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Gregory Popov

Did Rus' Save Europe from the Mongols?

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Abstract

The author poses the question of whether or not the Rus' people truly played a decisive role in averting a Mongol invasion of Europe by acting as a physical barrier between the advancing forces and the European continent. In response to this query, he concludes that the Catholic states of Europe were capable of mounting effective resistance against the Mongol conquerors. In his work, he employs a comparative method, combining medieval chronicles with archaeological research. Gregory Popov posits the hypothesis that, following the Battle of the Sit River on 4 March 1238, the Russian principalities did not seek to consolidate their position in order to resist the Mongol conquerors – particularly the Grand Prince of Vladimir, Yaroslav II Vsevolodovich. The author further concludes that Rus' possessed a weak military potential at the onset of the Mongol invasion of Europe.

Keywords: *Mongol invasion of Europe, Batu Khan's Western Campaign, Battle of Mohi*

Introduction

The factors that led to the preservation of independence by the Catholic states of Europe during the Batu's western campaign continue to be the subject of considerable controversy. For a considerable period, Soviet historiography espoused the perspective that Rus' played a pivotal role in averting the Mongol conquest of Europe by shouldering the primary burden of the offensive and inflicting heavy losses on the warriors of the Mongol Empire. This scientific problem has retained its relevance, particularly in light of the ongoing discourse within the framework of the new dialogue between the West and Russia. There is a long-running Eurasian debate in historical science, wherein the Rus' people appears not even as an enemy, but rather as an ally of the Tatar-Mongol conquerors (an extremely unfortunate, but familiar, term).

The purpose of this disquisition is to ascertain the extent to which the resistance of Rus' to the Mongol

conquerors influenced the latter's ability to conduct offensive military campaigns against the states of Catholic Europe in the mid-13th century. The present study focuses on the Western campaign of Batu (Khan Batu in Russian terminology) as an epochal event of the High Middle Ages in Eastern and Central Europe. The following subject matters are addressed in this study:

- Determination of the scale of Batu's army's battles and operations in the two campaigns against Rus' (1237–1238 and 1239–1240), according to the Laurentian Codex;
- The mobilization potential of the Russian principalities in their fight against the Mongol conquerors.
- Comparison of this information with data from the chronicles of Catholic Europe regarding the Mongol campaigns against European states from 1241 to 1242.
- Identification of the Mongols' offensive potential in their campaigns against Catholic Europe during the specified historical periods, as recorded in European chronicles.

The “Chronicle of Greater Poland” (Polish: *Kronika wielkopolska*) is the primary source of information on which the present study is based. The next most significant sources for our study are the “A Mournful Song About the Destruction of the Tatars in Hungary” by Magister Rogerius¹ and, naturally, the Russian chronicles dating back to the early Mongol period.

The analysis of sources is conducted in accordance with the principle of comparing the potential of the Russian and Western chronicles (the latter term is used conditionally, given that the concept of the West did not exist at that time). Magister Rogerius witnessed these events and was briefly held captive by the Mongols. While the accuracy of his account of the atrocities committed by the Mongol conquerors is questionable, it is generally considered to be relatively reliable. Our analysis focuses on the depiction of the Mongol army that invaded Hungary, particularly the Battle of Mohi. Historians of Russia have not previously devoted sufficient attention to analysing Rogerius's work, and indeed it was only recently that his writing was translated from the original Latin.

The Mongol period in the history of Rus' is of particular interest to medieval historians. The first notable event to mention is that the only significant and relatively reliable battle against the Mongol conquerors took place in 1380 at the Battle of Kulikovo. This occurred approximately one and a half centuries after Batu's campaign against Rus'. Indeed, the Battle of Kulikovo is a relatively well-documented event, despite not being recorded in

the Eastern chronicles. Historical figures such as Dmitry Donskoy and the *tumen*² Mamai are also not mentioned there.

The present study does not consider the eastern chronicles concerning Batu's military campaigns against Rus', as they only offer a brief overview of the Mongol military actions against the Russian principalities. It should be noted that these chronicles were written long after the campaigns took place.

As evidenced by historical documents, following the capture of Kyiv on 6 December 1240, the Mongols planned to attack Hungary, dividing their forces into three groups. One group was tasked with launching an offensive against the Hungarians from the north, traversing Poland and Bohemia. In a strategic manoeuvre, Batu's contingent launched an offensive from a centralised position, while a third group bypassed the Carpathian Mountains from the south. Why was Hungary the main target of the Mongols' invasion of Catholic Europe?

There are two main versions. The first is based on the alliance between King Béla IV of Hungary and the Cumans, who were known as the Polovtsians in Russian chronicles and were enemies of the Mongols. The second states that Hungary had good pastures. The Mongols wanted to use the Hungarian plains as a base for further invasions of Europe. The Mongol campaign against Hungary culminated in a battle southwest of the Sajó River. On 11 April 1241, the Hungarians, with an army of 20,000–25,000 men, were defeated.³

On 9 April 1241, the Polish-German army was defeated by the Mongol Horde's northern flank at the Battle of Legnica. During the first half of April, the Mongols' southern flank inflicted a crushing defeat on the Transylvanian forces.

It has long been believed that the Mongols ended their campaign in the West in 1242 due to the death of Ögedei, Khan of the Mongol Empire, in December 1241, in order to participate in the election of a new leader. However, the election itself was not scheduled until 1246, so this theory is not credible. A more realistic hypothesis is that Hungary's resources had been depleted and it could no longer provide enough forage for the Mongols' horses. However, the accuracy of this version is also questionable, particularly given the wealth of resources available in the Balkans. The Mongols operated not only in Hungary, but in other regions too. A third version has also been put forward in historical science: that the Mongols suffered heavy losses and that there were strong fortifications in Eastern Europe. However, we can mainly find confirmation of this version in archaeology.

Sources of Catholic Europe

The "Chronicle of Greater Poland" does not say much about the Mongols. But for our research, the following passage from this work is important: "Not far from Opillia, they were met by the princes Vladislaus I of Opole and Bolesław of Sandomierz, and began to fight them. However, they fled, unable to resist either their numbers or the will of God. Thus, the aforementioned portion of the Tatar army, having devastated Sieradz, Łęczyca and Kuyavia, reached Silesia. Henry, the son of Henry the Bearded and Prince of Silesia, Poland and Krakow, bravely led many thousands of armed warriors to meet them on the field near the fortress of Legnica, trusting in God's help as he confidently prepared to fight them."⁴ The term "many thousands" is used to describe the size of the army comprised of European knights, city militias and mercenaries. It is estimated that this army had a maximum of 20,000 men. The Poles were unable to muster more than this in such a short time. Consequently, it is improbable that the Mongols significantly outnumbered the Poles; otherwise, the Poles would have been inclined to remain within the citadel walls as they had done previously, as recorded in the Chronicle. It is a well-documented fact that the Polish-German army suffered a decisive defeat at the Battle of Legnica. However, the aforementioned Chronicle does not provide a detailed account of the battle.

Furthermore, the "Chronicle of Greater Poland" contains interesting information about the invasion of Hungary: "When Batu, the Tatar prince, invaded Hungary, the Hungarian kings, the brothers Béla and Coloman, blocked his way. Having lost most of their army in battle, the latter fled. Thus, having devastated Hungary and brutally slaughtered people of all ages and sexes, Batu crossed the Danube River. He remained in this kingdom for a year or more, committing cruel massacres and the impious destruction of cities."⁵ It is known that the main army, led by Batu, was marching towards Hungary, while a smaller contingent was operating against the Poles to the north.

However, the Poles were defeated in Silesia due to the inferior quality of their weapons and training. This is reflected in the following fact from the aforementioned Chronicle: "Bolesław, Henry's eldest son, who was killed by the Tatars, succeeded his father Henry as prince together with his brothers Henry, Władysław, Konrad and Mieszko. Unlike his father, he was not meek, and began to show his bestial inclinations. He became fierce towards the Poles, arrogant and began to favour the Teutons over the Poles,

generously endowing them with estates. Consequently, the Poles renounced their vassalage and left his lands of their own accord. They joined Przemysł and Bolesław, the sons of the late Duke Władysław Odonic, who were their natural lords. Following this, the local Polish inhabitants occupied the Przemęt fortress, which was under the rule of Silesian Duke Bolesław. They had previously retreated from him, and now recognised Przemysław and Bolesław as their lords.”⁶ A pro-German party arose in Silesia due to the Mongol invasion. This party was formed through an alliance of Germans and Poles against the Mongols. However, the anti-German party won. This suggests that many Poles in Silesia believed that they could deal with the Tatars alone if they had the support of the other Polish states.

Judging by the events described in the Chronicle relating to the activities of the Duke of Pomerania, Świentopełk, the Poles did not consider the Mongol defeat at the Battle of Legnica to be a serious matter, nor did they deem it necessary to form an alliance with the Teutonic Order against the Mongol Empire as a common enemy. The Chronicle says the following about this:

“The traitor Świentopełk appointed himself Duke of Pomerania in a shameless and impious manner. He turned the baptised Prussians, who were under the rule of the “bearded ones”, away from their allegiance with his impious advice. Having united them with himself, he incited them to revolt against the “bearded ones”. They attacked the Teutons unexpectedly, sparing neither age nor gender and killing many of them. In retaliation, the “bearded” Crusaders united with the Polish princes and captured the aforementioned fortresses of Wyszogród and Sartowice, which belonged to the Teutons. The fortress of Nakło, which had recently been seized from the young princes Przemysław and Bolesław by deception, was returned to them. This took place in 1243 AD, at which time Przemysław, the aforementioned Polish duke, also built the fortress of Zbąszyń.”⁷ Firstly, we can see that, like the Mongols, the Prussians (a Lithuanian ethnic group) did not spare the civilian population. Secondly, the Polish rulers only allied with the Teutonic Order in response to the Prussian threat, rather than the Mongol one.

The Chronicle also contains an interesting passage for us: “In the same year, Duke Konrad of Mazovia invaded the diocese of Krakow, plundering the villages and setting fire to the bishop's residence. Having caused great damage to the church, he returned home unharmed. For this reason, Prandota⁸ – the bishop of Kraków, who had been elected

and consecrated to the episcopacy the previous year – excommunicated him. Archbishop Pelka of Gniezno⁹ confirmed this decision”.¹⁰ Accordingly, Krakow and its surroundings were not heavily plundered by the Mongols. It is common knowledge that the Mongols were unable to capture the citadel of Krakow, leaving something for Duke Konrad to plunder in 1243.

Magister Rogerius provides a more detailed account of the Mongol invasion in his work, though he limits his discussion to Hungary. He devotes considerable space to the arrival of the Cumans (known as the Polovtsians in Russian chronicles), a Turkic people who had long fought the Mongols, in Hungary.¹¹ Kuten, the Khan of the Cumans, informed King Béla IV of Hungary that he had fought with the Tatars for many years and defeated them twice. However, the third time, they suddenly attacked him and he was forced to flee west with his people.¹²

Of course, the Russian chronicles make no mention of these events in the Black Sea steppes, except for the 1223 campaign, which ended in the Russian-Polovtsian army being soundly defeated on the Kalka River. This excerpt from Magister Rogerius's work explains why the Mongols did not attack Southern Rus' for so long: they were preoccupied with fighting the Cumans, who were Batu's main enemy during the early 1240s.

Magister Rogerius reports that 40,000 adult Cumans migrated to Hungary. However, the number 40 is often used in European chronicles to indicate a large number. Accordingly, following the campaign against North-Eastern Rus' and the battle at the walls of Chernigov in 1239, Batu managed to overcome a seasoned and sizeable enemy: the Polovtsians of the Black Sea steppes. Magister Rogerius estimates that 500,000 Mongols invaded Rus' and Cumania,¹³ which is an incredible number. Such a large Mongol army would have been able to quickly destroy the entire Polovtsian army under the command of Khan Kuten. However, Rogerius is not referring to an army invading Hungary; he is talking about the Mongols who devastated Russian and Polovtsian lands and turned some of them into pastures.¹⁴ Batu gathered a small army to attack Hungary, since he could not provide enough forage for a large number of horses.¹⁵

Rogerius's assessment included the total number of Mongols, their allied peoples and slaves stationed from the Upper Volga to the Danube and the Eastern Carpathians. In this context, an estimated population of 500,000 does not seem an exaggeration.

According to Rogerius, when Batu marched on Hungary, Peta, another Mongol leader¹⁶ who was

already in Poland, rushed to his aid. Prior to this, Peta had successfully captured the city of Wrocław, overcoming one of the Polish dukes in the process.¹⁷ From the south, Batu was supported by a Mongol prince named Kadan. Kadan broke through the forests into Hungary, where he encountered a settlement near the royal mine of Rudan. This settlement was home to German colonists. The latter gathered such a large, well-armed army that Kadan did not dare attack. Instead, he waited until the Germans began celebrating their victory and got drunk, before attacking them. Thus, the Mongols managed to win.¹⁸ The Germans could muster no more than 2,000 warriors in this area, most of whom were militia. Therefore, there shouldn't have been more Mongols present.

Rogierius attributes the Hungarians' defeat at the Battle of Mohi to their overconfidence in their numbers, which led them to underestimate the Mongols. Furthermore, there was a desire to overthrow King Béla IV due to his unpopularity among the Hungarian feudal nobility. The Hungarian barons were ill-prepared for the battle and failed to post sufficient guards for the night, with fatal consequences.¹⁹ The losses sustained by the Hungarian forces were horrific. However, the Mongols also suffered significant losses in the following year when they failed to capture the strongly defended citadel of Esztergom, which was held by a large number of mercenaries led by Count Simon the Spaniard.²⁰ The Mongols similarly failed to take the citadel of Kraków in March 1241. However, it is noted that Esztergom itself was significantly devastated. In addition to the Hungarians, it was defended by Italian and German colonists, while Russian soldiers were also forced to participate in the assault.²¹ The Mongols were unable to take Fehérvár²² because the city was surrounded by swamps and the mud had set in.²³ The siege of the castle of St. Martin of Pannonia²⁴ was abandoned when the Mongols were suddenly recalled by their command, for a reason not specified by Rogierius.²⁵ According to Rogierius, only three fortified places in Hungary were not taken by Batu's warriors.²⁶

Thomas the Archdeacon²⁷ wrote a local chronicle, covering mainly events in Dalmatia (now part of Croatia). This source is interesting to us because it contains valuable information about the Mongol invasion of the Balkan Peninsula and Hungary, as well as the Mongol attack on Rus'.

He writes about Rus': "In the fifth year of the reign of Béla, son of King Andrew of Hungary, and in the second year of Gargan's reign, the destructive Tatars approached the lands of Hungary. Rumours of this people and the horror they had wrought had been

spreading throughout the world for many years. They marched from the eastern lands to the borders of Ruthenia, ravaging the territory they crossed. However, due to the strong resistance of the Ruthenians, they were unable to advance any further. Indeed, they fought numerous battles with the Ruthenian peoples and much blood was shed on both sides. Ultimately, they were driven back by the Ruthenians. So, turning aside, they marched through the northern lands, fighting their way through and remaining there for twenty years or more. Having bolstered their military forces primarily with the Cuman tribes and the many other peoples they had conquered, they then turned against the Ruthenians again. First, they surrounded and besieged the large Christian city of Suzdal. After a long siege, they captured and destroyed the city by treachery rather than force. They put the king, George, and a large number of his people to death. Moving on from there towards Hungary, they destroyed everything in their path."²⁸ Thomas the Archdeacon refers to the Battle of Kalka, after which the Mongols attacked North-Eastern Rus' directly a few years later. However, he only mentions the siege of Suzdal as a significant military event in relation to it, probably confusing it with the siege of Vladimir. He pays little attention to the Battle of the Sit River and, according to his information, the Grand Duke died in his capital. Thus, the Mongols did not immediately attack Catholic Europe after the Battle of Kalka due to the threat posed by the Russian principalities. However, it is unclear why they attacked North-Eastern Rus' when Southern Rus' lay directly in their path.

Thomas the Archdeacon gives a completely different reason for the defeat on the Battle of Mohi than Rogierius: the Hungarians, on the orders of King Bela IV, built a fortified camp, but left little space between the tents.²⁹ He then mentions an interesting fact: "Then Vat, the senior leader of the Tatar army, climbed the hill and carefully examined the location of the Hungarian army. Returning to his own army, he said: 'Friends, we must not lose heart. Although these people are numerous, they will not be able to escape our grasp since their leaders are careless and incompetent. I have seen them as a flock of sheep without a shepherd, penned in tightly.' Then he ordered his troops, drawn up in their usual formation, to attack the bridge connecting the riverbanks and located near the Hungarian camp that same night."³⁰ Thomas the Archdeacon then describes the beginning of the battle, which determined the future fate of the entire Hungarian army: "However, a Ruthenian defector went over to the king's side and said,

‘The Tatars will cross over to you tonight, so be on your guard in case they attack you suddenly and unexpectedly. Then King Coloman left the camp with his entire army. Archbishop Ugrin³¹ followed him with his own troops. He was a warlike and courageous man, always ready for battle. At midnight, they approached the designated bridge. Some of the enemy had already crossed. Upon seeing them, the Hungarians immediately attacked and killed many of them in a brave fight. Others who were trying to retreat to the bridge were thrown into the river. After posting a guard at the foot of the bridge, the Hungarians returned to their people, wild with jubilation. So overjoyed by their victory, the Hungarians already felt themselves victors and, having removed their weapons, slept peacefully through the night. The Tatars, however, having placed seven siege engines at their end of the bridge, drove off the Hungarian guards, hurling huge stones and shooting arrows at them. Having thus driven off the guards, they crossed the river freely and unhindered – some on the bridge, others fording the river.’³²



This 13th-century miniature, created by the Armenian historiographer Hayton of Corycus, depicts the clash between the Hungarians and the Mongols on the bridge over the Sajó River during the Battle of Mohi on 11 April 1241

Another interesting excerpt from the chronicle of the Croatian author reads as follows: ‘And Ugrin, being a man of impeccable courage and fearlessness, raised his voice and began to scold the king for his carelessness and accuse the barons of Hungary of idleness and inertia. In such a dangerous situation, they thought of nothing but their own lives and did nothing to save the entire kingdom. As a result, some people decided to go with them, while others were struck by sudden fear and seemed maddened, not knowing which side to take or where it would be wiser to go. The three aforementioned leaders left the camp without delay and engaged the enemy once again. Ugrin rushed into the thick of the enemy with such courage that they fled with loud cries, as

if struck by lightning. In a similar manner, Coloman and the Templar, accompanied by his Latin companions, slew many of the enemy. When Coloman and the archbishop, who were both seriously wounded, could no longer hold back the mob’s onslaught, they barely escaped to their own side. The Templar Master perished alongside the entire Latin detachment, and many Hungarians also fell in this battle.’³⁴ Some of the Hungarian nobilities were thus reluctant to attack the Mongols, which led to a lack of coordination and the destruction of the Templar detachment. There is also no mention of the effective use of the Mongols’ bows. They are not described as a formidable weapon in the accounts of this battle. As a result, the Mongols managed to surround the Hungarian camp and defeat the latter. The retreat from the camp was complicated by the crowded tents.³⁵

Thomas the Archdeacon’s account of the Mongols’ capture of Esztergom is broadly consistent with what Rogerius said about it, except for the successful defence of the city’s citadel, which the chronicler does not mention. However, he then writes that the Mongols besieged the nearby fortress of Alba, which was defended by Latins (presumably Spanish mercenaries), who used catapults. The Tatar prince Kaidan, who was besieging the city, then retreated.³⁶

According to Thomas the Archdeacon, the Croats offered almost no resistance, except in the defence of the Split citadel itself. The Mongols were unable to take it due to their lack of siege engines, and decided not to waste their forces storming it, since the Hungarian king had already left the city by that time.³⁷ Kaidan intended to capture Trogir, but the city was separated from the mainland by a narrow strait. The Mongols remained in Croatia and Dalmatia throughout March before moving on to Bosnia.³⁸ After ravaging Serbia, Batu and Kaidan turned to Bulgaria, where they intended to regroup and review their troops.³⁹ Afterward, they returned to the steppes. This must have happened by the end of April 1242, following the death of the Great Khan Ögedei⁴⁰ in December 1241. Thomas the Archdeacon does not specify the reason for the Mongols’ departure from the Balkans.

We know that Batu Khan invaded Poland in early 1241, with historians estimating his army to have numbered between 40,000 and 60,000 men. The Battle of Legnica took place on 9 April 1241, resulting in a crushing defeat for the Polish-German army. The battle is described briefly yet informatively in a letter from Pons d’Albon,⁴¹ Master of the Templar Order, which was published in 1847 as part of the collection ‘Anonymous Chronicle of France’. This

letter was translated into Russian before the 1917 revolutions⁴² and has been published several times. Pons d'Albon mentions the word “Legnica” in his letter.

Although his description does not mention any battles with the Mongols, he hints that there was a battle in Poland. On this occasion, he writes: “To my most exalted Lord, King of France, by the grace of God, Pons d'Albon, Master of the Templars in France, sends greetings and is at your beck and call in all things, with reverence and for the glory of God. We received news about the Tatars (Tartarins) from our brothers from Polonia (Poulainne), who attended the chapter. We inform Your Highness that the Tatars have ravaged and devastated the lands of Henry, Duke of Polonia, killing him and many barons, as well as six of our brothers, three knights, two parish servants and five hundred of our men. However, three of our brothers, whom we know well, have escaped. Then they laid waste to Hungary and Bohemia, after which they divided into three groups: one remained in Hungary, one in Bohemia, and one in Austria. They destroyed the two best towers and three settlements that we had in Poland, as well as everything that we had in Bohemia and Moravia. We fear that the same might happen in the German regions. And know that the King of Hungary and the King of Bohemia, the two sons of the Duke of Poland, and the Patriarch of Aquileia, with a large army, did not dare to attack any of their three detachments. And know that all the barons of Germany, the Emperor himself, and all the clergy and pious people – monks, converts and laypeople – have taken the cross. The Jacobins and younger brothers⁴³ everywhere, even as far as Hungary, have also taken the cross to fight the Tatars. And if, as our brothers told us, it happens that these will be defeated by God’s will, then no one will be found in our land who can resist the Tatars.”⁴⁴ This information was conveyed to King Louis IX of France in connection with the Order’s general chapter in Western Europe, where the Templars’ financial issues were decided, including those related to the Mongol invasion of Europe. The Templar Order redirected much of the money intended for another crusade in the Middle East to defensive measures against the Mongols in Europe.⁴⁵

Thus, the Mongol invasion of Catholic Europe lasted approximately a year – long enough to defeat the European forces, totalling at least 50,000 men, and capture several heavily fortified cities. This raises the question: did the Rus' truly inflict serious losses on Batu’s army?

The Russian Chronicles of the Invasion

The Mongols attacked North-Eastern Rus' at the end of 1237. According to the Laurentian Codex, Pronsk was the first place to be taken. While there is no mention of the siege and assault of Ryazan, there is reference to a battle near Kolomna fought by the Grand Duke of Vladimir, Yuri Vsevolodovich. He then proceeded to the Sit River to meet Yaroslav Vsevolodovich’s regiments. It can be presumed that Yaroslav was going to join the Grand Duke from Novgorod. The Russian army was completely routed at the Battle of the Sit River on 4 March 1238, with the Grand Duke among those killed. The Mongols captured 14 Russian cities within the Vladimir-Suzdal Rus' in February 1238 alone. According to the Laurentian Codex, the Russian city garrisons offered little resistance.

Yaroslav did not have time to come to Yuri’s aid. According to the Laurentian Codex, he had no intention of fighting the Mongols in 1239, nor did he do so in 1240 when they took Kyiv. According to this chronicle, Batu’s army easily took Pereyaslavl and Chernigov. The actions of Yaroslav Vsevolodovich are described as follows: “In the same year, Yaroslav set out from Smolensk on a campaign against Lithuania. He defeated them and took their prince captive. Having settled matters with the Smolensk people, he installed Vsevolod as their prince. He then returned to his lands with great booty and glory. That same winter, the Tatars invaded Mordovia, burning Murom and fighting along the banks of the Klyazma River. They also burned the city of Gorokhovets, which was dedicated to the Holy Mother of God, before returning to their camps. Great confusion then spread throughout the land, and the people did not know where to flee.”

This passage implies that neither the North-Eastern Rus' nor the princes of Chernigov took any action to fend off the Mongol invasion of 1239.

In the mid-19th century, the supposed site of the Battle of the Sit River became a place of pilgrimage for Russian historians and others. Researchers discovered several burial mounds which were assumed to be the resting places of Russian soldiers who had died in battle with the Mongols. Archaeologist N. P. Sabaneev discovered the remains of warriors in around 20 burial mounds. He believed these belonged to those who died in the Battle of 1238.⁴⁶ Several years later, the renowned archaeologist L.K. Ivanovsky excavated 150 burial mounds in the area where the Battle of the Sit River supposedly took place. However, the remains found inside were identified as those of Finno-Ugric warriors who had died in the region long before the Mongol invasion.⁴⁷

Although the debate about this battle was considered closed following L.K. Ivanovsky's research, it continued to gain renewed momentum long after World War II. The renowned Soviet archaeologist K. I. Komarov made a particularly significant contribution to the excavation of burial mounds in the area of the supposed battlefield on the Sit River.⁴⁸ He confirmed the Battle of the Sit River, placing it in the lower reaches of the river. However, it has not yet been possible to determine the scale of losses on both sides or the size of the opposing forces based on archaeological data. This is because K. I. Komarov failed to discover any sanitary burials for Russian troops. This distinguishes the archaeology of the Battle of the Sajó River – known as the Battle of Mohi in Hungarian historiography – from that of the Battle of the Sit River. The remains of Hungarian warriors and fragments of their weapons were found at the latter site.⁴⁹

During the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, archaeologists discovered several sanitary burials of presumed victims of the Mongol invasion. However, not a single dead Mongol was found.

Russian historians still explain this by saying that the Mongols had a unique burial practice and did not create burial mounds. A similar practice was observed in Catholic Europe.

In the Middle Ages, an army had to be led by a feudal lord. In Rus', these lords were representatives of the ruling Rurik dynasty. The Laurentian Codex records the deaths of six Russian princes, including Yuri Vsevolodovich. According to this chronicle, another prince presumably died, while twelve princes most likely saved their lives by fleeing, and three remained in a safe place. Other chronicles provide different statistics regarding the fate of the princes. For instance, the Hypatian Codex states that five princes escaped the Mongols, and that only one was definitely killed.⁵⁰ The Laurentian Codex lists the names of 22 princes who took part in events related to Batu's invasion.⁵¹

According to the Rurik dynasty genealogies compiled by E. V. Pchelov, four of the seven Ryazan princes definitely died and one was captured.⁵² The Ryazan principality was the first to suffer at the hands of the Mongol conquerors, which may explain the heavy losses among its leaders. Of the four sons of Vsevolod III Yuryevich ("The Big Nest"), who ruled Vladimir-Suzdal Rus', only one died: Grand Prince Yuri II of Vladimir. His brother Sviatoslav III of Vladimir took part in the Battle of the Sit River. It is not known whether Ivan (Ioann) Vsevolodovich participated in the battle.

At first glance, it is unclear why Grand Prince Yuri was waiting for Yaroslav Vsevolodovich's forces to arrive from Novgorod while he was on the outskirts of the Vladimir-Suzdal principality, especially since the latter had sufficient manpower. The answer to this question lies in archaeology. By the beginning of the Mongol period, Russian troops had started to replace swords with sabres, which were usually wielded by better-trained and better-equipped warriors.

However, archaeological excavations suggest that sabres were only possessed by the inhabitants of the Klyazma basin (the area of modern-day Moscow) and the area around the city of Dmitrov in the Moscow region at the end of the pre-Mongol period. Very few sabres were discovered by archaeologists near Murom. A significant number of sabres dating from the period just before the arrival of the Mongol conquerors have been unearthed in the vicinity of Kyiv and also in Novgorod.⁵³ This means that the population and state power could afford to equip warriors with this weapon, which was expensive at that time, precisely in these lands of medieval Rus'. However, the acquisition of weapons was also subject to legal restrictions. Like ordinary city dwellers, smerds (feudal-dependent serfs) did not have the right to own swords or sabres. These restrictions were introduced in the second half of the 11th century due to fears of uprisings against the princely authority. In some regions of north-eastern Rus', certain groups in society retained their personal freedom. In villages, these people were known as "freemen" (*mužici*). They also had the economic means to purchase weapons and armour. Judging by the archaeological evidence, the major urban centres of Rus', such as Rostov Veliky (Rostov the Great), Yaroslavl and Ryazan, did not possess sabres.

The sabre was a weapon used by cavalrymen. Therefore, the number of horse remains can be used to indicate the level of military development in Rus' during the relevant historical period. The percentage of horse remains in urban osteological material from the 12th to the mid-15th century indicates that the Rus' had significantly fewer horses than the Turks of the Upper Volga region.⁵⁴ The renowned historian Professor L. V. Milov also highlights the underdevelopment of horse breeding in medieval Rus'.⁵⁵

From 1237 to 1240, the Mongol army did not have to use much force against the Russian principalities. It is presumed that Batu brought around 6,000 Mongol warriors and several thousand soldiers from the peoples he had conquered to Rus' in the winter of 1237–1238.⁵⁶ These calculations are based on the number of yurts transferred to the Ulus of Jochi (the

Golden Horde) when Genghis Khan's estate was divided among his sons. For their campaign against Catholic Europe, the Mongols naturally recruited larger contingents directly from the central regions of their empire.

Conclusion

Whether Russia actually saved Europe from the Mongol conquest is unclear. After the Battle of the Sit River, Grand Duke Yaroslav Vsevolodovich did not attempt to unify the Russian territories to resist the Mongol invaders. This only occurred under Dmitry Donskoy at the end of the 14th century. The Rurikid dynasty of Chernigov fled to neighbouring countries. While the scale of the Battle of the Sit River is uncertain, there is no evidence to suggest that the Mongols sustained heavy losses.

The shortage of horses in Northeastern Rus' pre-determined the outcome of the campaign against Batu's army in 1237–1238. The Mongols captured 14 cities in the Vladimir-Suzdal Principality alone within a month. This also highlights the weak fortifications and poor organisation of the garrisons in these cities.

The fact remains that the Mongols failed to capture the citadels of Kraków and Esztergom. On the Adriatic coast of Croatia, they encountered strong fortifications. The arrival of Spanish heavy infantry and Templar Knights in Hungary demonstrated the increased military and political strength of Catholic Europe. There is no evidence that the Templars surrendered. Although the Catholic states' combined forces suffered strategic and tactical defeats at Mohi and Legnica, they undoubtedly demonstrated their determination to fight tenaciously.

References and Explanatory Notes

1. Magister Rogerius (also known as Roger of Torre Maggiore or Master Rogerius; 1205–1266) was an Italian cleric born in the southern Italian town of Torremaggiore. He was the Archbishop of Split in Dalmatia, which belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary in the 13th century. He witnessed the Mongol invasions of 1241 and 1242. This article uses the Latin name “Magister Rogerius”.

2. A tumen was in charge of 10,000 warriors in Genghis Khan's military system.

3. Szabó B., János J., Uhrin D. (eds): *Mongol invázió Európa ellen (1236–1242)*. Corvina: Budapest, 2022; ISBN 9789631368147; p. 293.
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4. “Velikaya khronika” o Pol'she, Rusi i ikh sose-dyakh XI–XIII vv.: *Perevod i kommentarii*; pod redaktsiyey V. L. Yanina; sostaviteli: L. M. Popova, N. I. Shchhaveleva. Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta: Moskva, 1987; str. 154.

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5. Ibidem, p. 155.

6. Ibidem, p. 155.

7. Ibidem, pp. 155–156.

8. Jan Prandota (c. 1200–1266) was the Bishop of Kraków from 1242 until his death in 1266.

9. Pełka, also known as Fulko, was Archbishop of Gniezno from 1232 to 1258. In 1234, he arbitrated a dispute between Henry the Bearded (1165–1238), the High Duke of Poland, and Władysław Odonic (1190–1239), the Duke of Greater Poland.

10. “Velikaya khronika”; p. 156.

11. Magistr Rogeriy: *Gorestnaya pesn' o razorenii Vengerskogo korolevstva tatarami*; perevod s latinskogo A.S. Dosayeva. Izdatel'stvo Dmitriy Bulanin: Sankt-Peterburg, 2012; ISBN: 978-586007-695-2.

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12. Ibidem, p. 18.

13. Ibidem, p. 29.

14. Ibidem, p. 30.

15. Ibidem, p. 30.

16. Baidar Khan (also known as Peta) took part in the Mongol invasion of Europe from 1235 to 1241. He commanded the Mongol army deployed to Poland.

17. Magistr Rogeriy, p. 30.

18. Ibidem, p. 30.

19. Ibidem, pp. 31–32.

20. Simon Nagymartoni (also known as Bajóti or Martinsdorfi; died after 1250) was a Hungarian knight and diplomat who was born in Spain in the first half of the 13th century. He and his siblings settled in Hungary, where their family became part of the social elite. He was a faithful confidant of Kings Andrew II and Béla IV.

21. Magistr Rogeriy, p. 56.

22. Székesfehérvár played a central role as a royal residence and the capital of the Kingdom of Hun-

gary in the Middle Ages. The first Hungarian kings were crowned and buried here. During the Mongol invasion of Hungary (1241–1242), the invaders were unable to approach the castle because of the surrounding marshes, caused by melting snow.

23. Magistr Rogeriy, p. 57.

24. The monastery and castle of Saint Martin of Pannonia (Márton-hegyi Apátság) is a medieval complex located in Pannonhalma, Hungary. Founded in 996, it is one of the oldest historical monuments in Hungary and is situated on top of a 282-metre hill known as the ‘Mount of Saint Martin’.

25. Magistr Rogeriy, p. 57.

26. Ibidem, p. 57.

27. Thomas the Archdeacon (Latin: Thomas Archidiaconus; c. 1200–1268) was a Roman Catholic cleric, historian, and chronicler. His accounts of the Mongol invasion of Hungary in 1241 and 1242, as well as Mongol customs and homeland, constitute the earliest examples of ethnological writing in local historiography.

28. Foma Splitskiy (perevod, komm. O. A. Akimovoy): *Istoriya arkhiepiskopov Salony i Splita*. Indrik: Moskva, 1997; ISBN 5-85759-063-9; str. 104. *Thomas of Split (translated and commented by O. A. Akimova): History of the Archbishops of Salona and Split*. Indrik: Moscow, 1997; ISBN 5-85759-063-9; p. 104.

29. Ibidem, p. 107.

30. Ibidem, p. 107.

31. Ugrin Csák (c. 1190–1241) was a Hungarian prelate and military leader during the first half of the 13th century. He served as Archbishop of Kalocsa from 1219 until his death in the Battle of Mohi on the Sajó River on 11 April 1241. Csák also served as chancellor of the royal court from 1217 to 1219 and again from 1230 to 1235.

32. Foma Splitskiy, p. 107.

33. “Miniature from a copy of Hayton of Corycus’s *La Flor des estoires de la terre d’Orient* in the Austrian National Library, illustrating his account of the Battle of Mohi in 1241 between Hungarians and Mongols and the purported drowning of Batu Khan in the river, which is a confused report of the death of the Mongol general known as Ba’atur, who drowned during a crossing of the Sajó, an ignominious reverse despite the Mongols’ overall victory.” (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_Mohi_1241.PNG)

34. Foma Splitskiy, p. 107.

35. Ibidem, p. 107.

36. Ibidem, p. 106.

37. Ibidem, p. 106.

38. Ibidem, p. 119.

39. Ibidem, str. 120.

40. Ögedei Khan (c. 1186–1241) was the third son of Genghis Khan (1162–1227) and the second ruler of the Mongol Empire. By the time of his death in 1241, large armies under the command of his generals had subdued the steppes and penetrated deep into Europe.

41. Pons d’Albon (also known as Pons de Obon) was the Grand Master of the Knights Templar in France in the mid-13th century. He is best known for his historical letter to King Louis IX of France (1214–1270), also known as Saint Louis, which contained information about the Mongol invasion of Europe.

42. The Russian Revolution began with the February Revolution of 1917 amid the First World War, resulting in the abdication of Emperor Nicholas II. On 7 November 1917, left-wing Bolshevik extremists overthrew the Provisional Government, establishing a regime of Red Terror and eliminating the bourgeoisie, intelligentsia, clergy and well-off peasants, who were considered “enemies of the people”.

43. Here, the “Jacobins” refer to the Dominicans (so named in France because their first monastery was located near the Church of St James), while the “younger brothers” (*frères mineurs*) refer to the Franciscans. These mendicant orders actively preached a crusade against the Tatars.

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51. Ibidem, p. 9.

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Reinhold Schulz

The Fate of a Migrant: Autobiography

Continued from Issue 14

Reinhold Schulz,

also known as Papa Schulz,

is a prominent Russia-German writer.

Abstract

The autobiographical story of Reinhold Schulz contains valuable microhistorical material, reflecting the typical realities of Russia-German history and everyday life from the mid-20th to the early 21st century. The author attempts to be objective about the first half of his life that he spent in the Soviet Union. This issue continues the publication of the memoirs of Reinhold Schulz.

Keywords: Reinhold Schulz | Russia-German microhistory | Soviet Union | Resettlers and late resettlers (German: *Aussiedler und Spätaussiedler*)

After serving in the army, I returned home and got a job in my specialty at the local airport, maintaining electrical and radio-technical equipment for communications and air navigation.¹ I also joined the trade union.

I played an active role in the community's social life, volunteering as a political informant,² a donor,³ a member of the fire brigade,⁴ and the people's squad,⁵ a member of the youth task force,⁶ a member of the Komsomol searchlight,⁷ and a member of the local trade union committee.



"Honorary Donor of the USSR" badge

I was elected chairman of the production committee⁹ and the creative group for scientific labour organisation.¹⁰ I was a prolific innovator,¹¹ submitting 40 rationalisation proposals¹² a year. I was on the editorial board of the wall newspaper,¹³ a top-perform-

ing worker,¹⁴ and a multiple winner of the socialist competition¹⁵ for the title of "Best in Profession."¹⁶ I was awarded the "Five-Year Plan High Productivity Worker"¹⁷ badge. In recognition of my conscientious performance of my duties, my photo and name were displayed on the Board of Honour.¹⁸ I was repeatedly awarded Certificates of Honour¹⁹ and monetary bonuses, and I was even granted a trip to the Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy²⁰ in Moscow. I was considered a "Top-Performing Worker of Communist Labour".²¹

I left the Komsomol due to my age, but I did not join the Party due to my convictions.

In summer, we went to work in the city by boat. In winter, we crossed the river on ice by bus. During the thaw in spring and autumn, when the river was flooded, we walked 14 kilometres. People crossed the river at their own risk. There was no bridge back then, and the roads hadn't been paved yet. After work, we would go dancing or to the cinema. Dancing was the highlight of our young lives each week. First, we danced the tango and the foxtrot; then the twist and the shake appeared. After dancing, the whole group saw the girls off late into the night before running home and sleeping for the rest of the night. We then walked to work the following morning. We didn't feel tired. Instead, we were full of enthusiasm and joy for life, searching for beauty in everything.

I was a patriot for the sake of humanity. I would have been crucified for an idea. I wanted to do something so important that I would be remembered for it, and that would benefit everyone. If I had been told then that I had to fly, for example, to Mars and, in the name of science, transmit important information from there, but that there wouldn't be enough fuel to get back and that it was very necessary for humanity, I would have flown.

One evening, a friend and I went to the cinema. A tearful woman ran up to the theatre and told us that her apartment had just been robbed. "The man went that way," she said, waving her hand in the direction she thought he had gone. While the crowd waited indifferently for the film to begin, my friend and I ran in the direction indicated and soon caught up with the man. We found him carrying the stolen items, overpowered him and took him to the local militsiya officer.²² It was late when the local police officer asked us to help him take the detainee to the city police station. We all took the last steamship to the station and handed the detainee over.

Of course, we missed the boat back, so the local police officer kindly arranged for us to spend the night in a separate cell at the sobering-up station.²³

The next morning, we were thanked solemnly, and our superiors at work were informed of our brave act of service. It turned out that the detainee was a repeat offender who had recently been released from prison. Our region was a complete prison zone, with barbed wire everywhere.²⁴

I often flew to Moscow to represent the company in cases at the State Arbitration Court.²⁵ I won many economic battles. I also met with Academician Sakharov.²⁶ I was struck by his simplicity and his clear, truthful reflections on life.

I have been involved in several car accidents. Once, I got lost in the woods. I once almost drowned in a swamp, but a helping hand always appeared just in time. I started thanking the Almighty every day for everything. I thought about my fate and began to read an atheistic “Bible for Believers and Non-Believers”,²⁷ which I accidentally bought in a bookstore – there was no other one on sale.

I passed my tractor driving test. I attended a course for trade union committee chairmen.²⁸ People often chose me to be the toastmaster at weddings, and I performed the marriage ceremonies of friends who went on to build good families.

One spring, I went on holiday to Kokchetav²⁹ to visit my father’s older brother. There, I met a girl from a respectable Volhynian German family who had experienced a similar fate. I married her fourteen days after we met, before she turned eighteen. I took her north. I found her a job sorting papers at the post office and we lived in my mother’s apartment. On our honeymoon, we travelled around the GDR along the following route: Moscow – Warsaw – Berlin – Rheinsberg – Neubrandenburg – Rostock – Stralsund – Potsdam (Sanssouci Palace) – Dresden (Semper Gallery) – Frankfurt (Oder) – Berlin – Moscow. After that, we visited my mother-in-law in Kokchetav (Chkalovo³⁰), shared our news with her, and then returned to Syktyvkar.

I worked as an aircraft mechanic, an automatic telephone exchange technician, and a cable installer. I befriended some interesting people, caught the attention of my superiors, and was promoted to Head of Logistics at the reputable Komi Civil Aviation Authority. I was responsible for everything on the ground at the airfield, but not in flight. I drew up plans and prepared design and estimate documentation, and drew up contracts with contractors. I shipped aviation equipment to all the airports in the Komi Republic. The Komi Republic is larger than united Germany.³¹

I’ve done a lot of flying for business. I could easily subtract the few months I spent on the ground from my life, since I spent that time high above the Earth

in aeroplanes. Flying is a wonderful experience. My pilot friends have let me fly with them and I’ve even piloted a Tu-134³² myself.

As the head of the logistics department, I planned the work of my enterprise, drew up job descriptions for subordinates, and sought out, selected, and hired workers. I instructed them on safety precautions, conducted civil defence and technical training, and organised inter-service exchanges. I organised scientific lectures and trade union meetings, summarised the results of socialist competitions, participated in the distribution of housing, bonuses and travel vouchers, and volunteered. As a member of the local trade union committee, I arranged places at departmental and city kindergartens and nurseries for the children of my subordinates.

I worked for the Food Programme,³³ organising the airport’s agricultural farm. The Moscow government decreed that every state organisation had to provide its employees with food. Our airport was no exception.

Everyone had to rear pigs and produce milk. I organised the farm’s operations. I bought pedigree piglets and provided them with feed and other necessary supplies. I oversaw the slaughter and transportation of the meat, distributing it among the workers at my enterprise.

I was always learning and broadening my horizons. I strove to be an interesting person and enjoyed socialising, theatre, photography, filmmaking, car touring, swimming and skiing.

I immediately hired my younger brother, who had just finished school.

Having two housewives in one kitchen is always problematic. My mother gave up her place to my wife and left for Karaganda in the autumn, supposedly to see my aunt off to Germany. Then my younger brother was drafted into the army. On New Year’s Day 1975, a telegram arrived: “Come urgently. Mother is in serious condition. Neighbours.” I flew out as a stowaway on the first available flight. I spent many days in hospital at my mother’s bedside, supporting her with love and encouragement. My mother died in my arms from pneumonia. I suffered terrible shock. I flew her to the North and buried her next to my father.

My younger brother was granted permission to come to the funeral, but he fell ill and was delayed. We then received a threatening telegram from his military unit: “Due to your late return from leave, your case has been referred to a military tribunal.” To save my brother from the disciplinary battalion, I backdated the documents, ran to doctors and

the military commissariat.³⁴ I befriended the military commissar, who wrote a note of justification to the commander – “on sick leave” – and certified it with his seal. The agents of the military counterintelligence³⁵ dragged my brother through interrogations, but left him alone. Later, thanks to my good connections with the military commissar, I helped many reservists with families avoid conscription for retraining or to join the “partisans”, as the reserve soldiers sent by the military commissariat to harvest virgin lands³⁶ were known.

In the summer time, I travelled to Karaganda to contest my mother’s inheritance in court. I was awarded half of the house, which I then had registered in my name before selling it on the spot. Upon returning home, I relinquished my share and deposited all the money into a bank account for my younger brother.

Disagreements arose with my recalcitrant wife. Contrary to her wishes, I took Zhenya Kotkov, a homeless orphan who had fallen under the influence of parasitic extortionists, into my home. He was practically left without any means of support. I got him a job, put him up in my apartment for free, and taught him a lesson. I opened a savings account for him, raised him, and saw him off to serve in the army.

On the opening day of the 25th Party Congress in 1976,³⁷ a fire broke out in the warehouse following welding work. Due to the warehouse’s poor construction, which had numerous invisible cracks in the concrete floor, a welding spark ignited the aircraft wheels stored in the basement.



1976 USSR Postal Stamp,
celebrating the 25th Congress

It took them 24 hours to extinguish the fire. A state commission flew in from Moscow for this specific purpose. Although the welding work had been carried out on orders from above and strictly according to instructions, the cause of the fire was not properly investigated because someone had to be blamed for political sabotage.³⁹ They opened criminal case No. 3606. I was forced to sign a travel ban.

At the time, the building we lived in was undergoing major renovations, so we were evicted from our flat. I rented a room from strangers. I sent my wife to my mother-in-law’s house to give birth. I secretly accompanied her to Moscow so that she wouldn’t worry about travelling alone, put her on a direct flight, and returned home that same night. The next morning, as if nothing had happened, I went to work. I took a risk. If I’d been caught, I’d have been taken into custody. And my wife didn’t care about the outcome of the trial – she never once asked me how the case was progressing.

The trial lasted three days. As the acting manager and a German, I was tried in an open show trial at the Aviation Workers’ Culture Centre. It was a noisy affair. The whole city had heard about the fire. I became infamous within Aeroflot⁴⁰ and “From Moscow to the Borders”⁴¹ through a stern order from the Minister of Civil Aviation. My friends and comrades stood up for me. They appointed a public defender and bailed me out. Everyone could see that, under my leadership, more had been accomplished for the Komi Aviation Logistics Department in one year than all my predecessors had achieved in the previous 52 years since 1922.

I dealt with perspective construction projects. My designs were used to build a mechanized overpass, a warehouse for varnish and paint, a garage for vehicles, a restroom for workers, and a checkpoint. The logistics compound was redeveloped. For example, I covered the river flowing through the area with reinforced concrete boxes and paved the entire area above them. As a result, the territory became unified. I built a sturdy, new fence around the perimeter of the airbase, supported by reinforced concrete pillars. I installed outdoor lighting poles and activated the civil defence and fire alarm sirens. I oversaw the major renovation of all the buildings. I drilled two water wells and repaired the fire reservoir. I installed radio, security, and fire alarm systems, as well as a telephone connection. I also equipped a 60-seat technical classroom with visual aids, and much, much more.

The court counted 52 similar cases. Recently, State Fire Supervision inspectors had been conducting tours of the airbase as a model facility. Now, in court, they selflessly and fraternally defended me. Despite the overwhelming weight of my personal work-related achievements and the indisputable facts of my innocence, the “humane court”,⁴² under Article 215, Part Two of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR,⁴³ sentenced me to prison for no reason. They replaced the sentence with a suspended one and deducted a portion of the damages from my salary. I was dis-

missed from my position, had my salary reduced and was demoted to engineer. I worked as an engineer in the Special Vehicles Group.

I later became a senior engineer in the non-standard and airfield equipment group, but I left for political and economic reasons. After working as a day labourer for a while, I was persuaded to return to engineering. This time, I worked in the aircraft and helicopter spare parts group and helped to organise the engine unit repair division.

To avoid having my property confiscated, I decided to pay off my court debts immediately after the trial. I took my six-month salary in advance and paid it into the court's account. Despite working like everyone else, I didn't receive a salary. I was left without a livelihood.

Due to my criminal record, I was considered a chemist⁴⁴ and was under daily public surveillance by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. I wasn't allowed outside after 8 p.m. and the militsiya men⁴⁵ would come to check that I was home. If I broke the rules, I would go to prison.

I suffered from scurvy due to a vitamin deficiency, and my gums often bled. I lived modestly and alone, staying with strangers, sleeping on a folding bed, and cooking on an electric stove. On weekends, I visited friends for a hearty meal.

Despite these circumstances, I finished evening school and passed the matriculation exams.

Immediately after, I received an unexpected telegram from my niece, the daughter of my older brother. "Bring the Contrikal⁴⁶ urgently! Dad's dying." I borrowed money to obtain the expensive and scarce medication. For a good reason, I obtained permission from the militsiya, took leave, and flew to Shymkent. I spent several days at the bedside of my delirious brother. After surgery for a duodenal ulcer, my older brother, Helmut, died in my arms. Within a year, there was another funeral. My younger brother, Leo, was not permitted to leave the army for the funeral.

There were just the two of us left, two brothers. My spiritual strength was at its limit. I had nothing to live on, grief and debt all around.

Returning home, I enrolled in the history faculty of Syktyvkar State University. I dropped out after the first semester.

After my official working day, I toiled on construction sites. I worked nights delivering concrete, building roads and laying foundations. I renovated my house, installing plumbing and heating lines, as well as central heating, gas and a sewerage system. I built a playground in the yard. Meanwhile, my younger brother, Leo, returned from the army.

My first child was born in Kazakhstan in autumn. I secretly went there for a couple of days over New Year to see my wife and daughter. Upon returning, I completed a fire safety inspector course. Once the house had been renovated, I brought my wife and daughter back.

My wife looked after the child during the day, and in the evenings, she got a job as a night cleaner at a public bathhouse.⁴⁷ I worked from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every day, and from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., I studied at a company-sponsored driving school to become a professional driver. After class, I would go to the bathhouse to help my wife by cleaning it until one or two in the morning. I would wash the floors, scrub the zinc die-cast washing bowls⁴⁸ and tidy up the steam room. It was really tough.

In the summer, I worked nights on the side, laying heating mains. We installed steam heating, cold and hot water, and welded pipes in sewer manholes. I'd get home at four in the morning and be up for work by six.

A year later, I enrolled my daughter in a crèche and found my wife a good job as a bookbinder at the Komigrashdanproyekt.⁴⁹ The work was quiet and clean, and involved wearing a white coat, staying warm and being in the city centre. She was elected to the People's Control Committee,⁵⁰ where she volunteered to oversee trade and managed to obtain cooked sausages.⁵¹

When my daughter was learning to walk, she would often wander off. Once, we found her on a different street. After eating "Vorkutinsky Cake"⁵² at home one day, she ended up in hospital with food poisoning. We went to visit her twice a day. Thankfully, everything turned out okay.

I applied for amnesty. A retrial was held at the request of the work collective. Due to my good behaviour during my time in correctional labour, I was granted parole. My criminal record was expunged. Although the time served was counted towards my overall work record, my biography and work record book were thoroughly tainted by the relevant entry.

I sometimes visited the local community of believers with a friend of my father's. I used to photograph weddings and baptisms, but then the KGB,⁵³ MVD⁵⁴ and OBKhSS⁵⁵ agents would show up at my work. They put pressure on me.

The family of my deceased older brother – his wife and two daughters – left Kazakhstan for permanent residence in Germany. Resentful of the Soviet regime, I too decided to fulfil my parents' dream of moving to my ancestral homeland. I secretly submitted to the OVIR⁵⁶ office the invitations from Germany.⁵⁷

My second daughter was born. As fathers weren't legally entitled to sick leave to care for children, my wife often had to stay home with them when they were ill, which resulted in her being laid off. It was impossible to resolve this quietly, as the matter was under government control. So, I wrote to the Republican newspaper "Krasnoye Znamya".⁵⁸ After my persistent appeals and communication with a correspondent, a long article was published, "Another Child... Joy or Burden?" about the problems of family and motherhood, about my wife's redundancy, about Soviet legislation, the procedure for issuing sick leave, etc. The article sparked a storm of public outrage. My wife was held back at work. A few years later, the law changed and fathers started getting sick leave to care for their children.

I hired my cousin to work at the airport. I helped my younger brother get a comfortable two-room apartment in a panel block of flats. I also helped him buy a new car with the money from selling his house.⁵⁹

As I was set on leaving for Germany and had no desire to climb the corporate ladder, I helped my best friend advance in his career by offering him the high-level position that had been offered to me. I spent a long time teaching him the ins and outs of the job. I promoted him from loader to driver, then left my own position following the court's decision; I helped him to become my boss. My friend rose to prominence, joined the party and built a career for himself. He became self-righteous and stopped greeting me. He was a friend – now he is an enemy.

I didn't take holidays; I worked part-time in the Taiga felling trees. I was a branch cutter, a lumberjack and a woodchopper, and I hauled logs on a "Kotik" – a KT skidder.⁶⁰ We worked from dawn to dusk, often waist-deep in snow, cooking over a campfire in the forest. There were no recipes. We threw whatever we had into a pot and cooked it. Everything tasted amazing in the fresh air. We slept in the construction trailer. In the evening, it was heated like a sauna, but by morning, everything inside was covered in frost. The water in the kettle froze, as did the hair on the wall. One day, while I was cutting down a huge tree, it started to fall and a large branch broke off from the top, almost killing me. Thankfully, I managed to jump out of the way with the saw just in time.

At 4 a.m., the shed and wooden garage at home burned down; I only just managed to get the car out in time. I was in a deep trance as I watched the fire almost burn down the house. I evacuated my wife and children to a safe place on the other side of the village. I helped fight the blaze alongside the firefighters.

Then, as an exception, I obtained permission from the authorities to build a new, fireproof garage on the site. To prevent interference from envious people, I quickly built a spacious garage of white sand-lime brick over two weekends. By Monday, everything was ready and the trees had even been planted. Then the anonymous letters and endless commissions and inspections started arriving. They even wrote to Moscow, but it was too late. The garage was built and the paperwork was in order. While I was pouring bitumen onto the roof, I felt unwell. I sent my wife and children on a plane to visit my mother-in-law in Kazakhstan, and that same night I was admitted to surgery with advanced acute phlegmonous-gangrenous appendicitis. I was on sick leave for six months but survived. The nickname "Diehard" stuck.

I graduated with honours from the People's University of Legal Knowledge⁶¹ with a degree in Civil and Labour Law. I then graduated with a degree in Finance and Credit from the State University. I studied Marxist-Leninist philosophy, scientific communism, political economy, economic history and geography. In total, I studied forty subjects, including a foreign language, Soviet law, the basics of production management, higher mathematics, probability theory and mathematical statistics, accounting, pricing and pricing strategies, money circulation, finance and credit, state budget, book-keeping and reporting. I am the only person in my family to have received a higher education. I completed my pre-graduation internship at the city finance department and the Ministry of Finance of the Komi ASSR. I chose a challenging topic for my thesis: "The Composition and Structure of Budget Revenues and Prospects for Their Development" (using the Komi ASSR as an example). My thesis was 88 typewritten pages long. The expert assessment was very positive. The state exams weren't particularly daunting. Out of the 18 men who were admitted to the first year, I was the only one to graduate. Almost all of the women went on to graduate from the university.

As a family, we always went to theatre premieres, the children's café "Sweet Tooth",⁶² concerts, movies, museums, saunas and swimming pools. I taught my children how to swim, dive, skate and ski.

The eldest daughter was as quiet as a mouse, while the youngest was as quick as a squirrel in a cage. One day, she went into the garage, locked the door and climbed down into the cellar. She tripped and fell three metres. She lost her senses, recovered and got out. She didn't say anything for a few days.

Then we saw bruises on her body and started asking questions, after which she confessed. I talked to her and explained how to handle similar situations.

On another occasion, when I came home from work and drove my car into the garage, I saw lots of wires from burnt sparklers⁶³ on the floor. There were a lot of petrol cans stored in the garage. My hair stood on end. It turned out that my daughter and her friends had found some sparklers. They locked themselves in the garage, which was out of sight from the street and dark, and lit them. Miraculously, nothing happened. I thanked God. I had another long conversation with the children about love, and I taught them to be careful.

At my eldest daughter's birthday party, my younger daughter, who was still at preschool, wanted to show the other children something. She jumped up and ran into the hallway. She bumped into her mother, who was coming from the kitchen with a kettle full of boiling water, and scalded herself. I called an ambulance and poured raw egg whites onto the burn before my daughter was taken to hospital. The situation was serious: 9% of her body was covered in third-degree burns. I took unpaid leave. I was beside myself for ten days, sitting by my sick daughter's bedside. I cried and prayed all night long while smoking. I got everything she needed and achieved the impossible.

At that time, an accident occurred in the city in which eleven children playing at a construction site were scalded with bitumen. To avoid making a big deal out of it, the regional Communist Party committee ordered good medications from its reserves to be issued for the case. I managed to persuade the doctor, and my daughter was accepted as the twelfth patient. She spent twelve days in a critical condition on the hospital ward. I convinced the chairman of the hunting association to grant a licence for the early bear shoot. Soon, the hunters returned with fresh bear fat,⁶⁴ which the doctors rubbed onto the children's sore spots. Everyone survived, but I went a little grey.

Around that time, a dacha cooperative⁶⁵ was set up at the airport and I joined it, too. I took two plots of land in the forest and registered one of them in my younger brother's name. There were no roads leading there. Every board and every nail had to be carried on our shoulders from the main road, which was about a kilometre away, through the taiga and the mud. In my free time, I worked tirelessly. I cleared the forest at the dacha, burned branches, processed logs, dug ditches to drain groundwater, built a fence, prepared the soil for a vegetable garden, planted seedlings under the stars at night, dug a well, transported construction materials and erected the house and its outbuildings.

I did it faster and more beautifully than anyone else. Everyone knew me, and jealous gossip followed. I sold the plot and bought two more among strangers in a different organization. I started all over again. I worked myself to the bone and grew tired of running around alone. I sold everything and bought a new Zhiguli.⁶⁶

My wife didn't like digging in the soil; she'd only been to the dacha twice – once when I showed my family the plot, and again as the owner when I sold it. The neighbouring gardeners called her a “festive woman,” and I called her a “loafer,” even though the house was spotless.

At school, I was always elected as chairman of the parents' committee. As I did in the army, I played Father Frost⁶⁷ at work and at school on New Year's Day. After work, the Snow Maiden⁶⁸ and I would go from house to house greeting people and holding parties for the children at the kindergarten. I went on hikes with my children's class, made films, took part in class parties and led tours of military detachments and the airport for schoolchildren. The children climbed on aeroplanes, sat at the controls, flew aeroplanes in simulators and maintained radio contact with the flight director. They became fascinated with the sky.

My daughters were the school's heroes; they were practically treated as if they were members of the school administration. I often took the official airport bus to various school events, such as theatre trips and museum visits, or to drive into the countryside. I used my movie camera to film lots of schoolchildren, and then showed the films at school parties. No other comedy film brought as much joy and laughter to children as my amateur movies did.

My children found learning easy, got good grades at school and never needed to be told to do their homework; they approached everything playfully. They attended craft, knitting and macramé classes. The eldest daughter also went to music school. She took the whole family to ballroom dancing competitions. As my children were good pupils, I took them on long business trips during the holidays, flying to other cities. At weekends, we often went out into nature, had picnics in the snow and went ice fishing. We also had “luncheons on the grass”.⁶⁹ We had our own “Albatross”⁷⁰ – a sailboat. In the autumn, the whole family would go into the woods, where I would teach my children about mushrooms.

I experienced the Afghan War⁷¹ in Tashkent in 1979. I was on a business trip to an aircraft factory at the time. A crowd of people had gathered in the hotel lobby. The television stopped broadcasting and announced that an important government announce-

ment would be broadcast in a few minutes. Everyone was seriously alarmed and frightened. Following the devastating news, all business travellers were advised to return home as quickly as possible. The border was closed.

Throughout my career, I have always been selfless in helping my acquaintances to find good jobs, obtain apartments, buy cars and spare parts, purchase airline tickets and set up home telephone lines – just to name a few of the things I have done.

I often flew to Moscow for work, and I used this opportunity to help people travelling to Germany with tasks such as obtaining visas, exchanging money at the bank, preparing and legalising their documents. I also helped my mother-in-law's entire family send their luggage through Sheremetyevo Airport⁷² and depart for Germany. I did everything selflessly, joyfully and from the heart. I never turned anyone down; everyone needed me. I neither took nor gave bribes.

Like any Soviet person, I was dependent on my salary, although in addition to it, we received bonuses: a northern coefficient of 30%, for remoteness – 20%,⁷³ plus vacation pay, bonuses, quarterly pay, and the “thirteenth remuneration”.⁷⁴ But still, in order not to depend on the state and the queues, after work, I planted potatoes in the garden, got compound fodder for animals, and raised pigs. I slaughtered and butchered the pigs myself, we cooked our own sausage and stewed meat,⁷⁵ and also smoked the meat on alder wood.

I have extensive experience of raising both domestic pigs and pedigree cattle, as well as of working with Soviet “command and control personnel” (CCP).

For ten years, I secretly carried invitations from Germany to the OVIR.⁷⁶ They wouldn't let us go there for habitual residence. I wrote to Brezhnev⁷⁷ and Gorbachev.⁷⁸ My secret wish was made public. Then the troubles began.

I had to leave air transport – transferred and promoted – for automobile transport. I got a job as Head of the Sales Department. From there, I could easily travel to Germany for “reconnaissance missions”, and on vacation to visit relatives.

At the beginning of Perestroika,⁷⁹ I was allowed to return to my historical homeland for good. They allowed me to take two suitcases for four of us, and exchanged 90 DM for each. I gave everything I owned to my relatives.

I officially worked for Russia for 23 years, 10 months, and 27 days, plus four generations of my family worked there. I finished my career as Deputy Head of the Production and Technological Equipment Department of Komiavtodor.⁸⁰

Commentaries and Explanations Made by the Editorial Board

1. The Electrical and Radiotechnical Equipment Service for Communications and Air Navigation plays a pivotal role in civil aviation. It is responsible for operating and maintaining all ground-based radio-technical equipment that ensures the safety and control of air traffic. Engineers and technicians from this service ensure the smooth operation of aviation.

2. Political information in the Soviet Union was a form of ideological work, in the form of mandatory lectures or discussions in working collectives and educational institutions, as well as in Party, Komsomol, and Pioneer organizations. Thus, schoolchildren in the USSR arrived for political information sessions half an hour before the start of classes. The regular conduct of political information sessions was aimed at informing the audience about current news in domestic and international life, commenting on them and forming a certain, ideologically determined attitude towards the facts, phenomena, and processes of the political and economic life of society. Political information sessions were entrusted to “political informants” [politinformator] – the most active and knowledgeable community members. These sessions primarily drew on materials from Soviet periodicals.

3. In the Soviet Union, donors were given paid days off. The individuals who had repeatedly donated blood were awarded the Medal “The Honoured Blood Donor of the USSR”.

4. In 1843, the first volunteer fire department in Russia was organised in Ostashkov, Tver Governorate. In 1897, Minister of Internal Affairs Ivan Logginovich Goremykin (1839–1917) approved the “Standard Charter of the Volunteer Fire Department.” In Russia and in the Soviet Union, volunteer firefighters were expected to respond to emergency calls for long periods of time, and were summoned to the fire stations when their services were needed. They were also expected to attend special training activities.

5. People's Volunteer Squads [Russian: dobrovolnaya narodnaya druzhina] were voluntary detachments for maintaining public order in the Soviet Union. People's Volunteer Squads in support of law enforcement were introduced in the Russian Empire in 1913. In the USSR, these squads were reintroduced according to the joint resolution of the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers of 2 March 1959 “On the Participation of the Workers in the Maintenance of Public Order”. The patrolling People's Volunteer Squads were often accompanied by police officers, for general guidance and official support. They could

perform citizen arrests of various petty offenders: drunkards, hooligans, etc.

6. Youth squads for maintaining public order (Russian: molodozhnyye operativnyye otryady) were student or youth volunteer groups established under the auspices of the Komsomol. Their role was to maintain public order, prevent crime, protect property and assist law enforcement agencies. They were often established at universities and in student halls of residence. Their responsibilities included maintaining public order during sporting and cultural events. They monitored university concerts, student campuses and sports tournaments. They also worked to prevent juvenile and youth crime.

7. The Komsomol Searchlight (Russian: komso-mol'skiy prozhektor) was a Soviet youth movement organised by the Komsomol in the first half of 1962 to encourage participation in public control. Its main tasks were to find and utilise production reserves, monitor compliance with youth legislation and cultivate economic initiative, personal responsibility and management skills in young people. One of the Komsomol Searchlight's activities was the publication of newspapers and "combat leaflets".

8. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/af/Donor_USSR.png

9. The Production Committee (Russian: proizvodstvennaya komissiya), more commonly known as the Labour Dispute Commission (LDC), was a body within an enterprise comprising representatives of employees and the employer. Its role was to resolve individual labour disputes that could not be resolved through direct negotiations. Acting as a pre-trial stage in the resolution of conflicts, the Production Committee examined violations of labour rights and was composed of an equal number of representatives from each party (usually the trade union and management).

10. The Creative Group for Scientific Labour Organisation (Russian: tvorcheskaya gruppa nauchnoy organizatsii truda) was a team of specialists who worked to comprehensively improve labour processes within enterprises by introducing scientific approaches to increase productivity, improve working conditions and quality, and reduce costs. They worked to optimise workplaces, work and rest schedules, employee incentives, and professional training. They strove to maximise efficiency and harmonise the relationship between humans and technology.

11. The Soviet leadership recognised the potential for economic growth in the movement of innovators and inventors (Russian: dvizheniye ratsionalizatorov i izobretateley), and decided that efforts needed to be

centralised and coordinated. On 26 October 1930, the decision was made to establish a mass, voluntary All-Union Society of Inventors. Innovators and inventors were awarded medals, making them popular figures and role models. Over the years, this evolved into a large-scale system that was unparalleled anywhere in the world. By the time the USSR collapsed in 1988–1989, the society included nearly 15 million people. It wasn't just a movement, but a vast cultural stratum. In the USSR, the media fostered the popularity of invention and innovation. Central Television aired a special programme called "You Can Do It" (Eto Vy Mozhete). Popular illustrated magazines on technical creativity were published for teenagers and young people, including: "Young Technician" (Yunyy Tekhnik), "Modeller-Constructor" (Modelist-Konstruktor), "Technology for the Youth" (Tekhnika Molodozhi) and "Chemistry and Life" (Khimiya i Zhizn').

12. As early as 1812, the Russian state adopted the first legal act on the protection of inventions – the manifesto "On Privileges for Various Inventions and Discoveries in Arts and Crafts." In 1921, in his programmatic article "Our Tasks," the founder of the Soviet system of Labor Scientific Management, Aleksei Kapitonovich Gastev (1882–1939), proposed a program of "social engineering," where he wrote, in particular: "modern mass production requires the transformation of each machine into a research laboratory." In 1929, Donbass mechanical engineer Liebhart proposed a rationalization proposal (Russian: ratsionalizatorskoye predlozheniye) that reduced conveyor travel time in a mine without dismantling it from 8 hours to 10-12 minutes. This revolutionized the Donbass mines. Since 1931, a flood of creative endeavors by miners has emerged, serving as an example for workers across the country. To popularize the movement, a specialized popular science illustrated monthly magazine, "Rationalizer" (Ratsionalizator), began publication in 1929. In the first issue of the magazine, Albert Einstein delivered a welcoming speech entitled "Masses Instead of Individual."

13. In the Soviet Union, the "wall newspaper" (Russian: stengazeta) was considered an effective means of publicising and propagating information within working collectives and student communities. It did not replace printed periodicals. Its purpose was to shed light on issues that could not be addressed in the pages of official newspapers. Working collectives were encouraged to hold public discussions about the specific problems of their production and to encourage all their workers to participate in these

discussions. The “wall newspapers” were particularly devoted to the specific interests of each industry. They were often produced by an editorial board of three to five people who frequently made use of news reports from so-called “worker-correspondents”.

14. In the USSR, “top-performing workers” (Russian: *peredoviki proizvodstva*) were employees who repeatedly exceeded production standards by performing their work to the highest level of productivity and efficiency through innovative methods, even in roles such as waitressing in cafés and restaurants. According to research, Soviet “top-performing workers” represented a specific socio-cultural type. They were characterised by their involvement in a “common cause”, persistence in achieving goals, courage, competitiveness, a thirst for knowledge and a desire to improve their professional level, as well as a sense of responsibility towards themselves and their team. Among the negative traits, increased ambition and the resulting desire for constant attention and various material and non-material rewards stood out.

15. Socialist competition (Russian: *sotssorevnovaniye*) was a long-term, centralised campaign in the USSR from 1929 to 1987 to increase labour productivity using non-economic propaganda methods. The obligation of “working collectives” to participate in socialist competitions was enshrined in Article 8 of the 1977 USSR Constitution.

16. In the USSR, there were many honorary titles: “Honoured Master of Sports”, “People’s Artist”, “Best Worker”, and so on. The best masters of their craft received public recognition and awards, as well as the right to priority access to socially subsidised apartments with improved layouts and vouchers for prestigious holiday homes and sanatoriums.

17. The “Five-Year Plan High Productivity Worker” badge was awarded to workers during the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Five-Year Plans in the USSR. Along with the badge, recipients also received a standard certificate and a commemorative gift. Corresponding entries were made in the work record book of each badge recipient.

18. In the Soviet Union, the Board of Honour (Russian: *doska pocheta*) was a special board or stand displaying the names and photographs of individuals who had achieved the best working results. There were city, district, regional and republican boards of honour.

19. In the USSR, a Certificate of Honour was an official document that recognised the achievements of an employee or group of employees in public. Beautifully designed and signed by a senior manager, it



Certificate of Honor for Active Work (1970)
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Certificates_of_Honour_of_the_Soviet_Union_06.jpg

20. The Exhibition of Achievements of the National Economy (Russian: *Vystavka Dostizheniy Narodnogo Khozyaystva*, abbreviated to VDNH) is a permanent exhibition and amusement park in Moscow. During the Soviet era, “top-performing” agricultural, industrial, scientific and cultural workers (Russian: *peredoviki proizvodstva*) were awarded trips to the exhibition as a form of recognition. They received free admission to Moscow museums and stayed in comfortable hotels for several days.

21. The title of “Top-Performing Worker of Communist Labour” (Russian: *udarnik kommunisticheskogo truda*) was awarded to workers who consistently demonstrated outstanding success in their work and studies. They set an example of comradeship and collectivism in their work, and displayed a high level of awareness in public affairs and personal behaviour. According to the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, 42,462,000 people (50.3% of the workforce) participated in the movement for a communist attitude towards labour as of 1 January 1972. Of these, 19.6 million people (46.2% of the total number of participants) were awarded the title of “Top-Performing Worker of Communist Labour”.

22. The Militsiya was the police force of the Russian SFSR and Soviet Union from 1917 to 1991.

23. In 1904, Fyodor Sergeevich Arkhangel'sky (1855–1928), a local physician, opened the first sobering-up station (*vytrezvitel'*) in Russia in the city of Tula. This was in response to the number of workers at the Imperial Tula Arms Plant who froze to death in Russia’s harsh winter conditions while intoxicated. The idea was “to provide free accommodation, care and medical assistance to people found by the police or on the streets of Tula in an extremely drunk and unconscious state.”

24. The first forced labour camps in the USSR were established in the Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. From the 1930s to the 1950s, forced labour camps played a significant role in developing the Soviet mining complex, as well as the timber industry and transportation infrastructure. Almost all of the cities in the Komi Republic, including Ukhta, Vorkuta, Inta, Pechora, Sosnogorsk, Yemva and Mikun, originated from these camps. This process, known as “camp industrialisation”, cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of prisoners.

25. The State Arbitration Court (Gosarbitrazh) was the collective term for the state's quasi-judicial bodies in the USSR between 1931 and 1991. These bodies were responsible for handling property disputes between organisations. However, arbitration courts were not independent judicial bodies; instead, they were subordinate to the executive authorities, including the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the Councils of Ministers of the Union Republics, the Councils of Ministers of the Autonomous Republics, and the executive committees of the regional, provincial and equivalent Councils of People's Deputies. When making decisions, arbitration courts were guided by legal provisions and expediency. The constitutional basis for the activities of state arbitration courts was set out in Article 163 of the 1977 Constitution of the USSR. This article stipulated that economic disputes between enterprises, institutions, and organisations should be resolved by state arbitration bodies. On 1 October 1991, arbitration courts within ministries, government agencies, organisations and enterprises were abolished. The current system of arbitration courts in Russia replaced this.

26. Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov (1921–1989) was a Soviet physicist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate. He was awarded the prize in 1975 in recognition of his efforts to promote human rights around the world. He oversaw the development of Soviet thermonuclear weapons and made significant contributions to our understanding of physical cosmology. He is best known, however, for his political activism in favour of individual freedom, human rights, civil liberties and reforms in the Soviet Union. For this, he was deemed a dissident and faced persecution from the Soviet administrative establishment.

27. The “Bible for Believers and Unbelievers” is a book by E. M. Yaroslavsky (1878–1943) that was published in the USSR. Marxist interpretations of biblical criticism occupy a prominent place in the book. Selling hundreds of thousands of copies, it was primarily focused on criticising the content of the Bible itself, while also conveying some of the

main results of research in the field of the history of the Bible to the reader.

28. Local trade union committees (Russian: *mestkomy*) in the USSR were based directly within enterprises, institutions and educational establishments. Specifically, they were responsible for distributing vouchers to sanatoriums and rest homes, which were subsidized by the trade union. The chairman of the local committee, as a rule, was part of the so-called “triangle,” which also consisted of the local administrative head and the head of the party organization. Joint decisions of the “triangle” could be made on disciplinary matters affecting administratively non-punishable, but nonetheless antisocial or immoral, employee behaviours of employees, such as absenteeism, drunkenness on the job, adultery, and so on. The local committees were de facto entrusted with the organisation of lower-level judicial and administrative proceedings (i.e. “comradely courts”), but their decisions were advisory and related to moral condemnation rather than punishment. By the end of the USSR, the role of local committees had become socially devalued and was the subject of widespread ridicule.

29. Kokshetau, formerly known as Kokchetav, between 1868 and 1993, is a city in northern Kazakhstan. According to the 2024 Kazakh Census, 4,782 Germans lived in the city, making 2.5% of the total population of 193,492.

30. Thirteen new settlements, known as “points”, for exiled Germans from the Zhytomyr region of Ukraine (the Volhynian Germans) appeared in the territory of the former Chkalovsky district of the former Kokchetav region in 1936. The village of Chkalovo was considered the twelfth “point”.

31. With a surface area of 416,774 km², the Komi Republic is almost 60,000 km² larger than Germany, which covers 357,022 km². According to the 2010 Russian census, there were 5,441 Germans living in the Komi Republic, accounting for 0.6% of the total population of 854,303.

32. The Tu-134 was a twin-engined jet airliner built in the Soviet Union for short and medium-haul routes from 1966 to 1989. It could operate from unpaved airfields. It was one of the most widely produced passenger aircraft in the Soviet Union. A total of 854 aircraft of all modifications were built. On 22 May 2019, the final passenger flight of the Tu-134 in Russia took place.

33. From 1981 to 1990, the Soviet government implemented the Soviet Food Programme to enhance and improve agricultural conditions. To this end, subsidiary farms were established as subdivisions of enterprises to produce agricultural goods such

as vegetables, meat and milk, partly to provide for workers and enterprise canteens.

34. A military commissariat (Russian: voyenny komissariat, shortened as voyenkomat) was part of administrative military infrastructure in the Soviet Union. Each Soviet district would have a military commissariat that was responsible for keeping documentation concerning military resources in their region. They were also tasked with the recruitment and training of military servicemen. Military commissariats existed till the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991.

35. Military counterintelligence departments of the Soviet Armed Forces existed in all larger military formations, usually called a Special Department (Russian: osoby otdel) or “third department”. The members of the Special Department were colloquially called osobists.

36. The Virgin Lands (Russian: Tselina) campaign was a 1953 initiative by the Soviet leadership to dramatically increase agricultural production and alleviate food shortages. Hundreds of thousands of young volunteers settled in and farmed in Western Siberia and Northern Kazakhstan, considerably changing the area’s demographics. Due to the poor living conditions and constant emigration, there was a shortage of workers on the new Virgin Lands state farms. Army reservists were regularly conscripted to perform agricultural work.

37. The 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union took place in Moscow between 24 February and 5 March 1976.

38. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:USSR_1976_4501_2690_0.jpg

39. Sabotage or „wrecking“ (Russian: vreditel’stvo) was a crime specified in Article 58 of the RSFSR Penal Code. As applied in practice, “wrecking” and “sabotage” referred to any action which negatively affected the economy, including failing to meet unrealistic economic targets. Any form of non-compliance with Party directives could have been considered a “sabotage”.

Nikolai Karlovich von Meck (1863 – 24 May 1929) was a Russia-German engineer and entrepreneur involved in the development of Russia during the first part of the twentieth century. He was put on trial as “saboteur” because of his “bourgeois” origin and executed. He was rehabilitated in 1990 by the Plenum of the Supreme Court of the USSR.

40. During the Soviet era, Aeroflot was one of the world’s largest airlines. In 1976, it carried its 100 millionth passenger. It also operated an extensive international network, serving destinations such as the

United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, Cuba, Mexico and the People’s Republic of China.

41. “From Moscow to the borders” is the rhyme taken from the popular Soviet patriotic song “Wide Is My Motherland”. The music was composed by Isaac Dunaevsky (1900–1955) and the lyrics were written by Vasily Lebedev-Kumach (1898–1949). The song was first featured in the Soviet film “Circus” (1936).

42. This is a reference to the ironic quote, “The Soviet court is the most humane court in the world!”, from Leonid Gaidai’s famous 1967 comedy “Kidnapping, Caucasian Style”, exclaimed by the character Coward. This did not reflect the real state of affairs, but rather offered a satirical depiction of the Soviet judicial system in cinema. In reality, the Soviet court was part of the state apparatus, and its humanness was a matter of debate.

43. Article 215 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR: “Violation of rules during construction work.

1. Violations of construction, sanitary and fire safety regulations, as well as rules for operating construction machinery, shall be punishable by imprisonment for up to one year or correctional labour for the same period, if they cause harm to human health.

2. The same violations, if they result in death or other serious consequences, shall be punishable by up to five years’ imprisonment or up to one year of correctional labour.”

44. “Chemistry” (Russian: khimiya) is the name given to forced labour in the USSR and in modern Russia.

45. See Reference 22.

46. Under the trade name Trasylol (in Russia – Contrikal), aprotinin was used as a medication administered by injection to reduce bleeding during complex surgery, such as heart and liver surgery.

47. A traditional Russian public bathhouse with a steam sweating room is called banya.

48. Zinc die-cast washing bowls, known as “tazy”/taziki” or “shayki” in Russian, were used in Russian bathhouses for personal hygiene.



<https://minba.ru/shop/yomkosti-dlya-vody/shayki-tazy-ushaty/>

49. The Komigrazhdanproyekt Institute is a civil engineering design company based in Syktyvkar.

50. In December 1965, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR decided to transform the party-state's control bodies into people's control bodies. Committees, groups and oversight roles were set up within enterprises, collective farms, institutions, organisations and military units. These bodies were granted extensive powers. They issued legally binding decrees. Enterprise and department heads were required to address any identified deficiencies and support the public control bodies.

51. Cooked sausage was an iconic, mass-produced product in the USSR, symbolising prosperity and forming a staple part of the diet. The most famous and beloved variety was the "Doctor's" (Russian: doktorskaya), made with beef, pork, milk, eggs and spices. Other popular varieties included the "Dairy" (Russian: molochnaya), the "Amateur's" (Russian: lyubitelskaya) with lard chunks, and the festive "Metropolitan" (Russian: stolichnaya) or "Amber" (Russian: yantarnaya). The inexpensive "For tea" (chaynaya) variety was often fried with eggs.



Doctor's sausage

Pannet: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Докторская_колбаса_02.jpg

52. The "Vorkutinsky Cake" is most likely not a unique or historically famous dessert. It is more likely that the bakery named the cake "Vorkutinsky" after the city of Vorkuta to emphasise its regional origins.

53. The Committee for State Security (Russian: Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti), abbreviated as KGB, was the main security agency of the Soviet Union from 1954 to 1991.

54. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR (Russian: Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del SSSR), abbreviated as MVD, was the interior ministry of the Soviet Union from 1946 to 1991.

55. The Department Against Misappropriation of Socialist Property (Russian: Otdel po bor'be s khishcheniyami sotsialisticheskoy sobstvennosti), abbrev-

viated as OBKhSS, functioned as the Soviet financial police.

56. Department of Visas and Registration (Russian: Otdel viz i registratsii), abbreviated as OVIR, was a division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs that was responsible for both the registration of foreigners arriving in the USSR and Russia, and the processing of exit documents for Soviet citizens who had emigrated from the USSR for permanent residence.

57. Until the mid-1980s, ethnic Germans from the USSR who wanted to emigrate to West Germany had to provide documentary proof of their relationship with relatives living there, along with an invitation from those relatives. This invitation, known as "Verpflichtungserklärung", was the key emigration document, confirming both kinship and financial support.

58. On 18 March 1955, the newspaper "Red Banner" (Russian: Krasnoye znamya; Komi-Zyryan: Görd znamya) began to be published in Russian and Komi-Zyryan languages with the same text.

59. In the USSR, buying a car required years of waiting in line. Occasionally, one could be granted permission to buy a car ahead of schedule for good work.

60. The KT-12 (Kirov Skidding), which was produced by the Kirov Plant in Leningrad from 1948 to 1956, was the first Soviet crawler tractor designed specifically for logging. It was equipped with a gas generator engine that ran on wood, as well as a winch for loading timber.

61. People's universities in the USSR were mass public educational institutions that acted as a system of continuous education for broad sections of the population. They contributed to raising the cultural and professional level of citizens by offering courses in various fields of knowledge, often without entrance examinations.

62. The "Sweet Tooth" (Russian: sladkoezhka) chain of children's cafés and pastry shops focused on family entertainment and children's parties. They offered a varied menu of pastries and a cosy atmosphere for children and parents. The children's cafés were also named after characters from popular fairy tales: Pinocchio (Russian: Buratino), Snow White (Russian: Belosnezhka), Karlsson-on-the-Roof (Russian: Karlson), Cheburashka, and so on.

63. Sparklers (Russian: bengal'skiye ogni) are hand-held fireworks that burn slowly, emitting bright coloured sparks. They burn at a high temperature (over 1000°C), so they can be very dangerous. Sparklers are particularly popular with children.

64. Bear fat is a natural remedy used in traditional and folk medicine to boost the immune system and aid skin healing. It stimulates metabolism, aids tissue restoration, and has anti-inflammatory properties.

65. The 1955 USSR legislation introduced a new type of legal entity into the Soviet juridical system, a so-called “gardeners’ partnership” (Russian: *sadovodcheskoye tovarishchestvo*). They received the right to permanent use of land exclusively for agricultural purposes and permission to connect to public electrical and water supply networks. In 1958, yet another form of organisation was introduced, a “cooperative for dacha construction” (Russian: *dachno-stroitel'nyy kooperativ – DSK*), which recognised the right of an individual to build a small house on the land leased from the government.

66. The Zhiguli was a line of cars based on the Fiat 124 that was manufactured in Russia and the Soviet Union from 1970 to 2012. In the USSR, buying a passenger car at the state price required waiting in line, sometimes for several years. The market price was much higher. Owning a Zhiguli was a sign of high social status.

67. Father Frost (Russian: *Ded Moroz*) is a legendary figure similar to Father Christmas and Santa Claus, who has his roots in Slavic mythology. At first, communist authorities banned Father Frost. However, the ban was lifted and he soon became a significant part of Soviet culture.

68. Snow Maiden (Russian: *Snegurochka*) is a character from Russian fairy tales. Since the mid-20th century, she has been depicted as the granddaughter and companion of Father Frost during celebrations.



*Ded Moroz and Snegurochka
The New Year's celebration of the
ETHNOS association in Dortmund.*

69. This is a reference to the famous 1866 painting “Luncheon on the Grass” by Claude Monet (1840–1926), which is exhibited in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow.

70. This is a reference to the “Albatros” class of corvettes, which were built by the Soviet Union between 1970 and 1990. Traditionally, a corvette is the smallest class of warship vessels.

71. The Soviet-Afghan War was fought in Afghanistan between December 1979 and February 1989.

72. Opened in 1959, Sheremetyevo International Airport is one of four international airports serving the city of Moscow. It is the ninth busiest airport in Europe. Originally named after a nearby village, the airport’s name was extended to include the name of the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin in a 2019 contest.

73. By the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 10 February 1960 “On the regulation of benefits for persons working in the regions of the Far North and in localities equivalent to the regions of the Far North,” the so-called “northern coefficients” and “remoteness coefficients” were introduced to calculate the wages of employees of organisations located there.

74. The “thirteenth salary” was an additional annual bonus paid to employees in the USSR at the end of the year. It was not legally required and served as a performance incentive.

75. Stewed meat (Russian: *tushónka*) is a variety of canned stewed meat popular in Russia. It can be used and preserved in extreme situations, and was a part of military and tourist food supplies.

76. See References 56 and 57.

77. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev (1906–1982) was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1964 until his death in 1982. He also held office as the head of the Soviet Union in the capacity of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet from 1960 to 1964 and later from 1977 to 1982.

78. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev (1931–2022) was the last leader of the Soviet Union from 1985 until the country’s dissolution in 1991.

79. Perestroika (“restructuring”) was a political reform movement within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during the late 1980s. It is associated with Mikhail Gorbachev and his reformist policy. Perestroika was aimed at the restructuring of the Soviet economy.

80. Komiavtodor was a state-owned company that was responsible for the construction and operation of roads in the Komi ASSR.

Begman Iskak, Ileskan Smanov

Berdibek Soqpaqbaev: The Writer Who Depicted Everyday Life **Бердібек Соқпақбаев – Шынайы Өмір Суреткері**

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Abstract

This article is dedicated to the creative work of the renowned Kazakh writer Berdibek Soqpaqbaev (1924–1991). He is best known for his 1957 novella “My Name Is Kozha.” Kozha is a mischievous schoolboy who often finds himself in amusing yet awkward situations. He has become a popular character and a national hero. The book has been translated into 68 languages and published worldwide. Berdibek Soqpaqbaev devoted a great deal of attention to the complex issues of child-rearing. Even during his lifetime, he was considered a classic of Kazakh children’s literature. He later wrote the story “Journey to Childhood” (1960), about the arrival of new life in a Kazakh village in the 1930s, and the largely autobiographical novel “The Dead Do Not Return.” The works of Berdibek Soqpaqbaev contain unique micro-historical material from the period when Kazakhstan was a union republic of the USSR.



On 1 June 2022, a monument to the protagonist of the novella “My Name Is Kozha” was unveiled in Astana. Designed by sculptor Azamat Talapkhani, the monument depicts the scene in which Kozha holds a secret meeting with himself in front of a mirror and draws up a list of rules for his new life: no more fighting or rudeness, good grades, and breaking off friendships with bullies.
Keywords: *Berdibek Soqpaqbaev | My Name Is Kozha | children’s literature | Kazakh ethnic microhistory*
Негізгі сөздер: *Бердібек Соқпақбаев | Менің атым Қожа | балалар әдебиеті | Қазақтың этникалық микротарихы*

Балалар әдебиетінің шоқтығын көтерген Бердібек Соқпақбаев деуге негіз бар. «Балалық шаққа саяқат», «Менің атым - Қожа», «Өлгендер қайтып келмейді» т.б. шығармалары – жаушының ерекше танымал, бағасы аспандаған тартымды туындылар. Бұл шығармаларда жазушы өзі өмір сүрген заманның шынайы келбетін суреттеді.

Бердібек Соқпақбаев әдебиетке әуел баста шығармашылық қызметін ақын ретінде бастады. Ол өлеңді мектепте жүргенде-ақ, жас, албырт кезде басынан кешкендерін өлең етіп жазып, жұрт бас қосқан жерлерде тақпақтап айтып беріп отыратын әдеті болатын 1942 жылы Қарағандыдағы ФЗО-ның оқуына кетіп бара жатып:

Нарынқол, туып-өскен ауданым-ай,
Көркем жер болмас сенің аумағыңдай.
Кетерде сенен ұзап көзім қимай,

Қызыл тіл өлеңдетіп зауладым-ай, - деп туған өлкесі жайлы сүйіспеншілікпен жырлаған болатын. «Өлең туралы» дейтін екі шумақты шығармасында өлең жайлы соны пікір білдіреді.

Өлеңде мінезі бар жас баланың,
Жылатып алам ба деп жасқанамын.
Жазып қойып, өзіме-өзім сенбей,
Оқып-оқып басыма жастанамын.
Өлең нәзік ішегіндей домбыраның,
Үзіп алсам үлкені масқаранң.
Нақ өлеңдей бұрқырап жатыр сөзім,
Ағытсаң да жіберсең тауып көзім.
Ақындықтың толқыны есімді алып,
Ұмытып та кетесің өзінді-өзің.
Тиіп-қашып толқынның сырын тыңдап,
Менің бұл жар жағалап жүрген кезім.

Жап-жас Бекең «Өлең сөздің патшасы, Сөз сарасы» екенін баяндап тұрғандай әсер етеді. Өзінің бір естелігінде ол:

«Тартқыздың-ау азапты,
 Қылшылдаған жиырма,
 Қолға тұрмай сынаптай
 Бұлтылдаған жиырма.
 Қызды көрсе қылмындап,
 Бұлтылдаған жиырма.
 Қызды үйдің сыртынан
 Тың-тыңдаған жиырма... – деп шұбыртып әкетуші
 едім. Өзімнің бар өлеңімді, Абайдың көп өлеңін,
 «Барырлар жыры» атты кітаптағы дастандарды
 жатқа білетін едім», - дейді өзінің естелігінде.

Жиырма алты жасында, 1950 жылы оның
 «Бұлақ» атты алғашқы өлеңдер жинағы жарыққа
 шықты. Авторлық сезімдердің ерекше сенімділігі
 мен шынайылығымен ерекшеленген жинақ бір-
 ден өз оқырмандарын тапты. «Бұлаққа» енген бір
 өлеңінде:

Бір жас бала қаршадай

Трактордың үстінде
 Бір жас бала қаршадай.
 Бекем ұстап рульді,
 Жер жыртып жүр шаршамай.

Өзі баптап бұрады,
 Бораздадан шығармай.
 Кейде тоқтап тұрады,
 Құю үшін жағармай.

Жақын келіп сұрадым
 -Ау, балақай, бұл қалай?
 Тым жассың ғой шырағым,
 Кеткенбісің оқымай?

Күлімсіреп сол кезде:
 -Жаңа келдім сабақтан,
 Кетіп еді әлгінде
 Әкем түскі тамаққа.

Трактор бос тұрмасын
 Дегенім ғой, - дедім де,
 Парс еткізіп түтінін,
 Жүре бердім жөніне.

Көріп отырғандай, сол тұстағы балалар ақын-
 дары қолынан шыққан өлеңдердің ең үздігі де,
 өрнектісі де, мәдениеттісі де Бердібек аға жыр-
 лары екенін сол кітапша үздіксіз дәлелдеп береді.

Көп ұзамай Соқпақбаев прозада да бағын
 сынап көрді. Жазушының тарихы күрделі емес,
 бірақ қазақ ауылының өмірі мен тіршілігінің
 көлемді бейнесі суреттелген «Он алты жасар
 чемпион», «Бақыт жолы», «Өзім туралы» пове-

стері тек жасөспірімдердің ғана емес, сондай-ақ
 ересек қазақ оқырмандардың да жүрегінен орын
 тапты.

Соқпақбаевтың «Менің атым Қожа» атты по-
 весті 1957 жылы, яғни әднбиетке әлі де «жылы-
 мық» кензең орнай қоймаған заманда жазылған.
 Бұл – «социалистік реализм» өнер мен әдебиетті
 болат шынжырмен байлап, матап, қия бастырмай
 отырған кезі. Жазушының повесті жарияламақ
 болған ниеті сыншылар қарсылығына тап болып,
 Қожаның үлгі етер қасиеті жоқ, басбұзарлығы
 кеңестік идеологияға қайшы деп қайтарып тастай-
 ды. Қожаның ішкі және сыртқы қайшылықта-
 рынан туындайтын іс-әрекеттері кеңестік кезең
 кейіпкерлерінің қалыбына сыймағандықтан,
 сынға ұшырап, кедергілерге тап болды. Керіт ше-
 гінуді білмейтін жазушының қайсарлығы оны ау-
 дартып, («Менің атым Қожа» атты повесті орыс-
 шаға қызы Самал Соқпақбаева аударған) орыс
 тілде шығаруға тура келеді. Көп ұзамай өз елінде
 қағажу көрген бұл туынды Мәскеудегі «Детская
 литература» баспасында шығып, содан кейін
 орыс тілінен көптеген тілдерге аударылып, Фран-
 ция, Польша, Чехословакия, Болгария секілді ше-
 телдерде жарияланды. Тек содан кейін ғана бұл
 шығарма өз отанына оралып, байырғы қазақ тілді
 оқырмандардың жүрегінен ойып орын алды.

«Менің атым – Қожа» бүкіл әлем мойындап,
 өз тілдеріне аударып жатқанда, қазақ деген халық
 неге үнсіз отырған? Неге?

Біз қит етсе кемшілігімізді өзімізден есес,
 заманнан немесе біреуден көріп үйренгенбіз.
 Жазушы Бердібекті тұншықтыруымызды да то-
 талитарлық биліктен, сол биліктің ноқтасын
 ұстаған орыстан көргіміз келеді. Шынтуайтқа
 келдегде «Менің атым Қожаға» сол кездегі кеңес
 билігі ле, орыс әдебиетінің өкілдері де қылдай
 қиянат жасақан жоқ! Не істесек те, өзіміз істедік.
 Иә, басқа емес, өзіміз істегеніміз айдай анық!

Оза шапқан Құлагерді басынан ұрып мерткі-
 тіру қазақтың қанында бар қасиет қой! Бұлай
 дейтініміз Бердібек ағаның Димекеңнің үйінде
 (Дінмұхамет Қонаев) айтқан мына сөзі: «Кітап
 басылуды да тоқтатты. Атым тізімге қосыл-
 майды. Айналайын орыстарым болмаса, аштан
 өлетін едім. Әлгінде бәрің жабыла мақтап жатқан
 «Қожаны» қорғайтын қазақтан біреу табыл-
 май, Мәскеуде жарияланғаннан кейін көзім аздіп
 ашылды. Бірнеше қайтара басты, көп тілде аудар-
 ды, қалтамды толтырап қаламақы берді», - деуі
 дәлел.

Қазақтың көреалмаушылығы, іштарлығы – ең
 бірінші жауы.

Жазушы Тұрлыбек Мәмесейіттің естелігіне көз салайықшы: «Бекене қатысты бір оқиғаны айтайын. 1963 жылы Алматыға келген бір француз жазушысы ҚазТАГ тілшісіне: «Француз оқыпмандары қазақтың классик жазушылары Мұхтар Әуезов, Бірдібек Соқпақбаев, Ғабит Мүсіреповтің шығармаларын ана тілінде оқй бастады» деп сухбат беріпті. Бұл хабар кәдімгідей дүрбелең туғызып, шу шығарды. Оны шығарып жүрген – өзіміздің қызғаншақтық, көреалмаушылық пендешілігіміз. «Бердібек Соқпақбаев ондай атаққа лайық емес» деп жерден жік шыққандай өре түрегелген – тағы да өзіміз» деп жазғаны, сол жағымсыз қасиеттердің бізде барлығының дәлелі.

Повестің басты кейіпкері – Қожа арманшыл, сотқар бала. Тектектігімен үнемі түрлі жағдайларға тап болып жүретін Қожа ақыл-ойы мен біліктілігінің арқасында қиындықтардан шыға алды. Ол біреудің қайғы-қасіретіне көз жұма қарамайтын елгезек, жоғары әділеттілік сезіміне ие, досқа адал, қайырымды, зұлымдыққа жол бермейтін бала. Ал осы қасиеттердің барлығы оқырмандардың жүрегінен мейірімділік тудырып, Қожа батыр бала атанды.

«Менің атым – Қожа» киноға да сұранып тұр деушілер де көп болды ол кезде. Киноны түсіруге талантты режиссор Абдолла Қарсақбаев қолға алды. Киносценарийін жазуды Бердібек ағаның өзі кірісті. Фильм көрермен қауымды бірден өзіне баурап алды. Тіпті шетелдіктердің өзі қайран қалып, таңдай қағысты.

1967 жылы Францияның Канн қаласында өткен Балалар мен Жасөспірімдер фильмдерінің халықаралық фестивалінде арнайы жүлдеге ие болды.

«Менің атым Қожа» бірнеше ұрпақты тәрбиеледі, әлі де талай ұрпақтың тамырына нәр береді. Сондай-ақ, бүгінде кеңестік қаулы-қарармен жазылған «өміршең» шығармалар замана көшіне ілесе алмай, ұмытыла бастады. Ал Соқпақбаев шығармалары әлі талай ұрпаққа азық болатыны анық.

Бердібек Соқпақбаевтың шын мәніндегі күрделі және оқ бойы озық тұрған шығармасы – «Өлгендер қайтып келмейді» романы. Социалистік реализмге сусындап өскен біз бір нәрсені әлі күнге дейін түсінбейміз немесе түсінгіміз келмейді. Бұл протестік, яғни қарсылық әдебиет. Осы протестік әдебиеттің ашық көрінгені Қажығұмар Шабданнның «Қылмыс» романы мен Бердібек Соқпақбаевтың «Өлгендер қайтып келмейді» романы.

Дүниежүзінде ең жоғары бағаланатын әдебиет – протестік әдебиет. Протестік әдебиет дегенің өзінің бір сипаттары болады. Тұтас шығармада айқайлап, аттандап қарсылық білдіріп отырады. Жазушының шеберлігі – осының бәрін әрі астарлап, әрі мысқылдай, сарказммен де жеткізеді, юмормен де шеберп бере біледі.

Шығарманың бір жерінде Еркін мен Зағипа оқу бітіріп, жұмысқа барады. Сондағы рушылық, жершілдіктің кесірінен ана мектепке барса да. Мына мектепке барса да руын сұрап еш жер қабылдамайды. Содан екеуі шаршап келіп отырса, сиырлар өрістен келе жатады. «Бақайлары сыртылдап, байқаса, сиырлардың өзі бізді жақтырмай келе жатқан сияқты» дейді. Міне, керек болса сізге юмор.

Шығарма бастан-аяқ осындай бір юморға толы. Егер осындай юмор мен сарказым араласпай отырса, таза қарсылық бағыттағы жазылған шығарма оқырманға ауырлау тиетін еді. Шығарма өн бойында осы юмор мен сарказмды жоғалтпайды. Араласып отырады. Оның барлығы жай ғана кекесін, мысқыл емес, қоғамға деген наразылық. Қоғамның кейбір оғаш өрескелдігі мен шолақ белсенділікке деген наразылық. Әрбір кейіпкерді суреттеген кезде, олардың қылықтарын жазғанда, оқиғаны баяндағанда эпизодтың аяғында немесе ішінде сондай бір кекесінді сөздер айтып отырады.

Романның ашаршылықты көрсететін тұстары болған, бірақ мұның бәрі сол кезде қысқарып, сызылып кеткен, қайта түзетілген тұстары бар. Алайда толық қалпына келтірді деуге болмайды. Жұтаң...

Жалпы алғанда жазушы «Өлгендер қайтып келмейді» романында өмір жолында алдынан шыққан барлық қиындықтарды еңсерген табанды, батыл жас жігіттің өмірін және мінезінің қалыптасуын көрсетеді. Романның әрбір бетінде сол уақытқа тән өмір шындығы мен мұндалайды.

Жазушының 1960 жылы жарық көрген «Балалық шаққа саяхат» атты тағы бір повесті қазақ балалар әдебиетінің асыл мұрасына айналды. Повесть басынан аяғына дейін шындық, бастан өткен оқиғаларға құрылған жазушының қоршаған ортаны дәл сипаттауы жаға ұстатады. Мысалы, повестегі мына бір мәтінге зер салыңызшы. Оған өзіңіздің көзіңіз жетеді. Таңқаласыз. «Жолдың екі жақ жаңасы биік ши. Қияқтары желкілдеп қау болып көрінеді. Шидің арасы толған шырылдауық шегіртке. Төңірегі мың құбылыпәнге толтырады. Екі көзі маржанға ұқсаған, шекесінде екі тал мүзі бар, ұзын сирақ, қанатты көк шегірткені

көк шөптен айыру қиын. Адам жақындаған кезде әндетуін қоя қояды. Әбден үстіне басар болғанда тыз етіп бір-ақ ұшады. Аңадай барып, лақтырған тасқа ұқсап, торс етіп салмақпен қонады. Зерделей қарағанда, табиғатты суреттеуде автор мейлінше шебер екенін байқауға болады. Текес өзенін суреттеуін таң қалмасқа лажың жоқ.

1930-шы жылдардағы кішкентай кейіпкердің тағдыры арқылы өтетін повесть сол уақыттағы оқиғаларды және қазақ халқының қиын өмірін еш боямасыз көрсетеді. Соқпақбаев бұл шығармасында балалық шағын қызықты етіп әңгімелейді. Соның арқасында оқырман сол дәуірдің шынайы тарихи шындықтарын сезе алды.

Жазушының көптеген шығармалары жас оқырмандарға арнап жазылған. Адамның әрбір кезеңі оның шынайы қуанышына толы. Осы тұрғыдан алғанда, қаладан атасына келіп, басынан қызықты ауыл өмірін өткерген қалалық қыз туралы «Аяжан» атты әңгімесі шынайы қызығушылық тудырады. Қаладан ауылдағы туыстарына келгеннен кейін Аяжан өмірде шексіз қайырымдылық, ізгілік, дастық, туысқаншылық сияқты қасиетті сезімдердің бар екенін сезініп, одан әрі тереңдетіп ұға түседі.

Повесте өмірдің көлеңкелі, теріскей жақтарынан гөрі жас оқырманға оптимистік рух сыйлайты, адамдарға деген сүйіспеншілікті күшейтетін, жақсы, шуақты көзқарастар басым. Өзі іздеп келген Сарыбай атасының отбасы, оның мүшелері Аяжанды мейлінше жақсы көріп, бауырына тартады. Тіпті, өзінен кіші Зәуре деген қыздың Аяжанды ересек адам ретінде қабылдап, әпке тұтып, қасынан қалмай, жақсы көруі ауылға бала болып еркелеп келген қыздың өзін лезде есейтіп жібергендей болады. Бір сөзбен айтқанда, дамалыс кезінде қаладан ауылға туысқаншылап келген сегіз жасар қыз Аяжанның он шақты күннің ішінде-ақ көріп-білгені, танып-түсінгені ауыз толтырарлықтай қомақты. Ауыл өсірімен танысу барысында қаладан келген бүлдіршіннің көзқарасы кеңейе түседі. Қаладан ауылға бала болып келіп, бой түзеп, бойжетіп қайтқандай әсер қалдырады.

Аяжанның келешекте ағайын-туғанына, дос-жаранына, жалпы халқына қамқорлық жасап жүретін адам болатын шығар деген сенім ұялаптады. Осыдан-ақ оқиғасы шынайы өрілетін повестің тәрбиелік мәнінің де орасан зор екенін байқауға болады.

Жазушының кейінгі шығармаларының ішінде махаббат, әсемдік пен сұлулық жайында жазған «Қайдасың Гауһар» атты тамаша әңгімесі бар.

Мұндағы негізгі оқиға жас жігіттің алғашқы сәтсіз махаббатының төңерегінде өрбиді. Ауылдан үлкен қалаға оқу іздеп келген бозбала үшін Гауһар есімді қалалық қыз қол жетпейтін биік шынар іспетті. Бірақ шынайы алып ұшқан сезім ондай әлеуметтік теңсіздікке қарата ма, бас кейіпкер өзі көрген жас сұлудың жолында басын тауға да, тасқа да ұрады, бірақ қолын жеткізе алмайды. Бұл – өмірде жиі ұшырасып жататын типтік құбалас. Автор сол типтік құбылыстан жас адамға сабақ боларлық философиялық ойлар туғызады, оқырманын оптимистік рухқа жетелейді.

«Өлгендер қайтып келмейді» деген шығармасы жазушының жүйкесін тоздыра әзер дегенде жарыққа шықты. Шыққаны құрысын. Көп жері қысқарып кеткен, кей тұстары басқаша түзетілген. Мәтіндер арасындағы байланыстар үзілген. Бір сөзбен айтқанда, бар шырайынан көз жазып қалған. Мына кітап шығарушыларының бассыздығынан кейін жазушы қалам мен қағаздан күдер үзді десе де болады, Неге жазбай кеткені жайында ақын Қадыр Мырза Әлінің жазған күнделігінен бақауға болады.

— Беке, не жазып жүрсіз? – деп сұраймын.

— Не жазушы ем? Түк те жазып жүргем жоқ. Менен маскүнем де жақсы! Олар ең болмағанда бастарын жазады. Жазбайын демеймін, әрине! Жазғым-ақ келеді. Бірақ ақиқатты айттырмайды. Өтірікті жазғым келмейді! – дейді ол бір жағынан әзілдеп, бір жағынан мұнайып.

— Жазушы болып жаратылғанға кейін әйтеуір бірдеңе жазуымыз керек қой! Жазушы жазбай жүре ала ма?! Жүре алады! Қиын! Бірақ амал жоқ!

Бекеңнің бұл жауабына мен ешқашан сенген емен. Өлі де сенбеймін. Құдай біледі. Бірдеңе жазып жүрді. Бірақ Азия және Африка жазушыларының Ташкентте өткен конференциясынан кейін кәдімгідей қорқып қалды. Өйткені ол содан кейін КГБ қадағалауына тап болды, Оған ешқандай күдігім жоқ, - деп жазады Қадыр аға.

Жоғарыдағы аталған Ташкентте өткен конференцияның Бердібек ағаның өміріне қандай қатысы бар дегенге келсек. Азия, Африка жазушыларының Дүниежүзілік конференцияның атына Ташкентке жағдайын, үйсіз-күйсіз жүргенін айттып телеграмма салған болатын. Сол үшін өмір бойы пәлеге қалды емес пе? КГБ-сы да, ЦК-сы да, Жазушылар одағы да соңына түсіп, өмірінің соңына дейін тыныштық бермеген.

Бердібек аға Соқпақбаевтың мәңгілік өмірге аттануы жайы жұмбаққа толы.

— Бердібек аға қалай қайтыс болды? – дегендерге, Бибігүл жеңге:

— Жүрегінен кетті ғой. Жүрегі бұрын да ауырып жүретін. Тіпті, бір күнде бірнеше рет жедел жәрдем шақырған кезіміз болған. Мен жұмыста боғанмын. Сол кезде қайтыс болыпты, – десе, Жазушының қазасы жайында ақын Қадыр Мырза-Әли былай өрбітеді:

— Бір күні сол ағамыз ойда-жоқта қайтыс болды. Жұрттың сөзіне де, құлағыма да сене алмадым. Сенуім де мүмкін емес еді. Бірақ, сен сенбе! Өлген адамды тірілте алмайсың. Арулап о дүниеге аттандырдық. Әйтсе де, көңілде күдік қалды. Күдіктенсем, күдіктенгендей-ақ екенмін. Кейін Бердібек Соқпақбаев қазасына куә болған бір әріптесімнен төрт-бес адам болып барып, Кеңсайдағы саяжайынан төбеде асулы тұрған марқұмды өз қолдарымен түсіріп алғанын естідім. Қазақ баспасөзі оның қалай қаза болғаны туралы шындықты бүгіп қалды. Қалың қазақ оқырманы әлі күнге шейін оның қалай қаза болғанынан бейхабар. Ол өзін-өзі өлтіретін адам емес-ті. Қалай дәлелдесе де, мен оның асылып өлгеніне сенбеймін. Алдымен өлтіріп, содан кейін асып кетуі мүмкін, - дейді ақын ағамыз.

Жазушы ғалым Құлбек Ергөбек бұл жайында: — Асылы, жазушы біткен – жұмбақ. Бердібек Соқпақбаев соның ішінде жұмбақтау адам, бірақ шыншыл адам, шынайы жазушы еді... Қазасын қазып қайтеміз? Жұмбақ болып қалсын! – дейді. Шынында мәңгі өшпес те өлмес шығармаларды дүниеге келтірген дарабоз жазушының өмірінің соңы жайын тәптіштегенімізде не ұтамыз? Құлбек айтпақшы, жұмбақ болып қалсын. Жан ауруы ма. Жоқ әлде тән ауруы ма, қандай кеселдің кесірінен о дүниелік болды? Белгісіз! Өкініштісі сол қазақ, соныман бірге жарық көрген дүниелерін сүйіп оқыған дүниежүзі оқырмандары күткен өзімен бірге жазылатын талай шығармаларын алып кетті. Асылын ардақтай алмайтын қайран қазағым-ай? Қайтейін! Өзі де ескертпе пе еді «Өлгендердің қайтып келмейтінін». Иә, өлгендер қайтып келмейді.

«Өлді деуге болама айтыңдаршы,

Өлмейтұғын артында сөз қалдырған» – демекші, заңғар жазушы Бердібек Соқпақбаевтың шығармалары бүгінде ең көп оқылатын, қазақтың рухани байлығын молайтатын өлмес шығармалар екені даусыз.

*Photo provided by author
Ileskan Smanov*



Robert Korn

The Bitter Glory of Boris Vogau-Pilnyak Горькая слава Бориса Вогау-Пильняка

Dr. Robert Korn

is an author, literary critic
and historian

Abstract

This article focuses on the creative work of the Russia-German writer Bernhard Vogau, who wrote under the pseudonym Boris Andreevich Pilnyak.

In the first part of his essay, Dr. Robert Korn debunks the myth of the “Russification” of Bernhard Vogau and the Volga-Germans, with whom the world-famous writer identified. Boris Vogau-Pilnyak considered himself a Volga German and repeatedly stated this fact. The writer famously said, “I am a Volga German, and I was raised that way.” Vogau was convicted on trumped-up charges of spying for Japan and executed on 21 April 1938.

In the second part of his essay, Dr Robert Korn draws on the critical views of Bernhard Vogau to examine the social phenomenon of “blessed fools”, who are and were revered in Russia. He warns that this phenomenon, in the form of a psychic epidemic, is spreading in Germany too. There are no known studies that have examined attempts to export the phenomenon of “Russian profane blasphemy” to other countries. In his article, Dr. Robert Korn attempts to address this gap in the study of this ethno-cultural and historical phenomenon.

Keywords: *Bernhard Vogau | Boris Pilnyak | Russification | Volga Germans | Russian profane blasphemy*

Ключевые слова: *Борис Андреевич Пильняк | русификация | поволжские немцы | юродство*



Boris Pilnyak (1894–1938)
Photo by unknown author

Известный русский писатель Борис Андреевич Пильняк (его настоящие имя и фамилия – **Bernhard Vogau**) родился 29 сентября 1894 г. (11 октября по новому стилю). В этом году ему исполнилось бы 132 года.

В вопросах творчества Вогау-Пильняк отличался необычайной принципиальностью и постоянно отстаивал право иметь собственный взгляд на происходящие в Советской России сложные события. *«Мне выпала горькая слава быть человеком, который идёт на рожон. И ещё горькая слава мне выпала – долг мой – быть русским писателем и быть честным с собой и Россией»,* – писал он в рассказе «Расплёснутое время» (1924).

«Повесть непогашенной луны»

Таким актом «честности с собой и Россией» стала его «Повесть непогашенной луны». В основу этой повести, в которой впервые в советской литературе раскрываются черты нарождавшегося тоталитарного режима, в частности, уничтожения неугодных этому режиму лиц, которые совсем недавно считались единомышленниками, положена история смерти советского партийного и военного деятеля М.В. Фрунзе. Кроме того, современники без особого труда разглядели прототип другого героя повести – И.В. Сталина.

По версии Пильняка, большевистское руководство, во главе которого уже стоял Сталин, вынудило Фрунзе сделать операцию, в результате которой он и скончался на операционном столе, а набиравший силу диктатор избавился от одного из неугодных лиц. Эта повесть была опубликована в 1926 году в журнале «Новый мир» в №5; тираж был конфискован. Вокруг автора повести разразился грандиозный скандал, который, несомненно, во многом определил его дальнейшую судьбу. (При этом следует помнить, что литературное произведение нельзя рассматривать в качестве исторического документа). Споры об истинных причинах смерти Фрунзе не стихают до сих пор.

Несколько лет назад некий Михель выставил в интернете пост под №259, озаглавленный «Пильняк и его „Повесть непогашенной луны“». Названный автор излагает новую версию конфликта Вогау-Пильняка с Максимом Горьким и советской властью. При этом он между прочим пишет: *«(...) он (т.е. Пильняк – прим. Р.К.) происходил из обрусевших немецких колонистов, поселившихся в России ещё во времена Екатерины II»,* и далее: *«... Борис Андреевич Пильняк-Вогау действительно ничем более не прославился ни до, ни по-*

сле публикации „Повести непогашенной луны“», кроме того: «... шумиха 1931 года из-за практически никому не известного произведения...». В этих утверждениях всё неверно. Более того, мне кажется, что они сильно отдают чванством.

«Обруселые» колонисты?

В самом деле, начнем с «обрусевших немецких колонистов». В словаре русского языка С.И. Ожегова этот эпитет отсутствует вообще, указано только «обруселый». Таким образом, налицо, скорее всего, слова, сходные по смыслу, синонимы (см. стр. 373 в издании 1986 года), означающие «ставший русским по языку, обычаям». Иными словами, получается, что родители и предки Пильняка стали «русскими по языку и обычаям». Утверждать это может только человек плохо или совсем не знакомый с творчеством Вогау-Пильняка. Приведу в этой связи лишь один пример из его очерка, который писатель назвал „Не русский дух, – не Русью пахнет“:

«... Без четверти семь бьют в кирке колокола, и вся колония сидит за столом, за кофе... в семь бьют на кирке колокола, и вся колония за работой (...) Ехать на пароходе – семь часов. Пароходик отошёл (вещь удивительная с точки зрения российской!) от пристани по расписанию (а не по настроению), ... Пароходик маленький, блестит начищенной медью, имя ему – «Республика», идёт быстро, покачиваясь на стрелках. Пассажиры – ровно столько, сколько на пароходе мест. Все немцы. Курят свои трубки с каучуковыми мундштуками, лбы прикрывают широкополыми шляпами, шеи кутают красными шарфами. На всех сапоги с голенищами до паха, и у всех бритые рожи с сизыми носами и с торжественным спокойствием в глазах. (...) Кругом чистота, тишина и порядок, у каждого дома вывеска, объясняющая всё: немцы не любят пустых разговоров. (...) Я – в трудовой коммуне немцев Поволжья, особой федерации Российской Советской Республики. (...)».

По-моему, «обруселостью» здесь и не пахнет. Вот из этой среды и вышли предки, а значит и отец писателя Вогау-Пильняка, который уже в названии данного очерка чётко выразил свой творческий замысел – изобразить людей, сохранивших в России свой характер, свою самобытность (эта особенность творчества писателя нашла своё отражение и в других его произведениях). На этом фоне совершенно очевидно, что назвать отца и предков писателя «обрусевшими колонистами» является просто невежеством, если не наглостью.

В самом деле, в условиях российской действительности, конечно, были и есть люди, которые утратили свои исконные национальные особенности, стали «русскими по языку и обычаям». Ничего удивительного в этом, казалось бы, нет. Но я всё-таки не помню, чтобы кто-нибудь написал «обрусевший еврей» или «обрусевший казах» и т.д. С российскими же немцами в этом плане обычно не церемонятся. Но это уже другая тема.

Заурядный автор?

Вернёмся к утверждению Михеля. «... Борис Андреевич Пильняк-Вогау действительно ничем более не прославился ни до, ни после публикации „Повести непогашенной луны“». Неправда. Прославился. И до, и после.

Первая книга Вогау-Пильняка «С последним пароходом» вышла в 1918 году, следующая – «Быльё» – в 1920. Автор считал её первой книгой о революции в РСФСР.

А в 1922 году он написал в новой авангардной манере роман о революции «Голый год», который был переведён на многие языки мира и принёс его автору мировую известность. Этот роман в истории русской прозы послереволюционной поры сыграл ту же роль, что и поэма А. Блока «Двенадцать» в истории русской поэзии.

В этом же году Вогау одним из первых советских писателей посетил Германию, представляя «новых писателей» советской России. В Берлине тогда даже вышли две книги Вогау, в которые вошли произведения «Голый год», «Иванда-Марья», «Повесть Петербургская или Святой камень-город», «Смертельное манит».

В 1927 году вышли в свет книги «Заволочье», «Корни японского солнца», «Очередные повести», «Расплёснутое время», «Рассказы с Востока», в 1928 – «Китайская повесть», а также другие повести и рассказы, в которых частично нашли свое выражение впечатления писателя от многочисленных поездок по СССР и за границу. В 1929 году увидело свет 6-томное, а в 1930 году – 8-томное собрание сочинений Вогау-Пильняка.

В 1929 году в берлинском издательстве «Петрополис» вышли в свет повести

«Штосс в жизнь» и «Красное дерево». Это послужило поводом для травли, организованной против Вогау-Пильняка, несмотря на то что он в то время возглавлял Всероссийский союз писателей. Сделано это было, несомненно, по распоряжению вождя, который стремился любой ценой поставить под партийный контроль советскую литературу.

В тридцатые годы Вогау-Пильняк опубликовал книги «Волга впадает в Каспийское море», «Таджикистан – седьмая советская», «О‘кей, американский роман», «Камни и корни», «Созревание плодов», «Рождение человека».

В предчувствии ареста, в 1937 году Вогау написал роман «Соляной амбар», в котором тематизирует свои детские и юношеские годы, проведённые в провинциальных городах России, а также пытается проанализировать истоки революции и событий, свидетелем которых он стал.

Происхождение и родители писателя

Мать писателя, Мария Савинова, была дочерью русского волжского купца, отец же, Андрей Иванович Вогау, земский ветеринарный врач, родился и вырос в городке Катериненштадт, который также назывался Баронск (в советское время – Маркшадт, сегодня Маркс). Этот городок на Волге в 1918 году стал центром трудовой коммуны немцев Поволжья и неоднократно упоминается в рассказах Вогау, в которых называется им по старинке – «колония Катериненштадт». В 1924 году трудовая коммуна немцев Поволжья была преобразована в автономную республику, столицей которой стал город Энгельс (до этого – Покровск).

Сам Борис Андреевич Вогау-Пильняк считал себя немцем Поволжья, о чём неоднократно заявлял. Известно, например, следующее высказывание писателя: «Я немец Поволжья, и я так воспитан, что любое воровство вызывает у меня тошноту». Связь с Поволжьем он ощущал всю жизнь: «Мечтаю о Волге – ведь я же волжанин, а три года не мог добраться туда (...)», – писал он А.М. Чернышёву в 1915 году. Но если представлялась возможность, он, конечно, «туда добирался». А если в этом была необходимость – тем более.

Работая в Российском государственном архиве, автор этих строк натолкнулся на документ, свидетельствующий о том, что «бригада писателей во главе с Борисом Пильняком» весной 1933 года посетила немецкую республику в связи со свирепствовавшим там голодом и направила в этой связи письмо на имя Сталина, в котором приводились факты проявления указанного бедствия, вина за которое возлагалась на местных руководителей, которых писатели предлагали привлечь за это к ответственности. Они также предлагали оказать республике срочную помощь. Этот документ я представил в распоряжение д-ра Наталии Кромм, знатоку творчества Бориса Вогау-Пильняка.

В республике немцев Поволжья знали писателя и гордились им. Вогау живо интересовался жизнью республики и был лично знаком со многими представителями её интеллигенции – профессорами Георгом Дингесом, Андреем Дульзоном, археологом и художником Паулем Рау, что также нашло отражение в его творчестве. Так, в рассказе «Немецкая история» он пишет:

«В городе Покровске, в музее, где постоянно работают профессор Дингес и доктор Рау, изредка собираются на заседание экономист Генрих Шлегель, кооператор Виктор Штромбергер, статистик Николай Либих, общественные деятели, – иногда заходят члены немецкого правительства. Тогда ведутся очередные рабочие разговоры, о менно-голландском скоте меннонитского Коппентальского района (кантона), о холодильном деле, о хлебозаготовках, о кустарном ремесленничестве, о растительности заливных волжских лугов, о сыроварении, о беконном деле, о многом очередном прочем. (...) – За буднями разговоров в музее, когда заседания заканчиваются и остаются доктор Рау и профессор Дингес, эти два рыцаря своей родины, когда они говорят о своих работах, так же обыденно, как на заседании, – говорят о вновь разработанной сказке и о новом разрытом кургане, платьях, принесённых в музей из могил, – тогда возникает – здесь, в этих музейных комнатах – возникает история, наука этой страны. За стёклами витрин лежат человеческие черепа, камни и утварь тысячелетий курганов».

«Немецкая история»

Литературовед Самуил Зиннер, проживающий ныне в США, является племянником Петра Ивановича Зиннера, известного в своё время в немецкой республике краеведа, историка, поэта и писателя. Он считает, что для литературного творчества его дяди характерен мотив быстротечности, тленности, непостоянства всего сущего. Так, вспоминая своё детство, Пётр Иванович в стихотворении «Ein Wunder» (1926) пишет: „*Ich träum‘ mich zurück in ein wunderreich Land, / Wie war es doch herrlich, wie rasch es doch schwand*“. Самуил Зиннер считает, что именно под влиянием Петра Зиннера насыщенная и активная жизнь немцев Поволжья в 1920-е годы изображается Борисом Вогау как быстротечное, непостоянное, мимолётное видение, как мираж.

В начале рассказа автор вспоминает «молочные реки и кисельные берега», обещанные императрицей Екатериной Второй переселенцам из Германии, ср.:

«В 1763 году по германским городам читался манифест Екатерины Второй, российской императрицы, в коем говорилось, что в России, на Волге есть такие чудесные места, где произрастают лимоны, винограды и мирты, происходит миртовая жизнь, эдакий лирический лимонад из писаний великой императрицы и что она Фелица приглашает всех желающих немцев ехать туда на вечные времена трудиться и блаженствовать без податей, без воинской повинности на сто десять лет, на новые земли, где каждый может себе взять земли, сколько захочет. (...)».

И далее:

«Люди тогда приехали к осени, в места, где, как полагалось по российским традициям, миртов не произрастало, но была голая степь, ковыль, пустыня и ни одного человеческого кола. По степи кочевали киргизы и калмыки, и за степью на горизонтах вставали миражи. Кроме немцев, в эти места Екатериной ссылались каторжанники и острожники русского происхождения. Немцы оказались в положении более жестоком, чем Семилетняя война, – и в первые же два года от тридцати тысяч немцев осталось двадцать три; бывшие офицеры ушли к Пугачеву, солдат вешала Екатерина. Многие собрались было бежать обратно, – и есть ряд рассказов о том, как русские каторжане, за мзду брались провожать безъязыких немцев, везли их на дощаниках до ближайшего глухого острова и там резали немцам языки. В нынешнем Маркштадте – в прежнем Катериненштадте – до сих пор видны остатки рвов крепости, охранявшей колонию от киргизов и от россиян. Киргизы так же, как и россияне, имели привычку резать немцам языки, не умеющие говорить по-русски. В 1924 году, по переписи, немцев было шестьсот тысяч человек (...). И вот сейчас же, за десятки вёрст от Волги, когда позади точно рядом волжские горы, – впереди в степи возникла чудесность – возникли пальмы, мирты, виноградники. Озёра, воды, непонятные человеческие стройки, фантастика, чудесность, – всё то, что обещано в манифесте Екатерины Второй. Это – мираж».

Литературовед Самуил Зиннер интерпретирует этот мираж как метафору на основе сравнения с немецким островом в русском море...

Таким образом, Борис Андреевич Вогау-Пильняк словно предвидел грядущую катастрофу немцев Поволжья, будто чувствовал, что немецкий оазис в приволжской степи исчезнет, как мираж. Только исчез он не сам по себе, а в результате оставшегося безнаказанным насилия, злобы

и зависти, которые вкуче оказались в тысячу раз страшнее и беспощаднее кочевников и русских каторжников, резавших немцам языки. Предвидеть же свою личную трагедию и предотвратить её он не смог. В октябре 1937 года его арестовали, а 21 апреля 1938 года он был приговорён Военной коллегией Верховного суда СССР к «высшей мере наказания – расстрелу» по ложному обвинению в совершении государственных преступлений. Приговор был приведён в исполнение в тот же день.

Посвящается

*бывшим функционерам КПСС, а также
лихим рубакам, ряженым казацким генералам,
липовым атаманам, адмиралам, самозванным
профессорам и академикам, вновь наставляющих нас,
грешных, на путь истинный. На
этот раз – под небом Шиллера и Гёте.*

Похабы в Германии

Подражание выдающемуся советскому писателю Борису Вогау-Пильняку, прославившему своих земляков, немцев Поволжья.

Юродивые (похабы) являются неотъемлемой частью русского быта со дня возникновения Руси. Но в последнее время они всё чаще встречаются и в Германии.

Если в сказке Ганса Христиана Андерсена «Голый король» мошенничество, ставшее возможным благодаря всеобщей глупости и тупому тщеславию, разоблачает ребёнок, то в классической русской литературе эту функцию зачастую несут юродивые. Так, в трагедии А.С. Пушкина «Борис Годунов» именно юродивый обличает царя Бориса, помните?

«Вели их зарезать, как зарезал ты маленького царевича».

Юродивые ради Христа Руси Святой, нищие, калики перехожие, убогие и прочая неотделимы от русского быта со дней его возникновения. В русской истории и литературе этих полусумасшедших (или просто алкашей, мошенников и демагогов), известных как волочёбники, лазари, убогие, пустосвяты, шуты, странницы и странники, карлицы и карлики, дуры и дураки, называли ещё «похабами». Они считались «красою церковною», христовой братиею, мольцами за мир» (Борис Вогау-Пильняк).

О юродстве много писали в благочестивом ключе. Недавно даже увидело свет монографическое исследование Сергея Иванова,* в котором «похабство» рассматривается в качестве феноме-

* Иванов. С. А.: Блаженные похабы / Культурная история юродства. Институт славяноведения / Языки славянских культур, Москва, 2005; ISSN 1727-9968; ISBN 5-9551-0105-5.

на культурной антропологии. Между тем, в мировой гуманитарной науке совершенно неизвестны работы, в которых рассматривались бы попытки экспорта российского «похабства» на чуждую ему почву. В данной статье делается попытка восполнить этот пробел в исследовании названного культурно-исторического феномена.

«Месяц светит, котёнок плачет...»

«Помолись, Николка, за меня грешную», – просят старуха юродивого в вышеназванной трагедии Пушкина. И Николка, получив копеечку, садится на землю и поёт:

*«Месяц светит,
Котёнок плачет,
Юродивый, вставай,
Богу помолимся!..»*

Типичная картина русского быта. Борис Пильняк утверждает, что «сыром, где жили черви юродов», в Москве был Китай-город. Ему вторит Владимир Гиляровский, свидетельствующий в своей известной книге «Москва и москвичи», что в ночлежках и различного рода притонах у «Китайской стены» вольготно чувствовали себя беглые крепостные мелкие и крупные воры, нищие, сбежавшие от родителей и хозяев дети, старики, здоровенные мужичищи, плодородящие бабищи, беспаспортные крестьяне, мещане, дворяне и купцы. Из этой развесёлой, вечно пьяной публики и рекрутировались все эти доморощенные похабы: пророки, ясновидцы и пр., и пр.

Постоянно витая в ореоле алкогольных паров над серой прозой полуазиатского российского – а затем и советского – царства, некоторые из них писали стихи или басни, другие пели петухами, павлинами или снегирями, третьи – аматеры собачьего лая, – тьякая и повизгивая, бессвязно прорицали божьи веления, наподобие древнегреческого оракула Аполлона в Дельфах, четвёртые крыли всех и вся матом во имя Всевышнего, пятые знали только по одной фразе, которая считалась пророческой, ср.: *«Жизнь человека – сказка, гроб – коляска, ехать – не тряско!»* Они же давали пророкам имена ...

Преклонение перед разного рода сирыми, убогими и юродивыми не изжито было и в незабвенные советские времена. У станции метро «Бауманская» я однажды стал свидетелем трогательного внимания, оказанного толпой советскому юродивому, который – явно во власти Бахуса – рефреном вопрошал соотечественников:

«Наша цель – коммунизм, но на хрена нам эта жизнь?»

Кроме данной сентенции, поведать согражданам что-либо путное он был не в состоянии. Но, видимо, именно это-то безмерно и умиляло толпу, щедро вознаграждавшую «пророка» копеечками – полтинниками и рублями.

В общем же следует признать, что нищих, провидов, побирош, волочебников, лазарей-пустосвятов, калик, пророков и прочая в советское время стало гораздо меньше. (Стихи и басни, правда, писать продолжали. Особенно басни). Что, конечно, не значит, что похабство исчезло как феномен русского быта. Отнюдь. Но, несмотря на традиционное русское благоговение перед «христовой братией» и «мольцами за мир», лающие и кукарекающие предсказатели и ясновидцы и, прежде всего, те, которые во имя Всевышнего крыли матом всех и вся, включая товарища Сталина, омрачали имидж родины социализма. Особенно в глазах иностранцев. Поэтому Китайгородскую стену – этот «сыр, где жили черви юродов», – МКХ,* согласно Гиляровскому, в 1926 году привело в порядок, а в 1934 году она и вовсе была снесена.

Сирым, каликам, ясновидцам и прочая, и прочая в советское время назначили пенсии. А если это не помогало, то их довольно успешно лечили. В психбольницах. Или в исправительно-трудовых лагерях. На лесоповале, например. Там, после трудового дня на свежем таежном воздухе желаящих петь павлинами и снегирями или лаять и визжать по-собачьи, прорицая божьи веления, было гораздо меньше, чем в притонах у Китайгородской стены. И товарища Сталина матом больше не крыли. Не до него было. Не случайно великий пролетарский писатель Максим Горький так восторгался этой системой «трудового воспитания». Понял, очевидно, что такое Сибирь...

Однако, истинный «сыр», в котором жили черви похабов – хроническое пьянство, безделье и страсть к прорицаниям, – бульдозером, конечно, не сроешь. Оказалось, что эти качества гораздо прочнее Китайгородской стены. Во всяком случае, под голубым покоем полуазиатского российского неба похабы и прочие не перевелись и, главное, шагают они по жизни неизменно рука об руку с Дионисом, по-прежнему скрашивающему их не очень богатую неординарными событиями жизнь, которая проходит преимущественно в грязных пивнушках, различного рода притонах, а то и в кочегарках сибирских городов, таких неуютных в зимнее время.

* Московское коммунальное хозяйство



A God's Fool
Pavel Svedomsky (1849–1904)

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Воскресение

Но мало того, в последнее время участились случаи явления народу представителей этой так почитаемой в России похабской братии аж в самой... Германии – под небом Шиллера и Гёте. Конечно, здесь представители этой алкоголизированной полусумасшедшей «церковной красоты», присутствовавшие в России, если верить художнику Сурикову, даже на казни боярыни Морозовой, в общественных местах появляются ещё сравнительно редко. Поющие петухами, павлинами или снегирями, а также аматеры собачьего лая, твякающие и повизгивающие, прорицая божьи веления, в Германии пока особым успехом не пользуются, а «поэты и баснописцы», кроющие всех и вся матом во имя Всевышнего, – тем более. Традиции нет.

Редкие пока поклонники похабства рассеяны по стране, а из обычно чистых пивных новоявленных похабов, т.е. оракулов, баснописцев и прочая, пока ещё, слава Богу, гонят в шею. На улицах же и в Германии бывает неуютно. Особенно зимой. А в кочегарках здесь приюта не найдёшь. Нет их. Да и за монологи типа «жизнь человека – сказка, гроб – коляска, ехать – не тряско!» здесь пока и медного гроша не дадут, т.е. ни цента. Более того – могут и социального пособия лишить. Вот и открыли для себя некоторые из духовных наследников российских пророков, ясновидцев и провидов в Германии несколько русскоязычных газет и журнальчиков, которые читают их немногочисленные поклонники. А редакторы, в том числе и такие, которые прежде к журналистике никакого отношения не имели, очевидно, учуяв так милые их сердцу мотивы русской похабщины, с радостью их печатают. Тоска по родине. Да и рыбак рыбака...

Вот и явились они в другом обличье и зауродствовали на страницах этих листков и особенно в интернете, получив копеечку, ожившие к новой жизни блаженные похабы. Стали посредством интернета, открывшего новые возможности, рассылать матерные доносы вместе с возваниями мифических Всегерманских «аусзидлерских» Советов да комитетов. Запели вновь петухами, павлинами и снегирями, залаяли и завизжали по-собачьи, кроя за медный грош всех и вся, с пеной у рта бессвязно изрекая новые откровения: «мировая закулиса, ..., германороссы, ... тевтонокацапы, ..., апостол Павел, ..., опасные дилетанты, ... , масоны, ... агенты КГБ» понесли вновь «в массы» такую же ахиною, как и их вечно полупьяные духовные предтечи-похабы, помните: «месяц светит – котёнок плачет», «жизнь человека – сказка, гроб – коляска, ехать – не тряско», «наша цель – коммунизм...»? Примечательно, что некоторые из этих апостолов в той жизни разоблачали христианство – опиум для народа – или несли в массы пламенное слово коммунистической партии. Но поскольку в услугах подобного рода в Германии пока, к счастью, особой надобности нет, а членство в партиях особых привилегий не даёт, нашли-таки отдушину – жгут глаголом сердца людей, разоблачая происки «мировой закулисы», не чураясь при этом обыкновенного шантажа и вымогательств!

Кто бы мог подумать, что не только под голубыми покоем полуазиатских российских просторов, но и под небом Шиллера и Гёте на зависть объединённой Европе возродятся к новой жизни русские похабы: провидовы, побироши, волочебники, калики переходные, убогие ради Христа Руси Святой, странницы и странники, карлицы и карлики, пустосвяты и пророки, дуры и дураки и просто шантажисты и вымогатели, вся церковная краса Святой Руси, её Христова братия и мольцы за мир, а также новоявленные «рубачи, казаки, генералы, липовые профессора и академики», а также просто шантажисты и вымогатели, пусть и в поношенных казацких шароварах? И кто знает, может, засверкают они скоро всеми цветами русской похабщины и на страницах серьёзных изданий? Если мы, конечно, будем их читать и слушать. За копеечку.

Д-р Роберт Корн,
Вормс

Dr. Walther Friesen

Coats of Arms of Russia-Germans

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Abstract

The article examines the possibility of conferring aristocratic titles on distinguished members of the Russia-German community who were exposed to state genocide (07.10.1942–?) and subsequent disenfranchisement policies. These titles should also incorporate the names of the places to which the Russia-Germans were exiled. The author of the article was inspired by the words of Prince Ernst-August von Anhalt, who said in an interview with the magazine *Novyye Zemlyaki / New Compatriots* (No. 1/2019): “The title is a part of my last name. Neither I nor my children can get rid of it. At the same time, it obliges us to do a lot. We are public figures. We have to be open to society.”

Keywords: *Russia-Germans | state genocide | aristocratic titles | Alexander Kreik*

“Human dignity shall be inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.”¹

„If the right of a person to use a name is disputed by another person, or if the interest of the person entitled to the name is injured by the unauthorised use of the same name by another person, the person entitled may require the other to remove the infringement.”²

„The “use” of a not one’s own coat of arms within the meaning of § 12 of the German Civil Law Book is not only evidenced in the case of a completely identical takeover, but also in the case of a merely similar reproduction, provided that this contains the essential characteristics of the original and is thus suitable to refer to the entitled person.”³

“In the heraldic traditions of England and Scotland, an individual, rather than a family, had a coat of arms. In those traditions coats of arms are legal property transmitted from father to son; wives and daughters could also bear arms modified to indicate their relation to the current holder of the arms. Undifferenced arms are used only by one person at any given time. Other descendants of the original bearer could bear the ancestral arms only with some difference: usually a colour change or the addition of a distinguishing charge.”⁴

Some historical background: aristocracy and courtier estate

0.1. The word aristocracy originally meant “rule of the best” (Greek: ἀριστοκρατία, from ἄριστος “the best” and κρατεῖν “rule”). In protohistory, the personalities recognized as “the best” rose by virtue of their abilities and held certain leading offices or heredities. The “first among equals” recognized by the members of tribes, clans or communities emerged from their ranks as authentic ancestral aristocrats.

0.2. A courtier was a person who was permanently present at the court of a ruler, often held certain functions or offices and thus obtained his/her title, such as: table-decker, table-decorator (стольник/stolnik), bed-servant (постельничий/postelnichy), potables-servant (кравчий/kravchy), stable-master (конюший/konyushiy), etc.

0.3. Heads and ordinaries of the Frisian communities in the Middle Ages belonged to the ancestral European aristocracy. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which is a competent reference book on heraldry (study of coat of arms), states in the article on the Frisians: „Every Frisian is a nobleman.”⁵ In another source: „Every Frisian is born a nobleman!”⁶

Frisian Freedom is the right granted to the Frisians by Charlemagne (747–814) that no lord but only the emperor could have master of them. The Frisian legend tells of the Frisians, who in the 9th century had completely and unexpectedly for their King Charles defeated the Romans. The king was enthusiastic, rewarded and gifted his brave Frisian warriors with the highest good: freedom. After this campaign, Charles was crowned Roman Emperor by Pope Leo III. In the Middle Ages, the Frisians organized themselves cooperatively in autonomous state communities to construct dikes and to defend against foreign powers; they actively defended their “freedom” against foreign princes.

0.3.1. Every descendant of the Frisians has the right to give himself the title “Freiherr”. The title is identical to the “baron”, which derives from the Latin *liber vir* “free man”. In the Germanic-speaking countries, the official title has always been the “Freiherr”, while in France, as well as in Great Britain, the Netherlands and Russia, it is customary to confer the title “baron”. The custom of addressing a “Freiherr” with a “baron” originates from the 16th century and became the norm of etiquette in German courts in the 18th and 19th centuries, when French was still a court and diplomatic language. “Baron”, “baronin” / “baroness” or “baronesse” (Freiherr’s daughter) are to this day regarded as courtesy forms of salutation.

0.4. Boyars (бояре) were the ancestral aristocracy

in medieval Eastern Europe (Rus, Bulgaria, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Romania, Moldova) and Serbia. In the 16th century, the Russian tsar Ivan IV (1565–1572) let many boyars kill or deport, and Peter I (*1672–1725) finally abolished the boyar status as part of his reforms at the beginning of the 18th century. The boyars were replaced by the courtier estate. The role of the Russian courtier estate, which was one of the pillars of despotic power in Russia is not yet a sufficiently explored subject that is waiting for its researchers. This courtier estate exerted its influence on the mind-set of the masses, which defend the need for a “hard hand” in Russia.

0.5. In 1721, the former territories of the Livonian part of the German Order merged with the Tsardom of Russia. As a result, a new geopolitical entity of Eurasia came into being – the Russian Empire. The driving force behind unification with Russia was the German land aristocracy, which rebelled against the Swedish occupiers. No less than one hundred thousand Livonian Germans, including the ancestral German land aristocracy, became subjects of the newly founded empire.⁷

0.6. The new free-thinking elite of the Empire was at odds with the courtier estate that actually was zealously implementing the will of the state power. The confrontation, which sometimes escalated into an open animosity, culminated during the reign of the throne usurper Catherine II who loathed everything German. For the courtiers’ sake, wild forms of slavery were legalized; the Academic University was closed “because of the majority of the heinous estate”. The murderer of her own husband, the Emperor Peter III (Karl Peter Ulrich von Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorf; 1728–1762).⁸ plunged the Russian Empire into a bloody feud.⁹ “State morale deteriorated noticeably during the reign of Catherine II. ... Discord has increased, both in the national and social make-up of the state.”¹⁰

1. The Russia-German community,

which had been exposed to the state genocide (7 October 1942 – ?) and subsequent disenfranchisement policy, has allotted primacy, in line with the customary law, to a number of public figures from its ranks. The dignitary status of such personalities is confirmed by the Council of Russia-German Elders (www.rd-senat.de) and attributed to a corresponding rank. Three dignitary statuses are foreseen:

1.1. Freiherr / Freifrau – this dignitary rank can be awarded to the deserving Russia-German public figures;

1.2. Freigraf / Freigräfin – this dignitary rank can be awarded to the deserving Russia-German cultural workers, creative artists, and writers:

1.3. Freifürst¹¹ / Freifürstin – this dignitary rank can be awarded to the leading figures of the movement of the Russia-Germans for their complete rehabilitation.

1.4. The aristocratic titles of the Russia-Germans may contain, in addition to the name itself, depending on the choice of the coat of arms holder, the indication of the place of birth, the permanent residence or the documented names of the places to which the Russia-Germans were exiled.

1.4.1. For example, the title of the author of this article can be represented as follows: *Dr. Walther Freifürst von Friesen zur Zeche Nr. 6, Rajon Us-lowaja, Gebiet Tula / Dr. Walther Free Duke of the House of Friesen from Coal Mine # 6, Uzlovsky District, Tula Region*. The title contains the indication of the place of birth, confirmed by the German identity card, in one of the concentration camps for Russia-Germans organized in accordance with the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR No. 133 of November 26, 1948. All Russia-Germans could be sentenced to perpetual exile with a penalty of 20 years of forced labour for fleeing these forced settlements.

1.5. Julius Eduard Erdmann Prince Ernst-August von Anhalt said in an interview with the magazine *Новые Земляки/ New Compatriots* (No. 1/2019): “... The title is for me ... a part of my last name, neither I nor my children can get rid of it. At the same time, it obliges us to do a lot. ...

We are public figures. And we have to be open to society.”

2. Legends and facts about the origin of the surname Kreik

2.0.1. In the Roman Empire, the word “familia” referred to a community consisting of masters and their slaves; later – a community consisting of the head of the family, his blood relatives and relatives by marriage.

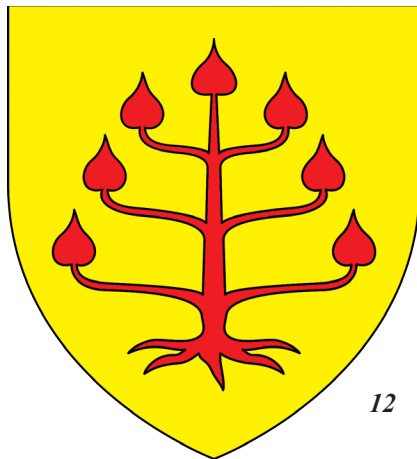
2.0.2. Surnames in the modern sense began to form in the 10th–11th centuries, first in the economically developed regions of northern Italy, then – in France. In the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation (lat. *Sacrum Romanum Imperium Nationis Teutonicae*), the name formation of German farmers continued until the 19th century. Serfs often also received the names of their masters.

2.0.3. The Yenish, “nomadic”, “white gypsies” are the descendants of groups of the German-speaking

population of the German states and Switzerland who were marginalized in the 18th century. They could register at the church under fictitious or local surnames, for example aristocratic French. In the latter case, both the desire of the clergy to protect the Christian nomads from possible interference in their freedom by the landlords and the desire of the marginalized groups to increase their social status by a sonorous surname could be recognized.

2.1. A prominent bearer of the surname KREIK was Jean V de Créquy (1395–1474), a Burgundian military leader and diplomat.

2.1.1. The family coat of arms of the Kreik/Kreyki family symbolically represents a blooming blackthorn – a talisman against the machinations of witches.



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2.1.2. The crown of thorns was placed by the Roman soldiers on the head of Jesus Christ during his desecration.

2.1.3. In January 1430, de Kreki became one of the first Knights of the Order of the Golden Fleece in Bruges (Flanders), which remains the most influential knightly organization to this day.

For example, the Vatican’s main order, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem (lat. Ordo Equestris Sancti Sepulchri Hierosolymitani), has an advantage over the bearers of all other orders, except the Distinguished Order of the Golden Fleece.

2.1.4. On 10 January 1430, Philip III of Burgundy (Philip III the Good; 1396–1467) founded this order on the occasion of his third marriage to the Portuguese Infanta Isabella (1397–1471) in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostle Andrew.

2.1.5. The Apostle Andrew was considered the patron and Baptist of Burgundy. According to legend, he presented the Burgundian rulers with the St. Andrew’s Cross, also called “Burgundy”.



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2.2. The St. Andrew’s flag is also the ensign (national flag) of the Russian Navy.

2.3. The surname Kreik is mentioned among the commanders of the Russian army during the Great Northern War (1700–1721): the regiment “Zei – Kreik – Busch”.¹⁴

2.4. In Scotland (the flag of the country is the white St. Andrew’s Cross), surnames were formed under the influence of Masonic lodges, primarily the Grand Lodge of Scotland.



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Flag of Scotland

2.5. The probably originally Burgundian surname Créquy was changed in Scottish into the similar-sounding word creag “rocky cliff”, from which the English surname Craig was derived.

2.6. In the 18th century, the traditions of Scottish Freemasonry were brought by settlers and their descendants to North America and the newly formed United States of America.

2.7. The first President of the United States, George Washington (1732–1799) and his colleague, friend and personal physician, the Scotsman James Craik (1727–1814) were among the founders of the first North American Masonic Lodge in Fredericksburg (Virginia) in 1752.



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Flag of Fredericksburg, Virginia

2.8. Among other owners of the surname Craik, the most famous are the Craik brothers:

2.8.1. Scottish writer and literary critic George Lillie Craik (1798–1866). He wrote the popular “A Manual of English Literature”, which was published in 1871.

2.8.2. Doctor of Theology James Craik (1802–1870). From 1863 to 1864 he was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.



*St. Andrew's Cross with a Blackthorn Tree –
Stylised Symbol of the Church of Scotland*

2.8.3. Brilliant preacher, theologian and specialist in Hebrew Henry Craik (1805–1866).

2.9. In the North Rhine-Westphalian town of Lünen there is a historic place – the former farm Kreikenhof, mentioned in 1486 as “Kreycke”.



3. Family legend

According to family traditions, representatives of the KREIK family were members of the parish church of the Great Martyr St. Catherine of Alexandria in Isenburg, Rhineland-Palatinate before their departure to Russia in 1767.

4. Documented history of the family

“On 17 August 1767, Peter Kreiek, 42 years old, farmer from Isenburg together with his wife Elisabeth, 42 years old, with their son Johann Georg, 15 years old, and their daughter Magdalena, 11 years old, arrived in the colony of Huck on the Volga.

They received from the guardianship office in Saratov 25 rubles, 2 horses, and 1 cow. In 1768, the farm had 2 horses, 2 cows; 1.5 hectares were ploughed, 6 chetverik¹⁸ rye sown.”

5. Biography of Alexander Kreik

5.1. The Russia-German Alexander Kreik was born on 10 May 1948 in the city of Leninsk-Kuznetsky in the Kemerovo region of Russia.

5.2. In 1968, he graduated from the vocational school for inland navigation in Omsk as a navigator-mechanic.

5.3. From 1968 to 1971, Alexander Kreik served in the Navy as a representative of the Political Department for Youth Work.

5.4. From 1971, he worked as the head of the workshop of the Omsk Biofactory; at the same time, he studied at the Correspondence and evening faculty of the Novosibirsk Institute of Water Transport Engineers.

5.4.1. In 1978, he became a graduate engineer in mechanical engineering.

5.5. In 1979, Alexander Kreik completed a two-year elective course at the Ecological University in Omsk and was certified as an ecologist.

5.6. In 1990, after defending his dissertation, Alexander Kreik was certified as head of administration of the higher service at the Institute of Further Education in Leningrad.

5.7. In 1995, he became a member of the International Academy of Ecology and Life Protection Sciences in Saint Petersburg.

5.7.1. In 1999, he was elected a corresponding member of this International Academy.

5.8. From 1988 to 1997, Alexander Kreik worked as a chief engineer, then – as deputy general director of the Territorial production association for housing and municipal services of the Omsk region.

5.9. In 1989, Alexander Kreik was the initiator of the founding of the first private institute for physical and technical problems of ecology on the subject of “drinking water”.

5.9.1. Until 1997, he was chairman of the founding council of the working group with the same name.

5.10. In 2003, Alexander Kreik initiated the founding of the Berlin and All-German Integration Council of the Russia-Germans.

5.11. Alexander Kreik is coordinator of the Council of Elders of the Russia-Germans.

6. Coat of arms of Alexander Kreik

6.1. The coat of arms is divided into four fields by two wavy lines, which simultaneously symbolize both the St. Andrew's Cross and the main rivers of Russia and Germany – the Volga, the Dnieper (connected with the history of the Mennonites) and one of the rivers of Germany historically significant for the Russia-Germans (the Rhine, the Elbe, the Danube...)

6.1.1. For Alexander Kreik, the St. Andrew's Cross, the ensign (national flag) of the Russian Navy, is very symbolic, as he graduated from the Vocational School of Inland Navigation in Omsk and served in the Navy.

6.2. In the lower field, a blooming blackthorn is symbolically depicted – a talisman against evil spirits.

6.3. In the middle-left field, the stylized coat of arms of Isenburg is placed, where, according to family traditions, representatives of the Kreik family were members of the parish church of the Great Martyr St. Catherine of Alexandria before their departure to Russia in 1767.

6.4. In the middle-right field, there is a modified coat of arms of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of the Volga Germans with the date of arrival of the KREIK family on the Volga and the name of their first settlement – Huck on the Volga.

6.5. The coat of arms of the Federal Republic of Germany is symbolically depicted in the upper field.



The Heraldic Council of Russia-Germans approves the personal coat of arms of Alexander Kreik with the dignity of a free duke (prince) and recognizes his right to be named:

Title in German: **Alexander Freifürst von Kreik zu Huck an der Wolga**

Short form in German: **Alexander Freifürst von Kreik**

Title in Russian: **Александр, вольный князь фон Крейк, родом из Гукк, что на Волге**

Short form in Russian: **Александр, вольный князь фон Крейк**

Title in English: **Alexander Free Duke of the House of Kreik from Huck on the Volga**

Short form in English: **Alexander Free Duke of the House of Kreik**

On behalf of the Heraldic Council of Russia-Germans

Dr. Walther Free Duke of the House of Friesen from Coal Mine # 6, Uzlovsky District, Tula Region /

Dr. Walther Freifürst von Friesen zur Zeche Nr. 6 / Rajon Usłowaja, Gebiet Tula

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18. Chetverik (Russian: четверик) was a Russian measure of volume and grain; it equalled 24.5 litres.



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