

**"Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers" Marching song of the Don
Cossacks (Folklore of the war years)**

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Abstract. *In this report, dedicated to the folklore of the war years, we will consider the transformation of one military song that exists among the Cossacks of the Kuban [historical references № 1 - 10] and, as it turned out in the process of research, in other regions of Russia [comments № 1, Internet № 1]. The song is very popular, it is included in the repertoire of the Kuban Cossack Choir and the ensemble of the "Cossack Circle" organization [Internet № 1]. However, research shows that the song is not being played quite right. The author has repeatedly heard this song from her father, Zaporozhets Vasil Andreevich, a hereditary Kuban Cossack. The song "Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers" was constantly performed on holidays, especially on May 9, Victory Day, by a chorus or ensemble consisting of the author's relatives, the lead singer and leader of which was the author's father. I must say that Zaporozhets Vasily Andreevich was one of the active participants in the stanitsa Cossack choir, which regularly performed at the local house of culture. He was one of the brightest performers of folk songs and the lead singer in the choir. Having gone through the Great Patriotic War as a simple soldier, he was wounded, had awards, so the song was especially loved by them and was often simply sung at home, both solo and together with the villagers. As a true natural performer and connoisseur of folk art, he knew not only the melody of his part, but also the voice leading of any choir member and could replace everyone at any moment. Later, while studying professionally in musical institutions, the author realized that such a skill is a rare natural gift. But my father knew not only folk songs, in scientific journals the author more than once published stories, legends, tales, jokes, proverbs, etc., heard*

from her father, mother (members of the labor front), grandfather (order bearer, the second grandfather died in a concentration camp), grandmothers and other relatives. [Zaporozhets 2003, 2005 a), b) 2006; 2009 a), b); 2010 b); 2011; 2012; 2014; 2017 a), b); 2020 b.]. My father told me how in his youth, before the war, he self-taught to play various folk instruments: balalaika, mandolin, guitar (accordion - the dream of his life, he never mastered, to buy, in those years - there was no financial opportunity). He told me how he played in a folk ensemble, consisting of relatives. Unfortunately, the author never managed to hear the instrumental music performed by his father, since he came from the war with a damaged hand and could no longer play. But he was a great master of singing. Until now, his portrait hangs in the house of culture on the board of honor, as an excellent performer of folk songs. Following in her father's footsteps, the author first graduated from a music school in the village, then a music institute in the city of Krasnodar, and then in Moscow, which was a huge incentive to further engage in ethnography in general.

Keywords: *folklore of the Great Patriotic War, folk songs.*

May 9 is coming soon! Victory Day! And the topic of our report corresponds to the red date of the calendar - one of the brightest dates in the whole world - the Victory over the fascist invaders. It must be said that of the entire folklore heritage, the folklore of the war years occupies a leading place in the research of scientists. These are: signs associated with the beginning, course and end of the war; conspiracies and prayers used in war, folk medicine, etc. The author was fortunate enough to record a huge amount of interesting material not only in expedition trips, but also from his parents and relatives, which is periodically published in various publications and in reports at conferences [Zaporozhets 2002; 2010 a); 2020 a); also see "Abstracts"]. One of the most popular and least studied topics is folk songs from the times of the war. This report presents a study of the song "Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers", its history, and its reconstruction.

Among the Cossacks, singing is one of the most widespread types of folk art. This dominance of the creative heritage is not accidental. It evolved from wartime therapeutic art practices. The songs not only raised the fighting spirit of the soldiers before the battle. Singing, as art therapy, as treatment with music, sound - was used in the intervals between hostilities and after battles. During periods of short or long term

rest, singing was used as one of the most active forms of treatment for soldiers. After providing medical assistance, the wounded Cossacks were placed in the center on a flat area, stood around them, forming a circle, and sang. At the same time, the wounds healed much faster [Zaporozhets 2020 c)]. So, the marching song of the Don Cossacks "Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers".

Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers

1. Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers, /Twenty-third of September!

How we fought with the Pole /From dawn to dark!

2. Oh, how we fought with the Pole /From dawn to dark!

The music played with us, /The drums beat loud!

3. Oh, the music played with us, /The drums beat loudly!

Signalists began to play: /"Take out the checkers bald!"

4. Oh, the signalmen began to play: /"Take out the checkers bald!"

And we took out the checkers /And rushed to the attack.

5. Oh, and we took out the checkers /And rushed to the attack,

Our commander was brave /He walked ahead all the time!

6. Oh, our commander was brave /He walked all the time in front!

Got a big wound /From a Pole on my chest!

7. Oh I got a big wound /From a Pole on my chest!

"Oh you, oh Kuban brothers, /Do not leave me!"

8. "Oh you, oh Kuban brothers, /Do not leave me -

I will never forget, /I will let everyone go home! "

[Comment № 1].

♩ = 60

1. Ой да вето-мшии, гра- тыи, вые ку-ра - мшыи

Два-дцать тре - тье са-н-тя-дря

Как гра-ми- сеи мы с по-ля - ком

от ра-себе - та го те-мша

So what does this song tell us?

1. In the annotation, the author has already indicated that this is a marching song of the Don Cossacks. The information was taken from the sites of such reputable organizations as: Kuban Cossack Choir and "Cossack Spas" ... [Internet №. 1]. In this case, the question that constantly arose in the author's childhood becomes

immediately clear: why the song, unlike other folk songs performed in the Kuban, does not sound in the Ukrainian dialect, but in Russian. This suggests that the song appeared among the Don Cossacks, and then it was already borrowed by the Kuban Cossacks. Thus, the words are correct - an appeal to the brothers-Kuban "YOU, the Kubans", and not "WE the Kubans", as the Kuban Cossack Choir later began to perform [Internet № 1].

2. Another interesting fact. The melody of the song, as befits a military chant, is replete with quarto-fifth leaps. But! The song size is 3/4! That is - this is not a 4/4 march, as a marching song should be! What, then, is it? A song or instrumental music performed at a slow pace in a 3/4 size is a *polonaise*, a dance-procession. (Translated from French - Polish dance. ... As a musical genre has been known since the 17th century. ... Origins in folk dance). (SED p. 1044). Polonaise is a dance of knights, which was performed by soldiers in full uniform: in armor with weapons in their hands, after which the soldiers went into battle. (Later, the polonaise, like many other folk dances, became ballroom). Ukraine is geographically located next to Poland and, naturally, a lot from the peoples of the neighboring states was borrowed from each other. But why has polonaise become so popular in general, even in Europe? Because in the 17th century, Rzeczpospolita entered into a great force, and the Poles even invaded Moscow! There was an attempt to capture Russia! The beginning of the aggression was manifested in the siege of Smolensk in **September 1609**. [Historical references № 11, 12]. This fact is recorded in the song! Later, about the time of Poland's aggression against Russia, the opera Ivan Susanin (composer M.I. Glinka) was written about the feat of a Russian peasant who, at the cost of his life, did not let the enemy's detachment reach Moscow. (I must say that during the Great Patriotic War, the military-patriotic song "**Sacred War**" was also written in the size of 3/4. This is also a procession song (polonaise), and therefore was perceived as a march. (Composer A. V. Aleksandrov, poet V. I. Lebedev-Kumach)). The borrowing of the Polish dance in the music of the song "Oh, let's remember, brothers", which is not at all typical for the Don Cossacks, indicates that the melody was introduced by the Cossacks of the Zaporizhzhya Sich. Consequently, the initial appeal of the Don Cossacks was: "Oh, let's remember, brothers - Zaporozhtsi!" This is understandable even from the syllable composition of the sentence. "You, Kubantsi" appeared later, after Catherine II moved the Zaporozhye Cossacks to the Kuban. But since the word

"Kubantsi" consists of three syllables, in contrast to the "Zaporozhian" - four syllables, then the pronoun "you" appeared as "the fourth syllable".

3. Further. Where did the conversion "brothers" come from? And is it accidental? What is Brotherhood? Is this just a designation: are all Slavs brothers? Of course yes! But there is one more designation for this word. "Brotherhoods are national-religious and educational public organizations of the 15-18th centuries at the Orthodox churches of Belarus, Ukraine, Lithuania ... (Lvov Brotherhood, founded in 1586; Kiev Brotherhood in 1615 ...). They fought against national oppression and forcible catholicization of the Orthodox population ... (SED p. 165). When did the Cossacks enter the Kiev Brotherhood? **In September 1621** the famous Khotyn battle took place, the combined forces of the Polish and Cossack troops (about 80 thousand people), opposed the Turkish army (about 200 thousand people). The Turks suffered heavy losses and with the onset of the winter cold they had to conclude a peace that was unfavorable for them. But these victories gave nothing to the Zaporozhye Cossacks. According to the Khotin peace, the Poles pledged to curb the willfulness of the Cossacks and prevent them from military action against Turkey. In fact, it was a betrayal on the part of the Poles. Deeply outraged by the conditions of peace, the Cossacks did not allow the Poles to disarm themselves and left Khotin in an organized manner [Historical note № 13]. It was then, at the beginning of the 17th century, that the Zaporozhye army entered the Kiev Orthodox Brotherhood.

4. Further. a) The song mentions, for example, not "ataman", but - "commander". This is probably the same late designation of the head of the Cossack army, as well as the appeal to the Cossack-Cossacks already as to the Kuban. b) Why does the commander ask the Kuban people not to abandon him? In general, I must say - a strange request. The soldiers are already protecting their leaders to the end. This is the norm in military combat. Most likely, such a text sounds in the song precisely because the "commander" was not from the Zaporozhye Sich, but a Don Cossack. Here he is to the Zaporozhian brothers and addresses that: even though he is Russian, not Ukrainian, all Slavs are brothers! And the Cossacks are brothers! Don't leave each other in trouble! That's the point!

5. But! When do some warriors turn to others to remember past victories? Just? Not. No wonder this song is designated as "Marching". Usually, such calls to memories arise at the time of a military threat, mortal danger. It is then that the moments of mutual assistance, mutual support and brotherhood come to mind. When

did it become necessary to recall the battles with the Poles? During the uprising on the Don, led by Kondrat Bulavin. The Bulavin uprising (1707 - early 1709) covered the Don, the Left-Bank and Sloboda Ukraine and the Middle Volga region. Considering all of the above, it becomes clear such a wide area of distribution of the song [Historical information № 14, 15]. (In the expeditionary practice, the fact of the wide distribution of the song repertoire of different regions during the Great Patriotic War was noted more than once).

In the reviews on the Cossack Circle website, we read: "My father said that before the war this song was often sung in the village by our relatives. Where the Kuban song came from in the Volga village is not clear. Another thing is strange - in 1941, **in the three-day battles from September 21 to 23 on the shores of the Upper Volga Lake Sterzh**, almost everyone who had been drafted from the village, including my grandfather, perished"(Sergei 2) [Internet № 1].

From the review we see that the author of the letter considers the song to be Kuban. Probably, this conclusion is made by the people on the first line of the song - an appeal to the Kuban people. But this is not the main thing. It is interesting to pay attention to **the coincidence of the dates of the battles with the Poles, Turks - and with the Germans four centuries later**. Maybe that's why in our village, unlike other regions, they sang not "21st" but, "23rd September"? The author saw the difference between the indicated dates (only two days), but at first she did not know how much to attach importance to this. (In this case: a) there was simply an association with the festive Day of the Defender of the Fatherland - February 23rd, or b) - with the Battle of Sterz? The question remains open). Apparently - importance should be attached to each stroke and nuance. Everything can have informational value.

This reference also confirms the author's assumption about the rapid spread of the song and its widespread popularity during the Bulavinsky uprising that swept the Don, Ukraine and the Volga region. All of the above confirms the correctness of the performance of the beginning of the song "Oh, let's remember, brothers, YOU, Kubantsi", and not "We are Kubantsi", since in this case, the song sounds an appeal of the Don Cossacks to the Kuban Cossacks - to recall past victories gained together! The song is sung as a memory of past battles, when the Cossacks of one region went to the aid of the Cossacks of the other region, and when the "Kubantsi" were still called "the Zaporozhtsi", the *Kubantsi were no longer at war with the Poles*, they guarded completely different borders.

The village of Dinskaya of the Krasnodar Krai - is the birthplace of my ancestors on the line of my father - the Zaporozhye Cossacks. "Dinskaya" in translation into Russian from the leadership of Kondrat Bulavin and the Zaporozhye Cossacks went to the aid of the Don Cossacks. And upon their return from the Don, their kuren began to be called "Dinsky", that is, "those who went Ukrainian means - "Donskaya". This name of a kuren in the Zaporizhzhya Sich appeared in the 17th century, when an uprising broke out on the Don under to help fight in the uprising on the Don", "those who returned from the Don". And when the Cossacks were resettled in kurens to the Kuban, and villages were formed from the kurens, then the villages began to be called by the kurens: Dinskaya, Plastunovskaya, etc. ... Plastun-cossacks gave name to special crawling technique "po-plastunsky", which was reflected in the song dedicated to the Great Patriotic War "We plowed half of Europe on our bellies". [Historical references № 16, 17] This is how the songs contain information about the historical facts of the Fatherland.

So, "Oh, let's remember, you, oh Kuban brothers." Before us is a 17th century Cossack song! About the fight against the Polish intervention of the early 17th century. About brotherhood and friendship of the Cossacks of the Slavic peoples! A song that has undergone many changes, but has not lost its popularity throughout the country to this day!

Comments

1. The version of the song was recorded by S. A. Samodelova in the Kaluga Oblast (1985). [Zaporozhets 2005 b)]. In this version, performed on the fronts of the Second World War, the word "Pole" (as was often the case in folk songs) was replaced by "fascist" (author's note). Here and in other versions, the date is indicated - September 21st.

Historical references.

1. **Cossacks** – the military estate in pre-revolutionary Russia in the 18th - early 20th centuries. In the 14th - 17th centuries, free people, ... persons who carried out military service in the border areas; in the 15th - 16th centuries, outside the borders of Russia and the Polish-Lithuanian state (on the Dnieper, Don, Volga, Ural, Terek) self-governing communities ... of free Cossacks (mainly from fugitive peasants) appeared, which were the main driving force of popular uprisings in Ukraine 16 - 17th century

and peasant wars in Russia in the 17th - 18th centuries. The tsarist government strove to use the Cossacks to guard the borders, in wars, etc., and in the 18th century subjugated it, turning it into a privileged military class, the support of the autocracy. At the beginning of the 20th century, there were 11 Cossack troops. ... In the 1st World War, about 300 thousand people were sent In 1920, the Cossacks as an estate were abolished. In 1936, the Don, Kuban and Terek Caucasian Cossack formations were created, which participated in the Great Patriotic War (disbanded in the 2nd half of the 40s). (SED p. 529).

2. **Don, Dnieper, Volga, Kuban** – the largest rivers of the Russia, and later – the USSR.

3. **Zaporizhzhya Sich** – organization of Ukrainian Cossacks in the 16-18th century beyond the Dnieper rapids. The name comes from the name of the main fortification (Sich).... Divided into kurens In 1709 ... Old Sich was liquidated, in 1734 the government created ... New Sich, liquidated by tsarism in 1775 (SED, p. 456). The name comes from "*Sich*, which is *beyond the rapids* of the Dnieper - *Zaporozhye Sich*" - ed.

4. **Rapids** – a short section of a river with a relatively high level of water decrease and an increased flow rate ... (SED, p. 1052)

5. **Kuren** – (Turkic origin of the name). ... In the Zaporizhzhya Sich - a military unit ... and its living quarters. (SED, p. 682).

6. **Don Cossack army**, arose in the 2nd half of the 16th century in the Lower and Middle Don from fugitive peasants. Since the end of the 16th century, it has been protecting the southern borders of Russia. Placed in the area of the Donskoy army ... In the First World War, 66 cavalry regiments, 45 batteries, 6 battalions, 110 hundred were deployed, in 1918 it was abolished. (SED, p. 411.).

7. **Black Sea Cossack army**, created in 1787 in southern Ukraine from the majority of the Cossacks. In the 90s of the 18th century, it was resettled to the Kuban. It defended the Caucasian fortified line from the mouth of the Kuban to the Laba River. In 1860 it became part of the Kuban Cossack army. (SED, p. 1507.)

8. **Kuban Cossack army**, created in 1860 in the Kuban Oblast (center of Yekaterinodar, now Krasnodar) from the Black Sea Cossack and part of the Caucasian Linear Cossack troops..... In the First World War, 41 cavalry regiment, 2 cavalry and foot divisions, 25 battalions, 10 batteries, 35 hundreds were deployed. Abolished in 1918. (SED, p. 672.).

9. **Stanitsa** –...A large Cossack rural settlement or administrative-territorial unit that united several small Cossack families.

10. **Ataman**– ...The supreme commander of the Cossack army, the head of the Cossack administrative-territorial unit or koshevoy unit (SED p. 85).

11. **Polish intervention** of the beginning of the 17th century, an attempt by the ruling circles of the Commonwealth and the Catholic Church to dismember Russia and eliminate its state independence. ... Open aggression under the leadership of King Sigismund III was expressed **in the siege of Smolensk from September 1609**, a campaign against Moscow and its capture (1610). After the liberation (October 1612) of Moscow by the Second Militia, the failure of the attempts (1612, 1617) of Sigismund and the prince Vladislav to seize Moscow again, the Polish intervention ended with the Deulinsky truce of 1618 (SED p. 1046).

12. **Rech Pospolita** – ...the official name of the united Polish-Lithuanian state during the Union of Lublin from 1569 to 1795. (SED p. 1134).

13. **Battle of Khotyn. Khotin** – city in Chernivtsi Oblast on the Dniester River. ... Known since the 10th century. It entered Kievan Rus, ... Turkey. Since 1812 it has been a part of Russia, ... since 1940 - the Ukrainian SSR. Turkish fortress of the 17th - 18th centuries. **In September - October 1621, near Khotin, Polish-Ukrainian troops ... defeated the Turkish army ...** (SED p. 1476)

14. **Bulavin Kondrat Afanasevich** (about 1660 - 1708), Don Cossack, leader of an antifeudal uprising. ... **In October 1707 he raised a revolt**, from May 1708 the military ataman ... (SED p. 176).

15. **Bulavin uprising**, antifeudal peasant-Cossack uprising of 1707 - early 1709 in the Don, Left-Bank and Sloboda Ukraine and in the Middle Volga region under the leadership of K. A. Bulavin...

16. **Cossacks Plastuns (village Plastunovskaya Krasnodar Krai)** – personnel of foot teams and units of the Black Sea and Kuban Cossack troops in the 19th - early 20th centuries. During the Great Patriotic War, some Cossack battalions and regiments, as well as the 9th Krasnodar Infantry Division (SED p. 1023), had the name "Plastun". The name came from how the Cossacks and their horses crawled so spread out on the ground, practically merging with the landscape that they were completely invisible. Of course, when, at the right moment, a whole cavalry army rose from the ground and went on the attack, then the enemy, shouting: "Urus Shaitan!" - ("Russian sorcerers!"), Ran away in horror from the battlefield. There is a

song about the Great Patriotic War, which mentions the tactics of moving troops on their bellies.

17. **Song "The Last Battle"**. Words and music by composer Mikhail Ivanovich Nozhkin, written for the film epic (consisting of 5 films) "Liberation", 1969

We for so long, we have not rested for so long.

We just had no time to rest with you.

We plowed half of Europe *on our bellies*,

And tomorrow, tomorrow, finally, the last battle will come ...



Information for photograph.

1. Zaporozhets Vasily Andreevich, 1925 - 1981, local, Kuban Cossack. (Author's father). Member of the Great Patriotic War. Awarded with medals. (His father (the author's grandfather) Zaporozhets Andrei Nazarovich, born in 1902, a participant in the Great Patriotic War, died in a concentration camp in Poland in 1944).

2. Zaporozhets Anna Petrovna, 1925 - 2007, (nee Vasiliev), originally from the Orenburg region, Ivanovo district, the village of Yegoryevka. She moved to Kuban in the mid-1950s. (Author's mother). Member of the labor front. Awarded with medals. (Her father (the author's grandfather) Vasiliev Pyotr Yegorovich 1899 - 1996, participant of the Great Patriotic War, order bearer).

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7. Zaporozhets 2010 b) – Article "Etiological legends". "LA", № 4, 2010, P. 15. (Moscow, Krasnodar region, late XX and early XXI centuries).

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9. Zaporozhets 2012 – Article "Lullabies of Central Russia". "LA", № 4, 2012, P. 51 – 53. (Kimrsky district of Tverskoy region, Pereslavsky and Poshekhonsky districts of Yaroslavl region, Sudogodsky district of Vladimir and Krasnodar region).

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