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WWII Cossack Newspapers and Periodicals at CRL

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The fate of the Cossacks during World War II is a sad yet intriguing history: For some it was a matter of defending their homeland, while for others it was a fight for recovering their homeland. Fighting for the hope of autonomy if not independence yet caught between two tyrannical powers of the 20th century, Cossacks of various groups found themselves on opposite sides of the war. It is in this context that I briefly describe a small collection of Cossack newspapers published mostly during World War II and microfilmed at the request of the Slavic and East European Microform Project of CRL.

Kazachii vestnik (Der kosakenbote, Kozatskyi vystnik): informatsiia Kazach'ego natsional'nogo osvoboditel'nogo dvizheniia [Cossack National Liberation Movement]

(Aug. 1941 - Apr. 1945; Jun. 1951 - Feb. 1958)

Kazach'ia lava: tsentral'naia obshchekazach'ia gazeta - (Apr. 16, 1944 - Feb. 22, 1945)

Kazachii' klich: ezhenedel'naia gazeta 1-i Kazach'ei divizii - (Dec. 1943 - Oct. 1944)

Kosakenruf - (Apr. 1944) – German issues of *Kazachii klich*

Kazachii klinok - (Mar. 1943 - Feb. 1944)

Kubanets - (Jun. –Sep. 1943)

Na kazach'em postu: dvukhnedel'nyi zhurnal dlia kazakov - (Apr. 1943 - Jan 1945)

Parizhskii Viestnik - (Jan. 30 - Feb. 27, 1943)

The newspapers above will be an invaluable source for the study of Cossack involvement (especially on the Nazi side) in World War II. As expected they breathe a mood of Cossack nationalistic feeling mixed with varying amounts of German military victories, Nazi propaganda, and anti-Bolshevik sentiment. *Kazachii vestnik*, for example, the organ of the Cossack National

Liberation Movement (*Kazach'e natsional'noe osvoboditel'noe dvizhenie*) and probably the most blatantly nationalistic paper in the collection chronicles many of the party's public activities, meetings, resolutions, etc.; the obvious purpose of which is to call their Cossack brothers arms to join the Nazi's against a common enemy, the Bolsheviks. While early issues bleed propaganda; as the tide of war turns against Germany in 1944-1945, the "progress of the war" all but drops out of sight on the paper's pages and is replaced with an abundance of columns exhibiting a calmer Cossack sentiment. Among these one finds a bibliography of Cossack works, historical calendar, and a column dedicated to missing persons. Letters and testimonials of Bolshevik/Soviet atrocities committed against Cossacks also continue to appear regularly, but they are not as aggressive as in the early years of the war. Curiously, I even found a postage stamp of Adolf Hitler on the first page of issue no. 24 (81), 15 November 1944. After a gap of 6 years following the war (according to OCLC Accession no. 665086958), the paper resumes publication in Munich, German in 1951. The focus, of course, on Cossack nationalism represents a new stage in the Cossack's fight for freedom and political identity. Published in the West, the paper has one column in English.

These newspapers as a whole add to the textual and visual chronicle of Cossack involvement in World War II on the German side. *Kazachii klich* is especially rich in photographs, artistic decoration, and cartoons. Cossack verse and song lyrics are also a common feature of many of the papers.

This short summary is not the place to describe at length the contents of each newspaper. While I am not a specialist in Cossack or Ukrainian history, I found the content of these newspapers fascinating historical documents; and I anticipate that interest among Slavists and Germanists alike will grow as word of their publication circulates. At present, microfilm copies of these newspapers are held by the Center for Research Libraries and the University of Kansas.

I provide here two sources of related interest:

1. Newland, Samuel J. *Cossacks in the German Army 1941-1945*. London: Frank Cass, 1991. Print
2. Wikipedia: Cossacks. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cossack#cite_note-Newland-24) – While I generally do not cite Wikipedia, the content and references are useful.
3. <http://www.itcmarchetti.net/Sito%20con%20Frame/HOME%20PAGE.htm>
4. <http://library2.usask.ca/USSRConst/gallery/cossacks>

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