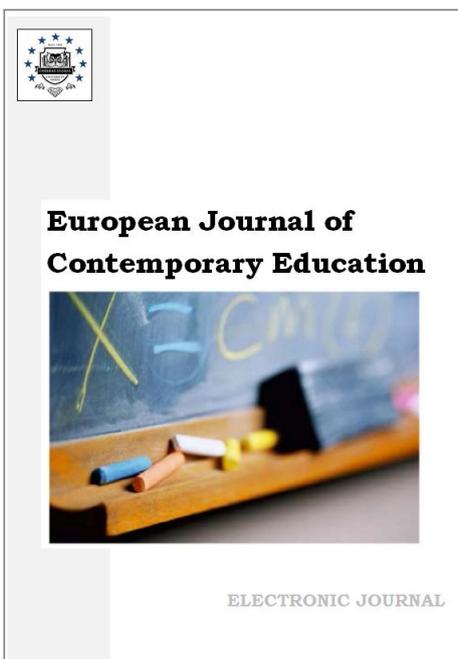




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Cherkas Global University (1992–2022): Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

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Abstract

This work is dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Cherkas Global University, a private research organization. It traces the evolution of this organization from a military historical society to a university and outlines some of the key characteristics of its development.

The primary source drawn upon is 'Cherkas Global University (1992–2022): A Collection of Documents', a collection of published works that includes 50 documents spanning the period from 1992 to 2022. In addition, use was made of periodical press materials, namely relevant materials from the newspaper Vestnik Leib-Gvardii.

In terms of methodology, use was made of the following traditional principles: systematicity, objectivity, and historicism. The integrated use of these principles helped to transform a vast, scrappy patchwork of data into a systematized body of knowledge, synthesize this kind of information, consider the line of events in a historical sequence, and arrive at conclusive results.

The author's conclusion is that over the 30-year period the organization has come a long way since its inception in 1992 from a regional military historical society in the city of Sochi to a private research university in Washington, DC. In this period, the organization has built a fruitful relationship with its foreign partners, including colleges in the world's top 100. The organization has its own publishing house, which handles top-rated journals. There have been projects on indexing scholarly journals on the university's platforms and popularizing research in the area of history. The university has acted since 2020 as the organizer of the annual research contest 'Slavery in the Past and Present'. In addition, the university is distinguished by significant publication activity, with a focus on research topics such as the history of world civilizations and professional and pedagogical training. The above allows us to look to the future with optimism and take pride in our past and present achievements.

Keywords: Cherkas Global University, Vestnik Leib-Gvardii newspaper, International Network Center for Fundamental and Applied Research, history of an organization.

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1. Introduction

Cherkas Global University is a private research university. It will turn 30 on August 1, 2022. The article explores its entire dynamic journey from the military historical organization Leib Guard Regiment (1992) to the International Network Center for Fundamental and Applied Research (2014), and, finally, to Cherkas Global University via reorganization (2021).

2. Materials and methods

The primary source drawn upon is 'Cherkas Global University (1992–2022): A Collection of Documents' (Cherkas Global..., 2022), a collection of published works that includes 50 documents spanning the period from 1992 to 2022. In addition, use was made of periodical press materials, namely relevant materials from the newspaper Vestnik Leib-Gvardii.

In terms of methodology, use was made of the following traditional principles: systematicity, objectivity, and historicism. The integrated use of these principles helped to transform a vast, scrappy patchwork of data into a systematized body of knowledge, synthesize this kind of information, consider the line of events in a historical sequence, and arrive at conclusive results.

3. Discussion

The historiography on this subject is relatively thin. It can be divided into the following two key themes:

- 1) The history of Cherkas Global University;
- 2) Publications on the founder of Cherkas Global University, A.A. Cherkasov.

The first group includes the following works: 'A History of Cherkas Global University: Its Making (1992–2014)' (Taran, 2021), 'The Newspaper Vestnik Leib-Gvardii (1992–1997) as a Historical Source' (Rajović, 2021), and 'INCFAR: Characteristics and Challenges (A Fifth Anniversary Tribute)' (Tarakanov, Ponomareva, 2019). These works cover different chronological periods in the development of the organization. Specifically, K.V. Taran's work analyzes the development of the organization in the period 1992–2014. The one by G. Rajović is focused on the Vestnik Leib-Gvardii newspaper solely, while the one by V.V. Tarakanov and M.A. Ponomareva discusses the organization's activity in the period 2014–2019.

The second group includes the following works: 'Aleksandr Cherkasov: A Scholar, Publisher, and Organizer of Research Collaborations (To the 20th Anniversary of the Scholar's Research and Pedagogical Activity)' (Tarakanov, Ludwig, 2019), 'New Trends in the Organization of Historical Research in the South of Russia: A.A. Cherkasov's Activities in the Study of Slavery' (Peretyatko, 2021), and 'Students' Humanitarian Science Club Activity in 2006–2012' (Ermachkov et al., 2018). The first of these works discusses the research-and-pedagogical activity of A.A. Cherkasov. It is dedicated to the 20th anniversary of his scholarly activity. The one by A.Yu. Peretyatko explores A.A. Cherkasov's activity in the area of the study of slavery. Finally, the work by I.A. Ermachkov and his colleagues analyzes the work of the science club headed by A.A. Cherkasov in the period 2006–2012.

4. Results

The history of Cherkas Global University is closely associated with its founder – Aleksandr Arvelodovich Cherkasov, a Doctor of Historical Science. Mr. Cherkasov was born in 1974 in the city of Sochi. He is descended from the ancient family of the Cherkasovs (Keretsky's), whose progenitor was Prokopy Cherkas, born circa 1685 (Cherkasov, 2021: 1671-1682). Mr. Cherkasov is a tenth-generation descendant of this family.

In early 1992, Mr. Cherkasov established the military historical society Leib Guard Regiment in Sochi, and as early as August 1, 1992, he authorized the publication of the Society's monthly newspaper Vestnik Leib-Gvardii (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 7). This newspaper was published on and off up until 1997, resulting in 14 issues, 12 of which are held today in the US Library of Congress.

The newspaper pursued educational aims, and as early as 1992, it began to carry materials on the history of cadet corps (military educational institutions in the Russian Empire) and the history of World War I. The date August 1, 1992 became the starting point for the history of our organization.

Mr. Cherkasov turned to the educational process as early as 1993. On January 28, 1993, he authorized the establishment of a cadet regiment for youth aged 11 to 14 (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 8). However, this cadet regiment was disbanded a few months later due to a lack of funding. Mr. Cherkasov returned to the educational process in December 1996, when he introduced a theoretical course of study at the above military historical society (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 8-9). This course of study incorporated special military disciplines and was about 6 months long.

Mr. Cherkasov graduated from university in 1999. He then joined the Department of National History at Sochi State University. In 2002, he defended his candidate's thesis. In 2003, he launched his first scholarly journal, *Istoriya i Istoriki v Kontekste Vremeni*, and in 2006, the first issue of the historical journal *Bylye Gody* came out. In 2007, Mr. Cherkasov defended his doctoral dissertation.

In 2010, Mr. Cherkasov began to combine his research work with entrepreneurial activity. Specifically, on November 1, 2010, he launched the monthly multidisciplinary journal *European Researcher* (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 10-15). This would turn out a commercially successful project, one launched at the right time – at a time when there was a shortage of open-access journals in Russia.

On March 25, 2012, Mr. Cherkasov set up in Sochi the commercial organization *Researcher Academic Publishing House* (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 16-26), which continues to be in operation today. The period 2010–2018 saw the launch of over 50 scholarly journals under the purview of this organization, most of which continue to be published to this day. The launching of new scholarly journals necessitated creating a platform for indexing scholarly journals, and on June 11, 2013, Mr. Cherkasov launched the database *Open Academic Journals Index* (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 27). Today, this database indexes nearly 3,300 open-access scholarly journals from 116 countries.

In the spring of 2014, Mr. Cherkasov left Sochi State University, and on May 26, 2014, he set up his own research center – the *International Network Center for Fundamental and Applied Research* (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 37-41). In July 2014, the Center became home to three labs and a research department (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 47). The center primarily focused on research into the history of the Caucasus, slavery as a phenomenon, and the history of pedagogy.

In pursuit of international cooperation, on September 6, 2015, Mr. Cherkasov established the *Eastern European Historical Society* (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 50-52). This enabled the Center to engage in joint research projects with foreign scholars and provided a boost in publication activity in foreign journals. The Society received input from well-known historians such as Roin Metreveli (Georgia), Sorin Arhire (Romania), Darko Darovec (Slovenia), Asen Kozhukharov (Bulgaria), Miodrag Markovic (Serbia), Sergey Sulyak (Moldova), Gocha Tsetskhladze (UK), Evgeny Vodyasov (Russia), Andrey Dvornichenko (Russia), Evgeny Krinko (Russia), Pavol Tisliar (Slovakia), Andrii Lebid (Ukraine), and Michal Smigel (Slovakia).

The services of foreign specialists were enlisted by the Center as well. Specifically, between 2014 and 2016 it received input from researchers such as Nugzar Ter-Oganov (Israel), Sergey Degtyarev (Ukraine), Goran Rajovic (Serbia), and Jacob Sarfo (Ghana). At that time, the bulk of its staff were Russians, mostly researchers from Sochi State University (Anvar Mamadaliev, Olga Natolochnaya, Konstantin Taran, Violetta Molchanova, and Natalya Shevchenko), research students of Aleksandr Cherkasov (Ivan Ermachkov and Lyubov Polyakova), and external specialists (Nikolas Mityukov, Timur Magsumov, and Artem Peretyatko).

From 2016 to 2018, Mr. Cherkasov was a visiting professor at *Matej Bel University* in Banská Bystrica (Slovakia). His frequent visits to a foreign university prompted him to open a publishing house in the capital of an Eastern European nation within the European Union, with his choice ultimately falling on Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. In January 2018, a clone of the publishing house in Sochi was set up in Bratislava. It was named *Academic Publishing House Researcher s.r.o.* (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 54). The 50 journals under the purview of the commercial organization in Sochi were moved to Slovakia, with just one journal, *European Researcher*, staying in Russia.

During the period 2016–2019, Mr. Cherkasov took part in four Arctic expeditions organized as part of the *Arctic Floating University* program (2016 – Novaya Zemlya's western coast; 2017 – Franz Josef Land; 2018 – Novaya Zemlya's eastern and western coasts; 2019 – Spitsbergen). As a result of these expeditions, scholarly ties were successfully established with researchers from Switzerland, Canada, and China.



Fig. 1. A group of researchers holding an American flag and an INCFAR flag in Ny-Ålesund on the island of Spitsbergen (Norway) in July of 2019 (A. Cherkasov second right).

In February 2018, Mr. Cherkasov resolved to move the International Network Center for Fundamental and Applied Research from Sochi to Washington, DC (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 55). As a result, 'INCFAR' became the official abbreviation for the organization (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 56). In the fall of 2018, Mr. Cherkasov took his first familiarization trip to Washington.

The experience with creating Open Academic Journals Index¹ indicated that indexing articles was not the pinnacle in popularizing research. Consequently, on April 30, 2018, the Eastern European Scientific Information Agency was established (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 57). This project helped to kick off the process of picking the more interesting articles on history published in Eastern European journals and presenting them on the platform of the Information Agency.

Central to the activity of the Research Center were information materials, searching for which required a significant amount of time. Consequently, on January 10, 2020, the decision was taken to establish the INCFAR's fundamental electronic library (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 58). The launch of the platform was followed by the uploading of the literature for the Center. The library numbered over 60,000 items as at May 2022.

That same year, 2020, Mr. Cherkasov began to focus on holding international contests for the best research work. On May 10, 2020, it was announced that a contest dedicated to the fifth anniversary of the Eastern European Historical Society would be held soon, the first event of this kind (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 59).

Three weeks later, they officially instituted Slavery in the Past and Present, an annual narrowly specialized contest for research works on slavery (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 60). The contest had a prize of \$2,250.

On January 8, 2021, Mr. Cherkasov resolved to reorganize the INCFAR into Cherkas Global University (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 61). The organization was reorganized into a corporation with a board of directors. The Board included Sergey Degtyarev (Sumy, Ukraine), Jacob Sarfo (Effiduase-Koforidua, Ghana), and Aleksandr Cherkasov (Los Angeles, USA), with Mr. Cherkasov appointed as the President of Cherkas Global University.

In 2021, on the 4th of July, the date on which they celebrate Independence Day in the US, the Slovak publishing house Academic Publishing House Researcher s.r.o. was reorganized into Cherkas Global University Press (Cherkas Global..., 2022: 73), and the journals from Slovakia were moved to the US. Today, Cherkas Global University Press numbers 39 journals, some of which are

¹ It became a full-text database in 2015. The database numbers a hefty over 200,000 articles as at 2022.

indexed in the top-rated databases Scopus and Web of Science. Specifically, the historical journal *Bylye Gody* (Editor-in-Chief – Sergey Degtyarev), founded in 2006, is indexed in both Scopus and Web of Science, as is *European Journal of Contemporary Education* (Editor-in-Chief – Yury Tyunnikov), founded in 2012. The journal *Media Education* (Editor-in-Chief – Alexander Fedorov), founded in 2005, is indexed in Web of Science. *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy* (Editor-in-Chief – Anastasia Levitskaya), founded in 2016, is indexed in Scopus.

Some of the Publishing House's scholarly journals are indexed in CAS (Chemical Abstracts Service), a division of the American Chemical Society, which are as follows: *European Journal of Medicine* (Editor-in-Chief – Anatolii Bykov), *European Journal of Molecular Biotechnology* (Editor-in-Chief – Valerii Novochadov), and *European Reviews of Chemical Research* (Editor-in-Chief – Viktor Bekhterev).

In addition, the Publishing House works with several revived journals from the Russian Empire period, namely the journal of the Military Department *Voennyi Sbornik* (Editor-in-Chief – Ivan Ermachkov), the journal of the Ministry of Public Education *Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnogo Prosveshcheniya* (Editor-in-Chief – Dmitrii Kudinov), and the historical journal *Russkaya Starina* (Editor-in-Chief – Evgeny Krinko). There are also a few narrowly specialized journals, namely the journal on the history of slavery *Slavery: Theory and Practice* (Editor-in-Chief – Sergey Dudarev), the journal *Biogeosystem Technique* (Editors-in-Chief – Valery Kalinitchenko and Artemi Cerdà), and *Propaganda in the World and Local Conflicts* (Editor-in-Chief – Andrii Lebid), the world's only journal on the history of military propaganda.

The editorial boards of journals under the purview of Cherkas Global University Press include scholars who are well-known in the research-and-pedagogical community, namely Evgeniya Blagodatskaya (Germany), Tatiana Minkina (Russia), Sudhakar Srivastava (India), Vishnu D. Rajput (Germany), Peter F. Surai (UK), Utku Kose (Turkey), Pandian Vasant (Malaysia), Gerhard-Wilhelm Weber (Poland), Marius Brazaitis (Lithuania), Oleg O. Rybak (Russia), Romualdas K. Malinauskas (Lithuania), Paul R. Josephson (USA), Roger Markwick (Australia), Boris Mironov (Russia), Joshua Sanborn (USA), Frithjof Benjamin Schenk (Switzerland), Willard Sunderland (USA), Guangxiang Zhang (China), Rushan Ziatdinov (South Korea), Jana Birova (Slovakia), Boticki Ivica (Croatia), Szijarto Imre (Hungary), Maria Ranieri (Italy), Sirkku Kotilainen (Finland), Henry Giroux (Canada), and Emma Camarero (Spain).

At the time of its reorganization into Cherkas Global University, the organization numbered around 20 staff members, who were employed at the two labs, the Laboratory for World Civilizations and the Laboratory for Professional and Pedagogical Training, and the Research Information Department.

Cherkas Global University in Scopus

As at July 17, 2022, Cherkas Global University numbered 415 works written by 24 staff members of the organization.

The top 20 organizations interacting with Cherkas Global University include Volgograd State University (284 works), Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (148), Penza State University of Architecture and Construction (66), Université de Genève (55), Sumy State University (54), East European History Society (37), Matej Bel University (21), Universidad Cristóbal Colón (16), Tel Aviv University (10), and others.

The organization's works have been published in the following journals: *Bylye Gody*, *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, *Vestnik Sankt Peterburgskogo Universiteta. Istoriya*, *International Journal of Media and Information Literacy*, *Rusin*, *Terra Sebus*, *Muzeológia a Kultúrne Dedičstvo*, *Voprosy Istorii*, *Annales: Anali za Istrske in Mediteranske Študije*, *Series Historia et Sociologia*, *Brukenthal Acta Musei*, *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences*, *Konstantínove Listy*, and others.

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the number of Cherkas Global University publications in Scopus across the years.

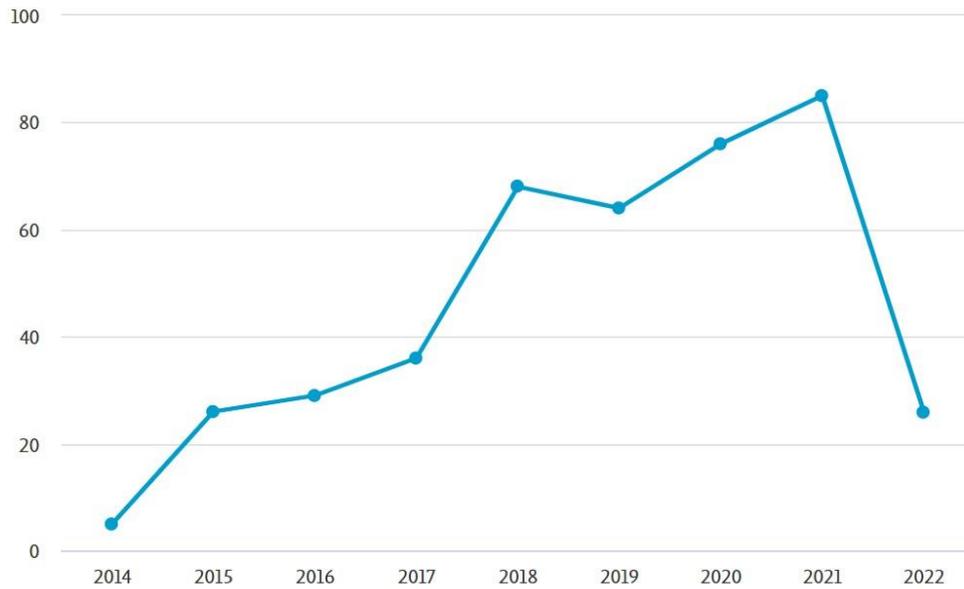


Fig. 2. Distribution of the number of Cherkas Global University publications in Scopus across the years.

Note that the data for 2022 in Figure 2 are currently incomplete.

Figure 3 illustrates the organization’s interaction with researchers from other countries.

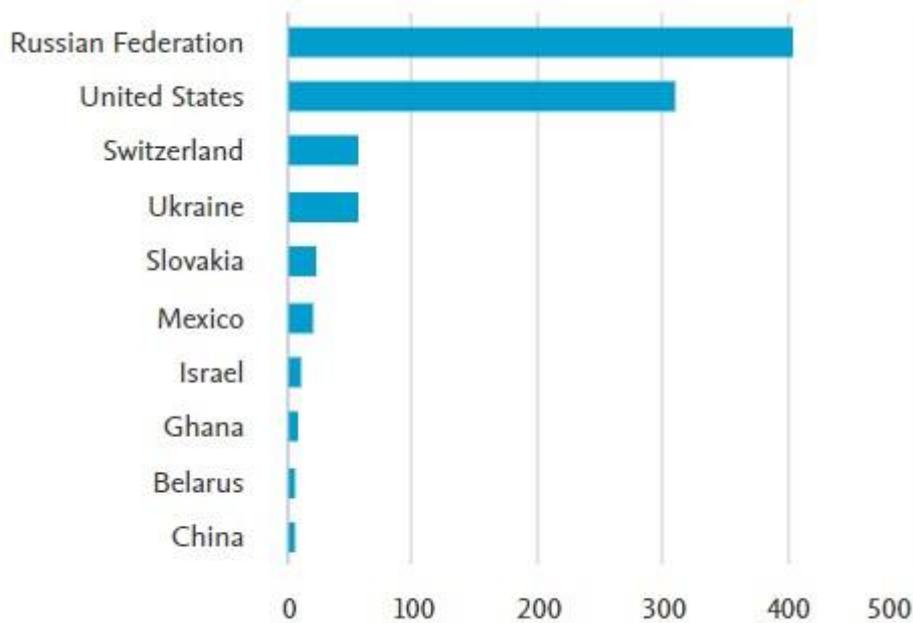


Fig. 3. Top 10 countries with which Cherkas Global University has engaged in joint activity.

As evidenced in Figure 3, the university has actively engaged in collaboration with researchers from Switzerland, Ukraine, Slovakia, and Mexico, followed by Israel, Ghana, China, and other nations.

In terms of the area of knowledge, the largest portion of publications has been accounted for by Social Sciences (56.1 %) and Arts and Humanities (40.7 %) (Figure 4).

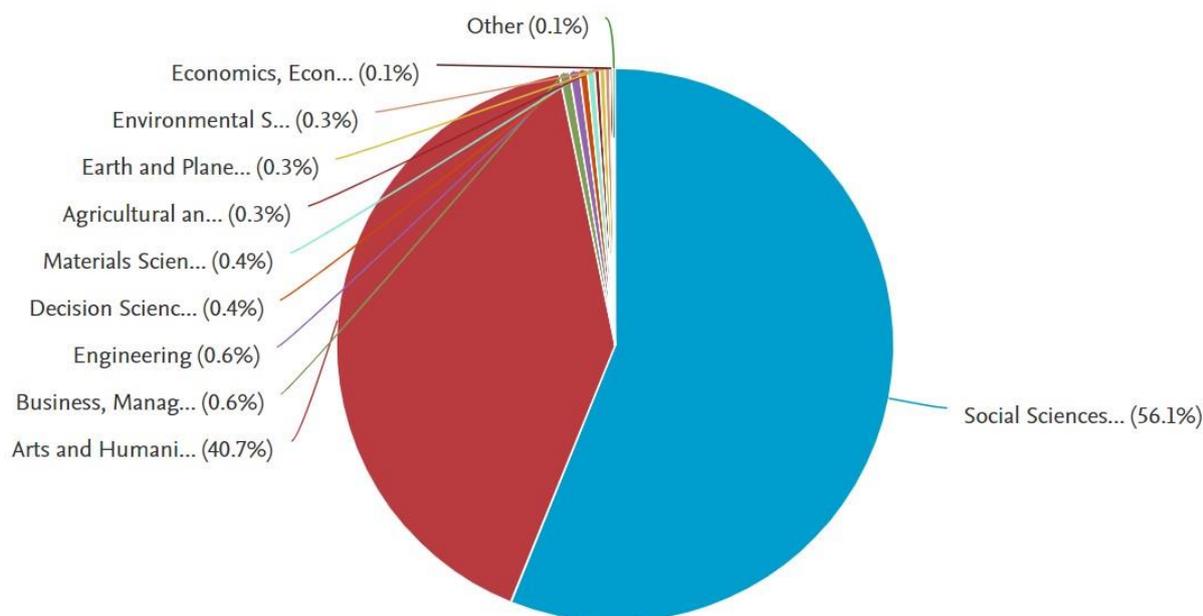


Fig. 4. Distribution of the organization's publications across the different areas of knowledge

The organization's most cited papers

This selection incorporates papers with the most citations (22 to 54 citations).

The presented works fall under two themes. Most of the papers, 16 out of the 20, deal with the subject of the system of public education in different regions across the Russian Empire, which is an area of focus at Cherkas Global University. These works were published between 2016 and 2020. Some of them explore the entire system of public education in the Caucasus (Shevchenko et al., 2016; Magsumov et al., 2018; Natolochnaya et al., 2018), while others are focused on specific regions of the Caucasus, like Kuban Oblast (Molchanova et al., 2019; Molchanova et al., 2019a; Molchanova et al., 2020), Kars Oblast (Magsumov et al., 2020), and Tiflis Governorate (Mamadaliyev et al., 2020; Mamadaliyev et al., 2020a).

Besides the Caucasus, research has also been conducted into public education in Vologda Governorate (Cherkasov et al., 2019; Cherkasov et al., 2019a), Vyatka Governorate (Magsumov et al., 2018), the Don region (Peretyatko, Zulfugarzade, 2017; Peretyatko, Zulfugarzade, 2017a), and Vilna Governorate (Natolochnaya et al., 2019; Natolochnaya et al., 2019a).

The second portion of the publications are works on the history of the Caucasus published between 2015 and 2017. During this period, a group of researchers led by A.A. Cherkasov implemented a fundamental research project entitled 'The Caucasus in the Dialogue of Civilizations: Mechanisms behind Global Change (The Experience from the Period between the 18th and 19th Centuries)' (Cherkasov et al., 2015; Cherkasov et al., 2016; Cherkasov et al., 2016a; Cherkasov et al., 2017).

5. Conclusion

Over the 30-year period, the organization has come a long way since its inception in 1992 from a regional military historical society in the city of Sochi to a private research university in Washington, DC. In this period, the organization has built a fruitful relationship with its foreign partners, including colleges in the world's top 100. The organization has its own publishing house, which handles top-rated journals. There have been projects on indexing scholarly journals on the university's platforms and popularizing research in the area of history. The university has acted since 2020 as the organizer of the annual research contest 'Slavery in the Past and Present'. In addition, the university is distinguished by significant publication activity, with a focus on research topics such as the history of world civilizations and professional and pedagogical training. The above allows us to look to the future with optimism and take pride in our past and present achievements.

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