STALINGRAD STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE OPERATION (19.11.1942 - 02.02.1943): FACTORS OF SUCCESS OF TANK FOR SURROUNDING AND DESTRUCTION OF LARGE Factions OF ENEMY

Author in this article continuous publications on the Battle of Stalingrad, revealing the role of army armored troops of Red Army during the breakthrough of the enemy's defense and surroundings of the 6th and 4th tank armies during the Stalingrad strategic offensive operation in the autumn-winter of 1942-1943, as the only one operation of the southwest, Don and Stalingrad fronts. The importance of groups of tanks of direct support of the infantry during the breakthrough of the enemy's defense and mobile units (tank and mechanized corps) during the completion of the breakthrough of the main enemy's defensive zone and the development of success inside of the enemy lines have been analyzed. The experience of the association of three tank corps for closer interaction under the general leadership of one of these commanders was singled out, which was the basis for the formation in the spring of 1943 of tank armies of a uniform composition.

Key words: Stalingrad strategic offensive operations; front line; tank corps.

Introduction

During the Second World War, in the offensive operations of the Red Army occupied an important place in the operations of the environment and the defeat of the surrounding grouping of the enemy. These operations are complex and demand from commanders, headquarters and personnel of diligent preparation, high organizational work of the headquarters and command and control units during the preparation and in the conduct of fighting (actions). The strategic offensive operation of Stalingrad occupies a special place in its scale and results, consisting of a set of front operations and operations of groups of fronts, which should be considered in stages. The relevance of military and historical research of Stalingrad Strategic Offensive operations during the war imposed by Russian militarists in 2014 has theoretical and practical significance for the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The level of military arts nowadays are not derogate from the experience gained during operations in World War II, particularly in Stalingrad Strategic Offensive, but rather confirms its viability. It requires constant development of military ideas aimed at improving the forms and methods of modern operations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. And taking into account the experience of military experts will contribute to the expansion of their knowledge, outlook, development of creative thinking.

The historiography of the problem, which includes the question of the combat use of tank troops, is extremely broad and multifaceted. And Soviet historiography occupies a prominent position, and since the end of the twentieth century - Russian historiography.

Stalingrad's strategic offensive operation enriched the theory and practice of martial arts with new techniques and methods of armed struggle, as evidenced by numerous sources and scientific works, memoirs and popular literature.

In general, all the scientific works devoted to the course of the war are marked by the ideological stamps of the totalitarian era. The best of them, in our opinion, is “The History of the Second World War” in 12 volumes (published in 1973-1982), which contains a large scientific and historical material. Despite ideological postulates and pre-programmed conclusions, the works of Soviet researchers of these years were marked by a significant factual and contained a lot of materials devoted to tank troops. The best of them are the works of G.A Deborin1, the collective monograph “The Second World War”, edited by Lieutenant General S.P. Platonov, Major-General N.G. Pavlenko and Colonel I.V. Porotkin2.

Lots of interesting information can be gleaned, bypassing obligatory ideological postulates and stamps, and from other Soviet scientific literature, where military-theoretical views on the use of tank armies were considered, as well as the participation of tank units (associations) in campaigns of 1942-43 years3.

In general, studies of Soviet, especially contemporary Russian historians, helped to study the history of the development and use of tank troops.

The question of the history of the use of tank armies has long been studied in Western Europe and the United States. Moreover, national schools not only make their peculiarities, but also maintain some tendentiousness. German historiography has always been characterized by scrupulosity and attention to numbers and details. Actually, she managed to maintain objectivity and coverage of such a difficult topic as the Second World War, which provided a sufficient fact that allows us to understand the features of the use of tank armies in various campaigns and operations. Another feature of the German researchers was enthusiastic about the descriptions of the fighting of individual units, parts and compounds, especially the tank compounds, where it was possible to show the strong points of the Wehrmacht. Modern German historians are very restrained about the idea of a preventive war and are in no hurry to declare Stalin as an aggressor.

English historiography has become the most critical of the attitude of both - to their own and opponents. And although tank issues are second only (fleet occupies Britain's traditional championship). Not the most active among British military theorists of that time was Biezel Henry Liddell Hart. His main ideas relate to the mechanization and motorization of the army. B. Liddle Hart also survived the Second World War.

French military-theoretical thought was not far behind from English. French historians also did not justify their military-political leadership. The most prominent of them was Brigadier General Charles de Gaulle. He advocated for the mechanization and motorization of the army.

The works of American researchers, on the other hand, are rather superficial and contain whole series of minor inaccuracies. Their authors are hard to blame for deliberate engagement or supremacy. It is rather negligence for the mechanization and motorization of the army. B. Liddle Hart also survived the Second World War.

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The purpose of the article

On the basis of studying and analyzing of archival documents, memoirs and scientific literature about the Stalingrad strategic offensive operation, to identify the peculiarities of its preparation and conduct as operations on the surroundings, to identify the features and peculiarities of combat use of tank troops, to offer suggestions on the use of the experience in military theory and practice of modern military construction.

Methods

To achieve the purpose of the study, special methods of military-historical science and general scientific methods were used.

Due to the application of the historical method of research, they could identify the stages and with the maximum possible reliability to recreate the factors of the success of the tank troops in the Stalingrad strategic offensive operation, to clarify its results and consequences.

Due to the use of the logical method, the factors that influenced the preparation and conduct of the operation...
on the surrounding and the destruction of a large group of
enemy were identified and revealed, the features of combat
use of shock groups in the operation were identified and
analyzed, the contribution of the acquired combat expe-
rience to the development of military art were revealed.

Results
Preparations for the transition to a counterattack began
during the defensive battles near Stalingrad (Samsonov,

The plan for the destruction of the German group on
the Volga was the most important part of the plan of the
winter campaign of 1942/43, the strategic goal of which
was the defeat of troops throughout the southern wing
of the German army, the seizure of a strategic initiative and
a breakthrough during the war in favor for the Soviet Union
(Great Victory on the Volga, 1965: 219).

The idea of a counterattack was to smash the flanks of
the main group of the enemy (Vol. 19, 1965, No. 10. p. 18)
with powerful strikes from the bridgeheads Serafinovich,
Kletsk and from the lake area south of Stalingrad and,
developing an offensive in the directions that converge on
Kalach, to surround and destroy the main forces of the
enemy, who operating in the area of Stalingrad.

The fronts were tasked with operations. Fighting troops:
to inflict a major blow from the bridgehead southwest front
(SWF) of Serafinovich, defeat the enemy in the frontline
and, by developing an offensive, by the end of the third day
of offensive, enter the Kalacha region, where, together
with the troops of the Stalingrad front (SF) and the Don front
(DF), to complete the encirclement. Simultaneously part
of the forces went out on the River Chir and create an
active external front of the surrounding.

SF troops: strike from the area of the Sarpin lakes,
break through the enemy's defense, and, developing an
offensive against the Soviet, unit with the troops of the
SWF, to surround and further in cooperation with other
fronts, to destroy the enemy group. In order to secure its
front group, it was necessary to part of the forces to step
on Kotelnikovo and create an external front of the en-
circlement.

DF: strike two attacks in the direction of Vertichy with
the purpose of surroundings and defeat the enemy group
near the bend of the Don. In the future, together with the
troops of the SWF, and the SF, to destroy the surrounding
group of the enemy (History of War and Military Art, 1970:
198).

At the same time, it was planned to inflict auxiliary strikes
from the regions of Kachalinsk and Kletsk in the direction
of Vertichy to cut down the enemy troops defending
themselves in the bend of Don, from the Stalingrad group.

An significant role in the preparation of a counterattack
in Stalingrad was played by the reserves of Supreme High
Command General Headquarters (SHCGH), which
consisting mainly of new formations (History of Military Art,

But to determine the time of the transition to the
offensive, the composition of the shock groups and the
direction of their attacks on the German command was not
successful (Fateful decision, 1958: 166; War-Historical
Journal, 1961, No. 4. S. 89). The uncertainty factor at this
important stage of the struggle was of great importance in
the course of further development.

The concentration of troops near Stalingrad and
regrouping was carried out only at night with maintaining
the strict measures of masking. General A.G Rodin, who
commanded 26 tk and 5 TA, later wrote in his memoirs:
"Unexpectedness was provided with all care and severity.
When sending trains by rail, even their chiefs did not know
the way of movement and station of destination. The
concentration of parts after unloading took place only at
night .... The task was known to a certain circle of people"
(Rodin: 134).

The beginning of the offensive for the SWF and the DF
was planned for November 19, and for the SF - by 20. It
was planned to simultaneously create the internal and
external fronts of the encirclement. The inner front of the
surrounding was created by tank, mechanized and cavalry
corps. At the outer front there were rifle and cavalry
divisions. Operative line up of the fronts was supposed to be
in one echelon, and the general armies - in two
echelons.

The strike groups had a significant advantage over their
enemy in terms of manpower and technology in the direction
of major strikes. As pointed out by K. Tippelskirh, the
direction of the enemy's strikes was determined by the
image of the front line: the left flank of the German group
stretching nearly 300 km from Stalingrad to the bend of the
Don in the district of Novaya Kalyba, and the short right
flank, which was located particularly weak forces, began
near Stalingrad and was lost in the Kalmyk steppe
(Tippelskirh, 2001: 349). And G. Djerr noted that "the com-
mand of the Soviet forces was skillful ... has set a
breakthrough point so far from the flank of the German
troops that the assistance of the German reserves did not
come immediately" (Djerr, 1957: 66).

by In all armies for the artillery preparation of the attack
were involved artillery of other echelons. 45-mm battalion
and regimental, as well as 76-mm regimental guns were
planned to be used during the artillery training period for
direct gunfire shooting, and with the onset of the attack, as
infantry and tanks guards. For the support of infantry and
tanks, it was planned to use part of the gun of diving artillery
and anti-tank artillery regiments. In the armies, which had
on the reinforcement of the cannon regiments of the
SHCGH Reserve, armed groups of long-range action were
created.

Fighting artillery was planned for periods: artillery
training, artillery attack assault, and artillery support for
infantry and tanks during combat at the depths of the
enemy's defense (Operation SBAS, 1958: 33-44).

Much attention was paid to the air defense of the troops,
for which the SWF and the DF had two, and the SF - one
aircraft artillery division and several anti-aircraft artillery

The main tasks of the aircraft were: the maintenance of
conquered domination in the air; Coverage from the air
strikes of the enemy of the strike groups of armies in the
starting position for the offensive; suppression and de-
struction of the living force and fire equipment, as well as
the destruction of defensive structures in the direction of
major strikes of the armies during the breakthrough of the
enemy's defense; direct support for the troops coming on
offensive; air cover of mobile armies in the waiting areas
and when they enter the突破口; suppressing the
tactical and operational reserves of the enemy and

8 The bandwidth of the offensive of the fronts ranged from 85 to
180 km, and the armies from 35 to 110 km. The fronts broke the
enemy's defense on two and three sections, and the army - on
one, a width of 5 to 16 km. The depth of operations for the fronts
reached 60-140 km, and the armies - from 50-60 km to 110-140 km,
the duration was 2-3 days, and the rate of offensive planned
operations for the front reaches 60-140 km, and armies - from 50-
60 km to 110-140 km, the duration was 2-3 days, and the pace of
the offensive was planned 25-45 km.

9 It consists of 3-4 gun regiments, approximately one for each
division.
obstructing their approach to breakthrough areas (Operation SBAS, 1958: 45).

The plan of aviation security provided for the beginning of the operation to strike night bombers on the combat orders of the enemy in the main lane of defense, and in the break-through period - the main forces of 17 PAs suppress hostile artillery positions, support points, KP and nodes in the direction of the main strike. With the beginning of the success of the aircraft, aviation was supposed to strike at enemy airfield and reserves, and part of the forces to support the attack of tank corps (History of Military Art, 1963: 202).

Fighting of tank and mechanized parts and units were planned according to the order of the People's Commissar of Defense (PCD) No. 325 from October 16, 1942 (Russian Archives, 1997: 334). Tank and mechanized corps were planned to be used as echelons of success 11. They were intended to introduce into the breakthrough in the stripes of the armies advancing in the direction of the main strikes of the fronts with tasks: rapidly developing the offensive in the operational inside of the enemy's defense, defeating its immediate operational reserves, reach the rear of the main group of the enemy and surround it.

Individual tank brigades 12 and battalions were added to infantry divisions to be used as group of tanks for direct infantry support (BPP). But due to insufficient number of Tank Army BPP 13 as such, it was planned to use part of the forces of tank and mechanized corps. This weakened the impact of the last, but the army commanders were forced to take such measures because of the lack of tank units at their disposal (Operation SBAS, 1958: 46-47). The main task of the BPP tanks was to destroy enemy infantry. Typically, tanks were not allowed to engage with enemy tanks (except in cases of explicit advantage).

The skillful training of Soviet troops in a counterattack notices the A. Vert. "Preparing for an offensive was conducted with the highest secrecy .... The Germans did not have a clear idea of the amount of equipment and troops delivered (mainly at night) to the area on the north of the Don and to the two main Soviet bridgeheads in the twist of the Don. ... the Germans did not have an idea of the power of the blow that was being prepared" (Vert, 2001: 353).

The coordination of the actions of all three fronts was assigned to the representative of the Stake Colonel-General O. M. Vasilevsky.

On the morning of November 19, after the 80-minute artillery training, an attack on the forces of the SWF and the DF went on the offensive.

A crushing fire inflicted heavy damage on the enemy. However, due to bad things, far from all targets were destroyed, especially on the flanks of the strike group of the SWF, where the enemy made the greatest resistance to the advancing troops (Samsonov, 1989: 375).

Unfavorable meteorological conditions did not allow aerial training. But the artillery fire was so powerful that the infantry connections of the first echelons of 5 TA and 21 A SWF for 4-5 hours moved to a depth of 3-4 km, that means they broke through the first position of the main band of the enemy's defense. In order to complete the breakthrough of the main lanes of defense, at the breakthrough area 5 TA (commander-lieutengant-general P. L. Romanenko), the main forces of 1 tk (commander-lieutenant-general P. L. Butkov) and 26 tk (commander-major-general O. G. Rodin), and at the breakthrough area 21 A (commander - Major General I. M. Chistyakov) - 4 tk (commander - Major-General A. G. Kravchenko). The massive attacks of large groups dazzled the enemy. He began to hurry backward. For 4-5 hrs. Tank corps, together with the rifle connections, completely the completed the breakthrough of the tactical zone of the enemy's defense and entered the operational space (History of Military Art, 1966: 403-404).

On the first day of the offensive on November 19, the strike group of the SWF broke through the tactical zone of the enemy's defense and advanced units of tank corps moved forward inside for 20-35 km (Great Victory on the Volga, 1965: 262-264).

The output of the three tank corps at operating depth made a huge impact on the entire further course of the operation. He led to the partition of the 3A (Romanian) opposing troops on isolated parts, which lost their interaction, which forced them to move away in different directions (History of Military Art, 1963: 208).

The next day, the Soviet troops, developing an offensive, struck at the operational reserves of the enemy, 1 tk, together with 8 kk, threw 22 td (German) on south of Medvezhe. And 1 tk, developing the offensive, by the end of November, 22 went to the river Liska in 15-20 km north of its mouth. At the same time, 26 tons were dropped from the Perelazovsky region to the east of Part 1, td (Romanian) on November 20, and, continuing the offensive on the southeast, on November 22, pushed for Don in the Kalach region, seizing the crossing over the river, 4 pm until evening on November 21 went to the Don to the north of Kalach.

Rifile units 5 TAs and 21A the strikes of parts of their internal flanks captured the troops of two Romanian corps in the Raspynskaya region, and the remaining parts using the success of tank corps, quickly moved forward.

The SF troops started an offensive on November 20 in adverse weather conditions, which also ruled out aviation's actions. The armies went on the offensive alternately one after another, as the fog dissipated.

Connection 57 A (Commander-Major General, since January 19, 1943 - Lieutenant-General F.I. Tolbukhin), 51 A (commander-major-general M.I. Trufanov) and 64 A (commander-lieutenant-general M.S. Shumilov) on the first day broke the defense of the enemy and provided the introduction of a battle of 13 and 4 microns (mc), 4 kk, which by the end of the day moved to a depth of 10-15 km.

After the breakthrough of the enemy's defense, the troops of all three fronts were able to develop an offensive at operational depths. Tank and mechanized corps moved up to 50-70 km a day (History of Wars and Military Art, 1970: 202).

The German command made attempts to prevent the connection of armored and mechanized buildings of the SWF and the SF. For this purpose, it sent to the Romano district 24 and 16 td and they managed to stop the Soviet offensive after they captured Kalach and a large bridgehead in the area and on the left bank of the Don.

Thus, on November 23, the surroundings of the enemy group in the area of Stalingrad were completed. On this day, the troops of the 64th and 57th SF securely took the border along the Chervlena River, blocking the ways to go south, and to the Don in the Kalach region, advanced

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detachments of infantry divisions of 21A SWF (Operation SABAS, 1958: 52).

Inside, there were 22 divisions 6 A and 4 TA units, 15 infantry divisions, 3 tank, 3 motorized, 1 cavalry, as well as 160 separate units. The total number reached 330 thousand people. Troops DF failed to cut off the enemy in the bend of Don, and the enemy partially went to the main group that operated directly near Stalingrad.

In addition to the 6A and 6T forces, the Soviet troops defeated the 3rd Romanian Army, 48 tk, which comprised the enemy's operational reserve, inflicted defeats 6 and 7 of the Romanians operating south of Stalingrad and were operationally subordinated to the commander of 4 TA (German) (Great Victory on the Volga, 1965: 283).

By the end of November 23 Soviet troops have created internal and external fronts. The total length of the outer front was: in the SWF band - 165 km, and in the stretch of the SW - more than 100 km. The maximum distance of the external front of the environmental one was equal to the SW - 100 km, and at the SF - 75-80 km. Minimum situation was within 15-20 km. At the same time, the least distance from the outside was internal, it was in the most responsible directions, from which the enemy was more likely to carry out a counterattack in order to release his surrounded group (Great Victory on the Volga, 1965: 283-284).

On November 24, an offensive against the Soviet troops began. Against the group of opponents surrounded at Stalingrad went on the offensive 21 (Russian archive, 1996: 415) 65, 24 and 66 A DF, 62, 64 and 57 A SF. Fierce battles lasted until November 30th. The area occupied by the surrounding group of the enemy was reduced to 1 500 km² (40 km from west to east and 30 to 40 km from north to south) (Operations SVS, 1958: 54).

A distinguishing feature of this stage of the counter-attack was that tank and mechanized corps were aimed at creating the inner front of the encirclement. Cavalry corps and infantry units went to the rivers Chir and Akсаi to create the outer front of the environment.

Soviet troops on the front of the Bokova to the lake. Sarpa (southern), over a distance of more than 300 km, created a huge gap, covered only by the river Chir and Don with the remnants of the broken divisions of the enemy.

As a result of military actions, the enemy's defense was broken. The Strategic initiative went to the command of the Red Army. At the beginning of December 1942, a dense inner front of the environment was created around the grouping of the enemy.

During the development of a counterattack in the Battle of the Volga before the command of the Red Army, there was a need for a simultaneous solution to mutually opposite directions of two important tasks: to liquidate the surrounded enemy group in the rivers of the Don and the Volga and to develop further offensive on the Rostov direction (Russian Archive, 1996: 459).

The situation on the external front of the environment seriously aggravated. The enemy captured a small bridgehead on the left bank of the Don in the Nizhny-Chirsk region and held it firmly despite repeated attempts by the troops 5 TA to capture the bridgehead (History of Military Art, 1963: 212). In order to quickly release their surround troops 6 A and parts of forces 4 TA The German

command hastily created two groups: one of the district Tomson (about 17 divisions) and the second in the district Kotelnikovo (13 divisions), which became part of the newly formed group of armies "Don" (Commander - Field Marshal Erich von Manstein).

Taking into account the current situation, the SHCG made a decision with the forces of 1 A, 3 guards A and 5 TA SWF and 6 A Voronezh Front in order to develop counterattack and disrupt the plans of the enemy A and defeat the 8th Italian and the remains of the 3rd Romanian Army.

According to the plan of the front commander, the defeat of the enemy on the Don and Cher River was supposed to be carried out by strikes of the forces of 1 guards A from the Upper district. Mamon in the direction of Tacin and 3 guards A from the eastern part of Bokovskaya - on Morozovsky. At the same time, part of the forces of the adjacent flanks of these armies was planned to develop an offensive in the directions converging on Bokovsky, in order to surround and destroy the troops of the 8th Italian Army. Provision of a shock group of 1 guards A from the west he was assigned to 6 A, who was given the task to step in the direction of Kantemirovka, Millerovo (History of Military Art, 1963: 214).

The attack on the SWF strike groups started simultaneously on the morning of December 16 after an hour and a half of artillery attack preparations. In the fierce two-day battles, the tank corps, together with the infantry, broke through the enemy's defenses, and by the morning of December 18 they went to the southern coast of Bogucharka river. Until the end of the day, the troops of 1 guards A and 6A expanded the front of the breakthrough to 60 km and completed the breakthrough in the band of 3 guards A at the front of the width of up to 20 km (Operations SVS, 1958: 65).

The actions of tank corps after their release into the operational space took the nature of the rapid pursuit of enemy troops, who were retreating. The greatest pace of persecution was developed by 24 tk. In five days they moved on 240 km and on the morning of December 24 they seized the station Tacin. The attack was so rapid and sudden that the enemy did not have time to pick up airplanes. In total, it was captured at the airfield and in echelons at the railway station of 350 planes. Thus, the troops of 24 tk crossed the more important railway communication linking the group of armies "Don" with the rear, which deprived the German command not only to complete the concentration of their brakas group, but also to provide supplies with the necessary material resources. Under the prevailing German command it was compelled to refuse the use of the Germans group to release its surrounded troops in the inter-rivers Don and the Volga and in a hurry to send them against the attacking troops. But the enemy succeeded at the turn north of Tacin, Morozovsky to prevent a breakthrough 25 tk. 24 tk was in the surroundings. Within five days, the corps repulsed the enemy's attacks, which sought to seize the Tacin (History of Military Art, 1963: 216).

Until December 24, an enemy group was liquidated, consisting of three Italian and one German infantry divisions in the north-east of Zaleznoi-Lozovsky region.
The development of the offensive by Soviet troops threatened to cover the right flank of the group of German-Hungarian troops, which was particularly dangerous for the enemy, threatened the reach of the left flank and the rear of its group in the areas of Tormosin and Kotelnikovo.


The success of the operation, as well as in the first stage of counterattack, played a decisive role in tank and mechanized corps.16

For closer interaction 24, 25 tk and 1 guards during the battle for Tacinsk and Morozovsky, during the battle, they were united under the general command of the commander of 24 tk (Major-General V. M. Badanov). This experience was justified and was the basis for the formation in the spring of 1943, tank armies of a homogeneous composition.

From 12 to 30 December, the Kotelnikovsky offensive operation was conducted by the SF troops. The 51A troops resisted parts and connections of the right wing of the Goth armies group, whose goal was to join forces surrounded by troops, which in turn were supposed to strike a counter strike.

The main direction of the left flank of the Goth armies group, concentrated in the area of Tormosin and intended to strike at Stalingrad, but were transferred to Morozovsky and Tacinsk, where they were involved in the battle with the troops of the SWF. There was also thrown from Kotelnikovsky direction and 6 td. Thus, by December 24, the plan to attack the enemy in order to release his troops surrounded by the Stalingrad region was sabotaged.

By December 23, on the Kotelnikovsky direction, concentrated 2 guards A from 7 tk and unfolded on the Mishkov River from Shabalinsky to Kapkinsky. Left-handed 51 A in the five sd and three microns. More to the right 2 guards A were deployed one cd of 5 Defence A and 4 tk.

On the morning of December 24, the group of the left wing of the SF went on the offensive to defeat the opposing group (Operations SVS, 1958: 67-68).

The main strike inflicted 2 guards A in the direction of Kotelnikovo from the north, 51 A - from the north east, and its 13 mk and 3 guards mk broke through the front of the 4th Romanian army to deep cover the enemy's group from the south.

Within three days of the battles, the rifle divisions 2 guards A and 51 A together with the 2 guards mk and 7 tk entered in the battle were consistently broken through the defenses of the German group on the Mishkov Aksay-Yesaulovsky rivers, advanced to a depth of 40 km and proceeded to cover the enemy's flanks retreating.

At the same time, the troops of the left wing, 51 A, together with 13 mk and 3 guards mk defeated the opposing parts of the 4th Romanian army, and, pursuing them, went to Shabalin and the Zavtne (History of Military Art, 1963: 220).

Until December 31, the SF troops went to Verkhnya, Rubizhne, Tormosin, Zhukovsky, Komissarovsky, Gluboky. During the operation on the Kotelnikovsky direction, the 4th Romanian army was finally defeated, and the 4th German Tank Army was thrown at 200-250 km away from Stalingrad, to the Zimyvinki area with great losses. The remnants of the units of the Army group "Don" departed in the southern direction, to the turn of the Manich River (Samsonov, 1989: 467).

Thus, the second German group, which had the task of helping its surrounded troops, was defeated. And hence the fate of the surrounded group was solved in advance. This was understood by the German SHCGH. F. Millentin noted that “... The battle on the banks of this river led to the Third Reich crisis, put an end to Hitler’s hopes for the creation of an empire and became a decisive link in the chain of events leading to the defeat of Germany” (Millentin, 2005: 242).

In terms of improving the organizational forms and combat use of armored troops, the experience of uniting under the general leadership of several tank and mechanized corps are of certain interest. It was taken into account when creating tank armies.

By the end of December 1942, the threat of a bleeding blow from the outside had been eliminated. The territory occupied by the surrounding troops, shortened significantly, and almost fired by the fire of Soviet artillery. In the course of the fighting, the German command completely spent all its reserves.

The calculations of the German command for the organization of the uninterrupted delivery of troops surrounded by air failed. With loss at the end of December, as a result of Operation Small Saturn in most airfields, the shoulder of air transportation increased significantly (Isaev, 2008: 389-390). This transformed the operation of supplying 6 A Paulus into the beating of the transport aircraft Luftwaffe (the Germans from November 24, 1942 to January 31, 1943, lost 488 planes and about 1,000 people flying warehouse) (Morzik F., 1961: 195).

Elimination of the surrounding group of the enemy was assigned to the troops of the DP, acting on the internal front of the environment (Voronov, 1963: 300).

The vision of the operation envisaged eliminating the surrounded group of the enemy in a consistent manner: to cut off and destroy the enemy's forces in the western part, and then, in the southern part of the ring, after a rapid blow to dissociate the enemy troops, which remained in two parts, and destroy them separately (History of the Great Patriotic War, 1961: 56).

Three armies (65, 24 and 21) were assigned to destroy the surrounding group in the western part (the main blow), in the southern part two armies (57 and 64). In the north-eastern part acted 66 A, and in the eastern part of the city - 62 A. Operational line up DF was in one echelon (History of Military Art, 1963: 222).

In the direction of the main strike, 33% of rifle divisions, 50% of artillery, 57% of the Guards mortar and 75% of the tank regiments were concentrated. This allowed us to create a significant density of forces and means 19. The combat and numerical strength of the DF on January 10, 1943 was: the personnel - 281,158 people; mortar - 6,247 units; Field guns - 1,702 (CAMD RF, vol. 206, op. 262, pp. 189, p. 102).

January 8, 1943, the Soviet command brought the ultimatum with the proposal to surrender the German troops, surrounded at Stalingrad. But Colonel-General F. Paulus rejected the ultimatum after talks with OKX and on the orders of Hitler.

On the morning of January 10, the troops of the DF went on a decisive offensive to destroy the surrounding enemy group. By the end of the day, on a number of sites, the enemy's defense had been broken to a depth of 6-8 km.

Already the first days of the offensive turned into heavy losses for the DF tank troops. At 22.00 on January 12, the presence of tanks in tank parts was 120 units. (CAMD RF, 206, op. 262, issue 173, pp. 13). And at 22.00 on January 9,

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16 17, 18, 24, 25 tank and 1 gv. mechanized, which had in its structure 750 cars.
The troops of the DF, having conducted a regrouping of forces during January 13 and 14, resumed the offensive on the morning of January 15 and until the middle of the day the defense was overthrown. Remains 6 A began to retreat to the ruins of Stalingrad. By January 16, the territory of the neighborhood of 6A was reduced to the size of less than a third of the original. But the success was not easy. The losses of troops of the DF during the first five days of the offensive amounted to 22 043 (excluding 64 A) (CAMD RF, No. 206, op. 262, No. 189, pp. 131).

After defeating part of the adversary, the troops of the DF until the end of January 17 went to the Great Rossoshka, Gonchar, Voroponovo, where they met the desperate resistance of the enemy on the old Soviet fortifications on the approaches to the city. On the strengthening of the armored forces of the front on January 16, 48th separate Guards Tank Regiment was sent on Mk.IV tanks "Churchill". The German group persistently maintained the strengthening of the internal defense zone, but after the crushing strikes of the Soviet artillery, the enemy's defense was broken and on January 25, Soviet troops broke into Stalingrad from the west. By the end of January 26, troops 21 and 62 A united in the area of Mamayev Kurgan, and dismembered the enemy's group into two parts: the southern part was clamped in the central part of the city and the northern region, surrounded by the Tractor Plant and the Barricade Factory (Operation SAS, 1958: 77-78).

From January 27, battles on the elimination of dismembered groups began. At the same time, the enemy still did not stop the resistance. In the southern sector, a particularly stubborn struggle went beyond the elevator, the bakery, the Stalingrad II station, the Dagoria church and the buildings adjacent to them. The troops of 64, 57 and 21 A from the southwest and northwest compressed the circle surrounding the southern group of the enemy. On the night of January 28th to 29th, the left flank connection of 64 A, overcoming the river Tsaritsa, went to the central part of the city. The enemy was demoralized. "Imprisonment has taken a massive character. In just three days, from 27 to 29.1.43, parts of 64 A captured 15 thousand soldiers and officers" (War.-Historical Journal, 1959, No. 2. p. 88).

By January 31, the resistance of the enemy troops in the southern part of the city was finally broken and capitulated. Headquarters 6 A headed by Commander General-Field Marshal F. Paulus on that day were captured.

An enemy group of 11 ak, surrounded by the northern part of the city, continued to fight. For its defeat, an unprecedented density was created - up to 300 guns and mortars per 1 km of front. It was almost 5 times more than during the transition to a counterattack (History of the Second World War, 1961: 62). Having not sustained the fire strike of such force, 11 ak also capitulated. And on Feb. 2, 1943, the historic victory at Stalingrad ended.

In total, during the Operation "Ring", more than 2,500 officers and 24 generals of 6 A, more than 91 thousand soldiers and officers of the Wehrmacht were taken into captivity. The trophies of the Soviet troops from January 10 to February 2, 1943, according to the report of the headquarters of the DF were 5762 guns, 1312 mortars, 12701 machine guns, 156 987 guns, 10 722 guns, 744 aircraft, 1666 tanks, 261 armored vehicles, 80438 motor vehicles, 10679 motorcycles, 240 tractors, 571 tractor, 3 armored trains, etc. (Isaev, 2008: 419).

Discussion
For the first time in the domestic historiography, on the basis of a comparative analysis of archival documents, memoirs, general and special works of both warring parties on the Stalingrad strategic offensive operation, the author made an attempt to reveal its course, results, consequences and peculiarities of the combat use of the tank army of the mixed warehouse and tank, mechanized corps in the operation on the encirclement. As a result of the study, a number of conclusions were drawn different from the previous conclusions of the predecessors, all the new ones were analyzed in terms of operative art and tactics during its conduct regarding the use of tank armies; an objective assessment was made of the significance of the Stalingrad Strategic Offensive Operation and Development of Military Arts in Operations with the surrounding and destruction of large groups of the enemy.

New to the study is that the author attempted to assess the role of the Stalingrad strategic offensive operation, not only in the development of Soviet military art, but also in the art of war opposing the warring side. Particular attention is drawn to the actions of the German command to create a stable defense of the surrounding troops, ensuring high moral and psychological stability of the personnel in extremely difficult conditions, decisive attempts to release the surrounded group, the organization of measures for the comprehensive provision of the surrounded group.

The obtained results of the research can be used for further military-historical scientific developments, research works on the problems of the Second World War, the study of the issues of the development of military arts in the use of large tank associations. The provisions and conclusions of scientific work can be introduced into the educational process of cadets and students of the Second World War of Ukraine through their use in conducting studies on military-historical disciplines, as well as the basic material in contemporary military-theoretical discussions about the role and principles of the use of tank armies in modern the stage of development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Their study by military experts will contribute to the expansion of the horizons, the development of creative thinking.

Promising areas of further research can be: a comprehensive study of the development of Soviet military art in conducting operations on the enemy's environment on the territory of Ukraine, studying the experience of the German command to release and withdraw from the environment of its troops.

Conclusion
The author made a theoretical generalization and solved a scientific objective to determine the role, place, characteristics and features of the use of the Red Army armored troops in the Stalingrad Strategic Offensive as one of the outstanding operations on the encirclement during the Second World War and to develop recommendations for using the experience in modern warfare, theory and practice.

Despite the large number of historical and special works devoted to this operation, a number of issues remain unresolved for the time being: the particular features of the use of tank armies in operations on the environment under extremely difficult operational conditions. These issues require a thorough historical study involving the source base of both warring parties.

The author used well-known general scientific and special methods of historical research, among which the main place belongs to historical and logical methods, analysis, comparison, generalization, statistical method, system approach.

The article analyzes the conditions and factors that exerted a significant influence on the preparation, course and results of the Stalingrad Strategic Offensive Operation,
on the use of the tank army of mixed warehouses and tank and mechanized buildings. Armored troop contributed the main strike force in the operation.

Operative art in the counterattack at Stalingrad was characterized by a large scale of front and army offensive operations conducted in accordance with the strategic plan.

Operative line up of the fronts was in one echelon, and the armies were usually in two echelons. The armies advancing towards the main strike had in their second echelon, except for 1-2 infantry divisions, 1-3 tank (mechanized) corps.

Armored and mechanized troops were used in accordance with the requirements of the order of the PCD No. 325 of October 16, 1942. Tank brigades and regiments were used as direct support infantry tanks. But the density of tanks was still not enough for a rapid breakthrough in advance prepared enemy defense.

In a counterattack at Stalingrad, tank armies of the mixed composition, tank and mechanized corps were successfully used. Tank and mechanized hulls were used to develop success in the direction of the main strike and operations at operational depths. At the first stage of the counterattack, they carried out the surroundings of a large group of opponents. At the same time, the overwhelming number was involved in completing the breakthrough of the tactical zone of the enemy’s defense, which significantly weakened the forces of mobile units before the start of their main task.

Inclusion of tank and mechanized units was supported by all of the first echelon artillery and by long range army group. To secure the actions of tank and mechanized corps in the enemy lines each one was accompanied by one-two anti-tank units and one of anti-air units.

Thus, battle experience gained in the battle on Volga served as a basis for future development of military excellence of Red Army. Based on this experience they learned the art of surrounding with consecutive annihilation of enemy troops.

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