Olexandr Gulyma, Lt. Col.
National Academy of Ground Forces named after Hetman Petro Sahaidachny, Ukraine

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ETHNO-POLITICAL PECULIARITIES OF CRIMEA DEVELOPMENT FOR FIVE DECADES AFTER ITS ANNEXATION BY THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

The article reveals the main features of formation and further development of socio-economic and ethno-political processes in Crimea during the first five decades after its joining the Russian Empire in 1783. After the annexation of Crimea by Russian empire a political situation on the peninsula became considerably complicated, the main reason of which was bringing in a significant contingent of Russian imperial troops. After 1783 the process of colonization of Crimea by settlers among Ukrainian peasants began. It was concluded that the first fifty years of Russian domination in the Crimea can be characterized as an undisguised colonialism.

Key words: Crimea, Crimean Tatars, annexation, Crimean Tatar emigration, colonization of Crimea.

In the recent years, an interest to the research of the Crimean history has significantly increased. This is primarily due to the events around Russia’s annexation of the peninsula in March 2014. The circle of problems, which, in our opinion, deserve priority, includes clarifying the features of formation and development of socio-economic and ethno-political processes in Crimea during the first decades after its annexation by the Russian Empire in 1783. This analysis should logically be considered as a necessary part of information base on the current geopolitical Crimea forecasting.

The aim of the article is to reveal features of the formation and further development of socio-economic and ethno-political processes in Crimea for five decades after its annexation by the Russian Empire in 1783.

Issues related to the achieving the goal of this paper are considered in a number of quite fundamental scientific studies. However, there are still many reserves to deepen the study of these issues.

Starting the analysis of the Crimean peninsula development after joining the Russian Empire in 1783, it is appropriate to consider one of the important events that occurred on the peninsula several years earlier. This refers to forced evictions of all Christians living in Crimea from its territory, which was initiated by Russian authorities in 1778. As a result of this action 18391 Greek (including – 87 members of the clergy) and 12,598 Armenians were deported from Crimea. The event was aimed not only to settle deserted lands of the southern Ukraine with farmers and herders, but also to force Ukrainian Cossacks, stayed there after the destruction of the Sich, out of these lands.

This action was also a part of the expansionist policies of the Russian empire as to the further annexation of the Crimean peninsula, despite the official reason of relocation – the liberation of Orthodox Christians from the Mohammedan oppression, it was aimed at the disruption of the economy of the peninsula, because the Christian population was engaged in agricultural production. However, very soon Russia had to «reap the fruits» of the deportation in Crimea. As the witness of those events Sumarokov said, «... five years later (after the relocation of Christians) that land... was absolutely devastated for Russia».

«It shuddered, finding out that the villages turned into ruins, gardens into neglected forests, crafts and industry into idleness and made sure that led its new children to the orphancy even before their adoption».

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1 Яковенко, Н. (2012). Очерк истории Украины в Средние века и раннее Новое время. Москва, 15.
A few years later, in 1786, a prominent French politician J. Romm, travelling around Crimea attached by Russia, described his impressions of what he saw there: «There is nothing sadder that the journey around the terrain devastated by war. <...>

Cities, once inhabited and decorated, are named after their founder and then that name goes to a devastator, who boasts this new name, which only shows his great ability to make death and horror everywhere, as a result of famous battles to lead to the destruction of industry and agriculture and destroy happiness of thousands of families who fall a victim of an ambitionist. That happened in 1771 when Prince Dolgoruky ruined Perekop and that bloody success brought him the title of the Crimean.»

After the annexation of Crimea by Russian empire a political situation on the peninsula became considerably complicated, the main reason of which was bringing in a significant contingent of Russian imperial troops, placement of military posts throughout the peninsula to observe public safety and the mood among the Tatars. Those actions lead to lawlessness and constant harassment against Tatar population that, in practice, was powerless.

Another reason of complication of the political situation in Crimea in the 1780's and 1790's was associated with Arvanites, who after 1783 took a prominent place in the socio-political structure of Crimea – they were present (including those in high positions) in the most staffs of Tauride region authorities. In addition to security functions of Arvanite teams, their representatives actually assumed the administrative functions on the south coast of the peninsula and turned into independent uncontrolled militias, resulting in powerless and defenseless of Tatar population in those areas.

We can get an idea of the other consequences of the presence of Russian troops in Crimea from the research of Sichynskii where he describes the impressions of Cambridge University professor E. Clark of his journey around Crimea in 1812. According to E. Clark, in Bakhchisarai «Russians satisfied their barbaric pleasure of destruction and completely destroyed that capital,» in Kerch «500 buildings were razed to the ground «and «about thirty poor barracks» were built instead. In addition, they systematically destroyed Chersonesos ruins.

After the annexation of Crimea by Russian Empire the so-called «first wave» of Tatars emigration began during which at least 80-85\(^{1}\) thousand people emigrated. It is necessary to mention that after the annexation the religious freedoms of Crimean Tatars were restricted, the gradual decline of the religious life of Muslims began, which was the result of deliberate Russian policy of deislamization in Crimea. The purpose was to weaken the Muslim clergy (which Russian administration considered as a pro-Turkish factor) and to neutralize their impact on the Crimean Tatar population of the peninsula, because Russian authorities were well aware of a fundamental role of this factor in preserving national cultural traditions of the Crimean Tatars.

The imperial policy of Russification that was realized in Crimea after its accession led to the fact that «... in the middle of the XIX century. or in the 1860s it was quite easily to meet an educated Crimean, especially from noble families, who finished a Russian school or was on Russian government service (civilian or military) for a long time, became more a Russian intellectual than a Tatars».

An important step in the economic life of contemporary Crimea was colonization of its lands by foreigners. The relevance of foreign colonization of Crimea for Russian Empire at the turn of XVIII-XIX centuries shows the decree of Alexander I on July 23, 1803 about the settlement of German colonists in Crimea. The text of this document refers to a commission of the Russian emperor to Kherson military governor: «... to promote durable and easy settlement of immigrants by all dependent on you ways.»

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1 Ромм, Ж. (1941). Путешествие в Крым в 1786 г. Ленинград: Изд. Ленингр. гос. ун-та.
4 Маркевич, А.И. (2003). Переселенці крымських татар в Туреччі в зв’язку з рухом населення в Криму. Східний світ, 1, 172.
Special attention was paid to grape growers: they had to be provided with suitable growing land on the peninsula, and if it was impossible – local Russian administration was supposed to buy land for these purposes from individuals. At the same time the governor was instructed to «... take special care of the colonists who settled in the Crimea, and deliver to them every means to restore the declined vineyards there».

Later in the report of the Minister of the Interior of February 22, 1804, approved by the emperor, wine and fruit growing in the southern colonies were defined as «... the most important goal in settlement of immigrants in these areas».

However it is unfair to assert that the intensive development of horticulture and viticulture (both qualitative and quantitative parameters of it) in Crimea in the XIX century was provided exclusively by foreign colonists. At least it indicates an opinion expressed by a respected scientist and agronomist Semyrenko: «Bakhchsarai Karaites are considered prominent gardeners».

After 1783 the process of colonization of Crimea by settlers among Ukrainian peasants began. They were serfs, brought to Crimea by Russian landowners, and fugitives from serfdom, who managed to break into the territory of Crimea and settle in abandoned lands left by the Tatars.

Boiko gives results of the study conducted by Brook and Kabuzan according to which during the years 1782-1858 168 thousand people moved to Taurida province from northern Ukrainian, Russian and Belarusian provinces.

The interest of the Russian government in the active colonization of the peninsula by Ukrainian population (including the Right Bank), part of which, as Korolenko indicates, was the highest in ethnic structure of colonization resources, because of the fact that «... Ukrainian element was most incorporated to the empire social and political structure, so loyal and predictable».

The result of intensive colonization of the Crimea from the XVIII century by peasants from Ukraine was that during the XIX century «... a steppe part of Crimea was predominantly in the hands of Ukrainian peasants», and before the First World War there were many Ukrainian villages near Simferopol.

We want to point out, in our opinion, one very important aspect of contemporary Ukrainian-Tatar relations, which Dashkevych draws attention to. This refers to the fact that since the liquidation of the Crimean Khanate and until 1917 a part of Taurian area (later – Province), the actual Crimean peninsula, also included three large counties of steppe Ukraine (with almost exclusively Ukrainian population) that «... played a role of an agricultural rear « And with the creation of Novorossysk governor-generalship, which, in addition to Tauris, also included Kherson and Katerinoslav provinces, economic and political integration of the Crimea with the southern regions significantly strengthened,» ... Crimea, in general, was in the «Ukrainian environment». The proof of that can be just a cursory glance at the territories that belonged to Tauride province, which can be seen on the General map of Tauride province in 1822 (Fig. 1).

In one of the first Soviet-era historical research dedicated to the Crimea, we could find a reference to the fact that after 1783 the Crimean peninsula «... was used by the autocratic government for different purposes,» including the fact that the lands of the peninsula were given to the great and courtiers. There were numerous cases of forced eviction of Crimean Tatar families and even entire villages, confiscation of their lands. Numerous trials between landlords and Tatars also took place; for their consideration a special commission was even established. However for 10 years of the existence it could not finally solve those cases.

1 Указ Александра I о поселении немецких колонистов в Крыму 1803. ПСЗРИ, Собр. 1, т. XXVIII, 786.
2 Доклад министерства внутренних дел о местах для поселения иностранцев на юге России, утвержденный Александром I 1804. ПСЗРИ, Собр. 1, т. XXVIII, 154–155.
The Crimea, weakened by mass emigration of Tatars to Turkey, at the end of the eighteenth century experienced the war of 1806-1814, the decline of trade, increasing of taxes and duties, various natural disasters. In the postwar years the colonization of Crimea intensified, and mainly due to the influx of foreigners, industry and trade increased. However, the Russian bureaucracy began to turn into a significant negative factor. The common facts were «...injustice, litigation, bribery, theft and illegal land sale and attempts to satisfy personal gains and interests, not the public and state».

A special committee, established in Tauric province to investigate possible abuse, in particular, reported that the abuse related to the sale of local land reached a peak. This led to the displacement

of Crimean Tatars in the mountains, which drastically cut their land, but later they were pushed out even further – in the most unsuitable rocky mountain areas.

The total disregard of legal and historical rights of the Tatar population of the former Crimean Khanate led to the fact that the biggest part of it had to emigrate to Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania. However during the Patriotic War of 1812 Crimean Tatars made significant donations and formed four cavalry regiments that took part in the military hostilities of the Russian Empire. Formed in 1827, the Guards squadron tested Crimean Russian-Turkish war of 1828-1829 (and later was active under the banner of the Russian Army in the Crimean War of 1853-1856, he was awarded numerous awards and honors). So, the first fifty years of Russian domination in the Crimea can be characterized as an undisguised colonialism. Nevertheless, the Crimean Tatar population did not actually commit the resistance to the Russians. Moreover, they even demonstrated an attempt to adapt to the new geopolitical realities.

References:
