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The foundations and origins of the Moscow expansionist imperial policy towards Ukraine

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Key words: expansion, imperial politics, Russian imperial colonialism, Moscow state, despotism, Ukraine, imperial history of Muscovy.

The article covers the foundations of the Moscow expansionist imperial policy towards Ukraine. The formation of the imperial history of Muscovy is traced. It is noted that the process of Russian imperial expansion, like the imperial history of Muscovy, in general, has a rather long history, which goes back to the XIIth – XIIIth centuries, but was quite clearly manifested at the turn of the XVIIth – XVIIIth centuries. It was noted that throughout its history, the Moscow state showed predominantly predatory nature and a tendency to expand in relation to neighboring countries and for Moscow (Russian) colonialism, the seizure of some material resources was insufficient, it was complemented by absorption of human resources: the most intellectual, socially active and in every way gifted Ukrainian, including – and military talent. It was emphasized that it was necessary to wage endless colonial wars of the Moscow state, at the turn of the XVII–XVIII centuries, it was transformed into imperial Russia. It was noted that for the Muscovites, the cult of war and the seizure of foreign territories was close, regardless of whether or not it was neighboring Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic States, the Caucasus, or much further: Siberia, Central Asia, the Far East, and the like. It was noted that for a despotic, in its essence, Moscow (Russian) state, it was also extremely important to destroy any centers of democracy, especially if they concerned the veche system, that is, people's rule. It was summarized that the factor of the Russian aggressive policy is one of the most pressing issues of our time.

Підґрунтя та витоки московської експансіоністської імперської політики щодо України

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Ключові слова: імперська політика, московська експансія, російський імперський колоніалізм, московська держава, деспотизм, Україна.

У статті висвітлюється підґрунтя московської експансіоністської імперської політики щодо України. Прослідковано становлення імперської історії Московії. Зауважено, що процес російської імперської експансії, як й імперської історії Московії, загалом, має досить давню історію, яка сягає в глибину XII–XIII століть, але досить виразно проявилася вже на рубежі XVII–XVIII століття. Відзначено, що протягом усієї своєї історії московська держава демонструвала переважно хижацьку сутність і схильність до експансії по відношенню до сусідніх країн. Наголошено, що для москвинів близьким був культ війни та загарбання чужих територій, не дивлячись на те чи це сусідні Україна, Білорусь, Прибалтика, Кавказ, чи значно далші: Сибір, Центральна Азія, Далекий Схід тощо. Підсумовано, що фактор російської агресивної політики є одним із найбільш нагальних питань сучасності.

Problem statement. The process of Russian imperial expansion, like the imperial history of Muscovy, in general, has a rather long history, which dates back to the XIIth–XIIIth centuries, but was quite clearly manifested at the turn of the XVIIth–XVIIIth centuries. Consequently, during the XVIII–XIX centuries, Russian imperial colonialism led to the destruction of state life in almost all neighboring nations. And already in the XX–XXI centuries. Russian autocratic imperialism, transformed into the Bolshevik (and at the turn of the XX–XXI centuries – in the newest hypertrophied Bolshevik) regime led to a number of criminal, genocidal actions in relation to other nations (Ukrainian, Belarusian, Chechen, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and so on), which led to not only the denationalization of neighboring nations, but also the destruction among them of all forms of public morality and spirituality.

The analysis of sources and recent researches. The solution of this research topic to a certain extent is reflected in the works of S. Andreeva [12], V. Belinsky [1], P. Golubenko [7], J. Dashkevich [4], A. Nestayko [5], A. Sytnyk [14; 6], P. Stegnia [13], P. Shtepy [16; 2], M. Yuri [3], N. Yakovenko [10]. More substantive as to the basis and sources of the Moscow expansionist imperial policy towards Ukraine are the studies of V. Debenko [8; 9], G. Turchenko [11], F. Turchenko and G. Turchenko [15] and others. However, a special study that would be devoted to this topic is absent in modern historiography.

The publication's purpose. The article is devoted to the characterization of the foundations and sources of the Moscow expansionist imperial policy. The main task of the article is to analyze the formation of the Russian imperial expansionist policy.

Statement of the basic material. Presentation of the main research material. Ever since the days of Russia, the psychology of the northern environment has endowed the future of the first Great Russians with cruelty, distrust of all, absolute indifference to culture, disregard for other people's traditions [1, p.67, 68]. For the residents of Muscovy, the cult of war and the seizure of foreign territories has always been close, regardless of whether or not it is neighboring Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic States, the Caucasus, or much further: Siberia, Central Asia, the Far East, and the like.

Practically throughout its history, Muscovy has always tried not only to free itself from the external (in particular – the Tatar) yoke or internal despotism, as to impose its own order, power and despotic regime on its neighbors. At the same time, as P. Shtepa noted, force is the only argument that Muscovin understands and respects. To strengthen itself, the

Muscovite came to the community. To strengthen the community, recognized the need for strong power. A strong power in the representation of this savage, there is only power despotic. The community did not allow individualism, because it would mean its end. The government suppressed manifestations of social individualism, public initiative, since it also viewed this as the beginning of its end. Throughout the history of Muscovy, all were slaves (if not physically, then spiritually), from the chancellor of the empire to the last beggar. A nobleman mocks at a serf (as a communist later on a collective farmer) and an aristocrat mocks at a nobleman (later on a rank-and-file communist – more importantly) a mock king mocks an aristocrat. Practiced for almost a millennium, this system became a national feature of the Moskvin [2, p.37, 38].

Eight centuries of the Tatar yoke – eight centuries of despotism and tyranny. Peter's European reforms were only a facade renovation of the horde, as if painted outside with European colors, and inside Muscovy the same Horde essence. The Asian despot, dressed in European silks, even overseas barons and empresses, brought up in European traditions, who turned out to be in Muscovy, quickly became Asian. The horde swallowed everyone, indiscriminately. Of course, the people rebelled, the spirit of freedom did not disappear in an instant, but the Horde established its own order with steel and fire. And, at the same time, the Moscow church was one of the main assistants of the Horde and its khans. As a result, the Muscovites became slaves, dumb and weak-willed in their mass. Rebelling even against their oppressor landowners, they did not go against the horde as such. The king-father is good, he just does not know what his boyars are doing [3, p.161]. It is clear that Muscovy is the direct heir of the Golden Horde of the state of Chingizids, that is, in fact the Tatar-Mongols were the «godfathers» of Moscow statehood. The Moscow principality (and from 1547 the kingdom) had no ties in the XVI century with the principalities of the land of Kievan Rus.

The so-called «Great Russians», or the Russian people, as it is called today, appeared around the XVth–XVIIth centuries among the Finnish tribes: Murom, least of all, and others. Then his story appears. There is no history of Great Russians on the land of Kiev! The history of the Great Russians begins from Muscovy, which has never been Rus. The Tatar-Mongols who came to these lands made a significant contribution to the formation of the «Great Russians». Great Russian psychology left an imprint of the borrowing of the Tatar-Mongolian instinct of the conqueror, the despot, whose main goal is world

domination [4]. Eastern feudalism frankly denied European democratic values, such as those that were formed in Western Russia. At the same time, it should always be remembered that the Moscow lands were under the Golden Horde for almost 300 years. During this time, the Horde despotic traditions, closely united with the ancient Moscow customs, adopted an extremely cruel and cynical system of government.

The Moscow state borrowed from the Golden Horde perhaps the most despotic and aggressive political traditions. She contrasted the European influences with the Messianic ideology of the Third Rome, and then with Asian fanaticism plunged into the arms of Bolshevism [5, p.184]. Traditionally, the goal of the Moscow Horde, above all, was not to reject individual territories (now it is the Crimea and Donbass), but to conquer the capital, Kiev. For a despotic, in essence, Moscow state, it is also extremely important to destroy any centers of democracy, especially if they concerned the veche system, that is, the people's rule [6, p.76].

The formation of the Russian Empire in the XVIII century created significant political consequences, both for Russia and for a number of countries that were under its power, or had a common border with it. The imperial idea became the political-ideological rationale for a large territorial expansion of Russia. Its origins can be traced at the end of the XVth century. Created by leaders of the Orthodox Church and supported by the political elite of Moscow State, the imperial doctrine became the official ideology of the Russian autocrat. Its practical application demanded from the government circles of Muscovy huge material costs and human victims [7, p.3].

V. Debenko believes that the most important task is to study the origins of the imperial doctrine in the social and political life of Russians of the XV–XVI centuries. After all, it largely influenced the formation of certain features of the mentality of the ruling elite of the Moscow state, attempts to develop a corresponding political concept and attempts to implement it [8, p.3, 4]. Already during the reign of Ivan IV, the imperial idea actually received the status of the state ideology of Moscow. The ideologies of the «Roman» origin of the Moscow princes and their «God's chosen people» were used by the Russian Tsar to establish strict ideological control inside the country. They proclaimed the Russian tsar the «sole defender» of the Orthodox faith and were the ideological basis for literary and journalistic works of such content [9, p.36, 37].

Already since the beginning of the XVIIIth century, the tendency of unitarism began to spread in Ukraine, which penetrated deeper and deeper into

all sectors – the economy, politics, culture, religion, breaking everything that did not fit into it, and subordinating the human lives of its highest idea – to augment the power of absolutist «good managed» state. Against this background, the western regions that were not so recently annexed to the empire looked particularly annoying, and the social structure of which was based on the principles of polycentrism and the contractual residence of the «people» and «rulers». The diversity of their devices «well managed» state must oppose a single administrative system and state control, adjustable from the center. Therefore, Ukraine was destined to be the first to get under the wheel of unification (from the last quarter of the XVIIIth century, right-wing Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Poland would enter this path, in spite of their will, and in somewhat different scenarios). Cossack autonomy was not ready to counteract the streamlined imperial machine. Against the background of the energetic reforms of Peter I, the structured democracy of these countries looked like an anachronism [10, p.499]. The Russian government sought, above all, to attract the Cossack elders, who represent the Ukrainian army, and to a large extent expressed the political and ideological attitudes and aspirations of the then Ukrainian society.

In the XVIIIth century, the Russian Empire became the dominant military-political power in the South.

While she waged wars with Turkey and needed the help of Zaporizhzhya Cossacks – and without them there were no Russian victories in the South, she agreed with the existence of the Zaporizhzhya Sich, gradually limiting her powers. In the second half of the XVIIIth century, tsarism headed for the destruction of the Zaporizhian Sich. In 1775, the Zaporizhian Sich was attacked by the hundred-thousandth Russian army and destroyed. The ideological basis of the imperial position on the elimination of the Sich was the Manifesto of Catherine II. The issue of claims to the Zaporozhye inheritance runs through the content of this Manifesto. The rights of the Ukrainian Cossacks to own the lands of Zaporizhzhya Liberties were rejected, although their military and economic presence in the South had a much longer history than the stay of Russian colonists and military settlers settled by imperial power, and their role in the long-term bloody struggle against the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate in general it is difficult to overestimate [11 p.297]. To achieve the political objectives of joining the Crimean Khanate to the Russian Empire as well as access to the Black and Mediterranean Sea, Russia had to spend twelve wars with the Ottoman Empire in periodic political

confrontations with Western Europe and only in the XVIII century to take an active part in four wars: 1710–1713, 1735–1739, 1768–1774, 1787–1791, which ultimately led to the realization of the imperial goals and objectives for the Crimea, the northern Black Sea coast, Azov, Taman and Kuban.

During the reign of Catherine II, the offensive of the Russian Empire towards the South was significantly intensified. Starting in 1762, Count N. I. Panin became the head of the empire's foreign policy. It was he who for 1763–1783 years headed the College of Foreign Affairs. An important component created by Count N. I. Panin of the foreign policy concept of establishing the Russian Empire as a significant European state (the «northern system») was the existence of a «buffer» on the western borders of Russia with a formally independent but dominant Russian influence Poland. This significantly contributed to the further struggle against the Ottoman Empire for access to the Black Sea. At the same time, in relation to the Crimean rulers, the Russian authorities and diplomacy used the most diverse arsenal of means – attempts to bribe, intrigue in Istanbul in order to eliminate unwanted khans, secret offers to them of the Russian protection. However, in this situation, the Ottoman Empire did not show noticeable militarism [12 c.29, 30]. It is clear that Catherine II understood the need for international recognition and further approval in the treaty with the Ottoman Empire to change the international legal status of the Crimean Khanate. Diplomatic support for the independence of Crimea was the result of certain political agreements between Prussia, Austria and Russia in 1772, the practical implementation of which meant the first partition of Poland [13 p.140–148]. Capturing the Crimean Khanate, the Russian army committed a whole series of war crimes. She destroyed a peaceful facility that had no defenses. She also deprived the Crimean Tatars as a whole of their written and historical heritage on one day. The scientific and educational system of the Crimean Khanate was destroyed. The history of the Crimean Khanate, left without a documentary base, quickly became a hostage to the historiography of the Russian Empire. In fact, the history of the Crimean Khanate was interpreted by the imperial historians of Russia in a version that suited the conquering country. It was during the reign of Empress Catherine II that not only the history of the Crimean Khanate, but also the history of the entire Russian state was copied from scratch.

Throughout the centuries-old history of Moscow expansion with respect to Ukraine and other countries, the entire predatory nature of Russian imperial colonialism has been fully manifested, which was not

disdained by any mean means to achieve the aggressor's own objectives.

According to V. Debenko, relations based on the metropolis are typical for the empire – a colony and the harsh use of central authority in the annexed or conquered lands [8, p.4]. It is this policy that the Russian state has demonstrated in Ukraine for several centuries.

Already in the twentieth century, the imperial policy of the Kremlin was transformed into a specific substrate of the methods of autocracy and Bolshevism [14, p.180, 181]. It was Bolshevism during the period of the national liberation struggle of 1917–1921 that applied the factor of «hybrid war» against Ukraine. This was the response of the former imperial metropolis to the attempt of the Ukrainian nation to defend its independence, proclaimed in January 1918 by the Central Rada. Ukraine did not want the Bolshevik dictatorship, the destruction of democratic freedoms, the «red terror» and the return to the control of Russia, now Bolshevik. In response, regular troops went to Ukraine from Russia under the red flag of the communist revolution and the false slogan of «helping the fraternal people in the struggle against the world bourgeoisie». They were helped in every way by the local «fifth column» of the Bolsheviks and other pro-Russian elements who were especially active in the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine [15, c.146]. The modern neo-imperial policy of the Kremlin is the implementation of the methods of autocracy and Bolshevism, with a combination of criminal oligarchic and sabotage-terrorist forms.

External manifestations of Moscow expansionism (imperialism) are primarily explained by the situation in the Moscow state. Muscovy needed weapons money, because the neighboring states grew culturally and economically, and consequently, militarily. The government could not increase taxes, because there was nothing left that could not be taxed, and the old taxes could not collect everyone. It remained to rob the neighbors. The Moscow people, on the orders of their tsar, joyfully went to let down, enslave, exploit, rob the neighboring nations [16 p.161]. This trend has continued to this day. The Kremlin regime at any price seeks to conquer the neighboring countries. And to those states that are at a considerable distance from the Russian Federation, but are of particular interest to it (for example, Syria or even Venezuela), various kinds of hybrid influences are spreading from Moscow.

Usually, the territorial expansion of the Russian Empire developed in accordance with the traditional Eastern canons, when the increase in the territory of a state was at the expense of neighboring countries.

However, it was not quite the usual classic colonial type of expansion. Almost all the occupied territories were part of the Russian Empire. More than 400 years of territorial expansion of the Russian state had cases of voluntary accession of certain peoples. At the same time, the entry into the Russian state took place, as a rule, on the terms of a vassalage or protectorate. But even in these cases, violence, oppression, humiliation and the like dominated. Thus, in Central Asia and the Caucasus, entire villages were burned to the ground for one body of a murdered Russian who was found nearby. And the patronage and protectorate were then turned to violent submission, expansion, seizure with the most severe repression.

It should also be noted that every aggression of Moscow against Ukraine was almost always carried out with the expectation precisely of the Ukrainian traitors with the mentality and psychology of the Little Russians. The latter usually play the role of the fifth column of invaders and in every way contribute to the interests of the Kremlin.

Conclusions. In general, it should be summarized that throughout the centuries-old history of the Moscow expansionist imperial policy towards Ukraine and other countries, the whole predatory

essence of Russian imperial colonialism manifested itself, which used a whole range of cunning means that are characteristic of the arsenal of the usual aggressor-occupier.

The factor of Russian aggressive policy is one of the most pressing issues of our time. It should be noted that the process of Russian imperial expansion, as well as the imperial history of Muscovy, in general, has a rather long history, which goes back to the depth of the XII–XIII centuries, but was quite clearly manifested at the turn of the XVII–XVIII centuries.

Virtually the entire history of the Moscow (Russian) state testified to the expansionism of its imperial policy, especially with regard to Ukraine and other neighboring countries. As for the Kremlin regime, the cult of war was and remains decisive. At the same time, it does not matter for him – on what territories he encroaches: these are neighboring Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic States, the Caucasus, or much further: Siberia, Central Asia, the Far East, and the like.

In the further process of researching this topic, it is necessary to analyze the evolution, character and specificity of the Russian colonial expansion of the period of the XIX century.

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