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THE EVOLUTION TREND OF THE BALTA REGION MOLDAVIAN POPULATION IN 19TH - 1920^{S*}

Moldavians, or Volokhi¹, as they were named here at the end of 18th c. - beginning of the 19th c. is one of the most numerous ethnic groups in South-East Podil'ia. On the northern territory of the present-day Odessa and Transdnistria regions within the limits of the present-day Kam'ansk and Rybniza districts of Moldova, which were a part of the Balta povit (district)², Moldavians lived both in separate monoethnic and in mixed Ukraino-Moldavian or Moldavo-Ukrainian settlements. In the early 18th c. they settled down with impetuosity on this territory together with Ukrainians. The khutors founders' names and microtoponyms of Moldavian origin are considerable evidence of their common activities³.

The Moldavian Diaspora became an important factor of economic development of this territory.

At the same time, the Moldavians' place and their role on the territory of South-East Podil'ia are not studied sufficiently. There are quite a lot of unsettled questions, in particular those of inter-ethnic relations between Ukrainians and Moldavians, the development of the ethnic processes on the whole and their consequences. In this context, the questions that draw one's attention are those of the dynamics of the Moldavian population in the region and clearing up the factors exerting influence upon the dynamics of Ukrainians and Moldavians growth. Finding out the mechanism of development of this process, we will get an

* Studiul prezintă punctul de vedere al istoriografiei ucrainene, pe care l-am respectat integral, deoarece considerăm utilă cunoașterea lui în mediul istoriografic românesc. În plus, informațiile conținute sunt deosebit de valoroase pentru cei interesați de destinul românilor dela est de Nistru (n. ed.).

1 Volokhi is an east-Romance ethnic community of the Middle Ages, that was formed on the basis of Romanized Thracio-Dacian autochthonous population. At the end of 18th - beginning of 19th c.c. in Russian record-keeping 'Volokhi' was a name for Moldova's population.

2 Balta's Povit from 1796 was a part of the newly-established Novorossia Gubernia (Complete works of the Russian Empire laws. Complete works 1- volume XXIV. № 17634.). Futher administrative-territorial changes did not considerably influence the dimensions of the Povit, which existed as a district from 1923 (Collection of statutes and orders of Workers and Peasants Government of Ukraine.- 1923.- № 18-19.), and eventually became a district within much more restricted territorial borders.

3 Мельничук О.С. Топоніміка Колимського району Одеської області // Мовознавство.- Наукові записки.-Т.ХГУГ.- К.,1957.

additional source of research of this region's history.

In this publication we use Michail Karachkovsky's materials on Northwest Balta's region, where he, in addition, also studied demographic problems. From the 31st of June to the 15th of August, 1928 on a commission from the AUAS⁴ Karachkovsky visited about thirty settlements. On the expeditionary map made by the researcher there are villages and towns, which, according to a modern administrative division, are a part of the Balta and Kodyma regions of the Odessa area and Rybnitza region of Moldova. Karachkovsky set off to the villages lying in the Kodyma river valley. He visited Kodyma, Budei, Obzhyla, Evtodia, Olenivka, Myrony, Balta, Sinne, Moshniagy, Fernatia, Berezivka. Having reached Olexandrivka, he turned to Labushnia along the Molokish river valley, visiting villages of Plot, Garaba, Molokish. Coming down to the Dniester, he looked in Rybnitza, Ghydyryma, Vykhvatinzy, Zozuliany, Popenky. On his way back via Rybnitza, he visited villages of Krasnenke, Ivanivka, Semenivka, Kruti and, having reached Olexandrivka, turned to Kodyma, passing over into Frantzuzke (the present-day Lisogorka).

The field ethnographic survey materials, collected by Karachkovsky, are kept at Vernadsky scientific library's Department of Manuscripts. The results of his research are published⁵. They are "Materials to towns' history in Podil'ia at the end of 18th c."⁶, "To the history of Podil'ia in the early 19th c."⁷. His ultimate work on the research results was published in 1929⁸. Some part of the materials is in archive repositories⁹.

Krachkovsky did not limit himself to his own field materials. That's the essence of his findings' scientific value. He tried to enlist other sources, especially of early periods and, on the basis of their analysis, to show changes in social and economic lifestyles. Some of such sources, which can be considered basic ones for a researcher, are "Topographic and statistic account

⁴ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина (мапа).- Рукописний фонд бібліотеки Вернадського.- Ф.Х. Од.зб. 11635; Гавриленко Тодор. Михайло Карачківський. Північно - Західна Балтщина. „Історично -географічний збірник”. Т.Ш, К.,1929.

⁵ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина // Історично - географічний збірник.- К., 1929.- Т.Ш.

⁶ Карачківський Михайло. Матеріали до історії міст на Поділлі в кінці XVIII в.// Рукописний фонд бібліотеки Вернадського.- Ф.Х. Од.зб.11632.

⁷ Михайло Карачківський. До історії міст Поділля поч. XIX в. - Рукописний фонд бібліотеки Вернадського. - Ф.Х. Од.зб. 17441.

⁸ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина // Історично - географічний збірник.- К., 1929.- Т.Ш.

⁹ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина (мапа).- Рукописний фонд бібліотеки Вернадського.- Ф.Х. ; - Матеріали до історії міст на Поділлі в кінці XVIII в.// Рукописний фонд бібліотеки Вернадського Од.зб.11632.; Михайло Карачківський. До історії міст Поділля поч. XIX в. - Рукописний фонд бібліотеки Вернадського.- Ф.Х. Од.зб.17441.;Півш'чно - Західна Балтщина...- Ф.Х. Од.зб.11635.

of the Podil'ia province written in 1819 by the province land surveyor Vikentiy Rudnitsky" and "Laboratory and topographic account of the Podil'ia province of the Balta povit (district)"¹⁰.

It should be noted that Karachkivsky looked at the sources he used with a critical eye. Comparing different sources of information, he specified dates, pointed out errors and inaccuracies and took them into account in his work. Karachkovsky's scrupulous and critical approach to historical heritage of ancestors, his attempt to take maximum advantage of reliable information allow us to consider the works by Karachkivsky as those of worth confidence.

The researcher did not limit himself to fixing his contemporary historical reality. He tried to trace the evolution of society development, the dynamics of ethnic composition of the population and define factors which caused social and economic changes.

Being in possession of information about farms and dwellings quantity in the Povit villages at the end of 18th – beginning of 19th c.c., he compared it with the data of 1928. It should be emphasized that statistical data on the population and ethnic composition of villages and towns of the the uyezd (district) of 1928, cited by Karachkivsky, are of particular importance, because they have not been preserved in archives.

The statistical data are reported in the table below. In the column of the data for the end of 18th - beginning of 19th c.c. Volokhi and Ukrainians dwellings quantity is cited. Estates quantity is shown in the statistical data for the 1st of January, 1928. Although M. Karachkivsky cites the population rate information, it is not included into the table, because it does not consist of the data for the 1st of January, 1928 and as a result it is impossible to compare these two periods. It seems to be correct to estimate dwellers quantity of either village on the basis of dwellings or estates quantity, as every dwelling belonged to a certain family. Both Ukrainian and Moldavian family sizes were roughly similar. According to the data relative to 11 settlements (Obzhyla, Evtodia, Olenivka, Moshniagy, Fernatia, Erzhiv, Gydyrym, Krasnen`ke, Labushna, Plot`, Sarazeia) a Moldavian family consisted of 6 (5,9) people and that of Ukrainian – of 5 (4,7) people.

¹⁰ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина...- Ф.Х. Од.зб.11635.

Place-names	At the end of 18 th c.- at the beginning of 19 th		For the 1 st of January, 1928	
	Volokhi's dwellings quantity	Ukrainians' dwellings quantity	Moldavians' estates quantity	Ukrainians' estates
Obzhyla (Balta region)	15	112	Absent data	661
Evtodia (Balta region)	6	49	Absent data	321
Olenivka (Balta region)	6	59	Absent data	309
Moshniagy(Balta region)	3	49	Absent data	288
Fernatia (Balta region)	38	56	5	402
Berezivka (Balta region)	17	27	Absent data	512
Garaba (Rybnitza district, Mold.)	30	30	7	372
Erzhiv (Rybnitza district, Mold.)	21	5	15	490
Kruty (Kolyma region)	28	37	Absent data	575
Gydyrym (Rybnitza district,	39	6	163	186
Krasnen`ke (Rybnitza district,	20	8	255	297
Molokysh (Rybnitza district)	72	6	367	21
Sarazeia (Rybnitza district)	20	8	3	13
Total	315	452	815	4549

Concerning a moldavian family size we could cite the data relative to Moldavo-Ukrainian villages. So, in 1800 45 men and 50 women resided in 15 Volokhi's dwellings in Obzhyla (the present-day Balta region)¹¹, at the end of 18th c. in Evtodia there were 6 Volokhy's dwellings with 26 men and 16 women residing there¹².

The ethnic composition of a series of villages does not seem adequate as regards place-names. Thus, the first mention of the village of Moshniagy dates back to the year 1780, when Count Olexander Ljubomirsky conferred a "presenta"¹³ and "erektia"¹⁴ on the priest Ostapovytych for the newly-built St. Olexander's Uniat Church. The village name indicates the Moldavian origin of its founders (the word "moshniag" in Moldavian means "an old person"). The village might have risen on the base of the khutor, founded by a Moldavian migrant,

¹¹ Карачківський Михайло. Північно - Західна Балтщина // Північно - Західна Балтщина... - Ф.Х. Од.зб.11634.-

¹² Карачківський Михайло. Північно - Західна Балтщина // Північно - Західна Балтщина... - Ф.Х. Од.зб.11634.-С.12.

¹³ Presenta – a certificate, given by an estate owner to a parish pretender, according to which an appropriate charter was given by the Uniat Metropolitan Office (Труды Комитета для историко-статистического описания Подольской епархии.- Каменец-Подольский, 1887.- Вып.3.- С.414,419).

¹⁴ Erectia – a certificate by which an owner assigned his donation of the realty to the Church. This document gave right to run some kinds of duty-free economy activities.

but it was developed by Ukrainians. At the end of 18th c. this village numbered 49 Ukrainian estates¹⁵ (those of Moldavian were 3), the number of Ukrainians made up 213 people (89,9 %), that of Moldavians was 9 (5,5 %). At the end of 18th c. in Fernetia Volokhi numbered 40,3 % (38 estates)¹⁶, whereas for the 1st of January, 1928 only 5 Moldavians' estates were established there. That is to say, in the area of the Kodyma river basin the rate of Moldavian population is decreasing even in the villages, founded by Moldavians. The problem concerning the village of Labushna's name origin is disputable. M. Karachkivsky failed to find out the origin of the village's name though he thinks it is of a Moldavian descent just as M.V.Sergievsky, who connected its origin with the Moldavian word "lepush" which means "burdock"¹⁷. As the local saying runs the name derives from one of the first migrant's surname Lapka or Labka¹⁸. The data of another village's name Jabluchna ("apple") are preserved in Church records. In any case, the village's name reflects its biethnic, i.e. Moldavo - Ukrainian composition. The village was divided into two parts – Ukrainian and Moldavian magalas (in Moldavian means "a part of a village"). At the end of 18th c. this village numbered 64 Ukrainian estates and 50 Moldavian ones¹⁹. If expressed as a percentage, Ukrainians made up 46% (373 people), those of Moldavians – 49% (398 people). There were much more Moldavians in the village of Plot', which was also divided in some "nooks" named Rusnatzky, Moldavian, Bulgarian.

The statement, which allegedly came to historiography with reference to M. Karachkivsky about joint residence of Bulgarians in this place together with other nations, should be considered disputable. In 1928 M. Karachkivsky himself, however, did not find Bulgarians there. He just informs, referring to local rumors, about truck farming, which was formerly borrowed from Bulgarians. It should be noted that there is a detail M. Karachkivsky extracted from Church records. The question is that Bulgarians came here during the Turkish domination. In 1769 Turks destroyed the Bulgarian settlement²⁰. Probably at that time Bulgarians left this country, but the memory of them was held in the name of that part of the locality they had populated. While Moldavian population northwest of the settlement is decreasing, that of Transdnestrian villages on the contrary is increasing. Thus, in the village of Molokish the number of Moldavians is increasing up to 93%, it being known that in 1928 most of them did not know Russian²¹. And in the

¹⁵ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина ... С170.

¹⁶ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина ... С. 172.

¹⁷ Сергійевський М.В. Молдавские этюды.-М-Л., 1936.-С.34-35.

¹⁸ Мельничук О.С. Топоніміка Кодимського району ...- С.57.

¹⁹ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина ... С. 176.

²⁰ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина ... С. 178.

²¹ Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина ... С. 182.

rest of Transdnestrian villages at the end of 18th c. – beginning of 19th c. there were more Moldavians than Ukrainians: in the village of Krasnen`ke – 95 Moldavians and 29 Ukrainians, in Gydyrym correspondingly 260 Moldavians and 26 Ukrainians, Rybnitza numbered 338 Volokhi and 95 Ukrainians, in Erzhov -141 Moldavians and 18 Ukrainians, Sarastzea numbered 75 Moldavians and 29 Ukrainians. For the period more than a hundred years the correlation of Moldavian and Ukrainian population changed. By the 1st of January, 1928 in Sarastzea there were 124 estates, 113 being of Ukrainians and 3 of Moldavians²². In Erzhov of 541 estates there were 490 Ukrainian and 15 Moldavian ones. In Gydyrym there were 186 Ukrainian and 163 Moldavian estates. In Krasnen`koe they were correspondingly 297 and 255.

The statistical data cited here reflect the dynamics of Ukrainian and Moldavian population of the Balta region (“povit”) from the beginning of 18th c. to 1928 and a development tendency of the two ethnic groups. In the north-west part of the povit, where Ukrainians considerably predominated, Moldavians were gradually assimilated whereas their population in the Transdnestria zone, not in all places however, was increasingly growing. The dynamics of Moldavian ethnic group rate in this area was under the influence of some other reasons, but this issue does not fall within the aim of this research.

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²² Карачківський М. Північно - Західна Балтщина ... С. 184.