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**HOW THE SOUTH UNITED UKRAINE
(THE END OF THE XVIIIth – THE BEGINNING OF THE XXth CENTURIES)**

Abstract. *The aim* of the article is to analyze the reasons for the failure of the Russian imperial project “Novorossiya” and give a theoretical justification for the process of integration of the South Ukrainian region as the part of Great Ukraine. **The Methodology** – general scientific, general historical, interdisciplinary methods and theoretical developments of particular scientists. **The scientific novelty** consists in the fact that for the first time in modern Ukrainian historiography, an attempt has been made to generalize theoretically the complex of combined socio-economic, political, and ethnocultural processes that led, on the one hand, to the failure of the imperial project “Novorossiya”, and on the other – to the transformation of the southern Ukrainian lands into an integral part of Modern Ukraine. **The Conclusions.** Although Imperial Russia used huge human, non-human and intellectual resources to implement the Novorossiya project, it still failed. The main obstacle was the modernization processes that from the last quarter of the XVIIIth – beginning of the XIXth century covered Europe and spread to Ukraine, including the part of it that was called as Novorossiya.

Modernization activated a whole range of factors in this territory that leveled the consequences of the policy of Imperial integration of Novorossiya, which led to its failure. One of these factors was mainly the Ukrainian ethnic composition of the region's population, which was formed as a result of migration processes. Another powerful factor was the economy. In the XVIIIth – at the beginning of the XXth centuries the South became the center of economic attraction of Naddnipriansk Ukraine and its commodity market, contributing to the consolidation of its individual regions into a single national territorial complex. Therefore, it activated social and ethno-cultural processes, and ultimately intensified the process of forming a modern Ukrainian nation throughout Ukraine.

Key words: *Novorossiya project, southern Ukraine, migration, regional integration, modern Ukrainian nation.*

ЯК ПІВДЕНЬ ОБ'ЄДНАВ УКРАЇНУ (КІНЕЦЬ XVIII – ПОЧАТОК XX ст.)

Анотація. *Мета роботи* – проаналізувати причини провалу російського імперського проєкту “Новоросія” і дати теоретичне обґрунтування процесу інтеграції південноукраїнського регіону до складу Великої України. **Методологія** – загальнонаукові, загальноісторичні, міждисциплінарні методи і теоретичні напрацювання окремих вчених. **Наукова новизна** – вперше у новітній українській історіографії здійснена спроба теоретичного узагальнення комплексу поєднаних між собою соціально-економічних, політичних і етнокультурних процесів, які призвели, з одного боку, до провалу імперського проєкту “Новоросія”, а з іншого – до перетворення південноукраїнських земель на невід’ємну складову частину модерної України. **Висновки.** *Хоча для реалізації проєкту “Новоросія” імперською Росією були задіяні величезні матеріальні, людські й інтелектуальні ресурси, він зазнав краху. На переході стали модернізаційні процеси, які з останньої чверті XVIII – початку XIX ст. охопили Європу і перекинулися в Україну, включаючи ту її частину, яка називалася Новоросією. Модернізація активізувала на цій території цілий комплекс факторів, які знівеливали наслідки політики імперської інтеграції Новоросії, спричинили її провал. Одним з цих факторів був переважно український етнічний склад населення регіону, який склався в результаті міграційних процесів. Інший потужний фактор – економіка. В XIX – на початку XX ст. Південь перетворився на центр економічного тяжіння Наддніпрянської України і її товарного ринку, сприяючи консолідації окремих її регіонів в єдиний національно-територіальний комплекс. Зі свого боку, це активізувало соціальні й етнокультурні процеси, і у кінцевому рахунку, інтенсифікувало на території всієї України процес формування модерної української нації.*

Ключові слова: *проєкт “Новоросія”, Південна Україна, міграції, інтеграція регіонів, модерна українська нація.*

The Problem Statement. During recent decades, scholars in Ukraine became much more interested in regional history. Among many historical studies of regional issues, many research esare devoted to southern Ukraine. It is common know ledge that this region, closely connected with Ukraine-Rus since the Middle Ages, in the second half of the XVIIIth century belonged to the territory of the Russian Empire. Its ruling circles set out the goal to merge the region with the ethnic territory of the rest of Russia. The name given to this region – Novorossiya – corresponded to this idea. The Russian Empire ruling circles hoped that this region would give a strong impetus to Russia's economic development and become a stronghold for the implementation of its military and strategic plans in the Black and Mediterranean basins. But this ambitious project, for the implementation of which huge material, socio-political and intellectual resources of the Russian Empire were mobilized, failed. History developed in such a way that the South developed as a component of the national and territorial space of Ukraine, integrating with its Left Bank and Right Bank, and forming Greater Ukraine together with them. The article focuses on the analysis of the reasons that caused the failure of the imperial project “Novorossiya” and which contributed to the transformation of the Steppe South into an organic part of Greater Ukraine.

The Analysis of Recent Researches and Publications. Hundreds of researchers analyzed the South Ukrainian issue in its various aspects. However, in their works the processes of economic and socio-political integration of the region as a part of Greater Ukraine, as well as the consequences that it led to, remain insufficiently studied. The exceptions are the articles of two historians – O. Ohloblyn, who analyzed the transformation processes of the South into the center of economic attraction of Greater Ukraine and focused on the socio-political consequences to which those processes led (Ohloblyn, 1995), as well as his student and follower I. Lysiak-Rudnytsky, who emphasized the role of the South in the economic integration of the Ukrainian lands and the creation of all-Ukrainian market (Lysiak-Rudnytskyi, 1994). Both of these authors worked during the last century.

Among modern Ukrainian historians, the role of the South in the processes of economic integration of the Ukrainian lands is partially analyzed in the works of V. Vashchenko (Vashchenko, 2002), T. Honcharuk (Honcharuk, 2002) and O. Skorokhod (Skorokhod, 2017).

The Main Material Statement. The question of “who owns” the territory, which Catherine II called Novorossiia in 1764, the Ukrainian intellectual elite of the XIXth – the XXth centuries decided based on, firstly, the scientifically proven fact of residence antiquity of the Ukrainians in the Dnieper region, and secondly, taking into account the consequences of colonization processes which took place before and after the conquest of southern Ukraine by the Russian Empire.

To illustrate this, it is worth mentioning the draft Constitution prepared by the Cyril and Methodius Society (1846). In the draft Constitution in the part of the future Slavic federation (“the country of states”), which was planned to be established on the ruins of the Russian and Austrian Empires, the first state was called “Ukraine with Chornomorria (the Black Sea Coast Territory), Galicia and the Crimea” (Sokhan, 1990, p. 507). Thus, Southern Ukraine (including the Crimea) was perceived as an integral part of ethnic Ukraine.

The line of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood was continued by M. Drahomanov, a prominent Ukrainian scholar and a public political figure (Drahomanov, 1991, pp. 276–277), by the historians V. Antonovych (Antonovych, 1991, p. 199), D. Bahaliy (Bahaliy, 1920, p. 110) and the others. Without any admonishment, they considered Southern Ukraine the part of a Greater Ukraine inhabited by the Ukrainians. But most of all for the assertion of this truth did M. Hrushevsky, who in his famous article “The Usual Scheme of “Ruska” History and the Matter of the Rational Formation of the History of Eastern Slavs” (1904) proved the unfoundedness of Russia’s claims to Kyiv heritage (Hrushevskyi, 2014).

The list of views of the Ukrainian historians on this issue can be extended to include modern researchers. But the content of their works, with some differences, is similar. Thus, in the discussions around Novorossiia / Southern Ukraine, the authors cite the facts of the ancient and modern settlement of the region by the Ukrainians as the main argument, which is the proof of its belonging to Ukraine. Formed by the Ukrainian populist historiography in the XIXth century this point of view, in a somewhat updated form, dominates in the domestic historical literature even nowadays.

As for the Russian historiography, it emphasizes the imperial conquest of the South, which is considered reasonable, “just and legitimate”, and, most importantly, based on the fact (unproven) of a comprehensive modernization of this, once uninhabited land – “Wild Field”, by the sources of the Russian people. Quite fantastic statement – about the South as an ancient, “native-Russian” territory is still added to these arguments.

The estimation of modern Russian historians of imperial policy on the “Novorossiia” project, in spite of its external “scientificity”, does not change fundamentally and deviates

increasingly from the facts and becomes more aggressive. Here is what A. Shubin, a famous Russian historian, wrote in his monograph “History of Novorossia” in 2015: “People who called themselves the Russians, dreamed of freedom of the steppe in the thickness of forests, under the oppression of poverty and feudal despotism, in then dcreated Novorossiya bytheir labor, their folk culture, their warrior courage” (Shubin, 2015, p. 4).

This impudent neo-imperial onslaught, which, in its essence, is one of the fronts of the current hybrid war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, must be contrasted with historical research, do neon the basis of modern theoretical approaches.

The theoretical legacy of O. Ohloblyn, a prominent Ukrainian historian, who began his work at the beginning of the 1920s in Kyiv, is noteworthy in the context of the search of these approaches. After World War II, O. Ohloblyn continued his work in emigration. He was an ardent supporter of the state direction of the Ukrainian historiography, which began its formation at the beginning of his scientific career.

O. Ohloblyn considered history of Ukraine of the XIXth – the beginning of the XXth century in the context of the regional subdivision. According to his point of view, at the end of the XVIIIth – the beginning of the XIXth century Ukraine was “aconglomeration of several different historical and geographical territories, each of which had its own historical destiny” (Ohloblyn, 1995, p. 47). O. Ohloblyn elucidates the configuration of these territories, calling the main ones in the Russian Empire – Left-BankUkraine, Right-Bank and Southern Ukraine, which are united by the generalizing concept of “Greater Ukraine”.

As for Southern Ukraine, it is described by O. Ohloblyn as “a huge space between Russian and Polish Ukraine, which has long been organically connected with the whole complex of the Ukrainian lands, and in the new era (the 16th – the 17th centuries) this space was to some extent separated from it and until 1775 was represented by the state of the Zaporozhian Lowland Army and the Turkish-Tatar possessions in the north of the Black Sea region, and later the so-called Novorossiya, or Novorossiysky Krai, which Russia for a long time, even after the revolution of 1917, considered an organic part of the Russian state” (Ohloblyn, 1995, p. 48).

O. Ohloblyn gives an answer to the question why and how in the place of this “conglomerate of territories”, among which the South of Ukraine was, a united, Greater Ukraine was formed. He singles out a whole set of interconnected processes that constituted the essence of a “social life of contemporary Ukraine”. Among them – territorial, economic and political processes,as well as the processes of the leading stratum formation, social structure, development of the Ukrainian culture. They developed in unity, and O. Ohloblyn considers their integrated consequence O. as “an organic unity, merging of all these elements – geographical, economic, political – *in a united national and territorial complex of modern, new Ukraine ...*” (Ohloblyn, 1995, p. 48). A generalizing consequence of this unityis the formation of a modern Ukrainian nation at the territory of Greater Ukraine, which includes the southern region.

The historian clearly outlines the content of each of the above processes, especially emphasizing the importance of two – territorial and economic, which particularly significantly contributed to the transformation of the South into an organic part of Greater Ukraine. But he considers them in unity with all others, emphasizing that only the symbiosis of historical territory, economy, politics, ethnic and socio-cultural processes creates the necessary conditions for the organic merging of different regions of Ukraine and the formation of a poly ethnic community – modern Ukrainian nation.

O. Ohloblyn begins his analysis with the territorial process, or, conditionally speaking, with the “discovery” of their native place, “their” land by the Ukrainians. This thesis corresponds

to the latest ideas about nation-building. Anthony Smith, a modern English researcher, called “territorial unity”, “historical territory, or native land” “the first step ... to the social and cultural unification of the nation” (Smit, 2004. p. 32). The geography of settlement of the Ukrainians is meant, within which there was the formation of the “Ukrainian territorial massif”, the part of which is the South. The beginning of this process is lost in the depths of the centuries, and in the XIXth – at the beginning of the XXth centuries this process went through the final phase.

During the XIXth century the population of the region increased 9 times – from 1 million to 9 million people. The percentage of the Ukrainians among the inhabitants of the South prevailed, although it gradually decreased – from 70% at the end of the XVIIIth century up to 57% at the beginning of the XXth century (Turchenko & Turchenko, 2003, pp. 14, 16). There are no exact data on the ethnic composition of the population, because the Ukrainians (“malorosy”) were often presented by census organizers in the same array with the Russians and the Belarusians. This was typical of counting city residents.

The population increased not only due to natural increase, but to a greater extent as a result of spontaneous migrations, mainly from the left-bank and right-bank Ukrainian provinces, as well as due to the purposeful resettlement policy of the authorities. The latter were unable to stop the spontaneous resettlement, although they did not make much effort. After all, local landowners, who were acutely short of labor force, were not interested in it. In the 1870s and the 1880s, up to 300 000 people came to Kherson province each year for seasonal work, 260 000 – to Tavriya province, and 100 000 to – Katerynoslav province (Luhova, 1965 p. 116). Researchers concluded that agricultural labour became a transitional stage to resettlement “and has been so closely linked to it that no line can be drawn between them” (Boiko, 1996, pp. 124–125).

Contemporaries, especially urban dwellers, where the Ukrainians were in the minority, were struck by the diverse ethnic composition of the region. But at the same time, they clearly pointed at its predominantly Ukrainian nature. In particular, D. Dontsov, whose origin is also connected with Southern Ukraine, called Northern Tavriya “our America, an ethnographic mixture of the Ukrainians” and many other peoples (Dontsov, 1996, p. 154).

Historians also noticed the fact that the traditions of the Zaporozhian “freemasonry” did not disappear after the abolition of the Cossacks in Southern Ukraine. A historical myth was formed, which concerned not only the direct descendants of the Cossacks, but also many of those whose ancestors had nothing to do with Zaporozhzhia, the Cossacks and even Ukraine. It was a phantom that was reproduced by the Steppe constantly and remained out of the authority control. Everyone who came to the South was influenced by it in one way or another. “Mythology (and the image) of the free steppe also influenced politics”, – G. Kuromiya, American historian, said of the southern Ukrainian region of the XIXth – the XXth centuries. As once in the history of the Zaporozhian Cossacks, the inhabitants of southern Ukraine at the end of the XIXth – the XXth centuries seemed to the Empire authorities “rebellious fighters for freedom and independence” (Kuromiya, 2002, p. 68).

But all this rebellious spirit was opposed by the Empire fiercely, whose efforts were aimed at the Russification of the region and all possible support for the myth of Novorossiia. D. Bahaliy wrote that the Empire’s policy was aimed at “destroying even the memory that it used to be purely Ukrainian territory” (Bahaliy, 1928, p. 64).

It should be noted that this goal was largely achieved by the Empire. The myth got assimilated. N. Polonska-Vasylenko wrote about it convincingly: “The artificial name “Novorossiia” spread throughout the whole territory of Ukraine, and this aberration that the country of “Zaporozkykh Freedoms” is Russia not Ukraine – was firmly mastered by

contemporaries, and descendants, and administration, and historians. And not only did the name become entrenched, but so did the idea that these lands originally belonged to Russia, and that the southern Ukrainian lands were Russia, not Ukraine. Only at first unfairly taken away, and at the end of the XVIIIth century rejoined” (Polonska-Vasylenko, 1976, p. 276). Let’s pay attention to the words “originally belonged to Russia”, which the historian used not by chance, confirming them with the final statement, which was the essence of the imperial legend of Novorossiya: “... Only at first unfairly taken away, and at the end of the XVIIIth century rejoined”. It remained only to put the “final dots” – to complete the full Russification of the region, turning it into an organic part of the Russian ethnocultural space. In the Russian imperial society the belief was dominated that it was a matter of time. However, this did not happen. The territory of the South became established as Ukrainian finally, and we will find the explanation for this by continuing to analyze the creative heritage of O. Ohloblyn, I. Lysiak-Rudnytsky and other researchers.

Economy was the most powerful among the processes that contributed to the integration of the South into Ukraine decisively. It was the result of economic development that there took place “the consolidation of the Ukrainian lands with a different historical and economic destiny into a single economic organism”.

At the end of the XVIIIth century the three largest regions of Ukraine – the Right-Bank, the Left-Bank, and the South – became the part of the Russian Empire. “Their unification”, – the historian wrote, “was not just a common unity of different areas under a single political and administrative system. It was the unification of scattered, once broken parts of a single economic organism of Ukraine. Of course, the process of consolidation of the Ukrainian economy developed slowly and under the difficult economic and political conditions of that period of time” (Ohloblyn, 2018, p. 185).

Oleksandr Ohloblyn was, perhaps, the first in the 1920s to substantiate the conclusion that the South was especially important in the process of economic consolidation of the Ukrainian lands. Many historians write about it nowadays. Among other things, they emphasize the fact that after the annexation of the South to Russia on the shores of the Azov and Black Seas, ports were built fairly quickly, which were not only of military and strategic but also of purely economic importance. At the same time, a system of roads was formed, which played the role in the history of Ukraine that went far beyond its purely economic significance. As a result, the directions of trade-routes, in particular, grain, changed cardinaly. It is known that until the last quarter of the XVIIIth century the roads were of different directions: Right-Bank Ukraine was economically oriented towards Poland, and Slobozhanshchyna and the Hetmanate were oriented towards Russia. After the period of time when the Azov and the Black Sea ports were rebuilt, it became more economically profitable to trade (to export and to import goods abroad) across the territory of the South. In modern domestic historical publications it has already been noted that at the end of the XVIIIth – the beginning of the XIXth centuries the South became a powerful factor in the economic integration of the Ukrainian lands (Vashchenko, 2002, pp. 155–163; Honcharuk, 2002, pp. 163–171; Honcharuk, 2006, pp. 332–341; Skorokhod, 2017, pp. 220–229). This role of the southern region was especially strengthened after the reform of 1861 and the acceleration of modernization processes. The South, in fact, revolutionized the economic relations of Ukraine, which, as I. Lysiak-Rudnytskyi writes in the article “The Role of Ukraine in Modern History”, “was a decisive step towards the economic integration of the Ukrainian lands and towards the creation of a geographically united Ukrainian national economy” – in other

words, towards the formation of all-Ukrainian market. As a result, the historian concludes, “the South became the economic center of gravity of new Ukraine” (Lysiak-Rudnytskyi, 1994, p. 155). As a result, the significant differences that previously existed between the South and the rest of the regions of Dnieper Ukraine began to disappear.

This process was also facilitated by the formation of the labor market in southern Ukraine, which took place largely at the expense of the Ukrainian migrants from Left-Bank and Right-Bank of Ukraine, as well as from the Russian and Belarusian provinces. Having studied a large array of sources, Ya. Boyko, a historian, concluded that the three provinces of southern Ukraine became the home for more than 2 million migrants during the period of 1861 – 1917. The vast majority of them inhabited the territory of the South arbitrarily without the permission of the authorities (Boiko, 2006, p. 239). Thus, new settlers from Right-Bank and Left-Bank became an important factor in the consolidation of the Ukrainian lands in a united national territorial array. After settling in the South, the settlers did not lose contact with their relatives for a long time, helped them financially, visited them and invited them to their houses in a new homeland. An all-Ukrainian community of people was formed.

Huge flows of migrants were caused by agrarian overpopulation in the Right-Bank and Left-Bank Ukrainian provinces. In the 80s of the XIXth century, on the Left Bank of Ukraine the excess of labor force was 850 thousand people, and on the Right Bank – 1 million 200 thousand. At the same time, in all sectors of the economy of southern Ukraine there was an acute deficit shortage of labor force (Boiko, 2002, p. 94). Thus, mass resettlements and seasonal migrations of the Ukrainian peasants from the Right-Bank and the Left-Bank to the South brought these regions closer and were a powerful factor in their integration into the national and territorial complex of Greater Ukraine.

A big problem for the Ukrainians in the South, as well as in Ukraine, was their weak position in cities where they were in the minority. Official statistics shows that at the end of the XIXth century in the cities of southern Ukraine, there was the following percentage of the Ukrainians – 17.5%, while the Russians – 45.1% and the Jews – 25.2%. In Ukraine these data were the following: the Ukrainians – 30.5%, the Russians – 34.5% and the Jews – 27.0%. But official statistics often lessened the number of the Ukrainians in cities (Turchenko, 2005, p. 24). But another issue was more important. In the polyethnic South, organically connected with Left-Bank and Right-Bank of Ukraine, national differences and related contradictions were neutralized by a sense of commonality of those important life circumstances, which united different ethnic groups together and served as a basis for the formation of a modern political Ukrainian nation on their basis.

The Conclusions. There are many cases in history when the intentions of the rulers of empires did not coincide with the results of their actions. The same thing was observed with the Novorossiia project, which the Russian Empire tried to implement in southern Ukraine. Already in the XIXth – the XXth centuries the Ukrainian historians made great efforts to debunk the myth of the South and the Crimea as “originally Russian” lands. M. Hrushevsky did the most for this in his theoretical article “The Usual Scheme of “Ruska” History and the Issue of the Rational Way of the History of the Eastern Slavs” (Hrushevskyi, 2014) and proved the unfoundedness of Russia’s claims to Kyiv heritage in general, and to Southern Ukraine, in particular. Therefore, there was no reason to speak of any historical justification for the Russians’ stay on the shores of the Black Sea.

Thus, in the second half of the XIXth – the beginning of the XXth century, leading Ukrainian historians debunked the imperial myth of Novorossiia. But on the eve of World War I, after

more than a century of Southern Ukraine under the full rule of the Russian Empire, it turned out that the artificial name “Novorossiya”, and even the imperial myth that “these lands originally belonged to Russia” were assimilated by a large part of the society. It was clear that during the period of the Russian Empire, the Ukrainian historians with their truth about the past of the South would not reach ordinary people and debunk imperial myths about its past.

During the Ukrainian Revolution of 1917, the situation changed dramatically. After the collapse of tsarism, Russian imperial deception quickly subsided and the South proved to be an integral part of Ukraine. After some hesitation, the Bolsheviks were forced to agree with this objective reality. As early as in 1917 and the beginning of 1918, they organized fake quasi-state formations in the south of Ukraine, directly subordinated to Moscow – the Donetsk-Kryvyi Rih and Odesa Soviet republics, and the Soviet Taurida Republic in the Crimea. But in 1919 the South was recognized as the part of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (the UkrSSR). Otherwise, the Bolsheviks would not have been able to keep it under their control. However, no refusal of Russia’s traditional imperial policy concerning this region took place. As before 1917, the imperial government and the Bolsheviks after the revolution accepted the South of Ukraine with its industry, seaports and huge food resources through the prism of the implementation of plans for Russia’s home and foreign policy. Among these plans there was the Soviet project to export the communist revolution to Europe. In this case it is appropriate to mention the thesis proved by the Ukrainian researchers about the deadly threat of the Russian imperialism not only for Ukraine but also for European civilization (Sytnyk, 2017, pp. 77–78). It was the South of Ukraine in 1919 that became the springboard for the organization of communist intervention in Central and Eastern Europe. But this attempt, like “Novorossiya” project at that time, failed. The mass uprising of the southern Ukrainian peasants, to whom Russia, with its expansionist plans, was organically alien, thwarted it. The export of the Bolshevik revolution from Russia to Europe failed (Turchenko & Turchenko, 2019).

But the general situation was such that Ukraine, which in 1919 made a significant contribution to saving Europe from the communist invasion, was unable to save itself from Bolshevism and preserve its own independence. As a quasi-state, Ukraine remained the part of the communist empire, and the former Novorossiya was recognized as the part of the USSR.

Among other things, this fact helps researchers who studied the imperial project “Novorossiya” understand its artificial nature and find rational explanations for its collapse at the beginning of the XXth century. The very circumstance opens up prospects for further research of this issue, in particular, in the context of the analysis of the adventurous attempt of the modern Russian Federation ruling circles to reincarnate this project “Novorossiya”, which resulted in the latest Russian-Ukrainian war.

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