

THE GREEK POPULATION OF THE GENOESE COLONIES IN CRIMEA

Moiseyenkova L. S.

Taurida National V. I. Vernadsky University, Simferopol, Ukraine

The article covers several aspects of history of the Greek population in the Crimea in the period of the Genoese conquest (XIII–XV centuries). It is also substantiated a dominant role of the Greeks among polyethnic and multiconfessional population of the Crimean colonies. Greeks had not always been superior in numbers however their cultural advantages are unquestionable. The conquerors because of their small number were forced to cooperate with the local conquered population, grant political rights, and engage local nobles in management of towns and trading stations. Greek language together with Latin one was the main language of colonial clerical work. The Greeks were business partners of Genoese in trade and seafaring. However at the times of aggravation of contradictions between catholic conquerors and local population Greek Orthodoxy played a unifying role for many ethnic groups including Turcoman. The article is also dedicated to mutual influence between Western and Eastern cultures and a role played by the Crimean Greeks in delivery of the Byzantine cultural heritage.

In the middle of the 1260`s Genoese have strongly established themselves in Crimea. Having been settled the matters with Mongols-Tatars who by this time have transformed Crimea into the province of the Golden Horde, they have achieved a sanction to base the whole network of polytypic settlements at the Crimean coast. Trading stations appeared there very fast one after the other. Some of them turned to be really large and influential cities (Caffa).

In order to protect these acquisitions in such «Far East» of the Mediterranean Genoese constructed powerful fortresses Vosporo (Kerch), Soldaia (Sudak), Chembalo (Balaklava), etc., quite often using foundations and walls of Byzantine and even antique defensive constructions which remained intact. In 1381 under the treaty with the Tatars Italians have secured for themselves 18 villages of Soldaia region and have got the «Captainship of Gothia» which in the Middle Ages was the name of the Southern coast of Crimea. The Italian settlements in Crimea have received the general name – Genoese Gazarie.

The main trading and political center of Gazarie has become Caffa. Already by the end of the 13th century, dynamically developing it turned into densely populated, polyethnic city, and by the 15th century Caffa on intensity of a city life and population could has been compared with Constantinople. The rise of Caffa was promoted by strengthening role of the Northern Pontos in international trade of the western countries with the East. Caffa became a large trans-shipment point on trade of the transit goods: Russian furs, leather, canvas, wax, and weapon; spices, dyes, silk and jewels from Far East countries. The local goods were in great demand also: salt, salty fish, caviar, bread, unmanufactured skins. Huge incomes to Genoese brought also slave trade.

Impressing successes of Genoese on development of the region could not be explained only by their military and diplomatic experience, enterprise aggressiveness, and

business quick. The Genoa colonization had trading character, and the number of colonists was always insignificant. Towns and fortresses of the Crimean coast which visible traces were kept till our times, were erected by hands of the local Crimean population, which work and talents Italians tried to turn to own advantage with highest possible effectiveness.

All researchers from the very first steps of studying history of the Genoese colonies ascertained extraordinary diversity of the Crimean population, at times admitting their inability not only to define an ethnic characteristic of its separate components, but even to list all nations known to a science which representatives lived in trading stations. Not the full list can far look so: Greeks, Armenians, Tatars, Jews, Cumans, Russians, Syrians, Abkhazians, Circassians, Georgians, Hungarians, etc. There were adherents of various religions among named nations: Christianity, Islam and Judaism. In the process of growth of economic appeal of trading stations, this diversity only intensified.

Ethnic-religious picture of the medieval Crimea represented such a mix, which could be defined as «the European Babylon» or «the European Jerusalem.» However, the mix as has noticed Fernand Braudel «must consist of different elements. Their diversity is evidence that they do not merge in homogeneous mass, remain separate, isolated, and more and more distinct in the process of moving from the basic centers in which they are closely bound» [1, p. 597].

The most significant ethnic communities with which the Italian conquerors have interacted were Greek, Armenian, Tatar and Jewish. The Greek population prevailed over representatives of other ethnic groups (Tatars, Circassians) in coastal cities of Crimea. In Caffa and Soldaia Armenians made the competition to Greeks. Existing data about absolute prevalence of Armenians in Caffa of the middle of 15th century now called in question. To this doubt, would be desirable to add the following: in the 30`s years of the 14th century «infusion» of a large ethnic group of Armenians in the region, which ran from oppressions initiated by the Turks, has made impression upon contemporaries. Reflection of an innovation, instead of routine of daily occurrence is more frequent in sources. Establishing themselves on a new place, Armenians required greater communal definiteness among native population, showed activity on building up of space in conformity with cultural and religious needs, built up temples, transferred to them the rescued relics. Probably, this active self-affirmation of Armenians has also caused a use of the name «Seaside Armenia» which referred to Caffa and its district.

Greeks donated Armenians-coreligionists their temples, joint participation in divine service practiced also. Parishioners of the same Orthodox temples could be both Greeks, and Armenians, and representatives of other ethnic groups. All this does ethnic components of the Crimean population almost indiscernible.

Nevertheless, special researches are devoted to separate ethnic communities (Armenian, Russian, Jewish) of the Genoa settlements [*See for ex.:* 2, p. 142–154; 3, p. 169–177]. Thus the Greek population is represented as a background which should shade and give more precise outlines to considered ethnos. However, the background which characteristics suppose the certain homogeneity and stability looks a little bit vague.

History of ethnogeny of the Crimean Greeks leaves many questions. Relations with the Greek population of antique colonies of Crimea are hardly traced. However, research-

ers do not deny, that «barbarized» Greeks and «Hellenized» barbarians participated in ethnogeny of the Crimean Greeks. During all history of Byzantium Crimea was considered by empire as the major stronghold of its influence in the Northern Pontos. Under active missionary, economic and political influence of Byzantium local Greek, Goth-Alan and partly Turkic population was converted to Christianity, has acquired Greek as a language of religious and daily dialogue, accepted elements of the Byzantine culture and ideology. In this case, we observe generating role of a religious-cultural component in relation to an ethnic generality. Processes of assimilation have been completed by the end of the 10th century. The Greek population of the Genoa settlements in Crimea, defining the religious and ethnic identity, named itself «Romans.»

Because of the Genoese conquest the Crimean settlements have become sort of liege dependent on Genoa. In this system of feudal submission, Greeks were from the point of view of the colonial authorities vassals of the first grade. Apparently, Latins have not seen special distinctions between the Crimean Greek population and the Byzantine Greeks with which they were in the closest intercourse long before they settled on the Crimean peninsula.

Not numerous conquerors willingly went on cooperation with the local nobility and first of all Greek which originally acted Circassians on behalf of the population of the colonies. The Greek names more frequently met among members of city authorities and trustee boards. Greeks more often than others were charged with the posts of captains, company's leaders. They more often than others assumed responsibility for food and other supply of cities, acted as tax-farmers of the state monopolies, and from the end of the 14th century when it became possible, as buyers of positions.

Prevalence of the Greek population, its business, public and cultural activity was admitted and taken into account by the Genoese authorities. Capital curia of Caffa on the constant salary kept the secretary of the Greek letter. Officials with knowledge of other languages (Arabian, Cuman, Tatar and so forth) were involved as required. Alongside with Latin notaries above drawing up of necessary documents worked officially approved by the consul of Caffa Greek notaries. They had the right to make notaries certificates in the Greek language. The statute of 1449 has officially legalized existence of the Greek notaries. And in the 60`s – 70`s of the 15th century already met mentions of existence in Caffa special Greeks loggia, i.e. an official building where curia, office, scribes, and notaries should have been placed [4, p. 133].

Greeks that, in general, is natural for native population were presented at all steps of a social scale of coastal cities and rural district. Natives of the Greek nobility alongside with other representatives of local elite were often ranked to so-called to «white Genoese,» i.e. found the status among those who, not being actually Genoese, had their rights and privileges.

Activity of the Greek population is especially appreciable where it was not required to have a special social or a legal status. Latins have found qualified partners among the Greek merchants. In the organization of trade on a new place colonists, most likely, leaned on experience and knowledge of the Greek merchant class, which took the lead positions in trade of the region in the pre-Genoese period. Already by the end of the 80`s of the 13th century practically from the first steps of existence of the trading stations Genoese, coop-

erating with Greeks could arrange mass export of grain from Crimea and the Northern and Eastern Pontos. Caffa's trade in grain was especially intensive [5, p. 28; 6, p. 29–30].

At Genoese, joining the advanced forms and methods of business, getting certain access to extensive trading contacts of Italians, the Crimean Greeks acted in the merchant environment not only as the subsidiary personnel serving needs of colonial trade, but also as proprietors of ships, solvent and exclusive dealers of spices and cloth.

The craft on the economic importance in the Crimean cities conceded to trade, but its role in economic development of the region did not have to be underestimated. Caffa's statements of the end of the 13th century name about 30 craft specialties, which, certainly, have arisen not suddenly. Genoese have found in the Crimean settlements highly developed craft manufacture. Archeological data testify about advanced local ceramic products and bronze foundry craft in the period before the conquest. Ceramic finds kept brands in the form of the Greek monograms, which have allowed ascertaining, that ceramic production of the seaside masters extended all over Crimea and beyond its bounds.

Not all Italians who arrived to Crimea were engaged exclusively in trade. Some of them found additional incomes in the organization of craft manufacture, mainly in metal working weapon manufacturing and tailoring. The crafts connected with manufacture of leather, furs, manufacturing of footwear, local fabrics – everything connected with supply of cities and fortresses with the foodstuffs belonged to local population activity. Millers, bakers, butchers were Greeks, Armenians and Jews. Foodstuffs were receiving from the rural district which population on the ethnic variety did not concede to cities. First of all the Greeks are appreciable here as wine growers and wine-makers. West-European traveler I. Schiltberger who has visited Crimea in the first half of the 15th century informed of the Greek Christians, «who make excellent wine»[7, p. 58]. Grapes grew up in the vicinities of Soldaia, Caffa, Chembalo. Every spring in Soldaia were electing two confidential persons. One of which had to be the Greek who was entrusted with the distribution of water between owners of vineyards. The Caffa's Charter of 1449 mentioned about the special tax collection from vineyards, and about sale of wine wholesale and retail in the towns of Crimea.

The Genoa authorities actively used local builders. Greeks and Armenians were skilful masons, marble workers, carvers on a stone. Documents name also many craft specialties connected with construction repair and equipment of vessels. The shipbuilding on peninsula had old, mainly, the Greek traditions. There are records of existence of a shipyard in the 12th century in Partenit. The Genoese highly rated the Greek shipbuilders. In the documents of Caffa dated by 1480's were named carpenters from among Greeks who supervised over construction of the ships. By this time, there was a state shipyard in Caffa, which were carrying out orders of the city. A little later, a shipyard had been organized also in Chembalo.

Latin's activity in the Northern Pontos was not limited only to economic sphere. Latins had quite certain missionary goals, which achievement has appeared to be not so impressive. The uniting principles for all Greek and significant part of not Greek population was the Orthodox Christianity. Greeks continued to live in old ideas of communication with empire and patriarchy. In the list of eparchies of Constantinople patriarchy were named four Crimean: Kherson, Gothia and Sugdeya united with Fulle and Bospor. Their

representatives, which appointments depend on the patriarch, were in close relationships with the synod of Constantinople and took part in cathedrals. At the end of the 13th century bishop of Sugdeya and in the 14th century, the other bishops have been raised in a rank and became metropolitans.

There were numerous cult constructions in charge of the Crimean bishops. The abundance of temples, churches, and chapels has amazed the Polish diplomat M. Bronevsky who has visited Crimea in the second half of the 16th century. «Proud, not consent and rebellious Greeks», as considered M. Bronevsky, because of the disagreement easily defeated by the Genoese, «reached such intestine enmity, that the families most suffered from these distempers, did not wish even to be present and participate in public divine services. From here there was such set of churches that according to Christians their number reached several hundred» [8, p. 343]. However, it was not the matter. Really, the eyes of the diplomat have got used to the European town built around the central cathedral. The Crimean medieval towns developed spontaneously and were constructed according to the principle of functionality. Every residential area usually occupied by handicraftsmen of one specialty had own church as a rule devoted to the patron saint. The rich townspeople had also their own churches, which served also as patrimonial burial-vaults. As a rule, all of them were small erected on a plan typical for the Byzantine provincial architecture: rectangular basilica under gable roof and with a semicircular apse. Cross-domical temples, such as John Predtechia's temple in Kerch dated 10th–14th centuries were much less frequent. Unassuming external decoration of the majority of churches was compensated by the expressive internal decor presented by frescos. The kept frescos of Caffa's Saint Stephen church testify to a high level of skill of the Greek artists. Moreover, researchers found the bases to connect painting of the Saint Stephen church and creation of Dejesus and Eucharist images with a name of great Byzantine painter Feofan Grek who, according to some information, in the beginning of the 14th century stopped at Caffa on the way from Constantinople to Novgorod and Moscow [9, p. 49; 10, p. 51–52].

The Orthodox Church was for Greeks not only the consolidating basis in conditions of opposition to a pressure of Tatars-Moslems from one side and Latin-Catholics from another. Temples and monasteries were a place of dialogue, center of culture and education. There were schools at monasteries. There is information of school's existence at Saint Peter's monastery dated 1366. Besides the theological literature at schools were studied Greek classics by which enlightened Byzantines always have been so passionately keen. The Crimean Greeks could get not only church education. At educational institutions teaching was built by the principle of «seven free arts» studying. Greek as a language of antique erudition and culture and as the second (after Latin) official language of the settlements was taught not only at the Greek schools, but also at Armenian and at the schools established by the Italians.

The Genoese inevitably acquired local Greek customs and traditions. Some of them could organically blend with rites of official holidays, which were ordered from Genoa. On the common for Orthodox and Catholics holiday of the Epiphany which fell on January, 6th, Greeks were coming to the consular's castle and sang there «calimeras» («happy day»). The same day Orthodox priests (papas) were making a ceremony of consecration of the sea. Then boys jumped in sea waves, receiving gratuity for this.

Such a fact as that in far Crimean settlements the Genoese preferred to marry Greek women could be explained by the absence of serious cultural distinctions between Greeks and Italians.

Firstly, the Catholic clergy negatively reacted to such conjugal units, being afraid of a converting Latinas into schism because of everyday contemplation of customs and rites of Orthodoxy. Indispensable condition of the marriage was the promise of the bride to accept Catholic faith. However, Orthodox women far not always fulfilled the promises. Pope John XXII ordered to the bishop of Caffa to admonish and punish such wives who have not fulfilled the promise to be christened on a Catholic ceremony [11, p. 179; 12, p. 110].

In the middle of the 15th century in conditions of increasing Turkish threat, the Genoa authorities trying to keep colonists in the Black Sea settlements began to encourage marriages with local women, giving monetary payments on acquisition of families. Marriages with privileged and well-off Italians for local Greeks women were considered prestigious, but at times led to the real human dramas. Probably one of them has found reflection in a legend about young man Nikita from Soldaya and its love to a beautiful daughter of local shroff Ilya. The girl whose name was Nadiya has preferred to the not so rich young man who prepared himself to become a priest, the Genoese-Catholic who was the officer of palace guard. When Nikita has learned about a taken place wedding the beloved, he has gone to suburb of the town and settled in a cave by the spring where soon died of famine and sufferings. Therefore, as the legend says there was a spring of fidelity and a monastery of unrequited love in Sudak (modern name of Soldaya).

Thus, the Greek population of Crimea during the Genoa dominion held position of dominating ethnos among polyethnic and multyreligious population of the settlements. In many respects, Greeks set the fashion in economic, public, and cultural life of the Crimean towns and were empowered by the Genoese to represent all Crimean population.

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Рассматривается ряд аспектов истории греческого населения Крыма в период генуэзского завоевания (XIII – XV вв.), обосновывается доминирующая роль греков среди полиэтничного и многоконфессионального населения крымских колоний. Греки не всегда преобладали численно, но их культурологические преимущества представляются несомненными. Завоеватели в силу своей малочисленности вынуждены были идти на сотрудничество с покоренным населением, наделять политическими правами, привлекать к управлению городами и факториями местную знать. Греческий язык, наряду с латинским, был основным языком колониального делопроизводства. Греки выступали деловыми партнерами генуэзцев в торговле и мореплавании. Однако в периоды обострения противоречий между завоевателями-католиками и местным населением греческое православие становилось объединяющим началом для многих этносов, в том числе и тюрок. Уделяется также внимание вопросам взаимодействия восточной и западной культур, отмечается роль крымских греков в передаче Западу византийского культурного наследия.

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Розглядається ряд аспектів історії грецького населення Криму в період генуезького завоювання (XIII – XV вв.), обґрунтовується домінуюча роль греків серед поліетнічного і багатоконфесійного населення кримських колоній. Греки не завжди переважали чисельно, але їх культурологічні переваги представляються безперечними. Завойовники в силу своєї нечисленності вимушені були йти на співпрацю із скореним населенням, наділяти політичними правами, залучати до управління містами і факторіями місцеву знать. Грецька мова, разом з латинською, була основною мовою колониального діловодства. Греки виступали діловими партнерами генуезців в торгівлі і мореплаванні. Проте в періоди загострення протиріч між завойовниками-католиками і місцевим населенням грецьке православ'я ставало об'єднуючим початком для багатьох етносів, у тому числі і тюрок. Приділяється також увага питанням взаємовпливу східної і західної культур, відзначається роль кримських греків в передачі Заходу візантійської культурної спадщини.

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д.и.н., проф. А. А. Непомнящий

д.и.н., проф. В. М. Хмарский