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**THE “WAKF QUESTION” IN THE SYSTEM OF RELATIONS BETWEEN  
RUSSIAN AUTOCRACY AND CRIMEAN MOSLEMS  
(LATE EIGHTEENTH TO EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES)<sup>1</sup>**

According to most general definitions of encyclopaedias, *wakf*<sup>2</sup> is the charitable property establishment act on a trust basis, in result of which the *wakf* establisher (*wakif*) transferred his/her indisputable property (real estate or, in certain cases, movables) to the end of time for the charitable purpose, determined once and forever [see: 60, p. 59; 4, p. 45; 56, p. 390, 391; 7, pp. 485, 486]. A product of Muslim religious philosophy, *wakf* became extremely popular throughout the Moslem world, making an extraordinary important contribution to the formation of the Islamic civilization [57, p. XIII]. The Crimean Peninsula was not an exception: a great number of local *wakfs* appeared especially in the period of the Crimean Khanate, in two traditional forms. The Russian legislation knew the first type, *wakf khayrī*, as “*dukhovnyi vakuf*” (“spiritual *wakf*”) [56, p. 391; 7, p. 488], and the second, *wakf ahlī*, as “*chastnyi vakuf*” (“private *wakf*”) [56, p. 391; 7, p. 488]. By the Russian annexation of the Crimea, *wakfs* formed there, according to various calculations, either the “majority” [54, p. 15] or one-third of arable land [58, pp. 77, 78]. However, these calculations remain conventional because of the lack of statistical data on *wakf* under the Crimean Khanate. Apart from the land, there were other *wakf* properties, such as buildings, fountains, and so on.

The Russian legislation first mentioned *wakf* in the Order *On the Establishment of the Department of Schools in Simferopol for the Education of Tatar Schoolteachers* of 14 February 1827 [45, vol. 2, № 902]. Naturally, this legislative act did not imply that the establishment of the institution of *wakf* in the Russian Empire dates to the same year. *Wakfs* certainly existed before, though outside of the Empire’s legal framework.

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<sup>2</sup> The documents issued in the Crimea and in the Russian Empire, legislative acts in particular, spelled this term as “вакуф,” *vakuf*, disregarding its correct Arabic form “*waqf*” (واقف), plural “*awqaf*” (واقف) or “*wuquf*.” The spelling “*vakuf*” is also popular in the scholarship in Russian and Ukrainian languages. This article uses the form “*wakf*,” plural “*wakfs*,” according to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* [61, s. v. *Wakf*], which also was a source of spelling of other specific terms.

At the initial stage of the administrative and economical integration of the Crimean Peninsula, Russian bureaucrats followed the ways of governing the *inorodtsi* (“foreigners”) declared by Catherine II’s Manifesto of 8 April 1783 [44, vol. 21, № 1570], which guaranteed the inviolability of local residents’ traditional rights and religious customs. Despite declarative character of this document, establishing the general trend and particularly shaping the framework of the Russian Administration’s policy towards Crimean Islam, the Manifesto formed a stable and efficient argument for Russian officials working with numerous problems related to the protection of Moslem traditions in the annexed territories. By all appearance, local authorities had to treat *wakfs* in accordance with the principles established by the Manifesto, viewing *wakfs* as a traditional Moslem institution, free from any administrative interference.

After 1783, most initiatives on the reorganization of the New Russia in general and the Crimea in particular came from the Governor of New Russia and Empress Catherine II’s favourite Grigorii Potemkin. This trend also concerned the policy towards the Crimean Muslims [28, p. 630]. Its important component was the new authorities’ various demonstrations of knowledge and respect to local customs. In this regard, an effective approach was the new publication of *Koran* upon Catherine II’s order prior to her travel to the Crimea [5, p. 42; 18, p. 78; 49, p. 62]. Among these measures was the replacement of the poll tax in the Crimea with the land tax, resembling *kharadj*, and a tithe from the harvest, actually *ushr*, both tolerable for the Moslems. Some of the money collected was used to support mosques, staff of schools, and “necessary public spaces and especially fountains...” [44, vol. 21, № 15798]. Catherine II’s establishment of money *wakf* should certainly be included to the list of the said measures. This episode is documented by an archival file in the collection of the State Archive of the Republic of the Crimea [13, ll. 126-127, 149]. This document particularly informs that, during her stay in the Crimea at the famous trip, the Empress donated 583 roubles and 83 kopecks in silver (or 2,040 roubles in paper money) in favour of the *wakfs* of several Moslem establishments in Bakhchisarai:

- for a mosque in the “Khan Djami parish” [13, l. 149];
- for the “Kebir Djami clerks: 206 roubles and 67 kopecks for two imams, 103 roubles 33 ½ kopecks for the *khatib*, 103 roubles 33 ½ kopecks for the library, 372 roubles for six *mazins* [*mu’adhdhin?*]...” [13, ll. 126-127];
- for “Khan Mengli Girei’s Madrasah, 120 roubles; for Amet Aga’s Madrasah, 120 roubles...” and more donations for other *madrasas* and *maktabas* [13, ll. 126-127].

The document also foresees the salary of 102 roubles for the *mutawalli*, the curator of *wakf* properties [13, l. 127]. The clergy accepted all the Empress’ donations, using them in proper way as late as fifty years after.

It is interesting enough that other primary sources and secondary researches on Catherine II’s travel to the Crimea did not supply any direct information on the *wakf* established by her [see: 46; 25; 43; 5; 21]. Most likely, Catherine made this donation during her first visit to Bakhchisarai, when she met with the Crimean *mufii* and other Moslem clergymen. Aleksandr Brikner informed that, following the Empress’ arrival to Bakhchisarai, she “ladled out money for the building of mosques” in order to make a good impression on the Tatars [5, p. 42]. There is also an account that, staying in Karasubazar, the Empress donated money “for the mosque” to dervishes (perhaps for their *tekiyye*) [3, p. 364]. Evgenii Markov accounted to the money capitals bequeathed by Catherine II to Moslem schools [33, pp. 107-108].

It is worth mentioning that Potemkin was the Russian Government's chief assistant in all the enterprises concerning the formation of new power's positive image among the Crimean Muslims. Perhaps, the reason was Potemkin's rare experience in working with Moslems. Famous "Prince of Taurida" got these knowledge and practical training first during his service in the Synod in Saint Petersburg and then in 1768, when he participated special Spiritual and Public Commission (a part of the famous Legislative Commission of 1767-1769). In this Commission, Potemkin was the "guardian" of the *inovertsii*, i. e. Moslem populations of continental governorates of Russia, representing their interests [3, pp. 93-96]. However, practical knowledge obtained in these affairs did not save Potemkin from some radical measures towards the "indigenous" population of the Crimea, nor did they prevent several mistakes in the confessional policy. Potemkin's measures for the regional economy were sometimes risky and sometimes forcible.

Following Potemkin's death in autumn 1791, Catherine II personally administered the New Russia for more than a year-and-a-half. The functions of governor-general in this wide area, which cried for active economical development, required of the administrator to stay in the region. Naturally, the Empress could not do that. Perhaps, it was the reason why in this short period the development of the area followed the policy established by Potemkin, who enjoyed the Empress' total confidence. However, the Crimea accumulated a great number of problems, including the distribution of state-owned land, though the Empress did not make any important decision in the field.

On 25 July 1793, another famous favourite of Catherine II Count Platon Zubov was appointed as the Governor-General of Ekaterinoslav and Taurida. Although this marked some minor changes in the land use in the Crimea, he did not perform any radical steps. Moreover, in the first year of his work, Zubov continued his predecessor's tradition of large-scale distribution of lands [37, p. 57; 38, pp. 59, 60; 39, pp. 103, 109, 117, 118; 40, pp. 53, 71, 72; 41, p. 2; 42, pp. 16, 22, 26 and other]. Although the legitimacy of Potemkin's land donations in the Crimea remained undisputed, Zubov's activities raised well-grounded doubts already in his lifetime. In 1806, the Russian Minister of Home Affairs Vasilii Kochubei wrote to Governor of Taurida Dmitrii Mertvago that "the solution of the problem if Prince Zubov had the right to distribute lands, since he probably was not allowed to give them out, lacking any written or oral permission from the late Autocratess, would be quite hard and delicate problem..." [11, l. 37].

Zubov initiated the order, passed by the Senate after his report [20, p. 203], *On the Leaving of the Owners in the Taurida Governorate in Free Disposal of Their Estates, Patrimonies, and Other Noblemen's Estates of the Kind, Extending this Right on Their Heirs*. This order came into effect on 9 November 1794 [44, vol. 23, № 17265] to become a milestone in the land-use system in the Crimea. This was the first legislative act assigning the Crimean residents "of clerical Mohammedan titles, and also merchants of various ranks, bourgeois, ordinary Tatars and others" to "estates, patrimonies, and other noblemen's estates of the kind, which they owned as property by heritage or in other legal ways... extending this liberty on their heirs" [44, vol. 23, № 17265]. Therefore, although most peasants in the Russian Empire were bonded to land and were extremely restricted in their economic abilities, ordinary Crimea Tatars as members of agricultural communes got the ownership right to tillable land. However, apart from granting the ownership right to the land already occupied by the Crimean Tatars, this order introduced the restriction of acquisition on new lands, extended on most local residents. According to the law, the right of acquisition (by buying or in any other way) and rental of "noblemen's estates" was restricted to those "natural local residents, who, according to

Russian laws, have the right to own the nobleman's property." In result, the coming of this order into effect stroke ordinary Crimean Tatars and almost all the Moslem clergymen off the potential land-buyers. First time after the Russian annexation of the Crimea, the law directly restricted local residents' liberties, promised by Catherine II's manifestos [28, p. 637].

The ascension of Paul I marked a certain shift in the land-use policies in the New Russia. Under Catherine, Potemkin and, later, Zubov placed high emphasis on the donation of state-owned lands to Russian landowners and on the peopling this vast area with Russian and Ukrainian peasants. On the contrary, Paul I, after his rapid administrative reform in the Russian south, paid much of his attention to the economical development of the region. This trend is particularly visible on his legislative acts for Taurida. The Emperor's orders encouraged sheep breeding, winemaking, silk-farming, and other industries [44, vol. 25, № 18375; 44, vol. 26, № 19290, № 19771]. Another direction of Paul's activities for the economical development of the Russian south was its peopling with different ethnic minorities, accompanied by generous donations of land [44, vol. 24, № 17905; 44, vol. 25, № 19168; 44, vol. 26, № 19372]. This cardinal reorganization of southern provinces required abundant land properties. Large-scale distributions and donations in previous ages logically resulted in the lack of state-owned lands. There was need to stop the washing-out of the state properties.

In order to sort out the land problems in the Crimea, Paul I and Alexander I started the establishment of specific land management commissions. The most important contribution came from the *Commission for the Settlement of Disputes on the Right of Land Ownership in the Crimean Peninsula*, which worked in 1802–1810 (henceforth "1802 Commission"). This state body possessed wide authority to lay firm foundation (from the point of view of Russian law) for the new landowners' right to Crimean lands. Later, the 1802 Commission's decisions usually became the local proprietors' argument proving their ownership rights.

Although the status of *wakf* properties was still not enshrined in the legislation, and the legitimating of *wakf* was not among the 1802 Commission's tasks, the Commission discussed this kind of Crimean landownership several times. Russian authorities incorrectly understood *wakf* as the property of Moslem clergy. This understanding implies free use of *wakf*, with possible changes in its purpose. In some cases, this interpretation was good for Crimean Moslems, since such status secured *wakf* in Russian legislation more firmly than any other status or its existence outside the legal framework. In result, the reservation of *wakf* to clergy supplied the latter with an opportunity to use and even to sell this type of property. In the age of the Crimean Khanate, such processes were less pronounced in the Crimea because the peninsula was under the Sharia law. Archival documents support the conclusion that the Russian government unwillingly granted the clergy with extra rights concerning *wakf* land. In 1806, the Chairman of the 1802 Commission and Governor of Taurida Dmitrii Mertvago requested from the Mufti of Taurida the information "on the law or the ownership right allowing to sell the *wakf* owned by *tekiyye* and others of the kind..." [12, l. 1]. It is important to admit that the said conflict was not sorted out by later legislative acts but, on the contrary, was officially approved. The *Regulation for Tatar Settlers and Land Owners in the Taurida Governorate* of 1827 [45, vol. 2, № 1417] calls the spiritual *wakf* the "inviolable property of mosques and schools" under the management and supervision of the "Mohammadan Spiritual Administration" (§34).

The most important role in the legitimating of *wakf* landownership belonged to the *Commission for the Investigation and Eradication of the Abuses in the Taurida Governorate*, 1816–1819 (henceforth "1816 Commission"). Emperor Alexander I established this Commission by his

personal decision, emphasizing the forthcoming results of its work [29, p. 113]. The Tsar's almighty favourite Aleksei Arakcheev and Governor of New Russia Alexandre-Louis de Langeron supervised the works of the 1816 Commission.

The 1816 Commission included Crimean Tatar nobles, particularly Prince Kaia Bei Balatukov, Major Azamat Arginskii, and Major Seit Ibragim Tashchi Oglu, who actively participated in its work. The knowledge of local customs and traditional forms of Crimean Tatar land-use system allowed them to solve many cases in a positive way. The works of Prince Balatukov, the permanent member of the 1816 Commission, deserves particular consideration. As the author of the *Opinion* of 15 March 1818, he paid the Commission members' attention to the great number of petitions on the *wakf* lands appearing in private property due to various reasons [10, ll. 1-8]. Then Balatukov's *Opinion* demonstrated the differences between *wakf* properties, particularly such kinds of *wakf* as *ebnai wakf* and *evliadi wakf*, which appeared to surprise the Russian authorities. Later on, Russian legislation incorporated these *wakfs* as "private," subject to specific rules, in contrast to "spiritual *wakfs*," which were administered by Moslem clergy. Therefore, Balatukov's *Opinion* made an important step towards the incorporation of the concept of *wakf* into the Russian legislation. This was probably the most important result of the 1816 Commission, since private *wakfs* formed a large array of Crimean lands and its legalisation was a warranty of its preservation and separation from possible speculation in the future.

Among Alexander I's key decisions, which dramatically changed the development of the New Russian region and the Crimea in particular, was the appointment of Count Mikhail Vorontsov as the Governor-General of the New Russia. Having large circle of relations among Petersburg aristocracy and permanent support from the Tsar's family and being a friend of ministers, this Russian dignitary made provisions for the rapid development of Southern Russia. The "*wakf* question" did not escape his attention. In the 1830s, Vorontsov initiated several laws concerning Crimean *wakfs*, which allowed the settling of the problem of land-use in the Crimea for a certain period and, simultaneously, the observations of the interests of civil proprietors (the Governor-General was among the biggest of them) and Moslem clergy [30].

Another famous politician, who actively participated in the regulation of *wakf*, was Dmitrii Bludov, one of the most talented and progressive officials of the generation. As the Deputy Minister of People's Enlightenment, in 1828 Bludov headed the Central Administration for the Spiritual Affairs of Foreign Religions. In the period in question, this Administration elaborated laws concerning the Crimean Moslems. Bludov took part in this work, in result of which in the late 1820s and early 1830s Emperor Nicholas I signed several orders regulating the rights of Crimean Moslems, related to *wakf* in particular. This legislation included the *Regulation Concerning the Tatar Settlers and Land-Owners in the Taurida Governorate* confirmed by the Emperor on 28 September 1827 [45, vol. 2, № 1417]. The Regulation's Articles 33 and 34 deal with *wakf* land. Soon after, these articles were considerably amended by the State Council's "opinion" *On the Wakf Estates in the Crimea*, adopted by the Emperor on 22 March 1829 [45, vol. 4, № 2761]. This law firstly introduced the concept of "private *wakf*" into the Russian legislation and stated the legitimating conditions for both spiritual and private *wakfs*. Finally, the *Condition on the Taurida Mohammadan Spiritual Administration and the Cases Administered by It* [45, vol. 6, № 5033] passed on 23 December 1831 confirmed the Moslem clergy's right for spiritual *wakfs* [see details at 22, pp. 45-47].

By the mid-nineteenth century, preparation of specific legislation for the Moslems became

an urgent affair and a subject to discussion by top administrators and the Russian emperor. Dmitrii Arapov informs, with a reference to Aleksei Kharuzin's manuscript, that the meeting of Nicholas I, Bludov, and Vorontsov in 1848 recognised that Islamic laws needed codification. However, the forthcoming edition of the "Sharia regulations" should have "unofficial status" in order "not to raise the importance of Islam too high" [1, p. 77].

Perhaps as a part of this project, the Second Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery published in 1850, at government expense, Nikolai Tornau's *Statement of the Origins of Moslem Jurisprudence*. However, this research appeared not very convenient as a lawmakers' reference book. First, it was unofficial. Second, it used mostly on Shiite sources, as the author himself mentioned [51, p. IX]. Although the book also included some Sunnite sources, these were less known in the Caucasus and Crimea.

The final stage of the lawmaking for the Islamic sphere started in the 1820s by the politicians of Nicholas I's generation was the publication of the *Statutes of Spiritual Affairs for Foreign Religions* within the general *Code of Russian Imperial Law* in 1857. Volume XI, Part I, Book V presents the first collection of state laws regulating various spheres of Moslem life within the Empire. The problem of *wakf* was addressed by article 1203 (with special Appendix), though it concerns only the Taurida Governorate [50].

The "*wakf* question" became topical again after the Crimean War. In result of large-scale emigration of Crimean Tatars following the end of military operations, entire villages appeared devastated and abandoned. Their mosques with spiritual *wakfs* were also deserted. Massive array of such lands appeared in possession of outsiders by this or that way. Many Crimean Tatars' private *wakfs* were sold into private property, illegally according to both Russian law and Moslem tradition. This problem troubled Tsarist administration, so the Ministries of Home Affairs, State Properties, and Justice undertook some measures to regulate the "*wakf* question."

Due to the specific features of this process, the Emperor and the Government needed a time to develop constructive position regarding the Crimean Tatars and *wakfs* in particular. In the first post-war years, the predominating interpretation doubts the Crimean Tatars' loyalty to the tsarist regime, which particularly reflected in Tsar Alexander II's personal opinion [36, pp. 179, 187]. In result, there appeared the idea that the Empire did not need Crimean Tatars' economy, so their migration to Turkey would be desirable [55, pp. 211-229; 52, pp. 537-538; 17, pp. 75-76; 31, pp. 604-605, 625-626, 629; 24, p. 118; 16, p. 209]. The research has shown that some of the military men, local dignitaries, and land-owners practically realized this discourse [26; 52, pp. 532-533; 27, pp. 150-151; 31, pp. 605-610; 36, pp. 171-176, 185]. The government understood the depth of the problem and its risks for the economical development of the region years after the beginning of the Crimean Tatar emigration. The shifted official position reflected in the public thought, as sympathetic publications [26; 19; 31; 17], recall of some officials [36, p. 180; 34, pp. 698-699; 24, p. 112], initiatives by *zemstvo* local self-government [9, p. 38], and in the central government's practical measures to solve this actual problem.

An important episode was Semen Vorontsov's mission. In March 1874, Emperor Alexander II sent Adjutant General Count Vorontsov to the Crimea to find out the reason for "Crimean Tatars' raising desire to leave the limits of Russia" [47, l. 201]. The Emperor's choice of this person as the "ambassador" was quite symbolical. Crimean Tatars, and particularly their clergy, respected the father, His Serene Highness the Prince Mikhail Vorontsov. Therefore, the Moslems should have

absolute trust in the son. Semen Vorontsov stated the results of his mission in the *Memoir*, submitted directly to the Tsar. Apart from other points, the *Memoir* suggested several measures to prevent Crimean Tatar emigration [8; 34, pp. 701-706]. The problem of *wakf* was also addressed, particularly stating that it “greatly troubled and alarmed both the population and the Moslem clergy” [47, ll. 201, 201ob.]. In Semen Vorontsov’s words, Crimean Tatars petitioned to leave the regulation of *wakf* properties “in the public administration as before.” The “ambassador” supposed that the complying with this petition “would make good wholesome influence on the Tatar population’s state of minds” [47, l. 201ob.]. Therefore, the “*wakf* question” is among the key points capable of preventing Tatar emigration. Vorontsov’s *Memoir* shows that the Tatars viewed *wakf* as not a property but rather as a kind of religious symbol, indicating the observation of their rights and traditions by the Imperial power.

Realizing this problem’s importance, the Emperor put his positive resolution on the document, ordering to “consider how to realize this [idea]” [Мартыянов, с. 705]. Thus, he stopped the burst of some officials, especially those from the Ministry of State Properties, for radical transformation of *wakf* management by its total requisition from the Moslem clergy. Perhaps the Emperor’s position reflected in the adoption, soon after Vorontsov’s mission, of the Cabinet of Ministers’ Order *On Spiritual and Public Wakf Properties in the Taurida Governorate* [45, vol. 49, part 2, № 53703]. According to this Order, Crimean private *wakfs* passed to the management of the Ministry of State Properties. However, the first clause of the Order states that spiritual *wakfs*, including those at liquidated mosques, remained under the management of the Taurida Muhammadan Spiritual Administration.

The problem of *wakf* did not escape the attention of the next Russian Emperor Alexander III. On 28 February 1885, this autocrat established the Special Commission on Wakfs (henceforth “Wakf Commission”) in order to sort out the problems that heaped in the Crimea. Particularly, the Wakf Commission should calculate the quantity of *wakf* properties and the legality of its ownership by the persons concerned, as well as to develop the project of optimal management for the Crimean *wakfs* [14, l. 1; 15, l. 1].

Alexander III’s personal order made the Emperor’s Retinue Chamberlain and Major-General Sultan Khadzhi Gubaidulla Dzhangir-Ogly Chingiz-Khan the Chairman of the Wakf Commission. Similarly to Semen Vorontsov’s, his mission to the Crimea was not accidental. A member of one of the noblest families in the Old World, Sultan Chingiz-Khan was Sunnite Moslem [2, p. 101]. These two conditions played a specific role for the Crimea, since the Crimean Tatars traditionally confessed Sunnite Islam, though the Girai dynasty of Crimean khans descended from Genghis Khan (“Chingiz-Khan” in Russian spelling). A Moslem with such a genealogy would certainly deeply impress the Crimean Tatars and would gain their trust.

However, due to the lack of success in the works of Wakf Commission under Sultan Chingiz-Khan, Alexander III dismissed him in 1889. The Commission successfully realized its general tasks under its next Chairman Prince Fedor Golitsyn, a blood brother to famous Crimean winemaker Lev Golitsyn. Among Fedor Golitsyn’s personal achievements in the land-use management in the Crimea was the initiative to solve the problem of landless Crimean Tatars by settling them at *wakf* allotments. Although similar propositions circulated before him, Prince Golitsyn shaped this idea into the form desirable “at the top level” and, most importantly, suggested a working mechanism of its practical realization. As such, it had good consequences for the Crimean Tatar peasantry.

Several years after, the Taurida Governor's report to the emperor of 1897 informed that, with the aim of supplying landless Crimean Tatars with land and as an experience, more than 5 000 *desiatinas*<sup>3</sup> of *wakf* land were leased out to landless Crimean Tatars from 1896 on, for the term of three years, with the right to prolong it for 12 years. The very profitable lease fee was 1.5 to 3 roubles per *desiatina* [48, ll. 4, 4 ob]. Importantly, this initiative gained support from the Tsarism. Emperor Nicholas II made, by his own hand, a remark on this clause of the Report: "It should continue in this direction in the future" [48, l. 4]. Therefore the settling of landless Crimean Tatars on *wakf* allotments was officially favoured at the highest governmental level. It is worth pointing out that this process continued as long as the October of 1917.

In the twentieth century, the "*wakf* question" was repeatedly discussed by Gosudarstvennaia Duma (Russian parliament). Particularly, Rashid Mediev, the delegate member of the Moslem Fraction of the Second Duma, concerned it in his famous speech. Mediev announced the instruction of "Tatar brothers" complaining that tsar's officials plundered *wakf* lands [6, pp. 124-125]. By the way, Vladimir Lenin sympathetically commented this oration in his *Agrarian Program of Social Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905–1907*, evaluating it as a "revolutionary speech" protecting "land and liberty" [32, p. 389].

Petr Stolypin several times participated in the discussion on the projects of the management of *wakfs* in the Crimea, first as the Minister of Home Affairs and then as the head of the government. Stolypin probably opposed the settling of the members of Crimean Tatar village communities on *wakf* lands, since his general agrarian reform foresaw the liquidation of agrarian communities, though the system of *wakfs* preserved and favoured such communities [35, p. 116; 59, p. 118]. It is known that Stolypin paid much attention to the "Moslem question" in Russia [2, pp. 314-315; 23, pp. 12-13], since the success in this area determined a great deal of stability in the Empire in general. As a practical action in the field, Stolypin supported the publication of the famous journal *Mir islama* ("The World of Islam") [2, pp. 340-342]. The first four volumes appeared in 1912, edited by famous Orientalist Vasilii Bartold. Nicholas II's special order provided the financing of these volumes in the amount of 25,000 roubles from the *wakf* capitals of the abolished mosques in the Taurida Governorate [53, p. 11].

Therefore, the "*wakf* question" was the backbone of the history of relations between the Crimean Tatars and the Russian autocracy. This type of land property survived despite different problems, particularly fast Russification of the region, Crimea's administrative status of ordinary Russian governorate, introduction of all-Russia's legislation, and other novelties. Side by side with other traditional Islamic institutions, *wakfs* indicated and preserved Crimean Tatars' Islamic identity. Under every next Russian emperor, the "*wakf* question" became an important factor in the cooperation of Crimean Islamic clergy and Russian authorities. Finally, the institution of *wakf* as an inalienable element of traditional material, economical support to Moslem population made an important contribution to the preservation of the history and culture of the Crimean Tatar. Occasionally *wakfs* secured the physical survival of Crimean Tatars, when landless peasants lacking their own plots were allowed to settle and farm *wakf* allotments. Besides, *wakfs* prevent a considerable part of Crimean Moslems from emigrating. It is worth mentioning that the tsars showed

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<sup>3</sup> *Desiatina* is a Russian archaic land measurement unit, equivalent to 1.0925 hectares (10,925 square meters) or 2,702 English acres.



enough patience and understanding in their policies for the “*wakf* question” in the Crimea. Despite of repeated attempts of secularization, this type of religious endowment was kept and legally bonded to the Crimean clergy. The upshot was the development of the system of *wakf* management, which largely became the sample for other Moslem regions within the Empire.

*Translated from Russian by Nikita Khrapunov*

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Д. В. Конкин

**Вакуфный вопрос в системе взаимоотношений российского самодержавия и мусульман  
Крыма (конец XVIII – начало XX вв.)**

**Резюме**

После 1783 г. вакуфы в Крыму продолжали существовать и являлись одним из ярких индикаторов мусульманской идентичности крымских татар. Вакуфы играли ключевую роль в экономическом благосостоянии мусульманского духовенства. При каждом российском императоре вакуфный вопрос неизменно проявлялся и оставался важным фактором в процессе сотрудничества мусульманского

духовенства Крыма с российскими властями. Несмотря на многочисленные попытки со стороны имперской администрации секуляризировать вакуфные имущества, данный институт был сохранен и закреплен за мусульманским духовенством полуострова. В конечном итоге была выработана система управления вакуфами, во многом ставшая образцом для других мусульманских регионов империи.

**Ключевые слова:** российское самодержавие, мусульманское духовенство, вакуф, крымские татары.

**D. V. Konkin**

**The “Wakf Question” in the System of Relations between Russian Autocracy and Crimean Moslems (Late Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries)**

**Summary**

After 1783, *wakf* estates continued to exist in the Crimea, forming a striking indicator of the Crimean Tatars' Islamic identity. *Wakfs* played a key role for the economic welfare of Moslem clergy. Every next Russian emperor turned to the “*wakf* question,” which remained an important factor for the cooperation between the Crimean Moslem clergy and the Russian imperial authorities. Despite the imperial administration's repeated attempts of secularizing *wakf* estates, this institution was kept and assigned to the Moslem clergy in the Crimean Peninsula. The upshot was the development of the system of *wakf* management, which largely became the sample for other Moslem regions within the Empire.

**Key words:** Russian autocracy, Moslem clergy, wakf, Crimean Tatars.