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## **Ancient Economic and Social Concepts in the Genoese Gasaria Region**

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**Abstract:**

*The main theme of the article is the consideration of issues related to the presence of the Genoese Republic in the Northern Black Sea region in the 13th - 15th centuries. In the region, a whole system of towns and settlements was established by the Genoese, which was transformed into a separate state entity. The boundaries of this state entity covered the territory from the delta of the Danube in the west to the Caucasus coast in the east, as well as the entire coast of the Crimean Peninsula.*

*For the state entity, built by the Genoese in the region of the Northern Black Sea Coast, the name Genoese Gazaria is proposed. Therefore, all the material evidence of the Genoese presence on the territory of the previously owned state of Golden Horde and, especially, of trade settlements in the Northern Black Sea region in the 13th and 15th centuries fall under this definition.*

*The main difference between the Genoese Gazaria and Genoese Romania is the issue of the initial ownership of the land in the places of settlement of trading factories (settlements). In the case of Genoese Romania, these lands belonged to Byzantium and were granted to the Genoese by Byzantine emperors. The Genoese Gazaria emerged under similar circumstances, but on the lands of the Mongolian empire, these lands were given to them by khans of the Golden Horde.*

**Keywords:** *Northern Black Sea Coast, Crimean Peninsula, Genoese Gazaria, Genoese Sea Republic, Venetian Sea Republic, Byzantium, Golden Horde, Historical Geography, Archeology.*

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## **1. Introduction**

The Genoese republic in the 13th - 15th centuries in the Northern Black Sea region created an integral system of cities and trade settlements. Politically, it has become a special state entity on the edge of Europe, subordinated to Genoa and based on the lands of the Golden Horde. This system did not arise immediately and developed in several stages. In its completed form, by the end of the 14th century, it consisted of cities and settlements in the Danube delta (Kilia and Likostomo), the northern shore of the Black Sea (Mavrokastro, Zinestra, Iliche), the Azov coast and the Don delta (Porteti, Palastra, Kabardi, Tana, Pekso), The Taman Peninsula (Kopa, Matrega), the coast of the North Caucasus (Mapa, Mauro Lacho). The main place in this system was occupied by four cities of the Crimean Peninsula (Kaffa, Soldaya, Chembalo, Vosporo), their rural districts, villages and castles of the Southern coast of Crimea. The capital of these possessions was the Crimean city of Kaffa, whose head, the consul, was the supreme ruler for the entire territory (Karpov, 2000).

## **2. Methodology**

In this study, information from three significant source blocks was used. These are written sources, based on which it is possible to reconstruct the historical canvas and obtain basic chronological references (Balard, 1973; Nicephori, 1830; Yurgevich, 1863). Many historical evidences have been published by Russian (Adaxina and Mytz, 2015; Karpov, 2000; Rusev, 2007) and Western European researchers (Balard, 1978; Papacostea, 2006; Pistarino, 1988). The second block of sources is cartographic, includes data from portolan (portulan) charts of 13th – 15th centuries and maps of the area, as well as general plans of the Black Sea towns of the second half of the 18th century, which reflected medieval realities (Bocharov, 2015b; Fomenko, 2007; Volkov, 1992). The third large block of sources is archaeological. The results of archaeological research of the “Kaffa” expedition, which works under the guidance of the author of this article, have been summarized and for more than twenty years it has been studying material monuments of the Genoese presence on the Crimean Peninsula (Bocharov, 2004; 2005; 2009; 2011; 2013; 2015a; 2015c; 2016a; 2016b; 2017a).

The used technique made it possible to combine in a single study the evidence of such different basic sources, which determined its complex character with the use of typological, cartographic and chronological analysis.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

To understand the subject of the study, let us consider the main chronological and territorial aspects associated with the Genoese presence in the Northern Black Sea region in the 13th and 15th centuries. While the main Genoese cities and settlements were located on the Crimean Peninsula traders and officials of the Republic of St. George were represented throughout the entire northern Black Sea area. This applies

to the cities of Kilia and Likostomo in the Danube Delta (Papacostea, 2006, p. 158-161; Rusev, 2007, p. 102-110), further to the east in the estuary of the Dniester River - the city of Monkastro (modern Belgorod-Dnestrovsky) (Papacostea, 2006, p. 202-210; Rusev, 2007, p. 112-119). On the Dnieper River there was a village and the castle of Iliche. The main Genoese outpost on the Azov Sea from 1304 to 1475 was Tana (Azov). By 1304, the Genoese trading post, led by a consul with an area of about 4.0 hectares, was fortified with a stone defensive wall (Volkov, 1992, p. 87). The factories of Kop and Matrega were on the Taman Peninsula.

The owner of Matrega, after marriage with the daughter of the local feudal lord, becomes Simon Gisolpho in 1419. With the support of the administration of Kaffa, in the second half of the 15th century, his descendants erected a stone castle in Matreg. The points of Kalo Lymena with the castle of Batario (modern Tsemesskaya bay) and Mauro Lacho (modern Gelendzhik bay) were located further to the east on the Caucasian coast (Yurgevich, 1863, p. 742). The author indicated only the main points, there was a whole network of villages and anchorages along the coast of the Black and Azov Seas that contributed to the coastal trade and trade exchange and were plotted on portolan charts (Fomenko, 2007, 272-275, 313-331).

The main administrative and economic center of the Genoese in this region was the Kaffa city (modern Feodosiya). The exact date of the establishment of the trading settlement – factory (trading post) is not known here. In the Byzantine chronicle of Nicephorus Grigor, 1266 is cited as the date of the Genoese settlement foundation (Nicephori, 1830, p. 684). However, the French historian Michel Balar considers this date to be incorrect and relates the foundation of the city to the time between 1268 and 1275, and more likely in his opinion it looks exactly 1275. Gradually, Kaffa was gaining strength, received administrative management. The first news about the head of the city government (the consul) refers to 1281. The mention of Kaffa in the Genoa notarial acts became frequent. After 1285, from the records of the Cafintian notary Lamberto di Sambuceto, numerous evidence of life appeared in the early period of urban history (1289 - 1290). The acts describe a small city, divided into quarters (kontrado), which was protected by an earthen moat and a tree with a wooden palisade. Several houses were located outside the hedge (Balard, 1973, p. 45).

Because of the siege of the city by troops of the Golden Horde of Tohta in 1308, Kaffa was abandoned by the inhabitants. After 1316, the colonists returned, and the construction of a new defensive wall began, which would significantly change the appearance and status of the city. Since its erection in medieval Kaffa two main city-forming parts have appeared: the city blocks located within the citadel and the city quarters located beyond its borders (the burg) (Balard, 1978, p. 118). The area of the fortified urban area was 11.3 hectares. Fortification works were continued in 1383 – 1389 by construction of an external defensive ring around the burg (the area of the newly fortified area is 82.0 hectares). After that, the city landscape of Kaffa got its

finished look: quarterly building inside the citadel, quarters inside the defensive ring (burg) and not a fortified suburb – antiburg (Bocharov, 2015c, p. 315).

In Kaffa in 14th century representatives of different peoples and several religious groups lived in urban neighborhoods. During this period in the urban landscape the Christian churches of the three main denominations - Catholic, Orthodox (Byzantine) and Armenian were dominated. There were also two Judaic temples and one mosque.

By the end of the 14th century the city reached its blossoming, the total area of the city at that time was 120 hectares. During the second half of the 14th and the first half of the 15th centuries, Kaffa played a leading role not only in the trade, but also in the political life of the Black Sea region. However, after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, the communication between the colonies and Liguria became difficult, and as a consequence, the gradual decline of urban life and outflow of population began. In November 1453, the commune of Genoa for an amount of 5,500 livres handed over their possessions in the Northern Black Sea Coast to the Bank of St. George. And in the following year 1454 the Turkish fleet approached the walls of Kaffa, but the military collision was avoided - the city had to admit its dependence on the Ottoman sultan and pledged to pay tribute annually.

In the middle of the 14th century the rural district of the city (campania) is formed. Campania of Kaffa occupied the territory along the eastern coast of the Crimea for 30 km long and 3.0 - 9.0 km wide. Campania consisted of seven villages - three (Caliera, Possidima, Provato) were emerged in the previous Byzantine period, one in the Golden Horde (Otuz) time, and three more appeared under the Genoese (Tepe-Oba, Silent Bay, Padilka). In addition, in the rural area there were two Greek monasteries (St. Peter and St. George) and one Armenian (St. John the Baptist), as well as one castle (Kaliera) (Bocharov, 2011, p. 138–145).

The second Genoese city in the Crimea in size, population and administrative significance was Soldaya (modern Sudak). This ex-Byzantine city under Mongolian rule was Kaffa's main trading competitor from the end of the 13th century up to the third quarter of the 14th century. In 1365, the Genoese captured the Soldaya (it was under the rule of the Golden Horde) and 18 of its districts, during which they liquidated the main competitor port (Pistarino, 1988, p. 214). Soldaya's urban area of 29.4 hectares included a citadel (castrum Sancti Elie), an area of about 0.21 hectares; quarters, an area of 12.9 hectares, protected by an external defensive line erected in 1385-1414 (castrum Sancti Cristi), the length of which was 925 m (Bocharov, 2015a, p. 449-450); a port area of 5.7 hectares enclosed by a separate stone wall with a length of 255 m, as well as a non-fortified suburb of 3.6 hectares (Bocharov & Maslovskiy, 2015, p. 40–41).

The administration of Kaffa did not use Soldai as an international sea port, the city's role was reduced to a regional agricultural center and a key fortification site.

The rural district of the city was formed in the Byzantine period (11th – 13th centuries.) and passed to the Genoese already formed. It consisted of eighteen villages. The Soldai Consulate occupied the coastal territory of the southern slope of the eastern part of the Main Ridge of the Crimean Mountains for 50 km (Bocharov, 2005, p. 282–294).

The third largest Crimean city of the Genoese was Cembalo (modern Balaklava). The first mention of the Genoese consul in this city refers to 1347 - 1349. At the first stage in the 40-s of 14th century Cembalo was fortified with an earth trench and a rampart with a wooden palisade, and the construction of a stone citadel on Mount Kastron began in 1357 (an area of 0.16 hectares). Between 1386 - 1388 at the entrance to the bay Genoese built a second citadel (St. Nicholas Castle) with an area of 0.18 hectares. The urban landscape underwent significant changes during the war (Papacostea, 2006, p. 259-276) with the Crimean post-Byzantine seigneur Theodoro in the 20-s and 30-s of 15th century: a stone wall with a length of 1080 m (castrum Sancti Cristi) came to replace the earth defenses, and the total area of the fortified urban area increased to 3.3 hectares (Adaxina & Mytz, 2015, p. 12-18).

An undeveloped suburb of 2.8 hectares was on the eastern shore of the bay. Cembalo played an important role in supplying Kaffa with food and defense of the western borders of the Genoese Gazaria. It was the administrative center of a significant territory with the Greek (post-Byzantine) population. In addition, it was the center of a rural district, consisting of eighteen villages and four Greek monasteries (Bocharov, 2017a, p. 207).

Vosporo (modern Kerch) is the fourth city subordinated to the Genoese in the Crimea. The exact date of foundation of the Genoese consulate in the city is unknown. Fortress buildings of the city were erected in two stages. The Citadel was built in the second half of the 60-s. of 14th century, then in the middle of 1380-90-ies. The stronghold was strengthened by a defensive line and a moat protecting the city quarters. At the same time, an external defensive ring, an external fortress line and an urban moat were erected. The area of the fortified urban area was 3.52 hectares. West of the fortress was an unfortified suburb (area 2.4 hectares) (Bocharov, 2015b, p. 143). Such significant fortifications were used to ensure Genoese superiority in the Kerch Strait. Fortress Vosporo controlled all trade routes from the peninsula to the North Caucasus, as well as the main sea trade highway to the Sea of Azov.

Because of the archaeological reconnaissance of the “Kaffa” expedition on the Kerch Peninsula, it was possible to find out that eight villages of the 13th and 15th centuries were marked on the portolans and depended on the city of Vosporo (Bocharov, 2013, p. 37–40; Bocharov, 2016b, p. 157–161).

In the period of 1365 - 1380 the territory of the Southern coast of the Crimea with twelve villages went under the authority of Genoa (Bocharov, 2009, p. 109). This

was a coastal area, stretching for 100 km. from west to east from Cape Sarych to the valley of the Sotera River. The administrative division of the South Coast consisted of five consulates with centers in Alushta, Partenit, Gurzuf, Yalta and Simeiz. In these five villages for the residences of the Consuls in the late 14th - early 15th centuries Genoese built seaside castles (Bocharov, 2004, p. 186-201). Navigation and, therefore, maritime trade along the shores of the Western Crimea and the Tarkhankut peninsula was provided by a network of ten coastal settlements economically closely connected with the Italian possessions in the Northern Black Sea Region (Bocharov and Koval', 2009, p. 45-46).

#### **4. Resume**

In conclusion, it can be noted that by the last quarter of the 14th century in the Northern Black Sea Coast with the center on the Crimean Peninsula in the town of Kaffa, a state formation was established by the Genoese republic. This state formation along with the Golden Horde (later the Crimean Khanate) and the Byzantine Empire (later the Ottoman Empire) determined the political situation in the region and influenced all historical events. At the same time, we are faced with the most important question: what is the name of this political entity and, accordingly, what are all the material archaeological evidences left to them? We will try to answer this question.

Today, the issues of the Genoese presence in the Northern Black Sea region on the lands belonging to the Mongolian-based Ulus Juchi state, depending on the research vector, are one of the components of either Byzantine studies or the study of the Golden Horde (Bocharov, 2017b, p. 63). However, today there is no general term that would unite such studies within the framework of historical science. Within the framework of Byzantine studies, there is a general concept of Latin Romania - by definition of S.P. Karpov - it is the totality of the possessions of West European feudal lords, as well as the Italian maritime republics, Genoa and Venice, on the territory of the Byzantine Empire as a whole (Karpov, 2000, p. 9). In separate areas of study, Genoese Romania is singled out (Balard, 1978, p. 6-7) as an object for the study of the whole complex of the presence of the Republic of St. George in Byzantine lands. Within the framework of Genoa Romania, it is customary to single out the Genoese Gazaria.

Under the term 'Genoese Gazariya', in most of cases all the possessions of the Genoese Republic on the Crimean Peninsula are understood. Is it correct? In our opinion, the term 'Genoese Gazaria' would be correct to apply for the entirety of the Genoese possessions on the lands of Golden Horde and especially for the coastal Northern Black Sea Horde territories. The key issue of the Middle Ages was the issue of land ownership. Based on this criterion, we need to isolate the Genoa Gazara into a separate political entity, since the permission to settle its settlements in the Northern Black Sea Coast the Republic of St. George received not from Byzantine emperors but from other khans of the Golden Horde and based them not

on Byzantine but on earlier Belonging to the Golden Horde lands. The main difference between the Genoese Gazaria and Genoa Romania is precisely in this point - who was the owner of those lands on which the Genoese merchants settled their settlements.

In geographic terms, this is the territory of the northern Black Sea coast (including the Crimea) and the whole coast of the Azov Sea with nearby territories from the mouth of the Danube with the cities of Kiliya and Likostomo to Gelendzhik Bay (Mavro Lako point). There were no clear state borders in this area – these are the coastal zones under the rule of the khans of the Golden Horde, and after the middle of the 15th century, under the rule of their successors, where in the Golden Horde cities the Genoese received separate quarters and enjoyed autonomous rights or based their settlements on the coast.

The Crimean Peninsula was an exception in this system, where the Genoese built an entire system of cities with rural districts, with clear administrative boundaries (Bocharov, 2016a, p. 267). The subject of the archaeological study of the Genoese Gazaria can be the entire body of material evidence of the Genoese presence on the outlined territory - cultural strata and their individual components of cities, villages, necropolises, anchorages and other monuments, in the chronological framework of the 13th - 15th centuries.

## **5. Conclusions**

The army and navy of the Osman Sultan Mehmet II under the leadership of the great vizier Gedik Ahmed Pasha with the support of Tatars in 1475 captured Kaffa and all Genoese possessions on the Crimean Peninsula, the Azov Sea and the Western Caucasus. The last ones, in 1484, city of Monkastro and Kiliya that were at that time included in the Moldavian principality were captured. This was the end the era of the Genoese presence in the Northern Black Sea coast and the political entity of Genoese Gazaria disappeared from the historical arena.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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