**Decline of ukrainian statehood and culture (1712-1783)**

Report

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After defeat of Mazepa, tsar Peter intensified his efforts to subjugate Ukraine. Hetman Skoropadskyi had his powers restricted by Russian supervisors. His residence was transferred from Baturyn to Hlukhow near Russian border, where two Russian garrisons were stationed to ensure his loyalty to Moscow.

Ukrainian population became burdened by plundering Russian military units, dispersed throughout the country. Cossacks were sent to work on construction of canals near St Petersburg, connecting river Volga with Baltic Sea, where they died in thousands from hunger, exhaustion and sickness. Many Cossack colonels were replaced by Russian nationals.

In 1722, tsar appointed a council called "Little Russian Collegiate", controlled by senior Russian officers and headed by brigadier Velmyaninow, to monitor and audit hetman's activities and decisions. This, for practical purposes, transferred all powers to Russians, leaving Cossack hetman and his officers only with empty titles.

Hetman Skoropadskyi was very upset by such situation; he became ill and died in 1722. tsar Peter used this opportunity to abolish the office of hetman altogether. He directed Cossack colonel Polubotok to perform hetman's duties under supervision of Velmyaninow and refused to agree to Cossack requests to elect new hetman.

Russian occupiers continued to persecute and impoverish Ukrainian population. They kept sending more Cossacks to work on construction of canals, connecting Caspian Sea with Baltic Sea, where some 20000 Cossacks perished during years 1721 to 1725.

Polubotok was an honest and energetic man. He managed to improve law and order within Cossack establishment and to improve living conditions of the population. However this did not please Russian authorities, who relied on disorder and corruption to maintain their grip on Ukraine. They feared Polubotok's growing popularity and his efforts to re establish Hetmanate.

Velmyaninow complained to tsar that Polubotok was not complying with his directives. Consequently Polubotok was arrested and interrogated under torture in Petropavlowsk fort, near St Petersburg. He died there, as a martyr for Ukrainian cause in autumn 1724, in spite of tsar's belated efforts to save him and to reconcile with Cossacks. tsar Peter died soon after, at the beginning of year 1725.

Ukraine was thus left at the mercy of Velmyaninow and his henchmen. As for Cossack colonels, some were in prison near St Petersburg and others, who were not already replaced by Russians, kept quiet and to scared to resist.

tsar Peter was succeeded by his wife Catherine. Faced with possible war with Turkey, she needed Cossacks and wanted to return to them some of their former freedoms. However she faced a stiff opposition from the "old guard" in Russian government, therefore Cossacks received only few minor concessions. Catherine died in spring 1727 and the grandson of tsar Peter, Peter II became the emperor of Russia.

The new Russian government sacked Velmyaninow and his "Little Russian Collegiate", released Cossack colonels from jail and appointed 70 year old Danylo Apostol as Cossack hetman. On 1st October 1727 Apostol was formally accepted by Cossacks by ceremonious election in Hlukhow.

Although reporting to Russian "resident" Naumow, new hetman managed to carry out considerable improvements in Ukrainian situation. His loyalty to Moscow was ensured by presence of one of his sons as virtual hostage in St Petersburg.

tsar Peter II died in 1730 and his aunt tsarina Anna became the ruler of Russia. When hetman Apostol fell ill and became paralyzed, she refused to hand over his powers to Cossacks and ordered Russian "resident", prince Shakhowski to form a council, consisting mainly of Russians, to take over. Hetman Apostol died in January 1734 and later in that year Zaporozhtsi in Sitch decided to come over from Turkish to Russian side.

With Ukraine becoming almost a province of Russia, russianization of political, religious and cultural life intensified. Intermarriages with Russians were encouraged and any efforts to regain independence were brutally suppressed. Cossack colonels were kept under constant observation and subjected to house Searches at the slightest sign of disloyalty. Even any attempts to obtain justice were punished; when, in 1737, Kyiv's city counselors tried to defend their rights against Russian excesses, they were all jailed. Things were so bad, that when in 1740 an English general Keith was temporarily appointed in place of a Russian administrator, people were amazed by his human behavior and tolerance.

Times were hard for the top layer of Ukrainian society, but even harder for middle and lower classes and peasants, who suffered most from Russian exploitation. Cossacks were being forced to fight for Russia against Turks, Tatars and Poles for small rewards, and often for nothing.

Under such circumstances, yearning for the return of Hetmanate autonomy persisted. The possibility of this to happen occurred after the end of war with Turkey in 1740 and death of tsarina Anna in 1741. A short regency of Anna II was terminated by a palace revolution, whereupon the daughter of Peter I, Elizabeth was installed on Russian throne.

Elizabeth was sympathetic to Ukrainian cause because, prior to becoming tsarina, she befriended and fell in love with a handsome son of a Cossack court choir singer, Oleksiy Rozumowskyi. She married him after her coronation.

While visiting Kyiv in 1744, she agreed to promote Cossacks' request to re install hetman's office and proposed Oleksiy's younger brother Kyrylo Rozumowskyi for this position.

Twenty year old Kyrylo, who studied abroad, returned in 1746, married into royal family and was bestowed with many orders and titles. In 1747 Russian senate was requested to take steps toward re establishment of Hetmanate.

In February 1750, ceremonious formality of election of new Cossack hetman took place in Hlukhow, followed by celebrations and festivities. In spring of 1751 hetman Kyrylo Rozumowskyi, again with great ceremony and parade was installed as hetman.

Unfortunately, being brought up in St Petersburg, Rozumowskyi was a stranger to Ukraine and ways of life there. His Russian advisor Teplow was unsympathetic to Ukraine's newly won autonomy and did all he could to hinder its development. Rozumowskyi himself was bored with life in Ukraine and preferred to spend most of his time in St Petersburg.

It could be said that, during this period, Ukraine was divided into several parts such as Left Bank consisting of Hetmanate and Slobidshchyna, Zaporozhian Sich, Right Bank, Halychyna (Galicia), Wolhynia, Bukovyna and Transcarpatia.

The Hetmanate included areas around Poltava, Lubny, Peryaslav, Kyiv, Nizhyn, Chernihiv, Hlukhiv and also areas, which are at present parts of Russian Federation, around Starodub, Pochep and Mhlyn.

The neighboring areas centered around Kharkiv were called Slobidshchyna meaning free (from serfdom) lands also referred to as Sloboda Ukraine. They included Izyum, Balakleya, Akhtyrka, Sumy and, presently Russian areas around Bilhorod, Ostrohozhsk and Sudza. Originally these lands were settled by adventurous people, who tried to establish themselves free from Polish and Russian domination. They formed Cossack regiments for protection from Tatars and for some time were able to lead an independent life, because they served as a buffer from Turks and Tatars. However later they fell under direct Russian rule; the autonomy of Loboda Ukraine was abolished under Catherine II in 1765.

To ensure lasting domination over these two parts of Ukraine, Russians tried to suppress Ukrainian culture. They disallowed Ukrainian language in books, schools and theaters. The church and government were controlled by Moscow and the only way for a person to advance was to speak Russian and to be loyal to Moscow.

While Ukraine on the east side of Dnipro (Left Bank) was being russianized, the western Ukraine consisting of Galicia Wolhynia and Bukovyna (areas around Lviv, Ternopil Lutsk and Chernivtsi) was under Polish influence. Polish authorities were preventing not only national, but also economic development of Ukrainians. The Orthodox Church was being gradually taken over by Polish dominated Catholic Church.

Between western Ukraine and, Russian dominated, parts on east side of Dnipro was a large territory on Right Bank, partly de-populated by recent wars involving Cossacks, Poles, Russians, Turks and Tatars. Gradually, Polish nobility began to return, reclaimed their landholdings and started to exploit Ukrainian peasants as serfs. The resistance to this, at first, was in the form of outlaw gangs, said to have robbed the rich to help the poor. Some of the gang leaders were even considered as folk heroes, such as Olexa Dowbush, who operated between 1738 and 1745. There were also uprisings by so called Haydamaks, generally during hostilities between Poland and Russia. The biggest uprising was in 1768. Haydamaks, led by Maxym Zaliznyak and Ivan Honta, captured Umanj and killed many Polish oppressors and their Jewish collaborators. They expected help from their Orthodox "brothers" from Russia. However Russians made peace with Poland, captured Zaliznyak, Honta and many other Haydamaks handed them over to Poles. Those, who were not immediately tortured and executed, were tried in Kodno and sentenced, in most cases, to death.

The Transcarpathian Ukraine (areas around Uzhhorod and Mukachiv) was under Hungarian rule. Overwhelmingly rural in character Transcarpathia had a Ukrainian Ruthenian peasantry, a powerful Hungarian nobility and a substantial number of urban and rural Jews. Ukrainian population there did not display much enthusiasm for independence but managed to retain their language, customs and religion.

Cancellation of Hetmanate was decided by tsarina Catering II, who ruled Russia from 1762, after short reign of her husband Peter III. Hetman Rozumovskyi resigned and, in his place, on November 1764, tsarina re installed "Little Russian Collegiate", under presidency of Graf Rumyantsev.

Rumyantsev's policy was to eliminate all remaining traces of Ukrainian autonomy and separatism, to introduce serfdom of peasants and to integrate Ukraine with Russia. This was resisted by Cossacks and population at large.

In 1767 tsarina ordered election of deputies from all parts of Russian Empire in order to be informed what kind of government people want. The deputies from Ukraine declared their desire for Hetmanate autonomy. This angered Rumyantsev and he sent out his officers to persuade electors to elect deputies supporting his government; people who resisted were jailed. However in spite of all efforts of Russian authorities, the popular sentiment for return of Hetmanate system continued.

In 1772 Galicia and, two years later, Bukovina were annexed to Austro Hungarian Monarchy, which has somewhat improved conditions of Ukrainians (Ruthenians in the contemporary terminology of Galicia). In 1774 the Uniate church (renamed to Greek Catholic church) was, by imperial decree, equalized in status with Roman Catholic church. Educational reforms in 1775 allowed for instructions in Ukrainian language. However on balance government policies favored the Poles.

The Cossack stronghold, Zaporozhian Sitch, was subservient to Moscow and was utilized for raids on Crimea and Turkey. During Turkish war, which started in 1768, several thousand Cossacks supported Russians in battles on land and Sea. Their efforts were rewarded by eulogies from tsarina but little else and restrictions of Cossack freedoms continued. Their lands were being colonized by Russians, Serbians and other foreigners with aim of creation of so called Novorossiya or New Russia state in the south of Ukraine.

After end of Turkish war in 1775 the Cossacks were being gradually disarmed and in the Summer of that year, Russian general Tekeli surrounded Cossacks in Sitch itself with superior force and demanded abandonment of their fortress. Faced with such overwhelming odds, Cossack chief Kalnyshevskyj surrendered. Sitch was destroyed and abolished by tzarist edict of 3rd August 1775. Kalnyshevskyj and other Cossack leaders were exiled to Siberia.

The Cossack lands were granted to Russian nobles; Cossacks were told to disperse and settle in towns and villages or to join Russian forces. Many Cossacks escaped and settled in Turkey near Danube delta; in 1778 they were formally accepted under Turkish rule.

By end of 1780 all districts, which were formerly under Hetmanate, were incorporated into Russian regime. In 1783 all Cossack regiments were transferred to Russian forces; peasants were prohibited to leave their landlords, which made them serfs on their former land. Ukrainian church autonomy was abolished and church property was transferred to Russian treasury.