

THE RESETTLEMENT POLICY OF TSARIST RUSSIA IN MUGHAN AS A PART OF THE COLONIAL POLICY (THE LATE 19TH CENTURY AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY)**Salman Ibishov*****ABSTRACT**

This article analyzes the resettlement policy implemented by Tsarist Russia in the Mughan region of Northern Azerbaijan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as one of the principal instruments of imperial colonial governance. The study demonstrates that the settlement of the Russian population in Mughan was not merely the outcome of agrarian or social reforms, but rather an integral part of a strategic plan aimed at altering the region's ethnic composition, strengthening political control, and establishing an imperial stronghold along the southern frontiers. The article identifies three main stages in the settlement process in Mughan: the forced relocation of religious sectarian communities between 1830 and 1860; the formation of a new model of colonization between 1888 and 1902 through the establishment of Petropavlovka and the introduction of initial irrigation projects; and, finally, the period between 1902 and 1916, during which mass resettlement acquired a systematic, state-led character within the framework of Stolypin's agrarian reforms. Based on archival sources, it is shown that during this period more than fifty Russian villages were founded in the Javad district, and over twenty thousand Russian peasants were resettled in the region. Drawing on the views of N. Shavrov and other imperial ideologues, the study examines plans to transform Mughan into a "fully Russian governorate," the instrumentalization of the Russian population within policies of Christianization and Russification, and the military-strategic significance of the region in the context of the Ottoman and Iranian borders. The article further demonstrates that the allocation of land, weapons, financial assistance, and administrative privileges to Russian settlers generated tensions with the local population, leading to the depopulation of certain villages and the marginalization of indigenous communities. In conclusion, the article argues that Russian resettlement in Mughan was not a case of simple agrarian colonization, but rather a deliberate policy of demographic and political engineering pursued by the empire. These settlements subsequently became one of the main support bases of anti-national armed forces in the region during the years 1917–1919.

INTRODUCTION

One of the constituent parts of the multifaceted colonial policy carried out by Tsarist Russia in Northern Azerbaijan is the resettlement process of Russians through various stages. It should be noted that even in the 18th century and later throughout the 19th century immediately after the Turkmenchay tragedy, the mass resettlement of ethnic Armenians was the result of "velikorus" chauvinist, Russian-Slavic bigotry, but the specification (particularity) of the resettlement of the Russian-speaking population varies from time to time. The article presented by us is dedicated to the settlement of Russian peasants in the Mughan region of Azerbaijan at the beginning of the 20th century. The settlement of Mughan with Russians, which became serious since the 80s of the 19th century and became widespread at the beginning of the 20th century, especially during Stolypin reform, was studied by N.Shavrov, M.B.Məmmədzaadə, D.Ismayilzadəh, F. Baghirov, H. Verdiyeva and other authors.

In their works, the founders of the Republic of Azerbaijan paid attention to the resettlement policy as one of the main directions of the policy of Russification and Christianization of Tsarist Russia. M.B. Mammadzadeh in his work "National Movement of Azerbaijan" also draws attention to the reason why Russians did not migrate en masse at the beginning of the 19th century: tsarism needed a social group to support it. However, tsarism did not trust the agha and bey clans either. To get out of this situation, the investigative teams sent by Russia to Azerbaijan proposed various ways. The most adequate (favorable) of them was to take Russian peasants to Azerbaijan and settle them in the places occupied from the khans. However, the famous Paskevich, who knows Azerbaijan well, considered this proposal very dangerous for Russia. According to his opinion about this proposal, the captive and slave status of the Russian peasant

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belonging to the Russian nation, the ruler and conqueror, will look ridiculous next to the free-living Azerbaijani peasant, and for the Russian landlords, who are the backbone of Russian tsarism would create a fearful situation"(Məmmədzadə, 1992, p. 16).

It is the right approach, it should be related to the components and results of the process of moving Russian peasants to remote areas, abolition of the serf system at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. At the beginning of the 19th century, the current socio-political and economic situation in Russia did not allow this. At the beginning of the 20th century, the resettlement of Russians was a new stage of the policy of Russification, it was a part of Stolyp's reaction. This was the period when "the ideologist and implementer of the 1907 reaction, Prime Minister Stolypin of Russia, used all reactionary methods to extinguish the national awakening in Azerbaijan.

As it is known, population transfers were part of the colonial policy of Tsarist Russia and had the purpose of Russification and Christianization. Siberia and the Volga, Poland and Ukraine, Central Asia and the Caucasus are among such geographies. The migration of ethnic Armenians and Russians to Azerbaijan during the Russian invasions is essentially the same. However, the research allows us to say that the ethno-demographic policy of the empire has changed in terms of historical stage and period, and has a far-sighted aim in terms of political and economic. The beginning of the 20th century is one of those times. In the article presented by us, I have tried to reveal the essence and philosophy of this hateful policy on the example of the Northern Mughan region. It is clear from the historical literature that the relocation of the Russian-speaking population to Mughan was carried out in several stages. The 30s-60s of the 19th century can be considered as the first period, the period from 1888 to 1902 as the second stage, and finally the years 1902-1913 as the third stage. In the 30s-60s of the 19th century, heretics or sectarists (Russian sectarians) peasants who were transferred to Mughan: Malakans, Dukhobars, Priguns, Subbotniks and other Russians were actually exiled to Mughan as criminals of various composition. The colonialists, who viewed the Azerbaijani people as criminals, treated the sectarians who took an opposing position against the official Pro-Slavic Christian Church from the same position and transferred them to distant colonies. Hajar Verdiyeva writes about the relocation of this period: "The main aim of the resettlement policy was the settlement of Russian sectarians in Azerbaijan. This process was especially strengthened in the 30s of the 19th century. In those years, according to the Russian historian N.A. Borozdin, a researcher of that period, they were collected from all over Russia and deported to Transcaucasia. Molokans, Dukhobors, Khlists, Subbotniks, Priguns, Skops - they were all sent here. If in 1841 the number of Molokans of both sexes in the Caspian region was 3,977, in the mid-1940s the number of only men reached 2,667. In 1844, the total number of sectarians in northern Azerbaijan was 3369 men and 3922 women" (Verdiyeva, 1994, p. 85). Val - 1834, Novogolovka - 1844, Prishib - 1840, Nikolayevka - 1841, Astrakhanka - 1842, etc., were the first Russian settlements established in Mughan (Lankaran district). Russian peasants who were transferred to these regions were mainly sectarists. The process of migration from Russia to Azerbaijan in 1830-1880 was spontaneous and organizationally weak and unsystematic. In the cameral image of 1873 the total number of Russian heretical settlers in Javad district is 118 yards, including 732 people. 408 of them was men, 324 of them was woman. In the information given by S.Alifin based on the data of 1885 we see a decrease in the number of Russian heretical settlers, total number of people were shown 259 people, 135 men and 124 women was consist of these people. This population was shown in 86 yards In fact, Petropavlovka, which was founded in 1888, was the first Russian settlement created in Mughan and its population consisted of only Russian-Orthodox peasants. Azerbaijani historians D.Ismailzadeh (Ismailzade, 1962, pp. 3-15; Ismailzade, 1971, pp. 38-46; Ismailzade, 1976, pp. 18-31), F. Baghirov (Bagirov, 2009), H. Verdieva (Verdieva, 1999) and others have studied the most diverse directions of the colonial resettlement policy of the Russian Empire in Azerbaijan (including resettlement measures carried out in Mughan). Thus, in the article, on the basis of archival documents, as well as the works of Russian and Azerbaijani authors, the essence of the relocation of Russian villages to Mughan and historical periods is considered.

1. Solving the Shahsevan "problem" in Mughan and a new stage of Russian emigration

We believe that new prospects for Russian relocation emerged after 1885, when the migration of shahsevens from Southern Azerbaijan to Mughan was blocked by a brutal shooting; we have devoted a separate work to this topic.

The years 1888-1902 can be considered as this new phase of Russian migrations. The location of northern Mughan on the border with Iran (with southern Mughan - S.I.) and the construction of water canals on the banks of Kura, Araz and Bolgarchay after the expulsion of the Shahsevans in 1885 encouraged the mass settlement of Russians in Mughan. F.Baghirov writes about the mentioned history of settlement of Russian peasants: "With the exception of the Russian village of Petropavlovka, which was established in 1888, active Russian settlement of this place began in 1901-1902. The creation of an irrigation system led to the establishment of new Russian settlements" (Baghirov, 2009, p. 33) It should be noted that a number of villages were already founded by 1902. New Nikolayevka, New Aleksandrovka and others are of this type.

Thus, as mentioned above, in 1888, the Russian settlement of Petropavlovka was established near the place where Araz meets Kura. N. Shavrov presents the history of the establishment of the village in detail: "In 1887, during the administration of the country by Dondukov-Korsakov, 70 families gathered from different regions of Vladikavkaz came to the city of Javad, which was chosen as the Uezd center since 1868." With the permission of Prince Dondukov-Korsakov, 70 Russian families settled in Petropavlovka, a settlement chosen for them, a short distance from Javad. It resembled an empty desert except for the 26 villages located there. In 1896, as a result of the flooding of the Araz near the village of Saatli, the new Araz was formed, which flowed into the Kyzylagac Bay. As a result of this natural disaster in the summer months of 1896, the fertile lands created as a result of the flooding of the Nile in Egypt created fertile conditions for the development of agriculture in Mughan. In fact, the colonial local authorities did nothing to protect the population in 1896, even though the local population had built dams and other defenses to protect their farmlands from flooding. The location of the Mil-Mughan plains on the border with Iran gave it a strategic-geographical position. F. Baghirov writes: "The establishment of individual Russian settlements in Mughan dates back to the 1960s. If we do not count the Petropavlovka Russian settlement established in 1888, then there was a long pause in the resettlement of Russians to Mughan until 1901-1902." (Baghirov, 2009, p. 28).

In Petropavlovka, each family was given 27 desyats of land. Additionally, 1,960 desyatins and then 3,531 desyatins of land were leased as originally planned. In exchange for this, the Russian families had to build a water canal from the Araz River to Gobu. In the first years, residents who were not able to adapt to local conditions had a lot of difficulty. They did not get along with the local population, they faced diseases, poverty reigned among them. Over time, they adapted to local conditions. Now the people of Petropavlovka are engaged in the most diverse field of agriculture. Life was bustling in the village and 92 families lived there. The Pristav's residence is located here. In addition, a fish warden, a doctor, a veterinarian, a water engineer, an inspector of water transport on the Kura River, a school, a church, a weekly market, a control station for ships sailing on the Kura River were located in Petropavlovka. N. Shavrov writes that: "Recently, a telegraph-communication bureau has also been established. In 1898, Russian settlements named Novo-Nikolayevka and Novo-Aleksandrovka were built in Mughan." During the spring flooding of the Araz River, the creation of a fertile agricultural environment allowed the soil to become suitable for cultivation. The process of economic appropriation of the Mughan region went parallel with the construction of the irrigation system created here.

The Russian settlement of Novo Nikolayevka was built (in 1898) around the villages of Gara-Nuru,

Haji Hasanli. It was located 12 km southeast of Petropavlovka, along the Sarajalar stream (Baghirov, 2009, p. 33). The first inhabitants of this Russian settlement were gathered from Yekaterinoslav, Chersonesus, Bessarabia and Podolsky governorates. In the earlier stages, the settlers suffered greatly from the lack of water. However, the situation changed after the mission of water transport engineer Mayevsky to Mughan. With his initiative and leadership, the Saradzhalyar (Saricali) water canal, 5 versts long, was built. The cost of the channel was 2000 rubles. The construction of the aqueduct changed the life of the residents of Novo-Nikolayevka. He gave impetus to the development of cotton farming. N. Shavrov writes: "Currently, 152 families and 792 people (Russians) live here." The main occupation of the village population was cotton growing. The village had a cotton field specialist, a church, a parochial school, a beekeeping enterprise, and stables. The Russian settlement of Nikolayevka played the role of the main center for the expansion of cotton farming in Mughan, spreading this field. At the same time, the village of Novo-Nikolayevka played a special role in the development of beekeeping and cattle-breeding in Mughan, as well as in the creation of pig farming.

N. Shavrov indicates the establishment of the Russian village of Novo-Aleksandrovka in 1901. He writes: "The 3rd Russian settlement in Mughan (after Petropavlovka and Novo-Nikolayevka) was built on the left bank of one of the tributaries of Novo-Aleksandrovka-Yeni Araz, where this tributary meets Gur-Gur Gobu, around the villages of Samad Khan and Suleyman Khan. Residents of the village come from the southern governorates of Russia. The water supply of residents of the Russian settlement of Novo-Aleksandrovka was re-established in 1902. A 5-verst long water canal was built, which is the basis of the Golitsyn system created in Northern Mughan. Novo Aleksandrovka is located 12 versts east of Novo Nikolayevka and has 89 families. In total, 504 Russians live in the village. The land system of these villages was rebuilt in 1903. 9665 desyatins of land were allocated to them." (Baghirov, 2009, p. 41).

Some authors indicate the history of the Russian settlements of Novo-Nikolayevka and Aleksandrovka with certain differences. H. Verdiyeva indicates that Nikolayevka was founded in 1902 and Aleksandrovka in 1904 (Verdieva, 1999, p. 213).

N. Shavrov notes that Aleksandrovka was built in 1901 (Shavrov, 1911). F. Bagirov writes that both villages were founded in 1898 (Baghirov, 2009, p. 292). The first Russian peasants who were transferred to Mughan were in great difficulty. The main food products were the fish they caught from Araz - mainly: salmon, wels catfish, and watermelon, melon. They could not bear the hot weather there, they suffered from various diseases. Some of the first displaced people returned. The inhabitants of Petropavlovka town were almost in despair for a long time (for 15 years). After the construction of the Gurgur irrigation canal, the situation changed for the better. Gur-gur ditch laid the foundation of the network of water ditches called Golitsyn. The flood and overflows that occurred in Mughan in 1896 were regarded as an unfortunate event among the people. The Araz caused a flood near the village of Saatli, some distance from where it meets the Kura, and by opening a new bed for itself, a large area, almost the Mughan desert, was submerged in the waters of the Araz. As a result of the flooding of the Araz, a new Araz in the Mughan plain, a large tributary was separated from it and directed to the Caspian Sea through the Kyzylagac Bay. As a period of government officials, they did not take any measures regarding the overflowing Araz river in the spring months (Araz had flooded once in 1868). Local people tried to build dams in a very primitive way to protect their houses and yards. However, all this did not give any results and the Araz River was flooded with 100,000 decimeters of land.

The creation of the new Araz in 1896 was a historical event in the way of Mughan becoming an arable land and cultivation. Thus, after the water receded from the flooded areas, the local Azerbaijani population took advantage of this situation and obtained abundant crops. This fact woke up the Russian officials. In essence, a new epoch has begun in the economic appropriation of Mughan. Parallel to the new branch of Araz, various large water canals were built from Araz itself to the Mughan steppe and were directed to the Caspian Sea. The construction of irrigation canals from the Araz River made the surrounding

uncultivated land suitable for farming. This plan was implemented by the water inspectorate in the Caucasus under the leadership of an engineer named Petrov. As a result of the flooding of the Kura and Araz rivers, it helped to fertilize the surrounding lands. The activity of G.S. Golitsy, the governor of Transcaucasia, and the activity of Saposhnikov, who is responsible for the management of the state property of the Baku governorate, should be especially noted in the revival of resettlement in Mughan and the expansion of settlement works.

In 1900, for the first time, a loan of 37,000 rubles was allocated for the construction of an irrigation canal by the instructions of Prince Golitsy. "In 1901, the water transport engineer Mayevsky built a small canal in the old Sarajalar canal, which has its source in Yeni Araz, allowing to irrigate 1000 desyats of land" (Baghirov, 2009, p. 29).

It should be emphasized that the construction of kilometers of water channels, which began in the 1900s and continued in the 1920s, was based on manual labor. During the period of Tsarist Russia, the settlers themselves built the irrigation canals for the resettled Russian peasants. In return, they were given large plots of land and many concessions were made. It should be noted that the new canal (1901), which was separated from the old Sarajalar canal as a branch, boosted the prosperity of Yeni Nikolayevka village. This village Novo-Nikolayevka was called the Red village (Krasnoselsky) during the Soviet era and now it has been returned to its previous historical name - Kara Nuru. In the following years, many irrigation canals were built, called Golitsyn's canal network (so-called system).

2. Russian settlers of Mughan in the early XX century and Stolypinism

N.N. Shavrov notes that "the rapid increase in the population of the European part of Russia creates the need to relocate a part of it to empty, uninhabited areas. Shirvan, Mil and Mughan plains were among such areas. 250,000 or 300,000 Russian families could be settled in the waste lands of these three plains, and as a result a governorate consisting of an entirely Russian population could be formed." (Shavrov, 1909).

N. Shavrov also expresses his attitude to the resettlement of non-Russian peoples in Transcaucasia by Tsarist Russia. In the very introductory part of the book, he writes that "after the Armenian-Georgian uprising that suddenly broke out in the Caucasus in 1905-1906, it became clear that one of the main options to prevent Transcaucasia from breaking away from us (Russia) in the future is to increase the number of population of Russian origin in this land, so that even their minimum number in this land should not be less than half of the local population of this place." (Baghirov, 2009, p. 7) According to the data of 1911, the author presents historical facts that 1 million of the 1,300,000 Armenians living in Transcaucasia were resettled by the Russian Empire (from 1828 to 1911) and were immigrants. He does not hide his objection to the increase of the non-Russian element (population). Most likely, the brazenness of Armenians against Russia in 1905-1906 forced the author to come to this conclusion.

The Armenians, whom Tsarist Russia transferred and settled in the lands of Azerbaijan, also plundered the empire itself. In traditional historiography, we usually come across the presentation of the event that happened in 1905-1906 as an Armenian-Muslim massacre. However, we can learn the correct approach to these events, that Armenians have been preparing for national autonomy for a long time, and that Muslim Azerbaijanis have become innocent victims, is described in M.S. Ordubadi's work entitled "Years of Blood" (the history of the Armenian-Muslim feud that took place in the Caucasus in 1905-1906): At the meeting in the "Aghoghlan" monastery, the authorized representatives of the Dashnaksutyun party took advantage of Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 and thought about political autonomy: "We, the Armenian nation, have longed to demand our national rights and administrative independence. Finally, our enemy, the Russian Empire, is in the position of a big bulky elephant. We and

you, or rather other peoples who are not Russians, were always helpless, we were cornered by the fear of the tyrannical government, that stubborn bulky elephant, and we were whimpering. But thanks be to God Almighty that Japanese flies, which are weaker than us, have hit this cruel elephant so hard that our dream came true. That fly chased the cruel elephant so much that it finally fell on its back into a deep ditch and canal. Now, brothers, let's join hands and destroy by smashing the flesh of that elephant." (Ordubadi, 1993). For almost 20 years, the Armenians, under the leadership of the Armenian church, Dashnak and other political parties, were supplying arms and ammunition and trying to use the Azerbaijanis (taking into account their ignorance and unawareness of the essence of the event) as a means to realize their goals.

N.N. Shavrov also touches on the political significance of the settlement of Russians in Mughan: "The Mughan region covers the area from the Caspian Sea along the Iranian border to Araz. It belongs to the vast Mughan steppe, which is supposed to be settled with Russians. At least one million people of Russian origin can be successfully accommodated in Mughan, and thus the central part of Eastern Transcaucasia will be populated with a population of Russian origin. The northern part of this region, which is occupied by Russia, is inhabited by Lezgis and Georgians (Caucasian-speaking peoples - S.I.) in the territories up to Dagestan and Kakheti. In the west, this land is bordered by Georgians (moved Armenians and Tatars (Azerbaijani Turks), and in the south directly by Iran (South Azerbaijan - S.I.) (Shavrov, 1909). At the moment, this province is completely empty, and this is our (Russia - S.I.) situation here. On the whole, our southern borders are suffering from the constant attacks of the Shahsevens, and our Turkish neighbors, on the advice of their far-sighted German politicians and soldiers, are now trying to capture Urmia and get behind our positions in Asia Minor". N. Shavrov notes that in the future, in order to prevent the Ottoman state from entering Transcaucasia from the direction of Urmia and to prevent the occupation of the territories up to Dagestan, to organize a serious resistance against the Turks, it is a vital necessity to organize a Russian governorate with a population of at least one million in Eastern Transcaucasia, that is, Mughan. The Russian-speaking population transferred to the Russian army can be of great help. The one-million-strong Russo-Slavic element located in Mughan has a special significance in terms of spreading Christianity to the local population and Russian cultural influence on the local population. If a period of peaceful conditions for natural growth is created for the one million population to be relocated for at least ten years, the number of Russians will increase rapidly, the position of the private property class in Transcaucasia will be significantly strengthened, and as a result, the Russian element will gain a superior position." According to his notes, the Russian population consisting of peasants (numbering one million) was settled in Mughan and placed between Dagestan, Iran, Turkey, and Georgians, and it is also important in terms of dividing them and preventing them from uniting. The resettlement of the population should be intensive and if its proper placement is well organized, then this measure would add strength to Russia's power. In this way, in order to prevent "unfortunate" events expected as a result of the increase in the number of the local population, the relocation of the Russian-speaking population was considered as the basis. It should be noted that the settlement of Mughan with Russians had a political, economic and military strategic purpose. In 1888, 13 years after the Russian settlement of Petropavlovka (now the city of Sabirabad) was established, the Russian resettlement in Mughan turned into an intensive, systematic migration process. At the beginning of the 20th century, the center point of the Russian Empire's resettlement policy in the Caucasus became Mughan. It was necessary to build water channels and create an irrigation-watering system for the economic exploitation of the Mughan desert. In 1905-1914, the transfer of Russian peasants to this area as a labor force for the creation of industrial cotton cultivation and pig farming, a new area of cattle breeding in Mughan, was carried out rapidly at the state level. At the beginning of the 20th century, Russian settlements and villages supported in Mughan were part of N. Stolip's economic policy.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the main place of resettlement of Russian peasants in Mughan (northern part of Mughan S.I.) was Javad district.

The main thing is that from 1902 to 1916, more than 50 Russian villages were built one after the

other in Mughan, and more than 20 thousand Russian villagers were resettled. However, there were not a few people who immigrated on their own. Based on the documents of State Historical Archive of the Republic of Azerbaijan (fund-43, list-2, storage unit-73,69) table below that we have presented, where and in what year the population of some Russian villages were relocated is systematized in the following table (Azerbaijan Republic State Historical Archive [ARDTA], fund 43, inventory 2, file 69, 73). Thus, the majority of those transferred to Mughan are from other lands in Ukraine, including Kiev they were the peasants of the governorates! This is clearly visible in the table which compiled by us!

Names of villages built in Javad district		Previous residence	Year	Number of families
1.	Nikonovka The former residence of the villagers who moved to Nikonovka village of Javad district on their own	Kyiv Governorate, Kharkov Governorate	1910	101 families
2.	New Kherson	Stavropol Governorate	1910	150 families
3.	New Troitski	From different governorates	1906 1910	33 families

		(Kuban region, from Saratov, Orlov, Voronezh, Simbirski, Chernikov, Voronezh governorates), from Penza, Poltava, Ryazan, Chernyov, Kherson, Donskoy, Tauria, Yekaterinoslav governorates		
4.	Osipovski	From different governorates	1911	25 families
5.	Poltava	From different governorates	1913	40 families
6.	Petrovo-Polya	From Tula, Kursk, Poltava, Nodar, Voronezh, Kherson, Kyiv, Penza	1912, july	17 families

		Governorates, from the city of Ekaterinodar and Kharkiv		
7.	Rumyantsevsky		1913	32 families
8.	Preobrazhensky		1913	24 families
9.	Skobelevsky	Lankaran city of Baku Governorate	1917	22 families
10.	Romanovsky	Kherson and Podolsky, Voronezh, Mşanin, Poltav, Çerniqov, Kharkiv, Donski, Orlov, Kuban, Vyatka	1916	83 families
11.	Pakrovka	August in 1909 Podolsk, Kuban, Anaga, Mshinsky, Voronezh, Kyiv,	1905 compilation, In 1909 new arrival	64 families + 116 families =180 Families

		Kursk, Tavriçeskiy	to Pakrovka	
12.	Semyonovsky	From different governorates	1912	31 families
13.	Seversky	From different governorates	1912	37 families
14.	Stolipinka	From different governorates	1912	39 families
15.	Slepchovsky	Voronej, Kharkiv, Kuban, Kursk, Penza, Tavriya	1910	87 families
16.	Suvorovka	From different governorates	1917	48 families
17.	Smolensky	Kharkiv Governorate	1914	19 families
18.	Petropavlovsky	Penza, Voronezh, Kazan governorates Yekaterinoslav, Samara governorates, Don region and the city of Cheboksary	1892- August family list	90 families

N.N. Shavrov writes: “As a result of the planned and proper implementation of the settlement of Russians in Mughan and other steppes of Eastern Transcaucasia, within 5-10 years we can create a Russian governorate with a population of 1.5 million people here” (Shavrov, 1911) .

In the spring of 1909, Count I.I. Voronsov-Dashkov, the Viceroy of the Caucasus, who visited

Northern Mughan, informed the Tsar of Russia about the results of his visit to Mughan: "I think that the cultivation of land based on the artificial irrigation system will achieve great success and will be a great impetus to the development and flowering of Mughan. . On October 25, 1908, A. Krivoshein, the head of the Caucasus Department of Agriculture and Land Management, appealed to the State Duma with a letter to release financial resources for the cultivation of the Mughan desert" (Baghirov, 2009, p. 298). During that period, the development dynamics of planting and cultivation of Mughan lands were as follows:

In 1902-1908 - 6000 desyatins

In 1908-1909 - 16,000 desyatins

In 1910 - 18,000 desyatins

In 1912 - 47,000 desyatins

In 1913 - 50,000 desyatins

N.N. Shavrov notes that the rapid increase in the population of the European part of Russia creates the need to relocate a part of it to empty, uninhabited areas. Shirvan, Mil and Mughan plains were among such areas. In the waste lands of these three plains 250,000 or 300,000 Russian families could be settled, and the result would be a governorate composed of an entirely Russian population. At the beginning of the 20th century, in 1905-1914, the resettlement of peasants to Mughan was carried out at the state level, and the Russian settlements and villages founded here were part of N. Stolyp's reforms. P. B. Struve took the epigraph of P. A. Stolypin's famous motto "Great Russia" "forward with great changes" to his article "Great Russia" published in 1908 in the newspaper "Russian Idea" and noted that the abolition of Obshchinas and peasants with free private property along with the creation of the railway line, the expansion of the railway network throughout the country will stimulate economic development and is of historical significance (Oldenburg, 2013, p. 38). Most of the peasants who were transferred to Mughan were from the governorates where agrarian reforms were taking place, Tavria, Yekaterinoslav, Kherson, Kharkiv, Poltava, Pskov, Smolensk and other regions (Oldenburg, 2013, p. 39). If in the 30s-60s of the 19th century, those who were transferred to Mughan were heretics or sectarists Russian peasants (Russian sectarians): Molokans, Dukhobors, Priguns, Subbotniks and other Russians were exiles. In 1830-1880, Russian migrations were weak and unsystematic character oriented in terms of spontaneous and organizational aspects. At the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century, the nature of the resettlement of Russians was different. In fact, it was Petropavlovka (I.S. on the site of Sabirabad), which was founded in 1888 and was the first Russian settlement created in Mughan and its population consisted of only Russian-pro-Slavic peasants. As we mentioned earlier, at the beginning of the 20th century, the main place of resettlement of Russian peasants was Javad district. In the years 1902-1916, 55 Russian towns, 21 oba (villages made up of Russian-pro-Slav peasants), 3620 house (yards) were built here, and a total of 21094 people were resettled here. According to the information given by A. Brilinski in 1915, 53 Russian settlements were built in Mughan, and according to the agricultural census of 1917, 54 towns were established. Russian families who were transferred to Mughan and settled on treasure lands were provided with enough land. The correspondent of the newspaper "Moscow (Innovations) News" noted that the population relocated to Mughan was given a large area of land as a gift. In addition, the new arrivals were given ready-made houses worth 150-200 rubles, they were given financial assistance and even (to protect themselves from the locals) they were given a rifle with a cartridge. Thus, the resettlement of Russian peasants to Mughan at the beginning of the 20th century can be seen as one of P.A. Stolypin's measures to save Russia from the economic and political crisis. One branch of the reforms, which covered the entire economic sphere of the Russian Empire under the leadership of P.A. Stolypin, was the problem of massive relocation of peasants with little land from the central governorates to more remote areas. Since 1906, the resettlement of peasants with little land from the central provinces

of the Russian Empire to Central Asia, Siberia and the Caucasus has become one of the main directions of state policy. The revolution of 1905-1907 greatly increased the state's attention to the peasant issue, and the solution of this problem was entrusted to P.A. Stolypin, who was the governor of the Saratov province until 1903, and who was appointed the minister of internal affairs of the Russian Empire from 1903. The main essence of these reforms was that everyone was given the right to leave the community and they were given 15 desyatins (15 ha) of land. P.A. Stolypin's reforms destroyed centuries-old historical traditions by destroying peasant communities, stratification among peasants divided them from the inside. A wealthy peasant who left the community and became a private owner became the support of the state. Stolypin was entrusted with the order of Nicholas II to make the peasants leave the community and become small, private owners, and constantly increase the number of owner peasants. The relocation process was not easy at all. Peasants who were moved from the central provinces of the empire to remote areas due to lack of land faced various difficulties. This problem was similar in Siberia, Central Asia, Far East and Mughan. According to A. Shubin, 500,000 of the 3 million peasants who were transferred from the central governorates to Asia and Siberia returned because they could not adapt to the local geographical conditions. There was a lot of land in Siberia, but little usable land. In other regions inhabited by Turkic peoples, for example, in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia, various conflicts arose with Muslim-Turkish peoples. According to the Russian historian K. Mogilevsky, P. A. Stolypin's reforms faced serious difficulties. In the process of resettlement, the interests of the local population (there were many such incidents in Mughan) were trampled upon. You could also see that a Russian village was being built in the morning on the road of the village inhabited by the local population. If we take into account that they are provided with weapons and keep pigs, then we can see how the national and moral values of the Muslim-Turks are affected. The most fertile lands where the local population kept cattle were sometimes cut and taken away for the benefit of the newcomers. The uprisings in Kazakhstan and Central Asia in 1916 were the result of hatred of immigrants. This reform was of interest to the Russian Empire and Russians. As a result of P.A. Stolypin's reforms, significant progress was made in the financial field. If the state income of Russia in 1897 was 1 billion 400 million rubles. In 1912, this number was 3 billion 104 million rubles. According to S.S. Oldenburg, the amount of tax per person in Russia was 2 times less than in Germany and France. According to the amount of tax per person, it was 4 times less than England, and 2 times less than Germany and France. During the reform period (1906-1916), the use of agricultural machinery increased by 3 times (Oldenburg, 2013).

F. Bagirov summarizing the statistical data on the total number of villages where the settlers were located and related to January 1, 1914, writes: Thus, in total, 185 of the 342 Russian settlements in Transcaucasia were established in Azerbaijan, of which 140 were located in the territories of the Baku governorate. 107 of them fell to Lankaran and Javad districts (p. 390). 80 villages where displaced persons settled were built in Javad district. In the earlier stages of resettlement, Lankaran, Shamakhi districts and Yelizavetpol (Ganja) were mostly settled, while at the beginning of the 20th century, the focus was on Northern Mughan as part of Stolypinism and the promotion of industrial cotton cultivation. The basis of cotton cultivation in Northern Mughan started in 1900 in Novo-Nikolayevka (now Kara Nuru) in an experimental area with an area of 2 desyatins, and soon it became widespread in Mughan. In 1906, 2,000 desyatins, and in 1912, 10,000 desyatins were the basis of industrial cotton cultivation (Baghirov, 2009, p. 355). V. Masalskov's article "Cotton cultivation in the Transcaucasia" presents statistical figures on the development dynamics of cotton production in the Baku governorate as follows: 73,500 pounds in 1909, 182,000 pounds in 1910, 309,000 pounds in 1911, 289,500 pounds in 1912 and 416,900 pounds of cotton were produced in 1913. Although the pioneers of cotton growing were the displaced Russian peasants, and they brought this field of agriculture to Mughan at the beginning of the 20th century, the labor force was made up of local peasants. It produced 289,500 pounds of cotton a year, and 416,900 pounds of cotton in 1913 (Baghirov, 2009, p. 357). Although the pioneers of cotton cultivation were the displaced Russian peasants, who brought this field of agriculture to Mughan at the beginning of the 20th century, the labor force was made up of local peasants. Thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, the main part of the Russians who were transferred to

North Azerbaijan were settled in Baku governorate. This was 9.0% of the population of the governorate (72,178 people). Accordingly, this figure was 3.1% (36,697 people) in Yelizovetpol governorate (Baghirov, 2009, p. 362). Thus, the creation of Russian settlements was carried out in parallel with the suppression and deportation of the local population. Let's look at the historical facts: in 1877, after the conflict in Mikhaylovka, where the local population settled with the local population, the population of Kusnet and Haji Huseyin winter camp was moved to other areas, Vladimirovka and Elenovka villages were built in place of those villages (Baghirov, 2009, p. 459). At the beginning of the 20th century, the same disaster happened to Bolgarkand, Kharmandali, Adna Gulukand, Balacakand and other villages on the outskirts of Bolgarchay of Javad district in Mughan, as well as to Alar village community of Lankaran district. Alar residents were moved to other areas (Baghirov, 2009, p. 464-465). Similar incidents and conflicts were happening continuously and covered the entire Mughan geography. It should be noted that the above-mentioned difficulties of the villagers transferred to Mughan were soon resolved. It has already been mentioned above, and they became the ethnic support of Russia here. Villagers were given weapons for "self-defense", churches were built for them, schools were built near the church, medical personnel were created, and irrigation canals were provided. Tens of years would pass, these hundreds of thousands of displaced Russian peasants would become the ethnic support of Tsarist Russia in Mughan and become a real obstacle to the restoration of our statehood. The population of Russian villages who called themselves "Mughans" became a military-political tool in the hands of various political forces: Aghvardiya, Bolshevik-Menshevik-Dashnak, Eser and others during the turbulent period of 1917-1918. At that time, one of the main issues facing the national forces was the neutralization of numerous armed groups in the Russian villages of Mughan, the confiscation of their weapons, and the restoration of law and order in these villages. The inhabitants of those villages also had enough weapons. Disruptive detachments of the Russian army were stationed in those villages, and the leadership of the Baku Soviet regularly sent weapons and manpower. In particular, well-armed organized military forces have been deployed in the villages of Privolni, Prishib, and Nikolayevka. Although there was a difference of opinion between them on the issue of power in Russia, their positions on the attitude towards Azerbaijan completely coincided (Aliyeva, 2011, p. 38). On the eve of the establishment of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the partisan units of the Russian villages of Muga joined forces led by Russian nationalist officers. Colonel Ilyashevich led these forces, which had close ties to Denikin's troops in Russia. He was the commander of the 29th Russian border brigade stationed south of Mugan to protect the border line with Iran. Colonel Ilyashevich, a typical representative of Russian nationalist officers, does not want to accept the independence of Azerbaijan and considered it a part of indivisible Russia. Therefore, he took active measures to bring the region under his control by using force in the existing situation, and by strengthening himself here, turned the station into a base for the future attack of Denikinists on Azerbaijan (Suleymanov, 2014, p. 438). In August 1919, the military forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan under the leadership of General Habib Bey Salimov fully established their power in the Lankaran region, anti-national forces were disarmed.

CONCLUSION

This article has examined Tsarist Russia's resettlement policy in the Mughan region as a component of imperial colonial governance, arguing that the relocation of a Russian-speaking population to Northern Azerbaijan was not a purely demographic phenomenon but a purposeful

mechanism linking territorial control, frontier security, and economic exploitation. The evidence indicates that Mughan functioned as a strategic “frontier laboratory” where demographic engineering, administrative privilege, and infrastructural investment were deployed to consolidate imperial authority.

The study has identified three distinguishable phases of settlement. The first phase (1830–1860) was shaped primarily by the forced transfer of sectarian communities, reflecting a punitive and disciplinary logic of empire. The second phase (1888–1902) marked the emergence of a new colonization model associated with Petropavlovka and the gradual expansion of irrigation initiatives, through which resettlement became connected to planned agricultural development. The third phase (1902–1913/1916) coincided with the broader framework of Stolypin’s agrarian reforms and demonstrates a transition toward a more systematic, state-supported settlement policy, characterized by the foundation of numerous new villages, the allocation of substantial land plots, and material and administrative incentives.

A central finding is that irrigation infrastructure and land redistribution were not neutral modernization measures but key instruments that enabled and accelerated colonization. The creation of canal networks and the expansion of cultivable land strengthened the economic viability of new settlements and supported the growth of commercial agriculture—especially cotton cultivation—while also reshaping local patterns of land use. At the same time, the preferential provisioning of resources and legal-administrative advantages to settlers contributed to asymmetries in local relations, generating frictions with indigenous communities and, in certain cases, facilitating displacement and the marginalization of local populations.

Finally, the article suggests that the longer-term political consequences of these settlements became visible during the crisis years of 1917–1919, when several colonist villages emerged as significant actors within local security dynamics and regional power struggles. While the present study does not reduce complex revolutionary events to a single causal factor, it shows that the institutional consolidation and militarized capacity of certain settlements—shaped in part by earlier state support—affected the balance of forces during this period.

The conclusions of this study are based on archival materials and contemporary publications, yet further research could deepen the analysis by systematically comparing Mughan with other colonization zones in the Caucasus and by integrating micro-level local case studies (land registers, community petitions, and district-level administrative correspondence). Such work would help clarify variation across districts, the socio-economic consequences for different segments of the local population, and the broader imperial logic linking settlement, infrastructure, and security in late Tsarist colonial policy.

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