

Kozodavlev O.P. and Peasant Question in Russia under Alexander I

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ABSTRACT

In the paper the activities of the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Russian Empire Osip Petrovich Kozodavlev are studied. His activities in a peasant question, to which no attention was paid, are researched. Truly said, this question was the most important direction of domestic policy of the Empire under Alexander I. Data for the research were taken from both of public administration acts, and memoirs. Among the firsts there are the documents kept in archives, allowing to specify some aspects of the minister's activity in 1816-1819 when he had carried out the main reformer actions in implementations of some decrees, such as a decree of 1803 on free ploughmenploughmen, a decree of 1804 on permission to some merchants to own the inhabited lands in preparation the of Baltic region reforms. The provided data allow to state his important minister role in the affair to which in historical literature no attention was paid. In 1816-1819 namely in his activities the social side of the case was reflected. Based on a number of a new, for the first time mentioned sources, including archival materials, the paper authors reveal Cozodavlev's role in a range of ways of the peasant question solution in this period - in the case (which was considered in the Senate in 1806) on so-called "pilipons", eventually left in government department without transferring into serfs; his role in the implementation of the decree of 1803 on the free ploughmenploughmen, expressing, in particular, in active participation in the activities of the Special Committee on this issue; role in the implementation of the decree of 1804 on permission to some received the 8-ranks merchants to own the inhabited lands with the peasants on terms, the provisions of which he sought to extend to other prosperous categories of not-noblemen. This given analysis helps to clarify the scope of activities of the Minister of Internal Affairs, which practically had no attention. The given conclusions shall be taken into account when analyze a research of domestic policy of the emperor Alexander I. That will allow placing accents more precisely in research literature in assessment of a role and value of politicians of the time.

KEYWORDS

Serfdom, Decree of 1803,
pilipons, free ploughmen, free ploughmen, Kozodavlev
O.P.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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Introduction

We consider, that today the name of Osip Petrovich Kozodavlev (1754-1819) is unfairly forgotten. Of course, he wasn't a person comparable with true reformer, a gold feather of bureaucracy M.M. Speransky nor with the noble

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"liberal" prince V.P. Kochubey, nor even with the rich man sans-culotte, the initiator of creation of Secret committee earl P. A. Stroganov. But nevertheless he was the third Minister of Internal Affairs in that time (the privy councilor beginning from 1799, the actual privy councilor since 1818), holding this post for 10 years, as long as the few in Russia, until his death. He was a supporter of protectionism in the economy, a man who left his mark in the field of education and literature, and most importantly, in our opinion, he was one of the most vigorous, as said before, "speculators" in the peasant question, who had to implement the decree on free ploughmen, and well-known Baltic reform of 1816-1819, and a number of other steps in the solution of urgent problems of the country.



Figure 1. Portrait of Osip Petrovich Kozodavlev

O.P. Kozodavlev was from the noble family, which rose in the middle of the 18th century. In the age of 8 he became page-boy, and since 1769 he studied at the Leipzig University after which since 1774 he was on service. In 1784-1786 of 18th century he was the director of national schools, in 1787 he provided to Catherine II "The plan of universities organization in Russia ". In this plan he suggested to open new universities and to reduce teaching foreign languages,

giving the preference to Russian; he pointed the possibility of admission to universities for representatives of all social categories. Since 1799 he was a senator, since 1810 – the companion of the Minister of Internal Affairs A. B. Kurakin, and in 1811 he became the Minister of Internal Affairs. It is obvious that his views, including view on the peasant question, were based on belief in need of salutary changes in the country. It can be assumed that they could be based on the fact that "Without any pretense he was filled with religious feelings", and "he was really the kindest person, he didn't know either rage, or envy ..." We note that these feedbacks were made by the famous memoirist F.F. Vigel (2003), among whose contemporaries' characteristics positive ones were found extremely rare (Ibneyeva, 2015).

In the years of his ministry, first in 1811-1812 (in fact from 1810 to early 1812), and then about 1816-1819, there were two peaks of the Emperor Alexander I reformatory activity. However, the first one was more concerned with the M.M. Speransky's activities, while the other dignitaries were practically dismissed from making important decisions. In the second peak, fallen on the era of the famous royal speech in the Sejm of the Kingdom of Poland in 1818, there were no extraordinary reformers near Alexander, except for N.N. Novosiltsev who stayed in Warsaw and kept his former importance mainly engaging in the regional affairs and the management of creation of State-Charters. Apparently, that was the time, when Kozodavlev as Minister of the Interior Affairs carried out most of the reformer work, however, he was under the constant supervision of a sort of "shadow" ruler of Russia in those years earl A.A. Arakcheev, who had a special relationship with Kozodavlev (Kizevetter, 1997). The feature of reformatory activities of Alexander I for that time was special attention paid to the social side of affair, including to a peasant question.

Estimates of activities of the minister are various; lets turn our attention to the epigram of the contemporary Saltykov(1816):

“Our minister would rattle with glory
And the posterity would compare him to Kolbert,
When from internal affair
Nothing would came out” (The Russian epigram, 1988).

The story about O.P. Kozodavlev practically was not considered in researches of historians, excepting the general notes which are found in memoirs and reference books. There his humanity was noted, as well as his belonging to the category of liberal figures, and it was traditionally mentioned that peasant class found in him "the defender of the interests". It was specified also that though Kozodavlev "never" encroached "on institute of serfdom" and "was far from a thought of its cancellation", he understood that it "prevents the development of agricultural, and, especially, industrial production".

In our opinion, studying biographies and state occupations of figures of imperial Russia is an essential task of modern historical science where such researches are still very rare. In relation to our hero it is obvious that studying his ideas and activities toward the peasant question can help to understand Alexander's policy in general, and in relation to serfdom in particular, where O. P. Kozodavlev, apparently, has played his role, especially in 1816-1819.

Attracting fragmentary materials of literature and new sources, taken from archives, we succeeded to reveal several spheres where Kozodavlev's role was significant – in the case (which was discussed in Senate in 1806) on so-called "pilipons" (Pilipons (filippovets) was a name for the Old Believers evicted from Russia for religious reasons), eventually left in government department without transferring into serfs; his role in the implementation of the decree of 1803 on the free ploughmenploughmen, expressing, in particular, in active participation in the activities of the Special Committee on this issue; role in the implementation of the decree of 1804 on permission to some received the 8-ranks merchants to own the inhabited lands with the peasants on terms, the provisions of which he sought to extend to other prosperous categories of not-noblemen.not-noblemen

Besides, approximately in 1818 he had prepared the comprehensive draft decision of a peasant question that we introduced for the first time in scientific use. We shall not forget the fact, that in those years the baltic emancipation or the release of the Baltic peasants without land began. It is obvious that Kozodavlev became the minister in the era of a serious attack to reforms in the second half of the 1810th, who was mainly linked with numerous attempts of agrarian or peasant question solution of .

Need to study this problem is connected with the fact, that there are no monographic researches on this question, which is very important, as at the beginning of the 19th century the foundation of future peasants release in Russia in 1861 was laid and actions of certain public agents helped that "revolution in minds" which created along with the Russian literature the ideas of need for changes which led, eventually, to serfdom cancellation.

Speaking about historiography problem, we will pay attention only to the biographic sketch of M. A. Poliyevktov in "The Russian biographic dictionary" containing references on the separate facts concerning our problem. Also we will consider one chapter from a research of Soviet historian A.V. Predtechensky (1957), which concerns mainly Kozodavlev's economic views, without detail analysis ing of his policy in peasant question, but only mentioning its separate episodes (The Russian biographic dictionary, 1903, Predtechensky, 1957). Let us note that the latest review article about O. P. Kozodavlev, which noted all sides of his multi-faceted activities, practically doesn't designate his position in that period of time about the main question of domestic policy of the state – about peasant question (Zalessky, Kozodavlev & Petrovich, 1996).

We have studied a wide range of materials, including archival sources, unexplored by the predecessors. The use of O.P. Kozodavlev's "peasant" draft gives an opportunity to relate his views with those his reform proposals, that he brought to in the Russian state institutions of that time.

Methodological Framework

Except for traditional in historical science, it is possible to call as research methods a method of philological criticism, use of a semantic derivation or transfer, and expansion of a sense of concepts, for example, in the analysis of the uses of the concept "slavery" in relation to a serfdom.

Results and discussions

Passing to results of a research, we will note the following. First, it is necessary to identify the main Kozodavlev's activities on a peasant question. According to our data, from his 14 known these or those opinions statement in this sphere, 13 concerned this or that improvement of the possessory peasantry situation. Let's compare a ratio of "liberal" and conservative opinions on this subject of other famous figures of Alexander I time, of the emancipatory line: V. P. Kochubey: 24 to 6 (4 to 1); A.B. Kurakin: 12 to 1; N. N. Novosiltsov: 15 to 4 (4 to 1), M.M. Speransky: 11 to 3 (4 to 1); P.A. Stroganov: 16 to 0 and A.E. Chartorysky: 14 to 1.

It is known that Kozodavlev as the minister used different opportunities for improvement of different categories of the peasantry (including possessory) situation, beginning from mitigation of serfdom till release separate groups and categories. That was a typical feature of that time policy in general and Alexander I himself in this sphere, which speaker he was.

But in some cases it is possible to see his own handwriting. Let's mention the well-known episode with the pilipons, called above. V.I. Semevsky (1888) wrote that the Polish landowners (in the era of the Russian jurisdiction, in the Polish Kingdom) treated them as serfs. Peasants complained in all instances, and at last, the case reached the monarch, who in 1806 enjoined to consider this question in General meeting of the Senate, where the majority (15 senators) recognized them as the fugitives deserving punishment and not having the rights to freedom. Eight senators spoke in the sense that "described in a deal rights and benefits of those pilipons, who made the deal with landowners, should be deducted; those of natives, who lodged on landowners' estates without any provisions, shall be attached for landowners". But senator O.P. Kozodavlev offered the other: to rank the firsts to the rank of free ploughmen, to leave the seconds attributed to the land forever; but as these last "with the voluntary settlement on landowners' territories couldn't lose a law of persons and didn't come by this in a condition of absolute slavery ... and it should not grant the owner unlimited rights over those people...thou over slaves. ". The owner can use their works for agriculture, but it didn't follow from this that he "could use them on another, unusual to agriculture, case, or to sell them without land".

According to the researcher Poliyevktov, "Kozodavlev's opinion didn't meet sympathy in the Senate and set against him full many...". Only three senators joined him. Originally the monarch agreed with the opinion of 8 senators. But the case didn't come to an end. It was discussed once again in Department of civil and spiritual cases of the State Council and, apparently, according to the proposal of the Minister of Justice (P. V. Lopukhin), all pilipons were left in state department, that is, finally, as far as we can judge, Kozodavlev's opinion was supported by the monarch and, according to Poliyevktov, "in essential lines it received law force" (Archive of the State Council AGS, 1892; Semevsky, 1888).

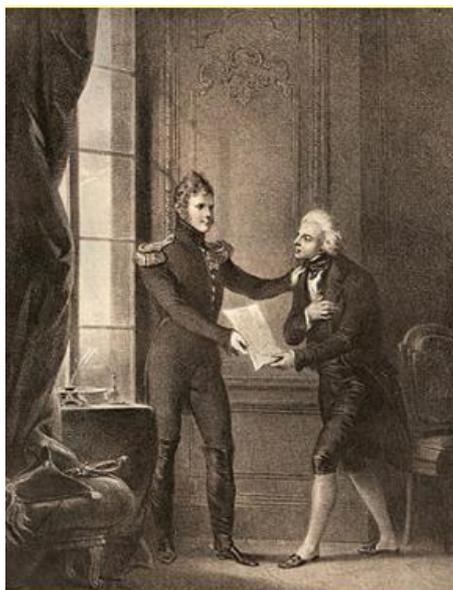


Figure 2. Earl SP Rummyantsev received from Alexander an order for the release of the peasants. Engraving the beginning of the XIX century.

The important role was played by O.P. Kozodavlev in a question of implementation of the Decree on free ploughmen (1803). Discrepancies in understanding of its regulations caused creation on December 10, 1813 of special committee. Information about this Committee is insufficient. It is known that originally the count N. P. Rummyantsev was appointed as its head, but he refused this post. That, probably, was connected with the fact that in August, 1814 he left service. The count V. P. Kochubey and O.P. Kozodavlev were members of the committee, existing, at least, till 1818. and O.P. Kozodavlev, probably, played a major role in the committee, in any case, since 1816, as there is data about his report on this question to Committee of ministers on July 5, 1816. According to V.I. Semevsky (1888), Kozodavlev, "imbued with liberal views in a peasant question", was its most influential member. Let's note that as A.V. Predtechensky (1957) wrote, "after Kozodavlev's appointment the minister he was entrusted with the consideration of all affairs connected with the decree on free ploughmen ", and he aimed "to expand interpretation of the decree, not limited by observation of its formal content". The cases of "his strengthened petition ... on the release of peasants from serfdom in various private occasions" were frequent. However, as marked out N.I. Sergeeva (1983), work of Committee led to opposite result, and "instead of the expected revival of the decree operation in 1814-1815, the number of the cases, which were considered by the ministry, decreases considerably", and the number of them coming there. It could be a possible explanation of this phenomenon, in our opinion, if the fact that those landowners who wished to release peasants had already realized these intentions. The researcher specified a tendency to reducing deals and increasing of cases of a deviation by the authorities signed agreements on release according to this law. Kozodavlev wrote about implementation of the decree positively, perhaps, indulging in wishful thinking, or for some other

reasons (RPHA-1, 1816.; RPHA-2, 1818; RPHA-3, 1824; Semevsky, 1888; Predtechensky, 1957).

Let's speak about implementation of the decree of October 18, 1804 in practice. "About the permission for received eight ranks merchants to buy villages and to own it under the conditions determined with the lodged in it peasants ". This act was connected with the legislation about the merchants of the 1st guild, who distinguished themselves in the tender and had continuous 12 "years of service" in it, began to receive the rank of commerce adviser, introduced in 1800. The decree introduced new category of the owners limited in the right of serfs possession. Earlier even merchants granted by a rank of the 8th class had no right to purchase the inhabited estates as far as "the nobility was granted only for those", who purchased this rank by "public service". Under the decree of 1804 the merchants granted by 8-cool ranks not by the order of service, but as a result of rewarding with awards and purchased inhabited estates before the decree entered into force, kept the property right to them in immunity till their death, but they couldn't transfer this right to the posterity. The merchants purchasing on the same basis the inhabited estates after the decree edition could own villages only under the conditions concluded with peasants, and the last, in these cases, received personal liberty and signed free contracts with owners. In connection with the decree publication next was offered to the Minister of Internal Affairs: "for a reason of all agriculture benefits with the state legalizations, to constitute rules on which those conditions upon purchase of villages shall be made and submit it to our approval; for them not to buy peasants and domestic without the land". According to I.E. Engelman (1990), "the government laid great hopes on this measure in spite of the fact that it could promote release of peasants only indirectly. But it didn't give any results. There were very few merchants who received the highest ranks, and if they were such, they were able to receive the nobility upon estates purchase". A.V. Predtechensky (1957) believed that this decree meant to expand f a number of people, who have the right of land possession and "to a certain extent was opening the road to bourgeois land ownership", but also "preserved the closed corporate body of the nobility". The question of whether new landowners could descend these estates is not clear yet. According to V.N. Latkin (2004), the law permitted them to buy the inhabited estates, "but without the right of disposal them to the heirs".

The scope of this act was limited, but the purposes were clear if meaning the general direction of policy of Alexander I in a peasant question. It is necessary to recognize that the thought of mitigation or even liquidation of serfdom was one of the main ideas of the monarch since the beginning of reign and it was heard already in his first statements in Secret committee. The monarch "expressed desire that the rights of landowners were regulated by the law; he hoped to approach this purpose in an indirect way, extending the right to own an inhabited land to all classes... with that, however, that the rights of new landowners of not noble origin in relation to their serfs were strictly determined by the law. When thus the category of serfs arises, concerning whom landowners will have only certain rights, then ... it will be possible to restrict the rights of owners-noblemen without big effort". Stating these ideas, the emperor encountered resistance of the committee members, who noted "an impracticality of the project" and warned against half measures "which will lead only to weakening of the landowner power, but won't move the case of release forward".

In that time these ideas of the monarch weren't implemented, and the legislation on this subject was inefficient, though further it had continuation, and the government tried to use it as the base for a peculiar way of peasant release. So, in 1810 the monarch "permitted a top of merchants to buy the inhabited lands from treasury ", having stipulated, however, that it doesn't give "to the buyer any other noble rights". The idea was that in 1810 because of financial problems it was authorized for "eminent merchants of different highest categories", including merchants of the 1st guild, to buy the inhabited lands, which were sold by the treasury, but with a condition, that payment for them was made by internal bonds. At the same time merchants remained in a former state, and it was stipulated that purchase of such estates from individuals was forbidden to them.

Nevertheless, this story did continue. Apparently, the decree on October 18, 1804 was practically not enacted, although Kozodavlev tried to reanimate it, initiating creation of peculiar "Regulations" on the right of not-noblemen to acquire ownership the villages. It was dated by A.V. Predtechensky (1957), according to the context of his work, approximately till September 10, 1810, other words, the project (full text didn't remain) began to be created by O.P. Kozodavlev, most likely after the beginning of his ministry governance, approximately since March, 1810.

Kozodavlev suggested to extend the right of possession the inhabited lands to "eminent citizens, merchants and similar to them members of different classes of the state", that should have made " double benefit to the state ": not only open " a method of achievement the richest appointment by the nowadays lulled equities ", but also, "thanks to increasing number of buyers", to raise "the prices for noble estates". At the same time peasants of the lands bought by not-noblemen, if there is freedom, will be deprived of the right of free movement "by political types" at all, and that is not only tolerant, but also shall remain "for advantage of the state", protecting "general safety", keeping "national silence" and approving "property of everyone in peaceful and serene ownership ". If the estate passes then to the nobleman, peasants will remain in a former free provision, performing only country work, or passing to new owners with special contractual relations for the period no more than 20 years by agreement of the parties. This project, probably, wasn't discussed in Council up to the beginning of Patriotic war of 1812.

But after completion of Napoleonic wars, in connection with a new wave of government transformations, Kozodavlev pushed this project for discussion of Council again. In our opinion, its new option can be dated about 1818 (A.V. Predtechensky (1957) considered that for Council discussion the former project of 1810 was offered). Anyway the same author brought project in Council again. According to the project, the landowners-not-noblemen, who bought the inhabited lands, didn't receive the nobility, nor the personal right to peasants (that remained the privilege of hereditary noblemen). Therefore peasants of such estates were exempted from personal dependence in relation to the owner, who could "use them only for rural works" and shall give in property for every " villager" the land area, which one owned earlier, but for that the peasant shall perform for him three-day bondhold. If the owner didn't want to be engaged in agriculture, but, having yielded his land to peasants, he would wish to use them to work at factories, plants or to receive from them a quitrent, he shall conclude

"voluntary conditions" that were supposed to be for a period of no more than 20 years. Agreements on it were signed by the owner and elective from peasants, they shall be certified by the parson, be approved in district court with the assistance of the district leader of the nobility and written down in serf books. The owner could suit any "institutions" on the bought lands, release peasants personally or on the terms of the law on free ploughmen. Peasants of such estates though must have been under control of the owner, but concerning internal management (collection of taxes, delivery of the recruit, etc.) depended on the solution of a peasant's meeting on the same bases, as the satate-onwed villagers were controlled. If the estate was devolved, or redeemed by former owners or their relatives, or left into other hands, peasants remained free there, and the new owner, even having the noble right, couldn't turn them into serfdom. It is obvious that promotion by the minister of such radical project couldn't take place without discussion with the emperor, whose ideas mouthpiece the author was.

Kozodavlev's project came to Council; at a meeting on December 11, 1818 The Department of laws charged its consideration to the Commission of creation of laws. In its determination it was noted that the project encroaches on one nobility inherent rights of peasants possession, and their welfare "is based more on the mutual advantages connecting the landowner to his peasants, than on laws ... But it is hardly possible to expect improvement of peasants condition, when the right to own villages was granted without distinction to all not-noblemen". Of course, the Commission conveyed a project meaning inexactly, accusing Kozodavlev in the aspiration to extend the noble right to all not-noblemen while he, probably, was hesitated to give this right to merchants only. In any case, these questions in the project weren't considered in details; it was more about the basic decision; at the same time representatives of clergy and other class groups stayed behind scenes.

Passing to consideration of the project, the Commission expressed doubt about whether "it will be useful to extend suddenly a right of villages possession without distinction of all other conditions while in Russia there is a serfdom; though the Minister of Internal Affairs made the distinction between the property right on the estate and property right over the person, but this distinction will nearly be immutable in practice where the law ties the person to the land on which he was born; because owner of the land and time of work of each person ... necessarily has also the great power over the person attributed to the land ". However, the Commission didn't speak against distribution of the noble right under the decree of 1804 to the merchants, who received 8-cool ranks, but also in these cases the Commission suggested to review project provisions, for what it was suggested to establish special committees in provinces, with estates of such landowners-not-noblemen. Those committees must have been consisted of civil governors, vice governors and leaders of the nobility, who must have to charg to put the decree of 1804 in action, conforming local conditions. After receiving from them feedbacks and projects it would be possible to start, in its opinion, to create general provision on the matter. Thus, the Commission rejected Kozodavlev's plan, specified unreality of a number of provisions of the project, believingto be possible to base the relations between owners of land and peasants on the terms of the free agreement during an era of empery of a serfdom.

The conclusion of the Commission was transferred to Department of laws which agreed with its opinion and believed that "the existing legalizations of the right of one's noblemen to ownership of peasants must be leaved in the force and immunity". In this regard it was interesting, in our opinion, that inspite of the fact that the right for personal noblemen was extremely limited at that time by permitting them to own the inhabited estates only during their life, this right was de-facto admitted. Maybe, in this case members of Department didn't go into similar subtleties, opposing expansion of this right to not-noblemen. Besides, the Department proposed to the new Minister of Internal Affairs V. P. Kochubey to constitute rules for ownership of the estate only of that category of not-noblemen, to which it was permitted by the decree of 1804. On October 20, 1819 this opinion got support in General meeting and was approved by the emperor on January 7, 1820.

Thus, the project, suggesting to extend the right of people possession on other categories of the population even in limited version, wasn't entered in life. In the State Council the narrow classes point of view on immunity of the rights inherent to the nobility got the best (perhaps, only for hereditary). The obvious sounding from the minister (and, probably, the emperor) position of the ruling bureaucracy on this issue, as it often happened in the reign of Alexander I, did not lead to success, and when faced with the actual opposition to their plans, the Emperor, as it has happened in similar cases, retreated (Archive of the State Council, AGS, 1874), (The peasant question in Russia, 2005; The peasant question in Russia, 2008; Latkin, 2004; Predtechensky, 1957).

The essence of Kozodavlev views on the solution of a peasant question in the last period of his life can be understood from provisions of his project stored in Own His Imperial Majesty office judging by archive, since 1824. This project – "A reasoning on gradual release of peasants from slavery and on the methods with which it is safely possible to enter between them civil liberty" – isn't dated, but we conditionally determine time of its appearance in 1818th. At the same time we proceed from its content, rather frank and somewhere reminding creation of A. N. Radishchev which works were obviously known by Kozodavlev on prior activities in Academy of Sciences and the Commission on national schools. In the project it was noted that "landlords peasants are the true slaves, who don't have neither property, nor the freedoms, who pay a quitrent and work for the misters or landowners will; they are sold one by one, without lands, as slaves ... and sometimes they are tormented as convicts. Though the laws prohibit selling peasants without land during recruitment, the self-interest escapes this legalization through forgery, and very often peasants and domestic ... are on sale for being recruited without the land ... the word to tell, in Russia happens, to our shame, the bidding by slaves just the same as one what is made in Africa and Asia". From our point of view, from the entire period of Kozodavlev's participation in government (1810-1819) the 1818th was the most suitable time for its creation (year of peak of noble activity in this sphere: more than 10% of draft decisions of a peasant question of Alexander period known to us). It was the year of the monarch order to some dignitaries to create projects of peasant emancipation. Perhaps, among them there was also Kozodavlev, who was famous for his rather moderate, but still the ideas of the peasant question solution. A certain hint for dating the document is the words in it about the revolution, which filled France with the "unprecedented horrors", overthrew "this state in an abyss of disasters". It is obvious, that Kozodavlev, who was

always guided by opinion of the monarch, would hardly decide to do such statements, at least, before completion of wars with Napoleon.

Significantly, for example, the frequency of using in the text of the draft terms "slave" and "slavery": 41 times on 13 pages. It is obvious that Russian conservatives tried to avoid the use of this eloquent terms in relation to the status of serfs in Russia, strongly emphasizing the difference of their position with the ancient slaves, and their opponents, the so-called "liberals", better to say, supporters of emancipation, who themselves were, typically, soul owners, preferred to use these terms in this context with definite emotional part. Basically, they were resented by the extremes of serfdom – selling people without land, sexual violence of peasant women, arbitrary giving away people in recruits, unlimited domestic punishment, reference serfs to hard labor in exile, and the settlement by the will of the landowners. They showed other relation concerning so-called regular serfdom – the agricultural duties which were in custom – the traditional three-day bondhold which is actually authorized by Pavel in the manifest of 1797, other duties, the relation to which, however, was miscellaneous. Some of them extolled a quitrent because in this case the landowner interfered in everyday life of peasants very little (N. I. Turgenev). The others, among who was O. P. Kozodavlev, didn't approve a quitrent, especially cash as far as, in their opinion it brought harm for cultivation, distracting peasants from it by the possibility of rather easy money, especially in the capitals; the similar ideas were stated also by frank Russian conservatives of that time by M. M. Shcherbatov and O. A. Pozdeev. Negative attitude to a quitrent form of exploitation from O. P. Kozodavlev causes a number of questions as he was known as the preacher of own industry and production development, together with M.M. Speransky and N.P. Rumyantsev, he was a supporter of a prohibitive customs tariff. But, it is visible, that in this case his interest both as landowner and as supporter of preserving safety and peace in the country got the best.

Having given the destroying characteristic of serfdom in Russia, the author of the project paid attention that to the fact that in the the majority of European countries serfdom is already cancelled, and he focused attention on that its liquidation only promoted strengthening of the monarchic modes and weakening of the aristocracy (and "feudalism") in these countries. There was a parallel with the similar ideas circulating in the country, at least, since the publication in 1764 by G.F. Miller of article I.G Eisen von Schwarzenberg on the status of serfs in Livonia (Eisen, 1764).

As measures for change the current situation, the author of the project recommended improvement of a property status of possessory peasants by permission serfs to buy not inhabited lands with the landowner's permission (as it was in practice as spoke then, "under a hand"), and the landowner-nobleman couldn't encroach on them. Concerning the measures directed to release serfs, O. P. Kozodavlev insisted on continuation of implementation of the decree of 1803, specifying its outstanding performance (that, of course, wasn't true).

At the same time, the author highlighted the offer to resolve purchase of the inhabited lands to people of not noble origin. Apparently, the talk could be about merchants and, perhaps, about representatives of clergy; in general this last question was about those categories of not-noblemen who could buy villages and also about the rights of personal noblemen in this respect it wasn't analyzed in

detail neither in this document, nor in the project provided for discussion of Council. Peasants of the purchased villages, becoming personally free and performing only the land duties determined by the authorities and the agreement, would pass to a provision, reminding the latest the "obliged peasants" (who appeared after the decree of 1842) and couldn't be returned in serfdom any more, having the right to leave the land and from the new landowner after payment of a fixed amount of the redemption (360 or 500 rubles, as for the recruit). On the same basis, in his opinion, grant of peasants in lease and involvement of free people by landowners on the lands was possible. All this plan excluded application of any violent acts against landowners-noblemen and proceeded from the laws existing in Russia and a number of proposals of the emperor Alexander I of time of action of Secret committee, some of which would be possible to alter for a little. Let's note that all these Kozodavlev's proposals, as it was already told above, weren't realized during his life (A peasant question in Russia, 2005).

Conclusion

Thus, O. P. Kozodavlev acted as a reformer in a number of the ways of domestic policy, including the solution of a peasant question. In our opinion, he, as well as A. H. Benkendorf under Nicholas I, can be considered to be a certain extent "alter ego" of Alexander I, at least, in that part of this monarchs' outlook, which sometimes is characterized as "government liberalism" (better to say as heritage of "the educated absolutism"). Some aspects of O. P. Kozodavlev's activity indicated reformatory intentions of the monarch, at least potential, even if the emperor showed other views. It is difficult to draw more exact conclusions due to the lack of sources in this respect, concerning personal motivation of actions of the minister. Anyway, he can't be considered as a reforms brake that proves to be true both his position and independent activity in promotion of these or those ideas and legal acts, concerning various categories of the peasantry. Discussion of these questions gradually created belief of certain public agents and society in need of active review of the existing relations in the area of a peasant question in Russia.

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