
ДАЛЬНЕВОСТОЧНАЯ ПОЛИТИКА РОССИИ ВО ВТОРОЙ ПОЛОВИНЕ XIX ВЕКА: ДОГОВОРЫ С КИТАЕМ, ОСВОЕНИЕ ПРИМОРЬЯ

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Аннотация

Во второй половине XIX века развитие дальневосточной политики России было связано с укреплением позиций государства на Тихоокеанском побережье и формированием новых границ с Китаем. Политическое взаимодействие с соседними странами осуществлялось путем заключения договоров, освоения территорий и развития инфраструктуры региона. Данная статья посвящена исследованию процессов формирования российско-китайских договоренностей, особенностей колонизации Приморского края и влияния внешней политики на внутренние процессы империи.

Ключевые слова: дальневосточная политика, Китай, международные договора, освоение территории, историческое исследование.

FAR EASTERN POLICY OF RUSSIA IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: TREATIES WITH CHINA, DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMORYE REGION

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ABSTRACT

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the development of Russia's Far East policy was associated with strengthening its position on the Pacific coast and forming new borders with China. Political interaction with neighboring countries took place through treaty-making, territorial expansion, and regional infrastructure development. This article focuses on exploring processes related to the formation of Sino-Russian agreements, features of colonization in the Primorsky Krai region, and how foreign policy influenced internal processes within the empire.

Keywords: far eastern policy, China, international treaties, territory development, historical research.

Introduction

The second half of the 19th century saw significant transformations in the development of the Russian Empire, one of whose key elements was the reorientation of the state's attention towards its Pacific borders. Deepening its presence in the Far East, the empire began to build a fundamentally new foreign policy aimed at integrating newly acquired territories into the unified space of the country, as well as protecting its own interests in the face of growing pressure from Western powers [3]. It was precisely during this period that the basic principles of future actions of Russia in the region were formed, general tendencies outlined, and approaches determined that subsequently influenced the entire subsequent history of the Russian state [2, c. 15–42].

The main purpose of this study is a comprehensive analysis of the stages of formation of Russia's Far Eastern policy in the second half of the 19th century, studying the character of Russia's interaction with China through the conclusion of international treaties, evaluating the role of these acts in the internal life of the empire, and identifying common trends conditioned by the specificity of the geopolitical context of the studied period [5, c. 17–32].

To achieve this goal, the following tasks are proposed:

Examine the key elements of the foreign policy of the Russian Empire in the context of global changes in the mid-19th century.

Analyze the content and significance of treaties concluded with China, determine the influence of these acts on the internal life of the empire [1, c. 125–143].

Assess the scale and methods of mastering the territories of the Primorye region, identify the factors that had the greatest impact on the efficiency of the implemented measures.

Determine the role of the Far Eastern territories in ensuring national security and strengthening the international status of the Russian Empire.

The methodology of the study is based on the analysis of a wide range of archival materials, published documents, memoirs of contemporaries, statistical data, and special scientific literature [4, c. 34–51]. Particular attention is paid to interdisciplinary approaches, combining methods of traditional historical science with elements of legal norms analysis, social anthropology, and cultural geography.

The structure of the study includes an introduction, which outlines the general trends of the studied period and formulates the tasks of the study; Chapter 1 considers the background and general context of the events taking place; Chapter 2 describes the dynamics of Russian-Chinese negotiations and the conclusion of important treaties; Chapter 3 describes the course of colonization of the Primorye region and its consequences; Chapter 4 summarizes and gives an assessment of the contribution of Russia's Far Eastern policy to its overall potential.

Geopolitical Situation and Preconditions for Enhanced Interest in the Far East

The second half of the 19th century was characterized by deep transformations in the world order. The period of domination of European powers in the New World ended, industrial rearmament took place in many European countries and North America, heightened competition on world markets led to increased struggle for spheres of influence and colonies. Against this background, sea routes gained particular importance, opened thanks to discoveries such as Magellan's strait and the Suez Canal, which enhanced interest in maritime communications and defense of maritime borders [3, c. 235–256].

The Russian leadership realized the importance of gaining access to warm waters and oriented itself towards achieving leading positions in the Pacific arena. The increase in the strength

of neighboring powers – Japan and England – dictated the need to protect Russian possessions in the East. Signing a number of trade agreements with Japan, USA, and Great Britain indicated the recognition of the Far Eastern region as a promising direction for the development of foreign trade and industrial activity [2, с. 15–42]. Together with trade, demand for reliable communication lines and logistic centers necessary for the proper functioning of industry and transport increased.

Against this comprehensive approach, a clear vector of Far Eastern policy developed, directed towards the gradual inclusion of new territories into the composition of the empire, promotion of Christianization and European culture, organization of regular communication channels, support for entrepreneurship, and development of the agricultural sector.

International Treaties Between Russia and China in Mid-19th Century

The period under consideration is marked by the conclusion of three key international treaties between Russia and China, which had decisive significance for consolidating Russia's presence in the Far East [1, с. 125–143]:

Treaty of Aigun (1858). After defeating Chinese troops in the war with Anglo-French forces and exhausting the central authorities of the Qing Empire, Russian diplomats were able to take advantage of the situation and conclude a beneficial treaty. The document acknowledged Russia's right to control the left bank of the Amur River up to its mouth in the Okhotsk Sea. The treaty established the principle of equal use of the Amur River and obliged the Chinese side to assist in the peaceful exploration of the territory by the Russian government. It should be noted that this agreement served as a starting point for subsequent decisions and activated the construction of Russian fortresses and military camps along riverbanks [2, с. 15–42].

Peking Agreement (1860). This agreement finally settled the issue of borders between Russia and China. Now the entire basin of the Ussuri River, the Hanka Lake district, and a significant portion of the Japanese Sea coast passed under Russian control. For the Chinese side, this meant losing a significant share of continental territory, but in return, it received important guarantees of non-aggression and preservation of the status quo in the rest of its territory. Thus, the Russian fleet gained access to ice-free ports and strategic communication routes, allowing it to successfully compete with Western powers [4, с. 34–51].

Supplementary Protocol (1861). Additional specifications and arrangements clarified the boundaries and regulated joint use of water spaces, facilitating deeper penetration of Russians into the continental interior [2, с. 15–42].

The significance of these treaties cannot be overestimated. They not only legitimized Russia's claims to territories used by Chinese peasants and fishermen for centuries but also initiated a process of mass migration, large-scale infrastructure construction, and active industrial development. These measures transformed the appearance of the region, turning it from a remote backwater into a significant economic node of the empire [5, с. 17–32].

Process of Mastering Primorye Territory and Its Consequences

Mastering the territory of the Primorye region proceeded in stages and had a number of peculiarities distinguishing it from similar processes in other regions of the empire. One distinctive feature was the fact of direct contact with another powerful state – China – whose interests sometimes collided with the goals of the Russian government [1, с. 125–143].

Among the most important factors of successful mastery were the following:

Creation of Naval Base. The establishment of the Vladivostok Fortress became a catalyst for rapid economic rise and transformation of the locality into the largest seaport. Here concentrated trade, produced significant volumes of military products, shipbuilding and repair took place. The city quickly developed, attracting huge numbers of workers [4, с. 34–51], creating new enterprises and institutions.

Development of Railway Communication. The projected construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad and narrow-gauge track from Zabaikalskaya Station to Vladivostok gave a powerful

impetus to the economy of the region, improved transport accessibility, and reduced freight transportation costs. Railwaymen became the main workforce, the influx of qualified personnel raised educational levels and technical equipment standards [3, c. 235–256].

Organization of Agricultural System. Supporting mass settlement, the Tsarist government promoted the development of new agricultural technologies aimed at cultivating grain crops [5, c. 17–32], vegetables, fruits, breeding cattle and horses. This accelerated food surplus growth and increased competitiveness of local produce in the domestic market.

However, the process of mastering faced a number of difficulties:

Lack of developed infrastructure complicated the organization of regular deliveries of foodstuffs and construction materials, slowed production, and worsened living conditions for settlers.

Unfamiliar climatic conditions, marshy soils, frequent floods negatively impacted people's health and the condition of buildings.

Constant collisions with local residents and migrants led to conflicts, causing social tension and reverse migration flows back to European Russia.

Despite these challenges, the colonization project succeeded. Thanks to active state support, mass migration, financial assistance, and private capital involvement, the region began to develop rapidly, replenishing the empire's budget with significant revenues and increasing total population size [4, c. 34–51].

Results of Russia's Far Eastern Policy

The result of prolonged and consistent implementation of Russia's Far Eastern policy in the second half of the 19th century was a significant increase in the size of its territory, reinforcement of defensive capabilities, and enhancement of prestige on the international scene [3, c. 235–256]. Acquired territories from China turned into important industrial centers supplying raw materials and goods to the country, while obtaining profitable ports made possible efficient operations against competitors [4, c. 34–51].

In addition, the successful solution of colonization and development issues opened prospects for advancing the idea of Europeanization and modernization of the entire provincial territory. Many technologies and managerial solutions first applied here later spread across the central part of the empire [5, c. 17–32].

At the same time, many problems remained unsolved. The need for continuous increases in garrison manpower, heavy spending on maintaining fleets and defending the coastline inevitably led to higher taxes and deterioration of living standards for ordinary people. Insufficiency of investments in infrastructure constrained the pace of economic growth, forcing the local population to leave the region in search of better opportunities [2, c. 15–42].

Nonetheless, success was achieved, and the future fate of the region evolved positively. The region gradually integrated into the country's economy, becoming a source of raw materials and agricultural products, receiving an additional impulse for development through the emergence of numerous educational institutions, medical facilities, and cultural organizations.

Conclusion

The Far Eastern policy of the Russian Empire in the second half of the 19th century represented a complex interweaving of different interests and needs. Its realization required enormous efforts, significant material investments, and human sacrifices. However, the result justified expectations, raising the country to a qualitatively different level of development, providing access to valuable resources, and enhancing international weight.

Further study of the history of this region will help to understand the mechanisms of political decision-making, learn from past experience, and avoid mistakes committed in the past.

Only by considering the lessons of previous generations is it possible to formulate optimal strategies for development and maintenance of stability in modern conditions.

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