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Economic Data in the Surveyors' Field Notes on the Crimean Economy at the Turn of the 19th Century

Abstract

The article is devoted to the identification and analysis of the source documents used by land surveyors to compile Economic Notes to the General Land Survey plans. The landmarking on the Crimean Peninsula began in the late 18th century, but by the early 19th century it was judged premature and suspended until development of special rules taking into account the peculiarities of land use in the region. And yet the field notes of land surveyors on the Crimean Peninsula of the turn of the 19th century preserve primary economic information to a greater extent than those on other territories of the Russian Empire. This information is presented in the

“Skazki to the Economic Land Survey,” data collected from the local population. Skazki (“tales”) containing initial data for Economic Land Survey remain a poorly studied and rarely encountered source. Their identification in these field notes makes it possible to verify the accuracy of the Economic Land Survey and to restore the information excluded from the Brief Economic Notes and descriptions of specific lands in the lost Full and Cameral Economic Notes. The discovered “Skazki to the Economic Notes” on the Tauride gubernia are a unique source that makes it possible to assess the economy of Crimea at the turn of 19th century. They characterize natural environment, economic activities on the peninsula and occupations of its population, provide information on the soil conditions, available water resources, common species of trees, animals, birds, and fish. In their structure, they coincide with the skazki compiled in other regions of Russia, but have characteristic features that are associated with the identity of the Crimea and its economic condition in the late 18th century. The process of the Crimea development made its own adjustments to the land survey documentation. Unlike other regions, here the authors of the skazki were not only landowners’ attorneys, but also land owners themselves — local beys and murzes. The introduction of the skazki into scientific use opens opportunities for comparing their data with the preserved texts of the Economic Notes and for studying the history of the region at the micro level of individual settlements.

Keywords

Historical source, General Land Survey, Economic notes, Tauride gubernia, development of territory, Crimean Peninsula, field notes, land use.

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