

## Artículo de investigación

**Comparative analysis of migration policy in Russia under the reigns of Catherine II and Alexander III****СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ МИГРАЦИОННОЙ ПОЛИТИКИ РОССИЙСКОЙ ИМПЕРИИ ПРИ ЕКАТЕРИНЕ II И АЛЕКСАНДРЕ III**

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**Abstract**

This article is devoted to the social and political development of the Russian Empire under Catherine II and Alexander III. The issue of migration policy and its relationship with the economic, demographic and social indicators of the country was the purpose of this comparative study. The authors also analyze the challenges of socialization and education of human resources during the analyzed historical periods. The achievement of the main goal of the research was accompanied by a number of difficulties associated with gaps in statistical data. It was especially true for the reign of Catherine II, when the process of systematization of state documentation was in stage of formation. In these regards, the systematic work of various researchers using the retrospective method and the method of comparative analysis formed the methodological basis of the article. Despite certain restrictions related to the size of the article and the number of data used for research, it was possible to achieve the goal and reflect the main aspects of the policies of both sovereigns. As the result of the given research it was revealed that the effective migration policy of Catherine II led to the growth of the economy by attracting human resources to strategically important regions of the country. It allowed increasing development indicators, primarily in the field of agriculture and industry. The migration policy of Alexander III was more restrained and was one of the factors influencing the economy. The authors conclude that reigns of both Catherine II and Alexander III

**Аннотация**

Статья посвящена анализу социального и политического развития Российской империи при правлении Екатерины II и Александра III. Целью исследования был анализ влияния миграционной политики в рассматриваемые исторические периоды на экономические, демографические и социальные индикаторы параметры страны. Авторы также анализируют проблемы развития человеческого капитала в рассматриваемые исторические периоды. В процессе исследования авторы столкнулись с дефицитом доступных статистических данных (особенно по ситуации в XVIII в., когда только формировалась система государственной статистики Российской империи), преодолеть который позволило использование историко-ретроспективного подхода и сравнительного анализа данных разных исследователей. Предпринятое исследование показывает, что эффективная миграционная политика при императрице Екатерине II привела к значительному экономическому росту за счет привлечения человеческих ресурсов в стратегически важные регионы страны. В свою очередь миграционная политика Александра III оказалась более ограниченной и являлась одним из факторов, оказывающих влияние на экономику. Авторы приходят к выводу о том, что периоды правления и Екатерины II и Александра III сопровождалась высокими темпами экономического роста во многом за счет проводимой миграционной политики.

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were accompanied by rapid growth of the country's economy due to the migration policies.

**Key Words:** Russian Empire, Catherine II, Alexander III, migration policy, political economy, socialization.

## Introduction

Although the reign of Catherine II (1762-1796) was more than twice as long as the reign of Alexander III (1881-1894), it was difficult to overestimate the merits of both of them before the Fatherland. The same holds true for the results, which are reflected in economic performance. Perhaps in the period of the XVIII - XIX centuries they were representatives of the dynasty who made the most significant contribution to the strengthening of the Russian state. Despite differences in strategic priorities, the periods of reigns of both sovereigns were accompanied by the dynamic development of the country.

It is worth noting that both the empress and the emperor came to power in the times of crisis. The first one came to the throne in a coup, and the second one took the lead after the assassination of his father Alexander II. The Russian Empire demanded significant reforms in both cases.

In the first case, it was possible to use specially created commissions to study current problems and develop an action program (De Madariaga, 2002). In the second case, the composition of the liberal Government had to be changed to those who supported the foundations of autocracy (Vorobyova, Rybakovsky, Rybakovsky, 2016). The result was a significant number of reforms that had a positive impact on the development of the country. First of all, they covered the sphere of economy and state structure. At the same time, migration policy played a significant role, especially in the times of Catherine II. Under her reign, it was largely based on attracting foreign colonists to develop new lands, and under Alexander III it was conducted with the emphasis on the local population (Vorobyova, Rybakovsky, Rybakovsky, 2016). At the same time, in the case of foreign settlers, under Catherine, pockets of new cultures and religions appeared, and under Alexander, an active policy of russification of the borderlands and the strengthening of the role of Orthodoxy in society were carried out (Zayonchkovsky, 1970). However, both approaches were fruitful. It can be seen from the comparative data presented below.

**Ключевые слова:** Российская империя, Екатерина II, Александр III, миграционная политика, политэкономия, социализация.

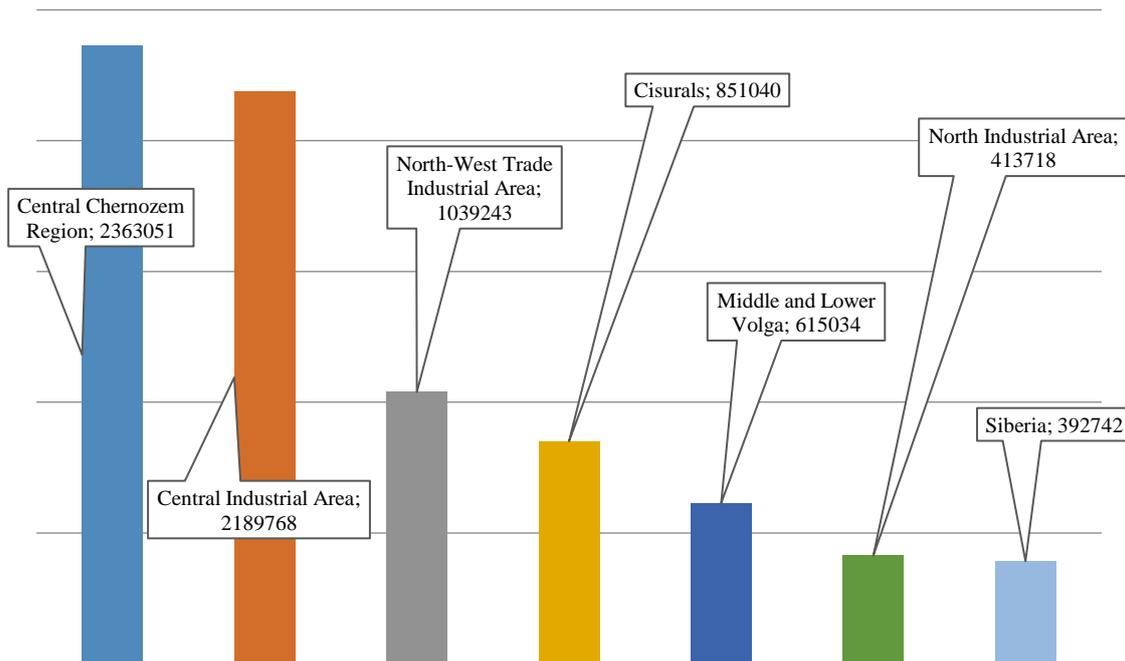
## Methodology

In preparing the article, the authors used historical-retrospective approach, statistical and comparative analysis of a wide range of sources and documents, including archival ones. Econometric methods were used to assess the effectiveness of migration policies under the reigns of Catherine II and Alexander III. The authors widely used the provisions and terminology of the theory of human capital.

## Results and discussion

The migration policy, which is a purposeful stimulation of voluntary resettlement of population groups by the state from one territory to another, is carried out through special administrative and economic measures (Ivanova, 2017). This mechanism was involved both during the reigns of Catherine II and Alexander III. However, it had different focus. In the first case, it was necessary to settle new territories for the expansion of arable land and the development of agriculture (Vorobyova, Rybakovsky, Rybakovsky, 2016). In the second case, it was necessary, first of all, to strengthen the Russian presence on the outskirts in order to ensure the security of the borders, especially in the Far East (Rybakovsky, 1990). And only in the second turn it was necessary to develop the economic direction: mainly it concerned the development of Siberia. The difference in these approaches was due to different management strategies. While Catherine II actively joined the new lands, including through participation in wars, Alexander III advocated the peaceful development of the country, but the constant increase in the country's defense.

Regarding the issue of immigrants, Catherine II was forced to attract foreign colonists due to insufficient migration potential within the country, as well as the number of people distributed unevenly depending on climatic conditions and the availability of infrastructure (Vorobyova, Rybakovsky, Rybakovsky, 2016). The Fig. 1 below can illustrate this situation.



**Fig. 1.** Population of main regions of the Russian Empire in 1762 (De Madariaga, 2002).

Under Alexander III, the problem of low migration potential persisted (Russia / Population / Population Statistics, 1890-1907), but the natural increase in population allowed solving the issue of marginal settlement to a lesser extent with the help of foreigners. Thus, if in 1762 the population of the Russian Empire was about 19 million people, in 1858 before the reign of Alexander III it was about 74 million people (Russia / Population / Population Statistics, 1890-1907). Since more or less accurate data were obtained only during the first general census of the population in 1897, in other periods, researchers calculated data on the number. Some believe that during the emperor's accession to the throne in 1881 in 50 provinces of the Russian Empire the average annual population was about 75 million people (Rashin, 1956). In other words, His Majesty's subjects could cover the needs of the state for resettlement.

Returning to the reign of Catherine II, it should be noted that it was she who gave impetus to the development of migration policy through such documents as the 1762 Manifesto 'On the free settlement of foreigners in Russia', the 1763 Manifesto 'On permission for all foreigners to come to Russia, in which they wish to settle in the provinces, and on the rights granted to them', the nominal decree of 1763 on the establishment of the Office of Foreign Trusteeship (this body dealt with the affairs of immigrants). These

documents provided for a number of progressive measures for that time to stimulate the relocation of foreigners, which, despite some difficulties in practice, were successfully applied.

In addition to foreign nationals, fugitives and schismatics were brought into the country, and provided with temporary housing benefits, land acquisition, transportation, and taxes. Along with it there was internal migration of peasants to the southern provinces and the Caucasus. Migrants also received various tax breaks and payments for travel and accommodation.

The internal policy of Alexander III was carried out within the framework of the 'Manifesto on the inviolability of autocracy' (Government Paper, 1881) of 1881. Its consequence was the concept of counter-reforms, aimed at correcting the liberal policy of Alexander II, who abolished serfdom, and its negative effect (Vorobyova, Rybakovsky, Rybakovsky, 2016). As a result, other priorities were present in the field of migration policy than during the reign of Catherine II. Accordingly, among the documents relating to stimulating the movement of the population, it is possible to mention the Provision of 1881 'On the establishment of temporary rules on the resettlement of peasants to free state lands' and the Decree on the start of construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway from 1891.

It is worth paying attention to the fact that, despite the adoption of the Provision ‘On the establishment of temporary rules on the resettlement of peasants to free state lands’, this document did not achieve the desired results. The factors that constrained the resettlement were insufficient loan assistance and the speed of land acquisition. In 1889, an attempt was made to solve this problem with the help of a new law on resettlement, but it was fragmented and did not work. These measures were in conflict with counter-reforms, which were aimed at limiting the social mobility of the population, setting every class a rigid framework and taking the lower classes under strict control by the authorities.

Thus, investment projects were chosen as a tool to stimulate resettlement. One of them was the

project of the Siberian railway with a length of about 7 thousand kilometers, which was supposed to connect the Far East with St. Petersburg and Moscow. After signing the relevant Decree in 1893, the Committee was approved, which was supposed to regulate resettlement. It was personally supervised by the Sovereign Emperor. Stimulation of migration flows was made through payments from a special 14-million fund of ‘subsidiary enterprises on the Siberian Road’ (Rybakovsky, 1990) and the Alexander’ fund, formed on private donations.

Among the measures applied by Catherine II and Alexander III to stimulate resettlement, it is possible to identify those that are displayed in the Table 1.

**Table 1.** Measures to stimulate resettlement by Catherine II and Alexander III (compiled by the authors).

| Measures | Types                                   | Catherine II for foreigners  | Alexander III for local people   |
|----------|---|--|--|
| Economic | Cash payments                           | For travel, food, material assistance, interest-free loans for the arrangements  | Allowances, loans for travel, arrangements, housing construction, seed material, agricultural tools, animals, construction of parochial schools                                    |
|          | Payments in natural form free of charge | Apartments in trip, lands for the construction of industrial facilities and infrastructure   | Timber for homestead buildings   |
|          | Privileges                              | Exemption from import duties of personal property, grace period for tax payment of taxes, preferential taxation for industrialists | Exemption from state obligations for 5 years while maintaining public ones, in the cities exemption from duties and obligations for 10 years, special benefits for military people |
| Legal    | Securing the status                     | Obtaining rights to benefits by law  | -  |
|          | Rights                                  | Freedom of religion, exemption from state and military service, the right to defend interests in court                             | -  |

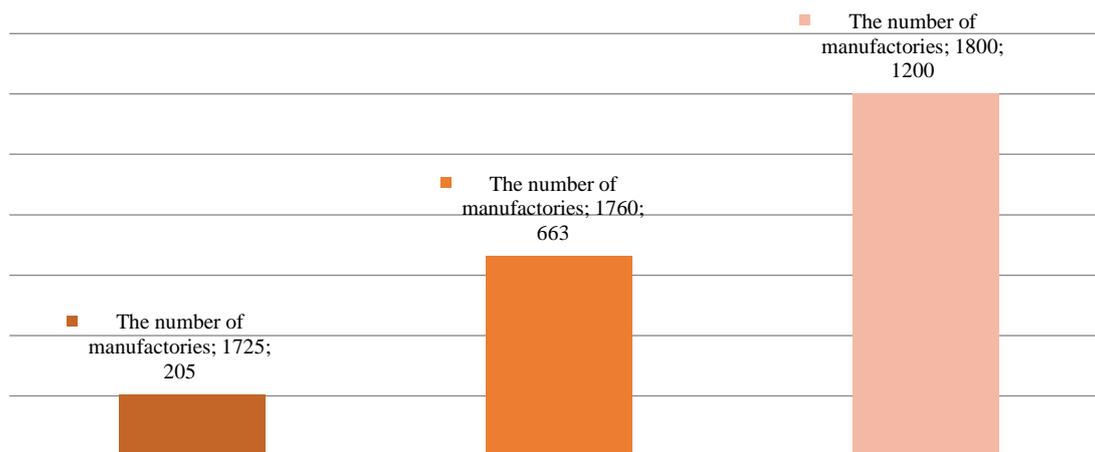
It is worth noting that under Alexander III such a problem as overpopulation in the central and southern provinces due to natural growth arose. Its consequence was the shortage of lands. The solution was to encourage resettlement from densely populated regions to the Far East and Siberia. However, along with the local

population, residents of bordering countries (China, Korea and Japan) also claimed these lands. In these regards, there was a heated discussion of the Government of the Russian Empire and regional authorities according to the influx of citizens of these countries. Questions of potential threat to the economy and security of

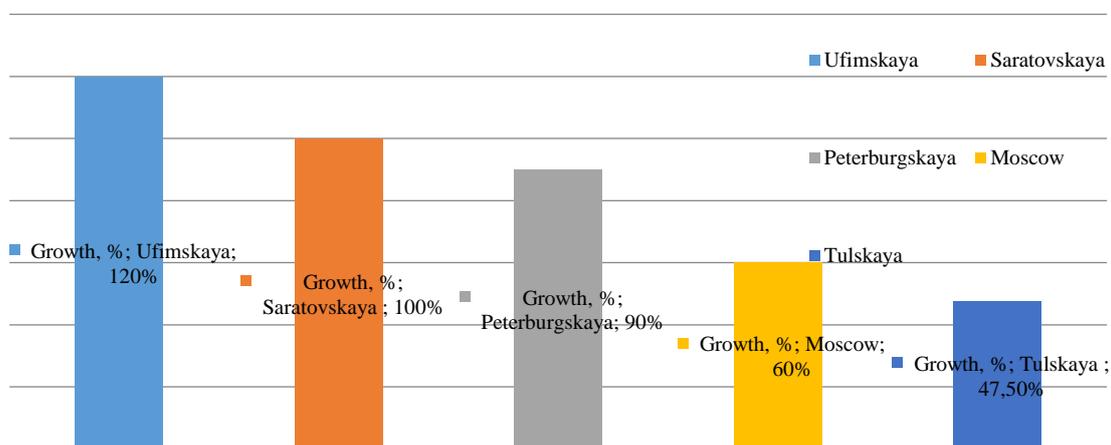
Russia and meeting the economic interests of the country by migration flows were discussed. At the same time, the main contradictions arose between various departments regarding the issues of stay and residence of foreigners (Vorobyova, Rybakovsky, Rybakovsky, 2016).

Thus, the migration policy of Catherine II was associated exclusively with the development of the economy, while under Alexander III it was also aimed at solving problems of a military-strategic nature.

Under Catherine II migration policy became one of the components of performance in the field of economics. Thus, despite the preservation of the budget deficit in the period from 1762 to 1796, the total income in the Russian Empire grew more than four times, from 17,235,000 rubles to 73,970,000 rubles (De Madariaga, 2002). This result was based mainly on growth of manufacturing and cultivated lands with rapid development of agriculture (see Figures 2-3).



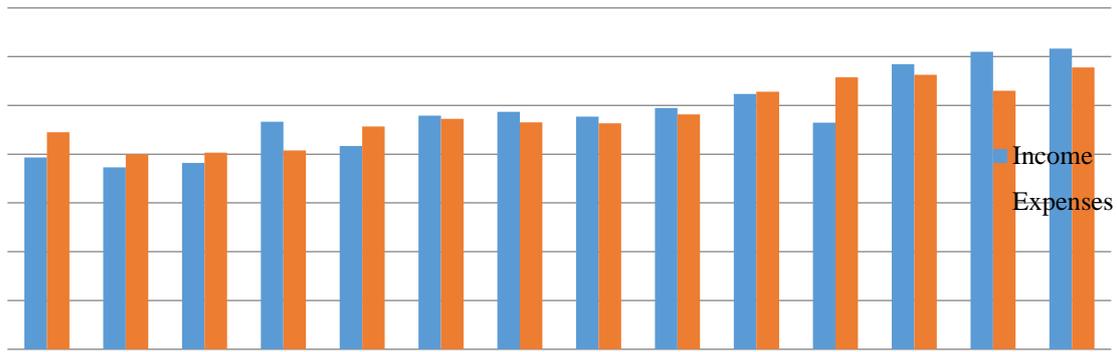
**Fig. 2.** Manufacturing growth in the XVIII century, quantity of facilities (Nikolaeva, Chernaya, 2006).



**Fig. 3.** Growth of cultivated land in some regions of Russian Empire in the period of 1786-1796 (De Madariaga, 2002).

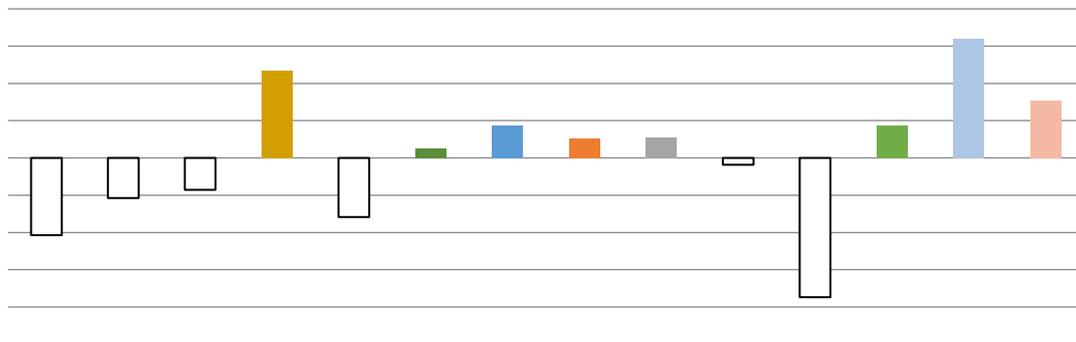
As to the reign of Alexander III, income from 1881 to 1894 increased more than 1.5 times from 786,145,000 rubles to 1,232,715,000 rubles

(Anniversary Compendium, 2013). The dynamics of growth of income and expenses can be seen in the Figure 4.



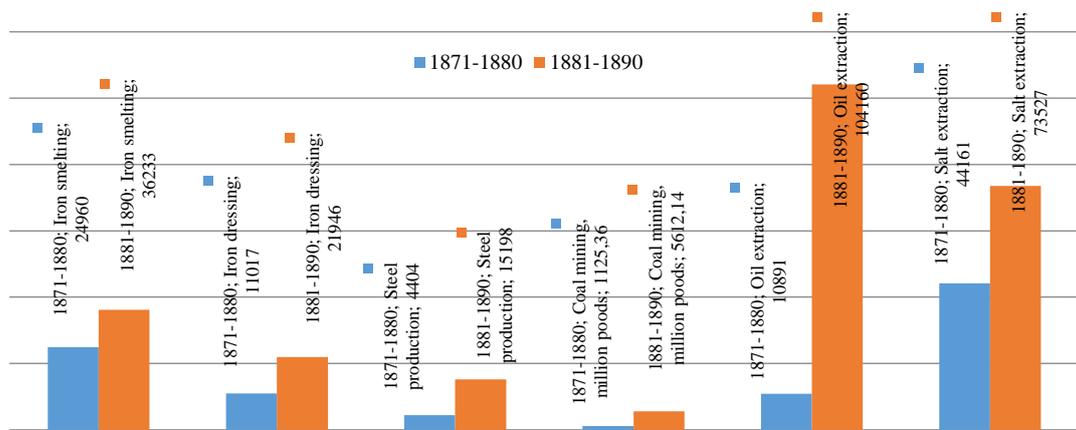
**Fig. 4.** Dynamics of income and expenses in the Russian Empire in 1881-1894 (Moscow State University, 2013).

At the same time, it became possible to stabilize the financial system, although in a number of periods there was a budget deficit (see Figure 5).



**Fig. 5.** The difference between income and expenses in the Russian Empire in 1881-1894 (Moscow State University, 2013).

Main factor of rapid development of the Russian Empire was the growth of industrial production the results of which can be seen on the Figure 6.



**Fig. 6.** Industrial Production Growth in the Russian Empire 1871-1880 and 1881-1890, thousand poods (Russia: Encyclopedic Dictionary, 1991).

Analysis of the objectives in the field of economics, and the results achieved during the reigns of both emperors demonstrates the following. Catherine II was primarily focused on economic growth through the development of agriculture by attracting foreign colonists. She managed to achieve not only this goal, but also growth due to the joining of new lands, increase of cultivated lands in general survey, the emergence of new industries, growth of manufactures and active development of exports, especially grain.

In the area of economy, Alexander III had more extensive objectives and covered such areas as: stabilizing the financial system after high expenses on active foreign policy of Alexander II, army refit, conducting of redemption operation and intensive railway construction of the 1860–1870s; modernization of the tax system; making life easier for the poor; transition from free trade to protectionism.

These objectives were solved in stages (Kornilov, 2018):

- The budget managed to be balanced by increase in budget discipline, restricting the issuance of government bonds and reducing their profitability, the abolition of private concessions for the operation of railways, and the construction of railways became implemented by the state.
- The main result of the tax reform was the gradual abolition of head tax from 1883 to 1887. However, parallel to it, indirect taxes were introduced (taxes on inheritance and gift, flat tax, taxes on commercial and industrial enterprises, on income from capital, various excise taxes).
- Steps to improve the social standards of the poor were expressed in the adoption of the law on the compulsory redemption of the plots of temporarily obliged peasants from 1881, and in 1882 the redemption payments were reduced. In 1883 the Peasant Land Bank was created to facilitate the acquisition of the lands of the ruined landowners by the peasants. Factory legislation was formed which included the norms of restricting child and female labor (1882 and 1885). The ‘Rules on the mutual relations of manufacturers and workers’ (1886) were adopted. They put the actions of employers under the control of factory inspection.
- The transition to protectionism allowed protecting domestic producers through high import duties on products of foreign production. The development of foreign trade was based on the promotion of grain exports, including through the optimization of railway tariffs.

These measures led to the rapid growth of industry, which included an increase in the smelting of iron and steel, the extraction of oil and coal, and doubling expansion of the rail network. These successes were achieved due to the competent actions of the Ministers of Finance N.H. Bunge (1881–1886), I. Vyshnegradsky (1887–1892) and S.Y. Vitte (since 1892).

However, during the reign of Alexander III there were also negative moments, for example, the famine of 1891-1892. Its reasons were, on the one hand, the end of the development of agricultural land, the reduction of landed estates and the lack of opportunities for additional earnings from the peasants; on the other hand, there were obligations of Russia under foreign economic grain contracts. Generally, the development of agriculture was hampered by the growth of the population and its use in industry. A focused state program of agricultural development did not exist.

### Conclusions

Thus, the reigns of Catherine II and Alexander III were accompanied by rapid growth of the country's economy. The Empress managed to develop commerce and entrepreneurship, create banking system, thereby increasing the role of commodity-money relations, and intensifying foreign and domestic trade. All these measures helped not only to achieve the goals set, but also to create the prerequisites for the development of capitalism. During the reign of Alexander III, the state was an active initiator in promoting the idea of capitalism through the support of industry and the preference for foreign capital. Though, the political system was an autocracy. At the same time, these successes occurred to the detriment of the development of agriculture, which was one of the reasons for the famine of 1891-1892. Along with it protest sentiments continued to accumulate, despite ongoing efforts to combat them. As a result, under Alexander III, along with significant economic success, public discontent with the ongoing reforms continued to develop. Comparison of measures in the field of migration policy indicates that the reign of Catherine II was

more fruitful: she managed to use it as the main engine of economic growth.

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