

THE CRIMEA WITHIN UKRAINE: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE 50'S-70'S OF THE XX CENTURY

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INTRODUCTION

Today the relevance of the research topic is beyond any doubt. Since, without any exaggeration, a thousand-year-old history of their coexistence, the historical destiny of Ukraine and the Crimea has been too closely intertwined. Significant content of history of both Ukraine and the Crimea has been embraced due to their common and instructive development. This equally concerns the period of the 50's and 70's of the last century. Like it was during that time, today the issue of the Crimea is of the utmost importance, given the current situation on the peninsula. The current ethnic-political situation in the region is historically closely connected to a criminal deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other peoples and national groups more than 70 years ago, continuous struggle of the indigenous Crimean Tatar people for their return to their homeland, as well as further forming of appropriate socio-political and socio-economic conditions. Among them last but not least – to solve the issue of the Crimean Tatar autonomy in the Crimea.

A proper solution of these and other important problems was interrupted by the treacherous aggression of Russia against Ukraine, the annexation of the Crimea and the war in Donbass. The latter, along with an insidious propaganda, are explicit elements of the current Russia's aggressive policy and criminal deeds of its President Putin. The Crimea has been declared “originally Russian land” with a “sacral” significance for Russia. The situation was also escalated by the hazardous, crisis condition of our state, permanently facing a threat of Russia's larger-scale war against Ukraine, as well as the risk of a war in Europe or even the new world war. The situation on the peninsula itself stays also very complicated: ethnic-political cleansing campaigns against the Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainians, unveiled brutal extermination of the Ukrainian language and Ukrainianness as a whole, persecution of the Ukrainian

Orthodox Church both in the Crimea and in the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk people republics.

The realities in the Crimea nowadays actualize again the task to analyze circumstances of the 50's–70's of the XX century, as well as to comprehend the reasons why the administrative handover of the Crimean region from the Russian Soviet Federative Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic took place, what a socio-political situation at that time was, and how the indigenous Crimean Tatar people struggled for returning to their native land.

1. Integration of the Crimean region into the Ukrainian SSR

Ethnic-political and social processes among the Crimean Tatar people nowadays have some historical and political roots. The first among them is a political decision, taken by the former Soviet and Communist party leadership to hand over the Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR. The decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to hand over the Crimea Region (Oblast) from the Russian SFSR to the Ukrainian SSR in 1954 had, of course, a great historical impact not only on the Crimean Tatars, Crimean Karaites, Krymchaks, German, Bulgarian, Ukrainian, Russian and other ethnic groups living on its territory, but on the entire Ukrainian society.

In order to understand the contemporary ethno-political processes in the Crimea, it is necessary to determine what political, social and socio-economic processes preceded the decision made by the highest leadership of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR authorities. The legal norms of the handover of the Crimea to Ukraine should be named and analyzed in detail. Consideration of these norms, which totally corresponded not only to the legislation of the USSR of that time, but also to the norms of international law, is very essential within today's ethno-political situation on the peninsula and on the background of Kremlin's attempts to justify the "legitimacy" of the annexation of the Crimea and its "entry" into the Russian Federation.

The origins of the current ethno-political processes in the Crimea are largely associated with the tragic events that occurred in May-June of 1944, when Tatars, Greeks, Bulgarians and Armenians, in a result of the absurd accusations of treason, were deported from the Crimean peninsula. 45 384 Tartar families (194 303 people) were deported to the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan, namely: 3 088 from the Dzhankoy area,

5 264 from the Yevpatoriya area (22 638), the Kerch peninsula – 2 415 (11 218), Sevastopol area (including Bakhchisaray district) – 12 242 (51 273), Simferopol – 400 (10 905), Simferopol district – 5 308 (23 889), Feodosiya area – 5 319 (25 050), Yalta area – 7 020 (26 683)¹.

The tragedy of the Crimean Tatar people and other deported ethnic groups can never be justified by anyone. A total deportation of the whole people from its historical homeland was a crime against humanity, a complete neglect of the basic human rights. After all, the Tatars, like all peoples, were fighting against Nazi Germany in a regular army at fronts, in partisan units, in an anti-fascist underground, many of them marked by high government awards. For example, a native of Alupka city, Ametkhan Sultan has been twice awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, Detislam Abilov has become a Full Cavalier of the Order of Glory. The heroes of the Soviet Union were: A. Reshydov, S. Seitleviyev, A. Teifuk. The number of awardees among the Crimean Tatars was the highest in relation to the population.²

After the forced eviction of the Tatars, the Greeks, the Bulgarians and representatives of other ethnic groups, the Crimean peninsula became empty. The local economy has collapsed. The deserted land of the peninsula started to be recruited by the Russians. However, the resurgence of life, in the countryside especially, went very slowly. O. Adzhubey, in his memoirs about a trip to the steppe zone of the Crimea with M. Khrushchov in the autumn of 1953, provides information, which is rather interesting from a scientific point of view. It sheds light on some aspects of this problem³. In particular, Adzhubey's memoirs confirm that Khrushchov knew about the current situation in the Crimea and it is just for this reason he requested the party leaders of the Ukrainian SSR for their assistance with the region's recovery. Therefore the claims that Khrushchov "decided to hand over the Crimea to Ukraine because of "the tercentenary of reunification" or "under pressure from the Ukrainians among the tops of the Communist Party of Soviet Union", as has been stated by the Deputy Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs of the Supreme Council of Russian Federation at that time, has no reason behind⁴.

¹ V. Chumak, *Ukraine and the Crimea: Common Historical Destiny: Monograph* / V.Chumak, 2nd edition, amended and supplemented – Kyiv: VPTSAMU. 2013, p. 65.

² V. Chumak *The above mentioned labor*, p. 178.

³ A. Adzhubey "How Khrushchov Gave the Crimea to Ukraine. Memoirs on the given subject" // *Novoe vremia*. – 1992. – №6. – P. 23-24.

⁴ E. Ambartsumov *Peninsula of Discord* // *Novoye vremya*. – 1992. – № 6. – P. 18-19.

These and other myths about the handover of the Crimea to Ukraine, being still willingly uttered by various Russian politicians of versatile political spectrum, are massively distributed in the mass media. The only difference – some of them do that due to their total ignorance of the issue, not at all bothering themselves to search for a truth, the others who know – just distort and falsify facts deliberately for certain reasons.

Let us have a look at what was happening in the time associated with the handover of the Crimean region to Ukrainian SSR. An important question which is surely worth to be answered is what role M. Khrushchov played in this extremely subtle and delicate matter? The fact is, that Khrushchov was elected First Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU in September 1953 after Beria's exposure. At that time his situation was very complex and uncertain, so stirring of such a "slippery" and difficult issue was quite dangerous.

Proceeding from this, a question arises – what exactly did force the government to solve the Crimean problem in this very way? As highlighted in fundamental scientific works, despite different historical aspects the Crimea since ancient times was closely connected with Ukraine in terms of not only economic and cultural, but also political relations. A direct common border and traditional economic ties facilitated such relations primarily. The artificial rupture of them became harmful to both of peoples, and first of all to the Crimea as the latter had poor raw materials, energy and industrial base. This clearly proved during the crisis which the Crimea experienced since World War II, when the regional economy had suffered terrible losses. Almost everything here turned into ruins, but the biggest were human losses. Population decreased drastically to only 351 thousands⁵. Instead of rapid rebuilding of the region, the totalitarian Stalinist regime caused another blow, which may be considered as an genocide based on the international law – the indigenous population was deported from the Crimea and the number of citizens decreased again by 228,5 thousands.⁶

It is also worth analyzing the very procedure of handover of the Crimea region from the RSFSR to the Ukrainian SSR. Initially, the issue was considered at the republican level, where the Council of Ministers of

⁵ The Crimea Multinational. Questions-Answers. Edition 1.- Simferopol, 1988, p. 88-89.

⁶ The Crimea: The Way Through The War. The History in Questions and Answers / NAS of Ukraine. Institute of History of Ukraine. Amended addition V.A Smaliy. – Kyiv, Institute of History of NAS of Ukraine 2014. – P. 344.

the Russian SFSR, upon examining of all relevant proposals, arguments and local authorities' requests, supported them and advocated the expediency of a handover of the Crimea region to the Ukrainian SSR, having preliminary got familiar with Ukraine's position on this issue. In the aftermath the issue was forwarded to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian SFSR. The Presidium, having received the principal confirmation from the authorities of the Ukrainian SSR, in accordance with the current legislation, considered the problem and adopted the Decree: "The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, with the participation of representatives of the Executive Committees of the Crimean region, Sevastopol City, and the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR, on the handover of the Crimea Region to the Ukrainian SSR" with the following resolution: "Taking into account the community and integrity of the economy, proximity and close economic and cultural ties between the Crimea region and the Ukrainian SSR, as well as taking into consideration the consent of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR consider it appropriate to hand over the Crimea region to the Ukrainian SSR."⁷

After this, on February 13, 1954 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR adopted its Decree "On Submission to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of the Issue of the Crimea Region' Handover to the Ukrainian SSR". In this

Decree, in particular, was noted that the submission of the Presidium of the RSFSR's Supreme Soviet, submitted to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, was considered, and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR expressed grateful thanks to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic for this generous, noble act of the brotherhood from Russian people, as well as will take care of the further development and prosperity of the Crimean economy.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, in accordance with the submission of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian SFSR, decides: "To request the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to handover the Crimea Region from the Russian SFSR to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic."⁸

⁷ Grochenko S.V. #KrymNash. A History of the Russian Myth / S.V. Grochenko – K., 2017. – P. 224.

⁸ V. Chumak Ukraine and the Crimea, Common Historical Destiny. – P. 73. The above mentioned work.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR sent the above-mentioned decree to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Thus, the necessary legal basis was made for the decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

It should be emphasized that, in the full accordance with the Constitution of the USSR of that time, all interested parties were present at the meeting of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on February 19, 1954. In particular, the representative of Russia – the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, M. Tarasov stated: “The Crimea region, as known, occupies the entire Crimean peninsula and is territorially adjacent to the Ukrainian Republic, as if it were a natural continuation of the southern steppes of Ukraine. The economy of the Crimea region is closely linked to the economy of the Ukrainian Republic. For geographical and economic reasons, the handover of the Crimea region to the fraternal Ukrainian Republic is appropriate and consistent with the common interests of the Soviet state.”⁹ Concluding his statement, M. Tarasov appealed to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to approve the submission of the Russian SFSR on this issue. Afterwards, the representative of Ukraine, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR, assured in his speech that the Ukrainian government will pay due attention to further develop the economy in the Crimea and increase the material and cultural welfare of the working people of the Crimea region. While discussing this issue, the members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and its chairman K. Voroshilov also spoke.¹⁰

Remarkably, after the discussion, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR unanimously approved the Decree “On the Handover of the Crimea Region From the RSFSR to the Ukrainian SSR” on February 19, 1954. The document stated: “Taking into account the community and integrity of the economy, territorial proximity and close economic and cultural ties between the Crimea region (oblast) and the Ukrainian SSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics decides: To approve the joint submission of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR on the handover of the Crimea

⁹ V. Chumak Ukraine and the Crimea, Common Historical Destiny. – P. 74. The above mentioned work.

¹⁰ V. Chumak Ukraine and the Crimea, Common Historical Destiny. – P. 74. The above mentioned work.

Region from the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.¹¹

The final decision on the issue resulted in the law passed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on April 26, 1954¹². After all, any change of the existing borders between the Soviet republics, even with their prior consent, could only be approved by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. The law stated that “The Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics decides: 1. To approve the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR as of February 19 1954 concerning the handover of the Crimea Region from the RSFSR to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. 2. Make appropriate amendments to Articles 22 and 23 of the Constitution of the USSR.”¹³

It should be noted that in legal terms the decision taken was fully in accordance with the law of the RSFSR, the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR, as well as within the relevant rules of international law.

While it does not look appropriate to focus on the economic development of the Crimea after 1954 in more detail, one can come to a general conclusion: the post-war poverty was over in a few years. And although the “socialist choice” imposed upon all the peoples of the former USSR, ruled out a possibility of true prosperity, the Crimeans, especially those who could compare the state of the Crimea with the state of various regions of Russia, consistently stated their much better position.¹⁴

The handover of the Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR was important also because the Crimean Tatar people, Karaites, Krymchaks, ethnic Russians, Armenians, Jews, Germans, Bulgarians, Greeks, as well as representatives of other ethno-ethnic groups who had previously lived in Russian Federation, have since then lived on territory of Ukraine.

2. Development of the ethno-political situation in the Crimea in the 50's -70's

The processes related to the de-Stalinization of the Soviet political system, including the rehabilitation of Crimean Tatars and representatives of other ethno-national groups, who were

¹¹ The Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. – 1954. – №4. – P. 147.

¹² The Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. – 1954. – №10. – P. 343.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ V. Chumak Ukraine and the Crimea, Common Historical Destinies. – P. 76. The above mentioned work.

indiscriminately accused of collaboration and cooperation with the Nazis during the WWII, played a significant role in the further development of the ethno-political situation.

As mentioned earlier, based on similar allegations in 1944, tens of thousands of people were subjected to repression and deported from the Crimea to the “remote places of the Union”. Changes in the social status of many ethnic groups, as well as in the overall ethno-political situation in the Crimea, were triggered mainly by legislative acts, adopted by the party political leadership of the country in the mid of 1950s -1960s. Within 1950s-1957s a solid legal framework was created aiming to justify repression against deported peoples. Among the first such documents were the Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR regarding the Germans (dated December 13, 1955), the Kalmyks (March 17, 1956), the Greeks, the Armenians, the Bulgarians (March 26, 1956), the Chechens, the Ingushs, the Karachayites (June 16, 1956). According to them, the citizens of these ethnic groups were released from the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR and were allowed to leave special settlements. However, they were deprived of the right to return to their homeland and claim any reimbursement for confiscated property.¹⁵

A decision in the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR as of April 28, 1956 “On liberation from the administrative supervision of the Crimean Tatars, the Balkars, the Turks – the citizens of the USSR, the Kurds, the Hamshilies and their family members, who were evicted during the Great Patriotic War” greatly influenced the further destiny of the repressed peoples of the Crimea. The document stated: “1. To release from a special settlements’ register and to dismiss the Crimean Tatars, the Balkarians, the Turks – citizens of the USSR, the Kurds, the Hamshilies and their families, deported to special settlements during the Great Patriotic War from the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the USSR”.¹⁶

This Decree stressed the fact that removal of restrictions on special settlements for persons listed in Article 1 of the Decree does not entail any return of property confiscated upon eviction and that they are not

¹⁵ The Crimea in the Ethnic and Political Dimension. – K., Svitohliad, 2005, p. 329.

¹⁶ National Relations in Ukraine in the Twentieth Century. Collection of documents and materials / Editorial collegium. I.F. Kuras (Chairman), M.I. Panchuk, R.Y. Pyrig, L.P. Poliovyv and others. – K.: Editorial Collection of historical and and cultural heritage of Ukraine, 1994, p. 335.

entitled to return to the places from which they were evicted”¹⁷. Resettlement of representatives of previously repressed peoples in some other regions of Ukraine was considered also “impractical”. In the Decree of the Council of Ministers of the Ukrainian SSR “On Resettlement of Citizens Who Before Lived in the Crimea” (December 15, 1956) was stipulated in detail: “1. To recognize as inappropriate any resettlement of the Tatars, the Germans, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Armenians and other persons who had previously lived in the Crimea region and who now return from the places of special settlements, on the territories of Kherson, Zaporozhia, Mykolayiv and Odessa regions (oblasts). To oblige executive committees of regional, city and district Soviets of workers' deputies of these regions: a) to cease granting a residence permission for the Tatars, the Germans, the Greeks, the Bulgarians, the Armenians and other persons who were previously living in the Crimea region, and who now return from the places of special settlements, and provide them with all necessary assistance in traveling outside these areas, as well as beyond the borders of the Ukrainian SSR; b) consider that the families of former special settlers who are already living in the above specified areas, are resettled into other regions of the republic, as well as outside of the Ukrainian SSR, including those who have not yet returned but plan to return”.¹⁸

However, only in the second half of the 1960s, the authorities formally withdrew indiscriminate allegations in betrayal against the Crimean Tatar people and stated that previously repressed representatives of this people should be provided with all the conditions necessary for the same full life as citizens of other ethnic groups of the USSR have. In the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR “On Citizens of Tatar Nationality Living in the Crimea” as of September 5, 1967 it was noted that after the liberation of the Crimea from Nazi occupation in 1944, some facts of active cooperation of a certain part of the Crimean Tatars with the Germans were unjustifiably attributed to the entire Crimean Tatar population of the Crimea. These sweeping accusations in respect of all citizens of Tatar nationality who

¹⁷ National Relations in Ukraine in the Twentieth Century. Collection of documents and materials / Editorial collegium. I.F. Kuras (Chairman), M.I. Panchuk, R.Y. Pyrig, L.P. Poliovy and others. – K.: Editorial Collection of historical and cultural heritage of Ukraine, 1994, p. 335.

¹⁸ Statements of the Supreme Council of the Union of Soviet Socialist Respublik. – 1967. – № 38. – P. 531-532.

lived in the Crimea should be removed, especially given the fact a new generation has entered in the labor and political society. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet decided to cancel the relevant decisions of state bodies in the part of sweeping accusations against citizens of the Tatar nationality who lived in the Crimea, while for further development of areas with the Tatar population to “instruct the councils of ministers of the Union republics continue to assist and help citizens of the Tatar nationality in the economic and cultural development, taking into account their national interests and characteristics.”¹⁹

Let's pay attention to the fact that as soon as process of the previously deported citizens started, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Central Committee of the CPSU started to receive letters requesting the restoration of autonomy. Perhaps this might facilitate that new documents, regulating the lives of deported citizens, were promptly elaborated by the Soviet authorities. In May 1956, a document was prepared that regulated possible measures to resolve this issue. In the draft resolution addressed to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR it was suggested that autonomy for citizens of German, Kalmyk, Karachay, Balkar, Chechen, Ingush nationalities and the Crimean Tatars should be considered in the form of national districts in the areas of their new settlements. A few months later in June 1956, another bill was prepared. It contained, however, rather different approaches regarding the return of the repressed to their former places of residence. In the “Reference on requests of the Chechens, the Karachayites, the Balkars, the Kalmyks and the Germans to establish their autonomy”, only the Karachayites, the Balkars and the Kalmyks were considered to be allowed to return to their historic homeland, given a small number of these peoples and the insufficient population of territories they left.

At the same time, it was considered inappropriate to restore autonomy for the Chechens and the Ingushs “because of a number of undesirable consequences”, which such a return “will inevitably cause”. As for the Germans and the Crimean Tatars, the document categorically stated that they were denied to return to their native places.²⁰

It is remarkable that the state politics of the 1970s – the first half of the 1980s towards ethnic groups did not undergo any qualitative changes

¹⁹ Statements of the Supreme Council of the Union of Soviet Socialist Respublik. – 1967. – №38. – P. 532.

²⁰ The Crimea in the Ethnic and Political Dimension. – K.: Svitohliad, 2005, p. 330.

in regard to the Crimean Tatar people. Though new legislative acts, which formally appeared to contribute to the problem's solving and declared a democratic solution, were adopted during the mentioned period, in reality they aimed to steer the Crimean Tatars' issue in such a way as to solely prevent their compact settlement in the Crimea and to create such a political environment, within which even any mentioning on the necessity to build a national autonomy of the Crimean Tatar people was not possible.

On November 3, 1972, the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "On the Removal of Restrictions on the Choice of Place of Residence, Foreseen in the Past for Certain Categories of People" was issued. In February 1973, the relevant Resolution of the Crimean Regional Committee of the Communist Party was adopted.²¹

According to these documents, it were the Communist party and the Soviet administrative bodies of the Crimea region who actively prevented the Crimean Tatars from returning to the Crimea. It is exactly from these bodies requests to the highest party bodies of Ukraine and the USSR were sent, demanding a need to strengthen the passport regime in the Crimea.

Thus, in his memorandum to the Central Committee of the CPSU as of November 1, 1973, the secretary of the Crimean Regional Party Committee M. Kyrychenko emphasized that "the Crimea has an important military-strategic significance and is a frontier", and therefore considered "as expedient ... to extend to the Crimean Region the power of the Resolution taken by the Council of Ministers of the USSR № 700 as of September 8, 1969 "On Measures to Strengthen the Passport Regime and Limit the Registration of Citizens in Sevastopol", as well as "to provide administrative authorities with the administrative rights, where necessary, to deport offenders of passport rules and their family members to their former place of residence"²². That meant, that despite the law, the reality did not comply with the norm where the Crimean Tatars like other citizens should not have any restrictions on the right to choose a place of residence.

In the Decree of the Crimean Regional Committee of the Party (February 1974), the issue to remove restrictions on the choice of

²¹ The Crimea in the Ethnic and Political Dimension. – P. 333. The above mentioned work.

²² Bekirova Gulnara. Crimean Tatar problem in the USSR (1944-1991) // Crimean studios. – 2004. – № 1-2. – P. 101-102.

residence of the Crimean Tatars and other “citizens of certain nationalities who were relocated from their places of residence to other regions of the USSR” arised again. However, in the document, as previously, it was stated that “...the Tatars who lived earlier in the Crimea were firmly rooted in new places of residence”²³. As a result, the party leadership concluded that the issue of returning of the Crimean Tatars must be carried out through the bodies, which would organize a structured selection, in accordance with the current legislation on the passport regime, provided there are certain opportunities for their housing and home improvement.²⁴

The party leadership of the Crimea region was forced to continue an organized resettling of a number of selected citizens of the Tatar nationality in between of 1974-1975, but just considering it as an effective measure to “split the ranks of the Tatar extremists”²⁵. However, in the second half of the 1970s, the administrative bodies of the Crimea region informed the Central Committee of the CPSU on the increase of facts of the Crimean Tatar citizens’ migration into the region. Namely, M. Kyrychenko and the head of the Crimean regional executive committee T. Chemodurov in their common memorandum as of January 5, 1977, stressed again on the escalation of “unorganized arrival” of the Crimean Tatars into the region. In this regard, data were provided that in 1973 only 32 people arrived to the Crimea in an “unorganized” way, while in 1974 – 128, in 1975 – 605, and in 1976 – already 901.

As a precautionary measure against the unauthorized resettlement of the Crimean Tatars, the local authorities proposed “improving” of the legislation and introducing more stringent rules and administrative sanctions.¹ The reaction of the central government was not delayed. The decision of the Council of Ministers of the USSR No. 700 “On Additional Measures to Strengthen the Passport Regime in the Crimea Region” of August 15, 1978 appears. Adoption of this document allowed the local authorities to apply tough actions on the eviction of the Crimean Tatars who lived without registration, and though the resolution itself did not specified the Crimean Tatars at all, its action was directed against them. Thus, the situation with regard to the solution of the

²³ The Crimea in the Ethnopolitical Dimension. – C. 333. The above mentioned work.

²⁴ Bekirova Gulnara. The Crimean Tatar problem in the USSR (1944-1991). – P. 102. The above mentioned work.

²⁵ The Crimea in the Ethnopolitical Dimension. – C. 333. The above mentioned work.

Crimean Tatar issue was drastically exacerbated. So, at the beginning of 1980 only 60 families of the Crimean Tatars without a residence permit remained in the Crimea. Besides, new resettlements practically ceased, while they were hindered by a legislative paperwork that essentially blocked the movement of the Crimean Tatars from Uzbekistan and stopped their resettlement to their homeland in the Crimea.²⁶

Researchers distinguish three main stages in the development of the Crimean Tatar national movement, namely: 1) 1956-1964 – its formation; 2) 1964-1969 – the period of its greatest activity; 3) 1970-1990 – temporary decline and further movement's activation as well as a further change in the form of struggle within 1980-1990s.²⁷ The oppression of the Crimean Tatar national movement through authorities in the 70's resulted in an appropriate reaction. This protest expands already to the international arena and obtains support of the international community. A petition to the UN to create an international commission to investigate the situation of the Crimean Tatars in the Crimea has been signed by 890 people.

The party and the state bodies at all costs tried to break the ever-increasing links of the Crimean Tatar national movement with the outer world (both with the West and the East)²⁸. Relations with quite a big Diaspora of the Crimean Tatar in Turkey and other countries are being established, what had a significant input. The most prominent activists of the movement (like Ayshe Seytmuratova and others) are expelled from the country and any contacts with their compatriots are not allowed. However, the Crimean Tatar national movement in the 1970s and 1980s is already breaking through the “Iron Curtain”, finds moral and ideological support abroad, primarily in the United States, Britain, Holland and Turkey. At the same time the Crimean Tatar national movement relied on international legal acts. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in 1966 also served to be a direct protection of their national rights. The Covenant first of all confirmed the legitimization of the potential of structural expansion of the international system, introduced by W. Wilson, and thus automatically confirmed the

²⁶ Crimean Tatar National Movement. B2 Documents, Materials, Chronicles / M.N. Hubglo, S.M. Chervonnaya. – T. 1. – P. 125.

²⁷ Alekseeva L. History of Dissent in the USSR. The Newest Period. – Vilnius-Moscow. – 1992. – P. 94.

²⁸ The Crimean Tatar national movement. – T. 1. – P. 125-126.

legitimacy of the structure as a result of decolonization. The legal subjectivity of the new elements of the structure was clearly understood as inseparable from their ethno-historical rights: “All peoples have the right for self-determination. On the basis of this right, they freely establish their political status and freely ensure their economic, social and cultural development” (Article 1). The individual level of rights is confirmed by the article 2:

“The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to guarantee that the rights proclaimed in this Covenant will be exercised without any discrimination whatsoever with regard to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national or social origin, property status, birth or other circumstances”²⁹, which almost literally repeats the Universal Declaration of Human Rights³⁰.

M. Huboglo and S. Chervonnaya analyzed the typical behavior of the Crimean Tatars during the period of deportation. They emphasized that from the very beginning it was focused on the struggle for self-preservation, for returning to the Crimea, for restoration of the destroyed foundations of the national lifestyle. The historical memory of the Crimean Tatar people, deprived not only of its historical homeland, but also of the possibilities of compact settlement in another territory, on the one hand, became the forefront of the confrontation between the Crimean Tatar people and a powerful party-punitive state apparatus on the other³¹. Immediately after the deportation and forwarding to special settlements in the new places, the totalitarian regime carried out a massive attack on national self-consciousness, especially on the Crimean Tatar national culture. The Crimean Tatars were denied their own ethnonyms, the word “Crimean” was removed from the self-name of the people, and the idea of the Crimean Tatar people as about “simply” the Tatars was cultivated. National self-consciousness was muffled by the massive allegations of “betrayal of the Motherland”. At the same time, the Crimean Tatars' families, who either lost their relatives at the front of the war, or in the partisan

²⁹ Human rights in Ukraine. Information and analytical bulletin of the Ukrainian-American Bureau for the Protection of Human Rights. Issue 21: Minority Rights / Rev. Collective: Z. Antoniuk, S. Gluzman, V. Zhmyr, E. Zakharov and others. – K., 1998. – P. 59-60.

³⁰ Ethnicity in the International System / O.M. Mayboroda. – K., IMIDEND them. IF Kuras, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2015. – P. 339.

³¹ Huboglo M.N., Chervonnaya S.M. The Crimean Tatar National Movement. Volume 1. History. Problems. Perspectives. – M., 1992. – P. 75.

struggle, or even children born after the war, should have to bear this horrible label. Traces of the historical memory of the Crimean Tatars' living in the Crimea were systematically and consistently eroded in a criminal, systematical and consistent way. Monuments of material and spiritual culture were relentlessly destroyed, there were burned not only religious books, but also original works of the Crimean Tatar writers, Muslim cemeteries, mosques destroyed, tombstones used as a building material. At the same time the Crimean Tatar toponyms were exterminated³². Officially, on April 26, 1954 the Crimea (at that time the Crimean oblast) became an integral part of Ukraine, and its reconstruction and development fell fully on Ukraine's shoulders. However, in fact, Ukraine herself was dependent on Moscow and had to follow the will of the imperial center. Therefore, as in the previous years, the main efforts were aimed to populate the peninsula.

The main flow of immigrants from the regions to the Crimea was directed from the Ukrainian SSR. The settlers were arranged to move into 24 districts of the Crimea region. In the 1960s-1970s, the Crimean population grew by more than 40%. The mechanical growth was 72% of the total population. In 1976 the planned and organized migration resettlement into the Crimea was terminated. However, an unplanned and spontaneous influx of migrants on the peninsula continued.

It should be noted that the number of the Russians in the Crimea grew at a much faster pace. This meant that among the Russian component of settlers dominated a non-labor emigration, like former servicemen released from reserve or seekers of "easy life". The Russians settled mainly in the south-coast areas and cities, while the Ukrainians mainly in the northern, agricultural regions³³. Russification has become one of the main and most lasting consequences of the deportation and the ethno-national situation in the Crimea.

On the one hand, a massive russification and sovietization have led to the spread of anti-Ukrainian sentiment also among the Crimean Tatars. The handover of the Crimea region to the Ukrainian SSR contributed and facilitated misinformation about the role of the

³² Huboglo M.N., Chervonnaya S.M. The Crimean Tatar National Movement. Volume 1. – P. 77-79. The above mentioned work.

³³ The Crimea: The Way through the Centuries: The History in Questions and Answers. NAS of Ukraine. Institute of History of Ukraine. Edited by V.A. Smoliy. – K.: Institute of the History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 2014. – P. 363.

Ukrainians in the Crimea. The politically inexperienced leaders of the Crimean Tatars, who did not feel the harmfulness of their political movement's isolation, were subjected to this great-power provocation. This was emphasized by the well-known human rights activist P. Grygorenko. He paid particular attention to the utmost importance for the Crimean Tatar national movement to win new supporters among Soviet people of other nationalities, including Ukrainians³⁴. On the other hand, Moscow's great-power leadership in various ways stirred up ethnic hostility towards the Crimean Tatars among the Ukrainians, promoting the most tragic pages of Ukrainian-Crimean-Tatar relations and often falsifying them. In the historical "studies", literature and artworks that captivated Ukraine and the Crimea at that time, the Crimean Tatars were shown in a negative light only, denigrating the history of the Crimean Khanate. In the 1960's, this campaign acquired a special dimension to counteract the idea of removing allegations of betrayal of the Crimean Tatars by the Decree of September 5, 1967.³⁵

We would like to emphasize that the direct consequence of deportation for the peoples of Crimea was the politicization of ethnic groups in the Crimea. At the same time, this applies equally to both deported peoples and those who left or arrived here due to the increase of migration. This opinion is shared by the leading Ukrainian historians who studied the Crimean issue. Officially, the Crimean Tatars started to return to their homeland since 1968. A permission to return, however, was given only to a very limited number of them and under the condition of their acceptance of certain restrictions and obligations. Most intensively the Crimean peninsula was occupied, as noted above, by the Russians. At the time of the first post-war census in 1959, they made almost 72% of the total population. There were 268,000 Ukrainians (22%) out of 1 million 200 thousands of the total population³⁶. A part of the Germans, the Armenians, the Bulgarians and the Greeks returned from the deportation too. As for the Crimean Tatars, the authorities did their best to prevent them from entering the Crimea. Raids and persecution became normal in the Crimea. This land turned to be a

³⁴ The Crimean Tatars: The Way to Return. The Crimean Tatar national movement (the second half of the 1940s – early 1990s), through the eyes of the Soviet special services: a collection of documents and materials. – CHI. – K. – 2004. – P. 203, 211.

³⁵ The Crimea in the Ethnopolitical Dimension. – P. 303. The above mentioned work

³⁶ The Crimea: Road through the Ages. History in Questions and Answers. – P. 363. The above mentioned work

forbidden zone for its indigenous inhabitants of the Tatar origin. There is no such a law, but secret instructions exist, in accordance to which there is an administrative practice – the practice of arbitrariness and lawlessness. They are not registered because they do not have a home, while a housing could not be sold to them, because they had no residence permit. Lack of residence permit does not allow to work, give a child to school, register a marriage and so on.

According to the human rights activists, “one was hunting the Tatars in the Crimea, who did not have a residence permit, like the wild animals”³⁷. The eloquent evidence of the situation, in which the Crimean Tatars and their families, who returned to the Crimea, found themselves, was a letter of the Tatar children to the UN’s Secretary General K. Waldheim in March-April 1974.

This letter desperately informs, that “... we are free listeners, without even being registered in the class logs, we are neither asked, nor our notebooks are checked, by all means one avoids answering our questions and insults us in the presence of all classmates, reproaching the past.”³⁸

The Crimean Tatars’ national movement did not ignore any cases of lawlessness and arbitrariness. In particular, the forced eviction of three families of the Crimean Tatars – the Gubanov’s, the Mazinov’s and the Kursytova’s from the villages of Chervonyy Krym and Spokiyne in Simferopol district on November 30, 1972 – caused a very determined demonstration involving 200 Crimean Tatars. In 1978 Musa Mamut resorted desperately to self-immolation due persecution through the local Crimean authorities, which deprived him and his family of settling down in their homeland. The funeral of Musa Mamuta turned into a public protest against the continuation of discrimination against the Crimean Tatars.³⁹

The Crimean Tatar National Center founded in the USA (New York) in July 1976, established the Crimea Foundation. The Foundation’s task was “to disseminate information on the situation of the Crimean Tatars and other religious-ethnic groups of the Crimean population, to publicize the facts of political and administrative repressions against the members of the Crimean Tatar national

³⁷ The Crimean Tatars’ national movement. Vol. 2. – P. 201. The above mentioned work

³⁸ The Crimean Tatars’ national movement. Vol. 2. – P. 207-208. The above mentioned work

³⁹ The Crimean Tatar National Movement. Volume 2. – P. 298. The above mentoned work

movement, to promote preserving and development of the material and spiritual culture of the Crimea”⁴⁰.

The activity of the Crimean Tatar national movement in the 1970s-1980s is closely linked to public actions in support of its courageous and independent leader, Mustafa Dzhemilev. Protests with demands to release M. Dzhemilev from detention grew into the bigger protest movement for support and solidarity with all the Crimean Tatar people. Famous political and cultural figures such as A. Sakharov, P. Grygorenko, O. Nekrych, L. Kopelev, and O. Halych took active part these public actions⁴¹. The issue of its more effective organization in the agenda of the Crimean Tatar national movement became more resolute.

The Central Initiative Group (CIG) – transformed in May 1989 – into the Organization of the Crimean Tatar National Movement – OCTNM.⁴²

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the Crimean people passed through the incredible trials caused by the indiscriminate deportation due to the absurd accusation of the whole people of betrayal and cooperation with the Nazi occupiers. This fact of genocide in relation to the indigenous people of the Crimea clearly reveals the essence of the totalitarian Stalinist system and the specific features of the ethno-national policy of the Communist Party and the Government of the Soviet Union during that period. In the conditions of a special regime which the whole people had to endure on the foreign land of Uzbekistan, the Crimean Tatar people did not lose their ethnic roots, their language, culture and spirituality. Due to the cohesion, unity and their high national consciousness, the Crimean Tatars managed to preserve their ethnic characteristics and not dissolve in another ethnic group. After certain, ambiguous changes in the policy of the CPSU, subject to the condemnation of the cult of personality and Stalin's extreme decisions on ethnonational policy towards many peoples of the USSR, including the Crimean Tatars, the latter have succeeded to cancel criminal ethnopolitical decisions of Stalin's time and, overcoming the resistance of the Stalinists and their supporters both centrally and locally, started in the 1970s to return to their homeland and sometimes even more difficult

⁴⁰ The Crimean Tatar National Movement. Volume 2. – P. 297. The above mentioned work

⁴¹ The Crimea: A Road Through the Ages. History in Questions and Answers. – P. 378. The above mentioned work.

⁴² The Crimean Tatar National Movement. Volume 1. – P. 154.

process of social and ethnic adaptation and arrangement in an environment with other ethnic and national groups on the Crimean peninsula.

The above mentioned factors contributed decisively to the ethnopolitical processes in the Crimea, determined their essence and special conditions of further development. This is also true for the Crimean Tatar people as an autochthonous ethnic group living on the Crimean peninsula.

SUMMARY:

The social and ethnographic processes in the Autonomous Republic of the Crimea in the 1950s-1970s are considered. A special focus is given to the analysis of legal issues regarding the handover of the Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR, as well as the processes of political rehabilitation of the Crimean Tatar people.

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