

EMPIRE AND CRIMEA - THE LONG PATH TO GENOCIDE

Treatise

"It has long been snowing from the north, and it snows, and snows, and does not stop, and the further it goes, the worse it gets."

M. Bulgakov. The White Guard

"Hey, Hadji Murat, surrender! There are many of us, and few of you!"

L. Tolstoy. Hadji Murat

The unique fate of the Crimean Tatars in the pre and post-revolutionary periods is not always apparent. For example, not everyone recognizes the 1944 deportation act as the only case in European history when an entire nation was expelled to another continent (though not entirely, as almost half of the people were destroyed through various means). Equally unique was the campaign for the total elimination of the indigenous culture of Crimea and its replacement with Slavic culture. No analogies can be found here either in the history of European civilization in general or in the set of methods and means employed by European colonizers.

The centuries-old history of Russian-Crimean Tatar relations entered a period of genocide in the 18th century, during which the foreign cultural neighbor, having colonized the Crimean Khanate, attempted to erase from the ethnic map of the world not only one of the European peoples but also its traces in the form of social, cultural, economic traditions, and even the toponymy of the Crimean Tatars' historical homeland.

The search for causes and origins of any action of similar scale, but not so rare, more typical, having analogies, would hardly require an especially broad narrative scope or unusually deep excursions into layers of history. We are compelled to this, firstly, by the very duration of the genocide that stretched over centuries (which is very difficult to explain), and secondly, by the under-researched history of the Crimean Tatars, resulting in the reader's

poor familiarity with it and misconceptions about it. Therefore, we will begin this essay from very venerable times.

1

First, we should address the "historical fact" of the supposed arrival of Crimean Tatars to the peninsula in the 11th-14th centuries. Here, we must remember that Crimea, with its blessed climate and generous nature, became a human habitat earlier than many other places on Earth. Already in the Paleolithic era, it was densely populated, and subsequently, the peninsula's population only increased. The earliest known peoples of Taurida, the Cimmerians and Taurians, passed down their traditions and legends to ancient authors - and none of them mention any catastrophe that forced the aboriginals to leave their ancient homeland. Later, Crimeans never left the sphere of attention of historians from neighboring countries - and none of them, starting with Herodotus, notes any mass exodus from Crimea.

The conclusion about the preservation of the main mass of indigenous Crimeans in the foothills and mountains is confirmed by modern science. According to nephelometric studies of material from the last three millennia, all skulls found outside the steppe zone belong to the same, undisputedly Europoid type.

This type underwent minimal changes even during centuries of immigration. Some of the newcomers (Scythians, Greeks, Sarmatians, Romans, Goths) were the same Indo-Europeans, though they spoke different languages. The dominance of subsistence farming and weak trade connections between villages and estates preserved this division of languages for centuries. The exception was the steppe part of the peninsula, where among the mobile nomadic population (also of Europoid type), a unified Turkic (Kipchak) language became predominant as early as the 6th century CE.

A completely different socio-economic picture emerged on the coast. Crimea's geographical position at the intersection of the most important ancient trade routes (Balkan-Caucasian, Black Sea-Asia Minor, and the Great Silk Road) led to early colonization of the shores by

Greeks, Romans, Goths, and other representatives of peoples renowned for their political and economic activity.

But Crimea was not just a transit center or transshipment point. Even on the eve of our era, the production of commercial grain was developed here, and huge quantities of fish, wine, leather, metal products, and ceramics were exported. Some industries were far ahead of similar production in neighboring and not-so-close countries. This was explained both by the enterprise of the colonists and the peninsula's location at the communication hub: Crimeans, having an enormous choice, mastered the most advanced and promising methods of processing raw materials, tools, the best varieties of agricultural crops, and the most interesting directions in applied art and culture in general. Moreover, cultural exchange occurred not so much with the countries of still-barbaric Europe as with the territories of fading great civilizations of Asia and Africa.

In turn, Crimea of the ancient epoch and later played a huge role in the cultural history of European civilization. In this cosmopolitan center, representatives of European peoples came into direct contact with religions, literature, and art of the rest of the world - this was a time when direct penetration of these cultures into Europe was not yet possible.

With the arrival of the Romans (1st century CE), a new, urbanistic form of habitation emerged in Crimea, and the type of industrial city was born. Under the protection of Roman triremes, navigation became safe, and the peninsula became the core of the economic center of gravity that had shifted to the eastern provinces of the vast empire. It was here, on the periphery, that the collision of Mediterranean and continental Eurasian worlds struck a blinding spark of new, unprecedented economic and social relations. Local trades attracted landowners, brokers, and merchants with opportunities for rapid enrichment. Here, enormous fortunes arose overnight, major wholesale deals were made, and prices for grain, leather, and fish had already embarked on their eternal, rhythmically maddening, tireless dance.

The pace of life in Crimea accelerated, and economic processes moved ever faster. It was here that old, ossified relations, still suitable for the cold imperial world of the mainland, could not withstand the impact of fresh waves and hopelessly broke. Quantitative changes in the economy transformed into social metamorphoses, qualitative ones naturally, and in the 2nd century CE, slave labor, abolished from above, disappeared forever in Crimea.

Thus, the once semi-colonial province surpassed the metropolis in social development by centuries. Rome desperately clings to slavery, making enormous efforts to preserve it (this agony of an outdated mode of production would last another 2-3 centuries), while Crimea is already free: local practitioners had long discussed the theory of slave labor's unprofitability in their barbaric Latin and, accordingly, abolished it. The ancient world was fading everywhere, but the dawn of the coming great epoch, the Middle Ages, ignited in the East, where Taurida was the first in Europe to give freedom to its slaves.

It was mentioned above that social and economic development progressed faster on the coast. However, over time, changes spread throughout the territory of the emerging Crimean ethnos. Acculturation was facilitated by both intra-Crimean migrations and the custom of local tribal princes living in cities, while Roman magnates would travel to the steppe in summer, where tents of Scythian type were set up for them. Obviously, this practice, as well as the very coexistence of masses of diverse tribal and multilingual urban and rural residents, reinforced the old Crimean tradition of national and religious tolerance. These traits of tolerance, which much later became characteristic of Crimean national psychology (both Muslim and Christian), were not artificial or superficial. Their origins lie in Crimea's ancient history. Without them, existence on the peninsula, long inhabited by ethnically uniquely diverse populations, would have been simply impossible.

The immigration process did not end with the Romans. In the 3rd-4th centuries, the Goths entered Crimea, then the Huns, followed by the Khazars and Magyars, Pechenegs and Polovtsians, etc. But those newcomers who settled and dissolved into the mass of the indigenous population adopted, judging by the monuments, the basic customs and

traditions of the Crimeans. The same can be said about the last two major waves of medieval immigration - the Genoese-Byzantine and Horde (13th century).

Crimea attracted Italians and steppe dwellers for different reasons. The former were tempted by duty-free trade and Crimea's agricultural potential. As for the Chinggisid state, its centralization, acquisition of complete feudal features, growth of administrative apparatus, etc., required an exit from the wide but monotonous (i.e., essentially closed) steppe into the open world, access to its economic and cultural treasures. Only thus, by assimilating the material and spiritual treasures of the civilized world, could the new needs of Horde society and its elite be satisfied.

But Crimea possessed qualities that were undoubtedly equally appealing to emissaries of both the Steppe and the Great Sea. One of these traits was the ease with which newcomers could enter the peninsula's social life, which knew no conflicts based on differences in faith, language, or blood. The second such trait was the flourishing of multicultural port cities and craft centers of Crimea, which were magnificently "prepared" for the implementation of the approaching inevitable contact between two deeply alien but mutually attracted worlds: the Steppe and the Sea.

Thus occurred the third great meeting of Earth's civilizations. Again in Crimea and again with epochal results. Another economic uplift began and a new culture flourished, quickly spreading throughout the Black Sea region and to not-so-nearby countries, and ultimately to all European civilization.

Changes in the peninsula's territory were expressed primarily in the breakdown of the subsistence economy in Crimean backwaters. Universal commodity exchange was established, and for the first time, the need for a unified language of communication became vital. It became Turkic: firstly, one of its dialects was previously perhaps the most widespread, and secondly, it was the language of the relatively small but administratively empowered Horde's spiritual and secular authority. Gradually, the Turkic proto-language replaced all others - the indigenous population, descendants of Greeks, Goths, Italians, etc.,

began to speak it. Religious differences didn't disappear as quickly, but by the 15th century, Islam became predominant (in most of Crimea's territory). Thus, it's hardly worth attributing to the Horde people, who penetrated the peninsula in the 13th century, a decisive role in the linguistic and confessional unification of the peninsula's population. Relatively few in number, they were no more than catalysts, initiating the main phase of the Crimean Tatar people's ethnogenesis. This phenomenon, though not frequent in history, is not unique: the same process was observed, for example, in Central America after the Conquista. The numerous multilingual Indian population here adopted the Spanish language and Catholic faith from the conquerors, but calling Mexicans Spanish for this reason is as erroneous as calling Crimean Tatars descendants of the Horde.

Compared to the indigenous population, there were so few Horde people that, living in the steppe part of the peninsula, they couldn't influence either the economy or the main traditions of the Crimeans. And even conflicts between ancient, pre-Muslim customs and Islam didn't always end in the latter's victory. This was true not only in the sovereign Crimean Khanate (i.e., before the 1470s) but also later when it fell under the protectorate of Islamic Turkey, whose sultan became the spiritual caliph of the Crimean Tatar people for a long time.

2

The Crimean Khanate, never knowing a "locked border," never acquired one. Society remained open as well. Written monuments testify to the high social and economic mobility of Crimeans during the Khanate era; here, unlike feudal Europe and Asia, firstly, legal status was not hereditary and changed freely, and secondly, social categories were not identical to legal categories: the role of the latter was negligible. However, the possibility of alternatives and ability to change one's position in society was high. The market was free, as was competition and means of production - even land in the beyliks wasn't private property of the beys; practically anyone could settle on it. Free competition (in its broader understanding) was the basis of individual freedom. The state couldn't suppress the

individual, as there was no ideal of "sobornost," and the basic provision of Sharia about universal equality, primarily legal, was thoroughly implemented. Military service wasn't mandatory, which was widely used by Christian Crimeans, but not only them. Freedom of movement, speech, ideology, various associations (free guilds, merchant corporations, unions of young townspeople, etc.) were natural and customary.

Neither faith, nor origin, nor nationality posed any restrictions or obstacles: even the khans had recent and long-standing immigrants of various faiths as their closest advisers, treasurers, and military leaders. Property inequality weakly reflected in interpersonal relations. This was a strong tradition, and in the 19th century, it was common to see when a simple shepherd enters his master's living room without invitation "in his buffalo sandals, with dignity lights his pipe, sitting down on the carpet, and reaches for the standing treats, not doubting at all that he has an equal right to it with everyone" (Markov E. L., 1902, 312).

The absence of non-economic coercion (Tatars never knew serfdom), personal freedom, free labor, and the peninsula's blessed natural conditions allowed Crimeans not only to exist comfortably but also to successfully develop their national culture. Its uniqueness, brightness, and richness were largely determined by factors of continuity, an effective mechanism of succession. Immigrant cultures didn't disappear without a trace but became common Crimean spiritual heritage, long preserved in the form of multiple local subcultures. This mosaic nature and cultural polycentrism allowed to concisely but accurately define Crimea as "concentrated Mediterranean."

Even in the Middle Ages, education became truly universal. There wasn't a village in Crimea without an elementary school-mekteb at the mosque, so literacy was universal - a result that not all other European countries achieved even in Modern times. Further education could be obtained in one of Crimea's spiritual universities-madrasas, which trained lawyers, doctors, astronomers, theologians, preachers, officials, and creative intelligentsia of broad profile.

Book publishing developed: the passion for poetry was widespread, as was patristics (and not only in cities). The second conquest of Islam, after education, was the spread of humanist ideas of a different type than in other medieval countries of Western and Eastern Europe. The difference was that pragmatic Crimeans shifted their attention from the purely religious-spiritual world to understanding the place and role of humans in the earthly world. An attitude toward the individual developed as a self-sufficient value, not just as a subject of faith or, moreover, of loyalist ideology. Individuality and spiritual autonomy were highly valued (the right to choose any monotheistic confession was recognized), incompatible with either "pan-Christian totalitarianism" (A. Toynbee) or the previously mentioned Orthodox leveling sobornost.

The roots of these humanistic views extended not only from the Islamic East. They also arose from local pre-Muslim traditions of a conglomerate open society of merchants, seafarers, free herders and farmers, free artisans, artists, and philosophers - all those whose authority and prosperity were based on their own industriousness and professional excellence. This is characteristic of some other cultural-economic "crossroads of the world" with ethnically mixed populations, for example, Sicily, but not for all. In Spain, similar border conditions (it was the "fist of Christianity" thrust deep into the Muslim world, while Crimea was that of Islam among Christian countries) caused unlimited cruel actions of the Inquisition against those of different faiths, ending in their physical liquidation or removal from the Iberian Peninsula.

But even in quite tolerant Sicily, the rare tolerance of its society was still imposed from above, by its kings. And when this power weakened (1161s, 1250s), Christian-Muslim massacres began, no better than in Spain. In Crimea, however, during the half-millennium history of the Khanate, not only was there not a single pogrom against non-believers, but there weren't even attempts at one or simply inter-ethnic conflicts. Crimean khans were political and military, but by no means ideological leaders; they didn't see natural enemies in their Christian neighbors. There were no military-religious groups in Crimea (orders of muttavies, ghazi, etc.), known for their fanatical rejection of non-believers.

Crimeans of all faiths had common saints (George, Nicholas, Virgin Mary), had places of joint pilgrimage, dervishes praised the great prophet Isa (Christ), etc. Contemporaries were struck by the fact that khans lit candles to the Assumption Mother of God year-round (Lyzlov A., 1990, 117), there were hundreds of Tatar-Christian families and mixed Muslim-Christian clans. Of two brothers, one could be baptized, the other circumcised, such cases were not exceptional (Markovich A. I., 1910, 530, 541), as was changing faith, which in neighboring Russia and Turkey was considered a grave crime and severely punished.

This picture of traditional Crimean Tatar society life barely changed over centuries, although Crimea was not isolated from other European countries. While exerting a powerful beneficial influence on the culture, spiritual world, and economy of neighboring powers, it also remained open to foreign achievements worth borrowing.

The question of how deep the process of Crimean-Western European acculturation was, what in it was superficial and what was fundamental, must remain open for now (it has not been researched, like many other problems in Crimean Tatar history). But the very fact of convergence between these two models of society and cultural development is indisputable; it became more noticeable as Turkey weakened, which had often deprived Crimea of the right to independent choice.

Such was, for example, the epoch of Krym-Girey (1758-1764), one of the last khans, when Bakhchisaray freed itself from Ottoman dictate in both domestic and foreign policy. Considering his throne no lower than the Sultan's, this khan created a system of his own diplomatic ties with other European sovereigns, including Frederick II of Prussia. During Girey's reign, the Khan-Saray became a center of enlightenment, a sanctuary of muses, an outpost of science. Here, foreign scholars worked in the richest collection of manuscripts and books in the khan's library, philosophical disputes were held in the palace, and lectures were given.

Krym-Girey was deeply interested in European systems of governance and was an admirer of Montesquieu's teachings. European culture also attracted him. He collected paintings, sculpture, passionately loved European music and theater. The court regularly hosted concerts and performances - there was a permanent Tatar musical chapel and a troupe of French actors, most often performing Molière, whose comedies Louis XV ordered his personal translator to translate specifically for the Crimean ruler. Among the exact sciences, Girey devoted most time to chemistry, physics, and astronomy. Quite in the spirit of the time, he cultivated advanced economic teachings, seeking to introduce the country's economy into more rational structural forms. He practiced protectionist policies towards exported goods, primarily grain, conducted geological surveys trying to free the economy from raw material imports; selective breeding was carried out in animal husbandry. Under him, extensive road and port construction was planned or conducted - particularly to create communications for his Trans-Perekop Nogai subjects, whom he engaged in commercial grain production.

The great khan's successors tried to continue his work, but the khanate's days were numbered. The annexation of Crimea by Russia was approaching, which would turn it from an organic path of development onto completely different rails.

According to historians' calculations, over the centuries leading up to the beginning of the last century, more than 30 major ethnic groups known to science immigrated to Crimea. This number does not include Eastern Slavs (ancestors of Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians), as the purpose of their campaigns, starting from the 8th century, was not immigration but military plunder. Thus, the clang of Slavic swords resounded on the shores of Taurida 5 centuries before the Crimean Tatar ethnos formed there. Then the ancestors of the Tatars repelled Slavic attacks from the sea (campaign of Askold and Dir, 840), from the direction of Taman (913-914), survived the occupation of Chersonesos and

Kaffa by Kyivan Prince Vladimir (988), etc. Only the advancement of the Pechenegs to the Black Sea region stopped the Slavic raids. With this, the first acquaintance of Crimeans with their northern neighbors ended.

Nothing suggested that it would ever resume. Century after century passed, and Crimea and the Eastern Slavic principalities, strengthened after the expulsion of the Mongol-Tatars (Crimeans were not among the latter), were occupied with other, non-southern foreign policy issues. So there were almost no points of contact between the Rus' people and Crimeans yet. And when they appeared (end of the 15th century), it turned out that Crimea and Moscow had common friends and common enemies, after which the two powers entered into a military alliance that passed the test of both battles and time.

The break in allied relations occurred in 1507, when the Tatars launched a campaign against the cities of Northern Ukraine, 11 of which had recently fallen under the rule of the Moscow prince. Thus began the history of "Crimean raids on Rus'," a century-and-a-half epic of military activity, directed this time in the opposite direction, from south to north. In other respects, both series of campaigns-raids, separated by several centuries, possessed a number of strikingly similar features. The main one: neither the Slavs of the end of the 1st millennium CE, nor the Crimean Tatars of the middle of the 2nd aimed to capture and hold foreign territory (individual timid and unsuccessful attempts by Vladimir Svyatoslavich don't count). This phenomenon is particularly prominent in Tatar policy: even having full opportunity to do so, Crimeans regularly returned to their borders, appropriating neither cities nor small villages.

From both sides, these were campaigns aimed at capturing spoils - an occupation for that epoch not only quite ordinary but also quite respectable (especially for nobles, from English to Japanese). But what neither princes nor khans could be accused of was expansion, that is, wars aimed at depriving neighboring peoples of political independence through the capture of their territory.

In this sense, much more alarming were new, outwardly less noticeable initiatives. Already in 1502-1503, when the Russian-Crimean alliance was quite solid, and certainly "before open military clashes with the Crimean Khanate" (Kargalov V. V., 1974, 27), Moscow began its advance southward - that's when the mentioned 11 cities were captured, not for the purpose of plunder, but to create a foothold for further expansion toward the Black Sea.

This grandiose political task simultaneously received ideological justification. The teaching about biblical Mosoch-founder of Moscow, about the great mission of the Russian people, called to unite all (including Black Sea region) Slavs into a single power ("Moscow - the Third Rome"), spread throughout Rus'.¹

As for the "Crimean Tatar raids," the Crimeans themselves, that is, the inhabitants of the Crimean peninsula, almost never participated in them. This was prohibited both by strong traditions of persistent work on their land and at sea, and by the peculiarities of sedentary economy - neither garden, nor vineyard, nor crops could be left even for a week, while large raids lasted for months. Only warriors from the khan's or beys' personal guard who weren't tied to farming, and servants or laborers "like bird keepers, that is, day laborers or workers, and most of those weren't even Tatars, but some were house servants, ...some were bandits who had fled... and disguised themselves as Tatars, some were Circassians, some Russians and Moldavians. Among such a diverse rabble, how many Tatars who had seen battle were there? Not even one in a thousand" - writes an eyewitness to such raids (Quoted from: Smirnov V. D., 1887, 319). The khans left the main part of Crimean owners in peace and "were content only with imposing tribute for the right not to go out" (Khartakhay F., 1866, 207).

Who then made up the main mass of participants in these formidable campaigns? Those subjects of the khan who lived in the endless Trans-Perekop steppes, the Nogai nomads, whose economy didn't suffer at all from the raids. Tens of thousands of them willingly stood under the bunchuk of the Crimean khan, which is why these raids received the historically not entirely correct name "Crimean."

In total, they didn't last long - a century and a half. In the second half of the 17th century, not a single major raid was recorded - their historical time had expired. This was keenly sensed by contemporaries who noticed that "the Tatars now, already abandoning many of these crude customs, are found to be more humane (our emphasis V. V.), and are unspeakably patient in labors and needs" (Lyzlov A., 1990, 126).

Therefore, when at the end of the 17th century Moscow again activated its anti-Tatar policy, it could be explained by many reasons, except one - Crimea's aggressiveness.

The first signs of Russia's renewed expansion southward after a long break were already noticeable in the 1670s, when the head of the Foreign Office A. L. Ordin-Nashchokin tried to put together a new crusade against the "busurman," believing that not only Russia and Poland "should have it," but "all great Christian sovereigns need that cause" (Galaktionov I. V., 1979, 385). For its part, Russia prepared for such a campaign, gradually advancing the so-called zasechnye lines, that is, lines of fortresses, further south. The Great Zasechnaya Line was replaced by the Belgorod one, then it too was left behind by the Russians, who occupied with their garrisons not only Kyiv and Bila Tserkva, but also Uman, Bratslav, Karsun. Then the next, Izyum line, was erected, quite in the south of Ukraine. The chains of fortresses grew into settlements populated by Russian artisans and peasants. Thus was eliminated the weak point of Russian campaigns to the south - the lack of rear support and backup. Bakhchisaray was being prepared for the fate of Kazan and Astrakhan. Undisguised aggression was beginning against Crimean lands that had never belonged to Russia.

In 1687, before the start of military operations, Moscow issued an ultimatum to Turkey: "to cede Crimea to Russia and both fortresses that locked the exits to the Azov and Black Seas... furthermore - to relocate all Tatars from Crimea" (Bogoslovsky M. M., 1940, 207). Thus Russia first declared its program of Crimean policy before all of Europe.

The first part of it, according to M. Bogoslovsky, was accomplished "exactly one hundred years later by Empress Catherine II." The scholar himself didn't live 15 years to see the implementation of its second part - in May 1944...

For the Tatars, the ultimatum had the value that from now on they knew absolutely precisely what they could count on in case of Russia's victory in the south. Or rather, that they would have nothing to count on.

Peter I, with all his efforts, failed to conquer Crimea; his contribution to this task was rather theoretical: when in 1736, already under Anna Ioannovna, Field Marshal Münnich took control of the steppe part of the peninsula, he, applying Peter's tactics in Livonia, completely burned down the steppe villages. Then came Bakhchisaray's turn: "whatever possessions or implements were found in the houses were given to soldiers as spoils, and all buildings were burned. The khan's palace likewise was not left intact... All this magnificent building was plundered and turned to ashes in several hours." (Münnich E., 1891, 54). Then also perished the completely unique in antiquity and richness archive and library of the khans - the national heritage of the people.

It's terrifying to speak about human casualties: everyone, from small to great, who didn't manage to flee to the mountains, was killed (Wolfson B., 1941, 61). Piles of corpses on streets and roads had no one to remove them, and disease outbreaks emerged. As a result, the Russian army's brutality turned against itself - the epidemic took 27,500 of the 30,000 soldiers who entered Crimea (Kuropatkin A. N., 1910, 438).

The following year, Field Marshal Lacy led the campaign. His soldiers "went with torches through all the foothill valleys of Crimea, climbed into the mountains, where they scattered in all directions to devastate and burn" (Solovyev S. M., X, 428). In total, about a thousand towns and villages were completely destroyed.

Then other matters distracted Petersburg from the "Crimean problem," but not for long. Already in 1771, according to a new (in time, but not in political spirit) concept, Russia planned "now without any delay" to "completely exterminate the Crimean Tatars with our

same victorious weapons... and devastate their lands entirely, as such people from whom no use, no benefit... can be had" (Ulyanitsky V., 1883, 157-166).

In the summer of that year, Dolgoruky's army invaded the peninsula, repeating the feats of Münnich and Lacy. "Having destroyed many cities up to Kaffa itself," he established a new order, relying "more on the non-Muslims living in Crimea" (Markevich A. P., 1897, 29). Christians received from Dolgoruky the lands, workshops, and dwellings of killed or expelled Tatars. Out of gratitude, they later erected a multi-meter obelisk to their benefactor, which still stands in Simferopol on Zhukovsky Street. Thus was found a method of splitting the millennial unity of Crimeans, which hadn't occurred to any conqueror before: one simply had to gift the property of some to others. This experience of the 1770s was applied in the 19th century and hasn't been forgotten in our days.

After passing through a brief period of entirely fictitious "independence" under the rule of Petersburg's puppet Shahin-Girey, in 1783 Crimea was annexed to Russia. Thus, the first point of the imperial program was fulfilled. They proceeded to the second without delay; the staged deportation of the indigenous population began. In 1779, A. V. Suvorov relocated Crimean Christians (31,000) to the Azov region, who were no longer needed - their own lands and the Tatar lands they had developed immediately passed to Russian officials, nobles, and royal favorites. A cheaper method was applied to the Tatars - they were oppressed in every way, deprived of land, whereupon need and hunger immediately took such Homeric proportions that at the turn of the 19th century, "voluntary emigration" began.

The authorities didn't prevent it: in 1803, most Crimeans received exit passports. However, at the last moment, someone in Petersburg realized that mass departure would be untimely: without the indigenous population, Crimea was doomed to desolation. The importation of Russian peasants wasn't yet justifying itself - they were helpless in the alien ecological environment, proved unsuited to the traditional economy of the region, suffered hardships, and fled back to Russia. Therefore, temporarily they had to tolerate the Tatars - but not their traditions, culture, worldview, or economic independence.

Eliminating the latter was easiest. When the main part of the economic territory was taken by newcomers, the Tatars had no choice but to go into bondage to them on any conditions. Crimeans were now forced to rent their own lands, paying with unfixed corvée. And after private real estate came the turn of waqf² - and it gradually passed into foreign hands.

After the annexation, with the decline of the wealthy and generous murzas, with the liquidation of the khan's and state domains, waqfs became the only source of social and cultural provision, as Russia did not allocate a single kopek for these needs of a people foreign to it. Now, for the first time in Crimea's history, waqfs, this truly national property dear to every Tatar's heart, began to be alienated. Eventually, they disappeared completely, leaving culture and education without their last support. In this context, a question arises - should the alienation of waqfs be considered as measures to eliminate Crimean Tatar culture and social traditions, or was it just ordinary economic plunder of a new colony? Alas, other parallel actions show this was not the case, actions that not only didn't bring income to the empire but cost considerable effort and money, meaning they were necessary for non-economic reasons.

In 1833, throughout the peninsula, all books, new and old, were collected, of which there were enormous quantities in this country of universal literacy. Collections of manuscripts (including ancient ones and those preserved in single copies), chronicles, epic and poetic works, historical and philosophical treatises were brought together. After this, everything collected was burned (Krichinsky A., 1919, 35).

Thus, in one action, the most important component of the people's culture, their recorded thought, spiritual experience, and national history was destroyed. This event stands apart in the history of colonialism; it is unique. Such a thing could not have occurred to the British or other, even the cruelest bearers of the "white man's burden."

But the living word still remained. Such authoritative and educated representatives of the people's intelligentsia as mullahs, sheikhs, kadis, and other keepers of traditions continued to bring culture to the masses; most of them taught in the national school - from parish to

higher education. The accessibility and free nature of this school were especially "dangerous," and they began to shut it down, deporting mullah-teachers beyond Crimea, most often to Siberia.

This was expensive, and students would take the place of teachers, which could go on endlessly. It was cheaper to destroy these living sources of wisdom and tradition, but the people would have counted them among the host of martyrs and saints, which would have led to the opposite result. And yet a method was found, whose originality and subtlety does credit to the Russian authorities: mullahs, among whom were many venerable elders, were subjected to flogging. They were whipped publicly, in their places of residence and with the mandatory presence of the oldest residents and officials. A special regulation for these executions was developed: it specified that in Simferopol, for example, both Russian and Tatar nobility had to be present at this shameful act, etc. (ibid., 5-8). The flogging of clergy was introduced in 1788; the date of its abolition has not been established, but even in 1875, mullah-teachers were still being exiled with an eternal ban on returning to Crimea.

The resettlement of Slavic-speaking peasants went in the opposite direction; the alien cultural offensive was expressed in the "import" of serfdom (not for Tatars), Russification of education, and office work. Pure economic expansion was also quickly completing. As a result of land redistribution, the Tatars were first deprived of the most valuable territories on the South Coast, in the valleys of Salgir, Baydar, Belbek, and Kacha. According to a contemporary, those Crimeans who "living in disadvantageous places, did not fall under the yoke of favors" of the peninsula's new masters were in the best position, while otherwise "almost everything went to the jesters and favorites" of the tsars (Mertvago D. B., 1867, 179).

There were also theorists of Tatar land dispossession like Count Mordvinov. He constantly reminded Petersburg that the aborigines, despite their submission, were inwardly disloyal "due to the novelty of their adoption and their eternal, on the contrary, hatred towards Christians." Land couldn't be left to them also because "all tools and horses were taken

from them everywhere" (Mordvinov N. S. 1872, 201). Thus, the Crimean Tatars, "guilty" of uninvited newcomers depriving them of means of production, were condemned to accelerated extinction.

This direct genocide was supplemented by harmful interference in the very system of ancient Crimean biocenosis, in the nature and ecology of the region. Alien cultural immigrants dispersed arable land, a huge number of springs that previously irrigated the steppe fell into decline, dried-up fields became overgrown with weeds, cultivated forest gardens went wild. From the first months of annexation, "they began to cut down forest indiscriminately. Not spared were huge walnut, pear, apple, and other trees... Like aspen and birch, they cut down everything that was closer" (Mertvago D. B., 179).

Because of such economic policy, famine became a constant phenomenon. The threat of death pushed the indigenous population to emigrate; there were many such demographic catastrophes in Crimea - there were three great exoduses alone (i.e., encompassing more than a third of residents): immediately after annexation, in the 1860s, and at the beginning of the 20th century. By the most modest calculations, the Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey alone far exceeds the number of Crimean Tatars now scattered throughout the CIS countries.

The resistance of the doomed people was minimal. Only in the initial period of colonization were several local uprisings recorded, which were brutally suppressed. Subsequently, "for suspicion of agitation or sympathies with Turkey, they were punished mercilessly. Pacification of the region occurred only after the extermination of a significant part of the Tatars" (Wolfson B., 1941, 63).

The exact number of victims of punitive actions is unknown to us - it was concealed from the very beginning. The specifics of the adopted measures were also concealed, apparently terrible even for that cruel time (usually the methods of suppressing peasant unrest were not kept secret). Thus, in a report from Karasubazar dated April 28, 1783, we read: "The

execution continued secretly from his excellency, and also over some criminals, during which the mentioned 46 people were punished with hard labor, whipping, and some ear cutting" (ibid.); that is, the other, unmentioned punishments were, judging by their concealment from "his excellency," even more brutal.

There were victims of seemingly general imperial policy not specifically directed against Tatars. Its next target (after Crimea) was Istanbul, the straits, the Archipelago islands (Schneider D. S., 1930, 43; Solovyev S. M., 1862, 24, et al.). But the long-suffering peninsula was destined to become the battlefield in another clash between the aggressive empire and its opponents. While the Crimean War cost the lives of thousands of Russian soldiers and officers, their share in the multi-million population of the empire was negligibly small. Much more noticeable was the blow dealt by the war to the economy of the vast power, to the Russian people. But both these losses are incomparable with the catastrophe that befell the Crimean Tatars in the first months of the war.

Initially, the authorities confiscated livestock; marauders, mainly Cossacks, took what remained. They also "shamelessly devastated grain pits if they managed to find them" (Stulli F. S., 1894, 507, 517) - the dashing Don Cossacks sold cattle and grain as "trophies" to army quartermasters. Over time, peasants placed on the brink of starvation began to fear "our Cossacks and even soldiers" more than "western foreigners" (Markov E. L., 1902, 95). The latter "looked at all of Crimea as traitors. Under this banner, they drove away flocks of sheep, burned entire villages... they broke into houses like conquerors, smashed mirrors, slashed feather beds, furniture, searching for treasures (?). If a group of Tatars gathered somewhere, about 20 people, they were shot at. This too was treason" (Op. cit., 106).

In fact, during the period of occupation of part of Crimea by the allies, when unique conditions were created for "treason" against Russian colonizers, there wasn't a single case of Tatars supporting the enemy. On the contrary, the common opinion was that without Tatar support, Russia would have lost the war "immediately: all medical supplies and provisions were in their hands" (Op. cit., 103).

The terrible post-war famine, unknown in native Russian provinces, struck Crimea and became the cause of the second great emigration. No one tried to stop it, even by reducing levies on devastated Tatar farms. On the contrary, settlers multiplying like mushrooms after rain rubbed their hands - the mass exodus caused land prices to drop from 20 to 3 rubles per desyatina. In the government, emigration was generally considered "a happy accident for the region" (Usov S. A., 1925, 50). To develop this unexpected success in the Russification of Crimea, settlers (but not Tatars!) received treasury support, and from 1865 to 1895, the peninsula's population tripled despite emigration.

The abolition of serfdom proceeded peculiarly in Crimea. Since Tatars were not enfranchised, they practically received nothing; meanwhile, the share of Russian landowners didn't decrease but increased to 50% of all land, ordinary settlers - to 28%. Stolypin's reforms also brought the indigenous people not land, but new infringements and restrictions based on nationality.

Only after February 1918, when the National Party (Milli-Firka) was created in Crimea, did some hopes dawn for the Tatars. This party's program included establishing democratic governance without national distinctions, creating a people's republic, and including it in free Russia on a federal basis. The Muslim Committee, the only legal body of Crimean Tatar representatives, took a similar position. Obviously, its mistake was delaying the transfer of land to peasants, although for an understandable reason: landowners wouldn't give up land voluntarily, and Tatars wouldn't resort to violence. They hoped to solve the problem in a traditionally peaceful way, rejecting repressions and oppression so characteristic of the old, imperial power.

The Bolsheviks were not satisfied with this. People deeply alien to Crimea and its traditions (there wasn't a single representative of the indigenous people among them), they advocated

for a violent, bloody breaking of established relations. Already in autumn 1917, Sverdlov characterized Crimea as a "stronghold of evolutionists," calling for the defeat of local "social compromisers," declaring that "Sevastopol should become the Kronstadt of the South" (Gaven Yu., 1922, 5).

The cause of Red Terror in Crimea was the Bolsheviks' defeat in October 1917 in the local Constituent Assembly elections. Bloody atrocities began immediately. The Bolsheviks' terror was condemned at the first Crimean Tatar national assembly - Kurultai, which set its task "based on ideas of brotherhood, feelings of a united Homeland to act in the name of reunification with the democratic world, in the name of salvation from the claws of bloody revolution, which destroyed monuments, religious buildings, burned palaces to the ground, trampled the generous and beautiful Crimean peninsula" (Kandymov Yu., 1991, 3).

In winter 1918, using Russian armed forces stationed in Crimea, the Constituent Assembly was liquidated. This was a typical suppression of a "colony rebellion," although the empire itself practically no longer existed. Typical "gunboat diplomacy" continued, and the glorious Black Sea Fleet willingly played the role of the latter. In the beginning bloody orgy of reprisals against democrats - "evolutionists," only Tatar squadrons remaining loyal to people's power offered organized resistance to detachments of sailors and soldiers moving from Sevastopol. That's why the initial phase of civil war in Crimea appeared "to many as a struggle between Russians and Tatars" (Bunegin M. F., 1927, 118). Of course, it proceeded on a different plane: the emerging dictatorship was strangling freedom and democracy. But it was hardly accidental that in these battles the former was represented by the Russian army, and the latter by Crimean Tatars.

However, later the famous call of "Pravda" (October 18, 1918): "All power to the Cheka!" was supplemented in Crimea with: "We are threatened by military dictatorship of Tatars!" (Priboy, 1918, No. 117), which shifted terror onto nationalistic rails. Lenin's emissaries incited discord between Russian Crimeans and the indigenous people, trying, not unsuccessfully, to attract the former to their side - military detachments were only enough for punitive raids. After some time, in all cities and most small villages, Bolshevik

administrative and political organs emerged, activist groups from representatives of the Russian diaspora (Russians, Ukrainians, Jews). Understandably, even for Tatar intelligentsia, not to mention craftsmen and peasants, "this was simply the return of Russians, their power, violence produced by Russian troops over the awakening national movement" (Bunegin M. F., 1927, 123).

Obviously, now is not the time to paint half-forgotten pictures of Red Terror in Crimea - for contemporary readers they would seem terrifyingly implausible. Let's just briefly mention the Sevastopol bloodbath of February 21-24, 1918 (no less than the historical Stockholm one of 1520) - Tatars were executed by hundreds, government member status played no role. Let's recall the raid of Black Sea Fleet ships "Romania" and "Truvor" to Yevpatoria - on their decks, civilians were terribly tortured, guilty only of being "national bourgeois," that is, Tatars. In total, more than a thousand civilians were tortured or executed in this town. Here in Crimea, in winter 1917-18, people began to be burned in locomotive furnaces - apparently for the first time (Bunin A. I., 1991, 5). When as a result of the "victorious march of Revolution" the indigenous people on the peninsula decreased, in the same 1918, the SSR Taurida was created. The ancient toponym "Crimea" was naturally absent from the new state's coat of arms - it was headed exclusively by "Crimeans" in the first generation.

Having passed through German, then Allied, another Bolshevik occupation, breaking free from the heavy hands of Denikin's cartels, in November 1920 Crimea again found itself under the power of Russian Bolsheviks. The new terror, led by Bela Kun, Zemlyachka and other Leninists, didn't stop until 60,000 Tatars were executed. This took almost a year, only then was some semblance of law established. But even these victims proved insufficient, and in 1921-22 an artificial famine was organized, costing the lives of another 60,000 Tatars. This is how Lenin's November (1920) directive to "digest" the main population of the peninsula was fulfilled (See in: Vozgrin V. E., 1992, 424). It, as the future showed, was still subject to replacement by Slavic-speaking settlers.

The task appeared urgent because there were still enough Tatars to maintain old traditions. The indigenous people did not succumb to the general epidemic of so-called labor enthusiasm and communist ideologization. In this connection, mass (already Stalinist) terror resumed here not in the 30s, but in the 20s with the execution of the first chairman of the Crimean Central Executive Committee, Veli Ibrahimov. Then 3,500 people of Crimean Tatar creative intelligentsia and clergy were shot or exiled, along with tens of thousands of the most educated and promising youth. They were followed by 36,000 individual farmers and "kulaks" who refused to join collective farms.

In 1929, the Crimean Tatar alphabet of ancient Arabic origin was replaced with Latin script. After this, Tatar books, magazines, musical notes, and manuscripts were collected from everywhere, from private collections and state libraries, and burned. Many rarities and even completely unique works and documents that had miraculously survived the fiery auto-da-fé of 1833 were lost. Almost nothing could be saved; attempting to hide from the NKVD a book or manuscript of any era written in the old script meant arrest and exile.

By 1941, the population had fallen to its lowest number in history of a quarter million (not counting tens of thousands of prisoners and exiles). With the beginning of the war, 60,000 people were mobilized into the Red Army. During the German occupation, the Reich's policy of Germanizing Crimea became apparent. Already in the first months of the "new order," 85,000 Tatars were placed behind the barbed wire of a labor camp near Berlin. This action pushed part of the Tatars capable of bearing arms (there were very few left now) to participate in the partisan movement. Some of them took command positions (I. Bekirov, U. Yenileyev, A. Kerimov, and others), A. Dagdzhi became the head of one of the largest (1,260 people) partisan detachments.

Such activity provoked a quick reaction from the occupiers: mass shootings of Tatar hostages began. The Germans burned people in mosques, entire villages with their population. Of the first 89 villages destroyed in this way, 52 were purely Tatar (Vatap, 1990, No. 1, 12). Nevertheless, it must be noted that the pace of genocide of Crimean Tatars under the Germans significantly decreased: the number of victims was measured in "mere"

hundreds, not tens of thousands as before the war. Perhaps this is why the seemingly completely alien German rule appeared preferable to some than the Stalin regime. However, the number of Tatar collaborationists (according to A. Nekrich's calculations, among 1,632 Crimeans who collaborated with the Germans, there were also Tatars) bears no comparison to the thousands awarded orders and medals at the front (5 Crimean Tatars became Heroes of the Soviet Union, one twice).

These data are not provided to "justify" the people - they don't need it. Under conditions of prolonged and systematic physical and cultural genocide, in the struggle for survival, a people has the right to any means, up to assisting the political enemies of the metropolis that consciously exterminating the colonized ethnos. No, the facts and figures provided are only proof that the justification for the 1944 deportation and new wave of Stalinist genocide by the people's "betrayal" is crudely falsified. This is evident from the simple fact that deportation began even before the occupation, in September 1941 (Fakhri P., 1991), when there could be no talk of any "treason of Crimean Tatars."

Neither partisan heroism nor front-line awards saved people from deportation. In the staged trains, and then in the bare steppes of Asia in the first, most difficult year of exile, almost half of the people perished. In Crimea itself, residents of places difficult to access for deportation and the seriously ill were killed. The surviving special settlers were forbidden under threat of prison to leave the reservations where hunger and disease reigned.

Then special settlements began to "open," but neither in the 60s nor in the 70s, when Crimean Tatars were officially rehabilitated, did anything change. During these years, almost 2 million Russians and Ukrainians moved to Crimea, while Tatars were told there was no place left for them.

In the 1980s, the people lost their last hope for Moscow's justice, and unauthorized return to Crimea began. Tatars were beaten with batons, gassed, their dugouts crushed by bulldozers. But despite the abuse, arrests, stages to Asia, demolition of new buildings and

other actions of local Slavic-speaking authorities, the number of repatriates steadily grew. Now (summer 1993) it has reached 230,000, almost half of the Crimean Tatars in the CIS.

Even now they are not given plots for construction in old residential areas. At the same time, full-sized allotments for dachas of non-Tatar Crimeans are being cut everywhere on the most convenient and prestigious land strips along highways and on the coast. The number of such plots is 270,000, while half that number of plots transferred to the once homeless aborigines of the peninsula would be sufficient for a complete and final solution to the Crimean Tatar housing problem. If we consider that the mentioned 270,000 families of dacha owners are somehow provided with housing (often occupying ancient Tatar houses), then a simple conclusion is inevitable: discrimination against the indigenous population continues.

Moreover, not only in this area. Even Tatars already registered in Crimea are given only work that doesn't require high qualifications; the intelligentsia receives positions in their specialties in the rarest cases. About renting, there's nothing to say - land and other means of production are given to anyone but Tatars, although it was the ancestors of the latter who transformed the once wild peninsula into paradise.

Thus new grievances layer upon old ones, the crime continues in the post-imperial era. And only by the great patience of the people, their two centuries of experience surviving in the most brutal of colonial regimes can one explain the relative calm in Crimea, the absence of bloody interethnic conflicts. The most explosive element (as everywhere), youth, even now obeys the elders, who maintain restraint, traditional contemptuous humility. The entire people remains faithful to the peace-making policy of the Kurultai elected in 1991 and the national plenipotentiary representative body of the people, the Mejlis. Protest actions are conducted only in cases of particularly brutal physical reprisals by authorities against repatriates, whose only guilt is love for their Homeland. But even these protests are expressed in peaceful demonstrations and occasionally - self-immolations. The authorities,

apparently, care little about this - after all, it's Tatars who suffer and die, not, God forbid, the zealously protected new population of the ancient land.

Regarding cultural genocide, in all its multifaceted nature and results, it has risen to a universal level, becoming comprehensive, reaching the scale of distorting the biocenosis. The nature and partly the climate of Crimea have been changed beyond recognition by alien cultural newcomers. The springs of crystal-clear water, once lovingly protected by Tatars, have disappeared; humidity has increased from dozens of artificial reservoirs and mosquitoes unknown in Crimea have multiplied; canals have salinated the soil; mountain slopes are covered with unhealing sores of quarries. Beaches have lost their multicolored pebbles, and the steppe and forest - a significant part of endemic flora and fauna. Faceless cities and workers' settlements, alien to Crimea, have grown monstrously like tumors. Overall, urban and natural landscapes have been adjusted to some average template, created not here but far to the north.

Neocolonial, parasitic exploitation of the peninsula's nature has reached its apogee: having depleted local mineral reserves, uninvited "commanders of the economy" have long been importing fuel and chemical raw materials from the north to process them far from the metropolis. They typically use the dirtiest, most destructive to Crimea's unique nature, but cheap production processes. In their noise and thunder, the quiet voices of Crimean Tatars cannot be heard, the only ones for whom the death of nature is equivalent to their own disappearance from the face of the Earth as a distinctive ethnos.

Actions of a not-so-general nature, selectively directed against the indigenous people's culture, are constantly being conducted. In the 1940s, all old toponyms were replaced with Russian ones, hundreds of mosques, cemeteries, marble and diabase fountains, entire medieval quarters, fortress walls and gates were demolished. Civil architecture buildings were also demolished if they showed Crimean motifs; at best, Tatar inscriptions and ornaments were scraped off them. Cypress alleys were cut down, replaced by columns of

"Russian birches." Ancient settlements were cut through by deep concrete foundations of ugly "high-rises" intended for newcomers from the north.

The destruction of traces of Crimean Tatar material culture required enormous resources. Money was found even in the hungry post-war time, and later such works were already provided uninterruptedly. They are not yet finished - the mosque of Plodovoye village was demolished quite recently; which of the surviving historical monuments is next remains unknown.

Let's try to pose the ripening questions: what caused the anti-Tatar policy in general, where are the origins of the ideology that justified it, what forces directed this policy in different epochs? Finally, how did a society traditionally considering itself either "God-bearing," or the "light of the world," or the bulwark of the highest type of morality (communist) give birth to anti-Tatar genocide? And who directly implemented it?

4

Two permanent sources of Russia's anti-Tatar policy (both old and new) can be traced:

- a general one, designated by the term "imperial syndrome,"
- a specific one, in the form of a chain of concrete programs, changing in form but not in their dual goal (capture of Crimea, its Russification).

The appearance of the first source is usually dated to the end of the 15th century. According to the imperial idea, colonization, if carried out by Russia, is considered just and honorable, the advance of Russians to the east, south, and west - natural. The interests of colonized peoples were not taken into account; they were "no more than gatherings, gangs" (Anisimov E. V. 1989, 50). Notably, such opinions maintained viability over half a millennium; even in the 20th century, one could hear "we didn't take this space: flat, open, defenseless - it imposed itself on us; it forced us to master it" (Ilyin I. A., 1991, 12). This

refers, naturally, not only to the Great Steppe. Adherents of the "lesser evil" theory consider that Russian soldiers and Cossacks were generally benefactors to conquered peoples.

The Crimean Tatars should obviously be included among the latter. Indeed, otherwise the capture of Crimea is difficult to explain. It presented no threat since the mid-17th century (politically more urgent was the danger from European powers concerned about Russian expansion). Economic justification can't be found here either - at least until the development of Ukraine's black earth riches. Thus, the annexation of Crimea was caused exclusively by tsarist ambitions, rather provincial ones³, and the genocide in 18th century Crimea - by the desire to strategically secure these claims: not for nothing did Catherine order inscribed on Sevastopol's city gates: "Road to Constantinople" (Zhigarev S., 1896, 221).

The second cause of genocide, socio-economic, manifested only in the 19th century with the growing problem of Russian serfdom. The despotic system felt danger both from above (Decembrists and many others) and below (transformation of spontaneous riots into conscious and purposeful peasant unrest in mid-19th century). The weakening regime had to consider any potential threats, deliver preemptive strikes. One of the targets for such strikes became Crimean society with its traditions of freedom and equality. And the fact that actions against a peaceful people acquired uniquely violent, cruel, threatening character here was explained by Crimea's dissimilarity to other "new lands" of the empire.

The tsars weren't worried about Ukraine - already half a century after the Pereyaslav Rada, it was visible that local serfdom was acquiring "domestic," Russian features and scope.

Having captured the Baltic region, Peter I could change nothing there at all. The Ostsee serfdom system was at such a level of totality that Russia had yet to "rise" to - and the tsar gladly washed his hands, leaving local peasants in complete personal dependence on barons.

Polish serfdom was equally universal; and here the tsars could not intervene, legitimizing the old rights of lords over their wordless, downtrodden "serfs."

A roughly similar picture emerges in Moldavia and Wallachia, where local boyars faithfully served Petersburg rulers because their power over serfs was fully preserved.

In the Caucasus, the situation was more complex. In those regions where relations between lords and commoners had developed, as in Georgia (where peasants completely depended on princes), friction between landowners and Russian authorities didn't arise. If individual tribes and peoples fought against the army bringing enslavement under threat of losing personal freedom, then the reaction was corresponding. As General P. Tsitsianov wrote in such situations, "you will await my visit, and then I won't just burn your houses - I'll burn everything, from your children and wives I will take out their entrails" (*Auxiliary Disciplines*, 1939, 23).

Thus, only Crimea broke out of this unified picture of the empire's European part, despite ethnic, cultural, and economic multi-component nature that most worried Petersburg. Only Crimea had long overtaken the all-Russian cart creaking on all wheels, still governed by feudal laws. And from the Crimean people, one could neither "take out entrails" (unlike, say, the Chechen people, it was absolutely peaceful), nor ignore them (like the free but extremely remote from the explosive zone of serfdom Pomors or Siberians).

The real danger lay in the fact that the incomparably freer, more open, independent lifestyle of Crimean Tatars would prove attractive to Slavic neighbors, would prove a bad example for serfs, if it had long attracted even free Cossacks (who repeatedly asked the khan for citizenship).⁴ Yes, this was a dangerous example, and the fact that it was unique in its kind meant only that equally non-traditional means had to be found for its elimination.

Different methods were found. Despite all the brutality of the Caucasian campaigns, matters there were limited to military-political suppression. But there was no destruction of indigenous peoples' culture, which, incidentally, has been magnificently preserved to our days. In Crimea, however, Russian authorities, having correctly identified the source of open society's vitality - Crimean Tatar cultural traditions - began uprooting these traditions

without delay. The methods were uncomplicated but effective: deportation of the most culturally developed part of the population, complete restructuring of the traditional economy, discrediting or physical elimination of national intelligentsia, strangulation of public education, complete severance of mutually enriching ancient connections between Crimean Tatar culture and Turkic and Mediterranean areas, destruction of the region's ecological structure, changing the containing landscape according to foreign cultural models, and finally, a national policy of discrimination against indigenous population, condemning them to hunger, lawlessness, physical and spiritual degradation or, as an alternative, to mass emigration.

The "human factor" was not overlooked either. Crimean Tatars were persistently convinced that they were second-class people, that the settlers' superiority lay in their being Russian and Christian. Particularly intolerant, Black Hundred-pogrom relations between the newcomer element and indigenous Crimeans - Tatars, Karaites, Krymchaks, Jews - were established in the early years of the 20th century. This period is marked (almost for the first time in Crimea's history!) by nationally-motivated conflicts, instigated by authorities and carried out by masses of mainland lumpen-proletariat settled in the peninsula's port and industrial cities.

The above-listed government measures led to the desired result only partially. Of course, material culture suffered cruel damage and fell into prolonged decline - this was inevitable with such steady massive offensive against it. However, if we approach culture as the primary way of seeing the world, then its most important components, national mentality and national psychology, survived. And if, for example, xenophobia is considered characteristic of the specifically Russian way of orientation in the world (Sedov L. A., 1989, 182), then neither it nor intolerance toward those of different faiths could be implanted into Tatar consciousness. Contactability, tolerance, openness, sense of human dignity in all strata and social groups, cultivated by many hundreds of years of life in a free society, could not be eradicated for completely understandable reasons.

The totalitarian system in its purest form (Byzantine), almost entirely adopted by Rus', could not take root in medieval Crimea. How then could Russia's secondary, mediated totalitarianism have any influence on the strengthened and established centuries-old traditions of humanism and openness of Crimean society?

When Crimean Tatars encountered the totalitarian ideology (and practice) of the Bolsheviks, nothing fundamentally new was discovered in it. Both the imperial perception of Russia's "messianic" world-historical role⁵ and its people, and the corresponding attitude toward other peoples not belonging to the "vanguard of advanced humanity" remained the same. According to the definition of the well-known political scientist, Cadet B. Mirsky, this was a new variant of "old, distinctive, domestic Black Hundredism" (Posl. Novosti, Feb. 23, 1921), though the discovery of this truth belongs to D. Merezhkovsky: "before our eyes the Romanov Black Hundred merges with Lenin's" (Novaya Rech, November 28, 1917).

For further development of this work's theme, it's necessary to touch upon a subject that I have until now tried to avoid. Frankly speaking, due to its rare ungratefulness for any author - it concerns the role of the masses in government atrocities, their more or less voluntary participation in regime crimes against humanity, specifically - in genocide.

Attempts to find the main culprits of the Crimean Tatar people's national tragedy so far fall into emptiness.⁶ However, recently this lacuna in domestic historiography was finally publicly identified - to our shame, abroad. French historian Marc Ferro not only named it but also pointed out the main reasons for its emergence: scholars avoided it for fear of being accused of Russophobia, while politicians feared losing popularity among the main mass of our voters (1992, 192-193).

After this, it becomes impossible to pretend that the indicated problem doesn't exist in nature. A scholar is obligated to evaluate the known facts one way or another, however painful they may be for national feelings.

Special analysis of the "traditionally powerful mechanism of power in Russia" shows that it relied on nothing other than "specific structures of mass consciousness" (Sedov L. A., 1989, 173). It was in the masses, it turns out, where "vested interests" were strong - the basis of any expansion (Muravyev V. P., 1990, 196), especially in colonies where Russian settlers found themselves in alien natural and national surroundings. Overall, a situation developed similar to Russia's position in the "concert" of European powers, with the same results. The universal distrust of Russia, caused by undisputedly unique-scale seizures, was met with a quite understandable reaction of constant irritation and blind self-assertion. That's why both in Europe and along Russian peripheries, the echo of the first "deportator" of Crimeans, A. V. Suvorov's semi-idiotic exclamation long resonated without fading: "We are Russians - what delight!"

And somewhat later, the known law of "colonial ingratitude" began to operate, according to which the metropolis people develop a "conviction that their good feelings are insulted, their role, constantly officially emphasized, is actually diminished" (Anisimov E. V., 1989, 54) as "natives" lack a sense of gratitude and so on. From here it's a short step to former settlers' antipathy toward them. And immediately a more general rule comes to mind: "Genocide is carried out by the army or police, but with the silent, and sometimes jubilant consent of the dominant nation" (Gabrielyan G., 1992).

And one is no longer surprised that soldiers not only executed the order to evict Tatars but acted with hunting enthusiasm, accompanied the monstrous action with insults and cruelties that were not sanctioned at all. On the other hand, not a single attempt by Russian neighbors to help Tatars, hide them from deportation, etc., was noted. In other places of Stalinist deportations, such natural sympathy was not uncommon: "Several residents of Georgia were arrested for harboring 'enemies of the people.' Kumyks carefully preserved Chechen cemeteries, didn't allow a single grave to be desecrated," "Mountain Jews categorically refused to occupy the vacated houses and apartments of Chechens and Ingush" (Prelovskaya I., 1992).

The explanation here suggests itself. Caucasians hated the executors of genocide and sympathized with its victims, even those of different tribes. In Crimea, however, the civil Slavic-speaking population, before the trains with Tatars disappeared from sight, rushed to occupy their houses, drive away cattle, loot property, etc. Many testimonies about this have also been preserved, as well as about the still frequent hostile attitude of some Russian-speaking Crimeans toward returning aborigines (exception - indigenous Christian Crimeans), which is also explicable: it's natural for a person to be suspicious of those they have cruelly and unjustly wronged.

Therefore, Soloukhin's words that the Russian people suffered more than those they colonized, if true at all, is only in the sense that prison destroys both prisoners and jailers, but in terms of morality - the latter inevitably lose more.

In everything else, Russians still suffered less than Crimean Tatars. By the most modest calculations, over a hundred years (mid-19th - mid-20th centuries) the Crimean Tatar population decreased fivefold - entirely due to colonial policy. Russia, fortunately, didn't have to make such sacrifices. Russian cultural values were generally preserved: even after the rampage of Bolshevik barbarians, the country counts not hundreds but thousands of churches and other monuments of national architecture. In Crimea, there aren't even ten of them. Russia still ranks first in the world in mass of archival sources (both in absolute terms and per capita) - the national archives and book funds of the Crimean Tatar people were completely destroyed. Obviously, there's no need to continue this sad comparison. Since "to understand is to forgive," let's prefer a different goal: let's try to understand what moved the people to complicity in crime.

This task, extremely complex in itself, will require deep excursions into areas not directly within the framework of the stated theme (we apologize in advance for the extensiveness of these excursions).

To begin with, we'll have to return to the ideas of tsarism and Bolshevism already touched upon in this work. They are named here with a known degree of approximation as totalitarian, although it would be more accurate to say that totalitarianism brought them together, was the most common characteristic feature for both. The masses' attitude toward these ideas was, as evidenced by an extensive body of sources, polar opposite north and south of Perekop, both during the khanate period and later. Such dissimilarity in sympathies and antipathies of Slavic and Crimean Tatar societies became even more striking after the revolution. From its first months, the purely Russian doctrine of Bolshevism was quite limitedly perceived by the broad popular masses of Russia and Ukraine. There are many contemporary testimonies to this; let's refer only to the most authoritative of them.⁷

The Bolsheviks couldn't have suppressed the White movement without having support from the masses, attracted by Lenin's declared "redistribution," that is, freedom to plunder. After all, even village dekulakization was carried out by fellow villagers themselves. "Activists" were found in every village; Communist cells sprang up everywhere like mushrooms, the number of informer-worker and village correspondents multiplied, then Komsomol and Pioneer organizations - also on an entirely voluntary basis.

This devotion to totalitarian power had long traditions⁸, was natural, sincere, and withstood serious tests. For example, in Ukraine, "German occupation drove the Bolsheviks underground, but as soon as the Germans left, the entire country immediately became permeated with Bolshevism and fell under Soviet power" (Trubetskoy E., 1992).

As Prof. I. L. Mamiofa recently noted, "the people of Russia showed their will not in the Constituent Assembly elections, but on the fields of civil war" (ChP, Jan. 27, 1993). The success of Bolshevism among masses who accepted the idea of class, that is, openly fratricidal war, is so offensive to our authors that some tried to explain it from a psychopathological viewpoint, that is, as "mass mental illness" (Trubetskoy E., *ibid.*), "age-old moral vices nested in our people, inter-class and inter-human distrust and ill will, often flaring into hatred" (Struve P. B., 1990, 248).

The list of such attempts to explain the striking phenomenon of the "Bolshevism disease" can easily be continued, but let's try instead to find out why the Crimean Tatar people proved immune to this disease.

Deeply understanding, loving and protecting their native nature, feeling themselves part of it to the same degree as in antiquity,⁹ perhaps because of this more psychologically stable, more conservative, fanatically devoted to the land, Crimean Tatars saw the highest pleasure and meaning of life in free labor on ancestral fields. This fundamental feature of national character alone, polar opposite to Bolshevik parasitism,¹⁰ could explain the fact of the Tatar masses' rejection of Lenin's doctrine. But there were other reasons for the incompatibility of Leninism with Crimean mentality.

The tightness of the Crimean community in a peninsular (practically insular) society played a unifying role even during ethnogenesis. But later too it consolidated society, developing both discipline and, more importantly, solidarity between strata and estates. This consolidation was not hindered by non-economic coercion or rigid social partitions; over time it reached the highest level, becoming the basis of moral, spiritual, political homogeneity of the ethnos, its cultural unity. And, what's more important at this moment - dedication to creative activity incompatible with Bolshevism became the brightest feature of ethno-social psychology, unified for the entire people: a phenomenon unique for Europe; a distant analogy can be found perhaps only in Iceland.

And least of all in Russia, where "the part of the people who received education immediately thereby perceived a worldview alien to the people, broke away from the people, lived without connection to Russian history" (Muravyev V. N., 1990, 193). A Tatar who received higher education at the local Zinjirli Madrasa, Ankara or even the Sorbonne still felt part of the people. He inevitably returned to the harmony of people's life, remaining the same Crimean Muslim as his countrymen. And the empire's effort before and after 1917 to split this nationwide culture, to destroy unified traditions led to directly opposite results.

From foreign cultural pressure suffered not part of the population (lower classes or elite), but 100% of the people. This set another, additional common life goal - resistance, which consolidated the people even more.

These were effective vaccinations against cultural stratification of the ethnos, but not only that. Having a long-lasting effect (they were regularly repeated by northern "doctors"!), they protected the people from the danger of contracting the mentioned disease, which could only become epidemic in a disconnected, split society permeated with intra-national envy and malice. We repeat, in the unified Tatar society there simply could not arise "on one hand boundless rationalistic pride of an insignificant handful of leaders, on the other - unbridled instincts and desires of an indefinite multitude of masses" (Struve P. B., 1990, 242), as it was north of Perekop.

It was from there that Bolshevism came. It was imposed in Crimea almost exclusively by force, although it enjoyed support from part of the peninsula's population, as in other borderlands of Russia, its support base became the Russian diaspora, who considered membership in the RCP(b) as a symbol of belonging to their old homeland and a form of national self-assertion (Agursky M., 19, 152). Understandably, Tatars had nothing in common with these party members either.

And later, in the interwar period, Crimean Tatar society maintained outwardly subtle but fundamental differences from the general Soviet society. It's known that by the Russian people, in whom the monarchical principle and monarchical mentality were traditionally strong, Stalinism was perceived as something not only familiar but necessary. Stalinist ideology completely replaced religion in godless Russia, which was impossible in any other country. Stalinism and the Soviet system were also objectively beneficial to the majority of the population, who sincerely supported this regime - even prison couldn't always extinguish the ecstatic faith in the leader and his system.

The picture in post-revolutionary Crimea, where socialism was introduced by force of arms, was almost directly opposite. The indigenous people didn't need a surrogate religion, for which there was simply no free niche in their worldview system - Tatars remained Muslims.

Islam was and remained a solid spiritual foundation of the nation also because it really helped maintain positions of tolerance, non-violence, humanism in the totalitarian era. Which distinguished it, incidentally, from Orthodoxy, which lost its authority in the Slavic mass of the country with striking ease, giving way to a new ideology of inhumanity.

Such alignment of forces, quite evident to attentive Chekists, obviously became the reason for earlier repressions in Crimea than in other regions, as we've seen - they tried to bring Taurida to some all-Russian "common denominator."

But perhaps this goal, had it been achieved, would have brought Tatars benefits in the form of new levels and directions of education, development of industrial technology, science, etc.? This question is not rhetorical; with similar arguments, "concern" for aborigines by native Soviet power, and earlier - Russia, both Bolsheviks and tsars justified their policy. One can hear about the "high mission" of Russians in the "half-asleep Crimea" even today. (See e.g., in: Lyusy A., 1991, 3). Therefore, we must address this repeatedly galvanized theory as well.

As known, society's development can follow one of two main paths: "progress" or "historical" (for more on terms see: Kantor K. M., 1992). The first carries scientific-technical progress, relatively rapid growth in overall welfare. But - also alienation of property from the individual, differentiation of society, dehumanization of interpersonal relations. Typically, this path, the path of progressive mode of production, is accompanied by regression of spirituality, often - and personality.

The path of "historical" development, conversely, doesn't guarantee accelerated growth of material goods. It's rather characterized by constant transformation of external wealth into internal, growth of moral perfection. Here too progress takes place, but it's progress of spirit, acquisition of ever greater fullness of life and ability for personal self-realization. Naturally, this requires sacrificing speed of technical progress, development of prestigious scientific disciplines and directions, etc., as means here are both more modest in themselves and spent on somewhat different goals. Therefore such society appears backward -

externally, of course. And one shouldn't grieve about its fate, "progress" in the European understanding of this word is no more necessary for such societies than, say, a car of the latest, most prestigious model was needed by the sage Roerich in his mountain abode.

The "historical" path of development was characteristic for pre-colonial Crimea; it was being transferred to the rails of the "progress" path in the 19th-20th centuries. It would seem nothing catastrophic was in this (if not counting as value the traditions of the indigenous people, whose choice no one was or is interested in). But the paradox is that neither old nor new Russia, forcing its colonies onto the European path of progress, didn't itself possess its idea (we're not even asking how Russia with its 90% illiteracy could civilize Crimea, a country of universal literacy!). Where could an empire lead its subjects when "Western norms" of culture didn't take root even in the 19th century, and in the 20th Stalin ascended to the Kremlin throne, also known as a "statesman of Eastern, Asian type" (Berdyayev N., 1990, 70, 120)?

Crimean Tatars were forced to sacrifice their values, being offered new ones in return, which turned out to be chimeric. Crimea was deprived of its centuries-old cultural, spiritual, ethical achievements, but in return it certainly didn't become a developed region of European type. From time immemorial Crimean Tatars supplied high-quality goods of their own production abroad, and imported raw materials. Now the empire stuck in the past, a hopeless raw material appendage of the West¹¹ dragged Crimea down with it, with its traditionally dynamic economy, its free market and society demonstrating a higher type of political and social development.

In all these areas, the "path of progress" of Russian design led Crimeans not even back to already passed stages of development, not simply to socio-economic regression. Barbaric realities never seen here before were introduced to Crimea, such as lawlessness of those in power, closed borders, serfdom, censorship, system of non-economic coercion, etc. And certainly, for the first time in history, Crimea was reduced to the shameful status of a raw material appendage to... a raw material appendage.

As for the railway and other technical innovations, Tatars had the right to regard them like one of the leaders of the Algerian revolution, who noted: "Electricity doesn't make me happy if the French installed it in a house that's no longer mine."

Much of what was said about economic violence applies to Russia's cultural policy in Crimea - this has already been mentioned. We'll only add that violence against Crimean culture had harmful consequences not only for Tatars. In this process, Crimea completely lost its world-historical role as an ancient center of cross-cultural connections between East and West. And in this sense, Russia degraded Taurida to the level of the Balkans, which had long performed the directly opposite mission - as a barrier between two great civilizations, Muslim and Christian, a smoldering hotbed of discord between them. With the arrival of Soviet power, such a role, imposed on Crimea from outside, became even more apparent.

N. Berdyaev noted that Russians are a people of extremes, of "obsession" (1990, 55). It's possible that the former Marxist meant the exaggerated European type of development taken to extremes in Russia - along a dialectical spiral (or polar cycles). Russia's policy always swung either right or left relative to some central vector, in principle moving gradually upward toward ideals of tolerance, democracy, general welfare. This theoretical core is generally close to the Eastern type of development: not spiral (or wave-like) but linear-progressive. By fate's will, this peaceful, evolutionary path devoid of social cataclysms became characteristic of only one European ethnos - the Crimean Tatar (not counting Karaite and Krymchak, possibly Gagauz). And the events of Crimean history over the last 75 years provide additional confirmation that it was once optimal both for the people and their land.

Russia's annexation of Crimea and all subsequent history of the Crimean people demonstrated the destructive results of the empire's "great mission" in a small neighboring state. We saw that on the eve of this national catastrophe, in the epoch of Krym-Girey, Crimean Tatar society, moving along an evolutionary path, reached a high degree of development. The fact that it surpassed Russian society in formational characteristics might seem debatable. But even in this case, it's worth remembering that a society or group of

societies can, in specific historical conditions, while not progressing formationally, move noticeably forward in civilizational indicators. These indicators were obvious to all contemporaries who observed Crimea in the brilliant epoch of Krym-Girey. At the very time when Russia's imperial structure, preparing to finally "civilize" Crimea, left the enormous country only one narrow path - further civilizational self-sealing.

The annexation broke the genetic axis on which layers of Crimean and Crimean people's history were strung. The heaviest and most difficult to compensate loss in this process was the loss of cultural material. It was woven from living nerves of historical, civilized experience, perfected from century to century, passed from generation to generation. The severance of these connections also interrupted the evolutionary progressive development of society, sharply reduced its economic and cultural level, made real the possibility of disappearance from Earth's face of a quite young ethnos full of vital forces - such was the general result of Russian "missionary work."

5

After attempting to answer the question "Who is to blame?" there remains the second, equally traditional one: "What is to be done?" We might be criticized for a simplified approach to the problem, but it seems we're dealing with a situation where we shouldn't reinvent the wheel; the answer is before our eyes, we need only turn them to modern Germany.

Here in the recent past, Nazism was just as organic, grew just as luxuriantly from the masses as Bolshevism in Russia. And Hitler with his chauvinistic policy met no less adoration and support. As a result, both in Germany and in Russia, national minorities suffered most, who were not at all involved in the genesis and cultivation of this criminal ideology.

Today, Germans provide enormous, comprehensive, effective assistance to their former victims, the Jews, without making excuses (as is customary with us) that "we are not

responsible for our fathers." Sons, if they are decent sons, pay their fathers' bills, repay their debts - and young Germans travel to Israel every summer to build houses for the people who suffered at their fathers' hands.

One could, of course, explain such a model of behavior as a gift of spiritual compassion, sense of honor, "impatience of the heart," etc. But the point is that this is not a gift in the exact sense of the word. Germans were not **endowed** with these qualities, they consciously developed them in themselves, having been horrified by what was done, having realized the fact of the German people's terrible moral fall, not being afraid to speak about it before the whole world in the language of not only historical science but also art ("Doctor Faustus" by T. Mann and many others). In short - they **repented**, all of Germany repented like Nineveh.

Not so with us. It seems that Russia somehow cannot comprehend, realize the fact that Bolshevik genocide is its and only its creation, that Marxism is not at all responsible for this crime, as sometimes claimed (genocide in Crimea began before K. Marx's birth), that it's time, finally, to apply to ourselves the words of an old Russian philosopher about "personal moral responsibility and collective national guilt" (Stepun F., 19, I. 135) and - repent.

The issue isn't just that "until the nation, on whose behalf genocide was carried out, has not repented or been punished, it is capable of repeating such crimes against humanity" (Gabrielyan G., 1992), although this concern is deeply true. The point is also that repentance for "collective national guilt" is needed more by Russians themselves than by Crimean Tatars¹² - only it can avert from Russia future trials and punishments, whose cup, apparently, is not yet depleted.

And only after this does the next step along this path seem real: restoration entirely at the expense of the Russian people of the entire pre-war situation in Crimea, starting from the state status of the national republic and ending with economic, cultural and social structures.

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