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**COLLABORATION IN THE CRIMEA DURING THE  
NAZI OCCUPATION (1941-1944)**

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## Relevance of the research topic

During World War II, about 70 million people remained on the Soviet territories occupied by the German troops and their allies<sup>1</sup>. According to different estimates, between 1 and 1.5 million Soviet citizens actively collaborated with the Nazis<sup>2</sup>. The Crimean peninsula was under the German occupation for two and a half years – from November 1941 to April 1944. There are several reasons behind choosing this region as a case-study for analyzing the phenomenon of collaboration within an occupied territory. Firstly, this region was inhabited by representatives of different nationalities both before and during the Nazi occupation. According to the 1939 census, 1 126 429 people lived on the peninsula, including 49.59% were Russians, 19.43% were Tatars, and 13.68% were Ukrainians. The minorities were represented by Jews, who composed 5.81% of all inhabitants, Armenians – 1.15%, Bulgarians – 1.36%, and Greeks – 1,38%<sup>3</sup>. Secondly, even though Crimea had become a part of the *Reichskommissariat Ukraine* during the war, the peninsula was under *Wehrmacht's* jurisdiction as there was no civil administration which was established in neighbouring Ukraine<sup>4</sup>. Finally, in Crimea, as well as in the North Caucasus, the Germans carried out a special national policy toward an ethnic minority, namely the Muslims.

In the fall of 1941, the volunteers from the Crimean Tatars began to be recruited into the German army. In general, up to 20,000 the Crimean Tatars were fighting in

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<sup>1</sup> Igor Ermolov, *Tri goda bez Stalina. Okkupatsiya: sovetskie grazhdane mezhdru natsistami i bol'shevikami. 1941-1944* (Moskva: Tsentrpoligraf, 2010), 7.

<sup>2</sup> A. E. Epifanov and S. V. Kudryashov counted that approximately 1 million Soviet citizens can be considered as active collaborators: Alexandr E. Epifanov, *Organizatsionnye i pravovye osnovy nakazaniya gitlerovskikh prestupnikov i ikh posobnikov v SSSR. 1941-1956 gg.* (Moskva: YUNITI-DANA), 74; Sergey V. Kudryashov, "Predateli, "osvoboditeli" ili zhertvy rezhima? Sovetskiy kollaboratsionizm (1941—1942)", *Svobodnaya mysl'*, no. 14 (1993): 84-98. S. I. Drobyazko noted that 1.3-1.5 Soviet citizens collaborated with the Nazi occupation regime: Sergey I. Drobyazko, "Sovetskie grazhdane v ryadach vermachta. K voprosu o chislennosti", in *Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna v otsenke molodykh*, edited by N. A. Kirsanov (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Rossiyskogo gosudarstvennogo gumanitarnogo universiteta (RGGU), 1997): 131-133.

<sup>3</sup> Manfred Oldenburg, *Ideologie und militärisches Kalkül. Die Besatzungspolitik der Wehrmacht in der Sowjetunion 1942* (Köln: Böhlau, 2004), 59.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail Tyagly, *Mesta massovogo unichtozheniya evreev Kryma v period natsistskoy okkupatsii poluostrova (1941-1944)* (Simferopol: BETS "Khesed-Shimon", 2005), 15.

the German units on the peninsula during World War II<sup>5</sup>. Along with participation in military operations, the Crimean Tatars implemented other functions supporting the occupation regime. However, they were not the only group of population who collaborated with the Germans. Various positions under the new regime were given to the representatives of other nationalities: Russians, Ukrainians, Soviet Germans, Bulgarians, etc. They received positions in the administrative apparatus of Crimean cities and villages not being directly recruited into the German army. Instead, they worked as directors at different enterprises and as police officers. Besides, they actively participated in the mobilization of the Soviet population to be sent as slave laborers to Germany. Thus, the question about how positions and functions were distributed among collaborators of different nationalities and the extent of their involvement in Nazi crimes, is relevant.

Various aspects of the phenomenon of cooperation with the Nazis on the occupied Soviet territories have been covered in numerous scholarly works. However, the question of motivation for collaboration has began to be reconsidered by historians quite recently<sup>6</sup>. The materials of currently available postwar trials against those who collaborated with the Nazi regime in Crimea have not yet been at the center of scientific historical research. The question of how collaborators belonging to different nationalities were trialed after Crimea had been liberated by the Red Army has not been raised in relation to Crimea, either. This study analyzes the peculiarities of cases against Crimean collaborators in the context of the peninsula's multi-ethnic population. This research contributes to the further study of both the phenomenon of collaboration and the transformation of the Soviet judicial system during World War II and the first postwar years. A comparative analysis of the trials against defendants of different nationalities provides an opportunity to understand whether Soviet investigators were biased against the collaborators who were ethnic Crimean Tatars.

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<sup>5</sup> David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War* (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), 226.

<sup>6</sup> Mark Edele, *Stalin's Defectors. How Red Army Soldiers became Hitler's Collaborators, 1941-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 165-178.

This study allows for proposing a more general conclusion about how the Soviet judicial system had changed since the Great Terror. Finally, the research field called *The Perpetrators Studies*, which emerged and developed in the framework of the *Holocaust Studies*, has not been properly applied to the Soviet history.

### **Literature review**

The pioneering works devoted to the occupation of Crimea during World War II were written by foreign researchers who focused on certain aspects of the Nazi occupation during the war, including the features of the partisan movement in this region or the food situation on the territory of the peninsula<sup>7</sup>. The question about cooperation between the local population and the Nazis was raised only in a general context. Collaboration was mentioned as a special phenomenon, but no further analysis of who and why became Nazi accomplices was given.

One of the most fundamental study of Crimea during the Nazi occupation appeared in 2005. The book was written by the German historian Norbert Kunz, and it analyzes the main aspects of the occupation policy on the Crimean peninsula<sup>8</sup>. This monograph remains one of the most complete and classic works on the occupation of Crimea during World War II. The historian considers the collaboration of the local population in the context of the national policy pursued by the Germans toward the Muslims. Accordingly, the main part is devoted to the collaborators among the Crimean Tatars. However, it is underlined that if the Crimean Tatars participated mainly in military operations and in campaigns against partisans, then Russians and

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Luther, "Die Krim unter deutscher Besatzung im Zweiten Weltkrieg", in *Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte*, no. 3 (1956): 28-98; Erich Hesse, *Der sowjetrussische Partisanenkrieg im Spiegel deutscher Kampfanweisungen* (Göttingen: Muster-Schmidt, 1993), 125-131; John Armstrong, Kurt DeWitt, *Organization and Control of the Partisan Movement* (Washington, 1954), 87; Rolf-Dieter Müller, "Das Scheitern der wirtschaftlichen „Blitzkriegsstrategie“, in *Der Angriff auf die Sowjetunion*, edited by H. Boog, J. Förster, J. Hoffmann, E. Klink, R. Müller, G. Ueberschär (Frankfurt am Main, 1991), 1116-1226; Alexandr Dallin, *German Rule in Russia, 1941-1945: A Study of Occupation Policies* (London: Macmillan, 1981).

<sup>8</sup> Norbert Kunz, *Die Krim unter deutscher Besatzung 1941-1944. Germanisierungsutopie und Besatzungsrealität*. (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchges., 2005).

Ukrainians cooperated more at the administrative level: they served in the police and held positions in local administration<sup>9</sup>.

The Crimean historian Oleg Romanko, who remains one of the most influential experts on the issue of collaboration of the Crimean Tatars during the Nazi occupation, has published three monographs, and each of them is devoted to the issue of collaboration in occupied Crimea<sup>10</sup>. His works describe the activities and features of the military units formed by the occupation authorities from the Muslims. He also gives a detailed description of how the Muslim Committee was formed and how it functioned under the Nazi occupation. The phenomenon of recruitment of Muslim people to the ranks of the Wehrmacht during World War II is highlighted in the monograph written by the British historian David Motadel<sup>11</sup>, who compares the Nazi policy of mobilizing Muslims in different regions.

The Israeli historian Kiril Feferman, whose work is devoted to the peculiarities of the Holocaust in Crimea and the North Caucasus<sup>12</sup>, also addresses the topic of collaboration on the territory of the peninsula. In his work, the historian examines the participation of local collaborators in persecution and extermination of the Crimean Jewish population. Cooperation of the Soviet citizens with the Nazi regime is represented by fragments from the memories of those who survived the occupation. However, the monograph does not contain any conclusions about the phenomenon of collaboration in Crimea with regard to the multi-ethnic nature of the region.

Finally, recently in Australia, Daria Rudakova defended her dissertation on civil collaboration on the occupied territories of the Ukrainian SSR and Crimea during the Nazi occupation<sup>13</sup>. Based on a single collection of documents (materials of postwar

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<sup>9</sup> Kunz, *Die Krim unter deutscher Besatzung 1941-1944*, 205-213.

<sup>10</sup> Oleg Roman'ko, *Nemetskaya okkupatsionnaya politika na territorii Kryma i natsional'ny vopros (1941-1944)* (Simferopol': Antikva, 2009); Idem, *Musul'manskie legiony vo Vtoroj Mirovoj vojne* (Moskva: AST, 2004); Idem, *Krym pod pyatoy Gitlera. Nemetskaya okkupatsionnaya politika v Krymu (1941-1944)* (Moskva: Veche, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> See the reference 5.

<sup>12</sup> Kiril Feferman, *The Holocaust in the Crimea and the North Caucasus* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2016), 392-400, 407-416.

<sup>13</sup> Daria Rudakova, "Civilian Collaboration in Occupied Ukraine and Crimea, 1941-1944: A Study of Motivation", (PhD. diss., University of Western Australia, 2018).

trials against collaborators), the work is devoted to the phenomenon of civil collaboration, mainly on the territory of Ukraine. The author did not aim to compare different types of cooperation in which Crimean inhabitants belonging to different nationalities were involved. As the dissertation focuses only on civil collaboration, there is no place for the Crimean Tatars and military collaboration as a special type of cooperation.

Traditionally, the attention of the researchers has been drawn to the question about collaboration of the Crimean Tatars with the German occupiers. At the same time, the role of collaborators among Russians and Ukrainians in Crimea has remained unstudied so far. The interest towards the Crimean Tatars can be explained by the specifics of available sources. The question of how the Crimean collaborators were trialed after the liberation of the peninsula has also not found its place in historiography, since the materials of the trials against collaborators in Crimea have remained unavailable to researchers for a long time.

Historians have expressed various opinions about the motivation of the Crimean Tatars who agreed to collaborate with the Germans. The researchers focused on the activities of the Muslim Committee, which was established in Crimea on the initiative of the German occupation authorities in 1941 in Simferopol. This organization was supposed to present the interests of the Crimean Tatars residing in the peninsula. The German historian Folker Kopp supports the idea that the Crimean Tatars worked for the German occupiers, “because they shared the Nazi ideology. Many Tatars believed that after the “final victory” of the Germans, they could hope to create an independent Crimean Tatar state in the future”<sup>14</sup>. This point of view was also expressed by another historian Gerald Reitlinger, who believes that the prisoners of war from the Armenians, Georgians and Tatars had a common reason to collaborate with the invaders - the possibility to create their own state<sup>15</sup>. In my opinion, such conclusions

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<sup>14</sup> Volker Kopp, *Hitlers Muslime. Die Geschichte einer unheiligen Allianz* (Berlin: be.bra verl., 2012), 81.

<sup>15</sup> Gerald Reitlinger, *Ein Haus auf Sand gebaut. Hitlers Gewaltpolitik in Russland 1941-1944* (Hamburg: Rütten und Loening, 1962), 339.

can be explained by the fact that historians, working with the documents from mainly German archives, found massive amount of information about the interaction of the Muslim Committee with the Third Reich<sup>16</sup>. However, almost nothing was found about at least 15,000 collaborators recruited from the Crimean Tatars. This has become possible due to the materials of closed trials against collaborators, which contain information that allows historians to look at Crimea under the occupation regime from a completely new angle.

Historians Manfred Oldenburg and David Motadel argue that forced collectivization, mass repression and a prohibition of religious freedom can explain the desire of the Crimean Tatars to work for the Nazi occupation regime during World War II. On the other hand, they claim that a certain part of the Crimean Tatars could have agreed to collaborate being motivated by pragmatic factors. Since most of the collaborators were recruited by the Germans from the camps for prisoners of war, many believed that it was better to work for the enemy than to die in the camp from hunger<sup>17</sup>.

In the Russian and the Western historiographies, opinions about the main motives of collaborators are divided. The Russian historian Andrey Malgin, who worked with the materials devoted to the history of the partisan movement in the region, is convinced, just as Kopp and Reitlinger are, that the Crimean Tatars hoped to create an independent Tatar state<sup>18</sup>. The same point of view is supported by Feferman, who considered the role of collaborators in the persecution of Jews<sup>19</sup>. The Russian researcher Iskander Gilyazov also emphasizes the nationalist sentiments and aspirations of the Crimean Tatars during World War II<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, 151; Roman'ko, *Nemetskaya okkupatsionnaya politika na territorii Kryma i natsional'ny vopros*, 90-98.

<sup>17</sup> Oldenburg, *Ideologie und militärisches Kalkül*, 119-123; Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*, 221, 251.

<sup>18</sup> Andrey Mal'gin, *Partizanskoe dvizhenie Kryma i "tatarskij vopros", 1941-1944* (Simferopol': SONAT, 2008), 92-93.

<sup>19</sup> Feferman, *The Holocaust in the Crimea and the North Caucasus*, 407-416.

<sup>20</sup> Iskander Gilyazov, "Germaniya i musul'mane Rossii v dvukh mirovykh voynakh", *Ab Imperio*, no. 4 (2001): 195-208. Idem, Kollaboratsionizm tyurko-musul'manskikh narodov SSSR v gody Vtoroy mirovoy voyny – forma proyavleniya natsionalizma? *Ab Imperio*, no. 1 (2000): 145-176.

Speaking about the conduct of the Crimean Tatars during WWII, Romanko identifies two contexts: ideological and national-religious. The ideological context assumes that the Muslim collaborators viewed partisans and civilians as ideological enemies who supported the Soviet government. On the other hand, the Crimean Tatars had «historical, national and religious grievances»<sup>21</sup> against them, which caused the brutality against the civilian population. Speaking about collaboration on the Soviet occupied territories, the researcher notes that disloyalty of the Soviet citizens can be explained by unfavorable living conditions in the prewar Soviet Union<sup>22</sup>.

The question of cooperation between the local population and the occupiers in Crimea, which has been raised many times by historians, traditionally considered only collaboration of the male part of the population, in most cases exclusively the Crimean Tatars. Separate forms of cooperation (work in the local police, in administration, and in camps for prisoners of war) were presented in historiography only in fragments. The involvement of collaborators of various nationalities in the Nazi crimes, the distribution of their responsibilities and, as a result, their functions, and the question about female collaboration in this region, remain understudied and deserve further analysis.

**The object** of the research is a set of various documents: Materials of the postwar trials against Crimean collaborators, reports of the *Einsatzgruppe D*, documentation of the German command, reports of the Crimean partisans, and sources of personal origin devoted to the history of Crimea during the Nazi occupation (1941-1944). In addition, the thesis is based on the materials of the Extraordinary State Commission for establishment and investigation of the Nazi crimes. Interviews taken by the Commission under the leadership of Isaak. Mints immediately after the liberation of the Soviet occupied territories are also applied in this research framework.

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<sup>21</sup> Roman'ko, *Nemetskaya okkupatsionnaya politika na territorii Kryma i natsional'ny vopros*, 158.

<sup>22</sup> *Bitva za Krym 1941-1944 gg.*, edited by A. Isaev, N. Glukharev, O. Roman'ko, D. Khazanov (Moskva: Eksmo: Yauza, 2016), 560.

**The subject** of this dissertation is the causes and extent of involvement of the Crimean collaborators belonging to various nationalities in the crimes of the Nazi regime during the occupation of the peninsula by the German troops during World War II (1941-1944). In addition, the paper analyzes the phenomenon of female collaboration, and the Soviet postwar policy toward identification and punishments of those who worked for the Germans.

**The purpose of the study** is to characterize the phenomenon of collaboration in Crimea during World War II, taking into account the diversity of population. The dissertation is also aiming to describe the policy of the Soviet state toward those who collaborated with the occupiers. To achieve this goal, a solution of six **research tasks** is proposed:

Firstly, to analyze the general situation in Crimea during the German occupation. It implies the answers to the following questions: How was the occupied territory ruled? What role did the partisan movement play in the struggle against the invaders? What aspects of the everyday life under the occupation pushed Soviet citizens to cooperate with the Nazi regime?

Secondly, to identify the areas of activity in which the occupiers needed help and support of the local population.

Thirdly, to characterize the main ways of how the Germans mobilized representatives of various nationalities.

The fourth task is to analyze the motivation for collaboration of people belonging to various nationalities.

The next task is to determine the gender specificity of the collaboration in occupied Crimea. It refers to the questions about what functions were performed by women on the occupied Soviet territories, what terms in correctional labor camps they received after the return of Soviet power, and what factors influenced the prescribed punishment.

This brings us to the final task which is to analyze the materials of the postwar trials organized by the Soviet government.

### **Novelty of the research**

First of all, this research was conducted in the framework of the *Perpetrators Studies* – the direction of historical research devoted to the study of various offenders. Originated within the framework of the *Holocaust Studies* and originally applied only to the Nazi perpetrators, today this term covers the study of various phenomena of criminal activity throughout the twentieth century. In the context of the Soviet history, the *Perpetrators Studies* can be applied to collaborators.

On the one hand, the dissertation is devoted to the phenomenon of collaboration in Crimea during World War II, and a special attention is given to the involvement of Soviet citizens belonging to different nationalities in the support of the Nazi occupation regime. This aspect has not been studied previously in both Russian and Western historiographies. Special attention will be given to the questions about relationship between the Crimean Tatars, Russians and Ukrainians, as well as the gender aspect, i.e. the involvement of women in the repressive activities of the Nazi occupation regime.

On the other hand, this study is based on sources that are currently actively researched by scholars who write about the phenomenon of collaboration on the Soviet occupied territories. However, the analysis of all available cases against Crimean collaborators has not been conducted so far. Consideration of this issue is a contribution to the study of the Soviet judicial system. Besides, this research expands our knowledge of the principles that guided Soviet investigators in defining the nature of crimes and the degree of punishment for collaborators.

### **Theoretical and practical significance of the research**

The theoretical value of this research is expressed in the application of a new approach for studying the phenomenon of collaboration in Crimea during the Nazi occupation. The analysis of postwar trials against Crimean collaborators belonging to different nationalities gives us an opportunity to assess the phenomenon of collaboration in this region from a new perspective. This approach will become the main basis for further overcoming the ideological stereotypes formed in the Soviet

period. Thus, this dissertation is an attempt to move away from the traditional historiographical perception that only the Crimean Tatars exclusively collaborated with the Nazis during the occupation. The research considers the question as to what degree were the Soviet citizens of different nationalities involved in Nazi crimes in Crimea.

The results of the research were used in the preparation and teaching of the course “The Second World War on the Soviet territories: Occupation and the Holocaust”, read for bachelor students at the history department of the Faculty of Humanities in the National Research University Higher School of Economics in 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 academic years. In addition, the results of the study could be included into schoolbooks and various reference editions devoted to the history of World War II.

**The source base of the research** consists of different collections of unpublished documents from American, German, Russian archives, and published primary sources. A huge array of archival materials – postwar trials against collaborators in Crimea and interviews conducted by the Commission under leadership of Isaak Mints – are introduced into scientific circulation for the first time.

The first and the main group of sources consists of proceedings for the Soviet postwar trials against the former Crimean collaborators. Although the materials of these trials are still not accessible in Russian archives (and only partially – in Ukrainian), some copies of these documents can be found in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington D. C., USA)<sup>23</sup>. After the Red Army had liberated Crimea, 6,452 people were arrested there as “anti-Soviet elements”<sup>24</sup> between 1944 and 1953, i.e. for being collaborators during the Nazi occupation. Exactly these cases are of particular interest in the framework of the chosen topic for this dissertation.

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<sup>23</sup> Archive of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Digital copies of the documents from the Departmental State Archives of the Security Service of Ukraine). RG Number: RG-31.018M.

<sup>24</sup> Lavrentiy Beriia – Iosifu Stalinu: “Ikh nado deportirovat”: dokumenty, fakty, kommentarii (Moskva: Druzhba narodov, 1992), 137.

The Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington contains copies of 955 cases against former collaborators, of whom 170 people (146 men and 24 women) collaborated with the Germans in Crimea during the occupation. The entire collection of the Crimean cases has about 30,000 archival pages. The original documents are held in the SBU (Ukrainian security service) archive in Kiev, and these copies were made in the 1990s. The sample of the Holocaust Memorial Museum is rather random, despite the fact that the original purpose of the archive staff was to copy cases that dealt exclusively with crimes against the Jewish population. Analysis of the entire collection has shown that not all cases contain information about the Holocaust on the occupied Soviet territories<sup>25</sup>, especially it refers to the cases against the Crimean Tatars.

The second cluster of primary materials comprises documents of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission for establishment and investigation of the atrocities committed by the German invaders and their accomplices. The Commission was founded in November 1942 with a goal to collect information about the damage caused by the enemy on the occupied Soviet territories. That was necessary for further calculation of reparations issued after the end of World War II. The documents are located in the State Archive of Russian Federation in Moscow, and a separate fund contains documents dedicated to Crimea during the occupation<sup>26</sup>.

The documents of the Commission which was headed by Isaak Mints present the third group of unpublished sources the dissertation is based on. The Commission, which was found in December 1941, consisted mainly of historians, who conducted interviews with the Red Army soldiers, former partisans, and members of diverse underground organizations<sup>27</sup>. The collection is held in the archive of the Russian

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<sup>25</sup> Seth Bernstein, Irina Makhalova, “Aggregate Treason: A Quantitative Analysis of Collaborator Trials in Soviet Ukraine and Crimea”, *The Soviet and Post-Soviet Review* 46, no. 1 (2019): 30-54.

<sup>26</sup> Fond R7021, Opis' 9: Materials of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission for establishment and investigation of the atrocities committed by the German invaders and their accomplices in Crimea.

<sup>27</sup> *Vklad uchenykh v sokhranenie istoricheskoy pamyati o Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyne. Na materialakh Komissii po istorii Velikoy Otechestvennoy voyny AN SSSR, 1941-1945 gg.*, edited by Sergey Zhuravlev (Moskva, Sankt-Peterburg: Tsentr gumanitarnykh initsiativ, 2015), 50-131. See

Academy of Sciences in Moscow, and a separate fund contains interviews with the Crimean partisans, who talked about both collaborators and people who remained loyal to the Soviet government during the occupation.

Another group of sources that I analyze in my dissertation are interviews, some of which were taken as part of the Harvard project in the early 1950s.<sup>28</sup> The second collection contains the interviews conducted with Crimean residents by the Ukrainian center for Holocaust Studies in 2008<sup>29</sup>. As respondents belong to different nationalities, this corpus of interviews allows to compare how Tatars, Russian, and Ukrainians experienced the Nazi occupation.

In the *Bundasarchiv* (Berlin), I worked with the reports of *Einsatzgruppe D*, whose activity covered southern Ukraine and the entire Crimean peninsula<sup>30</sup>. This historical source elucidates how the Nazi perceived the situation on the occupied Soviet territories. These documents shed light on the mood of the Crimean population, and the behavior and main tasks of the collaborators.

Postwar trials against former members of *Einsatzgruppe D* are the sixth group of sources I investigate in the framework of my dissertation. One part of them is held in the archive of the Institute of Contemporary History (Munich, Germany), another is located in the *Staatsarchiv München*.

In my dissertation, I also rely on a number of published sources: diaries of those who witnessed the Nazi occupation<sup>31</sup>, memories and diaries of the Crimean

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about the features of this source: Oleg Budnitskii, “A Harvard Project in Reverse. Materials of the Commission of the USSR Academy of Sciences on the History of the Great Patriotic War – Publications and Interpretations”, *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 19, no. 1 (2018): 175-202.

<sup>28</sup> Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System. URL: <http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?collection=oasis&uniqueId=fun00001>. Accessed May 27, 2017).

<sup>29</sup> Online collection of the interviews (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington DC): Interviews with the Crimean inhabitants who experienced the Nazi occupation. URL: <http://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn85789>. Accessed March 21, 2017.

<sup>30</sup> Bundesarchiv Berlin, Fund R58 - Reichsicherheitshauptamt, u.a. Akten von SS- und Polizeidienststellen in der deutsch besetzten Sowjetunion.

<sup>31</sup> Khrisant Lashkevich, *Dnevnik*. URL: <http://dnevniki-okkupacii.narod.ru/lashkevich-dnevnik.html>. Accessed November 11, 2018.

partisans<sup>32</sup>, and collections of documents that cover various aspects of everyday life under occupation<sup>33</sup>. Every group of documents has been considered critically and all the conclusions presented in the dissertation are based on a comparison of various sources that form the basis of this research.

### **Methodology of the research**

This dissertation analyzes the motivation of collaborators. For that purpose, I apply an individual approach describing the strategies of behavior and the process of decision-making. On the other hand, to track certain patterns, it is necessary to analyze 170 Crimean cases presented in the collection of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. This approach allows us to perceive the Crimean collaborators as a community with certain characteristics. Thus, the work combines individual and collective approaches while performing the tasks mentioned above.

In order to understand and analyze the motivation and behavior of a person in conditions when he or she decides to cooperate with the occupation regime, I apply the Agency Theory, which operates with such notions as “free agent”, “freedom of choice”, and “responsibility” (in this case, for a choice which is made by a person). Previously, researchers perceived collaborators from the local population as a kind of community, taking it as an Agency unit. The disadvantage of this approach is an excessive generalization concerning the question of motivation. While accepting that the Crimean Tatars collaborated with the Nazis because they were Muslims and a national minority in Crimea, some historians essentially accept the perspective of the German command, which was convinced that Muslims hated Russians and the Soviet government<sup>34</sup>. However, the war showed that this judgment was not always appropriate, but this vision was deeply rooted in postwar historiography.

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<sup>32</sup> Nikolay Lugovoy, *Strada partizanskaya: 900 dney v tylu vraga. Dnevnikovye zapisi* (Simferopol': CHP “El'ino”, 2004); Ivan Genov, *Chetyre vremeni goda (dnevnik partizana)* (Moskva: Voenizdat, 1969); Mikhail Chub, *Tak bylo* (Simferopol': Tavriya, 1980).

<sup>33</sup> *Peredayte detyam nashim o nashey sud'be ... / Sbornik dokumentov i materialov* (Simferopol': BETS “Chesed-Shimon, 2001); *Partizanskoe dvizhenie v Krymu (1941-42)*. (Simferopol': SONAT, 2006).

<sup>34</sup> Joachim Hoffmann, *Die Ostlegionen 1941-1943: Turkotataren, Kaukasier und Wolgafinnen im deutschen Heer* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1976), 85-86.

In the framework of the dissertation, I propose to take as an Agency unit a person who decided to collaborate with the Nazi occupation regime. According to the Agency Theory, each individual can be considered as a «free agent», which means that he or she are free to make decisions<sup>35</sup>. A “free agent” can act spontaneously, and his or her actions are difficult to predict. However, the choice of a person can be understood and explained only if we are able to analyze the internal and external reasons that led him or her to make a “rational choice”. To investigate the motivation of collaborators on a micro level, I am using Agency Theory while analyzing the factors that could potentially influence the decision-making of a particular collaborator.

In addition to the question of motivation, I am trying to analyze interrelations between various factors that allow us to look at the phenomenon of collaboration in Crimea from new angles. In order to find these interrelations and confirm them with quantitative data, it was decided to use the computer language Python. Creation of a specific code that counts the data entered in the table allows us to establish an interrelation between indicators. Using this programming language, we can receive generalized conclusions that are based on the available sample of the cases against collaborators in Crimea. For example, this code allows to analyze the connection between social origin, age, place of residence, and the functions of the convict, which seem completely unrelated. Using obtained quantitative data, the created code allows to confirm the working theses that emerged during the initial reading of sources.

Thus, the methodological core of this dissertation is formed by the combination of computer methods and the Agency Theory. When analyzing motivation, I emphasize “external reasons”, as well as the social context which led the person to make the decision. Such consideration will allow us to come closer to understanding the “rational choice” made by each of the collaborators. In turn, quantitative analysis, which brings us from the micro to the macro level (in case of this dissertation, it is

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<sup>35</sup> Barry Barnes, *Understanding Agency. Social Theory and Responsible Action* (London: Sage Publications, 2000), 3.

the territory of the entire Crimean peninsula), gives future researchers the opportunity to consider a broader context for analyzing the phenomenon of collaboration.

### **Statements for defense**

- Collaboration in occupied Crimea was caused by various reasons, shared by representatives of different nationalities. Cooperation with the occupiers cannot be explained only by national, social, religious or gender-age factors – it was also due to the situation in which a particular person found herself or himself. Thus, the author of this dissertation adheres to the thesis of the so-called “situational collaboration”.
- Officially, all Crimean Tatars were declared to be collaborators. This argument was used by the Soviet government as the main reason for their deportation. During the postwar Soviet trials, the Crimean Tatars received the punishment that corresponded to their crimes according to the norms of the Soviet law. For the same crime, Crimean collaborators of different nationalities received identical terms of imprisonment in correctional labor camps. In addition, the available sample of the postwar trials materials allows to suggest that the average sentence for the Crimean Tatars was lower than for Russians and Ukrainians.
- Russians and Ukrainians were more often appointed to positions in the administration of large cities and in rural areas than the Crimean Tatars. This was due to their higher level of education, the attempt of the Nazi occupation authorities not to give too much power to one of the national groups, and the elementary numerical superiority of the Russians and Ukrainians.
- Military collaboration was suggested exclusively for the Crimean Tatars, while Russians and Ukrainians were mainly engaged in administrative work and police service. Thus, the latter were more actively involved in the process of persecution and annihilation of the Jewish population. This may explain, among other things, the harsher punishments they received after the 1944 liberation.
- The postwar trials against collaborators in Crimea essentially differ from the processes during the Great Terror of 1937-1938. The analysis of available

materials allows to suggest that the imposed sentences corresponded, in most cases, to the committed crimes. Thus, the thesis of this dissertation is an additional argument in favor of the thesis proposed by the group of researchers who believe that the materials of the postwar trials against collaborators can be used to study the realities of everyday life during the Nazi occupation.

- Except for men, Crimean women also collaborated with the Nazi regime during the years of occupation. Despite the fact that female collaboration usually refers primarily to sexual relations with the occupiers, it is demonstrated in this dissertation that the so-called «horizontal collaboration» is not a cooperation with the occupiers in its conventional meaning. On the Soviet occupied territories, when the most difficult conditions of existence prevailed, work for the Germans was one of the few strategies available for survival.

### **The research approbation**

Selected parts of the dissertation have been presented on 17 international conferences and workshops in Moscow, San-Francisco, New Haven, Vilnius, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Munich, Thessaloniki, Bratislava, Ljubljana, Paris, and Besancon. Besides, a full text of the work has been discussed during the section meetings “Russian History” of the School of Historical Sciences (Faculty of Humanities) in the National Research University Higher School of Economics, held in October 2019 and March 2020 in Moscow.

Particular parts of the research have been published in journals indexed in citation bases Scopus and Web of Science, or in the journals which are included in the list of journals approved by the National Research University Higher School of Economics.

### **Structure and outline of the work**

In the introduction, the relevance of the research and its novelty in a historiographical context are given. In this part of the work, the purpose and objectives of the research are formulated, and an analysis of the sources is given.

*The first chapter* “Crimea during the Nazi occupation” contains brief description of everyday life of the Crimean local population during World War II. People who stayed on the occupied Soviet territories experienced the war in different ways. Their life under the occupation depended on various factors: gender and age, place of work before and during the war, and their language skills. Also, it depended on personal qualities of a German or a collaborator who commanded a particular locality. The experience of those who stayed in cities differed from those in the countryside. Swaths of the local population welcomed the Germans as liberators, pinning on them the hopes associated with the abolition of collective farms and general improvement of living conditions. However, it became quickly clear that life under the Nazi occupation was many times worse than the realities of the prewar life under the Soviet regime. The proposed alternative could hardly be supported by the majority of the population. Besides, the worse things were for the Germans at the front, the harsher the regime on the occupied territories became.

Jews, Sinti and Roma, the most active Communists and mentally ill people became the main victims of the Nazi regime. A combination of antisemitism with anti-Communist ideas resulted in mass extermination of the Jewish population that began in the summer of 1941 on the Soviet territories. Initially the Germans annihilated only the men, but starting from the end of July 1941 the entire Jewish population including women and children had to be exterminated. Crimea was no exception, but the situation here was more complicated as there were special groups of the Jewish population – Karaites and Krymchaks, and the Germans had no special instructions about how to deal with them. Eventually, the Karaites were granted with the right to live – not least thanks to the Muslim clergy.

By pursuing the policy of supporting national minorities, especially toward the Muslim population of Crimea, the Germans tried, on the one hand, to win the sympathy of this part of the population and to provoke conflicts among representatives of various nationalities. On the other hand, promising members of the Muslim Committee to create an independent state for the Crimean Tatars in case

Germany wins the war, the leadership of the Third Reich could use this argument to mobilize young Crimean Tatars into the German army. However, the Muslim Committee never received any real power and its activities were strictly controlled by the German command.

Different forms of cooperation between local population and German occupants are examined in *the second chapter* “Forms of Collaboration in Crimea during the Nazi occupation (1941-1944)”. *The first paragraph* «Military collaboration» is devoted to the participation of the Crimean Tatars in fighting against the Red Army and Soviet partisans. Initially, military collaboration was intended only for Muslims, but later the Germans began to recruit representatives of other nationalities. This paragraph of the dissertation shows that part of the Crimean Tatars remained loyal to the Soviet government throughout the war. The ambiguity of the situation toward the Tatars could be traced in the reports written by the Crimean partisans. The documents show that there was no consensus among the leadership of the Crimean partisan units on how to assess the behavior of the Crimean Tatars. The failures of the first months (lack of food, severe weather conditions, and the small number of partisan detachments) and the policy of mobilizing the Muslim population into the German army forced the partisan leadership to suggest that exclusively the Crimean Tatars were the main culprits of failures. However, the documents which have recently become available allow us to reconsider this assessment.

*In the second paragraph* “Administrative collaboration”, I analyze the question about how people belonging to different nationalities were appointed to perform different duties in the administrative apparatus in Crimean cities, as well as in the countryside. In this part of my dissertation, I state that the local administration of Crimean cities consisted mainly of Russians and Ukrainians, while the administration of rural localities depended on the nationality of people who lived there. At the same time, it should be noted that neither urban nor rural government bodies obtained sufficient autonomy during the Nazi occupation and their activities were coordinated by the Germans.

*In the third paragraph* “Police”, I suggest that the urban police consisted mainly of Russians and Ukrainians, while the nationality of rural policemen depended on the locality they lived in. Regardless of nationality, all policemen were expected to participate in the fight against partisans. From my point of view, that allows researchers to look at the problem of relations between partisans and the Crimean Tatars in a new way. Documents confirm that the police consisting of Russians and Ukrainians participated in the protection of villages from partisan raids, even though the scale of their involvement was much smaller. Besides, according to the documents of the postwar trials, along with the Crimean Tatars policemen from Russians and Ukrainians were involved in the execution of captured partisans.

*The fourth paragraph* “Work in the SD” is dedicated to those who were recruited as secret agents (or informants) of the German security service during the occupation. Their functions depended on various factors including the place of residence and the needs of the German administration. One person could be asked to eavesdrop on conversations at a plant and inform on disloyal citizens. Another Soviet citizen could be ordered to accompany the captured members of underground organizations to the places of mass executions. Soviet investigators, as well as researchers today, find it difficult to classify this type of collaboration. Of all forms of cooperation, that causes the greatest difficulty in analysis, since this category included both those who tracked down and reported suspicious persons among the local population systematically, and those who betrayed only once. These included the members of various underground organizations who gave up one of their comrades, or men who gave the names of partisans on pain of death. Everyone received one or another term in correctional labor camps, but those who reported only once received, as a rule, no more than 10 years of imprisonment. In this sense, Soviet investigators defined the work of an informant as one of the most “soft” forms of cooperation.

The activities of the Crimean residents who held various positions in the economic sector during the occupation are analyzed in *the fifth paragraph*

“Collaboration in the economic sphere”. This part considers only those who were arrested after the war as collaborators. The analysis of available materials showed that nationality played absolutely no role in this type of cooperation. Either a Crimean Tatar or a representative of any other nationality could be appointed to be a director of a plant. Nor did the person's party affiliation play any role. If someone's activities provoked further reprisals against the civilian population, as well as caused direct harm to socialist property, the guilty person was arrested and convicted after the liberation of Crimea. As a rule, the punishment for this type of collaboration varied from 10 to 20 years of imprisonment. If this activity was compounded by participation in the extradition of either partisans or Communists to the Germans, the person could be sentenced to death.

*In the sixth paragraph* “Social portrait of a collaborator”, I analyze the data collected from the questionnaires of convicted men. Based on the sample available today, we can conclude that almost 60% of those who collaborated with the Germans in Crimea during the Nazi occupation were young people, most of whom were under the age of 30 in 1941. This conclusion is logical, since the Germans needed, first of all, healthy and young men who were able to perform physical work. More than 80% of male collaborators were non-partisan, while only 5% were members of the Communist party. The vast majority of collaborators were born and lived in rural areas – 75% compared to 25% of those who lived in cities. This is not surprising since the majority of the Crimean population lived in rural areas on the eve of the war. 71% of males in my sample were married by the beginning of World War II. In turn, 49% had no children and 17% had three or more children. Only 2% had higher education, 33% had secondary education, and 65% had lower education. 76% of the defendants were born in peasant families, and only 2% of them, according to the questionnaires, were the *kulaks* (the higher-income farmers), while the rest indicated their origin as *bednyak* (a poor peasant) and *serednyak* (mid-income peasant). The second largest group consisted of workers (14%), and the third – employees.

*In the seventh paragraph* “Motivation for collaboration”, I support the idea that the behavior of a Soviet individual during the war was not determined by one or another ideology. Most frequently, the decision to cooperate with the enemy was made in extreme conditions. In this dissertation, we are talking mainly about prisoners of war who began to cooperate with the Nazi occupation regime for various reasons. Some Soviet citizens did not want to be sent to Germany for forced labor. Others wanted to obtain power and perceived cooperation with the occupiers as social mobility. Finally, some men just wanted to get out of a camp for prisoners of war where conditions led to death from exhaustion. In this part of the dissertation, I analyze cases when former collaborators, who pretended being prisoners of war, joined the Red Army after the liberation of Crimea, and later even received awards for bravery in combat. This indicates that their choice did not depend on adherence to an ideology, but on the situation, which in military conditions was prone to change.

The activities of twenty-five women who collaborated with the Nazis in Crimea during the occupation are considered in *the eighth paragraph* “Female collaboration”. Unlike men, women performed work for the occupation regime that did not require physical force. In particular, only men were recruited to guard the camps for prisoners of war or to the ranks of the local police. Even if women participated in the arrests of Jews or Communists, attended executions in *Gaswagen*, and registered the population, they were always accompanied by men.

In some cases, men and women performed the same functions. For example, even though “female” cases prevail among the translators, there were also men who implemented this type of work. Taking into consideration the fact that more women than men stayed on the Soviet occupied territories, the administrative work was performed mainly by women. Both men and women worked as secret agents of the security service, but women were obviously a less suspicious element, so it was easier for them to gain someone’s trust. As for “economic collaboration”, men most often held leadership positions, while women were no more than ordinary workers, but

really diligent workers who used their power to satisfy the food demands of the occupation regime.

*In the third chapter* “Crimes and punishment of collaborators”, I examine the participation of the local population in the Nazi atrocities. The prosecution of the Crimean collaborators after the liberation of the peninsula is also analyzed in this part of the dissertation. *In the first paragraph* “Participation in the Holocaust”, I argue that police officers, heads of villages, and some administrative workers (for example, translators) were actively involved in the persecution of the Jewish population. However, the documents do not confirm their direct participation in the mass shootings. The collaborators were expected to organize technical and organizational support, including arresting and escorting the Jews and digging pits for further executions. The process of extermination in cities differed from that in villages. In rural areas, the head of a village was more involved in the process of collecting Jews for execution than the *burgomaster* in the city.

Battalions of the Crimean Tatars did not participate in the persecution and physical destruction of the Jewish population. This conclusion is confirmed by the testimony of former members of *Einsatzgruppe D*, who emphasized the role of the Crimean Tatar battalions in the fight against the Crimean partisans, while denying their involvement in the Holocaust. After the national structure of the police have been analyzed, we can conclude that the Russians and Ukrainians were more actively involved in the extermination of Jews than the Crimean Tatars who were engaged in the fight against the partisans.

*The second paragraph* “*Krasny* concentration camp” is devoted to the living conditions in this camp and everyday life of prisoners who were held there. The specifics of the guards' work in the largest labor camp on the peninsula are also analyzed in this part of the dissertation. Here, I conclude that for both prisoners and guards of the camp, nationality did not play a crucial role. The prisoners differed between those who treated them brutally and those who demonstrated a more or less loyal attitude toward them. For the guards, it was more important to demonstrate

power and control, which was manifested, among other things, in the implementation of violence against weak prisoners of the camp. Besides, they shared some pragmatic interests: to get a promotion for good service, or to expropriate valuables and food brought by the relatives of the prisoners.

*The third paragraph* “Prosecution of collaborators after the liberation of Crimea” is dedicated to Soviet postwar trials. An analysis of the punishment terms received by collaborators of various nationalities allows us to suggest that the imposed sentences corresponded to the guilt of the defendant and did not depend on nationality. They did not depend on the prewar past of the guilty person, either. For example, a former *kulak* did not receive additional 5 or 10 years of imprisonment only for his “*kulak* past”. An average sentence received by the Russians was higher than an average sentence of the Crimean Tatars, since it was the Russians who were more actively involved in organization of the large-scale Nazi repressions. At the same time, Soviet investigators tried to shift the blame for the destruction of the Roma to the Muslim Committee and attribute nationalist ideas to the Crimean Tatars.

### **Conclusion**

During World War II, representatives of various nationalities who inhabited Crimea cooperated with the Germans and performed certain functions directed against Soviet citizens. Being convinced that the Muslim population had been suppressed by the Soviet regime before the war, therefore they should have had a negative attitude towards the Soviet government, the leadership of Nazi Germany tried to win, first of all, the sympathies of the Crimean Tatars. They were granted various types of privileges, and in exchange for voluntarily joining the German army, they received a generous remuneration. In my dissertation, I conclude that the Crimean Tatars did this not least because of pragmatic rather than ideological reasons. Previously, sympathy for the ideology of national socialism, the desire to create an independent Crimean Tatar state on the peninsula, and hatred of the Soviet regime were considered the main reasons why the Crimean Tatars joined the German army. The analysis of archival documents, as well as interviews conducted with the residents of Crimea after the

collapse of the Soviet Union, allow historians to suggest that the Crimean Tatars were guided by other motives while choosing the side for which they considered to fight in this war. Separatist sentiments, which were shared by a small part of the Muslim Committee members, were not the main reason of cooperation for all Crimean Tatars. This assumption allows us to consider the collaboration of the Soviet population as a kind of supranational phenomenon. In my opinion, it is legitimate to say that representatives of different nationalities often had the same reasons for collaboration with the Nazis. For prisoners of war, the main reason for cooperation was an elementary desire to survive. Someone was guided by the hope of improving social status. Finally, some citizens were dissatisfied with the realities of prewar life in the Soviet Union, and hoped that life under the Germans would be better.

In addition to military collaboration, which was typical for the Crimean Tatars and included participation in fighting against partisan detachments, we can distinguish cooperation in administrative and economic spheres. Representatives of various nationalities were involved in all areas of cooperation, except for military collaboration. Along with that, the majority of police and administrative staff in Crimea were Russians and Ukrainians.

It is generally assumed that cooperation of the Soviet women with the Nazi occupation regime consisted only in having sexual relationships with Germans and Romanians. However, women were recruited to work in the structures of the new occupation authorities on an equal basis with men, often performing the same functions. For the vast majority, collaboration became a survival strategy, as women, who stayed under occupation without protection from men, were subjected to violence by enemy soldiers<sup>36</sup>, were forced to survive during the war in conditions of permanent hunger and fear of being sent to Germany for forced labor.

At the first public postwar trials against the Nazi criminals and after that, the Soviet leadership tried to construct a special image of collaborators. These supposed

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<sup>36</sup> Katherine R. Jolluck, "Women in the Crosshairs: Violence Against Women during the Second World War", *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 62, no. 4 (2016): 514-528.

to be *kulaks*, criminals, or bourgeois nationalists, i.e. “enemies of the people” who had not been arrested during the Great Terror of 1937-1938. Over time, it became clear that the reality was far from these ideas. As a result, mainly the crimes of the Germans rather than their accomplices were considered at open postwar trials during the Stalinist period. An analysis of a social portrait showed that collaboration, being a widespread phenomenon in any military conflict, was not determined by belonging to a party, male or female gender, or a social group.

A study of cases against the Crimean Tatars, most of whom were deported in May 1944 due to alleged mass collaboration with the Nazi occupation regime, showed that even for Soviet investigators nationality did not play any role in defining punishment for cooperation. Regardless of their nationality, translators received from 20 to 25 years of imprisonment, while the Crimean Tatars who served in self-defense units and participated in the fight against partisans received ten years, which correlated with the severity of their crime. Similarly, the punishments of policemen depended on how actively they were involved in organization of repressions against civilians, not on their nationality. An analysis of the average sentences received by collaborators in Crimea concluded that the sentences for Russians were higher than for the Crimean Tatars. That can be explained by the fact that they were more actively involved in administrative work, which suggested participation in violent reprisals against the civilian population. Although the Soviet authorities tried to attribute a number of crimes committed by the Nazis to the Muslim Committee (for example, the repressions against Sinti and Roma), it should be underlined that the postwar courts differed from the judicial practice of the 1930s when a single confession was enough to pass a sentence.

**The list of published papers on the topic of the dissertation:**

1. Irina Makhalova, “Features of the Holocaust in the Crimea and the North Caucasus”, *Rossiyskaya istoriya*, no. 5 (2017): 192-198.
2. Irina Makhalova, “Collaboration in the occupied Soviet territories: historiography of recent years”, *Rossiyskaya istoriya*, no. 3 (2019): 141-149.

3. Irina Makhalova, “Heroes or Perpetrators? How Soviet Collaborators received Red Army Medals”, *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 32, no. 2 (2019): 280-288.
4. Irina Makhalova, “History of the Napoleonic Wars in the propaganda of belligerent powers during World War II”, *Novaya i noveyshaya istoriya*, no. 5 (2017): 215-225.