VICTIMOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE HISTORY AND MODERN LIVING CONDITIONS OF MESKHEΤIAN TURKS IN THE KHerson REGION OF UKRAINE

INTRODUCTION

One of the predominant foundations for the formation of a common Ukrainian identity is the ethnonational victimization of the Ukrainian population. Victimizing constructs are produced as a part of the official policy of identity construction at the level of state authorities of Ukraine, as well as interested external actors. The nationwide agenda of ethnonational victimization is transforming at the level of multiple identities that are diverse in their characteristics and formats and have regional specificity, affects the sphere of historical memory, and is taking the form of socio-political myths. The content of ethnonational victimization discourses may vary depending on the characteristics of historical development and modern socio-economic living conditions of ethnic groups in the multi-ethnic Ukraine, as well as be contingent on the characteristics of the interaction of these ethnic groups with the contacting ethnic groups and state power.

In this regard, a unique situation is developing in the Kherson region of Ukraine which can be classified as one of the most contrasting in its characteristics ethnically mosaic border region of the Ukrainian state. An ethnic group with one of the most tragic fates among the groups present in the region is the Meskhetian Turks, Sunni Muslims who speak one of the Eastern Anatolian dialects of the Turkish language.

Studies illuminating the various aspects of the life of Meskhetian Turks cover the issues of the history of the Akhaltsikhe region and Georgia, the problems of their deportation and the current status, cultural adaptation, value orientations, self-awareness, and ethnic stereotypes. Various aspects of the socio-economic life of the Meskhetian Turks in Ukraine including the Kherson region are explored in studies by A. Malinovskaia, A. Syrinska and M. Maiorov, and M.A. Homaniuk. Meskhetian Turks are also mentioned in studies of the Ukrainian-Turkish relations and the activities of Islamic organizations in Ukraine in the works of S. Danilov, D. Zolotarov, and V. Shchepanski. Close attention to the most diverse issues from history and geopolitics to the problems of Meskhetian Turk migrants from Donbas living in Ukraine is paid by Turkish researchers including A. Aydingün, İ. Aydingün, L. Derviş, K. Devrisheva, İ. Hasanoğlu, and others.

Despite the diversity of the spectrum of existing research, a study of the history and modern life of the Meskhetian Turks in the context of the factors and processes of victimization of this ethnic community has never been carried out which determines the choice of the goal of the study. Thus, the present study aims to identify the victimological aspects of the history and modern living conditions of the Meskhetian Turks in the Kherson region of Ukraine.

The object of the study is the history and modern socio-economic spheres of life of the Meskhetian Turks in the Kherson region of Ukraine. The subject of the study is presented by the victimological aspects of the emergence and development of the ethnopoltical conflict. The study hypothesis is based on the assumption that the overall historical aspects of the development of the Meskhetian Turks, as well as the socio-economic living conditions of the Ahiska Turks in the Kherson region of Ukraine, the features of their interaction with the contacting ethnic groups, and the state, contain victimizing content including that which is constructed by interested actors.
METHODS

Exploring the victimization of the Meskhetian Turks living in the Kherson region of Ukraine, we face the need to substantiate the possibility of construction of the victim complex based on ethnonational identity which is impossible without understanding the phenomenon of victimhood. Analyzing the existing variations of the semantic content of the term "victimhood" in the context of our interest, we can, with a certain degree of assumption, divide them into two groups. The first group includes definitions in which victimhood is understood based on an individual's ability to become a victim of a crime.

The second group includes definitions understanding victimhood through the manifestation of outwardly directed deviant behavior in a victim. In our study, we proceed from the assumption that the victimhood of ethnic communities is mass. This social phenomenon includes the victimhood of integrative victims (additive victimhood) or integrative victimhood (RIVMAN, 2020). The manifestations of group victimhood will be examined as characteristic of certain categories of people distinguished by different qualities and properties including ethnicity.

It is possible to identify the following forms of manifestation of the victimological aspects of ethnicity. First, they serve as a characteristic of the social environment of ethnic subjects contributing to the formation of the victim complex in them. The victimological aspect can manifest in the context of ethnic subjects' vulnerability (at the individual and group levels) against crimes and manifestations of hostility on ethnic grounds committed against them.

Second, ethnic identity can be viewed as a marker of a social group demonstrating victim behavior aimed at a real or constructed enemy demonstrating itself through the realization of the victim complex. A definition of the victim complex that is the most suitable as the operational one for our study is proposed in E.N. Veleshko's study “The influence of victim factors on the political behavior of the Crimean Tatar repatriates” (VELESHKO, 2007). Based on this definition applied to ethnic communities, we examine the victim complex as a conglomerate of psychological reactions that show themselves in social manifestations and emerge due to the influence of traumatizing historical contexts and the socio-political conditions of the development of social communities including ethnic, as well as ideas about them, and cause the formation of the victim behavior in them both at the individual and collective levels.

The presence of the victim complex leads to negative conflict consolidation and mobilization of an ethnic community which manifests through the cultivated struggle against an identified enemy. The role of the enemy can be played by a contacting ethnos, the state, or external subjects. In the collective consciousness of an ethnic community, they can be viewed as having committed a crime against the ethnic subject demonstrating victim behavior. Victim behavior is characterized by aggression towards the outside world and the identified offender which a victim strives to punish. A victim blames external influences for their problems in various spheres of life and seeks to receive compensation for the real or imagined caused damage. Thus, in this case, the behavior of an ethnic community will demonstrate aggressive compensatory features (VELESHKO, 2007) and can be associated with demanding satisfaction or compensation for the caused damage.

Examining the phenomenon of victimhood outside of the search for its ontogenetic foundations and based on the methodology of social constructivism, we can consider victimhood a social phenomenon and a characteristic of social environment acting as “a characteristic of a certain state of society” (ANIKIN, 2017). Accordingly, victimhood as a property of a victim society can be constructed through the introduction of various destructive versions of the perception of the past and the mythologization of socio-political reality. The topic of our research also makes us highlight the unresolved issue of the ethnic origin of the Meskhetians projected both on their ethnic self-awareness and the used ethnonym, as well as on the most significant aspects of the history of the Meskhetian Turks in the context of scientific research.

In particular, V.A. Simonenko distinguishes several forms of self-identification of the representatives of these people. About 95% of Meskhetian Turks living in the post-Soviet states...
originate from the Akhaltsikhe region located in southern Georgia. Most of them identify with the people of Turkey as Meskhetian Turks. A lesser part of them identifies as Muslim Georgians explaining this by the fact that the historical Georgian region of Meskhetia was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1578. As a result, the local population converted to Islam, became Turkish, and lost its Georgian identity. An insignificant part of this people traces its origin from Meskhi. Similarities exist both with the Georgian and Turkish ethnic groups among which the latter is identified as the closest one (SIMONENKO, 2002).

According to researchers dealing with this issue, the most credible option suggests that the Turks from Meskheti are a special ethnic group of the Turkish ethnic group that has developed in the ethnic zone of Georgia and Turkey. Thus, it formed from representatives of both peoples combining their cultural features to a certain extent under the predominant influence of the Turkish component (PANESH & ERMOLOV, 1991). The problem of self-awareness is also associated with the issue of the ethnonym being used. As a self-name, the Ukrainian Meskhetian Turks use the ethnonym “Turks-Ahiska” or “Ahiska Turks” (“Ahiska Türkleri”) and also recognize the name “Meskhetian Turks” which comes from the name of the historical province of Georgia – Meskhetia and is predominant in Russian science. The present study uses all the proposed ethnonyms.

The aspects of the history of the Meskhetian Turks that are the most significant in the context of our study are the following. Until 1829, Meskheti was part of the Ottoman Empire and became part of the Russian Empire as a border region as a result of the Treaty of Adrianople. In 1944, the Soviet leadership decided to deport the Meskhetian Turks from southern Georgia to the Central Asian republics of the USSR – Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan where they received the status of special settlers. The largest number of Meskhetian Turks ended up in Uzbekistan.

On April 28, 1956, by a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, they were freed from administrative supervision and some of the administrative restrictions were removed from the Ahiska Turks. However, the settlement was only allowed within certain territories while the ban on returning to Meskhetia was preserved. This decision was motivated by the Akhaltsikhe region being a border zone impossible to enter without a special permit and having a limited registration regime. The subsequent mass resettlement of the Meskhetian Turks from the republics of Central Asia to Ukraine and other republics of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s was a consequence of the mass anti-Meskhetian pogroms in the Fergana region of Uzbekistan in 1989 that followed the escalation of interethnic conflict. Since Georgia took a tough stance on the return of the Meskhetian Turks to Meskhetia, individual communities of this people settled in different countries of the post-Soviet space, in Turkey, and the United States (SYRINSKA & MAJOROV, 2015).

The most populous centers of the settlement of Meskhetian Turks in Ukraine were formed in Donetsk (mainly Slavyanskiy district), Kherson (mainly Genichenskiy district), and Nikolaevsk regions. According to the 2001 All-Ukrainian Population Census of Ukraine, their number in the main areas of the settlement was 1,791, 3,736, and 758 people, respectively. As of the beginning of the 2010s, according to the estimates of representatives of the community itself and researchers, the number of Meskhetian Turks in Ukraine reached about 8,500-10,000 people (MALINOVSKAIA, 2006). Representatives of this ethnic group united within the framework of the public organization “All-Russian Society of Meskhetian Turks ‘Vatan’”. In the Kherson region, the largest communities of Meskhetian Turks formed in the city of Kherson, the urban-type settlements of Chaplyinka and Askania-Nova, the villages of Khrestivtsi, Nadezh dovka, Nyzhni Torhai, Stroganovka, Pavlovka, and Mirolubovka. In 30 years since settling in the Kherson region, a part of the Ahiska Turks moved to settlements in the northern part of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, particularly to the city of Armiansk (SYRINSKA & MAJOROV, 2015).

RESULTS
Proceeding from the fact that the formation of the victim complex can be caused both by traumatic events in the ethnos’ history and its current socio-economic living conditions, as well as constructed by the informational influence of the corresponding content, we can state that
the Meskhetian Turks living in the Kherson region experience the victimizing effect of the features of their of interaction with government bodies and contacting ethnic groups.

Said features are largely determined by the processes of the specific integration of the Meskhetian Turks in the host community. The community of Ahiska Turks is distinguished by its isolation (SYRINSKA & MAIOROV, 2015); even marriages are welcomed only within their ethnic group (DANYLOV et al., 2020). Serious problems with integration are still present which is ascertained by the regional state and municipal authorities, as well as by Ukrainian and foreign non-profit organizations operating in the region. In particular, this fact is demonstrated by the results of the “Implementing Participatory Democracy Mechanisms – the Way to Solving Problems and Overcoming Conflicts” project implemented in the Kherson region by the Black Sea Center for Political and Social Research with the support of the Democracy Assistance Fund of the US Embassy in Ukraine (POLITYCHNA KHERSONSHCHYNA, 2018).

Among the Meskhetian Turks, the prevailing identity is Turkish which is directly and indirectly indicated by several signs. The basis of their identity and group solidarity remains to be the Turkish language. According to Ukrainian researchers, the transformation of the identity of Meskhetian Turks can be traced based on the ethnonym used in the names of public associations and religious communities in Ukraine and the Kherson region demonstrating the transition from the self-name “Meskhetian Turks” to “Ahiska Turks”. This transformation is interpreted as a reorientation from the Soviet and post-Soviet context to the Turkish and world context, the rejection of the connotations associated with deportation, the movement to return to Georgia, the Fergana pogrom of 1989, and the following forced resettlement to various Soviet republics. Moreover, the statements of the community representatives clearly show the dominance of ethnic identity and the tendency to identify with Turkey (GOMANIUK, 2020) rather than Ukraine which can be considered a favorable host environment (YAVUZ, 2020).

The Republic of Turkey pays close attention to the Turkish-Meskhetian issue. Community representatives in Ukraine are a resource for realizing Turkey’s national interests in the region. National organizations of Meskhetian Turks function in almost all countries of their settlement including Ukraine. Their activities are coordinated by the World Association of Ahiska Turks (Dünya Ahiska Türkleri Birliği, DATÜB) interacting with government and public organizations of the Republic of Turkey. The central office of this organization is located in the capital of Turkey. One of the specific examples of assistance provided to the Meskhetian Turks from the Turkish Republic is the implementation of several educational programs and support for the study of the Turkish language in Ukrainian communities. The Turkish Religious Affairs Authority is engaged in missionary activities. The programs of foreign visits of the leaders, the government, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey obligatorily include meetings with the representatives of the Turkic diasporas, while negotiations with community leaders typically take place in a fairly narrow circle usually limited to the representatives of the Republic of Turkey and the corresponding local communities.

It is indicative that at the initial stage of measures of the evacuation of Meskhetian Turks from Ukraine to Turkey in 2015, the front-line representatives of the Republic of Turkey practically did not discuss the relevant issues with the government structures of Ukraine. The local authorities of Ukraine learned about Turkey’s intentions to export the Turkish-Meskhetian population when the process of their evacuation had already started (ZOLOTAROV, 2020). Returning to the issues of the identity of the Meskhetian Turks, we can note the presence of its other forms represented to a much lesser extent. Specifically, it is the Ukrainian identity according to which Meskhetian Turks are Ukrainians of Turkish origin who consider Turkey their homeland but associate themselves with Ukrainian citizenship and for whom Ukraine has become a “second homeland” (GOMANIUK, 2016). Thematic sites demonstrate their loyalty to Ukraine, a willingness to fight for its interests. It is indicative that in interviews, representatives of the community in the Kherson region report aiding the Ukrainian army with food and participating in its operations in Donbas which is not officially confirmed by the leaders of the communities (SYRINSKA & MAIOROV, 2015).

There also exists a local identity that started to be recorded by researchers only recently. While earlier the Ahiska Turks in the Kherson region opposed themselves to the old-timers, now they...
are increasingly highlighting the fact that they are also “local”, “merged” with the local population, and Ukraine is their second family (GOMANIUK, 2016).

The features of interaction with state authorities and contacting ethnic groups correlate with the problems of integration of Meskhetian Turks including issues in interaction with the Ukrainian majority and the Crimean Tatar population (DANYLOV et al., 2020). In particular, the studies of 2006 show a low level of tolerance towards Meskhetian Turks on the part of the host society. At that time, the index of social distance (adapted Bogardus social distance scale) in relation to the Meskhetian Turks was 5.9 with a maximum of 7.0, and 53% of the inhabitants of the studied area of the Kherson region demonstrated xenophobic attitudes towards them. During interviews, the Meskhetian Turks avoided talking about Crimean Tatars, with whom they were either in a competitive relationship or in a state of mutual disregard (DANYLOV et al., 2020).

In an interview from 2015, representatives of the Meskhetian Turks in the urban-type settlement of Chaplinka in the Chaplinsky district of the Kherson region reported manifestations of xenophobia on the part of the local population as the main problems they faced. As examples, they cited insulting inscriptions addressed to their people and public calls to “evict all Turks” from the representatives of contacting ethnic groups (SYRINSKA & MAIOROV, 2015).

Negative episodes experiences by the representatives of other ethnic groups in the Kherson region were quite often attributed to the Meskhetian Turks. There was a negative unfair attitude on the part of law enforcement agencies, problems with obtaining Ukrainian citizenship had lasted for many years, and local officials were delaying the resolution of this issue (SYRINSKA & MAIOROV, 2015). The results of the study “Conflict Prevention in the South of Ukraine” carried out in 2018-2019 with the financial support of the USA National Endowment for Democracy confirm the existence of problems in interethnic relations between Meskhetian Turks and the contacting ethnic groups. Every fifth respondent (except for the ones from Kherson) believes that Meskhetian Turks are a threat to the region. At the same time, half of the respondents agree with the statement that Meskhetians are part of their society and they manage to coexist normally but also talk about the threat posed by minorities in general (TIMOSHCHUK, 2018a).

Ukrainian researchers lack consensus on the reasons for prejudice towards Meskhetian Turks. There is a viewpoint suggesting that due to their intra-group cohesion, large families, and diligence, the level of prosperity of the Meskhetian Turks quickly began to exceed the prosperity of the Ukrainians. The poorer a person is, the more expressed is their fear of the Meskhetians. With the expansion of the area of cultivated land, the mechanization of labor, and an increase in the marketability of production, the Meskhetian Turks shifted their emphasis from using the labor of their large families in growing agricultural products to attracting hired labor. Even in the absence of work, hired labor for farmers from among the Meskhetian Turks occupies low positions in the social hierarchy of attractiveness among the residents. The Meskhetian Turks are not perceived as a legitimate local highest economic stratum due to the ethnocultural characteristics of Meskhetian Turks, their isolation, and the negative attitude of the contacting ethnic groups to an increase in their economic status compared to the beginning of the 1990s when the Meskhetians had just recently moved to the region and were significantly inferior to the residents in terms of their level of prosperity (DANYLOV et al., 2020). A significant role is played by the struggle for resources including land which negatively affects the interethnic and interreligious interactions.

According to a different viewpoint, the negativity is based on the residents suspecting the Meskhetian Turks of disloyalty to the state due to their isolated lifestyle and weak integration into the Ukrainian national and cultural field. During interviews with the residents of Chaplinka, respondents from among the contacting ethnic groups asserted that in the first period of the conflict with Russia, the Ahiska Turks had adopted a neutral or wait-and-see attitude. Among the reasons for conflict situations with the Ahiska Turks, the respondents named: “attempts to avoid military service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine; “parasitic” psychology inherent in the life of the community, attempts to use all possible social benefits, avoiding official employment and, therefore, paying taxes; allegedly sabotaging the study of the Ukrainian language in some schools; numerous domestic incidents, criminal incidents among youth groups” (DANYLOV et al., 2020).
Regarding the Meskhetian Turks, negative heterostereotypes exist that produce fear of them in regions where the representatives of this ethnic community do not live. For example, in the Chaplynsky region, Ukrainians and representatives of the Meskhetian Turks generally maintain normal relations, while in the Kalanchatsky region where the Meskhetian Turks do not live, they are feared. The respondents oppose the construction of a mosque in the area where it already exists but the respondents remain unaware of its existence (TIMOSHCHUK, 2018a).

Economic realities generally negatively affect the inhabitants of the region, and the Meskhetian Turks are characterized by the same problems as the contacting ethnic groups. The population is highly afraid of poverty, and a culture of poverty already exists there. The area borders on Crimea and is perceived as a risk zone which extremely restricts the flow of investments.

Kherson agrarians specializing in vegetable growing, horticulture, and melon growing suffered significant losses having lost their main sales markets – Russia (including Crimea) and Donbas. The situation was aggravated by an increase in prices for fuels and lubricants, energy resources, and water for irrigation, as well as by the redistribution of land resources and raiding. The Kherson Ahiska Turks were no exception since a significant part of them continue to engage in agriculture and animal breeding on their own or leased shares. As a result, the number of jobs in the villages populated by the Ahiska Turks has decreased, which in turn led to internal and external labor migration (mainly to Turkey and Russia). As a result of migration in 2019, the number of Meskhetian Turks in the Kherson region decreased by more than 20% compared to 2015 and in some places of compact residence, the very existence of the community is now questioned.

Considering the issues of victimization of the Meskhetian Turks community in the Kherson region, it can be stated that the main victimizing background having the greatest traumatic effect on the entire ethnic community is presented by the deportation of the Meskhetian Turks in 1944 and further forced resettlement from the places of deportation as a result of pogroms. The harshest rhetoric in assessing these events is followed by Turkish information sources, both scientific and journalistic, in which the Russian Federation is declared to be the culprit in the tragedy of the Meskhetian Turks. The authors typically substantiate the thesis viewing that Russia as the legal successor of the Soviet Union bears the main responsibility for the deportation of Meskhetian Turks from their native places and continues the policy of discrimination against the representatives of this ethnic group living on the territory of the Russian Federation (HASANOĞLU, 2016).

The blame is even laid on Georgia for its unwillingness to allow the return of Meskhetian Turks to their historical homeland. Georgia is also viewed as responsible for solving the problem of their ethnic consolidation. According to authors, the Russian Federation acts “as the initiator of the international legal solution to the problem of the political status of the Akhiskites ensuring their repatriation either to the territory of Georgia or to Turkey” considering the opinion of “each Ahiska family in particular” (DERVIŞ, 2019).

Turkish sources also accuse Russia of provoking a conflict between “Uzbek brothers and Meskhetian Turks” in Fergana (DEVRISHEVA, 2019) which resulted in mass pogroms of Meskhetians and their flight from Uzbekistan.

The negative role of Russia in the tragedy of this people is even associated with the fact that the territories inhabited by the Meskhetian Turks entered the Russian Empire. In particular, in the study “Ahiska Turks - people who were exiled three times”, it is argued that “the tragic fate of the Ahiska Turks was predetermined by the expansion of the Russian Empire into the territory of Transcaucasia” (DERVIŞ, 2019). Moreover, the migration of Meskhetian Turks to the Ottoman Empire during this period is interpreted as provoked by the “Russian expansion” and is designated as “forced resettlement” or “deportation” since “legal grounds were created for this” (DERVIŞ, 2019). The legal grounds for deportation refer only to “the order of the commander of the Russian army I.F. Paskevich allowing Muslims wishing to move to Turkey to sell their plots and real estate”, as well as the subsequent “permission for resettlement” based on the Treaty of Adrianople of September 2, 1829 (DERVIŞ, 2019). Although the study of the role of the Russian Empire in the resettlement of the Meskhetian Turks during this period is beyond the scope of this study, the introduction of meanings that demonize the very arrival of
Russia in the Caucasus and its role in the fate of the Meskhetian Turks which have an obvious victimizing effect seems quite apparent.

With a significant degree of assumption, the materials presented in scientific publications can be considered as playing a significant role in the victimization of Meskhetian Turks in the Kherson region as they rather produce or substantiate interpretations of the past for a negative perception of the role of Russian statehood in the fate of Meskhetian Turks. Publicist materials posted, in particular, on websites devoted to the life of Meskhetian Turks that are mostly affiliated with Turkey have a much greater effect (Hürriyet.com.tr, Ahiskalilar.org, aa.com.tr, trthaber.com, Ahiska.org.tr).

The historical contexts of the formation of a negative image of the Russian Federation are projected onto the current situation. Publicly available information sources contain discourse stating a fear of Russia both among the population of the Kherson region as a whole, and specifically among the Meskhetian Turks, there are statements of the following nature: “In all districts, except Skadovskiy, poverty is feared more than Russia” (TIMOSHCHUK, 2018b).

The existing economical problems are projected onto Russia’s aggression. In particular, the transition of Crimea to the Russian Federation considered as an annexation in Ukrainian and Turkish information sources is declared the basis of the economic problems of the inhabitants of the Kherson region in general, as well as the reason for the Meskhetian Turks being on the verge of a “new catastrophe” (HASANOĞLU, 2016).

The Meskhetian Turks state that competition for them is created not so much by their neighbors as by agricultural holdings and agricultural producers from other countries. The opportunities provided by the Association Agreement with the European Union did not fix the situation since, according to the Meskhetian Turks, it is difficult to supply products to Europe and “the market opened for large agricultural holdings, not for us” (GOMANIUK, 2020). The state support of small and medium-sized businesses which they consider necessary in the current situation is practically not implemented (GOMANIUK, 2020).

In scientific publications of Ukrainian researchers, the above-mentioned labor migration of the Meskhetian Turks is associated with the danger of the “armed conflict” reaching the Kherson region. The project of the resettlement of the Ahiska Turks from the Kairka village of the Kalanchatsky district as the closest to the Crimea is also mentioned. In an interview conducted in 2015, the community representatives directly expressed their fears that Russia could launch an offensive from the Crimea into the territory of the Kherson region which would have affected the places of compact residence of the Meskhetian Turks primarily located near the border (SYRINSKA & MAIOROV, 2015).

It is necessary to pay attention to the manifestations of a loyal attitude of the Meskhetian Turks towards the Soviet past and the Russian people. For example, on his Internet page, Ali Bulut (2015) who until recently was a representative of the Association of Ukrainian and Turkish Businessmen in the Kherson region expressed a desire for an early establishment of peace in a conflict that turned into the “brotherly war” through negotiations between Ukraine and Russia, “Slavic and Christian brothers”.

During the interviews, Meskhetian Turks living in the Kherson region also repeatedly expressed nostalgia for the times of the USSR when there were no borders and conflicts. One of the interviewees noted the following: “Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians are all one people. How can they be separated?” (POLITYCHNA KHERSONSHCHYNA, 2018). In the works of Ukrainian researchers, such an opinion is considered a consequence of the Ahiska Turks being unable to implement the ritual obligatory ritual of the given community consisting in visiting relatives who live, among other places, in the territory of Crimea (Armyansk) (DANYLOV et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

As a result of the realization of the research objective, the following results were obtained:

- Understanding the phenomenon of victimhood can be based on both the ability of an individual or a group to become a victim of a crime and on outwardly directed deviant behavior conditioned by the realization of the victim complex. The formation of the
victim complex is conditioned by both traumatic events in the history of the ethnos and its current socio-economic living conditions and is also constructed through the informational impact of the corresponding content.

- The victimological influence on the Meskhetian Turks community living in the Kherson region is ensured by the attitude on the part of the contacting ethnoses predominantly determined by the isolation of this local community, economic competition in the context of the low living standards, the existing stereotypes, and the features of their interaction with government authorities.

- Turkish identity prevails among the Meskhetian Turks. This fact is facilitated by the increased attention from the Turkish Republic for which the representatives of the Turkish-Meskhetian communities living in Ukraine present a resource for the realization of Turkey’s national interests in the region. The interaction of the Turkish authorities with the Ahiska Turks of the Kherson region can be carried out without the involvement of the Ukrainian authorities.

- The Ukrainian identity is more demonstrative and is aimed at ensuring loyalty from the state. The local identity is developing.

- The main victimizing background element having the greatest traumatic effect on the entire ethnic community is the deportation of Meskhetian Turks in 1944 and further forced resettlement from the places of deportation as a result of pogroms.

- The harshest rhetoric in assessing the role of Russia in these and other negative historical events in the past of the Meskhetian Turks is followed by Turkish information sources, both scientific and journalistic.

- The historical contexts of the formation of a negative image of the Russian Federation are projected onto the current situation. Publicly available Ukrainian and Turkish information sources contain discourse stating the fear of Russia both among the population of the Kherson region and specifically among the Meskhetian Turks. The blame for the existing economic problems is projected onto the aggression of Russia which is declared to be the culprit of the economic problems of the inhabitants of the Kherson region and the reason due to which the Meskhetian Turks are finding themselves on the verge of a “new catastrophe”.

- A loyal attitude towards the Soviet past and the Russian people exists among the Ahiska Turks but there is also a constructed fear of possible Russian aggression. They attribute the responsibility for the existing economic problems to the Ukrainian state power. The prevalence of such opinions among Meskhetian Turks is difficult to identify at the moment and this issue calls for further research.

- The victimizing nature of the socio-economic environment of the Meskhetian Turks community on the territory of the Kherson region, as well as its interpretations, can be stated. Said interpretations are associated with the historical aspects of interaction with Russia. Meanwhile, the information field demonstrates the shift of responsibility for the ongoing processes to the Russian Federation which can lead to the formation of the victim complex in the Ahiska Turks in which the Russian Federation will act as the identified enemy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
The present study was conducted with financial support from the Russian Foundation for Basic Research and the Expert Institute for Social Research as a part of research project No. 20-011-31790 “Conceptualization of the model of ethnonational victimization of the population of Ukraine on the example of the Kherson region accounting for the all-Ukrainian and regional contexts of the victim image construction”.

REFERENCES
ANIKIN, D.A. Izobrazhaia zhertvu: kollektivnye travmy i sakralizatsiia proshlogo [Playing the victim: collective trauma and the sanctification of the past]. In: Filosofskaia antropologiia

Laplage em Revista (International), vol.7, n. Extra C, 2021, p.466-476

ISSN: 2446-6220
zhertvy: materials of the All-Russian conference with foreign participation, October 12-14, 2017, Samara, Russia (p. 152-159). Samara: Samara Humanitarian Academy, 2017.

BULUT, A. Sadiyar… Ukrayna’da Vatansız Vatansever, Barışsever Bir Ahiska Türkü… [A Stateless, Patriotic, Peace-loving Meskhetian Turk in Ukraine …], 2015. Available at: https://alibulut.org/2015/03/15/sadiyar-ukraynada-vatansiz-vatansever-barissever-bir-ahiska-turku/. Access: March 21, 2021.

DANYLOV, S.I., EIHELSON, I.V., & YELIHULASHVILI, M.S. Musulmanski hromady Khersonshchyny v konteksti rehionalnoi sotsialno-politychnoi dynamiki i bezpekovykh vyklkyiv [Muslim communities of Kherson region in the context of regional socio-political dynamics and security issues]. Skhidnyi svit, 2020, 4, 36-47.

DERVIŞ, L. Ahiska türkleri – üç kere sürğün edilen halk [Ahiska Turks - people who were excluded three times]. Karadeniz Uluslararası Bilimsel Dergi, 2019, 43(Güz), 145-152.

DEVRIŞHEVA, K. Ahiska türklerinin bitmeyen göçü [The never-ending migration of Ahiska Turks]. Sutad, 45, 2019, 333-352.

GOMANIUK, M.A. Modernizatsiia sotsialnoho zhyttia turkiv-akhyska v Ukraini [Modernization of social life of Achish Turks in Ukraine]. Skhidnyi svit, 2020, 2, 49-62.

GOMANIUK, N.A. Ot turok-meskhetintsev do turok ukraintsev [From Meskhetian Turks to Ukrainians Turks]. Habitus, 2016, 2, 65-78.

HASANOĞLU, İ. Ahıska Türkleri: Bitmeyen Bir Göç Hikâyesi [Meskhetian Turks: An Endless Migration Story]. Türk Dünyası İncelemeleri Dergisi, 2016, 16(1), 1-20.

MALINOVSKAIA, E.A. Turki-meskhetintsy v Ukraine: etnosotsiologicheski ocherk [Meskhetian Turks in Ukraine: an ethnosociological essay]. Kyiv: Heneza, 2006.

PANESH, E.KH., & ERMOLOV, L.B. Meskhetinskie turki [Meskhetian Turks]. Voprosy Istorii, 1991, 9-10, 212-217.

POLITYCHNA KHERSONSHCHYNA. Yaki konflikty v hromadakh Khersonshchyny? [What are the conflicts in the communities of the Kherson region?], 2018. Available at: http://polit-kherson.info/society/2259-yaki-konflikty-v-gromadah-heronschyny.html.

RIVMAN, D.V. Kriminalnaia viktimologiia [Criminal victimology]. Saint Petersburg: Piter, 2002.

SIMONENKO, V.A. Meskhetinskie turki: Istoricheskaia sudba i problemy kulturnoi adaptatsii [Meskhetian Turks: Historical fate and problems of cultural adaptation]: Ph.D. dissertation in historical sciences. Krasnodar: Kuban State University, 2002.

SYRINSKA, O.A., & MAJOROV M.V. Hromada turkiv-meskhetintsv v umovakh zbroinoho konfliktu na Skhodi Ukrainy [The community of Meskhetian Turks in the context of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine]. Skhidnyi svit, 2015, 1, 138-148.

TIMOSHCHUK, YA. Dorohy, bidnist, nudha. Khersonshchyna cherez susidstvo z Krymom potrebuie osobyi uvahy (Sotsiologhiia, infohrafika) [Roads, poverty, boredom. Kherson region needs special attention due to its proximity to the Crimea (Sociology, infographics)], 2018a. Available at: https://texty.org.ua/articles/86461/Dorogy_bidnist_nudha_Khersonshhyna_cherez_susidstvo_z-86461/

TIMOSHCHUK, YA. Na mezhi. Pislia okupatsii Krymu na pivdennii Khersonshchyny pobilsalo tykh, kto vvaizhaie sebe ukrantsiamy [On the verge. After the occupation of Crimea, the number of those who consider themselves Ukrainians increased in the southern Kherson region], 2018b. https://texty.org.ua/articles/83028/Na_mezhi_Pislia_okupaciji_Krymu_na_pivdennij-83028/ Access: June 21, 2020.
VELESHKO, E.N. Vliianie viktimnykh faktorov na politicheskoe povedenie krymskotatarskich repatriantov [The influence of victim factors on the political behavior of the Crimean Tatar repatriates]: Ph.D. dissertation in political sciences. Simferopol: Tavrichesky National University named after V.I. Vernadsky, 2007.

YAVUZ, T. Ahiska Türkleri Sürgünü tanığı Şükri Anvarov, sürgünde yaşadıklarını AA’ya anlattı [Şükri Anvarov, the witness of the Meskhetian Turks in Exile, told AA about her experiences in exile], 2020. Available at: https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/yasam/ahiska-turkleri-surgunu-tanigi-sukri-anvarov-surgunde-yasadiklarini-aaya-anlatti/2043578. Access: March 25, 2021.

ZOLOTAROV, D.YU. Do pytannia emihratsii turkiv-meskhetynsiv z Ukrainy v Turechchynu u 2015-2017 rr. [On the issue of emigration of Meskhetian Turks from Ukraine to Turkey in 2015-2017]. Skhidnyi svit, 2020, 2, 63-78.
Victimological aspects of the history and modern living conditions of meskhetian turks in the Kherson Region of Ukraine

Aspectos victimológicos da história e das condições de vida modernas dos turcos meskhetian na região de Kherson, Ucrânia

Aspectos victimológicos de la historia y las condiciones de vida modernas de los turcos meskhetianos en la región de Kherson de Ucrania

Resumo
Um dos componentes da identidade ucraniana comum atualmente formadora é apresentado pela vitimização etnonacional. Seus discursos estão mudando dependendo das características do desenvolvimento histórico e das modernas condições de vida socioeconômicas de grupos étnicos na Ucrânia multiétnica e dependem das características da interação dessas etnoses com os grupos étnicos de contato e autoridades estatais. Os resultados do estudo revelam que o conteúdo vitimizador é encontrado nas características específicas da integração dos turcos meskhetian na comunidade anfitriã devido às características de sua identidade e características etnoculturais, bem como na percepção negativa por parte do contato com grupos étnicos e problemas econômicos regionais. Eventos históricos negativos e problemas contemporâneos dos turcos de Ahiska na região de Kherson são frequentemente apresentados através do prisma de culpar a Federação Russa. Enquanto isso, os representantes da referida comunidade mostram lealdade ao passado soviético e ao povo russo.

Abstract
One of the components of the currently forming common Ukrainian identity is presented by ethnonational victimization. Its discourses are changing depending on the features of historical development and the modern socio-economic living conditions of ethnic groups in the multi-ethnic Ukraine and are contingent on the characteristics of the interaction of these ethno-features with the contacting ethnic groups and state authorities. The study results reveal that victimizing content is found in the specific characteristics of Meskhetian Turks’ integration in the host community owing to the features of their identity and ethnocultural characteristics, as well as in the negative perception on the part of contacting ethnic groups and regional economic problems. Negative historic events and contemporary problems of the Ahiska Turks in the Kherson region are often presented through the prism of blaming the Russian Federation. Meanwhile, the representatives of said community show loyalty to the Soviet past and the Russian people.

Keywords: Meskhetian turks. Ethnonational identity. Socio-economic conditions. Victimization. Ukraine.

Resumen
Uno de los componentes de la identidad ucraniana común que se está formando actualmente se presenta por la victimización etnonacional. Sus discursos están cambiando en función de las características del desarrollo histórico y de las condiciones de vida socioeconómicas modernas de los turcos meskhetian en la Ucrania multiétnica y dependen de las características de la interacción de esas etnias con los grupos étnicos y las autoridades estatales que se ponen en contacto. Los resultados del estudio revelan que el contenido victimizante se encuentra en las características específicas de la integración de los turcos mesjetianos en la comunidad de acogida debido a las características de su identidad y características etnoculturales, así como en la percepción negativa por parte de los grupos étnicos de contacto y los problemas económicos regionales. Los acontecimientos históricos negativos y los problemas contemporáneos de los turcos Ahiska en la región de Jerson a menudo se presentan a través del prisma de culpar a la Federación de Rusia. Mientras tanto, los representantes de dicha comunidad muestran lealtad al pasado soviético y al pueblo ruso.

Palavras-chave: Turcos meskhetian. Identidade etnonacional. Condições socioeconômicas. Vitimização. Ucrânia.

Palabras-clave: Turcos mesjetianos. Identidad etnonacional. Condiciones socioeconómicas. Victimización. Ucrania.