

DOI 10.23947/2414-1143-2022-29-1-9-16  
UDC 321

## FORMATION SPECIFICS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF CRIMEA IN THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD<sup>1</sup>

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The main stages of the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea in the post-Soviet period are considered, as well as their main features and key aspects of its transformation are analyzed. In total, four stages were identified in the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea: 1992-1994; 1995-2006; 2006-2014; 2014-present time. The first stage was characterized by features of a transformative regime with a presidential form of government that was still being formed and a party system with a dominant party. The specific features of the second stage were the political crisis in the region associated with the rejection of the presidential republic, as well as the transition to a parliamentary republic and a majoritarian electoral system. The third stage in the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea was characterized by the transformation of the party system towards a system with a dominant party, which, starting from 2006, was the "Party of Regions" for eight years. The form of government at this stage did not undergo any changes, representing, as before, a parliamentary republic. This stage was also distinguished by a change in the party system and the transition in 2006, first to a proportional electoral system, and later, in 2010, a return to a mixed electoral system, characteristic of the political process of the Republic of Crimea in the period from 1992 to 1994. After 2014, a new stage in the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea began, associated with the transition to a presidential form of government. At the same time, the party and electoral systems have not changed. As in the period from 2006 to 2014, the republic currently has a party system with a dominant party (the difference is that United Russia has become the dominant political force instead of the Party of Regions), as well as a mixed electoral system.

Key words: Crimean Peninsula, Ukrainian ethnic group, population, demography, ethnic structure.

### **[Д.И. Узнародов Специфика становления политической системы республики Крым в постсоветский период]**

Рассматриваются основные этапы становления политической системы Республики Крым в постсоветский период, анализируются их основные особенности и ключевые аспекты её трансформации. Всего было выделено четыре этапа становления политической системы Республики Крым: 1992-1994 гг.; 1995-2006 гг.; 2006-2014 гг.; 2014-по наст. время. Первый этап характеризовался чертами трансформативного режима с ещё только формирующейся президентской формой правления и партийной системой с доминирующей партией. Специфическими особенностями второго этапа являлись политический кризис в регионе, связанный с отказом от президентской республики, а также переходом к парламентской республике и мажоритарной избирательной системе. Для третьего этапа становления политической системы Республики Крым была характерна трансформация партийной системы в сторону системы с доминирующей партией, которой, начиная с 2006 года, на протяжении восьми лет являлась «Партия регионов». Форма правления на этом этапе изменений уже не претерпевала, представляя собой, как и ранее, парламентскую республику. Данный этап также отличался изменением партийной системы и переходом в 2006 году сначала к пропорциональной избирательной системе, а впоследствии, в 2010 году, - возвращением к смешанной избирательной системе, свойственной политическому процессу Республики Крым в период с 1992 по 1994 годы. После 2014 года начался новый этап становления политической системы Республики Крым, связанный с переходом к президентской форме правления. При этом, не претерпели изменений партийная и избирательная системы: как и в период с 2006 по 2014 гг., в настоящее время в республике действуют партийная система с доминирующей партией (отличие заключается в том, что вместо «Партии регионов» доминирующей политической силой стала «Единая Россия»), а также смешанная избирательная система.

<sup>1</sup> Публикация подготовлена в рамках реализации ГЗ ЮНЦ РАН, № гр. проекта 122020100349-6.

Ключевые слова: Республика Крым, политическая система, политические партии, избирательная система, политическая власть.

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In the scientific discourse, the studies of the issues of the political process and political development of the Republic of Crimea are devoted to the works of a number of specialists, in particular, O.V. Vdovichenko [2], I.N. Voronin [3], M.L. Galas [4], A.A. Zotkin [8], V.V. Kaftan [9], D.F. Segal [16]. Despite the fact that a significant research base has already been formed on this topic, certain aspects, in particular those related to a detailed analysis of the processes of formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea, still remain undisclosed. In the course of the study, the stages of formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea were identified, their main features, key aspects of its transformation were analyzed.

In the process of formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea, four main stages can be distinguished: 1992-1994; 1995-2006; 2006-2014; 2014-present. The first stage (1992-1994) is characterized by the features of a transformative regime [1, p. 85] associated with the adoption of a new democratic constitution and the determination of the status of the region within Ukraine. It was during this period that the bodies of regional self-government of Crimea were reformed into state authorities of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, and the procedure for their work and the adoption of legislative and other acts was determined, issues of budgetary powers were settled, laws were adopted on education, on elections of the president and the Supreme Council of the Republic of Crimea [1, p. 86]. On May 5, 1992, an act was adopted declaring the state independence of the Republic of Crimea, and on May 6 of the same year, the Supreme Council of the Republic approved the Constitution, according to which the Republic of Crimea was defined as a democratic state with a presidential-parliamentary form of government within Ukraine, and the city of Sevastopol was given a special status [13], [10]. On June 14, 1993, the Supreme Council of the peninsula adopted a law on the president of the republic [5], and on February 4, 1994, the first and only presidential elections in the Republic of Crimea were held, which were won by Yuri Meshkov, who was nominated from the Russia political bloc. On September 21 of the same year, by decision of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Crimean autonomy was renamed the Autonomous Republic of Crimea [6].

On March 27, 1994, elections were held to the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Elections were held in single-member and multi-member constituencies. The pro-Russian bloc "Rossiya" (Republican Party of Crimea and People's Party of Crimea) won a landslide victory gaining an absolute majority and 54 seats. Independent candidates won 21 seats, and the ones from the Kurultai of the Crimean Tatar people (14), the Communist Party of Crimea (2), the Economic Revival Party (1), and the Russian Party of Crimea (1) also entered the parliament [17].

The second stage in the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea (1995-2006) was associated with the political crisis in the region and the transition to a parliamentary republic. The initiatives of President Yuri Meshkov, who advocated holding a referendum on declaring Crimea an independent republic, restoring political and economic ties with Russia, integrating the peninsula into the Russian economic space, frightened the then Ukrainian authorities, as a result of which, according to the law "On the abolition of the

Constitution and some laws of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" [7], the post of President of the Republic of Crimea was abolished in March 1995.

On March 29, 1998, regular elections to the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea were held, for the first time held by the majoritarian system. The majority (47 seats) were won by independent candidates [12]. Representatives of the Communist Party of Ukraine received 38 seats in parliament, another 5 seats went to candidates from the Agrarian Party of Ukraine (currently the "People's Party"), representatives of the People's Democratic Party and the "Union" party received 4 seats each, 1 mandate for each candidate from the Socialist Party of Ukraine and the Party of Economic Revival of Ukraine [12].

At the time of the elections, the "Russia" bloc, which won a landslide victory in the last elections, had already ceased to exist. The reason for this was a split in this political movement, caused by the refusal of a number of deputies from the Rossiya bloc to approve the candidates proposed by Meshkov from among Moscow politicians and economists to the government of the republic. Along with other deputies from the "Russia" bloc, the chairman of the Supreme Council of Crimea, Sergei Tsekov, spoke out against the composition of the government proposed by Meshkov. In addition, ten more deputies left "the Russia bloc", creating a new Respublika bloc, arguing that they are in favor of the sovereignty of Crimea, but against joining the Russian Federation. Both the Republican and the People's Party of Crimea, which formed the basis of the Rossiya bloc, no longer existed by 1998.

On October 21 of the same year, the parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea adopted a new Constitution, which entered into force on January 11, 1999, according to which the parliamentary form of government that exists in the republic at the present time was officially fixed. The representative body of power was the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the executive body was the Council of Ministers. According to the adopted Constitution, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (Prime Minister) was elected by the Supreme Council and approved by the President of Ukraine, and the composition of the government was also formed by the Supreme Council.

The next parliamentary elections in Crimea were held in March 2002. As in the previous elections, independent candidates won again winning 46 seats. As in the 1998 elections, the second place in terms of the total number of seats was taken by representatives of the Communist Party of Ukraine, while losing almost twice their representation in comparison with the previous elections (15 seats) [12]. On the contrary, the Agrarian Party (from 5 to 11 seats) and the People's Democratic Party (from 4 to 8 seats) increased their representation. For the first time in the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, such parties as the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine, the Party of Regions, the Russian Bloc (3 seats), the Peasant Party of Ukraine, the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs of Ukraine, the Russian-Ukrainian Union (currently the party " Rus"), Labour Ukraine and the Democratic Union (1 place each) [12]. It can be concluded that between 1998 and 2002 among the residents of Crimea, there was a rather low level of trust in political parties: even the most popular at that time among all political forces, the Communist Party, in the 2002 elections received only 15% of the total number of seats in parliament. Another observation is that, as in the 1998 elections, the Crimean Tatars found themselves without representation in the Supreme Soviet of the republic.

Since 2006, the third stage in the development of the political system of the Republic of Crimea begins. Since that time, the party system of the republic has undergone certain changes. In 2006, for the first time, elections to the Crimean parliament were held according to the proportional electoral system. It can be stated that from 2006 to 2014 the Crimean Peninsula was characterized by a system with a dominant party. This dominant political force was the "Party of Regions". In the elections to the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2006 and 2010. The Party of Regions won a landslide victory (in 2006,

as part of the For Yanukovych bloc, which also included the Russian Bloc party): in 2006, as part of the For Yanukovych bloc, the Party of Regions received the support of 32.55% of voters, 48.93% in 2010 and the absolute majority of seats in parliament [12].

In 2010, there was a return to a mixed electoral system as it had happened in the 1994 elections. It is also curious that neither in 2006, nor in 2010, none of the other parties participating in the elections could get more than 7% of the vote, which also indicates a very high level of support for the Party of Regions at that time. In addition, the downward trend in the level of support for the Communist Party of Ukraine continued (9 seats in 2006 and 5 seats in 2010) [12]. Another trend was an increase in the representation of pro-Russian political forces in the parliament of the Republic of Crimea: if in 2006 one could observe a fairly wide representation of parties of the right spectrum of Ukrainian politics ("Kunitsyn Bloc" (10 seats); "People's Movement of Ukraine" (8 seats); "Bloc Yulia Tymoshenko" (8 seats). Later in 2010, from the political forces of this direction in the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, only the "People's Movement of Ukraine" (5 seats) was represented [12].

After the events of 2014, a new page in the history of its political development begins on the entire Crimean Peninsula. The former subjects of both the political and socio-economic spheres were forced to integrate into absolutely new realities for them, which often took place quite painfully for them. Speaking about the political aspect of the development of the Crimean Peninsula after 2014, it should be emphasized that at present we can talk about the gradual completion of the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea. Currently in the Republic of Crimea, there is a similar model of the political system, which is also characteristic of many other constituent entities of the Russian Federation - a strong executive power plus a party system with a dominant party at the legislative level of separation of powers. After 2014, the form of government on the peninsula underwent a transformation to a certain extent: since that period, the form of government in the republic can be de facto described as presidential (despite the fact that there is no formal position of "president" in the republic, and the position of the head of the executive branch is called the "head of the Republic of Crimea").

The head of the republic is elected not by popular vote, but by a representative body of power, i.e., the State Council, having, at the same time, very broad powers. For example, the head of the republic has the right to determine the structure of the executive authorities, head the Council of Ministers of the republic, dissolve the State Council in cases and in the manner prescribed by federal law and the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea, appoint, with the consent of the State Council, the chairman of the Council of Ministers of the republic, as well as his deputies, suspend or cancel the effect of resolutions and orders of the Council of Ministers and acts of the executive authorities of the Republic of Crimea [11].

Analyzing the results of the elections to the State Council of the Republic of Crimea in 2014, it should be emphasized that the United Russia party won a convincing victory in all municipalities (70.18%). In many ways, this result was due to the positive perception of the events of the "Crimean spring" by the majority of the population, as well as the fact that other parties did not have sufficient resources to conduct a high-quality election campaign and elementary time to open their branches in at least a quarter of the settlements of the peninsula. Unlike other political forces, United Russia formed its party cells mainly from representatives of other political forces operating on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula until 2014 (the Russian Unity party, the Party of Regions). Other parties of the Russian Federation, which were given the opportunity to compete for seats in the Crimean parliament, experienced very great difficulties with the formation of the list of their candidates and with the nomination of candidates in single-mandate constituencies. Very often, the parties were forced to nominate people from other regions as candidates, who at that time were completely unfamiliar to the inhabitants of the Crimean Peninsula. The candidates nominated by

United Russia were known to the inhabitants of Crimea, and many of them actively showed themselves during the events of the Crimean Spring, which, in turn, automatically gave United Russia an advantage over other political forces. According to the results of the 2014 election campaign, only two parties entered the parliament of the Republic of Crimea: United Russia (70.18% and 70 seats) and the Liberal Democratic Party (8.49% and 5 seats) [14]. In total, twelve political forces took part in the elections. Elections, as in 2010, were held according to a mixed system (50 deputies were elected from party lists, 25 from single-mandate constituencies).

Five years later, in the elections of the State Council of the Republic of Crimea of the second convocation, the results were already of a different nature and, it is noteworthy, despite a certain positive trend in socio-economic development, the indicators of the ruling United Russia significantly declined compared to the elections five years ago. United Russia received 54.70%, the Liberal Democratic Party received twice as many votes (16.84%), and the communists almost doubled their result (8.22%) [15].

So, turning to the conclusions, it should be noted that in the process of formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea, four main stages can be distinguished: 1992-1994; 1995-2006; 2006-2014; 2014-present time. The first stage was characterized by the features of a transformative regime with a newly emerging presidential form of government and a party system with a dominant party. The second stage was characterized by a political crisis in the region and the transition to a parliamentary republic, as well as to a majoritarian electoral system. The formation of the party system during this period was complicated by the low level of public confidence in political forces, as evidenced by the results of the 1998 parliamentary elections, which were won by independent candidates. A similar situation was observed in the 2002 elections, in which independent candidates won an even more convincing victory. The third stage in the development of the political system of the Republic of Crimea is characterized by the transformation of the party system towards one with a dominant party, which for eight years was the "Party of Regions". The form of government at this stage did not undergo any changes, representing, as before, a parliamentary republic. The third stage was also characterized by the transformation of the electoral system, associated with the transition in 2006, first to a proportional electoral system, and in 2010, a return to a mixed one that operated from 1992 to 1994. As for the fourth stage of the formation of the political system of the Republic of Crimea, the main change was associated with the transition to a presidential form of government, while the party system with the dominant party was preserved (United Russia became the dominant political force instead of the "Party of Regions"), and also remained the former mixed electoral system, which came into force in the 2010 elections.

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**15 February, 2022**