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**ROLE OF THE CHECHEN INTELLECTUALS IN THE DECISIONS  
ON CHECHEN PEOPLE REHABILITATION**

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**Abstract**

After the death of I.V. Stalin, letters and appeals from the victims and their relatives poured into the central party and state bodies, personally members of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Soviet government, the USSR General Prosecutor and heads of allied law enforcement agencies, and international organizations including the UN. Well-known Soviet writers, cultural and art workers, scientists, representatives of the general public including foreign ones demonstrated solidarity with them. A just solution hope to the problems of the deported peoples appeared in connection with the decisions of the July (1953) Plenum of the CPSU CC where L. Beria’s criminal activities were severely appraised. The formal statement about the need to “eliminate the consequences of Beria’s sabotage actions in the field of national relations” was contained only in the final part of the Decree on criminal anti-party and anti-state actions of Beria, adopted due to the discussion. The participation issues of the Chechen intellectuals’ representatives in the preparation of party and state directive decisions on the Chechen people rehabilitation are considered in the article. The evicted peoples being under permanent stress, feeling freedom, began persistently and categorically the process of rehabilitation and return to their historical homeland. Both the representatives of the Chechen intellectuals and representatives of other deported peoples have repeatedly appealed to the highest authorities of the country with statements about the return of the deported peoples to their homeland.

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## **1. Introduction**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century left an unforgettable imprint in the history of the Chechens. The peoples have been subjected to unfair treatment by the authorities during this century. Most of the Chechen-Ingushetia population was destroyed as a result of revolutions, wars, repression, and deportation. The Chechens and Ingush deportation to Central Asia and Kazakhstan is one of the tragic events in the history of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The tyrants of the Soviet power who had no conscience, honor, or dignity decided to make a false accusation of treason to deal with the North Caucasus peoples. Glorious fighters, many of whom were recalled from the fronts and also sent to Siberia, fought bravely during the Chechens and Ingush deportation on February 23, 1944 on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War. Many intellectuals' representatives of the deported peoples were destined to share the fate with the republic. The intellectuals mainly consisted of workers who received pedagogical, technological, medical, and agricultural education in the country's universities. The main part of the intellectuals was made up of teaching staff, cultural workers and civil servants. Intellectuals' representatives in the person of doctors, economists, lawyers, and teachers have made a great contribution to the restoration of the republic and certain spheres of life. However, the bulk of the male population was drafted into the army as a result of the war outbreak, some went voluntarily to the front to defend their homeland.

## **2. Problem Statement**

The Chechens have been waiting for the restoration of justice and return to their homeland for long and anxious 13 years. The rehabilitation and restoration process of the statehood of the Chechen-Ingush and other repressed peoples of the Soviet Union began only in 1956 after the historic decisions of the XX Congress of the CPSU to condemn the personality cult of Stalin. The Presidium Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR "On the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and the abolition of the Grozny region" was signed on January 9, 1957; it crowned the thirteen-year struggle of the Chechen and Ingush peoples for the restoration of their violated rights. A peculiar result of the process of restoring the national autonomies of the North Caucasus peoples was summed up at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in February 1957. The Presidium Decree of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR dated January 9, 1957 was approved in accordance with the adopted constitutional procedure. Undoubtedly, the Chechen intellectuals made their contribution, because they sought the historical justice restoration for a long time.

## **3. Research Questions**

The research subject is the history of the Chechen intellectuals, which, like the entire Chechen people, were deported in 1944. However, intellectuals begin to fight for the historical justice restoration, not resigning to their position. Historical science does not have accurate data on the composition of the Chechen-Ingush intellectuals resettled to Siberia during the deportation, but we know that their number dropped sharply in subsequent years. In places of special settlements, few people managed to get a job

due to their specialty, and those who had already applied for a job could be fired without explanation. There were cases when highly educated cadres from Chechens and Ingush performed the most humiliating work in order to feed their families.

However, immigrants from Checheno-Ingushetia being in permanent tension and pressure from above passed through the test of their despair and weakness before the Soviet regime, and did not intend to give up. Despite the repressions and their terrible consequences, the Chechen-Ingush intellectuals tirelessly sent written appeals to the offices of the country's leadership, without losing faith in the restoration of justice in relation to the unlawfully accused of betrayal and evicted peoples.

The current issues are considered in the works of Bugaev (2012), Desheriev (1995), Tsutsulaeva (2014), Mamsurova (2017), Turkaev (2008), Dolgiev and Gapukhaev (2017) and others.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the paper is to show the activities of the Chechen intellectuals' representatives in the process of deported peoples rehabilitation and the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The methodological basis is the principles of objectivity, scientific character and historicism presupposing the study of facts and phenomena in all their diversity within the specific historical conditions of their emergence and development, and making it possible to highlight both the positive and negative aspects of the considered problem. An integrated research approach is taken as a ground in the paper.

#### **6. Findings**

Rehabilitation of repression victims of the totalitarian regime began immediately after the death of I. Stalin. Paradoxically, the initiator of such measures was L. Beria, one of the main punishers of millions of innocent victims of the Bolshevik terror including entire nations. Restoring legality and historical justice has become one of his key tasks in the new situation that has developed in the country in connection with the change in the top party and state leadership. At the same time, not only individuals were subject to rehabilitation but also peoples who had languished in a foreign land for many years. After Stalin's death and Beria's execution, they also had a hope that the new leaders of the country would realize the senselessness of their total exile which had been officially declared as eternal in 1948.

The following outstanding representatives of the Chechen-Ingush intellectuals can be pointed out: Muslim Gairbekov, Iunus Desheriev, Dziiiaudin Malsagov, Idris Bazorkin, Abdulla Khamidov, Magomed Mamakaev, and Khalid Oshaev. Each of them has played a separate role in the revival of the republic. In addition, written statements from workers, employees, front-line soldiers, and ordinary people were sent to the capital. Written appeals of Chechen workers to higher authorities with a request to return them to their historical homeland are kept in the Kazakh and Kyrgyz archival departments. Political scientist

Abdurakhman Avtorkhanov played a crucial role in restoring justice. Since 1947, he tried to convey to the Western public about the crime committed by the Stalinist government deporting entire peoples to the Kazakh and Kyrgyz ASSR. In 1948, he sent a memorandum on the genocide of the Caucasus peoples to the United Nations, and ten years later he published a book entitled “National murder in the USSR. Murder of the Chechen-Ingush people” (Turkaev, 2008).

Muslim Gairbekov is a prominent representative of the Chechen-Ingush intellectuals, who played a significant role not only in the return of Chechens and Ingush to their homeland but also in the life restoration in the republic.

In the spring of 1956, in Moscow, the meeting was held between the intellectuals of Checheno-Ingushetia including M.G. Gairbekov and the First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR A.I. Mikoian. Questions about the deported peoples, their situation in Central Asia, the importance of the full rehabilitation of peoples and the restoration of their autonomy were discussed at the meeting. A delegation from Checheno-Ingushetia handed over a written appeal to N.S. Khrushchev through A.I. Mikoian with a request to return the Chechens and Ingush to their homeland and restore national autonomy. When the discussion on the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR on the territory of the Kazakh Republic began, then M.G. Gairbekov, who served as Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, categorically opposed such an issue solution, taking a tough stance, and demanding the restoration of the republic within its historical borders.

In 1956, the Chairman of the Organizing Committee demonstrated persistence and steadfastness of demands when discussing this issue at the XX Congress of the CPSU. As a result, the leadership decided to restore the autonomy of the Chechens and Ingush in its historical homeland (Mamsurova, 2017).

The Organizing Committee for the return of special settlers to their historical homeland was created in February 1957 and was located in Grozny. Muslim Gairbekov was appointed as the Committee Chairman. The most complicated period started from this moment in the life and professional activity of M.G. Gairbekov. Muslim Gairbekov mobilized all ethical and moral forces to solve problems in the republic, realizing the full weight of the burden in the republic restoration which fell on the Organizing Committee. The republic restoration began with the construction and reconstruction of residential buildings, followed by the recovery of industry, culture, education, and economy. Construction work was carried out at a rapid pace, namely, new buildings of factories, plants, hospitals, schools, cultural institutions, and airports were erected, which is the result of M.G. Gairbekov’s incredible work.

Much has been done in the republic in six months after the publication of the Decree on the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. The Research Institute of History, Language and Literature was restored, a song and dance ensemble was created, and a studio of 19 people consisting of the Chechens and Ingush was opened at the Leningrad Theater Institute. Moreover, the work on training and retraining of pedagogical workers was actively going on in the republic. Owing to the considerable efforts of Muslim Gairbekov, Grozny Pedagogical Training School was transformed into the Chechen-Ingush Pedagogical Training School with school and preschool departments (Tsutsulaeva et al., 2020).

Dziiudin Malsagov, who served as Deputy People's Commissar of Justice of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic until 1944, has played a significant role in the return of the Chechens and Ingush to their homeland. In July 1953, he sent a written statement detailing L. Beria's criminal actions during the period of the forced eviction of the deported peoples to Central Asia to G.M. Malenkov, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR. On July 18, a group of Ingush special settlers sent an appeal to G.M. Malenkov and K.E. Voroshilov, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council (Bugaev et al., 2017).

Dziiudin Malsagov was unseated all his posts, expelled from the party, and sent to a psychiatric hospital for his activities on the path of restoring justice to the deported peoples, after a written appeal to I.V. Stalin. However, the measures taken by the authorities could not silence D. G. Malsagov. In 1956 he wrote a letter to N.S. Khrushchev after the death of the leader of the people. In the same year, Dziiudin Malsagov outlined the whole truth about the injustice committed against the peoples of the North Caucasus in a conversation with the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee of the Kazakh SSR. The Decree on the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was issued after a short period of time (Mamsurova, 2019).

The writer Idris Bazorkin made a significant contribution to the return of the Chechens and Ingush from exile. He was among the first fighters to restore justice to the North Caucasian peoples. In 1954, he wrote his famous appeal to the leadership of the USSR. The document, consisting of many pages, is authentic evidence of the events of the 1940s first half. This letter can be considered the most substantial historical document, in which every word is proof of the illegality and groundlessness of the charges brought against the evicted peoples. At the same time, Idris Bazorkin took part in the preparation and sending of written statements to the leadership of the Soviet Union on behalf of other authors. Writer N.D. Kodzoev's significant contribution to restoring the autonomy of the Chechens and Ingush is emphasized in his monograph, which notes that Idris Bazorkin has become the leader of the national movement in Central Asia for the return to their lands (Dolgieva & Gapukhaev, 2017).

At the end of May 1956, the work on the delegation formation, which was to prepare an appeal to the leadership of the Soviet Union on behalf of the deported peoples, as well as to organize and hold meetings at the state level, began due to the initiative of the Chechen linguist Iunus Desheriev and the Ingush writer Idris Bazorkin in Moscow. The idea to organize a single delegation from representatives of all repressed peoples originally existed according to the testimony of Professor Iu. Desheriev, however, it received no support. Therefore, a decision to "include the Chechens and Ingush who willingly agreed to take an active part in this important event into the delegation" was made.

The delegation consisted of 13 people: Ziazikova Zhanetta, Gaisumov Abbas, Shataev Magomet, Tashtiev Osman, Mutaliev Khadzhibikar, Taisumov Alaudin, Saidov Akhmad, Khamiev Sultan, Tashukhadzhieva Aset, Bazorkin Idris, Mataev Aki, Khamatkhanov Khadzhibikar, and Desheriev Iunus.

On June 12, 1956, A.I. Mikoian, the member of the Presidium of CPSU Central Committee, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR received a delegation in the Kremlin. The meeting was continuous and, certainly, the issues of the situation of the deported peoples, the political significance of the historical decisions of CPSU 20th Congress, the need for the full rehabilitation of the illegally expelled peoples, and the restoration of their national autonomies were discussed. The members

of the delegation presented a letter and an appeal to A.I. Mikoian, the content of which included the nuances of eviction, an assessment of the real situation in the places of special settlement, and an approval of the decisions of the XX Congress of the CPSU in order to pass them on to N.S. Khrushchev. There was also a request, firstly, to allow the Chechens and Ingush to return to the land of their ancestors – to the Caucasus, and secondly, to restore the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic “on the primordial territory”.

Desheriev (1995) wrote after the decades from these events: “These days will forever remain in the memory of the members of the first Chechen-Ingush delegation, essentially the first delegation of repressed peoples, in our memory, in the memory of the people” (p. 62).

The intellectuals, being the people leaders after returning to their homeland in the second half of the 20th century, when the republic was actively rebuilding, continued to support the people providing all kinds of assistance, which contributed to the restoration and further prosperity of Checheno-Ingushetia in the shortest possible time. It should be noted that Dinmukhamed Akhedovich Kunaev, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR, made a contribution to the return of the deported peoples to their lands and the restoration of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Besides, the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee N.S. Khrushchev played a considerable role in resolving the issue of restoring the autonomy of the Chechens and Ingush. A.Ch. Osmaev, the former Soviet party worker, recalled: “I am well aware that the issue of restoring the autonomy of the Chechens and Ingush in their historical homeland was repeatedly considered on the initiative of General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev in the mid-1950s. Most of the party representatives opposed such a solution to the issue; they suggested creating autonomy within the Kazakh ASSR” (as cited in Mamsurova, 2019, p. 25).

Said-Akhmed Atiev, the former Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, noted that N.S. Khrushchev had made a proposal to restore the autonomies of several peoples of the North Caucasus at the Presidium in 1956. However, an anti-party faction including Kaganovich L.M. and Malenkov G.M., under the direction of V.M. Molotov opposed this option for restoring autonomy (Aidaev, 1996). Owing to the persistence of N.S. Khrushchev, who introduced this proposal for discussion in the Presidium, until a positive decision followed, the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic was restored.

## **7. Conclusion**

Thus, both the representatives from among the Chechens and Ingush, and the representatives of other “punished peoples”, tormented by unbearable longing for their native land, primarily, raised the issues associated with the unconditional return to the territory of their ethnic homeland, and subsequently with the complete rehabilitation of the people. This expressed their natural desire to restore historical justice, the recognition of their legal rights, and the creation of a decent life on the land of their ancestors. This fact was not an unusual and unnatural phenomenon that infringed upon someone’s interests and rights. The authorities engaged in cynical clauses and red tape instead of satisfying the fair expectations of innocent victims. Almost all steps and measures for the rehabilitation of repressed (expelled) peoples at that time were, firstly, opportunistic, and secondly, strictly subordinate to the logic of bureaucratic

understanding of the ruling elite interests, and not legality and principles of humanism. On January 9, 1957, justice was met, and the autonomy of the Chechen-Ingush people was restored.

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