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THE CRIMEAN AUTONOMOUS REGION AND
UKRAINE'S RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA
IN THE POST-SOVIET ERA

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ABSTRACT

The Crimean Autonomous Region and Ukraine's Relations with Russia in the Post-Soviet Era

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This thesis explores the autonomy of the Crimean region in Ukraine in terms of its impact on Ukraine's relations with Russia in the post-Soviet era. Thesis analyzes also the impact of the relations between Ukraine and Russia on the autonomy of the Crimean region. Contrary to the views that consider the Crimean autonomy as a product of the ethno-territorial relations between the Crimea which is populated by mainly ethnic Russians and Kiev, thesis argues that the interstate relations between Ukraine and Russia have played a crucial role in the evolution of the autonomy of the Crimean region within Ukraine. Thesis is composed of six chapters. Following the introductory First Chapter, the Second Chapter examines the origins of the Crimean autonomy. The Third Chapter examines the Crimean Autonomous Region during the post-Soviet period until the signing of the Friendship Treaty between Ukraine and Russia in 1997. The Fourth Chapter explores the period between 1997 and 2004. The Fifth Chapter analyses the period in the aftermath of the Orange revolution in 2004. The Last Chapter is the Conclusion.

Keywords: The Crimea, Ukraine, Russia, The Orange Revolution, The Crimean Tatars

ÖZ

Kırım Özerk Bölgesi ve Sovyet Sonrası Döneminde Ukrayna'nın Rusya ile İlişkileri

Umerov, Eldar

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

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Bu Tez, Ukrayna'daki Kırım bölgesinin özerkliğini Sovyet-sonrası dönemde Ukrayna'nın Rusya ile ilişkilerine etkisi açısından incelemektedir. Tez, aynı zamanda, Ukrayna ve Rusya arasındaki ilişkilerin Kırım bölgesinin özerkliği üzerindeki etkilerini de ele almaktadır. Kırım'ın özerkliğini nüfusu çoğunlukla etnik Ruslar ın oluşturduğu Kırım bölgesi ile Kiev arasındaki ilişkilerin bir sonucu olarak gören görüşlere karşı, bu tezin öne sürdüğü ana görüşe göre; Ukrayna ve Rusya arasındaki devletlerarası ilişkilerin gelişimi ile Kırım Özerk Bölgesinin siyasal gelişimini çok yakından etkilemektedir. Tez Altı Bölümden oluşmaktadır. Girişi oluşturan Birinci Bölümden sonra, İkinci Bölüm Kırım bölgesinin özerkliğinin tarihsel arka planını ele almaktadır. Üçüncü bölüm Kırım'ın Ukrayna'nın 1991'de bağımsızlığını kazanmasında Rusya ile dostluk antlaşması imzaladığı 1997 yılına kadar olan dönemdeki konumu incelemektedir. Dördüncü Bölüm 1997'den Turuncu devrimin ortaya çıktığı 2004'e kadar olan dönemi incelemektedir. Beşinci Bölüm Turuncu Devrim sonrasındaki gelişmeleri analiz etmektedir. Son Bölüm Sonuç bölümüdür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kırım, Ukrayna, Rusya, Turuncu Devrim, Kırım Tatarları

To My Parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Scope and Objective

This thesis seeks to explore the place of the Crimean region in terms of its impact on Ukraine's relations with Russia in the post-Soviet era. Thesis analyzes also the impact of the relations between Ukraine and Russia on the autonomy of the Crimean region.

The Crimean Autonomous Region is a very small region located in the southern Ukraine that covers an area of 25,5 thousand square kilometers. The Crimean peninsula has a relatively long shoreline in the north of the Black Sea. It is almost an island since it is connected to the mainland Ukraine by a narrow strip of land in its northern part at Perekop.¹

Despite its small size, the Crimean region is of great strategic and political importance in the region due to its geographical location. Located at the intersection point of the routes between north and south and between east and west, the Crimean region has always been an important asset for various international actors for exerting an economic, cultural, political² and even military³ influence in the wider Black Sea region

¹ Crimea, Big Soviet Encyclopedia, [Online]. Available: <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/bse/100442/%D0%9A%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BC> [Accessed: 2 March 2012].

² Skrynnikov, Ruslan Grigorievich „Rusian History IX-XVII c.” *Text on History in Chrestomaty* . Ed. L.Ya.Averyanov, “Russian Humanitarian Internet-University”[Online]. Available: <http://www.lants.tellur.ru/history/skrynnikov/skr02.htm> [Accessed: 12 March 2012].

that covers the region between the Caucasus in the east and the Balkans in the west. Not surprisingly that the international actors try to exert greater influence in the region by manipulating the people living on the territory of the peninsula.

According to the demographic structure of the Crimean population presented below the ethnic Russians population makes 58, 5 % of all population of Crimea⁴.

Table 1.1.

Population Statistics of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea for 2001

	Population <i>thousand people</i>	Actual population <i>thousand people</i>		2001 as % of 1989
Autonomous Republic of Crimea	2024.0	100.0	100.0	99.4
Russians	1180.4	58.3	65.6	88.4
Ukrainians	492.2	24.3	26.7	90.5
Crimean Tatars	243.4	12.0	1.9	in 6.3 times more
Belarussians	29.2	1.4	2.1	68.9
Tatars	11.0	0.5	0.5	116.2
Armenians	8.7	0.4	0.1	in 3.6 times more
Jews	4.5	0.2	0.7	30.2
Poles	3.8	0.2	0.3	70.9
Moldavians	3.7	0.2	0.3	68.8
Azerbaijanians	3.7	0.2	0.1	173.0

Source: State Statistics Committee of Ukraine

³ Balayan, Lev Ashotovici *Return Stalin, The third Campaign of the Antante* , Moscow: Eksmo, Algoritm, 2010, p.79

⁴ “About number and composition population of UKRAINE by data All-Ukrainian population census'2001 data” [Online]. Available: <http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/> [Accessed: 17 March 2010]

The table includes data about nationalities whose part in actual population of the region was not less than 0.2%.

Illustration 1.1

Map of the Crimean Autonomous Region⁵



Source: Crimea Map: Wikipedia.

The Crimean Tatars composed the majority part of the population of the Crimea throughout centuries. Historians consider the Crimean Tatars to be the descendants of

⁵ „File:Crimeamap.png” [Online]. Available: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Crimeamap.png> [Accessed: 17 March 2010]

the Mongols, who occupied most of contemporary Russia and Ukraine in the thirteenth century. By the fifteenth century, the Crimean Tatars had become a separately distinguished national group, forming the Crimean Khanate, and occupying the territory of Crimean peninsula itself and Black Sea coastal areas. The Khanate reached its climax under the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth century. By the eighteenth century, modernized Russia fought the Crimean Tatar Khanate along with the declining Turkish Empire. In 1783, the Crimea was annexed by Russia. The newly conquered territories became Russified⁶.

Despite Russia's moderate tolerance toward the Tatars' religious traditions, they emigrated in large numbers to nearby Turkey. In 1783, "Tatars comprised about 83 percent of the peninsula population...by 1897, their share had plummeted to 34 percent, while Russians and Ukrainians comprised almost 45 percent."⁷ The late nineteenth and early twentieth century marked the reemergence of the Tatar intelligentsia. After the Communist revolution of 1917 the Crimean Tatars were under the constant purge of repressive policy. In 1941, when the Germans took over the Crimea, great number of Tatars openly supported them up until the time the Germans started to repress them. Soviet troops retook the Crimea in 1944 and Stalin decided to deport the Crimean Tatars to "special settlements" in Central Asia and Siberia, in retaliation for their collaboration with Germany. After the death of Stalin, the majority of deported nationalities were rehabilitated by Khrushchev, but the Crimean Tatars were among the exceptions. The year 1989 was thus a turning point in the life of the Crimean Tatars, because they were granted the right to return to the Crimea⁸.

⁶ Helton, Arthur "Crimean Tatars", *Director, Forced Migration Projects* September 1996, [Online]. Available: www.osi.hu/fmp/html/chapter_1_crimean.html [Accessed: 1 March 2012]

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

1.2. Literature Review

The existing literature on the Crimean Autonomous Region is composed of official documents and the studies published by various academics and think tank experts. This literature is mainly in Russian, Ukrainian and Tatar. Although they are in minority, the contribution to the literature took place in English and Turkish too.

The dominant view in the literature considers the Crimean autonomy as a product of the relations between the ethnic Russians in the Crimea and Kiev. This vision is also supported by the official documents. Thus, the Constitution of the Republic of the Crimea that was adopted in 1992 claims that “Official language and the language of proceedings...” in the Crimea “...is the Russian language”⁹ and that the Crimean Republic determines the relations with Ukraine “...on the basis of the Treaty and agreements.”¹⁰ Although being annulled by the Ukrainian Parliament in 1995¹¹ still the ethnic Russians try to revive it as Kyiv cancelled it “unilaterally without taking into account the views of the residents of the peninsula”.¹²

Ukrainian party “Soyuz” (“Union”) with headquarters in the Crimea also stakes on the relations between the Crimea and Kyiv. Recently, they initiated the preparation of the Treaty on delineation of authority between the Crimea and Kyiv. According to Lev

⁹ Article 6 of The Constitution of Crimean Autonomous Republic, adopted by the Superior Soviet of Crimea, 06.05.1992 [Online]. Available: <http://sevkrimrus.narod.ru/ZAKON/1992konst.htm> [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

¹⁰ Article 9 of The Constitution of Crimean Autonomous Republic, adopted by the Superior Soviet of Crimea, 06.05.1992 [Online]. Available: <http://sevkrimrus.narod.ru/ZAKON/1992konst.htm> [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

¹¹ Law of Ukraine no. 92-95-BP, 17.03.1995 [Online]. Available: <http://sevkrimrus.narod.ru/ZAKON/1995-2.htm> [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

¹² Court for cancellation of the Ukrainian Constitution of Crimea again took time out (PHOTOS), *NR2. Com. UA*. (September 13, 2010) [Online]. Available: http://nr2.com.ua/photo_reporting/300229.html [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

Mirimskiy, the party leader, "...the Treaty should clearly define rules of the game between Kyiv and Simferopol... Legislators should not forget that there is the only autonomous republic in Ukraine and that this republic is not just nominally existing but also entitled to the rights."¹³ In another interview, he added, "The Crimea, despite his Republican status is in direct financial and legal dependence to Kyiv. Over the past 15 years, the Crimean politicians, leaders of the socio - political movements of the Russian-speaking, Slavic population of the Crimean Communists always advocated the expansion of economic and political rights of the Crimea against the central government."¹⁴

Another party "Русское единство" ("Russian Unity") sees the Russians of the Crimea as political force that should participate to the forthcoming local elections. As explained by the leader of "Russian Unity" Sergei Aksenov, after being registered in the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine "... the Russians of the Crimea for the first time introduced their own political organization that can represent their interests at all levels of government. The emergence of the "Russian Unity" party will enable the Russian patriots to unite and get their own full-fledged political organization. ... The first time, Russians have the opportunity to participate to elections as a united political force."¹⁵

The same idea can be traced in the statement of Sergey Tsekov, deputy of Crimean Parliament, the ex-leader of the "Russki blok" ("Russian unit") party. "Today, but I think also in the future, in the Crimea there will be a really active force, which is Russians in the Crimea that protects the rights of Russians and all those who considers

¹³ "Party "Union" proposes Kiev and Simferopol to agree on the division of powers", *First-Crimean* No. 17 (17.09.2010-23.09.2010), Simferopol, p. 5

¹⁴ Information bureau of the movement „Russian Unity”, *First Crimean*, 17/23 September 2010, "Simferopol", p.6

¹⁵ "Simferopol", *Russkoe-Edinstvo*, No. 17 (09.2010), p. 12

the Russian language and culture as native ones, i.e. the Russian community of the Crimea.”¹⁶

The post graduate student of Kyiv Mohyla Academy, Stanislav Shumlyanskiy in his article considering the “language problem” puts forward that Ukrainian society “...now is not that implicitly imposes the language issue on the State (Russian supporters - to Russia, Ukrainian defenders - to Ukraine)”¹⁷ asserting also that the language conflict should be considered mostly as consequence of “political struggle and the interest of political entity”¹⁸ which being used by politicians for their own purposes sharpens at the election period.¹⁹

A.V. Ishin in his research about ethno-confessional relations in the Crimea also stresses the high importance of the interactions between the representatives of the local population. “... It is important to note that the Crimea, contrary to some predictions, did not become the next “hot spot” in the post-Soviet space. It was prevented both by the balanced policy of the Ukrainian state and the overall high level of inter-ethnic tolerance of the Crimean society.”²⁰

¹⁶ Tsekov, Sergey, „If you want to be Russian you should be Russian”, [Online]. Available: <http://rusk.ru/st.php?idar=111285>, [Accessed: 1 December 2011]

¹⁷ “Movne pitania” pislya parlamentskih vioriv: Vid politichnoï kon'yunkturi to derzhavnoï politiki [Online]. Available: <http://www.politik.org.ua/vid/magcontent.php3?m=1&n=58&c=1245> [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

¹⁸ Shumlianskiy, Stanislav Viktorovich, “Movna politika u dvomovnomu suspilstvi (na prikladi Ukraini)”. – *Rucopis 2009*. Kiev [Online]. Available: <http://disser.com.ua/content/352048.html>, [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

¹⁹ “Movne pitania” pislya parlamentskih vioriv: Vid politichnoï kon'yunkturi to derzhavnoï politiki [Online]. Available: <http://www.politik.org.ua/vid/magcontent.php3?m=1&n=58&c=1245> [Accessed: 1 January 2012]

²⁰ Ishin, Alexandr Vladimirovici, “On the main trends of the ethno-religious relations in the Crimea at the present stage” *Simferopol*, ed.Krimskii Arhiv, 2004. p. 34

Alla Prisjajnjuk in her article²¹ on the one of the famous analytical news websites while describing the political situation before the municipal elections in the peninsula highlights the problems between the ruling party (the Party of Regions) and the local leaders, who, by the way, supported the party at the last Ukrainian Parliament and President Elections.

According to “Assessment for Crimean Russians in Ukraine” as of December 31, 2006, “Ethnic Russians in the Crimea have a strong sense of identity and are politically organized... they have also consistently mobilized to protest, ...agitate for increased cultural rights, particularly in regards to language...” and “...find themselves ... in conflict with the central government of Ukraine...”²².

The Crimean question is of paramount importance for the internal stability of Ukraine²³. Many scholars compare the potential for ethnic conflict in the Crimea with the one in former Yugoslavia²⁴. Relations between Ukraine and Russia are characterized by considerable ambiguity. Scholarly disputes, relevant to this thesis, have been focused on two areas. First, a number of academics see the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (further RBSF) in the Crimea as a destabilizing factor for Ukraine. Mark Galeotti writes, “the presence of the Black Sea Fleet [Russian]...created a further complication [for internal ethno-cultural divisions and for the weakness of the Ukrainian state].”²⁵

²¹ „Crimean rake”, [Online]. Available: <http://www.glavred.info/archive/2010/10/13/175704-5.html>, [Accessed: 10 January 2012]

²² “Assessment for Crimean Russians in Ukraine” [Online]. Available: <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/assessment.asp?groupId=36905> [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

²³ Sasse, Gwendolyn. *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2007. p. 2-3

²⁴ Sherr, James “After Yugoslavia: Whither Ukraine?” in *Between Russia and the West: Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine*, Ed: Kurt R. Spillmann Bern: Peter Lang AG, 1999, p. 142; Kuzio, Taras, *Ukrainian Security Policy* Ed: Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995, p.69-70.

²⁵ Galeotti, Mark . “The Challenge of “soft security”: crime, corruption, and chaos,” in *New Security Challenges in Post Communist Europe*, Ed: Andrew Cottey, et al. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002, p. 164-165.

John Jaworski considers the RBSF in the Crimea as mostly a destabilizing factor for Ukraine²⁶. Primarily, he refers to an example of Moldova's Transnistria region where the Russian troops that are stationed there intervened into a conflict supporting the Russian population in Moldova against the Moldovan nationalists. Additionally, a number of personnel of the Black Sea Fleet²⁷ have been allowed to stand as candidates for office in both the Crimean Supreme Council and the Sevastopol City Council, where they formed a military lobby. It appears absurd that Russian citizens were allowed to participate in governing the Ukrainian administrative body.

Furthermore, the existence of the RBSF military bases in the Crimea allows Russia to influence developments in the Black Sea region. If tensions between Russia and Ukraine escalate, it is more convenient for Russia, in order to control maritime trade, to project force into the Crimea and the entire Ukrainian Black Sea shore from the Crimea than from significantly more distant Novorossiysk²⁸.

Trade, especially oil and natural gas trade, is crucial for Ukraine to diversify its sources of energy, reducing the Russian influence over the Ukrainian economy. Taras Kuzio stresses the destabilizing effect of the Russian military presence in the Crimea²⁹.

²⁶ Jaworski, John, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security," in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, Ed.: Maria Drohobycky, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 137-139.

²⁷ This instance has been drawn from the times of 1994, when the Black Sea Fleet has not been divided yet. Today, the similar situation is impossible. The citizens of Ukraine only can participate in Ukrainian elections

²⁸ Myasnikov, Victor "Chernomorslii Flot Gotovyat k Evacuatsii: Novuyu Bazu Speshno Stroyat v Novorossiiske za 2 Milliarda Dollarov," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, March 10, 2006. [Online]. Available: www.ng.ru/politics/2006-03-10/1_flot.html# [Accessed: 10 January 2012]. According to Russia's plans, Novorossiysk will become the main base for the RBSF by 2016.

²⁹ Kuzio, Taras, *Ukrainian Security Policy* Ed: Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995, p. 65-66

He points out that the size of the Russian military in the Crimea is sufficient to fuel a conflict between Russia and Ukraine. However, he insists that Russia is neither in the right condition to begin a full-scale military conflict nor has the intention to do so. Roman Solchanyk considers the continued Russian military presence in Ukrainian territory as the sign of Moscow's military and geostrategic interest to the region. The bilateral agreements on the issues of the division and basing of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF), signed in 1997, did not resolve the disputes, but rather postponed them until 2017, when the formal rights for the RBSF basing in Ukraine will expire.³⁰

Garnett points out that the postponement of the final decision on the RBSF basing issues in Ukraine until "at least" 2017 remains the "source of external instability on the peninsula [Crimean]."³¹ The second academic debate addresses the obviously contentious question: does the presence of RBSF on the Ukrainian territory have a stabilizing effect on the situation in Crimea? The Russian military claims the RBSF in the Crimea is a stabilizing factor.³²

1.3. Argument

Contrary to the general view represented in the previous sub-chapter where the Crimean autonomy is considered as a product of the relations between the ethnic Russians in the Crimea and Kiev, the thesis argues that it is the interstate relations

³⁰ Solchanyk, Roman. *Ukraine and Russia: the Post-Soviet Transition*, Ed.: Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009, p. 160.

³¹ Garnett, Sherman. "Incomplete Settlement," in *Russia and the West: the 21st Century Security Environment*, Ed.: Alexey Arbatov, et al. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999, p. 141.

³² Jaworsky, John "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security," in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, Ed.: Maria Drohobycky, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 135.

between Ukraine and Russia that have played a crucial role in the evolution of the autonomy of the Crimean region within Ukraine.

The view could be supported by the views of scholars such as Dr. Taras Kuzio. In his recent article³³ at the Jamestown Foundation site while disclosing the Russian influence on the Ukraine's foreign policy he says: "President Viktor Yanukovich's foreign and security policy is controlled by Russia and coordinated with Moscow. The same conclusion is already appearing among European elites after seeing first-hand how Ukrainian foreign policy personnel work closely with Russia." This idea is in parallel with the comments of the scholar in his earlier articles. Thus, after the Russian attack against Georgia in 2008 Taras Kuzio wrote that tension in political situation "... in the Crimea is at its highest since Ukraine faced the separatist challenge in the mid-1990's. Externally, Russia has launched a widespread ideological campaign against Ukraine (and Georgia) that has made the former the third most disliked country in Russia. This tension in the Crimea is largely ignored by the E.U., NATO and the U.S. - though it is an increasing priority in Kyiv."³⁴

On the main question of politicians and journalists at that period "Will Russia start explicit provocations in Crimea?"³⁵ their opinion expressed the political scientists. Thus, according to O. Paliy, the expert of the Institute of the Foreign Affairs of the Diplomacy Academy in Ukraine: "Provocative actions of Russia in Ukraine are

³³ Kuzio, Taras. "Ukraine's Foreign and Security Policy Controlled by Russia", Ed.: *Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 7 Issue: 187*, October 18, 2010 02:47 PM, [Online]. Available: http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=37043&cHash=6d42a97add [Accessed: 10 January 2012]

³⁴ Kuzio, Taras. "Russia-Ukraine Diplomatic War", Ed.: *Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 6 Issue: 147*, July 31, 2009 05:18 PM [Online]. Available: http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=35347, [Accessed: 07 July 2012]

³⁵ Mischenko, Mash . "Chi pide Rosiya na vidverti provokatsii v Krimu?",[Online]. Available: <http://www.unian.ua/news/268416-chi-pide-rosiya-na-vidverti-provokatsiji-v-krimu.html>, [Accessed: 10 January 2012]

constantly observed: monuments figures of politicians, who destroyed Ukrainian State, Ukrainian monuments at Goverla mountain desecrated, is outrage at the cemeteries in the Crimea to blame for the violence of the Crimean Tatars. It is artificially created to increase the tension, then release spark set fire to everything and create conditions for the separation of the Crimea.”³⁶

In defense analysis of the Swedish Defense Research Agency prepared at the same period just after Russian intervention to Georgia while describing Russia’s foreign policy towards the states of CIS and the Crimea as a part of Ukraine an analyst shows ways used by Russia in order to preserve and enlarge her influence in the Crimea³⁷.

Fears by the Ukrainian authorities of Russian subversive tactics in supporting separatism among ethnic Russians in the Crimea have increased after the Georgian Crisis. According to a recent study, there is now reason to speak of the threat of pro-Russian separatism in the Crimea again. Despite the fact that the majority of the organizations supported by Russia are still rather small and that their actions and demonstrations rarely gather more than a couple of hundred activists, the activities of these organizations attract large coverage in the mass media and are supported at a high political level in Russia. These pro-Russian organizations generally concentrate their agitation on a few questions: opposition to NATO/US, opposition to “Ukrainisation”, support for the Russian Black Sea Fleet and support for the Russian language in Ukraine. Anti-Tatar and Islam-phobic elements are also common³⁸.

As Jakob Hedenskog has noticed, “Russia is in fact acting to increase the intensity on the peninsula, trying to incite political and economic organizations loyal to

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Hedenskog, Jakob “Crimea after the Georgian Crisis”, *FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency*, Stockholm, 2008, pp.23-24

³⁸ Ibid.

it and to increase conflict in ethnic relations, in order to have the ultimate possibility to interfere to defend Russians in the Crimea.”³⁹

The similar view is also supported by Janusz Bugajski, the director of the New European Democracies Project. According to him, “...Moscow's role in the Crimea has been ambivalent. While some parliamentary fractions and military leaders have favored bringing the peninsula under Russian jurisdiction, Boris Yeltsin's government has avoided a direct conflict with Kyiv. Nonetheless, it periodically has manipulated the Crimean issue to maintain political pressure on Kyiv. In addition, the activities of radical pro-Russian forces needed to be carefully monitored by Kyiv as the possibility of provocations in order to draw Moscow into a confrontation with Ukraine could not be discounted.”⁴⁰

Since the demise of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991 and the emergence of the newly independent states (NIS), Russia has employed various techniques to preserve its dominance over them. It is very important for Russia to keep Ukraine under its influence because of Ukraine's exceptional strategic location. In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, Russia, with a subordinated Ukraine, becomes an empire, and without it, ceases to be one.⁴¹

Russia and Ukraine are of equal importance to each other.⁴² First, Ukraine and Russia are economically interdependent. The biggest disparity lays in Ukraine's vast dependence on Russian energy sources. However, Ukraine transports the majority of

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Bugajski, Janusz. “Ethnic Relations and Regional Problems in Independent Ukraine,” in *Articles and Papers Janusz Bugajski Ukraine: The Search for a National Identity* Edited by Sharon L. Wolchik and Volodymyr Zvighyanich, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1999, p. 174

⁴¹ Shevtsova, Lilia, David J. Kramer, “Ukraine, Russia, and Two Horses”, *American Interest*, August 21, 2012, [Online]. Available: <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2012/08/21/ukraine-russia-and-two-horses/dxez> [Accessed: 10 January 2012]

⁴² Ibid.

Russian oil and natural gas to Europe, making Russia almost equally dependent on Ukraine in commercial terms. Both countries are major trading partners. Second, Ukraine serves as a buffer separating Russia from an expanded NATO. This is true on both an emotional level and a physical one. Having its former adversary (NATO) present in a neighboring republic is a threat to the psyche as much as it is to national security.

On a personal level, both Russians and Ukrainians have relatives on the opposite side of the border. Russia has tried to exercise pressure upon Ukraine from the very beginning of its independence. The majority of disputes between the two states have been settled. The Crimea and the issues of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (RBSF) based there still remain an important outstanding issue in diplomatic relations between the two states.⁴³ Besides the issues of the RBSF in Ukrainian territory, the so-called “triangle of conflict”⁴⁴ — Russia-Crimea-Ukraine — brings certain difficulties to Ukraine’s state building efforts. The Crimean Tatars brought another dimension to the current instability in the Crimea.

A stable, predictable, and democratic Ukraine is of vital importance for the West and particularly to the stability and security in the EU. It is a “key-stone in the arch of security in Central Europe” because instability within a state with such territory and strategic location could easily trigger the same in the young democracies of Central Europe.⁴⁵ Current relations between Ukraine and Russia are not good. Almost each disagreement between the two countries causes the RBSF issues in the Crimea to revive.

⁴³ Jaworsky, John. “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security,” in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, Ed.: Maria Drohobychy, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 136

⁴⁴ The term “triangle of conflict” is used in several works of Taras Kuzio to explain contemporary interrelations in triangle Russia-Crimea-Ukraine.

⁴⁵ Cottey, Andrew, Averre, Derek. *New Security Challenges in Post-Communist Europe: Securing Europe’s East*, Manchester University Press, 2002, p. 131

According to Jaworski, both security analysts and international news media have highlighted the Crimea as “a flash point of tensions between Ukraine and Russia.”⁴⁶

Once thought to be a “settled issue,” Ukraine and Russia are far from a lasting resolution to the controversies over the basing of RBSF in the Crimean peninsula and other issues in the Black Sea region.⁴⁷ The status and fate of the Crimean Tatars has added a further layer of instability to an already troublesome region. Historically, the Tatars are the most numerous “indigenous” population in the modern Crimea.⁴⁸ The influx of the Crimean Tatars to the peninsula created many problems of social, political, and economic character, which became hard issues to be resolved for the Ukrainian authorities. Consequently, these problems generated unrest among the Tatars, which was directed against the Slavs⁴⁹. In my thesis, I will try to show more widely the importance of the interstate relationships on the status, local population of the Crimea and their relations with official Kiev.

1.4. Conceptual Framework and Methodology

This thesis is based on a neorealist approach to international relations, which has been developed by scholars such as Kenneth N. Waltz, Stephen M. Walt, and John Mearsheimer as it shares with realist assumption that states are prime units of analysis. Likewise external struggle power shapes the internal political developments of weak

⁴⁶ Jaworsky, John. “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security,” in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, Ed. Maria Drohobycky, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 136

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Drohobycky, Maria. *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, Ed.: Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 110

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 41

states significantly. Finally, survival is the ultimate objective of states. This thesis is a work of contemporary history, which seeks to explain the emergence of current conditions in light of earlier events, and to appraise the range of likely future developments that experience has made possible.

As Mark Webber stated in his book “International politic of Russia”, the “neorealist analysis emphasizes the condition of anarchy in the international system”. He was assured that the “neorealism holds that under anarchy a bipolar distribution of power offers more propitious conditions for maintaining peace than a multipolar arrangement. Bipolarity is, therefore, forwarded as a major factor in explaining the “long peace” of the post-war era”.⁵⁰ At the end of the year 1980 and at the beginning of the 1990s arrived the decline of bipolarity. The decline was the consequence of the diplomacy managed by Gorbachev and the subsequent collapse of the USSR. With this phenomenon, coincide also the end of the Cold War. The end of bipolarity has given rise to a number of major preoccupations among analysts, which were working within the neorealist framework. First, the likely trends in the distribution of power within the international system. Second, the prospects for peace in this newly configured system. Third, prescriptions for dealing with the new uncertainties⁵¹.

According to Kenneth Waltz, “Neorealism develops the concept of a system’s structure which at once bounds the domain,...” and enables researches to understand the structure and the changes in the structure of the system that “... emerges from the interaction of states and then constrains them from taking certain actions while propelling them toward others.”⁵² Kenneth Waltz sees “states as like units”⁵³ and claims

⁵⁰ Webber, Mark. *InterNationnal Politics of Russia*, Manchester University Press, 1996, p. 340

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 340

⁵² Waltz, Kenneth. “Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory”, *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 44, No. 1, Spring/Summer 1990, p. 29.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 37

“Since variations in unit-level causes do not correspond to variations in observed outcomes, one has to believe that some causes are located at the structural level of international politics as well”.⁵⁴ “Because states coexist in a self-help system, they may, however, have to concern themselves not with maximizing collective gain but with lessening, preserving, or widening the gap in welfare and strength between themselves and others”, states he later.⁵⁵ While recognizing the existence of other, non-state actors, Kenneth Waltz declares, “...states remake the rules by which other actors operate.”⁵⁶

Although supporting the views of Kenneth Waltz about main actors Stephen Walt tries to develop the balance-of-power theory, by saying “I do not see power and threat as independent. Balance-of-threat theory openly incorporates power, subsuming it... within the more general concept of threat. Balance-of-power theory predicts that states will ally against the strongest state in the system, but balance-of-threat theory predicts they will tend to ally against the most threatening.”⁵⁷ Thus, he indirectly accepts “the relative importance of ... system-level causes”⁵⁸ over domestic ones.

John Mearsheimer also considers states as prime units of the analysis that “gain as much power as possible and, if the circumstances are right,” try “to pursue

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 34

⁵⁵ Waltz, Kenneth. “Structural Realism after the Cold War”, *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 1, Summer 2000, p. 40

⁵⁶ Waltz, Kenneth . *Theory of International Politics*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. , 1979, p. 94

⁵⁷ Walt, Stephen. “The Progressive Power of Realism”. *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 91, No.4 1997, p. 933

⁵⁸ Ibid.

hegemony”.⁵⁹ In the same manner as Kenneth Waltz, John Mearsheimer uses assumption on the anarchic nature of the environment where the main actors operate aiming “maximize their purpose for survival”⁶⁰ while paying no attention to the middle and small powers and their effect on any process in international system⁶¹.

Neorealist theory is an extension of the realism, the oldest theory of international relations. Its chief advocate, Kenneth Waltz, offered it as a significant refinement of Hans Morgenthau's realism (basically: a human nature realism). In Kenneth Waltz's refinement, greater emphasis is afforded to structural properties of the international system than the psychological elements discussed by Morgenthau.

The “Theory of International Politics” written by Kenneth Waltz is regarded mainly as a work gave rise to spread of neorealism all over the world. On this subject, exists a large number of commentaries. There are classic statements, which include Robert O. Keohane’s volume “Neorealism and its critics” edited in 1986 in which are reproduced several chapters from “Theory of international politics” and in which are included a wide array of criticism of Waltz’s work, from theory of institutionalism to theory of postmodern perspectives⁶².

More recently, a number of realists represented by Barry Buzan, Charles Jones, and Richard Little collaborated on a book which represent a critical extension of the Waltz’s work⁶³. The authors make the case for a selective Waltzian neorealism, one that

⁵⁹ Mearsheimer, John. “Structural Realism,” in *Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, eds., International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p.72

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.74

⁶¹ Mearsheimer, John. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, New York: Norton, 2001, p. 89

⁶² Keohane, Robert, *Neorealism and its Critics*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1986, p. 100

⁶³ Buzan, Barry; Charles Jones, and Richard Little, *The logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1993, p. 120

both drops some of Waltz's ideas and supplements with their own. What is missing from these critiques of neorealism are sustained gender analyses of Waltz's work. Christine Sylvester's book "Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era"⁶⁴ and J. Ann Ticker's chapter in "Gender and International Relations" corrects this oversight⁶⁵.

The methodology of thesis is based on the use of both primary and secondary resources. The official legal documents, such as constitution and important laws as well as the speeches of politicians are used extensively. I also examined the statistical data and reports published by official sources. In addition to my personal observations in the Crimea as a person who had been there some years ago, my interviews with the influential politicians, experts, journalists and academics constitute another important primary source for this study. The secondary sources that I studied in writing this thesis include books, book chapters, academic journal articles and commentaries published by newspapers and magazines. All of these sources are listed in the reference part of thesis systematically.

1.5. Chapters of thesis

Thesis is composed of six chapters. Following the introductory, Chapter I will cover the purpose of thesis, its significance, literature review, methodology, and thesis synopsis. Chapter II will provide a brief history of the Crimea to reveal possible grounds for further interstate conflicts. This chapter starts with an examination of the origins of the Crimean Tatars and the Crimea before the Russian imperial rule. Afterwards, it examines the situation in the Crimea under the angle of relations with the Russian

⁶⁴ Sylvester, Christine. *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, especially chapter 23

⁶⁵ Tickner , Ann, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992, especially chapter 2.

Empire. At last, the second chapter describes the state of affairs in the Crimea in the Soviet period, including the deportation of the Crimean Tatars and transfer of the Crimea under the jurisdiction of Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1954.

The Third Chapter examines, the Crimean Autonomous Region during the post-Soviet period until the signing of the Friendship Treaty between Ukraine and Russia in 1997 in the frame of relations between two independent states - Ukraine and Russia. The same outline is used in Fourth Chapter that explores the Crimea within the period between 1991 and 2012. The Fifth Chapter discusses the period in the aftermath of the Orange revolution in 2004 and the problem of the Black Sea Fleet. The Last Chapter is the Conclusion.

In Chapter 1 was covered the scope and objective of the research consisting in the exploration of the place of Crimean region in terms of its impact on Ukraine's relations with Russia in the post-Soviet era; literature review as official documents, articles, books, interviews, etc; argument of the research where it is argued that the interstate relations between Ukraine and Russia have played a crucial role in the evolution of the autonomy of the Crimean region within Ukraine; conceptual framework and methodology and the neorealist approach to international relations and the composition of the research which consists of six chapters.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I will examine the historical background of the Crimea from the prehistoric times until nowadays. The Chapter will start with the history of the civilizations who lived in the Crimea in ancient times, from which appeared the Crimean Tatars and will continue with the history of the Crimean Tatars and the Crimea before the Russian Imperial rule, under the Russian rule and the deportation of the Crimean Tatars under the Soviet Russian rule, and then will analyze the Crimea under the Ukrainian Soviet rule.

Crimea's history dates back to prehistoric times. The civilizations of the Scythians, Greeks, Vikings, Mongols, and Turkic and Slavic peoples⁶⁶ following each other left their fundamental imprints on the political, cultural, religious and economic past of the region. As the main argument of this thesis is that the inter-state relations define the character of the relations between local population of the Crimea and the official Ukrainian government, it seems to be useful to make a journey through the history in order to understand the nature of the relations between Russia and Ukraine and to discern the role of the Crimea in these relations.

⁶⁶ Andreev, Arcadii, *History of Crimea: Summary of last Crimean Peninsula*, Interregional Center for Industrial Informatics GAN Russia, 1997, p.2

2.2 The Crimean Tatars and the Crimea before the Russian Imperial Rule

Territory of the Crimean peninsula has been inhabited from the earliest times due to its geographic location, rich nature, good climate and relief, accommodation and infrastructure. Although pro-Russian politics and population tries to put in doubt the autochthony of the Crimean Tatars, number of historical, archeological, anthropological and linguistic studies, such as studies of Smirnov V., Kondaraki V., Aristov N., Gumilev L. proves the opposite⁶⁷.

According to the general approach, the Crimean Tatars have been living on the territory of the peninsula since immemorial times when "... tribes were mixing up with each other, contacting with new coming nomads that after starting to live in conquered country little by little turned to domiciled way of life making their own cultural contributions to it, accepting language of the locals and transferring them their own and by this way becoming a new part of the ethnogeny process (process of the nation generation)".⁶⁸ The statistics says that by the ends of 1930s their number reached 220 thousands man.⁶⁹ The genesis of the Crimean Tatars is believed to begin at the turn of

⁶⁷ Smirnov, Vasilii Dmitrievich, *Collection of some of the important news and official documents regarding Turkey, Russia and the Crimea*, St. Petersburg, 1881; Smirnov, Vasilii Dmitrievich, *Crimean Khanate under the rule of the Ottoman Porte in the XVIII century untill the attach to Russia*, Ed.: Typ. A. Shultze, Odessa, 1898; Kondarachi, Vasilii Hristoforovich. *Universal description of the Crimea*. P 10.-St.-Petersburg, 1875; Aristov, Nokolai Allexandrovici, „Notes on the ethnic composition of the Turkic tribes and nations and their numbers” , *Zhivaja Starina*, 1896, ed. III and IV and dep. dep., SPB, 1897; Gumiliov, Lev, Nokolaevici, *Ancient Rus and the Great Steppe*, Ed.: Misl, 1989

⁶⁸ Memetov, A., Memetov I. A., *The origin of the Crimean Tatars*, 2012. doc. [Online]. Available: <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:IvyvJfAP3EQJ:repository.crimea.edu/jspui/bitstream/123456789/4839/1/%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%8C%D1%8F%2520%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%85%D0%BE%D0%B6%D0%B4%2520%D0%BA%D1%80%2520%D0%9C%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2%2520%D0%B8%2520%D0%9C%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2.2012.doc+%&cd=1&hl=ru&ct=clnk> [Accessed: 29 January 2012]

⁶⁹ Aydınğün, Ayşegül; Aydınğün, İsmail, *Kırım Tatarlarının vatana dönüşü: kimlik ve kültürel canlanma*, Ankara : Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı, 2004, p.11

the first and second Millennium BC, in other words three thousand years ago when the Tauri people arrived to the Crimea from Cilicia, Asia Minor territory of the nowadays Adana and Mersin⁷⁰, as a result of the desperate struggle with Cimmerians that were occupying the northern Mediterranean.

Cimmerians by historical order are the second people who generally mentioned as a people of the Crimean peninsula. According to the Histories of Herodotus (c. 440 BC), formerly powerful people of Cimmeria was expelled from the Black Sea steppes across the Caucasus and the Crimea into Anatolia, India and Iran by the Scythians, whose main settlement territory were steppes situated between downstream of Danube and Don Rivers, including the Crimea steppes and areas north of the Black Sea and even Northern Caucasus⁷¹.

The Later Scythia flowered at the II century when Scythians united with Sarmatians compelled Olbia, conquered a part of Chersoness near nowadays Sevastopol and marched off against the Bosporan Kingdom, invading it and trying to take possession of trade⁷². Each Sarmatian tribe arriving the Crimea changed their own customs and traditions by possessing culture and language of the domiciled population of the Crimea. At VI-V centuries B.C. when steppes were under the rule of the Scythian nomadic tribes the Greeks from Hellas started establishing of the trading-colonies in the southern and eastern parts of peninsula injecting then the culture of the ancient Greece reflected in architecture, city planning, agriculture and handcrafts⁷³.

⁷⁰ "Cilicia" [Online]. Available: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cilicia> [Accessed: 10 January 2012]

⁷¹ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: "Misl", 1992, p. 78

⁷² Ibid. p. 74

⁷³ Ibid.

The next ten centuries were marked with alternating invasions of Alans, Gothic tribes, (1-2 centuries); Huns (4-6 centuries); Bulgarian and different Turkic tribes (6-7 centuries); Khazars (8-10 centuries). Thus, it can be claimed that the population of the Crimea that was build up on the mix of Scythians, Sarmats, Goths, Alans and Khazars was a predecessor of the nowadays Crimean Tatars⁷⁴.

Relative ethnic stability was interrupted by the new Turkic tribes arrived to the Crimea. Historical processes taken place in the Crimea and northern Black Sea region were penetrated by the ones occurring in Europe, Central and Minor Asia and Dnieper Valley. In Europe, established French and British Kingdoms, German Empire, Italian Principality, Polish and Hungarian states were growing up. Great Mongolian Empire established by Genghis Khan started its downfall process bringing up Golden, White and Blue Hordes that were defeated then by the neighbors. In Central Asia Timur Khan came to the power and started military campaigns seizing systematically the south part of the Mongolian Empire⁷⁵.

Despite the desolation in the Kievan Rus' at that period, Grand Duchy of Moscow began to gain a power integrating Russian lands around. Development and strengthening of the Crimea's northern neighbor had been maturing for 300 years period under the protection of the Golden Empire of Genghis Khan, however, currently this period undeservingly is called as Tatar Yoke⁷⁶.

At the same period, we see the occurrence of the Crimean Tatars as a self-conscious ethnic group whose ethnic identity was shaped by a mélange of cultures passed through or settled in the Crimea. Effect of the Turkic peoples the last invaders of

⁷⁴ Andreev, Aracadii, *History of Crimea: Summary of last Crimean Peninsula*, Interregional Center for Industrial Informatics GAN Russia, 1997, p.10

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 11.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

the Crimea was crucial for the language choice. The authority of the Golden Horde that covered the Crimea began to fade out⁷⁷.

One of the main characteristics of this epoch is more difficult domestic than foreign policy situation in the Crimea as three powerful structures began their development on the area of the Crimea and northern Black Sea region. Nogays settled in the north below Perekop, this place is currently known as steppes of modern southern Ukraine and Russia, Crimean Yurt or Crimean Khanate was founded at the middle part of the peninsula while the south and southwest coasts still were under the protectorate of the Republic of Genoa⁷⁸.

Haci Giray was invited to be khan, accepted this proposal, and ruled for 39 years. As early, as in the second part of the XIV century Khans started to appoint their sons as leaders of the Nogay troops and territory of the Khanate was extended to Podolia and Kyiv⁷⁹. Being a young entity with non-stable khan throne and shaping government institutions Crimean ulus demonstrates its power trying to follow independent foreign policy⁸⁰.

As an independent state with strong power and unique internal and external policy, Crimean Khanate became known when Giray dynasty came to the government. If to consider the date of Haci Giray coming to the throne, the date of Crimean Khanate establishing should be defined as 1428 year. Over a period of 355 years until 1783 when

⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 10

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Biografy. Net „Haci Giray” [Online]. Available: <http://www.biyografi.net/kisiyrinti.asp?kisiid=5102> [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

⁸⁰ Tribe, “The Crimean Chanate”, [Online]. Available: <http://tribes.tribe.net/542c9b86-93b1-4b12-bc96-a754f89c5e8e/thread/4d96a7f0-685b-4928-bf05-0bc2264ec645> [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

Catherine II in violation of the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji interfered into the civil war and annexed the peninsula into the Russian Empire as Taurida Governorate⁸¹.

Within a 3,5 century period the Crimea passed through formation, golden age and decline stages of historical development process, experienced periods of the independence, self-sufficiency, separatism, feudatory, stages of invading and annexing, seizure and area losses, peace and war, stable governing and civil war⁸².

As the aim of this study is not only reflection and analysis of the Crimean Khanate's history, the main point of this part of the thesis is relations between the states with effects of such relations on the changes in internal and foreign policy of the Crimea.

Haci Devlet Giray Khan after the succession to the throne started to pursue independent foreign policy, acting as a leader of the powerful self-sufficient state. However, terms and conditions of the historical development of the Crimea left not only the positive trace on it forming society that differs in such important aspects as language, religion, customs and traditions. Also on the territory of the Khanate there were persisting Greeks, Genoese, Armenians the political opponents of the existing government that were not only connected to their mother country but also created sufficiently independent enclaves inside that up to a certain time coexist with Khanate in peace⁸³.

Generally, nationhood appears due to the strong government. In the middle age, nationhood can be associated with absolute monarchy and weak local opposition. In the Crimea we see beys who lead some noble and reach families that were rivaling with

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ The Tatar Khanate of Crimea, [Online]. Available: http://www.allempires.com/article/index.php?q=The_Crimean_Khanate [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

each other and thus making nationhood of the Crimea weakened by strifes and civil conflicts. Influence of beys on the political life was so strong that Crimean Khanate can be considered as the first limited monarchy in the world as the governmental body that has a right to take collective decision concerning strategic issues of the state development limited the power of the ruler. In the Crimea, such a body called Divan solved important political problems as well as main internal issues that could not be chosen by courts and kadi⁸⁴. Along with beys, vizier, mufti, treasurer the special position in the council was assigned to the Khan's mother. Beys had some political privileges, governed their lands by themselves and possessed own military forces.

The Crimean Khanate existed in favorable for its development historical period. Golden Horde was in its decline, Timur Khan ceased his military campaigns, Ottoman Empire treated the khans more as allies than enemies or subjects, Lithuania was forced to ally more closely with gaining its strength Poland, Russia, not very great at that period was at the stage of self-awareness after Golden Horde's nurturance during the 3 century. All these factors gave to the Crimean Khanate possibility to gain strength, possess considerably big territory outside the Crimean peninsula and play an important role in the processes in the Eastern Europe. The Crimean Khans considered as successors of Genghis Khan Family met relevant attitude from neighbors. Russia considered them as overlords paying tribute and buying off. So it is natural that the Crimea tried to maintain independent from the Ottoman Empire foreign policy by supporting this or that side in the Eastern Europe⁸⁵.

After the capture of Constantinople in 1453 gaining strength Ottoman Empire started struggle for the Black Sea water area and areas in the south of Europe. The Crimea was also in the area of the Ottoman interest; however, they did not try to capture the Crimea, implementing instead loyal policy. The relations of the khans and the

⁸⁴ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: "Misl" , 1992, p. 78

⁸⁵ Ibid.

Ottoman Sultan were governed through diplomatic correspondence. The khans continued to mint coins and use their names in Friday prayers, two important signs of sovereignty. They did not pay tribute to the Ottoman Empire; instead, the Ottomans paid them in return for their services of providing skilled outriders and frontline cavalry in their campaigns⁸⁶.

Later, after making allies of the Crimean Khanate weaker by capture the control over Dardanelles and Bosphorus, the Ottoman Empire seized southern-east and the hilly parts of the Crimea from Inkerman to Caffa. In addition to this, Ottoman troops occupied Perekop, Gezlev , Arabat and Yenikale fortresses. Gaining thus most important strategic supporting points Sultan became able to control the military and political situation in Khanate with small garrisons⁸⁷.

Thus, starting from Menli Giray in the Crimea was accepted the suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire. As there is no any data confirming existence of the possible treaty between the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate it can be assumed that vassal relationship were established, developing and changing rather spontaneously depending on the specific situation in both states for that historical period. For example at the ruling period of the first Khans-vassals Horde law defining the Crimean throne succeeding system was permanently violated. Thus, according to the law of Genghis Khan new Khan should be elected strictly in order of precedence. Respectively, more often existent Khan's brother rather than son was the candidate on the Khan title. The Ottoman legal system accepted the religious law over its subjects and thus proposed on the throne one of the sons of the Khan. As being agreed Sultan kept one or several sons of the Crimean Khan in Istanbul where they were educated as future absolute ruler. Notwithstanding, Crimean Khans, even being carried to the throne by the Ottoman Sultan were trying to preserve their own traditions insisting on the right to elect people on some positions in

⁸⁶ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: "Misl" , 1992, p. 78

⁸⁷ Ibid.

the Crimea and to conduct their own foreign policy with neighbor states. Even for non-serious violations of the entered conventions Sultan was amercing Crimean Khans by shifting off the throne, expelling them to the some provinces and to the Rhodes island and even by executing them (eg. Kaplan I Giray, Devlet III Giray, Selamet II Giray, Halim Giray, Mahsud Giray, Sahib II Giray)⁸⁸.

By virtue of Turkish influence, Islam permeated into the Crimea. It was reflected in the rising authority of the Islamic missionaries, building up of mosques, madrassas and rising role of the religious leader while taking decisions of the high level. Existence of the bey's opposition in the Crimea that continuously complained on the Crimean Khan encouraged the mess in the throne issue, consequently, there were no terms for the rule continuity and hence had a very negative consequences for the development of the Crimean state⁸⁹.

As a result of internecine quarrelling, small but permanent wars that put away smallish resources of the Crimea and suzerainty of the Ottoman Empire the Crimean Khanate that in other circumstances would be able to turn to a powerful state started to weaken and fall behind neighbor states, especially Russia, that drew a line under the existence of the Khanate wined in rivalry with Ottoman Empire⁹⁰.

⁸⁸ Kudusov, Ernst, „Moscow and Crimea”, *Sketch of the history of relations between the two nations: the Great Russians and the Crimean Tatars*, Edited by Doctor of Philosophy, Professor I. G. Yakovenko, Moscow 2002, p. 9

⁸⁹ „Solchat blossoming.” [Online]. Available: http://krymology.info/index.php/%D0%98%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D1%8F_%D0%A1%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE_%D0%9A%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BC%D0%B0 [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

⁹⁰ The formation of Crimean khanat. Campaigns of the Crimean khans to Ukrainian lands and their consequences, [Online]. Available: http://school.xvatit.com/index.php?title=%D0%9E%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%9A%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BC%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE_%D1%85%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0_%D0%9F%D0%BE%D1%85%D0%BE%D0%B4%D1%8B_%D0%BA%D1%80%D1%8B%D0%BC%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D1%85_%D1%85%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2_%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D1%83%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%B5_%D0%B7%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%BB%D0%B8_%D0%B8_%D0%B8%D1%85_%D0%BF%D0%BE%D1%85

At the period of existence of the Crimean Khanate, southeastern Europe was under the dominion of the Ottoman Empire. Sufficiently independent remained medieval states situated northward of the modern Hungary. Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania were among these states whereas Ukraine not shaped as state, was rather a military formation established by the Dnieper Cossacks and the Ruthenian peasants fleeing Polish serfdom⁹¹. Such a constitution also known as military republic or military religious order was comprised of Zaporozhian Sich and Cossack Hetmanate⁹².

Foreign policy of the Cossack state was shaped according to the following aspects: There was objective needs to preserve own political, economic and religious freedoms, not only for Cossacks but for all Ukrainian population; As the state was surrounded by the powerful states Cossacks as far as possible tried to offset political influence and military power of the neighbors⁹³.

The general way to realize own policy was practice of the military unions formation that were reshaping according to the current situation according to the own military power and geopolitical interests. In this situation, the Crimea was used as counterbalance for the powerful Christian states. Christian state neighbors showed tolerance to the Cossacks military state only because of the Tatar danger. In other words, even if it seems as a paradox main factor that made it possible for the Zaporozhian Sich and independent Ukraine in general to exist is the Crimea and the Crimean Tatars⁹⁴.

81%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%B4%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%8F [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

⁹¹ Krupnytsky, Boris, Zhukovsky A.. “Zaporizhia, The”. *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. Retrieved 2007-12-16

⁹² History of Ukraine, [Online]. Available: http://www.erudition.ru/referat/printref/id.57728_1.html [Accessed: 12 January 2012]

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Krupnytsky, Boris, Zhukovsky A.. “Zaporizhia, The”. *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. Retrieved 2007-12-16

Political relations between Cossacks state and the Crimea were supplemented by the economic ones. Cossacks were buying salt in the Crimea transporting it then to Poland and Russia. Also in response to being allowed to take fish in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov Cossacks were leaving to Tatars a right to use the Ukrainian grasslands for the cattle grazing. Along with confrontations between Cossacks and Tatars there were also periods of the mutually beneficial and efficient military partnership, for instance periods of mutual military campaign conducted by Muhammed Giray and Hetman Dashkevich in 1521 against Moscow and Ryazan, 6-months period of the military union of Islam Giray with Hetman Bogdan Khmelnytsky⁹⁵.

Crimean foreign policy running to the support of the political and military balance around supported also by the Ottomans had to preserve its variable character that was reflected on the relations with Poland. There were periods of the mutual military campaigns of the Crimean Khanate and Poland, periods of rivalries and peaceful cooperation in diplomatic, political and economic areas⁹⁶.

Crimean Khanate gained relations not only in immediate surround. Strangely, enough but there are evidences of the relations between the Crimea and Sweden, the Christian state situated in the north far away from the Black Sea region. First mentioned fact is dated 1556 year. At that certain time the case was mutual military campaign against strengthened Russia who began to exert unseen hitherto aggression.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Krupnytsky, Boris, Zhukovsky A.. "Zaporizhia, The". *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. Retrieved 2007-12-16

⁹⁷ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: "Misl" , 1992, p. 78

2.3. The Crimea under the Russian Imperial Rule

According to the chronology, first interest of Russia to the Crimea appeared in VIII century when troops of Prince Bravlin of Novgorod Republic invaded the Crimea, devastating Surozh city and St.Stephen Church in Sudak. His Crimean campaign is mentioned in only one source, the Russian version of the Life of St. Stephen of Sugdaea, tentatively dated to the 15th or 16th centuries⁹⁸.

The Russian people is not a very old nation. Rather it is name adherent to the conglomerate of East Slavic tribes migrating to the East European Plain in the early Middle Ages. Most prominent Slavic tribes in the area of what is now European Russia “included Vyatichs, Krivichs, Radimichs, Severians and Ilmen Slavs. By the 11th century, East Slavs assimilated the Finno-Ugric tribes Merya and Muroma and the Baltic tribe Eastern Galindae” that used to inhabit the same area with them. Settled in the territory of the modern Pskov, Novgorod regions, Belarus and Northern Ukraine they established first cities on the area from Novgorod to Kiev. From here, they were making foray not only to the Crimea but also to Constantinople and southern Europe⁹⁹.

After the periods of prosperity of the Kievan Rus’ and its decline caused also by the nomad, tribes that actively participated to the ethnogeny of the Crimean Tatars northern principalities became to be main players in the Russians’ foreign policy shaping. Relations between Muskovy and the Crimea started to develop from the remote past. Being successors of the same state Genghis Khan’s Tataria, Principality of Moscow and Crimean Khanate established diplomatic and business relations with each

⁹⁸ Lessons of Russian History, Moscow 2012, [Online]. Available: http://hram-mephi.ru/files/%20%D0%A0%D1%83%D1%81%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B9%20%D0%98%D1%81%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%B8%202012_11_17.pdf [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

⁹⁹ Ahaev, Alexandr. *Etnography of the Crimea*, Yalta, 2010, pp.66-68

other¹⁰⁰. Due to the perpetual internecine struggles, the central power in the Golden Horde weakened to the end of XIV century and provinces, namely Muscovy and the Crimean Khanate became stronger than metropolis that made it possible to them to remain the tribute to themselves and to manipulate the rulers of the Golden Horde. At the pre-khan period, the most powerful ruler of the Golden Horde was Mamai under whose government the Crimea became so mighty that was trying to establish independent relations with the Sultan of Egypt¹⁰¹.

Rivalry between Muscovy and the Crimea gave rise to the Battle of Kulikovo (1380) where Russians, using 7000 rebel Lithuanians and cavalry comprised of christened Tatars won a Pyrrhic victory by leaving at the battlefield 120,000 of 150,000 fighters. Delayed to the battle Mamai's ally Grand Prince Jogaila of Lithuania caught up and killed remained Russian soldiers while also delayed to the battle ally of Moscow Tokhtamysh attacked the Crimea where Genoese presented him the cut off head of Mamai killed by them. The Crimea was rescued from devastation whereas Moscow was sacked by Tokhtamysh 2 years later. Prince Dimitriy of Moscow pledged his loyalty to Tokhtamysh and to the Golden Horde and was reinstated as Mongol principal tax collector and Grand Duke of Vladimir until his death in 1389¹⁰².

Getting restored after this the Principality of Moscow went on with its contest with the Crimea. Moscow had ambitious plans towards the Crimea. For example, sheltering Nur-Devlet and Ayder, two sons of Hacı Giray Khan, who contended for the Crimean throne Ivan III the Great from one side was writing Mengli Giray Khan that he is sheltering two brother in order not to obstruct him, from the other side the Prince of

¹⁰⁰ Paksoy, H. B., Crimean Tatars, Published in: Modern Encyclopedia of Religions in Russia and Soviet Union [MERRSU], Academic International Press, 1995, Vol. VI. Pp. 135-142.

¹⁰¹ Andreev, A. R., Crimea History, Moscow, „Belii Volk”, 2002, [Online]. Available: http://lib.ru/HISTORY/ANDREEW_A_R/krym_history.txt [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹⁰² Ivanov-Smolenskii, Valerii, All the Cities of Belorus, [Online]. Available: http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:W0u0ETtGEukJ:zhurnal.lib.ru/i/iwanow_w_g/ivg200255.shtml [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

Moscow nourished an idea to use the brothers as a pretenders for the Crimean throne¹⁰³. Starting from XIV until XVI centuries Moscow officially being an ally of the Crimea, paying the tribute and acknowledging Crimean Khans as a chargs of the Genghis Khan family actually was hatching a plan of the capture and vassalage of the Crimea. During this period, great number of the Crimean Tatars, sons of the Golden Horde being christened and established Russian noble families then.

By a conservative opinion, Tatars, including the Crimean Tatars gave Russia two chargs, namely Boris and Fedor Godunov, 5 tsarinas, gave rise to 92 princely, 50 boyar, and 13 palatine and more than 300 noble families. It can be supposed that the idea of the Golden Horde about unity and separatism eradication by easy stages was transposed from Saray, the capital of the Golden Horde to Moscow, from the Khans to the chargs of Moscow. Actually, Golden Horde can be assumed as relived in XVI-XVII centuries with another capital and another religion¹⁰⁴. At the last stage it even abandoned own policy of the forced turning of the Tatars from the conquered territories to the Orthodox Christianity smoothening by this way rivalries based on the religious differences.

Kazan and Astrakhan Khanates and Siberia were conquered and rejoined to Russia. Only the Crimean Khanate was not willing to return under the wings of the two-headed eagle, the symbol of the Golden Horde transposed to the flag of Russia.¹⁰⁵ Rebellion of the Crimea against Russia continued for 2 centuries. However, once, Empire that one day was prostrated by the own province but revived then got own back when in 1783 obstinate people of the Crimea were enthralled once more and the Crimean Khanate ceased to be existent. Ideas of Ivan the Terrible defeated in 1555 and

¹⁰³ Mengli Giray Khan, Part II, [Online]. Available: <http://rikonti-khalsivar.narod.ru/G1.3.htm> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ The main directions of foreign policy and the expansion of the territory of the Russian state in the XV-XVI centuries. [Online]. Available: <http://www.examens.ru/otvet/6/11/969.html> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

1571 by Devlet Giray Khan who burned Moscow were carried out by Catherine II the Empress of Russia with the German origin¹⁰⁶.

For the Crimean Tatars this revival of the Empire, taking them back to Russia became a spell of bad luck for the historical development because it gave rise for the never-ending intricate genocide of the big ethnic group of people that lengthened in our days but maybe in different shape. By such way, Empire is taking revenge for the recalcitrance although having been changed its own guise for several times¹⁰⁷.

XVIII century was very complex for the Crimea. There were many palace revolutions, military campaigns to the glory of Ottoman Empire. Caucasus trips and defeat from Russian army Field Marshal Burkhard Christoph von Munich in 1736 year and Zussy in 1737 and in 1738 years as a result all cities and villages were burn up in the Crimea. Arslan Giray tried to restore the Crimea and state in 1748-1756 and Qırım Giray attempts were condemn (1758-1764). The Crimean khanate could not outlet the condition of hostage in policy of Turkey, Russia, Sweden and Germany¹⁰⁸.

Russia always had the wish to subordinate the Crimea and tried to realize her wishes by all possible methods using military force or frank bribery allies. Shahin Giray was suborned by Russia, that is why his inner betrayal became the cause of taken the Crimea by Dolgorukov with the Nogay Horde. Then Russia played diplomatic games giving an opportunity for independence of the Crimea from Turkey and from Russia that was refracted in Kuchuk Kainarji agreement, signed in 1774; Russia tried to have her troops in the Crimea by flirting with aristocracy and captured lands of the Crimean Tatars – that was the reason for bundle, at that period Catherine II had declared that the

¹⁰⁶ Avtorhanov, A., Empire of Cremlin, [Online]. Available: <http://rudocs.exdat.com/docs/index-73421.html?page=9> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹⁰⁷ Crimean Tatars, [Online]. Available: http://www.ccssu.crimea.ua/crimea/etno/ethnos/crim_tat/ [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹⁰⁸ Chapter 11. Crimean peninsula in the XVIII century. [Online]. Available: <http://acrimea.narod.ru/p11.htm> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

Crimean peninsula is Russian territory and at 8 October 1783 was published manifesto about annexation the Crimea to Russia¹⁰⁹.

Historic agreements of the XVIII century we can evaluate by the help of historians. In 1930, Shneyder in his book “Balakhlawa” wrote that Tatar’s khanate was destroyed in the economic and political struggle with Russia and due to system of espionage, bribery and intrigue.¹¹⁰The Crimean Khanate lost his parts of political independence. People who had a land ownership were “incorrect” bureaucrats. They were not interested in the changes to take place in the life of people as they could exploit landless people.... “Even such poor conditions as now were not so terrible in the khanate how they are currently,” wrote explorer Nikolskyi P.A.¹¹¹

Conquerors, the army and bureaucrats of the Russian Empire “devastated country, rooted up the trees, destroyed houses, ruined sanctuary and public houses of the Crimeans, annihilated water-pipes, raked citizens, outraged Tatar’s religious customs, threw out bodies of ancestors into manure and turned their tombs into washtubs for swine, destroyed antiquities”. They established serfdom “which as slavery in Crimean Khanate was not existed”.¹¹²

The Crimea annexation and “fundamental changes of the face” resulted in the local wars between Tatars. Persons who were suspected in sympathy to Turkey were cruelly extirpated. Only after the biggest part of Tatars was annihilated the Crimea became a more or less calm¹¹³. At the same years, the most tragic part of the life of

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Vozgrin, Valerii, Historical Fate of Crimean Tatars, [Online]. Available: qtmm.org/.../valeriy_vozgrin_istoricheskie_cudby_krymskih_tatar.d... [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

Crimean population began when Crimean Tatars started to leave their lands because of robbery and violence policy of Russia. During the first years of “Russian Crimea’s” existence, about 5 thousand people left the Crimea to Turkey.¹¹⁴

The end of the XVIII century marked the events in the south of Europe, which proved that annexation of the Crimea was the indispensable part of the impressive plan of Russia known as “Greece project” or “Peter the first testament”. The plan consisted of expulsion of Turkey from the south of Europe in order to set up Russian regime with representatives of Tsar’s family at the head¹¹⁵. This plan supposed annexation of Istanbul and Constantinople and the full control over Black Sea. Unleashed Russian – Turkey War (1787 – 1791) became sterile attempt for realization of Greece project of Russia, which became a new disaster for the Crimea and other territories.

Continued enormity of Russian bureaucrats was the genocide and ethnocide against the Crimean Tatars, which continue to exist for more than 225 years. This policy of Russia pushed to the extension of the voluntary-compulsory migration process of the Crimean Tatars from their homeland. As a result, nearly 100’000 Tatars left their native land. The new XIX century brought new difficulties to the Crimea and the Crimean Tatars, because of their difference in language, culture, style of life, laws of living, relations and religion¹¹⁶.

We can divide the XIX century into 3 periods: before the war, the period of the Crimean War and after-war period. Unfortunately, these periods brought a lot of suffering to the Crimean Tatars, who tried to adapt to the new ruler and to survive... Annexed, beheaded and ruined the Crimea lived in bad conditions, in serfdom, national

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: “Misl”, 1992, p. 78

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

depression and humiliation implanted by Russia. Crimean territory was settled up by colonists who got prosperous advantages, lands and had privileges in taxation. The best lands were given to bureaucrats and the biggest property owners of the famous Russian families¹¹⁷.

The Crimea was built up by the inordinate exploitation of indigenous population and serfs from Russia and Little Russia (Ukraine). Woods and gardens were cut down; pastures and houses were taken out. Once a prosperous country, the Crimea was devastated and destructed. Being in terrible conditions, Tatars were forced to cultivate the stone land. Starting from 1809 year there were many revolts and complaints in the Crimea. New land commission was established in 1816; in 1827 a new regulation “Regulation for peasants of Tatar origin and for owners of the lands of Taurida Governorate”, was approved that gave the right to sell the lands¹¹⁸. Next document was written in 1833 and gave the right to sell the common land. This law broke down the ancient institute of Tatar community. Peasants turned to lumpens - rented workers without rights and freedom¹¹⁹.

The eradication of Tatar’s culture and spirit were stipulated by forced settlement of foreign colonists on these territories. The immigrants obtained comfortable conditions, e.g., German immigrants received 85 land arpents free of charge. Nikitskiy botanical garden (1814) and other gardens were planted on the favored territories of the old Crimea¹²⁰.

¹¹⁷ Vozgrin, Valerii, Historical Fate of Crimean Tatars, [Online]. Available: qmmm.org/.../valeriy_vozgrin_istoricheskie_cudby_krymskih_tatar.d... [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: “Misl”, 1992

¹²⁰ Vozgrin, Valerii, Historical Fate of Crimean Tatars, [Online]. Available: qmmm.org/.../valeriy_vozgrin_istoricheskie_cudby_krymskih_tatar.d... [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

Russia continued her policy of purge among the leaders of Crimean Tatars in XIX century. Representatives of mosques and educated mirza and mullahs were expelled to Russia without right to come back. Instead, the new people without national interest attained their positions.¹²¹

The economic conditions and oppressions were the main reasons of the new wave of Crimean Tatars' emigration in 1850-1860 and then in 1873-1890. All these factors made it possible for the Crimea to become Russified, with diluting and dissolving the language, culture, family traditions, customs and the manners of life and religion of Crimean Tatars¹²².

Aggressive Russian foreign policy was directed only for war actions. The victory over Napoleon in 1812, defeat of the Decembrist movement, execution and exiles of noblemen-freethinkers pushed Tsar Nicholas I to increase military despotism and recognition of the necessity of the struggle for the existent aims such as capture of Constantinople-Istanbul and in such way to broaden the frontiers to the south and west. Strengthening ambitions of tsarism got rise for the unification of Europe (France, England) with Turkey in the war against Russia but the military actions in the Crimea and western territories did not give any chance for these plans¹²³.

After the end of the war, the emperor power didn't harden. Under the new wave of the influence of democrats appeared among intellectuals such as Herzen, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, Russian population started to express its discontent with tsarism as it and serfdom were restraining the capitalism development. Serfdom was abolished in 1861, but this fact neither did change imperial ambitions of Russia nor

¹²¹ Ibid

¹²² Guidelines and Program to the discipline „Ukrainian and foreign culture” (Culture of Crimea) [Online]. Available: <http://sevntu.com.ua/jspui/bitstream/123456789/3172/1/d020037.pdf> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹²³ Ibid.

her internal and foreign policy. Russia steadily went into the fall stage of tsarism regime in early XX century. Russian Empire existed as long as Crimean Khanate. After it fell down a new Soviet Empire appeared on its place with similar appetites and ambitions¹²⁴.

At the end of XIX and early XX centuries, the policy of tsar government became more or less gentle towards Crimean Tatars. They were allowed to get a high education not only religious, but temporal also; were calling up to military service, without being forced to change their religion and become Christian. New living conditions were stimulating appearance of talents, who were willing to serve to their motherland, to help own ethnicity and crushed culture to revive. The leader of this movement Ismail Gaspraly was a highly educated person studied in Russia, France (Sorbonne) and in Turkey¹²⁵.

It was like a resurrection for the people devoted to distinction by means of new information resource, a printed newspaper “Tercuman” that made it possible to attain reforms in Islam recognized later in Islam world¹²⁶.

Being a leader of the Civil Revolution he facilitated the appearance of the constellation of talented social and political actors such as Noman Chelebidzhihan, Jafer Seydamet, Edige Krymal, Memet Niyaziy, Asan Ayvazov, Usein Tohtargazy, Ablakim Ilmiy, Amet Ozenbashly who made important contributions to the cultural, political and public life of the Crimea. These people brought the light of education and culture and performed titanic efforts trying to establish a national state with national property of people¹²⁷.

¹²⁴ Dmitriev Nikolai, Konstantinovich, „Crimean language expedition”, in *Revolution and Writing* , 2, Moscow, 1936, p. 12

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Dmitriev Nikolai, Konstantinovich, „Crimean language expedition”, in *Revolution and Writing* , 2, Moscow, 1936, p. 12

¹²⁷ Ahaev, Alexandr. *Etnography of the Crimea*, Yalta, 2010, p. 65

The Russian Empire kept on with oppressing all the people and particularly ethnic minorities. The revolution of 1905 was cruelly suppressed by tsarist regime; however, it gave temporary hopes to the ethnic and national minorities of Russia. In particular, the Constitution of Finland was restored, wild laws prohibiting Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Lithuanian writing were abolished, the freedom of different parties and unions' creation including ones based on national and religious principles was granted. Different organizations began to appear with aims of realization some religious, political, social and economic rights and freedoms. Possible in the future ethnic autonomous formations just began to emerge when Stolypin's Act dated June 3rd, 1907 turned starting its change national policy of Russia backwards¹²⁸.

This act legalized repressions and other restraints for the Crimean Tatars and for other national and ethnic minorities of Russia. If before Stolypin minorities suffered mainly from the oppressions of bureaucrats, now Russian society completely supported these perceptions. This doctrine, opposite to principles of published national policy of Lenin, was used albeit not so openly, in the period of the existence of the Communist Empire. Stolypin supported the policy of Russification. He accepted the distinctive ideas and identities of people within the Russian Empire as long as those people were ready to accept their primary identity as Russian. As a result of such oppression and nationalistic policy in the Crimea emerged Crimean separatists as part of the spiritual fire of Ukraine which flame was burned from abroad, namely, Austria, Lithuania and Eastern Prussia where nationalism was flourished¹²⁹.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ahaev, Alexandr. *Etnography of the Crimea*, Yalta, 2010, p. 65

2.4 The Soviet Russian Rule in the Crimea and the Deportation of the Crimean Tatars

Starting from the official appearance of the Crimean Khanate until now the Crimea was out of the political standards imposed by the rulers of the Russian Empire, Soviet Empire and government of the modern Russia. Firstly, despite the fomentation of the international enmity, by exploiting idea of the betrayal of the Crimean Tatars lack of the real facts restrained the development of the warfare. Secondly, the distribution of political power in the Crimea was not for the benefit of Bolsheviks. Actually, the population of the peninsula experienced a revolting outburst but it had character that is more liberal. Soviets established in the Crimea were set for the bloodless, non-violent, evolutional development of bourgeois society into national democracy. Thirdly, the most unified, solid, task-oriented, ideologically consistent and organized was democratic spirit owned national movement of the Crimean Tatars leading by the head of Muslim Committee of the Crimea and by created national party “Milli Firka”¹³⁰. The representatives of these organizations were experienced politics who occupied key positions in the Crimea. The target of the national leaders of Kurultay, the representative democratic parliament in the Crimea was a building of a new state inside the federative union with Russia within a peninsula. However, the Bolshevik regime that came to the power never stand for these ideas, accepting only the policy of force that in the future suggested to turn into purges running in genocide and ethnocide¹³¹. Fourthly, a congress of Crimean Tatars called in October 1917 supported a slogan “The Crimea for the Crimeans” that became a unique and ideologically different from others platform that in the environment of dissolution of the former empire was able to respond to the

¹³⁰ Uehlin, Greta, Lynn, The Crimean Tatars, [Online]. Available: <http://www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/krimtatars.html> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹³¹ Andreev, Arcadii, *History of Crimea: Summary of last Crimean Peninsula*, Interregional Center for Industrial Informatics GAN Russia, 1997, p.22

anticipation of the population who foresaw new seizure of the Crimean territory with indispensable emancipation. The slogan meant maximum possible guarantee for the preserving of political independence, possession on equal rights and keeping the original culture for all ethnic groups who inhabited the Crimea¹³².

The October 1917 revolution was not able to prevent the calling the Kurultay in November of the same year in Bakhchisaray where the first constitution of the Crimea created by the native population representatives was adopted. On Kurultay it was declared also that the new state to be established, the Republic of Crimean people and about the Union of directories leading by Noman Celebicihan that would govern the state. The new constitution declared the equal rights for all citizens with no regard to their nationalities, was guaranteeing the main democratic freedoms¹³³.

Unfortunately, claimed rights and freedoms never to be realized. Deceived by the Bolshevik propaganda military forces of the Black Sea navy and former tsar's army attacked the Government of the young republic in January 1918. Military garrisons of the Crimean cities and cavalry comprised of Tatars were conquered in rough combats. It was the beginning of the civil war the struggle of the incipient democracy with the dictatorship transforming to the dictatorship of the proletariat for the future¹³⁴.

The dictatorship established firmly by cruel terror, torments, repressions, and contribution of peasants. Crimean People Republic was liquidated; the leaders were executed by shooting or subjected to exiles. At March 10, 1918 the Central Executive Committee selected by Governor Soviets Congress proclaimed the territory of the Crimea as a Taurida Soviet Socialist Republic (TSSR). The government of TSSR had worked for the 2 months period and is famous for its cruel policy towards the local

¹³² Smirnov, Vasilii Dmitrievich, *Collection of some of the important news and official documents regarding Turkey, Russia and the Crimea*, St. Petersburg, 1881

¹³³ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: "Misl", 1992, p. 78

¹³⁴ Ibid.

native population, confiscation of the peasants' property for the benefit of general mobilization, inability to conduct a dialog with people and absence of any constructivism in the organization of the new life conditions¹³⁵.

As a result of the suppression by the punitive forces and landing troops of the revolution adherents of the insurrections in the villages of the south of the Crimea local population and especially the Crimean Tatars after being washed in their own blood started to wait the following events: the German occupation, intervention by English and French forces, 3 months long return of the Soviet system, a new seizure of the Crimea by volunteer army of Denikin and a finally establishment of the Soviet power after the victory of the Red Army and escape of baron Wrangel in November 1920¹³⁶.

At 18 October 1921, taking into consideration political situation in the south of the state and proposals of the particular Revolutionary Council leaders without getting opinion of the local population Elective Council and the Council of People's Commissars decided to create Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of the Crimea and approved its Constitution and symbols¹³⁷. There were a lot of discussions and political arguments about the character of the Crimean Republic of 1921 either national or territorial autonomous state formation as part of RSFSR.

This decision perceived for a long time as a part of V. I. Lenin's national policy actually was a formal preliminary act for the creation of a Jewish State instead of nowadays Israel on the ancient territory of the Crimea¹³⁸. Although it was not happened,

¹³⁵ Smirnov, Vasilii Dmitrievich, *Crimean Khanate under the rule of the Ottoman Porte in the XVIII century until the attach to Russia*, Ed.: Typ. A. Shultze, Odessa, 1898

¹³⁶ Vozgrin, Valerii, *Historical fate of the Crimean Tatars*, Moscow, Ed.: "Misl" , 1992, p. 78

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Kudusov, Ernst, „Moscow and Crimea”, *Sketch of the history of relations between the two nations: the Great Russians and the Crimean Tatars*, Edited by Doctor of Philosophy, Professor I. G. Yakovenko, Moscow 2002, p. 90

it caused the accusation of general betrayal by the Crimean Tatars during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) and further deportation of the whole people to the Central Asia and Siberia¹³⁹. In spite of repressions against intelligentsia of the Crimean ASSR local population succeeded in development in their territory that was so impressive that in 1934 it was decided to confer a highest state reward, the order of V. I. Lenin, on the ASSR of the Crimea.

It is necessary to mark the following facts: in spite of territorial neighborhood and close contacts between the Crimea, Ukraine, and place of Ukraine as one of the main players in the USSR the Centre, central power, and, at last, Russia itself did not want to see the Crimea as a territorial and strategic part of the State. The territory of the Crimean peninsula was to be used for the realization of Jewish republic formation Zionist plan. The Crimea, proclaimed as Autonomic Republic, passed all the continental part of Taurida to Ukraine and was enduring purges and repressions among the leaders of the Crimean Tatars in the Council of the Crimean ASSR. For this purpose, Jewish population settled in the particular districts of the Crimea was developing household using foreign investments and modern technologies¹⁴⁰.

At that time, it was impossible to rename CASSR to the Crimea Jewish Autonomous Republic due to the Crimean Tatars. However, the government prepared the special plan for them. After the death of Lenin his place of the main leader of the communist regime passed to Stalin who spifflicated a part of the Communist Party named Zionistic (Trotsky - Bronstein, Zinoviev – Apphelbaum, Martov – Zederbaum, Tomskiy – Honikberg, Akselrod, Sverdlov, Shraider, Kamenev – Rozenfeld, Bogdanov – Zilbershteim-Ioffe, Volodarskiy – Kogen, Radek – Sabelzon and others), established at

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Kondarachi, Vasilii Hristoforovich. *Universal description of the Crimea*. P 10.- St.-Petersburg, 1875

the Far East in Birobidgan a Jewish Autonomous Region and forced thousands of Jewish to migrate there¹⁴¹.

Nevertheless, this did not mean that the Crimea would remain for the Crimeans. Stalin did not seek the fair verdict. He chose repression and exiles as fundamental ideological instruments, and developed them skillfully in different ways. Being for the nation a man of honesty, principles and communist purity Stalin was choosing and changing the performers of his will¹⁴².

For the Crimean Tatars, the indigenous people of the Crimea and for other people (Volga Germans, Kalmyks, Chechens, Balkars, Karachays, Crimean Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians and Germans etc.) Stalin wrote the destiny of Motherland traitors exiled so that from the occupied places to the outback. A big part of the Crimean Tatars was deported from their historical homeland to Siberia and Middle Asia at May 18, 1944. The Crimean ASSR was liquidated in 1945 after the deportation of the biggest part of the Crimean Tatars. Thus, the new stage of massacre against the Crimean Tatars supported by the monstrous crimes of communist regime began.

2.5 The Crimea under the Ukrainian Soviet Rule

After Stalin's death and the XX Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR, where the new general secretary of the party Nikita Khrushchev made his speech disclosing personality cult of Stalin, the stage of returning to their homeland and renaissance began for all repressed people except for the Crimean Tatars, who until 1989 continued to live in exile without official identity, without the right to return to the land of their ancestors, to sources of their history and culture¹⁴³.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Andreev, Arcadii, *History of Crimea: Summary of last Crimean Peninsula*, Interregional Center for Industrial Informatics GAN Russia, 1997, p.11

Without analyzing all facts of the historical injustice, outrageous lawlessness and tragic fight for existence it should be said that formation of obstacles for the returning and rebirth of Crimean Tatars their ethnic identity had only one aim – the assimilation of Crimean Tatars within the Turk-speaking environment of Uzbeks, Turkmen, Kirgiz, Kazakhs in order get rid of the future pretenders to the territory of Crimea, which gained a geopolitical importance after the Cold war. In 1970-1980's of XX century the Crimea became an unsinkable aircraft carrier of the USSR in its south boundary. In 1954 Crimean District was established within the boundaries of that time Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. This fact predestinated its future character as disputable territory of Russian ambitions in the late XX century¹⁴⁴.

The second half of the XX century passed for the Crimea without any shocks. Crimean Tatars fought for surviving in deportation in the Middle Asia and at the first opportunity were coming to the Crimea with families for the rest on holidays. Actually, adults took their children to the Crimea, in order to show them their real motherland, to transfer them their love of native places and to show them the injustice of the communist regime to people¹⁴⁵.

At the same time, heaps of people were brought to the Crimea from other regions of Ukraine and Russia under the pretense of the labor scarcity. Recruited people were mostly those who never worked - drunkards or tramps. Have been coming to the Crimea they got aid, houses, work and other advantages. Still, the indigenous Russian-speaking population remembered Tatars from their best side whereas newcomers were at least indifferent and only diluted the remained heritage taken free of charge. In this way the Crimean, land nurtured a new generation of people growing up under the communist

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Kudusov, Ernst, „Moscow and Crimea”, *Sketch of the history of relations between the two nations: the Great Russians and the Crimean Tatars*, Edited by Doctor of Philosophy, Professor I. G. Yakovenko, Moscow 2002, p. 9

philosophy and glowering with untruly discriminated and deported Crimean Tatars, their history and culture¹⁴⁶.

The Crimean territory began to be used as sanatorium for the party's members and as a military base for the navy of USSR. Climate conditions allowed developing agriculture in order to provide party leaders and army with food. Educational and other infrastructures were the same as in other regions of Ukraine and Russia. Although being the administrative and territorial unit of Ukrainian SSR the Crimea was used in accordance with the decisions of central power. Ukraine itself was one of the most important republics of the USSR. Being one of the scientific, military, cultural and agricultural centers of the Soviet Union Ukraine along with Belorussia, both the members of the UN, played the leading role in the realization of the Soviet's foreign policy¹⁴⁷.

At November 14th, 1989 year was taken Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of USSR "About de-facto recognition of the illegal and criminal repression acts against people exiled by force and about providing their rights"¹⁴⁸ made it possible for deported far away from their motherland the Crimean Tatars to start the process of return to the Crimea that gave rise for the new era in the development of the relations between Crimea, Ukraine and Russia.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR "About de-facto recognition of the illegal and criminal repression acts against people exiled by force and about providing their rights" [Online]. Available: <http://constitutions.ru/archives/2975> [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

2.6. Conclusion

As the analysis of the historical background of the Crimea and the Crimean Tatars, demonstrate that International Relations shaped the developments.

As discussed in this chapter, firstly, the Crimean peninsula as a territory important from the geopolitical and strategic points of view for a long time has been attracting attention of people, who conquered it, affected its military, economic, scientific development, participated into ethnogeny of the Crimean Tatars, shaping their original culture, traditions, life-style.

Secondly, the first and only Crimean state the Crimean Khanate for a long period tried to run independent internal and foreign policy objectively affected and contributed to the development of European states. Crimean Khanate setting balance of military and political forces in Eastern Europe provided insensibly creation of the Principality of Moscow, which was succeeded by the Russian Empire that absorbed then Crimean Khanate.

Thirdly, Russia appeared as a result of uniting of Russian principalities with remainders of the Golden Horde, taking from them not only intellectual and labor resources but even Horde's symbol – double-headed eagle which brought to Russia the spirit of “great Empire” encouraging her to think permanently about new achievements.

Fourthly, the patriotism and stability of national spirit of the Crimean Tatars gave them ability to stand against repressions of communist regime, to keep their identity while being in deportation and to return to their Motherland surmounting obstacles of genocide. Return and revival of the Crimean Tatars will would affect and in some sense determine relations between Ukraine and Russia concerning important strategic geopolitical area, Crimean peninsula.

In Chapter II was analysed the historical background of the Crimea and namely the Crimean Tatars and the Crimea before the Russian Imperial Rule, the Crimea under the Russian Imperial rule and the Soviet Russian rule in the Crimea and the deportation of

the Crimean Tatars under the Ukrainian Soviet rule. Also was underlined the fact that starting from the official appearance of the Crimean Khanate until nowadays the Crimea was out of the political standards imposed by the rulers of the Russian Empire, Soviet Empire and government of the modern Russia.

Having studied the historical background in the Chapter II thesis in the next Chapter will analyze the situation in bilateral relations between Ukraine and Russia in the post-Soviet era.

CHAPTER 3

THE CRIMEA AND UKRAINE'S RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA BETWEEN 1991 AND 1997

3.1. Introduction

In this Chapter I will examine the Crimea and Ukraine relations with Russia between 1991-1997. Firstly I will examine the development of Ukraine's relations with Russia and the first years of Ukrainian independence until the Ukrainian elections in 1994. Secondly, I will analyse the role of the Crimea in Ukraine's relations with Russia and the conflict between these two states involving the Crimean Tatars. Thirdly, I will analyse the impact of Ukrainian and Russian relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars and namely the dispute around the Black Sea Fleet.

The euphoria of independence due to the Act of Independence in August 1991¹⁴⁹ sustained by Belovezha Accords¹⁵⁰ and Alma-Ata Protocol¹⁵¹ passed off in 1992 when newly formed independent states faced with the newly appeared problems. Being internationally recognized as a legal successor to the Soviet Union¹⁵², the Russian

¹⁴⁹ Declaration of Independence of Ukraine, August 24, 1991

¹⁵⁰ Kudusov, Ernst, „Moscow and Crimea”, *Sketch of the history of relations between the two nations: the Great Russians and the Crimean Tatars*, Edited by Doctor of Philosophy, Professor I. G. Yakovenko, Moscow 2002, p. 56

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² “United Kingdom Materials on International Law 1993”, BYIL 1993, pp. 579 (636). [Online]. Available: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union#cite_note-8 [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

Federation kept its policy of “big brother” that was build up on the idea of the reintegration of the USSR under the rule of Russia. The importance of Russia as a “backbone factor”¹⁵³ for the state was underlined by M. Gorbachev just before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, in his speech on the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. According to him, it was vital to preserve the Soviet Imperial Rule, as Russia was obtaining the “life-giving power” from “other cultures and languages. Without it Russia will not be that state which Russians had inherited and which they will transmit to descendants.”¹⁵⁴ According to the chairperson of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Anatoly Lukyanov, Gorbachev was trying to act in parallel with this idea. After understanding the most probable consequence of Novo-Ogaryovo Process, on March 28, 1991 at the close meeting in Kremlin he defined the members of the State Committee and entrust them with formulation of the Law about initiation of Emergency State¹⁵⁵. Later, the August 1991 actions of the Committee were perceived by the entire world as a coup attempt against Gorbachev¹⁵⁶.

As a result of the dissolution of the USSR and acquiring the independence by Ukraine, relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation gained formal features of international relations. Now, these were separate states with their own interests acting

¹⁵³ “Report of the CPSU Central Committee General Secretary MS Gorbachev”, *Proceedings of Committee Plenum of the CPSU Central*, 11,14,16 March 1990 CPSU. CC. Plenum (1990, March). K77 *Proceedings of Committee Plenum of the CPSU Central*, 11, 14, 16 March 1990 h.-M.; Politizdat, 1990. - p.14

¹⁵⁴ Gunchak, Taras. “Ukraine and Russia: Empire again”, *Dzercalo Tjnia*, № 22 (701) 14 — 20 June 2008, [Online]. Available: www.dt.ua/3000/3150/63234/ [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹⁵⁵ Lukianov, Anatolii. „It was a desperate attempt to save the Union”, *Nezavisinaja Gazeta*, 18.05.2010 [Online]. Available: www.ng.ru/ng_politics/2010-05-18/9_lukianov.html [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

¹⁵⁶ “1991: Hardliners stage coup against Gorbachev”, [Online]. Available: news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/august/19/newsid_2499000/2499453.stm [Accessed: 10 October 2012]

as subjects of the international law. While preserving economic and historical links with Russia, Ukraine tried to find her own place in the post-Soviet environment. Her choice not to sign the Tashkent Agreement of 15 May 1992 on The Principles and Procedures for The Implementation of The Treaty On Conventional Armed Forces In Europe¹⁵⁷ and not to ratify the Statute of the CIS¹⁵⁸ predestines the characteristic of its relationship with Russia until 1997 when the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation¹⁵⁹ between the two states was signed.

3.2 Development of Ukraine's Relations with Russia

The first years of Ukrainian independence can be characterized as a policy of dissociation from Russia despite the strong economic dependence from her. This policy of keeping a distance from time to time giving rise to confrontations between the states had some consequences. A significant part of the Ukrainian community in the east and south of the country rejected the policy of exclusion of Russia. From one side, it was one of the reasons for the defeat of Leonid Kravchuk in the presidential elections in the summer of 1994 and led Leonid Kuchma, who during the election campaign advocated the close ties with Russia, to the victory¹⁶⁰. From the other side, the aggressive anti-Ukrainian rhetoric in Russia appeared because of the Ukrainian independence policy helped to strengthen the Ukrainian statehood. As Russia initially was not ready to

¹⁵⁷ Treaty On Conventional Armed Forces In Europe

¹⁵⁸ Ignatenko, Grigorii; Tiunov, O. „International Law”. Textbook for high schools. Ed.: Publishing Group NORMA-INFRA , M, 1999., Ch. 11, [Online]. Available: www.pravo.vuzlib.net/book_z1656_page_126.html [Accessed: 01 October 2012]

¹⁵⁹ Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Russia and Ukraine

¹⁶⁰ Simon, Gherhard. “Russia and Ukraine, a decade after the collapse of communism: similarities and differences”, [Online]. Available: <http://www.politstudies.ru/N2004fulltext/2000/6/11.htm> [Accessed: 01 October 2012]

recognize the independence of Ukraine¹⁶¹, the relations between states erupted into significant conflicts on the issue of nuclear weapons, the Black Sea Fleet, the Crimea and Sevastopol and later on the international trade with Russia.

Actually, Ukraine chose her way at November 1990 when Speakers of Russian and Ukrainian Parliaments, Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kravchuk, signed the Treaty on the Basic Principles of Relations between the Russian Federation and the Ukrainian SSR, according to which both sides in the framework of sovereignty of both state acknowledge the “the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic inside the borders presently existing within the boundaries of the USSR”.¹⁶² Having anti-imperial vision at that period Yeltsin claimed in his speech to the Ukrainian Parliament:

“I categorically reject the accusation that Russia is now claiming some special role. At the [Supreme Soviet] session, [Nikolai] Ryzhkov said that we allegedly want to shift the center from the center to somewhere in Russia. I categorically reject this accusation. Russia does not aspire to become the center of some sort of new empire. It does not want to have an advantage over other republics. Russia understands better than others the perniciousness of that role, inasmuch as it was Russia that performed precisely that role for a long time. What did it gain from this? Did Russians become freer as a result? Wealthier? Happier? You yourselves know the truth; history has taught us that a people that rules over others cannot be fortunate.”¹⁶³

Shortly, in line with neo-realistic theory, the leaders of independent Russia return their imperialistic rhetoric. Just after the unsuccessful coup attempt in 1991 Yeltsin pondering also on the possibility of nuclear blow between two states said that if Ukraine

¹⁶¹ Brezinski, Zbigniew. *The Grand Chessboard*, M.: Intern. Relations, 1998, p.50

¹⁶² Treaty on the Basic Principles of Relations between the Russian Federation and the Ukrainian SSR, *Article 6*, 19/11/1990, Kyiv

¹⁶³ Solchanyk, Roman. *Ukraine and Russia: the post-Soviet transition*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., Maryland, p.37, [Online]. Available: http://books.google.com.ua/books?id=LNvTSDQXFXgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Ukraine+and+Russia:+the+postSoviet+transition&hl=ru&ei=CJT6TPnCOMex4Qbu_ZGDBw&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=book-thumbnail&resnum=1&ved=0CCcQ6wEwAA#v=onepage&q&f=false [Accessed: 11 February 2012]

would try to segregate herself from USSR, Russia would expose territorial claims.¹⁶⁴ Few days later press secretary of Yeltsin, Pavel Voschanov claimed that borders of Russia with that, republics of the former Soviet Union who would not sign the new Union Treaty (except for 3 Baltic republics) could be revised. Later he explained that in the focus are the Crimea, the part of the left bank Ukraine and the Northern Kazakhstan while the Moscow Major Gavriil Popov exposed claims also on the territory of Odessa region and Transnistria.¹⁶⁵

From the other side, Mikhail Gorbachev was also making efforts for revival of the Soviet Union though in new shape. This pressure as well as understanding of the destiny of Ukraine in the new Union ignited Leonid Kravchuk to make all possible for the de-facto independence of Ukraine. In his book, Kravchuk describes the situation in such way:

When before New Year, December 30, 1991, we again gathered in Minsk, Yeltsin reported that he proclaimed policy of rapid market changes in the economy. To a legitimate question: what about the recent agreement on the harmonization of reforms, Boris categorically stated: “You have to follow Russia.” It was a serious error of the Russian president, the country of whom was soon damaged and headed. However, in Ukraine this mistake of B. Yeltsin struck quickly and painfully, becoming the underlying cause of many of our economic, industrial and social ills.

That is why Ukraine was bound to improve the situation on its own. That is why Kiev was forced almost immediately to declare that the CIS is nothing but a form of divorce. That is why our government did not see the point in signing a number of agreements: the charter of the Commonwealth, the economic union (by the way, these

¹⁶⁴ Mardarenko, Oleg. “Ukrainian-Russian relations in the program and the political practice of the People's Movement of Ukraine” (1989-1993), *Collection of Intellectuals and Power*, Output 5. 2005, Odessa National Polytechnic University , p. 212

¹⁶⁵ Sokolov, Mihail. The Destiny of the (Soviet) Union : “N+0” of “9-9”, “Kommersant” newspaper, no. 35, 1991 in *Egor Gaydar’s “Death of the Empire. Lessons for the modern Russia.”*, Russian Political Encyclopedia, Moscow, 2006, p. 423

documents have not been signed by Ukraine to this day), etc. Russia immediately put its own interests above the interests of the partners in the CIS. Ukraine was forced to defend the position arising from its national interests.”¹⁶⁶

Nevertheless, Kravchuk realized well the “level of integration within USSR, the economic dependence of republics”.¹⁶⁷ So did new appoint at 14 October 1992 Prime Minister of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma. Having been worked for 6 years before this appointment as a General Manager of the big Machinery Plant, Kuchma as nobody else understood the vitality of the ties with post-Soviet republics, especially with Russia. After been elected by the Parliament, Kuchma emphasized that “the economic “cold war” with Russia be ended. A reflection of his intention to normalize relations with Ukraine’s northern neighbor was his visit to Moscow, his first official trip outside Ukraine, where he met with acting Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar and President Boris Yeltsin and signed three economic agreements”.¹⁶⁸ Among the other factors, such his views and activity oriented to cooperation with Russia led him to the victory on the Presidential Elections in Ukraine in 1994. Still, in 1993, when President Kravchuk was rejecting any military, political or diplomatic integration with CIS¹⁶⁹ the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Kuchma tried to strengthen economic ties with Russia. In 1993, he participated to the CIS Economic Coordination Council that aims develop foreign economic activity, trade relations between the states-participants and consult concerning

¹⁶⁶ Kravciuk, Leonid. “We have what we have”, in *Zercalo Nedeli*, №32, 23.08-01.09.2001, [Online]. Available: www.zn.ua/1000/1030/32025/ [Accessed: 11 February 2012]

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ The Ukrainian Weekly, no.48 , 29.11.1992

¹⁶⁹ “Newsbriefs on Ukraine”, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, no.17 , 25.04.1993

import tariffs.¹⁷⁰ In May 1993 the declaration, proposing deeper economic integration was signed.¹⁷¹

The power struggle between President and Prime Minister starting from 20 May 1993 when Leonid Kravchuk announced to Parliament his request for extraordinary powers¹⁷² instead of the separate request of Leonid Kuchma to prolong the special powers given to him for six months in November 1992, when the Supreme Council temporarily suspended some articles of the Constitution giving thus legislative prerogative related to financial, tax, custom and labor spheres to the Cabinet of Ministers¹⁷³ led to vote of non-confidence in September 1993. The resignation of Leonid Kuchma accepted by the Parliament gave Leonid Kravchuk plentitude of the power that was strengthened by his Decree about guidance the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine¹⁷⁴. As it was mentioned earlier, it nevertheless would not help him to win the Presidential elections of 1994.

Economic difficulties from one side and Russian imperial spirit from the other were also corroborated by the troubles with nuclear status of Ukraine. Following the Declaration about state sovereignty of Ukraine adopted on 16 July 1990, in October 1991 the Parliament of Ukraine proclaimed the denuclearization status of the state¹⁷⁵ and

¹⁷⁰ DECISION on the Council offices RADA of foreign leaders - the Commonwealth of Independent States, 28.04.1993

¹⁷¹ Decision on Measures to establish the Economic Union countries - members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, 14.05.1993

¹⁷² Kolomayets, Marta. "News analysis : Who will be responsible for economic reform?", *The Ukrainian Weekly*, no.22 , 30.05.1993

¹⁷³ LAW OF UKRAINE On temporary delegation of Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine powers to issue decrees in the field of legal regulation 18.11.1992

¹⁷⁴ Decree of the President of Ukraine on the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 27.09.1993

¹⁷⁵ Ordinance of the Parliamentary RADA from 24.10.1991 № 1697-XII

intention to abide by the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-1) between USSR and USA signed at the end of July 1991¹⁷⁶ that was, however, ratified by the Ukrainian Parliament and came to force for Ukraine more later, in November 1993 and December 1994 respectively. Up to that moment, Ukraine was keeping being the third biggest owner of the nuclear arsenal in the world¹⁷⁷ after the United States and Russia. Nevertheless, Ukraine should pay the price for the ideas of neutrality and non-aligned status of Ukraine and the price was the non-nuclear status of the state¹⁷⁸.

Someone could challenge such decision of Ukraine in context of neo-realism theory. Notwithstanding, Mark Kramer in his paper explained the “disjuncture between empirical evidence” and predictions about certain nuclear proliferation in Ukraine¹⁷⁹ made by well-known structural realist John Mearsheimer in 1993¹⁸⁰. For this purpose he came down to the unit level and explained the choice made by Ukraine. According to him, despite the thought of “most Ukrainian officials” that “the only serious external threat to Ukraine over the long term would come from Russia... one key factor – the awareness, on both sides, of how disastrous a conflict would be even if no nuclear weapons were used... officials in both countries sought to avoid a direct clash”.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ START 1.

¹⁷⁷ Grechaninov, Vadim. “Ukraine and her “nuclear possibilities”, [Online]. Available: ua-nato.org.ua/2010-10-09-11-32-11/expert/43-2010-03-29-13-38-19/122--q-q, [Accessed: 10 February 2012]

¹⁷⁸ “I wasn’t in the sauna, and I didn’t drink champagne” ,*Rossiiskaia Gazeta*- Federal Issue №3941 from 2 December 2005 , Online]. Available: www.rg.ru/2005/12/02/kravchuk.html [Accessed: 9 February 2012]

¹⁷⁹ Kramer, Mark. *Neorealism, Nuclear Proliferation, And East-Central European Strategies*, Harvard University, May 1998, pp.1-3

¹⁸⁰ Mearsheimer, John. “The Case for a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (Summer 1993), p. 61

¹⁸¹ Kramer, Mark. *Neorealism, Nuclear Proliferation, And East-Central European Strategies*, Harvard University, May 1998, pp.44-45

An additional point for the nuclear disarmament was the virtual inability to use it. The analysis performed by the Ukrainian Military Forces General Staff revealed that Ukraine by own means could not carry out the whole process of missile launching as the capacity informative bases situated on the territory of Ukraine was not enough to provide necessary data for the existent missiles with targets located at 10-11 thousands kilometers distance.¹⁸²

All the while, the United States and Russia were trying to accelerate the process of denuclearization of Ukraine, choosing for this, however, two different approaches. While USA tried to assure the leaders of Ukraine in the absence of necessity for the further nuclear status and proposed the assistance in disarmament process, Russia forced Ukraine to give away all the missiles because of impossibility of its use, trying to put under control the nuclear arsenal in Ukraine and sustain her own by means of diminishing the missile quantity initially situated on the territory of Ukraine.¹⁸³ The deterioration of the relations with Russia let the opponents of disarmament argue at 1992 Parliament debates about military status of Ukraine “that it was folly to hand over nuclear weapons to a state that posed a threat to Ukraine, and that because the republic was voluntarily giving up its nuclear weapons, it was entitled to international guarantees of its security”.¹⁸⁴ One month before, Leonid Kravchuk terminated the removal of the tactical weapon from Ukraine and “proposed to a U.S. Senate delegation visiting Kiev...

¹⁸² “Under nonnuclear umbrella: UKRAINE AND ITS nuclear capabilities - ILLUSION AND REALITY”, *Razumkova Center*, 09.12.1999, [Online]. Available: www.uceps.org.ua/ukr/article.php?lng=UKR&news_id=19 [Accessed: 11 February 2012]

¹⁸³ Grechaninov, Vadim. “Ukraine and her “nuclear possibilities””, [Online]. Available: ua-nato.org.ua/2010-10-09-11-32-11/expert/43-2010-03-29-13-38-19/122--q-q,20.04.2010 [Accessed: 10 February 2012]

¹⁸⁴ Nahaylo, Bohdan. “Research report: The shaping of Ukrainian attitudes on nukes”, *The Ukrainian Weekly* 16.05.1993, #20, p.2

that an International Atomic Center be built in Kiev with Western assistance”¹⁸⁵ for liquidation the nuclear armor on the territory of Ukraine. While the official reason was “doubt that the facilities in Russia are sufficient to destroy not only tactical weapons, but strategic ones as well”¹⁸⁶, the signal was made to United States for “attention and understanding”.¹⁸⁷ Just after this the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a parliamentary resolution on “Additional Measures for Ensuring Ukraine's Acquisition of Non-Nuclear Status”¹⁸⁸ in which decision “not to transfer tactical nuclear missiles from the territory of Ukraine until the mechanism for the international control of their destruction has been worked out and implemented with Ukraine's participation” was announced.¹⁸⁹ Logical follow-ups for such steps of Ukraine were numerous visits and meetings with US officials that finally resulted in the promise of the Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko to “resume the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons to Russia for destruction”¹⁹⁰ and compliance with the July 1 deadline from one side and conversion by the Protocol signed by Russia, USA, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus on 23.05 1992 in Lisbon¹⁹¹ of

¹⁸⁵ Kolomayets, Marta. “President suspends removal of Ukraine's tactical weapons”, *THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY*, no. 11, 15.03.1992, p.3

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p.1

¹⁸⁷ Motyl, Alexander. *Dilemmas of independence: Ukraine after totalitarianism*, Council of Foreign Relations, New York, 1993 p.180, [Online]. Available: books.google.com.ua/books?id=CyKISgLoMu0C&lpg=PP1&ots=ghGL4unxBD&dq=Dilemmas%20of%20independence%3A%20Ukraine%20after%20totalitarianism&hl=ru&pg=PP1#v=onepage&q&f=false [Accessed: 10 February 2012]

¹⁸⁸ Resolution on “Additional Measures for Ensuring Ukraine's Acquisition of Non-Nuclear Status.”, 09.04.1992

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁹⁰ Lew, Khristina. “Ukraine's defense minister visits U.S.”, *The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1992-16*, p.3

¹⁹¹ Protocol To The Treaty Between The United States Of America And The Union Of Soviet Socialist Republics On The Reduction And Limitation Of Strategic Offensive Arms, 23.05.1992

the START-1 into a multilateral agreement from the other. Accordingly, Ukraine gained a greater opportunity to “sell” her compliance to antinuclear ideas.

During a closed session of debates on nuclear disarmament in June 1993 Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma claimed that “Ukraine should, at least temporarily, become a nuclear power”¹⁹² having in mind 46 ICBMs with storage period up to 2001.¹⁹³ He spoke about those 46 ICBMs that were produced in Ukrainian plant he was in charge before his assignment as a Prime Minister¹⁹⁴. Although the Ukrainian officials tried to ascertain the world community that statement was made by Leonid Kuchma as a technical expert and did not reflect the official position of the Ukrainian Government it did disturb the officials in USA and Russia. Actually, it could be his reaction either on intentions of Russia to bind the independent Ukraine with Russia by the fixing of the security guarantees “within the framework of the CIS”¹⁹⁵ or on the character of relations with USA who according to Leonid Kravchuk “was looking at the nuclear issue from the Russian perspective and ignoring Ukraine's security interests”¹⁹⁶.

On July 2, 1993 Ukrainian Parliament adopted document entitled The Guidelines for the Foreign Policy of Ukraine which set for Ukraine a status of “the owner of the nuclear weapons inherited from the former USSR”¹⁹⁷. In her turn, the Russian

¹⁹² Kolomayets, Marta. “Kuchma remarks muddy the waters”, *The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1993-24*, p.1

¹⁹³ “Under nonnuclear umbrella: Ukraine and its nuclear capabilities - illusion and reality”, *Razumkova Center*, 09.12.1999, [Online]. Available: www.uceps.org.ua/ukr/article.php?lng=UKR&news_id=19 [Accessed: 11 February 2012]

¹⁹⁴ “Interview: President Leonid Kravchuk outlines Ukraine's position on nukes”, *The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1993-03*, pp.10, 16

¹⁹⁵ Solchanyk, Roman. “Ukraine's search for security”, *The_Ukrainian_Weekly_1993-24*, p.2

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p.13

¹⁹⁷ Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the main directions of the foreign policy of Ukraine, 2.07.1993, Ch.III, a. B1

government called these steps of Kiev as “leading to very serious consequences for international stability and security... A dangerous precedent is being created, which nuclear threshold countries may use.”¹⁹⁸

An attempt to break deadlock was made shortly. In 1992-1993, the Ukrainian officials set forward their claims for security guarantees, including the security of territorial integrity of Ukraine and guarantee of prevention of the economic pressure; for compensations for the fissile materials transported from the territory of Ukraine; for the financial aid for the nuclear disarmament from the United States amounted in 1,5 milliard USD at least; and for the international control over the nuclear warhead liquidation, including the process of liquidation of the delivery vehicles for missiles. Except for the financial matters, almost all these requirements were satisfied¹⁹⁹.

On 14 January 1994, the trilateral agreement on the completion of the withdrawal of the strategic nuclear weapons from the territory of Ukraine was signed in Moscow by the presidents of Russia, the United States and Ukraine. The agreement provided security guarantees for Ukraine by United States, Russia and United Kingdom and recognition of inviolability of Ukraine's borders and her territorial integrity as far as the START-1 is ratified.²⁰⁰ As well, Ukraine gained technical aid from USA, at least 175 millions USD and compensation from Russia for the fissile material in the form of nuclear fuel for Ukrainian nuclear power stations. “Between March 1994 and June 1996, about 2,000 nuclear munitions of strategic weapon systems were removed from Ukraine to Russia for disassembly. In all, considering tactical weapons, about 5,000 nuclear munitions were moved to Russia in almost 100 trains. The START-1 Treaty and the

¹⁹⁸ Dubinin, Yuri. “Ukraine’s Nuclear Ambitions: Reminiscences of the Past”, 13.04.2004, [Online]. Available: eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_2913 [Accessed: 08 February 2012]

¹⁹⁹ „Farewell to arms” , 16.01.2007, [Online]. Available: worldnews.org.ua/news27140.html [Accessed: 22 February 2012]

²⁰⁰ Trilateral Statement of the Presidents of Ukraine, USA and Russia, 14.01.1994

Lisbon Protocol were completely fulfilled.”²⁰¹ In the meantime, Russia received about 25 milliards USD for annihilation of only the third part of her nuclear weapon²⁰².

Events on the domestic political arena of Ukraine were predetermined by the economic situation in the country. Miners’ strikes tradition spread across coal miners at the late Soviet era was resumed with new vigor in the independent Ukraine. Though initiated by the miners, strike was led by the regional elite and “managed to become the most powerful mobilizing structure and framing process for public protest in the country”²⁰³ that resulted in both parliamentary and presidential elections of 1994²⁰⁴.

Nevertheless, due to the weak participation to elections the electorate made only 338 out of 450 deputies to be elected as “In order to be elected a candidate needed to obtain more than 50% of votes and in order for the election to be valid more than 50% of registered voters needed to vote”.²⁰⁵ The remaining part was elected later in 1994.²⁰⁶

²⁰¹ Dubinin, Yuri. “Ukraine’s Nuclear Ambitions: Reminiscences of the Past”, 13.04.2004, [Online]. Available: eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_2913 [Accessed: 22 February 2012]

²⁰² „Farewell to arms” ,16.01.2007, [Online]. Available: worldnews.org.ua/news27140.html [Accessed: 22 February 2012]

²⁰³ Mykhnenko, Vlad. “State, Society and Protest under Post- Communism: Ukrainian Miners and Their Defeat”, *Paper for the Political Studies Association-UK 50th Annual Conference*, 10-13 April 2000, London, p.14

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ “Ukrainian parliamentary election”, 1994, [Online]. Available: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukrainian_parliamentary_election,_1994, [Accessed: 22 February 2012]

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

3.3 Role of the Crimea in Ukraine's Relations with Russia

Since the demise of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991 and the emergence of the newly independent states (NIS), Russia has employed various techniques to preserve its dominance over them. It is very important for Russia to keep Ukraine under its influence because of Ukraine's exceptional strategic location. In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, Russia, with a subordinated Ukraine, becomes an empire, and without it, ceases to be one.²⁰⁷

Russia and Ukraine are of equal importance to each other.²⁰⁸ First, Ukraine and Russia are economically interdependent. The biggest disparity lays in Ukraine's vast dependence on Russian energy sources. Russia has tried to exercise pressure upon Ukraine from the very beginning of its independence. The majority of disputes between the two states have been settled. The Crimea and the issues of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (RBSF) based there remain an important outstanding issue in diplomatic relations between the states.²⁰⁹

Besides the issues of the RBSF in Ukrainian territory, the so-called "triangle of conflict"²¹⁰ — Russia-Crimea-Ukraine — brings certain difficulties to Ukraine's state building efforts. The Crimean Tatars brought another dimension to the current instability in the Crimea.

²⁰⁷ Cited in D'Anieri, Paul. et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, p. 1.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Jaworsky, John. "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security," in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, ed. Maria Drohobycky, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 135.

²¹⁰ The term 'triangle of conflict' is used in several works of Taras Kuzio to explain contemporary interrelations in triangle Russia-Crimea-Ukraine.

A stable, predictable, and democratic Ukraine is of vital importance for the West and particularly to the stability and security in the EU. It is a “key-stone in the arch of security in Central Europe” because instability within a state with such territory and strategic location could easily trigger the same in the young democracies of Central Europe. Current relations between Ukraine and Russia are not good. During almost every disagreement between the two countries, the issues of the Crimea and the RBSF resurface. According to J. Jaworski, both security analysts and international news media have highlighted the Crimea as “a flash point of tensions between Ukraine and Russia.”²¹¹

Once thought to be a “settled issue,” Ukraine and Russia are far from a lasting resolution to the controversies over the basing of RBSF in the Crimean peninsula and other issues in the Black Sea region²¹².

In 1991, when there was a collapse of the Soviet Union, the relations between Ukraine and Russia have worsened. The people living in Russia, after the loss of so many territories, remembered about the Crimea, which could be returned as the transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine in 1954 was not approved by many persons. At the same time, 80% of Crimean residents declared that they consider themselves citizens of Russia and the Crimea - a part of its territory. Even the power of the Crimea at that time was of the pro-Russian orientation²¹³.

However, Ukraine had only one, very significant, lever of pressure on Russia; this was the Black Sea Fleet. Nevertheless, strangely, in January 1992, the n President

²¹¹ Jaworsky, John . “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security,” in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, ed. Maria Drohobycky, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, p. 135.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ “Crimea: the disputed territory of Russia and Ukraine, the geopolitical characteristics”, [Online]. Available: www.kazedu.kz/referat/76974 [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

Leonid Kravchuk announced about taking under the trusteeship the Black Sea Fleet. It was a collapse for Russia²¹⁴.

The transfer of the territory of one state to another requires an agreement concluded between them, which must conform to the principles of law. On the Russian and on the Ukrainian territories was not found a similar contract concerning the transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine or to Russia. Among the arguments that Ukrainian Party operates in support of its rights to the territory of the Crimea, should also be mentioned:

- art. 5 Agreement on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States on December 8, 1991, about the respect and recognition of the mutual territorial integrity and inviolability of the existing borders within the Commonwealth²¹⁵;

- Alma-Ata Declaration of 21 December 1991, which confirmed this approach;²¹⁶

- art. 3 The CIS Charter from January 22, 1993, which gained a foothold among the interrelated and equal principles of relations within the CIS as inviolability of state borders, the recognition of existing borders and refusal of unlawful territorial acquisitions, the territorial integrity of states, the rejection of any action aimed at the dismemberment of foreign territory²¹⁷;

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Voronin, Iurii. „Soviet Russia”, 8 December, 2012, *Betrayal from Beloveziya*, [Online]. Available: www.sovross.ru/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=587134 [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

²¹⁶ “Alma-Ata Declaration”, from 21 December 1991, [Online]. Available: www.worldcourts.com/eccis/rus/conventions/1991.12.21_Declaration_AlmaAta.htm [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

²¹⁷ Kembayev, Zhenis. *Legal Aspects of the Regional Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Area*, Springer, 2009, p. 5

- Declaration on the respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of CIS member states from April 15, 1994²¹⁸.

All these arguments “do not work”, because there does not exist any legal documents which include the Crimea and Sevastopol in the national territory of Ukraine. Cession (transfer of sovereignty from one state to another by agreement between them) requires the conclusion between the concerned States of an international agreement, which must meet all of the basic principles of international law²¹⁹.

Such disputes of States on territories are often decided on the basis of three cases of unilateral territorial claims. The first case is when the territory has never belonged to the state, and it never carried out any sovereignty over that territory; This item is entirely on the side of Russia, as Ukraine did not own the Crimea until 1954²²⁰. Another case is when the territory once belonged to a state but then became part of the territory of another state, and that was appropriately legally executed; Similar to the first item, the area did not belong to Ukraine. However, this item boosts the Russian claim since she was the owner of the disputed territory, but it was not properly formalized²²¹. One other case is when the territory did not belong to anyone in the past, and later became part of the country, and this was legally formalized. This is not suitable, because there is no a third country owner of the Crimea in the past. Consequently, the situation with the Crimea does not fit into any of these options and therefore assumes the existence of Russian sovereignty over the territory of the peninsula²²².

²¹⁸ Bekjashev, Konstantin, Bekjashev D., *International Public Law*: coll. of doc., Prospekt.org, 2009, p. 569

²¹⁹ Baburin, Serghei, Nikolaevich. ”State Territory”, *Crimea- the legal aspects of the problem*, [Online]. Available: kro-krim.narod.ru/LITERAT/RUSSIA/baburin.htm [Accessed: 12 February 2012]

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

Russian naval base Sevastopol got in a particularly difficult situation. There was not a legal fact of transfer of the Russian authority to Ukraine with regard to Sevastopol. The inclusion of Sevastopol in the text of the Constitution of Ukrainian SSR (Article 77) as city of republican subordination has no legal force from the moment of decision, since the decision of the Ukrainian SSR taken unilaterally without an appropriate decision of constitutional authorities of the Russian Federation²²³.

Sevastopol as the main base of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet represented a separate administrative and territorial unit. For it has been established a special legal regime concerning, in particular, the stay and activities of its inhabitants, the order of entry and departure and other issues. Position of Sevastopol as city of naval base of Union subordination, having special legal regime, was stemming from its value for the organization of the defense and ensuring the national security of the whole country that was referred to the responsibility of the supreme bodies of state power of the former USSR by the Constitution of the Soviet Union²²⁴.

The Russian leadership is allegedly not interested in the return of ancestral territory. The Russian leadership was undecided to protect not only the interests of their fellow citizens, but also the state interests of Russia. Perhaps was preparing a secret plan on the returning of the Crimean territory. Nevertheless, in 2000, all hopes for this failed, as B. N. Yeltsin left power, and V.V. Putin was not aware about this problem. However, the collapse of all relations between states occurred in 2004, when Leonid Kuchma left power, and instead him had come Viktor Yushchenko, who supported the pro-Western policies. Consequently, even the America has more chances to take possession of the

²²³ “Sevastopol- a Russian city!”, [Online]. Available: crimea-tour.ru/o_stature_sev2.html [Accessed: 11 February 2012]

²²⁴ Ivleva, Oliga, *Russian-Ukrainian relations in 90's*, Kazani-2002, [Online]. Available: works.tarefer.ru/54/100029/index.html [Accessed: 11 March 2012]

Crimea than Russia, with which Yushchenko, practically, does not lead diplomatic relations²²⁵.

Are also known the Turkish interests regarding the Crimea. A specific subject of Turkish policy is the expansion of economic and then political presence in the Crimea. On this basis at the beginning of 1996, there was a dramatic cooling of relations between Turkey and the Ukraine. For the latest, the aggressiveness with which Turkey was moving to the Crimea became a revelation. Ukraine is between two fires on the background of the fact that in Russia there is no understanding of the Islamic threat in the Crimea and the raising of the Crimean problem in the anti-Ukrainian context continues. Consequently, it turns that for the Ukraine Turkey and Russia in this sense, are “in the same boat”²²⁶.

The Crimea has strategic and symbolic importance for both Ukraine and Russia, sufficiently so that any disagreement over the Crimea might trigger an intra-state conflict between them.²²⁷ There are many examples of bloody intra-state conflicts among former communist states: Bosnia, Kosovo, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Chechnya, Nakhichevan, Dagestan, Transnistria, and Karabakh are lands artificially divided for the sake of politics and ideas in which such a conflict has erupted.

The Crimea represents “a complex territorial challenge”²²⁸ along similar lines, based on historic myths and embellishments, as well as contemporary developments.

²²⁵ «AK-74, Question to Gogol, where Ukraine is, or what will be the Ukraine”, 23.08.08 17:39:38, [Online]. Available: www.nr2.ru/moskow/192653.html/discussion/, [Accessed: 11 March 2012]

²²⁶ Vlasov, Serghei. Valerii Popovkin, „The problem of regionalism in governance structures and policies of Ukraine”, [Online]. Available: poli.vub.ac.be/publi/etni-2/vlasovpopovkin.htm [Accessed: 11 March 2012]

²²⁷ Leibowitz, Ronald. Preview of *Perceptions of Security: Public Opinion and Expert Assessments in Europe's New Democracies*, by Richard Smoke, *JSTOR: The Scholarly Journal Archive*, Autumn, 1998, p. 192; and Kuzio, Taras. *Russia-Crimea-Ukraine: Triangle of Conflict*, London: Research Institute for the Study of conflict and Terrorism, 1994, p.1.

²²⁸ Sasse, Gwendolyn. *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2007.p. 10.

There are several state actors and an abundance of non-state actors involved in the Crimean question. State actors — Ukraine, Russia, and (to a much lesser extent) Turkey — and the most prominent non-state actor and ethnic group, the Crimean Tatars, will shape the possible outcomes in the Crimean peninsula. The Crimea is also important geopolitically to the U.S. because “whoever controls Crimea, will attempt to impose its will on all ongoing events in the region”, because “The Crimea is the major gateway to the entire Slavonic world.”²²⁹ In an energy-hungry world, the Black Sea Region is a regional hub for the distribution of oil and natural gas.²³⁰

To date, actual conflict in the Crimea has been averted despite many opportunities for violence arising from “a clash between Ukraine and Russia, an intraregional political conflict among ethno political groups, internecine conflict among the Crimean Russian elites, and a center-periphery conflict between Kiev and Simferopol.”²³¹ Yet the plausibility of a conflict involving the Crimean Tatars is high. It is in the remission stage and can explode if not addressed properly.

3.4 Impact of Ukrainian-Russian Relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars

The dispute of Ukraine and Russia around the Black Sea Fleet is a kind of “active background”, in which was unfolding the dramatic struggle for regional autonomy of the

²²⁹ Sardanovsky, Sergei “Regional Security of Ukraine: External Factors,” *The Black Sea Area Research Group*, [Online]. Available: www.bsarg.crimeainfo.com/Rserch/10_Regional_Security_of_Ukraine.rtf [Accessed: 26 March 2012].

²³⁰ Pamir, Necdet. “Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Regions: Challenges and Solutions.” In *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, edited by Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2003., pp. 123-155.

²³¹ Pamir, “Energy and Pipeline Security.”

Crimea and the Crimean-Tatar problem appeared to be a powerful internal factor, which also seriously affected the course and outcome of this struggle²³².

The failure of the Soviet Union brought about many problems to the former republics of the USSR and their inhabitants. In 1990s Ukraine, the Crimea became a center of conflict between Ukraine and Russia over the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet and the Crimea itself, perceived as historically their own by both sides of the conflict. Local Crimean authorities took advantage of the specificity of a demographic situation in the Crimea where Ukrainians, the titular nation, are in minority and considerably Russified to claim for autonomy. Later, they attempted to secede from Ukraine²³³.

At the same time, the Crimean Tatar influx from exile, orchestrated by the Stalin regime in 1944, further exacerbated the 'triangle of conflict' between the dyads Russia-Ukraine and Crimea-Ukraine. The Crimean Tatars, currently 12 percent of the Crimean population, proclaimed the Crimea the national territory of the Crimean Tatar people, on which they alone possess the right to self-government and claimed greater rights for themselves as allegedly the most indigenous peoples in Crimea, while the rest are colonizers. The status and fate of the Crimean Tatars has added a layer of instability to an already troublesome region. Historically, the Tatars are the most numerous "indigenous" population in the modern Crimea.²³⁴

The problems of social, political, and economic character, great number of which could not be resolved for the Ukrainian authorities gave rise to tensions between the Tatars and the Slavs. This hypothesizes that the presence of the RBSF in Ukraine cannot

²³² Malighin, Andrei, "Politics, Crimean site", [Online]. Available: www.politology.vuzlib.org/book_o255_page_16.html [Accessed: 11 March 2012]

²³³ Kuzio, Taras, *The Crimea: Europe's Next Flashpoint?*, The Jamestown Foundation, November 2010, p. 4 [Online]. Available: www.taraskuzio.net/media13_files/30.pdf [Accessed: 02 March 2012]

²³⁴ Tanner, Arno, *The Forgotten Minorities of Eastern Europe: The History and Today of Selected Ethnic Groups in Five Countries*, ed. East-West Books, 2004, p. 15

be a stabilizing factor against the desire of the Crimean Tatars to make the Crimea autonomous within Ukraine and subsequently pursue full independence²³⁵.

The Crimea is significant to Russia ethnically, militarily, symbolically, and economically. Russia's attempts to open a consulate in Simferopol, to grant Russian citizenship to ethnic Russians living in the Crimea, to establish a permanent representation of Russian parliament in the Crimean parliament and vice versa²³⁶ in the 1990s emphasizes the importance of the Crimea to Russia.

The nationalist extremists from the Russian Federation argue that the majority of the population in the Crimea is ethnic Russians. The cause of protecting ethnic Russians in non-Russian states encourages some Russian Generals and politicians to intervene in potentially troubled regions.²³⁷ This was the case in Transnistria and other places. In Crimea, Russian Admirals supported pro-Russian nationalists, at least rhetorically, and their support had never been at the same level as in other areas of ethnic tensions in the former Soviet Union. Still, Russian Generals and Admirals are not well in control of democratically elected civilians. Admirals in Sevastopol enjoy a certain level of freedom, at least in the economic sphere. Civil-Military relations in Russia are not democratic and the Russian Parliament is not yet in control of the military²³⁸. Former President Yeltsin, who was much softer than his successor Putin, linked withdrawal of

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Zaborsky, Victor. "Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian-Ukrainian Relations," in *Discussion Paper 95-11, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, September 1995*, and Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 6, [Online]. Available: belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/disc_paper_95_11.pdf [Accessed: 07 March 2012].

²³⁷ Motyl, Alexander. *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine after Totalitarianism*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993, p. 121.

²³⁸ Mathers, Jennifer. "David J. Betz, *Civil-Military Relations in Russia and Eastern Europe*," review of *Civil-Military Relations in Russia and Eastern Europe*, by David J. Betz, *Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, [Online]. Available: www.pipss.org/document432.html [Accessed: 22 March 2012].

Russian troops from Latvia and Estonia with “greater minority rights” for ethnic Russians²³⁹. These claims, however, have not materialized in any considerable way in the Crimea. The situation, aggravated by the constant conflicts between ethnic Russians and returned the Crimean Tatars who lack jobs and housing, provides additional justification for Russia’s hard tone towards Ukraine.

Russia possesses an extensive military infrastructure in Crimea, and values Sevastopol as a warm-water naval base.²⁴⁰ Sevastopol was intended to be a naval base from the very beginning of its establishment in the eighteenth century and went through significant modernization to achieve its present military infrastructure. It would take a long time and considerable financial resources to rebuild the same facilities on the Russian shores of the Black Sea.

The Crimea is an “unsinkable aircraft carrier”²⁴¹ that has recently become home to twenty-one SU-24M front-line bombers, capable of delivering nuclear weapons.²⁴² The Crimea provides great advantages for Russia in attempts to regain its dominance in the Black Sea region, despite significantly narrowed basing options for the Russian

²³⁹ Kauppila, Laura Eleonoora. “The Baltic Puzzle: Russia’s Policy Towards Estonia and Latvia, 1992 – 1997,” *University of Helsinki*, January 1999, [Online]. Available: ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/val/yhtei/pg/kauppila/thebalti.pdf [Accessed: 22 March 2012].

²⁴⁰ Zaborsky, “Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet,” p. 6

²⁴¹ Waller, Michael. Bruno Coppieters, and A. V. Malashenko, *Conflicting Loyalties and the State in Post-Soviet Russia and Eurasia*, London; Portland, OR: F. Cass, 1998, p. 69, [Online]. Available: books.google.com/books?id=J_S9xfdODDUC&pg=PA69&lpg=PA69&dq=unsinkable+aircraft+carrier+AND+Crimea&source=web&ots=efnrHx9ZNB&sig=fU_r9WE3eFxsLQPv9CsAXgJZgdU#PPA69,1 [Accessed: 07 March 2012].

²⁴² Martin, James. “Nuclear Chronology: 2000-2002,” *Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies*, [Online]. Available: www.nti.org/e_research/profiles/Ukraine/Nuclear/print/5519.prt [Accessed: 07 March 2012].

Black Sea Fleet (BSF). Currently, in Ukraine the Russian BSF retains three out of ten basing points of the former Soviet BSF and three out of thirteen airfields.²⁴³

According to terms of military and strategic importance, Russia claims that its BSF plays an important role in protecting “the southern flank of Russia and Ukraine from Turkey and NATO.”²⁴⁴ However, that is not true due to aging hardware (some refer to the ships of the BSF as “the world’s largest naval museum”²⁴⁵) and insufficient funding of the Russian Navy. Moreover, Ukraine holds the largest ship repair facilities in the former Soviet Union, whose services are offered to Russia for market prices.²⁴⁶ RBSF units hold some navigation facilities in the Crimea to serve dual purposes — to maintain marine passenger and merchant routes and serve the RBSF.²⁴⁷

“Historically both the Black Sea Fleet and the Crimea itself are of great symbolic significance to many Russian politicians.”²⁴⁸ Catherine the Great established the BSF in 1771 and Russia, after success in conflicts with the Ottomans, through a treaty acquired the right to base it in the Black Sea. Former Commander of the Russian BSF, Admiral Victor Kravchenko, called the Black Sea a “Russian Ocean”, referring to Russia’s long

²⁴³ Perepelytsya, Hrihoriy. “Military and Naval Balance,” in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe, Inc., 2003, pp. 196-197.

²⁴⁴ Jaworsky, “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine,” p. 135.

²⁴⁵ Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, p. 225

²⁴⁶ Blue Dolphin Shipping Service Inc., ““Sevastopole Shiprepair Yard” of Black Sea Fleet (SSYBSF),” [Online]. Available: www.obdss.com/ssrz.html [Accessed: 26 March 2012].

²⁴⁷ Maksymiuk, Jan. “Ukraine: Crimea Lighthouse Becomes another Bump in Ukrainian-Russian Relations,” *RFE/RL Newslines*, January 23, 2006, [Online]. Available: www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/01/743bc216-3768-4ac1-a948-e6542d31b37b.html [Accessed: 26 March 2012].

²⁴⁸ Bukkvoll, Toll. “Ukraine and the Black Sea Region.” In *Politics of the Black Sea: Dynamics of Cooperation and Conflict*, edited by Tunc Aybak. London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2001.p. 88.

and successful “struggle for the possession of the Black Sea.”²⁴⁹ Songs, poems and books, and memorials about Sevastopol as the city of Russian glory and the city of Russian sailors are signs of its symbolic importance to Russia.²⁵⁰ Maintaining the presence of the RBSF in the Crimea Russia achieves a symbolic goal. It stresses that Russia extends to Crimea, and Ukraine is not as separate and independent as it wants to claim.²⁵¹ Moreover, some high-ranking Russian officials used new tactics in response to a recent series of statements about the withdrawal of the RBSF from Ukraine in 2017. Russian Ambassador to Ukraine, Victor Chernomyrdin, in 1997 made a statement that Crimean Tatars are waiting for the RBSF withdrawal in order to claim wider autonomy within Ukraine, and then for full independence; he also hypothesized that Ukraine will beg Russia to leave its fleet in Ukraine, due to the inability of local officials to deal with the problem²⁵². In attempt to restore the leading role of Russia over the “near abroad”, some Russian politicians employed the term ‘Russian heritage’²⁵³ as the criterion for evaluation of friendliness of a NIS to Russia. Attempts to expel the BSF from

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p.89.

²⁵⁰ Plokyh, Serhii “The City of Glory: Sevastopol in Russian Historical Mythology,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 3, (2000): 372, [Online]. Available: www.jstor.org/cgibin/jstor/printpage/00220094/ap010134/01a00030/0.pdf?backcontext=page&dowhat=A_crobat&config=jstor&userID=cd9b41e2@nps.navy.mil/01c0a848660050bb2b3&0.pdf [Accessed: 09 March 2012].

²⁵¹ D’Anieri, Paul. “Constructivist Theory and Ukrainian Foreign Policy,” in *Ukrainian Foreign and Security Policy: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Jennifer D. P. Moroney et al., Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002, p. 45.

²⁵² BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Radical Muslim ideas in Ukraine's Crimea Sponsored From Abroad,” LexisNexis Academic, [Online]. Available: www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2974752077&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2974752080&cisb=22_T2974752079&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1 [Accessed: 19 March 2012].

²⁵³ Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, p. 122.

Sevastopol deny Russia's mythmaking about Russian and Soviet naval glory.²⁵⁴ Ukraine's request to join NATO seriously undermines the claim of 'Russian heritage' in Ukraine and Crimea, and has revitalized claims among Russian nationalists to protect ethnic Russians in Ukraine.

"Developments in the Crimea are significant to Ukraine in terms of more than simply traditional security concerns."²⁵⁵ Ukraine's capacity to maintain stability in the Crimea generates certain political implications and a precedent for dealing with other challenges Ukraine is facing since it gained independence. The Crimea is also significant to Ukraine economically and strategically. Economically, the Crimea is subsidized by Ukraine, but has a huge potential to be profitable. Strategically, the Crimea is almost a center of the Black Sea, facilitating rapid access to any part of it. A number of scholars agree that Ukraine's territorial integrity and state-building efforts are threatened not from outside but from inside due to internal political instability in general, and in the Crimea in particular.²⁵⁶

If the Crimea question will have a successful settlement, this would bring several political dividends to Ukraine. First, Ukraine's ability to withstand Russia's pressure on Crimean issues adds significance to its standing as a newly independent state. A good deal was accomplished in this direction with the overcoming of the waves of Crimean separatism in 1992-95, and the conclusion of the bilateral Treaty with Russia on Friendship and Cooperation in May 1997. However, state-building efforts are still in progress with the integration of the Crimean Tatars and other minorities — Armenians, Germans, Bulgarians and Greeks — who have returned to Ukraine from exile. Thus,

²⁵⁴ Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine," pp. 136-137.

²⁵⁵ Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine," p. 135.

²⁵⁶ Weller, Craig. "Mass Attitudes and Ethnic Conflict in Ukraine," in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D'Anieri, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002, p. 76.

Ukraine is still in the process of acquiring political maturity by dealing with the minorities issue in Crimea²⁵⁷.

Secondly, Ukraine itself represent a divided nation.²⁵⁸ Primarily, the crisis of identity among the Ukrainians divides them between West and East, whose inhabitants are respectively pro-Western and pro-Russian in their preferences. Ukraine is also divided religiously between Christians (the majority of Russians, Ukrainians and others) and Muslims (Crimean Tatars). Christians are divided between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, and even Orthodox are separated into two main branches — the ones subordinated to the Moscow Patriarchate and the other to the Kievan Patriarchate.

A remarkable researcher, Huntington Samuel underlined these divisions in his research “The Clash of Civilizations?”²⁵⁹ Huntington, who visited Ukraine several times, drew a fault line that runs right across Ukraine and divides Western Christianity and Orthodoxy (under Russia’s patronage) plus Islam (Crimean Tatars and other Muslim minorities of the former USSR).

The place of Ukraine from the geostrategic point of view is such that the more unstable Ukraine becomes, the higher its importance because it is the key for all of Central and Eastern Europe. Huntington’s argument, however fatalistic, presents a daunting prognosis for the immature Ukrainian state, especially in light of growing calls for federalization of Ukraine, and the inability of the government to solve Crimean Tatar problems. If Huntington’s prediction came true, instability and ethnic turmoil might

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, pp. 4-10.

²⁵⁹ Huntington, Samuel P. “The Clash of Civilizations?” [Online]. Available: history.club.fatih.edu.tr/103%20Huntington%20Clash%20of%20Civilizations%20full%20text.htm [Accessed: 11 June 2012].

spread to the new EU members, bordering Ukraine against which no new ‘iron curtain’ could be erected²⁶⁰.

The last dividend, the third, is derivative from the above two dividends. The Ukraine is eager to move toward the West, to NATO and the European Union (EU). If it remains as politically unstable²⁶¹ as it is currently, its Euro-Atlantic aspirations will remain unattainable. As a newly independent state, Ukraine is in search of its place in the geopolitical space. The Black Sea region is important as a link to South Eastern Europe and, through Turkey, to the Middle East. Participation in pipeline projects distributing Caspian and Central Asian energy resources allows Ukraine to reduce its dangerous dependence on Russian energy. Finding a workable solution for the Crimean problems makes Ukraine more attractive to foreign investments, including from other states of the Black Sea region.

As the Russian counterpart, the Ukrainian Navy enjoys year-round access to a warm water base and other military facilities left over from the Soviet Union times. This contributes to more effective and efficient maritime operations to secure trade routes and control and defense sea lines in the Black Sea region. Moreover, if the Crimea is not Ukrainian, it would much easier become a source of drug and human trafficking from Caucasus and Central Asia, an influx of refugees to southern regions of Ukraine, and a source of other security concerns.

Another angle of the importance of the Crimea to Ukraine from the strategic point of view lies in creating a precedent to deal with West-East divide in Ukraine. In Crimea, the expectation for ethnic conflict is high. Conflict-prone the Crimea is often

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ Kuzio, Taras. “European, Eastern Slavonic, and Eurasian: National Identity, Transformation, and Ukrainian Foreign Policy,” in *Ukrainian Foreign and Security Policy: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Jennifer D. P. Moroney et al., Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002, p. 213. This will provide details on the positions of Slavophiles (pro-Russian) and Westernizers (anti-Russian and neutral to Russia).

compared with Transnistria, Abkhazia, and even Chechnya.²⁶² If the Crimean Tatar, Ukrainian, and Russian nationalism get reconciled in Crimea, it may provide a model for the broader reconciliation of western and eastern Ukraine.

3.5 Conclusion

The Crimea possesses an important place in the Black Sea region. The history of the Crimea was shaped by its important location, and made it the aim and the arena for interstate competition. It was a crossroad for different cultures, religions, and peoples with different levels of socioeconomic development. Ukraine with the Crimea, as an integral part of the state territory, inherited the set of territorial, political, social and economic problems predetermined by its history.

In the times considered as modern history, the Crimea was the edge of the Golden Horde, Russian, Ottoman empires, and the Soviet Union. Each side of a dispute — Crimean Tatars, Russians, and Ukrainians — spins around and refers to and interprets the history to justify its own policy. Interrelations between aristocrats of the Golden Horde and the Islamic and Nomadic tribes gave way to the emergence of a semi-autonomous Crimean Tatar state in 1475. Despite the fact that it was a protectorate of the Ottoman Turks, the Khanate of the Crimea was considered the pinnacle of Crimean Tatar history.

Territorially the Crimea fell under Russian rule in 1783 and remained that way up until 1954, when it was transferred to Ukraine. During those times the ethnic composition of the Crimean peninsula changed dramatically. Both the forced and natural influx of Russians marginalized the Crimean Tatars presence to a mere 26 percent in 1921. Deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other minorities further diminished the Crimean Tatars presence there. The collapse of the Soviet Union left Ukraine with the

²⁶² Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, p. 32.

legacy of unresolved military, economic, political, and ethnic problems and made the Crimea a conflict prone area.

In the next Chapter will be analysed the Crimea and Ukraine's relations with Russia between 1997-2004, the period of changes in the Ukrainian and Russian relations and the Crimea question for this decade. In the next Chapter will be mentioned that the relations between Ukraine and Russia between 1997-2004 are characterized by considerable ambiguity. The chapter will also analyse the development of Ukraine's relations with Russia, the role of the Crimea in Ukraine's relations with Russia, the impact of Ukrainian-Russian relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars.

CHAPTER 4

THE CRIMEA AND UKRAINE'S RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA BETWEEN 1997 AND 2004

4.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I will examine the Crimea and Ukraine relations with Russia between 1997-2004. Firstly I will examine the development of Ukraine's relations with Russia and until the first steps of Orange Revolution in 2004. Secondly, I will analyse the role of the Crimea in Ukraine's relations with Russia and the new Crimean constitution. Thirdly, I will analyse the impact of Ukrainian and Russian relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars and the impact of the Orange Revolution for these states.

During the years between 1997-2004 the Ukrainian-Russian relations passed through a period of changes beginning with the consequences of disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1997 and ending with the first steps of Orange Revolution in 2004. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the Crimea became an integral part of the newly independent state of Ukraine. The Crimea is an atypical region of Ukraine for several reasons. Ethnically, the Crimea was the only region in Ukraine with a substantial majority of Russians²⁶³. Culturally the Crimea was Russified;²⁶⁴ even its administration

²⁶³ Kolstoe, Paul. *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995, p. 183. Total population of Crimea in 1989 (in the very last years of the existence of the Soviet Union) was 2,430,000 with 1,629,000 Russians.

²⁶⁴ Ibid. The amount of Russophones in Crimea in 1989 was 82% and amount of studying in Russian in Crimea in 1992 (the second year since Ukraine gained its independence) was 99.96%.

still utilizes Russian in its paperwork, despite the fact that the only official language in Ukraine is Ukrainian²⁶⁵. Historically, at least from the Russian point of view, the Crimea was a part of Russia until Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev²⁶⁶, ethnic Russian and the former leader of Ukraine, transferred it to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1954. The Crimea is the home for the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) and Sevastopol, which is still considered as “the city of Russian glory.”²⁶⁷

For the internal stability of Ukraine the Crimean question is of paramount importance. Relations between Ukraine and Russia are characterized by considerable ambiguity. The states and republics of the dissolute Soviet Union were connected by economic interdependence. After its dissolution, Boris Yeltsin invented the term “near abroad” for the former Soviet space and attempted to declare that entire geopolitical space as a zone of Russian interests. Ukraine and the Crimea are not an exception from the rule and, besides other interests, constitute a zone of its economic interests.²⁶⁸

Despite the fact that the Crimea is currently subsidized by Ukraine²⁶⁹, the Black Sea region and the Crimea are considered to have the potential to boost Ukraine’s economic growth by increased tourism, maritime transportation, exploitation of the Black Sea and the Crimean peninsula oil and natural gas resources, and as a transit area

²⁶⁵ Barrington, Lowell B. “Region, Language, and Nationality: Rethinking Support in Ukraine for Maintaining Distance from Russia,” in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D’Anieri, Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002, p. 134.

²⁶⁶ first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1953–64) and premier of the Soviet Union (1958–1964) whose policy of de-Stalinization had widespread repercussions throughout the communist world. In foreign policy, he pursued a policy of “peaceful coexistence” with the capitalist West.

²⁶⁷ Ploky, “The City of Glory,” pp. 369-383.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Svitlytsia.crimea.ua, “Arseniy Yatseniuk: Ya Katorychno Proty Bud’-Yakykh Samozakhopen’...” *Kryms’ka Svitlytsya*, #5, February 1, 2008, [Online]. Available: svitlytsia.crimea.ua/index.php?section=article&artID=5526 [Accessed: 4 June 2012]. In 2007 UAH 800 million (\$160 million) came directly from the budget of Ukraine to subsidize Crimea.

to Russian, Caucasus, and Central Asia goods. The tourism business has the biggest potential for development. The Crimea was a vacation playground for the Soviet elite and a popular tourist destination before the Soviet Union collapsed²⁷⁰. Currently, the tourist infrastructure of the Crimea is in bad shape, but if the region were to become stable and the infrastructure undergoes renovation and restructuring, tourism's 8.2 percent share in Ukrainian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 1998²⁷¹ might be higher.

In 1997-2004, the Ukrainian ports, Sevastopol among them, are closer to Russian manufacturers than Russian ones. This fact did not change beyond that period. This fact, multiplied by the reduced tariffs in Ukrainian ports²⁷², might divert the flow of goods from Novorossiysk. Russian intent to build a bridge over the Kerch Strait to connect Russia and Crimea²⁷³ supports this hypothesis. The Crimea has significant amounts of natural gas and oil. However, the energy sector of Ukrainian economy is not efficient, mostly due to its obsolescence. If it is modernized, Russia's share in the Ukrainian energy market might decrease, reducing dependency.

4.2 Development of Ukraine's Relations with Russia

The most important partner of the Ukraine from all the countries that border it is the Russian Federation. The relations of Ukraine with Moscow are very important for its foreign policy to such an extent that each option of the Ukrainian foreign policy is first and foremost a choice as to the shape of its relations with Russia. This is mainly a

²⁷⁰ Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, p. 11.

²⁷¹ Bukkvoll, "Ukraine and the Black Sea Region," p. 96.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ IPR Strategic Business Information Database, "Russia: a Bridge Too Far to Crimea?" *High Beam Encyclopedia*, September 8, 2000, [Online]. Available: www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-63965388.html [Accessed: 1 June 2012].

consequence of Ukraine's geographic and geopolitical situation, the legacy of many centuries of political, economic and cultural bonds between these two countries, as well as Russia's inevitably dominant position in their mutual relations²⁷⁴.

In addition, this is a consequence of the fact that the European Union's most important partner in the East of Europe is Russia, while Ukraine is viewed by the EU mainly in the context of its relations with Russia: the better these relations, the better Ukraine will be perceived by Berlin, Brussels and especially Paris²⁷⁵. In the case of the United States the situation is a little different, since the US is interested in the independence of Ukraine's security policy from that of Russia, nevertheless the Americans also see Ukraine mainly in the context of their relations with Russia. On the other hand, after ten years of Ukraine's existence as an independent state there is no doubt that this country has no chance of joining NATO or the European Union in the foreseeable future. This makes the relations between Moscow and Kyiv even more important.²⁷⁶

In the years 1996 when the fact of extension of NATO became inevitable, Ukraine begun a diplomatic action aimed at ensuring that the NATO's expansion does

²⁷⁴ Yakovlev, Helena, Two decades of the Russian Federation's Foreign Policy in the Commonwealth of the Independent States: The Cases of Belarus and Ukraine. [Online]. Available: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:h6v5B5aTegUJ:www.ef.huji.ac.il/publications/Yakovlev%2520Golani.pdf+The+most+important+partner+of+the+Ukraine+from+all+the+countries+that+borders+it+is+the+Russian+Federation.+The+relations+of+Ukraine+with+Moscow+are+very+important+for+its+foreign+policy+to+such+an+extent+that+each+option+of+the+Ukrainian+foreign+policy+is+first+and+for+most+a+choice+as+to+the+shape+of+its+relations+with+Russia.&hl=ru&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESiLLsISaKoL13dafjF2gK4rmS8BfMx4QGgnJkXvO8BROjL71sbBUVdN5iSPNSjUSL-G-MX2ELfGnB2-sycC9BSsyLxrhsWfnPn2qXi9f4U1cCITlunJC6AoEymyEjNuxyZYdpL&sig=AHIEtbQqDsKif1KL9xN7x9EISm8wuUpp6Q> [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

²⁷⁵ Stewart, Susan, EU relations with Russia and the Eastern Neighbourhood, [Online]. Available: http://www.swp-berlin.org/fileadmin/contents/products/fachpublikationen/KS_Stewart___EU_and_Russian_final1.pdf [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

not adversely affect the geo-strategic situation of the Ukraine.²⁷⁷ This action brought the expected results, not only in the form of the NATO-Ukraine Charter: under evident pressure from the West, Moscow agreed to sign the treaty with Ukraine along with the three agreements negotiated immediately before, which governed the final division of the former USSR's Black Sea Fleet and set out the terms and conditions on which the Russian navy base in Sevastopol was to operate. It is quite likely that these agreements were negotiated with confidential mediation of the NATO member states. On May 30, 1997, during president Yeltsin's official visit to Kyiv the Ukrainian-Russian treaty and the Sevastopol agreements were finally signed. The text initialed in 1995 was signed without any amendments; the dual citizenship issue remained unresolved, and the Russian Federation apparently gave up this demand, for it has not resumed it yet.²⁷⁸

The Sevastopol agreements confirmed Ukraine's unconditional sovereign rule over the city and the naval port, but they guaranteed Russia the right to keep a navy base there for at least twenty years. It was a compromise based on realistic analysis of gains and losses for both sides²⁷⁹. It did not satisfy either party but it was acceptable to both. Signature of the treaty closed the formation phase of the basic structures in Ukrainian - Russian interstate relations. Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine ratified the treaty on January 14, 1998, while the State Duma of the Russian Federation did so on February 17, 1998 on the condition that Ukraine ratify the a Sevastopol package, which took place on March 24, 1998. Russia ultimately gave up the idea of separating Crimea or Sevastopol from Ukraine (if it had ever considered seriously this). In return it gained what it really

²⁷⁷ Cross, Sharyl, Russia and NATO Toward the 21st Century, [Online]. Available: <http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/99-01/cross.pdf> [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ Could Moscow to take Sebastopol by the Hague tribunal? [Online]. Available: www.realt5000.com.ua/news/utf/en/1387798/ [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

wanted and secured its significant interest, i.e. retained the military base in Crimea²⁸⁰. At the same time it prevented Ukraine's potential accession to NATO, and consequently, avoided the Alliance's presence on the northern coast of the Black Sea.

Following the signature of the treaty on friendship and co-operation, negotiations were undertaken with a view to conclude the long-term economic agreement which was finally signed by presidents Leonid Kuchma and Boris Yeltsin on February 27, 1998 during the Ukrainian president's first official visit to Moscow²⁸¹. The agreement on economic co-operation from 1998 to 2007 is a fairly enigmatic document. Its key provision, Article 3, states that "the high parties signing the agreement, who recognize the necessity to gradually shape and develop a joint economic space, shall create favorable conditions for the harmonization of basic directions of social and economic change; structural reconstruction; alignment of the normative and legislative foundations of economic co-operation with abroad, customs tariff policy, tax policy and antimonopoly legislation; the development of separate projects and programs; promotion of co-operation; the development of strong production structures; as well as for mutual participation in privatization and investment projects, in compliance with national legislation"²⁸².

The agreement also contains provisions on the necessity to "align the basic directions of market reforms" in both countries and to "create the foundations for further development of integration processes in the economy"²⁸³. The media on both sides have

²⁸⁰ Shapovalova Natalia; Balazs Jarabik, Crimea: Next Flashpoint in the European Neighborhood? [Online]. Available: www.fride.org/.../PB14_Crimea-flash_point [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁸¹ Zaborsky, Victor, Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian- Ukrainian Relations, [Online]. Available: http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/2934/crimea_and_the_black_sea_fleet_in_russian_ukrainian_relations.html [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁸² Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Russian Federation and Ukraine Kyiv, May 31, 1997, [Online]. Available: <http://sevkrimrus.narod.ru/ZAKON/1997god.htm> [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁸³ Ibid.

attached huge importance to this document, but in fact it is little more than a letter of intentions that must be followed by long and difficult inter-government negotiations and real decisions, including the passing of numerous legislative acts. What is also necessary is good will on both sides, i.e. the will to achieve more than just conclusion of an agreement, a success that is easy to turn to propaganda profit. One more thing that significant about this agreement is its distinctly bilateral nature: the Commonwealth of Independent States appears only as a decoration of no real consequence²⁸⁴.

The agreement, however, is merely a preamble to the appendix that details the scope of future arrangements. This appendix, entitled The Program of Economic Co-operation between Ukraine and the Russian Federation for 1998-2007, comprises 130 paragraphs, of which 16 are devoted to co-operation in the area of the armaments industry, and it makes a provision for future negotiations aimed at “liberalization of the free trade regime”²⁸⁵, uniformisation of the terms of imposing indirect taxes, alignment of customs tariffs and procedures, establishing co-operation between the two countries’ border and customs services (the more detailed propositions in this respect could be summed up as calling for the introduction of elementary legal and organizational order on the Russian-Ukrainian border), and so on. The Program, nevertheless, remained dead, and real improvement in economic relations between Russia and Ukraine did not take place until 2007²⁸⁶.

After a short period of good economic situation, the economic co-operation between Ukraine and Russian Federation wavered under the impact of the Russian crisis

²⁸⁴ Zaborsky, Victor, Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian- Ukrainian Relations, [Online]. Available: http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/2934/crimea_and_the_black_sea_fleet_in_russian_ukrainian_relations.html [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁸⁵ The Program of Economic Co-operation between Ukraine and the Russian Federation for 1998-2007, [Online]. Available: <http://russia.bestpravo.ru/fed1998/data08/tex24489.htm> [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

in 1998²⁸⁷. Ukraine did not experience a financial crash like the one in Russia, but the ties existing between the financial markets of both countries led to a serious weakening (not a breakdown, though) of the hryvnia in autumn that year. This, in turn, adversely affected the economic exchange between Russia and Ukraine. In 1999 Ukraine's commodity exports to Russia had decreased 50 percent compared to 1995 and 22 percent compared to 1997, while imports from Russia had decreased 1/3 percent and 10 percent, respectively. Exports of services increased 40 percent in 1997.1998, but in 1998 dropped 30 percent, while imports decreased 15 percent and 10 percent, respectively. An important long term consequence of the crisis was the reduced profitability of imports in both countries, which stimulated domestic production. This, in turn, contributed to the 2000 boom in Ukraine²⁸⁸.

The election of Leonid Kuchma for a second term of office and the appointment of Victor Yushenko as Prime Minister increases hopes for the beginning of radical reforms in Ukraine, which would bring the country closer to West-European standards of economy and social life. These hopes were only partially fulfilled. The economic growth, achieved without any help from Western financial institutions, turned out to be the main success of the Yushenko government. Nevertheless, the disappointment of the West with Ukraine and vice versa was still growing even despite the government's successes over the year 2000. On top of that, an understanding that there is no alternative to close co-operation with Russia matured in Ukraine²⁸⁹.

The program executed by Yushenko's government was aimed at bringing order to the mechanisms of Ukrainian economic life, but not at their radical change. Over the year 2000 Ukraine was rather reducing the distance from Russian Federation than

²⁸⁷ Mossessian, George, Ukraine's Energy Under Kuchma's policy and Dependence on Russia, [Online]. Available: http://www.math.ucdavis.edu/~gmoss/hosted/Ukraine_paper.pdf [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

²⁸⁹ Strategic Partners of Ukraine: Declarations and Realities (UCEPS Analytical report), [Online]. Available: http://www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/files/category_journal/NSD12_eng.pdf [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

becoming closer to the Western standards.²⁹⁰ It is striking that the fundamental mechanisms of Ukrainian political life (especially the struggle between the oligarchic and bureaucratic groups for influence over the president) and their changes reflect similar mechanisms and processes in the Russian Federation²⁹¹. For example, the oligarch's attacks first on the Vice-Prime Minister Julia Tymoshenko and then on the Prime Minister Yuschenko were preceded by similar attacks from their Russian counterparts on the Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko in the summer of 1998. However, the changes which the Russian political mechanisms have been undergoing since 2000 still have not been seen in Ukraine²⁹².

Ukraine experienced in 2000, for the first time since gaining independence, a substantial economic growth (Gross National Product rose by 6%, industrial production by 13%, agricultural by 7.5%) and an increase of budget's income which improved the social situation. The biggest increases were in food, steel and light industry. The increase was largely due to a growth in the prices of crude oil, which was unfavorable to Ukraine, but which propelled Russia's economic growth which in turn propelled the demand for imports from Ukraine²⁹³. The second important factor was the continuation of extensive privatization, as a result of which numerous plants of heavy and chemical industry have become the property of Russian capital and were able to increase or even start production again. The Ukrainian economic and political circles must have

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ Zaborsky, Victor, Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian- Ukrainian Relations, [Online]. Available: http://belfercenter.hks.harvard.edu/publication/2934/crimea_and_the_black_sea_fleet_in_russian_ukrainian_relations.html [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁹² Ibid.

²⁹³ Ukraina v Chifrah, [Online]. Available: http://ukrstat.org/uk/druk/katalog/kat_u/publ1_u.htm [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

understood then that their country could manage without the Western help, but not without close co-operation with Russia²⁹⁴.

On the other hand, the International Monetary Fund did not resume loans to Ukraine in 2000 and the Western media would occasionally renew their campaigns discrediting the country, Prime Minister Yushenko especially - the most pro-Western politician of Ukraine's leaders, seen there as the one appointed by the USA. At the same time an almost year-long discussion of the Russian project (which mainly took place in Poland not in Ukraine) for a new gas pipeline which would go around the territory of Ukraine combined with Brussels' attitude towards an increase of the import of Russian gas have made the Ukrainian political class aware that European Union sees the Russian Federation as its main partner in Eastern Europe, and from Kyiv it expects good relations based on partnership with Moscow²⁹⁵.

After the election of the new president of the Russian Federation which became Vladimir Putin he has given up his predecessor's inconsistent policy towards Ukraine. The policy toward Ukraine had before Putin a soviet direction and have a direction toward the re-integration of the CIS' countries. Moscow has understood and accepted the fact that Ukraine's independence is irreversible and that it would be in Russia's interest to respect this, not only making its policy towards Kyiv easier, but also improving the Russian Federation's image world-wide. The change contributed to improvement of bilateral relations in the years 2000-2001²⁹⁶.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Golos Ukraini, 27.02.2001, [Online]. Available: <http://www.licasoft.com.ua/index.php/component/lica/?view=dir&type=0&base=1&menu=3034&id=108560> [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁹⁶ Kuzio, Taras, Russian Policy toward Ukraine during Elections, [Online]. Available: http://www.taraskuzio.net/International%20Relations_files/russia_elections_ukraine.pdf [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

During the presidential campaign of 1999 in Ukraine, Russia remained restrained. Relatively late in the campaign it opted for Leonid Kuchma as the least inconvenient of the important candidates. His main rival, a communist Petro Symonenko, was dangerous to Moscow as he is an ally of Gennady Zyuganov. Kuchma however, was already known and was also liked and valued by Boris Yeltsin. If the change of leaders in the Kremlin had happened earlier, Russia might have decided to support Oleksandr Moroz, the only candidate who in those elections constituted a real political alternative to Kuchma²⁹⁷.

Before 2000 Russian Federation's politics have become more predictable, and Russia itself was ruling with consistence, and therefore stronger. Putin's Russia has given up treating the CIS as a tool in re-integration of the "post-USSR space" and with determination has backed bilateral relations with the member countries of the CIS. The Kremlin has decided that treating Ukraine as a partner and an ally, and not as a "transient country", would make it easier to achieve the important political aims connected with this much weaker country. It has turned out to be a good decision²⁹⁸.

The new political direction has removed the main psychological impediment in the way of tightening the Ukraine-Russia relationships, enabling Kyiv to make some concessions to its northern neighbor²⁹⁹.

Boris Tarasyuk, Ukraine's previous minister of foreign affairs, similarly assesses the situation. He considers that since Vladimir Putin's victory in elections Ukraine has clearly experienced a new approach of the Russian Federation. It is characterized by firmer relations and pressure on Ukraine. He also underlines that there is less sentiment in the relationship of the leaders of both Ukraine and Russia and more pragmatism,

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ UNISCI Discussion Papers, Russia's foreign policy under Putin, [Online]. Available: http://www.taraskuzio.net/International%20Relations_files/russia_elections_ukraine.pdf [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

which is positive in itself.³⁰⁰ But, contrary to Boris Tarasyuk's beliefs, it is difficult to see any increase in Russia's pressure on Ukraine. It was especially noticeable during gas negotiations at the end of 2000, which gave Kyiv some unexpected benefits³⁰¹. A certain hardening of Russia's standpoint in economic matters did not take place until 2004.

4.3 Role of the Crimea in Ukraine's Relations with Russia

In the present subchapter the role of the Crimea in Ukraine's relations with Russia should be analyzed through the prism of the Black Sea Fleet importance and role for both states.

The Soviet dissolution was the loss of strategically important territory, and the future status of bases and Soviet forces in the neighboring states. The combination of strategic and historical factors led to strong incentives for Russia to maintain an influence in what is now referred to as the "near abroad"- the area comprised of the non-Russian independent states once part of the former Soviet Union³⁰². Such incentives were further emboldened by the presence of large Russian minorities living in the Newly Independent States. Approximately 25 million Russians were living in the Soviet Union, but outside the borders of current day Russia upon the collapse of the USSR.

At the beginning of the 1992 the parliament of Ukraine adopted a law concerning the status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea giving it wider powers in comparison to the other local authorities of Ukraine.³⁰³ In the same year, in May 1992 was received a

³⁰⁰ Tarasiyk, Vladimir, *Politika I Kulitura*, [Online]. Available: <http://www.pic.com.ua/tarasyuk-boris-ivanovich.html> [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

³⁰¹ Russia-Ukraine Gas disputes, [Online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia%E2%80%93Ukraine_gas_disputes [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

³⁰² Lowell, W. Barrington, Erik S. Herron and Brian D. Silver, "The Motherland Is Calling: Views of Homeland among Russians in the Near Abroad," *World Politics* 55, no. 2 (January 2003), p. 290

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

response in which the parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea adopted a Constitution and also a Declaration of Independence. According to the Constitution from 1992 and the Declaration of Independence the proclaimed Autonomous Republic of Crimea is a part of the Ukrainian republic and that the relationship between the two “independent” republics should nevertheless be based upon treaties.³⁰⁴

The presence of Crimea and Ukraine as nominally independent states, from which Crimea represent a part of Ukraine contradicts conventional wisdom. The comments gave by a legal expert from Ukraine, A. Matsiuk about the law granting autonomy to Crimea indicated that on the one hand, a depiction of power between a state and its components is impossible, but on the other hand, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea was granted wide powers.³⁰⁵ This was done for the most part in order to recognize the Russian entity as a dominant national group in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea,³⁰⁶ and to appropriate separatists by granting them a certain level of authority and independence within Ukraine. Holovaty Serhiy, at that time working as Justice Minister states his own opinion that the presence of two republics with two constitutions within one country will result in the federalization of these republics.³⁰⁷

Kiev refused the idea of creating an Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and even several political parties of the Ukraine claimed that the legislature of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea be dissolved and its direction to be hold under the authority of the law. Ukrainian parliament annulled the Declaration of Independence of the Autonomous

³⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 194.

³⁰⁵ Kolstoe, *Russians*, p. 194.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 191.

³⁰⁷ Belitser, Natalya, *The Constitutional Process in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in the Context of Interethnic Relations and Conflict Settlement*, 20 February 2000, [Online]. Available: www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/nbelitser.html [Accessed: 2 June 2012]

Republic of Crimea and the leadership of presidential representatives to the Crimea were stretched. At the same time the Ukraine parliament addressed a message to the people of Crimea about the strong resolve of Ukraine parliament not to allow any act of seceding from Ukraine.³⁰⁸

Due to this, the parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea subdued to the claim of Kiev. The years 1991 - 1994 were a period of conflict between Kiev and Simferopol. The coming later years became ones of growing stability.³⁰⁹ The idea of Crimean independence dimed, and was renamed as the Republican Movement of Crimea and among some other political forces which were supporting the Russians by the idea of Crimean unification with Russia. However, even if the separatists won in 1994, during the Crimean presidential elections an important victory, the leader of the Republican Movement of Crimea Yuri Meshkov, who won the election conceded that he would not insist for Crimea's separation from Ukraine."³¹⁰

Despite everything, Yuri Meshkov decided to make some dangerous steps toward restoration of good relations with Russia. Such steps were as symbolic at the beginning as the change of time to Russian time, and others were more substantial as the subordination of the security forces in Crimea, institution of the ruble zone, retention of the Black Sea Fleet under the control of the Russian Federation, and also the withdrawal of the security forces belonging to Ukraine from the territory of Crimea³¹¹

President's Meshkov political position and the position of the Russia Bloc belonging to him were reinforced in the month of March 1994 with the results of

³⁰⁸ Kolstoe, *Russians*, pp. 194-195.

³⁰⁹ Belitser, Natalya, *The Constitutional Process in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in the Context of Interethnic Relations and Conflict Settlement*, 20 February 2000, [Online]. Available: www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/nbelitser.html [Accessed: 2 June 2012]

³¹⁰ Kolstoe, *Russians*, p. 199.

³¹¹ Belitser, Natalya, *The Constitutional Process in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in the Context of Interethnic Relations and Conflict Settlement*, 20 February 2000, [Online]. Available: www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/nbelitser.html [Accessed: 2 June 2012]

Crimean parliamentary elections. The elections finished with fifty-four seats for the Russian Bloc out a total from ninety-eight.³¹² But the result of the elections did not helped the Russia Bloc for long time. As President Meshkov with his Russia Bloc were unable to solve the problems of the economic domain and had little experience in politics, the most part of electorate diverted from them. One year after, in June 1995, when next local elections started, no council chairman from the Russia Bloc was elected.³¹³

Presidency of Yuri Meshkov was not recognized by the Crimean Tatars and they were disappointed in Kiev's assent in his victory³¹⁴ Crimean Tatars considered this fact as big indifference of the leadership of Ukraine toward the Tatar's interests. At the next parliamentary elections Crimean Tatars Assembly won 14 seats and it claimed that they support Ukraine's integrity and that Crimean Tatars Assembly is more interested in the Ukrainian integrity than the most citizens of Ukraine.³¹⁵ By contrast, the Crimean Tatars political views were not certain in their political views. The National Movement of Crimean Tatars which was supporting the Russians was in alliance with the Russian Bloc, but, even so, they had little support and didn't receive any seat in the parliament.³¹⁶

³¹² Nahaylo, Bohdan. *The Ukrainian Resurgence*, C. Hurst & Co. Publishers, 1999, p. 469

³¹³ Kuzio, Taras, "The Crimea: Europe's Next Flashpoint?", *The Jamestown Foundation*, November 2010 [Online]. Available: www.taraskuzio.net/media13_files/30.pdf [Accessed: 2 June 2012]

³¹⁴ Arbatov, Aleksej Georgievič. *Managing Conflict in the Former Soviet Union: Russian and American Perspectives*, MIT Press, 1997, p. 110

³¹⁵ Shevel, Oxana. „Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian state: the challenge of politics, the use of law, and the meaning of rhetoric”, [Online]. Available: www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/oshevel.html [Accessed: 2 June 2012]

³¹⁶ Ibid.

The next Constitution was adopted in 1998, only after the abolition of the presidency of Crimea³¹⁷ and after the change of the political leaders in its parliament. The positive sign was in prior coordination of its draft with Ukrainian parliament. The majority of its provisions were approved with the exception of the “separatist clauses” about separate citizenship, state symbols, the “Crimean” people, and proclamation of Russian as the state language.³¹⁸

On the 21st of October, 1998, the parliament of Crimea adopted a new Constitution. In this Constitution there was recognized as the state language the Ukrainian language. On the 23rd of December, 1998, this Constitution was adopted by the parliament of Ukraine and it was considered being one of the most supporting in the history of the Ukraine - Crimea relations.³¹⁹ Two days after, on the 25th of December, the parliament of Russian Federation ratified the Ukrainian-Russian Treaty acknowledging the rights of Ukraine on the Crimea as part of Ukraine.³²⁰

Almost immediately following the Soviet dissolution, it became obvious that both countries had divergent views on the proper role and function of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).⁹ Ukraine viewed the break-up of the USSR as requiring an allocation of the Former Soviet Union (FSU)’s assets and liabilities among the independent, separate, and equal successor states. Thus, Ukraine perceived the CIS as a transitory structure, intended primarily to assist in the distribution of the FSU’s resources and ensure a smooth transition from a centralized union to

³¹⁷ In 1995 the Ukrainian Parliament (Verhovna Rada) passed the “Law of Ukraine on the Status of Crimea”, which abolished the Office of the Crimean Presidency and suspended the 1992 Crimean Constitution. All laws and decrees that contradicted Ukrainian legislation were declared null and void.

³¹⁸ Sasse, Gwendolyn. *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 2007. pp. 86-87

³¹⁹ EastWest Institute, *Annual Survey of Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union: 1998: Holding the Course*, M.E. Sharpe, 01.12.1999, pp. 173-174

³²⁰ Ibid.

independent states. In contrast, Russia envisioned itself as somewhat of the heir of the Soviet Union.

Many counties in the NIS were previously under the control of Imperial Russia long before the Bolshevik Revolution. As such, Russia viewed the CIS as a permanent structure that would constitute a voluntary union underpinned by democratic principles and dedicated to market reform – at least in theory - yet would still be tacitly ruled by Russia akin to the way it was in Soviet times.³²¹

The present conflicting views set a contentious tone for agreements which will be signed in future involving Crimean territory, particularly the status of the Black Sea Fleet. After remaining in a stalemate for three years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a provisional agreement, referred to as the Black Sea Fleet Accord, was finally reached between Ukraine and Russia regarding the division and basing of the Black Sea Fleet. Signed on May 28, 1997 in Kiev, the agreement permits Russia to lease space from Ukraine for twenty years. The Accord also granted Russia the right to keep its main naval base at Sevastopol, provided that it shares the city's facilities with the Ukrainian Navy. The agreement also grants Russia the right to lease 18,500 hectares of land in Crimea including important facilities and infrastructure³²².

Russian Federation and Ukraine take the decision to split the Fleet evenly, but Ukraine agreed to sell a share of its portion to Russian Federation, allowing Russia to maintain approximately 82 percent of the Black Sea Fleet. Russia agreed to pay Ukraine a one-time fee of approximately \$526 million for warships and vessels, and slightly less than \$100 million per year in rent for the use of Crimean facilities³²³.

³²¹ Kachuyevski, Angela, "Avoiding State Fragmentation while Negotiating Sovereignty: Ukraine and Russia in Crimea" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the ISA's 49th Annual Convention, Bridging Multiple Divides, San Francisco, California, 26 March 2008): 19. [Online]. Available: mwww.allacademic.com/meta/p251928_index.html [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Universalium, Ukraine, [Online]. Available: <http://universalium.academic.ru/215491/Ukraine> [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

A large number of treaties and agreements leave little doubt that the rule of law and power of external legitimacy is in Ukraine's favor. Nevertheless, Russia continues to inflame tensions and challenge Ukraine's territorial integrity through a variety of tactics, ranging from distributing Russian passports in the Crimean peninsula to pledging millions of dollars to support Russians living in Ukraine³²⁴. Their efforts are further bolstered by pro-Russian citizens living in the predominantly Russian leaning southeastern region of Ukraine and lend Russia some internal power of legitimacy. It is fair to predict that tensions will continue to intensify in the lead-up to the expiration of the Fleet's lease in 2017, and borders and Crimean sovereignty will feature prominently in bilateral relations.

4.4 Impact of Ukrainian-Russian Relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars

The approval of the Crimean Constitution of the last years by the Ukrainian Parliament in December 1998, after some years of protracted struggle between Kyiv and Simferopol over the nature of Crimea's autonomy, has been presented by the Ukrainian government, and considered by some domestic and foreign observers, as having finally settled "the Crimean problem" — the problem of the Russian separatist movement in Crimea — by defining Crimea's status as a constituent part of Ukraine and specifying the range of its powers. In time when Kyiv and Simferopol are not fully content with the final compromise, the constitution particularly disregards the interests of over 260,000 Crimean Tatar, who have returned to Crimea in the last 10 years after almost half a century in places of deportation, and now constitute around 12% in Crimea's 2.5 million population, which is majority Russian³²⁵. Most part of the political demands put forward

³²⁴ Leon Aron, "Russia's Next Target Could be Ukraine," Wall Street Journal [Online]. Available: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122100831438617621.html?mod=opinion_main_commentaries [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

³²⁵ PART TWO, "CIS countries outside Russia", [Online]. Available: <http://lgi.osi.hu/publications/2002/119/Minority-%20CIS-P2.pdf> [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

by Crimean Tatars since early 1990s remain unsolved today, and Tatars' unrecognized demands for greater group rights continue to aggravate political situation in Crimea.

Crimea is the most distinct and complicated region of Ukraine due to its history, ethnic composition, cultural legacy and constitutional status. It is the only Ukrainian region where Russians form the major ethnic group representing 58 per cent of the population, followed by 24 per cent of ethnic Ukrainians, and 12 percent of Crimean Tatars who had been forcibly expelled to Central Asia by Stalin in 1940s and began to return since the early 1990s. Belarusians, Armenians, Jews, Azeris, Greeks, Bulgarians, Germans (together around 5 per cent) add further diversity. Crimea is granted political autonomy by the Constitution of Ukraine and this status is confirmed in the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. It is the only region of Ukraine which has such an arrangement. Crimea has its own parliament, which appoints and designates a prime minister with the consent of the President of Ukraine³²⁶.

The language which is most spoken is Russian language. Crimean Constitution grants to the Russian language official status. In fact, only Russian language is used in the public administration, the media and the educational system in Crimea. Although Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar have the same status, these are rarely used. A reality check confirms this: while there are 987 Russian-language printed media in Crimea, there are only five published in Ukrainian and four in Crimean Tatar. Despite the 250-thousand strong Crimean Tatar population, there is not a single Tatar school³²⁷.

Even though Crimea voted in favor of Ukrainian independence in the 1991 referendum, the early 1990s saw the rise of separatist movements. When the Crimean government introduced the post of President of Crimea, the elected pro-Russian politician Yuriy Meshkov disbanded the Crimean Parliament and called for

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Shapovalova Natalia; Balazs Jarabik, *Crimea: Next Flashpoint in the European Neighborhood?* [Online]. Available: www.fride.org/.../PB14_Crimea-flash_point [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

independence. Separatism flourished as Russia was reluctant to recognize Ukraine's sovereignty over the peninsula. Only the adoption of the Constitution of Ukraine in 1996 and the ratification of the Ukraine-Russia Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership in 1997 (tied to the agreements arranging the status of the Russian Black Sea Fleet until 2017) led to an easing off of territorial tensions³²⁸.

Loyalty to Russia among Crimeans is still strong and this has increased during the last few years. According to a recent study by the Razumkov Centre, a Kyiv-based think-tank, 32 per cent of Crimeans do not consider Ukraine as their native country, while 48 per cent would like to change their citizenship, mostly to Russian. Importantly, 63 per cent of the population would support the idea of Crimea joining Russia. However, there is no single vision on the future of the region – the same proportion would support greater Crimean autonomy within Ukraine. Only 25 per cent are in favor of Ukraine joining the European Union, with 52 per cent against; in Ukraine as a whole, support for EU integration (47 per cent) prevails over opposition to it (35 per cent)³²⁹.

The strains have deepened over the rights of land, political, social, economic and language domain, over historic and religious places, and between Kyiv and local authorities. In most of cases the division lines lie between the Russian-Slav and the Crimean Tatar populations. These are exacerbated by the hate speeches of the Crimean media against the Tatars and the Muslim population. Ukrainian authorities have not developed legislation that would renew Crimean Tatar rights as an aboriginal ethnic group. This has pushed the Tatars towards radical behavior, such as illegal land grabs, street protests and the radicalization of national movements. Land is one of the major sources of conflict. The land promised to the repatriated Tatars is also a major focus of

³²⁸ Mizrokhi, Elena. Russian 'separatism' in Crimea and NATO: Ukraine's big hope, Russia's grand gamble, [Online]. Available: www.psi.ulaval.ca/fileadmin/psi/documents/Documents/Travaux_et_recherches/Crimee.pdf [Accessed: 24 June 2012]

³²⁹ Shapovalova Natalia; Balazs Jarabik, Crimea: Next Flashpoint in the European Neighborhood? [Online]. Available: www.fride.org/.../PB14_Crimea-flash_point [Accessed: 24 January 2012]

corruption in which local and national authorities and the Tatar representatives are involved³³⁰.

When Victor Yushchenko was elected at the presidential elections in 2004,³³¹ as President of Ukraine, he tried to alter stable relations between Russian Federation and Ukraine, which were considered not to be maintained to the same extent.³³² In time of his first visit to Russian Federation after the elections from 2004, the President of Ukraine - Yushchenko mentioned that Russia's relations with Ukraine must be build on the Ukrainian interest which should be considered the most important.³³³ This fact had a negative influence on the relations of Russian Federation toward Ukraine, because Russia was interested to maintain a position of leader over the "near abroad", a term which was overarching for the former Soviet republics.

Nevertheless, the revolution which was named The Orange Revolution bypassed in a large way Crimea and even hasn't changed a lot the Crimean politics.³³⁴ Presidential elections of 2004-2005 and Parliamentary elections of 2006 confirmed this observation. During the three rounds, one of which was an extra round and was imposed due to the Ukrainian Supreme Court decision that fraud had been committed on behalf of Yushchenko's main competitor, Victor Yanukovych, Yushchenko acquired slightly

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Samokhvalov, Vsevolod. "Colored Revolutions" in *Wider Black Sea Region and the "Geopoliticization" of Democracy*, [Online]. Available: dgap.org/en/article/getFullPDF/17960 [Accessed: 2 June 2012]

³³² Ponsard, Leonel. "A Road Map for Ukraine," research paper no. 17, NATO Defense College (NDC), April 2005, 2, [Online]. Available: www.isn.ethz.ch/pubs/ph/details.cfm?lng=en&v33=110625&id=14433 [Accessed: 2 June 2012].

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, p. 263.

more than fifteen percents of votes versus eighty one percents in support for Yanukovich; the gap between the two was even wider in Sevastopol.³³⁵

The life of the Crimean Tatars didn't changed after the Orange Revolution and the leaders of the Kurultay movement decided to help Yushchenko and to support him and the political forces which belonged to him as the Russia Bloc, but this was only the Crimean Tatars who supported him, because, according to the presidential results, the majority of the Crimean populace supported the opposite side. Such an obvious divide shoved the Crimea to the edge of new ethnic tensions, like those experienced in the 1990s. The Tatars might not support Yushchenko, but he looked less threatening to them as he was against the rapprochement with Russia, a state generating bad memories among the Crimean Tatars³³⁶.

The problems of Crimean Tatars were overshadowed by the Orange Revolution and it generated international support for Ukraine. Chechnya, and the war in Iraq also produced fear of rising Islamic fundamentalism among Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians. Even in mid-90s, rumors were floating around about Chechen terrorists resting in the Crimea.³³⁷ Later, Hizb ut Tahrir emerged in Crimean ground; many experts considered the Crimea the only place in Europe where it operates openly, due to flaws in Ukrainian legislation.³³⁸ The U.S.-led War on Terror further exacerbated the situation with

³³⁵ Izmirli, Idil. "Regionalism and the Crimean Tatar Political Factor in 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections." *The Journal of Turkish Weekly*, February 28, 2007. [Online]. Available: www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=171 [Accessed: 2 June 2012].

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Tanner, Arno. *The Forgotten Minorities of Eastern Europe: The History and Today of Selected Ethnic Groups in Five Countries*, East-West Books, 2004, p. 51

³³⁸ BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Islamic Radical Party Hosts Conference in Ukraine's Crimea," LexisNexis Academic, August 17, 2007, [Online]. Available: www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985557359&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985557364&cisb=22_T2985557363&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1 [Accessed: 29 June 2012].

Crimean Tatar political and cultural claims. As a result, the Crimean Tatar leadership refused any help from Islamic groups.

After the presidential election from 2004-2005 Crimean Tatars and their leaders who supported Yushchenko at the election asked for support of their grievances as reciprocity of their help at elections. The Crimean Tatars were concerned with the recognition of them as an “indigenous people,” giving the Crimean Tatar language the status of the official language in the Crimea along with Ukrainian, and settling land disputes.³³⁹ As a result, Yushchenko set up a commission to find a way out of that complicated situation, but it ended without any noteworthy solution.³⁴⁰ In late 2005, however, the newly appointed Crimean prime minister and Yushchenko’s ally, Anatoly Bordiunov, formed a Cabinet with an increased number of Crimean Tatars. Two Crimean Tatars occupied positions as heads of committees, two as ministers and the other two occupied posts of deputy prime ministers, in total the amount of Crimean Tatars working at governance was six.³⁴¹

In recent years, the Crimean Tatars made efforts to create a national self-defense groups which intention was to regulate the allotment of lands plots in Crimea. The meeting of the leaders of Meclis passed an affirmative draft resolution, which was finally vetoed by Dzhemilev.³⁴² Dzhemilev underlined the fact that if the Crimean Tatars actions will radicalize, this will bring to another war and the Meclis will lose its authority, but this can bring also to the formation by the people of radical groups which will fight not for the Meclis but for the Crimean Tatars interests.

³³⁹ National Security & Defence, Nr. 5 (109), 2009, Founded and published by: *Ukrainian Centre For Economic & Political Studies Named After Olexander Razumkov*, [Online]. Available: www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/files/category_journal/NSD109_eng.pdf [Accessed: 3 June 2012]

³⁴⁰ Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, p. 265.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

³⁴² Ukraine General Newswire, “Creation of Self-defense Brigades to Regulate Land Allotment in Crimea Violates Law, NSDC Deputy Secretary Says,” LexisNexis Academic, December 10, 2007, [Online]. Available: business.highbeam.com/407726/article-1G1-173612307/interfax-ukraine-business-weekly [Accessed: 2 June 2012].

4.5 Conclusion

The period between the years 1997-2004 was characterized by secession attempts initiated by pro-Russian political forces; and the process after 2004 characterized by relative stabilization of secessionist attitudes in Crimea. In what concerns the Russian-Ukrainian relations, the mentioned period was important by the years 1997 when was signed the Treaty on Friendship and Collaboration according to which Ukraine and Russia came to an accord in what consists the Black Sea Fleet and it's territories for each country apart. The time before the year 2004 is characteristic for the Crimea by the revival of conflict between the Crimea and the central government. This division is conditional because the Ukraine – Crimea relations have been uneven since Ukraine gained its independence. Russo-Ukrainian relations, in disputes over Crimea, revolved around the rights of ethnic Russians in Crimea, the division of the Black Sea Fleet and its basing rights. As a final point, the return on the part of the Crimean Tatars from exile and their influence on the politic of Crimea, the adoption of the Constitution of Crimea brought additional tensions to the region. The problems of land, restoration in what consists the rights of the Crimean Tatars, and the relations between ethnicities complicated the further situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, radicalizing both the ethnic Russians and the Crimean Tatars.

In the next Chapter will be analysed another period of the Crimea and Ukraine's relations with Russia, the period between 2004-2012. In the Chapter will be analysed the interest of Russia and Ukraine for Black Sea Fleet and the role of Crimean Tatars in the Black Sea Fleet conflict between these two states. The next Chapter will also develop the idea that the Crimea had an imperial role in Ukraine's relations with Russia and will demonstrate that there was for the period during 2004-2012 an impact of Ukrainian-Russian relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and on the Crimean Tatars in particular.

CHAPTER 5

THE CRIMEA AND UKRAINE'S RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA BETWEEN 2004 AND 2012

5.1 Introduction

In this Chapter I will examine the Crimea and Ukraine relations with Russia between 2004-2012. Firstly I will examine the development of Ukraine's relations with Russia and the Black Sea Fleet conflict. Secondly, I will analyse the role of the Crimea in Ukraine's relations with Russia and I will mention that the Russian Black Sea Fleet widely participates in illegal business activities in the Crimea. It subleases facilities, without Ukraine's consent, to businesses that are consequently able to evade local taxes. Thirdly, I will analyse the impact of Ukrainian and Russian relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars and I will mention that Russia also believes the presence of its fleet at Sevastopol contributes to regional stability. I will next mention that Ukraine and Russia have gone to considerable lengths to settle disputes over the division of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet.

The Crimea and Ukraine's relations with Russia between 2004-2012 represent the interests of Russia and Ukraine on the Black Sea Fleet. The presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine intersects with the problems posed by the Crimean Tatars in several respects. It is itself an independent source of friction between Russia and Ukraine, and to that extent makes cooperation on other matters of common interest more difficult. Beyond that, its presence is widely thought to influence the outlook of the Crimean Tatars directly, but in diverging ways.

Some argue that the presence of the BSF helps deter the Crimean Tatars from claiming independence from Ukraine, or initiating intrastate ethnic conflict. Others argue that the fleet fuels pro-Russian sentiments among the Crimean Russophones, who wish to challenge Ukrainian authority over the Crimean peninsula, and are generally hostile to Tatar interests.

5.2 Development of Ukraine's Relations with Russia

In the present subchapter, I will analyze the development of Ukraine's relations with Russia through the prism of the Black Sea Fleet problem. The Soviet Navy (Voenno-Morskoi Flot) consisted of four fleets. The Black Sea Fleet was the third largest, and constituted of "26 percent of the former Soviet Navy ships and 7 percent of its submarines, primarily based in Ukrainian ports of Sevastopol and Odessa, with smaller bases in Poti, Georgia, and Novorossiysk, Russia."³⁴³ Its main task was (and still is) to defend the Black Sea coast and compete with the U.S. sixth fleet and other NATO naval forces in the Mediterranean.³⁴⁴ The BSF had more than four hundred combat aircraft and one hundred helicopters, supported by significant land components, including a Coastal Defense Division with three hundred tanks and six hundred armored vehicles and a Naval Infantry Brigade.³⁴⁵

At the time of the dissolution of Soviet Union, BSF maintenance and basing facilities constituted a valuable piece of former Soviet basic framework for Ukraine and Russia to compete over. Several Western observers feared that such competition might

³⁴³ Kuzio, Taras. *Ukrainian Security Policy*. Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995. pp, 92-93.

³⁴⁴ Kessler, Jr. George Albert, *Ukrainian Naval Reform: Required For Survival*, Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California, June 2001, [Online]. Available: www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA395811 [Accessed: 12 June 2012]

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

be serious enough to escalate to an armed conflict.³⁴⁶ In Russian-Ukrainian relations the issues of Crimea, Sevastopol, and the BSF were the most important obstacles on the way to signing an interstate treaty.³⁴⁷

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia tried to establish control over the military formations, based on the territory of NIS, which it considered as strategic assets necessary for the joint defense of the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS).³⁴⁸ Ukraine did not consider the BSF to be of strategic significance in this sense.

Its leadership regarded the BSF as a conventional military asset to be nationalized along with other military hardware stationed in Ukraine now of the Soviet Union's dissolution.³⁴⁹

The issue of the BSF was also used as a cover for higher interests at stake. For Russia, the interest was chiefly the establishment of a "long-term presence and influence on the Black Sea;" for Ukraine, it was about "the viability of Ukrainian sovereignty over

³⁴⁶ Felgenhauer, Tyler. *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1999, p. 1, [Online]. Available: www.princeton.edu/research/cases/ukraine.pdf ([Accessed: 7 June 2012]; and RusNavy.com, "Russia and Ukraine have measured swords with one another twice," [Online]. Available: rusnavy.com/nowadays/concept/rusvsukr1.htm [Accessed: 7 June 2012].

³⁴⁷ D'Anieri et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine*; Drohobycky, Maria. ed., *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, Lanham, MD; Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995; Cottey, Andrew et al., *New Security Challenges in Post Communist Europe*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002; Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*; Arbatov, Alexey et al., ed., *Russia and the West: the 21st Century Security Environment*, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999; Kremenyuk, *Conflicts in and Around Russia*; Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*; Lieven, *Ukraine & Russia*; Spillmann, Kurt., *Between Russia and the West: Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine*, Europaischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, Bern: Peter Lang AG, 1999; Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia*; and Bonnell Victoria E. and Brelauer, George., *Russia in the New Century: Stability and Disorder*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001.

³⁴⁸ Zaborsky, Victor. "Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian-Ukrainian Relations." Discussion paper 95-11, Center for Science and International Affairs, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. [Online]. Available: belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/disc_paper_95_11.pdf [Accessed: 7 June 2012]

³⁴⁹ Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, p. 109.

Crimea.”³⁵⁰ According to Tyler Felgenhauer for the both, the real interest was about influencing unstable domestic politics and domestic interest groups, rather than about confronting external threats.³⁵¹

Russian interest was not in the ships, but in preserving its traditional presence in the Crimea through claiming sovereign status of Sevastopol, the main base for the BSF.³⁵² Russia wanted to keep Turkey, its ancient rival, away from Ukraine, and prevent active Turkish involvement in Crimea, especially with regard to Crimean Tatars.³⁵³ Russia also desired to reinstall its patronage and control over the former Soviet Republics, the so-called ‘near abroad.’ Vladimir Putin’s government in particular has focused on subordination of “former Soviet space” in the interest of Russian security, and has been less concerned with troublesome and expensive patronage.³⁵⁴

For Ukraine, the issue of the Black Sea Fleet was important for proving its independence, and showing that it could not easily be intimidated. It was not a matter of military importance, because Ukraine is not able to sustain a large blue-water navy or even a piece of it. Possessing a part of the BSF would also strengthen Ukraine’s *de facto* rights for the Crimean peninsula, however, which is a political consideration in its own right.

³⁵⁰ Drohobycky, Maria. *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, ed., Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995, pp. 200, 201

³⁵¹ Felgenhauer, Tyler. *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords*. Princeton, NJ: Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, 1999. [Online]. Available: www.princeton.edu/research/cases/ukraine.pdf [Accessed: 7 June 2012]

³⁵² Bohlen, Celestine. “In Russia-Ukraine Fight Over Navy, Crimea Lies at Heart of the Struggle,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1992, [Online]. Available: query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E0CE1D71E30F932A05750C0A964958260&scp=1&sq=red+fleet+in+black+sea+split&st=nyt [Accessed: 7 June 2012].

³⁵³ Moshes, “Littoral States,” p. 80.

³⁵⁴ Sherr, James. “Democracy: the Missing Link in Regional Security,” in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp, 2004, p. 247.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia and Ukraine were close to a military conflict over the status of Crimea, and the ownership of the former Soviet BSF and everything associated with it. The situation was exacerbated by the nationalistic hard-liners within Ukrainian and Russian governments. The BSF negotiations were about the division of hardware into two fleets — Russian and Ukrainian — basing rights for Russia in Crimea, and, generally speaking about the right to control the Crimea and Sevastopol.

The issue of basing rights was especially important and complicated. In the early 1990s, Russia did not have any significant naval infrastructure on the Black Sea beyond Ukraine. Russia has since undertaken a massive program of building the necessary infrastructure in Novorossiysk (to be completed in 2012) and has negotiated with Syria to increase basing rights there. In the meantime, Russia's deteriorating economy denied it the capacity either to build a substitute for the current infrastructure or to relocate BSF personnel from Ukraine somewhere else.³⁵⁵

The most important point of the dispute was about control over the Crimean peninsula and Sevastopol. "In many ways, it is really about the Crimean Peninsula itself, which [was then] poised for a referendum on its independence from Ukraine, and about Sevastopol, a navy town of faded elegance that dates to the reign of Catherine the Great."³⁵⁶ Ukraine inherited part of the Soviet Army without considerable resistance of Russia, but division of the BSF was closely connected to the rights for the Crimea and Sevastopol. Russia's interest in Sevastopol and the Crimea was supported by the ethnic Russian majority and other Russified nationalities, and reinforced by the pro-Russian administration of the Crimea.

³⁵⁵ Felgenhauer, Tyler. *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords*. Princeton, NJ: Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, 1999. [Online]. Available: www.princeton.edu/research/cases/ukraine.pdf [Accessed: 7 June 2012].

³⁵⁶ Bohlen, Celestine. "Russia and Ukraine to Run Black Sea Fleet Jointly." *New York Times*, August 4, 1992. [Online]. Available: query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E0CE3D6113CF937A3575BC0A964958260&st=cse&sq=black+sea+fleet&scp=1 [Accessed: 7 June 2012].

Current disputes revolve around the timely withdrawal of the BSF in 2017 according to the agreements Between Ukraine and Russia over the BSF, leasing cost and multiple violations by the Russian side of the accords on the division of the BSF.³⁵⁷ The first is mainly about Ukraine's concerns that the RBSF will stay in the Crimea after 2017. There is much evidence to support this concern. First, Russian Naval planning out to the year 2020 considers Sevastopol as the main base for the BSF.³⁵⁸ Russian officials at different levels proclaim that the BSF will continue to stay in the Crimea after 2017. At the same time, Russia has accelerated building a naval base in Novorossiysk and is investigating basing a part of the RBSF in Syria.³⁵⁹ Second, Ukraine consider the cost of lease, negotiated at \$97.75 million, to be inappropriate given that Ukraine must now pay close to the world market price for Russian natural gas. Finally, Ukraine considers Russia as the violator of the accords because it has occupied more facilities and land in the Crimea than was earlier agreed, a charge Russia rejects.³⁶⁰

5.3 Role of the Crimea in Ukraine's Relations with Russia

Russia today is a revisionist state, eager to reshuffle its cards in the Crimea. The RBSF is a perfect tool for this purpose. "Russia still considers military force to be an element in its foreign policy towards CIS...which Moscow has declared to be a zone of

³⁵⁷ Hamilton, Daniel, Mangott, Gerhard, *The New Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova*, Washington, DC: Center for Transatlantic Relations, 2007, p. 14, [Online]. Available: transatlantic.sais-jhu.edu/publications/books/new_eastern_europe_text.pdf [Accessed: 12 June 2012]

³⁵⁸ BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Expert Says Russian Navy Has Nowhere To Go From Ukraine's Sevastopol," LexisNexis Academic, February 22, 2006, [Online]. Available: www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-142417574/expert-says-russian-navy.html [Accessed: 14 June 2012].

³⁵⁹ Barabanov, Mikhail . "Russia in the Mediterranean," *Moscow Defense Brief* #3 (9), 2007, [Online]. Available: mdb.cast.ru/mdb/2-2006/item1/item2/ [Accessed: 13 June 2012].

³⁶⁰ The Kabinet Ministers of Ukraine, "Ukrainian - Russian Working Group into Russian Black Sea Fleet's Functioning in Ukraine Sits in Kyiv," September 26, 2007, [Online]. Available: www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=93034459 [Accessed: 13 June 2012].

its vital interests.”³⁶¹ The RBSF in the Crimea allows Russia to conduct its intelligence gathering and Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) in Ukraine and the Crimea at a lower cost than from the mainland.

To conduct intelligence at least three tools — maritime and coastal SIGINT units, air platforms, and scouts — are available in the Crimea. The RBSF has maritime and coastal signal intelligence (SIGINT) units, incorporating a wide array of ‘legalized’ ways and means to conduct intelligence gathering in Ukraine beyond the Crimea. Organized PSYOPS started in 1992 with the establishment of PSYOPS units within the BSF, and have assisted in the creation of a “social base for the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol” and in support of pro-Russian organizations in the Crimea.³⁶² The Russian government has invested in the creation of a civilian infrastructure and media in Sevastopol and the Crimea to promote Russian ideas.

The Russian Black Sea Fleet widely participates in illegal business activities in the Crimea. It subleases facilities, without Ukraine’s consent, to businesses that are consequently able to evade local taxes. The RBSF leases radio frequencies within the range allocated to it for military purposes; besides the lost commercial profit by Ukraine, this undermines the safe use of military equipment by the RBSF itself.³⁶³

RBSF training centers in the Crimea were used by troops departing to Chechnya. Individuals and RBSF military units participate in counterterrorism efforts in North Caucasus (mainly Chechnya). A Marine scout troop (detached) participated there in 1999-2000 as part of joint Northern Fleet Marine battalion and is currently stationed in

³⁶¹ BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, “Russian daily Looks at Moscow’s Military strategy in CIS,” October 11, 2005, [Online]. Available: www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-137423691/russian-daily-looks-moscow.html [Accessed: 13 June 2012].

³⁶² BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Black Sea Fleet is Russia’s “Fifth Column” in Ukraine – Defence web Site,” November 3, 2004, [Online]. Available: www.accessmylibrary.com/coms2/summary_0286-14252340_ITM [Accessed: 14 June 2012].

³⁶³ “Black Sea Fleet illegally leases Ukrainian radio frequency ,” *Kreschatyk: Kievskaja Munytsypalnaya Gazeta*, February 2, 2008, [Online]. Available: kreschatic.kiev.ua/news/1202803931.html [Accessed: 9 June 2012].

the Crimea.³⁶⁴ Sevastopol and, to a lesser extent, the Crimea are rich for terrorist targets (barracks, families, arsenals and depots). The most dangerous is the IR-200 nuclear reactor of the Sevastopol nuclear institute,³⁶⁵ which might serve as a ‘dirty bomb.’ Those threats seem to be plausible in the wake of increased Wahhabi activities in the Crimea.

5.4 Impact of Ukrainian-Russian Relations on the Crimean Regional Autonomy and the Crimean Tatars

The Russian budget provides some financial support to Sevastopol. However, this support does not arrive on a regular basis.³⁶⁶ The RBSF also hires local inhabitants to work for it. The government of Moscow also provides financial support to Sevastopol to the task of patronizing the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which is based at Sevastopol. Much was done during the past few years to create normal conditions for the fleet's work. The “Moskva” missile cruiser was commissioned on money from the Moscow city budget. More than 2,500 flats were built in Sevastopol for the families of sailors, along with a school building, kindergarten, and medical center. A subsidiary of Moscow State University is functioning and developing there for the second year running.³⁶⁷

Russia also believes the presence of its fleet at Sevastopol contributes to regional stability. “If we surrender the Crimea, it is not to Ukraine but to Turkey, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, is reported to have

³⁶⁴ BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Black Sea Fleet is Russia’s “Fifth Column”.”

³⁶⁵ BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Ukrainian web-site mulls danger of terrorist attacks in Crimea,” May 28, 2005, [Online]. Available: www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-137109795/ukrainian-web-site-mulls.html [Accessed: 11 June 2012].

³⁶⁶ BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Sevastopol to Become Ukraine's “Unifying Chain” with Russia – Governor,” July 15, 2005, [Online]. Available: www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-134400708/sevastopol-become-ukraine-unifying.html [Accessed: 14 June 2012].

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

said.”³⁶⁸ This point of view is quite exaggerated. Turkey does not need the Crimean peninsula to control the Black Sea. The Bosphorus and Dardanelles provide exceptional control over the maritime lines between the Black and Mediterranean Seas.

Some Russian sources also hypothesizes that the RBSF is a deterrent to keep Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar nationalists from putting additional pressure on the Russian-speaking community in the Crimea. This point has very limited grounds. Many ethnic Russians live without problems in Western Ukraine without any support from the RBSF³⁶⁹.

A prediction was made by some Crimean Tatars and Krymchacs (which is surprising). The Deputy Head of the Krymchacs cultural society, Mark Purim, made a statement that 2017 will be the year of creation of the Crimean Tatar state. Nariman Abdul’vaapov, a Crimean State Engineer-Pedagogical University faculty member, supported this claim during a seminar on “Protection and Preservation of Indigenous Crimean Peoples Cultural Heritage.”³⁷⁰ However, official “Meclis” leadership supports the idea of territorial integrity of Ukraine.³⁷¹ Does the RBSF serve as the deterrent against such undesirable consequences for Ukraine?

The RBSF consist of about fifteen thousand men and eighty ships (twenty-plus warships only). Despite the impressive number, these personnel are not well suited for antiterrorist and riot control functions. According to Jane’s, the RBSF has a naval

³⁶⁸ Blagov, Sergei. “Politics-Russia: Skepticism Prevails Over Friendship Treaty,” *IPS-Inter Press Service*, February 25, 2000, [Online]. Available: www.ipsnews.net/2000/02/politics-russia-skepticism-prevails-over-friendship-treaty/ [Accessed: 14 June 2012].

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ “In 2017 the Crimean Tatars aim to create their own state,” *All-Russian public organization Zubr*, September 11, 2007, [Online]. Available: za.zubr.in.ua/2007/09/11/1209/ [Accessed: 7 June 2012].

³⁷¹ Ibid.

infantry brigade³⁷² plus the RBSF HQ guards and support battalion. Naval aviation units and possibly other major bases and garrisons may have their integral small units to maintaining security of ships, airfields and other installations. A small detachment of combat divers, acquired during division of the Soviet BSF,³⁷³ is possibly still with the RBSF.

In case of riots caused by the Crimean Tatars' desire to get independence from Ukraine, the RBSF units will be among the first (along with Ukrainian military formations) to be attacked by the radicals to gain weapons and explosives. As soon as the riots began, the extensive network of big and small RBSF units³⁷⁴ will be involved in force protection measures. Moreover, RBSF personnel are involved in the protection of several lighthouses necessary for navigation near the Crimean shores.³⁷⁵

These personnel and other small units are among the least protected. The real 'boots on the ground' are in the naval infantry brigade, the combat diver detachment, and possibly the guard company of the RBSF headquarters. This is barely enough for their own force protection. Ukraine cannot count on the support of the RSBF in dealing with possible Crimean Tatar riots; and Russia in turn cannot send significant reinforcement without Ukraine's consent³⁷⁶.

³⁷² Jane's Information Group, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Russia and the CIS," *Jane's Navy International*, July 31, 2008, [Online]. Available: articles.janes.com/articles/Janes-Sentinel-Security-Assessment-Russia-And-The-CIS/Navy-Ukraine.html [Accessed: 11 June 2012]

³⁷³ "Agreement between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on the Black Sea Fleet of the partition parameters," *Collection of Laws*, May 28, 1997, [Online]. Available: www.vcom.ru/cgi-bin/db/zakdoc?_reg_number=%D09706092 [Accessed: 12 June 2012].

³⁷⁴ "Agreement between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on the Black Sea Fleet of the partition parameters," *Collection of Laws*,

³⁷⁵ BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Russian TV Says Troops May Open Fire in Ukrainian Lighthouse Dispute," January 18, 2006, [Online]. Available: www.accessmylibrary.com/article-1G1-141021832/russian-tv-says-troops.html [Accessed: 14 June 2012].

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

Thus, the RBSF cannot serve as the deterrent for the Crimean Tatars. Like the Russian 14th Army in Transnistria, Moldova, however, the RBSF could arm pro-Russian paramilitaries — a truly negative and dangerously escalatory role. The actual RBSF units will be hard-pressed to protect RBSF's multiple bases, lighthouses, and so on.

5.5 Conclusion

Ukraine and Russia have gone to considerable lengths to settle disputes over the division of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet. Despite the Agreement reached in 1997, the issue still festers. Basing of the RBSF in Ukraine has raised questions about the relative advantages and disadvantages of its presence in the Crimea. From Ukraine's perspective, having the RBSF in the Crimea provides an easier environment for Russia to gather intelligence on Ukraine, and to conduct psychological operations against it. The RBSF also participates in some illegal activities, and its presence increases the possibility of terrorist acts in Ukraine.

Conversely, the claim that the RBSF deters the Crimean Tatars from demanding independence from Ukraine is hardly plausible, due to the specific nature of the military contingents involved, which are themselves an easy target for terrorists.

In the next Chapter will be mentioned the conclusions made after the analysis of the problem of Ukrainian-Russian relations in the Post-Soviet era and the importance of the Crimea in these relations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

In this Chapter will be mentioned that the present research explored the autonomy of the Crimean autonomous region in terms of its impact on Ukraine's relations with Russia in the post-Soviet era. Thesis analyzed also the impact of the relations between Ukraine and Russia on the autonomy of the Crimean autonomous region. Contrary to the views that consider the Crimean autonomy as a product of the relations between the ethnic Russians in the Crimea and Kiev, thesis argued that the bilateral relations between Ukraine and Russia have played a crucial role in the evolution of the autonomy of the Crimean region within Ukraine.

The main question of this thesis was whether the internal, regional or external/international dynamics have been more influential in the development of the Crimea as an autonomous entity in the post-Soviet era. As the findings of this thesis demonstrate, it is main at the interstate dynamics that have shaped the evolution of the Crimean autonomy.

In the neorealistic Ukrainian view, the Crimean peninsula is geographically an extension of Ukrainian steppe land, which has been linked, culturally and ethnically, to what is now Ukraine since before the emergence of the Kievan Rus'.

In the Russian view, on the other hand, the Crimea fell under Russian influence before the Mongol invasion, which means the Tatars are the real foreigners in the Crimea. The history of Russian glory in the Crimea started by Catherine the Great and

was exemplified by the building of Sevastopol, an achievement celebrated in Russian history to this day, and solidified by the fact that the city remains the homeport of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The division of the Soviet BSF between Russia and Ukraine was long and painful, and the two states confronted each other on this matter angrily. Russia and Ukraine signed a bilateral treaty on friendship and, finally, divided up the BSF and arranged the basing rights issue in a way that has reduced, though perhaps not entirely eliminated, the possibility of serious conflict in the future.

In the Crimean Tatar view, the Crimean peninsula is their only homeland, as established by a long history of state building there between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. They consider themselves the indigenous people of the peninsula, whose statehood was destroyed by the Russian Empire. Since the eighteenth century, their nation has suffered progressively destructive discrimination, culminating in “surgun”, the complete exile from the Crimea by Stalin. More than four decades of political struggle with Soviet authorities allowed them to get certain benefits, eventually including a right to return to Crimea, achieved slightly before the collapse of the USSR itself.

Upon arrival, the exiled Crimean Tatars claimed the Crimea as their homeland, adopting the “Declaration of National Sovereignty of the Crimean Tatar People” during the second “Kurultay”.

The Crimean Tatar claims for national sovereignty are the most contested. Their written historiography started in late nineteenth century. Since the annexation of Crimea, the Crimean Tatars were not well suited to the modernization, which was undertaken by Russia in the Crimea. Many opted to leave, mostly for Turkey, their religious patron. Earlier, the conversion to Islam was the decisive point in the formation of the Crimean Tatars as a nation. Before that time, history remembers Greeks, Bulgarians, Germans, Armenians and Jews, but not the Crimean Tatars. At the same time, it must be admitted that the Crimean Tatars roots run deeper in the Crimea than those of the Russians and Ukrainians.

Fears by the Ukrainian authorities of Russian subversive tactics in supporting separatism among ethnic Russians in the Crimea have increased after the Georgian Crisis. According to a recent study, there is now reason to speak of the threat of pro-Russian separatism in the Crimea again. Despite the fact that the majority of the organizations supported by Russia are still rather small and that their actions and demonstrations rarely gather more than a couple of hundred activists, the activities of these organizations attract large coverage in the mass media and are supported at a high political level in Russia.

According to research of the Swedish Defense Research Agency, Russia is trying to increase her intensity on the peninsula by supporting various political and economic organizations loyal to it and by sharpening the conflict in ethnic relations and in such way to have the possibility to interfere to defend Russians in the Crimea.

Since the demise of the Soviet Union (USSR) and the emergence of the newly independent states (NIS), Russia has employed various techniques to preserve its dominance over them. It is very important for Russia to keep Ukraine under its influence because of Ukraine's exceptional strategic location. In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, Russia, with a subordinated Ukraine, becomes an empire, and without it, ceases to be one.

Russia and Ukraine are of equal importance to each other. First, Ukraine and Russia are economically interdependent. The biggest disparity lays in Ukraine's vast dependence on Russian energy sources. However, Ukraine transports the majority of Russian oil and natural gas to Europe, making Russia almost equally dependant on Ukraine in commercial terms. Both countries are major trading partners. Second, Ukraine serves as a buffer separating Russia from an expanded NATO. This is true on both an emotional level and a physical one. Having its former adversary (NATO) present in a neighboring republic is a threat to the psyche as much as it is to national security.

On a personal level, both Russians and Ukrainians have relatives on the opposite side of the border. Russia has tried to exercise pressure upon Ukraine from the very

beginning of its independence. The majority of disputes between the two states have been settled. The Crimea and the issues of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (RBSF) based there remain an important outstanding issue in diplomatic relations between the states.

Despite Russia's moderate tolerance toward the Tatars' religious traditions, they emigrated in large numbers to nearby Turkey. After the Communist revolution, Crimean Tatars were under the constant purge of repressive policy. Just after the Soviet troops retook the Crimea after German invasion Stalin decided to deport the Crimean Tatars to Central Asia and Siberia. Although the majority of deported nationalities were rehabilitated by Khrushchev after the death of Stalin, the status of the Crimean Tatars was not changed. Only in 1989 the Crimean Tatars obtained the official right to return to the Crimea. The social, political, and economic problems arisen before the Ukrainian authorities with the beginning of the return process generated unrest among the Tatars which was directed against the Slavs

In this thesis, I tried to show more widely the importance of the interstate relationships on the status, local population of the Crimea and their relations with official Kiev.

As it was demonstrated in the first chapter, according to the historical factors the collapse of the Soviet Union brought political entrepreneurship into action in the Crimea. Historical myths contributed to political mobilization of the ethnic groups involved in disputes. The regional political leadership was weak and lacked political experience in dealing with ethnic issues. Initially, Crimea's Russian majority contributed to attempts to establish Crimean autonomy within the Soviet Union. Later, Ukrainian independence and subsequent democratization contributed to the emergence of a multiplicity of mutually competitive political parties and movements.

As it was demonstrated in the second and third chapters, Russian separatism culminated in an attempt to secede to Russia. The attempt collapsed, owing in part to weak support from Russia itself, which preferred to use the occasion to extend its influence indirectly over one of its most important neighbors. This judgment has been largely vindicated by subsequent events. The assumption that the Crimean population

wanted to remain in Ukraine is supported by its participation in multiple national elections and referenda. Credit should be given to Ukraine for the ability to solve secessionist attempts peacefully and to withstand pressure from Russia over the BSF. The bilateral Treaty with Russia on Friendship and Cooperation and the Black Sea Fleet Accords undermined, but did not fully eliminate, grounds for Russian separatism in the Crimea. Russian nationalism in the Crimea still exists, and is fueled by certain political circles from Russia; but it appears to have lost the opportunity to win local support, at least given the current level of interethnic tension in the Crimea.

As it was demonstrated in the fourth chapter currently, the situation in the ‘triangle of conflict’ is different from the nineteenth century. The Crimean Tatar national movement, spurred by the arrival of former exiles eager to redress both real and mythical injustices, represents a far greater risk to the territorial integrity of Ukraine than pro-Russian separatism did. The Crimean Tatar claims evolved from the right to return to their historic homeland to recognition as the indigenous peoples in Crimea, a claim that has provided them with considerable benefits. After this they declared the national sovereignty of Crimean Tatar peoples. There is little doubt that the final goal of the Crimean Tatars is to achieve territorial autonomy and, later, national sovereignty. The Crimean Tatar leadership continues to demand new legislation elevating them over the other citizens of Ukraine. Their claims are reinforced by the newly adopted UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the precedent of unilateral proclamation of independence by Kosovo.

These attempts are destabilizing for the Crimea. It is early to predict an emergence of an independent Crimean Tatar state, given their still-modest share of the Crimean population. Yet, some tendencies have a negative character for Ukraine. First, the rate of growth of the population is advantageous for the Crimean Tatars, whose birth rate is higher than that of neighboring populations. Such a factor does not imply a rapid shift in the Crimean demographics, but a saying that seems to be right for Crimea, given sufficient time. Second, public attitude can be shaped to favor the Crimean Tatars, many of whom experienced considerable hardship, caused first by forced resettlement and then

by the weak economic performance of the Ukrainian state, which has few resources with which to right the old wrongs. This allows for manipulating public opinion and mobilizing the poorest Tatars for violent action, perhaps under the sway Islamic radicals who have found a sympathetic reception in the Crimea. Young Crimean Tatars without prospects are the perfect target for radical Islamist recruiters.

As it was demonstrated in the fifth chapter Russia is still interested in the Crimea, especially following the Orange Revolution and general degradation of Russo-Ukrainian Relations. Unresolved issues — on Russia-Ukraine borders in the Strait of Kerch and the Sea of Azov, navigational facilities occupied by the RBSF in addition to the Accords of 1997, Ukraine's attempts to revise the RBSF basing rights — have inspired Russian authorities to invent new roles and missions for the RBSF in Ukraine, above all as a deterrent against possible Crimean Tatar claims for independence.

The studies in the Chapter 5 proved very low, or even wrong, for the likelihood of the RBSF to deter the Crimean Tatar claim for independence. The central government in Kiev has played a very careful game with the Crimea, based on balancing pro-Russian and Crimean Tatar political forces, and allowing neither side to tip the scales for the own advantage. In the nineteenth century, the Constitution of Ukraine was adopted elaborating the peculiarities of Crimean autonomy in the unitary Ukrainian state. The fourth (and still current) Constitution of the ARC was approved by the Parliament in Kiev, with full recognition of the Crimea as the part of Ukraine. Arrangements with respect to Tatar autonomy are vague, however, and do not provide lot of room for self-determination. This is because the constitution was arranged with a view of appeasing ethnic Russians, not the Crimean Tatars. To that extent, it is destined to become increasingly obsolete.

Further studies could be carried out on the international and political role of the Crimean conflict for the population of the Crimea and the Russian Federation and Ukraine. At the same time, the results of the investigation could be useful for the seminar in international relations and for a deeper analysis of the further relation of Ukraine and Russian Federation and their interest on the Crimean question.

To conclude this thesis has tried to explain the interest of Russia and Ukraine for Crimea, namely for contemporary the Crimea through the prism of earlier events, and to predict the array of possible developments that may follow from the current situation. It studied history of the all the parties involved — Ukraine, Russia and the Crimean Tatars — in the Crimean peninsula as a scene of disputes.

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Appendix A

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü
- Enformatik Enstitüsü
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı :
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TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

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