CRIMEAN TATAR FACTOR AND *EUROMAIDAN* IN UKRAINE'S
NATION BUILDING EFFORTS: NOVELTIES AND CHANGES AFTER 2014

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis analyses the impact of the pro-Ukrainian resistance of the Crimean Tatars to the Russian occupation and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, which started on 26 February, 2014, on the relationship between Ukraine and Crimean Tatars. Additionally, the impacts of the *Euromaidan* that lasted from October 2013 until February 2014, prior to the Russian occupation of Crimea, on Ukraine's nation building efforts are studied. This thesis supports the idea that Ukraine has entered a new phase in the nation building process, and that the country is re-establishing its relations with its citizens within the post-*Euromaidan* period. It is claimed here further that the Russian Federation's occupation of the Crimean Peninsula and the pro-Ukrainian resistance of the Crimean Tatars changed the Ukrainian state's approach to the Crimean Tatars, after being originally suspicious of its motivations prior to occupation. Alongside the discussion of the changes that were undertaken and the novelties that emerged, this thesis also examines the current situation on the

Crimean Peninsula in the light of the demographic and political history of the region. This study uses the qualitative data obtained during the fieldwork in both Ukraine and Turkey, which has a significant Crimean Tatar diaspora population. The results of the fieldwork indicate that the divisions in Ukraine, the existence of which is defended by a significant number of scholars, are based on political, cultural and historical differences, and oppose the idea that these divisions are based on ethnic background. This change in the relationship the between Ukrainian state and the Crimean Tatars is supported by the fieldwork findings. and so this new term should be comprehended as an important turning point in the nation building efforts of the country.

Keywords: Crimea, Crimean Tatar, Ukraine, Nation Building, *Euromaidan*

ÖZ

UKRAYNA ULUS İNŞASINDA KIRIM TATAR ETKİSİ VE *EURO* MEYDAN:

2014 SONRASI YENİLİKLER VE DEĞİŞİMLER

ŞAHİN, Fethi Kurtiy

Yüksek Lisans, Avrasya Çalışmaları

Tez Yöneticisi Prof. Dr. Ayşegül AYDINGÜN

Eylül 2016, 175 sayfa

Bu tez, 26 Şubat 2014 tarihinde başlayan Rusya'nın Kırım Yarımadasını işgal ve ilhakı süreci sonrasında, Kırım Tatarlarının Ukrayna yanlısı direnişlerinin Ukrayna ve Kırım Tatarları arasındaki ilişkileri nasıl etkilediğini incelemektedir. Ayrıca, Kırım'ın işgali öncesinde, Kasım 2013 - Şubat 2014 tarihleri arasında gerçekleşen *Euro* Meydan olaylarının Ukrayna'nın ulus inşası sürecine etkileri de irdelenmektedir. Bu tez, Ukrayna'nın *Euro* Meydan sonrasında yeni bir ulus inşası sürecine girdiği ve vatandaşları ile olan ilişkilerini yeni baştan inşa etmekte olduğu görüşünü savunmaktadır. Savunulan bir diğer görüş, Rusya Federasyonu'nun Kırım Yarımadası'nı işgali ve Kırım Tatarlarının bu işgale karşı Ukrayna yanlısı direnişinin, Ukrayna devletinin Kırım Tatarlarına ilişkin işgal öncesi şüpheci yaklaşımlarını değiştirdiğidir. Tez, bu değişimi ve yenilikleri tartışmanın yanı sıra, bölgenin demografik ve siyasi tarihi ışığında Kırım Yarımadası'nın güncel durumunu da incelemektedir. Bu çalışma Ukrayna'da ve önemli bir Kırım Tatar

diasporasının bulunduğu Türkiye'de yürütülen saha çalışmalarında elde edilen nitel verilere dayanmaktadır. Saha araştırmasının sonuçları, Ukrayna'ya ilişkin literatürün önemli bir kısmında var olduğu savunulan bölünmüşlüğün ve siyasi çatışmaların etnik temellere değil; siyasi, kültürel ve tarihsel temellere dayandığını göstermektedir. Son dönemde Ukrayna devletinin ile Kırım Tatarları arasındaki ilişkilerdeki değişimi saha çalışmasında elde edilen veriler doğrulamaktadır ve bu yeni dönem Ukrayna'nın ulus inşası sürecinde önemli bir dönüm noktası olarak değerlendirmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kırım, Kırım Tatarlar, Ukrayna, Ulus İnşası, *Euro* Meydan

To My Family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Ukraine lies on what was formerly the western border of the Soviet Union, the dissolution of which brought independence to Ukraine in August 1991. Ukraine is the largest producer and exporter of wheat in the world thanks to its vast expanses of fertile black soil,[1] and is located in a region that has witnessed the rise and amalgamation of many civilizations. According to official sources, in 2016 the country had a population of 42,760,500, which is a significant drop from the 51,838,500 recorded in 1990.[2] The most recent official census that detailed ethnic minorities was on 5 December, 2001, when it was found that 77.8 percent of the population was Ukrainian and 17.3 percent was Russian,[3] with the remainder being made up of Belarussians, Moldovans, Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Romanians, Poles, Jews, Armenians and Greeks, along with some other smaller communities.

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[1] Ukraine has one-third of the world's rich black-soil. See United States Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Productivity and Efficiency in Russia and Ukraine: Building on a Decade of Reform*, by Stephan Osborne and Michael A. Trueblood, Agricultural Report No. 813 (Washington DC, 2002), 1. http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aer-agricultural-economic-report/aer813.aspx .

[2] "Population," State Statistic Service of Ukraine, accessed May 10, 2016, http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/ .

[3] "About number and composition population of UKRAINE by data All-Ukrainian population census '2001 data," All Ukrainian Population Census '2001, accessed May 5, 2016 http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/ .

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Ukraine's origins can be traced back to the Kievan Rus' of the 9th century, although each region in Ukraine carries the heritage of different cultures and experiences. Ethnic Ukrainians have attempted to establish independent states many times in history, but all such efforts were short-lived, the most recent attempt ending with the government deciding to join the Soviet Union in 1923. It has been the lack of state experience and the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic character of society that have been the main stumbling blocks in efforts towards nation building.

Today, Ukraine is waging a war against the Russian Federation in a bid to free itself from the Russian sphere of influence. Although some scholars have suggested that the events were a 'CIA plot' against Russia, Ukrainian people showed great determination and some even lost their lives in the protests in central square of Kyiv[4]– *Maidan Nezalezhnosti* (Independence Square) – against their old pro-Russian government between 21 November, 2013 and 23 February, 2014. Nowadays, these events are referred to as the 'Revolution of Dignity', underlining their importance in the minds of the Ukrainian people.[5]

However, four days after the 'victory' in *Maidan*, Russian troops wearing uniforms without insignias occupied the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of

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[4] 'Kyiv', the capital city of Ukraine, is known widely as 'Kiev' in literature. This different spellings are a result of the name's transliteration from the Russian pronunciation of the name of the city. Ukrainian authorities have tried to change its name in line with its Ukrainian pronunciation, and started a campaign to this end. In this regard, during this study, the names of the cities, regions and geographical names will be used in line with their Ukrainian usage; Kyiv (Kiev), Kharkiv (Kharkov), Lviv (Lvov), Dnipro (Dnieper River) and so on.

[5] "How it All Happened," Euromaidan Press, Accessed March 15, 2016, http://euromaidanpress.com/2016/02/20/the-story-of-ukraine-starting-from-euromaidan/2/ .

Crimea in Simferopol,[6] known as *Aqmescit* by Crimean Tatars. In the days that followed, pro-Russian protests started in some Eastern regions of Ukraine that would evolve into a separatist movement, and as a result of the Russian support of these separatists, the situation evolved into an armed conflict that is continuing still today.[7] Russia declared the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula on the basis of a hasty referendum under the control of Russian soldiers on 16 March, 2014. This sudden attack by Russia was traumatic not only for Ukraine, but for all post-Soviet countries. Each of the 15 states that gained independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, including the Russian Federation, are undergoing state- and nation building processes that involve trying to draw up a new 'social contract' in society and the re-establishment of solidarity and harmony out of the ruins of the Soviet regime. The road has not been easy though, in that the clash between the old values and new 'western' and 'liberal' values has raised many problems for the elite managing the post-Soviet transition. Russian propaganda based on this old Soviet discourse, aiming to protect Russian influence in the post-Soviet and *russophone* region, has made this transition much harder, and in some cases impossible. [8]

The Ukrainian people have demonstrated clearly their will for change in their country through the Revolution of Dignity in 2014, as they expressed previously in

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[6] Capital city of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

[7] "Two years after war broke out in Ukraine, the death toll continues to mount," The Telegraph, Accessed May 3, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/03/two-years-after-war-broke-out-in-ukraine-the-death-toll-continue/ .

[8] See; "Putin's new ideology: Developing Russian civilization," RT, Accessed June 20, 2015, https://www.rt.com/politics/putin-election-president-panarin-955/ ; "Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club," President of Russia, Accessed June 20, 2015, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/19243 .

the Orange Revolution of 2004; however, Ukraine's nation building process is controversial. Ukrainians, like Belarussians, are the closest of all the post-Soviet communities to Russia in terms of language, culture and religion, in that the two nations lived together under the rule of Moscow for hundreds of years. During Soviet times they were the most trusted and 'approved' communities, together with Russians, in the eyes of the suspicious Soviet administration, and as a result of this long history of brotherhood, the establishment a new national identity, independent of Russianness, has been quite complicated and multidimensional.

The repercussions of these facts on the post-Soviet nation building divided Ukrainian society. While part of society supported a pro-Russian identity, another segment supported the building of a separate 'Western'-oriented national identity. The reoccurring question in Ukraine in these days is whether Ukraine is part of Europe, or whether Ukrainians and Russians are inseparable brothers. In addition to that, the views of the Russians who make up a significant proportion of the Ukrainian population are not homogenous. Establishing a new 'social contract' in this society, in which there is still no consensus on the basic matters related to nation building even after 25 years of independence, is a problem that is high on the agenda of the Ukrainian elite. When other post-Soviet 'illnesses' like corruption and distrust of political authority and the elite are added to this, along with the dominance of the Russian language and culture, the situation becomes much harder and more complex for Ukrainian policy makers.

In Ukraine, internal clashes reached a peak as 2013 turned into 2014. *Euromaidan* and the events that followed changed Ukraine in an unprecedented way in the post-Soviet space, while the invasion and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and war in Eastern Ukraine had a significant impact on the Ukrainian efforts at nation building.

1.1. Research Question

This thesis analyses the impact of the Russian occupation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, on the post-*Euromaidan* Ukrainian nation building process. It is well known that this young state, like other post-Soviet states that gained independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union, faced many social, economic and political problems and experienced some revolutionary acts. As claimed by Taras Kuzio, Ukraine became independent without a modern nation or a united political community.[9] This is supported by the findings of Smith, Deutch and Anderson related to nation, who found that territorial unity, a common history, a single economy, common legal rights and a printed media are very important for a politically united nation, and for the evolution from an ethnos to a nation.[10] Although Ukraine has a unitary state, its mechanisms are malfunctioning. As will be shown in the following chapters, the diverse historical backgrounds of different regions, post-Soviet economic problems, animosity related to language and its reflections in the media have prevented the complete unification of Ukrainian society. As a result, state-building efforts were

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[9] Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 1.

[10] See; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 2006); Anthony D. Smith, 'Ethnic Identity and Territorial Nationalism in Comparative Perspective' in *Thinking Theoretically About Soviet Nationalities. History and Comparison in the Study of the USSR*, Alexander J. Motyl (ed.), (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

followed by those aimed at nation building, yet as a result of the difficulties faced, the creation of a political community failed, to a certain extent.

It is argued that the invasion and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 strengthened the Ukrainian national consciousness and contributed to the nation building efforts in the country as it continued along a path of reforms following *Euromaidan*. It is also argued that the Crimean Tatar resistance against Russia helped to mobilise national sentiment, and it has been highlighted that the Russian invasion of the Crimean Peninsula had an impact on relations between the Ukrainian State and the Crimean Tatars, with Crimean Tatar nationalism and patriotism triggering also Ukrainian nationalism and patriotism. The struggle of the Crimean Tatars after the 2014 invasion and annexation to reclaim their homeland is said to have caused a shift in the Ukrainian nation building process and in the discourse of policy makers. In other words, it is possible to defend the idea that the Crimean Tatar resistance to the Russian occupation was perceived and used as a symbolic fact by the Ukrainian authorities to trigger a national feeling, and this also caused a shift in Ukrainian-Crimean Tatar relations. It is from this perspective that the place and role of the Crimean Tatars in Ukrainian nation building is discussed, highlighting also the perspective of the Crimean Tatars to the mentioned shift.

Disunity is the leading problem in today's Ukraine, where social and political unity is lacking as a result of the different historical experiences in various regions.[11] The reform process after *Euromaidan*, as in the pre-*Euromaidan* period, was interrupted

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[11] John-Paul Himka, "The History behind the Regional Conflict in Ukraine," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 16(1), (2015): 129-136.

due to the fragmented character of post-Soviet Ukraine. As Kuzio underlines, nation building is a process in which states have to proceed very carefully because "nationhood generates [the] collective power" necessary to maintain a state.[12] This view indicates a need to analyse Ukrainian nationhood and markers of the Ukrainian nation to identify who is Ukrainian and who is not, although it is also necessary to analyse what makes Ukrainianness the preferred identity for Ukrainian citizens of different ethnic backgrounds.

The Ukrainian state inherited a fragmented society following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and as a result, there was no political unity in society. As was observed in the other post-Soviet states, the building of a state of Ukraine was the first priority, although this process and its successes and failures fall outside the scope of this study. That said, it is clear that the creation of social harmony and solidarity among the people and the establishment of national unity in Ukraine was the responsibility of the Ukrainian State. As Kuzio suggests, it is better to refer to the process as the building of a 'state-nation' rather than a 'nation-state',[13] for two reasons: first, the state-nation concept underlines the inexistence of a modern united nation in post-Soviet Ukraine; and second, it highlights the role of the state institution of Ukraine in the nation building process, which is important to keep in mind.

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[12] Taras Kuzio, "The National Factor in Ukraine's Quadruple Transition," *Contemporary Politics* 6(2), (2000): 143-163.

[13] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 9.

Ukraine is a state that was not established on ethnic principles, and so every resident of Ukraine had the right to take Ukrainian citizenship.[14] This may sound overly civic and liberal, however this can also be construed as a misfortune of Ukraine. There have been a number of debates on the ethnic divisions in Ukrainian society. However, as Pilkington has underlined, in the case of Russians who migrated from different parts of the former Soviet Union to Russia, having the same ethnicity was not enough to keep people with different life experiences and social memories together. Her book demonstrates clearly that despite sharing the same ethnicity, the different experiences and migrations were followed by identity problems.[15] Recent events in Ukraine have shown that it is quite difficult to claim that Ukraine is an ethnically divided society, and it should be remembered that different parts of Ukraine were ruled by Russia, Poland, Austria and Crimean Khanate in different periods in history.

During the invasion of the Crimean Peninsula and the war in Eastern Ukraine, ethnic Russians, ethnic Crimean Tatars and people of many different ethnic backgrounds supported Ukrainian territorial integrity, and it is worth noting the presence of both Russians and Crimean Tatars in the Ukrainian Armed Forces tackling Russian aggression and terrorist attacks. In this regard, terms such as 'civic nationalism' or 'ethnic nationalism' fall short of painting an accurate picture of the divisions in Ukrainian society. To understand the reality of the Ukrainian social landscape, it is

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[14] Graham Smith, Vivien Law, Andrew Wilson, Annette Bohr & Edward Allworth, *Nation-Building in the* Post-Soviet Borderlands: *The Politics of National Identities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 122.

[15] Hillary Pilkington, *Migration Displacement and Identity in Post-Soviet Russia* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

important to understand that these divisions have mainly a historical, cultural or political basis, meaning that the different historical experiences of all Ukrainians in the country should be taken into consideration.

Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that wars and conflicts are significant in the mobilization of national sentiment, and consequently, nation building processes. It is widely accepted in Ukraine that the Russian invasion and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the Russian support of separatism in Eastern Ukraine have had a shocking effect on Ukrainians. In particular, the inability of the Ukrainian army during the invasion and the resistance of the Crimean Tatar national movement against the invasion are often highlighted as deeply influential for Ukrainians. For the last two years, the conflict in Donbass has continued to evolve into a very bloody war, and there are still casualties almost every day. Veterans and martyrs are held up as national heroes of Ukraine, and Ukrainian society is regularly mobilized in support of the army. It can be argued that war and conflict triggered a national sentiment in all segments of society, contributing to the establishment of political unity and the formation of a united nation.

1.2. Methodology

This study makes use of documentary research and in-depth, semi-structured interviews with Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian elites and experts, both in Ukraine and Turkey. The fieldwork for the study and the in-depth interviews were conducted in Ukraine in the Kherson *Oblast* between 25 June and 3 July, 2016 (In addition to

Kherson city, the Genichesk, Partizan, Chongar and Novoaleksiyevka districts of the oblast were visited), and in the city of Kyiv between 10 and 18 August, 2016. In addition, in-depth interviews are conducted in Turkey (during meetings of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars in Eskişehir and Ankara) with the leaders and members of the Crimean Tatar Diaspora. A total of 35 in-depth interviews were conducted during the fieldwork for the study.

The interviews had a semi-structured form, and included questions related to the recent political and social situation in Crimea; the situation of the Crimean Tatars and other internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine; the effects of the invasion of the peninsula and the Donbass region on Ukrainian nationalism; the shift in the policies of the Ukrainian government; and the effects of recent events on the relationship between the Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians.

As a background to the fieldwork in Kherson, the Kherson *Oblast* became an important region for Crimean Tatars after the occupation, with many populating the region upon their return to Crimea in the 1960s after the deportations of 1944. With the occupation of Crimea, the region became politically much more important, being the closest region of Ukraine to the Crimean Peninsula. The headquarters of the embargo against occupant rule in the peninsula was established in Kherson, and the embargo was organised with the support of the Crimean Tatar settlers in the oblast. Accordingly, this region is very crucial to contact ordinary Crimean Tatars and Crimean Tatar elite. The joint declaration by Ukraine and Turkey signed on 9 March, 2016 was a strong indication of the strategic importance of Kherson for the Crimean

Tatars and the regional powers.[16] It is important to note that the Crimean Tatar community in the Kherson *Oblast* were the first of the Crimean Tatars to return after the deportations, and settled in this region after being denied settlement rights on the Crimean Peninsula after the 1960s by the Soviet administration.

In addition to Kherson, Kyiv, as the capital of Ukraine, has always hosted significant numbers of Crimean Tatars. The deported national leaders and activists gathered in Kyiv where they found room to improve their lobbying activities following the 2014 invasion and the annexation of Crimea, with Ukrainians also giving their support to finding a solution to the Crimean Tatar issue, with many research centres and associations established by Ukrainian experts having been opened.

The interviews conducted in Turkey took advantage of the large Crimean Tatar community living in Turkey's capital, Ankara, including a number of leaders of international Crimean Tatar organizations, who were approached with in-depth interviews to understand their views, projects, perceptions and thoughts related to the shift in Ukrainian discourse. Aside from the Crimean Tatars, there is also a small community of Ukrainians in Ankara. Interviews were conducted with members of this small community, which maintains contact with Crimean Tatar organisations and Turkish authorities

Being a Crimean Tatar and speaking the Crimean Tatar language helped me in my interviews, both in Turkey and in Ukraine, and helped me also to gain the trust of the

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[16] "Ukrayna ile Türkiye arasında ortak bildiri," QHA , Accessed March 11, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/ukrayna-ile-turkiye-arasinda-ortak-bildiri/143450/ .

interviewees. Furthermore, my knowledge of the feelings and perceptions of Crimean Tatars towards the actors in recent events helped me to establish these interviews on a rational basis. That said, my background was at times also a disadvantage, particularly in interviews with politically active respondents.

Interviews were chosen as the main data-gathering method in this thesis as the best way of gaining an understanding of the real feelings and thoughts of people without any intermediary elements. Additionally, as the subject of this thesis is a very hot topic, having first-hand information and having the chance to see the real situation in the field is very important. That said, this method has some weaknesses. As a result of political sensitivities in the region, people were, from time to time, reluctant to share their ideas and thoughts, and would sometimes stay silent. As an outsider, building trust took time in some interviews, although my ethnic background did help in building trust with the interviewees.

Due to the Russian annexation, it was not possible to carry out fieldwork in Crimea, and so all information related to the current situation in Crimea was obtained through the interviews carried out in Kyiv and Kherson *Oblast*. As many of the interviews were in close touch with their relatives in Crimea, and some of them were visiting them regularly, it was possible to keep abreast of the current situation in the region.

The interviewees expressed clearly that the security of people in Crimea was a significant problem, in that there is clear proof that those who oppose Russian rule, especially members of the Crimean Tatar National movement, are under strict

surveillance and oppression. We were told that it is dangerous to travel in the region, particularly in areas where the military conflicts are continuing. The 'new border' between Ukraine and Russia in the Armyansk, Chaplinka and Chongar regions is also a politically sensitive area, and even though there are currently no military conflicts in the region, we were warned to be cautious.

1.3. Organisation of Thesis

This thesis is set out in six chapters. In this introductory chapter the research question and methodology are presented, along with introductory information related to the topic. The second chapter provides a brief history of the region with focus on the geography and the economic and military importance of the Crimean Peninsula. The history of the residents of the region is covered in the third chapter, mapping the origins of the peoples of the Crimean Peninsula, with specific emphasis on Crimean Tatars, and the demographic change witnessed in the region as a result of Soviet and then Russian policies is discussed. The fourth chapter describes the nation building process in Ukraine up until 2014, while in Chapter Five, focus is on the nation building efforts in the post-2014 period. The sixth and final chapter of the thesis makes an overall analysis on the fieldwork data and draws conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

A PENINSULA IN THE BLACK SEA

AND ITS UNCHANGING SIGNIFICANCE: CRIMEA

The Crimean Peninsula is located on one of the most important trade routes between the old continents. As a result of its strategic location, regional powers long sought to control the peninsula to increase their power in the Black Sea region, and thus, the importance of the region was maintained for centuries. The peninsula is still a key factor in the regional politics and economy of the region, with its location being the main driver of the political struggle. To understand the politics of the region it is necessary to take a brief look over the geographical, economic and the military importance of the peninsula, all of which have had a direct influence on its political importance.

One of the aims of this chapter is to show how the military and economic importance of the peninsula have for centuries remained unchanged. Explaining briefly the history of the peninsula requires an analysis of its significance over time, and an explanation of the recent events in the region. Although it is not possible to chart the history of the peninsula in any detail in a single chapter, some historical milestones and turning points in its history are underlined. A further objective in this chapter is to explain the geographical characteristics of the peninsula and of northern Black Sea region, and also to provide a summary of the peninsula in the economic history of the

region. Then, the significance of the peninsula in the military and political history of the region is addressed, with focus on its geographical significance rather than the history of its people. In other words, this chapter underlines the vital place of the peninsula in regional politics, independently of the peoples of the region.

2.1. Geographical significance of the peninsula in the region

Crimea is a peninsula located in the northern Black Sea, and is connected to continental Ukraine with three narrow passes. The peninsula spans 27,000 km^2, and as a result of its size, is one of the most important geographical land masses in the Black Sea. Crimea, particularly its northern region, is relatively lower than the Caucasus and the Southern Black Sea. As one can see from Figure 2.1, the only significant geographical shape in Crimea is the southern mountain chain that runs parallel to Black Sea, which is generally lower than 1000 meters. All of the other parts of the Crimean Peninsula are covered by plains.[17]

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[17] Paul R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 5.
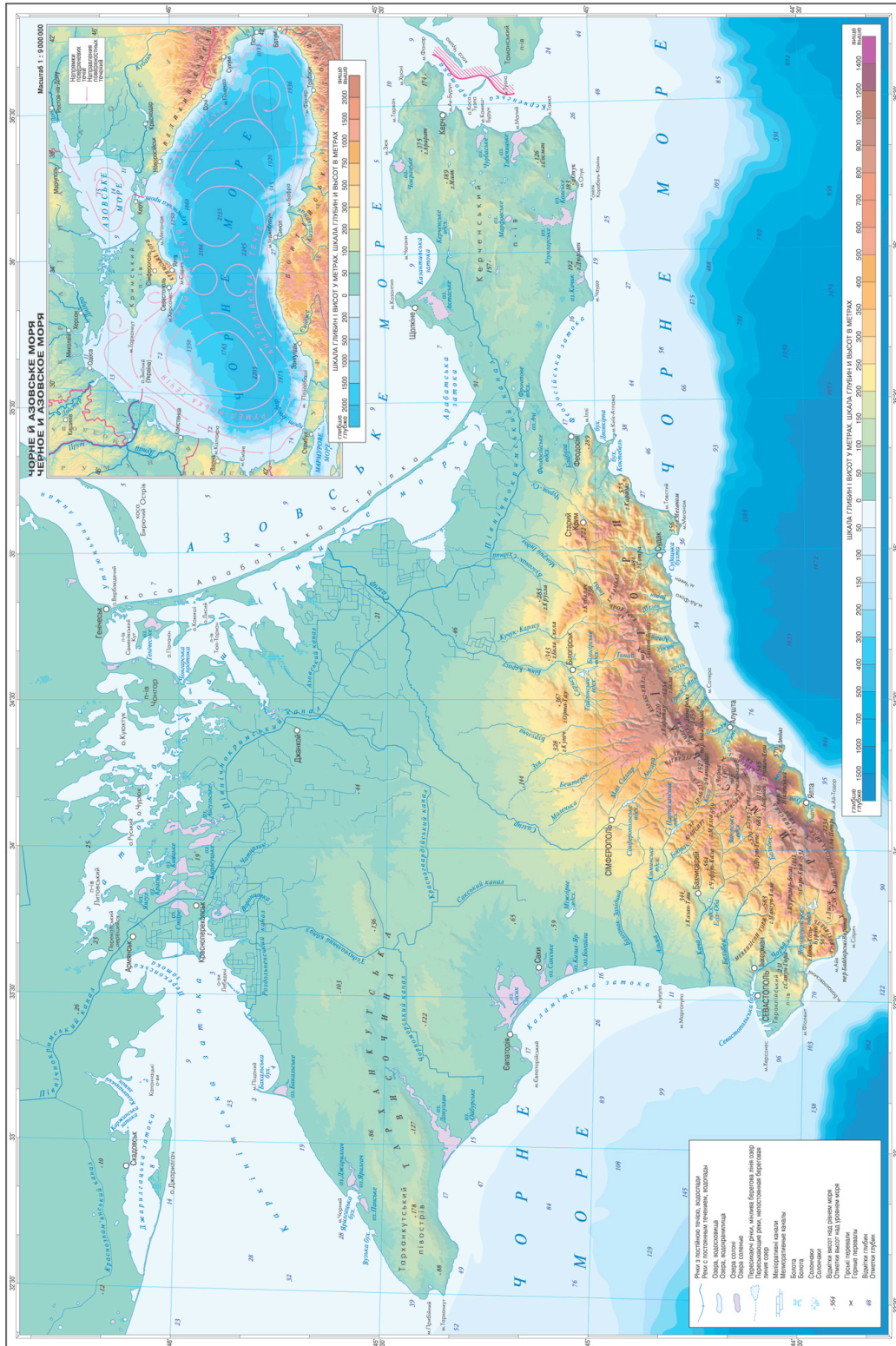
Figure 2.1: Physical Map of Crimea[18]

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[18] "Физическая карта. Черное и Азовское моря", Украинские учебники, accessed June 15, 2016, http://ukrmap.su/ru-gc/241.html .

The geographical character of southern Ukraine is very similar to that of the Crimean Peninsula. The lands that stretch to today's Kazakhstan were known as the Kipcakh Steppe in history, named after their nomadic residents. This vast steppe was one of the most important migration routes in human history, and was ruled by nomadic tribes for centuries. As well as being flat, southern Ukraine is host to the largest expanses of *chernozem* (black-soil) in the world, which makes its agricultural potential very important in the international grain trade.[19]

The Crimean Peninsula is also very important in the commerce of the region, due in no small respect to the Kerch Strait. The Don River, which is a key waterway for Russia, extends to the Azov Sea, although the only access to the international trade routes is through the Kerch Strait. In addition to this, Dnipro River, which is the most crucial waterway in today's Ukraine, reaches the Black Sea via Kherson city. In short, the Crimean Peninsula maintains a controlling position related to these commercial routes, as can be seen in Figure 2.1.

Thanks to a favourable climate and fertile soil, the Crimean Peninsula has always prospered in agriculture and animal husbandry. The wheat production and husbandry in the north of the peninsula still maintain an important position in the economy of the region, while horticulture, bee keeping and fishing are the primary economic

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[19] Ukraine has one-third of the world's rich black-soil. See United States Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Productivity and Efficiency in Russia and Ukraine: Building on a Decade of Reform*, by Stephan Osborne and Michael A. Trueblood, Agricultural Report No. 813 (Washington DC, 2002), 1. http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aer-agricultural-economic-report/aer813.aspx .

sectors on the Black Sea coast. Furthermore, the mild climate on the peninsula has turned the region into a popular touristic centre.[20]

2.2. Economic Significance of the Peninsula throughout History

The favourable geography and climate of the region had a marked influence on the local economy, which also affected the changing faith of its people. Located at the heart of the old continents and at the junction of a number of migration routes, the peninsula has taken an important role in the economy of the region. The position of the peninsula makes it an attractive crossing point over the open sea, with the port of *Sinope* (today's *Sinop*) in *Anatolia* and other Crimean ports developing as key commercial centres in the Black Sea since antiquity.[21]

The Greek and Byzantine settlement in *Chersonesos*, located close to Sevastopol (Crimean Tatar: *Aqyar*), and *Theodosia* (Crimean Tatar: *Kefe*, Russian: *Feodosia*), established in the 6th century BC, were very important trade centres, and were colonised by Greeks who hoped to gain access to the wealth of Crimea, the Kipchakh Steppe and the Northern forests, which were linked to the south by important rivers. The trade of the Kievan Rus', after hundreds of years, was still based on these rivers

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[20] "2013 Yılında Kırım'a 5 Milyon 903 Bin Turist Geldi" QHA, Accessed May 18, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/turizm/2013-yilinda-kirim-a-5-milyon-903-bin-turist-geldi/130421/ .

[21] Owen Doonan, "Exploring Community in the Hinterland of a Black Sea Port" in *Surveying the Greek Chora: Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective*, eds. Pia Guldager Bilde & Vladimir F. Stolba (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 49.

and their links to important centres in the region.[22] Large amounts quantities of wine, wheat, timber, fur, ember, game, etc. were being sold in the Crimean ports,[23] with *Theodosia* especially preserving its importance for a very long time. Venetians controlled this colony as a major trade centre in the Black Sea and the Byzantine trade, and were followed by the Genovese.[24]

The climate of the Crimean area of the Azov Sea has always been favourable for agriculture, and as a result, the nomadic tribes thrived in animal husbandry in the region. Wheat was produced as the basic bread crop in Crimea in antiquity,[25] but aside from grain production, the peninsula had an important place in fishing and fish processing activities of the Black Sea. It is interesting to note that in the 2nd century BC, *Chersonesos* was home to fish salting vats measuring 2000 cubic meters – significantly larger than the largest complexes in the Western Mediterranean, which

[22] Nicholas Riasanovsky and Mark D. Steinberg, *Rusya Tarihi: Başlangıçtan Günümüze...* (İstanbul: İnkılap Kitap Baskı Tesisleri), 39-48; Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime*, 2nd ed. (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 29-31.

[23] Vadim A. Kutajsov, "The Chora of Kerkinitis" in *Surveying the Greek Chora: Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective*, eds. Pia Guldager Bilde & Vladimir F. Stolba (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 141; Joseph C. Carter, "Towards a Comparative Study of *Chorai* West and east: metapontion and Chersonesos" in *Surveying the Greek Chora: Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective*, eds. Pia Guldager Bilde & Vladimir F. Stolba (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 179; Alexander V. Gavrilov, "Theodosia and its *Chora* in antiquity " in *Surveying the Greek Chora: Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective*, eds. Pia Guldager Bilde & Vladimir F. Stolba (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 249.

[24] Donald M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 216.

[25] Kutajsov, 141; Tat'jana N. Smekalova & Sergej L. Smekalov, "Ancient roads and Land Division in the *Chora* of the European Bosporos and Chersonesos on the evidence of air Photographs, mapping and Surface Surveys" in *Surveying the Greek Chora: Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective*, eds. Pia Guldager Bilde & Vladimir F. Stolba (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 216.

measured just over 1000 cubic meters.[26] The size of the Crimean economy and the complexes established on the Crimean Peninsula were a reflection not only of the economy, but also the diet and daily life in the region for centuries.

The key actors in the Black Sea and Crimean economies did not change until the arrival of the nomadic tribes from Central Asia. The 5th and 6th centuries saw the arrival of Huns, Avars, Khazars, Pechenegs, Oghuz and Bulgars from the deeps of the steppe who started to populate the Crimean Peninsula and regions to the north until the advent of Mongol rule.[27] The Golden Horde, as one of the strongest empires in the world at the time, became one of the most important actors in Black Sea trade and in the economy of the region in the 13th century.

The Genghis Empire, which was the largest state in history, encompassed the entire Silk Road, bringing all commerce in the period under the control of Genghis Khan. After the collapse of his great empire, control of different parts of the trade routes was divided among his heirs,[28] and in the hands of the Golden Horde, Crimea had an important role as a hub along this ancient route. The Golden Horde, as the heirs of Genghis Khan in the northern steppe, had well-defined goals and methods in the Black Sea trade, and it would be fair to say that they established a Black Sea policy that included cooperation with the Italian merchants of the region and keeping the

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[26] Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen "Introduction" in *Ancient Fishing and Fish Processing in the Black Sea Region*, ed. Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2005), 16.

[27] For demographic information on the Turkic tribes settled in the region before the Crimean Khanate see Akdes Nimet Kurat, IV-XVIII. Yüzyıllarda Karadeniz Kuzeyindeki Türk Kavimleri ve Devletleri (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1972).

[28] Virgil Ciocîltan, *Mongols and the Black Sea Trade in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 61-280.

straits free. With their arrival on the peninsula and *Soldaia* (today *Sudaq*), the Mongols took over this important trade centre, and *Soldaia–Sinope* became the most direct route between the peninsula and Asia Minor. This route also integrated with the trade route crossing Asia Minor via *Sivas* and *Kayseri* that went on to Syria and Iraq – both important centres of trade in the Fertile Crescent. The destruction of this crucial trade centre was a grave blow to the Black Sea economy, and highlighted further the significance of the Crimean Peninsula in the region. In the years that followed, this port and ancient *Theodosia,* under its new name *Caffa,* preserved their major role in the economy of the Golden Horde being fed by the Silk Road.[29]

The Golden Horde collapsed after two centuries of rule in the Kipchakh Steppe,[30] leaving behind smaller khanates claiming the heritage of the Mongol Empire that offered proof of the importance of trade relations for the khans in the steppe. These successor states survived not in the open steppe, as might have expected, but found shelter in the commercial centres of the Golden Horde. Even the names of these khanates come from these commercial headquarters in the steppe, including Crimea, Astrakhan and Kazan.[31] The longest lived of these khanates was the one established in the Crimean Peninsula – the heart of the Black Sea economy – by Hacı Geray in 1441–1442.[32]

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[29] Ibid., 141-143, 156.

[30] A. Yu. Yakubovskiy, *Altın Ordu ve Çöküşü* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınlar, 2000).

[31] Ciocîltan, 19.

[32] Halil İnalcık, "Kırım Hanlığı", *İslam Ansiklopedisi*, (Ankara: Türk Diyanet Vakfı, 2002).
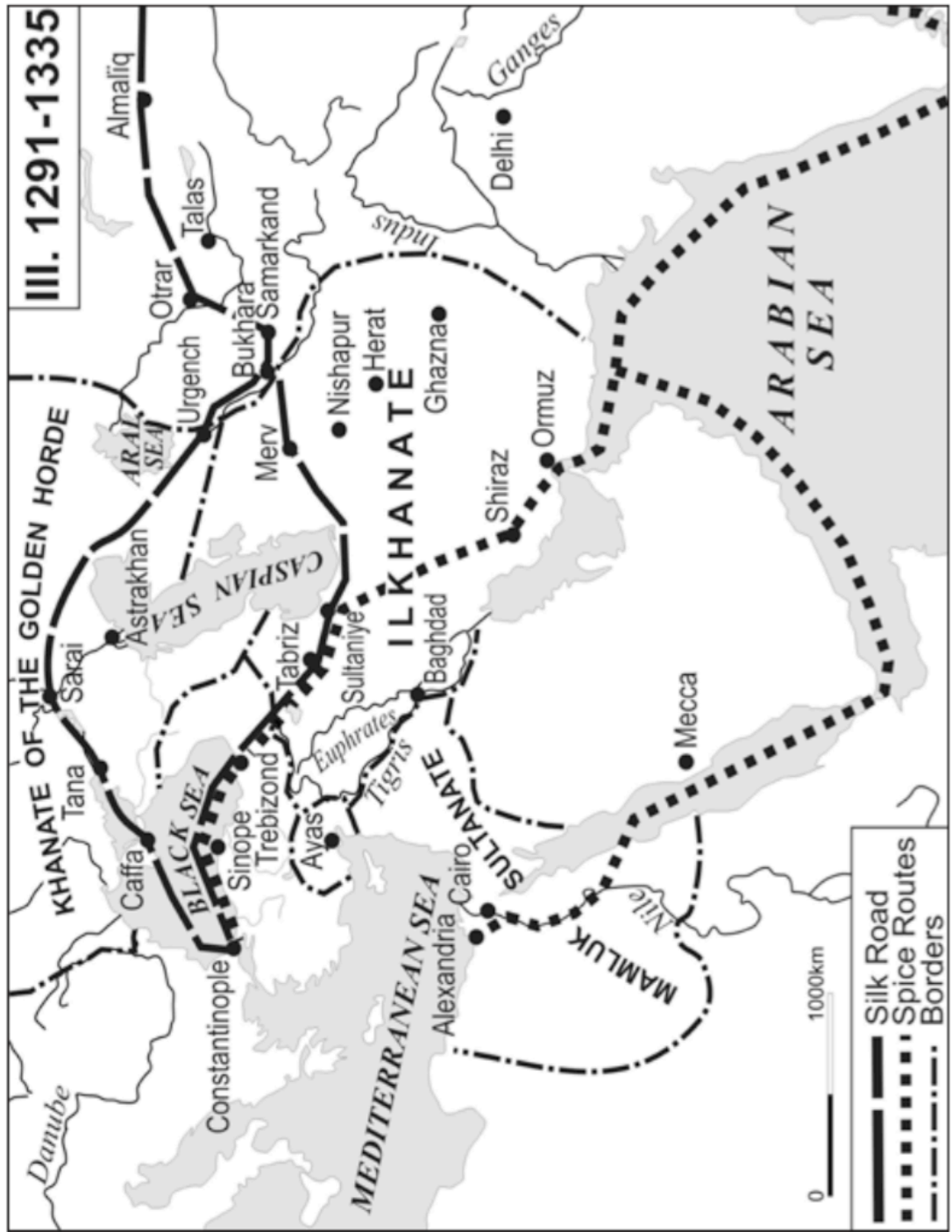
Figure 2.2: Trade routes, 1291-1335.[33]

After the demise of the Golden Horde, the Crimean Khanate was one of the most important actors in Eastern Europe between the 15th and 18th centuries. During the

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[33] Ciocîltan, 340.

reign of Meñli Geray, who superseded Hacı Geray, the Crimean Khanate and Ottoman Empire formed a special economic and political alliance.[34] This cooperation between the *Bağçasaray*[35] and İstanbul was a new phase in the economy of the Black Sea, although during this new era, the economy of the Crimean peninsula did not change. As a hub for the flourishing north-south trade, *Caffa* was of vital importance for both the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Empire in Black Sea commerce.[36]

In order to understand the size of the economy in the Black Sea and the Crimean Peninsula, there are some statistics that are worth noting. A calculation made by Halil İnalcık on the basis of Ottoman tax registers that was supported by Dariusz Kolodziejczyk[37] who used Russian and Polish sources suggests that the number of Slavic slaves transported across the Black Sea between 1500 and 1700 might may have approached the 2 million marks, surpassing the number of black slaves transported across the Atlantic in the same period.[38] During that time, in addition to

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[34] It is important to note that Crimean Khanate continued its own diplomatic relations in the region, and Crimean Khans were not treated as other vassal rulers. For detailed information see Giray Saynur Derman, Kırım Hanlığı'nın Yıkılışı, "Yıkılışın Osmanlı Devleti Üzerindeki Tesirleri ve Avrupa Diplomasisindeki Değişiklikler" in *Türkiye Ukrayna İlişkileri: Kazak Dönemi (1500-1800)*, ed. Volodımir Melnik, Mehmet Alpargu, Yücel Öztürk, Ferhat Turanlı, and Muhammed Bilal Çelik (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2015), 115. In addition to this Crimean Khanate continued to take taxes from Russia and Poland-Lithuania until the 18th Century. For detailed information see Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th – 18th Century) A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 34, 55, 59. When the Genovese colony surrendered in front of the Ottoman army, and the Ottomans established province in this region, special relations between these two states entered into a new phase, see Kolodziejczyk, 21.

[35] Capital city of the Crimean Khanate. One can also find as; *Bakhchisarai*.

[36] Kolodziejczyk, 17.

[37] Dariusz Kolodziejczyk is a Polish historian and professor of University of Warsaw. He is a student of Halil İnalcık and specializes on the history of diplomacy, history of Poland and Ottoman History. For his CV see; http://en.ihuw.pl/institute/about/academic-staff/prof-dr-hab-dariusz-kolodziejczyk .

[38] Kolodziejczyk, xiv.

slaves, wine, vinegar, vessels, livestock, salt, grain, flour, honey, fats, olive oil, soap, fish, rice, clay, fruits and many other valuable commodities passed through the port of Caffa as imports and exports.[39] The Crimean Peninsula and the northern lands of the Crimean Khanate were very important for the Ottoman Empire for another reason, being a rich source of grain, livestock and dairy products for the Ottoman capital as a result of the significant black soil reserves.[40] This vibrant economy at the core of the old trade routes coming from the Far East and passing through Asia Minor and Mesopotamia fed the Ottoman and Crimean economies for a very long time.

In the 18th century, the Black Sea came to a turning point. The collapsing Ottoman Empire and Crimean Khanate were losing hegemony in the region, and the power gap was filled by the Russian Empire. In addition to this, the Turkic-Islamic monopoly and the buffer zone preventing the northern powers from accessing the southern commerce both collapsed, and the annexation of the peninsula was the key event for the Russian Empire, known as 'the empire of lands', providing it with access to the busy maritime trade in the south. With the decreasing power of the Khanate, all of the steppes in the northern Black Sea and the core of the Khanate on the Crimean Peninsula were conquered by Russian Empire in 1783.[41]

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[39] Halil İnalcık, *Sources and Studies on the Ottoman Black Sea Vol. I: The Customs Register of Caffa, 1487-1490*, ed. Victor Ostapchuk (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 121-132, 143-150.

[40] Derman, 116.

[41] Alan Fisher, *Kırım Tatarları* (İstanbul: Selenge Yayınları, 2009), 86. Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 276.

In 1783, the Russian Empire under the rule of Catherine II annexed the Crimean Peninsula, and the region began to be reshaped according to Russian imperial plans, with trade routes of the region re-designed according to the needs of the Russian Empire. A small Crimean Tatar village at the outrun of the Dnipro River, which is an important waterway that extends to the city of Kyiv, was renamed Kherson, and was designated as the centre of Russian trade. The old quadrangle between Caffa, Trabzon, Sinop and İstanbul fell to ruin, largely in accordance with the priorities of the new ruler, but also due to geographical concerns. The mountainous south of the peninsula was geographically separated, and as a result, the once key ports in the south became more connected with Anatolia. The Russian administration, looking to break these ties between the peninsula and the Ottoman lands, sought then to integrate this important outpost with the vast Russian Empire. Consequently, Black Sea trade shifted towards Kherson and Odessa, as the largest modern Black Sea ports. In parallel to this shift, a new modern port for the new Russian Black Sea fleet was established next to the old Crimean Tatar village of *Aqyar,* and the old trade hub started to evolve into a military base.[42]

This shift continued in the years that followed, with Russian Black Sea trade being carried out through the ports of Odessa and Kherson, and entering into the 19th century, Russian infrastructure investments were increased. After Russia's defeat in the Crimean War (1853–1856) due to inferior communication and transportation infrastructure, new rail lines were laid between the ports and the most important cities, and so by the middle of the 19th century the ports of Kherson and Odessa were

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[42] Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 162-163.

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handling nearly two-thirds of Russia's grain trade, and almost 90 percent of its wheat exports. These young ports evolved into busy centres of commerce under the protection of the Russian Black Sea fleet, harboured on the Crimean Peninsula.[43]

The Bolshevik Revolution was one of the most important events in world history, and its revolutionary changes and affects are still remembered today. The obligatory transition to the Marxist economic doctrine was very painful for every Soviet citizen. At the time the Bolshevik Revolution began, Crimea had been under Russian rule for about 150 years, and its economy and institutions had undergone a long process of transition and adaptation to the Russian Empire. The 1917 Revolution meant a whole new transition process for the region, which had to adapt to the collectivisation and new economic programmes of the Soviet system. For ordinary farmers and villagers, the new Marxist doctrine was devastating. All private means of production were nationalised and the market was taken under control through mass mobilisation and force.[44] In the years following World War II (WWII), Soviet Union evolved into an industrial superpower, although this revolutionary economic shift was not an easy process for ordinary people.[45]

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the transition to a capitalist economy meant a new transition for the Crimean economy. By the 1990s, the Crimean Peninsula was

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[43] Ibid., 195-200.

[44] R. W. Davies, "Introduction: From Tsarism to NEP" in *From Tsarism to the New Economic Policy*, ed. R. W. Davies (London: Macmillan Academic and Professional LTD, 1990), 1-24; Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-First Century* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 123-149.

[45] Service, 169-274.

no longer a centre of trade, being focused more on tourism due to its natural beauty. Accordingly, its export and import volume today has little to compare with ancient and medieval times as a result of the allocations and regulations of the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. That said, statistics show that tourism has retained importance in the Ukrainian GDP.

According to official data, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea made $904,986,200 of exports in 2013.[46] In addition to exports from the peninsula, the most important source of income of the region was tourism and recreation, as the leading tourism destination of both the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire. As a result, many *dacha*s[47] and palaces were built on the peninsula during the Soviet era, as well as many sanatoriums and spas, which at the time were the main tourism facilities in the region, and newly established hostels, hotels and large tourism facilities served to increase its importance. After the occupation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, the Ukrainian State Statistics Service quantified its tourism facilities by excluding the facilities in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. According to official data, Ukraine lost 938 hotels and similar establishments (43,600 beds) and 901 specialised establishments (137,000 beds) after the occupation in 2014.[48]

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[46] "Exports-Imports of Commodities, 2013, by Regions of Ukraine", State Statistic Service of Ukraine, Accessed June 18, 2016, http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2013/zd/oet/oet_e/oet1213_e.html .

[47] *Dacha* is the name of traditional Russian country houses and villas.

[48] "Collective Tourism Establishments," State Statistic Service of Ukraine, Accessed June 18, 2016, http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2013/tur/zr_e.htm .
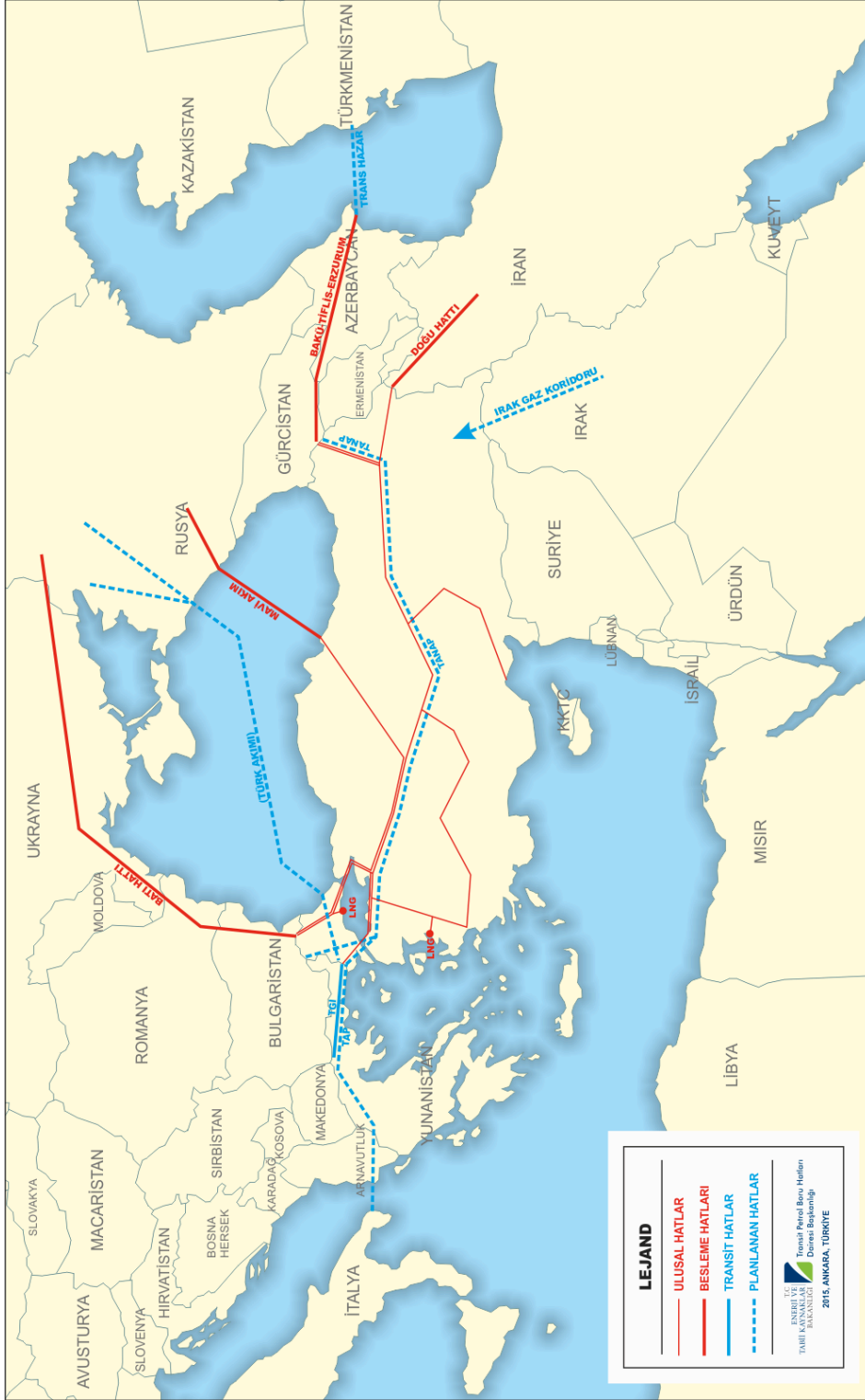
Figure 2.3: International Pipelines and Pipeline Projects around Black Sea.[49]

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[49] "Uluslararası Boru Hattı ve Boru Hattı Projeleri," Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, Accessed June 17, 2016, http://www.enerji.gov.tr/tr-TR/Sayfalar/Uluslararasi-Boru-Hatlari-ve-Boru-Hatti-Projeleri .

In addition to tourism and trade, Crimea plays another role in the Black Sea economy that is based on its geographical position. In the 20th century, industrial production was deeply dependent on oil, and oil producers transported their valuable product to consumers via pipelines, which became known as the modern Silk Road. Russia is one of the largest energy exporters in the world, and after the collapse of the Soviet Union oil became the Russian Federation's most important export. Russia transfers oil to the West and Turkey via the Black Sea and Ukraine, and the Crimean Peninsula is at the heart of this trade, and so it is very important in the security of these pipelines. Accordingly, the Crimean Peninsula plays a key role in both the construction and security of Russia's Black Sea pipeline projects.

2.3. Crimean Peninsula and its Significance in the Military History of the Region

In addition to its role in regional commerce and the economy, the Crimean Peninsula has also had a military function in its history. In ancient times the region was colonised by merchant tribes, each of which had to protect their own assets. During Byzantine times the Crimean Peninsula was an outpost, controlling the northern borders of the empire, and in the struggle for the control of the northern trade routes against the Pechenegs, Khazars and Bulgars, Crimea was an important centre for the Byzantine Empire. Attempts were made to control the region from Constantinople,

utilising troops from different parts of the empire, which was the predominant means of rule in the 9th and 10th centuries.[50]

The Crimean Khanate, as the state of the Crimean Tatars, established its political and military base on the peninsula, from where it ruled the northern Black Sea for three centuries. Prior to that, it had always been predominantly an important trade hub and strategic centre, as the political and military centres of the Byzantines, Venice and Genoa were in different places. The Crimean Khanate retained its core on the peninsula, divided from the Kipchak Steppe by many lakes and seas, and so it had chance to oppress its northern neighbours without suffering any major human or economic losses. Thanks to its geographical significance, Crimea has long been a special base at the heart of the Black Sea, protected from the chaos of the steppe.

The Crimean Peninsula was high on the list of priorities in Ottoman policies related to the Black Sea, Balkans and the Caucasus, and even the Middle East, for the same reasons as the Russian interest in the peninsula. Crimea is the heart of the region, and the owner of this land has always had an upper hand in regional politics. The Crimean Khanate, as the ruler of the peninsula for some three hundred years by keeping the northern states away from the Black Sea, was able to keep watch over the northern Balkans and the Caucasus, and assisted the Ottoman armies in many different regions as a crucial partner of the Empire. This cooperation with the Ottomans was possible thanks to the strategic advantages offered by the peninsula,

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[50] Alexandru Madgearu, *Byzantine Military Organization on the Danube, 10th-12th Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 11-25, 45-51.

and so the collapse of the Khanate meant not only the loss of an ally, but also a significant strategical hit to the Ottoman Empire in the north.[51]

The Crimean armies were deployed constantly to support Ottoman army campaigns in the Balkans, and even in Persia, [52] and were made up of semi-nomadic people of the steppe and the peninsula, who served as light cavalry in the Ottoman army.[53] Their responsibilities in this regard were to protect the Ottoman hinterland in the north, and through the use of hit and run tactics, to weaken the enemy. In addition to the main campaigns, the Khanate launched seasonal raids into the northern regions and Eastern Europe, keeping those areas under control of the *Bağçasaray* and Istanbul.[54]

The Russian annexation of Crimea in 1783 changed the political landscape of the region dramatically,[55] with the centre of Black Sea trade and the political centre of the region coming under the control of the Russian tsars. In the second year of Russian rule in Crimea, a famous Russian naval base was established in

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[51] For more information on the importance of the Crimean Khanate in the Ottoman economy and policy in the northern Black Sea, and results of the collapse of the Crimean Khanate for the Ottoman Empire , see; Fisher, 60-62; Derman, 109-151.

[52] Halil İnalcık, *Devlet-i 'Aliyye: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu Üzerine Araştırmalar – III: Köprülüler Devri* (İstanbul: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları, 2015), 251-274, 281-288.

[53] Fisher, 60-62.

[54] Nuri Kavak, "Kırım Hanlığı'nın Sosyo-Ekonomik Yapısı İçinde Yağma Akınlarının Yeri" in *Türkiye Ukrayna İlişkileri: Kazak Dönemi (1500-1800)*, ed. Volodımir Melnik, Mehmet Alpargu, Yücel Öztürk, Ferhat Turanlı, and Muhammed Bilal Çelik (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2015), 383-385.

[55] For the most detailed story of the annexation of the Crimea, see Alan Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea (1772-1783)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

Sevastopol,[56] and by September 1854, 70,000 Russian soldiers and sailors were deployed on the Crimean Peninsula.[57] Also in 1783, Russia established a protectorate over the Kingdom of Georgia and built a military highway linking Georgia with the Russian territory.[58]

It should be kept in mind that Crimea was a stronghold at the edge of the steppe, and that the ruler of this centre was charged with keeping the northern states under economic and political pressure. The Russian Empire in less than a century managed to colonise almost all of Central Asia after the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula.[59] After reaching the gates of İstanbul, and following an intervention by the British Empire, the Russian army forced the Ottomans to sign the Treaty of San Stefano (*Ayastefanos Antlaşması*) in 1878.[60] It should be noted that the intention here is not to claim that these incidents were a cause and effect relationship, in that the aim is rather to show the bigger picture, and to demonstrate how the Russian Empire gave itself elbow room with the annexing of the Crimean Peninsula.

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[56] Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 276.

[57] David R. Stone, *A Military History of Russia: From Ivan the Terrible to the War in Chechnya* (London: Prager Security International, 2006), 120.

[58] Ibid., 85.

[59] For a detailed story of Russian campaign in Central Asia, see Alex Marshall, *The Russian General Staff and Asia, 1800-1917* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Francis Henry Skrine, Edward Denison Ross, *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and the Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

[60] Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya: XVIII. Yüzyıl Sonundan Kurtuluş Savaşına Kadar Türk-Rus İlişkileri* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2011).

The importance of the region was proven once again in WWII and the aftermath. The crucial geographical position of Crimea aroused the interest of Hitler and the Nazi commanders, and the following German campaign in Ukraine and Crimea caught the Soviet Union off guard.[61] According to Hitler, Crimea was to be the German Gibraltar in the Black Sea, while the peninsula was seen as perfect for a German military base for the oppression of Turkey and the rest of the Black Sea region. In addition, Crimea was considered for a possible Soviet military base to address the German control of the Romanian oilfields, which was to be prevented at all cost.[62] The Third Reich, after reaching Stalingrad and Moscow, took over the rule of Crimea between 1942–1944, but later, following a Soviet counter attack and victories against the German war machine, Crimea was taken back from the hands of the Nazis. Crimea thus became a border region with the Western Alliance and NATO, and so the peninsula has always been a highly prioritised location for the Soviet military. The navy, harboured in Sevastopol, and its closeness to the Bosphorus has ensured its importance to Moscow until the present day.[63]

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, Ukraine fell into dispute with Russia, especially on the issue of Sevastopol and the continental shelf in the Azov Sea. Furthermore, Ukraine inherited a huge nuclear arsenal from the Soviet Union (much of which had been kept on the Crimean Peninsula), making it one of the largest nuclear powers in the world, and this was of great concern to the

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[61] Nicholas Riasanovsky and Mark D. Steinberg, *Rusya Tarihi: Başlangıçtan Günümüze...* (İstanbul: İnkılap Kitap Baskı Tesisleri), 561.

[62] Fisher, *Kırım Tatarları*, 216-218.

[63] Deborah Sanders, "Maritime Security in the Black Sea: Can Regional Solutions Work?" *European Security* 18(2), 2009, 15-16.

international community. This nuclear problem was negotiated and 'resolved' with the signing of the Budapest Memorandum in 1994 by Ukraine, the United States, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom,[64] in which the parties:

> "…reaffirm[ed] their commitment to Ukraine, in accordance with the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine…"

In addition, the signatory countries:

> "…reaffirm[ed] their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defense or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations…"

With the signing of these pledges, among others, Ukraine became a non-nuclear weapon country, and gave up the nuclear weapons it had inherited from the Soviet Union. The other important aspect of the Memorandum was the signatory countries all pledging to respect the territorial integrity of the newly independent Ukraine (after the bilateral treaty of 1990 between Ukraine and Russia), underlining Crimean Peninsula as an autonomous region. It is apparent, however, that the recent events on the peninsula in 2014 violated the treaty, and the status of Crimea has once again come to the international agenda.[65]

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[64] For the full text of the Budapest Memorandum, see "Budapest Memorandums on Security Assurance, 1994," Council on Foreign Relations, accessed March 25 2016, http://www.cfr.org/nonproliferation-arms-control-and-disarmament/budapest-memorandums-security-assurances-1994/p32484 .

[65] On disputes over the situation of the Budapest Memorandum; Thomas D. Grant, *Aggression Against Ukraine: Territory, Responsibility, and International Law* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 108-110.

The status of the Russian naval base in Sevastopol emerged as another important issue in regional politics. In 1992 the fleet comprised 300 combat ships, 14 nuclear submarines, 300 sea- and land-based planes and helicopters, numerous coastal infrastructures and 67,000 military personnel. This base had been a symbol of the might of the Soviet military, and had been sited in Sevastopol rather than Novorossiysk for both strategic and symbolic reasons.[66] The base had been established after the annexation of the Crimea in 1783 as part of the general military strategy of the Russian Empire, and so the fate of this symbolic base became an important issue after independence.

Sevastopol was ruled under a special regime during the Soviet period, but was brought under the direct control of the Russian Soviet Federalist Socialist Republic (Russian SFSR) after 1948. In 1954, when Crimea was given to the Ukrainian SSR, the region's administration was shared by Moscow and the Crimean ASSR, although the strategically important peninsula and its naval base were ruled directly from Moscow.[67] The situation of the Crimean Peninsula and the Sevastopol Naval Base was raised many times, with the Russian Federation applying diplomatic pressure to take control of, and even take back, the peninsula after 1991. Russia fanned the flames of internal tension between the Crimean Tatars and Russian nationalists, and the threat of Russia's military power was used to force Ukraine into a compromise.[68] Despite the pressure, the Crimean Peninsula managed to maintain its internationally

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[66] Sasse, 225.

[67] Ibid, 229.

[68] For more detailed information on the disputes between Ukraine and Russia, see Sasse, 221-249.

accepted status as part of Ukraine until 26 February, 2014 as an autonomous republic within Ukraine, with Sevastopol ruled directly from Kyiv.

To conclude, the Crimean Peninsula as a result of its significant location, has always maintained an important place in the political agenda of the regional powers, and there is much evidence to prove this. To begin with, the demographic policies applied to the region that will be underlined in the following chapter and its importance in the security and economy of the region are a clear reflection of the value of this strategic location, with further proof being its unchanged situation for centuries. In addition, Russia's ongoing aggressive stance against Ukraine shows that the region maintains its importance still today, which is something that is reflected not only in regional politics, but also on the residents of the peninsula. In the following chapter, efforts will be made to provide a detailed understanding of these reflections.

CHAPTER 3

DEMOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE PENINSULA AND

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CRIMEAN TATAR NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The demographic changes in the Crimean Peninsula in history have resulted from the policies of the 'rulers' in the region. Every state that held sway over the region in history sought to dominate not only regional politics, but also the demography of the peninsula as proof of its existence. In this chapter, the primary objective is to summarise the demographic changes that have occurred on the Crimean Peninsula over time in order to be able to understand the demographic situation as it stands today. This will be followed by a brief analysis of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, which was established and organised by Crimean Tatars, as indigenous people of the peninsula, in reaction to the demographic policies of first, the Russian, and then the Soviet administrations. The national movement of the titular nation of the peninsula is unravelled in this chapter to demonstrate the link between the demographic policies put in place and the Crimean Tatar National Movement.

3.1. Demography of the Crimean Peninsula Prior to the Crimean Khanate

The Crimean Peninsula, as a centre of trade on significant migration routes, has been inhabited by many different civilizations since ancient times. Scythians and

Sarmatians settled in the region between 1000–200 BC,[69] while in the second half of the 6th century BC, Theodosia was established, resulting in colonisation by the Greeks, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Theodosia was a key port in the region, although there were many other smaller Greek settlements around this stronghold. Archaeological surveys have determined the existence of dozens of villages in the area, starting from the coastline and penetrating deep into the peninsula.[70] This broad settlement indicates the presence of a significant Greek population in this region two-and-a-half millennia ago.

In the years that followed, the Roman Empire arrived, with the first garrison of the empire established in Crimea in 64 AD.[71] The Romans held sway over the region for a significant period, to be followed by the Byzantines, who maintained their rule over the peninsula in the 9th and 10th centuries.[72] Then, starting in the 5th and 6th centuries, the peninsula and the regions to the north came to be populated by the Huns, Avars, Khazars, Pechenegs, Oghuz and Bulgars who came from the depths of the steppe.[73] The 13th century saw the empire of Genghis Khan take control of the

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[69] Nicholas Riasanovsky and Mark D. Steinberg, *Rusya Tarihi: Başlangıçtan Günümüze...* (İstanbul: İnkılap Kitap Baskı Tesisleri), 10.

[70] Alexander V. Gavrilov, "Theodosia and its Chora in Antiquity," in *Surveying the Greek Chora: Black Sea Region in a Comparative Perspective*, eds. Pia Guldager Bilde & Vladimir F. Stolba (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 149-272.

[71] Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen, "Introduction," in *Rome and the Black Sea Region: Domination, Romanisation and Resistance* ed. Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen (Gylling: Aarhus University Press, 2006), 9.

[72] Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 31.

[73] For demographic information on the Turkic tribes settled in the region before the Crimean Khanate see Akdes Nimet Kurat, IV-XVIII. Yüzyıllarda Karadeniz Kuzeyindeki Türk Kavimleri ve Devletleri (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1972).

northern Black Sea,[74] and after its demise, the Golden Horde inherited the region and ruled the Crimean Peninsula until its collapse, between 13th–15th centuries.

What emerged in the following period was five new khanates – the Crimean Khanate, the Kazan Khanate, the Sibir Khanate, the Astrakhan Khanate and the Noghai Horde.[75] Of these, the Crimean Khanate endured the longest, becoming one of the most important actors in Western Europe and the Kipchakh Steppe in the northern Black Sea, where it ruled for around two centuries.

3.2. Demographic Situation in the Crimean Khanate

Historians took the name of the Crimean Khanate to refer to the state based on its status as the khanate's political centre after the collapse of the Golden Horde. The Khans of this state claimed to be the true heirs of the Golden Horde, and declared themselves as the sole rulers of the dominion, like the other heirs of the Golden Horde.[76] This is an important point, in that the Khans of the Khanate were all behaving according to this principle, and oppressed their northern neighbours for many years, professing their claim to the heritage of the Golden Horde. As the

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[74] Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 63.

[75] A. Yu. Yakubovskiy, *Altın Ordu ve Çöküşü* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayınları, 2000). 204-219.

[76] To see some examples of the Crimean Khanate's diplomatic documents, Dariusz Kolodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th – 18th Century) A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2011) 529-1001.

political centre of the Crimean Khanate, the Crimean Peninsula was a much sought-after prize as an important centre of political and economic power.[77]

The social structure in the Crimean Khanate is important to note. The Khan of Crimea came from the bloodline of Genghis Khan, and was the highest authority in the state and the head of the army, although their power did not match that of the Ottoman sultans. Khans were elected in the Kurultai, which is an assembly of four *qaraçı* beys who were the leaders or *bey*s of the Shirin, Arghın, Barın and Qıpchaq clans, and other important figures in Crimean politics. The leader of the Shirins was the strongest of the Kurultai and the state after the Khan, and the Khan also had a number of deputies, with the second being the *qalga* and the third the *nureddin*, who also came from the Genghis bloodline and took the authority when the Khan was away on campaigns.[78] The most important centres on the peninsula included *Bağçasaray*, *Aqmescit* (Russian: *Simferopol*), *Kezlev* (Russian: *Yevpatoria*), *Kerç*, *Yalta*, and *Karasubazar* (Russian: *Belogorsk*, Ukrainian: *Bilohirsk*). Of these, *Karasubazar* was the capital city of the Shirins,[79] *Bağçasaray* was where the khans lived and *Aqmescit* (Russian: *Simferopol*) was established for *qalga*. *Suğdaq* and *Kefe*, mentioned in Chapter 2, were the most important ports in the Khanate and had significant importance in Black Sea trade.

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[77] Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 275-277.

[78] Depending on their relations with the khan their place changed in the history. In addition to them, Sicuvut and Manghıt clans also took part and in sometime Mansur and Argın clan lost their importance. See Halil İnalcık, "Kırım Hanlığı" (in "Kırım"), *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: Türk Diyanet Vakfı, 2002) Vol. 25, 455-456.

[79] Alan Fisher, *Kırım Tatarları* (İstanbul: Selenge Yayınları, 2009), 49.

Between 1453 and 1466, as a result of clashes in the steppe, many Tatar clans migrated to the lands of the Crimean Khanate, which strengthened the khanate and increased the Turkic population in the region.[80] Under the rule of the Crimean Khanate, Muslims and non-Muslims lived together on the peninsula for centuries, with *Kefe* in particular being one of the most cosmopolitan areas on the peninsula. The demographic statistics from the 16th century given in the Table 3.1 show that *Kefe, Mangup, İnkerman, Balaqlava, Suğdaq, Kerç, Azaq* and *Taman* were some of the most important coastal centres of the Crimean Khanate, and it is clear that non-Muslim settlers in the region, who had lived on the coasts of Crimea since ancient times, were significant in number on the peninsula in 1542. In addition to these Latin settlers, these centres were also home to Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Circassians and Russians, who were also living in the central regions of Crimea. *Bağçasaray* had Armenian and Greek neighbourhoods that matched the cosmopolitan character of the peninsula,[81] which meant that after the near-four centuries of Turkic and Islamic rule in the Peninsula, the non-Muslim population still made up an important percentage of the population in the 16th century.

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[80] Fisher, 19.

[81] Ömer Bıyık, "Osmanlı Yönetiminde Kırım (1600-1774)" (PhD. Dissertation, Ege Üniversitesi, 2007), 84-87.

Table 3.1. Population of religious groups in some Crimean Coastal centers in 1542[82]

	Muslim, city	Non-Muslim, city	Muslim, rural	Non-Muslim, rural
Kefe	7.419	8.877	-	-
Mangup	180	321	116	1041
İnkerman	194	958	106	3106
Balaqlava	153	711	150	1738
Suğdaq	53	1446	199	4108
Kerç	961	238	245	460
Azaq	3100	285	-	-
Taman[83]	425	-	120	1315
TOTAL	12.485	12.836	936	11.768

Up until the collapse of the Khanate, and for a long time under Russian rule, the peninsula was settled predominantly by Tatars as a result two important incidents. When the Russian Empire conquered Astrakhan, the Noghais living in that region migrated to the lands of the Crimean Khanate, which was a turning point in the demographic history of the peninsula, and according to Ottoman sources, there were 65 Noghai clans under the rule of the Crimean Khans.[84] The second important incident was the ban on the nomadic life style by the *yarlıq*[85] of the Sahib Geray I on the Crimean Peninsula during his reign between 1532-1551.[86] After this period, the

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[82] Yücel Öztürk, *Osmanlı Hakimiyetinde Kefe, 1475-1600* (Ankara: T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı Millî Kütüphane Basımevi, 2000), 193-284.

[83] Taman Peninsula is in the other side of the Kerch Straight and it is in the Krasnodar *Krai* of Russian Federation, today.

[84] Bıyık, 77-82.

[85] *Yarlıq* is a term used for the official documents, diplomatic texts and orders of the Khans of the Crimean Khanate. It is the synonymous of the *ferman* in this context.

[86] Özalp Gökbilgin, *1532-1577 Yılları Arasında Kırım Hanlığı'nın Siyasi Durumu* (Ankara: Atatürk Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1973), 1-41.

Muslim Crimean Tatars maintained a constant and stable population in the peninsula, which had been the aim of the Sahib Geray, and a Crimean Tatar culture gained dominance as a result. The political centres of Crimea like *Bağçasaray*, *Aqmescit* and *Qarasubazar* all had a cosmopolitan character, although the importance of the Crimean Tatar language and the Islamic and Turkic culture was maintained over time.

Under the rule of Golden Horde and then the Crimean Khanate, the Turkic and Islamic character of the region maturated. The Crimean Tatars, as the titular people of the Crimean Peninsula, were heirs of these peoples, and Crimean Khanate is their historical state. The Crimean Tatar culture and language dominated the Khanate, resulting in the rise of a separate ethnic identity. The amalgamation of nomadic tribes and their cultures, in addition to the former settlers of the region and the merchants who colonized the coastline of the peninsula, created the unique character of the Crimean Peninsula.

3.3. Demographic Change under the Rule of the Russian Empire

The Crimean Peninsula holds an important place in Russian history. After the conquest of the region by Elizabeth II, the peninsula became a stronghold of the Russian Empire in the Black Sea. Russia's Black Sea fleet, as the symbol of the greatness of the empire, was established here, and the peninsula was used to adumbrate Russia's existence in regional politics. Even today, Crimea is perceived

by many Russians to be an inseparable part of Russia, and the peninsula holds an important place in the security doctrine of the Russian Federation.

The rising Muscovite Principality and then the Russian Empire encroached into the lands of the old Golden Horde for centuries,[87] and campaigns of rising Russia to east and south brought them face-to-face with the heirs of the Golden Horde. Russia annexed Kazan in 1552, Astrakhan in 1556 and progressed on to Siberia.[88] The rising state was located in a region with no direct connection to the key maritime trade routes, as mentioned in the previous chapter, with Moscow's most obvious connection being the Baltics, although blockaded by the Great Britain and the other Baltic states. The second and the best option for Russia was the political centre of the Crimean Khanate, which was fighting with Moscow as an ally of the Ottoman Empire for the Northern Black Sea.[89] This was seen as Moscow's most beneficial choice as the two sides of the Crimean Khanate and Ottoman alliance had started to decline in the 16th century, while Moscow was on the rise.[90]

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[87] The first Tsar of the Muscovite ruler was the Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible). He was the first ruler using this denotation not only in the internal papers but also in the diplomatic texts. His reign can be accepted as the start of the Russian Empire. See Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 143.

[88] Fisher, 65.

[89] Special alliance between the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate started in the reign of Mengli Geray who came to the throne in 1469 after Hacı Geray. However, it is important to note that the Crimean Khanate continued its own diplomatic relations in the region, and Crimean Khans were not treated as other vassal rulers. See; Giray Saynur Derman, Kırım Hanlığı'nın Yıkılışı, "Yıkılışın Osmanlı Devleti Üzerindeki Tesirleri ve Avrupa Diplomasisindeki Değişiklikler" in *Türkiye Ukrayna İlişkileri: Kazak Dönemi (1500-1800)*, ed. Volodımir Melnik, Mehmet Alpargu, Yücel Öztürk, Ferhat Turanlı, and Muhammed Bilal Çelik (İstanbul: Çamlıca, 2015), 115. In addition to this the Crimean Khanate continued to take taxes from Russia and Poland-Lithuania until the 18th Century. See; Kolodziejczyk, 34, 55, 59. When the Genovese colony surrendered in front of the Ottoman army, and the Ottomans established province in this region, special relations between these two states entered into a new phase. See; Kolodziejczyk, 21.

[90] Riasanovsky and Steinberg, 143.

The Russian annexation of Crimea in 1783 can be considered a turning point in the demographic history of the region. At that time, there were no Russian residents of Crimea apart from captives and slaves, and Crimean Tatars made up most of the population of the peninsula.[91] That said, there is no accurate information of the true number of Crimean Tatars living in the peninsula before or after the Russian annexation, with estimations ranging from 300,000 to 500,000.[92] Coming to 1783, Crimean Tatars were known to be dominant in demographic statistics. In the year of annexation, it is estimated that the Crimean Tatar population constituted more than 80 percent of the Crimean population,[93] the majority of which migrated to Ottoman lands in the aftermath. According to estimations based on Ottoman documents, the number of Crimean Tatars migrating to Ottoman lands between 1783 and 1922 was about 1.8 million,[94] which supports the suggested demographic dominance of the Crimean Tatars in the peninsula.

After their victory in the region, Russia decided that this strategic region should become a true part of the Russian motherland,[95] and in accordance with this

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[91] In this context Russianness does not refer an ethnic origin. Most importantly religion determined this Russianness or Crimean Tatarness. If a Russian family accepts Islam, they turn into a Crimean Tatar family in a couple of generations.

[92] Information on demographic change in the region after the Russian annexation is from Hakan Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler (1904-1916)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 2010) 1-36; and Hakan Kırımlı, *Türkiye'deki Kırım Tatar ve Nogay Köy Yerleşimleri*, (Ankara: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2012).

[93] Ayşegül Aydıngün & İsmail Aydıngün, *Kırım Tatarlarının Vatana Dönüşü: Kimlik ve Kültürel Canlanma* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2004), 11.

[94] Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler*, 12.

[95] Catherine II and her administration wanted to make Crimea a Russian land and started to their "Greek Project". Names of the Crimean Tatar settlements changed to Greek names and Greek

imaginary policy, the peninsula was attached to newly established *Tavrida Oblast.* The other parts of this *oblast* were in a very poor ethnic and economic relationship with the Crimean Peninsula, and Moscow tried to address this through forced migration to the newly conquered lands and oppression of the unwanted elements in the region. The Crimean Tatars were perceived as a minor obstacle in the way of Russia's objectives by the higher bureaucracy of the empire.

These oppressive policies and the drastic differences in the property rights granted to Muslims and Christians resulted in a mass migration to Ottoman lands. In spite of Moscow's success in forcing out the 'unwanted' elements of the peninsula, the Russian population did not increase very rapidly. By the end of the 19th century, there were only 4,500 colonists and 8,746 Russian serfs (including children) in Crimea, at a time when the Russian administration was distributing land to Russian aristocrats to promote the settlement of the Crimean Peninsula. In response, the Russian administration settled Germans, Bulgars, Jews, Armenians, Greeks, Poles and Serbs, among others, on the peninsula alongside the Russians, boosting the population to 70,000 in the lead-up to the 1850s.[96] This situation is a clear indication of how imaginary their policies were at that time, although it is clear that the future of the peninsula was shaped according to their will and those imaginary policies. The Russian annexation of the peninsula was a drastic event in the history of the region, although it would be many years before the effects were seen in the demographic statistics. The region was shaken by the Crimean War and World War I (WWI) in the

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symbols dignified in the Crimean Peninsula. See Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler* (1905-1916), 7.

[96] Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler (1904-1916)*, 10-11.

years that followed, although the Russification policies related to the peninsula continued uninterrupted.[97] It was as a result of these policies that the Crimean Tatars were forced out of the lands of the Crimean Khanate to the Ottoman Empire for over 150 years, with mass migration being seen particularly in 1812, 1828–1829, 1860–1861, 1874, 1890 and 1902.[98] The migration resulted in a drop in the Crimean Tatar population to between 180,000 and 190,000 in the 1890s.[99] The Russian administration continued to send settlers to the region up until 1917, including small numbers of Estonians, Latvians, Italians and people from 22 different ethnic backgrounds. As a result, the incoming population became the majority.[100]

3.4. Demographic Policies of the Soviet Union on the Crimean Peninsula

The Red Army took control of the peninsula in November 1920 following the evacuation of the last remnants of the White Army from Crimea.[101] After their occupation of the peninsula, the next mission for the Red Army was to exert their power and ideologies over the settlers to the region. Regional activists among the Crimean Tatars tried to persuade the Bolsheviks and the secret police, the *Cheka*,[102]

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[97] For a detailed look on Crimean War, see Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[98] Hakan Kırımlı, "Rus İdaresi Dönemi" (in "Kırım"), *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: Türk Diyanet Vakfı, 2002) Vol.25, 458.

[99] Sasse, 275; Aydıngün & Aydıngün, 11.

[100] Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler (1904-1916)*, 11.

[101] Fort a brief chronology of the Russian Civil War, see Richard Pipes, *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 411.

[102] *Cheka* or *ЧК* was the first Soviet state security organization. It is full name in Russian was Чрезвычайная Комиссия, in English Emergency Committee.

to heed their national demands. Instead, according to Soviet archives, 60,000 'Bandit sheiks, White Guards and Nationalist Tatars who tried to prevent the establishment of the Soviet rule' were liquidated in 1920 over a six-month period after Nikolay Bistrih was appointed to that region by *Cheka*.[103] Lenin himself, in December that year, spoke of the 800,000 'bourgeois' in the peninsula, stating that the Bolshevik regime would 'deal' with them. However, the armed struggles in the mountainous region of the peninsula against the Tatars failed to bring the desired results, and so the Bolsheviks changed their approach by offering them a broad range of rights and national autonomy in the peninsula. As a result, the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Crimean ASSR) was established on 18 October, 1921 as a part of Russian SFSR.[104] Although there were many discussions about its status, the Crimean Tatar nationalists, as the organizers of the 1917 *Qurultay*, and their well-structured resistance was a very important factor in this result. By 1923, as a result of the migrations mentioned above and the Russian settlement of the region, the Crimean Tatar population in the peninsula had dropped to about 150,000 (25%) while Russians numbered 306,000 (49.1%). In lower numbers, the peninsula was also home to Jews 50,000 (8%), Germans 40,000 (6.4%), Armenians 12,000 (2%) and Bulgarians 12,000 (2%). The total population of the peninsula was 623,000.

Veli İbrahimov, a Bolshevik Crimean Tatar, was the head of the Crimean ASSR between 1923 and 1928 when the *Korenizatsiia* policies were being applied in the

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[103] Fisher, 189.

[104] Parts related to Crimean ASSR are from; Fisher, 185-214.

Soviet Union.[105] His term in office is worthy of note, in that during his administration, the Crimean Tatar culture was given the opportunity to progress on the peninsula. He invited the Crimean Tatars who had left Crimea after 1783 to return to the Crimean ASSR, aiming to increase the influence of the Crimea Tatars in the region again, although he was accused of bourgeois nationalism and was killed under the orders of Stalin on 9 May, 1928. In the following months, İbrahimov's supporters were discharged from the governmental bodies, and according to some estimations, at least 32,500 Crimean Tatars were affected.[106] The following period saw a tightening of Soviet policies over the region to parallel the rest of the Soviet Union. This was part of a campaign against all National Soviet administrations in the Soviet Union, although it was reflected in Crimea as Russification. The term of İbrahimov is very important – considered to have been the golden age of the Crimean Tatars under the Bolshevik regime and a pause in the Russification of the peninsula. He played an important role in providing a 'place to live and grow' for the Crimean Tatar identity and culture, which was to be very important in the post-Soviet era within their national movement.

After that date, like many other parts of the Soviet Union, the Crimean Peninsula underwent a painful transformation to Bolshevik economic and social values, which brought suffering to the entire peninsula under the oppressive Stalin regime. Crimean Tatars, like the other Muslim people living in the bordering region to Turkey, were

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[105] *Korenizatsiia* was the name of the Soviet nationality policies in the 1920s. During that term, titular national leaders were promoted and national minorities were supported. For more detail, see; Dina Zisserman-Brodsky, *Constructing Ethnopolitics in the Soviet Union: Samizdat, Deprivation, and the Rise of Ethnic Nationalism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 24.

[106] Fisher, 199-200.

deported to Central Asia under accusations of treason in 1944,[107] representing the most drastic and 'fastest' demographic change since 1783 in the peninsula. In the years that followed, the peninsula was repopulated by other Soviet citizens, mainly Russians, and on 30 July, 1945, the Crimean ASSR was abolished and the peninsula was attached to the Russian SFSR as an *oblast*. The final change in the status of the peninsula occurred on 19 February, 1954, when rule of the *oblast* was transferred from the Russian SFSR to the Ukrainian SSR (as an autonomous republic again) as a symbol of the brotherhood of the two peoples on the anniversary of the *Pereyaslav* Treaty, which was signed in 1654.[108] This situation was 'sustained' until February 2014.

3.5. Collapse of the Soviet Union and the New Demographic Shift in the Crimean Peninsula

The dissolution of the Soviet Union had a traumatic effect on Russian policy makers. The collapse of the Soviet superpower is still accepted as a tragedy by Russian nationalists, with the independence of Ukraine and Belarus in particular having particular importance in this regard. With the collapse of the Union, many of its strategically important military bases were lost by the Russian Federation, one of the most critical of which was the 'home' of the Black Sea fleet – the Crimean Peninsula.

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[107] For a detailed story of the forced migrations and deportations in the Soviet Union, see Polian Pavel, *Against Their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR* (Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2004).

[108] For further information on this change, see Gwendolyn Sasse, *The Crimea Question: Indetity, Transition, and Conflict* (Cambridge: Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2007), 107-128.

The dissolution provided an important opportunity to Crimean Tatars to return to their homeland after 67 years. After being deported, the Crimean Tatars stayed in their new adopted homes until 1964, when the accusations against them were lifted. After that time, they sought to gather in Uzbekistan, with the aim being to organize their return to Crimea. They worked actively in anti-Soviet human rights movements, with their ultimate goal being the repatriation of Crimean Tatars and a return to the autonomous rights they had before deportation. The famous protest in Moscow's Red Square in 1987 was the first mass demonstration against the Soviet regime,[109] and many Crimean Tatar activists, who were very active in the human rights movement in the Soviet Union, played an important role in organising people from across the entire nation.[110] It should be kept in mind that the demographic composition of the peninsula changed a great deal after 1944 under the long period of Soviet rule, and that Crimean Tatar returnees were unwanted in their homeland, with the Ukrainian government being highly suspicious of their movements on the peninsula.[111]

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[109] For more detailed information on human rights movement in Soviet Union, see Emma Gilligan, *Defending Human Rights in Russia: Sergei Kovalyov, Dissident and Human Rights Commissioner, 1969-2003*, (London: Routledge, 2004).

[110] For a detailed story of the return movement of the Crimean Tatars, see Greta Lynn Uehling, *Beyond Memory: The Crimean Tatars' Deportation and Return* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Mustafa Abdülcemil Kırımoğlu, *Kırım Tatar Milli Hareketi'nin Kısa Tarihi.* (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Genel Merkezi Yayınları, 2004); Fisher, *Kırım Tatarları*, 157-289; Ayşegül Aydıngün & İsmail Aydıngün, *Kırım Tatarlarının Vatana Dönüşü: Kimlik ve Kültürel Canlanma* (Ankara: Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2004).

[111] "Eski İktidar Kırım Tatarlarına Yeterince Güvenmediği için Özür Dilerim," QHA, accessed May 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/eski-iktidar-kirim-tatarlarina-yeterince-guvenmedigi-icin-ozur-dilerim/138760/ .

Table 3.2: Changes in ethnic composition of the Crimean population (percent in parentheses).[112]

	1897	1921	1939	1979	1989	2001
Russians	274.724 (45.3)	370.888 (51.5)	558.481 (49.6)	1.460.980 (68.4)	1.629.542 (67.0)	1.180.400 (58.5)
Ukrainians			154.123 (13.7)	547.336 (25.6)	625.919 (25.8)	492.200 (24.4)
Crimean Tatars	186.212 (34.1)	184.568 (25.9)	218.879 (19.4)	5.422 (0.3)	38.365 (1.6)	243.400 (12.1)

* No distinction was made between Russians and Ukrainians in 1897 and 1921. Ukrainians are included in the Russians.

Table 3.2 shows the changes in the demography of the region, but while new demographic statistics are available from the state statistical service of Ukraine, the last official data related to the numbers of minorities on the peninsula are based on a 2001 census. After the Russian occupation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, the Russian government planned to carry out a census, however it never came to fruition. There are still many disputes regarding the Russian occupation of the peninsula, and its illegitimacy and illegality have been underlined by many different international sources.[113] Under the current conditions, a census would be considered neither reliable nor neutral in the eyes of the international community. The national structure of Crimea, as reflected in the 2001 census, is presented in Table 3.3.

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[112] Sasse, 275.

[113] "Opinion: Whether the Decision Taken by the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea İn Ukraine to Organise a Referendum Becoming a Constituent Territory of the Russian Federation or Restoring Crimea's 1992 Constitution is Compatible with Constitutional Principles", Venice Comission, Accessed March 21, 2014, http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD%282014%29002-e .

It is interesting to note that according to surveys by Crimean Tatar national education institutions, Crimean Tatar children constituted 20 percent of the total population in schools, while representatives of the Crimean Tatar religious administration, the *Müftiyat*, claim that one-third of all new-born babies come from Muslim families in 2013.[114] These statistics show that since 2001 there is a significant increase in the Crimean Tatar population.[115] Furthermore, the decreasing overall population of Ukraine is an important indicator that most recent official demographic statistics do not show the real demographic situation in the peninsula.[116]

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[114] These institutions are established by the Crimean Tatar national movement and works with *Qurultay* and *Meclis*. All of the representatives of the institution were elected by the Crimean Tatars and serves voluntarily.

[115] Some Crimean Tatar activists say that Crimean Tatar population is 450.000; "Moscow to Conduct New Census to Reduce Status of Ukrainians and Tatars in Crimea", The Interpereter, Accessed March 26, 2016, http://www.interpretermag.com/moscow-to-conduct-new-census-to-reduce-status-of-ukrainians-and-tatars-in-crimea/ , paragraph 4.

[116] Ukrainian population in the 1990 was 51.556.500 and it decreased to 42.568.433. For 1990 statistics; "Населення (Population) (1990-2016)", Державна служба статистики України (State Statistic Service of Ukraine), Accessed March 26, 2016, http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua ; for 2016 statistics "Чисельність населення (за оцінкою) на 1 лютого 2016 року та середня чисельність у січні 2016 року (Population (estimated) on 1 February 2016 and the average number in January 2016)" Державна служба статистики України (State Statistic Service of Ukraine), Accessed March 26, 2016, http://database.ukrcensus.gov.ua/PXWEB2007/ukr/news/op_popul.asp .

Table 3.3. National Structure of the Population of Autonomous Republic of Crimea in 2001.[117]

	Number (Thousand Person)	As % to Total	
		2001	**1989**
Russians	1180.4	58.5	65.6
Ukrainians	492.2	24.4	26.7
Crimean Tatars	243.4	12.1	1.9
Belarussians	29.2	1.5	2.1
(Kazan) Tatars	11.0	0.5	0.5
Armenians	8.7	0.4	0.1
Jews	4.5	0.2	0.7

3.6. A Brief History of the Crimean Tatar National Movement

The Crimean Tatar National Movement is deeply related to the demographic policies of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, and can be said to have a 200-year history that dates back to the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 1783 and the start of the 'de-Tatarization' policies in the region.[118] The Crimean Tatar enlightenment movement, in parallel with all Turkic-Muslim peoples under the rule of Russia, evolved into a mass mobilisation of Crimean Tatars after the deportation of 1944, and one can follow the evolution of the enlightenment movement into a

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[117] All Ukrainian Population Census 2001, Accessed July 20, 2016, http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/ ; There are also Poles, Moldovans, Azeris, Uzbeks, Koreans, Greeks, Germans, Mordva, Chuvashi, Gypsies, Bulgarians, Georgians and Mariytsi in the Autonomous Republic.

[118] Aydıngün & Aydıngün, 17.

national movement in parallel with the oppressive policies of the Russian and Soviet authorities.

In the long years between 1783 and 1905, the Crimean Tatar nation faced the great suffering and trauma of the annexation. Within this period, in 1883, İsmail Bey Gaspıralı[119] launched a new education movement that would affect the entire Turkic world, leading to a period of enlightenment. In 1905, several of Gaspıralı's students launched a radical movement that set out the terms of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, and between 1905 and 1944, they defined the goals of the Movement. Deportation was a completely new problem for the Crimean Tatars, and they had to develop their own methods to struggle against the oppressive regime to regain their national and cultural rights.

3.6.1. Situation of the Crimean Tatar Nation between 1783 and 1905

The annexation and Russia's policies related to the region resulted in continuous migration flows to Ottoman territories, while the new Russian settlement policy caused a great social and cultural trauma in the Crimean Tatar nation. The Crimean Tatar culture and civilization that had flourished under the rule of the Crimean Khanate stagnated in the 'Russian' Crimea. Furthermore, the Russian intervention into Crimean Tatar education and their religious administrations and systems made them completely unproductive, which had a devastating effect on the culture and

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[119] One can also see him as; İsmail Gasprinski (Gasprinskii, Gasprinskiy) or Gaspıralı İsmail Bey.

intelligentsia, and it would be very hard to say that there was a 'national' movement.[120]

3.6.2. Jadidism and İsmail Bey Gaspıralı: Infrastructure of the National Movement of Crimean Tatars

Jadidism (Turkish: *Cedidçilik*) was the name of the enlightenment movement led by İsmail Bey Gaspıralı that spread to all Turkic-Muslim communities living under the rule of Russian Empire, reaching even the furthest Muslim geographies from the Russian lands.[121] The situation of the Crimean Tatars after the Russian annexation of 1783 served as a reference for other Muslim and Turkic communities in the Russian Empire, in that coming to the end of the 19th century, the situation of the Turkic-Muslim communities could be summarized in one word: *backwardness*. The social and cultural lives, economy and administrative systems of these communities were deeply dependent on the Russian administration, and it can be said that under the cultural, economic and political oppression of the Russian Empire, these communities experienced a period of ignorance.[122] This situation was supported by the assimilation policies of the Russian rulers, and at this point, the influence of

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[120] Kırımlı, "Rus İdaresi Dönemi" (in "Kırım"), 458-459.

[121] For more detailed infromation on Jadidism, Gaspıralı, his new method schools and the newspaper *Tercüman*, see Nadir Devlet, *İsmail Bey (Gaspıralı)* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basımevi, 1988); Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (London: University of California Press, 1998); Hakan Kırımlı (ed.), *İsmail Bey Gaspıralı İçin* (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Yayınları, 2004); Edward Lazzerini, "Ismail Bey Gasprinskii and Muslim Modernism in Russia: 1878-1914" (PhD. Diss., University of Washington, 1973).

[122] Barçınay Curayeva," İsmail Bey Gaspıralı ve Türkistan'da Cedidçilik Hareketi" in *İsmail Bey Gaspıralı İçin*, ed. Hakan Kırımlı, Bülent Tanatar, Dündar Akarca and İbrahim Köremezli (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Yayınları, 2004), 595.

Nikolay I. Ilminsky is important to note. Ilminsky, an important theoretician of Russian policies over the *inorodets*,[123] suggested that Christianity and the fundamentals of the Russian civilization should be taught to people in their own languages, but in Cyrillic, claiming that this would convince them of the greatness and the spiritual superiority of the Russians. He and his supporters believed that this would allow the 'oriental' people to be assimilated, and teaching them Russian and educating them in Russian would be the final stage of their assimilation.[124]

Such rehabilitation and reformation efforts were launched by Şihâbeddin Mercanî (1815–1889), Abdulkayyum Nasırî (1824–1907) and Hüzeyin Feyizhanî (1826–1866), among others,[125] in the second half of the 19th century.[126] Realizing that the conservative structure of their society had fallen behind that of Western civilizations, these intellectuals believed that something should be done to turn the situation around for the sake of their people. Their main concern was the reformation of madrasas, which had by that time become dogmatic places that rejected reasoning. Gaspıralı grew up under these circumstances, and took steps to turn these reformist ideas into actions. In short, although he was not the founding father of these ideas, it was he that executed them.

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[123] Term used for the non-Christians and especially for the "Orientals" in the Russian Empire.

[124] İldus Kuddüsulı Zahidullin, "İsmail Gaspıralı ve Çarlık Kükümetinin Ruslaştırma Siyaseti" in *İsmail Bey Gaspıralı İçin*, ed. Hakan Kırımlı, Bülent Tanatar, Dündar Akarca and İbrahim Köremezli (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Yayınları, 2004), 32-33. For the original document, see: "İsmağıl Gaspıralı hem Hükümetiniñ Urıslaştıru Seyaseti", *Miras* num:5 (Kazan, 1992): 85-90.

[125] Alimcan Barudî, Abdürreşid İbrahim, Rızaeddin bin Fahreddin, Abdullah Bubî, Musa Carullah, Ziyaeddin Kemâlî can be named.

[126] Devlet, 9.

Gaspıralı changed the history of not only the Crimean Tatars, but also all Turkic-Muslim groups. Gaspıralı was born in *Bağçasaray* in 1855 and attended the famous *Zincirli Medrese*, after which he studied at the Military School in Moscow. There, he had the opportunity to learn about Russian imperial policies and Russian nationalism, and although he wanted to join the Ottoman army, he was not accepted. He then went to Paris, where he lived for two years, and while there, he worked with Ivan Turgenyev. Then he left France and went to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, for around two years where he was able to inspect some Anatolian and Istanbul schools. He returned to Crimea in the winter of 1876, where, according to some resources, he taught Russian in a school for two years, and then served as the Mayor of *Bağçasaray* between 1878 and 1883.[127] Armed with his familiarity with the European civilization and lifestyle, he sought to find a way to develop his own people, and led to the publication of the famous *Tercüman*[128] newspaper in 1883 and the opening of *Usûl-i Cedid*[129] schools in 1884. [130] The movement was so effective that by 1904, only 20 years after the first school opened in 1884, he and his students had opened 5,000 new method schools all over the Russian Empire.[131] More

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[127] Devlet, 17-19.

[128] *Tercüman* means interpreter.

[129] *Usûl* means method, *Cedid* means new and *Usûl-i Cedid* means new method. This name was given to his schools to underline its new and modern methods and difference from the 'old' and dogmatic education.

[130] Devlet, 60.

[131] Ibid., 70.

interestingly, his newspaper *Tercüman* had a readership of 1,000, 200 of which was in Central Asia,[132] with further subscribers in Morocco, Egypt and India.[133]

Gaspıralı was an idealist/ideologist for all Turkic-Muslim people, and it is clear that if he had not started his campaign for enlightenment, there would have been no Crimean Tatar National Movement. Jadidism, as the main goal of the enlightenment movement led by Gaspıralı, was not just for Crimea, but for all Turkic-Muslim lands under the rule of the Russian Empire. The movement can be said to have left an intellectual heritage in all of the regions that it reached, and Gaspıralı is hailed as having created an intellectual infrastructure for the Crimean Tatar National Movement in Crimea. Without his reforms and intellectual heritage, it is unlikely that an *intelligentsia* would have emerged among the Crimea Tatars. The first generation of his students theorised the basics of the national movement of the Crimean Tatars, and 33 years after the opening of the first new method school, Crimean Tatars were seeking to establish their own state, based on the intellectual heritage of Gaspıralı. Even today he is referred to as *Babay,* meaning father, by Crimean Tatar intellectuals and is accepted as the father of their nation.

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[132] Khalid, 90.

[133] Devlet, 48.

3.6.3. Crimean Tatar National Movement between 1905–1944

The following generation of Crimean Tatars grew up during the times of the reforms of Gaspıralı, and found room to organise in the revolutionary times of Russia. This can be seen as a turning point for the Crimean Tatar National Movement, and the modern national institutions of Crimean Tatars are based on this term and actions of the activists of the time.

3.6.3.1. *Yaş*[134] Tatar Movement

The early days of the 20th century were chaotic for the Russian Empire as revolutionary changes were taking place. There were three political movements in the Russian Empire – the Liberals, Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries – all of which were organised as political parties, and it was the political clashes with each other and the autocracy that brought about the 1905 Revolution.[135] The Crimean Tatar youth and intelligentsia did not ignore these movements, and the graduates of the teacher school in *Aqmescit* and the young people studying in the larger Russian cities all wanted to take part in the revolution. The *Yaş Tatar*s represented the new idealist and politicised generation of Crimean Tatars, in contrast to non-political education movement of the previous generation, and worked mostly with the Socialist Revolutionists and *Menshevik*s. They organised All-Crimean Muslim meetings to reach their people, and began the first mass political movements aimed

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[134] *Yaş* means young in Crimean Tatar.

[135] Richard Pipes, *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 31-55.

at promoting the interests of Crimean Tatars. The *Yaş Tatar* movement was important in one other respect, being a political movement that for the first time conceptualised Crimean Tatar nationalism around a motherland concept. It was clear that the motherland referred to was the Crimean Peninsula, and as such, they can be considered as the group that developed Crimean Tatar nationalism.[136]

3.6.3.2. First Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* in 1917

Qurultay is an ancient institution that works like a parliament in making important decisions in Turkic societies. In the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution, the new nationalist generation of Crimean Tatars tried to establish a democratic republic in the Crimean Peninsula, establishing the Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* in which Crimean Tatars were represented by democratically elected representatives, including women.[137] Gaspıralı's daughter was elected to the presidium of the *Qurultay*,[138] and the institution functioned as the first national parliament of Crimean Tatars. Under the leadership of Noman Çelebicihan, in 1917 the Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* accepted that its ultimate aim was to establish a Crimean People's Republic (in Crimean Tatar: *Qırım Ahali Cumhuriyeti*), and the executive bodies of the *Qurultay* started to work towards this goal. Their initiatives, however, were interrupted by the bloody Bolshevik intervention in the early days of 1918, which saw some of the Crimean

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[136] Parts related to *Yaş Tatar* movement are taken from Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler (1905-1916)*, 87-122.

[137] For a detailed look for the Crimean Tatar national movement in that term, see Osman Kemal Hatif, *Gökbayrak Altında Millî Faaliyet: 1917 Kırım Tatar Millî İstiklâl Hareketinin Hikâyesi*, ed. Hakan Kırımlı (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Genel Merkezi Yayınları, 1998); Kırımlı, *Kırım Tatarlarında Milli Kimlik ve Milli Hareketler (1904-1916)*.

[138] Osman Kemal Hatif, 85-87.

Tatar leaders arrested, deported or murdered, and the abolition of the newly established Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* by the Bolsheviks. Some leaders of this movement, however, managed to flee to Turkey, including Cafer Seydahmet Kırımer.

The *Qurultay* tradition is important for many different reasons. First, today, the demands of the Crimean Tatars related to autonomy are established by the *Qurultay*, which is symbolically important for them. It is apparent that the movement is a significant driver of hope among Crimean Tatars, who have faced many problems since 1783. Photographs of the 1917 *Qurultay* are kept in the homes of *émigré* Crimean Tatars, who fled the peninsula in the years that followed, as a reminder of their homeland. The charismatic leadership of Noman Çelebicihan, who is the poet of the national anthem of Crimean Tatars, is still very strong in the minds of the people, and he and other leaders are still addressed with respect by the people, and their movement and methods still form the basis of the Crimean Tatar National Movement.

As stated previously, Veli İbrahimov is very important in Crimean Tatar history. It was because of his 'pro-Crimean Tatar' policies and efforts that the Crimean Tatar national intelligentsia found the opportunity to maturate. The rule of Stalin changed this situation radically, with his 'Great Purge' liquidating the national intelligentsias from all over the Soviet Union between 1937 and 1938.[139] The terror of this purge

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[139] Norman M. Naimark, *Stalin's Genocides* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 99-120; Robert Service, *A History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-First Century* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 210-234; Pavel, 57-139.

reached the Crimean Peninsula in the late 1930s, when the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia was deported, imprisoned and liquidated.

3.6.4. Deportation and *Avdet*

The great purge before and during WWII reached a peak on 18 May, 1944, when the Crimean Tatars were deported to Central Asia, the Ural Mountains and Siberia, as the final step in the 250-year-old policies of the Russian government in the region. It can be said that Russian policies reached their ultimate goal with the 'cleaning' of Crimean Tatars from the entire region through migrations and the 1944 deportation.

On 28 April, 1956, the Soviet government lifted its sanctions on the Crimean Tatar nation, and it was after this date that the Crimean Tatars started to petition the relevant authorities and establish initiatives supported by public meetings, and to organise a national movement within their 'penal colonies'. Crimean Tatars collected thousands of signatures, which were taken to Moscow by their democratically elected representatives.[140] There were also Crimean Tatar activists working actively in the anti-Soviet human rights movements,[141] and it was this movement that organised the first public protest in Red Square in 23 July, 1987 with the participation of 1,100 Crimean Tatars and their supporters.[142] Crimean Tatar national initiative groups established the Crimean Tatar National Movement Organization

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[140] Kırımoğlu, 12-13.

[141] Gilligan, 29, 44, 65.

[142] Interview, Kherson (Ukraine), 29.06.2016.

(*Qırımtatar Milliy Hareketi Teşkilatı*) during meetings held in Tashkent between 29 April and 2 May, 1989,[143] and it was through this institution that the collective will of the Crimean Tatar national movement was given a voice. This organisation would be the foundations of the Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* and *Meclis* national institutions.

Many Crimean Tatar activists, after their efforts at resistance failed to convince the Soviet authorities to change their policies, came to the decision that all further efforts in this regard would be pointless, and it was the collapse of the Soviet Union that was seen as the long-awaited opportunity for them to return back their motherland. The declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union on October 1989 was very important for the Crimean Tatar National Movement and all communities that had been deported and oppressed in the Soviet Union during WWII. According to the declaration, the rights of all oppressed nationalities would be returned and guaranteed by the Supreme Soviet, which resulted in Crimean Tatars starting a slow return to Crimea in the late 1980s, despite the lack of a welcome from the regional authorities. In 1989, the number of Crimean Tatars in Crimea rose to 40,000, and it was considered a great success when they were able to move the headquarters of their movement from Central Asia to the homeland.[144]

The term *Avdet* means literally 'to return' in Crimean Tatar, but is used specifically to refer to one's return to Crimea after deportation. The *Qurultay* is an ancient institution that works like a parliament, making important decisions on behalf of

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[143] Kırımoğlu, 24-25; For more detailed information on the charter of the *Qırımtatar Milliy Hareketi Teşkilatı*, see; "Kırım Tatar Millî Hareketi Teşkilâtı Tüzüğü," *Emel* 172 (1989): 3-11.

[144] Aydıngün & Aydıngün, 23-25.

Turkic societies, and the Crimean Tatars modernised this old institution, establishing a unique self-governing body after their return to Crimea. *Meclis,* on the other hand*,* means literally 'council,' 'assembly' or 'parliament', but for Crimean Tatars, the term is used to refer to the executive body of the *Qurultay* (like a cabinet), which is made up of 32 elected *Qurultay* members (each member is voted upon separately).

The first action of the Crimean Tatars in the peninsula was to organise their '*2ⁿᵈ Qurultay'* on 26–30 June, 1991, which was considered to be carrying on the works of the 1917 *Qurultay*,[145] and had representatives from Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Latvia and, of course, Crimea.[146] The Crimean Tatar National Anthem and Crimean Tatar National Flag were assigned according to the decisions of the 1917 *Qurultay* as a symbol of the continuation of the Crimean Tatar state tradition,[147] and Mustafa Cemilev (known also as Mustafa Abdülcemil Kırımoğlu), a well-known human rights defender in the Soviet Union, was elected as the head of both the 2ⁿᵈ *Qurultay* and the *Meclis*. Crimean Tatar returnees started to occupy lands around cities and to establish Crimean Tatar districts, and by 1992 the peninsula had become home to 142,000 Crimean Tatars, with even more coming in the following decade.[148]

In order to solve the problems of the rising Crimean population, initiative groups in the Crimean Tatar National Movement established several institutions related to

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[145] "Kırım Tatar Millî Kurultayı'nın 'Kırım Tatar Bayrağı ve Millî Marşı' Hakkındaki Kararı" *Emel* 185 (1991):10.

[146] "Kurultay Vekillerinin Cedveli" *Emel* 184 (1991): 20-22.

[147] "Kırım Tatar Millî Kurultayı'nın 'Kırım Tatar Bayrağı ve Millî Marşı' Hakkındaki Kararı" *Emel* 185 (1991):10.

[148] Aydıngün & Aydıngün, 11.

education, culture, religion, and so on, all of which worked together with the *Qurultay* and *Meclis*. In addition, veterans of the movement established regional *Meclis*es in every region with a Crimean Tatar population, and these institutions worked as intermediaries between the *Qurultay* and Crimean Tatars living in different regions, forming the infrastructure of the Crimean Tatar National institutions. This was the pattern followed by the Crimean Tatar National Movement after their return to the Crimean Peninsula.

3.6.5. Crimean Tatar National Movement after the Russian Occupation in 2014

The Russian occupation of the Crimean Peninsula, as covered in the previous chapter, had a significant effect on regional politics, although this geopolitical importance brought pain and suffering to its people. According to some estimations, 35,000 people left Crimea after the occupation, 17,000 of which were Crimean Tatars.[149]

The Crimean Tatar National Movement and its related institutions were labelled as extremists and terrorist organisations upon a decision of the Crimean attorney general, who had been appointed by Moscow in March 2014.[150] A number of Crimean Tatar activists and other prominent figures were deported from Crimea, and they were forbidden from engaging in any activities on the Crimean Peninsula, with

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[149] "Kırımoğlu: 17 bin Kırım Tatarı yarımadayı terk etti" QHA, Accessed June 16, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kirimoglu-17-bin-kirim-tatari-yarimadayi-terk-etti/144802/ .

[150] "İşgalci Mahkeme, Meclis ile ilgili Kararını Verdi" QHA, Accessed June 16, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/isgalci-mahkeme-meclis-ile-ilgili-kararini-verdi/144734/ .

judicial processes started in their absence to prevent their re-entry to Crimea.[151]

Some of the old *Qurultay* and *Meclis* members were recruited by the so-called pro-Russian administration of Crimea to pacify the Crimean nationalists and divide the Crimean Tatars. These puppet politicians were quickly excluded from any Crimean Tatar meetings, and were not invited even to wedding ceremonies and funerals, which are traditionally the most hospitable gatherings of Crimean Tatars.[152]

Public support for the *Qurultay* and *Meclis* was not divided, despite the political oppression, and after the occupation one can actually observe a more active participation among the Crimean Tatar diaspora.[153] There is a lack of trustable data related to the Crimean Tatar diaspora population, but there are known to be large numbers in Turkey and Romania, as well as in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Uzbekistan, Poland, Germany, the United States, the Netherlands, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia. It is estimated that the largest Crimean Tatar diaspora can be found currently in Turkey, numbering, according to some demographic projections, between 3 and 5 million.[154]

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[151] "Kırımoğlu Hakkında Gıyabi Tutuklama Kararı Çıktı" QHA, Accessed June 16, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kirimoglu-hakkinda-giyabi-tutuklama-karari-cikti/142128/ ; "Rusya'ya Girişi Yasaklanan Yüksel Moskova'ya Mahkemeye Çağırıldı" QHA, Accessed June 16, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/rusya-ya-girisi-yasaklanan-ismet-yuksel-moskova-ya-mahkemeye-cagrildi/139477/ .

[152] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 25.11.2015.

[153] For more detailed information on the Crimean Tatar national movement in the Crimean Tatar Diaspora, see; Filiz Tutku Aydın, "Comparative Cases in Long-Distance Nationalism: Explaining the *Émigré*, Exile, Diaspora and Transnational Movements of the Crimean Tatars" (PhD. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2012).

[154] This projection is according to 1.800.000 number given on the basis of the Ottoman documents.

These numbers are worthy of note, in that after the occupation, the Crimean Tatar diaspora declared their loyalty to the *Qurultay* and *Meclis*. The World Congress of Crimean Tatars was organised in Ankara, Turkey on 1–2 August, 2015, with 184 Crimean Tatar organizations from 16 countries represented at the meeting, and more than 430 delegates attending.[155] In the Resolution penned at the meeting, it was declared that the 'Crimean Tatar national movement has the mass support of the Crimean Tatar people, and the Crimean Tatar people will never accept the Russian occupation of Crimea.'[156] This meeting was also where the Ukrainian authorities made an official apology to the Crimean Tatars for their suspicion leading up to the occupation, and promised to repatriate the Crimean Tatars and give them autonomy in their homeland after the de-occupation of the region. These apologies and promises were made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine during the meeting, after which he read a personal letter from the President of Ukraine to the assembles guests.[157] After the occupation of Kyiv, a new headquarters was established under the leadership of the deported leaders by veterans and young activists alike, from where autonomy is demanded for the region bordering Crimea, including the Crimean Peninsula. With the active support of the diaspora, people

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[155] "Dünya Kırım Tatar Kongresi, milli marşlarla sona erdi" QHA, Accessed June 16, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/dunya-kirim-tatar-kongresi-milli-marslarla-sona-erdi/138784/ .

[156] "DKTK'nin Netice Beyannamesi Kabul Edildi" QHA, Accessed June 16, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/dktk-nin-netice-beyannamesi-kabul-edildi/138778/ .

[157] "Eski İktidar Kırım Tatarlarına Yeterince Güvenmediği için Özür Dilerim," QHA, accessed May 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/eski-iktidar-kirim-tatarlarina-yeterince-guvenmedigi-icin-ozur-dilerim/138760/ .

living in the border region of Crimea are becoming organised and new institutions are being established.[158]

These most recent events in the region have created a novel situation to the relations between Crimean Tatars and Ukraine. This can be observed in the changing Ukrainian policies related to the Crimean Tatars and the new language being used in their movement.

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[158] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 10.07.2016.

CHAPTER 4

NATION BUILDING IN POST-SOVIET UKRAINE

Nation building is one of the most important processes undertaken by post-Soviet countries, and the well-known linguistic, cultural and historical closeness between Ukraine and Russia brought nation building in Ukraine its own peculiarities. In addition to the problems associated with this closeness, the Ukrainian state faces many other hurdles related to internal dynamics that are deep rooted in history. These constitute significant hurdles in the country's efforts to establish a sovereign state and instil solidarity in the population, and its attempts to differentiate itself from Russia. Strengthening the state institution is the only option for Ukraine if it is to succeed in building a nation, which shows that Ukraine is a state-nation rather than a nation-state, as suggested by Taras Kuzio.

This chapter presents a brief analysis of the problems of the post-Soviet Ukraine in its nation building process, and explains the sources of the divisions and fragmentations in Ukrainian society. The chapter also provides background information for the next chapter, in which the shifts and the changes that took place in the relationship between Ukraine and the Crimean Tatars after 2014 are analysed. Understanding these changes after the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 will help in an analysis of the successes and failures of the nation building process.

4.1. Different Narratives on the History of Ukraine and Ukrainians

'The facts speak only when the historian calls on them:
it is who decides to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context.'[159]

E. H. Carr

Different narratives have been put forward by Ukraine, Russia and Poland on the history of Ukraine and the background of the Ukrainian ethnos.[160] On the one hand, Russia and Poland as the leading powers in the region in previous centuries attempt to shape the international perception of Ukraine according to their own historical narratives, while Ukraine, as an independent state, is trying to establish its own historical narrative. This debate on the very basics of Ukrainian history and the source of the Ukrainian ethnos is a clear indicator of the internal and external problems that have beset Ukraine, and so the sources of the fragmentations among Ukraine's citizens and the divisions in the society should be discussed in this regard.

According to the Russian perspective, Eastern Slavs, Russians, Belarussians and Ukrainians, should be concerned as a whole. In the 18th century, as the first histories of Eastern Europe were being written, the Russian Empire was the only Eastern Slavic state under a powerful Romanov Dynasty, and this led the Russian Empire and the Romanov Dynasty to seek means of justifying their existence. The first two histories in this regard were written by S. O. Menkeev (written 1715, published

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[159] Edward H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Penguin Books), 11.

[160] For a detailed look to the historical debates, see; Serhii Plokhy, "The Ghosts of Pereyaslav: Russo-Ukrainian Historical Debates in the Post-Soviet Era," *Europe-Asia Studies* 53(3), (2001): 489-505; Paul R. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 12-24.

1770) and Vasilii M. Tatishchev (written 1739, published in five volumes 1768–1818). Later, Nikolai M. Karamzin penned his 12-volume *Istoriia gosudarstva rossiiskago* (History of the Russian State, 1818–1829), which was the first piece covering Russian history from the earliest times up to 1613, when the Romanov Dynasty was founded. In the years that followed, the continuity between the Kievan Rus', Muscovy and the Russian Empire underlined; and the Riurykid Dynasty, which was the dynasty ruled Kievan Rus', then, Muscovy until the Romanov Dynasty, gained a key place in the Russian narrative. In 1856, Mikhail D. Pogodin put forward his 'depopulation theory', which was highly influential in the Russian perception of the history of the Eastern Slavs. Pogodin suggested that, as a result of the Mongol 'invasion', the people who were living in the south moved north and populated the northern cities, while the dynasty shifted to Moscow. In this respect, Kyiv can be accepted as the starting point of the Russian state and the mother of all Russian cities, and so warranted protection in the Empire when ruled by the rightful heirs to the Kievan Rus' legacy. The protection of Kievan heritage and the survival of the state was possible only through the unification of the *Veliko-Rus'* (Great Rus' - Russia), *Belo-Rus'* (White Rus' – Belarus) and *Malo-Rus'* (Little Rus' - Ukraine) into a single Russian people. Although, linguistic and ethnographic research indicates that there were considerable differences between these components of the Russian people in the early 19th century, especially between the Great and Little Russians (or Ukrainians), this unification theory was promoted by Karamzin and his followers. The most mature and 'elegant' pieces on the Russian narrative were presented in the *Istoriia Rossii s drevnieishikh vremen'* (History of Russia from Earliest Times, 1851–79) by Sergei M. Solov'ev and *Kurs russkoi istorii* (Course of

Russian History, 1904–21) by Vasilii Kliuchevskii. Finally, based on this historical narrative, the idea of Russia without Little Russians was unacceptable and 'inconceivable', as summarized by Dmitrii Likhachev:

> Over the course of the centuries following their division into two entities, Russia and Ukraine have formed not only a political but also a culturally dualistic unity. Russian culture is meaningless without Ukrainian, as Ukrainian is without Russian.[161]

The Polish narrative of Ukrainian history shares the aims of the Russian narrative, but with different goals. The Polish viewpoint is influenced strongly by Aleksander Jablonowski's seven volumes of historical studies (*Pisma*, 1910–13) and his *Historya Rusi Poludniowej do upadku Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (History of Southern Rus' until the Fall of the Polish Commonwealth, 1912). While his book demonstrates sympathy towards the Ukrainians, it goes on to claim, "historically the Ukrainian lands had never constituted a distinct entity nor the population of Ukraine a distinct people". Additionally, a number of Polish scholars accept Pogodin's 'depopulation theory', which suggests that after the Mongol 'invasion', new settlers arrived from the Polish- and Lithuanian-controlled Galicia and Volhynia who made up the nobility of the region, and the depopulated regions were ruled by this nobility under the rule of the Polish state. In essence, the regions located to the west of the Dnipro River were accepted as an integral part of Poland according to the Polish narrative,

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[161] Magocsi, 12-16.

and the civilizing role of Polish rule over the today's Ukrainian lands is still heard often in the Polish public opinion.[162]

The origins on the Ukrainian narrative on Eastern Europe date back to the 18th century, with works related mostly to 'the Little Russians', but referring to the Zaporozhian Cossaks. In addition, some other major works were penned by French (Jean-Benoit Scherer, 1788), German (Carl Hammersdorfer, 1789) and Austrian (Johann Christian von Engel, 1796) authors. In the first half of the 19th century, Dmitrii Bantysh-Kamenskii (in 1822) and Mykola Markevych (in 1842–1843) provided the first multi-volume Ukrainian histories, in which they underlined the importance of the Zaporozhian Cossacks in Ukrainian history. The most influential piece of the time was *Istoriia Rusov* (History of the Rus' People, 1846), and while the author of the work is unknown, its political character came to be very important in the Ukrainian narrative. This was the first piece that did not take Ukraine as a province of Russia or Poland, seeing it rather as an independent country with origins in the Kievan Rus'. In addition to these, in the first half of the 19th century some romantic conceptualizations were penned by Mykhailo Maksymovych, Mykola Kostomarov and Panteleimon Kulish, depicting the Cossacks as a symbol of the egalitarian character of the Ukrainian people. The 1830 *Knyhy bytiia ukraïns'koho narodu* (Books of Genesis of the Ukrainian People) by Kostamarov presents Ukrainians as a group of people with no love for the Russian Emperors or Polish Kings, being a people living in the Cossack host where all people are equal. Responding to Pogodin, the unity of the Eastern Slavs and the 'ostensible' link

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[162] Ibid., 16-18.

between the Kievan Rus' and Muscovy, Maksymovych (1857), Volodymyr Antonovych (1882) and Mikhail Vladimirskii-Budanov (1890 and 1893) all published books disproving his depopulation theory. The most important challenge to the Russian narrative was given by Mykhailo S. Hrushevs'kyi in the early 20th century in a 1904 article entitled 'The Traditional Scheme of "Russian" History and the Problem of a Rational Organization of the History of the Eastern Slavs'. In the text, he underlined the problems of the Russian narrative from the Ukrainian perspective, and his own 'monumental' ten-volume *Istoriia Ukraïny-Rusy* (History of Ukraine- Rus', 1898–1937) offered a completely new frame for Ukrainian history. In the following years, Dmytro Doroshenko and Viacheslav Lypyns'kyi challenged Hrushevs'kyi's populist view, offering instead a statist perception of the Kievan Rus'. Hrushevs'kyi and his book can be considered relics of the Ukrainian narrative and nationalism.[163]

Russian historians like Aleksander Presniakov (1918) and Matvei K. Liubavskii (1929) were influenced by the works of Hrushevs'kyi, and sought the origins of the Muscovite Russian state not in Kyiv, but in Rostov, Suzdal' and Vladimir, although the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 interrupted studies of this type. In the early days of the Soviet Union, Hrushevs'kyi's school continued to dominate, and even Marxist historians like Matvii Iavors'kyi supported his ideas. However, in 1930 under the rule of Stalin, supporters of the Ukrainian school were exiled, imprisoned and silenced, leading the Soviet historical framework to be turned back to the Great

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[163] Ibid., 18-21. For more information on the Ukrainian history writing; see, Serhii Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

Russian theory and the Great Russian Bolshevik understanding. The Kievan Rus'
were accepted as the common cradle of the Eastern Slavs and the Great Russia, as
the older brother of White and the Little Russia was living in the Soviet Union as the
heir to the Russian Empire and the Kievan Rus'.[164]

In addition to this debate in Ukraine there were two schools of thought in history
writing after independence – Ukrainophile (or ethnic Ukrainian) and Eastern Slavic.
The Ukrainophile school tended to be much more anti-Russian and anti-Soviet, with
the enemy and the 'other' of this school being Russia and the Russians. Supporters of
the Eastern Slavic school may have been critical of some aspects of the old regime,
but they were not 'unfriendly' to Russia and Russians. Ukraine needed an "over-
arching official history that could be taught in schools", for which Hrushevs'kyi and
the formulation of the 19th century of Ukrainian history was being used.[165] From this
perspective, it is accepted that the Ukrainian ethnos had been formed before the 19th
century, and there was a 're-turn' to Hrushevs'kyi and this formulation in the 1980s,
with the independence of Ukraine representing an opportunity for him to spread his
ideas to the citizens of Ukraine.[166]

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[164] Ibid., 21-23.

[165] Taras Kuzio, "Nation Building, History Writing and Competition over the Legacy of Kyiv Rus in Ukraine," *Nationalities Papers*, 33(1), (March 2005), 34.

[166] Georgiy Kasianov, "'Nationalized' History: Past Continuous, Present Perfect, Future," in *A Laboratory of Transnational History: Ukraine and Recent Ukrainian Historiography*, eds. Georgiy Kasianov and Philipp Ther, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2009), 13.

4.2. Impact of the Soviet Heritage on the Problems and Fragmentations in Post-Soviet Ukraine

There were several attempts made to establish a Ukrainian state in history, but all were short-lived. After WWI, the armistice with Poland in October 1920 and the final treaty signed on 18 March, 1921 led to Soviet Ukraine being recognised by Poland and the international community, at a time when most of the lands in the west of today's Ukraine were part of Poland. In February 1922, the diplomatic prerogatives of the Ukrainian state were given to the Soviet Union, and Ukraine thus became a 'sovereign' state under the Soviet Union.[167] After WWII, the borders of the state changed many times, with the final change being made in 1954 when the Crimean Peninsula was gifted to the Ukrainian SSR by the Russian SFSR. The state was established in line with the needs of the Soviet Union, in that the national will of the Ukrainian people was not important for the Soviet administration. When Ukraine gained independence in 1991, the artificial character of the borders was a source of significant problems, along with the fragmented nature of society, both of which obstructed the building of a nation-state.

One of the best analyses of the fragmentations in post-Soviet Ukrainian society was made by a Ukrainian author, who referred to Ukrainian society as multi-fragmented, with divergences at seven different levels of social relations, being political (left and right-wing), regional (west and east), national (patriotism and cosmopolitanism),

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[167] Magocsi, 526.

territorial (separatism, federalism and centralism), statehood (*derzhavnyky*[168] and its opponents), religious (believers and non-believers) and economic (supporters of capitalism versus those in favour of a planned economy).[169]

Parallel to this perception on the economic situation and language preferences are the fields that one can observe the reflections of the fragmentations of the Ukrainian society. Admire to the Soviet Regime and its power, being Russophone and not learning Ukrainian language are good examples of the borders between the sides of the clashes and the fragmentations. The economic fragmentation a result of the transition from a Marxist economy to a market economy, which proved to be a burden for all post-Soviet states. The Soviet economic structure had been established according to a centralised plan, and so the dissolution of the union brought unbalanced interdependence among the states. Privatisation, macroeconomic problems related to the adaptation to a capitalist economy, corruption, income inequality, new taxes, inflation and social inequality were all a source of distress in post-Soviet societies,[170] and it was not possible for Ukraine to find a way out of these problems. The resulting impact on the daily lives of ordinary people led to objections and reactions to the market economy, and a sense of nostalgia for the 'old, good times' under the Soviet system.

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[168] *Derzhavnyky* is a term refers to supporters of the state.

[169] *Demokratychna Ukraiina,* 18 April 1996, quoted in Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 47.

[170] For more information on this transition process; see, Anders Aslund, *Building Capitalism: The Transformation of the Former Soviet Bloc* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 20-38.

Language is a very important indicator within the political clashes in post-Soviet Ukraine, allowing the boundaries between sides in the political, regional and national clashes to be seen. The Russian language was the *lingua franca* in the Soviet Union as a result of the policies of the Soviet administration, being the dominant language across the entire Union, and remaining so today. This is a problem for all the young post-Soviet states that are undergoing a nation building process, and Ukraine is no exception. In response, all post-Soviet states have felt a need to develop policies related to language in order to diminish the dominance of the Russian tongue. According to statistics, only 60 percent of the population in the Ukraine SSR was Ukrainophone in 1989,[171] meaning that almost 40 percent of the Ukrainian population was Russophone, and it was easier for them to communicate with the *russkiy mir* (Russian World) than the inhabitants of the western parts of Ukraine. It should be noted, however, that this 40 percent included different ethnic groups (numbering almost 100),[172] and so the statistic should be analysed taking into account the social reality. In the 2001 census, 77.8 percent (a little over 37.5 million) of the total population of Ukraine was made up of ethnic Ukrainians, while 17.3 percent (8.3 million) was Russian, although 14.8 percent of ethnic Ukrainians defined Russian as their mother tongue. In addition, 62.5 percent of Belarussians, 17.65 percent of Moldovans and 6.1 percent of Crimean Tatars named Russian as their mother tongue.[173]

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[171] Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 16.

[172] Ibid., 14.

[173] "About number and composition population of UKRAINEby All-Ukrainian population census '2001 data," All Ukrainian Population Census '2001, Accessed June 20, 2016 http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/language/ .

UKRAINE'S VOTE FOR FREEDOM

This map illustrates the percentage of Ukraine's citizens who voted for independence in the referendum on Sunday, December 1. The percentages are listed by the 27 administrative districts in Ukraine: 24 oblasts, one autonomous republic and two cities. Results for the cities of Kiev and Sevastopil are given separately in the bottom corner. These official results were received from the Central Electoral Commission on Wednesday, December 3.

Kiev City 92.87

Sevastopil City 57.07

Map labels (oblast — percentage):
- Luhanske 83.86
- Donetske 76.85
- Kharkiv 75.83
- Zaporizhzhia 80.74
- Dnipropetrovske 90.86
- Kherson 90.13
- Crimean ASSR 54.19
- Sumy 92.61
- Poltava 94.93
- Chernihiv 93.74
- Cherkasy 96.03
- Kirovohrad 93.88
- Mykolayiv 89.45
- Kiev 95.52
- Odessa 85.38
- Zhytomyr 95.06
- Vinnytsia 95.43
- Rivne 95.96
- Khmelnytsky 96.30
- Volyn 96.32
- Ternopil 98.67
- Chernivtsi 92.78
- Lviv 97.46
- Ivano-Frankivske 95.81
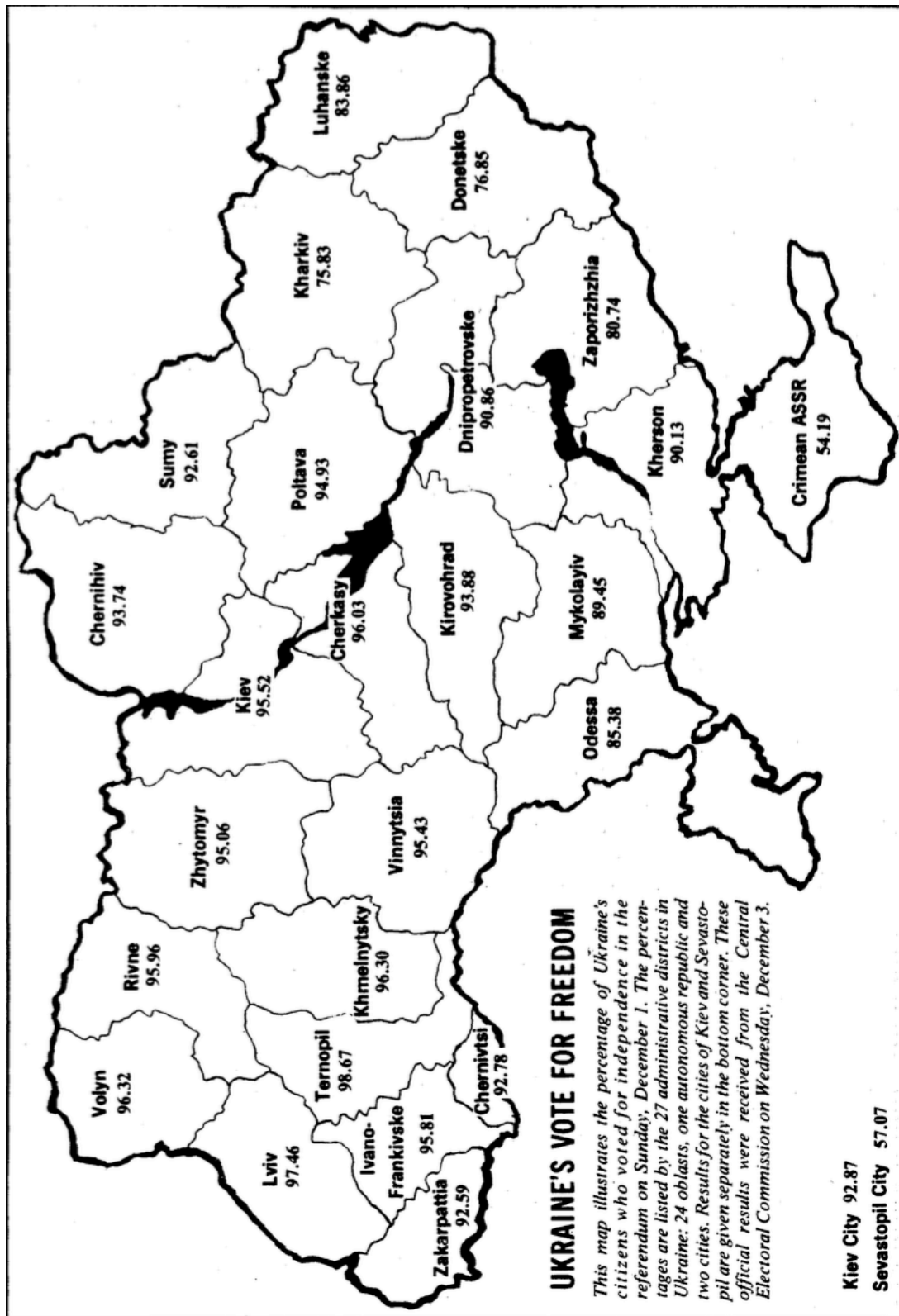- Zakarpattia 92.59

Figure 4.1. Results of the independence referendum in 1991[174]

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[174] Chrystyna Lapychak, "Independence," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 8 December 1991, p1.

One can see in Figure 4.1 the schism that exists between the eastern and western regions of Ukraine on the issue of the independence of Ukraine in 1991, which was deeply related to the different historical experiences in the various regions of Ukraine and the different political orientations and identities.[175] Entering into the mid-1990s, a sharp polarization occurred in Ukraine along the lines of the spoken language, and this had a direct effect on the future integrity and independence of Ukraine.[176] The percentages underlined in the previous paragraph are important to note, in that the elections of 1994 demonstrated a correlation between the distribution of Ukrainian and Russian speakers and the regional distribution of votes.[177] A similar polarisation was observed in the elections of 2004 as a result of a fraud and 2013 when the Ukrainian president refused to sign the EU agreement.[178] In 2004, pro-Western candidate Viktor Yushchenko, supported by the nationalist parties, received more than 90 percent of the vote in the western regions, while his support in the east was less than 25 percent. The other candidate, Viktor Yanukovich, received more than 70 percent of the vote in the eastern regions and took only 7 percent in the western regions. The protest against the presidential decision related to the EU agreement was supported mostly by the electorate in western Ukraine and Ukrainophones, and

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[175] John-Paul Himka, "The History Behind the Regional Conflict in Ukraine," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 16(1), (2015): 129.

[176] Valeri Khmelko & Andrew Wilson, "Regionalism and Ethnic and Language Cleavages in Ukraine" in *Contemporary Ukraine: Dynamics of Post-Soviet Transformation*, ed. Taras Kuzio (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1998), 70.

[177] Taras Kuzio, "Kravchuk to Kuchma: The Ukrainian Presidential Elections of 1994," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Policies*, 12(2), (1996): 133-136.

[178] "Ukraine protests after Yanukovych EU deal rejection," BBC, Accessed June 20, 2016, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563 .

two of these political clashes, in 2004 and 2013, brought revolutionary changes to Ukraine that will be analysed at the end of this chapter.[179]

The continuing debates and conflicts related to the building of a state and nation and the bi-national nature of the country are important. Those who consider Ukraine to be a bi-national state argue that Ukraine is populated by two equal or nearly equal ethnic groups, whose languages and cultures form the Ukrainian identity. They hold up bi- or multinational states like Belgium, Canada and Switzerland as examples of civic nationalism, although it is argued that these states were established according to a balance between two or more ethnicities forming the state. In contrast, there are those that claim that Ukraine is not a state that is established by two ethnic groups, but rather, as historical data supports, that it was established by ethnic Ukrainians, and that Ukraine is a *bi-ethnic* state.[180] In such a state, a dominance of one ethnicity can be observed in the nationalisation policies applied to the other. The titular Ukrainian nation, being the ethnic Ukrainians, which would be the main actor in any nationalisation policies, has been unable to establish political unity around a national

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[179] For more information, related to the different political culture of different regions of Ukraine, see; Ivan Katchanovski, "Regional Political Divisions in Ukraine in 1991–2006," *Nationalities Papers*, 34(5), (2006): 507; John-Paul Himka, "The History Behind the Regional Conflict in Ukraine," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 16(1), (2015); Paul Kubicek, "Regional Polarization in Ukraine: Public Opinion, Voting and Legislative Behaviour," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 52(2), (2000): 273-294. For more information on the correlation between language preferences, political orientations and civilizational choice, see; Hanna Zalizniak, "Language Orientations and the Civilization Choice for Ukrainians," in *Language Policy and Language Situation in Ukraine: Analysis and Recommendations*, ed. Juliane Besters-Dilger, (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 139-174.

[180] When Ukraine was established in 1991 the 22% of Ukrainian population was Russian. Although they were concentrated in the eastern regions of Ukraine, Russians did not constitute majority in any region except Crimea. This exception was recognized by giving this peninsula autonomous rights. See, Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 13-15.

idea.[181] This debate was reshaped after 2014, and finally accepting the demands of the Crimean Tatars, some Ukrainian policy makers argued that they should be referred to as Ukraine's indigenous people in the Constitution. Although President Poroshenko expressed this plan many times, there were many policy makers that were against the idea, claiming that Ukraine possesses only one indigenous people – Ukrainians.[182] This issue is still today high on the agenda in Ukraine, with debate of the issue being seen also in the international arena.

In 1991, when Ukraine became independent, ethnic Ukrainians constituted 72 percent of the total population. This figure at the time was higher than the titular ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, Latvia and Estonia, and only 10 percent lower than that of Russia.[183] It can be assumed from this statistic that ethnic Ukrainians would have sufficient numbers to dominate the state, and that there would be no room for fragmentations or clashes, yet they continue. After Ukraine gained independence, it was the lack of experience among the appointed civil servants that constituted the most significant problem Ukrainian society was at the same time bearing the reflections of clashing historical narratives as the leading main problem. Under their administration, at a time when "Ukrainian nationalism was expanding to the east, from the eastern regions" as a Crimean Tatar activist underlined. Yet, the mismanagement and inabilities of the state structure failed, leading to many problems and clashes in Ukraine, rather than maintaining the expansion of Ukrainian

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[181] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 13-15.

[182] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 11.08.2016.

[183] Ibid., 46.

nationalism.[184] The most recent clashes are being experienced today, in the wake of *Euromaidan*. While establishing a new state, the Ukrainian people are giving their lives in the Donbass region against Russian-backed separatists, aiming to protect their territorial integrity after 25 years of independence, and Crimea is evolving into a nuclear arsenal under Russian occupation. These are the most crucial aspects of the post-Soviet space, and allow an understanding of the failures and successes of Ukraine's nation building efforts.

4.3. A State-Nation: State Building and its Reflections on Nation Building until 2014

The fragmentations and problems in Ukraine can be attributed to the weakness of the national consciousness, according to some Ukrainian scholars.[185] In parallel to this view, Connor underlines that the prime cause of political disunity is the absence of a single psychological focus.[186] Thus, during a nation building process the belief of being 'similar' and knowing the 'other' is very important in raising the consciousness of people about their togetherness.

Different narratives on Ukraine's history have been developed, especially by Russians and Poles, who deny the existence of a distinct Ukrainian nation and state. These two different narratives, that undermine the Ukrainian identity, impact upon

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[184] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

[185] Mykhailo Kivcharuk and Robert Kartashov, 'Po Shliakhu do   Konsolidatsii Natsii', *Rozbudova Derzhava,* no. 2 (February 1996): 14, quoted in Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 47.

[186] Walker Connor, "Nation Building or Nation Destroying," *World Politics*, 14(3) (April 1972): 353.

the people living in different regions of Ukraine. Although the Soviet Union established a Ukrainian state, Soviet contribution to the formation of the Ukrainian national demographic and ethnic structure deepened the already existing fragmentations and cleavages. Omeljan Pritsak suggested that Ukraine was an 'incomplete' nation in the 1960s,[187] and that it was not possible to 'complete' the evolution of the Ukrainian ethnos into a nation under Soviet rule. Today, Ukraine maintains this characteristic, and as a result, this evolution into a nation needed to be organised and managed by the Ukrainian state, supporting the idea that state building comes before the nation building in the post-Soviet region. As mentioned earlier, Taras Kuzio underlines the importance of the state institution in the nation building efforts of Ukraine and suggests that 'state-nation' is a better term to use in the Ukrainian case, rather than 'nation-state'.[188]

Kuzio created a checklist of the key points for Ukraine's nation building process, putting forward 16 concepts that are important for a nation-state and that should be clarified in the minds of the public: (1) collective historical memory; (2) language and culture; (3) geography (National Soil); (4) a community of interests; (5) economic reform; (6) rule of law; (7) democratic reform; (8) a national idea; (9) stability and lack of conflict; (10) an ideology of state building; (11) national leaders;

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[187] Omeljan Pritsak and John S Reshetar Jr., "The Ukraine and the Dialectics of Nation-Building," *Slavic Review* 22(2) (Jun., 1963): 224-255.

[188] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 9.

(12) political will and vision; (13) the desire to be *hospodar*[189] over Ukraine; (14) integration and regional elites; (15) territorial integrity; and (16) foreign enemies.[190]

Smith, Deutsch and Anderson claim that a 'nation' requires seven prerequisite attributes: (1) a compact territorial unit of population; (2) a common history in which nation-state builders act as "archaeologists" who forget, as well as remember, the past; (3) a common culture; (4) a single economy that unites different regions; (5) social communications (through urbanization, developed markets and transportation); (6) print media; and (7) common legal rights.[191] Ukraine can be said to have developed these attributes, and as a result, the term 'state-nation' can be considered more appropriate. The state institution of Ukraine the leading institution in nation building, and so it is necessary to look at the state building process within the limits of this thesis. It will be beneficial to look how the Ukrainian state defines itself and its citizens, which symbols have been accepted as state symbols and what Ukraine has done to unify its divided parts.

4.3.1. State Symbols and the Definition of Ukraine

In the post-Soviet transition period, the aim of the former Soviet states was first to establish their state institutions and to develop national solidarity, as these would facilitate the following steps in the transition. In such processes, states define

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[189] *Hospodar* is the term used for the governor of Wallachia and Moldavia under the Ottoman Porte. Although originating in Romania, it was also used in Russia and Ukraine as a governor title. See, Oxford Living Dictionaries, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/hospodar .

[190] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 52-55.

[191] Ibid., 121.

themselves and their citizens, choose their insignias, processes their histories and create their foundation myths, and then invite their citizens to accept these as reality. The strength of these definitions, symbols and myths defines the level of the unity in society and the durability of the state institution.

Smith writes, 'Ceremonies, symbols and myths are crucial to nationalism; through them nations are formed and celebrated'.[192] Policy makers 'invent' or 're-animate' ceremonies and symbols for the 'sake' of the state and society, while Michael Billig believes that history is constantly rewritten by the elite who dominate the state structure at any particular time.[193] This process is a result of history writing, the practical applications of which can be observed. According to Kuzio, national symbols, myths and ideas should be prepared, and the 16-point checklist above should be well defined in the minds of the public. Furthermore, the national myth of the state should (1) be believable; (2) be created through a social process; (3) have a dramatic structure (a beginning, middle and an end); (4) seldom be questioned; (5) have a practical purpose; (6) be easily understood, making life easier to grasp and accept; and (7) provide a sense of one's self, purpose and importance.[194] The development and adoption of national symbols was based on the social memory of Ukrainians, and was aimed creating a sense of unity and instilling a sense of devotion to the institution that produced the myths.[195] In this respect, history writing

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[192] Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 150.

[193] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, (London: Sage, 1995), 71.

[194] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 203.

[195] For more information on the production of this myths, see; Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013). For more information, to see how these

is a crucial aspect of a nation building process. The national language, on the other hand, as the most important means of communication in a nation, must be protected, dignified and canonised, and so it is necessary to look at both history writing and language policies to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Ukrainian nation building efforts from 1991 to 2014.

According to Article 2 of the Constitution of Ukraine, adopted on 28 June, 1996, Ukraine is a unitary state. The official language of the state is Ukrainian, according to Article 10 of the Constitution, while Article 20 defines the state symbols and their foundations as follows:

- The State Flag of Ukraine is a banner of two horizontal bands of blue and yellow of equal width.
- The Great State Coat of Arms of Ukraine shall be established with the consideration of the Small State Coat of Arms of Ukraine and the Coat of Arms of the Zaporozhian Host, according to the law adopted by no less than two-thirds of the constitutional composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.
- The main element of the Great State Coat of Arms of Ukraine is the Emblem of the Royal State of Volodymyr the Great (the Small State Coat of Arms of Ukraine).
- The State Anthem of Ukraine is the national anthem set to the music of M. Verbytskyi, with words that are confirmed by the law adopted by no less than two-thirds of the constitutional composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.
- The description of the state symbols of Ukraine and the procedure for their use shall be established by the law adopted by no less than two-thirds of the constitutional composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.
- The capital of Ukraine is the City of Kyiv.[196]

myths and traditions taking place in our lives and affecting our social relations, see; Michael Bilig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE Publications, 1995).

[196] "Constitution of Ukraine," Council of Europe, Accessed August 27, 2016, http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/cooperation/ccpe/profiles/ukraineConstitution_en.asp .

The trident of Ukraine was selected as the coat of arms of Ukraine, and its attachment to Volodymyr the Great of Kyiv Rus' is underlined in the Constitution. The references to the Zaporozhia and the Cossack times are worthy of note, in that they are to underline the long history of Ukraine prior to Russian rule. *Hryvna*, the official Ukrainian currency, is also an important symbol. The banknotes carry portraits of Hrushevsky, figures from the Kyiv Rus' leadership and Hetman Ivan Mazepa, who revolted against Russian Empire in the 18th century. Even the word *Hryvna* refers the old Ukrainian history.[197]

History was an important apparatus in Ukraine's efforts to create its own myths and to justify its state symbols. After gaining independence, the Ukrainian struggle for independence throughout history was canonized and important historical figures were defined, with the Cossack Hetmanate, *Orhanizatsiya Ukrayins'kykh Natsionalistiv* (OUN – the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists) and the *Ukrayins'ka Povstans'ka Armiya* (UPA – the Ukrainian Insurgent Army)[198] glorified in school textbooks, monuments and even in daily life.[199] In contrast, the oppression endured under the rule of Russian Empire and Soviet Union, and the Holodomor,

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[197] "History of Hrivna," National Bank of Ukraine, accessed August 27, 2016, https://bank.gov.ua/control/en/publish/article?art_id=37482&cat_id=37437 .

[198] OUN was established in 1929 and UPA was established by OUN in 1942. UPA conducted guerilla warfare against Nazis then Soviet Union almost a decade-long. The successors of the OUN is still active in the Ukrainian political life. See; Taras Kuzio, "Ukraine" in *Nations and Nationalisms: A Global Overview, Vol.4. 1989 to Present*, eds. Guntram H. Herb & David H. Kaplan (California: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 1624; David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains, Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine*, (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007), 79-202.

[199] David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine,* 239-282; David R. Marples, "Anti-Soviet Partisans and Ukrainian Memory," *East European Politics and Societies* 24(1), (Winter 2010), 26-43.

took their places in the 'official' history.[200] During this reform movement and 'nationalisation' of Ukrainian history, classics of pre-revolutionary and émigré historiography were republished. It is important to note that the nationalisation of the history of Ukraine meant a gradual detachment from the Soviet Union. Detachmend Detachment from the Soviet Union was not only an ordinary element in the history writing, it was the aim and a motivation of the authorities.[201] It would be fair to say that the detachment from the Soviet Union ran in parallel to the 'completion' of the Ukrainian nation. A self-confident narrative on the Ukrainian history of Ukraine will be a valid indicator of the completion of the Ukrainian nation.

Benedict Anderson underlined the fact that language has the 'capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect particular solidarities'.[202] Based on its ability to educate national patriots, language can be accepted as the starting point of national security, and so for some scholars like Kuzio, Russophone Ukrainians were considered a weak point in Ukraine's nation building efforts.[203] As mentioned earlier, there is a correlation between spoken language and political preferences in Ukraine, which compelled the Ukrainian state to prioritise language policies aimed at promoting the Ukrainian language in the transition period. The intention in this regard was to soften the effect of the Russian language and to improve Ukrainian as the state language of Ukraine, although internal clashes interrupted the process.

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[200] David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine*, 35-78.

[201] Kasianov, 8-13.

[202] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London, New York: Verson, 2006), 133.

[203] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 169.

It is remarkable that in 1989, according to official statistics, 22 percent of the population were Russian, although only 42.7 percent of schoolchildren were taking education in Russian during the Kuchma period. Additionally, in 1996, 83 percent of the country stated Ukrainian as their native language, but only 53 percent used it on a regular basis.[204] In order to increase the use of the Ukrainian language and its charisma, the Council of Languages issued a decree that was approved by the president on 1 February, 1997,[205] pledging:

- Tax breaks on Ukrainian-language publications;
- Greater subsidies for Ukrainian-language textbooks in literature and education;
- Financial subsidies to the *Prosvita*, *Znannia* and *Ukraiina* societies to help implement these policies;
- Promotion of the Ukrainian language within the school system;
- Support for the introduction of Ukrainian terminology;
- The introduction of "evolutionary protectionist" policies for the printing of Ukrainian-language publications. (What was especially important in this regard was to ensure 'a high artistic intellectual basis in print, radio and television').

In addition to these, policy makers in Ukraine prioritised issues related to media and publishing, and in 1993, Russian radio was replaced with Ukrainian radio, and the Ukrainian state television channel was established. By 1998, 60 percent of all textbooks were in Ukrainian, although the Ukrainian language was not widely used in media. In other words, in the daily life of ordinary Ukrainians, Russian was still the dominant language. During the Kravchuk period, who was known as a 'nationalising' president, proportion of the publication of Ukrainian newspapers

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[204] L. Aza, *op. cit.*, "Natsional'na Samosvidomst", p. 130. cited in Kuzio, 171-172.

[205] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 191.

decreased (from 60 percent to 27 percent), and surprisingly, it was the Russophone Kuchma period that saw the situation improve in favour of Ukrainian newspapers.[206]

In late September 2004, Yanukovich granted the Russian language official status, and gave an important place to the issue in his election campaign. The days following the election, however, would see the start of the Orange Revolution after it was proven that Yanukovich had won the election fraudulently, and consequently the presidency went to Yushchenko. Like most of the protesters in the Orange Revolution, who were from Western and Central Ukraine, Yushchenko was a Ukrainophone,[207] although the Parliament was composed mostly of anti-Orange Russophone representatives. As a result, during the Yushchenko period the Parliament, the cabinet and the president were sides of a debate related to language policies; and the dissemination of the Ukrainian language did not reach the level sought by Yuschenko.[208]

4.3.2. Minorities and the Myth of Separation

According to the 2001 census, Ukraine hosts many different minority groups, 17 of which have a population of more than 300,000.[209] With independence, all minorities

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[206] Ibid., 193.

[207] Volodymyr Kulyk, "Language Policies and Language Attitudes in Post-Orange Ukraine" in *Language Policy and Language Situation in Ukraine: Analysis and Recommendations*, ed. Juliane Besters-Dilger, (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009), 22-23.

[208] For a detailed look over the laws and regulations on the language issue, see; Kulyk, 24-28.

[209] "About number and composition population of UKRAINE by data All-Ukrainian population census'2001 data" All Ukrainian Population Census 2001,

were granted automatic Ukrainian citizenship, 'as in other post-Soviet Republics', as long as they were not citizens of another country. This liberal criterion for Ukrainian citizenship was said by some critics to have had four motivations: (1) the granting of citizenship as an important means of constructing identity; (2) excluding those from the community who are not granted citizenship; (3) restricting the loyalty of Russians to Russia; and (4) limiting the Russian sphere of influence.[210] In 1992, soon after independence, Ukraine adopted a law on national minorities that granted equal political, social, economic and cultural rights to all citizens, 'regardless of their ethnic origin, and supported the development of their national self-consciousness and self-expression'. This article was followed by a separate article stating that this shall not violate state sovereignty and territorial integrity.[211] In other words, non-Ukrainian citizens of Ukraine were granted rights and freedoms by law, but only as long as they remained loyal to Ukraine.

This concept of loyalty is important for a number of reasons. In Ukraine has been a 'myth of separation' to consolidate the political community since the independence. Although the territorial integrity of Ukraine was supported unconditionally by many of the Ukrainian elites after independence, they were also developing a myth of separation in a bid to strengthen national unity. The attachment to Russia of some Ukrainians and Russians residing on the Crimean Peninsula was a concern for many of the elite in Ukraine, although the unity of the Ukrainian state was supported

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http://2001.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/ .

[210] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 93-94.

[211] Ibid., 94.

unconditionally, even during the collapse of the Soviet Union. This myth of separation appeared as a result of the so-called demands for federalism and those related to the Russian language in eastern regions like Donbass.[212] Kuzio referred to the conceptualization of these demands as 'a mistake'. Crimea and Donbass are regions where a Ukrainian national consciousness is weak, making nation building problematic. No mass separatist movement existed in Donbass, although most of the region was Russophone, and the Russian expansionist policies were a source of great discomfort among the resident Ukrainians. In addition, according to Kuzio, the Donbass region has eight characteristics that distinguish it from other parts of Ukraine: (1) There is no demand for political autonomy; (2) there are few issues upon which Donbasites could mobilize, in that nearly two-thirds of the population do not think political rallies provide any benefits; (3) there is no indigenous Russian culture or folk music, nor any cultural basis for an ethnic national Russian revival. (4) Russian political parties have been unable to establish a foothold in the region; (5) Donbass is highly industrialized and urbanized, therefore trough trade unions many different parties can achieve the ordinary people; (6) the Russian-speaking residents of Donbass, the majority of whom are of Ukrainian ethnic origin, are neutral mostly against Ukraine or Russia; (7) as in Crimea, residents of the region have a strong attachment to Donbass; and (8) the people of Donbass are, in time, becoming much more Western-oriented.[213] After 2014, this argument was more or less approved.[214] After two years of armed conflict, there was no mass support of the

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[212] Ibid., 75-82.

[213] Ibid., 85-86.

[214] For more information on the political orientation of Donbas and generally Eastern Ukraine, see;

Russian-backed separatists among the ordinary people of Donbass. While the older generation and those who 'adored' the Soviet Union supported the separatist movement, most had either left Donbass or were struggling to survive under the existing situation.[215]

The Crimean Peninsula is unlike Donbass in many respects. The Russian population on the whole believe that Sevastopol and Crimea should be part of Russia. Unlike the other regions in Ukraine, almost 75 percent of the Crimean population came to the peninsula after 1945.[216] Furthermore, it was the region of which right for autonomy was accepted without any doubt, based on its unique historical character. As summarised in the previous chapters, due to the strategic importance of the region, the Crimean Tatars were unable to return to their homeland, even on an individual basis.[217] Nevertheless, the Crimean Tatars by their widely known, rightful, national and humanitarian movement demanded their rights which were dispossessed from them by the Stalinist regime and challenged the Soviet Union not only domestically, but also in international politics. As a result, their return to their homeland was a significant issue for Ukraine and its policy makers. Aside from the Russian threat, the well-structured Crimean Tatar National Movement was considered a threat by the Ukrainian authorities, and their demands for rights on the peninsula were looked upon with suspicion by the high bureaucracy. Details of this relationship between

Paul S. Pirie, "National Identity and Politics in Southern and Eastern Ukraine," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 48(7), (November 1996), 1079-1104.

[215] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

[216] Kuzio, *Ukraine: State and Nation Building*, 87.

[217] Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine After Totalitarianism*, (New York: Council of Foreign Relations Press, 1993), 11.

Ukraine and the Crimean Tatars, and the changes that occurred following Russia's aggressive moves is examined in detail in the next chapter.

Ukraine's efforts at nation building were interrupted and suffered setbacks as a result of internal clashes for 25 years, although it is clear that the Ukrainian state had made impressive progress. The year 2014 was a breaking point for post-Soviet Ukraine, in that Russian aggression was so drastic that every variable in Ukraine changed, heralding in a new era for the country. The Russian occupation of Crimea and the pro-Russian separatist movement in Donbass can be accepted as a realization of the myth of separation of Ukraine.

4.4. Failures, Clashes and Successes

The Ukrainian state was established by Ukrainians, but was re-designed under the Soviet rule. The demographic character of the state and the borders were planned according to the needs of the Soviet Union over time. After independence, ethnic Ukrainians constituted a majority in the population, but as a result of the anti-national education of the Soviet Union, even this group is not concentrated on a national idea. The return of Crimean Tatars to Crimea, the changing Russian foreign policy related to Russian minorities in the post-Soviet states, and the economic and social problems in Ukraine were all challenging issues for this newly independent state.

Every region in Ukraine has its own history, which has made it hard to break the attachments to the regions and to strengthen the national consciousness. For example, while Transcarpathia experienced 1,000 years of Hungarian rule, Galicia was under the rule of Austria, and in different regions of Ukraine one can observe the heritage of the Crimean Khanate, the Ottoman Empire, Romania, Russia, Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.[218] Taking into account this diversity, Ukraine established a very liberal citizenship law, allowing every resident of Ukraine to obtain Ukrainian citizenship as long as were citizens of no other state after independence. State and nation building efforts were to be realized in line with democratic Western values, for which the necessary legislation was put in place. As mentioned earlier, state building preceded nation building, in that the former was vital for the success of the latter. The symbols taken from the Cossack Host and the promotion of the Ukrainian language were likely to be a successful project according to the statistics which indicates that the ethnic Ukrainians are the majority in the population, yet the liberally established demographic situation inherited from the Soviet Union was in conflict with the state symbols selected from the history of the ethnic Ukrainians. These symbols needed to be inclusive, yet in Ukraine, minorities like the Russians and Poles and their states of origin rejected these symbols, and in fact looked down on them. Furthermore, other communities had very strong attachments to their regions of origin, which had never been ruled by Ukrainians, for example, the Crimean Tatars and Crimea. All of this demonstrates that although the state symbols of Ukraine do not exclude any ethnic minorities directly, they are not inclusive enough to create a politically united nation. Accordingly, as Taras Kuzio

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[218] Himka, 129.

suggests, there are two forms of nationalism clashing in Ukraine – ethnic nationalism and civic nationalism – both of which work against each other.[219] However, outcome of *Euromaidan* challenged this idea and proved that these concepts are not enough to understand clashes in Ukraine.

Ukraine has experienced many important conflicts and debates since its independence, covering a broad range of subjects that include language, political orientation of the state and election results, most significant of these being the Orange Revolution (November 2004–January 2005). After fraud was suspected in the elections, thousands of protesters from the opposing blocks took to the streets, with one side, who were mostly Ukrainophone from western Ukraine, supporting Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Timoshenko, and the other side, primarily Russophone from the east of the country, supporting Viktor Yanukovych. The two opposing blocks mostly established their discourses on two different orientations. Yushchenko and Timoshenko block supported integration with Europe and were supported by Ukrainian nationalists, while Yanukovich supported a strong alliance with Russia and economic integration with the economic alliances of the post-Soviet region. After a long period of protests, Yushchenko and Timoshenko block was victorious, the elections were re-run and Yushchenko became president of Ukraine.[220]

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[219] Taras Kuzio, "Nationalism, Identity and Civil Society in Ukraine: Understanding the Orange Revolution", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 43(3), (2010): 285-287.

[220] For more information on the Orange Revolution; see, Andreas Umland, "Russia's New 'Special Path' After the Orange Revolution," *Russian Politics and Law*, 50(6), (2012): 19-40; Anton Shekhovtsov, "The "Orange revolution"and the "sacred" birth of a civic-republican Ukrainian nation," *The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 41(5), (2013): 730-743; Jeanne L Wilson, "The Legacy of the Color Revolutions for Russian Politics and Foreign Policy," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 57(2), (2010): 21-36; Taras Kuzio, "Democratic Revolutions from a Different Angle: Social Populism and National Identity in Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution," *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*,

4.4.1. *Euromaidan* **(November 2013–February 2014)**

Almost 10 years after the Orange Revolution Ukraine experienced another political upheaval. President Yanukovych, who had been elected after the failure of the Yushchenko and Timoshenko block on 14 February, 2010, planned a free trade agreement with the EU, but he was forced to change the plan under diplomatic pressure from Russia. Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov underlined many times that such an agreement would be a catastrophic mistake for Ukraine, saying at one point, "… my country would not give benefits to Ukraine if Russian goods have to compete with a flood of products from Europe …".[221] After long discussions on 21 November, 2013, Ukrainian Prime Minister Mikola Azarov declared that his government did not support the EU agreement and would not be continuing with the integration process. This led to small protests in *Maidan Nezalezhnosti* (Independence Square), the main square in Kyiv, however the number of protesters increased day-by-day until thousands were occupying the *Maidan*. On 29 November, 2013, President Yanukovych announced that the EU Treaty would not be signed, but instead, and in the following month he launched a new agreement

20(1), (2012): 41-54; Taras Kuzio, "Nationalism, identity and civil society in Ukraine: Understanding the Orange Revolution," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 43 (2010): 285–296; Taras Kuzio, "State-led violence in Ukraine's 2004 elections and orange revolution," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies,* 43 (2010): 383–395; Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption and the New Russian Imperialism*, (California: Praeger, 2015), 49-76; Vladimir Pastukhov, "The Ukrainian Revolution and the Russian Counter Revolution," *Russian Politics and Law*, 49(5) (2011): 68-80; "Ukrayna'da zafer Yuşçenko'nun", BBC Turkish, accessed, August 10, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/turkish/europe/story/2004/12/041227_ukraineelection.shtml , paragraph 3.

[221] See; "Lavrov Warns Ukraine over EU Deal," The Moscow Times, Accessed October 23, 2013, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/lavrov-warns-ukraine-over-eu-deal/488632.html#ixzz2mXJNzrkO .

process with Russia.[222] His decision was seen as fraud by many, and rumours spread that Yanukovych had accepted a Russian offer to fill his bank account. While the protesters were following the news, the *Berkut*, Ukraine's special police forces entered the *Maidan*, and tried to bring an end to the protests. The violence inflicted by the *Berkut* against the protesters brought a major reaction from the population of Kyiv, and also other parts of Ukraine. In the following days, the *Berkut* increased the level of violence in response to the continuing resistance in the *Maidan*. The conflict increased incrementally, and the protests, which had started in response to a governmental decision not to sign the EU Agreement, evolved into an anti-governmental revolt. Violence against the public and cases of kidnapping by the police raised the level of participation in the protests, causing Ukrainians from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds to get involved. A solidarity movement developed with the key purpose of overthrowing the president and his government, which were perceived as corrupt, violent and 'un-Ukrainian', and the conflict reached its apogee on 20 February, 2014 when the *Berkut* opened fire on the protesters. Many protesters died, but the protests continued, growing into a revolutionary movement. On 22 February, 2014, party leaders supporting the *Euromaidan* declared that they had reached consensus with the government and president, who had accepted a schedule for reforms. This, however, was not accepted by the protesters, who said that if

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[222] See; "How the EU Lost Ukraine," Spiegel Online, Accessed June 20, 2016, http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/how-the-eu-lost-to-russia-in-negotiations-over-ukraine-trade-deal-a-935476.html ; "Ukraine, Russia sign economic deal despite protests," CNN, Accessed June 20, 2016, http://edition.cnn.com/2013/12/17/world/europe/ukraine-protests/ ; "Vladimir Putin offers Ukraine financial incentives to stick with Russia," The Guardian, Accessed June 20, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/17/ukraine-russia-leaders-talks-kremlin-loan-deal ; "Russia offers Ukraine major economic assistance," BBC, Accessed June 20, 2016 https://web.archive.org/web/20140406083526/http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-25411118 ; "Russia 'blackmailed Ukraine to ditch EU pact'," The Guardian, Accessed June 20, 2016 https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/22/russia-ukraine-eu-pact-lithuania .

Yanukovych did not resign by 10 a.m., they would launch an armed attack to overthrow him. Yanukovych fled the country, and on the following day the *Verkhovna Rada* (High Council – Parliament) of Ukraine stated that Yanukovych had left the country in an unconstitutional way and could no longer fulfil his presidential duties. New presidential elections were scheduled for 25 May, 2014, with Parliament taking power in the interim period. Petro Poroshenko was elected president of Ukraine and launched a new reform process according to the new values of post-*Maidan* Ukraine, and the EU Association Treaty was signed by Poroshenko on 16 September, 2014. During *Euromaidan* 125 people died, 65 people are still missing and 1,890 people were injured.[223]

After *Euromaidan,* Russia occupied Crimea, and the annexation of the peninsula by the Russian Federation was declared after a contradictive and ostensible referendum under the control of Russian soldiers wearing no insignia on 21 March, 2014.[224] In the same period, pro-Russian protests started in the eastern regions of Ukraine and a separatist movement was launched in Donbass, with much evidence that the movement was started and backed by the Russian Federation. The conflict turned into a bloody war.[225]

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[223] For more information on Euromaidan; see, Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine Crisis: What It Means for the West*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); Serhy Yekelchyk, *The Conflict in Ukraine: What Everyone Needs to Know*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Taras Kuzio; "Competing Nationalisms, Euromaidan, and the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 15(1), (2015): 157-169; Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine: Democratization, Corruption and the New Russian Imperialism*, (California: Praeger, 2015), 77-116.

[224] "Ukraine: Putin signs Crimea annexation," BBC, Accessed June 20, 2016 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26686949 .

[225] "How Russia finances theUkrainian rebel territories," Bild, Accessed August 30, 2016 http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/ukraine-konflikt/russia-finances-donbass-44151166.bild.html   ;

The Orange Revolution and the other clashes in Ukraine lead to a belief that national and political attachments are very important, and these clashes are becoming more visible especially in language policies, decisions on the political orientation of the state and minority issues. *Euromaidan* and the events that followed brought a completely new period to the country, with the territorial integrity of Ukraine becoming a priority in both national and international politics. It is interesting to note that in this new situation, the opposing sides in the clash are not as clear as in previous clashes, and the mobilization of the army, state institutions and the entire population gave the state the opportunity to repair the rifts in society. In other words, the opportunity arose as a result of the recent turmoil for the Ukrainian political elite to establish new methods of communication with the public and carry out reforms aimed at securing the development of new values.

There were claims that it was the Russophone Ukrainians that were the main weakness in the Ukrainian nation building efforts, although recent events have proven that language, like ethnicity, are not the main source of division in Ukraine. While the spoken language can provide an idea of somebody's political orientations, it is apparent that many Russophone Ukrainians currently support the idea of Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty in the ongoing conflict. Moreover, there are many Russophone Ukrainians and ethnic Russians fighting against pro-Russian separatists in the Ukrainian army, which demonstrates that Ukrainian nation building could create a sense of attachment to Ukraine among its citizens.

"War in Donbass," Euromaidan Press, Accessed August 30, 2016, http://euromaidanpress.com/category/news/donetsk-luhansk/ .

Euromaidan promoted a new foundation myth of Ukraine to the Ukrainian nation. Many of the activists involved in *Euromaidan* claim that the Ukrainian nation became independent by its full meaning for the first time, and the event can be considered important for the nation building process in many respects. The most important aspect of recent events, however, is that Ukraine was able to make use of an event that did not focus around one specific ethnicity, but included all parts of Ukrainian society. In this regard, *Euromaidan* can be considered as the event that changed the clash of civic and ethnic nationalism, and the Ukrainian state institution started to use civic national terms thanks to *Euromaidan*. Ukraine has thus had a chance to unify its divided parts for the first time since independence. Those that were involved in the *Euromaidan* Revolution and those that lost their lives have become heroes of Ukraine, and their names have been written next to the country's historical figures. Crimean Tatars hold a special place in in these events, in that while Ukraine and the Crimean Tatar National Movement always had many problems related to the demands and claims of the Crimean Tatar *Qurultay*, the Crimean Tatar resistance to Russian occupation has been a breaking point in their relations.

CHAPTER 5

CRIMEAN TATAR RESISTANCE AGAINST THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND ITS REFLECTIONS ON UKRAINE

The year 2014 can be considered a milestone in Ukrainian history. The Russian political and military manoeuvres at the time were unexpected, and had a marked effect on the regional and global political landscape. The invasion of Crimea was evidence of the continued political and strategic importance of the peninsula in the Black Sea for Russian foreign policy, and the Crimean Tatar resistance to the Russian aggression and the invasion had a significant impact on Ukraine's nation building efforts and political life.

The Crimean Tatars, who are the indigenous people of the Crimean Peninsula, have always had an important place in Ukrainian politics. Their *avdet* (return) to Crimea from the lands to which they were deported and the demands of their well-structured national movement were important challenges for Ukraine in the pre-2014 period. The Crimean Tatar National Movement, became a major partner and supporter of Ukraine after the Russian invasion of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014. It is interesting to note that today, the Crimean Tatar National Movement and their resistance are treated as heroes in daily politics in Ukraine, while Crimean Tatar leaders are being given important responsibilities and are being appointed to important posts in the

Ukrainian state structure. This new perception of the Crimean Tatars in Ukraine has significant reflections on the Ukrainian nation building efforts.

5.1. Russian Invasion in 2014 and Crimean Tatar Resistance

As mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, *Euromaidan* was one of the most important events in the history of post-Soviet Ukraine, evolving into a symbolic revolt against the pro-Russian government that had rejected signing a cooperation and trade agreement with the EU. This 'Revolution of Dignity' took place mostly in Kyiv, and while there were some pro- and anti- protests all over Ukraine, the leading role was played by the people who fought against the *Berkut* forces in the capital. Interestingly, Crimea was one of the quietest places in Ukraine during *Euromaidan*. Some Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian activists participated at *Euromaidan* in Kyiv, but although small groups organised public demonstrations in support of their kin in Kyiv,[226] there were no major public demonstrations or protests in Crimea during these important times.

In the days following the victory in the *Maidan*, Ukraine faced its most crucial challenge for survival since independence. The largest public demonstration related to *Euromaidan* in Crimea was held on 23 February, 2014, when Viktor Yanukovych fled the country. On 23 February, 2014, in the central square of Simferopol, Crimean Tatars organised a public demonstration to honour Noman Çelebicihan, who had

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[226] "Crimean Tatars Support EuroMaidan Protests in Kyiv," The Jamestown Foundation, Accessed April 10, 2016, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=41728&cHash=d1cd3f1e8d675ff85a354f630d6882f5#.V9xQ4jveE6U .

been killed by the Bolsheviks on that date after dissolving the First Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* in 1918. Speaking at the public meeting, Refat Çubarov said that the Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea should be dissolved and re-elected. On 26 February, 2014, post-*Euromaidan* Ukraine saw one of the most symbolic events. After hearing that the Crimean Parliament would be holding a special session to discuss the declaration of independence and unification with Russia, more than 10,000 Crimean Tatars gathered in front of the Parliament to stop it going ahead. The Crimean Tatar protesters were met by pro-Russian groups who had already gathered in front of Parliament, although some Crimean Tatar activists claim that there were also many Russian soldiers in civilian clothing in the crowd. On 26 February, 2014, tension between the two sides reached a peak, although consensus between the two sides in Parliament prevented the crowds from devolving into fighting. Çubarov said that an agreement has been made between the two sides, and an agreement reached not to hold the session to discuss independence or unification with Russia.

However, on 27 February 2014, a group of soldiers who became known as 'green men', and who were wearing no insignias, occupied the Crimean Parliament and the cabinet of the autonomous republic, and raised Russian flags over the buildings, replacing the Ukrainian flags. Under the 'protection' of these soldiers, Crimean Parliament held a special session and took the decision to give the autonomous republic independence.[227] On the following day, Russian military vehicles from Sevastopol moved into a number of some regions on the Crimean Peninsula, while

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[227] "Crimean parliament sacks regional government, approves referendum," RT, Accessed June 25, 2016, https://www.rt.com/news/ukraine-crimea-parliament-government-056/ .

more green men occupied Simferopol Airport and established control points all around the cities. The first control point between the peninsula and continental Ukraine was established on 28 February, 2014,[228] at the same time that Ukraine's military bases were surrounded or forced to change sides. On 3 March, 2014, Reşat Ametov, a Crimean Tatar activist, was kidnapped, and his body was found on 15 March, 2014 bearing signs of torture. Ametov was only the first Crimean Tatar to be kidnapped and killed after the Russian invasion, as since the Russian invasion, 25 others have been kidnapped in Crimea, nine of which have been found dead and 16 are still missing, including Crimean Tatars, Ukrainians and Russians.[229] Ervin Ibragimov, a member of the executive committee of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars, was kidnapped on 25 May, 2016,[230] becoming the first high-ranking activist to be kidnapped in the history of the Crimean Tatar National Movement.

Many peaceful protests were organised across Crimea by Crimean Tatars, Ukrainians and Russians who were against the Russian invasion. In line with a decision of Parliament, a referendum in unification with Russia was held on 16 March, 2014. Statistics show that only 34 percent of the Crimean population participated, while the Crimean Tatars boycotted it completely.[231] There was much evidence of fraud in the

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[228] "2014 Kırım İşgali'nin Kısa Tarihi," QHA, Accessed August 20, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/video/2014-kirim-isgalinin-kisa-tarihi/4059/ .

[229] "Missing and Died People Over the Occupation Period of Crimea", Crimean Resource Center. 2016.

[230] "Ervin İbragimov'un Kaçırılma Görüntüleri Yayınlandı," QHA, Accessed Mayıs 25, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/yasam-olaylar/ervin-ibragimov-un-kacirilma-goruntuleri-yayinlandi/145437/ .

[231] "Crimean Tatars Appear to Boycott Voting," The Wall Street Journal, Accessed August 21, 2016, http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304747404579443341954329348 .

referendum, which was organised under the shadow of guns.[232] According to official Russian numbers, 96.7 percent of voters voted in favour of unification with the Russian Federation,[233] and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law formalising Russia's takeover of Crimea on 21 March, 2014.[234] On 3 May, 2014, Mustafa Cemilev, the leader of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, was prevented from entering the peninsula.[235] Under these circumstances Ukraine did not establish a government-in-exile for Crimean Autonomous Republic, but the Crimean Presidential Representative moved to Kherson.[236]

On the days that followed, the duty of the 'new regime' of the peninsula was to quash all forms of opposition and threat to Russian rule on the peninsula, and political imprisonments started. At the time of writing, 23 Crimean Tatar, Russian and Ukrainian activists are still in Crimean prisons, accused of extremism, participation in radical religious groups and terrorist activities against the Russian

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[232] "Crimean referendum vote could have been fixed, world awash faux shock," UPI, Accessed August 16, 2016, http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2014/03/17/Crimean-referendum-vote-could-have-been-fixed-world-awash-in-faux-shock/1321395082619/ ; "Crimean 'Referendum': Fraud, Neo-Nazis, Over 100% Turnout," Ukraine Crisis Media Center, Accessed August 16, 2016, http://uacrisis.org/831-crimean-referendum-fraud-neo-nazis-over-100-turnout ; "Was the Crimean Referendum Rigged?," Quora, Accessed June 16, 2016, https://www.quora.com/Was-the-Crimean-referendum-rigged .

[233] "Russian government agency reveals fraudulent nature of the Crimean referendum results," The Washington Post, Accessed June 16, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2014/05/06/russian-government-agency-reveals-fraudulent-nature-of-the-crimean-referendum-results/?utm_term=.e46a5f6d63b7 .

[234] "Ukraine: Putin signs Crimea annexation," BBC, Accessed August 20, 2016 http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26686949 .

[235] "Kırımoğlu Kırım'a Alınmadı," TRT Haber, Accessed August 22, 2016, http://www.trthaber.com/haber/dunya/kirimoglu-kirima-alinmadi-125999.html .

[236] "Крымское Представительство Президента перенесут в ХерсонПодробности читайте на," UNIAN , Accessed August 20, 2016, http://www.unian.net/politics/918933-kryimskoe-predstavitelstvo-prezidenta-perenesut-v-herson.html .

regime, although it is widely accepted that they are being kept in prison in order to stifle dissent on the peninsula. The Crimean Tatar activists in particular are being kept under the strict control of the regional administration, with public demonstrations by Crimean Tatars (18 May, Commemoration of the Deportation of Crimean Tatars; 26 June, Crimean Tatar Flag Day) banned for dubious reasons.[237]

During the period of the invasion and annexation, the resistance put up by the Crimean Tatars was perceived as a very symbolic event in Ukraine, and was strengthened by respectful attitude of the Crimean Tatars towards such state symbols as the Ukrainian flag and governmental institutions. On 26 February 2014, Crimean Tatars were shouting not for a 'Crimean Tatar', but for a 'Ukrainian' Crimea', and were waving Ukrainian flags together with Crimean Tatar flags. The majority of members of the national movement, aside from a few who had collaborated with the *de facto* Russian authorities, took the Ukrainian side in support of Ukrainian territorial integrity. At the time of the blockade of Ukrainian military bases, Crimean Tatars, together with Ukrainians, brought food to the Ukrainian soldiers and organised public demonstrations to give moral support. After the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, the Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* gathered to discuss the ongoing situation,[238] while the new government were trying to find a way to work with the Crimean Tatar National Movement bring some of the leaders over to their side. The *Qurultay* nominated a number of people to work with the Russian

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[237] "Tatarlar Yasak Dinlemedi," Al Jazeera Türk, Accessed August 21, 2016, http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/tatarlar-yasak-dinlemedi .

[238] "Kurultay Kırım Tatarlarının rotasını belirleyecek," QHA, Accessed August 21, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kurultay-kirim-tatarlarinin-rotasini-belirleyecek/131522/ .

administration, however the Crimean Tatar people in Crimea and the diaspora all declined to collaborate with the Russian administration – a decision that was underlined in the Resolution of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars on 2 August, 2015.[239] This decisive step by Crimean Tatars, who had maintained the same attitude towards Russia for almost a century, became a part of the post-*Euromaidan* foundation myth of Ukraine. On those days, the Ukrainian army was unable to mobilise, the state structure was paralysed and Ukrainians were being betrayed by the bureaucrats, which meant having the support of Crimean Tatars, of whom Ukraine was suspicious, was unexpected and was considered very impressive for Ukrainians.

5.2. Crimean Tatar National Movement after the Russian Invasion

The period following the Russian invasion of the Crimean Peninsula was challenging for the Crimean Tatar National Movement and its institutions. The movement had emerged during the Soviet period, and its institutions were established under the strict control of the KGB.[240] The *avdet* (return) to Crimea was organised by activists in this movement, and the Crimean Tatar *Qurultay* and *Mejlis* were established by its leaders in order to create a platform that represented all Crimean Tatar people. These institutions were self-governing bodies of the Crimean Tatars, and the associated institutions and their elected leaders were accepted as legitimate representatives of the Crimean Tatar nation by all Crimean Tatars, in both Crimea and the diaspora.

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[239] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016.

[240] Mustafa Abdülcemil Kırımoğlu, *Kırım Tatar Milli Hareketi'nin Kısa Tarihi*. (Ankara: Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Genel Merkezi Yayınları, 2004).

Crimean Tatars also established regional *Mejlis* offices, as infrastructure supporting the *Qurultay*. Thanks to these democratic and well-organised institutions, Crimean Tatars were able to remain unified following their return to Crimea. Additionally, although the national rights of Crimean Tatars were not fully granted by Ukraine following their return, they were recognised as legitimate actors in both Ukrainian and international politics, which allowed them to protect their importance in Ukrainian politics for 25 years.[241]

5.2.1. Situation of Crimean Tatars and Crimean Tatar National Movement in the Crimean Peninsula after the Russian Invasion

According to estimations provided by an activist working in the *Mejlis,* there were almost 80,000 Crimean Tatar Families in Crimea, most of which in 2012 were working in tourism and service industries (65%) and agriculture (20%). The Crimean Tatars attempted to build their own houses and improve their economic situation between 1991 and 2012,[242] as underlined by a young Crimean Tatar activist:

> 'In around 2013, Crimean Tatars started to became self-confident ... We were gaining seats in bureaucratic, political and economic affairs. We were on course to dominate the demography (of the peninsula) …'[243]

All was well until the Russian invasion in 2014 interrupted the development and acquisitions of Crimean Tatars, and in fact the Crimean Tatars were oppressed by

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[241] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

[242] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

[243] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 13.08.2016.

Russia and had their acquisitions taken away one-by-one following the invasion. One of the leading figures in the Crimean Tatar National Movement who was forced to leave Crimea indicated during our interview that the meetings of Crimean Tatar activists, and even meetings of ordinary people, were broken up by Russian security forces:

> 'Organising meetings is forbidden for Crimean Tatars. Our prayer meetings became a new platform for discussing issues. Our people returned to the old methods that they had used during the Soviet Period'. [244]

Furthermore, leading figures in the Crimean Tatar National Movement and members of the *Mejlis* and *Qurultay* face the severe oppression of the occupying regime, as pointed out by one of the leading figures in the *Mecjlis*:

> 'Out of 33, eight members of the *Mejlis* are deported from Crimea. Some of them are banned from entering Crimea, while others will be arrested as soon as they enter the peninsula. Four people (from *Mejlis*) changed sides …'[245]

At the time of writing, Ahtem Çiygöz, the vice chairman of the *Mejlis*, remains in prison without sentencing, where he has been since 29 January, 2015,[246] while Mustafa Cemilev and Refat Çubarov, the leaders of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, have been deported. Aside from activists, even ordinary people are being kidnaped, and people are afraid to go out alone.[247] In the words of one of the leading figures of the Crimean Tatar National Movement: '…they (the occupants) are

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[244] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016.

[245] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 18.08.2016.

[246] "Ahtem Çiygöz Hakkında Tutuklama Kararı Çıktı," QHA, Accessed August 25, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/ahtem-ciygoz-hakkinda-tutuklama-karari-cikti/135911/ .

[247] Interview, Kherson (Ukraine), 01.07.2016.

'choking' the Crimean Tatar nation, trying to force us (Crimean Tatars) to leave Crimea'.[248]

In addition to the *Mejlis*, the Crimean Foundation, which was established to support the *Mejlis* and to deal with financial issues, is also being oppressed. After the invasion, all properties of the Crimean Foundation, meaning all of the properties of the institutions of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, were seized. The *de facto* government refused to give the administration of the foundation access to its property, despite there being no legally binding justification for the seizures. As a result, the foundation moved to Kyiv and is now working out of the offices of the *Mejlis*. Aside from these national institutions, the Crimean Tatar media has also been targeted, with the official news agency of the national movement (QHA – *Qırım Haber Agentligi* - the Crimean News Agency)[249] and the only Crimean Tatar TV channel broadcasting in Crimean Tatar (ATR)[250] both being banished from Crimea, and their offices, property and technical equipment seized.

It is apparent from the interviews carried out in Kyiv that regardless of the challenging situation in Crimea, there is still consensus among the Crimean Tatar elite, diplomats and Ukrainians that the Crimean Tatar people stand behind their national leaders and institutions. More importantly, the former opponents and objectors to the leadership of the national movement now stand with them against the

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[248] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 18.08.2016.

[249] QHA, http://qha.com.ua .

[250] ATR, http://atr.ua/qt .

Russian invasion, and are taking on roles in national institutions.[251] After the invasion, the *de facto* Russian administration managed to gain the support of some Crimean Tatar activists, although the effect on the population has been very limited, and it can be said that the project of the *de facto* government to attract the support of part of the Crimean Tatar population has failed. Although these Crimean Tatar activists have large economic support from the Russian government, people do not follow their suggestions and it is being said that they are no longer welcome even at prayer meetings or family celebrations.[252] As stated by one Turkish official, 'The Crimean Tatars do not give credit to traitors.'[253]

Aside from the oppression of the activists, Russian invasion has had also a direct impact on the daily lives of the ordinary Crimean Tatars, due to their support of the Crimean Tatar activists who oppose Russia. This oppression of ordinary people is a method adopted by the *de facto* government to weaken resistance. One example of their tactics in this regard is to urge Crimean Tatars speaking in Crimean Tatar language to speak Russian in public as a 'true' citizen of the Russian Federation.[254] The parents of Crimean Tatar students who draw Crimean Tatar symbols on their notebooks are 'invited' to schools to 'hear' their ideas about the regime, while there have been reports that Russian students in one primary school beat up Crimean Tatar students for speaking in Crimean Tatar on the phone, and received no punishment

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[251] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016; Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016; Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 18.08.2016.

[252] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 25.11.2015.

[253] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

[254] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 25.11.2015.

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from the school administration.[255] It is also important to note that school curriculums have changed and new textbooks have been brought from Russia, and every week, students must attend *ediniy urok*[256] in which students are being taught to love Russia. According to Crimean Tatars, students are having Russian state propaganda forced upon them in school,[257] and although there are still Crimean Tatar National Schools,[258] Crimean Tatar language courses are being reduced in other schools, while Ukrainian courses are being completely abolished.[259] A young Crimean Tatar activist underlined her fears for her nephew during her interview, '… my nephew will start to go to school, and I am frightened when I think about how they will brainwash him …' Furthermore, Russia is also offering scholarships and opportunities to Crimean Tatar students to study in larges Russian universities.[260] Additionally, Crimean Tatars think that these students educated in the Russian education system are getting closer to *russkiy mir*. One of the initiatives of Crimean Tatars in this situation is a private kindergarten project. Pedagogues have started an initiative in this regard and have received support, and are working with students until they reach high-school age teaching in Crimean Tatar. They are also teaching Crimean Tatar culture and traditions to new generations.[261]

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[255] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 15.05.2016.

[256] *Ediniy urok* (единый урок) means single lesson. *Ediniy* also means unified or one. The name of the party of Vladimir Putin is *Edinaya Rossiya* (Единая Россия).

[257] Interview, Kherson (Ukraine), 01.07.2016.

[258] There were 15 before the invasion.

[259] Interview, Kherson (Ukraine), 01.07.2016.

[260] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 13.08.2016.

[261] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 25.11.2015.

From the conducted interviews, it can be understood that although living standards are decreasing, in contrast to the promises of the Russian Federation, and the cost of living is increasing day-by-day, Crimean Tatars, on the whole, want to stay in Crimea. While some activists encourage young Crimean Tatars to go to other countries like Turkey or Poland to study, the general tendency is to stay in Crimea.[262] All of the interviewees underlined that the Russian invasion in 2014 triggered national sensitivities among both Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians. The patient and peaceful resistance by Crimean Tatars living in Crimea earned the respect of Ukrainians and affected the Crimean Tatar national movement all around the world.

5.2.2. Situation of Crimean Tatars and Crimean Tatar National Movement outside the Crimean Peninsula after the Russian Invasion and Annexation

Although there are some estimations of the number of Crimean IDPs, as Ukraine does not control internal migration it is very hard to come up with an actual figure. According to a Crimean Tatar civil servant working in the field, Crimean IDPs number between 30,000 and 50,000.[263] As a result of the most recent migration flow, it is estimated that there are between 7,000 and 12,000 Crimean Tatars living in Kherson, 2,000 and 3,000 in Melitopol, 2,000 and 4,000 in Lviv and 5,000 and 7,000 in Kyiv. Aside from these regions, Kharkiv, Odessa, Vinnitsa and Dnipro are also home to significant Crimean Tatar communities. In the following months after the Russian invasion, the Crimean Tatar national leadership estimates that, almost half of

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[262] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016.

[263] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

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the Crimean Tatar IDPs returned to Crimea.[264] There are several problems faced by Crimean Tatar IDPs. First of all, the Russian documents issued by the *de facto* administration are not accepted in Ukraine, meaning that birth certificates, new certificates of residence, and school and university diplomas are not recognised. In their efforts to obtain new documents in continental Ukraine, Crimean Tatars face many problems due to complications in the bureaucratic Ukrainian processes. To help these IDPs, Crimean Tatar NGOs have established offices in the Kherson Region, one of which was established in the summer of 2016 in Genichesk, which is 50 km from the closest city in Crimea, Canköy.[265]

The leadership and the headquarters of the Crimean Tatar National Movement moved to Kyiv after the Russian invasion, and established a new form of public diplomacy with the Ukrainian state. The role of the two very well-known leaders of the movement, Mustafa Cemilev and Refat Çubarov, has been very important in this process. Cemilev was appointed Vice President of Ukraine and became the special representative of the President of Ukraine on Crimean Affairs on 20 August, 2014,[266] while Çubarov has been part of the Ukrainian delegations to international organisations like UNESCO.[267] Cemilev has become a respected figure in Ukrainian society and in the international community due to his life-long struggle for human rights, and Refat Çubarov is considered a good orator a political leader. In addition to

[264] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

[265] Interview, Kherson (Ukraine), 30.06.2016.

[266] "Kırımoğlu Yeni Sorumluluklarını Anlattı," QHA, Accessed July 17, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kirimoglu-yeni-sorumluluklarini-anlatti/133643/ .

[267] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 11.08.2016.

these two leaders, there are other new names that are gaining prominence. Emine Capparova was appointed as the First Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Information Policy, while Yusuf Kürkçü was appointed as the First Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Temporally Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons' Issues. In addition to these, Crimean Tatars have started to establish new NGOs and organisations in Kyiv to support the national movement.[268] Regardless of their political problems, Crimean Tatars have gained an important place among the Ukrainian minorities. The Crimean Tatar National Movement, thanks to its systematic and democratic character, has become an organisation model for all minorities. The Movement has come up with a plan of action to protect southern Ukraine against Russian aggression and to take back the Crimean Peninsula after the invasion, and this attitude towards territorial integrity and loyalty to the Ukrainian state is strongly respected by Ukrainian policy makers. In this respect, it can be argued that Crimean Tatars hold a special place among the other minorities in Ukraine.[269]

The most controversial issue in Ukraine related to Crimean Tatars is the 'civilian blockade of the Crimean Peninsula' and the Crimean Tatar battalion in the Chongar region. The blockade of the Crimean Peninsula is a form of embargo on Crimea organised by Crimean Tatars. After the Russian invasion, the Ukrainian Parliament changed the status of Crimea, according to which the Crimean Peninsula became a

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[268] Crimean Resource Center and Crimea SOS are the most important of them.

[269] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

free-trade zone, taking it outside the customs zone of Ukraine.[270] As a result of this regulation, a new trade regime was established in the occupied territory, and the leadership of the Crimean Tatar National Movement came to the decision that trading with an occupied territory only supports the *de facto* regime and helps to strengthen its power. As a result, Crimean Tatars established control points on the roads connecting continental Ukraine to the Crimean Peninsula and started to check all vehicles traveling between the regions, confiscating all trade goods and refusing to allow the carriers of these goods to cross the *de facto* border between the Crimean Peninsula and continental Ukraine.[271] On 2 January, 2015 it was declared that a Crimean Tatar volunteer battalion had been established to manage, support and protect this blockade,[272] and on 21 October, 2015, the volunteer paramilitaries in the battalion sabotaged electricity pylons to cut the electricity supply between continental Ukraine and Crimean Peninsula.[273] This action received much criticism in Ukraine and among Crimean Tatars, although the blockade was embraced by Ukrainians in time and the Ukrainian army and police took over the blockade. The situation of the battalion is still in dispute, as there is a concern that this form of armed group goes against the peaceful approach of the Crimean Tatar National Movement and affects its perceived legitimacy internationally. There are also some

[270] "Kırım'da İki Serbest Ticaret Bölgesi," QHA, Accessed August 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/ekonomi/kirim-da-iki-serbest-ticaret-bolgesi/135043/ .

[271] "Kırım Tatarları 'Abluka Kampanyası' Başlatacak," Anadolu Ajansı, Accesesed August 15, 2016, http://aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/kirim-tatarlari-abluka-kampanyasi-baslatacak/12972 ; "Kırım'ın Ablukası Başladı," QHA, Accessed August 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kirim-in-ablukasi-basladi/139574/ .

[272] "İlk Kırım Tatar Taburu Kuruluyor," QHA, Accessed August 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/toplum/ilk-kirim-tatar-taburu-kuruluyor/141082/ .

[273] "Patlatılan Elektrik Hattındaki Direk Değiştirildi," QHA, Accessed August 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/toplum/patlatilan-elektrik-hattindaki-direk-degistirildi/140884/ .

that argue that even if this approach was necessary for Crimean Tatars, it should have been named and organised differently, claiming that the means employed sullied the perception of the Crimean Tatars in the international community.

The Crimean Tatar diaspora also mobilised in support of the Crimean Tatar struggle against the Russian invasion and annexation, with one of the most important initiatives in the post-invasion period being the re-establishment of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars on 1–2 August, 2015.[274] During this meeting, 430 delegates representing 184 Crimean Tatar organisations from 16 countries confirmed their condemnation of the Russian invasion. The meeting was established on the principle that all kinds of Crimean Tatar organisations and initiatives could be represented (either as delegates or monitors) at the meeting, under the condition that the *Qurultay* and *Mejlis* institutions are recognised as representatives of the will of all Crimean Tatars, and their decisions are accepted as final. One of the key declarations and decisions made during the congress was that the decisions of the *Qurultay* while under occupation would be declared null and void by the Crimean Tatar organisations as a result of the oppression of the *Qurultay* delegates, while the decisions of the *Qurultay* elected before the invasion and the *Qurultay* decisions taken before the invasion would stand. In short, a 'puppet *Qurultay*' was politically prevented. One member of the Executive Board of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars underlined during their interview: 'As was the case in 1917, *Qurultay* institution may freeze its activities in order to protect its dignity under these

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[274] "2. Dünya Kırım Tatar Kongresi Başladı," QHA, Accessed August 15, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/2-dunya-kirim-tatar-kongresi-basladi/138753/ .

circumstances.'[275] This meant that the Crimean Tatar National Movement could establish an international institution under the leadership of national leaders, allowing it to organise the international division of labour in the national movement. According to one Crimean Tatar, many of the Crimean Tatar elite believe that the congress corrected some of the mistakes made in Crimea while under occupation, and resolved many problems.[276]

Crimean Tatar diaspora organisations also started to improve their connections with the Kherson region. In the past, Kherson was populated mostly by Turkic, semi-nomadic subjects of the Crimean Khanate. After the rule of Russian Empire, the demographic of the region changed, although the region was more densely populated than other parts of Ukraine. Crimean Tatar communities existed in different towns in the region, having settled there in the late 1960s. The region was not 'popular' during the *avdet* and after, in that the national movement was concentrating its efforts on the Crimean Peninsula. However, after the 2014 invasion, Crimean Tatars began using this region as a stop-off point in their migration to Ukraine or their return to Crimea. In the early days of the invasion, there were a number of disagreements related to this region, with some Ukrainian MPs suggesting the unification of some parts of the Kherson Oblast and the Crimean Peninsula, and granting autonomy to the Crimean Tatars in this new administrative area. Crimean autonomy was duly granted, and the region could be redesigned to practice the Crimean affairs. While Parliament did not

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[275] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 02.06.2015.

[276] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016.

accept the proposal, the Crimean Tatar National Movement turned its attention to the region.[277]

5.3. Relations between Crimean Tatars and Ukraine after 2014 and the Change in Nation Building

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in 2014, Ukraine gained the opportunity to re-establish relations with the public to explain the new values of post-*Euromaidan* Ukraine. Crimean Tatars found themselves invited to the discussions of the policy makers, and as a result, the Crimean Tatar resistance found the chance to strengthen the hand of the Crimean Tatars in these discussions.

The Crimean Tatar efforts to protect Ukrainian territorial integrity were unexpected for Ukraine, which saw that they were almost the only group to support and encourage Ukraine to struggle to take back Crimea. The resistance put up by the Crimean Tatars triggered Ukrainian national sentiment and consciousness, bringing about a change in the perception of Crimean Tatars in the eyes of Ukrainians and raising their significance in Ukrainian politics. In the words of the Governor of Kharkiv:

> '… Ukraine succeeded as a state. The Ukrainian people have proven their unity; and … the Crimean Tatars also set the tone in many ways. Here, in this very Square we celebrated the Crimean Tatar Flag Day, and today we celebrate a great holiday that is important for both Kharkiv residents who are Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars. They are

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[277] Interview, Ankara (Turkey), 10.07.2016

very dear to us and are the best. We learn from Crimean
Tatar people how to express the will and spirit …'[278]

5.3.1. The Growing Significance and Promotion of Crimean Tatars in the Post-Invasion Period

Ukraine is a young state with no experience of modern statehood, which raises several problems. One of the activists interviewed divided Ukrainian history into three periods: (1) 1990–2000, when Ukraine was trying to strengthen its sovereignty; (2) 2000–2010, when the citizens of Ukraine were dealing with personal wealth management; and (3) 2010 and after, when Ukraine was starting to 'make politics'.[279] Accordingly, the interviewee suggested that Ukraine reached an adequate level of maturity only after the 2010s.

Since the Russian invasion of Crimea in 2014 and the rise of the Crimean Tatar resistance, relations between Crimean Tatars and Ukraine have changed. A representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine underlined that the problems of Crimean Tatars are always on the table, and that they try to resolve their problems and raise their issues during international meetings. It was also mentioned during the interview that a new Department of Public Diplomacy had been established in order to collect information related to the situation in Donbass and Crimea, and to inform the people of Ukraine about the situation in both regions. In addition to these, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs collects data related to human

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[278] "Kharkiv Governor : We study under Crimean Tatar people," QHA, Accessed September 2, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/en/society/kharkiv-governor-we-study-under-crimean-tatar-people/138256/ .

[279] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

rights violations in Crimea and Donbass, and prepares reports for international organisations where they have no possibility of monitoring.[280]

Furthermore, the Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine prepares projects for the promotion of Crimean Tatars in Ukraine and in the international community. It was mentioned during the interview that the ministry fights against the idea that there is no need to take Crimea back, for which it has the support of 47.2 percent of the population. Ministry supports the idea that, '… without Crimea, Ukraine cannot be a strong state …'[281] In order to reach its aim, the ministry uses the national and international respect towards the Crimean Tatars. The holidays and commemorations marked by Crimean Tatars are also promoted by the ministry, including 26 February (The Day of Resistance), 18 May (Commemoration of the Crimean Tatar Deportation), 10 April (Crimean Tatar Journalism Day (in the name of Gaspıralı), 26 June (Crimean Tatar National Flag Day) and 9 August (International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples).

Another important act of the state was the official apology given by the President of Ukraine and the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Crimean Tatars on 1 August, 2015 at a plenary session of congress, after which territorial autonomy on the Crimean Peninsula was granted to Crimean Tatars.[282] Since that day, in official speeches by

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[280] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 11.08.2016.

[281] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 17.08.2016.

[282] "Ukrayna Cumhurbaşkanı Petro Poroşenko'nun DKTK Katılımcılarına Mesajı," QHA, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/ukrayna-cumhurbaskani-petro-porosenko-nun-dktk-katilimcilarina-mesaji/138759/ ; "Eski İktidar Kırım Tatarlarına Yeterince Güvenmediği için Özür

the President of Ukraine and in official documents, Crimean Tatars are defined as the indigenous people of Ukraine. As a symbolic 'gift' to Crimean Tatars, the Crimean Tatar national flag is raised next to the Ukrainian national flag in front of the building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,[283] and a new slogan has been put forward by the state: 'Two Flags, One State'.[284] To underline the heroic character of the Crimean Tatars and their resistance to the Russian invasion, documentaries telling the story of the resistance of the Crimean Tatars have been filmed. Furthermore, Ukraine has given the *Mejlis* 6.000.000 Grivnas (~$225,000[285]) for its expenditures and supports Crimean Tatar media institutions. It can now be said that there are two nations in Ukraine that are fighting side-by-side for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine.[286] Although having no legal basis in law, Crimean Tatars are accepted as *de facto* 'shareholders' in Ukraine, which can be described accordingly as bi-national state. On the contrary to the suggestion that conceptualise Ukraine as having two indigenous people – Ukrainians and Russians – Ukraine puts Crimean Tatars in this picture instead of Russians.

Dilerim," QHA, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/eski-iktidar-kirim-tatarlarina-yeterince-guvenmedigi-icin-ozur-dilerim/138760/ .

[283] "Ukrayna Dışişleri Bakanlığı önünde Kırım Tatar Bayrağı Çekildi," QHA, Accessed February 12, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/toplum/ukrayna-disisleri-bakanligi-onunde-kirim-tatar-bayragi-cekildi/142695/ .

[284] "Ukrayna Ankara Büyükelçiliği Kırım Tatar Bayrak Günü Kutlama Mesajı," Ukrayna'nın Ankara Büyükelçiliği, Accessed September 2, 2016, http://turkey.mfa.gov.ua/tr/press-center/news/48707-zajava-posolystva-ukrajini-v-turecykij-respublici-u-zvjazku-z-vidznachennyam-dnya-krimsykotatarsykogo-praporu ; "Kırım Tatar Bayrağı Her Zaman Ukrayna Bayrağının Yanında," QHA, Accessed September 2, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kirim-tatar-bayragi-her-zaman-ukrayna-bayraginin-yaninda/146292/ .

[285] According to 10 September 2016 currency rate.

[286] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 17.08.2016.

As a result of the struggle of the national movement and a broad media campaign, the Crimean Tatars have obtained a special place not only in Ukrainian politics, but also in the minds of Ukrainian people, which can be understood from the fieldwork data garnered during this study. There is a general consensus that since 2014, people have become more sympathetic and respectful towards Crimean Tatars and the Crimean Tatar National Movement. A new kind of 'stereotype' has emerged related to Crimean Tatars in Ukraine, as can be understood from the words of one Ukrainian student: '… Crimean Tatars do not give up when faced with a desperate situation; they do not give up. They remain standing …'[287] A Crimean Tatar student comments on the same issue, from a different perspective, '… they (Ukrainians) perceived us (Crimean Tatars) as a nation that returned from deportation and re-started their lives from the first step …'[288] In addition to this, there is broad respect of the 'survival skills' of Crimean Tatars, and the political decisions supported by Crimean Tatars with regards to the respect of human rights, based on their traditional national principles. Cemilev's refusal to visit Yanukovych after his victory in the 2010 elections is a notable example of their unchanging political stance, and is an act that sticks in people's memories.[289]

As a result, it can be said that the image and perception of the Crimean Tatar nation witnessed significant change after 2014, and now there is general mutual respect and tolerance between Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians forming the basis of their

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[287] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

[288] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 13.08.2016.

[289] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 13.08.2016.

cooperation. That said, whether or not this mutual respect will be long-lasting remains uncertain, and there are still many Crimean Tatar activists who are still suspicious of Ukrainian policy makers and their authority.

5.3.2. Demands of Crimean Tatars from Ukraine

As a result of this mutual respect between sides, Crimean Tatars found the opportunity to pursue their specific agenda in their relations with Ukraine, which can be understood from the comments of one of the leading figures in the Crimean Tatar movement during our interview:

> '… Ukraine is using us (for internal and external politics), and by using them we should be able to clear the way for our own state … We should be able to create new opportunities for us … these new relations are important for the cooperation between Ukraine and Crimean Tatars …'[290]

The law related to the rights of indigenous people has a key place in the Crimean Tatar agenda. This law, in parallel to the international regime on this issue, gives them the right to (1) determine their own future; (2) establish military units; and (3) use underground- and ground-based resources. The law also states that the indigenous people live on its determined land which land is or a part of its motherland. If accepted by Parliament, the Russian discourse related to Crimea claiming that the Russian Federation intervened in Crimea only after being asked for help by the Russians living on those lands will be challenged. Russians constitute a minority in Crimea, although it was underlined during the interview that with the enactment of the law, Crimean Tatars will no longer be a minority, but rather

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[290] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 11.08.2016.

indigenous people of Crimea, and as a result, it will not be possible to determine the future of the peninsula without their involvement.[291] Discussions on the draft law related to indigenous people are continuing, and so it yet to be signed into law.

In addition to this law of indigenous people, the Crimean Tatars are waiting for Poroshenko to keep his promise related to autonomy, although for this to come to fruition, the reform committee must complete its works on the new Constitution of Ukraine. The status of the Crimean Peninsula is covered in Article 10 of the Constitution, and so Crimean Tatars will need to wait for the issue to be discussed, and make sure the movement is prepared for that day. One Crimean Tatar activist said:

> '… if we could turn to Crimea today and the autonomy would be granted to Crimean Tatars, we will need 6,000 people to run the autonomous state … Do we have this human resource?'[292]

This is the key issue for the Crimean Tatar National Movement in the current period, and there has been much criticism from Crimean Tatar activists directed at the Crimean Tatar National Movement, with claims that nothing is being done to raise the next generation of leadership. This is accepted as a deficiency, and it is argued that there are significant problems to be addressed related to every aspect of the Crimean Tatar nation.

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[291] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 11.08.2016.

[292] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

5.4. Problems in the Relations between Crimean Tatars and Ukraine

Although the current status of Ukraine makes it easy to improve social relations, there are some problems that are hindering progress. According to one academician:

> '… reforms and relations between Crimean Tatars are not progressing due to the inexperience of Ukrainian civil servants and the economic problems in Ukraine'.[293]

That said, it is not only Ukraine but also the Crimean Tatar National Movement that is lacking, and these deficiencies are accepted as the real weakness of the National Movement by most activists.

The most commonly stated problem of the Crimean Tatar National Movement is the insufficiency of the political cadre in terms of education level and numbers. It can be argued that Ukraine has a similar problem, but only in terms of education. While embroiled in crisis and war, Ukrainian state institutions have faced some significant problems, and Crimean Tatars are also experiencing problems that are a direct result of developments after 2014. It may be argued that this has an impact on relations between the state and the Crimean Tatars, although it is also important to note that international support and opportunities granted to the Crimean Tatar *Mejlis* have reached their highest level ever. As a result of this, Crimean Tatars have many opportunities to realise their projects, although there is a feeling among some activists that the Crimean Tatar National Movement needs to be more productive, for which more support from the community is required. The leadership of the

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[293] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

movement has become internationally respected, and their policies are being accepted by both Ukrainian policy makers and society, yet if their political success is not supported with the implementation of projects in line with the objectives of the National Movement, opportunities will be missed. If this occurs, there is a danger that Crimean Tatars will lose their influence and importance in the political sphere, and this has drawn criticisms from many activists who are trying to change the situation. What is certain is that in order to realise this, more people need to take an active role in the movement, including the young educated generation.

Another problem related to the relations between Ukrainian policy makers and Crimean Tatars is the lack of trust, which is based both on past experiences and on the more recent events. Since 1991, Crimean Tatars were treated as a threat to Ukraine, and the state established its relations with Crimean Tatars accordingly. This often leads Crimean Tatars to doubt the sincerity of the promises and apologies coming from the administration. Furthermore, the demands of Crimean Tatars for autonomy and their aggressive blockade and battalion have raised concerns related to security in the Ukrainian Parliament. In addition to that, the well-organised Crimean Tatar National Movement and the international support it enjoys is another cause of concern. In the words of a Crimean Tatar civil servant:

> '… for 20 years we (Crimean Tatars) were like the enemy of Ukraine. They did not listen to our problems. Now, at least they look like they are listening …'[294]

In addition, the war in Donbass has kept Ukrainian policy makers busy for the past two years. Tensions between the two sides have increased over time, and after two

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[294] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

years of war, 9,300 soldiers have died and 21,400 people had been injured by 2 June 2016.[295] In addition to military casualties, almost 2 million IDPs have left the conflict zones of Donbass,[296] which offers a significant reflection of Ukrainian society. After two years, some people have started to say that giving Crimea and taking back Donbass to stop this war would a wise choice for the state, although senior civil servants and most of the population do not support this idea.[297] One thing that is certain is that this type of a discussion challenges Ukrainian policy makers and their projects related to Crimea.

One influential Crimean Tatar activist indicated during their interview that '… our (Crimean Tatars) weakness is our strength … Crimean Tatars are tired of being weak and desperate …'[298] Within the current political climate, the Crimean Tatar National Movement is trying to re-establish itself and benefit from the latest events for the benefit of their national cause – to establish an autonomous Crimean Tatar state in 'Ukrainian Crimea'. Additionally, the feeling of being supported by a state institution after the 2014 invasion is a long-sought after goal for Crimean Tatars, and the belief that they will be able to establish a Crimean Tatar state with the help of the state makes them much more attached to Ukraine. Although past experience have left them a little cautious, Crimean Tatars have stuck to their goal with the aim of

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[295] "Turchynov unveils losses of National Guard in Donbas war," UNIAN, Accessed September 2, 2016, http://www.unian.info/politics/1363486-turchynov-unveils-losses-of-national-guard-in-donbas-war.html .

[296] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

[297] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

[298] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016.

supressing suspicions, which has made it possible for Ukraine to forge a new

relationship with the Crimean Tatars.

Contrary to the century-old Crimean Tatar National Movement, independent Ukraine

was for the first time experiencing this type a war. In the words of a young Ukrainian

student:

> '… it is said that Crimean Tatar Battalion was established to
> fight against the troops of the FSB[299] in Crimea; however,
> no matter how well-trained this battalion was by Ukraine,
> we (Ukraine) cannot win against the FSB troops. It is an old
> and perfect institution. We do not have this …'

The student added, '… *Ukraina tse Evropa*[300] was the slogan that divided Ukraine.

We could move away from Russia, but it needed to be tardily …'.[301] While she

harbours hope for change, the social memories of the Soviet Union and the struggles

against the Russian administration are still fresh in her mind. It is important to keep

in mind that Russian propaganda is very affective in Ukraine, and even the

generations born in the independent Ukraine are unable to rid themselves completely

of the pressure of such propaganda.

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[299] FSB is the abreviation of *Federal'naya sluzhba bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii* (Федеральная служба безопасности Российской Федерации (ФСБ)), Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation.

[300] *Ukraina tse Evropa* (Україна - це Європа!) means 'Ukraine is Europe'. It was one the strongest slogans of Euromaidan.

[301] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016

5.5. Shift in the Ukrainian Nation Building after 2014

Euromaidan was a milestone the history of Ukraine and its nation building efforts, and the changing relations with Crimean Tatars and the War of Donbass have reflections on the Ukrainian nation and state building process. *Euromaidan*, the War of Donbass and the invasion of Crimea led to the creation of new heroes and symbols in Ukraine. The policy makers of Ukraine, who are planning and conceptualising the nation building efforts in the country and re-defining their state, are also trying establish new relations with the citizens of Ukraine and put forward new symbols to replace old memories.

Crimean Tatars, as a result of the resistance they put up against the invasion for the benefit of Ukraine, caused a shift in Ukrainian politics, and have thus started to be given posts in the administration of Ukraine. Crimean Tatar leaders have thus started to earn respect among Ukrainian policy makers, and as Governor of Kharkiv underlined, the Crimean Tatar resistance has been accepted as a symbolic example of how to fight for one's national values. The Crimean Tatar resistance to Russian aggression is held up as an example of how a nation can organise itself to fight for its motherland against a stronger enemy. Internalising Crimean Tatars as a part of the Ukrainian nation and promoting their struggle and sacrifices have helped Ukrainian policy makers in gaining support from among Ukrainians for the post-*Euromaidan* effort.

One of the most important issues in the post-*Euromaidan* period is the reform project and the anti-corruption law. The government has used the reforms to redefine itself in the eyes of the public, while corruption is put forward as a post-Soviet problem that the government is dealing with to make it more reliable for its citizens. A commission was established to oversee these efforts, and Mustafa Cemilev, the leader of Crimean Tatars, was appointed as its head.[302] This process is perceived as a must on the way to European Union accession, while the reforms are presented to Ukrainians as necessary steps that must be taken if the country is to become a European nation.[303] The other objective of this project is to distance the country from the Russian sphere of influence and to strengthen the state institution, with the aim being to become more reliable in the eyes of the public and to attract their support.

It is argued that in 2014, state institutions of Ukraine were mostly designed to complement authoritarian rule. In the early years of independence, Ukraine, as a result of the weakness of its state institutions and the political strength of the president, checks and balances could not be established. By the time the *Euromaidan* protests had erupted, the country's political system had collapsed. After Yanukovych

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[302] "Kırımoğlu, Yolsuzlukla Mücadele Kurulu Başkanlığı'na Atandı," QHA, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://qha.com.ua/tr/siyaset/kirimoglu-yolsuzlukla-mucadele-kurulu-baskanligina-atandi/139669/ .

[303] For reform process in Ukraine, see; "Ukraine Reform Monitor: April 2016," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/04/28/ukraine-reform-monitor-april-2016-pub-63486 ; "Ukraine Reform Monitor: February 2016," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/02/19/ukraine-reform-monitor-february-2016-pub-62831 ; "Ukraine Reform Monitor: October 2015," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/10/05/ukraine-reform-monitor-october-2015-pub-61510 ; "Ukraine Reform Monitor: August 2015," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/08/19/ukraine-reform-monitor-august-2015-pub-60963 .

fled the country, the *Verkhovna Rada*,[304] Ukraine's Parliament, took the power and ruled the country until new presidential elections could be organised. In the wake of these events, Ukraine sought to rehabilitate its institutions, for which a democratic terminology was adopted, democracy was consolidated and 'Western' values were promoted. Although the institutionalisation of reforms is yet to be completed in Ukraine, its close relations with the EU indicate the positive direction of the state.[305]

The reform of the security services is another important part of this project, and is also important in re-positioning Ukraine within the Western block symbolically. The police were considered to be corrupt and untrustworthy in Ukraine in the past, and the violent methods employed by the *Berkut* against the *Euromaidan* protesters were traumatic for society, and led to the *Berkut* being perceived as the pro-Russian police of the pro-Russian president. After *Euromaidan,* a 'Western-style' police force was established to replace the 'old, corrupt' police institution, with uniforms designed according in a 'Western' style, and police officers sent to Europe and other countries for training.[306]

Aside from the police, the army was another state institution that considered in need of reform after the war. The proposed reform had two dimensions: (1) Reform of the

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[304] *Verkhovna Rada* of Ukraine (Верховна Рада України) means Supreme Council of Ukraine.

[305] For more information on this issue, see; Richard Youngs, "Fine-Tuning EU Support for Ukrainian Democratization," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, April 6, 2016, http://carnegieeurope.eu/publications/?fa=63250 ; Mikhail Minakov, "A Decisive Turn? Risks for Ukrainian Democracy After the Euromaidan," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 03, 2016, http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/02/03/decisive-turn-risks-for-ukrainian-democracy-after-euromaidan-pub-62641 .

[306] "Ukraine launches Western-style police force to set a marker for reform," Reuters, Accessed September 1, 2016, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-police-idUSKCN0PG13E20150706 .

army (including a redesign of the uniform[307]), integration with the West and improving its image; (2) and the War of Donbass and new heroes of Ukraine. Relations with NATO and the Western alliance are improving in the face of Russian aggression.[308] It is widely known that military service in Ukraine was an 'involuntary' and 'unwanted' duty for the Ukrainian public prior to *Euromaidan*. Yet, the War of Donbass is a dramatic event that brought Ukrainian society face-to-face with the severity of war. Although, it did not evolve into a 'total war', the Ukrainian army is suffering casualties, and this is having a devastating effect on Ukrainian society. The severity of war and its reflections on Ukrainian society is being used to strengthen public support for the army, and one of the most important symbols resulting from the War of Donbass can be observed during the parades devoted to Ukrainian Independence on 24 August. During these parades, time is given to reflect upon the martyrs who gave their lives during *Euromaidan* and in the war with a minute's silence. The ceremony continues with the awarding of Hero of Ukraine medals by the President of Ukraine to those soldiers whose contribution was over and above the call of duty. Afterwards, soldiers who showed bravery in the war are rewarded with the colours of their troops, with each soldier kneeling to kiss the flag, as relics of independent Ukraine. Soldiers injured in the war participate in the parade, with their 'devotion' and 'sacrifice' to their nation shown to the people. It

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[307] "Ukrainian Army Moves Further West With New NATO-Style Uniforms," The Moscow Times, Accessed September 3, 2016, https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/ukrainian-army-pushes-further-westernization-with-new-uniforms-55091 ; "New Ukrainian army needs new traditions, new uniform and new knowledge – President about the achievements of volunteers," Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, Accessed September 3, 2016 http://www.mil.gov.ua/en/news/2015/07/27/new-ukrainian-army-needs-new-traditions-new-uniform-and-new-knowledge--president-about-the-achievements-of-volunteers/ .

[308] "Relations with Ukraine," NATO, Accessed June 22, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_37750.htm# ; "Ukraine and NATO, Complementary Allies Against Russia," The Wall Street Journal, Accessed July 7 2016, http://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraine-and-nato-complementary-allies-against-russia-1467941606 .

can be argued that the efforts to change the image of the army in Ukraine have been a success, and according to one Ukrainian scholar interviewed in the course of this study, people have started to embrace the army, and show their appreciation through such acts as cooking for them, allowing them free travel on public transport and offers of support from members of the public when soldiers are seen to be mistreated.[309] In parallel, many regional volunteer battalions have been established to give their support to the war.

As mentioned previously, the formation of the state preceded the formation of the nation in Ukraine, and *Euromaidan* was the incident that brought about the collapse of the state institution that was trying to establish the Ukrainian nation. *Euromaidan*, the invasion of Crimea and the resistance by Crimean Tatars have all been milestones along the road to nation building in Ukraine. During our interviews, one young Crimean Tatar activist underlined that Ukrainians had started to take on many more responsibilities in support of the state,[310] while a Ukrainian student pointed out that after *Euromaidan*, cooperation in Ukraine had increased and many more people were working voluntarily in support of the reform process.[311] This can be accepted as evidence that *Euromaidan* triggered a national sentiment, and as a result, unification around a political idea became possible. At a time when Ukrainian state institutions are being re-established and rehabilitated, Ukrainian people are becoming much more motivated to take a part in the reformation of their state. It may be argued that

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[309] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 12.08.2016.

[310] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 15.08.2016.

[311] Interview, Kyiv (Ukraine), 16.08.2016.

Euromaidan, the invasion of Crimea and the resistance put up by the Crimean Tatars all contributed to the efforts to evolve the Ukrainian nation from a state-nation into a nation-state.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Nation building in Ukraine is a process that is affected by social changes and shifts in the history of society. *Euromaidan* changed significantly the political and social dynamics in Ukraine and launched the start of a new age in the relations between the Ukrainian state and its citizens. Since 2014, Ukraine has been going through an important reform process that is seeing the Ukrainian state being re-built. Furthermore, the Russian invasion and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and the War of Donbass have resulted in major economic, social and international problems, and Ukraine is trying to resolve these problems while redefining the nation. In short, in the post-2014 period, Ukraine's efforts towards nation building have shifted into a new phase.

Euromaidan and the events that changed public and international perception on the divisions and fragmentations in Ukrainian society. There have been some theories suggesting that the cause of the internal fragmentation in Ukraine is a result of ethnic divisions. But after the Russian aggression in 2014 two parties emerged regardless of the ethnic and social background of the people. Both ethnic Russians and Crimean Tatars joined the army to fight against the Russian aggression, and there were ethnic Ukrainians supporting integration with the Russian Federation. As a result of this, it can be argued that the sources of fragmentation in Ukrainian society need to be

analysed in terms of the political, cultural and historical divisions in the region, as failing to take these points into account and focusing only on ethnicity and ethnic problems will lead to a too simplistic analysis, and will prevent a true understanding of the social reality in Ukrainian society.

As a result, both the unifying and triggering impacts of wars and conflicts in Ukraine should also be taken into consideration. The war in Donbass and the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea were traumatic events that drove Ukrainian society to unify against a common invader, and as a result, Ukraine experienced a shift in its nation building efforts and was able to begin a new nation building project. In past studies of nationalism, the dichotomy between ethnic and civic nationalism is often used, and this can be applied also to the case of Ukraine, where there was a clash between the liberal citizenship policy during independence and non-inclusive national symbols. After gaining independence, every resident of Ukraine gained automatic Ukrainian citizenship, and as a result, Ukrainian society came to be composed of many different elements with diverse historical experiences. However, state symbols and the foundation myth of pre-2014 Ukraine ignored this reality, being established rather on the history of ethnic Ukrainians. After *Euromaidan*, the War of Donbass and the invasion of the Crimean Peninsula, Ukraine adopted much more inclusive terms. It became possible only after experiencing these common sufferings. New inclusive concepts are being established on these common memories, and the old Ukrainian symbols are being coalesced with new symbols, which and evolving into symbols of the 'new' Ukraine.

Crimean Tatars and their struggle against the Russian aggressor have had a key role in this evolution. The resistance put up by Crimean Tatars was unexpected in Ukraine, but was welcomed. Even after not being given a warm welcome in Crimea after their return in 1991, they fought for Ukrainian territorial integrity, which forced Ukraine to reconsider its citizenship policies. The loss of the Crimean Peninsula, the lack of success of the Ukrainian state and the army during the invasion and the Crimean Tatar resistance in support of an independent Ukraine triggered a national sentiment in the Ukrainian public. In the days following the invasion, Ukraine re-designed its relations with Crimean Tatars, presenting them as the heroes of Ukraine, and they started to be appointed to key positions in the administration of the country. Furthermore, their resistance took its place among the new symbols of Ukraine as a historical event. Crimean Tatars and their struggle, like *Euromaidan*, became an important example in the hands of the Ukrainian policy makers to show their citizens how they should act and get mobilised to protect their state and territorial integrity. This promotion of Crimean Tatars forced Ukraine to redefine its discourse on nationalism, while also strengthening the civic nationalist stance in Ukraine that was prioritised after *Euromaidan*, and this triggered a wave of Ukrainian nationalism that strengthened the national sentiment and spurred feelings of patriotism.

After the Russian aggression, the debate on the political orientation of Ukraine was concluded, and Ukraine repositioned itself with the Western block. In Ukraine, many people accept the country's closeness to Russia, and thought that a sharp pro-European discourse would trigger internal political clashes and problems with Russia. However, after the aggressive acts by Russia and the outbreak of war,

Ukraine, re-positioned itself in the Western block with the support of its citizens. During *Euromaidan*, the violent acts of the pro-Russian government strengthened the pro-European discourse, and the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea, and Russia's support of separatists in Eastern Ukraine served to empower the anti-Russian, pro-European discourse in the country. This orientation can be observed most clearly in the reform of the security services in Ukraine and the re-design of state institutions, while agreements with EU and NATO can be considered a declaration of this policy in the international arena.

It is worth recalling that Ukraine gained independence in the absence a modern nation or a united political community. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the lack of social and political unity is a result of the different historical experiences of various regions, and this lack of unity hampered the reforms and national projects. As a result of the traumas of 2014, new trends and orientations are evident in Ukrainian society; one of the most noteworthy of these is the increase in cooperation and solidarity among the different segments of society, and people volunteering much more in support of the policies of the state. This can be accepted as the start of unification around a common political objective, which is very important for the formation of a unified political community. Additionally, as a result of the process, which began with the repositioning of Crimean Tatars within the national discourse, this new trend is being supported by policies that are more inclusive. In this regard, *Euromaidan* represents the starting point of the new Ukraine and the end of the Russian mandate in Ukraine, while Crimean Tatars are defined as symbols of the resistance against the Russian aggression and the protection of Ukrainian territorial

integrity. These common memories are being reproduced in the War of Donbass, and Ukrainians are being invited to fight against the aggressor so that the country does not have to face the same sorrow again. By increasing cooperation among the members of the public, and by encouraging the public to participate in the processes, rather than waiting for favours from the policy makers, is a completely new phenomenon in Ukraine.

In addition, the existence of a modern nation and political unity in Ukraine has forced the state institution to intervene nation building and to design a Ukrainian nation suited to its independence. Accordingly, it makes more sense to use the term state-nation rather than nation-state in the case of Ukraine. That said, the increasing active participation of Ukrainian citizens in political processes, their mobilisation against the invader and being united around the new Ukrainian symbols and ideas indicate that Ukrainian national idea has become strong enough to unite the different elements of society. The old power relations in Ukraine and the state mechanism established after independence collapsed as a result of *Euromaidan*, and since then, and particularly with the onset of Russian aggression, Ukrainian citizens have become more active and are volunteering their services in support of the state institution. As a result of this, Ukrainian society, which is evolving into a modern and politically united nation, is starting to build its state for the first time after 2014. Accordingly, it can be said that the term state-nation has had to be replaced by the term nation-state, and it can be argued that Ukraine is evolving into a nation-state in the hands of its people, who are today unified around new values and a new patriotic and national sentiment.

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A. Turkish Summary / Türkçe Özet

Ukrayna, 2014 senesinde bağımsızlığını kazandıktan sonra pek çok toplumsal sorunla karşı karşıya kaldı. En önemlilerinden birini, Kasım 2013 ve Şubat 2014 tarihleri arasında yaşayan Ukrayna, artık 'Onur Devrimi' olarak adlandırılmakta olan *Euro* Meydan olaylarının arkasından yeni bir dönüşüm ve reform sürecine girmiştir. Bu süreç zarfında vatandaşları ile ilişkilerini yeniden yapılandırmaya çalışan Ukrayna, o güne kadar sorunlar yaşadığı ve şüphe ile yaklaştığı Kırım Tatar Millî Hareketi ile olan ilişkilerini de gözden geçirmektedir. Bu süreç içerisinde Kırım Tatar Millî Hareketi ile ilişkiler, hem içeride millî duyguları güçlendirmek için kullanılırken hem de Ukrayna devletinin vatandaşlarına yönelik daha kapsayıcı kavramlar geliştirmesinin önünü açmaktadır. *Euro* Meydan'ı yeni Ukrayna'nın doğumu olarak niteleyen siyasi iktidar, aynı zamanda Kırım Tatarlarını yeni Ukrayna'nın önemli ve sembolik bir parçası olarak irdelemekte ve bu durum gelecekte Ukrayna devletinin toplumsal bütünlüğünü kurma yolunda attığı en önemli adımlardan birini oluşturmaktadır.

Karadeniz'de Bir Yarımada ve Onun Değişmeyen Önemi: Kırım

Eski kıtaların ortasında ticaret yollarının kesiştiği bir noktada bulunan Kırım yarımadası stratejik önemini asırlar boyunca korumuştur. Yarımadanın coğrafi

konumunun bir neticesi olarak bölge ekonomisinin ve bölge siyasetinin tam göbeğinde yer almasının üzerinde yaşayan halkların tarihlerine doğrudan yansımaları olmuştur. Bu sebeple, bölgenin siyasetini ve bölge üzerinde yaşanan çatışmaları anlayabilmek için yarımadanın coğrafi, siyasi ve askerî önemine bakmak gerekmektedir.

Karadeniz'in kuzeyinde yer alan Kırım yarımadası Ukrayna anakarasına üç dar geçitle bağlanmaktadır. Yüzölçümü 27.000 km^2 olan yarımada genel itibari ile düzlüklerle kaplı olup güneyinde Karadeniz'e paralel uzanan dağ sırası genellikle 1000 metreden alçaktır. Önemli bir çernezyom rezervine sahip olan yarımada kayda değer bir tarımsal üretim potansiyeline sahiptir. Kırım yarımadası, Rusya ve Ukrayna için önem arz eden su yollarını kontrol eder bir pozisyondadır. Ilıman iklimi sayesinde hayvancılık için elverişli bir coğrafi yapıya sahip olan yarımada, uzun sahil şeridi ve uzun süren yazları ile önemli bir turizm merkezi özelliğini de korumaktadır.

Kırım'daki ilk önemli Grek yerleşim yerlerinden biri olan *Chersonesos* (günümüzde Sivastopol (Kırım Tatarca: Aqyar) şehrine yakın antik kent) M.Ö. 6. yy'de kurulmuştur. Bu merkezin kurulmasının arkasında yatan motivasyon, su yolları ile kuzeyden güneye taşınan zenginliklere Kırım üzerinden ulaşabilmektir. Bu su yolları belirtildiği üzere günümüzde de önemlerini korumaktadır. O dönemde *Chersonesos* ve *Theodosia* (günümüzde Rusça: Feodosiya, Kırım Tatarca: Kefe) gibi Kırım limanlarında önemli miktarda şarap, buğday, kereste, kürk, kehribar, av eti ve diğer kıymetli mallar alınıp satılmaktaydı. Bu ürünlerin yanı sıra yarımadada batı

Akdeniz'de bulunan balık tuzlama depolarından çok daha büyük depolar bulunmaktaydı. Bu durum, yarımadanın doğrudan bölge halkının günlük beslenmesinde önemli bir yer tuttuğunu göstermektedir.

Takip eden asırlarda Orta Asya'dan gelen kavimler ile birlikte bölgenin yapısı değişim göstermiştir ve 13. yy itibarıyla Altın Orda İmparatorluğu bölge ticaretinde önemli devlet durumuna gelmiştir. Bölgedeki Latin ticaret kolonileri ile iyi ilişkiler kuran Altın Orda Hanları doğrudan bir Karadeniz politikasına sahiptiler ve özellikle *Soldaia* (günümüzde Sudaq) ile Sinop arasındaki ticaret yolu bu dönemde kuzey-güney ticaretinde çok önemli bir yer kazanmıştır. Bu ticaret yolu Sivas ve Kayseri üzerinden Bereketli Hilal'e ulaşmaktadır ve bölge ekonomisinin can damarı niteliğindedir. Altın Orda'nın arkasından Kırım Hanlığı bölgenin kontrolünü 15. yy'nin ortaları itibarıyla almıştır. Takip eden üç yüz yıl boyunca yarımadayı, bugünkü Ukrayna'nın önemli bir kısmını, kuzey Kafkasya'yı ve Romanya'nın kuzeyini kontrolü altında tutan Hanlık, Osmanlı ile iyi ilişiler geliştirmiş ve yarımada ile Osmanlı arasında canlı bir ticari ilişki tesis etmiştir.

1783 senesinde yarımadayı fetheden Rusya İmparatorluğu bölgeyi kendi ekonomik planlarına göre yeniden düzenlenmiştir. Anadolu'ya entegre olmuş olan Kırım limanları yerine Dinyeper Nehri'nin Karadeniz'e döküldüğü noktaya Herson adında yeni bir liman şehri, küçük bir Kırım Tatar köyü olan Hacıbey'in etrafına döneminde Karadeniz'in en modern limanına sahip Odesa şehri kurulmuştur. Bu limanlar, Rusya'nın buğday üretiminin ticaret yollarına iletildiği önemli bir ticaret merkezine dönüştürülmüş, yarımadadaki eski limanlar ve ticaret bağlantıları kesilmiştir. 20.

asrın başlarında dünya tarihini değiştiren Bolşevik Devrimi Kırım yarımadasına da çok büyük bir değişim getirmiştir. Halihazırda Rusya İmparatorluğu'nun yeni ekonomik planları neticesinde baştan aşağı yenilenmiş olan ekonomik durum Marksist ekonomi ve yeni değerlerle baştan aşağı, bir kez daha değiştirilmiştir.

1990'lara gelindiğinde Kırım yarımadası eski ekonomik öneminden çok uzak bir durumdaydı. İmparatorlukta başlayan daha sonra Sovyetler Birliği'nde devam eden Kırım'ı bir turizm merkezi olarak inşa etme fikri neticesinde, bağımsızlığını yeni kazanan Ukrayna'ya bağlı Kırım bir ticaret merkezinden çok bir turizm merkezi görünümündeydi. 2014 senesinde Rusya Federasyonu'nun Kırım'ı işgali neticesinde Ukrayna, Kırım ile beraber 938 otel ve benzer işletme ile 901 uzmanlaşmış turizm işletmesini kaybetmiştir.

Turizmin yanı sıra bölgenin son dönemde giderek daha çok önem kazanan bir diğer ekonomik konusu doğal gaz boru hatlarıdır. Bölge ekonomisinde çok büyük önemi olan bu projelerin özellikle Karadeniz üzerinde planlananları için Kırım yarımadası, hem inşaat sürecinde hem de inşaat sonrası güvenlikleri sürecinde çok büyük önem arz etmektedir.

Kırım yarımadası, ekonomik öneminin yanı sıra bölgede askerî politika açısından da önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Kırım, Bizans İmparatorluğu döneminde bölge için önemli bir askerî üs olmakla beraber İstanbul'un bölgeyi idare edebilmesi için önemli bir merkez konumundadır. Ayrıca, Kıpçak bozkırının kargaşasından coğrafi olarak ayrılmış olan yarımada bölgenin idaresi için korunaklı bir merkez olarak

hizmet etmektedir. Bu durum, Kırım Hanlığı süresince de devam etmiş; Hanlık, kuzeyindeki kargaşadan Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nu ve Karadeniz ticaretini koruyan bir tampon vazifesi görmüştür. Ayrıca, Kırım orduları, Osmanlı ordularını Balkanlarda ve hatta İran'da destekleyerek, Osmanlı'nın hafif süvari ihtiyacını karşılamaktaydılar. Hanlık orduları, asıl askeri manevralara ek olarak mevsimlik yağmalarla bölgenin Osmanlı ve Kırım tarafından kontrol edilmesinin zeminini hazırlıyordu.

1783 senesinde Kırım'ın Rusya tarafından işgal edilmesi ,bölgede önemli değişikliklerin kapısını aralamış, Karadeniz'in ağırlık merkezi Rusya İmparatorluğu emrine geçmiştir. Kırım'ın ilhakının ikinci yılında Rusya'nın meşhur Karadeniz Filosu Kırım'da kurulmuştur ve bölge için önemli askerî bağlantılar oluşturulmuştur. Kırım'ı işgal ederek bölgede elini rahatlatan Rusya, takip eden yıllarda hem Balkanlarda hem de Orta Asya'da büyük bir fetih hareketine başlayabilmiştir.

2. Dünya Savaşı, bölgenin askerî önemini ortaya koyan çok önemli bir olaydır. Hitler, Kırım'ın Karadeniz'de bir Alman Cebelitark'ı olacağını hayal etmiş ve bölgede Alman çıkarları için önemli bir üs olarak elde tutulmasını istemiştir. Bölge Almanlardan geri alındıktan sonra da yeni kurulan askerî ittifaklar neticesinde Sovyetler Birliği'nin NATO ve Batı Bloku ile sınırı konumuna gelen Kırım önemini korumaya devam etmiştir.

Sovyetler Birliği'nin 1990'ların başında yıkılmasından sonra, 1954 senesinde Ukrayna'ya hediye edilen Kırım yarımadası Ukrayna içerisinde bağımsız bir özerk

cumhuriyet olmuştur. Yarımadada bulunan askerî üs, Rus ordusu tarafından miras alınmış ve uzun yıllar boyunca bölgede güvenlik politikalarının merkezinde yer almıştır. 2014 senesinde, Rusya'nın askerî harekatı ile önce işgal edilen, daha sonra da Rusya tarafından ilhak edildiği ilan edilen Kırım yarımadasının, bölge siyasetinde ve güvenlik politikalarındaki önemli yerini koruduğunu bir kere daha görmüş bulunmaktayız.

Kırım Yarımadasının Demografik Tarihi ve Kırım Tatar Milli Hareketi'nin Kısa Tarihi

Bölgedeki siyasi ve ekonomik dönüşüm, yarımadada yaşayan halkların hayatlarına doğrudan etki etmiş olup yarımadanın demografisini de değiştirmiştir. M.Ö. 1000-200 yılları arasında İskitler ve Sarmatlar tarafından yerleşilen bölgeye M.Ö. 6. yy itibarıyla Grek kolonistler gelmeye başlamıştır. Arkeolojik buluntular, kıyıdan içeriye doğru yüzlerce Grek köyü olduğunu ve kayda değer miktarda bir nüfusun bölgeye yerleştiğini göstermektedir. Yarımadadaki ilk Roma garnizonu M.S. 64 yılında kurulmuştur. Roma, daha sonrada Bizans, M.S. 10. yy'la kadar bölgeyi kontrol etmişlerdir. M.S. 5. ve 6. yy'lar ile başlayan ve Orta Asya'nın derinliklerinden gelen yarı göçebe halklar bölgenin demografik yapısındaki en önemli değişimlerden birinin önünü açmışlardır. Sırasıyla Hunlar, Avarlar, Hazarlar, Peçenekler, Oğuzlar ve Bulgarlar bölgeye gelmişlerdir. 13. yy'da ise Cengiz Han bölgeyi kontrolü altına almıştır.

Cengiz Han'ın ölümünden sonra parçalanan devleti büyük hanlıklara bölünmüş, bu hanlıklar da yine Cengiz soyundan gelen hanların idare ettikleri daha küçük hanlıklara bölünmüşlerdir. Kırım Hanlığı bunlardan biridir ve Kırım Tatarlarının otantik devletidir. 1453 ve 1466'da Kıpçak bozkırında yaşanan çatışmalar nedeniyle önemli miktarda Tatar kabilesi yarımadaya göç etmiş ve bölgedeki Türki nüfusun artmasının yolunu açmıştır. Ancak 1500'lerin ortalarında hâlâ özellikle kıyı kesimlerde gayrimüslim nüfusun, Müslüman ve Türk nüfustan fazla olduğunu görüyoruz. Bu durum, Rusya İmparatorluğu'nun Astrahan'ı fethetmesinin ardından yarımadaya ve Hanlık topraklarına göç eden Nogay kabileleri ile değişmeye başlamış olup I. Sahip Geray Han döneminde yarımada da göçebeliğin yasaklanması ile Türkler lehine iyiden iyiye değişmiştir.

Bir sonraki önemli demografik değişme, Rusya İmparatorluğu'nun yarımadayı fethinden sonra gerçekleşmiştir. Bölgenin o güne kadar giderek artan Türk ve Müslüman nüfusu, yarımadanın ilhak edildiği 1783 senesine gelindiğinde bölgedeki dominant unsur durumundadır. Ancak dönemin İmparatorluk idaresi tarafından, yarımadanın Rusya İmparatorluğu'nun fethettiği herhangi bir uç kalesi gibi değil, ayrılmaz ve gerçek bir Rus toprağı şeklinde tanıtılmasının daha doğru olacağına kanaat getirilmiş ve yarımada ekonomik ve kültürel olarak kendisinden çok farklı bölgelerle birleştirilerek yeni bir *oblast* oluşturulmuştur. Toprak idaresindeki farklılıklar, köylülerin hukuki durumu ve Türk ve Müslüman Kırım Tatarlarına yapılan baskılar sonucunda 1812, 1828-1829, 1860-1861, 1874, 1890 ve 1902'deki gerçekleşen göç dalgaları ile önemli miktarda Kırım Tatarı yarımadayı terk etmiştir ve Rusya İmparatorluğu tarafından yarımadaya önemli miktarda Rus ve başka

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Hristiyan halklar getirilmiştir. 1783 ve 1922 yılları arasında Kırım'dan çıkıp Osmanlı topraklarına göç eden nüfusun 1.8 milyon olduğu tahmin edilmektedir.

Bolşevik Devrimi sırasında devrimcilere direnen ve yarımadada bir devlet kurma girişiminde bulunan Kırım Tatarları Sovyet idaresi tarafından bölgede istenmeyen unsur olarak görülmeye devam edilmişlerdir. 1921 senesinde, Kırım Tatarları idaresinde bir Kırım Otonom Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyeti kurulmuş olsa da uzun ömürlü olamamıştır. 1923 senesine gelindiğinde yarımadada Kırım Tatar nüfusu 150.000 (%25) civarına kadar düşmüş olup yarımadadaki Rus nüfusu 306.000 (%49,1) civarındadır. Takip eden yıllarda Kırım Tatarları, adanın yerli halkı olarak kültürel ve siyasi ağırlıklarını yarımadada korumaya devam etmişlerdir. 18 Mayıs 1944 senesinde, Kırım Tatarları, 2. Dünya Savaşı sırasında Sovyetler Birliği'ne ihanet ettikleri gerekçesi ile topyekûn Kırım'dan sürgün edilmişlerdir. Bu olay, yarımadanın bütün tarihi boyunca yaşanmış en ani ve büyük nüfus değişimidir. Takip eden yıllarda Sovyetler Birliği'nin farklı yerlerinden önemli miktarda Rus ve diğer 'güvenilir unsurlar' yarımadaya getirilmiştir.

Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması ile sürgünden sonra ilk defa vatanlarına toplu bir şekilde geri dönmeye başlayan Kırım Tatarları adanın demografik yapısını bir kez daha değiştirmişlerdir. 1979 senesinde, 5.422 (%0.3) olan Kırım Tatar nüfusu, 1989'da 38.365 (%1.6)'ya çıkmış ve 2001 senesinde 243.400'e (%12.1) ulaşmıştır. 2001 senesinden sonra etnik grupları ayrı ayrı gösteren bir nüfus sayımı yapılmamıştır ve son durum ile alakalı resmî bir veri bulunmamaktadır. Ancak 2013 senesinde, Kırım Tatarlarının kendi inisiyatifleri ile kurdukları eğitim teşkilatlarının

yaptıkları araştırmalar neticesinde üniversite çağına kadar olan okul çocukları içerisinde, Kırım Tatarlarının %20 gibi önemli bir oranı teşkil ettikleri tespit edilmiştir. Bunun yanında yine Kırım Tatarları tarafından kurulan Müftülüğün verilerine göre, yarımadada doğan her üç çocuktan biri Müslüman ailelerde doğmaktadır. Ukrayna'nın kurulduğu günden itibaren azalan genel nüfusu ve Kırım Tatar nüfusundaki bu yukarı yönlü trend göz önünde bulundurulduğunda bölgedeki demografik yapının son resmi verilerde olduğundan çok daha farklı olduğu ortadadır.

Bu demografik dönüşüm süreci, günümüzde Ukrayna ulus inşasına etki eden Kırım Tatarlarının millî hareketinin evriminde ve gelişiminde de etkili olmuştur. 1783 senesini takip eden bir asır boyunca Kırım Tatarları çok büyük bir travma yaşamışlardır ve halk bütünüyle içine kapanmıştır. Kırım Hanlığı dönemindeki canlı kültürel ve siyasi yapı kaybolmuş yerini gerici ve üretken olmayan bir sistem almıştır. İsmail Bey Gaspıralı'nın 1883'te çıkarmaya başladığı Tercüman gazetesine kadar bu durum böyle devam etmiştir. 1884'te açılan ilk usûl-ü cedid mektebi ile başlayan Cedidçilik hareketi, takip eden yıllarda sadece Kırım'da değil bütün Rusya coğrafyasında yaşayan Türk ve Müslüman halkların dâhil olduğu bir aydınlanma hareketine dönüşmüştür. Bu durum o kadar etkili olmuştur ki ilk cedid mektebinin açılmasından sadece 33 yıl sonra, Kırım Tatarları, 1917 senesi içerisinde devlet kurma girişiminde bulunacak bir aydın sınıf yetiştirebilmiştir. Gaspıralı'nın prensipleri 1905'te *Yaş Tatar* hareketi ile bir adım daha ileri taşınmış, ilk defa vatan kavramı etrafında şekillenen bir Kırım Tatar milliyetçiliği fikri ortaya çıkmıştır.

Sovyetler Birliği'nde, Veli İbrahimov'un Kırım Otonom Sovyet Sosyalist Devleti idaresinde olduğu yıllarda yeniden bir gelişme alanı bulan Kırım Tatar kültür ve medeniyeti, Stalin ile birlikte değişen politikalar edeniyle tekrar baskılanmaya başlanmış ve 1944'te Kırım'ı tehlikeli unsurlardan temizlemek maksadıyla yapılan sürgün ile bu politika zirve noktasına ulaşmıştır. Sürgün yerlerinde inisiyatif grupları etrafında teşkilatlanan Kırım Tatarları, Sovyetler Birliği'nde insan hakları ve muhalif hareketlere aktif bir şekilde katılmış, Moskova'da, 1987 senesinde Sovyetler Birliği tarihinde ilk defa bir protesto mitingi tertip edebilmişlerdir. 1989 senesinde Sovyetlerin Birliği'nin sürgün edilen halkların haklarını iade ettiklerini ve rehabilitasyonları için çalışacaklarını açıklayan Sovyet hükümeti kararı neticesinde, o tarihe kadar Kırım'a dönemeyen Kırım Tatarları, birliğin dağılması ile bu *avdet* hareketine daha da önem vermişlerdir. 1917'de kurulmaya çalışılan devletin mirasçısı olduklarının altını çizmek için 2. Kırım Tatar Milli Kurultayı, 26-30 Haziran 1991 tarihlerinde Kırım'ın başkenti Simferopol'de (Kırım Tatarca: Aqmescit) toplanmış ve Kırım Tatarlarının yarımadadaki haklarının ve bu hakları için mücadele edeceklerinin altını çizmiştir. 1917 Kurultayı'nın bütün kararlarını aynen kabul edip yeni bir icra organı, yani Kırım Tatar Millî Meclisi'ni teşkil eden 1991 Kurultayı, millî hareketin en önemli dönüm noktalarından biri olmuş, Mustafa Abdülcemil Kırımoğlu liderliğindeki millî hareket, takip eden yıllarda Kırım ve Ukrayna siyasetindeki önemini korumayı güçlü teşkilatı sayesinde başarmıştır. 2014'te Rus işgaline karşı direnen en önemli unsur olan bu hareket, günümüzde de Kırım'ın yeni kurulan *de facto* hükümetine karşı en önemli muhalefeti teşkil etmektedir.

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Sovyet Sonrası Ukrayna'da Ulus İnşası ve 2014 Sonrası Değişimler

Ukrayna, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılması ile bağımsızlığını kazanan 15 devletten biridir. Ancak diğer devletlerin ve halkların olmadığı kadar Rusya'ya ve Rus kültürüne yakınlığı, ve hatta Rus medeniyeti ile iç içeliği, Ukrayna'nın Sovyetlerin dağılmasından sonraki ulus inşa sürecini olumsuz etkilemiştir. Bunun yanında, Rus ve Leh tarih okumaları, Ukrayna'nın ayrı bir devlet olarak var olması bir yana, Ukrainleri ayrı ve müstakil bir etnik grup olarak bile kabul etmemektedir. Bu tarih okumalarına karşı Ukrainler önemli tarihçilerinin eserleri ile akademik cevaplar vermiş olmalarına rağmen, günümüzde, özellikle Rusya'nın Ukrayna'nın bağımsız dış politika kararlarından duyduğu rahatsızlığın altını çizmenin ötesinde doğrudan yaptığı müdahaleler ile bu konudaki tutumunu en sert biçimde ortaya koymuştur.

Bağımsızlığın kazanılmasından sonraki bir diğer önemli konu ise Ukrayna devletinin çok çeşitli ve birbirleriyle çatışan unsurları içerisinde barındırıyor olmasıdır. Ukrayna'nın sınırları, Sovyetler Birliği'nin bölgesel planlarına göre suni olarak değiştirilmiştir ve bağımsızlık kazanıldıktan sonra, çok çeşitli tarihi miraslar taşıyan farklı bölgelerdeki farklı kültürel ve siyasi yönelimler Ukrayna'nın sorunlarının temelini oluşturmuştur. Bu şartlar altında alınan liberal karar sayesinde Ukrayna'da ikamet eden herkes Ukrayna vatandaşlığı alabilmiştir. Ancak devletin sembolleri, kurucu unsur olan etnik Ukrainlerin millî sembolleri içerisinden seçilmiş olup kimseyi doğrudan dışlamıyor olsalar bile bu kadar etnik çeşitlilik gösteren demografisinin tamamını kapsayacak durumda da değildir. Bunun yanında, bağımsız bir devlet deneyiminden yoksun bürokratik kademelerin idaresi altında yaşanan

çatışmalar istenildiği şekilde yönlendirilememiş, batı Ukrayna'dan doğuya doğru yayılan Ukrayna milliyetçiliği güçlü temellere oturtulamamıştır. Bunun neticesinde, karşılaşılan sorunlar ve iç çatışmalar uluslararası arenada Ukrainlerin Ukrayna'da iktidarı Ruslarla beraber paylaşması gerektiği ve içerideki etnik temelli çatışmaların ancak böyle sonuçlandırılabileceği gibi görüşler ortaya atılmıştır. Ancak 2014'te başlayan savaş, Ukrayna'da karşılaşılan sorunların doğrudan etnik bir temele değil, kültürel, siyasi ve tarihi temellere oturduğunu ve etnik temelli bir açıklamanın bu sorunları tam olarak kavramımızı engelleyeceğini açıkça ortaya koymuştur. Çatışmaların dönüp dolaşıp üzerine geldiği dil sorunları ve devletin siyasi yönelişi gibi meseleler bu kültürel ve tarihi temellere göre şekillenmektedir. Ukraincenin kullanımı veya Rusçanın devlet nazarındaki statüsü ve Ukrayna'nın Avrupa Birliği tarafında mı mı yoksa Rusya tarafında mı bir siyaset izleyeceği gibi tartışmalar etnik temelli gibi görünse de daha ziyade Ukrayna'daki bölgelerin tarihi geçmişlerinden kaynaklanmaktadır. Özellikle 2014'te, Kırım'ın işgali ve ilhakı sırasında oluşan siyasi gruplardan her iki taraf içinde Rusları ve Ukrainleri görmek veya Ukrayna'da yaşayan her azınlıktan insanlar görmek ancak bu şekilde anlaşılabilir.

Kasım 2013 – Şubat 2014 arasında devam eden ve Ukrayna devlet başkanı Yanukoviç'in önce imzalayacağını ilan ettiği daha sonra ise imzalamaktan vazgeçtiği Avrupa Birliği ile ticaret anlaşması yüzünden başlayan *Euro* Meydan, zamanla Ukrayna özel polis gücü olan *Berkut* birliklerinin giderek sertleşen, gerçek mermiler kullanmaya varan metotları ve hükümetin halktan tamamen kopuk tavırları neticesinde kelimenin tam anlamıyla devrimsel bir harekete dönüşmüştür. En sonunda Yanukoviç'in ülkeyi terk etmesi ve protestocuları destekleyen siyasi hareket

liderlerinin iktidara gelmesiyle olaylar yatışmıştır. Ancak 26 Şubat 2014 tarihinde, Kırım'da başlayan olaylar ve Rus ordusunun 'koruması altında' gerçekleştirilen sözde referandum neticesinde Rusya, Kırım yarımadasını işgal ve ilhak etmiştir. Takip eden süreçte doğu Ukrayna'da başlayan olaylar Ukrayna'nın tamamına yayılmamıştır ancak Doğu Ukrayna'da Rusya destekli ayrılıkçılara karşı kanlı bir savaş başlamıştır.

Bu süreç devamında Kırım Tatarlarının Ukrayna yanlısı tutumu, Kırım'da Ukrayna millî sembollerine ve Ukrayna devlet kurumlarına karşı gösterdikleri destek ve bağlılık, o güne kadar Kırım Tatarlarına şüphe ile yaklaşan Ukrayna siyaset yapıcıları ve tüm Ukrayna halkı için 'dramatik' bir olaydır. *Euro* Meydan, Ukrayna'nın tarihinde bütün farklı unsurları bir araya toplayan ve yeni bir kimlik veren, çok önemli bir olaydır. Kırım Tatarları ise bu süreç içerisinde Ukrayna devleti tarafından Rusya'ya karşı onurlu direnişin bir sembolü haline getirilmiştir ve bu Ukrayna'nın vatandaşları ile yeniden kurduğu ilişkilerde önemli bir dönüm noktasıdır. *Euro* Meydan, güçlü bir siyasi sembol olarak, Ukrayna'nın bağımsızlığını tam anlamıyla kazandığı olay olarak lanse edilmekte ve yeni demokratik Ukrayna'nın bu olaylar sırasında Ukrayna halkının tüm unsurlarının gösterdiği fedakarlıklar sayesinde doğduğu anlatılmaktadır.

Ancak bugüne kadar süregelen çatışmaların ve daha önce Turuncu Devrim'de olduğu gibi kolay kaybedilen zaferlerin anıları hâlâ taze olmakla birlikte bütün Sovyet sonrası coğrafyada devlete ve idarecilere karşı süregelen güvensizlik, bu son dönemdeki reform hareketlerini yavaşlatmaktadır. Kırım Tatarları ile daha önce

şüphe ve güvensizlik üzerine kurulan ilişkiler değiştirilmeye çalışılsa da eski hatıraların unutulması için Ukrayna'nın zamana ihtiyacı olduğu açıktır. Ancak bu reform süreci ve Kırım Tatarları gibi tamamıyla farklı bir geçmişten gelen bir azınlık ile güven ve karşılıklı anlayış temeline taşınmak istenen ilişkiler, Sovyetler Birliği sonrası Ukrayna'da kurulan ancak zamanla işlemez hale gelen toplumsal düzenin yeni baştan inşa edilebilmesi için önemlidir. Bu sürecin başarısının kapsayıcı ve bütüncül bir ulus devlet söyleminin oluşturulması için de oldukça önemli olduğu açıktır ve Kırım Tatarları ile kurulan yeni ilişkilerin bu söylemin oluşumundaki ilk adım olduğu söylenilebilir.

B. TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

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Soyadı : ŞAHİN
Adı : Fethi Kurtiy
Bölümü : Avrasya Çalışmaları

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