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# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**THE CRIMEAN TATARS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON  
THE 'TRIANGLE OF CONFLICT' —  
RUSSIA-CRIMEA-UKRAINE**

by

Igor Davydov

March 2008

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**THE CRIMEAN TATARS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE ‘TRIANGLE OF  
CONFLICT’ —RUSSIA-CRIMEA-UKRAINE**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES  
(CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS)**

from the

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## **ABSTRACT**

The dissolution of the Soviet Union brought about multidimensional problems to the former republics of the USSR and their inhabitants. In 1990s Ukraine, Crimea became a center of conflict between Ukraine and Russia over the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet and Crimea itself, perceived as historically their own by both sides of the conflict. Local Crimean authorities took advantage of the specificity of a demographic situation in Crimea where Ukrainians, the titular nation, are in the minority and considerably Russified to claim for autonomy. Later, they attempted to secede from Ukraine. At the same time, the Crimean Tatar influx from exile, orchestrated by the Stalin regime in 1944, further exacerbated the ‘triangle of conflict’ between the dyads Russia-Ukraine and Crimea-Ukraine. The Crimean Tatars, currently 12 percent of the Crimean population, proclaimed Crimea the national territory of the Crimean Tatar people, on which they alone possess the right to self government and claimed greater rights for themselves as allegedly the most indigenous people in Crimea, while the rest are colonizers.

This thesis explains the historical developments in Crimea and attempts to draw implications to the Ukrainian government in dealing with Crimean Tatar nationalism which seems to be overcoming the problems within the ‘triangle of conflict,’ that was so sharp in the 1990s.



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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. PURPOSE**

Since the demise of the Soviet Union (USSR) in 1991 and the emergence of the newly independent states (NIS), Russia has employed various techniques to preserve its dominance over them. It is very important for Russia to keep Ukraine under its influence because of Ukraine's exceptional strategic location. In the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, Russia, with a subordinated Ukraine, becomes an empire, and without it, ceases to be one.<sup>1</sup>

Russia and Ukraine are of equal importance to each other.<sup>2</sup> First, Ukraine and Russia are economically interdependent. The biggest disparity lays in Ukraine's vast dependence on Russian energy sources. However, Ukraine transports the majority of Russian oil and natural gas to Europe, making Russia almost equally dependant on Ukraine in commercial terms. Both countries are major trading partners. Second, Ukraine serves as a buffer separating Russia from an expanded NATO. This is true both on an emotional level and a physical one. Having its former adversary (NATO) present in a neighboring republic is a threat to the psyche as much as it is to national security. On a personal level, both Russians and Ukrainians have relatives on the opposite side of the border.

Russia has tried to exercise pressure upon Ukraine from the very beginning of its independence. The majority of disputes between the two states have been settled. The Crimea and the issues of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (RBSF) based there still remain an important outstanding issue in diplomatic relations between the states.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in Paul J. D'Anieri et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> John (Ivan) Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine and Its Future Security," in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, ed. Maria Drohobycky (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995), 135.



Besides the issues of the RBSF in Ukrainian territory, the so-called ‘triangle of conflict’<sup>4</sup> — Russia-Crimea-Ukraine — brings certain difficulties to Ukraine’s state-building efforts. It is the Crimean Tatars who brought another dimension to the current instability in Crimea. This thesis will examine the influence of both the Crimean Tatar influx to Ukrainian Crimea from exile and the RBSF, primarily based in Ukraine, on the ‘triangle of conflict’ and each other.

## **B. IMPORTANCE**

A stable, predictable, and democratic Ukraine is of vital importance for the West and particularly to the stability and security in the EU. It is a “key-stone in the arch of security in Central Europe” because instability within a state with such territory and strategic location could easily trigger the same in the young democracies of Central Europe.<sup>5</sup> Current relations between Ukraine and Russia are not good. During almost every disagreement between the two countries, the issues of Crimea and the RBSF resurface. According to Jaworski, both security analysts and international news media have highlighted Crimea as “a flash point of tensions between Ukraine and Russia.”<sup>6</sup> Once thought to be a “settled issue,” Ukraine and Russia are far from a lasting resolution to the controversies over the basing of RBSF in the Crimean peninsula and other issues in the Black Sea region.

The status and fate of the Crimean Tatars has added a further layer of instability to an already troublesome region. Historically, the Tatars are the most numerous “indigenous” population in modern Crimea.<sup>7</sup> Historians consider them to be the descendants of the Mongols, who occupied most of contemporary Russia and Ukraine in the thirteenth century. By the fifteenth century the Crimean Tatars had become a separately distinguished national group, forming the Crimean Khanate, and occupying the

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<sup>4</sup> The term ‘triangle of conflict’ is used in several works of Taras Kuzio to explain contemporary interrelations in triangle Russia-Crimea-Ukraine.

<sup>5</sup> D’Anieri et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine*, 1.

<sup>6</sup> Jaworsky. “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine,” 135.

<sup>7</sup> Justin Burke, *Crimean Tatars: Repatriation and Conflict Prevention* (New York, NY: the Open Society Institute, 1996), 17.

territory of Crimean peninsula itself and Black Sea coastal areas. The Khanate reached its climax under the Ottoman Empire during the sixteenth century. By the eighteenth century, modernized Russia fought the Crimean Tatar Khanate along with the declining Turkish Empire. In 1783, Crimea was annexed by Russia. The newly conquered territories became Russified.

Despite Russia's moderate tolerance toward the Tatars' religious traditions, they emigrated in large numbers to nearby Turkey. In 1783, "Tatars comprised about 83 percent of the peninsula population...by 1897, their share had plummeted to 34 percent, while Russians and Ukrainians comprised almost 45 percent."<sup>8</sup> The late nineteenth and early twentieth century marked the reemergence of the Tatar intelligentsia. After the Communist revolution of 1917 Crimean Tatars were under the constant purge of repressive policy. In 1941, when the Germans took over Crimea, most Tatars openly supported them up until the time the Germans started to repress them. Soviet troops retook Crimea in 1944 and Stalin decided to deport the Crimean Tatars to 'special settlements' in Central Asia and Siberia, in retaliation for their collaboration with Germany (a fate shared by many Chechens as well). After the death of Stalin, the majority of deported nationalities were rehabilitated by Khrushchev, but Crimean Tatars were among the exceptions. 1989 was thus a turning point in the life of Crimean Tatars, because they were granted the right to return to Crimea.

The influx of Crimean Tatars to the peninsula created many problems of social, political, and economic character, which became hard issues to be resolved for the Ukrainian authorities. Consequently, these problems generated unrest among the Tatars which was directed against the Slavs. This thesis hypothesizes that the presence of the RBSF in Ukraine can not be a stabilizing factor against the desire of Crimean Tatars to make Crimea autonomous within Ukraine and subsequently pursue full independence.

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<sup>8</sup> Burke, *Crimean Tatars*, 21.

## C. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Survey of Prior Work on the Question

The Crimean question is of paramount importance for the internal stability of Ukraine.<sup>9</sup> Many scholars compare the potential for ethnic conflict in Crimea with the one in former Yugoslavia.<sup>10</sup> Relations between Ukraine and Russia are characterized by considerable ambiguity. Scholarly disputes, relevant to this thesis, have been focused on two areas. First, a number of academics see the presence of the RBSF in Crimea as a destabilizing factor for Ukraine. Mark Galeotti writes that “the presence of the Black Sea Fleet [Russian]...created a further complication [for internal ethno-cultural divisions and for the weakness of the Ukrainian state].”<sup>11</sup> John Jaworski considers the RBSF in Crimea as mostly a destabilizing factor for Ukraine.<sup>12</sup> Primarily, he refers to an example of Moldova’s Trans-Dniestria region where the Russian troops that are stationed there intervened into a conflict supporting the Russian population in Moldova against the Moldovan nationalists. Additionally, a number of personnel of the Black Sea Fleet<sup>13</sup> have been allowed to stand as candidates for office in both the Crimean Supreme Council and the Sevastopol City Council, where they formed a military lobby. It appears absurd that Russian citizens were allowed to participate in governing the Ukrainian administrative body. Furthermore, the existence of the RBSF military bases in Crimea allows Russia to influence developments in the Black Sea region. If tensions between Russia and Ukraine escalate, it is more convenient for Russia, in order to control

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<sup>9</sup> Jaworsky, “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine,” 135-156.

<sup>10</sup> James Sherr, “After Yugoslavia: Whither Ukraine?” in *Between Russia and the West: Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine*, ed. Kurt R. Spillmann (Europaischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, Bern: Peter Lang AG, 1999), 142; Taras Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy* (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 69-70.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Galeotti, “The Challenge of ‘soft security’: crime, corruption, and chaos,” in *New Security Challenges in Post Communist Europe*, ed. Andrew Cottey, et al. (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002), 164-165.

<sup>12</sup> Jaworsky, “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine,” 137-139.

<sup>13</sup> This instance has been drawn from the times of 1994, when the Black Sea Fleet has not been divided yet. Today, the similar situation is impossible. The citizens of Ukraine only can participate in Ukrainian elections.

maritime trade, to project force into Crimea and the entire Ukrainian Black Sea shore from Crimea than from significantly more distant Novorossiysk.<sup>14</sup>

Trade, especially oil and natural gas, is crucial for Ukraine to diversify its sources of energy, reducing the Russian influence over the Ukrainian economy. Taras Kuzio stresses the destabilizing effect of the Russian military presence in Crimea.<sup>15</sup> He points out that the size of the Russian military in Crimea is sufficient to fuel a conflict between Russia and Ukraine. However, he insists that Russia is neither in the right condition to begin a full-scale military conflict nor has the intention to do so. Roman Solchanyk considers the continued Russian military presence in Ukrainian territory as the sign of Moscow's military and geostrategic interest to the region. The bilateral agreements on the issues of the division and basing of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF), signed in 1997, did not resolve the disputes, but rather postponed them until 2017, when the formal rights for the RBSF basing in Ukraine will expire.<sup>16</sup> Sherman Garnett believes that as long as the issues pertaining to the RBSF on Ukrainian territory remain important, its personnel and respective military units will represent a possible source of conflict in Crimea.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, he named current ethnic, social, and economic tensions in Crimea exacerbated by the declining RBSF as the "combustive mixture."<sup>18</sup> Igor Zevelev noted that as of 2001 the issue of ownership of the warm water port of Sevastopol was still contested and that "the presence of the Black Sea Fleet [Russian] added a military dimension to the controversy."<sup>19</sup> Victor Kremenjuk stresses that the vast disagreements over the issues of the Black Sea Fleet have been managed peacefully with the employment of diplomatic

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<sup>14</sup> Victor Myasnikov, "Chernomorslii Flot Gotovyat k Evacuatsii: Novuyu Bazu Speshno Stroyat v Novorossiiske za 2 Milliarda Dollarov," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, March 10, 2006. Available at [http://www.ng.ru/politics/2006-03-10/1\\_flot.html#](http://www.ng.ru/politics/2006-03-10/1_flot.html#) (accessed October 10, 2007). According to Russia's plans, Novorossiysk will become the main base for the RBSF by 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*, 65-66, 148n38.

<sup>16</sup> Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia: the Post-Soviet Transition* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.), 138.

<sup>17</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1997), 73.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>19</sup> Igor Zevelev, "Redefinition of Nation, Security, and Stability," in *Russia in the New Century: Stability and Disorder*, ed. Victoria E. Bonnell and George W. Brelauer (Boulder, Colorado: Westview press, 2001), 279.

means, preventing the emergence of a serious conflict.<sup>20</sup> However, the disputes are still far from resolved.<sup>21</sup> Garnett points out that the postponement of the final decision on the RBSF basing issues in Ukraine until “at least” 2017 remains the “source of external instability on the peninsula [Crimean].”<sup>22</sup>

The second academic debate addresses the obviously contentious question: does the presence of RBSF on the Ukrainian territory have a stabilizing effect on the situation in Crimea? The Russian military claims the RBSF in Crimea is a stabilizing factor.<sup>23</sup> According to this view, the RBSF defends the southern flanks of Russia and Ukraine against rising threats from Turkey, the long-term rival of Russia, expelled from Crimea in 1783. Anatol Lieven does not take a position regarding the issue of the stabilizing effect of the RBSF in Ukraine; he views the RBSF as neutral in its effect on the stability of Crimea.<sup>24</sup> Paul D’Anieri, Robert Kravchuk, and Taras Kuzio, in a discussion about the “Problems and Prospects for Ukraine in the Twenty-First Century,” do not mention the RBSF, stationed in Ukraine, as a potential source of conflict.<sup>25</sup>

## **2. Major Questions and Debate**

Both schools agree that the RBSF, based in Ukraine, affects Ukrainian political, social, and economic life. It also affects Russian-Ukrainian relations. The schools identify a handful of positive and negative effects of the RBSF presence in the Ukrainian territory. However, an impact of the Russian troops stationed in Ukraine on the behavior of the Crimean Tatars has not yet been studied. The Crimean Tatars strongly supported Ukrainian authorities in the struggle against the movement that wanted Crimea to secede

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<sup>20</sup> Victor A. Kremenjuk, *Conflicts in and Around Russia: Nation-Building in Difficult Times* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 118.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, “Incomplete Settlement,” in *Russia and the West: the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security Environment*, ed. Alexey Arbatov, et al. (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), 141.

<sup>23</sup> Jaworsky, “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine,” 135.

<sup>24</sup> Anatol Lieven, *Ukraine & Russia: a Fraternal Rivalry* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1999), 130.

<sup>25</sup> D’Anieri et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine*, 262-273.

from Ukraine and join the Russian Federation.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, they publicly expressed their willingness to demand a broad autonomy within Ukraine with possible further steps to full independence.<sup>27</sup> Ukraine's experience with the pro-Russian separatism of the 1990s in Crimea demonstrated the difficulties in dealing with separatism. However, pro-Russian separatism was peaceful.<sup>28</sup> In contrast to the sixty-seven percent share of Russians in the Crimean population, the Crimean Tatars, twelve percent of the population, often use violence in pursuit of their political and economic goals; they are supported by other Muslim states, and sometime in the 1990s the Chechens began conducting actions in Crimea.<sup>29</sup> Will Ukrainian authorities be able to control the situation in Crimea in case of a large scale Crimean Tatars uprising? Does the RBSF play the role of a deterrent against the Tatars? What are the ways to prevent ethnic separatism in Crimea and to make constitutional the temporary character of the RBSF in the Ukrainian territory? What will the consequences be for Ukraine in case of granting the Crimean Tatars a status of 'indigenous people' in Crimea?

#### **D. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES**

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

The bulk of the sources for this thesis will be secondary sources (books, news media and other internet resources and journals). This thesis is also going to use some primary sources – interviews with and statements of officials. As the other primary source, this thesis will use some published official documents from Czarist and Soviet

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<sup>26</sup> Oxana Shevel, "Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian state: the challenge of politics, the use of law, and the meaning of rhetoric," (paper presented at the Association for the Study of the Nationalities (ASN) Fifth Annual World Convention, Columbia University, New York, NY, April 13-15, 2000, <http://www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/oshevel.html> (accessed October 10, 2007).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Toll Bukkvoll, "Ukraine and the Black Sea Region," in *Politics of the Black Sea: Dynamics of Cooperation and Conflict*, ed. Tunc Aybak (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2001), 104-106.

<sup>29</sup> Idil P. Izmirli, "Regionalism and the Crimean Tatar Political Factor in 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections," *The Journal of Turkish Weekly* (February 28, 2007), <http://www.turkishweekly.net/articles.php?id=171> (accessed October 10, 2007).

sources, as well as governmental documents of the Post-Soviet era, available on the web. The author has established some contacts with the Ukrainian navy officers in Sevastopol to use as additional sources of information on the issue.

## **E. THESIS SYNOPSIS**

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter I will cover the purpose of the thesis, its significance, literature review, methodology, and the thesis synopsis. Chapter II will provide a brief history of Crimea to reveal possible grounds for ethics of interstate conflicts. Chapter II will study the Crimea's importance for Ukraine and its future security. Chapter IV will look at the emergence and the evolution of the Crimean Tatars in Crimea, and influence of other nations on their development as a nation. Chapter V will look at the RBSF issues in Crimea, and its military, political, and economic influence in the region. Chapter VI will study the current ethnic imbroglio in the Crimea, and the role of historical myths in shaping ethnic groups' behavior, and problems and prospective related to this. Chapter VII will summarize findings and produce conclusions and policy recommendations to deal with possible Crimean Tatar separatism in Crimea.

## II. BRIEF HISTORY OF CRIMEA

The geography of Crimea determined its history. Gwendolyn Sasse pointed this out as “an important factor in the capacity for autonomy or secession.”<sup>30</sup> Study of Crimean history provides an important basis for evaluation of a potential for ethnic conflict. During the development of a state over time it goes through different historical experiences, shaping its development. Historically, “the Black Sea and its coastal areas have played an important role in the history of Eastern Europe and Western Asia.”<sup>31</sup> Since territories of contemporary Crimea and southern Ukraine were colonized for the first time by ancient Greeks, they became an important economic zone; later, the founders of Kievan Rus, the Mongols, the Ottoman Turks, Lithuanians, Polish, Russians, and, finally, the Soviets tried to establish control over these territories to serve for their political, economical, and military purposes throughout various periods of history.<sup>32</sup>

Currently, Crimea (in Ukrainian *Avtonomna Respublika Krym*) is an autonomous republic of Ukraine located in southern Ukraine.<sup>33</sup> It occupies a peninsula of the same name (Crimea) on the northern coast of the Black Sea. The total area of the republic is 26,100 sq. km. (10,008 sq. mi.).<sup>34</sup> The capital of Crimea is the city of Simferopol, where all branches of the republic’s power are placed. The city of Sevastopol, a home for the Russian Black Sea Fleet and Ukrainian Navy, is located within the Crimean peninsula,

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<sup>30</sup> Gwendolyn Sasse, *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2007), 4.

<sup>31</sup> Alan W. Fisher, *Introduction to the Russian annexation of the Crimea, 1772-1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge [Eng] University Press, 1970), xi.

<sup>32</sup> See for details Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 2nd edition, (Toronto; Buffalo: Published by the University of Toronto Press in association with the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1994).

<sup>33</sup> Constitution of Ukraine, Ch. X, art. 134-139, <http://www.rada.gov.ua/const/conengl.htm#r10> (accessed May 29, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> “Encyclopedia: Common Information,” *Information Portal Autonomous Republic of Crimea*. Available at <http://www.crimea-portal.gov.ua/index.php?v=7&tek=&par=&art=70&date> (accessed December 29, 2007).



but it has special status, allowing its administration to be subordinated directly to nation-level government in Kyiv rather than the one of Crimea in Simferopol.<sup>35</sup>

## A. CRIMEA AND CONTIGUOUS AREAS IN EARLY HISTORY

The origin of the name Crimea came from the one of the Crimean province capital in the Golden Horde times. Governors of Crimea, appointed by the Tatar khans at Sarai on the Idil<sup>36</sup> (Volga), the capital of the Golden Horde, resided at Solhat, or Eski Kirim (“Old Crimea”) for over a hundred years up until the mid-fifteenth century.<sup>37</sup>

### 1. Prehistoric Times

Major prehistoric sites were found in the territory of contemporary Ukrainian steppes and Crimea as early as roughly 5000 to 4000 BC during the times of the Trypillian culture.<sup>38</sup> Later, in about 3000 BC, the nomads, who had a distinctive way of life famous for the domestication of animals, emerged in Ukrainian steppes moving southwards from overpopulated areas.<sup>39</sup>

The earliest inhabitants, who were mentioned in literary references, were “the Cimmerians. Homer, in the *Odyssey*, mentioned them as the ones who populated the northern shore of the Black Sea.”<sup>40</sup> Besides the *Odyssey*, very little information is available on the Cimmerians. Scholars’ views are divided on their origins. Some consider them as the ones who migrated to the territories of contemporary Ukraine, and others see them as native there.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Const. of Ukraine, Ch. XI, art. 140-146, <http://www.rada.gov.ua/const/conengl.htm#r11> (accessed December 29, 2007). According to the Constitution of Ukraine, two cities have special status: Kyiv and Sevastopol.

<sup>36</sup> In some sources *Idil* is spelled as *Itil*. See for details Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 29.

<sup>37</sup> MIT School of Architecture and Planning, “Solhat,” Digital Library, [http://archnet.org/library/places/one-place.jsp?place\\_id=8092&collection\\_id=23](http://archnet.org/library/places/one-place.jsp?place_id=8092&collection_id=23) (accessed December 29, 2007); *Modern Encyclopedia of Religions in Russia and Soviet Union*, [MERRSU], Vol. VI, (Academic International Press, 1995), s.v. “Crimean Tatars,” (by H. B. Paksoy), 135-142; Alan W. Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 3.

<sup>38</sup> Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 6.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

The Scythians expelled the Cimmerians in the seventh century BC. Two hundred years later, Herodotus, “the Greek father of history,” described them as Indo-Europeans, Iranian-speaking nomads of several types.<sup>42</sup> The Scythians of the first type, plowers (those who lived by the agriculture and used ploughs), were an agricultural indigenous people, who accepted the name of their overlords. Some scholars consider them to be the ancestors of the Slavs.<sup>43</sup> The second type, the nomadic Royal Scythians, corresponded to those who forced other Scythians and non-Scythians to pay them tribute by fierce military force. The Scythians went through victories and defeats, and ended up “overwhelmed and assimilated” by the Sarmatians; only “a remnant of whom managed to find refuge in the Crimea.”<sup>44</sup> The Sarmatians dominated the steppes of contemporary Ukraine for four hundred years up until the second century AD and Sarmatian control was destroyed by Khuns from the East.

## **2. Crimea and Kievan Rus’**

Both the sea and the steppe served as an avenue for newcomers. Greeks established their colonies along the northern coast of the Black Sea. In Crimea, they set up important historic centers at Chersonesus (present-day a part of Sevastopol), Theodosia, and Panticapeum (the center of the so-called Bosphoran kingdom, present-day Kerch). For the first time the Gothic invasion of 270 AD, and later the Khuns, destroyed the Greek colonies. From that point forward “the Eurasian steppes would become for almost a millennium the domain of the Turkic peoples.”<sup>45</sup>

Since the establishment of *Kievan Rus’* in 852-859 AD, the dominance of the Turkic peoples over the northern shores of the Black Sea was constantly challenged.<sup>46</sup> Princes Oleh (882-912?) and Ihor (912-45) plundered the Khazars’ ports and cities on the

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<sup>42</sup> Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 10-13.

<sup>43</sup> Jona Lendering, “Herodotus’ tenth logos: Scythia. Country and Customs of the Scythians,” Livius Articles on Ancient History, [http://www.livius.org/he-hg/herodotus/logos4\\_10.html](http://www.livius.org/he-hg/herodotus/logos4_10.html) (accessed December 29, 2007).

<sup>44</sup> Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 11.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 27-37.

Caspian Sea; prince Sviatoslav (962-72), through a series of raids, crushed the Volga Bulgars, the mighty Khazars, “a people probably of Turkic origin”<sup>47</sup> and “razed their capital at Itil on the Volga.”<sup>48</sup> However, the control over the lands from Volga to Danube did not endure. It was gone with Sviatoslav’s death. In the late tenth century (988), prince Volodymyr the Great accepted Christianity, offered by the Byzantine, but later conquered “the Byzantine-held Crimean city of Chersonesus” in demand for marriage with the Byzantine co-emperor’s sister Anne.<sup>49</sup> Again, during the rule of prince Iaroslav the Wise (1036-54) the authority of Kievan Rus’ was, once again, extended to the Black Sea.<sup>50</sup>

In sum, despite the efforts of the Kievan Rus’ princes, their control over the Crimean peninsula was volatile. Crimea was never under their control. Control was only partial and sporadic.

### **3. The Mongols, Golden Horde and Crimea**

The Mongols flourished under the rule of a gifted leader of the name Temjun. He adopted a title of Jengis Khan — Khan of Khans. He managed to unify divided and rival tribes, which later in 1240 managed to capture the Kievan Rus capital of Kiev. Thus, the territories of former Kievan Rus were included to the Golden Horde, a khanate, established in the western part of the Mongol Empire, which included Crimea and the northern shores of the Black Sea.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Charles J. Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde: the Mongol Impact on Medieval Russian History* (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1985), 11.

<sup>48</sup> Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 31.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>51</sup> Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, 25.

Even before the Mongols arrival in the area, it was largely populated by Turks, who absorbed Mongols and their language.<sup>52</sup> This fact is proved by the Golden Horde's coinage, which had Turkish script on them.<sup>53</sup>

The Black Death, the deadly pandemic of the 1340s, was a major factor contributing to the Golden Horde's downfall.<sup>54</sup> A fatal blow to the Horde was dealt by Tamerlane, who annihilated Tokhtamysh's army, destroyed his capital, looted the Crimean trade centers, and deported the most skillful craftsmen to his own capital in Samarkand. In the 1440s, the Horde was again racked by civil war. This time it broke up into separate Khanates. The Khanate of Crimea was one of them. None of these new Khanates was stronger than Muscovite Russia, which finally broke free of Tatar control by 1480.

## **B. THE KHANATE OF CRIMEA**

As the one of the many remnants of the Golden Horde, the Crimean Khanate, "more than any other preserved the traditions and institutions of the Golden Horde."<sup>55</sup> Haci Giray, "a descendant of Cingis Khan [Jengis Khan],"<sup>56</sup> assumed independent power sometime in between 1420 and 1441.<sup>57</sup> He founded a dynasty which ruled the Crimean Khanate uninterruptedly until 1783, the date of Russia's annexation of Crimea.

Moreover, the newly established Crimean Khanate required outside support and assistance for its survival. During his rule, Haci balanced friendship and alliance with Lithuania along with Poland, who recently extended its influence over former Kievan Rus' territories of contemporary Ukraine and Muscovite Russia.<sup>58</sup> It can be explained by

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<sup>52</sup> David Morgan, *The Mongols*, (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 141, [http://books.google.com/books?id=7nvOSTs8E8EC&pg=PA141&ots=30wRcsAzWk&dq=golden+horde&sig=Jqd\\_PSlp-KgwUPqv8ZUGzpJNzC4#PPA142,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=7nvOSTs8E8EC&pg=PA141&ots=30wRcsAzWk&dq=golden+horde&sig=Jqd_PSlp-KgwUPqv8ZUGzpJNzC4#PPA142,M1) (accessed January 14, 2007).

<sup>53</sup> Morgan, *The Mongols*, 142.

<sup>54</sup> Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*, 32.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>56</sup> Fisher, *The Russian annexation*, 2.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. The precise date is a matter of dispute.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

the fact that Haci Giray himself found refuge from the Golden Horde in Lithuania, and was born in Lithuania, and the Tatars of Crimea sent the request to Casimir, grand prince of Lithuania, to “give them Haci Giray as khan.”<sup>59</sup>

The Crimean Khanate shared the Crimean peninsula with the Genoese, and tried to regain their ports and cities in the south and southwest of Crimea.<sup>60</sup> In this effort they went into an alliance with the relatively new Ottoman Empire, which seized “the centuries-old Muslim and Turkic dream of...Constantinople, the capital of the East Roman Empire.”<sup>61</sup> Since then the situation was forever changed for the Genoese, whose trade was dependant on straits now controlled by the Ottomans. In 1454, the Tatars and the Turks made an unsuccessful attack on the port of Kefe; in 1475 they finally captured it from the Genoese, strengthening future Crimean-Ottoman political and military relations.

Some sources suggest that from thirteenth through fifteenth centuries Crimea was the home for Kingdom Theodoro. It was conquered by the Turks in 1475. It is considered as a link between the Roman Empire and Slavic states.<sup>62</sup> Sources available on Theodoro are scarce. However, some existing works suggest that its population numbered around two hundred thousand just before its fall in 1475.<sup>63</sup>

In 1460, Haci Giray died suddenly, most likely from poisoning. His death initiated a period of intense competition for power and leadership over the Crimean Khanate. Internal fighting was resolved by the establishment of the Ottomans’ political supremacy over the rival Crimean khans.<sup>64</sup> The Ottomans occupied the vacated Genoese territories, establishing a special Ottoman province and, in 1478, the Tatars and the

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<sup>59</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 4.

<sup>60</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 5.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> “Otkryvaya Zabytye Stranitsy Istorii,” *Obshchestvo Svyatogo Pheodora Gavrasya*, <http://www.graal.org.ua/ru/gosud/zagad.htm> (accessed January 15, 2007).

<sup>63</sup> “Zemli Knyazhestva Pheodoro: Kolichestvennyi I Etnicheskii Sostav Naseleniya Knyazhestva,” <http://koe-cto.boom.ru/pages/articles/books/feodoro/quantity.htm> (accessed January 15, 2007).

<sup>64</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 7.

Ottomans signed a treaty regulating the latter's authority in Crimea.<sup>65</sup> The treaty promulgated the khan's authority over internal political and military issues, the Ottoman sultan was a sovereign in the Crimea and regulated the Crimean khanate foreign relations, and the khanate supported the Ottomans in their military campaigns.<sup>66</sup>

Alan W. Fisher, in his book *The Crimean Tatars*, stressed that, contrary to "the claims of many Soviet historians" the Crimean Tatars were not "marionettes in Ottomans hands."<sup>67</sup> Throughout the history of the Crimean Khanate it made ad hoc alliances with Poland-Lithuania and Moscow in pursuit of political and economic goals: with Poland-Lithuania to counter Muscovy and with Muscovy to fight Kazan. The alliance with the Ottomans was more or less constant and, for substantial compensation, the Tatars participated in Ottoman military campaigns against its neighbors and more distant adversaries.<sup>68</sup>

The Crimean Khanate was very mighty at the beginning of its existence. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries khans started to lose their power due to domestic instability. The leaders of local clans, the beys, possessed certain wealth, political and military power, and become less dependent on the khans, acting on their own without the khan's consent.

The Ottomans lost strength in Europe and, contrarily, Russia gained power. Russia had interest in gaining access to the Black Sea and, exploiting Crimean internal instability and weakness, it invaded and in 1774 forced khans under its influence; and later in 1783, Crimea was annexed by the Russian empire.<sup>69</sup>

### **C. CRIMEA UNDER RUSSIA'S RULE**

After the annexation, Catherine II made a governmental reorganization in Crimea. It was not the first experience for Russia to rule a Muslim region in the Russian empire:

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<sup>65</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 9-13.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>68</sup> Fisher, *The Russian annexation*, 16.

<sup>69</sup> Subtelny, *Ukraine: a History*, 136.

the Kazan Tatars and Volga Bashkirs were annexed prior to the Crimea annexation.<sup>70</sup> To fulfill her decision, Catherine organized a census in Crimea, a study of the Crimean tax administration system, and appointed the Crimean District Government (*Krymskoe Zemskoe Pravitel'stvo*) of newly established *Tavrisheskaya oblast'*, “the area of the former Crimean Khanate from the Dnepr River to Taman [it stretched far beyond the Crimean peninsula itself and included a considerable piece of contemporary Ukraine’s territory].”<sup>71</sup>

The old Khanate’s administrative system was replaced by the usual one that was within the Russian empire of those days. The vertical administrative-territorial division was as follows: the *oblast'* (region) was within the *gubernia* of Ekaterinislav and Tavrid and consisted of seven *uezds* (districts). In terms of religion, Russian policy of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was intended to eradicate Islam within the Russian empire. Later on in 1773, Catherine, who was irreligious herself, issued her ‘Toleration of All Faiths’ decree, allowing the Tatars to practice Islam.<sup>72</sup>

Catherine realized that the use of Russian administrators was not very productive in settling down issues in native regions.<sup>73</sup> Thus she decided to stuff as much as possible into positions in *uezds* by natives. Moreover, she permitted the local native elders to be in charge of daily routines in certain regions of *Tavrisheskaya oblast'*. Similarly to the Kazan Tatar *mirzas* (local nobility), she allowed Crimean *mirzas* to receive “Russian charters in *pomestie* lands,” “to own...peasants (non-Christian),” and “to hold ranks in the Russian army.”<sup>74</sup>

Catherine allowed each Crimean “to enjoy the same duties and privileges as did his counterpart in Russia.”<sup>75</sup> At the same time, she allowed for those who did not want to have Russian citizenship to leave for the Ottoman Empire. It was estimated that during

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<sup>70</sup> Fisher, *The Russian annexation*, 139.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 142.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 139.

the first decade after annexation, the amount of Tatars that left the Crimea ranged approximately from 20,000-30,000<sup>76</sup> to 150,000-200,000<sup>77</sup> with the pre-annexation Crimean Tatar population of “a little less than a half-million.”<sup>78</sup> The mass exodus of Tatars during the last decade of the Crimean Khanate (since 1772<sup>79</sup>) and the first decade after annexation has left vast amounts of land vacant, which, besides the demographics, had some negative effects on the agriculture.

On the other side, free land in the state’s disposal tempted the colonists. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, besides the 8,746 Russians<sup>80</sup> who existed before, some “35,000 non-Muslims had been settled in the Crimean peninsula....the former Crimean Khanate, which included lands from the Dnestr to the Kuban Rivers, there were just under 100,000 Russian settlers.”<sup>81</sup>

The annexation of Crimea is an important event in Russian history. “By annexing the Crimea Russia achieved what many considered to be her ‘natural’ southern frontiers.”<sup>82</sup> Nineteenth-century Crimean nationalism had spread to other Muslim entities within the Russian Empire with increasingly anti-Russian feelings, caused by Russian disrespect for Tatar culture and forced Russification.

However, suppression of the Tatar culture needs to be viewed through the comparative lenses with the Russian empire’s attitude toward the Ukrainian one. For the Tatars, “the government encouraged cultural traditionalism...Turkish, Arabic, and Koran were taught” in schools and universities.<sup>83</sup> Tatar intelligentsia published their books, journals and newspapers. In Ukraine, the use of the Ukrainian language was suppressed. For instance, “in...118-year period 3,214 titles [mostly *belles-lettres*] saw publication, on

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<sup>76</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 78.

<sup>77</sup> Fisher, *The Russian annexation*, 145-146.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 75.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>81</sup> Fisher, *The Russian annexation*, 147.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>83</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 98.



the average twenty-seven titles per year for a population of approximately twenty million.”<sup>84</sup> With periodicals the situation was much worse: “the first daily newspaper in the Ukrainian language was not founded until 1905... [It] survived until 1914.”<sup>85</sup> On the contrary, the Tatars published twelve newspapers in 1914,<sup>86</sup> which allows one to conclude that the Tatars were better off under Imperial Russia rule than other minorities.

## **D. CRIMEA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

### **1. Crimea After the 1917 Revolution and During the Civil War**

During the Russian revolutions of 1917-18 Tatar nationalists increasingly claimed their independence.<sup>87</sup> The first World War caused a crisis in the identity of the Crimean Tatars. On the one side, the Tatars were represented in the *Duma* (the legislature), within the Russian executive they participated in Muslim organizations and fought on the western front of World War I. On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire supported Russia’s enemies in World War I and the idea about the war against it was hardly acceptable.

“The Crimean Tatars were psychologically prepared to support any movement to eliminate the tsarist regime, and to remove from the Crimea Russian institutions representing centralized state control and authority.”<sup>88</sup> In 1917, three main political groups were active in Crimea: the Tatar National Directory, the Crimean Provincial Assembly (the organization of Russian and Ukrainian liberals in Crimea), and the Bolsheviks. The former two were against the latter and formed a Crimean General Headquarters. The Bolsheviks were not supported by the indigenous population, but they

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<sup>84</sup> Bohdan Krawchenko, *Social Change and National Consciousness in Twentieth-Century Ukraine*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985), 27.

<sup>85</sup> Krawchenko, *Social Change*.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>87</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 111.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

were supported in the garrisons in Sevastopol. After the Russian revolution, the Tatar National Constituent Assembly (*Kurultai*) in Bahchesaray accepted a constitution of the Crimean state.<sup>89</sup>

The Bolsheviks realized the danger of Crimean secession from the newly proclaimed soviet state. As a preemptive strike, they first seized control over the local government of Sevastopol; later on, naval squadrons landed at Feodosia and Kerch, and forward toward Bahcesaray and Simferopol.<sup>90</sup> Finally, the Bolsheviks advanced to Simferopol, defeated units of the Tatar cavalry and disbanded *Kurultai*. Thus, the Tatars' dreams about their own statehood had become a reality for the first time since 1783 for only several months. However, it was the same for the first Bolshevik administration as well until "the German occupation forces destroyed it."<sup>91</sup>

During the Russian Civil War of 1918-1921, Crimea was the arena for struggling interest groups. The Tatars had received no respect for their interests from the both the Bolsheviks and the Whites,<sup>92</sup> the Volunteer Army comprised of former tsarists military. Neither side was interested in having Crimea become independent; each of them saw Russia unified under their own set of ideas. Finally, in October of 1920, the Bolsheviks occupied Crimea and stayed there until the German invasion of 1941.

## **2. Crimea in the Soviet Union**

In the Soviet Union, Crimea received a status of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and, administratively (Crimean ASSR), it was a part of the Russian Socialist Federative Republic (RSFSR).<sup>93</sup> For that time, the Crimean Tatars constituted about one-fourth of the Crimean ASSR population. The autonomy was limited and Moscow remained in charge of most of the Crimean activities, with the probable

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<sup>89</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 115.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 134.

exception of issues of justice, education, and healthcare. Two important port cities, Sevastopol and Evpatoria, were excluded from the Crimean jurisdiction and were subordinated directly to Moscow.

Crimea, along with many other areas of the Soviet Union, experienced two famines, one during 1921-22 and the other during 1932-33. It was primarily caused by the disastrous effects of the Soviet rule.<sup>94</sup> For the former case, private property was abolished in 1921.<sup>95</sup> For the latter, the Stalin's pushed forward a policy of collectivization after abolishing the right for private property. Both undertakings ended up with reduced effectiveness in agricultural production, causing food shortages, already multiplied by food confiscations and its transfers for the sake of the policy of industrialization.

During World War II, Crimea was relatively easy, with the exception of Sevastopol which heroically resisted until July 1942, occupied by the Germans, Romanians, and Italians for the period of time from 1941-1944. Immediately after Crimea came back under the Soviet control in early 1944, Stalin ordered a deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other smaller minorities as collective punishment for their collaboration with the Nazis. In 1967, the Tatars were rehabilitated but banned from returning back to Crimea.<sup>96</sup>

The Crimean ASSR was abolished in 1945 and was reorganized into the Crimean *Oblast'* of the RSFSR. In 1954, it was transferred under the jurisdiction of Ukrainian SSR due to close geographic, economic, and cultural ties to Ukraine, and as a friendly gesture symbolizing the 300th anniversary of the treaty which unified Russia and Ukraine.<sup>97</sup> During the years after WWII and up until the dissolution of the USSR, the Crimea was developed as the tourist destination and the base for the Black Sea Fleet (BSF).

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<sup>94</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars.*, 137.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>96</sup> Edward Allworth, *Tatars of the Crimea: Their Struggle for Survival* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1988), 145.

<sup>97</sup> Roman Solchanyk, "Crimea: Between Ukraine and Russia," in *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects*, ed. Maria Drohobycky, (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995), 5.

Under the Soviet Union the demographics of Crimea changed significantly. Hunger from the 1921-22 famine resulted in a population decrease of more than 21 percent.<sup>98</sup> One hundred thousand people died of starvation (60 percent of them were Crimean Tatars) and fifty thousand, mainly the Tatars, fled abroad. As of 1923, 25 percent (one hundred fifty thousand) of the Crimean population were the Tatars.<sup>99</sup> Thirty-five to forty thousand Crimean Tatars were removed to Siberia as part of Stalin's attack on Crimean Tatars nationalism; pre-war the Crimean Tatars population was about three hundred-two thousand, and in late 1970s fewer than twelve hundred Tatar families were registered in Crimea.

Such a dramatic shift was caused by the deportation of the Tatars and other minorities. The deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other minorities from Crimea was initiated by Stalin in 1944 after the liberation of Crimea by the Soviet Army and will be studied in detail later in this thesis. During the German occupation of Crimea some 15,000-20,000 Crimean Tatars served for the Germans to fight partisans in the Crimean Mountains.<sup>100</sup> Fisher refers to different estimates of about 20,000-53,000 Crimean Tatars fighting against Germany in the Red Army and up to twelve thousand in the resistance and the underground.<sup>101</sup> Stalin disregarded the Crimean Tatar participation in the Great Patriotic War against Nazi Germany and ordered their deportation to Central Asia.

### **3. Crimea as Part of Independent Ukraine**

The history of Crimea as part of independent Ukraine will be discussed later in this thesis in Chapter III. However, several points need to be mentioned upfront:

- With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Ukraine inherited Crimea, a region with untypical demographics in comparison to its other regions;

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<sup>98</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 137.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>100</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 155.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 161.

- Not long before the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Crimean Tatars, the nation in exile, began to return to Crimea *en masse*, further exacerbating difficult economic, political, and ethnic situation there; and
- The former Soviet Black Sea Fleet was stationed mostly in Crimea, and Russia did not want to lose its assets and opportunities they were receiving in the Black Sea region.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

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

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

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

The collapse of the Soviet Union left Ukraine with the legacy of unresolved military, economic, political, and ethnic problems and made Crimea a conflict prone area.

### III. CRIMEA'S IMPORTANCE TO SECURITY IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

#### A. SYMBOLIC AND STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF CRIMEA FOR RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Crimea has strategic and symbolic importance for both Ukraine and Russia, sufficiently so that any disagreement over Crimea might trigger an intra-state conflict between them.<sup>102</sup> There are many examples of bloody intra-state conflicts among former communist states: Bosnia, Kosovo, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Chechnya, Nakhichevan, Dagestan, Transdnestria, and Karabakh are lands artificially divided for the sake of politics and ideas in which such a conflict has erupted. Crimea represents “a complex territorial challenge”<sup>103</sup> along similar lines, based on historic myths and embellishments, as well as contemporary developments. There are several state actors and an abundance of non-state actors involved in the Crimean question. State actors — Ukraine, Russia, and (to a much lesser extent) Turkey — and the most prominent non-state actor and ethnic group, the Crimean Tatars, will shape the possible outcomes in the Crimean peninsula. Crimea is also important geopolitically to the U.S. because “whoever controls Crimea, will attempt to impose its will on all ongoing events in the region, because Crimea is the major gateway to the entire Slavonic world.”<sup>104</sup> In an energy-hungry world the Black Sea Region is a regional hub for the distribution of oil and natural gas.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Ronald D. Leibowitz, review of *Perceptions of Security: Public Opinion and Expert Assessments in Europe's New Democracies*, by Richard Smoke, *JSTOR: The Scholarly Journal Archive*, Autumn, 1998, <http://www.jstor.org/cgi-bin/jstor/printpage/00376779/di000576/00p00732/0.pdf?backcontext=page&dowhat=Acrobat&config=jstor&userID=cd9b41e2@nps.navy.mil/01c0a80a6a00501ce3c0d&0.pdf> (Accessed December 26, 2007); and Taras Kuzio, *Russia-Crimea-Ukraine: Triangle of Conflict* (London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1994), 1.

<sup>103</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 10.

<sup>104</sup> Sergei Sardanovsky, “Regional Security of Ukraine: External Factors,” *The Black Sea Area Research Group*, [www.bsarg.crimeainfo.com/Rserch/10\\_Regional\\_Security\\_of\\_Ukraine.rtf](http://www.bsarg.crimeainfo.com/Rserch/10_Regional_Security_of_Ukraine.rtf) (accessed December 26, 2007).

<sup>105</sup> A. Necdet Pamir, “Energy and Pipeline Security in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea Regions: Challenges and Solutions,” in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2003), 123-155.

To date, actual conflict in Crimea has been averted despite ample opportunities for violence arising from “a clash between Ukraine and Russia, an intraregional political conflict among ethnopolitical groups, internecine conflict among the Crimean Russian elites, and a center-periphery conflict between Kiev and Simferopol.”<sup>106</sup> Yet the plausibility of a conflict involving the Crimean Tatars is high. It is in the remission stage and can explode if not addressed properly.

### **1. Importance of Crimea to Turkey**

Crimea is important to Turkey mostly symbolically and, to a certain extent, geopolitically. In theory, the possibility of Crimea’s secession to Turkey exists, but has “not yet entered Crimean political debate.”<sup>107</sup> The history of Crimea provides certain grounds for that. The Crimean Tatars enjoy official support by the Turkish Government and tacit support from the extensive — five<sup>108</sup> to seven<sup>109</sup> million — Crimean Tatar Diaspora in Turkey. Since 1998, the Turkish government, through the Crimean office of Turkish Agency for International Cooperation, has been involved in the construction of mosques and accommodations for returning Tatars; Turkey also grants scholarships for the Crimean Tatars to get higher education in Turkey.<sup>110</sup>

The ‘Crimean Turks’ — the name for the Crimean Tatar Diaspora in Turkey — are presently well integrated into the Turkish society, and are not very active in supporting the Crimean Tatars in Crimea. Turkish scholar Filiz Tutku Aydin provides an explanation for this.<sup>111</sup> First of all, the Diaspora Tatars speak Turkish not Crimean Tatar, and did not identify with Crimea up until the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Currently,

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<sup>106</sup> Pamir, “Energy and Pipeline Security.”

<sup>107</sup> Jane I. Dawson, “Ethnicity, Ideology and Geopolitics in Crimea,” *Peace Research Abstracts* 37, no. 3 (2000): 431.

<sup>108</sup> Brian Glyn Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2001), 275.

<sup>109</sup> Taras Kuzio, “Turkish-Ukrainian Relations Receive A Boost,” *BRAMA*, July 11, 2002, [http://www.brama.com/news/press/020711kuzio3\\_turkey-ukr.html](http://www.brama.com/news/press/020711kuzio3_turkey-ukr.html) (accessed January 14, 2007).

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Filiz Tutku Aydin, “Crimean Turk-Tatars: Crimean Tatar Diaspora Nationalism in Turkey,” *International Committee for Crimea*, <http://www.iccrimea.org/scholarly/aydin.html> (accessed January 14, 2007).

Crimean Turks are attempting to recover their identity as Crimean, but they are only in the initial stage. Second, the idea of Crimean Tatar nationalism is popular among the elites, not at the grass roots level. Third, the dissolution of the Soviet Union removed the Iron Curtain and allowed increasing social and political ties between the Crimean and Diaspora Tatar community.

In geopolitical terms, Turkey and Russia are “eternal rivals” who want “to play the dominant role in the Black Sea region.”<sup>112</sup> Since 1991, Russia’s position has weakened there and, following this logic, Turkey tried to take advantage of the situation. Turkey spread its influence over Turkish-speaking former Soviet republics and initiated the creation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in 1992 to strengthen its leading position in the Black Sea region.<sup>113</sup> However, the lack of resources at the disposal of Turkish government and the emergence of a Russia-Greece-Bulgaria alliance<sup>114</sup> in the BSEC almost leveled its regional leadership. Despite the negative results from attempts to establish regional leadership, Turkey carefully watches the developments in Crimea in order to take advantage of possible errors of Ukraine’s policy.<sup>115</sup> This does not necessarily mean that Turkey seeks to weaken Ukraine, its ally in balancing Russia. It might reinforce its own position in bilateral relations.

The Turkish government is friendly to Ukraine and, at least declaratively, supports its territorial unity against Russia’s claims for the Black Sea Fleet and the Crimean peninsula, but its policies may still destabilize the situation with the Crimean Tatars.<sup>116</sup> Individual assistance by members of the Diaspora is less controllable by the governments and might be directed both for good and for bad.

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<sup>112</sup> Sardanovsky, “Regional Security.”

<sup>113</sup> Arkady Moshes, “Littoral States and Region Building Around the Black Sea,” in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 2003), 65-66.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>115</sup> Sardanovsky, “Regional Security.”

<sup>116</sup> Moshes, “Littoral States,” 80; and Dagu Bazaglu Sezer, “Balance,” in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, (Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe, Inc., 2003), 182-183.



## 2. Importance of Crimea to Russia

Crimea is significant to Russia ethnically, militarily, symbolically, and economically. Russia's attempts to open a consulate in Simferopol, to grant Russian citizenship to ethnic Russians living in Crimea, to establish a permanent representation of Russian parliament in the Crimean parliament and vice versa<sup>117</sup> in the 1990s emphasizes the importance of Crimea to Russia.

### a. Ethnic Importance of Crimea

Russia's nationalist extremists argue that the majority of the population in Crimea is ethnic Russians. The cause of protecting ethnic Russians in non-Russian states encourages some Russian Generals and politicians to intervene in potentially troubled regions.<sup>118</sup> This was the case in Transdnistria and other places. In Crimea, Russian Admirals supported pro-Russian nationalists, at least rhetorically, and their support had never been at the same level as in other areas of ethnic tensions in the former Soviet Union. Still, Russian Generals and Admirals are not well in control of democratically elected civilians. Admirals in Sevastopol enjoy a certain level of freedom, at least in the economic sphere. Civil-Military relations in Russia are not democratic and the Russian Parliament is not yet in control of the military.<sup>119</sup>

Former President Yeltsin, who was much softer than his successor Putin, linked withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia and Estonia with "greater minority rights" for ethnic Russians.<sup>120</sup> These claims, however, have not materialized in any considerable way in Crimea. The situation, aggravated by the constant conflicts between

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<sup>117</sup> Victor Zaborovsky, "Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet in Russian-Ukrainian Relations," (Discussion Paper 95-11, Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, September 1995, and Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 6, [http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/disc\\_paper\\_95\\_11.pdf](http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/disc_paper_95_11.pdf) (accessed January 7, 2007).

<sup>118</sup> Alexander J. Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence: Ukraine after Totalitarianism*, (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1993), 121.

<sup>119</sup> Jennifer G. Mathers, "David J. Betz, Civil-Military Relations in Russia and Eastern Europe," review of *Civil-Military Relations in Russia and Eastern Europe*, by David J. Betz, *Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies*, <http://www.pipss.org/document432.html> (accessed February 22, 2008).

<sup>120</sup> Laura Eleonoora Kauppila, "The Baltic Puzzle: Russia's Policy Towards Estonia and Latvia, 1992 – 1997," *University of Helsinki*, January 1999, <http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/val/yhtei/pg/kauppila/thebalti.pdf> (accessed December 26, 2007).

ethnic Russians and returned Crimean Tatars who lack jobs and housing, provides additional justification for Russia's hard tone towards Ukraine.

***b. Military Importance of Crimea***

Russia possesses an extensive military infrastructure in Crimea, and values Sevastopol as a warm-water naval base.<sup>121</sup> Sevastopol was intended to be a naval base from the very beginning of its establishment in the eighteenth century and went through significant modernization to achieve its present military infrastructure. It would take a long time and considerable financial resources to rebuild the same facilities on the Russian shores of the Black Sea.

Crimea is an 'unsinkable aircraft carrier'<sup>122</sup> that has recently become home to twenty-one SU-24M front-line bombers, capable of delivering nuclear weapons.<sup>123</sup> Crimea provides great advantages for Russia in attempts to regain its dominance in the Black Sea region, despite significantly narrowed basing options for the Russian Black Sea Fleet (BSF). Currently, in Ukraine the Russian BSF still retains three out of ten basing points of the former Soviet BSF and three out of thirteen airfields.<sup>124</sup>

In military and strategic terms, Russia claims that its BSF plays an important role in protecting "the southern flank of Russia and Ukraine from Turkey and NATO."<sup>125</sup> However, that is not true due to aging hardware (some refer to the ships of the BSF as "the world's largest naval museum"<sup>126</sup>) and insufficient funding of the

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<sup>121</sup> Zaborsky, "Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet," 6.

<sup>122</sup> Michael Waller, Bruno Coppieters, and A. V. Malashenko, *Conflicting Loyalties and the State in Post-Soviet Russia and Eurasia* (London; Portland, OR: F. Cass, 1998), 69, [http://books.google.com/books?id=J\\_S9xfdODDUC&pg=PA69&lpg=PA69&dq=unsinkable+aircraft+carrier+AND+Crimea&source=web&ots=efnrHx9ZNb&sig=fU\\_r9WE3eFxsLQPv9CsAXgJZgdU#PPA69,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=J_S9xfdODDUC&pg=PA69&lpg=PA69&dq=unsinkable+aircraft+carrier+AND+Crimea&source=web&ots=efnrHx9ZNb&sig=fU_r9WE3eFxsLQPv9CsAXgJZgdU#PPA69,M1) (accessed January 7, 2007).

<sup>123</sup> James Martin, "Nuclear Chronology: 2000-2002," *Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies*, [http://www.nti.org/e\\_research/profiles/Ukraine/Nuclear/print/5519.prt](http://www.nti.org/e_research/profiles/Ukraine/Nuclear/print/5519.prt) (accessed January 7, 2007).

<sup>124</sup> Hrihoriy Perepelytsya, "Military and Naval Balance," in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klymush-Tsintsadze, (Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe, Inc., 2003), 196-197.

<sup>125</sup> Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine," 135.

<sup>126</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 225.

Russian Navy. Moreover, Ukraine holds the largest ship repair facilities in the former Soviet Union, whose services are offered to Russia for market prices.<sup>127</sup> RBSF units hold some navigation facilities in Crimea to serve dual purposes — to maintain marine passenger and merchant routes and serve the RBSF.<sup>128</sup>

*c. Historic and Symbolic Importance of Crimea*

“Historically both the Black Sea Fleet and Crimea itself are of great symbolic significance to many Russian politicians.”<sup>129</sup> Catherine the Great established the BSF in 1771 and Russia, after success in conflicts with the Ottomans, through a treaty acquired the right to base it in the Black Sea. Former Commander of the Russian BSF, Admiral Victor Kravchenko, called the Black Sea a ‘Russian Ocean,’ referring to Russia’s long and successful “struggle for the possession of the Black Sea.”<sup>130</sup> Songs, poems and books, and memorials about Sevastopol as the city of Russian glory and the city of Russian sailors are signs of its symbolic importance to Russia.<sup>131</sup> Maintaining the presence of the RBSF in Crimea Russia achieves a symbolic goal. It stresses that Russia extends to Crimea, and Ukraine is not as separate and independent as it wants to claim.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, some high-ranking Russian officials used new tactics in response to a recent series of statements about the withdrawal of the RBSF from Ukraine in 2017. Russian Ambassador to Ukraine, Victor Chernomyrdin, made a statement that Crimean Tatars are waiting for the RBSF withdrawal in order to claim wider autonomy within Ukraine, and then for full independence; he also hypothesized that Ukraine will beg Russia to leave its

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<sup>127</sup> Blue Dolphin Shipping Service Inc., ““Sevastopole Shiprepair Yard” of Black Sea Fleet (SSYBSF),” <http://www.obdss.com/ssrz.html> (accessed December 26, 2007).

<sup>128</sup> Jan Maksymiuk, “Ukraine: Crimea Lighthouse Becomes another Bump in Ukrainian-Russian Relations,” *RFE/RL Newslines*, (January 23, 2006), <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/01/743bc216-3768-4ac1-a948-e6542d31b37b.html> (accessed December 26, 2007).

<sup>129</sup> Bukkvoll, “Ukraine and the Black Sea Region,” 88.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>131</sup> Serhii Plokyh, “The City of Glory: Sevastopol in Russian Historical Mythology,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 3, (2000): 372, <http://www.jstor.org/cgi-bin/jstor/printpage/00220094/ap010134/01a00030/0.pdf?backcontext=page&dowhat=Acrobat&config=jstor&userID=cd9b41e2@nps.navy.mil/01c0a848660050bb2b3&0.pdf> (accessed January 29, 2008).

<sup>132</sup> Paul D’Anieri, “Constructivist Theory and Ukrainian Foreign Policy,” in *Ukrainian Foreign and Security Policy: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Jennifer D. P. Moroney et al. (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 45.

fleet in Ukraine, due to the inability of local officials to deal with the problem.<sup>133</sup> In attempt to restore the leading role of Russia over the 'near abroad,' some Russian politicians employed the term 'Russian heritage'<sup>134</sup> as the criterion for evaluation of friendliness of a NIS to Russia. Attempts to expel the BSF from Sevastopol deny Russia's mythmaking about Russian and Soviet naval glory.<sup>135</sup> Ukraine's request to join NATO seriously undermines the claim of 'Russian heritage' in Ukraine and Crimea, and has revitalized claims among Russian nationalists to protect ethnic Russians in Ukraine.

#### ***d. Economic Importance of Crimea***

Twenty-five percent of Russian foreign trade travels across the Black Sea via Ukraine.<sup>136</sup> It also requires port facilities in Ukraine to process the goods. In addition, "the BSEC countries account for 15-16 percent of Russia's trade."<sup>137</sup> Thus, the Crimean ports are important for ensuring uninterrupted commodities flow to the region, while the only modern port on the Russian Black Sea coast, Novorossiysk,<sup>138</sup> is not operational for approximately two winter months. Moreover, in the Soviet Union, Crimea was a major tourist destination. Russian business might be interested in investing in the Crimean tourist infrastructure.

The republics of the former Soviet Union were connected by economic interdependence. After its dissolution, Yeltsin invented the term 'near abroad' for the former Soviet space and attempted to declare that entire geopolitical space as a zone of Russian interests. Ukraine and Crimea are not an exception from the rule and, besides other interests, constitute a zone of its economic interests.

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<sup>133</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, "Radical Muslim ideas in Ukraine's Crimea Sponsored From Abroad," LexisNexis Academic, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2974752077&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2974752080&cisb=22\\_T2974752079&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2974752077&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2974752080&cisb=22_T2974752079&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1) (accessed January 29, 2008).

<sup>134</sup> Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, 122.

<sup>135</sup> Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine," 136-137.

<sup>136</sup> Nikolay Kovalsky, "Russia and the Black Sea Realities," in *Politics of the Black Sea: Dynamics of Cooperation and Conflict*, ed. Tunk Aybak, (London, New York, NY: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2001), 164.

<sup>137</sup> Moshes, "Littoral States," 67.

<sup>138</sup> Kovalsky, "Russia and the Black Sea Realities," 163.

### 3. Importance of Crimea to Ukraine

“Developments in Crimea are significant to Ukraine in terms of more than simply traditional security concerns.”<sup>139</sup> Ukraine’s capacity to maintain stability in Crimea generates certain political implications and a precedent for dealing with other challenges Ukraine is facing since it gained independence. Crimea is also significant to Ukraine economically and strategically. Economically, Crimea is subsidized by Ukraine, but has a huge potential to be profitable. Strategically, Crimea is almost a centre of the Black Sea, facilitating rapid access to any part of it. A number of scholars agree that Ukraine’s territorial integrity and state-building efforts are threatened not from outside but from inside due to internal political instability in general, and in Crimea in particular.<sup>140</sup>

#### a. Political Importance of Crimea

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

Second, Ukraine itself is a divided nation.<sup>141</sup> Primarily, the crisis of identity among the Ukrainians divides them between West and East, whose inhabitants are respectively pro-Western and pro-Russian in their preferences. Ukraine is also divided religiously between Christians (the majority of Russians, Ukrainians and others)

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<sup>139</sup> Jaworsky, “Crimea’s Importance to Ukraine,” 135.

<sup>140</sup> Craig A. Weller, “Mass Attitudes and Ethnic Conflict in Ukraine,” in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D’Anieri, (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 76.

<sup>141</sup> Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, 4-10.

and Muslims (Crimean Tatars). Christians are divided between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, and even Orthodox are separated into two main branches — the ones subordinated to the Moscow Patriarchate and the other to the Kievan Patriarchate. Samuel Huntington noted these divisions in his essay “The Clash of Civilizations?”<sup>142</sup> Huntington, who visited Ukraine several times, drew a fault line which runs right across Ukraine and divides Western Christianity and Orthodoxy (under Russia’s patronage) plus Islam (Crimean Tatars and other Muslim minorities of the former USSR).

The geostrategic place of Ukraine is such that the more unstable Ukraine becomes, the higher its importance because it is the key for all of Central and Eastern Europe. Huntington’s argument, however fatalistic, presents a daunting prognosis for the immature Ukrainian state, especially in light of growing calls for federalization of Ukraine, and the inability of the government to solve Crimean Tatar problems. If Huntington’s prediction came true, instability and ethnic turmoil might spread to the new EU members, bordering Ukraine against which no new ‘iron curtain’ could be erected.

The third dividend is derivative from the former two. Ukraine is eager to move toward the West, to NATO and the European Union (EU). If it remains as politically unstable<sup>143</sup> as it is currently, its Euro-Atlantic aspirations will remain unattainable.

#### ***b. Economic Importance of Crimea***

Despite the fact that Crimea is currently subsidized by Ukraine,<sup>144</sup> the Black Sea region and Crimea are considered to have the potential to boost Ukraine’s

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<sup>142</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” <http://history.club.fatih.edu.tr/103%20Huntington%20Clash%20of%20Civilizations%20full%20text.htm> (accessed February 1, 2008).

<sup>143</sup> Taras Kuzio, “European, Eastern Slavonic, and Eurasian: National Identity, Transformation, and Ukrainian Foreign Policy,” in *Ukrainian Foreign and Security Policy: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Jennifer D. P. Moroney et al., (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002), 206. This will provide details on the positions of Slavophiles (pro-Russian) and Westernizers (anti-Russian and neutral to Russia).

<sup>144</sup> Svitlytsia.crimea.ua, “Arseniy Yatseniuk: Ya Katerychno Proty Bud’-Yakykh Samozakhopen’...” *Kryms’ka Svitlytsya*, #5, February 1, 2008, <http://svitlytsia.crimea.ua/index.php?section=article&artID=5526> (accessed February 4, 2008). In 2007 UAH 800 million (\$160 million) came directly from the budget of Ukraine to subsidize Crimea.

economic growth by increased tourism, maritime transportation, exploitation of the Black Sea and the Crimean peninsula oil and natural gas resources, and as a transit area to Russian, Caucasus, and Central Asia goods. The tourism business has the biggest potential for development. Crimea was a vacation playground for the Soviet elite and a popular tourist destination before the Soviet Union collapsed.<sup>145</sup> Currently, the tourist infrastructure of Crimea is in bad shape, but if the region were to become stable and the infrastructure undergoes renovation and restructuring, tourism's 8.2 percent share in Ukrainian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 1998<sup>146</sup> might be higher.

Ukrainian ports, Sevastopol among them, are closer to Russian manufacturers than Russian ones. This fact, multiplied by the reduced tariffs in Ukrainian ports,<sup>147</sup> might divert the flow of goods from Novorossiysk. Russian intent to build a bridge over the Kerch Strait to connect Russia and Crimea<sup>148</sup> supports this hypothesis. Crimea has significant amounts of natural gas and oil. However, the energy sector of Ukrainian economy is not efficient, mostly due to its obsolescence. If it gets modernized, Russia's share in the Ukrainian energy market might decrease, reducing dependency.

### *c. Strategic Importance of Crimea*

As a newly independent state, Ukraine is in search of its place in the geopolitical space. The Black Sea region is important as a link to South Eastern Europe and, through Turkey, to the Middle East. Participation in pipeline projects distributing Caspian and Central Asian energy resources allows Ukraine to reduce its dangerous dependence on Russian energy. Finding a workable solution for the Crimean problems makes Ukraine more attractive to foreign investments, including from other states of the Black Sea region.

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<sup>145</sup> Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, 11.

<sup>146</sup> Bukkvoll, "Ukraine and the Black Sea Region," 96.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> IPR Strategic Business Information Database, "Russia: a Bridge Too Far to Crimea?" *High Beam Encyclopedia*, September 8, 2000, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-63965388.html> (accessed February 1, 2008).

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

The other angle of strategic importance of Crimea to Ukraine lies in creating a precedent to deal with West-East divide in Ukraine. In Crimea, the expectation for ethnic conflict is high. Conflict-prone Crimea is often compared with Transdnistria, Abkhazia, and even Chechnya.<sup>149</sup> If Crimean Tatar, Ukrainian, and Russian nationalism get reconciled in Crimea, it may provide a model for the broader reconciliation of western and eastern Ukraine.

## **B. UKRAINE'S POLICY IN CRIMEA SINCE 1991**

### **1. Developments in Ukraine – Crimea Context before 2004**

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Crimea became an integral part of the newly independent state of Ukraine. Crimea is an atypical region of Ukraine for several reasons. Ethnically, Crimea was the only region in Ukraine with a substantial majority of Russians.<sup>150</sup> Culturally Crimea was Russified;<sup>151</sup> even its administration still utilizes Russian in its paperwork, despite the fact that the only official language in Ukraine is Ukrainian.<sup>152</sup> Historically, at least from the Russian point of view, Crimea was a part of Russia until Khrushchev, ethnic Russian and the former leader of Ukraine, transferred it

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<sup>149</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 32.

<sup>150</sup> Paul Kolstoe, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 183. Total population of Crimea in 1989 (in the very last years of the existence of the Soviet Union) was 2,430,000 with 1,629,000 Russians.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. The amount of Russophones in Crimea in 1989 was 82% and amount of studying in Russian in Crimea in 1992 (the second year since Ukraine gained its independence) was 99.96%.

<sup>152</sup> Lowell B. Barrington, "Region, Language, and Nationality: Rethinking Support in Ukraine for Maintaining Distance from Russia," in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D'Anieri (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 134.



to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1954. Crimea is the home for the BSF and Sevastopol is still considered as “the city of Russian glory.”<sup>153</sup>

Crimea was “considered a hot spot”<sup>154</sup> posing a considerable threat to the unity of the Ukrainian state. In 1991, while Crimean *oblast*’ was a part of the Ukrainian SSR, its local authorities arranged a referendum to establish the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR)<sup>155</sup> within the Soviet Union, with the support of more than 80 percent of the population.<sup>156</sup> The legal legitimacy for the referendum is questionable, because “no referendum law was in existence at the time neither in the Soviet Union nor in Ukraine.”<sup>157</sup> Yet it reflected undeniable demographic facts.

The Crimean Tatars’ influence upon the referendum’s result equated to zero. At that time the Tatars constituted a tiny segment of the Crimean population. In the spring of 1987 there were only 17,400<sup>158</sup> Crimean Tatars out of the more than two million of Crimea’s population. They were granted the right of return to the homeland before the Soviet Union collapsed, and by June of 1991 the Crimean Tatar population had increased to one hundred thirty-five thousand.<sup>159</sup> In addition, most Tatars boycotted the referendum<sup>160</sup> because they preferred to remain as a part of Ukraine.<sup>161</sup>

Despite the absence of any legal grounds for the referendum, the authorities in Kiev accepted the voice of the Crimean population to a certain extent — the Ukrainian

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<sup>153</sup> Ploky, “The City of Glory,” 369-383.

<sup>154</sup> Nancy Popson, “Conclusion: Regionalism and Nation Building in a Divided Society,” in *Dilemmas of State-Led Nation Building in Ukraine*, ed. Taras Kuzio and Paul D’Anieri (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), 192.

<sup>155</sup> Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia*, 186-194. The intent behind the establishment of the Crimean ASSR within the Soviet Union and, later, independent Ukraine was in “taking into consideration the geographic location, historical traditions, demographic and socioeconomic realities.” It was done during the times of the crush of the empire in attempts to weaken the central governments in Russia and Ukraine claiming their independence. International Law does not provide firm definition for autonomy and the scopes of authorities of autonomies vary on case-by-case basis.

<sup>156</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 190.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 448.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 190.

<sup>161</sup> Kuzio, *Russia-Crimea-Ukraine*, 20.

parliament gave the peninsula the status of autonomous republic to calm the moves toward returning Crimea under the jurisdiction of the RSFSR.<sup>162</sup> After Ukraine proclaimed independence on August 24, 1991, the Crimean Supreme Soviet (the parliament) confirmed the sovereignty of the peninsula as a part of Ukraine.<sup>163</sup> The collapse of the Soviet single party system in turn paved the way for the development of diverse political forces with different agendas.

The Republican Movement of Crimea (the Russian acronym RDK) emerged right after Ukraine declared its independence, with the objective to ensure Crimea's secession from Ukraine and to serve as a counterbalance for the Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA) activities in Crimea. The RDK demanded a new referendum to establish an independent Republic of Crimea and started collecting the signatures for referendum according to the requirements of the newly adopted Law of Ukraine On Referenda. The commander of the BSF also supported the RDK.<sup>164</sup> Their demands received substantial support among the Crimean population fueled by the march of Galician nationalists "tearing down Russian and Soviet flags and holding placards bearing inscriptions such as 'Crimea for the Ukrainians.'"<sup>165</sup> The Communist Party of Crimea (CPC, lead by Leonid Grach, later the speaker for the Crimean parliament) and Russian Language Society, in coordination with the chair of the Crimean parliament, Nikolai Bagrov, saw themselves as a reaction to Ukrainian nationalism.<sup>166</sup>

Such developments in Crimea worried Ukrainian officials. It was easy to predict the outcome of a new referendum if one were to be held. Ironically, they dismissed the idea using the same arguments Gorbachev used for holding together the disintegrating Soviet Union, claiming the lack of an adequate legal basis, illegality, fear of economic decline, and threatening legal prosecution for challenging the territorial integrity of the

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<sup>162</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 191.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Kuzio, *Russia-Crimea-Ukraine*, 21.

<sup>165</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 192-193.

<sup>166</sup> Kuzio, *Russia-Crimea-Ukraine*, 20.

state. Moreover, the authorities feared that Crimean secessionism would create a precedent for secessionism of the other regions of the former Ukrainian SSR, such as Novorossia and Donbass.<sup>167</sup>

In April 1992 the Ukrainian parliament adopted the law ‘On the Status of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea’ giving it wider powers in comparison to the other territorial bodies of Ukraine.<sup>168</sup> In response, in May of 1992 “the Crimean parliament adopted a Constitution plus a Declaration of Independence,” however, claiming both that the proclaimed Crimean republic is a part of the Ukrainian republic and that the relationship between the two ‘independent’ republics should nevertheless be based upon treaties.<sup>169</sup>

The existence of two notionally independent states, one of which (Crimea) is a part of another (Ukraine) contradicts conventional wisdom. In his comments to the law granting autonomy to Crimea, a leading Ukrainian legal expert, A. Matsiuk, pointed out that on one side, a delineation of power between a state and its constituent parts is impossible, but on the other side, Crimea was granted wide powers.<sup>170</sup> It was done primarily for the sake of recognizing the dominant national group in Crimea, the Russians,<sup>171</sup> and also to co-opt separatists by granting them a certain level of authority and independence within Ukraine. The Justice Minister at the time, Serhii Holovatiy, expressed the opinion that two republics and two constitutions within one country will lead to its federalization.<sup>172</sup>

The idea of creating a true Crimean republic was strongly rejected in Kiev, where some political parties demanded that Crimean legislature be dissolved and its leadership arrested. The Crimean Declaration of Independence was annulled by the Ukrainian parliament, the powers of presidential representatives to Crimea were extended, and the

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<sup>167</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 194.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 193.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>170</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 194.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>172</sup> Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine Under Kuchma* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 84.

parliament addressed the Crimean populace with a clear message about the strong resolve of Ukraine not to allow any moves toward Crimean secession from Ukraine.<sup>173</sup> As a result, the Crimean parliament fulfilled the demands of Kiev.

The years of 1991–1994 were ones of open confrontation between Simferopol and Kiev. Subsequent years became ones of increasing stability.<sup>174</sup> The idea of Crimean independence faded away, and was replaced in the RDK and among some other pro-Russian political forces by the idea of Crimean unification with Russia. Nevertheless, although the separatists won an important victory during the Crimean presidential election in 1994, the RDK leader Yuri Meshkov, who won the election admitted “that he would not press for Crimea’s separation from Ukraine.”<sup>175</sup>

Even so, Meshkov undertook certain risky steps toward rapprochement with Russia. Some of them were symbolic — the change of time to Russian, and some more substantive — the subordination of the security forces in Crimea to the Crimean republic, establishment of a ruble zone, retention of the BSF under the Russian control, and withdrawal of Ukrainian security forces from Crimea.<sup>176</sup>

The political position of President Meshkov and his Russia bloc (RB) was reinforced with the results of Crimean parliamentary elections in March 1994. The elections ended up with the RB having fifty-four seats out of the ninety-eight total.<sup>177</sup> But the success was short lived. President Meshkov and his RB were unable to solve pressing economic problems and lacked political experience, even as more extreme separatism diverted public support away from them. One year later, during the June 1995 local elections, “not a single council chairman was elected from the Russia bloc.”<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 194-195.

<sup>174</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine Under Kuchma*, 67-68.

<sup>175</sup> Kolstoe, *Russians*, 199.

<sup>176</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine Under Kuchma*, 74-77.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 77-79.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 80.

The Crimean Tatars refused to recognize the Presidency of Yuri Meshkov and were disappointed in Kiev's acquiescence in his victory.<sup>179</sup> They saw this as one more piece of evidence of Ukraine's leadership indifference to the Tatars' interests. During the parliamentary elections, the *Kurultai* (Crimean Tatar Assembly) won fourteen seats claiming their support to Ukraine's integrity with the remark that "we again appear to be better interests of the Ukrainian state than the Ukrainian themselves."<sup>180</sup> However, the Tatars were not unified in their political views. The pro-Russian National Movement of Crimean Tatars was in alliance with the RB, but got only marginal support and no seats in the parliament.<sup>181</sup>

The new constitution of Crimea was adopted after the abolition of the Crimean presidency and change of the leadership in its parliament. The positive sign was in prior coordination of its draft with Ukrainian parliament. The majority of its provisions were approved with the exception of the "separatist clauses" about "separate citizenship, state symbols, the 'Crimean' people, and proclamation of Russian as the state language."<sup>182</sup>

On October 21, 1998, the Crimean parliament adopted the fifth version of the Crimean Constitution. There were nothing about separatism in it, and Ukrainian language was recognized as the state language. On December 23, 1998, it was adopted by the Ukrainian parliament and was considered as the most pro-Ukrainian in the history of Ukraine-Crimea relations.<sup>183</sup> Two days later, the Russian parliament ratified the Ukrainian-Russian Treaty, acknowledging the rights of Ukraine on Crimea as part of Ukraine.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine Under Kuchma*, 71.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>183</sup> D'Anieri et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine*, 67.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

## 2. Developments in Ukraine–Crimea Relations Since 2004

The election of the strong Euro-Atlantacist Victor Yushchenko,<sup>185</sup> as President of Ukraine, altered more or less stable relations between Russia and Ukraine, which “will probably not be maintained to the same extent.”<sup>186</sup> During his first visit to Russia after being elected, President Yushchenko stated that Ukraine’s relations with Russia will be built on the primacy of Ukrainian interests.<sup>187</sup> This event influenced the relations for the worse between Ukraine and Russia, as Russia strives to maintain its leadership position over the ‘near abroad,’ the overarching term for the former Soviet republics.

However, 2004’s ‘Orange Revolution’ largely bypassed Crimea and did not change Crimean politics significantly.<sup>188</sup> Presidential elections of 2004-2005 and Parliamentary elections of 2006 confirmed that assumption. During the two ‘usual’ rounds and one extra round, imposed due to the Ukrainian Supreme Court decision that fraud had been committed on behalf of Yushchenko’s main competitor, Victor Yanukovych, Yushchenko acquired slightly more than 15 percent of votes versus 81 percent in support for Yanukovych; the gap between the two was even wider in Sevastopol.<sup>189</sup>

The ‘Orange Revolution’ did not bring any better life for the Crimean Tatars. *Kurultai* leadership decided to support Yushchenko and the political forces associated with him, but the rest of the Crimean population, as it is seen in the election results, supported the opposite side. Such an obvious divide shoved Crimea to the edge of new ethnic tensions, like those experienced in the 1990s. The Tatars might not support Yushchenko, but he looked less threatening to them. At least he was against the rapprochement with Russia, a state generating bad memories among the Crimean Tatars.

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<sup>185</sup> Victor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine, “Victor Yushchenko - Biography,” [http://www.president.gov.ua/en/content/101\\_e.html](http://www.president.gov.ua/en/content/101_e.html) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>186</sup> Leonel Ponsard, “A Road Map for Ukraine,” (research paper no. 17, NATO Defense College (NDC), April 2005), 2, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/pubs/ph/details.cfm?lng=en&v33=110625&id=14433> (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

<sup>188</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 263.

<sup>189</sup> Izmirli, “Regionalism.”

The ‘Orange Revolution’ generated international support for Ukraine, and overshadowed the Crimean Tatars’ problems. 9/11, Chechnya, and the war in Iraq also produced fear of rising Islamic fundamentalism. Even in mid-90s rumors were floating around about Chechen terrorists resting in Crimea.<sup>190</sup> Later, *Hizb ut-Tahrir* emerged in Crimean ground; many experts considered Crimea the only place in Europe where it operates openly, due to flaws in Ukrainian legislation.<sup>191</sup> The U.S.-led ‘War on Terror’ further exacerbated the situation with Crimean Tatar political and cultural claims. As a result, the Crimean Tatar leadership refused any help from Islamic groups with the aim of not compromising themselves.

The Crimean Tatar leadership, who supported Yushchenko during the presidential elections of 2004-05, asked for reciprocity in support of their grievances. The Crimean Tatars were concerned with the recognition of them as an ‘indigenous people,’ giving the Crimean Tatar language the status of the official language in Crimea along with Ukrainian, and settling land disputes.<sup>192</sup> As a result, Yushchenko set up a commission to find a way out of that complicated situation, but it ended without any noteworthy solution.<sup>193</sup> In late 2005, however, the newly appointed Crimean prime minister and Yushchenko’s ally, Anatoliy Bordiunov, formed a Cabinet with an increased number of Crimean Tatars. Six Crimean Tatars occupied positions as deputy prime ministers (two), ministers (two), and heads of committees (two).<sup>194</sup>

The 2006 parliamentary elections reduced the hopes of the Crimean Tatars of being represented in Crimean and local assemblies due to changes in electoral legislation in Ukraine which provided for 100 percent proportional representation, in contrast to the

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<sup>190</sup> Venik’s Aviation, “War In Chechnya - 1999,” November 5, 1999, <http://www.aeronautics.ru/chechnya/110599.htm> (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>191</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Islamic Radical Party Hosts Conference in Ukraine’s Crimea,” LexisNexis Academic, August 17, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985557359&format=G NBF&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985557364&cisb=22\\_T2985557363&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985557359&format=G NBF&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985557364&cisb=22_T2985557363&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1) (accessed January 29, 2008).

<sup>192</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine-Crimea-Russia*, 95.

<sup>193</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 265.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 267.

mixed system that had existed in the past, and which allowed some small local majorities to prevail. Again, as it was during presidential elections of 2004-05, the Crimean Tatar leadership affiliated itself with pro-Yushchenko political forces — Our Ukraine and *Narodnyi Rukh* (Peoples' Movement). The *Kurultai* (Crimean Tatar assembly) proved its authority over the majority of the Crimean Tatar population by persuading them to vote for the pro-Yushchenko bloc. On the national level the Crimean Tatars gained 2 seats in the Ukrainian Parliament (for Mustafa Dzemilev and Refat Chubarov, the Leader of *Mejelis* and his deputy); on the Crimean level they got eight seats.<sup>195</sup>

The score of two representatives on the national level corresponds to the Crimean Tatar population to the Ukrainian population ratio.<sup>196</sup> However, the ratio for the Crimean assembly was lower than expected.<sup>197</sup> It can be explained by the split among the Crimean Tatars.<sup>198</sup> The Crimean Tatar Bloc, a rival Crimean Tatar party led by Edir Gafarov, made an alliance with the Union Party (formerly part of the Crimean Russian bloc, forced to be re-registered as Ukrainian Party according to Ukrainian legislation)<sup>199</sup> and diverted some Crimean Tatar votes from Yushchenko supporters. Moreover, the anti-Yushchenko Party of Regions and the United Social Democratic party declaratively addressed Crimean Tatar issues in their electoral campaigns, and contributed to dispersing Crimean Tatar votes.

Following the 2006 elections, the vast majority in the Crimean parliament constituted anti-Yushchenko political forces — eighty-four seats versus sixteen seats (eight seats for Tymoshenko bloc and eight seats for Rukh (Our Ukraine)).<sup>200</sup> Thus, the

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<sup>195</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 269.

<sup>196</sup> The calculation is based upon the ratio between the amount of the population of Ukraine and the amount of Crimean Tatar population in Ukraine and compared with the ratio between the amount of seats in Ukrainian Parliament and the amount of seats occupied by the Crimean Tatar representatives, elected to the national Parliament. The same principle of calculations was applied to the Crimean level of representation.

<sup>197</sup> The same principle of calculations was applied to the representation on the Crimean level.

<sup>198</sup> Sasse explained the split in details. See for details Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 269.

<sup>199</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Ukraine's Approaching Elections and the Fractured Multi-Party System," *The Ukrainian Weekly* LXX, no. 1 (January 6, 2002), <http://www.ukrweekly.com/Archive/2002/010204.shtml> (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>200</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 268.



Crimean legislature was against Yushchenko's policy of Euro-Atlantic integration. These political forces organized anti-NATO manifestations, and resulted in canceling an already planned joint Ukraine-U.S. military exercise.<sup>201</sup> The Sevastopol city council went even further, declaring the city as a NATO-free zone, and prohibiting any NATO servicemen from entering it.<sup>202</sup>

The current situation in Crimea is marked by an intensification of pro-Russian attitudes among the majority of the population, increased activities of Islamists, and radicalization of the Crimean Tatars. Pro-Russian attitudes among the majority of population can be seen in "total sabotage of the head of state's [The President of Ukraine] decisions in Crimea,"<sup>203</sup> demands of certain political groups in Crimea for Russia to grant Russian citizenship to ethnic Russians in Ukraine,<sup>204</sup> and the fact that even Ukrainians in Crimea consider themselves Russian.<sup>205</sup> The Crimean parliament is pro-Russian by its composition and political parties. Representatives there have organized a rally with the mottos 'Welfare of Ukraine is with Russia,' and 'The Future of Ukraine in a union with Russia,'<sup>206</sup> and, as of February 2008, are under criminal investigation for

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<sup>201</sup> Yuriy Rubtsov, "NATO on the Volga and "The Global Strike"," *Strategic Culture Foundation*, August 4, 2006, <http://en.fondsk.ru/print.php?id=234> (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>202</sup> Svitlytsia.crimea.ua, "Provokyt' nestabil'nist'," *Kryms'ka Svitlytsya*, #5, February 2, 2008, <http://svitlytsia.crimea.ua/index.php?section=article&artID=5528> (accessed February 03, 2008).

<sup>203</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, "Ukraine's Crimea Still Unstable – Experts," LexisNexis Academic, September 23, 2006, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985691304&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985691316&cisb=22\\_T2985691314&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985691304&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985691316&cisb=22_T2985691314&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>204</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, "Ethnic Russians in Ukraine's Crimea Demand Russian Citizenship," LexisNexis Academic, June 1, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985694810&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985694817&cisb=22\\_T2985694816&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=3](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985694810&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985694817&cisb=22_T2985694816&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=3) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>205</sup> Christian Science Monitor, "Why Crimea, Soviet 'Gift' to Ukraine, Remains Strongly Russian?" LexisNexis Academic, September 28, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985699185&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985699801&cisb=22\\_T2985699800&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=7945&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985699185&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985699801&cisb=22_T2985699800&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=7945&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>206</sup> Svitlytsia.crimea.ua, "Poza Normamy Morali," *Kryms'ka Svitlytsya*, #5, February 2, 2008, <http://svitlytsia.crimea.ua/index.php?section=article&artID=5527> (accessed February 3, 2008).

“calls for the violation of the country’s territorial integrity.”<sup>207</sup> Mustafa Dzemilev, the *Kurultai* leader, pointed out that the Ukrainization of Crimea is no more than a myth; everything Ukrainian is suppressed, with 90 percent of schools and 100 percent of TV broadcast conducted in Russian.<sup>208</sup>

There are several signs of increased activities of Islamists in Crimea. Ukrainian legislation does not prohibit registration of the religious communities in Ukraine. The mufti of the Crimean Muslims, Emirali Ablaev, pointed out that, contrary to the other states, “religious communities...preaching radicalism and extremism” are freely registered in Ukraine’s Crimea.<sup>209</sup> In August 2007, Crimea hosted a conference of *Hizb Al-Tahrir*.<sup>210</sup> The conference was about the establishment of a World Islamic Caliphate, and offered further evidence of fragmentation among the Crimean Tatars. The leader of the Crimean Tatar Bloc, Edip Nafarov, stressed the normality of the conference agenda; on the contrary, the mufti of the Crimean Muslims characterized it as a sign of “evil to Muslims in Crimea,” and Dzemilev’s deputy, Refat Chubarov, tied the conference to attempts to discredit the Crimean Tatars just before the parliamentary elections.<sup>211</sup>

The radicalization of the Crimean Tatars occurred because the Tatars did not see adequate support of their interests by the government, both on the state and local levels. Moreover, “the president’s party [Our Ukraine People’s Union]” accused “the Crimean

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<sup>207</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Ukrainian Security Service Probes Separatism Calls in Crimea,” LexisNexis Academic, January 29, 2008, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985707927&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985707946&cisb=22\\_T2985707945&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985707927&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985707946&cisb=22_T2985707945&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>208</sup> Ibid. This opinion is confirmed by the article in BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Guide to Media in Ukraine’s Crimea – May 2007,” LexisNexis Academic, May 30, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985710386&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985710391&cisb=22\\_T2985710390&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985710386&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985710391&cisb=22_T2985710390&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>209</sup> Ukraine General Newswire, “President’s representative in Crimea, Mufti of Crimean Muslims Discuss Interfaith situation in Autonomy,” LexisNexis Academic, December 20, 2007, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/search/homesubmitForm.do> (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>210</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Islamic Radical Party.”

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

authorities and police of provoking ethnic conflicts.”<sup>212</sup> It was about a series of anti-Tatar events, namely a youth attack on a Crimean Tatar village and destruction of summer cafes by the police. Moreover, Dzemilev stressed that the combination of the “lawlessness” toward the Crimean Tatars and the appearance of Wahhabi Muslims may turn a part of the Crimean Tatar population toward extremist movements.<sup>213</sup> The main point of friction, the land issues, remains unresolved, and Dzemilev is very pessimistic on the prospective of solving this problem.<sup>214</sup> Moreover, recently the Crimean Tatars opted to form national self-defense groups “intended to regulate the allotment of land plots in Crimea; the *Mejlis* meeting passed an affirmative draft resolution, which was finally vetoed by Dzemilev.”<sup>215</sup> Dzemilev made a conclusion that further radicalization of the Crimean Tatars may lead to the “second Chechnya” if the *Mejlis* will lose its authority, and “people may start forming radical groups.”<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Ukraine President’s Party Accuses Local Officials of Bias Against Crimean Tatars,” LexisNexis Academic, November 7, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985716893&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985717305&cisb=22\\_T2985717304&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985716893&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985717305&cisb=22_T2985717304&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>213</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Extremists May Benefit From Discontent - Tatar Leader in Ukraine’s Crimea,” LexisNexis Academic, December 19, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985721330&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985721337&cisb=22\\_T2985721336&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985721330&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985721337&cisb=22_T2985721336&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>214</sup> Svitlytsia.crimea.ua, “Arseniy Yatseniuk: Ya Katerychno Proty Bud’-Yakykh Samozakhopen’...” *Kryms’ka Svitlytsya*, #5, February 2, 2008, <http://svitlytsia.crimea.ua/index.php?section=printable&artID=5526> (accessed February 3, 2008). The Ukraine’s National Security and Defense Council is going to meet to discuss land allocation in Crimea. Moreover, the Speaker of Ukraine’s Parliament Arseniy Yatseniuk, visited Crimea in late January condemning unlawful seizure of 17,000 land plots (14,000 by the Crimean Tatars). During his visit he stressed on the bottom-up (local – ARC – Ukraine) initiative in solving the land issues.

<sup>215</sup> Ukraine General Newswire, “Creation of Self-defense Brigades to Regulate Land Allotment in Crimea Violates Law, NSDC Deputy Secretary Says,” LexisNexis Academic, December 10, 2007, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/search/homesubmitForm.do> (accessed February 2, 2008).

<sup>216</sup> Ukraine General Newswire, “Crimean Tatar Leader Doesn’t Rule Out Growth of Radicalism,” LexisNexis Academic, December 17, 2007, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T2985729932&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T2985729937&cisb=22\\_T2985729936&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=167603&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T2985729932&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T2985729937&cisb=22_T2985729936&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=167603&docNo=1) (accessed February 2, 2008).

### **C. CONCLUSIONS**

The Crimean experience within independent Ukraine can be conditionally divided into two periods, with the Orange Revolution of 2004 as the landmark. The first period consist of two sub-periods: the period of 1992-1995 characterized by secession attempts initiated by pro-Russian political forces; and a second period from 1995-2004 characterized by relative stabilization of secessionist attitudes. The period since 2004 has in turn been characterized by the revival of conflict between Crimea and the central government. This divide is conditional because Ukraine–Crimea relations have been uneven since Ukraine gained its independence. Russo-Ukrainian relations, in disputes over Crimea, revolved around the rights of ethnic Russians in Crimea, the division of the Black Sea Fleet and its basing rights. Finally, the return on the part of the Crimean Tatars from exile brought additional tensions to the region. Land issues, restoration of rights of the Crimean Tatars, and interethnic relations further complicated the situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, radicalizing both the ethnic Russians and the Crimean Tatars.

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## **IV. CRIMEAN TATARS AND THE INFLUENCE OF OTHER NATIONS ON THEIR DEVELOPMENT AS A NATION**

### **A. CONTESTED ETHNOGENESIS OF THE CRIMEAN TATARS**

In the development of the ‘triangle of conflict,’ Russia-Crimea-Ukraine, Crimean Tatars play an important role. Despite their relatively small numbers in Crimea, they are a significant player in Ukrainian domestic politics. Their number of about 250,000, or roughly 12 percent<sup>217</sup> of the Crimean population, is just the tip of the iceberg. The Tatars are widely represented abroad. For instance, in Turkey they number as many as 2 to 3 million, and according to some sources, up to five to seven million. Thus, the Crimean Tatars in Ukraine may be supported by Diasporas both morally and financially.

#### **1. The Ethnogenesis**

All parties of conflict present different theories of the Tatars descent. To understand the grounds for the Crimean Tatars’ search for identity and statehood, the study of Crimean Tatar ethnogenesis is necessary. It is more or less an agreement among scholars that certain peoples populated Crimea and became what we know as Crimean Tatars somewhere in the fourteenth century with the Mongol Tatar invasion.<sup>218</sup>

The ethnonym “Crimean Tatars” is obscure.<sup>219</sup> Many ethnic groups with the second word ‘Tatar’ in the name of a group are scattered throughout the territories of the former Soviet Union and elsewhere. Astrakhan Tatars, Kazan Tatars, Siberian Tatars, Bashkir Tatars, and many other Tatars are not the same people, but they were identified in the Russian lexicon since the thirteenth century “to refer to many different nomadic peoples coming to *Rus*’ from the East.”<sup>220</sup> The ‘Tatars’ can be compared with the

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<sup>217</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine-Crimea-Russia*. The expression ‘triangle of conflict’ is borrowed from this work.

<sup>218</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, xvi.

<sup>219</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 1.

<sup>220</sup> Greta Lynn Uehling, *Beyond Memory: the Crimean Tatars’ Deportation and Return* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 28.

‘Indians’ of the U.S., the collective term for the indigenous population of North America, which contained a multiplicity of different tribes, who distinguished themselves from one another.

Two scholars speaking for the Crimean Tatars summarized and expressed their views on their ethnogenesis. Greta Lynn Uehling based her study of the interview of fifty-three individuals with the set of fifty questions asked “among different ethnic groups [Armenians, Bulgarians, Germans, Greeks, and Karaims] as well as Crimean Tatars deported from the Crimea in 1944 by Stalin.”<sup>221</sup> Brian G. Williams based his study on guidance of his “former adviser, a Dobruchan Turk, Professor Kemal Karpat.”<sup>222</sup> Uehling described historic Crimea as “home to flourishing Greek city-states, Genoese and Venetian trading colonies,” and the Crimean Tatars, who descended from the tribes of the Tavriis and Kimmerites, are “one of the indigenous peoples, along with the *Karaims* and *Krymchaks* (two Turkic Jewish minorities).”<sup>223</sup> Williams described the Crimean Tatars as “an eclectic Turkish-Muslim ethnic group that claims direct descent from the Goths, Pontic Greeks, Armenians, the Tatars of the Golden Horde and other East European ethnic groups.”<sup>224</sup> Crimean Tatar scholars also emphasize “the formative influence of geography...for the development of the indigenous group,” and assert the independence of the Crimean Khanate, as “a fully developed, pre-modern state,” from the fifteenth century onward.<sup>225</sup>

## **2. Thoughts on the Proposed Crimean Tatar Ethnogenesis and Claims Based Upon It**

Construction of a common history, combining fact and mythology in varying degrees, is a characteristic means by which nations assert themselves. In this regard the history of Crimea is very delicate, as Russians, Ukrainians, and the Crimean Tatars all try to create their own picture of who has more historic rights for the Crimean peninsula.

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<sup>221</sup> Uehling, *Beyond Memory*, Acknowledgments and Methodology.

<sup>222</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, Acknowledgments.

<sup>223</sup> Uehling, *Beyond Memory*, 29-30.

<sup>224</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 2.

<sup>225</sup> Uehling, *Beyond Memory*, 30-32.

Russian historian Valeriy Vozgrin, in his largely pro-Crimean Tatar book *Istoricheskie Sud'by Krymskikh Tatar* (Historic Fates of the Crimean Tatars), argues that historic works are subjective to a certain extent and subject to distortion in light of contemporary political goals and issues.<sup>226</sup> Moreover, Crimea is the multiethnic literary landscape,<sup>227</sup> and it is very hard to develop a consistent picture of past events. Crimean Tatar sources are the least precise, being chiefly oral in nature. “The written historical record [on the Crimean Tatars] prior to the early twentieth century is sparse.”<sup>228</sup> National consciousness among the Crimean Tatars emerged in recognizably modern form only in the very late nineteenth century due to the efforts of Ismail Gaspirali, who is “commemorated as a founding father of the Crimean Tatar nation.”<sup>229</sup>

Considering the Crimea as “home to flourishing Greek city-states, Genoese and Venetian trading colonies,” as Williams does, is perfectly right; but the Crimean Tatars did not help them flourish. Alan Fisher pointed out that along the coast of the Crimean peninsula there were certain cities (Kaffa (Kefe, Feodosia today), Evpatoria (Gozleve), and Tana (Azov, Azak)) meeting “eastern European standards” of that time; they were inhabited by Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and “a sizeable Italian and Frankish minorities,” and “these cities were European in influence.”<sup>230</sup> Sasse sites several travelers visiting Crimea in late eighteenth century, who reported the Crimean Tatars as “indolent...uneducated and unsophisticated.”<sup>231</sup>

The claim that the Crimean Tatars, who descended from the tribes of the Tavriis and Kimmerites, are “one of the indigenous peoples, along with the *Karaims* and *Krymchaks* (two Turkic Jewish minorities) looks like a historical myth, corresponding to the idea that the deeper one dug into the history, the more rights one has for the disputed

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<sup>226</sup> Valeriy Vozgrin, *Istoricheskie Sud'by Krymskikh Tatar* (Moskva: “Mysl’,” 1992), 12, [http://tavrika.by.ru/books/vozgrin\\_ists/html/contents.htm](http://tavrika.by.ru/books/vozgrin_ists/html/contents.htm) (accessed January 3, 2008).

<sup>227</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 54.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>230</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 1.

<sup>231</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 49.



piece of territory.<sup>232</sup> But even from the point of view of national mythology, such claims are not necessarily the most important. Vozgrin considers language the crucial milestone on the way to ethnic group development, so that the descent of ethnos can be studied through the success of the language used by the group.<sup>233</sup> According to Vozgrin, Lithuania played a significant role in the emergence of the Crimean Tatar culture in the early part of the fourteenth century. Lithuania pushed away the Golden Horde, which had been occupying the Black Sea steppes between Bug and Don.<sup>234</sup> The Karaims and Tatars lived in Lithuania<sup>235</sup> and the first Khan of the Crimean Khanate, Haci Giray, arrived from Lithuania with the consent of Casimir, the Grand Prince of Lithuania.

Williams' description of the Crimean Tatars as "an eclectic Turkish-Muslim ethnic group that claims direct descent from the Goths, Pontic Greeks, Armenians, the Tatars of the Golden Horde and other East European ethnic groups"<sup>236</sup> is a good definition, but needs to be explained further. Sasse points out that Greek colonizers arrived to Crimea in seventh century BC, dominating but not entirely displacing earlier Slav settlers.<sup>237</sup> Thus, Crimea initially was settled by the Slavs.<sup>238</sup> Her evidence, based on the observation of eighteenth century travelers, suggests that Crimea was an "ethnically segregated society" of "Armenians, Greek, Jews and others" who had lived there for ages; at the time, they "still preserve their national religion, customs and so on and do not seem to have mixed their blood in any considerable degree with the Tatars."<sup>239</sup> Even during the Golden Horde times, Slavs married Turkic women, but Slavic women had never married Tatar men willingly, because it was against the

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<sup>232</sup> Andrew Wilson, *The Ukrainians: Unexpected Nation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 38-39.

<sup>233</sup> Vozgrin, *Istoricheskoe*, 10.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>235</sup> Tapani Harvianen, "Karaims and Tatars – 600 years in Lithuania," *The University of Helsinki*, <http://www.helsinki.fi/lehdet/uh/198j.html> (accessed January 3, 2008).

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>237</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 42.

<sup>238</sup> Vozgrin, *Istoricheskoe*. Vozgrin refers to historic works, but with some level of uncertainty, determining the first settlers of the Crimean peninsula to be arrived somewhere from Central Europe.

<sup>239</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 49.

Christian norm to be one of the numerous wives of one Muslim man. This point contradicts any literal Tatar claim of ‘direct descent from the Goths, Pontic Greeks, and Armenians.’ Sasse pointed out that the Crimean Tatars, a heterogeneous group itself, acquired its cultural identity under the influence of Islam and the international Muslim community by the fifteenth century.<sup>240</sup>

With respect to the “formative influence of geography...for the development of the indigenes,” it may be noted that the Crimean peninsula consists of three different zones: “steppe, mountains and coast.”<sup>241</sup> Two-thirds of it is covered by steppe, identical to the Ukrainian landscape. Thus, the geography of most of the peninsula could not have contributed to the development of particular qualities pertinent to this region only. Sasse uses the evidence of Evgenii Markov, the appointed director of the schools and colleges in *Tavricheskaya Gubernia* in 1865, who “saw Crimea as the part of “Malorossia” (Little Russia) [the other name for Ukraine, invented by Russia] and its inhabitants as closest to the *khokhli* [often used to name Ukrainians in Russian nationalistic slang], defined as the “inhabitants of the Black Sea steppe and south.”<sup>242</sup> The same may be said about the coast. The Black Sea coast is extensive and it was not a particular feature of Crimea. Thus, these geographic conditions were widespread in the close proximity to Crimea and did not contribute to the development of an indigenous group considerably different from the steppes and shores of contemporary Ukraine. The Crimean mountains may be a small exception, though they are not very high (the highest peak is about five thousand feet) as to require extensive cultural adaptation to get adjusted to them. The biggest contributor for the emergent group identity was undoubtedly Islamization, which contributed to the creation of “a collective cultural identity” for a wider Crimean Tatar group rather than the territory of Crimea.<sup>243</sup>

The independence of the Crimean Khanate as “a fully developed, pre-modern state,” is based on “hearsay evidence” about “a Tatar-Ottoman Treaty” which stated “that

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<sup>240</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 74-75.

<sup>241</sup> Uehling, *Beyond Memory*, 30-32.

<sup>242</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 50.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 74-75.

the Khan [Crimean] had complete internal power and could appoint his civilian and military officials.”<sup>244</sup> Yet in reality, “many of the towns and harbors...of the Crimea passed under direct Ottoman control,” while “the Khan’s administration resembled the Ottoman governmental apparatus.” The diverse clans of the Crimea were controlled only due to a strong Ottoman Empire and Ottoman garrisons there,<sup>245</sup> not the Khan’s authority. Fisher notes that historic views of the Tatars see them in the best estimate as vassals on the Ottomans, and at worst as a semi-civilized society whose role was to attack and ruin the steppe, taking advantage of their more civilized and developed neighbors.<sup>246</sup> The latter image is strengthened by Vozgrin, who notes the dependence of the Crimean Khanate upon the archaic practices of the Ottomans themselves.<sup>247</sup>

## **B. CAUSES OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES IN CRIMEA**

The ethnogenesis of the Crimean Tatars is deeply contested in virtually every detail. But even so, it is hardly conceivable that Russians or Ukrainians, both relative newcomers under any circumstances, have more rights to the land of Crimea than the Crimean Tatars. In practice, the demographics of Crimea in modern times have changed constantly since the Russian annexation of the peninsula from the Ottomans in 1783. The Crimean Tatars were forced to leave due to a new and less congenial environment created by new rulers who wish to eliminate or assimilate them. This remained true during the Soviet period as well.

### **1. Changes in Crimean Demographics Under the Russian Empire**

Russian policy toward the Crimean Tatars was initially moderate. Catherine the Great, during whose reign the annexation occurred, fostered religious tolerance and an Islamic clergy to possess an influential position in Crimean society. Tatar nobility was granted rights similar to those of Russian ruling class. At the same time, she initiated a

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<sup>244</sup> Fisher, *The Russian annexation*, 4; and Alan W. Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), 12.

<sup>245</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 5, 9, 10, 18.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>247</sup> Vozgrin, *Istoricheskie*, 94.

policy of Russification, changing Tatar names to Russian, imposing the Russian administrative system and the settling of Christian colonists to the peninsula. This contributed to the decline of the standard of life for Crimean Tatar nobility and ordinary people. In terms of demographics, the Crimean Tatars constituted 83 percent of the total Crimean population in 1783.<sup>248</sup>

Catherine's administration in Crimea did not resist emigration of those who chose to leave. Moreover, it tried to facilitate the Russification of Crimea. Important trading centers, Kefe and Gozleve, were abandoned almost completely by the Tatars. New Russian-built cities like Sevastopol took their place.<sup>249</sup>

After the Crimean annexation by the Russian Empire, Crimean Tatar emigration was a relatively constant phenomenon. It was difficult for the Crimean Tatar elite to adjust to Russian policy in Crimea. For ordinary Tatars, it was mostly Russian land administration that caused an economic depression for peasants.<sup>250</sup> The other reason laid in the "preventive displacement" of Tatars from the shores of the Black Sea during the Russo-Ottoman wars of 1806-1812 and 1828-1829.<sup>251</sup>

"In the aftermath of the Crimean War of 1854-56, the pace of the Tatar exodus quickened."<sup>252</sup> This war saw the successful Russian invasion of the Ottoman Empire, threatening the strategic Bosphorus Straits. To protect them, France, Britain and Sardinia joined the Ottomans in the war. Allied forces landed in Crimea, finally destroying Sevastopol. Despite the Crimean Tatar participation in the war against the Napoleonic invasion of 1812, they were not trusted by the Russian Empire leadership, and were accused of being in collaboration with the Turkish alliance in the fight against the Russian Army. It is estimated that during the war 10,000 to 20,000 Tatars immigrated to

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<sup>248</sup> Forced Migration Projects, *Crimean Tatars: Repatriation and Conflict Prevention* (New York, N.Y.: Open Society Institute, 1996), 21.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>250</sup> Edward Lazzerini, "The Crimea under Russian Rule: 1783 to the Great Reforms," in *Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917*, ed. Michael Rywkin (London and New York: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1988), 126-127.

<sup>251</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 143-144.

<sup>252</sup> Forced Migration Projects, *Crimean Tatars*, 19.

Turkey and another 20,000 were evacuated on departing allied ships.<sup>253</sup> After the war, Russian Tsar Alexander II saw the Crimean Tatars as a source of danger and instability. In 1859 he ordered his administrators “to facilitate and encourage” their emigration. As a result, “some 100,000 Crimean Tatars [who] had left the peninsula” by the end of 1860.<sup>254</sup>

Crimean Tatar emigration continued throughout the last decades of the Russian Empire. It peaked between the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 and 1902, when the emigration slowed due to the revival of “the intellectual movement [of] the influential Tatar reformer, Ismail Bey Gaspirali.”<sup>255</sup> The numbers of those who emigrated were overwhelmed in any case by the natural growth of the Tatar population “from 100,000 in 1861 to 196,854 by the 1890s.”<sup>256</sup>

In sum, Russian imperial policy can not be seen as what is today called “ethnic cleansing.” After the annexation, political, administrative and economic situations have changed for the worse for the Crimean Tatars. Many of the latter opted to leave for Turkey and other countries in search for better life, without any prohibition from the Russian Empire. They did not always find it. The Crimean Tatars who emigrated to Bulgaria and Romania, for instance, suffered the same systematic persecution as the Muslim populations in the Serb dominated areas of Bosnia and Kosovo.<sup>257</sup>

## **2. Revival of the Crimean Tatar Identity and Demographics**

During the late nineteenth century, the Tatar cultural identity was threatened due to the emigration of the Tatar intelligentsia and nobility, and impoverishment of the ordinary Tatars. The revival of the Crimean nation is associated with Ismail Bey Gaspirali, who advocated increased cooperation with the Russians.<sup>258</sup> Gaspirali himself

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<sup>253</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 148.

<sup>254</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 89.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 189.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 240.

<sup>258</sup> Forced Migration Projects, *Crimean Tatars*, 19.

was born to a Tatar *dvoryanstvo* (nobility) family and was educated in a local Islamic school, and then in Russia and France.<sup>259</sup> He recognized the threat of Russification, and sought to counter it through a revival of Islamic education that would not directly challenge Russia's political authority. Gaspirali published a book titled *Russkoe Musul'manstvo* (Russian Islam) in 1881, and in 1883 a journal *Tercuman-Pepevodchic* (Translator), promoting the modernization of Russian Islam; his audience was the youth, because the old elite had left Crimea and the clergy was under complete Russian control.<sup>260</sup> The youth, influenced by the ideas of Gaspirali, split into three schools — his followers, the Young Tatars and the Tatar nationalists (Vatan) — each of which contributed to the emergence of a broad nationalist movement among the Crimean Tatars.<sup>261</sup> Gaspirali's nationalistic movement reduced Crimean Tatar emigration and changed their perception of their identity from that of a "religiously defined" community to one whose only homeland was Crimea.<sup>262</sup>

### **3. Changes in Crimean Demographics Under the Soviet Union**

With the collapse of the Tsarist regime in February 1917, the Crimean Tatar nationalistic movements tried to establish a cultural autonomy. The Crimean Tatar political movement, the *Milli Firka*<sup>263</sup> (the National Party), became the dominant force, and the self-proclaimed Tatar state of Crimea was established in December 1917, and was almost immediately crushed by the Bolsheviks, who feared Crimea's secession.<sup>264</sup> During the Civil War, power over the peninsula was volatile. In the late 1920s, the Bolsheviks took Crimea under firm control with the goal of incorporating it into the

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<sup>259</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 89.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid., 102-103.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., 104-108.

<sup>262</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 189-190.

<sup>263</sup> *Modern Encyclopedia of Religions in Russia and Soviet Union* [MERRSU], Vol. VI, (Academic International Press, 1995), s.v. "Crimean Tatars," (by H. B. Paksoy), 135-142, <http://www.angelfire.com/on/paksoy/crimean.html> (accessed December 29, 2007).

<sup>264</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 119.

communist state. On October 18, 1921, Communists allowed the establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. At that time the Crimean Tatars constituted 25 percent of the total Crimean population.<sup>265</sup>

However, this did not mean the establishment of national autonomy. National autonomies and nationalism were beyond the scope of what was allowed by the Soviet power. It recognized regional autonomies only and nationalism was considered a bourgeois trait.<sup>266</sup> The Crimean Tatars made a counterargument, claiming that autonomy can not exist without nationality.<sup>267</sup>

Soviet policy in Crimea was, at least, twofold. On one side, Vladimir Lenin introduced the policy of *korenizatsia*,<sup>268</sup> which consisted of supporting “the development of the Crimean Tatar language...increasing the national intelligentsia and...institutionalizing ethnicity in the Crimean state apparatus; Crimean Tatar history was taught in *Ak Mecit* (the name for old Tatar village in place of Simferopol) university, Crimean Tatar ethnographic museums were opened, the Crimean Tatar language became the official language along with Russian in Crimea and the Crimean Tatars filled from 30 to 60 percent of the positions in Soviet and Party organizations, while constituting 25 percent of the total Crimean population.”<sup>269</sup>

On the other hand, Lenin claimed Crimea was a hive of bourgeoisie, and sent the *Cheka* (Soviet secret police) to deal with those who opposed the Soviet rule. Crimea had been a last refuge for opponents of the communist regime. As the result, sixty thousand members of *Milli Firka* (who were concerned “with the [quality of] life of the Tatars”) and other organizations perished by April 1921 during six months of Cheka’s ‘work.’<sup>270</sup> Soviet land reform and collectivization led to famines in some areas of the former USSR.

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<sup>265</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 335.

<sup>266</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 131-132.

<sup>267</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 335.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 132.

Crimea was not an exception. The famines of 1921-22 and 1931-33 and the Communist repressive policy resulted in one hundred fifty thousand Crimean Tatars being “killed or forced to leave the Crimea.”<sup>271</sup>

Following Lenin’s death in 1924, Stalin’s policy was directed to “decimate the national Communist cadres of the various republics and smaller territories throughout the USSR.”<sup>272</sup> In Crimea this meant the elimination of national scientific, pedagogical, Crimean Tatar party and state elites, Russification of the Crimean Tatar culture (the Latin alphabet was replaced by Cyrillic, Russian words and grammatical rules were introduced), and closely connecting the Crimean ASSR to the RSFSR.<sup>273</sup> The demographic impact of these policies was palpable. In 1923 Crimean Tatars constituted 24.07 percent of the Crimean population; in 1939 it had been 19.37 percent.<sup>274</sup>

World War II changed Crimean demographics significantly. After the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union, Stalin ordered the deportation of peoples and nationalities associated with Hitler and his allies. The latter, in Stalin’s view, increasingly came to include anyone who had survived Nazi occupation, or failed to die fighting the Germans. Thus, the Soviet Army retook Crimea in 1944, and 188,626 Crimean Tatars are estimated to have been deported on suspicion of having bought their survival by collaborating with the Germans.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 136-138, 143-145.

<sup>272</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 364.

<sup>273</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 145-149.

<sup>274</sup> International Committee of Crimea, “Ethnic Composition of Crimea,” <http://www.iccrimea.org/population.html> (accessed January 3, 2008).

<sup>275</sup> Otto J. Pohl, ““And this Must be Remembered!” Stalin’s Ethnic Cleansing of the Crimean Tatars and their Struggle for Rehabilitation, 1944-1985,” *International Committee of Crimea*, <http://www.iccrimea.org/surgun/pohl-asn-2004.html> (accessed January 3, 2008).



## C. *SURGUN*<sup>276</sup> AND THE RETURN FROM EXILE: CHALLENGES AND CONSEQUENCES

### 1. Why the Crimean Tatars Were Resettled

The precedent for the forceful resettlement of the Crimean Tatars was created by the Russian Empire. After the Crimean War of 1854-54, the Crimean Tatars were accused of collaborating with the Turko-Anglo-French alliance which resulted in official encouragement of their emigration from Crimea.<sup>277</sup> The same accusation was made during the WWII toward them. It was true to a certain extent. Many of the Crimean Tatars expressed sympathy for Germans as their liberators. Germany persuaded some Crimean Tatars, both prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians, to serve for Germany and, “by February 1942, the Germans had outfitted 1,632 Crimean Tatars into 14 companies and six battalions.”<sup>278</sup> During the course of WWII, twenty thousand Crimean Tatars fought for the *Wehrmacht* (almost 10 percent of the 1939 Crimean Tatar population).<sup>279</sup>

The Crimean Tatars were not the only minority who fought for the Germans in WWII. “The Volga Tatars contributed between 35,000 and 40,000 volunteers; from the various Caucasian peoples over 110,000 were recruited, and the Kalmyks provided about 5,000 volunteers.”<sup>280</sup> The number of collaborators among Russians, Ukrainians, and other Slavic nations is not clear, but in relative terms almost certainly as high.

On the other hand, twenty thousand (some other sources propose fifty thousand<sup>281</sup>) Crimean Tatars were conscripted to the Soviet Army and 630 Crimean Tatars out of a total of 3,783 took part in anti-Nazi fight as partisans.<sup>282</sup> Many of the

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<sup>276</sup> Deportation in the Crimean Tatar language.

<sup>277</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 89.

<sup>278</sup> Otto J. Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing in the USSR, 1937-1949* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1999), 112, <http://books.google.com/books?id=SnLANpCfDn4C&pg=PA113&lpg=PA113&dq=crimean+tatars+and+fascists&source=web&ots=4dhTo5gOEW&sig=PfzyzHj0aoZ0BcnwNcaJk6Ih198#PPA112,M1> (accessed January 3, 2008).

<sup>279</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 378; International Committee of Crimea, “Ethnic Composition of Crimea.”

<sup>280</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 155.

<sup>281</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine-Crimea-Russia*, 196.

<sup>282</sup> Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing*.

Tatars supported the partisans logistically and by providing intelligence. This support generated heavy reprisals from the Germans. Thousands of the Crimean Tatars were killed, fifteen thousand were taken to Germany and Austria, and 115 Crimean villages were burned to the ground.<sup>283</sup>

There were several reasons behind Stalin's decision to deport the Crimean Tatars: the obvious one — their betrayal in favor of the Nazis — and some the other reasons that were hidden by Soviet officials. Among them are extensive ties between the Soviet Crimean Tatars and various Crimean Tatar Diasporas in the wake of a planned Soviet invasion into Turkey, and inflated statistics of Crimean Tatar betrayal.<sup>284</sup> The Crimean Tatar's alleged betrayal, and their supposed attempts to exterminate the non-Tatar population in Crimea were widely advertised by the Soviet officials both among the troops and civilians all over the Soviet Union.<sup>285</sup>

In addition, ties between the Crimean Tatars and the Diaspora had not received proper scholarly attention. These were viewed as a threat to the extension of Soviet influence after the war. Crimean Tatars who had maintained relations with the Diaspora in Turkey and other states undermined the strategic value of Crimea as the 'unsinkable aircraft carrier' and important naval base for Soviet strategic plans in Turkey and further in Mediterranean.

## **2. Surgun**

After the Soviet Army entered Crimea, any person accused of collaboration with the Nazis by two individuals was executed without trial.<sup>286</sup> Less than one week after the Nazis left Crimea, on May 18, 1944, Stalin ordered the deportation. Crimean Tatar villages were surrounded by Army and *NKVD* units in the middle of the night. The Tatars were given less than one hour to collect their most valuable belongings. Then,

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<sup>283</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 381-382.

<sup>284</sup> Pohl, *Ethnic Cleansing*.

<sup>285</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 162-163.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

they boarded trucks to be transported to railway hubs throughout Crimea. Complete deportation of 188,626 Crimean Tatars, primarily to Uzbekistan, was finished in just three days.

Crimean Tatars who fought in the Soviet Army were demobilized after the fall of Berlin and sent to exile. According to Otto J. Pohl, “in March 1949, the special settlements contained 8,995 Crimean Tatar veterans of the Red Army including 534 officers and 1,392 sergeants. The special settlement also held 742 Crimean Tatar Communist Party members and 1,225 *Komsomoists* [members (Young Communist League)].”<sup>287</sup>

The estimates of the amount of death during several weeks of horrible transportation revolve around five percent (seventy-nine hundred).<sup>288</sup> The Crimean Tatars were not well suited to the climate in Uzbekistan. One of the deportees recalled that upon his arrival to Uzbekistan “it was about 110 degrees Fahrenheit — unimaginable heat [for the Crimea].”<sup>289</sup> Estimates of those who lost their lives as the result of deportation vary from 45,000 to 110,000.<sup>290</sup>

### **3. The Struggle for Return**

Conditions improved slightly for Crimean Tatars after Stalin’s death in 1953. Some special settlement restrictions were lifted first for the partisans, military veterans, and, later in 1956, the unpublished decree removed restrictions from the entire Diaspora.<sup>291</sup> However, several core limitations remained: they were not authorized to return to Crimea and the right to their property was not restored.<sup>292</sup> The Crimean Tatars and two other nationalities — Meskhetian Turks and Volga Germans — were deprived of complete rehabilitation.

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<sup>287</sup> Pohl, “And this Must be Remembered!”

<sup>288</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 390.

<sup>289</sup> Arthur C. Helton, “Crimean Tatars,” *Forced Migration Projects*, [http://www.osi.hu/fmp/html/chapter\\_1\\_crimean.html](http://www.osi.hu/fmp/html/chapter_1_crimean.html) (accessed January 15, 2008).

<sup>290</sup> Ibid; and Pohl, ““And this Must be Remembered!”

<sup>291</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 174.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

By the late 1950s, the Crimean Tatars were trying to gain attention to their rights to return to Crimea. In this effort they collected twenty-five thousand signatures on a petition to the Communist Party Congress of 1961, claiming a full restoration of their rights.<sup>293</sup> “The petitions became one of the principle instruments in the Crimean Tatar national movement in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.”<sup>294</sup> The Soviet regime responded with a series of trials for anti-Soviet propaganda, “arresting and giving lengthy jail terms.”<sup>295</sup>

Crimean Tatar efforts to return from exile attracted the attention of Soviet dissidents, and, later on, of an international community.<sup>296</sup> Famous Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov appealed to the UN for support in the Crimean Tatar struggle for return to their homeland; later, he asked French President Giscard d’Estaing, who was planning to visit the USSR, to raise the question of the Crimean Tatars.<sup>297</sup> Mustafa Gemilev, the current *Kurultai* leader, who was jailed in 1966, was freed in 1988, in part with the assistance of U.S. President Reagan.<sup>298</sup>

The situation changed radically during only the last years of the existence of the Soviet Union. First, ethnic conflict in Uzbekistan showed that outsiders are not welcomed there. Second, “the Supreme Soviet issued a decree “on Recognizing the Illegal and Repressive Acts against Peoples Subjected to Forcible Resettlement and Ensuring their Rights”<sup>299</sup> on November 14, 1989 following a demonstration by Crimean Tatars in Red Square in Moscow. As a result, the Crimean Tatars started moving closer to Crimea and, by 1989, more than thirty-eight thousand Crimean Tatars lived in Crimea.<sup>300</sup> Out of an estimated five hundred thousand Crimean Tatars that lived in Central Asia and Siberia, two hundred sixty thousand had returned to Crimea by 1993.<sup>301</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*.

<sup>294</sup> Pohl, ““And this Must be Remembered!”

<sup>295</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 420.

<sup>296</sup> Pohl, ““And this Must be Remembered!”

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Williams, *The Crimean Tatars*, 424.

<sup>299</sup> Pohl, ““And this Must be Remembered!”

<sup>300</sup> International Committee of Crimea, “Ethnic Composition of Crimea.”

<sup>301</sup> Forced Migration Projects, *Crimean Tatars*, 106.

#### D. CHALLENGES AND CONSEQUENCES

Since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine experienced political conflicts of multiple dimensions. There were internal disputes between Kiev and Simferopol and external ones between Russia and Ukraine. The returning Crimean Tatars added an additional dimension to an existing set of problems in economic, social, and political life.

Crimean Tatar arrival to the peninsula exacerbated an already serious economic crisis there, brought about by the collapse of the Soviet Union itself. The economy of Ukraine suffered as well, but it continued to subsidize Crimea. The arrival of thousands of impoverished Crimean Tatars became a challenge for Ukraine, whose economy was being ruined by hyperinflation.

Socially, the influx of new people to the region increased competition for jobs.<sup>302</sup> Social tensions also increased as Crimean Tatars tried to reclaim their confiscated property and other rights they had lost due to the deportation. The arrival of the Muslims, bearers of the relatively rare religion at the peninsula,<sup>303</sup> made people anxious due to the stereotype of Tatars, as barbarians who had lived by banditry and the slave trade in earlier times. The second *Kurultai* (the first took part in 1918) convened in September 1990 passing the “Declaration on National Sovereignty of the Crimean Tatar People;” the declaration described Crimea as “the national territory of the Crimean Tatar people, on which they alone possess the right to self government” and asserted that “the political, economic, spiritual and cultural rebirth of the Crimean Tatar people is only possible in their own sovereign national state.”<sup>304</sup>

The presence of the Crimean Tatars deepened the crisis between Russia and Ukraine. Russia feared that, through the Tatars, Turkey might get deeper into Ukrainian affairs and reduce Russian influence. In addition, increased tensions between Slavs and

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<sup>302</sup> The damage to the economy can be imagined with recalls of the debates in the U.S. on the impact of illegal immigrants on the job market and economy. Ukraine is a different case. However, certain similar trends can be traced.

<sup>303</sup> International Committee of Crimea, “Ethnic Composition of Crimea.” In 1970, there were 6,479 Tatars out of 1,813,502 of the total population of Crimea, in 1989 – 38,365.

<sup>304</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine-Crimea-Russia*, 196.

Tatars provide another reason for Moscow to put pressure on the Ukrainian government to protect ethnic Russians — a dynamic that has persisted, with varying intensity, to this day.

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## **V. THE RUSSIAN BLACK SEA FLEET IN UKRAINE**

The presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine intersects with the problems posed by the Crimean Tatars in several respects. It is itself an independent source of friction between Russia and Ukraine, and to that extent makes cooperation on other matters of common interest more difficult. Beyond that, its presence is widely thought to influence the outlook of the Crimean Tatars directly, but in diverging ways. Some argue that the presence of the BSF helps deter the Crimean Tatars from claiming independence from Ukraine, or initiating intrastate ethnic conflict. Others argue that the fleet fuels pro-Russian sentiments among the Crimean Russophones, who wish to challenge Ukrainian authority over the Crimean peninsula, and are generally hostile to Tatar interests.

### **A. A HISTORY OF A CONFLICT OVER THE BLACK SEA FLEET**

#### **1. Soviet Black Sea Fleet**

The Soviet Navy (*Voenno-Morskoi Flot*) consisted of four fleets. The Black Sea Fleet was the third largest, and constituted of “26 percent of the former Soviet Navy ships and 7 percent of its submarines, primarily based in Ukrainian ports of Sevastopol and Odessa, with smaller bases in Poti, Georgia, and Novorossiysk, Russia.”<sup>305</sup> Its main task was (and still is) to defend the Black Sea coast and compete with the U.S. sixth fleet and other NATO naval forces in the Mediterranean.<sup>306</sup> The BSF had more than four hundred combat aircraft and one hundred helicopters, supported by significant land components, including a Coastal Defense Division with three hundred tanks and six hundred armored vehicles and a Naval Infantry Brigade.<sup>307</sup>

At the time of the Soviet collapse, BSF maintenance and basing facilities constituted a valuable piece of former Soviet infrastructure for Ukraine and Russia to compete over. Some Western observers feared that such competition might be serious

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<sup>305</sup> Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*, 92-93.

<sup>306</sup> Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 74.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.



enough to escalate to an armed conflict.<sup>308</sup> In Russian-Ukrainian relations the issues of Crimea, Sevastopol, and the BSF were the most important obstacles on the way to signing an interstate treaty.<sup>309</sup>

## **2. Russian and Ukrainian Perception of the Black Sea Fleet**

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia tried to establish control over the military formations, based on the territory of NIS, which it considered as strategic assets necessary for the joint defense of the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS).<sup>310</sup> Ukraine did not consider the BSF to be of strategic significance in this sense. Its leadership regarded the BSF as a conventional military asset to be nationalized along with other military hardware stationed in Ukraine at the moment of the Soviet Union's disappearance.<sup>311</sup>

The issue of the BSF was also used as a cover for higher interests at stake. For Russia, the interest was chiefly the establishment of a "long-term presence and influence on the Black Sea;" for Ukraine it was about "the viability of Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea."<sup>312</sup> For the both, the real interest was about influencing unstable domestic politics and domestic interest groups, rather than about confronting external threats.<sup>313</sup> Russian interest was not in the ships, but in preserving its traditional presence in Crimea

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<sup>308</sup> Tyler Felgenhauer, *Ukraine, Russia, and the Black Sea Fleet Accords* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1999), 1, <https://www.princeton.edu/research/cases/ukraine.pdf> (accessed February 7, 2008); and RusNavy.com, "Russia and Ukraine have measured swords with one another twice," <http://rusnavy.com/nowadays/concept/rusvsukr1.htm> (accessed February 7, 2008).

<sup>309</sup> D'Anieri et al., *Politics and Society in Ukraine*; Maria Drohobycky, ed., *Crimea: Dynamics, Challenges, and Prospects* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1995); Andrew Cottey et al., *New Security Challenges in Post Communist Europe* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2002); Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*; Alexey Arbatov et al., ed., *Russia and the West: the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Security Environment* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1999); Kremenjuk, *Conflicts in and Around Russia*; Kuzio, *Ukrainian Security Policy*; Lieven, *Ukraine & Russia*; Kurt R. Spillmann, ed., *Between Russia and the West: Foreign and Security Policy of Independent Ukraine* (Europaischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, Bern: Peter Lang AG, 1999); Solchanyk, *Ukraine and Russia*; and Victoria E. Bonnell and George W. Brelauer, ed., *Russia in the New Century: Stability and Disorder* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001).

<sup>310</sup> Zaborsky, "Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet," 25.

<sup>311</sup> Motyl, *Dilemmas of Independence*, 109.

<sup>312</sup> Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 74.

<sup>313</sup> Felgenhauer, *Ukraine, Russia*, 1-2.

through claiming sovereign status of Sevastopol, the main base for the BSF.<sup>314</sup> Russia wanted to keep Turkey, its ancient rival, away from Ukraine, and prevent active Turkish involvement in Crimea, especially with regard to Crimean Tatars.<sup>315</sup> Russia also desired to reinstall its patronage and control over the former Soviet Republics, the so-called ‘near abroad.’ Vladimir Putin’s government in particular has focused on subordination of “former Soviet space” in the interest of Russian security, and has been less concerned with troublesome and expensive patronage.<sup>316</sup>

For Ukraine, the issue of the Black Sea Fleet was important for proving its independence, and showing that it could not easily be intimidated. It was not a matter of military importance, because Ukraine is not able to sustain a large blue-water navy or even a piece of it.<sup>317</sup> Possessing a part of the BSF would also strengthen Ukraine’s *de-facto* rights for the Crimean peninsula, however, which is a political consideration in its own right.

### **3. Background for the Dispute of Black Sea Fleet Accords**

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

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<sup>314</sup> Celestine Bohlen, “In Russia-Ukraine Fight Over Navy, Crimea Lies at Heart of the Struggle,” *New York Times*, March 31, 1992, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E0CE1D71E30F932A05750C0A964958260&scp=1&sq=red+fleet+in+black+sea+split&st=nyt> (accessed February 7, 2008).

<sup>315</sup> Moshes, “Littoral States,” 80.

<sup>316</sup> James Sherr, “Democracy: the Missing Link in Regional Security,” in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharp, 2004), 247.

<sup>317</sup> Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 75.

The issue of basing rights was especially important and complicated. In the early 1990s, Russia did not have any significant naval infrastructure on the Black Sea beyond Ukraine. Russia has since undertaken a massive program of building the necessary infrastructure in Novorossiysk (to be completed in 2012) and has negotiated with Syria to increase basing rights there. In the meantime, Russia's deteriorating economy denied it the capacity to either build a substitute for the current infrastructure or to relocate BSF personnel from Ukraine somewhere else.<sup>318</sup>

The most important point of the dispute was about control over the Crimean peninsula and Sevastopol. "In many ways, it is really about the Crimean Peninsula itself, which [was then] poised for a referendum on its independence from Ukraine, and about Sevastopol, a navy town of faded elegance that dates to the reign of Catherine the Great."<sup>319</sup> Ukraine inherited part of the Soviet Army without considerable resistance of Russia, but division of the BSF was closely connected to the rights for Crimea and Sevastopol. Russia's claim on Sevastopol and Crimea was supported by the ethnic Russian majority and other Russified nationalities, and reinforced by the pro-Russian administration of Crimea.

#### **4. Black Sea Fleet Accords**

The dispute started on March 16, 1992 with the creation of the Russian defense ministry and a responding decree by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk to form a Ukrainian Navy in April 1992.<sup>320</sup> The "war of decrees"<sup>321</sup> over the ownership of the BSF resulted in multiple Russian-Ukrainian summits and other meetings over how to divide the fleet. In the end both sides agreed "that the Black Sea Fleet was inherited by both Ukraine and Russia."<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 75.

<sup>319</sup> Bohlen, "In Russia-Ukraine Fight."

<sup>320</sup> Zaborsky, "Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet," 25.

<sup>321</sup> Jaworsky, "Crimea's Importance to Ukraine," 200.

<sup>322</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine-Crimea-Russia*, 206.

Despite the moratorium to undertake any unilateral actions reached during several rounds of talks, two incidents derailed further negotiations.<sup>323</sup> First, Ukraine announced that 97 percent of BSF officers had taken an oath of loyalty to it, claiming right of ownership over BSF facilities, followed by seizing a naval garrison in Sevastopol. Second, a BSF ship hoisted a Ukrainian flag and “defected” to Odessa during a naval exercise. Ukrainian authorities claimed ownership of the ship against Russian accusations of ‘piracy.’ A similar case, but from the Russian side, emerged in May 1994 when Russia seized a research ship in the Ukrainian mainland port of Odessa and placed it under its control.

Propositions for the division of the BSF ranged from full subordination to Russia to equal 50-50 division between Russia and Ukraine. Russia emphasized the strategic character of a fleet armed with nuclear weapons, but it was not clear how many ships were actually able to carry nuclear weapons, nor where these weapons (if any) were stored, on the ships or at the fleet’s bases.<sup>324</sup> Ukraine’s claims were purely territorial. Up until 1995 the issues of the division of the BSF remained unresolved mostly because of the status of Sevastopol and basing rights for Russia.

In 1995-96, Ukraine received one hundred fifty naval installations in addition to “Mykolaiv, Saki, Ochakov and Danubian flotilla bases outside Crimea,” and twenty ships and some aircrafts, based on naval bases, military garrisons and airports.<sup>325</sup> Again, the division of the BSF stopped in 1996 after Ukraine did not provide sufficient basing rights in Sevastopol to Russia.

Support by Crimean authorities for secession to Russia reinforced the Russian bargaining position over Sevastopol and Crimea. Russia demanded “a 99-year lease of the city of Sevastopol (and not just the port), a division of the coastal infrastructure (as well as vessels) and removal of all Ukrainian naval forces from the Crimea (a demand

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<sup>323</sup> Felgenhauer, *Ukraine, Russia*, 6.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>325</sup> Taras Kuzio, *Ukraine under Kuchma: Political Reform, Economic Transformation and Security Policy in Independent Ukraine* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 217.

backed by then Crimean President Meshkov).<sup>326</sup> Local support for Russia in Sevastopol ranged for up to 89 percent, and the majority of Sevastopol city council declared that legally the Crimea was part of the Russian territory.<sup>327</sup> These influences were counterbalanced by the Union of Ukrainian Officers, Rukh, Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists and Crimean Tatars (the latter advocated territorial integrity of Ukraine).

Finally, after almost five years of disagreement, on May 28, 1997, Moscow and Kiev finally settled their dispute over the Black Sea Fleet. The two sides decided to divide the BSF property and that Russia would lease Sevastopol facilities for the BSF. Russia and Ukraine split the ships 50-50, with Russia then buying a part of Ukraine's share.

The two states agreed that Russia would rent three ports for warships and two airfields for a twenty-year period. Russia also agreed to station "no more than 25,000 military personnel at the bases, and that it would not place any nuclear weapons at the leased facilities."<sup>328</sup> On March 24, 1999, the Parliament of Ukraine ratified the three intergovernmental agreements signed in May 1997. Currently, the BSF consists of "some 80 vessels and 15,000 servicemen in Ukraine."<sup>329</sup>

## **5. Current Disputes Between Ukraine and Russia Over the BSF**

Current disputes revolve around the timely withdrawal of the BSF in 2017 according to the agreements, leasing cost and multiple violations by the Russian side of the accords on the division of the BSF between Ukraine and Russia.<sup>330</sup> The first is mainly about Ukraine's concerns that the RBSF will stay in Crimea after 2017. There is

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<sup>326</sup> Kuzio, *Ukraine-Crimea-Russia*, 211.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "Black Sea Fleet (BSF)," <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/agency/mf-black.htm> (accessed February 10, 2008).

<sup>329</sup> "Europe: Crimean wars; Russia and Ukraine," *The Economist* 378, no. 8466 (February 25, 2006): 42, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=0&did=994266871&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1202852935&clientId=11969> (accessed February 12, 2008).

<sup>330</sup> Valentyn Soroka, "Fleeting moment for Russia...food for thought for Ukraine!" *Kyiv Weekly*, July 15, 2005, <http://weekly.com.ua/?art=1138923183> (accessed February 12, 2008).

much evidence to support this concern. First, Russian Naval planning out to the year 2020 considers Sevastopol as the main base for the BSF.<sup>331</sup> Russian officials at different levels proclaim that the BSF will continue to stay in Crimea after 2017. At the same time, Russia has accelerated building a naval base in Novorossiysk and is investigating basing a part of the RBSF in Syria.<sup>332</sup> Second, Ukraine consider the cost of lease, negotiated at \$97.75 million, to be inappropriate given that Ukraine must now pay close to the world market price for Russian natural gas.. Finally, Ukraine considers Russia as the violator of the accords because it has occupied more facilities and land in Crimea than was earlier agreed, a charge Russia rejects.<sup>333</sup>

## **B. THE RBSF IN CRIMEA: REAL AND IMAGINABLE ROLES**

### **1. The Negative Role of the RBSF in Crimea**

Russia today is a revisionist state, eager to reshuffle its cards in Crimea. The RBSF is a perfect tool for this purpose. “Russia still considers military force to be an element in its foreign policy towards CIS...which Moscow has declared to be a zone of its vital interests.”<sup>334</sup> The RBSF in Crimea allows Russia to conduct its intelligence gathering and PSYOPS in Ukraine and Crimea at a lower cost than from the mainland. To conduct intelligence at least three tools — maritime and coastal SIGINT units, air platforms, and scouts — are available in Crimea. The RBSF has maritime and coastal signal intelligence (SIGINT) units, incorporating a wide array of ‘legalized’ ways and means to conduct intelligence gathering in Ukraine beyond Crimea. Organized PSYOPS

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<sup>331</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Expert Says Russian Navy Has Nowhere To Go From Ukraine's Sevastopol,” LexisNexis Academic, February 22, 2006, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3053849385&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3053849395&cisb=22\\_T3053849394&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=9](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3053849385&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3053849395&cisb=22_T3053849394&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=9) (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>332</sup> Mikhail Barabanov, “Russia in the Mediterranean,” *Moscow Defense Brief* #3 (9), 2007, <http://mdb.cast.ru/mdb/2-2006/item1/item2/> (accessed February 13, 2008).

<sup>333</sup> The Kabinet Ministers of Ukraine, “Ukrainian - Russian Working Group into Russian Black Sea Fleet's Functioning in Ukraine Sits in Kyiv,” September 26, 2007, [http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art\\_id=93034459](http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art_id=93034459) (accessed February 13, 2008).

<sup>334</sup> BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, “Russian daily Looks at Moscow’s Military strategy in CIS,” October 11, 2005, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3045962245&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3045962248&cisb=22\\_T3045962247&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=6](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3045962245&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3045962248&cisb=22_T3045962247&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=6) (accessed February 13, 2008).

started in 1992 with the establishment of PSYOPS units within the BSF, and have assisted in the creation of a “social base for the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol” and in support of pro-Russian organizations in Crimea.<sup>335</sup> The Russian government has invested in the creation of a civilian infrastructure and media in Sevastopol and Crimea to promote Russian ideas.

The RBSF widely participates in illegal business activities in Crimea. It sub-leases facilities, without Ukraine’s consent, to businesses that are consequently able to evade local taxes.<sup>336</sup> The RBSF leases radio frequencies within the range allocated to it for military purposes; besides the lost commercial profit by Ukraine, this undermines the safe use of military equipment by the RBSF itself.<sup>337</sup>

Crimea may also turn into a target for terrorist revenge by Chechen guerrillas. RBSF training centers in Crimea were used by troops departing to Chechnya. Individuals and RBSF military units participate in counterterrorism efforts in North Caucasus (mainly Chechnya). A Marine scout troop (detached) participated there in 1999-2000 as part of joint Northern Fleet Marine battalion and is currently stationed in Crimea.<sup>338</sup> Sevastopol and, to a lesser extent, Crimea are rich for terrorist targets (barracks, families, arsenals and depots). The most dangerous is the IR-200 nuclear reactor of the Sevastopol nuclear institute,<sup>339</sup> which might serve as a ‘dirty bomb.’ Those threats seem to be plausible in the wake of increased Wahhabist activities in Crimea.

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<sup>335</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Black Sea Fleet is Russia’s “Fifth Column” in Ukraine – Defence web Site,” November 3, 2004, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3045999111&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3045999116&cisb=22\\_T3045999115&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3045999111&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3045999116&cisb=22_T3045999115&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=10962&docNo=1) (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>336</sup> “Vartist’ Orendy Chornomors’kogo floty Mozhe Buty v P’yat’ Raziv Vyshche?” *Euroatlantica*, May 5, 2005, <http://www.euroatlantica.kiev.ua/ua/news/?actio=view&id=237> (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>337</sup> “Chornomors’ky Flot RF Protzyzakonno Zdae v Orendu Ukrain’s’ky Radiochastoty,” *Kreschatic: Kyivs’ka Mynitsipal’na Gazeta*, February 2, 2008, <http://www.kreschatic.kiev.ua/ua/3240/news/1202803931.html> (accessed February 9, 2008).

<sup>338</sup> BBC Monitoring Kiev Unit, “Black Sea Fleet is Russia’s “Fifth Column”.”

<sup>339</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Ukrainian web-site mulls danger of terrorist attacks in Crimea,” May 28, 2005, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3046821983&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3046821986&cisb=22\\_T3046821985&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3046821983&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3046821986&cisb=22_T3046821985&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1) (accessed February 11, 2008).

## 2. Positive Roles of the RBSF in Crimea and Implications Derived from These Roles

The Russian budget provides some financial support to Sevastopol. However, this support does not arrive on a regular basis.<sup>340</sup> The RBSF also hires local inhabitants to work for it. The government of Moscow also provides financial support to Sevastopol.

Moscow is devoting particular attention, Luzhkov [Moscow mayor] note, to the task of patronaging the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which is based at Sevastopol. Much was done during the past few years to “create normal conditions for the fleet's work.” The “*Moskva*” missile cruiser was commissioned on money from the Moscow city budget. More than 2,500 flats were built in Sevastopol for the families of sailors, along with a school building, kindergarten, and medical center. A subsidiary of Moscow State University is functioning and developing there for the second year running.<sup>341</sup>

Russia also believes the presence of its fleet at Sevastopol contributes to regional stability. “If we surrender the Crimea, it is not to Ukraine but to Turkey, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the ultra-nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, is reported to have said.”<sup>342</sup> This point of view is quite exaggerated. Turkey does not need the Crimean peninsula to control the Black Sea. The Bosphorus and Dardanelles provide exceptional control over the maritime lines between the Black and Mediterranean Seas.

Some Russian sources also hypothesizes that the RBSF is a deterrent to keep Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar nationalists from putting additional pressure on the

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<sup>340</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Sevastopol to Become Ukraine's “Unifying Chain” with Russia – Governor,” July 15, 2005, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3047015157&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3047015160&cisb=22\\_T3047015159&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3047015157&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3047015160&cisb=22_T3047015159&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1) (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>341</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, “Moscow city delegation visits Crimea,” July 15, 2005, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3035824658&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3035824662&cisb=22\\_T3035824661&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=8063&docNo=13](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3035824658&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3035824662&cisb=22_T3035824661&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=8063&docNo=13) (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>342</sup> Sergei Blagov, “Politics-Russia: Skepticism Prevails Over Friendship Treaty,” *IPS-Inter Press Service*, February 25, 2000, <http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/search/homesubmitForm.do> (accessed February 14, 2008).



Russian-speaking community in Crimea.<sup>343</sup> This point has very limited grounds. Many ethnic Russians live without problems in Western Ukraine without any support from the RBSF.

A more extreme prediction was made by some Crimean Tatars and Krymchacs (which is surprising). The Deputy Head of the Krymchacs cultural society, Mark Purim, made a statement that 2017 will be the year of creation of the Crimean Tatar state. Nariman Abdul'vaapov, a Crimean State Engineer-Pedagogical University faculty member, supported this claim during a seminar on "Protection and Preservation of Indigenous Crimean Peoples Cultural Heritage."<sup>344</sup> However, official *Mejelis* leadership supports the idea of territorial integrity of Ukraine.<sup>345</sup> Does the RBSF serve as the deterrent against such undesirable consequences for Ukraine?

The RBSF consist of about fifteen thousand men and eighty ships (twenty-plus warships only). Despite the impressive number, these personnel are not well suited for antiterrorist and riot control functions. According to Jane's, the RBSF has a naval infantry brigade<sup>346</sup> plus the RBSF HQ guards and support battalion. Naval aviation units and possibly other major bases and garrisons may have their integral small units to maintaining security of ships, airfields and other installations. A small detachment of combat divers, acquired during division of the Soviet BSF,<sup>347</sup> is possibly still with the RBSF.

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<sup>343</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, "BBC Monitoring Quotes from Russian Press," April 19, 2005, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3047103163&format=G\\_NBF&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=26&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3047103167&cisb=22\\_T3047103166&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=27](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3047103163&format=G_NBF&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=26&resultsUrlKey=29_T3047103167&cisb=22_T3047103166&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=27) (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>344</sup> "2017 goody krymskie tatory namereny dobitya sozdaniya sobstvennogo gosudarstva," Bserossiiskoe obschestvennoe obedinenie Zubr, September 11, 2007, <http://za.zubr.in.ua/2007/09/11/1209/> (accessed February 7, 2008).

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> Jane's Information Group, "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Russia and the CIS," *Jane's Navy International*, January 3, 2008, [http://www8.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/cissu/russs130.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=Russian%20black%20sea%20fleet&backPath=http://search.janes.com/Search&Prod\\_Name=CISS&](http://www8.janes.com/Search/documentView.do?docId=/content1/janesdata/sent/cissu/russs130.htm@current&pageSelected=allJanes&keyword=Russian%20black%20sea%20fleet&backPath=http://search.janes.com/Search&Prod_Name=CISS&) (accessed February 11, 2008).

<sup>347</sup> "Soglasenie Mezhdru Rossiiskoi Federatsiei i Ukrainoi o Parametrah Razdela Chernomorskogo Flota," *Sbornik Zakonodatel'stva*, May 28, 1997, [http://www.vcom.ru/cgi-bin/db/zakdoc?\\_reg\\_number=%D09706092](http://www.vcom.ru/cgi-bin/db/zakdoc?_reg_number=%D09706092) (accessed February 12, 2008).

In case of riots caused by the Crimean Tatars' desire to get independence from Ukraine, the RBSF units will be among the first (along with Ukrainian military formations) to be attacked by the radicals to gain weapons and explosives. As soon as the riots began, the extensive network of big and small RBSF units<sup>348</sup> will be involved in force protection measures. Moreover, RBSF personnel are involved in the protection of several lighthouses necessary for navigation near the Crimean shores.<sup>349</sup> These personnel and other small units are among the least protected. The real 'boots on the ground' are in the naval infantry brigade, the combat diver detachment, and possibly the guard company of the RBSF headquarters. This is barely enough for their own force protection. Ukraine can not count on the support of the RSBF in dealing with possible Crimean Tatar riots; and Russia in turn can not send significant reinforcement without Ukraine's consent.

Thus, the RBSF cannot serve as the deterrent for the Crimean Tatars. Like the Russian 14th Army in Transdnestria, Moldova, however, the RBSF could arm pro-Russian paramilitaries — a truly negative and dangerously escalatory role.<sup>350</sup> The actual RBSF units will be hard-pressed to protect RBSF's multiple bases, lighthouses, and so on.

### C. CONCLUSION

Ukraine and Russia have gone to considerable lengths to settle disputes over the division of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet. Despite the Agreement reached in 1997, the issue still festers. Basing of the RBSF in Ukraine has raised questions about the relative advantages and disadvantages of its presence in Crimea. From Ukraine's perspective, having the RBSF in Crimea provides an easier environment for Russia to

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<sup>348</sup> "Soglashenie Mezhdru Rossiiskoi Federatsiei i Ukrainoi o Parametrah Razdela Chernomorskogo Flota," *Sbornik Zakonodatel'stva*.

<sup>349</sup> BBC Monitoring International Reports, "Russian TV Says Troops May Open Fire in Ukrainian Lighthouse Dispute," January 18, 2006, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3047513065&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3047513071&cisb=22\\_T3047513070&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3047513065&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3047513071&cisb=22_T3047513070&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=227171&docNo=1) (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>350</sup> Garnett, *Keystone in the Arch*, 28.

gather intelligence on Ukraine, and to conduct psychological operations against it. The RBSF also participates in some illegal activities, and its presence increases the possibility of terrorist acts in Ukraine.

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

## **VI. ETHNIC IMBROGLIO IN CRIMEA: A PROBLEM THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE THEORY OF AUTONOMY, INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND TERRORISM**

### **A. A STUDY OF CRIMEA'S AUTONOMY**

According to its Constitution, Ukraine is a unitary state.<sup>351</sup> At the same time, it has an autonomous republic among its administrative-territorial units (ATU). The Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC) has its own constitution, the capital (Simferopol), symbols, and fully configured legislature, executive, and judiciary branches of government.<sup>352</sup> Ukraine has developed a hierarchical relationship between the state governing bodies (the center) and administrative-territorial units (periphery). Thus, the normative power of the ARC is subordinated to the Constitution and the laws of Ukraine, and may not exceed the regulative limits imposed by state bodies. The only qualification is that the ARC enjoys some “exclusive features,”<sup>353</sup> elevating the ARC over the rest of the ATUs in Ukraine.

#### **1. Theoretical Prospective on Autonomy**

There is no agreement among international law scholars and political scientists on what can be considered as autonomy and how to conceptualize it.<sup>354</sup> Autonomies were once regarded as dangerous to a state's territorial integrity and an initial step for secession. Later, the idea of autonomization was transformed into more state-friendly issues to silence claims for secession. “Autonomy is just seen as one element of state

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<sup>351</sup> Const. of Ukraine, art. 3, [http://ww7.president.gov.ua/en/content/10301\\_e.html](http://ww7.president.gov.ua/en/content/10301_e.html) (accessed February 15, 2007).

<sup>352</sup> Constitution of Crimea, <http://www.rada.crimea.ua/> (accessed February 15, 2007).

<sup>353</sup> Markku Suski, “On the Entrenchment of Autonomy,” in *Autonomy: Applications and Implications*, ed. Markku Suski (Hague, Netherlands: Kluwer Law International, 1998), 154.

<sup>354</sup> Stefan Wolff and Mark Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy: A conceptual Introduction,” in *Autonomy, Self-Governance, and Conflict Resolution: Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies*, ed. Stefan Wolff and Mark Weller (New York, NY: Routledge, 2005), 11, [http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=NnbDYWufzh0C&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Conflict+in+the+Crimea+;+an+examination+of+ethnic+conflict+under+the+contemporary+model+of+sovereignty&ots=QattiyCi9z&sig=QVOdioRgF26Q8\\_otndsLag6h3zE#PPA4,M1](http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=NnbDYWufzh0C&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=Conflict+in+the+Crimea+;+an+examination+of+ethnic+conflict+under+the+contemporary+model+of+sovereignty&ots=QattiyCi9z&sig=QVOdioRgF26Q8_otndsLag6h3zE#PPA4,M1) (accessed February 14, 2008).

construction addressing the needs of diverse communities.”<sup>355</sup> Stefan Wolff and Mark Weller see sources of potential tensions and conflicts through the prism of “the politicization of ethnicity and territory.”<sup>356</sup> They saw ethnic groups as “a type of cultural collectivity, one that emphasizes the role of myths of descent and historical memories, and that is recognized by one or more cultural differences like religion, customs, language, or institutions.”<sup>357</sup> Territory was identified as a set of “values in or of it.”<sup>358</sup> Those values may include natural resources, tax income generated by established government, or access to geographic, military or strategic advantages offered by the territory.

A group, to be granted autonomy, needs to be distinguished territorially or by some other characteristic. The international legal understanding of sovereignty does not require that a state be a single national group. It may comprise a multiplicity of groups, supervised and coordinated in their interrelations through a certain set of functions for a common interest.<sup>359</sup> On the other side, “a legal obligation to grant autonomy is not mentioned.”<sup>360</sup> It is difficult to imagine all thirty-five hundred of the world’s ethnic groups claiming their own states.

Moreover, International law (IL) governing the existence of rights independent of sovereign usually refers to individual rights,<sup>361</sup> but a group of people, unified by certain features, may nevertheless have a collective identity and collective rights. The precedent for discussing the collective rights of indigenous peoples emerged in 1957; however, it was not beneficial for the ethnic groups in the minority. The International Labor Organization (ILO) issued a Convention on Indigenous Peoples No. 107 assuming “the assimilation into the rest of the population of individual members of indigenous groups as

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<sup>355</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 3.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>360</sup> Hans-Joachim Heintze, “On the Legal Understanding of Autonomy,” in *Autonomy: Applications and Implications*, ed. Markku Suksi (Boston, MA: Kluwer Law International, 1998), 14.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid., 15.

they became civilized.”<sup>362</sup> In 1989 (entered into force September 5, 1991), the indigenous peoples acquired a better position in IL with the issuing of the more progressive ILO Convention No. 169<sup>363</sup> concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries which aimed at the preservation of “the integrity and identity of those communities.”<sup>364</sup> In 1993, the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted a draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples,<sup>365</sup> which was later adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (Ukraine abstained).<sup>366</sup> “The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples constitutes the minimum standards for their survival, dignity and well-being.”<sup>367</sup> The Crimean Tatars, *Krymchaks* and the *Karaims* in Crimea are in their majority, the citizens of Ukraine are equal in rights with the other representatives — citizens of Ukraine — from the other ethnic groups. The Declaration provides (declares) the abundance of rights desirable for the indigenous peoples. The most important one is “the right to the restitution of lands confiscated, occupied or otherwise taken without their free and informed consent, with the option of providing just and fair compensation wherever such return is not possible.”<sup>368</sup> The Declaration, however, is not legally binding; it is not a

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<sup>362</sup> Geoff Gilbert, “Autonomy and Minority Groups: A Right in International Law,” *Cornell International Law Journal*, (Fall, 2002): 6, [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3078041221&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3078041227&cisb=22\\_T3078041226&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=12489&docNo=2](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3078041221&format=GNBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3078041227&cisb=22_T3078041226&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=12489&docNo=2) (accessed February 16, 2008).

<sup>363</sup> Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Convention (No. 169) Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries,” <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/62.htm> (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>364</sup> Gilbert, “Autonomy and Minority Groups,” 6.

<sup>365</sup> University of Minnesota Human Rights Center, “Study Guide: The Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/studyguides/indigenous.html> (accessed February 16, 2008).

<sup>366</sup> International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,” September 14, 2007, <http://www.iwgia.org/sw248.asp> (accessed February 16, 2008).

<sup>367</sup> United Nations, “Press Conference on Declaration of Indigenous Peoples’ Rights,” Department of Public Information - News and Media Division, December 12, 2006, [http://www.un.org/news/briefings/docs/2006/061212\\_indigenous.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/news/briefings/docs/2006/061212_indigenous.doc.htm) (accessed February 16, 2008).

<sup>368</sup> James S. Anaya and Siegfried Wiessner, “The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: Towards Re-empowerment,” the University of Pittsburgh School of Law Jurist forum, October 3, 2007, <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/forumy/2007/10/un-declaration-on-rights-of-indigenous.php> (accessed February 16, 2008).

treaty.<sup>369</sup> On the claim that the Declaration can not become customary international law due to the absence of such practice in the history of states before, James S. Anaya and Siegfried Wiessner argue that the shift from assimilation of the indigenous peoples to the preservation of their identity<sup>370</sup> is already a global practice and consensus.<sup>371</sup>

Minorities are not automatically granted the right of autonomy.<sup>372</sup> Self-determination is “a right of peoples under colonial and alien domination.”<sup>373</sup> Nobody in Crimea is under colonial rule or alien domination. Article 31 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples equates autonomy and self-government to the right for self-determination. “Indigenous peoples assert that they should not be treated as minorities, that they are a discrete group entity within international law.”<sup>374</sup> The distinction is important, because minorities enjoy protection, in many cases symbolic, by their kin-states,<sup>375</sup> but the indigenous peoples do not have them. In the case of Crimea, the Crimean Tatars are historically closer to being indigenous peoples than the Russians, who are an ethnic minority in Ukraine, but a majority in Crimea.

“Autonomy is always the balance to be found between territorial States...and the **legitimate** (emphasis added) expressions of national or cultural identity.”<sup>376</sup> “Autonomy is a strategy of preventing and settling ethnic conflict, thus, is based on recognition of group-specific concerns alongside or on par with concerns of individuals (independent of their ethnic identity) and the state.”<sup>377</sup> Autonomy is the state’s internal matter, but, in

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<sup>369</sup> Anaya and Wiessner, “The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

<sup>370</sup> The evidence lays in shift from the ILO convention No. 107 of 1957 to the ILO Convention No. 169 of 1989.

<sup>371</sup> Anaya and Wiessner, “The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

<sup>372</sup> Gilbert, “Autonomy and Minority Groups,” 7.

<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

<sup>374</sup> Ibid.

<sup>375</sup> Zsuzsa Csergo, “Kin-State Politics in Central and Eastern Europe: the Case of Hungary,” (meeting report 315, *George Washington University*, January 12, 2005), <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/pubs/MR%20315%20Csergo.doc> (accessed February 16, 2008). “Kin-states are states that pursue policies aimed at members of co-ethnic groups living abroad.” See for details on emergence of kin-politics

<sup>376</sup> Heintze, “On the Legal Understanding,” 17.

<sup>377</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 12.

some cases, it can be agreed internationally, or can be promoted by a kin-state. For instance, Russian law on co-nationals abroad identify state assistance to co-nationals abroad to create national-cultural autonomies based on principles and norms of IL.<sup>378</sup> This law, however, offers benefits only on Russian territory; treatment of the Russian ethnic minority in Ukraine depends on Ukrainian sovereign decisions. Autonomy is not static, and there are conditions in which it creates the possibility for political instability, as it has done, for instance, in Kosovo.

Hans-Joachim Heintze provides the legal understanding of types of autonomies.<sup>379</sup> Territorial autonomy provides group protection to a dominating minority within a geographically well-defined territory. It creates, however, other minorities within newly established territorial autonomy. “The minorities in the same area will be concerned with their future which serves as the source for perpetuation of a conflict.”<sup>380</sup> To avoid possible mistreatment, plain and accurate agreements on territorial autonomy should be used between parties concerned. Non-territorial autonomy might be a workable solution in cases when the chances to win territorial autonomy are weak. “Non-territorial autonomy is good for non-compact settlement of ethnic group (caused either by history or contemporary developments).”<sup>381</sup> There are several types, however overlapping, of non-territorial autonomy: cultural, personal and functional. **Cultural** autonomy allows freedom in cultural affairs. It allows regulating education, culture, art, sport and youth affairs of a minority. **Personal** autonomy is applicable when minority groups are not settled in a compact way sufficient to establish territorial minority. In such conditions, certain preferential treatment is necessary for those minorities, e.g. voting benefits to guarantee representation for a minority in governing institutions. For instance, in the Ottoman Empire the millet system allowed non-Muslims to “enjoy some

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<sup>378</sup> The Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Federal’nyi Zakon ot 24 Maya 1999 g. # 99-FZ “O Gosudarstvennoi Politike Rossiiskoi Federatsii b Otnoshenii Sootechestvennikov za Rubezhom,” Article 5 section 2, [http://graph.garant.ru:8080/SESSION/S\\_jJH0dg8N/PILOT/main.html](http://graph.garant.ru:8080/SESSION/S_jJH0dg8N/PILOT/main.html) (accessed February 16, 2008).

<sup>379</sup> Heintze, “On the Legal Understanding,” 17.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>381</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 12.



degree of cultural and religious autonomy.”<sup>382</sup> **Functional** autonomy affords control of cultural, media, educational and religious affairs in order to promote a group’s identity. The difference is that a group needs to be organized collectively to exercise such functions without state interference. State public law, authorizing the transfer of the responsibility for these issues from a state to a public entity, is highly desirable.

In sum, IL provides various forms of autonomy arrangements for conflict prevention and conflict resolution. With the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples in 2007, the limitation of IL to the protection of an individual’s rights shifted toward the more formal recognition of collective rights. The status of indigenous peoples is, in some aspects, higher than those of a minority, but if the indigenous peoples constitute less than half of the population, they may enjoy the status of a minority.

## **2. Problems in the Application of the Theory of Autonomy to Crimea**

The Crimean Tatars demand to be recognized as the indigenous people of the Crimean Peninsula. Along with them, two tiny ethnos, the Karaims (about 1,400) and Krymchaks (520),<sup>383</sup> also pretend to be indigenous peoples. None of the three have kin-states. The other distinguishable ethnos of the region, Greeks, Armenians and Germans, arrived on the Crimean peninsula before them, and do have kin-states. The Crimean Tatars are the third largest ethnic group in Crimea; the others, are significantly smaller,<sup>384</sup> and are losing their voice behind the Crimean Tatars’ claim for expanded rights in the peninsula.

The Crimean peninsula is claimed to be a geographically separate territory, which is not completely true. It is connected to Ukraine territorially, and easily accessible through the Strait of Kerch. None of the national groups mentioned above live in compact areas larger than a village.

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<sup>382</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 15.

<sup>383</sup> Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group, “The short report on fulfilling the second stage of the project “Non-discrimination Review”,” December 13, 2002, <http://www.khpg.org/ru/index.php?id=1039794987> (accessed February 16, 2008).

<sup>384</sup> State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, “About Number and Composition Population of Autonomous Republic of Crimea by Data All-Ukrainian Population Census,” <http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/Crimea/> (accessed January 3, 2008).

### 3. The Theory on Terrorism and the Crimean Tatars

Without a discussion of the theory of terrorism the study of the ‘triangle of conflict’ will not be complete. Crimea has lately experienced a sharp increase in the influx of Wahhabi messengers, and has become an attractive place for Islamic radicals. Persistent rumors float around about Crimea as a resting place for Chechen guerillas. It has also been hypothesized that the Crimean Tatars send their representatives in support for the Chechens. Apart from the sizeable Crimean Tatar Diaspora in Turkey, where terrorist recruitment is known to have occurred, on the strength of the participation of Turks in the conflicts in Chechnya, Iraq, and Afghanistan, there are also ten thousand Crimean Tatars with Ukrainian citizenship in Uzbekistan, where terrorism is far more widespread than in Ukraine.<sup>385</sup> Martha Crenshaw, in “The Logic of Terrorism,” identified four groups of causes for terrorism: individual, systemic, rational and ideological.<sup>386</sup> For the Crimean Tatars **individual** causes are nationalism, victimization (in the Soviet period most especially)<sup>387</sup> and occupation of the historic homeland<sup>388</sup> by outsiders perceived as colonists. **Systemic** causes correspond to the Crimean Tatars’ long history as indigenous people in the Crimean peninsula, their ostensibly lost statehood (the Crimean Khanate and successful autonomy in early Soviet Union), their linguistic distinctiveness, and the absence of a kin-state *per se* which can assist in

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<sup>385</sup> Igor Rotar, “Terrorism in Uzbekistan: a Self-Made Crisis,” *The Jamestown Foundation*, April 23, 2004, [http://www.jamestown.org/publications\\_details.php?volume\\_id=400&issue\\_id=2937&article\\_id=236626](http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=400&issue_id=2937&article_id=236626), (accessed February 14, 2008).

<sup>386</sup> Martha Crenshaw, “The Logic Of Terrorism: Terrorist Behavior as a Product of Strategic Choice,” *NPS Blackboard*, NPS SO 3801 (“International Terrorism” class reading, October 2007), [https://nps.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab\\_id=2\\_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D\\_6587\\_1%26url%3D](https://nps.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=2_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flauncher%3Ftype%3DCourse%26id%3D_6587_1%26url%3D) (accessed January 18, 2008).

<sup>387</sup> Vamik D. Volkan, *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=iQbZL9IycwMC&oi=fnd&pg=PA3&dq=Conflict+in+the+Crimea+;+an+examination+of+ethnic+conflict+under+the+contemporary+model+of+sovereignty&ots=kDe6j-ollp&sig=9bt0MMknCcLiBtezs3WvgPsS51E#PPA48,M1> (accessed January 18, 2008).

<sup>388</sup> Dominique Arel, “Contested models of Autonomy: the Cases of Quebec and Crimea,” in *Institutions, Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: International Experience and Its Implications for the Caucasus* (Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies Center for Slavic and East European Studies Institute of International Studies Conference Report, May 2-3, 1997), 17-22, <http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1016&context=iseees/bps> (accessed January 23, 2008). Dominique Arel characterized “attachment to a “homeland” [as] at least partly mythical.”

lobbying minority's interests internationally. On a **rational** level, terrorism may be chosen as a plausible weapon against a vulnerable government, against which non-violent efforts have failed. **Ideological** causes arise mainly from the practice of a distinct religion, aggravated by Wahhabi indoctrination that the government is unable to suppress.

#### 4. Ukraine's Efforts to Prevent Ethnic-based Tensions in Crimea

The dissolution of the Soviet Union created an unprecedented set of new legal issues. The troubling moment was in "the emergence of distinct ethnic populations that found themselves isolated within the boundaries of a nation with which they share no ethnic identity."<sup>389</sup> For the Crimean Tatars it turned into a double challenge: they were aliens in both Uzbekistan<sup>390</sup> and Ukraine.

Crimea is home to more than 125 nationalities and ethnic groups, of which only 20 constitute 0.1 percent and more share of the population.<sup>391</sup> Between 1989 and 2001 the share of ethnic Russians, the majority in Crimea, decreased from 65.6% to 58.5%; the share of Ukrainians decreased from 26.7% to 24.4%; and the share of the Crimean Tatars, the third largest group, increased from 1.9% to 12.1%, a very rapid increase even if the absolute numbers remain relatively small.

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<sup>389</sup> Philip Chase, "Conflict in Crimea: An Examination of Ethnic Conflict under the Contemporary Model of Sovereignty," *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law*, (1995), [http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21\\_T3117228298&format=G\\_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29\\_T3117229703&cisb=22\\_T3117229702&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=151337&docNo=1](http://www.lexisnexis.com/us/lnacademic/results/docview/docview.do?risb=21_T3117228298&format=G_NBFI&sort=RELEVANCE&startDocNo=1&resultsUrlKey=29_T3117229703&cisb=22_T3117229702&treeMax=true&treeWidth=0&csi=151337&docNo=1) (accessed January 11, 2008).

<sup>390</sup> Alexey Bessarabov, "Sevastopol pod Pritselom," *Independent Analytic Agency Glavred*, February 19, 2008, <http://www.glavred.info/archive/2008/02/19/144432-2.html> (accessed January 12, 2008). Besides the other evidence, given earlier in the thesis, a participant in a discussion forum about the article "Sevastopol in the Breech-Sight" gave an example of quite successful Crimean Tatar businessmen in Uzbekistan, dead shot after disregarding an ethnic based demand to leave. His widow left Uzbekistan for Crimea, after selling her property for discounted price.

<sup>391</sup> State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, "About Number and Composition Population."

The vast majority of ethnic-based disputes are encountered between ethnic Russians (the shrinking majority) and the Crimean Tatars (a rapidly increasing minority with a strongly held belief in its moral claim to primacy based upon its status as an indigenous people).<sup>392</sup>

**a. *Citizenship and Other Rights, Depending on Citizenship***

In 1991 Ukraine adopted a new law “On the Citizenship of Ukraine,”<sup>393</sup> under which anyone in Ukraine (as of November 13, 1991) who was not a citizen of another state was given Ukrainian citizenship. Many Crimean Tatars arrived after this date. As a result, they were not granted citizenship in Ukraine. Moreover, in 1992 they were granted citizenship of Uzbekistan automatically. Ukraine does not accept dual citizenship and it was costly and time consuming to terminate the Uzbek citizenship. According to Ukrainian legislation, non-citizens are excluded from the right to privatize land<sup>394</sup> besides other rights (to vote, etc.). To help in solving this problem, the governments of Ukraine and Uzbekistan signed the Agreement on the Prevention of Dual Citizenship in August 1998, simplifying renunciation of the Uzbek citizenship rights and acquiring Ukrainian citizenship.<sup>395</sup> Further improvements for the citizenship law of 1997 and January 18, 2001 made the procedure of acquiring Ukrainian citizenship easier for the first and second degree descendants of those forcibly removed by Stalin’s administration.<sup>396</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> Center for International Development and Conflict Management, “Assessment for Crimean Tatars in Ukraine,” University of Maryland, December 31, 2003, <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/assessment.asp?groupId=36904> (accessed January 17, 2008); and Center for International Development and Conflict Management, “Assessment for Crimean Russians in Ukraine,” University of Maryland, December 31, 2003, <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/assessment.asp?groupId=36905> (accessed January 17, 2008).

<sup>393</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 84.

<sup>394</sup> United Nations, *Consideration Of Reports Submitted By States Parties Under Article 9 Of The Convention: Concluding Observations Of The Committee On The Elimination Of Racial Discrimination: Ukraine*, Committee On The Elimination Of Racial Discrimination, Sixty-ninth session, July 31 –August 18, 2006, [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/c12563e7005d936d4125611e00445ea9/5a855cc45d65082dc1257214005d3c77/\\$FILE/G0740377.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/c12563e7005d936d4125611e00445ea9/5a855cc45d65082dc1257214005d3c77/$FILE/G0740377.pdf) (accessed January 17, 2008).

<sup>395</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 84.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid.

***b. Representation***

Crimean Tatars were well represented in the administrative bodies of the ARC. In 1994, the Crimean Tatars were granted fourteen seats in the Crimean parliament to compensate for the fact that the scattered character of Crimean Tatar settlements in Crimea did not allow them to create a majority in any electoral district.<sup>397</sup> On the local level, the Crimean Tatars had 923 representatives, exactly 14 percent of all available seats in the local communities. In Sevastopol, a stronghold of anti-Tatar sentiment, a Crimean Tatar took a post of Deputy Head of State District administration.<sup>398</sup> The Crimean Committee for Nationalities and Former Deportees was also established in the Crimean administration.<sup>399</sup> As of February 2008, the leader of the Tatar Mejlis, Mustafa Jemilev, is a member of the Ukrainian Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and International Relations which is comprised of ten members and is established in the Parliament of Ukraine, and the head of a sub-committee on indigenous peoples, national minorities, ethnic groups, deported peoples and national minorities.<sup>400</sup> After the 2007 parliamentary elections, the Crimea assembly has eight Crimean Tatar members (8 percent), acquired by the Rukh quota.

The level of representation of Crimean Tatars in public service remains low according to the UN “Draft Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.”<sup>401</sup> The Crimean Tatars are underrepresented in Crimea’s government (1.5 percent as of December 1999), in the Office of Public

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<sup>397</sup> Shevel, “Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian State.”

<sup>398</sup> Rustem Ablyatifov, “The Access of Crimean Tatars to Public Services on Regional and Local Level in the Context of Elections of 2002 in Ukraine,” (paper for 11th NISPAcee Annual Conference: Enhancing the Capacities to Govern: Challenges Facing the CEE Countries, Bucharest, Romania, April 10-12, 2003), <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/nispacee/unpan009136.pdf> (accessed January 17, 2008).

<sup>399</sup> Wolff and Weller, “Self Determination and Autonomy,” 91.

<sup>400</sup> Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, “List of Profile Committees: Committee on Human Rights, National Minorities and International Relations,” February 23, 2008, [http://gska2.rada.gov.ua/pls/site/p\\_komity?pidid=2085](http://gska2.rada.gov.ua/pls/site/p_komity?pidid=2085) (accessed February 23, 2008).

<sup>401</sup> United Nations, *Consideration of Reports Submitted*.

Prosecutor (5.9 percent), the courts (1.7 percent) and police and security forces (1.3 percent).<sup>402</sup> On the other hand, the Crimean Tatars occupy quite important positions in Crimea to influence the situation.<sup>403</sup>

*c. Ethnic Identity*

The Constitution of Ukraine and the Constitution of the ARC contain provisions to support the development of the ethnic identity of nationalities in Ukraine. In reality, however, the situation is more complicated. In Crimea, the majority of schools are Russian. Even the Crimean Tatars have more schools in the Crimean Tatar language than Ukrainians, the titular nation in Ukraine.<sup>404</sup>

In most cases the ARC supports the autonomy of Russians, but not of other nationalities in Crimea. The Constitution of the ARC (Article 10) identifies Russian as the language of the majority of population.<sup>405</sup> The Crimean Tatar language is also accepted as a language of communication, though to a much lesser extent than Russian.<sup>406</sup>

Crimean Tatars fear assimilation by the Russians not Ukrainians: 10 percent of Crimean Tatars kids go to Crimean Tatars schools, the others to Russian ones. The preservation and revitalization of Crimean Tatar cultural heritage goes slower than it is demanded by the Crimean Tatars.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> Minority Election Resources, "About the Situation in Crimea (Ukraine)," *the Foundation for Research and Support of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea*, Article 4, (Parallel Report, Undertaken in Accordance with the Article 25<sup>th</sup> of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of Council of Europe, May 1, 1995), [http://www.minelres.lv/reports/ukraine/Article\\_4.htm](http://www.minelres.lv/reports/ukraine/Article_4.htm) (accessed January 19, 2008).

<sup>403</sup> Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, "Deputaty Verkhovnoi Rady Avtonomnoi Respubliki Krym," <http://www.rada.crimea.ua/> (accessed January 19, 2008).

<sup>404</sup> National Radio of Ukraine, "Lytvyn's Bloc's Representative Sceptical about Crimean Officials to Enlarge Ukraine-Language Schools," November 21, 2007, <http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=55661> (accessed January 19, 2008). There are seven Ukrainian schools were in Crimea in 2007 and no universities at all. Also, Minority Election Resources, "About the Situation in Crimea (Ukraine)," Article 14. In 1999, there were 577 Russian schools, four Ukrainian and 21 Crimean Tatar schools with 12.7% of Crimean Tatar students in Crimea. See for details

<sup>405</sup> Const. of Crimea, art. 10, <http://www.rada.crimea.ua/> (accessed January 19, 2008).

<sup>406</sup> Wolff and Weller, "Self Determination and Autonomy," 90.

<sup>407</sup> Minority Election Resources, "About the Situation in Crimea (Ukraine)," Article 5.

*d. The Crimean Tatar Socio-Economic Situation*

On August 11, 1995, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine issued a very ambitious Decree, "On Actions to Solve Political, Legal, Social-Economic and Ethnic Problems in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea."<sup>408</sup> However, it had a purely declarative character because it required financial resources that were not attainable given Ukraine's deteriorating economy.<sup>409</sup> "Economically," as one scholar has declared:

Crimean Tatars are in a destitute situation even in relations to Crimea's depressed economy. Upward of an estimated 60% Crimean Tatars are unemployed (at least double the rate for Crimea as a whole), and around 50% lack proper housing. Out of 291 Crimean Tatar settlements, around 25% do not have electricity, 70% are without water, 90% without tarmac roads, 96% are without gas, and none have sewers. Since 1991, Ukraine has spent some US\$300 million on Crimean Tatar repatriation programs — a significant sum for economically-depressed state... Since the USSR fell apart, Ukraine has been the only CIS country to bear the costs of Crimean Tatar resettlement, although the 1992 CIS agreement "On Questions of the Restoration of Rights of Deported Individuals, National Minorities, and Peoples," signed by the heads of 10 CIS states on 9 October 1992 in Bishkek, provided for the participant countries to share the cost of Crimean Tatar return to Crimea. As economic crisis deepened in Ukraine, funding for the Crimean Tatar programs had to be drastically reduced: if in 1992 \$95.2 million were provided, in 1994 — \$59.6 million, and in 1997 - only \$6.9 million. In 1999, out of \$4.8 million budgeted; some \$3.2 million were actually disbursed...<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>408</sup> Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine, "Pro Zakhody Shchodo Rozv'yazannya Polityko-Pravovykh, Sotsial'no-Ekonomichnykh ta Etnichnykh Problem v Avtonomnii Respublitsi Krym," Decree of the Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine No. 636, August 11, 1995, <http://zakon1.rada.gov.ua/cgi-bin/laws/main.cgi?nreg=636-95-%EF> (accessed January 19, 2008).

<sup>409</sup> "Kryms'ki Tatary: 'Natsional'na Menshina' abo 'Korinnyi Narod.' Politychni I Yurydychni Aspekty Pytannya," Ukrainian Independent Center for Political Studies, *KrumTAU*, February 9, 1999, <http://www.crimeatau.org.ua/events/seminar1.html> (accessed January 19, 2008).

<sup>410</sup> Shevel, "Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian State."



It is estimated that \$3 billion are necessary to resolve the Crimean Tatar problems.<sup>411</sup> The international community is concerned about the low level of conveniences available to the Crimean Tatars. It is explained by the fact that Tatars who returned from exile often grabbed their land illegally, and that such settlements were located far from the communication lines, sewer, water, electricity, etc.

However, in any event, the Ukrainian Government is not capable of solving the problems of those returned from exile without considerable external assistance. “The existence of poverty and destitution was officially admitted in Ukraine only in 2000; at that time, 27.8 percent of the population (13.7 million persons) was considered to belong to the category of the impoverished, and 14.2 percent (almost 7 million persons), to the category of the destitute... At present [2000] in Ukraine there are more than one million families in which the per capita income does not reach fifty Ukrainian hryvnas (US\$9) a month, while in more than one hundred thousand families it does not exceed twenty grivnas (US\$3.60).”<sup>412</sup> Poor housing and life standards are a dominant problem in Ukraine, not only for the Crimean Tatars. According to the State Committee for Statistics, in 2006 only 56.4 percent of Ukrainian houses were equipped with running water, 54.0 percent with sewer, 82.8 percent with natural gas and 56.8 percent with central heating.<sup>413</sup> Thus, the poor situation of the Crimean Tatar housing is not a matter of discrimination by the Ukrainian or Crimean governments — it caused by systemic problems pertinent to Ukraine as a state.

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<sup>411</sup> Rustem M. Ablyatfov, “The Adaptation and Integration of Formerly Deported Crimean Tatars in Ukraine: Evaluation of the Governmental Programme Impact in 2002,” (paper for the 12th NISPACEe Annual Conference: Central and Eastern European Countries Inside and Outside the European Union: Avoiding a New Divide, Vilnius, Lithuania, May 13-15, 2004), 16, <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/nispacee/unpan018440.pdf> (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>412</sup> Ludmila Shanghina, “The Demographic Situation in Ukraine: Present State, Tendencies, and Predictions,” *The Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Studies named after Olexander Razumkov*, April 6, 2004, <http://www.uceps.org/eng/show/641/> (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>413</sup> State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, “Zhitlovyyi Fond Ukrainy,” Available on-line <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/> (accessed January 11, 2008).



*e. Legislative Activities toward the Crimean Tatars: Conflicting Views and Facts*

After the Orange Revolution of 2004, President Yushchenko forced Crimean authorities to prepare a draft law “On Restoration of Rights for Those, Deported for Ethnic Reasons.” Further action has been delayed, however, because of concern that the draft law contradicts the Constitution of Ukraine by granting certain nationalities exceptional rights at the expense of other nationalities. The vice speaker of the Crimean Assembly, Mikhail Bakharev, also noted that the draft law does not have mandatory financial calculations for the cost of its fulfillment should it be adopted. Overall, he thinks that the Crimean Tatars are already well-integrated into society, and that the state provides them more benefits than to any other ethnic group.<sup>414</sup>

In 2006, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted a new program allocating US\$129M as relief for those returning from former places of exile.<sup>415</sup> The same document reports that out of 258 thousand returnees, 150 thousand already have living premises, six thousand families are waiting for living premises and seventeen thousand live in incomplete buildings. Chubarov confirmed that, saying that those incomplete buildings have just 2-3 bedrooms.<sup>416</sup> Such statistics need to be seen through comparative lenses. In the interview, the Director of Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine (FISU), Mykola Malomuzh, delivered statistics that out of 4,350 FISU’s personnel,<sup>417</sup> eight hundred (more than 18 percent) are not supplied with living premises by the state. In Ukrainian military the situation is much worse. Out of one hundred fifty-

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<sup>414</sup> Anna Akhmetova, “Zakon o Vosstanovlenii Prav Deportirovannykh Tatar ne Nyzhen,- Vitse-Spiker Krymskogo Parlamenta Bakharev,” *Russian Information Agency ‘New Region,’* March 14, 2007, <http://www.nr2.ru/crimea/109011.html> (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>415</sup> Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine, “Pro Zatverdzhennya Programy Rozselennya ta Oblashtyvannya Deportovanykh Kryms’kyh Tatar I Osib Inshykh Natsional’nostey, shcho Povernylsya na Prozhyvannya v Ukrainu, ikh Adaptatsii ta Integratsii v Ukrain’s’ke Sypil’stvo na Period do 2010 Roky,” Decree of the Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine No. 637, May 11, 2006, <http://nau.kiev.ua/nau10/ukr/doc.php?uid=1096.634.0> (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>416</sup> Yuriy Tyshkun, “Refat Chubarov: Nas Slukhaut,’ ale ne Chyut’,” *Postup*, May 21, 2004, [http://postup.brama.com/dinamic/i\\_pub/usual.php?what=24429](http://postup.brama.com/dinamic/i_pub/usual.php?what=24429) (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>417</sup> Yuri Luka, “800 Razvedchikov Stoyat v Ocheredi na Zhil’e,” *Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine*, June 6, 2006, <http://www.szru.gov.ua/article.php?lang=ru&root=1&item=73&page=1> (accessed January 10, 2008).

two thousand<sup>418</sup> active duty personnel, 51,800 (more than 26 percent) are not supplied with the living premises, twenty thousand have been waiting for them for more than ten years, and twelve thousand retired without ever being supplied living quarters.<sup>419</sup> Forty-two thousand families who moved from contaminated areas after the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl in 1986 are still waiting for housing from the state.<sup>420</sup> Official governmental statistics in Ukraine says that, in 2006, 1.3 million families in Ukraine were waiting for governmental housing, compared to only twenty thousand families who actually received it that same year.<sup>421</sup> The statistics confirm that the constitutional principle of equality of the citizens of Ukraine in their rights is already violated by distinguishing the Crimean Tatars from the other citizens of Ukraine whose needs are as great as theirs. The Speaker of Crimean Assembly, Grytsenko, thinks that the governmental program of 2006-2010 should be the last to be done in favor of the resettled ethnicities.<sup>422</sup>

## **B. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CRIMEA**

Crimea, due to its volatile political and ethnic situation, has attracted much attention from international organizations. The main players are the UN and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). During the period from

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<sup>418</sup> Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, "White Book 2006: Defence Policy of Ukraine," 90, [http://www.mil.gov.ua/files/white\\_book\\_eng2006.pdf](http://www.mil.gov.ua/files/white_book_eng2006.pdf) (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>419</sup> Yuri Ekhanyrov, "U Nastupnomy Rotsi My Zminymo Polityku Shchodo Vyrishennya Zhytlovykh Pytan' I Pryblyzno Dvi Tretyny Vydilennykh Koshtiv Ytyme na Koryst' Pobydovy Postiinogo Zhytla," *Ministry of Defense of Ukraine*, December 27, 2007, <http://www.mil.gov.ua/index.php?lang=ua&part=news&sub=read&id=10983> (accessed January 10, 2008). According to Ukrainian legislation, an active duty person of any of militarized formation should be provided a living premise according to the family size. Compensation for the leasing of the premise is stopped on the level of 1995 and currently is up to \$4 depending on the place of duty station. Also, Volodymyr Boyko, "Vystyp Zastypnyka Ministra Oborony Ukrainy Volodymyra Boika Na Dni Uryadu u VR Shchodo Zabezpechennya Zhytlo ta Inshymy Garantiyamy Sotsial'nogo Zakhystu..." *Ministry of Defense of Ukraine*, December 12, 2006, <http://www.mil.gov.ua/index.php?lang=ua&part=news&sub=read&id=8664> (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>420</sup> Media UA, "Sotsial'ne Zhytlo Rozdavaly S'ogodni u Kyevi, Biliy Tserkve I Zhytomyri," May 18, 2007, <http://mediaua.com.ua/detail/10399> (accessed January 10, 2008).

<sup>421</sup> State Statistics Committee of Ukraine. "Zhitlovyi Fond Ukrainy."

<sup>422</sup> 2000 Weekly, "Spiker Krymskogo Parlamenta ne Protiv Nadeleniya Tatar Osobym Statusom," December 19, 2007, <http://news2000.org.ua/news/8/13983> (accessed January 10, 2008).

1991 to 2000, international governmental and non-governmental organizations allocated US\$10 million, comparing to US\$300 million allocated by Ukraine.<sup>423</sup>

OSCE became active in Ukraine in the end of 1994, opening offices in Kiev and Simferopol and jumping into the crisis situation in Crimea. OCSE involvement is not always politically astute, as evidenced by a speech in 1995 by the head of OCSE mission in Ukraine, Andreas Kuhlshutter, who expressed support for secessionist attitudes in Crimea.<sup>424</sup> Since 1992, the newly established OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) has sought to facilitate negotiations, consensus building and negotiations on “institutional mechanisms for the accommodation of diversity.”<sup>425</sup>

The UN’s Crimean Integration and Development Program (UNCIDP) proposed a \$15 million plan in 1994 to alleviate the worst conditions in Crimean Tatar settlements and foster ethnic tolerance. As of 2000, the project was able to generate “US\$3-4 million in pledges” from foreign governments.<sup>426</sup> The shortage of enthusiasm is explained, oddly enough, by the lack of violence in the region.<sup>427</sup> At about the same time, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) initiated PACE Recommendation No. 1455, which called for international support for the Crimean Tatars from the EU and other donors, and urged Ukraine and Crimean authorities to restore the Crimean Tatars right for education and public recognition of the Crimean Tatar language.<sup>428</sup> Turkey, through the Turkish International Cooperation Agency, has officially promised to build one thousand homes for the Crimean Tatars — the project is not complete yet, owing to economic and political difficulties in Turkey itself.<sup>429</sup>

Overall, the efforts of the international community have been directed at conflict prevention in an environment in which open conflict is largely absent. As a consequence

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<sup>423</sup> Shevel, “Crimean Tatars and the Ukrainian State.”

<sup>424</sup> Waller et. al., *Conflicting Loyalties*, 65.

<sup>425</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 238.

<sup>426</sup> Helton, “Crimean Tatars.”

<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

<sup>428</sup> Sasse, *The Crimea Question*, 245.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., 246.

its ambitious plans have failed due to lack of financial resources and political enthusiasm. “Since the USSR fell apart, Ukraine has been the only CIS country to bear the costs of Crimean Tatar resettlement [US\$300 million comparing to US\$10 million worth international assistance], although the 1992 CIS agreement “On Questions of the Restoration of Rights of Deported Individuals, National Minorities, and People,” signed by the heads of ten CIS states on October 9, 1992 in Bishkek provided for the participant countries to share the cost of Crimean Tatar return to Crimea.”<sup>430</sup>

### C. CONCLUSION

Recently the Kosovo Parliament voted for independence from Serbia, a precedent likely to resonate among secessionists all over the world. In many ways the situation in Crimea resembles the one in Kosovo. The central government has allocated additional resources for the new citizens of Ukraine, those returned from exile, at the expense of other citizens whose prospects may be equally bleak. In Yugoslavia, the central government experienced difficulties with the Albanian nationalists in Kosovo. Tito, the former Yugoslav president, provided “increased autonomy and greater economic assistance to Kosovo Albanians... [trying to make them] loyal citizens of Yugoslavia.”<sup>431</sup> As the result, Kosovo was subsidized by Yugoslavia. The result is widely known: claims for full independence, atrocities on the both sides, and finally independence following international intervention spurred by large-scale violence.

In Ukraine, certain political forces are trying to please the returnees at the expense of the other ethnic groups. This political short-sightedness might lead to a deeper divide within the Crimean society and to political violence on behalf of the Crimean Tatar statehood. Independence of Kosovo, if ultimately achieved, creates a precedent that may lead to new conflicts, especially among so-called nations without states.<sup>432</sup>

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<sup>430</sup> Sergiy V. Kurbatov, “The Problem of Repatriation as a Source of Community Conflicts (The Case of Crimean Tatars in Ukraine),” *The Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences*, <http://www.iccr-international.org/euro/docs/paper-kurbatov.pdf> (accessed January 29, 2008).

<sup>431</sup> Alex N. Dragnich, “The Agony of Kosovo,” *Serbian Unity Congress*, October 1998, [http://www.serbianunity.net/news/world\\_articles/Dragnich1098.html](http://www.serbianunity.net/news/world_articles/Dragnich1098.html) (accessed January 29, 2008).

<sup>432</sup> Nadesan Satyendra, “Fourth World - Nations without a State,” *Tamilnation*, May 2000, March 2007, <http://www.tamilnation.org/selfdetermination/fourthworld/index.htm> (accessed January 29, 2008).

The most workable solution for the Crimean Tatars and other ethnic minorities in the region is to be granted a non-territorial personal autonomy by Ukraine. The radical draft laws proposed both by the current Ukrainian government and the Crimean Tatar members of Ukrainian Parliament are not the remedy for ethnic problems. They solve one problem and create a multiplicity of others due to the abundance of nations and nationalities in Crimea.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has tried to explain the ‘triangle of conflict,’ Russia–Crimea–Ukraine, in contemporary Crimea through the prism of earlier events, and to predict the array of possible developments that may follow from the current situation. It studied history of the all the parties involved — Ukraine, Russia and the Crimean Tatars — in the Crimean peninsula as a scene of disputes.

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

In the Russian view, on the other hand, Crimea fell under Russian influence before the Mongol invasion, which means the Tatars are the real foreigners in Crimea. The history of Russian glory in Crimea started by Catherine the Great and was exemplified by the building of Sevastopol, an achievement celebrated in Russian history to this day, and solidified by the fact that the city remains the home port of the Russian Black Sea Fleet. The division of the Soviet BSF between Russia and Ukraine was long and painful, and the two states confronted each other on this matter angrily. In 1997, Russia and Ukraine signed a bilateral treaty on friendship and, finally, divided up the BSF and arranged the basing rights issue in a way that has reduced, though perhaps not entirely eliminated, the possibility of serious conflict in the future.

In the Crimean Tatar view, the Crimean peninsula is their only homeland, as established by a long history of state building there between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries. They consider themselves to be the indigenous people of the peninsula, whose statehood was destroyed by the Russian Empire. Since the eighteenth century their nation has suffered progressively destructive discrimination, culminating in *surgun*, the complete exile from Crimea by Stalin in 1944. More than four decades of political struggle with Soviet authorities allowed them to get certain benefits, eventually including a right to return to Crimea, achieved slightly before the collapse of the USSR itself.

Upon arrival, the exiled Crimean Tatars claimed Crimea as their homeland, adopting the “Declaration of National Sovereignty of the Crimean Tatar People” during the second *Kurultai* in 1991.

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

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

Russian separatism culminated in 1994 in an attempt to secede to Russia. The attempt collapsed, owing in part to weak support from Russia itself, which preferred to use the occasion to extend its influence indirectly over one of its most important neighbors. This judgment has been largely vindicated by subsequent events. The assumption that the Crimean population wanted to remain in Ukraine is supported by its participation in multiple national elections and referenda.

Credit should be given to Ukraine for the ability to solve secessionist attempts peacefully and to withstand pressure from Russia over the BSF. The bilateral Treaty with Russia on Friendship and Cooperation signed in May 1997 and the Black Sea Fleet Accords undermined, but did not fully eliminate, grounds for Russian separatism in

Crimea. Russian nationalism in Crimea still exists, and is fueled by certain political circles from Russia; but it appears to have lost the opportunity to win local support, at least given the current level of interethnic tension in Crimea.

Currently, the situation in the ‘triangle of conflict’ is different from the 1990s. The Crimean Tatar national movement, spurred by the arrival of former exiles eager to redress both real and mythical injustices, represents a far greater risk to the territorial integrity of Ukraine than pro-Russian separatism did. The Crimean Tatar claims evolved from the right to return to their historic homeland to recognition as the indigenous peoples in Crimea, a claim that has provided them with considerable benefits. As early as 1991 they declared the national sovereignty of Crimean Tatar peoples. There is little doubt that the final goal of the Crimean Tatars is to achieve territorial autonomy and, later, national sovereignty. The Crimean Tatar leadership continues to demand new legislation elevating them over the other citizens of Ukraine. Their claims are reinforced by the newly adopted UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the precedent of unilateral proclamation of independence by Kosovo.

These attempts are destabilizing for Crimea. It is early to predict an emergence of an independent Crimean Tatar state, given their still-modest share of the Crimean population. Yet, some tendencies have a negative character for Ukraine. First, the rate of growth of the population is advantageous for the Crimean Tatars, whose birth rate is higher than that of neighboring populations. Such a factor does not imply a rapid shift in the Crimean demographics, but a saying that ‘some wars can be won in a bed’ seems to be right for Crimea, given sufficient time. Second, public attitude can be shaped to favor the Crimean Tatars, many of whom experienced considerable hardship, caused first by forced resettlement and then by the weak economic performance of the Ukrainian state, which has few resources with which to right the old wrongs. This allows for manipulating public opinion and mobilizing the poorest Tatars for violent action, perhaps under the sway Islamic radicals who have found a sympathetic reception in Crimea. Young Crimean Tatars without prospects are the perfect target for radical Islamist recruiters.

Russia is still interested in Crimea, especially following the Orange Revolution and general degradation of Russo-Ukrainian Relations. Unresolved issues — on Russia-Ukraine



borders in the Strait of Kerch and the Sea of Azov, navigational facilities occupied by the RBSF in addition to the Accords of 1997, Ukraine's attempts to revise the RBSF basing rights — have inspired Russian authorities to invent new roles and missions for the RBSF in Ukraine, above all as a deterrent against possible Crimean Tatar claims for independence. The studies in the Chapter V proved very low, or even wrong, for the likelihood of the RBSF to deter the Crimean Tatar claim for independence.

The central government in Kiev has played a very careful game with Crimea, based on balancing pro-Russian and Crimean Tatar political forces, and allowing neither side to tip the scales for the own advantage. In 1996, the Constitution of Ukraine was adopted elaborating the peculiarities of Crimean autonomy in the unitary Ukrainian state. In 1998, the fourth (and still current) Constitution of the ARC was approved by the Parliament in Kiev, with full recognition of Crimea as the part of Ukraine. Arrangements with respect to Tatar autonomy are vague, however, and do not provide lot of room for self-determination. This is because the constitution was arranged with a view of appeasing ethnic Russians, not the Crimean Tatars. To that extent, it is destined to become increasingly obsolete.

## **B. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The solution for the integration of the Crimean Tatars and other minorities issue in Crimea has political, cultural, socioeconomic, humanitarian and legal dimensions. On the **political** level, the Ukrainian government needs to more fully identify the place of the Crimean Tatars and other previously deported minorities in society, and their political role in the government. The Crimean Tatars achieved their primary goal when they were finally able to return to their homeland. Since then, its leadership has not yet built up a program for the development of the Crimean Tatars as an ethnic group. Besides bare words in the Declaration for the self-determination, no systemic program has been offered by the Crimean Tatar leadership, a major source of dissention and factionalism. The Crimean Tatars experience internal divisions such that *Mejelis* and *Kurultai* no longer represent them convincingly. Crimean authorities, along with the central government in Kiev, need to develop a detailed roadmap for the integration of the previously deported peoples in Ukrainian society, taking into account non-compact

settlement of the Crimean Tatars. The demographic situation in Crimea and the small share of the Crimean Tatars in the peninsula do not allow the Crimean Tatars territorial autonomy. Separate draft laws granting special rights to the Crimean Tatars or other ‘preferred’ categories can further destabilize Crimea. Instead, a realistic quota of parliamentary seats needs to be established for the Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups, according to their demographic share. The smallest groups can get representation by cumulative share based upon intergroup arrangements. Consequently, the term of service for the elected Members of the ARC Parliament needs to be reduced from four to two years, with the goal of guaranteeing timely rotations for the representatives of the smallest ethnic groups.

The government of Ukraine needs to insist that the BSF Accords about the withdrawal of the RBSF from Ukraine in 2017 be enforced. The basing cost needs to be established on the current market basis. However, careful study of the Accords is necessary to identify the legal possibility for achieving that. It can be done by establishing bilateral commission with participation of independent (international) experts in the fields of international law and real estate.

The remedy for the deteriorating situation in the **socioeconomic** sphere of life is simple, universal and well known. The government needs to distance itself from the overregulation of the economy both in Ukraine and Crimea. It is clear that the current system is corrupt, slow and destructive. Artificially regulated markets inhibit foreign and domestic investment. Enlargement of the job market is perhaps the single most promising means of pacifying the socioeconomic grievances of the Crimean population.

In the **humanitarian** sphere, both the central and Crimean governments need to encourage the arrival of NGOs to Crimea to promote ethnic tolerance on the grass-roots level to foster the practice of peaceful co-existence among the peoples of different cultures and religions. In the **cultural** sphere, the governments should encourage cultural exchanges and arrange weeks of ethnic cultures of various Crimean peoples.

Even without any program for the development of previously deported peoples, there are several steps to be taken in the **legal** field. First, the Constitutional Court of

Ukraine should define the meaning of a term ‘indigenous people,’ mentioned in Article 11, 92, 119 of the Constitution of Ukraine, as distinct from the term ‘national minorities.’ This is important for dealing with ethnic issues in Ukraine’s multiethnic society, and in the wake of the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN General Assembly in 2007. Second, the Constitution of the ARC needs to be amended to grant the Crimean Tatar language the same status as the Russian language in Crimea. Despite the fact that the Crimean Tatar language is used by the Crimean Tatars to a lesser extent than Russian (many started to lose it after the deportation), the provision limiting its utilization in Crimean courts needs to be lifted. Third, the law “On the Citizenship of Ukraine” needs to be amended to facilitate the acquisition of citizenship for the deported peoples, who were on Ukrainian territory on the day of its amendment. The law should contain the possibility for limited family reunion in the case of divided families. It will help prevent the legal movement of Islamic extremists to Ukraine, and facilitate a resolution of existing problems for the previously deported peoples who are in Ukraine already. Finally, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine needs to control the enforcement of the already adopted law to punish illegal land seizures, to prevent land speculations and to facilitate land distribution for those in need.

The list is not a dogma. However, the biggest mistake would be to give preference to certain categories of people on the basis of their past experiences. Conflict prevention policy must accommodate the grievances of the society as a whole, not just of a part of it. Otherwise, it will resemble the medieval practice of curing pain by inflicting pain in other parts of body, forcing individuals to switch attention from one type of pain to another.

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