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## **KIRIMLI COMMUNITY IN LVIV: A NEW HOME OR A TEMPORAL SHELTER?**

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The Crimean Tatars, who managed to preserve their ethnic, cultural and religious identity through the most difficult trials of history, nowadays have been undergoing severe times due to the developments in Crimea. Russia's annexation of the peninsula on 18 March 2014 caused almost immediate wave of the first internally displaced people of the Crimean Tatar community arriving in western Ukraine. Compared to only 20 Crimean Tatars who used to live in Lviv before 2014, now their number increased to nearly 2 000. Accordingly, a persistent work has been carried out aimed at mutual recognition and perception of the confessional, cultural and historical originality of two nations – the Ukrainians and the Crimean Tatars.

The suggested paper is aimed at analyzing the peculiarities of Crimean Tatars' integration into Lviv local environment. The Lviv Kırımli Community is considered to be not homogenous due to different purposes of their moving from Crimea and because of different perception of Lviv (or continental Ukraine in general) in their plans for future life.

Generally, Crimean Tatars are positively perceived in Lviv and western Ukraine not only due to compassion for the encumbrances they had to face but also because they are viewed as vitally important in solving the problem of Crimea. Therefore, it is also important to determine the main reasons of this issue to get politicized within the local and nation-wide contexts.

**Key words:** Crimean Tatars; identity; Russian annexation of Crimea; internal population migration; Ukraine; Russian Federation; Crimean Tatar community in Lviv; social security; national security; international security.

### **Introduction**

Occupation and further annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by the Russian Federation throughout February–March 2018 not only inflicted Ukraine's sovereignty and national security, it also changed the overall demographic situation in the country causing mass migration of people within the state.

According to the current data (mainly received from the volunteers and NGOs), around 35–40 thousand people [14] were forced to move out from Crimea due to

different reasons, but mostly because of their protest against the Russian policy there or the pro-Ukrainian stand.

The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Crimea is much smaller than that from the Donbas area. According to the estimations of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine as of 2015, the regions and towns with the largest number of Crimean IDPs were city of Kyiv (4 665), Lviv region (3 042), Odessa region (2 043), Kyiv region (excluding Kyiv city) (1 217) and Mykolayiv region (1 160) [10]. Actually there is no exact official statistics and the current figures are likely to be different (possibly much higher), since the immigrants from the peninsula often choose not to officially register with the state authorities, because most of them find work and accommodations on their own without governmental assistance and some of them prefer to conceal themselves bawaring of persecution from the Russian authorities.

Approximately half of the IDPs from Crimea are Crimean Tatars. The representatives of this ethnical group generally are unwilling to leave the peninsula, due to the consequences and their stance towards the Crimean Tatars' deportation in 1944. Therefore, most of Crimean Tatars tend to leave the peninsula only as a last resort. A sufficient number of them regularly travel between the Crimean peninsula and mainland Ukraine, mostly to the Kherson region, in order to obtain various administrative services, including the issuing of travel documents.

Crimean Tatar IDPs mainly relocated themselves to central and western regions of Ukraine (Kyiv, Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil, Vinnitsya). As reported by the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in most cases, they have been positively treated and accepted by host local communities [28].

At present, the Department of Social Protection of Lviv has registered 307 families of IDPs from Crimea. Many of them are Crimean Tatars. It has to be acknowledged that Ukrainian local social protection services do not register the IDPs according to their ethnical belonging; therefore it is difficult to calculate the exact number of Crimean Tatars in various Ukrainian regions and cities. According to rough estimates made by the Tatars themselves, there are about two thousand of them in Lviv [22]. During five years of forced migration, they managed to establish their new life in the city in different ways and maintained predominantly positive relationship with the local community.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this research is on the basis of general analysis of the Crimean Tatar issue to study the main features of newly shaped Kırımli community in Lviv and to estimate the specifics of its integration into the local society. The case of Lviv has been chosen due to the officially declared multiculturalism political approach of the local authorities and because of special attitude of Lvivians towards the Crimean Tatars. By this research I intend to fill in the existing gap in such kind of complex studies.

A constructivism theoretical approach has been adopted, since a special emphasis is put on the role of interactions among different cultures leading to investigation of religious and ethnic aspects. Also the state policies of Ukraine and Russia have been analyzed through the prism of ethnic and cultural identities construct.

This paper is based on fieldwork carried out in Lviv within April and May 2018, during which scores of interviews were conducted with the Crimean Tatars' representatives of different age and occupations.

#### Historical Background of the Problem

As of the last census, held in 2001, the total population of the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea was 2 376 000 people. At that time, there were 58,5 % of Russians in Crimea, 24,4 % of Ukrainians, and 12,1 % of Crimean Tatars [5, p. 97]. Such «a unique mixture», as characterized by Greta Uehling, when Russians being a minority in the overall Ukraine, actually constituted a majority and ethnic Ukrainians on the contrary being a minority in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, preserved only in that part of Ukraine. Moreover, this is the only territory in the world which is considered to be a historical homeland of Crimean Tatars. Consequently, the Crimean Tatars (along with the Karaims and Krimchaks) position themselves as the indigenous people of Crimea.

According to many researches, the current problem of Crimea «takes place on the foundation of a highly contested past» [29, p. 71; 5, p. 98–100; 34, p. 89–90]. Actually all the dominant ethnic groups, inhabiting the Crimean peninsula, namely, Russians, Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, interpret Crimea's history proceeding from their own, mutually exclusive, historical myths and consequently turn to different ways of justifying their actions on the territory they share. Different interpretations of historical developments laid the foundations of ethnic identity construct of the main ethnical groups in Crimea.

The Russian and Ukrainian claims on Crimea refer to the times of Kyiv Rus – the contested cradle state of modern Russia and Ukraine. The Russian and Ukrainian historiographies stress upon the early appearance of the Slavs in the Crimean peninsula, dating back to the 6–7th, mid 10th centuries [16, p. 41]. In the end of the 10th century the grand prince of Kyiv Rus Volodymyr the Great (Volodymyr Velykyi) conquered the southern part of Crimea and adhered it to his state. Russian sentiments towards Crimea are rooted in a very significant event (according to Orlando Figes – «one of the most important events in Russian history» [9, p. 20] which took place in the old Greek city of Khersonesos in Crimea in 988 – the conversion of Volodymyr to Orthodox Christianity. Therefore, to a great extend the Russian nation-building narrative rests on the idea of Crimea's cultural and religious importance that as argued by Markéta Žídková and Hynek Melichar «even precedes the geo-strategic considerations of the modern era» [34, p. 89]. Vladimir Putin appealed to this argument in his 2014 speech on proclamation of the March 2014 referendum results and justification of the Russian annexation of Crimea [1].

The Baptism of Kyiv Rus has been also perceived as a key event in the formation of the Ukrainian national identity. The Ukrainian party does not claim that the Ukrainians are the indigenous people of Crimea but argues that they appeared in Crimea long before the Russians. In such a way the Ukrainian historians attempt to legitimate the transfer of Crimean autonomous region to the USSR in 1954 [6]. The Russians negatively treated the fact of unification of Crimea with Ukraine and denied the legality of that event by all means. However, it should be noted that the Ukrainian

community on the Crimean peninsula had undergone a severe russification and became strongly pro-Russian over time that was demonstrated in numerous social opinion surveys conducted in Crimea since the USSR disintegration [13, p. 82–84].

As for the Crimean Tatars, throughout the 15–17th centuries they had managed to build their unique society and culture within a state establishment (the Crimean Khanate) on the peninsula. According to the Crimean Tatar historian Refat Kurtiyev, the formation of ethnic core of the Crimean Tatar nation had been completed by the first half of the 16th century [15]. As acknowledged by Žídková and Melichar, «during the «golden age» of the Khanate, the Crimean Tatars emerged as a distinctive ethnic group with clear emotional territorial attachment to Crimea» [34, p. 90]. The Crimean Tatars argue that the Khanate was an independent, culturally diverse state, one of the strongest powers in Eastern Europe before it was forcibly acceded to the Russian Empire.

On the other hand, the Russians expose a historical myth, legitimatizing their presence in Crimea, by stating that the Khanate was merely a vassal state of the Ottoman Turkey, and Crimea voluntarily acceded to become part of the Russian Empire in 1783 [29, p. 71]. Moreover, the annexation of Crimea was viewed as a historical justice triumph when the rights of the Russian people to its own lands were reestablished. The Ukrainian political scientist, Yuliya Biletska admits that the Russian policy of memory in Crimea «aims to cultivate the myth of positive influence of Russian annexation on Crimea» [5, p. 49]. In the Russian historiography the Crimean Khanate is seen as quasi-state that was not capable of independent existence. Russia is shown as a rescuer of Crimean Tatars that were nomadic and uncivilized population. By inclusion of Crimea to Russia, the last one brought civilization and promoted the development and prosperity in Crimea [4].

At the same time in the Crimean Tatar adopted historical memory Russia is traditionally viewed as a conqueror of Crimea which had deprived the Crimean Tatar people of its statehood and caused mass suppression further on.

Starting from 1783 the Tatar population began to move mostly to the areas under the Ottoman control. Their emigration actually «turned into a mass exodus in the years following the Crimean War (1854–1856)» [34, p. 91]. The Russian authorities perceived Crimean Tatars as an internal security threat due to their historical and cultural connections with the Ottoman Empire; therefore, they were subjected to a special political treatment. Thus, Figes noticed an obvious historical similarity of the Russian Tsar's policy and the Soviet leadership's conduct 90 years afterwards:

«Having been informed that the Tatars had collaborated en masse with the enemy, the Tsar responded that nothing should be done to prevent their exodus, adding that in fact it 'would be advantageous to rid the peninsula of this harmful population' (a concept re-enacted by Stalin during the Second World War)» [9, p. 422].

The Soviet times are perceived by Crimean Tatar as the most difficult and tragic period in their history. When Nazi forces occupied the Crimean territory during the World War II the Russians accused the Crimean Tatars in treason, since they had formed the battalions to assist the Germans. In 1944 the Crimean Tatar's deportation followed. The Soviet Russian policy on Crimean Tatars of 1944 is considered to be a

crime against the Crimean Tatar people. According to various official sources, 20 %–25 % of all Crimean Tatars died in places of special settlements during or after their deportation. According to unofficial information (self-censorship of the Crimean Tatar national movement), this figure reached 46 % [8]. The survivors until 1956 were considered to be exiled forever and did not have the right to leave their place of residence under the threat of a 20-year prison sentence. Notwithstanding the fact that in 1967 the accusations of «mass collaborativeism» had been lifted, the Crimean Tatars were not allowed to return to the Crimean peninsula. Mass repatriation began only in 1989.

Deportation and long-term exile had played a crucial role in the process of the Crimean Tatar national identity formation. *Perceiving the violent deportation of the whole nation as a common tragedy had led to awareness of a desperate need for the national unity and became a core of the Crimean Tatar historical memory.* According to Turkish researchers Ayşegül and Ismail Aydıngün, discriminatory policy of the Soviet state was the one that caused strengthening of the Crimean Tatar ethnic identity [3, p. 119]. Since the Crimean Tatars «always perceived themselves as guests in Central Asia» [3, p. 122], *the common idea of coming back to homeland became a central idea of their identity and further activities.*

The repatriation process, launched in 1989, also had a special symbolic meaning – the triumph of justice for the entire repressed nation of Crimean Tatars. After the Soviet Union disintegration the state programs on the resettlement of the Crimean Tatars had been approved by the Ukrainian government. However, practically the resettlement process was passed to the local authorities and the Crimean Tatars who had to self-repatriate. More than 200 000 people returned, notwithstanding the economic and political challenges [29, p. 72]. One should point out that the Crimean local authorities were not ready for such influx and a real bunch of problems followed. The Crimean Tatars faced continuing obstacles to acquiring land, housing, and property throughout the 1990s. Many Crimean Tatars' settlements, formed by themselves in result of so called 'zakhvat' or captures of the former state property, were deprived of basic amenities like paved roads, plumbing, water and gas. The Crimean Tatars remained underrepresented in the bodies of government, law enforcement institutions and many other professions. These factors, combined with poverty, unemployment, and poor access to health and social services led many Crimean Tatars to feel like an underclass [29, p. 73] and didn't encourage the integration of repatriated Crimean Tatars into the Crimean society.

Beginning from 1990s the authorities of independent Ukraine made quite active attempts towards the reintegration of the Crimean Tatars and formation of a tolerant multi-ethnic society in Crimea. However, deep structural problems prevented a real success. Thus, the Law on the restoration of the formerly deported peoples' rights was drafted, but never approved by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Crimean Tatars were extremely dissatisfied with the Constitution of the Crimean autonomy. A number of factors led to the creation of the political institutions based on the ethnic grounds – Kurultai, Mejlis [25, p. 48] and generally caused tensions between representatives of dominant ethnic groups in Crimea. The government of Ukraine did not recognize the

Mejlis as a legitimate institution of self-governance in Crimea, although a special advisory body was initiated in 1999 under the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma – a Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People.

While not much was done in the political realm for the Crimea Tatars issue solution, the cultural landscape showed all evidences of blossoming. The appropriate conditions were created on the local and state levels for guaranteeing the Crimean Tatars' cultural rights observance. The Crimean Tatars got the opportunities to recover mosques taken by the Soviets. They established their cultural centers and religious organizations. They opened libraries, launched book- and newspaper-printing. Silenced under the Soviet rule, the facts about the Crimean Tatars' deportation came into light. Along with the Ukrainian language as an official one, functioning, development, use and protection of the Crimean Tatar language was ensured, pursuant to the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. It was introduced for instruction in schools. Crimean Tatar architectural pieces of art, cultural places were restored; their national heroes were honored with monuments across the Crimean landscape. The central Ukrainian government was predominantly supportive of this process: for example, in the 1990s the information about the 1944 deportation was included in the Ukrainian history books [29, p. 73].

Generally, as argued by the Ukrainian researcher Volodymyr Shyrai, the multidimensionality and complexity of integration and adaptation of the Crimean Tatars required a systematic approach of the Ukrainian authorities. At the same time, the interaction of the Ukrainian central government with the local bodies of the Crimean Tatars was not clearly based on the outlined strategy for integrating repatriates into Ukrainian society and that why it was not consistent and effective [25, p. 49].

#### The Crimean Tatar Identity: Theoretical Considerations

Since the theoretical framework of this paper is grounded on constructivist approach presuming that the national identity plays a crucial role in the 'enrichment' of the state's internal and foreign policy with a strong affiliation to the culture, mentality and history of the society, let's follow the national/ethnic identity analysis of the Crimean Tatars as one of main ethnic groups inhabiting Crimea.

Constructivists define ethnicity as a socially constructed phenomenon which is rooted not in the «heart or blood», but rather «in the mind» of individuals, who form the ethnic groups – imagined or constructed communities. Anthony D. Smith argues that it's more relevant to analyze the ethnicity from the perspective of approach which lies between two extremes: 'primordial' (when ethnicity is viewed as 'given') and 'situational' (when «belonging to an ethnic group is a matter of attitudes, perceptions and sentiments [...], varying with a particular situation» [26, p. 20]. This approach, according to Smith should «stress the historical and symbolic-cultural attributes of ethnical groups» [26, p. 20]. While the historical myths and memories play crucial role in shaping ethnic boundaries, Smith acknowledges that the ethnical groups should be also recognized by one or several cultural peculiarities (religion, traditions, language, institutions, etc.).

Max Weber also stressed on «memories of colonization and migration» in his definition of ethnic group [32, p. 389]. Weber considered the feeling of belonging together to be a result of shared ethnic origin as a social construct.

Taras Kuzio defends the idea that «issue of myths and history writing is largely understood as part of nation-building aspects of nation-states» [16, p. 29]. Referring to Eriksen, Kuzio argues that history for the anthropologists is not a product of the past but a response to requirements of the present [16, p. 31]. The past is constructed according to the conditions and desires of those who produced historical books in present. Therefore history can never be truly objective, as it can be interpreted according to different purposes that are situational.

I am not intended in this paper to get deep into the discussion about the origin of nations and nationalism, or into details on the difference between a nation and an ethnic group. What is relevant for this study (since it is aimed at investigating the peculiarities of the Crimean Tatars' adaptation to the conditions of living in new social environment, stressing on Lviv context) is the essence of shared identity and self-perception.

As pointed out by Žídková and Melichar, «the Tatars of Crimea, however relatively low in numbers, constitute a politically significant ethnonational and religious entity» [34, p. 100]. The Crimean Tatars generally perceive themselves as a nation. The basis for the development of Crimean Tatar nationalism can be traced back to the times of the Crimean Khanate, although the Crimean Tatar national movement emerged only through the 19th century. As a distinctive society, Crimean Tatars clearly manifest features of nationhood: a distinctive language, different even from other Tatar languages; shared ethnic bond from the times of the Khanate; shared history; common festivities and commemorations (the 1944 deportations in particular); political institutions – the Mejlis and the Kurultai; as well as national symbols like the national flag or the national anthem.

According to the Ukrainian ethnologist Olena Sobolyeva, a strong affiliation to the homeland – Crimea remained the main mobilization factor for the Crimean Tatars. As she argues, the traditional Crimean Tatar culture throughout the deportation period underwent significant decline and transformation. Nowadays it has been reproducing rather fragmentarily (for example, the traditional cuisine and a nutrition system), or in the form of stage and decorative elements (traditional ritual, folk art). Religion was largely neglected in the period of anti-religious policy and propaganda of the Soviet times. Ethnic language, although it is considered now as a powerful national symbol, has also lost its dominant unifying meaning in Soviet times as a result of russification policy [27]. The studies of modern historians, sociologists and anthropologists have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that the image of ethnic territory became an ideological slogan of a powerful mobilization of the Crimean Tatars after their repatriation.

Some authors emphasize the importance of control over a particular territory for an ethnic group to be considered a nation. Though, as assumed by Lindholm, some societies living within existing state structures can be considered nations on the grounds of their striving for a state of their own [17, p. 16]. Nowadays the Crimean

Tatar national leaders do not position themselves striving for their own state due to several reasons, namely, a sufficient decrease of Tatar population in Crimea, Russian military dominance and control over the Crimean peninsula. However, an independent Crimean Tatar state could be their ultimate dream [34, p. 101], especially if to take into consideration the statements and declaration of the Crimean Tatars national movement leaders in the 1990s [25, p. 130–132].

Oli Waever argues that the nation is a special case of society characterized by the following attributes: 1) «affiliation to a territory»; 2) «a combination of present time community with a continuity across time»; 3) «a feeling of being one of the units of which the global society consists» [31, p. 19]. Undoubtedly, the Crimean Tatars would fit into such categorization. They feel strongly attached to Crimea, which they consider as their historical or even sacred homeland [2, p. 275]. They share a common perception of their continuity in history from the times of the Khanate through Russian, and especially Soviet, oppression to the present day. «As a nation (real or imagined) with articulated political demands, they also feel as a unit of global society» [34, p. 101].

Having briefly analyzed main historical periods of the Crimean Tatar people in Crimea, we can presume that the Crimean Tatar ethnic identity was shaped through three main modern concepts that appeared in different times: «the concept of land/territory» (idea of the Crimean peninsula as a historical Homeland), «the concept of crime» (referring to forced migrations and deportation performed under the Russian Empire and during the Soviet period), and «concept of victim» (the repatriation process and the land and political rights claims in the independent Ukraine).

Thus, it was the Soviet regime that by its violent discriminative policy encouraged the formation of the Crimean Tatar national identity and strengthened their affiliation to Crimea as the only homeland for all Crimean Tatar people. Under Ukraine's independent governance the Crimean Tatar were encouraged to establish the institutions for defense of their political and social rights after repatriation. The Crimean Tatar national elite were formed. It is very important that the Crimean Tatars received a sufficient support from the Ukrainian government in their cultural revival. Thus, their identity was undergoing the times of consolidation and reunification.

However, it is very important to acknowledge that until 2014 the Crimean Tatars mostly perceived both the Russian and Ukrainian ethnic groups on the Crimean peninsula as threatening to their identity and challenging to their interests. That is also stressed by Aydingün and Aydingün:

«Most of the Crimean Tatars perceive both Russians and Ukrainians as nations that make claim to the Crimean Tatar homeland. They believe that these nations, having different religions and traditions and holding political authority, deny Crimean Tatar national identity and threaten the Crimean Tatar cultural and ethnic existence. Crimean Tatar intellectuals define the interaction with Russians and Ukrainians as a threat to the Crimean Tatar identity» [3, p. 122].

That can be explained by the inefficient policy of the Ukrainian government on the Crimean Tatars repatriation and continuous active anti-Tatar propaganda implemented by Russia within the Ukrainian and Russian ethnic communities in Crimea.



The occupation and annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in March 2014 marked a new stage in the history of the Crimean Tatars, as it not only caused sufficient alteration in their self-identification but changed their political activities and the attitude of the Ukrainian society and government towards them.

In this context the ethnic identity components are important to consider. Erik H. Cohen argues that the ethnic identity is composed of three integrated elements [7, p. 89]: *the cognitive* (knowledge of main distinctives of the group, namely, the awareness of history, customs, the culture of its people, and awareness of its membership on the basis of ethno-differentiating characteristics: language, values, customs, religion, historical memory, national character, folk art, etc.), *the affective* (sense of belonging to a group, assessment of its features, emotional attitude to membership in it, etc.) and *the behavioral* (attendance at community events, contributions to organizations and charities associated with the ethnic community, and observance of religious traditions). While the cognitive and affective elements can be seen as the psychology of identity, the behaviors reflect the sociology of identity.

Thus, ethnic identity means not only an awareness of affiliation to an ethnic community, but also its assessment, the significance of membership in it, shared ethnic feelings: the sense of dignity, pride, insults, and fear are the most important criteria of inter-ethnic ties, based on deep emotional connections. However, as argued by Siniša Malešević, ethnicity is much more than «just a perspective, discourse or way of understanding and interpreting», it's more to social action and «linked to specific dynamics of political, economic or coercive power» [18, p. 78]. So, it's also important to look into the activities of ethnic groups aimed at achieving their goals based on their interests. As in case of the Crimean Tatars and their current strategy concerning occupied Crimea.

#### Russian Occupation of Crimea in 2014 and the Crimean Tatars' Migration

On 17 March, after the official announcement of the referendum results, the Supreme Council of Crimea adopted a resolution 'On the Independence of Crimea'. Almost immediately the process for the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to become a part of the Russian Federation was launched. A Treaty of Accession of the Republic of Crimea was signed on 18 March 2014. Yet, Russia officially incorporated Crimea as two federal subjects of the Russian Federation. Although the referendum results were not recognized by the UNO and by the majority of the states, the situation over the restoration of territorial integrity of Ukraine did not change since 2014. As argued by Jeffrey Mankoff, Russia's invasion of Crimea wasn't a sudden realization of a new-born idea, it was «a replay and an escalation of tactics that the Kremlin has used for the past two decades to maintain its influence across the domains of the former Soviet Union» [19].

The Crimea issue nowadays seems to be irreversible and far from being resolved since it is officially considered by Russia as its integral part. 14 March 2018, before the anniversary of Russia's annexation of Crimea, Putin declared that there were no circumstances which could lead to Crimea's returning to Ukraine. Putin stressed that by their decision in the referendum in 2014 the Crimean people «restored historical justice, which was violated in the Soviet times, when the Crimea and Sevastopol had

been illegally, even pursuant to the Soviet legislation, dissociated from Russia» [30]. The image of Crimea as «iskonno russkaia zemlia» (primordially Russian land) is deeply rooted in the Russian national identity and that has been actively exposed by the Russian leaders for justification of their policy in Crimea [1].

The reaction of international community was more than moderate. Only on 17 November 2017 the UN General Assembly approved the Resolution on the «Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine»<sup>1</sup>. The Resolution condemned the Russian Federation of «the ongoing temporary occupation of part of the territory of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol» and reaffirmed the non-recognition of that annexation. By issuing the document the General Assembly also condemned «violations, abuses, measures and practices of discrimination against the residents of the temporarily occupied Crimea, including Crimean Tatars, as well as Ukrainians and persons belonging to other ethnic and religious groups, by the Russian occupation authorities» and called upon taking all measures necessary to bring an immediate end to all violations and abuses against residents of Crimea<sup>2</sup>.

Being traditionally anti-Russian, the majority of Crimean Tatar opposed the policy of Russia in Crimea in February–March 2014. Notwithstanding the fact that throughout 1991–2014 Crimean Tatar leaders unsuccessfully made numerous attempts to push through some of their demands to Ukrainian authorities and often suffered being used in the Ukrainian political battles, starting from the events in February–March 2014 when the first arrests followed they acknowledged the Ukrainian times as a period of relative prosperity of Crimean Tatar culture. In March 2015, Refat Chubarov stated that under the Ukrainian governance «for those 23 years, we obtained the possibility to restore our schools, to promote our language, which was not possible for 50 years. We published books in Tatar language, a TV channel was set up, a theatre» (quoted in [11]). The opposition against Russia became more active when despite of all the promises from the Russian side to guarantee and expand the rights of Crimean Tatars in Crimea the mass persecutions started.

During the first years under the new rule and until now, freedoms and rights of the minorities have been repeatedly violated and Tatars have been affected by these attacks most of all. Although the new constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea recognized the Tatar language as one of the official ones (which was not performed under the Ukrainian governance), it still fails to deal with minority rights and cultural specificities of the peninsula. The Crimean Tatars have been facing hidden and open repressions [23]. The Crimean Tatars' public commemorations of 1944 deportations as well as almost all public meetings organized traditionally by the Mejlis were banned; the Tatar media channel ATR and its affiliated media outlets were closed down; the Mejlis building in Simferopol was raided and sealed off, and the Crimean Tatar fund was confiscated [34, p. 103]. At the beginning of Russian occupation new Crimean authorities denied the very existence of Mejlis. In 2016

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<sup>1</sup> The UN General Assembly Resolution A/C.3/72/L.42, in: <https://undocs.org/A/C.3/72/L.42>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

pursuant to the decision of the so-called Supreme Court of Crimea the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people was recognized an extremist organization and its «anti-Russian» activities were banned. The Crimean Tatars «have been subjected to increasing pressure on and control of the peaceful expression of their political views and cultural practices» [10, p. 82]. Several of the most prominent Crimean Tatar leaders and activists, including Mustafa Dzhemilev, Refat Chubarov, Akhtem Ciygoz, Sinaver Kadyrov, Ilmi Umerov, Ismet Yuksel, were prohibited to enter Crimea.

Negative stereotypes against the Tatars deeply rooted within the dominant Slavic population in Crimea have still been encouraged nowadays by the Russian propaganda which is spreading the information on the Tatars' collaboration with the Western states. One should admit that the interethnic hostility and intolerance instigation is widespread in modern Crimea.

Due to numerous cases of abductions, disappearances, unlawful arrests and searches, the majority of Tatars feels really threatened. As one Crimean Tatar woman put it: «We're all living in fear that history is repeating itself, like it's 1944 all over again» (quoted in [34, p. 102]). At present, the Crimean Tatars are even more poorly represented in the demography of the Crimean peninsula, since another approximately 10,000 Tatars moved from Crimea in the aftermath of the annexation. The situation was so desperate that some young Tatars were even hashtagging «genocide» on their social networks expressing their real anxieties about the future.

As of the Ukrainian policy throughout 2014–2018, it could be characterized as situational and inconsistent in most of the cases. In March 2014 the Ukrainian authorities finally recognized the Mejlis and the Kurultai on the official level. They also proclaimed the Crimean Tatars an indigenous people of Crimea. On 12 December 2015 the Ukrainian Parliament recognized the 1944 deportation an act of genocide and established 18 May as the Remembrance Day. However, all these decisions were reactive since they had followed the Russia's proceedings in Crimea. Such «late in the day» policy of Kyiv was negatively perceived by many Crimean Tatars.

Nevertheless, most of the Crimean Tatar leaders pronounced pro-Ukrainian stance and adopted the policy of cooperation with Ukraine aiming at bringing back the Crimean peninsula under the Ukrainian sovereignty, though putting forward the demand of national-territorial autonomy for the Crimean Tatar people in the future. Such cooperation is perceived as mutually beneficial since the Ukrainian political elite consider the Crimean Tatars as the only possible instrument and chance for Ukraine's territorial integrity restoration.

Of course, all the developments in Crimea caused substantial changes in the identity structure of the Crimean Tatars. The Russian scientists Vladimir Mukomel and Sergey Khaykin who conducted a research on the transformation of identities in Crimea, claim:

«The ethnic and regional identities that have traditionally been important for Crimean Tatars have undergone deterioration: among those who are dissatisfied with new social conditions and policies the confessional identity is getting more and more important. It substitutes for the regional identity when ethnic identity keeps dominant» [21, p. 51].

According to the authors, «decreasing share of those who identify themselves with Ukraine has not been compensated for the growing share of those identifying themselves with Russia». Having mainly adopted a «wait and see» attitude, many Crimean Tatars have not accepted Russia; according to the survey data, only 16 % call themselves «rossiyane» (Russian citizens). Even among those who support the idea of the Crimean incorporation into Russia, the civic (Russian) identity is weak and opposed by the regional identity [21, p. 51].

All the above analysis is deemed to be very important for the performance of the diligent research of the recently established Crimean Tatar community in Lviv, since all the developments in the Crimean Tatar national movement and tendencies concerning the Crimean Tatar people throughout Ukraine always get almost immediate reflection and reaction on the local levels of their current residence.

#### General Information on the Crimean Tatar Community in Lviv

Russia's annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the armed conflict in the Donbas resulted in the emergence of a new category of people in Ukraine – internally displaced persons (IDPs) – meaning the people who were forced to leave the place of their permanent residence and moved to live in new territorial communities. The problem of their adaptation to new social environments is fairly complicated and requires a special academic attention envisaging a multidisciplinary approach.

According to the latest information available, about 35–40 thousand people left the Crimean peninsula [12; 22]. Approximately half of them are Crimean Tatars. They dispersed throughout the territory of Ukraine: most of Crimean Tatars resided in Kiev, partly – in the western regions of Ukraine (Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil) and partly – in Kherson.

The developments of 18 March 2014 in Crimea caused almost immediate wave of the first Crimean Tatars moving to Lviv and Lviv region. Compared to only 20 Crimean Tatars who used to live in Lviv before 2014, nowadays their number increased to almost 2 000. It is quite a vast newly emerged ethnical community that attracts a special attention.

When speaking about the Kırımli in Lviv, one can not characterize it as homogenous. This community turned to be very diverse due to different factors: purposes for moving to Lviv, affiliation to the religion and the Crimean Tatar culture, age and social status. So, we have to consider all of these aspects for the thorough analysis of the Lviv Kırımli community.

Within only five years of their presence in Lviv Crimean Tatars managed to establish an operating institutional structure for ensuring their main social, religious and cultural needs. The main Crimean Tatar institutions include the Islamic Cultural Center named after Muhammad Asad; the Crimean Tatar Cultural Center in Lviv (DUMK); nongovernmental organizations: «Crimean Tatar Association» in Lviv, «QIRI'M YOUNG», «Lviv Women's Club Kırımli» and others. Generally, the IDPs from Crimea (with the Crimean Tatars being in the core) have managed to establish a community in Lviv, which facilitates the IDPs' adaptation process and encourages solidarity and cross-cultural dialogue.

Another significant aspect that should be accounted – Lviv local authorities' positioning of the city as a multicultural territorial unit and their policy on the Crimean Tatar IDPs, and the perception of Lviv local community of Crimean Tatars inhabiting their city.

#### Main Reasons for Moving to Lviv

The Crimean Tatars in Lviv are different people who left the Crimean peninsula and moved to the western capital of Ukraine due to different reasons and who accordingly set different goals.

For most of the reasons Lviv was chosen because this city had a general image of «very comfortable place» and «full of opportunities».

There are a considerable number of those who consider Lviv as a temporal place of residence and are intended to return to Crimea by all means after it will be reintegrated to Ukraine. Mainly, those having responded in such a way, are the Crimean Tatars aged over 30 who escaped from Crimea due to political reasons (predominantly for their pro-Ukrainian stance). This attitude coincides with the main Crimean Tatar ideological 'concept of home' or 'coming back home' which was analyzed in the previous sections. The representatives of this category mostly show a strong affiliation to the Crimean Tatar national identity and are very active in their civic position. They also use all the opportunities of gaining some new useful skills, knowledge and experience while residing in Lviv. Another thing is that many Crimean Tatars didn't realize that «their forced deportation would last for so long». So, they sometimes become very anxious about their future and plans, still bearing in mind returning to their homeland.

Among those who also intend to come back to Crimea are also young people under 30. They usually move to Lviv to obtain higher educational degree. However, this category of IDPs is also showing their willingness to stay in Lviv for a permanent residence and work. They have pointed out that there are much more opportunities in this city for them than in Crimea.

There are also people who due to different circumstances chose Lviv for a permanent living, so, they want to adapt here and, therefore, rebuild their projects for a longer term, buy real estate, maintain their business, etc. For them the question of returning to Crimea remains only an idea that could possibly be considered.

And, obviously, there is a third category (not so numerous) – the Crimean Tatars who come to Lviv and view the city as a transit point for moving further to the EU states or the USA in the future.

#### Religion Attitudes, Culture, Mentality

There is another division existing within the Crimean Tatar community by their religious and cultural attitudes.

Practically, all of those interviewed responded that they belonged to the Crimean Tatar ethnical group and that they were Muslims. It is important to admit that there is a division between secularized Muslims and those who adhere to the Islamic religious practices in their everyday life.

Within the first group there are those whose civic identity is connected to Ukraine and who apart from affiliation to Crimean Tatar culture have sincere sentiments for

the Ukrainian culture. They usually express their pro-Ukrainian stance and support the Ukrainian-Tatar cultural coexistence. There is a small percentage of those who are deeply rooted in the old Soviet mentality, which is extremely difficult to change.

And those Crimean Tatars professing Islam are divided into moderate and more radical one. Moderate Muslims are usually opened to cross-religious dialogue. Secularized Crimean Tatars and moderate Muslim Crimean Tatars both feel more affiliated on the ethnic basis, when referring to the language, traditions, folk arts, history, etc.

However, there is a category of Crimean Tatars (quite numerous) in Lviv who belong to more radical Islamic branches. The essence lays not in the differences in Islamic doctrine perception but in its practical implementation, the assessments of the present, and the attitude towards the current processes in the Islamic world in general and within the Crimean Tatar community particularly. It concerns mainly the organization called Hizb ut-Tahrir («The Party of Liberation»), established in the early 2000s in Crimea which calls for the creation of a «global caliphate», emphasizing the non-violent methods. Hizb ut-Tahrir actually is banned in Russia as a radical organization. The representatives of this organization stress on Islam as the main basis of social organization and do not care about the ethnic differences. It causes problems within the Crimean Tatar community that aims to stay unified. And such radical religious elements may not only divide the Lviv Kırımli but also cause problems in the process of its adaptation into Lviv local social environment.

Preserving a moderate Islamic way of life can be a definite basis of support for preserving the identity of the Crimean Tatars. But the Crimean Tatar people should deliberately avoid radical forms of Islamism that can discredit the entire community. Because as soon as the extremists appear, there will be a violent rejection of the Crimean Tatars by a local and overwhelming Ukrainian community.

#### Perception by the Lviv Community

Lviv is considered to be a multicultural and multi-confessional city and the local authorities traditionally do their best to maintain such image. They support almost all initiatives of the Crimean Tatar community. In the beginning of Crimean Tatars' influx to Lviv, the City Administration even proposed to build (or adopt a building for) the mosque for them in the city center. The Lviv Crimean Tatar leaders rejected the proposal due to various reasons, but mostly because they did not want to instigate any conflicts inside the local society.

As far as interaction with the Lviv community is concerned, it should be borne in mind that the Ukrainian society is more diverse here, ranging from nationalists to liberals. However, it is also highly politicized. The community of Crimean Tatars has been predominantly perceived positively and friendly by the Galician community as the one that has been providing its support to liberation of Crimea. Thus, such attitude can not be identified as ambiguous. As acknowledged by the Ukrainian political scientist Taras Vozniak, if you refer to the history of Crimean Tatar presence in Lviv you can notice that at the first stage of moving to Lviv they were perceived with enthusiasm as refugees fleeing from the Russian aggression [20]. Yet, the perception is becoming calmer and more weighed nowadays [20].

Lvivians still have often been participating in the cultural and political actions performed by the Crimean Tatars to demonstrate their solidarity and to express that Crimea is not forgotten, that it is not rejected, that it is still on our political agenda.

It is worth noting that Lviv is indeed conservative enough in religious matters. But there is a different conservatism. The Greek-Catholic conservatism, which survived after the actual complete destruction and persecution; and conservatism of the Russian Orthodox Church, which once became a subdivision of the NKVD. Both are conservative, but different: the first one in a liberal way, and the second one in the NKVDist.

#### Social and Political Contexts of Coexistence

As it was already mentioned the Crimean IDPs came from different regions and represent different people with different views. And to various degrees they can both enrich the local society and pose certain threats. If we talk about the migrants who are the opponents of Ukraine, then this may cause problems revealing not only in the tensions within the local society but regarding their possible anti-Ukrainian preferences on the elections.

But if we talk about the IDPs in terms of their professional qualifications, then the Lviv society has already been and could be further enriched.

Still an issue of adaptation as an inevitable process is on the agenda.

Those Crimean Tatars, who plan their stay in Lviv for a longer perspective, of course, have to adapt. Assimilation processes are also possible when it refers to the 'newcomers' to any community. The adaptation and assimilation processes can be parallel as they are not mutually exclusive.

At present stage, the politically conscious Lviv community is absolutely interested in the Crimean Tatars' adaptation (or integration) and not assimilation. It is important in the context of the Crimea issue solution that the Crimean Tatar people grow in quantity rather than dissolve or disappear. Of course, in order not to assimilate, Crimean Tatars in Lviv must rely on their culture, religion, and the maintaining of their own political elite. And the support of the Crimean Tatar ethnic/national identity coincides with the interests of Ukraine.

On the other hand, since the problem of Crimea's reintegration to Ukraine is not a perspective of the near future, the achievement of aim of 'coming back home' for the majority of Crimean Tatars could also be postponed. Their consolidation and preservation of their identity is of high priority nowadays. At the same time they have to integrate into the local society adhering to the main principles of mutually advantageous coexistence.

#### Conclusions

The current illegal transition of power in Crimea is fraught with tension mainly because it is based on a highly contested past and concerns the cross-ethnic coexistence and conflicts. Despite the fact that they now constitute even less than 12 percent of the population of Crimea, the Crimean Tatars represent a distinctive ethno-national and ethno-religious group, or a nation in many respects.

Unlike other ethnic communities of the Crimea, the Crimean Tatars are the only people who do not have other territories outside the Crimea which could be considered

as their ethnic territories (homeland). That is why the ‘idea of homeland’ has been so deeply incorporated into the Crimean Tatar identity.

A new phenomenon appeared in modern Ukraine – the forced Crimean Tatar migrants from Crimea to the mainland Ukraine who have been constructing an image of a lost for the second time homeland, different from the image of the homeland of their compatriots who remained on the peninsula.

Having analyzed the peculiarities of the Crimean Tatar community in Lviv, it is necessary to admit the declared and actual tolerance and openness of both communities towards each other. It is also important to stress upon that fact that in the interests of both communities nowadays is to find mutually beneficial ways and forms of further coexistence, keeping in mind that one of the priorities of this coexistence is not the assimilation, but the actual preservation of the Crimean Tatar identity for realization of Crimean Tatars’ main aspiration of ‘coming back home’.

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## СПІЛЬНОТА КИРИМЛИ У ЛЬВОВІ: НОВИЙ ДІМ ЧИ ТИМЧАСОВИЙ ПРИТУЛОК?

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Кримські татари, яким вдалося зберегти свою етнічну, культурну та релігійну ідентичність упродовж найскладніших випробувань в історії, сьогодні переживають складні часи через події на Кримському півострові. Російська анексія Криму 18 березня 2014 року спричинила майже негайну хвилю прибуття перших внутрішньо переміщених осіб кримськотатарської громади на захід України. Порівняно з лише 20 кримськими татарами, які раніше жили у Львові до 2014 року, зараз їх кількість зросла майже до 2 000. Відповідно, на сучасному етапі здійснюється наполеглива робота, спрямована на взаємне визнання і сприйняття конфесійної, культурної та історичної самобутності двох народів – українців та кримських татар.

У статті подано огляд історії кримського питання, представлено позиції України, Російської Федерації, Туреччини та кримських татар. Визначено фундаментальні цінності кримськотатарської ідентичності у контексті дефініції її місця в українському суспільстві.

Запропонована стаття спрямована на аналіз особливостей інтеграції кримських татар у львівське місцеве середовище. Львівська громада киримли вважається неоднорідною через різні цілі переїзду з Криму та через різне сприйняття Львова (або континентальної України загалом) у планах на майбутнє.

Як правило, кримські татари позитивно сприймаються у Львові та на заході України не лише через співчуття до труднощів та обтяжень, які їм довелося пережити, але й тому, що кримськотатарський народ розглядається сьогодні як надзвичайно важливий інструмент вирішення проблем Криму. Тому важливо також визначити основні причини політизації цього питання на місцевому рівні та у загальнодержавному контексті.

**Ключові слова:** кримські татари; ідентичність; російська анексія Криму; внутрішня міграція населення; Україна; Російська Федерація; кримськотатарська спільнота у Львові; соціетальна безпека; національна безпека; міжнародна безпека.