

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

Faculty of Social Sciences

School of Economics and Business Administration

Ismet Suleimanov

**Collective Trauma of the Exile**

Memories of the genocide and collective tragedy in the contemporary social and political landscape of Crimean Tatars

Master's Thesis

Supervisor: Alevtina Solovyeva PhD.

Head of the centre for Oriental Studies

Tartu 2024



I have written this Master's Thesis independently. Any ideas or data taken from other authors or other sources have been fully referenced.

**List of Abbreviations**

1. POW - Prisoner of War
2. WWII - World War II
3. USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
4. Crimea ASSR – Crimea Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
5. KGB - Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Committee for State Security)
6. KrymOHRIS - Crimean organization for the preservation of historical monuments  
and art
7. TUAK - Tauride Learned Archival Commission
8. ROPIK - Russian Society for the Study of Crimea

### Orthographic Note

In this thesis, I use Crimean Tatar language for place names, foods, holidays, and a few key concepts. The Turkish alphabet is used for these words, which is largely phonetic with some specific pronunciations:

ç is pronounced “ch” in English.

c is pronounced “j” in English.

ş is pronounced “sh” in English.

q is pronounced “ha” in English or as a clicking sound “k”.

ö, ü, and i are pronounced as back versions of the English o, u, and i respectively.

ı has no equivalent in English, but it is pronounced like i in cousin. In Russian this sound is ы, in Ukrainian и, and Estonian õ.

**Table of contents**

List of Abbreviations .....	4
Orthographic Note .....	5
1. Introduction.....	9
2. Historical background of Crimean Tatars .....	12
2.1. The land in the Black Sea .....	12
2.2. Ethnogenesis .....	13
2.3. Middle Ages.....	15
2.4. Crimean Khanate .....	17
2.5. Outset of Russia dominating period.....	19
2.6. Period of 20 <sup>th</sup> century.....	21
2.7. Soviet Crimea.....	22
2.8. Crimea during the WWII .....	24
2.9. The forced exile of Crimean Tatars .....	25
2.10. In places of exile .....	27
2.11. Return and modern times .....	28
3. Bibliography Review .....	29
3.1.Historiography of Crimea and Crimean Tatars.....	29
3.2. Oral history .....	33
3.3. Place-lore .....	34
3.4. Memory Studies. Collective and Post-Memory .....	35
3.4.1. Collective memory .....	35
3.4.2. Realms of memory .....	37
3.4.3. Post-memory .....	38
3.5. Collective Trauma. Rule of Silence .....	38
4. Methodology .....	40
4.1. Research strategy .....	40
4.2. Research Ethics .....	42

4.3. Narrative theory .....	43
5. Historical memories in the socio-political landscape – data, analysis, and results.....	44
5.1. Genocidal exile .....	44
5.1.1. The decree 5859ss .....	44
5.1.2. First years of the exile .....	46
5.2. Foreign land .....	48
5.2.1. Discriminations .....	49
5.3. Occasional visits of Crimea. Rendezvous with the homeland .....	50
5.3.1. Physical contact .....	51
5.3.2. Silencing/Sacralising.....	52
5.3.3. Crimea as a fairy tale .....	54
5.3.4. Practices of acknowledgment .....	58
5.4. Return. Period of independent Ukraine .....	62
5.4.1. The declaration of 1989 .....	62
5.4.2. Hardships of returning as a relapse of the 1944 exile. Everything is known in comparison.....	62
5.4.3. Discrimination. Feeling of being unwanted.....	64
5.4.4. Realms of Memory. 18 May .....	65
5.4.5. Practices of remembering after return.....	67
5.5. Crimean Tatars since 2014.....	69
5.5.1. Forced migration .....	70
5.5.2. 18 May in 2014 .....	72
5.5.3. 18 May after 2014 .....	73
5.5.4. Süren Memorial .....	74
5.6. Postmemory. Knowledge of survival.....	75
Conclusion .....	78
List of references.....	81
Resümee .....	88





## 1. Introduction

The 20<sup>th</sup> century has proved to be one of the most distressful in the history of mankind, being marked by numerous events caused widespread sufferings and collective traumas. In case of Crimean Tatars, native people of Crimea, the year 1944 has left an indelible mark on their destiny. It was the year in which Stalin's regime illegally banished the entire nation from its homeland, allegedly accusing the whole community of collaborating with the Nazi Germans. The exile of the entire Crimean Tatar population generated a deep wound in their collective memory, affecting both individual and group consciousness.

The concept of collective trauma describes the psychological repercussions of traumatic events on entire communities and societies (Hirschberger, 2018). The experience of direct survivors transcends their individual memory, becoming a part of the collective memory. Such memories are not merely recalled as a historical account but constantly reformulated to make sense of the trauma. This dynamic allows the collective trauma to become a transgenerational legacy that metamorphoses the identity of next generations. Marianne Hirsch's (2008) concept of post-memory addresses this trans-generational inheritance of trauma, describing how the generation following those who experienced cultural or collective trauma feels deeply connected to these events through stories, images, and behaviors, even though they did not experience them firsthand. This ingrained, emotionally impactful connection makes these memories feel personal, explaining how the memories of the 1944 forced exile endure to affect Crimean Tatars' today. Alexander (2004) described cultural trauma as lasting marks on a group's identity and future, occurring due to a horrific event.

Collective memory is defined as an ongoing process of sense-making over time, synthesizing individual memories and social practices to form shared group memories (Olick and Levy, 1997). Halbwachs (1997[1950]) emphasizes the social nature of memory, stating that even personal memories are shaped through interactions with others. Collective memory defines group identity and boundaries through shared narratives and stories, which foster social cohesion and solidarity. Jan Assmann (1995) later expanded on Halbwachs' work, distinguishing between communicative memory, which exists in everyday interactions, and cultural memory, which is institutionalized in books, monuments, and rites. Aleida Assmann (2006) further refined this classification, emphasizing the dynamic nature of memory and its role in preserving group identity over time.

Pierre Nora (1989) expanded on the concept of collective memory by introducing the idea of *lieux de mémoire*, or realms of memory, which are symbolic, functional, monumental,

or topographic. These sites serve as anchors for collective memory, helping to preserve and transmit it through generations. As Crimean Tatars began returning to their homeland in the late 1980s, various realms of memory emerged to uphold collective memory, such as the annual commemoration of the 18th of May or various monuments dedicated to the tragedy.

For the Crimean Tatars, their homeland is not just a physical space but a repository of collective memories and identities. The concept of place-lore (Valk & Daniel, 2018) helps explain the deep, almost spiritual connections that Crimean Tatars have with their ancestral land, reinforcing their sense of belonging and identity. By introducing new concepts, the research is going to contribute to a broader understanding of mechanisms behind the conveyance of collective memory of the trauma during the Soviet silencing and in post-2014 era.

Based on the research background, the objective of the thesis is to understand a role of the 1944 exile in the contemporary socio-political environment of Crimean Tatars. Moreover, the study attempts to understand to what extent generations after the experienced eviction are the generations of post-memory and why, i.e. inherited the traumatic experience and perceive the modern reality through this lens. Hereafter, the research asks questions, “How these stories are transmitted and what are the mechanism behind conveying the traumatic experience?” Furthermore, the study has an ambition to investigate what kinds of political identities were transferred intergenerationally through the concept of collective memory.

To explore a role of the collective trauma in the modern reality, 20 open-ended one-on-one or two-on-one interviews with Crimean Tatars of three different generations were conducted. The oral testimonies were collected through snowball sampling via video-calls. Some of the respondents still live in Crimea. Therefore, they were giving insights about the community’s practices in occupied Crimea, regarding the collective trauma.

The thesis is organized in the way to provide comprehensive knowledge about Crimean Tatars. The first chapter begins with the historical background of the ethnic group in order to explain the complexity of the issue behind the exile of 1944. Beside acquainting with the history of the people, his chapter sets a purpose to introduce Crimean Tatars as European Turks by reviewing their ethnogenesis. The chapter is ordered chronologically and divided into paragraphs for better navigation.

The second chapter is the bibliography review, introducing the key concepts such as collective trauma and memory, realms of memory, place-lore, and elaborate on silencing in the Soviet Union as well as introducing oral history as an analytical tool. Moreover, it will delve into the historiography of Crimea and Crimean Tatars. In the third chapter, the research

methodology will be introduced, including the process of data collection and research ethics. There we will present the narrative theory as a research method at analyzing the oral histories.

The fourth chapter we will delve deeper into the findings by analyzing and discussing the data in detail, meanwhile, unveiling the alternative history of those who would otherwise remain voiceless or overlooked.

**Keywords:** Collective Trauma; Oral History; Collective Memory; Place-lore; Crimean Tatars, Realms of Memory; Memory Studies.

**Research classification code(s) (CERCS):** S210 Sociology; S220 Cultural anthropology, ethnology

## **2. Historical background of Crimean Tatars**

‘The Blessed Land’ is how American scholar Magosci (2014) titled his book about history of Crimea and its people. On the other hand, for political scientists and journalist Crimea is the apple of discord between Russia and Ukraine. The occupation of 2014 not only revived interest around the events in Crimea but has started a new era for the inhabitants of the peninsula, especially Crimean Tatars. Despite growing academic literature in the field of political studies, on the contrary, anthropological studies are rather downplayed. However, Russian’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine has raised new challenges not only to Ukrainians, but also to Crimean Tatars. Institutional history has been subjugated to mechanisms of the state-propaganda, being distorted. The historical ‘return’ of the Crimea to its ‘native harbor’ is among recent. The 1944 exile of Crimean Tatars has been the event contested people right to the land as well as their ethnic identity (Nekrich, 1978; Uehling, 2004; Williams, 2016). For clearer image of who are Crimean Tatars, in this paragraph we introduce their eventful history and rich ethnogenesis, claiming their right to be considered as native people of the peninsula. Before all, let draw attention to the actual location of Crimea. It will help us in understanding such their complex destiny.

### **2.1. The land in the Black Sea**

Crimea is a peninsula located on the northern side of the Black Sea littoral. A small strait links the sea with another – Azov; and separates the soil from the mainland of nowadays Russia. Locked between two seas, the isthmus of Perekop is the only connection to the continent. There Crimea meets Ukrainian Kherson region and continues its northern steppes into what once have been called Kipchak plains or Desht-i-Kipchak, stretching from modern-days Kazakhstan to the eastern borders of Hungary (Williams, 2001). If two thirds of the Crimea are plain steppes, the rest is a stretch of Crimean Mountains and strip of the littoral of the Black Sea.

The peninsula is relatively young geological formation of about 8.000 years old, before then representing merely an elevated portion of the northern shore of the Black Sea, which, at that time, was a huge freshwater lake. The retrieval of the glacier from the European continent made it possible to the salty water flow into the lake, carving new landscapes on its way such as the Dardanelles, the Marmora Sea, and the Bosphorus (Magosci, 2014)

It is this landform that contributed to the everchanging ownership of the soil. Newcomers could enter the peninsula from at least three directions: the isthmus, the sea and

Kerch strait as semi-terrestrial due to freezing in winter. Therefore, it was possible to cross it on foot as the Bering strait for there-local communities in the past. Being a crossroad of civilizations, the history shows that it was relatively easy to conquer Crimea, but to keep was a task much more difficult. Hence, the dynamic situation on the peninsula allowed various groups of people call this soil home. Crimean Tatars did so, being among three native ethnic groups in Crimea. Nowadays they are the most populated on the peninsula among two others – Karaims and Krymchaks (Uehling, 2004). However, the process of the homogeneity for the Crimean Tatars had been lasting for centuries until the Soviet era had become and finalized this process with the mass exile (Williams, 1997).

## 2.2. Ethnogenesis

The ethno-composition of the Crimean Tatars comprises complex history, unveiling the fact of the century's long seclusion of people, simultaneously, with their active intermingling. The Crimean Tatar's language is direct evidence in support of their extensive past, containing elements of both Oghuz and Kipchak Turkic. According to the regional division, there are three main dialects such as steppe - pure Kipchak; south coastal, or yalıboy, is pure Oghuz and related to Osmanli (Ottoman); and middle dialect - orta yol – spoken in Crimean Mountains, being a basis of the literature Crimean Tatar language and constituting the combination of both Turkic languages (Lazzerini, 1985; Williams, 1998; Memetov, 2013). Moreover, in different dialects the influence from the European settlers can be traceable, for example, people of the south adopted many Italian and Greek words in their vocabulary since the presence of descendants of these lands (Memetov, 1990; Vozgrin, 2013).

Nevertheless, their native rights have been argued in western and Soviet/Post-Soviet sources by representing them solely as 'Mongol invaders' who had penetrated the peninsula in 13<sup>th</sup> century, although their past goes deeply in the pre-Mongol period (Williams, 2001, p. 329). Indeed, if we line up in a row a dozen of Crimean Tatars, it becomes obvious that variety of diverse types from Scandinavian and Mediterranean to those who may be encountered on the terrain of the Central Asia. However, all over the post-Soviet space the stereotype still exists in the combination with other biases, disseminated rather by pseudo-historians and governments who found this narrative suitable for their frameworks. It ended up in people's minds to some extent caused the implied fissure in the society. For this occasion, it is inevitable to deepen into the ethnogenesis' features of Crimean Tatars and to unveil their distinctiveness from the other Turkic ethnic groups to which they are attributed.

Over millennia the land was home for various tribes, beginning with the Taurians, Scythians, Greeks, Sarmatian Alans, and Romans of antiquity, and continuing in medieval times with Byzantine Greeks, Goths, Khazars, Pechenegs, Kipchaks, Mongols, Tatars, Seljuk and Ottoman Turks, Genoese, Venetians, Armenians, Crimean Jews, Greeks, Bulgarians, Germans, and Estonians and in more modern times with Russians and Ukrainians. Therefore, it becomes obvious that the Crimean land was never uninhabited even before major geological changes. Rather the peninsula was intermediate zone, linking the steppe hinterland with the Black Sea. Thus, those Mongol-Tatars were one of many people in there. Crimean Tatars themselves believe in commencing their autochthonism from Taurians and Cimmerians – the most ancient tribes dwelling in Crimea from 2-1,000 B.C.E. (Uehling, 2004, p. 30).

The migratory trajectory of Cimmerians set a precedent that was later echoed by subsequent waves of nomadic arrivals, pushed out from the steppes, and seek sanctuary in the Crimean highlands, where they were eventually absorbed by the native population (Magosci, 2014, p. 11).

Williams (2001, p. 331) suggests similarities between the Caucasus and Crimean mountains in their role in preserving nations. He argues that in both instances, mountain dwellers favoured a defensive stance over territorial expansion, thereby safeguarding the diverse population residing in the valleys, such as the Scythians, Sarmatians, and Ostrogoths etc., who found refuge with the native inhabitants of the valleys.

Due to the continuous shifts of power dynamics in the steppe region coming from the east, preceding inhabitants were compelled to migrate southward in search of a more tranquil existence and better pastures. In this way the Iranian Scythians have been overcome by the more powerful Iranian Tribe – Sarmatians, mainly the Alans from the North Caucasus, who, in their turn, were defeated by the Germanic Goths from Scandinavia. The Attila's Huns put the end to the Goths, fragmenting them into the West and the East Goths. The former reached the fading Roman Empire, destroying it eventually. The remnants of the Ostrogoths could reach the peninsula's highland and join 'the refugee camp', establishing later fortified strongholds, such as Mangup, which allowed them to control partially the southern Crimea, and subsequently bringing to the land relative stability. The northern hinterlands were lack of constancy, being relentlessly subjugated by various Turkic confederations such as the Kök Turks, Bulgars, Khazars, and Magyars. The millennia of instability were over with the Turkic Kipchaks, or Polovtsians, taking over the western side of the Desht-i-Kipchak (the modern-day Ukraine) in 11<sup>th</sup> century CE. Nevertheless, Magosci (2014) has different opinion,

pointing out the Khazars' harmonizing effect and positive impact on the stability in the steppeland. He argues that Khazars alike the previous conquerors could incorporate the steppe and part of the south-eastern coast, establishing the city of Sudaq as their center. Moreover, the Turkic-speaking have been given the opportunity to become permanent residents, especially of the eastern coast where they retreated from the nomadic lifestyle.

Parallely to the process occurring in the steppe and mountains with the arrival of the Scythians, Greek sailors began navigating between the Aegean and the Black Sea. Their first departures are dated from the 7<sup>th</sup> century BCE and marked with the establishment of the earliest Greek colonies on both sides of the Kerch's strait. The northern littoral of the Black Sea was colonized by Greek settlers predominantly originated from Miletus (modern day Türkiye) and Megara (near Athens). They had strong ties with the homeland and were independent from each other. However, their consolidation occurred under the Bosphorus Kingdom in 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE and lasted until 110 BCE, being demolished by the Pontic Kingdom. Since the advent of first Greeks on the peninsula, they have been exerting tremendous socio-cultural influence on their uphill neighbors.

### **2.3. Middle Ages**

In this way the Byzantine Greeks, setting control over the southern coast, scattered orthodox Christianity among the Goths and Alans, including them through religion in the politico-cultural sphere. Thus, finding allies on the brink with the nomadic lands and secure themselves from the invasions on their ports. During the reign of Justinian (527 – 565), Crimea was innovated with defense facilities alongside the southern coast and in the mountains. The erected fortresses secured the strategic region both from the sea invaders and the nomads beyond the Goths and Alans' possessions.

The importance of Crimea can be defined not only with the access to the Black Sea, but also by the possession of such a valuable commodity as salt. It played a crucial role not only in seasoning food, but mainly preserving it, especially during winter food scarcity. In the middle of 9<sup>th</sup> century CE, several the tribe of Rus' unified several Slavic tribes under the formation known as Kyivan Rus'. They terminated Khazars' dominancy in the steppe. Thereafter, expanding their principalities on the Azov Sea's coast as well as the Black Sea on the eastern side of the Kerch strait, where Tmutorokhan dominion was established. However, their influence, regardless the proximity, is debatable (Magosci, 2014; Williams, 2001). Moreover, Crimea shares also spiritual significance for the Rus' since 987. The grand prince of Kyiv Volodymyr the Great, after aiding the Byzantium Emperor militarily and receiving

the hand of his daughter, was allegedly baptized in Chersonesus. Thus, he joined the Byzantium cultural sphere.

In 1204 western Crusaders diverged from their original ambition about Holy Land and redirected their efforts towards Constantinople. The capital of the Byzantine Empire and the Eastern Orthodox "heretics" was put to the end by Roman Catholic. Thereafter, western entities such as Venetians and Genoese began demonstrating interest in taking over the Crimean trade routes. Around this period in 1220s, the Anatolian Seljuks could scatter their authority far beyond their region to the northern coasts of the Black Sea, seizing a short control of the port Sudaq. Also, their campaign in the Eastern Anatolia resulted in the defeat of the Armenian Kingdom in 11<sup>th</sup> century. This event forced Armenians to mass flee from their homeland. These events played crucial role in appearing Oghuz Turks and Armenians in Crimea, mainly in Kefe (Feodosia) (Magosci, 2014).

It was Genoese, who eventually superseded in the rivalry, although Venetians still had comparably modest role. Both were fighting and trading with the other settlers of the peninsula – Orthodox Goths and Kipchaks. Their dominancy lasted for two centuries, being disrupted neither by the Mongols' invasion in 1223, led by Chinggis Khan. Nor by the repeated offense fifteen years later by Khan Batu, resulting in establishing of the Kipchak Khanate, or the Golden Horde, as the westernmost sector of the Mongol Empire. Khan Özbek in the middle of 13<sup>th</sup> century introduced Islam to Crimean plains, establishing it as the official religion of the Golden Horde. According to Williams (2001), Islamization of the Kipchak-Turkic-speaking nomads, known as Tatars, has finished their ethnogenesis. Despite of the Mongolian origin of the empire, ethnic Mongols were always outnumbered by the Tatars from the Mongol-China borderland and ethnic Turks whom they assimilated during conquests.

During the decline of the Byzantine Empire, inhabitants of the Crimean Mountains found few independent principalities such as Theodoro (Gothia) with center in Magup and Qırq Yer (Forty Fortifications), populated by the Alans and located in nowadays city-fortress Çufut Qale near Bakhchisaray. The Latin rule in Byzantium made Orthodox Greeks sought an asylum in remote mountains with Hellenized Goths and Alans as well as Slavs, Tatars, Kipchaks and Karaites (Vozgrin, 2013; Magosci, 2014).

While the coastal areas of Crimea enjoyed relative stability, the region north of the mountains, controlled by the Great Horde, faced a series of internal and external upheavals that challenged the unity of the khanates. Externally, invasions by neighboring powers such as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Tamerlane's army caused significant disruption.



Internally, the power struggles among the great Tatar clans further weakened the authority of the Great Horde. This turmoil led to the decline of the Great Horde, which persisted until 1502, eventually shrinking to the size of the Astrakhan Khanate, which it subsequently became. Meanwhile, the Crimean and Kazan Khanates emerged as independent entities by the mid-15th century. (Magosci, 2014).

Although the capital of the Great Horde was in Saray on the Volga River, Crimean city Solhat (Eski Qırım (Staryi Krim)) served crucial role for diplomatic missions such as establishing connections with Turkic Mamluks dynasty of Egypt. To honor the event, Sultan Beybars built a mosque, ruins of which only survived there. This represents the importance of Solhat also as a cultural and religious center of the Tatars of Crimea where back in the days numerous mosques, school, and other spiritual buildings could be found (Fisher, 1978).

At some point Solhat became a refuge for the contenders for an independent political entity within possessions of the Golden Horde. The most prominent among them is Taş Timur, being the first to issue coins with his name, thus manifesting his intentions. Fisher (1978) believes, that Taş Timur may be regarded as an initial founder of the Crimean Khanate, although the independent formation became to the existence during his grandson Hacı Geray. He has established the independent Khanate and eponymous ruling dynasty in the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century. The Crimean clans deliberately summoned Hacı Geray from Lithuanian lands because he was a hereditary Chinggisid.

#### **2.4. Crimean Khanate**

The year 1441 is considered as the beginning of Hacı Giray reign until 1466 (Magosci, 2014). According to Fisher (1978) with a reference to V.D.Smirnov (1887), who examined the Polish chronicles, claims that the Crimean clans invited the future khan in 1443. Around this time, he began minting Crimean coins with his name at Qırq Yer, the former residence of the Alans. A decade later, prominent Tatar clans, inspired by Hacı Geray's success in separating from the Golden Horde, moved westward to Crimea. Their migration showed loyalty and gave important support to the new state on the peninsula. This not only strengthened the Crimean khan's position but also increased the local population with the incoming Tatars. However, these powerful clans did not want to give up their influence, leading to internal struggles similar to those that had troubled the Golden Horde's unity. The Genoese took advantage of this, fearing a unified Tatar leadership would threaten their colonies. They incited conflicts between different political groups, causing more discord (Fisher, 1978). As Hacı Giray gained control over the peninsula, a few key locations

remained outside his control, such as the profitable Genoese ports and the fortified Goth's Mangup, which his army couldn't conquer due to their strong defenses.

With the fall of Constantinople at the hands of the Ottomans in 1453 and their expansion, both the Crimean Khan and Mehmed II saw each other as allies to oppose the Genoese. Hence, twelve years later, Ottomans deployed troops to Crimea and eradicated Genoese supremacy, taking them under the direct Ottoman administration. Moreover, three years later they besieged and destroyed the last Christian stronghold of the Principality of Theodoro.

The aforementioned events accelerated the process of Islamization and Turkification, which had begun centuries earlier with Özbek Khan. The old Crimean populations had to adapt to a new reality dominated by Turco-Tatar authority, with Islam as the official religion. Christian communities, such as Armenians, Goths, Greeks, and Italians, mixed with Ottomans and Tatars, eventually forming what is now known as the Crimean Tatar ethnicity (Williams, 2001). The conversion to Islam was generally not coercive. As Fisher (1981) notes, Muslims paid fewer taxes than non-Muslims, making it financially advantageous for non-Muslims to convert to Islam, often opting to do so semi-voluntarily to gain the benefits of the state religion.

The Crimean Khanate is often mistakenly considered a puppet of the Ottoman Empire, a narrative promoted by Soviet and post-Soviet historians to suggest that the Khanate lacked independence and to justify the Russian Empire's first annexation of Crimea. In reality, the Crimean Khanate derived its right to the steppes from its Chinggisid heritage, inheriting the tamga, a symbol of steppe sovereignty, not from the Ottomans. The Khanate independently established diplomatic relations with Poland and Muscovy, engaging with the latter more frequently than the Ottomans. There was even a Crimean Court (Crimean Dvor) where negotiations with Muscovy took place and tribute was collected. Despite its close ties with the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate demonstrated its sovereignty by minting its own coins until its annexation at the end of the 18th century (Fisher, 1978).

From its inception until the end of the 18th century, Crimea was a hub of active slave trade, where captives from nearby non-Muslim lands were sold beyond the peninsula. Initially, settlements outside Crimea were raided during the Genoese period, and this continued under the Ottomans and Crimean Tatars. The nomadic Nogais, who lived in the Ukrainian steppe north of the Azov and Black Seas, from the Kuban River in the east to the Danube River in the west, were often responsible for these slave raids. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of southern Crimea were sedentary, focusing on agriculture and trade with foreign

merchants in the ports. These numerous captive Christian peasants were not only a source of revenue and development for urban and cultural societies but also contributed to the ethnogenesis of the Crimean Tatars (Fisher, 1978).

The fall of the Kazan Khanate in 1550 and the Astrakhan Khanate in 1556 to Muscovy forced the Nogai to leave their native steppes and move westward to the Crimean Khanate, where they assimilated into the existing Nogai confederations. Despite differences within their ethnic group, they were generally referred to as Tatars.

As previously mentioned, contemporary Crimean Tatars are divided into three sub-ethnic groups based on their dialects: Nogais, Tats, and Yaliboyu (Coastal residents). The Yaliboyu have preserved features of Greek, Italian, and Armenian ancestry. The Tats primarily inhabit the mountainous regions, which were the last strongholds of Christianity until the Ottomans diminished the local principalities and established Islam.

Hans Schiltberger, who visited the peninsula in the early 15th century, noted that the Muslim population of Crimea referred to their southern Islamized neighbors, such as the Goths, as Tats or Tadd. According to Professor P. Bruun, in the later edition of Schiltberger's book, this term translated from Turkish as 'renegade' or 'a conquered race.' It appears that Turkic people in Crimea used this ethnonym for those with Christian ancestry. Additionally, Williams (2001) notes that the term 'Tats' was used by Caucasian Turks and those from Central Asia to describe non-Turkic tribes and groups, such as the Jewish Mountain Tats and the Iranian Tajiks.

Throughout its existence, the Crimean Khanate, like any state, experienced its ups and downs. The hereditary Geray dynasty's constant power struggles often benefited various interested parties. Influential clans frequently made claims to power and, during special meetings called *qurultay*, formally elected a new khan. The Sultan ultimately approved the khan's candidacy. These clans also participated in the council that determined state policy.

## **2.5. Outset of Russia dominating period**

The pivotal battle of Vienna in 1683 marked a turning point for both the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate, contributing to their gradual decline. The signing of the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 resulted in the Ottoman Empire losing significant territories. Around this time, the Russian Empire began expressing its intention to annex Crimea, initiating the Crimean Campaign. Despite initial setbacks, including two defeats, Russia managed to occupy Azov in 1696 and secured the signing of the Treaty of Constantinople in 1700. This treaty recognized Russian sovereignty over Azov, ended Muscovy's tribute

payments to the Khans, and included a clause stipulating mutual non-aggression between the Tatars and the Zaporizhian and Don Cossacks (Davies, 2007). These developments brought an end to the slave raids, leading to economic difficulties for the Crimean Khanate, which had relied heavily on northern captives.

During the Russo-Ottoman War of 1768-1774, Russia extended its influence to the Black Sea shores. They installed Şahin Geray as a puppet ruler, who declared the Khanate's independence from the Ottomans and accepted the Russian Empress's protection. The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774 further reduced Ottoman sway over the Khanate and ceded their Black Sea territories. However, internal unrest ensued as the pro-Russian Khan struggled to maintain control, facing opposition from powerful clans and discord over policies that disrupted centuries-old traditions of Muslim-Christian coexistence. Catherine the Great exploited these tensions to undermine the Khanate's economy, leading to the migration of predominantly Greek and Armenian populations to the northern Azov Sea shores. These Christian minorities played a significant role in foreign trade due to their involvement in crafts and commerce (Fisher, 1978). This period also marked the beginning of an influx of settlers from the Russian Empire, a trend that persists to this day.

The growing distrust between the Khan and the Empress culminated in the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 1783. Through a manifesto, the short-lived independent Crimean state was dissolved, and Crimea became part of the Russian administrative entity called Taurida. This action prompted a significant migration of Crimean Tatars to Ottoman territories to evade Russian repression and safeguard Islam.

Despite this annexation, some Crimean Tatars still clung to the hope of Ottoman intervention to liberate them from Russian rule. The Russo-Turkish War of 1783-1792 dashed these hopes, with the Ottoman Empire suffering defeat. The subsequent Treaty of Jassy recognized Russian control over the peninsula, leading to widespread disappointment among Crimean Tatars who had anticipated liberation. Consequently, many Tatars migrated to Ottoman territories to escape Russian rule (Williams, 2016).

The Russian government actively promoted the resettlement of people from outside Crimea to the peninsula, offering incentives and benefits. As a result, Russians, Old Believers, Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Swiss, and German colonists were attracted by these promises and came to Crimea to seek a new life. This resettlement effort aimed to populate the lands with peasants to increase profits and compensate for losses caused by the departure of Crimean Tatars. However, this initiative gained momentum after the devastating Crimean War (1853-1856), which particularly impacted the Muslim population of Crimea.

*“During the Crimean War, the Russian government charged the Crimean Tatars with espionage, provocation, betrayal, and collaborating with the enemy. For the Russian government, deeply embroiled in a war it was clearly losing, the Tatars posed a wild card. Many officials presumed Tatars to be a “fifth column,” ready to assist the Allies because, like the Ottomans, they were Muslim. In an era of heightened religious tension, Russian officials believed their own propaganda: that the Crimean War was a holy war, and that they had an internal as well as an external enemy. These suspicions marked a shift in the government's attitudes toward Crimea's native inhabitants, which ultimately resulted in an exodus of two-thirds of the Crimean Tatars from the peninsula. Following the war, Tatars left in a mass emigration of up to 200,000 in a large wave that began as a slow trickle in the mid-1850s and peaked between 1860 and 1863.”* (Kozelsky, 2008, p. 866)

The Russian desire to regain what was lost in the Crimean War led to retaliation 20 years later in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878, which took place in the Balkans. The Ottomans were defeated, but this relatively distant conflict triggered another massive wave of emigration among the Tatars. During the 19th century, the Crimean Tatars, once the majority in their homeland, found themselves becoming a minority compared to the influx of Russian colonizers who were enticed by government-granted privileges. More newcomers, especially those of Slavic descent, relocated to Crimea, further altering its demographic landscape.

## **2.6. Period of 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Around this time, parallel to developments in Europe, the Crimean Tatars began to experience a national awakening led by the prominent educator Ismail Gaspiralı. His revolutionary ideas in education, which challenged the conservative Muslim clergy's control, aimed to uplift Muslim society by providing them with knowledge of the Russian language and natural sciences. This was seen as a means to empower them to navigate the new secular reality and stem the tide of emigration. The modernization process was accompanied by the establishment of the first Crimean Tatar newspaper, *Terciman* (The Interpreter), in 1883, which was managed by Gaspiralı.

Gaspiralı's modernistic efforts did not go unnoticed; instead, they became the foundation for the next generation of intelligentsia, which can be divided into three groups: those who continued Gaspiralı's philosophy, the young nationalistic revolutionaries known as the Young Tatars, and the Fatherland Society, seeking national restoration in Crimea.

According to Hakan Kirimli (1996), the Young Tatars, led by Abdureşid Mehdi, were the initial proponents who firmly established the idea of Crimean Tatar nationality linked to

the territory. They regarded Crimea as the ancestral homeland of the Crimean Tatars, with inherent historical rights. While the Young Tatars operated primarily within Crimea, the Fatherland Society was founded by two Crimean Tatars studying in Istanbul. Inspired by the rising Young Turk movement in Turkey, Cafer Seydamet Qırimer and Noman Çelebicihan advocated for the independent statehood of Crimean Tatars in Crimea.

*“On the eve of the Russian Revolution, the leadership of the Young Tatars and Fatherland Society were, however, aided in their struggle to unify and nationalize their countrymen by several factors. Firstly, the Crimea was a compactly defined “island” homeland and easy to identify with in the common imagination. Secondly, and most importantly, the Crimean Tatars had the collective memory of historical statehood to turn to in their search to legitimize their own aspirations for nationhood. As with other ethnic groups in Europe, members of the Crimean intelligentsia had a growing awareness of their people’s proud history, and the Crimean Khanate provided them with a wealth of nationalist symbols and icons. After exploring this history, members of the Crimean Tatar nationalist leadership in Istanbul, for instance, rediscovered the Tarak Tamgha crest of the Giray dynasty and placed this emblem on a blue flag (blue being the sacred color of the pagan Turkic tribes), making the Crimean Tatars among the first (if not the first) Muslim nations in the world to devise a national flag.”* (Williams, 2016, p. 55)

With the outbreak of World War I, the tsarist regime conscripted Cafer Seydamet and Noman Çelebicihan into the army. However, by then, the two men had already organized secretive cells across the peninsula, disseminating modernistic national ideas. In March 1917, the All-Crimean Muslim Congress was convened in Simferopol, forming a Provisional Crimean Muslim Executive Committee with Cafer Seydamet and Noman Çelebicihan at the helm. Çelebicihan was chosen as the mufti of Crimea, the highest Muslim clerical post. A conflict with the Provisional Government led to the establishment of the leftist nationalistic party, Milli Firka, promoting cultural-national autonomy.

## **2.7. Soviet Crimea**

Following the October Revolution in Russia and the Bolshevik seizure of power, a national assembly (Qurultay) convened in the Khan's palace in Bağçasaray, where a Crimean Tatar government was elected, leading to the establishment of the Crimean People’s Republic. However, this period of turmoil resulted in the murder of Crimean Tatar leaders, including Çelebicihan. Some managed to escape to Germany, where they attempted to resist the growing Bolshevik power. Despite the Germans curbing the authority alongside the

Whites in Crimea, they prohibited the restoration of the national government. This led to opposition from Crimean Tatars, who felt deprived by the actions of General Denikin and the installation of Sulkiewicz by the Germans.

Crimean Tatars joined guerrilla units to resist, eventually leading to the departure of the Whites and anti-Bolsheviks in October 1920. However, the transition of Crimea under Soviet rule was marked by state-sanctioned violence. In a third attempt to suppress opposition, Bela Kun, head of the Bolsheviks' secret police (Chekha), was dispatched, assisted by Nikolai Bystrykh, the head of the Crimean Chekha. Crimean Tatars operating from the forests effectively resisted, prompting an investigation by Sultan Galiev, a Volga Tatar Communist leader. Galiev suggested making Crimea an autonomous Soviet republic and involving Crimean Tatars in leadership, contrary to the plans of the local Communist government, but central authorities pressed for these changes. In addition to repressions, already ravaged peninsula as well as neighboring regions occupied by the Bolsheviks, experienced a devastating famine.

*“Whereas 719,531 people lived in the peninsula in 1921, this figure fell to 569,500 in 1923 as recorded by the Crimean Statistical Department. The death toll was no less than 100,000. More than half the deaths had taken place in the countryside and some 60 per cent of the victims were Crimean Tatar”* (Kirimli, 2003, p. 44).

Despite the economic, social, and food struggles that occurred in Crimea with the Bolsheviks' arrival, the region was hailed as the Crimean Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic (the Crimean ASSR) starting from 1921. The newly formed Crimean government aimed to restore Tatars' presence in Crimea by limiting the influx of Slavic-nation people and granting amnesty to Crimean Tatars who had fled before. This policy, known as korenizatsiia (indigenization), empowered minorities across the Soviet Union to construct their national identities with government support, although the government's involvement was minimal.

As the process of Tatarization gained momentum, more schools emerged with instruction in the Crimean Tatar language, and scholars extensively published works on ethnogenesis. For the first time, Crimean Tatars were considered native people. However, Lenin's death and Stalin's rise to power marked a turning point. Stalin saw a threat to the unity of the Soviet state and began brutally suppressing national leaders, including Veli Ibrahimov. He also introduced policies of collectivization and unofficially endorsed 'Great Russian Chauvinism' throughout the Soviet Union, while purging the intelligentsia through murder or exile to Siberia.

## 2.8. Crimea during the WWII

The onset of 1941 marked a significant turning point for the Crimean Tatars, as the Soviet army faced defeat in the south and the peninsula fell under German and Romanian occupation. However, the conduct of some Crimean Tatars during this time ultimately led to the tragic events of 1944. It's crucial to consider several key points when discussing this matter. Firstly, Soviet policies from 1928 to 1939 significantly weakened the native political and cultural leadership of the Crimean Tatars, unlike any other Soviet nationality. This resulted in the destruction of nearly half of their population through exile or death. Secondly, the Tatar masses, particularly the peasants, had not witnessed any tangible benefits from Soviet governance.

As a result, some Crimean Tatars saw the Germans as liberators from Soviet authority. Meanwhile, the Nazis, seeking to court Turkey's support, put aside their initial strategy to exterminate 'Asian inferiors'. However, according to Nazi racial theory, Crimean Tatars, whom they associated with Mongols, were considered sub-humans.

Aware of the presence of the Goths in Crimea, the Nazis pursued the idea of transforming the peninsula into *Gotenland* and populating it with the German race, necessitating the elimination of people of other ethnicities. However, they failed to recognize that the Crimean Tatars were descendants of those Germanic people.

Although Turkey did not actively participate in World War II as desired by the Germans, they expressed concerns about the fate of Muslims from the Soviet space. As a result, the Nazis treated Crimean Tatars somewhat better than non-Muslims, primarily for utilitarian purposes and propaganda. The German Ambassador to Turkey, von Papen, proposed including Crimean Tatars in administrations to have a positive political effect in Turkey and potentially gain their support for a pro-German stance. Turkish pan-Turkists recommended and negotiated with the Germans about cooperation with émigré Crimean Tatar leaders such as Cafer Seydahmet, Edige Kirimli, and Mustejip Ülküsal, who received unofficial support from the Republic of Turkey.

Although the Germans abandoned pan-Turkism due to discrepancies in views on Muslim territories, they utilized the Tatar delegation for their propagandistic goals. They recruited 'volunteers' among Crimean Tatars for the 'Crimean Tatars battalions', although these units were composed of different nationalities. Their main task was to protect German facilities in Crimea from anti-Nazi elements and Soviet guerrillas. However, the introduction of the term 'Crimean Turks' by Kirimal and Seydahmet, influenced by their relations with the pan-Turkist movement, proved detrimental to the Crimean Tatars in 1944. This linked them



with an old enemy of Russia – Turkey. Despite this, Crimean Tatar nationalists from Romania and Turkey obtained permission from the Nazi Ministry to establish the 'Muslim Committee', which aimed to promote cultural and religious life. Initially, it was supposed to pursue objectives aimed at national autonomy, but the German authorities tightly controlled it, even dictating the choice of mufti. Additionally, the occupational power did not recognize the Crimean Tatar language on the administrative level, establishing German and Russian as official languages. Although there are cases of native people's collaborationism with the Nazis, it did not meet the expectations of the Germans. For example, initially implied to increase collaboration, the Muslim committee ended up lifting nationalism among Tatars, which Nazis failed to utilize for their purposes.

However, the motivation behind the cooperation, in some of the cases, was to escape harsh conditions of prisons, in the case of POW, or, as it had been mentioned above, there was a political drive as a reaction to the brutal policies. Many Crimean Tatars were formed in self-defense brigades whom the Nazis supposed to exploit for protection Tatar villages from partisans as well as countering them, nevertheless, passivity of the recruits did not demonstrate desired result and, conversely, made Germans more suspicious toward Tatars.

On the other hand, tens of thousands of Crimean Tatar men of draft age had already served in the Red Army, fighting Nazis on various frontlines. As time passed, many Tatars joined guerrilla resistance movements as Germans became more aggressive in self-defense operations on villages. Treachery in Crimea was punished by both Germans and partisans, with every case of disloyalty magnified to justify resistance efforts and losses on the battleground (Williams, 2002).

## **2.9. The forced exile of Crimean Tatars**

The policy of forced labor, compelling Tatars to work in Nazi factories in Germany, significantly tarnished the Germans' reputation in Crimea. As Soviet troops regained control from the Nazis, repressive measures intensified. Lavrentii Beria, chief of the NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs), accused Crimean Tatars of "*traitorous activities against the Soviet people*" in a report to Stalin on May 10, 1944 (Bugai, 1992, p. 134). The next day, Stalin issued decree 5859ss, ordering the banishment of all Tatars from Crimea and their permanent resettlement as special settlers in the regions of the Uzbek SSR (Seventeen Moments in Soviet History, 2015).

Many Soviet officials were aware that numerous Crimean Tatars who had collaborated with the Nazis or were associated with the Muslim committee had fled Crimea

during the Germans' retreat. Although the escaped Tatars refuted the accusations of collaboration, those who remained in Crimea were not spared from Stalin's decree.

On May 18, Soviet units initiated the cleansing of Crimea of Tatars, surrounding their villages and forcibly evicting them from their homes, allowing just 15 minutes to pack up. Subsequently, the people were convoyed to railroad stations and banished in freight wagons to the Ural region and Central Asia. Some Tatar families, like those on the Arabat strip, were taken by boat to the Sea of Azov and drowned (Mubeyyin, n.d.).

Bugai (1992, p. 138) estimates that around 180 thousand Crimean Tatars were forcibly banished from Crimea as a result of ethnic cleansing, based on an official report to Lavrentii Beria. The total number reaches 200 thousand when accounting for those returning from the front who were immediately sent to places of special settlement under strict control, with restrictions on relocation. More than 50,000 women, around 68,000 children, and over 27,000 men were among those convoyed from the peninsula (Broshevan & Tygliants, 1994).

In terms of the death toll, Michael Rywkin's (1994, p. 67) statistics are often cited, calculating 7,900 deaths during the transit, and listing the number of deaths resulting from the exile at 42,000, with an additional toll due to harsh conditions and excessive labor, primarily on the cotton fields, estimated by Crimean Tatars themselves.

The exile of Crimean Tatars by the Soviet regime was not an isolated incident but part of a broader pattern of ethnic cleansing and forced migration. Similar practices were employed against various ethnic groups across the Soviet Union, often on charges of treason or disloyalty.

For instance, in 1937, around 200,000 Koreans were deported from the Far East to Central Asia. During World War II, doubts about loyalty led to the exile of Volga Germans from their autonomous republic to Kazakhstan. In 1943 and 1944, other ethnic groups, including Muslim Karachais, Buddhist Kalmyks, Balkars, Ingush, Chechens, Meskhetian Turks, Khemshils (Muslim Armenians), Turkic Karapapakhs, and Turkified Kurds, were forcibly relocated.

Many of these exiles were linked to suspicions of ties to Turkey, particularly among Muslim populations. The Soviet Union's desire to prevent protests and sabotage in border areas influenced these actions. While accusations of treason were widespread, some groups, like the Meskhetian Turks, were not explicitly charged with treachery.

The policy of ethnocide aimed to eradicate the political, social, spiritual, and cultural identity of these peoples, including the prohibition of language and history. Cultural heritage, such as mosques and cemeteries, was devalued and destroyed (Lemkin, 2014). This process

was not sudden but reflected a long history of Russian imperialism in the region, dating back to the time of Catherine the Great.

### **2.10. In places of exile**

The impact of these policies extended beyond the targeted ethnic groups to the status of Crimea itself. In 1945, the region lost its autonomy and became just another part of the Russian Federal Republic, marking a significant shift in its political status.

The year 1957 held promise with Khrushchev's decree absolving North Caucasian nationalities of false accusations of mass treachery, allowing them to leave special settlements and return home. However, Crimean Tatars, Volga Germans, and Meskhetian Turks were not included in this decree and remained deprived of the right to return home, despite the removal of the special settlement regime.

Despite these setbacks, Crimean Tatars began reviving their language and culture, establishing newspapers, journals, and institutions to inspire new generations to fight for their rights. The National Movement, initiated by youth and with sections across the Soviet Union, gathered to discuss history, national rehabilitation, and the right to return to their homeland. They collected petitions, organized meetings with high-ranking officials, and raised their demands, but promises made by politicians remained unfulfilled until the collapse of the Soviet Union allowed people to return to Crimea.

In 1967, a meeting with Kremlin officials, including KGB chairman Yuri Andropov, resulted in a decree partially rehabilitating Crimean Tatars. However, the decree labeled Crimean Tatars as formally Tatars from Crimea, suggesting they had already taken root in Uzbekistan. It offered no compensation or rights to return to the peninsula. Despite this, Crimean Tatars persisted in their efforts to return home.

*“The Crimean Tatar exiles nevertheless persisted in what now became a concerted campaign for the right to return. In the absence of any formal permission, in 1967 and 1968 upwards of 10,000 Tatars simply left Uzbekistan and returned to Crimea. Local officials, who were incensed by such boldness, invoked the only weapon they had: refusal to grant them a propiska that is, to register them as residents, which according to Soviet law was a necessary pre-condition for anyone seeking employment and accommodation.”* (Magocsi, 2014, p. 132)

Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of openness in the late 1980s, known as perestroika, eased restrictions for Crimean Tatars. Although opportunities to return home were limited, some were able to do so through organized labor programs, provided they were not involved in the national movement.

By 1989, nationalist sentiments were spreading across the Soviet Union, leading to violence such as the Fergana Pogroms in Uzbekistan, where locals targeted Meskhetians. In this volatile atmosphere, Crimean Tatars were also at risk, viewed as outsiders by the Uzbek population. The author's family, formerly living in Namangan, faced threats from nationally awakened Uzbeks demanding their property back, which had been utilized by the Soviet regime. Faced with danger, the researcher's grandfather sold the house to the government at a lower price than expected and moved to Crimea.

During this time, a specially appointed commission addressed the demands of Crimean Tatars, acknowledging their right to return home and condemning Stalin's regime for the forced resettlement in publications like *Izvestiya* and *Pravda*.

### **2.11. Return and modern times**

As Crimean Tatars began returning to their native land, simultaneously the Soviet Union started collapsing and ceased its existence in 1991, setting new challenges in the new international order. Amidst the socio-cultural restoration, Crimean Tatars found themselves on a whirl of political contest deciding on whether Crimea would be independent, with Ukraine or Russia, but Leonid Kuchma, the second president of Ukraine, released a decree in 1995 stating that the Autonomous Republic of Crimea is an inseparable part of Ukraine, therefore hunting down separatists' intentions to the underground. Meanwhile, the returnees were struggling with the land acquisition as well as with the integration into biased society, brainwashed with the years of the Soviet propaganda, and thereafter, of pro-Russian parties.

The official census conducted by Ukrainian authorities in 2001 reported 243,000 Crimean Tatars, comprising 12% of the total population of Crimea. Unofficial estimates suggest their numbers exceed 300,000. The most recent census in 2021, conducted by Russian authorities following the occupation, showed a slight increase, with 250,000 Crimean Tatars, constituting 13% of the total population.

The events of 2014 led to a rift between Crimean Tatars and the Russian Federation. Many Crimean Tatars opposed the Russian invasion and the subsequent referendum, as they maintained a clear pro-Ukrainian stance. In response, the newly established pro-Russian authorities in Crimea outlawed the Crimean Tatars' representative body, the Mejlis, branding it as an extremist organization and banning its members from entering Russia.

### 3. Bibliography Review

#### 3.1. Historiography of Crimea and Crimean Tatars

Crimean studies commence its existence from the Middle Age period by inheriting interpretations of the Ancient Greek writers' works from the Late Antique authors (Kravchenko, 2002). The tendency has continued the research of those primary source until the present time due to primarily Russian scholars Latyshev (1947-1949) and who had been exploring the topic of the Crimea and Caucasus in the ancient texts, contributing to the overall historiographical science on Crimean history. Homer's 'Odyssey' is considered among the earliest written works mentioning the peninsula and Cimmerians with their port on the Bosphorus (the Kerch's Strait). Geographer and an antique historian Hecataeus of Miletus is prominent for his two works such as 'Journey round the Earth' and 'Genealogy' where he provides thorough description of the Northern lands of the Black Sea, introducing Kerkinitis (modern-day Yevpatoria). Nevertheless, it is Herodotus who wrote about Taurians, demarcating their area of dwelling, as well as about Scythes, being a pioneer at thorough description of the Taurica. Thus, it gives an understanding that the first colonizers of the peninsula were aware of the native people widely known as Taurians. The remained witnesses of that era, however, introduce us to rather limited knowledge of those inhabitants, being a fusion of myth and truth as the narrative technique.

The oldest Slavic alphabet was elaborated in 863 by monk brothers Cyril and Methodius, however, the same as with works of the Ancient Greeks, nothing but copies and reinterpretations were preserved. Despite of the first written Old Turkic language is dated around 8<sup>th</sup> century with the Orkhon inscription, we have even less material left to us. Times of the Golden Horde, for instance, are partially reconstructed by the Rus' chronicles with their historical stories where the relationship with the Horde from the inception until the collapse of it is described (Kemaloğlu, 2021). Extensive bibliographies on the Crimea-related publications were composed by the following scholars Markevič (1894); Dubrovskiy (1956); Nepomniaščij (1998; 1999; 2001; 2003); Zolotarev (1999); Kizilov (2003); Filimonov (2004); Mal'gin (2004); Popov (2007).

Nevertheless, the Crimean Studies, inextricably linked with the Crimean Tatars' Studies, got a push for the development after the annexation of the peninsula to the Russian Empire, being scholarly studied from the perspectives of different disciplines. Kizilov and Prokhorov (2011) argue that the timespan could be divided into 7 stages: the period during the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the first decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century with the information gathered by governors and traveling scientists; the stage to the 1850s is noticeable due to ethnographic and historian

publications about the Crimea; the Crimean War (1853-1856) has led to a surge in interest in the peninsula, attracting not only Russian scholars, but also their colleagues from Europe; with establishing of the Tavričeskaja učenaja arhivnaja komissija (Tauride Learned Archival Commission, TUAK) during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, a professional exploration of the Crimea was launched, advancing the historical research; a post-revolutionary period from 1917 to 30s is characterized by the Soviet encouragement, resulting in the establishment of the Taurida University and organization for the preservation of historical monuments and art (KrymOHRIS); the Stalin's accession to power led to the purge of intelligentsia throughout the Soviet Union and following the mass exile of the Crimean Tatars in 1944, discouraging ethnic history for more than 50 years; the late 80s to 2014 saw a revival of Crimean studies, coinciding with the return of the Crimean Tatars and subsequent increasing ethnic tensions. However, the abovementioned article has a particular limitation due to the time of the publication. Since 2013 the peninsula was undergone political perturbation because of the aggressive behavior of the Russian Federation, leading to the occupation of the Crimea in 2014 and the full-fledge war in Ukraine from 2022, in this thesis I would like to contribute with the 8<sup>th</sup> division, regarding the attempt of the Russian historians justify the Crimea's ties with the Russian Federation. Moreover, as the Crimean War affected foreign scholars to draw attention to Crimea in its time, the events of 2014 worked in the similar manner.

As the Crimean Khanate ceased its existence in the result of the Russian annexation in 1783, the newly established government understood the need of "*acquiring updated information about the economic, geographic, and ethnic situation in their newly acquired southern province.*" (Kizilov and Prokhorov, 2011, p. 440).

Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682) can rightly be considered as a pioneer in writing a travelogue regarding the Crimea by undertaking a journey around the Ottoman's possessions during 17<sup>th</sup> century and documenting his expedition in the Seyahatname (Book of Travels) where, regardless the comparatively small amount of information provided, he gives valuable insights of the Crimean life of that era. Two other significant traveling scientists who provided notable descriptions of the Crimea in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were Peter Simon Pallas and Edward Clarke (1811).

Scholars of non-Russian origins played crucial role in exploration of the Crimea in the beginning of the new socio-political era, for instance, Otto Henrik Igelström collected the first detailed data on the ethnic and socio-economic composition in 1784 which were included in the Kameral'noe opisanie Kryma (Cameral description of the Crimea) published

later by Laškov (1888a; 1888b; 1889; 1897a; 1897b; 1897c). Moreover, a Polish clergyman, a Metropolitan of the Roman Catholic Churches of Russia, Sistrzeńcewicz de Bohusz (1806) is known as the earliest author on the comprehensive history of the Crimea from the antiquity until then-present.

The establishment of the Feodosia's Museum of Antiquities in 1811 served as the impetus to more active study of the region, attracting archeologists to make new excavations and discoveries such as the Scythian borrows in Kerch by Paul Du Brux and Jean Moret de Blaramberg's Neapolis in Simferopol, the capital of the late Scythian state. Meanwhile, travelogues remained a crucial source of the ethnographic and historical information. Kizilov and Prokhorov (2011) point out two important scholarly expeditions of Anatolij Demidov (1853) and a Frenchman Frederic Dubois de Montpereux (1843), encompassing a wide spectre from ethnography to geology of the Crimea. The Odessa Society of History and Antiquities, established in 1839, is no less important due to the periodical journal 'Notes of the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities' issued from 1844 and collected many volumes of important academic data about the Crimean studies (Sibirko, n.d.).

The Crimean War, regardless of its devastating consequences for the peninsula practically in all spheres of life, drew attention of the entire world to this patch of land. The public interest on military issues gave a rise to the deepening into the history of the Crimea. Therefore, numbers of amateurish and scholarly studies were written on various aspects of the local society. Although many of them were rather biased and shallow, a substantial number provides with valuable information on the life there.

By the end of the 19th century, travelogues as a literary genre began to wither in popularity. Instead, newly developed scientific disciplines such as archaeology, ethnography, anthropology, and linguistics started to be utilized more extensively in historical studies. Furthermore, the TUAK was established in 1887 and operated until 1920, being sponsored directly by the Russian government., when it was renamed lately. The TUAK published its own periodical and played a key role in founding the museums and libraries, moreover, engaging in public educational activities such as seminars and lectures.

Notwithstanding political instability during the Russian Revolution had obviously degenerating effect on the Crimean studies, a period between 1920 and 1930 is considered as very prolific. Aimed at the state-policy of indigenization, the government was encouraging the scholarly research of the Crimea, establishing important institutions such as KrymOHRIS, Taurida university, and Russian Society for the Study of Crimea (Rossijskoe Obshchestvo po izucheniju Kryma), abbreviated as ROPIK.

Since 1930s the situation has drastically changed by numerous arrests and executions of academics around the Soviet Union. Crimean Tatar scholars got the worst, persecuted for alleged allegations in nationalism and counter-revolutionary activities.

The mass exile of Crimean Tatars from the peninsula in 1944 was a tipping point in the Crimean studies resulting in stagnation and shifting of the government's inquiry to smear the Turkic tribes in the history of the Crimea as well as to tarnish the role of Crimean Khanate and subsequently Crimean Tatars proposed by Russian academic B.A. Rybakov (1952). Therefore, scholars working on Crimean history developed a new political interpretation emphasizing *"the medieval and early modern Russian presence in Crimea, aiming to justify its subsequent annexation by Russia."* (Kizilov and Prokhorov, 2011, p. 447) Similar tendency we can spectate in the modern-day Russia, trying to justify their occupation of the Crimea in 2014 and the full-fledge war in Ukraine.

Nevertheless, Crimean studies have been in the poor condition in the Soviet Union, but with the efforts of foreign scholars such as Alan Fisher (1978) and his monograph "The Crimean Tatars" based on a wide specter of literature in Russian, Turkish, German, and English, where he describes history from the Crimean Khanate to 1970s. Regardless the year of publication, it is still one of the most important works in English language on Crimean Tatars and the history of Crimea. Alexandr Nekrich's book "The Punished Peoples: The Exile and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War" (1978) was written in the USSR but published the same year as he fled to the USA. Being a senior Soviet scholar allowed him to have access to high-profiled information that he included in the book, presenting the actual image of the exiles during the WWII and aftermaths (Fisher, 1982).

The era of perestroika in the late-80s has returned truthful study of the history of the peninsula and Crimean Tatars with their ancestors, receiving possibility to restore their traditions and reputation which had been blackened for half a century. After being given a right to return on their homeland in 1989 effected the mass homecoming as well as an influx of scholarships about Crimean Tatars and the problems they encounter. Among scholars significantly contributed to this study are Bugai (1992), revealing secret documents and reports regarding the exile; the compilation of studies in "Tatars of The Crimea" (1998), edited by Edward Allworth, delves into the national identity of the nation; Brian Williams' years of research on Crimean Tatars resulted in comprehensive book (2001) where not only history meticulously described, but the identity construction in the exile together with a transition of trans-generational narratives about the Crimea to the new generations born outside the homeland; Uehling's (2004) interdisciplinary work has encompassed a territory of



memory studies, concentrating particularly on the collective memory and consequent trauma of the nation, oral history and various concepts and theories such as genocide, exile, myth of return, dialogism; Magosci (2014) is a revelation of the Crimean history for the wide range of readers with accompanied pictures and updated information. Abovementioned works from the second half of the last century are among the most important in the framework of this thesis, providing with the credible information on Crimean Tatar topic.

It is worth to mention massive historical research undergone by Vozgrin (2013), resulted in 4 volumes of the detailed history of Crimean Tatars from antiquity to modern days, using various source to describe historical periods and events, including oral history. A description of the first tribes on the peninsula, supported the passages regarding the ethnogenesis and ancient history.

The events of 2014 gave a new impetus for the Crimean studies in the West, replicating the experience of the Crimean War when foreign scholars referred their attention to the Crimea (Williams, 2016). Since 2015 the Ukrainian side owing to the efforts of the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory shifted the study of the history of Crimea and the Crimean Tatar people from the optional history lessons to the national level as part of the subject "History of Ukraine", however, while I was studying at school I have not had even an offered option at studying the Crimea, relying only on the teacher's own interest at revealing it (UINP, 2021). Meanwhile the Russian scholars have begun reiterating narratives of the Tsarist and Soviet eras, elaborating the myth of the ancient Christian and Slavic presence on the Crimean soil in order to justify the unlawful occupation (Hromenko, 2016). Despite a certain tendency in Russian academic circles on Crimea, some scholars continue unbiased work, while denying the vassal dependence of the Crimean Khanate on the Ottoman Empire, pointing to signs of independence (Kodzova, 2015), as well as theories about Slavic ancestors and the historical annexation of Crimea to the Russian Empire (Yurasov, 2017).

### **3.2. Oral history**

For this thesis I am going to employ oral history as analytical tool since it allows to consider a historical event or social phenomena from diverse perspectives through interviewing, capturing, and analysing an individual's interpretation on a particular issue that interests a researcher. Oral history relies on oral testimonies, unlike traditional historical research which reckons archival and written sources.

Oral history as a methodology shares common origins with ethnography, being aimed at empowering marginalized or voiceless individuals and communities. Oral history implies

the study of a historical event through dyadic interaction between the interviewer and interviewee, focusing on one's memory, while during an ethnographical fieldwork, even dialogical encounters are considered within groups socio-cultural context (Di Leonardo, 1987).

Therefore, exploring into one's lived experience by interviewing and interpreting information, oral history falls into a category of subjectivity where doubts about reliability comes up. This point will be elaborated in the method section. Exploiting oral history as analytical device is not only eliciting insights and unique materials of the past, which otherwise may be gone with a witness, but also recovering history, i.e. voices of overlooked or those who have been neglected are salvaged and prevented from the traceless extinction, such as memories of working classes, women, native communities, immigrants etc., and, therefore, contribute to the existing historical records (Peniston-Bird, 2009). Thus, testimonies of interviewed ordinal Crimean Tatars are converted from oral and ephemeral memory into oral history, providing the research with materials to answer research questions and add new insights to the Crimean Tatars studies and historical events of this and previous centuries, such as the exile, life in exile, return to the Crimea, and contemporary struggles of Crimean Tatars.

### **3.3. Place-lore**

The concept owns its existence to Estonian folkloristics, being emerged in 1990s, and known in Estonian as kohapärimus (Valk & Daniel, 2018). It perceives places more than just a location or setting, but as a sacred site permeated with meanings of lived experiences and narratives (Knuuttila, 2006), therefore, "*animated by thoughts, emotions and memories, place becomes a powerful agent that attracts, inspires and bounds people,*" (Valk & Daniel, 2018, p.8) simultaneously, serving as one of the main sources of national identity, rooting an individual to environment in order to answer questions of essence and belonging. (Lowenthal, 1991; Daniels, 1993).

Place-lore implies reciprocity between communities, their natural surroundings, and places, resulting in creation of narrative lore which manifest this symbiosis. Therefore, it can unite humans, safeguard, and make them sacralize important places, for instance, graves, homes, birth places etc., inspiring them for a kind of a pilgrimage to these meaningful sites which embedding triggers for different feelings, be it from pleasant or uncomfortable memories. Thus, we can say that narratives are means to empower places, converting them from a passive actor into an active contributor in constructing the place-lore.

Therefore, the concept of place-lore is employed for this thesis in order to explain intimate bonds with landscapes not merely because it used to be their home from which they were forcibly expelled, but in the context of holy place, inseparably connected with the collective memory and identity.

### **3.4. Memory Studies. Collective and Post-Memory**

Memory studies is interdisciplinary field which shed light on how memory shapes our everyday life from perspectives of human and social sciences such as sociology, psychology, history, anthropology, philosophy etc. However, in order to understand what place the tragic event has in the modern days among Crimean Tatars and how the narratives survived through generations and continue impact national identity, the memory studies should be narrowed down to the concepts of collective and post memory.

#### 3.4.1. Collective memory

Collective memory can be characterized as “*an active process of sense making through time*” (Olick and Levy, 1997, p.922) and should be understood as synthesis of individual memory and social practices which form commonalities and memories shared by a group. Collective memories are not static, but rather is seen as a dynamic process, fluctuating according to a socio-political landscape and individual’s affiliations, thus, collective memory socially and politically mediated. It was formally conceptualized and introduced by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1997[1950]) in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His achievement lies in showing social aspect of memory. Even our personal or individual is crafted in a process of communication with others. Collective memory is based on everyday communication and socialization and affiliates with oral history since it plays the same role at challenging monopoly of history over the past. “*Memory enables us to live in groups and communities, and living in groups and communities enables us to build a memory.*”(Assmann, 2013, p.40)

To create collective memory, only reciprocity between individuals is not enough, rather they should possess unifying them features through a shared past. Thus, by remembering their own past, the group develops its exclusive social identity which determines the content of what to remember. It originates from Halbwachs’ presumption that collective identity precedes memory.

Halbwachs argues that collective memory, which consists of shared stories and narratives, plays a crucial role in defining the identity and boundaries of entire societies. He acknowledges that individuals may not always feel a strong connection to their nation's history, as it can seem distant and abstract. However, Halbwachs suggests that certain events have the power to significantly impact group dynamics and alter the course of collective memory. Despite the existence of smaller, more localized groups with their own histories, collective memory can still serve to unite societies on a national scale. The underlying argument is that both personal and national identities rely on a sense of continuity with the past, highlighting the importance of collective memory in fostering social cohesion, solidarity in order to ensure preservation and continuation of the social group. Therefore, remembering and forgetting can be perceived as selective and controllable processes defined by the larger group because of the group support to such memory.

However, this argument was criticized for overlooking the significance of living memories within groups, viewing them as integrated into the tradition of the most dominant group rather than engaging in dialogue, interdependence, and conflict with the broader collective tradition. Consequently, his conceptualization of the relationship between past and present is overly simplistic and assumes the stability of group memory. This viewpoint hampers our ability to understand changes in a group's perception, "*which could arise due to new conditions*" of the past and implies a static social identity (Misztal, 2003, p.55).

Jan Assmann (1995) proposed to split up Halbwachs' 'collective' memory into 'communicative' and 'cultural'. Communicative memory exists in everyday interaction and communication in vernacular language among people through practices of oral history, "*characterizing its proximity with the everyday*" (Assmann and Czaplicka, 1995, p.128). The temporal horizon of communicative memory as part of oral history studies is limited to hundred years or three to four generations. On the other hand, cultural memory is institutionalized and embodied in books, monuments, rites etc., serving as mnemonic triggers. This kind of remembrance is distanced from the everyday, being fixed in the past and safeguarded from the passing of time. Aleida Assmann (2006) further elaborated Jan Assmann's classification into four memory formats. Communication memory was branched out into individual and social/generational memory, and cultural was divided into political/national and cultural memory.

In this thesis, theorizing of collective memory as a means of remembering will support the understanding of what is remembered and consented to be shared about the Soviet exile in the framework of the national identity based on solidarity of each member of this

ethnic group. Since collective memory not only mirrors the past but also influences present perceptions by offering frameworks for understanding the world, it will give as an image of how memories of the genocide navigate Crimean Tatars in the modern-day situation (Misztal, 2003).

### 3.4.2. Realms of memory

Perceiving memory as socially constructed in the present, Pierre Nora (1989, p.9) enhanced Halbwachs' notion of collective memory by coining *lieux de mémoire*, i.e. “sites for anchoring its memory.” The idea behind the concept is that certain events and objects can generate symbolism and obtain importance, becoming a substrate for memory. Thus, helping people to remember. Becoming a realm of memory, the realm acquires a ‘symbolic aura’ which is the meaning given by the imagination, endowing *lieux* with the intention to remember.

There are several types of sites of memory: “*symbolic sites (commemorations, pilgrimages, anniversaries, emblems); functional (manuals, autobiographies, associations); monumental (cemeteries, buildings); and topographic (archives, libraries, museums).*” (Misztal, 2003, p. 105) Despite animating memory with certain realms, *lieux de mémoire* can be understood as a process of petrification in order to prevent it from forgetting, but rather it should be seen as a process of conservation where memories preserve “*their capacity for metamorphosis, an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications.*” (Nora 1989, p.19) However, Confino and Fritzsche (2002) argue that memory has dynamic nature intertwined with social networks, not just institutionalized and static in artefacts of cultural memory and realms of it. Therefore, memory requires persistent symbolic investment to retain meaningful.

As Crimean Tatars started mass returning to their homeland in the end of 1980s, sites of memory either functional, either material or symbolic begun erupting to upkeep collective memory. 18 of May has become mourning day only in 1993 and since then annually people from all corners of Crimea gathered on the main square in Simferopol to commemorate the tragedy of the nation. This thesis adopts Nora's concept in order to explore into such realms and understand occurred metamorphoses with not only memories, but identity which is integrated into a realm.

### 3.4.3. Post-memory

In order to explain trans-generational inheriting of the trauma of the forced exile and its effects, a concept of post-memory comes to aid this thesis. Marianne Hirsch (2008) in 'The Generation of Post-memory' describes it as the generation that comes after those who directly experienced cultural or collective trauma often feels a deep connection to the events, while just receiving the traumatic knowledge. This traumatic-loaded experience comes from stories, images, and behavioural observation related to the trauma while growing up. Therefore, it appears so ingrained and emotionally impactful that they feel like personal memories, even though they're succeeded from previous generations.

Hirsch elucidates that in order to make the traumatic experience live through the time and resettle effects to the present, a simple recall of the event is not enough and requires, in addition to it, imaginative investment, projection, and creation. *"To grow up with such overwhelming inherited memories, to be dominated by narratives that preceded one's birth or one's consciousness, is to risk having one's own stories and experiences displaced, even evacuated, by those of a previous generation."* (Hirsch, 2008, p.107)

Hirsch argues that the memory formats made by Jan and Aleida Assmann are insufficient at addressing impacts of 'collective historical traumas' such as war, genocide, or exile. These traumas profoundly affect both embodied communicative memory and institutionalized cultural memory, impairing their transmission processes. Survivors often share more than just memories—they express deep emotions that are hard to put into words. Moreover, totalitarian regimes have intentionally erased records, destroyed cultural archives, and suppressed histories, making it harder to pass down memories.

The concept of post-memory elucidates how these ruptures affect intergenerational inheritance. Post-memory *"strives to reactivate and reembody more distant social/national and archival/cultural memorial structures by reinvesting them with resonant individual and familial forms of mediation and aesthetic expression."* (Hirsch, 2008, p.111) This means that even people who weren't directly affected by the events can still be part of remembering them, so the memories can continue even after everyone involved has passed away.

## 3.5. Collective Trauma. Rule of Silence

Bringing up concepts of collective memory and post-memory, for this thesis concept of collective trauma should be introduced. The 1944 exile was aimed at extermination of Crimean Tatars. They were hastily exiled from homeland, being provided with almost no food and water supplies in addition to bestial attitude from the Soviet government. In the

places of exile, they were subsequently subjugated to humiliations, being deprived from leaving special settlements until the death of Stalin. Afterwards, compared to the other banished nations, the right to return to the homeland was restricted for most of the people, however, trips to the peninsula were allowed. The wound of the exile has deeply embedded in the collective memory, being constantly triggered by the Soviet attitude towards the ethnic group. Moreover, the trauma has found its way to become a realm of memory, i.e. institutionalized in a commemorative event as well as in monuments and texts.

Collective trauma refers to the shared psychological responses experienced by eyewitnesses or participants in a tragic event. It's a common experience, but each person's experience is unique, and it encompasses not only surviving the event but also living with its aftermath (Anikin and Golovashina, 2017). However, Arthur Neal (1998) distinguishes a 'national' trauma as an event with lasting impacts that persist in individual consciousness and become deeply embedded in collective memory. Alexander (2004, p.1) points out 'cultural' trauma 'occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable way'. The main contrast lies in who is impacted: cultural trauma affects a specific group targeted for their identity, while collective trauma affects society as a whole. However, these two types of traumas are often linked, with cultural trauma contributing to or arising from broader collective traumas.

During Khrushchev's leadership in the USSR, Platt (2016) argues that adhering to a rule of silence regarding the legacies of collective trauma was necessary for social acceptance and belonging. Although Khrushchev condemned Stalin for creating a 'cult of personality' in 1956 for mass atrocities and distorted history, the Soviet regime continued 'the public ritual of knowing silence', inherited from the Stalin's era of terror (Platt, 2016, 664). Therefore, silence concerning collective traumas became institutionalized and continued even after the collapse of the Soviet regime in Russia. Remembering collective trauma meant balancing knowledge and silence. Despite of society's awareness, the Stalinist violence was never openly discussed and persisted "to be a highly controlled, taboo, and even ritualized subject" (Platt 2016:649). However, this contrasted with a hidden network of alternative stories shared through unofficial channels like private memories, old books, Soviet jokes, and dissenting voices. Traces of the Soviet enforced amnesia is omnipresent in the Soviet people, embodied in their attitude. In this thesis, this concept of rule of silent will complement the concepts of memory studies, mainly focused on the Holocaust. Implementation of this concept will give

us understanding of why the memory was barely transmitted within society and even families during the Soviet era. Moreover, it is supposed to explain modern trends in the occupied Crimea on memory of the 1944 exile.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Research strategy**

Methodologically, this thesis adopts qualitative research, employing oral history interviewing as the primary method. This approach was chosen to investigate whether inter- and transgenerational migration of memory regarding the collective trauma of the 1944 exile has occurred. Oral history involves collecting memories and personal reflections of historical significance through recorded interviews (Ritchie, 2014). Consequently, conducting in-depth life interviews provided the research with valuable insights into alternative histories and facilitated the exploration of family narratives.

Family interviewing has been a priority. Therefore, some interviews were conducted with two family members answering the same questions. It resembled rather an informal conversation where was place for arguing between, for instance, son and his mother. The researcher made it on purpose to, firstly, see whether memory conveyed to the next generation, and, secondly, to see whether memories were passed from someone else.

However, the process of collecting interviews encountered certain obstacles. Despite the passage of time since the tragic event, some individuals still express reluctance to discuss it via the Internet, particularly those residing in Crimea. This concern is not as pronounced among Crimean Tatars in other countries, where freedom of speech and internet usage are less restricted by domestic laws. Nonetheless, every Crimean Tatar has relatives in the peninsula, necessitating the careful protection of participants' identities. Therefore, the research will maintain confidentiality by only disclosing participants' age and place of birth for the purpose of categorization into generational groups.

Although the in-depth interviews, we had a certain number of questions rather to navigate a person what we expect to hear. In the beginning of every interview, participants were once again introduced to the topic of the research and its puzzles that it attempts to find out. First time it happened during the process of negotiating with them.

The participants were selected using snowball sampling, where interviewees helped in identifying other participants, typically their relatives or close friends believed to have significant knowledge about the exile. Despite initially aiming for 25-30 participants, 20



individuals were ultimately reached within the constraints of the master's thesis framework, which included limited time and budget constraints.

Efforts were made to include Crimean Tatars from diverse backgrounds, with varying incomes. Given the focus on post-memory, participants were required to have not directly experienced the exile themselves. Therefore, the search was restricted to individuals who were born after the forced displacement or were infants during the event, relying on memories passed down from older generations.

Initially, manual transcription of interviews was planned, but due to the average length of conversations (1.5 hours), the researcher opted for a transcription program called Pisec (<https://pisec.app>) to expedite the process. Since the interviews were conducted in Russian, a language the researcher is fluent in, this approach was considered suitable.

Russian was the primary language for most of the participants. However, many of them were also fluent in Crimean Tatar. Despite this fluency, the dominance of Russian in communication can be attributed to the Soviet policy of Russification. Additionally, the researcher, despite being of Crimean Tatar origin, did not inherit the language from the older generation and is unable to speak Crimean Tatar.

Uehling (2004) observed that, although Crimean Tatar is considered the mother tongue, people often find Russian more comfortable to speak, but not when discussing certain topics. Therefore, conducting the research in Crimean Tatar could potentially provide deeper insights while reducing fears of surveillance by Russian authorities.

The results of the transcriptions were satisfactory, but additional examination was needed to ensure the accuracy of deciphered words. Reviewing the recordings also allowed for observations of behavioral cues, such as instances of crying. They serve as important indicators of the influence and adoption of the tragic narrative as a person has experienced such an event on her/his own skin.

Although the oral history interviews were touching upon painful memory, Ritchie (2014) notices a therapeutical effect of such interaction, not excluding of course traumatic effects. Some participants expressed their gratitude to have such a talk where they released 'long-pent-up' emotions.

Furthermore, the open-ended nature of the interviews allowed for the revival of forgotten memories, as there was no limit on the duration of the conversations. The researcher observed that remembering takes time, and interviewees often recalled forgotten memories after some time had passed, typically around 30-40 minutes into the conversation. This observation underscores the importance of allowing sufficient time for participants to

delve into their memories and share their experiences fully.

Table 1

*List of Participants*

Name	Year of birth	Place of birth	Generation after survivors	Length of the interview
N1	1950	Exile	First	74 min
N2	1956	Exile	First	161 min
N3	1969	Exile	Second	163 min
N4	1957	Exile	First	162 min
N5	1968	Exile	Second	117 min
N6	1978	Crimea	Second	119 min
N7	1999	Crimea	Third	31 min
N8	1975	Exile	Second	84 min
N9	1983	Exile	Second	84 min
N10	1972	Exile	Second	290 min
N11	2004	Crimea	Third	85 min
N12	1972	Exile	Second	140 min
N13	1999	Crimea	Third	
N14	2002	Crimea	Third	42 min
N15	1967	Exile	Second	80 min
N16	1956	Exile	First	172 min
N17	1990	Crimea	Third	48 min
N18	2001	Crimea	Third	120 min
N19	2002	Crimea	Third	
N20	1965	Exile	Second	80 min

Source: Compiled by the author

#### 4.2. Research Ethics

Prior to conducting each interview, all participants were briefed on research ethics. Consequently, their explicit consent was obtained and recorded alongside the interview proceedings. This was not only in compliance with contemporary research protocols but also aimed to ensure the confidentiality of participants, assuring them that their testimonies would not be disclosed to third parties. As previously mentioned, while some participants still reside in Crimea, others have relatives there. Hence, there exists a potential risk that either they or their families could face repercussions, such as arrest, due to issues related to the Crimean Tatar community and their historical interpretation. Despite these concerns, participants were informed that they had the right to request a copy of the recording for

personal use, given that we documented their life stories and those of their families. The researcher deemed this step crucial for preserving and transmitting memories accurately.

### 4.3. Narrative theory

Narrative theory found its way to oral history from literary studies, helping research with interpreting its data. Therefore, through the lens of the theory, an interview is perceived as a dyadic collaboration of an interviewer and interviewee where they are “creating and negotiating a text” (Chamberlain, 2006, p. 285). It allows to view the interview as multi-layered social document with numerous insights into an individual’s world and perspective, produced and shaped by a matter of certain choices from both sides. It depends on the narrator’s selection what to include into their oral testimonies as well as in which genre this life story should be conveyed. Here perspective is embedded of identity, customs of narrating such as “conventions of process and purpose, presentation and style, place and performance.” (ibid., p. 281) Thus, instead of thinking that everyday actions have rationality and serve practical purposes, we could see them as traces to deeper ways of thinking and imagining things.

The narrative theory tends to emphasize on subjective accuracy of selected events rather than on “historical truth”, objective reality. Subjective reality implies two categories: psychological and narrative truth, responding how the information shaped by the interviewees’ beliefs and how it was structured as well as undercover nonverbal meanings, respectively (BenEzer, 2003). “Rather than highlight the uniqueness of each narration, however, narrative theory focuses on the similarities among many stories, suggesting that the memories people retain are shaped by their cultural values and environment, reflecting a society’s collective memory.” (Ritchie, 2014, p.168)

In this thesis the narrative theory will be handful at rendering the collected in-depth interviews, life-stories, of 20 Crimean Tatars in order to answer the research questions as well as decipher underlying signs and symbols hidden in their attitude towards the exile.

Dyadic nature of oral history approach values mutual construction of the narrative by both a researcher and respondent. Reflexive, life-story interviews focus on understanding the meanings and emotions that arise during the interview, both from the participant and the interviewer. While the main focus is on the participant's story, the researcher's own thoughts, feelings, and experiences are also considered. This adds depth and context to the narratives collected. Moreover, since the researcher is of Crimean Tatar descent, it seems appropriate to include this method in this thesis. The researcher has been living in the cultural context the

greater part of his life, thus, offer personal of the cultural experience, including collective memory. Autoethnography allows to describe “moments of everyday experience that cannot be captured through more traditional research methods.” (Adams, Ellis, & Jones, 2017)

## **5. Historical memories in the socio-political landscape – data, analysis, and results**

### **5.1. Genocidal exile**

#### 5.1.1. The decree 5859ss

Knock on the door at the crack of the dawn, agents of NKVD, and 15 minutes to pack up. This how the beginning of the forced exile deposited in the collective memory of Crimean Tatars. However, every family keeps different stories starting from this moment. Although destinies are different, the collective trauma is common for Crimean Tatars. The fatal decree 5859ss was signed on 11 May by Stalin and executed a week later. According to the document, Crimean Tatars were found guilty because many individuals have switched the side and betrayed the Soviet homeland in different ways aimed at elimination of Soviet people. Regardless of these severe accusation and subsequent exile from Crimea to the permanent special settlements in Uzbekistan, the decree contains the procedures of exile which is different from the reality. The order must have been completed until 1 of June 1944, but the Soviet authority eradicated the whole population in two days, sending people to Ural and Central Asia. On the paper, the exile resembled a re-settlement, guaranteeing people a reimbursement of their assets which they left in Crimea, including livestock and agriproducts. For this they were supposed to have time for a swap of their property to exchange receipts. In addition to it, officially people were allowed to bring with up to 500kg of personal belongings and food per family.

Respondent N5 tells a story that the uncle was bringing food to the Soviet guerillas. The Nazi became informed about it that the next time the father of the respondent was beaten by the Germans in order to reveal the location of the partisans. The native people, living on the land for centuries, knew the mountains very well, thus, helping partisans to navigate in the landscape. However, civilians were rather stuck in between, on one hand, being raided by the Nazis during the daytime, and, on the other, by the partisans who needed constant re-supply.

The decree states that people should have been provided daily with portioned meals in the course of the transition. N10 and N15 shared stories, heard from ancestors, that deportees did not have any water and food provided, only what they had with them since the departure.

N10 tells that people were supplied with salty water which only worsened situation, leading to even more thirst and problems with stomach. N15 emphasized that the grandmother was sharing this story with tears on her eyes because these conditions without food and water, and sanitary took away half of her children. She had 13 of them and some fought in the Soviet army, being killed during the WW II. N11 recalled the testimonies of the grandfather about frozen flatbread and undercooked potatoes. N12 remembered that the father was a small child during the exile, and he was constantly asking for food. To handle this relentless hunger, he was fed with flour, being told that it is sugar. This respondent also shared a story of the grandmother who did not believe that they were going to be expelled and perceived an order of NKVD as a short-term measure:

*“When they came to my grandmother and told her to pack. She knew her husband was at war; she didn't believe it. She thought it must have been some kind of misunderstanding. They were told, pack your food, the only things you need. She packed bundles, as my aunt, my dad's older country, tells it. She seems to have collected everything, and they are here when they get on the cart, she, it turns out, she takes her bundles and throws back out, thinking that she will come back. And she's with her kids, with her mum. My aunt really tells me that the grandmother didn't understand, she thought that she wouldn't drag them back later. And when they got into such a mess, and when she was here already with her hungry children or something else, she turned out as I understood, she ran back in a day, apparently, and she took these bundles.”*

Each echelon, according to the decree, should have been assigned with one physician and two nurses, and a relevant supply of medications in order to provide with first aid and sanitary service of Crimean Tatars on the way to special settlements. N15 described absence of any abovementioned conditions and a mass contraction of the intestinal infection. People were making holes in the trains to handle with constant diarrhea. N10 told a story of the grandmother about omnipresent head louse. Moreover, people in the train were not able to commit dead compatriots because the stops were irregular. Therefore, a dead person was travelling with living one for days. Respondent N1, being told by the aunt, shared that dead bodies were just thrown from the train because they could not bury a body.

*“Every family had a very hard time and there were losses. My mum told me how they were resettled. She had a six-month-old baby brother who died on the road, and they had to just carry him out, leave him at the station and put some 3 ₺ there, just in case someone might take the baby and bury it.” (N4)*

The stops have not been scheduled. People could have either a short or a long rest, usually refilling their supplies if there any possibility or cooking. Due to irregularity, the train could start moving as soon as a family begun making food with what they had with them. N6 heard this story while had been assisting returnees in 90s with issuing Ukrainian citizenship:

*“When I was working at Inicium, I used to help to issue citizenship to people. A lot of people also came and told their life stories. Which one impressed me the most? A grandfather came to me. He has Kazakh citizenship. His passport says he's Turkish. And he came to talk to me, I don't remember his surname. He said, ‘Help me get citizenship. I'm not a Turk myself, I'm a Crimean Tatar. When we were banished . I ran out to get water, everyone was thirsty. At the station I ran out, he says, to get water, and our train moved, he says, my parents stayed in the train, and I, he says, stayed on the platform. I was a child, I was there. 10 years old or something, they were, well, that's it. I think he was born 35. He says I walked on the tracks for a week. I saw where the train had gone, I was walking on these tracks, talking. And I was exhausted, he says. I reached some half-station. And there people picked me up. They were banished Turks from Meskheta. And they adopted me and made all the documents. That's how I became a Meskhetian Turk, he says. He never found his parents. “*

Regardless of the twist of life to be adopted and live with Meskhetian Turks' family, this person preserved the memory of the homeland. After almost 50 years since the tragedy, Crimea has not lost preciousness and the Crimean Tatar identity was not interrupted due to different environment even from a regular Crimean Tatar family.

N14 shares the grandmother's testimonies that she heard from her parents because at the moment of the exile she was an infant.

*“She told me how it was, that is, she added some details, that people, when there were stops, got out of the carriages to get water. There were stops, a river or I don't know, something similar. People would just come out; they'd be taken and shot.”*

### 5.1.2. First years of the exile

Exiled Crimean Tatars were supposed to be provided with a patch of land and supplied with building materials to build a house on their arrival as well as seven-years loan of up to 5000 rubles per family. Food such as flour, groats and vegetables should have been provided free of charge for July and August as a barter of products and livestock left in Crimea.

*“And when they were brought to the village, it was called Aktash village, as far as I remember, they settled them in barracks, such long buildings, one-storey large rooms.*

*Then they separated them with curtains or whatever they used, if there was a female half, there were elderly men, there were no young men there, they were all at the front. Old men and children mostly and women. They lived there, they used to go there. My dad told me how they used to go there with my brothers and sisters. Well, they were teenagers then, they were 10-12 years old, in general, they would go and pick fruit that had fallen to the ground, there were apricots, then they chewed cotton seeds, which made their stomachs deflate.”*

(N15)

Respondent N1 recalled the life in barracks with the family still in the 50s when she was born. N2 is a sibling to N1 elaborated more on the issue of accommodations:

*“And also at that moment when they brought our people to Uzbekistan. Everyone was sitting with their families, and they took them like healthy slaves, they chose them. They chose healthy families for their collective farms. They lived in cowsheds. Then with time, when we were born, they started to build, but before that they were settled in these villages, in cowsheds, where there was a cow. That's where one family, how many 5-6 people there were. That's how they lived. It was, in short, a total mockery. Our people survived it well, but how many died. They died then, when they were transported to the stations, they left those who died. That's all, and these wolves and jackals were waiting. People travelled in a carriage with dead people, definitely. Because the wagons were locked, they took something with them, wheat or something they had, they went out quickly and started cooking. They ran back with uncooked food, they stopped for 10 minutes, went on their way again, whoever managed to get in, got in, whoever didn't, starved to death there.”*

For people the information about exile was conceived. The decree was signed secretly by Stalin on 11 May. On the eve of the expulsion, there was information in a form of rumors about it. However, most of the population were caught off guard. The researcher's grandmother's family was among those few, who were notified of upcoming disaster couple of days earlier. Her father was a devoted communist and a head of a cotton's station in Crimea. The fact of belonging to the party helped them to prepare for the long transition, having all needed property with them.

*“My grandmother apparently told my mum and she said that we lived in the ward. They didn't live in Kurghantepe itself, but in the ward. And when they came to the ward, she says, grandfather was immediately appointed foreman of something there. Because there was cotton there, and there was cotton here. And, she said, we always lived well. Mum said, we*

*always had meat, we always had bread and butter. My grandmother, she said, was a kind mum, she said, she helped. She all the time, here's someone is poor, she, although 9 children, but despite that, she helped everyone.” (N20)*

N5's parents, during the first years of the exile, lived in the very poor conditions in kolkhozes. In conversations with them, the respondent has been told a story of how the father's sisters died of typhus and he himself got this disease but survived.

*“In this collective farm there was an Uzbek girl, she was without parents and my father's sisters, they were about 15 or 16, maybe older. They pitied her and brought her home. They themselves hungry brought her home, fed her. She even stayed at their home; she was an orphan. And then she died of typhus, and then 2 sisters of my father also died of typhus, they all got infected from this girl.”*

## **5.2. Foreign land**

According to Rywkin (1994), number of Crimean Tatars who died as result of the exile reached almost 50,000 people which was one third of the population. The life in the special settlements was difficult. Beside shortages of food and absence of normal conditions, Crimean Tatars encountered acts of discrimination from the local population, imposed by the Soviet propaganda. The official agenda denounced them as traitors. This narrative has survived until nowadays among Russians and adherents of the Soviet Union.

N16 recalls the childhood when their Uzbeki neighbours were calling them satqin (a traitor):

*“We would come home and ask why we were so disliked. Why do they call us such names, what did we do to them wrong, and my parents somehow calmed us down, saying don't pay attention, everything is normal, everything is fine.”*

N17 and N4 are family members. The stories about the first years that they have evoked are identical, telling memories about horse skin and dead siblings of their ancestor. This case points at circulation of memories within family circle. N4 described how the Soviet regime was sticking to the decree and the point about accommodations:

*«They told us how they lived in dugouts during the exile. There were no dishes, they burned tin cans, found them, burnt them with fire and used them as a food container. My mother-in-law told me that they used to go to the cotton fields to harvest cotton in autumn. And there were no shoes, she said. They wore stockings, just old stockings of some kind instead of boots and walked on this soil. There was nothing to eat. There were families, Uzbek families, who received them well, helped them in some way, could give them something*



*to eat, and there were families that were not very friendly. And it was hard to eat, and she says that she was walking through a field and saw a dead horse. They chewed the skin of the dead horse, as if it chewed all day and as if it extinguished the feeling of hunger, and then one morning she woke up to the fact that she was freezing. On one side her sister is dead, on the other side her little brother is dead, here she is left, and she woke up because she was cold” (N4)*

N19 told that the general attitude towards Crimean Tatars, from the stories of the respondent’s mother, was not very benevolent:

*“They called us animals there. Although, at the same time, there were Russians who were saying to these Uzbeks that, ‘You are animals.’ These over these over those. In general, I don’t know whether they got even or not. In general, things were not very good with the Uzbeks either.”*

N1 shared a personal account that Uzbeks treated them well, although “there were some cases of people being killed for a flatbread.” N20 emphasized that the grandfather’s family lived well in the exile due to closeness to the communist system. The food was brought by carts to them, and they did not experience those privations:

*“So, when I asked my mother, she said, you know, I am even ashamed to say that we lived well in the exile.”*

### 5.2.1. Discriminations

Ethnic discrimination in places of exile had different shades for Crimean Tatars. N12 shared an incident at school where a teacher of history called all Tatars to the blackboard when she was covering a topic about traitors of the Soviet regime.

*“I was studying in Uzbekistan at school 34. Our history teacher started reading about traitors, Tatars and so on. I mean a history book, and I remember very well, as she told me, I really was a small child... She said, all the Tatars come to the blackboard. We really all did. And it turns out that we really had both Kazan Tatars and Bashkir Tatars, because we really had both Bashkir Tatars and Kazan Tatars. We all came out, and she said that, and now I will read carefully, listen, this is about your ancestors, so that you know about it. And here she starts reading it. I cried a lot; I was very bad in this respect.”*

N2 used to be a teacher. Once, while the respondent went to a job interview at one of the schools in Uzbekistan, a head teacher questioned existence of Crimean Tatars as a distinctive nation. The Soviet authority had been attempting to erase any traces of Crimean

Tatars to simply Tatars from Crimea. Therefore, the submissive nature of the soviet society kept practicing rule of silence, begun from 1944.

*"When I said that I was a Crimean Tatar, and the head teacher said, "Who are these Crimean Tatars?" He said, "I know, Ufa, Kazan, Bashkir, but I have not heard about Crimean Tatars," How, I said, you haven't heard of them." (N2)*

Respondent N6 told that due to his European appearance, he was always in a conflict with local Uzbeks. However, N6 said that they lived in a friendly atmosphere.

*"They didn't like Europeans, but I had a more European appearance. I was always getting beaten up for my looks."*

N15 told about fights with the peers to defend against accusation of treachery:

*"I remember, I fought, I didn't brag. I was defending myself, that we are not traitors. That's not the way to accuse the whole nation indiscriminately. »*

One of the discriminations which occurred with N3 and N4 was regarding their names which others from non-Turkic background attempted either to simplify or substitute with an alliterated Russian version. Although N3 emphasized that with the return in 90s to Crimea, Crimean Tatars names became on hearing, the researcher had few accidents when his name was attempted to shorten or be changed with a Slavic analogue. Also, among neighbors and relatives, the author encountered this problem which exists until nowadays.

### **5.3. Occasional visits of Crimea. Rendezvous with the homeland**

In 1957, the Krushchev's government published a decree where the Soviet state admitted the false deceit allegation towards the Caucasians. They were allowed to return to their homeland, except Meskhetian Turks. For Crimean Tatars and Volga Germans removed the restriction on special settlements, but still it was prohibited to come back to their native lands, facing obstacles with registry and forced expulsion from the territory of the region. People could settle and dwell elsewhere, but their homeland. However, there appeared a possibility for short trips to Crimea.

N1, being born in 1950, recalls that she and her family lived in barracks in those years. This decree gave people a false hope of the return.

*"We were sent to Kugai station, Kugan district. We were sent and we lived near the railway. There were carriages standing there. They said that we Tatars will be returned to Crimea soon. Everyone lived with this dream that we would return to Crimea. Because it was still fresh, if I was born in the year 50. It was still fresh, and we all dreamed. That's who left. Everybody's soul ached. Nostalgia for the Crimea, everyone was forcibly removed. That's*

*why everyone has a dream to go to Crimea to their homeland. That's the thing: they lived, suffered, and then they came and dumped them. Who, where, who? People helped there, who, in general, survived as we could in barracks. We quietly survived there.” (N1)*

### 5.3.1. Physical contact

Due to the efforts of the National Movement, Crimean Tatars were partially rehabilitated with the 1967 decree. In 1968, a recruitment program (verbovka) began resettling Crimean Tatars to Crimea, providing housing and jobs in uninhabitable areas. This allowed some of the banished Crimean Tatars to start returning to their homeland. N4 recalled numerous rallies and they were dispersed with watercannons. The respondent's family was among the luckiest at that time, being enlisted in the recruiters of the early waves. However, news about the decree were promising for Crimean Tatars who thought that it is finally would be allowed to return.

*“I remember very well when in September the order was issued about the return, about exile, about the return of Crimean Tatars back to Crimea. We children remember very well, we had just such a street that only Tatars lived there. And the neighbouring children and we children, between the houses on the street, kissed the ground in Uzbekistan that we would be leaving there, as if we were saying goodbye. We're going to the Crimea. This is '67.”*

N3's family attempted to settle in Crimea in 1975. They bought a house, but the local authority obstructed the process of registering at the address. During one of the attempts, the interviewee visited the father's village Yancu in Bakhchisaray district. Since then, the place obtained sacrality for the respondent which was transmitted from the father who was telling about his childhood and showing various places. The landscapes seen there got burned into the respondent's memory, that after coming back to Asia, she was drawing it.

*“And I liked it all so much. Or rather, I would say I felt as if it was all mine, I needed it. I'm from here. Well, that I feel really good here, that this is exactly what gives me strength. This is what I need.”*

N15 and N20 visited Crimea while they were on the trip in the children's camp “Artek” which was a dream of every Soviet child to spend a shift there.

*“I brought in my handkerchief a handful of soil, when I was in Artek.*

*Being a schoolboy, my grandmother, when I went to Artek for a month, told me, “When you come back, take a handful of Crimean soil.” So, I took it and brought it back.*

*They smelled it and said it was Crimean soil – Qırım toprağı. That's how sacred it was because this is the motherland, native land, native land.” (N15)*

N10 emphasized on being one of the few who visited Crimea, having trips with the family, especially grandmother with whom they travelled to the peninsula at least 3 times before the final return in '90s.

*“She showed me places of her childhood. She told me how it was, what it was like, I mean, and I also heard her talking to her friends. What the Crimean Tatars were like before and after. That is, I have the impression even then that, well, I am very sorry that everything happened like that. That is, I have a very heightened state of mind.”*

N12's father visited Crimea more than once, receiving vouchers from work.

*“He went there every time, and he came and cried - cried, because Crimea, seeing Crimea.”*

### 5.3.2. Silencing/Sacralising

During the exile people behaved differently towards their memories about Crimea, about the exile. Whether within one family everything was told thoroughly and in colors, attitude of others was to silence anything regarding the past. Therefore, in this section we are going to discuss the migration of trauma from older generation to their descendants in a form of fabulous narrativization.

N20's family did not talk neither about Crimea, nor about the exile which was revealed to her only during that trip to the summer camp “Artek”. The silencing, as the respondent assumed, came from the earlier suffer in the exile to Urals as part of the Soviet campaign of dekulakization.

*“When I was told in “Artek” that, ‘You are an enemy of the nation, your Crimean Tatars were fighting with the Germans against the Soviet Union.’ I didn't fully understand why that was so? And, as then, I didn't know about that, there was no talk about exile then.”*

Although the father of N3 was telling the stories about his youth and places associated with it, the respondent said that the family remained silent regarding the exile. Talks about childhood may intentionally provoke children to ask questions such as ‘How did we end up in Uzbekistan then?’ or ‘Why did we leave Crimea?’

*“Our parents raised us, protecting us as much as possible from bad information, from some sad topics, trying to adapt us to the society as much as possible. We studied well, went to music school. Our parents also tried to make a career for themselves and bring up their*

*children as much as possible. So that there was prosperity, so that there was development. And to try not to bring any depressing information into the house. Parents tried not to say anything about it to their children.”*

Being from one family, N1 and N2 were enclosed from stories of exile and Crimea.

*“Our grandmother survived the exile with her family. We didn't even have a conversation about it. When I moved to Crimea, I only learnt this whole story.” (N2)*

N16 finished school in 1974 and during this time different stories started appearing around the respondent due to a move to relative's family. However, in the own family, the parents were strongly avoiding any talks about both Crimea and exile to protect the child from potentially dangerous and harmful information. Although all the perturbations, the heritage of silencing was prevailing across the Soviet space.

*“There is a feeling that the stories were told that grandfather went to the front and grandmother was left alone. These conversations, we still heard. But in my family, I never heard it. Again, I didn't realize that Crimea, that we all came from there. I didn't even go into it and didn't understand it, because it was really closed to us. Everything was in front of us, and here was just something slipping through.”*

Although the exile was not discussed in the family, N5 shares the same feeling of acknowledging about the tragic event. Crimean Tatars lived very compactly in places of exile and were usually very social within the community. Undesirable information about the past was sneaking to Crimean Tatars in different forms and ways.

*“Firstly, if I remember old people, we were small when they died. Although my grandfather died having already returned to Crimea. On my mother's side, I didn't ask him, but that's not to say that we didn't know. We always... when we lived in Shahrison, and we had a lot of Crimean Tatars there. They were all basically from the same village from Crimea as us. There were always these conversations because of that, but there were more conversations about going back; about the people who lived. You see, our life there continued as sort of the same fellow villagers. I remember people reminiscing, but the moments of exile are not in my memory to be remembered. But I think that they did not hide it intentionally.”*

Moreover, the tacit understanding of the exile is evident from the next episode happened with N5 at school. Train is a symbol inextricably intertwined in and with the exile, evoking a rapid association with the sufferings of Crimean Tatars. This memory has firmly enrooted in the future generations as well as into general understanding of people from outside of the community.

*“I don't remember when it was specifically mentioned, but I know for sure that in primary school it means up to 4th grade. We had a boy, he sang the song ‘blue carriage running, swinging’ it's from the cartoon about crocodile Gena, but on the words ‘trains running, swinging’ ... it evoked in me some feelings, some knowledge. So, I had then that I thought, ‘It's strange why that boy is singing that song.’ Well, he goes out and sings a song like that in class. You can't sing a song like that, I thought. Although this feeling has always lived with me, and I now conclude that when a question is asked specifically, it means that I already knew in primary school that our parents travelled in trains.” (N5)*

Despite N12 experienced of being concealed from the stories of the exile, the respondent always was aware of some forbidden topics, passively storing information from all over.

*“I just know one thing. Here I was all the time as a kid...we somehow heard some of these kinds of conversations from our parents at moments.... We didn't understand what they wanted, what they were hiding from us, and I understood that something was going on until I grew up and heard a story from my mum that my grandmother, when the Germans were here... She was a teacher. Taught German and because she taught German, they decided that she was like a traitor. Unwittingly, unwittingly, she's a traitor. This plume is like that, it was like that for me as a child, incomprehensible.”*

At the same time, the respondent said, they talked a lot about Crimea in their family. A similar statement was shared by N8 in whose family the exile was not brought up, but constantly there were talks about Crimea and the return.

### 5.3.3. Crimea as a fairy tale

The longing for Crimea metamorphosed it into a fairy land, sacralised it in memories of next generations who were born in places of exile. Whether talks about exile were dangerous to bring up, Crimea seems to be more innocent.

*“We know that we are Crimean Tatars and that our homeland is Crimea. We have always even imagined it as a fairy-tale land of some kind. Well, it is indeed a fertile land, a fairy-tale land, it has all continents in one. On the same territory and steppe and tropics, subtropics, that is, and, well, you do not have to go anywhere, but only to rest in the Crimea. And it is necessary, as my former head when I was working said, listen, he says, ‘Life is given to a man once, and it is necessary to live it only in the Crimea.’” (N15)*

N2 imagined Crimea as the Black Sea, being told about this at school where teachers described it as the sea and resort. However, the parents were silent about Crimea. The respondent emphasized at not knowing about the homeland.

*“The Black Sea. For me, Crimea is the sea of everything. It seemed to me that Crimea is all sea when I was little because they said that is the sea, a resort. It all seemed to me that Crimea is the sea. And when we moved to Canköy (Dzhankoy) district, the sea was so far away from us.”*

N2 is not alone at having discrepancy between what has been told and what was seen after arrival to Crimea. In the case of N2, their family relocated to a steppe region in the north from Uzbekistan.

N8 had been portrayed Crimea as a paradise, but an occasional visit of the land, changed the image to the reality.

*“We were told that Crimea was the most paradisiacal place, that we would definitely return there. Of course, the ideas were fabulous, let's be honest. And it turns out, literally six months before moving to the Crimea, I accidentally go to the Crimea with my grandmother. She says, say, we should go with you to see. I was in 5th grade. We came to the Crimea. We went first to St. Petersburg; from St. Petersburg we came to Crimea. But I remember, to be honest, I saw, we were just. It was the year 89. This difficult year was just when our people started to move. No one was well-equipped, no gas. Everyone lived in some kind of kubitkas. I saw many such families, and I was in a hurry to run home and say, ‘No, this is not the Crimea they told us about, let's live here in Samarkand.’ I had a wonderful childhood. I adore this city, and when people say to me, ‘Don't say anything - your homeland is Crimea,’ I understand everything, but my homeland is Samarkand. I was born there.” (N8)*

N9 shares a similar story about a dissatisfaction upon their arrival to the praised homeland. It comes with a lack of dipping into the widespread nostalgic atmosphere.

*“Mother told us that Crimea is like a fairy tale, it is very beautiful, there are blossoming trees, flowers. So, we imagined that Crimea was like a really some place from the fairy tales we had seen. And when we were on our way back to Crimea, we flew by plane and arrived at Simferopol airport. Back then the airport was not like an airport today at all. It was a field. The plane landed. We got off, I asked, ‘Where is this Crimea?’ She said, ‘This is the Crimea. And we saw just a field, where we walked, probably half a kilometre exactly, probably on foot, to get there to the bus stop. And then we came to the village where my grandmother and great-grandmother lived. We didn't realize where the tale was at all because there was no warm water then. Mum, I remember, washed outside in cold water and*

*rinsed. We didn't have a washing machine. So, everything was the opposite, because in Uzbekistan we lived very well. We had a three-room flat. All the conditions were warm. Mum worked at school, taught French, and here we were back in Crimea and without anything, but Mum was not discouraged. She always said that it's nothing bad, we will rise on our own, and everything will be fine. The main thing is that we are in our homeland.” (N9)*

Returning to Crimea was accompanied with many hardships. Beside the attitude of locals towards coming to their native land “Tatars”, people, in many cases, were leaving a better life behind. For more than 40 years of life in exile, they have achieved social stability there. Many of them had prosperity and had been living in big cities with all basic facilities needed. Crimea, at the same time, developing as All-Union health resort, was far from those conditions to which many Crimea Tatars got used to in exile. One of the problems was the absence of the native inhabitants of the land, who used the land according to the knowledge and practices accumulated over centuries by their ancestors and passed on from generation to generation.

Although three abovementioned stories are representing a divergence from reality, the respondent N3 has been impressed by Crimea and the landscapes seen in the father’s village during their visit at N3’s age of 5. It was previously described that the respondent was drawing the impression the whole childhood, those pictures of mountainous Crimea during August.

*“I remember it very well. A village in the Bakhchisaray district, a beautiful place - a fairy tale, just a fairy tale. This is my father's village, the village of Yancu, and we went there with him. And he took me to this house. When I was 5 years old, I knew where my grandfather's house was. And I knew that my he told me about his childhood, how he ran in this village before the war, what kind of cave there is ‘bear's ear’ and how the plane fell into the river Belbek, and they and the boys ran, jumped from the wing of the plane and dived. And that is where grandfather's hazel tree. Where is the well, where his sister boasted a briefcase and fell into the well. Well, you know, these are all these, like these stories, these are his childhood, he's so, well, apparently, you know, here, first, my age, and he was talking about the same age of his. So that really stuck out to me and laid down in general, that's what I understood very well. And we went to the house of Greek Kicho. That's this Nikolai Kicho. He was an agronomist, and my paternal grandfather was the director of the motor-tractor station of Kuibyshev district. We came to visit this Kicho, and then all my childhood I drew what I saw in the yard of this Nikolai Nikolaevich. He was an agronomist, and he had such a garden, it seemed just magical to me. Phloxes were blooming, this, you know, such a garden*



*dogwood, it was still unripe on the branches hung. His house was right above the river, and he had a spring in the courtyard, and the spring was full of cool water. It was the end of August, probably, the water was so cold and clear. He had a vineyard, there was a gazebo in the yard, everything was covered with grapes, it was so cool, although it was a very hot day. And I came here later, my father took me to my grandmother in Asia, and then they moved away. And all my childhood, all my pictures were of this house under the mountains.”*

N10 has an artistic family where stories and legends were circulating without any fear the Soviet attitude of silencing. Also, to this contributes the social circle of the parents constituted of “writers and different intellectuals.”

*“We had a small flat, but writers of all sorts of figures who cared about the people. Of course, they had conversations there. A one-room flat, you can't go anywhere. I didn't talk about it somewhere; I knew that it was not appropriate to share with my peers.”*

A Crimean Tatar legend about a girl Arzi, told by her mother at the age of 4, shaped N3's perception of Crimea as a fairyland. Thus, a year after, when they went to Crimea, the interviewee was insisting on going to Mishor to see the statue of this folklore character. The legend has different interpretations; however, we will briefly describe the respondent's version: a beautiful girl loved by a simple villager is desired by a wealthy local man. She is kidnapped by brigands and sold to the Turkish Sultan, becoming his favorite wife. Longing to return to Crimea, she leaps into the sea during a walk and transforms into a mermaid. She swims back to Crimea, reaching a spring that gurgles upon her arrival, symbolizing her return.

*“We got there, and I remember even now it's very clear how it was. That is, I came, I ran to the sculpture complex where Alibaba is on the rock, Arzi Qız she is near the spring. She didn't have her arm yet. It had been broken off and was only held on a sort of rebar. So, the hand itself was missing. It was probably 200 years old at that time, but no, not 200 years old, maybe 150 years old. And I stuck to it, I did not leave and when the excursion came up, well, before Soviet times, 78. And when the excursion came up, the guide began to tell the tourists that this is a Georgian legend, where the girl is a Georgian. Here I am standing, I am 5 years old, I am not politicized yet, I am a blank slate, absolutely. I started shouting out loudly that this is not a Georgian, this is a Crimean Tatar, this is my great-great-great-grandmother, she is standing right here. And, well, it's not a Georgian, I started shouting loudly. My mother was shocked because she didn't know how to behave. She stepped back, she stood aside, watching. She says, it was, of course, it was so... I mean, people are so shocked. The tour guide doesn't know what to do. People too. I remember this one, I*

*remember these eyes of the tour guide who was very much embarrassed. No one paid any attention to me; they continued the tour. They told me about it, and at some point, someone threw papers into the spring, like a bathtub. They started throwing papers there, and there were already these boxes from ice-cream. They used to be cardboard boxes with wooden sticks. When I saw them doing that, I said, "You can't do that. He's a living spring." Well, in my mind it was a living spring, because it was gurgling and it was happy, as my mum told me. I saw it as alive. Like a mythical creature, maybe. I see that they are comprehending, and they throw rubbish. I started screaming that you can't throw rubbish in here. I mean, I'm a child. Imagine these are grown-ups. I remember these indignant faces, too, but nobody ever stopped me. Nobody ever did. Some boys my age started climbing up the statue. I overtook them too, I said, "You can't, she's alive, she's just like that at the moment. It's alive and you can't touch it," so it's childish.*

Despite the fact that the legend appeared long before the tragic exile, already after this tragedy the legend gained symbolism with the longing and return of Crimean Tatars to their homeland.

*"Probably, in my mind, it was imagined as a return of the people to their origins. That is, in the person of Arqız to the origins, it is this çeşme, this spring. That is, it is the spring, it is the homeland, it is in the homeland."*

#### 5.3.4. Practices of acknowledgment

Once we have mentioned that N15 brought a handful of soil. This ritual has been mentioned across the interviews as something that everyone did if he/she had a chance to visit Crimea. This practice serves in two ways: to reminisce about the homeland and to introduce it to the generation growing in exile. Through the practices of receiving different symbols linked to Crimea, some people got familiarized with their homeland for the first time. We have found out that the topics of exile and Crimea were either hidden or vice-versa.

##### 5.3.4.1. Nature

N20 after a shift in "Artek" also brought a handful of earth to the grandmother who ate this soil and afterwards hid it in Quran. N12 witnessed a scene when old people were kissing Crimean soil. N5's father visited Crimea two times and the respondent remembers that he brought hazelnuts and cornelian cherry. N5 told that everyone who went to the peninsula were bringing these crops to Uzbekistan. N5 has an Uzbeki friend whose father

was a high-rank official. He was able to travel to Crimea frequently and he always had some Crimean soil of the Crimean Tatar neighbours. After a recent call with this friend, the respondent shared a touching story which made her cry.

*“Recently, we were talking again, she says, ‘Wow, he brought them land... she says, ‘A grandmother took the soil, and she cried when she saw this soil.’”*

N4’s aunt brought from Crimea flower seeds and seeds of persimmon which she planted, and the tree grew in the courtyard of her house in Uzbekistan.

#### 5.3.4.2. Storytelling through art

N12 had pictures of Crimea in the childhood.

*“I had photos. I had photos in my childhood. I laughed a little bit all the time, in what way, there are very old photos, really old, old and there are small houses, you know, like that, I didn’t even understand what kind of houses they were. I mean, I understood at that moment that it was Crimea. I understood from the photos that it was some kind of village.”*

N16 had a painting of Bağçasaray’s Khan Palace with minarets in their home in Uzbekistan. The respondent was not aware of what the father depicted on it until the return to Crimea, where N16 was a teacher and had a school trip with the student to Bağçasaray. The interviewee remembered only dua (a prayer), but after that trip, the small building in the corner got its understanding.

N4 recalled that while living in Uzbekistan, every Monday there was Crimean Tatar radio music concert which was to that extent important that people were putting things off for a while and gathered for these 10 minutes. N8 also remembers this show:

*“Seriously, everyone kept putting things off and getting together. It was so important and necessary. After this ten-minute session, we all shared our thoughts afterwards. It’s like, ‘Oh, really?’ This means we’re getting closer. That means we’re about to go to this Crimea. That’s what I saw.”*

Songs were a recurring topic across interviews, whether N16 and N4 talked about the radio show with Crimean Tatar music, others emphasized a particular song that played a linking role between them, Crimea, and their national awareness.

##### 5.3.4.2.1. Ey,güzel Qırım

Being written in 1968 by Şukri Osmanov and Nayle Halilova, the song obtained a status of a folk song. Whoever heard this song when it appeared, recorded the lyrics, and then

shared with their friends (QHA, 2008). It became an anthem of the aspire to return to the homeland. Its lyrics tell of a sorrowful life in exile and mourning for the lost homeland.

*“Of course, we all knew the song “Ey,güzel Qırım”. We sang it at our weddings since we were little children. It was sung in Shahrixon, not everywhere this song was allowed to be sung, but at our Shahrikxon weddings it was sung, and we knew that it was a secret song, it was so secret. What was in it, what was it like? We probably understood everything from the words.” (N5)*

N8 told about what spectrum of emotions the song evoked in people:

*“I remember one song in Samarkand, I was about 5-6 years old then. And I remember on some channel “Güzel Qırım”. and how we all gathered, everyone is crying. I can't understand what's going on. They say, “See this is in our language. Look, this is our song.” And since then, this music always sounded in our mouths...”*

Ukrainian singer of Crimean Tatar origins Jamala used some lyrics for the song “1944”, narrating about the exile. In 2016 she won Eurovision contest with this song. N11 says that music conveyed a message not only to Crimean Tatar community, but globally:

*“People like Jamala, who through her winning song “1944”, she told the world about it. People have learnt more of our history.”*

#### 5.3.4.2.2. Ural dağı

This folksong dates back to the early 1930s during the kulak exiles to Ural. After the 1944 exile, additional verses were added, reflecting the challenges and longing of the Crimean Tatars. Today, it commemorates those who could not return home. N6 recalled that the grandmother often hummed Crimean Tatars songs. The respondent described a feeling of peace of mind while listening to them. However, another emotion juxtaposed with calmness:

*“I was a kid once. I didn't realise that we were Tatars, it was, well, these folk songs, she sang. She was humming. You know, from my childhood, I remember that we had sad songs. They made me sad. I used to listen to those songs. I, well, I didn't understand all the songs.”*

N6 told that the song “Ural dağı” moved the grandmother to tears.

*“She also sang a song about the Urals. She cried afterwards. Well, she must have this... they lived, they were evicted to the Urals, and she, apparently, this song...”*

N9 used to hear this song from an old Crimean Tatar woman who sang it frequently when the respondent was visiting her.

#### 5.3.4.2.3. Ensemble “Qaytarma”

The Crimean Tatar song and dance ensemble was established in 1939 under the Crimean Philharmonic with Yaya Şerfedinov as its artistic director. Despite the tragic 1944 exile, the ensemble survived. In 1957, it became a state ensemble in Uzbekistan led by composer Ilyas Bahşiş. Composer Edem Nalbantov renamed it into "Qaytarma" in 1964. The ensemble toured Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Russia starting in 1965. In 1992, it relocated to Yevpatoria, Crimea.

N3 shared a story about one of the concerts of the ensemble “Qaytarma” around the Caucasus, in Novorossiysk. The following excerpt restates the power of art, especially music, at conveying knowledge and showing unity of Crimean Tatar.

*“I know that the “Qaytarma” ensemble from Tashkent came to Novorossiysk. The Haitarma had relatives of people who already live in Novorossiysk. And so, someone visited someone, that is, the artists came to the city, settled in a hotel. The Tatars learnt that the ensemble came on tour to Novorossiysk. The concert was to be in the theatre. All tickets for this concert were distributed by the trade unions of Novorossiysk. That is, schools, military units, large enterprises distributed tickets. I do not know how many seats there are, but all tickets were distributed among the collectives, so that no Crimean Tatar could get this ticket. People came to the time, that's when this concert should be. There's a huge crowd around the theatre. 100, 150, 200 people. I don't know how many. All the people with flowers, they came to listen to their music, nothing else. Here they are, and they're all around. There are people sitting in the audience who have never heard our music, they don't know it. They just came because they were given a ticket, they said go, one of them went, another one said I won't go, but someone still came. The hall is half-empty, and people are sitting there, and these artists are performing for them, and the Tatars are standing on the street with flowers under their windows. And then the chairman of trade union committee of school number 10 of Novorossiysk Victoria Nikolaevna comes to school. And tells me, she was my sister's class teacher in the class, she comes and says, “I was at the concert of Crimean Tatar ensemble “Qaytarma” yesterday”. It's in the whole class, it was '86. She said, “But I don't know any better music, and I don't know any other people who could stand so steadfastly in the rain. To listen to their music outside the theatre. I bow to your people.” So, this was already a thaw period.”*

## 5.4. Return. Period of independent Ukraine

### 5.4.1. The declaration of 1989

The Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR “On the Recognition of Unlawful and Criminal Reprisals Against the Peoples Subjected to Forced Immigration and Ensuring Their Rights” recognized the right of the Crimean Tatar people to return to their homeland in Crimea, from which they were forcibly banished in 1944. Moreover, it emphasized restoring their national integrity, including cultural, linguistic, and autonomous rights. Also, the declaration was aimed at fostering a positive climate for the state program. Propaganda and political-educational efforts should have been refocused on objectively presenting history and restoring justice and equality for the Crimean Tatar people. Soviet authorities and organizations in Crimea should prepare public opinion to support the return of Crimean Tatars, ensuring it does not harm other peoples. Engaging respected Crimean Tatar representatives in media and public discussions is recommended (NKDT,1989).

### 5.4.2. Hardships of returning as a relapse of the 1944 exile. Everything is known in comparison

Living in exile means to coexist with a nostalgia of the older generation that metamorphoses an object of longing into a fabulous. We have described the encounters of N9 and N8 with the reality of the peninsula which dispelled those fairytales about Crimea. The mass return in ‘90s gave a chance to the generations born in exile to experience, although in a much softer form, the hardships of resettlement. Therefore, a greater understanding of the 1944 banishment was revealed to those, who only heard these stories from their family. By recalling them and comparing with them, people found enough strength to overcome challenges faced during the return. N12, who was a fashion designer in Uzbekistan, was horrified on arrival by the conditions in which the family had been living in Crimea. Despite some relatives had built houses, the respondent’s family owned a small trailer and tapchan, a large bed with a table.

*“When I saw where they lived, I said to myself, ‘Shut your mouth. Your family, look how they lived.’ I said to myself, ‘Shut your mouth, look at how they lived.’ So I started to tidy up this trailer. I put it in order, I started cooking for them. At night I cry so that nobody could see them, so that they could not see these tears. And I started working with them, helping them and so on.”*

N12 is not alone at drawing parallels with who faced the 1944 exile to go through difficulties. N6 elaborated on how the comparison is applied in the life:

*“I always if I have any tough moments... Everyone has such things. And I often said: ‘Well, our old people? They have lost everything, everything, everything.’ Only what they had on them was left, that's all. The spirit was all that's left. And they managed to survive. They managed to acquire knowledge, experience, and material values.*

*They came back to Crimea, again almost everything from scratch, again they started everything here. I always bring it to myself in comparison. I often say that our old people had it worse, but we will survive it.”*

N9 stated that Crimean Tatars had one dream for all of them is to return to the homeland. Although the life in Uzbekistan was much better, the national dream was prevailing, establishing a direct connection between the generations.

*“Regardless of the fact that it was much more comfortable for us to live in Uzbekistan, we had housing and jobs there. We went to kindergarten, various classes, and when we returned to Crimea, we were deprived of all this. That is, there was nothing. There we had a class teaching dancing, songs of Crimean Tatar language and that's all. But mostly we had nothing. There was no housing, there was no work. We experienced what it is not to be banished, but what it is to return. How difficult it was. But it didn't stop us.”*

N6 emphasized that in ‘90s people become more open to talk about their experience due to the perturbations and the period of ‘Glasnost’, that the ‘grandma sometimes sat down, telling stories’ about Crimea.

When Crimean Tatars were coming home, they brought all their belongings in ship containers. The process of moving was stressful for everyone. N20 shared memories about this episode where the respondent was put in the comparison. Thus, understanding a better state of things during the ‘90s raised merits of the situation both the respondent’s and the grandmother’s, although in different vectors.

*“When we all started to move and suffer, I remember, I will never forget. We had so much trouble with the container, and I said to my grandmother, ‘We're back in Crimea, we have nothing there, and we had so much trouble.’ And she said to me, ‘Oh, listen, you call it a struggle? You managed to take all your belongings and came here. And when we were evicted in 1944, I came to Uzbekistan with one bale.’ Can you imagine, she said that, and after that I probably started to analyze it all. I think, it turns out that everything is known in comparison, how everyone moved then and how they move now. That is, they didn't move, how it all happened then.”*

#### 5.4.3. Discrimination. Feeling of being unwanted

Regardless of the intention mentioned in the 1989 declaration to foster a positive climate, some respondents felt even greater dislike upon their arrival.

*“Uzbeks were benevolent people after all. But here it's noticeable. There, no one ever reproached you with anything, but here I noticed the division right away. They say that the Tatars have come in a large number. We were forced out of our places. When I arrived in '91, my sister met us, and we went to the shop. My sister stepped aside, and the shop assistant said, 'You've come here too.' Just at that time my sister came, she was not afraid of anyone, she went to shout at them, she put them in their place quickly.” (N1)*

N2 also emphasized the negativity from the local population.

*“When we arrived, we faced such negativity that we were not wanted. When we arrived, our neighbors, for example, they were talking to us from behind the wicket.”*

Instead of propagation of objective history of Crimean Tatars. Crimean local authorities were throwing fuel on the fire, making the situation even worse. This was shared by N8 whose spouse was the classmate and local Crimean.

*“My spouse told me that before the Crimean Tatars started to arrive. They were warned in their school that Crimean Tatars would be arriving now, so be very careful. Be very careful. This is such a nation that there will be massacres. Do not leave the house. They intimidated us by telling us such things. We even thought of leaving for a while. That's how intimidated we were, he says.”*

N10 told that the classmates were also warned about upcoming barbaric Tatars who would kill everyone.

*“In Crimea, who are we? We are horned, tailed, we are some kind of people there. They even went to families there. My classmates told me about it. They showed them and warned them that the Tatars were coming. They are like this, they will slaughter. So, it was literally propaganda at that time.”*

*“The image of Crimean Tatars was created, some barbarians who will come and slaughter you all, take away your houses that belonged to them. Secondly, the image was created of Crimean Tatars, who are conditionally stupid, who do not know anything, only do greenhouse. But I understand why everyone was doing greenhouse, because you were not employed anywhere or not registered at all.” (N17)*



The third generation has not escaped the discrimination basis. The narrative of wild and barbaric Crimean Tatars has been existing among the Crimean population, although it has been fading away due to the time of co-living. N14 described that at school he has been under pressure and insulted because of his origins.

*“You felt the pressure. They pointed their fingers at you and said that you were a Tatar, you were a wetback and everything else. How unpleasant it was, but when I moved to another school, the next school I went to was Tankovaya. It became much easier there, because you were surrounded by mostly all Crimean Tatars, even Russian guys would come up and say selâm aleyküim.”*

N18 recounted a story about the brother who has been also humiliated at school being a Crimean Tatar. Once, the respondent told, the brother had attended classes on 18 May, but as appeared, it was a day-off at school, although it was not officially stated. N18 explained that it was due to concerns that *“the Tatars would go to slaughter people and make provocations.”*

#### 5.4.4. Realms of Memory. 18 May

The return of Crimea also presented an opportunity to institutionalize the memory of the tragic exile through the establishment of monuments and commemorative events.

During the period of exile, no institutionalized commemorative event was held to remember the victims of exile. N5 recalled that people usually were coming to the local cemetery where they were cleaning up the graves of compatriots and then were discussing regarding the return. Such talks were empowering with knowledge those who lacked it in terms of the burning question of Crimean Tatars.

Since 1993, the Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Exile has been officially commemorated in Crimea on 18 May. Before the occupation in 2014, Crimean Tatars from all over the peninsula were gathering on the main square in Aqmescit (Simferopol). The commemoration was accompanied with a peaceful rally and laying flowers to the monuments of exile. Although on the main square during the rally national leaders spoke and national questions were being raised, the respondents N5, N8, and N18 stated that 18 May turned into a day of meetings. Relatives and friends who lived in different corners of the peninsula could meet there. During those meetings they were evoking memories of the life in exile, the relatives either alive or dead. The process of collective memory petrification was taking a place in the swirl of stories and their threads, intertwining with each other's.

*“...there were years when people went just to see each other. Even, you know, everybody was talking about it, even writing about it, they started writing that the 18th of May turned into a meeting with friends. When already, you see, the houses were built, they looked up a little bit, and they wanted to see their neighbours, relatives from Uzbekistan there.”*

N12 experienced the fear of being fearless with their people around. The respondent described the commemorating rally as a concentration of pain that made the interviewee stop attending the event.

*“We participated; I'll tell you honestly. I got to these rallies a couple of times. And I had a sense of fear. I'm telling you like it is, I had this kind of pain. First of all, I was crying. First of all, the pain, these stories that old people were telling, and there were little children there, and it was very hard. I'll be honest with you; it was really hard. Here I am walking, and it seemed to me that I was so fearless, that I thought that if everyone would run somewhere, something would happen, and I could do something like that too. Well, I've always had a sense of fear for some reason. I don't know why. I took it very hard, very hard, and it turns out that I began to limit myself only by the fact that where, for example, the railway is, you know, where we lay flowers? You know, there was a stone there. And then the only thing we did with the girls, we took flowers, our representatives were there. We stood, we talked, we cried, we laid flowers and left. After that, I'll tell you honestly, on the 18th of May, the only thing I did was turn on the TV, I cried, ATR was on and I listened to all the stories,”*

N18 noted that the 18 May rally was showing not only solidarity of the generations with the tragedy, but also the unity of the nation.

*“It was a time when Crimean Tatars, living in areas predominantly Russian, needed to show that we were a part of the Crimean society. It was a way to demonstrate that we were a significant community with our own interests and demands, not just isolated families. This day served as a tribute to those who had died or suffered. That's one part. The other part was to show that we could fill the entire square in the city, and this happened in every city—Sudaq, Simferopol. People gathered everywhere. That's my view. It was like the Kurultai, where they gathered, made decisions, and voted. But what happens in one room isn't widely known to the outside world, except for those who document it.”*

N7 has never attended rallies on 18 May. However, at school they were encouraged to learn more about the tragedy. Additionally, the predominantly Crimean Tatar environment supported deepening into the topic. The respondent was spreading information in media

space by sharing and posting information on this day. N19 had events for the commemoration the exile that were initiated by the school.

*"This was on May 18th, this kind of thing happened, because our school was located... we had a huge number of Tatars. A lot of them studied in our village, so it was unavoidable in this school."*

As a teacher, N16 gave assignments for the commemoration day where students should collect some proverbs and write an essay about exile from their elders and their oral testimonies. As a student, N9 described a similar approach from the teacher at university.

*"I learned more about the exile when I started my first year of college. We were given an assignment to collect folklore of the Crimean Tatar people. In Simferopol, there is a nursing home where many of the elderly were those who had been banished. They sang songs. I remember we collected them; it was for reports or something like that, and we went there and met with the grandmothers who had experienced the exile. They told their stories. They sang songs, as we were collecting folklore."*

N5 described a ritual of waking up at 4 AM to relive the exile day, a practice that underscores the deep, personal connection to this distant event. Reconstructing the event "minute by minute" and making dua (prayers) highlights the solemn and reflective nature of the commemoration.

#### 5.4.5. Practices of remembering after return

##### 5.4.5.1. Placelore

Upon returning, many Crimean Tatars were unable to go back to their ancestral homes or villages. The reasons varied: some settlements no longer existed, in some cases it was impossible to purchase property in those areas, or Crimean Tatars simply moved to urban areas. The practice of visiting their native homes continues to this day, showing the deep emotional ties Crimean Tatars have to their ancestral homes. Also, it allows to reconnect with their roots and trace their family histories, fostering a sense of belonging and continuity of collective memory across generations.

In some cases, younger generation witnessed a total disappointment of elders who visited their native land for the first time after homecoming to Crimea. This act of disenchantment generated an empathic grievance for them, transmitting and amplifying the collective trauma of exile through generations.

*"... that's how I learned about Crimea from my grandmother. We went to the house*

*where they used to live. Well, they didn't let us in. And then I understood that this exile, she told me it happened right from here." (N9)*

N5 recounts the disappointment experienced by the spouse's grandfather who returned to Crime after a long absence. Despite his anticipation and excitement, upon arriving, he failed to satisfy his nostalgic memories and re-establish the connection with his past. The disappointment arises from the realization that the place he once knew has become alien and unfamiliar. However, witnessing these feelings fuels younger generation to develop the connection with that past in order to understand what is happening.

N17 described attempt of intergenerational transmission of memory through a place of birth. The respondent's grandfather, who lived in the US from after the WWII, came to visit his village with his nephews and nieces to show them his house. The owners did not let them in, referring to the unsafe time which made them afraid. As in the abovementioned situation, the refusal represents the tragedy even more vividly, showing the scale of the event.

People who settled in abandoned Crimean Tatar houses, as N15 mentioned, are afraid that Crimean Tatars can come and show the ownership documents and take back the property. The relatives of N12, moved by a nostalgia, wished to visit their family house. Upon the arrival at the place, they asked the owner to let them in to see the interior, but they were asked in return whether they would not take this house back. However, as N15 told in the same statement, the exiles did not have time to collect documents during the expulsion and they "they took only the most valuable things, the Quran and a small bundle of food to avoid starving." N9 described a dominating concern among Crimean society that Crimean Tatars would aggressively take back what is rightfully theirs.

#### 5.4.5.2. *Qaytarma*

"Qaytarma" is a first full-length Crimean Tatar movie and first about the exile of Crimean Tatars, being premiered in 2013. Besides these facts, the movie became the first attempt to cinematographically depict the exile, thus endowing with images people who have not witnessed the exile on their own. This supported the migrating tragic stories, providing them with additional dimension. N1 recommended to watch this movie while describing the experience of the parents, saying that "all of them—told stories, like in 'Qaytarma.'" Respondent N13 suggests the movie as a credible source of information about the 1944 banishment to those who do not know much about it.

The movie itself is a postmemory, i.e. reimagined deeply rooted traumatic knowledge which director of Crimean Tatar origins Ahtem Seyitablayev put through his specter of

emotions. The researcher remembers the period of screening in cinemas all over Crimea. All talks were about the poignancy of the movie and tears, especially elders. N7 is related to the generation born in Crimea. The movie served as an indicator of this post-memory linkage between generations and adoption of the trauma.

*"I cried during the viewing of 'Haytarma,' really shed tears. It's not like I consider myself a Crimean Tatar, you know. I don't deny that part of me exists, so it was more like, besides the tragedy itself, it was also about my personal connection, you know? I understood that my grandmother, for example, was there at that moment, that many close relatives experienced and lived through it. Plus, my mom... I related it to myself, to my family. So, it was more than just watching and crying." (N7)*

N19 said that there was not anything new which means that in the family stories were circulating and most likely the respondent was exposed to the intergenerational trauma. The movie has provided N19 with the visual component of how it was happening since there are not any video materials from the 1944 exile.

*"We see that picture. And if you're really empathetic, you watch and imagine, 'This is how my grandfather, my grandmother was banished. This is how it was.'" (N19)*

*"In the cinema, I felt pain. I was probably in a state of stress for a long time, and I couldn't recover for a very long time. I can't watch that movie again. I just can't—it would bring back the stress." (N12)*

N14 played an episodic role in the film. The respondent described the experience on the film set where actors were plunged into the akin to a dominating-then atmosphere. By these techniques not only a viewer receives a closer to reality picture and ambience, but also the actors by cultivating collective trauma to the level of their own.

*"If the scene was in a train car, you were really in the train car, and it was hard to breathe. It was very hard to breathe. And that was just a small part of what we experienced there on the set. A small part of what actually happened in 1944."*

### **5.5. Crimean Tatars since 2014**

The occupation of Crimea by Russia in spring 2014 caused serious distress among Crimean Tatars "as they and their homeland were transferred overnight from democratic, Western-leaning Ukraine to Putin's authoritarian Russia." (Williams, 2016, p. 157) Crimean Tatars have been showing loyalty to independent Ukraine since the collapse of the Soviet union, supporting sovereignty, territorial integrity, and pro-Western aspirations. Therefore, they supported the Orange Revolution in 2004 in the result of which the pro-Russian

Ukrainian government was demolished. During the pivotal events in the beginning of spring, Crimean Tatars opposed the growing pro-Russian sentiment which agitated separation from Ukraine and accession to Russia

On February 26, a massive rally took place near the Crimean parliament, where pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian activists clashed. The following day masked Russian soldiers took control of the Crimean parliament building where the deputies voted in favor of Russia in support of holding a referendum. Oxana Shevel (2014) in her article for the Washington Post has laconically described Crimean Tatars' stance.

*“Whatever the Tatar grievances against the Ukrainian state may be, when faced with the choice of being under either Russian or Ukrainian control, the Crimean Tatar leadership has consistently and unequivocally chosen Ukraine.”*

The Crimean Tatar Mejlis has refused to recognize the new Russian-installed government in Crimea following the invasion. Mustafa Cemilev, the leader of Crimean Tatars, also a member of the Ukrainian parliament, rejected Russian occupation efforts despite Putin's attempts to negotiate, even refusing to endorse the occupation in exchange for his jailed son's release. As a result, Cemilev was banned from entering Russia, including Crimea, for five years. Cemilev remained steadfast, stating the importance of Ukraine's territorial integrity and being described in Western media as a leading voice against the referendum that claimed Crimea's vote to join Russia.

#### 5.5.1. Forced migration

The occupation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 led to a surge in human rights violations against the Crimean Tatar population which had pro-Ukrainian position. Documented cases include abductions, arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, torture, and extrajudicial executions. Many were charged with membership in "Hizb ut-Tahrir" or alleged involvement in pro-Ukrainian volunteer battalions. Repressive measures extended to the suppression of Crimean Tatar culture, language, and institutions, including the closure of media outlets such as ATR and the banning of the Mejlis. Persecution prompted hundreds to flee Crimea, while those remaining faced continued repression. The cumulative effect of these actions, as recognized by the PACE in 2016, poses a significant threat to the existence of the Crimean Tatar community as a distinct ethnic and cultural group (ADC, 2022).

*"I've lived in many places; I can tell you precisely. Especially after 2014, I distinctly felt unsafe in Crimea. It was a clear feeling of insecurity, especially for a Crimean Tatar like me. It was always there. When I read Solzhenitsyn's 'The Gulag Archipelago' around 2011-*

*2012, I understood how it all worked. I never had a sense of relaxation. It was okay if, hypothetically, you were Russian or spoke Russian, or if you sort of erased your identity to survive, probably not for me, but in general. If you erased your identity and assimilated with the majority of the population, which unfortunately happens, we all mostly speak Russian. That's how it worked. I always had this feeling, it turns out. Even after the annexation of Crimea, I never felt comfortable there. Whenever I crossed that checkpoint between Crimea and Ukraine, I always felt anxious. There was always a sense of unease. But when I returned to the territory not controlled by the Russian Federation, I felt calmer." (N17)*

N17 explained the origins of insecurity as something that was conveyed from elders through their stories of exile. Also, an understanding of being a minority put the respondent in a weak position.

According to the Russian census 2020, only 220 thousand Crimean Tatars live in Crimea compared to almost 1.3 million Russian. The collective trauma sowed feeling of insecurity and unsafety to the descendants. The sense of being banished or deteriorated by the national aspect keeps the remembrance of collective trauma and guarantees its lasting to the next generation.

*"Those who were radical, who were there for Ukraine, so to speak, everyone was prohibited from talking about it. It's not about a government ban. It's just your mom comes up to you and says, 'Son, don't talk about this. You shouldn't talk about it. You could get into trouble, so to speak.' Living in this politics of not being able to talk about certain things is equal to not being yourself, equal to creating some separate personality, as I see it. A large number of people are united by this. We lived under a fabricated personality with our own customs that we had to develop just to live, simply to live. And when I left, for a very long time, I couldn't freely talk about certain topics, right? Still, there was paranoia because of this system that came to us; you develop paranoia, fear of being found out, that you'll be exposed. But the fear isn't about what will be done to you; the fear is about hurting others in your family, your friends, and so on. And that also greatly affects one's personality, I think. After 2014, I remember, I remember what happened in 2014. We left then, my mom took me, then returned to school. A long time passed. A strong impression, I return to class, and everyone is looking at me. They had scared eyes. They looked at me and saw threats in me. It was palpable." (N11)*

N10 has fled Crimea after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022. The respondent's decision to not take action in 2014 due to the responsibility of caring for elderly parents and family.

The internal exile mentioned by the respondent reflects a deep emotional and social isolation of being physically present in Crimea but alienated because of the political situation.

*“I lived as if in internal exile all these years because I have parents there, I have family there. My son was still going to school there, so I couldn't just leave alone. It needed to be organized, but no one wanted to, and then if we leave Crimea, who will be left for him if we all leave? Although in Ukraine, some Ukrainians perceive it as if you stayed, then you're a traitor, then you're with them. So, I lived, I was an internal exile.”*

N7, who moved to the mainland of Ukraine after the occupation, shared how Ukrainian were precautionous about people of Crimea.

*“I'll tell you, basically, in Ukraine, especially in the early years, around 15, 15, when you said you were from Crimea, people were cautious in the moment, they had to understand if you were truly with us. It was necessary to understand that if you came to Ukraine, you were with Ukrainians.”*

#### 5.5.2. 18 May in 2014

Right after the occupation, Russia begun suppressing people of non-Russian identities and any oppositional voices in Crimea. 18 May in 2014 has a special place in collective memory of Crimean Tatars. On this day the pro-Russian government forbade mass events, thus banned Crimean Tatars from their conventional way of commemorating the victims of the 1944 illegal exile: a march to the central square in Aqmescit and a peaceful rally. Instead, Russian OMON chained the usual location of the gathering to conduct trainings. Crimean Tatars were forced to commemorate far from the center to a mosque on the outskirts of the city (Aqmescit - a neighbourhood in Aqmescit (Simferopol) predominantly inhabited by Crimean Tatars), being convoyed by the omnipresent “green men” and helicopters. N17 has also been there, recalling *“a helicopter flying over us, and some drones were flying, and these Russians, I remember it exactly.”* The researcher was there with his family. He remembers the helicopters and a feeling of being encircled by Russian soldiers, although there were not them on the site.

N8 has told that will never forget this day because of the amount of pain it consists of and baldness of Crimean Tatars. The father's illness coincided with the created tension due to the occupation.

*“There was a crazy ban at the time, but we still went. We went to Aqmecit near the mosque where there was a small square, and they were trying to drown out our voices. There were helicopters flying overhead; they started talking and flying, trying to drown out the*



*speeches. We couldn't understand what Çubarov was saying. That was the most painful day, I remember feeling so bad. I cried a lot, and on top of everything at home with my father, who passed away on June 14th. But that May 18th, I will never forget. It was the most painful day, and I was struck by our people, especially the youth, who, despite everything, walked down the roads with their posters and flags. I will never forget that image."*

### 5.5.3. 18 May after 2014

2014 appeared to be the last year when Crimean Tatars were able to organize a mass rally to honor the memory of the exile in Crimea. The pro-Kremlin government hinders the native people from the mourning meeting on the main square in Aqmescit. Throughout 10 years of occupation, they use different pretexts to limit the commemoration to the laying of flowers at monuments and official speeches of pro-Russian representatives.

*"Well now, after this COVID, they're trying to restrict it altogether. Only the administration and at the railway station there is a monument to the deportees to lay flowers there. Last year I went to the rally, everything was covered with tape, there were guards around all the time. People were directly probed, completely checked bags and let through, they said there should not be more than 15-20 people. And since people were coming from everywhere, they couldn't help but let them through. They did, but now there are no children's performances at such rallies. The administration speaks there, the culture house says something, the mullah reads a prayer. Their representative comes from the church, he also reads with a cross. They bless everything there. Now it's different, purely symbolic. It's just for a tick. And before, when I went to rallies with my children from school, children recited poems, and there were tears, and everyone was there, and people were eyewitnesses. That's what they came out and told the rallies were then."*

N12 stated of the probability to be fixated by the police while attending an event on 18 May. Therefore, people have switch to the individual or family level of commemorating the victims of 1944.

*"I could just recall in my soul, in my soul, on that day, passing by where you were, something, somewhere, laying flowers there, in the square. After '14, we were deliberately driven away from the square. We went to the station area, there was also a stone." (N4)*

The pro-Kremlin authority in Crimea removed the cornerstone of the monument for the victims of the exile. Annually, Crimean Tatars gathered around the foundation stone to lay flower. It occurred after reconstructions in the park in 2023 where the stone located in

Aqmescit (Abdullah, 2023). N6 explained that the local government “deliberately erase” everything related to May 18<sup>th</sup>.

*"Last year, on May 18th, repairs began at the train station area. And there, if you remember, there was a memorial stone. The stone suggested that some sort of composition or monument would be made later. How many years has it been? Now that stone has been removed. It was already gone last year, and it was impossible to gather at the station. And this year, too, everything is fenced off, as if the repairs are still ongoing. The stone is gone, and no one knows where it went. Basically, they're saying, 'We'll put the monument farther away, go there and remember,' I want to say."*

#### 5.5.4. Süren Memorial

In May 1944, the Süren railway station near Bahçesaray became a notorious site for Crimean Tatar. From this station, the Soviet regime exiled around 100,000 Crimean Tatars from the Bahçesaray district, Aqmescit, Aqyar (Sevastopol), and nearby areas. In the 1950s, the village of Süren was renamed Siren (Lilac). Following 2014, the pro-Kremlin authorities in Crimea started constructing a 1.8-hectare memorial complex to honor the exile victims, with work beginning in 2016. It took 5 years to accomplish the project.

The main elements of the complex include: the memorial composition "Pillars of the Peoples of Crimea," a commemorative plaque, the letter composition "Suren," the sculptural composition "The Last Family" (created by Russian artist Salavat Shcherbakov), a freight wagon, a chapel, and mosque (KRTMuseum, 2022). The same artist Shcherbakov is author of an infamous for Crimean Tatars sculpture to “polite people”, i.e. to the “green people” who are Russian soldiers participated in the occupation operation in 2014.

Only few respondents either visited the memorial complex or had their opinion about it. N5 has only seen pictures from the site, but the respondent was indignant by the fact of non-Crimean Tatar name as an author. The events of 2014 had a traumatic impact on the respondent and amplified the previously existed one. Although N5 precautioned of not seeing the whole complex, the main compositions which interest the research was seen.

*"When I saw the photo, it gave me the impression that the Crimean Tatars were peacefully rising, almost as if they were going on a vacation to warm southern countries. It seemed like there was no violence, and they were being carefully protected so nothing would happen at this memorial. You don't see the real history at all. You don't see it in the people's eyes or actions, nowhere."*

The respondent described the composition “The Last Family”. The contradictions can be explained in absence of banishing forces that violently moved people to the wagons and sent off from their homeland. N5 heard from many people that the memorial complex does not evoke sorrowness, but something opposite.

*“There is no sorrow there; maybe there is fear and a desire to scare people once again.”*

N2 is of a similar opinion as N5, expressing thoughts about the freight wagon.

*“You know what I don't like? They put that freight wagon there, as if hinting that if you misbehave, you'll be taken away again. To me, it felt like that. Well, they showed these cattle cars, maybe they meant something else, but for me, it was a reminder to stay quiet and not make any trouble.”*

The question about the memorial composition was asked across interviews. N3 sees the existence of a such museum as a positive sign due to presence of a guide who can explain historical aspect of the place. However, N3 considers that commemorative bodies should be made according to the traditional way of honouring memory which corresponds with culture of people.

*“There's an old English saying: if you want to understand a people, look at their marketplace, church, and cemetery. You see, for us, if we wanted to commemorate something, to honor a memory, we would build a fountain or plant a tree, something different. We didn't have portraits or images. And especially not tall obelisks or life-sized statues. In Crimea, there were never fountains like in Versailles. Here, water was scarce, so we had the Fountain of Tears, for example. It was done differently. So, if we are to commemorate memory, it should probably reflect the traditions of the people who lived here.”*

### **5.6. Postmemory. Knowledge of survival.**

In order to understand whether the traumatic experience has been transmitted to the generation-recipients, the respondents were asked a question whether the 1944 exile, being a distant for many interviewees, has any impact on their personal life. In some cases, it was obvious because of the narratives told and, for example, the reactions shown such as crying.

N19 stated that the influence on the first and second generations can be traced in the omnipresent stimulus to return to Crimea. For N15 tears of the grandmother petrified the memory of the exile that the respondent telling the same stories to the children and hope of the continuation of the tradition. N11 has been grown in an artistic family as well as N10,

therefore, the stories were not merely told, but passed through one of the forms of art which amplified the reception. For them the exile was an integral part of life.

*“This pain is very profound for me, perhaps even exaggerated, maybe due to my character and the fact that I'm a creative person - I'm vulnerable in such moments of pain. It's like a foundational aspect of my life. Not that I live for the pain, but I want to ensure that justice for my people prevails. You can't get rid of this pain; it will be with me for life.” (N10)*

N17's lingering sense of insecurity is shaped by the traumatic experience migrated to the respondent from elders. Despite achieving stability and success, the memory of losing their home persists to haunt the respondent.

*“I understand that, hypothetically, what was happening to me, in general, even when I was in Kyiv, when I was making money, everything was fine, I had a slight feeling of unsafety, and I think it was from there, I mean, it's still trauma that... I never had the feeling, you know, that I could breathe freely. There was always a feeling that something, what's happening now, could hypothetically collapse at any moment because they, in fact, destroyed all our lives, and they just evicted everyone in one day. And at some point when the psychologist asked me why I don't hypothetically buy myself a house or acquire some material things. I realized something. I recently came to understand that I was just scared, honestly, that it could collapse at any moment. I mean, there's no feeling that your private property is protected, and I think it probably comes from there. People simply took away homes, the house where my grandmother lived. It's located above the Nikitsky Botanical Garden. And when we went there in 2011, they just didn't let us in because, they said, you know, it's such an unsafe time, we can't let you in just to see our grandfather's house, where he was born. I felt that, probably, somewhere deep down there was such a feeling, yes, you can buy yourself an apartment and everything else, but at some point, they could take it all away. I think it's still there, as part of the family's trauma.”*

N11's habit to stockpile food reflects a subtle influence of collective trauma, driven by a subconscious reaction to the stories of food scarcities during the forced exile. The grandfather's memories had shaped the behavior of the respondent.

*“Why our fridges are always full. We don't need full fridges, but they are always full, even for me, though, yes, I live in Montreal, where money is tight. I have to stock up the fridge with some canned goods because there's always this fear that it will be taken away. I spend a lot, for example. When my friends ask why I need so much, I tell them, 'Don't ask me that. You don't know my life story.' I may not have experienced the exile, but I've been so deeply affected by it, yes, affected, of course, that it's not something conscious.”*

19:44 on a clock is not merely time for the researcher, N18, and N19. The combination of numbers always has meaning of the exile's day, returning to the memory about the tragedy every time it is noted.

N14, despite being born almost 60 years after the exile, shared the same feeling to be haunted by the stories passed down by elders. The occupation of Crimea sowed a sense of displacement and longing for their homeland, contributing to the deeper connection with the banished generation.

The pain of the traumatic experience was always present in N2, saying that it is ingrained into Crimean Tatars to the extent that they become part of the exile's story. N18 shared the same feeling of being surrounded by these stories.

*"Of course, and still, this pain lingers. I still don't feel myself at home in this life. I still feel it, that we're not wanted here. So, from childhood, it's been there, from childhood."*(N2)

N13 has not personalized the collective trauma since the stories are merely an experience of those who suffered physically. However, the respondent feels sorrow of what happened. N12 is a relative of N13. Although N12 spoke about an impact of the tragic event, the respondent did not elaborate further, emphasizing on the importance to remember the history of the nation. N16 stated that the collective trauma affected in the way *"I became a fervent nationalist. I fully immersed myself in it."*

*"Not knowing the past - no future, so, you know, it's clearly important to understand that, to learn it and keep it in mind, but not to dwell on it too much. The world is moving forward. Everything is moving forward."* (N13)

N6 suggested that the traumatic experience has equipped Crimean Tatars with resilience and the ability to navigate complex situations, both every day and political, without being greatly affected.

*"Did we live well under any regime? Our people always felt oppressed by any authority. That's why our people don't trust any authority and try not to get involved in politics. Many may think that we choose an ostrich policy, sticking our heads in the sand and ignoring everything else, right? Well, it's not quite like that. We understand everything clearly, we perceive everything clearly. We don't forget that if you raise your head too high, you might lose it, and without a head, you are useless to anyone. You won't be able to help your family without a head."*

N17 and N11 also expressed that collective memory had contributed to the distrust towards any authorities, including other non-Crimean Tatar people.

*“The exile personally affected me. You know, I think overall I had this feeling of distrust towards the government, the heads of state, and even towards your, let's say, Slavic neighbours in Crimea.” (N17)*

*“Perhaps, to be more cautious. This agenda, it was always there, until 14 or after, 'be more careful, be more cautious,' because exile as an event instilled in people another detail. These 'trust issues,' problems with trust, because you trusted, and you were treated so horribly. And this path of exile is also a path of seeking trust, rethinking everything, whom to trust, how to move, with whom to move, and what I was told is to be more careful, keep your distance.”(N11)*

N7 and N18 shared their thoughts that the collective memory fostered a dislike towards Russians.

*“The only impact that occurred strengthened my dislike towards the Russian-speaking, well, not the Russian-speaking, but specifically towards Russians, you know.” (N7)*

*“My grandfather has a sister. When they were banished, she was already of conscious age, so she roughly understood what was happening, and she remembered all those scenes. Well, I didn't talk to her often, only when we visited them. She had, you know, an open, I would say, dislike, not just towards the Soviet Union, but generally towards Russians, you know. I don't mean to say she was a racist, but she was quite tough (the older sister of my grandfather). It's like, let's say, a dislike for Russians and even a strong distrust. She didn't want her grandchildren to be friends with Russians.”(N18)*

N18 added that due to the traumatic past, Crimean Tatars are more solidary with small nations who suffered colonialism, unjustified violence and humiliations based on nationality. The collective trauma allows to draw parallels between their history and Crimean Tatar's.

### **Conclusion**

This thesis has endeavoured to shed light on the enduring impact of the 1944 exile on the contemporary socio-political landscape of the Crimean Tatars. Through the exploration of the concept of post and collective memory, the research has delved into the transmission of traumatic experiences across generations and the subsequent shaping of perceptions of modern reality.

By asking fundamental questions about the mechanisms underlying the conveyance of these stories, the study has provided insights into the intricate ways in which collective

memories are perpetuated. Furthermore, this research has sought to unravel the complex interplay between historical trauma and political identity formation. By examining how political identities are transferred intergenerationally through the prism of collective memory, the study has highlighted the profound influence of past injustices and lasting since then difficulties on present-day socio-political dynamics.

In order to answer the abovementioned questions, the research employed oral history interviewing, thus 20 Crimean Tatars were in-depth interviewed. The collected material was analyzed through narrative theory, categorizing them by the narrative structures and recurring themes. In the result, findings are structured in the chronological order, delving into the alternative history representing collective memory of Crimean Tatars.

Regardless of the ubiquitous rule of silence during the USSR, the research shows that through various explicit and implicit practices allowed the trauma of genocide to migrate to the next generation. Although some people could visit Crimea and through the physical contact reveal the tragedy, many Crimean Tatars were unaware of how their homeland looks like and what make them live somewhere but their homeland. In this case, Crimea was represented as a fairy land through personal testimonies or legends, reflecting the nostalgic feelings of those who were born there. The longing of this generation has created different customs of reminiscing such as bringing Crimean soil or seeds of flowers. Art, especially music, had enormous significance at disseminating the story about the homeland and the Soviet crime against the people.

While some conformed with the Soviet reality by concealing their stories from children and others had very active stance, discrimination was to some extent a remainder of foreignness. The collapse of the Soviet Union provided people with the lacking freedom, and it was the period of unveiling details about the past. Although the stories have powerful effect that one can begin considering them as personal, the first and second generations of postmemory could live through some experiences of the exiled generation. The mass return in 90's was a softer version of the 1944 resettlement, but it gave a chance to draw comparison and deeper understand elders.

When everyone was allowed to visit their homeland, through the same practice of place-lore, i.e. physical contact with a memorial place, people amplified resentments towards the past, therefore, adopting the traumatic memory as an intrinsic part of them. During the period of independent Ukraine in Crimea, a first Crimean Tatar movie "Qaytarma" was established, and it was about the 1944 tragic events, strengthening the intergenerational connection and overall awareness.

The commemoration day, appeared at this period, has become a first institutionalized realm of memory. The peaceful rallies on a square gathered thousands of Crimean Tatars from all over the peninsula, accumulating their collective memory in one area. Such event had positive effect on the conveyance of the tragic memory and certain knowledge it contained in order to survive in the non-Crimean Tatars dominating environment. Therefore, the evidence of it was noticeable during Russia's occupation of Crimea in 2014 when Crimean Tatars have shown a pro-Ukrainian stance, remembering through their centuries long history how is to be with Russia. Unfortunately, the history repeated itself for the native people of Crimea. By the same strategy as in 18<sup>th</sup> century, Russia occupied the peninsula. This event exacerbated relationship between Crimean Tatars and local pro-Russian people due to the support of Ukraine by the former. Moreover, the sufferings are perpetuating for Tatars which intensify the embodied the post-memorable traumatic experience with the new struggles and threats, coming from Russia and its invasion of Ukraine.

The limitations of the research can be viewed in few ways. First, all participants either returned to Crimea or were born there, therefore, it does not represent those Crimean Tatars who remained in Central Asia or in some other places but Crimea. Second limitation is the online format of conducting interviews. This aspect is very important in the contemporary political environment since there are fear of a wiretap and following prosecutions, especially for those who stay in Crimea. Possibility of the on-site fieldwork could give more explicit data. However, to visit Crimea for the researcher poses certain risks.

In future studies, the sample size can be expanded as well as geographical coverage. The results of the study can give new perspectives to research collective memories of Crimean Tatars, drawing attention on post-memorable testimonies the second and third generations of Crimean Tatars. Moreover, the future study can include the fourth generation to analyze an extent of collective memory's presence.



**List of references**

1. Abdullah, A. (2023, July 18). *Из сквера возле ж/д вокзала Акмесджита исчез памятный камень жертвам депортации [A memorial stone to the victims of exile disappeared from the park near the Aqmescit railway station]*. Retrieved May 19, 2024, from <https://www.crimeantatars.club/life/society/iz-skvera-voze-zh-d-vokzala-akmesdzhita-ischez-pamyatnyj-kamen-zhertvam-deportatsii>.
2. Adams, T. E., Ellis, C., & Jones, S. H. (2017). Autoethnography. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118901731.iecrm0011>
3. Alexander, J. (2004). "Chapter 1. Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma". In *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (pp. 1-30). Berkeley: University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520936768-002>
4. Anikin, D. A., & Golovashina, O. V. (2017). *Травмы культурной памяти: концептуальный анализ и методологические основания исследования [Traumas of Cultural Memory: Conceptual Analysis and Methodological Foundations of the Study]*. *Vestnik Tomskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta*, (425), 78–84. doi:10.17223/15617793/425/10
5. Assmann, A. (2006). Memory, Individual and Collective. In R. Goodin & C. Tilly (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford Academic. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199270439.003.0011>.
6. Assmann, J., & Czaplicka, J. (1995). Collective Memory and Cultural Identity. *New German Critique*, 65, 125–133. <https://doi.org/10.2307/488538>
7. Assmann, J. (2013). Communicative and cultural memory. *Memory Studies*, 6(4), 36–43.
8. Broshevan, & Tygliants. (1994). *Изгнание и возвращение [Izgnanie i Vozvrashchenie ]*. Tavrida.
9. BenEzer, G. (2003). *The Ethiopian Jewish Exodus*. Routledge.
10. Бугаї, N. F. (Ed.). (1992). Иосиф Сталин--Лаврентию Берии : "Их надо депортировать" : документы, факты, комментарии [Iosif Stalin--Lavrentiïu Berii: "Ikh nado deportirovat": dokumenty, fakty, kommentarii]. Druzhba narodov.
11. Chamberlain, M. (2006). Oral History. In T. L. Charlton, L. E. Myers, & R. Sharpless (Eds.), *Handbook of Oral History* (pp. 272–289). Rowman Altamira.
12. Clarke, E. D. (1811). *Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Part 1: Russia, Tartary, and Turkey*. Philadelphia.

13. Confino, A., & Fritzsche, P. (2002). Introduction: Noises of the Past. In A. Confino & P. Fritzsche (Eds.), *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture* (pp. 1–24). Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
14. Crimean State Philharmonic. (2023, April 24). *Крымскотатарский ансамбль песни и танца «Хайтарма» Крымской государственной филармонии [Crimean Tatar song and dance ensemble "Qaytarma" of the Crimean State Philharmonic]*. Retrieved from <http://krim-gf.ru/2023/04/24/крымскотатарский-ансамбль-песни-и-та/>.
15. Daniels, S. (1993). *Fields of vision: Landscape imagery and national identity in England and the United States*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
16. Demidov, A. (1853). *Travels in Southern Russia, and the Crimea*. London.
17. Di Leonardo, M. (1987). Oral History as Ethnographic Encounter. *The Oral History Review*, 15(1), 1–20. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3674955>
18. Dubois de Montpereux, F. (1843). *Voyage autour du Caucase V2 [Travel around the Caucasus V2]*. Paris.
19. Dubrovskiy, V. (1956). Türk Kırım’a dair tarihi kaynak ve araştırmalar [Historical sources and research on Turkish Crimea]. *Institut zur Erforschung der UDSSR*, (4), 53–76.
20. Filimonov, S. V. (2006). Интеллигенция в Крыму (1917-1920): поиски и находки источниковеда [The intelligentsia in Crimea (1917-1920): searches and findings of a source scientist]. Simferopol’.
21. Fisher, A. W. (1978). *The Crimean Tatars*. Hoover Institution Press.
22. Fisher, R. T. (1982). The Punished Peoples: The Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War. By Aleksandr M. Nekrich. Translated by George Saunders. New York: W. W. Norton, 1978. xiv, 238 pp. \$10.95. *Slavic Review*, 41(1), 140–141. doi:10.2307/2496655
23. Halbwachs M. (1997 [1950]). *La Mémoire Collective [Collective Memory]*. Paris: Albin Michel.
24. Hirschberger, G. (2018). Collective Trauma and the Social Construction of Meaning. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01441>
25. Hromenko, S. (Ed.). (2016). *Наш Крим: неросійські історії українського півострова [Our Crimea: non-Russian stories of the Ukrainian peninsula]*. Kyiv, KIS/Ukrainian Institute of National Memory.

26. Kemalöđlu, L. (2021). Rus Yıllıklarındaki Tarihî Hikâyelerde Altın Orda [The Golden Horde in Historical Stories in Russian Annals]. *Cengiz Han Ve Mirası*, 195–206. <https://doi.org/10.53478/tuba.2021.029>
27. Kirişli, H. (1996). *National movements and national identity among the Crimean Tatars (1905-1916)*. Leiden: Brill.
28. Knuuttila, S. (2006). Paikan moneus [The multiplicity of the place]. In S. Knuuttila, P. Laaksonen, & U. Piela (Eds.), Paikka. *Eletty, kuviteltu, kerrottu* (pp. 7–11). Kalevalaseuran vuosikirja 85. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura.
29. Kodzova, S. Z. (Ed.). (2015). *История Крыма [History of Crimea]*. Moscow, Russian Military-Historical Library
30. Kizilov, M. (2003). *Karaites Through the Travelers' Eyes: Ethnic History, Traditional Culture and Everyday Life of the Crimean Karaites according to the Descriptions of the Travelers*. New York.
31. Kravchenko, E. A. (2002). Південний Крим за античними джерелами і легенда про таврів [South Crimea in ancient sources and the legend of the Taurians]. *Naukovi zapiski NaUKMA*, 20(Historical Sciences: In Two Parts. Part 1), 28-34.
32. KRTMuseum. (2022, December 3). Меморіальний комплекс жертвам депортації в посёлке Сирень Бахчисарайського району [Memorial complex for the victims of exile in Süren]. Retrieved May 19, 2024, from <https://krtmuseum.ru/memorialnyj-kompleks-zhertvam-deportatsii-v-posyolke-siren-bahchisarajskogo-rajona/>.
33. Latyshev, V. V. (Latyshev, V. V.). (1947-1949). Известия древних писателей, греческих и латинских, о Скифии и Кавказе [Accounts of ancient Greek and Latin writers about Scythia and the Caucasus]. *Vestnik drevnej istorii*, No. 1-4.
34. Laškov, F. F. (1888a). О камеральном описании Крыма [On the cameral description of the Crimea]. *Izvestija TUAК*, 6, 36–63.
35. Laškov, F. F. (1888b). ). О камеральном описании Крыма [On the cameral description of the Crimea]. *Izvestija TUAК*, 7, 25–45.
36. Laškov, F. F. (1889). О камеральном описании Крыма [On the cameral description of the Crimea]. *Izvestija TUAК*, 8, 12–40.
37. Laškov, F. F. (1897a). О камеральном описании Крыма [On the cameral description of the Crimea]. *Izvestija TUAК*, 2, 20–30.
38. Laškov, F. F. (1897b). О камеральном описании Крыма [On the cameral description of the Crimea]. *Izvestija TUAК*, 3, 36–64.

39. Laškov, F. F. (1897c). О камеральном описании Крыма [On the cameral description of the Crimea]. *Izvestija TUAК*, 4, 32–45.
40. Lazzerini, E. (1988). The Crimea under Russian rule: 1783 to the Great Reforms. In M. Rywkin (Ed.), *Russian Colonial Expansion to 1917* (pp. 123-138). London and New York: Mansell Publishing Ltd.
41. Lazzerini, E. (1985). Crimean Tatar: the fate of a severed tongue. *Sociolinguistic perspectives on soviet national languages: their past, present and future*, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter, 109-124.
42. Lemkin, R. (2014). *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd.
43. Lowenthal, D. (1991). British national identity and the English landscape. *Rural History*, 2(2), 205–230.
44. Mal'gin, A. (2004). *Русская Ривьера: курорты, туризм и отдых в Крыму в эпоху Империи: конец XVIII – нач. XX в. [Russian Riviera: resorts, tourism and recreation in Crimea during the era of the Empire: late XVIII - early. XX century]*. Simferopol'. Sonat
45. Markevič, A. I. (1894). *Опыт указателя сочинений, касающихся Крыма и Таврической губернии вообще [Experience of an index of works relating to the Crimea and the Tauride province in general]*. Simferopol'.
46. Memetov, A. M. (1990). *Иноязычные заимствования в крымскотатарском языке [Foreign Language Borrowings in the Crimean Tatar Language]*. Tashkent
47. Memetov, A. M. (2013). *Крымскотатарский язык (История изучения. Лексикология. Фонетика. Морфология) [Crimean Tatar Language: History of Study, Lexicology, Phonetics, Morphology]*. Simferopol'. Krymuchpedgiz.
48. Misztal, B. A. (2003). *Theories Of Social Remembering*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK). Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/BarbaraMisztalTheoriesOfSocialRemembering>
49. Mubeyyin, B. A. (n.d.). *Arabat Tragedy*. International Committee for Crimea. Retrieved March 16, 2024, from <https://www.iccrimea.org/surgun/arabat.htm>
50. Neal, A. (1998). *National Trauma and Collective Memory*. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe.
51. Nekrich, A. M. (1978). *The punished peoples: The exile and fate of Soviet minorities at the end of the Second World War*. Norton.

52. Неромніащій, А. А. (1998). *Очерки развития исторического краеведения Крыма в XIX - начале XX века [Essays on the development of historical local history of Crimea in the 19th - early 20th centuries]*. Simferopol'.
53. Неромніащій, А. А. (1999). *Записки путешественников и путеводители в развитии исторического краеведения Крыма (последняя треть XVIII-начало XX века) [Notes from travelers and guides in the development of historical local history of the Crimea (last third of the 18th – early 20th centuries)]*. Kyiv.
54. Неромніащій, А. А. (2001) *История и этнография Крыма: Библиография и архивы, конец XVIII - начало XX века [History and ethnography of Crimea: Bibliography and archives, late 18th - early 20th centuries]*. Simferopol'.
55. Неромніащій, А. А. (2003). *Историчне кримознавство (кінець XVIII – початок XX століття) [Historical Crimean studies (end of the 18th century – beginning of the 20th century)]*. Simferopol'.
56. NKDT. (1989). *О Выводах и предложениях Госкомиссии Г.И. Янаева [On the Conclusions and Proposals of the State Commission of G.I. Yanayev]*. Retrieved May 18, 2024, from <https://web.archive.org/web/20210720140620/http://ndkt.org/o-vyvodah-i-predlozheniyah-goskomissii-g.i.-yanaeva.html>.
57. Nora, P. (1989). Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire. *Representations*, 26, 7–24. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928520>
58. Olick, J. K., & Levy, D. (1997). Collective Memory and Cultural Constraint: Holocaust Myth and Rationality in German Politics. *American Sociological Review*, 62(6), 921–936. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2657347>
59. PACE. (2016). *Resolution 2133*. Retrieved May 20, 2024, from <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=23167>.
60. Pallas, P. S. (1802). *Travels through the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire, in the Years 1793 and 1794* (Vol. 2). Translated from German. London.
61. Peniston-Bird, C. (2009). Oral History, The Sound of Memory. In S. Barber, & C. Peniston-Bird (Eds.), *History Beyond the Text: A Student's Guide to Approaching Alternative Sources* (pp. 105-121). (Routledge Guides to Using Historical Sources). Routledge.
62. Platt, K. M. F. (2016). Secret Speech: Wounding, Disavowal, and Social Belonging in the USSR. *Critical Inquiry*, 42(3), 647–676. <https://doi.org/10.1086/685607>
63. Попов, Р. Р. (2007). *Мир ученых в Крыму: исторический очерк [The world of scientists in Crimea: a historical sketch]*. Simferopol'.

64. QHA. (2008, March 15). «Мои последние каникулы...» 40-летию песни «Эй гузель Къырым» посвящается (ФОТО) [My last vacation...” Dedicated to the 40th anniversary of the song “Hey Guzel Kyrym” (PHOTO)]. QHA Crimean News. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20180521104853/http://qha.com.ua/ru/kultura-iskusstvo/moi-poslednie-kanikuli-40letiyu-pesni-ei-guzel-kirim-posvyaschaetsya-foto/16632/>.
65. Ritchie, D. A. (2014). *Doing Oral History*. Oxford Oral History.
66. Rybakov, B. A. (1952). *Об ошибках в изучении истории Крыма и о задачах дальнейших исследований* [On the Mistakes in the Study of Crimean History and the Tasks of Further Research]. Simferopol’.
67. Shevel, O. (2021, December 7). Who are the Crimean Tatars, and why are they important? Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/03/01/who-are-the-crimean-tatars-and-why-are-they-important/>.
68. Sibirko, A. (n.d.). *BIBLIOTHECA CHERSONESSITANA*. Retrieved from <http://www.library.chersonesos.org/index.php?lang=en>.
69. Uehling, G. (2004). *Beyond memory: The Crimean Tatars’ exile and return*. Palgrave Macmillan.
70. UINP. (2021, October 11). *УІНП провів круглий стіл про дослідження історії Криму* [UINP held a round table on researching the history of Crimea]. Retrieved April 4, 2024, from <https://uinp.gov.ua/pres-centr/novyny/uinp-proviv-kruglyy-stil-pro-doslidzhennya-istoriyi-krymu>.
71. Valk, L., & Sävborg, D. (Eds.). (2018). *Storied and Supernatural Places: Studies in Spatial and Social Dimensions of Folklore and Sagas*. <https://doi.org/10.21435/sff.23>
72. Vozgrin, V.E. (2013). *История крымских татар: в 4-х томах* [History of the Crimean Tatars: in 4 volumes]. Simferopol, Tesis
73. Williams, B. G. (1997). A community reimagined. The role of “homeland” in the forging of national identity: The case of the Crimean Tatars. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 17(2), 225–252. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602009708716374>
74. Williams, B. G. (1998). The Crimean Tatar exile in Central Asia: A case study in group destruction and survival. *Central Asian Survey*, 17(2), 285-317.
75. Williams, B. G. (2001). The Ethnogenesis of the Crimean Tatars. An Historical Reinterpretation. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 11(3), 329–348. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186301000311>

76. Williams, B. G. (2002). The Hidden Ethnic Cleansing of Muslims in the Soviet Union: The Exile and Repatriation of the Crimean Tatars. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 37(3), 323–347.
77. Williams, B. G. (2016). *The Crimean Tatars: From Soviet genocide to Putin's conquest*. Oxford University Press.
78. Yurasov, A. V. (Ed.). (2016). Крым: проблемы истории. Сборник статей [Crimea: problems of history. Digest of articles]. Moscow, Indrik.
79. Zolotarev, D.Y. (1999). Европейская и американская историография эмиграции крымских татар [European and American historiography of the emigration of the Crimean Tatars]. *Культура народов Причерноморья [Culture of the peoples of the Black Sea region]*, (6), 347-350.

### Resüme

Mälestused genotsiidist ja kollektiivsest tragöödiast krimmitatarlaste kaasaegsel sotsiaalsel ja poliitilisel maastikul

Ismet Suleimanov

Käesolevas töös uuritakse 1944. aasta massilise eksiili kestvat mõju krimmitatarlaste kaasaegsele ühiskondlik-poliitilisele maastikule. Uurides kollektiivsete traumade ja mälestuste järgseid mõisteid, uuritakse, kuidas traumaatilised kogemused põlvkondade lõikes edasi kanduvad ning tänapäevaseid arusaamu ja identiteete kujundavad. Läbi 20 põhjaliku suulise ajaloo intervjuu, uurimus paljastab mehhanismid, mis on tingitud põlistamine kollektiivseid mälestusi ja nende rolli põlvkondadevahelise poliitilise identiteedi kujunemist.

Tulemused näitavad, et vaatamata nõukogudeaegsele vaigistamisele anti genotsiidi trauma edasi selgete ja kaudsete tavade kaudu. Füüsilised sidemed Krimmiga, kunstilised väljendid ja isiklikud tunnistused aitasid säilitada identiteedi ja kuuluvustunnet. Nõukogude Liidu lagunemine võimaldas avaldada allasurutud ajalugu, süvendades nooremate põlvkondade arusaamist. Massiline tagasipöördumine Krimmi 1990. aastatel ja sellele järgnenud institutsionaliseeritud mäluvaldkondade loomine, nagu mälestuspäevad, tugevdatud kollektiivne mälu ja solidaarsus.

2014. aasta Venemaa okupatsioon Krimmis taaselustas ajaloolised traumad, krimmitatarlaste demonstreerisid tugevat Ukraina-meelset hoiakut, mis põhines nende ajaloolistel kogemustel Venemaaga. Jätkuv konflikt süvendab nende võitlusi, süvendades päritud traumaatilisi mälestusi uute väljakutsetega.

See uurimus rõhutab kollektiivse mälu olulist rolli krimmitatarlaste ühiskondlik-poliitilise tegelikkuse kujundamisel, pakkudes teadmisi selle kogukonna vastupidavusest. Tulevased uuringud võiksid laiendada valimi suurust ja geograafilist ulatust, sealhulgas neljandat põlvkonda, et täiendavalt uurida kollektiivse mälu olemasolu ulatust ja selle mõju järgmistele põlvkondadele.



Non-exclusive licence to reproduce thesis and make thesis public

\_\_\_\_\_ Ismet Suleimanov \_\_\_\_\_,  
(*author's name*)

herewith grant the University of Tartu a free permit (non-exclusive licence) to

reproduce, for the purpose of preservation, including for adding to the DSpace digital archives until the expiry of the term of copyright, my thesis

Memories of the genocide and collective tragedy in the contemporary social and political landscape of Crimean Tatars

\_\_\_\_\_  
(*title of thesis*)

supervised by

\_\_\_\_\_  
(*supervisor's name*)

2. I grant the University of Tartu a permit to make the work specified in point 1 available to the public via the web environment of the University of Tartu, including via the DSpace digital archives, under the Creative Commons licence CC BY NC ND 4.0, which allows, by giving appropriate credit to the author, to reproduce, distribute the work and communicate it to the public, and prohibits the creation of derivative works and any commercial use of the work until the expiry of the term of copyright.

3. I am aware of the fact that the author retains the rights specified in points 1 and 2.

4. I certify that granting the non-exclusive licence does not infringe other persons' intellectual property rights or rights arising from the personal data protection legislation.

*Ismet Suleimanov*

**21/05/2024**