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Nation-building and Nationalism in the Black Sea Region (Nineteenth–Twenty-First Centuries)

1 Introduction and Outline of the Chapter

Rooted in Western European liberalism, the idea of the nation as a politicized concept of belonging, commonality, and solidarity found its way to the Black Sea region during the long nineteenth century.[1] Promising a modernizing reconfiguration of the state, society, economy, and culture, it initially attracted especially those sections of the local elites that were seeking a symbolical (re-)alignment with Europe by reproducing its institutions and lifestyles. Even if the blind imitation of Western modernity met with criticism—in Romania, for example, Titu Maiorescu (1840–1917) coined the critical bon mot *formă fără fond* (i.e. "form without content")[2]—conservative elite members (like Maiorescu) were also able to agree on the concept of the nation, as it made it possible to inscribe the values they cherished in a normative corpus that was imagined as part of a national tradition reaching far into the past. Unwanted change could thus be castigated as a deviation from the path the nation was destined to follow. As for liberal intellectuals, the great appeal of this concept lay in the fact that it promised to harmonize opposites such as old and new, the self and the other, or rich and poor.[3] Imagining urban bourgeoisies, an often landless peasantry, and a nascent industrial proletariat as one great community connected by the common interest in the welfare of the nation, it should bridge social antagonisms—regardless of differences in socialization, conflicting economic interests, or the fact that mutual understanding was difficult due to the use of different dialects and sociolects (and sometimes even languages). At the same time,

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1 In this article, such a conceptualization will be addressed as nationalism. The term nationalism is used as an analytical category, not, as is often the case in the media, a normative one.

2 For an English translation of the essay "În contra direcţiei de astăzi în cultura română" (*Against the contemporary direction in Romanian culture*), published in 1868, in which Titu Maiorescu makes this criticism, as well as a short biography of the author, see the following anthology: Ahmet Ersoy, Maciej Górny, and Vangelis Kechriotis, eds., *Modernism: Representations of National Culture* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2010).

3 On the close link between the emerging idea of the modern nation and nineteenth-century liberal thought, see the still fundamental study by Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012 [first edition 1991]), especially 14–44.

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liberal conceptualizations of education, prosperity, gender roles, and even affect control could be embedded into—most often personalized—accounts of national history. This strategy of historical make-believe was intended to obliterate the traces of recent intellectual transfers from outside that had brought these concepts into the communities in which they were now to become effective.

Grand narratives have played an essential role in this process. They have popularized notions of a common ethnic origin reaching far into the past and of historical experiences shared by all members of the nation as a "community of fate," thus shaping the genre of ethnonationalist historiography. Pre-modern realms and dominions have been anachronistically interpreted as precursors of nation states that are to be restored in the present, or whose existing borders are to be shifted. This is true, for example, of references to the Byzantine Empire in the Greek *megali idea* or to the pre-modern Armenian kingdoms, which also date back to antiquity, the realm of the medieval Georgian kings and other dynasts ruling this region from the sixteenth century, the two Bulgarian Empires in medieval Southeastern Europe and Kyivan Rus, which for both Russian and Ukrainian nationalism represents the starting point of national statehood imagined as having continuously existed since the ninth century. For other national historiographies, the post-medieval pre-modern period provides a reference point: the Cossacks for Ukrainian nationalism or the Khanate of Crimea for Crimean Tatar historical narratives.[4] In narratives of Romanian national history, a central role is played by the reign of Michael the Brave (Mihai Viteazul, 1558–1601), during which the principalities of Wallachia, Transylvania, and Moldavia were united under one ruler for a brief period of four months in 1600, which is seen as the nucleus of the Great Romanian nation state established after World War I.

References to the past were more difficult for Turkish national historiography. The Kemalist cultural revolution of the 1920s and the first half of the 1930s decreed a break with cultural practices of the Ottoman past, which Atatürk roundly condemned as a historical aberration in his own interpretation of history.[5] This did not necessarily mean that the Ottoman era did not represent any positive point of reference for national historiography—contrary to the portrayals in older research.[6] However, the picture of the Ottoman era remained ambivalent and characterized by numerous negative cli-

4 An early example of narrating the history of the Crimean Khanate as part of Crimean Tatar national history can be found in Cafer Seydamet Qırımer (1889–1960): Djafer Seïdamet, *La Crimée. Passé – Présent – Revendications des Tatars de Crimée* (Lausanne: Imprimerie G. Vaney-Burnier, 1921), esp. 16–32.

5 For Atatürk's interpretation of the Ottoman sultanate and caliphate as institutions that prevented the vital development of the Turkish nation, see his iconic speech *Nutuk* held in 1927 and lasting a total of 36 hours: [Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal], *A speech delivered by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal, President of the Turkish Republic, October 1927* (Leipzig: Koehler, 1929).

6 This was recently demonstrated by Deniz Imamoğlu in his dissertation on Turkish historiography of the 1930s: Uğur Cenk Deniz Imamoğlu, "Turkish Historical Society and Nation Building (1931–1938)" (PhD thesis, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, 2023), https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/giris.jsp.

chés. The situation was different with the history of pre-Ottoman Anatolia.[7] In addition to the Seljuk Empire, the ancient history of this region played a role here, similar to Greek and Romanian national history with their references to classical Greece or the ancient people of the Dacians as the supposed progenitors of today's Romanians. As in Romanian and other national historiographies in the Black Sea region, in the Turkish case too questions of migration history have played a central role: The supposed proof that the Turkish tribes colonized Anatolia as early as prehistoric times was intended to fend off competing claims of Greek, Armenian, and Kurdish nationalisms. An unreservedly positive reference to the imperial dimensions of Ottoman history and an emphasis on the civilizational significance of Islam did not take place until the 1980s, and was intensified after the Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) came to power in 2002. In the meantime, imperial Ottoman history and the Islamic dimensions of Turkish history have become a usable past and play a prominent role in national modes of self-description. This reappropriation of the imperial past, apostrophized as neo-Ottomanism, is intended to legitimize the definition of spheres of interest and the reorientation of foreign policy in the present, when it focuses on an imagined Ottoman commonwealth.[8] Such neo-imperial appropriations of the past are even more pronounced in the historical policy of Putin's Russia, where they are supposed to justify the war against Ukraine.

In all these cases, strategies of constructing a *normative past*[9] are discernible, that is, imaginings of the past are used as a yardstick for shaping the present. The construction of such normative pasts goes hand in hand with the imagination of a "golden age," that is, epochs that are imagined as a phase of a cultural heyday, economic prosperity, and maximum territorial expansion. Developments that took place after these imagined golden ages and contradict what national historiographies describe as its "essence" are seen as historical aberrations and misdevelopments that need to be revised, be it borderlines, demographic conditions, or cultural practices such as the use of a given language. In this context, the use of various forms of repression or even physical violence is usually considered legitimate, as will be shown below.[10]

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7 This was summarized in historiography under the term *Türk Tarih Tezi* (Turkish History Thesis). On the role of the Battle of Manzikert in 1071, in which a Seljuk contingent defeated the Byzantine emperor, as a national founding myth, see Carole Hillenbrand, *Turkish Myth and Muslim Symbol: The Battle of Manzikert* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 196–225; regarding the changing perception of the once Ottoman Balkan region, see Ebru Boyar, *Ottomans, Turks and the Balkans: Empire Lost, Relations Altered* (London: Tauris Acad. Studies, 2007).

8 M. Hakan Yavuz, *Nostalgia for the Empire: The Politics of Neo-Ottomanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

9 For the concept of normative pasts, see Jan Assmann, *Religion and Cultural Memory: Ten Studies*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006).

10 Helpful overviews of the development of national grand narratives, which take into account political contexts and social conditions, can be found in: Hercules Millas, *National Myths in Greece* (London: Transnational Press, 2023). And in a comparative perspective: Hercules Millas, "History for Nation-Building: The Case of Greece and Turkey," in *Palgrave Handbook of Research in Historical Culture and Edu-*

In the process of nation-building, five phases can be distinguished in the Black Sea region: (1) the long nineteenth century, (2) the continuum of war and ethnicized violence from 1911 to 1923, (3) the interwar period starting with the foundation of the Soviet Union 1922 and the Treaty of Lausanne 1923, followed by the period of World War II that affected the Black Sea Region directly since 1940, (4) the period of bloc confrontation, and finally (5) with regard to the northern Black Sea region, the post-socialist period, and with regard to the southern Black Sea region, the period of post-Kemalism.

2 The Long Nineteenth Century: Nation-building in the Age of Empire

The emergence of nationalisms took place in the Black Sea region in the nineteenth century within the framework of imperial rule. The initial conditions, potential effects, and goals of the various national movements were highly diverse. In an overview such as this article, it seems sensible not simply to enumerate individual national movements, but to describe and compare them with the help of abstract models and at the same time to ask about possible interactions. The approach of this chapter is, as outlined above, that nationalism is an elite project whose advocates seek to have a broad social impact. The temporalization of the Prague historian Miroslav Hroch is a model that is able to describe the dynamics of how such an impact unfolded. It helps to make developments in different societies comparable, which is also shown by studies on national movements in the Russian and Ottoman Empires. Hroch's model distinguishes, as is widely known, between phase A, in which patriotic intellectuals develop cultural models of the nation, phase B, in which these models are politicized in order to gain broad popular support, and phase C, in which nationalisms are supported by mass movements.[11] In recent research, it has been proposed to extend

cation, ed. Mario Carretero, Stefan Berger, and Maria Grever (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 355–72; Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Making of the Georgian Nation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); Roumen Daskalov, *The Making of a Nation in the Balkans: Historiography of the Bulgarian Revival* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2004); Serhii Plokhy, *Ukraine and Russia: Representations of the Past* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014); Stephen Velychenko, *National History as a Cultural Process: A Survey of Interpretations of Ukraine's Past in Polish, Russian and Ukrainian Historical Writing from the Earliest Times to 1914* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1992); Lucian Boia, *History and Myth in Romanian Consciousness* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2001). For a general account of the reorientation of Kemalist historiography after the founding of the Turkish Republic and its dissemination, see: Étienne Copeaux, *Éspaces et temps de la nation turque: Analyse d'une historiographie nationaliste (1931–1993)* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1997), and in Turkish translation: *Türk Tarih Tezinden Türk İslam Sentezine: Tarih Ders Kitaplarında (1931–1993)* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1998).

11 Miroslav Hroch: *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

this model to include a phase D focusing on nation-building processes after independence.[12]

Another model, which was first developed in a comparative European and then in a global perspective, and whose reception seems to be essentially limited to German-speaking academia, is that of Theodor Schieder, who distinguishes between integrating and unifying varieties of nationalism.[13] Such a classification might help us distinguish between conceptualizations of the national that aimed at political emancipation—be it autonomy, or be it through territorial secession from imperial rule, and those that aimed at the integration of an existing state, now based on the idea of the nation. Concerning the Black Sea region before World War I, this last category of integrating nationalisms includes Russian nationalism in the Russian Empire and—under much more complex conditions—Turkish nationalism emerging in the Ottoman Empire and—until the rise of Kemalism—being diffusely linked to the idea of imperial rule.

Another possible distinction is that between so-called "old" and "young nations," which Andreas Kappeler makes in his groundbreaking study of national movements in the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. Among the "old nations" Kappeler counts those ethnonational groups that had their own cultural elite and that had developed their own tradition of statehood and literary language before their integration into the Russian Empire. On the northern shores of the Black Sea these were the Crimean Tatars and Georgians. Kappeler contrasts them with the so-called "young nations," that is, "peasant peoples," which had only an incomplete social structure, as they lacked traditional elites and their urban middle classes were only weakly developed.[14] In the northern Black Sea region, this categorization applies first and foremost to the Ukrainians.

Kappeler's categorization is based on socio-historical considerations. However, the distinction as such is older and, as Holm Sundhaussen has already argued in relation to Southeastern Europe, might involve problematic judgment.[15] Since the nineteenth century, the argument that a nation is new, suggesting that it was invented, or too small has been used to delegitimize competing emancipatory claims. At present, a denial of national self-determination based on such an argumentation can be observed on the part of Putin's Russian neo-imperialism in relation to Ukraine. While one's own nation is imagined as having existed since time immemorial, the nation of the "others" is denounced as new and artificial. Such possible problematic implications must always be considered when applying generalizing categories of analysis.

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12 Ulf Brunnbauer and Klaus Buchenau, *Geschichte Südosteuropas* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 2018), 128.

13 Theodor Schieder, "Typologie und Erscheinungsformen des Nationalstaats in Europa," in Theodor Schieder, *Nationalismus und Nationalstaat: Studien zum nationalen Problem im modernen Europa*, ed. Otto Dann and Hans-Ulrich Wehler (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1992), 65–86.

14 Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire: A Multi-ethnic History* (London: Routledge, 2014).

15 Holm Sundhaussen, "Ambiguities of 'Natural' and 'Artificial' Nations: Introductory Remarks," in *The Ambiguous Nation: Case Studies from Southeastern Europe in the 20th Century*, ed. Ulf Brunnbauer and Hannes Grandits (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2013).

As regards the emergence of national movements under the conditions of imperial rule, it must finally be pointed out that the idea of a sharp antagonism between empire and nation, which is deeply rooted in both older scholarship and in self-historicizations of national movements in the region itself, in many cases, did not exist. Loyalties and identities were complex and situational, and the advocates of national emancipatory claims often tried to assert them within the framework of—and not against—the existing imperial order.

If we take up the categorization between state-supporting integrating and unifying nationalisms on the one hand and secessionist nationalisms on the other, then Greek nationalism can be addressed as an early example of secessionist nationalism in the Black Sea Region. Here, too, however, a differentiated view is necessary. What initially catches the eye—and what is also at the center of traditional accounts of national movements in Southeastern Europe—are the efforts to establish an independent Greek nation state as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century, culminating in the War of Independence between 1821 and 1829.[16] Still, the ideas as to which historical polity—Ancient Greece, the Byzantine Empire, or something in between—should be revived and which territorial outlook this state was to have diverged significantly.

Similarly to the case of other secessionist nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greek intellectual activists were driven by the idea of emulating the French Revolution, which implied imaging Ottoman rule not only as illegitimate foreign occupation, but also as an *ancien régime*, stubbornly ignoring the fact that social conditions in the Ottoman Empire were entirely different from those in late-eighteenth-century France. Besides that—and here too we can recognize a parallel to other uprisings against Ottoman rule during the nineteenth century—national activists utilized different forms of social banditry and peasant resistance for their own purposes. They now framed such practices of disobedience as *national resistance* against foreign rule aiming at mobilizing the broad mass of the rural population. In the Greek case, such local "communities of violence"[17] were the Klephts, in the Romanian case they were called Pandurs, and Chetniks in the Serbian and Bulgarian case.[18]

Yet another pattern, which was to become typical of nineteenth-century independence struggle, could already be discerned during the Greek revolution of the 1820s: the attempt to mobilize public opinion in Europe in order to bring about an intervention by the Great Powers in one's own favor. Such a military intervention (this time by Brit-

16 For detailed information on its social and cultural dimensions, the theatres of war, and biographies of its most important actors, see Paschalis M. Kitromilides and Constantinos Tsoukalas, eds., *The Greek Revolution: A Critical Dictionary* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2021).

17 Winfried Speitkamp, "Gewaltgemeinschaften in der Geschichte: Eine Einleitung," in *Gewaltgemeinschaften in der Geschichte: Entstehung, Kohäsionskraft und Zerfall*, ed. Winfried Speitkamp (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), 11–40.

18 See also, with a focus on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Ramazan Öztan and Alp Yenen, eds., *Age of Rogues: Transgressive Politics at the Frontiers of the Ottoman Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021).

ain, France, and Russia) took place for the first time in 1827, and again in 1876, when Russian troops almost reached the Ottoman capital. In both cases, these interventions, together with the diplomatic activities of the European Great Powers, led to international recognition of national sovereignty, in the case of Greece by the London Protocol in 1830, and in the case of Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro by the Congress of Berlin in 1878.[19]

As for the emergence of a public opinion that was sympathetic to the cause of the Christian nationalist activists in the Ottoman Empire, traditions of Islamophobia and hostility towards the Ottoman Empire played a crucial role. This is particularly evident in the emergence of European middle class philhellenism in the 1820s, which was rooted in idealized imaginings of Greek antiquity. The liberal bourgeoisie of Western Europe assumed a congeniality between its own aspirations for freedom, which were suffocated by the post-Waterloo regime of restoration, and the cause of the Greek insurgents. In addition, the use of violence by the Ottoman authorities when suppressing Christian uprisings fed favorable views of the insurgents, as demonstrated by the example of the Batak massacre in 1876, which, not least through targeted political manipulation, fostered anti-Ottoman sentiment in Great Britain, British papers labeling this massacre "Bulgarian atrocities." However, the quest of territorial expansion to the detriment of the Ottoman Empire could also create critical public opinion. This was particularly true of the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, as a result of which the persistent stereotype of Southeastern Europe as an uncontrollable "powder keg" and the site of ethnicized "ancient hatred" became established in the Western media. As Maria Todorova has eloquently argued, these stereotypes still inform Western perceptions of Southeastern Europe in the present.[20]

Besides such practices of armed resistance to achieve national independence we can also identify attempts to enforce political participation and autonomy for one's own ethnonational group within the framework of imperial rule. This aspect of nationalism was long overlooked by research. Among representatives of the Greek community in the Ottoman Empire, for instance, models of autonomy oriented toward the Austro-Hungarian Compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867 were discussed. Until 1908, the autonomous Ottoman province of Eastern Rumelia, constituted by the decisions of the Congress of Berlin, could also claim to be a model for self-government. The fact that approaches to participation within the framework of imperial rule were seen as promising may be shown by the positive response that the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 met with among the Greek and Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire immediately after the reinstatement of the Ottoman constitution.[21] That the Young

19 A good overview of national movements and wars of independence in Southeast Europe can be found in the the chapter "Nation- and state-building" in John R. Lampe and Ulf Brunnbauer, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Balkan and Southeast European History* (London: Routledge, 2021).

20 Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

21 Bedross Der Matossian, *Shattered Dreams of Revolution: From Liberty to Violence in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014).

Turks would so bitterly disappoint the hopes of non-Muslims and non-Turks within the empire, and that in the case of the Armenians they would even choose genocidal ethnic engineering, was beyond what could be imagined at the time.

As for the Russian Empire, the revolution of 1905 had a catalytic effect on the further development of nationalism.[22] The bloody suppression of a workers' demonstration in St. Petersburg reverberated in the peripheries of the empire, all the more so as regions such as Ukraine and Transcaucasia had already been places of social and political unrest, articulated as claims to political participation and also, in some cases, in protests against cultural and linguistic russification. However, as the example of Ukraine shows, peasant populations could be mobilized for social demands such as a radical land reform without necessarily identifying with a genuinely national agenda.

The Ukrainian peasant population was particularly affected by the empire's russification politics that began in the 1860s and aimed at the suppression and repression of the Ukrainian language, the existence of which was denied by the tsarist authorities, who saw in the local language only a variety of Russian contaminated by Polish and, in general, considered Ukrainian nationalism—typical of the imperial stance towards national movements during the nineteenth century—an invention of a few misguided intellectuals who wanted to stir up the bulk of villagers and urban toilers. The same strategy of russification was also applied in other parts of the Northern Black Sea region, affecting the Romanian-speaking population of Bessarabia from the 1860s and the Georgian and Armenian speaking populations of Transcaucasia from the 1870s and the 1880s, respectively. This policy of linguistic assimilation was accompanied by an attempt to limit the autonomy of local church institutions, as had already happened in the case of the Georgian Church during the reign of Nicholas I and with the Armenian Church at the beginning of the twentieth century. In contrast to this, the Ukrainian population in the Russian Empire, unlike the Ukrainians in Austrian Galicia, did not have their own church organization, which was another reason for the hesitant development of their national movement.

The situation was different with the Muslim populations in the Northern Black Sea region. The Russian conquest of the Caucasus led to the displacement of part of the Muslim population, a particularly dramatic example being the enforced resettlement of the Circassians and other Muslim populations into the Ottoman Empire in 1864, which was accompanied by mass deaths. Such coercive measures against recalcitrant populations did not, however, preclude the co-option of loyal Muslim elites into the system of imperial rule or the staging of the benevolence and lawfulness of the tsarist administration.[23] At the same time, the emergence of pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic solidar-

22 For an overview of the impact of the 1905 revolution on nationalism and national movements in the tsarist empire, see Kappeler, *The Russian Empire*, 328–48.

23 Mustafa Tuna, *Imperial Russia's Muslims: Islam, Empire, and European Modernity, 1788–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 195–216; Volker Adam, *Rußlandmuslime in Istanbul am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges: Die Berichterstattung osmanischer Periodika über Rußland und Zentralasien* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2002).

ities, which went along with the spread of the Muslim reform movement of Jadidism, gave rise to fears of Muslim irredentism, although these concerns of the tsarist authorities usually lacked substance.[24]

This generally points to the role of transimperial entanglements in the emergence of national movements as well as protonational ideas of commonality in the Black Sea region before the First World War. They were also strong in the case of Ukrainian nationalism, which received important impulses from the Ukrainian national movement in Austrian Galicia, which is why the tsarist authorities tried to prevent the import of Ukrainian press products from Austria-Hungary. In the case of Armenian nationalism, cross-border exchange played a role too. As Armenian activists in the Ottoman Empire no longer shied away from the use of terrorist violence after the experience of the pogroms of 1894, the tsarist administration viewed such links with growing concern, perceiving Armenian nationalism as increasingly threatening and potentially terrorist. This was also a major reason for the described action against the Armenian Church in 1903. These transimperial interconnections become even more complex when one considers that the model for the Armenian terrorist acts in the Ottoman Empire was the violent practices of the Russian terrorist organization *Narodnaia Volia* ("People's Will") in the Russian Empire.[25]

Despite the continuing mistrust of the tsarist authorities, the 1905 revolution created completely new conditions for the development of national movements in the Russian Empire. Even if it was granted reluctantly, the tsar's October Manifesto opened up new scope for action, as it enabled pre-existing and newly founded national parties and periodicals to articulate their concerns in public legally and—more or less—freely. A completely new platform was provided by the newly opened Duma as a place for parliamentary debate where nationally-based demands for autonomy could be articulated. Reform-oriented Russian Muslims made use of these new freedoms by founding their own party, which soon sought proximity to the liberal party of the Russian Constitutionalists (Cadets).[26]

These new freedoms led to a differentiation of the political spectrum. At the same time, it became apparent that ethnonational emancipation policies were directed not only against russification, but also against other non-Russian nationalisms, as the violent conflicts between Georgians and Armenians and Muslims and Armenians in the Transcaucasia demonstrated. The imperial administration used such tensions to divide and rule.[27]

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24 Stefan B. Kirmse, *The Lawful Empire: Legal Change and Cultural Diversity in Late Tsarist Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

25 Kappeler, *The Russian Empire*, 220–38.

26 Hakan Kırımlı, *National Movements and National Identity among the Crimean Tatars, 1905–1916* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 56–72, 105–15.

27 On the development of nationalisms in the Caucasus region in the late tsarist period, with a focus on the Armenian, Georgian, and Azerbaijani national movements, see the individual chapters in the section "Nationalism and Social Change under Tsarist Rule" in the anthology *Transcaucasia, Nationalism, and*

The early withdrawal of the freedoms granted at the end of 1905 led to increasing frustration, especially among the younger generation of national activists. Quite a few of them doubted that meaningful political participation was within reach under the condition of imperial rule. Among the younger generation of Crimean Tatars, for example, this led to a reorientation within the imperial party spectrum from the liberal Cadets to the social revolutionaries.[28]

The Young Turkish Revolution was to bring new possibilities of articulation for the Russian Muslims. Activists like Yusuf Akçura (1876—1935) now moved to Istanbul in order to publish there. The ideas of community and solidarity they articulated there can be described as his Turkish-grounded pan-Islamism. A sharply contoured Turkish ethnonationalism actually based on the commonality of language and the imagination of common descent was to emerge only in the following years. It was the result of over a decade of persistent experiences of war and expulsion that began in 1911. Here, the circulation of ideas within the Black Sea region played a decisive role.[29]

3 The Period from 1911 to 1923: Nation-Building in a Time of Continuous War and Violence

Italy's attack on the Ottoman province of Tripolitania in 1911, justified with flimsy arguments, represented a bitter setback to the Young Turks' experiment with modernization. The hope that through their constitutionalists efforts and committed reform policies they would be recognized by the European Great Powers as one themselves was severely disappointed by the indifference of European cabinets to Italy's blatant breach of international law. The Balkan Wars, which began in 1912 and resulted in mass violence and expulsion of Muslims from Southeastern Europe, represented an even more drastic experience. Within the Young Turk leadership, doubts increasingly prevailed about the possibility to integrate the Christian populations within the Ottoman Empire.[30]

This marked the beginning of a reorientation towards imperial integration strategies. Yusuf Akçura had described such integration strategies in 1904 as "three types of politics" (*üç tarz-i siyaset*): (1) Ottomanism as trans-confessional imperial patriotism, (2) pan-Islamism as a politicized notion of common religious affiliation, especially including the Arab population, and (3) Turkism as (pan-)Turkish nationalism potentially

Social Change: Essays in the History of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1983), 107–239.

28 Kırımlı, *National Movements*, 73–104.

29 For the transimperial activities of Akçura and other "identity freelancers," see James H. Meyer, *Turks Across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) and Adam, *Rußlandmuslime in Istanbul.*

30 Erik Jan Zürcher, *The Young Turk Legacy and Nation Building: From the Ottoman Empire to Atatürk's Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010).

encompassing all Turkic-speaking peoples.[31] The political elites now increasingly oriented themselves towards the latter integration strategy. This resulted in growing disappointment among non-Turkish population groups.

Such a shift towards imperial nationalism also took place in the Russian Empire—not least in the face of the rise of non-Russian nationalisms manifested in the revolution of 1905. An ideological amalgam of imperial ideas of domination and nationalist striving for hegemony increasingly replaced older imperial patriotism, which was primarily based on loyalty to the dynasty, without being able to completely displace it.[32]

World War I once again radically changed the situation in the Black Sea region. With it, the hope cherished during the constitutional revolutions of 1905 (Russia), 1906 (Iran), and 1908 (the Ottoman Empire) that divergent ethnonational interests could be politically negotiated within a constitutional framework was finally displaced in favor of the idea of a radical "solution" to ethnic "questions."[33] During the Great War, there was an unprecedented intensification of practices of mass expulsion and mass killing in these "shatterzones of empire."[34] Violent ethnic engineering culminated in the genocide of the Armenians in 1915 and 1916[35] and the so-called population exchange between Turkey and Greece during the Turkish War of Independence.[36]

31 Kemal H. Karpat, *The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 388–96.

32 Kappeler, *The Russian Empire*, 238–42; Geoffrey Hosking, "Empire and Nation Building in Late Imperial Russia," 19–33, and, in a broader historical perspective Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552–1917* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

33 Holly Case, *Age of Questions: Or, a First Attempt at an Aggregate History of the Eastern, Social, Woman, American, Jewish, Polish, Bullion, Tuberculosis, and Many Other Questions over the Nineteenth Century, and beyond* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018).

34 Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz, eds. *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and Ottoman Borderlands* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013). For the dynamisation of nationalisms in the Russian Empire as a result of World War I, see Eric Lohr et al., eds., *The Empire and Nationalism at War* (Bloomington: Slavica, 2014).

35 Ronald Grigor Suny, *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 94–115; Ronald Grigor Suny, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Norman M. Naimark, eds., *A Question of Genocide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Fatma Müge Göçek, *Denial of Violence: Ottoman Past, Turkish Present, and Collective Violence against the Armenians, 1789–2009* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of the Modern Turkish Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Hans Lukas Kieser, *Talaat Pasha: Father of Modern Turkey, Architect of Genocide* (Princeton, NJ : Princeton University Press, 2019).

36 Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger: The Mass Expulsions that Forged Modern Greece and Turkey* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Aslı Iğsız, *Humanism in Ruins: Entangled Legacies of the Greek-Turkish Population Exchange* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018).

4 The Interwar Period and World War II

The new international order of the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Lausanne seemed to have finally established the nation state principle in all parts of the Black Sea region. "Greater Romania," for example, now united nearly all Romanian-speaking territories into one state. And while Greece's efforts to unite all Greek-populated areas in one nation state failed, the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations of 1923 seemed to have created a "rational" instrument, legitimized under international law, for how divergent territorial claims could be settled in ethnically heterogeneous areas by "unmixing" them through resettlement agreed by contract.

The Soviet Union also seemed to have internalized the nation state principle by making it a guideline in its dealing with cultural difference. At a first glance, this might be surprising as, according to Marxist doctrine, bourgeois nationalism and proletarian internationalism were incompatible. However, the political practice under Lenin and Stalin assigned to each group that corresponded to Stalin's definition of a nation its own standardized national language, national culture, and an autonomous territory. This policy, which was finally established as binding from 1923 onwards, would subsequently be known as *korenizatsiia* (indigenization). A key aim of *korenizatsiia* was to make Soviet power "intimate" and "comprehensible" to all population groups in the Soviet Union by having them addressed in their native languages (although it was often only now that they were defined and standardized as such) by their "own" people.[37] This approach was applied to the Transcaucasia region too after it had been conquered by the Red Army and the local political elites had either fled or been executed. In April 1918, the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic had been founded here, but by the end of the year it had already split into the states of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan.[38]

A closer look, however, shows that the collapse of the continental empires by no means led to a consistent implementation of the principle of nationality and associated notions of autonomy. In the first place, this applies to the border shifts established in the Paris Peace Agreements. This is well illustrated by the example of Bulgaria. As a defeated Central Power it had to cede Eastern Thrace and Dobruja. However, the ambiguous demographic conditions in these regions made it difficult to justify the border shifts with the right of peoples to self-determination enshrined in Woodrow Wilson's

37 Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 414–52; Jeremy Smith, *Red Nations: The Nationalities Experience in and after the USSR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

38 See the contributions collected in Adrian Brisku and Timothy K. Blauvelt, eds., *The Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic of 1918: Federal Aspirations, Geopolitics and National Projects* (London: Routledge, 2021).

Ten-Point Program. The demographic conditions in the existing or newly established nation states also indicate that they reproduced the ethnonational heterogeneity of the empires that collapsed after World War I—only on a smaller geographical scale. And where homogeneity actually existed, it had only been established through the use of large-scale violence. This also applies to the Greek-Turkish population exchange mentioned above.

A consistent recognition of the nationality principle would also have meant that the rights of national minorities would have been respected. However, this did not happen in most cases, despite the minority protection clauses in the peace treaties.

In the Soviet Union, too, the claim by Lenin, Stalin, and their followers to guarantee the emancipation of all nationalities living there proved to be an illusion. The bureaucratic obsession, which lasted until the end of the Soviet Union, to assign every Soviet citizen a nationality imagined as unchangeable, contrasted with the reality of hegemonic Russian culture. The definition of the cultural canon, as it had existed in the Stalinist Soviet Union since the 1930s, drew on Russian models of the nineteenth century, especially in the areas of literature, music, ballet, and, in the case of classicism, architecture, and used them to form a model of high culture that was presented as exemplary to other Soviet peoples.[39]

At the same time, the interwar period in the Black Sea region marked the definitive departure from the initially dominant liberal variety of nationalism. Nationalism —and this once again shows its enormous adaptability—now entered into a lasting relationship with the ideologies of right-wing authoritarianism, fascism, communism, and Kemalism. While the first manifested itself in the Black Sea region in the royal dictatorships in Bulgaria in 1935 and in Romania from 1938, which aimed to preserve the existing social order, fascism, communism, and Kemalism formulated transformation programs—with varying intensity and goals—that sought a revolutionary transformation of state, society, and culture. With the reorientation of Soviet cultural and educational policy under Stalin, and even more clearly in the cases of fascism and Kemalism, these transformation agendas became embedded in national narratives, be it in relation to ideas of family and gender roles, work, everyday life, or mechanisms of social inclusion and exclusion.[40]

However, the idea of an unchangeable ethnonational classification of people was also the starting point for selection mechanisms according to which different groups of people were expelled or exterminated during World War II. This applies first and foremost to the genocidal racial ideology of National Socialism.[41]

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39 See, with a focus on language, Michael G. Smith, "The Hegemony of Content: Russian as the Language of State Assimilation in the USSR, 1917–1953," in *Kampf um Wort und Schrift: Russifizierung in Osteuropa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Zaur Gasimov (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Rupprecht, 2012), 193–208.

40 For an attempt at a comparative view, see Stefan Plaggenborg, *Ordnung und Gewalt: Kemalismus – Faschismus – Sozialismus* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2012).

41 See the article by Mariana Hausleitner in this handbook.

Ethnonationally coded mechanisms of selection were also applied in the Soviet Union; after cases of actual or anticipated collaboration with the German occupiers, entire population groups were subjected to the collective punishment of deportation, as was the case with the Crimean Tatars. Stalinist (and post-Stalinist) anti-Semitism also followed this racist-nationalist logic of exclusion.[42] The situation is more complex with regard to the famine of 1932/33, known in Ukraine as the "Holodomor," which claimed millions of victims in large parts of the Soviet Union, including Ukraine, the Middle Volga, the Caucasus, and Kazakhstan. The starting point was initially the radical agenda of socio-economic transformation, which was associated with a disastrous agricultural policy, although it is undeniable that these measures were enforced with particular vehemence in non-Russian areas, especially in Ukraine. This is one of the main reasons why the Holodomor is now classified as genocide in the declarations of various European parliaments.

5 The Cold War Period

In the Black Sea region, the antagonistic relationship between the Eastern and Western blocs after World War II caused a change of national statehood both as an idea and social practice, which went along with a revision of existing mental maps.

As concerns the impact of national statehood on everyday practices, it was particularly manifested in the tightening of border regimes. The drawing of new borders and their surveillance posed a new challenge for the circulation of people, ideas, and commodities as early as the nineteenth century. However, with the erection of the Iron curtain and the associated drastic restriction of mobility, this problem took on a completely new quality.

The East-West confrontation, which in the geography of the Black Sea region actually manifested itself as a North-South conflict with the northern shores belonging to the Warsaw Pact and Turkey to NATO, was also accompanied by a change of notions of progress and civilization that where bound to spatial imaginings. This is shown by the example of Turkey: Kemal Atatürk's *cultural revolution*[43] of the 1920s and 1930s had understood modernization as radical Westernization. At that time, continental Western Europe (especially France, Switzerland, Italy and, to a certain extent, Germany) had been seen as a model to imitate. Now, in the Cold War, the Kemalist elites increasingly oriented themselves towards the US. Newly founded elite universities took the leading American universities as their model. Anyone who wanted to join the highest ranks of the Turkish academic elite had to gain intellectual experiences in the States.

42 Edward A. Allworth, ed., *The Tatars of Crimea: Return to the Homeland* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998).

43 For such a conception of the transformation of Turkey under Atatürk, see Klaus Kreiser, *Atatürk: Eine Biographie* (Munich: Beck, 2024).

However, these phenomena of elite culture said little about orientations in the broader strata of the population.

In the northern part of the Black Sea region, representations of the national had to be based on the Soviet model of national culture described above. For the ethnonational groups that had already been in the Soviet Union's sphere of power before World War II, this meant a continued reproduction of everyday practices that condensed into a Soviet civilization, as described by Karl Schlögel.[44] Besides common places,[45] practices of remembrance played a crucial role in the formation of this cross-national Soviet civilization: Within the communist festive calendar, the anniversary of the victory in World War II, commemorated as the "Great Patriotic War," now joined the remembrance day for the October Revolution.

Cultural difference was imagined in stereotyped presentations of folklore which became common knowledge all over the Soviet Union. In the post-Stalin period, such canonical folkloric stereotypes were also disseminated through newly emerging patterns of leisure and consumer culture, especially tourism to the Black Sea and Caucasus regions. Finally, Soviet film contributed to the dissemination and consolidation of such stereotypes, albeit via ironic allusion: The most prominent example of this is undoubtedly the romantic comedy *Kavkazskaia plennitsa, ili Novye prikliucheniia Shurika* (Prisoner of the Caucasus or Shurik's New Adventures; released as *Kidnapping: Caucasian Style*) from 1967, which was extremely popular in the Soviet Union. The film depicts the adventurous journey and amorous entanglements of a Russian ethnography student in Transcaucasia, playing with heterostereotypes of the local inhabitants and clichéd notions of backwardness.[46] Both the plot and the original Russian title allude to Pushkin's canonical poem "Kavkazskii plennik" ("The Prisoner of the Caucasus"), which was published in 1822 and played a central role in the formation of Russian Orientalism and the imagination of the Caucasus as a rough, uncivilized, but also exotic and fascinating mountain region.[47]

With the expansion of the Soviet sphere of power, aesthetics that had emerged in the Soviet Union now also became influential in Bulgaria and Romania for the representation of culture. The field of architecture illustrates this particularly clearly: The *Casa Scînteii* in Bucharest, for example, named after the Communist Party newspaper

44 Karl Schlögel, *The Soviet Century: Archaeology of a Lost World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2023).

45 Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994).

46 Elena Prokhorova, "The Man Who Made Them Laugh: Boris Gaida, the King of Soviet Comedy," in *A Companion to Russian Cinema,* ed. Birgit Beumers (Chichester: Blackwell Wiley, 2016), 562–62.

47 Susan Layton, *Russian Literature and Empire: Conquest of the Caucasus from Pushkin to Tolstoy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Scînteia (The Spark), imitated the architecture of the *Stalinskie Vysotki* (Stalin's high-rises), seven monumental skyscraper projects in late-Stalinist Moscow.[48]

The dominance of the Soviet cultural model also required the revision of national histories reproduced in academic discourse and in history teaching at school. National history had to be told in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist dogmas of the regularity of historical development, for example when the Middle Ages were portrayed as an epoch of domination by a local feudal class. At the same time, the presentation of national history had to be in line with the political interests and claims to power of the Soviet Union. This was particularly true of the representation of recent history, that is, the phase of national movements and nation-building. In the case of Bulgaria, this development had long been closely aligned with Russia, so it was not difficult to stylize Russia and the Soviet Union as the historical big brother whose care for Bulgaria's well-being dated back to the very beginning of modern Bulgarian statehood.

The reorientation towards the Soviet model was much more difficult in Romania. Here, the local intellectuals saw themselves as a natural part of the Western and Central European elite culture, even though the question of which concrete cultural models to follow—France or Germany—remained controversial. During the nineteenth century, the elite's urge for symbolic Westernization went along with a symbolic break with the Cyrillic writing tradition, and in the process of standardizing a Romanian national language, traditional Slavic elements were systematically suppressed. Although these developments did not go unchallenged and—as in other Orthodox countries of Southeastern Europe—anti-Occidental discourses gained in importance during the interwar period, the affiliation to Romance Europe remained more or less unquestioned. Additionally, the aggressive anti-Bolshevism of the Antonescu regime during the Second World War made use of racist anti-Russian stereotypes.

Nevertheless, the years after the Communists came to power in Romania initially saw a radical reinterpretation of recent national history in line with Soviet patterns of interpretation. The establishment of national statehood in the nineteenth century and the expansion of the Romanian nation state after World War I was now narrated as a project oriented primarily towards the class interests of the boyar and bourgeois elites. In addition, the annexation of Bessarabia—part of the Soviet republics of Moldova and Ukraine after World War II—to the Kingdom of Romania in 1920 was criticized. This pro-Soviet presentation of history was gradually dismissed from the 1960s onwards. Nicolae Ceaușescu's establishment of the Romanian variant of national communism from 1971 onwards finally marked the ultimate break with this mode of interpreting the past. Whereas Ceaușescu's regime in terms of the technique and representation of power was characterized by a leader cult oriented towards contemporary Chinese and North Korean models, a paranoid surveillance of one's own population by the state security service, and a representation of multiculturalism borrowed from the So-

48 Emanuela Grama, *Socialist Heritage: The Politics of Past and Place in Romania* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2019), 32–65.

viet model, a deliberately sharp demarcation from the neighboring Eastern and Southeastern European countries took place through the emphasis on Romanity. The orientation towards models of the pre-communist era went so far that Ceaușescu, like the fascist dictator Ion Antonescu before him, claimed the designation *Conducător* (leader) for himself.[49]

Such a use of nationalism, which was oriented towards models of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, as can be seen in Romanian national communism, was contrasted by the phenomenon of mobility and the dynamization of notions and practices of identity. This applied in the first place to emigration from the Soviet Union, as had already been the case in the interwar period. The Crimean Tatar émigré community continued to play an important role in Turkey's political and intellectual life and shaped ideas of the Crimean nation and its connectedness to Turkey in Turkish society.[50] Concerning institutionalized scientific nation-building in exile, mention should be made of the Ukrainian University, which was founded in Prague in 1921 and moved its headquarters to Munich in 1945, or the academically far more important Center of Ukrainian Studies, which was established at Harvard University in 1973.[51]

A completely new form of cross-border mobility and identity patterns was brought about by labor migration from Turkey to Germany from 1961 onwards, which gave rise to transnational kinship networks that still exist today. Political, social and, for a long time, also economic experiences of discrimination, encounters with diverse forms of everyday racism, and a lack of access to educational resources often strengthened the immigrants' feeling that they had to preserve and defend their own culture in the host society, which in some cases led to phenomena of retraditionalization. At the same time, emigration to Germany opened up new opportunities for minorities that were discriminated against in Turkey, such as the Alevis.[52]

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49 For the development of historiography in communist Romania, see Francesco Zavatti, "Between History and Power: The Historiography of Romanian National-Communism (1964–1989)," *Cuadernos de Historio Contemporánea* 42 (2020): 39–58.

50 Alan Fisher, "The Crimean Tatars, the USSR, and Turkey," in *Soviet Asian Ethnic Frontiers*, ed. William O. McCagg, Jr. and Brian D. Silver (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), 1–24 (reprinted in: Alan Fisher, *Between Russians, Ottomans, and Turks: Crimea and Crimean Tatars* [Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2010], 177–200).

51 Nadia Zavorotna, *Scholars in Exile: The Ukrainian Intellectual World in Interwar Czechoslovakia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020); Zaur Gasimov, "Krimtatarische Exil-Netzwerke zwischen Osteuropa und dem Nahen Osten," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften/Austrian Journal of Historical Studies* 28, no. 1 (2017): 142–166.

52 See, for example, the investigations into this matter by the sociologist Esra Özyürek: Esra Özyürek, "The Politics of Cultural Unification, Secularism, and the Place of Islam in the New Europe," *American Ethnologist* 32, no. 4 (2005): 509–12; and Esra Özyürek, "'The Light of Alevi Fire was Lit in Germany and then Spread to Turkey': The Debate about the Relationship between Alevism and Islam," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 15, no. 1 (2009), 233–53.

6 Reinventing the Nation: Post-Socialism and Post-Kemalism

The period from the 1980s to the first decade of the new millennium in the Black Sea region was a phase of long transition from socialist to post-socialist societies on the one hand and from the Kemalist approach to politics, religion, and culture to a post-Kemalist society on the other. While in the Soviet Union, with Mikhail Gorbachev's assumption of the office of General Secretary of the CPSU in 1985 a reform phase began during which he tried to combine a course of social liberalization with a return to what he considered true Leninism, in Turkey, Turgut Özal attempted to follow a path of economic liberalization and a moderate re-Islamization of the public sphere, which meant a break with orthodox Kemalist secularism almost twenty years before Recep Tayyip Erdoğan came to power. The success of these policies was very different. While Gorbachev's approach failed before the eyes of the world at the latest with the coup by reactionary forces of the old Soviet Union in August 1991, Özal's idea of combining re-Islamization with liberalization can be seen as an approach that Tayyip Recep Erdoğan also pursued in his first years in office—at least to certain extent—before he turned towards paternalistic authoritarianism.[53]

Gorbachev's clear renunciation of the Brezhnev doctrine enabled the states of the Warsaw Pact, which finally dissolved in July 1991, to find their own political future without having to fear Soviet intervention, as was the case in Hungary in 1956 or Czechoslovakia in 1968. Where there were violence and deaths in the replacement of the old regime, as in Romania, this was due to internal factors. Whereas Gorbachev had initially vehemently opposed the independence of the Baltic states, he was no longer able to influence the final dissolution of the Soviet Union. It was finally sealed in the Belovezha (Belarusian: Belavezha) Accords on December 8, 1991, and in Alma-Ata (today: Almaty) on December 21, 1991, after Georgia had already declared its independence in April 1991 and Ukraine (including the majority of the population in the Donbas and in Crimea) had overwhelmingly opted for independence in a referendum held on December 1.[54] Research has emphasized the compromise nature of these agreements. While in the non-Russian successor states of the Soviet Union they were largely seen as recognition of independence, on the Russian side there was the hope that the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) established by these agreements could create the conditions for Russia to retain control over CIS member states. In the course of Putin's historical revisionism, a kind of stab-in-the-back legend has developed around the Belovezha Accords according to which the dissolution of the Soviet Union was brought

53 For a basic orientation for these two transformation phases, see Archie Brown: *Seven Years That Changed the World: Perestroika in Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Yavuz, *Nostalgia for the Empire*, 107–25.

54 Serhii Plokhy, *The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union* (New York: Basic Books, 2014).

about without any political necessity. The lasting significance of these agreements, however, is that they recognized the inviolability of the borders.[55]

The dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union was accompanied by a reinvention of the nation both on a symbolical and on a scholarly level. In most cases, this process did not mean an actual break with paradigms and practices of producing and presenting national culture as already performed in socialist times, even if it often was staged as such in order to distract from the manifold continuities that existed between the socialist and post-socialist elites. Historical discourses and commemorative practices shaped during the socialist period were inserted—albeit often in modified form—into the official narratives and representations of national history if they continued to appear politically useful. Besides that, points of reference were now sought again in pre-communist times. In Romania, the new period of reference became especially the interwar period, which is stylized as a golden age of national statehood. For countries like Ukraine or Georgia, which had only experienced a short phase of national independence before 1991, looking for such historical points of reference was a much more difficult undertaking. In a monograph on the historian Mykhailo Hrushevsky (1866–1934), who was also the first president of independent Ukraine in 1917, the Ukrainian-American historian Serhii Plokhy describes how Hrushevsky's approach to Ukrainian history helped him to free himself in the 1980s and 1990s from the Russocentric narratives encompassed in the paradigm of the "History of the Peoples of the USSR."[56] For him, as for many other historians in post-socialist Europe, in a phase of fundamental change and reorientation the models of national history shaped in the nineteenth century became meaningful again.

In Georgia, the designation of the post-Soviet nation state as the "Third Republic" refers to the phase of national independence after the end of the tsarist empire—despite its short-lived nature. At the same time, the example of post-socialist Georgia illustrates the importance of "invented traditions" for the reproduction of models of commonality and belonging. In the Georgian case, the ritual of the banquet (*supra*) —with its toasts considered specifically Georgian and under the guidance of a *tamada*—takes on the role of such a tradition that is essentialized as the core of national identity. This charge of meaning makes it possible to use the ritual in a situation of social change not only to stabilize a positive self-image—the virtue of hospitality itself—but also to epitomize certain patterns of behavior, in this case ideas of masculinity in a male-dominated form of sociability. As with many of the "invented traditions," this is

55 Felix Riefer, "Die Erzählung vom Ende der Sowjetunion als außenpolitischer Referenzpunkt," *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 67, no. 21–22 (2017): 22–26.

56 Serhii Plokhy, *Unmaking Imperial Russia: Mykhailo Hrushevsky and the Writing of Ukrainian History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), ix–x and 3–21.

essentially a practice that was only standardized from the nineteenth century onwards and not ethnically marked beforehand.[57]

Such national appropriations of a common cultural heritage also take place in the post-Ottoman areas of the Black Sea region (and in post-Ottoman Southeastern Europe in general), for example when in Bulgaria Ottoman architecture of the nineteenth century is re-labeled "Bulgarian Revival architecture" (*balgarska vazrozhdenska arhitektura*), a term coined in socialist Bulgaria in the 1950s and used to this day—also in the presentation of local culture to foreign tourists.[58]

Similar observations can be made in the field of cuisine, when food consumed across borders is reinterpreted as a national dish.[59] In today's Turkey, a revival of Ottoman cooking traditions is taking place which—at least to a certain extent—can be described in terms of post-imperial nostalgia. This revival is part of cultural and political practices usually labelled neo-Ottomanism.[60] It goes hand in hand with a positive reassessment of the Ottoman legacy. A positive reappropriation of the Ottoman past is also taking place in other areas of everyday culture, for example in music and in extremely popular historical telenovelas (which have also found an audience in Southeastern Europe), which focus on ruler personalities such as Süleyman I ("the Magnificent") or Abdülhamid II, who was portrayed notoriously negatively in traditional Kemalist historiography.[61]

Although it is an older conceptual coinage, in the field of politics neo-Ottomanism is associated primarily with the AKP's (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*/Justice and Development Party) assumption of power in 2002. The neo-Ottoman revival initiated by the AKP is based on the mental map of an Ottoman commonwealth in which Turkey strives for increased visibility in foreign and cultural policy, for example by maintaining cultural institutes, but also strives to assert political interests with robust measures, for

57 Florian Mühlfried, *Postsowjetische Feiern: Das georgische Bankett im Wandel. Mit einem Vorwort von Kevin Tuite* (Stuttgart: ibidem-verlag, 2006); Florian Mühlfried, "Banquets, Grant-Eaters, and the Red Intelligentsia in Post-Soviet Georgia," *Central Eurasian Studies Review* 4, no. 1 (2005): 16–19.

58 Tchavdar Marinov, "The 'Balkan House': Interpretations and Symbolic Appropriations of the Ottoman-Era Vernacular Architecture in the Balkans," in *Entangled Histories of the Balkans*, vol. 4, *Concepts, Approaches, And (Self-)Representations*, ed. Roumen Dontchev Daskalov, Diana Mishkova, Tchavdar Marinov, and Alexander Vezenkov (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 559–60; Tchavdar Marinov, "Constructing Bulgarian Heritage: The Nationalisation of the Byzantine and Ottoman Architectures of Melnik," in *Balkan Heritages: Negotiating History and Culture*, ed. Maria Couroucli and Tchavdar Marinov (London: Routledge, 2016), 84–114.

59 For the construction of the *shopskata salata* as a Bulgarian national dish, see Stefan Detchev, "Shopska Salad: From a European Innovation to the National Culinary Symbol," in *From Kebab to Ćevapčići: Foodways in (Post-)Ottoman Europe*, ed. Arkadiusz Blaszczyk and Stefan Rohdewald (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2018), 273–88.

60 Stefan Rohdewald, "Neo-Ottoman Cooking in Turkey in the Twenty-First Century: Cooking as a Means to Imagine a Common Past and Future," in Blaszczyk and Rohdewald, *From Kebab to Ćevapčići*, 289–300.

61 Leyla Amzi-Erdogdular, "Ottomania: Televised Histories and Otherness Revisited," *Nationalities Papers* 47, no. 5 (2019): 879–93.

example when it violates the Syrian border in order to attack Kurdish militias in Syria. Domestically, this neo-imperialist approach to politics is used to present Erdoğan to his electorate as a respected statesman and Turkey as a major regional power and one of the leading nations in the Muslim world. At the same time, political neo-Ottomanism goes hand in hand with a policy of re-Islamization of society. This includes the ostentatious observance of religious commandments in everyday life, the commitment to Islam as a source of ethical orientation applied to politics, and the use of religious codes when addressing the public. Ideologically, this results in a synthesis of Turkish nationalism and politicized Islam, which other political actors had already experimented with before Erdoğan, but which no longer meets with significant resistance due to the ousting of the old Kemalist elites from positions of political, social, and military leadership.[62]

This reinvention of the Turkish nation outlined here has a number of similarities to reinterpretations of the national in the post-socialist societies of Eastern Europe. In addition, research has pointed out similarities to Russian neo-imperialism. First of all, the temporal parallelism is striking: Both Vladimir Putin's assumption of power as president in 2000 and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's as prime minister in 2003 have ushered in neo-imperial new designs of national identity. For Russia, a link to the pre-socialist era means above all a reappropriation of the traditions of the tsarist empire. In addition to recourse to older epochs of Russian history, we can discern a reappropriation of imperial imaginaries that go back to the time of Peter I but were shaped above all in the nineteenth century. In addition to the much older concept of the "Holy Rus," which was coded nationally during the nineteenth century and cultivated in church and church-related milieus, this is above all the concept of the *Russkii mir* (Russian World) as a space of civilization distinct from and superior to the West. The basic features of this concept go back to the politician and scholar Sergei Uvarov (1786—1855) and have been reactivated and expanded since the first decade of the new millennium. These spatial images are accompanied by the idea of a historical unity of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine, which is why the existence of an independent Ukrainian nation is denied. Ideas of Russia as a Eurasian power also play a role.[63]

Even before the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the resulting image of history was characterized by an aggressively anti-Western orientation and barely bridgeable differences with historical interpretations in neighboring countries such as Ukraine. The latter may be illustrated by the example of the celebrations of the three-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Poltava. The battle, which took place in 1709 during the Great Northern War, abruptly ended the hopes for independent development of the Ukrainian territories ruled by the hetman Ivan Mazepa (1639–1709) and paved the way for Russia's imperial expansion towards the West. A balancing mediation between the im-

62 Soner Çağaptay, *The New Sultan: Erdogan and the Crisis of Modern Turkey* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2017).
63 Zaur Gasimov: "Idee und Institution: 'Russkij mir' zwischen kultureller Mission und Geopolitik," *Osteuropa* 52, no. 5 (2012): 69–80.

ages and interpretation reproduced in Russian and Ukrainian historiographies did not succeed even at the central commemorative ceremonies on the occasion of the three-hundredth anniversary in 2009, although they were attended by representatives of both Russia and Ukraine.[64] The narratives and public representations of the history of the Second World War In Russia and Ukraine diverge even more strongly.

This also addresses an essential difference to neo-Ottomanism: The relationship to the Soviet legacy on the one hand and to the Kemalist era on the other. While Erdoğan's staging as the father of the nation shows certain parallels to the personality cult of Atatürk, a positive integration of the political heritage of Kemalism into the neo-Ottoman narrative hardly seems possible. In contrast, in contemporary Russia there is certainly an appropriation of such strands of tradition from the Soviet period that can be integrated into the neo-imperial narrative, such as remembrance of the victory in the "Great Patriotic War." Clear differences can also be identified with regard to the instrumentalization of neo-imperial imaginaries in foreign policy: Although both cases are about the legitimation of hegemonic claims, in Putin's Russia this is combined with efforts to shift existing borders through the use of military force (as in the case of Russia's war on Ukraine) and to advance the establishment of territorial units controlled by Moscow through political destabilization. In the Black Sea region, Abkhazia in particular should be mentioned in this context. Such a policy of revising existing political borders is currently not discernible in Turkey.

7 Conclusion

The emergence of national movements and the founding of nation states has changed the Black Sea region like almost no other historical development of modernity. One lasting consequence of this process was a hitherto unknown proliferation of border regimes with consequences for the flow of people, goods, and ideas.

While the liberal variety of nationalism, as it was still predominant during the Paris peace conferences ending World War I, propagated the idea of the nation as a rational and just principle for the organization of statehood, in reality it created border conflicts and new minority problems. At the same time, nationalism has brought with it a leveling of cultural diversity, often through coercion, such as forced assimilation, or even through physical violence, with ethnic and religious groups that do not fit into hegemonic notions of homogeneity expelled or killed in the course of ethnic engineering.

The processes under consideration involved intellectual interactions and personal mobility that extended far beyond the Black Sea region and in some cases were not focused on it at all. This is shown by the nation-building processes in the nineteenth

64 Serhii Plokhy," The Battle That Never Ends," in *Poltava 1709: The Battle and the Myth*, ed. Serhii Plokhy (Cambridge, MA: HURI, Havard University Press), xiii–xiv.

century, which took place during the first globalization and were characterized by the reception of ideas circulating worldwide. This also applies to the hubs where personal contacts between mobile intellectuals led to a transfer of ideas. Such hubs could be located in the Black Sea region or nearby, such as Istanbul, but could also be far away, such as the capitals of St. Petersburg and Moscow, which were of major importance as intellectual centers for nation-building processes. Additionally, diaspora groups and exiles spread across Europe and, in the interwar and Cold War periods, the US played an important role as initiators in nation-building processes, for example for Greek merchant communities in European trading cities, or anti-communist intellectuals from the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union.

The example of Greek nationalism refers to the Black Sea as a communication space, as do Turkish and Crimean Tatar nationalisms. Beyond that, as is shown in other contributions to this handbook, the Black Sea has constantly been part of nationalist mental maps and geopolitical fancies. A systematic study of the development of nationalism focusing on the Black Sea as a site of nationalist imagination or its role as a communication space in the emergence and spread of nationalist thinking would be an attractive subject for future research.