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Migration in the Black Sea Region in the Modern Period (Late Eighteenth–Twentieth Centuries)

From the early modern into the modern period (from the seventeenth to the twentieth century), migration and human mobility constituted a defining and essential element of the Black Sea region. Like many maritime regions in the early modern period (prior to industrialized forms of transportation), coastal areas acted as the primary migratory routes for populations on the move around the Black Sea littoral. The introduction of steamships into the Black Sea in the late 1820s opened up cross-sea transportation corridors (especially along a north-south axis), generating a particularly active period of migration in the Black Sea region into the early part of the twentieth century. This essay will highlight the centrality of Russian-Ottoman relations in the history of migration in the Black Sea region in the modern period. The interplay between migratory populations and state-driven policies geared towards controlling or managing these populations has been an enduring component of Black Sea regionalism. The durability of the state-migration nexus as well as the historical continuity of migration-generated regionalism in the Black Sea basin will be emphasized.

This article will adopt an expansive definition and understanding of both the Black Sea "region" and the category of "migrant." The conceptualization of the Black Sea region here includes the sea itself and the coastal littoral, as well as the important riverine systems feeding the sea and the close-in hinterland settlements along these rivers. The category of migrant here includes voluntary and forced migrants, economic migrants, religious dissenters, merchants, coastal traders, seasonal laborers, pilgrims, and soldiers.

1 Migratory Groups and Numbers

While caution is in order when specifying the numbers of people on the move in the Black Sea region (at least prior to the late nineteenth century), historical demographers provide reasonable estimates for the level of migration among some of the larger and more recognizable migratory groups around the Black Sea basin in the modern period. These groups include Bulgarians, Crimean Tatars, Circassians (and other Caucasian Highlanders), and Jewish migrants from southern Russia to Palestine. An estimated 250,000 Bulgarians migrated from the Ottoman Empire to the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia (roughly modern-day Romania) and southern Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This number constitutes around 10–15 percent of the Orthodox, Slavic-speaking, agriculturalist population of the southern Ottoman Bal-

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kans during the period in question.[1] These Bulgarian migrant populations travelled along roads close to the western Black Sea coast or along well-established commercial cabotage corridors along the western and northern Black Sea littoral. An estimated 150,000–200,000 Crimean Tatars migrated from the Russian to Ottoman Empires in the latter part of the eighteenth century and historians have noted a steady movement of Crimean Tatars across the Black Sea region throughout the nineteenth century, with a recognizable spike in displacement and migration during and after the Crimean War of 1853–56.[2]

In the 1860s, the final phase of the Russian Empire's decades-long penetration into the Caucasus (the north-eastern and eastern part of the Black Sea basin) resulted in a significant out-migration and re-settlement of Circassian migrant and refugee populations in the southern (Anatolian) and western (Balkan) parts of the Black Sea region. These movements were accompanied by on-going Ottoman slaving activity, which brought an estimated 150,000 indentured Circassians across the Black Sea and into the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century. These slaves formed a subset of the roughly 500,000 Circassians who forcibly migrated to the Ottoman Empire after 1867. Overall, up to one million Muslims moved from the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire in the 1860s and 1870s and an estimated five million Muslims migrated from the Russian Empire to the Ottoman Empire in the period from 1783–1908.[3] In what is known in Jewish/Israeli history as the second Aliyah, between 1904 and 1914 an estimated 35,000 Jewish people fled pogroms and persecution in Russia for refuge and settlement in Ottoman Palestine. Many of the worst pogroms perpetrated against Russian Jewish populations occurred in cities (Kishinev [Romanian: Chișinău] and Odesa) close to and along the northern Black Sea coast. The primary route for this Jewish migratory movement was across the Black Sea from Odesa to Istanbul and on to Palestine. In the first half of the twentieth century, the Black Sea served as on-going transportation corridor for subsequent Jewish migrants moving from Eastern Europe and Russia to Palestine. The sinking of the MV Struma in February 1942 (en route from Constanța, from Romania to Istanbul) and the catastrophic drowning of 800 Jewish refugees on board the ship constitutes the largest exclusively civilian naval disaster in the history of the Black Sea.

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1 Stefan Doynov, *Balgarite v Ukraina i Moldova prez Vazrazhdaneto 1751–1878* (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo "Marin Drinov", 2005); Ufuk Gülsoy, *1828–1829 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşı'nda Rumeli'den Rusya'ya Göçürülen Reaya* (Istanbul: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1993).

2 Alan Fisher, "Emigration of Muslims from the Russian Empire in the Years after the Crimean War," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 35, no. 3 (1987): 356–71; Brian Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation* (Boston: Brill, 2001).

3 See Vladimir Hamed-Troyansky, "Imperial Refuge: Resettlement of Muslims from Russia in the Ottoman Empire, 1860–1914" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 2018); Mark Pinson, "Russian Policy and the Emigration of the Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire, 1854–1862," *Güney-Doğu Araştırmaları Dergisi* 1 (1972): 37–56; Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

Additional recognizable and significant migratory groups in the Black Sea region in the modern period include: Armenians, who established sizable migrant communities across the northern Black Sea littoral from the Dniester River to the southern Caucasus; Greek merchant and seafarer communities, who served as important commercial actors in the Black Sea region during the period in question and provided aid and support to Greek fugitives and refugees before, during, and after the Greek uprising against the Ottoman Empire in the 1820s; Moldavian and Wallachian nobles and peasants, who moved across and lived on both sides of the Prut River; mixed Nekrasovite, Zaparozhian Cossack, and Russian Old Believer communities, who, fleeing Russian state control in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, found refuge in the Ottoman Balkans and the Danubian estuary, where they formed several migratory groups such as the "mouth of Danube Cossacks" (Russian: *Ust-Dunaiskoe Kazachestvo*) and the "community of Trans-Danubian Old Believers" (Russian: *Zadunaiskoe Staroobriadcheskoe Obshchestvo*); and mobile and sizable (though difficult to categorize) Gagauz and Roma populations.[4]

2 Ottoman-Russian Relations and Black Sea Migration in the Modern Period

Ottoman-Russian warfare was the primary, although by no means sole, generator of displacement and migration in the Black Sea region in the modern period. From 1768 to 1915 the Ottoman and Russian empires engaged in seven armed conflicts on and around the Black Sea. Each of these conflicts produced significant demographic displacement, migrant outflows, and redistribution of populations in the Black Sea region. In response to these migratory movements and outflows, Ottoman and Russian state officials (at the imperial, regional, municipal, and local levels) consistently coordinated and cooperated on migration management and resettlement initiatives in the Black Sea region. Although migrant removal, re-distribution, and re-settlement operations typically followed periods of Ottoman-Russian warfare, state-organized peacetime

4 See Roger P. Bartlett, *Human Capital: The Settlement of Foreigners in Russia, 1762–1804* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Charles King, *The Moldovans: Romania, Russia, and the Politics of Culture* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 2000); Ivan Meshcheriuk, *Pereselenie bolgar v iuzhnuiu Bessarabiiu 1828–1834 gg.* (Kishinev: Kartâ moldovenâskè, 1965); William Wilkinson, *An Account of the Principalities with Various Political Observations Relating to them* (London: Longman, Hurst, Ress, Orme, and Brown, 1820), re-issued as *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldovia* (New York: Arno Press, 1971); Carl von Sax, *Geographisch-ethnographische Skizze von Bulgarien* (Vienna: Mittheilungen der kaiserlich-königlichen geographischen Gesellschaft, 1869). For more on the Nekrasovite-Old Believer Cossack group, see A. A. Skalkovskii, "Nekrasovtsy zhivushchie v Bessarabii," *Zhurnal Ministerstva vnutrennikh del* 8, no. 10 (October 1844): 61–82; "Dobrudzha," in *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar* (St. Petersburg: Brokgauz i Efron, 1893), 10a: 830–31. For general information on Russian Old Believers, see P. L. Iudin, "K istorii russkago raskola," *Russkaia starina* 25, no. 1 January 1894): 183–96.

migrant recruitment operations (primarily for agricultural development purposes) were regularly conducted in the Black Sea region during the period in question. Additionally, an analysis of Ottoman-Russian peace treaties in the modern period indicates that migration and the disposition of displaced populations were a core part of diplomatic negotiations between these two Black Sea powers. Indeed, one can make the argument that the dynamism and particularism of Black Sea migration in the modern period generated a certain type of Black Sea diplomacy specific to the unique state-migrant characteristics of the Black Sea basin in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Repeated bouts of Ottoman-Russian warfare devastated and depopulated important agricultural lands around the Black Sea basin. The demographic and economic damage inflicted during and after these conflicts prompted Ottoman and Russian authorities to adopt pro-migration measures to re-settle agricultural communities and revitalize agricultural output. Pro-migrant reform measures implemented by the Ottoman state in this period included: the reduction, suspension, and rationalization of the taxes imposed on peasant populations as a means to re-invigorate economic activity in post-war Balkan territories; a crackdown on corrupt tax-farmers; administrative reforms to improve the delivery of resettlement services; the extension of material benefits, administrative assistance, and tax exemptions to return migrants; and an offer of amnesty to any Ottoman subjects who had sided with or joined the Russian army during Russian-Ottoman wars.

Similarly, Russian imperial proclamations exhorted provincial officials to persuade migrants living outside of Russia to migrate and settle on newly-conquered imperial lands north of and along the Black Sea coast. These proclamations offered the following incentives for migrants settling in Russia:

> a residence and life in Russia free of any danger to their person or possessions; protection from enserfment; subordination only to the crown of Russia; exemption from military service; the possibility to choose the most advantageous settlement site for the construction of their homes; relief from any imposts; and government assistance for town-planning and economic development.[5]

Overall, Ottoman and Russian state re-settlement and revitalization efforts had a significant impact on migratory processes in the Black Sea region in the modern period.

Post-conflict revivals of annual trade fairs in the Ottoman Balkans further contributed to travel and migratory circulation in the Black Sea region, particularly in the nineteenth century. Trade fairs (Bulgarian: *panairi*) flourished in eighteenth-century Balkan Black Sea coastal regions and were an integral feature and consequence of the early modern *Pax Ottomanica* in the Balkans. Large weekly, monthly, and seasonal fairs in Balkan towns on or close to the Black Sea coast and along the Danube, such as Karasu (Bulgarian: Chervena Voda), Mangalia, and Babadağ drew merchants from the

5 "Orders to Frontier Commanders issued by the Governor-General of Novorossiya Duc de Richelieu" (October 18, 1805), quoted in V. P. Grachev, "Kam vaprosa za preselvaneto na balgari v Rusia v nachaloto na XIX v., 1800–1806 g," in *Balgarskoto vazrazhdane i Rusia* (Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo, 1981), 284–85.

Anatolian Black Sea towns of Sinope and Trabzon. By the mid-nineteenth century the autumn trade fair in Karasu was attracting roughly 35,000 – 40,000 visitors per annum.[6] In Dobruja in the north-western part of the Black Sea, the vibrancy of the Hacıoğlu Pazarcık (Bulgarian: Dobrich) trade fair was a "sure sign of the growing commercial volume of the area and of Dobruja's attractiveness, which drew not only the urban poor but those who could bring along relatively large amounts of capital."[7] In the 1860s, the "ethnic" composition of the most prominent merchant proprietors who annually set up shop in Pazarcık included representatives from the region's Bulgarian, Turkish, Armenian, and Jewish communities.[8] Additionally, the liberalization of trade between Dobruja and the Danubian Principalities (as stipulated in the terms of the Treaty of Adrianople following the Russian-Ottoman War of 1828 – 1829) resulted in an up-tick in the trans-Danubian carry trade in the 1830s—a development that contributed to wealth accumulation among Bulgarian merchant families with long-established agents and factors in northern Rumelia, Wallachia, Bessarabia, and Odesa.

3 Migratory Patterns, Push and Pull Factors, and Disease

While large numbers of people did flee the Ottoman Empire during and after Russian-Ottoman wars, an analysis of Russian registration lists of Ottoman subjects crossing the Danube, Prut, and Dniester Rivers into the Russian Empire provides clear evidence of considerable in-migration for every year in the period from 1768 to 1834.[9] In the general narrative of migration between the Ottoman and Russian Empires in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, therefore, two basic points needs to be made. First, the establishment of structural connections—through trade, communication, and return migration—among members of various migrant communities in the Ottoman Balkans, the Danubian Principalities, and southern Russia preceded Ottoman and Russian border demarcation initiatives (including the construction of quarantines). Second, these connections endured despite on-going efforts by the Ottoman and Russian states to police their borders and manage (or control) in and out-migration. Non-linear migra-

6 Velko Tonev, "Natsionalno obrazuvashti protsesi v Severoiztochna Bulgaria i Dobrudzha," in *Balgarskata natsia prez Vazrazhdaneto* (Sofia: Balgarskata akademia na naukite, 1980), 265 – 91.

7 Nikolai Todorov, *The Balkan City, 1400 – 1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983), 462 – 63.

8 Todorov.

9 For a good example of a comprehensive migrant registration compiled by the Russian state, see the list requested by the Kishinev Town Duma in 1821. Besides the name, age, and gender of each registered Bulgarian migrant, this registration list notes the year that each migrant family crossed the Danube and settled in the Russian Empire. Tsentralnyi gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv (TsGIA), Moldavskaia Sovetskaia Sotsialisticheskaia Respublika (MSSR), f. 75, op. 1, d. 130, ll. 22 – 45. See also TsGIA, MSSR, f. 5, op. 2, d. 439 and f. 5, op. 2, d. 442. Microfilmed copies of these types of registration lists can be found in the Bulgarian Central State Archives in Sofia, Bulgaria.

tion and, for certain groups and individuals, a circular migration involving out-migration, multiple secondary moves, and a return trip to their homelands was a common experience for many migrants in the Black Sea region in the modern period.

A variety of push and pull factors incentivized and stimulated voluntary and involuntary migration in the Black Sea region. In addition to warfare, the main push and pull factors spurring migration around the Black Sea in the modern period included: political instability and frequent outbreaks of epidemic disease resulting in the regular displacement of primarily peasant populations; chain migration due to previous re-settlement of kin-migrant communities around the Black Sea; fear of enserfment for newly arrived migrants in the Russian Empire, which prompted considerable return migration; the inability to adapt to harsh and unfamiliar environmental conditions, principally in the Budjak steppe and the windswept and bitterly cold northern Black sea littoral; the depletion of natural resources due to rapid and large-scale migration during and after Russian-Ottoman Wars and subsequent and significant crop failures for migrant agricultural communities; the lethalness of the migrant experience, in particular deadly outbreaks of plague and cholera in the Ottoman Balkans, Bessarabia, and southern Russia; the overcrowding and squalid conditions at border quarantine stations, which often prompted the immediate return of large numbers of migrants to their homes towns and villages; and the natural desire of migrants to return to their homeland and to be reunited with kinfolk.

Sub-state diasporic communication networks among kin-migrant communities scattered across the Black Sea region contravened and frustrated state-driven migration management and control initiatives. Members of Bulgarian migrant communities in the Black Sea region communicated with their kinsmen about the pros and cons of settlement conditions in the southern part of the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Balkans. Word of favorable economic and resettlement conditions stimulated out and return migration movements around the Black Sea.[10] Ottoman officials in particular took into account the existence of communication networks among Bulgarian migrant communities in the Black Sea region when formulating migration and settlement policies. For example, following the Ottoman-Russian War of 1828–29, the Ottoman governor of Silistre took advantage of communication channels among Bulgarian migrants to publicize the Ottoman state's offer of preferential treatment for Bulgarians returning from the Danubian Principalities and southern Russia to the Ottoman Balkans.

Additionally, despite the best efforts of Russian state servitors and border guards, Bulgarian migrants en route to the Russian Empire were aware of, and sought out, the easiest points of entry into and through the Danubian Principalities. For example, in the fall of 1830 Russian officials in Wallachia received reports on a significant drop in Bulgarian migrant arrivals at the Kalaraşi (Bulgarian: Kalarash, Romanian: Călăraşi) quarantine and a significant increase in migrant arrivals at the Brăila (Turkish: İbrail)

10 Iov Titorov, *Balgarite v Bessarabia* (Sofia: Pechatnitsa na G. A. Nozharov, 1903).

and Pioa Pietri quarantines.[11] This shift in a migratory pattern—as a counter to recently-enacted Russian border security measures—typifies the fluidity of the Ottoman-Russian Black Sea migratory processes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The endemism of disease (plague and then cholera) in Istanbul and the Ottoman Balkans and the linkage made by Ottoman and Russian state authorities between migration and the spread of disease promoted the implementation of migration management and control initiatives in the Black Sea region in the modern period. The etiology and spread of the plague, an insect-borne bacterial disease, revolved around a rat-flea-human nexus. Fleas, after biting plague-infected rats, transferred the disease to humans. Textiles and hides constituted a particularly conducive breeding environment for fleas and, to a lesser extent, rats. Therefore, the primary method for the long-range spread of the disease between human populations in the Black Sea region was through trade in wool, silk, cotton, and the personal effects of merchants, migrants, and soldiers.[12] Dislocations and population displacements caused by warfare, political instability, and natural disasters (such as earthquakes, fires, and floods) compromised immune systems and indirectly contributed to the susceptibility of human populations to the plague. Particularly virulent strains of the plague in the Black Sea region carried a case mortality rate of 60–90 percent.[13] The appearance of Asiatic cholera (*cholera morbus*) in the Ganges plain in 1817 coupled with the increased use of steamship travel by Muslim pilgrims (*hadjis*) from the Indian subcontinent, resulted in significant outbreaks of epidemic cholera in Mecca and Medina in the early part of the nineteenth century. The disease was spread to Russian Black Sea ports by Russian Muslim *hadjis* returning from the Hejaz; the Russian Empire was the first European nation to suffer the ravages of the global cholera epidemic of the 1820s and 1830s and remained susceptible to a series of cholera pandemics across the nineteenth century.[14]

For many Ottoman subjects flight (for safety and to escape social ostracism) was the natural response to the appearance and contraction of disease, and plague-induced displacements resulted in the formation of new population settlements and significant alterations to the human geography of the Black Sea region.[15] In response to migrations and flight from disease-ridden areas, in the first half of the nineteenth century the modernizing and increasingly technocratic Ottoman and Russian states introduced en-

11 "Doklad na logofeta Sht. Vladesku do izpalnitelnia Divan vav vrazka s preminavaneto i nastaniavaneto na balgarski bezhantsi (May 23, 1830)," in *Balgarite v Rumania, XVII–XX v.: Dokumenti i materiali*, ed. Maksim Mladenov, Nikolay Zhechev, and Blagovest Niagulov (Sofia: Akademichno izdatelstvo "Marin Drinov", 1994), 27–28.

12 Daniel Panzac, *Quarantines et lazarets: l'europe et la peste d'orient* (Aix-en-Provence: Édisud, 1986).

13 John T. Alexander, *Bubonic Plague in Early Modern Russia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

14 For example, from 1823–31, over 250,000 Russians died of cholera. For a thorough overview of cholera in the Russian Empire, see Roderick McGrew, *Russia and the Cholera, 1823–1832* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965).

15 "*Chuesh li za chuma, byagay v shuma*" ("If you feel the plague coming, flee to the forest") was a common proverb in nineteenth-century Bulgaria.

hanced public health measures in the more heavily-trafficked Black Sea port cities of Odesa, Istanbul, and Varna and constructed quarantine lines along important rivers draining into the Black Sea (principally the Danube and the Prut). These *cordons sanitaires* had a wide-ranging impact on the direction, duration, and pace of population movements in the Black Sea region. Quarantines are primarily constructed in an effort to combat the spread of disease and, from an historiographical standpoint, are generally discussed within this context. However, it is clear that in the Black Sea region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries quarantines rapidly evolved into all-purpose border posts where trade goods were inspected, customs collected, currency exchanged, criminals and fugitives surveilled, intelligence gathered, and migrants and refugees registered and provided with travel documents.

Historians tend to analyze migrant populations in units of hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands. The adoption of this macro-level frame is often unavoidable, as historians lack the conventional tools (such as real-time surveys and personal interviews) used by scholars of contemporary migrations to appreciate and evaluate individual migrations. Memoirs and travel accounts penned by Black Sea migrants and refugees are rare (at least until the latter part of the nineteenth century), making it difficult to engage the topic of migration in the Black Sea region at the human or individual level. However, through a closer look at city life and time spent in quarantine stations it is possible to get a glimpse of the mundane experience of migration in and around the Black Sea basin in the modern period. In Odesa, repeated outbreaks of plague and cholera prompted provincial officials to restrict movement into and out of the city as well as to impose lockdowns on neighborhoods suspected of harboring individuals stricken with disease. State-issued documentation was required to circumvent these restrictions and move throughout the city. Similarly, in Istanbul, in response to outbreaks of disease, Ottoman officials interdicted migration to and from the Ottoman capital and physically relocated suspected (and suspicious) populations outside of the city. Unmarried and itinerant, migrant laborers from the countryside were particularly subject to harassment and surveillance by Ottoman authorities. Several extant diaries and memoirs of literate merchants, pilgrims, and students on the move in the Black Sea region detail the experience of entering and surviving Ottoman and Russian quarantines.[16] The typical experience of migrants entering into quarantine included invasive medical checks, congested living conditions, the fumigation of clothing and trade goods, the rinsing of coinage in vinegar, and the resort to bribery and graft to avoid or reduce quarantine stays.

Pilgrimage and particularly the consistent and large-scale movement of Muslim migrants (*hadjis*) from Russia across the Black Sea en route to Mecca and Medina contributed significantly to the overall migratory regime of the Black Sea region in the modern period. The annual nature and the spatial specificity of the Muslim pilgrimage

16 See for example the diaries of Ruscho Vulkov Mirkovich and Panaret Rashev, *Balgarski Istoricheski Arkhiv* (BIA), Fond 169 – Ruscho Vulkov Mirkovich, and BIA, Fond 8 – Panaret Rashev.

resulted in the forging of several well-trafficked Black Sea pilgrimage-migration routes. Istanbul served as the main collection point for Russian Muslim pilgrims arriving from the north, with the three primary pilgrimage routes of Odesa–Istanbul, Sevastopol–Istanbul, and Batumi–Istanbul funneling Muslim migrants to the Ottoman capital for onward travel to the Holy Lands of Mecca and Medina. Secondary trans-Black Sea *hadj* routes included Sevastopol–Samsun and Sevastopol–Trabzon, both with onward links to central Anatolia. In time, Odesa emerged as the main collection point and way-station on the northern Black Sea littoral for Russian Muslim *hadjis.* In the first decade of the twentieth century, up to 10,000 Muslim pilgrims annually passed through Odesa on their way to Istanbul.[17] Orthodox Christian migrants in the Russian Empire also engaged in long pilgrimages through Ottoman territory to important religious sites on the Khalkidiki Peninsula (in the northern Aegean). For example, in the period from 1816–21, an estimated 1,400 Bulgarian pilgrims travelled from Russia to the Zograf Monastery on Mt. Athos in Khalkidiki. Many of these Bulgarian pilgrims opted to remain in the Ottoman Empire rather than undertake the arduous journey back to the Russian Empire.

4 Migration in the Black Sea Region: 1850s–1920s

The Crimean War (1853–56) inaugurated a period of intense migration in the Black Sea region. A significant number of Muslim migrants (both Crimean Tatars and Circassians) who fled Russia during and after the war resettled in the Ottoman Balkans south of the Danubian estuary and along the Balkan Black Sea coast. Scholars estimate that a total of up to 350,000 Crimean Tatar and Circassian refugees were transported across the Black Sea and re-settled in the Ottoman Balkans in the second half of the nineteenth century. These migrants travelled to Ottoman Dobruja and the eastern Balkans by both land and sea, the latter group entering the Ottoman Empire via the Black Sea ports of Varna and Constanța before being transported inland on newly built rail lines.[18] Although the migration and settlement of Russian Muslims in Anatolia was not as numerous as in the Ottoman Balkans, Circassian refugees in particular were also resettled in and around the Anatolian towns and cities of Trabzon, Amasya, Sivas, Kars, and Erzincan in the period after the 1860s.

In general, as with previous state-driven migration and settlement initiatives in the Black Sea region, the Ottoman state (building on the provincial Governor Midhat Pa-

17 Eileen Kane, *Russian Hajj: Empire and the Pilgrimage to Mecca* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); Daniel Brower, "Russian Roads to Mecca: Religious Tolerance and Muslim Pilgrimage in the Russian Empire," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 3 (1996): 567–84.

18 For more on infrastructural developments and migration, see the excellent collection of articles in the recently published volume of the *Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies:* Lyubomir Pozharliev, Florian Riedler, and Stefan Rohdewald, eds., "Transottoman Infrastructures and Networks across the Black Sea," special issue, *Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies* 3, no. 5 (December 2020).

sha's modernization drive in the Danube *Vilayet* in the 1860s) extended significant resettlement assistance and incentives to the post-Crimean War wave of Crimean Tatar migrants entering the Ottoman Empire. While many Crimean Tatar arrivals were resettled in Bulgarian villages and in Bulgarian homes, new, migrant-specific settlements were established for Crimean Tatar settlers. Circassians (and other Caucasian highlanders) were not treated as well in the Ottoman Empire as were the Crimean Tatars and were generally looked down upon by Ottoman servitors and Orthodox Christian populations along the western Black Sea coast. Both Circassians and, to a lesser extent, Crimean Tatars were pressed into service by the Ottoman state as irregular militia (*başıbozuk*) against rebellious Bulgarian populations, contributing to Orthodox Christian antipathy towards Muslim migrants in the Ottoman Balkans. In general, the large number of Crimean Tatar migrant arrivals in a condensed period of time following the Crimean War (80,000–100,000) overwhelmed municipal and regional Ottoman authorities, leading to a reprisal of earlier Ottoman-Russian efforts to communicate about, coordinate on, and manage migratory circulation in the Black Sea region. The migration of Crimean Tatars from the Russian to the Ottoman Empires after the conclusion of the Crimean War contributed to a significant population increase along the Black Sea coast in the late nineteenth century. By the second half of the nineteenth century, the population of Varna (the largest Bulgarian city on the Black Sea coast) had risen to 40,000, and the population of the Russian Black Sea port of Nikolaev had tripled in size. In this same period, the populations of the Russian Black Sea port cities of Odesa and Rostov grew six-fold and ten-fold respectively.

Typifying the circular and dynamic nature of the Black Sea migration experience, many Muslim migrants opted to return to the Russian Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century. While a certain number of Circassians (and other Muslim highlanders from the Caucasus) found their way back to Russia, Crimean Tatars constituted by far the largest group of Muslim migrant returnees to Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century. The south-north return journey to the Crimean Peninsula was shorter and easier for Crimean Tatars (aided by the increased use of steamship to navigate the open waters of the stormy Black Sea) compared to the lengthy and treacherous trans-montane route for Caucasian migrants. Crimean Tatars also enjoyed a better reputation in Russia as imperial subjects and were encouraged to return to the empire by Russian authorities. Up to 10,000–15,000 Crimean Tatars returned to the Crimean Peninsula shortly after the conclusion of the Crimean War and Crimean Tatar return migrations to the Russian Empire are documented well into the early part of the twentieth century.[19] The collapse of Ottoman authority in the Balkans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries exposed Muslim migrant communities to Orthodox Christian backlash and many Crimean Tatars undertook a second migration from the Ottoman Balkans to Anatolia in this period. In the period during and after the Rus-

19 James H. Meyer, *Turks across Empires: Marketing Muslim Identity in the Russian-Ottoman Borderlands, 1856–1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

sian-Ottoman War of 1877–78, up to 160,000 Muslim refugees left the Balkans for Istanbul. An additional 20,000 died of disease during this post-war displacement.[20] As James Meyer notes, in the nineteenth century

> [l]ike Armenians, Greeks, and Jews, and others traveling between the two empires, Russian Muslims frequently devised strategies that helped them take advantage of the categorical ambiguity of their positions. Living as Russians in the Ottoman Empire and Ottomans in Russia, these individuals succeeded in manipulating the politics of citizenship on both sides of the frontier.[21]

In general the story of Crimean Tatar migration in the second half of the nineteenth century highlights the fluidity and circulatory dynamism of migration in the Black Sea region in the modern period.

According to Charles King, the collapse of the Russian and Ottoman Empires during and after World War I and the post-World War I settlement of political boundaries in the region, sparked a "series of massive population movements that dwarfed the multiple exoduses of the late nineteenth century."[22] World War I, the Russian Revolutions of 1917, and the ensuing Russian Civil War (1918–21) generated both another wave of Jewish out-migration to Palestine (part of the third Aliyah of 1919–23) and a significant movement of White Russian (anti-Bolshevik) dissenters, émigrés, and refugees from Russia across the Black Sea to Istanbul. Starting in 1920, up to 200,000 White Russians, having migrated south to the Russian Black Sea ports of Odesa and Sevastopol ahead of the Red Army, fled the generalized violence of the Russian Civil War and sailed and steamed to safety in Istanbul.

5 Conclusion

Following a Cold War interlude from the 1950s to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, high levels of in- and out-migration re-emerged as a key structural component of Black Sea regionalism. According to Charles King, "the population movements of the 1990s and the early 2000s—the flow of economic migrants, asylum-seekers, transit migrants and refugees—may yet transform the demographic structure of the region in as profound a way as the region's last major period of mass population movements: the multiple rounds of ethnic cleansing and war-time displacement that took place from the 1860s and the 1920s."[23] These continuities underscore the durability of the state–migration nexus and the continuity of migration-generated regionalism in the Black Sea basin.

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20 See Justin McCarthy, *Death and Exile: The Ethnic Cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821–1922* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc., 1995).

21 Meyer, *Turks*, 28.

22 Charles King, *The Black Sea: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 211.

23 King.

The economic and political cycles of the Black Sea region have fluctuated between periods dominated by a closed command economy and periods marked by international openness and free trade. Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the political economy of the Black Sea region was organized around the monopolistic provisioning of the Ottoman capital of Istanbul. At the start of the modern era, a series of treaties and trade agreements signed by the Ottoman and Russian Empires initiated a long period in the history of the Black Sea region marked by relative openness, commercial activity, and demographic exchange. Following a period of closure during the Cold War era, the thirty years since the collapse of the Soviet Union have seen both the return of the Black Sea region to participation in the international system as well as a pivot back to a Russian-Turkish condominium over Black Sea affairs. The regionality and spatial qualities of each of these cycles have both driven and circumscribed the level and pace of migration in the Black Sea region.

In the modern period, the Black Sea region was an active zone of exchange between the Ottoman and Russian Empires. The two key regional characteristics of the Black Sea basin—commercial interaction and large-scale migration—linked these two powerful empires along a clearly defined north-south axis. Defining a region as "a distinct geographical zone of interaction," Charles King identifies migrants and merchants as the main connective tissues that have historically linked the communities and political entities around the Black Sea.[24] To this list, for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one can add diseases such as the plague and cholera which used migrants, merchants, and movers as carriers to infect human populations.

Focusing primarily on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and adhering to an expansive pre-twentieth century definition of "migrants" (to include movers of all types, such as voluntary and forced migrants, economic migrants, religious dissenters, merchants, coastal traders, seasonal laborers, pilgrims, and soldiers) this article, in addition to providing a broad overview of migration in the Black Sea region in the early modern and modern periods, has addressed the following themes: the environmental factors that defined and determined the number and flow of migrants in the Black Sea region; structural factors, such as "international" or transimperial relations and diaspora networks, that contributed to the direction and timing of migratory movements; migratory push and pull factors; the role of the state, state-migrant dynamics, and state-society relations, migration management initiatives and technologies; and the connection between migration and the spread of epidemic diseases in the Black Sea region.

The formation and articulation of diaspora communities and their ability to circumvent efforts by Black Sea states to enforce political and territorial sovereignty continues to be a salient feature of migration in the Black Sea region today. Turkish businessmen and traders have established themselves in Odesa, while Ukrainian migrants

24 Charles King, "Is the Black Sea a Region?," in *The Black Sea Region: Cooperation and Security Building*, ed. Oleksandr Pavliuk and Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze (London: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 13–26.

and settlers have formed a visible community in Istanbul. The Chechen diaspora along the Bulgarian Black Sea coast controls a large segment of the lucrative Black Sea tourist industry in Bulgaria. Statistics compiled by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) document the migratory links among countries around the Black Sea littoral and the ongoing dispersion of peoples in the Black Sea region. Annually, an estimated 13.6 million migrants are on the move in the Black Sea basin. According to the IOM, intra-regional migration accounts for roughly 60 percent of total immigration into Black Sea countries. Russia is the primary source country for intra-regional migration, accounting for 22.5% of intra-regional migrants. Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Romania all send a large number of labor migrants to Russia and Turkey.[25] These regional migration flows have remained relatively stable throughout the first two decades of the twenty-first century. As has been the case throughout the history of the Black Sea region, the dynamism of migratory flows around and across the Black Sea region continues to both knit the Black Sea together and erode the sovereignty of nation-states around the Black Sea littoral.

Large-scale population movements, shifting patterns of agricultural settlement, and the commercial and political activities of migrant diasporas animated and energized the Black Sea world in the modern period. Today, trade, return migration, and intra-communal communications around the Black Sea littoral continue to forge strong and enduring structural connections among migrant communities in the region. The establishment of regional communication networks and historically high rates of return migration contributed in the past and will continue to contribute in the future to socially-constructed and culturally-articulated expressions of Black Sea regionalism.

25 International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Migration in the Black Sea Region: An Overview 2008*, November 2008, https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/regional_overview_black_sea.pdf.