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The Crimean War

1 Introduction

Surveying the history of imperial rivalries over the Black Sea Region, Gheorghe I. Brătianu argues that any state controlling the sea and its river channels into Europe enhances its own security and commands Eurasian trade routes.[1] Brătianu further points out that power over the sea is never static, but unravels as soon as it forms. This principle is evident in the origins of the Crimean War, just one of many modern wars fought over the strategic Black Sea space.

Until the Crimean War, conflicts between the Russian and Ottoman Empires followed the localized expansion/contraction movement Brătianu had depicted. Yet, the Industrial Revolution suddenly disrupted age-old patterns by expanding the field of claimants upon the sea and its hinterlands. Able to navigate up the Danube with the invention of steam by the 1840s, distant European powers entered the local competition over Black Sea trade routes. Almost overnight, the Black Sea world had become much larger.[2]

Although the Crimean War ultimately spread across the globe, this chapter focuses on the Black Sea region, where war originated, and where violence concentrated.[3] After a brief discussion of the causes of the war, sections follow the reciprocal impacts of war along the Black Sea's western, northern, and eastern peripheries. The chapter focuses on geographic patterns of violence and environmental agency rather than battles or diplomacy.[4] As this chapter shows, new industrial military technologies offered

1 Gheorghe I. Brătianu, *La mer Noire: Des origines à la conquête* ottomane (Munich: Societas Academica Dacoromana, 1969), 37.

2 To borrow the words from Eyüp Özveren, the Black Sea Region is an "historically-constituted unit of analysis, a 'world,' the reality of which precedes in importance the actors placed on it." Y. Eyüp Özveren, "A Framework for the Study of the Black Sea World, 1789–1915," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 20, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 87.

3 See Stefan Troebst's summary of the concept of meso-region as it relates to the Black Sea: Stefan Troebst, "The Black Sea as Historical Meso Region: Concepts in Cultural Studies and the Social Sciences," *Journal of Balkan and Black Sea Studies* 2, no. 2 (2019): 11–29; Stefan Troebst, "European History," in *European Regions and Boundaries: A Conceptual History*, ed. Diana Mishkova and Balázs Trencsényi (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017).

4 Thousands of books have been composed about the Crimean War, none of which can be addressed in detail. Important recent works on the war (most of which contain bibliographic essays) include Candan Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War (1853–1856)* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Iuliia A. Naumova, *Ranenie, bolezn i smert: Russkaia meditsinskaia sluzhba v Krymskuiu voinu, 1853–1856 gg.* (Moscow: Modest Kolerov, 2010); Orlando Figes, *The Crimean War: A History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2011); Jerszy W. Borejsza, "Crimean War 150 Years Later," in *The Crimean War, 1853–1856: Colonial Skirmish or Rehearsal for World War? Empires, Nations and Individuals,* ed. Jerszy W. Borejsza (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Ner-

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little defense against climate or disease, while states proved unable to harness the violence they had unleashed. By 1856, the Crimean War had changed the Black Sea world forever, but not necessarily in ways the belligerent parties desired or anticipated.

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European powers began to take an interest in the affairs of the Black Sea following a new international balance of power created at the Congress of Vienna. Reflecting Eurocentric and Orientalist points of view, British and French politicians framed their concerns about Russian expansion and Ottoman contraction as the "Eastern Question." While the Eastern Question may have gained momentum with the Greek Revolution (1821–29), it did not appear regularly in print until after Egyptian Pasha Mehmed Ali had challenged Ottoman authority (1831 and 1840). By the eve of the Crimean War, the Eastern Question had become shorthand for a large set of diplomatic and military issues relating to shifting political powers on the Black Sea.[5]

Although a number of events falling under the umbrella of the Eastern Question led up to the Crimean War, the spark occurred on July 2, 1853, when the Russian army crossed the Prut River. According to public and private expressions on both sides, neither the Ottoman nor the Russian Empire wanted war.[6] A flurry of diplomatic exchanges ensued. Nevertheless, about 90,000 Russian soldiers were concentrated in the space of two hundred miles between Leova and Bucharest, a force that grew to about 100,000 in 1854.[7] Simultaneously, the Ottoman Empire concentrated 150,000–175,000 men along the southern banks of the Danube from Vidin to Varna.[8]

The Russian occupation of the Danubian Principalities triggered alarm among multiple European powers. Britain in particular perceived the move as an effort to control trade routes, and not a humanitarian intervention as Tsar Nicholas I (1825–55) had

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iton Instytut PAN, 2011), 9–18; Andrew Lambert, *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1854–1856*, 2nd ed. (Farmham: Ashgate, 2011); Andrew Rath, *The Crimean War in Imperial Context, 1854–1856* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Mara Kozelsky, *Crimea in War and Transformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); for French historiography, Elena V. Linkova and Marc de Bollivier, "Frantsuzskaia istoriografiia Krymskoi voiny (1853–1856 gg.): Osnovnye napravleniia i tendentsii," *Vestnik Rossiiskogo Universiteta Druzhby Narodov* 19, no. 1 (2020): 240–53; and the large collection of essays edited by Candan Badem, *The Routledge Handbook of the Crimean War* (Oxford, UK: Routledge, 2022).

5 The earliest appearance of the Eastern Question appears in French political discourse. See Théodore Benazet, *Question d'Orient* (Paris: C. Gosselin, 1836); and Charles Dupin, *Discours sur la question de l'Orient* (Paris: Imprimerie Panckoucke, 1840). For a longer analysis, see Lucien Frary and Mara Kozelsky, eds., *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands: The Eastern Question Reconsidered* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, 2014), 1–31.

6 For the Russian position, see Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voennyi Arkhiv (RGVIA), f. 846, d. 16, f. 5407, l. 13. For the Ottoman, Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 81.

7 This number includes approximately 6,000 non-combatant personnel. Evgenii V. Tarle, *Krymskaia voina* (Moscow: Izd. AST, 2005), 1:296–97.

8 Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 103–4.

claimed when he announced war in October 1853.[9] Leaders of the diverse civilian populations living in occupied territories, meanwhile, had not been consulted in the diplomatic talks. Most civilians in the war zone had grown weary of war and the burdens of supporting an occupying army; Russia had occupied the Principalities multiple times in the years 1806–12, 1828–34, and 1849–52.[10]

2 The Danubian Front

Foreign armies occupied the Danubian Principalities for more than three years, beginning with Russian mobilization on the Prut and ending with the withdrawal of occupying forces in the summer of 1856. By October 21, 1853 the first shots of war had been fired on the banks of the Danube near the town of Isaccea (Ottoman: İshakçı, Russian: Isakcha).[11] Armies of the empires skirmished in Oltenița on land, and at Sinop on the Black Sea in the November. December introduced more fighting in Calafat and Cetate.[12] Estimates of Russian and Ottoman soldiers killed in direct military engagement approach a few thousand men for the Danubian theater.[13]

Remaining officially neutral, the Austrian Empire positioned an army along its borders with the Principalities to prevent Russia from making contact with Serbia, and to threaten the rear Russian supply chain that ran from Bucharest in Romania to Beltsy (Romanian: Bălți) in Moldavia. After being unable to broker peace, France and Britain declared war on Russia in the late March of 1854, adding another 50,000–60,000 men to the 500,000 Ottoman, Russian, and Austrian forces distributed around the Principalities.[14] Ultimately, the preponderance of power encouraged Nicholas I to withdraw his army during the summer months.

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9 Tarle, *Krymskaia voina*, 1:270. The complex of religious issues behind the war should not be dismissed. See David M. Goldfrank, "The Holy Sepulcher and the Origin of the Crimean War," in *The Military and Society in Russia: 1450–1917,* ed. Eric Lohr and Marshal Poe (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 491–506; David M. Goldfrank, "Policy Traditions and the Menshikov Mission of 1853," in *Imperial Russian Foreign Policy,* ed. Hugh Ragsdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 119–25.

10 See Radu Florescu, *The Struggle Against Russia in the Romanian Principalities* (Iaşi: The Center for Romanian Studies, 1997), 74; Veniamin Ciobanu, "The Impact of the Crimean War on the Juridical Status of the Romanian Principalities (1853–1866)," in Borejsza, *The Crimean War*, 129–53; Viktor Taki, "The Russian Protectorate in the Danubian Principalities: Legacies of the Eastern Question in Contemporary Russian-Romanian Relations," in Frary and Kozelsky, *Russian-Ottoman Borderlands*, 35–72.

11 Ambiguities surrounded the actual declaration of war, to the extent that when Omer Pasha sent an ultimatum requiring the removal of Russian forces, the local commander denied that he had the authority to conduct the removal. Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 100.

12 Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 177. Sources record 2,300 Russian casualties and 1,000 Ottoman dead and wounded.

13 Tarle, *Krymskaia voina*, 1:325.

14 For a summary of the size of the forces in Varna and Dobruja, see Winfried Baumgart, *The Crimean War, 1853–1856,* 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2020), 134–35.

Although the European and Russian armies never met in battle, the death toll increased; on the western shores, as in Crimea, more men died of contagious diseases than of war wounds. Cholera had been raging in several Mediterranean port cities prior to the war, and had traveled into the war zone with the French army from Marseille.[15] Scientists had not yet worked out that the disease derived from bacteria in feces-contaminated water, and so death came quickly, sometimes within six to twenty-four hours. Victims experienced intense and painful dehydration, severe bowel cramping, waves of nausea, and diarrhea. British doctors in Varna recorded a death rate of 68 percent.[16] At the end of July 1854, when several hundred men died from the disease daily, French soldiers erupted into cholera riots, a phenomenon that had occurred in 1831 and 1832 in London, St. Petersburg, and elsewhere.[17] About two-thirds of Varna went up in flames.[18] Even the Austrians, who never officially entered the war, lost 1,700 men by 1856 due to epidemics as well as confrontations with subjects under their occupation.[19]

Disease marked one type of exchange between armies and the natural environment. The ground upon which armies moved and sought supplies represented another. Waterways blocked army movement as much as rivers facilitated transportation. River crossings at Galați (Ottoman: Kalas), Brăila (Ottoman: İbrail), Isaccea, Tulça (Romanian: Tulcea, Russian: Tulcha), and Izmail (Romanian: Ismail, Ottoman: İzmail) forced troops to remain in place. In an effort to tame their surroundings, army brigades razed forests for bridge timbers.[20] Further south, in the dry terrain of Dobruja, the Ottoman army drained local drinking water as they marched northward to meet Russian forces. Subjected to degradation and plunder, nature did not yield without protest. Rushing river waters washed away bridges; heavy rains turned roads into mud pits. Winter temperatures turned harbors into sheets of ice, locking ships in place.[21] Summer temperatures threatened soldiers with heatstroke, and reignited the spread of disease.

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15 Trapped in Marseille's quarantine, American merchant John Codman depicted a city of ceaseless funerals, overcast by gloom and despair. Men fell to their knees in the street, writhing in agony. John Codman, *An American Transport in the Crimean War* (New York: Bonnell, Silver and Co., 1897), 19.

16 John A. Shepherd, *The Crimean Doctors: A History of the British Medical Service During the Crimean War* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1991), 64.

17 Karl Marx, *The Eastern Question: A Reprint of Letters Written 1853–1856: Dealing with the Events of the Crimean War*, ed. Eleanor Marx Aveling and Edward Aveling (London: Swan Sonnenschen & Co., 1897), 478; Geoffrey Gill, Sean Burrell, and Jody Brown, "Fear and Frustration: The Liverpool Cholera Riots of 1832," *The Lancet* 358, no. 9277 (2001): 233–37; Roderick E. McGrew, *Russia and the Cholera, 1823–1832* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965); Andrew Robarts, *Migration and Disease in the Black Sea Region: Ottoman-Russian Relations in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (London: Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2018).

18 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5450, ll. 48, 48 ob. (Prince A. S. Menshikov to Tsar Nicholas, August 26, 1854). For a vivid portrayal of the cholera and fires in Varna, see Figes, *The Crimean War*, 191–92.

19 Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 141.

20 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5413, 49 ob.

21 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5413, 48, 55.

Like their natural environment, civilians both succumbed to and resisted war. Armies pressed civilians into labor and commissioned work animals needed to till the fields. From 1853–54, for example, more than 9,000 oxen pulled wagons for the Russian army in a continuous loop between supply depots in central and eastern Ukraine and the Danubian Principalities. Most of these animals died from exhaustion and thirst, although in July 1854 1,600 died of disease.[22]

Rather than sacrificing their livelihoods or sustenance, many local inhabitants fled into the forests with packed wagons and drove herds as far from the armies as possible.[23] Greeks living in Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia erupted into rebellion, while Bulgarian, Wallachian, and Greek volunteer militias joined Russian forces on the delta.[24] Tatar legions fought alongside the Ottoman army in the Danubian Principalities.[25] Believing Orthodox Christians might align with Russian forces, Ottoman soldiers terrorized Bulgarian and Serbian populations suspected of harboring collaborators, and forcibly relocated Orthodox families into the interior.[26] Later, the same pattern of religious hostility repeated in Crimea, when the Russians suspected Tatars of collaboration and deported them from the coast.

Facing rapid spread of disease, and increasing hostility from civilians, the belligerent parties entered into peace talks in the summer of 1854. Peace talks in the August focused on Russia renunciation of the right to intervene in the affairs of Orthodox Christians living in Ottoman spaces, and internationalizing Black Sea waterways. When the tsar refused to concede, the Allies resolved to transfer the war to Crimea. In April 1854, Allied ships had already conducted a preliminary scouting expedition of Russia's Black Sea coast, and had attacked Odesa. The quay burst into flames, but most of the city survived.[27]

3 Crimea

Approximately 60,000–80,000 Allied soldiers disembarked in Crimea, a number matched by the Russian forces distributed in the peninsula and nearby territories.[28] Rather than spreading his men sparsely along the Crimean shores, the local military commander concentrated his forces on Sevastopol and the road networks leading

22 Fedor Zatler, *Zapiski o prodovolstvii voisk v voennoe vremia* (St. Petersburg: tip. Torgovogo doma S. Strugovshikova, 1860), 1:192–203.

23 N. Loran, "Pereselenie bolgar v Rossiiu: Sovremennaia zapis," July 10, 1854, *Russkii Arkhiv* (1897): 318–25.

24 Maria Todorova, "The Greek Volunteers in the Crimean War," *Balkan Studies*, 25, no. 2 (1984): 542.

25 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5413, 51.

26 Tarle, *Krymskaia voina*, 1:296–97; RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5415, 125 ll., 41–42 (Report to General Liders from the Commander at Satunovo, January 14, 1854).

27 Tarle, *Krymskaia voina*, 2:8–35.

28 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5492, 52–53 (V. I. Charykov to N. N. Annenkov, September 12, 1854); Tarle, *Krymskaia voina*, 2:132; Zatler, *Zapiski o prodovolstvii voisk v voennoe vremia,* 1:253.

into Crimea's interior. By the fall of 1854, Russian defense in Crimea had swelled to 300,000. The major battles of Alma (September 20), Balaklava (October 25), and Inkerman (November 5) proved unable to dislodge the Allies, and so the Allied siege of Sevastopol continued for eleven months.

From the first day of the Allied landing, armies began a quick drain of the peninsula. The mass concentration of soldiers brought with it a voracious appetite that army supply chains could not satisfy. Russian oxen could not pull the wagons quickly enough from the mainland, while goods traveling to the Allies by sea were subjected to the vicissitudes of the weather. In the most severe case, a hurricane on November 14 sank ships transporting precious medical supplies, food, and ammunitions. Hundreds of men on both sides died as a result of the storm, which flooded sewers and eroded trenches. The storm was so damaging to the Allies that the Russians considered it a sign God had taken up their cause.[29]

Before the end of the year, the armies had picked the peninsula clean of all foodstuffs and Crimea entered a subsistence crisis. Wells that once flowed continuously had been drained to mud.[30] Starving Russian soldiers slaughtered more than two-thirds of military and civilian work animals for food, which deprived the military of transportation necessary to import food from the mainland, and stripped the civilians of the means to sow the next year's harvest.[31]

Cholera struck as severely in Crimea as it had in Varna. Dozens died from the disease on the ships en route to the Allied base in Evpatoriia. The disease spread rapidly in the camps; for example, 98.5 percent of Sardinian casualties in Crimea resulted from sickness. From the camps, diseases spread to the civilian population.[32] The concentration of soldiers and brothels quickly produced an outbreak of sexually transmitted diseases that doctors struggled to treat through 1858.[33] Like people, animals near the war zone died in terrible numbers, whether from contagions like anthrax or from exhaustion from overwork and starvation. A Russian army report at the end of the war calculated that more than 35,000 oxen and 12,000 horses died hauling food and hay.[34]

In the middle of a prolonged war, starving men sought a simple explanation for their hunger. They fell upon the Tatars, whom they believed harbored sympathy

29 Fr. Dombrovskii, "Buria 2-go noiabria 1854 goda, v Krymu," *Odesskii vestnik* 127 (1854), reprinted in *Moskovskie Vedomosti* 145 (1854); Kozelsky, *Crimea in War and Transformation,* 91.

30 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5610, ll. 31–32 (Prikaz no. 32, March 4, 1855).

31 RGVIA, f. 846, op. 16, d. 5617, l. 60 (Prikaz no. 102, March 28, 1855); Zatler, *Zapiski o prodovolstvii voisk v voennoe vremia,* 1:240–41.

32 Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 286; Somerset J. Gough Calthorpe and George Cadogan (illustrator), *Cadogan's Crimea* (New York: Athenaeum, 1980); Rossiiskaia Natsionalnaia Biblioteka, f. 313, op. 1, d. 44, l. 732.

33 Kozelsky, *Crimea in War and Transformation*, 165.

34 Arsenii Markevich, *Tavricheskaia guberniia vo vremia Krymskoi voiny po arkhivnym materialam* (1905; repr., Simferopol: Tavrida, 1994), 192; RGIA, f. 1263, op. 1, d. 2481, l. 11; Kozelsky, *Crimea in War and Transformation*, 165.

with their Ottoman co-religionists.[35] To be sure, some Crimean Tatars joined forces with their "brethren of the faith," but as with Ottoman Bulgarians and Greeks, the percentage of defectors within the overall population remained quite small.[36] However, uncertainty over the loyalties of the Tatar population spread within the Russian military and irregular forces, which at times terrorized and deported several thousand Tatars from the coastal areas near Allied camps.[37]

As the war in Crimea wore on, the Allies compounded destruction of the peninsula with a *guerre de course*, targeting industries and agriculture along the Baltic and Black Seas.[38] In May 1855, Allied ships entered the Kerch Strait. Soldiers looted civilian homes and set fire to the towns when they had finished. Joined by Sardinia-Piedmont, the Allies delivered a sound defeat to the Russian army in the Battle of Chernaia River (August 16, 1855), which precipitated the Russian evacuation of Sevastopol ten days later.[39]

The evacuation of Sevastopol did not end the war. "Sevastopol is not Moscow, the Crimea is not Russia," said Alexander II (1855–81), the Russian Tsar who had unexpectedly assumed the reigns of war after his father Nicholas I passed in March 1855.[40] Instead, the Russian army withdrew to Simferopol and towns of the interior as the Allies retained their position along Crimean coasts. Skirmishes broke out through the fall and winter, but the Allies never managed to penetrate Russian resistance or Crimea's difficult terrain. The war continued until Russian victory in the Battle of Kars in the Caucasus emboldened the tsar to take his place at the negotiating table.

4 Caucasus

Much to Ottoman chagrin, European Allies did not send forces to the Caucasus, but left the Ottoman Army to manage the Caucasian front largely on its own. Violence between the Russian and Ottoman Empires in the Caucasus raged from the Russian storm of the

35 Greta Uehling challenges the idea of "collaboration." Among other things, her work shows that civilians trapped by occupying powers have circumscribed choices on the one hand, and on the other, invaders have real motives to invent the image of support where none exists. Greta Lynn Uehling, *Beyond Memory: The Crimean Tatars' Deportation and Return* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 49–78. For an analysis of allegations against the Crimean Tatars during the Crimean War, see Mara Kozelsky, "Casualties of Conflict: Crimean Tatars During the Crimean War," *Slavic Review* 67, no. 4 (2008): 862–91.
36 Hakan Kırımlı, "Krymskie tatary i Osmanskaia imperiia vo vremia Krymskoi voiny," in Borejsza, *The Crimean War*, 333–50.
37 RGIA, f. 651, op. 1, d. 468, l. 145 (Untitled Report from the Ministry of the Interior, no. 2292, November 21, 1860).
38 Rath, *The Crimean War in Imperial Context*, 28–30, 47–51.
39 Liubomir G. Beskrovnyi, *Russkoe voennoe iskusstvo XIX v.* (Moscow: Izd. Nauka, 1974), 278; Modest I. Bogdanovich, *Vostochnaia voina, 1853–1856* (St. Petersburg: tip. F. Sushchinko, 1876), 3:45–46.
40 See, for example, Winfried Baumgart, *The Peace of Paris 1856: Studies in War, Diplomacy, and Peacemaking*, trans. Ann Pottinger Saab (Oxford: ABC-Clio, 1981), 58; Trevor Royle, *Crimea: The Great Crimean War, 1854–1856* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 435; Figes, *The Crimean War*, 397.

fortress of Batum on October 25, 1854, through the Russian seizure of the Kars fortress in November 1855. Both Russian and Ottoman war aims centered on a long-term struggle for suzerainty in the southern Caucasus region that had begun in the early nineteenth century and had seen several reversals.

Like Crimea and the Danubian Principalities, the rugged environment of the Black Sea and its hinterlands shaped the flow of violence in the Caucasus. The Caucasus Mountains had historically provided a natural geographic barrier between the Russian Empire in the north and the Persian and Ottoman Empires in the south. Only the north-south Russian military road built in the nineteenth century crossed the mountain chain to connect the military forces of the Russian Empire with the battlegrounds in the southern Caucasus. Quickly concluding that the army could not reinforce the Black Sea coastal forts Russia had wrestled from local powers and the Ottoman Empire in earlier conflicts, the Russian navy stripped the forts of cannon and evacuated nearly 4,000 men shortly after the war began.[41]

As violence unfolded in the Caucasus, an Ottoman army of nearly 120,000 arrayed against a Russian army of 160,000. Most of these men were stationed around the fortresses between Batum and Bayezid, with about half surrounding Kars and Ardahan.[42] In addition to Batum, the two armies met in the fall of 1853 in the vicinity of Aleksandropol (today: Gyumri; November 10) and Akhaltsikhe (November 13), and at Başgedikler (December 1, 1853). More bloodletting occurred as the two armies retreated.[43]

Local populations viewed the Crimean War as one stage of a protracted Russian war of conquest that began in 1816 and lasted to 1864.[44] Nearly half a century earlier Russia had gained a foothold in the region through Georgia. Through subsequent wars with Persia (1804–13; 1826–28) and the Ottoman Empire (1828–29) Russia secured its position in Transcaucasia.[45]

The Russian conquest of the Caucasus was brutal. In 1816 General A. P. Ermolov initiated a deadly campaign of ethnic cleansing, with a clearly expressed goal of cultivating Christian populations such as Armenians and Georgians, at the expense of the Muslim mountain tribes of the Caucasus, namely the Ingush, Chechens, Ossetians, Circassian, and Dagestani. His men burned a wide swath between the coast and the mountains, and indiscriminately slaughtered men, women, and children.[46] Rallied by a Mus-

41 John Shelton Curtiss, *Russia's Crimean War* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979), 186–88.
42 Badem states that there were some 90,000 troops, and Baumgart notes that the initial number dropped quickly due to epidemics and desertion. Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 145–46; Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 223.
43 Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 223–25.
44 See for example Nikolai I. Pokrovskii, *Kavkazskie voiny i imamat Shamilia* (Moscow: Rosspen, 2000); Khadzhi Murat Ibragimbeili, *Kavkaz v Krymskoi voine 1853–1856 gg. i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* (Moscow: Izd. Nauka, 1971).
45 Firouzeh Mostashari, *On the Religious Frontier: Tsarist Russia and Islam in the Caucasus* (London: I. B. Tauis, 2006), 23.
46 Moshe Gammer, *Muslim Resistance to the Tsar* (Abingdon, UK: Frank Cass, 1994), 30–38; Mostashari, *On the Religious Frontier*, 37–38.

lim resistance movement known as Muridism and led by Imam Shamil, local tribes hindered Russian expansion in the Caucasus throughout the 1830s. Shamil's movement had gained the attention of Western observers on the eve of the war and garnered Polish sympathies and support.[47]

When war broke out, French and British diplomats met with Circassian and Adyghe leaders in Istanbul, while dozens of English and Ottoman agents traveled the Caucasus issuing calls for "holy war" against the Russian forces.[48] Shamil and his officers considered making an alliance with the Ottoman Empire or creating an imamate under Ottoman protection. They ultimately rejected the idea, concluding that their loose confederation of tribes would not want to be beholden to Ottoman or European powers. That Ottoman *başıbozuk* (irregular forces) traveled through the Caucasian war zone committing atrocities against men, women, and children did not help. Reports of rape and murder, as well as enslavement of non-Muslims, prompted many peoples in the region, including some Muslim tribes, to view Russia as a better alternative.[49]

Without assistance from the local Caucasian tribes, Ottomans had little chance of success. After spending 1854 mired in Crimea, Russia and the Ottoman Empire returned to battle it out in Kars in the fall of 1855. Although the opening battle at Kars on September 29, 1855 resulted in an Ottoman victory and 7,500—8,000 deaths for the Russian army, the Russian forces dug in for a siege. Within weeks, the Ottoman defenders of Kars had fallen into starvation. Cholera and scurvy swept through the camps. After a snowstorm prevented the Ottoman forces from reinforcing Kars, the defenders of the Kars fortress capitulated on November 27, 1855.[50] The Russian victory at Kars proved decisive, and the Allies surrendered the Caucasus.

Victory at Kars meant that the Russian Empire had captured more territory than the Allied forces and gave Tsar Alexander II substantial leverage for peace talks. Further, as disgruntled Anatolian Greeks threatened an uprising after the Russian seizure of Kars, the Ottoman position appeared much more unstable than at the beginning of the war.[51] Britain cared less about Kars than about the possibility of a Russian march upon Istanbul. Entering the talks, the European Allies did not have the same unity of vision about the Caucasus as they did about the Danubian Principalities. France was more concerned about the Near East in the Ottoman Empire. Britain envisioned creating a greater "Circassia," joined with Georgia, Armenia, and other Caucasian states,

47 Vladimir Bobrovnikov, "Krymskaia voina na russkom Kavkaze: Ideologiia frontira i diskurs musulmanskogo soprotivleniia," in Borejsza, *The Crimean War,* 299–332; Pokrovskii, *Kavkazskie voiny i imamat Shamilia*, 303–4; Asker D. Panesh, *Zapadnaia Cherkesiia v sisteme vzaimodeistviia rossii s Turtsiei, Angliei, i imamatom Shamiilia v XIX v. (do 1864)* (Maikop: Adygeiskii respublikanskii institut gumanitarnykh issledovanii im. T. M. Kerasheva, 2007), 3–4.

48 Panesh, *Zapadnaia Cherkesiia*, 183–85.

49 Pokrovskii, *Kavkazskie voiny i imamat Shamilia*, 458–60; Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 154–55; Yusuf Hakan Erdem, "Wherever Slavery Exists, the Whole Society Suffers: The White Slave Controversy During the Crimean War," in Borejsza, *The Crimean War,* 53–79.

50 Badem, *The Ottoman Crimean War*, 251–55; Figes, *The Crimean War*, 398–99.

51 Baumgart, *The Peace of Paris*, 106.

while also returning to Persia and the Ottoman Empire those parts ceded to Russia in the treaties of Gulistan (1813) and Edirne (also known as Adrianople, 1829). Talks ensued from December through February, until all sides agreed upon peace in March 1856.[52]

The Paris peace treaty brought an end to the Russian protectorship in the Danubian Principalities and ceded some portions of Bessarabia (the western part of present-day Moldova) to the Ottoman Empire. The Russian Empire retained sovereignty over most of the Transcaucasian territory it captured, and secured the sultan's assurance of the legal position of Christian subjects stated in the *Hatt-i Hümayun.* The European Allies won neutralization of the Black Sea and freedom of navigation on the Danube.[53]

5 Conclusion

Three years of mobilization and war dramatically changed the world in ways only partially revealed by the peace accord. The European, Russian, and Ottoman Empires had already begun to stretch across the globe, and the consequences of this war took a global dimension. In addition to the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, navies fought in the Baltic Sea, the White Sea, and the Pacific Ocean. Armies skirmished in China and on the banks of the Amur River. The Crimean War's Pacific front, fought around the Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin Island, unlocked a new imperial dynamic between Japan and Russia with repercussions stretching to the present.[54] The consequences of this outsized conflict in the Black Sea even rippled in the United States by providing a blueprint for warfare in the Civil War and precipitating the sale of Alaska.[55]

A war of the industrial era, the Crimean War also ushered in a new type of mass violence. Other scholars referenced throughout this article address the role of steamships and rail, along with the importance of long-range guns and sea mines. Modern advances in battlefield medicine have also been well documented in the literature.[56] Mass media captured all of these developments for audiences at home. Roger Fenton pioneered war photography, alongside war journalists like William Russell.[57] In Russia,

52 Panesh, *Zapadnaia Cherkesiia*, 183; Curtiss, *Russia's Crimean War*, 18.

53 Baumgart, *The Peace of Paris*, 107–73; "Traktat zakluchennyi v Parizhe 18 (30) marta 1856," in Tarle, *Krymskaia voina* (unpaginated appendix).

54 Rath, *The Crimean War in Imperial Context*, 191–202; Andrew Lambert, *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy Against Russia, 1854–1856*, 2nd ed. (Farmham: Ashgate, 2011), 112–16, 151–53, 199–201.

55 Matthew Moten, *The Delafield Commission and the American Military Profession* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2000); Lee A. Farrow, *Steward's Folly: A New Look at the Alaska Purchase* (Fairbanks, AL: University of Alaska Press, 2016); Joseph Bradley, *Guns for the Tsar: American Technology and the Small Arms Industry in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (DeKalb, Illinois: Northern Illinois University, 1990).

56 See for example the works referenced in fn. 4.

57 Ulrich Keller, *The Ultimate Spectacle: A Visual History of the Crimean War* (Amsterdam: Routledge, 2001); Stefanie Markovitz, *The Crimean War in the British Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univer-

Leo Tolstoy and Nikolai Berg educated the growing literate public about activity of the front.[58] And there were many other icons associated with this war, be it the nurses Mary Seacole, Florence Nightingale, and Dasha Sevastopolskaia, or the British poet Alfred Tennyson and his contemporary Karl Marx, who wrote about the war for the *New York Tribune.*[59]

Official sources on the death toll of the war rarely depict civilian losses. Sources vary and/or under-represent soldiers' deaths. Taking the previous limitations into consideration, estimates of lives lost to the Crimean War range to 900,000, including up to 600,000 Russians, 120,000 Ottomans, approximately 93,500 French, 2,500 Sardinians, 22,000 British soldiers, and unnamed civilians.[60] By far the largest death tolls occurred in and around Crimea, where nearly 170,000 men died in Sevastopol alone.[61]

In the Black Sea Region, the war's impact penetrated deeply into the hinterland. Soldiers commanded civilian labor and resources in a wide radius around the sea through the present-day spaces of Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Caucasus. Militaries spread war diseases from ports inland. Scorched earth policy and *guerre de course* burned fields and villages. The voracious appetite for violence demanded provisions from an ever-widening field, which forced refugees even further from the violent shores. By war's end, violence had dragged living and material resources from continental interiors, with a demographic and environmental impact that no one could fully calculate.[62]

The war accelerated emerging nationalist movements in Southeastern Europe and the Caucasus, while inspiring transformational reforms in the Ottoman and Russian Empires. Although some areas in or near the war zone suffered terrible destruction, other economies entered the world market in stronger positions.[63] Most significantly, the Crimean War prompted one of the largest mass migrations of the nineteenth century. Some 200,000 Crimean Tatars fled Russia for the Ottoman Empire; Orthodox

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sity Press, 2009); and Georg Maag et al., eds., *Der Krimkrieg als erster europäischer Medienkrieg* (Berlin: Verlag 2010). See also Gavin Williams, *Hearing the Crimean War: Wartime Sound and the Unmasking of Sense* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018).

58 Alexis Peri, "Heroes, Cowards and Traitors: The Crimean War and Its Challenge to Russian Autocracy," *Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Working Papers Series* (Institute of East European and Eurasian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, Summer, 2008); Serhii Plokhy, "The City of Glory: Sevastopol in Russian Historical Mythology," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 3 (July 2000): 369–83; and Olga Maiorova, *From the Shadow of Empire: Defining the Russian Nation through Cultural Mythology, 1855–1870* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010).

59 Karl Marx, *The Eastern Question: A Reprint of Letters Written 1853–1856 Dealing with the Events of the Crimean War*, ed. Eleanor Marx Aveling and Edward Aveling (London: Swan Sonnenschen & Co., 1897).

60 Figes, *The Crimean War*, 467–92; Baumgart, *The Crimean War*, 286–87; Kozelsky, *Crimea in War and Transportation*, 75–89.

61 Naumova, *Ranenie, bolezn i smert*, 297.

62 Kozelsky, *Crimea in War and Transformation*, 199–206.

63 Ivan Roussev, "Wartime Crisis? The Crimean War (1853–1856) – the Different War," *Proceedings of the Centre for Economic History Research* (2019): 52–65.

Christians from the Ottoman Empire took their places. Nogay Tatars and Muslim tribes from the Caucasus soon followed.[64]

Over the course of three years, war in the Black Sea had redistributed violence and resources. The lethal intersection pulled life and labor from the hinterlands into the sea, whirlpooling peoples and their faiths, flora and fauna, economies, and militaries around the shores.

64 A. I. Markevich, "Pereseleniia krymskikh tatar v Turtsiiu v sviazi s dvizheniem naseleniia v Krymu," *Izvestiia Akademii Nauk SSSR*, otd. gumanitarnykh nauk 1 (1928): 375–405, 2 (1929): 1–16; Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population, 1830–1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); Alan W. 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; Marc Pinson, "Demographic Warfare: An Aspect of Ottoman and Russian Policy, 1854–1866" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1970); Brian Glyn Williams, "Hijra and Forced Migration from Nineteenth-Century Russia to the Ottoman Empire," *Cahiers du monde Russe* 41, no. 1 (January–March2000): 79–108; James Meyer, "Immigration, Return, and the Politics of Citizenship: Russian Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, 1860–1914," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 39, no. 1 (2007): 9–26; Catalina Hunt, "Changing Identities at the Fringes of the Late Ottoman Empire: The Muslims of Dobruca, 1839–1914" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 2015).