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Emigration of Muslims from the Russian Empire in the Years After the Crimean War

Between 1855 and 1866, at least 500 000 and possibly as many as 900 000 Muslim subjects of the Russian Tsar emigrated to the Ottoman Empire. Of these, about one-third originated in the lands of the former Crimean Khanate (Tavričeskaja gubernija), the other two-thirds from the north and west Caucasus (Kavkaz). If the tenth all-Russian census (1857) is accurate, these emigrants accounted for between 15 and 23 percent of the entire population of the Crimea, and for between 17 and 28 percent of those sections of the Caucasus.¹ Clearly this was a demographic event which must have resulted from a catastrophe of some magnitude, and which must have produced a significant alteration of the population of the southern regions of the Russian Empire. But just as importantly, the arrival of the immigrants in the Ottoman Empire would have produced demographic consequences of like magnitude, particularly in those regions where the immigrants were first placed. Finally, the emigrants/immigrants themselves must have undergone considerable stresses in the process, from which large numbers would find it difficult to recover. It is the purpose of this essay to examine these three aspects of this movement, the first of what would be several major population transfers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the Balkans and the Middle East.

Both the Crimea and parts of the Caucasian areas had been conquered, and administratively absorbed, into the Russian Empire in the last decades of the 18th and first decades of the 19th centuries. In both instances, the native populations included virtually no Russian or Slavic elements. But the next forty years would be ones of increasingly intensive Slavic immigration southward, both the result of a natural movement of peasants to better land, and of conscious governmental policy aiming at Slavicizing "New Russia" and the Caucasus. The destruction of native social and political institutions, the implementation of a land policy intended to favor Russian ownership and its attendant serf agriculture, and concern that the mostly Muslim natives posed security problems for the state, all combined to produce pressures on the Tatars and Caucasians to leave.²

The Crimean Tatars began leaving their homeland in 1772, when their Khans lost effective political control, and the Russians began intervening forcefully in Crimean internal affairs. The exodus proceeded unabated until 1789, when the Treaty of Jassy cemented Russian control of the peninsula and the steppe to the north of the Black Sea. Estimates (for no one actually counted) of Tatar emigrants from these years range from 50 000 to 300 000.³ More reliable figures indicate that between 150 000 and 170 000 Tatars

¹ V. M. KABUZAN *Izmenenija v razmeščennii naselenija Rossii v XVIII – pervoj polovine XIX v. Moskva 1971*. According to the 10th census, the population (male, above age 11) of Tavričeskaja gubernija was 340 774, and that of the Kavkaz, 284 223 (Appendix, tables).

² For an outline of Russian administrative policies in the Crimean region, after its conquest and annexation, see A. FISHER *The Crimean Tatars*. Stanford 1978, pp. 70–93; and MARK PINSON *Russian Policy and the Emigration of the Crimean Tatars to the Ottoman Empire, 1854–1862*, in: *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* [South-East European Studies Journal] 1 (1972) pp. 37–56 (here pp. 37–42) and 2–3 (1973–1974) pp. 101–114.

³ The highest estimate, ca. 300 000, was also the earliest made, by P. I. SUMAROKOV *Dosugi krymskago sud'i ili vtoroje putešestvie v Tavridu*. Vol. 1, S.-Peterburg 1803, p. 161; F. Laškov, who was able to examine the Khans' archives before they disappeared at the time of the 1917 revolution,

remained on the peninsula itself by the end of the century.⁴ While it appears likely that many of the Tatars who left went to the Ottoman Empire, including the Danubian Principalities and Bessarabia, Ottoman sources have not surfaced which could corroborate these large numbers.⁵ This early Tatar emigration played an important role in the subsequent, more extensive exodus, for it provided the opportunity, indeed necessity, for an immigration of Slavic peasants and landowners which would gain momentum as the century progressed.

Between the all-Russian census of 1795 and that of 1850, the population of Tavričeskaja gubernija rose from about 130 000 (taxable males) to 332 000, the bulk of whom were Russian peasants. The fact that this gubernija's population rose much more slowly than that of its northern neighbor, Cherson (from 147 000 to 480 000 in the same period), while its agricultural potential was similar, indicates that it is likely that the Tatar exodus continued, in a more gradual way.⁶ As the Tatar proportion declined, a new (serf-oriented) agricultural system was introduced, and a set of legal institutions which discriminated against the Tatars were put into place, life for the Muslim population became increasingly difficult. Attitudes of Russian administrators who saw the Tatars as aliens (although natives), as backward, and potentially dangerous, served to encourage Tatar departure.

A further incentive for Tatar flight was provided by the Tsarist policy of permitting Cossack units to settle (and roam) the coastline of the Black Sea from west to east. After the Russo-Ottoman war of 1828–1829, the Azov Cossack Army was settled along the shore from the Crimean peninsula west to Bessarabia. Even Soviet studies indicate that the Cossacks took advantage of their position to harrass Tatar villagers in their area. In addition, Christian refugees from the Ottoman Empire, mainly Greeks, Serbs, and Bulgarians, were settled in the Crimea and the Black Sea coastal region. Their attitudes towards Muslim Tatars, to them indistinguishable from the Turks of the Ottoman Empire,

believed the Tatar population to have exceeded 500 000 in 1770. F. LAŠKOV estimated the total emigration to 1789 to have been 150 000 to 200 000 (K voprosu o količestve naselenija Tavričeskoj gubernii v načale XIX stoletija, in: *Izvestija tavrčeskago učennago archivnago kommissii* 53 [1916] pp. 158–176, here pp. 159–160). CHANTAL LEMERCIER-QUELQUEJAY gives 100 000 as the total in: *The Tatars of the Crimea. A Retrospective Summary*, in: *Central Asian Review* 16,1 (1968) pp. 15–25, here p. 18; the lowest figure, 8000, is provided in a more recent Soviet account, in E. I. DRUŽININA *Severnoe Pričernomoře v 1775–1800 gg.* Moskva 1959, pp. 118–119. ARSENIJA MARKEVIČ *Pereselenija krymskich tatar v Turciju*, in: *Izvestija AN SSSR. Series 7: Otdel. gumanitarnych nauk* (1928) no. 4 pp. 375–405, whose article is solely about this emigration, ventures no guess on numbers.

⁴ Baron Igel'ström produced a study of the economic resources of the peninsula and southern steppe in 1783 which concluded that only ca. 150 000 Tatars remained "after the years of devastation." See F. LAŠKOV *Statističeskija svedenija o Kryme, soobščennyja kaimakanami v 1783 godu*, in: *Zapiski imperatorskago odesskago obščestva istorii i drevnostej* 14 (1886) pp. 91–156, here pp. 91–93; P. S. PALLAS put the figure closer to 200 000 in 1793, in his: *Travels Through the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire in the Years 1793 and 1794*. Vol. 2, London 1812, pp. 343–344. Neither provides evidence of actual counts taken.

⁵ One Ottoman document, of December 1783, reports the arrival at Özü of 4000 Tatars fleeing before the Russian advance: *Başbakanlık Arşivi* (Istanbul), *Hatt-i Hümayun*, No. 1101. Ottoman chroniclers of the events surrounding the Ottoman loss of the Crimea make no mention of the Tatar immigration (Ahmet Cevdet, Sa'dullah Enveri, and Ahmet Resmi Effendi).

⁶ KABUZAN *Izmenenija* pp. 107–118, 167–171; E. I. DRUŽININA *Južnaja Ukraina v period krizisa feodalizma, 1825–1860 gg.* Moskva 1981, p. 14, indicates that between 1827 and 1858 the number of Slavic peasants in the Crimea rose from 125 626 to 228 284 (males). For details of the process of Slavic settlement, see V. I. ČASLAVSKIJ *Zemledel'českie otchožie promysly v svjazii s pereseleniem krest'jan*, in: V. P. BEZOBRAZOV (ed.) *Sbornik gosudarstvennych znanij*. Vol. 2, S.-Peterburg 1875, pp. 181–211.

were also extremely hostile. They, too, received preferential treatment from the Russian authorities.⁷ Both the use of military irregulars and the actions taken by the new refugees against the native population and another religion would recur in the Caucasus and ultimately in Anatolia during the remainder of the 19th century, with essentially the same results, continuing flight by the native population to what they perceived as more hospitable, and safer, lands.

From the initial exodus of Tatars after 1783 to the beginning of the Crimean War, Tatar emigration seems to have been sufficiently sporadic to permit the total Tatar population in the Crimea to rise slowly. The substantial influx of Slavic peasants and landowners, however, produced a major shift in the demographic balance between Tatar and non-Tatar, Muslim and Christian. By the beginning of the Crimean War, the Tatars constituted somewhat less than 50% of the population.

It was to be the outcome of the Crimean War, and perceptions by the Russian leadership of the role that the Tatars had played in it, that would produce a second major flight of Tatars to the Ottoman Empire. In part out of a concern for the security of the Crimean coastline and an interest in establishing a strong coastal defense, and in part from a continued desire to populate the Crimea with as many Slavs as possible, the Russian commander in Tavričeskaja gubernija, Prince Menšikov, proposed the total removal of Tatars from the coast for resettlement in internal districts of the peninsula. Some Tatars believed this proposal to be more drastic than it actually was, and suspected that the Russian aim was their ultimate removal to places far distant from their homeland. A suggestion by one Russian official that they be sent to Central Asia did nothing to temper their fears.⁸

There can be no doubt that Tatars did provide aid – supplies, as well as some manpower – to the British and French during the War. Claims that the Tatars defected *en masse* to the Allied armies, fought alongside of them against the Russians, and proved to be an entirely traitorous element, are at best exaggerated. First, the Tatars had no arms to speak of; one of the important elements of Russian policy in the Crimea after 1783 had been to make sure that the Tatar population was unarmed. The fact that the Tatar military forces had all left the Crimea in the last years prior to 1783, leaving behind only peasants and townspeople, indicates that the remaining Tatars would not have been much of a military asset.⁹ Secondly, when Tatars did resist Russian forces, it often was in response to military actions

⁷ DRUŽININA Južnaja Ukraina p. 16; V. M. KABUZAN Zaselenie Novorossii (Ekaterinoslavskoj i Chersonskoj gubernii) v XVIII – pervoj polovine XIX veka. Moskva 1976, pp. 245–246; A. P. BAŽOVA Iz jugoslavjanskich zemel' – v Rossiju, in: Voprosy istorii (1977) no. 2, pp. 124–137.

⁸ PINSON Russian Policy pp. 42–43, downplays the serious effect that this proposal had on the Tatars, citing MARKEVIČ Pereselenija p. 394. However, AHMET ÖZENBAŞLI, the leading Tatar historian in the Revolutionary era, using Tatar sources, makes clear the widespread fear these proposals generated, coming in the context of several decades of subtle Russian attempts to encourage Tatar departures: Çarlık hakimiyetinde Kırım faciası yahut Tatar hicretleri [The Fate of the Crimea under Tsarist Administration, or Tatar Emigrations]. Akmesçit [Simferopol'] 1925; reprinted in: Emel iki aylık kültür dergisi [Hope, a bimonthly journal of culture] CIV (Istanbul 1978) pp. 38–44; CV (1978) pp. 30–35; CVI (1978) pp. 21–26; CVII (1978) pp. 20–31; CVIII (1978) pp. 16–24; CIX (1978) pp. 28–35; CX (1979) pp. 26–34; here, CVIII (1978) p. 21.

⁹ P. N. NADINSKIĬ Očerki po istorii Kryma. Part 1. Simferopol' 1951 (AN SSSR. Krymskij Filial), pp. 131, 140, writes that "the Crimean Tatars were traitors and by the thousands deserted to the camp of the enemy. In Evpatorija, the Tatars formed volunteer military units to fight alongside of the enemy." Nadinskij's phraseology is identical to the charges made against the Tatars during World War II, which were used to justify their deportation in 1944.

initiated against them. (This whole matter reminds one of the charges and justifications given concerning Armenian resistance/rebellion in Anatolia several decades later.) The Russian General LEVICKIJ, who knew first hand of the events in the Crimea during these years, wrote that "From the start to the finish of the war, Cossacks patrolled the Crimean villages, continually accusing the Crimeans of helping the enemy, arresting them and setting them free after payment of bribes; others were killed or driven away."¹⁰

Soon after the end of the war, Tsar Alexander II made it clear to his officials in the Crimea that he believed that the Tatars had behaved shamefully, in all probability would remain a security risk, and possibly would be happier living in a state dominated by their co-religionists. Of course their departure would also facilitate the integration of the Crimea into "more normal" Russian society.¹¹ ÖZENBAŞLI provides the Tatar interpretation of this development. It is his opinion that Alexander did not intend to remove the Tatars forcibly, against their will, but that local officials interpreted the Tsar's attitude in a very active manner. Count Kiselev, Minister of State Domains, including those in the Crimea, since 1837, secretly informed (May 22, 1856) officials in the Crimea that Alexander was interested in "cleansing" (the term *očičat*' is often translated as *purge*) the Crimea of as many Tatars as possible, and that no obstacles of any sort should be placed in the way of the Tatars' leaving.¹² The Tatar leadership was easily convinced that immediate flight was necessary for survival. When a recent Soviet historian can write, as fact, that "the main cause of the emigration was the fear by the Tatars of fair and just retribution for their traitorous behavior during the war," how more immediate this fear must have been at the time.¹³ It was after 1856, and continuing until 1860, that the vast majority of Tatar emigrants left.

The causes of the emigration of the Caucasian peoples to the Ottoman Empire had as long a history as those for the Tatars. Underlying both emigrations was the desire (at first not clearly spelled out) to have Russia's southern frontiers populated by trustworthy subjects (Slavic if possible, but Christian necessarily) to improve her security against hostile Muslim neighboring states. The situation in the Caucasus was far more complicated than it was in the Crimea; the geography was difficult and the local population consisted of many ethnic and tribal groups. The largest element, the Circassians (Çerkes) numbered approximately one million by the mid-19th century, and included a number of tribes such as the Natukhay, Shapsug, Abadzekh, and the Kabardinians. The Circassians had assimilated most of two other tribes, the Ubekeh and Abaza, by the time of the Russian conquest.¹⁴ Other large groups in the Caucasus included the Chechens, Ingush, Dagestanis, and the Christian Armenians and Georgians.¹⁵ Unlike the Crimean Tatars, who were peasants and townspeople, many of the Caucasians were nomads and practiced animal husbandry with all of its related economic pursuits. They had not often submitted to effective rule by sedentary states, and retained a general dislike of settled agriculture and the states it sustained.

With the creation of protectorates over, and then actual annexation of, Christian Georgia

¹⁰ G. I. LEVICKIJ *Pereselenie tatar iz Kryma v Turciju*, in: *Vestnik Evropy* 17 (1882) vol. 5, pp. 596-639, here pp. 605-606.

¹¹ See PINSON *Russian Policy* pp. 44-45, for a clear discussion of Alexander's attitude.

¹² ÖZENBAŞLI *Kırım faciası*, in: *Emel CIX*, p. 30, for the Tatar reaction. He also provides a Tatar translation of a rather late (1860) reiteration of Alexander's decision, with the verb form *očičat*' as *temizlemek*.

¹³ NADINSKIJ *Očerki* p. 140.

¹⁴ CHANTAL LEMERCIER-QUELQUEJAY *Çerkes*, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. New Edition. Vol. 2, Leiden, London 1965, pp. 21-22.

¹⁵ ALEXANDRE BENNIGSEN *Çeçens*, *ibidem* pp. 18-19.

and Armenia, it was inevitable that the Russian government would find these two peoples more congenial than their Muslim neighbors, and would work to make them dominant in the Caucasus. Both Armenian and Georgian nobility soon entered the highest levels of Russian officialdom, and would come to influence Russian policy towards the other inhabitants of the Caucasus. Armenian and Georgian peasants and townspeople fit in more with customary Russian social policies than did the Muslim mountaineers and herdsmen.

The Russians slowly, but steadily, increased their control of the north Caucasus and the Black Sea littoral during the first half of the nineteenth century. Each Russian advance provoked resistance from the Muslim Caucasians, occasionally breaking out into full-scale armed opposition ("rebellion" in the Russian sources). The most important resistance movement was led by Sheykh Shamil, who was finally defeated only in 1859. Gradual Russian encroachment, preferential treatment towards the Christian population, and a conscious effort to populate the entire region with Russian and Ukrainian peasants, drove more and more of the Muslims into the mountains. Some began to find it necessary to flee to the Ottoman Empire.¹⁶

The population growth of Russian gubernii in the lower Volga valley (Saratov and Astrakhan) and the establishment and growth of the gubernija of the Caucasus itself (Kavkaz) from the early 19th century to the eve of the Crimean War shows clearly the pressures being applied against the native Muslim population. Saratov gubernija grew from 380 000 in 1795 to 573 000 in 1815, to 802 000 in 1833, and to 948 000 in 1850 (all figures for males). In 1850, fully 85% of the population in Saratov gubernija were peasants. Astrakhan province's population advanced from 73 000 in 1811 to 164 000 in 1833, and to 180 000 in 1850. Kavkazskaja gubernija's population grew the most substantially, from 60 000 in 1811 to 190 000 in 1833, and finally to 279 000 in 1850 (only Russian subjects were counted here). The region called "the lands of the Don Cossacks," just to the north of the Kubañ River, grew from 149 000 in 1795 to 200 000 in 1811, to 320 000 in 1833, and to 393 000 in 1850. In all four cases, the bulk of the population growth was caused by the influx of settlers from the north.¹⁷

Even if one might ignore the fact that the Crimean War had an important Caucasian front, there can be little doubt that at some point the Russian settlement pressure was going to provoke a massive attempt at resistance, or a large exodus of the native Muslim population to new lands. In fact, the presence of large Russian and Ottoman armies in the Caucasus precipitated this inevitable response, which in the end took both forms, resistance and exodus.¹⁸

The Russians had prepared well for conflict in the Caucasus. Already in the late 1840's, the government had ordered the clearing of large areas of forest land on the northern flanks of the mountains, to facilitate agricultural settlement, and to deprive the local population of the means of carrying on its traditional economic activities. In 1852, Prince Barjatinskij led a large military force through the lowlands of the Chechen area, driving the population away, destroying their villages, and confiscating their animals. As JOHN BADDELEY

¹⁶ N. A. SMIRNOV *Mjuridizm na Kavkaze*. Moskva 1963, and S. K. BUŠUEV *Bořba gorcev za nezavisimost' pod rukovodstvom Šamilja*. Moskva, Leningrad 1934, are excellent studies of Muslim resistance. N. G. VOLKOVA *Ėtničeskij sostav naselenija severnogo Kavkaza v XVIII – načale XX veka*. Moskva 1974, pp. 214–219, chronicles the movement of Muslims southward to the mountains from the northern Caucasus.

¹⁷ KABUZAN *Izmenenija* pp. 119–166.

¹⁸ The best study of the Caucasian front in the Crimean War is CHADŽI MURAT İBRAGIMBEJLI *Kavkaz v Krymskoj vojne 1853–1856 gg. i meždunarodnye otnošenija*. Moskva 1971.

portrays the effects, “not an *aoul*, not a house but had lost husbands, fathers, brothers. Whole families were exterminated, whole villages destroyed, whole communities were decimated.”¹⁹

The fact that many of the Muslim Caucasians “collaborated” with the Ottomans during the war, providing supplies and manpower, probably in the hope that the Russians would be driven back from their homelands, persuaded the Russian government that more drastic measures were necessary to assure security along this southern frontier. Soon after the war’s end, with the approval of Tsar Alexander II, the Russian army began a concerted effort to clear the entire Black Sea coast and its hinterland of “undesirable” elements. Between 1856 and 1859, Shamil was able to provide stiff opposition to the Russian efforts, but in the end his forces were no match for the full might of the Russian army in the area, which numbered at one time over 100 000. After 1856, the Russians were also determined that defeating the armed resistance must be accompanied by a complete “cleansing” of the region of the local population, and by their replacement with Russian peasant settlers.²⁰ The inevitable result of the Russian victories was the massive emigration of Caucasian Muslims to the Ottoman Empire in the years after 1859. They simply had no alternative.

Soviet historians, reluctant to portray these movements as forced removal, and perhaps embarrassed by what their Tsarist predecessors accomplished, have developed a series of alternative explanations for the exodus. Most argue that the emigration was the product of mass (and unwarranted) hysteria generated by “Ottoman agents” and local Muslim clerics. BUŠUEV, for example, claims that the Adygei Circassians fell under the spell of “Turkish agitators” and “Muridists”. IBRAGIMBEJLI says it was both “Turkish and British agents” who were responsible. The Academy of Sciences’ “History of Dagestan” charges that the emigration was entirely the result of “external influence: Emissaries from Turkey and pro-Turkish feudal lords and clergy spread anti-Russian propaganda that the Russians aimed at crushing Islam and converting everyone to Christianity.” NADINSKIJ writes about the Crimean exodus in the same terms: “Overcome by religious fanaticism engendered by propaganda from Turkish agents,” an “emigration fever” spread through the Tatar communities. It seems clear, however, that such “agitation,” even if it was extensive, would have had little chance of success without major Russian provocations.²¹ Two other Soviet studies provide a more balanced explanation, adding that the Tsarist policies and general socio-economic factors facilitated the “Turkish agitation.”²²

Thus, while the cases are somewhat different, the exodus of Crimean Tatars after 1856 and of Caucasians after 1859 were two branches of essentially the same phenomenon. They became quickly inextricably mixed as the process intensified. This was the “catastrophe” mentioned at the start of this essay, the forced removal of hundreds of

¹⁹ JOHN BADDELEY *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*. New York 1908, p. 480.

²⁰ MARC PINSON *Ottoman Colonization of the Circassians in Rumili After the Crimean War*, in: *Études Balkaniques* 8,3 (1972) pp. 71–85, here p. 71.

²¹ S. K. BUŠUEV *Iz istorii vnešnepoličeskich otnošenij v period prisoedinenija Kavkaza k Rossii*. Moskva 1955, p. 94; IBRAGIMBEJLI *Kavkaz* p. 339; AN SSSR. *Dagestanskii filial. -Istorija Dagestana*. Vol. 2, Moskva 1968, p. 142; NADINSKIJ *Očerki* pp. 140–141.

²² VOLKOVA *Étničeskij sostav* p. 219, and CH. LAJPANOV *K istorii pereselenija gorcev severnogo Kavkaza v Turciju*, in: *Trudy Karačaevo-Cerkesskogo instituta istorii, jazyka i literatury*. Serija istoričeskaja. Vyp. 5. Čerkessk 1966, p. 117. An earlier Soviet writer is cited by both as focusing on Tsarist “repression,” G. A. DZAGUROV *Pereselenie gorcev. Materialy po istorii gorskich narodov*. Rostov-na-Donu 1925. I have been unable to locate a copy of this work.

thousands of Tatars, Circassians, Chechens, and to some extent Dagestanis and Kabardians from the southern areas of the Russian Empire, and their subsequent flight to the Ottoman Empire.

The process by which this exodus took place was understandably hectic, confused, and impossible to organize effectively. How many actually emigrated from the Russian Empire, and how did they leave? An accurate count of refugees from the Crimea and Caucasus between 1856 and 1866 is not possible to obtain. Most of those leaving the Caucasus did it in a hurry, in a disorganized fashion, without passing any official border point where they might have been counted or officially noted. Since many whose origin was in the northern Caucasus left via the western route, and passed through the Crimea on their way to the Ottoman Empire, any figures of refugees leaving the Crimea would be useless in determining how many fled the Crimea itself. Since the Ottoman Empire, which received most of the refugees, did not keep an account of the refugees' origin, one finds little help there either. The best one can do is provide what evidence is available, with its source, and attempt to evaluate its veracity. A further difficulty arises from the fact that the emigration proceeded over a ten-year period, and in some respects continued even after 1866 in fits and starts, until a second massive exodus took place during and immediately after the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877–1878.

From the Russian side, we can find some census data, as well as impressionistic and anecdotal accounts for both the Crimea and the Caucasus. The census data for both the Crimea and the Caucasus, unfortunately, is only of slight value, as the census of 1857 was based on counts taken prior to the large-scale exodus of Tatars, and does not provide the ethnic or religious identity of those counted. Thus, an exodus accompanied by an influx of Slavic settlers would show up in the census as only a slight increase or decrease in total population. We do see that the total population of Tavričeskaja gubernija continued to rise, albeit at a slower rate than before, between 1850 and 1857, from 331 000 to 340 000.²³ Thus, it is of no help in determining the extent of Tatar emigration. Another census, however, of the Bessarabian region, which included the districts of Akkerman and Bender, does show a sizeable temporary drop in population during the years of the Tatar exodus. Bessarabia was an area where many Tatars had been resettled during the Crimean War, and had been a region where Nogai Tatars from the north Caucasus had been encouraged to move in the early years of the Russian "cleansing" operation. Akkerman had 112 000 population in 1859, dropped to 66 000 in 1861, and rose dramatically again to 186 000 by 1871. Bender district experienced a similar drop and subsequent rise, having 111 000 in 1859, only 58 000 in 1861, and rising to 116 000 in 1871.²⁴ These figures correspond well with the immigration into Rumelia of large numbers of Crimean and Nogai Tatars between 1859 and 1861.

Reports appearing primarily in Soviet accounts of Caucasian and Crimean history provide figures which cannot be corroborated; their sources may be official reports or observations by contemporaries of the emigrations, but it is impossible to determine how reliable they are. Beginning with the Caucasus, three western scholars agree on a general figure of ca. 600 000 as the total emigration of all Caucasian peoples to the Ottoman Empire between 1856 and 1864.²⁵ MARK PINSON states, on the basis of contemporary

²³ KABUZAN *Izmenenija* pp. 155–167.

²⁴ V. S. ZELENČUK *Naselenie Bessarabii i Podnestro'vja v XIX v.* Kišinev 1979, pp. 100–104.

²⁵ W. E. D. ALLEN, PAUL MURATOFF *Caucasian Battlefields: A History of the Wars on the Turco-Caucasian Border 1828–1921.* Cambridge, England 1953, p. 108; DAVID MARSHALL LANG *A Modern*

Russian accounts, that 308 068 Caucasians departed their homeland in 1863–1864 (a figure that implies a rather exact count, which is unlikely), and that the total, prior to 1866, was around half a million. More recently, KEMAL KARPAT, who is preparing a full-scale study of Muslim emigration from Russia and the Balkans, posits the figure “more than three million” for Circassians in the period after 1862. He writes that “Russian sources indicate that the total number of Circassians migrating in 1858, 1859, 1862, and in the summer of 1863, came to 80 000, while in the spring of 1864 alone the number went up to nearly 400 000.” In the years 1862–1870, KARPAT says “the total number of Çerkes who migrated during the first exodus varies between 1,2 and 2 million,” according to various Russian, Ottoman, and European sources.²⁶

If one looks at figures for particular groups of Caucasians, we find a similar total. We are told that the Chechens left in two separate emigrations, in 1860 and 1865, as the result of a two-stage assault on their lands by the Russians. Soviet figures for the 1860 flight indicate a total of 81 360 and that of 1865 at 22 500 with 16 000 head of cattle.²⁷ Of the Kabardinians, 10 300 left in 1860–1861; 14 500 Abaza between 1861–1863; 100 000 Abkhaz between 1859–1864; and 398 000 Adygei and Kubañ Nogai Tatars over the entire period. Entire tribes of Natukhaisy (4000 families), Temirgoevtsy (2000 families), and Beslenevtsy (600 families) joined the stampede from the mountains to the Ottoman Empire.²⁸ The total of these separate groups approaches 700 000.

Statistics for the Crimean Tatar emigration during these years are thoroughly confused, as so many of the Caucasians and Nogai Tatars passed through the peninsula on their way to Ottoman Rumelia. SHAW's figures are by far the highest, a total from the Crimea between 1854 and 1876 of 1 400 000, a total which clearly exceeded the total number of Tatars in the Crimea at the start of the period by at least 250%, and is considerably larger than the figures provided by the Crimeans themselves. MARK PINSON estimates that the Tatar emigration was between 210 000 and 230 000 between 1855 and 1862, while

History of Soviet Georgia. New York 1962, p. 98; HALIL INALCIK Çerkes: Ottoman Period, in: Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition. Vol. 2, 1965, pp. 24–25, provides the figure 595 000 culled from an Ottoman report.

²⁶ PINSON Ottoman Colonization p. 72. – VOLKOVA Ètničeskij sostav p. 221 places this figure for 1863–1864 at 312 000. KEMAL KARPAT Ottoman Population 1830–1914. Demographic and Social Characteristics. Madison 1985, pp. 27, 67; for the period 1862–1870, see IDEM The Status of the Muslim under European Rule: The Eviction and Settlement of the Çerkes, in: Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs 1, 2 (Jeddah 1979) pp. 7–27, here p. 11.

²⁷ (1860): SMIRNOV Mjuridizm p. 214; ALLEN, MURATOFF Caucasian Battlefields speak of one segment of this emigration as constituting 4000 families. (1865): BENNINGSEN Çeçens p. 18 places the 1865 figure at 40 000; VOLKOVA Ètničeskij sostav p. 222 says it was 5000 families. See also SMIRNOV Mjuridizm p. 218.

²⁸ Kabardinians: VOLKOVA Ètničeskij sostav p. 220. Abaza: VOLKOVA p. 220. Abkhaz: V. P. PAČULIJA Abchazija: Istoriko-kul'turnyj očerk. Suchumi 1976, p. 13. Adygei and Nogais: VOLKOVA Ètničeskij sostav p. 221. Other tribes, VOLKOVA p. 220. Turkish accounts are notably silent or unclear on this emigration. For example, İSMAIL BERKOK Tarihte Kafkasya [The Caucasus in History]. Istanbul 1958 describes the grim condition of refugees in Ottoman Anatolia, but cites only a report of the Russian consul Katraščev in Trabzon. He gives no figures for the exodus. STANFORD J. SHAW, EZEL KURAL SHAW History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Vol. 2, Cambridge, England 1977, p. 116, say there were “176 000 Nogais and Kuban Tatars” who emigrated between 1854–1860.” KEMAL KARPAT states that by 1860 between “46 000 and 50 000 Nogai Tatars emigrated, but not before being forced to pay heavy taxes and passport dues.” They settled mainly in the Dobruca. Population Movement in the Ottoman State in the Nineteenth Century: An Outline, in: JEAN-LOUIS BACQUE-GRAMMONT, PAUL DUMONT (eds.) Contributions à l'histoire économique et sociale de l'Empire ottoman. Paris 1983, pp. 387–426, here p. 401 (= Collection Turcica vol. 3).

ULKUSAL gives 227 000 between 1860 and 1862. GÖZAYDIN says the grand total numbered about 300 000, a figure in accord with that of ÖZENBAŞLI several decades earlier.²⁹ Like the Turks, Soviet historians are also silent on the extent of the Tatar exodus. DRUŽININA says only that it was characterized by “large numbers.” Though she does inadvertently provide one very important statistic which does imply a substantial exodus between 1859 and 1860. In a report of the number of livestock in the Crimea each year from 1845 to 1860, one finds a steady increase in all forms of livestock until 1859 (despite the problems caused by the war), and then a drastic decline in 1860: horses from 130 000 (1859) to 96 000 (1860); cattle from 480 000 to 369 000; sheep from 1 103 186 to 846 339; and most dramatically camels from 5229 to 1536. (The exact nature of these figures causes some concern about their accuracy.) Perhaps Tatars used camels for transporting goods on the journey, though there is no Ottoman mention of an increase in their camel population at the time.³⁰

By combining the two sets of figures, the total becomes staggering. In an eight year period, 1856–1864 (with the bulk leaving in the last five years), at least 700 000 and possibly as many as 900 000 Muslim Crimeans and Caucasians left the Russian Empire for the Ottoman Empire. Given the total population of the areas from which they came, the regions to which they went, the nature of transport available at the time, the fact that the Ottoman government was totally unprepared to deal with an immigration of this magnitude, and the lack of warning and time for planning available, the results had to be catastrophic. The effects of the emigration on the people involved, the people living in the areas of “settlement,” and the Ottoman government, were in the short term unimaginably bad, and would have negative consequences for years to come.

The Russian government, which had precipitated the exodus, achieved its objectives, that is, vast unpopulated areas in the south which it could fill with settlers more congenial to its interests, and who would satisfy Russian concerns for frontier security. There is not much evidence that any high Russian official had anticipated quite so large an emigration, and at least in one instance, an advisor to Alexander II suggested in late 1860 that the emigration from the Crimea may have progressed too far.³¹

A French journalist who observed the Tatar exodus from the docks in Evpatorija, and who travelled throughout the central Crimea in the midst of the emigration period, remarked that “the Crimea is now empty. The major task for the government is to find means to repopulate it.”³² Many of the abandoned villages were still empty as late as 1889. In a report compiled by the *zemstvo* of Cherson gubernija in 1870, 278 formerly Tatar villages in the north district of the peninsula were still mostly empty, and “of these 244 had not a single inhabitant.” In a similar computation by the *zemstvo* of Tavričeskaja gubernija of 1889, of the “678 villages which had suffered from the emigrations, 315 are still empty.”³³

²⁹ PINSON *Russian Policy* p. 109; MÜSTECİB ULKUSAL *Kırım Türk-Tatarları [Crimean Turks and Tatars]*. Istanbul 1980, p. 138; ETHEM FEYZİ GÖZAYDIN *Kırım: Kırım Türklerinin yerleşme ve göçmeleri [The Crimea: Crimean Turkish Emigrations and Resettlements]*. Istanbul 1948, p. 71; ÖZENBAŞLI *Kırım faciası*, in: Emel CIX, p. 31.

³⁰ DRUŽININA *Južnaja Ukraina* p. 90. She says the decline was “a long-term consequence of the Crimean War.”

³¹ PINSON *Russian Policy* pp. 50–55; for Russian orders to local officials to supervise more carefully the emigration, with an eye to retaining “persons with skills essential to the local economy,” see: *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossijskoj imperii*. Series II, vol. 36, no. 35063.

³² G. DE MOLINARI *Lettres sur la Russie*. Paris 1877, p. 258.

³³ (1870): GÖZAYDIN *Kırım* pp. 84–85; (1889): ÖZENBAŞLI *Kırım faciası*, in: Emel CIX, p. 32.

Ultimately these lands were occupied. After the mid-1860's, a large movement of Ukrainian and Russian peasant settlers produced an overwhelming Slavic majority throughout the Crimea and the gubernii to the north. Statistics for population growth in Cherson gubernija are typical of the entire region. In 1851, it is estimated that the total population of Cherson gubernija just surpassed one million, of whom 94 000 (9%) were Crimean and Nogai Tatars. By 1868, the population had risen slightly to 1,2 million, including around 27 000 (2%) Tatars. But in 1897, its total was more than 2,7 million with under 14 000 (½%) Tatars. The largest increases during these years were Ukrainians (from 703 000 to 1 500 000), Russians (30 000 to 600 000), and Jews (from 55 000 to 332 000).³⁴

In the years just after the height of the emigration, many settlers coming as immigrants from lands in the Ottoman Empire were granted lands vacated by the Tatars. Moldavians, Bulgarians, Serbs, and Greeks appeared in large numbers.³⁵ On an unequal scale, it appears that there were a population exchange between the Russian and Ottoman Empires, of Muslim and Christian subjects.

It would be several decades before the Crimea could recover economically. A recent Soviet historian admits that the empty villages, the decline in population, "had a strong negative effect on agricultural economy of the Crimea. It produced a decline in animal, vegetable, and fruit production, and the entire region was set back several decades."³⁶ Surprisingly, the Tatars who did not emigrate, certainly several hundred thousand, were able to continue to develop their national consciousness to the point where they were able to present a nationalist movement of considerable vitality during the revolutionary period. But their "homeland" was by then populated by Russians and Ukrainians, who after a few generations had come to consider it theirs too. At the outbreak of the revolution in 1917, the Tatars constituted no more than 25% of the peninsula's total.

The effects of the emigrations were more drastic in the Caucasus. Here, entire tribal and national groups were eliminated from their ancestral lands; the Circassians simply ceased to exist as a viable national group and virtually none remained in the Caucasus. The same was true for the Nogai Tatars. Other groups, such as the Chechens, Dagestanis, Kabardinians, and Adygei emigrated in such large numbers that those remaining were swamped by the newcomers. In the Caucasus, local Russian officials facilitated the flight as much as they could, and the authorities in St. Petersburg apparently never had second thoughts about this emigration, as they had for the Crimea. As SMIRNOV admits, "the interests of colonization in the Caucasus were first and foremost in the government's mind. It didn't really matter whether the local peoples went to the Ottoman Empire or to other areas, so long as the land was made available. They all believed that it was a good solution to a problem long on their minds."³⁷

In a secret report to the government, officials in the northern Caucasus noted in 1861 that "vast stretches of land formerly occupied by Nogai Tatars now stand empty; they are

³⁴ ZELEŇČUK *Naselenie Bessarabii* p. 158; V. M. KABUZAN *Narodonaselenie Bessarabskoj oblasti i levoberežnyh rajonov Pridnestro'vja (konec XVIII – pervaja polovina XIX v.)*. Kišinev 1974, pp. 55, 92–94.

³⁵ DRUŽININA *Južnaja Ukraina* p. 6; KABUZAN *Zaselenie* pp. 245–246. A. A. SERGEEV *Uchod tavičeskich nogajcev v Turciju v 1860 g.*, in: *Izvestija tavičeskago učennago archivnago kommissii 49 (1913)* pp. 1–144, here pp. 13–14, describes the new settlement by Bulgarians, Moldavians, and Wallachians in the northern Crimea in 1860.

³⁶ NADINSKIJ *Očerki* p. 141.

³⁷ SMIRNOV *Mjuridizm* pp. 216–217.

ready for new settlers.”³⁸ Many of the newcomers would be Russians and Cossacks, but also large numbers of Georgians and Armenians were given land grants, the latter particularly along the Black Sea coast and along the border with the Ottoman Empire. Also some German, Greek, and Bulgarian colonists were settled along the coast in the hope of continuing the vegetable and fruit production for which the area had been famous. An English visitor to the region in the late 1870’s noted, however, that these Balkan and European settlers proved unable to adapt to the climate of the region, and “wilderness had invaded the orchards and gardens once cultivated by the Circassian communities.”³⁹

What routes did the emigrants take, and how did they get to the Ottoman Empire? In brief, they used whatever means they could find, on foot, horseback, on land and sea, across the border with the Ottomans in Anatolia, across the steppe north of the Crimean peninsula. The movement was disorganized, supplies for the long journey were not available in many cases, and mortality was high. There is no way to tell how many died *en route*, though from various anecdotal sources, one may guess that the number was great.⁴⁰

PINSON suggests that it was a large contingent of Nogai Tatars passing through the Crimea in late 1859 which set off the massive Tatar exodus.⁴¹ The Tatars left, also by all means available; some left from the Crimean ports for the Dobruca, to the ports of Kostenza, Varna, and Burgaz; others passed on foot through Bessarabia and the Danubian principalities. Apparently as the pressure of the emigration mounted in the Crimea, hundreds of ships (large and small) arrived at Crimean ports from the south to transport the refugees, and it is likely that handsome profits were made in many instances by the ship captains.⁴²

What was to become of these hundreds of thousands upon their arrival in the Ottoman Empire? That is a good question, for there is every indication that the Ottomans were completely unprepared for such large numbers. It is true that there had been a steady stream of refugees from the Russian Empire for a long time, and after 1783, quite a sizeable number of Tatars had arrived. Almost nothing is known of what became of this group, and it seems probable that they easily assimilated into the Turkish population in the Eastern Balkans. The Tatars were primarily agriculturalists and townspeople. Their language was similar to the Turkish spoken in the Ottoman Empire, and it is likely that they got along well with their new hosts provided there was space and employment for them. Ottoman population records for the period before the 1850’s make no special note of these Tatars or their descendants, and by then they were probably indistinguishable from other Turks.

³⁸ VOLKOVA *Ėtničeskij sostav* p. 220; LAJANOV *K istorii* p. 117.

³⁹ VOLKOVA *Ėtničeskij sostav* p. 219; ALLEN, MURATOFF *Caucasian Battlefields* p. 108; PAČULIJA *Abchazija* p. 13, remarks that in the last quarter of the 19th century, coastal Circassia was a “multinational region,” without Circassians however. The best study of the colonization of Abkhazia after the Abkhazians left is A. A. OLONECKIJ *Kolonizacija Abchazii vo vtoroj polovine XIX veka*. Suchumi 1934 = *Trudy Abchazskogo naučno-issledovatel’skogo instituta kraevedenija* vol. 2. For many of the details of Russian policies during the emigration, see MARK PINSON *Russian Expulsion of Mountaineers from the Caucasus 1856–1866 and Its Historical Background. Demographic Warfare – An Aspect of Ottoman and Russian Policies, 1854–1866*. Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1970.

⁴⁰ VOLKOVA *Ėtničeskij sostav* p. 221, quotes a Russian archival source describing the exodus of the western Caucasians: one large group, “facilitated by some official aid,” crossed into the Crimea at Tamañ and proceeded westward; a second left by boat from the Circassian coast; and a third, “the largest,” proceeded southward along the coast to the Ottoman border.

⁴¹ PINSON *Russian Policy* p. 46.

⁴² ULKUSAL *Kırım* p. 142; PINSON *Russian Policy* pp. 106–107.

The problem was not so simple in the aftermath of the Crimean War. As early as 1856, the Ottoman government recognized a problem with the refugees, and set in motion a policy which would, in time, come to occupy the attention, and revenues, of many sections of the government. In early May, 1856, a *talimatname* [book of instructions] was sent to the Silistre governor concerning the handling of refugees arriving from the Crimea and Caucasus. It ordered that 2000 *akces* be allotted to the settlement expenses for each refugee and some tax and recruitment exemptions be granted, presumably until the refugees had become established in their new communities.⁴³ In the next year, a Muhacirin Kanunnamesi [Refugee Law] was issued which extended the provisions of the earlier regulations to include land grants. That the tax and recruitment exemptions were to be twice as generous if the refugees settled in Anatolia rather than in Rumelia, indicates already a concern about population pressure in the west.⁴⁴

That the numbers of immigrants soon far exceeded the capacities of normal officials to handle is evidenced by the decision to establish a special Refugee Commission [Idare-i Umumiye-i Muhacirin Komisyonu] in January, 1860, the winter of the beginning of the massive influx from both Crimea and Caucasus. The bulk of the proceedings of this commission have been preserved, in the Başbakanlık Arşivi in Istanbul, though they have not yet been examined.⁴⁵ The extent of the problem is likely a multiple of the case of Trabzon, as reported by the Russian consul there in the early 1860's:

"70 000 Circassians passed through Batum on the way to Turkey. These died along the journey at a rate of seven per day. But once they arrived in Trabzon, their death rate rose considerably. From that group, 24 700 arrived in Trabzon; since their arrival, almost 19 000 have died. Today there are 63 900 Circassians in Trabzon, and these are dying at the rate of 150–250 per day. In the Samsun area, where there are 110 000 refugees, more than 200 die each day."⁴⁶

On the basis of Bulgarian sources, and reports by Europeans who observed the process, PINSON presents a similar picture of enormous suffering by the refugees at the points of entry in the Balkans. In early summer, 1864, more than 35 000 Circassians were temporarily "housed" in Kostenza, "where smallpox was rampant." As PINSON notes, "one observer estimated that 80 000 Circassians landed at Varna, destitute, suffering from fever, smallpox and dysentery."⁴⁷ These were the immediate problems the Ottoman Refugee Commission faced at each entry port for the refugees.

The fate of the Crimean Tatars, once they entered the Ottoman Empire, was not as bad as the fate awaiting the Caucasians. The Tatars were able to settle, as their predecessors had done, mainly in the Dobruca, while others went to communities in Bulgaria and Anatolia. The Dobruca became almost a "Küçük Tataristan," and by 1880, many towns in the region

⁴³ AHMET CEVAT EREN *Türkiye'de Göç ve Göçmen Meseleleri* [Refugees and Refugee Questions in Turkey]. Istanbul 1966, pp. 41–46. Of course, if 2000 *akce* were spent on each of the 700 000 to 900 000 refugees who would arrive in the next ten years, it would have amounted to the astronomical total of 1,5 to 2 billion *akce*!

⁴⁴ SHAW, SHAW *History* vol. 2, p. 115.

⁴⁵ Başbakanlık Arşivi, Istanbul, in the fond Bab-i Asafiye, section Ayniyat defterleri, no. 1553 – Muhacirin Komisyonu; and in the fond Bab-i Ali Evrak Odası (Varide – Sadira), no. 758–764. These materials are described and used by PINSON *Ottoman Colonization, passim*. In the Foreign Ministry Archives, Istanbul, Carton 175, is a dossier "Emigration des Circassiens en Turquie (1864)." And scattered throughout other fonds are numerous other defters relating to the refugees and their settlement problems: in reports from local governors, materials collected by census officials, and finally in police files concerning civil disturbances. See KARPAT *Ottoman Population* pp. 67–68.

⁴⁶ As reported in BERKOK *Tarihte Kafkasya* p. 529.

⁴⁷ PINSON *Ottoman Colonization* pp. 73–74.

had very large Tatar communities. These would continue to survive as centers of Tatar intellectual and national life, and there are still many Tatars in Romania and Bulgaria. In 1880, Hirsova's population was 15% Tatar, the Tatars of Silistre constituted 7%, Mecidiye 65%, Kostenza 54%, Mangalye 76%, and in the whole of Dobruca, 38%.⁴⁸ Tatars who left their new communities in Romania and Bulgaria for Anatolia found it difficult to retain their sense of Tatar culture and identity; it was there that the Tatar immigrants most easily and quickly assimilated into the native Turkish population. It is interesting that the leadership for a Tatar national movement in the early 20th century came essentially from the West Balkans and the Crimean peninsula. Those in Anatolia had simply ceased to be Tatars, and had "lost their nationality."

While the Tatars were generally well accepted by their hosts, whether Bulgarian or Romanian Christians or Muslim Turks, the Circassians were another question altogether. Their languages were not related to Turkish, or any Balkan or Anatolian language; their life style was not compatible with settled life in either agricultural or urban communities; and it soon became clear to everyone concerned that the Circassians were going to have a difficult time "fitting in" with their new surroundings. The Circassians arrived in the Ottoman Empire in the east, in Istanbul, and on the west Black Sea coast. Their arrival was apparently not welcomed in any of the three, and the Ottomans did as much as they could to move them on to points inland in each case.

Large contingents of the Circassians arriving on the west Black Sea coast were "shipped" westward, up the Danube, or into western Bulgaria and Macedonia. The Bulgarian historian N. MICHOV, on the basis of Bulgarian archival sources, states that by July 1864, some 40 000 households of Circassians had arrived in Bulgaria and the Dobruca; in the remainder of that year another 70 000 households had arrived, and by the end of the year, more than 200 000 persons had been resettled along the Danube or in western Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia. Large numbers remained in temporary camps and unsettled.⁴⁹

The Soviet historian V. PAČULIJA has followed the tracks of various tribal and village communities from the Caucasus who entered the Ottoman Empire in the east. He has found that often village and tribal communities stayed together until their final destination. The Chechen groups from Tsabal, Lata, and Azhara entered via Trabzon in 1864, in numbers approaching 30 000 and first settled in the Sivas area, moving finally on to Egypt and Syria in the 1870's. The Adygei entered also via Trabzon, but were "transhipped" to the Balkans, arriving in Bulgaria in late 1864.⁵⁰ A Bulgarian historian corroborates the presence of Adygei in Bulgaria in 1865, numbering over 2000, and distributed among 30 villages.⁵¹ Osetins settled primarily in southeastern Anatolia, with some ultimately moving to Egypt.⁵²

JUSTIN MCCARTHY has published an interesting Ottoman document from 1861–1862

⁴⁸ ULKUSAL Kırım p. 142. Mustecib Bey came from a Dobruca Tatar community; and the author has met many Tatars in Istanbul and Eskişehir whose ancestors had lived in the Dobruca. See also M. ULKUSAL Dobruca ve Türkler [The Dobrudja and the Turks]. Ankara 1966 = Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü. Yayın 26 [The Turkish Cultural Research Institute. Publication No. 26].

⁴⁹ N. V. MICHOV Naselenieto na Turcija i Bülğarija prez XVIII i XIX v. Vol. 1, Sofija 1915, pp. 91–92, 99. PINSON Ottoman Colonization p. 75, provides, from Michov, a breakdown of these figures by province.

⁵⁰ PAČULIJA Abchazija p. 123.

⁵¹ MIŃKO PENKOV Turski archivni dokumenti za Čerkezite v Gerlovo, in: Izvestija na narodnija muzej, Šumen 4 (1967) pp. 145–157, here p. 152.

⁵² VOLKOVA Ètničeskij sostav p. 222.

listing the total number of refugees then in the Empire, registered according to their placement in various provinces.⁵³ The figures are difficult to interpret, as one does not know at what point a refugee ceases to be considered in refugee status by the government, and no indication is given of their origin. And it is not possible to determine when the figures would have been gathered. But it provides figures prior to the massive Caucasian immigration, yet which exceed 250 000. More than half are located in provinces along the Danube, with others scattered throughout Rumelia and Anatolia. A sizeable number (20 000) are registered in Adana Eyaleti with a smaller number in Aleppo (1500). The figures are so exact as to signify actual counts being taken. A series of such documents, over an extended period of time, would help a great deal in identifying the settlement policy of the government.

As PINSON points out, the Ottomans may well have hoped that the Tatar immigration would help solve a "labor shortage" in Rumelia, especially in the Dobruca, and help raise the Muslim-Christian ratio in favor of Muslims. He argues that in fact the Tatar immigration turned out well for the Ottomans in both regards. The Ottomans may also have hoped to take advantage of the Circassian immigration by utilizing these newcomers for both military and police purposes, taking advantage of their reputed military prowess. The Ottomans did in fact make use of Caucasian "irregulars" against Bulgarian "rebels" in 1867 and 1868.⁵⁴

The Circassians, as "irregulars," acted in an expected fashion, repressing not only the rebels, but the local population in general. Irregulars, operating outside of the normal military command structure, pursue their own goals and interests. In the next several years, the Ottomans discovered that the presence of these hundreds of thousands of Caucasians in the Balkans were producing as much unrest as they were "controlling." It is likely that their depredations in Bulgaria and elsewhere helped produce the growing disaffection toward Ottoman rule resulting in the "wars of national liberation," and at least accelerated what may have been an inevitable process.⁵⁵

After 1877–1878, the vast majority of Caucasians in the Balkans either fled or were moved, and were "resettled" in central and eastern Anatolia, where they joined what already was a large population of Caucasian refugees. FARUK KOCACIK, in a recent article (which focuses on the period after 1878), presents evidence of the Caucasian presence in Anatolia during these crucial years. For example, in Çukurova district, the population rose dramatically between the Crimean War and 1878, being flooded with refugees directly from the Caucasus as well as via Bulgaria. He notes that in Çukurova district today, there are 48 villages with populations made up of descendants of Caucasians; 24 have Circassians who came from Bulgaria; 21 include Caucasians who came directly from the Caucasus, while three are dominated by Muslim refugees from Crete.⁵⁶

The arrival of this second wave of Caucasians in central and eastern Anatolia must have had a disastrous effect on the local population, as they had had earlier in Bulgaria. A second forced migration within one generation could only have produced enmity among

⁵³ JUSTIN MCCARTHY *An Ottoman Document on the Refugees of the Crimean Period*, in: *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin* 6, 2 (1982) pp. 29–30.

⁵⁴ PINSON *Ottoman Colonization* pp. 81–82.

⁵⁵ VOLKOVA *Ėtničeskij sostav* p. 223.

⁵⁶ FARUK KOCACIK *Balkanlar'dan Anadolu'ya yönelik göçler (1878–1890)* [*Refugee Movements from the Balkans to Anatolia (1878–1890)*], in: *Osmanlı Araştırmaları [Ottoman Researches]* 1 (1980) pp. 137–190, here p. 164.

the Caucasians; and their situation was materially desperate. Some found areas with sparse population where they could settle; others apparently found it necessary to replace existing populations, both settled and nomadic. Their arrival more than likely helped set off the vicious struggles between nomad and settled, between Christian and Muslim, that were to characterize the remaining years of the nineteenth century.

Did the arrival of the Circassians exacerbate the local balance to the extent that the "Armenian Problems" were an inevitable result? It is curious that this aspect of the problem seems to have been ignored by both Turkish and Armenian historians of these events, though STANFORD SHAW alludes to a possible link in his survey of Ottoman history.⁵⁷ An Englishman, H. LYNCH, who travelled through eastern Anatolia in the 1880's provides some interesting information on this matter. During his stay in a Circassian village, Uran Gazi, near Erzurum, Lynch had a long conversation with the village chief, Shakir Effendi. One of the founders of the village, Shakir Effendi had come from a settlement near Kars (to which he and his villagers had been forced when the Russians cleared their homeland in the 1860's). When the Russians captured Kars during the war of 1877, these Circassians had had to move on again. Shakir Effendi told Lynch that they had been lucky to find some empty land on which they had established their present village:

"[The Circassians] are on good terms with the Turks, but they are preparing to move on again – that inexorable Russian advance! As for the Kurds, they regard them as scarcely human beings and do not fear them at all. But they are held in great awe by the Kurds."⁵⁸

A relatively early Armenian history of the period, A. V. SARKISSIAN, in discussing the subsequent massacres, blames most of the problems on actions by Kurds and Circassians. This historian curiously notes that "these Circassians, originally natives of the Caucasus, had come to these provinces after they had lived in the Balkan peninsula for a number of years." He further criticizes the Ottoman government for moving the Circassians to Anatolia:

"These Circassians thus transplanted, or rather, let loose in Asia Minor, were ready to fall upon the unprotected and defenseless Armenian peasants, inflicting all sorts of injuries and injustices, and usually depriving them of their wherewithal."⁵⁹

SARKISSIAN cites the report of an Armenian commission sent to Aleppo in 1878 which described the situation in Zeitun, the site of one of the first large-scale Armenian massacres:

"This almost semi-independent district in the mountain fastnesses of Taurus, inhabited mostly by Armenians, was being infested with Circassians; the presence of these Circassians was their [Armenian] great grievance against the government. They believed that the governor of Aleppo deliberately wished to surround Zeitun with Circassians to intimidate, if not to exterminate the inhabitants."⁶⁰

There is no reason to doubt the identity of those causing most of the problems for the Armenian communities. The Circassians had acted the same way in Bulgaria before. The Circassians had arrived in Anatolia in desperate circumstances after having had terrible experiences before. Uprooted from their homeland in the Caucasus, forced to emigrate to

⁵⁷ SHAW, SHAW History vol. 2, p. 161.

⁵⁸ H. F. B. LYNCH *Armenia: Travels and Studies*. Vol. 2, repr. Beirut 1965, pp. 340–341.

⁵⁹ A. V. SARKISSIAN *History of the Armenian Question to 1885*. Urbana, Ill. 1938, pp. 39, 51–52.

⁶⁰ SARKISSIAN *History* p. 102.

the Ottoman Empire, and experiencing a second uprooting within a generation, their behavior in Anatolia might have been expected. That the Ottoman government was unable to handle their initial arrival in an effective manner, and continued to be unable to find suitable settlements for them either in Anatolia or Rumelia, was also true. The Ottoman inability to control the Circassians in Anatolia after 1877 should not have been a surprise. One should also note that their Caucasian homeland soon became populated by Georgians and Armenians, among others, and was ultimately placed in the new republics of Georgia and Armenia after the First World War.

It appears that the exodus of Muslims from the Russian Empire was the first act of a drama that would produce large exchanges of population in the Balkans and Middle East, exchanges along both national and religious lines. Russian aims would in time become adopted by most of the states in the region. These included the desire to have their frontiers inhabited by Russians if possible, although any Christians would be preferable to Muslims. The disruptions caused by the settlement of the displaced persons in the Balkans brought about the second exodus, into Anatolia. This resulted in the last act of this particular drama, the removal or massacre of much of the indigenous Anatolian population to make room for the newcomers. Future population exchanges would be better organized, the goals would be more clearly conceived than in these first stages, but the physical suffering produced would remain characteristic of the process. The Russian government, with its policies in the Caucasus and Crimea in the 1850's and 1860's, should be held at least partly responsible for setting in motion developments which would produce many tragedies in this area in the future.