Appendix:
Ethnonationalism or a Financial-Criminal Incentive Structure?

Explaining Elite Support in Crimea for Russia's Annexation

Eleanor Knott*

October 12, 2023

Please cite as: "Knott, Eleanor (Forthcoming) 'Appendix: Ethnonationalism or a Financial-Criminal Incentive Structure? Explaining Elite Support in Crimea for Russia's Annexation', Comparative Politics."

This Appendix is an empirical supplement to the main article, offering more empirical detail than possible in a theoretically-guided and analytical article. In particular, the appendix offers more empirical detail on the issue of the repeal of the language law (A2), biographical trajectories as detail on the 'local'/Macedonian split and their ethnonationalist vs financial-criminal incentives (A3), key Russian actors (A4), and a timeline of key events during and after annexation (A1).

Contents

A1 Timeline of Key Events in 2013-2014 **3**

A2 Additional Evidence - Ethnonationalism in Light of the Cancelling of the Regional Language Law **5**

A2.1 The Regional Language Law in Crimea: 2012–2013 5

A2.2 The Regional Language Law in Crimea: February to March 2014 6

A3 Key Actors in Crimea and Ukraine **7**

A3.1 The 'Macedonian' Split 8

A3.1.1 Anatolii Mogilev: The Loyal 'Macedonian' 8

A3.1.2 Vladimir Konstantinov: King of Local Defectors 11

*Eleanor Knott (e.k.knott@lse.ac.uk) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Methodology, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London, WC2A 2AE.

A3.1.3 Rustam Temirgaliev: The Third Point of the "Troika" 14

A3.1.4 Implosions and Defections of Party of Regions 16

A3.2 "Professional Russians": The Pro-Russian Fringe and Organized Crime(a) 17

A3.2.1 Sergei Aksenov, or "Goblin" 17

A3.2.2 Sergei Tsekov: The Only Crimean 21

A3.2.3 Aleksei Chalyi: Sevastopol's Brief Russian Mayor 22

A3.3 The Last Communist: Leonid Grach 23

A4 Key Russian Actors **25**

A4.1 Sergei Shoigu 25

A4.2 Oleg Belaventsev 26

A1 Timeline of Key Events in 2013-2014

Table A1: Timeline of Events (August 2013-April 2014)

2013	*August*		Vladislav Surkov visits Crimea and participates in a conference on Ukraine signing an Association Agreement, in 2013 he also meets with Anatolii Mogilev allegedly to discuss the Kerch bridge
	September		Surkov becomes personal adviser to Putin on relations with South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Ukraine (after resigning as Deputy Prime Minister)
	November	21st	Ukraine postpones signing Association Agreement with EU Euromaidan protests begin in Kyiv
		28-29th	Vilnius Summit held
		30th	Violence escalates in Kyiv, as does police brutality
	December		Euromaidan protests continue Berkut continues to act with violence against Euromaidan protesters
2014	*January*	16th	Anti-protest laws passed by the Ukrainian parliament Berkut continues to use violence against protesters and buildings occupied in Kyiv
		28th	Ukrainian government steps down Parliament revokes many of anti-protest laws
	February	18th	18 people, including seven policemen, die in Kyiv during violence
		20th	88 people die, and hundreds are wounded in Kyiv during violence
		21st	Deal signed between Yanukovych, Ukrainian opposition leaders, and German, French, and Polish ministries
		22nd	Yanukovych disappears and essentially abdicates from office
		23rd	Oleksandr Turchynov becomes acting President of Ukraine and announces snap presidential elections for 25 May 2014 Verkhovna Rada repeals the 2012 regional language law
		26-28th	Protests begin in Crimea Unidentified armed men, first described as self-defense forces and later identified as "little Green men", orchestrated by Russia, seize the Crimean parliament, Council of Ministers, and Simferopol airport, and blockade Ukrainian military facilities across Crimea[1] Ukrainian flags are removed from administrative buildings in Crimea and replaced with Russian flags Yanukovych appears in Rostov-on-Don (Russia) to give a press conference Anatolii Mogilev (Chairman of Crimean Council of Ministers, appointed by Kyiv) resigns Sergei Aksenov, former leader of Russian Unity (RE), is appointed as Crimean leader
		27th	Ukraine begins to assemble a new government 100 vote in favor of the non-binding United Nations General Assembly Resolution 68/262 (11 vote against and 58 abstain), recognizing Ukraine's territorial integrity and objecting to Crimea and Sevastopol's annexation following 16th March referendum (UN General Assembly, 2014; UN News, 2014)
		28th	Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council (RNBO) meet
	March	1st	Russian Duma approves the use of force in Ukraine Russia appears to be in control of Crimea
		3rd	Turchynov cancels Verkhovna Rada's repeal of 2012 language law that gave the Russian language, and Hungarian and Romanian languages, status as regional languages
		4th	Putin denies troops in Crimea are Russian and claims they are local self-defense forces

	6th	Crimean parliament votes in favor of joining the Russian Federation and announces a referendum for 16 March
		Crimean parliament votes in favor of joining the Russian Federation and announces a referendum for 16 March
		US announces first round of sanctions against individuals involved in actions in Crimea
	15th	Russia vetoes UN Security Council denunciation of Crimean referendum
	16th	Referendum held in Crimea and Sevastopol: 96.77% vote in favor of joining Russia; no independent observers are permitted to observe the referendum, and the referendum takes place under militarized conditions with no status quo option
	17th	Crimea officially asks to join the Russian Federation, announces the introduction of the ruble, and moves to Moscow time
		The EU and Canada introduce sanctions against those involved with annexation
	18th	Putin announces that Crimea will be formally annexed by Russia and become a republic of the Russian Federation (President of Russia, 2014)
	24th	Ukrainian forces withdraw from Crimea
		Ruble introduced to Crimea
April		Pro-Russia protests begin in east and south of Ukraine
	17th	Putin admits Russian forces were present in Crimea and "backed" self-defense forces (Interfax, 2014a)

Table A2: Referendum results provided by Crimean and Sevastopol authorities

	Crimea	**Sevastopol**
Registered voters	1,533,775	306,258
Turnout	1,274,096 (83%)	274,101 (89%)
Percentage voting for annexation to Russia	1,233,002 (97%)	262,041 (96%)

Source: State Council of the Republic of Crimea, 2014; contrast with results posted on The Presidential Council on Civil Society and Human Rights (2014) which suggested far lower turnout (30-50%) and support for unification with Russia (50-60%).

[1]Voroboiv (2015) reports that the so-called "Operation Polite People" – unmarked Russian troops gathering ground across Crimea – began on 22 February 2014 and extended until 28 March 2014. Meanwhile Lavrov (2014, p. 159) argues the offensive began offensive on 20 February 2014 based on dates of medals awarded for annexation (dated 20 February-18 March 2014).

A2 Additional Evidence - Ethnonationalism in Light of the Cancelling of the Regional Language Law

The crucial events to analyze are those that took place between the repeal of the regional language law by the Verkhovna Rada (23 February 2014), in the wake of Yanukovych's departure from Ukraine and the Ukrainian presidency, and the veto of this repeal by interim President Oleksandr Turchynov (3 March 2014). Informally, the law was known as "Kivalov-Kolesnichenko Law", after the two PoR MPs who co-authored the bill: Vadim Kolesnichenko (then Head of PoR in the Verkhovna Rada)[1] and Serhiy Kivalov.

Localities, whether regions or towns, with 10% of speakers of a regional language could apply for such status. Regional councils in Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, Kherson, Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Dnipropetrovsk and city councils in Odesa, Kharkiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia, Sevastopol, Dnipropetrovsk and Luhansk, all made Russian a regional language, as well as Krasny Luch Town Council in Luhansk region. Hungarian and Romanian/Moldovan languages were also made regional languages by a few town/village councils.

A2.1 The Regional Language Law in Crimea: 2012–2013

As speaker of Crimea's parliament, Vladimir Konstantinov (A3.1.2), welcomed the law at the national level (State Council & State Council, Republic of Crimea, 2012). However, within Crimea and on repeated occasions, Konstatinov indicated that the regional language law changed nothing in Crimea (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2013) and was "useless" because Crimea's constitution indicated the right to use three languages (Ukrainian, Russian, and Crimean Tatar) and, specifically, Russian as the language of communication (Komentarii: Krym, 2013). For Konstatinov, the regional language law was more for Ukraine's "other regions" because the Crimean constitution protected its three languages "more strongly" than the regional language law (Komentarii: Krym, 2013).

The controversies around the regional language law in Crimea in 2012 and 2013 involved, instead, those advocating for speakers of Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar. Those advocating for the Ukrainian language, for example, protested against the law in Simferopol and argued that it would "legitimize" and legalize existing "discrimination" of Ukrainian speakers in Crimea (Tyzhden', 2012). Similar objections were raised by Crimean Tatar organizations (BBC News Ukraine, 2012). Refat Chubarov, for example, was critical because it drew more attention to a language that did not need further support in Crimea (Russian) and drew attention away from Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian languages, when Crimean Tatar was "simply on the verge of extinction" (Pashchenko, 2012).

A2.2 The Regional Language Law in Crimea: February to March 2014

Many have described how the Verkhovna Rada's decision to repeal the regional language law was key in fomenting support within Crimea for annexation. Ukraine's ombudsman, Valeriya Lutkovska, who visited Crimea in the weeks prior to the referendum, blamed the repeal as one of the reasons that conflict emerged (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014d). Lutkovska praised Turchynov's swift decision to veto the repeal and prepare a new version of the language law (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014d).). Ukrainian politicians, like Vitaliy Klichko, also condemned the repeal of the law as unhelpful (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014b). Serhiy Kunitsyn, a Crimean politician and the president's representative in Crimea during annexation, remarked that for dialogue to take place between Kyiv and Crimea that might avert annexation, a new language law was needed that would regulate the status of Russian, as well as a law on new autonomous powers vis-a-vis the economy (Krym Realiï, 2014).

Something to bear in mind is the difficulty in finding reporting on the repeal of the language law within Crimea to determine its effects. Due to changes and restrictions on Crimean media, under de facto rule since 2014 (and even more since 2022), accessing media in Crimea is very challenging.

The only insight comes from an interview with Andrei Malgin, a Crimean political scientist, who criticized the post-Yanukovych authorities in Kyiv for acting on issues that are "not top-priority" but that "send a threatening signal to the regions". Asking why they would act to repeal the regional language law, Malgin described it as seeking "to provoke a confrontation" and to "warn Russian-speaking citizens that they do not have the right to speak their native language in Ukraine". Malgin continued: "It's not about the law and not about the monuments. People perceive this as a symbol, as a warning – what to expect for a Russian-speaking city" (Ivzhenko, 2014).

But, the majority of empirical fingerprints that remain are Russian media reports that, not to a small degree, exaggerate the implications of repealing the language law for its effects on Crimea (given the law was not in effect in Crimea vs the Constitution that protected the Russian language). That being said, it is worth noting such exaggerations. For example, there is extensive reporting that suggests repealing the regional language law was to "downgrade" the status of Russian (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014c), or worse, to "outlaw[ed]" in Ukraine (Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti, 2014; Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2014a). Others described this move as an "exacerbation of the situation around Crimea" (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014g) and a signal that Ukraine "wants" conflict (Boldyrev, 2014).

The only contrasting account from Russian media suggests that while it was an "attempt to put pressure", that the "law was very imperfect" and adopted more "for show, to show that something had been done for the Russian-speaking population (Izvestiia, 2014).

While there were critical voices in Ukraine for repealing the regional language law, not least at this particular moment in time, reporting in Ukraïns'ka Pravda (2014b), described the law both as "scandalous" and "now used as one of the factors of destabilization in Crimea. Going further, Ukraïns'ka Pravda (2018) notes the canceling of the law "did not humiliate citizens in Lviv or Crimea". But, also

notes that "Russian propaganda" used its canceling to "incite hostility and divide Ukrainians on the basis of language, religion and ethnicity" (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2018)

Despite the law making little difference in Crimea, in the wake of the Verkhovna Rada repealing the regional language law, there were small-scale protests across Crimea, in Evpatoriia, Kerch, and Sevastopol (Khatuntsev, 2014). The most reporting is on those protests in Sevastopol around 23 February 2014. These Sevastopol protests were a rally of the "People's Will Against Fascism in Ukraine" (Bashlykova, 2014), where crowds gathered to 'elect' Aleksei Chalyi as Mayor of Sevastopol (A3.2.3). At the protest, Chalyi "announced the city's non-recognition of the authority of the Supreme Council and its readiness to defend the city against nationalists" (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014g). In other words, the connection of these protests to Chalyi (A3.2.3) in Sevastopol suggests a particular, and political, frame to those engaging in protests. While this does signal some ethnonationalist mobilization vis-a-vis the repeal of the language law, it also suggests a specific, rather than broad, appeal.

Thus, it is necessary to contrast these protests with snippets visible on the issue of the Russian language prior to and during February/March 2014. Citing a study conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology and the "Rating" group in Spring 2013 (the original of which cannot be located), a Russian journalist noted how "over the past ten years, Crimeans have become much softer in the language issue", with a declining number supporting Russian as a state language and supporting, instead, that Russia would be a regional or second language in Ukraine (Kichanova, 2014b). The same journalist visited Crimea in late February 2014 to interview young people in Crimea and found similar, with none of her interviewees noting tensions with the Russian language (Kichanova, 2014a). For example, one quoted interviewee indicated there was no reason that Russian should be a second state language when "there are many other nationalities in Ukraine". As the young Crimean continued: "the Russian language is not oppressed in any point of our country, but only one should remain the state language – Ukrainian" (Kichanova, 2014a). A similar story was repeated by another Russian journalist in March 2014, who reports that while Russian is widely spoken in Crimea, "young people can no longer always easily answer the question in which language they just watched the film, in Russian or Ukrainian" (Gavrileva, 2014).

In other words, we shouldn't take Russian propaganda and exaggeration at its word that concern for the rights of Russian speakers or repeal of the language law was widespread, beyond specific politicized organizations and groups. As the Crimean-born Ukrainian journalist, Masha Efrosinina, wrote on her Facebook page, discrimination against the Russian language is "non-existent", and the Russian language "has never been ALIEN in Ukraine!" (Lenta Novostei Kryma, 2014).

A3 Key Actors in Crimea and Ukraine

I focus on the biographies and annexation trajectories of actors that both pursued and supported annexation: those within the inner circle, or annexation troika, of Sergei Aksenov, Vladimir Konstantinov, and Rustam Termirgaliev and their affiliates, and those who left office in Crimea and fled (Anatolii Mogilev). This annexation troika had links to Russia, as well as interests in corruption and organized crime; and

some were actively pro-Russian politicians (Aksenov). I also investigate the involvement of those on the sidelines, like long-term Communist politician Leonid Grach.

Fundamentally, this mapping exposes a split between the annexation troika and the prior Crimean administration, many of whom were 'Macedonians' implanted by the Yanukovych clan from Donetsk into Crimea (such as Anatolii Mogilev). Within these trajectories, I map both their ethnonationalist credentials and their interest and involvement in corruption, racketeering, and criminality, to explore the leverage of the financial-criminal incentive structure. In doing so, I empirically supplement the more pared-down analysis in the main article.

A3.1 The 'Macedonian' Split

This section analyzes the split between 'local' Party of Regions (PoR) functionaries and the so-called 'Macedonians', those from and attached to the Donbas/Yanukovych-clan. Crimean discourse described these as 'Macedonians' in reference to Makeevksa in Donetsk oblast, from which many hail. At the same time, I refer to the others on the other side of the split as 'local' because most do not originally hail from Crimea but have spent the majority of their lives and careers there.

On the one hand, many 'Macedonians' stayed loyal to the Ukrainian regime – such as Anatolii Mogilev, the Chairman of Crimea's Council of Ministers, prior to annexation. On the other hand, many 'locals' defected from PoR to support annexation: Vladimir Konstantinov (speaker of the Crimean parliament, A3.1.2) and Rustam Temirgaliev (Mogilev's deputy prime minister, A3.1.3) as two apexes of a troika flanked by Sergei Aksenov (A3.2.1), a fringe pro-Russian politician that came to be Crimea's prime minister during and after annexation.

Were Konstantinov, Temirgaliev, and other defectors always secretly pro-Russian? What made them defect? While there is not a total alignment between those defecting and not, and 'locals' and 'Macedonians', these are clear alignments to explore, as well as scrutinizing evidence of ethnonationalist support, alongside the factions and fractions within existing and new financial-criminal incentive structures.

A3.1.1 Anatolii Mogilev: The Loyal 'Macedonian'

Mogilev, originally from Sloviansk in Donetsk oblast, was Chairman of Crimea's Council of Ministers prior to annexation (2011-2014). The Chair of Council of Ministers was, essentially, the eyes and ears of the Ukrainian regime in Crimea, and particularly of the Donbas/Yanukovych clan that ruled Ukraine from 2010-2014. Mogilev was appointed after the death of his predecessor, Vasilii Dhzarti (also part of the same Donbas/Yanukovych clan), in 2011.

Before this, Mogilev was head of the City Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Artemivsk (1995-2000) and Makiivka (2000-2005), both in Donetsk oblast. He was also head of the Ministry of Affairs in Crimea for a few months in 2007, as well as heading Yanukovych's PoR presidential campaign in 2010 in Crimea. Between 2010 and 2011, he was Minister of Internal Affairs before becoming Chairman

of the Council of Ministers in Crimea.

During his tenure as Chairman, Mogilev was not well-liked, either by Crimean Tatars or by those in Crimea who disliked being governed by those in the Donetsk/Yanukovych clan. In 2010, while Mogilev was at the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Crimean Tatar Mejlis wanted to file a lawsuit against him for his racist comments in 2008, where he described how Crimean Tatars could pose a Kosovo-like risk of conflict and were "Adolf Hitler's allies" in Crimea (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2010). Accusing Crimean Tatars of being Nazi collaborators then and now is a common racist slur from their opponents. In 2007, Mogilev also caused clashes with Crimean Tatars while ordering police to bulldoze buildings and businesses on Ai-Petri mountain, on the southern coast of Crimea (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2010).

Annexation Comes to Mogilev's Door What is key in 2014, during Russia's annexation of Crimea, is how the power of Mogilev dwindled and how he split from those seeking annexation, namely Vladimir Konstantinov and Sergei Aksenov. Critically, Mogilev has repeatedly said how he saw his role as informing Kyiv of what was happening, seeking their instructions, and following the instructions of the Ukrainian parliament both during Yanukovych's tenure and after. But as early as 25 February 2014 – before the capture of the Crimean parliament, Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Council of Ministers – Petukhova – Petukhova (2014)) argued that Mogilev's words did "not really correlate with what is happening in Crimea", i.e., that he was claiming authority for himself and Ukraine that had already been taken by Aksenov, the annexation troika, and Moscow.

By the night of 26-27 February, the Russian military (at the time pretending to be local Crimean "self-defense forces") had seized Crimean government buildings, and Mogilev found himself sacked and replaced by Sergei Aksenov (A3.2.1), who became Crimea's prime minister. After this, Mogilev met with local law enforcement, informed leadership in Kyiv (the presidential administration and head of the Ukrainian Security Service/SBU), and transferred video footage to the SBU (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2018). Mogilev described how he awaited further instructions, "but they never arrived" (Stek, 2016).

Given his military training, Mogilev has claimed that he immediately knew those seizing buildings were "highly professional military special forces" from their "equipment and tactics"; he informed Kyiv accordingly but never received instructions on how to proceed (Krym Realiï, 2016b).

At the same time, changes were being made in the Crimean police, with their head (Valerii Radchenko) fired and replaced around 28 February 2014, which was "definitely not in Ukraine's favor" (Krym Realiï, 2016b). Indeed, Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council did not meet until 28 February to decide on action (or inaction) in Crimea, the day after the seizure of buildings, and Mogilev was deposed. Mogilev's advice, he claims, was to execute an anti-terrorist operation or institute martial law (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2018); advice that Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council was extremely unwilling to follow due to fear of seeming as an act of war against Russia (RNBO, 2014).

Mogilev has since elaborated on his role and powers as Chairman of the Council of Ministers. In his words, he was not a Tsarist-style "governor-general" but a governor like any other region of Ukraine

who had control over "neither the internal troops, nor the police, nor the units of the Ministry of Defense, nor the SBU" (Nikulenko, 2016); these were competencies only held by the central Ukrainian government that itself was in turmoil after the abdication of President Yanukovych and his fleeing to Russia via Crimea. Instead, Mogilev could only "gather teachers or doctors and resist the seizure" and thus reported events to central authorities and waited for a decision that never came (Nikulenko, 2016).

However, using sources from within the Kremlin, Zygar' (2016, p. 729) ssuggests that the "seizure" of Crimea was originally planned by Russia's delegate to Crimea, Oleg Belaventsev (A4.2), to be carried out with Mogilev's help who "agreed not to interfere with the envoys of Moscow" before he "he got scared and fled to Donetsk". It will never be fully clear what Mogilev's role was; perhaps he was more involved than he admits to. But what is clear is that he was certainly weakened and deposed before he left Crimea, having been abandoned both by Kyiv, Yanukovych, and its former seeming allies in Crimea.

Moreover, Mogilev has disowned Yanukovych, his former ally, for abdicating from office claiming that "[F]rom the moment he fled the country, he died for me" (Nikulenko, 2016) and did not speak to him after 21 February, the day before Yanukovych abdicated (Kovalenko, 2018). Mogilev was also never informed that Yanukovych was in Crimea, as would have been standard for an official visit. Mogilev and Crimean officials were also not contacted by those who came to Crimea to look for and detain Yanukovych (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2018).[2] However, other officials have also laid blame on Mogilev's (in)actions and alliance with Yanukovych which, according to Akhtem Chiigoz, "contributed to the surrender of Crimea" by announcing his resignation (Center for Investigative Journalism, 2018; Kovalenko, 2018).[3] Mogilev would, no doubt, dispute this telling of events by the fact that he was given no choice but to resign by military force.

Pro-Russia Cleavages vs Donetsk resentments On pro-Russian movements prior to annexation, Mogilev has entirely denied "the existence of pro-Russian sentiments" and argued that, if they had been present, that he would have acted to "stop them" (Krym Realiï, 2019). Instead, Mogilev commented that the pro-Russian movements and Sergei Aksenov gained only "3-4%" of votes in the 2010 Crimean elections so there is "nothing to say about its [pro-Russian movement in Crimea's] weight" (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2018). Finally, before annexation, Mogilev claimed he had a "good working environment" with those who would eventually betray him and Ukraine (Sergei Aksenov and Vladimir Konstantinov).

However, others criticize Mogilev's tenure as chairman as a period where pro-Russian movements were able to gain power compared to their predecessor, Dzharti. In the words of investigative journalist Valentina Samar, she describes how Dzharti "used a bulldozer to clean up the entire opposition that opposed PoR – but also the pro-Russian one" (Lashchenko, 2021). Although Samar labels herself as an opponent of Dzharti, she comments on how Dzharti expelled Yurii Meshkov from Crimea for his leadership of succession in 1994-95 (Lashchenko, 2021). Samar continues that following Dzharti's death and Mogilev's appointment, "pro-Russian forces immediately raised their heads". Like Akhtem Chiigoz, she also criticized Mogilev's willingness to resign, with Mogilev's resignation and Crimea's annexation being both unlikely during Dzharti's tenure (Lashchenko, 2021). By contrast, Mogilev blames the

erosion of Crimean autonomy and the unwillingness of Ukraine to renegotiate in Crimea on the eve of annexation, in contrast to their willingness to offer concessions during the similar separatist crisis in 1994 (Nikulenko, 2016).

Mogilev After Annexation On 29 February 2014, Mogilev left Crimea for Kyiv, fearing for his own personal safety and feeling a lack of support or protection from Ukrainian authorities in Crimea (Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2018). He recalls how the only person to visit him from mainland Ukraine was Andrei Senchenko on 24 February 2014, who advised him to leave Crimea (Kovalenko, 2018).[4]

A3.1.2 Vladimir Konstantinov: King of Local Defectors

Konstantinov is a good example of someone with longer roots to Crimea who defected from PoR. Konstantinov was born in Vladimirovca in the Moldovan SSR (now in Transnistria) but graduated secondary school in Crimea, where he has been since consistently based.

Before joining politics, Konstantinov was a businessman in construction (e.g., hegemonic construction businesses like Consol and Ukrrosbud) in Crimea, where he accumulated vast amounts of wealth. With an estimated personal wealth of between 45 and 207 million US Dollars between 2011 and 2013, news reports suggest he was between 89th and 104th richest person in Ukraine (GolosUA, 2013).

While remaining involved in business, he became an MP in the Crimean Parliament in 1998. Later, he joined PoR and, in 2010, became Chairman of the Crimean Parliament. Consol was also one of the major sponsors of PoR, as was Konstantinov in Crimea (Prytula, 2010, 2012). In particular, journalists reported that both scandals around Consol and his desire to be awarded further official contracts by Crimean authorities pushed him to seek and climb the greasy pole of power (Sergienko, 2012). As Prytula (2012) wrote, "successful business, especially construction, cannot be practiced in Ukraine without a 'roof' in power".

Konstantinov vs Donetsk Vladimir Konstantinov has been affectionately described as "always second": to Mogilev prior to annexation and then to Sergei Aksenov after annexation (A3.2.1). At the same time, this hierarchy seemed to offend him more under Mogilev than under Aksenov (Vetrov, 2018).

While seeking power, Konstantinov was constrained within Crimea. Under Yanukovych, the role of the Chairman/Speaker of the Crimean parliament lost powers to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (Dhzarti and then Mogilev). He was also the only top official in Crimea who had at least spent several decades in the peninsula rather than being imported from Donetsk. Dzharti needed a seemingly inexperienced and incompetent but "obedient, gray, but reliable and professional executive manager" who could be subordinate to Donetsk's power in Crimea (Prytula, 2012). Konstantinov also seemed irreplaceable by the Crimean parliament because he was at least partially from Crimea, rather than from Donetsk, and MPs feared if he were replaced, it would be by someone from Donetsk and the Donetsk/Yanukovych-clan (Prytula, 2012).

Konstantinov was, therefore, alone as someone with longer ties to Crimea while being among the top echelons of Crimean politics. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Minister of Interior, head of SBU in Crimea, prosecutor, and chief of police had all been replaced by those from Donetsk and the Donetsk/Yanukovych-clan in ways that they had not been prior to Yanukovych gaining the presidency in 2010 (Prytula, 2010).

In turn, PoR MPs within Crimea were annoyed by their subordination to a Donetsk-run Ukraine from within Crimea. But the only resistance to PoR's "power vertical" within Crimea came not from within PoR or pro-Russian parties, but MPs from the Iulia Timoshenko Bloc (BYuT) who campaigned for an inter-party association (Patriots of Crimea) to work against the "invasion of non-Crimean cadres" (Prytula, 2010).

A Pro-Russia Ethnonationalist within Crimean Party of Regions? While leading PoR, there is some evidence that Konstantinov was neither enamored with the dominance of the Ukrainian language in Ukraine nor the need to engage in the Ukrainian language as a Crimean official (Prytula, 2012; Ukraïns'ka Pravda, 2012). At the same time, Konstantinov made unfortunate statements that, according afterward to his spokesperson, were "distorted" and taken "out of context" (Prytula, 2012). In these statements, he supported, potentially, diminishing the status of Crimea from an autonomous republic to a region of Ukraine, even if de facto Crimea had become a region by the watering down of Crimea's autonomy by the Yanukovych regime (Prytula, 2012).

It is, therefore, hard to determine how far Konstantinov was a Russian ethnonationalist prior to annexation or if his support for Russian ethnonationalism was critical in encouraging him to defect to the pro-Russian alliance that emerged in Crimea as the Yanukovych regime crumbled following Euromaidan. For example, unlike several PoR officials that were native to Crimea, including those that would serve in the Crimean and Russian parliaments after annexation, such as Aleksei Cherniak, Konstantinov does not appear in records of leaders of the Russian Community of Crimea (*Russkaia Obshchina Kryma*, hereafter ROK). ROK campaigned for the rights of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers, was led by Sergei Tsekov (see A3.2.2) and was closely aligned with the Russian regime prior to annexation. Further, both Konstantinov and Aksenov received Russian passports on 25 March 2014 (i.e. after annexation Komentarii: Krym, 2014), countering suggestions that Crimea was annexed because of or by those who held Russian passports and citizenship (and therefore prior allegiance to Russia, c.f. King, 2014).

Konstantinov in the Financial-Criminal Incentive Structure Easier to determine is the precarious financial situation of Konstantinov before annexation that might have incentivized him to cling on to power, whatever way the wind blew. For example, the Ukrainian MP and Crimean native Andrei Senchenko has accused Konstantinov of involvement in construction scams that "collected money from people and did not build apartments for them" (Tsenzor.net, 2014) and being in debt to Russian banks (Sohn, 2014). Meanwhile, the politician Serhiy Kunitsyn has accused Konstantinov of "colossal debts" that somehow had to be "repaid" (suggesting the Russian regime offered both financial and criminal

protection).[5]

Konstantinov's Role in Annexation During the early period of annexation, on the one hand, Konstantinov appeared to be making regular trips to Moscow (e.g. in December 2013 and 20 February 2014, Rudenko, 2021; Sohn, 2014). On the other hand, as late as 27 February (after government buildings were seized), Konstantinov claimed that the Crimean parliament was "not raising the issue of Crimea's secession from Ukraine" because this was a "provocation" designed to discredit the authority and legitimacy of Crimean institutions (Agatov, 2014).

His actions, accusation of treason by the Ukrainian state, and rewards post-annexation suggest a deep involvement, contrary to Konstantinov's claims. Indeed, Igor Voronchenko (a Navy Admiral) met with Mogilev and Konstantinov on 22 February. Mogilev indicated he was going to meet Yanukovych in Severodonetsk (in Luhansk oblast), while Konstantinov advised, "you don't have to go to Severodonetsk, you have to go to Moscow" (Rudenko, 2021). In later reports, Mogilev – asked if he was surprised by Konstantinov's (and Aksenov's) actions – accused them of being both "hostages" and "accomplices" because "little green men did not fall from the sky", but with Konstantinov and Aksenov's knowledge and agreement (Nikulenko, 2016).

Konstantinov After Annexation Konstantinov became the Chairman of Crimea's State Council (i.e., he remained in the same role) and head of the Crimean branch of United Russia, Putin's party, mirroring the prior role he held as head of PoR in Crimea.[6] Konstantinov, however, has denied any "continuity" with PoR, describing the party as "legitimizing the Kyiv junta' in exchange for being allowed to continue their political existence" (Interfax, 2014b). But, Leonid Grach (the former Crimean Communist MP and leader, A3.3), has described figures like Konstantinov and his associates as figures "walking around the Crimea today with the masks of yesterday's regionals, and today the benefactors of the Crimea" suggesting Konstantinov's motivations were less ideological (i.e., ethnonationalism) and more associated with financial and criminal protection as ethnonationalism (Krym Realiï, 2016a).[7]

Finally, in the six years since annexation, it is today unclear how much power figures like Konstantinov and Aksenov have retained within Crimea.[8] If anything, Crimean politics today seems to resemble that of prior annexation, replacing Donetsk's dominance with trusted officials from other regions of Russia and subordinating Konstantinov to Aksenov. In other words, if Konstantinov started in "second place", he has remained there while having more of his power ceded by Aksenov(Vetrov, 2018).[9] However, Vetrov (2018) suggests that Konstantinov uses his subordination to his advantage, staying quiet and distancing himself from Aksenov. Meanwhile, Konstantinov has been able to give his Consol company contracts to rebuild and repair "schools, hospitals, rural clubs" from the Russian and Crimean budgets and lend them legal legitimacy within Russia to enrich his personal wealth. He also has a quota to fill within the administration that he has filled with Consol affiliates while "dragging" his "mistresses" to be MPs as if the administration is a "harem" (Kazarin, 2016a). In other words, just like Aksenov, he has been able to position himself and his network as hugely benefitting from annexation financially.

A3.1.3 Rustam Temirgaliev: The Third Point of the "Troika"

Rustam Temirgaliev was another key defector from PoR who supported annexation, a third point of what I describe as an annexation troika, flanked by Aksenov and Konstantinov, that supported and participated in Russia's annexation of the peninsula (Matsuzato, 2016, p. 242).

A Volga Tatar, Temirgaliev was born in Ulan-Ude (in the Russian Republic of the Soviet Union) but grew up in Crimea and became a Crimean MP for PoR in 2010 after heading the Crimean youth wing of the party in 2004. Prior to 2010, Temirgaliev was a teacher and later became involved in public administration. But, similar to his other troika affiliates (Konstantinov and Aksenov), he was also involved in business, namely agglomerating the largest Crimean print and radio media firms (Kommersant", 2014).[10] Meanwhile, Mustafa Dzhemilev, Ukrainian MP and former head of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, has accused Temirgaliev of being a GRU operative or, at least, an example of a "Kazan Tatar" brought in as an attempt to legitimize the regime while stifling Crimean Tatars (Portnikov, 2014).

Temirgaliev vs Donetsk Particularly illuminating is a 2015 interview between Temirgaliev and a Russian journalist, Petr Kozlov, in the Russian newspaper *Kommersant"*. Temirgaliev details how he became Mogilev's Deputy Prime Minister in 2013 with "Russia's help", which was "the first time in the Crimean period of Donetsk domination" that someone from within Crimean (rather than Donetsk) cadres had occupied such a strong position in that period (Kozlov, 2015). These events occurred after Temirgaliev (and Olga Kovitidi) was told he would have spots in the 2012 Ukrainian parliamentary elections in Crimean districts, but this was rescinded.

After this disappointment, Temirgaliev reports that Konstantinov told him, "Sorry, Donetsk people gave you a ride, they don't want to share with the Crimean authorities" (Kozlov, 2015). Temirgaliev then took up "a publicly more aggressive anti-Donetsk position" (because Crimean cadres had far less power than those from Donetsk), before being appointed by Mogilev as Deputy Prime Minister (Kozlov, 2015). Temirgaliev also reported that he and Konstantinov were "probably the most pro-Russian politicians" in the Crimean PoR and had "very good relations in Moscow" (Kozlov, 2015).

Temirgaliev's Early Involvement with Annexation On about February 10, Matsuzato (2016) suggests that Konstantinov, Temirgaliev, and Aksenov concluded that there was no other way than removing the "Donetsk government".

Temirgaliev has detailed his friendship with Dmitri Sablin (a Russian politician, and allegedly one of the richest in the Duma, born in Ukraine), who Temirgaliev claimed lobbied for him, and introduced him to Konstantin Malofeev (a Russian businessman who has been sanctioned for illegally funding paramilitary groups in Donbas and Crimea, see Weaver, 2014).[11]. Sablin had asked Temirgaliev to meet with Mogilev, who refused. Instead, together with priests from the Russian Orthodox Church, Temirgaliev, Sablin, and Malofeev met Konstantinov at his ice rink to discuss contingency plans – over a month before Yanukovych abdicated – to increase Crimea's autonomy "in the event of a chaotic

situation in Kyiv" (Kozlov, 2015). DeBenedictis (2021, p. 125) suggests they likely met at such venues, outside of official spaces, to avoid SBU observance because "they knew their actions amounted to subversion".

Moreover, Malofeev wrote a memo around 4-12 February 2014 (although Malofeev is litigating to the contrary), suggesting to Moscow if Yanukovych lost power that Ukraine would split east/west. He advocated that Moscow should push for unification referenda in Crimea and Kharkiv but not Donbas due to Rinat Akhmetov's business interests there (published in *Novaia Gazeta* in 2015, Lipskii, 2015). Specifically in Crimea, the memo recommended Moscow meeting with Konstantinov and Aksenov ("chairman of the Russian Unity party"). It is worth emphasizing that this memo was authored well before Yanukovych abdicated and – to Russia's interpretation – an illegitimate and radical ethnonationalist Ukrainian government took over Kyiv, while Mogilev still held power in Crimea and Aksenov was only a fringe pro-Russian politician (and affiliate of organized crime).

Furthermore, reports suggest that not only has Sablin invested in several businesses since Russia's annexation of Crimea, but that Temirgaliev is his business partner. While Sablin is known as being an extreme ethnonationalist and businessman within Russia, and Temirgaliev described himself as pro-Russian, it must not be discounted the extent to which ideology is veiling business interests and strategies of personal enrichment via such alliances. Clearly, Sablin and Temirgaliev ideologically agreed, but their political and business collaboration suggests at least alternative motivations aligning with the financial-criminal incentive structure.

Temirgaliev also put his name into the ring to be Crimea's prime minister, but Konstantinov told him to withdraw his name and put his weight behind Aksenov, which Temirgaliev did (DeBenedictis, 2021). Instead, Temirgaliev became Aksenov's Deputy Prime Minister following annexation, mirroring his position under Mogilev prior to annexation.

Rise and Fall After Annexation But, Temirgaliev's period as deputy prime minister in the post-annexation regime was short-lived. He was one of the first "heroes of the Crimean Spring" to be deposed by Aksenov in June 2014, just three months after annexation (Kazarin, 2016a).[12] Writing in *Krym Realii*, Cheremshina (2014) expresses surprise that he was deposed so soon, expecting him to replace Aksenov as prime minister rather than be removed(and for Aksenov to be removed although this remains not the case), given Temirgaliev's usefulness to the Russian.

While Temirgaliev claimed he would stay on as an adviser to Aksenov, Cheremshina (2014) alleges that such a removal was ordered by the Kremlin for "not coping with the tasks set", or at least by Putin's operative in Crimea, Oleg Belaventsev (Krym Realiï, 2016a, see also A4.2). Aksenov is also reported as criticizing Temirgaliev for confusing a "government post with a job in business" (Nikiforov, 2015). Since then, Temirgaliev has been working as a plenipotentiary representative of Tatarstan in Kazakhstan (Nikiforov, 2015), as Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Far East Development Corporation, and later as General Director of the Russian-Chinese Investment Fund for Regional Development, to strengthen Russian-Chinese financial relations.

In 2015, Temirgaliev was indicted for cash, gold, and jewelry theft (for a crime that seemingly was committed in 2011, Dobrovol'skaia, 2016; Nikiforov, 2015). Denying his involvement, he claimed he was simply a witness to the case while also claiming the case was used to coerce him out of his role as deputy prime minister (Nikiforov, 2016). Indeed, Semena (2021) suggests that he fell out with Aksenov and Konstantinov and effectively was "deported to Kazakhstan" in his role as trade representative as penance. Semena (2021) also comments on how the charges against Temirgaliev managed to divert suspicions from Konstantinov and Aksenov for their involvement.

Enter Another 'Macedonian': Vitalii Nakhlupin Temirgaliev's successors as deputy prime minister have also faced a similar fate. His replacement Evgeniia Babykina was replaced by Vitalii Nakhlupin in 2016, one of Crimea's richest figures. Putilov (2016b) termed Nakhlupin's appointment as the "return of the Macedonians", given that Nakhlupin came to Crimea as part of Dzharti's team from Donetsk (Krym Realiï, 2016a).[13] Andrii Senchenko, Ukrainian MP and formerly Crimean MP, believes that Nakhpluin was able to rise up through the post-annexation regime because of his position at the "crossroads of schemes pursued by the Crimean political and criminal group" (Putilov, 2016b).[14]

However, in 2018, Nakhlupin was arrested in Moscow (with two other Crimean political figures) on bribery charges related to transport construction. Zhilin (2018) explains how Nakhlupin was neither a friend nor associate of Aksenov and, after annexation, was left with no supporters in Crimea to save him from prosecution since the "entire Macedonia team" had left. Meanwhile, Aksenov went full force against Nakhlupin because of Aksenov's self-proclaimed "uncompromising fight against corruption, which was started in the republic on my initiative, will continue" (Zhilin, 2018). An article entitled "Banditry as a form of governing Crimea" explains how "mafia circles" in Donbas have since sought to ransom Nakhlupin away from his pre-trial detention center in Moscow (Association of Reintegration of Crimea, 2020).

A3.1.4 Implosions and Defections of Party of Regions

While Konstantinov was one of the most significant defectors from PoR to support annexation, he was far from alone. For example, within the two convocations of the Crimean Parliament since 2014, eight of the 37 were from PoR and are now aligned with United Russia (in addition to Konstantinov).

Four out of fourteen of those who were or are currently in the Russian Duma and Federation Council (chambers of the Russian parliament) representing Crimea were also aligned with PoR: Konstantin Bakharev, Tatiana Lobach, Aleksei Cherniak, and Olga Kovitidi.[15] Bakharev and Cherniak are also on lists of officials in the ROK prior to 2014 and, prior to their election to the Duma, were MPs in Crimea's parliament after 2014 (and Bakharev prior).

Prior to 2014, Olga Kovitidi was a lawyer and MP in the Crimean parliament and also worked for the Ministry of Justice within the City of Sevastopol. Following annexation, and her election to the Federation Council, she was nominated by Russia to stand on the OSCE Parliamentary Authority to

represent Crimea; however, her nomination was rejected after campaigning on grounds that nominees can only serve countries not illegally occupied territories (OSCE, 2015).

A3.2 "Professional Russians": The Pro-Russian Fringe and Organized Crime(a)

While some were new to pro-Russian politics, at least overtly, several prominent figures in Crimean annexation – Sergei Aksenov as part of the annexation troika and his affiliate Sergei Tsekov – had been in the game for a while. I describe it as a game because as much as their politics were ethnonationalist, it was also a convenient strategy to win both votes and money from Russia. That is why these figures, and the organizations they represented (ROK and its political affiliate Russian Unity/*Russkoe Edinstvo*, hereafter RE), were not politically successful prior to annexation but instead were known in Crimea as "professional Russians" (Barash, 2010). In other words, for some time, Russian ethnonationalist politics in Crimea has had less to do with symbolic concerns and grievances but more to do with engaging in corruption and lobbying for, and laundering, money (Knott, 2022).

A3.2.1 Sergei Aksenov, or "Goblin"

Sergei Aksenov was born in Bălți, in the Moldovan SSR (peculiarly just as Konstantinov was), and then attended military college in Simferopol, Crimea. However, he did not graduate before the Soviet Union dissolved and was "deprived" of a military career (Murmanskii Vestnik, 2014). Aksenov became Crimea's prime minister during annexation, a post he (like Konstantinov) has held since while many around him have been removed for corruption scandals.

An Ethnonationalist or a Criminal Businessman? For many years, Aksenov – like Konstantinov – developed a business career before entering politics in 2010. Aksenov and his family members developed and owned extensive businesses across Crimea. However, his reputation as a businessman was matched by his reputation in organized crime as a gangster, known as "Goblin" (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014f; Tsenzor.net, 2014). SStarting out in the Crimean criminal gang, "Greki", where he was allegedly involved in killings against Greki rivals, he later survived ("unlike many") and moved to "Salem", a crime group spread across Ukraine (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014f). For example, he narrowly avoided being murdered during a car shooting on the motorway to Moscow. While law enforcement looked the other way, Aksenov also benefited from the contract killings of his associates, picking up their businesses along the way and accumulating weapons (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014f). While Aksenov escaped prosecution in Crimea, allegedly following extensive bribes to the prosecution office, Leonid Kuchma also sought to use the powers of the Ministry of Interior and SBU within Crimea to curb gangster power in Crimea "since the real power in the autonomy was indeed criminal bosses" (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014f).

In 2008, Aksenov became a member of ROK and, in 2010, became the head of RE, aligned with ROK headed by Sergei Tsekov. BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union (2014f) claims that Aksenov

became involved in pro-Russian movements primarily to fund and organize campaign materials and mass mobilizations, and also acquired the Association of Crimean Cossacks, a quasi-militia group.

Meanwhile, Senchenko claims that RE was established after consultations with, and funded by, interests in Moscow; for Senchenko, "[T]hat is why this couple [Konstantinov and Aksenov] was instructed to portray the new government in Crimea" (Tsenzor.net, 2014).[16] In 2010, Aksenov sued another member of ROK, Mikhail Bakharev (then Deputy Vice Speaker in Parliament),[17] for defamation of his character and was awarded 1 Hryvnia before losing in appeal court(BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014f; NovoRoss.info, 2010). Bakharev suspended his membership in ROK in 2009 because of how many of its members were involved in crime and were "random people who got there for opportunistic reasons and in order to receive political dividends in the future". Bakharev had alleged that Aksenov was involved in the Salem organized crime group (Crimean Information Agency, 2009).

RE, and its associated cultural organization (ROK), sought to mobilize support and votes from those who sympathized, such as pensioners, with the idea that ethnic Russians and Russian speakers were left behind by Ukraine's state policies, and discriminated against and marginalized by its Ukrainization policies. Indeed, in 2010, Aksenov expressed disappointment with "irresponsible politicians" – from Kuchma in 1994 to Yanukovych in 2004 – who used the promise of dual citizenship rights and the Russian state language to gain votes and "do nothing at the same time" (Portal of the Russian People of Crimea, 2010). But, these pro-Russian campaigns also did not lead to much electoral success (the 2000s-2010s), with RE gaining only 4% of votes in Crimea's 2010 parliamentary elections, alongside the hegemony of PoR in Crimea (Parties and Elections in Europe, n.d.); though, enough to elect Aksenov as an MP and two other deputies (Sergei Tsekov and Sergei Shuvainikov).

Aksenov and Annexation As mentioned, Sergei Aksenov was a key part of the annexation troika. He emerged as Crimea's prime minister out of the embers of the prior regime, replacing Mogilev, and leapfrogging the first candidate Russia had in mind (Leonid Grach, see A3.3). Temirgaliev alleges that it was Konstantinov who first nominated Aksenov for the post against protests from Aleksandr Melnik (PoR) and associated MPs (who "had been at enmity with Aksenov since the 1990s", Kozlov, 2015). Indeed, the enmity between Melnik and Aksenov is likely over them being rival factions within the Salem organized crime group (Kazarin, 2016b).[18] emirgaliev reports that Konstantinov sought support for Aksenov, rather than alternatives like Grach or Viktor Plakida (nominated by Melnik), because Crimea now needed "Che Guevara, not a business executive. The business executive will be needed later" (Kozlov, 2015).

In other words, there was neither mention of Aksenov's ethnonationalist politics nor competence as grounds for his nomination but his revolutionary and militia potential. Aksenov also ran up the rungs in Moscow's estimation, previously "hampered by his reputation as a person associated with crime", following advice from Belaventsev (Shoigu's delegate in Crimea) and the understanding of security services "drinking in the bathhouse" that if Aksenov failed, he would be easy to abandon (Galimova, 2015, see also: Vinokurova, 2014).

Aksenov After Annexation Aksenov's loyalty to Russia was rewarded by remaining as Crimea's prime minister after annexation (Kazarin, 2016a). He has also been able to "prevent [those] people who have betrayed" PoR and RE "from entering the new Crimean elite", i.e., by joining United Russia and gaining political positions (Vinokurova, 2014).

In turn, Aksenov and Konstantinov have been allowed to get away with "mistakes" by Moscow, including allowing corruption, racketeering, and criminality to proliferate "to emphasize the spontaneity, 'nationality' of what happened" (Kazarin, 2016a),[19] while others have been removed and prosecuted for similar allegations (e.g. Nakhlupin, A3.1.3; Temirgaliev, A3.1.3). Indeed, Vladimir Ganarchuk (former adviser to one of Aksenov's affiliates Mikhail Sheremet), claims that Aksenov has far greater "carte blanche" than other Russian governors as "the only leader [...] trusted by both Crimeans and Russians" (Kazarin, 2016a).

Such "carte blanche" has included the right to appoint Aksenov's "closest relatives, friends, and business partners (Stel'makh, 2018), including:

- Valerii Aksenov (father): elected to Crimea's parliament on United Russia list (2014, 2019), chair of construction and property committee (Oparyshev, 2019);
- Evgeniia Dobrynia (sister-in-law): elected to Crimea's parliament on United Russia list (2014, 2019), chair of land relations committee (Oparyshev, 2019);
- Mikhail Sheremet (A3.2.1), Andrei Kozenko, and Dmitrii Polonski (Aksenov's political affiliates from RE): made deputy prime ministers of Crimea's government; Kozenko and Sheremet were later elected to the Russian Duma;
- Sergei Borodkin and Nikolai Vysotskii (business partners of Aksenov's wife, Elena Aksenova's): received seats in Crimean parliament, formerly dealt with financial issues in RE (Stel'makh, 2018).
- Ruslan Balbek (A3.2.1): deputy prime minister of Crimea's government, elected to Duma (2016-2021).

Inheriting Yanukovych's style of crony governance, Ganarchuk describes how both Aksenov and Konstantinov were able to reward "their friends, relatives, mistresses" much, to the chagrin of Crimea's residents (Kazarin, 2016a), as if Crimea was Sicily (Prokov, 2020) or an episode of the Sopranos. Crimea's "criminal hierarchy" has thus remained intact even if Aksenov's now holds more formal power (Prokov, 2020).

Moreover, ethnonationalization and then privatization of assets have allowed Aksenov to enrich himself and his family further. Aksenov's son-in-law and son have all benefited from state property and business ventures (Ezhov, 2019). Meanwhile, as well as acquiring an elite state mansion, Aksenov bought his mother-in-law a large flat in an elite district of Moscow, a flat previously owned by Russian businessman, Aleksandr Karmanov, associated with Arkady Rotenberg (a close friend of Putin; both trained judo with Putin, see Ezhov, 2019).

While the Russian administration may disregard such aggrandizement and enrichment, Russia is funding Crimea not only to further crime but, according to Prokov (2020), to "really develop Crimea". Such ambitions require Aksenov to hire not only criminals but professionals who come to work not to steal, but such work "causes discontent among the criminals" (Prokov, 2020).

Ruslan Balbek Ruslan Balbek is an example of a figure who has benefited from Aksenov's patronage. While he was on the periphery of Crimean politics prior to 2014, after 2014, he became deputy prime minister of the republican government, entrusted with interethnic relations,[20] before being elected to the Russian Duma for United Russia (2016-2021). Since annexation, Balbek's income and wealth have increased substantially (as has Sheremet's, A3.2.1), and he now holds apartments in Crimea and Moscow (Golubov, 2018).

Balbek is also a Crimean Tatar with a longstanding grievance against the Crimean Tatar Mejlis and well-known Crimean Tatar figures in Crimea, such as Mustafa Dzhemilev (who, after annexation, lived in exile in mainland Ukraine). Since annexation, he has been one of the leading figures to campaign for the Mejlis to be banned as an extremist organization.

His appointment as deputy prime minister in the post-annexation regime is perhaps, at least somewhat, related to his anti-Mejlis stance as a Crimean Tatar; in other words, if the regime contains at least one sympathetic Crimean Tatar, this can be used to pretend the regime is not responsible for human rights abuses against Crimean Tatars. As Seitablaeva (2021) argues, Russia "bet" on Balbek to build a "pro-Russian vertical" within the Crimean Tatar community to quell potential unrest; although he neither tried "very hard" nor was very successful.

Mikhail Sheremet Alongside Andrei Kozenko and Dmitrii Polonskii, Mikhail Sheremet has benefited substantially from his affiliation and friendship with Aksenov since annexation. Following annexation, he became the first deputy prime minister in Crimea's government and then became an MP in the Russian Duma. Not only is Sheremet a close friend and ally of Aksenov, but they both also studied together at military school in Simferopol (Putilov, 2016a). Sheremet has a similarly dark and criminal past (NovoRoss.info, 2015).

Sheremet was especially useful to Aksenov as head of Crimea's so-called "self-defense forces" (i.e., militia, Meduza, 2016) that provided useful "thugs", alongside Russian special forces, to intimidate the streets during the early period of annexation (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014f). Such self-defense forces have been heavily involved in preventing any opposition to annexation, implicated in "grave human rights abuses" (e.g., disappearances, unlawful detention, and torture of activists, journalists and politically and non-politically active Crimean Tatars) and corporate raiding; neither the Russian regime nor within Crimea have these self-defense forces been investigated or their powers curtailed, rather they have had their powers regularized and widened (Gorbunova, 2014, p. 332).

Sheremet's usefulness has, in turn, transformed his "dizzying" career and personal wealth since

annexation (Veselova, 2017). For example, Sheremet's mother-in-law (and pensioner) has founded many businesses, including a security provider to Chernomorneftegaz (a contract worth 90 million rubles) that itself now employs many of those previously in the Crimean "militia" (Veselova, 2017).

***

Overall, as Stel'makh (2018) writes, Aksenov's permeation into power – fusing politics, business, and crime – demonstrates how "the effectiveness of the Russian government in Crimea is inversely proportional to the number of proteges of Sergei Aksenov and Speaker Vladimir Konstantinov in important positions". These "proteges" may not have "solved a single important problem for Crimea" (water, energy, transport, etc.), but figures like Aksenov's wife, Elena, have become exceptionally rich entrepreneurs (Stel'makh, 2018).

A3.2.2 Sergei Tsekov: The Only Crimean

A mechanic and then surgeon by training, Tsekov has been a pro-Russian ethnonationalist figure in Ukrainian and Crimean politics since 1990. He is also one of the few Crimean politicians who was born in Simferopol, Crimea (Kommersant", 2014). At the same time, many use the fact that Tsekov is ethnically Bulgarian to underscore how ethnonationalist politics is not a personal conviction but a strategy to win votes (Knott, 2022). The point here is not whether Tsekov is not 'really' ethnically Russian and is 'actually' Bulgarian because ethnicity is a socially constructed, and politicized, aspect of identity. The point is that he was often described as Bulgarian, according to Knott (2022), to make fun of his ethnonationalist politics, ethnonationalist credentials, and his status as a "professional Russian", using pro-Russian ethnonationalist politics for business interests rather than ideology (see above, A3.2; and below).

First, Tsekov was a Ukrainian MP (1990-94) – despite being outraged by Ukrainian independence from the Soviet Union and resigning from the Communist Party in Protest. He then held positions of deputy chairman (1993-94) and chairman (1994-97) of the Republican Party of Crimea (a party that supported secession), and after 1994, he became a Crimean MP, holding positions of speaker (1994-95), first vice speaker (2006-2009, 2010), and vice speaker (2014) (Kommersant", 2014). In 1993, he became a member of ROK, and in 2003, he became its head, during which time he was also deputy chairman of the Russian Bloc party (*Russkii Blok*). He was also both a member and deputy chairman of the Crimean branch of PoR (2005-09, Kommersant", 2014).

Pro-Russian Ethnonationalism (?) Tsekov has been involved with many political parties while seemingly campaigning for the rights of ethnic Russians in Crimea and Ukraine. In 2009, he then left to co-found the new political party RE, which Aksenov joined in 2010. Not only in the wake of Euromaidan (2013-14), but prior, Tsekov was a regular visitor to Moscow, lobbying for support for ethnic Russians. Indeed, in 2012, he disagreed with and described as "Russophobic", the OSCE's High Commissioner for

National Minorities, who had disputed that ethnic Russians were discriminated against in Crimea (Free Russia Forum, n.d.).

At the same time, he was also lobbying for the right to dual citizenship for ethnic Russians in Ukraine and the right to acquire citizenship from Russia. He was adamant that he did not hold Russian citizenship or a Russian passport (Portal of the Russian People of Crimea, 2009), casting doubt on the idea that Crimea was passportized prior to annexation since one would have assumed figures like Tsekov would be first in line to acquire Russian citizenship if they had been able prior to annexation (Wrighton, 2018, c.f. Grigas, 2016; Kuzio, 2010).

Tsekov and Annexation In the wake of Euromaidan, Tsekov accompanied Konstantinov to Moscow to ask for "help and protection" by asking for Russian support for Crimean autonomy and prepared a proposal for autonomy to the Crimean parliament (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014a; Free Russia Forum, n.d.; Vlatchanin et al., 2014). Indeed, Mogilev alleges that for twenty years, they lobbied and received "money from the Russian Federation" (Kovalenko, 2018).

In turn, Tsekov was "one of the initiators" who asked for Mogilev's resignation between 25 and 26 February 2014, and one of the "main characters among local politicians-collaborators" supporting annexation (Free Russia Forum, n.d.). He also campaigned for his ally, Aksenov, to be appointed as prime minister, according to Temirgaliev, in the five-hour discussion/debate among Crimean MPs (Galimova, 2015).

Tsekov was part of a Crimean delegation to the Kremlin on the day Crimea's annexation was rubber-stamped (Free Russia Forum, n.d.). Moreover, Tsekov was rewarded with a free place in Russia's Federative Council in 2014, and re-elected in 2019, being third on the United Russian party list in Crimea (after Aksenov and Konstantinov).

Crimea's Corrupt "Judas" While Tsekov has been a long-standing pro-Russian politician, involved in Crimea politics since the early 1990s, he is not liked by "veterans" of pro-Russian movements in Crimea. Supporters of Yurii Meshkov, Crimea's self-proclaimed president in 1994 who led failed efforts for separatism, claim that Tsekov betrayed the movements, and sabotaged separatism and the "development of Russian sentiments" during the mid-1990s (Seitablaeva, 2016). Labeling him Crimea's "Judas", these veterans describe Tsekov's interests, not in pro-Russian politics, but engaging in corruption scandals around medical machines to enrich himself; Meshkov describes him as the "personification of betrayal", seeking "access to the "feeding trough" in order to profit at the expense of his people" (Seitablaeva, 2016).

A3.2.3 Aleksei Chalyi: Sevastopol's Brief Russian Mayor

Another figure worth mentioning is Aleksei Chalyi. This article, predominantly, focuses on those within the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, rather than the city of Sevastopol. What warrants attention is:

how Chalyi took power, his stoking of protests in the wake of the repeal of the regional language law, and his presence at Putin's annexation ceremony in Moscow on 18 March 2014.

From 23 February to 1 April 2014, Aleksei Chalyi was essentially the de facto, and self-appointed, Mayor of Sevastopol. Chalyi came to office after the Mayor appointed by Yanukovych's Kyiv/PoR authority, Volodymyr Yatsubaå, resigned and/or was deposed. He was 'elected' at the People's Will Against Fascism in Ukraine rally in Sevastopol on 23 February, where crowds gathered to 'elect' him (Bashlykova, 2014). From 1 April to 14 April, Chalyi was Governor of Sevastopol, until he was replaced by Sergei Meniailo, a former deputy commander of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol. It is reported that Chalyi, himself, suggested to Putin that he should be replaced by Meniailo, who agreed (Ekho Mosckvy, 2014).

It is as unexplained and unclear why he participated in annexation, as it is why he resigned (Evgenii Semienov, 2014). News reports comment on the unexplained intrigue around Chalyi's participation in annexation within Sevastopol politics. Whereas those participating in annexation (e.g., Aksenov) were generally "absolutely systemic" (perhaps a euphemism for being involved in organized crime), Chalyi is described as a "non-systemic person" (Kazarin, 2016a). Grach, too, described how "time has shown" that Chalyi "was out of place". Chalyi is known as being from Sevastopol, being a businessman, specifically a "Russian [rossiisskii] businessman" (Tsvetelina Miteva, 2014) and a Russian citizen, but not much more is known. News reporting suggests that Chalyi was a "well-known", "respected", and "trusted" person in Sevastopol, in large part because of 'philanthropy', including self-funding a museum dedicated to the 1942 defense of Sevastopol and Sevastopol history textbooks (Sizova, 2014).

It is also reported that he personally "solved the problems of supplying self-defense" during the confrontation between Crimea and Kyiv (Sizova, 2014). Of course, we know these were more thugs than legitimate 'self-defense' forces, and position Chalyi similarly to Aksenov in being able to provide financial, political, and militia support for annexation from within Crimea.

A3.3 The Last Communist: Leonid Grach

Grach has been a Communist his whole life. A veteran of Crimean politics, he was the last Soviet leader of Crimea. He headed the Crimean branch of the Communist Party (KPU) after Soviet collapse and the Crimean parliament (1998-2002), and was a Ukrainian MP (2002-2012, see Zhegulev, 2017).

Grach and Annexation Grach enters this story because he was the first person approached by Russian actors – Sergei Shoigu (A4.1), Oleg Belaventsev (A4.2), and Rustam Muradov (a Russian general) – to run the new regime in Crimea. Grach also claims that, after the Orange Revolution and Sea Breeze joint military exercises between Ukraine and NATO in the Black Sea besides Crimea, he developed contacts with the FSB (Zhegulev, 2017).

Grach has reported in interviews how Belaventsev came to his house on 23 and 26 February 2014 to discuss becoming the prime minister of Crimea, to replace Mogilev (A3.1.1), and the need to avoid

"bloodshed" (Galimova, 2015; Semena, 2021; Stoianov, 2015). Grach reports that he was introduced to Belaventsev by Yuri Khaliullin, a former Black Sea Fleet employee who now worked at Slavianka, the same military contractor as Belaventsev that also connected him to Shoigu (Zhegulev, 2017). Grach explains how the decision was approved by Shoigu, with Belavetnsev connecting him by a secure phone line to Shoigu in Moscow (Stoianov, 2015). Here, Grach reports that he raised the problem that he was not liked by Konstantinov and PoR MPs in the Crimean parliament and thought they would vote against him; Grach alleges that Belaventsev told him, "No, Leonid Ivanovich, don't worry, everything will be fine" (Zhegulev, 2017). Grach then remained with several FSB officers who suggested from 27 February, they would begin to organize rallies to support the referendum, at which point Grach pushed back and replied that he would not "sell my face. Pro-Russian forces are one thing, and bandits' support is another" (Zhegulev, 2017).

However, by 27 February, the offer to Grach to be Crimea's prime minister had been rescinded after Konstantinov met Belaventsev and protested (Semena, 2021; Stoianov, 2015). Since then, Grach reports, he has not spoken to Belaventsev, who he claims "hides from communicating with me" (Stoianov, 2015). Not only was Grach offended by this change of course, but he was also anxious that Aksenov and Konstantinov were allowed to take the jobs they did knowing who they were (i.e., their involvement in organized crime), which caused him "anxiety" (Zhegulev, 2017).

It is reported that Konstantinov not only raised concerns about nominating Grach but that Belaventsev and Shoigu backtracked. While Grach had a reputation in Moscow as "the most famous pro-Russian politician in Crimea", Belaventsev and Shoigu came to realize within Crimea, he had little power and, instead, a reputation as a "city madman" (Zygar', 2016, p. 729) and "village idiot" (Matsuzato, 2016) that was not worth betting on (Zygar', 2016, p. 730). As Matsuzato (2016) argues, these events also demonstrate how "ignorant" those aligned to the Kremlin were of Crimean domestic politics during this period.

Accusations of Corruption Since annexation, however, Grach has not shied away from pulling punches at the post-annexation regime in Crimea and their engagement in corruption. Appointments of figures like Nakhlupin (A3.1.3) caused Grach to argue, for example, that the "representatives who walk in the Crimea today with the masks of yesterday's regionals [i.e., previously those aligned to PoR], and today the benefactors of the Crimea" (Putilov, 2016b).

Grach has also raised concerns about the appointment of those with patronage from Aksenov to important companies, such as the energy company Chernomorneftegaz (Stoianov, 2015). While many PoR affiliates did leave Crimea after annexation (e.g., Mogilev), Grach's broader point is that there has been less regime turnover since annexation, given the financial incentives provided by annexation as an opportunity for racketeering and profiteering, albeit on a larger scale than prior to annexation because of the ethnonationalization of key assets (stolen from the Ukrainian regime and oligarchs). Indeed, given Grach's self-proclaimed "vast experience" across Soviet and post-Soviet politics, he has written directly to Putin (and others) with these concerns while not holding out much hope because Russian bureaucracy

is the "foundation of corruption in the country"; a problem that cannot be fixed by "patch[ing] holes with imported people", i.e., those from outside Crimean politics (Stoianov, 2015).

A4 Key Russian Actors

Vladislav Surkov is a known "grey cardinal" involved in Russia's annexation of Crimea, as Putin's advisor on South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Ukraine (2013-2020, Vinokurova, 2013), who met with figures like Mogilev and Konstantinov across the annexation process, allegedly to discuss the construction of a bridge across the Kerch strait (Zygar', 2016).[21] If anything, as Treisman (2018) argues, Surkov's real job was keeping Yanukovych in power (at which he failed), not annexing Crimea, and Surkov spent most of March in Moscow (Zygar', 2016).

Instead, figures like Sergei Shoigu (Russia's Defense Minister) and Oleg Belaventsev (Shoigu's delegate) played an important role in Russian annexation. Their role is worth explicitly unpacking.

A4.1 Sergei Shoigu

A close ally of Putin, Sergei Shoigu has been Russia's Defense Minister since 2012. According to Galeotti (2022, p. 157), he is also the only member of Putin's inner circle who is not a former KGB agent or a colleague from Leningrad/St Petersburg. Anointed by Putin, Shoigu led Russia's military efforts to annex Crimea. Zygar' (2016, p. 735) notes that "[W]here Shoigu is, there is victory everywhere".

Zygar' (2016, p. 723) reports that at a meeting in the early hours between 22 and 23 February 2014, between Putin, Shoigu, and three others,[22] where Putin allegedly claimed Russia was now "forced to start working on returning Crimea to Russia" that others were supportive of annexation, but Shoigu needed to be convinced. Zygar' (2016, p. 725) claims this was due to Shoigu being in charge of planning such an operation. In particular, Zygar' (2016, p. 728) notes the orchestrators were fearful of failure "because, despite years of talk about the need to return Crimea, there was no plan". At the same time, Galeotti (2022, p. 170) argues the fact the decision was made just prior to 'little green men" arriving in Crimea is "probably disingenuous" given the likelihood that Putin was "consulting more widely beforehand"; what Galeotti (2022, p. 170) notes as significant is that this "final" meeting was with his "closest confidants", as described above, and excluded those like Sergei Lavrov, Russia's longtime Foreign Minister.

While it is claimed that Shoigu took phone calls from Moscow with those he sought to lead annexation within Crimea,[23] primarily Shoigu anointed his close friend – Oleg Belaventsev – as his functionary on the ground within Crimea to carry out annexation from within.

A4.2 Oleg Belaventsev

Belaventsev has had an illustrious career that began in the UK as a diplomat, from which he was expelled in 1985 for spying (Galimova, 2015). As Shoigu's long-term friend, Belaventsev's illustrious career has tracked that of Shoigu's: at Emercom (the Agency for Support and Coordination of Russian Participation in International Humanitarian Operations at the Ministry for Emergency Situations) and when Shoigu was briefly governor of Moscow (Anin et al., n.d.; Basharova, n.d.). But, the overlap was greatest when Shoigu became Minister of Defense: Belaventsev was recruited by Shoigu to be the director of Slavianka, one of the largest military contractors controlled by the ministry (Anin et al., n.d.). Belaventsev's real talent is being appointed to run companies that get huge state contracts and support for aid, for example, supplying humanitarian aid and food in conflicts like Donbas (Anin et al., n.d.), with his personal wealth taking off since he began at Emercom.

In turn, it was Shoigu (allegedly) who advised Putin that Belaventsev should be his "envoy" in Crimea (Anin et al., n.d.). But, Belaventsev claims that he was conveniently (and unbelievably) on holiday as the reason for being in Crimea in the early dates of annexation, at which point he realized he needed to become "fully involved in preparing for the referendum" (Basharova, n.d.).

Temirgaliev has also claimed that Belaventsev's "role in the process of reuniting Crimea with Russia [wa]s really very great" (DeBenedictis, 2021), and he took decisions on his own without direct intervention from Moscow (Basharova, n.d.). Similarly, as Russian military authorities locked down Crimea, changed flags, and seized key government buildings, Zygar' (2016, p. 731) describes how it was Belaventsev that "became the owner" of the Crimean government building, as the seeming supervisor of the whole operation (Galimova, 2015). Moreover, as we saw with Grach, Belaventsev was a "liaison" between Crimean figures and Russian authorities with prior connections to Aksenov (Galimova, 2015). Moreover, as we saw with Grach, Belaventsev was a "liaison" between Crimean figures and Russian authorities with prior connections to Aksenov (Basharova, n.d.; Galimova, 2015). At the same time, while describing Aksenov as being "like a son", Belaventsev denies any prior connections to, or meetings with, Aksenov or Konstantinov before February 2014 (Basharova, n.d.).

Following annexation, Shoigu no longer led the operation (as the military part was complete, Zygar', 2016, p. 747), and Belaventsev was awarded the highest title in Russia, Hero of the Russian Federation, in what Petrov (2016) describes as a "'closed' presidential decree" in April 2014. Belaventsev also became Putin's official state representative (plenipotentiary) in Crimea until 2016, when the Crimean region was abolished, at which point he became plenipotentiary to the North Caucus region (Zhegulev, 2017). In turn, there is the suggestion that it was (and perhaps remains) Belaventsev – rather than Aksenov and Konstantinov – that ordered the various political reshuffles (Putilov, 2016b). But, Belaventsev's switch from Grach to Aksenov demonstrates, if anything, that while military Russia's annexation of Crimea was smooth that, politically, it was chaotic and demonstrates Russia's ignorance of the politics of the peninsula (Treisman, 2018).

Today, Belaventsev has a bizarre post as Honorary Consul of Nicaragua in Crimea, while still allegedly

being the "most influential person" in Crimea with billions of rubles of assets based in Crimea (Basharova, n.d.). He has benefited both from Aksenov's sister-in-law, Evgeniia Dobrynia, being chair of the land rights committee, and from the liquidation of business and property assets from wealthy Ukrainians like Ihor Kolomoiskii. At the same time, Belaventsev has spoken out about the scale of corruption in Crimea, resulting, as he claims, "from 23 years of being in a different jurisdiction" (BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 2014e). In other words, just like Aksenov, Belaventsev speaks out about corruption while benefiting hugely from enrichment and racketeering personally.

Notes

[1]As a resident of Sevastopol, since Russia's annexation of Ukraine, Kolesnichenko defected to Russia and has been a Russian politician.

[2]These included Valentina Nalivaichenko (Head of SBU/Ukrainian Security Services) and Arsen Avakov (who became Ukraine's Minister of Internal Affairs on 22 February 2014).

[3]Akhtem Chiigoz was then and remains Deputy Chairman of the Mejlis; he was also arrested by Russian authorities for participating in a rally on 26 February 2014, the night government buildings were seized, and detained until March 2017.

[4]Senchenko, grew up in Crimea and was a Ukrainian MP who became acting deputy head of the Presidential Administration and worked on securing the release of around 40 hostages from Crimea.

[5]While this evidence is significant, it is also important to bear in mind that both Kunitsyn and Senchenko were political opponents of Konstantinov, or at least were before 2014.

[6]The vote for role of head of United Russia in Crimea was held in a secret ballot with Konstantinov having only one opponent, Evgenii Bubnov who previously headed the republican committee for environmental protection (Interfax, 2014b).

[7]While this evidence is important, it is also worth bearing in mind that Grach was Konstatinov's opponent, and would seek to present himself in interviews in the best light.

[8]For example, Grach (A3.3), has suggested that reshuffles since annexation are neither the "will" of Aksenov nor Konstantinov but of Russian Deputy Prime Minister in Crimea, Oleg Belaventsev (Krym Realiï, 2016a).

[9]Vetrov (2018) describes how the rules were "rewritten" to give Aksenov greater powers while giving the right to MPs to draft laws as a form of "compensation" and "symbolic consolation".

[10]Temirgaliev's father, Il'mir Nasikhovich, is also a successful Crimean businessman and at one time Chairman of the Crimean Republican Association of Tatars of the Volga Region "Idel".

[11]At one time, it is also alleged that Malofeev has employed Donbas separatists Girkin – likely a GRU operative – and Borodai.

[12]Aksenov and Temirgaliev claimed that he was not sacked but had performed his duty as requested, to see Crimea through currency transition from the hryvnia to the ruble, even though this had not yet been hugely successful.

[13]Prior to his appointment, Nakhlupin was a deputy (before and after annexation) and headed the budget committee in parliament in the post-annexation regime (Putilov, 2016b), a seemingly profiteering position.

[14]While this evidence is significant, it is also important to bear in mind that Senchenko was a political opponent of Nakhlupin, or at least was before 2014.

[15]Only Bakharev and Kovitidi face sanctions

[16]While this evidence is significant, it is also important to bear in mind that Senchenko was a political opponent of RE, or at least was before 2014.

[17]Who currently sits in the Russian Duma in United Russia, Putin's party.

[18]Moreover, Melnik did not join Putin's Party, United Russia, following annexation but *Rodina* (Motherland), a minority party in Russia.

[19]The latter point made by Taras Ibragimov, a political observer from "Crimea SOS".

[20]Balbek replaced Lenur Isliamov who temporarily held the post. Isliamov is a Crimean businessman and owner of Crimean Tatar media, like ATR TV station that had to move to Kyiv after annexation due to harassment; Isliamov also moved to Kyiv and led the Civil Blockade of Crimea.

[21]In 2014, just prior to annexation, Surkov under the pseudonym Natan Dubovitskii (Dubovitskii, 2014) penned a blog article about the emergence of "non-linear warfare", i.e. hybrid warfare using conventional and unconventional military strategies; seen as a precursor to Russia's actions in Crimea: namely the strategy of "little green men".

[22]The three others were Nikolai Patrushev (Security Council Secretary), Alexander Bortnikov (FSB head) and Sergei Ivanov (head of the presidential administration), according to Zygar' (2016, p. 723).

[23]Such as Grach only to ditch him, see section A3.3 above.

References

Agatov, M. (2014). Stenka na stenku (Wall to Wall). *Novye Izvestiia*. Retrieved December 14, 2021, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38970043

Anin, R., Shmagun, O., & Vasic, J. (n.d.). *Ex-Spy Turned Humanitarian Helps Himself* [OCCRP]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://www.occrp.org/en/investigations/4565-ex-spy-turned-humanitarian-helps-himself

Association of Reintegration of Crimea. (2020, May 9). *Banditizm iak forma pravlinnia Krimom. Sprava Nakhlupina (Banditry as a form of governing Crimea. Nakhlupin's case)* [Association of reintegration of crimea]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://arc.construction/2749?lang=uk

Barash, R. (2010, December 20). *Professional'nye sootechestvenniki (Professional Compatriots)* [Russkii zhurnal]. Retrieved March 6, 2020, from http://www.russ.ru/pole/Professional-nye-sootechestvenniki

Basharova, S. (n.d.). *Kak drug Shoigu stal khoziainom Kryma (How Shoigu's friend became the master of Crimea)* [Baza]. Retrieved January 5, 2022, from http://hozyainkryma.baza.io/

Bashlykova, N. (2014, April 3). *Aleksei Chalyi Gotov Priniat' Uchastie v Vyborakh Gubernatora Sevastopolia (Aleksei Chalyi Is Ready to Participate in the Election of the Governor of Sevastopol)* [Izvestiia]. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/39252945

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014a). Weekly says Russia seeking to annex Ukraine's Crimea. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from http://www.proquest.com/docview/1499608739/abstract/35647A5A700E4B07PQ/43

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014b). Programme Summary of Russian NTV "Segodnya" News 1500 Gmt 24 Feb 14. Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://www.proquest.com/docview/1501429560/abstract/F4CFDA87E80B46DEPQ/3

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014c). Russian Daily TV Roundup for 25 February 2014. Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://www.proquest.com/docview/1501655816/abstract/F4CFDA87E80B46DEPQ/6

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014d). Ukrainian Ombudsman Says No Complaints from Crimean Residents. Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://www.proquest.com/docview/1503772225/abstract/F4CFDA87E80B46DEPQ/26

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014e). Putin's approval rating rises after Crimea annexation – poll. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from http://www.proquest.com/docview/1510218213/abstract/35647A5A700E4B07PQ/163

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014f). Ukraine website profiles new Crimean leader. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from http://www.proquest.com/docview/1511535929/abstract/35647A5A700E4B07PQ/75

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union. (2014g). Russian defence minister arrives in Crimea. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from http://www.proquest.com/docview/1528821286/abstract/35647A5A700E4B07PQ/114

BBC News Ukraine. (2012, June 19). *Chi potryben novyy movnyy zakon natsional'nym menshynam? (Do national minorities need a new language law?)* Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2012/06/120619_minorities_law_languages_sd

Boldyrev, I. (2014). Im Nuzhen Zhestkii Konflict (They Need Hard Conflict). *Sovetskaia Rossiia*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38973689

Center for Investigative Journalism. (2018, February 2). *Mogilev svoim bezdeustviem sposobstvoval sdache Kryma Rossii – Chiigoz (By his inaction, Mogilev contributed to the surrender of Crimea to Russia – Chiigoz)*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from http://investigator.org.ua/news-2/205529/

Cheremshina, O. (2014, November 6). *Rustam Temirgaliev kak zhertva provala perekhodnogo perioda (Rustam Temirgaliev as a victim of the failure of the transition period)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved January 4, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/25418342.html

Crimean Information Agency. (2009, December 22). *Bakharev priostanovil svoe chlentstvo v ROK do tekh por, poka ona ne ochistitsia ot kriminaliteta (Bakharev suspended his membership in the ROC until it is cleared of criminals)*. Retrieved December 17, 2021, from https://web.archive.org/web/20140301203413/http://www.kianews.com.ua/node/14879

DeBenedictis, K. (2021). *Russian 'Hybrid Warfare' and the Annexation of Crimea: The Modern Application of Soviet Political Warfare*. IB Tauris.

Dobrovol'skaia, A. (2016, April 2). *Nizshaia proba, ch.1: 'Kak Temirgaliev organizoval khishchenie pochti 100 mln rublei' (Lowest test, part 1: 'How Temirgaliev organized the theft of almost 100 million rubles')* [Krym Inform]. Retrieved December 19, 2021, from https://www.c-inform.info/comments/id/190

Dubovitskii, N. (2014, December 3). *Bez neba (Without sky)* [Russkii Pioner]. Retrieved January 13, 2022, from http://ruspioner.ru/honest/m/single/4131

Ekho Mosckvy. (2014, April 15). *Vladimir Putin Podpisal Ukaz o Naznachenii Vremenno Ispolniaiushchikh Obiazannosti Glavy Respubliki Krym in Sevastopolia (Vladimir Putin Signed a Decree Appointing Acting Heads of the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol)*. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from https://web.archive.org/web/20160825184511/http://echo.msk.ru/news/1300550-echo.html

Evgenii Semienov. (2014, April 22). *Mnenie. Pochemu Aleksei Chalyi Ushel s Posta Mera Posle Oglushitel'noi Pobedy? (Opinion: Why Did Aleksei Chalyi Leave as Mayor after a Great Victory?)* [Birzha]. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/40618586

Ezhov, S. (2019, May 21). *Chei Krym. Kak sem'ia Sergeia Aksenova zaratatyvaet na poluostrove v skupaet elitnuiu nedvizhimost' v Moskve (Whose Crimea. How the family of Sergei Aksenov makes money on the peninsula and buys up elite real estate in Moscow)* [The Insider]. Retrieved December 19, 2021, from https://theins.ru/korrupciya/156512

Free Russia Forum. (n.d.). *Tsekov Sergei Pavlovich* [The database "PUTIN's LIST"]. Retrieved January 6, 2022, from https://www.spisok-putina.org/personas/czekov/

Galeotti, M. (2022). *Putin's Wars: From Chechnya to Ukraine*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Galimova, N. (2015, December 3). *'My idem v Rossiiu. Kak – ne zhnaiu' ('We are going to Russia. How – we don't know')* [Gazeta.ru]. Retrieved January 5, 2022, from https://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2015/03/11_a_6503589.shtml

Gavrileva, N. (2014). Krym Na Rasput'e (Crimea Is at a Crossroads). *Izvestiia*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38984462

GolosUA. (2013, April 26). *Konstantinov Vladimir Andreevich*. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from https://web.archive.org/web/20130623190047/http://ru.golos.ua/politika/13_04_25_konstantinov_vladimir_andreevich

Golubov, A. (2018, August 24). *Razbogatet' na anneksii: chto delariruiut krymskie chinovniki (Get rich on annexation: what do Crimean officials declare)* [Krym Realii]. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/somnitelnoe-obogashenie-krymskih-chinovnikov/29450899.html

Gorbunova, Y. (2014). Human Rights Abuses in Crimea under Russia's Occupation. *Security and Human Rights*, *25*(3), 328–340.

Grigas, A. (2016). *Beyond Crimea: The New Russian Empire*. Yale University Press.

Interfax. (2014a). Putin: Russian military servicemen were behind Crimean self-defense forces' back. Retrieved January 17, 2022, from https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/43723/?sphrase_id=60369

Interfax. (2014b, July 4). *Krymskii spiker Konstantinov vozglavil regional'noe otdelenie 'Edinoi Rossii' (Crimean Speaker Konstantinov headed the regional branch of 'United Russia')* [Interfax]. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from https://www.interfax.ru/russia/369929

Ivzhenko, T. (2014). Verkhovnaia Rada Poluchila Nekontroliruemuiu Stranu (The Verkhova Rada Received an Uncontrollable Country). *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38963228

Izvestiia. (2014). "Nikto rasporiazhenii maidana ne vypolniaet" (Nobody fulfills the orders of the Maidan). Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38956746

Kazarin, P. (2016a, March 24). *Ukhodiashchie 'geroi krymskoi vesny' (Outgoing 'heroes of the Crimean spring')* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 19, 2021, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/27631693.html

Kazarin, P. (2016b, September 2). *Sergei Kunitsyn: Arestovannye 'Bashmaki' meshali rossiiskim banditam (Sergei Kunitsyn: The arrested 'Bashmaki' prevented Russian bandits from running Crimea)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/27539547.html

Khatuntsev, S. (2014). Nezalezhnyi Krym (Independent Crimea). *Izvestiia*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38974995

Kichanova, V. (2014a). "Pugaiut Beteery Pod Simferopolem". Chto Dumaiut Zhiteli Kryma o Proiskhodiashchem? ("The Armored Personnel Carriers near Simferopol Are Scary." What Do the Inhabitants of Crimea Think about What Is Happening?) *Republic (Slon)*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/43209504

Kichanova, V. (2014b). Dovoennyi Krym Glazami Sotsiologov: Politika i Naselenie (Pre-war Crimea through the Eyes of Sociologists: Politics and Population). *Republic (Slon)*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/43209446

King, C. (2014, January 3). *Crimea, the Tinderbox*. Retrieved July 14, 2014, from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/03/opinion/crimea-the-tinderbox.html

Knott, E. (2022). *Kin Majorities: Identity and Citizenship in Crimea and Moldova from the Bottom-Up*. McGill-Queens University Press.

Komentarii: Krym. (2013). Konstatinov Priznal Bespoleznost' Iazykovogo Zakona Dlia Kryma (Konstantinov recognized the futility of the language law for the Crimea) [Komentarii: Krym]. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://web.archive.org/web/20130502093045/http://crimea.comments.ua/news/2013/03/27/173000.html

Komentarii: Krym. (2014, March 25). *Glavnyi 'etnichestkii moldovanin' Kryma poluchil pasport RF (The main 'ethnic Moldovans' of Crimea received a passport of the Russian Federation)* [Komentarii: Krym]. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from https://comments.ua/politics/459332-glavniy-etnicheskiy-moldovanin-krima.html

Kommersant". (2014). Chem izvesten Sergei Tsekov (What is Known about Sergei Tsekov). Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/39190698

Kovalenko, O. (2018, February 27). *Anataolii Mogilo pro vtratu Krimy: U silovikiv bula proukrains'ka pozitsiia (Anatolii Mogilev on the loss of Crimea: The security forces had a pro-Ukrainian position)* [Ukraïns'ka pravda]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2018/02/27/7172941/

Kozlov, P. (2015, March 16). *'Esli eto imelo opredelennuiu rezhissuru, rezhisseru nuzhno postavit' piat' c pliusom' ('If it had a certain direction, the director needs to be given a five plus.')* [Vedomosti]. Retrieved January 3, 2022, from https://www.vedomosti.ru/politics/characters/2015/03/16/esli-eto-imelo-opredelennuyu-rezhissuru---rezhisseru-nuzhno-postavit-pyat-s-plyusom

Krym Realiï. (2014). Ukrayins'ke kerivnytstvo maye tverdo vyznachyty pozytsiyu shchodo Krymu – Kunitsyn (The Ukrainian leadership must firmly define its position regarding Crimea – Kunitsyn). Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/25349411.html

Krym Realiï. (2016a, January 20). *Grach: u Krimy prodovzhuiut' praviti 'regionali' (Grach: "regionals" continue to rule in Crimea)*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/news/27498206.html

Krym Realiï. (2016b, February 23). *Mogil'ov: pid chas aneksii Krimy diiav za statutom iz dotrimanniiam zakoniv Ukraini (Mogilev: during the annexation of Crimea he acted according to the statute in compliance with the laws of Ukraine)*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/news/27568550.html

Krym Realiï. (2019, August 5). *Mogil'ov 'ne pomitiv' prorosiis'kikh nastroiv u Krymu naperedochi aneksii (Mogilev 'did not notice' pro-Russian sentiment in Crimea on the eve of annexation)*. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/news-krym-aneksia-mohyliov/30092915.html

Kuzio, T. (2010). *The Crimea: Europe's Next Flashpoint?* Jamestown Foundation.

Lashchenko, O. (2021, February 25). *'Makendon'ska' epokha v Krymu ('Macedonian' era in Crimea)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/makedontsi-v-krymu-pravlinnia-vasylia-dzharty-ta-anatolia-mohyliova-2010-2014/31121841.html

Lavrov, A. (2014). Russian Again: The Military Operation for Crimea. In C. Howard & R. Pukhov (Eds.), *Brothers armed: Military aspects of the crisis in ukraine* (pp. 157–184). East View Press.

Lenta Novostei Kryma. (2014). Masha Efrosinina: "Iazyk Nikogda Ne Byl Predmetom Razdora i Diskriminatsii v Ukraine! Ob'iavliaia Voinu Zhe Iazyk" (Masha Efrosinina: "Language Has Never Been a Subject of Contention and Discrimination in Ukraine! By Declaring War on Ukraine, Russia Is Destroying Its Own Language") [Lenta Novostei Kryma]. Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://crimea-news.com/politics/2014/03/02/20296.html

Lipskii, A. (2015, February 25). *'Predstavlietsia pravil'nym initsiirovat' prisoedinenie vostochnykh oblastei Ukrainy k Rossii' ('It seems correct to initiate the accession of the eastern regions of Ukraine to Russia')* [Novaia gazeta]. Retrieved December 14, 2021, from https://novayagazeta.ru/politics/67389.html

Matsuzato, K. (2016). Domestic Politics in Crimea, 2009-2015. *Demokratizatsiya*, *24*(2), 225–256.

Meduza. (2016, March 17). *'Krymskaia samooborona' dva goda spustia Chem zanimaetsia Narodnoe opolchenie Kryma v 'mirnoe vremia' ('Crimean self-defense' two years later What does the Crimean people's militia do in 'peacetime')* [Meduza]. Retrieved January 11, 2022, from https://meduza.io/feature/2016/03/17/krymskaya-samooborona-dva-goda-spustya

Murmanskii Vestnik. (2014). Vozvrashchenie domoi. Retrieved December 15, 2021, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/39204795

Nikiforov, V. (2015). Zolota Kryma ne dostalos' ni Ukraine, ni Rossii (The Crimean gold went neither to Ukraine nor Russia). *Kommersant"*. Retrieved January 4, 2022, from https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2669939

Nikiforov, V. (2016). Zoloto Kryma cvetit svobodoi (Crimea's gold shines with freedom). *Kommersant"*. Retrieved January 4, 2022, from https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2916171

Nikulenko, T. (2016, October 20). *Mogilev: Pravookhrantel'naia sistem Ukrainy razgromlena, eto mozhet povlech' za soboi takoi kriminal'nyi vsplesk, chto my vse sodrognemsia (Mogilev: The law en-*

forcement system of Ukraine has been crushed, this could lead to such a criminal surge that we will all shudder) [Gordon]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://gordonua.com/publications/mogilev-pravoohranitelnaya-sistema-ukrainy-razgromlena-eto-mozhet-povlech-za-soboy-takoy-kriminalnyy-vsplesk-chto-myti-vse-sodrognemsya-154971.html

NovoRoss.info. (2010, February 26). *Sud obiazal vitse-spikera Bakhareva vyplatit' Aksenovu 1 grivnu (The court ordered the vice-speaker Bakharev to pay Aksenov 1 hryvnia)* [NovoRoss.info]. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from http://novoross.info/people/1801-sud-obyazal-vice-spikera-baxareva-vyplatit-aksenovu-1-grivnu.html

NovoRoss.info. (2015, January 30). *'Vitse-prem'er s bol'shoi dorogi'? Mikhail Sheremet c 'gruppoi podderzhki' vorvalsia v univeresitet ('Vice Prime Minister from the Highway'? Mikhail Sheremet burst into the university with a 'support group')* [NovoRoss.info]. Retrieved January 13, 2022, from http://www.novoross.info/krim/30319-vice-premer-s-bolshoy-dorogi-mihail-sheremet-s-gruppoy-podderzhki-vorvalsya-v-universitet.html

Oparyshev, V. (2019, November 10). *Kadry Askenova 'poreshat' vse (Askenov's cadres will 'solve' everything)* [The moscow post]. Retrieved December 19, 2021, from http://www.moscow-post.su/politics/kadry_aksyonova_poreshat_vsyo30810/

OSCE. (2015, February 18). *Statement on the rejection of Russia's designation of Olga Kovitidi as a Member of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly* [OSCE]. Retrieved December 17, 2021, from https://www.osce.org/pa/141421

Parties and Elections in Europe. (n.d.). *Parties and Elections in Europe: Crimea*. Retrieved June 7, 2021, from https://web.archive.org/web/20180324080358/http://www.parties-and-elections.eu:80/crimea2.html

Pashchenko, V. (2012, August 21). *V Krymu est' problemy c krymskotatarskim i ukrainskim yazykami, a ne s russkim – Chubarov (Crimea has problems with Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian languages, not Russian – Chubarov)* [Ukrinform]. Retrieved February 20, 2023, from https://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-regions/1388421-v_krimu_est_problemi_s_krimskotatarskim_i_ukrainskim_yazikami_a_ne_s_russkim____chubarov_1444243.html

Petrov, N. (2016). Crimea. *Russian Politics & Law*, *54*(1), 74–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/10611940.2015.1160715

Petukhova, E. (2014). Raskolotyi poluostrov. Krym stoit samooboronu ot radikalov (Broken Peninsula. Crimea is Worth Self-Defense from Radicals). *Moskovskii Komsomolets*. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38955070

Portal of the Russian People of Crimea. (2009, September 17). *Sergei Tsekov: Krym vernetsia v Rossiiu vmeste c Ukrainoi, Chast' I (Sergei Tsekov: Crimea will return to Russia together with Ukraine, Part 1)* [Portal of the russian people of crimea]. Retrieved July 9, 2020, from http://www.ruscrimea.ru/2009/09/17/629.htm

Portal of the Russian People of Crimea. (2010, October 27). *Sergei Aksënov: Zakon o russkom iazyke ekonomicheski vygoden Ukraine (Sergei Aksenov: The Law on Russian Language is beneficial for Ukraine)* [Portal of the russian people of crimea]. Retrieved July 9, 2020, from http://www.ruscrimea.ru/2010/10/27/1502.htm

Portnikov, V. (2014). U Krimy okupatsiina vlada vzhe ne kotrelie te, shcho sama stvorila – Dzhemilev (In Crimea, the occupying power no longer controls what it has created – Dzhemilev). *Radio Svoboda*. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/25305246.html

President of Russia. (2014, March 18). *Obrashchenie Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii (Address by President of the Russian Federation)* [Kremlin]. Retrieved August 2, 2018, from http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603

Prokov, I. (2020, December 13). *'Krestnyi otets' Kryma Aksenov (Aksenov is the 'godfather' of Crimea)* [Rucriminal]. Retrieved December 19, 2021, from https://rucriminal.info/ru/material/kriminal-v-krymu-k-vlasti-uje-ne-rvetsya

Prytula, V. (2010). 'Donets'ki' vziali Krym ('Donetsk' took Crimea). *Radio Svoboda*. Retrieved December 17, 2021, from https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/1986715.html

Prytula, V. (2012). Krymskyĭ spiker Konstantynov tak i ne stav politikom (Crimean speaker Konstantinov never became a Politician). *Radio Svoboda*. Retrieved December 17, 2021, from https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/24517197.html

Putilov, I. (2016a, September 30). *'Vezhilivyi' zamestitel' Aksenova: 'pravaia ruka' ili smotriashchii? (Aksenov's 'polite' deputy: 'right hand' or a supervisor?)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved January 11, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/28024872.html

Putilov, I. (2016b, October 25). *Povernennia Mogil'ova: rol' "makiivs'kogo" prem'era v aneksii Krymu (The return of Mogilev: the role of the "Makeyevka" prime minister in the annexation of Crimea)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/28073647.html

RNBO. (2014, February 28). *Timoshenko vs Turchinov: Stenograma zasidannia RNBO vid 28 liutogo 2014 roku [Tekst, chastina 2] (Tymoshenko vs Turchynov: TRANSCRIPT of the National Security and Defense Council meeting of February 28, 2014 [TEXT, PART 2])*. Retrieved December 15, 2021, from https://texty.org.ua/articles/65493/Tymoshenko_vs_Turchynov_STeNOGRAMA_zasidanna_RNBO_vid-65493/

Rudenko, A. (2021, March 18). *'Khokhol, koly u tebe zakinchit'sia tushonka?' ('Khokhol, when will you run out of stew?')* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/krym-aneksija-voronchenko/31157342.html

Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti. (2014). Ukraina Burlit (Ukraine Is Seething) [Sankt-peterburgskie vedomosti]. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38990515

Seitablaeva, Z. (2016, July 11). *Kto on – 'krymskii Uida' ili 'patriot'? (Who is he – 'Crimean Judas' or 'patriot'?)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved January 6, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/28099911.html

Seitablaeva, Z. (2021, February 9). *Pis'ma krymchan: Rossiiskoe 'oknoe overtona' dlia krymskikh tatar (Crimean Letters: Russian 'Overton Window' for Crimean Tatars)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved January 12, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/rossiya-krymskiye-tatary-okno-overtona/31541119.html

Semena, M. (2021, February 3). *Iak tse bulo (How it was)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/yak-tse-bulo-zakhoplennia-krym-mykola-semena/31129703.html

Sergienko, I. (2012, January 3). *Pochemu ukrainofob Konstantinov stal kavalerom ordena Iaroslava Mudrogo (Why Ukrainophobe Konstantinov became a Knight of the Order of Yaroslav the Wise)*. Retrieved December 17, 2021, from https://web.archive.org/web/20120301000121/https://politics.comments.ua/2012/02/27/324389/pochemu-ukrainofob-konstantinov.html

Sizova, I. (2014, April 16). *Chelovek v Svitere (Man in a Sweater)* [Riazanskie vedomosti]. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/40621159

Sohn, R. (2014, March 3). *Ukraine: The Empire strikes back* [EUobserver]. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from https://euobserver.com/opinion/123339

State Council & State Council, Republic of Crimea. (2012, July 4). *Volodymyr Konstantynov: "Ukhvalennia Zakonu pro Zasady Derzhavnoi Movnoi Polityky Svidchit' pro Demokratizatsiiu Movnogo Seredovishcha v Nashiy Kraini" (Vladimir Konstantinov: "The Adoption of the Law on the Principles of State Language Policy Indicates the Democratization of the Language Environment in Our Country")*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://web.archive.org/web/20140616015242/http://www.rada.crimea.ua/ua/news/040712

State Council of the Republic of Crimea. (2014). *Rezul'taty obshchekrymskogo referenduma (Results of Crimean referendum)*. Retrieved May 6, 2014, from http://www.rada.crimea.ua/referendum/resultaty

Stek, L. (2016, February 26). *Den', koli Ukraina vtratila shans zminiti perebig podii u Krymu (The day when Ukraine lost the chance to change the course of events in Crimea)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/27575761.html

Stel'makh, S. (2018, January 29). *'Afrikanizatsiia' Kryma ('Africanization' of Crimea)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved January 11, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/29005027.html

Stoianov, F. (2015). Leonid Grach: Aksenov snachala govorit, a potom dumaet (Leonid Grach: Aksenov first speaks and then thinks). *Krym Realiï*. Retrieved January 5, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/26947587.html

The Presidential Council on Civil Society and Human Rights. (2014, April 21). *Problemy zhitelei Kryma (The problems of residents of Crimea)*. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://web.archive.org/web/20141201181709/http://www.president-sovet.ru/structure/gruppa_po_migratsionnoy_politike/materialy/problemy_zhiteley_kryma.php

Treisman, D. (2018). Crimea: Anatomy of a Decision. In *The new autocracy: Information, politics, and policy in putin's russia* (pp. 277–95). Brookings Institution Press.

Tsenzor.net. (2014, February 27). *'Prem'erom Kryma' izbran bandit, kotoryi v 90-kh imel klichku'Goblin' – Senchenko (A bandit who had the nickname 'Goblin' in the 90s was elected 'Prime Minister of Crimea' – Senchenko)* [Tsenzor.net]. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from https://censor.net/ru/news/273225/premerom_kryma_izbran_bandit_kotoryyi_v_90h_imel_klichku_goblin_senchenko

Tsvetelina Miteva. (2014, February 27). *"Narodnyi Mer" Sevastopolia – Rossiianam: Zhertvuite Den'gi v Pomoshch' Osazhdennomu Gorodu (The "People's Mayor" of Sevastopol – to Russians: Donate Money to Help the Besieged City)* [Republic (slon)]. Retrieved February 22, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/43209548

Tyzhden'. (2012, July 8). *U Krymu 30 Hromadsk'ykh Organizatsiy Zasudzhuiut' Movnyy Zakon i Hotuiut' Protesti (In Crimea, 30 Public Organizations Condemn the Language Law and Are Preparing Protests)*. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://web.archive.org/web/20120708235210/http://tyzhden.ua/News/54760

Ukraïns'ka Pravda. (2010, December 10). *U Krymu zhochut' porushiti spravu proti novogo golobi MVS (Crimea wants to file a lawsuit against the new head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs)*. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2010/03/12/4857067/

Ukraïns'ka Pravda. (2012, August 6). *Kryms'komu spikeru ne vistachae prisytnosti Rosii (Crimean Speaker thinks Russia isn't present enough)*. Retrieved December 16, 2021, from http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2012/06/8/6966223/

Ukraïns'ka Pravda. (2013). 'Movnyĭ' zakon Kolesnichenka-Kivalova nichoho ne dav Krymu (The Kolesnichenko-Kivalova 'Language' law has given nothing nothing to Crimea). Retrieved May 26, 2014, from https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2013/03/27/6986562/

Ukraïns'ka Pravda. (2014a). Ukraina (Ukraine) [Ukraïns'ka Pravda]. Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/38954756

Ukraïns'ka Pravda. (2014b). Turchynov Doruchyv Terminovo Rozrobyty Novyy Movnyy Zakon (Turchynov Instructed to Urgently Develop a New Language Law). Retrieved February 21, 2023, from https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/02/27/7016552/

Ukraïns'ka Pravda. (2018). Svidchennia Parubiia na sudi (Parubiy's testimony in court). Retrieved December 13, 2021, from http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2018/01/25/7169505/

UN General Assembly. (2014, April 1). *Sixty-eighth session Agenda item 33 (b) 68/262. Territorial integrity of Ukraine* [UN general assembly] [A/RES/68/262]. Retrieved December 6, 2021, from https://undocs.org/A/RES/68/262

UN News. (2014, March 27). *Backing Ukraine's territorial integrity, UN Assembly declares Crimea referendum invalid* [UN news]. Retrieved December 7, 2021, from https://news.un.org/en/story/2014/03/464812-backing-ukraines-territorial-integrity-un-assembly-declares-crimea-referendum

Veselova, V. (2017, November 7). *Nagrada za anneksiiu: bizness 'krymskikh opolchentsev' (Annexation Award: 'Crimean Militia' Business)* [Krym Realïi]. Retrieved January 11, 2022, from https://ru.krymr.com/a/28610727.html

Vetrov, K. (2018). Portreti krym'skoi 'vladi'. Sistema Konstantinova (Portraits of the Crimean 'authorities'. Konstantinov's system). *LB.ua*. Retrieved January 4, 2022, from https://lb.ua/news/2018/10/29/410656_portreti_krimskoy_vlasti_sistema.html

Vinokurova, E. (2013, September 20). *Chem Vladislava Surkov zaimetsia v Ukraine (What Vladislav Surkov will do in Ukraine)* [Forbes ukraine]. Retrieved January 13, 2022, from https://web.archive.org/web/20140222183813/http://forbes.ua:80/nation/1358330-chem-vladislav-surkov-zajmetsya-v-ukraine

Vinokurova, E. (2014, March 20). *'I Aksenov, i Chalyi prochno ukhvatiatsia za preodostavlennyi im shans' ('Both Aksenov and Chaly will firmly seize the chance given to them')* [Znak]. Retrieved

December 19, 2021, from https://www.znak.com/2014-03-20/v_rossiyskiy_politike_novye_zvezdy_chto_ih_zhdet

Vlatchanin, N., Redichkina, K., & Sokolova, M. (2014). Predstavitel' Kryma (Representative of Crimea). *Parlamentskaia Gazeta*. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://dlib.eastview.com/browse/doc/39271498

Voroboiv, V. (2015, February 28). *Rik okupatsii. Iak separatisti zakhopliuvali vladu v Krymu ta blokuvali ukrain'ski viis'kovi chastini (Year of occupation. How separatists seized power in Crimea and blocked Ukrainian military units)* [Krym Realiï]. Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://ua.krymr.com/a/26874517.html

Weaver, C. (2014). Malofeev: the Russian billionaire linking Moscow to the rebels. *Financial Times*. Retrieved January 4, 2022, from https://www.ft.com/content/84481538-1103-11e4-94f3-00144feabdc0

Wrighton, S. (2018). Authoritarian regime stabilization through legitimation, popular co-optation, and exclusion: Russian pasportizatsiya strategies in Crimea. *Globalizations*, *15*(2), 1–18.

Zhegulev, I. (2017, March 21). *'Esli by nas ne podderzhal Patrushev, v Krymu stoial by amerikanskii Flot' ('If Patrushev hadn't supported us, the US Navy would have been in Crimea')* [Meduza]. Retrieved January 3, 2022, from https://meduza.io/feature/2017/03/21/esli-by-nas-ne-podderzhal-patrushev-v-krymu-stoyal-by-amerikanskiy-flot

Zhilin, I. (2018, October 19). *'Cherez nego prokhodili millardy' ('Billions passed through')* [Novaia gazeta]. Retrieved January 5, 2022, from https://novayagazeta.ru/articles/2018/10/18/78237-cherez-nego-prohodili-milliardy

Zygar', M. (2016). *Vsia kremlevskaia rat': Kratkaia istoriia sovremennoi Rossii (All the Kremlin's men: A brief history of modern Russia)*. Intellektual'naia Literatura.