

The Crimean Tatar Question: A Prism for Changing Nationalisms and Rival Versions of Eurasianism*

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Abstract: *This article discusses the ongoing debates about Crimean Tatar identity, and the ways in which the Crimean Tatar question has been crucial to processes of reshaping Ukrainian identity during and after the Euromaidan. The Crimean Tatar question, it is argued, is a key test in the struggle between civic and ethnic nationalism in the new Ukraine. The article also looks at the manner in which the proponents of different versions of “Eurasianism”—Russian, Volga Tatar, and Crimean Tatar—have approached the Crimean Tatar question, and how this affects the attitudes of all these ethnic groups to the Russian annexation of Crimea.*

Key words: Crimean Tatars, Euromaidan, Eurasianism, national identity, nationalism—civic and ethnic

Introduction

In the period either side of the Russian annexation of Crimea, the Crimean Tatar issue has become a lodestone for redefining the national identities of all the parties involved. The mainstream Crimean Tatar movement has been characterized by steadfast opposition first to the Yanukovich regime in Ukraine and then to Russian rule. This position has strengthened its longstanding ideology of indigenouness and special rights, but it has also

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