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Russo-Ukrainian Patterns of Genocide in the Twentieth Century

Abstract

Russo-Ukrainian relations in the 20th Century are dominated by genocide. Using Raphel Lemkin and Martin Shaw as a guide, one finds that Russo-Ukrainian relations during the 20th Century was a long period of genocidal action, linked by periods of punctuated genocides. These genocides included several political genocides that quelled Ukrainian nationalism and independence and kept it subjugated to Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia's genocide during the 20th Century was a carryover from Imperial Russia treatment of Ukraine, the arch of which carries over into today's relations between the two countries. Understanding this long period of genocide helps make sense of the enduring relationship between the two countries.

Introduction

In his classic treatise on the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides captures an interesting discussion between delegates from Athens and Melos, two of the war's quarreling polities. Athens, the dominant power between the two, sought Melos' loyalty and alliance against Sparta. During the discussion Melos refused to side with Athens.[1] The Athenian delegation then offered a stark warning to the weaker polity, suggesting

> Since you know as well as we do that, when these matters are discussed by practical people, the standard of justice depends on the equality of power to compel and that in fact the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept.[2]

This passage is an instructive tool in explaining Russian-Ukrainian international relations from the founding of the Tsardom of Muscovy to today. Russia, in all its variant forms throughout history, has been the stronger polity and dominant actor on the international stage. Meanwhile, Ukraine, long viewed by Russia as its weak little brother, has been forced to endure inhumane treatment at Russia's hands.

The twentieth century, a snapshot in time, provides an excellent case study to examine this relationship. With the works of Raphael Lemkin, Martin Shaw, and the United Nations (UN) law on genocide as a guide, Soviet Russia employed genocide against Ukraine throughout the twentieth century. Soviet Russia used genocide and ethnic cleansing, which, provided their legal definitions, can be classified as genocide, to maintain control over Ukraine, deny it and its people political sovereignty, and to keep it within Soviet Russia's sphere of influence.

This article begins with a survey of the analytical methods and terminology used to do that analysis. This paper then transitions to a brief assessment of power to demonstrate that for genocide to occur, power amongst actors is important to understand. Then the paper moves into multiple examples of genocide perpetrated by Soviet Russia against Ukraine. These include denationalization through post-World War II (WWII) ethnic cleansing in the Donets River Basin (Donbas), Crimea, and other parts of Ukraine, and the repopulation of those areas with ethnic Russians. Next, Soviet political

genocide, or politicide, is highlighted. Politicide is highlighted by illustrating the various independence and insurgent movements that rose during the twentieth century but were violently suppressed by Soviet Russia. Lastly, this article discusses how Soviet Russia used famine as a strategy to keep Ukraine weak and force compliance with Soviet Communist ideology. This article concludes by connecting the past to today and making a simple forecast for the future of Russo-Ukrainian international relations.

Methodology and Analytical Framework

Lemkin and Shaw's work on genocide and the UN Convention on genocide are the baseline analytical tools used throughout this article.[3] Lemkin, Shaw, and the UN Convention are employed to measure Soviet Russian genocidal activities levied against Ukraine during the twentieth century. Lemkin was selected because his thoughts are the intellectual foundation for the entire genocide studies field, while Shaw was selected because his work forms a tight, easy-to-use taxonomy to apply towards a variety of situations.

Lemkin, writing in the immediate aftermath of World War II and the Holocaust, established a relatively loose, simple framework to define genocide. Lemkin defines genocide as, "The destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group."[4] He continues, stating that genocide is a two-part process. The first phase consists of a coordinated plan of complementary actions oriented on the destruction and subsequent liquidation of a given national group.[5] The second phase, a continuation of the coordinated plan of complementary actions, consists of the oppressor imposing their own national pattern on the targeted group.[6]

Despite warning that the use of descriptive terms and phrases is inadequate because doing so tends to result in one or more aspects of genocide being overlooked, Lemkin fills in the margins of his framework by arguing that genocide is carried out in one or more of a series of fields through coordinated attacks.[7] These fields include political, social, cultural, economic, biological, religious, moral, and physical.[8] Within the physical field of genocide, Lemkin further elaborates, contending that rationing food based on race, endangering health, and mass killings are animating subcomponents of this field.[9] For the purpose of this study,

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which focuses on Soviet Russia's treatment of Ukraine during the twentieth century, Lemkin's political genocide, cultural genocide, and physical genocide are most applicable. Each of these terms are analyzed in conjunction with justifying evidence later in this article.

On the other hand, Shaw, a contemporary sociologist, and expert in the field of genocide studies, also provides a useful taxonomy for the study and assessment of genocide. Shaw contends, "That genocide is a structural phenomenon" that is both a "recurring pattern of social conflict" and it maintains profound connections to additional "structures of conflict" and societal formations of strength.[10] Shaw continues by stressing that genocide is a generalization, or scheme for scrutinizing and classifying any number of observed events.[11]

Carrying this idea forward, Shaw argues that genocide is the result of asymmetries in both armed and unarmed conflict. Furthermore, genocide is categorized by the pattern of hostile moves enacted by a stronger actor over a weaker actor.[12] Shaw, building upon Lemkin's concepts, refines his thinking on genocide to a four-component taxonomy. According to Shaw, there is genocide, genocidal action, a genocide, and genocidal violence.[13] Genocide, the concept, is, "A form of violent social conflict or war between armed power organizations that aim to destroy civilian social groups, and those groups and other actors who resist this destruction."[14] The second category, genocidal actions, are the physical acts of genocide perpetrated by one actor against another to destroy the other's societal position through violence, intimidation, and killing.[15] Shaw's third category is a genocide, which he contends is, "A large-scale episode, involving substantial numbers of victims."[16] The final component is genocidal violence. Shaw contends that this category, although like a genocide, is not grand or wide-ranging enough, whether in number of victims or physical reach, to register as a genocide and is therefore relegated to a lesser position.[17]

Regarding ethnic cleansing, Lemkin does not use the term because it did not exist at the time he was writing about genocide. However, his two phases of genocide - the reciprocal relationship between the destruction of a weaker actor's national pattern and the replacement of that with the stronger actors, which is often characterized by the removal of the targeted actor's population and the colonization of that territory by the aggressor -

meets ethnic cleansing's definitional threshold for use.[18] Meanwhile, Shaw writes that ethnic cleansing, a perpetrator's term popularized in the 1990s, "Oozes genocidal intent, resonating with the idea of destroying, if not murdering, groups to which it is applied."[19] However, as the United Nations notes, ethnic cleansing is not genocide by definition, but depending on the ways in which it is waged and the effect on those being ethnically cleansed, it can be a war crime, a crime against humanity, or genocide.[20]

In summary, Lemkin and Shaw's work on genocide and ethnic cleansing, coupled with the UN Convention on genocide are used as the analytical framework to measure Soviet Russian activities perpetrated against Ukraine in the twentieth century. The purpose being to identify if a pattern of genocide is discernible and make judgments about the continued relations between the two countries based off their past. Before doing so, however, it is instructive to briefly examine the role of power and how that can result in genocidal actions.

The Role of Power in Genocide

Power is the critical feature to understand Russo-Ukrainian relations. Power is not just useful for understanding how Russia has been able to manipulate Ukraine over time, but how it (power) has been the lubricating substance for Russian genocide. Robert Dahl summarizes power by stating that one actor has power over another insofar as it can make the other actor do something it would not otherwise do.[21] For that to occur, both actors must be in some sort of relationship, because without a connection between the actors neither has the potential to exercise power over the other.[22] For power to be tangible and not a fleeting moment, an actor must possess a base of power that can mobilize and generate relational power for use against another actor..[23]

Charles Glaser and Michael Howard offer similar macro-level views on power. Both Glaser and Howard's views are relational. Glaser defines power as the ratio of one actor's resources relative to that of another actor or actors. Resources, according to Glaser, are the tangible and intangible capabilities that are converted into military capabilities.[24] Howard, on the other hand, writes that power is an actor's ability to dominate its environment in relation to its continued existence.[25]

Understanding power and how it affects the relationship amongst strategic actors is important to understanding how and why genocide occurs. With the basics of power outlined, it is important to harken back to Thucydides' Melian Dialogue. Moving forward in this work, it is useful to think of Soviet Russia as Athens and Ukraine as Melos. Doing so makes it easier to understand how Soviet Russia continually employed genocide against Ukraine during the twentieth century.

The theories of power outlined herein are the animus for Lemkin's two phases of genocide. Soviet Russia, being the politically dominant oppressor in the relationship, was able to denationalize Ukraine by destroying Ukraine's national pattern. In turn, Soviet Russia, the dominant actor, was able to impose its own national pattern on Ukraine. In the case of Soviet Russia, its national pattern consisted not only of the Soviet ideology but also Russian culture.

Ethnic Cleansing, Denationalization, and Genocide

Orlando Figes provides an excellent starting point to begin the discussion of Russian genocide in Ukraine. Figes contends that during Soviet Russia's rule over its union of socialist republics, Stalinization—the embodiment of Soviet Russian policy throughout the Soviet Union—meant Russification.[26] This meant that ethnic and cultural identity throughout the Soviet Union was to be swept aside and Russian language, history, food, music, film, dance, and ideology put in its place.[27] The idea of eradicating an annexed or conquered people's way of life and replacing it with that of Russia, or Soviet ideology, was a bulwark of Russian relations with its neighbors since Ivan III took charge of the Tsardom of Moscovy in 1547.[28]

With the idea of relative power serving as the animus for Russian interactions with the other members of the Soviet Union, Soviet Russia conducted large-scale ethnic cleansing against many groups following its victory in WWII. Soviet Russia deported seven distinct groups of people from their homeland, spread those people across eastern and central Russia, and repopulated those nations with ethnic Russian people.[29] Those groups included the Crimean Tartars, the Kalmyks of Astrakhan, the Chechens, the Ingushi, the Karachi, the Balkars, and the Meshketian Turks. These groups were forcibly removed from their homes in Soviet

Crimea, the Caucasus, and Caspian Sea regions for both perceived and confirmed cooperation with Nazi Germany during the war.[30] Antony Beevor notes that upwards of 270,000 Ukrainians, either willingly or unwillingly, worked for Nazi Germany as it occupied eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.[31]

For the Crimean Tartars, the post-war ethnic cleansing of Crimea continued a tsarist policy of denationalization first implemented by Catherine II following the peninsula's annexation from the Crimean Khanate in 1783.[32] By the time Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev gifted Crimea to Ukraine in 1954 the peninsula had been all but gutted of its native Tartars. Of Crimea's 1.2 million inhabitants, 71 percent of those people were Russians, 22 percent Ukrainians, and the remainder consisting of Tartars and other ethnic groups.[33]

Ukraine, a menagerie of people and cultures, also caught Soviet Russia's ire at wars end. Soviet Russia deported many Poles and all but cleared central and eastern Ukraine of its native German population. For instance, the river regions of eastern Ukraine dominated by the Don, Donets, and Volga Rivers, which hosted the Volga Germans, were hit quite hard. By 1947, Soviet Russia's ethnic cleansing of Poles and Germans, and its Jewish pogroms pushed Ukraine from a multicultural country to a bipolar state, or what Serhii Plokhy stylized as a Ukrainian-Russian condominium.[34]

Further denationalization occurred in Ukraine in 1954. Moscow gifted Crimea to Ukraine. The gift of Crimea, a Trojan Horse of sorts, injected nearly another million Russians into Ukraine, providing Russia with an additional lever through which it could manipulate Ukraine. This served as a subtle method by which Soviet Russia further injected its national character into Ukraine.[35]

To summarize, Russia, whose foreign policy has always viewed Ukraine as an extension of itself, as illustrated by Russia's use of phrases like little brother, southern Russia, and New Russia employed population manipulation and ethnic cleansing in the post-World War II period to denationalize Ukraine.[36] Russia used ethnic cleansing to erode Ukraine's historic national character throughout the twentieth century to make it politically and socially disjointed. Doing so allowed Soviet Russia to keep

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Ukraine aligned with Soviet Communist ideology. However, if one employs a historical eye towards the two countries interconnectedness, Russia's genocidal actions against Ukraine allowed it to keep Ukraine in a pseudo-protectorate status. Doing so, in effect, maintained the Russo-Ukrainian status quo dating back to the 1654 agreement between Cossack Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytsky and Tsar Aleksei Romanov.[37]

Soviet Russian Political Genocide

Soviet Russia employed politicide against Ukraine during the twentieth century for a two-fold purpose. First, Russia sought to eliminate Ukrainian nationalism and various independence movements. Second, Russia used genocide against Ukraine to drive Ukraine's political and ideological assimilation.

Founded in 1942 in western Ukraine, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) pushed for Ukrainian independence from the Soviet Union through the 1940s and 1950s.[38] At its peak, the UPA had 40,000 fighters.[39] The UPA was the militant wing of the right-wing Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), founded in 1929.[40] The OUN and the UPA's goals were an ethnically homogenous and independent Ukraine. However, by 1947 the Soviet Union, leveraging its Polish, Czechoslovakian, and Ukrainian subsidiaries whittled down the UPA to the point that it operated underground and had to rely on small-scale terrorist attacks and assassinations.[41]

Soviet victory in World War II accelerated the UPA and OUN's defeat. Eliminated by 1949, and despite Ukrainian Nikita Khrushchev holding Soviet Premiership in the wake of Stalin's reign, Soviet authorities in Moscow forcibly moved to erase the entire episode from memory, covering up official and unofficial records.[42] Trevor Erlacher notes that in the decades following the death of Stalin, and notwithstanding the post-Stalin thaw of the mid-twentieth century, the Soviet Union tightened its stranglehold on information to, "Enhance its control over the public discourse and closely manage the quality, quantity, and context of references to the OUN and UPA."[43] At the same time, Moscow actively sought to rewrite Russo-Ukrainian history to illustrate the brotherhood of both nations and peoples through time, while thrusting Russian national

identity to the fore, and all but removing Ukrainian history from the record altogether.[44]

Soviet Russia's handling of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationals and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army is but one example, largely lost to the collective memory, of how Moscow maintained power over Ukraine, eroded Ukraine's national character, and instead imposed that of Soviet Russia. Although Ukrainian nationalism and independence finally won out on December 1, 1991, Soviet Russia quelled other attempts in the twentieth century.[45] As Plokhy notes, Ukraine attempted statehood three other times during Soviet Russian dominance. The first of which was in Kyiv and Lviv in 1918, followed by an additional attempt in Transcarpathia in 1939, and the final attempt coming in Lviv in 1941.[46]

Soviet Russian power vis-à-vis allowed it to wage genocide throughout Ukraine during the twentieth century. More precisely, Soviet Russia's policy toward Ukraine was one of denationalization, or the process of eroding Ukraine's national character. Soviet Russia accomplished this by denying social and political freedom to Ukraine, while simultaneously foisting Russian language, culture, and historical narratives on Ukraine. Russia further denationalized Ukraine through the terms by which it used to describe the country. Phrases such as Little Russia, Southern Russia, New Russia, and The Ukraine, instead of Ukraine, were all intended to undermine Ukrainian national character and subconsciously attack Ukrainian national solidarity. The use of Russian versions of Ukrainian names, such as Kiev instead of Kyiv, or Khakov instead of Kharkiv, are further examples of how Soviet Russia used language to denationalize Ukraine.

Lemkin's fields of genocide are a useful taxonomy for one inclined to apply labels to this form of genocide. While Soviet Russian activities in this section apply to nearly all of Lemkin's fields of genocide, political genocide and social genocide are the most apropos.[47] However, examining this section's genocidal action in relation to the UN Convention's ruling on genocide, shows that it falls short of meeting the threshold for genocide defined by international law. It falls short because Soviet genocidal action and genocidal violence in the aforementioned cases does not meet or surpass the parameters defined in the Convention, which are focused on the destruction of a selected group of people. Soviet Russian activity noted

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above instead focused on denying true independence, by maintaining Ukrainian subservience using political ideology.

Denationalization through the twentieth century resulted in another effect on Ukraine. Soviet Russia's disassociation of Ukrainian society and Ukrainian nationalism resulted in Soviet Russia's genocidal violence being all but lost to history. Further, Moscow's effort to bury and obscure nationalist and independence movements like those carried out by the OUN and UPA, among others, resulted in these events becoming hidden genocides beyond the borders of Eastern Europe.

Moreover, Soviet Russia's manipulation of information as it related to the trauma it inflicted on the Ukrainian people during this period is a classic example of Jeffrey Alexander's cultural trauma theory. Soviet Russia, the power broker amongst collective actors, denied carrier groups the ability to aggregate Ukrainian trauma, thereby denying them the opportunity to embrace that cultural trauma.[48] To put it in more plain terms, Soviet Russia covered up Ukrainian nationalism and Ukrainian nationalist movements. They did so to dislocate the movement, to deny its ability to engender support, and to keep Ukraine pliable to Soviet Russian ideology. It is only in Ukraine's post-Soviet era that that cultural trauma has been embraced.[49]

Famine and Starvation as a Tool of Political Strategy

Soviet Russia used starvation as a strategy between 1921 and 1946 to keep Ukraine politically weak and thereby ideologically aligned toward Moscow, resulting in three major famines during that period. The conditions that generated each of these were similar. In each case, the Ukrainian peasantry was upset about collectivization. Soviet collectivization directives coming from Moscow resulted in peasants losing their land to the state. Those peasant holdings, whether individual farms or local communes, transitioned into large state-run collective farms. Furthermore, collectivization resulted in the peasant farmers having to yield their livestock and farming implements to those farms. Moreover, before the collective farms could share their profits with their toiling peasantry the Soviet Union received its quota of profit from the farm.[50] What was not exacted by the state went back to the farm to cover operating

costs. The remainder, often little, went to the peasantry working the farms.[51]

The exploitation of collectivization angered the peasantry. In 1921, peasant uprisings broke out across the Soviet Union, including Ukraine.[52] Furthermore, many peasants passively resisted collectivization by killing off their livestock, breaking farming tools, and hiding grain and seeds.[53]

The Soviet Union used food as a weapon to combat peasant revolts. Moscow intentionally withheld grain from the farms to pressure the peasants into compliance and punish non-compliance. In 1922, as famine conditions set in across the Soviet Union, to include Ukraine, Moscow refused to ease these restrictions all the while insisting that grain procurement and grain exports continue. The effects were devastating throughout the Soviet Union, resulting in 23 million deaths.[54] Ukraine, for its part, suffered approximately 2 million of those deaths.[55]

Authors and historians alike contend that the famines wrought against Ukraine were not the product of bad harvests or drought, as Soviet leaders and Russian apologists contend. Instead, Roman Serbyn writes that the famines were a strategy to punish the Ukrainian peasantry for not complying with collectivization. Moscow sought to punish the peasantry by consciously neglecting the crisis, while maintaining state-mandated grain and foodstuff quotas and withholding food from the peasantry.[56]

Ukraine's Holodomor, the famine and starvation of 1932-1933 followed the same pattern as that of 1921-1923. Stalin's Five Year Plan of 1928, which sought to increase collective farming production by 128 percent by 1934, was a major difference between the 1921-1923's famine and the Holodomor.[57] This Five Year Plan rapidly increased the toll on farmland and the peasants that worked it, without providing additional relief or support to either.[58] Moscow, well-aware of the deteriorating situation in Ukraine, did nothing to relieve the famine as vast and deep starvation set in across the country.[59] In doing nothing to offset the widespread starvation ravaging Ukraine, Moscow tacitly approved starvation as a political strategy to advance its political ideology while extinguishing dissention.

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Immediately following World War II another famine and starvation occurred in the Soviet Union. This famine, following a similar causal pattern as the previous two, affected more of the Soviet Union than did the famines of 1921 and 1932. Nonetheless, out of 790,000 deaths, Ukraine suffered 258,000 or 33 percent of the starvation's fatalities.[60] Michael Ellman argues that Moscow used starvation as a tool of strategy to terrorize Ukraine into submission and as a substitute for ethnic cleansing programs.[61]

Soviet Russia's use of starvation as a tool of strategy to enforce policy clearly meets Lemkin's threshold for genocide. In this instance, Moscow's policies toward Ukraine were clear examples of economic genocide.[62] Soviet Russia used starvation, a complementary strategy to collectivization, to destroy the economic foundation of Ukraine and replace it with Soviet industrialization. Moreover, Soviet Russia employed what Lemkin calls physical genocide, or the physical destruction or annihilation of national groups through discrimination in feeding and endangering the health through restricted access to food.[63] Lastly, Soviet Russia's use of starvation as a strategy to bring Ukraine to heel and to keep it docile is a clear violation of Article II(c) of the UN convention on genocide. Article II(c), one of five elements of genocide, states that genocide is the act of, "Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part."[64] The Moscow-sponsored starvation strategies levied against Ukraine during the early- and mid-twentieth centuries are textbook examples of genocide.

Conclusion

The examination of Russo-Ukrainian relations through the twentieth century makes many things clear. First, power dominates the two country's interactions, much like power dominated the interaction between Athens and Melos during the Peloponnesian War. Russia, our Athens, has largely been able to do what it wants regarding Ukraine because it is more powerful than the latter. Ukraine, our Melos, has had to endure what it must because it lacked the power to effectively counter Russian dominance. Post-WWII ethnic cleansing, violently suppressing three separate independence movements and a two-decade long insurgency, and three punctuated starvations, all within the twentieth century demonstrate that genocidal action is a tool of Russian foreign

policy. Russia conducted genocide and ethnic cleansing to keep Ukraine docile to support both Russification, from a cultural standpoint, and Soviet indoctrination, from a political position.

John Lewis Gaddis contends that historians interpret the past for the purpose of the present.[65] With Gaddis' postulate in mind, it is important to ask, how does Soviet Russia's treatment of Ukraine impact Russo-Ukrainian international relations today? Since breaking free of the prison house of nations in 1991, Ukraine has pursued its own foreign policy. In doing so, it has become closer with Western Europe and the United States. As a result, it has cultivated collective actors, new supporters, and carrier groups, and thus educated the world on its checkered history with Soviet Russia. Breaking free from Russia denied Russia's ability to wage direct, overt genocidal action in Ukraine.

However, as Russia has emerged from the fog and discombobulation of the immediate post-Soviet era, it looks to rebuild many vestiges of its imperial and Soviet past, of which Ukraine is a central component.[66] Ukraine, as the 2014 annexation of Crimea and invasion of the Donbas indicate, factors heavily into Russian president Vladimir Putin's grand strategic vision for Russia moving forward. During the 2014 invasion of Eastern Ukraine, Russia's strategic objectives included capturing six regions of Ukraine, but due to un-forecasted international uproar, they succeeded in obtaining only two of those regions.[67] To make up for that shortcoming Russia has weaponized citizenship and passports. Specifically, Russia is expediting the citizenship process and offering Russian passports to upwards of one million people in demographically similar regions of Eastern Ukraine.[68] If Russia is able to further Russify those regions it can make them ripe for a similar annexation and invasion to that of Crimea and the Donbas.

To the outsider looking in, Russification and denationalization appear to be working. Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky's July 2020 acceptance of Russian territorial gains in the Donbas through the quasi-recognition of the Donetsk People's Army and Luhansk People's Army as the region's governing bodies are one example.[69] Voting is another example. Elections throughout Eastern and Southern Ukraine in October 2020, in which pro-Russian candidates outlasted many of their pro-Kyiv counterparts, further demonstrate the slow growth of Russification in Ukraine today.[70]

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Like Soviet Russia's use of starvation in the early- and mid-twentieth century to manipulate Ukraine, Russia uses food, water, and essential services as leverage points with Kyiv. For example, Russia denied Ukraine natural gas during the winters of 2006 and 2009 to apply political pressure on Kyiv.[71] The recent Nord Stream 2 gas deal reached between Kyiv and Moscow, which allows Russia to pump natural gas not only to Ukraine, but through Ukraine to many outlets across Europe, will likely serve as leverage to pressure or discredit Kyiv in the future.[72]

Water, on the other hand, is another resource factoring into the two countries relations. Drought and the lack of water in Crimea is increasing political tension between Moscow and Kyiv.[73] Prior to Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, Ukraine provided the Crimea with most of its drinking water. However, following Crimea's annexation, Kyiv discontinued that practice. In doing so, the water crisis reached fever pitch by August 2020.[74] Kyiv insists that providing water to Crimea gives credence to Russia's claim to the region and it therefore refuses to support Crimea.[75] Water is also a problem in the Donbas.[76] Six years of combat has damaged and contaminated many of the region's reservoirs, which keeps 3.6 million people supplied with fresh water.[77]

Russia is still deeply invested in keeping Ukraine close to Moscow. Despite Ukraine's hard-won independence of 1991, Russia is conducting a subversive campaign, focused on weaponizing citizenship and discrediting Kyiv by manipulating access to immediate need resources, and to denationalize Eastern Ukraine. Russia's goal of denationalizing and Russifying Eastern Ukraine is to ripen it for further territorial gain.

Lastly, Lemkin and Shaw's conceptual body of work on genocide are useful tools for both examining and explaining how Russia has sought to erode Ukraine's national character and identity and replace it with one in step with Moscow. In doing so, Lemkin and Shaw's work, if examined in conjunction with the United Nations Convention on genocide, demonstrates that Russia used genocide and ethnic cleansing during the twentieth century to bend Ukraine to Moscow's ends. Given Russia's post-Soviet foreign policy towards Ukraine, it is important to keep watch on this region to ensure additional genocides do not metastasize.

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