


THE CRIMEAN KHANATE- RUSSIAN RELATIONS

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Abstract: The Crimean Khanate was the last to be destroyed by the Russians among the remnants of the Golden Horde. The Khanate, founded by Hacı Giray Khan in 1441, remained under the auspices of the Ottoman Empire from 1475 until the end of the XVII century. With the loss of power of the Ottoman Empire from the beginning of the XVIII century, its protection over Crimea weakened. In this process, the Russian Empire came out in Eastern Europe as a marked power and reflected its expansion policy to Crimea just like the geography of Turkestan. Especially from 1736, Russian military expeditions began towards Crimea. With the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca in 1774, the Crimean Khanate was forced to secede from the Ottoman Empire and later was annexed by the Russians in 1783. With the Treaty of Jassy in 1792, Ottomans had to accept Crimea's annexation to Russia.

Keywords: *Crimean Khanate, Russian Tsardom, Crimean Khanate-Russian Relations, Annexation of Crimea, Ottoman-Crimea Relations*

INTRODUCTION:

Although the center of the Crimean Khanate was the Crimean Peninsula, the area of dominance of the Khanate extended from the Azov Sea to the Danube, from the Lower Bug to the middle currents of Dinyester and Dinyeper, and the Kipchak steppes known as Dest-i Kipchak. Due to its geographical proximity to the Ottoman Empire and the fact that it was more exposed to the Ottoman Turkish influence than the other remnants of the Golden Horde, The Crimean Khanate had a marked importance in terms of being under the protection of the Ottoman Empire (Kurat,2019:203). Throughout history, Crimea has been an important geographic region for trade routes from north to south and from west to east. Crimean port cities, especially Kherson, were the key points of trade from the north of the Black Sea to Anatolia, the Aegean, and the Mediterranean. In addition, trade caravans coming from the Caucasus, Khwarezm, and Volga regions were transported to the west and south by passing through the territories of the Crimean Khanate. Due to its geopolitical location and being the intersection point of trade routes, Crimea has been the scene of civilizations' struggles for dominance since ancient times (Kurat,2019:204-205).

During the Golden Horde period, starting from 1289, the Genoese established trade colonies on the southern coast of Crimea with the permission of the Golden Horde Khans, and under certain conditions, they controlled trade in the region. After the dissolution of the Golden Horde its descendant, the Crimean Khanate, founded on Crimean territory and fought for the port cities of Crimea against the Genoese. During this period, the Crimean Khanate allied with the Ottoman Empire against the Genoese. In 1475, the Ottoman navy captured Kefe, the important commercial city of the Crimea Peninsula, and in the

meantime, the Genoese were completely expelled from the region. Thus, the Kefe, Azak, and Taman regions remained under Ottoman rule. The Crimean Khans would be a friend to friend and an enemy to the enemy of the Ottoman Empire. With the Crimean Khanate's establishment of close relations with Istanbul, the Crimean Khans became an effective power in the region under Ottoman auspices. However, at this time, the Moscow Tsardom of Russians was growing stronger in the north of Crimea (Kurat,2019:205-219).

THE CRIMEAN KHANATE-RUSSIAN RELATIONS FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KHANATE TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

After the death of Canibek Khan (1342-1357), the Golden Horde was disintegrated as a result of the struggle for the domination of the throne and civil war. During this struggle, Hacı Giray(1441-1466), who was descended from Tokay Timur, the younger son of Cuci, one of the sons of Genghis Khan, succeeded in establishing dominance in Crimea. Considering the coins minted in Hacı Giray's name dated back to 1441, it is stated that the establishment date of the Crimean Khanate must have been around 1441 (Kurat,2019:205-209; Ürekli, 1987:16-17; İnalçık,2014: 27-29).

Hacı Giray faced many problems both inside and outside. He fought with Golden Horde's inheritor Uluğ Horde's Khan Seyid Ahmet for territory. Genoese colonies on the Crimean coast intervened in the internal politics of the Khanate. In 1456, Haydar, one of the sons of Hacı Giray, rebelled against his father and seized the throne of Crimea for a short time. Haydar received help from the Genoese colonies during this revolt (Ürekli, 1987:19-20). In the face of these threats against Hacı Giray, he sought to ally with the Polish King Kazimir in 1454 and he supported the Ottoman expedition to Kefe. He also formed a close friendship with Moscow Knyaz Ivan III (1456-1505) and promised to protect Moscow against any danger. Seyid Ahmed Khan, who was trying to return the Golden Horde to its former glorious days, could not achieve this goal as a result of the alliance between Hacı Giray and Ivan III. In 1465, when Seyid Ahmed Khan came to the banks of the Bug River to make an expedition on Moscow, he was attacked by Hacı Giray and had to retreat (Mutlu,1996:474-475; Saray,1989:538-540). After the death of Hacı Giray Khan in 1466, his three sons Nur Devlet, Mengli Giray, and Haydar sought support from Poland-Lithuania and Moscow Russia in the struggle for the throne and Mengli Giray (1466-1514) declared himself as Khan in 1467 and he united the entire Crimean Khanate under his rule in 1469 (Kurat,1996:212).

In 1475, The Ottoman navy set out to Crimea and conquered the Kefe, Suğdak, Mangup, Azak, and Taman castles ending the domination of the Genoese here. With the treaty made between the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate, these territories, which previously had belonged to the Genoese, belonged to the Ottoman Empire. The inner steppe part of the peninsula and the *Novocherkassk* area between the Azov and Taman-Astarhan would remain under the rule of the Crimean Khanate. Thus, the Khanate came under the Ottoman protectorate with this treaty (Öztürk, 2020:585-586; Ürekli,1987:180). Ivan III, also a rather cunning diplomat, sent emissaries from Moscow to win Mengli Giray over in 1479. The ambassadors brought offers to Mengli Giray: "many gifts, friendship and joint action against Uluğ Horde's Ahmed Khan, and Moscow would be subject to the Crimean Khanate, so, the tax sent to the Uluğ Horde previously would be sent to the Crimean Khanate". Thus, an agreement was concluded between the

Crimean Khanate and the Moscow Tsardom against the Uluğ Horde. This alliance was also established to get the support of the Crimean Khanate against the Kingdom of Poland-Lithuania, one of the biggest rivals of Moscow Russia (Kurat,2019:213;219). When The Uluğ Horde Khan allied with the Polish King Kazimir and marched on Moscow, the Crimean Khan launched an expedition towards Poland, and Poland was prevented from helping the Uluğ Horde. Ahmed Khan had to retreat miserably with his army, he could not stand the pain of this disaster and died of sadness and Uluğ Horde territory was occupied between Crimea and Nogai Horde (Saray,1989:539). In this period, the Russian trade revived through the cities of Kefe and Azov. Russian merchants flocked to the Crimean cities and traded precious goods such as fur, wax, and linen. The Moscow government referred to Mengli Giray to meet with the Ottoman Sultan to reestablish safe trade in Crimea and to relieve the troubles of the Russian merchants. Diplomatic relations were established between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Principality through the agency of Mengli Giray, and a Russian ambassador was sent to the Ottoman capital for the first time in 1492. After this first embassy, the ambassadors sent from Moscow to Istanbul would come and go through only with the authorization of the Crimean Khans, and they would be able to appear before the Ottoman Sultans only through the consent of the Khans. The Crimean Khans would not welcome the Moscow government's direct contact with the Ottoman Sultan and would want themselves to play a leading role in Moscow's negotiations with the Ottoman (Kurat,1996:220-221).

The alliance between the Crimean Khanate and Moscow suddenly broke down with the collapse of the Uluğ Horde in 1502. The danger of the Uluğ Horde was now eliminated for Moscow and began a fierce struggle for possession of the remaining lands of the Uluğ Horde between Moscow and Crimea. After the death of Knyaz Ivan III in 1505, Mengli Giray Khan allied with the Polish-Lithuanian King Kazimir IV in 1507 against Moscow and the Moscow Knyazes began to be counted as an "enemy" among the Crimean Khans. Continuous raids of the Crimean Khanate began towards the Moscow area (Kurat,1996:222-230).

Mengli Giray's successor Mehmed Giray (1515-1523) continued the "anti-Russian" policy that his father followed in his last years. The military raids in Moscow continued because the Russians did not abide by the agreements and did not pay their annual taxes. An alliance was made between the Crimean Khan and his brother Sahib Giray, who ascended to the throne of Kazan Khanate, against Moscow in 1487. In the same year, these two khanates attacked Moscow Russia, and forced Knyaz Vasily III (1505-1533) to pay taxes. When the tax was delayed, the Crimeans continued their raids on the Moscow territory. Moscow was forced to send these taxes to the Crimean Khans continued until the time of Tsar Peter I. Tax often consisted of precious furs and was sent to the Khan himself and also to the mirzas, the ruling class in the Khanate. When Mehmed Giray Khan was killed by the Nogais while returning from the Astarhan campaign in 1523, Moscow got rid of a very significant enemy for itself (Kurat,1996:229-231).

Moscow's expansionist policy on the North Caucasus was revealed with the capture of Kazan in 1552 and Atarkhan in 1554 (Ürekli,1987:182). The Crimean Khanate's claim on the Kazan and Astrakhan lands as the heir of the Golden Horde also ended and its policy towards Moscow became quite harsh. Crimea made an expedition to Moscow in 1552 to prevent the Kazan Khanate from falling into Moscow's hands but Russian forces repelled this raid. In 1555, the Russians built a fortress on the Terek River and posted

armed guards there from the Cossacks, Kabartay-Circassians, and Strelets. Crimea's subsequent campaigns against Moscow until 1562 were interrupted by these guards in cooperation with Moscow, attacking Crimea in their homeland. The Ottoman army participated in the defense of the Crimean Khanate against this alliance (İnalçık,2014:134-150; Öztürk, 2002:490; Kurat,1996:237).

In 1569, Devlet Giray's great expedition on Moscow earned him the title of "throne algan" (capturer of the capital). He sieged and completely burned Moscow. Tsar had to escape from the city barely saving his life. Devlet Giray was greeted with great joy in Istanbul. The Ottoman Sultan congratulated the Crimean Khan by sending a royal honor and a sword. In 1572, Devlet Giray once again crossed the Oka and came to Moscow with the Ottoman auxiliary forces and artillery units, but he had to retreat as a result of a fierce battle. After this failure, due to the hunger years in Crimea and the Cossack attacks, he avoided a major initiative towards Moscow (İnalçık,2014:167; Kurat,2019:242-243).

In addition to military conquests, Ivan IV (1533-1584) gave priority to intelligence work in foreign policy and resorted to defeating her opponents with this method. The "Russian agents" were recruited in the capital city of the Khanate, Bakhchysaray, and the Ottoman port cities and castle cities of Azov and Kefe as a foreign policy. Their duty was to collect information about the intentions and movements of the Crimean Khans and immediately convey them to the Russian ambassador in Bakhchysaray and all these diplomatic activities were organized by the "Ambassadors' Department" in Moscow. In this department, there were branches such as Kazan, Nogai, Crimean, Turkish, and Iranian. The instructions given to the ambassadors, couriers, and agents were organized and sent to the countries by these espionage departments(Kurat,2011:81-82).

Tsar Feodor's (1584-1598) main foreign policy for Crimea was to attack Crimea with the help of the Nogais, thus taking Crimea under his protection through the Nogais. Two Russian voivodes were appointed for this purpose and they prepared to attack Crimea together with the Kazakhs, Circassians, and Nogais. The Russian Tsardom's involvement in these internal struggles in Crimea meant that it appeared as a rival to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman commander Piyale Pasha was assigned to the Astrakhan expedition and the Crimean Khan was also ordered to join him. However, the Crimean Khanate thought that it would be better to launch an expedition directly to Moscow instead of Astrakhan. During this expedition in 1588, İslam Giray died on the way and the Ottoman expedition failed (İnalçık,2014:170-171). The Crimean Khanate also participated in the Ottoman expedition against Chyhyryn in 1678 and this joint army took the Chyhyryn castle from the hands of the Zaporizhian Cossacks and their supporter the Russian Tsardom. This campaign is considered the first Ottoman-Russian war. After the fall of Chyhyryn Castle, Ottoman forces withdrew and peace negotiations with Moscow were left to the Crimean Khanate in 1681. A twenty-year peace was signed between the Crimean Khanate and the Moscow Tsar in the city of Bakhchysaray. With this agreement, the border between the Crimean Khanate and the Russian Tsardom was accepted as the Ozi River (Ayhün,2014:102-103).

In 1696, Tsar Peter I's(1682-1721) capture of the Azov Castle revealed that the next target of the Russians was Crimea. The Crimean Khanate fought alongside the Ottoman Empire during The Great Turkish War of 1683-1687. The Ottoman Empire was defeated by the Holy League of the Austria-Venice-Polish-Russian alliance. The most important result of this war was the end of Ottoman control in Eastern Europe with the Treaty of

Karlowitz. The Treaty of Constantinople was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Tsardom of Russia in 1700. The Ottomans ceded the Azov region to Russians and the taxes paid since the time of Mengli Giray would no longer be paid to the Crimean Khans. Thus, one of the major sources of income of the Crimean Khanate was cut off. The Treaty of Istanbul was the agreement that paved the way for the collapse of the Crimean Khanate. The Russians took under their command the Kazakhs and Kalmyks and surrounded Crimea from all sides with them (Kurat,2019: 248-258; Inalcık,2014:337).

CRIMEAN KHANATE-RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Until the 18th century, the expansion activities of the Russians in the Turkestan area could not be analyzed properly by the Crimean Khanate and the Ottoman Empire and a common state policy could not be developed against these activities. Until the Holy Alliance wars, launched against the Ottomans at the end of the 17th century, the Moscow Tsardom was seen as a source of income from which taxes were collected from the time of the Golden Horde, therefore it seems that no systematic and planned policy was pursued against Moscow Russia. The Crimean Khanate even did not take advantage of the opportunity and remained inactive during the years of internal turmoil in Moscow at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Crimean Khans considered themselves the masters of the Russian Princes and Tsars and looked down on them. As a result of this understanding, the Moscow Princes were thought to be obliged to send this annual tax called "tış" to the Khanate. When the Crimean Khanate was strong this tax was paid on time and in full. When the Khanate was weak, tax demands were delayed and worthless small gifts were sent. The Ottoman Empire's wars with the Holy Alliance and the Treaties of Karlowitz and Istanbul at the end of these wars showed that the Russian Tsardom was more than a dependent revenue source and that it had emerged as a formidable enemy for Crimea and the Ottoman Empire. Russia had emerged as a European power and in turn, the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate accepted defeat against this power (Ayhün,2014:111; Kurat,2019:250-252; Inalcık,2014:336-337; Inalcık,1993:392). With this change in the balance of power, Moscow's symbolic loyalty to Crimea disappeared, and the Crimean Khans now took on the role of an intermediary between the Sultan and the Tsar, who gained equal status with each other. However, under all these circumstances, the Ottoman Empire would once again miss the chance to defeat this powerful enemy in 1711. Although the army of Tsar Peter I was surrounded from all sides by the joint Ottoman-Crimean forces, the interests of the Crimean Khanate were not adequately protected in 1711 with the Treaty of Prut (Ayhün,2014:111; Kurat,2019:250-252).

From the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Russian army was reinforced with firearms, whereas the Ottoman Empire did not equip Crimea with firearms partly because they could be used for independence against the Ottomans in the future. This was probably one of the reasons why the Khanate was helpless against the Russians when the Russians strengthened and fortified borders with arms and artillery against the Crimean Khanate. Crimean Khans had to defend themselves with arrows and swords against the modernized Russian army. It was clear that the Russians were preparing for the occupation of Crimea as they were developing their activities around Özi and the Caucasus. Although it was necessary at least to fortify the castles with more ammunition and guard soldiers, this was not done(Uzunçarşılı,1995:366).

While the Crimean Khan was heading towards Derbent at the request of the Ottoman dignitary to participate in the Ottoman war against Iran in 1735, the Russian Army entered Crimea via Azak. It occupied Bakhchysaray, the capital city of the Crimean Khanate. The city was plundered, works of art and manuscripts in libraries were destroyed, and even Greek and Armenian churches were looted. After this destruction, the city of Bakhchysaray could never return to its former condition again (Ayhün, 2014: 126-127). Even in this environment of turmoil between the Crimean Khanate and Russia, the plundering expeditions of the Crimean Tatars to the Russian territory and the Zaporog Cossacks to the Crimean territory were another issue. Both the Crimean and Russian sides were complaining about these plunders, and disputed issues were discussed by the authorities at the border. Sometimes the plundered goods were returned to their owners if they could be captured (Kurat, 2019: 265-266).

With Catherine II's (1762-1796) accession of power in 1762, the Russian Empire's marked foreign policy was to expand rapidly by conquest and diplomacy. The most notable part of her expansionist policy was Crimea, which would enable her to dominate the Black Sea. To achieve this goal, the Russians managed to stir up internal turmoil in Crimea by intriguing the Crimean lords and trying to attract some of them to their side. Russian ambassadors began to visit Crimea frequently, and a Russian consul settled in Bakhchysaray. Meanwhile, the Russians cooperated with the Yedisian Noghais. The Yedisian's control by the Russian Empire meant that the Crimean Khanate's territorial connection with the Ottoman Empire was cut off. From now on, the Khans could maintain their relations with the Ottomans only through the sea (Uzunçarşılı, 1995: 405; Ayhün, 2014: 129, 144-147).

With the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca signed at the end of the Ottoman-Russian War of 1768-1774, with the pressure of Russia, the Ottoman Empire had to admit that the Crimean Khanate formally gained its independence from the protection of the Ottoman Empire. Russia had already annexed the Kerch, Yenikale, Özü, and Kinburun castles. When pro-Ottoman Devlet Giray III was dethroned in Crimea in a short time and replaced by pro-Russian Şahin Giray, it became clear that the Russians could now directly intervene in the internal affairs of Crimea. The people of Crimea started a rebellion against the pro-Russian Khan and Katherina II took advantage of the situation and announced the annexation of Crimea to Russia with a manifesto in 1783. The Crimean Khanate was completely occupied by Russian soldiers and turned into a Russian province called "Tavrida Guberniya" (Kurat, 2019: 268-271). The Ottoman Empire decided to wage war against Russia upon the annexation of Crimea. In 1787, Russia declared war against the Ottoman demand for a vacation of Crimea by Russia. For Ottomans, the result of a series of wars until 1792 was a disaster. The 1792 Treaty of Jassy marked the Ottoman Empire's official recognition of Crimea's annexation to Russia (Kurat, 2019: 272).

CONCLUSION:

The Crimean Khanate, founded in 1441 by Hacı Giray descendant of Cuci Khan claimed to be the successor to the Golden Horde and acclaimed to pursue its legacy. While fighting other inheritors of the Golden Horde for territory until the middle of the fifteenth century, the Khanate developed an alliance and friendship with the Tsardom of Russia. Tsardom was only a revenue-generating vassal principality for the Khanate in the North.

However, in the sixteenth century, this small principality began to grow and expand its territories. Relations between Tsardom and Khanate deteriorated especially after the conquest of Kazan and Astrakhan by Russians. Although the annual tax collection from the Russian Tsardom continued, the Crimean Khans began to plunder Russian lands with constant raids. The weakening of the Ottoman Empire, which took the Crimean Khanate under its protection in 1475, encouraged the Russian Tsardom to pursue expansionist policies against the Crimean Khanate in the seventeenth century. The Istanbul Treaty of 1700 accepted the cancellation of the annual tax given to the Crimean Khans with the surrender of the Azov Castle to the Russians. While the Khanate's external power was greatly weakened by this agreement, internal turmoil arose due to the provocations of the Russians. Tsardom's equipping its army with modern firearms and becoming the great power of Eastern Europe made things very difficult for the Crimean Khanate in the eighteenth century. It was marked in the eighteenth century that the basic policy of the Russian Empire was to take control of the Black Sea by seizing the Crimean geography. According to the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca of 1774, the Crimean Khanate was freed from Ottoman protection and became independent. In 1783, independent Crimea was annexed by the Russians. With the Treaty of Jassy in 1792, the Ottoman Empire had to approve Crimea's annexation to Russia.

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