



Report Information from ProQuest

16 September 2014 08:28

İçindekiler

1. Russia's Latest Land Grab: How Putin Won Crimea and Lost Ukraine.....	1
--	---

Russia's Latest Land Grab: How Putin Won Crimea and Lost Ukraine

[ProQuest belge bağlantısı](#)

Özet: Russia's occupation and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in February and March have plunged Europe into one of its gravest crises since the end of the Cold War. Despite analogies to Munich in 1938, however, Russia's invasion of this Ukrainian region is at once a replay and an escalation of tactics that the Kremlin has used for the past two decades to maintain its influence across the domains of the former Soviet Union. By annexing Crimea and threatening deeper military intervention in eastern Ukraine, Russia will only bolster Ukrainian nationalism and push Kiev closer to Europe, while causing other post-Soviet states to question the wisdom of a close alignment with Moscow. Russia may have won Crimea, but in the long run, it risks losing much more: its once-close relationship with Ukraine, its international reputation, and its plan to draw the ex-Soviet states back together.

Tam metin: Russia's occupation and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in February and March have plunged Europe into one of its gravest crises since the end of the Cold War. Despite analogies to Munich in 1938, however, Russia's invasion of this Ukrainian region is at once a replay and an escalation of tactics that the Kremlin has used for the past two decades to maintain its influence across the domains of the former Soviet Union. Since the early 1990s, Russia has either directly supported or contributed to the emergence of four breakaway ethnic regions in Eurasia: Transnistria, a self-declared state in Moldova on a strip of land between the Dniester River and Ukraine; Abkhazia, on Georgia's Black Sea coast; South Ossetia, in northern Georgia; and, to a lesser degree, Nagorno-Karabakh, a landlocked mountainous region in southwestern Azerbaijan that declared its independence under Armenian protection following a brutal civil war. Moscow's meddling has created so-called frozen conflicts in these states, in which the splinter territories remain beyond the control of the central governments and the local de facto authorities enjoy Russian protection and influence.

Until Russia annexed Crimea, the situation on the peninsula had played out according to a familiar script: Moscow opportunistically fans ethnic tensions and applies limited force at a moment of political uncertainty, before endorsing territorial revisions that allow it to retain a foothold in the contested region. With annexation, however, Russia departed from these old tactics and significantly raised the stakes. Russia's willingness to go further in Crimea than in the earlier cases appears driven both by Ukraine's strategic importance to Russia and by Russian President Vladimir Putin's newfound willingness to ratchet up his confrontation with a West that Russian elites increasingly see as hypocritical and antagonistic to their interests.

Given Russia's repeated interventions in breakaway regions of former Soviet states, it would be natural to assume that the strategy has worked well in the past. In fact, each time Russia has undermined the territorial integrity of a neighboring state in an attempt to maintain its influence there, the result has been the opposite. Moscow's support for separatist movements within their borders has driven Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova to all wean themselves off their dependence on Russia and pursue new partnerships with the West. Ukraine will likely follow a similar trajectory. By annexing Crimea and threatening deeper military intervention in eastern Ukraine, Russia will only bolster Ukrainian nationalism and push Kiev closer to Europe, while causing other post-Soviet states to question the wisdom of a close alignment with Moscow.

FROZEN CONFLICTS PLAYBOOK

These frozen conflicts are a legacy of the Soviet Union's peculiar variety of federalism. Although Marxism is explicitly internationalist and holds that nationalism will fade as class solidarity develops, the Soviet Union assigned many of its territorial units to particular ethnic groups. This system was largely the work of Joseph Stalin. In the first years after the Bolshevik Revolution, Stalin headed the People's Commissariat for Nationality Affairs, the Soviet bureaucracy set up in 1917 to deal with citizens of non-Russian descent. Stalin's commis-

sariat presided over the creation of a series of ethnically defined territorial units. From 1922 to 1940, Moscow formed the largest of these units into the 15 Soviet socialist republics; these republics became independent states when the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991.

Although designed as homelands for their titular nationalities, the 15 Soviet socialist republics each contained their own minority groups, including Azeris in Armenia, Armenians in Azerbaijan, Abkhazians and Ossetians in Georgia, Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan, and Karakalpaks in Uzbekistan, along with Russians scattered throughout the non-Russian republics. Such diversity was part of Stalin's plan. Stalin drew borders through ethnic groups' historical territories (despite the creation of Uzbekistan, for example, the four other Central Asian Soviet republics were left with sizable Uzbek minorities) and included smaller autonomous enclaves within several Soviet republics (such as Abkhazia in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan). From Azerbaijan to Uzbekistan, the presence of concentrated minorities within ethnically defined Soviet republics stoked enough tension to limit nationalist mobilization against Moscow. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic already had sizable Russian and Jewish populations, but Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's decision to give the republic the Crimean Peninsula in 1954 added a large, territorially concentrated Russian minority. (Crimean Tatars, who are the peninsula's native population, composed close to a fifth of the population until 1944, when most of them were deported to Central Asia for allegedly collaborating with the Nazis. According to the last census, from 2001, ethnic Russians compose about 58 percent of Crimea's population, Ukrainians make up 24 percent, and Crimean Tatars, around 12 percent. The remaining six percent includes Belarusians and a smattering of other ethnicities.)

For a long time, the strategy of ethnic division worked. During the 1980s, most of these minority groups opposed the nationalist movements that were pressing for independence in many of the Soviet republics, viewing the continued existence of the Soviet Union as the best guarantee of their protection against the larger ethnic groups that surrounded them. As a result, local officials in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria largely supported the August 1991 coup against Mikhail Gorbachev, who they believed was speeding the dissolution of the Soviet Union. In Crimea, only 54 percent of voters supported Ukrainian independence in a December 1991 referendum—by far the lowest figure anywhere in Ukraine.

As the Soviet Union dissolved, many of these divisions sparked intercommunal violence, which Moscow exploited to maintain a foothold in the new post-Soviet states. In 1989, as part of a national project to promote a shared linguistic identity with Romania, its neighbor to the west, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic voted to reinstitute the Latin alphabet and adopt Moldovan as its only official language, downgrading Russian. Feeling threatened, the ethnic Russian and Ukrainian populations of Transnistria declared the area's independence in 1990, and, in an eerie preview of recent events in Crimea, pro-Russian paramilitary units took over Moldovan government buildings in the territory. Later, in 1992, when fighting broke out between Transnistrian separatists and a newly independent Moldova, Russia's 14th Army, which was still stationed in Transnistria as a hold-over from Soviet times, backed the separatists. A cease-fire signed in July of that year created a buffer zone between the breakaway region and Moldova, enforced by the Russian military, which has remained in Transnistria ever since.

Similar scenes unfolded in Georgia. In 1989, the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, on its way to declaring independence, established Georgian as the official state language, angering Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which had enjoyed autonomy in Soviet Georgia. In 1990, clashes broke out after Georgian authorities voted to revoke South Ossetia's autonomy in response to the region's efforts to create a separate South Ossetian parliament. After Abkhazia declared its independence from the new Georgian state in 1992, Georgia's army invaded, sparking a civil war that killed 8,000 people and displaced some 240,000 (mostly ethnic Georgians). In both conflicts, the Soviet or Russian military intervened directly on the side of the secessionists. The 1992 cease-fire in South Ossetia and the 1994 cease-fire in Abkhazia both left Russian troops in place as peacekeepers, cementing the breakaway regions' de facto independence.

Tensions were renewed in 2004, when Mikheil Saakashvili, a brash, pro-Western 36-year-old, was elected president of Georgia. Saakashvili sought to bring Georgia into NATO and recover both break-away republics. In response, Moscow encouraged South Ossetian forces to carry out a series of provocations, eventually triggering, in 2008, a Georgian military response and giving Russia a pretext to invade Georgia and formally recognize Abkhazian and South Ossetian independence.

In Nagorno-Karabakh, which was an autonomous region in Soviet Azerbaijan populated primarily by ethnic Armenians, intercommunal violence in the late 1980s grew, in the early 1990s, into a civil war between, on the one side, separatists backed by the newly independent state of Armenia and, on the other, the newly independent state of Azerbaijan. Although Soviet and then Russian forces were involved on both sides throughout the conflict, the rise of a hard-line nationalist leadership in Baku in 1992 encouraged Moscow to tilt toward Armenia, leading to the separatists' eventual victory. In 1994, after as many as 30,000 people had been killed, a truce left Nagorno-Karabakh in the hands of the ethnic Armenian separatists, who have since built a small, functional statelet that is technically inside Azerbaijan but aligned with Armenia—an entity that no one member recognizes, including, paradoxically, Russia. As energy-rich Azerbaijan has subsequently grown wealthier and more powerful, Armenia—and, by extension, Nagorno-Karabakh—has cemented its alliance with Russia.

BACK IN THE USSR?

In each of those cases, Russia intervened when it felt its influence was threatened. Russia has consistently claimed in such instances that it has acted out of a responsibility to protect threatened minority groups, but that has always been at best a secondary concern. The moves have been opportunistic, driven more by a concern for strategic advantage than by humanitarian or ethnonational considerations. Pledges to defend threatened Russian or other minority populations outside Russia may play well domestically, but it was the Azerbaijani, Georgian, and Moldovan governments' desire to escape Russia's geopolitical orbit—more than their real or alleged persecution of minorities—that led Moscow to move in. Russia has never intervened militarily to defend ethnic minorities, including Russians, in the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, who have often suffered much more than their co-ethnics in other former Soviet republics, probably because Moscow doesn't assign the same strategic significance to those Central Asian countries, where Western influence has been limited. Leading up to the annexation of Crimea, Putin and his administration were careful to talk about protecting "Russian citizens" (anyone to whom Moscow has given a passport) and "Russian speakers" (which would include the vast majority of Ukrainian citizens), instead of referring more directly to "ethnic Russians." Moscow has also used the word "compatriots" (*sootechestvenniki*), a flexible term enshrined in Russian legislation that implies a common fatherland and gives Putin great latitude in determining just whom it includes. In announcing Crimea's annexation to Russia's parliament, however, Putin noted that "millions of Russians and Russian-speaking citizens live and will continue to live in Ukraine, and Russia will always defend their interests through political, diplomatic, and legal means." The Kremlin is walking a narrow line, trying to garner nationalist support at home and give itself maximum leeway in how it acts with its neighbors while avoiding the troubling implications of claiming to be the protector of ethnic Russians everywhere. But in Ukraine, once again, Moscow has intervened to stop a former Soviet republic's possible drift out of Russia's orbit and has justified its actions as a response to ethnic persecution, the claims of which are exaggerated.

It is important to note that although Russia has felt free to intervene politically and militarily in all these cases, until Crimea, it had never formally annexed the territory its forces occupied, nor had it deposed the local government (although, by many accounts, Moscow did contemplate marching on Tbilisi in 2008 to oust Saakashvili). Instead, Russia had been content to demand changes to the foreign policies of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova, most notably by seeking to block Georgia's NATO aspirations. The annexation of Crimea is thus an unprecedented step in Russia's post-Soviet foreign policy. Although in practice the consequences may not be that different from in the other frozen conflicts (assuming Russia does not precipitate a wider war

with Ukraine), Moscow's willingness to flout international norms in the face of clear warnings and the Obama administration's search for a diplomatic way out of the crisis hints at other motivations. More than in the conflicts of the early 1990s or even in Georgia in 2008, the Kremlin conceived of the invasion and annexation of Crimea as a deliberate strike against the West, as well as Ukraine. Putin apparently believes that he and Russia have more to gain from open confrontation with the United States and Europe-consolidating his political position at home and boosting Moscow's international stature-than from cooperation.

MOTHER RUSSIA

Despite the differences in the case of Crimea, what has not changed in the Kremlin's tactics since the fall of the Soviet Union is Russia's paternalistic view of its post-Soviet neighbors. Russia continues to regard them as making up a Russian sphere of influence, where Moscow has what Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, in 2008, termed "privileged interests." In the early 1990s, Russian officials described the former Soviet domains as Russia's "near abroad." That term has since fallen out of favor. But the idea behind it-that post-Soviet states in eastern Europe and Eurasia are not fully sovereign and that Moscow continues to have special rights in them-still resonates among the Russian elite. This belief explains why Putin and other Russian officials feel comfortable condemning the United States for violating the sovereignty of faraway states such as Iraq and Libya while Russia effectively does the same thing in its own backyard.

Such thinking plays another role as well. These days, Russia has little to justify its claims to major-power status, apart from its seat on the UN Security Council and its massive nuclear stockpile. Maintaining Russia's influence across the former Soviet Union helps Russian leaders preserve their image of Russia's greatness. Under Putin, the Kremlin has sought to reinforce this influence by pushing economic and political integration with post-Soviet states, through measures such as establishing a customs union with Belarus and Kazakhstan and forming the Eurasian Union, a new supranational bloc that Putin claims is directly modeled on the EU and that he hopes to unveil in 2015 (Belarus and Kazakhstan have already signed on; Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan have expressed their interest).

Putin hopes to turn this Eurasian bloc into a cultural and geopolitical alternative to the West, and he has made clear that it will amount to little unless Ukraine joins. This Eurasian dream is what made the prospect of Kiev signing an association agreement with the EU back in November-one that would have permanently excluded Ukraine from the Eurasian Union-so alarming to Putin and led him, at the last minute, to bribe President Viktor Yanukovich with Russian loan guarantees to Ukraine, so that he would reject the deal with Brussels. Thus far, Putin's tactic has failed: not only did Yanukovich's refusal to sign the association agreement spawn the protests that eventually toppled him, but on March 21, the new, interim government in Kiev signed the agreement anyway.

Although Moscow has a variety of tools it can use to exert regional influence-bribes, energy exports, trade ties-supporting separatist movements remains its strongest, if bluntest, weapon. Dependent on Russian protection, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria, and now Crimea serve as outposts for projecting Russian political and economic influence-in this sense; Moscow doesn't back Nagorno-Karabakh directly, but backs Armenia.) Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Transnistria all permit Russia to base troops on their territory, as does Armenia. Abkhazia and South Ossetia each host roughly 3,500 Russian troops, along with 1,500 Federal Security Service personnel; Transnistria has some 1,500 Russian soldiers on its territory; and Armenia has around 5,000 Russian troops. One of the principal reasons Moscow has regarded Crimea as so strategically valuable is that the peninsula already hosted Russia's Black Sea Fleet.

But Russia's tactics are not cost-free. By splitting apart internationally recognized states and deploying its military to disputed territories, Moscow has repeatedly damaged its economy and earned itself international condemnation. The bigger problem, however, is that Moscow's coercive diplomacy and support of separatist movements diminish Russian influence over time-that is, these actions achieve the exact opposite of what Russia hopes. It is no coincidence that aside from the Baltic countries, which have joined NATO and the EU, the

post-Soviet states that have worked hardest to decrease their dependence on Russia over the past two decades are Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova.

These states have moved westward directly in reaction to Russian meddling. During the 1990s, Azerbaijan responded to Russia's intervention over Nagorno-Karabakh by seeking new markets for its oil and gas reserves in the West. It found a willing partner in Georgia, leading to the construction of an oil pipeline from Baku through Tbilisi to the Turkish port of Ceyhan, which started operations in 2005. A parallel gas pipeline in the southern Caucasus opened the next year. Both freed Azerbaijan's and Georgia's economies from a reliance on Russia. Since 2010, Azerbaijan has also secured regional security guarantees from Turkey, which would complicate any future Russian intervention. Georgia, meanwhile, continues to pursue membership in NATO, and even if it never makes it, Tbilisi will be able to count on some support from the United States and other Western powers if threatened. And Moldova, despite its fractious domestic politics, has also made great strides in aligning itself with Europe, committing to its own EU association agreement last November, just as Yanukovich backed out.

Russia's invasion and annexation of Crimea, especially if it is followed by incursions into eastern Ukraine, will have the same effect. Far from dissuading Ukrainians from seeking a future in Europe, Moscow's moves will only foster a greater sense of nationalism in all parts of the country and turn Ukrainian elites against Russia, probably for a generation. The episode will also make Ukraine and other post-Soviet states, including those targeted for membership in the Eurasian Union, even more reluctant to go along with any Russian plans for regional integration. Russia may have won Crimea, but in the long run, it risks losing much more: its once-close relationship with Ukraine, its international reputation, and its plan to draw the ex-Soviet states back together.

Sidebar

Again, Russia has fanned ethnic tensions and used force at a moment of political uncertainty.

Russia's coercive diplomacy and support of separatist movements actually diminish its influence.

Author Affiliation

JEFFREY MANKOFF is Deputy Director of and a Fellow in the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Konu: Military occupations; Annexation; International relations;

Konum: Russia, Ukraine

Sınıflandırma: 9176: Eastern Europe; 1200: Social policy

Başlık: Russia's Latest Land Grab: How Putin Won Crimea and Lost Ukraine

Yazar adı: Mankoff, Jeffrey

Yayın adı: Foreign Affairs

Cilt: 93

Sayı: 3

Sayfalar: 60-68

Sayfa sayısı: 9

Yayın Yılı: 2014

Yayınlanma tarihi: May/Jun 2014

Yıl: 2014

Yayıncı: Council on Foreign Relations NY

Basım yeri: New York

Yayınlanma ülkesi: United States

Yayın konusu: Political Science--International Relations

ISSN: 00157120

CODEN: FRNAA3

Yayın türü: Scholarly Journals

Yayın Dili: English

Belge türü: Feature

Belge özelliği: Photographs

ProQuest belge kimliği: 1520424155

Belge URL'si: <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1520424155?accountid=16277>

Telif Hakkı: Copyright Council on Foreign Relations NY May/Jun 2014

Son güncelleme: 2014-05-06

Veritabanı: ProQuest Art, Design and Architecture Collection

ProQuest'e Ulaşın

Telif Hakkı © 2014 ProQuest LLC. Tüm hakları saklıdır. - **Şart ve Koşullar**