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# **The Impact of National Identity on Conflict Behavior: Comparative Analysis of Two Ethnic Minorities in Crimea**

Karina Korostelina\*

## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper examines the process of national identity formation among ethnic minorities in the Crimea—specifically, the moderation effects of national identity building on inter-relations between conflict indicators and readiness for conflict or compromise for two ethnic minorities in Crimea. Based on a survey in the Crimea, results show that national identity moderates the effects of ethnic identity, ethnocentrism, economic deprivation, and majority/minority position on individual and group conflict behavior and such effects differ between two ethnic groups, namely Russians and Crimean Tatars. For both groups the strongest moderation effect was found for ethnocentrism and ethnic identity.*

## **Introduction**

Identity, definition, and the concepts of ingroup (“we”) and outgroup (“they”) are key issues in understanding ethnic conflicts in the post cold-war era. Such identity conflicts express existential needs, values, safety, dignity, control over destiny, and are rooted in complex and multidimensional psychological, historical, and cultural factors. The frustration of these basic needs along with a denial of human rights leads to social conflicts (Fisher 1997).

As Rothmans (1997) stresses, the differences between identity and interest conflicts are not precise. All identity conflicts contain interest conflicts; moreover, many ignored or unresolved interest-based conflicts can become identity conflicts. Burton (1987, 1990) calls identity conflicts “deep-rooted conflicts” and stresses that they are not based on negotiable interest and position, but on underlying needs that cannot be compromised. Azar suggests (1990) that the source of such protracted social conflicts is not in economic and power goals, but in the denial of elements necessary to the development of all people, and whose pursuit is therefore a compelling need. In identity conflict, “groups struggle for their basic physical and moral survival” (Rothmans 1997: 9). Such conflicts arise when identity groups perceive that they are

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oppressed and victimized through a denial of recognition, security, equity, and political participation (Fisher 1997).

Research on ethnic conflicts and violence show a set of factors that have significant impact on conflict behavior and negative intentions toward outgroups. In numerous studies, it appears that salient ethnic identity, ethnocentrism, perceived economic deprivation, and minority position of the ingroup have a strong negative impact on ethnic violence in weak states with sizeable and aggrieved minorities. As Brubaker (1996) points out, ethnic identity politics and minority grievances lead to tensions; the formation of nation in new independent states evokes the activity of national minorities and their proclivity to initiate conflicts.

However, the establishment of new states embodies the potential for economic independence, human dignity, and the self-esteem of the population (Kelman 1997). In addition to a contribution to escalation and self-perpetuation of identity-based conflicts, national identity building in post-communist societies is, therefore, a process that may create superordinate peaceful identity and opportunities for the resolution of conflict.

This study considers the impact such factors as national identity building and ethnic identity revival have on processes of conflict prevention, resolution, and reconciliation. The purpose of this paper is to study the moderation effects of national identity building on interrelations between conflict indicators and readiness for conflict or compromise for two ethnic minorities in the Crimea.

### **Context of the Research**

In the context where the research took place, Crimea in Ukraine, the ethnic minority groups (Russians and Crimean Tatars) are now in the process of adopting a new national identity. Crimea was a nominally independent khanate of the Ottoman Empire until 1783, when it was annexed by Russia. After the Russian Revolution, Crimea was briefly independent from 1917 to 1918 and then incorporated into the Soviet Union as an autonomous republic of the Russian Federation in 1921. This autonomous status was abolished in 1944. In 1954, Crimea was transferred to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and this status continued when Ukraine became independent in 1991. The current population of Crimea is nearly 2.5 million. Ethnic Russians comprise 64 percent of the population, 23 percent are Ukrainians, 10 percent are Crimean Tatars, and 3 percent are Belorussians, Armenians, Greeks, Germans, Jews, and others.

The Crimea of the 1990s had substantial potential for ethnopolitical violence. Multiple “nested autonomies” conflicts arose from the resettlement of 250,000 Crimean Tatars who had been deported to Central Asia by Stalin in 1944, overlapping with the collapse of the Soviet Union that engendered irredentist autonomy claims by Crimea’s majority ethnic group, the Russians (Fearon 1998; Van Evera 1995). The resettlement also changed the ethnic balance of the

population through the insertion of an ethnically divergent group and resulted in land and property disputes and citizenship claims by the new arrivals. Crimean Tatars received state donations and funds for resettlement. This fact increased negative attitudes among Russians, who also experienced economic deprivation. At the same time, Russians had better access to jobs and education than Crimean Tatars. The unraveling of the communist system of government has also posed challenges to new political institution-building, social reorientation toward the market economy, and the definition of new concepts of post-Cold War national security for Ukraine as a newly independent state.

Russians and Crimean Tatars differ in their conceptions of the legitimacy of their positions in Ukraine (Korostelina 2000a, 2000b). Crimean Tatars consider it legitimate to reclaim their possessions and reestablish national-territorial autonomy. Russians aspire to establishing closer relations with Russia and perceive the Crimean Tatar autonomy as a step toward Crimean incorporation in the Muslim world. Conversely, Crimean Tatars fear that local autonomy will never be granted if Crimea is part of Russia. Hence, the goals of Russians and Crimean Tatars are incompatible with formation of a common national identity.

Currently in Ukraine, the Ukrainian language is the only official language and the only language for education. Acceptance of Ukrainian culture and customs and proficiency in Ukrainian language now is the only way to receive high social status. Adopting a Ukrainian national identity also can provide self-esteem and human dignity for members of ethnic minorities and make them feel like equal citizens of an independent state. National shared identity may unite people in the Ukraine in the development of a common State. We expect that the influence of national identity formation will be different for the two main ethnic minorities in Ukraine: Russians and Crimean Tatars.

## **Method**

We focused on the moderation effect of national identity on the impact of conflict indicators of the readiness of representatives of ethnic minorities to fight with outgroups. The sources of ethno-political conflict behavior, which are usually described as early warning indicators of ethnic conflict, were analyzed as independent variables. Readiness for conflict or compromise was analyzed as dependent variable.

## **Conflict Indicators**

### ***Salience of Ethnic Identity***

Salient Identity can be defined as the most important identity for the individual, and it can be influenced by such factors as permeable/impermeable group boundaries, positive or negative intergroup comparisons, identity distinctiveness issues,

and socialization processes (Berry et al. 1989; Brewer 1991, 1996). Salience can vary on a continuum from strong to weak. As Phinney (1991) shows, persons with salient ethnic identity are more prejudiced and show more readiness for conflict behavior toward other groups. Other results also suggest the role of salient group membership in shaping political attitudes and behavior (Conover 1988; Miller et al. 1981), while other studies find a correlation between salient group identification and out-group hostility (Branscombe and Wann 1994; Grant and Brown 1995).

### ***Ethnocentrism***

According to previous research, ethnocentrism has the following characteristics: (1) individual members give their primary loyalty to their own ethnic community; (2) this loyalty supersedes their loyalty to other groups; and (3) these ethnic communities tend to evaluate ingroups positively and have negative attitudes toward outgroups. An awareness of attitudes and stereotypes lead to explanations of events that encourage positive perceptions of the ingroup and more negative views of the outgroup (Crocker and Luhtanen 1990). This ultimate attribution error leads to increased conflict between groups (Hewstone 1990; Pettigrew 1979).

### ***Economic Deprivation***

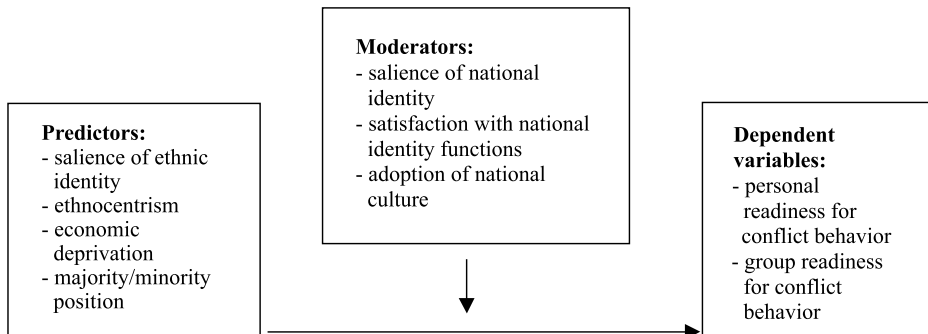
Economic growth in sectors associated with a different ethnic group threatens to accentuate and exacerbate ethnic grievances (Azar and Burton 1986; Gurr 1993), especially in countries with a developing economy. Groups are likely to "conclude that they can improve their welfare only at the expense of others" (Lake and Rothchild 1998).

### ***Majority/Minority Position***

Research shows that ingroup bias is stronger among social or numerical minority groups than among majority groups (Brewer and Weber 1994; Ellemers et al. 1999; Simon and Hamilton 1994). The reasons for the stronger ingroup bias of minority groups are their concerns about social identity (Gerard and Hoyt 1974; Mullen et al. 1992) and the compensation of perceived insecurity (Sachdev and Bourhis 1984). However, the evidence is not conclusive. Mullen et al. (1992) found that ingroup bias is weaker among low-status groups.

### ***National Identity Formation***

According to the common in-group identity model (Gaertner et al. 2000), a new common identity changes people's conceptions of the membership from

**Figure 1**

different groups to a single, more inclusive group and makes individual's attitudes toward former out-group members more positive, even if they had a long history of offences. The theory suggests that acquiring a national identity depends on three factors: (1) the adoption of the specific elements of the national identity, i.e. of the beliefs, values, assumptions, and expectations that make up the national identity as a collective product; (2) the development of an orientation to the nation itself (Herman 1977); and (3) self-definition as members of the nation (Kelman 1997). Research indicates that social identity serves several psychological functions for group members such as providing self-esteem; bestowing social status; supplying existential security; granting social protection and security; and providing opportunities for personal growth.

### **Research Hypothesis and Propositions**

From this background literature, we arrived at a general research hypothesis: the effect of conflict indicators (salient ethnic identity, ethnocentrism, economic deprivation, and minority position) on readiness for conflict or for compromise will be mitigated by three features of national identity formation: (1) salience of national identity, (2) satisfaction with fulfillment of national identity functions, and (3) adoption of a national (Ukrainian) culture.

Schematically, the impact of national identity building can be represented like this:

This general hypothesis generated the following 12 propositions:

#### ***Salience of Ethnic Identity***

Proposition 1. Salient national identity will reduce the effect of salience of ethnic identity on readiness for conflict. This effect will be stronger for respondents with weak ethnic identity.

- Proposition 2. Satisfaction with national identity functions will reduce the effect of salience of ethnic identity on readiness for conflict, which would hold when controlled for other variables. This effect will be stronger for respondents with weak ethnic identity.
- Proposition 3. Adoption of national culture will reduce the effect of salience of ethnic identity on readiness for conflict.

### ***Ethnocentrism***

- Proposition 4. Salient national identity will reduce the effect of ethnocentrism on readiness for conflict.
- Proposition 5. Satisfaction with national identity functions will reduce the effect of ethnocentrism on readiness for conflict.
- Proposition 6. Adoption of national culture will reduce the effect of ethnocentrism on readiness for conflict.

### ***Economic Deprivation***

- Proposition 7. Salient national identity will reduce the effect of economic deprivation on readiness for conflict.
- Proposition 8. Satisfaction with national identity functions will reduce the effect of economic deprivation on readiness for conflict.
- Proposition 9. Adoption of national culture will reduce the effect of economic deprivation on readiness for conflict.

### ***Majority/Minority Position***

- Proposition 10. Salient national identity will reduce readiness for conflict if respondents consider their group a minority. It will have no effects if respondents perceive their group as a majority.
- Proposition 11. The satisfaction with national identity functions will reduce the effect of minority position on readiness for conflict. That effect will be weaker for majority position.
- Proposition 12. Adoption of national culture will reduce the influence of majority/minority position on readiness for conflict.

## A Survey Design

### *Sampling*

To test these propositions, an opinion survey was conducted during January through May 2003 in several towns and villages in Crimea. The sample was stratified by location, number of resettlements, and rural-urban status. Participants were Russians (408 respondents) and Crimean Tatars (422 respondents), distributed across these locations in equal proportions. Of the participants, 42 percent are male and 58 percent are female; 39 percent are between 20 and 30 years old, 31 percent between 30 and 45, 20 percent between 45 and 60, and 10 percent above 60; 55 percent are residents of towns and 45 percent are residents of villages. Participation was voluntary. Respondents were provided with a questionnaire and selected answers from the list.

### *Questionnaire Design*

The questionnaire (available on request) measured the following variables:

- a Identity questions (salience of national and ethnic identity; functions of national identity; the level of adoption of the national culture; meaning of national identity: single nation concept, multicultural concept, and civic concepts)
- b Economic deprivation
- c Ethnocentrism
- d Minority/majority position
- e Individual readiness to fight
- f Perceived group readiness to fight.

Five point scales were recoded to 4-point scales, excluding “*No answer.*”

## Results

Crimean Tatars identify more strongly with the ethnic Tatar ingroup than Russians identify with the ethnic Russian ingroup, but the level of ethnocentrism does not differ significantly between groups. Crimean Tatars identify more strongly with the nation than Russians identify with the nation, but the difference is not significant. Crimean Tatars show higher satisfaction with national identity than Russians but the level of adaptation of Ukrainian culture does not differ significantly between groups. Crimean Tatars show more readiness for individual conflict behavior than do Russians, but Russians show more readiness for group conflict behavior than do Crimean Tatars.

Our analysis shows that correlations between moderating variables are significant, but variables are independent (correlation between salience of



national identity and satisfaction with national identity is  $r = 0.39$ ,  $p < .01$ ; correlation between salience of national identity and adoption of culture is  $r = 0.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and correlation between satisfaction with national identity and adoption of culture is  $r = 0.13$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Distributions of answers for most of the scales were highly skewed to the right or to the left. For example, more than 80 percent of Crimean Tatars demonstrated high salience of ethnic identity and only 10 percent of Russians had developed an ethnic concept of national identity. The importance of this difference will be shown in the later discussion.

### ***The Impact of Ethnic Identity as Moderated by National Identity***

For Russians, the results of ANOVA (analysis of variance) show the main effects of ethnic identity, salience of national identity, satisfaction with national identity, adoption of Ukrainian culture, the interaction effect of ethnic identity by level of satisfaction with national identity and by level of adoption of Ukrainian culture on the readiness for individual and group conflict behavior (see Table 1). The main effects show that a salient ethnic identity and satisfaction with national identity strengthen individual and group conflict behavior. Among Russians, the interaction effect shows that satisfaction with national identity and adopted Ukrainian culture moderate the influence of ethnic identity on individual and group readiness to fight. When there is a low satisfaction with national identity, ethnic identity has virtually no impact on readiness to fight, but when satisfaction with national identity is high, salient ethnic identity produces a higher readiness to fight. Results differ from what was expected regarding the weakening effect of satisfaction with national identity. On the contrary, when there is a low level of adoption of national culture, ethnic identity has significant impact on readiness to fight, but when level of adoption of national culture is high, salient ethnic identity produces lesser readiness for conflict behavior. Results support proposition 3 that adoption of Ukrainian culture would reduce impact of ethnic identity on readiness to fight.

For Crimean Tatars, two significant interactions were found: interaction effect of ethnic identity by salience of national identity and by level of adoption of Ukrainian culture on the readiness for individual conflict behavior (see Table 1). Salient national identity and adopted Ukrainian culture weaken the influence of ethnic identity on the readiness of individual to fight with other ethnic groups. When there is a low salience of national identity, ethnic identity has significant impact on readiness to fight, but when level of salience of national identity is high, salient ethnic identity produces a lower personal readiness to fight. A similar moderation effect was found for adoption of Ukrainian culture.

For the readiness for group conflict behavior of Crimean Tatars, the results show an interaction effect of ethnic identity by level of satisfaction with

**Table 1.**  
**Ethnic Identity Effect on Russians and Crimean Tatars' Personal and Group Intention to Fight Under High and Low Salience of National Identity**

National identity	Ethnic Identity			
	Russians		CrimeanTatars	
	High salience (N = 251)	Low salience (N = 157)	High salience (N = 364)	Low salience (N = 57)
Individual conflict behavior	4.73	4.54	4.59	4.03
Low salience of national identity (RN = 219; CTN = 161)	4.79	4.66	4.65	4.10
High salience of national identity (RN = 189; CTN = 260)	4.57	4.28	4.49	3.95
Low level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 339; CTN = 275)	4.38	4.43	4.65	4.13
High level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 69; CTN = 146)	4.77	4.63	4.49	3.82
Low level of adoption of national culture (RN = 165; CTN = 250)	4.83	4.58	4.66	4.15
High level of adoption of national culture (RN = 243; CTN = 171)	4.33	4.48	4.48	3.92
Group conflict behavior	4.83	4.64	4.63	4.30
Low salience of national identity (RN = 219; CTN = 161)	4.56	4.86	4.70	4.26
High salience of national identity (RN = 189; CTN = 260)	4.71	4.77	4.58	4.36
Low level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 339; CTN = 275)	4.59	4.86	4.78	4.36
High level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 69; CTN = 146)	4.80	4.54	4.34	4.17
Low level of adoption of national culture (RN = 165; CTN = 250)	4.71	4.59	4.67	4.33
High level of adoption of national culture (RN = 243; CTN = 171)	4.90	4.86	4.56	4.28

national identity (see Table 1). When there is a low satisfaction with national identity, ethnic identity produces significant influence on the readiness to fight, but when level of satisfaction with national identity is high, salient ethnic identity has virtually no impact on personal readiness to fight. Thus, satisfaction with national identity weakens the influence of ethnic identity on the readiness of a group to fight with other ethnic groups. This is what was expected in proposition 2.

***The Impact of Ethnocentrism as Moderated by National Identity***

For both ethnic groups, the results of ANOVA show the main effects of ethnocentrism, salience of national identity, level of satisfaction with national identity, and level of adoption of Ukrainian culture. The results also show the interaction effects of ethnocentrism by salience of national identity, by level of satisfaction with national identity, and by level of adoption of Ukrainian culture on the readiness for individual and group conflict behavior.

For Russians, salience of national identity, satisfaction with national identity, and adopted Ukrainian culture increase the effect of ethnocentrism on readiness to fight with outgroups. When there is a low salience of national identity, ethnocentrism produces practically no effect on readiness to fight, but when the level of salience of national identity is high, ethnocentrism has significant impact on readiness to fight. A similar moderation effect was found for satisfaction with national identity and adoption of Ukrainian culture, but adoption of culture has a less significant effect. It differs from what was expected from Russians in the hypothesis (propositions 4–6), namely, the weakening of ethnocentrism's impact on conflict behavior.

For Crimean Tatars, salient national identity, satisfaction with national identity, and adopted Ukrainian culture weaken the effect of ethnocentrism on the readiness of individual and group to fight with other ethnic groups. When there is a low salience of national identity, ethnocentrism produces significant influence on the readiness to fight, but when salience of national identity is high, salient ethnic identity has virtually no impact on personal readiness to fight. The same effect was found for satisfaction with national identity and adopted Ukrainian culture. Results confirm propositions 4–6.

***The Impact of Economic Deprivation as Moderated by National Identity***

For Russians, economic deprivation interacted with satisfaction concerning national identity to impact the readiness for individual and group conflict (this was measured through responses to such statements as: *During the past two years economic situation in Crimea have become better/worse*). When there is low satisfaction with national identity, ethnocentrism produces practically no effect on readiness to fight; but with high satisfaction, ethnocentrism has a significant impact on readiness to fight (measured through responses to such statements as: *There are no people in the world better than my ethnic group*). Thus, satisfaction with national identity increases the influence of economic deprivation on the individual and group readiness to fight. This differs from what was expected from Russians in proposition 8, namely, a weakening of the impact of economic deprivation on conflict behavior.

For Crimean Tatars, economic deprivation interacted with salience of national identity and level of satisfaction with national identity to impact

readiness for individual and group conflict behavior. When there is a low salience of national identity, economic deprivation produces significant influence on personal readiness to fight, but when national identity is not salient, economic deprivation has less impact on personal readiness to fight. An opposite effect was found for group readiness to fight. When there is a low salience of national identity, economic deprivation produces practically no effect on group readiness to fight, but when national identity is salient, economic deprivation has significant impact on group readiness to fight. Thus, salient national identity weakens the impact of economic deprivation on an individual's readiness to fight but strengthens the impact of economic deprivation on group readiness to fight. Satisfaction with national identity weakens the effect of economic deprivation on the individual and group readiness to fight. When there is a low satisfaction with national identity, economic deprivation has significant impact on readiness to fight, but when level of satisfaction with national identity is high, salient ethnic identity produces less effect on personal readiness to fight. The moderation effect of satisfaction with national identity is stronger than moderation effects of national identity salience for both individual and group readiness to fight.

### ***The Impact of Minority Position as Moderated by National Identity***

Data analysis shows that Russians who perceive themselves to be in a majority position in Ukraine have higher individual and group readiness to fight with outgroups than Russians from minority positions. For Russians, ANOVA shows an interaction effect of majority position by level of satisfaction with national identity and by level of adoption of Ukrainian culture on the readiness for individual conflict behavior. When there is a low satisfaction with national identity, majority position produces less influence on readiness to fight, but when level of satisfaction with national identity is high, majority position has significant impact on readiness to fight. A similar effect was found for adoption of Ukrainian culture. Thus, satisfaction with national identity and adoption of Ukrainian culture increase the influence of majority position on the individual readiness to fight (see Table 2).

Several interaction effects were found for Crimean Tatars: an interaction effect of minority position by level of satisfaction with national identity on the readiness to fight and an interaction effect of majority position by level of national identity salience on the readiness to fight (see Table 2). When there is a low satisfaction with national identity, minority position has significant impact on readiness to fight, but when level of satisfaction with national identity is high, minority position produces less effect on personal readiness to fight. So, for Crimean Tatars, satisfaction with national identity weakens the effect of minority position on the readiness of individuals and groups to fight with other ethnic groups. The moderation effect of satisfaction with national identity is stronger for group than for individual readiness to fight.

**Table 2.**  
**Majority/Minority Position Effect on Russians and Crimean Tatars' Personal and Group**  
**Intention to Fight Under High and Low Salience of National Identity**

National identity	Perceived position			
	Russians		Crimean Tatars	
	Minority position in Ukraine (N = 130)	Majority position in Ukraine (N = 278)	Minority position in Crimea (N = 346)	Majority position in Crimea (N = 75)
Individual conflict behavior	4.24	4.63	4.56	4.33
Low salience of national identity (RN = 219; CTN = 161)	4.22	4.67	4.47	4.30
High salience of national identity (RN = 189; CTN = 260)	4.26	4.59	4.61	4.37
Low level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 339; CTN = 275)	4.25	4.55	4.65	4.24
High level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 69; CTN = 146)	4.21	4.93	4.40	4.54
Low level of adoption of national culture (RN = 165; CTN = 250)	4.48	4.70	4.64	4.35
High level of adoption of national culture (RN = 243; CTN = 171)	4.09	4.59	4.43	4.31
Group conflict behavior	4.53	4.81	4.57	4.66
Low salience of national identity (RN = 219; CTN = 161)	4.58	4.79	4.65	4.55
High salience of national identity (RN = 189; CTN = 260)	4.46	4.83	4.52	4.81
Low level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 339; CTN = 275)	4.55	4.79	4.74	4.66
High level of satisfaction with national identity (RN = 69; CTN = 146)	4.36	4.76	4.26	4.68
Low level of adoption of national culture (RN = 165; CTN = 250)	4.71	4.75	4.60	4.87
High level of adoption of national culture (RN = 243; CTN = 171)	4.41	4.85	4.51	4.51

When there is a low salience of national identity, perceived majority position produces more influence on personal readiness to fight, but when national identity is not salient, majority position has less impact on personal readiness to fight. An opposite effect was found for the group readiness to fight. When there is a low salience of national identity, majority position produces practically no effect on group readiness to fight, but when level of national identity is salient, majority position has significant impact on group readiness to fight. Thus, salient national identity weakens the impact of majority position on the individual readiness to fight and strengthens the impact of majority position on the group readiness to fight.

## Discussion

This research shows that national identity moderates the effect of ethnic identity, ethnocentrism, economic deprivation, and majority/minority position on individual and group conflict behavior, and that such effects differ between two ethnic groups—the Russians and Crimean Tatars. For both groups, ethnocentrism and ethnic identity produced the strongest moderation effect.

The research demonstrated that salient national identity increases the influence of ethnocentrism on personal and group readiness for conflict behavior of Russians. Consequently, for Russians, more salient national identity moderates only the effect of ethnocentrism. When Russians adopt national identity and believe that Russians are the main (and more powerful) group in Ukraine, their readiness to fight with other ethnic minorities is strengthened. When Russians accept Ukrainian identity without ethnocentrism, they perceive this identity as common to all ethnic groups. To verify this proposition I analyzed the meaning of national identity with the data showing that ethnocentric Russians with more salient national identity are more ready to view Ukraine as a single nation than ethnocentric Russians with less salient national identity.

For Crimean Tatars, salient national identity weakens the effect of ethnocentrism on readiness to fight. For Crimean Tatars with low salience of national identity, ethnocentrism leads to readiness to fight with other ethnic minorities who can compete with them. However, if national identity is salient, it decreases the influence of ethnocentrism on readiness for conflict behavior. The analysis confirms that ethnocentric Crimean Tatars with a more salient national identity are more ready to view Ukraine as a multicultural nation than ethnocentric Crimean Tatars with a less salient national identity ( $M = 8.37$ ;  $F(1, 425) = 3.09$ ;  $p < .05$ ) and, hence, they are more ready for tolerant behavior toward other ethnic groups. Thus, different positions in society lead to the development of different meanings of national identity among ethnic minorities. Russians, who perceive themselves as a main minority, are more ready to fight with outgroups if they adopt a national identity and have strong sense of ethnocentrism. Crimean Tatars, who perceive themselves as a minority, are more ready to fight with outgroups if they don't adopt a national identity but have ethnocentric tendencies. In other words, for Russians, national identity can reduce readiness to fight only if they do not have ethnocentric views and are ready to adopt a Ukrainian identity. For Crimean Tatars, national identity can lead to tolerant behavior and weakened ethnocentrism.

Salient national identity weakens the effect of ethnic identity, economic deprivation, and perceived majority position on *personal* readiness of Crimean Tatars to fight. However, it strengthens the effect of economic deprivation and perceived majority position on perceived *group* readiness to fight. No interaction effects of national identity with ethnic identity, economic deprivation, and majority/minority position were found for Russians.

In interpreting the effect of national identity, if Crimean Tatars have salient national identity, they have higher personal loyalty to Ukraine and all ethnic groups within the state. However, if Crimean Tatars consider their group a majority in Crimea, they feel themselves to be a part of Ukrainian community and perceive Russians as aliens in Crimea without social rights. Further analysis showed that Crimean Tatars with salient national identity and perceived majority position have a less developed concept of Ukraine as a multicultural nation than Crimean Tatars with a low level of salience of national identity and perceived majority position. Accordingly, if Crimean Tatars have a strong feeling of belonging to the nation, they believe the experience of strong economic deprivation will reinforce the social activity of their group and readiness to fight for their rights. Moreover, our data showed that Crimean Tatars with salient national identity and perceived strong economic deprivation have a more developed concept of Ukraine as a civic society than Crimean Tatars with a low level of national identity salience ( $M = 7.32$ ;  $F(423) = 4.64$ ;  $p < .05$ ).

For Russians, satisfaction with national identity increases the impact of ethnic identity, economic deprivation, and ethnocentrism on individual and group readiness to fight. For Crimean Tatars, satisfaction with national identity weakens influence of ethnocentrism, economic deprivation, and minority position on individual and group readiness to fight.

Russians who adopt Ukrainian culture and customs feel comfortable with being incorporated into Ukrainian society and have less negative attitudes toward people of other ethnic groups. But, if they judge themselves to be a majority or have very strong ethnocentrism, adoption of Ukrainian culture could lead to more negative intentions toward outgroups. Russian and Ukrainian culture are close and have a lot of common values and customs; so Russians accept their position of "Ukrainian Russians" and don't expect that Crimean Tatars would be deeply integrated into the Ukrainian cultural context. Thus, they will be more ready to defend the stable unity of Ukrainian society.

For Crimean Tatars, correspondingly, the adoption of Ukrainian culture strengthens positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups who have similar cultures and decreases ethnocentric view.

It was expected that national identity would reduce the negative impact of conflict indicators. This hypothesis was confirmed for Crimean Tatars except for the moderation effect of salient national identity on impact of economic deprivation and perceived majority position on group readiness for conflict behavior. However, the hypothesis failed for most effects on personal and group conflict behavior of Russians, for whom national identity shapes their readiness to fight. It can be explained by the social position and political goals of the two groups. Russians who, on the one hand, adopted national identity and are satisfied with the fulfillment of national identity functions and, on the other hand, have salient ethnic identity and ethnocentrism, perceived themselves to be a "majority" and main group in Ukraine. They have a new identity:



“Ukrainian Russians,” which is different from Russian ethnic identity, but does not presuppose a deep adoption of Ukrainian culture (Korostelina 2003). Consequently, they have stronger readiness to fight with Crimean Tatars—a Muslim minority in Crimea—who possess a different culture, values, and goals. If they adopt Ukrainian identity and are experiencing economic deprivation, they do not blame Ukraine but consider Crimean Tatars guilty of economic problems, because the latter required additional resources for their resettlement and cultural revival.

If Crimean Tatars adopt Ukrainian identity and culture, and are satisfied with national identity, they show less readiness to fight and are fully incorporated in Ukrainian community. But, if Crimean Tatars have a salient national identity, they believe that experiencing strong economic deprivation and perceived majority position in Crimea would reinforce the social activity of their group and their readiness to defend their rights. They accuse Russians of negative changes in their economic situation and see fighting with them as a goal for the ingroup.

According to common identity theory, national identity could unite ethnic minorities within the state and reduce negative attitudes and conflict intentions toward other ethnic groups. We could expect that the adoption of national identity by representatives of ethnic minorities would reduce the influence of conflict indicators and lead to more tolerant behavior toward outgroups. This prediction was confirmed for the group of Crimean Tatars—a political and numerous minority—in the Ukraine. However, the hypothesis failed for the group of Russians, who perceived themselves to be a language majority. Results showed that national identity reinforced the readiness to fight with outgroups: groups that significantly differ in religion and culture from the “national group”; groups that have intentions for sovereignty or close relations with other countries; and groups that could become the most powerful minority group.

We conclude our empirical study by positing that, in some cases, adoption of national identity does not create common meaning and a sense of unity. Rather, some ethnic minorities can use loyalty to nation to accomplish their own goals and receive more benefits. National identity can reduce readiness to fight only if ethnic minorities do not hold ethnocentric views and are ready to adopt national identity or if they perceive that the state can provide more opportunities and defend the rights of their ethnic groups.

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