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Taming Anxieties, Coping with Mnemonic Conflicts: Cultural Diplomacy of Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian American Diasporas through Historical Films

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the cultural diplomacy of Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian American diasporas, who both suffered from deportation at the hands of the Soviets and are conducting anti-Russian diplomacy today. Historical films are useful in terms of showing how the diasporic communities seek to reconstruct a collective memory on a traumatic event and tame their anxieties of death, meaninglessness, and condemnation that constitute "unknown unknowns" by turning them into the fear of a "known unknown" through securitization. Therefore, this study aims to grasp the multiplicity of anxieties reflected upon the Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian diasporas' recent historical films that demonstrate how diasporas' varying anxieties translate into diverse strategies of political representation and mobilisation against Russia. It thus reconciles the scholarship on diaspora's memory politics with anxiety/fear nexus in securitization theory.

Keywords: Trauma, deportation, securitization, anxiety of death, memory politics

Kaygıları Bastırmak, Bellek Çatışmalarıyla Baş Etmek: Tarihsel filmler yoluyla Kırım Tatarı ve ABD'deki Litvanya Diasporalarının Kültürel Diplomasisi

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, Sovyetlerin sürgününe uğramış ve bugün Rusya karşıtı diplomasi yürüten Kırım Tatarı diasporasının ve ABD'deki Litvanya diasporasının kültürel diplomasisine odaklanmaktadır. Tarihsel filmler, diasporaların travmatik bir olayla ilgili kolektif belleği nasıl yeniden inşa etmeye çalıştıklarını ve güvenlikleştirme yoluyla "bilinmez bilinmeyenlere" karşı duyulan ölüm, anlamsızlık ve itham edilme kaygılarını nasıl "bilinen bilinmeyene" yönelik korkuya dönüştürerek bastırmaya çalıştıklarını göstermesi açısından yararlıdır. Dolayısıyla, bu çalışma Kırım Tatarı ve ABD'deki Litvanya diasporalarının son dönemdeki tarihsel filmlerine yansıyan çoklu kaygıları ve diasporaların bu farklı kaygılarının nasıl çeşitli Rusya'ya karşı siyasi temsil ve seferberlik stratejilerine aktarıldığını anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu sayede, diasporalarda bellek siyaseti literatürüyle güvenlikleştirme kuramındaki kaygı/korku bağlantısı literatürünü buluşturmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Travma, sürgün, güvenlikleştirme, ölüm kaygısı, bellek siyaseti

Introduction

This study aims to connect "memory politics" literature with diaspora studies by applying an alternative perspective derived from the "political anxieties" scholarship.[1] Accordingly, it follows three critical trends in the International Relations (IR) literature that suggest taking more seriously: (i) the "mnemonic" dimension of political conflicts;[2] (ii) the political agency and cultural diplomacy of diasporic communities;[3] and (iii) the ontological dimension of security.[4] The study focuses on the recent efforts of the Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian diasporas to "defend their memory"[5] against the resurgence of Russian power in Europe. Rather than mere "instruments of other's diplomatic agendas; and/or intentional or accidental partners with other actors pursuing shared interests", diasporas are political actors with their own diplomatic goals and strategies.[6] While their aim for "mobilizing the past" is stressed,[7] their need to deal with the rise of ontological insecurity and political anxieties is largely neglected. In fact, it is crucial to grasp the anxiety-related motivations of diaspora's cultural diplomacy because "agents recall a comforting narrative regarding the 'past' not only to make the present reassuring, but also as a basis or script for what should be done by the agent or group in the near future".[8]

This study assumes that diasporas with cultural traumatic experiences are more ontologically insecure in terms of harbouring multiple anxieties that are easily triggered by regional developments such as Russian resurgence. Thus, diasporas resort to pro-active diplomacy to tame their resurfacing anxieties and increase their ontological security by "making the world remember" the injustices they had to endure.[9] Their representations of past traumas through arts, music and film are "politically transformative" in terms of both consolidating a sense of Self[10] and delegitimizing the political narratives of rival powers (such as Russia, here). They can also help friendly powers (such as Ukraine and Lithuania, here) to legitimize their political stance based on diasporic traumas. Focusing on the ontological-security dimension of diasporic cultural diplomacy, the study reveals how diverse anxieties reflect upon diasporic cultural diplomacy in terms of various strategies towards the representation of past traumas.

1 We thank Prof. Bahar Rumelili, two anonymous reviewers, Prof. Hakan Kırımlı, Zafer Karatay, Sandra Baksys, Dr. Juozas Kazlas, Rasa Kazlas, Marius Markevičius, Prof. Sezai Özçelik and Prof. Jan-Peter Abraham for their contributions.

2 Dovilė Budrytė and Ėrica Resende (eds.), *Memory and Trauma in International Relations: Theories, Cases and Debates*, NY, Routledge; Maria Mälksoo, "'Memory must be defended': Beyond the Politics of Mnemonical Security", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 46, No 3, p. 221-237; Jelena Subotić, "Political Memory, Ontological Security, and Holocaust Remembrance in Post-communist Europe," *European Security*, Vol. 27, No 3, 2018, p. 296-313.

3 Jennifer Brinkerhoff, "Diasporas and Public Diplomacy: Distinctions and Future Prospects", *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, Vol. 14, No 1-2, 2019, p. 51–64; Emma Hutchison, *Affective Communities in World Politics: Collective Emotions after Trauma*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

4 Bahar Rumelili and Umut Can Adısönmez, "Uluslararası İlişkilerde Kimlik-Güvenlik İlişkisine Dair Yeni bir Paradigma: Ontolojik Güvenlik Teorisi", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 17, No 66, 2020, p.23-39; Jennifer Mitzen, "Ontological Security in World Politics: State Identity and the Security Dilemma", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 52, No 3, 2006, p. 341-370; Catarina Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity and the Search for Ontological Security", *Political Psychology*, Vol. 25, No 5, 2004, p. 741-767.

5 Mälksoo, "'Memory must be defended'".

6 Brinkerhoff, "Diasporas and Public Diplomacy".

7 Jonathan Boyarin (ed.), *Remapping Memory: The Politics of TimeSpace*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

8 Brent Steele and Alexandra Homolar, "Ontological Insecurities and the Politics of Contemporary Populism", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 32, No 3, 2019, p. 214-221.

9 Armenian and Jewish examples are well-known cases of trauma reconstruction by diasporas.

10 Emma Hutchison, "Affective Communities in World Politics".

Although both diasporas are geographically dispersed and ideologically divided across generations, they run several cultural associations in different countries to defend their national self-determination. Diaspora accounts for as much as 30% of global Lithuanian population. It is estimated that 1.3 million Lithuanians live abroad and fewer than 3 million live in Lithuania.[11] The largest, best organized and most politically active part of this diaspora lives in the US.[12] Crimean Tatars who returned to Crimea after the dissolution of the Soviet Union were only around 250,000 whereas more than 3 million Crimean Tatars reside in Turkey (whose migration dates back to the 18th century).[13] After the 2014 Annexation (for Crimean Tatars, "Occupation"), both gross violations of human rights in Crimea[14] and "the memories of the past chosen trauma have resurfaced again and the fear of second forced deportation", led to around 15,000 Crimean Tatars escaping from Crimea.[15] More than 40 Crimean Tatar associations based in Turkey organize annual meetings attended by the Crimean Tatar leaders and Crimean Tatar associations from different countries in the world.

Both the Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian American communities suffered from Soviet deportation in the 1940s and are currently conducting anti-Russian diplomacy. The recent rise of Russian foreign policy activism has led both diasporas to produce and internationally promote historical films about their traumas.[16] Serving as a testimony, these historical films emphasize their mass deportation, which constitutes a powerful image countering the official Soviet narratives. These films reflect resurgent anxieties in the diasporas and serve to turn those anxieties into the fear of Russia. They are internationally promoted by not only the diasporas[17] but also by Ukraine and Lithuania that hold similar anxieties vis-à-vis Russia. They officially promote these diasporic films to emphasize the historical injustices caused by Soviet authorities and warn against the current Russian threat.

This paper provides the theoretical framework on diasporic ontological insecurity, anxieties and securitization based on Rumelili[18] who has drawn on Tillich.[19] It begins by offering a brief history of Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian diasporas' trauma of deportation and the resurgence of anxieties and mnemonic conflicts with Russia. Then, it analyses the films "Haytarma" and "Ashes in the Snow" by focusing on the three types of anxieties that are reflected upon the diverse representations of Self and trauma. Finally, the paper concludes by discussing how "unknown unknowns" underlying diasporic anxieties are translated into the fear of a "known unknown" (Russian power)—thus, securitized through memory politics.

11 Dangis Gudelis and Luka Klimavičiūtė, "Assessing 'Global Lithuania': The Strengths and Weaknesses of Lithuanian Diaspora Engagement Strategy", *Journal of Baltic Studies*, Vol. 47, No 3, 2016, p. 330.

12 Egidijus Aleksandravičius, "Išeivija ir Lietuvos užsienio politikos uždaviniai", *Oikos*, Vol. 1, No 1, 2006, p. 14.

13 Filiz Tutku Aydın, *Émigré, Exile, Diaspora, and Transnational Movements of the Crimean Tatars: Preserving the Eternal Flame of Crimea*, New York, Palgrave, 2021.

14 Unofficial Turkish Delegation in Crimea, "Crimea Report: The Situation of The Crimean Tatars since the Annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation", 27-30 April 2015.

15 Sezai Özçelik, "The Russian Occupation of Crimea in 2014: The Second Sürgün (The Soviet Genocide) of the Crimean Tatars", *Troyacademy*, Vol. 5, No 1, 2020, p. 29-44.

16 A surge of historical films on mass deportation is observed in other former parts of the Soviet Union as well. For instance, "The Chronicles of Melanie" (Latvian, 2016) and "In the Crosswind" (Estonian, 2014).

17 Personal correspondence with Zafer Karatay (Crimean Tatar Meclis representative, chair of Emel Kırım Foundation in Turkey) and interviews with three Lithuanian community members in the US (Sandra Baksys, Juozas and Rasa Kazlas). Crimean Tatar Association (kirimdernegi.org.tr) and Emel Kırım Foundation in Turkey promoted the screening of "Haytarma" at the Turkish state channel TRT.

18 Bahar Rumelili, "Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties: A Framework for Conflict Resolution", Bahar Rumelili (ed.), *Conflict Resolution and Ontological Security: Peace Anxieties*, London & New York, Routledge, 2015, p. 10-29.

19 Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, New Haven CT, Yale University Press, 1952.

Diaspora Strategies towards Ontological Security

Members of small diasporic communities with past traumatic experiences suffer from ontological insecurity which means a "fractured sense of self" and anxieties about uncertain future. To deal with it, not only do they invent ritualized practices such as commemorative events reinforcing a sense of "certainty" about the community's authentic being and righteousness but they also resort to "securitization" allowing them to focus on a more concrete fear than their paralyzing anxieties.[20] Hence, they increase their ontological security by drawing clearer boundaries between Self and Others and designing certain strategies for self-defense against the securitized object/actor.[21] When their system of meanings and values established through rituals and securitization become contested (or banned), they face resurging anxieties and ontological insecurity. This uncertainty leads to a longing for a previous conflict setting that the diaspora was familiar with and where they could identify a threatening Other against the Self.[22] In this context, attempting to quell its rising anxieties, the diaspora turns its attention away from "unknown unknowns" inciting anxieties to "known unknowns" that provoke fear of a more concrete, visible Other.[23] Here, it is the selective memory of the diaspora that determines which "known unknowns" become the diaspora's main source of fear based on their past traumas.

ANXIETY ---------- **FEAR**

"Unknown unknowns" ***Securitization*** **"known unknowns"**

Accordingly, securitization efforts of diasporas to tame their existential anxieties and cope with ontological insecurity cannot be understood without considering their attempts to reconstruct and internationally promote their own memory of the past. In this sense, historical films made by diasporas offer a laboratory for diaspora memory politics and cultural diplomacy to tame resurgent anxieties. Here, it is crucial to understand how diverse and interrelated anxieties shape diasporic representations of national trauma in their cultural diplomacy.

Following Rumelili, this study benefits from Tillich who provides three main interrelated types of existential anxiety: (1) anxiety of fate and death, (2) anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness, and (3) anxiety of guilt and condemnation.[24] Anxiety of fate and death may "overshadow" the rest since it inherently derives from one's mortality and finitude in a spatiotemporal sense as well as the anxiety about fate-related diseases and accidents.[25] Yet, other types of anxieties may have "a more immediate impact than the anxiety of death".[26]

For instance, anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness is about losing touch with the foundational assumptions that are taken for granted as the community's "spiritual centre" and "the loss of an ultimate concern, of a meaning which gives meaning to all meanings".[27] The community begins to

20 Rumelili, "Ontological (in)security", p. 14

21 Ibid., p. 14, 24

22 Ibid.

23 Bahar Rumelili, "Integrating Anxiety into International Relations Theory: Hobbes, Existentialism, and Ontological Security", *International Theory*, Vol. 12, No 2, 2020, p. 257-272.

24 Tillich, *The Courage to Be*.

25 Ibid., p. 39

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid., p. 47

harbour "total doubt" against the traditional system of meaning it used to make sense of the world.[28] Hence, "one feels frustrated about something which one had passionately affirmed, one is driven from devotion to one object to devotion to another and again on to another, because the meaning of each of them vanishes".[29] In order to tame anxiety, one abandons one's freedom to doubt and adopts a meaning system that would give answers with certitude, which may even lead to fanaticism.[30]

Anxiety of guilt and condemnation is about doubting whether one meets the moral standards one set for oneself. "A profound ambiguity between good and evil" brings an anxiety of guilt.[31] According to Tillich, the anxiety of condemnation may even overshadow the anxieties of death and meaninglessness because from a religious perspective one may feel that one would be eternally damned and punished for one's immoral act even after death. Hence, "man tries to transform the anxiety of guilt into moral action regardless of its imperfection and ambiguity".[32]

Finally, following Kierkegaard, Tillich emphasizes the constitutive effect of anxieties: "Nonbeing drives being out of its seclusion, it forces it to affirm itself dynamically… being must be thought as the negation of the negation of being."[33] In particular, when the community faces political repression or survival threat, diasporas become key actors in reminding the world the "right" version of the past conflict that had victimized the community. Diasporic cultural diplomacy relies on commemorative ceremonies, rituals and historical films that reconstruct the past trauma in order to tame resurgent anxieties and cope with ontological insecurity within the diaspora.

Both Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian diasporas suffer from ontological insecurity: the Lithuanian case points to "sovereign uncertainty" (experienced by Lithuania and, by extension, its diaspora)[34] whereas the Crimean Tatar case resonates with the "lack of 'coherent biographical narrative'".[35] Crimean Tatars reported, due to deportation, they felt "their life had already been cut off into two".[36] In exile, they were unable to learn their language and practice their religion.[37] When those from the diaspora returned to Crimea after the collapse of the Soviet Union, they discovered Crimean Tatar culture had systematically been eroded from Crimea through local policies. They voiced concerns that the Crimean Tatar youth is becoming increasingly alienated from the Crimean Tatar language, religion and identity.

The Crimean Tatar diaspora constitutes different waves of migration. The first, in the 19th century due to Russo-Ottoman wars, again later in the 20th century due to Stalin's deportation and, most recently, in the 21st century due to Russia's annexation of Crimea. The biggest and most politically ac-

28 Rumelili, "Ontological (in)security"

29 Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, p. 47

30 Ibid., p. 49-50

31 Ibid, p. 52

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., p. 179

34 Neringa Klumbytė, "Sovereign Uncertainty and the Dangers to Liberalism at the Baltic Frontier", *Slavic Review*, Vol. 78, No 2, 2019, p. 336-347.

35 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*, New York, Polity Press, 1991, cited in Rumelili "Ontological (In)security and Peace Anxieties", p. 11

36 Didem Buhari-Gulmez, "Religion and Nation-Building in Crimea", Rico Isaacs and Abel Polese (eds.), *Nation-Building and Identity in the post-Soviet Space: New Tools and Approaches*, London, Routledge, 2016.

37 Hakan Kırımlı, "Soviet Educational and Cultural Policies Toward the Crimean Tatars in Exile (1944–1987)", *Central Asian Survey*, Vol. 8, No 1, 1989, p. 69–88.

tive diaspora is based in Turkey. A narrative of "crisis" based on the collective memory of deportation has been useful to reconcile the differences within the Crimean Tatar diaspora.[38]

Even though the Lithuanian American diaspora has been able to practice its culture and language after World War II, there are anxieties such as "sovereign uncertainty" and "fragmented biographical narrative", as well as doubts about the future survival of their culture in a strongly assimilationist US. The Lithuanian diaspora has its "own" state (Lithuania) but the 2013-14 crisis in Ukraine and events in 2022 revealed insecurities associated with living in Russia's neighbourhood (hence "sovereign uncertainty"). The survey of publications issued by the Lithuanian diaspora in the US suggests that Russia's aggressive foreign policy is one of the main topics in these publications and even a way for the members of the diaspora to maintain their "Lithuanianness."[39] Many Lithuanians in the US, especially from the second wave (who went to the US after World War II) still embrace strong anti-Russian feelings, associating Russia with the Soviet Union.

With the influx of new immigrants after the disintegration of the USSR (the so-called "third wave"), the diaspora became much more diverse and much less united in terms of its political goals and aspirations (hence "fractured sense of identity"). Many of the "newer" immigrants were much less interested in political life than those who went to the US after World War II. Often referred to as "economic immigrants", they clung to their ethnic identity and "Lithuanianness" as a way to cope with economic uncertainties.[40] Many descendants of the "second" wave became fully integrated into American culture. However, their upbringing developed a strong sense of "ethnic duty" and devotion to "the Lithuanian cause," including opposition to Russian foreign policy.[41]

Unresolved Traumas: Soviet Deportation as the "chosen trauma"

Both Crimean Tatars and Lithuanians experienced Nazi invasion and Soviet mass deportation in the 1940s. Their diasporas emphasize the Soviet deportation as their "chosen trauma".[42] Chosen trauma is "the shared mental representation of a massive trauma that the group's ancestors suffered at the hand of an enemy" that "is reactivated in order to support the group's threatened identity".[43] Both diasporas suffer simultaneously from anxiety of death, meaninglessness, and condemnation. Yet, there is a significant difference between their traumatic experiences. The Crimean Tatars were living in autonomous Crimea under the Soviet sovereignty before the 1944 deportation. Lithuanians were living in their own nation-state when they experienced Soviet occupation in 1940, with mass deportation of

38 Didem Buhari-Gulmez, "'Crisis' and Crimean Tatars: Discourses of Self-Determination in Flux", Ėrica Resende, Dovilė Budrytė and Didem Buhari-Gulmez (eds.), *Crisis and Change in Post-Cold War International Relations: Ukraine in a Comparative Perspective*, London & New York, Palgrave, 2018, p. 203-224.

39 Dovilė Šarkūnaitė, "Identity Formation in the Lithuanian Diaspora Press", *Lituanus*, Vol. 64, No 1, 2018, p. 9-31.

40 Vytis Čiubrinskas, "Uncertainties of Transnational Belonging: Homeland Nationalism and Cultural Citizenship of Lithuanian Immigrants in the USA", *Electronic Journal of Folklore*, https://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol78/ciubrinskas.pdf (Accessed 18 June 2021).

41 Interviewees, including Marius Markevičius, the film maker, praised Saturday Lithuanian language schools for promoting Lithuanianness.

42 Özçelik, "The Russian Occupation", p. 31. According to Prof. Jan-Peter Abraham, "the collective deportation on 18th May 1944 was the absolutely dominating trauma among almost all of our Tatar respondents" (personal correspondence, 13 November 2021)

43 Vamık Volkan, "Transgenerational Transmissions and Chosen Traumas: An Aspect of Large-Group Identity", *Group Analysis*, Vol. 34, No 1, 2001, p. 87-88.

the "enemies of the state" (including Lithuania's intelligentsia and members of government) on June 14, 1941. From 1940 to 1941, approximately 23,000 Lithuanians suffered from Soviet repression, deportation, or mass murder.[44]

During the Nazi occupation, around 196,000 Lithuanian Jews were murdered. Only five to ten percent of Lithuanian Jews survived until the end of World War II.[45] This trauma was followed by the second Soviet occupation that involved several waves of mass deportations, a flight to the West, and a fierce anti-Soviet resistance war, which lasted until the 1950s. Around 118,000 of Lithuania's residents were deported to Siberia and elsewhere between 1944-1953.[46]

As an indigenous community of the Crimean peninsula, the Crimean Tatars experienced multiple traumas after the 1783 Russian annexation. Between 1921-1941, half of the Crimean Tatars was lost due to famine, deportation and murders.[47] After invading Crimea in October 1941, the Nazis recruited Crimean Tatar "self-defense battalions" against the Soviet pillages. While the Soviets officially accused them of voluntarily joining the Nazi enemy, many Crimean Tatars participated in the underground anti-Nazi attacks.[48] Regardless, after recapturing Crimea in May 1944, Stalin deported all Crimean Tatars to Uzbekistan and the Urals. According to Soviet archives, the number of deported people was 183,155, whereas Crimean Tatars claim that it was 450,000.[49]

The 1944 deportation is the main source of Crimean Tatar trauma and anxiety.[50] According to survivor testimonies, 40 per cent of the Crimean Tatars died during the deportation. Further, Stalin sought to delete the Tatars from Crimean history by changing textbooks, street names and destroying cultural monuments.[51] Khrushchev annexed the Crimean oblast to Ukraine in 1954. While all other deported communities were gradually allowed to return after Stalin's death, Crimean Tatars could only return in the 1990s.

Around 250,000 Crimean Tatars returned to the autonomous Crimea within the newly independent Ukraine and encountered serious problems regarding residence permits, housing, social services, employment, and political representation. They built a political representative agency, "Meclis", and organized commemorative events around the 1944 deportation. In March 2014, Russia officially annexed Crimea at the protest of Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars and Western powers. This maneuver was interpreted as a reaction to Ukraine's growing interest in joining NATO and the EU. After the annexation, many Crimean Tatar dissidents disappeared, were imprisoned for extremism or barred entry to Crimea. Their commemoration of deportation, Crimean Tatar TV channel and Meclis were banned.[52] As the fight in Eastern Ukraine continues, Russian expansionism increases anxieties not only in Ukraine but also in Central and Eastern Europe.[53]

44 "Lietuvos gyventojų netektys 1940-1986 ir 1991 metais", http://www.genocid.lt/centras/lt/147/c (Accessed 18 June 2021).

45 Arūnas Bubnys, "Įvadas", Arūnas Bubnys (ed.), *Holokaustas Lietuvoje 1941–1944 m.*, Vilnius, Lietuvos gyventojų genocido ir rezistencijos tyrimo centras, 2011, p. 5.

46 "Lietuvos gyventojų netektys".

47 Greta Uehling, *Beyond Memory: The Crimean Tatars' Deportation and Return*, London & New York, Palgrave, 2004.

48 Williams, "The Hidden Ethnic Cleansing".

49 Uehling, *Beyond Memory*.

50 Buhari-Gulmez, "'Crisis' and Crimean Tatars".

51 Fisher, The Crimean Tatars, p. 171.

52 Human Rights Watch 2014. "Rights in Retreat: Abuses in Crimea", 17 November, 2014.

53 James Shotter, "Poland's Prime Minister Brands Macron "Irresponsible" on NATO", *Financial*

Resurgent Traumas, Diasporic Anxieties and Mnemonic Conflicts

Anxieties that derive from mnemonic conflicts (conflict over memory) about different versions of the past (including the memory of the Nazi invasion and mass deportation by the Soviets) are embraced by different actors, including diasporas. Similarly, to states, the creation of a biographical story drawing on one version of the past (such as memory of deportation as the "chosen trauma") is essential for both diasporic identities and ontological security. Memory "helps create and sustain a particular biographical narrative through the use of historical signposts and careful curating of selected events, setbacks and triumphs, myths and symbols."[54] The leadership of diasporic communities reconstructs and promotes a particular version of history through certain rituals, speech acts and cultural products.

"Mnemonic conflicts" derive from the clash of different accounts of the past that affect the status, fate and the strategic resources claimed by different actors. When a dominant memory is challenged by other actors, there is anxiety and temptation to "defend memory," which leads to even more insecurity.[55] It becomes a "critical situation," which can destabilise both the identity and the relationships of the actor (such as diaspora).[56] For the Lithuanian community, the memory of the Nazi invasion has been the source of many mnemonic conflicts with Russia. This memory coincides with the so-called June rebellion, an uprising to restore Lithuania's independence, and the start of the Holocaust (in which many Lithuanians participated). For Crimean Tatars, the memory of the Nazi invasion similarly provokes mnemonic conflict with Russia. While the Crimean Tatar collective memory is reconstructed around the image of "unrecognized patriots who served the Motherland"[57], more than 70 per cent of Crimean Russians still saw the Crimean Tatars as "traitors".[58]

Lithuanian American and Crimean Tatar diasporas experience renewed anxieties associated with the resurgence of Russian power in Eastern Europe. The 2014 Crimean Annexation resuscitated the memory of deportation trauma. Crimean Tatar deportation survivors are anxious that "this hidden genocide, a living memorial to their people's tragedy in every sense, is dying off and soon there will be no more living witnesses to this crime which has gone largely unnoticed by the outside world".[59] Their return to Crimea in the 1990s had only been possible due to the "trans-generational transfers of grievance served as a primary marker of Crimean Tatar identity during the exile years".[60] Post-annexation campaigns to explain the Crimean Tatar suffering to the world through memory politics increased with the support of Ukraine (re)claiming sovereignty over Crimea.

For Lithuanians, the events during June 1941, when the Nazi occupation quickly followed the Soviet occupation and mass deportation, as well as subsequent deportations after 1944, are sources of long-lasting anxieties and unresolved traumatic memories. The Baltic diaspora politicians, such as Mykolas Krupavičius, the leader of VLIK (Supreme Committee for the Liberation of Lithuania,

Times, 10 November 2019, https://www.ft.com/content/a0a71b16-03a1-11ea-a984-fbbacad9e7dd (Accessed 18 June 2021).

54 Jelena Subotić, *Yellow Star, Red Star: Holocaust Remembrance after Communism*, Ithaca NY, Cornell University Press, 2019, p. 28.

55 Mälksoo, "'Memory Must be Defended".

56 Ibid.

57 Uehling, *Beyond Memory*, p. 50

58 Mustafa Cemiloğlu, "Crimean Tatars: Problems and Prospects", Speech at the European Parliament, 17 March 2010.

59 Williams, "The Hidden Ethnic Cleansing", p. 324

60 Ibid., p. 345

a political group operating from Germany and the US after World War II), started using the term "genocide" to describe deportations and repressions in Soviet-occupied Lithuania. Occupation by the Soviet Union was conceptualized as an "existential threat" to Lithuania and Lithuanians.[61]. Similar discourse was used by Adolfas Damušis, the member of the Lithuanian provisional government active in 1941 under the Nazi occupation[62] who argued that the deportation efforts were focused "on the core of the Lithuanian nation—the family" (as there were instances when entire families were deported) and referred to the Gulag as "concentration camps".[63]

In contrast, the Holocaust, including the Lithuanian participation in it, especially in June 1941, was mostly suppressed in the discourses created by the Lithuanian diaspora in the West. The June 1941 rebellion led by Lithuanians (which coincided with the start of the Holocaust) was commemorated as a popular uprising against Soviet occupation, when "the restoration of the sovereignty of Lithuania" was announced on June 23, 1941, just one day after the invasion of Lithuania by Nazi Germany.[64] For many members of the Lithuanian diaspora, the uprising represented a tragic attempt to restore Lithuania's independence—a story presented in a romantic way. The Lithuanian community has attempted to create a selective narrative of the past, focusing on suffering, primarily on the trauma of deportation. June 14 (the day of mass deportations in 1941) has been commemorated by the Lithuanian diaspora in the US as a "Baltic Holocaust" day, strategically forgetting the beginning of the Jewish holocaust (which also took place in June 1941) and the Lithuanian participation in it.

Both in Lithuania and outside, Russia's recent aggressive policy in Eastern Europe has strengthened what can be described as a "fighting and suffering" memory paradigm. Constructed by the Lithuanian diaspora in the West after World War II, this narrative focuses on the suffering (and even "genocide") of the Lithuanian nation in 1941 and after World War II from repressions and deportations pursued by Stalin. It also lionizes the participants of anti-Soviet resistance, some of whom, including Generolas Vėtra (Jonas Noreika), collaborated with the Nazis. However, the "fighting and suffering" narrative has served to tame the anxiety of only part of the Lithuanian community (both in Lithuania and abroad). Some claimed that they need to face the Nazi past honestly.[65]

Accordingly, in both diasporas, there are similarly complex processes at work that involve mnemonic conflicts and anxieties that increased with the resurgence of Russia. Different types of anxieties lead to diverse strategies of cultural diplomacy and political representation. The following part provides a comparative analysis of the historical films "Haytarma" (2013) and "Ashes in the Snow" (2018), made by the Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian American diasporas seeking to alleviate their rising anxieties through cultural diplomacy. Apart from the anxiety of death that is clearly highlighted in both films, the diasporic efforts to tame the anxieties of meaninglessness and condemnation are also visible.

61 Arvydas Anušauskas, "'Genocido' sąvoka Lietuvos istorijoje", *Genocidas ir rezistencija*, Vol. 2, No 10, 2001, p. 105.

62 Adolfas Damušis, *Lithuania against Soviet and Nazi Aggression*, Chicago, The American Foundation for Lithuanian Research, 1998.

63 Anušauskas, "'Genocido' sąvoka Lietuvos istorijoje", p. 105.

64 Damušis, *Lithuania against Soviet and Nazi Aggression* p. 83.

65 For example, the cover of the book written by Silvia Foti, Vėtra's granddaughter, includes the following quote from the New York Times: "Blaming the Russian propaganda has suddenly become a lot more difficult thanks to Mr. Noreika's own granddaughter Silvia Foti". Silvia Foti, The Nazi's Granddaughter: How I Discovered My Father Was a War Criminal, Washington D.C., Regnery History, 2021

Anxiety of Fate and Death: "A Knock on the Door"

The story featured in "Ashes in the Snow" focuses on Lina who is an aspiring teenage artist who is preparing for art school and a holiday in Palanga, a sea resort. Suddenly, one night in June 1941, there is a loud knock on the door. Her beautiful apartment in Kaunas is invaded by NKVD, Soviet secret police, who forces her mother, her younger brother Jonas, and her into a car and then deports them to Altay in Siberia. There, Lina falls in love with Andrius, a young man who has been deported to the same camp. The two do not stay together because commander Komarov orders her family to be transferred to a small island in the Laptev Sea, a land of eternal frost. Lina's mother dies there, but she and her brother are freed by Kretzky, a half-Ukrainian NKVD commander who later kills himself.

A knock on the door by NKVD is also a critical turning point in the fate of the Crimean Tatars in the film "Haytarma". Amethan Sultan and his family never saw it coming. They were shocked when NKVD officials suddenly attacked them and revealed the Soviet decision to deport and denounce all Crimean Tatars as traitors. Amethan Sultan struggled with the officers and tried to explain that he was officially a hero of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, he was to be executed and his friends from the Soviet army would not come to his aid. Sultan also saw the woman he loved, Feride, and her family carried away at gunpoint by NKVD. It was the last time he saw her.

Death is one of the most prominent, perhaps *the* most prominent, themes in both films. There are multiple terrifying scenes of death, and often the characters are faced with anticipation of death. While forcing people to the station for mass deportation, the NKVD killed without hesitation those who resisted, including Amethan Sultan's friend. Six elderly Crimean Tatar men talked to the commander and said that they would choose death over leaving their homeland. The commander coldheartedly executed them saying they knew better where they wanted to be. The NKVD is shown shooting at women and elderly who refused to get on the train. A large traumatized crowd of elderly, children and women who are violently pushed into cattle wagons find it difficult to breathe and faint. According to the film, 109,956 Crimean Tatars died from famine and diseases during the deportation.

In "Ashes in the Snow", the very first mention of death takes place during a scene of mass deportation, when a NKVD team is pushing people into cattle wagons. An old man utters: "They will kill us all", thus foreshadowing that many worse things will follow this scene of mass violence. The man's prediction comes true. One of the first horrors experienced by Lina and the other deportees on the way to Altay is the death of an infant on the train. Later the mother of the infant is killed by a cruel NKVD commander. The death of Lina's mother, on the island in the Laptev Sea, is one of the most dramatic and most moving scenes of the film. Overall, we argue that the omnipresence of death in both films helps justify the recent resurgence of anxiety of fate and death in both communities. Both films seek to refute the Russian claim that the communities in question deserved to be deported. These films can be seen as crucial cases of diaspora diplomacy defending the nation in the ongoing mnemonic conflicts that threaten their national "being".

Anxiety of Emptiness and Meaninglessness: "Remember Who We Are"

Both films stress that the communities in question are authentic and distinct with a meaningful cultural identity. "Haytarma" is named after a Crimean Tatar folkloric dance. It starts with a note that Haytarma is "a symbol of eternal course of life" and that the film was made in the memory of grandparents,

parents and "to all those without whom we, our children, our memory and our culture would not exist". Throughout the film, Crimean Tatars are shown as wearing traditional Turkish-Muslim clothing, speaking the Crimean Tatar language, respecting traditions such as praying while burying the dead, kissing the hands of the elderly, performing folkloric dances (during Amethan Sultan's visit to his parents in Alupka) and singing Crimean Tatar laments during the deportation. Also, "Haytarma" shows a Crimean Tatar woman being dragged by the NKVD to the station for deportation while shouting that her baby was left behind. NKVD officers could not understand her because she was speaking in Crimean Tatar. This scene emphasizes a coherent sense of identity: the Crimean Tatar nation speaks Crimean Tatar, not Russian. An elderly woman stresses that "God (Quran), memory (photo), and bread" would ensure the nation's survival.

"Ashes in the Snow" depicts Lina's father as heroically opposing the Soviet regime (and this was one of the reasons why Lina's family was deported to Siberia). The deportees are portrayed as condemning the regime as they are singing the Lithuanian national anthem on the way to Altay. Similar to "Haytarma", one of the points made in the films well as in memoirs is the desire of deportees to "cling" to their traditional values. This is touted as a way to cope with adversity during the deportation. In "Ashes in the Snow", the protagonists cling to their traditional values (Catholicism, when burying their dead, and commitment to nationalism). In such a tragic situation, instead of doubting traditional systems of meaning, the deportees are portrayed as clinging to their traditional beliefs.

Anxiety of Guilt and Condemnation: Reclaiming Innocence

Anxiety of guilt and condemnation is particularly important because the past condemnation continues to affect the present image of the community and serves to legitimize past and present violence against the community. Hence, it is not a coincidence that "Haytarma" is based on the life of Amethan Sultan, a Soviet aviator who was twice awarded the title "hero of the Soviet Union". Sultan was of Crimean Tatar-Dagestani origin, and he personally witnessed the 1944 deportation. Throughout the film, he is shown wearing the Soviet uniform.

Both films strongly emphasize the innocence of the victims. The victims are shocked by the accusations against them, the sudden forced deportation without any notice and other injustices. "Haytarma" depicts Amethan Sultan's father as a strong loyalist who wholeheartedly celebrates Soviet victory over the Nazis. Amethan Sultan aided by Major Krotov helps his parents escape the deportation. While escaping, Amethan's mother turns to his father in despair and asks, "Who did it? Is this YOUR Stalin?". Amethan's father answers in disbelief, "He doesn't know about what is going on here". Even while escaping deportation, Amethan's father is in disbelief that his loyalty is disregarded by the Soviets. The NKVD officers who came to take people to the station, shout at a former Soviet soldier of Crimean Tatar origin, "You are not Soviet anymore".

Similarly, "Ashes in the Snow" stresses the immorality of the persecutors. When Lina's mother (Elena Vilkienė) asks Kretzky (a half-Ukrainian NKVD commander) to stop the train to bury the dead infant, he refuses to do it, arguing that there are no dead bodies in the train. Showing her disgust, Elena remarks (referring to the NKVD officers responsible for the deportation), "Devils". When they arrived in the camp, Elena tries to mobilize the deportees not to sign papers acknowledging their own "guilt". However, her attempts are not successful. The deportees are physically forced to sign the papers, thus officially declaring them "enemies of the state". These scenes underline the efforts of the

filmmakers to demonstrate the innocence of the deportees, despite undergoing treatment as criminals, traitors, and being labeled as "enemies of the state".

Both films offer a "significant silence" about Nazi collaboration. While the Lithuanian film, "Ashes in the Snow", focuses on the June 14, 1941 deportations that took place before the German occupation later the same month, "Haytarma" shows Amethan Sultan telling his commander in a mocking way that he had considered joining the Nazi side but could not because the latter had retreated. Rather than explicitly providing a counter-narrative of non-collaboration, the filmmakers choose to ignore that specific part of the Russian historical accusations.-According to ethnographic interviews with survivors, even the Crimean Tatars who had been personally tortured by the Nazis remain more resentful of the Soviets.[66] They found themselves falsely accused and deeply betrayed by the Soviet Union.[67] It was almost impossible to know who was on whose side due to high secrecy and deception tactics employed by both Soviet and Nazi forces.[68] Crimean Tatar anxiety about being condemned of both treason and radicalism continues today.[69]

In sum, the selected diasporic films on Soviet deportation demonstrate all three types of anxieties, namely, the anxieties of death, meaninglessness, and condemnation. A strategy of cultural diplomacy deriving from the anxiety of death is used to emphasize the sudden, unpredictable and irreversible nature of the deportation determined by a hostile Other who had no mercy nor sympathy for human rights. The films offer a black and white account drawing a clear line between the Evil Other and the Self that is unjustly persecuted in an abrupt and lethal way. Anxiety of meaninglessness leads the filmmakers to demonstrate various cultural ceremonial performances that distinguish the communities in question as authentic. Yet, the anxiety of condemnation may lead to self-contradictory strategies of cultural diplomacy. For instance, the filmmakers of "Haytarma" emphasize the Crimean Tatar loyalty to Stalin (contradicting Crimean Tatar autonomy) with a non-Islamic ceremony of drinking wine (contradicting Islamic culture). Hence, different anxieties may lead to diverse and conflicting strategies of cultural diplomacy.

Fear of Russia: From "Unknown Unknowns" to "Known Unknowns"

Both films become part of a diasporic cultural diplomacy attempting to turn heightened anxieties into a more visible, concrete object of fear (Putin's Russia) for easier political mobilization. According to Kırımlı, while the Crimean Tatar and Lithuanian diasporas were divided on several issues, the cultural reconstruction of the deportation trauma triggered by the Russian annexation of Crimea has unified them.[70] In December 2015, the Crimean Tatar diaspora's campaigns led the Ukrainian Parliament to declare 18 May as the "Day of Remembrance for the victims of the Crimean Tatar genocide". On 18 May 2020, the Ukrainian Embassy to Turkey called on the international community to recognize the Crimean Tatar "genocide" emphasizing the link between their past and current suffering:

66 Uehling, *Beyond Memory*.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

69 Zafer Karatay, "Crimean Tatars between Russia and Ukraine", 18 May 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Gbc4rrmGPE (Accessed 18 June 2021).

70 Personal statement, 16 December 2021, Izmir. Also, see Buhari-Gulmez "'Crisis' and Crimean Tatars".

> More than 230 thousand Crimean Tatars were deported from Crimea; 110 thousand of them died. The tragedy of the Crimean Tatar people was repeated in 2014 when the Russian Federation occupied Crimea, which is an integral part of Ukraine…The atmosphere of fear, physical and psychological pressure has forced numerous Ukrainian citizens, including more than 20,000 Crimean Tatars, to leave the occupied peninsula and move to mainland Ukraine.[71]

Foreign Ministers of Ukraine, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland published a joint statement accusing Russia of continuing "Stalin's totalitarian regime and criminal policy in the 21st century in the temporarily occupied Crimea".[72] Similarly, three Baltic presidents made a joint statement condemning Russia's memory wars and violation of Georgian and Ukrainian borders.[73]

Moreover, Ukraine won the 2016 Eurovision song contest with a Crimean Tatar song "1944", performed by Jamala, reminding the world of Crimean Tatar suffering at Stalin's hands. Jamala emphasized the post-2014 suffering of the Crimean Tatars too: "Some have disappeared without a trace. And that is terrifying. I would not want to see history repeat itself".[74]

On 5 April 2018, the President of Lithuania attended the screening of "Ashes in the Snow" at the Capitol building together with US legislators and stated that the film offered "a true story about Lithuania's destiny, deportations, sufferings, and unconditional fight for freedom" and "a worldwide testimony of truth about a nation that resisted and survived annihilation."[75] On 14 June 2021, the Lithuanian Embassy in Washington DC organized a virtual panel on "A Day of Mourning and Hope-The Living Memory of Soviet Deportees and Displaced Persons of the Baltic States" attended by the ambassadors of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to the US as well as Rūta Šepetys, the author of the book that inspired the film. "Ashes in the Snow" was also screened in Brussels in 2019 by the Lithuanian Embassies to Belgium and to the EU.

Similarly, the Mission of Ukraine to the EU officially published a call to watch "Haytarma" "in dedication to the day of remembrance of the victims of genocide of the Crimean Tatar people" and invited "our European partners in Brussels" to watch "Haytarma" and "spread the word about this tragedy of the Crimean Tatar people."[76] It also reminded that the Crimean Tatar channel ATR that had produced the film "was forced to leave Crimea after Russia's occupation"[77]. Ukrainian Embassies (in the US, Canada, Turkey, Germany, Montenegro, the UK and Saudi Arabia) actively screened "Haytarma" at diplomatic platforms and international film festivals (such as, Kimera and Trieste in Italy

71 Embassy of Ukraine in Turkey, https://turkey.mfa.gov.ua/en/news/press-release-regarding-76th-anniversary-deportation-crimean-tatars-and-commemoration-victims-genocide-crimean-tatar-people (Accessed 18 June 2021).

72 Mission of Ukraine to the EU, https://ukraine-eu.mfa.gov.ua/en/news/spilna-zayava-ministriv-zakordonnih-sprav-ukrayini-estoniyi-gruziyi-latviyi-litvi-ta-polshchi-do-76-h-rokovin-deportaciyi-krimskotatarskogo-narodu (Accessed 16 June 2021).

73 Vabariigi Presidendi Kanselei, "14 June. Statement by the Presidents of the Baltic States", https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDxZvovKmvg (Accessed 18 June 2021).

74 Viktoria Veselova and Oleksandra Melnykova, https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-jamala-eurovision-crimean-tatar-singer/27541517.html (Accessed 18 June 2021).

75 President of the Republic of Lithuania, 5 April 2018, https://www.lrp.lt/en/media-center/news/the-president-ashes-in-the-snow-a-testimony-of-truth-about-lithuania/29745 (Accessed 12 December 2021).

76 Mission of Ukraine to the EU, 18 May 2020, https://ukraine-eu.mfa.gov.ua/en/news/invitation-watch-online-haytarma-film-about-stalins-deportation-crimean-tatars (Accessed 12 December 2021).

77 Ibid.

and Golden Orange in Turkey).[78] "Haytarma" won several prizes, including the Russian Academy of Cinema Arts and Science's 2014 Nika film award.

However, Russia banned the screening of "Haytarma" in Russia. Vladimir Andreev, Russian Consul-General in Crimea, discouraged Russian pilots (Amethan Sultan's trainees) from attending the premiere of the film in Crimea.[79] Andreev stated to the press that "Haytarma" distorted history by overlooking the mass treason of Crimean Tatars against Russians. His comments incited protests in Crimea, which led to an apology from the Russian Foreign Ministry and the resignation of Andreev.[80] Both Ukraine and Lithuania internationally advocate that Soviet repressions, including deportations, should be recognized as "genocide" and find support in the West.[81] Hence, the selected historical films provide an excellent example of diasporic cultural diplomacy having some political effects on memory wars and great power rivalry in the 21st century.

Concluding Remarks

The literature on ontological security in IR demonstrates the importance of memory in construction of biographical narratives of states. This literature shows that challenges to these narratives may result in new crises and anxiety, destabilizing the identities of the states and their relations with other actors. In other words, mnemonic conflicts can become new "critical situations." However, there are many important questions that remain unanswered in this literature. For instance, what is the role of non-state actors, such as diasporas, in the construction of state biographical narratives and mnemonic conflicts? How do diasporas deal with their own ontological insecurities and anxieties? What is the relationship between anxiety experienced by non-state actors (diasporas) and the securitization process that puts forward a more concrete fear?

Drawing on the case studies of two diasporas and the literature on anxiety in IR, we demonstrated how anxieties felt by these diasporas ("the unknown unknowns") were embodied in their "chosen" "trauma stories"—historical films about deportations pursued by Stalin, thus revealing an attempt to deal with a more concrete fear (of Russia). Our analysis of the films highlighted multiple anxieties reflected in the films—fate and death, emptiness and meaninglessness, anxiety of guilt and condemnation. These films have become part of cultural diplomacy against Russian foreign policy embraced by the diasporas and their home states (Ukraine and Lithuania). Thus demonstrating the ways in which "trauma stories" created by diasporas to tame their own anxieties become part of the biographical narratives of states and potential triggers for new mnemonic conflicts.

Thus, the diaspora efforts to reconstruct cultural traumas in order to deal with their current anxieties should not go unnoticed by IR scholars studying ontological security, securitization, and the construction of mnemonic conflicts. This type of investigation not only expands our horizons about diaspora diplomacy, it also helps bridge memory politics with anxiety/fear literature.

78 "Haytarma" was screened at the annual diplomatic film festival of the Indian Embassy to Riyadh in 2014. Also UK Embassies to Turkey, Germany, the UK, Montenegro, and Saudi Arabia screened the film.

79 Greta Uehling, "The Release of Haytarma and its Aftermath", 12 June 2013, https://iccrimea.org/reports/kaytarma-review1.html (Accessed 12 December 2021).

80 Idil Izmirli, "Russian Consul General to Crimea Resigns Following Offensive Comments About Crimean Tatar Deportation", *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 10, 2013, p. 106.

81 Human Rights Monitoring Institute, "Lithuania: Soviet Repression Deemed Genocide", 2 April 2019.

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