

Williams

The Crimean Tatars

The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation

Taking as its starting point the ethnogenesis of this ethnic group during the Mongol period (13th century), this volume traces their history through Islam, the Ottoman and the Russian Empires (15th and 17th century). The author discusses how Islam, Russian colonial policies and indigenous national movements shaped the collective identity of this victimized ethnic group. Part two deals with the role of forced migration during the Russian colonial period, Soviet nation-building policies and ethnic cleansing in shaping this people's modern national identity. This work therefore also has wider applications for those dealing with the construction of diasporic identities. Taking a comparative approach, it traces the formation of Crimean Tatar diasporas in the Ottoman Balkans, Republican Turkey, and Soviet Central Asia (from 1944). A theme which emerges through the work is the gradual construction of the Crimea as a national homeland by its indigenous Tatar population. It ends with a discussion of the post-Soviet repatriation of the Crimean Tatars to their Russified homeland and the social and identity problems involved.

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