

This Master's thesis focuses on the relationship of the Russian Federation with Post Soviet De Facto States since the annexation of Crimea in 2014. The purpose is to give a cross-case comparison of factors of the two cases: the PMR and Abkhazia. Both of the case studies have their unique sets of challenges and common obstacles towards their respective state-building. The central focus and aim will be to examine any key developments in their relationships with the Russian Federation since 2014. Russia's role as a patron state and their soft power tactics towards their compatriots will also be examined in this study. Various concepts of the patron state relationship are going to be point of focus as well. The issue of whether or not the patron state hinders or helps de facto states in their state-building comes into question. Key words: De facto state, PMR, Abkhazia, State Patronage