



Decolonizing Ukraine: The Indigenous People of Crimea and Pathways to Freedom

Greta Lynn Uehling, *University of Michigan*

Demonstrates how understanding Crimea is essential to understanding Ukraine – and the war with Russia – today

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Description

In this ground-breaking book, distinguished anthropologist Greta Lynn Uehling illuminates the untold stories of Russia's occupation of Crimea from 2014 to the present, revealing the traumas of colonization, foreign occupation, and population displacement. Drawing upon extensive fieldwork in Ukraine, including over 90 personal interviews, Uehling brings her readers into the lives of people who opposed Russia's Crimean operation, many of whom fled for government-controlled Ukraine. Via the narratives of people who traversed perilous geographies and world-altering events, Uehling traces the development of a new sense of social cohesion that encompasses diverse ethnic and religious groups. The result is a compelling story—one of resilience, transformation, and ultimately, the unwavering pursuit of freedom and autonomy for Ukraine, regardless of ethnicity or race.

Key Features

- **Examines the significance of Indigeneity for Ukraine** to argue that Indigenous status affords a framework for upholding human rights and pursuing social justice.
- **Illuminates how interpretations of history influence migration** and are used to carve out internal divisions and reconfigure who does and does not “belong.”
- **Uses critical race theories** to demonstrate how the derussification and decolonization of Ukraine will be incomplete without considering the rights of Crimean Tatars
- **Includes the only ethnographic account of the Crimean blockade**, the most significant civilian resistance to Russian occupation prior to Ukraine's counter-offensive

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Praise

"Greta Uehling manages to cover, in one sweep, many of the most pressing issues in the interpretation of the Russo-Ukrainian War. This includes, among others, the war's start in February 2014, Russia's quick annexation of Crimea, the experience of Crimeans of the preparation and start of Russia's full-scale of Ukraine in 2022, and the broader lessons from Crimea's experience for the ongoing decolonization of Ukraine. This book is a must-read for everybody interested in the interplay between Ukrainian domestic affairs, Crimean Tatar history, and Russian neo-imperialism since 1991."
—**Andreas Umland**, Stockholm Center for Eastern European Studies

"Greta Uehling's captivating storytelling provides poignant insights into the experiences of the people of Crimea, both those who fled Russian occupation, and those who remain on the peninsula. Her rich, ethnographically-grounded account illuminates constructions of indigeneity, homeland, national belonging, and the challenges of decolonization and war."

— **Laada Bilaniuk**, University of Washington, USA

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