

DECOLONIZING UKRAINE

The Indigenous People of Crimea and Pathways to Freedom

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. *Ukraine is Crimea: Indigenous People, Race, and the Pathway to Decolonizing Ukraine* demonstrates how understanding Crimea is essential to understanding Ukraine – and the war with Russia – today.



"I cried, smiled with gratitude, and grieved alongside this book. As a Ukrainian from Crimea, reading it felt like reclaiming a lost piece of myself. The memories I had 'forgotten' were gently unraveled in a delicate process of remembrance and mutual recognition. Each page offered me the missing fragments of my past and present, presented with such tenderness that they seamlessly wove back into the tapestry of my life." — **Elina Beketova, Democracy Fellow at Center for European Policy Analysis**

"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**

"Twenty years after her first book, Uehling follows up with her interlocutors. This time, Crimea – occupied – is a different place and Crimean Tatars – dispersed and oppressed – offer a new story of resilience, resistance, and forbearance. In her nuanced, sensitive, and eloquent way, Uehling shares these Indigenous voices and raises important questions of recognition, Indigenous rights, and decoloniality." — **Mariia Shynkarenko, Institute for Human Studies**

"This is an ethnographically vibrant and animated depiction of the turbulent lives of Crimean Tatars. Uehling offers us a sympathetic portrait of a people wronged, vindicated, and wronged again, as well as a glimpse as to what the future holds for this strategically important indigenous people caught in the crosshairs of geopolitics and competing claims. A must read for anyone interested in the dynamics of the Russian-Ukrainian war." — **Catherine Wanner, author of *Everyday Religiosity and the Politics of Belonging in Ukraine***



Greta Uehling is a cultural anthropologist and Teaching Professor at the University of Michigan, whose work explores how war reshapes social worlds. Her books include *Everyday War: The Conflict over Donbas, Ukraine*—winner of Harvard's Davis Prize—*Decolonizing Ukraine* (2025), and the widely acclaimed *Beyond Memory*, which brought to light the testimonies of survivors of the 1944 deportation of the Crimean Tatars. A former Fulbright Scholar in Ukraine, she is also a Faculty Associate with the Center for Russian, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

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