

## A Hybrid Deportation: Internally Displaced from Crimea in Ukraine

Written by Greta Uehling

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# A Hybrid Deportation: Internally Displaced from Crimea in Ukraine

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GRETA UEHLING, APR 20 2017

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In February 2014, troops lacking military insignia invaded Crimea and swiftly took over key military and strategic sites. A referendum was hastily organised, even though this violated Ukrainian law and international norms. The Russian press claimed that 83 per cent of the electorate had turned out, and that 97 per cent of those who voted were in favour of annexation. While these figures are the ones featured by international news media sources, a report by the President of Russia's Council on Civil Society and Human Rights posted at the president-sovet.ru website showed that only 30 per cent turned out for the referendum, and of those who voted, only half were in favour of becoming part of Russian Federation (Gregory 2014).

With the bogus referendum swept under the rug, a treaty was signed between the newly proclaimed Republic of Crimea and the Russian Federation to initiate a process of integration. The peninsula was so radically transformed during this period that people describe the sudden change by saying they went to sleep in one country, and woke up in another. While the change in power and authority from Ukraine to Russia was greeted with a great deal of fanfare and enthusiasm by the pro-Russian part of the population, a significant pro-Ukrainian demographic felt sufficiently threatened to flee the peninsula. The first wave left very early when it was clear that Ukraine was not going to fight for the territory and the so-called 'little green men' were rapidly gaining control. A second wave followed after the 'referendum,' when the illegal occupation was declared an 'annexation.'

This chapter explores the experience of people from Crimea who became internally displaced within Ukraine. Unfortunately, there are no reliable statistics to tell us the exact number displaced by Russian occupation. In the beginning, statistics were captured by the State Emergency Services of Ukraine, a function that was subsequently transferred to the Ministry of Social Policy. The Deputy-Minister, Vitaliy Vadimovich Muschinin, points out that while some 20,000 IDPs from Crimea have been registered, this is only a fraction of the total number (Personal interview, 27 June 2016). Further calling the estimate of 20,000 IDPs from Crimea into question is the data of the Border Services, which have reported a net out migration from Crimea that is three times higher than the number being reported by the Ministry of Social Policy. IDPs who fled Crimea are now scattered across Ukraine.

In what follows, I first explain my methods in the absence of accurate statistics or a reliable sampling frame. Then, I explore the reasons people left, which suggest Russian policies are designed not only to eliminate dissent but also to remove people. The nation that received these migrants was unfortunately ill-equipped to welcome them. If the government lacked experience and resources to address internal displacement, the Ukrainian people, inspired by the 'Revolution of Dignity', had both the will and the desire to help those who arrived from Crimea. Two main findings stand out: first, population displacement contributed to the development of a new civic identity that has the potential to unite Ukrainians and fill a void that previously existed with regard to Ukrainian national identity. Second, there is

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deep disenchantment with the Ukrainian state that manifests itself most strongly in feelings of having been abandoned and betrayed by the government. The principal task ahead is to resolve the barriers and overcome challenges that stand in the way of IDP integration, so that state and society can function together.

## Methods

To capture the experience of people displaced by the conflict in Ukraine, I carried out 125 interviews over a two-year period. Participant observation at cultural, social, political and educational events helped identify the most salient interview questions. Educational trainings for IDPs were a particularly valuable opportunity to 'hang out' with IDPs and listen to their concerns as they expressed them to one another. Monitoring of the Ukrainian press and social media further enriched my understanding.

The interviewing focused primarily on IDPs from Crimea (26 in 2015 and 18 in 2016). I also interviewed state officials, the staff of NGOs, psychologists, political and cultural leaders, and IDPs from the conflict in the eastern part of Ukraine. People who were not displaced and chose to stay in Crimea were also consulted for this study. Because random sampling of IDPs is not possible,[1] I employed several non-random sampling techniques. Through quota sampling with NGOs that assist IDPs, respondents were selected according to gender, age and education. Gaps in demographic categories were then filled by snowball sampling with the assistance of three key respondents who were well-connected in their communities. I also used opportunistic sampling, inviting people I met at social, cultural, and educational events to respond to my questions. For these interviews, a semi-structured interview schedule was used to explore the IDPs' current thoughts and feelings about displacement. In 2016, follow-up interviews with 12 of the people interviewed in 2015 were carried out to assess the extent to which views changed over time. Since IDPs are dispersed widely across Ukraine, research was carried out in three cities favoured by IDPs and several small towns.

The experts interviewed for this study, some of whom were also IDPs, were selected through purposive sampling. These interviews were tailored to the individual's professional experience and expertise. All of the interview data was transcribed, translated, and analysed using Nvivo software for qualitative analysis. Monitoring of the Ukrainian press and social media sites further enriched the research.

Without an effective sampling frame, this research cannot claim to be representative. The methods combined, however, give the study as much validity as is possible under the circumstances. One important limitation to this research is that for ethical reasons, only the IDPs who felt ready to talk about their experience were interviewed. The thoughts and feelings of those with serious mental health challenges, for example, remain largely outside the scope of this study. This gap is partially filled by interviewing the psychologists and the social workers that serve IDPs. I also learned about people who were too affected by the events to talk about them from friends and family members. IDPs speculated that for the most part, their demographic differs from the one that stayed behind in being relatively more reflective, entrepreneurial and forward-thinking.

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Asked why they left, my respondents stated plainly and unequivocally that they disagreed with the change in power and would not live under the occupational authorities. Thus, a common denominator in the calculus of whether to stay or go is precisely the change in political regime. In addition to the most basic reason of not wanting to live in the Russian Federation, people leave to retain their human rights. Whether it was to have a political opinion, profess a faith, feel safe in their home, or avoid torture and death, all were seeking to preserve fundamental rights.

- **Right to a political opinion.** Individuals active in the Euromaidan protests or any form of pro-Ukrainian politics left to save their lives. The disappearances of colleagues prompted them to pack and leave. For Crimean Tatars, the death of Reshat Ametov is often mentioned. He was stuffed in an unmarked car after a one-man protest and later found dead with signs of torture. At least 20 disappearances of young Crimean Tatar men have followed. Expressing political opinion has become a risk. The Crimean Tatar political leadership, the *Mejlis* (a democratically elected representative body) was declared illegal and its top

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leadership barred from living in Crimea. Now, those who retain an allegiance are vulnerable to repression.

- **Right not to be tortured/right to a private life**. Many people, but especially academics and artists, left after their homes were searched for banned material, or they were invited for informal 'conversations' and subjected to psychological pressure. Searches of homes, in which the occupants must lay face down, and in which important property like computers and cell phones are confiscated, have become routine.
- **Right to religion**. The Ukrainian church was deprived of its premises and forced to operate underground. Similarly, devout and observant Muslims predicted they would be a target of the new Russian authorities. Searches of mosques, banning of even basic religious texts, detentions, and various forms of humiliation such as being booked and having to submit a DNA sample (obtained from urine and spit submitted at police stations) for attending a mosque have followed.
- **Right to education**. During the first two years of occupation, diplomas issued in Crimea were not recognised as valid in mainland Ukraine. Realising this separated them from any viable future outside Crimea, young people and their families left for education. Today there are plans for these diplomas to be translated and converted into official Ukrainian documents. Children in schools are pressured to become pro-Russian and inform on parents who are pro-Ukrainian. Some families stated they left to protect their children from this kind of abuse in the educational system and to preserve family unity.

Given these conditions, it is not surprising that Crimean Tatars label the policies of the *de facto* authorities as a hybrid or hidden deportation:

If in 1944 the Soviet authorities selected the reason of collaboration with the Nazis, and the whole Soviet people just agreed with that, in the 21st century, to simply take a people and deport them is not going to be viewed favourably. Since they can't do that, they create the conditions to make people leave of their own accord. It would be too obvious to use trains' (No. 21, Crimean Tatar male IDP).

I think the 2014 occupation was interpreted through the metaphor of deportation in part because the process of mourning the 1944 deportation has never been completed. While governments may have rushed to proclaim the deportation a genocide in 2014, for over two decades it was proclaimed to be 'humane' by the pro-Russian authorities in Crimea. Thus, Crimea lacked a commonly agreed upon historical narrative. Without adequate ways to remember (memorials to those who perished were routinely vandalised) it remained contentious. The Russian Federation further disrupted the process of mourning when they occupied Crimea in 2014. Now the traumatic past is the present and termed 'hybrid deportation.' Whether or not it is scientifically accurate, the phrase transduces feelings of vulnerability and historical injustice, and captures the ways in which the choice to leave is a forced one.

## The Ukrainian Government's Response

The Ukrainian government was not prepared to deal with flows of internally displaced persons. Ukrainian officials interviewed for this study readily admit a lack of experience that resulted in notable policy and protection gaps. Corruption has also undermined the government's ability to meet the needs of IDPs. Further complicating the ability to respond, recent years have been marked by restructuring and reorganisation, leading to staff turnover, loss of institutional memory and issues with coordination. For example, there has been disagreement between the Verkhovna Rada (the Ukrainian Parliament) and the Presidential administration on the best course of action for IDPs. The legislation put forward by Verkhovna Rada has lacked mechanisms for implementation.

There is also a significant problem with government officials passing responsibility to non-governmental organisations. For example, the government hotline established by the Ministry of Social Policy directed IDPs not to services provided by the Ukrainian government, but to volunteers. Even the process of registering as an IDP has been fraught with problems. Ambiguity in the law about whether or not the *spravka* or document identifying one as an IDP must have a stamp from the Migration Services led to a period of time in which it was impossible to register as an IDP. The Migration Services threw out their stamps according to one interpretation of the law, while regional authorities interpreted the law in a different way and required the stamp. Making matters worse, highly placed officials are rumoured to make negative statements about IDPs publically.

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The government policy has led to a situation in which IDPs do not enjoy a full set of rights in mainland Ukraine. One manifestation of the issue is voting privileges. In July 2015, Ukraine's Parliament approved a law that excludes IDPs from participating in local elections. This obviously bars them from forming local councils and electing village and city mayors. Ukraine's displaced population has essentially been deprived of a voice in making policies, some of which are related to them, the IDPs.

Another example is that according to Ukrainian law, neither birth nor death certificates issued in the territory occupied or controlled by Russia are recognised. In other words, a baby born to Ukrainian parents in the occupied territory is not a Ukrainian citizen. When they bring their child to mainland Ukraine, IDPs are excluded from the stipend the Ukrainian government offers other families for the birth of a child until they go through a complicated legal process. The issues continue with death certificates that are not recognised in continental Ukraine. Although an attorney was able to win benefits for a child by presenting both the child and her medical records to a Ukrainian court, the matter is more complicated after death. 'A corpse?' he mused, 'much more difficult to transport' (Uehling 2015). This affects the ability to inherit property within families – a transaction that is only possible with a valid death certificate. In most countries of the world, the registration of births and deaths is accomplished through a simple administrative process. The Ukrainian government has taken steps to simplify and speed the process, but it is still only accomplished through time consuming and potentially costly court proceedings.

Banking is another example of a skewed policy response to IDPs. One of the first activities of the Ukrainian authorities after the occupation of Crimea was to freeze Crimeans' funds in Ukrainian banks in the occupied territory. Some were able to recover their funds through the painstaking intervention of Diaspora, a Kyiv-based NGO, others lost them irretrievably. What is more, Ukrainian citizens with Crimean *propiskas* cannot open a new bank account in mainland Ukraine. They must first go through the long process of registering at an address in mainland Ukraine. The notion that she lacked the right to open a bank account in her own country led one IDP to exclaim she had been abandoned by Ukraine.

In short, IDPs from the occupied territories think Ukrainian government policies make them second-class citizens, attached to the body politic, but not fully joined as political subjects. The Ukrainian government seems to be 'saying' that the territory has been occupied unlawfully. What IDPs are 'hearing' however, is a form of rejection and condemnation. Thus, the current legal environment is one in which IDPs question whether they genuinely belong, and whether their hopes for incorporation will be fulfilled by a state that fails to offer them full rights.

Ong's insight (1996) that within the seemingly unitary category of citizenship there are in fact hierarchical schemes of difference that intersect in contingent ways is useful here. People holding valid Ukrainian citizenship but formerly residing in Crimea (and bearing a stamp called a *propiska* to that effect in their passports) have a different set of rights in independent Ukraine. Somewhat like the 'whitening' and 'blackening' processes described by Ong (1996, 741) there is a 'marking' by Russian occupation that sets these political subjects apart. IDPs from Crimea, whether Russian, Ukrainian, or indigenous Crimean Tatar, find themselves in a special status. Theoretically, citizenship is supposed to work against this (MacDonald 2012, Bosniak 2006) but Ukrainian citizens who come to the mainland from Crimea are viewed as politically tainted. IDPs said that in the beginning, they were called 'traitors' on account of the bogus referendum, whether they had voted in it or not.

In response to the gaps in services and the lack of harmonisation, the government of Ukraine has recently created a Ministry for the Temporarily Occupied Territories with two directives, one for the occupied territory of Crimea and another for the so-called Anti-terrorist operation (ATO) in the East. This Ministry is, however, only beginning its work. Officials interviewed in late June 2016 stated they see their primary role as coordination. They hope to identify gaps in legislation and services to IDPs. Their influence at this time is limited. Their current budget is limited to the administrative expenses related to supporting a staff of 35 people. They have a plan, which they have submitted for approval to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Economy.

### Work and Housing: Don't Build Us a Ghetto

In addition to civil liberties and legal protection, IDPs who have left homes, jobs, and personal belongings in Russian-

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occupied territory sometimes need financial assistance. At a time when the average monthly income is between 5000 and 6000 UAH, individuals who are registered as IDPs are entitled to a stipend of 440 UAH, the equivalent of 20 USD per month, to offset the cost of housing. Pensioners, invalids and children are eligible to receive 880 UAH a month, the equivalent of 40 USD, but there is a maximum payment of 2400 UAH per family per month. The limitation associated with these benefits is that they are highly contingent and there are a host of factors that make one ineligible. For example, if an individual is unemployed for one month the benefits are cut in half. At the end of two months, they are cut entirely. This results in a situation in which those most in need are least able to receive IDP benefits. Officials in the Ministry of Social Policy suggested the logic behind this policy is to avoid dependency syndromes and provide a reward or incentive to work.

Work is, however, hard to find. Crimean Tatars who left Crimea observe anecdotally that they are an extremely active demographic: none are sitting idle waiting for a handout. Ukrainian officials corroborate this, stating that most Crimean Tatar IDPs have simply found themselves work. NGOs have turned their attention from reception of IDPs to this very question of work, focusing on training IDPs to open small businesses and giving them grants and loans to do so. This is a wise approach; the Ministry of Social Policy observes that there are more job seekers than jobs, and the jobs that are available officially are low paying ones (interview, 27 June 2016).

Concern about their housing arrangement was a strong enough sentiment to appear in my interviewing as the primary reason IDPs stated they do not yet feel at home in mainland Ukraine. The vast majority of IDPs rent housing and are concerned with the high cost of accommodation, the looming possibility that they could be asked to move, and reluctance on the part of the host population to rent to them. IDPs from Crimea have not suffered nearly the stigma or discrimination as those from the East, who are stereotyped as wealthy, spoiled, arrogant, and uncultured. Those from Crimea who wore head covering told stories of repeatedly being denied housing.

Housing is a wedge that separates IDPs from the local population who live in homes and apartments that they own, having only to struggle with the rising cost of utilities, not rent. By contrast, IDPs must pay for housing and utilities while earning the same, and often lower, salaries. Unfortunately, the stipend to offset the cost of housing is too small to make an appreciable difference, and also became a justification for landlords to actually raise rent, further disadvantaging IDPs. Good solutions are still needed: in response to plans for an IDP settlement outside of Kyiv, one IDP exclaimed 'No, don't build us a ghetto.' Indeed, most of the social science literature shows that physical separation or special treatment is likely to impede, rather than facilitate integration.

With an eye toward the future, the government of Ukraine is collaborating with international organisations to resolve the issues of work and housing confronting the internally displaced. The World Bank and the United Nations Development Fund are perceived as the primary donors. In the last two years, the World Bank Group has provided a total of 4.7 billion USD to Ukraine (World Bank 2016). The International Organization for Migration and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees have also been very active partners, distributing humanitarian aid to the neediest families, as well as grants and loans to start businesses to those with promising business proposals. The IOM has supported self-employment and micro-entrepreneurship with funding from the European Union, and the governments of Canada, Norway, Japan, and the United Kingdom (IOM 2016).

## **Inventing Tradition**

In spite of the weak government response to IDPs, Ukrainian civil society was primed to receive them. The Euromaidan protests resulted in the formation of coordinated networks of citizens that turned their attention to IDPs once the Revolution was behind them. I suggest this is significant and could shape the outcome of population displacement far into the future.

Writing before the 'Revolution of Dignity', Shevel notes that unlike Russia, there was no domestic consensus on the definition of the Ukrainian nation (2006, 221). The only compromise among various viewpoints was that those with family origins on the territory of Ukraine were eligible to apply for Ukrainian citizenship, irrespective of ethnic, linguistic, or other characteristics (2006, 221). My research shows that after the conflict with Russia in the east and the occupation of Crimea in the south, there is a clearer sense of what it means to be Ukrainian emerging. This new

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civic identity, initially marked by the recognition of a common enemy in Vladimir Putin, has grown to encompass the identification of a common Ukrainian-Crimean Tatar history, the attenuation of the salience of ethnic and religious differences, and a new sense of political agency.

After the Maidan, we began to construct a civic identity that was not there before. People began to say, 'Now I feel myself to be a citizen of Ukraine.' Most of the residents of Crimea never had the cause or the opportunity to think of themselves as being the citizen of ANY state (No. 32, Russian female IDP in Kyiv).

This statement was made by an ethnically Russian woman who left Sevastopol, underscoring that this is a politically not ethnically-motivated migration, and that the national identity is envisioned as subsuming multiple ethnic groups.

We understood that to be Ukrainian isn't to be Ukrainian ETHNICALLY. It's more like the way the American mind sees things. It's not about NATIONALITY. It's a style of thinking, really. I'm Crimean Tatar [pointing to heart]. I'm Ukrainian [pointing to head] (No. 35, Crimean Tatar female IDP in Kyiv).

The pragmatics and gestural deixis of this conversation suggest that in the structure of feeling following the 'Revolution of Dignity', being Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar are different dimensions (head and heart) of the same body politic. These sentiments were echoed by Ukrainians coming to know the IDPs in their midst.

No longer just the inhabitants of a distant 'island,' IDPs from Crimea are in a unique position to educate. If the average Ukrainian knew very little about Crimea or Crimean Tatars before, they became very curious as a result of the occupation. Cooking clubs, master classes, common apartment block entryways, playgrounds, personal friendships, and the flush of new businesses opened by IDP-entrepreneurs are all bridging this gap. IDPs speculated that they have a special role to play, helping the Ukrainian population as a whole to become psychologically prepared for the day when Crimea is (hopefully) de-occupied.

This newfound sense of 'Ukrainian-ness' relies in part on separating itself from the Soviet and the Russian. Respondents in my study generated discourses that constructed Russians as being fundamentally different and 'other'. These conversations referenced genetic material, history, and values.

They [Russians] are people who are ready to destroy any other people just in order to remain a superpower. That is not a part of who we are, we are free people and we would never allow this to occur (No. 121, Crimean Tatar male IDP, Kherson).

This informant went deeper to hypothesise that Russians carry a genetically-based hatred for Crimean Tatars originating in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Discourses that essentialise the Other are prevalent in this region where the past has never been fully mourned or put away. As Etkind describes, post-Soviet memory 'operates as a living combination of various symbols, periods, and judgments which are experienced simultaneously' (2013, 11). It is specifically 'freedom' that is the primary marker of Ukrainian identity, which not only unites various peoples of Ukraine, but separates them from Russians who presumably do not value freedom of thought or conscience.

FREEDOM! Ukrainians are a freedom loving people. This is a country in which there were no tsars or institutionalised slavery. Ukrainians always elected their khetmen. Then they killed them of course, but that's another story (No. 35, Crimean Tatar female IDP).

While discourses of freedom are hardly surprising in this post-revolutionary moment, the folding in of both Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians under this rubric represents a shift in comparison to the separation and suspicion between the two groups in the past. It is important to underscore that these feelings were not unique to Crimean Tatar IDPs. A common refrain was that whereas it used to be ethnicity that divided people of Ukraine, it is now political loyalty.

A crucial part of this civic identity relies on creating a collective past – a process that resonates with nation-building projects the world over as amply demonstrated in a volume edited by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983). Held to be in common in today's Ukraine are fighting battles on the same side; common wedding rituals; the same melodies in

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music; common toponyms; styles of dress among Tatars and the Cossacks; and values.

The history of the Crimean khanate, and the Crimean Tatars is closely tied to the history of Ukraine, to the people of Ukraine and to Europe, because among other things, it has been shown historically that the first khan was from what is now Poland. These relations are very deep. It's our common history. All the paraphernalia, sharovars [pants worn by Cossacks] the names of the clothes, the weapons, it is all 90 per cent Tatar (No. 39, Crimean Tatar male IDP, Kyiv).

I had a project in which both Ukraine and Crimean Tatar music groups participated. We found that Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian melodies could be heard in the same piece. The music is identical. Yes. We never studied this before, and the [political] events inspired us (No. 6, Crimean Tatar male IDP).

These ideas about a common past from respondents only partially align with scholarly accounts. For example, Wilson places more weight on the social *distance* between Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians. In a discussion of how the Russian and Ukrainian Cossacks were allied with one another, Wilson states, 'Sometimes, the groups were in conflict with each other. At other times they joined forces to fight against their mutual enemy – the Crimean Tatars. In some respects, they were caught between slave-trading Islam and, as Orthodox, Counter-Reformation Catholicism' (2000, 59). Absent from Wilson's account is the acknowledgement that the Cossacks and the Crimean Tatars were on the same side.

There is more alignment when it comes to common cultural markers. As Wilson states, 'Still, the open steppe where they lived provided an opportunity to absorb the dress, vocabulary and methods of military organization from their Islamic enemies' (2000, 59). In other words, respondents in today's Ukraine were beginning to develop a counter-history to the version passed down to them, and are now casting Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars as friends rather than enemies. As one respondent put it:

Well, firstly what I want to say, the object of Ukrainian peoples' pride are the Cossacks, because the Cossacks were the libertines, they loved freedom, and they provided the first seeds of statehood. And the Cossacks, their mode of life, their costumes, their weapons – all of these were Crimean Tatar (No. 25, non-IDP female, Lviv).

How far this reframing of history will proceed will be important to analyse as it continues. It is an open question whether this Ukrainian counter-history will withstand the pressure of Russian narratives and propaganda.

### No Longer Victims

This new sense of Ukrainian-ness was strengthened by a growing awareness of their own political agency, which represents a departure from the past when the dominant narratives had to do with victimisation at the hands of the Soviets, either in the form of the collectivisation, the 1944 deportation or the Holodomor.

The idea for the exhibit arose in conversations in which we said: 'wait a minute. We are used to victimising ourselves – talking about ourselves as victims. We may have been deported, but we emerged victorious, we are strong, and we are going to survive' (No. 43, Crimean Tatar male non-IDP, Kyiv).

To a certain extent, IDPs saw their displacement as a loss that also contained an opportunity. If discourses have the power to create the things of which they speak, IDPs were socially constructing themselves as resilient and creating openings for experiencing themselves as empowered.

I am more than certain that in my generation there will be many notable people. Whether or not they are stars of the screen, they are going to be stars in the human rights field, in the field of management, in politics, because that is what is happening with us. Someone will get a Pulitzer, someone will become a Nobel Prize laureate (No. 3, Crimean Tatar male IDP, Kyiv)

These narratives, rich in the sense of individual political agency, represent an intriguing departure from the kinds of

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narratives that prevailed when I did research in Crimea in the 1990s. Political agency, defined here as seeing oneself as having and making choices to act or not act politically in the world, was a preoccupation of IDPs and is a theme in a majority of my interviews. While the theme of deportation and its legacy of discrimination surfaced in the metaphor of a hybrid deportation, these IDPs problematised any discourse of victimisation or victimhood, and spoke rather of crossing thresholds, turning pages, and otherwise moving forward, based on their own choices.

## Loyalty and Betrayal

The fact that Ukraine did not defend Crimea from Russian incursion, coupled with the lack of rights and lack of benefits in mainland Ukraine have led many IDPs to say they have been betrayed by Ukraine. The word used to describe this, *predatelstvo*, is heavily saturated with meanings because it is also the word that has been used to discredit and disenfranchise Crimean Tatars since the Second World War. After the 2014 occupation, Ukrainians asked why the Crimean Tatars had not stepped forward to do the work of the Ukrainian army and defend the peninsula against Russian takeover. There were also announcements that anyone who voted in the referendum was a traitor. There is a deeply painful irony in this choice of words because of the (unreciprocated) loyalty to Ukraine that Crimean Tatars demonstrated for over two decades in independent Ukraine. In the last 12 months, thoughts of leaving entirely have become more possible. Some IDPs rationalised that with time, the political environment would be improved and the economy would grow. Others lost the hope that led them out of Crimea into mainland Ukraine:

Now I do not feel like a patriot of Ukraine, I am less tied to this country than ever before. Some of my friends have left already and others are planning to leave to Europe or wherever because they don't see a future or any possibilities. This is the very unpleasant effect of all these events (No. 109, Russian female IDP, Lviv).

Indeed, according to the IOM, 11 per cent of the Ukrainian population is located outside of Ukraine (IOM 2011). The displacement of people from Crimea to mainland Ukraine occurred as a result of an unlawful occupation. While traumatic and disruptive to the lives of individual IDPs, this migratory flow also presented Ukraine with an unexpected opportunity to generate its own traditions and become more integrated. It will take concerted effort on the part of state officials, civil society, and of course IDPs themselves to create positive momentum.

## Conclusion: A Double-Edged Sword

It is difficult to predict whether the solidification of Ukrainian national identity occurring in 2015 and 2016 will continue to be ascendant, or whether tropes of treason and betrayal will undermine the forging of new political culture. Concerns that they could be labelled 'traitors,' undergo deportation at the hands of *Ukraine*, or become divided amongst themselves are sobering reminders that the structures of feeling following the 'Revolution of Dignity' are still in solution and have yet to precipitate into robust and longstanding institutions of civil society.

Upon returning from a short visit to aging parents in occupied Crimea, one IDP captured the ambivalence of being displaced in mainland Ukraine by highlighting that it is uncomfortable for migrants whether they return to occupied Crimea or stay in 'free' Ukraine.

I went to visit and when I am home, among my own, on my land, in the house of my birth. Everything is the same, but not the same. There is an inexplicable pressure that's so intense you can't think. I told my husband I was either tired or going crazy. When I come back to mainland Ukraine, I can say anything I want, I can do anything I want, I can go anywhere I want, but my loved ones and my native land are still missing. It's like a double-edged sword (No. 57, Crimean Tatar female IDP, Lviv).

This double-edged sword provides a good cipher for understanding IDP psychology. The hope for loyalty and the fear of betrayal run alongside a celebration of agency and unity, forming the complicated ground upon which state policies and institutions will continue to take shape. While IDPs from Crimea may be relatively small in number, they provide an important window, perhaps even a magnifying glass, on contemporary Ukraine.

## Notes



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[1] Statistics are not disaggregated by ethnicity and only a subset, the most needy IDPs who need state assistance, register. NGOs have databases of beneficiaries, but I could not structure my sample around these data because they were said to be in bad repair (duplicate entries, gaps, omissions) and because they were unwilling to share these data.

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**Greta Uehling** teaches at the Program on International and Comparative Studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where she is also an Associate Faculty Member with the Center for Russian and East European Studies. Currently, she has a Fulbright grant to study internal displacement within Ukraine and is hosted by the Taras Shevchenko National University in Kyiv. Her first book, *Beyond Memory: The Crimean Tatars' Deportation and Return* (2004), is based on ethnographic fieldwork in former Soviet areas.

# **A Hybrid Deportation: Internally Displaced from Crimea in Ukraine**

Written by Greta Uehling