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INDIGENEITY, DISPLACEMENT, AND REGIONAL PLACE ATTACHMENT AMONG IDPS FROM CRIMEA

AUSTIN CHARRON

ABSTRACT. Studies of indigenous place attachments tend to focus on the alternative environmental ontologies that animate and inform indigenous peoples' relationships with place, but rarely engage with the material and psychological impacts of colonialist practices—namely, displacement and dispossession of land. Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 triggered the internal displacement of tens of thousands of Crimeans to mainland Ukraine, including ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, and indigenous Crimean Tatars. This multiethnic flow of internally displaced peoples (IDPs) affords the opportunity to contrast the post-displacement attachments of both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples to the same place. Based on ethnographic fieldwork, this paper argues that Slavs' attachments to Crimea are principally individualistic and rooted in a reverence for the peninsula's natural environment, while Crimean Tatars possess an intergenerational narrative of national belonging to Crimea informed by cyclical patterns and experiences of colonialist displacement from their homeland. *Keywords*: Crimea, indigeneity, internal displacement, Ukraine. *Keywords: Crimea, indigeneity, internal displacement, Ukraine.*

Judging by long-term trends in place-attachment research, the most salient places to which we develop attachments tend to be rather small and intimate in scale; as Maria Lewicka (2011) observes, studies of place attachment focus most frequently on the scale of the home, neighborhood, or city. However, Lewicka also notes that strong place attachments do develop at the regional scale in regions that, for historical reasons, "have acquired strong nationalistic meaning" (212), while others have similarly affirmed that regions may serve as salient sites for the development of place attachment (Cuba and Hummon 1993; Laczko 2005; Shamai, Arnon, and Schnell 2012). Rarely cited among nationally significant regions with a strong sense of identity, the contested Crimean Peninsula is precisely such a region, where well-developed regional identities are informed by competing narratives of the peninsula's underlying significance to its three primary ethno-national communities: Russians, Ukrainians, and indigenous Crimean Tatars (Charron 2016).

Recent events serve to highlight the deeply nationalistic underpinnings of Crimean regional identity, as rhetorical justifications for Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 have relied primarily on a political narrative portraying the region as innately Russian and totemic of Russian national identity (Teper 2016). But while

AUSTIN CHARRON, Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 210 Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive, Madison, WI 53706, USA; [austincharron@gmail.com]

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many in Crimea embrace this essentialist narrative of Crimea's relationship to Russia, some tens of thousands of Crimeans have tacitly rejected it by relocating to the Ukrainian mainland as internally displaced peoples (IDPs). Uninhibited by the Kremlin's strict limitations on speech contradicting this prescribed narrative, Crimean IDPs articulate alternative perspectives on the affective meanings of Crimea influencing their regional identities—perspectives now colored by the experience of displacement.

Internal displacement tends to impact indigenous peoples or other culturally and economically marginalized communities disproportionately to others (Birkeland 2009), but Crimean IDPs represent a broad cross-section of Crimea's population, consisting of ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars, and other small minorities marginalized politically by their rejection of Russia's occupation of Crimea. These unique circumstances present a rare opportunity to consider variations in place attachment among different ethnic communities with a shared experience of displacement from the same region. While the impacts of both sociocultural identities—including ethnicity and indigeneity—and displacement are frequent themes in place-attachment studies, they are seldomly considered in tandem.

Ethnic cleavages play a key role in how Crimean IDPs express attachment to Crimea following their displacement, with Crimean Tatar perspectives diverging significantly from those of Slavic Crimeans—i.e., both Ukrainians and Russians. These divergent perspectives are linked directly to the indigenous status of Crimean Tatars and the legacy of Russian/Soviet colonialism responsible for Crimea's Slavic majority today. But while most studies of indigenous place attachment focus primarily on the alternative ontologies of place that animate indigenous worldviews, little attention has been paid to how indigenous relationships with place are transformed through practices of colonialism—namely, displacement and dispossession of (home)land. Based on ethnographic fieldwork among Crimean IDPs, this paper contrasts Crimean Tatar and Slavic discourses of attachment to Crimea as viewed from a displaced vantage point. I argue that Slavic Crimeans' relationships with Crimea are principally individualistic and rooted in a reverence for Crimea's natural environment, while Crimean Tatars possess an intergenerational narrative of national belonging to Crimea developed during previous periods of displacement, which informs their attachment to Crimea following displaced to mainland Ukraine.

Sociocultural Differences and Displacement in Place Attachment

Places are constructed from complex and often divergent assemblages of meaning that mediate relationships between spaces and the peoples who inhabit them. Doreen Massey describes places as being "constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus" (1994, 154), but also points to the multiplicitous and potentially contradictory

meanings generated at these intersections (155). The conflicting but coexistent meanings imbuing a particular place are a function of culture; theorizing "landscapes" as the "symbolic environments created by human acts of conferring meaning to nature and the environment," Thomasa Gredier and Lorraine Garkovich argue that landscapes fundamentally reflect the values and beliefs of the cultural groups who construct and occupy them (1994, 1). Setha Low similarly argues that the affective bonds groups form with their physical and symbolic environments are extensions of their cultural identities (1992, 166). These works reflect a trend in place-attachment studies wherein sociocultural differences rather than environmental characteristics are emphasized as the primary factor differentiating discourses of place attachment. As Lewicka demonstrates, most published research on place attachment is focused on the "people" dimension of a "people-place-process" nexus at the core of place attachment itself (2011).

Several authors examine correlations between embodied sociocultural identities and the robustness of place perceptions, preferences, and attachments professed by those belonging to particular groups, with many advocating for greater consideration for how racial, ethnic, gendered, sexual, and class identities impact humans' "emotional relationships" with place (Manzo 2005). Many studies pertain to places of leisure and recreation, such as works by Randy Virden and Gordon Walker (1999) and Cassandra Johnson and J. Michael Bowker (2004) that investigate how race and collective memory influence attitudes toward wildlands in the United States. But as Kelley McClinchey (2016) urges, greater attention should be paid to the differences in place attachment among ethno-cultural groups in particular.

In this spirit, several place-attachment studies examine how indigenous and non-indigenous identities engender different relationships with place. As indigenous peoples often ascribe to cosmological, ecological, and metaphysical perspectives that conflict with the hegemonic worldviews espoused by colonizers, indigenous understandings of the relationships between people and their environments are often portrayed as more "spiritual" (Stokols 1990) or phenomenological (Casey 2001; Seamon 2014) than those of non-indigenous peoples. Soren Larsen and Jay Johnson argue that, while Western ontologies of place generally uphold a fundamental disjunction between self and environment, indigenous ontologies typically view place as "a holistic reality in which myriad human and non-human beings are interconnected via genealogies contained within a landscape that is … resonant of cosmological and social origins, events, and encounters" (2012, 10). Taking their argument further, Larsen and Johnson assert that, from indigenous perspectives, place itself is animated by its own inherent agency both independent and generative of the human consciousness embedded within place (2016, 151). It is this holistic understanding of humans' relationships with place that often informs studies contrasting indigenous place attachments with the more "instrumentalist" relationships (Stokols 1990) non-indigenous peoples experience with(in) place.

Several authors compare indigenous and non-indigenous relationships with place empirically, including research into contrasting perceptions of homelessness in Ontario (Kauppi, Pallard, and Shaikh 2013) and the Northwest Territories (J. Christensen 2013) in Canada, and senses of place among various hunter-gatherer societies located across the globe (Thompson 2016). Many empirical studies of indigenous place attachment also focus on alternative ontologies of place in New Zealand (Hay 1998; Carr 2004; Farminer 2013) and Australia (Moreton-Robinson 2003; Carter and others 2018). But while there is a sizeable literature concerning the ontologies that inform indigenous place attachments, rarely do these works engage with the material realities and subaltern positionalities of indigenous peoples that may also influence their relationships with place in colonial contexts. Namely, the effects of displacement from and dispossession of native land—virtually universal to the experiences of indigenous peoples in settler-colonialist societies (Coleman and others 2012)—is lacking in much of the indigenous place-attachment literature.

Several works do explore themes of mobility, displacement, loss, and their effects on place attachment, yet indigenous perspectives are typically absent here, too. Questions of (im)mobility are a recurring theme in place- attachment studies, representing one of the most frequently interrogated factors contributing to variations in attachment to places of residency (Lewicka 2011). Many authors affirm that strength of place attachment is positively correlated with length of residency in a particular place, especially at the scale of neighborhood or city (Hay 1998; Shamai and Ilatov 2005; Hernández and others 2007; Fleury-Bahi, Félonneau, and Marchand 2008; Gustafson 2009a). Others contend that high residential and/or leisurely mobility does not necessarily diminish place attachments, but often fosters multilocal, translocal, and multiscalar attachments instead (Gustafson 2001, 2009a, 2009b, 2014; Cheng 2005; Christensen and Jensen 2011). Some also explore disruptions to or loss of attachment without movement away from a given place, but rather through changes in the place itself (Brown and Perkins 1992; Albrecht 2005).

But as Erika Apfelbaum laments (2000, 1009), political, economic, and environmental upheavals have produced growing numbers of displaced peoples since the mid-twentieth century, and the often traumatic experience of displacement compels consideration for the impact of such "uprootedness" upon place attachments. Lewicka (2014) and Michael Strong (2018) argues that memory is an effective enabler of place attachment among displaced peoples—either to the place left behind or to the place of resettlement through engagement with the place's historical memory as a coping strategy for displacement. Focusing on the plight of marginalized peoples who have been serially displaced within urban contexts, Mindy Thompson Fullilove argues that such chronic precarity often erodes the bonds between people and place, but that attachments may nevertheless be preserved through the (re)imagining of a "place-that-was-and-might-be-again" (2014, 141–42).

Despite the staggering variety of cultures and idiosyncratic relationships with place that they represent, indigenous peoples the world over nevertheless share common experiences of displacement and/or dispossession from native land due to colonial practices of settlement, development, and resource extraction; yet the impacts of these experiences on indigenous place attachment remains conspicuously underresearched. While some studies do frame indigenous relationships to place as, in part, a product of colonization and displacement (Moreton-Robinson 2003; Christensen 2013), much of the relevant literature seeks cultural and/or ontological explanations for differences in how indigenous and non-indigenous peoples relate to place. This work is indeed vital, but we run the risk of cultural essentialism and perpetuating marginalization if we focus too singularly on ontology and ignore the realities of displacement that also shape indigenous relationships with place. For millions of indigenous peoples there is some understanding of a "place-that-was-and-might-be-again" (Fullilove 2014), whether it be the native land from which they have been removed and imagine returning to, or the land on which they remain yet watch as it transforms into something unfamiliar (Albrecht 2005). The case of Crimea, whose annexation in 2014 triggered waves of internal displacement to mainland Ukraine by both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples, offers a unique opportunity to interrogate the varied effects of displacement on place attachment for both groups. Indeed, Crimea is the site of a long historical struggle between indigenous peoples and colonizers that has resulted in cyclical patterns of displacement and dispossession.

Historical Background: Indigeneity and Colonialism in Crimea

The Crimean Peninsula has been a site of both conquest and refuge for millennia, where subsequent waves of invasion and settlement—by Tauris, Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Goths, Huns, Khazars, Greeks, Romans, Turks, Armenians, Italians, Slavs, Mongols, Kipchaks, and Nogais, among others—created a diverse ethno-cultural palimpsest by the mid-thirteenth century. Split between the Ottoman Empire and the Crimean Khanate by 1475, Crimea was jointly ruled by two Islamic authorities, and, as Brian Glynn Williams (2001) argues, it was the influence of a singular religious culture under Islam that first stimulated the coalescence of Crimea's diverse peoples into a hybrid regional ethnos: the Crimean Tatars. Although both religion and language were the main catalysts that drove the synthesis of a unified Crimean Tatar ethnos, Williams (2001) contends that some sense of territorial cohesion and mutual belonging to Crimea likely stimulated the formation of a pan-Crimean regionalism as a central component of a nascent Crimean Tatar identity from an early period. Herein lies the crux of Crimean Tatar ethnic and territorially identity, along with their claims to indigeneity (Belitser 2017): descended from a unique blend of peoples and cultures infused together within

the Crimean Peninsula (Vozgrin 1992; Voitovich 2009), the Crimean Tatars are a product of Crimea's history and geography, a people who could not have appeared anywhere else, and who therefore identify not only as indigenous to Crimea, but autochthonous to it.

Growing in power and eager to compete with rival European empires for territory and influence, the Russian Empire first invaded and annexed Crimea in 1783. For Russia, Crimea was a strategically valuable acquisition that allowed it to project its influence and strength deep into the Black Sea region, but it also had great symbolic value. Crimea represented Russian's first colonial incursion into the "Orient" according to contemporary European perceptions and Orientalist discourses within Russia itself (Schönle 2001), helping to establish Russia's imperial credentials alongside other European empires actively seeking colonial possessions in the wider region (Dickinson 2002). The popular myth of Russian Orthodoxy's inception in Crimea with the 988 baptism of Prince Vladimir of Kyivan Rus' was also used as a justification for annexing Crimea at a time when Russia was fashioning itself into the foremost center of Orthodox Christianity (Kozelsky 2010).

Crimea would continue to acquire symbolic meanings over subsequent centuries within Russia's imperial grasp. Its rugged beauty attracting some of Russia's greatest literary figures of the nineteenth century, Crimea inspired its own distinctive literary tradition within the larger Russian cannon, endearing it to readers throughout the empire (Sasse 2007). Crimea also became one of Russian's premier tourist and health resort destinations by the late-nineteenth century, further endearing the peninsula to the millions of Russian and Soviet citizens who would vacation there. Perhaps most importantly, Crimea withstood intensive sieges and assaults during both the Crimean War (1853-1856) and World War II, resulting in a profound mythology of national perseverance and militarism surrounding the peninsula and especially the twice-destroyed naval port of Sevastopol, transforming the city into a potent symbols of Russian/Soviet patriotism (Plokhy 2000; Qualls 2009). From this heady stew of national symbols and mythologies, a distinctly "Crimean-Russian" identity would eventually materialize and form the foundation of a regional place attachment among the millions of ethnic Russians who settled in Crimea beginning in the late-eighteenth century (Charron 2012, 2016).

But constructing a Russian and, later, Soviet mythology of Crimea necessitated the suppression and erasure of its indigenous culture. Beginning shortly after the 1783 annexation, Crimean lands were confiscated from their indigenous owners and gifted as estates to members of the Russian nobility, reducing many Crimean Tatars to rent-paying serfs or otherwise compelling them to emigrate (Kırımlı 1996). Crimea's early Russian colonizers further implemented repressive measures against the Crimean Tatars with the intent of driving them from the most valuable land; according to Crimean Tatar

political leader Mustafa Dzhemilev, early Russian colonialist tactics in Crimea included,

> terrorism and systematic plundering of the civilian population; seizure of the most fertile lands by high Tsarist officials; the displacement of Crimean Tatars to territories unsuitable for farming, thus depriving them of their means of existence; and the harsh violation of the Crimean Tatars' religious beliefs. (Cemiloglu [Dzhemilev] 1995, 88)

These efforts precipitated the beginnings of a Crimean Tatar exodus from the peninsula, primarily to the Ottoman Empire where an embryonic Crimean Tatar diaspora was beginning to take shape. The trickle of Crimean Tatar emigration became a flood beginning in the 1850s with the Crimean War, when escalating imperial rivalries pitted the Russian Empire against the Ottoman, French, and British empires, with Crimea serving as the theater of war and site of militarized violence on a massive scale. Additional waves of Crimean Tatar emigrants arrived in Ottoman lands during the 1860s when news of Russia's ethnic cleansing of the Circassian people of the North Caucasus sparked fears that Crimean Tatars may be targeted next (Williams 2001).

With the peninsula's population depleted due to extensive emigration and the ravages of the Crimean War, Tsarist authorities began sponsoring the mass settlement of Slavic peasants in Crimea—primarily Russians and Ukrainians—to replenish the region's labor force (Starchenko 2013). Thus began a drastic shift in Crimea's ethnic demographics that would see Crimean Tatars reduced to roughly one-third of the regional population by 1897 (Vodarskii, Eliseeva, and Kabuzan 2003). Kemal Karpat (1985, 66) estimates that the Russian colonization of Crimea displaced at least 1.8 million Crimean Tatars between 1783 and 1922, and while this figure is disputed, Hakan Kırımlı (1996) maintains that the number of Crimean Tatars who left during the nineteenth century at least far exceeds the number that stayed. Those who remained in Crimea were subjected to extreme policies of Russification (Fisher 1978), further contributing to the dilution and loss of Crimean Tatar culture and language as Crimea was gradually remade into a Russian cultural space.

Comprising only about 25 percent of Crimea's population by the time the Soviet Union was formed in 1922, the Crimean Tatars then endured heavy-handed programs of *korenizatsiya*—meaning "root-making" or "indigenization"—meant to sanitize and codify "official" versions of their national culture and language in ways consistent with the socialist and secular ideologies of the state (Williams 2015). While the ultimate objective of korenizatsiya was to reduce national cultures to their cosmetic trappings in order to foster a robust pan-Soviet identity—to render them "national in form, socialist in content," as the credo went—Kaiser (1994) argues that these policies mostly had the opposite effect, increasing perceptions of national difference and raising national consciousness rooted within a prescribed, territorialized homeland. Crimean Tatar's national consciousness and their perception of Crimea as a homeland both

predated the Soviet period, but it was early Soviet policies of korenizatsiya that molded Crimean Tatar national identity into its modern form, however flattened and diluted (Williams 2015).

On the night of May 18, 1944, just days after Crimea had been liberated from Nazi occupation and under direct orders from Joseph Stalin, all Crimean Tatars were forced from their homes and onto cattle cars bound for distant corners of the Soviet Union, but mostly Uzbekistan. The Crimean Tatar deportation was predicated on accusations of their collective collaboration with the Third Reich during its occupation of Crimea, which sources refute despite the accusation's continued promulgation to this day (Fisher 1978; Williams 2001; Pohl 2010). Some estimate that as much as 46 percent of the Crimean Tatar population (110,000 out of 238,500) died in transit during their deportation due to disease, starvation, dehydration, and trauma, and those who survived were officially deprived of their national identity; Soviet authorities banned the use of the Crimean Tatar language and removed Crimean Tatars from the list of recognized nationalities, expecting them to eventually assimilate into the Uzbek or other ethnic populations (Williams 1997, 238). Emptied of its indigenous people, Crimea was now populated almost entirely by Russians and Ukrainians, many of whom now occupied Crimean Tatars' former homes and lands. Mosques and cemeteries throughout the peninsula were destroyed while hundreds of toponyms were Russified, as "the [Soviet] totalitarian regime used its vast, Orwellian resources to obliterate more than five hundred years of Tatar presence in the Crimean Peninsula" (238).

But in spite of the Soviet regime's efforts to erase them from memory, the Crimean Tatars persevered through the remainder of the Soviet period while remaining forbidden from returning to their homeland—an injustice that spawned the Crimean Tatar National Movement. One of the most ambitiously defiant and persistent protest movements in the history of the Soviet Union, the avowedly nonviolent Crimean Tatar National Movement fought singularly through petition and protest for the right to return to Crimea, resulting in criminal charges and imprisonment for many of its leaders (Alexeyeva 1987). The Crimean Tatars' connection to Crimea became the single most salient and galvanizing component of their national identity during this period of exile, functioning as a bulwark against cultural assimilation. Through tight-knit social networks, the memory of Crimea was kept alive and passed to younger generations who had never seen it for themselves, creating an "intergenerational narrative" (Merrill and Fivush 2016) of homeland and trauma from its deprivation (Uehling 2004; Bekirova 2017).

Authorities finally allowed the Crimean Tatars to return to their homeland in 1989, just as the Soviet Union was beginning to fracture under the weight of ethno-national demands for self-determination. Crimea had been transferred from the Russian SFSR to the Ukrainian SSR in 1954, but remained Russified

linguistically and by population, with ethnic Russians now the clear majority. Although they had won a hard-fought battle for the right to live in their homeland, the Crimean Tatars remained politically marginalized and frequently vilified by Slavic Crimeans threatened by their return (Bezverkha 2017). As a pro-Russian separatist movement threatened Crimea's stability during the early 1990s (Sasse 2007), most Crimean Tatars aligned with Kyiv and supported Ukrainian sovereignty over Crimea in order to gird against further Russian incursions—a marriage of political convenience that would blossom into a genuine Ukrainian civic identity for many Crimean Tatars over the following decades (Charron 2018, 2019).

Comprising around 12 percent of the region's population by 2001 (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine 2004), the Crimean Tatars had again become integral yet continually marginalized members of Crimean society by the 2010s, while Crimea itself had become gradually entrenched as a Ukrainian region despite its Russian majority and persistent pro-Russian political sentiments. The latent threat of Russian revanchism became real in February 2014; immediately following the conclusion of Ukraine's Euromaidan Revolution, covert Russian forces seized control of the Crimean government and forced a fraudulent referendum on the region's status, paving the way for formal annexation on March 18, 2014. Russia's second annexation of Crimea—effectively a recolonization—received enthusiastic support from many Slavic Crimeans who remained bitter over the peninsula's placement within Ukraine instead of the Russian Federation since the Soviet Union's demise. Yet many others—particularly Crimean Tatars—favored Ukraine and had supported the Euromaidan's revolutionary thrust away from Russia, and hence were alarmed by Moscow's forceful seizure of Crimea and the oppressive political regime it imposed there (Coynash and Charron 2019). Weighing financial, political, and practical considerations (Charron 2020), tens of thousands of Crimeans of all ethnic backgrounds fled Crimea in the wake of the annexation and resettled in mainland Ukraine as IDPs.

Contrasting Crimean Tatar and Slavic Crimean IDP Attachments to Crimea

Although far outnumbered by the roughly 1.5 million people internally displaced by the violent conflict in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, Crimean IDPs now constitute a sizeable community spread across mainland Ukraine. While no official figures are available regarding the number of IDPs from Crimea specifically, they have been estimated at up to 100,000 (Blair 2016). The following discussion draws from semistructured interviews and focus groups conducted with Crimean IDPs in either Russian or English between September 2015 and July 2017, primarily in the cities of Kyiv (55 interviews, three focus groups) and Lviv (26 interviews). Because the unavailability of data concerning the numbers and demographic characteristics of

Crimean IDPs made obtaining a representative sample of this population impossible, I instead sought a diversity of perspectives according to age, gender, ethnicity, occupation, and education using a variety of nonrandom sampling methods. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling, opportunistic sampling at events and gatherings, and targeted sampling of more prominent members of the Crimean IDP community. Participants were asked a variety of questions pertaining to their experiences of displacement and the roles of both Crimea and Ukraine in their perceptions of territorial belonging.

Strong attachments to Crimea, manifested as a pronounced sense of regional identity, have been documented and theorized since long before the Russian occupation and internal displacement crisis began in 2014 (Kisileva 1999; Korostelina 2008; Knott 2015). But the nature of this regional identity and the affective meaning of Crimea itself varies tremendously for its residents depending on whose "national lens" one views it through (Charron 2012, 2016), and these differences are elucidated more clearly through the experience of displacement. As descendants and benefactors of a Russian/Soviet colonialist project that displaced Crimea's indigenous peoples and imposed an imperialist counternarrative about the region's underlying meaning and significance, Slavic Crimeans never experienced displacement or alienation from Crimea on a wide scale before 2014. Crimean Tatars, on the other hand, tend to view the 2014 annexation through the lens of their own historical memory, revealing it as another iteration in a centuries-long pattern of colonization and displacement that has ultimately strengthened their connection to Crimea and continually reinforced the imperative to return—an imperative with no such parallel among Slavic Crimeans.

Most Crimean Tatars are acutely aware that 2014 marks Russia's second annexation of Crimea, and that their relocation to mainland Ukraine represents their people's third major displacement event following the waves of emigration in the nineteenth century, and the 1944 deportation. "Catherine the Great, Stalin, and now Putin. One and the same, nothing ever changes," one focus group participant told me in frustration while reflecting on the Crimean Tatars' historical fate (Crimean Tatar woman, 40s). "We know what it means to be with Russia," an interviewee explained with regard to the Crimean Tatars' opposition to the 2014 annexation;

> We know the first annexation of Crimea by Catherine [the Great] in the eighteenth century, when much of the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia left … We know the period of deportation in 1944, when half our population died. Historical memory has a very strong impact. (Crimean Tatar man, 20s)

Another interviewee similarly laid the blame for the Crimean Tatars' subjugation squarely at the feet of their colonizers: "[i]n their blood and from their mothers'

milk, Crimean Tatars already have an antipathy toward this country; Russia has brought a lot of trouble to our nation" (Crimean Tatar man, 40s).

Incidentally, several Crimean Tatar interviewees conceptually evoked "mother's milk" as an intergenerational vector of inherited attachment to Crimea. "All of us certainly, from our mothers' milk, we know that Crimea is our homeland," one Uzbekistan-born focus group participant mused, explaining that,

> Our children are like this, and we were like this. I always remember how my grandmother cried as she remembered the place from where she was deported … We probably didn't fully understand this feeling until we arrived in Crimea ourselves, and especially now that we have come to be in this situation, we ourselves think about Crimea and we understand that we are the same [as our grandmothers]. (Crimean Tatar woman, 40s)

This narrative of inherited belonging to Crimea also appears to be instilled within younger generations born in Crimea itself. Having developed personal attachments to their homeland since childhood—a privilege denied to their parents and grandparents—post-Soviet generations of Crimean Tatars nevertheless couch their sense of territorial belonging within this broader intergenerational narrative. As one Crimea-born focus group participant stated,

> We consider our homeland to be our most native place, which is Crimea … We consider this a real homeland, where we were born and where we lived. And our parents consider this their homeland because it was passed to them through their mothers' milk. A person born in any given location will not necessarily consider that place his homeland, but instead the place where his parents or ancestors come from. (Crimean Tatar man, 20s)

In the words of one Crimean Tatar interviewee, "it seems like we are genetically linked to Crimea" (Crimean Tatar woman, 40s).

By contrast, most Slavic Crimeans' ancestral roots in Crimea—if they have any at all—are rather superficial. While some may be able to trace their lineage to the earliest Slavic settlers who arrived in the eighteenth century, anecdotal impressions are that most of Crimea's ethnic Russians and Ukrainians today arrived much more recently. "For 50 years there was really something like an overpopulation in Crimea, different people came and settled there," remarked one Ukrainian interviewee who had moved to Crimea only as a university student, adding, "among our [Slavic] friends and the people we interacted with in Crimea, there probably weren't any true [*chistye*] Crimeans. You could maybe count them on one hand" (ethnic Ukrainian man, 40s). "There are very few people who are native Crimeans. What is a native Crimean from our point of view? This is when at least your grandmother lived in Crimea. There are practically no Crimeans like this," explained another interviewee (ethnic Russian man, 50s). Slavic Crimeans therefore lack the discourse of a deep ancestral rootedness to anchor their senses of territorial belonging, and thus they relate and express attachments to Crimea principally on an individualistic basis. As one ethnic Russian interviewee stated, "[Crimea] has a monopoly on my

childhood memories. I could live in New York for 30 years, I could live in London for 20 years, or live out the rest of my years in Kyiv, but these cities will never have my childhood memories, they are all in Crimea" (ethnic Russian man, 30s).

In the majority of cases, Slavic Crimean IDPs describe their relationship with Crimea primarily in terms of its natural environment; with its inviting coastline and rugged mountains, Crimea has long attracted artists, vacationers, and outdoor enthusiasts of all stripes, and Crimeans themselves typically cite the peninsula's natural splendors among its most defining characteristic (Charron 2012). "We love Crimea because it's beautiful," one ethnic Ukrainian interviewee told me,

> we love that the forest comes right up to the sea, that the sea is warm and inviting (…) We know that on warm days in November you can run down to the sea and go swimming. So, we know Crimea and love it for the way it is … It's beyond a national label—it's ours, we live there, and we love it. (ethnic Ukrainian man, 40s)

For many Slavic Crimean IDPs, it is through the dissonant feeling of displacement from one environment to another that they are able to articulate their underlying sense of attachment to Crimea.

"First of all, the sea. This is my first association with Crimea," one ethnic Russian interviewee responded when asked to describe Crimea's meaning to her. As she mused during our interview in her new home of Lviv, "[t]he sea just always called to me, and the water gives me a calming feeling, it gives me strength. There's nothing like that here. It's different here. There are [the Carpathian] mountains, but I think that everybody who grew up near the sea feels like I do. Crimea is for me, first of all, nature, mountains, the sea, everything around" (ethnic Russian woman, 20s). In perhaps the most doleful expression of longing for Crimea's natural environment that I encountered, one ethnic Russian woman also living in Lviv attributed her yearning for Crimea to an environmentally determined, physiological dependence:

> We all hurt in the same way; it's the air, the sea, we remember how it smelled there in the springtime. But what can we do? The trout lives in one kind of water, and the carp in a different kind. We can change the water, but it won't work out; The carp can only live in muddy water, and the trout needs fresh water … . We are a different people. It's very difficult for southerners to live here. We've come to Lviv, to this beautiful place, but for southerners it's really tough to live in a different region. It's genetic, there's no way to fool it. (ethnic Russian woman, 50s)

On the surface, this appeal to genetics draws an intriguing parallel with the claim of Crimean Tatars' genetically encoded belonging to Crimea quoted above. But here the notion works only as a metaphor for environmental affinity, while Crimean Tatars mostly do descend from the uniquely Crimean crucible of peoples from which their ethnos and ethnic consciousness first materialized.

For their part, Crimean Tatar IDPs also express longing for Crimea's natural environment and for the places that hold personal meaning to them. In one

example, a Crimean Tatar man now living in Lviv described his emotional connection to Crimea's natural environment in terms that resemble those offered by several Slavic Crimean IDPs:

> For me, Crimea, the salty sea water, the wind, it's like a way of life, a basic necessity. It was tough for me in Lviv at first, there wasn't enough sun, it was constantly rainy, and far from the sea. In the summertime you want to go swimming, but here there are only some puddles with too many people. There's no space, and there's no place where you can climb up high and have your breath taken away because you feel the power of nature below, along with all the aromas. There's nothing like that here. The Carpathians have their own charms, but the Crimean Mountains are different. I really miss Crimea so much. (Crimean Tatar man, 40s)

However, his elaborations reveal that this relationship to Crimea's natural environment is inextricable from the intergenerational narrative of national belonging and return that he inherited as a child in Uzbekistan, which colored his impressions of the Crimean homeland long before he ever set foot there:

> I was born in Uzbekistan, outside of Tashkent, and for 15 years I heard about Crimea, that there is this promised land somewhere, our homeland, where my great-grandfather and great-grandmother lived, and where my great-grandfather's house is. I heard all these stories, and I always knew that we would return, even in the 70s and 80s when I was still a little boy. We always talked about this, even when it was impossible, it was a necessity for us … I've been dreaming about [Crimea] lately. I dream about the White Cliffs, where I have been to the very top, where I explored all the caves. I dream about Demerdzhi Mountain as I approach the sea, I dream about everything connected with this. I dream about my trees that grow in my courtyard, the grape vines, and this is all intermixed with the fact that it's connected to my grandmother and grandfather. (Crimean Tatar man, 40s)

In contrast to their Slavic counterparts, Crimean Tatars' hard-fought claims of indigenous belonging to Crimea are so deeply encoded into their narrative of national identity that they transcend reverence for the appealing characteristics of the place itself. Mustafa Dzhemilev, esteemed veteran of the Crimean Tatar National Movement and the Crimean Tatar's preeminent political leader today, summarized their relationship to Crimea thusly:

> During the few decades after their deportation, the Crimean Tatars fought desperately to return to Crimea not because it's beautiful there, with the Black Sea and the mountains. We probably would have struggled to return even if it was just a barren steppe, because that is where our nation was formed, that is where the graves of our ancestors are located. Any further perspectives for the existence and development of our nation are found only in our own land. (Dzhemilev 2016)

It is this indefatigable connection and commitment to homeland that animates the Crimean Tatars' attachment to Crimea, and which has enabled them to endure colonialist practices of displacement, dispossession, and disruption with their territorially rooted national identity intact. The Russian annexation of Crimea in 2014 opened a new chapter in this cyclical pattern of colonialist violence, this time displacing many Slavic Crimeans along with Crimean

Tatars, but it is the condition of rooted indigeneity that fortifies the Crimean Tatars' attachment to Crimea in a way impossible for Slavs to replicate.

Conclusions

Crimea is fraught with contested meanings that variably undergird regional place attachments for both its Slavic and indigenous Crimean Tatar populations. The multiethnic flow of internally displaced peoples to mainland Ukraine following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 offers an opportunity to contrast place attachments to Crimea both through the lens of displacement and according to differences in ethno-national identity. An ethnographic study of Crimean IDPs reveals that Slavs' attachments to Crimea are principally individualistic and tied to their reverence for Crimea's natural environment. As such, Slavic Crimean IDPs generally express loss and longing for Crimea in terms of the rupture to their emotional connections with Crimea's natural places, especially the sea and the mountains. But while Slavic Crimeans have never before experienced displacement on such a scale, the recent flow of displaced Crimean Tatars is just the latest iteration in a cyclical pattern of colonially driven displacement that began with the first annexation of Crimea in 1783 and continued with the 1944 Crimean Tatar deportation. That experience of displacement and exile resulted in an entrenched intergenerational narrative of national belonging to Crimea that helped inoculate the Crimean Tatars against assimilation and propelled their activistic demands for the right to live in their homeland. It is this same narrative of indigeneity and intergenerational belonging to Crimea that informs the identities and place attachments of the Crimean Tatars now displaced in mainland Ukraine. While much of the literature concerning indigenous place attachment crucially emphasizes the non-Western ontologies that inform indigenous perceptions of place, the case of Crimean IDPs helps demonstrate that greater attention should also be paid to the impacts of colonialist policies and practices on indigenous peoples' relationships to place.

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