

Belonging to Land and Identity among Crimean Tatars after Repatriation

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Plan

- ▶ **History and context.**
- ▶ **Landscape and Memory.**
- ▶ **Struggle for Land**

Mamut Churlu
"Deportation"
1994





“No one ever asked who we were. Everyone must have known we were Tatars, except for us.

Rural people were called koj adamlary.”

**Interview with Fevziya,
b. 1933, Nyzhnia
Holubenka, 2006.**



Photo from the archives of the Bakhchysarai
Historical and Cultural Reserve



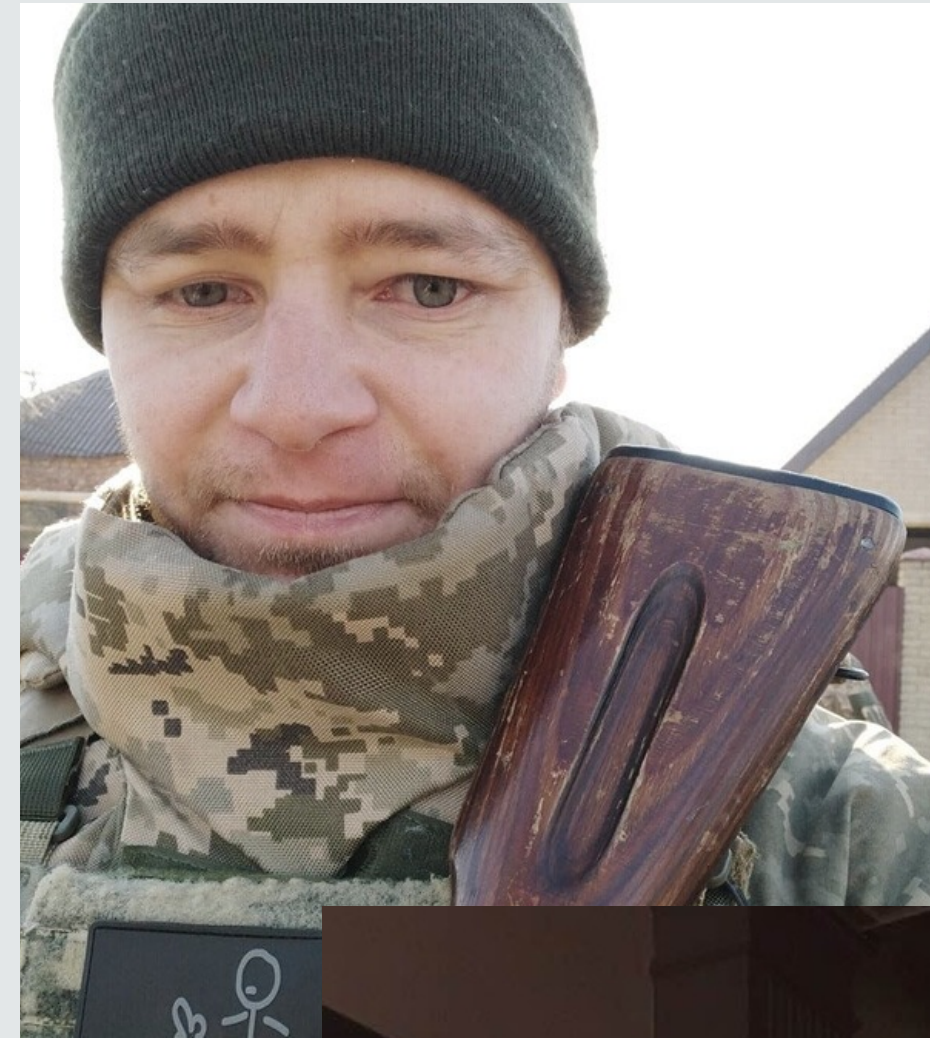
Deportation and political movement of Crimean Tatars

**May 18, 1944.
more than 191 thousands of
people were deported from
Crimea.**



**Ideological
transformation of
Crimean cultural
space**

"Phantom Limb":
Russian Settler
Colonialism in the
Post-Soviet Crimea" by
Maksym Sviezhentsev
(uwo.ca)



Pro-Ukrainian demonstration of Crimean Tatars near the Crimean parliament on February 26, 2014

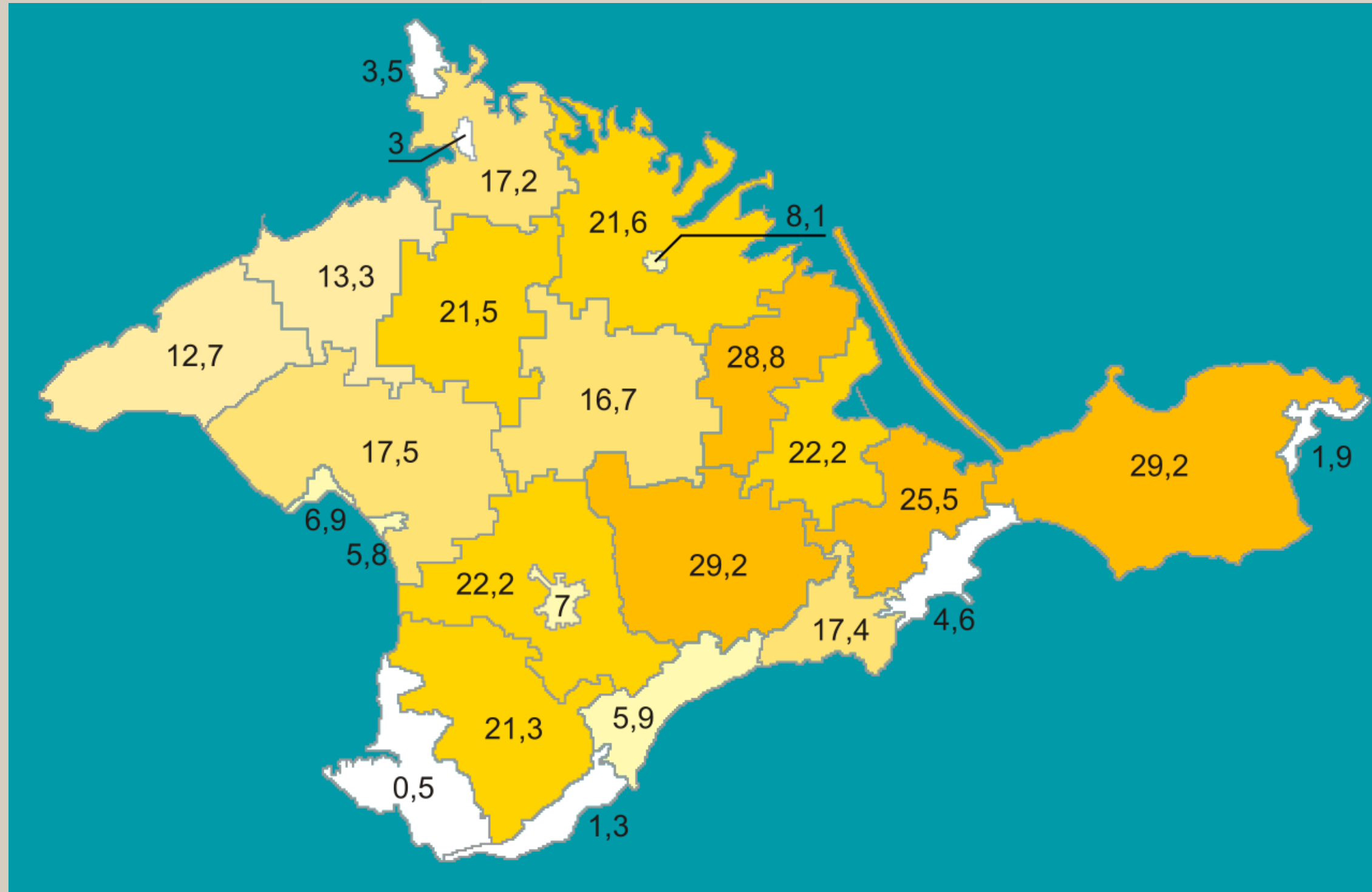


In 2001, for instance, 249,714 Crimean Tatars lived in Crimea where they accounted for 12% of the entire population of the peninsula at the time.



Photo by Rifat Yakupov, 1990s

But despite the fact that we lived very well there, we had a good apartment, good neighbours, but we were drawn here. As I remember, I ran barefoot in Bakhchysaray. Childhood, memory remains. We went to the forest, collected dogwood. I have a memory from my childhood. That's why I was drawn here. And we are in the 1990s years, when there are already people [other Crimean Tatars, who arrived in previous years], when it is already free [as before], we arrived here. We bought this house, half a house (Interview with Aishe, F, b. 1932, Beregove, 2003).



Distribution of Crimean Tatars by districts of Crimea according to the results of the 2001 census
<https://wikipedia.org>



I interviewed 212 people previously deported from Crimea by the Soviet authorities. Among them, only 19% (41 people) returned to the area where they were born and only 8% (17 people) returned to their hometown or village.



In 1976 I came from Central Asia and stopped in the Bilohirsk region. Then in 1976 there were very uncomfortable times for us, they kicked us out, they didn't register. And during this period [April to October] all the time we were struggling with local administration. And in the end, I was driven to a heart attack. Then such a heart attack was a serious illness, I was lying for 40 days. And we moved to Kuban. We lived there for 15 years. And all the time we went to the market in Kerch. Then it was the ferry. It was convenient. And all this time we were visiting Kerch, and during this time Kerch became dearer to me than other regions. And when, already in 1978, in 1988, in the 1990s, our Tatars began to come here, I landed right here. Since then, I have been the head of the Kerch mosque here (Interview with Rustem, M, b. 1932, Kerch 2011).

Photo by Rifat
Yakupov 1990s



Landscape and Memory



"Return Crimean Tatars to their Homland - Crimea!"

Photo by Oleksandr
Klymenko, 1990s, open
sources





**"Whenever you go there you bring along a stone, a piece of soil, some water. People were bringing whatever they could. It was already in 1976. I ran there and I took some water from the well for my granny."
Interview with Shefia 1934b.
Shtshebetivka, 2010.**





Photo by Oleksandr Klymenko, 1990s

"He (the husband - S.O.) went there with children. Well, they found something there, those stones laid out there, you can see that there were houses, gardens. They walked there with children. They found some dishes there. That's what my husband brought. At the beginning, they used to travel there every year. [...]. They went there often, he drove with children, showed them "(Alie, 1966, Bakhchisarai, 2010).



- ▶ **2008, 77 new mosques has been built**
- ▶ **57 mosques were reclaimed by crimean tatar**
- ▶ **and 146 facilities were adjusted for worship**



pmem.ru/index.php?id=6946





[https://blog.mediashm.ru/
?p=3025т](https://blog.mediashm.ru/?p=3025т)

Drawings of Crimean Tatar embroidery by Oleksandra Petrova
(beginning of the 20th century), collection of the Historical
Museum, Moscow

Struggle for Land "To sit on the land"

www.facebook.com/girey.bair





- Property relations in Indigenous societies
- conflict,
- legal pluralism,
- social structure,
- kinship relations and inheritance,
- property and gender,
- politics and power relations,
- land and the commons

Masut Abhair Ogly with his family near temporary house, 1990s, family archive.



Fields of protest

Squatting and
"Selfreturn" of the land



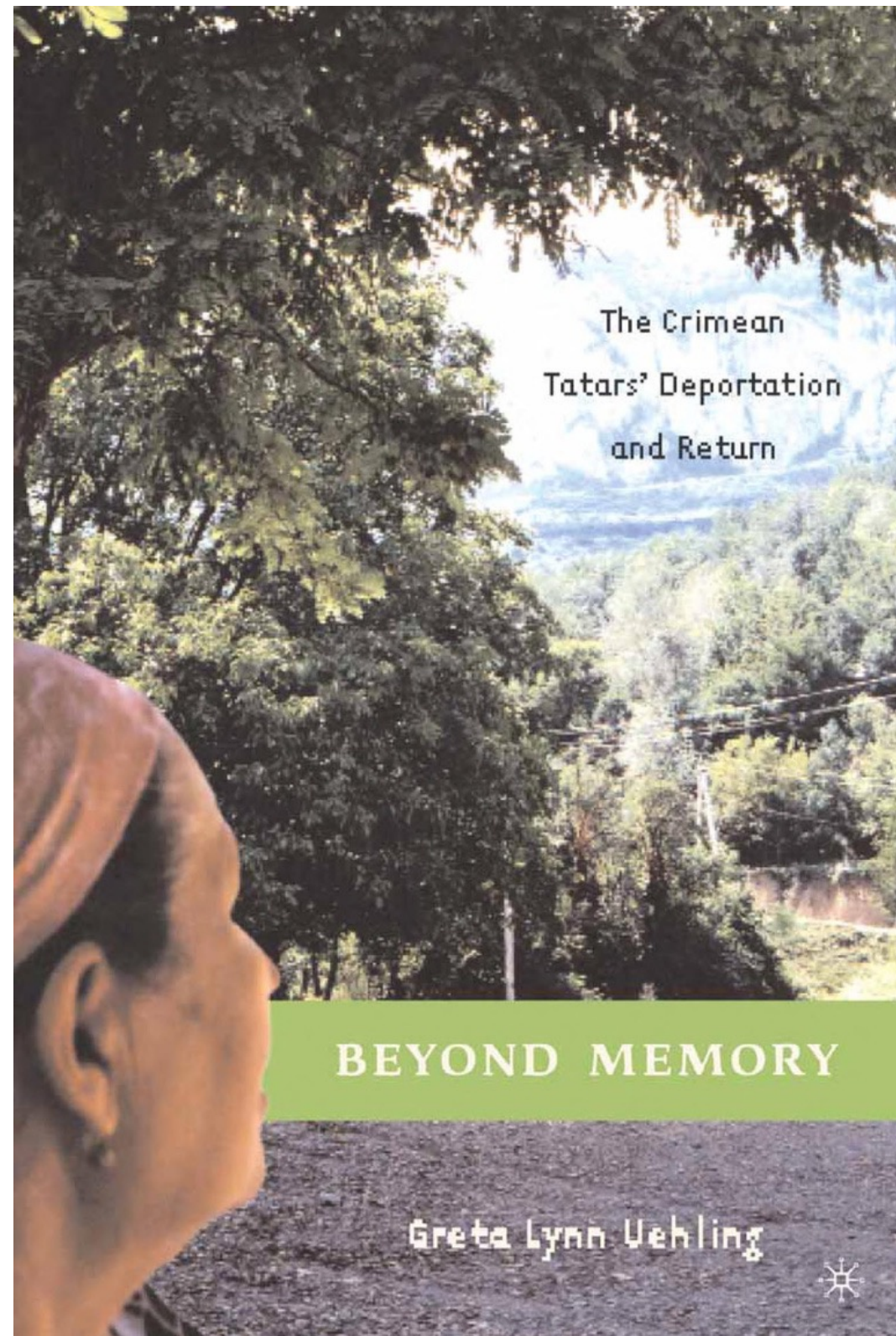


"We asked for the adoption of normative documents according to which land would be issued free of charge to returning Crimean Tatars, but the local authorities said that there were no grounds for this. Then people started just occupying vacant plots. Thus, about 300 new settlements and microdistricts appeared in the Crimea, which de facto stood on lands that were not registered in any way. And this problem was solved".

Umerov, 2017 NG

Main aspects of Land Disputes

- restitution of old property
- massiveness
- continuity and inheritance
- shared sense of Justice
- “natural” right to recieve land
- performative forms



Uehling, Greta. Beyond memory: the Crimean Tatars' deportation and return. Springer, 2004.

Russia's military aggression in the Crimea in 2014

**Between 2014 and 2021 nearly 100,000 Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians
left AR Crimea**

**According to estimates in 2015, direct losses of state and private property
amounted to 1 trillion hryvnias (more than US\$44 billion)**



The construction of private houses and land "activism" of the first years of repatriation made Crimean Tatars to prominent social actors in the visual landscape of Crimea.

Mamut Churlu
"Return" 1990

