

# THORNBUSH

Memoirs of a Crimean Tatar  
Nationalist and Educator Relating to  
the Russian Civil War and the  
Famine of 1921-1922

FEVZİ ALTUG

2005

SA

12108

THE ISIS PRESS  
ISTANBUL





# THORNBUSH

THORNBUSH

Methods of a ...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

...

THORNBUSH

ISLAND



*Published by*  
The Isis Press  
Şemsibey Sokak 10  
Beylerbeyi, 34676 Istanbul  
Tel.: (0216) 321 38 51  
Fax.: (0216) 321 86 66  
e-mail: [isis@tnn.net](mailto:isis@tnn.net)  
[www.theisispress.com](http://www.theisispress.com)

First edition 2004  
Copyright © 2004 by İnci A. Bowman

ISBN: 975-428-263-3



Fevzi Altug

## THORNBUSH

Memoirs of a Crimean Tatar  
Nationalist and Educator Relating to  
the Russian Civil War and the  
Famine of 1921-1922

Translated into English, with  
Introduction and Notes

by

Inci A. Bowman

THE ISIS PRESS  
ISTANBUL





05 SA 12108



I dedicate this work to the memory of Asiye, my paternal grandmother. In 1918 she accompanied her husband Fevzi Altug to Crimea and survived the tumultuous years of the Russian Civil War. But she died in 1922 in Batumi, Georgia, while the Family was on route from Crimea to Ottoman Turkey. She was 38 years old and a mother of four children.

I dedicate this work to the memory of my father  
grandfather in 1918 the movement of his husband from  
Italy to China and survived the turbulent years of the  
Russian Civil War but she died in 1922 in China. During  
while the family was on their way to China in 1918  
Turkey she was 24 years old and a member of the family.





## CONTENTS

Acknowledgments .....	9
Introduction .....	11
1. An Open Letter to the Bolsheviks .....	27
2. General Borovsky, White and Red Russians ..	35
3. A Recollection from Crimea .....	45
4. What Did the Gold of the Tatars Show? .....	51
5. Memories of My Last Trip from Crimea .....	59
6. The Brutality of Russians .....	67
The Life of Fevzi Altug (1878-1934): A Timeline .....	73
Publications of Fevzi Altug .....	78
Bibliography .....	79
Index .....	83



Fevzi, around 1905

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The publication of this small volume would not be possible without the assistance and support of a number of individuals.

I would like to thank my uncle, Nurettin M. Altug of Istanbul, for his help in locating the issues of *Milli Yul* and *Yana Milli Yul*, in which the memoirs of Fevzi Altug were originally published. He also clarified many of the obscure passages and the meaning of Tatar words in the original text. Mr. İsmail Otar, a prominent member of the Crimean Tatar community in Istanbul, opened his Library to me and allowed me to make copies of pertinent articles. I benefited greatly from the discussions I had with him. The Otar Library in Istanbul contains an impressive collection of books and serials on the Turkic world.

Altug's memoirs were published as a series of articles in Berlin between 1929 and 1931. However, they were printed in Arabic letters. I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Baki Asiltürk in transliterating the text into the Latin alphabet, in which modern Turkish is written today, and providing a glossary of Tatar words. Dr. Asiltürk rendered this invaluable service in 1996, when he was a doctoral student at the Institute of Turkic Studies, Marmara University, Istanbul.

Acknowledgement is also due to Peter Bowman of the University of Houston (Texas) and Antoinette Boecker of Arlington, Virginia, for reviewing earlier drafts of the manuscript and making suggestions to enhance style and context. I am also grateful to my husband David for proofing my various drafts and providing constant support for this project.

During the course of preparing the *Thornbush* for publication, I have used extensively the collections of the Library of Congress, Washington, DC. I would like to express my appreciation for the assistance rendered by the staff of the Main Reading Room and of the African and Middle Eastern Reading Room. I am ever impressed with the rich resources of the Library relating to my field of interest. It has been a pleasure to do research in the largest library of the world.

## INTRODUCTION

On 7 October 1918, a ship carrying a group of teachers, professionals and their families left Istanbul for Crimea. Included in the group were a doctor, a lawyer, school teachers and other individuals, who were responding to a call from the regional Crimean government under the direction of General Süleyman Sulkiewicz (1865-1920). Crimea had been under German occupation since April 1918, and Crimean Tatar nationalists had succeeded in obtaining considerable political success and responsible positions in Sulkiewicz's administration.<sup>1</sup> A former general in the Tsarist army and a Lithuanian Tatar, Sulkiewicz had extended an invitation to Crimean Tatar émigrés living abroad to return to their homeland. The news circulated among the émigré communities in Ottoman Turkey and Romania that Crimea desperately needed teachers and skilled people to help build the infrastructure of the new republic.

Among the group of volunteers who sailed from Istanbul was Fevzi Altug, the headmaster of a middle school in Istanbul, with his wife and three children, aged 12, 10, and 7. Altug was born in Crimea in

---

<sup>1</sup>M. Alaç, "Kırım'da Süleyman Sulkiewicz Hükümeti" [Government of Suleyman Sulkiewicz in Crimea], *Emel* 2, no 11 (1962): 14-17.

1878 and received his early education in a village near Gözleve (Yevpatoriya).<sup>1</sup> At the age of 14, he moved to Istanbul to finish his schooling and subsequently was employed by the Ottoman government's Commission on Immigration. In 1905, Altug returned to Crimea and worked for Ismail Bey Gaspirali (1851-1914), a Crimean Tatar intellectual and publisher of the influential newspaper *Tercüman* in Bahçesaray (Bakhchisarai). He also taught school for two years. Back in Istanbul in 1908, he got involved in the activities of the Union and Progress Party (Young Turks) and continued to teach school. When he decided in 1918 to return to Crimea to work for the independence of his native land, he had a stable job, a respectable position in the community and a family.

As an involved member of the Crimean Tatar community in Istanbul, Fevzi Altug could not have been indifferent to the changes sweeping the European political order in 1918, especially in Russia. Crimea had been under Russian control since the end of the eighteenth century, and her native people had been subjected to land seizures and various forms of oppression by the Tsarist authorities. Thousands of Crimean Tatars had abandoned the land of their ancestors and emigrated to the Ottoman Empire throughout the nineteenth century, especially after the Crimean War, 1853-1856. Therefore, when the

---

<sup>1</sup>See "Life of Fevzi Altug (1878-1934): A Timeline" at the end of this volume, page 73. Also: İnci A. Bowman, "Fevzi (Elitok) Altug (1878-1934): Kırmırlı Bir Eğitim Savaşçısı," *Kırım* (Ankara) 4, no. 14 (1996): 6-8.

Tsarist regime collapsed following the October 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, Crimean Tatars along with other nationalities living in the Empire saw an opportunity to establish their independence.

In November 1917, the Bolsheviks gained control of Petrograd (St. Petersburg), dismissed the Provisional Government's cabinet, and quickly established their own governing Council of People's Commissars. Moscow came under Bolshevik control within three weeks. Russia had entered World War I on the side of the Allied Powers (England, France, later Italy and the United States). Seeking to end the Russian involvement in the War, the Bolsheviks sued for peace. Germany and her allies (Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires) agreed to a ceasefire. Negotiations continued until early in March 1918, when the Soviets accepted the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Although the terms of the Treaty amounted to a great defeat for the Bolshevik regime, Lenin wanted to end the Russian participation in World War I so that he could consolidate power and save the Revolution.<sup>1</sup> As a result of the Brest-Litovsk agreement, Russia lost Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Finland, where new independent states were quickly established. The German forces occupied the Ukrainian territory, including Crimea, and went as far as the Caucasus. Accordingly, about a third of the population of the Tsarist Russia, and

---

<sup>1</sup>Glenn E. Curtis, ed., *Russia: A Country Study*. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1998), pp. 61-62.

more than half of its industrialized regions remained under German control.<sup>1</sup>

Just as the year 1918 marked the end of the Russian Empire, it witnessed the rise of new independent states. The Bolshevik Revolution further gave new hope to different nationalities living under Tsarist rule that they could gain political and cultural autonomy. The early policies and attitudes of the Bolshevik leaders also encouraged the nationalist aspirations of the ethnic groups. When the Bolsheviks came to power, they issued a number of revolutionary decrees such as the authorization of seizures of land by peasants and control of industries by workers. Within one month after the October Revolution in 1917, they issued also the Declaration of the Rights of Peoples of Russia, which recognized equality of the people of Russia, the right of the national minorities to self-determination and freedom for cultural development.<sup>2</sup> This proclamation and Lenin's later statements gave hope to non-Russian nationalities aspiring for autonomy or independence. It was a clever move on the part of the Bolsheviks to offer equality, self-determination and cultural freedom in order to gain the support of ethnic minorities for the new regime.

---

<sup>1</sup>The Soviet government abrogated the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on 11 November 1918, when Germany and her allies signed the Armistice ending World War I. The Bolsheviks gained control of Ukraine in 1919 during the Russian Civil War, but the other new republics in the Baltics and Poland would remain independent until World War II.

<sup>2</sup>*Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, vol. 1, Alexander J. Motyl, ed. (Academic Press, 2001), p. 663.



In reality, the Communist leaders in Moscow opposed the idea of self-determination and showed little tolerance for nationalist aspirations and activities.<sup>1</sup> However, the true colors of the early Soviets were not seen readily by nationalists like Fevzi Altug. Crimean Tatars believed that they could also take their place among the small independent nations in the new world order, and that hope figured significantly in Altug's decision to return to Crimea in 1918. When he and his idealist colleagues sailed from Istanbul, they must have believed that under the Bolshevik rule ethnic groups would have a chance to gain political and cultural autonomy.

Within a month after Fevzi Altug and the team of teachers arrived in Crimea, the German forces that had occupied the peninsula since April began to withdraw. World War I ended with the defeat of Germany, the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Shortly after the Ottoman government agreed to a ceasefire in late October, Germany sued for peace. On 11 November 1918, the armistice signed between the Allied Powers and Germany marked the end of the armed conflict. The Great War had cost over eight million lives and wasted enormous material resources of Europe.

---

<sup>1</sup>The early Bolshevik leadership did not agree on the nationalities question. The development of the nationalities policy is quite complex, and evolved over a period of several years. The principle of the right of nations to self-determination did not literally mean the right to secede and form a separate state. By promoting national and cultural autonomy, the leadership hoped the economically less developed nationalities within Russia would move closer to socialism, but never intended to give up central control over them. See: Jeremy Smith, *The Bolsheviks and the National Question, 1917-23* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. 19-28.

With the withdrawal of German military forces from Crimea in November 1918, the Sulkiewicz government fell and was replaced by another headed by Salomon Krym, who favored the interests of the Russian population. The White Russian army under the command of General Denikin began to occupy Crimea. Russia was in the midst of a civil war, and Crimea would become the scene of intense ethnic conflict. The Russian Civil War was between the supporters of the Tsarist regime, aided by the Allied Powers (mostly England), and the Bolshevik forces fighting on several fronts since April 1918. Krym's rule depended greatly on the support of Denikin's Volunteer Army and quickly collapsed when the Bolsheviks defeated White forces at Kerch and invaded Crimea in April 1919. However, the second Bolshevik regime, which was friendlier to Crimean Tatars, did not last long.<sup>1</sup> The peninsula changed hands once again when the White Army returned in June. Crimea remained under White Russian rule until November 1920, when the Whites lost the Civil War, and the officers and families were evacuated to Istanbul by the Allied Powers. The Bolshevik forces then occupied Crimea for the third time and they stayed. Fevzi Altug and his family remained in Crimea during the Civil War. They were forced to live in the midst of violence, destruction, famine and epidemics, and suffered great hardships. In March 1922, Altug and his family left Crimea at the height of the 1921-1922 Famine, never to return.

---

<sup>1</sup>Alan Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), pp. 122-28.

The publications of Fevzi Altug, based on his experiences in Crimea during the Russian Civil War and early Bolshevik rule, appeared in *Milli Yul* [National Path] and *Yana Milli Yul* [New National Path], between 1929 and 1931.<sup>1</sup> These six articles fall into the category of memoirs, as they were written eight to ten years after the events. Although most of the narrative is based on Altug's recollections of events, he had a diary and related documents in his possession, to which he occasionally referred. Altug's diary and his files have since been lost. Both *Milli Yul* and *Yana Milli Yul* were underground publications issued in Berlin by the Tatar nationalist Ayaz Ishaki (1878-1954).<sup>2</sup> Altug probably met Ishaki sometime after 1925, when the latter was invited to Turkey to edit *Türk Yurdu*, a periodical advocating Turkic ideals. However, Ishaki's stay in Istanbul did not last long because of the growing Soviet pressure on the Turkish government. It is not likely that Altug could have published his memoirs in Turkey due to

---

<sup>1</sup>A list of Altug's publications is given in at the end of this volume, page 78.

<sup>2</sup>Born in 1878 near Kazan, Russia, Ayaz Ishaki (Idilli) was an active leader of the Tatar nationalist movement, who had been closely watched by the Tsarist police and imprisoned several times. He studied in Kazan, and took an active part in secret Tatar organizations, and published several Turkic journals such *Tan Yıldızı* (Kazan, 1906) and *Vatan* (St. Petersburg, 1913-1915) that were closed by the Russian police. He was deported twice to Siberia and Archangel. In 1919, he left Russia via Japan and settled in Europe to promote his national cause. He lived in Paris, Berlin, Istanbul and Warsaw, and between 1933 and 1936 in Japan and the Far East. During World War II, he stayed in Turkey and died in Istanbul in 1954. See: Charles W. Hostler, *The Turks of Central Asia* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), pp. 176-77; Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, *La presse et le mouvement national chez les musulmans de Russie avant 1920* (Paris: Mouton, 1964), pp. 84-85.

the political climate prevailing in the country at that time. Earlier in the decade, Soviet Russia and the young Turkish republic had signed a Friendship Treaty, which safeguarded Turkey's eastern border, followed by a Neutrality Treaty and a trade agreement. During this time any activity promoting Turkic nationalism, which would affect the Muslim populations in Russia, was forbidden in Turkey. This was also the period when Leon Trotsky, the exiled leader of the Bolshevik Revolution, lived in Istanbul (1929-1933) with the tacit approval of Stalin and the cooperation of the Turkish government.

Ayaz Ishaki left for Europe in 1927 and became an active participant in a wider political program, the Promethean movement, which was centered mostly in Poland.<sup>1</sup> The Polish leader Josef Pilsudski (1867-1935) and his followers, who had considerable experience in underground political activities in Russia, Austria and Germany, found many allies among the nationalist leaders of the oppressed peoples of Tsarist and Soviet Russia. The Poles allocated funding to support the Promethean movement and to organize groups of nationalists aspiring for self-determination following the collapse of the Tsarist regime and the rise of the Bolsheviks. By the late 1920s, centers had been established in cities such as Berlin, Paris, Helsinki and even in China. More than twenty periodicals were published,

---

<sup>1</sup>Richard A. Woytak, "The Promethean Movement in Interwar Poland," *East European Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (1984): 273-78; Hostler, *The Turks of Central Asia*, pp. 123-126. The movement was named after the Greek mythological figure, Prometheus, imprisoned in the Caucasus mountains.

representing the interests and ideals of groups from Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, the North Caucasus, the Volga–Ural region and Crimea.<sup>1</sup> The Promethean movement, which had the backing of Polish government, was active from 1926 to 1939 and ended when the Nazi forces occupied Poland.

After Ayaz Ishaki settled in Warsaw, he founded the Independence Committee of the Idel-Ural [Volga-Ural region] in 1928. The Committee's publication *Milli Yul* was first issued in December 1928 and later renamed *Yana Milli Yul* in January 1930. It continued to be published in Berlin (in Arabic alphabet) until September 1939. The eleven-volume set is now considered a valuable source of information on the nationalist movement of the Turkic people living in the Volga-Ural region.<sup>2</sup>

The language of Fevzi Altug's memoirs is basically Turkish, but with many Tatar and Ottoman words that are no longer used in modern Turkish. Although a Turkish-speaking person can understand the general meaning of the original text, a full comprehension of the text, as would be required in translating it into another language, necessitates the use of Tatar and Ottoman Turkish dictionaries. The written style is ornate and somewhat archaic, with

---

<sup>1</sup>A select list of publications by these nationalist groups are given in Hostler, *The Turks of Central Asia*, pp. 124–125, the most famous being *Prométhée*, a monthly review issued in Paris.

<sup>2</sup>Şule Güngör "Yana Milli Yul (Yeni Milli Yol) Dergisi ve Tatar Aydınlarından M. Ayaz İshaki (Idilli) nin Siyasi Görüşleri" [The journal *Yana Milli Yul* and the Political Views of M. Ayaz Ishaki, a Tatar Intellectual], Unpublished Master's thesis, Marmara University, Istanbul, 1994, pp. 33–37.

occasional long sentences that can include as many as thirty words. In order to make the translation readable, the original sentences were broken into shorter ones. While I tried to remain close to the original text as much as possible, the English version may be considered a free translation in places.

In his published memoirs, Fevzi Altug generally used the term "Turk-Tatars" to refer to the ethnic group called "Crimean Tatars" in the English language. In my translation, I have chosen to use "Crimean Tatars" in order not to create any confusion in the mind of the reader, as "Turk-Tatars" of Crimea are not a separate ethnic group. Why did he use the name "Turk-Tatars" then?

It is generally accepted that Crimean Tatars are a heterogeneous ethnic group, a mixture of descendents of Turkic tribes, who had moved west with the Mongol armies and settled in the lower Volga region and Crimea in the thirteenth century, and of the earlier inhabitants of Crimea (Scythians, Goths, ancient Greeks and Kipchak Turks). Whether Crimean Tatars are truly Tatars or Turks has been a topic of discussion among intellectual circles, and the controversy still continues today. The identity of Tatars and whether they should call themselves "Tatar" or "Turkic" were also discussed among Crimean Tatar and Volga Tatar intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century. By 1917, they had reached a compromise and decided on the name "Turk-Tatar" and the use of the term remained

popular for a while.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps following this convention, Altug almost consistently used the name “Turk-Tatars” in the set of memoirs that is translated here. I am also inclined to think that it was possibly the editorial policy of *Milli Yul* and *Yana Milli Yul* to call the Muslim inhabitants of Russia who spoke a Turkic language “Turk-Tatars.” In his earlier writings published in 1918,<sup>2</sup> Altug did not call the Muslim people of Crimea “Turk-Tatars” but *Kırımîlilar*, which translates as “Crimeans,” distinguished from the Jewish and other Christian residents of the peninsula.

One may wonder at this point why the memoirs of an unknown Crimean Tatar teacher published in an obscure source would be of interest to Eurasian studies, or even why anyone would bother to translate them into English. Copies of *Milli Yul* or *Yana Milli Yul* are difficult to find in major research libraries, and the language and the Arabic alphabet in

---

<sup>1</sup>Nadir Devlet, “XX. Yüzyılda Tatarlarda Milli Kimlik Sorunu” [The Question of National Identity among Tatars in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century]. In: *Originea Tatarilor: Locul lor in Romania si in lumea Turca/Tatarların Kökeni: Romanya’da ve Türk Dünyasındaki Yeri* [The origin of Tatars: Their Place in Romania and the Turkish World]. Buckarest: Editure Kriterion, 1997, pp. 27-41. It is also interesting to note that Müstecip Ülküsal, a Crimean Tatar diaspora leader in Turkey, chose for his well-known monograph the title *Kırım Türk-Tatarları Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını* [Crimean Turk-Tatars: Their Past, Present and Future]. Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1980. An excellent discussion on the ethnic origin of Crimean Tatars is found in the first chapter of Brian Williams’ impressive work, *The Crimean Tatars. The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

<sup>2</sup>Before he left for Crimea, Altug published three articles on Crimean schools, Crimean youth and disintegration of the Russian Empire, and farming in Crimea and Anatolia. See “Publications of Fevzi Altug,” page 78.



which these publications were issued make them inaccessible to most Western scholars. The historical literature relating to Crimean Tatars during the Russian Civil War and early Soviet period is generally based on sources published in Russian and European languages. Admittedly, eye-witness accounts and memoirs written by Crimean Tatars themselves are not readily available to Western scholars. Yet, they are an important part of Crimean Tatar literature that should be incorporated into historical studies.

Only in recent years, have the memoirs of such leaders as Cafer Seydahmet Kırimer (1889-1960) and Müstecip Ülküsal (1899-1996) been published posthumously in Turkish. Kırimer was an important political figure and served as Minister of War and Foreign Affairs in the short-lived Crimean Tatar Republic (December 1917 - January 1918) and again as Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Sulkiewicz government in the summer of 1918. In his *Bazı Hatıralar* [Some Memories], Kırimer provides considerable insight into the Crimean Tatar aspirations to found an independent democratic government. Ülküsal was a leader of the Crimean Tatar diaspora in Turkey, and he described his experiences as a teacher in Crimea between 1918 and 1920 in *Kırım Yolunda Bir Ömür* [A Life Spent on the Path of Crimea]. These memoirs, along with



several other earlier accounts<sup>1</sup> including the writings of Fevzi Altug, are works revealing how the Bolshevik Revolution, and the resulting violence, terror and famine affected the lives of Crimean Tatars. How did they respond to the political change and turmoil, over which they had very little control?

The *Thornbush*<sup>2</sup> is a translation and critical edition of Fevzi Altug's account of his experiences in Crimea between 1918 and 1922. This collection of six articles by Fevzi Altug provides almost no detail about his own or his family's daily life during their stay in Crimea. The reader should not thus expect to read a diary. Rather, these are political memoirs that describe events during the Civil War, and the Bolshevik confiscation of foodstuffs and valuables of the local population, a policy that led to the man-made Famine of 1921-1922. The memoirs contribute

---

<sup>1</sup>See for example, Aynelhayat, *Kızıl Rusya'da bir Türk Kadını* [A Turkish Woman in Red Russia], Recorded and published by Recai Sanay (Istanbul: Nebioglu Yayınevi, nd). This volume of Aynelhayat's memoirs is of particular interest to this study because she was one of the teachers who sailed to Crimea on the same ship as Fevzi Altug and his family in 1918. Another publication, *Volga Kızıl Akarken* [While the Volga Flows Red] by Şevki Bektöre (Ankara: Eroğlu Matbaası, 1965) details his experiences as a teacher in Crimea and Turkmenistan, and his imprisonment by Soviet authorities. Bektöre spent 25 years in Soviet prisons and labor camps before he was allowed to return to Turkey in 1956.

<sup>2</sup>The word "thornbush" which means a thorny shrub, may be construed here as a symbol of the tense relations between the Tsarist and later Soviet authorities and the native people of Crimea. Following the annexation of Crimea by the Tsarist government in 1783, many Crimean Tatars lost lands and were forced to emigrate in waves throughout the 19th century, especially after the Crimean War. They had only limited educational and economic opportunities and became second class citizens in their homeland. Crimean Tatar hopes for cultural and national autonomy, rekindled by the collapse of the Tsarist regime, were crushed brutally by the Bolsheviks.

new information and insight into the Crimean history. From "An Open Letter to the Bolsheviks," we learn about Altug's meeting with Salomon Krym and how the English forces occupying Southern Russia were aiding the Whites. The demands of the White military command in Crimea and the refusal of the Tatars to provide soldiers and financial aid to the Russians are detailed in "General Borovsky, White and Red Russians." In "A Recollection from Crimea," Altug describes how the local residents in the Sudak area managed and protected a home for Tatar orphans. This may well be the first account of a Tatar Children's Home available in English. The next two sections contain vivid descriptions of sorrowful conditions during the Famine in Crimea, the circumstances that forced Altug and his immediate family to leave their homeland. The last paper, "The Brutality of Russians," deals with the early Soviet rule in the 1920s that ended with arrests, execution and deportation of local inhabitants who were accused of being "kulaks" and "bourgeois nationalists."

As far as I know, the publications of Fevzi Altug are the first set of Crimean Tatar memoirs to be translated into English. I have undertaken the project in order to make them available to a wider audience. It is my hope that historians and other researchers in Eurasian studies may become better aware of writings published in native languages, as they may provide a different perspective. Studies based on government archives and official publications may depict situations and offer explanations that may be

seen in different terms by the people themselves. In this regard, memoirs and related native literature are an important part of historical documentation.

Inci A. Bowman  
Washington, DC  
December 2003



## An Open Letter to the Bolsheviks

*The memoir begins with a description of how Fevzi Altug joined the Crimean Tatar national movement and pledged to work toward bringing down the Tsarist regime that had deprived his people of their land, educational opportunities, and civil rights. Like many Tatar youth, he believed initially in Lenin and the Bolsheviks, who had promised to grant ethnic minorities autonomy and to respect their national rights. He regrets, however, that the Bolsheviks betrayed the Crimean Tatars and committed atrocities against his people. Oppressive policies of the Tsarist government eventually led to its collapse, and he predicts that the same unlawful behavior will also bring down the Communists. An interesting episode described in the memoir is the meeting between the author and Salomon Krym, who headed the regional Crimean government under the protection of the White Volunteer Army from November 1918 to April 1919. Krym made him a lucrative offer to work for the Whites, who were receiving assistance from the English forces occupying southern Russia. Declaring his independence and commitment to the Crimean Tatar cause, Altug declined Krym's offer.*

*The original, "Bolşeviklerge Açık Mektup," was published in Milli Yul, no. 18-19 (1929): 13-15.*

As a nationalist, I was active in my native Crimea from 1905 to 1922,<sup>1</sup> a period when the Tsarist regime weakened and collapsed. Under the Russian Tsarist government, which ruled in Crimea for 150 years, our fathers became peasants, deprived of education, respect and civil rights. Since I am a son of peasants, I could be considered a member of the national proletariat as defined by the Bolsheviks. Despite the poverty and injustices endured by our families, we (the promising youth) were sent to distant lands to receive education under dire circumstances. The Tsarist authorities forbade us from returning to our beloved homeland and we stayed away. Thus we, the sons of peasants, who were limited in a world of opportunities, experienced continuous oppression and pain, and yearned for pleasures of a richer life. When we started to work, we felt that we had earned the right to lead a life of our own. No black or red forces<sup>2</sup> could intimidate the youth thus prepared to take on life. If a hundred of them were chased away or killed, a thousand would take their place because this was a movement against injustices committed against us. We were powerful and motivated. We aimed to declare our right to life and raise the flag of freedom in order not to become slaves in our homeland.

---

<sup>1</sup>The author lived in Crimea from 1905 to 1908, and again from 1918 to 1922. During the ten-year period when he was absent from Crimea, he taught in public schools in Istanbul, where he kept close contact with Crimean Tatar students and émigrés.

<sup>2</sup>The reference here is to Anarchists and Bolsheviks who carried black and red flags respectively.

Several hundred young men from the villages were rounded up by the Bolshevik comrades and turned over to the Cheka.<sup>1</sup> This is not in conformity with Bolshevik principles, public statements and promises. It is ingratitude to say the least! It is a great wrong! The injustices committed by the Bolsheviks surpassed those of the Tsarist authorities, as the recent history of events shows clearly. The Crimean Tatars assisted the Bolsheviks when their forces were attacked by Denikin's<sup>2</sup> army in Akmanay<sup>3</sup> and bombarded by the English Navy. Fifteen years earlier, in 1905, laborers who worked in

---

<sup>1</sup>The first Soviet secret police. Established in 1917 as an agency of investigation, its operations quickly expanded to include arrest, imprisonment and execution without due judicial process. During the Russian Civil War (1918-1920), Cheka was responsible for implementing the Red Terror, arresting and killing thousands of counter-revolutionaries. A Soviet decree in 1922 abolished the Cheka and transferred its functions to the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD). In Crimea, Cheka's agents arrived just as the White forces retreated in defeat and high ranking officers and their families were evacuated from the peninsula in November 1920. The Cheka embarked on armed struggle against the Tatars and Russians whom they considered hostile to the establishment of Soviet power. As many as 60,000 people perished during a six month period. See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 132-33. The Crimean Tatar young men who were turned over to Cheka were not likely killed but forced to join the secret police.

<sup>2</sup>Anton Ivanovich Denikin (1872-1947), Russian general who commanded the anti-Bolshevik Volunteer Army and later became Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Southern Russia during the Civil War. Although he was successful during the early stages of the War, the White forces retreated when the Red Army launched its major offensive late in 1919. Denikin resigned his position and was replaced by General Petr N. Wrangel. Denikin left Russia in April 1920, lived in Europe and later moved to the US. See: *Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, vol. 9 (New York: Academic International Press, 1978), pp. 64-67.

<sup>3</sup>Village of Akmanay, present Kamenskoe, situated in eastern Crimea (near the southern shore of the Azov Sea).

the quarries and the youth who attended the schools of Akmanay had pledged to embark on an armed struggle to destroy the Tsar's oppressive regime. I was among them and still have the document to prove it. Within a decade or so, the Tsarist Empire collapsed and became history. Still the nationalist (White) Russians organized forces of resistance and began attacking the Bolsheviks. While the Allied forces provided financial and military assistance to the White Russians, the Crimean Tatar peasants did not yield to the black, red or white forces. They believed in the Bolsheviks, took their promises seriously, and cooperated with the Bolsheviks and fought against the enemy's stronger forces. The Whites began losing ground and finally fled across the Black Sea. As a former revolutionary and nationalist, I was determined to work for the independence of Crimea and self-government of Crimean Tatars. I did not hesitate to work with the Bolshevik agitators from Moscow and spent time with them. Since I was a staunch nationalist, I neither received any money nor asked for help. In those days, we, the Crimean Tatars, believed unfortunately that Lenin understood the good nature and needs of the peasants and that he would respect the civil and human rights of our people, who had been oppressed and left in the dark by the Tsarist authorities. We thought that he would know the youth forced to join the Cheka, would remember the previous cooperation shown by our people and would not chase us from our homeland. These Bolsheviks, who took advantage of our friendship and deceived us, once sought to improve



Russian and Tatar relations and to gain the support of peasants. They used to seek our services and come to our gatherings. If we had helped the Whites instead, perhaps Bolshevism would not have taken root in Russia and would have faded away.

The Whites did not appreciate us until it was too late. They were used to treating us badly and unfairly, forcing us to work like slaves and dominating our lives. At the end, finding themselves in a desperate situation, they solicited our help. There are hundreds of examples to support this. Let me mention the proposal I once received:

I was working in the Crimean steppes to make a meager living to support my family. At a time when I was in need of money, I met Salomon Krym<sup>1</sup> in the house of a farmer. He was a representative to the Tsarist Duma and later was asked to head the regional government in Crimea established by the

---

<sup>1</sup>Salomon Samoilovich Krym (1864-1936), a prominent Crimean Karaim and wealthy land owner. A former Deputy to the first State Duma, he headed the Crimean regional government, supported by non-Bolshevik Russian and Ukrainian leaders, from 16 November 1918 to 17 April 1919. His government received additional support from General Denikin's Volunteer Army, which gained control of Crimea in November 1919, and the Allied forces. The Crimean Tatar Kurultay did not recognize the authority of the Krym government because it was not an elected body, and mass protests were organized in major cities. Krym is also credited with founding the Taurida University in Simferopol in 1918. With the fall of the White regime in Crimea, he fled to France, from where he tried to assist the University. He died in a suburb of Paris in 1936. See: M. Alaç, "Kırım'da Salomon Krym Hükümeti" [The Salomon Krym Government in Crimea], *Emel* 5, no. 27 (1965): 10-15; N. Schur, *History of the Karaites* (Frankfurt am Main, 1992), pp. 121-22; Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 126-27.

Wrangel<sup>1</sup> administration. He owned many farms and large country houses, and was in daily contact with the English forces. I believe he is now in London. He made the following proposal to me: He would give me an English passport, an automobile, two assistants and 10,000 English pounds, if I agreed to visit cities and rural communities to disseminate information against the Bolsheviks. The main purpose was to collect from peasants petitions in favor of establishing a Salomon Krym government under the protection of the English. I have not forgotten my answer to him, which is recorded in my handwriting. "There is no vagabond among the Tatar peasants who would subject himself to occupying foreign forces. Crimean Tatar mothers have not given birth to any traitors!" There are documents from the White and Red factions, as well as those from the Tsarist period. These stories will be known and printed eventually. I refused unconditionally Salomon Krym's proposal and rejected his money. He was stunned. He had thought that I was an aimless person who had escaped from Turkey.

As this incident shows, we did not give up our ideals even in very difficult and troubled times, when chaos prevailed everywhere. We would not be bought—our minds, consciousness and even work remained free. We, the Crimeans, want to live our lives in a civilized world, where one's human dignity

---

<sup>1</sup>General Petr N. Wrangel (1878-1928) succeeded Anton Denikin as Commander-in-Chief of the Volunteer Army in April 1920. The event Mr. Altug is describing here took place during the occupation of Crimea by White forces under Denikin, and not Wrangel. Since he published this article ten years after the event, he was likely confused.

and national right to live in peace, without violence and intimidation, are respected. Our deeds openly support our words. No Crimean poses a threat to the individual safety, property, and dignity of others. In my opinion, those Tatars forced to emigrate from their Crimean homeland failed by not joining the Communist party. Or, those who joined betrayed their own people while trying to gain the favor of Russians. They were of no use to our people, nor to the Bolsheviks. Even those who helped the Bolsheviks were driven out of their homeland. Some were even eliminated unjustly by the Cheka. Atrocities and unlawful acts destroyed the Tsarist government, which was stronger than today's Communist government. The Bolsheviks will also suffer the same fate. The victimized peasants, with an overwhelming strength, will stand against the brutal forces which left them homeless. No Crimean will believe in anyone, any party, or the promises of any prophet, except himself. It should be clear to the Bolsheviks that Crimeans, who got rid of the Tsarist yoke, will with their own strength free themselves of the Communists when the opportunity arises. That day is coming soon.



## General Borovsky, White and Red Russians

*The event described in the following memoir took place during the occupation of Crimea by the White Russian forces early in 1919. A provisional government under the direction of Salomon Krym was in power. When the White military command requested assistance from the Tatar population, the Kurultay refused. The Russian authorities then held new elections to form another representative body that would yield to its demands. At a meeting of the new Crimean Tatar Deputies with the Russian officers, Mr. Fevzi Altug served as the spokesman for the group. He explained the reasons why Crimean Tatars would not provide military aid to the Russians: They had suffered great losses, no longer trusted the Whites or the Reds, and were opposed to spilling anymore blood of their fellow men. These events indicate that the Crimean Tatars had relative autonomy then and the White Russian Army did not have full control in Crimea. Although the author does not give a date for the meeting, very likely it took place in February or March of 1919.*

*The original memoir, "General Barovski, Beyaz ve Kızıl Ruslar," was published in Yana Milli Yul, no. 6 (1930): 6-9.*

After the German forces withdrew from Crimea, a White general named Borovsky<sup>1</sup> came to Crimea with the Volunteer Army. At that time, a Crimean Tatar representative government, Kurultay,<sup>2</sup> elected according to democratic election laws was in power. It protected the rights, lives and liberty of the Crimean Tatars, and maintained public order. As there is always opposition to every administration, the Kurultay also had its opponents. They also continued to work freely. The opposition came mainly from the White Russians wanting to bring back the Tsarist rule and the Red Russians attempting to establish the communist dictatorship in Russia and worldwide. While the Red Russians worked stealthily, the White Russians, relying on their Volunteer Army, the naval power of the Allied forces and their support, did not

---

<sup>1</sup>Alexander Alexandrovich Borovsky (1877-1939), a lieutenant general in the Russian Army, was appointed commander of the Crimean-Azov Volunteer Army in January 1919. In that capacity, he worked closely with the Salomon Krym government, which was established just as the German forces withdrew from Crimea in November 1918. In the original text, Mr. Altug spelled the general's name as Barovski, the phonetic spelling of the name. For more information on Barovsky and the Salomon government, see: M. Alaç. "Kırım'da Salomon Kyrn Hükümeti" [Salomon Krym Government in Crimea], *Emel* 5, no. 27 (1965): 10-15; Peter Kenez, *Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 191-202.

<sup>2</sup>The first Crimean Tatar Kurultay convened in December 1917 and stayed in power until the Bolsheviks gained control of Crimea late in January 1918. Following the German invasion of Crimea in April 1918, the Kurultay reconvened but had jurisdiction only over Crimean Tatar affairs. The German military command established a government under the control of General Süleyman Sulkiewicz, who remained in power until the German forces withdrew. The Kurultay stayed in existence during the Salomon Krym administration and the next Bolshevik occupation beginning in April 1919. Denikin's White Army forced the Bolsheviks out of Crimea late in June, and dissolved the Kurultay and closed down Tatar schools and press. See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 127-29.

recognize the Kurultay. Yet, they did not dare to dissolve or abolish it. The Tatar Kurultay did not also recognize the authority of General Borovsky and did not have any dealings with him.

Meanwhile, the Armenian nationalists in Paris accused the Turkic people in Russia of pursuing Pan-Turkist<sup>1</sup> goals, when the latter only aspired to live independently, free of the Bolshevik yoke. Now these Armenian flatterers also labeled the Kurultay Pan-Turkist. General Borovsky was advised to issue a special order to hold elections that would result in a new Kurultay,<sup>2</sup> whose members would consist of the *mollas* (Muslim clergy) and their supporters. The *mollas* had fared well under the Tsarist government by cooperating with the authorities, while protecting their own interests. General Borovsky ordered new elections, and two weeks later succeeded in convening a meeting of forty duly elected representatives at the Zadegan Room of the Doverenski Hall in Akmescit [Simferopol]. I was

---

<sup>1</sup>Pan-Turkism refers to the movement aimed at uniting all Turkic people living in Anatolia, the Balkans, Russia and Central Asia. The movement, which had many adherents early in the twentieth century, was regarded as a threat by the Russian and later Soviet authorities.

<sup>2</sup>The Crimean Tatars did not recognize the authority of the Salomon Krym government (November 1918-April 1919), which was under the protection of the White Volunteer Army. General Borovsky wanted to subject the Tatars to the military control of his forces but the Kurultay refused. Then he decided to go directly to the people and hold new elections. See: M. Alaç, Kırım'da Salomon Krym Hükümeti," *Emel* 5 (27): 1965, p. 14. Also: Note 1 in Chapter 1, "An Open Letter to the Bolsheviks," p. 31.

among these elected representatives invited to a closed session.<sup>1</sup>

The Hall was surrounded by the soldiers of the Volunteer Army. The officers, White Russians and certain members of the *Mirza* class [privileged Tatar landowners] were also present. As the elected representatives arrived, their credentials were checked and they were seated in assigned seats. The authorities did not permit us to talk to the members of the former Kurultay nor to anyone else from the outside. They would announce the decisions of the representatives after the closed session.

The White Russians, who were trying to resettle in Crimea and revive the Tsarist administration, intended to deceive and intimidate the Tatars at the first meeting they convened. Those owls who found refuge in European attics are still trying to deny the Crimean Tatars their civil and national rights and their independence; they are still dreaming of the Russian sovereignty and dominion of the Tsar. They must keep in mind, in view of recent history and experience of neighboring states, that the Crimean Tatars in Russia are not supporting Pan-Turkism. Rather they are trying to live independently in their own homeland and be recognized as a member of free nations. As in the proverb "Do not knock on my door, they will knock on your door," the Russians knocked on the door of the Turks for

---

<sup>1</sup>It is not clear how Altug happened to be elected a Deputy, as he did not belong to the class of people (the clergy or land owners) who would be likely to support the White regime. At this time, he served as the principal of the middle school in Gözleve (Yevpatoriya) and considered himself a Crimean Tatar nationalist.



centuries. They harassed the Turkic people and they seized the Turkic lands. Their entire goal was to destroy the Turkic identity, and to force the Turks to live under bondage and oppression. The Russian Empire collapsed at the same time as the Ottoman Empire. Just as the end of the Ottoman state gave rise to new kingdoms and republics, the demise of the Tsardom led and will lead to the birth of new states and republics. The near future will show this. The Bolsheviki, who have been experimenting with communism for twelve years, caused a great deal of misery for the people of Russia. Once they realize that this is not the way to go, they may undertake a second experiment. That is, to recognize the freedom and independence of the nationalities without shedding any more blood. Even if the Bolsheviki failed to understand this, the peoples of Russia will demand to be recognized. The violence and terror inflicted by the Bolsheviki can only be described as insane behavior. This amounts to nothing but acts of desperation.

There is a saying: "If you press the timid far enough, he will become a hero." They push the peasants to their limit, subjecting them to arbitrary treatment. Sooner or later, they will unite and say: "What do you want from us? What do we want from you? Come forward so that we can settle this matter now." That day is coming soon. I have not forgotten the speech of the General whom I met in Doverenski Hall eleven years ago. Let me summarize it as an answer to the White Russians in Europe.

The General began by saying that the White Army was organized with great hopes and determination. Their first duty was to recognize people's right to life, liberty and ownership of private property. They aimed to fight against the Bolsheviks and the Red Army, and to reestablish the Tsarist government in Russia. The General praised the bravery of Crimean Tatars who fought against the Bolsheviks. He asked the Tatar representatives gathered there to take a vote in favor of assisting the Whites monetarily and by recruiting soldiers for the Volunteer Army. The White officer expected a positive response and a firm decision.

Although the majority of the Tatar representatives present there came from the rural areas and did not yet have sufficient political experience, they were alert and capable individuals. A number of them could also express their views clearly and courageously in public. Yet they asked me, a school teacher, to speak first, maintaining that teachers are used to speaking in public. I glanced at the General and the officers as a teacher would at his pupils. It was during a crucial period in the Civil War that followed the Russian Revolution. They bore the pain of the Bolshevik assault, appearing like children beaten by their parents. They were eager to hear what we had to say; yet they seemed nervous. It was very important for me to take the right approach and make a good beginning so that we can clearly present our points before the White Russians, as they felt deeply the agony of losing power.

We expressed our appreciation for their efforts and willingness to protect our lives and property, to grant us rights and freedom, and to defend our

homeland. Since we were elected according to a special order, we were not in a position to take any political action against them, but merely wished to express the views of the public.

Regarding the issue of providing material assistance to White forces and fighting against the Bolsheviks, I explained that the Whites had missed the opportunity to help us Crimean Tatars when we fought against the Bolsheviks. In the resistance movement launched by Cafer Seyd Ahmet,<sup>1</sup> the first commander of the Crimean Tatar Army, and Mufti Çelebi Cihan,<sup>2</sup> we had asked the Whites to assist us.

---

<sup>1</sup>Cafer Seydahmet Kırimer (1889-1960), Crimean Tatar politician and political writer. Born in Crimea and educated in Istanbul, he became involved in the nationalist movement while a student. In December 1917, the first Crimean Tatar Assembly (Kurultay) appointed him Minister of War and Foreign Affairs. After the Bolshevik victory in Crimea, he fled to Turkey. He took an active role in the Sulkiewicz administration, and following World War I he lobbied for Crimean Tatar autonomy in Europe. Kırimer wrote several books relating to Crimea, including one on Ismail Bey Gaspiralı, and numerous journal articles. See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 110-13, 122-25. (Referred to as Cafer Seidahmet by Fisher, as his earlier works were published under the name "Seidahmet.")

<sup>2</sup>Numan Çelebi Cihan (1885-1918), the first president of the independent Crimean Republic. Born in Crimea and educated in Istanbul, Çelebi Cihan became one of the founders of the Crimean Student Society, which prepared the ground for the Crimean Tatar nationalist movement. A lawyer by training, he was elected Mufti (Muslim jurist) of Crimea upon his return. In January 1918, just barely two months after he was elected to lead his nation, Bolshevik forces clashed with the Tatar cavalry near Simferopol. He was arrested, imprisoned in Sevastopol, and later executed. (See also Note 7 below.) Çelebi Cihan was also an accomplished poet. Among his well-known poems are "Savlıkman Kal Tatarlık" [Farewell Tatarness], "Bastırık" [Prison], and "Ant Etkemen" [I pledged], which later became the Crimean Tatar national anthem. For additional information, see: Alan Fisher, *Crimean Tatars* (1978), pp. 118-20; Brian Williams, *The Crimean Tatars* (2000), pp. 343-45; and Mübeyyin Altan, "Numan Çelebicihan (1885-1918)," an essay with translations of Çelebi Cihan's poems, at Website [www.iccrimea.org/literature/celebicihan.html](http://www.iccrimea.org/literature/celebicihan.html).

But the White officers did not help us; on the contrary several officers who came to help betrayed us. After the Tatar Army was defeated, they campaigned against us by spreading false statements: "Crimean Tatars fought against the Bolsheviks in order to establish their own state (Khanate or Kurultay) and to get rid of other nationalities (ethnic groups) in Crimea." They were instrumental in getting the Bolsheviks to kill Tatar youth in cities and villages. In particular, why was Mufti Çelebi Cihan murdered? He was a Tatar leader, who believing in the Russians' word and friendship, had turned himself in. Now on what grounds did the Whites wish to ask for our help in their fight against the Bolsheviks?

Despite the apparent unrest among the *Mirzas* and White Russians in the hall, I continued to explain the reasons why the Crimean Tatars would not extend assistance, stressing that I was merely conveying their feelings. When the volunteer Tatar Army of Cafer Seyd Ahmet was engaged in a battle with the Bolsheviks between Bahçesaray and Sevastopol, White Russians began attacking us from Akmescit [Simferopol] and informed the Bolsheviks, who were on the verge of being defeated, that their enemy did not have reserves behind. The Whites thus gave enough support to the Bolsheviks to change the

outcome of the battle.<sup>1</sup> The White Russians did not want to recognize the Kurultay and disapproved the Tatar agenda for protecting the life, liberty and property of Crimean people, and the actions of the reformed-minded young Tatars. Now those Crimean Tatars, whose help the Whites were seeking, no longer wished to believe in empty promises.<sup>2</sup> They have not forgotten the atrocities committed by the Bolsheviks, with the assistance of White Russians, and all those young Crimean Tatars murdered in the villages and cities. If it was not for the invasion of the German forces that stopped the Bolsheviks,<sup>3</sup> there would have been certainly more deaths, including deaths among local Germans. Under these tragic circumstances created by the Revolution, Crimean Tatars could assist neither the Red nor the White Russians. They were opposed to spilling blood of

<sup>1</sup>The military conflict referred here took place on 25 January 1918. The historical sources indicate that Crimean Tatars had about 3,000 troops, and prior to the armed confrontation the Crimean Tatar leadership was split. Numan Çelebi Cihan was in favor of negotiating with the Bolsheviks, warning that "I am convinced that the Bolsheviks represent such a force that no weapons can suppress them." However, in a vote of the leadership, he lost by 43 to 12 and resigned from the Executive Committee. When Crimean Tatar military forces were defeated, the Kurultay was dissolved and most of its leaders went into hiding or fled to Turkey. Çelebi Cihan remained in Simferopol, still hoping to arrive at a settlement with the Bolsheviks, but he was arrested, taken to Sevastopol and executed on 23 February.

<sup>2</sup>The idiom the author uses here could be translated as "Once burned, twice shy." In original Turkish, the expression is "Sütten ağzi yanan, yoğurdu üfleyerek yemiş" and can be translated literally as "Those who burn their mouth from hot milk will eat yogurt by blowing on it."

<sup>3</sup>The first Bolshevik rule in Crimea lasted from 27 January to 25 April 1918, at which time the German forces invaded Crimea. During the months of February and March, the Bolsheviks carried out mass slaughter of residents, eliminating thousands of Slavic and Tatar people. The German military, for example, reported finding mass graves near Simferopol. See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, p. 120-21.

their fellow men and wished to remain neutral. If the Russian authorities wanted to negotiate with us, they should contact the members of the Kurultay who were true representatives of the Tatar people. My fellow associates at the meeting supported me, reiterating and agreeing with my statements. Failing to get our approval of their demands, General Borovsky and White Russians left the hall disappointed and angry. The meeting of the representatives was dissolved in turmoil on the first day they met and members went home.

Dear Brothers and Young Men! This story is an example of what White and Red Russians have done to the Crimean Tatars, and it is in vain to believe in their friendship and promises. If any one of us trusted them, he paid for it with his own life and property. Whenever the Crimean Tatars defended themselves with good intentions, asked to have their rights respected, they met with betrayal. In return, the Russians tried to find fault with us in order to cover up their treacherous acts. They attempted to persuade the civilized world that the Crimean Tatars are brutal. They think the rest of the world is blind, and people are gullible.

Today, the Crimean Tatars are not the only people in Russia who are suffering. The innocent peasants, who form the majority of the population, kneel and pray with open arms: "We are willing to serve anyone who saves us from the torments and oppression of the Reds and the Whites, whoever will let us live in peace and happiness. Let him come!" They no longer want the White regime, under which they suffered enough. "We are left without resources, without any blood for revenge," they say.

## A Recollection from Crimea

*The event described in the following piece took place in late summer or early fall of 1921, when Fevzi Altug served as Director of Education in the Sudak region. This was about the time of the establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Crimean ASSR) in October 1921 by the Soviet authorities. The memoir sheds light on persisting negative attitudes of the local Russians toward the Tatar population, the composition of the local administration of Sudak, and the efforts of the Tatars to administer their own orphanage (Children's Home). This was also the time when food supplies were getting scarce in Crimea, just before the onslaught of the deadly famine of 1921-1922. Mr. Altug occupied the position of Director of Education from August 1921 to January 1922, when he resigned and went back to a nearby village of Otuz Koy, where his immediate family was living. Two months later the Altug family left Crimea, never to return again.*

*The original memoir, "Kırım'dan Bir İskerme," was published in Milli Yul, no. 14-15 (1929): 12-14.*

I consulted my diary with the intention of writing for the *Milli Yul* and giving information about Crimea in the Crimean dialect. I noted a passage about the devastating famine in Crimea. Let me describe an incident from this period.

I was talking to five orphans in the garden of the Tatar Children's Home.<sup>1</sup> A horse-drawn carriage was moving along the dirt road in front of the garden and it stopped at the gate. I could see four Russians in addition to the coachman. One of them stood up, as if he were to give a speech, and showed the estate to his comrades. Since we were in an area shaded by trees, they did not see us. It looked as if they were under the influence of alcohol (wine) and seemed uninhibited. One Russian said: "This mansion is the gathering place (Kurultay) of the Tatars; they may stay here for the time being, but soon we will show them what Kurultay is." And they drove off toward the summer homes (dachas) of Sudak.

It was necessary to find out who these people were and be prepared. They would want to drown us in one spoon of water, if they had the chance. At that time, I was a member of the Executive Committee of Sudak and Director of Education. Miss Rabia Veli (Lebib) served as the head of the Children's Home. After graduating from the university (*dar-ul-funun*) in Istanbul, Rabia Veli had come to Crimea to work for our cause (national

---

<sup>1</sup>The Bolshevik Revolution, Russian Civil War, and the Famine of 1921-1922 resulted in more than fifteen million deaths and seriously disrupted the social fabric in Russia. As the number of homeless children increased, local governments tried to cope with the problem by establishing homes for children (*detdoma*). During the Famine, the estimates of homeless or abandoned children ranged from four to seven million, and a high percentage of the children were of Russian or Slavic origin. See: Alan M. Ball, *And Now My Soul is Hardened; Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918-1930* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994), p. 16. Altug's account of a home for Tatar children in Sudak is interesting, as it indicates that the Tatars took care of their own orphaned youngsters.



movement). She was appointed the director of the Home because of her knowledge, honesty and good manners; she would be a good model for the Tatar children. In these difficult times of bloody revolutions and deadly famines, these women teachers protected and educated innocent children on this quiet country estate, which drew the attention of others (Russians). The teachers did not suspect that the Home may be raided one night and they may be killed by bombs and bullets. We increased the security by adding more guards and prepared to defend the property. I was dressed like a Russian peasant, wearing a large *kalpak* (a headgear made of fur, shaped like a fez) on my head, worn out boots, and a pair of stained baggy pants. I had a belt with a revolver (a six shooter). There is a saying, "If you push the Tatar far enough, he will become brave," and that proved to be true in my own experience.

During the famine, the rule of law no longer applied. One had to threaten to obtain grain from the cellars of Jews, and provisions thus obtained barely kept alive the starving staff and the orphans at the Home. On the Sudak Committee there were two young men from Kazan [Volga Tatars], who were also heads of local Cheka, three Crimean Tatars, and another man from Kazan without a party affiliation and six Russians. Occasionally, I would gather our own people and tell them not to forget that they are

the descendents of Genghis and Batu Khans.<sup>1</sup> It would indeed be a just cause to come to the aid of our oppressed people, the Tatars. Since I was the oldest member of the Committee and well respected in the community, the young men would listen to me. They were honest, trustworthy, loved their nation and worked hard. The Tatars did not harbor any vengeance. Their basic human qualities shined like the bright sun. We despised blood, death and the idea of killing.

Despite our good intentions, the Russians and others with ill thoughts, formed a secret committee among themselves in order to eliminate us. They were jealous because the Tatars held political power in this region. They had long regarded the Tatars as slaves and attempted to humiliate us, and did not want to see us in responsible positions. Therefore, they had decided to eliminate those capable and brave young men among us. In reality, the Tatar youth grows steadily; if one is killed, another one takes his place. For a Tatar, life is an inherent right, and one cannot change it.

---

<sup>1</sup>Genghis Khan (1162-1227) founded the Mongolian Empire, which extended from northeast Asia to the south and west, and to eastern Europe, becoming the largest state in history. Upon Genghis' death, his grandson Batu Khan (ruled 1227-1255) took control of the western division of the Empire and founded the Golden Horde in the mid-thirteenth century. Two hundred years later, the Golden Horde itself disintegrated into four Khanates, one of them being the Crimean Khanate. The Crimean Khans claimed direct descent from Genghis Khan, and many Crimean Tatars still believe that they are descendants of the Mongol ruler. Today, it is generally accepted that Crimean Tatars are descendents of the ancient population of Crimea (Greeks, Scythians, Goths, and Kipchak Turks), Tatar and Turkic tribes who moved west with the Mongol armies, and Ottoman Turks who settled on the peninsula after the fifteenth century.

In order to expose these misguided people, the young men from Kazan and our Committee members made plans and necessary arrangements. One night we detained fifty people and turned them over to the authorities (the courts).<sup>1</sup> We asked that they be prosecuted according to law. The nightmare was thus over. The innocent youngsters at the Children's Home and their teachers thus escaped the danger.

---

<sup>1</sup>The text is not clear on exactly what happened. It appears that a group of fifty Russians raided the Children's Home one night but the place was heavily guarded. The Tatars very likely had advance notice of the raid and succeeded in overwhelming the Russians. After all, two young men from Kazan affiliated with the Cheka were assisting the local Crimean Tatars.

A RECOLLECTION FROM CHINA BY

In order to provide more detailed information

about the book, the following information is given:

Author: [Faint text]

Title: [Faint text]

Place of publication: [Faint text]

Year of publication: [Faint text]

Number of pages: [Faint text]

Number of volumes: [Faint text]

Language: [Faint text]

Subject: [Faint text]

Classification: [Faint text]

Notes: [Faint text]

References: [Faint text]

Additional information: [Faint text]

Comments: [Faint text]

Remarks: [Faint text]

Observations: [Faint text]

Conclusions: [Faint text]

Summary: [Faint text]

Abstract: [Faint text]

Keywords: [Faint text]

Indexing: [Faint text]

Classification: [Faint text]

Notes: [Faint text]

References: [Faint text]

Additional information: [Faint text]

Comments: [Faint text]

Remarks: [Faint text]

Observations: [Faint text]

Conclusions: [Faint text]

Summary: [Faint text]

Abstract: [Faint text]

Keywords: [Faint text]

Indexing: [Faint text]



## What Did the Gold of the Tatars Show?

*The ravaging famine that followed the Russian Civil War affected about twenty-four million people living in the Volga-Ural region and Ukraine. While the Russian people had suffered shortages of food and even death by starvation before, and no measurable rain fell in the Volga valley in the spring of 1921, the main cause of famine was the indiscriminate requisitioning of food by the Bolsheviks.<sup>1</sup> In Crimea, a region that had even produced surplus food in 1920, the famine was clearly man-made, resulting from deliberate official policies. In the following memoir, Fevzi Altug describes how the Bolsheviks confiscated the people's foodstuffs first and then forced the Crimean Tatars to give up their precious belongings in exchange for small amounts of grain. He accuses the Bolshevik administration of plotting to exterminate his people (genocide). The first deaths from starvation began occurring late in 1921 and continued through the summer of 1922. After experiencing extreme hardships and seeing death and devastation brought on by famine, Altug and his family left Crimea in March 1922.*

*The original memoir, "Tatarların Altunları Ne Kösterdi?" appeared in Yana Milli Yul, no. 3 (1930): 5-7.*

---

<sup>1</sup>There is considerable literature on the 1921-1922 Famine in Soviet Russia. For an excellent discussion on the Famine, as it affected Crimea, see: Hakan Kırımlı, "The Famine of 1921-22 in the Crimea and the Volga Basin and the Relief from Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no.1 (January 2003): 37-88.

The Russians and Jews set up schemes to confiscate the gold that the Crimean Tatars had accumulated with their hard-earned savings. Let me tell you about an incident and give you some background. The black Tatar [who betrayed his nation] said, "I rather serve the Cossack than become a slave to the Khan" and did so for 150 years. Whipped and humiliated by Russians, he finally realized that the Cossack is a ruthless monster. The Russians, collaborating with opportunist Jews and greedy fools,<sup>1</sup> went into the villages to create disunity among the ignorant Tatars. They conspired to take the Tatars' property, even their lives if necessary. These are the misfortunes of Crimean Tatar history.

In Crimean cities and villages, every Tatar maiden and wife, whether rich or poor, wears a fez (headdress) decorated with gold coins and a gold necklace with pearls. Every Tatar saved part of his meager earnings to acquire gold, pearls and diamonds. Even during the Tsarist period, the greedy Russians coveted the gold of the Tatars. After the Revolution started, those greedy people looked for ways of confiscating the gold held by Tatars. They collected some of this gold by issuing paper money in exchange. They searched Tatar homes to grab any money or foodstuffs and dug along the foundations of houses in search of gold and pearls. They

---

<sup>1</sup>Individual members of the Jewish community may have cooperated with the Bolsheviks during these difficult times following the Russian Civil War. However, there is no known inter ethnic animosity or conflict involving the Jews and Tatars in the history of Crimea. In the fifteenth century, Crimea came under Ottoman influence, and the Ottoman policy toward the Jewish people remained favorable.

confiscated what they found and simply stole our property. Most Tatars held their precious gold dear to their hearts, saving it for a day of need. Those revolutionary Russians, who seemed to work for the life and liberty of the people of Russia, actually were trying to take away our livelihood and even our lives. Plundering and injustices committed in the name of Revolution continued and still go on today.

The severity and destructive nature of this ill-omened Revolution became apparent (unfolded in front of our eyes). Even those White Russians who could stay in Crimea for a little while with the aid of Allied naval forces plundered and destroyed as they left Crimea.<sup>1</sup> Once again, the Crimean people and Crimean Tatars suffered from their destructive behavior. Subsequently, the Bolsheviki gained control and struck the last blow. They collected all the food the local people had, sometimes even chickens and their eggs. Even the cows, sheep and chickens were requisitioned to produce milk, butter, meat and eggs every week. One villager hanged a chicken from its neck, with a note: "I could not lay this week the number of eggs required by my Bolshevik friends. Thus I am taking my life to clear my name."

The Crimean Tatars became convinced that the worst was yet to come and wanted to leave the green Crimea they loved to get away from the horrors

---

<sup>1</sup>As the Bolshevik victory became imminent, the White Volunteer forces under the command of General Petr Wrangel retreated to Crimea, and finally high ranking officers, their families and other Tsarist loyalists were evacuated from Crimea in November 1920.

inflicted by the Russians. They wanted to emigrate to neighboring countries. But Cheka's<sup>1</sup> armed gangs guarded the villages and intersections of roads, and would not even allow people to go from one village to another. Residents could not acquire basic staples. Their grain and other foodstuffs had been confiscated and stored in Bolshevik warehouses. The people lay low and moaned under the threat of bayonets. Is there any greater cruelty committed in the name of humanity? This was a time when lives and property of people were worth less than the egg of a chicken.

I was in the service of my nation, innocent Crimean Tatars, defending their rights. In one of the villages we were trying to protect a wine depot (with a capacity of two million liters) from being pillaged. We planned to distribute the wine to the villagers so that it could be exchanged for grain, and asked permission to do so. We argued that the Crimean Tatars did not oppose the Revolution and were destitute and would need grain to prevent death by starvation, which seemed imminent. After many months, Moscow turned down our request, but allowed us to distribute limited amounts of wine to people. The Russians claimed that the Tatars were hiding grain and gold pieces and would give up their gold in order to stay alive. A few months later, the criminal plans of Russians began to materialize and the devastating famine began to overtake the land. As people died of starvation, shiploads of corn from America were brought to the port of Kefe [Feodosia]

---

<sup>1</sup>The first Soviet secret police. For more information on Cheka's activities in Crimea, see "An Open Letter to the Bolsheviks," note 1, p. 29.



and immediately shipped to northern Russia for distribution to the Russian population.<sup>1</sup> The authorities would not give even a handful of corn to the Crimean people and Crimean Tatars. If they had any good intention, they would not have condemned Crimean Tatars to death by starvation, as there is always a way one could help. But the Russians did not even allow us to benefit from the relief aid sent from abroad. Therefore, we are entirely justified in accusing the Bolsheviks of criminal intent to kill our people (genocide).

At the end, the Tatars took the gold and jewelry belonging to their women to the market and exchanged them for 5-10 *okka* [one *okka* is 1,283

---

<sup>1</sup>The United States sent extensive relief aid to Russia during the Famine of 1921-22, although it had not yet recognized the Bolshevik government. The American Relief Administration (ARA) set up soup kitchens and delivered food and medical aid to children's homes and hospitals in the Volga-Ural region and later in Ukraine. Kefe was one of the ports where American ships unloaded corn and other relief supplies. On 28 February 1922, two ARA representatives arrived in Kefe to supervise the unloading of the first American ship arriving at the port. The American relief workers reported that the Moscow authorities had not informed them of the famine in Crimea, and neither the central nor the local government asked them to divert any relief to Crimea. To the dismay of the Crimean people, the shipments of corn were sent to the Volga region. The ARA started feeding the famine victims in Crimea in July 1922. It served 94,000 Crimeans in August, when over ten million Russian citizens were fed by the American relief agency throughout the famine area. There was also famine aid sent from Turkey, beginning in May 1922. See: Harold H. Fisher, *The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919-1923. The Operations of the American Relief Administration* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935), p. 278-79, 557; Kırımli, "The Famine of 1921-22 in the Crimea," p. 65.

grams] flour or corn.<sup>1</sup> The Jews and Russians took the gold for very little in return. Saying that "gold and silver are like stone but barley bread is food," the Tatars let their gold go as if they were pieces of stone. There was no grain left in the steppe villages and no wine in mountainous villages. The cattle and sheep had been all consumed, and even the cats and dogs were gone. The Crimean Tatars became living skeletons. Forty percent of the population died of starvation.<sup>2</sup> The grain, gold, jewelry and other valuable possessions of the Tatars had now passed into the hands of the Jews and Russians. In this

---

<sup>1</sup>Crimean officials (the *Pomgol*) opened centers in towns and villages where famine victims could exchange their valuables for grain. See: Kırımlı, "The Famine of 1921-22 in the Crimea," p. 45.

This practice of confiscating people's valuables was widely applied a decade later during the Ukrainian Famine. At a recent conference held in Washington, DC, "The Ukrainian Man-Made Famine of 1932-1933," Professor Yuri Shapoval of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine in Kyiv, discussed how the Soviet authorities first confiscated foodstuffs from the peasants and then forced them to give up their valuables and gold jewelry. By 1932, there were more than 250 stores operating where Ukrainians could exchange their precious belongings for a little cash so that they can purchase much needed food to stay alive. The conference was held on 13 November 2003 and sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Embassy of Ukraine, and other Ukrainian organizations.

<sup>2</sup>According to Edige Kırımlı, the population of Crimea decreased 21% during the 1921-1922 Famine. 50,000 residents left Crimea and 100,000 died of starvation. 60% of the famine victims who died were Crimean Tatars. While the death rate in the predominantly Russian city of Sevastopol was 11%, the rate reached over 50% in Bahçesaray (Bakhchisarai), a city of mostly Tatar population. Dr. Kırımlı reported that not only did the new Soviet government export the Crimean harvest of 1921 but also rejected the offer of the Italian Red Cross to send aid to starving Crimea. See: E. Kırımlı, "Complete Destruction of National Groups as Groups: The Crimean Turks." In: *Genocide in the USSR*, edited by Nikolai K. Dekker and Andrei Lebed (Munich: Institute for the Study of the USSR, 1958), pp. 20-21.

civilized century, if they had any compassion for human beings and any inkling of helping the needy, the Russian Bolsheviki, who pretend to work for socialism, could have saved the Tatars in Crimea and Kazan from starvation and death. We will not forget those civilized people in Europe who remained silent while the Famine took a dreadful toll and lasted for months, and the killing of the innocents by the Bolsheviki continued unabated. Neither will the future generations forget this indifference.

Tatar Youth! You can see that we have had very bitter experiences and survived disasters. It is said that history repeats itself, and it is possible to face such dismal times again. The Tatars must work with determination and confidence, the way the Germans and English do. The Russians and Bolsheviki aim to make the Tatars forget their national identity, language and religion and to Russify the new generations. The Bolsheviki are now in pursuit of achieving what the Tsars could not for centuries. They will make you forget your history and heritage. You will no longer be proud of your nationality, you will be deceived and become indifferent, and you will be swallowed up.



## Memories of My Last Trip from Crimea

*This 1929 memoir begins with a poem written by Fevzi Altug, just as he and his family left Crimea in March 1922. It expresses the thoughts and feelings of a Crimean Tatar teacher who had returned to his native land in 1918 with great hopes of helping to build a free nation. After living through the chaos and destruction brought by the Russian Civil War and the famine of 1921-1922, he realizes that Crimean Tatars will not be free as long as Russians are in power. He reaffirms his mistrust of the Bolsheviks and urges his people to unite. In the prose that follows, he describes the horrible conditions of the famine victims and questions the Soviet nationalities policy of establishing republics, which he sees as a way to weaken and oppress further the national minorities living in Russia. He cites, as an example, the important meeting held between the Crimean people and the Soviet authorities that he attended in September 1921, the meeting which eventually led to the establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR). The Tatars lived up to their part of the bargain, he says, but eventually all ended in more arrests, deportations, death and destruction, including the execution of Veli Ibrahimov.*

*The original memoir, "Kırım'dan Son Dönüşüm Hatıraları," appeared in Milli Yul, nos. 22-23 (1929): 4-5.*

**3 March 1922, Kefe – Novorossiysk <sup>1</sup>**

Devastating famine is bearing down on my homeland!  
 Many sighs, but no one listens when I mention our pain!  
 Babies and children are dying! Is this a Russian trick?  
 Talks about humanity, has the Russian fulfilled his  
 desire?

Misery prevails in my green homeland, cries of distress  
 reach the skies!

The Russian has no pity for the starving and dying, as we  
 just witnessed!

The revolutions revealed the great Russian character:  
 Devoid of compassion and decency. We saw the real  
 friend of the people!

Those communists, rascals! They have no respect for the  
 people!

Good for nothing, their comrades do not leave us without  
 breaking into our homes!

In essence, the Russian is like a bouquet of thorns;  
 One cannot hold it, nor smell it; but fades like a weed!

O Tatars, you remained slaves for a long time, you  
 suffered harm!

Even if you lead your lives in subservience, they will still  
 sell your shirt!

Why do you find yourselves in poverty?

---

<sup>1</sup>Kefe (Kaffa, or current Feodosia), a port city on the southeastern coast of Crimea. Novorossiysk is a Russian seaport on the northern coast of the Black Sea, east of Kefe. The poem that follows, written on a boat en route from Kefe to Novorossiysk, consists of rhyming couplets. Here only a free translation is provided.

MY LAST TRIP FROM CRIMEA 61

You like the pleasures of bowing to the Russians!  
Do you no longer love your homeland, your religion, and  
    have you forgotten your Turkic origins?  
The name and fame of Genghis Khan's people <sup>1</sup>  
    doomed to oblivion?  
I believe eighty percent of Turk Tatars are trustworthy.  
We need to have unity, strength, fairness and faith!  
    Russia is in chaos, and the whole world is watching  
    bewildered!  
    Bolshevism is infested with its own germs!  
Those yearning to be free have become Reds!  
They contaminated our green homeland!  
Even though I have dedicated my forty years to my  
    nation,  
I am grateful that I have not been infected by [Bolshevik]  
    germs.<sup>2</sup>  
It is time that we, as a nation, know the path of life,  
We must watch for our own well being!  
We Tatars cannot go back and divert from our path!

Seven years ago, I boarded a boat at Kefe.  
I planned to go to Turkey via Novorossiysk and

---

<sup>1</sup>Genghis Khan (1162-1227), founder of the Mongolian Empire, which extended from northeast Asia to the south and west, and to Europe. Crimean Khans regarded themselves as descendents of Genghis Khan. Today it is generally accepted that Crimean Tatars are a heterogeneous ethnic group, although there are still people in Crimea as well as among the diaspora who believe that they are descendants of Genghis Khan, as Altug did in 1922. See also Note 1, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Altug did not approve of those Crimean Tatars who cooperated with the Communists, although he admitted elsewhere that as a young man he had believed in the Bolsheviks. Here he is expressing his satisfaction that he is no longer lured by the Bolsheviks into thinking that they could help the Tatars gain national autonomy.

Batumi.<sup>1</sup> The Tatars in Crimea and Kazan [Volga Tatars] did not even have people to bury their dead. Weak from starvation, those still surviving were miserable skeletons. Many had collapsed and died in the villages, and bodies lay along the country roads. Infants, innocent women, and the elderly would eat cats, dogs and other animals, whatever they could find, but there was nothing left. Those eating tree roots they dug up in the mountains were also in pitiful condition.

In articles written for *Milli Yul*,<sup>2</sup> I described the indifference of the Bolsheviks to the victims of starvation and their animosity toward the Tatars. Those writings have not lost their validity. Today atrocities committed by the Cheka have replaced the suffering and death by starvation of earlier years.<sup>3</sup> Tolstoy once said that the Russian Duma<sup>4</sup> was like the cylinder used to pack down dirt in building roads because the Duma reinforced the Tsarist oppression. Today's Bolshevik republics condemned the Tatar

---

<sup>1</sup>Batumi or Batum, a city on the eastern coast of the Black Sea in the Republic of Georgia.

<sup>2</sup>"What Did the Gold of Tatars Show?" and "An Explanation from Crimea," both of which are included in this volume.

<sup>3</sup>The reference here is to the termination in 1928 of national autonomy policies that had allowed the Crimean Tatars considerable freedom during the early years of the Crimean ASSR. For example, they were able to open their own schools, publish their own newspapers and books, and find employment in the government. All of these freedoms ended, and thousands of Tatars, accused of "bourgeois nationalism," were arrested, executed or deported. See also Note 2, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup>Russian Parliament in the Russian Empire, instituted in 1906, in response to political and social unrest.



and Turkic people and the German people<sup>1</sup> to death by starvation, deportation and execution. As mentioned above, these republics are like a bunch of thorny weeds that one cannot hold or smell. I don't believe my description is incorrect. I heard it directly from the Bolshevik organizers themselves that they established the Tatar republic in order to weaken and eliminate awakening nationalities, to enrich the Russian people in the name of peasants, to reclaim the Russian throne, and to establish an even larger Russian empire.

While the naïve Russian peasants asked what had happened to the Tsars, whom they worshipped as if they were gods, and how the Revolution benefited the Russians, the communist organizers from Moscow were declaring that the Tsardom was replaced by a greater Russian nation, and the rule of workers and peasants would prevail in the world. The Russians seemed to be absolutely convinced of these words and acted accordingly.

At that time, there were among the Crimean Tatars many inexperienced young men and peasants who believed in the lofty words and empty promises of the Bolsheviks. I used to caution them, and still would like to address them: Can we not revive the Golden Horde of Turk-Tatars, who kept the Russians intimidated by a force of 500,000 horsemen? Is not our proverb, "When a Tatar mounts his horse, he forgets his Maker," still valid? Millions of Tatar

---

<sup>1</sup>These republics included the Crimean ASSR, Tatar ASSR, Bashkir ASSR, and the Volga German ASSR, all established during the early Soviet period.

young men, can you not free yourselves of the Russian yoke? Can you not gain the respect of friends and strangers alike? I still dream about the northern steppes, the Tatar raids, and meadows where horsemen practiced their skills.

I would like to remind you of the conference that opened on Saturday, 23 September 1921, at 12 o'clock.<sup>1</sup> I was with those individuals who were eventually driven off their green homeland. After the Bolsheviks freed Crimea from the Allied forces, the authorities sent a committee of ten from Moscow, who met with the two hundred independent representatives of Crimean Tatars. The purpose of the meeting was to determine the nature of Crimean administration and the basic rules and regulations. The following points were on the agenda:

1. Present situation; 2. How to establish the Crimean Republic, participation of Tatars; 3. Disbanding the Tatar militia in the mountains and amnesty; 4. Recruitment of Tatars into the Russian Workers Alliance; 5. Announcements by representatives relating to events in city centers and the regions (*raions*); 6. Improving economic, agricultural, and industrial condition of Tatars; 7. Land distribution; 8. Public education issues; 9. Soviet laws and elections; 10. Provision of foods; 11. Public health; 12. Military service and training; 13. Courts, police, and public security.

---

<sup>1</sup>On this date, representatives of Tatar and non-Tatar communities in Crimea met with the Soviet leaders to discuss the future of Crimea. The meeting eventually led to the announcement on 18 October 1921 of the formation of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (Crimean ASSR). See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 133-34.

These issues were resolved; a program of action in accordance with rules and regulations was adopted. The militia was disbanded.<sup>1</sup> Food stocks of Tatars were confiscated. What happened at the end? Death from starvation, loss of property and homes, execution by firing squads, or deportations to Siberia, isn't it? Wasn't Veli Ibrahimov<sup>2</sup> the President? What happened to him? All these events will force the young Tatars to mount their horses and forget their Maker.

---

<sup>1</sup>Here the word "militia" refers to the Tatar partisans or "Greens" who fought against the Bolsheviks trying to gain control of Crimea in 1921. After the White voluntary army lost the Civil War and left the Russian soil, the Bolshevik secret police (Cheka) under the command of Bela Kun arrived in Crimea to eliminate the hostile elements of White royalists and Tatar nationalists. As Cheka's men carried out their armed struggle against the residents of Crimea, they faced strong resistance from the Tatar irregulars operating out of the mountainous areas. See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 132-33.

<sup>2</sup>Two years after the establishment of the Crimean ASSR, the Bolshevik leadership in Moscow appointed Veli Ibrahimov (1888-1928) to head the Autonomous Republic. A leftist member of the Milli Firka, the nationalist organization of Tatars, Ibrahimov had cooperated closely with the Bolsheviks at the end of the White occupation of Crimea. In 1923, the Tatars constituted only 25% of the Crimean population, and yet the Bolsheviks authorities trusted him with the implementation of the Soviet policy of *Korenizatsiia* or "nativization" that would bring reforms in lifting political restrictions and revitalizing Tatar culture. In the next five years, Ibrahimov succeeded in employing more Tatars at all levels of the local government, distributing land to Tatar villagers, reopening Tatar schools, libraries, and theaters, and creating a Tatar intelligentsia. Crimean Tatar became one of the official languages in Crimea along with Russian. The "Golden Age" in Tatar autonomy lasted until January 1928, when Ibrahimov was arrested, accused of being a "bourgeois nationalist," and executed on May 9. See: Fisher, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 138-41; Williams, *Crimean Tatars*, pp. 355-66.

UNIVERSITÄTS- UND LANDESBIBLIOTHEK SACHSEN-ANHALT

VERGLEICHENDE ANTHROPOLOGIE

VON

DR. phil. phil. H. SCHMIDT

LEHRGEBILDETER

LEHRER AM GYMNASIUM

IN MAGDEBURG

VERLAG VON

DR. phil. phil. H. SCHMIDT

LEHRGEBILDETER

LEHRER AM GYMNASIUM

IN MAGDEBURG

VERLAG VON

DR. phil. phil. H. SCHMIDT

LEHRGEBILDETER

LEHRER AM GYMNASIUM

IN MAGDEBURG

VERLAG VON

DR. phil. phil. H. SCHMIDT

LEHRGEBILDETER

LEHRER AM GYMNASIUM

IN MAGDEBURG

VERLAG VON

DR. phil. phil. H. SCHMIDT

LEHRGEBILDETER

LEHRER AM GYMNASIUM

IN MAGDEBURG

VERLAG VON

DR. phil. phil. H. SCHMIDT



## The Brutality of Russians

*In this last published memoir, Fevzi Altug summarizes the Bolshevik atrocities committed against the Crimean Tatars and the Soviet purges in the period following the removal of Veli Ibrahimov. He first describes the confiscation of property and foodstuffs after the Communists gained full control of Crimea, the pitiful conditions during the famine of 1921-1922, and the indifference of Russian authorities while their own families continued to live in comfort. Those Tatars who managed to survive the calamities of the early Soviet period worked hard to put their lives together only to be arrested, killed or deported after being declared "bourgeois nationalists" and "kulaks" in the late 1920s. He estimates that 100,000 Tatars perished during the early Soviet period and bemoans the fact that no one in the civilized world cared. Neighboring countries and friends of Soviet Russia considered it a matter of internal policy and did not want to interfere. He concludes that it should be the obligation of the international community to stop the Russian brutality and assault on the Tatar people.*

*The original memoir, "Rusların Vahşilikleri," appeared in Yana Milli Yul, no. 2 (1931): 14-16.*

The refugees who fled Russia in recent years managed to stay alive by chance. They cannot say enough about the abominable policies to repress and liquidate the people of Russia. The behavior of Bolsheviks is nothing but a display of brutality and criminality. If one were to describe the terror tactics to eliminate the Tatars on the Crimean peninsula or even film the events to show to the civilized world, the brutality of Russians will make the compassionate weep and shame the civilized people. Let me review the brutality of the Russian oppression:

After the Bolsheviks invaded Crimea, they destroyed the homes of Tatars living in cities and villages. Under the policy of *Prodrazverstka*<sup>1</sup> they confiscated personal property, grain, money, valuables and household items, including even chickens and eggs. The Tatars were left without any means to work and earn a living, and to save themselves from the perils of famine. A few months later, they started dying of starvation. They became living skeletons, including the children and the elderly. They were trying to remain alive by collecting weeds, leaves and roots in the plains and the mountains, and by eating cats and dogs, whatever they could find. Thirty five percent of the population died of starvation, collapsing in the streets, the

---

<sup>1</sup>Arbitrary confiscation of foodstuffs from the peasants was authorized in order to feed the Red Army and industrial workers. Sometimes, collecting agents also took farm animals and personal property of the people. The practice was officially abandoned with the adoption of the New Economic Policy in March 1921. This was the period of "War Communism" that followed the Civil War, marked by Bolshevik terror and lawlessness. See: Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), pp. 389-90.

countryside, or in their own huts. They did not even have folks strong enough to bury their dead. The flesh of innocent people were consumed by wild dogs (jackals) and eagles in the countryside. I personally witnessed these tragic events.

During these deplorable calamities, the Russians and Bolsheviks remained bystanders. They continued to lead comfortable lives, their women were well fed, and they took pleasure in seeing us annihilated by famine. While thousands of innocent children, women and the elderly died in misery in front of their eyes, they were preoccupied with spreading the Bolshevik beliefs and defending their social policies. They desperately sought the support of the world's working class and spent money abroad on propaganda to make themselves look good. While the people of Russia died of deprivation and starvation, the Bolsheviks were exporting grain, even selling below market prices. This revealed the Bolshevik insanity and foolishness. The entire world will remember with disgust and horror these atrocities committed in the twentieth century. They will watch these events, as they happened, in films. I try to understand why the noble and civilized Tatars in our green Crimea became a target for the brutality, terror and murder. But I cannot find any real and true reason.

For centuries, the Tatars in Crimea tried to maintain their livelihood, while living under Russian dominance and oppression. They never showed animosity toward Russians or other nations. They tried to be worthy citizens, earning their living by

farming, growing produce, and trading. But the Russians could not accept the hard working Tatars, and viewed their modest existence and industry as grounds for deportation and annihilation. They lived as neighbors with the Turks in Turkey under the same flag for a long time, they fought in the same battles; and as result they have not forgotten their ties to Turkey. This is a natural outcome, a special kinship and ideal every nation in the world would feel. It would be impossible to deprive people of their faith and love of their homeland.

The Russians — the filthy, drunk, destitute and bare-footed Bolsheviks — could not endure the wealth and beliefs of Crimean Turk Tatars. They wanted the Crimean Tatars to be like themselves, filthy, idle, brutal, uncivilized, drunk and poverty-stricken. They wanted to deprive us of life and make us forget our nation. The recent atrocities committed by Russians can only prove my claims. Those Tatars who managed to survive the famines and other calamities began working in the fields, vineyards, and orchards, and thus produced enough food to remain alive. Those urban and rural Tatars who had enough food reserves at their homes and a few farm animals were accused of being “kulaks,” rounded up in one single day, and deported in railroad cars piled up like animals.<sup>1</sup> On a cold winter day, without being

---

<sup>1</sup>While the word “Kulak” generally refers to a well-to-do peasant or a peasant hostile to the Soviet rule, during the purges of 1929 and 1930, even small farmers were arrested and deported. It is estimated that 35,000 to 40,000 Crimean Tatars were deported to the Urals and Siberia, where most of them perished. See: E. Kırimal, “Sovyet Rusya Hakimiyeti Altında Kırım” [Crimea under the Rule of Soviet Russia], *Dergi* 49 (1967): 61.



allowed to take anything from their homes, they were sent to cold and icy Siberia, with their innocent children, hungry and barely covered. No one paid any attention to the cries of these innocent children, women, and men, as they were deported from their homeland under the threat of armed guards. No one showed any compassion, and no one wept except the deportees themselves. Many of these innocent people died of cold, malnutrition on the way, and many were forced to do hard labor in the Siberian steppes in freezing weather. They died under extremely dire conditions, exhausted and heartbroken.

As 100,000 Turk Tatars perished, no one had pity, no one cried out, and no one tried to save them. How do the leaders of the world, competing to provide freedom, peace and order to their own people, regard these events? How do the humanitarians interpret what has happened? Neighboring nations and friends of Russia consider it a matter of internal policy and do not wish to interfere. However, let us assume that the case involved the lives of families who are neighbors. If the head of one family became insane and started killing the innocent members of his family, it would only be the moral obligation of other families to interfere and try to save the innocent people. Similarly, it must be the obligation of neighboring states to stop the Bolshevik atrocities and their assault on the Tatar people, and to save the innocent.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE HISTORY OF THE

The history of the world is a complex and multifaceted subject, encompassing a wide range of events, cultures, and societies. It is a discipline that seeks to understand the past and its impact on the present. The study of history is essential for gaining a deeper understanding of our world and ourselves. It allows us to see the patterns of human behavior and the forces that have shaped our civilization. From the ancient world to the modern era, history has provided us with a rich and varied tapestry of knowledge. It is a discipline that is constantly evolving and expanding, as new discoveries and interpretations continue to emerge. The history of the world is a story that is still being written, and it is one that we must all understand if we are to live in a more informed and just society.



## The Life of Fevzi Altug<sup>1</sup> (1878-1934): A Timeline

1878: Born in the village of Elitok, north of Gözleve (Yevpatoriya), Crimea, to a family of religious leaders with titles "sheikh" and "molla." Received early education in a nearby village under the supervision of an uncle.

1892: Arrived in Istanbul with parents Sheikh Ahmet and his wife Selime, who were on route to Mecca (now Saudi Arabia). Fevzi enrolled in Davutpaşa Middle School (*Rüştiye*).

1898: Fevzi's family emigrated to Ottoman Turkey and settled in Eskişehir, where the Ottoman government settled large numbers of immigrants from Crimea in the second part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

1898-1901: Worked for the Commission on Immigration in Eskişehir. Owing to his untiring efforts on the Commission, one of the newly established villages was named in his honor: Fevziye.

---

<sup>1</sup>Although Fevzi used "Altug" as his last name, it was not his official name. The law requiring citizens of the Republic of Turkey to adopt a family name was passed on 21 June 1934, only a month before Fevzi died. The law [Soy Adı Kanunu] went into effect on 24 December 1934. The name "Altug" is derived from Eltok, the Crimean village where he was born. Later his family officially adopted the last name "Altuğ" spelled with a silent g, a letter that exists in Turkish but not in Crimean Tatar.

1900: Married Asiye, the 16-year old daughter of a Crimean family from Kerch, who had emigrated to Turkey via Constanza, Romania.

1901-1904: Worked in retail business in Eskişehir. His store was sabotaged and burned by Armenian merchants in 1903. Unable to establish his business afterwards.

1905: Returned to Crimea and began working for Ismail Bey Gaspıralı (1851-1914) in Bahçesaray (Bakhchisarai). Assisted with the distribution of *Tercüman*, an influential newspaper published by Gaspıralı, and the printing of textbooks at Gaspıralı's printing press. First exposed to the ideas of the Committee for Union and Progress, an organ of the Young Turks, whose banned publications were being smuggled from Paris into Turkey via Crimea.

1906: Trained by Gaspıralı in the "New Method" of teaching, Fevzi became headmaster of a newly established school in Akmanay (current Kamenskoe), northeast Crimea. His wife and two sons joined him in Akmanay in 1907.

1908: Following the July 23 proclamation of the Second Constitutional period in the Ottoman Empire, Fevzi returned to Istanbul with his family.

1908-1918: Served as headmaster of schools in several locations in Istanbul. Involved in Union and Progress Party activities and maintained close contact

with Crimean Tatar émigrés and students. Wrote several articles in 1918 for the *Kırım Mecmuası* published by Crimean Tatar intellectuals in Istanbul.

1918: Joined a group of teachers and professionals who volunteered to go Crimea to help build a new republic. He left on 7 October with his wife Asiye and three children. Eldest son stayed behind in boarding school. Arrived in Gözleve on 20 October to serve as headmaster of the local *Rüştiye* (middle school).

German military forces, which had occupied Crimea since April, withdrew. A new government, headed by Salomon Krym and protected by the White Russian army under the command of General Denikin, was formed on 16 November. The first Allied war ships arrived in Sevastopol on 25 November.

1919: Following the Bolshevik invasion of Crimea, the Salomon government fell on 17 April. Fevzi continued to teach school in Gözleve under the Bolshevik rule. Forced to leave with the Bolshevik forces on June 24 but escaped in Perekop to return to Gözleve. White Army invaded Crimea, dissolved the Crimean Tatar Kurultay, and closed down schools. Fevzi went into hiding to avoid arrest, and in July succeeded in moving his family secretly to Kefe (Feodosia). In October, he became head of school in the village of Otuz near Sudak, where the family lived until February 1922.

1920: In June, Fevzi traveled from Kefe to Istanbul on a boat and arranged for his eldest son, then in boarding school, to return to Crimea. In late October, he traveled to Istanbul again, but was unable to return following the defeat of the White Army in November. Last contingent of General Wrangel's forces left Crimea on 16 November.

1921: After a long and arduous trip via land, from eastern Turkey through Batumi (Georgia), Novorossiysk (Russia) and Kharkov (now Kharkiv, Ukraine), he reached Sudak, and joined the family in village of Otuz in February. Assumed teaching duties in the village school. Appointed Director of Education in the Sudak region on 2 August, and attended the important meeting between the Bolshevik authorities and Crimean representatives on 23 September in Simferopol. The meeting led to the establishment of the Crimean ASSR the next month.

1922: Resigned as Director of Education in January and returned to the village of Otuz. The Altug family left Otuz early in February for Kefe, and a month later left Crimea for Ottoman Turkey. His wife Asiye died of typhus in Batumi on 11 April, while the family waited for a boat to Istanbul. Arrived in Istanbul on 16 April. In September, he married Lütfiye, a young midwife practitioner, and a son was born to this marriage in 1924.

1923: Appointed headmaster of elementary school in Yeşilköy, a suburb of Istanbul.

1929-1931: Wrote articles relating to his experiences in Crimea (1918-1922) for *Milli Yul* and *Yana Milli Yul*, which are included in this publication.

1930: Divorced from Lütfiye.

1932: Appointed headmaster of a middle school in neighboring town of Bakırköy.

1934: Died of tuberculosis at Pasteur Hospital in Istanbul on 24 July.

## Publications of Fevzi Altug

- “Kırım Gençliği ve Rus İnhilali” [Crimean Youth and the Russian Collapse]. *Kırım Mecmuası*, no. 5 (1918): 88, 92, 94.
- “Kırımlıların Kırım ‘da ve Anadolu’da Çiftçiliği” [Farming by Crimeans in Crimea and Anatolia]. *Kırım Mecmuası*, no. 7 (1918): 136-37.
- “Kırım Medreseleri” [Crimean *Medreses* (schools)]. *Kırım Mecmuası*, no. 10 (1918): 188-89.
- 

Translations of the following articles are included in this volume:

- “Kırım’dan Bir İskerme” [A Recollection from Crimea]. *Milli Yul*, no. 14-15 (1929): 12-14.
- “Bolşeviklere Açık Mektup” [Open Letter to the Bolsheviks]. *Milli Yul*, no. 18-19 (1929): 13-15.
- “Kırım’dan Son Dönüşüm Hatıraları” [Memories of My Last Trip from Crimea]. *Milli Yul*, no. 22-23 (1929): 4-5.
- “Tatarların Altunları Ne Kösterdi?” [What Did the Gold of the Tatars Show?]. *Yana Milli Yul*, no. 3 (1930): 5-7.
- “General Barovski, Beyaz ve Kızıl Ruslar,” [General Borovsky, White and Red Russians]. *Yana Milli Yul*, no. 6 (1930): 6-9.
- “Rusların Vahşilikleri” [Brutality of Russians]. *Yana Milli Yul*, no. 2 (1931): 14-16.



## Bibliography

- Alaç, M. "Birinci Bolşevik İşgalinden Kurtulduktan Sonra Kırım'da Hükümet Kurma Teşebbüsleri." *Emel* 2, no. 9 (1962): 5-7.
- "Kırım'da Süleyman Sulkiewicz Hükümeti." *Emel* 2, no. 11 (1962): 14-17.
- "Kırım'da Salomon Kyrm Hükümeti," 16.11.1918-17.4.1919." *Emel* 5, no. 27 (1965): 10-15.
- "Bolşeviklerin İkinci İşgalinden Sonra Kırım'da Neler Oldu?" *Emel* 5, no. 29 (1965): 5-12.
- "Kırım Muhtar Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetinin Kuruluşu ve Ortadan Kaldırılışı." *Emel* 35, nos.141-45 (1984): 48-66.
- Altan, Mübeyyin. "Numan Çelebicihan (1885-1918)." Available at Website: [www.iccrimea.org/literature/celebicihan.html](http://www.iccrimea.org/literature/celebicihan.html).
- [Aynelhayat]. *Kızıl Rusya'da bir Türk Kadını*. Recorded and published by Recai Sanay. Istanbul: Nebioglu Yayınevi, nd.
- Ball, Alan M. *And Now My Soul is Hardened; Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918-1930*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.
- Bektöre, Şevki. *Volga Kızıl Akarken*. Recorded by Saadet Bektöre. Ankara: Eroğlu Matbaası, 1965.
- Bennigsen, Alexandre and Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay. *La presse et le mouvement national chez les musulmans de Russie avant 1920*. Paris, 1964.

- Bowman, Inci A. "Fevzi (Elitok) Altuğ (1878-1934): Kırimlı Bir Eğitim Savaşçısı." *Kırım* (Ankara) 4, no. 14 (1996): 6-8.
- Curtis, Glenn E., ed. *Russia. A Country Study*. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1998.
- Devlet, Nadir. "XX. Yüzyılda Tatarlarda Milli Kimlik Sorunu." In: *Originea Tatarilor: Locul lor in Romania si in lumea Turca/Tatarların Kökeni: Romanya'da ve Türk Dünyasındaki Yeri*, pp. 27-41. Buckarest: Editure Kriterion, 1997.
- Fisher, Alan. *The Crimean Tatars*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978.
- Fisher, Harold H. *The Famine in Soviet Russia, 1919-1923. The Operations of the American Relief Administration*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1935.
- Güngör, Şule. "Yana Milli Yul (Yeni Milli Yol) Dergisi ve Tatar Aydınlarından M. Ayaz Ishaki (Idilli)nin Siyasi Görüşleri." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Marmara University, Istanbul, 1994.
- Hostler, Charles W. *The Turks of Central Asia*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993.
- Kenez, Peter. *Civil War in South Russia, 1919-1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.
- Kırimal, E. "Complete Destruction of National Groups as Groups: The Crimean Turks." In: *Genocide in the USSR*, edited by Nikolai K. Dekker and Andrei Lebed, pp. 20-29. Munich: Institute for the Study of the USSR, 1958.
- "Sovyet Rusya Hakimiyeti Altında Kırim." *Dergi* 49 (1967): 59-66.
- Kırimer, Cafer Seydahmet. *Bazı Hatıralar*. Istanbul: Emel Türk Kültürünü Araştırma ve Tanıtma Vakfı, 1993.

- Kırımlı, Hakan. *National Movements and National Identity among the Crimean Tatars (1905-1916)*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.
- “The Famine of 1921-22 in the Crimea and the Volga Basin and the Relief from Turkey.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 39, no.1 (January 2003): 37-88.
- Pipes, Richard. *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.
- Schur, N. *History of the Karaites*. Frankfurt am Main, 1992.
- Smith, Jeremy. *The Bolsheviks and the National Question, 1917-23*. London: Macmillan Press, 1999.
- Ülküsal, Müstecib. *Kırım Türk-Tatarları (Dünü, Bugünü, Yarını)*. Istanbul: Baha Matbaası, 1980.
- *Kırım Yolunda Bir Ömür. Hatıralar*. Ankara: Şafak Matbaacılık, 1999. (Kırım Türkleri Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği Genel Merkezi Yayınları. No. 3)
- Woytak, Richard A. “The Promethean Movement in Interwar Poland.” *East European Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (1984): 273-78.
- Williams, Brian G. *The Crimean Tatars. The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001.
- In addition, the following reference sources were consulted:
- Encyclopedia of Eastern Europe*. Edited by Richard Frucht. New York: Garland Publishing, 2000.
- Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, 2 vols. Edited by Alexander J. Motyl. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 2001.
- Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet History*, 60 vols. Edited by Joseph L. Wiczyński. Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1976-2000.
- Redhouse Turkish/Ottoman-English Dictionary*. Istanbul: Sev Matbaacılık, 1999.



## Index

- Akmanay, village of (in  
Crimea): 29, 30, 74
- Akmescit. See Simferopol
- Allied Powers: 13, 15, 16,  
30, 36, 53, 64, 75
- Armenians: 37, 74
- Austro-Hungarian Empire:  
13, 15
- Bahçesaray: 12, 42, 74
- Bakhchisarai. See:  
Bahçesaray:
- Batu Khan: 48
- Batumi (Georgia): 5, 62,  
76
- Bolshevik Revolution: 13-  
18, 70
- Bolsheviks: 13, 14, 23, 24,  
53, 62-64, 67-69, 71, 75,  
76
- Borovsky, Alexander A.:  
24, 36, 37, 44
- Bourgeois nationalists: 24,  
67
- Brest-Litovsk, Treaty: 13
- Çelebi Cihan, Numan: 41,  
42
- Cheka: 29, 30, 33, 47, 54,  
62
- Children's Home: 24, 45,  
46, 49
- Civil War, Russian: 5, 16, 17,  
22, 23, 40, 51, 59
- Clergy, Muslim. See *Mollas*
- Commission on Immigration  
(Ottoman): 12, 73
- Committee for Union and  
Progress: 12, 74
- Constanza (Romania): 74
- Constituent Crimean  
Assembly See *Kurultay*
- Crimean ASSR: 45, 59, 64, 76
- Denikin, Anton I.: 16, 29, 75
- Duma: 31, 62
- Education: 12, 27, 28, 45, 46,  
64, 73, 76
- Elitok, village of (in Crimea):  
73
- England: 13, 16
- Eskişehir (Turkey): 73, 74
- Famine, 1921-1922: 16, 23,  
45, 51, 59, 67
- Feodosia. See: Kefe
- Fevziye, village of (in  
Turkey): 73
- Fez: 47, 52
- Gaspıralı, Ismail Bey: 74
- Genghis Khan: 48, 61
- Genocide: 51, 55, 80
- Georgia: 5, 19, 76

- Germans: 11, 13, 16, 18, 36, 43, 57, 63, 75  
Golden Horde: 63  
Gözleve: 12, 73, 75  
Greeks: 20  
Ibrahimov, Veli: 59, 65, 67  
Ishaki, Ayaz: 17, 19  
Istanbul: 9, 11, 12, 15-18, 46  
Jews, in Crimea: 21, 47, 52, 56  
Kaffa. See: Kefe  
Kalpak: 47  
Kazan: 47, 49, 57, 62  
Kefe: 54, 60, 61, 75, 76  
Kerch: 16, 74  
Kharkov: 76  
Kipchaks: 20  
Kırimer, Cafer Seydahmet: 22  
Krym, Salomon: 16, 24, 27, 31, 32, 35, 75  
Kulaks: 24, 67, 70  
Kurultay (Tatar National Constituent Assembly): 35-38, 42-44, 46, 75  
Lenin, Vladimir: 13, 14, 27, 30  
Mecca: 73  
Milli Yul: 9, 17, 18, 21, 27, 35, 45, 51, 59, 62, 67  
Mirza: 38, 42  
Molla: 37, 73  
Mongols: 20  
Moscow: 13, 15, 30, 54, 63, 64  
Nazi Forces: 19  
Novorossiysk: 60, 61, 76  
Ottoman Empire: 12, 13, 15, 39, 74  
Otuz, village of (in Crimea): 45, 75, 76  
Pan-Turkism: 37, 38  
Paris: 18, 37, 74, 79  
Peasants: 14, 28, 30-33, 39, 44, 63  
Perekop: 75  
Pilsudski, Joseph: 18  
Poland: 13, 18, 19  
Promethean movement: 18, 19  
Red Army: 24, 28, 30, 32, 35, 36, 40, 43, 44  
Russia: 5, 12-14, 16-18, 21, 22, 24, 27, 28, 30, 31, 33, 35-40, 42-48, 51-57, 59-64, 67-71, 75, 76  
Rüştiye: 73, 75  
Seidahmet, Cafer. See: Kırimer, Cafer Seydahmet  
Sevastopol: 42, 75

- Simferopol: 37, 42, 76  
Soviet authorities: 13, 15,  
17, 22, 24, 45, 59, 64,  
67  
Soviet Socialist Republic:  
18, 45, 59, 67  
Sudak: 24, 45-47, 75, 76  
Sulkiewicz, Süleyman: 11,  
16, 22  
Tercüman: 12, 74  
Trotsky, Leon: 18  
Turk-Tatars: 20, 21, 63  
Turkey: 5, 11, 17, 18, 22,  
32, 61, 70, 73, 74, 76  
Ukraine: 13, 19, 51, 76,  
Ülküsal, Müstecip: 22  
United States: 13  
Veli, Rabia (Lebib): 46  
Volga-Ural region: 19, 51  
Warsaw: 19  
White Army: 16, 24, 27, 30,  
32, 35, 36, 38-44, 53, 75,  
76  
World War I: 13, 15  
Wrangel, Petr N.: 32, 76  
Young Turks: 12, 74  
Yeşilköy (in Istanbul): 76  
Yevpatoriya. See: Gözleve









05 JA 12108

**ULB Halle**

3/1

000 984 248





Fevzi Altug

# THORNBUSH

Memoirs of a Crimean Tatar  
Nationalist and Educator Relating to  
the Russian Civil War and the  
Famine of 1921-1922

