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THE “YOUNG TATAR” MOVEMENT IN THE CRIMEA

1905-1909

In 1883, one century after the Russian invasion of the Crimea, a wholesale national awakening and modernization drive was initiated by Ismail Bey Gaspiralı among the Crimean Tatars. Gaspiralı, realizing the dire problems faced by his compatriots, envisioned the solution in a transformation into a modern nation in unity with other Muslim Turks in the Russian Empire. His reforms resulted not only in a major breakthrough in the intellectual life of the Crimean Tatars as well as other Turks in the Russian Empire, but also laid the groundwork for a contemporary national consciousness based on ethnic (Turkic) and religious (Islamic) self-identification.

A real turning point not only for the Crimean Tatars but also for all the subjects of the Russian Empire came in the turbulent and revolutionary year 1905. In the Crimea in 1905, almost all the aspects of the revolutionary turmoil were lived through. In the urban centers numerous strikes paralyzed daily life and the countryside was shaken by the peasant revolts.¹ Even more striking were the mutinies in the Black Sea Fleet whose base was located in Sevastopol. During the celebrated mutiny on the battleship *Potemkin* in June-July 1905, the battleship came to the port town of Kefe to provision with coal and food, on July 5, 1905. Although the city *duma* (municipal council) agreed to grant the request of the insurgents, the military authorities intervened and took measures to prevent any possibility of assistance to the battleship. The next day the attempt of the local revolutionaries to get hold of the coal supply by force met with the gunfire of the military. Thus *Potemkin* left Crimean waters empty-handed, but not without first stirring large waves of protest in the port towns. Several demonstrations of workers and sailors in support of the *Potemkin* mutiny took place in Sevastopol, Kerç, Kefe (Feodosiia), and Akmescit (Simferopol).²

The months of October and November were the periods of exceptionally large-scale civil and naval unrest for most of the Crimean cities. On October 27, a huge

demonstration was held in Sevastopol. Life in Akmescit and Yalta was paralyzed by strikes. Following the October Manifesto on October 31, large crowds stormed the prison of Akmescit and released political prisoners. A group of reactionaries (the "Black Hundreds") supported by the police opened fire, however, and 63 people died and more than 100 were wounded. A large revolutionary meeting in Kefe, on November 2, was also attacked by the Black Hundreds, who killed 15 people and organized a Jewish pogrom after the event.³ However, the events in Sevastopol were even more sensational. On October 31, thousands of people including soldiers and sailors marched to the prison to release political prisoners. Although the administration of the prison promised to carry out the demand, the troops opened fire killing eight and wounding 50. The bloodshed actually added fuel to the revolutionary fire which was led by a naval lieutenant, Peter Schmidt. Two days later the funeral of the victims was attended by 40,000 people who were electrified by the famous speech of Lieutenant Schmidt, who said, let "us swear to them [the victims] that if we are not given universal suffrage, we shall once more proclaim the great all-Russian strike."⁴ The next day Schmidt was arrested, but in the face of overwhelming public demand the authorities were compelled to release him with only a dishonorable discharge from service.⁵

Revolutionary demonstrations and strikes continued in Sevastopol, where a local revolutionary Soviet (council) was established. Most importantly, the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet were strongly under the sway of the revolutionary fervor. On November 21 and 22, the crews of the cruiser *Ochakov* and the battleship *Panteleimon* (the renamed *Potemkin*) mutinied and soon the mutiny spread to ten other ships as well as to 2,400 sailors and soldiers ashore, who were led by the ex-lieutenant Schmidt. It took days of hesitation before the admiral of the Fleet, G.P. Chukhnin, opened fire from the loyal ships to subdue the mutiny. Some 6,000 people were arrested and the leaders of the mutiny, including Schmidt, were executed on March 19, 1906.⁶

The reaction of the Crimean Tatars to the ongoing revolutionary events in the Crimea in 1905 was for the most part one of indifference and aloofness. Although a group of young intellectual Crimean Tatars did actively participate in the events, the masses followed the revolution with contempt and considered the events as purely an internal matter of the Russians. For them, all these were the "insubordination of the Cossacks (i.e., Russians) against their sultan, derangement and frenzy" caused by the defeat of the Russians at the hands of the Japanese.⁷ They could not foresee any betterment in their situation in the case of a takeover by the revolutionaries, about whom they knew nothing, and after all, they could not even imagine the possibility of such a victory by the revolutionaries.⁸ In fact, for the most part, the revolutionary actions took place in the Russian quarters of the Crimean cities, or in those cities populated almost exclusively by Russians like Sevastopol and Kerç. After all, as far as urban disturbances were concerned, the number of students and workers (that is, the elements potentially most receptive to a revolutionary call) among the Crimean Tatars was not significant. As for the Crimean Tatar soldiers, they played exactly the same role as the Cossack troops did elsewhere in Russia, that is, they helped suppress the demonstrations. In Sevastopol during the mutinies, the Muslim soldiers in general were so loyal to their officers that Nicholas II himself sent a telegram of gratitude to them.⁹

There were occasions, however, when the Crimean Tatars found themselves involved in the revolutionary events. During the pogroms, several Jews from the cities sought refuge in Crimean Tatar villages, where they were offered shelter. This made these villages possible targets for the Black Hundred groups, and defenses were organized in them. On one occasion, when Dereköy, a suburban village of Yalta, was threatened by attack from the mobs, even the Anatolian Turks who happened to be there for commercial purposes actively participated in the defense of the village.¹⁰

When revolutionary convulsions were shaking the Crimea in 1905, not all Crimean Tatars remained aloof from the activities of Russian revolutionary parties and groups. In fact, one segment of the Crimean Tatar youth and intelligentsia, either in groups or individually, did participate in revolutionary actions side by side with the Russian revolutionaries. Notwithstanding the fact that they worked together with, and were strongly influenced and inspired by Russian revolutionaries, for the most part they strove and worked for a national-revolutionary movement of the Crimean Tatars rather than politically assimilating into the mainstream of the Russian parties. Not surprisingly, these young men mostly belonged to those segments of Crimean Tatar society which had the closest intellectual acquaintance and contacts with Russian culture and society. The large majority of the prominent figures among them were the graduates or students of the Tatar Teachers' School¹¹ in Akmescit or those who were residing in the big cities of Russia proper for educational or other purposes.

These Crimean Tatar groups and individuals were generally called the "Young Tatars" (in Russian: *Mladotatary*; in Crimean Tatar: *Yaş Tatarlar* or *Genç Tatarlar*), or simply the "generation of 1905" or the "1905 revolutionaries" in the Crimean Tatar context. The former name obviously paralleled with the "Young Turks" who were then engaged in a struggle to overthrow absolutism in Turkey and whose name became a household word then as the intellectual "rebels" against the Old Order in the Muslim East. Yet the term "Young Tatar" was not coined by the "Young Tatars" themselves, but was the epithet used mostly by the Russian authorities to refer to the revolutionary and/or nationalist-minded Crimean Tatars in general after 1905.¹² Although the Russian authorities applied the term usually to the "actual" "Young Tatars," they also occasionally used it in reference to other reformist, liberal, and nationalist individuals (including *Gaspiralı*) in general, and political groups pertaining to a later period with the same epithet.¹³ On the other hand, the common adjective "Young" does not necessarily suggest any direct connection between the "Young Turks" and "Young Tatars," about the existence of which there is no evidence (at least during the earlier period), though certainly the "Young Tatars" harbored sympathies toward their fellow "revolutionaries" in Turkey. In the context of this study, partly for the sake of convenience, the term "Young Tatar" will be applied to the general movement of the progressive Crimean Tatar intellectuals with revolutionary and/or nationalist tendencies roughly between 1905-1909.

Since as early as 1903, some Crimean Tatar youths were actively participating in the underground activities of the local Social Democrats and the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs). Without formally joining either of these parties, the Crimean Tatars took part in their regular secret meetings and energetically contributed to their propaganda work. The names of at least two of the earliest

Crimean Tatar revolutionaries are known: Abbas Şirinskiy, graduate of the Tatar Teachers' School and scion of the most important noble family/clan (the *Şirin*) in Crimean history, and Mustafa Kurti (1881-1957), a medical student at the University of St. Petersburg. While the former was active in the Akmescit-Bahçesaray region, the latter was working with the local Social Democrats in the Kefe area.¹⁴ One can assume that the Russian revolutionary parties accepted the services of these non-partisan activists in the hope of establishing contact with the Crimean Tatar masses, with whom they as yet had no contact.

By 1905, several Crimean Tatar groups acting parallel to the Russian revolutionary parties had already been formed. Notwithstanding the watchful eye of the tsarist *gendarmérie*, they organized their small secret meetings in the villages and they constantly traveled in the countryside with false identities and in disguises.¹⁵ They also engaged in printing proclamations in Russian and Crimean Tatar.¹⁶

During the revolutionary turmoil of 1905, many of the Young Tatars became directly involved in general events. Abbas Şirinskiy, Selâmet Mirza Şirinskiy (Abbas's brother), Mustafa Kurti, Menseyit Cemil, Ablâmit Boralı, Seytмамут Katırşalı, Hüseyin Şamil Toktargazı, Abdurrahman Kırgızlı, Hasan Sabri Ayvazov, Ali Bodaninskiy, Hüseyin Baliç, Celâl Meinov, Süleyman Idrisov, Seyit Celil Hattat, Veli İbrahim, Cafer Odaman and Abdürreşid Mehdi were among them.¹⁷ At the time of the mutinous battleship *Potemkin's* arrival in Kefe, Young Tatar revolutionaries, M. Kurti, M. Cemil and Abbas Şirinskiy, together with the local Russian Social Democrats, established contact with the battleship and actively took part in the ill-fated attempts to provide coal and food for the mutineers.¹⁸ In the Kefe region Kurti was in charge of keeping the underground printing material and the arsenal, and he managed to secure them during numerous police searches.¹⁹ Menseyit Cemil apparently had close connections with the most active underground conspiratorial groups. According to a police report, his relations with a revolutionary nicknamed "Liza" who made an attempt on the life of General Dumbadze, the prefect of Yalta, was discovered by the police, and "he enjoyed enormous influence on the Tatar teachers."²⁰ He also made use of his brother's retail fruit store in St. Petersburg: inside the fruit boxes he sent and received from abroad were revolutionary documents and publications.²¹

During 1905 the Young Tatar groups adapted the slogans and rhetoric of the SRs and Social Democrats (Mensheviks)²² to the Crimean Tatar context. Apparently, they were primarily impressed by the determination of these parties against the tsarist order rather than the socialist content of their ideologies as a whole. Thus, their common slogan in their Russian and Crimean Tatar proclamations were "Down with autocracy!"²³ As a matter of fact, they enthusiastically coalesced with the Russian revolutionaries for the common goal of overthrowing the autocratic tsarist order which they blamed as the primary cause of the predicament of the Crimean Tatars as well as of Russia in general. As inside witnesses and components of contemporary Crimean Tatar society, which was living through the complex and belated process of national awakening and enlightenment, constantly thwarted by both the tsarist Russian system from without and the traditionalist elements from within (whom they considered as the loyal lackeys and clients of the tsarist system anyway), as well as the dire socio-economic plight of large segments of Crimean Tatar society, they came to the conviction that as long as the tsarist system remained as it was, nothing could be improved.

Thus, in view of the resoluteness and temerity of various Russian revolutionary groups fighting against the abhorred tsarist government, the Young Tatars easily sympathized with them. Obviously, the generally sympathetic approach of the Socialist Revolutionaries toward non-Russians, and especially the agrarian emphasis of SR socialism hit the Young Tatars close to home, as land hunger was the current concern of tens of thousands of their compatriots. One may also assume that the less rigidly doctrinaire ways of the SRs, who were dominant and very popular in the Crimean (Russian) countryside²⁴ might have facilitated their collaboration with the Young Tatars. In any case, for the most part, the doctrinaire socialist aspect seems to be of secondary concern for the Young Tatars in their affiliations or connections with the revolutionary parties. After all, they simultaneously had relations with both parties, though evidently the SRs enjoyed greater popularity among them. A proclamation (in the Crimean Tatar language) which was found among the personal papers of Abdürreşid Mehdi provides additional proof to the SR affiliations of the Young Tatars. The proclamation which was written in a characteristic Young Tatar style addressed to the soldiers of the Crimean Tatar cavalry squadrons and urged them not to use their guns against the people and the revolutionaries. The proclamation bore the signature of the "Party of the Socialist Revolutionaries" (in Russian).²⁵

With skin-deep concepts and trapping of socialism, the Young Tatars represented the transformation of the apolitical "enlighteners" into a politically conscious and idealistic national intelligentsia, playing both roles simultaneously. They were particularly fascinated by the conspiratorial and organizational skills and devotion of the Russian revolutionaries whom they read from a 1789 French perspective rather than a 1905 Russian one. A vaguely defined concept of "revolution" which almost turned into a fetish for them was taken by the Young Tatars as the key for their aspirations stemming from a national basis.

The assessments of Hasan Sabri Ayvazov (1878-1938?), a prominent figure in both the Young Tatar movement and the future nationalist movements of the following decades, must have reflected the common impressions of most of the Young Tatars concerning the Russian revolutionaries in general. In his article in a Young Turk journal in Cairo, published three years after the 1905 revolution (and, ironically, just a few months before the Ottoman revolution), he harshly criticized the Young Turks for their inability to follow the path of the Russian revolutionaries. He highly praised the sacrifices and bravery of the Russian revolutionaries who successfully inflicted blows of terror on the autocracy, conducted wide agitation among the soldiers, and, most strikingly, realized all those with the participation of not only men but also women. He hailed the work of female revolutionaries like Spiridonova and Maksimova, and the memory of "revolutionary martyrs" like Schmidt, Beliaev, and Kazanskii. According to Ayvazov, these heroes spilled others' and their own blood only for the sake of "freedom, republic and salvation of the country." Unless the Young Turks "went to the people" and agitated among the soldiers, peasants, and workers, unless they beat their fear and some five to ten thousands of devoted revolutionaries readily sacrificed their lives, he concluded, the Young Turks who preoccupied themselves with publishing newspapers abroad had no chance of success in the decades to come.²⁶

The Young Tatars made their first large public appearances in the all-Crimean Muslim meetings in Akmescit in December 1905, all wearing red shirts, following

the revolutionary fashion of the time. There they passionately expounded the meaning and benefits of the "revolution." Especially Abbas Şirinskiy, Süleyman Idrisov and Ali Bodaninskiy underscored their emphasis on the landless peasants and workers, and religious and national equality with a sharp revolutionary rhetoric. At one point, during his own speech an overexcited Abbas Şirinskiy, even turned to his father Mirza Şirinskiy, the highest-ranking Crimean Tatar nobleman, and said "We shall redistribute your lands too!" To poise the effects of these Young Tatar speakers on a perplexed and confused audience, Addürreşid Mehdi and Hasan Sabri Ayvazov presented the Young Tatars' ideas through a clearly national perspective. Ayvazov dwelled on the cataclysmic outcome of the tsarist colonial policy over the Crimea and the denied national rights of the Crimean Tatars. He stressed the revolutionary struggle against autocracy and demanded freedom.²⁷

The Young Tatar did not organize themselves in the form of a centralized party or society with a clear-cut political program. They also lacked a crystallized ideological unity. Apart from purely Crimean Tatar (or Turkic-Muslim) issues, they usually subscribed to the lines of the Russian socialist parties with whom they were associated. Yet they did succeed in creating an independent network of circles or underground cells operating in many parts of the Crimea both in the towns and villages. These circles were in contact with each other directly or through larger circles. Many of them even outlived the Young Tatar movement itself and continued to operate as a part of the later nationalist movement until 1917. The basic activities of the Young Tatar circles were directed at "enlightening the Crimean Tatar People, supporting the New Method (the educational reform program of Gaspıralı), advocating common education and that of women, training national cadres, especially from among the village youth, struggling against bigotry, and agitating against tsarist oppression and persecution."²⁸

According to the limited available information there were Young Tatar circles at least in the towns of Bahçesaray, Akmescit, Gözleve, Karasubazar, Kefe and Yalta (and their hinterlands).²⁹

We may suppose that the organizational structure of the Young Tatar circles in the Bahçesaray area was representative of the rest of the Crimea. In the town of Bahçesaray there was the district circle presided over by Celâl Meinov³⁰ which included Ismail Hattatov, Afuz Bekir, Asan Ismailoglu and Abibulla Amet (a future professor). Attached to the Bahçesaray district circle were the county circles of Kaçı (Çavuş Bekir Osman and others), Alma (Halil Bekir and others), Kökköz (Memet Haybulla Bay and others), and Duvanköy (Ismail Nogay, Abdülaziz Mamutov, Mustafa Kerim, Nuri Yunus and others). The great majority of the members of these circles were young teachers and students. Representatives of all county circles with the district circle regularly met in secrecy every month or two. Through the Bahçesaray district circle they were linked to Karasubazar, the all-Crimean center of Young Tatar activity. Every county circle was responsible for dispatching propagandists to the villages in its county for agitation, sending and publicly reading relevant publications (like *Tercüman* and *Vatan Hâdimi*), and collecting donations.³¹ We also know that Celâl Meinov, possibly with the sponsorship of the Bahçesaray circle, published a series of pamphlets under the title *Koyan (Hare)* in 1905.³²

In Yalta, the local Young Tatar circle was particularly active in enlightenment and social issues. Prominent members of the Yalta circle included the active

revolutionary Cafer Odaman, young and popular lawyer Mehmet Bekirov, Cafer Ablayev, Eskender Ametov, Emirasan Adamanov and Appaz Çalbaş.³³

The center of the Young Tatar movement was certainly Karasubazar, where the quintessential figure of the Young Tatars, Abdürreşid Mehdi (Mediyev) played the leading role. Mehdi was born to a poor peasant family in Or, in the northernmost part of the Crimea in 1880. With the support of a well-to-do uncle, he was able to enroll in the Tatar Teachers' School in Akmescit. A brilliant student, he also acquainted himself with socially active Crimean Tatars and Russians. Following his graduation in 1902, he taught in a Russian-Tatar school in the Or district for a short period. Around 1903-1904, persuaded by his revolutionary-minded friends Menseyit Cemil and Ablâmit Hoca, he settled in Karasubazar.³⁴ He wrote several articles in progressive-liberal Russian newspapers in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Baku and Sevastopol both before and after he came to Karasubazar.³⁵ While he was teaching in Karasubazar, a circle composed of revolutionaries, local enlighteners and intellectuals soon gathered around Mehdi. During this earlier period the members of the circle included Menseyit Cemil, Abbas Şirinskiy, Mustafa Kurti, Süleyman Idrisov, İsmail Mirza Arabskiy, Asan Çergeyev, Seytömer Tarakçı, Süleyman Alimollayev, Fazıl Biarslanov, Seydahmet Çelebi, Ablâmit Şeyhzade, among others.³⁶

Apart from actively participating in local social life and gaining great popularity among the local population, he also was in constant touch with Russian revolutionaries and apparently played the key role in organizing and linking various Young Tatar circles all over the Crimea. During the heated events of 1905, the Bahçesaray group of Young Tatars organized a large clandestine meeting which was to be attended by Celâl Meinov, H. S. Ayvazov, Seyit Celil Hattat, Süleyman Badraklı, Yahya Naci Bayburtlu, Emirali Kayızov and others. Before attending the meeting, however, Mehdi was arrested, and put into jail in Akmescit. When the prison house was stormed by the people on October 31, 1905, Mehdi was among the freed prisoners. As it might be expected, Mehdi quickly became a "hero of the revolution" and won a reputation as the leader of the Young Tatars.³⁷

For the most part, Mehdi represented the prototype of a Young Tatar. As a result of his education he was well integrated into Russian society and spoke perfect Russian.³⁸ Instead of isolation, he ardently advocated the active participation of the Crimean Tatars in Russian social life and institutions such as the *zemstva*. In this respect, he himself took part in local *zemstvo* proceedings where he vehemently criticized their policies for neglecting the education of the Crimean Tatars.³⁹ He also tried to educate the Crimean Tatar masses on how to make the best use of the *zemstva* and the municipal administration by giving public lectures at night.⁴⁰

Since he was from a peasant background, he was well acquainted with the deplorable situation of most of the peasants in the steppe regions of the Crimea. Therefore, throughout his social and political activities, land and agrarian issues were always his focal point and pet subject. This was obviously the strongest reason for his affiliation with the SRs. Although there is no formal evidence of his actual membership in the Party of the Socialist Revolutionaries, the memoirs of his contemporaries, several SR documents found among his personal papers, and his participation in the clandestine SR meetings leave little doubt about his adherence to the SRs.⁴¹ After all, a clear SR line is easily discernible in his writings and speeches about the agrarian question. In spite of his affiliations with the SRs and

his deep expectations from the “revolution,” his basic stand was staunchly nationalistic. To quote one of his close companions, Mustafa Kurti, he “took part in, but was not carried away by the currents of the Russian revolution [of 1905]; he held it sacred to make use of it for his own nation.”⁴² In national matters he was reputed to be utterly uncompromising.⁴³

Evidently, the activities of Mehdi and the Young Tatar circle in Karasubazar were directed both at overt social and public matters and at more covert political issues. Thanks to the popularity of Mehdi and his energetic companions as well as the wherewithal of some influential supporters, the Young Tatars were quickly able to dominate the social life of the Crimean Tatars in Karasubazar. At the time of local meetings in the Crimea following the October Manifesto, such a meeting took place in Karasubazar on December 31, 1905. The vice-chairman and actual leader of the meeting was Mehdi. Like Gaspıralı in Bahçesaray, Mehdi felt it necessary to assure the crowds about the imperial grant for freedom of speech and association. When local educational and social problems were discussed, two Young Tatars, Süleyman Alimollayev and Abbas Şirinskiy, proposed the foundation of a “charitable society” (*cemiyet-i hayriye*) to handle such matters, and the meeting accepted the proposal.⁴⁴

In fact, the Karasubazar “Charitable Society” became the primary means for the Young Tatars to organize local public and educational life. Thanks to the Charitable Society, whose secretary was Mehdi himself, public interest and support could be attracted to educational activities controlled by the Young Tatars. Soon, in addition to the opening of a number of New Method *mekteps* (Muslim elementary school) and a Tatar library, a *rüşdiye* (Muslim secondary school) with a combined religious and secular program was established in Karasubazar. The Karasubazar *rüşdiye* was to be one of the fountainheads of the future national intelligentsia. Mehdi also managed to obtain permission from the *gubernator*, with whom he was on good terms, to invite teachers from Turkey to teach in the *rüşdiye*. Among these was Yusuf Ziya Efendi, son of a Crimean Tatar emigrant, who became the director of the *rüşdiye* and a close associate of Mehdi.⁴⁵ Until his death in 1913, Mehdi worked hard to attract as many pupils as possible to the New Method *mekteps*, to train teachers both in the Crimea or by sending them to Istanbul, and to enable Tatar students to enter Russian or Turkish universities. He funded these expenses either through the Charitable Society or from the wealthy members of society whom he had won over.⁴⁶

Next to the broader and apolitical Charitable Society, a Young Tatar society, namely *Azm-ü Ümit Cemiyeti* (Will and Hope Society) was established in Karasubazar. This society was a center for propagating Young Tatar ideas; it operated legally until 1907 and after the Stolypin reaction continued to exist as an underground cell until 1917. During the later period of its history, Abdurrahman Cemaladdinov, a graduate of the Karasubazar *rüşdiye* was its leader.⁴⁷

The Young Tatars also bid for the control of the municipal administration in Karasubazar. Despite the fact that Crimean Tatars comprised the majority of the town’s population, only a small percentage of the members of the municipal administration (the city *duma*) could be Crimean Tatar in accordance with the provincial regulations. In 1905, the Muslim population of Karasubazar petitioned the Minister of Internal Affairs with the request that at least half of the municipal members be Crimean Tatars. The request was granted in early 1906, and Mehdi was among the Tatar candidates.⁴⁸

However, the nomination for the city *duma* required the ownership of property worth of at least 3,000 rubles, which Mehdi and the other Young Tatar candidates lacked. At this point Süleyman Alimollayev, son of a wealthy merchant family and the brother-in-law of Mehdi, came to their assistance. A number of properties and buildings were "sold" on paper to Mehdi and two other Young Tatars, providing them the requirements for nomination.⁴⁹ Thus, Mehdi became a member of the city *duma* in June 1906⁵⁰ and deputy mayor two months later.⁵¹ The following year he was elected mayor, and Karasubazar became the second Crimean town with a Tatar mayor (the other was Bahçesaray).

Mehdi's accomplishments during his mayoralty (1907-1912) won him long-standing fame in the Crimea. He built an electric station and provided electricity for the town, he modernized the irrigation system by replacing the open canals with a network of zinc pipes which carried water to every quarter of the town, and through the municipal funds he took a series of measures for social welfare. He built new quarters in the town for housing the poor and landless Crimean Tatar peasantry who had been expelled by their landlords after riots, as had happened to many of the inhabitants of Köprülüköy.⁵² He established a civic center (*narodnyi dom*), within which special musical, theatrical, and cultural sections were organized exclusively for the Crimean Tatar youth. Far exceeding the municipal budget, these undertakings could be realized only by persuading wealthy citizens of the town to contribute to them. Despite his long efforts, he failed to pass a resolution for municipal contribution to the *mekteps* and the *rüşdiye* in the municipal council, though he provided financial support for Russo-Tatar schools and a Russian high school (*vysshee nachal'noe uchilishche*). Without any funds from the municipality, he employed Alimollayev (without any salary) to deal with the legal problems and consultation of the Crimean Tatars.⁵³ It should be noted that all these measures in general were extraordinary and impressive innovations in the Crimea then, not to mention among the Crimean Tatars. No doubt Mehdi's popularity and the achievements in the municipality of Karasubazar contributed a great deal to the credibility of the young generation of revolutionary-nationalists, who were initially viewed by most of the Crimean Tatar society as nothing more than a bunch of madcaps.

One of the most important activities of the Karasubazar circle of the Young Tatars was the publication of the newspaper *Vatan Hâdimi* (*Servant of the Fatherland*). It was the principal forum for Young Tatar ideas and the second newspaper in the history of the Crimean Tatars.⁵⁴ At the beginning the official publisher of *Vatan Hâdimi* was Katırşasaraylı Seydahmet Çelebi Murat Efendioglu and the editor-in-chief Abdürreşid Mehdi.⁵⁵ Later, Emir A. Emirüseynov⁵⁶ became the official publisher and Ablâmit Şeyhzade the editorial secretary.⁵⁷ Mehdi was, of course, the soul of the newspaper determining the ideological line, and apart from him Hasan Sabri Ayvazov and Nureddin Agayev were the editorial writers.⁵⁸ Several prominent figures of the Young Tatars, such as Hüseyin Balıç, Hüseyin Şamil Toktargazi, Yahya Naci Bayburtlu, Asan Çergeyev, Osman Murasov, Mustafa Kurti, and others also contributed to *Vatan Hâdimi*.⁵⁹ Among the typesetters of *Vatan Hâdimi* were the brothers Veli and Ömer Ibrahim, both transferred from *Tercüman*, who were to play crucial roles in Crimean politics between 1918-1928.⁶⁰ *Vatan Hâdimi* was printed in the printing house of O. Rogan in Karasubazar.⁶¹ Initially it appeared four times a week and its circulation

wavered between 600 and 2,000 copies.⁶² The first issue of *Vatan Hâdimi* appeared on May 13, 1906.⁶³ Under the title of *Vatan Hâdimi* read a *hadith* of the Prophet Muhammed: “Love of the Fatherland is a part of the Faith.”⁶⁴ It also carried Mehdi’s slogan : “Land belongs to those who work on it.”⁶⁵

From its very first issue *Vatan Hâdimi* blared its revolutionary outlook by demanding land for the peasants, denouncing the injustices in the land question in the Crimea, and straightforwardly attacking the very institution of the monarchy. It even went so far as to state that “nothing is worthy about the tsars and sultans other than the gilded crowns on their heads.” It also made no secret of its intentions to struggle with the traditionalist elements of Crimean Tatar society.⁶⁶

Apparently, the land question and the demand for the reinstatement of all the rights of the Crimean Tatars which had been trampled by the tsarist authorities remained the focus of *Vatan Hâdimi* throughout its existence. Overall, both the tone and contents of *Vatan Hâdimi* were unusually radical for Crimean society of the day. Instead of *requesting* magnanimity of the tsar, it *demande*d change on the grounds of the *rights* of the Crimean Tatar people. Instead of compromising with a benevolent tsarist autocracy, it strove for the overthrow of autocracy in order to grab back the *rights*, and to this end it fully justified collaboration with the Russian revolutionaries.

An editorial written by Nureddin Agayev clearly reflected the position of *Vatan Hâdimi* in this matter:

“In [autocratic] monarchies, as its very name testifies, the all-powerful master of the nation is the absolute monarch himself. He has ‘irresponsible ministers’ as his executive organs. Whatever the government does, however it torments [the people], no one has the right to speak out. Even when the irresponsible ministers cause the degradation of the whole nation, no court can hold them responsible. It is because of these [unlimited] powers that in the governments of [autocratic] monarchy there can be no justice. The ruling power is unaccountable before the nation... All the [autocratic] monarchies in history have been habitually oppressive and despotic. One cannot expect justice from them.”⁶⁷

To be sure, the editorial did not spare Islamic autocracies from its condemnation. Agayev deplored the state of affairs among Muslim societies following the era of the “Four Caliphs” (i.e., the reign of four immediate successors of the Prophet Muhammed), which had until then fallen into the arbitrary and despotic rules of the sultans. Even the glory and magnificence of the past Muslim states could not conceal the injustices inherent in them. Agayev did not put all the blame just on individual sovereigns, but also denounced the *ulema* (Muslim religious scholars) who so readily justified the sovereigns’ misdeeds and attributed divinity to them. Not surprisingly, the principal target of the article within the Islamic context was the absolutism of Abdülhamid II in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁸

Vatan Hâdimi wholeheartedly supported the drive for reform and modernization in the Crimea and elsewhere in the Islamic world. In fact, it was a fervent upholder of the New Method, and during its existence *Vatan Hâdimi* advocated the expansion of reformed *mekteps* no less than *Tercüman* did. The opening of Muslim secondary schools in the native language, the *rüşdiyes*, a very provocative issue in post-1905 Crimea, was actively endorsed by *Vatan Hâdimi*.⁶⁹ In general educational matters,

the resolute policy of *Vatan Hâdimi* called for the broadening of modern national education (i.e., the instruction of both secular and religious subjects in the native tongue, with special emphasis on national culture and history) up to the highest possible levels, and beyond the existent Muslim educational system, further education of the Muslim Turkic students in the higher level Russian schools (i.e., the gymnasia and universities). In this matter, *Vatan Hâdimi* obviously was in favor of the highest degree of utilization of, and integration into, Russian science and civilization (and through it into that of the modern world), while at the same time firmly safeguarding national culture and consciousness and actually developing them with the help of modern means. Thus, *Vatan Hâdimi* proposed sending students with the support of wealthy Crimeans to the universities of St. Petersburg, Paris, and Cairo in order to "train cadres to serve the nation in the Crimea."⁷⁰

Another dimension of the educational and social stand of *Vatan Hâdimi* was its steady advocacy of the education of female members of society and their active participation in social life. In his article, Mehdi stated that Islam not only allowed but actually required that women learn worldly sciences and the language of the country in which they lived. He also protested the lower status of women in society and discussed their problems. As might be expected, this sensitive issue scandalized the traditionalist mullahs who publicly accused Mehdi of dragging Muslim women into dissoluteness.⁷¹

Vatan Hâdimi, as a part of its general outlook, endeavored to generate among the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia, if not the masses, a deeper interest and active participation in the general political life of the Russian Empire. It carried detailed news and commentaries about the full spectrum of Russian politics and highlighted Duma politics. To further political knowledge it recommended to its readers relevant Russian literature and political encyclopedias.⁷² It also underscored the necessity of the translation of the programs and important publications of the Russian political parties and groups.⁷³

One of the most important aspects of *Vatan Hâdimi* (and that of the Young Tatars) was its contribution to the national identity and consciousness of the Crimean Tatars. Without contradicting its Turkic, Muslim, and revolutionary allegiances, affiliations and interests, *Vatan Hâdimi* systematically emphasized the actual problems and aspirations of the Crimean Tatars.⁷⁴ In almost every issue its starting point was the Crimea, and it addressed primarily (but not solely) a Crimean Tatar audience. In the face of the evidence available to date, *Vatan Hâdimi* (or the Young Tatars) did not seem to specify a clear-cut definition and program of its specific brand of nationalism. Yet it unequivocally attributed the concept of the Fatherland (*Vatan*) in the sense of the *patria* to the Crimea, and brought to the fore the particular background, culture, and problems of the Crimean Tatars. In other words, the primary object and basis of its nationalism was the particular Crimean Tatar people/nation, on an ethno-religiously *and* territorially defined setting. That is to say, it did not view the Crimean Tatars *merely* as an anonymous fragment of a much larger religious (i.e., Islamic) and/or ethnic (i.e., Turkic/Turkish) body.

Nonetheless, the assumption that the Young Tatars were uninterested in or oppugnant to all-Turkic and all-Islamic ideas is totally unfounded.⁷⁵ On the contrary, they were evidently very much interested in these issues, and the Turkic and Islamic dimensions were inseparably incorporated into the national idea of the Young Tatars. While upholding a distinctly depicted concept of Crimean (Tatar)

consciousness, they simultaneously viewed themselves (and their conceptualized nation) as an integral part of the broader Turkic and Islamic worlds. In fact, they imbued the Turkic and Islamic components within a particular Crimean (Tatar) identity, and actually consolidated the latter with the former. This three-dimensional Crimean Tatar nationalism, which found its rudimentary form in the *Weltanschauung* of the Young Tatars, manifestly defined the platform of all future Crimean Tatar national movements up to this day.

The following words of Mehdi, which were written in a letter of reply to the editor of the Orenburg newspaper *Vakit*, clarify his (and the Young Tatar) position on the question of religious and national identity: "First, I am a Muslim and as a Muslim, for me, there has never been and there will never be a more important issue than religion; second, I am a Crimean and as a Crimean I do not and cannot forget the suffering of my Fatherland at the hands of the cruel officials of the tyrannical government because of religious reasons since the times of Catherine [II] up to this day."⁷⁶

Vatan Hâdimi, following the track of *Tercüman*, tried to inform its readers about the current situation of the Muslims abroad with an emphasis on colonial aggression against the Muslims. One could encounter in *Vatan Hâdimi* news and commentaries about the suffering Muslims in Algeria, Crete, Romania, and elsewhere, as well as pan-Islamic movements abroad.⁷⁷ The following list of subjects was announced for future publication in *Vatan Hâdimi* during 1907: the history of the Crimea after the Russian conquest; the opinions of prominent European writers about Islam; the history of the Ottoman Empire from Selim III to the present; information about currents which were subversive against Islam, such as the Babis and Wahhabis; and biographies of the great men of Islam.⁷⁸ Notably, *Vatan Hâdimi* was also read beyond the Crimea among the Turko-Muslims of Bulgaria, Azerbaijan, and the Volga-Ural area.⁷⁹

The language policy of *Vatan Hâdimi* reflected its stand on the unity of the Turko-Muslims. Like *Tercüman*, *Vatan Hâdimi* was also published in a clear Ottoman Turkish.⁸⁰ Naturally, *Tercüman* praised its language and described *Vatan Hâdimi* as *Tercüman*'s "closest fellow traveler in the issue of language unity," though it recommended that the Young Tatar paper use a simpler Ottoman Turkish with fewer insertions of Arabic and Persian words, considering the unsophisticated level of the average reader.⁸¹

In fact, *Vatan Hâdimi* outlined its stand on the Turkic linguistic unity from the very start with the articles of H. S. Ayvazov. In his first article on linguistic unity, Ayvazov criticized fellow Turkic newspaper in the Russian Empire which used local dialects as the written language rather than a unified literary Turkish. He wrote:

"The issue of language is the most important and principal issue among all other matters; it is the prime source of unity and union... The great majority, if not all, of the Muslims who constitute a large body of twenty million people are, in fact, Turks. Their blood, origins, extraction, traditions, and morals are one and the same. The root and origin of the language we speak today is also the same. Our maladies, problems, and needs are also the same. Therefore, it is necessary that the language and dialect we use must also be one and the same. Without unifying our language, not only will it be impossible for us to understand and help each other, but our unity and union will also be ill-founded. Since our nation, during its most unenlightened times, had read and enjoyed our literary language, i.e., [Ottoman] Turkish for twenty years, why could it not understand Turkish

at the present time when our national education has been more or less publicized? The cry of *Tercüman* is not for nothing. Its clamor is not a shallow one; it is a consequence of a twenty-five-year experience."⁸²

"As *Tercüman* correctly states, if each newspaper, each journal uses a different dialect there shall never be a unity among us, and our All-Muslim Congress in Petersburg will never lead to a fruitful end."⁸³

Despite the fact that the Young Tatars and their organ *Vatan Hâdimi* ardently supported the Turkic linguistic unity and the modernization-New Method movement, which were the preeminent objectives of Gaspıralı, and that the Young Tatars themselves were direct or indirect products of the national reform drive initiated by Gaspıralı, they in a number of respects clearly contravened him. First of all, the Young Tatars' radical-revolutionary stand in political matters and their socialist tendencies in social issues were contradictory to Gaspıralı's characteristic policy, which always followed legal and moderate lines.

At the beginning of the 1905 revolution, Gaspıralı, though not ignoring the new possibilities and opportunities concomitant with the new era, categorically refused to associate himself with the radical revolutionary currents. On the other hand, the Young Tatars declared an uncompromising struggle against autocracy and eagerly cooperated with Russian revolutionary groups. The attempts of the Young Tatar representatives who visited Gaspıralı several times to entice him to join or support the revolutionary movements failed.⁸⁴ At one occasion in 1905 Mehdi together with two other Young Tatars, Hüseyin Şamil Toktargazı and Nusret İlimiyev, visited the editorial office of *Tercüman* and addressed Gaspıralı, "The Russian revolution has happened. Peoples have arisen. In their minds the idea of national liberation has been born. Is it not the time for *Tercüman* to change its political course and to devote larger space to the democratic ideas?" Gaspıralı replied, "The revolution has happened, but it has not been victorious. Life has remained as it had ever been. Therefore, it is necessary to wait for better time." In spite of all efforts of the Young Tatars to persuade him, Gaspıralı stood firm at his position.⁸⁵ Consequently, as a result of the differences of outlook, to quote one of the radical socialist members of the Young Tatar Movement, "the Young Tatars and Gaspıralı got into a kind of competition."⁸⁶

A polemic between *Vatan Hâdimi* and *Tercüman* clearly illustrates the different perspectives and manners of both parties. In September 1906, Mehdi brought forward the issue of the return of all *vakıf* lands which had been taken away from the Muslims since the Russian invasion. In his article Mehdi wrote :

"We have already written that, at the time of the Crimea's subjugation by Russia 125 years ago there had been some 300,000 des. of *vakıf* lands. And now at the hands of the Spiritual Board and the *Vakıf* Commission only 87,000 des. of *vakıf* lands have been left. That is to say, 200,000 des. lands were usurped by several persons, and most of them were seized by the state, which has been most artful in such matters, and these sacred lands, left us by our ancestors, were renamed state (*kazenny*) lands.

It is our most important duty to work for the return of these lands which are the inalienable property of the Crimean Muslims. According to our opinion, in the first place we must work for [the return of] those lands which were named *kazenny* by the state. The State Duma which is to be convened can handle this matter. In order to demand the return of

these lands, however, it is necessary to present detailed documentation about their locations and sizes to the State Duma.”

Mehdi also urged the village or town communities concerned to organize meetings and petitions, and stated that he personally could be the canvasser to take care of these appeals to the state organs.⁸⁷

Gaspıralı's approach to Mehdi's call was cynical. Should it be possible to recover all lands with mere demands, he wondered why not demand much larger lands, say, the vast old pastoral lands of the Tatar shepherds in the continental parts of the former Crimean Khanate. To him, the old *vakıf* lands had already been appropriated by numerous successive persons and exchanged as a private property. Therefore, there could be no right to reclaim them. Gaspıralı recommended Mehdi to give up the idea, and, as a realistic demand, to ask priority for the landless Crimean Tatars in the case of a redistribution of the former lands of the emigrants which were now appropriated by the state.⁸⁸

When Mehdi insisted on the return of the former *vakıf* lands, Gaspıralı demonstrated that none of the present state lands in the Crimea were former *vakıf* lands, that is, all lost *vakıf* lands had long been transferred to private hands. Thus, according to Gaspıralı, “there could never be a Duma which would be demented enough to violate the principle of prescription.”⁸⁹

The Young Tatars also criticized Gaspıralı of underplaying the specific problems of the Crimean Tatars. While *Vatan Hâdimi* was temporarily closed, H. S. Ayvazov, a former (also future) close associate of Gaspıralı, reproved *Tercüman's* lack of emphasis on the Crimean affairs in an article in *Füyûzat* (Baku). Having conceded the long-standing and praiseworthy service of *Tercüman*, Ayvazov criticized *Tercüman's* failure to reach out to the Crimeans themselves and its devotion of too little space for Crimean affairs; he also claimed that *Tercüman* catered more to the interests of areas other than the Crimea and that its pages were “locked” against other voices and ideas.⁹⁰

Perhaps, the disagreement of the Young Tatars with Gaspıralı were most markedly paraphrased in Mehdi's speech in the 25th anniversary ceremonies of *Tercüman*:

“I see that present here are also those people who think differently from Ismail Mirza [Gaspıralı]. I myself also belong to those people. Being completely subscribed to this group of avowed ideas, I disagree with many of the ideas propagated by *Tercüman* and its editor Ismail Mirza [Gaspıralı] on purely political issues, and, as far as socio-economic matters are concerned, I not only deeply part with him, but possibly our points of view are diametrically opposed to each other.”⁹¹

It should be noted that, however, after these explanatory words, Mehdi went on highly praising Gaspıralı and stated that the Young Tatars were committed to support the enlightenment and reform movement which had been introduced by Gaspıralı.⁹²

On the other hand, it should also be noted that it was not always easy or possible to distinguish “Gaspıralı's followers” and the “Young Tatars.” Since none of these groups were organized in the form of parties or organizations with clear-cut programs and strict conditions of membership, and since at least shared strategies and aims certainly overshadowed their obvious differences which were not always “diametrically opposed to each other,” one could hardly draw an indisputable demarcation line between the two groups. There were not a few individuals who

could well be considered to belong to both of these groups simultaneously. After all, the cleavages between any of these two groups and Russian rule on the one hand and the traditionalist elements of Crimean Tatar society on the other were far deeper than any other disagreement between each other. It is not surprising that after *Vatan Hâdimi* was closed down, many of its contributors, including Ayvazov, wrote in *Tercüman*, which, ironically, owed its uninterrupted long life of publication primarily to its tactics and moderate tone, which was one of its basic differences from *Vatan Hâdimi*. It is known that Gaspıralı privately told about Mehdi, of whom he thought highly and who frequently visited Gaspıralı, "our path is the same, but our tactics are different."⁹³

An interesting incident involving the Young Tatars and Gaspıralı is worthy of mention. Soon after the issuance of the so-called "Vyborg Manifesto" by the ex-members of the dissolved First Duma,⁹⁴ a group of Young Tatars together with some Russian revolutionaries (possibly SRs) decided to publish and distribute the Vyborg Manifesto in Crimean Tatar. According to a news report appearing in *Tercüman*, on the very night of the Manifesto's issuance, in the village of Küçük Lambat in Yalta, the SRs organized a meeting which both Russian and Tatar inhabitants attended. The speeches of the SR speakers were also translated through a Tatar interpreter. There the Manifesto was publicly read, and after the meeting the text of the Manifesto was distributed in Russian and Tatar (at least the latter must have been in hand-written form).⁹⁵

Apparently, in order to print large numbers of copies of the Manifesto in Crimean Tatar, the revolutionaries needed the facilities of the sole Muslim printing house in the Crimea, i.e., that of Gaspıralı (for an unknown reason they did not utilize the printing house in Karasubazar where *Vatan Hâdimi* was printed and which belonged to a Jew). At that time, Gaspıralı was vacationing at the seaside and two Young Tatars, Celâl Meinov and Abbas Şirinskiy, contacted Gaspıralı's daughter Şefika and Nesipbey Yusufbeyli, her husband and an author in *Tercüman*. On August 7, 1906, according to the plan prearranged between Şirinskiy and Yusufbeyli, a group of "unknown" Russian revolutionaries, among them Şirinskiy, seized the printing house at gun point and had the Manifesto printed in Crimean Tatar. Of course, Şefika and Nesipbey Yusufbeyli pretended to be as surprised as anybody else. As Şefika Gaspıralı later narrated the incident, having learned what had happened, Ismail Bey Gaspıralı did not show any sign of resentment and actually he was quite happy about it.⁹⁶

When Gaspıralı mentioned the incident in *Tercüman*, he simply wrote that six armed socialists seized the printing house and printed 1,200 copies of the Vyborg Manifesto. Interestingly, not only did he not use a single word to condemn such a "criminal act," he even praised the behavior of the revolutionaries by stating that they treated the printing staff "gently and equitably."⁹⁷ According to Şefika Gaspıralı the "raiders" were SRs.⁹⁸ After the incident, the town police assigned two guards in front of the printing house.⁹⁹ A news item in *Tercüman* tells us that the Vyborg Manifesto (in Crimean Tatar) and other proclamations were distributed in many quarters of Akmescit on August 19, 1906.¹⁰⁰

In the context of the relations between the Young Tatars (and *Vatan Hâdimi*) and Gaspıralı and the line represented by him, it should be noted that parallel radical-nationalist groups appeared also in the Volga area, Turkestan, and Azerbaijan. Such groups gathered around the newspapers *Taň Yulduzı* (*Morning Star*) in Kazan

(1906), *Tekâmül (Evolution)* in Baku (1906-1907) and *Terakkî (Progress)* in Tashkent (1906-1907).¹⁰¹ The common features of these groups were their revolutionary character with SR affiliations, radical anti-autocratical policy, and a strong emphasis on their respective local countrymen. The leaders of the Kazan group (*Tañçılar*) were: Ayaz Ishakî and Fuat Tuktar, of the Tashkent group: Ismail Abidi (a Kazan Tatar, from the *Tañçılar*), and of the Baku group: Mehmet Emin Resulzade. All of these groups, especially the former, were strongly critical of the traditional line of Gaspıralı, which they found too conservative.¹⁰² The first issue of *Tañ Yulduzu* even contained an account of the “crimes of the Crimean hooligan [Gaspıralı] against our nation, who, for more than twenty years, deceived our Tatars and became a lackey of the autocracy.”¹⁰³

To be sure, there is no evidence that the criticism of the Young Tatars ever reached such dimensions of invective against Gaspıralı. What is more, although Gaspıralı reciprocated the attacks of *Tañ Yulduzu* and frequently called it as the “red newspaper,” he never used the same phrase for *Vatan Hâdimi*. Still, as far as general orientation was concerned, all of these groups apparently considered each other to be fellow travelers.¹⁰⁴ However, there is no information about any practical cooperation between these groups. Last but not least, not accidentally, the educational origins of most of the prominent activists of these revolutionary-nationalist Turkic movements were the Russian-Tatar schools (or Tatar Teachers’ Schools) like the Young Tatars.¹⁰⁵

At a time when *Vatan Hâdimi* was at the climax of its popularity in the Crimea, Mehdi ran for the second State Duma.¹⁰⁶ In order to have Mehdi elected to the Duma, Young Tatars, especially Menseyit Cemil, together with Mehdi himself conducted a large campaign not only within the Crimea but also in the continental section of the Tavrida *guberniia*, where the population was almost exclusively non-Tatar.¹⁰⁷ Mehdi also established connections with the influential politicians of the *guberniia*, and suppressing his SR affiliations, he took pains to exhibit his sympathies toward the Kadet Party, which was strong in the *guberniia*. In his long speech in the *guberniia* assembly, he made it clear that he would not act against the laws of the country. Consequently, he was elected to the Duma on the Kadet list with the votes of the local *Kadets* who were predominantly Russians.¹⁰⁸ Later, after Mehdi’s speeches in the Duma, many more moderate members of the Tavrida *guberniia* assembly were to regret their choice and say that “he fooled us by concealing his being a socialist.”¹⁰⁹ Apart from Mehdi, other deputies from the Tavrida *guberniia* to the Second Duma belonged mostly to the left-wing parties and fractions.¹¹⁰

Mehdi’s election to the Duma created enormous joy among the Crimean Tatars, as he was the first Crimean Tatar deputy in the State Duma.¹¹¹ Before going to St. Petersburg, Mehdi asked for the creation of a commission of *ulema* in the Crimea whose opinion he would seek in case of any doubt, in order to serve in accordance with the *sharia*.¹¹²

In the Duma, Mehdi joined the Muslim Fraction, and after his widely acclaimed speech in the first meeting of the Muslim Fraction, he was elected its general secretary.¹¹³ Mehdi established a very close relationship with the members of the Muslim Fraction, especially with Sadri Maksudî, Şahaydar Sırtlanov, and Musa Carullah Bigi (not a Duma deputy). He managed to secure the support of the Muslim Fraction even in his most radically toned speeches.¹¹ It is also notable that,

although Mehdi was one of the leading left-wing members of the Muslim Fraction, he did not join those five Muslim deputies who split from the Muslim Fraction to form the left wing "Muslim Labor Group" (*Musul'manskaia trudovaia gruppya*). This also indicated that the Young Tatar commitments to the idea of Muslim Turkic unity proved paramount in defining their place in the political spectrum.

When he was in the Duma Mehdi sent (most likely written down by himself) a petition "to the State Duma - from the Tatar people of the Crimean peninsula." The petition, with its typical rhetoric, represented a characteristic Young Tatar outlook on the actual Crimean Tatar situation. The demands in the petition focused principally on the economic plight of the Crimean Tatars, the land (or landlessness) problem, the misuse of *vakif* lands, the expropriation of Tatar peasants, the unbearable tax burden on the peasants, the harmful consequences of opening state-owned liquor stores in the villages, etc.:

"Our poverty is caused by the fact that not all of our income is left in our own pockets and that it goes to those pockets which have no use for us: first, to the state treasury, second to the local rich men, *pomeshchiki* and to those for whom most of us are compelled to work [...] Among our people, it is estimated that currently there are about 50,000 landless individuals who have to look for jobs, live as hired farm laborers and work for the *pomeshchiki*. On the other hand, here, there are *vakif* lands, confiscated lands, state lands, allocated lands and *pomeshchik* lands which can save many people from poverty and misery; however, at the present time [these lands] are either being wasted without doing any good to the people, or, at the cost of the toiling people, they provide profits for some individuals. All the lands here previously belonged to the Tatar people and all of them, by hook or by crook, passed to other hands, and we the Tatars received very little or nothing for this. Most of us were deceived and in no court were we able to find justice. [...] From us, the Tatars, hundreds of thousands, even millions of rubles are collected. And what is given to us in return? We are given those rude and willful *nachal'niki* [police or *gendarmierie* chiefs] who do whatever they want and who do not obey any laws."¹¹⁵

Mehdi's first speech in the Duma (March 28, 1907) was on the deplorable situation of the workers and peasants in Russia. "Russia is based on workers and peasants. The worker and the peasant - these are the giants which hold Russia. The worker and the peasant - it is these great forces who create the new, magnificent edifice of the new, free Russia on the place of the old edifice of the Russia of the past. And now before the eyes of the representatives of the people these great forces are being corroded by unemployment and famine," he said. Mehdi called for urgent assistance on the part of the Duma to those workers who lost their jobs because of the increasing lock-outs and to the starving peasants. He also added that the fraction he belonged to, i.e., the Muslim Fraction, fully supported the idea of urgent help to the workers and peasants.¹¹⁶

The most important appearance of Mehdi on the Duma platform was his long speech on April 22, 1907, which was a typical paradigm of the revolutionary-nationalist outlook of the Young Tatars. In this speech, Mehdi first defined his revolutionary position by declaring his loyalty to the celebrated motto of the Russian revolutionary socialists since 1860's: "Land and Freedom" (*Zemlia i Volia*). He condemned the autocracy which had silenced the First Duma, the slogan of whose representatives from the depths of the people had been: "Land and Freedom."¹¹⁷

“The Land must be utilized by those who work on it, by those who water it with their sweat, and not by those who force others to exert themselves to the utmost on the land, and those who build their happiness upon others’ labor.” He said that if the property was sacred as the Rightists claimed, then the property of a simple man should also be as sacred as the properties of some grandees.¹¹⁸ His example for the blatant violation of this principle was from his native Crimea:

“In the not so distant past, in the Crimean peninsula there were 600,000 des. of land which belonged to the Tatar village communities. These lands, which were the property of the Tatar village communities, were inviolable; besides the laws which established the inviolability of these lands, there were also the so-called special regulations. I shall read no.10 from these regulations: ‘Those lands which are in the possession of a whole village (*seleniia*) population do not constitute private property of the separate owners even in the form of plots; they are in essence the common property of the entire village population; therefore the Tatars have full liberty to utilize them, but from now on it is forbidden to sell or transfer them to outsiders with other ways.’ Yes, in the Crimean peninsula apart from these 600,000 des. of land, there also used to be the so-called *vakif* lands. These *vakif* lands had been dedicated by charitable Tatars in the name of God, to the benefit of mosques, schools, and the poor; these lands, which had been as if liberated from being subjugated by private property as exchange items in the markets, had been returned to their original owner, God. It was impossible either to sell or mortgage or confiscate or subjugate them again to the private property by other means. That is to say, in the Crimea, there were 600,000 des. of land which belonged to the village communities and whose inviolability had been consolidated, not only with the ordinary laws, but also with special regulations. Apart from those, there were 200,000 des. lands whose inviolability had been guaranteed as having been recognized that they belonged to God. And what do we see now? The Tatar village communities were left with nothing more than 79,000 des., and only 87,000 des. of the *vakif* lands are left. And where is the rest of it, those more than 500,000 des.? [...] This is what happened to them: previously they had been the property of the Tatars, that of God, and now they have become the properties of Count Mordvinovs, Vorontsov-Dashkovs, Kakhovskis, and their other brothers (applausal from the left).”¹¹⁹

Mehdi then, addressing the right, accused them of upholding the properties of the grandees as sacred while refusing to recognize the same right for the peasants and for the Tatars who, being non-Russians (*inorodtsy*), were considered devoid of all rights. During his speech, Mehdi brought several examples of similar land plunder and violations from other Turkic Muslim regions such as the Volga-Ural area and Turkestan.

He also pointed out the historical irony of the Tavrida Palace where the Duma sessions were held and which had been built by Catherine II in memory of the conquest of the Crimea: “...our land was parceled out here and distributed among themselves [‘the glorious heroes of the brilliant Catherinian times’]. Then, 2,000 versts away from here, having yielded to our destiny we silently sat and shed tears of desperation. A hundred years have passed and [only] now the representative of the Crimean Tatars is talking to you about their desires, about their fate.”¹²⁰

Mehdi, having read the above-mentioned petition “to the State Duma – from the Tatar people of the Crimean peninsula,” said:

“Yes, the situation of the Crimean Tatars is deplorable. This situation is worse than the worst; and you, too, gentlemen, say that you do not have land. No, you have at least

those three *arshins* of land which nobody can deny you when you go back to your ancestors for eternal rest; we do not have even that. Among us, the *pomeshchik* may kick out the deceased if it is within his sacred property; the peasants do not even have the right to bury the deceased in the sacred property of the *pomeshchik* without his permission. According to the data compiled by several researchers, fifty years ago, just after the Crimean Campaign [War] our Crimean Tatars faced such an economic collapse that they could hardly stand the imposts. Fifty years have passed and the Tatars are still in the same position, and they have begun to degenerate and become extinct. But we do not want to die, we want a new life, and we strongly believe that (pointing to the left) when this side of the State Duma will be triumphant and when we shall exercise control over the land together and equally, then we shall live the new life with new powers."¹²¹

Mehdi's long speech had a great deal of repercussions both on the right and left. Of course, the right wing was harshly critical of it.¹²² On the other hand, Mehdi gained wide popularity among the leftist groups, as his speech attracted the attention of both the SR Boris Savinkov and the Bolshevik Vladimir I. Lenin.¹²³ The latter, in his contemporary "The agrarian program of Social-Democracy in the first Russian Revolution, 1905-1907" made quotations from Mehdi's speech and implied his sympathies.¹²⁴ Inside the Crimea, Mehdi was tendered thanks and congratulated by public letters.¹²⁵

At the end of his short career as a Duma deputy (the Second Duma was dissolved by the tsar on June 16, 1907), Mehdi's last speech (on April 30, 1907) was about Russian colonization policies in Central Asia. He called for the discontinuation of settling Slavic colonists in Central Asia, at least until the land question in general was decisively resolved by the State Duma. Otherwise, he warned, such provocations of national antagonisms would lead to shameful events in the Asian provinces of Russia similar to those which had taken place in Transcaucasia.¹²⁶

Notwithstanding the popularity of Mehdi and *Vatan Hâdimi* among young intellectual circles with the Crimea and other Turko-Muslim areas, the publication of the newspaper could continue less than two years, and only with various hardships and interruptions. From the start, *Vatan Hâdimi* suffered from insufficient financial resources and, not surprisingly, pressure from both government offices and the traditionalist Crimean Tatars.

The principal financial means of *Vatan Hâdimi* was the financial support of some well-to-do Young Tatars and others. Among these supporters were Süleyman Alimollayev, Seydahmet Çelebi, Mamut Bazırgân and Abbas Hüseyin.¹²⁷ The contributions of Süleyman Alimollayev were most important. In fact, it was Alimollayev who provided the primary funds not only for *Vatan Hâdimi* but for many of the other Young Tatar activities.¹²⁸

On the other hand, the political line of *Vatan Hâdimi* naturally upset both the local censorate and Tatar traditionalists. In fact, the traditionalists repeatedly appealed to the *gubernator* to have *Vatan Hâdimi* closed. Although, thanks to Mehdi's and Alimollayev's influential connections in the provincial capital, it was possible for some time to continue the publication of the newspaper, the local police constantly kept a watchful eye on all Young Tatar activities in Karasubazar.¹²⁹ Moreover, large fines were imposed by the censorate upon almost every issue of *Vatan Hâdimi*, thereby making it practically impossible for the newspaper to survive financially.¹³⁰

Consequently, the publication of *Vatan Hâdimi* was forced to be interrupted in November 1906, six months after its first appearance. In order to overcome financial shortcomings and provide a regular source of funding for *Vatan Hâdimi*, a “Crimean Muslim Press and Publication Company” was established in Kefe by Rüstem Ahundov. The Company was supposed to publish all kinds of textbooks for Muslim schools and books “to serve the material and moral progress and enlightenment of the Muslims.”¹³¹

Though nothing is known about the future fate of the Company, apparently a year’s financial support was secured for *Vatan Hâdimi*, which began to be published again in December 1906.¹³² Nevertheless, *Vatan Hâdimi* was closed again in Spring 1907. The absence of Mehdi, who was then in the State Duma in St. Petersburg, must have contributed to this interruption, aside from the constant pressure from the censorship authorities. At one point, the Young Tatars attempted to open their own printing house in Akmescit, and publish *Vatan Hâdimi* there, but this enterprise apparently remained unrealized.¹³³ Meanwhile, Mehdi asked permission to publish a newspaper in Russian, *Golos Musul'man*, which was denied. The Young Tatars also attempted unsuccessfully to publish a pedagogical journal in Turkish, *Pedagoji (Pedagogy)*.¹³⁴

The intensifying reaction all over the Russian Empire throughout 1907 certainly complicated obtaining permission to resume publication of *Vatan Hâdimi*. After some difficulties, Mehdi managed again to get permission to publish *Vatan Hâdimi* once a week in November 1907.¹³⁵ This last period of publication of *Vatan Hâdimi* did not last long, and in Summer 1908 the government closed it for good.¹³⁶

By the end of 1908, the Young Tatars attempted to compensate for the loss of *Vatan Hâdimi* by publishing new newspapers. To this end in November 1908, Mehdi decided to publish in Akmescit a fortnightly newspaper in Russian, which was to be titled *Nash Golos* and devoted to Crimean Tatar affairs.¹³⁷ Possibly due to denial of official permission nothing came of this attempt. Meanwhile in October 1908, Hasan Sabri Ayvazov appealed to the *gubernator* asking for permission to publish a newspaper titled *Kırım Sedası (Crimean Voice)* in Crimean Tatar in Karasubazar. At first, permission was denied on the grounds that there was nobody in Karasubazar who could be appointed as the official observer (*nabliudaiushchii*) to the newspaper.¹³⁸ Two months later the *gubernator* finally found a sufficiently reliable person to observe and supervise the publication of *Kırım Sedası*: Father Nikolai Sarkin, the “anti-Islam missionary” in the Crimea. Bishop Aleksii of Tavrida also agreed to the new assignment of Father Sarkin on January 11, 1909.¹³⁹ Predictably, *Kırım Sedası* was never published.

The Bahçesaray group of Young Tatars, which was in the form of a circle comprising most of the Crimean Tatar teachers, also undertook a publishing venture. These nationalist teachers, among whom were Celâl Meinov, Hüseyin Baliç, Yahya Naci Bayburtlu, Süleyman Badraklı, Emirali Kayızov, Ömer Sami, Yakup Davidoviç, İbrahim Meinov, İbrahim Tarpi, and Abdurrahman Hüsnü, decided to publish a series of pamphlets in the form of children’s literature.¹⁴⁰ To this end, they named the series *Uçkun (Spark)*, upon Bayburtlu’s proposal,¹⁴¹ and in September 1909 they formed a society with this name to publish these works.¹⁴²

The idea of publishing children’s literature aimed both to present basic Young Tatar notions in a more innocent-looking form to get around possible difficulties and to instill them into the minds of the young generation in a palatable fashion. The

contents of the *Uçkun* series were either written by the Young Tatar teachers or translated from Russian. They were printed in the *Tercüman* printing house.¹⁴³ The language of the pamphlets was the Bahçesaray dialect (*Orta Yolak*, i.e., "midway") which was very close to Gaspıralı's literary Turkish and, at the same time, more accessible to the native readers.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, after the publication of only five or six pamphlets, the *Uçkun* series was banned by the police.¹⁴⁵

Short-lived as they were, the publishing ventures of the Young Tatars provided an encouraging outlet for neophyte Crimean Tatar poets and authors, many of whom would become the celebrated Crimean Tatar literary figures of the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁴⁶

One such figure was Hüseyin Şamil Toktargazı (1881-1913). Toktargazı was of poor peasant background and, like most of the Young Tatars, was a graduate of the Tatar Teachers' School.¹⁴⁷ As a teacher, he was an active participant in the Young Tatar movement and a contributor to *Vatan Hâdimi*. Soon he acquired fame as the most popular Young Tatar poet. In his poems, the central theme was, under unmistakable SR influence, the grievances of the peasants at the hands of the landlords and the enlightenment movement among the Crimean Tatars. Thus, in most of his works, he assailed the rich landlords and traditionalist mullahs.¹⁴⁸ (In fact, it was a village landlord who was to prearrange his murder on September 30, 1913.¹⁴⁹) Toktargazı's poems also illustrated the essence and sentiments of Young Tatar nationalism. The following verses from his poem "Fî Medh-i Kırım" (On the eulogy of the Crimea) are characteristic:

"Love of the Fatherland is part of the Faith' is an *hadith*,
Only a scoundrel would not love his Fatherland.
Only the son of Tatar is the inheritor to this Land,
The others cannot claim the Crimea.

There is no Land like the Crimea in the world,
There is no glory like Tatariness in the world."¹⁵⁰

For the most part, Toktargazı wrote his works either in Istanbul Turkish or in the southern Crimean dialect which is almost identical with it.¹⁵¹ Although, he was a prolific writer (he wrote textbooks, pedagogical works, novels, plays as well as numerous poems), during his lifetime, he was able to publish, in book form, only a partial collection of his poems, *Nale-i Kırım (Moan of the Crimea)* in 1910, and that through the good offices of Mehdi.¹⁵² In fact, his poems were spread all over the Crimea by means of *cônks* (that is, manuscript copied by every reader). His poems were also read in Azerbaijan and the Volga-Ural area, and some of them were even translated into Russian by the Russian poet Petrovskii.¹⁵³

The other quintessential Young Tatar poet was Asan Çergeyev (1879-1946). He was the son of a *mirza* family and graduated from the Tatar Teachers' School. His poems were strongly influenced by Russian literature (especially M. Lermontov) and Crimean Tatar oral literature.¹⁵⁴ His most famous works in the pre-1917 period were two verse novels, *Eşit Mevta Ne Söyleyor (Listen, what the deadman says)* and *Takdir (Destiny)*, both written in 1909. Çergeyev, whose works were secretly but widely read by Crimean Tatars prior to 1917, wrote in the northern and "midway"

Crimean dialects, thereby promoting the earlier linguistic forms of modern Crimean Tatar literature.

In *Eşit Mevta Ne Söyleyor*, Çergeyev symbolically denounced Russian rule over the Crimea. The hero of the novel who had died before the Russian invasion resurrects and sojourns in the Crimea. To his deep frustration, he sees everywhere only Russians who attack him with insults. Many of his fellow Tatars had long disappeared, and most of those who remained here and there are either Russified or serving the Russian masters in misery. All Tatar material culture had been desecrated. In despair, the resurrected man returns to his grave and lies down.¹⁵⁵ In *Takdir*, Çergeyev depicted the social predicament of Crimean Tatar women through the story of a hapless girl.¹⁵⁶

Çergeyev published the former verse novel in Canköy in 1909, and, obviously to confuse censorship, in Cyrillic letters with the pseudonym “*Belgisiz*” (Anonymous). It took more than two years for the local police to identify the author, and in January 1912, Çergeyev was arrested.¹⁵⁷ A year later, he was released thanks to the general amnesty on the tercentenary of the Romanov dynasty.¹⁵⁸ The second verse novel by Çergeyev, *Takdir*, remained unpublished until 1917.

Two other famous poets-to-be also wrote their first literary works in the Young Tatar milieu. Abdullah Lâtifzade (1890-1938), son of a mullah, had his education in the village *mektep* and *rüşdiye* of Akmescit. Although he was enrolled in the Tatar Teachers’ School, he was expelled after an argument with his teacher, and went to Turkey to continue his education. One of the most talented Crimean Tatar men of letters, he was very well acquainted with both Eastern and Western cultures (he was fluent in Arabic, Persian, Russian, French, and Latin in addition to his native Turkish). He published his earliest poems in *Tercüman* and *Vatan Hâdimi*.¹⁵⁹

Memet Nuzet’s (1888-1934) first satirical epigrams were also reflective of the Young Tatar concerns: revolution, Crimean Tatar reactionaries, misuse of *vakıf* lands, traditionalist mullahs, *mektep* and *medrese* reform, etc. For an epigram attacking the “murderers of the revolution,” he served four months in prison in 1909.¹⁶⁰

In the Karasubazar *rüşdiye*, Mehdi and Yusuf Ziya, director of the school, patronized the education of a poor young boy who was the son of a shepherd. After his graduation from the *rüşdiye*, they provided him with financial means through the Charitable Society for further studies in Istanbul. This young boy was Bekir Sıtkı Çobanzade, who later became the single greatest poet in the modern Crimean Tatar literature and a renowned professor of turcology.¹⁶¹

The Young Tatars also laid the foundations of Crimean Tatar national theater. The several dramatic circles which emerged after the 1905 revolution were mostly composed of Young Tatar teachers and students. In Karasubazar, Mehdi himself organized a Crimean Tatar play group which began performances in December 1907. Since, during this earliest period, women’s acting on the stage was considered scandalous by the conservative public, female roles were also played by male actors. The income from the performances was donated to the Charitable Society.¹⁶² Celâl Meinov and Hüseyin Baliç in Bahçesaray, and Seydahmet Memetov in Akmescit were the organizers of local play groups.¹⁶³ The plays performed were either written by the Young Tatars themselves,¹⁶⁴ or were the works of Ottoman and Azerbaijani Turkish playwrights, or were translations from Russian.¹⁶⁵

Two of the most prominent Young Tatars, A. Mehdi and A. Şirinskiy, in addition to their other activities, endeavored to write the first Crimean Tatar histories covering the last period under Russian rule. Şirinskiy's history covered both the period of the khanate (based mostly on the classic works of V.D. Smirnov¹⁶⁶) and its aftermath. Şirinskiy's manuscript was written in Russian, and a translation of one portion of it (on the last century of the khanate) was published in *Tercüman* in 1909.¹⁶⁷ This history remained unpublished in the following years, and today there is no information about the existence or whereabouts of the manuscript. It is known that Şirinskiy was also interested in the fate of the Crimean Tatar emigrants abroad. In 1909, he traveled to Turkey and toured the settlements of the immigrants. After his return to the Crimea, he wrote series of articles about them in the Russian newspaper *Krymskii vestnik* (Sevastopol).¹⁶⁸

The Crimean Tatar history by Abdürreşid Mehdi covered the period between 1783 and 1910. He planned to publish it in 1913, but he died in 1912, and the manuscript was never published.¹⁶⁹

By the end of the first decade of this century, the Young Tatar movement faded or at least lost the characteristic configuration and structure of 1905-1907. If nothing else, the organizational structure and operational methods of the movement could not help but succumb to the reactionary policies prevalent in the Russian Empire, which became increasingly dominant after 1907.

The Young Tatar movement was first and foremost a movement of young idealistic intellectuals and semi-intellectuals, circumscribed by the relative weight of these elements within the Crimean Tatar society. The great majority of its participants were teachers (most of whom were Russian-educated, i.e., the graduates of the Tatar Teachers' School) and their students. The universal gulf between the intellectuals and uneducated and conservative masses was further widened owing to the Russian educational background of these intellectuals which was most repellent to the masses. Consequently, the Young Tatar movement, despite its certain grass-roots features, never evolved into a true mass movement. In terms of social origins, the Young Tatars' background included virtually every segment of the society, from the highest-ranking *mirzas* to the landless peasants, from the urban bourgeoisie to the village mullahs. Therefore, whatever its rhetoric and tone, the Young Tatar movement was anything but a class-based movement.

Aside from certain underground activities, the basic operational ground of the Young Tatars was the platform which emerged thanks to, or as a by-product of, the freedoms gained in the 1905 revolution. Primarily intellectual in character, the Young Tatar movement benefited, and was most effective, in the newly emerging areas and possibilities such as the free press, meetings, organization, and blooming national education (both in terms of quantity and quality). As the autocracy recovered one by one the gains won in the 1905 revolution, the Young Tatars gradually lost their strongholds. They lost their press organ and were unable to raise their voices by means of legal publication. The Charitable Societies and other legal associations controlled or influenced by them were either closed down or were crippled by 1910, the *rüşdiyyes* were closed down, the semi-secular education in the elementary *mekteps* was brought under stricter control, and, last but not least, every kind of activity undertaken by the Young Tatars was severely curtailed under tightening police control. Unable to continue their previous activities, many of the leading Young

Tatars either engaged themselves in local enlightenment issues (usually rallying around Gaspıralı) or were forced to leave the Crimea temporarily or to stay relatively inactive until they joined the newly emerging national movement during the 1910's. After his participation in the Second Duma and the closure of *Vatan Hâdimi*, the activities of Mehdi and his cohort in Karasubazar were brought under close police surveillance, who took strict measures to prevent the clandestine meetings of the Young Tatars.¹⁷⁰ So far as the available information suggests, after 1909 until his death in 1912, Mehdi, still mayor of Karasubazar, concentrated on less political issues as municipal matters, the endorsement of broadening the New Method *mekteps* in the villages, and assisting Crimean Tatar peasants in legal, social, etc., matters.¹⁷¹ Mehdi died of tuberculosis on May 24, 1912.¹⁷²

Ayvazov was forced to leave the Crimea in 1908 traveling to Cairo to join the Young Turks there, and after the Ottoman revolution in July, to Istanbul. Upon his return to Russia and the abortive attempt to publish *Kırım Sedası*, he settled in Moscow, where he taught in the Lazarevskii Institute of Oriental Languages. He was still under police surveillance in Moscow, and finally he was arrested and sentenced for "disseminating Young Turk ideas among the Muslim students." While he was serving his sentence in Butyrka prison, he managed to escape living until the 1913 general amnesty as a fugitive in Turkey and in Russia.¹⁷³ Menseyit Cemil was expelled from the Crimea by the police in 1908,¹⁷⁴ and after 1910 he settled in St. Petersburg.¹⁷⁵ Mustafa Kurti, who had already been expelled from the University of St. Petersburg in 1906, stayed in the Crimea until 1909, when he was forced to leave for St. Petersburg and settled there.¹⁷⁶ Ali Bodaninskiy was fired from his job, and earned his living through translations from Russian and engaged himself with researches on Crimean Tatar history and ethnography.¹⁷⁷ Hüseyin Baliç had already been arrested and banned from teaching around 1906. He was given a job in the municipality of Bahçesaray¹⁷⁸ but in 1909 upon the *gubernator's* order he was fired from his job.¹⁷⁹

As for Young Tatar circles and cells in various towns and villages of the Crimea, many of them continued to exist separately and continued to link local intellectuals even after 1909. Many of these circles and individuals would provide the ready basis for the much broader national movement during the 1910's.

In addition to internal developments within the Russian Empire, the fall of absolutism in Turkey in 1908 also had a crucial impact on the Crimean Tatar intelligentsia and on the characteristic political orientation of the Young Tatars. Until then, in the eyes of the Young Tatars, ethnic, religious, linguistic, historical and cultural bonds aside, Turkey as a political entity represented one of the other odious autocracies. The political and ideological developments in the "New Turkey" and their direct and indirect repercussions on the Crimean Tatars provided a new dimension to the particular line represented by the Young Tatars. That being the case, under the influence of both internal and external factors, the "Young Tatar movement", in the sense it has been depicted here, gradually evolved into a new form in the 1910's rather than dissolving or disappearing abruptly.

Within the framework of modern Crimean Tatar history, the Young Tatar movement represents an idiosyncratic political and intellectual transitory phase, at the juncture of cultural resilience and the enlightenment of a people and the genesis of a self-conscious national entity. The 1905 revolution found the indigenous Muslim Turkic people of the Crimea in the midst of an as-yet-uncompleted process of trans-

formation into a modern society. The movement of cultural awakening and enlightenment which had been initiated by Gaspıralı two decades earlier had been gradually but steadily introducing and imbuing the ethno-cultural denotations of national self-identification, beginning with the intellectual or intellectualized elements of the society and aiming at reaching out the masses through the channels of the reformed educational system.

The Young Tatars acquired their *Weltanschauung* concurrently in the Russian milieu with its established socio-political notions, including that of socialism, and amidst culturally reforming and reorganizing Crimean Tatar society with its intrinsic problems and cleavages. They attempted to reshape and redefine their people in terms of national categories and sought direct political remedies to its problems on an all-Russian scale by contributing to the overthrow of autocracy, allying themselves with the uncompromising enemies of the autocracy, i.e., the Russian revolutionaries.

Totally appreciating and actually contributing to the increasing cultural awareness and aspirations of their people, the Young Tatars also introduced and appended political and social dimensions to it. Unlike Gaspıralı whose program of national awakening required a cautious but safer approach to the handling of matters in sequence, starting with the cultural-educational one, the Young Tatars believed in a plenary solution embracing all facets of what they saw as their nation's problems. In that respect, the overthrow of the autocracy was paramount as the key to the possible realization of the rest of their aspirations. In other words, their operational ground was political, as well as social and cultural.

Of course, the Young Tatars had no illusions of expecting anything other than a disaster in a single-handed struggle of the Crimean Tatar people against the all-powerful Russian autocracy. Moreover, given the socio-cultural level of the Crimean Tatar masses in 1905, a large scale sympathetic response to the revolutionary battlecries of the Young Tatars on the part of the masses who could hardly comprehend their essence, was equally unlikely. Therefore, the Young Tatars felt themselves compelled to place their political aspirations upon the prospective triumph of the Russian revolutionaries and its propitiousness. Besides, they were deeply impressed by the organizational and conspiratorial methods of the Russian revolutionaries which they enthusiastically tried to emulate, and, as in the case of the SRs, the Young Tatars, without much questioning, embraced agrarian socialism as a ready-made solution for the acute land problem of their compatriots. Their highly exalted but indeed vague concept of "revolution" was the one which would confer freedom, democracy, equality, and land to the Crimean Tatars, and one which would not hinder their national development on the political and cultural level, that is, quite a different one from the elaborate ideological objectives of any of the Russian revolutionary groups concerned. Naïve as their "revolutionary" outlook might have been, this, at the same time, revealed the primarily nationalistic perspective of the Young Tatars on all matters.

In this respect, the Young Tatars' contribution to national concepts, and consequently the nationalism, of the Crimean Tatars was crucial. It was the Young Tatars who manifestly introduced the territorially-bound and -defined Crimean Tatar national concept. For them the Crimea was *the* Fatherland of the Crimean Tatars, who had unalienable historical *rights* upon it. The expropriation of the Crimean Tatar peasant was unacceptable not only because this was socially evil, but also because it

represented an alien infringement upon the Crimean Tatar historical legacy and property. Though strongly underscoring the territorially-defined unique Crimean Tatar identity, the Young Tatars never renounced the extra-territorial ethnic (Turkic) and religious (Islamic) identities, affiliations and allegiances, which had been thus far emphasized by Gaspiralı. As a matter of fact, they very eagerly embraced the idea of a Turkic linguistic unity as the indispensable step for broader union, and displayed a clear interest in all-Turkic and all-Islamic issues. Theirs was the rudimentary but pronounced manifestation of the three-dimensional (Crimean Tatar, Turkic, and Islamic) nationalism which was to be inherent in virtually all subsequent Crimean Tatar national movements.

Another innovation of the Young Tatar movement was its success in rallying a significant part of the young and intellectual elements of the Crimean Tatar society under revolutionary political and national slogans, thus creating quite an effective organizational network stretching all over the Crimea. True, the Young Tatar movement never became a strictly centralized party or organization, remaining a loose coalition of various local circles, and it was unable to produce an all-embracing political blueprint or program. Nevertheless, the Young Tatars provided the first experience of straightforward political action and organization among the Crimean Tatars since 1783.

Despite the fact that they failed to rally mass support for their cause, the Young Tatars, with their staunch populism, introduced the imported notion of "going to the people". In order to reach out to the masses, in addition to actively endorsing the "enlightener" and *Kulturträger* missions which had been introduced by Gaspiralı, they also became the mouthpieces of the more intrinsic and immediate concerns of the Crimean Tatar peasantry, such as the seemingly all-important land question, which bore the potential for raising the masses more than anything else. It is noteworthy that, in retrospect, these methods introduced by the Young Tatars produced effective results in a much shorter time than those of their Russian counterparts, the "goers to the people."

Bilkent University, Ankara, 1993.

1. G.N. Gubenko, *Revolutsionnoe dvizhenie v Tavricheskoj gubernii v 1905-1909 gg.* (Akmescit, 1955): 39-53.

2. *Ibid.*: 62-66.

3. *Ibid.*: 71.

4. Sidney Harcave, *First blood. The Russian Revolution of 1905* (New York, 1964): 203; G.N. Gubenko, *op. cit.*: 72-74.

5. S. Harcave, *op. cit.*: 203.

6. G.N. Gubenko, *op. cit.*: 75-85.

7. Cafer Seydahmet Kırımer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *Emel* (Ankara), 4 (1961): 23.

8. C.S. Kırımer, "Nurlu Kabirler-Abdürreşid Mehdi'nin Kabri," *Emel* (Istanbul), 17 (1963): 40.

9. Untitled, *Tercüman* (Dec. 28, 1905).

10. C.S. Kırımer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *art. cit.* 5 (1961): 25.
11. Tatar Teachers' School (*Tatarskaia Uchitel'skaia Shkola*) was founded by the government in Akmescit in 1871. It was supposed to train teachers for the Russian-Tatar schools whose official goal was the "Russification and amalgamation (*slianie*) with the Russians of all non-Russians (*inorodtsy*) living within the boundaries of our homeland." ("Krymskaia ASSR (Krym)," *Bol'shaia sovetskaia entsiklopediia*, 1st ed., 35 (Moscow, 1935), column 309.) The Tatar Teachers' School, which was administered mostly by missionaries, offered a large range of courses in Russian and there were also courses on literacy in Tatar (i.e. Turkish) and on the Muslim religion, though both the hours spared for them were insufficient and their contents superficial. Rıza Fazıl-Safder Nagayev, "Kırım'tatar Edebiyatı Tarihına Bir Nazar," *Yıldız* (Tashkent), 6 (1988): 99; Abdülğaffar, "Kırım'a Bir Nazar," *Kırım Mecmuası* (Istanbul), 3 (1918): 51; Temirci, "Kırım'da Eğitim Meseleleri Hakkında Bazı Notlar," *Emel* (Istanbul), 20 (1964): 12; Fatih Kerimi, *Kırım'a Seyahat* (Orenburg, 1904): 49-50.
12. Mustafa Kurti [Berke], "Hatıralar" (Memoirs), manuscript-recorded by Edige Kırımal in Neu Ulm (Germany) on 11 Nov. 1948, Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 8; Abdülaziz Mamutov (pseudonym İsapov), "Hatıralar," manuscript-recorded by Edige Kırımal, Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 4.
13. Several examples of this indiscriminate usage of the term can be found in the Russian official documents published in both volumes of Arslan Krichinskii's *Ocherki russkoi politiki na ukrainakh* (Baku, 1919 and 1920) (hereafter Krichinskii I and II). Cafer Seydahmet Kırımer, one of the leaders of the Crimean Tatar nationalist movement during the 1910's, mentions that they were also called "Young Tatars" by the tsarist officials. Letter from Cafer Seydahmet Kırımer to Edige Kırımal, dated Sept. 14, 1949. Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul.
14. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 1.
15. C.S. Kırımer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 34.
16. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 2-3.
17. *Ibid.*: 3, 5, 11; Üseyin Ramazanov, "Bolşevik Ali Badaninsky," in *Oktyabr Yolunen* (Tashkent, 1968): 309; "Hasan Sabri Ayvazov," *Kırım Mecmuası*, 9 (1918): 169; C.S. Kırımer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *art. cit.*, 5: 31; 25 (1964): 52; Krichinskii II, appendix: 125.
18. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 2-3.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Krichinskii II, app.: 125.
21. Şamil Alâdin, "Bizim İftiharımız," *Yıldız*, 5 (1987): 49.
22. There is no evidence of any Young Tatar-Bolshevik collaboration during the tsarist period. A list of the earliest Crimean Tatar members of the Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party (Bolshevik) also does not include anybody before 1917. Bekir Umerov, "Olar Kimler Ediler?" *Lenin Bayrağı* (Tashkent) (July 24, 1990).
23. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 2, 5.
24. M.F. Bunegin, *Revolutsiia i grazhdanskaia voina v Krymu* (Akmescit, 1927).
25. "Eskadron Kardeşlerimize Müracaat," Funds of the Crimean Museum of Regional Studies- Fondy Krymskogo Kraevedcheskogo Muzeia, Akmescit/Crimea, Mediev Papers (*Arkhiv Medieva*), file 6.
26. Hasan Sabri Ayvazov, "Rusya İnkılâb-ı Kebîri," *İctihad* (Cairo), 2 (Jan. 1908): 290-294.
27. C.S. Kırımer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 36-37.
28. A. Mamutov, *op. cit.*: 4-5; M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 12.
29. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 5, 8; A. Mamutov, *op. cit.*: 4.
30. Celâl Meinov was a graduate of the Tatar Teachers' School. In 1906, having graduated from the gymnasium of Kefe, he enrolled in the Law School at the University of Odessa. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (June 7, 1906 and Oct 2, 1906). Later he became one of the most famous lawyers and popular figures in the Crimea until he perished during the Stalinist purges. He was also one of the founders of Crimean Tatar theater.
31. A. Mamutov, *op. cit.*: 4-5.
32. Kurtseyit Bozgozu, "Kurtseyit Bozgozu'nun Hatıraları," manuscript - Archives of the Emel Foundation - Istanbul: 3.
33. M. Kurt, *op. cit.*: 5; C.S. Kırımer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *art. cit.*: 28.
34. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 44; K. Bozgozu, *art. cit.*: 1-3; R. Fazıl-Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 98; İbrahim Agayev, "İbrahim Agayev'in Hatıraları," manuscript-recorded by Edige Kırımal, Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 2. İbrahim Agayev was a disciple of Gaspıralı and a long time worker in the printing house of *Tercüman*.
35. R. Fazıl-Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 98.

36. Yusuf Celâl Büyüksu, "Kırım'lı Yusuf Celâl'in Hatıratı," manuscript-recorded by Edige Kırımlı, Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 2; M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 4; Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 44.
37. C.S. Kırımer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 34-35.
38. Alimseyt Cemil [Salkat], "Kırım'lı Alimseyt Cemil Efendi'nin Hatıratı," manuscript - Archives of the Emel Foundation - Istanbul: 4.
39. Bochagov, *Milli Firka* (Akmescit, 1930): 23.
40. "Kırım Haberleri-Karasu," *Tercüman* (Oct. 4, 1906).
41. I. Agayev, *op. cit.*: 4; Bochagov, *op. cit.*: 21.
42. M[ustafa] K[urti], "Reşit Mediyev (Ölümüne 30 Yıl Toluv Munasebetinen)," *Azat Kırım* (Akmescit) (May 11, 1943).
43. A. C. Salkat, *op. cit.*: 4. Mehdi also zealously opposed intermarriage between the Tatars and Russians and maintained that Crimean Tatar women could take part in social life perfectly. He tried his best to prove this with his own marriage. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 6.
44. Hatib A., "Karasu'dan Mektup," *Tercüman* (Dec. 28, 1905).
45. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 1-3; Noman Abdülmecid Şeyhzade (pseudonym Aytuvğan Batır), "Aytuvğan Batır'ın Hatıraları," manuscript-recorded by Edige Kırımlı in Immenstadt in 1948, Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 2.
46. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 1; "Kırım Haberleri-Karasu," *Tercüman* (July 14, 1906).
47. N.A. Şeyhzade, *op. cit.*: 1.
48. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Feb. 22, 1906). According to Büyüksu, even then only 14 out of 32 members could be Muslim. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 2.
49. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 44-45.
50. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (June 5, 1906).
51. "Kırım Haberleri," *ibid.* (Aug. 23, 1906).
52. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 46-49.
53. *Ibid.*; Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 3-5.
54. Unfortunately, it seems that there is not a single copy of *Vatan Hâdimi* in any of the major libraries (known for sizable collections of Turkic press) in the West and in Turkey. Even the two major Crimean Tatar émigré centers, Emel Foundation (Istanbul) and the Crimea Fund (New York), which otherwise possess some of the most important and rarest material for the modern Crimean Tatar history outside of the former Soviet Union, do not have any copies of *Vatan Hâdimi*. In spite of my long and laborious searches in the above-mentioned libraries as well as appeals to several individuals who were likely to possess such materials, I have so far failed to locate any trace of *Vatan Hâdimi*. I could not even find any indication of the existence of its copies outside of the Soviet Union within at least the last fifty years. Only recently, another Crimean Tatar researcher in Tashkent, Ismail Kerim, after long and discouraging searches in the major libraries of the former Soviet Union, eventually, succeeded in locating three issues of *Vatan Hâdimi* pertaining to the year 1908 in the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in St. Petersburg. Ismail Kerim, "Bizim 'Canlı' Ensiklopediyalarımız," *Lenin Bayrağı* (May 5, 1988); *id.*, "'Vatan Hâdimi' Gazetesi Akında Bazı Kaydlar," *ibid.* (May 5, 1990); *id.*, "Mucde," *Yanı Dünya* (Tashkent), (Sept. 25, 1991). I am grateful to Ismail Kerim for his sending me the photocopy of the issue of *Vatan Hâdimi* pertaining to June 7, 1908, the only issue that has been available to me so far. In the face of the deplorable scarcity of this extremely important newspaper, it seems that one has to rely basically upon numerous reprints and excerpts from and commentaries about *Vatan Hâdimi* which appeared in the contemporary press (such as *Tercüman*), memoirs and accounts of the Young Tatars and other secondary sources.
55. "Yeni Gazete," *Tercüman* (May 5, 1906); K. Bozgozu, *art. cit.*: 3; Krichinskii II, *app.*: 169.
56. Necmeddin Deliorman, *Meşrutiyetten Önce Balkan Türkleri, Makedonya, Şarkî Rumeli Meseleleri, Hudud Harici Türk Gazeteciliği* (Istanbul [1946]): 139.
57. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 46.
58. N. Deliorman, *op. cit.*: 139; C.S. Kırımer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 35; N.A. Şeyhzade, *op. cit.*: 4; Edige Kırımlı, *Der nationale Kampf der Krimtürken* (Emsdetten/ Westf., 1952): 22. Mehdi, though an excellent orator in Russian and in Crimean Tatar, had insufficient command of the literary Ottoman Turkish. A. Cemil [Salkat], *op. cit.*: 4. Therefore, the assistance of Ayvazov, who was renowned for his literary skills in the latter, must have been of great value to Mehdi. Nurettin Agayev, the other editor, later emigrated to Turkey, and wrote articles on educational and economic issues under the name of Tevfik Nureddin, in the nationalist Turkish journal *Türk Yurdu* (Istanbul) during the 1910's. C.S. Kırımer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 35.

59. A. Bennigsen, Ch. Lemerrier-Quellejay, *La presse et le mouvement national chez les musulmans de Russie avant 1920* (Paris-The Hague, 1964): 141; Mehmet Muhittin [Sevdiyar], "Mustafa Berke. Ölümü Münasebetiyle," *Kırım* (Ankara), 9-12 (1957): 315.

60. I. Agayev, *op. cit.*: 1. Veli İbrahim became a member of the Crimean Tatar National Parliament (Kurultay) in 1917-1918, and after the disbandment of the Kurultay he was one of the leaders of the clandestine Crimean Tatar National Party (Millî Fırka) until his death. From 1923 until his execution in 1928, he was the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee (President) of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. His brother Ömer was also an active participant of the Crimean events during the same era, and until 1928 he served as the People's Commissar (minister) for Agriculture in the Crimean ASSR.

61. N. A. Şeyhzade, *op. cit.*: 4.

62. I. Agayev, *op. cit.*: 4; İsmail Kerim, "'Vetan Hâdimi'...", *art. cit.*

63. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (May 3, 1906).

64. "Un journal tartare de Crimée," *Revue du Monde musulman*, 4 (Feb. 1907): 616.

65. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 46.

66. *Ibid.*

67. Quoted in N. Deliorman, *op. cit.*: 139-140.

68. *Ibid.*

69. Ahmet Özenbaşlı, "Keçen Devrimize Tenkidli Bir Bakış Tecrübesi," *Okuv İşleri* (Bahçesaray), 2 (1925): 20-21, cited in I. Kerimov, "Vetan Hâdimi...", *art. cit.*; N. Deliorman, *op. cit.*: 140.

70. The editorial in *Vatan Hâdimi* (Oct. 15, 1906) cited in "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Oct. 16, 1906).

71. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 3; C.S. Kırimer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 35.

72. "Une encyclopédie politique," *Revue du Monde musulman*, 6 (Apr. 1907): 277-278.

73. I. Kerimov, "Vetan Hâdimi'..."

74. Cafer Seydahmet [Kırimer], "Kırım ve Kırım Türkleri," in Yusuf Akçuraoglu, ed., *Türk Yılı 1928* (İstanbul, 1928): 569-570.

75. This assumption is reiterated in A. Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford, 1978): 105; id., "Social and legal aspects of Russian-Muslim relations in the nineteenth century: The case of the Crimean Tatars," in Abraham Ascher, Tibor Halasi-Kun, and Béla K. Kiraly, eds, *The mutual effects of the Islamic and Judeo-Christian worlds: The East European pattern* (New York, 1979): 89.

76. Letter from Abdürreşid Mehdi to the editor of *Vaku*, dated April 27, 1907, in Fondy Krymskogo Kraevedcheskogo Muzeia, Mediev Papers, file 6.

77. N. Deliorman, *op. cit.*: 141; "Les musulmans crétois" and "Les musulmans romains," *Revue du Monde musulman*, 5 (March 1907): 57.

78. "Vatan Hâdimi," *Tuna* (Dec. 9, 1322/1906).

79. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 46. For example, the leading newspaper of the Turks in Bulgaria, *Tuna* (Rusçuk/Ruse), frequently carried reprints and citations from *Vatan Hâdimi*, see above.

80. H.S. Ayvazov, "'Eski, Yeni Edebî Mülâhazalar' Makalesinden," *Emel Mecmuası* (Pazarcık-Romania), 5 (1933): 28; N. Deliorman, *op. cit.*: 140.

81. "Millet," *Tercüman* (Oct. 20, 1906).

82. H.S. Ayvazov, "Kırım'da Karasu Şehrinde Çıkan (Vatan Hâdimi) Gazetesinden: Umum Lisan-ı Edeb Hakkında Fikrim," *Tuna* (May 30, 1322/1906).

83. *Ibid.* (May 22, 1322/1906).

84. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 4-5.

85. Edem Ablaev, *İsmail Gasprinskii-gumanist, prosvetitel', pedagog* (Tashkent, 1991): 34-35.

86. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 12.

87. "Mizan," *Tercüman* (Sept. 8, 1906).

88. *Ibid.*

89. "Son Cevap," *Tercüman* (Oct. 2, 1906).

90. H[asan] Sabri A[yvazov], "Kırımlılar Ne İçün Tenkid Edilmiyor?" *Füyûzat* (Baku), 6 (Dec., 1906): 95.

91. Bochagov, *op. cit.* 21. Bochagov, whose book unmistakably reflects the party line of 1930's, provides only this excerpt from Mehdi's speech, and deliberately omits Mehdi's all other statements about his common points with, and praises for, Gaspralı.

92. "Vystuplenie R. Medieva pri chestvovanii Gasprinskogo v sviazi s 25-letiem gazety *Terciman*," manuscript, Krymskogo Kraevedcheskogo Muzeia, Mediev Papers, file 5.

93. Şefika Gaspıralı, “Şefika Gaspıralı’nın Edige Kırım’ın Sorularına Yazılı Cevapları,” manuscript-Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 4. Şefika Gaspıralı was the daughter of İsmail Bey Gaspıralı and one of her father’s closest assistants (together with her Azerbaijani husband – future Prime Minister of independent Azerbaijan – Nesipbey Yusufbeyli) in his activities during Gaspıralı’s last decade.

94. Following the dissolution of the First Duma by Nicholas II on August 2, 1906, some two hundred deputies, mostly members of the Kadet and Labor (Trudovik) parties, immediately traveled to the Finnish town of Vyborg and published there an appeal (the “Vyborg Manifesto”) in which they denounced the dissolution and called for civil resistance, in the form of refusal to pay taxes or to furnish recruits for the army, until the rights of the Duma had been restored.

95. “Kırım Haberleri – Kariye-i Küçük Lambat,” *Tercüman* (July 28, 1906).

96. Ş. Gaspıralı, “Ne Şiş Yandı, Ne Kebap,” *Kırım* 9-12 (1957): 273-275.

97. “Matbaamızın İştirakiyünları Tarafından Müsaderesi,” *Tercüman* (July 28, 1906).

98. Ş. Gaspıralı, “Ne Şiş...,” *art. cit.*: 274. İbrahim Ağayev, who was in charge of the printing work and who was present during the incident, tells that the revolutionaries shouted “*RSDRP*” (Russian Social Democratic Workers’ Party, i.e., the Social Democrats), I. Ağayev, *op. cit.*: 6. It is possible that either some of the “raiders” were actually Social Democrats, or they simply tried to confuse the police.

99. “Kırım Haberleri-Bahçesaray,” *Tercüman* (July 28, 1906).

100. “Kırım Haberleri,” *ibid.* (Aug. 9, 1906).

101. For additional information about these newspapers, see A. Bennigsen, Ch. Lemerrier-Quelque-*jour*, *op. cit.*: 87, 122-123, 161-162.

102. Ayaz İshakî, “İdil-Ural Türklerinin Siyasi Fırkaları ve Milli Mücadelelerinin Tarihçesi,” manuscript-Archives of the Emel Foundation-Istanbul: 10; A.Z.V. Togan, *Bugünkü Türkîli (Türkistan) ve Yakın Tarihi* (Istanbul, 1942-1947): 353; Mehmetzade Mirza-Bala, *Milli Azerbaycan Hareketi* (Berlin [1938]): 44.

103. Cited in Alimcan İbrahimov, *Tatarlar Arasında Rivalyutsiya Hareketleri. 1905 (Birinci Bölük)* (Kazan, 1925): 207. Later, however, most of the former contributors to *Tan Yıldızı* expressed their deep admiration of Gaspıralı. For example, Ayaz İshakî, after Gaspıralı’s death, described him as such: “The services and works started and realized by [Gaspıralı] are so many, so numerous that even if volumes of books are written about them, their significance cannot be appreciated. Whichever cultural, national, and spiritual movement is taken, its leader, its pathfinder, and initial realizer was İsmail Bey.” A. İshakî, “Büyük Üstad İsmail Bey,” *Yaña Milli Yul* (Berlin), 5 (1933): 19.

104. A. İshakî, “İdil-Ural Türklerinin...,” *op. cit.*: 10; M. Mirza-Bala, *op. cit.*: 42.

105. A.N. Kurat, “Kazan Türklerinin ‘Medeni Uyanış’ Devri,” *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Cografya Fakültesi Değisi* (Ankara), XXIV, 3-4 (1966): 157.

106. During the elections for the First Duma, Mehdi was ineligible to be even an elector since he was then underage. “Kırım Haberleri,” *Tercüman* (Mar. 13, 1906).

107. A. Cemil Salkat, *op. cit.*: 8; C.S. Kırımmer, “A. Mehdi’nin Kabri,” *art. cit.*: 37.

108. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 4; C.S. Kırımmer, “A. Mehdi’nin Kabri,” *art. cit.*: 37.

109. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 5.

110. The other deputies from the Tavrida *guberniia* were Nikolai Il’ich Emelianov (SR-Russian), Vasiliı Konstantinovich Korde (Kadet-Russian), Pavel Nikiforovich Tiutiunov (Labor-Ukrainian?), Mikhail Mikhailovich Fomichev (Social Democrat-Russian), and Savva Savich Shcherbakha (Labor-Ukrainian). *Gosudarstvennaia Duma, Ukazatel’ k stenograficheskim otchetam. Vtoroi sozyv. 1907 god* (Spb, 1907): 2; M.M. Boiovich, *Chleny Gosudarstvennoi Dumy. Vtoroi sozyv* (Moscow, 1907): 331-336.

111. Mehdi was seen off to St. Petersburg by thousands of Crimean Tatars, while the traditional Crimean Tatar musicians played the “Marseillaise”. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 45. Osman Akçokraklı was told to remember that Gaspıralı was not happy about Mehdi’s election at all, since he himself expected to be nominated. A.C. Salat, *op. cit.*: 3.

112. “Les députés musulmans à la Douma,” *Revue du Monde musulman*, 5 (Mar. 1907): 79-80.

113. C.S. Kırımmer, “A. Mehdi’nin Kabri,” *art. cit.*: 37. Apparently due to the list he was elected to the Duma, Mehdi was considered also a member of the Kadet Party. An album of the deputies of the Second Duma described him both as a “Kadet” and “nationalist.” M.M. Boiovich, *op. cit.*: 333.

114. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 4.

115. Bochagov, *op. cit.*: 22.

116. *Gosudarstvennaia Duma. Vtoroi sozyv. Stenograficheskie otchety. 1907 god. Sessii vtoraiia, I* (Spb, 1907): col. 579-581.

117. *Ibid.*, col. 1788.

118. *Ibid.*, col. 1789.

119. *Ibid.*, col. 1789-1791.
120. *Ibid.*, col. 1792.
121. *Ibid.*, col. 1793.
122. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 45.
123. E. Kırimal, *op. cit.*: 23.
124. Vladimir Il'ich Lenin, *Pol'noe sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow, 1961) XVI: 389. For its English translation, see, V.I. Lenin, *Collected works* (Moscow, 1962) XIII: 408.
125. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Apr. 27, 1907).
126. *Gosudarstvennaia Duma...*, *op. cit.*: col. 2273.
127. I. Kerimov, "'Vetan Hâdimi'...", *art. cit.*
128. "Dr. Reşit Türker'in Bazı Hatıraları," manuscript-recorded by the author in June 22, 1988 in İstanbul, the copy is in author's possession: 2 (Reşit Türker is a nephew of Süleyman Alimollayev); according to Mustafa Kurti, the amount of money spent by Alimollayev to support the Young Tatar movement and *Vatan Hâdimi* was in terms of hundreds of thousands of rubles. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 12.
129. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 3.
130. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 5; the sharp revolutionary tone of *Vatan Hâdimi* disenchanted even its initial official publisher and financial supporter Seydahmet Çelebi, who himself was a wealthy landlord. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 46.
131. "Kırım Müslüman Matbuat ve Neşriyat Şirket-i Müsahimesi," *Tuna* (Nov. 25, 1322/1906); "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Nov. 24, 1906).
132. "Vatan Hâdimi," *Tuna* (Dec. 9, 1322/1906); "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Dec. 4, 1906).
133. "Kırım Haberleri," *ibid.* (Apr. 6, 1907); "Idareye Mektuplar," *ibid.* (July 27, 1907).
134. A. Bennigsen, Ch. Lemerrier-Quellejeay, *op. cit.*: 142.
135. "Vatan Hâdimi," *Tercüman* (Oct. 19, 1907); "Kırım Haberleri," *ibid.* (Nov. 2, 1907); Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 49.
136. *Ibid.*; R. Fazıl-Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 97; I. Kerimov, "Vetan Hâdimi...", *art. cit.*
137. "Mahalli Haberler," *Tercüman* (Nov. 5, 1908).
138. Krichinskii II, appendix: 170.
139. Krichinskii I, appendix: 234-236.
140. A. Özenbaşlı, "Keçen Devrimize Tenkidli Bir Bakış Tecrübesi," cited in I. Kerimov *op. cit.*; Ömer Sami Arbatlı, "Kırım'da Rüştiye Mekteplerinin Açılması ve Tesirleri," 30; Halim Baliç "Hüseyin Baliç," manuscript (İstanbul, February 1949). Archives of the Emel Foundation-İstanbul: 1; C.S. Kırimer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *art. cit.*: 31.
141. Ö.S. Arbatlı, *op. cit.*: 30.
142. "Kırım, Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Sept. 18, 1909).
143. Ö.S. Arbatlı, *op. cit.*: 30; C.S. Kırimer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 35.
144. M.M. [Sevdiyar], "Mustafa Berke. Ölümü Münasebetiyle," *Kırım*, 9-12 (1957): 316.
145. Ö.S. Arbatlı, *op. cit.*: 30.
146. For the purpose of encouraging young Crimean Tatar poets, a special space was devoted to publish theirs works in the pages of *Vatan Hâdimi* under the rubric "From the national Crimean literature." Apparently, the poems of Hüseyin Şamil Toktargazı, Asan Çergeyev and others appeared there. "Milli Kırım Edebiyatından," *ibid.* (June 7, 1908).
147. R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 100.
148. *Ibid.*; Bekir Çobanzade, "Son Devir Kırım Tatar Edebiyatı Tenkit Tecrübeleri," *Emel*, 46: 21; 47: 28.
149. R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 105; M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 7; K. Bozgozu, *art. cit.*: 4.
150. Yunus Kandumov, "Üseyin Şamil Toktargazı (1881-1913)," *Lenin Bayrağı* (Jan. 1, 1989).
151. B. Çobanzade, *art. cit.*, 46: 21.
152. Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 46; Abdurreim Altanlı, "Şamil Toktargazı ve Çergeyev," *Edebiyat ve Kultura* (Akmescit), 1 (1936): 39.
153. R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 104.
154. Safter Nagayev, "Halk Sevgen Şair," *Lenin Bayrağı* (Sept. 25, 1979).
155. Krichinskii II, appendix: 174-175; Tayyip Seythalil Dörtel, "Tayyip Seythalil'in Hatıraları," manuscript-recorded by Edige Kırimal, Archives of the Emel Foundation-İstanbul: 11.
156. R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 107.
157. Krichinskii II, appendix: 176.
158. S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*
159. R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 120.

160. Eşref Şemizade, *Omür ve Yaratıcılık (Edebiy Makaleler)* (Tashkent, 1974): 33.
161. Şevki Bektöre, "Prof. Bekir Sıtkı Çobanzade," *Kırım*, 1, 23 (1961): 175; S. Nagayev, "Medeniy İnkılâb Askeri," *Lenin Bayrağı* (Oct. 10, 1989).
162. K. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 1; R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 98.
163. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 11; C.S. Kırırmer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *art. cit.*, 5: 31.
164. C.S. Kırırmer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.* 35; one of the then-famous plays was that of H.S. Ayzavov, *Neden Bu Hale Kaldık? (Why this has happened to us?)* which was published in Baku in 1907. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Nov. 2, 1907).
165. R. Fazıl, S. Nagayev, *art. cit.*: 98; "Kırım Haberleri-Tiyatro," *Tercüman* (Feb. 29, 1908); "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Oct. 2, 1909).
166. Apart from a number of articles, two of the most important works of V.D. Smirnov on the history of the Crimean Khanate are, *Krymskoe khanstvo pod verkhovenstvom otomanskoï party do nachala XVIII veka* (Spb, 1887), and *Krymskoe khanstvo pod verkhovenstvom otomanskoï party v XVIII stoletie* (Odessa, 1889).
167. "Kırım Tarihi," *Tercüman* (Nov. 27, 1909) (Supplément).
168. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 6; Abbas Şirinskiy, "İstanbul'dan Mektup," *Tercüman* (Aug. 7, 1909).
169. Mehdi in his death bed bequeathed the manuscript to his father-in-law, who kept it, with the other papers of Mehdi, until 1925. That year Veli İbrahim, then president of the Crimean ASSR, was interested in it and the manuscript was given to a commission which was to prepare it for publication. In 1928, however, Veli İbrahim was executed and many of his men were purged, and nothing more has been heard of the manuscript since then. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 7-8. What is known is, prior to Veli İbrahim's trial and execution, Mehdi's papers were exhibited in Tavrida Museum in Aknescit. R. Türker, *op. cit.*: 2. Remaining documents of Mehdi were taken from his family by the Crimean State Publication in 1931. N.A. Şeyhzade, *op. cit.*: 12. Today the bulk of the personal papers are located in the Funds of the Crimean Museum of Regional Studies. However, the above-mentioned manuscript seems to be missing among these documents.
170. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 3-5.
171. M.M. [Sevdiyar], *art. cit.*: 315.
172. M. Kurti, "Reşit Mediyev," *art. cit.* Upon Mehdi's death a day of mourning was declared in Karasubazar, and his funeral turned out to be a very crowded public event with the participation of people from every corner of the Crimea, including the *gubernator* from Aknescit. At one point event the Orthodox Church proposed to conduct a rite in memory of Mehdi, despite the fact that he was a devoted Muslim. Y.C. Büyüksu, *op. cit.*: 6-7; Ş. Alâdin, *art. cit.*: 49-50. One of the orators on his grave, Yusuf Ziya, the former director of Karasubazar *rüşdiye* and a Young Tatar, said, "the Crimean tragedy had awaited you for 122 years... Your greatest orphan is the Crimean national consciousness." C.S. Kırırmer, "A. Mehdi'nin Kabri," *art. cit.*: 39.
173. "Hasan Sabri Ayzavov," *art. cit.*: 169.
174. Krichinskii II, appendix: 124-125.
175. A.C. Salkat, *art. cit.*: 8. During his conversation with Cafer Seydahmet [Kırırmer] in 1915, Memseyit Cemil told him that he secured the documents related to the Young Tatar movement in a banksafe in St. Petersburg. C.S. Kırırmer, "Bazı Hatıralar," *art. cit.*, 25: 58. Nothing is known about the fate of these documents today.
176. M. Kurti, *op. cit.*: 8.
177. Ü. Ramazanov, *art. cit.*: 310.
178. Halim Baliç, *op. cit.*: 1.
179. "Kırım Haberleri," *Tercüman* (Nov. 20, 1909).