



Section 3. Philology

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SOVIET IDEOLOGICAL-POLITICAL THOUGHT IN CRIMEAN TATAR LITERATURE

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Abstract

The founders of a new direction in Crimean Tatar literature-Abdurrahim Altanli, Ziyaddin Javtobeli, Omer Ipchi, Jafar Gaffar, Irgat Kadir, Ashraf Shemizade, Kerim Jamanakli, and others-entered the literary scene after 1920, vividly reflecting the enthusiasm of socialist construction in their works. The traditional forms of poetry and prose were enriched with new socialist content. Among these, A. Latifzade's "Mujde", O. Ipchi's "The Sea", I. Kadir's "Irgat's Memoir", Z. Javtobeli's "Red Dawn and Komsomol Song", and Ilyas Tarkhan's "We Are Young Sailors" were examples of socialist-themed works. However, representatives of the older generation could not accept the newly imposed conditions-writing according to state orders. For instance, when the poet Cemil Kermenchikli was asked why he remained silent and was not writing, he replied:

"I do not have a red pen to write what you want" (Riza, Fazil. Crimean Tatar Literature, Simferepol 85).

With the establishment of Soviet power in Crimea, new newspapers and journals emerged. In 1926, A. Ozenbashli's "The Crimean Tragedy" was published, followed by Bekir Çobanzade's "Storm" poetry collection in 1927. H. Geraybey's journalistic poems were published. Ömer Ipçi also made significant contributions to prose and drama (Riza, Fazil. Crimean Tatar Literature, Simferepol 85).

During World War II, young and talented prose writers such as M. Dibaq, A. Dermanci, P. Tincherov, S. Alyadin, R. Murad, and others entered the Crimean Tatar literary scene. M. Dibaq's stories "Concert" and "Ferat", R. Tincherov's novel "The Shovketovs", Y. Polad's stories and the first part of his novel "Alim", as well as the short stories of S. Alyadin, were published in the press (URL: https://www.philol.vernadskyjournals.in.ua/journals/2018/3_2018/21.pdf)

After the Crimean Turks were exiled to Turkestan in 1944, their literature was almost entirely suppressed. Only after Stalin's death, when Crimean Turks began returning to their homeland, did Crimean Tatar literature start to flourish again.

Keywords: *Alphabet reform, Soviet poets, Young Soviet critics, Crimean-Turkic dialect*

After the establishment of the Crimean Autonomous Republic in 1921, the Bolsheviks attempted to isolate the Crimean Turks from the Turkic world. They declared the Crimean Turks an independent “Crimean Tatar nation” and the Crimean Turkic dialect as a separate “Crimean Tatar language.” Other Turkic groups—such as the “Uzbeks,” “Karakalpaks,” “Turkmens,” “Kazakhs,” “Kyrgyz,” “Bashkirs,” “Kazan Tatars,” “Azerbaijanis,” “Kumyks,” “Balkars,” “Karachays,” and others—were likewise treated as “independent nations.” Their dialects gradually transformed into separate languages. The only unifying element among the literary languages of these groups was the Arabic script used by all “Russian Turks” at the time. Between 1926 and 1928, the Arabic script was replaced with the Latin alphabet. Thus, each Turkic nation acquired its own alphabet “suited to the needs of its literary language” (Kirimal, E., 2008. 272).

In 1924, significant debates arose among Crimean Tatars regarding the transition from the Arabic alphabet to the Latin script and the simplification of the language (Turan, A., 2019. 565).

Some Crimean Turkish intellectuals opposed the alphabet reform, with the prominent linguist Timurjan Odabashi leading the opposition. Odabashi regarded this reform as the destruction of the written unity of Russian Turks (Kirimal, E., 2008. 273). While the majority of Crimean Turks welcomed the transition to the Latin alphabet, intellectuals such as Veli Ibrahimov and Hasan Sabri Ayvazov opposed its implementation (Turan, A., 2019. 565). However, their objections did not prevent the reform from being implemented. On the contrary, those who opposed the reform faced persecution and oppression by the Russian government. Eventually, with the approval of the central government, the Latin script was officially adopted in 1929 (Turan, A., 2019. 265).

In 1928, the “First Crimean Scientific Conference on the Orthography of the Crimean Tatar Literary Language” was held in Simferopol, where it was decided that the dialect spoken in the region between the plains and mountains would serve as the standard

literary language. The second and third scientific conferences were held in 1929 and 1934, respectively, focusing on grammar, orthography, pronunciation, terminology, and the compilation of dictionaries. In 1938, in accordance with Stalin’s policies, a law was passed mandating the use of the Cyrillic alphabet for all non-Slavic languages (except Armenian and Georgian), and the Crimean Tatar language transitioned to the Cyrillic script (Turan, A., 2019. 565).

From 1929 to 1941, Crimean Tatar literature also underwent a process of “Sovietization.” Most national literary works were dismissed under the pretext that they were not “Soviet or proletarian literature” (Kirimal, E., 2008. 273). This strict decision was reinforced by the Crimean Soviet press and the Soviet Literary Encyclopedia, published in 1939. As Jafar Seydahmed summarized, this was “the destruction of the national identity, national culture, and language of the Crimean Tatars” (Kirimal, E., 2008. 274).

The most brutal aspect of Soviet ideological-political thought was the mass terror campaigns carried out in Crimea between 1937 and 1938 under the leadership of Nikolai Yezhov, the notorious People’s Commissar for Internal Affairs of the USSR. This period of repression, known as “Yezhovshchina,” targeted all layers of Crimean society. From the president of the Crimean Republic, Ilyas Tarkhan, to the prime minister, Samaddin, and even elderly individuals as old as 80, thousands of people were accused of “local nationalism” and executed or sent to labor camps (Kirimal, E., 2008. 275).

During this terror, many Crimean commissars, Communist Party members, Soviet poets, writers, dramatists, professors, publishers, actors, and teachers were either executed or exiled (Kirimal, E., 2008. 275).

Before the 1917 revolution, Crimean poets and writers focused on national issues, but after the Bolsheviks seized power, they were forced to conform to Soviet expectations (Turan, A., 2019. 566).

Writers who had published their first works before the October Revolution—such as Bekir Chobanzade, Omer Ipchi, Hamdi Geraybey, Abdulla Latifzade, and Shevki

Bektore-initially reflected the changes in society in their works. They became the founders of a new direction in Crimean Tatar literature, attempting to celebrate the new socialist order and contributing to its propaganda. However, they could not have foreseen that this regime would soon reveal its ruthless and deceptive nature toward them and the entire Crimean Tatar nation. Among the first to be repressed, Hamdi Geraybey and Shevki Bektore had achieved significant literary success in that era (Riza, Fazil. Crimean Tatar Literature, Simferopol, 83). Unfortunately, the Soviet regime and Stalin's brutality knew no bounds. Even those who wrote articles and literary works praising the regime-such as Omer Ipchi, Jafar Gaffar, Ilyas Tarkhan, and Omer Aci Asan became victims of this political ideology (Turan, A., 2019. 566).

One of the witnesses of this period, Mustafa Dozay, stated: "During these years, no one in Crimea felt safe. 90 per cent of our people spent every night in fear, expecting to be arrested at any moment" (Kirimal, E., 2008. 275).

Hamdi Geraybey, who was born on February 14, 1901, in the Yanisala village of Crimea's Kefe district, made great contributions to Crimean Tatar national identity until he was executed (Soylemez, Orhan., 2003. 184). Despite writing a poem that welcomed the Bolsheviks to Crimea-beginning with the line "Welcome, Bolsheviks, to Crimea"-he was brutally executed by the same regime in 1930 (Turan, A., 2019. 566).

As a result, Hamdi Geraybey's works were banned for decades. Only 70 years later, in 1997, his collection of "Poems" was published by Tavriya Publishing House (Soylemez, Orhan., 2003. 84).

Another intellectual of that time, Shevki Bektore, born in 1888 in Romania, expressed his people's sorrow in poems such as "For Crimea," "A Day Has Come," "The Nation's Kaaba," and "Longing for the Homeland." However, in 1930, he was accused of nationalism and exiled from Crimea.

Many Crimean Tatar intellectuals involved in socialist propaganda-such as Irgat Kadir, Amdi Alim Qaniyev, Osman Amit, Eyub Dermanci and Maqsud Suleyman-lost their lives during World War II (Turan, A., 2019. 583).

Cemil Kermenchikli, one of the victims of Bolshevik ideological-political thought, was born in 1891 in the village of Kermenchik, Yalta province, into a family of teachers. He learned to read and write at home and later studied for two years at the Abdul-Alim School in Bakhchisarai, followed by the "Zancirli" Madrasa. In 1908, he was sent to Istanbul, where he continued his education for a year at one of the local madrasas. Between 1909 and 1913, he studied at the "Husaniyya" Madrasa in Orenburg. During summer breaks, he traveled to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, working in various places to earn enough money to cover his education expenses. In 1913, he returned to Crimea and worked as a teacher. Between 1916 and 1917, he was employed at the "Tercuman" newspaper, published in Bakhchisarai. He played a significant role in national liberation and democratic movements during the First Crimean Tatar Kurultai. He wrote his first poems while studying at the Zancirli Madrasa. In 1917, his poetry collection "To My Little Friends" was published in Simferopol. His poems, such as "I Am a Tatar!" (1918), "When Our Sacred Dream Was Alive" (1917), "Rejoice, O Glorious Nation!" (1917), and "Chalabijahan" (1918), reflected themes of nationalism, patriotism, and national liberation. In addition to poetry, he occasionally experimented with short stories and satire (Kerim. I, Shevket, M., 1999. 472).

On June 27, 1937, Cemil Kermenchikli was accused of "nationalism" and exiled to Siberia. Unable to withstand the hardships and suffering he endured, he passed away on January 22, 1942, in a labor camp near Arkhangelsk, Russia (Kerim. I, Shevket, M., 1999. 472).

Jafar Gaffar, one of the prominent representatives of Crimean Tatar Soviet literature, was born in 1898 in the village of Tavdayir, near Simferopol, into a family of teachers. After completing his primary education, he continued his studies at the Tavdayir Madrasa. According to some accounts, Jafar Gaffar wrote his first poems while studying there. After completing his madrasa education, he worked as a teacher in rural areas until 1920. During this period, he contributed to the newspaper Young Strength and, in 1926, worked for the journal Forward. Later, he began working as a writer for the newspa-

per New World (Kerim. I, Shevket, M., 1999., 491).

Jafar Gaffar became widely known for his short stories. His earliest works were published by "Ireli" Publishing House. Throughout his literary career, he also worked as a teacher. The renowned scholar Bekir Chobanzade noted that in his story "On the Journey", Gaffarov skillfully portrayed the crafts, morals, and beliefs of ordinary people through their own perspectives, using beautiful language and style (Soylemez, Orhan., 2003. 179).

In 1934, Gaffar was elected a member of the Crimean Writers' Union. However, just a few months later, he was dismissed by the commission. His most significant works, including the novella "On the Journey" and the textbook "Literature Lessons", brought him widespread recognition. However, as a leading intellectual of his time, he became the target of the so-called "Young Soviet Critics" of that era. As surveillance and criticism against him intensified, he was ultimately accused of bourgeois nationalism and executed in 1938 (Kerim. I, Shevket, M., 1999. 491).

Another well-known figure of the time, Hasan Sabri Ayvazov, attempted to escape to Turkey and Poland but failed. He was captured and executed in 1938. Similarly, Cah-an Noman Çelebi, Hasan Çergeyev, Mennan Camanaklı, and other poets, writers, and statesmen suffered the same fate.

Cemil Hacıoglu described the mass arrests of Crimean Tatars in the southern coastal regions: "In 1937, in a single night, 171 Crimean Tatar men from the villages of Ayvasıl and Derekoy were arrested. Most of them never returned from Soviet prisons" (Kırmal, E., 2008. 275).

One of the intellectuals who was active during this period was Umer Aci Asan. A linguist, Turkologist, and educator, Aci Asan was born in 1898 in the city of Kefe, Crimea. After completing his studies at the Zancirli Madrasa, he continued his education at the Simferopol Teachers' Seminary. In 1917, he worked as a teacher in his hometown of Kefe. In 1922, he was admitted to the Open Education Department of the Faculty of Languages and History at the Crimean State University. During this period, he was first appointed as the director of the newly opened II. Addım School in Kefe, and a year later, he became

the director of a school in Qara Tobe ((Turan, A., 2019. 583).

Between 1922 and 1923, he collaborated with A. Odabashi to prepare Crimean Tatar language textbooks for national schools. From 1923 to 1935, he worked in the Department of Teaching Methods and Literature at the Ministry of National Education. While teaching at the Crimean Pedagogical Institute, he also served as a mentor for students' practical training. Between 1935 and 1937, Aci Asan taught at the Simferopol Theater Lyceum. In 1937, he was arrested on charges of "using bourgeois linguistic methods and basing the teaching of the Crimean Tatar language on Pan-Turkist ideas." During his trial, he refused to accept these accusations. Nevertheless, on July 14, 1938, he was exiled. When Asan was deported, his family was also punished and sent to Samarkand. In 1946, he returned to Samarkand, where his family had been exiled, but he passed away shortly after, in 1949 (Turan, A., 2019. 583).

Yaqub Azizoglu, a Crimean linguist and educator of his time, was born in 1898 in the village of Tashli-Dair in the city of Telmanov, Crimea. A distinguished intellectual, he graduated from the Communist University of the Workers of the East in Moscow and worked as a lecturer at the Crimean Tatar Language and Literature Department of the Tatar Pedagogical Institute until 1928 (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 110). He played a significant role in the transition of the Crimean Tatar language to the Latin alphabet. In 1929, he delivered a speech at the Second Language Congress regarding Arabic and Persian loanwords in the Crimean Tatar language. From October 1, 1932, he worked as an associate professor in the Dialectical Materialism Department at the Crimean Pedagogical Institute. In 1934, he moved to Kazan, where he served as the secretary of the New Alphabet Committee. He later became the deputy director of the Institute of Language and Literature Research.

Azizoglu was accused of being an active member of an anti-Soviet Pan-Turkist nationalist organization since 1925 and of fighting against the Soviet government. He was arrested on June 28, 1937. The Military Commission of the Supreme Court sentenced him to death, and he was executed by firing squad in

Simferopol on April 17, 1938 (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 110).

After his death, his case was re-examined, and on October 13, 1959, he was posthumously rehabilitated as no criminal evidence was found against him (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 110).

The Turkologist and educator Yaqub Azizoglu was known as the author of works such as “Several Thoughts on Theater”, “Ways of Developing the Crimean Tatar Literary Style”, “Friendly Criticism”, and “On Literature” (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 110).

Ziyaddin Javtobeli, a poet of Crimean Soviet literature, carried out his literary and artistic activities during this turbulent period. The Crimean linguist Ziyaddin Javtobeli Menliazizov was born in the village of Vulkanovka, located between the cities of Kerch and Kefe. After completing his primary education at the village school, he studied at the Totaykoy Teachers’ School and the Simferopol Pedagogical University. In 1928, he worked as the director of the Model School in Alma-Tarhan village. From 1930 to 1935, he was active as a writer at the State Printing House (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 401).

In 1928, when he decided to continue his education, he was labeled a nationalist and arrested. Despite his efforts to support socialism, he remained in Soviet labor camps until 1947. (According to another study, Javtobeli was pardoned in 1964 and released from prison (Kerim. I, Shevket, M., 2008. 566). He endured severe torture in Soviet camps. After leaving the camp, he moved to Samarkand, Uzbekistan, where his family resided. He worked as a teacher there for three years, but due to increasing repression against Crimean Tatars in 1950, he was dismissed from his job. He then worked as a laborer for twenty-seven years (until 1979) and passed away in exile (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 401).

Javtobeli’s literary career began in 1923. His poems were published in “New World” and “Young Strength” newspapers, and in 1925, he became the editor of “Young Strength”. The core political principles of the Soviet regime had a significant impact on his literary work (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 401).

The main themes he addressed included the glorification of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, women’s emancipation, and the praise of figures such as Lenin and Stalin, as well as the Communist Party and the Young Communist League (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 401).

In his early poems, he demonstrated artistic mastery. Some of his works were highly praised by the renowned linguist, scholar, and poet Bekir Chobanzade, who noted that Javtobeli viewed the world through the eyes of rural people, capturing their emotions and thoughts. However, during the exile of Crimean Tatars from 1944 to 1990, Javtobeli wrote poems claiming that Crimean Tatars had settled in Uzbekistan and that this new land was now their homeland. This stance tarnished his reputation. Aside from some of his children’s poems, his works received little attention (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II., 401). Nevertheless, Javtobeli also wrote poems encouraging Tatar youth to pursue education and knowledge (Soylemez, Orhan., 2003. 186). In his poem *Who Is He?* he compared young Tatar readers to artisans who weave the fabric of knowledge:

He never tires on these roads, nor wastes his life,

His life has burned like coal for education and knowledge,

He is a rich Tatar reader,

The weaver of knowledge and wisdom (Turan, A., 2019. 186).

The first phase of Crimean Tatar literature (1923–1928) artistically depicted scenes from national life. Writers such as Asan Chergeyev, Memet Nuzet, Abdulla Latifzade, and Bekir Chobanzade reflected the traditions and daily lives of the people in their works (URL: https://www.philol.vernadskyjournals.in.ua/journals/2018/3_2018/21.pdf)

The post-revolutionary writers had to adapt to the new conditions, seeking new words, expressions, and forms while infusing them with new ideological content. The poet Abdulla Latifzade, who was executed in 1938, described this transformation in his poem “New Melody”:

A new world, a new life, a new day,

A new spring, a new melody,

New emotions, new thoughts, new harmony,

A new song within itself (Soylemez, Orhan., 2003. 84)

Crimean Tatar literature of the Soviet era had to conform to socialist content while maintaining a national form. Writers were required to depict the supposed beauty of Bolshevik ideology and socialist construction rather than presenting life as they saw it.

The concept of “socialist realism” which emerged within Bolshevik ideology, brought significant challenges for intellectuals, particularly writers. Anyone who deviated from these expectations was labeled a bourgeois nationalist or an enemy of the people and subjected to repression. Naturally, this had a profound impact on the artistic quality of literature produced during this period (Soylemez, Orhan., 2003. 84).

The second phase of Crimean Tatar Soviet literature (1928–1944) weakened under political pressures. The themes and messages of literary works were carefully aligned with the

ideological demands of the time (Encyclopedia of Turkic World Writers, – Vol. II).

Despite these constraints, the works produced during this period are still valued for their linguistic elegance, refined expression, and artistic imagery.

The 1930s were a crucial and complex period for the development of Crimean Tatar literature. The themes of literary works were shaped by the characteristics and demands of the era.

Thus, when analyzing how Bolshevik ideological-political thought was reflected in Crimean Tatar literature, it becomes clear that the dominant themes of that era’s works were the enthusiasm for a “new life” and the construction of socialism. Although most intellectuals conformed to this regime, they ultimately became its victims-many had their literary and artistic careers forcibly terminated and were executed. Given the historical context of that period, it is evident that further research on this subject is still needed.

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