

INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the USSR and Yugoslavia, followed by the transformation of some of their former minorities into sovereign, majority states; the continued struggle of remaining minorities to follow suit, generally unsuccessfully to date and resulting in much bloodshed and suffering; and the appearance of a number of interesting and skillful historical accounts of both successful and unsuccessful minorities have led me to reconsider some of the work that I have done on the Crimean Tatars over the last 35 years. This introduction gives me the opportunity to survey briefly what I wrote about the Tatars and how I would do it differently today.

As I look back on my first work, written while a graduate student in both Russian and Ottoman history at Columbia University, I see that I inherited the prevailing view that large states determined historical development and rightly so. Studies of the "small peoples" were subordinate to large multinational states — "the center" — of which they were a part. Thus, in the case of the Russian Empire, most of us examined the policies of the central government towards the "minorities"; and we gave high marks to policies which successfully incorporated the minorities within the large whole. In the Ottoman case also, we gave credit to governmental policies which we viewed as "tolerant" of minorities. In contrast, attitudes of the "small peoples" towards their rulers were virtually ignored. Even historians of the United States at the time almost completely concentrated on its dominant culture and, like their counterparts who studied the Russian or Ottoman Empires, avoided consideration of minorities within.

Indeed, most American academics who worked on Russian imperial history viewed work on the minorities which was hostile to the Russian center as unproductive, and to use a term common today, "politically incorrect". In the light of views today, it was ironic that historians who ventured into the study of non-Russian peoples within the Empire, and later within the USSR, were almost automatically portrayed as politically conservative or hostile towards the USSR. Today, after the break-up of the Soviet Union and the divisions in the old Yugoslavia, the "mainstream" has shifted to a consideration of historical development from minority or "small people" points of view.¹

Before I concentrated specifically on the Crimean Tatars, I wrote a short piece on one episode in Russian history in which the leadership pursued a

¹Certainly this is true in the study of United States' history, and for history both of the Russian Empire and the USSR. It is less so in the case of Ottoman history, where focus remains on the center.

tolerant policy towards one large minority, and concluded that this was a good example of "large-state success."¹ At the time, I intended to follow this up in my dissertation, which was initially designed around Russian policies towards the Volga/Kazan Tatars. Everything I had read in preparation for that work had led me to expect to find consistently "enlightened" and "tolerant", and thus, "successful" policy resulting in a general level of satisfaction by these Tatars' leaders within the larger Russian multi-national state.

To my dismay, after studying Russian and Ottoman Turkish, and Kazan Tatar, and reading all available secondary literature and published primary sources on the subject, I learned from my mentors that it was unlikely that I would receive research permission from the USSR authorities to conduct research in Kazan, and also unlikely that I could work on that subject in the libraries and archives in Leningrad and Moscow.

So, almost at the last moment, I decided to go to Istanbul to work in the Başbakanlık Arşivi [hereafter B. A.], in the summer of 1965. I hoped to be able to find evidence, promised by Russian and Soviet historians, for close relations between the Ottomans and the Kazan Tatars, and particularly on efforts by the Ottomans to influence the Tatars against their government.

There, again to my disgruntlement, I found that the Kazan Tatars and the Ottomans had had no close relations, indeed virtually no relations at all. The Russian and Soviet historians had misled me. I was in a very awkward position, and had to quickly change my focus to one for which there was evidence to examine, the enormous amount of evidence for relations between the Ottomans and the Crimean Tatars. It was in this way that I found the Crimean Tatars as my subject for study. Fortunately I had by now the languages for this second, related area, and I was working in the Ottoman archives during a "golden" period for research.² Since I had already read for my initial topic in the 18th century, I decided to work in the B.A. on the last years of the Crimean Khanate, the Russo-Ottoman wars of the late 18th century, and the Russian annexation of Crimea and the Crimean Tatars. The first piece that I wrote on this subject [# 7 in this volume] was an outgrowth of that dissertation, which itself was published a few years later.³

While writing this dissertation, I discovered that little or nothing had been written about the annexation by Ottoman or Turkish scholars. Akdes Nimet Kurat had included this topic in his more general survey of Russian-

¹"Enlightened Despotism and Islam Under Catherine II", *Slavic Review*, XXVII/4, 1968, pp. 542-553. This was an outgrowth of an essay I wrote early in my graduate career, in 1963, and was published only after my work on the Tatars had begun.

²The B.A. archive staff, especially Turgut Işıksal and Midhat Sertoğlu, were extremely cordial, friendly, and gave me much personal assistance and attention. In those days it was even possible for a researcher to make his own microfilm copies of documents!

³*The Russian Annexation of the Crimea, 1772-1783* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1970). This was subsequently published in Turkish, in installments, in the Crimean Tatar emigré journal, *Emel*, in Istanbul.

Ottoman relations, but only marginally and without detail.¹ A number of Ottoman chronicles and accounts gave useful information, but none dealt in detail with the Russian annexation nor with the period of Crimean "independence" between 1772 and 1783.² Russian and Ottoman, and Soviet and Turkish historians, for the most part, had seen the two large states as the major players in events, and the "small peoples" between as peripheral, however interesting.

In addition, Turkology had been an important discipline in Russia and the USSR, and some significant studies of Ottoman history had been made by Russian historians, and in the process a few had looked at Crimean history as well, using Ottoman and Tatar chronicles, and archival sources which were housed in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Odessa.³

¹ Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya: XVIII. Yüzyıl Sonundan Kurtuluş Savaşına Kadar Türk-Rus İlişkileri (1798-1919)* (Ankara, 1970); his later study, *IV-XVIII Yüzyıllarda Karadeniz Kuzeyindeki Türk Kavimleri ve Devletleri* (Ankara, 1972), treated Crimean Tatars as one of many "Turkish" groups in the North Black Sea area, and downplayed the fact that these Tatars had their own sovereign state and distinct culture.

² For example, 'Abd al-Gaffar Kirimi, *'Umdat al-tawarikh*, ed. N. Asim, in supplement to *Tarih Osmani Mecmuası* (Istanbul, 1343/1924); Ahmet Cevdet, *Tarih-i Cevdet* (Istanbul, 1854-1891), 12 vols., but esp. Vols I and II; Sa'dullah Enveri (mss. H. O. 101, 105, 201-202, in the Österreichisches Staatsbibliothek); Halim Giray Sultan, *Gülbün-ü Hanan Yahut Kırım Tarihi* (Istanbul, 1909); Mehmed Necati Efendi, *Rusya Sefaretnamesi* published both in Turkish (partial); F. Unat (ed.), "Kırım Tarihi veya Necati Efendinin Rusya Sefaretnamesi", *Tarih Vesikaları*, III, pp. 60-68, 137-149, 222-229; and in Russian (full), V.E. Smirnov (ed.), "Zapiski Mukhammeda Nedzhati-Efendi: Turetskago Plennago v Rossii v 1771-1775 gg.", *Russkaia Starina*, March 1894, pp. 179-208, April 1894, pp. 113-134, and May, 1894, pp. 144-169; Mustafa Nuri Paşa, *Netaic ül-Vukuat* (Istanbul, 1909), 4 vols.; Ahmet Resmî, *Hüsusat ül-Ihtibar* (Istanbul, 1869); and Ahmet Vâsîf Efendi, *Mehasin al-Âsar ve Hakaik al-Ahbar* (Cairo, Bulak, 1830), 2 vols.

³ V. D. Smirnov's two volumes, *Krymskoe Khandstvo pod verkhovenstvom Ottomanskoi Porty do nachala XVIII veka* (St. Petersburg, 1887), and *Krymskoe Khandstvo pod verkhovenstvom Ottomanskoi Porty v XVIII stoletii* (Odessa, 1889), were far more detailed, and sophisticated, than either his Soviet successors or A. N. Kurat's volumes. V. V. Veliaminov-Zernov and Hüseyin Feyzhanoglu published materials on the Crimean Tatars housed in the Moscow State Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Materialy dlia istorii krymskogo khandstva izvlechenykh iz Moskovskogo Glavnogo Arkhiva Ministerstva Inostrannykh Del* (St. Petersburg, 1864). Other Russians, who were both skilled Turcologists and historians, included A. Borzenko, V. Brun. F. Lashkov, A. Markevich, A. Negri, S. Shapshal, A. Skal'kovskii, and S. D. Smirnov. Boris Nolde included the Russian annexation of the Crimea, and the developments which led up to it, in his *La formation de l'empire russe* (Paris, 1952-1953), 2 vols. Of course there was the short survey of Crimean Tatar history by Hammer-Purgstall, though it paled by comparison with those of Smirnov: J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte der Chane der Krim unter Osmanischer Herrschaft* (Vienna, 1856). A number of Soviet historians wrote about the Crimean Tatars, though most, until recently, were expected to present the Tatars in the most unfavorable light possible, since Stalin had attempted to eliminate them as a nationality. Among those who were Turcologists, and thus could use Tatar and Ottoman sources, were: N. A. Smirnov, *Rossii i turtsiia v XVI-XVII vv.* (Moscow, 1946), 2 vols.; A. A. Novosel'skii, *Bor'ba Moskovskogo gosudarstva s Tatarami v pervoi polovine XVII veka* (Moscow, 1948); and M. A. Alekberli, *Bor'ba ukrainskogo naroda protiv turetsko-tatarskoi agressii* (Saratov, 1961). Important to my studies were the works of C. M. Kortepeter: "Gazi Giray II, Khan of the Crimea, and Ottoman Policy in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus," *Slavonic and East European Review*, XLIV, 1966; "Ottoman Imperial Policy and the Economy of the Black Sea Region in the Sixteenth Century", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXXXVI, 1966; and, later, his book, *Ottoman Imperialism During the Reformation: Europe and the Caucasus* (New York, 1973). Most valuable for my research, after the B.A., was the collection of Russian and Tatar documents edited by N. F. Dubrovina, on the Russian annexation: N. F. Dubrovina, *Prisoedineniia Kryma k Rossii: reskripty, pis'ma, reliatsii, doneseniia* (St. Petersburg, 1885-1889), 4 vols. Several Crimean Tatar historians also published important collections of documents during the short period of Tatar independent life in the 1920s, especially O. Akçokrakly and A. Özenbaşlı.

It was in the process of writing that dissertation, that I began to see that it was important to view events, not only from the capitals of the large states, but from within the society of the smaller peoples between. I felt uncomfortable doing so, for I still hoped to be able, at some future time, to conduct research in Soviet archives, and wanted to be careful not to unnecessarily antagonize Soviet scholars, who, in those days, did not mind one concentrating on the condition of minorities in other states, but did not appreciate scholarly attention towards their own minorities. Attitudes of Turkish historians towards the topic of the Crimean Tatars were more accepting, perhaps since I was working on "someone else's" minorities.

When working on the Russian annexation, I discovered that the Crimean khan, in theory a "vassal" of the Ottoman sultan, had supervised an administration that was large and complex, and had ruled a "state" which behaved independently of Ottoman policy. One important aspect of this seemed to be tied to the fiscal relationships between the Ottomans and the Crimeans. The source materials in the B.A., and occasionally in Ottoman chronicles,¹ led to the next stage in this study (# 3 in this volume). Interestingly, I found that these relationships were quite different from those between the Ottomans and any other of their "vassals" or subjects. This evidence suggested that the Crimeans were viewed from Istanbul in a special light, as associated with them but independent.

It was an interesting discovery, and enough to satisfy me on the subject of the Crimea for several years. I moved on to other areas and I became interested in the problems "small" nations and states had in maintaining their identities in worlds where the "big states" appeared to determine historic developments. Again, the Tatars sprang to mind. How small states perceive themselves led me back to the study of the Crimean Tatars [with project # 6 in this volume], this time focusing on Crimean-Ottoman relations from the Crimean perspective. At this time, with the exception of the "French team",

¹I would have preferred to have combined this study with one on Ottoman-Crimean political relations, but I was never granted permission to work in the archives of the Topkapı Sarayı [indeed, that is one trove of documents which has remained closed to me] where many of those diplomatic and political materials are preserved. We are very fortunate that a group of French scholars were permitted to study the Topkapı materials on the Crimea which they published in facsimile, translation, and with important and interesting analyses. See: Alexandre Bennigsen, Perlev Naili Boratav, Dilek Desaiye, and Chantal Lemerrier-Quelquejaye, *Le khanat de Crimée dans les archives du musée de Topkapı* (Paris and La Haye, 1978). Dilek Desaiye published a fascinating series of diplomatic correspondence between the Ottomans and the Crimeans in "Le khanat de Crimée et padichahs ottomans dans les registres des name-i hümayun," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XIII, 1972, pp. 560-583. And Dilek Desaiye and Özalp Gökbilgin wrote an account of fiscal and political relations surrounding one particular period of Crimean history in "Le khanat de Crimée et les campagnes militaires de l'Empire Ottoman — fin du XVIIe début du XVIIIe siècle," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XI, 1970, pp. 110-117. All but the last of these were published too late for me to use in my project, but have been enormously helpful in the years since.

most historians believed that the Crimean Tatars had been totally subservient to the Ottoman before 1772, and had virtually disappeared within the Russian Empire after 1783. However, evidence on the Crimean side suggested that the Tatars saw themselves as distinct and independent before 1772, and that they had continued to maintain their identity after 1783, albeit no longer independent. The nature of the fiscal relations between the Crimeans and the Ottomans had supported this view, perhaps had prompted me to rethink what I had originally argued in my dissertation/book, and now opened up new possibilities for understanding the realities of their relations.

The traditional viewpoint, and my original one, had been based on several explanations. Since Ottoman dynastic ideology made claims for Osmanli descent from Ghengis Khan, at least politically, the Ottoman government found it inconvenient to recognize the Crimean Giray dynasty of khans as the "true" successors [ideologically, politically, and perhaps even biologically] of Ghengis Khan.¹ The main problem with this argument was that Crimean chronicles and histories, which discussed the Tatars in the 16th through 18th centuries, suggested that Crimean intellectuals, sensing an Ottoman expectation of subservient status, felt compelled to defend Tatar independence, and to explain it.²

In 1976 I put together all of the various ideas I had come up with about the Crimean Tatars when the invitation to write a "survey" of their history arrived. In order to do so, I had to learn a great deal about the Tatar experience

¹ Halil İnalçık's "Yeni Vesikalara Göre Kırım Hanlığının Osmanlı Tabiliğine Girmesi ve Ahidname Mesclesi", *Belleten*, VIII/31, 1944, pp. 185-229, helped me understand the realities of Ottoman-Crimean relationships at the start. His "Power Relationships Between Russia, The Crimea and the Ottoman Empire as Reflected in Titulature", in Ch. Lemerrier-Quelequey, G. Veinstein, and S. E. Wimbush (eds.), *Passé Turco-Tatar Présent Soviétique, Etudes offertes à Alexandre Bennigsen* (Louvain-Paris, 1986), pp. 175-211, was published after I had moved on from this subject, but further corroborated the necessity of looking at events from Bahçesaray as well as from Istanbul.

² Among these Crimean works, most interesting were: Halim Giray Sultan, *Gülbin-ü Hanan Yahud Kırım Tarihi* (Istanbul 1909) — written in 1811; Özalp Gökbilgin (ed.), *Tarih-i Sahib Giray Han* (Ankara, 1973) — written soon after 1551; *Tevarih-i Dest-i Kıpçak* (published by Ananiasz Zajaczkowski as *La chronique des steppes kiptchak* (Warsaw, 1966); Kırımlı Hacı Mehmed Sena'i, III, *İslam Giray Han Tarihi* [published by Olgierd Gorka and Zbigniew Wojcik (eds.), Hadzy Mehmed Senai z Krymu, *Historia Chana Islam Gereja III* (Warsaw, 1971)] — written in the 1650s; Seyyid Mehmed Rıza, *Al-Sab' al-sayyar fi akhbar al-mulūk al-Tatar* (ed by Mirza Kazembek, as Seid Mukhammed Riza, *Assehb' o-sseitar' ili sem' planet* (Kazan, 1832) — written in the 1750s, and served as one of the main sources for V.D. Smirnov's volumes. The many pieces written by Halil İnalçık on the Tatars and their khans have been of great help to me, as well; in addition to those cited above, in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, "Dawlat Giray," "Ghazi Giray I," "Ghazi Giray II," "Hadjdji Giray;" and in *İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, "Giray," and "Kırım Hanlığı"; "The khan and the tribal aristocracy," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, III-IV, 1979-80; B. F. Manz, "The clans of the Crimean Khanate", *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, II/3, 1878, pp. 282-309. Publication of Crimean Tatar diplomatic correspondence with other states and discussion of their language include: Z. Abrahamowicz, "Dokumenty tatarskie i tureckie w zbiorach polskich," *Przegląd orientalistyczny*, X, 1954, pp. 141-148; Mary Ivanics, "Formal and linguistic peculiarities of seventeenth-century Crimean Tatar letters addressed to princes of Transylvania," *Acta orientalia* (Hungary), XXIX, 1975, pp. 213-224; and J. Matuz, *Krimtatarische Urkunden im Reichsarchiv zu Kopenhagen* (Freiburg, 1976).

after their annexation by Russia, and I entered here unfamiliar ground. In the process I discovered the extent to which western scholarship on the history of the USSR had become politicized, for at that time, to focus on Russian minorities was seen as politically conservative. In retrospect, and with a certain wry humor, I see it is ironic, in light of the 1980s and 90s and development and attitudes towards the study of the break-up of Yugoslavia and the Chechen problem.¹

I learned a lot about the Tatars in studying their post-1783 history. I met a number of Crimean Tatars living in Turkey, and came to appreciate their difficulties in retaining their Tatar culture in a society which expected them to assimilate into the larger Turkish people. The question of acculturation, rejection, assimilation or retention of a separate identity seemed to me to be an important one, and here was a very specific example to examine. I began a comparison of the development of Crimean Tatar life in the USSR and in Turkey; in the former they experienced repression, in the latter strong encouragements for assimilation. In neither case, would Tatar identity survive easily.²

During 1976-77 in Istanbul I discovered a number of documents and registers containing information on that portion of the Crimean peninsula which was directly under Ottoman administration. I was particularly interested in the question: what of the peninsula was actually controlled by the Ottomans and what was under the Khan's authority? I found it extremely difficult, even with the large amount of Ottoman sources relating to their Crimean holdings, to answer this question, though I tried in #4 and #5 in this volume.³ One of the

¹The book was published in 1978 the first of what would in time become the series which included works on the Volga Tatars, various Baltic and Central Asian peoples: Alan Fisher, *Crimean Tatars* (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, 1978); others were on the Volga Tatars by Azade-Ayşe Rorlich; Kazakhs by Martha Brill Olcott; Estonians by Toivo U. Raun; Georgians by Ronald Grigor Suny; Uzbeks by Edward Allworth; Azeris by Audrey L. Altstadt; and Latvians by Andrejs Plakans.

²The result was #11, in this volume.

³The comparable archives of the Khanate had disappeared early in this century, though some of them had been studied by F. Lashkov, "Arkhiivnyiia dannia o beilikakh v krymskom khaŋstve," *Arkheologicheskii S'ezd: Trudy*, VI/4, 1889, pp. 96-110; "Istoricheskii ocherk krymsko-tatarskago zemlevladieniia," *Zapiski imperatorskago odesskago obshchestva istorii i drevnostei*, XXIII, 1895, pp. 71-117; "Sbornik dokumentov po istorii krymsko-tatarskago zemlevladieniia," *Izvestiia tavrisheskago uchennago arkhivnago kommissii*, XXVI, 1897, pp. 24-154. French colleagues, led by Gilles Veinstein, were also working on this subject, and published extremely interesting work on the Crimea. These included: M. Berindei and G. Veinstein, "La présence ottomane au sud de la Crimée et en mer d'Azov dans la première moitié du XVIe siècle," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XX, 1979, pp. 389-465; *Ibid.*, "Règlements fiscaux et fiscalité de la province de Bender-Aqkerman (1570)," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XXII, 1981, pp. 251-328; G. Veinstein, "L'occupation ottomane d'Ocakov et le problème de la frontière lituano-tatare, 1538-1544," Ch. Lemerrier-Quelquejay, G. Veinstein, and S. E. Wimbush, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-155; *Ibid.*, "La révolte des mirza tatars contre le Khan, 1724-1725," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XII, 1971, pp. 327-328; *Ibid.*, "Règlements de Süleyman Ier concernant le livâ de Kefe," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XVI, 1975, pp. 57-104; *Ibid.*, "Les tatars de Crimée et la seconde élection de Stanislas Leszczyński," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, XI, 1970, pp. 24-92; and *Ibid.*, "Missionnaires jésuites et agents français en Crimée au début du XVIIIe siècle," *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, X, 1969, pp. 416-442.

great difficulties I encountered on this topic was the inadequacy of "finding tools" in the B.A. in those years. Well over half my time in the archives was spent in searching for materials that were relevant to the subject. As a result, I published a "guide" to the materials that I did uncover [#2 in this volume], much of which I did not have the time to examine in sufficient detail to use in my project; yet I hoped at the time, and still hope that it would be of use to other scholars. I also hoped that others, possessing the same sort of "guide" for their own research topics, would make them available to others in the same manner. This still remains a good idea, I think, to further the discipline.

Finally, a conference at Columbia University on the Crimean Tatars, led by Edward Allworth, gave me the opportunity to consider anew the role that Ismail Gaspirali had played in Crimean intellectual development and in Islamic modernism in Central Asia, resulting in items #9 and #10 in this volume. I knew of the significant work done by Edward Lazzerini on Tatar intellectual life, and now was even more impressed with his sophisticated treatment of the subject, also presented at this conference. Should one read his work, and then these two items of mine, it will be evident that I was able to add only marginally to what we know about Ismail Bey.¹

What more do we know now about the Crimean Tatars than when I began researching and writing about them 35 years ago? First of all, the Tatars, themselves, have transformed the subject by forcing a reconsideration of their place in Russia, and since the collapse of the USSR, in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. It is worth repeating here a portion of the introduction I wrote in 1977 for my book on the Crimean Tatars to see how much has changed in the interim.²

¹Edward Lazzerini's Ph.D. dissertation, "Ismail Bey Gasprinskii and Muslim Modernism in Russia," University of Washington, 1973, is a model of doctoral work, and in my opinion still deserves to be published on its own. His articles, "Gadidism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A View from Within", *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, 1975, pp. 245-277; "Ismail Bey Gasprinskii (Gaspirali), the Discourse of Modernism, and the Russians," in the same volume as my two pieces, pp. 149-169; "Tatarovedenie and the 'New Historiography' in the USSR: revising the interpretation of the Tatar-Russian relationship," *Slavic Review*, XL, 1981, pp. 625-635, "Ethnicity and the uses of history: the case of the Volga Tatars and Jadidism," *Central Asian Survey*, I, 1982-83, pp. 61-69, and "The Revival of Islamic Culture in Pre-Revolutionary Russia: Or, Why a Prosopography of the Tatar *Ulema*?" Ch. Lemerrier-Quelquejay, G. Veinstein, and S. E. Wimbush (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 367-372, continue his high level of scholarship. See also M. Mobin Shorish, "Traditional Islamic Education in Central Asia Prior to 1917," in Ch. Lemerrier-Quelquejay, G. Veinstein, and S. E. Wimbush (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 317-343.

²Alan Fisher, *Crimean Tatars* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), pp. xi-xii.

"The Crimean Tatars are today a nationality living in a Diaspora. Denied the right to return to their homeland in the Crimean peninsula, their communities are scattered throughout the USSR, the Turkish Republic, and the West. Like other nationalities that have experienced the same disasters (the Jews come to mind), the Tatars' claim to national identity and a national home are based on historical, cultural, and linguistic foundations.

"Appearing first in the Crimea in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the Crimean Tatars soon displaced the existing political and cultural entities with their own; they established their first state there in the middle of the fifteenth century. From that time until the Russian annexation of the peninsula in 1783, the Crimean Tatars organized and lived in a state, called the Crimean Khanate, that was ruled by their own Giray dynasty. From 1783 until 1918, the Tatars lived within the Russian Empire as subjects of the tsars.

"During the latter period, the Tatars were displaced gradually by immigrating Slavic settlers, officials, and landowners. Despite concerted efforts by their Russian rulers to eliminate Tatar culture and identity and to assimilate them into the fabric of Russian society, the Tatars were able to preserve their national awareness. With the fall of the tsarist system, the Tatars were temporarily successful in reestablishing their own state and independent society. But the advent of Bolshevik power soon put an end to their success, if not to their efforts.

"Since 1920, the Crimean Tatars have experienced one calamity after another: collectivization and its related famines, the elimination of their political and cultural elites between 1928 and 1939, the ravages of war and occupation from 1941 to 1944, and finally, their wholesale deportation to remote areas of the USSR where they now reside. [Had I the vocabulary now popular, I would have called this "ethnic cleansing."] Yet there have been developments in the Tatar community that show accomplishment in the face of adversity — developments that show that the Tatars possess almost unequalled courage to struggle for what they consider to be a just solution to their problems. Applying pressure upon the Soviet authorities who were responsible for the denial of their national existence, they have succeeded in the years since 1944 in gaining partial restitution of what was taken from them by Stalin. In 1967, in a decree issued by the Soviet government, the charges made against the Tatars in 1944 were removed; they were "rehabilitated" as a nationality. Yet their rehabilitation was virtually meaningless, for the punishments under which they suffered were not removed. They cannot return to their homeland. Their national and cultural rights remain denied to them, and their struggle for these rights continues today."

Fortunately, I was then overly pessimistic. Like others at the time, I did not suspect that the USSR would disappear, and that this disappearance would offer the Tatars, and many other former Soviet nationalities, the opportunity to reestablish their national identity and community on modern terms. Many have been able to return to the Crimean peninsula, though their national outcome is still in doubt. There seems little likelihood that Ukraine will permit the reestablishment of an organized Tatar community there. But those Tatars who are nationally active are beginning to recreate Tatar culture.

If I were going to write a new edition of my book on the Crimean Tatars, I would cast it quite differently, as a result of what I have learned in the intervening years, both from my own research, but especially from what colleagues have written, and continue to write on the subject. First, I would place them more in the international contexts in which they lived - between two large and expansive states, and as an important part in the international economy of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Second, I would let their own chroniclers and historians tell more of their story, particularly in the period before 1783, and depend less on what their Russian and Ottoman contemporaries had to say about them. Third, I would concentrate, in the 19th century, on those remaining Crimean Tatar institutions which contributed to their survival, against considerable odds. Fourth, I would include in my study of source materials for Crimean Tatar history visual and "material cultural" sources, and no longer depend so entirely on written survivals. Fifth, I would take advantage of the gradual opening of the former Soviet archives to find the Soviet side of their Tatar repression, before 1940; I would then be able to place the Tatar experience within the larger context of Soviet repression of minority cultures. And finally, I would bring their story up to date, with the beginning of their return to their homeland.

I want to thank all those who have helped me in my career, in my studies and researches, and writing. This includes my mentors: Marc Raeff, Tibor Halasi-Kun, Enver Ziya Karal who was a visiting professor, Edward Allworth, and Kathleen Burrill at Columbia; my fellow students, and subsequently professional colleagues: Gustav Bayerle, Tom Goodrich, Dikran Kouyumjian, Bruce McGowan; my wife Carol who was with me in Istanbul on all my research trips, and whose scholarship on Ottoman art showed me how important visual source material is to an understanding of a society; and our children, Elisa, Christy, and Garrett, who were with us on all but the first of our Istanbul stays. I also would like to thank my parents, Sydney and Elizabeth [Scipio] Fisher and her parents, Lynn and Margaret Scipio for making Turkey a part of my "growing-up" years—the Scipios had gone to Constantinople in 1912, remaining until 1942, where Lynn served as Dean of the Engineering School at Robert College; Sydney was a tutor there in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and taught Ottoman history until his retirement.

