

Crimean Tatars and Noghais in Turkey

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The present paper is a short report of the fieldwork done between August 31 and September 30, 1997, as well as June 13 and July 7, 1998 in Turkey in the regions inhabited by the Crimean Tatars and Noghais¹. The main goal of the fieldwork was to collect language material for a Tatar-English dictionary which was planned to be compiled in the future. The paper includes notes on the Tatar² and Noghai populations, figures, distribution, language varieties and a few further aspects of ethnicity and culture.

1. Historical background

As is known, the links between the Crimea, the adjacent hordes and Turkey, from which they were more or less dependent, were close through centuries. Turks immigrated to the Crimea, where they settled on the southern coast of

¹ My best thanks go to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for granting me a fellowship and financing my study, as well as to the American Research Institute in Turkey for assistance. It is also my pleasant duty to thank Mr Erol Uluçay from the Association of Culture and Support for the Crimean Turks in Eskişehir, Mr Cengiz Evirgen from Polatlı and the Turkish Noghais, Mr Musa Ünal, Sami Nogay and Celalettin Erbay from Ankara, Ahmet Sütbaş from Akin, and to all my Tatar and Noghai friends who generously offered me their knowledge, time, cars, food and lodging. A Polish version of this paper will appear in *Rocznik Tatarów Polskich* (Journal of Polish Tatars).

² I refer to the Crimean Tatars as 'Tatars', as they normally call themselves, see also section 3, below. It is to note that there is one single Volga Tatar village in Eskişehir province – Osmaniye, whose inhabitants are also called Tatar and their language Tatar. Although I met a few Tatars from Osmaniye, I shall not deal with them, for they form a distinct national group. In addition, much work was done on them by both Tatar and Turkish scholars, and one monograph has been published in Turkey by Fatma Özkan (1997).

the peninsula, and many Tatars went to Turkey, either for education or to seek refuge. A mass emigration started after the Russian annexation of the Crimea in 1783. As Fisher (1978: 78) estimated, in the years 1783-1784 about 8,000, and in 1785-1788 about 100,000 Crimean Tatars left their homeland. The next large emigration wave succeeded in the 1860s, when 181,177 individuals emigrated (Sekerinskij 1988: 91). The exodus continued until the revolution and the proclamation of the Soviet Union. Under the communist regime, in 1918-1941, only a small number of Tatar landowners were allowed to leave the country as unwanted, but it is unknown how many people fled the Crimea illegally. On the basis of various accounts, Sel (1996: 12) estimates the number of refugees in 1785 - 1800 as approximated 500,000. He says that in 1815, 1818 and 1829 further 200,000, then in the 1860s 227,627 individuals abandoned the Crimea. His figures outnumber those provided by Sekerinskij.

Tatars went to Turkey either directly by sea or across Dobrudja, the present day Romania and Bulgaria. Not all the refugees settled in Turkey. Some remained in Dobrudja. Nowadays about 45,000 Tatars, in addition to as many Turks, live in Romania (Jankowski 1991: 81). Ülküsal (1987: 25) provides a number of 150,000 Turks and Tatars, but he does not specify the period and also includes the current Bulgarian Dobrudja from which no reliable figures are available³.

Earlier studies provided either estimates or made use of Russian documents, so their findings must have been inexact. More recently historians started work on Ottoman documents; e.g. Saydam (1997) examined the period 1858 - 1876 after the Russian-Turkish war, and Erkan (1996) studied the subsequent 1878 - 1908 years.

Tatars and Noghais share many traits and it is impossible to make a clear distinction between these groups. Very instructive is their own, quite popular view that Noghais form a specific ethnic group within Tatars, as it is the case in the Crimea and Dobrudja. Naturally there are also different feelings. On the one hand some Tatars, mainly those who perceive themselves more as Turks than as Tatars, deny links with Noghais and their language, insisting that the latter are distinct and their language is

³ The first edition of his book came out in 1940 in Romania, the second in 1966 in Ankara.

unintelligible. On the other hand some Noghais, although being aware of their close links with Tatars and the similarity of languages, claim that they have nothing in common with the Crimea, that they came from “Moscow”, “the Caucasus”, “Volga” or “Kuban”. Mrs Damakan Ünal, an old Noghai woman, living now with his son in Ankara, told me that “we are not Crimeans, who call us *Kubanszyl* [i.e. people from the Kuban river, H.J.]”⁴ However, as it turned out many times, the claims of the respondents should be treated cautiously⁵ for their knowledge of the past and history is very poor. Interestingly, they confuse facts or, in most cases, say that they know nothing about their past, whereas they remember pieces of their oral literature quite well. Whatever the ethnic roots, later history had brought Noghais and Tatars together. Paradoxically, jokes told against each other point to close mutual links. The above-mentioned Damakan Ünal reported that “The Crimeans call us *at eti aşığan aram Noğay* ‘sinful Noghais who eat horse meat’”.⁶ Or

a Tatar says to a Noghai:

Noğay, Noğay nöğerek
Arabası töğerek
Noğaylarğa ne kerek
Bir araba kok kerek.

‘Noghai, Noghai friendly,
His cart is roundish
What does the Noghai need?
He needs a cart of dung’.

The Noghai replies:

Kırım, Kırım kırılğay
Bir tesikke tıılğay
Kasık berseñ kañkayır
Şömüş berseñ şonkayır.

⁴ The same was recorded by Ersoy and Aydın (1998: 31) among Noghais in Danözü.

⁵ Similarly Ersoy and Aydın (idem, p. 31-32).

⁶ Naturally the respondents denied that.

'Cracked, cracked Crimea,
 Scrapped to a ditch,
 Give him a spoon, he wants more,
 Give him a ladle, he's smug'.

2. Crimean Tatar population in Turkey at present

No reliable figures are available. The *Emel* activists provide a number of 6 million, Sel "at least 4 to 5 million" (Sel 1996: 12). These figures are not more than estimates. Tatars calculate it by taking one million immigrants as a starting point and multiplying this number by the birth rate in the span of the last hundred years, approximately. Careful analysts deem this to be overestimated⁷.

The most compact area inhabited by Tatars is Eskişehir province. The Tatar activists reported that it is difficult to compute the number of Tatar population, as elsewhere in Turkey, for the official census does not include minorities. They said that the number of Tatar residents may be around 150,000 individuals there, including the city. However, they stressed that these figures are approximate.

At present Tatars in Eskişehir province inhabit 33 villages. The other region of compact Tatar population is Polatlı – 11 villages. Noghais live in seven villages near the shores of Tuz Gölü. 2 out of 33 Eskişehir villages are Noghai, but these Noghais are much more influenced by the surrounding Tatars than the Noghais of Tuz Gölü. In addition to this, there are some minor regions where Tatars live in either two or three villages, or in a district of a city, and also in a few isolated settlements. With the ongoing process of migration from villages to large cities and growing outflow of people from villages, Tatars are spreading throughout the country. This, however, implies disintegration and hardly any new compact districts arise. Naturally, elderly people try to keep in touch, but the old entourage is inevitably lost.

What follows is a list of Tatar villages in Eskişehir district ⁸:

⁷ Also overestimated are figures provided by some earlier Tatar authors as for the population the Crimean Chanate. Ülküsal claims it had a population of 4 to 5 million (1980: 37).

⁸ The official Tur. terms for administrative units are *il* and *ilçe* 'province' and 'district', but elderly people commonly use the old Ottoman words *vilayet* and *kaza*.

Eskişehir province

a) Eskişehir district

- Boyacıoğlu (partly Tatar)
- Karaçoban
- Gökdere
- Kireçköy, Tat. Kireş (5 Tatar households remaining)
- Karaçay, Tat. Karaşay (34 Tatar households, 1 Kurd, 1 Manav⁹)
- Kalkanlı

b) Alpu district

- Gökçeoğlu, Tat. Kökşe(ulı) (partly Tatar)
- Fevziye, Tat. Pevziye¹⁰
- Güneli, former Mâmure (45 Tatar households, 10-15 of which from Konya, the others immigrants from the Crimea)¹¹
- Aktepe, Tat. and Nog. Rıpkıye (Noghai village, few Noghais remained)
- Yeşildon¹²
- Işıkören, former Arapkuyusu (Noghai village)
- Güroluk, the other name Kızılsuvat
- Çukurhisar (partly Tatar)
- Çardakbaşı
- Esence, former Yellice (half the population is said to be Noghai, 40 households belong to Tatars)¹³

⁹ More on the village see in Gence (1995: 28-30), according to whom it was founded in 1882 by the immigrants from the Crimea and the Karatay city and district in Romania.

¹⁰ The village was reportedly founded in 1901 by Tatars from Kezlev and Kerch in the Crimea, see Karaş (1995: 17-19).

¹¹ More on the village see in Uygur (1995: 26-31).

¹² The village was founded in 1897 by the Crimean Tatars, see Karaş (1996: 40-42).

¹³ More on the village see in Karaş (1997: 37-38); Noghais are not mentioned.

c) Mahmudiye district¹⁴

- Mesudiye, former Taşlıhüyük ~ Taşlıköy
- Şerefiye, Tat. Şerepiye (Tatars from the Crimea)
- Fahriye, Tat. Pahriye
- Hamidiye, Tat. Amidiye ~ Amdiye (partly Tatar)

- Akyurt, former Lütfiye, Tat. Lütpiye
- Güllüce, former Hayriye, Tat. Ayriye
- Tokatmecidiye

d) Sivrihisar district

- Ortaklar (partly Tatar)
- Paşakadın
- Yaverören, Yâverören¹⁵
- Karakaya (partly Tatar)

e) Çifteler district, Tat. Şipteler

- İlıcabaşı, Tat. Olca¹⁶
- Hayriye, Tat. Ayriye, former Şöngülük¹⁷
- Zaferhamit (partly Tatar)
- Yıldızören, former Mecidiyeköprüsü (partly Tatar)¹⁸

¹⁴ Much detailed information on the localities of Mahmudiye can be found in Tezcan (1982). According to this author the major village is Hamidiye (founded in 1890 by the Crimean Tatars), which in 1980 had a population of 1,251, while Taşlıhüyük (founded in 1900 by the Crimean Tatars) was inhabited by 719, Şerefiye (founded in 1903 by the Crimean Tatars) by 201, Fahriye by 162, Güllüce (with the immigrants from both Crimea and Dobrudja) by 132, Tokatmecidiye (founded in 1884 by the immigrants from both Crimea and Dobrudja) by 149 residents. Akyurt (former Lütfiye) was founded in 1887 by ten settlers from the Crimea and Dobrudja, who were followed in 1915 by immigrants from Dobrudja and later by a few families from Bulgaria (Tezcan 1982: 27-101).

¹⁵ More on the village see in Aygördüler, Aygördüler (1997: 37-41); the village is said to be founded in 1895 - 1897 by Tatar settlers from the Crimea.

¹⁶ Sak, who described the village (1995: 23-24), says that it was founded in 1874 and inhabited by Tatars from the Crimea, Romania, Bulgaria, and also from other localities in Turkey. He does not mention the Tatar name of the village.

¹⁷ According to Karaş (1994: 24-30), who provides the old name of the village, *Şüngülyük*, it was founded in 1902 by Tatars from Akmeçet and its surroundings.

¹⁸ In Karaş's opinion (1995b: 33-36) the village was founded in 1904-1905 by Tatars

f) Seyitgazi district

-Aksaklı

-Yenikent, the other names Yeniköy, Tat. Caŋköy

As said above, the second area of compact Tatar population is Polatlı in Ankara province with eleven villages. The study of this dialect is most advanced. Firstly, there is an unpublished doctoral thesis by Özen (1975) on the phonology and morphology of Polatlı dialect. We also find language samples and a glossary annexed to this work. Secondly, Zühal Yüksel, who herself is of Polatlı origin, and the only Tatar in Turkey who works on Turkish Crimean Tatar, has published a study on the dialect on the basis of texts recorded in six villages (Yüksel 1989)¹⁹. Lastly, Cengiz Evirgen, born in Taşpınar, a resident of Polatlı, has composed a handwritten glossary of his ethnolect. Although compiled by a non-professional, this glossary may be helpful in research.

Ankara province

Polatlı district:

-Eskipolatlı

-Karakaya²⁰-Karakuyu²¹

-Karapınar

-Karayavşan²²-Taşpınar²³

from various regions of the Crimea.

¹⁹ Material presented and analysed in this study was recorded in Tatlıkuyu, Karakuyu, Karayavşan, Karakaya, Taşpınar and Tırnaksız. It is to be noted that nowadays Turkish students of linguistics start to study minorities and their languages. During my fieldwork in Eskişehir Ms Arzu Tane from Erzincan recorded Tatar stories and songs for her MA thesis. In Gazi University in Ankara, Ms Dilek Gönenç, working on Noghai, started to examine the local Noghai dialect. She confirmed that she was surprised when she learned that there are Noghais in Turkey able to speak their language.

²⁰ See Yüksel (1994a: 24-28).

²¹ See Yüksel (1996: 30-34).

²² See Yüksel (1994b: 30-34).

²³ See M. Yüksel (1993: 31-34).

- Tatlıköyü²⁴
- Tırnaksız²⁵ (now Sakarya)
- Toydemir
- Yenidoğan.

Outside the borders of the administrative unit, but quite close to the city there is another Tatar village called

- Ahırlıkuyu.

A Tatar population can also be found in other villages, e.g. Yassihüyük (near the antic Gordion) and Üçpınar, to which Tatars moved in recent times. Many Tatars live now in Polatlı, where they work and study.

The Noghai villages are located south of Ankara, near the shores of Tuz Gölü, where the road forks towards Konya and Aksaray. This area is administratively subdivided between Ankara and Konya provinces. Noghais in this region occupy a distinct position in that they do not identify themselves with the Crimea and Crimean Tatars, though they are aware of the similarity of their languages. The local language is deeply influenced by Tatar.

Konya province

Kulu district

- Kırkkuyu
- Boğazören, former Köstengil
- Ağılbaşı, former Mandıra
- Seyitahmetli, pronounced Seydametli

Ankara province

a) Şereflikoçhisar district

- Akin, pronounced Agin, with 232 inhabitants in 75 households
- Şekerköyü, called Şeker, and by some Noghais, also Seker
- Doğankaya, also Karakaya and Abdülgediği

²⁴ See Yüksel (1998: 26-31).

²⁵ See Bayar, Bayar (1993: 35-36).

b) Ankara district

-Ahiboz, pronounced Ayboz ~ Aboz (partly Noghai)²⁶

-Ballık

-Taşpınar²⁷

-Günalan, the other name Koloz ~ Holos²⁸

c) Bâlâ district

-Ahmetçayırı²⁹

d) Haymana district

-Cingırlı (once a Noghai village, now Noghai families live in four households)

A few families are said to dwell in Börüdelik village in Cihanbeyli district (Konya province).

Aksaray province

Aksaray district

-Alaca, former Hamidiye.³⁰

Teberdar (1994: 27) reports that Crimean Tatar is still spoken by a handful of elderly people in Ayrancı Bucağı. She places this locality west of Ereğli district, east of Karaman district, south of Karapınar, and north of Mersin district.

Crimean Tatar villages are also reported to be located in south Turkey near Adana, in Ceyhan district: Çakaldere, Toktamış, Küçük Kırım and Büyük

²⁶ In Bavbek's opinion (1993: 8) the village has been existing since 1860.

²⁷ According to Bavbek (ibid), the village was founded by Tatar settlers who came from Romania between 1306 - 1324 (i.e. 1890 - 1908).

²⁸ In Bavbek's view (ibid) Günalan was founded in 1908 by immigrants from Romania. This village, like Taşpınar and Ballık, being located in the attractive area adherent to Ankara on the lake Gölbaşı, is undergoing a rapid process of urbanization and change of inhabitants.

²⁹ On the village see Elmacı (1996: 30-31).

³⁰ On the village founded in 1899, see Doğan, Gökdemir (1995: 39-40); since Tatars who settled in this village came from the southern Crimea, their language, as very similar to Turkish, was quickly replaced by Turkish. Only a few elder people are reported to remember their native language.

Kırım. I have not visited them, for I was told that Crimean Tatar had been completely forgotten³¹. There is no evidence of language maintenance in a few localities in Kırıkkale province, east of Ankara. The Tatar villages are there in Keskin (Yoncalı, Polatyurtu and Üçkuyu) as well as in Karakeçili district (Sulubük), see İçin (1994: 26-27). Ersoy and Aydın (1998) claim that Tatar and Noghai are well preserved in Darıözü, Kaman district of Kırşehir province. Furthermore, one Tatar village, Derince, is to be found in Gebze district of Kocaeli (İzmit) province. In the past, there were three Tatar villages near İstanbul: İzzetinköy, Sazlıbosna and Imrahor. However, nowadays only a few individuals of elder generation in Sazlıbosna still speak the language. We have found no Tatars in Imrahor, which was absorbed by the uncontrolled suburbs of İstanbul and transformed into a huge *gecekondu* locality.

At present most Tatars live in townships and cities to which their villages are close, where they can find work and school. Their integration varies from district to district. At new places, Tatar is only spoken at home, predominantly by elderly people.

In 1997, I visited eleven villages of Eskişehir province: Karaçay, Güneli, Aktepe, Esence, Şerefiye, Yıldızören, Mesudiye, Işıkören, Ilıcabaşı, Karakaya and Yaverören, in 1998 three other villages: Kalkanlı, Aksaklı and Cağköy (Yeni Kent). Initially, I have not planned extensive work in Polatlı, for – as said before – this area was quite well studied. However, because people in Eskişehir told me that Polatlı is small, compact and thereby the language is better preserved there than elsewhere, I finally decided to visit this region and verify these opinions. What I found was quite the opposite. All the villages looked uninhabited, houses half forsaken, no sign of life. Tatars, dwelling in the city, only occasionally visit their former abodes in the countryside. The assimilation seems to be much stronger there than in Eskişehir, probably because of the short distance from Ankara (one hour drive) and unfavourable agricultural conditions.

From among the Tatar villages near Ankara I have visited Ballık and Taşpınar (not to be confused with Taşpınar in Polatlı district), where it was

³¹ As in Ayrançı Bucağı, the inhabitants were reported to originate from the southern Crimea where Tatar is very close to Turkish; see also the preceding footnote.

hard to meet anybody able to speak Tatar. Except Kırkkuyu, whose inhabitants I met in the closest township Kulu, I have visited all the Noghai villages. Lastly, my study has included İzzettinköy, Sazlıbosna and Imrahor, and a small village Kalecikkaya near Alacahüyük, in Çorum province.

In addition, I have worked with my informants in all cities and townships mentioned, that is Eskişehir, Alpu, Mahmudiye, Çifteler, Polatlı, Kulu, Ankara and İstanbul.

3. *Ethnicity of Tatars in Turkey*

The population involved in my study may be subdivided into Tatars, Noghais and Gypsies. Tatar population is the largest. They call themselves *Tatar*, e.g. *Men Tatarman* 'I am Tatar', their language *Tatarca*. They immigrated either from Dobrudja or Crimea. Only a few people came to Turkey from other countries, e.g. one as ex-German soldier from Germany. Irrespective of the place of origin and habitation, the majority of them regard themselves as Tatars or Crimeans and consider themselves to be one nation. For only a few, being a Turk in a broader sense was more important.

As for Noghais, there is a difference between the Noghai population of Eskişehir and that of Tuz Gölü. The former do not normally differ from Tatars either linguistically or anthropologically, for typical Mongoloid traces may be present in both Tatars and Noghais. They merely differ from the neighbouring Tatars in that they are called Noghais and so call they themselves. There are no significant social differences between those Noghais and Tatars. The latter group is different. What is most important is their distinct ethnic consciousness. It is quite interesting that despite the similarity of the languages no close social ties are visible. Tatars do not know of them, either.

The relationship between Tatars and Noghais who are in contact is nationally unmarked. No derogatory, offensive approach was manifest³². The position of Gypsies, who predominantly live in Alpu, is different. They live in a separate district of the township. When talking about themselves with the outsiders, they say they are Tatars. Tatars warned me against addressing Gypsies by the term Gypsy, which they allegedly do not accept. Gypsies and Tatars are in contact on business affairs and do not normally

³² This is not applicable for the activists in great cities whose political and ethnic views may differ significantly.

invite each others for feasts and social events. The relations between both ethnic groups are good. I was encouraged by Tatars to go to Gypsies and talk to them, for they are believed to maintain the Tatar language very well.

4. *Language*

The examined population can be described as linguistically homogenous within the groups discussed above. The spoken languages of Eskişehir Tatars and Noghais do not differ too much. However, the language of poetry performed by Noghais shows some distinctive features characteristic of Noghai. The Noghai traits are more evident in the everyday speech of Tuz Gölü Noghais.

Currently the majority of people are bilingual. Only the elders say their Turkish is not good, but in fact they communicate in Turkish fairly well. Tatars are gradually shifting from Tatar to Turkish. The communicative situation is typical of language shift. As it is the case cross-linguistically, the generation of grandmothers and grandfathers have the best command of language. They normally speak Tatar while talking to each other and their children. Their children, that is people from forty to fifty years old and more, many of them also being retired, prefer Turkish unless they address their parents, to whom they predominantly talk in Tatar. Their children and grandchildren speak only Turkish, both in conversation with each other and with their parents, except for some common Tatar expressions, greetings and meal names, although many of them understand Tatar. It depends on the family setting, how much time they spend in the villages during vacations etc. It is worth noting that even those grand- and grand-grandparents whose command of Turkish is limited, try to talk to the youngsters in Turkish, explaining that they do so in order that Tatar could not impede them at schools.

Naturally, language preferences also depend on social factors. Educated people are more assimilated than traders, craftsmen and workmen. Only some of them prefer to speak Tatar. I have met only a few families whose language of communication was Tatar. Members of these families usually address other Tatars also in Tatar, except for the youngsters who use Turkish while talking to their peers who do not speak Tatar and hardly understand it.

Not a single Tatar, including teachers, did any effort to stop or to reverse language shift. There are neither schools nor other institutions to provide Tatar language courses. In this situation, nobody has seen any need to think of textbooks, dictionaries or other devices for language teaching.

As a result, Tatar is only spoken at home and between Tatars of older generation. It does not have any written standard. The shift to Turkish is voluntary and not imposed by any political option. Tatars say they do not have another alternative and do not want their children to be hindered in their professional career as they themselves once were. According to Bayar and Bayar, people leave the villages that their children could attend better schools. At present, this is not only a choice, but also a “must”, because with the outflow of young population, the schools closed³³. Nobody regrets this, for the standard of teaching in village schools was reportedly very low. The majority of young Tatars and Noghais do not return to their villages after graduation.

Tatar and Turkish are similar languages, especially in the current situation of Tatar being deeply penetrated by Turkish as a more prestigious, dominating language. During conversation, all kinds of switch are allowed and encountered. The switch may be limited to one word, phrase, sentence, but it may include a longer topic. There are numerous copies from Turkish, both semantic and pragmatic. Tatar with the least traces of the influence of Turkish is encountered in the conversation of the elders, undisturbed by television and other people who do not speak Tatar. In villages, the elder Tatars address the local non-Tatars also in Tatar, which they normally understand, some even reply in Tatar. However, an unknown person would only be addressed in Tatar after it turned out that she or he is Tatar. Similar attitudes can be observed among Noghais.

There is a common opinion that the present-day Crimean Tatar is much different from the local dialect. Cases of unintelligibility are frequent. Tatars say that the best Tatar language is spoken in Dobrudja, for it is influenced by neither Russian (as in the Crimea) nor Turkish (as in Turkey). Of course, this opinion is somewhat illusive, although it is true that the past migrations from the Crimea to Dobrudja basically involved the northern and central part of the peninsula and Kerch where the spoken language was quite distinct

³³ Akin was the only village visited in which a school was open for children.

from the southern Crimea. To prove this, we may point to the case of Ayrancı Bucağı, see above.

In short, it must be said that the language shift is an ongoing and inevitable process. It affects all aspects of everyday life and activities. The remnants of the Tatar language will live as long as the remnants of culture (discussed in the next section) will exist, e.g. the Tatar kitchen³⁴. The Tatar language may survive in songs and sayings performed at festivals and on the scene.

5. Culture

Despite rapid assimilation, a Tatar village differs from a Turkish one. The villages do not have a standard layout, a few villages resemble Crimean settlements, the unique one is that of Şerefiye, which imitates the layout of a modern Crimean village. The farmyards, always fenced, are very wide, living houses and outbuildings large. Sheds for livestock are detached from the living houses. The houses, however, are built of the same material as Turkish houses, that is of mud brick, and have roofs covered with earth or tile³⁵. The interior and arrangement of many houses do not differ from Turkish. National clothes are not preserved. People wear what is available in the country. Few Tatar women are veiled, but head covering, especially among older women, is common³⁶. Tatars reported me that their grandfathers had brought agricultural devices, machines and technologies

³⁴ A good parallel is the preservation of some meal names among Polish-Lithuanian Tatars, (*dżajma*, *bielusz* 'kinds of pie filled with meat etc.'), whose ethnic language was finally replaced with the local Slavic languages by the end of the 16th century.

³⁵ It is to note that Eskişehir region was inhabited by few Anatolian Turks. The core people were Manavs, and along with Tatars and Noghais there lived Turkmens (Yürüks) and Turkish immigrants from Bulgaria, the Macirs (← *muhacir* 'emigrant'). Now the forsaken villages and houses are being settled by Kurds coming from the eastern provinces. In contrast to all the others, Tatars do not like them. They accused the Kurds of thefts, something absolutely non-existing among native Anatolian population, Tatars and Noghais. Some regional Tatar communities do not allow the Kurds to settle in their villages.

³⁶ Tatar and Noghai communities living in small and scattered settlements are apparently more receptive to Turkish influence. For instance, Tatars in Kalecikaya, a locality situated far away from the compact Tatar areas, are as conservative as the neighbouring Turks. The girls and women did not look at me walking in the village, they wear head kerchiefs as conservative Turkish girls, so-called *türbanlı kızlar*, do.

unknown here and that the local people had learned from them how to plant and cultivate new crops.

The Tatar kitchen is different from the Turkish one. They make a lot of pastry and doughy meals, which is probably a Slavic influence from the Crimea and a Romanian one from Dobrudja. The Tatar kitchen seems to be one of the most resistant, and even expansive components of the Tatar culture. Tatar dishes are offered in a number of restaurants and bars in Eskişehir and are very popular. The beverages are the same as the Turkish ones. The Tur. *yoğurt* is called *katık*, and *ayran* – *cazma*. Tea is offered in the Turkish style, except for the Noghais at Tuz Gölü, who also drink genuine Noghai tea from bowls, called *nogayşay* or *ayakşay*.

Notwithstanding the disappearance of national cultural tradition, many elder Tatars remember the characteristic Tatar songs, *şışs*. These short verses were basically pronounced or sung by a girl and a young man in the form of a dialogue, but also by the elders, especially at feasts, gatherings, ceremonies, or just for fun on other occasions. Normally a young man begins and a girl replies³⁷. Although my informants said that *şışs* were invented by gifted performers, the comparison of the recorded material with the *şışs* known from the Crimea, Uzbekistan and Dobrudja has shown that most verses are identical. Another genre of the oral literature are riddles, Tat. *tapmaşa*, Nog. *cumak*. The fairy tale, Tat. *masal*, Nog. *erteği*, and epic stories, *destans*, are almost completely forgotten. I was able to record short pieces of epic from only three performers in Polatlı, Ilıcabaşı and Eskişehir.³⁸ Equally rare is *mani*, a form typical of the southern Crimea, a Turkish import. As is evident, the common Tatar literary tradition, which existed for centuries, is disappearing now with rapid changes in life, migrations and intensive contacts with the standard Turkish culture.

Apart from the elders, who are now the basic population of villages, many families live a double life. Probably the most common model of this is the following. The middle generation live in the village in summer, spring and autumn, as long as there is work in the fields. The children come to the

³⁷ I could not record any song of the kind *Nogay beyitleri* 'Noghai songs' that I heard in the recitation of one performer at the Tatar national festival *tepreş* in 1995 in Karakaya.

³⁸ Two of them are Cantemir brothers who, as they said, learned a longer poem in Romania in their childhood.

village only for the summer vacations and go back to cities in September when schools open. While in the city, they are with their grandparents, who look after them. Naturally, short mutual visits are frequent, especially if the distance between a village and a city is not long. In winter, also those Tatars who do not keep livestock go to the city and come back in spring.

At present, many Tatars are educated. There are doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers, businessmen, people active in all professions. The intellectuals and wealthy families do not separate themselves from the other Tatars, many of them help those who need support. The esteem for the elders is general. In addition to general factors which underlie depopulation of villages, there are specific ones³⁹. It seems that only those villages will survive in which the problem of watering the plants is solved. Although farmers complain that the operating of watering machines is very costly, they gain good profits. The other Tatar villages have no alternative and will disappear.

Tatars and Noghais are sunnite Muslims. There is one imam of Tatar origin in Eskişehir, but he does not speak Tatar in the mosque; he even preaches in Turkish. I was also acquainted with a Noghai imam, but I did not have the opportunity to listen to his service. Thus I do not know what language he speaks at a service, in addition to Arabic, which is the traditional language of the obligatory prayer. The other imams were Turks, one Kurd.

In the villages, Tatars are farmers, but few of them keep livestock. Sheep breeding seems to be more popular with Noghais than Tatars, but the shepherds are usually Turkmens. In contrast to Turkish and Kurdish women, the Tatar women do not work in the fields. I met a few Tatars who employed non-Tatar women. Tatars told me it would be a shame for a Tatar if his wife or other female relative worked in the field. However, women have very much to do around the house. The Tatar Gypsies do not deal with agriculture at all. They said that they earn money from crafts. From others I learned that also from their pedlar's job⁴⁰.

³⁹ See above, section 4, and footnote 28.

⁴⁰ According to Memiş (1996: 22-7), Crimean Gypsies were organized in the castes of musicians (*çalgıcılar*), goldsmiths (*altıncılar*, *quyumcılar*), basket weavers (*sepetçiler*) and bear keepers (*ayuvcılar*). Literature on this ethnic group is very scarce.

A guest invited to a house in a village has a dinner with the house lord⁴¹, although the other members of family are present. After dinner or lunch all members of family, male and female, drink tea or *cazma*. Outside the house Turkish customs apply. In most villages there is a pub, *kahve*, visited only by men. At wedding feasts, men and women sit and dance separately in the yard. The elders sit and talk inside the houses, unmarried youngsters dance together. However, when, in Yeşildon, I wanted to go and look at them, people told me that this was not accepted. It seems that Turkish *rakı* is served at the feasts upon the preferences of the bridegroom. No heavy drinks are available in a *kahve*.

Among the rural population, Tatars and Noghais marry mostly Tatar and Noghai girls, respectively, although marriages with Turks also occur. There are also marriages between Tatars and Noghais, but never between them and Gypsies or Kurds. On the basis of oral communications, we may say that formerly mixed marriages were uncommon.

There are evidently more distinctive features between Noghais and the local Turks than in the case of Tatars. Firstly, Tatars use the same names as Turks, whereas Noghais have still preserved a few specific Noghai names, unknown among Tatars and Turks, e.g. female names *Boldukan*, *Damakan*⁴², the male name *Keldimurat*. Secondly, the elders still remember the names of the Noghai calendar of animal cycle. Thirdly, in the old cemeteries in Köstengil (Bağazören) and Seyitahmetli there are many gravestones with inscribed clan signs called *tamga*. Fourthly, there are remnants of old tribal tradition, i.e. all elder people and many young Noghais know their tribe. Some of them are from Cetisan (*žestan* ← *žetisan*), some from Yedishkul (*žetiškul*), and some from Cemboyluk (*žombojluk* ← *žembojluk*) tribe⁴³.

41 However, when in 1998 I visited a few families for the second time, they treated me as a friend, and we ate together with women.

42 These names are absent from the list of names annexed to the standard Noghai-Russian dictionary by Baskakov (1963).

43 More exactly, these are tribe confederations. The Crimean Noghais call those tribal units *tabın*, whereas the clans are identified with the names of clan signs, e.g. *Ay Tamğa* 'Moon mark', *Ergenek Tamğa* 'arch mark'.

6. Tatar and Noghai organization

The major Tatar association is *Kırım Türkleri Kültür Yardımlaşma Derneği* 'Association of Culture and Support for the Crimean Turks'. This association has local departments throughout the western and central Turkey. In addition, there are two organizations known because of their publications as *Emel* and *Kırım*. It seems that the former is more concentrated on the Crimea, whereas the latter is more involved in the issues of other Turkic peoples, firstly in the closely affiliated Kipchaks, such as Volga Tatars, Bashkirs, Kumuks, Karachais, Malkars, Noghais, Kazakhs and Kirghiz. There are more political dividing lines between *Emel* and *Kırım*. However, both groupings equally regard the Crimea as their homeland and many activists recall that their primary goal is returning to the homeland. They closely follow Crimean events, keep in touch with Crimean Tatars and support Crimean organizations.

Noghais were organized in an association in Ankara, chaired by Mr Celalettin Erbay. This association was dissolved and a new one, chaired by Mr Musa Ünal, was created.

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