

# **Memoirs**

*National Existence and  
Cultural Struggles of Turkistan  
and Other Muslim Eastern Turks*

**Prof Zeki Velidi Togan**

## Translator's Note

This work needs to be read as a manual of governance in practice. It does not venture heavily into theory, as it concentrates on how large-scale applications of governance are conducted. In addition, the author was one of those practitioners who interacted and bargained with Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky and the rest of the Soviet and Bolshevik luminaries of his own time for Baskurdistan and Turkistan. It can be read profitably in the context of anti-colonialism, Sub-altern studies, Russian and Soviet studies. He presents the issues on world-wide bases.

Ahmet Zeki Velidi Togan (1890-1970) provides the details of his pursuits and environment in his own words. As he points out, in his own preface, he was not content to solely depend on his memory or even notes; he made use of secondary sources and collective recollections of his colleagues, especially to verify the political events. However, in rendering his words into English, the following provisions were borne in mind:

1. **Gnosis:** Togan was well read and in depth. At one point he delves into his own use of the term “Moslem.” Two of the arguments he presents are worth noting here:

*Now, we are learning the German organizations which are close to the same aims, with Azimbek. Here, the task of keeping together socialism with nationalism in the same organization is split into two. One is National Socialists; but their primary aim is animosity toward the Jews. The National Socialists are placing the German race and paganism against Catholicism, and following the path for a full dictatorship. In our case, in order to honor the Tajiks, in many cases, it will be necessary to use the term Moslem instead of Turk, and Turkistanis. That means, the race issue will not be valid with us. The second route is the path of the Christian Socialists. We may possibly learn some from them.*

and

***I believed that, conscious people could convene and find a mutual religion. I wondered if the ancestral Shamanism of the Turks could become a national religion for us. I thought that, possibly, as it is a natural religion, it had better facets than the religion of the books.***

2. **Language:** Togan was fluent in a number of diverse languages (German, Arabic, Russian, Persian, French, and English etc.) and a myriad of Central Asian Turk dialects as there are no such distinctions as “Turkic” and “Turkish,” which were artificially introduced into English and Russian. He not only used these languages and dialects for scholarly purposes, but also for discourse under a wide variety of conditions. Consequently, one can easily discern from his expressions that, while recalling an event, Togan has the tendency of remembering the proceedings in the “original,” the particular language or dialect in which the transaction took place. For example, if his respondent was a Kazak, he thinks in Kazak dialect, the flavor of which invariably seeps into his writing, recording the incident. He also uses vocabulary from those languages that can have more than one meaning in English. As an additional result, the spellings of geographic as well as personal names can vary, even on the same page.
3. **Style:** Togan came into contact with innumerable personages, speaking in all manner of languages, in as many locations. Thus, Togan’s expressions have a tendency to flow from one language and dialect to the next. This is true even in a single sentence, which are often longish, if he is relaying a group discussion or meeting comprising mixed sources. Invariably, this fact also influences his grammar. Although utmost care has been taken to preserve Togan’s own style, grammar and punctuation, and even though some of his statements may sound unusual, it became necessary, at certain points, to insert clarifications between angular brackets. The round brackets were used by Togan himself.
4. **Orthography:** Names of many localities Togan references cannot be easily found in other sources. Hence Togan’s work is an invaluable primary catalog. Therefore, it became necessary to preserve his orthography. A few exceptions were made, especially in rendering well known place names, such as Bukhara, Samarkand, Egypt; though, for the most part, I kept Togan’s spellings.

Togan was a product of unusual circumstances. He has been quite active over a prolonged period, and his own account in this volume covers what he calls his life’s first portion. He himself, as he noted, wished to put down the rest as a second volume, but wondered if he would have the time or the chance. It would have been as fascinating as the first. One would naturally wish to see a complete biography of Togan, to better understand his times, struggle and the politics of his world. An independent understanding of the Russian Nationalities politics on the part of the reader would help comprehend the contents of this work better.

I began this translation during early 1980s. The project was delayed due to legalities of all types; later on, due to health reasons. Perhaps some day I can write an article on all the proceedings. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Z.V. Togan’s offspring for finally cutting through the jungle and allowing all of us to see the sunlight.

I should note that I did not include the originals of the poetry Togan cited in various alphabets. That is partially due to the limitations of software. I discovered, a common platform across the net does not yet exist to represent all the alphabetical variations. A trial caused some reading apparatus fits by displaying combinations of symbols instead of the words containing the diacritics.

The poet Ahmet Hasim [1884-1933] is said to be a connoisseur of viewing the world through a tulle curtain. Togan, however, is a hard-headed realist. But, there is a fine line between remaining totally focused on the words of the author as opposed to producing a readable text. Therefore the aim was to keep the sheer curtains away from Togan’s text, even if some of the expressions Togan utilizes may sound peculiar in English. As a demonstration, I offer the following, to indicate what I avoided:

***Uses of cultural phrases: the case of ‘Heavy Headed’***

***Certain Turkish terms cannot be translated into English in a word or two. One of those is what the translator below rendered as, ‘Heavy Headed.’ The phrase certainly has nothing to do with skeletal weight. It is the dream of every mother to have an offspring possessing one such ‘head’; a source of intense pride and joy to those who already have. ‘Serious,’ ‘earnest,’ ‘grim,’ ‘solemn,’ ‘level-headed,’ ‘somber’ are some of the words that begin to capture the meaning. But, the sense is definitely extended well beyond; all public figures are expected to be ‘Heavy Headed,’ and successful ones are. The accompanying demeanor is indeed intensely charismatic, and a positive extension of the term.***

***The ‘story’ below is a 21st century creation. It was originally composed (anonymously; perhaps by several collaborators) in English by stringing together old, similar cultural-context Turkish phrases in ‘direct’ English translation, in a minimal plot to hold those together. Intended only for purposes of humorous laughter, directed at the Bilingual Community, as the original Turkish phrases are clearly ‘visible’ to those who can enjoy both languages. The ‘translation’ ignores the extant equivalent phrases, and uses the second and even third meanings to be found in a respectable dictionary; but not all are obvious at first glance. Just show the following tale to your bilingual neighbor. As soon as the laughter dies down, which may take a while, you may get the explanations you seek.***

***Nonetheless, a few of the terms deserve some treatment here, which are listed immediately following the story. Now, let us enjoy this modern story, deliberately built upon the gilded stilts of yesteryear:***

*“H. was a very heavy headed boy. His father was a middle stationed man. To make his son read in good schools he did everything coming from his hand. He took everything to eye. His mother was a house woman. Every job used to come from her hand. In making food there was no one on top of her. The taste of the observations she made you eat your fingers. This woman made her hair a brush for her son. When H. became sick, she cried her two eyes two fountains. When H. finished lycee he wanted to be a tooth doctor, and he entered the university exams and won Tootherness School. In the school he met J. H. was hit to J. in first look but J. was not hit to him in the first look. However her blood boiled to him. A few weeks later they cooked the job. J’s father was a money-father. He turned the corner any years ago by making dreamy export. But J. was not like her father. She was a very low hearted girl. Her father was wanting to make her marry to his soldierness friend’s son A. A. finished first school and didn’t read later. He became a rough uncle. He started to turn dirty jobs when he was a crazy blooded man. He was his mother’s eye. He said, “HIK” and he fell from his father’s nose. So three under, five up he was like his father. When he saw J., he put eye to her. His inside went. His mouth got watered. His eyes opened like a fortune stone. To be able to see J., H.’s inside was eating his inside. Finally, together they went to a park. When they were wrinkling in the park, A. saw them. First he pulled a deep inside. And then his eyes turned. He couldn’t control himself. He wanted to send them to the “village with wood”, but he collected himself. He decided to leave them head to head. At that moment the devil poked him. He fit to the devil, pulled his gun and fired. However, a man passing stayed under lead rain and poor man went to who hit. He planted the horseshoes. Then the mirrorless’ came. They took all of them under eye. J’s inside was blood crying. The man died eye seeing seeing. And so, this job finished in the blackarm.”<sup>1</sup>*

*Some of the less than obvious phrases (their original Turkish) and simple explanations are below:*

*H. was hit to J=(H., J. ye vuruldu) H was smitten by J*

*money-father=(para babası) wealthy man*

*low hearted=(alçak gönüllü) modest*

*observations=(gözleme) a pastry dish, fried on a flat steel sheet*

*making dreamy export=(hayali ihracat) fraudulent commercial transaction; ‘exporting shadows’*

*soldierness friend’s=(askerlik arkadaşı) comrade in arms, veterans of the same service or campaign*

*rough uncle=(kabadayı) hooligan (historical term, dating back several centuries)*

*pulled a deep inside=(içini çekti) sighed deeply*

*His inside went=(iç’i gitti) his heart leaped out*

*he fell from his father’s nose=(babasının burnundan düştü) a chip off the old block*

*three under, five up=(üç aşağı-beş yukarı) approximately*

*opened like a fortune stone=(faltaş gibi açıldı) eyes were as big as saucers*

*his eyes turned=(gözü döndü) temporary insanity*

*wrinkling in the park=(kırıştırıyorlardı) courting*

*He said, “HIK” and he fell from his father’s nose=(HIK deyip babasının burnundan düşmüş) a chip of the old block.*

*to send them to the “village with wood”=(Tahtalıköye göndermek) to send to the cemetery, as the coffins are made of wood.*

*leave them head to head=(baş-başa bırakmak) tet-a-tet, to leave them alone*

*fit to the devil=(şeytan’a uydu) heeded the devil’s bidding*

*stayed under lead rain=(kurşun yağmuru altında kaldı) subjected to a hail of bullets*

*went to who hit=(kim vurdu’ya gitti) killed by persons unknown*

*planted the horseshoes=(nallari dikti) kicked the bucket*

*mirrorless’ came=(aynasızlar geldi) cops arrived*

*took all of them under eye=(hepsini gözaltına aldılar) took all into custody*

*died eye seeing seeing=(göz göre-göre gitti) died for nothing, before everyone*

*job finished in the blackarm=(bu iş karakolda son buldu) this affair came to an end in the police station*

*In the Keloğlan stories, there are many similar cultural references as those encountered above. One of the more prominent is the tekerleme.*

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to an anonymous posters on an open listserv who supplied the text.

*The most well known tekerleme I have encountered is as follows (my translation):*

*Once there was, once there was not;/ in the times past, when the sifter was in the straw;/ when the flea was the town crier; and the camel, the barber;/ ‘tingir-mingir’ while I was gently rocking my father’s cradle;/ there was this .....<sup>2</sup>*

The original contained photographs at the very end. Unfortunately, the copy I have being a photocopy (published in 1969), the quality of the duplicated images would have been less than desirable.

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<sup>2</sup> HB Paksoy, “Introduction,” *The Bald Boy Keloglan and the Most Beautiful Girl in the World* (Lubbock: ATON, 2003). It is also available online.

## Preface

*by A.Z.V. Togan—*

The sources constituting the basis of these memoirs were taken out, prior to our [Togan, along with other prominent leaders of the Turkistan National Liberation Movement] departure at the beginning of 1923 from Turkmenistan to Iran, via the Kabul Embassy of Bukhara and merchants travelling to Muhammedabad. Quite a few valuable documents were taken out to Finland by my compatriot Osman Tokumbet the same year. The notes and documents that had been recorded in a simlie of cypher, and taken out via various means, were read and decoded in collaboration with my compatriots who had fallen prisoner to the Germans during 1943, who were aware of the events contained therein. Additional voluminous updates of information were also obtained from them. Those materials were brought to the Turkish Republic by the late Saffet Arikan, then the Ambassador to Berlin. During 1957, extensive use has been made of the Russian newspaper collections at the “Hoover War Library,” originally collected by F. A. Kerenskii, and by his permission, and with the aid of the library director, a Professor of Polish origin, W. S. Sworokowsky. Use also has been made of the microfilms of the Turkistan newspapers, originals of which were collected with care by Mr. Richard Pierce of Berkeley University during his visit to Russia [Soviet Union]. I must here express my gratitude to these individuals.

To assure the correctness of the information provided herein, I have asked my friends who have participated in the inclosed events, such as Abdulkadir Inan, Kocaoglu Osman, Abdullah Taymas and the combatants Shirmehmet Bek and Kirghiz leader Parpi Haci, to read the manuscript.

The first draft of this work was written in Berlin during 1924, but due to the unavailability of a suitable publisher, publication was delayed. Finally, a compatriot of mine, who had saved capital as a high school student, provided for the eventual printing of this volume, desiring to aid the national publications. He wishes to remain anonymous. Author and poet Orhan Saik Gokyay undertook the task of revising the original manuscript which had been written under the influence of Eastern Turk dialects, in order to render it readable in modern Turkish. I offer my sincere thanks to both.

A few photographs, though referenced in the text, were unavailable at the time of the printing. I offer my apologies for their omission.

*18 February 1967 (Istanbul).*

*I dedicate these memoirs to  
my beloved wife  
Nazmiye Ungar Togan  
who aided me in their compilation.*



# I. My Youth

## *Our Family—*

At the beginning of my life, as I shall chronicle in this book, it could not have been foreseen that I was going to lead a great political movement of the Urals and Central Asia during this century and a liberation struggle of mass scale among the Turks; and that I was also going to attain international prominence as a person conducting research in the field of Oriental studies.

The entirely medieval simplicity of the lives of the Baskurt and Tatars, comprising some agriculture and forestry, in the southern portions of the Ural Mountains, in a village flanked by the mountaineous forest as well as the steppe, could have left me a modest and docile peasant like my relatives living today in Soviet kolhozes.

Despite that, the character of our life, seemingly very modest in this setting of elevations and yaylas [summer pastures], especially its historical manifestations which I have listened to in my childhood, was drawn from living memories and their reflections, possessed of a nature that could drive its members to adventures, to make plans for the present, the future and the benefit of Turk and Islamic world. Keeping all this in mind, it could be said that my life may be regarded as a logical result of historical memories living within the people. Except, in order to shed some light on the circumstances, it is necessary to relay some details to my readers which may appear utterly uninteresting at first sight.

The kernel of our village was constituted by perhaps a count of 30 or 40 emigre households of Tatar and Muslim Chuvash, Soqli, Qayli and Ungut Boy, [‘boy’ = extended family, groups of families acknowledging one leader] the majority of which was settled in the middle of the last century.

In order to understand these tribes better, it must be added that Baskurts differ from other Turks by the manner they substitute “Z” and Ch” for “dh” and “S,” and comprise four groups:

1. Mountain Baskurts (Burcen, Usergen, Tamyán);

2. Yalan (Plateau Steppe) Baskurts (comprised of Yurmati, Kudey, Geyne, Irekti, Yeney, Tanip).

It is possible to determine that these two groups were living in the Urals at the time of Jesus. Mountain Baskurts use “S” for “H,” majority of the Yalan Baskurts use “Th.” But, those of the latter, living in the West and the Northwest have largely become Tatars.

3. The third group consists of portions that have arrived in various centuries and joined the Baskurts: Qipchak, Qangli, Suvun, Uran, Qayli, Qatay, Baylar (i.e. Bayat), Kerey (Kerait), Churas, Nogai, Qirghiz, and Merkit. Those of them who have settled among the Mountain Baskurts speak proper Baskurt, and the majority of those who have gone towards the West are under the influence of the Tatar dialect. These three groups have been in the Baskurt army during the last centuries and have paid a different tax to the Russians.
4. The fourth group came from the West to Baskurt lands, from the region of Bulgar and Kazan, after those districts have been occupied by the Russians, they are refugee Tatars (or, Tipter, meaning “Defterlu” in Ottoman), Buler (Bulgar), Misher and Muslim Chuvash tribes. Russians called these refugees, who came from the area of the Kazan Khanate, “Bashkiri Pripushchenniki, and “meaning” those Baskurts accepted into the body

The first three groups out of the aforementioned four are semi nomadic, in possession of large lands and yaylas and have maintained their tribal organizations. The fourth group had been farmers since early times, having lost their tribal organizations, historical dastans [ornate oral histories] and traditions.

I am a member of the Sokli Kay of the third group. Although I am considered an historian for the past 55 years, I know the least about the history of my own people. It is said that the Sokli Kay and Unggut tribes, constituting the foundations of our village, were residing on a branch of the Yigen, which in turn is a tributary of Ak Edil River, composed of 12 dispersed homesteads, settled on two hills belonging to Kuzen and Baki, and around a well of Yakub, since the 1800s. During the 18th century wars they had suffered many casualties, land remained vacant. Later, our village suddenly grew, when the tsarist government brought a crowded group of Western Baskurts called “Minzele Misheri” and settled them on the lands confiscated from us, as a separate subdivision. The villages on the branches of the Yigen River, Ermit, Utek and Togan were very small Baskurt settlements at the end of the 18th century.

It is written in Selim Umidbaev’s book, “Yadigar,” that the Utek and Tukun villages belonged to the “Kichi Tabin” tribe. Since the name of the “Erbit” was spelled as “Ermit,” it follows that at one time they must have been included among the ranks of the Western Siberian “Tumen.” But I do not know to which tribe they belonged. Their lands were confiscated as well, and given to refugees driven away from Western

Bashkurdistan. The confiscation of their lands caused them to rebel against Russia under the leadership of “Kusuk Sultan,” “Murad Sultan,” and “Sultan Cerey.”

It is said that our ancestors were living under the administration of “Kusuk Sultan,” whom they highly revered, in Erqaragay at the Tobol basin, and Irendik and Chubarkol of Eastern Ural. During the heat of the summer, they migrated to the mountains named Ak Biyik. Under the leadership of Kusuk Sultan, they had gone to Kemelik, Kuban and fought against the Russians. Neighboring “Katay” Baskurts were our allies, but “Arlar,” from other neighboring villages did not accept this sultan. These “Arlar” would not intermarry with us. Since “Kusuk” also meant “little dog,” the people of Arlar would say: “Your sultan became ‘it Kusuk,’” ridiculing us. In return, we would say: “Ar, who had swallowed snakes.” Our other relatives had lived in the Eastern Ural villages of “Kusi,” “Ismail,” and “Nogay” as well as the “Mukas” village of Yurmati Ulus.

Earlier, Kusi and Nogay villages were located towards the east of our village, in a region called “Kusi Yurtu” along the Yigen River. Those of our ancestors who joined them later moved on to the Irendik region of Ural, but mine stayed where they were. However, they continued to intermarry. There is a River called “Bitire” on the Eastern side of the Ak Biyik yaylak. The road leading to the town of Timec crosses it several times. Perhaps 150 years ago, two bridal processions had met on their respective journeys, one going to “Kusi,” the other arriving from Kusi, coming to us. The bride going away from us was crying; weary of seeing the crossings called “turkun,” which were constant reminders to her that she was getting further and further away from her mother’s home, complaining with: “you keep telling me that the end is in sight, what an endless end is this?” The other bride, arriving from Kusi, to express her desire that she did not wish to see the crossings come to an end, for she did not have a notion of what awaited her at the “Yigen” River basin, was repeating with running tears: “If the crossings came to an end, and my heart caught fire, could the waters of Yigen extinguish the flames?”

I had many times visited the Kusi and Nogay villages at Irindik after I turned fourteen, and stayed with old “friends” and “elder sisters,” and had taken down “Muradim” (Edige) [fixing them on paper] which we also knew, adding it to our versions. One of my first works of scholarly research was the papers I published in 1911 in connection with this dastan.

During spring, our horse herds, as they grew accustomed to from the times of our ancestors would go to the Ak Biyik yayla without any supervision. During the aforementioned visits, I had learned that the inhabitants of Kusi also had the tradition of taking their horse herds to Ak Biyik during hot summer days as well, and even had related songs keeping those memories alive. In those songs, the general theme was as follows: “God gave us a mountain such as Ak Biyik, so that we could erect our white goat skin tents. Wild colts playfully and voluntarily rushed into the rope stables, as if saying ‘tie us, no need to use the catching ropes.’” This means the climate of this place was very cool even during the hottest days, so the colts liked to be in the rope stables.



This yayla is perhaps one hundred kilometers from us. Our ancestors lived in yaylak and wintering quarters far away from each other, and died in battlefields equally distant. The tombs of some are known. About one it was said that “he died in Kuban.” It is the Northern Caucasian city. About another ancestor, it was said that he had gone to Mansil in “Tumen” and became a martyr in a battle fighting against the Russians and the Kalmaks on the Eastern side of the Urals, in a lake region called Chubar Kol. The elders, such as my grand uncle Veli Molla and Gusam Aga of Uggut, knew the old dastans very well. These dastans were in verse, narrations about the Golden Horde (Edige, Cirence, Isaoglu Emet, etc.). One of our ancestors, named “Allah Berdi,” remembered as an individual who knew these dastans extremely well, was buried at a high yayla called Karli Bulek some three kilometers from our village. He was known as “Allaberdi [God-given] Nogay” and his burial place was called “Allaberdi Olugu [Where Allaberdi is buried].” Since it was reported that there were quite a few tall individuals among our ancestors, my father exhumed this Allaberdi’s remains and determined that he was indeed tall, and discovered pieces of a sword in the burial as well.

Along with Allaberdi, a contemporary Nogay Bey is also remembered, named Burnak, and a yaylak was associated with him, along the Nigush River, near Ak Biyik. When other Nogay Beys [leaders, rulers] migrated to the Kuban basin, it is said that along with this Burnak, Allaberdi had stayed here. In addition, there was “Nogay Ogullari,” members of the ulema [scholars], who were said to be of Nogay Mirza lineage, in the city of Sterlitamak. One of their ancestors was said to be buried in this “Allaberdi Olugu.” They were my father’s and my uncles’ teachers. They used to visit us as guests, and despite being of the ulema, they were addicted to alcohol. My fifth generation ancestor Ishtogan (from whom my last name is derived) of the “Kuzen Ogullari” had died at Kemelik, very far from us, fighting the Russians. Around our village, there are places called “Russian died,” “Russians broken.” While ploughing, pieces of weapons used to be discovered at those locations.

Though all of the foregoing constitutes only the oral traditions concerning the history of my lineage, nonetheless they influenced my development. This stresses the point that my ancestors, in contrast to the Baskurts of our neighbors, have descended from martial, nomadic, and much travelled stock. Our homeland, termed “tubek,” was actually “Yigen Boyu” region, but the Ak Biyik yaylaks and Irendik district of Eastern Baskurdistan became the homeland of my ancestors. They have travelled throughout this zone, participated in all political events delineated by Mansil in Western Siberia, Erkaragay in Tobol, Kemelik in Western Baskurdistan, Kuban River in Northern Caucasias; in the retinues of Khans, Beys, “Mirzas,” fighting against not only the Russians, but also the Kalmaks. The small Kalmak village neighboring ours had arrived at the time when our ancestors were fighting against the Buddhist Kalmaks. However, the identities of those individuals regarded as belonging to the leadership, such as Kujuk Sultan, and among our direct ancestors, Burnak Biy [Bey], Allaberdi and Kuzen Biy were unknown.

It was after I grew up, learned Russian, started working at the archives of the “Land Boundaries Commission” in Ufa during 1912, followed the Russian publications pertaining to Western Siberian history, acquired information on Baskurt genealogy that I discovered “Kujuk Sultan” to be the grandson, living during the 17th century, of the famous Kujuk Han of Western Siberia and also the son of Ablay Sultan; that Burnak and Allaberdi Beys were Nogay Beys who had lived during the 16th century; that our ancestors were in the retinue of Kujuk Sultan, and under his leadership, as well as his brothers Abaga and Qansuvar Sultans have fought against the Russias in Western Siberia, around Astrakhan and Kuban, and since these princes were deriving their sustenances from scattered lands they controlled, they were widely dispersed.

The Turkish language ferman given to a Baskurt Bey by Kujuk Sultan in 1663 was published in the “Historical Materials” by the Baskurdistan Academy of Sciences during 1943. The participation of our ancestors in the campaign of this prince was also recorded in a genealogy owned by Hidayet Sufi residing in the Askar village. The genealogy of the Burnak and Allaberdi Beys, along with the genealogies of their descendants, the “Nogay Yurmati,” living today in a village close to ours, was among those published by the Baskurdistan Academy of Sciences during 1960. It is recorded in the Russian sources that during his fight against the Russians, Küçük Sultan had 6400 Nogay troops, and those Baskurts in his retinue stating: “We are fighting to establish an independent state, similar to the one formed by Kujuk Han.”

“Sultan Murad,” son of this “Kujuk Sultan,” was among the leaders of the uprisings, had travelled to Crimea and later to Istanbul, met the Ottoma Sultan; had been taken prisoner during the fighting in Daghestan and executed. “Sultan Gerey” was the nephew of “Kujuk Sultan,” had assumed the names of “Kara Sakal” and “Suna” while he was hiding from the Russians. It is not known when our great ancestor “Kuzen Qart,” who gave his name to our village, had lived. However, the mountain next to our village is also named after him. Two of the grandsons of this Kuzen, Aydaq and Curaq, along with 42 other Beys of the Yurmati Urug of Teltim oymak, had sold land belonging to them during 1757 to the Tatars of Said (Kargali), who were situated along the headwaters of the Isterli River. Photographs of the Turkish and Russian language texts of the contract were published in the Materials Pertaining to the History of Baskurdistan during 1956 by the Baskurdistan Academy of Sciences. Other documentation concerning land and familial lineages were present among my family papers. The names of the “sultans” who led our grandfathers, “Sultan Murad,” “Bahti Gerey,” “Sultan Gerey,” were among those most often given to children until recent times.

Our urug [extended family] is Soqli Qay; a branch of the Qay or Qayli, to which belong also the Senekli Qay, Yurektav Qay, Tavli Qay that were near us. According to tradition, before arriving in its present location, this urug was resident in the Irendik region of Eastern Urals. Large groups of Qay (Qayli) tribe are found in Western Baskurdistan. It can be determined that the “Yalan Qatay” and “Orman Qatay” tribes, which are close to us, on the banks of the Iset River, had constituted military groups during the time of the Khans, from the existence in history of “Katay Kalesi” (Katayskii Ostrog) and “Kay Kalesi” (Kay Gorod) from the beginning of the 17th century. The

other urug in our village is Unggut, and this tribe was also prominent with the designation of “Ak Tatar” during the time of Cengiz Khan. I surmise Qay, Qatay tribes joined the Baskurts at the time of the Karahitays, and Tabin and Ungguts, at the time of the Mongols. Since the Katay tribe was one of the mainstays of the descendents of Shiban, of Cengizids, after their occupation of Maverannehr they were called “Katay Hans.” This was related by Herberstein, the German ambassador of the 16th century. My father knew little of the Baskurts to the West of our village, as all his relations were with the Eastern Baskurts. This is the result of their fighting, on the same side, against the Russians during the time of Küçüm Han and his sons. My father caused me to become engaged to the daughter of Hacı Mehmet Yaksimbet oğlu of the Tungevur Baskurts, living on the banks of Yayik River, when I was still fourteen years of age.

## *CULTURAL TIES OF MY FAMILY*

From a cultural standpoint, it will be observed that no person of prominence in learning or other fields had emerged from my family. Despite that, Soqli Qay had played a role within the enlightened circles of our country. The house of Velid Bay, my great ancestor, was a central place of meeting during the first half of the 19th century, where public banquets were also given; Baskurt Canton Presidents, Russian Generals and Governors were received among the guests. It was said that an old “Kimiz ayagi” [on which the kimiz container was placed] and a very old torn carpet in our house were presented to our sixth ancestor by a Bey as a momento.

### *Military memories of our ancestors—*

It was said that the majority of our family friends were from among those who had served in the old Baskurt army alongside our fathers: prominently, Karmisogullari from the Makar village, six kilometers from our village, and Kackinbayogullari from the Alagoyan village. Kackinbayoglu Semseddin Molla and my great uncle Veli Molla had served together as non commissioned officers. A very old man, Omer Hacı of the Karmisogullari was the Canton President. Contemporary members of this family, as teachers and officers, had served in our national movement, in the front ranks of our army. It is said that a Yusuf Karamisev had reached the officer rank of major. Our people had always liked to listen to the songs dedicated to him, and the melodies on the ney [flute]. My friend, the late Dr. Togan, and Professor Jansky had published those scores in the scholarly journals of the Vienna Academy of Sciences.

Some members of these families also learned Russian, due to their military service. Veli Molla was one of them. Prior to his military service, Veli Molla had studied in a medrese. Veli Molla was posted to Sirderya, and my father to Daghestan. Both made time to learn good Arabic and Persian. Veli Molla had produced works in Arabic and Persian, but, since I was very young, I only learned from him in Turkish, the historical national dastans Edige, Cirence, and Isaoglu Emet. While my father was serving

in Gunib of the Caucasus, where Seyh Samil’s headquarters were located, he had met the scholarly secretary of that Seyh named Dibr al Indi, and had corresponded with him, and his brother, in Arabic, until the 1905 revolution. There must have been other good reasons for my uncle and my father to learn Arabic, but I could not determine those. However, it was reported by a Daghestani Omer Akay, who would visit my great ancestor Velid to teach Arabic to his sons among whom was Veli Molla. After completing his military service, my father had stayed on in the Caucasus for another year studying Arabic.

No attachment among the Baskurts to Russian culture is discernible among those who had served in the Baskurt army until 1860 [when it was disbanded], nor among those educated in Russian military schools who served only in Russian military units. Major Yusuf and other officers wore official Russian military uniforms while on home leave, but had never shown favor to Russian music, songs and were never attracted to Russian dances and games. In the home of the Karmisogullari, there was no Western or Russian furniture, the house and gardens were entirely in the Turkistan style of the Syr Darya.

Some Baskurt historians’ writings, published during the Soviet period, suggest such an attachment is at the behest of today’s Russians. Otherwise, though the technical superiority of the Russians was acknowledged, from the moral culture perspective, it was generally and absolutely believed that, like other Muslims, Baskurts were superior. Those Russians who entered our midst such as ironmongers, grocers, etc. would quickly learn our language, often their children would come under the influence of Islam, and sometimes, contrary to prevailing Russian laws, they would become Muslims. In addition to those Russians who had considered the Baskurt life original, and wrote about it, Polish (origin) General Siyalkowski, the military governor of Orenburg, while a guest of Major Yusuf in the Makar village, had expressed his fascination with the originality of the Baskurt life, and expressed his great admiration for Baskurt music. He recommended that Baskurts preserve their traditions.

The presumption that their ancestors also held the West in adoration is also prevalent among the educated of the Turkish Republic. The wish of some of the educated Turks to regard Fatih Sultan Mehmed as a lover of the European, especially Italian renaissance, is contrary to history. Fatih was a proper representative of the Islamic civilization of which he was a member. As he looked down on the European civilization, was proud of his own, so did the 18th and 19th century enlightened Baskurts, who were willingly or otherwise in contact with the Russians. They knew their national culture, which is in origin Central Asian, and were proud of it.

### *Mollas of the Bukhara Khiva type—*

The group our family got on best with were the mollas. Among the more prominent ones were Nogayogullari Serefuddin and Kemal from Sterlitamak, Abselam and his son Bekbulat Molla of Sayran village, Sultan Gerey of Yumagoca village, Allam

of Kunsak village, Nimetullah and Zeynullah of Isterlitas, Seydioglu Abdullah of Mollakay village of the East of the Urals, and a prominent one with the name of Zeynullah Isan of Troysk. These individuals knew Arabic and Persian, possessing theological knowledge, belonging to the Naksibendi tarika of Bukhara, were heads of their medreses. They were book reading personalities. Neither my father, nor Veli Molla maintained any appreciable contact with those who were unenlightened and fanatical. The most scholarly of those Seyhs were Zeynullah of Troysk and Mollakay Abdullah. Abdullah had studied in Bukhara, was an authority in theological sciences, a master in writing Arabic and Persian poetry and belonged to the “Muceddid-i Halidi” branch of the Indian Naksibendis. Their medreses were established in the model of Bukhara, especially of the Khorezm type. These were not fanatic men, for example, like those Kiskar and Tunter mallas of the Kazan area or many of the “Ishans” of the Baskurt il [lands]. All were astute individuals, cognizant of politics.

### *Arif Sayrani and Hizir Molla—*

Among those, Sterlitamak Nogayogullari had the most influence on our family. They considered themselves descendants of the Nogay Oybakti Mirza, maintained contacts with the likes of Kursavi, Mercani of Kazan, and Cardakli Hekim of Western Siberia and with Bukhara. It is said that they also held political views. My uncle Veli Molla and my father had studied in their medrese. In their milieu, some men of thought had matured; they valued sciences and branches of knowledge such as mathematics and history. One of the distinguished personages studying in the Nogayoglu medrese was the aforementioned Bekbulat Molla’s brother Arif Sayrani, from the neighboring village of Sayran. This individual, while studying at the Nogayogullari medrese, along with Nizameddin of the Katay urug, from the Kuruc village, had been inspired by *Al Tarikat al muhtla*, written by Mercani of Kazan, inculcating the “modern” understanding of Islam at the time. As a result he became interested in mathematics and philosophy, went to Bukhara during the first half of the last century in order to expand his knowledge in those areas. Upon observing that these types of knowledge had degenerated at that locale, he wrote a letter in Arabic expressing his deep grief, and sent it to his uncle or father, appended to a copy of the book *Akaid Neseffi*. My father had that letter published, through the great Tatar scholar Rizaeddin Fahreddin and historian Murad Remzi. Arif describes the ulema of Bukhara with “the turbans on their heads are high as the mountains, their claims wide as the oceans, but they are ignorant and insignificant.” Another one of his letters in Arabic has been published in a book by the historian Sihabeddin Mercani of Kazan. This individual [Arif], accompanied by his fiery friend Nizameddin, left Bukhara for Herat and Kabul, to undertake scholarly activities, and from there went to Bagdad via Iran. He was disillusioned once again and both perished in poverty during 1856 under conditions suggesting suicide. The adventurous lives of these two individuals, seeking true knowledge and reform in social life, their disappointment upon observing the demise of intellectual life in such

Islamic centers as Bukhara, Herat, Rayy and Bagdad constituted a significant tragedy at the time.

Among the members of the Yurmati urug, interest in the positive aspects of Islamic civilization was not confined to Arif Sayrani. In fact, an Imam by the name of Hizir, living in the village of “Buce,” four kilometers from ours, knew geometry quite well. My father had arranged for me to study geometry with him. This person used to determine the kibra of the mosques using the “Rub i mucaeyeb” (Astronomical Quadrant) method of the mathematician Ulug Bey, grandson of Timur. This was medieval knowledge and had diminishing relation to the developing mathematics available in contemporary Türkiye or Russia. This Imam, it was said, had also determined the peak heights of Ulkum and Alatav mountains, which were the highest in our vicinity, with his simple instruments. Hizir Molla lived out the last years of his life as the Imam of Bacik village, was pleased with my learning Russian and expressed his desire for me to be an engineer. After his death, I, too, determined the kiblas of some newly constructed mosques, using his method.

During my youth, the influence of Khiva on the national life of the Southern Ural Baskurts was continuing and manifested itself in many respects. For example, a gift of an outfit called “Khiva Capani” would be made at the wedding ceremonies. When I was in Khiva Khorezm during the winter of 1920, I was astonished to observe that the style and embroidery of the unlined blond furs worn during winter were the same as the ones we would wear. The haircuts and beard trims were also alike. In short: the milieu to which my father belonged was under complete influence of Bukhara and Khorezm, and perhaps abandoned the seminomadic life style during the 19th century, or perhaps not entirely. The visible center of this cultural milieu was the Sayran village, seven kilometers to our South, and the Makar village, a similar distance to the North East; that is to say, villages of Arif Sayrani and Major Yusuf. Though the Russians had studied, with imperialist aims, vast areas that lay between China and Tibet, down to the village level, they had entirely neglected the Ural environs. The Geographical Society they had established in Orenburg had only studied Ziyancura town, from among Baskurdistan cultural centers, and had published some studies on it, but that type of research had not spread in our direction. The existence of towns such as “Sayran,” “Selci,” “Yapançi,” “Sart Hasan,” that had reared some distinguished personae; and their possession of historical inscriptions, point to the populations’ having been detached from the Western Turkistan towns, known to be historical civilization centers, of “Sayran,” “Selci,” “Yafenc,” and settled in our territory.

### *Influences of the Kazan School—*

When my father married Ummulhayat (my mother), the daughter of Satlikoglu Kafi of the Utek village, where a mixture of Baskurt and Tipter were living, he entered into a somewhat different world maintaining contacts with Kazan, instead of Bukhara and Khiva. Valuable scholars had emerged from Utek since earlier times, one of them,



Kockaroglu Emirhan, who had died in 1826, had studied in Daghestan, Istanbul, Egypt and Hijaz. He and his son Ahmetcan, a foremost theologian who settled as an Imam somewhere in the vicinity of Kazan on his way back from the pilgrimage, had introduced some modernism into Islamic theology. Our relative from my mother's side, Oteguloglu Abcelil Hazret (died in 1859), who had a medrese at the Utek village, had studied at Khiva Yeni Urgenc; my maternal grandfather, Satlikoglu Kafi (died 1900) had lived in Bukhara and Khiva. Reportedly, both learned good Persian. The Persian culture, present in our village earlier, had developed further with my mother's arrival. While my father was teaching me Arabic, my mother was teaching me Persian.

On the other hand, Emirhan and his son Ahmetcan, both of whom settled in Kazan environs as Imams, were inviting their relatives to Kazan for study. The "Kazan sympathizers," who had emerged in our area, in competition to those of Bukhara and Khiva, rose from this Utek village. Their principal representative was my maternal uncle Satlikoglu Habibneccar, who admitted me into his medrese when I reached the age of eleven. Mercani of Kazan was known under the name "Sihab Hazret" in our parts. His independent views pertaining to Islamic precepts were received well even among "Bukhara type Mollas." But, his historical works were held in utter disdain due to their containing passages belittling Kazaks and Baskurts. Consequently, even Habibneccar was viewed as a "lackey of Sihab Molla." Mercani had misunderstood a point made by the Arab traveller Ibn Fadlan explaining a shamanic fetish called "tos," and wrote that there was a "phallus" cult among the Baskurts. Because of that, Mollakay Abdullah Hazret, who knew Arabic very well, burned Mercani's book *Mustefad al axbar* in a fire, in my father's presence. Outside of these three circles, several other individuals had contributed to my maturation. One of them was Mollagul Divana.

## *Mollagul Divana—*

My mother regarded Persian not merely as a language, but also as the vehicle inculcating mystical thoughts of the 13th century Persian Sufi writer Attar and the 18th century Sufi Allahyar of Bukhara, who wrote in Turkish and in Persian. In this respect, she was under the influence of a dervish named Mollagul Divana he was fifty years of age when I was very young who used to visit us often. This dervish of the Sengim Kipcak urug had lived in and around "Turkistan" (the city of "Yesi" in Syr Darya) and belonged to the Yesevi tarika, which was not well known among us. His zikrs consisted of reciting aloud religious verses all the while rocking back and forth and bouncing about. Though my father belonged to the Naksibendi tarika, reciting their zikrs silently in their mouths, he liked the zikrs of others called "cahri" and would remind Mollagul of the Sufi codes in Arabic at the end of a namaz, causing Mollagul to take notice, jumping and responding with "yahu."

I understood that these jumps and gyrations, throwing the head back and forth, resembling a dance, were called "erre" in Persian, meaning "bicki zikri", and in Turkish,

"capkin." My mother greatly enjoyed these zikrs, which Mollagul would perform at the end of namaz at our home, when not going to the mosque to do so. My mother would memorize the Turkish and Persian verses recited by this dervish, write down some and have me memorize them as well. These were all religious, moralistic poems. The poetry he used to relate from the great Turkish Sufi of the 12th century was emotive.

For example: "If I were to ask about the path from those who arrived at the truth/ Would it be wrong to place my head on their knees and rub my face?/ If I were to climb the peaks of tall mountains to become an ascetic/ Melding with the clouds, causing endless rains to fall/ Would it be wrong for me to resuscitate drying trees and grow lush gardens?/ If I were to touch the clouds as a Sunkar bird/ Descend down to become a hunter and stalk rapacious beasts/ Joining sparrows, repeat God's name ninety one times/ Would it be wrong to fly about along with the nightingales?"

I could never forget the time when Mollagul was visiting us during a bayram [religious holiday]. He (or, my father) apparently had previously related a story to the population, concerning the prophet. In any case, everybody knew of it. The contents of the story was as follows: During a bayram, the prophet noticed a destitute orphan, who, watching the children of the rich riding on luxuriously ornamented camels, was crying: "I wish I, too, had a camel." In order to please the child, the prophet pretended to be a camel, placing the orphan on his shoulders, moved about the crowd, jumping. When Abubakr intervened, stating that this was unbecoming of him, the prophet responded with "in that case, the child should purchase the camel under him and release it." Abubakr, handing six walnuts to the child, had him free the prophet. Mollagul, singing the versified story in lyrical form, placed me on his back, moved about among the congregation that had gathered next to the mosque. My father caused me to free Mollagul by giving me six walnuts. Commencing to recite the following poem in Turkish to me, attributed to Sems Tebrizi, my father repeated it exuberantly perhaps ten times in a row; all this being done as if it were a short theatrical act: "That child did not know the identity of the man under him, being a mere child; otherwise, he would not have sold it even if presented with the world entire and the universe."

The proceedings made me cry too, because Mollagul had acted the part of the prophet, and my father, that of Abubakr.

Mollagul would sing, in lyrical form, some of the religious verses and used to play the flute, known as "kuray." He would thus bring alive the Islamic traditions before the adults and the children. According to him, the famous Sufi Sems Tebrizi, who recited Persian poems, also recited them in Turkish, was a fiery dervish, and caused the Muslims to be overwhelmed with joy through his verses and dances.

Mollagul passed away during the Russo-Japanese war. When I visited home, accompanied by a detachment of troops during revolutionary times in 1918, I discovered a notebook belonging to Mollagul preserved in our house. After his death, my father and mother appended to it additional Turkish and Persian poems they had heard from him earlier. My father would recite those poems along with Mollagul. Often, my father would recite them when he was alone. Those poems were so fluid, so lively that they would effortlessly place themselves into a person's memory. There

were times when Mollagul would behave strangely. For example, sometimes he would steal something from my father. My father would say “let him.” But once he stole a silver pocket watch which came from Mekka as a present. My father caught and beat him. Despite the fact that he had a huge body, he cried, saying “I did not take it Molla, I admired it as a possession of a friend” and recited a Persian poem with the content “gold becomes more beautiful as the jeweler pounds it.” Truly, Mollagul was not a thief, but would walk away with the properties of those individuals he considered to be his true friends.

When he came to visit us during the summer months, he would stay in the summer dormitory of the medrese adjoining our house, called “alacik.” The summer kitchen was there, too. All of us children would sleep there as well. Upon Mollagul’s arrival, my mother had a goat skinned and prepared it to be boiled in the cauldron. Mollagul, stating “and this is Mahmay’s,” offered a leg of it to our dog by that name. My mother was angered and crowned Mollagul with the ladle. Mollagul immediately recited a Persian poem suitable for the occasion, and addressing his wife, who was perhaps one hundred and fifty kilometers away, shouted “Rehile, Ustabike is beating me.” “Ustabike” means “Ustad bike,” schoolmistress. My mother did not forget the poem he recited during this incident, and entered it into Mollagul’s notebook; meaning: “The aroma drew me inside (into the kitchen), and caused the ladle to be placed on my head.” This was not a poem he composed at that instant, but one of the thousands of poems he carried in his memory, selecting the appropriate one as needed.

It is said that he even used the suras of the Koran in such masterly manner. I tried to use them as he did. Mollagul liked me very much, and had me memorize Turkish and Persian poems of morality in my childhood. For instance “if you greet the guests forthright, God will bestow upon you countless blessings;” and “son, do not offend people with your tongue, so as not to weary God.” Also, “God, who can provide the fish to feed the birds flying in the sky, may also grant powers of state to his smallest servant.” But, he did not provide an interpretation of this last one, and indicated I would understand in adulthood. I did not insist. Though my father sometimes flogged him, he also used to say that Mollagul may be an evliya [saint]. When I presided over the Baskurt government in 1918, my father reminded me of Mollagul’s poem, asking “do you now comprehend the meaning?”

When I related those poems to Ahund Yusuf Talibzade of Azarbaijan (in 1922), who knew Persian literature very well, he explained that those were all from 12th 13th century poets Attar and Celaleddin Rumi. It became apparent that Mollagul also knew history. For example, he used to remember a poem concerning Seljuk rulers Sencer and Karahan Arslan Hakan’s often visiting Seyh Ahmet Yesevi, who had spread a “Turk mysticism,” centered around Syr Darya; they knocked on Yesevi’s door, kissing the earth on his threshold as well as his feet. I used to consider that an invention. Apparently that, too, was quoted from Rumi’s works. Though I never took the poems Mollagul taught me during my childhood seriously, I discovered they had all had been relayed from grand personae.

My teacher Zeki Halife and I would consider Mollagul’s behavior, such as addressing his wife afar, back at home, when beaten with a ladle on the head by my mother, a fraud and regarded him a thief. My father, on the other hand, supposed him learned and even a member of the “erenler [those who had reached God],” admonished me to earn his “alkis,” meaning praise, and avoids his “kargis,” imprecations. On my part, I would transport him to see his friends in the neighboring villages, using our horses and carriages. In any event Mollagul aided my understanding in a considerable way, by helping me learn Persian and Chaghatay literature, how Yesevism and Islam spread among the masses and became their property. He categorically shunned those who were ceremonious and lacking cordiality. He also severely criticized my father for taking an officious approach of religion. For instance, he did not find it expedient that my father would rouse me for the morning namaz. He would say “he is still a child; he has not yet acquired a taste for namaz, why do you compel him?”

Another anecdote: As long as I remember myself, on the wall of our guest house, which we called “Agoy,” there was a sizeable poster hanging. Along its borders it contained Sufi poetry taken from Yesevi, Attar and from other mystical poets. In its middle, as I recall, the heads of three dervises were drawn. The blue colored tears running from their eyes were depicted as forming Rivers, leading to a lake, finally engulfing the village. Supposedly, these dervises were clamoring with “ah’un min al isq,” meaning “oh, this love,” Allah, Allah. Addressing Mollagul, I queried: “Uncle, what is this? God is not visible, it is not known where he is, and how can one fall in love with him. Is Allah a “Leyla” so that a “Mecnun” can fall in love with him? It is absurd that their tears are forming Rivers. How can that be?” Because of my question, my father slapped and reprimanded me, calling me a swine. Mollagul immediately intervened with: Molla, what are you doing? The child does not possess the ability to understand mysticism, can mysticism be acquired forcibly? God created him thus, though he may become “sagacious,” but not a “Sufi.” If anything, he may become a “starshina,” but not a “Seyh” or “murid.” In Russian, “starshina” refers to the rank of governor of a township, or, in the army, to the rank of “major.” My father would not object to his interferences of this nature, instead, accept them. This was to my benefit. Mollagul did not at all like the mollas, known in Islam as “ulema i rusum,” of the formal type. He would not go anywhere near my maternal uncle Habibneccar because of his overly formal approach to being a molla, or the zealous Kessaf Molla of our village, who was of the Bukhara type. When he died, I was only fourteen years of age, and had not appreciated his worth. I began understanding him somewhat, after he passed away, from the poetry he had me memorize and through my mother and father. I also began to understand the inner thoughts of my mother and father only from the entries they made in Mollagul’s notebook, which was in their hands during 1918.



## *My Learning Russian—*

While I was still six, seven years of age, I began learning Russian along with Arabic and Persian. My learning these three languages at such an early age caused me to save quite a bit of time later in life, and allowed me to concentrate on other topics instead of struggling to acquire them after I grew up. Why did I start learning Russian this early? There is a reason. While my father was serving in the army, he had suffered tremendously, and resolved that, if he were to have a son, to have him learn Russian before anything else.

He used to recall the event as follows: In Islam, when “nocturnal emission” (pollution, ejaculating semen during a dream) takes place, it is customary to wash the body in “ritual total ablution.” One night, my father experienced that event in the army. But, he is caught by the officer of the watch during the “ritual ablution.” Upon the request of the military doctor, my father’s company commander ordered my father imprisoned and condemned him to be prostrated under sandbags for hours as punishment. As my father moaned under the weight of the sandbags, the Daghestani Beys, called “Samhal,” in their thick uniforms, serving in the Russian army, happened to be by. Samhal inquired from the young Russian officer the cause. Commander recounted the event. Samhal asked the commander whether he could take my father to his own unit to serve out the punishment. But my father, not knowing Russian, addressed the Samhal in Arabic, which pleased the latter immeasurably. After the punishment period, as the Samhal returned my father, told the Russian commander: “he is a worthy youth, promote him to sergeant.” But, since my father could not speak Russian, he suffered immeasurably as a sergeant, and received beatings often.

At that juncture, my father resolved that, if he could return home, get married and father a son, to have him learn Russian before all else. In our village, there was no school teaching Russian. There was one in the neighboring Makar village, but he did not wish to send me there. Instead, he charged Abdurrahman Menglibayev, a Tatar student in his medrese, a graduate of the “Russian City School” (Middle School), to tutor me privately in Russian. Two years later, another “Russian City School” graduate, Sahibek Ozbekov, son of a close friend of my father came to the medrese. When Abdurrahman left, Sahibek tutored me in Russian. When I reached the age of eleven, Sahibek prepared me, by tutoring me in other subjects as well, to sit for the primary school exams during the summer. I went to the school in Makar a few times during the summer. During spring, I sat for the exams there. The schoolteacher, Miftah Karamisev, gave me a diploma indicating I had passed. He also added that in four years, with private tutoring, I had learned better Russian than his own students, and recommended that I be sent to the Russian city school in Sterlitamak. I also insisted. However, my father and my mother were strictly against it. Instead, I was taken to my maternal uncle’s medrese in Utek, during the fall (1902). That bigoted Kessam Molla’s fabricating gossip: “Molla Aga is sending his son to the Russian school” prevented my going to Sterlitamak.

## *My Education in Utek (1902 - 1908)—*

Though this village was fourteen kilometers from ours, my maternal uncle’s circle was quite dissimilar to ours. I usually stayed in my uncle’s house, in its richly stocked library section.

All five sons of my maternal grandfather were Imams, so were his three daughters’ husbands, who were his pupils. His eldest son, my uncle Habibneccar, was taken to Kazan by the aforementioned son of the wealthy trader Kockaroglu Emirhan, became a student of one of the greatest minds, masters, philosophers of the time, the renowned historian Sehabeddin Mercani; and later became his famous assistant. Habibneccar published, in Turkish, his book pertaining to Islamic history, *Miftah ut Tavarih*, meaning “Key to Histories,” as well as Arabic commentaries to the well known medrese textbooks on Islamic metaphysics and philosophy. The Arabic footnotes he produced were written while the latter books were being typeset, as a means of correcting them, also appending biographies of their authors, in Arabic. Hamid Sengari, a friend of my uncle’s, wrote many such footnotes. Also, the “Qalyubi” anecdotes, which my uncle translated from Arabic literature, were also published.

Habibneccar was also informed about politics. He had read the *Tercuman* newspaper, published by the educated Crimean Muslim Turk Ismail Gasprinskii, from the beginning, meaning since 1883. In Sufism, he was a disciple of the progressive Seyh of the time, Zeynullah of the Tungatar Urug. Habibneccar also would obtain the latest publications from Türkiye, and read them. He, like my father, occupied himself with the Arabic language as well as the philosophical and moralistic works in that language.

But, there were points where their life views diverged from each other. My uncle had learned of the spherical nature of earth’s constitution from the translation of Flamarion. He knew astronomy and mathematics in its contemporary form. On the other hand, my father considered these topics from the perspective of 12th century Islamic thinker al Ghazali, whom he regarded to be the only teacher in such matters. He believed in the spherical nature of earth, that the moon is smaller than the earth and closer to earth than the other heavenly bodies, which the sun is larger than the earth and further away, knew of the solar and lunar eclipses. But he did not believe in the fact that earth rotated around its axis, because Gazali, under the influence of Ptolemy, stressed the heliocentric theory of the universe. My father, in his sermons, enthusiastically related from Gazali’s *Ihya ul ulum al din*, meaning “Resuscitation of religious knowledge,” but would also read certain portions of the same work in bed, to fall asleep. I would ask my father: “How is it that one work can create such excitement and induce drowsiness?” He would answer with: “Son, this book contains sections to affect both.” Later on, upon reading the French scholar G. Bosquet’s analysis of the said volume, I found a similar opinion and realized the essentially correct prognosis of my father.

I knew of Ghazali’s date of death, expressed in reiterative figures (A.H. 505; A.D. 1111), since I was perhaps ten years old. My father wished to die at the age of sixty

three, as did Ghazali and our prophet. But, his wish was not granted. When he died in the hands of the Bolsheviks, after having been subjected to prolonged tortures, he was well past eighty. My father regularly received Gaspirali's newspaper as well, reading only the important news, would not necessarily understand the articles pertaining to the contemporary intellectual currents, would believe in the advertisements. For example, he would regard long haired Anna Chilag, appearing in a hair tonic promotion, as real. Hence, my father's circle, though distant from fanaticism, was conservative. Habibneccar's milieu, on the other hand, was enlightened and progressive. These aspects bound me more to my maternal uncle than to my father.

## *My Father's Personality—*

Though my fathers' environment appeared comparatively undistinguished, in many respects I preferred it to my uncle's. My maternal uncle and my father were friends, but their characters and the life views they held were truly different. Habibneccar in Kazan, along with two other "assistants" of Mercani, Abbas and Sadri, indulged in excesses and all were involved in scandals. About them, a satirical poem was written:

"Neccar, Abbas and Sadri/ though it is said that they are students/ they are distinguished in merrymaking/ their eyes on the girls. Abbas went to Istanbul, but did not refrain from immoderation, and satires caught up with him. Neccar, whose reputation followed him to Istanbul due to those satires, became an Imam in his village, and later, Seyh. But his life was a mystery to me. Even though I lived in his household, I used to think "I wonder if he still drinks?" My father, on the other hand, was a simple and completely sincere man, held no secret from me. My uncle was overly pompous toward his students, while my father, though an authoritarian, treated his students and sons as a friend and a real father. If he noticed a fault, he would definitely mete out punishment, but often turned a blind eye toward the offenses. He had never imbibed intoxicants in his life. The namaz was compulsory in the family, but he knew that when he was away we did not perform it, and would not pursue the issue.

He was extraordinarily disciplined. He would rule with an iron hand when we were involved in the family herd management activities. He would place a cushion called "kopcik" on his saddle, but not allow anything soft to be placed on ours, requiring us to sit only on the leather saddle cover, even if we were to be riding fifty kilometers.

Our cover at night, at home or in the field, was a wool capote called "sekmen" (cekmen). During summer though the herds had shepherds, he would make us, his sons, responsible for any cow or sheep that was left behind, got lost or became ill. We had no less than five horses at home. At night, he would send us to "Qunalga," meaning to take them for grazing where the grass was best. We would stake with a lengthy rope those horses which had a tendency to run away. We would get up at night to change the places of those stakes. During morning prayers, we would bring the horses home. If we were to be still asleep by dawn, my father would most definitely slap our faces.

He was faithful to old customs and traditions in the highest possible degree. He was always in conflict with his lieutenant, Imam Kessaf Molla, for customs not found among Misers, Tipter and Tatars. Reportedly this person, behind my father's back, would say "molla prefers zakon to sheria." Having studied in Bukhara, what Kessaf Molla referred to as "zakon," meaning Russian official laws, were in actuality Baskurt traditions not necessarily in step with sheria. This manifested itself in inheritance matters, custom of "inci" (insi), and the "honey" drink.

"Inci" (insu) means division of property of all types equally, based on the principle of parity among men women of a family, without regard to gender, and branding of all animals accordingly. "Inci" is a fundamental law governing the family affairs, such as the slaughtering of animals for religious sacrificial occasions or for banquets, zekat and inheritance. Reportedly, our village was famous for keeping "bees," producing "honey" and for partaking freely of "bitter honey." A relative of ours, Ehil Molla, an aged Imam, was in the habit of drinking and leading the congregation in that state. It is said that Kessaf Molla would object: "the namaz cannot be performed under his leadership." In return, my father would only say: "if anyone is in doubt, let them repay their debt at home," and not contravene the aged molla because of this bitter honey matter. My mother, too, would surreptitiously produce this bitter honey for her own consumption. Though my father would see the "kurege," the wood container where bitter honey was fermented, he turned a blind eye. He would even hand my mother the honey water generated from washing the "ekmekli" portion of the honey from the hives, through which process candle wax is extracted, with the request that she "pour it out." My mother would not, instead storing it in her "kurege." This would turn into the most potent kind. And my father would act as if he was not aware. Kessaf Molla would hear of this, and about my father, whom he greatly revered, would say: "In Molla Aga's house, there is no shortage of unlawful honey." Kessaf Molla insisted on compliance to sheria to the letter. He had followers among the Tipter and Misers. They, too, would gossip about my father.

Since my father held the primacy of old traditions in the village life, there would be conflicts. According to my father, the main occupation of the village was to raise animals and provide pastures. His agriculture was confined to the "corn" he would plant, as much as could be carried in the skirt of his gown called "bismet" or "yilen," and the area where it was planted. The seeds of his annual planting would not exceed two or three skirtfulls. The planted field would be surrounded by a fence called "kerte," as done by everybody else. But when the Misers arrived, it is said, they had encircled the village with a fence, in Russian style, and called it "Ukalsa" (okolitsa) in Russian. The pasture was removed, all having been converted to planting fields. Then, conflict broke out between those keeping animals and the planters. My father regarded as natural the raids of the animals on the fields, returning from yayla in the fall. Miser, Tatar and Russians stood against him.

During summer, Misers and Russians were renting the winter pens of our animals, to plant potatoes there. Our people would not eat those, regarding them grown in filth. Misers also planted vegetables, like the Russians, and surrounded them with hedges.

Our neighbor, Siddik Miser, once beat me, stating I stole a cucumber and accused my father of raising his son as a thief. A row broke out: my father did not recognize the right to punish humans for taking cucumbers or chickpeas. My father, faithful to all ancient nomadic traditions and customs, viewed life where “one custom made place for another according to necessity.” Meaning, in adapting to changes in life, the central reference point was custom, and not sheria. From this standpoint, he was much more amenable to progress not only with respect to Kessaf Molla, but also to my maternal uncle Habibneccar.

Years passed, he used the winter pens of our animals to grow potatoes, having us eat large potatoes. He even grew cabbage, had his relatives get used to potatoes. In adapting to life, also planting fruit trees in the garden, he surpassed the Miser and Kessaf Molla who did not have any. When I was older, I persuaded him to increase our planting field by five-ten hectares. Earlier, would harvest grass with a scythe, but as the sickle caused us back-ache; we would employ Tatars or the Russians as day laborers to do that job. In time, my siblings got used to the sickle as well as the machine.

Earlier, we would feed our animals in open pens (kerte), even during the winter. In time, we had “ahur,” “saray,” meaning barns, constructed like those of the Miser. The Baskurt village school next to our house, comprising two rooms, took the form of an excellent medrese similar to those found in a Tatar township. In other words, my father speedily adapted the medieval life of my youth to contemporary times. In ten years, by the time I left our village at the age of eighteen to study in far off places, radical changes not seen for the past few centuries had taken place in our lives. The factor facilitating this change was my father’s ability to keep “religious” matters separate from affairs of “life,” and sheria away from the business of “life,” subjecting “life” to custom.

## *My Father’s Medrese—*

My father’s medrese comprised four buildings. He would have one hundred fifty to perhaps two hundred students. The majority of these students were dag Baskurts, and children arriving from distant locations. They would study for four months, returning to their villages before the snows melted. Fermenting honey secretly, without letting my father know, they would hold drinking parties. They would also organize regular wrestling and dancing events during Thursday evenings. There was a very tight discipline among them. The news of bitter honey parties would not reach my father’s ears, and I would not at all report them. The head, called “kadi” would be elected during fall, as soon as the medrese session began. He would be seated on white felt and raised high by four individuals, while other students would pinch, sometimes even needle him here and there with an awl, causing him to cry. But, later he would get his own back. This was the “Han,” meaning rulership, tradition of the old Turks. We have later learned that the election of “kadi” in medreses was entirely a Khorazm tradition.

Though the official director of the medrese was my father, the actual administration was in the hands of this elected “kadi.” Not allowing the internal matters to reach the medrese owner, called the “muderris,” was considered a talent of the “kadi.” My father’s skill was in appearing as if he had not heard of those events. In this manner, the medrese life was the mirror of our community, and its history. In it, there was not the trace of the new pedagogical system called “usul i cedit.” Except, my father had designated an assistant of his, named “Zeki Halfe,” with the task of teaching mathematics and geography to those interested. He also had students who could teach Russian. But my father categorically refused the proposal by the Russian government to open a Russian elementary school next to the medrese. And even I had opened a “village library” in this medrese.

The jurist Baskurt Sultanov, sent to us as the government district commissar (zemski nachalnik), was the son of Ufa mufti Sultanov. He, like the Tatar girl Zeyneb Abdurrahmanova, who was sent as the government doctor, had studied at the St. Petersburg University. Both would visit us often, discussing politics and educational matters. Perhaps these two had also influenced my father’s evolution into a reformer from that of a medieval village Imam. In my father’s medrese, I studied Arabic and religious lessons with him, learned Persian from Zeki Halfe and Kessaf Molla, Russian and mathematics from Sahibek. But, one occupation that pleased me most was my participation, as a standard fixture, in wrestling competitions, though allowed to the students only during Thursday evenings, were organized among our household nightly. I did not neglect the “honey parties” either. Folk stories would be recited until the lights were put out for sleep, and I enjoyed them very much.

## *Once Again, From My Mother—*

Because, when I was imprisoned at Orenburg in 1918 by the soviets, and in the Turkish Republic by Ismet Pasa during 1944, deprived of all reading material, I realized the importance of my mother’s influence on me, and later while reading the poems I had learned from her and also Yesevi’s inward supplication prayer piece called “Seb i Yelda.” During the events of 1944, memories of my father were long forgotten, but my mother’s image was next to me like the angel called “hafaza feriste.” Sometimes, as I did back at home, I felt as if I was inhaling her fragrance. Her charm was in her poetry, full of ethical suggestions. I am of the opinion that my mother had not committed the smallest sin in her life and that she was infinitely honest with me. The Persian and Turkish poems she taught me were not confined to moralistic pieces; among them there were literary and aesthetic ones. When I later read Navai’s works in their entirety, I realized that those “gazel” my mother had me memorize were select ones. I do not know who taught those to my mother. Because, the portions of his “Divan” we had did not contain them. Furthermore, the moralistic poems and stories she taught me were in the nature of a “chrestomathy,” an anthology, and the majority



of them were in my mother's memory. Those were mainly pieces taken and compiled from Attar, Celaleddin Rumi, Navai, Yesevi, and Sufi Allahyar.

During the beginning of 1957, I was in Pakistan as a guest Lahore University. There, at the home of my friend Muhammed Baqir, the Professor of Persian literature, I was astonished to discover that the army commander of Haydarabad Nizam, a Bukhara Ozbek by origin, had his son read the same books and poems my mother personally had me read, realizing how widespread this educational program was among the 19th century Turks.

I surmise that my mother did not know the authors of those Persian poems. I found out, only later, that they were select pieces, and that the pronunciations I had learned were correct. The contemporary Iranian ruler, Muhammed Riza Shah, during the two audiences I had with him, asked where I had learned Persian. When I responded with "from my mother," he said "I wonder if your mother was Iranian?" Because, he had noticed that my pronunciation was different than that of Bukharan Tajik. Like my father's Arabic, my mother's Persian was of the literary type, perhaps grafted onto the Kuzenogullari and Satlikogullari by the Daghestani masters since the 18th century. She had also taught me namaz "niyet," the formal resolve to perform namaz in Persian. I remained forever indebted to my mother for lovingly teaching me Persian, which allowed me to learn Middle and Near Eastern life quite closely, and giving me the chance to make many very good friends there.

My mother knew absolutely nothing of politics. She did not look at the arriving newspapers. Except stating that the name of God may be in them, she would not permit them to be left under foot, or anything to be wrapped in them. She was very religious. She would never neglect the namaz and, like my father, would rise before dawn. Delighting in poetry, my mother's speech was very correct. She spoke corroborating her every sentence with a proverb or with the insertion of aphorisms.

## *A Poem of My Mother's and Freud—*

My mother knew how to write, and while teaching her students prayers, she would write them. But, she would not write letters. However, when my father was angry with me during 1908, when I was in Kazan, she wrote one or two letters. Nevertheless, there were poems she wrote to my father. These were kept scattered in my father's books. Every now and then, the property "inci" would cause a fuss. My mother was very sensitive towards the animals she had brought from what we called "turkun," the bride's father's house. When one of those animals was sold, without securing her complete acquiescence, she took offence to my father. Then, my father wished to marry a second woman, or, it is said, at least threatened to do so. Consequently, my mother wrote the following poem:

"You said there is no other sweetheart to love/ you had not loved anyone else, have you changed/ you are the one who had tasted my ruby red lips, and the one who broke my seal/ Are you a stranger, what is the meaning of this jest?"

Possibly, the last two lines were quoted from another poet, but my mother had used them very fittingly. With its completely clear meaning, this poem had remained in my memory. However, until I grew up, I had not paid attention to its reference to the sexual relations between husband and wife. In general, whether or not there were sexual relations between our mother and father would not even enter the minds or imagination of us children. Whereas they would have us read the religious instructions regulating sexual relations, sometimes they would have some of the cows mated in our presence, to prevent them becoming barren, or we would observe the birthing sheep that had been brought into the warmth of the household, during the winter, for the purpose. To us, these were normal and natural affairs. Due to that, we had memorized our mother's poem as a beautiful piece. There were times, perhaps, when my sister Sare and I recited this and similar ones. But, according to the Viennese philosopher Dr. Freud, this is not simply the case.

While I was studying in Vienna, during 1935, I had rented a room on Berggasse No. 9, to be near the History of Art Seminar of Professor Strezegovski. I knew that there was an institute on the floor below me, but I was not aware that this was Freud's Psychoanalysis Institute. One day, the landlady said: "The residents below you are complaining of your very hard steps at night. Could you wear slippers?" I agreed, but kept forgetting and the request was being repeated. One evening, the landlady said: "The Professor is asking for you." This person introduced himself as Professor Freud, said there were sensitive instruments in his institute, and, because of that, repeatedly requested that I wear slippers in my room if possible. I had never seen Freud. Except, a Syrian Armenian student, said to be working under this Freud, had given me the books by the person in question. I had read some of them, but had not liked his philosophy at all. I responded to Freud with "I am a person who had arrived from the steppes of Central Asia. I wonder if I could have my feet comply with this stipulation."

Freud invited me to his room. There, I told Freud that his writings pertaining to a girl of six seven years of age lusting after her father was inapplicable to the Baskurts and Kazaks, translating my mother's above poem. I stated that I had grasped the sexual allusion of "breaking my seal" in this poem only after reading Dr. Freud's pamphlets.

I conversed with him several more times after that. I had analyzed the Arab traveller Ibn Fadlan's writings on the old Oghuz that their understanding of sexual relations was entirely different from other Muslims and the Arabs and had compared those writings to Herodotus' records pertaining to sexual relations among Scythians. During our second conversation, I relayed all this to Dr. Freud. I even said to him: "With your conversion of psychoanalysis into your 'philosophy,' which is an important and interesting branch of knowledge, you are providing material to the perverts who unabashedly write about watching their naked sisters through keyholes." He was not at all angered by my words. He wished very much to continue our talks, but as I had moved from Austria to Germany, there were no further opportunities.

## *The Training My Maternal Uncle Habibneccar Provided—*

My maternal uncle's medrese comprised seven buildings. He had over three hundred students. Many of them, quite different from my father's, studied six seven months of the year. There were even students who continued their education during the summer. On my part, I would arrive late to this medrese and leave early, returning to our village. For there were duties to be performed in our village to which I had grown accustomed (for example, toward spring, taking the animals to our forest houses, called "otar," and staying with them), which were not a part of Utek's routine; or, perhaps not undertaken during the medrese session. My father, too, was requiring me to return early, to look after the animals. Accordingly, I would be home by mid March. Thus, my medrese education would last for four months at most. Nevertheless, I would continue my lessons with my father, to remedy those interrupted due to my leaving early.

At Utek medrese I would learn Arabic language and literature. Though my father was quite Professoricient in Arabic, he knew nothing of Arabic literature. My uncle would personally tutor me in those, because I would mostly stay in his house. Since, at the time he had no children, he would treat me with care, as his own. He would also tutor other students at his home, separately. He placed specific importance on the knowledge of "beyan u bedi," meaning Arabic rhetoric, and the biographies of famed scholars and personae. In that context, I read the book entitled *Muvattal* until I left his school. From biographies he had me read portions, from Arabic translations, of Ibn Hallikan, Taskopruluzade, Abdulhay al Luknevi of India; and the *Resahat*, written and published by Murad Remzi, again, a friend of my father's, which is about the Sufi biographies of Central Asia. I very much liked to read those biographies and enjoyed comparing this *Resahat* to its Persian original, found in my uncle's library.

My uncle would tell me that I could learn fikih and kalam on my own, completely exempting me from those lessons which he taught in his medrese. And I personally avoided them. The reason for this was in the Turkish book I used to take from my uncle's desktop and read. This was a book published by the Turkish political activist and scholar Mehmed Arif Bey, entitled *Bin bir hadis*. In this book, while commenting on the Prophet's hadis "O Lord, I take refuge in you from useless knowledge/skills and those unacceptable actions and worship," Mehmed Arif Bey had regarded those branches of scholasticism, such as kalam and mantik, as unnecessary knowledge that had become the curse of Islamic nations. That hadith had a very sharp influence on me. On the other hand, I placed importance on reading history books in Arabic, and enjoyed it very much.

Also, Sahibek Ozbek, who had been studying in my father's medrese, had moved to my uncle's. I continued to learn Russian from him. This friend later became an officer in the Baskurt army, did not accept the truce we were observing with the Soviets during 1919, with my permission went to Ukraine, served in the Wrangel

army. Subsequently I heard that he was wounded in Crimea, went to Istanbul, and died there.

My uncle was pleased that the Russians were losing the Russo-Japanese war, which commenced in 1904, began daily sending a horse courier to Sterlitamak, to collect the telegraphic bulletins. He used to have me read those. This caused my Russian to further improve and provided a reason for my taking an interest in political affairs. In Utek there was a tailor named Toktamisoglu Gerey. He was a person who studied and had a good command of Russian and was well read. My uncle suggested that I further my Russian with him. I studied with this person, reading Pushkin's *Pugachev Rebellion* and the poems he wrote describing our Prophet, imitating the Koran. I rendered those into Chaghatay Turkish, which we used at the time as the literary language. My uncle would carefully read those translations. While comparing the Russian poet's translation of the "Vadduha" sura with its original, he had said "though he did not translate verbatim, also added a few things, he understood its meaning better than many of our commentators." Later, my uncle had me translate Pushkin's writings concerning his own family history, *The Arab of Peter the Great* and said: this Son of an Arab certainly likes the Koran."

I had earlier mentioned that, when in Utek continuing with my studies, I mostly stayed in my maternal uncle's house. He had numerous flocks, sheep folds and stables. I enjoyed feeding fodder to the horse herds even during winter. In our region, the harvested grass contained dried berries in abundance. I relished picking and eating those berries from among the dry grass, watching the animals. I liked the animals. If I was not present in class, reportedly my uncle would say: "he is most likely to be in the kerte (meaning stables), fetch him."

I also busied myself with mathematics, and reading the books my uncle had ordered from Istanbul. While I was still sixteen-eighteen years of age, I read and summarized works by Ernst Renan, Dr. W. R. Draper, and the German Schopenhauer on religion and knowledge, as well as those published in Istanbul, those pertaining to religion and Islamic social problems; in Arabic the works of Egyptian Muhammed Abdu and that of Ferid Vecdi and their likes. Reading the studies of Renan and Draper had more closely interested me than the refutations written against them. I acquired a desire to read their complete originals. The influence of the Turkish press caused in me an inclination to smoke. My uncle's second wife discovered the butt of the first cigarette I ever smoked, and handed it to my uncle. On account of that, my uncle beat me. Nonetheless, I occasionally smoked.

## *How I Was Spending My Summers—*

During spring, I used to return to our village from the medrese for the sake of our animals. This was because the fodder prepared in summer would be depleted by March. In the forest we would cut the branches of a tree called "yila," bring back and feed those to the animals. We would take the animals out for grazing, at spots where



the snows had melted. We, ourselves, would gather the wild potatoes, called “sarana,” and other certain roots, found where the snows had cleared, cooking and eating them. I preferred remaining alone with nature and animals to the medrese.

I would attend on horseback, in turn, the farmers’ festivals called “Saban Toyu” of the Tatar villages, during the first half of April; and traditional festivities of the Baskurt villages called “yiyin,” towards the end of May. At times I would enter the races with our horses, observe the wrestling competitions, and even personally participate in the youth matches. We would be occupied with the affairs of the honey bees beginning at the end of April. Containing over one hundred hives, our bee garden, called “Umartalik,” was in Qarli Bulek, four kilometers away at our old yayla and burial site. There was also located the “Alacik,” the yayla house, as well as the “izma,” the building used to store the hives during winter.

We also had hives placed among the branches of large trees, and these and the “suluq,” the hives carved into pine tree trunks, were meant to attract new swarms. Those [suluqs] were completely scattered over an area of one hundred kilometers in length. In April, there was the task of cleaning and placing beeswax in those “suluq,” some of which were inherited from our grandfathers, to prepare them for occupation by wild swarms. I undertook those tasks with my nephew Nur Muhammed and my friend Ibrahim Kackinbay. Ibrahim’s family had as many suluq as we had.

Simultaneously, our horse herds (generally comprising four unbroken herds) would already be at the yayla. After our lands and pastures were confiscated by the Russian government and added to their treasury, our people had to abandon the yayla life; this occurred a long time ago. We still had “Han Yeylevi” next to our village houses, and the “Alacik” at the yayla of the “Qarli Bolek” mountain. On the other hand, our animals had not at all abandoned the yayla life. They would leave, without needing any permission or such from us, to Mesim and Ak Biyik yayla at the beginning of every April. They would stay there until fall. Those yayla were the property of the “Alagoyan,” that is, belonging to the village of the aforementioned Ibrahim Kackinbay.

The agriculture and life of the Misers in our village was more regulated compared to ours. They planted plenty of cereals, grew vegetables, and kept their animals in the village year round in sheds called “abzar,” sold their crops, made a good living. The agriculture of our two urugs, as I had explained, would consist of two “skirtfulls” of corn, our animals would spend the winter in open pens, known as “kerte,” a loan word from old Iranian languages, and not come to the village but spend the summer in the yayla. Consequently, we would not devote much time to agriculture or for constructing animal pens. While our family’s horse herds were at the mountains during the summer, I would be their herdsman. I did not at all like the crop growing business. To me, it was a pleasure to reap fodder grass for the animals, but grain harvest (using a sickle), requiring excessive bending, was a torture. I could not do it.

All our business was in the forest. The forest “Aygir olgen,” once belonging to our urug that had been confiscated from us by the Treasury, was thirty five kilometers from us. Every year the Treasury would allocate to us a portion of that forest to cut some wood from that location, and we would take that load to the market and sell it.

Also, we would have linden tree barks unravel in running water, separating its fibers called “Salabas” and market it. When all that was completed, until fodder grass reaping time, I would go after the horse herds to “Ak Biyik” yayla, take care of them, feed them salt, drink the kimiz prepared by the womenfolk, visit others to drink kimiz, participate in the games held at the yayla.

In June when the sheep slaughtering time, called “Teke zamani,” arrived, my father, and sometimes my mother, too, would join me. We would stay with the families taking care of our animals. The most delightful time of the season was spent performing the task called “Bilemqarav” in beekeeping. This comprised inspecting, on running horseback, the “suluq” hives carved in the upper parts of the thick pine tree trunks, to determine whether “free swarms” had occupied them, or, observing how well the reconnaissance parties leaving the wild bee colonies accepted those hives. However, each of those “trees” belonging to us was located on a mountain or in a Riverbed, and despite riding on best of horses, it was only possible to see ten fifteen of them in one day. I used to perform this “Bilemqarav,” taking approximately fifteen days every year, with my friend Ibrahim Kackinbay.

## *Ibrahim Kackinbay—*

Ibrahim, two years my senior, was the son of “Alagoyan Basi” village Imam Semseddin Kackinbay. Semseddin, whose height was close to two meters, had served alongside with my paternal uncle Veli Molla, who also was very tall, in the Baskurt cavalry Regiment and participated in the Syr Darya campaign of the Russian army against Khokand, under the command of the aforementioned Major Yusuf. Like Veli Molla, Semseddin also knew Arabic, Persian and Russian well. Both were thoroughly cognizant of Chaghatay literature, especially with the writings of Ahmet Yesevi, Navai, Sufi Allahyar and their likes. Among Burcan Baskurts, the Seyh Seyyidoglu Abdullah and this Semseddin Kackinbay were very cultured individuals. Both had spent time in the Syr Darya region. They had brought the culture of that area to Baskurdistan, like our neighbors Major Yusuf Karamis of Maqar village and Bekbulat Molla of Sayram village. They also were in possession of Arabic and Persian manuscripts. Among Semseddin Molla’s books, there was one containing the versified story of two youths, named Mihr and Musteri, who were very close friends. Molla would liken me and his son Ibrahim to this Mihr and Musteri, reading some poems from that book. During 1958, in Washington D. C., I saw an excellent copy of that work, adorned with illuminations, at the Freer Museum.

Semseddin was having his son Ibrahim educated at my father’s medrese. Like me, Ibrahim had learned Arabic, Persian, along with Russian, and knew the last one better than I. Compared to our family, the Persian and Bukhara culture had a stronger influence on his. Ibrahim was extraordinarily handsome. He was a very intelligent youth with a thin and elegant body. Our clothes, long silk sashes, called “belbav,” heeled boots; breastbands, buckles, kuskun, stirrups, girths of our saddles; our saddles

themselves, with their “pommels” and “backs” decorated with inlaid silver by itinerant Daghestani jewelers; our belts and even our whips, were identical. Ibrahim’s mother had those made for us, and had woven our sashes with her hands.

I would spend time with Ibrahim during the winter, upon my return from Utek, and during the summer, in the months of May, June and September, when I used to stay with them. After his father’s death, his mother had Ibrahim married, stating she was left all alone. Thereafter, he always regretted not having been able to continue with his studies, and that he was compelled to tend to family wealth, which was considerable. His horse herds were held in high esteem. They were called Sulgen variety. Ostensibly, according to myth, their mares were impregnated by stallions emerging from the cave and lake found near the village of Sulgen. Ibrahim had presented me, as a gift, with one of his best running horses and a mare. After the arrival of this mare, we felt proud that “noble species” had entered our wild horse herd.

Though Ibrahim interrupted his formal education, he maintained his love of reading. He truly read widely. Among his favorites he enjoyed reading in Russian, Lermontov; in Persian, Attar and Allahyar; in Turkish, Navai and “Muhammediye.” Very cordial letters were exchanged between us. These letters used to arrive in longish thin rolls, in the style I later observed in Bukhara. Often these letters were embellished with popular poetry or quotations from old literature. I recall one instance. Despite the falling snow, two of our herds did not return to the village or the stables. I wrote to him, requesting his help to pursue the missing herds from his direction, while we would be searching from ours. In his response, rather than plainly stating “of course I shall,” he wrote a piece in the following manner:

“A human should regard his friend a sultan, and himself a slave/ His friend a spirit, and himself a body/ If the friend were to ask for his bork fur cap, one must be prepared to present his head/ And if asked for his life, be ready to give it up.” In fact, he searched the mountains for several days with his servants, some eighty kilometers from us, finding our herds, escorted them all the way to our village.

Summer life of the Baskurts may appear lazy, but when it comes to tending to the animals, forestry, beekeeping and military matters, no trace of laxity can be found. Ibrahim was a prime example. They had roamed the mountains for days, running on horseback for perhaps two hundred kilometers. Ibrahim’s father had him memorize many portions from the works of Navai; Yazicioglu’s Muhammediye and the divan of Kemal Umami from Ottoman literature; Attar and the divan of Hafiz from Persian; and the verse hikemiyet section of the *Nuzhet ul Arvah* named book, which was very popular at the time of Timur. I had not read that last work. Later, during 1913, upon arrival in Bukhara, I sought it out and repeatedly reading it, recalled Ibrahim. Afterwards I saw copies of these works containing miniatures. Semseddin Molla owned a few manuscripts in Persian, but there was not enough time to determine what they were or what happened to them.

Ibrahim and I would recite versified sections from classical Chaghatay literature during kimiz parties, and when we would become intoxicated, switch to popular songs. My friend Ibrahim played innumerable airs on the Baskurt flute called “Quray.”

His voice was, to the highest degree, high pitched and clear. Since he enjoyed hearing the echoes of the melodies he sang, he would ascend up Takya Susak Mountains, facing other ranges, sing and play the flute. There, when at the Yaruv and Karaagac yayla, the Kackinbay urug would play a game requiring the participants to pick up a whip from the ground, on running horseback. Those who could not pick up the whip would themselves be struck severely with a whip; the individual running away, to avoid being whipped, would throw a whip to his pursuer. If the pursuer could not catch the thrown whip in mid-air, then he would be whipped. Ali Shir Navai relates a similar horse pursuit game in which he himself played during his youth with a Rumi (meaning, Anatolian) Turk named Sari Tula:

“If I and Sariq Tula would get underway together/ Without noticing mountain, plain, plateau, occupied place or desert/ Freeing my arm from a torn shepherd’s cloak/ Let him run away, I giving chase; he pursuing me, I getting away.”

Ibrahim would always recite these poems. There was also the tradition of young man and girls chasing each other on horseback. Reportedly, in the generations before us, those young men who could not get away would be whipped by the girl; and, in return, if the girl could not get away, the young man had the right to kiss the girl. A girl named Urqiye, a relative of Ibrahim was a participant in those games. His wife “Ak Gelin” would be in the gallery. In our village, in my youth, our elder sisters Muhiye and Kulsum were no less accomplished riders than their male counterparts. But, influenced by the Tatar settlers in village, who themselves constituted a community overly affected by the Islamic culture, a little reservation entered amongst us with respect to women. On the other hand, those traditions were still alive here and there among the Burcen. When I would catch up with Urqiye, she would behave as if she was addressing the horse underneath her, recite the song “Kara Yurga” taken from old dastans “It would neither have the rider lady kissed nor have her embraced.” In this poem, the word “bikec,” referencing “daughter of the Bey” was used in the same meaning as “mademoiselle.” But, the Kackinbay would pronounce it as “Bikecni,” instead of “bekesti” as it would be among the Baskurts. Probably, the popular poetry they recited, called “quba yir” was under the influence of the Nogay dialect. I only realized that later. During those chases, I sometimes caught up with Urqiye, grabbing hold of her wrist, but would not kiss her; because, among our generation, it was not done. The elders would laugh and say teasingly that they used to kiss, therefore so should I. At times Urqiye would catch up and whip me. Then, “Ak Gelin” would shout “tear away the skin of this Tatar.” Because, according to Tatars we were Baskurt; to the Burcen, Tatars.

Among the family of the Kackinbay, the best of kimiz was drunk during summer, and the honey wine was consumed in the fall, after moving to the Alagoyan tamagi kislak, known simply as “Idhma,” where the Alagoyan River met Ak Edil River, and very lively dances was performed. The namaz would never be abandoned, even when drunk. It was not conceivable to find anyone not observing the fast during the Ramadan. My love of dastans, national games and races were inculcated by my elder uncle Veli Molla and this Kackinbay. Ibrahim’s mother, who was as capable as a man, and Ibrahim’s wife were literate, being the daughters of Mollas.

## *My Other Friends—*

During my youth, my most intimate friends were my nephew Nur Muhammed of our village, Aziz, the son of an Imam from the neighboring Makar village; and, Emir Qaramis (Karamishev), son of the Russian primary schoolteacher Muftaeddin. Nur Muhammed did not continue with his education. He and I together would undertake forestry business, look after the cattle, and hunt. When the winter set in, we would go hunting rabbits on skis. Aziz, who also had authored some works, was a very intelligent and poetic young man, studying simultaneously in the medrese of the Troitsk Seyh and the Russian school. He was studying in the medrese of the Troitsk Seyh along with Mecid Gafuri, who had later become famous. Both would go out to the Kazaks during the summer as teachers, returning in the fall, and stop to see Aziz on their way to their villages. Though Aziz had a greater poetic talent than Mecid, he perhaps did not have a published work. On the other hand, two small poetry collections of Mecid were published. I met with this lame poet (probably during 1907), before he and Aziz had visited us [which they did] several times later on. Both would recite their own poetry, my father and mother would greatly enjoy that. At that time, Mecid had read his poems with the content “Baskurt used to live in independent communities along the banks of Idil and Dim Rivers, foreigners arrived and enslaved them,” which was later published.

Mecid was my senior, probably by eight or nine years, and Aziz, I think, by five. On the other hand, Emir was my junior by two years. Despite that, he had facility in poetry and recited the verses of Mecid and Aziz from memory. Later on, Emir embarked on a Russian education and studied in a military school; and finally, among the military units which we had established in cooperation with him, he became the commander of the first cavalry regiment during the 1917 national movement, before commanding a division.

Members of the Karamisev family, to which Emir belonged, comprised educated individuals. They held officer rank in the Baskurt army of the 18th 19th centuries, and occupied the post of “kanton (banner) chief,” also serving with my maternal great uncles, as mentioned above, under the command and administration of Major Yusuf. They had abandoned nomadic life, but their village civil affairs were regulated. Their homes were whitewashed, surrounded with gardens, containing fruit trees, especially apple. Major Yusuf had published, in Russian, works pertaining to the statistics of the Syr Darya village life and the social life of Kazaks. Among the members of this family, the one closest to our family, and to that of Kackinbay, was one aged and wealthy individual named Omer Haci. In the past, when Baskurdistan was autonomous, he had served as the chief of kanton, had seen Türkiye and Hejaz. He was the closest friend of Zeynullah Isan of Troitsk. One member of this Karamisev, named Ahmed, had gone to Germany many years with his mares and wife, to make kimiz for a member of the Emperor’s family. Consequently, he had learned some German. He would speak to us about the beauty of Germany, show photographs, meaning he would conduct German

propaganda. But we best liked Karamisev’s father, the Russian teacher Miftah. Later, many of them had taken positions by my side, in the military and civil administration, during the Baskurdistan independence movement. My other close friends were Bekbulat Hazret, Nuri Muezzin and Osman Haci Ilyasoglu families from the villages of Sayran and Arlar, to the south of us. They had performed various duties during our national movement after 1917. One such person was Abdullah Kanton Ilyasov, whose name shall be encountered again.

## *My Father’s Troitsk Trips—*

The imece (ume) [community work], my father would organize at the end of each July, to harvest grass of the pastures at Iraman, was a delightful affair. The majority of the villages of our tribe’s “Elciktemir” branch would attend, many animals would be slaughtered. This had the character of our family festival. When this was complete, my father would leave to see his friends and Seyh. This trip would be terminated with his visit of Seyh Zeynullah in Troitsk, who was his pir [spiritual master]. On the way, there would be banquets, at their yaylaks [high pastures], with his friends and sheyhs belonging to the urugs of Karagay, Kipchak, and Burcen. There learned, religious, even political matters would be discussed. On the way back, my father would stopover at the villages of Mehdi and Emin, there visiting with his friends among the Muslim Kazak tribes of Tungevir, Tungatar, Tamyan and Katay, who considered themselves to be descendants of the Chora Batir of the dastan fame. This trip would last a month and a half. I joined three such trips, which were repeated every year, mainly to look after the horse and the carriage. Each trip had contributed positively to my intellectual development. The 1904 trip coincided with the Russo-Japanese war, the 1905 with the Russian revolution, and the 1906 had taken place at the time of the Russian “Duma” struggles. I did not at all like mysticism. I despised those Seyhs I considered hypocrites, though I respected the individuals I regarded to be models of sincerity, ethics, virtuousness, including Mollakay Abdullah Hazret, Kulbakti Abdulhannan Hazret and my father’s pir Zeynullah Hazret of Troitsk.

I was learning valuable lessons from the above mentioned three Seyhs. For instance, during 1906, Zeynullah Isan had treated me very kindly. Despite my young age, he asked me various questions, listening attentively to the answers I provided and favored me with words of an explanatory nature. Possibly he was testing me. One morning, during the tea gathering, he again asked me questions, and I answered them to the best of my knowledge. Then, in front of everybody, saying: “Son, take this, you may buy something,” presented me with a gold ten lira. I purchased with this money, from the Tatar bookshop a book named “Hizmet,” by Gazali on theological criticism, publications pertaining to Islamic social and philosophical matters printed in Egypt and Istanbul, books on astronomy and physics, Arabic translations of Tolstoy’s *Kreuserovo Sonato* and some Russian novels, *Mulkaleme i Franseviye* in Turkish, to



learn French; and also, from a Russian bookstore, Tolstoy's work "Years of Hunger," which chronicles the hunger reigning in our country in 1891, when I was born.

A few days later, the Seyh inquired how I spent my money. I detailed what I had purchased one by one. He approved, telling me that since I knew Russian, it would now be very good for me to learn French. He was also pleased with my choice of books on astronomy and physics. Especially when I told him of Tolstoy's book on the years of hunger, he told me that I had bought a good book. It transpired that the Seyh had given me the money to try me. During later assemblies, he again asked me which ones I had read and what they contained. When I related that I had purchased Gazali's *al Munqidh an al dalal*, meaning "Prevention from taking the wrong paths," he said: "you cannot understand that yet." I responded: "I bought these types of books to read after I further improved my Arabic," upon which he patted me on the back and gave me more money. Reportedly the Seyh had mentioned in other gatherings, that though I was only fifteen years of age I had acted with prudence in my selection of books. When I heard that, I was certainly puffed up. As he was held in very high esteem among our circles, his positive words had greatly encouraged me. If it had not been for such encouragement, my life could have turned to directions other than scholarship. As the poet Tokay of Kazan had pointed out "What has not happened to this humble servant, except my people had patted me on the head, giving me the desire to rise." If it had not been for the patting of this Seyh, I could have become an employee (prikazchik) in a commercial enterprise at the age of fifteen.

## *Our Contacts with the Kazaks and the Siberian (Tumen) Tatars—*

These trips were providing us with contacts not only in the Middle and Eastern Baskurt domains, but even with the Kazaks. This had great advantages later, during the organization of the 1917-1918 Baskurdistan National Movement. The tsarist government, with the aim of inserting a Russian province between Baskurdistan and the Kazaks, violently seized millions of hectares of Kazak lands, driving away the Kazak Turks from there. But in 1904-1905, they, especially the Kipchak tribe, were still living contiguous to the Baskurt lands and continuing to raise cattle. Among them, we had visited two very wealthy families who were friends of my father, that of Nayza and Nurpey Haci, and had become their guests. Reportedly this Nurpey Haci was of my father's age, and later two of them went to pilgrimage together.

They were closer to the aforementioned Er Karagay region, further to the East of Troitsk. These Kipchak, during the 18th century rebellion, had protected the Baskurt refugees. Nurpey Haci knew many dastans and was a great poet. I had taken down many poems from him. The Soviets mention an aged Kazak poet named Nurfeyz Bayganin, propagandizing on their behalf. They even published some of his works. Later I learned by chance that this Bayganin was our Nurpey Haci. This person was very nationalistic and religious. The most complete version of the great dastan

"Koblandi" is the one he recited. During these trips, I had met the sons of Musa Haci of Tipter Ahun village, Isa Ahun of the Tungatar Baskurts and Abdullatif Hazret of Saqmaq village in Tamyán. These were all educated individuals, and undertook important duties in government during the 1917-1918 national movement. Musa, son of Murtaza of Tamyán became the Commander of our Second Division.

In 1907, my father and my maternal uncle Habibneccar together took the train to Troitsk, travelling via Ufa and Cheliabinsk. I took them to the Devleken station, and saw the railroad for the first time at the age of fifteen. In the dark, the lanterns of the train appeared in the distance, growing brighter. Our horses were shying. Especially when the intense noise of the locomotive was heard, it was no longer possible to hold back the horses; the carriage was slammed against a wall. Only after we had left the houses behind, with the greatest difficulty, we were able to stop the horses. Since my father and my maternal uncle were in the carriage, we had a very narrow escape.

This time, on the way back from Troitsk, my father went to Nimetullah Haci at the Siberian town of Mancil, and had brought back two political books of Yadrintsev, the discoverer of the old Turk monuments of Orkhon, entitled "Siberia as a Colony," and "Condition of non Russian Nationalities in Siberia." When my father indicated that his son (meaning, I) knew Russian, Nimetullah Haci had presented him with these two works. This was a grand gift. I was translating articles, those I could understand, from these two books, to my father and maternal uncle. In these, the theories suggesting that the elements of non Russian nationalities are condemned to extinction were being refuted, defending their life and equal rights. Both of these works had an enormous influence on my political maturation. Reportedly, before my father, my great maternal uncle Veli Molla had also visited this Mancil village. Apparently, our ancestors had contacts with the Tumen Tatars of Western Siberia.

## *Mysticism of My Father—*

My father, as soon as he returned from his trip, said "Let us go to Fazkan." What we called Fazkan was one of the Kackinbay at the Alagoyanbasi village. "Fazkan" possibly means Fazlullah or "Fazil Han." He had the temperament of a Sufi, and was an unconventional, generous, stouthearted man. Reportedly, he used to say "If 'Ahmetsah' were to receive 'isanlik' (meaning, attain the rank of 'Seyh') from his Seyh, I will be his first disciple." Now, this year, Seyh Zeynullah had given my father the rank of Seyh, as well as the written certificate. But my father said "the present times are no longer the time of mysticism, those days are gone; when Isan (meaning Seyh) elevated me, I agreed, but I shall not accept anyone as 'disciple,' and will not allow anyone to address me as 'isan' but will accept Fazkan as a disciple because I had promised."

Fazkan was a peasant with some wealth. He was a student of Mollakay Hazret. He knew Persian and some Arabic. He was perhaps one hundred kilometers from us. We arrived at his place; I approached my father to help him dismount from his horse. There were sounds, even noises in the house but nobody came out. Finally somebody

appeared. It was Fazkan himself, certainly drunk. He kissed my father's stirrup. He helped my father dismount, took him to the house; inside of the house smelled of "bitter honey," in fact terribly so. My father said "Swines, you drank." In reality, they were merrymaking that day. Fazkan responded with: "When they heard of your arrival, the kurege (meaning, honey barrels) ran under urunduk (the sofa), and the guests out from the windows." A little later, we performed the afternoon namaz. Fazkan cried much. My father and Fazkan together recited aloud a verse of the Yesevis: "You appear to be a Sufi, but you are yet to become a Muslim" and a poem of Mollagul's, becoming exuberant.

The meaning of these latter verses, causing one to lose his wits, the origins of which go back to Sems Tebrizi Mevlana as I once mentioned above, was as follows: "A drunken man is saluting you; the soul of this man, whose heart you stole, is serving you from afar. You know how to create out of nothing and to cause what exists not to be, listen to the greetings of this drunkard; he is a drunkard who has both of his hands caught in your trap. You are the taste of every lip; altar of every sect, the moon in the sky is standing guard around your house every night. (This beloved), at a glance, is giving you wings and you take flight; at another glance, it is the anchor of your ship, you are unable to move; one instant it is your morning, another, your evening. He is causing you to shiver one instant, at another, causing you to laugh heartily; at one glance you are enchanted, at another you become like lifeless glass, like a stone. It matters not, if I cannot become a body, then I shall become a soul, if not a jewel, than the blood of gems; dear heart, never fear that you shall acquire notoriety, you will attain good renown in this regard."

I was disraught that they had forgotten the world by falling into such a fanatically enraptured state. In order to prevent my father from further foolishness, I said "Father, shall I water the horses?" He responded with "Do so," and praised me on this occasion "Now, Ahmet Zeki has awakened us, being sober minded. It is not proper to fall into ecstasy. I like mysticism and its poetry but not fanaticism. Let us rise." However, that night, it is said that my father had accepted Fazkan as a disciple and vowed never to be a Seyh beyond that.

The second day Fazkan had a mare skinned, invited the mollas of all neighboring villages and gave an excellent banquet. This feast was given to immortalize the boundless friendship the Kackinbayogullari had towards us, continuing for many generations. I spent the night with Ibrahim Kackinbay, and we passed the time drinking honey. My father knew that, but did not come near us in order not to see.

Kackinbay had very close relations with the Kipchak urug of the Kazaks. As before, Ibrahim again at length recited to me the poems of Kazak poet Seydali, and the "Kizcibek" dastan. Because, his late father was close friends with the family of the Kazak author Saydalin (Saeydalioglu), living in Troitsk. Ibrahim knew well his translations from Puskin's poetry. Ibrahim showed me such friendship on that occasion, I never forgot the occasion in my life, as well as "Fazkan's discipleship festivities."

On his part, reportedly, Fazkan would proudly say "Molla became a Seyh, did not accept anyone as disciple except me." He was a strange person like Mollagul. He

was a good conversationalist. He knew many poems and dastans. Though he occasionally drank to the extreme, he never gave up namaz. Towards the God whom he dearly loved, he was as fearless as the Anatolian dervish, who, addressing his God with "O Lord, are you drunk?" upon spilling his carafe of wine.

One day, my father had gone to visit a friend at another village. I stayed with Fazkan perhaps for a week. One hot August day in late afternoon, Fazkan returned home exhausted from pitching cut grass. I asked him if he had not forgotten the afternoon namaz. He responded with: "The afternoon namaz does not matter; if you have other business, you slam it against the 'kerte' (wall) and go on. God will wait, but the dried grass will not. You can make it up to God, but not to the grass. I know that better than God." My father, who had accepted Fazkan as his only disciple, knew of his curses of this nature. He said: "Fazkan had lost his front teeth in the war with the 'zemlamer' (Russian agricultural engineers). He only does good to the Muslims. God will forgive his occasional curses. He is the most sincere Muslim among my contemporaries. He is one of the most loved servants of God." Thus, this was my father's understanding of Sufism and Islam. Nevertheless, it is reported that Fazkan did not drink after that date. My father said: "The only benefit of my becoming a Seyh appears to be preventing Fazkan from drinking," laughing heartily. What strength and power my father's laughter possessed.

## *Our life during autumn—*

During the fall, I would be busy not only in the bee fields at the village, but also at the "suluk" hives at the mountains, collecting honey. We used to perform that task accompanied by my friend Mehmet Kafi of Qulgun village and at Burcen with Ibrahim Kackinbay. During the fall, at home, I also would work on physics. I had acquired physics apparatus during Troitsk trips. A room in my father's medrese ostensibly served as my "laboratory." An elder friend, Aziz, from the Makar village, whose name mentioned earlier, was helping me. I was working on electricity generation and telegraph. I was operating Morse between our house and the medrese.

During spring of 1907 I had ordered a globus by post, collect on delivery, from Ufa or Troitsk. It became necessary to go to Sterlitamak post office to take possession, thirty five kilometers from us. I had saddled a horse and undertook the trip without my father's knowledge. I was instructing the medrese students in astronomy. I had written those lessons in the form of questions and answers, taking place between two individuals named Ahmed Togan's first given name and Said. I had benefited from Flamarion and also from the work of a Syrian scholar named Huseyin al Cisir. These were new topics in our country, and were of interest to the students. This was my first scholarly work. My father disliked these lessons, because, as I had mentioned, he did not believe in the movement of the earth. I had constructed a larger globus. I was showing the students the rotation of the



earth around the sun, using a lamp in the dark. When constructing this sphere, I had used dough instead of glue. Because of that, mice had eaten it during the summer, as I had left it in my room at the medrese, causing my labors to be wasted. My father was pleased with that outcome; quietly laughing, stated that even the mice did not believe in the rotation of the earth. In addition to the Russian books on physics, I also had their Turkish versions printed in Istanbul. I had purchased them in Troitsk.

I had mentioned several times that I enjoyed apiculture. I used to apply to our bees whatever I learned from books on the topic, and a Russian language periodical entitled “pchelovodstvo” (beekeeping). Upon the arrival of fall, I would personally place the hives in their winter sheds. These bees would never touch or sting me, regarding me their friend.

One of the occupations of the fall was to take to Sterlitamak those animals I raised for sale within our herds, and to prepare winter meats at home. Probably the most pleasant task of the fall was this meat butchering and preparation for the winter. This was called “sogum.” Plenty of sausage (qazi) would be made. In connection with this occasion, many reciprocal banquets would be held.

Much honey wine would be made in the village from the honey produced. Some Baskurt Imam would also drink this wine, supposedly in conformance to Islam. I had earlier spoken of an Imam among our relatives, Ehil Molla. He would collect honey as “osur” tithe from the population, drinking all. The congregation performing namaz in his leadership was just like him, and they liked Ehil Molla better than my father. The behavior of our Imam was in conformity with the views held by Alishir Navai and the Kazak poet Abay. In his time, it is said that much wine was consumed during “sogum” days. Alishir states: “you must add splendor to your gathering with wine, from sunset until yellow dawn. Forget neither God, nor forsake wine; for God is great, he shall forgive you in the morrow.”

Summing up, in the fall, I would not return to the medrese before collecting the “suluk” honey with my own hands, placing the beehives into their winter quarters, going hunting with rifle and falcon during the early snows, hunting ruffed grouse, pheasant (qirgavul), and rabbit, with my friends. Our animals would never return to the village and their pens before the snow cover deepened. They liked “tebin,” meaning digging the snow with their hooves to get at, and eat the grass. Upon spotting us from afar, they would run away. In order to find these rebellious animals in the forest during deepening snow, skis would be used. In any case, when the snow cover thickened, they would go to the grass piles prepared for them in summer called “keben” in the forest. But, those among them keeping to the tebin tradition ardently, perhaps left from the times when our ancestors were living in the East of the Urals, would attempt to run away when we wished to round them up at the grass piles. Nonetheless, we would catch them, and bring them to their senses by administering an appropriate beating. Just like our Baskurts beating the women they love, to bring them to reason.

## THOUGHTS OF GOING AWAY FOR EDUCATION

### *Influences on Me of Arif Bey of Türkiye, an American, Murad Remzi and The Arab Philosopher MaarrMaarri—*

Owing to the special care of my maternal uncle, I had learned quite a bit at Utek by the time I reached eighteen years of age. My maternal uncle was a scholar who loved history, having read one of the primary sources of the Islamic history, Ibn ul Esir, from beginning to end, had translated portions of it into Turkish and published. He had also read from the Turkish the Cevdet Pasa Tarihi, and almost memorized it. He knew the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 with all of its details. In fact, he had obtained a work pertinent to that war by a Russian by the name of Griaznov and would have me read it occasionally. Among those Turks, whose names mentioned before, he had me repeatedly read Mehmet Akif Bey’s *Basimiza Gelenler*, concerning this conflict. I had read this work while we were under the impressions caused by the defeat of Russians by the Japanese. I treated the words contained in a letter appended at the end of this work, written by an American addressing the Khedive of Egypt, containing the words “How can you, a population of seven million people, tolerate the yoke of two-three thousand English? You do not possess patriotism. You are logs clad with clothes” as an admonition to all Russian Moslems.

On one hand, the works of the aforementioned Iadrintsev, and on the other, the book by Mehmet Arif Bey had greatly influenced me. A scholar of our country, by the name of Murad Remzi, was living in Hejaz. This person was a friend of my father and that of my maternal uncle. He had been a guest of ours during the summer months. He had written a two volume work on the history of the Kazan Turks and Russian Moslems. My maternal uncle had read many portions of this work while still in draft stage. It was published in Orenburg during the winter of 1907-1908. That winter my father had gone to pilgrimage, and, despite the fact that I had not yet completed my seventeenth year, had left his medrese to me and to a halife of his. I spent the entire winter reading this work, one thousand three hundred pages long, relating its contents to those students able to comprehend and especially to Ibrahim Kackinbay. It recounted the past of the Turks with great pride, and the Russian cruelties with great sorrow.

I had opened a library in a corner of my father’s medrese, under the name of “People’s Library.” I collected money to buy books for it. I arranged for newspapers to be brought in. Some newspapers, as I had informed them, were sending their

publications for free. In this manner, from Petersburg *Ulfet*, and in Arabic *Et Telmiz*; from Kazan *Beyan ul Haq* and *Yulduz*; From Orenburg *Vaqit*; from Astrakhan *Edil*; from Baku *Irsad*, and the journal *Fuyuzat* were arriving. My father was taking *Tercuman* from Crimea for some time. In addition, in Russian *Berjevie Vedemosti* newspaper and the *Niva* journal was coming. In our village, I and my paternal uncle Alikerrar Molla were reading those. Since he had been a teacher among the Kazaks for many years, he even used to mix Kazak into his speech. He was raising my interest in Kazak language and literature. Under his influence, I had ordered all of the Kazak books and pamphlets printed in Kazan for our library. Essentially, my father had an affinity towards Kazak due to old familial traditions. Though he himself had not lived among the Kazaks, he had friends among them such as Nurfeyiz Haci and Nayza Bay. He had gone to pilgrimage with them.

For the purpose of obtaining books for our library, I established contacts with booksellers named “Sark” in Ors, and “Sredniaia Aziia” in Tashkent. The owner of “Sark” was an educated person named Ahmet Ishaki. His father Ishak Hazret was my father’s friend. Possibly he had studied in Türkiye. He would obtain and sell the “modern” publications printed in Türkiye and Egypt. He was procuring even the Russian publications on Islam. This person aided me greatly. He was circulating regular catalogs and informing me of new items by letter. Through him, I had brought in the journal *Malumat* from Istanbul.

Among the books I acquired from Tashkent were the Russian biographies of Kazak Sultan Kine Sari and his son Siddik Sultan, who had rebelled against Russia, the memoirs of the Afghan Emir Abdurrahman Han, and the Kashgar Travelogue of general Kuropatkin. There were Persian originals and the Russian translations of the Abdurrahman Han’s memoirs. Kuropatkin, while he was the Russian ambassador to Yakub Bey in Kasgar, had a Baskurt officer in his entourage by the name of Suyergulov, from a prominent family we also knew. From this aspect, it was of interest to me. This book also included some writings by Suyergulov. Through this means, I had become familiar with Kasghar environs.

The memoirs of Emir Abdurrahman Han contained a lively history of his struggles for the independence of his people; but since I read this work while comparing it to its Russian translation, it was useful in learning both languages. I knew the *Kine Sari* and *Nevruzbay* dastans printed in Kazan. Murad Remzi also had included in his history the undulating life story of Siddik Sultan, son of Kine Sari, which had also become a dastan topic. Because, as Murad Remzi had served as a teacher for years next to Siddik Sultan and his brother Ahmet Sultan, he had written of them with high praises in his book. When Murad Efendi was our guest, he had also provided me with information not included in his book. Kine Sari and Siddik Tore were brave men who had struggled for the independence of our people. My paternal uncle Alikerrar, whose name had been mentioned, had taught me poems about them. For example, I would never forget the following piece:

“We attacked the enemy like a storming snow/ with the cries of Abilay, Abilay! (asking help from his spirit) we let our horses run, encircled them the enemy, crushing/ If

God is not in your heart, where could your soul rest?/ If you do not have a State you can behold with your eyes, how could your mind be at peace?”

Alikerrar would not only teach me those, but have me memorize them.

Among the books I secured for the “People’s Library,” there was also the one by the Han of Khiva, *Secere i Turk*, printed in Petersburg. Imam of Sayran, Bekbulat, and my father’s assistant Kessaf Hazret, who had studied in Bukhara, would always read books in this library. While Murad Remzi and Kine Sari were inculcating to us the idea of freedom from Russian imprisonment, Arif Bey and Emir Abdurrahman were suggesting that our national question could take its place among the issues of the world. Emir Abdurrahman was a man of our times, many of his words acted as a salve administered to our wounds. When the English mixed into the internal affairs of Afghanistan, he had gone to Khiva via Iran, and liked its Han and people. From there, he had gone to Bukhara, did neither like its Han, nor its people. Thinking that the Russians, who had occupied Samarkand, would come to terms with the English, he had arrived in Samarkand with his retinue. At first, Russians had received him well, but upon hearing his sympathy towards the Kazak Sultan Siddik Tore, and Cure Bek of the Ozbek Kinogis urug, who were protecting the independence of Turkistan, the Russians had taken him in the middle of the night, ostensibly for consultations, to Tashkent.

Upon realizing that no good would come of the Russians, with the hope of acting alone, trusting that the Russians would act as if they did not see, he had returned to his country through Maca Mountains, Hisan and Badakhshan. With the aid of native Katagan and other Ozbeks, he had liberated Balkh, later Kabul, had re-established today’s Afghanistan. As he had independent ideas and reformist posture, he had set up some factories, printing presses, introduced western style medicine, western type uniforms, and followed the world politics from afar, with attention and devotion.

Though he had crossed over to the Russian side as an enemy of the English in the beginning, he had returned to his country as an enemy of the Russians. According to him, the Asians would in the end realize that the Russians were expanding by killing and swallowing the Asian nations. Though he did not like the policies of the English, he believed that the only salvation for the Asian nations lay in their joining cooperation with the Western nations. My maternal uncle and my father, reading the newspaper of Mustafa Kamil of Egypt after the Russian revolution, had formed a negative idea about the English. English were considered a deceitful people. From that perspective, my maternal uncle and my father did not like Abdurrahman Han’s inclination toward the English. According to him and my father, it was necessary for the Turks and the Asian people to follow an independent path. All their hopes were in Japan, and because of that they attached importance to the news that the Japanese Emperor, in 1907, was searching for a religion, inclining towards Islam, and a Turkish delegation was sent there. My father did not care too much about my working on Pushkin and Iadrintsev’s books. Despite that, he would have me read and listen to my

translations from those passages from Pushkin's Pughachov Rebellion touching upon the Baskurt, and from Iadrintsev, those complimentary words about the Altaians and the Kazaks. He would state that, as there were individuals among the English siding with the Afghans and the Egyptians, perhaps among the Russians the likes of Iadrintsev would proliferate and that would benefit us; reciting an Arab aphorism, probably from Gazzali "Moanings and cries touching the nerves of the child of the cruel comes to the aid of the oppressed" and would pray for Iadrintsev.

The newspapers, journals and books I had obtained for the "People's Library" during the years 1906 1908, and the discussions at the side of my father and maternal uncle, even though I was sixteen years of age, had given me a sort of "weltenschaung." As a result of that, I wanted to improve my knowledge via Russian. I had set myself the aim of attending Russian teachers' school (uchitel'skaia shkola), to compare the historical information I had learned from Islamic sources against the information provided in the Russian sources. This idea was inculcated in me especially by Murad Remzi. I had mentioned that he had my father and maternal uncle read certain portions of his book while being printed during those years. He wished that I would learn Russian history, especially which of Soloviev histories he was unable to utilize. He had especially liked the works of Iadrintsev.

That winter (1907 1908), I taught some lessons at my father's medrese, on Arabic language and on the life of the Prophet, from an Arabic language work entitled *Nur al yakin*. The affection I had, in truth received from my maternal uncle, towards Arabic literature was not allowing me to attend solely to studying Russian. My reading of Musa Carullah Efendi's works was especially increasing my affinity towards Arabic literature. That year, Ahmed Ishaki published Carullah's book analyzing the philosophical ideas contained in the Arab poet and philosopher Abu'l Ala al Maarri's *Al Luzumiyat*.

I considered that work a masterpiece of the Arabic literature, charmed by his ideas and especially by his liberal thoughts on religion. But, Musa Carullah had published the portion of this work only up to the letter D. Through Ahmet Ishaki, I had obtained a copy of Maarri's original of this book, lithographed in India, containing marginal commentaries. When I could not completely understand this work, requiring commentaries and explanations, my desire to better learn Arabic language was further increased. Since I was naturally disposed to overcoming difficulties, Maarri's statement "the fact that treasures and truths being carefully hidden increases my determination to seek and solve them" altogether captured my mind. I especially liked his following words about religion: "every religion contains superstitions; can you essentially point to a single people, privileged to arrive at the truth?"

## *If I were to leave my environment to study at far away locations, where should I go and what should I study—*

Niyaz Maksudov, who later became an Imam in New York and died there in 1956, was at the time studying in the Beirut American College. He was inviting me to go there. I thought that, if I were not to stay in Russia, leave and go as far away as Beirut, I could descend into the depths of Arabic literature while learning English. On his return from the pilgrimage my father had brought back, from Arab lands and Istanbul, works that were very important to me. By spring, the thought that I would no longer be contained in Kuzen and Utek villages had taken hold in my mind. I had decided to go somewhere and continue with my education on a larger scale. On the other hand, my father wished to name me his successor as the Imam in the mosque and the muderris of his medrese. According to his thoughts, since I knew Russian, I would be of value to our nation as an Imam who had the appropriate knowledge to be involved in "zemstvo" (township or provincial council) matters, or even a member of the Duma. With this aim, he wished to have me get married immediately. In fact, he and his friend Hacı Mehmet Yahsimbertov, from the East of the Urals, had agreed that his daughter Nefise to be married to me. But now, they wished me to marry the daughter, whom I had heard to be beautiful but had not yet seen, of Abdurrahman, a wealthy Baskurt of Katay urug of the Mirzakay village. Actually, they had even bought trousseau and such. This was influenced by a very close friend of my father, Sabir Hazret, the Imam of Mirzakay.

But when my mother stated that they would not force me to marry against my will, I realized that they suspected that I had intentions of going away for education. My mother, Nur Muhammed and Aziz were agreeing with me on continuing with my education on this particular point. Upon my return from Utek during spring, my father's friend Sahserif Metinov, who was a member of the Duma (Russian Parliament), had arrived. In my father's presence, he encouraged me to continue my Russian education, stating "what would be the outcome of becoming a teacher?" This person, knowing good Russian, presented me with the works of Professor Hrushevsky on the Ukrainian autonomy movement and those of Professor Maxim Kovalevskii on international law. With that [gesture], this person wished to draw me into his field, politics.

In May, I went to Alagoyanbasi, to Ibrahim's. One day, we were leaning against two pine trees close to one another, in front of the summer huts called alacik. I told him my secrets entire. I detailed how Niyaz Maksudov was inviting me to Beirut, and how Dr. Zeynep Abdurrahmanova and Sahserif Metinov were encouraging me to stay in Russia to continue with my higher education. Ibrahim feared that if I entered the Russian environment, I would be lost to him and insistently advocated that I marry the daughter of Hacı Muhammed immediately. He stated that he would persuade my father in that direction. His wife, "Ak-gelin," was listening to us while boiling "qurut"



(cheese). To her husband, she said “would it be right to hinder someone who wishes to continue with his education?” And I said “God Bless you.” If my mother, Ibrahim, Nur Muhammed and Aziz insisted in unison, I was going to agree to be married. If my mother did not give her consent, the thought of going to far away lands would be removed. Although there had been times when my father was cross with me, until that day in my life, I had never injured my mother’s feelings. This intervention of Ak-gelin had caused my life to enter into a major turning point, because Ibrahim was able to exert influence on my father. I had decided to leave in the direction of Orenburg, before the end of June.

Though I liked the milieu of my village, Kuzen, along with the yayla of Aliekber, Alagoyanbasi, Ak-biyik, I was belittling it since I considered this area to be much undeveloped in material culture. But, I could only later understand that the Russian authors Tolstoy and Aksakov were correct in idealizing the Baskurt life philosophy. The stratum comprising the spiritual leaders of this milieu had introduced me to the Turk, Arab and Persian cultures, also to the Western and Eastern thinkers, and had provided me with the ethical values and a political ideal, which I did not at all feel the need to alter later.

## II. Years of 1908 - 1916

### *MY FIRST SCHOLARLY ENDEAVORS*

#### *My going to Orenburg, thence to Kazan—*

My life between the years of eighteen and twenty six years of age was spent under great difficulties, studies, teaching and scholarly research, first in my homeland Baskurt il and Kazan, later in travels between Ferghana and Petersburg-Bukhara, research and gradually opening to a relatively larger milieu. I entered into this new milieu by degrees, by leaving our vilage on 29 June 1908. That day, when my father and mother were guests in another village, I left home on foot, without taking a single coin from the household, with a pack on my back containing a round loaf of bread, a loop of sausage, a chunk of dry cheese (kurut) and an amount of tea. I wrote a letter to my father stating “I am determined to study, I cannot get married.” I added an old Arabic aphorism to it with the content “he who marries before his time is like the rat tying a broom to its tail, becoming unable to fit into his hole.” I asked them not to be offended, requesting that they pray [for me]. I did not inform anyone in the village, though I had told my friend whom I liked very much, with whom I always used to go graze the horses at the pastures, spending the nighthts huddling together, my nephew Nur Muhammed. But I had not let him know of the exact day. Our neighbor, the beautiful Miser girl Leylibedir, whom I liked very much, was a talented student of my mother’s. She and I had read together books on religion and ethics in Persian and Turkish. She used to come over to get water from our well. Just as I was about to leave, she showed up. I did not tell her in order not to cause her to cry. My brother Abrurrauf, who was the only one aware of this business, and I mounted a single horse, took the Togiz-qir mountain range route, against usual custom, to make use of the extant footpaths there. My brother was going to see me off for ten kilometers, and return. We dismounted and both of us cried much, because, this was the beginning of my still continuing adventurous life. Abdurrauf also regarded this event just like Ibrahim Kackinbay, with trepidation. I left on foot, Abdurrauf remained behind, crying, watching until I disappeared from his sight. Since I was a youth recognized in all nearby villages,

I bypassed the Sayran village on my route, following the rural paths. I encountered a Baskurt from that last village, named Omer Kirav. "Where are you off to, on foot?" he asked. I told him that I was looking for a horse, and he responded with "this is not the 'tubek' (regular grazing pastures) of your horses." I indicated that I was looking for the horses of our guests. This person became suspicious. We said good-bye and I continued with my journey. But, I thought that this man would inform my father of the place where he saw me. I did not wish my father to follow me by no means. I turned my path into an entirely new direction.

That day was what the Christians called "Troytsa" (Trinity), the "Little Easter" day festivities. I arrived in the Russian vilage of Verxotor, exhausted. Russians say "Bez Troitsi dom ne stroitsia," meaning "Before Easter Day, house cannot be built." According to Russian creed, it was an auspicious day to start new undertakings. I danced with the Russian girls with the small bag on my back. I sang along peasant songs such as "v sadu li vogorode devushka guliala," which I had earlier heard from the Russians. These girls were hugging and kissing me, saying "Bashkirinuk" (little Baskurt); I was saying to myself what sins I am committing, if it goes on like this, I shall be ruined. A young man tried to force me to drink vodka. When I declined, pouring out his glass, he spilled vodka on me. I cried at that. Because, though I drank honey since my childhood, let alone drinking vodka, I could not tolerate a drop of it touching my clothes, wine being "necis" (filthy) according to the Koran.

The Russian girls removed and hid my back-pack. I was of the opinion that they had wicked intentions. I was asking myself how I would be able to live among these unbelievers, away from my father and mother. Finally, they laid me down on the green grass, in a drunken state, next to a Baskurt shepherd who was also drunk. Even though he was intoxicated, he had observed the preceding events. He said "you know their language, you are dancing with them, of course they will hide your bag, pour vodka on you. What are you crying for? Lie down and go to sleep." They had brought my bag and placed it next to my head. Next morning I left that place before sunrise.

### *Freedom of religion festivities at Meleviz—*

When I arrived at the town of Meleviz three days later, I learned from a Baskurt teacher who had come to attend the Moslem festivities, that Omer Kirav had relayed to my father where he had seen me, that my father immediately mounted his horse to follow me, but encountered a wealthy friend of his named Kadi, at the village of Aznay, who was able to persuade my father to discontinue with his pursuit and intention of turning me back. I was relieved when I heard all this.

In this Meleviz, there were a group of Tatars who had been forcibly converted to Christianity by the Tsardom. These remained Moslem in their hearts. Taking advantage of the prevailing partial freedoms following the 1905 revolution, they had openly returned to Islam and constructed a large mosque. And now, there was the opening ceremony of this mosque. On this occasion, Imams from many a village,

and prominent individuals from among the Tatars and the Baskurt were invited. Several hundred sheep, oxen and cows were sacrificed. Many people brought kimiz from the surrounding villages. They had me sit for the feast with the Molla. While the news, as reported in the newspaper *Alem-i Islam*, was being discussed to the fact that Islam was spreading among the Japanese in large degree, the conversation turned to whether the Japanese could still be considered Moslems even if they would not join one of the true canonically recognized sects. When I stated that there was a pure Islam above all sects, quoting by way of proof from the works of Ibn Teymiyye, ibn Qayyim al-Cavzi, I was subjected to the attacks of the fanatics. On the other hand there were others present who stated that the sect and tarika were detrimental to the Moslems, siding with me. Apparently my words had attracted the attention of a Tatar merchant by the name of Ilac (Ilaceddin) Bayezitov. He invited me to his home and those Imams who appeared to have open minds towards the topics that were under discussion at the earlier gathering. It was understood that Ilac Aga wished to facilitate free and open talks among those competent on the topic. Very enjoyable discussions took place. Those molla present at this second gathering heard that I was intending to go to other countries for educational purposes. They advised me to go to Egypt in order for me to broaden my knowledge in Islamic topics. The fact that there was a merchant interested in the thought of Ibn Taymiye in this isolated corner of Baskurt lands was at the time the positive manifestation of the developing national cultural movement among the Baskurt and the Tatar. This person also gave me money, four - five liras.

### *The Konakbay Beauty—*

I left Meleviz on foot. I avoided the main road, as a precaution against the possibility of my father following me. Even at night, I slept among the wheat. In this manner I stopped at an "alacik," meaning a summer house, near the small village of Konakbay. I was going to eat there, but they were very poor. The adults were not at home, so a sister and a brother, ages twelve and fourteen boiled some water for me. I had tea with bread. Both of them were of extraordinarily beautiful creations. It was indicated that a beggar had died, and they were going to make a quilt out of his dirty, torn "çapan" (overcoat). O Lord, I said to myself "how destitute these people are, how can they subsist?" However, I was truly captivated by their beauty. I gave them all the bread, cheese and sausage I had in my bag. I kept asking myself what beauty is this and, in turn, what destitution. Celaleddin Rumi had a poem reflecting this strange contrast seen in the life of the Turks: "blacker and poorer the felt tent, the more the Turk beauty in it will shine like the full moon." They had one goat, which they milked to drink. But among the Baskurt, generosity sometimes goes too far. If, for example, a highly esteemed friend or an "isan" Seyh, to whom the father of these siblings regarded himself as the "murid," then he father would not hesitate to kill and serve this goat, which has been providing his family's daily sustenance, to the visitor.



I thought to myself I would marry this girl if I were not going away for education. When her brother left the alaçık, to change the goat's grazing place some distance in the vicinity of the alaçık, I wondered if I should kiss this girl, but I was hesitant to put this thought into action. When she affectionately asked me if I would come back to visit next year, I explained to her that I was on my way to far away places for education. In response, she gave me an amount of white string and a needle, saying "as you are going on a long journey, perhaps this will be of use." Possibly this was a tradition, or even a good omen.

After leaving their place I became a guest to a friend of my father's, named Nebi Hacı, a wealthy man of the Musa village, located somewhat away from the road. He was a very fat man. He stated that even if my father would arrive looking for me, he would not surrender me, but instead let me escape. He indicated that he, too, did not wish me to remain stuck in the village surroundings, even had told that to my father, suggesting to him that I should be given educational opportunities. Next day, while I was leaving, he provided a carriage to take me to the Kargali village. In addition, he gave me some travel money. He further began giving me fabric sufficient for a suit of clothes, suggesting that I would have it tailored in Orenburg. In response I told him of the needy state of the family living in the alaçık near Konakbay and I asked him to send two quilts to them as if a present from me, instead of the fabric he intended to give me.

After I left the Hacı, in his carriage, my mind was occupied with that girl named Züleyha and her brother. I was telling to myself that it is a good thing that I did not take advantage of the circumstances and kiss her, for, in our village, there was no such tradition, and probably the thought of kissing was placed in my mind by the novels I had read.

Time marched on. During 1913, when I was on my way from Orenburg to Sterlitamak, riding post horses, I passed a location near the Konakbay village. I recalled a poem of Goethe's addressed to a girl named Züleyha, since I learned German during those years, as if it had been written for my Züleyha. I regarded Goethe's fetish in "Lass die Renegatenburde, mich in deinem Kuss verschmerzen/ Denn ein Fitzliputzli wurde Talisman an deinem Herzen" perhaps corresponding to the white string and the needle given to me by my Züleyha. I asked a resident of Konakbay, whom I saw at the post station, the news of Züleyha and her brother living in the alaçık near the village, indicating I had earlier met them. He told me that both were now married and their first offspring were born, adding that a poor student had once become their guest, later sent two quilts to them. He asked me if I was that person. When I responded, without mentioning my infatuation with her "they were very poor, I had sent them that present via Nebi Hacı," this man said "but it was said that you were a poor student. We referred to that girl as 'Züleyha Huluv [sweet]."

## *My arrival in Orenburg and the students of Huseyniye—*

As I had very little money, I was spending it only on food. With the permission of its muezzin, I was sleeping at a corner, resembling a room, of the "grass market" mosque.

I was rising for the morning namaz, going to sleep after the yatsi namaz. I got very dirty. I bought soap and went to the Sakmar River to wash my clothes. But while washing them, the River carried away my single shirt. Though I had another, I had not brought it with me to the Riverside. While attempting to catch it, I was caught in the whirlpool of the River. I was a goner. But the vein of a tree extending into the water saved me. Grasping it, I emerged and got out. The currents had dragged me quite a distance. Though the underwear was lost, I thanked God, I was saved. As I was approaching my clothes on the bank, some students came over running, who told me that they were studying at the Huseyniye Medrese. They were living here I was informed, called "roshcha," meaning resort, during their summer holidays, and had seen me caught in the whirlpool. A Baskurt youth among them, whose name I later discovered to be Bektemir, with whom I stayed friends for a long time in our lives, until his death, approached me and told me to give thanks to God for saving my life. And I said "yes, God punished me for throwing myself into the water without knowing well how to swim, but had mercy on me and extended the vein of a tree at my hour of death." He said "do not worry, I shall teach you how to swim."

He took me to the barracks where they were staying, noticing that I was left without a shirt, gave me a clean one of his. We ate with them. Some of his friends, among them Kavi, the brother of Abdullah Battal, were of the type, in today's terminology "rebellious youth," in that day's expression "dehri [materialistic, atheist]." I became friends with them after this incident. They were laughing at my outfit. Because, I only had Baskurt village clothes on me. On my head there was a "kirpuvli bork" and "takiya," on my back gowns termed "bismet" and "yilen," on my feet, shoes called "çetik" and "kata." The spare shirt I brought from the village was of the Baskurt style referred to as "kirbavli" and underneath the gowns I was wearing "uçkurlu" cotton [long] underwear, without trousers. One day, one of these mischievous youngsters, while we were among his friends, pulled the cord of my underwear, called "usqur" to cause my underwear to fall down. He almost disgraced me. Everybody laughed. They told me not to wear these clothes here any longer. Bektemir gave a pair of trousers sewn by the city tailors. This was the first "European type" summer trousers I had worn in my life. Among us, trousers are worn only during winter. Due to my outfit, these [students] were much deriding me and regarding me a naive peasant. Among them, there were those who knew some Russian, and speaking of socialism. Upon discovering that I knew Arabic and Persian well, and much better Russian than themselves, they were astonished. *Al-Luzumiyat* of Abu'l-Ala Maarri, Russian scholar Iadrintsev's *Polozhenie inorodtsev Sibirii* and *Pendname* of Attar were the only books I had brought from home in my bag.

At a Russian bookstore, I found the Russian-Arabic dictionary of Arab Cezvi. As I had very little money, I went back and forth for three days in a row, deciding whether I should buy it. Finally, I bought it. This was a great blessing to me. Utilizing it, I would occasionally sit down and translate separate chapters from Iadrintsev's book into Tatar (Chaghatay), and read them to Bektemir. For example, I had translated "Reasons for the decline of the non-Russians and their talent for cultural life" and "Importance of

nomadism on the history of humanity” as much as I could understand. Thanks to this activity, my credit increased among the “rebellious youth.” Bektemir was the son of a well off village Imam. He gave me one of his own light overcoats. As a result of this, more and more, I began resembling a city dweller. Some of these students asked me to give them lessons in Arabic and Russian. I hesitated and declined, on the grounds that my knowledge was not sufficient to teach others. They asked me to move in with them, but I did not see it fit to join these youths, some of whom were drinking and gambling. I left the mosque and moved into the home of a small merchant, a Miser Turk from our village. Bektemir taught me swimming very properly. We would go swimming in the Sakmar River, where there were no whirlpool and bathe every day. These students were asking me what I intended to do. I did not yet know, but I was stating that I would definitely obtain an education.

### *My examination by Kemal Bay—*

Just in those days, the revolution had taken place in Türkiye. I used to go to the kiraathane [coffee house] operated by the Tatars and read the copies of *Sura-i Hummet* newspaper published by the Jeunne Turc in Paris. The Russian papers were also carrying detailed information pertaining to the revolution. This event, once again, drew me to the Turkish side. Upon recommendation of Musa Haci, I had made the acquaintance of a wealthy Tatar by the name of Kemal Bay Ubaydullin. He received my desire to go to Istanbul, Beirut and Egypt with interest. But, suddenly, he began to examine me according to his own knowledge. He asked “do you know the kirk farz?” Since I did not know any other farz than namaz, zekat, oruç and hac, I could not at all answer. Next, he asked me some of the prayers, I did not know them either. Because, my uncle had taught me some Arabic, stating that I would later easily learn the religious lessons, and no time was left for that. Since he was a liberal thinker, he only attached importance to the prayers that were farz [obligatory] and neglected to teach me those that were sunnet [Prophet’s own habits]. Kemal Bay asked me those “sunnet.” I was not able to answer well. Present also was the man looking after his business matters, his “upravliaiushchi.” He, too, looked at me with disdain. He continued with “tell me, since you claim to know Arabic, in the Koran, there is a reference to the four animals made helal [canonically legitimate] to the Moslems; in one place it is stated that there were four pairs, in another, eight pairs.” I responded “I understand the Koran partially, but I do not know “esbab-i nuzul” [reason of descent] or “ahkam” [judicial sentences, ordinances]. Later, Kemal Bay told me “before going to Istanbul and Egypt, there are plenty for you to learn here. Attend the Zahid Hazret Medrese, begin studying. I shall provide you with aid. But, I cannot help you to travel to Istanbul this year, since I have a large construction.” Upon hearing all this, I recalled the words of Abu’l Ala al-Maarri, in one of his poems: “The poorest people on this earth are the rulers who need money to assemble large and powerful armies.”

After leaving Kemal Bay, I felt anger within myself towards my maternal uncle and, as if addressing him: “You taught me ‘Mutavval,’ ‘Nehc al-Balaga’ books of syntax, literature, rhetoric of scholars such as Molla Cami, Teftazani; encouraged me to read histories such as Ibn Hallikan, but did not teach me fourty farz; caused me to bring shame upon myself. I related the incident to my friend Ibrahim Kaçkinbay in a detailed letter. Though Kemal Bay and his “upravliaiushchi” indicated that I could visit them occasionally and that they would help me, I did not go anywhere near them again until the day I left Orenburg. But Kemal Bay’s scolding caused me to give up my thoughts of going to Egypt and Beirut environs. Because, according to him, what I had learned from my maternal uncle was nothing. And I said to myself, I would not busy myself with your fourty farz.

### *Rizaeddin Fahreddin—*

That year, in Orenburg a literary journal entitled *Sura* began to be published under the direction of the great scholar Rizaeddin Fahreddin. This person, again during that year, had published a very good work on the life and philosophy of Abu’l Ala al-Maarri, whom I also admired very much. I had read that book while I was still at our village. I visited Rizaeddin Hazret, a very good friend of my fathger’s. He received me as if I was an adult. He was residing in a single story house owned by the Remeyev family, the publisher of the journal. We discussed many topics pertaining to history, literature and especially about Al-Maarri. Naturally, I could not tell him about the “Forty farz” incident. I described my worries about education. It appeared that he knew some Russian. He showed me various history books and the Soloviev History. This, too, was a sort of examination. I told him that I was between two dilemmas, that of attending the Russian schools and going to Syria. He advised me to stay in the country. This person, during 1926, on his way to Pilgrimage, spent some time in Istanbul and was a guest in my house in Samatya suburb. He recalled our meeting in Orenburg, and that he had encouraged me to study in Russian, adding “It was very proper for you to stay in Russia, because, if you had gone to Syria, you would not have accomplished these undertakings that you have among the Eastern Turks, during those revolutionary years. Among our educated that have come to Türkiye, other than Yusuf Akcora and Ahmed Agaoglu, none is discernible who had retained their personalities, leaving a trace in this milieu.”

I also visited the poet Zakir Remeyev, at his home, who was one of the publishers of the “Sura” journal. I had visited this person, with my father, during our 1906 Troitsk trip, at the goldmines east of Irendik mountains, called “Sultan;” meaning, we were already acquainted. His poems were beautiful and he was versed in Chaghatay literature. When I had arrived in Orenburg, he had taken two lines from a work by Ali Shir Navai (originally, that poem was by the 14th century Altinordu poet Horezmi) “God, who had created a mole on the face of my beloved, also created her hair as long as her height,” rearranging them into four lines, in a most beautiful manner, had decorated

the front cover of the *Sura* journal. I stated that this piece had taken a more beautiful format in Zakir Bey's hands, and recited some other poems of Navai that I could recall. He was immediately recording those into his notebook. For example the one which states: "A person cannot be happy away from home, nor any good can be found in the compassion of the strangers; Even if a red rose were to be grown in a golden cage, it is not as desirable to the nightingale as a thorn nest" was one I liked very much. Obviously, he knew that that poem was reflecting my circumstances. I explained to him that I would be going to Kazan, with the intention of entering Russian teacher's school and he thought it reasonable. But I did not mention my financial condition. Nevertheless, he suggested that I go and see a writer at the *Vakit* newspaper office, by the name of Yarullah Veliyev. Next day, this person gave me fifty lira in the name of Zakir Bey.

Zakir Bey spoke very sincerely. He asked me where and how I was able to I had read the works of Navai. In response, I told him that my father had a copy of his "Divan" and at Alagoyan, at the Kaçkinbay; and the printed copy of his *Hamse* at Sayran village, at the hands of Bekbulat Hazret. Apparently, Zakir Bey had not yet seen the "Hamse" and the "Divan" of Navai, only having read his "Muhakeme [*Muhakemat al-Lugateyn*]."

## *Astrakhan trip and Abdurrahman Omeroglu—*

I left Orenburg aboard a freight train, to go to Astrakhan first, then to Kazan, with the monies given me by Nebioglu Musa Hacı and Zakir Remey Bey. Along the way, I disembarked at the city of Buzavlik, and met with an Imam and author by the name of Aliasgar Gagatay. This person, under the pretense of liberalism, had issued a work smearing the Prophet's wife Ayse. From our talks, I saw that he took all he wrote on this topic from Russian missionary works, and he did not have any of the Islamic history sources in his home.

In Samara, I spoke with Imam Fatih Murtazin who was publishing a journal entitled *Iktisat*. He was an educated person. We had very sincere talks about our national life. He suggested to me that my simply studying economics or gaining admission into Russian teachers' school would not suffice, and that it would be better for me to seek ways to enter the university, and as I had reached the age of eighteen, it would be necessary for me to prepare for the related entrance exams privately. These suggestions were also made to me, in the past in our district, by Dr. Zeynep Abdurrahmanova and lawyer Sultanov. I was astonished to discover that Fatih hazret was of the same opinion.

I left that place, by boat, for Astrakhan. My only reason for travelling to that city was to speak with Abdurrahman Ömerov, who had just started to publish a new newspaper by the name of *Edil*. This person, a Kara-Nogay Turk, had been a student of my maternal uncle at the Mercani medrese of Kazan; when I was very young, once he had

come to our village looking to visit his teacher. Together with my paternal uncle and my father, had roamed the entire region alongside upper Aq-Edil and Yayik, visited the places mentioned in the old Nogay dastans such as yaylaks of Eremel, Bikmamay and others. He was in continuous correspondence with my maternal uncle and my father. This person was living in a suburb of Astrakhan, called "Tirek." He made me a guest in his house, took me to see the Nogay villages in the vicinity. This person, too, was a lover of the old Turk dastans. He had works which he had prepared in that vein. He had published some of them in the form of pamphlets. His knowledge of Arabic language and literature was also excellent. He had translated into Turkish and published the Arabic syntax book called *Kafiye*. I consulted him about my education plans, but, as he knew of my talent in writing, suggested that I stay in Astrakhan as a writer and get married there. But, I indicated that I had the thought of going to Kazan and continue with my education, leaving by boat.

I left for Kazan, as a semi-stowaway, among the cargo of a boat. But, before arriving in Kazan, I thought of staying somewhere, to earn some money. After passing Saratov, I disembarked at a boat landing called Balakov and walked to the farm of a Russian named Prokhorov. I was wearing my winter clothes that I had made for me in Astrakhan, and I was carrying my books on my back. The distance to the farm turned out to be thirty kilometers long. My feet swelled. I arrived at that farm in the afternoon, entered a tea house and wrote my mother and Ibrahim Kaçkinbay each a letter. I told them of the difficulties I was experiencing, adding that, since I had resolved to pursue education, I would withstand all. I did not have the courage to write my father, because I knew he was cross with me.

I worked at the threshing machine of that farm for fifteen days. On one hand, this occupation had the nature of an enjoyable entertainment for me. I had thought of staying there possibly for twenty five days, but the director (upravliaiushchi) of the farm became angry with me upon discovery of a defect in the threshing machine. I was very distressed. I asked that my wages be paid to me thinking "may no benefit be derived from earnings made under insult." When the director realized that he was in the wrong, he paid me for the sixteenth day as well. I returned to the Balakov landing on foot, to preserve my earnings. There, I had to wait for the next boat for one day. In the meantime, it transpired that a Kemelik Baskurt by the name of Guzeyir was returning to his village with his carriage. I asked him whether he would take me along so that I may see the Kemelik region Baskurt (meaning, the Baskurt of the Kemelik River basin), because it is said that an ancestor of mine named Istogan had died there. He gladly took me along. We had arrived at a place called Solak and to villages whose names I now cannot recall. During our 1917 Baskurdistan movement, many very valuable personages joined us from among these Kemelik Baskurt. This trip of mine turned out to be of use for matters that were to take place nine years later. Next day, I again returned to the Balakov landing with someone who was going there. I could not catch the boat; it became necessary to wait for another. I took this opportunity to write my mother and to Ibrahim a long letter describing my labors at the Russian farm and my Kemelik trip. Though I never wrote poetry, I wrote this letter describing



that chapter of my endeavors in rhyme. Later on, I learned that many acquaintances had read that letter and copied by hand. On the boat, I busied myself with translating Pushkin's work the Pugachev Rebellion.

## *Mercani and his works—*

As soon as arriving in Kazan, as he was my maternal uncle's spiritual master, I visited the medrese of Sehabettin Mercani and his son Burhan Molla. I spoke with the muderris Safi Hazret and the other halifes in his medrese. Mercani certainly was the greatest Islamic scholar who emerged from among the Moslems of Russia during the last centuries. He was also known among the Russian Orientalists. He had attended their congresses. But, Safi Hazret, who was managing his medrese, did not satisfy me. My relations with Kasim Hazret and his entourage were good. But I regarded the milieu of Mercani as mine, since my maternal uncle was trained there. I was reading, in the libraries of his son Burhan Molla and the elder of Kazan, Alimcan Barudi, the "Vefayat al aslaf" named as yet unpublished eight volume history by Mercani in Arabic. One volume of this work, constituting the introduction, was printed. Mercani had expressed many liberal thoughts in that "Mukaddime," matching Arab philosopher Ibn Khaldun. Mercani had devoted this great work of his, as he had mentioned in the Arabic summary of his *Muntahab al-Vakfiye*, published during 1881, to the history of the Caliphs, biographies of Islamic scholars, and in the final volumes, he wrote about the Volga region, Turkistan and Ottoman scholars. As I had heard certain things about this great work ever since my childhood, it was a great pleasure reading it. Though we learn, from the publications of the Russian [sic] Academy of Sciences Kazan filial, that today this great work is in the Kazan university library, we again learn, from the publications of the same Russian Academy, that not even a Russian summary of this work is done, nor is even an index of it yet compiled. The numerous initiatives I had undertaken to bring a photocopy (film) of this work to Istanbul University, via Professor Ali Muzaffer Bey, the Turkish ambassador to Moscow, did not yield a result. During 1908-1909 I had read this eight volume work from beginning to end, producing a one volume of summary in Turkish. In 1915, on the 100th anniversary of Mercani's birth, Archeological Society of Kazan University had produced a summary from that summary, which was, on that occasion, published in Russian. It is an astonishing fact that, among the Eastern Turks, no individual had emerged to read and prepare a concordance of this very important cultural historical source. Apparently, lately, from among the Kazan Tatars, no historian equipped with appropriate command of Arabic had emerged.

## *Reformers in Kazan—*

Among the Kazan Tatars, there was a group of people who wished to conduct wide-ranging reforms in the interest of positive nationalist outcomes, as well as a milieu of

young adults who were pursuing the thought of upgrading the schools. In general, I was not exchanging thoughts with many people. They were publishing a newspaper called *Islah* (Improvement). I had talks with those gentlemen. I found them without a plan, hesitant, and their ideas without a foundation. They were interested in changing the nature of their Tatar medrese into a gymnasium (college preparatory school), school of engineering and a university all at the same time. In my view, realistically, two types of educational institutions could be salvaged out of these outdated *medrese*. A portion could become 'theological seminary' as the Christians had, and another segment could become 'teacher's college.' On this matter, I had published a proposal in the Tatar newspaper *Beyan al Haq* (Expression of Justice). This thought was not well received by the 'reformists' with the exception of the intellectuals. The poet Abdullah Tokay wrote a poem because of my published piece, and an author by the name of Fatih Emirhan issued a couple of commentaries. However, they thought the piece was written by one Abdullah Ismeti. Their responses were in the nature of derision. Abdullah Tokay wrote his satire beginning with the line "ol ziyalidir, bilemsin marifet hikmet sata (he is an intellectual, don't you know, he is selling skill and talent)." When I met this poet shortly afterward, and he understood that it was not Abdullah Ismeti who wrote the piece but I was the author, he realized many a point he made in his satire was incorrect. Since the group which this poet belonged (the Fatih Emirhan group) were addicted to alcohol and gambling, and I did not join them frequently. I often visited Abdullah Tokay personally, in the rooms where he lived at the Bulgar Hotel. He grew curious about Chaghatay literature, when I informed him that the poem that started with the letter *qaf*, and expounding *qazi, qozu, qiz, qaz and qimiz* was descended from Shaybaq Han. However, the matter did not bloom since his close friends were not interested. Tokay wrote a piece about his satirical poem, stating his misunderstanding my article, for the newspaper *El-Islah* (the Reformer). The owner of the newspaper, Fatih Emirhan was haughty and conceited, and took umbrage of my proposal and did not publish Tokay's latter piece. Later, they all learned: the reason for the misunderstanding of my proposal was due to a column of it was thrown away by the owner of *Beyan al Haq*.

## *Making acquaintance of Musa Carullah and Abdurresit—*

The famous Islamic scholar Musa Carullah was living directly above the administration of the newspaper *The Reformer*. I met him. He was pleased that I was captivated by Arabic literature. We discussed the thought of Al-Maarri, and his own thought which he wrote in the Arabic language newspaper *et-Tilmidh* he was publishing. In his house, I met the famous traveller and author Abdurresit Ibrahim. I discovered he knew my father from way back, as they had travelled together for the pilgrimage. He took me to his home in the subdivision of Kazan known as *Yeni Biste*. I told him my concerns on education. His thoughts on the subject resembled Rizaeddin Fahreddin:

“It is not necessary to journey to Syria or Egypt in order to study Arabic subjects. Ahmet Sanqiti, one of the great masters of Arabic linguistics, is visiting for a year and living in Kasim Damolla’s home. Learn Arabic topics from him and Musa Carullah. To study Russian, do not enroll in Russian Teacher’s College, it is the seat of intrigue. Learn Russian privately, you can later pass the exam, or take the gymnasium test. Kostanay Tatar Abdullah Ismeti is doing all this.” The next day, I broached the same subject to Musa Carullah, he repeated the same ideas. The subject that occupied me for the past two years, whether to journey to Islamic countries or stay in Russia for my education, was thus resolved in favor of staying in Russia and completing my learning in Russian. In general, I preferred to consult persons I trust, if the decision I was to make at the end I knew to be a turning point in my life. I always benefited from this practice.

Since I had no money, I entered the Kasimiye *medrese*. The lessons in the medrese were not of any interest to me. I only followed the algebra lessons taught by the teacher Fatih Muhammedyarov. I started visiting Ahmet Sanqiti, taking Arab literature lessons. I read the anecdotes by the Arab author Hariri. Ahmet Sanqiti as well as Musa Carullah and Kasim Hazret were helping me with a certain regular monthly payment. Master Musa assigned me to read the collection of Arab poet Tarfa Ibn al Abd and ibn Durayd’s kaside. Master Musa was also testing me in Russian and providing me with helpful books. At the same time, he asked me to correct the type-sets of two of his books which were at press (*Al muvafaqat* and *Ifadat al Kiram*), and he gave me more money specifically for that task. Son of Master Abdurresit, Munir Bey was the Editor of *Beyan al Haq*. He had me correct the scientific writings to be published in the paper and had me paid for the labor. In addition, the owner of *Beyan al Haq*, Muhammedcan Saydasev, was also publishing an annual attached to this newspaper called *Malumat* (Information). He assigned the task of writing for it, and I translated, from Russian, a series on bee keeping. One day, this Muhammedcan Saydasev commented about me to Munir Bey, son of Master Abdurresit, ‘he speaks good Russian, Arabic, Persian, but he goes around in village clothes; I will have clothes made for him.’ Later he called me and told me that he would have a suit in the Tatar style made for me. In response, I told him that I would not wear a city dwelling Tatar outfit either; instead I will be wearing Russian style clothes. He was put-off. The same day I went to the Kazan flea market where old clothes were sold, and bought a Russian style black suit. Muhammedcan Saydasev, upon observing that I arrived at the administration offices in this suit, stopped paying me for my labors. These Saydasev’s were exceedingly fanatical people.

## *Private Russian and Islamic knowledge education—*

I was studying Russian language and literature from Emilyanov, who was a teacher at the non-Russian teacher’s school right next to Kasimiye medrese. Except, since the

Kazan citizens regarded everyone entering that school to convert into Christianity, I did not meet him there, but at his home. In Kazan, I spent all my time:

1. Reading the unpublished works of Mercani
2. Studying Arabic literature
3. Preparing to take the exam to become a Russian language teacher.

There was another objective I was reluctant to let go: I wanted to learn the Kur’an and Fikih (canon law), by comparing the Russian translations and the Arabic originals, with the aid of a knowledgeable person, in order to obtain a true knowledge as these two subjects constituted the foundations of the culture and the religion I belonged. Master Abdurresit indicated that Imam Sadik Imankuli would be a suitable teacher for the purpose. My uncle had advised me to learn literature deeply, and I could learn Kur’an and Fikih later. For that reason I had remained ignorant of the basics of Islam. I retained a desire to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of our religion. Imam Imankuli agreed to teach me privately. Twice a week he taught me the ‘true path’ from the Kur’an and Fikih. I was reading the Sablukov’s Russian translation of the Kur’an, and the Russian translation of Hidaye (true path) published in Tashkent, and we were comparing them with Imam Imankuli. After three months of this work I began to realize that the Bukhara educated Sadik Mullah’s knowledge was not as wide as needed to tackle this task. At the same time, I also realized it was not my business to learn the basics of our religion from the Arabic originals as it demanded too much time, and if I persisted, I would have to stop preparing for the exams that would appoint me to a Russian language instructorship as well as earning a high school diploma. Besides, what would I gain by plumbing the depths of Kur’an and Fikih in order to learn the ‘true’ knowledge? Three months later, I reduced my labors on this to one hour per week, later completely abandoned it. I satisfied myself by reading Sablukov and Hidaye’s Russian translation, to obtain a general knowledge on the subjects. Even though my Islamic knowledge was limited, since I knew well the Islamic history, culture, historical geography, economic conditions at various eras, I was Professor of ‘Islamic Knowledge’ at Bonn and Gottingen Universities during 1935-1939, and Director of ‘Islamic Research Institute’ at the University of Istanbul which I myself founded. As my primary specialization is Turk history, and I desired to devote my work to that subject, in 1953 I had accepted the Directorship of the Islamic Institute in Istanbul for a period of six months; a suitable replacement as Professor and Director still has not emerged. I surmise that this condition is an indication of how backward the Islamic sciences remained in the Turkish Republic as of late. In reality, it is rare to find a Professor equipped with the Eastern and Western languages in the field of Islamic culture in the Turk lands. For example, Muhammed Sefi and Zakir Huseyin in India, Takizade in Iran was not reared in our lands for whatever reason. However, there were distinguished scholars such as Ismail Saib, Babanzade Naim, and Hamdi Aksekili when I arrived in the Turkish Republic in 1925. In the

meantime, since the university began following the path of Islamic culture instead of the theology known by the aforementioned, their existence did not serve the purpose. Islamologists, capable of Eastern and Western languages in the contemporary context, only began to emerge among us.

Let us return to Kazan once more. I benefited from Ahmed Sanqiti quite a bit. I read a large portion of the Arab author Hariri's *Maqamat*, Cahiz's *Turklerin Fazileti*, and the old *cahili* poet's *On Makame* under his guidance. In addition, at his suggestion, I wrote a thirty-two page paper in Arabic on Kazan scholar Sehabettin Mercani, on his life and works, and presented my work to him. Sanqiti knew my interest in and love for Turkish history. After he returned to his homeland, he wrote and sent me many a poem extant in Arabic literature on Turks. Among them, a poem, as follows, remained in my memory:

*"In those steppes, Turk fawn ate the saxaul; immediately his blood became musk."*

At the Rawalpindi congress, the Palestine muftu Muhammad Emin al Huseyni read me the same poem. Apparently, it is part of a well-known poem in the Arabic literature.

## *Meeting Katanov and Asmarin—*

The aforementioned Emilyanov introduced me to teacher and Orientalist Nikolai Asmarin, who was teaching at the non-Russian Teacher's School and finally with the Professor N.F. Katanov. In that manner, I met the milieu of Kazan Orientalists. Nikolai was a Cuvass Turk. Nikolay Katanov, on the other hand, was a Sagay Turk from the Altai. Both had completed the Russian Oriental Institute, and joined the Russian Orientalists. I benefited much from both. That year, I translated Asmarin's paper *Tatar Edebiyati*, which he published in the Russian Ministry of Education journal in Russian, to Tatar. This translation was later published as a tract in Orenburg, by the *Vakit* press. As a summary: that winter, I was very loaded, I read much, I benefited much. I lived a pauper's life. In March, I received seventy Russian Rubles from my father, and from Ibrahim, forty Rubles. My mother and Ibrahim's mother sent me quite a few things including underwear, etcetera. I breathed a comfortable sigh as a result. I could now buy books and hire tutors with the money in order to prepare for the exams of the Teacher's School. Asmarin found me a teacher named Gluxarev. I followed the Russian literature, mathematics and pedagogy classes.

## *Summer Vacation at the Village—*

In May of 1909, while returning with a steamboat, I arrived at Ufa. There I met Ziyaeddin Kemali who opened a *medrese* and was working toward nationalist goals and some other individuals. This was my first visit to the seat of our province. There I met a Russian teacher by the name of Filonenko who was seriously working on the history of the Baskurts, who was to publish the results of his work in a few years'

time. When I arrived at our village, my father and maternal uncle completely forgot their resentments. My father was authoritative at home; we were afraid of him and respected him. But he liked it if the answers to his questions were rough. He did not believe that I was studying Arabic at Kazan, and thought that I was studying Russian. First time we spoke, he asked me to summarize what I learned from the Russians, good and bad. I responded with "the good is learning to urinate standing-up; the bad is putting a collar around our neck." He liked it very much. Later I learned that he repeated my statement to others as what I learned from the Russians was only a new way of urinating and wearing a collar and tie, in a jocular manner. Because, according to my father our life-style and civilization was so excellent, we had nothing to learn from the Russians and Europeans except new technologies. They learned my habit of smoking tobacco from the smell of my clothes. They did not look kindly to my wearing clothes resembling the Russians. The tobacco smell emitted by these clothes caused both my mother and father to experience stomach wrenching. They hung those clothes in the attic, till I left in the fall. I wore my old clothes. The morning after my arrival, I rode my favorite *kula* horse. While returning home, I saw the Misher girl Leylbedir, whom I loved from earlier times, washing clothes in the small River behind our house. Upon seeing me, she, later I learned, now was engaged to another fellow, ran away. My genuine feelings toward her had not changed. I sent her, with my youngest brother, the words of a popular song that I transcribed: "*I wonder if her wrists do not get tired washing clothes in the River? Will not her heart burn when she sees me occasionally as a neighbor?*" She responded with a missive to me: "*The cuffs of his trousers are narrow, it is said that he is smoking tobacco at the medrese where he went to study the Kur'an; from the dirty smell, the villagers are sneezing and cannot sleep; let this buster's mouth, mustache burn but not the village.*" No Misher girl, who were not known to compose poetry, could write such a metered and rhyming poem, called *taqmaq*. Later on I realized that my niece Muhiye wrote that poem. In other words, smoking tobacco was such a despicable act amongst us; she immediately forced me to face the issue. Even though I wanted to completely give up cigarettes, I was only able to realize that ambition fifteen years later, after arriving in Germany. However, under the influence of this girl, whom I liked very much to see even occasionally, I did not smoke during that summer vacation, even in secret.

## *It became necessary to wear eye glasses—*

After staying at our home for a few days, I rode my *kula* horse, which had missed me very much, to the Yaruv and Karagas plains, to see Ibrahim Kackinbay. I only understood the affection I had for the depth of my affection for him after this year of separateness. On the road, I often recalled and repeated the poem by Navai "*a brave among those whose faces are like angels stole my heart.*" When I reached Karagas Yurt, Ibrahim killed a sheep, and invited our friends. All of them were my age, but all were married, and instead of going back to their wives at night, they stayed with



us and listened to what happened and what I learned during the past year. Hunting woodpeckers, on horseback *bilen karav* running around the mountains, drinking kimiz was pleasant and occupied our time. There was a misfortune at the Nigus River; while we were fishing at night with torches and forked spears, I caught a cold. There was fear that I caught pneumonia, left the plateau in a cart, lying on pillows, returned back to the village. I was laid-up for a month, maybe more. Even though my father was an Islamic scholar, he allowed my mother to call a bagucu (shaman) by the name of Ayneddin to treat me. While I was in bed, recuperating, I read the novel supplements of the newspaper *Birjeviya Vedemosti*. The aforementioned Murad Remzi's two volume history was banned by the Tsarist government, because it contained, in quite graphical language, the atrocities committed against the Moslems by the Russians. The publication costs were underwritten by Zeynullah Isan, who was my father's Seyh. The volumes that were secreted away from the confiscation were sent to us and to my maternal uncle. My father had undertaken the task of distribution of these. Even though it contained some negative thoughts, since it made the Tsarist government angry in plenty of places, I read it time and again, and influenced deeply by it to work on the Turkish history. It turned out, by forcing myself to read in bed, I became near-sighted. I realized that when I tried to play the familiar bow-and-arrow game after I was able to leave the bed. We were able to pass the arrow over the crescent moon placed on the minaret of the mosque close to our home. I was a master of this. This time, I could not see the crescent moon when I tried to shoot over it. I was informed it was there. Later, when I went to the forest to hunt birds, I realized that my eyes were no longer good to see the distance. As a result, three to four months later, I was obliged to wear glasses, even though I dislike them.

### *Some differences of thoughts with my father—*

Every year, when I was returning to our village, I would bring a friend from Ufa, or one of them would arrive for recreation. This particular year, while returning from Kazan, I had stayed for a few days at Ufa, at the home of Hayrullah Ahund Osmanov, who was an Islamic scholar and a friend of my father's. His sons Abdulbari and Ibrahim were studying at Russian schools. Ibrahim was registered at the Lazarev Eastern Languages Institute in Moscow. A little later, Ibrahim arrived, even though we were far away from Ufa. His objective was to continue our talks on Orientalist training and rest. That year, my father had published a book in Egypt in Arabic on Islamic theology and social issues. Ibrahim brought a copy of this book. I now cannot recall the details, but we had debated some of the matters in that volume and discovered that we had a difference of opinion with my father. My mother, like my father, regarded that difference as a negative outcome of the Russian education. Bekbulat Hazret, who lived at Sayran village, eight kilometers away from us, was a great master of tasavvuf (mysticism). My father liked to converse with him in a pleasant way. He suffered from an ache in his

lower back for years. Since he believed that, if he were to journey to Bukhara, and rest his lower back on the tree guarding the entrance of the mausoleum of Seyh Bahaeddin Naksibend, he would be cured. He did that, stayed at the cemetery for a period and returned to his village. My father and mother regarded him as a pilgrim equal to one who had just returned from pilgrimage to Makkah, went to visit him. I laughed at Bekbulat Isan when he stated that no disease stayed in his lower back. Because, I did not believe in tasavvuf and that visitation of mausolea would be beneficial. My mother and father were hurt by my laughter. My father, first of all, stated "it is insolent of you to laugh at the face of the old Seyh; secondly, I do not like you entering the road of repudiation," and did not speak with me for the remainder of the day. That year, as such 'understanding differences' were beginning to repeatedly emerge; my father and mother were perturbed. After I got out of my sick-bed, even though I was still shaky, I returned to Alagoyan-basi. However, Ibrahim was suspicious of my words and behavior. He stated that I was observed tying my boot wrapping from the left, and wearing the left boot first. He also did not like me to be reading a book by the name of Siskov, expounding nihilism, ideas against the Czar and religion. He did not want to see anything get between our very friendly relations and stated that "if the outside world has this kind of influence on you, years will amplify those differences and we will end-up with a chasm between us."

### *Second Astrakhan trip—*

In the fall, my father accompanied me to the railroad station. My maternal uncle recommended I visit Astrakhan; he handed me some presents for Abdurrahman Omerov and a small barrel of honey. That year, my father and Ibrahim Kackinbay sold a horse each, and gave the proceeds to me. My mother also gave me money. From that point of view, my trip to Astrakhan was pleasant. I wanted to visit the old palace city and ruins, but the Molla did not have time, and I gave up the desire. I wrote for the *Edil* newspaper which he was publishing. Even though these were newspaper articles, they were my first scientific output. First of all, I published a critical analysis of the aforementioned work of Murad Remzi. That author had attacked Mercani unjustly. Since I regarded Mercani a forward thinker and Murad Remzi as a recidivist, I defended Mercani forcefully, and ended my piece with an Arabic poem "if someone's actions are agreeable, his faults will also be received with a blind eye; if another person is resented, they will dig for his dirty clothes." This writing of mine was well received by Mercani's students and friends.

Abdurrahman Molla, together with two Imams by the names of Abdurrahman Ilekf and Mehmet Sadik in Astrakhan, began publishing a journal called *Maarif* (education). They wanted me to take over as editor. One day, these Sadik and Abdurrahman Mollas took me to a historical place called Sungur Tube near Astrakhan. At the home of a rich Nogay Haji, an excellent Nogay national menu was prepared. They stated that this person had a very beautiful daughter, and warned me to pay attention, that

they would point her out to me. A little later, in front of the open window where I was seated, a two wheeled, covered and ornately decorated carriage called Koyme, stopped. Out came a very beautiful girl clad in Nogay national dress. This was a magnificent view. She was exactly my type. Later I learned that she was the daughter of a family well known to the author Necip Asri of Astrakhan.

Upon returning to Astrakhan, they insisted that I accept the editorship of *Maarif* journal, and remain in Astrakhan. Abdurrahman Molla's this invitation, compared to the one he made the year before, was much bossier. When I responded that I could not, coolness entered between us. I moved from Abdurrahman Molla's home to a hotel. When I left Astrakhan, Molla did not bother to buy me a ferry boat ticket, and did not accompany me to the landing. He did not even pay me the author's fee for the article I wrote for the *Edil* newspaper. They knew of my monetary poverty, and wanted to take advantage of that to force me to become a journal writer. I had no intention of becoming such at the level of Astrakhan and be stuck. I wrote a lengthy letter to Abdurrahman Molla after I left Astrakhan explaining all this. The primary reason for my declining the very favorable invitation pivoted around the religious interests of the publishers, and their backward thinking. We had debated certain issues deeply; I came to realize I could never reform them. That Omerof knew the fact that I even stood up to my father and my maternal uncle, whom I loved very much, in intellectual matters, so that I could not understand the behavior of Omerof behaving haughtily toward me.

I could never forget the girl Abdurrahman and Muhammed sadik Molla showed me at the home of a rich haji in a Nogay village. Since this extraordinary girl, resplendent in her Nogay clothes, was educated in and able to read and write in Turkish, I seriously considered writing her a letter and visiting Astrakhan one again the following year. However, I recalled the question asked of a famous Arab Commander Muhalleb ibn Abi Sufra "How were you able to obtain the victories (such as the large scale conquest of Horasan) you accomplished?" He replied with an answer I liked so very much "in every action, concentrating on the act, and rebelling against desire." I decided not to write the girl. I wanted to learn and be educated, not married.

This second Astrakhan trip resulted in some curious outcomes as well. There, in the hands of a village Imam named Cemil, I found a manuscript written by Ibn Kutaybe who died in the year A.D. 889, entitled *al-Imama va'l-siyasat*, and wrote an article on it in the aforementioned *Edil* newspaper. In this manuscript, those Emevi Caliphs we were taught to be bad were lauded, and some others who have acquired halos of sanctity criticized, and I liked the work altogether. The well-known scholar of the time aforementioned Rizaeddin Fahreddin did not wish to believe that a copy of this important work was extant in our country, or thought that I had mistaken another work as this one. He had borrowed temporarily the said manuscript, inspected the contents, became convinced of the correct lessons I had derived from it in the newspaper article. As one result, he had acquired a never waning trust in me. He told me all this in 1926 when he arrived in Istanbul as my house guest. With these two articles,

I had actively started my research into the history of Turks, as well as that of Islamic history.

## *Foundations of my friendship with Abrurrahman Molla—*

Abdurrahman Molla, too, arrived in Istanbul along with Rizaeddin Fahreddin in 1926. He was also my house guest. For a time, we stayed at the Bursa thermal baths. He apologized with "you visited Astrakhan twice, and I was faulty in not rendering full respect on both occasions." I responded with "you had rendered much respect, there was nothing missing." He continued "there were shortages; I was not able to understand you well. I could not show you the Old Palace ruins and other historical places as a comrade. I did not think of inviting my master Habib Neccar and your father, hosting them for a couple of months. I had considerable wealth, all of it became fodder to the dogs and the birds; I am sad that I could not spend it with friends." In addition he recited from al-Maarri, which he knew quite well "we like life because we are afraid of death; we become brigands due to our ambitions, and we leave this world without gaining a respected friend." He began crying, he added "you left our lands, and you are like dead to us. We hear friends remaining alive, but to me they are dead; they speak of a collective life. In reality, the people of a collective is separated from others with a Wall of China, became completely isolated." Abdurrahman Omerov was very pessimistic. I heard that he died shortly after returning to his home.

I had earlier heard from a student of Abdurrahman Molla, by the name of Sahip Gerey, who was then a student at the Kazan University, how Abdurrahman Molla was relating how he was pitying himself for not showing me the Old Palace ruins, traveling with me to see the places mentioned in the old Baskurt and Nogay narratives even though I really wanted to see those places. He was also sad that while I was leaving he had not bought my steamboat ticket, did not come to support me, and I was compelled to work in a Russian farm in Bulkov in order to earn money for travelling. In other words, he began telling these after I had become a well-known person, while I had not attached any import to any of it. I had not realized how closely Molla was genuinely attached to me and my family. Molla also had stated "I realized how right you were in turning down the editorship of a small journal in Astrakhan, when I heard of your speech to the 1917 Moscow Congress entitled 'Ethnography of the Russian Moslems.' Later on, you accomplished great things. Riza Hazret and I believe that you will do much more. When you arrived in Astrakhan, I saw myself as your second father; because, I regard myself a member of my teacher's (Habib Naccar) family. Thus my authoritative behavior toward you; I was certain that you would follow my word and also naturally become enthralled with the beautiful Nogay girl at the village."

Now, what do I think: Why did I travel to Astrakhan in 1908 and 1909, back-to-back to Abdurrahman Molla? He was not any relation of mine, even distantly. When he visited us, I was so young, I did not remember him at all. Astrakhan was

about one thousand kilometers away from us, and why did I wish to consult with this Molla concerning my future life and educational issues? I of course knew that he was a beloved student of my maternal uncle at the Mercani Medrese. But, his relationship with my father began when Molla began explaining and showing the historical places that occur in the Kara Nogay dastans which he was very lovingly studying, such as Edilbasi Eremen Tav, Yayikbasi Karaorman, and accompanied my father to visit those places. He further explained and showed my father and veli Molla, as he learned from my Grand Uncle, Boskuncak and Bozan, occurring in the Baskurt narratives, as places in the vicinity of Astrakhan. Abdurrahman Molla regarded us as relatives who were left in the distance, when he visited the old lands Bokuncak and Bozan in the vicinity of Astrakhan mentioned in the still remembered Kara Nogay dastans, and continually corresponded with my father. Molla collected plenty of his own Nogay's poetry and dastans from the 16<sup>th</sup> century when they lived in the Yayik basin, Southern and Eastern Ural and Aral lake regions and published a portion as a pamphlet in 1909. Kara Nogay kept the dastans alive concerning Baskurt Han Kucuk Sultan and his son Murad Sultan, and a portion of those was published by a Nogay scholar, Muhammed Osmanov, in Petersburg. Murad Sultan, in 1708 on his way to Crimea and Türkiye, Nogay Bey Allaguvat Mirza and his tribe Yedisian from the Allaguvat village, which is not far from us, accompanied him to the shores of Volga. When Abdurrahman Molla visited us, he went to that village and spoke with the Baskurt who had not yet forgotten that they were Nogay. To Abdurrahman Molla and those who thought like him, the homeland of the Nogay began from Yaxsay and Kuban in Daghestan, stretched all the way to Western Siberia and the Aral Sea. They recalled all the events in that region vividly as if they took place yesterday. My father's and Grand Uncle Kuzenoglu Veli Molla's geography stretched from the East, Tobil; in the North, Cubarkoy and Miyes River; in the West, Kemelik River, in the South, Boskuncak in Bokeyorda and Buzani and Kuban around Astrakhan. In these memoirs, the reason I stress the trips I took to Astrakhan and our relations with Abdurrahman Molla, is to show that our uruk is extremely traditional and in history lived from Tobol in the East to Astrakhan and Kuban in the West, mixed with very lively other nomadic uruks, and have been devoted to the historical events they lived together. The lives of groups living in Central Asia and the Urals and the individuals belonging to them, such as myself, can only be understood in this context.

### *Vice Captain of our steamboat—*

I spent this Astrakhan trip among the students of Mercani, hearing the anecdotes of this great scholar's time. While I was returning to Kazan via a steamboat on the Volga River, I spent my time reading Mercani's *al-Tarikat al-Muthla* which distilled all his ideas on Islamic religion. I also had with me the Russian translation of J. W. Draper's *Conflict between Religion and Science*, and Professor Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky's *History of Russian Intellectuals*. The colds started early. The steamboat

could no longer navigate the River at night, due to the ice forming. It is a good thing I had these works with me. I had earlier learned of the liberal thoughts contained in Draper's book from the writings of Ahmet Mithat Efendi in Türkiye. I thus re-learned them from Russian. In Turkish it was comprehensive; the Russian translation was made from an anti-Catholic point of view. That book and Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky's, are among the books that had the best influences on me in my life. The small box of sweet apples called Enis I bought along the way, in Saritsin (now Stalingrad), proved to be helpful. But, the third class room I was in was cold. I was shivering. Every time I passed the Vice Captain on board, I noticed that he was taking note of the books I was reading. One day, he invited me into his state room above. He said he had "never seen a Moslem interested in these books; why don't you stay here" and placed me in a warm room next to the First Mate. It turned out, this Captain was an intellectual, and he had the same books which he had read. He was from Simbirsk, he knew well the Akcurins among the Tatars. He asked me about the contents of the Arabic book I was reading. He gave me his address. Later on he sent me by mail P. Miliukov's *History of the Russian Civilization*, and the Russian translation of Draper's *History of European Enlightenment* and a couple of books by Chernishevsky as a present. This person also was the reason for my meeting of the intellectual Ibrahim Akcurin from Simbirsk. Ibrahim Bey, who passed away during the Soviet period, in addition to Russian, also spoke German, Chaghatay and Uyghur. A year later I journeyed to Simbirsk and stayed in his house. Until 1923 when I left Russia, I spoke with him and corresponded in the Uyghur alphabet. He and his family had the best influences on me. I was forever grateful to the Captain for introducing us. Our steamboat, crunching the surface ice of the water, reached Kazan with difficulty. There, we took our leaves with fondness toward each other with this very likeable Captain and unfortunately I was never able to see him again.

### *My teaching in Kazan and the Russian Milieu—*

This school year (winter of 1909-1910), I was appointed teacher of Turkish History and Arabic Literature at the Kasimiye Medrese. I rented a room at Kazan's Russian section, in the home of a large family named Shalygin, who owned a large farm. Their son named Nikolay (Kolia) was my close friend who was studying medicine. Two of us lived in the same room the entire winter. They were attempting to have me eat pork as a joke, but could not succeed. I thought that I succeeded in having them eat the horse meat as if it was goose, and believed I succeeded. It turned out that they ate it knowing it was horse meat. In the winter my mother was sending me pilmen named Tatar borek (pastry filled with meat and vegetables) in a frozen state. We were getting along famously. They were living in Kazan during the winter so that their children could go to school. I began writing my book on *Turk History* as a textbook. I was reading the book of Professor Karayev on historical research and writing, also giving lectures on the



topic. It turned out, fortunately, that book was a summary of the German Professor E. Bernheim and the French historian Seignobos's historical methodology works. Later on (in the 1950s) while I was writing my *Methods in History* volume, while benefiting from the books of those two Western scholars, I realized how correct was Karayev's understanding of history and how much time he had saved me by acquainting me with those scholars. I was also reading the Orientalist Professor Barthold's notes on Central Asian history, which was living in Petersburg, printed with the stone tablet method. At that time I also read the works of Karamzin and Solovyev on Russian history containing information on our national past. I read the Russian chroniclers as well as the works of French scholar Leon Cahun and English scholar Henry Howorth on Turk and Mongol history in Russian. Leon Cahun's work was abridged in the *E. Lavisse at Rambo* in Russian, and the entire volume was translated into Russian by the famous Baskurt lawyer Ali Asgar Sirtlanov. I had obtained that volume from the family of General Seyh Ali. The portion on Cengiz Khan from Howorth was published in Russian in the journal *Ortaasya* (Central Asia) in Tashkent. That year, with all those, I had entered the correct path in order to learn the history of the Turks. With the aid of Professor Katanov, I began obtaining printed source works from the Western booksellers in London and Leiden as well as from Tashkent and Baku. Also with Katanov's help, I obtained the facsimile copies of Persian books of Mirhond and Hondemir as well as the memoirs of Babur Mirza from the bookseller Luzaq in London. The sections on Mongol history from D'Ohsson and Howorth in abridged Russian versions made me aware that I needed to fully learn French and English from scratch in order to read those works in their entirety.

I continued to attend preparatory classes in order to pass the non-Russian Teacher's School as well as the High School graduation exams, in addition to my work as a teacher at the medrese. Even if I could not pass the High School exams, I thought that I could become a Russian teacher. Rklitski and Arbakov, who taught prep classes in Latin, German and mathematics, helped me to meet the Russian intellectual circles. I quite often went to the Russian city theater with them. Once I went to the opera and listened to the guest singer Chaliapin sing *King Lear*. Later on, when I saw this great artist in 1934 at the Austrian town of Kitzbuhl, I related to him my impressions of listening to him the first time. Shalygin family, in whose home I lived, provided me with the occasions of meeting with many other intellectual Russian families. I went to plays and danced with their daughters. We used to go ice skating on Lake Kaban with their daughter Tatyana. Every member of the Shalygin family was fond of me. However, our religious differences always placed boundaries on our relationships. I never drank alcohol, and they never offered me any. Their family library contained a full complement of Russian classics, and I widely benefitted from them. My work at the medrese was constructive. Before me, no classes were taught on Turk history or Arabic literature. However, everyone was pleased due to this new development. I had many students and they were happy not only with what they were learning, but also liked to help me. One of the students brought, from his own village, a good copy of the Persian language collection of poems by Devletsah, the Turkmen Bey of Samarkand

who lived under the over-all rule of the Timur Bey's offspring, which was recorded close to the time in which the author lived. Finding the Arabic work by Ibn Qutaybe in Astrakhan, and in Kazan, the Persian work of Devletsah, reminded me that in our country one could find works on Islamic and Central Asian civilization if one looked. That also gave birth to the idea that one needed to search for them, which put me on that track later on. Also, both the Tatar scholar Sihabeddin Mercani and the German Orientalist Gottwald, who was then living in Kazan, found some important works in the last century. I asked my students to let me know, if they knew of the existence of such volumes in their villages. During the four years of teaching at the Kasimiye medrese, I learned of the existence of many such works, obtained them or went to see them where they were kept.

The orientalist Ch. Fraehn, back in 1840, had published a work indicating the names of manuscripts that ought to be searched, constituting the basis of historical Islamic culture. That was also a helpful resource.

That year, my German language instructor Rklitski indicated that it was a useful method to learn German by comparing the German translations of works from Arabic, Persian or Turkish with their originals. I had done the same in learning Russian, so, I was leaning toward that path. Professor Katanov also recommended the same method, and suggested that I pursue Turcologist Radloff's *Specimens of the People's Literature of the Turks* and the *Kutadgu Bilig*. All this changed my direction into studying the dastans of the Turk populations. In the meantime, I also studied Professor Pozneyev's *Mongol Tribes' literature Specimens*. That allowed me to add the Mongol studies to my workload, in addition to the Turks. As one result of these studies, my first scholarly work entitled "Songs in a four-line structure among the Turk Tribes" was published in the journal *Sura* the next year. Professor Katanov was very, very happy of my endeavors.

## *My learning of the reasons for the historical decline of the Turks and other Islamic Peoples—*

I spent the winter of 1910-1911 again in the home of Shalygin family. The Russian seminary students who were also boarding at the same house were happy to see me read a book by Krimsky, showing the fate of the Russian Moslems in dark tones. The Dutch Professor Dozy's *History of Islam* was translated into Turkish, and it was causing incertitude in my mind. I regarded it my absolute duty to find answers to two questions in the courses I was teaching at Kasimiye:

1. What are the real reasons for the Islamic people, especially the Turks, to fall behind;
2. Is it true that Islam is the primary culprit in this matter?

I was learning the Islamic philosophical ideas through Mecani's *Mukaddimatu Vafiyat-I'l-Aslaf*, through him, reaching back to Ibn Haldun. The necessity of critical examination of historical events, detriment of theocracy, principles of nationalism in this century were among those ideas I liked. I also immediately grasped that other ideas were old and no longer applicable to life or practical for scholarship. I most liked Draper's *Europe's Intellectual Growth* and Meliukov's *History of Russian Civilization* books. After reading those, I wrote a letter to Captain Mishkin expressing my gratitude for introducing me to those writers. I even had translated Draper's chapter on "The end of faith in the East" (Chapter IX) from Russian into Tatar. Because, the ideas contained there on the reasons for the decline seemed original to me. However, when my mathematics and physics teacher Arbiakov introduced me to social democrat Plexanov's books *Materialist Understanding of History* and *The Role of the Individual in History*, I saw that learning history from the prism of economics would serve me better. Reading the same author's *Twenty years of Life* and *Criticizing those who criticize us*, which he wrote under the pseudonym Beltov, in which he expounded the idea "Consciousness does not constitute life; Life constitutes consciousness," directed me toward socialism. And, I had already been leaning in that direction, too. Plexanov attacked the right leaning Russian authors such as P. Struve and Kareev, which I liked very much. I did not find Professor Masaryk's, who later became President of the Czech Republic, criticism of materialism and Marxism convincing. I had labored on Grand Russian thinker Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky's *History of Russian Intelligentsia* since the summer. In his preambles, this author took literature into the center of his work, and I found his criticism of Plexanov (Beltov) very on the mark. In general, Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky was instrumental in my intellectual development of ideas, especially making me understand the distinctions between the Eastern and the Western types of worldview. Reading him, I further understood that materialism only served historical analyses, and since it was a specific ideology belonging to the industrialized Western countries, it was difficult to apply to life conditions in the East. Plexanov and Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky were not devoted to the problems of the East, and did not understand the Eastern issues as well as Draper. In these matters, the Russian Orientalists and the Western Orientalists whose works have been translated into Russian should have been more beneficial to me. However, the many Russian missionaries who were living in Kazan were fully propagandist zealots. Even the Russian translation of the German Professor August Muller's and the Turkish translation of Dutch Professor Dozy's works on the history of Islam were not satisfactory to me. And the university courses of Professor Krinsky's, whose personal friendship later benefited me, on the Arabs and the history of Persian and Turkish literature, were never sufficient. Among the Orientalists, two liberal scholars, Baron Victor von Rosen and Professor W. Barthold, because they had competence in economic doctrines, and because they resonated with the ideas of Plexanov and Ovsianiko-Kulikovsky's, satisfied me. Articles by both of these scholars were published in the *Russian Archeological Society Eastern Branch Zapiski*, and they were very important in critically introducing the Eastern works to the West. I purchased the extant 19 volumes of that journal as a collection. Barthold,

Leon Cahun, Grumm-Grjimaylo, Aristov's critical analyses of the historical works belonging to the Turks was very important. Accordingly, the reason for the Islam to fall behind was not the precepts, but the opening of the sea-trade routes at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that had left the land-trade routes redundant, which provided the Europeans with economic superiority. I accepted the views of Plexanov and Barthold and made them my central point when I was lecturing and began writing my *History of the Turks*. I remained faithful to this understanding of economic history idea in the 1910, as well as in 1940 when I wrote *Introduction to the General Turk History* and *Methodology in History*, both of which were published in Egypt, and those works I published in Istanbul in 1946 and 1950. In other words, it was not necessary to change my ideas that I had made mine while I was in Russia.

## *Developments in my religious considerations—*

For the past two years, I was away from my father's oversight in all matters, yet I continued to perform namaz, though not regularly, and was still under the influence of my parental religious upbringing. This matter was also in the Kur'an (V. 104; XLIII, 21) "Even if the Arabs are ignorant and careless, what we have learned from our fathers will suffice." In the Holy Bible (John, VIII, 41) "it is their stupidity to follow their fathers' path instead of their mothers." And, Abu'l-Ala al-Maarri stated "humans are separated from each other under the guise of religion by following their fathers' precepts blindly." I slept in the same room with Kolia Shalygin, and when we held discussions, we agreed that if there were no fatherly precepts influencing us, there would be no strife. Kolia was completely cold to Christianity. He would have me read the secret writings of a Russian author named Siskov, who claimed that there was no historical person named Jesus, that person was the invention of the priests. In return, I would read him from Abu'l-Ala al-Maarri: "I am surprised that the Brahman rulers washing their faces with cow urine; I wonder about the Christians calling a person God, even when he is being crucified who does not resist and received no help from anyone; another tribe gathers in Mekke in order to stone the devil. I wonder if all these people are blind." Also from Maarri; "They say Jesus arrived and cancelled the religious precepts of Moses; Mohammad brought namaz five times a day, and there will not be another prophet after him; apparently people lost their way between the morning and the evening." Kolia loved those poems, as I translated them into Russian.

I believed that, conscious people could convene and find a mutual religion. I wondered if the ancestral Shamanism of the Turks could become a national religion for us. I thought that, possibly, as it is a natural religion, it had better facets than the religion of the books. However, I thought, since Shamanism did not have a developed literature like the Semites have, it did not turn into a formal religion. I used to read works on Shamanism from Radloff, Mihailov, Verbitsky and especially Cokan Sultan Velihanov's research. Cokan Sultan's collection was always in my hands.

He, too, idealized Shamanism, and he especially liked the selflessness and love of nature in it. I knew, much better, the prayers of the Altai Turks and the Kazaks better than the Arabic prayers. However, these basic precepts did not seduce the large population of Turks from an intellectual point of view. It had not become a systematic religion.

I had been reading the Torah and the Bible since 1908. It was teaching the followers to remain passive in the face of aggression. The fact that it did not punish the assailants made the Russians I knew very skeptical of this religion, and did not satisfy me either. Especially in the Bible (John, VIII, 1-15) Jesus declines to apply the principles of extant law to a public woman, even going as far as stating: “you are ruling according to the physical presence; I do not rule over anybody.” I regarded all those words of a weak, hypocritical community, philosophy born of them. Actually, as Draper stated, Christianity was a religion created by Jews living in Rome, under the oppression of the Romans. The Bible is a collection of stories and does not contain any dictums regulating the internal and external [societal] behavior in life. Principally, it strives to regulate the internal and external life of the individual. To my spirit, “life for a life, eye for an eye, ear for an ear, and tooth for a tooth” principle was more suitable for a struggling warrior society, reflecting their life and values. On the other hand, Islam being the religion of an energetic military milieu, in time, constricted the human self-determination, understanding, and fanaticism took over. The works of Swedish Phander’s *Mizan al-Haq* and the Indian Rahmetulla Dihlevi’s *Izhar al-Haq* portrays such a view as they contrast Islam and Christianity. Among those fanatics, the patriarch of my father’s patriarchs, Naheddin Naqsibendi (d. 1389) and the theologian of Herat, Ali al-Qari (d. 1605), would have shown more violence, I thought, had they been able to put their hands on weapons than Pope Pius II.

I read many a work repudiating God and religion, brought to me by my philosophy teacher Davidov, as issued by the Social Democratic Party. However, the writings rejecting the administration of the universe by a single conscious power assuming different identities under natural laws never satisfied me. In reality, God and religion is dominant on humanity. Anyone rejecting this must separate himself from his nation and will be condemned to live alone. Especially in Moslem countries, the statesmen who wish to aid their nation in social and political spheres, must respect religion even only in form, and forced to trick their people to believe that they will be buried according to the religious ceremony. Therefore, it is necessary to compare and weigh the benefits of displaying irreligious behavior and withdrawing from public life against living with the people in order to be a benefit to them. I am only a teacher and not a statesman. Why do I bother? In that case, if I were to speak frankly, what is my religion? I was thus thinking on 1 May 1910. On that day, one of my students named Osman, and another whose name I cannot now recall, wished very much to know the answer to that question. I gave them the following answer: Humans display their adoration toward the creator of the universe and express that admiration via the ceremonies of one of the religions; seek refuge in that creator during times of

hardship. However, doing this must not prevent the individual from thinking about religious topics. Humans must not allow religion to regulate thought and behavior in the extreme; prevent it taking away the free will, and one must not be completely under the thumb of religion. Islam must be taken as a moral religion and the statement in the Kur’an “if the oceans are writing ink, and if it is necessary to write the mysteries of God along with that of the universe, the oceans would run-out, but the mysteries will not” will be just. My relation to religion is as much as the deist Draper had; my adherence to Islam is as Abbasid Chaliph Me’mun, who knew that Kur’an was a “creation,” and as much as the liberal Mutazile.

Even though I thought along those lines, I was thinking of protecting myself from the wide-sweeping interference of religion and Islam on myself. *Namaz* and muharremat (prohibitions) had become a very heavy lead for me to carry. That year, on 10 May, while attending the country fair called “Tas Ayak Yerminkesi” I decided to throw away that load and finally be completely free of them. Even though the weather was hot, I entered one of the Russian drinking establishments, which I had never patronized before, ate food that I knew to be prohibited, and also drank alcohol. On the way to the Shalygin house, that was located in the Sukonoye section, situated on a high hill, I was about to fall down. I was able to reach the house with difficulty; later I discovered that I threw myself on the floor in my room. My student Osman used to visit me, whom I liked very much. He had completed what was known as the “City School,” a Russian Middle school, and had entered the school of Agriculture. He had left that and began attending Kasimiye in order to complete his religious education. In addition to attending my history classes at the medrese, he used to take additional private lessons from me at my home on Arabic literature. Ostensibly, he planned, like me, journey to Beirut for his education. When he arrived, unusual to common practice, he saw me sleeping on the floor, in my clothes. But, he did not wake me, and waited for me in the garden, till I awoke. When he queried me as to what happened, I told him the truth. I also read him the following quatrain from Navai: “*For years, I listened to the words of the sheyh; but those words did not provide me with a pleasure to my soul or to my heart. But the wine selling son of an infidel gave me a swallow of drink, and the harmony entered my life, my heart was elevated.*” That night, we left the books behind, and entered into the world of pleasure forbidden to us by our religion. Osman was of one mind with me on these issues. We were experiencing the same pains, and we had discussed these many times before. He was making suggestions toward himself in that direction, and liked my decisions on the topic. I told him that, since I was an instructor at a Tatar religious institution, I was not about to tell anyone that I had crossed the religious boundaries. Both of us agreed that we would behave as if we are not confined by the precepts taught us by our parents. We were also convinced that that would not be entirely feasible, and the only path of independence of mental prison and imitation would go through acquired knowledge. Osman and I planned to take a steamboat trip on 11 May on the River Volga, and arrive at my village over the Urals. We had communicated with Ataulлах Molla, who was busying himself with translating the Arabic language grammar entitled *Elfiye*, written in verse, into Turkish, who was living in the province of Samara, town of Melekes. We were going to learn that book



from him. We arrived there together, and, along the way, we visited the ruins of the city of Bulgar. We stayed at the house of a Russian family named Jibolin, and took lessons from Ataullah Molla for a month. Since I had earlier learned a portion of *Elfiye* from Ahmet Sanqiti, I memorized the remainder from this Molla.

Two days before we left, there was an event there: The old Jilobin, his son and daughter-in-law were drinking very heavily. His son was a gambling addict. It appears that they would sell everything when they were drinking. In this instance the son Stephan sold my boots that I had purchased in Kazan, along with his own property. Compared to his son, the older Jilobin was much sturdier, made his daughter-in-law his own property and had her. His son knew that well and fought with his father in front of us. Upon observing that development, Osman and I stopped the card game we were playing, and looked at each other. We both knew what we were saying to each other: “even though we were given empty values by our parents under the name of Islam, let us remain Moslem. Let these people remain themselves according to what their parents taught them.” In addition we also observed further events that were not possible in our circles. I immediately deemed it necessary to leave this family, to find another house, or to leave Melekes and return to Baskurdistan. The next day, I opted for the latter option. Because, even though the village Russians seemed more religious than their city counterparts, before God they were less accountable. Christianity, just like Islam, believed in resurrection and accounting of one’s behavior before God, but in life after death in Islam, as every believer knows, a resurrected person will not be allowed to live without rules, and for that reason Islam seemed more effective. A priest who used to speak with us also agreed to this.

One night, while sitting in the window seat, Osman noticed that I kept repeating a poem by Navai: “dear heart, we left our beloved, gave offense, let us find another, searching the mountains and the plains. But, what will we gain by searching. Who are we going to find? It is best to find our old friend, and ask forgiveness.”

Osman had learned that piece from me, and he knew the meaning. He stated that, “you are referencing me as the old friend; and Islam. After witnessing these ugly matters, did you start looking for Islam again?” I responded with “yes, but not only yes, because, Islam will not arrive as before.” This statement of mine made Osman very curious. He asked me many times what that new understanding of Islam was going to be. Afterward he came to us for a stay, and while visiting the Ural Mountains, he was going to ask me many times more. I understood that these matters which have been of interest to me, were also of interest to him with the same intensity, but could not find an answer, and thought I would provide it. He, like me, discovered that the extant religions consist of following ancestral precepts from the words of Abu’l-Ala al-Maarri, and the Russian author Siskov. He apparently understood the words ‘an enlightened person ought to be free of those’ as a desire to find a new religion and precepts. And now, he regarded my repeating Navai’s poem with feeling to be a return to the ancestral religion. However, my thoughts were on the neither option. That fact constituted the crux of his curiosity. As a summary: our talks searching for precepts apart from the ancestral religion continued only for two months, in May and June. As a result of

our search, we still remained true to Islam. But, we were going to be true, according to our own understanding. Osman was with me in that decision. The cards we played occasionally, we were going to give up. We were going to use alcohol in a measured way. We will perform namaz when our heart asked for it. I never deviated from those decisions. I am certain Osman did the same, too.

We left the Melekes town at the beginning of July, and went to my village. Before leaving, we saw Ataullah Hazret, and thanked him for instructing us, leaving aside his other business. We told him what we observed among the Jilobin family, and asked Hazret if he was unhappy to be living in the same community with them. He responded with “we have completely isolated ourselves from them.” Really, for the rest of my life, I have never encountered another locality where the contrasts between the Turks and the Russians were so pronounced.

The weather was beautiful; we arrived in Samara and to the Safran station the day after. All around, the crop was very good also. The wheat and rye fields, for the next one hundred and fifty kilometers, were waving under the strong winds, all the way to the ground, straightening-up, then bowing once again. We found nobody at home. It turned out to be the annual imece grass cutting day designated by my father, with all the men called in from nearby towns. We then traveled to the Iraman pastures where the imece was taking place. From everywhere, my father’s relatives and friends brought kimiz and sheep, and my father had slaughtered several bulls. Most of them young, hundreds of Baskurt were singing and playing as they cut the grass. At late afternoon, the grass harvesting ended. All the slaughtered animals were already cooked; after dinner, my father left the fields to the wrestlers, singers, players, and went home. We had fun till midnight. This was something Osman had never seen or experienced before. Except, he found it strange that everyone ate the salma named pastry with their hands.

In our house, everyone was roused for the morning prayers (*namaz*). Only if my father was not home, we could be exempted out of namaz. After staying in our house a few days, we journeyed to other villages to see relatives and friends.

## *Ahmetsani and Mansur’s advice, for me to complete my education in Russia—*

A little later, my old friends Kockaroglu Ahmetsani and Kilicoglu Mansur arrived at our house. I and Osman had them mount horses, and we took them all to the high pastures, called Aygirolgen, some thirty kilometers away from us. Ahmetsani and Mansur had arrived from Istanbul, and they wanted to drink kimiz at the high pasture [yayla].

Ahmetsani was from the Utek village and he was descended from mendicant scholars. The Seyhs Kockar and Otegul arrived in this village in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, along with the Khoresmians and the Karakalpaks, and their descendants constantly moved about in Khorezm, Daghistan, Kazan, Istanbul, acquiring vast knowledge on Islam and they established many medrese along the way. From this family, Emirhan was an Imam in the

Mamadis-Kopka village of Kazan, brought some Tatars, some of whom were muezzin from the village of Bahtiyar, and a number of them settled in our village. Some offspring of Emirhan returned to Kazan, others remained in Utek. Those in Kazan engaged in trade and became wealthy, regarded Utek as their root and built mescit and medrese there, brought the children of their relations and friends to Kazan for their education. In short, these Kockar and Otegul families were the primary reason and conduit for the families of our Imam and sheyh to remain in touch with Khorezm, Kazan, Daghistan, Istanbul, Egypt and Mekke. The Ahmetsani mentioned here was the grandson of Ahmedcan who was a well known scholar and author of Arabic works in Istanbul. With the aid of his wealthy relatives, he had studied, first in Utek at my maternal uncle's medrese, later in Kazan. Later, he was taken to Istanbul, entered the "Sultaniye." We became friends at my maternal uncle's medrese. We had studied Russian together from a person named Gerey. He had learned French after arriving in Istanbul. Ahmetsani (known in the Turkish Republic as Ahmet Emircan), was my conduit with Istanbul, he sent me books from there. Now, he had graduated from highschool, he was about to enter the university. He had returned to his village to see his relations. Since the distance between Utek and my village was fourteen kilometers, we saw each other often. I was learning the conditions in Istanbul from him. And he was consulting me, as an old friend, concerning which branch of learning would be beneficial to him. I suggested he continue in Geography. Upon returning to Istanbul, at the Faculty of Literature, he did just that. He taught history and geography in highschools and he never married. He always thought of returning to Utek and teach what he learned in Türkiye, according to the last testament of his uncle, but the war that started in 1914 and the following Russian Revolution prevented him carrying out his plans. When I arrived in Istanbul during 1925, we met. We endeavored to have our homes in close proximity, and looked for land-plots adjacent to each other in Erenkoy and in the mountains East of Adapazari. He was a cultured person, since he had money; he would journey to Europe every year in order to increase his knowledge. During 1951 and 1953, we were neighbors in Goztepe. He acquired the ailment of shortness of breath. He believed that the Southern climate was easier in living so he moved to Medina and lived there till he passed away in 1958. He had placed all his money in the bank, land lots, and real estate holdings in trust, to be spent for the education of his countryman. Those vakf [foundation] would end with the completion of education or marriage; and among the beneficiaries both of my children were included. Ahmetsani's thin body in his elegant gown, his fez on his head, and shoes, always seemed enjoyable to me. He read to us the works of Turkist poets, such as Mehmet Emin Yurdakul.

Mansur, who arrived with Ahmetsani, was the son of Imam Numan Kilic, from the village of Yumran in the vicinity of Ufa. Imam was my father's friend, and took his son for his education to Mekke. Mansur studied in the medrese there and in Istanbul, became hafiz [Kur'anic reciter], commentator, and specialist on the statements of the Prophet. This young scholar's grasp of matters Arabic was also outstanding. Even though his precepts were very conservative, he liked to learn the European research on Islam. Along those lines, I had learned from him that he was collecting Arabic language texts published in Europe, in his library in Mekke. Mansur's father stayed with us almost every

summer, sometimes with his son. So, I got to know him from our early days. He arrived here in 1910 from Mekke, in order to visit his family. He had coordinated his homeward trip with Ahmetsani in advance. They both aimed at opening a contemporary Islamic kulliye in Baskurdistan, specifically in Utek. In meaning, they were aiming at a theological seminary as in Christianity, or a faculty of theology; because, in their thoughts, the era of 'medrese' was, by now, passé. Mansur Efendi went back to Türkiye that year, along with Ahmetsani, but both intended to return to their homeland. When the First World War began, Mansur remained in Mekke. But, when the Sharif of Mekke betrayed Türkiye, and took the side of the British, Mansur Efendi moved to Dortyol in the Hatay province, stating "I will not live here." I met and spoke with him several times when I arrived in Türkiye. I headed the International Orientalist Congress that took place in Istanbul during 1951, as well as the preparatory Committee, I was exhausted. After the conclusion of the Congress, I journeyed to Dortyol, and was a houseguest in his home for a few days; we reminisced. He told me repeatedly that it was a pleasure for him to have me as a guest, and I told him that meeting once again Mansur Kilic and Ahmet Emirhan, the friends of my youth, was a joy after arriving in Türkiye in 1925. But, he passed away in Dortyol, a year or two before Ahmetsani. His offspring is still there.

This is the *curriculum vitae* of AhmetSani and Mansur Kilic, who had visited us during Summer in 1910, and later we again met in their own village in the Fall, were intending to return to Türkiye. Even though Osman and I had decided to continue our education in Russia while we were in Melekes, when these two friends arrived, we decided to re-visit this issue one more time. After arriving in Aygirolgen, this was our first topic of discussion. Both of them indicated that they were homesick in Istanbul and Hicaz, travelling both ways was very expensive, and if one moves to Türkiye, it would be very difficult to return home, and since you wish to work at home, stay here. Beirut American College is a missionary institution more than a place of scholarship, attending it is no different than entering a Russian missionary school. Musa Akyeyitzade, who immigrated to Türkiye after studying in Russian schools, also indicated that "those who wish to serve the Russian Islam, need to stay there; home is in greater need of enlightened people like you." Both recommended that Osman and I remain in Russia and attend Russian schools. As a result of this, Osman and I gave up the idea of going to Beirut, and I decided to prepare for the exams to enter the university, while Osman was to register in the Higher Russian Agricultural School. At that time, I also stopped working on Arabic literature. I was not able to busy myself with the publication of the *History of Arab Literature* book that I was writing. The summer visit of Ahmet and Mansur Bey's visit was very important in giving a new direction to my life.

## "Surat Coffee House" in the Ural Mountains—

When we arrived at Aygirolgen high pastures, we found there the Russian engineer Nikolay Moskov there, whom I knew from earlier times, drinking kimiz. Even

though this person did not have tuberculosis, his body was very fragile. A few years back, he was here again, stayed a couple months to drink kimiz. Aygilolgen was an extraordinarily beautiful place along the River Urik. Prior to the confiscation of our lands, this place was one of our high pastures. However, we had retained the rights to benefit from the forests of the mansions, to fell a certain amount of pine trees, cut and sell the dead trees in the market, make tar out of the pine and beach barks, make fiber out of the linden trees, scoop beehives in the pine trees called suluk, harvest the grass in the pastures, and construct temporary shelters for feeding the animals called otar during the winter. So, we came here to work during the summers. For that reason, personally, I knew all of the hills and valleys like I knew the back of my own hand. My guests, Osman, Ahmetsani and Mansur Kilic immersed themselves in kimiz drinking. I, on the other hand, went deer hunting with Moskov, as I did in the years past. He was a member of the Social Revolutionary Party. He used to tell me his political views. He liked the fact that I was reading the Russian sociologist Chernyshevsky's novel *Prolog*. He advised me to read that author's other works, especially his novel *What is to be Done?* In general, he was devoted to Chernyshevsky. He was happy to learn from Mansur Efendi that the concepts of 'beautiful' and 'ugly' found in Chernyshevsky's works were debated in Islam under the rubrics husun and qubuh. In sum, Moskov was an enlightened person with wide interests. Our snippets of hunting together with him, reminded me the stories in the Russian author Turgenyev's *Memoirs of a Hunter*. He was taking notes on our hunting. He may have published those as articles in the Russian newspapers and journals I knew him to be contributing. I was greatly pleased that my friends were eating the deers I had shot. Moskov spoke a little Tatar. Mansur Kilic, who was very traditional in his understanding of social and religious issues, was speaking with a view to rejecting Moskov's socialist ideas. He was also suspicious of my continually speaking in Russian with Moskov, and from the Russian books I was reading. Since Moskov was an atheist, he always expressed free ideas. Among the religions he rejected, Moskov spoke positively about Islam, which caused Mansur Efendi to regard him as having left Christianity and converted to Islam. Between my friends and Moskov, these discussions always took the form of religious debates, and were of great interest to me. Mansur Efendi knew the history of religions and Islamic Sects, as well as the publications emanating from Egypt and India in support of Islam. Osman and I would take advantage of these conditions and would ask Mansur questions concerning all the issues that were of interest to us. Osman would detail all the tasteless accusations leveled against our religion in the journal published by the Russian Anti-Islamist missionaries, and noted all the responses from him. All these religious debates had turned the open summer home of Ferey Molla, termed alacik, into "Surat Coffeehouse." Surat is a commercial port in India. Russian author Leon Tolstoy wrote a good story about the people congregating in the coffeehouse of this port, belonging to many different races and religions who arrived by sea, debating religious issues, utilizing the writings of the French authors who lived before himself. The debates taking place in the Surat Coffeehouse are portrayed as if the religious

debates among various individuals had in the end yielded a common understanding. However, those taking place in Aygirolgen did not, due to Mansur Efendi's speaking in extra fanaticism. However, Osman would record these discussions continually. Ahmetsani and Mansur had heard that we were not always of one mind with them. But, I liked to visit friends in the Yaltiran and Kebes plateaus all by myself, taking advantage of the excellent horses Ferey had. Sometimes Osman accompanied me. But, since he was not able to ride well, he would often fall ill. His body would be wounded, and could not get on the back of a horse. Twenty days later, Ahmetsani and Mansur took their leave from there. Osman continued to ask me questions on the religious topics I discussed with those individuals. Finally, I undertook to answer those questions in a written fashion. That writing later caused me trouble, but it was also beneficial. Osman could not get used to our food, which was different than those of the Tatars. He intended to return home in order to prepare for the exams. When we reached my village, I took him to Sterlitamak. He rented a carriage from there, and continued on his journey.

I went in the direction of Akbiyik, with my father, to inspect our animals. We were guests of my friend Ibrahim at the Karagac plateau. My father told him, with sadness, my activities which did not agree with our local customs while I was travelling with Osman. For example, Osman was mounting the horse from the horse's right side, meaning he was lifting his left foot. Ibrahim, in response, told my father that his mother noticed my performing namaz without the necessary ablutions. And, my father told Ibrahim that Tatars had told him (my father) that I went into a Russian eatery in Sterlitamak with Osman, and ate a meal with sausage in it, and also took alcohol. He concluded with "I wonder where these actions will take him." In my life, I had never seen my father talk about me like this to others, before speaking with me. And, I was sad about that, but I did not tell him that. Moreover, he did not like the debates between me and Mansur Efendi; according to him we were all Moslems in the Sunni sect and Hanafi legal school, any and all discussions on religion will not yield positive results. The best position was to reduce all these matters to their simplest components. He believed that the following words by Abu'l-Ala al-Maarri contained a great deal of truth: "we are leaving this world without learning the secrets of life, the aim of humans in living. The celestial books and the astronomical observations of scholars do not provide us with answers." And, Imam al-Haramayn Juvaini stated: "my entire life was spent dealing with religious statements, none of which provided a result; finally, I am dying with the precepts of the old women of Nishapur." And that is the truest of all words. But my father had no knowledge of kelam [rhetoric; one of the five essential 'sciences' an Islamic scholar must know]; his knowledge consisted of and he taught ethics, Canon Law, and mysticism. His acquaintance on the Kur'an and prophet's sayings were fragmentary, he never taught commentary or prophets' sayings in his medrese. But, my friend was unlike that. He always wanted to plumb the depths of religious matters; if he did not insist on answers, I would not have ever written the writings that caused me a lot of pain.



## *Pains of idea revolution—*

The writings I produced at the insistence of Osman, summarizing our talks of those months, caused seismic tremors in our family after he left. He put the writing I handed him in a book, and he forgot that book in the home of the owner of the Kalem library in Sterlitamak when he left. At the time, a Tatar teacher by the name of Sunatullah Bekbulat who had studied in Egypt or Beirut was visiting from Orenburg read that paper in the presence of an outsider. And that stranger repeated the contents to others, which generated a lot of gossip about me. They broke my father's heart at a feast where my father was present when the gossipers stated that I had left the Islamic community. Because of that, my father's behavior toward me changed instantly. My mother told me the reason, that it is my writing, in the hands of the Kalem library owner, and that I needed to destroy it. I immediately mounted a horse and galloped over to Sterlitamak. I took the said writing from the owner of the Kalem Library, and had him promise that he had not read or seen the said paper. When I returned home, I told the events to my mother, asked her to calm my father down. But the matter was not resolved that easily. I made an error, did not flatly state that I destroyed it by tearing it up. When my father asked to see that paper, since I never told him a lie, I handed it to him. Our relations completely broke-down. He did not speak with me anymore. He stopped waking me for the morning *namaz*. I often saw my mother crying. Neither of them leaked a word to my siblings, but they, too, could detect that I was being treated just like an outsider. My father travelled to the Utek village. Of course, they had decided what they were going to do. My maternal uncle found that paper and handed it over to me in 1920 as a memento.

My maternal uncle was truly fond of Ahmetsani, who knew my maternal uncle's private thoughts. My Maternal uncle gave my writing to Ahmetsani, who copied it by hand, brought it to Istanbul and gave it to Dr. Sibatulla Devletgeldi of Kazan, who was then living in Uskudar. Later on, Ahmetsani took that writing from Devletgeldi and handed it to me. This was a big benefit to me, since the copy my maternal uncle gave me in 1920 was left in my papers in Baskurdistan. The summary of ideas contained in this paper, which is seven pages long, is as follows:

“Religion, for enlightened individuals, is comprised of the belief that a consciousness exists and manages the universe; this is not confined to the period in which the individual is alive, but the spirit will live on after separating from the body. Humanity always sought out the means of communication with that exalted entity. Common People attribute human qualities to that Supreme Being and regard that being as a person speaking his own language or in Hebrew or Aramaic. The same Common People fervently believe that their bodies will be roused from their interred locations, and they will be questioned by God as in courts of law. However, God has laws and natural principles governing billions of other bodies similar to Earth, perhaps even more. It is not His business to involve Himself in the fights between the ants, let alone the relations between Ahmet and Mehmet; it is the task of the laws he laid down.

The prophets living among the people are known as those individuals who deeply think about the beginnings and the end of the universe, morals, and the future of life. They learn matters unknown to other humans as a result of long periods of comparatively auditing knowledge. They are distinguished individuals who understand the mysteries of the universe by being closer to God. However, among more primitive societies, they appear as the Kam and Shaman as found among our Turks, presiding over and leading religious ceremonies. They constituted the prophet class among the Semitic tribes, who were comparatively more advanced. Many of them were illiterate, emerging from among the Common People, closer to them in Culture, these Religious Leaders inculcated historical tales and thoughts and ideas in forms people knew and understood. While suggesting that ‘those individuals who have grand ideas, they will accomplish much by the force of their will,’ is the bases of the story ‘double horned Zulkarneyn’ appearing in the Kur’an. But, that is only the story in the Arabic language of the Macedonian King Philip's son Conqueror Alexander who conjoined east to west. The Kur’an itself stated at least twenty-four times, as it is also mentioned in the Bakara Sure, that it relates many a proverb. Of course, the information about the Ethiopian origin Ebrehe, the Governor of Yemen who lived a century before the Prophet, and even the fact his statement ‘Jesus was not killed by the Jews, neither he was hanged, the events simply seemed that way’ are not proverbs but historical detail. Scholars have advanced ideas on the question, ‘did God express himself by words or by meanings?’ Along those lines, the Mutalizi answer to that is as God only meant the meaning. In reality, it is not only the letters or words, but the stories and proverbs are meant to transmit concepts to the Arabs. In other words, meanings were summarized to the Arabs in terms of tales and *dastan* and examples they would understand. When the scholarly classification of the Kur’an can be done, to separate the historical facts from the Arab proverbs, the baseless claims of missionaries who allude to the old Israeli tales and the Old Testament forms will become more apparent.”

I still believe the correctness of those statements I wrote when I was twenty years old about the holy books and Kur’an. Because, those three Roman Columns in Baalbek is recorded in the Irem fable in terms of what the members of the Semitic tribes could then understand. The statement in Kur’an ‘while Ibrahim and Ismail were establishing the foundations of the *Kabe*,’ told in no uncertain and precise terms, is couched exactly according to one of the Arabic dastans. The aim is to express the fact that Islam is very old as related by the Prophet, and he did not conjure the precepts. After understanding Islam in these terms, it became a more likeable religion. Let the enlightened, just like the Common People, choose whether to believe the contents as hard history or they accept the total meaning without regard to the words, there would be no reason for the two groups to regard each other as infidels. Celaleddin Rumi, since he knew the forms of expression of the Kur’an well, he had inserted plenty of new stories into his *Mesnevi*. But, he did not concern himself whether or not those tales were historically accurate; he only concentrated on the meanings he wished to express. If a Prophet were to emerge from among the Turks, they, too, would have used examples from the extant works believed by the Turks, such as the tales about

the wife of Kulerkin Yabgu in the dastan Oghuz to denote a naturally traitor personality; to express thoughts on justice, camel of Edige and the carpet of Kurkur in the *Edige dastan*. As of late, the English scholar Kenneth Cragg, in his published volume *Lessons on Contemporary Islam* specified that the tales in the Kur'an encouraged the Arabs and the scholars in the West to produce a multitude of volumes, which led me to thank myself that I did not feel it necessary to read books on those topics since 1910 and I could then devote my time to other subjects.

But, my father was thinking differently. After reading my paper on these topics, he believed that I had renounced Islam completely, but he did not talk to anyone about this, which had assumed the mantle of a disaster within the family, nor did he let out the deep hatred he felt toward me. Even though he no longer woke me for the morning namaz, he wanted me to perform it when there were others around. He had my mother verbalize this wish to me. For the past fifteen days, I was living with the feeling of repulsion and hatred from my father which I had never experienced before. I thought of leaving for Kazan, but that would have meant to cast-off all relations with my family. That would have my mother even sadder. I decided to wait, and see if my maternal uncle would find a solution. One day, my father commanded me to rouse myself to visit my maternal uncle. He did not want me to ride in his carriage, and told me I would be riding a horse. Upon arrival at the Utek village, and when we entered my maternal uncle Habib Neccar's house, I discovered that all the relatives and my mother's elder and younger brothers plus the in-laws, from the Tasbuken, Yalgizqayin, Yaniris villages as well as from various sections of Utek village, who were all Imams, with their wives were present. I believed I was going to face a family court. But, from the lighthearted talk I heard, I discerned that some of those present were lightly let into the matter. Some of them were cold to me, others were joking along with me. After the Evening namaz, we all ate together. After that, it was a complete family court. My father spoke very harshly. I responded with an Arabic phrase "father, do you mean to say 'if you do not give up your ideas, I will strike you down and kill you with a stone'?" These were the words used to threaten Prophet Ibrahim, by his father, as stated in the Kur'an. My father said "No; Son, I always have known you to be one of us, and you are a scholar. Now you placed the Kur'an before me." He started to cry. He did not say anything more. Kebir Mola, who was my brother-in-law, defended me by asking "the writing is a paper; I wonder if all the contents belong to him?" My maternal uncle addressed me directly: "son, you are spending time in foreign places and reading a lot. It is natural for you to have different ideas. I told this to your father, too. We believe that you will remain a Moslem. Except, there is a matter: do not tell the ideas that cross your mind to anyone in these lands here, nor write them down. Our enemies will be the beneficiary, and your words will turn around and and hurt our father, me and our entire family. Note that Sahserif Metinov (former member of the Russian Duma) is an admirer of yours, having noted how good a Russian you are speaking, well enough to write petitions. We all want you to be elected to the zemstvo (municipality) or even to the Duma when you reach the necessary age. Everybody will want that. Do not say words that will cause bad gossip to flourish about you. Believe

us, you are the apple of our collective eye." Shortly afterward, it was time for the yatsi namaz. The entire family performed it together. Both wives of my maternal uncle were very beautiful, and they were both educated. My grandmother was saintly and scholarly. They laid down white bed sheets for the namaz. This was a family namaz, the namaz of enlightened people. I very much liked the namaz of this type where the women were behind the men, all understanding the Kur'an in Arabic. During winter months, my mother's and my father's brothers, brother-in-laws, with their wives and children, would fill our house and stay three or four days. For the other namaz times, they would all go to the mosque near us, but the yatsi namaz was performed just like this, on white bed sheets, man and women together, as my maternal uncle served as the Imam out front. He would read selected sections of the Kur'an. It was just like that this time. My maternal uncle read the al-Hidjr verse from the Kur'an, which is not usual during namaz. He slowly read these words: "openly display and suggest the works you are ordered to perform. Do not accept the words of those who attempt to appear equal to God. We will send those who make fun of you, to their places. We know that what they are saying is bothering you, but, give thanks to God and worship Him." In the second rekate of the namaz, he again slowly read from the Fusillat verse: "Allah is our God, and the angels will come to those who keep this word, so that they are not frightened. Angels tell them they will remain friend and protector. Who has a better word to say than praying to God and stating that he is a Moslem? Goodness is not equal to evil. If you respond to evil with goodness, you can even gain your enemies as your friends." My maternal uncle was addressing me with those verses. Because he possessed more liberal thoughts than my father. After the namaz, he turned toward us, and as was his custom, he commented on the verses he had read. After the prayers, he addressed me: "what is the path?" He answered his own question: "continuing on the road you know to be true. The aim is to reach the heights without becoming waylaid by trivia. In Islam, the path is having the conscious self, finding its own way in life. If you continue on to your path in higher education with belief, you will reach your destination." He continued with a series of verses and aphorisms in Arabic, showing the benefits of pursuing an objective without fail, and the harm any hesitation would result. After the *namaz* and the prayers were completed, my father stated: "see, your maternal uncle solved all the problems." My maternal uncle stated: "One of the biggest names in the history of Islam, Umayyad Velid ibn Muaviye, tore apart the Kur'an and addressing the pieces and recited a poem with the meaning 'Go tell your owner, the God, that Velid tore me apart and threw me away.' Umayyad Mervan ibn Muhammad and the Caliph Ma'mun were called Professorly because they were free thinkers. And the Damascene declared Timur Bey Infidel because he preferred the Mutazile to serve as Imams to the four sects, and forced them to accept that fact. Our son is not any worse Moslem than those. Sometimes he conceives strange ideas, and those can come to anyone who reads. Among the Islamic scholars, there have been those who equated Zulkarneyn with that of Alexander." My father stated: "but, our son is not following Ahmet Mithat, he believes the infidel Draper, Christian Arabs, and every Russian book he reads and changes this thoughts." In response, my maternal uncle: "one

cannot stop reading books in order not to change ideas.” After these words and after the namaz, the entire family was greatly comforted, having lifted the crisis atmosphere. My maternal uncle specified: “the teacher to the Emperors, Hizir Bey oglu Sinaneddin had similar experiences. He had doubts, but he found his path with the aid of Seyh Vefa, and became the teacher to Fatih Sultan Mehmet. I pray to God that Ahmet Zeki will also find his path.” My father countered: “I hope his Seyh Vefa will not be a Christian or an atheist.” My maternal uncle: “No, no; there is an error here. He put on paper what was on his mind at that moment, and caused gossip. Henceforth he ought not to write them.”

It was an extraordinary feat for him to bring to a sweet conclusion of this family court trying me with a great deal of anguish with a verse from the Kur’an during the namaz. At that time, it became clear to me that my maternal uncle was a most definitely a liberal thinking person. It appeared that he joined me in every idea I expressed, even applauded every one. But the critical point was in his skillful tactics. He thought as I was doing, but would not tell anyone in order not to cause trouble to himself. He had ‘tried’ me for the sake of my father, but, in actuality, he protected me. While protecting me, he left the final decisions to the Kur’an, in order not to be seen as protecting me against my father who was ferociously insisting on his own bigoted views, did not allow the thought that he was defending me enter the picture. That had my father bend his neck. The verse he read from the Kur’an calmed my father while let alone not criticizing me, actually directed me to continue on doing what I was doing without regard to the gossip of the enemies.

This milieu had many other virtues. It was sincere to each other, deferent, determined in every business, lively but measured all members talented, far away from bigotry, drunkenness and all types of abnormal behavior. At least it reinforced the idea stated by the Prophet: “removing matters from the road that would otherwise cause pain to the people is a fascicule of faith.” We would remove the tree if it fell across the road in the forest; if boulders fell on it, we would roll them away; if encountering a dead animal, we would bury it. Even today, if I were to see horns, broken bottles that would cause a flat in auto tires, I will throw them away from the road.

The milieu I belonged never broke the hearts of others, or caused damage to anyone. This society was going to rear many valuable individuals. However, the negative influence on our people of the Russian Revolution, did not allow that. Red Russians, though announcing to the rest of the world that they were teaching how to read and write, exterminated this society. Before the Revolution, I had visited, with Osman in my company, each member of my family living scattered across many villages. My maternal uncle congratulated Osman for deciding to obtain an agricultural engineering degree, and continued: “our family so far reared teachers and Imams; we can serve our people only by obtaining an ukaz from the Tsar. Among these children you see, we will raise lawyers, engineers. A few of them will also become, like Ahmet Zeki here, will be educated in history, literature and philosophy sufficiently well to be able to contrast the results of both the Eastern and Western learning. Then, you can make this region a seat of learning and wisdom.” He aimed

at opening a school of agriculture in his own village. He also liked Osman: “So, if you successfully complete your education, perhaps you can undertake the opening of such a school here. Zemskii nachalnik (Russian official) Sultanov is also behind that project.” From the other end, my maternal uncle also most welcomed the idea of Ahmetsani and Mansur Kilic’s idea of opening a medrese after their return from Istanbul in the same village. He was also thinking of establishing a press. As a result, Utek would become a center of culture. After this family court business, my friendship with my father and my maternal uncle deepened. I was now able to speak with Ahmetsani in front of my father “Kur’an is the word of God as instructions received by a human in the form of revelations; however, it is the words of our Prophet, reflecting his language, educational level and folklore of his people.” My father did not react at all to this. Much like those actual historical events taking place close to the time of the Prophet in the Kur’an, also the idea that the old traditions have been reflected there via their Arab variants found its way to my father’s mind via contemporary scholars Muhammed Halafullah and Cevad Ali and others. During the winter of 1920, I observed the debates between the Indian scholar Ebu-Said el-Arabi and my father, on the Garden of Irem and the Seven Sleepers as well as the Irem and Ephesus excavations. The family court in Utek left a good impression on my father.

My right to perform *namaz* when I pleased was also granted. My father stopped waking me for the morning namaz. And told others “he is now an adult; he will decide for himself.” We stopped discussing religious and philosophical topics. Besides, I never debated those topics with anyone else after that time, I did not touch anyone else’s precepts, never forgot my maternal uncle’s statement: “never forget that Prophet stated ‘speak with the people so as to have your words fit into their minds.’” My maternal uncle suggested that, after learning Arabology, I would then study religion. Now, the latter was forgotten. He did not teach me theology, precepts, Islamic law; never have me memorize prayers or formulas. In Kazan, I studied only the application portion of Hidaye (the path), did not read worship, wedding, divorce portions. I concerned myself with only the cultural aspects of Islam. Again, at the recommendation of my maternal uncle, I purchased *History of Islamic Civilization* by Georg Zeydan. Besides my maternal uncle had already inculcated me with the pleasure of reading Arabic biographies and history. I had already read the biographies of Ibn-Xallikan, Taskopruluzade (Sakaiq), and those of Hanefi and Safii scholars, published in Egypt and Istanbul.

## *Crossing from discussion on religion to El-Biruni—*

I spent the last days of August with the laborers on the mountains and the forests, cutting bichen, meaning preparing dry grass for the winter. I repaired the otar, the structures and stables where some of our animals would spend the winter. We were along the Uruk River, where we had bee hives carved into the trees. I had carved a



few of those myself, the rest we had inherited from our uncle Veli Molla. This year, as a great luck most were occupied by wild bees. Perhaps thirty-five out of fifty were full. The Baskurt there regarded that as a grand gift. I collected honey from those suluk that were spread across various mountains and Rivers, because my father had indicated I could sell those for my own benefit. I sold all that honey to the Tatar merchants who arrived. Ferey Molla's wife chose the very dark colored ones and made mead (honey-wine). After spending a few days in complete pleasure, I returned to our village and immediately left for Kazan. Ahmetsani, who was on his way back to Türkiye and I stopped to see Mansur Efendi at the Yumran village. Apparently, Ahmetsani had summarized my family court circumstances to him. Even though he was a conservative theology student, he did not move a hair because of the said paper. Instead he told us the existence of scholars who told us that Zulkarneyn is Alexander of Macedonia. He continued: "Firuz Abadi, in the Zulqarneyn entry of his *Qamus*, and El Biruni in his *Al Athsar-I Baqiya* explained this. I asked where I could find a copy of this El-Biruni book. I learned that it was published in Europe. Mansur Efendi opened a whole new world for me by these short statements. Because, I had thus began learning El-Biruni, the greatest Islamic and cultural scholar. I continued working successfully on those researches for the past fifty-five years since that day. As soon as arriving in Kazan, I visited Professor Katanov, asked his help in obtaining a copy of El-Biruni's book. Because, this issue of Zulqarneyn = Alexander had become a matter of honor for me. The Professor told me that he could help me in obtaining a copy from Germany, but he already had a copy in his own library. I borrowed his copy and read it with great pleasure. It was in Arabic, published in Leipzig, and contained an Introduction of thirty to forty pages in German. When the Professor told me that the Introduction contained information on El-Biruni's life and works, I decided to increase my German language lessons. I was always grateful to Mansur Efendi for causing me to meet El-Biruni, his works, and my learning German.

The summer of 1910 was very beneficial to me:

1. I won a victory in the battle against the bigotry enveloping the Islamic world.
2. My discussions with my fellow countrymen arriving from Istanbul and Mekke, on the topic of religion, the resulting impressions I had, allowed me to work on other aspects of Islamic and human cultures instead of religion.
3. I was directed to El-Biruni
4. to learn German.

### *My contact with Ibrahim Akcurin—*

I stopped at Simbirsk while travelling by steamboat on the way to Kazan. During the past year, I had corresponded with Ibrahim Akcurin, having met him by way of the Vice-Captain of the boat on which I was journeying. He insistently had invited me

to visit him this summer. I went to see him. I learned that he was related to Yusuf Akcura in Istanbul, who was the Editor of *Türk Yurdu* journal there. He was living in a single story but large wood house. One side was a largish library; the other side was a carpenter's workshop. He read a lot, and when he did not, he was carpentering. I stayed there two days. Simbirsk was the birth city of Lenin was very sparsely populated. The green grass that was ever present in the city streets, appearing much like a green carpet, gave it a flavor of a village. We went around with Ibrahim Bey's daughters, who were high-school students. Ibrahim bey was correcting Radloff's translation of Kutadgu Bilig, which he thought very faulty. He gave me a copy of "Temur and the Ant" story by Mir Haydar, published in Paris in the Uyghur alphabet, and asked me to transcribe it into the Arabic alphabet and send it back to him. This was a sort of an exam. Vice-Captain was no longer in Simbirsk. I told Ibrahim Bey that I had read a novel by Chernyshevsky, and wanted to see a copy of the same author's *What is to be done?* It transpired that he owned a copy of this book which was banned by the Tsar, and he asked me to send it back to him by a courier when I was done reading it, instead of by mail. He was the representative of his industrialist relatives, and internationally travelled widely on business. But, he was not a 'capitalist' himself. Instead, he was reading the output of the Russian authors, and he was happy that I was, too. We discussed scholarly matters as well as politics when he visited Kazan. The prime character in the novel *What is to be done* was a Tatar idealist revolutionary. I likened him to (and, later journalist and teacher in Istanbul) the Tatar author 'Molla Husameddin' in the novel by Musa Akyegitzade, and I, too, wanted to be like that. Ibrahim Akcurin was one of those who influenced me best. I learned that he passed away, living his last days in want, after I left Russia.

### *How I wrote my first history book—*

I spent the 1910-1911 school year, again, with the Salygin family. I continued to work on my examination preparation. It was necessary to concentrate on Latin and German. I began attending the lectures at the Philology faculty of Kazan University, as a visitor, at the recommendation of Professor Katanov. I attended, mainly, the classes of Katanov in Eastern subjects, Professor Bogoroditsky in general Russian language, general history by Professor Xvostov and Xarlampovic. I continued to write my lessons in the form of a book. Professor Xvostov was concentrating on Roman history. He had me read Professor Karayev's *Introduction to Social Sciences* and *Analysis of the World History*, and spoke to me on those topics. Katanov had me study Siberian Turk dialects, puzzled me with the aruz poetry metering, and lent me from his personal library sources on Turk history. With those resources, I successfully completed. The first volume covered the period till the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the second, since then, was done during that winter. During the same winter I read works the people's literatures of the Turks and the Mongols. I studied the volumes of N. Aristov on the ethnography of the Turks; continued to learn the contents of Radloff

and Potanin's Turk tribes and ethnography. With my master Professor Bogoroditsky, we held a seminar on 'Experimental Phonetic' which resulted in a study on *Tone and Vibration in Baskurt and Tatar*. Because I was writing my history book, my high-school exams could not be undertaken in a regular manner once again. I attended only algebra, German and Latin. My teacher was Ukrainian Rklitski. With his aid, I had translated Radloff's *Poetry metering in Altai Turks (Uber die Form der Gebundenen Rede bei den Altaischen Tataren)* from German into Turkish. I discovered that I had sent this work to *Turk Yurdu* for publication, to Yusuf Akcura Bey. Since a lot of transcription marks were needed, it was not published. When I arrived in Istanbul, Yusuf Bay returned the piece back to me. I had established contact with Radloff via letter, on the occasion of aruz metering. He sent me, as a present, a series of his own publications. I translated his writings on Shamanism into Tatar.

That summer, son of the Orenburg Husniye medrese, who was a student at the Russian gymnasium, arrived in our village as a guest. I took him to the mountains and the high pastures. Even though he was very young, he was already addicted to alcohol and gambling. He returned back to his home, since he could not find someone to share his passions. When I arrived in Sterlitamak, in order to wish him a safe journey on my horses, the owner of the Kalem bookstore informed me of the pending arrival of Tatar authors Abdullah Battal and Alimcan Ibrahim. Since I admired Tatar authors, after obtaining my father's permission, I wanted to invite them to our village. I harnessed the best horses to the carriage, returned to Sterlitamak and extended the invitation to them. At the time, I had no fame, and these already famous writers did not accept my sincere invitation. Battal Bey took his place in the official mail carrier Tahirov's belled carriage, and left town. Nowadays, in Istanbul we see each other as old friends (now uses the family name Taymas). When I hosted him and his wife Azize Hanim in my automobile, I reminded him my first invitation "you said you would not ride in the carriage of a Baskurt" and took the yamci Tahirov's postal carrier; so, why do you ride with me in my car now?" He apologized with "at the time you arrived from a village, a Baskurt teacher; how did I know you were going to be a well-known personality?"

After Abdullah Battal left, I spoke with Alimcan Ibrahimov at length, and I had mentioned my history book at the press just then. He was a very intelligent man. My work's title was *Turk Tarihi* (Turk History), but Alimcan stressed that the title ought to be "Tatar History." The book was being published by the bookseller Idrisov in Kazan. He did not like the title *Turk Tarihi* either. When the printing was completed he gave the title as *Turk-Tatar History*. I objected that a name such as Turk-Tatar does not exist; let us call it *Turk and Tatar History* and joined in the fait accompli. He did just that. He only asked me to expand the section on the Kazan Khanate. Alimcan had obtained the printed fascicules from Idrisov, read and liked them. He praised my volumes in the *Yulduz* newspaper, as the most important contribution to our culture in 1911. This was a jest that encouraged me.

## *My getting acquainted with Russian Orientalists—*

During 1911-1912 I continued to audit the lectures in Kazan University, in preparation for the high school exams. That year, I concentrated on the works of the Western Orientalists on Islam, Arabic, Persian, Turkish literature. I had made the acquaintance of Associate Professor Ignatius Krachkovsky at the Petersburg Faculty of Orientalism. He wrote me often and sent me books. He had published a large book on the Arabic poet Va'va'Dimaski. I also read his articles on contemporary Arabic culture with pleasure. I looked into the manuscript catalogs of European libraries. My beginning to learn German, on top of the French I had begun earlier, was of a great asset in this. With the aid of Professor Katanov, I had obtained K. Brockelmann's volume on the history of Arab literature, his *Foundations of Persian Literature*, the extant fascicules of the German version of *Encyclopedia of Islam*. The Russian translation of Hungarian Orientalist Goldziher's *Lessons on Islam* was published that year. I had obtained his volume *Researches on Islam*, even though I did not have a sufficient command of German yet, on the recommendation of the book review written by Russian Orientalist Baron Rosen. I had established contacts with Zaman bookstore in Istanbul, Emin Hanci in Egypt, and other booksellers. This year, I also contacted publishers of orientalist nature books Luzak, Brill and Harrassowitz in Europe. I was aware that, due to the positive impression my volume garnered, I was about to join the Orientalists working on Islamic and Turk history. Professor Katanov was encouraging me in that direction. He also was supporting my endeavor in preparing for the high school exams, and was viewing me as a person who would complete university education and one who would become a university Professor.

1912 was the culmination of the Professor's Fiftieth birthday. I was one of the guests invited to his house for the celebration party. There was plenty to eat and drink. The Professor himself drank much. That night, while the guests were leaving, he asked me to stay a little. After everyone left, he spoke with me in his library, where we were alone. It turned out that even though our Professor was a missionary style Christian Censor, his Russian colleagues were giving him troubles. He was either dismissed or about to be dismissed from the Kazan University History and Archeology Society, of which he has been the President for years. He told me: "from among the Eastern Turks and Mongols, Dorji Banzarov, Cokan Velihanov and I (Katanov) joined the Oriental studies, gave our essence to serve the Russians, I left Shamanism, became a Christian, and have been serving them. Dorji and Chokan died before they were 35, from imbibing vodka, because my Russian friends did not teach them and me anything else. Now, you are the fourth; preserve yourself from this milieu. My environs did not contain a strong culture like Islam, we no longer exist, and we are now outsiders in Russian circles. You must realize the strength of your own cultural environment." While telling me all this, Katanov continued to drink vodka and cry. He was very hurt by the demeaning review of his magnum opus *The Language of Uranxay Turks*, especially

by Mel'yoranski's review. It is possible that other matters, that I did not know, also existed between him and his Russian friends. Later on, Katanov had sincere talks with me. He was a very different person than his public persona, seemed to be cooling from scientific world, withdrawing into himself. His words and behavior caused me to worry. I was afraid he might commit suicide. After those events, I began to stand away from the Orientalists at the Kazan University, and stayed close to Bogoroditsky and Xvostov, who were not. Katanov's words left a deep furrow in my mind; perhaps he would not have told me those if he had not drunk that much. I understood that I needed to be very careful in maintaining a relationship with those Russian individuals in Kazan who passed as Orientalists. My history book pleased my father, maternal uncle and my friends; I was receiving laudatory letters expressing positive thoughts. Most of that summer's discussions were centered about this.

### *Echoes of my book on Turk history—*

In fact, my publication on Turk history made me famous, unexpectedly, in a matter of few months. Yusuf Akcura in Türkiye, in the *Türk Yurdu* journal; in Crimea, Ismail Gaspirali, in his *Tercuman* newspaper; in Kazan, Professor Katanov and the Orientalist Yemelyanov in Russian scholarly publications. German Orientalist Martin Hartmann; Hungarian Professor Vambery sent letters of appreciation via the Orenburg *Vakit* newspaper management. "Kazan University Archeology and History Society" elected me to full membership, gave me a diploma during a ceremony for the purpose as a token of their appreciation. At that ceremony, Professor Xarlampovic gave a speech encouraging me much. My work was taken as a specimen and Ridvan Nafiz in Istanbul, Yusufcan Haci Agaliqoglu in Xoqand, wrote books on Turk history. In Azerbaijan Huseyinzade Ali Bey; in Orenburg Rizaeddin Fahreddin; in Istanbul Koprulu Fuat Bey announced me as a "Turk Author" in their writings. My work was made known to be a result of contemporary scientific methods using Eastern and Western sources expounding the historical fate of the Turks. Ibrahim Akcurin in Simbirsk, Alihan Bukeyhan who was then working as a bank clerk in Samara who was one of the grandees of the Cengiz descendents, Sahingiray Sultan Bukeyhan from Bukey Orda, Selimgerey Sultan Canturin from Ufa, the Derbend origin General Seyh Ali, also from Ufa invited me to visit them and stay at their homes. The author Hoca Behbudi in Samarkand and Hayrullah Hazret, Director of the Medrese-I Osmani in Ufa invited me to teach at their institutions with a suitably good salary. I accepted the invitations of Alihan Bukeyhan and Selimgirey Canturin; I left Kazan for Samara and Ufa during May. The excitement and enthusiasm of Alihan Bukeyhan and Selimgirey Sultan were in the utmost. I stayed with Alihan three days. He was reading my book in my presence, and was telling me what else needed to be included. Selimgerey Canturin also invited the former Duma member Kniaz Kugusev who was one of the nobles of the Altin-Orda Tatars, who naturally was inclined to follow the Turk and Mongol history. We spoke quite a bit with him. He was interested in having my work published

in Russian translation. In Ufa, General Seyh Ali gave me the notebooks containing the complete Russian translation of Leon Cahun's *Introduction a l'histoire de l'Asie* as undertaken by his son-in-law the deceased Ali Asgar Sirtlanov. He also gave me other presents. The person who appreciated my work most from a sincere scientific perspective was Professor Barthold. As the editor of the journal *Islamic World* in 1912 he undertook a field research trip that summer among the Russian Moslems. On that occasion I published a long article in the Orenburg newspaper *Vakit* (no. 125) expounding his scholarly work and value. Upon reading my article, Barthold spoke highly about me in a meeting with the Barnaul Moslems, as one who has benefited from reading his entire scholarly output. This too was published in the same *Vakit* newspaper. He also sent me a letter indicating he would work to have me invited to Petersburg. Those who were interested in my work from both the scholarly aspect, as well as their own Turk origins were Professors Katanov and Asmarin. Though they were both Russian Censors, they did not erase those portions that touched the Russians, and allowed the work to appear in its entirety. Katanov gave a proposal to the Kazan University Archeological and Historical Society general meeting, to support me for an expedition to Ferghana to research Turk ethnography and history, and to collect primary sources. Such support I received from my ethnic brethren and scholars served me to be completely devoted to Turk history. In the end, this would direct me into politics.

The most excellent example of the appreciation of my work was displayed by Asur Ali Zahiri and Yunuscan Haci Agaaliyev's journey, who were also working on our history, to my village, after reading my book. They were from Khokand in Ferghana. It turned out, Asur Ali was a teacher there. Yunuscan Haci was descended from those who held the title of "agalik" in the Khokand Han period, and was among the wealthy of the city. Yunuscan had inherited many manuscripts from his forbearers on historical topics. Later he purchased more of the same, and formed a rich collection. They both wanted to write the history of the Ferghana Hans but did not know how to and where to start. They also experienced difficulties in placing Ferghana in Turk and Turkistan history. My book solved their problems in those respects. They undertook a trip to Orenburg, Kazan and Ufa. They found my address at Ufa, and wrote me a letter. They stayed and drank kimiz along the Dim River, later rented a carriage and arrived in my village. The heat of the July felt cool to these dear friends. They stayed with us for ten to fifteen days, told us the good effects of my book in Turkistan made me, my father and maternal uncle happy. They invited me to Ferghana; stressed that the history of Turkistan needed to be expanded in the second edition and they were prepared to help. These individuals truly stayed as my friends until the end of their lives. At that time, an invitation arrived from one of the Kazak Sultans, Alihan Bukeyhanov, asking me to visit him in Samara without further delay. I took our guests in our carriage drawn with our horses to the Devleken railroad station some one hundred twenty kilometers from our village. From there, I went to Samara. My guests left for Ferghana from there. I held discussions with Alihan Bukeyhanov and his guest Ahmet Baytursun for a few days concerning the inclusion of Kazak Hans to the Turk



History book. This meant spending time on the second volume of my book which was being typeset. I returned to my village after these talks. I busied myself with domestic maintenance, and caring for our animals, began working on the Baskurt lineage. That year, the entire summer was taken up with scientific work and I wanted to rest a bit in the mountains. For that reason, I was in no hurry to return to Kazan in the fall. I was intending to visit Ibrahim Kackinbay, collect honey from the tree hives and hunt.

## *Hunting in Nugus—*

During the month of September, I only recovered the honey collected in the suluk in our trees. I sold them at the market, collecting a good sum of money. As I indicated earlier, my father was giving me the money resulting from that activity. This year, too, a lot of the suluk were filled with bees. (Amongst us, this was known as qurt qondi). My father regarded that as a good omen: “you will be successful in your education, because, in my youth we did not have this many hives full.” When I reached Alaguyan Tamagi village region, Ibrahim had already collected the honey from my suluk. He was my friend who was most happy about the publication of my book.

Winter arrived early. With the first snow, three of my father’s students Vildanoglu Suleyman from Aliekber village, from among the Kackinbay, Alagoyan village, Gilmeddin and Ibrahim, with their falcons, sparrow hawks, our hunting dogs, shotguns, we arrived at the structure we called otar, used to feed our animals during the winter, belonging to my father’s dear friend Vildanoglu Hamid Molla. Since the animals were brought here only after the grass at the villages were exhausted, there was nothing in it. Normally, there was no bedding or food in it. But, Ibrahim sent everything necessary to stay for a few days, meaning this hunt was arranged only for my benefit. We hunted for five days. These were pleasant and delightful days on the Ural Mountains the memory of which I never forgot. Ibrahim brought the honey and the mead with him. Day and night we ate pheasant which we called qirgavul, and wild chicken or rabbit. They also fermented the honey from the culuk. During the day we spent time with our good horses, hunting birds and dogs hunting; at night meals, imbibed fermented honey wine, listening to the flute we called quray, and sing. But, we never missed the five namaz every day. In our lands, the art of the Yesevi type dervish was hunting. The Seyh and his followers hunted together, and it was also the primary entertainment of the Beys. The only memento left to us from those days of birding was the leather straps adorned in silver, used to hold the falcons on the hunter’s hand. Nobody was keeping hunting birds any longer. But, I always participated in such hunts wherever they were held by those individuals I knew. Ibrahim was very melancholic this year (munglu, in our terminology). He repeated the words of the Baskurt poet dervish Semseddin Izek during this hunt at the Hamid Molla otar:

“Trading in today’s world market is Professoriate, engage in that trade/ Because, the market may not be as Professorial again/ You have a good horse under you, run around and find the boundaries of this world/ As the same horse may not be yours

someday/ When you are holding the falcon, make your spirit happy/ Because, someday the same falcon may not heed your word and may not respond to your commands/ Spirit and faith may join to drink inside a house/ But, they may not become one in the same house.”

Ibrahim was behaving as if we were enjoying ourselves as friends for the last time. I can state that I did not recite poetry in my life. Except, in these gatherings, when the context was appropriate, I would recite what I had heard from my Great Uncle Veli Molla, and my friends liked them. The friends in this gathering would wake the sleeping by placing the biyeley termed glove on their head and make them scream. Apparently, I had recited the following one such occasion:

“If you hold your gloved hand tight, the falcon will not attempt to fly away to free himself; getting drunk with good people is better than staying sober with people who are worthless.”

Even though they themselves were conservative, members of a tarikat, and strict adherents, the likes of Baskurt Semseddin Izek and Veli Molla, liked to drink mead with friends and get drunk. Suleyman, who had a good education, was one of those. Suleyman, much like Ibrahim, was tall, and both of them were poets. Neither wrote a volume, but they would recite “ir” (poetry in the folk style) that was most suitable for the occasion. They recited songs pertaining to hunting. If I had known that this gathering taking place during the fall of 1912, at the time of the first snowfall was going to be the last, I would have written down every ir recited extempore. After hunting for five days, everyone took onto his saddle as much as they could carry from among the kirgavul, qur and aguna termed wild roosters, and returned to their villages. I left alone for the village of Qalgasav. After returning home, I did not stay long and left for Kazan. It was apparent that the words ‘can’ and ‘iman’ contained in the poem recited from Semseddin Izek by Ibrahim clearly referenced him and me. I, too, repeated many times, on the way, the line “perhaps we will not be able to drink mead together.” Once again, I stopped over to see Alihan in Samara. My father was planning to go to haj this year. That would provide me with opportunity for contacts in Istanbul.

## *Desire to visit Istanbul—*

I knew about Istanbul from my fellow countryman Ahmetsani Emirhan. But, I learned about the plethora of manuscripts extant in Istanbul libraries from the catalogs in Katanov’s personal library. I also acquired those catalogs from the Zaman bookstore in Istanbul. Those opened a new world unto me. I also learned of the wealthy collection of old coins in the Imperial Museum of Istanbul. I was obtaining books from there constantly. My maternal uncle supported me financially; he gave me more money that year. While I was returning to Kazan from my village, I spent a few days with Ibrahim Osmanov in Ufa. Apparently, Ibrahim and his elder brother Abdulbari gave a copy of my book to Meryem Sultan, who had property in Ufa. I met this lady in Ufa. She told me that she would support my research and book acquisition; she immediately

gave me some money. With that support, I began obtaining Arabic books published in the West; Persian historical texts published in Mumbai and Calcutta, works of Mirhond and Hondemir. In addition, I obtained books such as *Baburname* as well as the manuscript catalogs of Western libraries, and rented a largish room to form my own personal library. With the aid of Meryem Hanim, I became a historian owning a library. But, I chose to establish that library not in Kazan, but in Ufa.

When my father was leaving for Haj, I gave him a written plan for him to search for certain works in the libraries of Hejaz, Syria and Istanbul. He was especially to look for the works of El-Biruni of Khorezm. Their titles were known, but the actual volumes could not be found so far. I had included that plan and my request from my father in the Introduction of my volume on *Biruni's Picture of the World* published in Delhi during 1940. I gave a copy of my *Turk and Tatar History* to my father, asked him to deliver it to Seyh Murad Remzi in Mekke. Remzi wrote back, appreciating my book. He recommended to my father to have the *Temur Tarihi* copied for me from the Fatih Library in Istanbul. That recommendation necessitated my eternal gratitude to Seyh Murad. My father had a majority of it copied for me in Istanbul, on his way back from Mekke. He also brought back from Istanbul Fatih Library, the copied Introduction and a portion of El-Biruni's on Geographical Research, from the only known autograph, written in his own hand. It was Abdullah Efendi who made those copies for me. He was a lecturer at mosques, a scholar fellow countryman of ours living in Istanbul. He also had Kirimli Hacı Abdulgaffar's book found in the Suleymaniye Library on the History of Altin-Orda, and sent it to me.

These were presents at the value of the world to me. These works gave me the impression that Istanbul was the greatest repository of sources on our history. I knew that, I could benefit properly only by going there. The notes my father brought were almost like the size of an ear on a camel. So much so that when I first arrived in Istanbul in 1925, I visited Esad Efendi and Fatih Libraries as my first act. To start seeing and reading the works I had only known from the entries in a catalog was the greatest happiness for me.

The winter of 1912-1913 was spent in preparing for the matriculation. But, spent most of it collecting materials for and organizing the information in the second volume of my *Turk History* book, according to the recommendations of my Turkistan and Kazak friends, on the conditions of 16-19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Maveraunnehir [land between Seyhun (Sir-i Derya) and Ceyhun (Âm-u Derya)], Kasghar, Kazak Hans and the Nogay lands. I also worked on the Arabic philosopher and traveller Ibn Haldun. As before, I continued teaching Turk history and Arab literature at Kasimiye.

## *Death of Ibrahim Kackinbay—*

I was back in the village for the summer months of 1913. This time, Tatar author and intellectual Fuat Toktarov accompanied me to drink kimiz and rest. This person had prepared privately and passed the matriculation exams, was now registered

as a student at the Kazan faculty of law. He intended to help me prepare for those exams during the summer. But, arriving in our milieu, he could not get used to the conditions. First of all, he did not like our food, or the way we ate with our hands. He was not to smoke tobacco, but he did at times. He kept repeating openly that our people were lazy, and had no talent for life. He fell in love with a Russian girl; he would read her letters to him perhaps forty times a day. He did not take-off his uniform. On the other hand, it was necessary to sit on the floor in our house; Baskurt way of living seemed primitive and barbarian to him. I was going to take him to the high pastures on the mountain. At that time, I received news that my friend Ibrahim Kackinbay was very ill. There was no doctor. In our village lived a member of the old Baskurt Army doctor's assistant Feldsher Allam. He was the father of Alikerrar Molla, whose name is mentioned several times in these memoirs. I wanted to take him, but he was addicted to alcohol, he could not ride any distance on a horseback. There was no carriage to take him, or even road for a carriage where I was heading. I left him at a village on the way, we pressed on with Toktar on horseback. But, Fuat was not used to riding a horse either. The saddle ravaged his body. I left him at another village, and went to Ibrahim who was on his bed some one hundred twenty kilometers away from our village. By the time I arrived, he was gone from this world. I could not even be present at his burial ceremony.

Ibrahim's passing away was a cause for change in my life. Without him, I could not continue my wild bee tree apiary days during the summer. It did not make any sense anymore. Also coming to these mountains, to the Akbiyik high pastures during summer, after our horse herds, had no more meaning. I cried plenty after losing Ibrahim. Fuat Toktar was angry with me, asking me what purpose crying like a female would gain me. But amongst us, crying was not shameful, nor was getting rid of the sadness in that way. In our village, I had erected headstones and carved some Arabic words on those headstones of my grandfather Uzun Ahmetcan and grandmother Muhib. In Ibrahim's locale, I could not find suitable stones for the purpose, nor implements to carve them. With only a hammer, I carved some Arabic statements, and the words of a popular song which he very much liked:

“Swallow is in the nest, and that nest is painted in colors/ Who did not leave this mortal world./ Some left behind their property/ Others, the one they loved.”

Just like Ibrahim, when another one of my childhood friends, Colonel Dr. Alimcan Tagan passed away in Hamburg during 1948, I had the same song words carved on his headstone. He, too, sang the same song, and had published the melody of that song in the Vienna Academy of Sciences journal, with his friend Professor Jansky.

Ibrahim's father, who had passed away sometime in early 1900s, Semseddin Kackinbayev spoke excellent Persian and Russian. My great uncle Veli Molla and my grandfather were very tall, and were separated into the hussar class in the army. I could not learn in which military school Semseddin and Veli Molla studied. Kazak intellectual Muhammedcan Seydalin indicated that Semseddin Kackinbay was a member of the Tsarist Geography Society Orenburg branch. He was a student of Moldakay Abdullah Seyyidoglu in Persian literature. From what gathered from the statements of

Ibrahim's mother and wife, who had passed away from pneumonia, he had dreamed of "studying far away," and was sad because he could not follow me. They were wealthy, but, he always stated "it was not my intent to maintain herds and remain in the village." Ibrahim knew Hafiz, Sadi and Navai very well. He also understood Pushkin. If he was alive, and followed me in 1908, we would have been trained together like twins. There was nobody else in my life, which followed me with his memories.

Fuat Toktar got used to our life after staying with us for two months. He liked to listen to the sermons my father gave every Friday at the mosque, criticizing the Russian tsarist government, on the occasion of the Balkan wars that started that year. According to his opinion, it was impossible for an Imam in the Tatar community to deliver such sermons critical of the Tsar and not be reported. After returning to Kazan, he even wrote that in the Tatar journal *Yalt-Yurt*. I was sorry that he did, and told Fuat "you might be right, but I fear an investigation of my father may result." But, Fuat was convinced that a secret political movement could be sustained in the lands of the Baskurts. He repeated the words of Tatar author Kayyum Nasiri: "If Suyunbile was in the lands of the Baskurt, they would have never given him to the Moscovites." He believed that was true. (We had read the words of Nasiri from an anecdote published in the journal *Sura*).

### *Effects of my writings on the ethnography of the Burcen Baskurt—*

Fuat Toktar returned to Kazan after spending his vacation with us. During that time, I wrote articles, to be published in the journal *Sura*, on the subject of Burcen Baskurt. Those writings were serialized in issues 19-22 during 1913. In those pieces, I indicated that the Baskurt folklore is very rich, but, under the influence of the Tatars and the Russians it was losing much. Still, it was the Burcen Baskurt who best preserved the aspects of old Turk culture, national music and dastans, especially *Edige* and his son Nureddin (Muradim), that I depicted still alive. Military discipline was in the blood of the Baskurt; they know how to move, as if they constitute one person, behind their leader. On horseback, Baskurt will appear like a statue. They kept alive the old Turk military spirit, in using their weapons, their skill in horsemanship, describing how the Baskurt lived on the Mesim and Irendik mountains. Those pieces left a good impression on Baskurt intellectuals. After the 1917 Revolution, among those who joined the Baskurt national movement, Habibullah Abid and Sabircan Kurmus published articles describing how excited they were reading my pieces. Many others wrote me personal letters. Those articles were beneficial when we began the Baskurt political movement four years later.

## My Scholarly Visit to Turkistan

### *My First scholarly visit to Turkistan—*

When I arrived in Kazan, Professor Katanov informed me that his efforts in sponsoring me by the Kazan University History, Archeology and Ethnography Society to send me to Turkistan for historical and ethnographic research in the Ferghana province have yielded fully positive results. I happily accepted to undertake that trip, which would keep me from preparing for my matriculation exams and teaching at Kasimiye. The first day I arrived in Tashkent, I found a manuscript, bought if from the sahhaf [second hand book-seller for manuscripts] and sent it to my father, who was beholden to the Nakshibendi Seyh of the Bagistan village, and to our neighbor Bekbulat Hazret as a present. Seyh Havend Tahur, the ancestor of Ubeydullah Ahrar, (d. 1360) from Tashkent, had an important place in the spiritual lineage of my father, and this book contained stories of his complete deed, Persian and Turkish poetry, and selected statements. The following is from that book I liked:

"A beautiful girl cannot be without her admirer next to her/ without a nightingale singing inside, a garden cannot be enjoyed by humans/ give your heart and mind to someone who will return theirs to you/ give your life to someone who can afford to buy it/ if you are not true to your sins, do not disgrace your pledge."

Now that 53 years passed [note the publication date of these memoires], I hear that most of the mosques in Tashkent have been destroyed, but, the mausoleum of Seyh Havend Tahur is intact because it is in a central place. This trip lasted until March 1914. I collected materials from Ferghana, Samarkand and Bukhara, any and all manuscripts I could find in private hands pertaining to the economics, historical geography, and very important vakif [religious foundation] documents showing the fluctuations of income over time, as well as materials pertaining to the ethnography of Ozbek tribes living in Ferghana. My trip was mentioned in the journal *Turk Yurdu*, under the title of "Signs of Appreciation Shown to a Turk Scholar." I discovered many works heretofore unknown, dating to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and later, mainly in history of literature. When I returned to Tashkent in March, I gave a talk to the Turkistan Archeological Society on my trip. The Turkistan Governor General Suholimnov was



present at my talk, and spoke in terms of praising me, and specified “this is a positive example of our efforts among the Moslems in terms of publishing.” The official Vice Governor General of Turkistankiye Vedemosti Alexander Alexandrovich Semenov wanted me to stay there and accept a position. I responded with the fact that I wanted to continue my education and could not. But, he sent word of my success at this trip to Petersburg. As one result, I received a letter indicating a forthcoming joint sponsorship by Russian Academy of Sciences and International Central Asia Research Society for a more comprehensive research trip. Those who supported that resolution were Professors Barthold, Radloff, and K. Saleman. I responded to them, indicating I would arrive in Petersburg after I submitted my report to Kazan Archeology and History Society. I arrived in Kazan by the end of March. My brothers Abdulbari and Abrurrauf were in Kazan studying at the Muhammediye medrese. I spent some time with them. I also gave my report to the Archeology Society.

During this trip, I gained many friends in Tashkent, Ferghana, Samarkand, and Bukhara. Many of them were very helpful to me concerning Turkistan cultural life as well as the political life later on. Each friendship left sweet memories in my mind. One of them was Baskurt Colonel Ebubekir Divaev, who had published many useful works on the ethnography of the Kazaks and the Kirgiz. He introduced me to another Tsarist Baskurt officer Kucukov, and the Tatar General Yenikev, in Samarkand Kirgiz general Kolcanov and Mirbelev as well as the Baskurt Akimbetov. Wherever I went, I discovered that letters of Ebubekir Aga’s letters introducing and describing me has already arrived. Among the recipients are the then high school student, later, Communist Nezir Turekul, in Tashkent; Petersburg University law student Mustafa Cokayev from the Ozbeks; author and poet Abdulmahit Suleyman (Colpan) from Andican, again in Tashkent, Nogay historian Polat Sali; Munevver Qari and Ubeydullah Hoca from the Ozbeks; from Samarkand, Mahmud Hoca Behbubi; from Bukhara, Ahmedcan Mahdum; again from the Kirgiz, a university student Canizaqoglu Ibrahim may be mentioned.

I need to dwell on a couple of the above; Nezir Turekul and Abdulhamid Suleyman, also known as Colpan as it is his nom de plume. Nezir’s father Turekul was a translator to the Governor of Ferghana. He had collected some valuable manuscripts. Nezir would read any book that touched his hand, and he would fall under the influence of that author. I was telling him that human life is short, learning and reading needed to be done according to a plan in order to obtain positive results. He, in turn, would attempt to inculcate my ideas in the mind of poet Colpan who was a child of fifteen at the time, claiming he (Nezir) could not follow that path as he had no resolve. In reality, he was an extreme Turkist at the time. He would read the journal *Turk Yurdu* being published in Istanbul. Later, he became a Communist. He was appointed Russian Council General in Cidde, published articles in the issues of Turk language, but remained loyal to his national culture. He was eliminated in the Soviet extermination waves because of that.

The greatest contemporary national poet of the Ozbeks, Colpan, was at the time probably fifteen years old. He had written me a letter indicating he was my admirer, after reading my book, and invited me to their home In Andican. When I arrived at

their home with Nezir Turekul, his father, who was a big wealthy merchant, met us coldly, even critically, stating “can a child invite someone without the permission of his father?” Abdulhamit was not home, he arrived later. Actually, he was still a child; we thought he was an adult. We motioned to move to a hotel. His father stated “you can go after dinner.” Abdulhamit could not say anything to his father. But, he was speaking with his friend seated next to him during dinner, while we conversed with his father. His father became angry at that. I recited a verse from Mevlana: “nightingales are select birds, but other birds do not stop singing because he is.” It turned out, he was an intelligent man, and he liked what I recited. He immediately changed and insisted that: “you are no longer my son’s guests; you will be mine.” He did not allow us to move to a hotel. Colpan’s father was more reverent toward Persian. In order to introduce myself, I handed him one of my cards. Apparently he had never seen such an item. He said: “so, this is your name, and you had it printed” and handed it back to me. This was the way we became friends with the great contemporary Ozbek poet, and his despotic father from the middle ages. Nezir Turekul, though he was a Turkist, he also liked and had facility in Persian literature. Those years, I greatly benefited from the Persian my mother taught me. I always privately remembered my mother with gratitude. Suleyman Aga gave us fabric as parting presents, and I took them to my mother.

## *The event that caused me to look into the Manas dastan—*

I was occasionally studying the manas dastan of the Kirgiz since 1910. But, that year, an event took place that necessitated my getting involved in a more serious way. I was going to prepare for the matriculation exams. I had money. My father had sold a mare (biye), and gave the proceeds to me. The honey money was already mine. Ibrahim Kackinbay’s mother had sold a stallion and gave the money to my father, to be passed on to me. I was attending theater, balls, student plays. In such a setting, I had met and became close with an enlightened Kirgiz named Ibrahim Canikazov. In Kazan, I met a manasci student [a trainee reciter of dastans] by the name of Sarikulov. This was a result of a strange event. On the Prolomny Street, there was a student restaurant and I was a regular there. One night, two students, a pockmarked Kirgiz and the other a blonde Russian, had become drunk, and were speaking in Kirghiz, and occasionally in Kazak, cussing-out other people around them. The table I was seated was directly across them. Thinking I was looking at them, they tried to provoke me as well. I did not respond. My behavior annoyed them even more. I addressed the owner of the restaurant, asking him to seat me away from those two, or have them removed altogether. Other patrons were also in favor of this request. The owner wanted them to leave. They tried to jump me. I told them to get lost. I addressed the pockmarked Kirgiz in his own dialect: “when one says ‘get lost’ to the dog, the dog will go away; but why is it that the Kalmaq named Elmembet does not?” When the Kirgiz student heard these words from the Manas dastan, he stopped. He said: “excuse me; who are you and how do you know Manas?”

We thus met. He was completely sober. It turned out, he had heard of my name, and even read my history book. The next day, at the same restaurant, he came to me and apologized. We intended to work on Manas together. Ebubekir Divayev, in Tashkent, gave me a complete version written in the Arabic alphabet during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was completely different than the version translated by Radloff. Many a place was illegible. But, as Sarukulv indicated, it was taken down from an excellent Manasci. That manuscript was in my hands for eight years. In 1921 Canizakov borrowed that copy from me during the Baku Eastern Conference. When he was martyred fighting against the Soviets, that manuscript disappeared. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century the Kirgiz fought against the Chinese after establishing a large state in Mongolia. The Manas dastan reflects the events and national myths concerning the Kirgiz uruk beginning from that period, much like those Greek epos. Since Radloff was in the employ of the Russians, while he was transcribing that dastan, the Manasci made additions they though he would like, such as “Ak-Padisah” [the white emperor] mixing into the text the Russian Tsar. Since 1924, the Soviets have been endeavoring to modify this dastan to suit their political needs. The copy I had was written in the period of Kokand Han, shortly before the Russian invasion, containing about sixty thousand lines. Sarikulov and I wanted to publish this work in the Arabic alphabet. Canizakov also wanted that. But both idealist Kirgiz intellectuals were sacrificed to the struggle against the Russians. The publication plan we made together was not carried out to culmination.

### *The story of transferring an important scholarly library to Istanbul—*

About this time, an event took place. Professor Katanov’s wife hated books and libraries. She finally told her husband: “either your books go, or I will.” At the time, since there were no electric powered vacuums, it was difficult for women to dust, especially dust the books was a difficult task. Because of that, and other reasons, they did not get along. Since she was the mother of offspring, Professor Katanov decided to sell his library. Since he gave a key to his library, and I was benefiting from it, I knew the value of this library. The Professor wanted me to broker the sale. I wrote an article published in the *Vaqit* newspaper, announcing: “the big library of a great Orientalist is for sale,” recommending that, in order to establish a scholarly institution specific to the Moslems in Kazan or Orenbug, this library be bought. Nothing was heard from the Tatars. I wrote to Yusuf Akcura in Istanbul, then writing in *Turk Yurdu*. He told the Ministry of Evkaf, they decided to buy it and bring it to Istanbul. Yusuf Akcura let me know of this result. They sent an official of the Evkaf, Nail Resit, and a Tatar origin officer named Omer Terigul to me in Kazan. I bought this library for eight thousand Rubles, for Türkiye. I packed it in boxes and sent it to Istanbul. But, this library missed a lot of material. I indicated to our guests that I would fill in the gaps from Petersburg. I arrived in Petersburg, met with Radloff and other Academy members in Radloff’s home and gave a report of my Turkistan trip. I was told I would be given a large sum

of money for a new expedition and to purchase more manuscripts. In the meantime, I bought additional books from the Petersburg bookstores and institutions in order to fill in the gaps in Katanov’s library, with the money Nail Resit Bey had, in the sum of seven thousand Rubles. I also collected books from the Academy and Institutes for free. We again packed those books and sent them on to Istanbul. Prior to the beginning of the First World War, these books arrived in Istanbul, and formed the seed of the library in the Istanbul University “Institute of Turcology.” This library was a priceless treasure for me, after I arrived in Istanbul in 1925. If it was not the Russian language scholarly sources in this library, my historical publications in Istanbul would have been solely based only on Eastern and Western European sources, thus deficient.

In Petersburg, I busied myself studying the European book catalogs of the Academy’s Asian Museum, updating and preparing for my own benefit, an index begun by Fraehn in 1845 on Islamic manuscripts. I also worked in the Academy’s archives in order to collect materials on the Baskurt and Nogay history. I also wrote the results of the first Turkistan trip. Those were published in the Russian Archeological Society’s Eastern Branch *Zapiski*. Barthold promised me that he would find a way to have me admitted into the Petersburg University School of Oriental Studies even if I could not pass the high school exams, and he would employ me in the International Central Asia Researches Committee, which he had founded, and he would send me to Europe to study the Islamic works in their libraries. Thus, I would be working in Germany, Austria, Paris and London between 1914 and 1917. Because of the war, those plans could not be realized, but caused me to dream and plan for that ideal future. Meaning, I would become an Orientalist working on the Turks and Islamic culture. I told myself, “Why would I not learn English and Latin sufficiently to read Orientalist Howorth’s English work on our history, Orientalist Fraehn’s Latin work, again on our history?” This was the definite decision I made during 1914.

### *My learning of Ibn-haldun’s philosophy—*

That winter, I spent quite a bit of time on *Manas* and the Arab philosopher Ibn-Haldun. That scholar’s six volume history and the Turkish translation of his *Introduction* [*Mukaddime*] were in my maternal uncle’s library, next to the work of Ibn-al-Asir’s Islamic history source. My maternal uncle had me not only give me homework from Ibn-al-Asir, but also from Ibn-Haldun, then he would examine me. Since Ibn-Haldun’s philosophical work *Introduction* was widely used in the introduction of Mercani’s *Vafiyat ul-Eslaf* published in Kazan, the contents were known to me in general outlines via my father and my maternal uncle, though my maternal uncle told me: “do not to worry about it at this time; you will not understand it.” The reasoning was that I had not yet been introduced to Social issues yet. That year, when I was reading Professor Karayev’s social studies book, my adviser Professor Khwostov gave me the task of summarizing Ibn-Haldun’s thoughts on social matters since I knew Arabic. I prepared a paper from that book, on the importance of nationality in organization of governance,

to present it to the Kazan University Archeology Society. At the time, Yusuf Akcura wanted articles from me in order to publish them in the *Türk Yurdu* journal. I modified it for the Turkish readers and sent it to him. Akcura had it printed in the journal *Bilgi* being published under the administration of Tevfik Rustu and Celal Sahir (1914, number 7). I learned of that only after my return from Germany to Istanbul during June of 1925. When I arrived in Istanbul, I met a gentleman named Muallim M. Cevdet. Later we became friends, and he had a large library. He whispered a few words into my ear: “Please do not mention my name, when your paper on Ibn-Haldun is discussed.” I asked: “what happened?” He stated: “when your paper was published, I wrote in the journal *Tedrisat-I İptidaiye Mecmuasi* we were then publishing, two retorts criticizing your ideas. Now, the ideas you advanced have appeal; mine are bankrupt.” I read my own article, as well as those of M. Cevdet bey. I was against theocracy, Cevdet Bey was in favor of it and he stated that: “what is the Northern author Zeki Velidi looking for in our government administration of the Turks living in Türkiye?” criticizing me severely. The ideas I advanced in this article were as follows:

*“Theocracy is a nuisance for the Turks; Theocracy is not the essence of Islamic society; when we are joining the Western world, Islam must fall in line as well; Turks always separated Islam from sovereignty; Among the Mongols and the Turks there is nothing that is bound in religion. Cengiz’s yasa period opened a new vista in Islam. This application (Yasaq-I Osmani and the tamga system) also left its mark in Türkiye as well as in the Islamic world. Religion and administration must be completely separate. The statement of the Kur’an must be modified by the regulations of the Professorane world. An Eastern people have nothing different from the Westerners as a human society. The efforts of Egyptian Mufti Muhammed Abdu; the Turk Mahmut Esat, Russian Musa Carulah’s efforts in Reforming Islam and making it the bases of contemporary Professorate laws are empty matters. The primary reason for the Central Asian societies becoming prisoners of Russia is their discarding the Cengiz yasa by turning to sharia. The ruler of Bukhara (during the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century), the Mangit Sah Murat Bey had become a Moslem dervis, and he was killing those who were no longer performing namaz. When Ibn-Haldun wrote his grand history, great events had taken place in Turk history. He spoke with Temur in Damascus. His first contacts with Turk tribes began at that occasion. He wrote a separate book and he recorded his impressions; Temur managed his country with Yasa and Tuzuk.”*

On 1 February 1930, I was invited to the Cankaya Kosk. At Ataturk’s table, scholarly matters were discussed in addition to the political ones. Ataturk addressed the Siirt Deputy Mahmut Bey, asked him: “kindly bring the Professor’s article.” A little later, Mahmut Bey brought the *Bilgi* journal from Ataturk’s library. I noticed that Ataturk had read that article very carefully. Now, he had Mahmut Bey read it. At one point in the article, he asked me to explain what I meant by stating: “with the

genius of Cengiz’s mind, extremely regular military administration removed Iran’s bureaucratic methods,” and added: “I believe there is an error there.” I immediately responded with “you are very correct, sir; I surmise, when Yusuf Bey was rendering my language into Ottoman, he utilized bureaucratic instead of theocratic methods, and changed that foreign word into ‘kirtasiye.’” Ataturk: “I thought so, too, because, in other places, you mention theocracy, and wrote against the Caliphate.” In that gathering, the owner of the said journal, Tevfik Rustu, Celal Bayar, Yusuf Akcura, Afet Hanim and many others were present. Yusuf Bey confessed that he inserted the word kirtasiye/bureaucracy. I was filled with admiration for Ataturk for his depth of attention. He then addressed me: “as you see, we read your writings prior to your arrival; you had sent a good message ahead of you.” That also testified to the fact that Ataturk had read the criticism written by M. Cevdet. This compliment paid me by Ataturk did not yield good results for me. Because, Professor Semseddin Gunaltay was of one mind with M. Cevdet during 1914, and he had published his thoughts when my article was published. Yusuf Akcura later detailed to me how Gunaltay’s facial expressions were spoiled while Ataturk was praising my work. Regardless, I was pleased to learn that that article I wrote while I was studying Ibn-Haldun during the winter of 1912-1913 was read seriously by Turkish men of ideas and politics. Later on I saw that, my same article was praised by Professor Ziyaeddin Fahri, in a work he wrote about Ibn-Haldun in 1922, much like that was done by Ataturk that night. Even the American Professor F. Rosenthal also touched upon my thoughts on Ibn-Haldun, in his 1961 critical English translation of *Mukaddime*.

While I was studying the manuscripts in Bukhara libraries during the winter of 1913, I realized that those scholars working on historical philosophy and social sciences were not confined to Mediterranean and Spain, much like Ibn-Haldun, and the idea was already in the hands of Temur in the very early 14<sup>th</sup> century. The referenced work was by Sems Ici, who wrote basically the same principles as Ibn-Haldun, and expounded the same thoughts without even knowing Ibn-Haldun. It was written at the time of Temur [d.1405], by his order, on historical philosophy and devoted to Turk law and administrative systems, and presented to Temur. I only found that work after my arrival in Istanbul, in the Yenicami library. I had mentioned that work to Ataturk during the said dinner, in which *Yasa* was utilized instead of *Sheria* and the results of mathematical sciences in the place of religion were stressed. Ataturk responded with: “a remarkable Turk this Temur.” In 1951, I presented that work to the XXII. International Orientalist Congress held in Istanbul. Professor Rosenthal of Yale has published a research comment of that work.

## *My second scholarly trip to Turkistan—*

Ibrahim Akcurin was foremost among my friends, who were happy to learn of my second scholarly trip, sponsored by the Russian Academy of Sciences. His name is mentioned in several places in this Memoir, and he was the representative for as



well as related to the industrialist Akcurins of Simbirsk province. Even though he was more advanced from me, he regarded me as his contemporary. He had learned Uygur. When I was in Petersburg, he happened to be there as well, and sent me an invitation in Uygur. He had invited me to the Grand Hotel for dinner. He wished me success and accompanied me to the train station. Upon arrival in Bukhara, I met with Prime Minister Nasrullah Qusbeg, because, I was going to spend most of time in Bukhara. He had dictated letters of recommendations to the Governors of various administrative divisions, to render me aid. Wherever I arrived, I noticed that those letters were already there. When I reached Qarsi, they assumed I was a high-level official of the Tsar, and placed me in the Elcihane, which was the equivalent of the Foreign Ministry Guest House. I was entertained in grand style, and also provided a host next to me. When I arrived in Sherisebz, the Governor (Bey) of this province was addressing me in Russian and having his words translated to me, even though he knew I was a Moslem Turk. I told him this was redundant, and I was not going to speak in Russian. He was pleased. In May, I saw in Qarsi market a medicinal compound being wrapped into pages written in the old Turkish. I asked for the rest of the book. He was tearing the pages from a volume. That book turned out to be one seventh of the Kur'an, in Turkish translation. I bought it for twenty Bukhara 'Pul.' This was one of the oldest examples of Turk-Islam period, dating back to the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Orientalists Barthold and Salemann wrote on this topic. Later on, 14<sup>th</sup> century copies written in Iran under the Ilkhans and in Altin-Ordu [Golden Horde] were discovered in Istanbul. Later on, I published a piece on these in English. After completing my research in Bukhara Khanate, and returned to Tashkent, Assistant Governor General A.A. Semenov offered me a large sum of money for me to sell this fragment to him. I responded with: "I bought it for the Academy of Sciences; I will give it to them." Later on I learned that Semenov wrote praises about me to Barthold. Perhaps he wanted to know if I had a money weakness. Probably he had a good collection of manuscripts, spending a lot of money for that. Professor Semenov passed away recently, after working in the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan and publishing important works on the Iranian past of Turkistan. Other high level official Russians who were interested in scholarship were then living in Samarkand; engineer Kastalsky and Viatkin. They had collected very valuable works. Another volume I bought in Qarsi was written in the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, a large work on the social and cultural life of Timurid Herat, written by one Mahmud Vasfi. Providing the smallest details of the life and environment of Alisir Navai, this work serves as an endless source for the scholars studying social and cultural topics. That book, also containing many pornographic stories, was published by the Russian Academy of Sciences. In Sehrisebz, I copied the inscriptions off the Timurid era buildings. I wrote the details of specifications of those inscriptions. Even though the Russians had militarily occupied Bukhara fifty years ago, none of these structures, constituting the largest architectural monuments of Turkistan, were yet photographed. After many of the monuments became ruined, they woke-up. It was the Austrian Cohn Wiener who first published those images.

## *My trip to Eastern Bukhara—*

When I arrived in Guzar at the beginning of June, Governor Seyyit Ekrem Tore, who was the uncle of the Emir, met me with great respect. He was unhappy with his nephew Emir Alim. Mustafa Mirahor, a member of his entourage, was from the Qavcin tribe. And he did not like the Mangit, on account of the Mangit spoiling the city folk Tajiks. Seyyit Ekrem Tore invited me to stay, be a teacher and teach Russian to his sons. His palace had a few good manuscripts. His grandfather Emir Nasrullah (1828-1860) had the British officers Conoly and Stoddard killed, and Russians had a portrait of his grandfather made; he asked that I send it to him. Later on, I sent him the work of Xanikov that included the said picture. He did not like the Russians. On my way to Serasya, at Baysun, referenced as Cidali Baysun in our dastan *Alpamis*, and the home of Kungrats, the Bey of the said tribe had me eat six different types of *pilav* in one day. In extreme heat, I almost drowned without being able to digest them. At Tupelenderya River, as we crossed, I killed a wild boar that attacked me, and scared my horse, with my pistol. The boar was biting into my boot, the stirrup saved me. I had read that there were plenty of boars here. The Baysun guide I had with me stopped everybody we encountered on the way, and told everyone with exaggeration the event as if I killed a lion. Ishaq Bey was an enlightened young man as governor of Serasya, gave me an excellent collection of manuscripts from the old Turk Sufis and Ahmet Yesevi, which I had not seen until that day. Since it was a present for me, I did not give it to the Academy. Now, it is lost. I wish I had passed it on. In Dusanbe, today the capital of the Tajik Republic, the former Prime Minister of the Emir of Bukhara Evliyaqul Qusbegi was the Governor General. He wrote poetry under the nom de plume Huseyni, and published them. I did not know anything about all this. He personally read his poetry to me, most of which were in Persian. He introduced me to some of his close friends with: "even though he has a Russian education, he remained a Moslem." I went to a village named Hazret-I Mevlana near Dusanbe. This was the burial site of a Grand Sufi of Turkistan, Yaqub Carhi, and the population was considered to be Mongol during the Timurid times; now as well. In 1555, this place was visited by the Turk sailor Seydi Ali Reis. Dusanbe (Suman, by the old name) was a center of Buddhism during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. I did not encounter any sign of those days. The ethnography of the Turk Laqay and Qarlik was never studied, so I went to a few places to collect language and folklore samples. Since they were the remnant of the old Ephtalites, their literature, customs and traditions were genuine interest to me.

## *My having been robbed at the Lakays—*

I told the issue to Evliya Kus Begi. He aided me and I went to the place of the emlakdar, meaning Kaymakam, provincial district administrator. I was going to the location known as Koktas, where the Lakay Beys lived. A special tent was erected for

me, inside the gardens completely surrounded by high wall. I was inviting the Lakay and Qarluq; I was recording the old legends and old dastans. I went to the room of the Kaymakam to retrieve some item from my jacket; I discovered that my wallet, with all the money in it was gone. I informed the Kaymakam. Five hundred fiftyfive Russian Rubles and several hundred Bukhara Tenke, adding up to approximately eight hundred Russian Rubles were stolen. Kaymakam announced that all the doors to the walled garden, perhaps several hectares in size, locked and everyone inside was now under detention. Since the amount stolen added-up to approximately four thousand Bukhara Tenke, it was as much as the total annual tax amount of this region. Kaymakam immediately sent a messenger Governor General Evliyaqul Kusbegi, advising him of the foregoing. The Governor General wrote back that, if the said amount is not found immediately, that total was going to be extracted from the residents as an additional tax. Having all of the people present in the gardens of the seat of government including the prominent individuals of the Qarluq and Lakay in custody immediately became an issue. Many were forced to swear on the Kur'an that they had not stolen the money. This caused great excitement. The tribal leaders went to the Kaymakam and stated: "this man's money was perhaps not stolen; he only feigned that it was. If his money was stolen, he would have been depressed. Perhaps he only wishes to extract money from our tribe." An Imam by the name of Haci Ali spoke for all the people: "given that this person confesses to be a Moslem, we swore we did not steal his money. He ought to swear on Kur'an that his money is stolen." I responded that I was not going to swear because of eight hundred Rubles; and if it is not recovered, I will not be amenable for an additional tax for the purpose. This increased the suspicion of those present. But, the Kaymakam resorted to other means to find the truth; some of the suspects were tortured in the Bukhara style. As a result, it transpired that one of the servants had taken the money. He confessed. Humor of everybody returned. The Ozbeks present stated: "if it was us, we would have sworn for a single Bukhara Pul; he was reluctant to, even though he had lost four thousand Tenke and did not show any remorse. To the contrary, he forgave it" and showed their sympathy toward me.

The same individual invited me to the mountains, to the high pastures of Koktas to a feast. I mounted my horse to go with them. As I approached the gate, the mounted leaders of the tribe addressed me: "Sir, we have many thieves; leave that money to the Kaymakam in front of everybody." I agreed, and in front of the assembled, I gave the money to the Kaymakam. We thus went to the mountains. It transpired that, even while we were with the Kaymakam, they had sent an advance man, had sheep slaughtered, and prepared a meal. They also had plenty of kimiz. We spoke pleasantly. I stayed there another two to three days and collected dastans. They asked me about world politics. The rumors that there was going to be a war between Germany and the Russians had reached them. Except, they were curious which side the Caliph (meaning, Türkiye) was going to take. I was truly amazed they were so curious about politics. I told them what I knew. When I left them, they accompanied me, just like a cavalry battalion all the way to the Kaymakam.

In my life, I experienced many a strange event. This is one of them. This thievery in Koktas helped me eight years later during the time of national liberation movement. At the time of the rebellion against the Soviets, these Qarluks and the Lakay kept Enver Pasa in custody, in the home of Ibrahim Bey, in which I had been, with the suspicion that he might be a false person. In the days when the Pasa was in custody (January 1922), I was in the place called Taldi, in the region of Guzar of Bukhara, with the Korbasi Cebbar. At the time, representatives arrived from the Lakay to Cabbar Bey. Their intent was to establish contact with the partizans in the direction of Qarsi and Guzar. One of those in the party recognized me and told the money stealing event. He told Cabbar Bey that "this man was a high official of the Tsar, and was a friend of the deceased Evliyakul Kusbegi. Four thousand Tenke of his money was stolen; he did not bat an eye. He was our guest, he told us that there would be war, Turks would join in with the Germans and the Tsar would lose. Whatever he told us, turned out to be true." I held conversations with them. I listened to what they told me about Enver Pasa. I also added: "I confirm that Enver, who is your prisoner in Koktas, is the famed Enver Pasa of Türkiye. Go trust him, and serve him." They left. A few days later an officer, by the name of Halil Bey, who was in the entourage of the Pasa, arrived. He informed that Pasa was no longer in custody. Of course, his release was not only the result of the word the Lakay carried. However, the fact that Lakay served him was definitely a result of my words. Their representatives who arrived in Kabul during 1923 openly stated that fact. As a result of what the Lakay said about me, my credit grew in the eyes of Cabbar Bey.

## *Results of my trip—*

After I returned from Koktas (at the end of June 1914), Evliya Kusbeg expressed his sympathy to me, stating: "good thing the money was found; if not, that would have caused an issue between Bukhara and Petersburg." At the time, in this land called Eastern Bukhara, I could not find any valuable historical documents. A few literary and religious works and documents on religious foundations were found. I collected very valuable information on historical monuments and ethnographic materials. Along those lines, I collected information on Xuttal Bek Horses, as they were mentioned in the Chinese records predating the birth of Jesus, in the seventh and eighth century Arab records and contemporary Iranian chronicles. These are myths on the stallions that emerged from the lake and hid in the caves. It transpired that those myths were still alive around Lake Cildi and among the Turkmen and the Qarluq living near Karatekin. I was able record them all. Marco Polo mentions those horses, too.

When I arrived in Qarsi on 14 July, I learned that war was announced between the Germans and the Russians. Even though I was within the age bracket to be mobilized, since I was officially sent from Petersburg, I was in no hurry. I continued working in Bukhara. I obtained a document from the Russian Consulate in Bukhara (Kagan) confirming this. Like everybody else, I wanted Türkiye to join the Germans against the

Russians. We spoke quite a bit on these issues with the young Bukharans. Nasrullah Kusbeg took me to the Emir's palace and showed me some books, but insisted I not tell anyone anything on this topic or write about it. He also gave me some money. He made pilav with his own hands in a corner of the government guesthouse, and made me wear a hilat. I learned that a book entitled *Tarih Yasa* was in the hands of the Emir, in Uygur, and I had to return some other time to see it. One of the important works I found in Bukhara was a complete and detailed work on geography written by Kasanli Mahmud bin Veli in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was destroyed when the Soviets bombarded the city in 1920. It contained comprehensive information on the iska system in Zarafshan and Kashkadarya regions, and I published the notes I took from it in the *Zapiski of the Russian Archeological Society* (V. XXIII). During 1964, when I was a guest of the Pakistan Historical Society, I learned that this manuscript was found, and being kept in the library of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences. The Uzbek government photographed this work and presented it to the Pakistan Historical Society in four large volumes. I stayed there a few more days and studied this work. Apart from all that, I also discovered several volumes on the history of Bukhara and Khorasan, previously unknown, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. One of those was the volume by an Uzbek named Imami, written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Bukhara, entitled *Hanlar Tarihi* or Hanname, a collection of the old Turk dastans. I wrote a German language paper on the Persian language version of that book discovered in Istanbul during 1948, and read it to the Congress of Orientalist in Cambridge during 1954. It was published in Holland. This trip, much like the earlier one, was very beneficial, but was cut short due to the war having begun. In 1912, I was invited to take up a Turk History teaching position in Ufa at the Osmaniye medrese, but I had asked for an extension. This year, I went there and had them and had them certify it officially. I returned to the village for a short rest. Due to the war atmosphere, and the possibility of being called into the army, I returned to the village from the high pastures where I had gone to drink kimiz. Shortly afterward, I left for Petersburg. Upon arrival, I gave my report to the Academy of Sciences and the International Central Asian Research Committee.

## *My work in the milieu of the Orientalists in Petersburg—*

This report was published in the *Zapiski of the Russian Archeological Society Eastern Branch*, just like the previous one. Barthold and Radloff were very happy with this trip. Barthold informed the Academy of Sciences: "Velidov's trip is a proof that those materials that are about to be completely lost can be retrieved by a native citizen who enjoys a complete trust of his people." Barthold used to invite me to the meetings of the Orientalists living in Petersburg. In that manner, I joined the meetings of the Tsarist Archeological and Geography Society and the Orientalist "Radloff Circle." Barthold's *Temur's Indian Expedition* was at press, I was making the corrections. I helped him with the reading of the sources while he was writing the life of Ulughbek.

I had seen a work on Temur's expedition to Syria, Damascus and Anatolia (Rum), written by Sihabettin Munsi, for a few hours. The owner did not want to show this work to the Russians, even though I worked hard, I could not obtain it. That year, my working with Barthold was very beneficial.

At the time, I was working on the second volume of my book *Turk History*. I was concentrating on the resurrection of the Turks against the Russians, history of Russian methods of economic pressure in response, especially the history of the Baskurt and Nogay revolts. Barthold asked me to give a briefing about my work to the Radloff Circle. I indicated that I would only be very happy to do so. On 12 December 1914 I presented my details: "I am learning the history of the Turk tribes living on the other side and to the North of the Caspian Sea since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, who are today prisoners of the Russians, on the bases of today's conditions. To that end, I am studying the laws of the steppe tribes and those of the Baskurt, issues of land ownership among the Kazak, Kirgiz and Taranci, from those who collected the documents, such as Scerbina, Kuznetsov, Rumiantsov, Skryplev, and Preplatcekov. I am reading those from the already published forty volumes, and the larger portion of that information is still in the archives of the Immigration Bureau in hand-written notes. I took the method of learning today and working backward, and wished to learn from them on the social conditions of the steppe life and ethnography." These issues were discussed in detail. I was told they would help me, and advised that I should work in the Tsarist Geography Society, in the committee working to draw the map of the tribes living under the Russian administration. I had already compiled such information on the Baskurt. Afterward, I worked privately in the ethnography department of the Russian Geography Society, especially with Professor Samoylovic. This work, lasting four or five months was especially beneficial to me. I continued doing the same after my arrival in Petersburg during the fall of 1916. I also studied the papers in the archive of the Academy of Sciences on the Baskurt, Kazak, and Nogay. I had already sent the plan of my second volume to Ramsted, with whom I was in constant contact. He gave me that report in 1937 when I was a guest in his home in Helsinki, which made me very happy. But the volume entitled *Introduction to Turk History Volume II* on the Turk ethnography, though ready for the printer, is still not published.

Barthold spent quite an effort to save me from going into the army. He worked hard to have me appointed as a lecturer in the Eastern Languages School operating under the protection of the Tsarina. He introduced me to General Pisarev, who was running the school, who was appointed by the Tsarina. This person, for whatever reason showed interest, invited me to his home several times. As a result of that meeting, I met several Russian families living in Petersburg who had an affinity toward the East. I attended some balls. Famed Cokan Velihan had established a wide circle of friends in Petersburg that included Dostoyevsky and his environment. I noticed that, I could do the same if I were to be appointed a lecturer in the Eastern Languages School. There were individuals who had a sincere interest and affection among them toward the East. However, the appointment was not valid, until it was verified by the Tsarina. With the encouragement of Barthold, I journeyed to Kazan and took the exam to



become a Russian teacher at the non-Russian schools. My old friend Ashmarin's help ensured quick results. Since I was preparing for the task for a long time, it was easy. However, since I was not appointed as a teacher, the diploma was useless. Barthold did not at all like to fight for the Tsar, and stated that my becoming cannon fodder was not worthy of me. But the efforts of Barthold, who had lost a number of his students at the front during the first months of the war, and of Samaylovich, bore no fruit. I was inducted into the Army. Fifteen days after I settled into the barracks as a soldier, a law was passed to exempt the teachers of the non-Russian schools. I returned to Ufa, obtained a document showing I was exempt from the army service, and began teaching. In that school, I was instructing Turk History and the History of Turkish Literature. I had some very valuable students, who were later of great help in my political life. I was still continuing to prepare for the high school exams. But, I was not telling anyone that I was, as I knew not what the result would be. My fellow countryman by the name of Abdullah Ismeti did not pass the exams on his first try, which caused gossip. Those individuals, who are determined to pass them, may do so even after five tries. I was taking lessons from a high school teacher by the name of Lavrov and his wife. The Latin language was difficult for me, even though I had started it in Kazan. Despite that, I had translated Ch. Fraehn's articles from Latin into Russian on the history of the Baskurt and the Hazar, which he took from Ibn-Fadlan. Lavrov had checked the translations.

### III. 1916-1918

## Political Life

I published my history book in Russian, in the Records of the Turkistan Archeological Society series. I re-inserted the section on Eastern Turks, which was taken out by the publisher Idrisov after he stated "it does not concern us Tatars," replete with images, also containing new information on the history of Ferghana Hans during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. While in Ufa, I was following the land cases on behalf of my uruk Elciktemir on the Kuzen ogullari, at the agricultural administration archives. These legal cases went back at least a century. My uruk had detailed me to follow the details of this complex case. During the war, I worked on political issues quite a bit. First of all, there were some groups of Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries here. My friend Omer Terigulov was a member of the first, and others were members of the latter. Via their channels, I was receiving and reading a lot of banned publications against the Tsarist government. Through these publications, I was also learning the currents developing among Russian Revolutionaries living outside Russia. There were offers for me to join some of the revolutionary parties. I did not join, believing those could manage themselves without me, and was leery of active politics. Besides, at the time, I was only interested in theoretical socialism. One of the Kazak Sultans, Selimgerey Canturin, owned a house in Ufa. He lived in Petersburg during winter. We held some political discussions in his house during the winter. I had some contact with the political movements in Turkistan. One of the reasons for that were the publications of a Hungarian scholar and that of the Russian Vice-Governor of Ferghana. The Russian translation of Hungarian scholar Vambéry's publications on Central Asia, especially during the 1905 Revolution, on the political movements of the Moslems in the Russian Empire, had an influence on me. When he died in 1913, I wrote an article, which was published in the journal *Mektep* in Kazan, and in *Turk Yurdu* in Türkiye. I had met Nalivkin, the Governor of Ferghana, in Samara, via Alihan Bukeyhanov. The Governor knew Turkish and Persian well, and he was a historian studying our history from primary documents. He published a work on the history of Kokand Hans in French. He also had a volume on "The Natives in the past and Now" (meaning Turkistan), a very good book written with affection published in 1908. His wife published an important study under the title "Condition of Native

(Ozbek) Women.” Despite the fact that Nalivkin was a soldier, having risen to the rank of governor, he was a member of the Social Democrat Party. He became a member of the Duma as a consequence. When I spoke with him in 1913, he had indicated the necessity of organizing the Moslems. That year during my Ferghana trip, I spoke several times with the Social Revolutionary Vadim Caykin. Our topic was always on the need to organize the Moslems. We agreed that a bi-lingual, in Turkish and in Russian, a newspaper with the title “Voice of Turkistan” needed to be established. I introduced Taskent attorney Ubeydullah Hocayev, teacher Munevver Qari and from Kokand Asurali Zahiri to Vadim Caykin; speaking with each before the introductions. If the newspaper was going to be established, I wrote three items to constitute the ideology to be propounded. My friends and Vadim accepted those, too:

1. The equality, before law and taxes, with the Russians, of all the Native Populations living along the Siberian Railroad and Afghanistan and Iran;
2. Not to allow Russian immigration into the region before the nomadic Moslems are settled and given lands;
3. Proliferation of contemporary education.

Accepting all these, the socialist Caykin began to publish his newspaper in Andican and Ubeydullah Hocayev in Tashkent. I published, under assumed names, in both. I concentrated on the need to establish municipal and provincial administrations in Turkistan. I also participated in the establishment of the Gayret Kutuphanesi in Kokand, which was founded with national and political aims at the end of 1913. Many a time, a room above Surali’s store which specialized in serving a dish named manti, was my abode as well as the venue for political talks, since he spent most of his time in his village.

Apparently, my contacts with the local enlightened people had attracted the attention of the Ferghana Governor during my trip. He, accompanied with the Orientalist Gibbios asked me, in Skobelev, in a very friendly way, if I held political talks during my trip of collecting historical documentation. I derived from that, perhaps I was being shadowed. I informed him I was not involved in political matters and that I believed in the three items aforementioned, that they are not secret and was going to be discussed in the newspaper to be published in Ozbek during that year. He told me that scholarly work is very important, and it would also serve the needs of my nation as well, and advised me to stay away from secret political activity. He told me those as a friend, not as a Governor. I wondered if this person was a revolutionary. Those were also the advice given me by Alihan Bukeyhanov and by Barthold. When I was a teacher in Ufa, I never forgot those admonitions. I was in favor of studying the political movements, regardless of their color, to the extent possible.

In my opinion, Baskurt could not have a separate policy. Since they were involved in a struggle in land matters against the Russian immigrants alongside the Kazak and the Kirgiz, I believed they needed to be on the Turkistan side in politics as well. In

fact, the Katay Baskurt and the Katay-Kipcak who had settled in the Syrdarya delta because of those issues beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were keeping that struggle alive. I spent a few days in fall of 1915 with Haydar Mirza Sirtlanov, a prominent Bey descended from their Sultans, and with Sultan Selimgiray Canturin, who was living in his farm in the Kilim village. Ali Asgar Sirtlanov, from the Sirtlanov family was an attorney well known across the Empire and had defended General Stessel who was a hero of the Russo-Japanese war. His brother-in-law Davut, who was a Bey of the Derbend, was killed by Davut Seyh Ali. It was said that Russians had a finger in that event. The late Aliasgar, as well as Selimgerey Canturin, during the 1905-1907 Revolutions, defended territorial autonomy for the Eastern Turk population units--- and at the time we all referenced them as Moslems--- and with their encouragement Abrurresid Kadi Ibrahimov published a tract under the name *Autonomia*. I had seriously personalized that idea, and with the encouragement of Alihan Bukeyhanov, I established contact with Gregori Potanin, the famed Central Asian researcher who favored Siberian autonomy. He was perhaps eighty years old, an officer of the Russian Cossacks, who later entered the world of scholarship. But his scholarship was much like the Hungarian Baratusi Balough who wrote on the history of the Turanists, and Dr. Riza Nur Bey, who wrote twelve volumes on the culture, history, ethnography and dastans of Siberian and Central Asian tribes. Those were penned more for the love of the feeling of scholarship rather than scholarship itself, as they personally entertained affection toward those tribes. Potanin published works stressing that the idea of “Son of God,” appearing in many Slavic and European epics and among the Christians, was originally taken from the Erke cult of the Turks. I read those with pleasure, despite the pessimistic criticism of Barthold. Potanin liked my interest in Siberian autonomy and wrote me letters. It was difficult to read those letters written with his shaking hands, but I liked receiving them and would read those time and again, because, I had earlier read the works of his friend Yadrintsev. I also read those letters to Selimgerey Canturin as well. We would call Canturin “Sultan,” meaning to indicate he was a Prince, because he was descended from the Kazak Hans who fought against the Russian occupation armies during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, alongside with the Baskurt. In 1915, when I visited him in his farm near the Kilim village, and expressed my ideas about the Siberian autonomy, and the fact that the Eastern Baskurdistan could join such an arrangement, which was earlier under the jurisdiction of Siberian Kocum Hans, his response was “if an opportunity presents itself, that may take place.” Selimgerey Sultan wished me to spend the winters in Petersburg and become acquainted with the preparations of the coming Russian revolution. During a time we spent alone, he indicated that he recognized me as a young man who had the ability to descend into the depths of political life.

## *My having been sent from Ufa to Petersburg: My work in the Moslem Fraction in the Duma—*

Then, some business appeared that would provide me the opportunity to seriously involve myself in politics. The election laws modified by the Tsar allowed five Deputies for the Kazan residents and one for the Azerbaijanis. Other Turks in Turkistan were deprived of the rights to have a representative in the Duma. Among the extant representatives, the Ufa Deputy Kutlukay Mirza Tevkilev was very honorable, honest and knowledgeable, but he was also very old. At the same time, since he was raised within the Russian community, he did not know the problems among the Moslems in detail. The other representative elected from the Ufa province, Ibniyemin Axtiyamov was educated in institutions of higher learning and was an attorney, but since he was stuck into small matters, his work did not yield positive results. Isa Mirza Yenikev was the Orenburg provincial Representative, was earlier a teacher, and he was involved in educational matters. But, since he was very ignorant, very hesitant and a scared person, he could not represent his constituents in anything other than education. The issue of sending someone from Ufa province arose, to help the official Moslem Fraction members, to remain in Petersburg during when the Duma was in session. Kutlukay Tevkilev desired this very much. He was aware of his own shortcomings and he was willing to admit it. Even though several candidates were advanced, it turned out that Tevkilev, Selimgirey Canturin and the late Aliasgar Sirtlanov's wife Emine Sirtlanova, who had large influence among the enlightened Moslems of Petersburg, as well as the Ufa provincial Council member Omer Terigulov, recommended me. As a result, I was sent to Petersburg at the end of 1915, in order to undertake those tasks at the meeting of the Moslems in Ufa.

## *My devotion to scholarly career—*

Were the efforts underway since 1909 to pass the matriculation exams derailed because of this development? Never. I believed that this political activity was temporary. I immediately sent letters to my teachers, Professor Katanov, Professor Barthold and Professor Bogorodetski, and to my German and Latin teacher Rklitski, with the general content as follows: "Moslem citizens of the Ufa Province gave me a political duty. However, my effort to enter the academe to continue my scholarly efforts will return some day. My new duties are temporary. Your desire to see me occupying a position in scholarship will always be my support. All the help you have extended to date will always keep me beholden to you, to my dedication to an academic career." Eleven years of political activity later, I arrived in Istanbul and entered that path. In 1930, I went to university of Vienna; I passed the Real Gymnasium and Doctoral exams. After the 'promotion,' I was appointed Honorary Professor of Islamic Studies

at the University of Bonn. On 9 June 1935, I was photographed with the Orientalists of the Oriental Seminar, starting with Professor P. Kahle and O. Spies, I sent that image to Professors Katanov and Bogoredetski with the inscription "I kept my word; my gratitude to you is eternal" as an attachment to my letter in Russian. At that time, Professor Barthold had passed away a long time earlier. It transpired that Professor Katanov had also recently died. I received a note from Professor Bogorodetski, consisting of the word "congratulations."

## *Political work in Petersburg—*

After arriving in Petersburg at the end of 1915, I rented a room from a prominent Social Democrat Georgian family close to the Tavriceskaya ulitsa where the Moslem Fraction had its quarters, close to the Duma. Selimgerey's home, who spent his winters in Petersburg, was close-by. Since Kutlukay Mirza spent most of his time there as well, the political issues were generally discussed there. Kutlukay Mirza always told the matters concerning the Moslems under debate in the Duma to the Fraction. Other Tatar members Bayterekov, and Minlialiyev, who were very ignorant, were nowhere to be seen. Those who were later elected to the Duma and joined the Fraction were Ahmet Salihov from Northern Caucasus; Mustafa Cokayev from Turkistan; Ismail Limanov from Crimea. Axtiamov was the official Secretary of the Fraction, though all matters passed onto the hands of Ahmet Salikov who was elected the head of the Bureau. Limanov was the Secretary of the Bureau. Azerbaijanis did not have permanent representatives, but often sent their leaders such as Alimerdan Topcibasi and Halil Hasmemedov to Petersburg, and they participated in the affairs of the Fraction. Even though I was not a lawyer, I physically worked on many a declaration to be made on behalf of the Moslem Fraction. With Mustafa Cokayev, we worked most with Representative Kerensky on the matter of laborers that were to be sent to the war-front from Turkistan. Kerensky was liked by those who were from Turkistan, because his father was an Educational Inspector in Tashkent and he had grown up there, and as a Social Revolutionary speaker who was criticizing the government. Especially Mutafa Cokayev was devoted to him. Mustafa Cokay and I, with Kerensky's aid, went to the war front twice to inspect the condition of those laborers. N. F. Kerensky is still alive and in February 1958 we met several times at the Hoover Library of Stanford University where he was busily writing the history of his times. We told each other our memories dating back to those times. By chance, the microfilm of *Turkestanskije Vedemosti* newspaper of the Kerensky period was in the hands of Dr. Richard Pierce of Berkeley [University of California], and we read those with pleasure together, at the Hoover microfilm readers. When Kerensky saw me, his memories of Turkistan were renewed, and he called the ezan in the manner of an Uzbek reciter while we were eating at the Library's cafeteria. We recalled the days when we were investigating the condition of the laborers from Turkistan at the front during 1916. In his old age, he had become an extreme Russian patriot, and does not wish to hear 'independence'



talk from us. Let him be; but the time we spent together within the Duma atmosphere in 1916 and the democrat Russia when he was head of the government during 1917 brought us back together.

## *The prominent Russians—*

I was attending the Duma sessions during the winter of 1915-1916 in order to learn the activities of various parties and groups and to listen to their debates. Kutlukay Mirza took me to feasts prepared by his friends. Once he took me to another that was given by a member of the Duma, and attended by many grand personalities including the head of the Duma and many party officials. It became necessary to rent a long-tailed jacket outfit and a top hat, with some Russian Ministers were also in attendance just like the time in 1954 when I attended a feast at the Buckingham Palace, in the retinue of the Turkish Ambassador Huseyin Ragib Bey, given by the Queen Elizabeth. I sent the photograph to my father taken at that first occasion. My father's friend and a member of the Second Duma, Sahserif Ahund Metinov, upon seeing me together with Kniaz Kocubey in the picture, a Russian notable whom he knew, wrote me a letter indicating he did not like it. Because, the same Kniaz Kocubey had the Duma reject the projects he was supporting on Baskurt lands and Russian immigrants. I wrote him back, suggesting him not to take the photograph seriously, and added in Persian, which he also knew, a rubai: "If you are able, take your place among the great men; be in the retinue of the Sultans when they drink. Being in the garb of the Moslems is useless when among the infidel; be the Moslem in the garb of the infidel." It was interesting to learn more about these prominent people, to whom I was first introduced by General Pisarev and by Kutlukay Mirza. But, they had no more business left in them. The only business they knew was gambling, which I did not like a whit. They could not dream that they were about to be buried as a class.

## *Maxim Gorki—*

The milieu that I liked was composed of those who opposed the prominents, most of whom were Socialist, enlightened free-thinkers, especially those who were Social-Revolutionaries. One of those I met from that category was Maxim Gorki. I also met some of the reporters working for the journal *Russkii letopisets* being published by him and other thinkers. Gorki decided to publish 'Manuals' of the cultures of those nations imprisoned by the Russians. Histories of Ukraine, Finn, Armenian, Georgian literatures and histories were being written. Gorki asked me to write the *Sbornik of Moslems in Russia*. I invested quite a bit of energy into that. For that purpose, I began by reading the Moslem literatures published in Russia and extant in the Petersburg public library, such as Ismail Gasprinsky and in Azerbaijan Hasan Bek Melikov, Fattah Ahundov, and so on, as well as the publications from Turkistan published by the Russians. In that task, the director of the Eastern Branch, the aged Professor Vasili

Dimitrovic Smirnov helped me enormously, because, he was also involved in that pursuit from the perspective of the Russians. I also reviewed the works written by Russian Moslems, but not published, with the aid of Smirnov. It turned out to be a large volume. During 1916, I gave Gorki the manuscript that I wrote in Russian. He handed it to Ukrainian Guriyevic, to review the style. Then, the Revolution started. This work was left in the hands of Guriyevic, who was killed while he was Minister of Education in Ukraine.

Working on that volume gave me a chance to understand Gorki very closely and read his works. One Gorki invited me to his summer house in Mostomiaki on Finland Road in Petersburg. He was making very liberal statements on the legal rights of the non-Russians. I also knew Professor Maxim Kovalevsky, who also had such beneficial thoughts about us. In 1905 he had published a volume under the title "In the eyes of the law, the issue of nationality and the legal rights." A few years back, Duma member Sahserif Metinov gave it to me to read. Maxim Gorki gave me Kovalevsky's book and some other writings to help me write my book. Professor Kovalevsky was requesting that all the nations imprisoned by the Russians to live their own lives, and advance their own national cultures; to the Armenians, he suggested that instead of dreaming to revive the Big Armenia of the Bagrat period, engaging Azerbaijan in a deathly struggle, and causing a hurly-burly in the civilized world, to advance their own language, religion and culture. He thus gained the affection of the Caucasian Moslems. In his volume, Professor Kovalevsky wrote to specify that the "Big Russia," reaching from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific could no longer be governed by the ideology of Ivan the Terrible, that it was a lie that Caucasus, Turkistan, Urals and the Altai joining her in a civilized way, and that the rights could only be applied to the Russians after they are fully provided to the nationalities. For the Russia that did not allow a right to live, personality and progress in peace, he concluded his work with the words of St. Augustine: *quid sunt regna sine justia, nisi magna latrocinia* (governance without justice is like banditry on a road in large scale). I had also concluded my Manual of the Russian Moslems' Literature with those words of Maxim Kovalevsky. Maxim Gorki also wrote a good introduction to my book. The *sborniks* of the Finns and the Armenians were published, but mine was not. But, a lot of the contents found their way into my *Today's Turkistan and the Recent Past*. But the *sbornik* also contained Crimea, Caucasia, and Kazan, meaning it had a wider reach.

When Gorki read what I wrote on the influences operating on Musa Carullah Bigiyev, besides the Russian and Western scholars, such as Andalusian Ebu-Bekir Arabi (d. 1148), and Ibrahim Satibi (d. 1388), and the Indian thinker Nimetullah Dihlevi (d. 1774), he stated that he did not know of cultural connections to such distant countries the Tatars had.

During 1915-1916 while I worked on political issues in Petersburg, I continued my contacts with the Russian Orientalists I already knew. I worked especially in the Asian Museum, and the Imperial Geography Society. I also spent some enjoyable time with the crowd of Moslem intellectuals and students gathered in Petersburg. We met with the university students mostly at the home of Emine Sirtlanoglu, widow of the

late Aliasgar Sirtlanov, and at the Petersburg Moslems Benevolent Society. Among those youths we were friends with and worked with at the time of the Revolution were Mustafa Cokayoglu, Ilyas Alkin, from Azerbaijan Ali Ekber Topcubasi, from the Turkmen Kakacan Berdiyev, from the Kazaks Isa Kackinbay, from the Tatars Sultanbek Mamliyev, Mustafa Sahkulu. Apart from them, capable intellectuals from among the political Moslems also joined us. Leading them was from Azerbaijan, Alimerdan Topcibasi and the Kazak Alihan Bukeyhan. I must mention them because they helped me understand the issues of the Moslem Turks of Turkistan. Russians losing the war gave birth to the beginnings of a Revolutionary and reformist atmosphere in the country. The retired Georgian officer in which I rented a room, even though he was among the notables, he was very close to the Georgian Social Democrats like Tserelli and Cixiedne. We were learning the preparations of the Revolution from primary sources. Then, the big Revolution arrived.

## *Revolution of 1917—*

My homeowner host Georgian, during the night of 16 February, indicated that action may take place next morning. The house was directly across the military barracks Preobrajenskaya Kazarma. My window overlooked it. I was wondering if gunshots would be heard, and if the Government would know about it ahead of time, and would they expel the soldiers. But, I did not imagine that the revolt would start inside these barracks.

I woke early in the morning. A little later, armed soldiers began exiting in groups contrary to military discipline. I watched them with my head between my hands, leaning on the windowsill. That meant the revolt of the soldiers billeted to the barracks. I began crying, thinking: “my God, please open a path for redemption of my people.” I got dressed and when I wanted to go out into the street, the doorkeeper stated: “do not go out, they are firing.” Despite that, I went out. I went toward the Fraction Bureau of which I was a member. The soldiers were carrying their weapons in an irregular manner, sometimes firing, were going somewhere. Even in Russia, I was in the habit of writing my memoirs, even if sporadically. What I wrote then, I no longer have. But, Alimcan Ibrahim of Kazan somehow got hold of them and quoted me in his *The Great October Revolution* (p. 21):

“When the Revolution started, I left my house and went to the Moslem Fraction. The door was closed. When I rang the bell insistently, they opened it. When I entered, I noticed that the Moslem Deputies had played cards all night. All the rooms were stuffed with cigarette smoke. When I told them that ‘the Revolution had started and you are gambling here,’ Ibniyemin Axtiamov responded with: ‘what Revolution; it is only a putsch by the soldiers. Tomorrow Protopov will demonstrate that.’ His friend attorney Necib Kurbanaliyev repeated the same words and reprimanded me. I turned to Ahmet Salihov who regarded himself a Revolutionary Social Democrat, but did not see a revolutionary belief in him. I could not convince them that we needed to discuss

together what we needed to do as a whole in Revolutionary conditions, I decided to act alone.”

After leaving the Fraction, cussing, I rang the doorbell of my friend Mustafa Cokayev, who was living a story below the Fraction offices. He was asleep as well. I could not convince him to get on the streets before he ate his breakfast. I left alone. It had not been an hour yet, but the events were snowballing. A little later I saw that the overcoats of higher ranking police officers were hung on the telegraph poles, and various generals were brought to the Crimean Place (Tavrisheskiy Dvoret) in trucks, and were imprisoned. Among them was general Pisarev whom I knew, as the Director of the Eastern Languages School, and Kniaz Kocubey were also present. Revolutionary workers threw snow, mixed with soil, in their faces. This Kocubey was descended from the brother of Albanian Kocu Bey who became famous with his tract and labeled Ottoman Montesquieu. The ancestor of this Kocubey, the brother of the aforementioned, betrayed the Turks and offering his services to the Tsar, converted. He was built quite stoutly, large and had a booming voice. I was introduced to him at a feast by our Deputy Kutlukay Mirza Tefkilev. Since I had read Kocu Bey Tract from Professor Smirnov, he had shown interest in my person. When I saw this person in that condition, receiving such insults, I felt sorry. Perhaps he was killed that day. Gunshot sounds were being heard everywhere. Despite that, I went back to the Fraction building, collected my friend Cokayoglu and the lawyer Sahahmedov; we spent the day in the streets. When the weapon selling stores were broken into, I was given a pistol as well as a rifle. I kept the pistol. But, it was not necessary to use it. We ate something somewhere. We watched the battles between the police and the Tsarist officials and the Revolutionaries until the evening. Toward the evening, papers began appearing the direction of the Revolution. I regarded myself lucky that I had observed with my own eyes the beginning of the events from the source, the Preobrajenskaya Kazarma.

During the first week of the Revolution, Moslem political representatives started arriving from Kazan, Crimea, Caucasus and Kazakistan. Everyone was desirous for a general Conference of all Russian Moslems to meet, and stressed that to the Fraction. But, everyone had different ideas as to on what bases invitations would be issued, and what the working principles were going to be. Even in the first meeting of the Fraction, the head and the most active member Ahmet Salikov, Axtiamov, Ismail Limanov and Cokayoglu advanced the idea that Russia ought to be a single democratic republic; myself and Selimgerey Canturin insisted that it must be a confederation of republics. I went to Helsingfors, capital of Finland, in order to prepare and write my thoughts on the congress, until the representatives arrived. I prepared this plan in four or five days, as to how the Russian Moslems were going to meet, based on respective populations, in a spirit of equality.

There, I met with Veli Molla Hakimov, who is still the Imam in Helsinki. It transpired that someone from my village was a soldier stationed in the Russian garrison there. When Veli Molla asked him if he knew Zeki Velidi, he responded with: “how would I not know him; we call him Ahmedheki. He is a bandit; he has two cigarettes in his mouth, on either corner, puffing on them. He places a hundred Ruble note

into his handkerchief pocket, he will not mind anyone, and will walk in mid street. Now that the Tsar's affairs are on the decline, his day arrived. He will take back our forests and pastures that were stolen from us. Everyone amongst us is saying, if anything will take place, he will do it." Both of us laughed at that description heartily. Because, this was a Baskurt villagers response, which are fed-up with the Tsar's oppression and it was typical; it was also personally encouraging. When I returned to Petersburg, I found Alimerdan Topcibasi from Azerbaijan, Sadri Maksudi, and Seyidgerey Alkin from Kazan and Alihan Bukeyhan from Kazakistan had arrived. Although they were members of the Russian Kadet (Constitutional Democrat) Party, both Topcibasi and Bukeyhan were intending to resign. Sadi Maksudi and some others were resolved to remain faithful to the Kadetsists and others directly to the Kadet Party.

### *Kadets and Turkiye—*

While attending the Party Congress of the Cadets (March 25), Maksudi Bey unwarily announced that Russian Moslems would remain loyal to the Party, and continued attending the proceedings even after the War Minister was announcing his plans, though he did not vote on those plans, to continue the war, occupying Istanbul and the straights, putting an end to independent Türkiye. All that drew a harsh criticism from all the Moslem representatives present in Petersburg in the newspapers *Russkaya Volia* and *Delo Naroda* (28 March). Sadri Bey's stated that military occupation of Istanbul would hurt Moslems; his words reported in *Russkaya Volia* that thirty million Moslems wanting to see the war to continue until the victory, and "Our not wanting to see the destruction of Türkiye does not mean we are not Russian patriots" caused an enormous excitement. Those who signed the letter of protest against Sadri Bey began first of all with Ahmet Salikov and I; later, Seyidgerey Alkin, Selimgerey Canturin, descendent of Seyh Samil Zahid Samil, from Crimea Badaninski, from Kazan Ayaz Ishaki, Musa Carullah, from among the former deputies, Kelimullah Hasanov's names were present. On the other hand, Sadri Bey was beholden to me, because of the words I said to the younger people, who were giving fiery speeches in the building of the Petersburg Moslem Benevolent Society, to calm them down: "Maksudi made those statements due to his mistaken belief that Kadet Party is going to be the dominant political organization in Russia. Otherwise, he also knows that thirty million Moslems did not announce their fidelity to the Kadet Party, nor did they give their consent for Sadri Bey to make that declaration, and they do not wish to continue the war." On the other hand, he never forgave me for signing the aforementioned protest, like the Chief of the Fraction Salikov. Sadri Bey was fighting seriously to prevent Russia from being subdivided into autonomous republics from the first day of the Revolution and with fanaticism. We recommended that it was necessary for the Moslems stay away from any political party which rejected the idea of federalism, and those who wanted the war to continue.

### *Preparation for all Russia Moslem Conference—*

The Fraction Bureau held a wide meeting at the Petersburg Moslem Benevolent Society building which was on the street near Katerina Church on 27 March, to discuss how many members and individuals were going to be invited to the congress to be held in Moscow, and what was going to be discussed. Salikov was chairing the meeting. I recommended that approximately six hundred members be invited, in proportion to their population numbers, from all Moslem tribes and groups; to support that, I also gave information on the statistics of Russian Moslems and ethnography. I read the plan I wrote in Helsinki. But, Salikov and author Ayaz Ishaki and some others feared that the federation idea was going to be accepted if that came to pass. They stated that they did not want to deal with ignorant and unwary people; that we can invite people from Kazan, more than half can be those. They tried to shut me up. I told them, if that is the case, I would write to all Islamic groups, and inform them of the current proceedings. That day and night I worked without stopping and wrote the said letters. In those lines, I wrote to Mehmet Emin Resulzade in Baku Azerbaijan, asked him to send representatives to the Moscow and Tashkent Congresses, and to include Turkistan, Kazakistan and Baskurt autonomous republics into their program. On 28 March, I left for Tashkent to organize the Baskurt, Kazak and the Ozbeks. It was most disheartening to see the enlightened not wanting to make use of the Revolution and even acting against the radical ideas. During the meeting taking place at the Moslem Benevolent Society, Lutfi Ishak from the Tatars, Sultanbek Mamliev from the Tatars and the medical student Isa Kackinbayev of the Kazaks supported me stoutly. Many others were against me in an advanced manner. Ahmet Salikov, as the Chief of the Fraction Bureau, chose to take drastic actions against me. In those days, because the travellers arriving in Petersburg increased many times, a new rule was instituted. Accordingly, it was necessary to show an official document showing that the putative traveller was in pursuit of important business to the railroad administration to obtain railroad tickets. Salikov forbade the issuance of such a document from the Fraction Bureau. Deputy Axtiamov supported him. But, I bought the ticket to Tashkent from Tsarkoe Selo. If they knew I was going to do that, they would have written to the railroad administration prevent it.

On the way, I chanced upon Baskurt intellectual Sefer Ali Idilbayev. I had him write letters to his sons, who were officers and university students, to be transmitted to everywhere. Also, I found Ali Bukeyhan, who was appointed as the acting Governor of the Turgay Province, and asked him to pass the word for sufficient number of Kazak delegates be present at the Moscow Congress. All this was done in half a day. I arrived in Tashkent on April Four. We immediately worked on all those who would attend the congress to meet there. The important meeting for us was the Turkistan National Executive Committee. This National Congress was necessary to participate with the Russians and all other nationalities. As a member of the Fraction Bureau,



I had the authority to organize this. I took precautions to pass the Federation idea at the All Turkistan and the Moslem Congresses. A few days later, Mustafa Cokayoglu and attorney Sahiahmedov also arrived from Petersburg. Cokayoglu was attached to the Kadets and Sahiahmedov to the Social Democrats and as such they were nowhere near the federation idea. However, they did not undertake any action to offend me either. The Russian newspapers wanted articles from both supporting the anti-federation position; neither would do it. Cokayoglu joined us quietly when the peoples' opinion went with the federation idea.

## *Fights with the two congresses in Tashkent—*

The thought that the decisions to be made at the Executive Committee as well as the Moslem Congress was going to be influential at the Russian Moslems Congress gave us thought. Because of that, we were involved in heavy fighting, and it would become necessary to go against our friends who would be against us. I was in a very difficult fight with the former mayor of Tashkent, and a leader of the Kadets, Professor Malletsky. Author from Samarkand, and muftu Mahmud Hoca Behbudi and SRs, especially my old friend Vadim Caykin and the Orientalist Lev Zimin supported me. Though the Kadets were able to deceive the enlightened, those Ozbek, Kazak and Turkmen arriving from their villages were very stout headed and remained alert against the Kadets. Mahmud Hoca Behbudi's clear talks with them was influential in obtaining that result, and we turned all those arriving from the region in favor of federation. Unitarism, meaning Russia be the only republic idea was defeated.

But, at this congress, the most important issue concerned the governance of Turkistan provinces and cities and the people's representation in the local councils (zemstvo). Most of the Russian enlightened were members of the Kadets. Their leader was the aforementioned Malletskiy. He was very cunning and viewed the local nationalities with suspicion, as he was a Russian imperialist nationalist. He was named to head the National Congress. The plans of the Kadets were written on mimeographed papers. They desired to divide the municipality administration into Russian and local (tuzemny) and only allow the Russian side the governance powers. They also desired to elect representatives for the Turkistan-wide council from the Russian municipalities, reduce the number of local participants and local women. During the 13 April meeting, Malletskiy spoke at length proposing his faction's agenda, and produced a resolution at the end. To that, I rose to present the plan I brought and my resolution. I spoke in Turkish first, then in Russian. This was something the Russian Kadets did not expect. That was because, a few years earlier, I had learned the previous years' publications of the Russians on the Turkistan municipality and zemstvos. They had translated into Russian and published in several volumes the British governance system in

use in India, meaning the laws allowing the rule of the occupying minority on the local majority, and their justifications. I brought those books to the 14 April meeting. I stated: "Turkistan governance system will mirror that of the Russian administrative principles. There is no need to be afraid of a Turkistani majority in Turkistan. Local women will participate just like the Russian women. There is no danger or objection to this. I showed, by examples the reasoning, the non-applicability of the British Laws meant for India to Turkistan. Malletskiy and the Social Democrat Dorrer had deceived the only attorney from the Ozbeks, Tasbulak Bek Narbutabekov and from the Kazaks, Mustafa Cokayoglu. Even though they did not dare to take the rostrum to speak against me, they conducted propaganda among the Moslem delegates to the tune of "having two councils in old and new cities means autonomy; we do not have educated people to represent us, because of that we are going to be smaller in number. If amongst us Russian education is spread, then our numbers in the national council will increase." But, both I and Mahmud Hoca Behbudi stated that it is wrong to think that in the Turkistan parliament only Russian will be spoken. Turkish and Russian must and will be equal before the law. I was sorry that I was going against my old friend Mustafa Cokayoglu. As president of the Congress, Malletskiy re-introduced his ideas and views on the 15 April meeting. I again countered him. Malletskiy again rose: "the local populations being the majority will make the governance more difficult for the future, as much as it was in the past; this is a reality." In response, I stated: "now it is the era of independence. Nobody can take away the four principles (open, equal, direct, and unisex) of election methods from those nations imprisoned by the Russians under any guise. The claims that the governance will pass to the hands of the ignorant is baseless, because the educational requirement will take care of that. You had the British volumes, originally written to control India as a colony, translated into Russian. Instead, it would have yielded better results to translate into Turkish and Russian the works showing how equal laws benefited both parties and aided them to live in happiness in colonies." An excitement started; when SR Vadim Caykin and the Orientalist Zimin supported me vehemently, nobody was listening to Malletskiy. Making use of his position as the head of the congress, Malletskiy left the issue without a resolution. Malletskiy fortified his case with a series of articles published in *Turkestanskije Vedomosti*. On the other hand my speech and Behbudi's speech were summarized in the 16 and 26 April issues. I and Hoca Behbudi explained the details to the Heading Committee of the General Congress of the Turkistan Moslems on 16 April. We advanced the thought that if the Kadets were to propose any means of preventing the proportional representation, the National Moslem Congress must vehemently protest this. We went back to the General National Congress, and repeated our views. As a result, the majority of the delegates and the SRs voted to affirm that the zemstvos are not separate for Russians and proportional representation was the principle. In other words there would be only one representative council for everybody, and education was necessary to be elected.

## *Turkistan National Congress and autonomy of Turkistan—*

During those days, I became a member of the Tashkent SR Party. That helped in this struggle. Mustafa Cokayoglu had obtained a position in agricultural department of the Sir-Darya administration with the aid of the Kadets. He was leaning toward them. On the other hand Sencer Isfendiyarov from the Kazaks was included in the Social Democrats and attorney Sirali Lapin was in the Monarchists. Keeping the damage of joining Russian parties before us, we held meetings of five to six people, in order to join these within a Turkistan National Party. But, we could not agree on social topics. On the other hand, agreeing that our joining together was outside those topics, we prepared to propose a Turkistan National Council. On 16 April, Congress of Turkistan Moslems commenced, but there was no program. I wrote that personally during the night of 15 April and gave it to *Turkestanskije Vedomosti*. It was published on 16 April, and everybody accepted it as written. At the time, a delegation was sent by the Kadet Lvov government, as a Temporary Governance Committee of Turkistan. From among the Moslems, General Abdulaziz, Sadri Maksudi and from the Kazaks Mehmetcan Tinisbaev had joined it. Sadri Maksudi Bey was going to be in charge of Moslem medrese and religions foundations. The Chief of the Party was Kadet Scepkín. This person congratulated the Moslem Congress in session. We were presiding over the congress in rotation as members of the presidium. I was the rapporteur on governance of state and administrative affairs, and I proved the federation ideas in detail with historical evidence. Mahmud Hoca Behbudi and the Kazak engineers Mehmet Tinisbayev supported the idea. Sadri Maksudi Bey rose and spoke against the federation idea. His attitude, speaking as a member of the government was not appreciated. Vadim Caykin, who arrived as a guest, better yet as my invited gusest, vehemently defended the federation idea. Finally, that principle was accepted. I was also the rapporteur in the affairs of the national governance and the zemstvo. The idea that local administrations would be proportionally elected according to the population numbers of residents was also accepted. I had prepared the by-laws for the Turkistan Central National Council. That, too, was accepted and was immediately printed. At this time, I must specify that I personally wrote as well as presented the following: The Congress Agenda, published in the *Turkestanskije Vedomosti*; Report on the General Russian State Administration; Report on Turkistan National Administration and zemstvo; By-Laws of the Turkistan Central Council. This is a reality. Because, the influence of the Kadets on the local educated was complete. Because of that, they were rejecting the federation idea, and the single parliament and zemstvo in Turkistan. Ninety percent of those attending the Congress did not know any Russian. Sadri Maksudi bey and Kebir Bekir, who spoke on behalf of Tatars, a Misher merchant from Kerki, and others, were vehemently against the federation; they supported a single Democratic Russian Republic. Under those conditions, intellectuals such as Munevver Kari, Ubeydullah Kocayev did not accept federation in the beginning, regarding it a

‘figment of imagination.’ This matter was positively a result only because Mahmud Hoca Behbudi and Abidjan Mahmudov of Khokand’s unconditional support of me. By-Laws of the Turkistan Central Council were accepted because I wrote it and it was the only one in existence. It was already published during the second day of the discussions. This publication was undertaken by Abidjan Mahmudov (Cataq) of Khokand. He also supported me just like Behbudi. Another influential friend who supported me was Asur Ali Zahiri, also of Khokand. From the Turkmen Berdi Haci; from the Kazak Tinisbayev and Abdurrahman Urazayev did the same. Without them, the decision that federation was necessary for the administration of Russia would have never passed. Because, from one end the Turkistan Temporary Administration under the leadership of Scepkín, and his Moslem members Devletsin and Maksudi, worked with all their might to prevent the passage. On the other, the Kazan intellectuals gathered around Kebir Bekir of the *Vakit* newspaper of Orenburg, and stood firm against the federation idea.

Federative system and the inclusion of Moslem representatives into governance organs—

In addition, even Ahmet Salihov was sending telegrams to Mustafa Cokayoglu in order to thwart my efforts. This decision, federative administration of Turkistan idea was agreed upon only because of the influence of Behbudi, Abidjan Cataq and Abdurrahman Urazayev on the uneducated or partially educated Ozbek and Kazak delegates. Turkistan Temporary Administration member Kazak engineer Mehmetcan Tanisbayev, in contrast to his friends General Devletsin and Maksudi supported the federation idea and congratulated the Congress for reaching that conclusion. Acceptance of the federative Russia principle by both Congresses caused some of the enlightened to change their stances, especially among those who had earlier supported the unitary Russia idea because they were under the influence of their Russian friends, especially the Kadets. At the same time, those who came over to the federative Russia camp began making statements in the meetings that they had no difference of opinion with those who arrived from the villages whom earlier they regarded as ignorant. Those who insisted on attacking the federation point of view were losing credibility in the eyes of the local populations. When Sadri Maksudi stated on 16 April, in an interview he gave to *Birjeviya Vedemosti*, “for the Sarts, autonomy is beyond the call of duty,” caused a negative backlash against him. Lasting close to a week, Turkistan Moslem Congress took place in a mature atmosphere, unexpected by many, and especially by the Kadets, and showed the maturity of the Turkistan people. This Congress elected twelve individuals to present and defend the matters concerning the Moslems of Turkistan at the Moscow Congress of the All Russia Moslems. Also, Turkistan Moslems Central Council was established. I was elected to both organs. Mustafa Cokayoglu was elected President of Turkistan Moslems Central Council, I was the Secretary. Munevver Kari, Abidjan Mahmud, Mahmud Hoca Behbudi, Ubeydullah Hoca and others were members. I wrote the By-Laws for the Branches to be opened in Cities and Towns. That was accepted by the administrative organ and was printed in four pages. Tashkent Committee was established under the direction of

Munevver Kari and Sadreddin Han. Khokand and Samarkand Branches were established by Cokayoglu and me, by journeying to those cities, in a few days' time. I began publishing a newspaper *Kenges*, as the Central Council's propagandist of ideas. The Lead Articles of this newspaper, published without a signature, were written by me and Munevver Kari. The Turkistan Temporary Administration Committee of the Kadets did not stay long and returned to Moscow. Their Moslem members left even earlier. Kazak engineer Mehmetcan Tinisbayev, who was a member of the reconstituted Temporary Turkistan Administration Committee by the Kerensky government, was thinking entirely like us. With his endeavors and the support of the SR representatives, a parallel Turkistan National Advisory Committee was established right next to the governmental Administration Committee. To that, Cokayoglu, attorney Narbutabekov and myself were sent as representatives. Apart from all that Cokayoglu and I were elected to the Turkistan Land Matters Committee. In summary, I was called to duty well beyond my weight as a result of these congresses. My friend Cokayoglu was a bureau director in the administration of the Sir-Darya Province. The Governor of that Province was our old friend Orientalist and former Duma member Nalivkin. At the time he was an old man, of sixty-six years of age, he invited me several times to the meetings of the Sir-Darya Provincial Administrative Council. Those were intense working days, and they were sweet. When the SRs joined in with other Russian groups on the issue of proportioning the food sent from Moscow to Tashkent residents, I resigned from the SRs. I relayed my regrets to my old friends to Caykin and Zimin.

## *My participation in the Moscow Congress—*

All twelve representatives journeyed together to the General Congress of Russian Moslems in Moscow. We reached Moscow on 7 May, to the opening day of the Congress. We had succeeded in attracting representatives even from among the Baskurt and Kazak-Kirgiz, in proportion to their populations. From Baskurtistan alone, fifty representatives arrived. Even towns were being represented. On the other side, Ahmet Salihov, Sakir Mehmetyarov and Ayaz Ishaki brought a crowded delegation of Tatars, believing they would be against federalism. But, when they realized that the arriving Azerbaijan and Crimean representatives were, much like the crowded Turkistani delegates on the side of Federation, they began cussing me and Mehmet Emin Resulzade. When I realized that federation idea was going to win, I felt at peace. The Moscow Conference, much different than the Tashkent gathering, was in the hands of those who favored federation. In the Tashkent conference, there was sufficient number of unitarists inserted into the leadership; in the Moscow conference, to represent the Central Council, Ali Merdan Bey Topcibasi was elected. He, along with Mehmed Emin Resulzade, the Crimean Cafer Seyid Ahmet, from the Kazaks Cihansah Dostmuhammed, gave powerful speeches in favor of federalism and won the day. It was not necessary for me to work and fight as intensively as I

did at the Tashkent conference. My presentation consisted of the future of the Turks living under Russian rule, on history, ethnography and statistics and how to use that information; on the ethnic organization of the Russian Moslems and the importance of that on political life. Ali Merdan Topcibasi, who was presiding, expressed his happiness my speech created, came to the lectern and shook my hand. I later saw a report on my speech published in the August issue of the German journal *Der Neue Orient* praising it as a scientific work. Ali Merdan Bey published a paper in Paris ten years later, reminding the readers of that speech. That speech constituted the bases of my views and program for which I fought until today. Autonomy and federation idea passed with two hundred seventy one against to four hundred forty six votes in favor. Russian Moslems Central Council (IKOMUS) was formed. A total of twelve members were appointed, including attorney Ubeydullah Hoca, attorney Cihansah Dostmuhammedoglu, me, attorney Velithan Tanacoglu, and the woman writer from the Kazaks Akkagit Dostcankizi. Delegates from Kazan rejected the proclamations on land matters stating that was an issue of the Kazaks and Baskurts. The Kazan Tatars considered the Congress of the Russian Moslems to be a platform only to discuss religious matters, education of the muftu, and Seyhulislam. As a result, Baskurts decided to convene a conference among them to discuss autonomy and land matters in Orenburg, gaining the agreement of the Kazaks, appointed a committee comprising Sait Mirasoglu, Allahberdi Caferoglu and Zeki Velidi [Togan] to bring that about. The German author G. von Mende, in his work on the national struggle of the Russian Moslems, gave misleading information on the Role of the Baskurts, based on the completely wrong information supplied by the Kazan Tatars. According to him, Kazan Tatars left the Congress as they fell into a minority position. Baskurts and Azeris constituted the primary elements of the majority present in this gathering, and there was no reason that would cause them to leave the conference. On the issue of autonomy, a letter was presented to the Azerbaijan representatives urging fortitude. Since the records of the Moscow conference, some six hundred pages, were published only in Turkish, and did not appear in Russian or in any other language, plenty of wrong writings appeared on the event. G. von Mende's aforementioned work is the primary culprit. Professor B. Spuler (in *Der Islam*, 1949, P. 186) and the Polish author in America, Professor Zenkovsky (*Panturkism and Islam in Russia*, 1961, Pp. 196-197) made statements that were of flattering nature to me, expressing the opinion that the idea of landed autonomy for the Baskurts was forwarded only by me, that, according to the latter author, I was the only person advancing scientific arguments, and therefore I must be regarded as a promising Orientalist offering much for the future. However, in the Moscow Conference, I did not advance the idea of autonomy for the Baskurts. At the time, I was only defending the autonomy of the Turkistan. In the Volga basin, I defended the civil autonomy for the native population where there was a dense Russian population. I was of the opinion that, at a later time, it may be possible to join the Eastern lands (which later was termed as "Little Baskurdistan") where the Turk populations were in the majority, in Turkistan and Kazakistan. In the Congress records, my words were published as such. On the other hand, Zenkovsky



reminded the readers of the congratulatory visit of the Russian Kadet representatives, and offered his opinion that if the proposals of the Kazan Tatars were agreed upon, it would have been better, and wrote that in our autonomy proposals there were elements in our and Kazak program leading to expelling the Russian and Ukrainian populations from our lands. All that, perhaps, is a result brought about under the influence of the Slavic solidarity idea propounded by the Polish author. The Baskurt who participated in the Moscow Conference wanted to solve the extant problems faced by the Baskurt in the revolutionary atmosphere, and for the purpose appointed me to a committee. In the Moscow conference that was the only decision passed involving me in the Baskurt affairs. On my way back to Tashkent, I stopped at Orenburg and we established the Baskurt National Council. In the 19 May issue of the newspaper *Vakit*, we published an address to the people announcing the formation of the Baskurt Central Council, and that the first meeting of the first Kurultay in Orenburg was going to take place on 20 July. We began publishing a newspaper named *Baskurt*. I wrote the first article in the first issue without a signature. In that article I stressed that the Baskurt were serving the function of a bridge between Turkistan and the Volga and that Baskurts establishing autonomy would, in the future, convince the Kazan Tatars to join the emancipation movement in the East. That article was liked by Moslems who were aware, especially by the likes of Kazan scholar Rizaeddin Fahrettin and poet Zakir Rami. But the chief author of the aforementioned *Vakit* newspaper was a poisonous opponent of autonomy. This person had published an article claiming that the roads of Turkistan and Edil basin were separate, and that my speaking at Tashkent one day and in Orenburg the next, and my consultations with the Uzbek and Kazak one day and with the Baskurt and the Tatars the next, wishing to create a large political movement was like steering two different boats with my two feet. One of the authors of the same newspaper, in the 23 May issue, published an article proposing to disposing of the Baskurt name altogether and forcing the Baskurt to adopt the Tatar designation. These were bitter indications that, in addition to the Russians, we were going to face obstacles from amongst us, and we would need to expend energy and time to overcome. We spoke on these with Kazak intellectuals present in Orenburg. I visited Rizaeddin Fahrettin twice with the hope that he would use his influence on the Tatars. He responded that he regarded our movement as sacred, but since he was now aged, there was not much he could do, but he had issued his last testament to his sons for them to support and aid the Baskurt autonomy. This was a gain for me. I was confident that among the Tatars there would be those who would support us, and left for Tashkent.

### *Fights with unitarism and recidivism in Tashkent—*

Until the opening of the Baskurt Kurultay on 20 July, I worked in Tashkent, even though the Baskurt Central Council placed the burden of organizing our lands onto

me. However, without the autonomy matter has been settled in Turkistan, it would not find any traction in Baskurdistan and Kazakistan. First of all, Alihan Bukeyhan and Mustafa Cokayoglu, who were members of the Russian Kadet Party, were very apprehensive. Among the Uzbek, those who girded their loins to realize that autonomy result were author Mahmud Hoca Behbudi, Asur Ali and Abid Mahmud Cataq from Khokand. Munevver Qari, even though he was hesitant at times, he would not contradict Mahmud Hoca and me. I was either travelling to other cities to hold meetings in the company of Behbudi, and the young Uzbek poet Colpan, Tashkent author Talipcan, Nogaykorganli Tahir from the Tatars and Hakim-zade of Samarkand; or, invite the intellectuals from other branches to Turkistan Central Council. The Kadet Party in Tashkent, which was the preeminent enemy of autonomy, was losing influence. As a result of the serious consultations until the beginning of July, the idea of autonomy was gaining ground everywhere. That also was an indication that we could be included in the elections to the Russian Founding Parliament, around a national plan. The task of establishing the Turkistan Central Council was loaded onto my back; in addition, I was also serving as the chief author of the Kenges newspaper as the propagator of ideas. Kazaks were gathering around the *Birlik Tugu* newspaper, being managed by Mustafa Cokayoglu and Sultanbek Hocaey. Among the Uzbeks, there were no individuals who knew Russian and who could undertake a publication venture in the contemporary sense. The only university graduate Uzbek, who called himself Sart, Tasbulatbek Narbutabekov who was involved in politics. He was not inclined to publish. Munevver Qari, who was helping, had trained youngsters who only spoke Turkish. Among them there were those who seriously who gave of themselves freely. Abdullah Battal, the author from Kazan was a believer in landed autonomy. He arrived in Tashkent and worked in the Central Council for a spell. Kebir Bekir, a reporter for the *Vakit* newspaper in Orenburg, who had arrived in April during the Turkistan Congress and expended serious efforts against autonomy. But later, he changed his mind, siding with the autonomy idea he remained in Turkistan. Heeding our request, Azerbaijan Musavat Party sent us two Azeris. They worked very positively. The primary issue at hand was this: to enter the Russian Founding Parliament as a unified and organized Turkistan and Eastern Turk group. Because, from one end, the SRs were losing influence in the esteem of the local population, because they had sided with the Russian immigrants; this was helping the Bolsheviks, who were attracting the youth who were inclining to the leftist views. Sencer Isfendiyar and Nezir Torekul, from among those I knew, were like that. On the other, a strong Ulama Party was established, by equating those of us who wanted national autonomy with those of the SRs which was attracting the right leaning individuals to that Party under the leadership of Russian former Samarkand governor Lykosin to the monarchist circles. Serali Lapin, an aged Kazak, serving as their attorney was making the circumstances dangerous. The establishment of parties on the left of this recidivist ulama group was a heavy burden. Munevver Qari, Behbudi and Bukhara Jadids were against not only the Kadets, but also against socialism. However, Nizamhocayev from the Uzbeks and Kulbey Tugusov from the Kazaks were in favor of leftist socialism. I was aware of my

heavy responsibility as the director in charge of organizational matters of the Central Council to establish the potential political parties which were yet to be founded, and to prevent them from being taken over by those who did not have good intentions. I was being told: “political parties are established all by themselves; that cannot be done by agreement and by order.” I usually responded with: “we cannot do it without prior agreement and order; we must do so, prior to the Russian Founding Parliament opens.”

## *Fights with the Russian Parties at the Turkistan National Committee—*

Since I had learned socialism dating back to 1911, and somewhat personalized it, I had welcomed SR member Kerensky's appointment to lead the government. I also liked the appointment of Nalivkin as Governor of Sir-Darya province, whom I personally knew since 1913, as an Orientalist, and went to him in person to congratulate him on his appointment. I was expecting the Socialists to win the next elections, was happy about that imagined prospect and believed that would help my nation, too. The Kadets sent from Petersburg as the Turkistan Temporary Administration soon lost their credibility. They returned to Russia, including Sadri Maksudi and Aziz Devletsin. Turkistan Committee took another shape under the leadership of Sir-Darya Governor Nalivkin with the participation of political parties and other entities, turned into a coalition more-or-less. Former member of the Committee, Sendrikov, and Skopskiy and among the Moslems, Muhammedcan Tinisbayev protected their seats. I was very happy that Nalivkin, a socialist, good person and believer of universal application of justice, was appointed to the position corresponding to the old Turkistan Governor General. I congratulated him once again for this. I was telling Nalivkin that the Turkistan natives needed to be conscripted into the army assign them into police duties and railroad labor whenever I could. He was receptive, and appointed several Moslems into important positions in the police administration.

I believed that socialism would be difficult to apply without revolutionary methods. I also sided with the farmers and peasants, not to touch their private property, but redirect socialism toward heavy industry and means of transportation. For those reasons, I joined the SR party in April and resigned the next month, I was leaning toward the left wing which was beginning to be discerned within it. I invited the Moslem intellectuals who wanted to establish Political Parties, but did not know where to start, to the Regina Hotel for the evening of 9 June. I announced that though I was personally in favor of establishing a Socialist Party, I felt it is necessary for all of us remaining a single body under the title of Moslem Parties, at least until the elections for the Russian Founding Parliament are concluded. However, as soon as we arrived at the Russian Founding Parliament, it was necessary for us to establish our political parties, and necessary for us to prepare for that eventuality from today. It was required of us to establish two parties in Turkistan, one populated by progressive intellectuals who did

not accept socialism, the other, socialists. It was desirable to avoid fragmenting further, but it would be better for us to agree on a joint agenda and work program today. The meeting agreed to these proposals, and posited the idea we refrain from entangling ourselves with economic issues and other separating matters until the elections to the Russian Founding Parliament were concluded. At the same time, we decided to establish contacts with the SRs, Social Democrat Bolshevik and others who were not socialists but those our enlightened could get along with, in order to learn them all properly.

Ubeydullah Hoca and I were going to maintain contacts with the SRs; Nizam Hoca was going to do the same with the Social Democrats. At one point, I intended to return to the SRs, but just at that period some events took place that would regulate my contacts with the Russian Socialist parties during the Russian Revolution period, when I was applying to the Tashkent SR party. Those events were: Our fights with the Russian political parties in the division of foodstuffs arriving from Russia among the Moslem and Russian populations of Turkistan, and the democratic election rights of the Turkistan populations.

Back in April, foodstuff distribution had become an issue while the Moslem Congress was taking place in parallel with the Turkistan Soviet Workers and Soldiers Congress. No foodstuffs were arriving from Russia, and since the local wheat had run out, the population faced a complete famine. For food distribution, a joint committee was formed. I was also included in the membership, nominated by the Moslem Council. In that committee, the Russian Parties agreed with the Jewish Bund Party to distribute the arriving food to the Europeans, while allocating very little to the 'old town' meaning the natives, or nothing for them at all. Ubeydullah Hodayev and the Kazak attorney Abdurrahman Urazayev participated in severe fights. Social Democrat labor chief Persin, who I later learned was a member of the Bolsheviks, made the statement: “the locals are going to disappear anyway, the grain arriving from Russia will not save them” as well as other reckless words. As recorded in Turar Ruskilov's published book, the Bolshevik Tabolin, who was very active in Tashkent at the time, made similar statements. When Persin made that statement, I decided to establish contact with them and seriously learn their thoughts and ideas. Because, ration and railroad laborers were in his hands; our commission was only generating words. It was finally understood that Persin was using the Social Democrats and doing all this in order to popularize the Bolsheviks among the “Europeans.” Even though our friends, the SRs knew this, they were not telling anything to us. I immediately withdrew my application to the SRs. I announced to my friends that we would not join any Russian Socialist Party, and immediately after the establishment of the Founding Parliament, we would establish the Turkistan Socialist Party. They were already in that frame of mind. I never fought with Persin, but spoke with him several times. These contacts continued until the end of July. It was understood that, even though some SRs were viewing us as the future owners of Turkistan, Bolsheviks did not even consider any active role for the native population in the emancipation of Turkistan. According to the Bolsheviks, independent Turkistan was going to be established only under their

‘guidance’ and remain as the Eastern Branch of the Socialist Dictatorship. They were offering the natives only a chance to ‘join’ them. At that time, their numbers were low, but all were Russians. They were thinking of parliamentary system in Turkistan only as Workers Soviet Dictatorship. Even though they were not specifying it openly, there was no doubt they were against the parliament system. They saw themselves as “internationalist” however, it was easily discerned that they were Russian socialist dictators when one spoke with them. For us, that result did not allow further discussion with them. However, I had read Lenin’s *Against the Current*, and liked his positive ideas on the nationalist issues. I even found the writings of SR leader Viktor Cernov who published his criticisms of Lenin, who had just returned to Russia, in the newspaper *Delo Naroda*. On the other hand, our contacts with Persin, Tabolin, Kolesov, et al., during that summer on matters of life-and-death clearly showed that their words were sweet but their intentions and actions were bad, and we ought not to believe the sweet words of their leaders in order to trust their local organizations. The Menshevik Party was represented in our meetings by the Jewish Dr. Fitterman, or the Jewish Social Democrat Bund representative Broyda. Mansirov, from Social Democrats was a good person; he too, like me, thought that collaborating with the Bolsheviks would mean sacrificing his existence. Then, there was the Ukrainian Pavlovcenko, who supported the idea of autonomous Turkistan, perhaps because he was Ukrainian, but he had no influence on his party. The majority of the Mensheviks regarded ‘internationalism’ to be against national issues, therefore their view toward us was identical to those of the Kadets.

## *Single election law, and fight for the single Turkistan Parliament—*

The second most important issue was our dispute with the Russians on the application of the election law in Turkistan. Russians proposed two Duma’s for Turkistan at the “Krayevoye Scovescaniye”; one for the Russians and the other for the natives, despite the vehement opposition of Behbudi, I and other enlightened Moslems, and though that idea had earlier been defeated at the National Executive Committee Conference. Nalivkin did not support us fully, even though he was against any decision that was against the Moslems, from his position as the Governor General. We sent a telegram to the Kerensky Government, asking them to inform the Governor General that they accepted our position. On 20 June a telegram arrived from the Kerensky government containing four sections, specifying “you must resolve that issue among yourselves,” and the matter caught fire. At the suggestion of Pavlicenko I visited the Workers and Soldiers Soviet, to find more supporters. I observed that Menshevik Broyda and Bolshevik Tabolin giving speeches with the content: “Giving the National Parliament to the hands of the Sarts (City Ozbeks) would result in a catastrophe, observe the ulama.” It was obvious that the majority of the native Soviets were going to vote against us. In both the National Executive Committees and the Turkistan Moslem

Congress, decisions were recorded that the members of the Turkistan Parliament and the municipal council members were going to be elected according to the proportional principle. Despite that, Kadets and the Social Democrats were straining to bring about a dual Duma, and to physically leave the transportation and industrial sectors in the hands of the Russians, and to reduce the role of the Moslems to governing only the Moslem sections of the municipalities. During those days, the fact that the conservative ulama having been jointly acting with the Russian monarchists was a ‘proof’ they were waving, and even wished to see the ulama danger becoming more prominent. They were even fanning the flames clandestinely, too. When the aforementioned 20 June telegram arrived, Nalivkin convened the National Council. From the Turkistan Moslem Council, Ubeydullah Hoca, Narbutabekov and I went. Cokayoglu abstained in order not to get into a heated argument with the Kadets. Narbutabekov was leaning toward the ideas of the Kadets and the Mensheviks. While I was defending our case, I specified: “exaggerating the activities of the ulama would become demagoguery; majority of those who dwell on that topic wish to belittle the Moslem Council, and wish to strengthen the ulama position. However, the ulama do not know contemporary organization. Even if they could win in the cities, with the aid of their Russian friends, they cannot in the provinces and in the elections to the Russian Founding Parliament. Their time has passed.” Immediately, those opposing [our proposal] attacked me. One of them (perhaps Fitterman) implying that Cokayoglu and Narbutabekov’s leanings toward them “even though the Turkistan intellectuals are with us, this Baskurt is always opposing us.” In response, Ubeydullah Hoca and the member of the Temporary Administration Kazak engineer Muhammedcan Tinisbayev gave very good replies. Tinisbayev stated: “in this gathering, we are not investigating the origins of those who carry Russian names, to see if they are Velikirus, Ukrainian or Jewish. Why are you attempting to introduce tribal differences among us? We, too, have differences between political parties as you have; not differences in tribes. In terms of nationalities we are all members of the same nation. Even though I am from Yedisu Province, I am of the same opinion as Velidov. Along with the Moslem intellectuals, I want to see the application of the election law without any change, on the proportional basis.” After Tinisbayev, Narbutabekov rose and explained that he had the same thoughts with us. That caused a complete unity among the Moslem front, the resolution passed to apply the election laws to Turkistan without change. That was of course relayed to Petersburg, and the government announced the elections between 16-30 July in Turkistan.

This was, especially for me, a big victory. Even though none of that mattered when the Bolsheviks took the administration, for the time it was a great benefit. Ubeydullah Hoca and I translated the related decision of the Turkistan Temporary Administration into Turkish, and had it published in the Arabic alphabet in the official *Turkistanskiya Vedemosti* newspaper. This became the first ever Turkish article printed in the Arabic alphabet in that official Russian newspaper.

In this issue the SR Party’s credit was raised among the Moslems due to their support of the Moslem position. We firmly decided to establish a Radical Party, including



the Jadids, as well as a Socialist party, immediately after the elections to the Founding Parliament was concluded, and began preparations. I busied myself with the writing of the Socialist Party program. We understood the nature of the Russian parties completely as a result of the fights on foodstuff distribution and the application of the election law to Turkistan. For me, personally, this was a big lesson, and an experience that served me throughout the revolutionary years.

## *How was Governor General, Social Democrat Nalivkin was deceived?—*

I learned the true desires of the Bolsheviks here. The meaning of their approaches to command centers, artisan societies, and their attempts at using us for their ends was becoming clear. During the last week of June, the Congress of Turkistan Social Democrat Party took place. With the encouragement of Mansirov, I attended some of the sessions. From his article published in the Turkistanskiya Vedemosti newspaper, it was apparent that Governor General Nalivkin was sliding to the left. He was talking about “local proletariat.” Now, he visited the Menshevik Congress, and congratulated them in the name of the Social-Democrat Fraction of the former State Duma. In the name of the Laborers and Artisans Organization, Bolshevik Tabolin spoke of the necessity of cooperation, to include the Bolsheviks. Mansirov spoke of the impossibility of cooperating with the Bolsheviks, and the necessity of expelling them from the Social Democrat Party. Despite that, the said congress decided to cooperate with the Bolsheviks.

Shortly after that event, I went to see Nalivkin. I stated that if they would not expel the Bolsheviks from administrative organs, in the end the administration would pass into their hands; and cooperation with the Bolsheviks would mean dissolution of all other political parties, and that would ruin them. He responded that Tobolin is only a left leaning Social Democrat, and he was not afraid of him. When I told him that the Jewish socialists such as Broyda and Fitterman were actually Zionists than socialists and that it was a mistake to include Broyda into the committee then being formed to investigate the uprising in Khiva, under a Turkmen adventurer by the name of Han Juneid, his only response was to finger his long beard. Only, when I was taking my leave, he stated: “believe me that I believe that it is beneficial to be discussing these matters with you.” I knew Brody a copy of Tabolin, and my words about them had some influence, that there is a strong argument against him made the newspapers. But, Nalivkin still named him to the exploratory committee believing he was Social Democrat; however, their only aim was to topple the democratic Kerensky government. I was convinced that Nalivkin was going to sink the democracy of Turkistan with his opportunism. That was realized. When the Bolsheviks took over the administration in October, escaped and fearing he was going to be killed by Tabolin and Kolesov in whom he earlier trusted, he hid for a period, and then he committed suicide with a pistol on the grave of his wife whom I had known very well. Thus the

story of this opportunist socialist soviet Governor General acquired importance in the world. Later on we observed that, wherever the Bolsheviks found an opportunist with any influence, they would first flatter him, cause him to favor the Bolsheviks, and then they would eliminate him.

## *Pleasant memories of the first revolutionary months—*

The first months of the Russian Revolution were beautiful. We had friends and we believed in each other cordially and sincerely. Many of the time, the ideas I expressed would later appear as articles or as poetry. Colpan had written our fights on the election law as a magnificent poem. I had an attorney friend from among the Kazaks, Sirkbay Akayev. He believed that the lower Sir-Darya basin could be populated jointly with the Kazaks and the Ozbeks, and convert the region as the administrative center of Turkistan. He published the text of my speech on the civilization and history of the old Cend and new City Oghuz in the newspaper *Birlik Tugu*, with my permission as his own. I know that, the said article was the reason for the formation of the city named Kizil-Orda, as the administrative center of Kazakhstan in the city location called Akmescit-Perovski. In Khokand, we began publishing a cultural journal called *Yurt*, with my friend Asurali Zahir. In 1920, I saw the positive influence of a paper I published in that journal earlier, when the President of the Bukhara Republic Mirza Abdulkadir Muhiddinov was repeating the contents in a gathering of friend from memory. As a summary: Whatever I did, a positive result would ensue. One could easily see the positive results of letting the free will work freely in Turkistan was yielding positive results. In May, The Executive Committee of the Moslem Union (IKOMUS), working in Petersburg, had replaced the former Moslem Fraction of the state Duma, when the Moscow Congress of the Congress of Russian Moslems elected the new members. I would now be drawing my salary from this IKOMUS; instead I chose to draw it from the Turkistan Moslem Council. About the middle of July, I received a letter from my teacher friends from Ufa: “wherever you are working, we believe your efforts will return beneficial results; your friends here will continue to send your salary as a member of the Fraction Bureau from here.” At the time, Selimgiray Canturin, who had returned from Petersburg sent me approximately one thousand Russian Rubles for two months’ salary. My friend Ubeydullah Hoca, as an attorney, specified that: “perhaps, for elections, a requirement to own property may be placed into the regulations. Buy a place.” I bought a gardened house in the Ahengeran basin of Tashkent, at a beautiful place above Abliq, facing the snowcapped Catqal Mountains. I could not visit the house in 1917, but the fighting youths arriving from Baskurdistan to participate in the Basmachi Movement stayed there for months. I too, spent a few days there then, where the views were excellent and the place had plenty of water as well as fruits. In the municipal elections, a list of candidates was drawn for Tashkent, and I was in it for City Council membership. Professor Malletskiy, since

he was interested in archeology, was the leader of the Kadets, and was my opponent. He was not only my opponent but also my enemy, but our personal relations were good; sometimes we even joked. One day, at a meeting, we both observed an Ozbek woman conducting political propaganda. I told him: “see, we are in the fifth month of the Revolution. The Ozbek woman who you claimed would destroy civilization by participation in the elections is now on stage, and she will elect me to the Municipality and the Russian Founding Parliament instead of you.” He responded with: “we shall see.” We laughed. Every day of this revolutionary period was equal to years of the past. One day I was at the home of my friend Professor Lev Zimin for dinner. He wanted to lure me into re-joining the SR Party. I stated that: “it is no longer necessary to join the Russian Parties. You, too, state that the natives cannot form political parties; take a look, they are being formed. A few months of revolution aided us in progress that could have been only obtained in generations.”

### *The first Baskurt Kurultay in Orenburg—*

I arrived in Orenburg in order to participate in the first Congress of the Baskurt. When I reached Orenburg, the Congress was in session. Even though I was the Director of the Organizational Branch of the Baskurt Central Council, I could not organize the congress since I was in Tashkent. However, since I had written both the by-laws of the Turkistan National Council as well as the Baskurt National Council, my fellow workers were friends of one mind, and even though I was absent, the matters were progressing excellently. Upon arriving in Orenburg, I noticed that my friends Sait Miras and Abdullah Berdi Caferoglu had already obtained the previously set objectives in the by-laws concerning the formation of Tubek Councils in towns. They already collected dues and organized the task of selecting members from a wide-spread region for participation from everywhere. I praised them. The Kazaks were also holding their first Congress in Orenburg, almost parallel to ours, during 20-25 July. Both Congresses congratulated each other, and the decisions made in each were in harmony with the other. I was the Rapporteur in the Turkistan Congress as well as in the Baskurt one on the issue of Governance of State and Agricultural Issues. Here, the decision “the Baskurt joining in with the wide-spread Eastern and South-Eastern Turks to obtain joint autonomy” was accepted unanimously and with applause. The reconstitution of the old Baskurt Army was also agreed upon. From the Argayas province, there was a family by the name of Kurbanaliyev. They owned rich lands. They opposed me, because the report I read specified that the large lands needed to be redistributed immediately, but his position was not adopted. The representative of this family, Abdulhay Kurbanali, known to be conservative and an enemy of progress, made opposing statements alone. He specified that, before else, it was necessary to include the defense of the religion as a primary plank in the Central Committee Plan. He brought in a university student by the name of

Serif Manatov; he had him elected into the Baskurt Central Council Board of Directors. I did not take on the Presidency of the Congress, since I was going to be working in Tashkent, but undertook the task of working on organization. We chose attorney Yunus Bikhov, but since he could not attend during those months, Serif Manatov attempted to fill in for him. He was a nationalist youth. While he was studying psychoneurology in Petersburg, he went to Türkiye when the Balkan War started. After the war, he went to Switzerland, and met with Lenin there. He had an adventurist character; there was no stability in his activities. Even though he was leaning to the Left, he agreed to become the representative of the extreme Rightist and recidivist Kurbanaliyev. He did not convey trust and since he did not possess a talent for organization, we were not happy that he was inserted amongst us. My friends Sait and Allahberdi shared my view on this. He could not do anything. His Russian was very weak. All the projects and writings of responsibility were falling on me.

The Kazak leader Alihan Bukeyhan was the Governor of Turgay Province. He had not yet left the Kadet Party. Because of that, the Kazak Congress did not definitively announce autonomy, but sided with it in principle. However, since the Orenburg and the Russian Cossacks had the idea of announcing their autonomy, they congratulated our announcement of autonomy. That was a good support for us, because, they too, just like the Baskurt, had also decided to establish their own army.

The Baskurt Congress gave us the authority to contact others who had the autonomy idea, such as the Azeris and the Ukrainians, and also appointed me and a university student by the name of Osman Kuvatov, an intellectual named Ildirhan Mutin to visit Petersburg to settle the Baskurt problems dating back generations, in discussion with the Kerensky Government. These issues involved Baskurt land law, Baskurt capital being collected since the time of the Tsars, and the Baskurt Army buildings in Orenburg, parks, gardens and Caravansarays. I was already invited to Moscow to the IKOMUS meeting as a member of the Turkistan representatives. Even though Osman Kuvatov was a very young medical student, he completely understood the issues of the Baskurt land law. In the instructions given to us, there were items concerning the laws of 9 November 1906, 19 November 1910, 20 May 1911 the modification and cancellation of the temporary Russian immigration, as well as the return of the immigrants sent from the Western Provinces, and their replacement with the Tatars who were left in the midst of Russia.

On the way, I stopped in Kazan and met with the leaders of the Kazan Turk Congress that was scheduled to end on 31 July, and asked them not to oppose the autonomy of Baskurdistan even if they were to be against autonomy for themselves. In these talks held in the home of Zahit Bey, grandson of Seyh Samil, the famed Northern Caucasian hero, the Kazan leaders, especially Sadri Maksudi did not even consider our request.

## *My Becoming the Minister of Health—*

We arrived in Petrograd. We participated in the IKOMUS sessions. I read in the Russian language newspaper *Izvestiya* being published by that organ, that I was to be taken into the Kerensky Government as the health Minister, and wondered about it. Because, I had not received any advance information on this matter. I thought that, Ahmet Salikov and his friends were attempting to remove me from the task of organizing the Eastern Turks, with the excuse of assigning me ‘big tasks.’ Ismail Lemanov from Crimea, as a friend, stated that that may be the real cause. We spoke with the Agricultural Minister Cernov. He was the true leader and theoretician of the Social Revolutionaries. In the words of the Bobi Tore, the Han of the Eastern Kazak-Kirgiz in the 18<sup>th</sup> century: “if he were to speak, he is a clear speaker with no ends to his words; but he can speak for a few days and cannot solve the problems of a tokli (one year old sheep)” he was a theoretician and did not understand the matters of practicality. He spoke on his theories rather than on our problems. Despite all that, he gave an order favorable to us on the issue of the Caravansaray. The Orenburg Governor, General Perovskiy had the said Caravansaray built 1825-1855 in Orenburg, when the Baskurt Army was an independent unit of the Russian army, for the Baskurt arriving in this city. It has a large park and a mosque. That general had it built in the style of Central Asia, in keeping with the request of the Baskurt. For the construction, money was collected from all corners of the Baskurt lands, and as a national building, it was put into service after a large ceremony. In the eyes of our population reclaiming it had an enormous influence. This was going to be regarded as the beginning of the return of Baskurt property that had been earlier confiscated. In the application we submitted to the government, that fact also was stated, and Cernov listened to the contents carefully when the contents were read aloud.

When Victor Cernov was our guest in 1918 in Orenburg, he stated jocularly: “so, this is the Caravansaray Velidov asked to be returned by travelling all the way to Petersburg; had I know that I was going to be a guest of the Baskurt one day, I would have included several other buildings.” When both of us were guests of the Czechoslovak Legions in Prague during 1929 and the meeting organized by the legion, he repeated that story, as well as in Paris later on, his memoirs of the Caravansaray. He was a jocular and nice person. He was the author of the book entitled *Constructive Socialism*, written to replace *Das Kapital* by the SRs. He was also the Chief Author of *Delo Naroda*, the most influential newspaper in Russia at the time.

## *My talks with the famed Plexanov—*

During our trip to Petrograd, I also visited Plexanov who the SR did not like. I obtained explanations on some of the points in the works he published. The old man Plexanov gladly provided those explanations, and put down the Bolsheviks with his words. He told stories about the insincerity of Lenin. From Cernov, we were able to obtain an

order for the return of buildings back to us. This was a good deed done for us by the SR government.

The Kazak intellectual Cihansah Dostmuhammedov was also in Petrograd, to participate in the IKEMUS sessions. Along with an attorney, who was a stout defender of the autonomy movement, we discovered that the recently published conference record did not contain my and Cihansah’s words confronting the unitarists; even the autonomy of Baskurdistan were not included. Ahmet Salihov and Ayaz Ishaki had been completely routed in the Moscow Conference. Despite that, they had themselves included in the IKOMUS in order to sabotage the decisions that were earlier passed, and Salihov even obtained the Presidency. Ahmet Salihov was an Ossetian Moslem from the Caucasus. He did not know any other language than Russian. He knew of the Russian Moslems as a single entity and regarded it as the Russian Moslems. To him, Pushkin was the poet of the Russians as well as the Russian Moslems.

Federation meant Moslems leaving that culture behind. The Tatar author Ayaz Ishaki, in order to obtain the Kazan leadership over the Russian Moslems, took action with Salikov in every aspect. Both were together after they emigrated. During 1924 in Berlin, Ahmet Salihov wrote an article in the *DNI* newspaper published by Kerensky on 22 August; on 10 September, Ayaz Ishaki also wrote an article under the title “the abuse of National Feelings.” In those, they stressed with pride, that they fought against their Moslem brothers in the service of the Russian democracy and unitarism. Cihansah spoke severely of them for all the modifications they entered into in the Moscow conference records, calling them falsifiers. I refrained from making any statements as the incident had already taken place. Except that I later had struggles with the individual Sakir Muhammedyarov who actually effected the change. Alimerdan Bey Topcibasi was the person who grieved the exclusion from the record.

## *Fight with Sayidgiray Alkin—*

In the meantime, I saw General Abdulaziz Devletsin, a member of the Turkistan Temporary Administration, who had returned to Petersburg on the pretention of being ill. There I saw attorney Mirza Alkin of Kazan, who had arrived in Petrograd for some business of his. This Seyidgirey Mirza is a member of the Kazan notables, of the past nobility, and held on to his nation and religion. Sehabeddin Mercani praised him for those attributes as well. Mirza had arrived in Petrograd at the beginning of the Revolution (in March) with an extensive plan to show how the Russian Moslems would benefit from the Revolution. But that project was based on uniting all the Moslems under a theocratic state and did not reflect reality. Mirza had no idea about the concept of statistics. When that plan was being debated in the Fraction Bureau, I had harshly criticized it. Thus I caused the rejection of his plans, and it turned out, he was in a huff. He revealed all that during these talks. But Abdulalaz regarded me in the right, and made statements I could not foresee earlier: “Zeki Bey and his friends know the



ways and means how this nation will benefit from this Revolution better than us; because they grew up with their people. When I arrived in Tashkent during the summer, three or four congresses were meeting at the same time. It was difficult to comprehend all the issues altogether. Everything was flowing at the speed of a movie. However, Zeki Bey not only speedily grasped these complex matters, but also arrived at the congresses with reports and prepared resolutions on matters concerning the benefit of the population. I lived in Turkistan for many years, but was not aware for what reason the plans and laws prepared by the English for the administration of India were translated into Russian and published. I had not even seen those volumes. Zeki Bey explained their true contents with mastery at the Krayevoye Scovescaniye and gave a national direction for the future of administration in the debates. In the beginning, I was against unitarism, but now find the plans of the federation supporters more logical. Now, a theocratic state as you propose cannot be established even without land. Velidov is justified in his objections to you.” The words of the General were completely unexpected by me. General Abdulaziz is from the Buri region, his grandfather Adilsah Isan was an Imam and Seyh at the beginning of the last century in Isterlibasi, close to us. His son Devletsah Isan studied in Bukhara wrote works in Turkish and Persian, opened a medrese in the Cibinli village of the Orenburg province. One of his sons, Abdullah Molla, while he was an Imam in Ickin, near Cilebi, somehow got close to Russians, and was appointed to the rank of head of Canton. In order to ingratiate himself to the Russians, he troubled famous poet Akmolla and Zeynullah Isan and caused them to be exiled. That person sent his son Abdulaziz to the Russian military school after completing his education at the medrese; and he became a staff officer. He served in elevated duties under the command of General Kuropatkin in Turkistan. Later he commanded the Asia Branch of the Russian General Staff in Petersburg. He was sent to Syria by the Russian General Staff while Emperor Wilhelm II was visiting Türkiye. The secret report he wrote afterward was published at the time. That book came to our attention in 1917 when all such secret materials were released. His wife was an ignorant Russian woman. In Petrograd he did not mix with the Moslems and no Moslem would visit him at home. Meaning, he grew up and was completely in the service of the Russians. His Islamic knowledge was good. He knew Persian well. Despite all that, he would not involve himself in Moslem affairs. Now, at the time of the Revolution he turned nationalist. Devletsah Isan’s other son, Ahmetsah, lived in the city of Qarsi in Bukhara. He fit himself with a lineage of Seyyid, and took on the honorific title Hoca. In 1921 I was going to meet someone descended from them in Qarsi. Another son of Ahmetsah, Abdulallam was an Imam in the city of Ilek in the Orenburg province, and others in Cibinli. Descended from those, Fatih Molla Devletsin attended the First Baskurt conference and was elected to the “Little Parliament.” He worked actively in the Baskurt Council in Orenburg. On the other hand, descendants of his other son, who placed themselves next to the Bukhara Emir, and called themselves Seyyid and Hoca, appearing as

Imam in various locations were constituting a family of extreme opportunists. General Abdulaziz was appointed to the Turkistan Temporary Committee by the Russian Revolutionary government with the aid of the Kadets. Now that he noticed the waning of the Kadet power, he excused himself on the grounds of some ailment, and according to what he told us, he was not intending to return to Turkistan. What I derived from those talks is that the General did not have ‘faith’ in nationalism; only that the path we took began to appear to these group of opportunists as the most vital. I and Osman Kuvatov left that meeting happily. Later on, General Devletsin agreed to take on the task of writing the history of the old Baskurt Army from us as an assignment. Ilyas Alkin, attorney and officer, would arrive a year later in Baskurdistan to join our movement and would bring to me his father’s greetings.

### *State Council in Moscow—*

All of us were going to meet for the Russian State Council during 25-28 August in Moscow. We advanced the idea that it was necessary to explicate the federation idea in that Council, and to stand with the Ukrainians and Byelorussians, and the necessity of having Alimerdan Topcibasi read our statement, who earlier headed our Moscow Congress. After reaching Moscow we spoke with all the delegates arriving, at the school of Azerbaijani wealthy man Asadullayev, and have them agree that Alimerdan Bey must speak for all of us. This upset all the plans laid down by Ahmet Salihov and Ayaz Ishaki. Ishaki, in the *IL* newspaper he published in Moscow (number 39) wrote the following words about me: “Zeki Velidi gave a long speech in Russian, and stated that we must unite like the Finns and Ukrainians. Take charge of our own affairs. Even though our numbers are small at this time, the future is ours. Let us demand a complete landed autonomy. But the Duma Member (Ibn-Yemin) Ahtiyamov responded with ‘This is not a Baskurt bozkir meeting. We cannot get involved in autonomy matters like the Finns and Ukrainians.’” Ishaki, who related these words in his newspaper, made fun of the issue of autonomy and even with Ukrainians, wrote: “They are intending to create an independent Xoxlandia. Since we are connected with the Russian people throughout history, we cannot enter into that path. As a delegation of four individuals (Sadri Maksudi, Islam Sahmamedov, Ayaz Ishaki and Sakir Muhammedyar) we went to the head of Government Kniaz L’vov and announced that we do not wish to separate like the Malorus (meaning Ukrainians) from you. We wish to be together with you.”

At the Moscow State Council, Topcibasi told the story of the Kirgiz who were thrown to the Chinese border, and the disaster of how eighty-three thousand of them died on the way back. However, he did not neglect to finish his words with the term “ex orient lux” (light arrives from the East), and was not careless in using phrases that would offend others. At this conference all the famed personalities of the Russians, all revolutionaries, Plexanov, Kropatkin, Caykovsky, and others were present. The issue was to take these matters all the way to the Russian Founding Council. Kerensky,

General Kornilov all stated that. Bolsheviks, at the time who already experimented with fomenting Revolution, was being represented by Rozanov. His issue was one of tyranny. This was the last time the Moslem intellectuals were all together. Later, everyone dispersed and we never did convene again at the Old Russian level. After this congress, I again returned to Petersburg and followed some of our business. I visited general Devletsin again. He promised to resolve some of our issues present before the Kerensky government.

## *The second Baskurt Kurultay—*

During 28-29 August, the Second Baskurt Kurultay met in Ufa. Those of us, who earlier went to Petrograd and Moscow, managed to be present at the last day. The primary issue during that occasion was the election of delegates to the Russian Founding Council meeting to take place on 23 November 1917. Those Tatars who were in favor of territorial autonomy joined us; but those ‘socialist’ Unitarians, Hadi Atlasi, Zakir Kadiri and others did everything they could to change the outcome in their favor. I was named as a candidate from Ufa, Orenburg and Perm Provinces.

After the Baskurt Congress, the Ufa Moslems Congress took place. At that event, when I was presiding over a session, Sadri Maksudi Bey rose and spoke violently against autonomists. I transferred the presidency of the session to another member, rose and gave my speech that are included in the books of others in Türkiye, for example reported by Huseyin Namik in *Türk Yurdu*, with falsifications. Others spoke in the same vein. This resulted in the complete rout of Tatar unitarists. The Ufa Provincial Congress turned out to be their grave. All of their propaganda was rendered completely ineffectual. They were not elected to the Founding Council either.

## *My visit to our village—*

I intended to head for Orenburg from there, to undertake Baskurt Central Council matters, and on to the Second Kazak Congress and finally to the Turkistan Moslems Second General Congress to be held in Tashkent in September. I wanted to see my father and maternal uncle, and in very rainy days, riding day and night, I arrived in our village on official postal horses. Nobody was present at home, save for a woman worker. My parents went to see the village of Yilim Karan, about half the distance to Ufa, which I passed on the way to the village, to visit a relative by the name of Imam Cemaleddin Bayis. My brothers went to cut grass to the mountains, far away. I wanted to saddle horses and chase after Yilim Karan. I was told the horses were not in the village, but away at pastures and the forest. It would take two days to find them. In reality, they could not find the horses in a day, who were wondering freely. I wore my village clothes. I went to the home of my paternal uncle Sayahmet’s house. His son, my old friend, went to the mountains to cut grass. The house was full of women. They were all busy beating the cereals behind the house for the purpose, called indir. I went

there. What did I see? My apa (‘elder sister’) Mahub, and Muhiye, and Leylibedir of my youth. They are now married. Muhiye was the daughter of my paternal uncle Sayahmed. In our village the traditions of the Miser and Baskurt were different. The Baskurt girls went about without head covering, ride horses, and their behavior was very much like those of the males. This Mulhiye was one of them. There were gossips about her because she rode a horse without a saddle (it was shameful amongst us) just before she got married. On the other hand, Mahub would wrestle with the man she married, and would divorce him if she won the contest. Now she is the wife of a strong man from the Kalgasav village. Leylibedir was the daughter of a Miser tribe who were neighbors of us. We had studied together, as students of my mother, when we were young. I had mentioned that earlier above. Daughters of the Miser tribe stayed away from the boys, and they did not ride horses. Despite that, Mulhiye prevented her from running away from me. I participated in beating of the wheat. At one point, I laid down on the hay. Muhiye caused the bundles of cut wheat, which we called kulte, to fall on me deliberately in an instant. At the moment I was inundated with those kulte, they joked with me stating: “why are you not getting married; if you do not promise to get married, you cannot get out from under these kulte.” We went home, drank tea. Men were few, women were in majority. Everyone in the village was at the fields, or at the forest cutting grass. With these women, elder sisters, maternal aunts and brides, we reminisced, recalling the old days. I took with me some of the young children and went to the cemetery just outside the village. I had carved the headstones, and engraved the Arabic inscriptions on them. I also planted the trees. Every one of them was in place, and they grew. My father made sure they were sustained. Muhiye quickly prepared a meal, and I received all the news about the village, about whose what animal died, or was slaughtered, and how my horse of brunette color, what we called yiren, had broken his leg and had to be put down and other news. It turned out that my horse was buried next to the wheat threshing place behind our house as ‘iziq.’ The horses arrived to pull the carriage that was to take me away. But, all the womenfolk, apa, maternal aunt, daughters-in-law did not want to let me go, and hid the tack. I was very amused looking for that tack. I was very happy to spend a few hours of sweet time with all the siblings and relatives who did not care where I have been, what I did, and who were only truly interested in my health, vitality, and wishing my presence amongst them, in the village that I loved. I left despite the fact that the hour was late. All my thoughts were left behind with my relatives, maternal aunts. It was an important event for me to discover that I was much loved in my village; I was hoping that my nation would love me as much.

## *Meeting at the Mizakay village and the feasts—*

I slept in Utek village where I was educated, in my grandmother’s house. My maternal uncle was visiting a wealthy person and a scholar named Hasan oglu

Sabir Hazret in the Mirzakay village. I finally arrived in the Yilim Karan village the second day, late during daylight. It transpired that my parents, and Cemaleddin Molla Basiyev went to Mirzakay village to Sabir Hazret. Our national poet Mecid Gafuri was also from Yilim Karan village. I was a house guest in his home. He was slightly older than I am. He was a student of my maternal uncle and his teacher Zeynullah Isan. In his home, he read many of his poems. Next morning, we went to Mirzakay. When my arrival was heard, several others from neighboring villages also arrived. Those feasts were very sincere and sweet. They also inspired our poet Mecid Gafuri; he recited some of his poems. Today, the Soviets have been printing his works in the hundreds of thousand, and want to show that he is one of them. However, he was only a nationalist. He was raised as a member of a poor family. The speeches he made at the Orenburgh Baskurdistan Congress have left a good legacy. We hear there that my maternal uncle Habibneccar had a dream that our effort to bring autonomy to Baskurdistan was going to succeed. In these parts, the news of the Dream by the Seyh was much more effective than several thousand printed copies of propaganda. Since my maternal uncle had that dream, then, according to my father and Sabir Hazret, this was a done deal. My father represented this is a matter that would be rewarded by God, that I would be sent to heaven for this result alone as a divine reward, and talking about it as if it would happen tomorrow. German poet Goethe's poem: "the true Moslem speaks of the Heaven such that as if he was there some time ago" was true for my father and Sabir Hazret. Here, we followed the lead of my maternal uncle, listening to his selected verses, performed the namaz plentifully and drank a lot of kimiz. We stayed at the home of the wealthy man named Abdurrahman, who gave his daughter to me in 1908 [sic]. In the morning we left for my maternal uncle's village, Utek. Sabir Hazret also arrived along with many other persons. The talks there assumed the status of a congress, more important than the one held in Ufa. The gatherings taking place in Mirzakay and Utek did not take the character of an official meeting, but were held as feasts of friends and relatives. Despite that many a good decision was made that were not recorded on paper. From there, I stopped at our village for a single day. There and at Sayran village a lot of individuals gathered. These gatherings were mirroring the Baskurt revolts of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Those talks gave me the impression that my nation was embracing the movement with sincerity, and were ready to die for it. I left from the town of Meleviz with the post carriage, running continuously, arrived in Orenburg, and told the circumstances to my friends. I also spoke with the Kazak Alihan Bukeyhan who was attending the Second Kazak Congress. I busied myself for two or three days with the organization of Baskurt Central Council matters, and left for Tashkent. If I recall correctly, I was in Tashkent on 15 September.

## *City council fights in Tashkent—*

I gave information to the Second Turkistan Congress, headed by Ubeydullah Hoca, on the discussions in IKOMUS, State Council, Ufa Congress and the Kazak Congress. Here, also, candidates were named to the Founding Parliament. They also made me a candidate from somewhere, but I forgot the location. Because, I was certain I would be approved from the Baskurt list. It was also agreed that, we would collect donations from the wealthy Moslems for the purpose of conducting preliminary election campaign. I had been disgruntled at Mustafa Cokay's not showing up at the Krayevoye Scovescaniye discussions of the election law because of his desire not to upset the Kadets. But, now, all was forgotten. Us two friends went to Andican and asked for a donation from a millionaire named Mirkamil. He was very cold. He offered about one hundred lira. We responded with: "when the Bolsheviks arrive you will give all you have." The guy did not understand, because he did not yet know the existence of the Bolsheviks; he had not heard that money and real estate was going to be confiscated. Two months later, when the Bolsheviks took over Tashkent, they confiscated the money in the banks. This Mirkamil sent word to us demanding to know what the Muslim Council was doing about this, and offered to give the Council ten percent if we could return his money and his cotton bales at the Tashkent and Asake railroad stations. Ubeydullah Hoca responded with: "let him have one hundred percent of his property." When we journeyed to Samarkand with Mustafa, we were unable to reach a beneficial result. Instead of the big wealth owners, the middle level merchants supported us and we collected a goodly amount of money from them. A Jewish millionaire named Poteliahov gave us a large sum.

At that time, Tashkent Municipal meetings took place. Since I was a member, I participated. The ulema and the Russians had the majority, and they were angry. When we lost an issue at the voting, we would leave the meeting. In one of the sessions, another Russian Monarchist was defending the fact that "municipality administration is now established; therefore all other illegal organizations must be abolished." At that point an ulama member rose, who I knew from earlier but now cannot recall his name, requested that the Moslem Council be included in the list of those organizations to be disbanded. I shouted, from my seat: "Tebbet yeda ebi-leheb." Because of that, he was severely chastised, and could not continue speaking. This was from a verse in the Kur'an, about an Arab who was a pseudo-Moslem, the enemy of the Prophet Mohammad. It meant: "both hands of Ebu-Leheb dried." That guy knew what I meant: "you pseudo-Moslem, may your hands be dried." The reason I shouted those three words, is because he was a person who visited the Moslem Council in the past. After the session, I spoke with several ulama I knew. They were ignorant individuals, and when explained, some would understand. They disparaged his request from the Russians to outlaw a Moslem organization, himself being a Moslem 'priest.' In the past, it transpired that he was labeled pseudo-Moslem



among his cohort. From that point of view my recitation of the verse was appreciated by some of the ulama.

### *Our talks with Nalivkin and Kravichenko—*

Nalivkin was still at his position. I saw him. He stated: “your projection that ulama would gain the plurality in Tashkent and they would not win elsewhere turned out to be true. But, they will not allow you to work in Tashkent.” I responded with: “After the election of the Founding Parliament, and the establishment of the Turkistan Parliament, we will renew the elections and get rid of them. Nalivkin was under the influence of the Taskent Soviets. He did not want to hear anything against them. I stated that: “the enemy of democracy is not only ulama; it is the Bolsheviks who wish to own them. It would be better if you were to push them aside.” Later, I told the issues to the Turkistan Central Council. The Council sent a telegram to Kerensky, stressing that the Soviets and the labor organizations in the city wanted to use the ulama in order to establish a dictatorship, and to prevent that, an army needed to be sent. Upon receiving that telegram, Kerensky sent an army commander general (or, colonel) Kravichenko from Orenburg to Tashkent. Soviets did everything they could to prevent his arrival. Despite all that, this general arrived in Tashkent at the head of the elements of a military unit on 25 September. Immediately thereafter, he began consultations. He especially talked with the members of the Moslem Council that caused his dispatch. He wanted to know what he needed to do, while facing the threats of the local labor soviets and the rightist municipality. I responded with: “if you wish to take serious precautions, send the leaders of the city soviets and the Bolsheviks, who took over the labor and artisan organizations, to central Russia. At the moment they number only fifteen or twenty. But, if that is neglected, they can become twenty-thousand, and establish a dictatorship over millions of souls. On the issue of the ulama, there is no other remedy than renewing the elections; because, they came to power as a result of the general and official elections. In addition, you must induct volunteers from among the Moslems, and hire a lot of Moslems into the police. If Nalivkin, who is the head, attempts to block your moves against the soviets, it will be necessary to send a telegram to Kerensky, and ask him to remove Nalivkin and appoint someone else. Hesitating to take such drastic measures will result in bad consequences.” While I was speaking, there was nobody else in the gathering besides us. However, afterward, my friend Cokayoglu stated: “What did you do, why did you mix your friend Vladimir Petrovic (meaning Nalivkin) into this; he will now be annoyed at us.” I responded: “in the affairs of the state, private friendships have no place. Nalivkin must get out. Let us send a telegram to Kerensky, and ask for that in no uncertain terms.” Neither Cokayoglu, nor Ubeydullah Hoca was in favor of that. Now that we are in exile, and I met up with Kerensky, he stated that my thoughts on Nalivkin were correct, he allowed Bolsheviks to take over Turkistan due to his opportunism.” I thus understood that, had the Moslem Council requested the removal of Nalivkin by telegram, he

would have done it. The errors were not only in Nalivkin, but we were responsible as well. Bolshevik propaganda was rampant among his soldiers; he was afraid to induct Moslems into his military units, either because he did not have the authority, or he was afraid. As a result, work in Tashkent lost its flavor. Without decisive action, the number of those hesitating were increasing, and joining the opposition. Since I knew that without a national army there could not be a national state, I was grieving. That was possible in Baskurdistan. It was possible to convince Kravichenko in the face of the Bolshevik danger. But, my friends did not believe that could be realized. At the beginning of October, Baskurdistan Central Council summoned me by telegram. Provincial Congresses were meeting in preparation for the elections. I needed to defend our causes there. So, I went.

### *Serif Manatov's skills—*

One of the reasons why my friends summoned me by telegraph was what Serif Manatov has been doing. He was the son of a village Imam from the Yalan Canton, and his formation was known. His name appeared often in the printed press because of his activities in Türkiye. As Ismail Soysallioglu, who knew him in Russia, stated that he was not a traitor, but was an adventurer. He was one of those idealist volunteers who arrived in Türkiye during the Balkan Wars. Other Communists made use of his writings written with the aim of revitalizing the Turk Ocagi ideal, who wanted to blacken his image. After the 1917 Revolution (after the Moscow Congress), he arrived in Baskurt Central Council and expressed his desire to work together. Since the intellectual Baskurt families, such as Bekbov and Kuvatov, were hesitant toward the Baskurt autonomy, we included him amongst us. He was not at all useful in internal organization. Since he lived in Switzerland for years, and knew French and German, we advised him to work on external affairs, and provided him with foreign press materials we sometimes obtained. He worked on establishing contacts with Ukraine, Caucasus, Finland, Bukhara and Khiva. His prerequisite was the acceptance of Baskurdistan as part of Turkistan. Since he was eyeing the Presidency, and it was thought that he joined us with that aim in mind, he fell afoul of Sait Miras, Allahberdi Caferoglu and Hurmetullah Edilbayev, who were working to have the attorney Yunus Bekbov appointed to that position. During the Second Baskurt Congress, he joined in with the most zealot, Monarchist and reactionaries and had himself elected to the Presidency of the Congress, as well as the vice-chairmanship of the Central Committee. I had inserted his name to the list of candidates for the Russian Founding Parliament. But, at the end of the said Congress, while working in Orenburg, his relations with the other members of the Committee were bad; he was reproached for working with the Monarchists even though he himself was a Leftist. He was told he arrived amongst them in order to destroy the unity. His biggest opponent was Hurmetulla Edilbay. He was a graduate of the high-school,

he had read enormously, knew French, had a command of the Western and Russian literature. He had not accepted membership in the Central Committee, due to his humility. But, he was always there. He determined that Serif did not know French, and knew his as a charlatan and a sham. Our working office was a large room of the Caravansaray. Everybody was present there. Hurmetulla would arrive, take a seat by the window, and criticize everyone. He gave a nickname to all his friends who knew Russian literature. He named me Doctor Wagner from *Faust*, because I was an academic; Raskolnikov to Serif Manatov from Dostoyevsky; as he regarded Allaberdi as lazy, he was Ablomov from Griboyedov. Hurmetulla liked to display Manatov's ignorance, because he believed Manatov's literary knowledge was by ear as he picked-up bits and pieces during general conversations, as a result Serif was continually losing respect. Hurmetulla would arrive and ask: "Serif agay is there Eastern influence in Dante's description of hell?" Another day he would state: "Faust was sincere in his pantheism." Yet another, he would ask: "Why Nietzsche did take a negative position against the women in his Zarathustra?" Since his comments and questions did not elicit any response from Serif, he exhibited Serif as one who did not speak the truth when he claimed he read them. One day Hurmetulla addressed Manatov: "I was going to call you Raskolnikov; but he would at least carefully count the money he was stealing from the cash register. On the other hand, you seize the money as soon as it is placed before you and stuff it into your pockets, and while escaping quickly, you are caught. What else did you have to do with Kurbanaliyev and Minhac?" Manatov attempted to slap Hurmetullah, but could not succeed. Manatov wanted to leave the Committee; others encouraged his to do so. He did not. Then the others called him two faced, brassy. When I arrived from Tashkent, all these bickerings had reached their peak.

## *Fights in Baskurdistan for the Russian Founding Parliament elections—*

There, there were four groups of people with whom any business was transacted: Kerensky's Orenburg Governor, Arxangelskiy; Orenburg Russian Cossacks; Moslem Kazaks; and the Orenburg Tatar organization. The Russian Cossacs and the Moslem Kazaks, as they were in favor of autonomy, were our allies. The Russian Governor was our bad enemy. Even though we had secured, when I visited Petersburg, an order from the central government in Petersburg for the return of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Baskurt Army's Caravansaray containing national military buildings and gardens to us, and even though General Devletsin was following that matter, they continually delayed that act on the grounds that they had archives being kept there. Tatars had formed a Moslem Committee. They were on the same side with Arxangelskiy. They convened the Orenburg Province Moslems Congress. We participated in that as well. The owner of *Vakit* newspaper, Fatih

Kerimi of the Tatars worked very hard to chop-down our autonomy movement and he spoke at length at that congress. My response to the Orenburg Tatars, explaining and responding to the accusations lasted for four hours. This was the longest speech I gave in my life. The aim of the Tatar unitarists was to cause the Baskurt to ignore the Baskurt list and have them vote for the Tatar list. However, during the elections, many of the Tatar voted for our list. In that fight our most poisonous opponents were Fatih Kerimov, author Burhan Seref and the former Duma Member Kelimullah Hasanov.

The leaders of the Kazakistan, Ahmed Baytursun; from Bukey-Orda, descendent of the Chingiss Han, revered old man Sahingiray Sultan Bukeyhanov; from Tashkent Mustafa Cokayoglu; from Oyil, Cihansah Dostmuhammedov, and others met at the building of the Governorship of Turgay, in the room of Governor Alihan Bukeyhanov at the end of October, beginning of November. I was also present in many of the sessions. These were the days when the Bolsheviks were succeeding in many places, sabotaging the Founding Parliament elections, and the spread of the dictatorship idea. On 26 October, city of Ufa crossed over to the soviet style. On 28 October Ufa province Moslem (Tatar) Military Council joined the Soviets. Alihan announced that he had definitely left the Kadet Party, in which his name was registered till that time, and that Kazakistan accepted definitely the idea of autonomy under the name Alas-Orda. Under those conditions, Kazak elders advised me to immerse myself into Baskurt matters, and Cokayoglu to go to Tashkent and not to leave there. The consultation meetings that lasted for two days showed our future path in a definitive manner. We were to remain faithful to Democracy and the Founding Parliament; we were never to accept the Bolsheviks; the country to be established in Ukraine would follow autonomy; at the end of December, Kazakistan and Baskurdistan Congresses were to meet in Orenburg on the same dates; autonomy would be followed in Turkistan. Those Russian circles and political parties that accepted the autonomy of Orenburg, Ural Russian Cossacks, Turkistan, Kazakistan and Baskurdistan were nowhere near agreeing to form a single republic with us, and would actively oppose it. Therefore, we were not to broach the subject.

In honor of the old Baskurt Army era canton Administration of Baskurdistan, we had divided the country into cantons, the equivalent of the Sancak. In each 'tubek' (township) committees were formed. They prepared and administered the Founding Council elections. At the elections, we were completely victorious. None of the Tatar intellectuals opposing federation and autonomy were elected. Amongst them, only those who were in favor of landed autonomy and those supporting socialism were elected. I was elected from Ufa, Orenburg and Perm Provinces. I chose to represent the Ufa province.

## *Announcement of the Baskurdistan Autonomy—*

As soon as the Bolsheviks took over the rule in Petersburg, they made a declaration on 2 November as if they were recognizing the independence rights of the nations imprisoned by the Russians. We debated that declaration at the Baskurt Central

Council, and did not agree to benefit from it. In response Edict Number 1 (Prikaz no. 1) was printed and distributed widely, stressing that such propaganda ought not be believed. Later on, the Soviet literature plentifully used the contents of that edict for their own benefit and against us. It was specified in it that we had sent representatives to autonomous Ukraine and continued: “After the overthrow of the Russian Temporary Government on 25 October, in Russia a citizens war has commenced. We do not accept the Soviets. Because, we desire to have our own rights and laws. We are not going to receive that autonomy from the hands of the Soviets, because we are not going to allow the trampling of our people’s rights and will.” After signing a truce with the Soviets, Lenin personally inquired of that edict from me. I responded with: “Yes, I wrote that edict; but it was the expression of our people and national sovereignty of the time. More importantly, it was our way of announcing our independence, on occasion of the anarchy reigning in Russia; because, none of the Moslems had yet announced their autonomy at the time.” That was the truth. Four days after the publication of that Edict, we announced the formation of Autonomous Baskurdistan on 16 November (on European Calendars, 29 November) and formed the national government. We began forming the kernels of the national army in the Cantons. We elected attorney Yunus Bekhov from amongst us. I was given the tasks of internal affairs and defense. On that occasion we published a declaration addressing the People, indicating we had agreed with the Ukrainians and had sent representatives there. The announcement we sent to Ukrainians and Don Cossacks we reminded them that two hundred ten years earlier we all three had signed an alliance to revolted against Tsar Petro Grozny, Ukrainians under the leadership of Mazepa, Don Cossacks under Bulavin, and the Baskurt at first under Murat Sultan, and later under Ibrahim Sultan. Later on, I discovered that that writing had left a good taste. After Baskurdistan, Crimea; then (old style 11—new style 24 December) Turkistan, and even later, Azerbaijan, and Kazakistan Republics were announced. During the aforementioned consultations with the Kazak leaders, I had prepared three maps. One was large, the other small, of Baskurdistan. The third one was under the title “Union of Autonomous Moslem Eastern Russian Countries.” We had them printed during the declaration of our autonomy. Mr. Bennigsen published that last one as a photograph in his work published in Paris entitled *La Presse et le Mouvement national chez les Musulmans de Russie* during 1964. During 1918, we had them reprinted once more in Samara while the governmental representatives of Baskurdistan and Kazakistan were consulting. For me, they are a grand and very important memory. The Turkish General Nuri Congur managed to get hold of a copy when he was in Russia. He presented it to me in Ankara. I also included a copy of the third map, the one printed in Samara in 1921, in my volume *Turkistan Tarihi*. During the announcement of the autonomy we included the eastern portions of Baskurdistan that had a minimum seventy percent Moslems living there. That area was known as Kici Baskurdistan. We had thought of having the Baskurt and Tatars living in a minority status to move to this Eastern Baskurdistan and to Turkistan. Kucuk Baskurdistan had a land territory of 79,560 square kilometers and had the population of 1,259,059. Seventy two percent of the entire population was Moslem. According to

our plans, the center of government for the Baskurt as well as Western Kazaks, and Orenburg Cossacs was going to be established in Orenburg. If, later on Baskurdistan and Western Kazaks merged into a single country, the Russian Cossacks would also join in. Among the Cossacks we had friends who accepted that idea without hesitation. I personally thought that they would get along with us just fine as they were half Turks. This declaration of autonomy caused a great deal of excitement amongst us, and became a topic for our poets Seyirtkirey Magaz and Seyhzade Babic. Among the Baskurt and the Miser living on the East of Urals was living in military administration in the form of cantons until the last quarter of the last century. Therefore, land borders and the known military national idea was naturally understood amongst them. The word canton was taken from Switzerland.

### *Third Baskurt Kurultay—*

We called for the Third Baskurt Kurultay to be held during 20 December 1917 – January 1918 at the Caravansaray, in accordance with the decisions made jointly with the Kazak intellectuals. This Congress was going to serve as the Founding Council of our nation. In reality, most of the Members of our Government were also a member of the Russian Founding Parliament that was due to be opened anytime in Petersburg. But, we thought that the Bolsheviks were not going to allow that Council to work, therefore, we decided not to go and thought we would do more good by working in our homeland. Instead, we opened our Congress on the day the Russian Founding Parliament’s opening day. In order to provide a comfortable working condition, there were volunteers from all over Baskurdistan who wished to ride in on their own horses and bringing their own food to serve as guards. We only saw it fit to have twenty-four guards for a period of ten days. This precaution served us well against the deep hostility of the Tatar Committee and the Arxangelsky who was the Governor only in name. Even though the Kazak Congress had opened before ours, not all their members had yet dispersed. From the Kazaks, Seyit Azim Kidirbayev, and from Khokand, who had announced Autonomy ten days after us, the Foreign Minister Mustafa Cokayev, were present as observers. I was also an observer in the Kazak Congress for a couple of times. Both Congresses exchanged congratulatory messages. In this Congress, Abdulhay Kurbanaliyev and his friend Minhac, from the Baskurts of the Argayas Canton, attempted to form a monarchist group as an option. Serif Manatov, who saw himself as a socialist, was representing that group in our government. Kurbanaliyev wished to make that Manatov the head of the Baskurdistan Government; while we wanted attorney Yunus Bekov. Kurbanaliyev displayed an outstanding fur-coat to the public, and presented it to Manatov. However, the Tokurcan Canton Baskurts presented me with a race-horse with an historical saddle on it; in addition to silver tea-set with Arabic inscriptions inscribed in silver and gold, plus a handbag with gold writing on it, on behalf of the overwhelming majority of the Congress. I understood that the tray of the tea-set,



containing nice poems on the reverse was prepared long before I was given news of it. These were most excellent and sincere rewards given to me in the name of my nation. The saddle was ornamented by agates in every direction; the tops of the reins were tooled with golden and silver. I carried the handbag with me often. In the end, the soldiers of aide-de-camp Muhliya were forced to sell it upon arriving in Iran. For me, becoming a leader in the Baskurt movement was a matter that came later, meaning I never thought that I would become such a leader. If the Soviets had not taken over Turkistan, I would have been between Orenburg and Taskent working. As a result, this Congress rendered the Baskurt Autonomy legal. Official Government was formed. Yunus Bekov became the President; I was undertaking the Internal and Defense Ministry duties. From among the officers, Emir Karamis was my deputy at the Defense. Among the other members, Ildirhan Mutin (Treasury); from the Tatars, Abdullah Edhemov (Education); Ayitbayev (Agriculture) were the other Ministers. The Defense Department was known as Baskurt Military Administration (Baskiskoye Voyskovoye Upravleniye) as it was also known as it did in the old Baskurt Army. The Congress resolved to form the National Baskurt Army. On January 1918, a group of our officers, Muhtar Karamis, Abdullah Miras, Abdullah Idilbay, Umran Magazov, and Britz from among the Polish and his two friends purchased an amount of weapons from the Cossack Government, and were assigned to form the first Baskurt regiment at the locality of Baymak. We did not have the money to establish the governmental organization, pay salaries to the bureaucrats, and to feed the Regiment. For that reason, we started collecting taxes. The Tsar had outlawed the consumption of raki during the General War [WWI]. A lot of raki was then warehoused at the Samakin raki factory [brewery] in the Usergen Canton. It was decided to occupy that factory and sell the raki to the Russians. All the Russian villagers on this side, even from Orenburg Cossack villages, ran over there with tea-pots, bottles, buckets, damacana and barrels. It was sold at a low price. The proceeds were approximately half a million Russian Rubles. That was sent to the Provinces as bureaucratic salary. Events took place at the factory; Russians drank the spirit and were rolling on the ground. Realizing that they would not be satisfied to drink with glasses some placed their mouths to the barrel taps and drank in that way. One climbed on top of the large barrel, several meters tall, as he was drunk, fell into the barrel and drowned. The Baskurt soldiers, fearing the raki would not be sold in that barrel if the occurrence was heard, did not tell the event to anyone. They retrieved the body of the drunk and now dead Russian's body and buried him. Baskurt did not drink raki and vodka. Perhaps some Baskurt may have obtained some from the Russians and imbibed. But, none of the Baskurt arrived at the factory to purchase any, and none of the Baskurt soldiers touch their tongues to the drink. The drunken Russians were falling onto the roads, and sometimes had their horses drink the raki. Later on, they had stated that: "nobody gave us such a magnificent feast like Velidov." At the time, taxes were being collected from the Cantons, and we were able to meet the Army needs. The people were undertaking every sacrifice for the army. Only from the Burcen Canton enough money was collected to suffice

for the Regiment's food for quite some time. But, every passing day, the Bolsheviks progressed. In the middle of this, the matter of Serif Manatov came to the fore. He was sad that he was not appointed to an important position by the Congress. The fact that he was presented a fur-coat by the recidivists was being thrown at his face at every opportunity. He was completely isolated. Now, he rose to attend the Russian Founding Parliament, on the grounds that he was a member. Hurmetullah told him: "you are not going to the Founding Parliament; you are going to help your friend Lenin in order to destroy democracy. They must be happy that you have represented the Monarchists amongst us, and worked to collapse us from within." The Central Committee and the Government told him: "do whatever you wish alone." No authority was conferred on him to represent Baskurdistan. He went as such and entered our opponent Communist Mollanur Vahidov's Committee.

## *Occupation of Orenburg by the Bolsheviks and the arrest of Baskurdistan Government Members—*

Only the Orenburg Cossacks, under the command of General Dutov, were responding to the Bolsheviks who had been holding the Ufa and Samara Provinces for the past two-and-a-half months. From among the Cossacks, an officer by the name of Kasirin and his family turned Communist, and took the Verxneuralskit region, right behind the Baskurt territory, under their influence. Since many influential Cossacks in Orenburg were also communicating with the Soviets secretly, it was impossible for the city to defend itself. We did not participate, because our Regiment was not ready and it was not a straight affair. Finally, the Soviets occupied Orenburg on 18 January (1918) by the European calendar Soviets adopted at the beginning of the year. Governor of Turgay Province Alihan Bukeyhan and other Kazak intellectuals escaped to Eastern Kazakhstan, to Semipalatinsk. We remained in Orenburg. If they would not touch the Regiment we were training and to our autonomy, we were prepared to move to Baymak and administer our country from there. The arriving Bolsheviks, beginning with their Chief, Zwilling, were treating us gently. We were told: "as long as you are not against the Soviet Government as an autonomous entity, but subject to the Soviets in external affairs, you can govern your country." We were also informed that we did not have to accept Communist Party Doctrines, and they wrote us in that manner as well. They allowed me to visit the regiment we were forming, to convince them of these conditions. I and Allahberdi Caferoglu went there. Officers arrived into the Kadirsah village in the Usergen Canton. Thinking that we could not journey to the Chinese border like the Kazaks, and believing that Soviets would reach there as well, we sent a telegram to Moscow on 27 January, in the name of the Regiment, we announced that we accepted the sovereignty of the Soviets as long as we had autonomy in our internal affairs. Communist S. Tipiyev, who wrote the Revolutionary history in Baskurdistan,

insists that we sent telegrams to Moscow full of threats. All those are lies. We were not in any position to threaten anyone. I wished patience and thoughtful action to our troops, we returned to Orenburg, hoping we could see them once again with the permission of the Soviets. Zwilling seemed very happy. They invited us several times to their Council meetings. In those meetings, the former Duma Member Kelimullah Hasanov and Burhan Seref had taken their places as if they were old friends of the Bolsheviks and behaving as if they were prosecuting us. Five days passed. During the evening of 3 February, we were arrested. Those imprisoning us were Tatar soldiers, and apparently they showed us fake arrest warrants. When we reached the prison, the Director stated: “we have not received an order indicating they will be imprisoned. We will keep them here temporarily.” No attention was paid to our request that we be released. Later we learned what the procedure involved: “Soviet permission is granted to the Moslem Military Committee in the city; those Baskurts arrested by them, may be kept here.” Orenburg Province Soviet Committee published that decision in the Orenburg *Izvestia* newspaper on 4 February. Allaberdi Cafer, Seyit Miras, and altogether eight of us were imprisoned. Two days later, I was interrogated. However, the prosecution folder contained only two articles written by two Tatar intellectuals, Kamil Kerimov and Ibrahim Bekcentayev, in the Cossack newspaper *Kazacya Pravda*, accusing me of being a Baskurt Counterrevolutionary, a Monarchist and a recidivist capitalist. Soviets knew that all that was printed were lies. The Bolshevik officials there got so used to killing individuals by firing squad, a very ugly woman secretary came to the Commissar and asked: “Kstenke ctolli yego,” meaning “are they going to be placed before the wall?” The Commissar with a great deal of dignity stated: “Pogodi,” meaning, “stop and wait.” He returned me to the prison. All of a sudden, all this business became very complicated, because, the word of our imprisonment caused much anxiety. Our troops in Baymak occupied the Russian gold mine, took away three hundred kilograms of silver, one hundred thirty-six kilograms of gold, much food and ammunition and sent a telegram to Moscow requesting our release. In response, the Russians in Orsk decided to completely decimate our Regiment. A Commissar by the name of Baranov invited a military representative group from Baymak, under the pretense of talks, with a friendly letter hand carried via trusted individuals. When the representative group arrived at the named location for the promised talks, the Red Soldiers hidden in the surrounding area jumped out and arrested all. They were killed by a firing squad that night. Among them were our most valuable officers, Umrans Magazov and Abdullah Idilbayev were thus killed in a lowly manner. Immediately afterward, Red Soldiers were sent to Baymak from everywhere, but the Regimental Commander Emir Karamis and the poet Habibullah Abidov did not go to the named place for talks as a precaution. Instead, they summoned the Baskurt Regiment troops and attacked the Russians who arrived to kill them all. Several Russians were killed in the fighting, and the Red Russians ran away to Orsk’iy. When the Russians arrived with an even larger force, the officers disbanded the Regiment fearing that not doing so would cause the Soviets might kill the members of the Baskurt Government. The leaders hid themselves accompanied by a few troopers, in the mountainous lands of the Burcen.

We had already bought the jail guardians either with presents, or they were leaning to our side to begin with. As a result I was receiving regular news from the outside and sending out messages in code. At that point, news arrived that Emir Karamis was collecting volunteers, and was preparing to attack Orenburg in collaboration with the Cossacks. One day, I was separated from the large room in which we were all housed, and I was taken alone to a distinguished room. In the jail, I was occupied with the arrangement of the Nogay dastans, and to complete my volume on the History of the Nogays that I had started writing in 1915 in Petersburg. One day, a Tatar youth arrived by the name of Muhammed Tahirov. He brought me food, writing paper, and a wristwatch. He was previously my student at Kazan, but became a Communist and he was assigned by the Moslem Military Council in Kazan and sent him to work with the Soviets to destroy the Baskurt Government in Orenburg. He entered my room in the prison and said: “Master, we only jailed you to scare you, and to change your mind about Baskurt Autonomy. But now the matter became enlarged; we are trying to save you, but we are unable. Now you have become an enemy of the Soviets, because, on the mountains, volunteer Baskurt units are established. They are keeping you here as a hostage.” He began crying. Later on someone named Rahimov wrote a big volume, in Russian, *The History of the Formation of the Republic of Baskurdistan*. In it, the contacts about us are detailed, taking place between the Tatar Military Committee and the Orenburg Soviets. That indicated what Muhammed Tahirov told me then was true. I continued writing my history of the Nogay, thinking whatever may happen, let it. I sent word to the Baskurt elders that excitement and anxiety would not help us; yet the excitement did not abate. From all locations telegrams were sent to Moscow and Orenburg Provincial Committee, with the message being “release the prisoners.” Even special envoys were sent and all that was making our circumstances more and more dangerous by every passing day.

One day (probably 27 March), the guard informed me that Orenburg Provincial Committee and Zwilling was going to come and visit me. He advised that I place the books I had under the bed, because a new order arrived to take away all my books and pens. Zwilling arrived, accused me of organizing volunteer military units in the mountains from my cell in the jail, and told me it was necessary for me to send an order to disarm them all in a week, or else I would be executed. I responded with: “what value is there in an order sent from the jail? First release me, and then I will send the order.” He said: “it is your business,” and left. After that, the regime became very harsh. They took all my papers, books and writing papers. Every ten or fifteen minutes someone was coming to observe me from the small window in the door.

### *Our escape from the prison—*

During the night of 3 to 4 April, noise started suddenly. The Cossacks attacked Orenburg, and the troopers sent by Emir Karamis participated in the attack. Until the morning they broke the prison doors and released all the Cossacks and the Baskurts.

But, they could not enter my room, and could not find the key. They made quite a bit of loud noises, shouts. I heard a few Baskurt words. But, I was in an internal room, secured with steel doors and heavy locks. The attackers left without dislodging the doors and without reaching me. After the attackers left, the Director of the Prison arrived with the key he did not wish to provide them. He stated: “you leave now as well, but do not tell anyone who released you.” Later it was discovered that the Director of the Prison told the Baskurt Troopers that he was not given the key, and it was impossible to open the door. The Troopers responded with: “if you do not find the key and release Velidov, we will return and kill you.” Therefore, the Director went and found the key, and released me from the select room in which I was imprisoned. The Director personally told me all this four months later, after the Soviets escaped from Orenburg.

Even though it was beginning of April, I still had on the winter clothing I had when I was jailed, and was wearing felt boots. Since the snow was melting one could not walk in the puddles with those boots. If anyone paid a bit of attention, from the clothes I was wearing one could tell that I was a prison escapee. I was walking. Bullets were flying everywhere around me. One even went through my clothing. Every place was in flames started by the falling artillery shells. Some homes were burning. Many a dead body littered the streets. I was jumping over them. Then, somebody said “stoy” meaning “stop,” and approached me. He said: “you are hereby arrested,” and took me to a narrow street. This was a Red Soldier. He was not speaking to me; he was quiet. We walked father. On the way he said: “do not be afraid.” He finally took me to a house near the Sakmar River railroad bridge. There I saw Sait Miras who escaped before me. It transpired that this house belonged to the family of one of the famed Tatar authors, Cemaleddin Velidi, and the Soldier who brought me was a family member. Our friends had sent two others, but they could not find me. This youth did find and brought me. The author Cemaleddin Velidi was one of the Tatars in favor of landed autonomy. The books he wrote on the cultural life of the Tatars, in Russian, are utilized by the European Orientalists who are interested in the contemporary history of Turk communities. I never was able to sit down and talk with this precious person, and he was not at his home; probably was not even in Orenburg.

During those days, I also saw a friend who had arrived from Tashkent. We learned the news of Nalivkin hiding in the garden of one of the native Turks, then going over to the Russian Cemetery and committing suicide; the escape of Mustafa Cokayoglu and other members of the Khokand National Government to Kazakhstan, and may other pieces of news from that person. He was immediately returning to Turkistan, intending to take back the news that we were beginning a guerilla war. We spoke all this, but we did not have time to even eat together; I asked them to send a young colleague to Ufa by rail, and announce to the friends that they need to gather in Ufa on April 7 and 8. Somehow, we needed to find a horse-drawn sleigh to escape from the city; it was found. While we were crossing the streets, artillery shells were still flying overhead. Streets were full of dead bodies. But, the rifle fire had stopped; that meant, the Cossacks and the Baskurts who arrived with them had withdrawn from these

sections. Those who arrived to release us, when they could not find me, were saddened. When I reached the town of Kargali, I found one of them, and sent word to their Chief, Emir Karamis “I am free, come to Ufa.” Without stopping there, changing the horse-drawn sleigh arrived in the Baskurt village of Omer on the banks of Toq River. I slept the night in the home one someone I knew. I am hoping that this person is still alive. With his aid, and his beautiful horses, I arrived in Abdullina rail station via a winding series of roads, and very secretly. I departed from this person half a kilometer before reaching the station.

I was going to Ufa. We met at the home of one friend, who could travel by rail, to decide what we were going to do next. We called that meeting “Ufu Yiyini” (Ufa meeting) which was to constitute a milestone in the history of the Baskurdistan National Movement.

## *Ufa meetings—*

I was wearing the clothes of a laborer. I participated in the ‘Soviet’ meeting of the rail road laborers. They were discussing the fact that some stations were requesting locomotives, and they wanted to decide if those requests were going to be honored by them. In short, it was a period of full anarchy; nobody was listening to anybody. The distance to Ufa could have been traversed in a few hours, but it took an entire day. And I managed to do that by taking different trains I encountered by chance, arriving in Ufa on 7 April. Our brave officer Emir Karamis also arrived by train from Orenburg that night. The Baskurt youth I sent him with the message “I am free, come to Ufa” found him in the village of Muraptal, and Karamis immediately followed me from Tokurgan. He was not alone; he brought with him a portion of the gold obtained from Baymak for the army.

Again, on the same day we arrived in Ufa, we learned completely by chance, that a Tatar intellectual by the name of Salah Atnagulov also arrived in Ufa, on his was to Orenburg, sent by Stalin to invite me to Moscow. He was also carrying a letter from the Tatar Communist leader Molla Nur Vahidov. It turned out that the Communist Party began an action to establish Moslem Autonomous states, and Stalin issued orders to have me taken out of prison and brought to Moscow. Even though I did not trust him completely, I spoke with Salah. It turned out, many compliments and much promise were issued. Before I gave my negative response, we continued our task of discussions amongst us. We decided the following: “Soviet policies are all based on lies. There might be good persons amongst those in the Center, but those working in the provinces, with whom we are supposed to collaborate, are all chauvinist Russian nationalists and traitors. Dictatorship is being handed to them. By the time an order arrives from Moscow, the business is completed. Despite our telegram offering our submission, they created the disaster at Baymak. Those prisoners who were to be released on the orders of Stalin were to be taken to Moscow to be executed on April 4. Good thing we obtained our freedom. Now, we are not going to him. We are going to establish a



guerilla organization in the mountains. We are going to meet with the representatives of the Kazakistan (Alas-Orda) on 15 May. Now, we will send a man to Semipalat, we are going to request their arrival in the home of the author Abdullah Ismeti's father in Kostanay. Mollacan Halikoglu will journey to Kostanay via Troytsk, to await us. If we were to agree with the Kazaks in Kostanay, we will let the world know of the conditions in Turkistan, Kazakistan and Baskurdistan via Japan. We will also send representatives to Golca and to Far East to Vladivostok. Our guerilla center is going to be temporarily in Tamyán Katay, in and around Ahmet village. Two troopers from the retinue of Emir will travel via two different roads to Yolaman Molla in Tamyán, who has been appointed handle the organizational matters, and take to him news and shapirographs [duplicating machines]. Emir Karamis and I will leave Ufa on 9 April, and reach Ahmet village via Katay." These are the summary of decisions we made in two days. I saw Salah Atmagulov once again, and told him: "At the moment, I am unable to visit Moscow. I had to escape from the prison. Even though I believe what Moscow is stating, I do not believe we can come to terms with the local Communists." I also placed before him a published announcement from the Provincial Commissar, brought from Orenburg by those arriving after us. It stated that: "Validov jumped over the dead body of our valuable friend Zwilling; he will be caught." After showing him that, I added: "I wish success to those friends who are now in Moscow and those who collaborate with them." Of course, I did not inform him of what we were going to do, and where we were going.

### *What happened to us in the city of Katay—*

After we sent one of our friends to Semipalat by train, and the two chosen Troopers to Mias and Beloretski, I and Emir left by a horse drawn sleigh the night of 9 April on the snow that was not yet melting, and arrived in the aforementioned Yilim Karan village, and from there Mirzakay village. Snow started melting everywhere. We travelled mostly at night. We saw Cemalettin Bayisev and Mecit Gafuri, and reached the home of Sabir Hazret Hasanoglu. He obtained the clothes of mountain Baskurts, provided horses and sent us on to the mine at Samov, in the land of the Katay Baskurt lands. We were going to continue on to Tamyán-Tungevir Canton, to the Ahmet village from there. But, our horses could not cross the River, ten kilometers from the Hodaybergen village, as the ice on that water was thawing. We sent back the man accompanying us, with the horses. In the forest, Emir and I tightly tied the gold we were carrying to our belts. The total amount was not much, but it was very necessary to send a representative man to Japan. Emir was a friend of my youth. He was from the Makar village, seven kilometers from my village in the uplands. His family was descended from the notables of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the noted Baskurt officer Yusuf Mayor Karamisev. Karmis Ogullari were very brave and very idealist youths. They had two brothers, officers, named Muhrat and Gani. Another of their brothers Gerey Karamisev was working on our civil matters with devotion. He had a hunchback.

Emir was very skilled in playing the flute called Quray, the Baskurt national musical instrument. In this forest, the reed used to make Quray, in Latin, *heraclium sibiricum*, was plentiful. Emir would always collect those reeds, drill four holes from the top, and one from the reverse, and play. I could not find that reed in the Altai Mountains, and in the Turkish forests. It was only found in some botanical gardens, and in museums. The melting snow was causing us to sing, and rendering us unusually tired. We were very wet. We chanced upon a Baskurt, with his ax. He was on his way to chop trees. We asked if the village was close. He responded: "very close, behind that hill" (minav tubenin arqahinda, yap yagin). But, though we walked for hours and could not climb the hill yet. In history, the Turk tribes are so used to crossing the continents, they always show the distances as being very close. A Kazan Tatar, referring to a Kazak, who gave him directions with his chin, stating: "minav Cogecek" meaning 'this is the way to the Cogecek city' pointing to a settlement on the Chinese border, stated: "I walked three months under the beard of that Kazak Turk." It was so among the Anatolian Sejuk Turks as well. Celaleddin Rumi one stated that "if someone asked for directions, do you know the meaning of the response 'Isbu?' It means 'may Tengri give you courage and strength, it is very far.'" After three or four hours we saw that Baskurt with an ax, we were able to reach the top of that hill, and were able to spot the village from the distance. We were exhausted by the time we reached the village.

The teacher in that village was married to the daughter of my mother's sister. We stayed with them. But a policeman working at the Samov mine, which was very close to this village, saw us and informed the Communist Commissar working there as 'suspicious persons.' The Commissar ordered that policeman to bring us in. The policeman was going to take us to the Commissar. We said, "We will go, but let us eat some food first." We left the gold and the paper money we were carrying with us to my sister, who was the wife of the teacher. Because, if we were searched, and the money was found, would have been in a pickle. A little later, another policeman arrived. The previous policeman was Baskurt; this one was A Russian. They took us to the Commissariat. We were interrogated. We had agreed on the responses we were going to provide. "What are you doing in this season, walking in the melting snow? Are you prison escapees?" We told him we arrived on horseback, but since the horses could not cross the River close to the village, we walked the rest of the way. In summary, everything went well. They placed us in detention, on the second floor of a house. There, something extraordinary happened. The mine guard holding us with his rifle was a man from my village by the name of Temirali. He recognized me and Emir, as soon as we crossed the threshold. But, he did not divulge anything to the Russians. This Temirali was a horse thief. Since he could not live in our village because of that, I knew that he had left in the direction of this Katay region. He became a Red Police, now he was guarding us. He said to me: "this Commissar will save you; if he will not, I will have you escape from here." A little later, another Baskurt arrived from another village. He told us in a low voice that the Teacher prepared horses for us to ride, when we were able to leave. He added: "your arrival here is the equivalent of the sky falling to the ground. What is this strange happening? Even if the Commissar does

not release you, we will set this house on fire; we also have gunpowder. Be certain, we will let you escape.”

But, a little later the Commissar called us again. He said: “you are free to go.” We did not let him know at all that we also spoke Russian. He knew a little Baskurt. We left the mine building. We were directed to the place where the horses were ready, behaving as if we were going back to the Hudayberdi village. But, on the way, they changed direction. During the night, the snowy road was frozen. At first, they traversed slowly. The Teacher returned what we left in his house. Later, we ran with a couple of individuals, in full moon, and did not stop anywhere. By the next morning, we arrived at Sermen Koy, the River Ak Edil (in Russian, Belaya). Even though the snow was melting in the plains, the snow here was hard. There was ice on the River. There was the danger of ice crashing through. We gave back the horses to the individual who brought us here, and we walked over the River on the ice. We arrived in the Sigay village, and slept. While we did, the ice on the River thawed. In the afternoon, Red Soldiers arrived on the other bank, but could not cross the River since the ice was melted. A few months later we learned that the Commissar at the Samov mine telephoned the Uzen mine, and reported that two suspicious persons crossed their locality. But, they could not catch us. Toward the evening, we reached the Ahmet village.

## *Our activity in Tamyan and formation of guerilla units—*

What we sent from Ufa, by two different Troopers, arrived at their destination, to the hands of Yolaman Molla, which I chose to name him thus to protect his identity, believing he is still alive. Since the Molla had relatives in the village, was, as if he was at his home. He thought that, if our presence was known, he needed advanced information. For the purpose, he appointed lookouts from villagers he knew personally, to detect the arrival of anyone sent by Kasirin, meaning Verxneuralsk. The activities of the enemy were going to reach him, and us, from desolate roads, and we were to pull aside to avoid detection. The duplication machines were placed in a hut (alaciq) in the forest. We were journeying to the Canton Administration at night, which was not too far, typing them on wax paper to duplicate our messages. We hand-wrote the Turkish versions. Our archive was the attic of the mosque. First of all, we printed a lot of “calling you” messages. We wrote the condition of the Eastern Russian Moslems, in Russian, if they were going to foreign countries. Some of our friends were stopping over here for a long time. And here also, we heard that the Baskurt policeman at the Samov Commissariat understood what happened. He hit his head with his fists, stating “I did not know” and claimed that he would now serve us. Actually, that policeman and Temirali later joined our guerilla organization and served well. The Baskurt people were very united. They would not let a syllable escape their mouths. One day, early news arrived. Twenty-five Red Soldiers were arriving, spent the night in a certain village. Emir Karamis was at another location, organizing.

Yolaman Molla, in whose home we were staying said to me: “walk in this direction. There you will find a tar cauldron. Someone is working there. Stay at that location. When the Russian leave, we will send horses and retrieve you. That year, winter lasted a long time. I walked far, snow was falling, all around was white. Because it was snowing, my footprints were being covered over. I found the said tar cauldron, and someone was actually working there. He was collecting pine tree resin, roots and veins and beech tree dust. He told me to “stand in the forest, nobody will see you. I, too, hid in the forest just like that.” It turned out that, he thought I was a bandit who escaped from prison. He was a bandit himself in the past, was sentenced in absentia, and lived in the forests and mountains for a long period. Occasionally he was taking a deep breath, and singing a bandit song “these leafy forests hid so many individuals and saved their lives.” By noon, someone arrived, found me, told me that the Reds have left. He had brought the horse of the Imam who arrived from a neighboring village to see me. When the man working the cauldron noticed that, he realized I was not a bandit. In addition, the man who came after me said something to him. I arrived at the village and understood that the Reds were not aware of us. The Police Director of the Canton, who later became head of the Baskurt government, Musa Murtazin had arrived. Emir went with him. I was not happy that Emir was away. On the way to the village, a pine branch broke under the weight of the snow, hit me on the shoulder and wounded me. I was bleeding. The Molla who was sent to retrieve me heated a skewer on the fire, pressed it on the location of the wound, and placed a piece of burnt felt on it. This method of curing wounds is known as “daglamak” in historical record, and it was not forgotten. Yolaman Molla stated: “I know, it will hurt, but that will also cure you in one day.” I responded with: “since we have entered this path. It matters not; I will endure.” I recited to him the poem of by Hoca Hafiz “if you have not stepped onto the Arabian derset with the intention of performing Hajj, do not be concerned with munganlay thorns ravaging your feet.” It turned out that Yolaman Molla knew well of the Hoca Hafiz, as he had studied in the medrese of Mollakay Abdullah Isan, who was keeping alive the culture of Bukhara culture along the Sakmar River. He immediately completed the rest of the poem from his memory: “Yusuf, who has been lost, will return to Ken’an, do not be sorry; someday the hut of worry will become a rose garden, do not be sorry; Even though the roads are dangerous, and the aim is not well known, but those individuals who have no boundaries for their aims do not need busy roads; do not worry.” Yolaman Molla stated: “One seeks horoscope answers from Hoca Hafiz. One opens his book, and points to a page.” He stated that Hoca hafiz gave me my answer. “He specified the truth” he said. We embraced with Yolaman Molla. In the morning, my wound got better. Molla cut my hair which was becoming too long to hide. But the razor made of regular iron was so bad, it was uprooting every hair on my head. Getting a haircut was worse in pain than having my wound cauterized. Molla told me to endure, and, he stated in the Russian he did not know well: “Ey Kazak, be patient, you will become an Ataman [Kazak ruler].” He was a very sweet man; there was nothing he could not do. He was working the duplication machine as well. His wife was an excellent cook. However, Molla beat this woman occasionally; but he also

knew how to caress her. Geothe's poem "I know well who is a skilled man; he will beat a woman first, then he will comb her hair by his hands" was written as if to fit Yolaman Molla. There were times when the woman had tears in her eyes when he brought food to the table; but she never complained of the Molla. As a summary, his woman was just like Molla himself. Molla was just like our security director here. He had men and organization in every quarter, but his appearance was very humble. My fiancée, Nefise, from my earliest days was living in the Abcelil village, closeby. Molla asked me if I wanted to visit. I responded with: "if her father Haci Mehmet Molla sees me, he will not hide his joy, and the people will discern that, and become suspicious." He stated: "you are right; at the moment nobody is aware of your presence here. Let it stay that way." In sum, we were able to establish the kernels of our guerilla units from among the Tamyan, Tungevir, Karagay, Kipcakand Burcen, under the protection of his excellent organization skills. According to Emir, who was a little boaster, we now had fifty-seven small units. The amount of leaflets duplicated and distributed by the Molla was countless. We had brought a sufficient amount of paper. I stayed there for approximately two weeks, till the end of April. It was necessary for me to be present at Kostanay, in order to organize Yalan Canton on 15 May. I left Emir Karamis to continue with his work organizing in these regions, and I left for Cilebi region. As a precaution, Molla gave me an unpretentious looking but a very good running horse. I was wearing a complete Tungevir baskurt village outfit.

## *Activities among the Tungatar and Yalan ulus—*

About that time, one of the Baskurt intellectuals Talha Rasulev arrived. We were going to send him to other countries. Some day he was going to become my brother-in-law. Together we went to his ulus Tungatar via Cilebi, Yalan and Kostanay. At the Tulek village, we met with an educated person by the name of Adilsah, the owner of the gold mine. If we could arrange a meeting with the Kazaks in Kostanay, Talha was going to Japan, or to one of their Diplomatic Missions in the Far East. We took with us all the writings we produced at the Ahmet village. Adilsah was a very generous and he liked to help other people. Because of that, all the villagers and the poor liked him very much. He was rendering serious aid to our national movement. He had enough formation to represent our nation in any set of circumstances, anywhere, with honor. He also knew Russian well. He had read some. He gave a goodly sum of gold money for external relations. He allocated horses for our trip. We stayed in the Tungatar village, where Talha was from. Tunqatar (tun-qatar) means night guard soldiers. Apparently that was their duty during the time of the old Hans. They were among the old notables. The famous Seyh Zeynullah Isan was also from this village. There were other respected soldiers and scholars raised in this village. Talha's father, who was also the brother of the aforementioned Seyh, was the military ahund of all Moslem soldiers during the Russo-Japanese war in Manchuria. When the war ended

in 1905, I had journeyed to this village with my father to visit him. He drank a little. He also used to put a little snuff under his tongue. He knew that it was against the sharia to perform namaz with snuff in his mouth. Once I noticed that he spat while leading the namaz, I asked my father: "what happened to the namaz?" He told me that it was no longer namaz, and renewed his namaz. When this was relayed to the ahund, he was not surprised, and responded with: "yes, sometimes I perform namaz without ablutions, but I am the only responsible party before God. Your worship is intact and accepted. Since your son noticed my faulty, of course you must renew your worship." As a result, they had laughed. My father was accommodating under such conditions. Our relative Ehil Molla imbibed a lot of hydromel, he would lead the namaz under the influence, but my father would not object. Isa ahund also liked me. But, he had already passed on. I recalled him, and with respect I read a Fatiha from the Kur'an, in my mind. Talha was the Governor of of this Tamyan Katay Canton. He had brought in good horses, and we journeyed to the West, to the high pastures of Uytas Mountains, very far from the village. In the suddenly warming weather, we raced horses almost to the death. The weather was really warm. Even though it was a little early for that, several times we swam in the village's small lake with Talha and his brothers. We were hearing that Red patrols were traversing the land. Since our nation was all allied and together, we felt ourselves completely secure, and were occupying ourselves with horse races.

I left Talha in his village to follow me a day later and to meet me at the home of Musa Kelimulla Hadisoglu at Yalan, I pressed on with the youth provided me as a guide. I visited some of my acquaintances at Cubarkol and Toktibay Baskurt villages as well as Atciter Miser Turk villages. I reached Musa Kelim Hadisoglu's home in four days. I think the name of the village was Ilyas.

There, a very strange event took place. There were many saddled horses and carriages at the entrance of the house. When Musa Kelim saw me from his window arriving in a carriage, he came out. Without extending his hand and coolly informed me: "there are many visitors; among them your opponents. Now, it is not appropriate if you do not enter the house; they are eating their meal." I responded with: "let me sit at a place near the entry door. You might tell your guests I am from Kubagus village." He did as I asked. I was wearing the outfit of the Tungevir uruk Baskurts; I did not carry my glasses during secret voyages. I was only asked simple questions such as why I had arrived and I answered. After the meal, the namaz period arrived. We all performed as a congregation. Afterward, all dispersed. Only those who knew me remained. When all leaving were away from the door, all began laughing out loud, and they were happy to see me. They embraced and patted me. Musa Kelim's old mother came out as well and caressed my head. I was told: "now that nobody knows you are here, stay for a few days." Musa Kelim was a very active, very trustworthy community leader. He knew cooperative business well; he also knew Russian; he would read newspapers and journals. His culture and knowledge was fine. He had participated in our congresses. We sent a horseman to invite a member of the army, Staff Officer (Stabs Kapiten) Captain Alimcan Tagan, who was the Governor of this



Canton. That Tagan, later, Dr. Tagan, until he passed away in 1948 while he was a Lecturer in Turkish at the Hamburg University, was to remain my colleague for the rest of his life. He had studied to be a Russian teacher, and then joined the army, rose to the rank of Staff Officer Captain. He had participated in our congresses, became a governor of this Canton, later commander of 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of our national Army, and even later commander of our 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. After the failure of our national movement, he went to Manchuria and worked there, crossed over to Japan, learned Japanese, made friends. He was sent to Hungary by the Hungarian Ambassador, completed the Debrezen Agricultural School and the School of Economics in Budapest becoming a doctor of economics. He published many articles in Hungarian and French on the Soviet Treasury and the ethnography of Baskurts. He became the Curator of the Eastern Department, Budapest Museum of Ethnography. As such he collected and brought materials from Türkiye. He conducted wide-scale research on the Southern Turk communities. He was very skilled in photography and film matters, and collected thousands of photographs on the life of the Turks, on their types and physical civilization. He travelled quite a bit with me in Europe, and the Swiss Alps. Finally, when the Reds entered Hungary in 1944, he withdrew into Germany; he sought refuge in the work-rooms of my friend Professor Schaade. It was that friend who slowly entered the room, while quoting touching sentences from Lermontov's *Ismail Bey*: "Allow me to still run my black mane horse on these Bozkir; allow me to take a look at this life and freedom a little closer. In my heart regarded dead, signs of inspiration are beginning; that inspiration is turning the ruins of gloom, trouble and love into a field of poetry." He was now embracing me tightly and pressing his thick mustachio onto my cheeks kissing me with respect and love. My friends in this village who just discovered my escape from jail to the mountains wanted me to stay for a long time. I told them that I needed to be in Kostanay on 15 May. We enjoyed such sweet and beautiful talks. According to our decisions, Tagan was to start organizing a guerilla unit here. However, he already had! I was told to go on to the Kostanay meeting without delay, the next day. On the return, you can stay here as long as you would like. In the morning, while I was leaving with Musa Kelim's horses and carriage, I was told: "be careful; on your way is Minhac; do not stop at his village. Reportedly he is boasting 'I will kill Zeki with this pistol.' Take a pistol with you." I was thus given a very good pistol of Musa Kelim. This Minhac was a wealthy villager who earlier served the Tsar in an administrative capacity as a soldier. He was in agreement with the group of Kurbanaliev and the Monarchist Russians and became a frightful life deadening opponent of the Baskurt autonomy movement. He participated in our last year's congress as an opponent of autonomy. Now he joined the Reds, invited aggressive Russian village Communists to his village and wanted to ambush and kill Alimcan Tagan with them, to destroy the Canton administration of the Autonomy Government. Alimcan heard that piece of intelligence, and prepared for the anticipated attack with his brother Semseddin, the official in charge of telegraph, by fortifying a corner of their house with brick and rendering that place as a strong point. When the attack came suddenly, he defended his wife and children using that strong

point, wounding several of the attackers and forcing them to withdraw. Because of all that, I was told we were going to Troytskiy via a complex series of routes, away from the village where Minhac lived.

## *The Kostanay meeting—*

Apparently, Talha did not get on the road immediately. I stayed there for two days, and he was still not present. I told Tagan that if Talha arrived today or tomorrow, send him after me. If he does not arrive tomorrow, let him wait for me here. I stated that I wanted him to meet with the Kazaks in Kostanay, since he was going to be our and the Kazak representative to the Japanese Mission. At Trotski, I arrived in the home of Tungevur Baskurt, Muhammed Halife. He was a spiritual descendent of Seyh Zenullah. When I was a little boy, my father and I stayed at his house visiting this town. Looking at my clothes, he thought of me a Baskurt of his own lands. He informed me that I would be staying in the guest room in the servants' quarters in the garden. A short while later he returned, when we talked, he understood who I was, and became scared. He informed me that Russian handbills were printed announcing that I must be apprehended and killed, and advised me to seek a certain other caliph of another Seyh, because "a lot of Commissars and such were visiting him, therefore I could not stay there." But, it was apparent that he was sending me away in sorrow. In response, I wrote the poems from our *Dede Korkut* Dastan, from the mouth of Tulek, a very scared bozkir Don Quixote, on his writing desk. A short while later he arrived in the home of the other caliph where I was, and apologized once again. My friend, and later a member of the Baskurt Government Member, and our representative in Moscow, Mollacan Xalikoglu found me in the home of that caliph. We were going to journey to Kostanay together. He was sent word ahead of time. He was of Tatar origin, but became a central load-bearing column of Baskurt autonomy movement. After we escaped our lands in 1923, he remained on our lands and endured much from the Soviets, and finally was executed in 1937. I also personally read the announcement printed by the Orenburg Governorate, pasted on walls that "I jumped over the dead body of Zwilling, and escaped from prison, therefore I must be killed." Despite that, since I believed I would not be recognized in this outfit I was then wearing, we journeyed with Mollacan, but in different cars of the train, to Kostanay. We stayed at the home of my friend, author Abdullah Ismeti's family. Two individuals from among the Kazaks had already arrived, a day earlier than us. We completed our talks in one day. The decisions made concerned the methods of letting the Japanese and the outside world know of our plight. The Kazaks, meaning the Alas-Orda government was going to contact with the outside world via Golca and Cugecek, and we would send a man to Japan. We also agreed on the details of the guerilla warfare in the direction of Tashkent and Ferghana. This Kostanay meeting was decided during the first hour of our escape from prison, speaking with an individual arriving from Tashkent, within a few minutes. Men were sent from Ufa and Semipalat as well as

from Orenburg. And, they, too arrived in Kostanay just in time. When the ideas and aims are the same, then there is no need to discuss the matters at length. After our agreements, we immediately left for Troitskiy. Mollacan remained in Troitskiy. I went to Yalan Canton, with the horses of still waiting for me at Troitskiy. We passed the dangerous places at night. This time, we arrived at the home of Alimcan Tagan at the Tanriqul town, which was the seat of the Canton. Talha Resulov was also there. Musa Kelim met us there as well. We gave the documents, gold and paper money to Talha and sent him that day, or the day after to the Cumlek railroad station. We charged him with the duty of contacting the Japanese representatives at Vladivostok; if that did not bring a result, for him to cross to Japan and let the world know of the plight of the Eastern Moslems in Russia.

### *The uprising of the Czechoslovakian Legions, and the re-establishment of the Baskurt Government—*

That night, on 27 May, a great event took place. The Czechoslovakian Legions revolted against the Soviets in Ciliabinsk, and took over the railroad between that city and Omsk in one night. These were the armies who left the Austrian side and joined the Russians during the World War. They were going to return to their homeland with their arms. The Tsarist Government had placed them in the direction of the Ural Mountains and in Siberia, on the railroads and military trains. After the Bolshevik Revolution, when the Germans came to terms with the Russians over of their homelands, they had become the enemy of the Russians, and revolted against the Russians. That news reached us from Ciliabinsk, as well as by Talha who returned from the Cumlek Railroad Station. That meant the removal of the Soviet danger for us. Because of that we thought we would join them with our guerilla units, form our own army, and expel the Bolsheviks from our lands. Since we believed that result, it became a day of celebrations. We celebrated the event that night. The Tagan family had a skilled quray player, they brought him. There was mead and kimiz. Talha and Musa Kelim and Alimcan Tagan were masters of the Baskurt national dances; they rose and danced continually. I was not far behind; I did not leave my turn to anyone else. After this “scene des quatre derviches tournons,” which lasted several hours, we slept a little. In the morning, I left for Ciliabinsk. We ordered Talha to continue on his journey. Doctor Tagan was going to organize his guerilla unit for three days and join me in Ciliabinsk. I ran on horseback, changing our horses at the Miser village of Atciter, with those of my friends’ horses, traversed a distance of one hundred twenty five kilometers in one day. I reached the Headquarters of the Czechoslovakian Legions on the morning of 29 May at the Ciliabinsk Railroad Station.

If one looks at the map, it will become apparent that all the travels I undertook from 4 April to that day, from Orenburg to Ufa; later to the mountains, and then here, adds up to two thousand kilometers. Of that total, only five hundred kilometers was in a train, the remainder on horseback. But the bother of the trips were not even felt. All these events took place during a very short period of time. During the time of the big revolutions, we constituted two or three guerilla organizations. We held the Ufa and Kostanay Congresses; now, we were joining the Czechoslovakian uprising. At Ciliabinsk, the Czechoslovakian Headquarters was constituted only of several train cars. It was encircled with trains full of troops. I entered into the presence of the Legion Chief and the head of the movement, Bogdan Paylo. I introduced myself as a member of the Baskurt Government, escaped from the Bolsheviks in Orenburg. Even though I was wearing a strange village outfit, and sporting a beard, he believed me without hesitation. A little later, his friends, Dr. Pateydel and Dr. Hirs arrived. Bogdan Pavlo introduced me; they were members of the revolutionary council. I also introduced myself to them, and indicated we were prepared to establish a Baskurt Army, and that we possessed guerilla organizations in Burcen, Turgevir, Katay and Yalan Cantons. I asked for ammunition. They told me that they would provide all our necessities, and allocate a house in the city center to be used as our governmental quarters. I was amazed that they believed me without hesitation, and even allocating a house. But, seven years after that day, when I visited the independent Czechoslovakian State, I found Dr. Pateydel as the Head of the Parliament, and Bogdan Pavlo as a Member of the Parliament and Minister of Internal Affairs. We were their guests. It transpired that they had joined the Czechoslovakian national socialists even before the First World War of 1914. At that time, I asked them how it was that they had shown me trust, and treated me as if they have known me from earlier times at the 1918 Ciliabinsk Train Station. Dr. Pateydel indicated: “a few hours before your arrival, A Baskurt came to see us, and stated ‘our Chief Validov has escaped from prison; now he is constitution guerilla organizations in the mountains; he will come and find you.’ A short while later, you arrived; a person speaking the Russian of the enlightened and wearing the outfit of an escapee was of course going to be Validov. Because of that, we did not hesitate.” Bogdan Pavlo added: “His bright eyes, decisive and self-confident movements did not leave any doubt that he was Validov.”

I took my leave, and in the company of a Czechoslovakian officer went to see the house allocated to us; I took possession of the keys. By sending telegrams, calling on the phone and via horse-mounted messengers we collected the spread-out friends. We began mobilization preparations with Captain Tagan, Lieutenant Arif Muhammedyarov, who joined us at the night of the second day; and with the aid of the Polish Moslem, who recently passed away in Ankara, Ismail Muhliya, and the Tatar Osman Terigulov named officers. On 1 June, we had printed the partial mobilization orders, and sent them to the Baskurt townships in the Ciliabinsk Province, in the name of the Baskurt Government. Volunteers began arriving from everywhere. We armed all, and with the permission of the Russian Army General Xanjinin, we obtained an ammunition depot.

## *Death of Minhac—*

About this time, another event took place. While attacking the Yalan Canton Administration building in collaboration with the Reds, the Monarchist Minhac was killed in the ensuing firefight. They brought me the pistol he was going to use to kill me. Two individuals from Togan's guerilla unit, a young officer by the name of Arif Muhammedyar, and the Trooper Haris Sisenbayoglu, shouldered their rifles, mounted their horses and began riding to defend the Yalan Canton Center at Tenriqul, when they heard of the attack. On the way, the Baskurts of a village informed them that Minhac and a Red soldier were in a carriage, attempting to escape toward the Cumlek railroad station, and it is possible to catch them on the way. Those two informed other members of their unit and chased after Minhac, who responded by pistol and rifle fire. But, one of the horses pulling the carriage got hit. Minhac and the Red soldier took refuge behind a wall, and continued to fire on these two soldiers. In the ensuing firefight, he and his Red companion were killed. This Minhac became one of the sacrifices from within our nation on the way toward our autonomy. Perhaps the Kurbanaliev faction heard of this incident, believing the Baskurt Government was not a joke, therefore immediately stopped their negative efforts to sabotage the mobilization orders. Lame and old, Ubeydullah Isan and Kurbanaliev himself brought kimiz in leather containers, with additional gifts, found me and apologized. He stated that he would also give his officer son to my command. Minhac's death thus closed the doors onto any other internal response against our efforts. Some of this enmity was based on the animosity between Cardakli Abdulhakim Hazret, who was an ancestor of the Kurbanogullari, and Seyh Zeynullah of Trotsk. Abdulhakim Hazret was subject to Isterlibas Isans on my ancestral side. Both groups had many followers. The Russians could have used all that; but the Minhac event stopped all that even before starting.

## *Re-formation of the Baskurdistan Government and our national army—*

We announced the re-formation of national Baskurt government with an edict to our people on 7 June. But, we had no money to hand, or buildings for other departments. All members of the Government wore military uniforms. The aforementioned ammunition dump was the seat of the Government. In the rooms we set aside for sleeping quarters, there were no bedsteads, bedding; the office rooms did not contain desks, chairs. The members of the government were sleeping on the floor, wrapped in our great-coats, without taking-off our boots. The documents of each governmental department were kept in separate wooden boxes. However, none of that affected our positive attitude. But, I will relate an extraordinary event.

## *Niyaz Maksudov—*

Velid Ahund Maksudoglu, the owner of a medrese in the village of Kirmiskali along the River Ak Edil, had a son by the name of Niyaz. This son went to Türkiye and studied at the Beirut American College. He was related to me from my maternal grandmother's side. He had learned English, advanced his knowledge of Arabic, entered the American cultural circles, and he was very happy about all this. He always wrote that in his letters. All that also gave me the idea that I should do likewise, go to Beirut and enter the American College. However, after lengthy thinking, I decided to stay in Russia to complete my education. Niyaz Maksudi returned to Russia when the Revolution took place. We had met at Troysk, immediately prior to the Czechoslovak uprising. I gave him information on our activities, and our work toward establishing a Moslem state in the Ural Mountains and in Kazakistan. Since he knew English, I asked him to work with us as an educated person who knew the world. Now, on 5 June, he was in Ciliabinsk, to journey to Omsk with the aid of the American Delegation in Siberia. I now repeated my offer to him that I had made earlier at Trotsk. He took one look at our quarters and humble office boxes. He stated: "I do not know anything about all this business; I am on my way to America." He left with his wife, on his way to Eastern Siberia. He was a doorkeeper in New York for years, and later served as an Imam. Finally, the Americans sent him to Munich, as an adviser to the Institute for Learning Russia, which the Americans had established in Munich during 1954. In a letter he wrote to his fellow and friend, Ahmet Emir Han, there were some statements about us: "They did not even have beds, they were eating by sitting on the floor. After I left Ciliabinsk, I learned that Velidi and his friends were succeeding, wanted to return to Ciliabinsk. But the Americans did not at all wish to help the Moslems organize in the Russian East. An officer of Velidi found me in Omsk and repeated their invitation. I did not go. I did not believe anything would come of the Russian Moslems. This is a matter of faith; I do not have any. Perhaps the majority of Tatars were just like that." Later on, when I arrived in Munich, we had talks at length. He always mingled with the White Russians. He asked me to call him Maksudov, instead of Maksudi. He was knowledgeable. When I visited America in 1957, I met his family, and observing that he had not given his offspring a notion of homeland, I was happy I did not go to Beirut.

## *The first Regiments—*

What we accomplished by faith, in our poor conditions, was boosting the morale of my colleagues. Everybody was working around the clock. A little later, we organized all the Governmental and military offices. We immediately began the task of collecting taxes. The partial mobilization was completely successful. At that time, we had called in only two birthdates from two ulus (volost). All of them, without exception reported in. Secret Bolshevik agents were exerting extra efforts to propagandize among our



soldiers. In return, our soldiers were killing those agents whenever they caught them. Because of that, the Communist Russians stayed away from Baskurt Military barracks.

We did not have sufficient number of officers. We added a few Russian Officers into the Baskurt Army. We began organizing the Second Infantry Division. Some skeptics, stated: “You do not even have a single battalion. You should have been content to establish one Regiment total, but you are making plans for a Division.” I responded with: “Not only one Division; but two Divisions; plus two brigades and independent technical detachments as well.” All those were realized in short order. We also had higher ranking Officers as well. However, they were left in Western Baskurdistan, under the rule of the Soviets. Alimcan Tagan and Terigulov were busy establishing the Third Baskurt Infantry Regiment in the region of Zlataust. We did not have any other ammunition than what the Czechoslovaks gave us. We inducted the mobilized youths in the formation of the Second Infantry Regiment. Emir Karamis and Musa Murtazin had the task of organizing the First Infantry Regiment at the Tamyran Canton. We appointed Haris Toymakayev, a Tatar Officer from Southern Baskurdistan, as the Commander of the Second Infantry Regiment. We summoned the Baskurdistan Government Members who were hiding from the Soviets; many arrived. We established the National Government. Seyyit Miras was the temporary head of government’ Abdullah Edhem, Abdulkhak Abidov, Seyit Giray Magazov, Mollacan Halikov and I became members of the government. I took upon myself the duty of War Ministry. I appointed the aforementioned Arif Muhammediyarov as my aide-de-camp. In July, we began the establishment of a militia [police], under the command of Baskurt officer Ahmet Biyisev. This militia organization was to shadow the Bolshevik units, and also act as the police force. This organization performed its assigned tasks successfully. They dismantled the secret cells left behind everywhere by the Soviets.

## *Military Movements—*

It had not yet been a week since we began forming the Regiment. We sent two battalions to Argayas Canton, on the line with Yekaterinburg, to help the Czechoslovaks. The day after we received the first action reports of these units, I got into a car driven by a Czechoslovak officer, along with Seyit Giray Magazov, and went to the front. Very hot shooting war was taking place at a location known as Kuyes. This was eight kilometers away from the village of my friend Abdulkadir Inan. I and Seyit Giray, grabbed a rifle each, and participated in the fighting. Finally, the Bolsheviks withdrew toward Yekaterineburg, to Tubuk railroad station. Our units collected important amount of weapons and ammunition. Some of the withdrawing units apparently thought that they could hide in the reeds surrounding the lake near Kuyes, and continue fighting until sunset. But, none of them could survive; they all died. Stories of comradeship between the Czechoslovaks and the Baskurts fighting together were written beautifully by the Czechoslovak officer Josef Urba, and published in the official newspaper of the Czechoslovak Legion, *Narodni Osvobozeni* in installments. In 1929, when I visited

Praha, those installments were read and translated for me. This battle at Kuyes began a new life for me, the military life.

After that fighting, an extreme Red by the name of Maxim was found dead. Apparently he was a blood-thirsty person. He had invaded the homes of Baskurts, and plundered them. When I was notified of his death, I ordered a squad of troops to his village and protect his home. Next morning, we searched his house and found the material belongings he plundered. There were many furs, rugs, gold and silver engraved saddles and reins, amulets decorated with jewels, belts, gold and silver jewelry belonging to Baskurt women. I called in the housekeepers of the neighboring villages, had them take possession of these looted materials, ordered them to be returned to their legal owners. When the villagers discovered that, they were very happy. I was happy as well. Because, with this act, we sincerely believed that we were beginning to retrieve what belonged to us that were looted by the Russians since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. I did not know at the time that, in a few years, all the property and lands of our people were going to be taken away through kolkhozes and the Virgin Lands Program.

I learned the Russia-wide importance of the fighting we did in Kuyes, from one of the Communist Magnates, Preobrajenskiy in 1920. He was the primary executioner of the Tsar Nikolay. He informed me that: “The execution of Nikolay during those very days was caused by the Czechoslovak and the Baskurt units moving toward Yekaterinburg.” In actuality, Yekaterinburg was ninety kilometers away from us during that fighting period. Czechoslovaks wanted to move toward that city. We were not planning to send our units there, but the Reds thought we were. Apparently, according to what Preobrajenskiy told me, when the Czechoslovaks joined with the Baskurts and began to move for the liberation of Yekaterinburg, the Reds decided to immediately close the book on the Tsar who was in Jail in Yekaterinburg. From the Kuyes fighting, I returned to Ciliabinsk. On 1 July, Czechoslovaks and the Baskurts very badly routed the Reds at the Turgayak railroad station. I and Captain Tagan arrived there during the night. We gained a large quantity of ammunition. We allocated that lot to the First and the Third Infantry Regiments being formed.

## *Fighting with the Kasirins—*

About that time, two Orenburg Cossacks, bothers Nikolay and Ivan Kasirin gained notoriety as Reds. They were going to ignore the uprising of the Czechoslovaks, Nikolay would keep the Orenburg branch of their business and Ivan would handle the Verxneuralsk and Edilbasi (Beloretsk), all their iron mines and other mineral factories; if they were to be pressed, they would escape to Taskent via Kazakistan to join the Reds there. When Zlataust was rid of the Reds, I sent Alimcan Tagan, Abdullah Gambarov and Osman Terigulov there to constitute the third Regiment on 8 July. A little later, I joined them. Ivan Kasirin and Bluxer, when they realized the Baskurts were very seriously joining that movement, they concentrated all the Red units at Edilbasi. But our officer Emir Karamis began gathering all guerilla units in

that region and forming the First Infantry and Second Cavalry Regiments, and further they heard the formation of guerilla units in Kazakistan, they abandoned the idea of withdrawing to Tashkent. They moved west toward Sterlitamak and established their headquarters in the Makar village, seven kilometers from the village where I was born. They were committing extreme atrocities in the Southern Ural Baskurt villages, including breaking the beehives and using the honey to grease their cartwheel axles. When they noticed that the Baskurt were collaborating with the anti-Soviet Cossacks, their atrocities increased.

When the Kasirins left their factory in Edilbasi, our officers redoubled their efforts to establish the First Infantry and Second Cavalry Regiments. On 3 July, I left the Miyas Railroad Station toward Edilbasi in a truck. Emir had settled in a two story house. That night, there was a meeting at the lover floor. A noise emanated from the upper floor of the building next to us. We ascended there. It turned out that the Chief of the anti-Soviet Cossacks, Annikov sent his officers in trucks to take possession of the ammunition left behind by the Reds at Sermen village. Both of the officers were drunk; they had jumped from the top of their truck directly into the room where I was going to sleep, through the open window. Our Troopers of the Guard Company, who were present at the upper floor of the house, thought they were Red Soldiers; so, the drunken officers were caught, disarmed, beaten and jailed in a dark room. Emir Karamis was going to let them go in the morning. Before doing so, he sent a cavalry unit ahead, in order to stop them. In that manner, he obtained the ammunition they were carrying with skill. And the cavalry unit sent ahead behaved just like the Reds, and freed the Cossacks. That matter was handled so beautifully, the said officer still believed, several months later, it was the Reds who took away the ammunition. In similar ways, our units obtained large amounts of weapons from the Reds chucked out of Miyas, Belorets, Uzen, Kagi and Evjen mines. Those weapons outfitted our Regiments that were far away from the railroad. The formation of the First Cavalry Regiment was completed very speedily, in the Tamyas Katay and Burcen Cantons, due to the heavy excitement of the populace. Of one the commanders of that Regiment, Ismail Seripov, in his memoirs to be referenced below, stated: “everywhere, Baskurts aged 18 to 60 wanted to register themselves for the Regiments, in tears.”

That was true. Lieutenant Musa Murtazin was a member of the Tamyas uruk and he was assigned the task of constituting that Regiment. Later, he was promoted to Colonel, and was assigned the Command of a Division. In 1920, he was the President of the Baskurdistan. He completed the Red Staff and Command Course. Along the way, he wrote the history of the Baskurt army and published it in 1926. Later, the Bolsheviks executed him. Murtazin provided a detailed description of the constitution of the First Regiment.

About that time, I arrived in Tungevir to visit a guerilla unit that had not yet joined the Regiment, accompanied by a company of cavalry. I had sent a letter to my future father-in-law, Haci Mehmet Molla Yaqsimbetoglu, asked him if he could bring his family and my fiancée Nefise, to the West of Abcelil village, where our military unit would be crossing on the way to our mission objective. He sent word with a man

to the Sigay village where I was, informing me that Abcelil was occupied by the Red Cossacks, therefore they could not. In order to express my sorrow in not being able to see her, I sent Nefise a partial poem written by one of our old poets: “I was happy because I was going to see you, and I was leaving behind sorrow and longing slowly; When the breeze brought a little of flower fragrance, now all I could do is to scream like a nightingale.” I was able to visit Abcelil, in order to get married, only a year later. I left Sigay village, accompanied by the Cavalry Company toward Celiabinsk. We did not stop at Ahun village, because the Tatar residents there were against Baskurdistan Autonomy and they sided with the Red Russians in Verxne Ural, fearing we might cause them harm. But the Tatars of Imangul gave us a magnificent welcome when they heard our arrival. From the neighboring villages, and even from the Tatars of the Ahun village, a lot of visitors also showed-up for the occasion. The cheering at that event indicated the love of independence of our people was very fresh. From there, we reached the Kozak-Baskurts at the region of Cubarkol. Since they had joined the Orenburg Cossack military units, we thought they might also have Kasirinists among them. They informed us that, if necessary, their units could join the Baskurt Army, treating us well. In that manner, we returned to Celiabinsk, some two hundred kilometers from Sigay, excited from the cheers we received in the villages, in two-and-a-half days. Husameddin of Cubarkol Baskurts could not finish telling of those days, when he was in his nineties in Istanbul. Those weapons gained at the Turgayak railroad station were used to form the Third Infantry Regiment at Zlataust; the munitions gained at Tamyas Katay, from Kasirin, was due to the ingenuity of Emir Karamis, who was instrumental in the formation of the First Infantry Regiment. Kasirins fleeing to the West, and the Tepter Ucali Tatars, as well as the Cubarkul Baskurt Cossacks joining us, gained us the entire Eastern Baskurt lands in two weeks. All these were completed with the selflessness and mastery of our officers Tagan, Karamis, Murtazin and Ismail Seripov. I had all that information printed as a declaration, and had it distributed to Western Baskurts, who were under the administration of the Soviets. That declaration, in the language of the old, was known as Fetihname (declaration of conquest).

Two or three days after our return to Celiabinsk, representatives from Tungatar Baskurts arrived to inform us that Kasirins were fleeing to the West in fear. Those arriving also brought me tiriz, an envelope made from the bark of beach-tree, containing dried fruit pulp of strawberry known as Qaq. Inside it, there were the words to a song, wrapped in a cloth: “beautiful girl is collecting strawberries; carrying her basket on her writs; making fruit pulp from those strawberries; to present them to her friend.”

## *Our contacts with the Western Siberia and Alas Orda governments—*

On 2 July, one of our officers and member of the government, Abdulhak Abidov was sent to see Colonel Grisin Almazov, President of the Western Siberian Democratic Government at Omsk. We requested ammunition, money and other details for the

infantry and cavalry regiments we were forming. Soviets published the letters I wrote to Grisin Almazov. In those, concerning the administration style, I stated: “the administration of Baskurdistan will be democratic; except, without committees.” The intent was centralized democracy, without extended debates. What we wanted was, in the parlance of our current day, “guided democracy.” The Soviet historians, while publishing my letters in the *Red Archive*, thought I meant ‘without Soviets.’ A few days later, I also arrived in Omsk, in the company of another member of our government, Seyit Giray Magazov. On the way, the bombs and weapons hidden in the Second Class carriage exploded. We disembarked, walked away and watched the spectacle. A train sent from Omsk collected us. We met with Grisin Almozon that very day; he accepted all of our requests, provided we accept the strategic primacy of the Siberian Government Command. The General was happy with my efforts in establishing an army during the past month, and issued an edict describing and appreciating all that. He also wanted to confer the rank of Colonel on to me by the Western Siberia Government. I declined specifying that since I was not educated in a military institution and have not earned that rank. My friend Seyid Giray magaz insisted much that I accept. He would be travelling to Semipalatisnk, to Kazakhstan’s national government Alas-Orda and participate in the during 18-21 July conference we originally proposed. We wrote the conference agenda, and prepared the draft of the treaty to be signed in Omsk. When he reached Alas-Orda, Alihan Bukeyhan and Khokand Autonomous Turkistan Government’s former President Muhammedcan Tinisbaev were already gathered. This was the first Congress between Alas-Orda, Khokand Autonomous Republic and Baskurdistan. In our joint discussion we dealt with the issues pertaining to the Germans who occupied Ukraine, who wanted to contact the Kazak Leadership, but we were not to get close to them. Instead, we suggested contacting the representatives of the Japanese Missions in Siberia and Golca, who were allies of the Russians, and to leave our national struggle within Russian borders. These ideas were also accepted by the Alas-Orda. Two years later (in 1920), our two item agreement with the Alas-Orda fell into the hands of the Soviets, among the documents of Muhammedcan Tungacin, an intellectual of the Astrakhan Kazaks. The fact that we left our national struggle within the Russian borders was met with approval by the Soviets, meaning the Soviets were also true Russian Nationalists just like the Tsarist Russian officials, a fact told me personally by Cicerin. Seyid Giray Magaz, who knew how to write very beautiful poems in the Kazak dialect, received much respect in the center of the Kazakhstan; in the newspaper Alas-Orda, he published a poem honoring me and the activities of the Baskurts, praising us. He brought with him the agreement written in Turkish, and signed, to Celiabinks with him.

## *Our relocation to Orenburg and the cleaning of Southern Urals from the Reds—*

The Reds were forced to evacuate Ufa on 6 July and Orenburg on 8 July. The latter city was in the hands of the Cossack Ataman Dutov. The Baskurdistan Government and the military units of the Baskurts originally established in Celiabinks immediately transferred to Orenburg by train. We settled in the Caravansaray, which was the property of the Baskurts in the old days, and the surrounding gardens. Seyitazim Kidirbayev was the Kazakhstan Government representative in the Western regions. Thus, there were three governments in Orenburg: the Government of the Cossacks; Baskurdistan Government and the Representative of the Western Kazaks. The administration of the Orenburg city was in the hands of the Cossacs. We immediately established civil administrative apparatus everywhere in Baskurdistan. We opened a Military Academy. While we were moving to Orenburg, we let intellectuals Fethulkadir Suleyman and Taki Ismeti to lead the education and publication administration matters in Celiabinsk. Fethulkadir is my friend Professor Abdulkadir Inan, who is now living in Ankara. He was then the Chief writer of the newspaper *Baskurt* being published there. That newspaper continued to be published even after we left. We established contact with the Russian Founding Parliament (Komuc) in Samara. We divided our regiments we brought from Celiabinsk into three: One portion went to Aktube, which was still in the hands of the Reds; the other two were sent to Orsk front and the third, for cleaning of the Southern Urals. They liquidated the Kasirins. The First Infantry and the Second Cavalry regiments were ordered to Orenburg by land route. They liquidated the Reds in the Ural Russian factories and townships.

## *Our meeting the Kasirins once again—*

While Bluxer and Ivan Kasirin were in Makar, near my village of Kuzen, Nikolay, who had escaped from Orenburg, arrived there as well. On 8 July, there were serious battles near my village and Makar. Makar was the village of Emir Karamis. He, his brothers and my relative Bayishev commanded the Baskurt military units fighting the Kasirins. In the Russian village of Petrovsk, five kilometers from my village, there was heavy fighting during 11-12 August. I travelled on the evening of 9 August by car, accompanied by three body-guards, from Orenburg, arrived in Meleviz; from there, using the horses brought from the Second regiment I arrived in my village and participated in the battles. Reds were escaping. I and one of our officers detached ourselves from our military units, watched the pitiful escape of the Kasirins through the bridge on Gigen River, through our binoculars from a place known as Yukeli. We did not fire on them, because they would have returned fire. Later, our Troopers also caught up with us. The Kasirins escaped leaving a majority of their ammunition on that bridge on horseback and on foot. Two years



afterward, when we established peace with the Reds and arrived in Moscow, I saw Nikolay Kasirin. Even though we fought him that much, I discovered he was not a bad person. When I told him my observing his escape from Gigen, he listened to me calmly. The defeated Reds were escaping to Krasnoufinsk and Perm in the Urals. They were leaving their baggage behind, and our units were chasing them closely, causing them casualties. Especially Bayisev and his friends cut off their rear-guard at the Cilim and Sim Rivers. Between 15-18 August, Alimcan Tagan and Abdullah Gambarov, with the Third Baskurt Regiment, caught them at the Iglino railroad station, and after three days of fighting, decimated them. However, the Bolsheviks later related their defeat, in their *War of Citizens in the Urals* as if it was their victory against the Third Baskurt Regiment.

### *Death of Emir Karamis—*

Emir Karamis, who was so instrumental in cleaning out the Reds from the Urals, commanding the Second Baskurt Regiment, fell during that battle. This was a huge loss for our army. Because of that loss, the poets in Baskurdistan wrote many a dirge. Among them, Seyhzade Babic wrote: “What happened to us today, why our emotions are upset; a huge brave has died; who is that brave man? He was Emir.” From the Baskurt soldiers who became prisoners to the Germans in 1943, I learned that that dirge was still being repeated among the people. Emir was a few years younger than I. But I knew him from a very young age, because his father was a friend of my father. Baskurdistan Government assigned his brother Gerey Karamisev to construct a suitable grave-site for him.

### *Baskurdistan and the Samara Government—*

Ismail Seripov, a battalion commander during the cleaning of the Southern Urals, arrived in Istanbul in 1921 as a member of the Vrangel Army. In 1924, he prepared a comprehensive report on the Baskurt Army’s activities against the Reds, their history, replete with maps and plans, and presented it to Recep Peker who was the Minister of Defense in Ankara. I was only able to read that much later. It was an excellent work. We were not on very good terms with Dutov, who was on the side of the Tsar. He was acting against us with the recidivist Russian generals, especially acting in unison with General Xanjin who was not happy with us. We were collaborating with the Socialists he did not like, especially with the Samara Founding Assembly Government (Komuc). Dutov did not recognize this Samara Government as the true Russian Government, which was constituted mainly by the SRs. On the other hand we regarded them as such. Samara Government was providing us with money for feeding our army, ad ammunition. They even channeled through us what they

were providing to the Kazakistan Government’s military, through the Baskurdistan Military Council. I was the head of that organization. Ataman Tolstov, the Chief of the Ural Cossacks, and especially Ataman Kargin was with us; meaning, they were supporting the Samara Government. When that government was established, the friendship telegrams we sent each other, mine and Ataman Tolstov’s with the Samara Government War Minister General Galkin were published by the Soviets. In return, we sent our member of Government Mollacan Halikov as our representative to Samara.

### *Organizational Matters in Orenburg—*

As soon as we arrived in Orenburg, we immersed ourselves into organizational matters. These were the domain of Governmental Head attorney Yunus Bekbov and Professor Kolayev. The Third Baskurt General Convention meeting in December 1917 had elected a pre-parliament made-up of twenty-two individuals. We were finally able to convene them in Orenburg. They issued decisions especially on legal, agriculture, and forest departmental matters. Our business was being conducted with such mutual trust; there was no need for me to walk over to the Pre-parliament building to participate. I was undertaking internal affairs and military matters. I was told: “you work; we will undertake whatever is left-over.” It was a cordial, very cordial trust.

Members of the Turkistan National Government, established In Khokand but dispersed by the Soviets in February, Ubeydullah Hocayev; Poet Abdulhamid Suleyman (Colpan); Abdulhamid Arifov, who later was appointed War Minister in Bukhara; and a Taskent intellectual named Mir Muhsin; several Khivans and Bukharans were with me as well. Abdulhamid Arifov worked at the External Affairs; Abdulhamid Suleyman was my secretary.

The first organization we established successfully, in connection with the Samara government, Ural Cossacs, and Kazakistan was an intelligence organization. The centers of operation for that organization was Uralsk (Teke), Xan-Orda in Astrakhan; Guriyev (Uysuk); Omsk in Western Siberia; under the Soviet administration, Orsk, Aktube and Tashkent where we had representatives. It was established very speedily. Arifov was the Director.

From among our national poets, Seyid Giray Magaz; Seyhzade Babic; Ozbek poet Abdulhamid Suleyman; young author from among the Kazaks Berimcan and an intellectual Kazak girl established brances in those cities, and provided extremely valuable information to Orenburg. The activities of the Kazak girl and poet Seyhzade Babic’s activities are interesting enough to fill novels. For example, Djangeldin, who was sent to establish the Soviet government in Kazakistan completely believed that girl and told all the inside Moscow information to her. Ali Ahmet Umitbayev, whose father was a Baskurt historian (1841-1907), was sent to Baku to collect information from Azerbaijan and activities of Türkiye there via Guryev-Petrovsk; a friend of his was sent to Turkmenistan. Through those vehicles, we learned of the SR uprising in Turkmenistan

on 11 July in Askabad; the embarkation of British soldiers in Turkmenistan and Baku; and even the arrival of some British troops in Fort Alexandrovski. We also knew of the Turkish Army entering Azerbaijan. We had learned of the conditions in Bukhara and Khiva, due to the organization of the Kazak girl. General Dutov's intelligence organization was very weak. Orientalist Vladimir Minorsky, who later became a Persian Professor at the University of London, left his post as the Russian Council in Iran, arrived in Orenburg via Bukhara. We spoke, but since I was non-Russian, he did not tell me anything. Except, General Dutov's Deputy, General Akulin told me everything Minorsky held back from me in great detail. News was arriving constantly from Tashkent via Kazakistan. As a summary: Orenburg was our intelligence center from Semipalatinsk in the East to Astrakhan in the West, Bukhara in the South and Omsk in the North. We were receiving good information from that region. If the Reds in Aktube rose, Tashkent would have burnt and their ashes would have flown into the skies. We had sent the War Prisoner Turkish Officer Omer Bey and Bukharan Abdulhamid Arifov and a third person to Tashkent, to the Basmachi in Ferghana, to Alas-Orda and Bukhara to establish contacts.

### *Our contacts with Bukhara and Khiva—*

At the end of July, an incident took place. Osman Hoca, who was the head of the Central Council after the Bukhara Revolution, along with Feyzullah Hoca, who was the Head of the Executive Committee of the same government, were arrested by Dutov's security officers and placed into detention in the Orenburg prison as suspected Bolshevik spies. These two told the Dutov government that they were personally known to me; and the Dutov government let me know of this a little later. I had them released from the prison and invited them to the Caravansaray. Both had commercial offices in the Moscow of old; they were young merchants and leaders in Bukhara. We obtained sufficient information from them on Bukharan affairs. Both wanted to reach Moscow, and went to Kazan which at the time was freed from the Reds. As a result of our talks with those two individuals, I decided to send Abdullah Ilyasov from Saynon, close to my village, and a couple of other individuals as a high-level delegation to Bukhara. We proposed that Bukhara soldiers could cut the rail-line between Aral Sea (Qazali) and Akmescit (Perovsk), and occupy the railway stations; if necessary, we would send our officers from Aktube front. Emir did not choose to give an audience to our delegation, had his Kusbegi (Prime Minister) speak with them. He sent word that he was loyal to whoever was in charge in Moscow, regarding that group as the legitimate government, and that he will honor the treaties he signed with the Russians, and would not participate in any uprising. Abdullah Ilyasov completed his mission skillfully and returned. The results were nothing. Meaning, the Bukharan Emir told us he was nothing. So, I wrote a letter to Mahmud Hoca Behbudi, stressing the nothingness of the Emir included a poem in Persian, the poet of which I did not know at the time: "these people, who wonder in the hands of fate, are oxen and donkeys

walking without a halter. The man who drove the donkey died; but these donkeys are still carrying their burdens on their back because of their donkeyness and ignorance." The Emir could have cut the railroad with a very small force or even by encouraging the Kazak tribes. He did not; he could not, and found his punishment two years later. Our armies were under the command of the Orenburg Cossack Colonel Makhin. He was a very valuable person, and my personal friend. If we could take Aktube, then we would have moved on to Tashkent. But, since this city received ammunition from Tashkent and Astrakhan over the Caspian Sea (meaning from Moscow) we could never conquer it. An adventurer Kazak by the name of Amangeldi Imanov, a Kazak intellectual who converted into Christianity and even served as a priest for a spell, Djangeldin, and the Chieftain of the Adak Kazak Tevbeniyaz were ensuring the arrival of munitions in Aktube. Those supplies could have been cut by the Khiva Han in an instant, if there was an open-eyed government. We sent a Baskurt intellectual Hurmetullah Idilbayev and a Tatar from Orenburg, a merchant by the name of Zakir to Khiva, asked him to keep an eye on the Ural Province.

The Western part of Kazakistan (Alas-Orda) had a different administration as Western Alas Orda. It was centered in Cimbiti. They were headed by my very close friends who shared my ideas, attorney Cihansah Dostmuhammedov and Dr. Halil Dostmuhammedov. We let them know of our initiative, and invited them to join us in this venture by sending men to Khiva. Hurmetullah did what we asked, but the Khan of Khiva was a very cowardly personality, and even though he personally spoke with the Han, there was a practical result, because, the Turkmen, under Han Juneyd, was causing unrest within the khanate. Hurmetullah used the city of Kongrat as a center, keeping in touch with the Han of Khiva at one end and Han Cuneyd at the other; did some work, but, due to the misadministration of Kihiva Han, nothing was gained. He could only send information to us. The Hurmetullah, whose name is prominent here, was studying law. He knew the Russian literature, and had read Turgenev, Belinskiy, Herzen, and Chadayev. He even had read some of the works by the German materialist Ludvig Bucher in Russian translation. Because of that, we likened him to a character in Turgenev's works, and called him Bazarov. He did not like Slavovists idealists. He had also fit himself a moral code as a result of his readings. Baskurt people had not any political contacts with the Khiva since their uprising against Peter the Terrible and his daughter Elizabeth. We contacted them, regarding that move as a national duty. Because of that, we sent our valuable intellectual Hurmetullah as a representative. The failure of that initiative did not cause us any frustration.

### *Monarchist attempts at causing mischief in the Baskurt Army—*

Among the Orenburg Cossacks, three sub-divisions appeared as extreme rightists, centralists and leftists. We were with the centrists. We Baskurts were a single united front without splinters. General Dutov and the General Xandjin in Ciliabinsk did not

like the Baskurt Government; they wanted to insert mischief amongst us. After the Baskurt army moved from Ciliabinsk to Orenburg, General Xanjin was left without a serious support. Therefore, he came to terms with Imam Abdulhay Kurbanaliyev from the Barin-Tabin uruk, a wealthy man of the Midyak village, whose name has been mentioned already. They wanted to take advantage of the fact that majority of the Baskurt units at the Tashkent front were from Argayas Canton, they sent secret aganets to them, attempting to provoke them with: “Zeki Velidi wishes to send you to Tashkent. Do not obey him. We will bring you to your own country, to Western Siberia.” In the month of August, a parade of Baskurt soldiers held at the Caravansaray gardens. Since I knew of the Kurbanaliyev propaganda among the Argayas soldiers, I ordered them to be placed at the very back. During the ceremony, when their ranks arrived at the location where I was, twenty-three of the extremists from among them attempted to attack me with their bayonets by dispersing those in front of them. Other soldiers immediately disarmed them. The soldiers of the First Infantry Regiment were about to kill those. I had them stop, had them arrested, and had the parade continue. Those arrested, told all the details in their interrogation: Abdulhay Kurbanaliyev wanted to revenge his friend Minhac who was killed by our officers in May; he wanted to take them away from the Tashkent front and transfer them to Western Siberia; he spoke with the recidivist Monarchist Orenburg Tatar Veli Molla Huseyinov, having also called on the soldiers who were from his own region of Muhammedkul; and that the sons of the prominent Tatar of Orenburg Gani Bay Huseinov knew of the plot. I forgave these twenty-three soldiers. They all served quietly and with devotion in other fronts. Later we learned that when the Soviets had heard of this event during the parade, they exaggerated the proceedings and aggrandized the happenings in their minds believing there was a mass uprising against Velidov, in favor of the Soviets. So wrote their newspapers. Just the opposite, these Argayas soldiers were the biggest enemy of the Soviets, and the Kurbanali supporters were in favor of the Tsar. After that event, I sent a letter to Ubeydullah Isan, father of Abdulhay, asking him to invite his son to fairness. He responded as he did three months ago when he arrived in Ciliabinsk that he could not have Abdulhay listen to him; and that he gave his other son to us for duty and that the second son would serve with us loyally. In truth the second son Harun served in the national Army till the end, until he fell in one of the battles. Abdulhay threw himself to the lap of Admiral Kolchak, who was our enemy, and withdrew to Far East in the retinue of Ataman Semenov, and spent the rest of his life in Japan. He became the Imam of Tokyo Islamic Community, he built a mosque and established a school, became the Director. He established a press, and published useful works in Turkish. He wrote a letter to the Commander of the Third Infantry Regiment Alimcan Tagan, who, like himself came to Japan, and later to Europe, to Hungary, for him to give me his letter, reminiscing about the old times. Probably, Abdulhay’s activities constitute the only negative aspect of the Baskurt Movement. Today, his family lives in Tokyo; one of his daughters is in America, another daughter is in Türkiye. They all grew-up studying in Russian and English. Russians took Abdulhay prisoner in Tezin, and took him to Russia. Nowhere else in our country there was another movement

similar to Kurbanali movement. The twenty-three Baskurt involved in his mischief later served with selflessness.

## *The attractive aspects of working within the National Army—*

Our relations with Kazakhstan enlarged while surrounding the city of Orsk. The attorney Azimbek Berimcanov from them came to us, and asked us to help them with the establishment of the Kazak National Army in the Turgay Province. We sent one of our Officers, Abdulhak Abidov and others. They worked very beneficially in the city of Turgay, establishing Kazak National Units. The ammunition of the Kazak units was being supplied by the Baskurt War Administration. The weapons supplied by the Samara Government for the Kazaks were being sent to us for transfer. We wanted to form a single Baskurt-Kazak Corps constituted by combining the separate Divisions. We were going to appoint General Isbulatov as the commander, one of our officers who had risen in the Tsarist Army. This general would also journey to Samara with me. My relations with the Samara Government Member Vedeniyapin were very friendly. I went to Samara several times for the purpose of obtaining military equipment. Vedeniyapin and Minister of War General Galkin were aiding us in the establishment of this Corps. I and general Isbulatov used to stay at the hotel allocated for the officers of the Samara Government.

One day, the soldiers guarding the door caught and brought the famed Kazan Tatar theatrical artist Abdullah Kariev under the charge of insulting the Baskurt soldiers. As soon as he saw me in military uniform, along with other officers, he told me: “you became a military commander, and chose the art of killing people. You are declaring mobilization. For God’s sake, give all that up; leave all that to the Russians.” He was not joking while he stated those words. Our Army Commander General Isbulatov was also present. He regarded those words as interference in his own affairs. He became very angry, and asked Abdullah Kariev, who had had not him known personally: “are you one of the Vayisovs?” Vayisovs were the group opposing the Kazan military duties. A French woman, Mme. Chantal Quelquejay published their history. Kariev responded: “no, I am not.” The General was from a mixed family of Tatars or Tatar-Baskurts, and he stated: “in that case, you are not a Vayist; you are a pacifist. Since the Kazan residents and the Cuvash have been under the administration of the Russians for centuries, they regard military affairs as the business of the Russians. Because of that, our majority is against the establishment of a National Army and landed autonomy; they regard religion and education as their primary focus. If we had inducted you into the service of the army, I would have you thrown into jail, since you have the same constitution to conduct propaganda for that purpose.” I added, addressing Kariev: “do not repeat such mindless words; you are free to go.” After Kariev left, the General addressed me: “it is very appropriate for us to begin forming a Corps from



the Baskurt and Kazak tribes who have not lost their military bearing. They do not possess separatist ideas.” A month after that incident, in Ufa, when the Russian State Council met, and Colonel Biglov and other Tatar officers opposed the formation of a National Corps, General Isbulatov stated: “this is what I meant at Samara. Among the Kazan residents, this duality exists even where there ought not be any opposition to the principle. They regard us as fools.” The Baskurt National Autonomy was in reality the joint business of the Baskurts and the Tatars. Tatars were joining the Army according to their proportion and willingly. So did the educational and administrative personnel. Among them a minority were opposing, as pacifists, just like Abdulla Kariev, stating that administration, economics is now the business of the Russians. But that was sufficient for the Tatars who claimed there was no unity in looking to the future.

I was still a bachelor. The military affairs were attracting me. I was living in the quarters allocated to the soldiers in the Caravansaray. It seemed to me, I was going to spend the rest of my life as a soldier. Our Troopers liked me. I had constituted the Guard Battalion from the offspring of the Baskurt families and friends I knew. Their Commander was Abdurresit Bekbayev. He was a Miser from the Xavalin region. His wife was from Litva Tatars. She could not join her husband in Baskurdistan. He had a handsome son, studying in high school. In exile, during 1929, when I arrived in Vilnius, I met his wife and their son. She showed me the letters in Russian her husband wrote, elucidating the Baskurt Army. Tears began filling my eyes when I read, in general how closely the Baskurt soldiers were devoted to me. I learned more of our military from the memoirs of Ismail Serif, and Bekbayev, and the excitement presented by Demidov, the Deputy to the Commander of First Infantry Regiment Russian Colonel Yemelyanov; also from the Cossack General Akilin, a prominent Cossack, what he wrote after the Soviets dispersed the Orenburg Cossack forces and the Baskurt Army. General Akulin was General Dutov’s Deputy. In 1919, when the Orenburg Cossacks were dispersed, Dutov withdrew to the Chinese border, to Xingjiang [Uyghur], whereas Akulin withdrew to the West, with his Ural-Cossacks to Ukraine. Akulin, in his history of fighting between the Orenburg Cossacks against the Soviets, published during 1947 in Shanghai, and in the émigré Cossack journals, he spoke highly of us. He stated: “among the Orenburg Cossacks the propaganda about not fighting outside one’s borders influenced their thinking. Among the Baskurts, if such propaganda was undertaken among them, there was no discernible result to that end. In general the Baskurts proved they were good soldiers. Despite the revolutions, they were able to maintain their traditional discipline originally found in their blood, they were obeying their leaders.”

In Orenburg, we were involved in educational matters as much as the military affairs. We opened schools for training teachers, nurses, telegraph, telephone, Military Academy and military courses. On those matters, the Baskurt Colonel, who was earlier working in the Tsarist Army, Akculpanov, Hasan Ahmerov, Alimcan Tagan worked selflessly. From the Tatars, General Isbulatov, Colonel Bekmeyov, Terigulov brothers and Ilyas Alkin, Yanbukhtin, Canisev, Suyundukov, joined our army and worked with all their might. Those Tatar Mirzas who belonged to our army first came to

Bukhara with us, and some of them arrived with us in Türkiye. Thus, what the French Leon Cahun had written concerning “among the Turks, army always provided the means for national unity” was fully realized. The Tatar author Fatih Kerimi, who was earlier seriously inimical to us, worked in the teacher Training schools. The former Duma member Ibniyemin Ahtiyamov, who I had mentioned was very much against us, also accepted a duty with us. The great Tatar scholar Rizaeddin Fathrettin’s sons worked for our newspapers and printers. His eldest son Abrurrahman Fahreddinov was the Chief Writer at the *Baskurdistan* newspaper. Those Russians and some Poles who worked in our army as officers seriously accepted Baskurt autonomy, and sincerely were helping us. Among them, Colonel Yemiliyanov and his Deputy Chief of Staff Officer Colonel Feotdorov, and from among the Poles Colonel Britz, who had been working in our army since 1917, are recalled especially. In mid-August (1918), I journeyed to Ufa and inspected our Third Regiment. The long speech I gave to the Tatars who did not join in with the Baskurt Army whose troops were quartered in the “Wooden Barracks,” but were serving the Russians, left a positive impression on the Ufa Moslems. Everybody was with us. The fact that, now, forty years later, those Baskurt and Tatars who are living in Istanbul can verbatim repeat that speech to me is an indication. We got along well with the Russians who helped us, because they aid was important for us. Extreme chauvinism existed among the Russians only in the Soviet period. That was not the case earlier. Our tolerant policies left a good impression on all levels of society who wanted to live together, including on those Russians who wanted to provide their rights to non-Russians. One example: “during the early part of 1924, when I was travelling with my friend Abdulkadir Inan, by train from Paris to Berlin, we were transferring our books and belonging from one train to another in Brussels. A railroad worker came to me, addressed me as ‘Gospodin Velidov.’ It turned out that he had worked in our military administration, later had joined the Denikin Army, and finally ended up in Belgium. His name was Demidov. He personally carried my belongings and placed them in our carriage. He recalled the old days, and cried; embraced me time and again and cried. His friend, a Captain, communicated with me for years; he would send me presents on my birthdays, and wrote his memoirs. At the time, our primary enemy was Communism and mischief against national independence. Because of that, Bolshevik agents could never enter into our army.

## *Consultations in Samara and Ufa—*

There were very serious consultations between 30 August - 4 September, among the Baskurdistan, Kazak and the Former Turkistan Governments in Orenburg and Samara. This was regarded as the Second Consultation amongst Baskurdistan, Alas-Orda and the overthrown Kokand Governments. The first meeting was held in Semipalat during July. Here, from Alas-Orda, Alihan Bukeyhan, Ahmet Baytursunov, Mir Yakup Dulat, and many other Members; From Khokand government, Head of

Government Muhammedcan Tinisbayev and Minister of Exterior Affairs, Mustafa Cokay, Ubeydullah Hocayev and many other individuals participated. Decisions were made to establish “South-East Moslem Countries Federation;” establishing a Corps composed of the Baskurt and Kazak Armies; a proposal to be made to the Siberian, Samara, Ural and Orenburg Cossacks to establish a wide-ranging Eastern Russian Federation. After these consultations we left in the train cars allocated to the Government of Baskurdistan to participate in the Russian State Solidarity Conference that was due to start on 8 September. In Ufa, we all stayed in the Sibir Hotel. The representatives of SR, SD, KD and other parties and the representatives of the newly established governments in the East, as well as the respective Generals were participating. On many issues, we moved in unison with the SRs and the Samara Government. In this Congress, also specified in the history of the Russian Revolution, a coalition government was formed under the administration of General Boldirev, only to be finally destroyed by Admiral Kolcak. Besides, the rightist parties and Monarchist Generals did not hold back in openly expressing their own dictatorial tendencies and ridiculing democracy. In that Congress, we devoted our efforts to the matters concerning the Moslem Turks. We held consultations with the educated Tatars in the same Sibir hotel. Among them, author Ayaz Ishaki, Colonel former Duma Member Ekrem Biglov and the officer Iskender Ismuhammedov were severely against autonomy and the formation of an independent corps. They were content to concentrate on the religious and educational affairs of the Russian Moslems, wanted those administrations established for the purpose to continue. They also advocated the formation of a new organization within the Siberian Was Ministry to undertake the Islamic Affairs of the Islamic military units under the title “Asian Branch,” and the transfer of all the administration of Tatar, Baskurt, Kazak and Central Asian Moslem units to that Asian Branch.

I explained my thoughts and beliefs on the fate of the Eastern Turks most clearly and comprehensively, during the first years of the Russian Revolution, on the evening of 8 September during those consultations, and on 9 September addressing the Tatar officers invited by the Baskurt Regimental officers at the Wooden Barracks. I was influenced in those by my belief that the educated distinguished persons in the Volga and Turkistan region could bring the projected results to life. There were many hesitations, doubts among the educated during the 1917 May Congress in Moscow, at the Congresses convened in Tashkent and Orenburg, and Ufa and Kazan at the Congresses of Eastern Turk Tribes that year during summer and fall. Now, those educated Kazaks and the majority of Tatars translating Alihan Bukeyhan are siding with autonomy and national army, and those who had been hesitating fell into a small minority.

The most interesting talks took place in the building constructed on the orders of the Tsarina Katerina, in the Sobranye meaning Moslem Spiritual Board, with the participation of Yusuf Akcura Bey. Yusuf Akcura was related to the Akcura industrialists of the Simbir province, having studied political science in Istanbul and Paris, had wide-ranging political activities in Kazan and Petersburg during the 1905-1907 Revolutions. Later on he was appointed Professor of contemporary political history

in the Turkish universities, and was trusted by Ataturk as a scholar and thinker. Later on, he was the Chairman of the Turkish History Association. He was elected a Deputy to the National Assembly. He desired to participate in the 1917 Revolution as well, but he was only able to journey from Moscow to Ufa, and became a guest to his old friend Mufti Alimcan Barudi at this Moslem Spiritual Board as a representative of the Turkish Red Crescent Society. Alihan Bukeyhan, Mehmet Tinisbay, Mustafa Cokay and I spoke of the matters discussed at the Samara conference on the issue of the founding a South-West Moslem Countries Federation with Yusuf Akcura and invited him, as he is fluent in French, to undertake the External Relations matters of the Federative Moslem National Governments. These talks took place at the Sobranya building on 12 September, and in response Yusuf Akcura stressed the fact that since he is a citizen of Türkiye, it was impossible for him to take part in our political activities. He also stressed the fact that, the name of the proposed federation ought to be Federation of Eastern Turks. Alihan responded with the fact that, until the Russians grew used to our national movements, and not label it Panturkist, it would suffice for the name to remain Federation of Eastern Russian Moslems. Later on, when we spoke of this Ufa consultations, he remembered those talks with affection. We arranged a kimiz feast for our guests from Turkistan, Kazakistan and Kazan. We had that kimiz from the Kandirakol from the Dim River basin. This was a place where the best horse herds of the Baskurt are raised. According to the myth, a young warrior by the name of Zayatubek fell in love with a girl named Suvsulu. These herds were given to the girl as a dowry, and she emerged from the lake. Their kimiz was said to be exceptional. After we left Ufa, we never saw the individuals, including Ali Bukeyhan, ever again. I left Ufa without waiting for the conclusion of the State Consultative Council. Even though we travelled with Dutov, in the same carriage, since coolness had entered into our relations, we did not speak on the way.

We always showed that we were collaborating with the socialists in all Russia-wide affairs. At the time, we were establishing the Erk Socialist Party, according to the principles of nationality and socialism. According to our plans, this party would apply to all of Eastern Turks. Those Kazaks who were to the Left of Alihan; from the Ozbeks, Nizam Hoca, poet Colpan; from Bukhara, Abdulhamid Arifov were also among the founders of this party. With the initiative of the group representing this party, the Baskurdistan Government passed a law regulating land matters. This law was based on the principles of Socialism. We had accomplished that in collaboration with our Minister of Agriculture Halil Emirov. It was discussed comprehensively by the pre-parliament and announced on 20 September. That law is now being mentioned in the Baskurdistan histories.

## *Occupation of Orsk—*

At the time, despite the competition among the generals and the Russian political parties, there was some movement in the war front. On 27 September, Orsk was

taken from the Reds. They left their entire ammunition stock in Orsk, and escaped to Aktube. Two Tatar law students, by the name of Suleyman Sultanaliyev and Mir Seyit Sultanaliyev, were leading the Baskurt military units occupying the city of Orsk. The nationalist educated who had been in the hands of the Reds, and thus liberated, welcomed the Baskurt units with flags in their hands. Among them, two female students, Gulsum Muzafferova and Safiye Muzafferova joined us. Gulsum served in the Baskurt regiments like a male officer; later she arrived in Germany and completed her education. From there he came to Türkiye, raised a son who became an officer, and moved to New York. Now we learn that she passed away. This Gulsum, and from the Kazaks, Akkagit were new type of educated from among the Eastern Turks. When Orsk was occupied, the collaboration between Baskurdistan and Kazakistan became more frequent. Reds had ambushed the Tatar intellectual Abdullah Sarukin, along with his fifty bodyguards and killed them all. Their intellectuals in Orsk (now, the Soviet historians belittling them as Tatar SRs) caught the Soviet administrators Nurimanov, Sefiyev and Seahi, along with their retainers, and killed them, and came to us. The poet Seyhzade Babic gave life to those events in his poems. Those events turned the educated Tatar, who had been cool toward us up to that date, in favor of us. We had sent propagandist to the interior of Russia, to attract the Tatars who were left isolated there, to emigrate into Eastern portions of Baskurdistan and distributed writings. From everywhere acceptances to that invitation were received. From Buguuslan Sancak, hundreds of Tatar families emigrated into Baskurdistan. With that, Baskurdistan autonomy was no longer confined to Baskurdistan, and became a national movement of the Tatars as well. Our official newspaper was being published in a middle language that was understood by both the Baskurts and the Tatars. General Isbulatov was one of the personalities who most appreciated the interest and unity from the Baskurts and Kazaks toward the formation of a national army. He announced that the despoiling propaganda conducted by the aforementioned Tatar unitarists Abdullah Kariev, Ayaz Ishaki, Ekrem Beglov, especially in the army, was not to be tolerated. It was a pleasant pastime to listen to his wife, who was very nationalistic, arguing with the Tatar unitarists.

Those Tatar educated who were working in our country had personalized the Baskurdistan movement, from among them, Seyhullah Alkin, after we left Baskurdistan in 1920, seriously participated in the struggle with the Soviets, and finally when every other possibility was exhausted, he hung himself in front of the Caravansaray mosque, regarded as the Baskurdistan monument to freedom. This was an expression of great misery beginning to appear in Baskurdistan. A portion of the Turk intellectuals were going to stay home, another portion was to go with us to participate in the uprising in the East, in Turkistan. That was so. But, it was impossible to tell those openly who were going to stay behind. This was a disaster. Seyhullah Alkin was one of those. On the other hand, Haris Iglikov, who was one of those going from Sterlitamak to Turkistan, told him that “your name is not on the list of those going to Turkistan; you stay with Mirzabulatov.” Reportedly he cried, stating: “why did not Zeki Agay himself tell me all this?” Suleyman Mirzabulatov was one of those who stated that if the Soviets were to

kill the Moslems in Baskurdistan, he would respond with his own life. But when the uprising of Mirzabulatov met with failure, his friend Seyhullah Alkin ended his own life, and to stress that he was doing it in the name of his nation and religion, he carried that out in the Caravansaray mosque. Seyhullah Alkin was descended from the Tumen Tatar Mirzas near Ufa. Alqin meant “Alqa-oglu” and that tribe is mentioned in Mahmut Kasgari. That means that is a tribe known for a long time. These Tumen Tatars were also supporting the Baskurt uprising in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. One of that lineage, a young officer by the name of Hudayarov, had arrived in Bukhara in 1921 in the group headed by Suyundukov to join the Basmachi Movement. His friends left the Sehrisebz Soviet garrison to join us. But, since Hudayarov was very ill during those days, he was admitted into the Military Hospital. He committed suicide in the hospital, because he could not join us with the rest of his friends. This Hudayarov was sent to me to by Suyundukov to collect information several times, when I was with the Basmaci at a place known as Talkislak. He was very idealistic and a very handsome youth.

### *Condition of the Third Regiment—*

Even though we took Orsk, Reds were not late in taking advantage of the differences between the General and the Democratic Parties. As a result, Kazan once again fell into their hands. We could not expel them from Aktube. In a line north of the Zlataust and Samara, the Red activity began to increase. This was a very heavy load for our Third Regiment. This Regiment was going to transfer to Orenburg, then to Aktube. If that plan was carried out, the road to Tashkent would have opened. That was not to be. Our Regiment could not leave the Samara-Zlaust railroad. In Ufa, during the State Consultation meetings, there were two battalions from this Regiment in the city. This Regiment was in control of the city. We sent the first battalion to Sizran, against the Reds who were beginning to move, at the request of the Samara Government, under the command of Colonel Terigulov and his second-in-command Harun Kurbanali. That was so, because the Russian units were very loose. The Samara Government no longer trusted them, and the only support was from the Baskurt Army; but, in Samara there was a single battalion from the Baskurt Army. Finally, that battalion withdrew in row-boats, to the left bank of Zulfu, calling the name of Allah, under the command of Harun. That withdrawal took place after the Russian units withdrew under the command of Colonel Kappel, along with the Czechoslovakian units from Sizran and the Zulfe Bridge near Samara. The right side of the Zulfu Bridge was given to the Baskurt battalion. On 7 September, the Baskurts left Samara. After that, the Regiment, under the personal command of Colonel Tagan, along with Colonel Kappel and his units protected the Bugulme line, and within that, fought very heavy battles with the Reds in a village named Turkgeldi. The Hungarians and the Chuvash, who were in the service of the Reds fought valiantly. In Samara as well as, here the White Russians were loose. A certain amount of French troops, brought from Siberia joined the fighting



with two artillery pieces. They endeavored to reconcile the Baskurt with the Reds. Even today, I still cannot understand why they wanted to do that. In the memoirs of General Janine, Commander of the French Forces in Siberia, this murderous act is not explained. The French logic was such that they stated to the Russians: “you are all Russians; one side Red the other White; reconcile.” The Baskurt Regiment completely defeated the Hungarians and the Cuvass in this battle which lasted for seven days. The Third Regiment had two component ski units. They excelled in chasing the Reds. In 1920, while we were escaping Moscow to Turkistan, we arrived in the city of Penza. On that day, the official newspaper *Penzinskaya Pravda* had published the memoirs of a Red officer concerning that battle. In those memoirs, that officer stated: “at the Bugulme front, the beating we received from the Baskurts we can never forget.” A Red officer was killed in the fighting. In his personal belongings, Togan found the jewelry of a Baskurt woman, along with an old sword with a silver scabbard and golden embroidery on it; he sent them on to me. I transferred them to the Treasury, to be displayed at the Ethnography Museum we were then establishing and collecting materials for the purpose. At the very end of this battle which we won convincingly, the labor battalions sent from Moscow arrived, forced the French to withdraw along with Kappel's units. That required the Third Regiment to withdraw to Ufa, then to the East of Ufa. Except, this Regiment was undefeated in all battles. Togan, in his report stated: “the business of the French, even if symbolic, it is not an aid. They showed how to escape from the Reds to the Russian units of Kappel. Given that they wish us to reconcile with the Reds, why did they come here [to fight]?”

The withdrawal of the Third Regiment resulted in a personal tragedy for me, in that my personal library was lost. That library was being transferred from Ufa to Orenburg inside seventeen wooden boxes along with the baggage of the Third Regiment. While they were at the Kineli railroad station, the Reds occupied the station. Later, those books fell into the hands of the Czechoslovaks. But, when Siberia changed hands again, fell into the hands of the Reds once more. As a result, that library was given to the Irkutsk University. In that library, which was collected with care, there were Turkish language newspapers, especially a collection of the *Tercuman* newspaper being published in Crimea since 1883. Some of the manuscripts and historical documents in Persian that I had collected in Central Asia were returned to me after signing a peace agreement with the Soviets. All of my printed books and my archive were lost. I heard from a Russian scholar who visited Cambridge University in 1954 to attend the Orientalist Conference that a large part of my belongings were also at the Irkutsk University.

## *Souring of our business—*

Baskurdistan Government was forced to take drastic action, when the events began favoring the Soviets, by Samara and Ufa falling to them. On 17 November the Pre-Parliament met and debated the circumstances, decided to move the civil

administration, printing presses and publications to the township of Times in Eastern Baskurdistan from Orenburg. These actions were speedily carried-out. All institutions and even the publications and printing presses were transferred to Times. I was advocating the continuation of our struggle with the Soviets, removing the Reds from the Aktube front, joining with the Kazak military organization and encouraging the local forces to rise-up against the Reds. However, the Aktube front was maintaining its harshness; increase in the number of those believing the propaganda of the Red agent Cangelidin among the Ural Provincial Kazaks; the efforts of the Generals in Siberia to transforming the administrative philosophy into a dictatorship being supported by the forces of the allies (French, English, and America) who had influence in the area, began spreading propaganda that could diminish the morale. Actually, the belief in Russian Founding Parliament, meaning democracy was strong; but the bad interference by the allies was wide and devastating. French, English, American and Japanese military representatives arrived in Omsk from Vladivostok. The allied generals supported the Russian generals in Siberia. The one most contrary was the chief of the Yedisu Cossacks, Ivanov-Rinov. He was a ruthless tyrant who massacred the Kirgiz and the Kazaks in the 1916 uprising against the Tsar. This Monarchist had voiced most support for the dictatorship of Kolchak at the Ufa State Conferalls. None of us, meaning the Eastern Turks went over to shake his hand. As disclosed by the memoirs of the French General Janin published in France, and the retinue of the American General Graves (B. M. Unterbyar and S. G. Kindall) published under the title *1918-1920 Siberian Expedition*, these delegations did not know what to do when they arrived. They were not given a certain plan of action. Because of that, the results were negative as it also happened with the activities of the Americans against the Chinese National Government in 1948-1949.

When, on 18 November Admiral Kolchak announced himself High Commissioner of Russia, meaning Dictator, with the help of these foreign missions, all business was turned upside-down. As first item of business, he acted against Komuc. On 21 November he announced that he abolished the Kazak and Baskurt governments and disbanded the Baskurt-Kazak Corps. General Dutov was Kolchak's right-hand man. He began to apply Kolchak's orders gradually, began reducing the flow of ammunition supply. Dictator Kolchak's sudden and drastic actions began to apply to our Third Regiment along the Samara-Zlataust railroad, separated from us with the Russian units. Because of the Kurban Bayrami, we exchanged congratulations with the Third Regiment via telegraph. After that, Kolchak cut our communications with that Regiment. A portion of the Regiment was left in the Russian town of Levze under the command of Togan; another portion in the Satkins factory, under the command of Harun Korbanaliev. They were ordered to disarm, but they disobeyed and fought back for two weeks. Kolchak did not provide food and ordered them to return to their villages. Togan and Harun Kurbanali sent reports indicating if it was winter and there was a thick layer of snow on the ground, he would have defied the order and joined the main Baskurt Army. Kolchak's behavior toward our Third Regiment, who had bravely and successfully fought against the Reds, showed us how he would behave in

case our other units fell into his hands. We distributed that information to our army as an order. At that point, General Isbulatov who was the Commander of our Corps gave a petition to our Government indicating: “in such sensitive circumstances, the Commander must have initiative. I cannot see that ability in myself. The Command of the Army must be given to Velidov.” The Government appointed me to the Command of the Army on 22 November. At that point there was a need to prepare for: the victory of Komuc in Western Siberia and the Urals, and the removal of the Aktube front and serious fighting with the Reds; on the other, in case that front dissolved, finding a way to reconcile with the Reds. In order for democracy to win, it was necessary to remove General Dutov in collaboration of democracy-supporting groups among the Orenburg and Ural Cossacks. If this could be done, then Komuc could be reconstituted, Reds could be thrown to the other bank of Volga. Due to our good intelligence apparatus, we knew that the Red position in the East was very thin. But, since the White generals, even though they did not have good relations among them, were together against Komuc and us, we could see that business was souring. Under those circumstances, it was necessary to negotiate with the Soviets immediately, without hesitation. We crossed government members Mollacan Halikov and Giray Karamisov through the front, for them to reach Moscow. I gave letters addressed to author Maxim Gorki, with whom I had good relations in the past, and artist Chaliapin, introducing him. Mollacan was going to conduct his negotiations with the Soviets through these individuals. But, Mollacan and Giray could not journey to Moscow, and sent the letters I wrote via the hand of someone else, and they returned. Orenburg Cossack Generals were prepared to withdraw to the Chinese border through Kazakhstan, at the head of the units loyal to them. We did not have the thought of moving our population or abandoning them. We thought, whatever we were going to face, we decided to face it with our people.

### *Precautions taken under critical conditions—*

Despite all that, we never gave up the idea of breaking through the Aktube front in collaboration with Alas-Orda and joining with the Turkistan forces. In the Turgat region, Abdulkhak Abidov from us and from the Kazaks Azimbek Berchanov were working with all their might. Our contacts with the Alas-Orda were being carried out on horseback, since communication via the train had become difficult. However, events were progressing with enormous speed. We were left between four different enemies; Samara and Aktube Reds, Dutov and Kolchak. It was necessary to protect ourselves from untrustworthy elements in our midst. Salah Atnagulov and Serif Manatov had earlier worked in the national front, and later went to Moscow and worked with Stalin and Mollanur Vahidov, even though they were not communists. Now they arrived, having escaped from the Volga Basin Reds, and volunteered to work for us in the national front once more. We gave them duties, not in the political sphere, but in

educational matters. In this critical period, we distanced such elements from us. We sent Salah Atnagulov to Moscow, to test the waters in case we were forced to come to terms with the Soviets. After he left, we heard that he did not follow our instructions and followed his own business. We gave some money and sent Serif Manatov to Azerbaijan for contacts, via Guryev and Petrovsk to Baku. He later crossed over to Türkiye. Since he was a volunteer in the Balkan Wars of 1911-1912 in Türkiye, he obviously knew the Turkish dialect well. But, his crossing over to Türkiye was not in his instructions. The members of the Founding Parliament and Komuc Members were arriving in Baskurdistan. Along those was Mustafa Cokayoglu, who later represented Turkistan in Europe, and the leader of the SRs Vadim Caykin were with me. One day, the Agriculture Minister in the Kerensky Government, leader of the Russian SRs and their theoretician Viktor Chernov; Foreign Minister of the Samara Komuc Government Vedeniyapin, and my other SR grandees arrived in horse-drawn sleighs from the direction of Yekaternburg while I was inspecting the front in the vicinity of Sterlitamak. I hosted them well in Kizilmescit. I brought them with me to Orenburg. They were on their way to Moscow, or, if necessary, to Europe. A little later, I sent them to Uralsk, under the protection of my good guards. If Dutov caught them, they would have been killed. They left for Astrakhan via Bukey-Orda. They lived in Soviet Russia for a spell under-cover. Four months later, I saw them in Moscow. Later on, I saw Chernov in Paris and Prag. He was a person I respected when he was the Chief Writer of the newspaper *Delo Naroda*. When he arrived in Baskurdistan, he was my ‘Seyh.’ After he published his big volume entitled *Constructive Socialism*, I cooled off of him. Because, in that work, there was no consequence; only contrasts. Baskurdistan governmental organization and the discipline of our army left a very good impression on Chernov and his comrades. Because, while every other place was in decline, only we had strength and regulation. Chernov mentioned all that in some of his published pieces in Europe. When they arrived in Orenburg, our work toward saving democracy was advancing. I inspected the Baskurt units on the Aktube Front twice, on 6 and 25 November. The morale of the Troopers was excellent. The Commander in this Front was Colonel Makhin. He was a representative of democrat Orenburg Cossacks and opponent of would be Dictator, General Dutov. There were also Ataman Kargin and representatives from the Ural Cossacks present. The precautions to be taken against Dutov were decided. This involved establishing a joint government constituted by me, Seyit Azim Kidirbayev from Kazakhstan and the Orenburg Cossack Ataman Kargin; appointing Colonel Makhin as Commander in Chief. Our first meeting was scheduled for 1-2 December night at the Orenburg Caravansaray. Since Dutov had no authority in the Baskurt section of the city, the meeting took place in peace. Mustafa Cokayoglu and Vadim Caykin were present at this meeting and they accepted positions in this allied (Kazakistan, Baskurdistan and the Cossacks) government. But, a First Lieutenant from among the Celiabi Tatar merchants, who was inserted amongst us by Dutov, had informed the General. He escaped in an armored car to the Cossack units loyal to him; he took positions in the streets with those units. Makhin was not in favor of spilling blood. Thus, the best laid plans over a month came to naught in a few hours.

Cokayoglu, who had undertaken the task of Foreign Affairs, was desirous of going to foreign countries. We sent him and his wife to Guriev, on their way to Baku. All night long, we collected all of our units at the railroad station which was under our control, took away all of the rolling-stock, and by noon 2 December, we left Orenburg, settled in the railroad stations between Sakmarsk and Orsk. The four hundred kilometer Front between Orenburg and Ufa was being held only by the Baskurt Army. We constituted our headquarters in the mansion of a wealthy German origin farmer, who was an Orenburg grandee, by the name of Schott.

## *Meetings at Yarmolevka and the decisions taken—*

I must mention three events that took place during the first half of December, causing a change in the front:

1. In Tashkent, the prisoner of war Turkish Officer Kazim Bey was working with the enemy of the British, Mevlevi Berekatullah of India who was descended from an independence minded lineage. Since their enemy was the British, they had prevented the Moslems from joining activities against the Soviets (the Osipov movement). They had sent a letter to the Baskurt Government, advising us to come to terms with the Soviets. While we were in Yarmolayevka, our representatives we had sent to Taskent, and an Ozbek we had known, brought a new letter from Kazim Bey and Bereketullah. They wrote that the Turkish Army occupied Baku and would cross over to the East of the Caspian Sea, to Turkistan; then the British would withdraw from Ashkabat; the Afghans were fighting the British, but they would need to obtain weapons from the Soviets. Therefore, fighting against the Soviets would be going against Türkiye, Afghanistan and the independence movement of India. Letters from the members of the known Turkistan leadership, and from the educated Azerbaijanis living in Tashkent were also appended that spoke of the same conditions. Later on, Bereketullah, who finally died in Europe, came to visit us after we signed a truce with the Soviets, and was our guest in Sterlitamak. Kazim Bey returned to Türkiye. With him, we published a journal in Istanbul during 1926-1928 with the title *Yeni Turkistan*. He published his memoirs in the Istanbul newspapers. He passed away here not long ago. Their comprehensive news on the affairs of Türkiye, Caucasus, India and Afghanistan was new to us. It also influenced some of our friends in coming to terms with the Soviets.
2. The second event was our reading of writings General Kolchak and the French General Janin sent to Dutov. At the time, communications between Orenburg and Omsk and Celiabinsk was being carried out via Baskurdistan, since Ufa was in the hands of the Reds. Colonel Yemilyanov, who had earlier worked for the Baskurdistan Army was journeying in horse-drawn sleighs, in the company

of allied officers, from Celiabinsk to Orenburg. They were ambushed at night with the excuse that the sleighs were late due to heavy snow. We read the papers and returned them in their bags. In order to read those documents, we travelled eighty kilometers at night, arrived at the village of Tavlikay, and read them. Those documents contained definitive orders to disband Baskurdistan and Kazakistan Armies, to arrest me and other Baskurt leaders and render us to a Military Court for trial. In another document, there were ideas expressed against the Moslem autonomy, meaning against Baskurdistan, Alas-Orda and Turkistan. The Germans had not yet left Ukraine. The Allies in Siberia were avoiding the Eastern Turks with the fear that the Turks and Germans would be influential on the Moslems to the East of the Caspian Sea, given that the Turks had occupied Baku. They knew of the activities of Kazim Bey and Mevlevi Berekatullah and their propaganda. Possibly, the representatives of Allies in Western Siberia asked for serious precautions taken against the Kazak and Baskurt Moslem Armies. Those were what we learned as a result of the night ambush in Tavlikay.

When I arrived in Kizil Mescit, I was informed that General Dutov in Orenburg wanted to converse with me via the Army telegraph. The General was attempting to subdue me with his words of civility and friendship. He was inviting me and our head of government Yunus Bekov to Orenburg or any other suitable place in order to discuss the 'critical conditions.' He was behaving as if he was not aware of the organization we had made against him during the night of 1 December. I responded with: "what are you talking about you shameless cad? Who are you fooling?" I ended the communication with a well-known Russian sentence of Profanity.

3. The third event was the arrival of news and representatives from the other end of Kazakistan, from Alas-Orda. From the Kazaks, Azimbek Bericanov, author Muhtar Avezov and some others arrived in Yarmolayevka. They were telling us the necessity of settling our differences with the Soviet given the negative attitude Kolchak and the allies displayed toward national and military organizations. Later on, Azimbek went to Germany and studied there. Upon his return to his country, he was killed by the Soviets. Muhtar Avezov, when he reached the age of sixty, was made a member of the Kazak Academy of Sciences and his jubilee as a Soviet author was celebrated with much extravagance. When they arrived, I gathered all the officers of the Baskurt Regiment and gave them a grand feast in the salons of Schott in Yarmolayevka. This was the grandest military feast organized since the establishment of our republic. Everyone spoke with sincerity. I gave a speech, describing the conditions in Orenburg and Siberia, plans of Kolchak. Even though the Red Front was only forty kilometers away, the morale of the officers and the Troops were excellent. National songs were sang, dances exhibited. Animals of the mansion owner were slaughtered, the beer, wine, champagne, aged salami, cheese and all else



were presented to the Troopers, since, when we leave, the Reds were going to occupy this region with the contents going to them. Ismail Seripov, an officer of the First Infantry Regiment, who was present at that event, wrote a comprehensive report for the acting Minister of Defense Recep Peker –which had been mentioned earlier-- in Türkiye after his arrival. He included vivid details of the Yermolayevka festival.

There were still optimistic persons in Russia, despite the fact that Kolchak's Dictatorship was being established and everything was racing toward a desperate end. An officer by the name of Kondratiyev, from the retinue of Avksentiyev, President of Founding Parliament (Komuc), which was dispersed by Kolchak in Yekaterinburg, used to perform the duties of a liaison officer between our governments. For a spell, we had appointed him an 'aide-de-camp' to Captain Tagan, undertaking organizational matters of the Second Infantry Regiment. He was, probably, a member of the SR circles. He told us: "the Dictatorship of Kolchak will not last long. After that, all business will be left to us again. Do not be hasty about negotiating with the Soviets." I trusted him very much. He had helped us greatly in obtaining arms for us from the Komuc government. Now, he helped us obtain the weapons secreted away by Komuc at the Usulka factory, which had not yet been discovered by the Reds. I took his suggestion to the Army and Government leadership. Everyone agreed on the senselessness of continuing the fighting with the hope of Kolchak's fall, and the low morale of the Russian people, and the impossibility of bringing about reform with half measures. Kondratiyev took our greetings and went back to the hidden members of Komuc.

## **IV. Collaboration with the Soviets for fifteen months (1919-1920)**

### *Decision to make peace with the Soviets and the continuation of the battles—*

During the secret consultations we conducted with the representatives of the Kazaks, we discussed all aspects of what we were going to agree concerning our relations with the Soviets. If Orenburg was to fall into the hands of the Soviets, we even agreed to meet in that city and journey to Moscow together. We sent to Alas-Orda our Yirmati Canton Chief Abdullah Ilyas. We sent Abdulhamid Arifov to carry the news to the Turkistan Organization. He later became the War Minister of the Bukhara Government. On 15 December, we sent Mollacan Halikov, a member of our government, and Hayrettin Saidov to the committee running the City of Ufa with an Official Document. The Soviet Commander was in no hurry to negotiate with those two. On 23 January 1919, news arrived that the allies recognized the Soviets and were not going to meddle in the internal affairs of the Soviets and that they were prepared to convene with the Soviets on the Istanbul islands. All this caused excitement amongst us. In order to speed the negotiations, we sent another representative group. In the recent years, the letter I wrote and read by Mollacan Halikov, carrying my signature, containing the Baskurt Peace Conditions, was published in the Soviet press. These conditions were only: "in internal and economic matters, complete autonomy; the army, though subject to the Soviet High Command, to maintain full autonomy in internal affairs; Communism is not to be compulsory." The chief of Ufa Communists, Eltsin, was nowhere near accepting these conditions. That, despite the fact that the Red Army Command was very afraid of the Baskurt Army units, and the fact that Lenin and Stalin had accepted our conditions, gave the order of acceptance of our conditions by telephone. To them, the only condition was our acceptance of fighting against the White Armies. In the History of Baskurdistan written by the chronicler Tipeev, it is written that, since the

Allies recognized the Soviets on 23 January, the Soviet press published the secret edict issued by the Baskurt Military administration (signed by me) as distributed to the Baskurt Army personnel on 11 February. In that it was stated: “The Allies have terminated the fighting against the Reds. Therefore, everybody is on their own. They will no longer support us with money or munitions. Kolchak, Dutov and Denikin sent representatives to the Prince Islands [in the Sea of Marmara—Istanbul]. As a result, the Baskurt Government sent the Deputy Head of the Government Doctor Kulayev, Abdurresit Bekbabov, Hayrettin Saidoz, Karligacov, Mollacan Halikov to negotiate peace with the Soviet Fifth Army Commander.” Even though the negotiations with the Soviets began on 22 November, due to the strict discipline in the Baskurt Army and the close support among the Government Members, these provisions only raised the suspicion among the Cossack and Czechoslovak circles, but they had not obtained and documentary evidence. We had asked for arms and ammunition on 16 January from the Czechoslovaks, sending Lieutenant Canishev and Hidayet Saadiyev. Despite the objections of Kolchak and the Dutov, they sent us arms and ammunition. First, Second, Fourth and Sixth regiments were going to join the Soviets. Only the Third Regiment in Zlaust was going to remain on the side of Kolchak.

In the intervening three months, between these preparations and our sending representatives on 22 November, until our joining the Soviets on 18 February, we had fought with the Reds and caused them significant losses. I personally participated in those battles. On 15 December we transferred our Army Headquarters to the Kananikolsk factory from Yermolayevsk, and stayed there until we joined the Soviets. In the Yoldibay village, near Kizil Mescit, a cavalry Regiment of the Reds was completely ran-over during a night ambush. Those Reds who managed to survive ran away in their nightgowns, barefoot, over the snow. I personally participated in the battles that took place in the vicinity of Yermolayevka, my own village Kuzen, and Salih and Makar regions. Once I was wounded while I was going to Isimbay, now a petroleum source, to join First Cavalry Regiment under the Command of Musa Murtazin, from my left hand and my right thigh. Despite those small wounds, I did not dismount from my horse. Those ambushing Red soldiers, who were firing at us while sitting, were found by our Troopers and killed. There were big battles in the Russian Pokrovsk village (10-12 December) and Ahmer location (15 January 1919). We won those, but since we could no longer obtain ammunition neither from Orenburg, nor from the Czechoslovaks, we were in a dire condition. We were the only ones holding the front between Orenburg and Ufa. A distance of one hundred ninety kilometers between Yermolayevka and Sterlitamak was being held by seven hundred of our Troopers. Then, the Red Fifth Army was able to send a concentration of several Regiments to the road between Sterlitamak and Ahmer. We withdrew to Makar from Ahmer. I was in my own village on 24 January. It was necessary to leave my aged mother and father to the Reds. Since I was raised believing in God, worshipping him, I went to our mosque and cried without letting anyone else know; because, the Reds were due to arrive in a few hours, and desecrate this old mosque as well. Afterward, I was never to see my village again.

The Makar village, seven kilometers from mine, was the home of the majority of our high level Army and Governmental personnel as well as the home of the Karamis Ogullari family. We dispersed the Reds who were in the stream-beds, chased them away, for twenty-five kilometers to the Ahmer village with drawn swords in hand. This was the village of my friend of youth, now Battalion Commander, Sahibek Ozbekov. Ilyas Akin, a leader among the Tatar Kazan dignitaries, was the Assistant Chief of Staff [of the Army]. He fought in those battles selflessly, just like a regular Trooper. Thus, we defended an area of several hundred kilometers between Kizil Mescit in the South, my village in the North, Makar and Cilimkaran villages further North until 18 February. Since I knew these regions since my childhood like the back of my hand, we benefited from the topographic advantages strategically. At the time, the poet Seyid Giray Magaz, who was in my retinue, wrote a dastan-format work describing our battles with the Reds, where we were aided by plenty of anti-Bolshevik villagers. The very aged Ethem Molla from the Aliekber village stated: “in your young years, you ran from one of these mountains to the next for suluq (bee-hives) and horse herds; now you are chasing the Reds.”

During these battles, two representatives whose names I forgot arrived from Kazakistan when we were at the Kulguna village at the beginning of February 1919. I think one of them was poet Magcan. He had visited us before; he put on paper his impressions of the Baskurt struggles against Russian invasions in his work Ural. They brought letters from Ahmet Tursun from Turgay, spoke of the necessity of joining the Soviets on the same day as previously decided. According to them, at this time, only the West Kazakistan was going to join the Soviets as the Eastern Kazakistan was under the control of Kolchak General Belov. I wrote letters to Ahmet Baytursun and Alihan Bukeyhan. I forgot their contents, but the said letters were later found by the Soviets in the Alas-Orda archives and were published. I stated: “we are preparing to cross over to the Soviet side. We are awaiting the word from our representatives on the acceptance of our conditions from the Soviets. You must know that our crossing over is a necessity, since Kolchak became such an enemy of us. We will remain loyal to our national cause and all the agreements we signed with Alas-Orda Government. As you also know, despite making peace with them, it is not possible to completely trust them. Because of that, some day it may become necessary to separate from them once again, and continue with our struggle. [Raimov, *Obrazovanye Baskirskoy Sovetskoy Respubliki*, P.2] We told our representatives that we wished Ahmet Baytursun’s participation in our negotiations with the Soviets, as we had informed you earlier. We sent poet Seyit Giray Magaz to Turgay, joining the two Kazak representatives, in order to inform the leadership of the Western Kazakistan orally that our crossing over to the Soviet side is going to take place on 18 February.” We returned to Kakanikolsky on 18 February as we were preparing to cross over to the Soviet side. In that manner, we were able to completely coordinate our crossing over at the same time with the Kazaks. This was very important. Because the Kazaks believed that, if they were to cross over by themselves, as their army structure was weak, they would all be killed. We Baskurts also believed that, if we went to Moscow together with the Kazaks, our

negotiating position was going to be stronger. In the words of poet Magcan: “The long Ural Mountains; you stretch between East and West, constituting a border, as much as a border between the sons of light (Turks) and the sons of darkness (Russians). The other side of you is a homeland to blue eyed jinn; this side is the homeland of the Turk bozkir (steppes). The hairy mouthed foreigners now rule over the lands once owned by our ancestors, and the burial sites of our sainted ancestors. They are massacring our youth. Magnificent Ural, you have trained us like our fathers. Turn your neck toward your elder brother (to Kazakistan). The brave sons of the Turks! Join together and do not let the enemy trample over this this land; hang onto the reins of your horses, and defend this place.”

Meanwhile, we were occupied with the establishment of a regular political party, to take our place next to the Communist Party, as an independent national socialist party in order to survive. Especially Ilyas Alkin was working on the related theory. We were establishing the “Erk Socialist Party.” It was going to be equal but separate from the Russian Communist Party. We informed the Kazak leadership and encouraged them to form a Kazak Socialist Party to replace the Alas-Orda which was not socially or economically socialist. Our program was ready. We provided a copy to the Kazaks who arrived. Later on (in 1926) this program was duplicated in mimeograph in Prag. Ilyas Alkin was always long-winded, which prevented us from debating what he wrote on the theory as we did not have time. The shortened version I wrote was accepted. Samoylov, who was the TZK VKP (meaning Russian Communist Party Center) representative in Baskurdistan in 1919-1920 wrote about this party, but spelled the translated word “Erk” not as “Volia” into Russian as intended, but incorrectly as “Volna.”

While we were occupied with the matters of the party program, events were progressing in their own fast pace. Cossacks evacuated Orenburg on 21 January and Orks fell to the Reds. We were about to be surrounded from all corners. Since our harsh responses had not changed along the entire front, they were unable to attack us with small forces. At that time, the worst for us was the isolation of the Third Baskurt Regiment North of the Russian units under the command of Koppel, North of Ufa-Zlataust railroad line. They could bring news to us as individuals in civilian clothes. I ordered Major Tagan to disperse this regiment and send the Troopers home.

## *Our crossing over to the Soviet Front—*

It was not easy to turn all of the Baskurt population and government officialdom suddenly, since their politics and programs were well known by our people and they had been warned against them. In order to protect our secrets from the enemies, the application of our decision to join the Soviets, which had been kept secret from the Army as well, had to be sudden. For example, the announcement was to be made one day, and cross-over to take place the same day. General Akulin wrote that, such a sudden change was impossible for the Orenburg Cossacks; only due to the Baskurt people’s trust in their government, and especially to my person by the

Army, this was done in an excellent manner. But, the negotiations stretching into a full month in Ufa were cause for concern. On 8 February, the Army personnel and Baskurdistan Government held an extraordinary joint meeting and decided to send The Baskurdistan Government Head Kulayev and Mollacan Halikov and my aide-de-camp Abdurresit Bekbabov directly to Moscow. Fighting with the Reds had already stopped. Delegations were travelling without obstacles. Only later we learned of the reasons for the delays in negotiations taking place in Ufa. Lenin and Stalin had sent orders to the Fifth Red Army Command and to the Ufa provincial Committee to make it easier for us to cross over, as that would strengthen their Eastern Policies. However, the fear of the Commanders of the Fifth Army from the Baskurt Army and the bigotry of the Ufa civil administration, in addition to the insistence of Samigulov strata of the Tatar Communists who were against any and all national autonomy, that the Baskurt Army be disarmed and the Baskurt Government Members be executed, Lenin and Stalin’s orders were not immediately carried out. Documents pertaining to all this was published by the Soviets. Also, in 1923 Communist Party Congress, Stalin’s question “why did you not execute Velidov at that occasion” and the interlocution with Samigulov was published in Stalin’s corpus (P. 304). The Central Committee sent the famed Mirseyit Sultanaliyev from Moscow, as the head of the Moslem Communist Party in Moscow, to Ufa, in order to speed up the process by breaking the deadlock in Ufa. He argued with the Ufa provincial Administration, and had the entire decision transferred to the Headquarters of the Eastern Front in Simbirsk, and to Moscow. He also sent one of the Tatar Communists he personally trusted to us, Alimcan Eminov, along with our representatives. This person was as nationalistic as Sultanaliyev, and the following was the information he brought us: “Do not cross-over until the negotiations are completed. Do not be in a hurry. If you cannot wait, then do not join the Fifth Red Army, but join First Red Army headquartered in Orenburg.” Sultanaliyev’s friendly advice was later heard by the Central Communist Party. He was asked, in 1937, when he was tried before he was executed, if he gave such advice to Velidov. He responded with “yes.” Alimcan Eminov, when he was at our headquarters in Kananikolsk specified that: “the Red Army Commanders are viewing the Baskurts with importance, despite the bigoted Party members, as they are a warrior nation; do not be in a hurry.” It transpired that he also spoke with the Baskurt and Tatar officers in the Army head-to-head. Later on, when I saw him in Moscow, he told me that the idealism and self-confidence he observed in those officers gave him a very good opinion of them. He also indicated that he told all this to the Soviet administrators in Ufa. Meaning, at that time, Among the Tatar and Baskurt nationalists on either side of the White-and-Red- divide, similar, united ideas were in force. On 11 February, the Second extraordinary consultations took place in Kananikols between the Army and the Government. The discussions included the invitation issued by the Allies to Red and White units fighting against each other, and to Bolshevik Denikin, Kolchak, Dutov, Ukrainians and Caucasians, in order for them to unite for an all Russia union, issued on 23 January to meet at the Istanbul islands; precautions taken by Kolchak treating us as an enemy; mild proposals from the Soviets; promises to maintain our



autonomy, army. We decided that the time and hour of our entry into the Soviet sphere is to be 18 February morning at ten o'clock. We sent word to that effect, via the Soviet representative Alimcan Eminov, and with our representatives who were travelling with him, to the First and Fifth Red Army Commanders. It was impossible for us to delay that crossing beyond 18 February. Our military discipline was excellent, our military secrets were not leaking to our enemies, to Kolchak. However, they were hearing it somehow. They could have moved in on us before we crossed to the side of the Soviets. We informed our frontline troops two days in advance of our plans; and the rear-guard, one day in advance. The Army received the order calmly. I brought the officers together. I told him that, if there are those who do not wish to cross-over, I was not going to force them. I further stated that, to those who did not wish to cross-over, I would provide one month's salary, horse, food, and send them to the White General of their choice. Among my best friends I liked most, Sahibek Ozbekov, Gani Karamisov, Ismail Seripov and a number of others obtained permission and left. Some of them were acting with emotions of revenge against the Reds, and had reached a point where they could not establish normal contact with them. For example, the Red agents sent to cause mischief in our army were in jail, far away from us. They could have caused us great damage. During a night, Captain Ozbekov drilled a hole in the ice covering the River Yayik and sent them all underneath the ice. He was criticized because he had acted as he knew how. Sahibek was a friend from my youth. He was very handsome, very intelligent, and very brave, but, extremely headstrong. Since he was a very well trained officer, I hoped he would serve as Minister of War. He stubbornly refused. He was created to remain small-hearted. It was a waste of time to attempt to raise him. I gave him jewels when he was leaving us. After leaving it is said that he went to Ukraine via Ural Cossacks and Dagestan, and worked in the Wrangel Army, and died in Crimea, in the battles. His friend Ismail Seripov, who later arrived in Istanbul, told us that Sahibek was very sorry that he left us, and cried over it on many an occasion.

On the morning of 18 February, it was not possible to call out a single military unit, to cross first from one Front to the other, when time came to apply the decision on the ground; because, doing so was being regarded as throwing that unit into the fire. Under those circumstances, I had to begin the crossing myself. I took my orderly, named Ahmetcan, two lower ranking officers, a total of ten; I approached the First Army Front at ten o'clock in the morning, letting the Regiment commander I was arriving. Soviet Officers arrived. When I crossed over, immediately afterward, the First Battalion of the First Infantry Regiment also crossed-over. After that was completed, the Regiment Commander came to me, and I communicated with the First Army Command in Orenburg via the telegraph. The Commander suggested I be present in Orenburg in the morning. On the afternoon of 19 February, I spoke with the First Red Army Commander Gay. He was an Armenian Partisan. The Commander suggested that I visit the front along with some of his officers, to oversee the crossing. I did, and the Regiments crossed-over before my eyes.

We pulled the two-horse drawn sleigh I was riding, to a side. When the units were crossing, I saluted them, barely managing not to cry. The Troopers were crying. After

the crossing-over was completed, I put my head on the chest of my orderly, I cried heartily. I had cried during the night of 18-19 as well. Crying with such magnitude perhaps happened twice or thrice in my life. All this was caused by the thoughts of abandoning the ideas of democracy and freedom, letting Tabulin and Kolisof to determine our fate, to be used for unknown causes without personal and national determination, to go to the enemy we fought so hard so long, the darkness of my peoples' future, and our Troops whom I loved very much. I was certain that, the Soviets were not going to kill us, at least for the sake of their Eastern Policy. However, to break the will and faith of our people who believed that we would realize our freedom democratically, and to do that by my person, was a heavier burden than anything that would drive a person to suicide. After our First and Second Infantry Regiments crossed-over, I and our Deputy Chief-of-Staff, Ilyas Alkin, left for Moscow, via Orenburg. Fourth, Fifth, Sixth Infantry and Second Cavalry Regiments and the technical units crossed-over after we left.

Our national poet Seyhzade Babic had crossed over with the technical units, and described in his poem written during that time how the Troopers were shaken with the image of a dark future, indicating this was the worst event they had experienced in their lives and in the history of the Baskurts. In his opinion, if Zeki Velidi was not heading the change of front event, the entire army would have committed suicide as a single person. I learned of those poems, only five months later, after the Reds killed Seyhzade and his friends when he was bringing our archives. He wrote his poem as if he knew he was going to die after crossing over to the Red world. Because, with his poem, he also wrote a personal letter addressed to me, which he gave to a friend of his at the Times township with the admonition that his friend give it to me. In his letter, he was damning Kolchak and Dutov for forcing us to change our front.

## *Journey to Moscow—*

Upon arriving in Orenburg with Ilyas Alkin, the First Army Commander Gay had us meet with the Kazakistan representatives who had also arrived. He informed us we could travel to Moscow together, and he would allocate us a train carriage for the purpose. The Kazak delegation was small in numbers and headed by the famed Kazak author Ahmet Baytursun and Karaldioglu (Karaldin). When Commander Gay asked if we had coordinated our simultaneous arrival to be on the same day, we responded in the positive and told him that this peace concerned not only the Baskurt, but all of us. The Red Commander and the officers did not do anything to show disrespect. Apparently, they had received orders from Moscow to that effect. At the time, the secret police (GPU) and espionage apparatus of the Bolsheviks had not yet developed. Nobody was listening to what we were discussing amongst ourselves, or following us to determine who we visited in Orenburg. Apparently, their attitude toward us was different than toward those Russian Cossacks who gave themselves up to them. In Moscow, they hosted us at Hotel Metropol. I spoke with Stalin and Trotsky first. Stalin

wrote an article published in Pravda, on 2 March, on the occasion of our crossing, on the topic of 'Our Future Business in the East.' In his own words, he spoke of "some thirty million Tatar, Baskurt, Kirgiz, Ozbek, Turkmen, Tacik and representative of middle ages and civilizations joining the Soviet Union, and the consequences to be thought about the Islamic people of the East." That article is printed in his corpus. We thus realized we were on solid ground in Moscow. When we spoke with Stalin in his Nationalities Commissariat Office, he explained to us the topic at length. He feigned that he had always deeply trusted me, stated that it was an accident that I had been with the Whites, that I was a true Revolutionary, that it would have been better if I had heeded his invitation to join him in 1918. We spoke with him practically every day. In many of those talks, he wanted to get information on influential individuals I personally knew and the degree of my friendship with them. I did not let him know that I knew why he was asking me those questions. The Moscow streets were clogged with snow; cars could not go through. He was travelling on a motorcycle. One day, we were travelling together on the seats of his motorcycle. Summer had arrived. Because of the high snow drifts still clogging the way, though they were melting, it became necessary to dismount from the motorcycles. He pointed to those snow drifts and stated: "our Soviet heights." He was deprecating himself. Another day, he was taking me to another place on his motorcycle. Something was thrown down from the high buildings, wrapped in a piece of paper. He joked: "in the past, they used to throw these things during the night; now, because the Commissar of Nationalities and an honorable representative of the Eastern People are crossing, they are honoring us by throwing it during daylight." It transpired that, when in the winter colds the central heating system and toilets froze, they would wrap the feces in a paper and throw it outside. Stalin also made fun of Tatars and the Caucasians working for him in his own retinue. He would pay me compliments with the words found among the Armenians and Georgians, in the Eastern style. When he put together "An honorable Representative of the East" with "Nationalities Commissar" in the same sentence, it caught my attention and caused a disgusting reaction in me. In sum, Stalin wanted to win me over. When I was relating all that to my friend Ahmet Baytursun, I stated that: "all this may be taking place not only against Kolchak, but for further future as well." One day, he introduced me to Ordzhonikidze and Kamaney. I found Kamaney to be more sincere. Another day, Stalin had me have a talk with Piatakov, the chief of the labor union. It transpired that he [Stalin] desired to stress the difference between his thinking and others in the matter of nationalities. Our talks with Trotsky were always short and pertained to military matters. We were going to talk with Lenin. Sultanaliyev informed us that, after his experience of facing an assassination attempt, he was very careful about meeting with people outside the Party.

At that time, the second congress of Comintern was taking place (2-6 March) in Moscow. Lenin was truly busy. Many representatives had arrived from outside countries. But, Stalin called to tell me Lenin was going to see me, and that I could bring two friends. I brought with me our Government Head Doctor Kulayev. He had arrived that day from Simbirsk Eastern Front Command Peace Talks. Kulayev

was a Baskurt who had fallen into the hands of Russian missionaries when he was a child; he had become accustomed to the Christian society and had converted. His real name was Mehmet Ali. We used to address him as Mehmet Ali Aga. He also wanted us to call him in that manner. But, he signed official documents as Mistislav Kulayev. He had studied medicine at Kazan University. He was a good doctor. After these events, he left politics, went to Kazan and became a Professor. It is possible he is still alive. He was an honorable person. Even if he was no longer a Moslem, he was devoted to being a Baskurt and Turk. He was sensitive toward Russian cruel nature and their shamelessness. He had read the Russian publications of Siberian Turks. We went to the presence of Lenin together. We thought that we were going to be searched for weapons. There was no such control. Lenin rose from his chair behind his desk, and extended his hand. His desktop had compartments facing him to hold papers and such. While Lenin was speaking, this elevated segment was hiding his hands. He was writing the names of those from the East, when he heard them. But, I thought, he has a pistol behind that elevation as well. He asked Doctor Kulayev: "while your friend's name is Ahmet Zeki, why is your name Mistislav?" Kulayev answered: "I am a Christian Baskurt." Lenin this time asked: "did you not distance yourself from your people by changing your religion? Would it not be better not to deal with changing religion and pay no heed to religion at all?" Kulayev could not answer that. He was actually embarrassed. Lenin told us that the Ninth Russian Communist Party Congress was in session while at the same time the congress of all the other communist parties from around the world was also taking place and that the crossing of the Baskurt to the Soviet side was a good opportunity to discuss nationality and Eastern matters in these congresses. He further stated that he was hopeful of future peaceful cooperation, and addressing me, "I have an article on the problems of Turkistan and India. Please read it. I will call you and we can debate the contents." We left Lenin with a good impression. But probably two days after our meeting (19 March), while he was debating with Bukharin on the nationalities issues, he stressed the importance of coming to terms with bourgeois nations as tactical steps to be taken. "Was it not necessary to sign a treaty with the nationalist whose name was 'Pigheaded' (Svinhavud), who slaughtered laborers in Finland, as we smiled at his face? And was it not necessary to do the same with the Baskurt Government yesterday?" Lenin added: "Bukharin insists that in the Communist Party Program, there cannot be a place for the rights of nationalities; the proletariat cannot be sub-divided into nations; for the tribes of Indus, Bushmen, and Hotanto, there cannot be a law. None of these demand autonomy. But, Bukharin forgot a small point; these are Baskurt. In Russia, there are no Bushmen or Hotanto. But there are Baskurt, Kirgiz and other tribal units, and we are obliged to treat them gently. We are obliged to grant them their national rights. Perhaps someday they can raise mature, organized proletariat. Perhaps they can conduct their own revolution in their own countries as we are doing today. But, now, we must manage with what we have. To those tribes, like the Kirgiz and the Sarts, who are living under their Imams,

we cannot tell to throw away their Imams. That would be interfering in their internal affairs. We are obligated to create the conditions that would aid them to undertake the revolution on their own.” These words of Lenin were later published in his corpus in English, French and German. From those points, that day we learned that Lenin and his friends regarded our peace treaty as a temporary intermediate step, though they publicly saw us as friends, in actuality regarded us as Imams and mollas among the Ozbeks and the bourgeois capitalists in Finland to be removed someday, meaning they intended to raise a new generation of communists and hand the administration to them. But, we did not tell anyone that we learned all this from that speech. When Stalin had me and Ahmet Baytursun meet with the labor union chief Piatakov once again, he instructed us “to discuss the matters of how you can establish the labor union in the East (Profsoyuz).” But I perfectly understood the fact that he wanted us to realize how different and negative Bukharin and Piatakov thought from himself and Lenin toward nationalities and small nations, wished us to present himself and Lenin as the protectors of small nations. We spoke with Piatakov on what we did back in 1917 in Taskent about our activities on local labor union (Profsoyuz). When he responded that in a labor union, nationality cannot constitute the basis of the organization, there can only be a single Profsoyuz, arguments started on the nationality issue. I asked him why he was not objecting to the Jewish Bund. As a result of these disputes, these men left a negative impression on us. To us, compared to them, Lenin and Stalin appeared much more positive. Eltsen, who prevented an understanding in our negotiations in Ufa, was such a bigoted Communist. On 23 March, a sixteen point treaty concerning the Baskurt Army was signed between Lenin, Stalin, Vladirmiski, Enikidze, Dr. Kulayev, I, Bekbabov and Abdullah Edhemov, indicating Baskurdistan was an autonomous Republic, that the Baskurt Army was going to be independent in internal affairs, composed of two divisions, one of four cavalry regiments and the other, three regiments of infantry, but would report to the Red Army headquarters; another four item treaty concerning the economic administration, was published in the official Soviet newspapers. In the draft we wrote, there was an item concerning the immigrants arriving in Baskurdistan, due to the World War I from other provinces, would not have election rights. Lenin and Stalin insisted on the exclusion of that item. While we were discussing this matter with Stalin, supposedly secretly, Stalin stated that there was no need to include that item in the treaty which would replace the constitution: “you can cut them all, that that would be all (vyrej’te ikh).” When I heard that statement from Stalin, I recoiled, and believed that day that Stalin was a grand provocateur. I told him: “comrade Yosef Vissaryonovic, let alone cutting them, even if their noses bleed, Eltsins in Ufa and Orenburg will scream that Baskurts are killing the Christians and raise holy hell; it is better for us not to touch those immigrants, and we will not. But, in the treaty we must stress that they are temporary immigrants therefore they have no election rights in our country, and we need to specify that in our treaty. Because, they number in the tens of thousands, they

have the capability to tilt the population proportions and the election results.” But Stalin would not accept any of this. Our delegation members could not also understand the fact that that item was necessary. They did not wish to insist, and that item was discarded. I was convinced, without a doubt, that Stalin would suggest to those immigrants that Baskurts would deprive them of all their legal rights and only the Soviet government was protecting their legal rights. That was so. A year later, Stalin secretly distributed arms to them.

## *The conditions getting worse in the Eastern front—*

In the meantime, regrettable events took place in Baskurdistan. On 21 February, Baskurdistan General Congress met at Times, and elected a Soviet style “Revolutionary Committee” (Revkom) was elected. I was a member, as was Ilyas Alkin, and other nationalist, other non-Communist Baskurts and Tatars. At the same time, Kolchak had arrived at the “Congress of Orenburg Province Cossacks, in the city of Troytsk. At that gathering, the Cossacks accused Kolchak of issuing superfluous orders to disarm the Baskurt Army and the Baskurt Government, which had ruined the Front. He accepted the blame in the matter of the Baskurts, and promised to repair all those consequences. He issued an appeal that he allowed the re-formation of the Baskurt Government and the modernization of the Baskurt Army. At the time, I learned all that from the publications emanating from Kolchak’s Siberia, and from Musa Murtazin. Nobody believed those words of Kolchak except the recidivist Abdulhay Kurbanaliyev and their ilk. Therefore, a Kolchak ally government, because there were no supporters, could not be formed.

At the time, the disagreements between the Fifth Red Army and the Baskurt army units who had crossed over to the Soviet side caused some of the Baskurt units crossing back to the Kolchak side. The commander of the First Red Army was an Armenian Partisan and an enemy of the Moslems. The Commander of the Twentieth Division, which was occupying the region of Kizilmescit, was also a bigoted Russian. The Commander of the Third Brigade, Zelenko, component of that Division, was a bandit. They were unable to sleep in peace, because the Baskurt Army was not disarmed. Because of that, they demanded partial disarming of the First and the Fourth Regiments. I was away from the Government, in Moscow. The Command in Times accepted that demand and those Troopers were sent to Sterlitamak.

The disarming of the Baskurts allowed the Red Russians to plunder Baskurt villages. They also caught a lot of the Tatar and Baskurt intellectuals and killed them. At the top of that list are our national poet Seyhzade Babic and author Abdulhay Erkebay. The government at Times was withdrawing to Sterlitamak, to avoid an attack by Kolchak forces. At the time, Seyhzade and his friends were transferring our excellent and rich printing press and the government archives. Reds caught them in Calayir iron factory and killed them savagely. Seyhzade was a beloved national poet. He had



written volumes in Tatar and Baskurt, some of which were printed. He had given life to our 1917 national movement in his works. He also had dastan works which he had not yet completed. All of them were lost. Abdulhay Erkebay was from the Saljut tribe, he had written very good poems. The national Baskurt movement was given life in the poems of these two poets, and in the pen of Sayit Giray Magaz, in literary journals and poetic journals. But the majority of their works were not yet published. All were destroyed by the Soviets.

When these despicable events were heard, our First Cavalry Regiment, protecting the border right next to Kolchak, crossed over to the Kolchak side without hesitation. The Commander of the First Cavalry Regiment, Musa Murtazin, was extremely brave and a little too fiery. He had removed and chased away the White Cossack units from the Abdulcelil region of Eastern Baskurdistan on three different occasions, turned over the protection of the area to the Smolensk Regiment of the Reds every time. That Regiment could not hold-out against the Cossacks in any of the occasions, they withdrew, and while doing so, plundered the Baskurt villages. When Murtazin heard the partial disarming of the First and the Fourth Regiments at Kizilmescit, and the plundering, he immediately turned his weapons against the Reds, joined the Belov Army of the Kolchak, and severely defeated the Red Smolensk Regiment. Soviet Army deduced that they could not hold along the Ural (Yayik) River under these conditions. The Command Headquarters gave the order to the Smolensk Regiment and the Third Red Brigade to withdraw toward Western Ural Mountains. They withdrew in a hurry. A lot of their ammunition fell into the hands of Murtazin.

The fact that a large part of our Army passing over to the Whites was a surprise for me, but also an unexpected development for my friends as well, who were in Moscow during that period. I was informed that a military motorcar was awaiting me at the entrance to the Metropol Hotel. I was told we were going to Kremlin. Lenin had called for me. Stalin was there as well. A little later, Trotsky arrived as well. They told the circumstances to him as well that I had not heard previously. I stated: “your commanders there are bum bandits, or bigot chauvinists; Armenian Tasnak bandit Gay has no other thought but to take revenge from the Moslems. Of course they attempted to disarm our Troops. Otherwise Murtazin would not have attempted to do what he did. He is a very close friend. All these matters can be sorted out; there is no need for fuss. It is necessary for me to be present there.” They all saw that appropriate. In the company of Abruresit Bekbabov and Abdullah Ethemov, we arrived in Samara. It transpired that the Baskurt Government had left the township of Times in mid-March. They had moved to the Muraq village in the Yeti Urug Canton; then settled at the Muraptal village some ninety kilometers from Orenburg. The Government showed wisdom and did not disarm the Guard Units. We learned all of this when we arrived in the Buzavlik area. While we were there, a relative of Murtazin brought Murtazin’s reasoning orally. From one end, he decided that the Kolchak policies needed to be streamlined. As mentioned above, at the Troysk Cossack Congress, Kolchak had invited the trusted individuals and confessed he had done wrong to the Baskurt Government and the Army. He promised he would rectify his errors from their foundations. From the

other end, the Reds had begun regarding the Baskurts as the enemy, plundering the people and disarming the Baskurt units where they were in minority. They also killed individuals just for the sport of it. The killing of our poet in Calayir caused the cup to flow-over. Murtazin and his friends began speaking with the Whites and changed their Front. I immediately sent an aid-de-camp to the Baskurt Government settled in the Muraptal township, requested a list of everything plundered by the Red Army from Baskurdistan. The Government successfully completed that list. Whatever was taken from wherever, and what was destroyed, were listed above the village headmen seals and signatures, in such a short period which showed the trust and influence of our government over the population. The condition of the Reds was bad; they were withdrawing.

### *My talks with Frunze—*

I spoke with Frunze, in his capacity as the Commander of the South-West Branch of the Red Eastern front established in Simbirsk. We spoke when we were both in Samara. Since the conditions were critical, he was interested in me. We took our meals together. The First Red Army was worn-out. The Ural Cossacks were attacking Buzavliq. The First Red Army was asking for permission to withdraw from Orenburg to settle in Samara. The Baskurt Government in Muraptal, in order not to fall into the hands of the Kolchak Army, wanted to withdraw to a more secure place, to Samara. Frunze was harried. He was hesitating between withdrawing and not withdrawing. I advised him not to. Kolchak did not have a force sufficient to re-occupy Volga basin: “I secretly sent a messenger o Murtazin. He crossed over to the Kolchak side only because of the idiocy of your Red Army Commanders; you need to change the likes of bandits Gay, Zelenko.” I asked Frunze to transfer the Baskurt Army to the Turkistan Front, if he was successful against Kolchak. He happily agreed to do that. But, he had a big problem. The Commander in Chief of the entire Red Army, latish Vatsetis and Trotski wanted to transfer the headquarters of the South-West arm to the West of Volga. We, on the other hand, wanted to move our Baskurt Government and the Army to Samara or Sizran and with minimal reogragization, their participation in the Eastern Front. Trotski and Vatsetis were disbelieving us. They had ordered our government to further West, to the city of Saransk. Many arguments took place and we were forced to agree to that order. Moscow was ordering Frunze not to send me East of Samara. But, Frunze had believed in me. At the end of April, I returned to Buzavliq. Our government had moved to the Totsk (Toq) township nearby. I consulted with Frunze and established a Baskurdistan Representative Committee, in order to re-gather the Baskurt Troopers who have been sent home by the Second and the Fifth Red Army component Divisional and Brigade Commands, under the pretense of them being disarmed and needed to be protected. I wanted them to go to the Saransk Government. With my heart aching, I arrived in Saransk, along with the Baskurt Government being relocated. I went to Moscow, saw Stalin. This person no

longer had the pride he had displayed a few weeks earlier. I personally handed the lists of plundered belongings of the Baskurts by the Red Army to Lenin, and the disastrous consequences, as prepared by the Baskurt Government. We will touch upon that report later. I obtained the ammunition needed in order to rearrange the Army and sent it to Saransk at the beginning of March.

### *Our life in Saransk—*

We endeavored extensively to reconstitute our worn-out army in Saransk, which today is the capital of Mari Republic. The reorganization of First, Second Infantry and First and Second Cavalry Regiments continued normally. There were meetings, entertainment, weddings. There was a gathering because of the wedding of Ismail Muhlia and Afife hanim who are now living in Ankara with their university graduate offspring. In a photograph taken at that occasion, twelve individuals performed important duties in the Government and in the Army. I was often travelling to Moscow to consult with Trotski and to Samara to speak with Frunze on military matters. I had tasked Colonel Hasan Ahmerov with the duty of affecting mobilization in the Belebey Sancak. I personally oversaw that activity. Kulayev had resigned from his post as Head of Government. We appointed Haris Yumagulov as the next Head. I remained Minister of War. Yumagulov was from the Kemelik Baskurts. He had studied Agricultural Engineering and he was a fiery youth. He and his elder brother, Cihangir Yumagulov, were among the educated who had been supporting the Baskurdistan autonomy from the very beginning. We believed that the Baskurts and Tatars needed to have a joint literary language, and we were printing our publications in that middle language; Haris Yumagulov had the idea of making the Baskurt dialect the literary language. During the First Baskurt Congress in 1917, when there were demonstrations in Orenburg, flags embroidered with Baskurt words were unfurled by Yumagul and his friends. When we entered into an open struggle against the Soviets in 1918, they had remained on the Soviet side. Haris also had joined the Communist Party at the time. Stalin sent him to us as a representative of the Central Committee. When he arrived in Saransk, he joked with: “Moscow sent me to my home as an ambassador,” because, he was first among all the nationalists. Central Committee had sent along with Haris, a Russian Communist by the name of Zaretski in order to ‘enlighten’ us and call us to the ‘true path.’ Toward the end of May, when I was in Moscow, I worked to have our army to be stationed in the Eastern Front under the Command of Frunze and I spoke many times with Lenin, Stalin, Mme. Stasova, Trotski and Vasetis. But, I felt that, the more I insisted, the more suspicion I was causing. Frunze sent a telegram to Lenin on 16 June, requesting the deployment of the Baskurt Army to the Eastern Front. Lenin’s response was to issue the order for our Army to be deployed to the Eastern Front on 23 June. That order was published in the Soviet archival materials. Finally, Vatsetis had

that order remanded. Meanwhile, I got to know, closely, the Foreign Affairs Commissar Cicerin, and the Education Commissar Lunacharski as well as the Economics Commissar (Head of the Economic Council) Rykov. I regarded those three individuals and Frunze as persons one could work with. Lenin and Stalin were close to us because of their interest in nationalities. However, their trust and their view of the circumstances were tied to conditions. Trotsky, Vatsites, Kamanev and Bukharin, to us, were international Communists. Later on, I realized I had correctly classified all these individuals during my contacts of three months. Stalin had presented the Eastern Turks as primitive tribes, a remnant of the middle Ages, in his article published on 2 March 1919. His opinions about the Moslems were not much different than what we already had observed among the Armenians and Georgians. He regarded himself as the scholar of Eastern problem. Lenin confessed that he did not know anything about the East, and he would fall under the influence of others. His relations with us showed a wide fluctuation from one day to the next.

### *Lenin’s wireless order to Turkistan—*

One day, Lenin called me to the telephone. He asked me to visit with him about the article he had earlier given me, as mentioned before, to discuss the matters of Central Asia. I had already written my observations on that writing. He read what I wrote carefully and out-loud. The writing he had given me was written by the aforementioned Indian grandee Mevlevi Bereketullah and the Yusupov named Tatar Communist, on the relations with Central Asia. In their writing they stated that: Kur’an was amenable to communism, and a Kur’anic approach to communism would be beneficial; it was necessary to include Afghanistan, Eastern Iran and Eastern Turkistan to any Central Asian state to be established; a serious contact with India is necessary by that state; and it was possible to expel the British from India with the aid of the Moslem Central Asian tribes. I displayed the absurdities and unreal facts. There is no relation between the Kur’an and communism that it is impossible to attract Moslems to communism via that comparison; if it is necessary to establish an Islamic state in Central Asia, entering Afghanistan and Eastern Iran would backfire; liberation of India is not such a simple matter to be settled by military intervention as claimed by the authors. I explained, in detail what needed to be done in Central Asia was to remove the signs of Russian imperialism of the Tsarist period, to replace it with nationalities as opposed to religion, which would advance the cause. In that writing I also stressed that, the statues of General Kauffman erected in Tashkent and Belovodsk in the Cu basin of Yedisu needed to be removed; the return of the lands to the natives that were confiscated as a result of the 1916 uprising and distributed to the Russian immigrants; in the state institutions, proportional employment of the natives and Russian residents; necessity of formation of native military units. In addition, as a practical matter, I advised the formation of a Turkistan Extraordinary

Commission comprised of three Moslems and two Russians, and task them to oversee the proposals mentioned above, to include the natives in the postal service, telegraph administration and industry. My writing had eleven points, and had the format of a request. Lenin liked very much all what I thus presented. He, too, regarded the proposals of the two authors absurd, and mine as practical (delovoy). Lenin made fun of Yusupov's extremely detailed arguments which claimed that all future conflicts could be democratically resolved, with his own observation that "these are founding parliament absurdities." Meaning, Lenin's own approach to parliamentarianism was very sarcastic. He picked up his pen, we structured the sentences together. He was a dictator, but not despotic. He relayed some of his provisions, including the removal of the said statues, to the Soviet Administration in Tashkent via radio on 12 July. Tashkent Official Soviet newspaper printed the news that was relayed via radio that all matters pertaining to the population was going to be handled according to the population proportions, the treatment of the native population was going to be just, and a Turkistan Extraordinary Commission (Turk Komisiya) was going to be established in the center (Moscow) for the purpose of executing these matters. Member of the Tashkent Soviet government, Tabolin, who was in Moscow at that moment, saw this parallel party Central Committee as an influence on Lenin by Zeki Velidi and the Indian Bereketullah, instead of their own initiative, and his comments detailed in his telegram on these matters was published in the Tashkent Russian newspapers *Izvestia*, and in *Istirakiyun* in Turkish. A portion of those measures were carried-out. I think the statue of Kaufman's was removed along those lines. But, the Tashkent local Russian administration, just like the cases in Ufa and Orenburg, did not obey the population proportion principle while hiring officials. Nor did they apply all the other measures. To the aforementioned Turk Komisiya, Turar Riskilov, Ozbek Nizam Hocayev, and from the Tatars, Mir Seyit Sultanaliyev's appointment as Moslem Members was proposed by me and accepted by Lenin; the Tashkent Russian Communists had those appointments derailed as well. During one of our consultation sessions with Lenin, very sincerely stated: "as you see, we are experiencing difficulties in the application of orders sent via radio. You had me write that order, but nobody was found among the natives who could work to apply those provisions. To have the Russian imperialism expunged by Russian hands, and apply pressure on them to do so via Moslem military units is also impossible. Comrade Tabolin represents communism in Turkistan. But, he is not able to understand that Soviet regime can succeed in your country without the Russian colonizers; nor does anyone else. For the time being, let us establish the Turk Komisiya; let them go and work; one may assume that this matter will be resolved gradually." What Lenin really meant was: "it is not our intention to establish a separate country for you; instead to establish the Soviet regime. Do I need to do that by forming a Moslem army to suppress the Russian proletariat there for the purpose of having them carry the orders you had me write? If you were to raise a generation of educated to carry-out the objectives of socialism, and revolutionary native military units, then all this can be done. But, that, too, will take time."

## *The matter of the Erk Socialist Party—*

In Sarenski, we had the capability of working on the establishment of the Erk Socialist Party that would collaborate with the communists, to complete the program and consult with the center for the purpose. I spoke many times on this matter in Moscow with the Communist Party Politburo members Jaroslavski and Mme. Stasova. They supported the formation of national socialist and communist parties like the Erk party we were establishing. They sent Zaretski to Saranski in order to learn of our efforts. Zaretski saw our efforts even more radical than the Communist Party since we were proposing to completely nationalize the economic activity, and leave the national legal system completely free. Later we learned that Zaretski wrote a report, indicating our economic principles were not at all confined to bourgeois values and much closer to communism; that this party must be officially established and be included in Communism.

I again saw Lenin at the end of June, when I visited Moscow for two days. He did not mention anything about our Party. I felt that, he, Stalin, Trotsky, Kamenev were not going to allow us to establish a separate national Party, however close we might be to their objectives in terms of our program. Jaroslavski and Stasova were only keeping us busy, stalling.

During our visits with Lenin, he gave me a big automobile made by Fiat. He wrote his order on a plain piece of paper with blue colored pencil. These automobiles once belonged to General Samsonov, who was once a Turkistan Governor General, who had lost the battle to Hindenburg at the Russian-German Front. But, it was very difficult to find gasoline in Moscow at the time. Despite that, they also gave me gasoline, and we brought this car to Saranski, and later to Baskurdistan. Even though this Fiat was very heavy, and burnt large quantities of gasoline, the fact that Lenin presented it to me increased my credibility in the esteem of the communists. However, nothing came of this superficial trust and compliment.

## *Deployment of our military units to Ukraine instead of Turkistan—*

Our misfortune was that, Lenin regarding the Turkistan issues a side-show, announced on 9 July the principle of "everything against Denikin." He gave me definitive orders to send our reorganized military units, complying with the opinions of Trotsky and Vatsitis, to Ukraine Front instead of the Turkistan Front at Samara, to help the 14<sup>th</sup> Red Army fighting against the Denikin forces in Ukraine with the proviso "for a very short period." We kept two battalions and some technical units in Saransk, and sent the majority to the Kharkov Front. When our units arrived, the 14<sup>th</sup> Red Army was completely dispersed, and the committee running the war, the "Defense Committee," had crossed over to the side of Denikin including their chief and all the staff, our units



were forced to withdraw from Kharkov. When I arrived in the front, our units were fighting the Denikin Army near the city of Mirgorod, mentioned many times in the works of Gogol. Our Troopers had placed furniture in the train carriages, and were also keeping a few girls in each carriage. I had these furniture collected and burnt. I sent the girls to their own cities and villages. I also issued an order stressing that all this was against military discipline. Trotsky read that order and wanted to apply the same to all of the Russian units. But, when Vatsitis indicated that it would be impossible to apply such strict moral code to the Russian units, he gave up his idea. Trotsky told me all this himself. Apparently, Trotsky greatly admired the internal discipline of our units. He also knew that the politcoms, meaning political commissars within our units, were previously Regimental Imams. He heartily laughed stating “do we need to appoint Regimental Priests in order to bring an order to our units?” Because, the Red Army, with their Commanders defecting to the side of the Whites, had no longer any discipline.

At that time, our Regiments were in possession of many items, never found in our country, taken earlier from the German Army, brought from Europe; medications, medical equipment, tons of printing paper that has never been opened. I sent all of that to Sterlitamak in two different trains via Safran station near Ufa. Some military equipment was also sent there. We were only keeping the civilian administrative apparatus in Saransk. Baskurdistan Representative Council and our other active organizations were at the Eastern Front, in front of the Frunze forces. I sent Colonel Hasan Ahmerov to Belebey Sancak on 5 June, ordering mobilization. The people responded without hesitation. Ahmerov immediately began establishing the Baskurt Third and Fourth Infantry and Third Cavalry Regiments. Frunze provided plenty of ammunition to them. We gave a portion of the ammunition I sent from Ukraine to them as well. These newly formed units were going to stay on the Turkistan Front. Our aim was to settle in Orenburg with the Kazaks, as before. But the Russian imperialist friends of Lenin influenced him for the Soviet Government to insert a Russian Province in Orenburg between the Kazaks and Baskurts. They agreed to establish a separate Soviet Government in Aktube, and ours at Sterlitamak, distant from each other. Against all that, I went to Lenin, to protest the decisions. They were nowhere near changing their minds. Even Lenin, caressing me, stated: “let it stand for the time being; we can discuss this later.”

### *Once again activities in Baskurdistan—*

In mid-June, the Kolchak Army began to disintegrate in every direction. On 9 June, when Ufa once again passed into the hands of the Reds, with the acquiescence of Frunze, gathering a representative from each province of our government located in Saransk, in the company of a Guard Company, I arrived in Samara. There (13 June) I met with communist magnates Rykov and Rudzutak in the company of Frunze. They were favorably viewing the formation of an independent government in Turkistan

based on a national army, and the presence of the Baskurt Army in the Turkistan Front under the Command of Frunze. Rykov told me that Stalin was completely against the formation of an Islamic center in Orenburg; but he and Frunze did not see any reason why not. We spoke of good things. We took meals together several times. I wondered if the business was in the hands of these, what good results we could have obtained. We called Lenin good; Stalin, the devil. But, does it not indicate that Lenin also had a touch of devil in him by the fact that despite Lenin had good people such as Frunze, Rudzutak in his retinue, he gave the reins of the party to Stalin instead.

I moved from Samara to Belebey and from there to Sterlitamak. I was almost alone here. If it was necessary to travel, that was only possible with cavalry units. That precaution was necessary, because the presence of Kolchak and Cossack agents in the Russian villages was a possibility. I journeyed to my village, and saw my father, mother, siblings and relatives. Even though our village had changed hands several times, they had not touched my books and possessions; and they had not caused any harm to my parents. After the Reds withdrew, the Troopers of the Murtazin Brigade protected them. I established an expeditionary government in Sterlitamak, and began forming administrative apparatus in the places evacuated by Kolchak. I even opened a small officer training school. I appointed Kadi Nizamettionoglu, from the Qatay uruk, one of our valued officers, to administer that institution. Later on, that school was to grow into a large War Academy. A little later, a portion of the government arrived in Sterlitamak from Saranski. And, a representative of Murtazin, in the company of his relatives arrived, bringing his application to re-join the Reds and the Baskurt Army.

The prominent men of the country, who had earlier helped us in 1917 when we began our Baskurt national movement also arrived in Sterlitamak and asked what happened? What will happen? Where are we going? I invited the prominent men of the ulus who had been freed from Kolchak for consultations; there were sincere talks. I told them: “we had no other alternative but come to terms with the Reds. We could not have carried the country to Siberia or China. Now, it is necessary to be patient. The Reds did not allow us to settle in Orenburg with them, or sending our Army to the Turkistan Front. We of course regret all that, but we have no other alternative other than be in resonance with the regime in the formation stages across Russia. The Russian people decided to test Bolshevism on their own back. The only power that can overturn all this is the SRs and the idea of a Founding Parliament. That idea collapsed. No Tsarist general can satisfy the Russian people any longer. We also observed that it is not possible for us to journey with the generals and that it was completely useless for us to become adventurers. We came to terms with the Soviets. Now, we have no other road except to adjust to the Soviet Conditions in order to retain the control of our country. You need to enter into the officialdom, become members, and establish cooperatives, economic and cultural institutions to do just that. Our biggest deficiency is ignorance. We will work to eliminate that.” These statements, in the meetings where my father and maternal uncle were also present, spread across our country. Even though these meetings were small, comprised of only of twenty-five to thirty people, lasting from the morning until evening, as private discussions,

their importance was great. I reported all that to Frunze in writing, also requested the removal of all eight Red military garrisons established across Western Baskurdistan. That was done, and I sent ‘milis’ units comprised of Baskurts to replace them.

Here, there is a small event worth mentioning: In our country there was a Kargali Tatar author by the name of Abdurrahman Hakberdin, whom I had known since 1904, a friend of my father’s, and earlier mentioned in these memoirs. He used to work as a controller in the gold mines of Sakir Remeyev. He had published small tracts under the name of Kutphane-i Ictihad. Most contained translated information from Russian and Ottoman sources. He also understood some Arabic and Persian. I knew that he used to harbor socialist ideas. But, it transpired that he was an old communist. Either that person or a friend of his approached the individuals and questioned them as to what was spoken at the small meetings. He thus gathered all that ‘information,’ mixing it with some falsehoods, reported me to the secret services of the Eastern front as “Velidov here is gathering all the bourgeois rich secretly and holding meetings with them.” General Avksentyev, deputy of Frunze, made a copy of what was reported and sent it to me as a display of friendship. He also wrote very unflattering words next to the name of Hakberdin, such as “Merzavets.” Later on I heard that Avksentyev called this person, or his friend working for him, and upbraided that person with: “Validov spoke with a few people and secured the peace, relieved us from maintaining garrisons. On the other hand, all you think about is creating restlessness in your own country, creating trouble for us. Get Lost!” Two months later, when Hakberdin heard that I was going to travel through Kargali village, he escaped somewhere, fearing that I would kill him. I left him a note as follows: “you were afraid that I would kill you. There is no need for that. You had already killed yourself. You advised that Caravansaray mosque ought to be demolished. Is there anyone who is crueller than those who advocate destruction of mosques and forbidding the mention of God’s name? [Here, Togan cites a sura from the Kur’an]. It is good that your advice is ignored; you are shameless. This is all I have to say to you.”

### *Strength of national autonomy ideal among the Baskurt—*

About this time, a group of Troopers asked for permission to speak with me. They were from the Third Regiment, and did not join Kolchak, but refused to accept the Reds either. They had remained in the Katay province forests, to await the return of the Baskurdistan Government. I received them with great respect, had a calf slaughtered for them at the village of Isey. After having their bellies filled, I embraced them. For the first time, I learned that the staff under the Command of Major Tagan was under siege by the White Regiments at Levze village, and after fighting them for two weeks, surrendered on 17 March. Major Tagan ordered these Troopers to go seek Zeki Velidi, despite the snow and winter. Tagan’s friend Harun Kurbanali established a cavalry company which he called Ural-Altay Cavalry Company, showed much bravery. But, while fighting the Reds at the

Beklemis Railroad Station he was martyred. The Troopers who were with him at that fighting hid in the Katay ulus forests. Major Tagan and Yoldibaev named other officer were sent to Eastern Siberia by Kolchak. Those two sent the ten Troopers they had with them, to join us. They hid in the forests, and found some of their friends who were likewise hiding in the same forests. After I arrived in Europe, I learned that Major Tagan had arrived in Far East in the company of some of his officers and Troopers of the Third Regiment. They were active for a long period, and finally arrived in Hungary with the aid of the Hugarian Ambassador in Tokyo. Later (in 1924) we were to speak in Germany and Hungary. A very brave soldier, Yoldibayev, collected some two hundred Troopers from among the Baskurt and the Tatars with the aid of the Japanese; he served them in cleaning-out the Honhoz bandits in Manchuria. I was now providing a feast in his village to these Troopers, who had insistently waited for their own government rather than giving up to the Whites or the Reds, was a matter to be greatly appreciated. Since I have witnessed several such examples, I believe that the Russians will not succeed in erasing the national feelings even after now.

### *Our Regiments, who were left with the Whites earlier, re-joining us—*

On 12 August, I went beyond the Eastern Front, meaning, inside the Kolchak Army, in order to collect the remnants of the Murtazin Brigade and bring back to our side. With me was Tahir Imekov, a close friend and he was from the Imek subdivision. We left our village and became guests in the house of Berguli Haci along the River Nugus, in the village of Taskicu. The Baskurts from the vicinity heard of our arrival and immediately gathered and slaughtered sheep. There was also plenty of kimiz. We stayed there one night, and rested. This was my only rest for those months. Otherwise, I was traversing the Fronts in Orenburg, Samara, Saranski, Moscow, and Ukraine. Many times I was travelling with two or three carriages being pulled by a single locomotive. I arrived from Bektas and became a house-guest at the home of Ebubekir Molla Huseyinov in the Times township. There, Broydo arrived from the First Red Army, from Orenburg, to accompany me to Murtazin. He was a Jewish Socialist Bund Party member, and an author. In the beginning, he was a Zionist Socialist. Earlier, we were together in Taskent, in 1917. Later he would go to Khiva and turn that place upside-down, mixing it-up, and he was to become an adviser to Stalin in the Nationalities Commissariat. If I had known that he was such a troublemaker, I would have requested from Frunze to send somebody else from the First Red Army. I only had a cavalry company of one hundred twenty Troopers accompanying me. We found Murtazin’s Brigade on the East of Yayik River, and to the East of Kizil Township, in the village of Nogaybek of the Christian Tatars. The Troopers of the Brigade was comprised of very handsome youths and volunteers. But, they did not have and ammunition for their cannon. Their clothes were torn to shreds. I gathered all and relayed to them the amnesty announced by the Baskurt Government. All rejoiced. The inhabitants of Nogaybek are those who were forcibly converted into Christianity. In their churches they would worship in

Tatar, but at home they would pray Moslem style, and consider themselves secret Moslems. I told them “now, you are free. There is no sense in hiding your religion. You can be openly Christian or Moslem.” But, they did not believe in the revolutions, nor were they giving-up their church. Murtazin’s Troopers burnt down the church in the village where we were. But, some women were seen crying. To me that meant they grew used to having their new religion or being of two religions during the past two hundred years of forced Christianity. Later on, they did not participate in our autonomy movement. Their national feelings were erased.

On 25 August, we crossed Murtazin’s Brigade to the West of Yayik. I sent them to Novosergiyevsk, to be refitted and rearmed. Broydo went with them. He advised and had the Turkistan Front accept his proposition of keeping this unit separate from the Baskurt Army. This showed to me and the Baskurt Government that the Soviets, after their refusal to let us settle in Orenburg, openly, for the second time, that their intentions were not good. We added additional Troopers to these poor Regiments. They became a Cavalry Brigade. After their rearming, Vatsetis sent them on to Ukraine Front.

### *My wedding—*

At the end of August, on my return, I got married at the Abulcelil village to Nefise, daughter of Imam Haci Muhammed Haci. They were from the Tungevir branch of the Baskurts. Haci Muhammed Haci was a close friend of my father. The bride’s mother was the daughter of Seyh Zeynullah, well known in Troysk. I had seen this girl when I was young, and had corresponded with her. The matter of having me marry her was spoken of in 1904; that was a sort of being engaged. Since large scale events intervened, the wedding was delayed. We had the wedding there. The weather was beautiful. On the night of the nuptials, five cavalry troopers from the unit guarding Magnitogorsk arrived unceremoniously, woke me and handed me a telegram. Trotsky in Moscow was calling me to Magnitogorsk to speak with me via the telegraph. I immediately left. Today, Magnitogorsk is a Soviet industrial town with a population of over half a million. At that time, Magnitogorsk was a Russian Cossack village with one hundred home structures. It was probably twenty-five kilometers from Abdulcelil, we arrived galloping. The matter was so critical, Trotsky was still awake. When I arrived, he immediately joined me at the other end of the telegraph line. He was requesting that I send the Third and the Fourth Infantry Regiments and the Third Cavalry Regiment we were establishing at Belebey to fight General Yudenich who was moving on to Leningrad. I indicated that their training and fitting were not yet completed. I promised to order Colonel Ahmerov to send two battalions in two weeks at this time. The same night, I called the Colonel to the telegraph, described the circumstances to him. He told me that even the two battalions were not yet ready. Next morning, I relayed that information to Trotsky who again came to

the telegraph. That was the beginning of Baskurt units’ fighting against Yudenic. I had not yet slept. I returned to Abdulcelil. I took my bride to a Baskurt village near Avziano-Petrovsk. We had our first night there. Since there was no telegraph nearby, Trotsky or Lenin could not reach me. After spending a few days there, I left a squad of guards to bring my bride. When I reached Sterlitamak, I was told Lenin was looking for me. A short while later he joined me at the telegraph, and repeated the same chant; he requested we definitely send an infantry and a cavalry regiment. He added that our loyalty to the revolution was going to be measured by that. I repeated my excuse that I could not send troops without training. I was digging-in my heels. My aim was not to sabotage as claimed by the Soviet historians, but to protect the Troopers who had just been inducted and not yet trained. Lenin and Trotsky’s aim was to use us for propaganda purposes, to scream “the Baskurts have arrived.” Trotsky had openly confessed that in his telegraphs. But, if we would not send any troops to Leningrad, they could cause trouble to our units in Ukraine. Raimov, who wrote our history, claimed that “Velidov was against sending his troops against Yudenic.” That is not true. Since we had signed a treaty with the Soviets, we would not even think of shirking our responsibility. Besides, we were determined, with all our might, to prevent the return of Tsarism in Russia.

In the telegram published in Lenin’s corpus (volume 35), the long admonitions laced with angry and profane words left no other alternative. In his telegram, he requested a portion of the Baskurt Army. We prepared those two Regiments without undue haste, battalion by battalion and company by company, sent them to Leningrad.

### *A poem by Sahib ibn Abbad read at the wedding—*

Four or five days after me, my new wife (Nefise) arrived in Sterlitamak. We settled in the home of a rich person by the name of Hadi Mahdum Nogayev whose house we had nationalized. Hadi Mahdum, whose father was Kemal Isan, was from the Nogay Ogullari. Kemal Isan was also the Seyh of my father. Hadi Mahdum was a pleasure seeker, and had passed away. We allowed his wife and children to remain in a portion of the large house. His wife served us with great pleasure. At that time, my friends Talha Resul and Fethulkadir Inan arrived from Eastern Baskurdistan. They were fond of imbibing. Talha was the uncle of my bride. He found his happiness in the basement among the countless wine bottles left from the deceased owner. He was writing poems on the labels of the bottles and sending them up to me. One evening, Fethulkadir (now a Professor in Ankara, Abdulkadir Inan) had lost the street and the house where he was staying because he was so drunk, slept on the street. At the time he was busy writing a play on the historical character Salavat. I went to Belebey by car, sent the Troopers home, I returned to Sterlitamak, invited my father, mother, siblings,



maternal uncle Habib Neccar, his wife, his children in order to perform the ceremony due to be performed by the groom's side. My maternal uncle brought what I wrote on religion and Islam in 1911, having found it among his papers, the story of which I had related earlier. My maternal uncle stated: "perhaps your liberal ideas about religion and Islam may now be useful." I responded with: "at that time, not performing namaz was a shame; now performing it is a shame." We spoke about religion and Islam's future at length. My father, mother, maternal uncle were very happy that I was now married, because the bride was the grandchild of the Seyh who they regarded as a saint. In the evening, I offered a glass of white wine to my maternal uncle. The former owner of the house Hadi Mahdum had kept the best wines and champagne in the basement of his house. What I offered my maternal uncle was the best of them. My maternal uncle took the glass to his hand seemingly intent on drinking it, and even appeared to drink it. In actuality, I had heard of my maternal uncle, when he was teaching in Kazan, he used to drink with his friends named Sadir and Abbas, and that became the topic of folk songs. I even mentioned that in my memoirs. It was a surprise and made me happy that my maternal uncle was now drinking in my wedding. I asked that: do you remember you had slapped my face because I was smoking tobacco?" He responded with: "if you see me smoking tobacco, you slap my face; but not drinking this clear wine presented in a similarly clear glass will be a sin." He recited an Arabic poem which I heard in my childhood: "we are confusing the clear wine with the clear glass; because of that we are confused; I do not know if there is wine and no glass, or there is a glass and no wine." That poem that my maternal uncle recited was very appropriate for the circumstances, and I liked it. Sahib ibn Abbad was a tenth century Arabic author and he was a vezir of the Abbasids. He was famed for his liberal ideas and his brave and happy behavior in society. His words about wine confusing the minds were accurately describing our gathering. My maternal uncle's and my father's participating in this gathering reciting the words of Sahib ibn Abbad, in an unusual manner, made me truly happy. I translated the words of the poem to the Baskurt and Tatar Communists present in the gathering; we raised our glasses once again to the honor of Sahib ibn Abbad. I stated: "this is one of the benefits of the Soviet regime; the Seyh and the murid tore the screen between them that existed falsely for years. Now the Seyh and the murid can together imbibe wine." They all laughed. But, according to what my father and the communist Rahmetullah explained to me the next day, my maternal uncle did not drink the wine, but transferred it to another glass when I had gone outside. In response to my maternal uncle reciting poems from the Arab poet Sahib ibn Abbad, I recited some poems from the Arabic poet Mutenebbi on wine. My maternal uncle was very happy that he taught me Arabic literature in the past. I told him that "my academic research remains in the domain of Russian. You having taught me Arabic literature did not help you." He responded with: "You brought back the Arabic divan of Zamansheri and the tract on the discussions between Teftazani and Seyid Serif Curcan when you travelled to Turkistan the first time. Is there a grander and more valuable present than those? I take pride in having trained you." That tract was written at the time of Temur, outlining the discussion between two

scholars on the introductory statement of the Bakara sura in the Kur'an, in Arabic. In that work, the finest points of Arabic rhetoric and philosophy were examined. Those sweet discussions in Sterlitamak were the last time I saw my maternal uncle. The next morning I left for Safran in the company of a battalion. Despite that, those talks never left my memory. Often times, I related those discussions to others. Once, I told Barthold in Istanbul during 1926 at my residence, at a dinner with wine, and he was elated. That was because that particular poem was translated by German Orientalist Ruckert into German in verse, but Barthold had never thought that the said rare example of Arabic literature would be familiar to the Mollas of the Ural Baskurts. Barthold also added that my maternal uncle's poetic understanding was very close to those of the Westerners.

Thirty seven years after the Sterlitamak wedding, in 1954 Germany, at a magnificent restaurant along the River Rhine, I told the same story at a gathering of Turcologists headed by the Danish scholar Professor Groenbach, holding a glass of very transparent Mosel wine in my hand. The French scholar J. Deny, who was also present, recited the excellent French translation of that poem by Sahib ibn Abbad by the French Arabist De Sacy in verse. My maternal uncle was very sincere in those talks. I asked him questions which he would not have answered in other times, and he responded with satisfaction. I asked him: "why did your youthful enjoyment of life, among the Tatars with your friends Abbas and Sadri, become a topic of a dastan amongst the Kazan residents? According to what Ahmed Sani states, the Tatars in Istanbul still know the poems about you. Why did you become a topic for a dastan; was your life of debauchery so much more outside the norms the Kazan residents had experienced?" My maternal uncle responded with: "we had fun occasionally, but, compared to the others, it was in a normal scale. The mollas, who were the enemies of Mercani wished to take revenge from him by making us infamous. In his works, Mercani stated 'Islam never rejects philosophy and wisdom; and all of sciences are auspicious. All three of us, regarding those words as authoritative and progressive, we wrote separate commentaries on them. We had written them in Arabic; those enemies regarded all that as Profane. There were fights with the other mollas and even fisticuffs." After arriving in Istanbul, I investigated this matter from Ahmet Sani and other former Kazan Residents living in Istanbul. I even obtained the lyrics of the said song from Iffet Hanim, the daughter of a Kazan Mirza, Terigul Omer Bey. My maternal uncle had passed away on 25 June 1925 and my father had written a good tract in the Chaghatay dialect on his life. In my father's letter on my maternal uncle's passing, my father stated: "your late maternal uncle received respect and was treated as a saint in the Yurmati lands. His burial received so many visitors from the outside that, no such burial crowd was seen in the recent years, especially during the Soviet period." He of course had many interesting aspects in his life; one day all that will become the subject of research. His son and daughter had studied in Russian schools and obtained rank in society.

As a result, an Arabic poem recited by my maternal uncle at my wedding in the fall of 1919, was being recalled pleasantly later. To that wedding, our Army Commanders in Ukraine and Musa Carullah from Petrograd had sent telegrams of congratulations.

## *Efforts to return to Orenburg—*

In Sterlitamak, our Government had established all administrative apparatus, and opened schools. Hospitals were opened by the medications and medical instruments I had sent from Ukraine. There was wide-spread activity. But, we were continually endeavoring for a return to Orenburg. Moscow had agreed to send our Army from Ukraine to Baskurdistan, to be added to the Turkistan Front, at my insistent requests, and the support of Frunze. While our Army was expected in Baskurdistan at the beginning of September, Trotsky and Vasetis diverted them to the Petrograd Front. They kept the Murtazin Brigade in Ukraine. They were working very hard to keep Murtazin away from us, and to cause him to cool from us. Murtazin was painfully aware of all this. Similarly, they were working hard to register some of the Baskurt intellectuals into the Communist Party, who had been in unity with each other, in order to cause mischief amongst them.

When the city of Aktube fell to the Reds, M. Kalenin, the head of the Soviet Government called for a meeting in Orenburg between 19-21 September to discuss the problems of the Eastern Front. Frunze, famed author Safarov, Communist leaders of Orenburg and Ufa provinces were present. I, too, was invited. I got on board the Fiat car presented to me by Lenin, left Sterlitamak toward Orenburg. I ordered horses to follow us, in case the gasoline was mixed and bad, and since the inner-tubes of the car tires were patched, so that we would not be left on a roadside immobile. The car broke-down several times on the way. The bad gasoline filling the exhaust-pipe was making sounds as if a cannon was being fired. When the inner tubes were punctured, we were repairing them. The Baskurt accompanying us were asking “why is this autonomy not moving forward?” They were confusing autonomy with automobile. Finally, we arrived in Orenburg. Here, the Safarov’s had outfitted an “Eastern Propaganda Train.” There was even an Arabic alphabet printing press in it. They also had representative who had arrived from India. They rose to speak during those sessions. Those individuals, whose names I forgot, mentioned that when they spoke with Lenin, there was a discussion of what had transpired between Velidov and Lenin concerning the Indian Mevlevi Bereketullah. Someone was translating their words from English into Russian.

It transpired that, these gentlemen did not realize that the Validov who was participating in the Orenburg Conference was the same one who spoke on Asian matters with Lenin. In return, it became apparent that these Indian gentlemen were close friends of Nehru; and I did not realize that. But, when I visited Delhi during the beginning of 1964, that gentlemen was not on this earth but heard that he earlier spoke of what he witnessed in Russia and spoke of me. Those Indians, in the presence of Kalenin, spoke

of the necessity of forming national military units from the Baskurts and other Eastern subdivisions (Ozbek, Kazak, and Turkmen). But the Orenburg Communist Party Chief Akolov and aforementioned Broyda were against that idea and the presentation I made there. They were complete Russian imperialists. On 26 October, Frunze invited me and other Baskurt and Kazak intellectuals to Orenburg to discuss the problems of Turkistan. He opined that both governments needed to be located in Orenburg. During those days, he published good articles on the topic of Turkistan. They were later published in his memoirs. These were good turn of events, but were always being overturned in Moscow; the Orenburg and Ufa Communists were doing their best to overturn them.

## *Riza Kadi, Zakir Remeyev—*

This time around, I spoke twice with the famed scholar of the Eastern Turks Rizeaeddin Fahreddin, and the great poet of the same, Zakir Remeyev. Rizaeddin (Riza) Kadi stated that he was praying for our initiatives, and that his sons ought to work with us. When Riza Kadi was leaving through the door, he held my head; his eyes were filled with tears. That was due to wondering ‘what will happen to us in the future.’ I told this scholar and a philosopher of our people: “we will search for the path to enlightenment by throwing ourselves into the fiery flames of life. Perhaps the next generation will benefit from that, provided we can prevent the death of the feeling of manhood. If that feeling remains alive, we will undoubtedly be a free nation.” Rizaeddin Fahrettin left a very good impression on me, despite his teary eyes, his demeanor of peace and representing centuries of wisdom, and his ability to work in his rich library in an era such as this. Even after we parted, I dwelled on his sweet words. Riza Kadi, on his way to the Mecca Congress, stopped over in Istanbul during 1926 and remembered our talks in Orenburg longingly. He related the aforementioned words to the assembled persons making us very happy. I saw the former millionaire Zakir Remeyev at that time or during the summer when I visited Orenburg the second time, who was living in a modest home. He was enchanted with the Chaghatay poet Ali Shir Navai. He told me that he had written a response to the poem I had recited to him twelve years ago. He was ill, and the pillow on which he had laid his head was not worthy of him. He stated that he was not sorry to have lost his wealth, but he was greatly worried about the fate of our people. He was living in the city of Orsk. As I was taking my leave, I recalled a piece from Ali Shir Navai: “you will say life is heavier than death; tears, the result of sinister sighs. Or, is it my lone head I laid on a stone calling it a pillow or a stone under my head filled with worry.” The pillow under his head resembled a stone. I left a certain amount of gold and paper money indicating, if necessary, I would help him.

## *Prisoners from Turkiye—*

Upon my return to Sterlitamak, the problem of Turkish prisoners faced me. They had arrived from Siberia, gathered between Ufa and Samara, asked me to find a way for them

to reach their homes. I obtained an order from Trotsky for securing railroad transport carriages for one hundred twenty soldiers, and sent a portion of them to Astrakhan and the rest to Tashkent. However, I had forcibly obtained the locomotives for those trains from the normal and military trains. All that caused arguments with Lenin and Trotsky at the telegraph-head. They regarded that move as some sort of banditry. Frunze thought I did the right thing. His trust and friendship made me think that if he was, and Rykov and their like were at the center of decision-making in the Soviet system, keeping their words and applying the written orders, I would not have chosen open rebellion. I had told the *Pravda* newspaper reporter that it was necessary to keep the word given when dealing with us Easterners. But, Broyda's report, the original of which we had obtained in manuscript form, and portions of which were published by the Soviets in the recent times, was much more important for Stalin in Moscow than the activities of Frunze, concerning the organization of Russian communists in Russian provinces bordering Baskurdistan. Broyda stated in his report: "Orenburg became the common point of agreement amongst Russian Moslems. Validov ought to be kept away. Murtazin ought to be encouraged to oppose him. Means need to be found to cause divisiveness between the Kazaks and the Baskurt. Neployev did that, and he became a truly great politician. Validov must be isolated from all other Turks." The Neployev mentioned here by Broyda was the governor of Elizabeth, daughter of Peter Grozny, who lived in Orenburg to administer the East, and later served in Istanbul as a diplomat with great successes for his own country.

### *Baskiropomosc—*

These intrigues came to a head, in a worst way, in 'Help to the Baskurts.' We had submitted the list of Baskurt property plundered by the Soviet Army to Lenin during the past May. Soviet Council of Ministers inspected the list on 6 October, and agreed to advance one hundred fifty million Rubles, and that they would pay more. Lenin and Stalin sent telegrams to us, as if it was an unequalled great grace they were granting us. In order to show that it was an affair by the Soviets, to gain the hearts of the Baskurts, Lenin sent some of his close friends to oversee that distribution. A little later it became apparent that the said money was allocated to break the unity of the Baskurts and to establish 'committee of poor' and communist cells. At the same time, Stalin had sent secret agents to be employed as propaganda spearhead among the temporary Western immigrants who were sent to Baskurdistan during the Great War. Their administration was trusted to Samoylov, sent by the Communist Central Bureau solely for the purpose of establishing the Communist Party organization. He was a close friend of Lenin and Stalin, later published his memoirs (1933) under the title "The Little Baskurdistan 1917-1920" explaining in detail the lessons from his activities. Even though I knew those activities were going to cause unrest in our country because of these inauspicious aims, I left for Petrograd Front in order to oversee the military units sent there. All business was left on the shoulders of Haris Yumagulov, who was

the Head of the Revcom. On the day I was leaving, I heard that Orenburg Soviet Chief Akulov, commenting on my sending the Turkish prisoners of war to Tashkent, regarding that act as panturkism, which he wrote as an intelligence warning to the Party Headquarters. I was very upset. Moreover, the business of 'helping the Baskurts' was already bothering me. All that meant, whatever the Soviets were doing under the guise of good deeds, there was hidden a big injustice.

### *Our activities in Petrograd—*

I had taken with me several trains full of foodstuffs, in order to help our army. Petersburg (Leningrad) was hungry. Everyone was looking at the trains with great hunger, since they were full of meat and fats. My old friend Professor Samoylov, because he had brought a sack of potatoes from another province, was caught, and was thrown into the basement of the Nikolayevsk train station. I had them released, and gave them meat and fats. I also provided others, such as Barthold, Arabist Krachovski, Mogolist Valdimirtsev, Iranist Rosenberg, with meat, fats, and sugar. Because of that, those scholars were grateful to me until the end of their lives. When Barthold visited Istanbul in 1926, he was openly stating that. The night I arrived, Lenin's old friend and the Chief of Komintern, Zinoviyev sent for me. He was also residing in the Astoria Hotel where we were staying. There were Soviet Commanders present in that meeting. They had exaggerated, and used that news for propaganda purposes, the arrival of the Baskurt units. I spoke of the needs of Baskurdistan, and stated that we needed to benefit from a portion of the plenty of scientific materials found in Leningrad. I asked for medical instruments, some clinics, printing presses, typewriters, hotel equipment, iron construction machinery, as I did in Ukraine. I was told to take away whatever I wanted. We were filling the trains that brought foodstuffs, with all that, and sending back. We also sent several specialist libraries. We constituted a list of Professors and the necessities in order to establish an institution of higher education and a school of medicine as well as a statistical administration in Sterlitamak. There were many specialists who wanted to join us, because of the hunger in the city. Musa Carullah Efendi, the Imam of the Petrograd mosque, was the person who was happiest because of the good will our Troopers have created in Petrograd. He stated: "Petrograd is a city of laborers and communists. They were going to take this city easily, expelling Yudenic, even without your Regiments. But this created goodwill is a good opportunity; make use of it." He aided us in obtaining some of the educated medical doctors and Professors and sending some of the laboratories. I spoke with Zinoviev several times. He had differences of opinion and competition amongst themselves with Stalin and others. He would tell me those, and wished to gain me on his side. The Red soldiers stationed here would tear the featherbeds to make clothes from the fabric, letting the feathers fly in the streets. They would break the bathrooms and toilettes, valuable mirrors and lamps. Our Baskurt Guards were much more decent and very disciplined in comparison. However, our Troopers quartered in the Graf Rumiyansev



Palace had looted that place with my acquiescence. In a portion of that palace, at one time, the Japanese Embassy was located, and left their possessions behind when they left. Among them, there were embroidered items for presentation, silver pens, embroidered notebooks for diary keeping, picture albums. I had distributed those to our officers. While taking possession of that wealth, the Troopers would bring clothes from the wardrobe of Graf's wife, valuable furs, and other expensive clothes for my wife Nefise who had come along with me to Petrograd. We did not accept any of that, not even a pin. Zonoviev later learned of that, and spoke of me with pride. A few months later, the Japanese Government demanded reparations from the Soviets. Lenin wished to collect from us. But, when we did not pay, Lenin reportedly stated: "all those possessions are now in the stomach of the wolf."

Two of our Infantry and two Cavalry Regiments from the Ukraine Front were sent to Pskov Front to Petrograd during 16-17 September, on the orders of Trotsky. From the Troopers sent from Belebey under the Command of Colonel Hasan Ahmerov, three Infantry Regiments were being formed. The total roll comprised of eleven thousand men. Combat Troops amounted to six thousand two hundred thirty three. The rest constituted the supply Troops; they did not enter into firefights. They were parading these troops as a matter of propaganda on the streets. Despite that, since the Baskurts were regarded as a military race among the Reds, they were showing their sympathy, or were jealous of them. At the same time that the Yudenic forces attached exaggerated import to the Baskurt Troopers as "wild Baskurts" (dikiye Baskiry) became apparent when I was able to inspect their archives at the Hoover Institution Library. A separate war region was allocated to the Baskurts, and they constituted a separate group. The Headquarters was established in the Pulkov observatory, some fifteen kilometers from Petrograd. On the day of our arrival, there were severe fighting between our Third Cavalry and Third Infantry Regiments and the Yudenic forces, near Tsarskoye Selo. Our casualties in this full day of fighting amounted to seventy, including the wounded. There were few dead. One officer was wounded. Two days later, again severe fighting took place near Kulma village. That day we suffered one hundred wounded. None died. After that, since the Front was dissolved, were pulled back to the barracks in Petrograd. In the first day's fighting, of the seventy casualties, some wounded and prisoners taken by Yudenic forces escaped and returned to their units. I visited the wounded in the hospital, distributed them the presents and food we brought from our country. Yudenic was done when Jamburg passed to the hands of the Reds on 16 November. Even though the Baskurt units were intended for the Turkistan Front, the permission was not forthcoming. A portion of them were sent to the Muraviev Barracks in Novgorod. The history of these battles was written by the Political Commissar of the Baskurt Group, Hidayet Sadiyev and the Commander of the Group, Alisev, under the title of "History of the Baskurt Revolution." I still have the manuscript, but it still awaits publication. In that manuscript it is written that the eleven thousand Baskurt Troopers caused horror in Yudenic, as well as feeding the hope that these Troopers someday may turn their weapons against the Reds to bring back the Tsar, in a milieu found among the Petrograd residents. On the other hand,

the group's definitive action and manhood, despite there were no losses, raised the enmity and jealousy of the 7<sup>th</sup> Red Army, and that caused the Baskurt being sent to Novgorod Province. My friend, author Fethulkadir Suleyman (Abdulkadir Inan) was constantly with me during these times. We borrowed many historical works from Petrograd Public Library, Saltikov Library. We made many photocopies. At the time my aide-de-camp Ibrahim Ishakov was with me, as he would be in Turkistan later on.

## *Again Sterlitamak and again Moscow—*

We left Petrograd on 15 November, and arrived in Sterlitamak on 17 November. Large 'war booty' trains followed us. On 17 November 1917, the Baskurt Autonomy was announced. We celebrated the anniversary. A lot of alcohol was consumed in the house that day. My father apparently arrived in the house that day, but when he observed the drinking and merrymaking, stated 'estagfurullah' [showing his humbleness] and left. He arrived again the next morning. He told me a story from Attar's book *Tezkire-i Evliya*. Caliph Omar and Abdurrahman ibn Avf happened to enter a group of Moslems' drinking party. Upon noticing that, Omar stated that "it is a sin to pry into the affairs of sin, let us leave." So they left. Consequently, my father had left in order not to embarrass us when he had arrived during the evening. I responded with: "father, I am embarrassed that you expect to find the embarrassment of the time of Saint Omer here today. We no longer have any of that left."

I could not remain in Sterlitamak long. We went to the VIIth Soviet Congress to meet in Moscow between 5-9 December. Prior to my arrival in Sterlitamak (during 8-11 November) First Communist Party meeting of Baskurdistan had met. Led by Yamagulov, Baskurt Communists fought with Russian Communists. There were approximately seven hundred Russian Communists in Baskurdistan. They regarded us Baskurts, those nationalists without a party, as the temporary administrators and themselves as the true owners. Among those elected to represent our Government at the Moscow Congress, and also participate in the Communist Party to meet concomitantly, my friend Abdulkadir Inan was also elected. From Kazakhstan, Ahmet Baytursun and from Bukey-Orda, Tungacin had arrived in Moscow. They were my old friends. At the Party Congress, as well as the Congress of the Soviets, decisions were going to be made concerning the oppressed nations. So, we were offered time to make speeches. The Kazak delegation informed Stalin that whatever I was going to say would be sufficient for them. In the name of Kazak residents, Seyidgaliev volunteered to make statements. We (Kazak, Ozbek, and Baskurts) gathered to write down what I was going to say in the name of all of us. The "Seventh All Russian Soviet Congress Stenographic Records" contains (Pp. 17-18), in Russian, the speech I gave. The said volume is in the collection of the Stanford University Hoover War Museum. In summary, the contents are as follows: "we are loyal to the idea of world revolution. We, Baskurt, Kazak (Kirgiz) and All Turkistan is Moslem, but not bigoted. Mecca and Medina today is occupied by England. Since the culture of the Eastern

Turkistan is different than Islam and Iran, whatever happens in Mecca and Medina is not causing great excitement amongst us. We, as neighbors of Russian proletariat, will deal with our internal problems.” It was Georgian Communist, friend of Stalin, Eliava who suggested touching upon the English and the Hejaz problem. We, on the other hand, refrained from making a foreign policy statement that would have aided the Soviet policies such as “we Eastern Russian Moslems condemn the English along with the World Moslems.” The Kazan Communist Seyidgaliev, for whatever reason, did not like our declaration (Pp. 15-17), and went on to state that the English occupied Mecca and Medina, and Abrurresid Ibrahim arrived in Kazan, and excitedly told everyone this at a place known as Otpazari, thus trying to blame the English. After the Congress, Eliava called me and Ahmet Baytursun, and indicated that he liked the speech, especially it ‘not touching the soap and the water.’ He specified that it was a diplomatic speech. As it was reported to us, Stalin stated “as if they have a separate policy,” meaning, he did not like it. Later on, Sultanaliyev told us. He, on the other hand, was accepting of our ideas.

This Congress was extremely crowded. At the time, the Mensheviks had not yet cut their ties with the Communists. The Jewish leaders, such as Martov, Lieber and Dan participated in the Congress. Lenin had ridiculed them by placing them in the Box of the Tsar. Amongst them, and some SRs, the tendency to merge into the Communists was strong. Samara Komuc Government Foreign Minister Vediniyapin was one. He saw me. His moral was depleted. That was because the Communists evaluated each person surrendering themselves to them with his future value to the Soviet cause. For example, Lenin regarded us as the men of the future due to his Eastern Policies, and valued us. Vediniyapin was regarded as, regardless of how valuable he was in himself, ‘his goose is cooked’ in a brutal manner. That was the cause of his sadness. I told him that “in Samara, Ufa and Orenburg, I took you to be a brave human; I see that events have bent you. You ought not to take them personally.” Later on, I heard that this revered person took his own life. I also spoke with Cernov, who was our guest, the Chairman of the SRs.

### *My seeing Chaliapin—*

At that meeting, we attended, as a whole, a grand concert. At that occasion, Chaliapin sang the Russian “Dubinushka” song. The approximately two thousand attendees were accompanying the chorus line as one voice; despite that, Chaliapin’s voice and the words he sang were still discernible. Even Lenin and the Mensheviks had joined in. After the concert, I went to see Chaliapin in a small room behind the curtain. In the past, everybody complained of his extreme haughtiness. He did not behave in such a way toward me. Instead, he was very mild. During 1918, in order for them to broker an understanding between us and the Soviets I had named Chaliapin and Maxim Gorki to represent us. As soon as he saw me, he joked, laughing “you wrote me a letter, but I could not have helped. If you are going to do something similar

in the future, do not write me.” Meaning, he regarded me as a future rebel. But, he made that joke, because we were alone. He added: “I am joking; I surmise you will be well-behaved from now on. But, it is not easy to endure these (Bolsheviks). Later, he left Russia and never returned. In 1935, I saw him in Kitzbuhl, Austria. I had first met Chaliapin in 1915, at Mosta-Maki, when I was with Maxim Gorki. I listened to him since 1910 as an opera artist. I loved his role in Tsar Boris Godunov, and would applaud him excitedly.

### *Talks with Lenin—*

At the end of this Congress, Lenin called me. It transpired that he wanted to talk about the writings of an Indian in favor of liberty, Muhander Partol. This person analyzed the issues of Central Asia from the perspective of non-Moslem Indian point-of-view, and suggested what the Soviets ought to do. Trotsky also told me about that writing. These Indians, Muhander Partol and his friends were expending maximum effort to overthrow the British yoke, to join the Moslems with the Hindus for the purpose. Two months prior to my talks with Lenin on this matter, he had sought me out through the Baskurdistan representative in Moscow, and we talked on many problems. I indicated to him that while it is important for a union of Hindu and Moslems, it was also necessary for the Soviets to recognize the political rights of the Central Asians and drew their attention to the fact that it is also important from the point of view of Indian independence. In the long article, Muhander Partol concentrated on the following: He proposed the establishment of a Hindu Nest in Turkistan. He named me in his writing. I thought that the real reason why Lenin gave me these two writings on Central and South Asia to me for comments was his thoughts toward how he could make use of them in the future. While we were discussing this matter with Lenin, I told him: “Afghans are going to give the privilege of constructing a railroad from Quetta via Kandahar to Kushka on the Russian border to the British. Are there no objections from the Russian side to this? More than likely, the region where this railroad goes through will fall under the Indian and British cultural influence in Afghanistan.” Lenin, without hesitation and off-the-cuff responded with: “what if that happens? They will introduce capitalism in that region. At the same time, a labor proletariat will also be formed. And, that will become ours. Capitalists will not carry coal to their locomotives.” I liked the fact that Lenin was such a realist and optimist. In the same meeting, Lenin queried me about the literature on Marxism, almost to the point of examination, how much I have been following it. In response, I showed him a work published by an author named Ulyanov on the ethnography of the non-Russians in the Kazan Province and the Chuvash. From this work, it was apparent that the author knew Tatar and Chuvash. I asked Lenin if that author was a relative of his. Was there a Tatar or Chuvash in his family? Lenin responded that he had not looked into his own family lineage, but he would, because he had not heard anyone from his family who may have published such a work. These talks were very sincere

and sweet, and Lenin learned that I worked on scientific topics and ethnography. He stated: “Unfortunately, I never was involved in those topics; only economics were my interest.” I touched upon our republic and our future. He responded with: “there will be consultations in the commission of Kirghiz and Baskurt, headed by Kalenin and Rykov. You can sort this matter there.” He avoided expressing his own thoughts. He did that previously as well. I thought that he was not in favor. I left those discussions sad. While I was leaving, he stated: “I wish you were a member of the Party; I would very much like to work with you in that context.” I thought if he was sincere in his statement of “I wish.” More than likely he spoke with me without formality that day. I asked clarifications on some points of the work he published *Against the Current* and his volume *Materialism and empereo Criticism* which was written under the pen name Ilyin in 1909. About his last work, he asked me when I had read it. I told him I read it in Ufa during 1915. He stated: “that means, you read it when it was forbidden to read it under the Tsarist regime.” He asked me if I knew “Ilyin was me?” I told him that Tsurupa had told me. It drew attention to the fact that I knew Tsurupa, one of his closest friends, back in 1915. He asked me: “were you a member of the Party?” I told him: “no, I only knew Tsurupa, and he trusted me; he used to give me such banned literature.” Lenin stated: “that book is now quite old. I hope that work did not change your view of religion.” I said: “no, in order to work for the cause of the social revolution it is not necessary to believe in the formation of the universe by chance; I believe the universe is created consciously.” Lenin responded: “that is also the belief of many of our old friends. That is no barrier to becoming a Party member. I like our sincere talks.” We talked all this after he rose from his desk, while we were both standing. It was apparent that they were intent on making me a Party member.

## *The issue of joining Baskurdistan and Kazakistan—*

Two days after those talks, Stalin repeated Lenin’s words to me, in the company of Kazak author Ahmet Baytursunov, and stated: “even though both of you are nationalists, we regard you as individuals who can adopt the social revolution idea, even though somewhat different than us. In both of your countries, a party life is beginning. We wish to see you in that organization. If the extra-party events and personalities do not take the form of an organization, they will be overtaken by events. Even though you are not Communists, I would like to work with you as Party members. As you already know, there are plenty of members from the Russians to all the others like you in the Party.” We told him that we would consult our friends and would respond. We knew that this invitation was being extended in order to make us a Party Member to take away our freedom by subjecting us to Party discipline. We spoke amongst us. Earlier, we had worked to have the Erk Socialist Party enter into Comintern as an independent member. Now, we proposed to join Uccuz from the Kazaks; Tude of the Ozbeks with Erk, and enter Comintern as “Southwest Native Communist Parties Union.” Stalin

stated: “those matters are easy.” But, they did not accept our party as a member of Comintern as an independent unit. As a result, we became direct members of the Communist Party. Though the Eastern Communist Center, under the direction of Sultanaliyev was openly and seriously conducting propaganda against religion and Islam, Stalin ordered Turkistan, Kazak and Baskurt Communists not to propose that.

The Kirgiz (Kazak)-Baskurt Commission, founded under the direction of Kalinin and Rykov, consisted of two meetings at the end of December. This Commission was ostensibly going to discuss the joint problems of Turkistan, Kazakistan and Baskurdistan, how they were going to cooperate, establishment of Orenburg as their joint capital, and national army issues. In this Commission that regulated our relations with the Soviets, in addition to the Ufa Communist Party Chiefs of Kalinin and Rykov (among them, Eltzen), I represented Baskurdistan, along with Fethulkadir Suleyman (Professor Abdulkadir Suleyman), my aide-de-camp Abdurresit Bekbabov; from Kazakistan, Ahmet Baytursun; from among Turkistan Russian Communists, Korostilov, Muhammedcan, Huseyin Kincin, Abdulkirim Bukeyhanov, Tungacin; from the Ozbeks, Aralbayoglu Otarbay, Ibrahimoglu Huseyin participated. During the first session, we won. For the Second Session, the Russian members indicated they had invited to speak on behalf of Moscow Communist Party Center, the Tatar Communists Seyyidgaliev, Borundukov and Samil Osmanov. Even though the Kazakistan and Ozbekistan representatives protested that this Commission was established for the sole purpose of discussion and resolving the problems of Turkistan, Kazakistan and Baskurdistan with the Russian immigrants, and that Tatars did not have any such problems, all that did not matter. Tatar Communists were already invited. They were injected into the meetings. It was Stalin who did this.

A portion of the matters to be discussed in this meeting were already touched upon earlier as different agenda items during the First Baskurdistan Communist Party Congress that had met 1-11 November 1919 in Sterlitamak, as well as at the Moslem (or, East) Division Communist Organization Second Congress that met in Moscow during 22-24 November, and at the Seventh Soviet Congress. On the one hand, in his long speech to the Eastern Communists Congress, Lenin had addressed the issue of independence of the eastern branches (Lenin Corpus, Volume XXX, Pp. 130-141). At the Seventh Soviet Congress (5 December), a decision in the form of a declaration was issued under the title “Concerning the Oppressed Nations” stating the independence of the Eastern Russian Moslems and that they were taken under the guarantee of the Soviets in gaudy words. On the other, after the invasion of Aktube at the beginning of October, the Kazakistan Revkom (revolutionary Committee) government and Baskurdistan Government were removed to Sterlitamak. That policy, in addition to inserting a Russian Province centered in Orenburg in between, had been applied in reality. The arming of the Russian immigrants in Kazakistan and in Baskurdistan also began to be speeded, independent of our national armies. The Soviet historian Raimov (P. 361) calls that “the Party’s policy to isolate Velidov, and to separate the people from the bourgeois strata.” On one hand, during those struggles, Kalinin, taking up the issue of Tatar-Baskurt Union, had the pre-conditioned



Tatar Communist Seyidgaliev state that the union of Baskurdistan and Kazakistan in a joint center would be an unnatural wedding. The type of men in the mold of the aforementioned Broyad and Pestkovsky, did everything they could in order to replicate what Niployev did during the time of Petro and Elizabeth, to separate the Baskurt and the Kazaks. When I showed their writings to Stalin, he stated “absurd” as if he was insulting them, “what value do these have?” On the other hand, they did not allow the Baskurdistan and Kazakistan having Orenburg as the joint capital. They even rejected the Tatar-Baskurt thesis, had the same Tatar Communists and Seyidgaliev repeat that rejection. Rykov was behaving amenably at the Kalenin Commission toward us, but his word did not carry weight. Aktube was chosen for Kazakistan and Sterlitamak for Baskurdistan capitals. In that manner, this Commission solved the problem of the union of the Eastern Turks, in favor of the Russianness.

But, on this issue, not all the Tatar Communists were united in that thought. Mir Seyid Sultanaliyev had let Kalinin know in writing that he had ideas other than the three friends named. It was because of this: prior to the meeting of the Commission, Ufa and Orenburg Provincial Communist Party Chairmen Akulov and Eltzen saw Sultanaliyev and asked him to vote against the unification of Baskurt-Kazak administrations. Along those lines, they would look at warmly toward a proposal of Tatar-Baskurt union, if an Orenburg Russian Province and an Ural Russian Province were to be established, meaning Baskurdistan and Bukey-Orda were going to be separated by two provinces. At that point, Sultangaliyev understood that the objective of the Commission meeting under Kalinin was to separate the Central Asian Moslems from the Idil-Ural Moslems forever by inserting two Russian provinces in between. But, Sultanaliyev avoided telling his three friends (Seyidgaliev, Samil Osmanov, and Burundukov) that the intensions of the TSK (the Central Committee of the Soviets) were bad. Sultanaliyev told me all this five months after the meeting of the Commission. Besides, Sultanaliyev had proposed, back in November 1919, at the Eastern Communists Second Congress, the establishment of the Little Baskurdistan from what is left over after the establishment of the Tatar-Baskurt Republic. In other words, Sultanaliyev had accepted the idea of Little Baskurdistan and Orenburg being under the administration of Kazak-Baskurt. In the recent years, thanks to the serious publications of Mr. A. Bennigsen and Mme. Lemerrier-Quelquejay, the “Sultangaliyev Movement” has become known in the West. When Sultanaliyev himself was executed in 1929, and his close friends in 1937 [sic; different dates provided by various sources], *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* newspapers reported that “his guilt was proven that he had collaborated with Validov who lives in foreign countries and acts as an agent of imperialists.” In reality, however, there was no contact between myself and Sultanaliyev after I left Russia. On the other hand, the accusations leveled against us collaborating on the formation of a national ideology and program is true. This collaboration of ideology was formed at this Kalenin Commission, when the Russian policy was formulated to separate the Tatars and Baskurts totally and finally, from the Kazaks along the River Yayik by inserting two Russian provinces in between, all the way to the Caspian Sea. Until that day, Sultanaliyev was handling

only the Tatar-Baskurt problem. After that incident, he accepted the fact that Little Baskurdistan needed to be unified with the Kazaks. My difference from Sultanaliyev was this: I was working on the issue of the Eastern Turks, while Sultanaliyev was concentrated on the Caucasus and Crimean Turks and wanted to unify them. But, he was unable to express what that unification was going to consist. That idea of unification was left over from the Tsarist period, from the Bureau of Moslem Fraction of the State Duma, and Russian Moslem Congress, and finally the idea left over from the *Tercuman* newspaper of “territorial Union of Moslems.” I also wanted to speak with the other Tatar Communists after the Kalinin Commission meetings, in a brotherly way, in order to learn of their ideas concerning the economic and vital aspects of the proposed Tatar-Baskurt Union. But, there was no consensus or express plan. They even wanted to include the Kasim Tatars, who were living near Moscow, to that union. In those regards, Sultanaliyev did not possess a different, clear idea than the others. Another feature of Sultanaliyev different from us was that he had joined communism with sincere belief, and had become a true enemy of religion, not like those of us who did out of necessity. The Russian members of the commission were nowhere near discussing the issue of Russian immigrants in Baskurdistan and Kazakistan. As a result, all this displayed the fact that the Kalinin Commission was going to follow the Russian policies established during the Tsarist period, and would finally remove the said republics. Raimov (P. 301) summarized the negotiations as follows: “though Validov lost the struggle within the Party organization, he did not give up the idea of continuing with it. He had sent the participants of the Second Moslem Communist Congress held in Moscow a telegram: ‘you must insist on the formation of a Kazak-Kirgiz Government to be headquartered in Orenburg, before the Soviet Government.’ He was proposing to join the Baskurt Republic with the Kirgiz (Kazakistan) Republic. That meant the joining of the Bourgeois nationalist Velidovists in Baskurdistan with the Kazakistan bourgeois nationalists of the Alas-Orda. At the time, Validov had already contacted the agents of imperialist English and had already proposed the formation of the federated Central Asian bourgeois republics. Now, in 1919, Validov is endeavoring to unite Baskurdistan and Kazakistan by military force, and leaning on English help as if it is the help of Türkiye, which they call a brother, working to separate from the revolutionary Russia.” According to Raimov, my cooperation with Enver Pasa in Turkistan was determined at that time, and supposedly Enver Pasa arrived in Russia by that agreement. In today’s Russia, this is the way history is written, with such falsifications. Otherwise, the Soviet historian also perfectly knows that Enver Pasa was not in Russia at the time, and that I had nothing to do with English imperialism.

On the decisions of the Kirgiz-Baskurt Commission, Raimov stated: “at this commission, Velidovist ideas of separating Baskurdistan from the revolutionary Russia was fully observed. Even though the majority of Commission members decidedly rejected the idea of Baskurdistan merging with Kazakistan, according to the dictum of the TSK (Communist Party Central Committee), or with any other country, it provided Baskurt ulus with the opportunity to live independently by itself.”

## *The problem of Bukhara—*

While I was in Moscow, Trotsky and Mme. Stasova spoke with me to determine the removal of Bukhara Khanate, whether or not I could help with the Baskurt forces, and what I would want in return. In response I told them that it was necessary to remove the Emir. The condition was that it was also necessary for Bukhara to maintain the current semi-autonomous status, a national democratic government to be established based on a national army. On those points I consulted several times with the Bukhara seekers of independence Mirza Abdulkadir and his father Mirza Muhiddin. I indicated to them that the offer ought to be accepted only under the conditions I proposed; but, their only motivation was their hatred of the Emir. They had the idea that no conditions to be proposed to the Russians.

At the time, only God and I knew what was burning inside me. I was not telling anything to anyone. On the one hand, I was behaving that I was sincere in my talks with Stasova on the Bukhara problem; on the other, I was wondering how I could support the uprising taking place in Turkistan. Lenin, with whom I spoke sweetly a month ago, now appeared as the prince of two-faces. Stasova told me that I needed to speak with Lenin on the issue of Bukhara. I told her: “all right.” So we spoke. The consultation was short. I was content to repeat what I already told the Politburo. Concerning the Kalenin Commission, I blamed the Provincial Russian Communists of Ufa and Orenburg, stating that “the results had become a tragicomedy and that you are the only one who can sort it out.” These talks were the first time I was not sincere with Lenin. I lost all the respect I once felt for him. He offered me his hand, stating “let us talk” on the documents he had given me for my examination and analysis. Some evenings there were meetings with Russian friends with alcohol. The Communist friends I knew closely did not know anything about the flames in my heart lit by the Kalenin Commission related issues. In order not to let anything out, I would not drink and kept my mouth shut. I behaved as if nothing happened and as if I only did not get along with Eltzen and Akulov.

## *The thought of uprising again—*

About that time, the Afghan Acting Foreign Minister Muhammed Veli Han and his deputy, who later became Minister of Education and Ambassador to Türkiye and Hejaz, arrived in Moscow. I spoke with them several times. I was present in the dinners honoring them. But, when the Foreign Affairs Commissar Cicerin invited me to be more deeply involved in foreign affairs, I avoided doing so on the excuse of military affairs. The results of the Kalenin Commission had disappointed me to the point of no longer caring about the Russian foreign and general political matters. Lenin had tasked me with the duty of analyzing Muhander Prato's reports and the problem of the English in Afghanistan. I was going to speak with him about those. But, as a result of the other commission's decisions, I regarded going back to Lenin unnecessary. I

wrote down my thoughts on the reports and sent them to him, and went to Petrograd from Moscow. After settling military matters concerning our military forces there, I left for our country with two or three trains full of soldiers and with my friends, in mid-February. For me, Moscow was now a center of lies, fraud and fake. While I was seeing our Afghan friends at the Moscow railroad station, I advised them, in the carriage allocated to them that they could not trust the promises they had received, in the Arabic language.

Our return to our country took a long time. At that time, a great inflation had Russia in its grip. The paper money I was allocated from Moscow for government and army expenses was large enough to fill a railroad carriage. By the time we arrived in Sterlitamak, they would have lost quite a bit of value. Our delay in our travels was due to the harsh winter, with non-stop snow storms. Between Moscow and Samara, our train stopped because of snow and storm. We remained there for a full week. Since the soldiers emptied their bladders and their food remnants on the carriage wheels, our train was covered in ice and could not move. We had picks and shovels brought from the surrounding villages to overcome the ice, but our efforts could not move the trains. Raimov, who wrote my activities of the period in a five hundred page book, had some truth in his falsifications. For example, he stated that “Validov became the head of the Turkistan Basmachi Movement. He had decided upon that at the time of the Kalenin Commission.” I had broached the subject of Turkistan case to three of my closest officers at the time. I gave Masalsky's *Turkistan Ulkesi* [The Land of Turkistan] book to my aide-de-camp Ibrahim Ishakov, and advised him to learn the contents. He asked: “why?” When I told him that perhaps we would go there, his response was “let us do that.” That was what we had decided in Rozayevka in mid-February of 1920.

## *Talks with Trotsky—*

At that time, Trotsky arrived in Rozayevka in his private train, and was on his way to Samara. He could not leave because of the snow either, and remained there for three days. Budyoni, who later became a Marshal, was there as well, and he called on me. Our mandatory stop at Rozayevka was a good opportunity for me to get to know Trotsky and his ideas. His carriage was previously one used by the Tsar. The radios were functional and he was sending orders everywhere by them. We spoke repeatedly. Trotsky was handling military affairs as well as writing one of his books. He was really energetic and a great organizer. He told me that he did not agree with the decisions of the Kirgiz-Baskurt Commission, and agreed with Rykov, told Lenin that they ought to make use of me especially on the Eastern matters, behave with sincerity toward me. It was Stalin who was insistent on separating Baskurts from the Kirgiz and Turkistan. He also told me that he was not happy with Stalin, and their fights between themselves. Zinoviev told me many times all about those matters in Petrograd. I told him that it was a great mistake to send our troops, who were refitted in Saranski during the summer, to Ukraine instead of the Turkistan Front under Frunze. He stated: “that

was a necessity. I agreed with Lenin that we needed to fight Denikin first. Yes, I had agreed to send your soldiers to the Turkistan Front from there, and I had told you that in person. Even though I issued the order to do so, it was Stalin who resisted sending them to the Turkistan Front. I had promised to give your army to the command of Frunze after their business was concluded in Petrograd Front. Lenin is under the influence of Stalin. Stalin is the worst enemy of keeping a disciplined body of dynamic Moslem troops in Turkistan.” He also added that Stalin had the idea of merging world socialist revolution with Russian imperialism and Russian national goals. “Those were the reasons why your soldiers were sent to the Novgorod Murayev Barracks,” he said. In other words, he was openly against Stalin. He was definitely working to gain me to his side. During our talks, I obtained information on his life in Europe before the Revolution, and his collaboration with Plexanov and other revolutionaries. In sum, Trotsky’s remaining in Rozayevska for three days due to snow allowed me to know him closely. When his seaside villa burnt down in 1927, in the Istanbul island of Buyukada where he was exiled, I had sent him a telegram to console him. In response, he wrote back a letter recalling those days pleasantly. Making use of the opportunity, I gave Trotsky a project to reorganize the Baskurt Army. He accepted all. On 5 April he issued a Military Order, published in official newspapers, indicating that the Baskurt Army was going to be encompassing an Infantry Brigade comprised of three regiments; a Cavalry Brigade comprised of four Cavalry Regiments, totaling a force of forty thousand. The Infantry Brigade would also contain an Artillery Company with twelve cannon, a battery of Haubisch with two cannon, a Signals Company, a Company of Combat Engineers. Also, for the Cavalry Brigade, a horse drawn Artillery Company comprised of four cannon, in addition to the a reserve Infantry Regiment and a reserve Cavalry Regiment in Sterlitamak, and I was designated as the War Commissar in charge of this organization. He also gave us airplanes and weapons for the militia (police) organization. In April, our troops added up to twenty seven thousand. He provided many automobiles and other transportation gear in plenty. He told me in person: “I fully trust you. I will help you any way I can. It is a pleasure for me to help those who do good work.” Stalin was keeping ammunition away from our army. Trotsky gave us plenty of that.

## *Senek uprising—*

Soviet position became precarious at Ukraine’s Polish border. During April, Poles invaded Western Ukraine and Kiev. That caused an uprising among the Ural villagers who were suffering from the Soviet policies of property confiscation. The autonomy of Baskurdistan had helped us maintain our own economy, to protect ourselves against the Red bandits, based on our national army and national representative council. This was propagandized among the Tatars and was a visible, positive proof of our autonomy. The unarmed Tatar villagers in the regions of Ufa, Belebey and Minzele, began an uprising during January 1920, in a haphazard manner with ‘senek’ in their hands (used to collect

straw during harvest) made of wood and iron. As a result, that movement was labeled the Senek Revolt. They had printed posters at the printers stating: “Zeki Velidi’s army began a movement to destroy Communism; he is arriving to help us.” When I was in Petrograd and Moscow, a Revkom (Revolutionary Committee) was formed in the center of Baskurdistan. As an independent country a Foreign Affairs Commissariat was established by that, and an individual by the name of Rakay was appointed as the Foreign Affairs Commissar who spoke several languages. This was going to be a joint foreign affairs administration for Turkistan and Kazakhstan. Rakay was a communist sent from Moscow to organize mail and telegraph affairs in Baskurdistan. He liked the Easterners, especially the Kazaks and the Baskurts; he spoke Kazak Turkish and some of the European languages. He was a grandson of the famed Central Asian researcher Ryckov. We regarded those Russians born in Turkistan as Turkistanis. We wanted to see Frunze, a Romanian born in Bishkek, as the Commander-in-Chief of Turkistan Armies. Some of our friends wanted to see Rakay as the Foreign Minister of Turkistan. Meaning, they did not see that as anything negative. The Baskurdistan Head of Government Yamagulov was leading those. This nationalist communist thought that independent Turkistan would maintain relations with the Soviets in the future, and he was an enemy of the imperialist policies of the Russian Communists. When I was in Moscow, there were many battles between them. As a result, Yamagulov imprisoned the members of the Baskurdistan Communist Party Central Committee. On the other hand, Stalin secretly had sent arms to the Russian immigrants in Baskurdistan. He had also ordered the establishment of fortified regions (Ukreplennyi rayon) in various places of Baskurdistan as a base for them. The Baskurdistan Government did not allow that establishment and immediately abolished the fortified regions that were in place, returning the Russian soldiers sent from the Orenburg Front who was to defend those fortified regions.

Moreover, there was a serious struggle against the intrigues of the Aid to Baskurts Committee, which we are going to mention later. All these events in Baskurdistan were being regarded as a revolt against Moscow in the regions adjacent to Baskurdistan. Yamagulov, who was a deep communist in social and economic affairs, behaving with such draconian measures against his Russian friends, was going over the top. I did not agree with those actions. And the Russians believed that I was the kingmaker behind Yamagulov. Actually, in those days, I had great influence in the Russian provinces bordering Baskurdistan. With my single signal, all those provinces could be raised in revolt. On the other hand, I believed that such an uprising could only succeed as Turkistan being the center, and if it were to be held all across Russia. I was not at all in favor of siding with adventures with such small actions against the Soviets. While I was returning from Moscow, I was informed that people were gathering at the train stations in order to see me. Truly, in along the villages all across my itinerary, geese were cooked and plenty of alcoholic drinks were prepared. Along the way, in the Tatar villages, there were screams: “annex us into Baskurdistan; save us; gather all of us make us soldiers; take our sons and make them soldiers.” They were also inviting me into their homes for feasts. Those Tatar villages, when we had announced our



first mobilization in 1919 June, had not responded to the call to send their sons to be soldiers. When I reached Sterlitamak on 24 February, all of the counties from the Ufa region sent representatives in order to urge us to annex them into Baskurdistan. We calmed them with the words ‘there is no need for an uprising’ and invited them to be calm. From the many Russian villages, representatives arrived requesting to be annexed into Baskurdistan. They had to be forcibly removed from the Government Building and from the vicinity of the home where I was living.

There were some interesting contacts with the Russians. There was a priest in Sterlitamak whom I knew prior to the Revolution. We had met because I was aware of the contents of the Old Testament and the New Testament of the Bible. I had not seen him in the Soviet period. One day, that priest sent me a typed verse from the Bible, in Russian: (Psalms 72:4) “He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.” In other words, he was directly encouraging me to revolt. Some other Russian opponents of Soviets also wanted to contact me. But, I was reluctant to accept those contacts. Social Democrats had an author from Siberia, who now calls himself a Communist by the name of Temofi Sedelnikov. He visited me at home to tell me that if there was a rebellion, it was going to be successful, and the Soviets could be forced to accept many conditions. Later on, he fell down a set of stairs and either his back or foot was broken.

## *Memoirs from Trotsky—*

When Trotsky spoke with us in Ufa, he had already researched the Senek Rebellion.” His papers on that matter, after he was killed in Mexico, were scattered. A portion of them found their way to the Russian University [*sic*] in the city of Utrecht in Netherlands. According to what Professor J. Meijer wrote me, that archive contained notes on what Trotsky spoke with me on the Senek Uprising and telegrams I sent Trotsky. One a noted dated 2 march 1920, Trotski stated: “After settling the Sterlitamak problem and sending Yumagulov to Moscow, the circumstances became more amenable. But when Validov arrived in Sterlitamak from Moscow, all flared up again. Validov requested that the Communist Party Congress scheduled to take place in March not to be held at that date.” In a letter Trotsky sent to the Party Secretary Kretinski, he writes: “yesterday, while I was conversing directly with Validov at the telegraph, I asked him to describe to me what the position of the Baskurt Army was going to be concerning the revolt of all these Moslem peasants. Validov assured me that not a single Baskurt was going to participate in them.” Apparently, in one of the telegrams I sent Trotsky, I had invited him to Sterlitamak. Reportedly, Professor Meijer is going to publish the portions of Trotsky archive he had at hand. That Trotsky archive was in the hands of the International Social History Institute in Amsterdam, and is currently being published volume by volume. The then director of that Institute, Professor Postomus arrived in Istanbul in 1951 when I was the Chairman of the Congress of Orientalists, and he visited with me. He stated: “there are documents among Trotsky’s papers

pertaining to you. We will publish them. Would you not also write your memoirs? If you do, the Brill Company will publish them happily.” Those documents found in Trotsky’s papers pertaining to me, as also requested by Professor Postomus, caused my memoirs to be published by the Brill Company [*sic*].

## *Writings of Erkebay and Kondrat’yev pertaining to those events—*

About this time, Kondrat’yev, who had earlier served as a liaison officer between Komuc in Yekaterinburg and our governments, and Erkebaev, who was hidden in Siberia with him, both officers, had arrived. Kondrat’yev was a Russian friend who was in favor of our positions. He was an SR, meaning, a social revolutionary. At one time, he had worked with Major Tagan and with Erkebayev in the formation of the Second Infantry Brigade. I had mentioned that previously. Kondrat’yev told me that, if I decided to head the events that were taking place, I could count on the SR elements that were not in favor of making peace with the Soviets. In response I explained to him that Urals, especially Baskurts did not have the means to undertake a new uprising such as that; it was without a meaning and it was impossible. I had already told Erkebayev that Soviets would not leave me in the Urals, they would transfer me to Moscow; and that I would be heading to Turkistan from there. I gave money to Kondrat’yev and Erkebayev, for travelling and expenses, and sent them to join Major Tagan in the Far East. Both of them went to Siberia, then to Manchuria. From there both wrote comprehensive letters to Major Tagan in Tokyo, the Commander of the Second Brigade Commander, explaining what I had told them. The most important were the letters written by Erkebayev in Baskurt to Tagan, penned in the city of Harbin. Major Tagan had quoted those in his memoirs in Russian, but has been unable to publish, under the title “Baskurts in the far East.” During 1925 when we arrived in Hungary from Germany, Major Tagan gave me those very interesting letters. Erkebayev states that he spoke with me several times at the end of March 1920 in Sterlitamak. He wrote his impressions as follows: “The world is not regarding Bolshevism as a global threat. The Allies have sunk a large anti-Bolshevik Movement in Siberia-Ural and Ukraine. No sane person can now collaborate with a White General. Inside Russia, there was an idea to establish a Founding Parliament and the SR Party against Bolshevism to uphold democracy. They are now all dispersed. It is possible to gather all the Islamic peoples of Eastern Russia; but, there is no state that can protect and help them. Moreover, they do not have the military capabilities as we Baskurts have. The Russian people are scattered in their thoughts and are lacking the capability to concentrate on a single idea. Under these conditions, even if there is an uprising can become successful in the beginning, in the end it will become a disastrous adventure. It has been demonstrated that we cannot work with the Bolsheviks. However, I prefer to join, with my friends, the Turkistan uprising that is already underway. In reality, there is no hope of receiving any help from the outside. The Allies prefer the dominance of Bolshevism in Central

Asia instead of an Islamic state. Therefore, instead of remaining in Moscow, to serve the aims of Moscow, or being hung by Moscow, I prefer to devote all my energies to regulating the Turkistan uprising and to inject an ideology into it. Find Major Tagan and his friends. If they can manage, have them join us in Turkistan. Or, they can work to gain the Japanese to our cause. If our efforts do not result in positive developments, we will leave together for foreign countries. Then, we will work for our cause outside.”

Since Erkebayev was one of my most trusted officers, and had even served as my aide-de-camp during the Celiabinsk period, I had told him everything for him to relay to Tagan. Tagan had brought all that with him from Japan to Budapest. Kondrat'yev's letters from Harbin to Tagan in Tokyo in 1920 contains very valuable information on the details of the movement; all that is worth being published as a stand-alone volume. Even though I was listening to what was being told me in the Urals and Siberia by those who trusted me, and spoke with them, I endeavored to prove my trustworthiness to Moscow. I did not undertake any activity or make a speech that would undermine that. When our Head of Government Yamagulov was called to Moscow, Rev-Kom elected me head of Government on 25 February 1920. In practice that was always the case. However, I did not wish to officially undertake the Chairmanship of the Government, and always remained as Minister for War. I was careful to base the power on the Army.

## *The First Baskurdistan Communist Party Congress—*

When I was at the Petrograd Front, a committee sent by the Russian Communist Party Central Committee convened the First Baskurt Communist Party Congress during 8-11 November 1919 in Sterlitamak. Since I was not a Party Member at that time, even if I was in Sterlitamak, I would not have been a participant but would have heard the discussions from Communist friends. After my return from Petrograd Front, according to what I was told, the great majority of the 700 participants were Russians and Russian Temporary War Immigrants from the provincial branches. We also heard that, beside the sessions where their Moscow Representative Sergeev-Artium and Samoylov, in addition to the very few Baskurt Communists, there were other sessions where only the Russian members were present. At the time, it was not possible to determine what those other matters were. Now, the Soviet historian R. Raimov's "Formation of the Baskurt Soviet Republic" published in 1952, comprised of 520 pages (in Pp. 297-302), we can read the stenographic records of that Congress. Those stenographic records and documents are kept in the Central State Archive of the October Revolution (Fund. 1320. Therefore we now that the agenda of the Congress included not only general organizational issues, but also the Eastern Question; the problem of Tatar-Baskurts; and the Second Congress of the Moslem Communists. Along those lines, important issues included especially excluding Validov and other leaders of the Baskurts, and their efforts in forming the Baskurdistan and Kazakistan

Republics in Orenburg and the means of preventing those, were discussed. It was also stressed that the Tatars were connected to the European Russian instead of Turkistan, and it was better for the Baskurts to be joined with the Tatars, meaning with Kazan, to undermine the union with Kazakistan and Turkistan. On that issue, Raimov, again basing himself on the same material in the October Revolution archive, specifies: "Validov's idea was to unite the bourgeois Central Asian Republics as a federation and separate them for the revolutionary Russia. He is endeavoring, and we must oppose all that in the Kalinin Conference on the Baskurt-Kirgiz (Kazak) to meet during December 1919." All that meant that the Kalinin Commission agenda, in which we participated in Moscow, was already set and the decisions to be reached were all decided in the Sterlitamak Communist Conference one month earlier. Our Government Head Haris Yumagulov, who attended as an old Communist, was not even aware of those decisions. He later somewhat learned of all that from a Polish delegate who participated in those sessions. When I was in Petrograd, I had heard that some educated Tatar fell for the misinformation at the Baskurdistan Communist Party First Congress and sent delegations to Moscow in order to defend the aforementioned Communist theses at the Kalinin Commission. That made me sad. Shortly afterward the events developed as I relayed them above.

## *Moslem Communists who became servants of the Russians—*

While I was in Petrograd and Moscow, there were events that transpired between the Revolutionary Committee and the Russians, which were finalized by Yamagulov's summon to Moscow. During those events, two Moslem Communists, by the names of Samigulov and Ismailov, acting as Russian servants, were jailed by Yamagulov. The Russians (meaning Communist Party Center headed by Samoylov) appointed Samigulov as the Political Commissar of the Baskurt Army Units in Baskurdistan. Because of that, Yamagulov had them arrested. After I arrived, I had them released. They were mentioned in the Soviet press as "Validov's personal enemies." I never had anything to do with them. Both wanted to advance their careers by 'appearing more Russian than the Russians.' That was the cause of their extraordinary efforts to suppress every type of national autonomy movement, and their attempts to execute us; failing that, assassinate us. I invited them to my home after their release from the prison, in order to have a chat:

Question: You regard yourself a "left Communist." I wonder, under which social and economic issue, I am to your right? Am I more conservative than you? What are those items?

Answer: We do not regard you more conservative in social and economic matters; we are different than you in national issues.

Q: What are those differences? Do they matter in right or left?

A: We are against any type of autonomy. We find that harmful to the unity of the proletariat.

Q: Meaning, you find it harmful to the Russian and Tatar proletariat union. When there is autonomy, will those two proletariats be separated from each other?

A: Yes.

Q: Since the Party Members are atheists, the difference in religion does not matter. Since you would like to see the Tatar proletariat unified with those of the Russians, why do you call yourselves Moslems? Would it not be better for you to be working directly for the Russian organization?

A: We work wherever the Party assigns us.

Q: In that case, you are amongst us as representatives of Russian imperialism. It is best for you to go to Moscow. You work there. Your opposition to national autonomy is unrelated to leftism or rightism. The only difference between you and I is: You are much more loyal to your Russian comrades than we are. The truth is, you are their servants.

### *Four pan-Islamists becoming guests in Sterlitamak—*

At the beginning of March, on a stormy day when plenty of snow was falling, somebody came to my house door and declared that he had arrived from Moscow. It transpired that, Resit Kadi, as he was known in Türkiye and in the Islamic world, when his full name was Abdurresit Ibrahim, had arrived. In the horse-drawn sled, there were two other comrades, wrapped in felt: Mevlevi Bereketullah and Mevlevi Abdulber from India. Those Indians were almost dead from the cold. They stayed in my house for a few days. They were both Indian seeker of independence and pan-Islamists. Even though they had nothing to do with socialism etcetera, they were thinking of collaborating with the Communists in order to free the Islamic world from the Western Imperialists. They were happy to see an Islamic state in the Urals, and thought that it was going to be the seed for a larger one to be established in Turkistan. Bereketullah already spoke with Lenin, who advised him to talk with me. They were unaware of the conditions prevailing in the seed of the “Grand Islamic State.” And, it was not possible to state everything openly either. Despite all that, I told them: “this idea is a dream. It is a sin to even attempt to unite the Kur’an with communism. You are speaking with the communists, but do not confuse that with religion. You might tell them that you wish to see it develop as a civilian political revolutionary movement.” In order for them to have talks, I had brought my father, who was the closest friend of Resit Kadi, and my Maternal Uncle Habib Neccar, to my home. Simultaneously, or a little later, the great religious scholar of the Kazan Turks, Musa Carullah also arrived. I got together with him in Istanbul during 1928 and 1948. We had appointed him an adviser to the Justice Ministry. He had made use of the free travel privileges accorded to the ministers and vice ministers of our government, and made a lot of money from salt trade. During the

Bolshevik period, due to the irregularity of transportation modes, salt was not found in certain parts of the country. Until then he made his living from the sale of his books and the aid extended him by the booksellers. When all that stopped, he experienced difficulties in living. I advised Resit and Musa and Bereketullah esquires to journey to Islamic countries if they could, but not to reconcile communism with Islam and not to take money from the Soviets. All three were grateful to that advice after they left Russia. Abduresit Kadi and Mevlevi Abdulber again visited my home in Istanbul. Resit Kadi passed away on 31 August 1944 while he was the Imam of Tokyo mosques at the age of ninety four; Abdulber passed away in Izmir. Musa Carullah went to India via Kashgar, then to Japan. In 1948 he was my house-guest for six months. He then journeyed to Cairo he passed away on 25 October 1949 at the age of seventy four. Mevlevi Bereketullah passed away in France. All three individuals were the guests of the Baskurt Government, received respect and remembered us gratefully. Mevlevi Bereketullah wrote a letter to the members of the Congress Party in India, and to Mevlana Ebulkelam Azad, indicating they were staying in Sterlitamak as our guest, and received advice. Ebulkelam Azad told me this in 1950, when he was the Minister of Education of India, in the presence of Istanbul University President Kazim Ismail Bey. Resit Kadi had written a tract in Turkish, on the struggles of the Russian Moslems and their history, citing me and his stay in Sterlitamak in grateful words. He presented me with that in 1930 while he was staying in Istanbul. After hosting him for three weeks in Sterlitamak, I sent him via horse-drawn sleigh to the nearest railroad station, Safran.

During that time, the Alas-Orda Government in Eastern Kazakistan was dispersed. Members of that, Mir Azim Kidirbayev and Muhtar Avezov arrived in Baskurdistan during March. Later on Avezov became a Professor and Member of the Kazakistan Academy of Sciences, and died on 27 July 1961. Muhtar Avezov was very pessimistic compared to his visit to us in 1918. I repeated everything to Avezov what I had told Erkebayev. Even though he was a calm and passive person, he was genuinely interested in continuing the struggle in Turkistan; but he asked “you have everything here; you are in comfort. How can you leave all this behind?” When he arrived in New York City in 1959 as a member of the Soviet Delegation, referring to that visit he told one of the Kazak immigrants there “it was a polar star of a period in darkness.”

### *Visitors from Moscow in the capital of Baskurdistan—*

When we arrived in Sterlitamak the struggle between the Baskurdistan Government and the Baskurt Communist Party headed by Sergeev-Artium, one of the closest friends of Lenin, Preobrajinski and Samoylov had reached a breaking point. In reality, I was made a member of that Party by the Communist Party Central Committee, but I was not given any documentation, or a membership card, showing that fact. Despite all that, I did not attend the Communist Party meetings. The Sterlitamak



representatives of Moscow regarded me as a Communist Party member, and they did not hesitate to consult with me. Since Yamagulov was a party member of the old, the Central Committee called him to Moscow in order to reproach him. Samoylov published his memoirs pertaining to those days, and in it, he stated: “we knew that the most intelligent and mature member of the Baskurt leaders was Validov; we believed that he would not publicly approve of what Yamagulov did, regardless of his personal relationship with him. But, we erred. As soon as he arrived, he stated that Yamagulov’s actions were true. He did not allow the Second Congress of the Baskurdistan Communist Party meeting to take place, and he did not free all of those communists arrested by Yamagulov. That is true. Preobrajinski was a good marksman and hunter. One day, he suggested we go hunting someday together. He had heard that I was a good hunter. We did not make it. But, I invited him to dinner one day. My close friend Tahir Imekoglu asked me the virtue of that invitation. I told him that Preobrajinski is a member of the Politburo and he is one of the party Secretaries. There is plenty to be learned from him. He told me not to drink. In actuality, Preobrajinski was as educated and intellectual as Bukharin among the Bolsheviks leadership. He was not one of those Chekists who would search for anti-Sovietisms in every word uttered. He wrote, with his friend Bukharin and Kretinski, the book entitled “Alphabet of Communism.” He arrived at the dinner with a friend of his whose name I forgot. I immediately placed the question before them: ‘whether or not the fights between Marx and Bakunin are based on competition or animosity?’ He explained with wide context and foundation. He knew the history of his own sect well and exactly. In the meantime, I objected to some points contained in his comments and references to Lenin’s book entitled *Materialism and Empereo-Criticism*. He asked me if I had raised those criticisms based on my reading of Cernov’s book. I responded that, no, those were my own objections. He responded with: “in that case, these are important objections; you might write those or tell them in person to Lenin. He wrote that book in his youth and sometimes his arguments are absurd. But, he enjoys debating on those issues.” We spoke on many other issues. His accompanying friend immediately started drinking. He was downing drinks one after the other. He also was insisting that I accompany him in drinking. He also threw a deck of cards. I told him that I had not gambled since I was twenty years old, and did not like to get drunk on alcohol. Preobrajinski asked me what good is it to drink, if the drinker does not wish to become inebriated. I told him that I had a Master whose testaments I valued highly, though he had lived a thousand years ago. He was a mathematician, el-Biruni, who had lived in what is now Khiva. He asked me what Biruni said. I told him: “the intelligent man only pursues matters that satisfy his spirit and those that will remain eternal; the unwary can only be batted between drunkenness and gambling and cannot taste a pleasure. He asked me what Biruni did as a mathematician. I told him that he was the genius, the very first man to determine the circumference of the earth; you can read about that in Edward Sachau. He asked me about Omar Khayyam. I told him, he, too, was a great mathematician. Preobrajinski was truly devoted to atheism. In his Communist Alphabet, he stressed the fact that that was his central theme. One day, while we were

discussing those matters, I told him: “Comrade Preobrajinski is it permissible to make such determinate statements about metaphysical issues? Perhaps you ought to have become a priest, and you had entered the path of communism by error.” Later on, his friends told my words to Lenin. Lenin responded by stating: “Validov discovered that correctly.” Preobrajinski was truly a cultured man. When I saw him in Moscow during May, he asked me “What news of el-Biruni?” He remembered what I had told him. He told me that if he had time, he would have studied the life of Biruni; that he loved those types of people. Perhaps he made time to take a look at Sachau.

At one time, I also invited Artium to dinner. He was a Chekist in the full sense of the word. He was one of the extreme theoreticians and practitioners of world communism, whose name is now given to a series of industrial centers from Ukraine to the Urals to Siberia. He was in favor of destroying the generation preventing the rapid success of communism. He stated: “what harm is there in eliminating ten thousand educated in a few days? We will train the next generation in the spirit of Communism, just like chicks in a chicken-coop.” He was by origin, Ukrainian. But, he hated Ukrainian nationalism. According to him, Russian language was destined to spread across all Asia. He was convinced that all future generations were going to be bilingual in English and Russian. To him, all speaking languages were living on borrowed time.

I used to talk quite a bit with Artium on Cernishevsky and Plexanov’s works. He liked those talks. He had learned the simple life of my family at the village. He enjoyed talking about his own adventures. He became a socialist as soon as he graduated the Higher Technical Institute, became friends with Lenin very early, and escaped to Paris. He was caught and exiled to Siberia several times while he was working on secret organizations among the laborers in Ukraine and the Urals. From there, he escaped to Korea, China, and finally to Australia, remaining there for eight years, working on propaganda and organization, published revolutionary newspapers. Despite all his travels, he had no idea about the intellectual life in the East, especially about Islam. He believed that Communism would join Buddhism in South-Eastern Asia, and conquer the world. He was an enemy of Islam. I wrote about these matters on 2 January 1966, in the newspaper *Yeni Istanbul*, in connection with the Vietnam problem. One of the Russian scholars who arrived in Vienna for the International History Conference indicated that he had read a Russian translation of that article in Moscow.

Artium believed in the necessity of destroying the human will, to turn the people into robots, in order to realize communism by the crassest means. According to him, in order to bring about socialism, it was better to utilize the imperialism of large states instead of the scattered will of the small nations. According to him, to reach the objective, all means were permissible. In other words he was a foolish missionary of world communism. In many respects, he was a mirror of Lenin. He had derived his information from Lenin. It was very important to speak with him in order to understand the bases of Lenin’s plans and philosophy. I thought that, to understand Lenin, it was necessary to read his works and speaking with his followers such as Artium.

Samoylov, who stayed the longest amongst us, did not have any other virtue or his personal ideas than being a communist doctrinaire. Although, he is the only Russian who portrayed his time in Baskurdistan by publishing his memoirs. These Russians were invaluable resources for me, in my learning of Leninism and Lenin's thoughts about the future. Then, amongst them, there were Polish origin old Vaytsikovskiy and Siromiatnikov, whom I knew as honorable personalities. They were completely different personalities than Artium, and normal individuals. I later learned that Siromiatnikov published interesting articles about his activities in Baskurdistan. There were other Communist Russians who wanted to follow positive policies in Baskurdistan. One of them was Mostovenko. This person wrote articles, like Samoylov, on his own activities in Baskurdistan in the journal *Proletarskaya Revolutsiya* (1928). According to him, Samoylov was acting in a very biased way. Samigulov, in order to keep the "Kazan authority," was collaborating with those Tatars who became members of the Party for chauvinistic reasons, as well as those Russians who were the enemies of the Baskurts. Just like Kretinski, the Communist Party Secretary, Mostovenko was definitely against those policies and individuals who wanted to fan inter-communal provocations in Baskurdistan. According to this person, what Stalin tentatively proposed in 1918, the Tatar-Baskurt Republic, Samoylov did that purely for the purpose of provocation. In addition, Mostovenko states that: "While Validov was expending energies to unite the tribes in Soviet Asia on the bases of a federation, in order to establish a large state, his definite aim was to found a state based on outside help. He had much wider view and ideas compared to his friends. He even kept in mind of the collaboration with Türkiye in his actions. Our (meaning, Soviet) policy of leaning on the Fortified Positions in Baskurdistan, neighboring Russian Provinces, and the competing elements amongst Tatars and Baskurts against the Baskurts, was in error. Kretinski and Slobov concurred in this."

After we left Baskurdistan, Mostovenko wrote a comprehensive report to the Communist Party Center on 8 November 1920. I do not recall meeting Mostovenko in person. However, I had heard that he had named those provocation policies as a 'policy of rascals' as reported by Vaytsyxovski, at the time of these intense struggles when I arrived in Sterlitamak, and while I was speaking with the Russian Communists. This person's throat had a hole in it. While he was speaking, he was plugging it with a piece of rubber. Probably, he was a clean Communist volunteer of the Moscow variety. Artium, Preobrajinski, Mostovenko and Vaytsyxovski, though they believed in the same policies, in their characters and in their tactics they exhibited very different aspects. But, their purity of their beliefs and their strength were getting lost against the devilish nature, thoughts and characters of their friends. Their common belief in the same objectives, and the hundreds of thousands of individuals they killed in the name of the revolution was providing them with the understanding of their great responsibility they incurred.

## *Help to the Baskurts and the fortified positions—*

Known as Baskiropomoc, this sinister aid was the perfect example of most insincere, deceitful policy of the Soviets applied against us as mentioned above. During the first four months of 1919, the Red army severely plundered the middle and Southern Cantons of Baskurdistan. Five thousand three hundred seventy seven homes were completely demolished, all the foodstuffs were taken from fifty thousand individuals, thereby condemned them to death by hunger. Thirteen thousand three hundred fifty four horses, six thousand two hundred forty two cattle, twenty thousand sheep, one hundred thousand pud wheat, twenty thousand pud meat and fats, four hundred thousand pud animal fodder, grass and cereals were plundered. In addition, clothes, rugs, kilims, felts, duvets, shoes, women's jewelry taken by the Red Army were all documented by the Baskurt Government, and I had personally handed that list to Lenin. In response, on 6 October, Lenin had issued an order to issue one hundred fifty million Rubles of advance compensation under the heading of "aid to the Baskurts who suffered from the Red Army during the war." Their intention was to distribute that compensation not via the Baskurt Government, but through a special committee by the name of "Committee to help the Baskurts" which they established specifically for that purpose. Against this 'help' the population was required to form "Committees of Poor" and "Communist Cells" in detailed and comprehensive orders and instructions. To oversee those, they first send someone with the name of Dudnik, and later (on 14 December), the aforementioned Artium. They were speedily establishing the "Committees of Poor" with alacrity, in collaboration with the local Communists. The newly established "Country Communist Party" was obligated to help them. As detailed above, the Turkistan Front (Turkfront), on the orders of Stalin, ostensibly to 'secure the general order,' was establishing fortified regions in Baskurdistan. To facilitate all that someone by the name of Spirin at the head of some Russian soldiers was sent from Orenburg. After I returned from Moscow, we returned them. Despite all that, Moscow was determined to establish 'fortified positions command' in Baskurdistan and they redoubled their efforts to do just that. Orenburg Communist Party was also endeavoring to subject the Baskurt Army units in the Turkistan Front to that Command. We requested that our national units to be under the Command of the Turkistan Front, and not to be involved in the internal affairs of our country under various excuses. The Baskurt country Communist Party Second Congress gathered between 7-9 March. I also attended, despite the fact that I was still not in possession of my membership documents. The Russian representatives immediately jumped in to discuss the 'help to the Baskurts' committees and the issue of the 'fortified positions.' The 'temporary' immigrants arriving during the First World War were all settled in the South Eastern Baskurt region of Baskurdistan, in the Usergen region Russian

villages. Stalin and Orenburg Province had become their protectors. With their help, these Russian immigrants began transgressing the land ownership of the Baskurts. The ‘Committee of the Poor’ and the ‘fortified positions’ were going to support them as well. The Baskurdistan government became aware of this in time, and prevented all that from happening.

### *A scholarly talk during the great cidal—*

As mentioned above, immediately after the visit of the four pan-Islamists, another freedom lover from India, and a pan-Islamist, Seyh Said Arabi Pencabi arrived in Sterlitamak. I hosted him in my own house at a time when our struggles with Moscow were at a peak. He had brought a letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs Chicerin in Moscow. Even though this person was from Punjab, he had lived in Burma. He had published a newspaper in Istanbul during the First World War. I had previously seen him in Moscow. He was a lover of Celaleddin Rumi and Sems Tebrizi. I had told him that Sems Tebrizi was known in the Sirderya basin as a Turk Yesevi Seyh, Turkish poems and wisdoms were attributed to him, and those poems were known by a dervish named Mollagul among the Baskurts, now deceased. He was astonished, because he knew Sems Tebrizi to be an Iranian. It was said that he was carrying all the works of Rumi and Tebrizi with him in all his travels, and he would read them as if they were the Kur’an. The problem of Rumi and Sems Tebrizi consisted of: Celaleddin Rumi was originally from Balkh, and from his mother’s side, he was descended from the Kipchak Hans. (His grandfather had married one of the daughters of those Hans). Those Kipchak Hans were living in today’s Turkistan’s Murgap basin in Afghanistan and in the Vahs River Basin in Tajikistan. When Horezmshah had a disagreement with his mother, the army commanders close to him corresponded with Cengiz Khan, who was his enemy, and came to an agreement. Because of these issues, the Balkh Seyyids Bahaedding and his son, Celaleddin, who were related to the Kipchak Han and Beys from their mother’s side, openly sided with Cengiz, and left the lands of the Horezmshah. After journeying through Bagdad and Hejaz, they arrived in Asia Minor, amongst the Konya Seljuks. There, Celaleddin met a Turk mendicant dervish by the name of Semseddin, became friends through tasavvuf, and with that muse, he wrote poems to counter the poems of Sems and attained fame. Celaleddin presented this Turk mendicant dervish as Kipchak, even as “Kipchak king of the fools,” and attributed Kipchak poems to him. Celaleddin’s son Sultan Veled, in his own poems written in a mélange of Kipchak and Oghuz that he wrote from the mouth of Semseddin: “I am Yazirim.” At the time of Timur, Devletshah of the Samarkand also presented Sems Tebrizi a member of the Yazer Turks. During our talks in Moscow, I had told all this to Seyh Said, and that Mollagul of Baskurdistan knew the Turkish poetry of Sems, and that my father also learned them from Mollagul. Seyh asked me how he could get hold of those poems; he also indicated that he would visit Baskurdistan to collect those poems. He had now arrived, and immediately began obtaining information on

Mollagul. I invited my father, had him transported to Sterlitamak, and introduced them. My father rendered quite a bit of help. Seyh wrote down Mollagul’s life, his oral poetry, and his repetition of Sems Tebrizi’s poems. I could not help him more, since it was a very complicated time frame.

After remaining in Sterlitamak for a period, and after visiting my father in our village, speaking with Mollagul’s relatives, Seyh Said returned to Moscow. Later, he returned to Istanbul, in the company of Zafer Hasan Bey from India, who is still alive today in Istanbul. I saw him once more in Istanbul. I later heard he went to Egypt around 1950 and he died there. I always feel sorry that I did not obtain a copy of what Seyh Said recorded about Mollagul, who he determined was a Sirdarya Kazak, in our country.

Since he was a guest of the Soviet Government, the Soviet representatives in Baskurdistan also came to see him off. However, Artium, who had listened to Seyh Said bragging about my knowledge of Arabic and Iranian poetry and history, stated: “Validov is quite a Grand Figure for the Urals.” As a result, the Moscow representatives wrote reports stressing the necessity of removing me from Baskurdistan, and Artium’s desire to see me work in Moscow. The assessments of Mohander Pratab and Mevlevi Bereketullah and Seyh Said of India that I needed to be working on the general problems of the East also added to those reports in describing me such a person.

### *The intrigues of Moscow representatives—*

Basing themselves on the temporary immigrants and the Russian villagers in our country, the intrigues of Artium and his friends continued. We seriously responded to each of their actions. Since they were comprised of nine individuals, they were called the Nines (deviatki). They even convened the congress of the communist organization “Committee of the Poor” on 9 March without even communicating with the Baskurdistan Government or obtaining permission. In response we requested them not to mix politics into the aid to the Baskurt, requested they change the conference agenda, and requested that the money received be immediately distributed to the victims of Red Army plundering. When they refused, we intervened in the conference. All these events were described as “provocation” by the Soviet historians. One of those, Samsun Tepeev, in his 1929 volume “The Outline of the Baskurdistan National Movements,” summarized these: “All possibility of cooperating with the Baskurdistan Revolutionary Committee was removed. The nine member Moscow committee, headed by Artium, convened a Communist Party congress at the Usergen province. This congress was declared illegal, since it was convened without the permission of the Baskurdistan Government. The Baskurdistan Government sent a delegation of three individuals to investigate the related matters on site, to Usergen Province, comprised of two Validovists and Ivanov, a representative of the Moscow Nine. But, Validow moved with such speed that, when Ivanov arrived in Usergen, delayed by two days, all business was transacted. The two Validovists, as soon as



they arrived, dismantled the Communist Party organization. They confiscated the membership cards of the Party members. Some members, if they were able, escaped beyond the country boundaries (Russian Orenburg Province); others were thrown into jail by the Validovists. So much so that, when Ivanov arrived, nothing was left of the Communist organization in this province. Ivanov returned, since there was nothing he could do.”

Despite the radical precautions we took, Artium managed to establish secret communist party organizations here-and-there, by deceiving the temporary immigrants living in our country and in Orenburg, and with their help. Meaning, Artium and his retinue established a parallel but secret communist organization to work against the Baskurt Government that gave permission to the establishment of the Official Communist Party. All this caused the interdiction of secret Russian immigrants and the arms they were smuggling into the country and related firefights. Spirin, even though not openly, instigated secret resistance and provocations. During the night of 10 March, directly behind the house where I was living in Sterlitamak, there was gunfire. Windows were broken; the guards responded, and the attackers escaped. But, it could not be determined where and how they had arrived, despite the investigations. That was because the attackers were placed in the neighboring homes by the Russians inside the Baskurdistan Communist Party for political audit, and escaped the same way.

The event was presented to Lenin. The Soviet Government tasked Trotsky and Frunze to investigate. Frunze recalled Spirin from Baskurdistan and appointed the Commander of our Baskurt First Cavalry Brigade Commander Axlov in his place. This Axlov was a Patlabasi Nogay from Northern Caucasus. He was a brave officer. Frunze sent me a telegram specifying that this new appointment was intended to show me his aim in appointing a new commander for the fortified region was not to interfere in the internal affairs of Baskurdistan. He also published an address to the Baskurt People. (The telegram and the address were published in his memoirs). Trotsky was hastily sent via a special train to Ufa. Four members of the Baskurdistan Government, and four representatives from the Moscow Party members (including Artium and Preobrajinski) were invited to Ufa. Ufa Province Soviet Chief Eltzin was also invited. Trotsky questioned both sides. In those talks, Preobrajinski was as calm as Artium displayed enmity. Preobrajinski did not utter a word to offend me. As a result, a decree comprised of twenty items was issued. Most of those items were in favor of us. Though the sixteenth item specified that “it will be endeavored to have Baskurdistan a Communist Republic within the great communist federation,” the fourteenth item specified “this country and her soldiers will remain within Turkistan Front.” The eleventh item read: “in the Tatar newspapers published in the neighboring provinces (Orenburg and Ufa), the efforts to show this country as recidivist autonomy is not advisable; they must be stopped.” In reality, the Tatar newspapers published in Orenburg and Ufa were very negatively against us, just like those of the Russians. Among them, Russians had sent two individuals, Samigulov and Ismailov, as their representatives, to the

Baskurdistan country Communist Party. And, those two were working with all their might in order to scramble the affairs of our country more than the Russians. The Baskurdistan Government was forced to arrest them, and requested Moscow to withdraw them. On the other hand, among the Tatars, the aforementioned Kaspranski and Rahmetullin, two old Communists, were completely on the side of national thoughts and worked to that end.

## *Talks with Mufti Alimcan Barudi—*

When I was in Ufa, Alimcan Barudi, who maintained his title as Religious Mufti of the Internal Russia and Siberian Moslems, asked to speak with me. We did. He stated: “Baskurdistan Autonomy found her place in history she deserves. Amongst the Tatars, the majority are supporting you. Though, a portion is still against you. I will try to overcome that.” I responded with: “Please proceed; but, you should have done that two years ago. As you see, all of the Ufa Tatars wish to join us and become our soldiers. But, those who opposed us in the name of supposed Islamic reasons have joined the Communist Party to collaborate with the Russians. They will not listen to you.” He agreed: “yes, you are right; there is no remedy against that. I am now afraid I might cause you damage with this meeting.” I told him: “I agree with you.” Alimcan Hazret asked me what remedies he needed to employ in order not to have his Muftiyat not to be completely demolished. He asked if it would be beneficial for him to see Trotsky who was in Ufa during those days. I told him: “If he does not agree to see you, you will be sad. It is best for you not to make any noise. He indicated that the building of the Muftiyat needed repairs. I responded to him, who had studied in Bukhara, and since he knew Persian well, in a pleasant way, by quoting the line from Seyh Sadi: “The owner of the house is after decorating the house façade; but, the house is about to collapse.” I added: “but, please do not lose hope; they will not take the path of abolishing your Muftiyat. Preobrajinski returned to Moscow in the company of Trotsky.

On the way back, I dealt with the business of our military units along the railroad. While we were at the Devleken station, the Tatar Communists Kaspranski and Rahmetullin relayed me an event which they considered very important. Apparently, the counter-revolutionary Abdullah Battal was at this station and that we needed to capture him. I asked them to bring him to me. He is today past the age of eighty, living in Istanbul as the author of many works, and had published many good works on the Tatar cultural life (with his current family name of Taymas), he represented another dimension of revolutionary efforts in our country. When the majority of Tatar educated were against autonomy during 1917-1918, Abdullah Battal and historian of literature Cemaleddin Velidi, and many others, struggled to support landed autonomy; they published newspapers. When Ufa fell into the hands of the Reds, they did not stay there and moved on to Kizilyar (Petropavlovsk) which was in the hands of the Kolchak administration. As a result, they were regarded as Kolchakists. Now that Siberia was

in the hands of the Reds, he was on his way to join his family in Kazan. We spoke for an extended period. I freed him from the hands of the other Tatar Communists, and allowed him to continue on his journey freely. The Tatar Communists had made it a habit of catching the individuals who thought different than themselves, in order to ingratiate themselves to their Russian masters. Addressing those two individuals who witnessed the struggles at the Kalinin Commission, and the aftermath, I stated: “you realized with your own eyes that following one of your own for the sake of ingratiating yourselves to the Russian friends did not bring you any benefit. We must remember that the same process may happen to you, or the rest of us, in the future. Therefore, we must not do things we might regret.” This was a big lesson to them. Besides, the struggles at the Kalinin Commission in Moscow had already negatively affected these two Tatar Communists.

After the Conference in Ufa, Samoylov and Artium returned to Sterlitamak in order to carry on their primary duties of mischief. During 15-20 March Artium convened a local conference in the Usengen region in a Russian village and issued some resolutions. At that occasion, one of the decisions was, as verbalized by Artium on 19 March, that the Baskurt Government was not using the Baskurt language in government affairs, and that they were going to force the use of Baskurt henceforth. This was one of the results of the instructions given by Stalin in Moscow. In reality, we were publishing our newspapers in a common language understood both by the Tatars and the Baskurts. Artium had a Baskurt Communist by the name of Gubeydullin write some announcements “in Baskurt language.” In response, I had him and the “Revolutionary Committee” he had formed arrested, and dispersed the said committee. The negative activities of the Russian communist organizations operating out of Tasli and Arxangelesk factories were way beyond the limit. Samoylov stated: “Validov had them arrested, had them handcuffed, and had some had to run between two cavalry troopers on horseback on the way to the jail.” Until that day, I always went about in half military and half civilian clothes. A tailor I knew in Moscow made me a civilian suit. Samoylov did not like that, and stated: “will you allow me to criticize your outfit?” I told him: “Go right ahead; but our tailor is a Communist” in a jocular manner.

## *April congress of the ‘Help to the Baskurts’—*

During the first week of April, Artium and other ‘Central’ (meaning Moscow) Representatives, convened the Congress of “Help to the Baskurts;” this time by procuring a permission from us. We did not prevent the gathering, even though we did not know the aims and the proposed work of this organization. But, when the Baskurts in attendance began complaining of the Russians making extremely negative references to our autonomy in their speeches, the Baskurdistan Government prevented the continuation of the congress on those bases. Samoylov, in his memoirs (Pp. 24-25) explicates what happened: “Validov having found encouragement from Trotsky’s

actions supporting him at the Ufa meeting, he became wild. Since he was behaving in nationalistic manner against communism, was acting fearlessly in applying his decisions from a nationalistic perspective with reckless abandon, it became impossible for us Central (Moscow) representatives to work here. This was especially the case during the Aid to the Baskurts Committee Congress at the beginning of April. The Baskurt Leadership was extremely sensitive and took an inimical position against bringing the Baskurt Party under the influence of Moscow and the communists. At this congress, Moscow was being represented by Artium, Saxarev, Dauge and I (Samoylov). At the end of the speech given by Artium, members of the Baskurt Government, Validov, Tuhfetullin, Ilyas Alkin and another person arrived; without requesting permission from comrade Artium, who was presiding, began delivering speeches one after the other in Baskurt. When Artium specified that for such speeches permission had to be obtained from the Presiding Officer, Zeki Validov responded with very demeaning terms, calling him slovoc (lowly bum). Even though Artium became extremely angry, he was forced to refrain from engaging Validov in an argument. In their speeches, they were accusing us of being an enemy of the Baskurt people; that we wanted to take away their autonomy, keeping them all as prisoners, as if we were behaving like the Tsarists against all Easterners. Under those circumstances Artium could not continue with his work; he fell ill. He and I (Samoylov) sent a telegram each to Moscow requesting our withdrawal from Baskurdistan.” Artium died without recovering from that ailment.

The aforementioned Soviet historian S. Tepeev related the events transpiring in the “Aid to the Baskurts Conference” in his volume (p.72), in detail: he specified that I called Artium ‘slovoc;’ accused them of attempting to revive the colonialism and slavery of the Tsarist period; but that Artium could not respond; and that the change of inclinations (nastroyenye) in the meeting was palpable.

As one result, even though the Party organization was structured according to the wishes of Moscow, the real struggle caused the deep gratitude of our population. Especially our forcing out the Russian soldiers from Usergen under the command of Spirin; their replacement Ahlov being a Moslem; the arrival of the one hundred fifty million rubles having been obtained by the initiative of the Baskurt Government becoming known among the populace; and the distribution of that money to the victims, even partially, increased the reputation of the Government. The movements in the neighboring Russian provinces, especially within those regions inhabited by the Tatars, their desire to join with Baskurdistan, and the statements made in our favor, as well as the propaganda conducted by the imams showed the positive results of our internal autonomy. These truths were being voiced by those elements that were against our autonomy only two years earlier. During 1948, while I was visiting Ankara, General Kazim Karabekir sent word that he would be very happy if I were to accept a cup of coffee at his home. I complied, and visited him. It transpired that the general had in his possession the memoirs of a Turkish prisoner of war by the name of Sami who had spent the winter of 1919-1920 in Orenburg. That person [Sami] portrayed the hopes created by our autonomy based on our soldiers as a Turk land, on the Turgay and Orenburg Moslems. In addition, I had invited a man named Ali Ahmet for him

to play the national airs on the Kuray (flute), for the purpose of recording them. The same person had played and recited for the Russian musical specialist Rybakov during 1895 such pieces that, Rybakov published them all in a thick volume in the Russian Academy of Sciences series under the title “Ural Moslems’ Music and Songs.” I had listened to that performer when I was a child, by journeying to his village several times. As a reward for the recordings he made, I had his teeth made and presented him with military uniform and a sword. He was very happy. He had personally witnessed the withdrawal of Spirin’s soldiers while he was returning to his home and wrote couplet-form poetry to celebrate. Unfortunately, I no longer have those poems. There is only a fragment in the hands of Ahmet Ziya Ozkaynak: “if the darkness causes us to lose our way/ this brave will turn us into the right path/ if our plump lands are attacked by the enemy/ this brave will save us.”

Our poet of those times, Fethulkadir Suleyman (Abdulkadir Inan) wrote some songs about me, and they were set to music. Dr. Tagan and Professor Jansky published them in Vienna. Another person bringing to life the events of those days was a young Tatar girl poet from the Bayik village of the Southeastern Baskurdistan. The satire she wrote under the name Spirin Battalion was very grand in grasping the events and in poetic quality. Unfortunately, her poems could not be taken out of the country. The lineage of this Bayik village was recorded by Otemis Haci, which he cites among the ‘Mangit Villages.’ They were of settled Tatars, different than those immigrating from Kazan; and unlike the rest of the other Tatars, they had joined in and supported all Baskurt uprisings during the past century. They also reared valuable scholars. Abdullah Ethemoglu, who was one of the foremost leaders of the Baskurt autonomy movement, was one of those Bayik Tatars.

### *The issue of the keys and Lenin—*

The Soviet Government had accepted the settlement of Baskurt Government in Sterlitamak. Yet, they wished to keep this city within the European Soviet Union (RSFSR) and regard us as a guest. Even though this city was under the administration of the Baskurt Government, it also contained buildings owned by the Russians. Those buildings had Russian guards. One of those buildings was a grain silo once owned by a wealthy Russian named Kuznetsov. The Ufa city Soviet Government sent a telegram to the Soviet Central Government stating: “the Baskurt Government removed the Soviet guards from that structure, confiscated the keys, and occupied it.” At the beginning of April, one night, I received the news that comrade Lenin wished to speak with me via the telegraph. After the issue of sending our troops to Leningrad, Stalin and Trotsky had called me to the telegraph; but Lenin had not made the same request since then. I thought there must be an important issue. It transpired that the issue of the keys was the cause. Lenin immediately stated: “Comrade Validov, it appears you had confiscated the keys to the grain silo by force, which belongs to the Ufa province. You must return the keys and the structure immediately.” I responded with: “Respected

Vladimir Ilyic, I do not have those keys; our government does not possess them either. They only exist in your imagination. Our neighbors, the Russian chauvinists, whisper something to you, and you are regarding that the truth. All news created concerning Baskurdistan is all of this type. I am sorry to observe that the imperialism left over from the time of the Tsars is growing, and the existence of little Baskurdistan is causing our neighbors to lose their sleep, to the point of rendering them insane. It is of concern to me that you believe them as well.” Lenin’s response was: “are you speaking the truth? Is it true that you have not occupied the said building?” I stated: “that is correct.” Lenin said: “in that case, I will have the matter examined, and I will let you know of the result.” Fifteen or twenty days later I journeyed to Moscow and saw Lenin. He told me: “he was sorry about this incident.” But, there was nothing else he thought besides surrendering all of Urals and the fate of Baskurdistan to those provocateur chauvinistic Red Russians which they knew well. I responded with: “even though you may regret that, you believe them more than us. We are unable to prevent that outcome. That is because; our Russian friends are convinced that the idea of Russian population serving the function of cement while building the grand socialist Russia is dominant. They believe that trust in us Easterners will be the primary cause of the great Russians to be dispersed. This was told us by our friends, comrades Artium and Eltzin probably one hundred times, without the need to hide their thoughts. You have only known me for the past thirteen months; but you had spent your entire life with them.”

### *Our departure from Baskurdistan—*

On 28 April, Stalin called me to the telegraph, indicating I needed to journey to Moscow “in order to discuss important matters concerning the Baskurt Army. Samoylov will journey with you.” I immediately grasped the fact that this was a ruse to separate me from Baskurdistan. We convened the Government, and debated the issue. Many of the friends advised that I disobey the order, and tell all this to Frunze. I responded with: “in these matters, Frunze cannot have a policy independent of the Party central. That will not yield anything beneficial. I will obey; then, we will see what needs to be done. I will take my family, and go.” Stalin was summoning me as a member of the Party; in other words, in the name of the Party Central. But, I was not yet issued Party Membership documents. Even Tipiyev, who published the history of the Baskurdistan Revolution, while speaking of Kaspranski, the Political Secretary of the Baskurdistan Communist Committee, wrote that the latter was “giving all the Party paperwork to Zeki Validov who was not yet a member of the Party.” In other words, they were summoning me to the Party (Obkom) meeting, but in reality they were not regarding me a member of the Party. I knew that well. I told my closest friends that if I were to be kept in Moscow, we would be journeying to Turkistan to join the uprising there. We took some necessary precautions. All these preparations were to be undertaken by Allahberdi Caferov, who was going to stay in Baskurdistan, who would also head the



Baskurt Government in my absence. I completed all this business in two days, and left for Moscow on 30 April. As soon as I arrived, I saw Stalin. Kamenev was with him. It transpired that a tri-partite commission was established, comprised of Stalin, Trotsky and Kamenev in order to examine the issues of Baskurdistan and our Army. Stalin stated: “it is necessary for you to stay here, in the center, for a period.” I responded with: “I arrived with that understanding.” I sent the car to our representative office, and was walking in the streets. By chance, I ran into the Polish Communist, who had a hole in his throat, I had mentioned earlier. I think his name was Vaytsikhovsky. This person told me things which I could never forget: “they [communists] telling you that you are made a member of the Party is for the sole purpose of taking away your freedom. Now, the Party is your swaddle; the great source of our chance is Party discipline. On the other hand, it is also the source of misfortune for the lovers of freedoms, our way of destroying free-will of humans. For me, you are a person who will be beneficially employed in the East, in your country, not in Moscow. While I was visiting your country, I followed all your actions with full sympathy. Along with a number of our friends, we recommended to the Party Central that we needed to benefit from your wide ranging talents suitably. But, we were unable to succeed.” During November of 1917, when we declared the autonomy of Baskurdistan and began establishing the First Baskurt Regiment, those who helped us, Captain Britz and six of his officer friends, were also Polish. They were later investigated and shadowed by the Russians because of that. The sympathy of the Poles toward the autonomy movements of the non-Russians was apparent even in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when General Siyalkowsky, the Commander of the Baskurt units and Governor of Orenburg clearly demonstrated that. The national building named Caravansaray and the mosque in the style of Central Asia were built on Siyalkovsky’s sympathy.

Two days after arriving in Moscow, I saw Lenin. He repeated what Stalin said. He told me of the issue of the keys I had related above. He also added: “I know you as a person who can work with us on Russia-wide issues, not only on a small country. Your friends can handle the matters of your country. You can visit them occasionally. Now, you might get used to working in the center.” I knew that those words were stated as a form of sycophancy, but I behaved as if I believed in them. Lenin explained to me that they had tasked me with the duty of organizing Moslem military units under formation in the Crimean Front, as well as for the preparation of the constitutions of the Moslem Soviet Republics. For the purpose, I was being appointed a ‘member of the Nationalities Commissariat,’ with a guard commander as before. Lenin was telling me all this as if they were benefices. Cars were also allocated for my use. All that meant, they have not changed the external appearances. Lenin told me that the Baskurdistan Soviet Congress was going to be held without my participation, and suggested that I prepare a proposal for the cooperation of the Eastern tribes among themselves, and that I seriously participate in that direction in the work of the Comintern. I spoke with Stalin a second time. Those talks were ostensibly very secret. He constantly complained of Trotsky. As if keeping me in Moscow was Trotsky’s design. As if, Trotsky and Zirzenski were afraid of my influence increasing in the Eastern provinces.

## *Morals as understood by Lenin—*

I was being summoned to the committee investigating the issues of Baskurdistan for consultations. During May, this commission issued a decision comprised of five items. With the addition of Kalinin and Lenin’s signatures, all that became the decision of the Soviet Government and was announced as such. As a result, our country was left as a province autonomous in the legal, educational, agriculture spheres but was subject to the RSFSR in external affairs, economics, treasury, post and telegraph and road-building. Our army was not in the Turkistan Military District, but subjected to the Volga Military District. Commission member Kamenev was against reducing autonomy to non-extant in this manner. He also suggested that there was a current to add the city of Ufa and many other Russian regions to our country, but all that was postponed for the time being. I again saw Lenin immediately after those decisions were announced. I told him: “During March 1919, we signed an agreement amongst us. We all signed. In that agreement, the rights of an oppressed nation, though not in full, were recognized. Now that fourteen months has passed, all that has evaporated.” Lenin responded: “Why are you speaking of such moral theories? What kind of revolutionary are you? How can you be stuck in such agreements? The agreement signed with you does not constrain anyone; it is only a piece of paper.” I told him: “we believe that the human relations are based on the compliance on what is written on that paper.” Lenin responded: “in that case, you are mistaken. You will learn a lot in our entourage. I seriously and sincerely wish that you will collaborate with us in all-Russian and world-wide issues. Arguing over a piece of paper written and signed based on transitory requirements is not worthy of you. You will see what important business we will be facing.” From those words, I sensed that he might be sincere in his desire to see me as a colleague and have me work on Russia-wide issues. While I was leaving, he gave me a batch of papers and stated: “after you read these, we will talk about them; but, you must submit your thoughts in writing.”

At Hotel Metropol, we the high Soviet personalities spoke on various topics. At the time, the task of shadowing people and Party members by Soviet officers was not developed much. It was possible to talk on many topics freely. At one point, I was telling Petrovski, Head of the Ukrainian Soviet Government, the constitutional drafts of the national governments, and my impressions of my talks with Lenin. I jokingly asked him: “since all options are permissible in the pursuit of the goal for Lenin, if he is told that his wedding his own mother would cause world revolution, would he do it?” Petrovski, without any hesitation stated: “of course he would wed his mother. Lenin always looks at at these issues from a tactical point-of-view. For example, he will consider the circumstances if they would turn the people away from us. His approach is not circumscribed with religion or morals or tradition. His morals are only confined to the class struggles of the proletariat. Most of the allies of us communists are transitory. A portion of those left us when Lenin was fraudulently signing the banknotes. Primarily, the agreements are in force because

they were necessary. On the other hand, I am not able to be as fearless as Lenin on these issues.” I asked: “is Lenin sincere in his thoughts of internationalism? Or, is the Russian nationalism is affecting his thoughts?” Petrovski: “Lenin is sincerely outside nationalism (vnenatsional) as he is walking toward applying communism world-wide. However, in terms of historical, geographical and economic terms, his talking of internationalism toward the societies living in Russia is nothing but a fraud. In those aspects, he is a Great Russianist. Instead of leaning on small nations to bring about universal communism, he regards the imperialistic traditions of Russians, Chinese and the English as the shortest route.” On another day, when there was nobody around, and while we were speaking alone, I asked Petrovski: “Grigori Andeevic, you are a party member for the past twenty-five years and you have been friends. Is Lenin defending the national benefits of the Great Russians? Or, is his siding, for example, in the Eastern Question, with the chauvinistic Russians a tactic? Why is he labeling the minority Communists as little bourgeoisie?” Petrovski gave the following response: “Lenin is defending the rights of the Great Russians even more so than Peter the Great. However, he supports the Great Russians, provided they are cleansed of capitalism, that they will become a shining example in the great realm of socialism among the nations. Even though he is not a Russian Nationalist, he supports the Russians with his policies. And, we are fighting Lenin constantly, even though we think differently than Ukrainian Nationalists concerning Ukraine. Lenin is unable to think differently about tribes that are Russian prisoners. This has reached such a level that sometimes we are reluctant to tell him all this. Lenin was an endless defender of small nations in his book *Against the Current*. But, the period of theory is now in the past. He now regards the revolutionaries and Party members from small nations such as you as small bourgeoisie, much the same way his Great Russian friends do. Those will remain small bourgeoisie until all of them accepts becoming Great Russians. As long as our mutual enemy is capitalism and capitalist imperialism, the deception between Great Russian Communists and the members of the Party from small nations will continue. It is necessary to accept this and to come to terms with it.”

What I heard from a sincere and old friend of Lenin, Petrovski, I told all to an Eastern Turk in whom I believed. I surmise it was Turar Riskulov. He relayed all of it to a communist friend of his in Bukey-Orda by letter. At the time, I thought of Petrovski telling me all this because he had a bone to pick with Lenin. During those days, a person by the name of Dr. Fuat Sabit arrived from Turkiye. This person, even though he was an old Turkist, he was leaning toward communism. In fact, his leanings seemed to be very deep rooted. One of the educated Tatars who studied in Turkiye, probably Necip Asri Bey of Astrakhan, thought that I wrote the aforementioned letter; he converted it into the Turkish of Turkiye and gave it to Dr. Fuat. Upon returning to Ankara, he gave that letter to General Mustafa Kemal. At that time, the contacts between the Turks of Russia and the Turks of Turkiye were very lively. I was thus amazed to learn what I told my friends about my talks at the Metropol Hotel had been noted and reached Turkiye

and was useful. This Grigori Petrovski was my best source of learning about Lenin’s moral principles, and his relations with the Russian Nationalism. Of course, he told me all this believing that I too would remain loyal to Lenin, much like himself, despite what our people would suffer in the hands of the Great Russians. However, I learned that he had not changed his positive impressions of me after I left Moscow and began operating against the Soviets. This was specified by another close friend Rudzutak, who told another friend, Turar Rizkulov. I related Lenin’s morals and his regard for treaties at the “Left Socialists Congress” convening at Berlin during December 1924 (the current chief of the Left Italians, Nenni was also present) in the paper I presented. That paper is published in German and Russian Left Socialist compilations (*Klassenkampf*, 14.1, 1925; *Znamia Bor’by* No. 9-10, 1925). In it, I stated: “we Asians are used to respecting the pieces of papers regarded as worthless by Lenin. Previously we knew Lenin more different than Kolesov in Tashkent, Zwilling in Orenburg, and Artium at Moscow Center. Now, it is certifiably clear that they have no differences.” Due to the 19 May decisions, some of the educated in the Baskurdistan Communist Party resigned from membership. When Samoylov asked for their reasoning, they responded with: “we will not be a member of the party that regards signed treaties non-extant and issues the decisions of 19 May.” Samoylov mentioned this in his memoirs.

## *The business of the secret organization—*

Back in March 1919, as Third International was in session, there was work in the town of Times [not to be read in English] where the Baskurt Government was at the time, to establish the Eastern Socialist Party to join the Third International as an independent party. During the same days, the Kazak intellectuals were engaged in parallel efforts in Tashkent. During March of that year, while the Baskurdistan Country Committee was being formed by the Communist Party, there were efforts to keep the socialism movement of Turkistan out of the communist party under the designation Earn Socialism, and have it become a direct member of the Third International. The Tatar educated Ilyas Alki, who was working in Baskurdistan, and his friends compiled a working program comprising twelve items. However, ZKRKP rudely rejected these preparations. At the time, from among the Ozbeks and the Kazaks several responsible individuals such as Nizamhocayev, Turar Riskulov, and Ahmet Baytursun were present in Moscow. The Moslem Countries Communist Center of the ZKP was about to dissolve. When there was no permission to establish an official, independent Eastern Socialist Party, we jointly decided to keep that organization together clandestinely. In that manner, we aimed at keeping the country communist parties of Turkistan, Kazakhstan, Baskurdistan; Bukhara and Khiva together and in secret. We had already decided that fourteen members of the Baskurt national organization would go to Turkistan and work there. In Moscow, those projects were enlarged. We decided that a portion of those who would be working with the Soviets needed to be from among the Cedids, that they needed to have nothing to do with socialism. The other

portion needed to be sincere socialists; that the two groups needed to work as two independent parties but work in unison. The keys to collaboration and both party programs were settled. We called certain friends from Tashkent and Kazakhstan. The Soviet Government had allocated a mansion belonged to an old wealthy man for the Baskurdistan representative at the center of the city. All our talks were conducted there.

## *Our contacts with individuals from Turkiye—*

At the end of May, from the leadership of Turkiye, Generals Cemal and Hail, Hacı Sami and a few of the Union and Progress party guides arrived. With that, our talks with the Turks of Turkiye gained life. The primary impetus was the telegram sent to us from Erzurum by General Mustafa Kemal. This telegram was sent to me as the Head of the Moslem Orenburg Government. From there, the said telegram was routed to Sterlitamak, thence on to me in Moscow. In that telegram, the feelings of brotherhood were expressed, and suggestion was made for further contacts. This was the very first news we received from a Turkiye, which was engaged in a struggle, without intermediaries. Even though the title Orenburg Moslem Government was widely heard, meaning Baskurdistan, it was living the last breaths of existence as an autonomous republic. It was almost the same what happened to the Azerbaijan National Government in Southern Caucasus. General Halil was stating that the contacts with Russia without an intermediary necessitated the removal of Azerbaijan. General Cemal was talking, on one hand, of participating in the movement in Anatolia; and from the other, his desire to operate against the English in India with the aid of the Soviets via Afghanistan. The thoughts of the Turkish leadership seemed rather very complex, just as the ideas of those who were unable to understand the conditions of the Soviets. Especially the belief of General Cemal and Bedri Bey, in the imaginary and worthless conditions expressed in the French author Dr. A. Legendre's *Quo Vadis Europe*, which was published in Paris during those days, caused us astonishment. This Frenchman was totally dismissing the Soviets; he was expressing the belief that the Soviet period would allow Europe to breathe easy, that it was necessary to collaborate with the Soviets, and that the real danger must be found in the movements of the Turks living in Central Asia who were the prisoners of the Soviets. General Cemal was deriving from all that: "observe, the Westerners are finding such a potential power in us. It is necessary to utilize that with the aid of the Soviets against the allies." General Cemal was taken in by Cicherin's devilishness, believed that the Soviets would task him with the duty of establishing an army from the Central Asian tribal units, and that he would utilize the imprisoned Turkish officers for that, and he would receive wide-ranging aid from the Soviets for the purpose. However, the Soviets were afraid of Dr. Legendre's

writings from a different point of view. They were scared of the organization of Central Asia especially by the Turks more so than they were afraid of their current opponents in the battlefield, the Western allies. In contrast, I told Generals Cemal and Halil that I was preparing to journey to Central Asia for the purpose of working against the Soviets. General Cemal stated: "please do not do that; let us all of us join in and become one with the Soviets, and induct all of Turkistan in uprising into the army we are going to form." I told him that those plans would cause nothing but a great heartbreak; on the other hand, the uprisings against the Russians, even though it may not yield an immediate successful result, would cause the formation of an affinity fighting against the Russian yoke; the primary enemy of the Turkistanis was the lethargy, the time lapse since the last martial movement, and getting warmed-up to the Russians.

At the Baskurdistan Representative Mansion, we gave large-scale feasts for the Turkish high representatives. At the same time, we discovered something new. These high representatives were alcohol-dependent. Our representative mansion was full with various types of alcoholic beverages. Since it was previously the home of a Russian wealthy old man, the cellars were stuffed with wine and other alcoholic beverages. If there was not a feast, none from amongst us would use any of those beverages, and did not see a need. Especially those colleagues who were regularly working in that mansion, there was none who drank any during regular meals; we had not made it a habit. On the other hand, Generals Cemal and Halil drank until they became drunk; the aide-de-camp Muhittin Bey and others became roaring drunks. They were continually asking for more. General Halil wanted to continue all this the next day as well. On the other hand, these leaders of the Committee of Union and Progress, quite different than the educated Turks in Russia, since they spoke as representatives of an independent state and commanders of her independent army. That verity made us proud.

At the Baskurdistan Representative Mansion feast, where we hosted our guests, I proposed a conference of Eastern Moslem Nations Conference to be held at Baku, since Azerbaijan was recently annexed into the Soviet Union. I suggested to our guests, the Generals, that at that conference they would find a chance to speak with various levels of representatives of Moslems who are prisoners of the Russians. I explained the matter to Stalin and Party Secretaries. We also spoke with some of the Azerbaijanis who had just arrived in Moscow, and with the 'Moslem Communists.' A short time later, there were planning sessions on this congress, with the participation of General Enver who had just arrived in Russia (during September).

During those talks, General Cemal was paying attention to the Turkish I was speaking. Only a few educated could understand the Turkish he was speaking. On the other hand, the Turkish I spoke was understood by Kazak, Kirgiz, Uzbek, Tatar, Azerbaijanis, by everyone. General Cemal asked: "is this language, understood by all, is it a different language?" I responded: "no, General; since I know all of these dialects, I am speaking with an accent so that everyone can understand me."



## *Journey to the Ukrainian Front—*

The Party Secretariat having transferred the Army Command de facto to Stalin, Trotsky's Revolutionary War Council presidency now appeared artificial. Trotsky called me on the telephone and informed me that I was appointed Southern Front Director of Moslem Unit Formation, answerable to Stalin, indicated I needed to leave immediately. I endeavored to delay my departure by various reasons. Lenin telephoned the same hour, repeated the same words in a decisive language. He verified his words with a private note he wrote in pencil. So, I commandeered a locomotive, had the wagons allocated to me attached to it, and left for Southern Ukraine protected by the guard company I had in my retinue. I found Stalin in Kremencuk near Crimea. Stalin invited me to his car, we ventured in the direction where the military barracks were located around the city. He told me my duties. New military units were going to be established from Baskurts, Tatars and Northern Caucasus Moslems; I was appointed, with very wide powers, to the retinue of the Commander-in-Chief to establish those units. We were to leave for Kharkov that day. They attached my wagons to Stalin's train. Stalin called me to the Tsar's magnificent wagon, which was completely furnished with soft leather. We ate broiled chicken washed down with Georgian wine. He was very moderate. He was getting under my skin. Ostensibly, he was living for the small oppressed nations, him being an Easterner himself. He was blaming all on to Trotsky, who he designated as a Jewish Internationalist. He was telling me that he was the son of a Georgian author's son, that he was raised in a nationalist environment, and that he understood us well. He was cussing-out the Russians, calling them chauvinists. Just like Lenin he was telling me that I needed to work Russia-wide, not to be concerned with the affairs of the small nations, that they would gain their rights eventually. However, I did not let him know that what he was telling me was not sincere, contrary to what I already knew about his parents, his youth environment, and that he was distorting the facts for my benefit.

The day after arriving in Kharkov, I fell ill. I spoke with Stalin at the General Staff headquarters, asked him a month off so I could go to Astrakhan for rest and recuperation and delay the formation of the Moslem military units for that period. He refused. He ordered me to perform my duty in the name of the Party. I told him: "that was the reason for your including me in the Party, to order me about." I faced him with his own lies. The critical conditions in the Front were maintaining their importance. He endured all. He stated: "we all became nervous wrecks." Even though he had not allowed me to journey to Astrakhan, he did not prevent me from obtaining a locomotive. I returned to Moscow with the guard company in my retinue. I let Lenin and Trotsky that I was ill. Our friends whom we had summoned from from Tashkent and Kazakistan had arrived. I told them what I spoke with Lenin and Stalin in great detail. It was understood that, the conditions were the same everywhere, meaning everyone was in stress.

## *Disputing with Lenin, his Nationality theses and related issues—*

A few days after my arrival from the Southern Front, Lenin's secretary called me by telephone and said: "Vladimir Il'yic wishes to speak with you." I went at the appointed hour. Madame Stasova was with Lenin. Lenin told me that he was preparing theses for discussion at the Second Congress of the Comintern, meeting in Moscow during those days, on nationalism and colonialism. He wished to receive my considerations on those topics in writing as soon as possible, and after reading them he would also call me to discuss them in person. Those theses, published in Lenin's collections, were comprised of twelve items. We read those theses together with our friends from Turkistan. I modified some of those, especially items 5, 11 and 12, and made some small additions to a couple of others. Among those, I proposed the clear definition of small bourgeoisie, I asked for modifications in what is meant by the proletariat's leadership, their continuing 'aid' after the removal of colonies and capitalism. Two days later, I wrote my thoughts as an independent thesis, and handed them over.

Lenin had given me many papers during our previous meeting. They, too, were concerned with nationalism and colonialism. I also studied them. To honor me, he added the word 'draft' (nabroski) to his twelve item project. Then, he read what I wrote and discussed each with me. However, he was nowhere near accepting our proposals. I personally heard, from Lenin's mouth: that they would only trust the representatives of the Russian proletariat in the colonies, and that our trustworthiness would be measured by our acceptance of their leadership. That distrust would also not be confined to the geographic borders of the Tsardom, but would continue after the completion of the world revolution and they wished to have the Western countries (England, France, Belgium, etc) under the leadership of the proletariat. All of this was Lenin's personal thoughts; and that in the East, in order to settle socialism, the Eastern proletariat was not going to be trusted.

All that proved to us that it was now necessary for us to struggle against the Soviets in a serious and open manner. During those days, in Tashkent, Rizkulov, Nizam Hodayev and their friends were expelled from Turk Kommissia and from Turtsek, meaning from the Executive Committee of Turkistan. In their place, several others, defined as Internationalists, were appointed. Ahmet Tursun and I decided to leave Moscow on 29 June. What Stalin held back from me, I obtained from Kretinski and Preobrajinski, the Party Central Secretaries. I intended to rest in Astrakhan. Preobrajinski, recalling the days we spent in Baskurdistan, and our hunting together, regarded me a friend. He took me to his own home. He told me that, when they killed the Tsar, he only took two items from the Tsar's belongings. One was a golden cup, which he gave to his own son; the other was a hunting rifle decorated in gold. He was giving that rifle to me as a present. I thanked him very much.

During those days, Dr. Nazim Bey or Bedri Bey arrived from the Committee of Union and Progress. He stated that there were items they wished to discuss. It transpired

that he had ideas other than expressed by General Cemal, concerning my journeying to Turkistan to join the uprisings there. He told me: “perhaps your thoughts are more correct. Please act according to your own and your friends’ thoughts. In truth, we do not know Russia well. What we are being told by the External Affairs changes by the day.” I told him: “I cannot tolerate lies. If today there was any evidence that auspicious events were going to take place, I would have tolerated a bit longer. But, there is not even the weakest evidence that there will be such auspicious developments. All these matters are based on personal acquiescence. Since I am not taking an army with me, I would not be afraid of being responsible of casualties. I am only carrying my own head under my arm. My friends are already altruistic. Even if I were to ask them to stay behind, they will not.” I was travelling by car to see a dacha outside the city which they were intending to allocate us as summer residence. I was repeating the following couplet from Sofi Allahyar, thinking what would be the benefit of a magnificent dacha around Moscow: “you who have turned your face in resignation/ your walk is against God’s law.”

## Struggles in Turkistan

### *On the way to Moscow-Baku-Ashkabad—*

On 29 June 1908, I had left my father and went far-away cities for education. Now, on 29 June 1920, I was leaving Lenin, raising the standard of open rebellion, I was withdrawing to the mountains and deserts of Turkistan. If we were not successful, I would possibly move on to Europe. I may never see Moscow again. Fourteen friends from Baskurdistan, as planned before were to leave on the same day, toward Turkistan and Kazakistan. This piece of news was relayed to them in two letters, as I will relate shortly. A portion of friends and I were going to visit various places in Kazakistan and Turkistan, and organize them. We had planned all-together to meet in Bukhara at the beginning of 1921 after the initial gathering of a portion of us in the city of Kungrat in Khorezm, others making contacts within Ozbekistan and among the Basmaci, even in Kashgar. However, we did not know if the Emirate of Bukhara was going to be alive until then. I would personally journey from Moscow to Askhabad by way of Astrakhan and Baku, attend Baku East Tribes Conference, then cross-over to Western Kazakistan, to Khorezm via Ustyurt and finally arrive in Bukhara. All of these plans were realized by the end of the year, as planned.

I had sent my wife Nefise in the company of one of my soldiers, to travel by way of Samar-Volga steamboat. We were going to meet at Saritsin. We got underway with my guard company, Ahmet Baytursun of the Kazaks, and several other Kazak intellectuals, via Saratov. At the border of Bukey-Orda, near Botakol, two Kazak horseman were going to wait for us on the morning of 30 June. During the early hours of the morning, we stopped the train when we saw them. I had some of my works with me, one soldier and our rifles. We transferred them to the horses. I gave all other materials to my aide-de-camp Arif Muhammedyarof, who knew of our detailed plans, the hand-archive for transfer to the central museum we began to establish at Sterlitamak. I also gave the long-gun from the Tsar’s treasury to my aide-de-camp, so that he could send it to Preobrajinsky in Moscow. I wrote a letter to Preobjajinsky indicating: “it is better for you to keep this valuable long-gun at this time; if we are able to get together again, I will ask for it.” I was dressed as a Red-soldier, as were my friends. I had not told any of this to my soldiers on the train. I bid them good-bye. All of us were crying, including Ahmet Baytursun. There was the possibility of not seeing our country again. We had decided that we would go to foreign countries if we were unsuccessful. The train

would go to Baskurdistan with my possessions and my papers. They would wait until we mounted our horses and disappear from sight; then they would get underway. We ran toward Aral Sor Lake, meaning due east. When we entered Baskuncak sands, the horse hoof-traces were disappearing. By the time the sun rose, we turned in the Western direction, away from Tsarev-Sariniyev and away from the villages, in the Bozkir. I wanted to see the ruins of the Yeni Saray city that was the Capital of Altin-Orda. We cooked our dinner in an abandoned, ruined small house and spent the night there. In the morning, we visited the Saray ruins. But, we did not have the time to inspect them in detail or look for monumental writings. We rode toward Volga. Across Saritsin, we left our horses and the Kazak youths. We crossed, to wait for the steamboat due to arrive from Samar. Since the steamboat was late by three hours, we visited the city. Later, that city was known as Stalingrad. The original name was Sarig Sin during the time of the Hazars. Russians pronounced it as Saritsin. The entire city had the appearance of a ruined township. Grass was growing on the streets. I could not, naturally, have imagined that that city was going to constitute a turning point during World War Two. When the steamboat arrived, we discovered my wife and the soldier accompanying her waiting for us on the deck. All four of us left toward Astrakhan. In order to hide ourselves, we travelled in the third class. Upon arriving in Astrakhan, we did not spend any time there. Two or three weeks before leaving Moscow, I had sent an Inak, a man I trusted from my retinue to Astrakhan, to see Abdurrahman Molla. He was carrying a hand written note which stated “this man is an Inak [trusted person]” to tell Molla all the details verbally, and had already received an answer. Molla advised us to meet with someone named Sokur Nogay near the port, and from there he was going to take us to another friend known as Guzeyir at Buzan. That night, I left my wife and my soldier Haris Sisenbay at Sokur Nogay, and followed a man sent by the Molla, I reached Kizilyar (Krasniy Yar) and from there with a motorboat to Guzeyir. Molla had published the folk-songs he personally collected from Buzan as a pamphlet. He had also informed me that he was going to gather some folk-singers from Guzeyir.

## *Neneke-Can—*

Buzan is an arm of the Edil River delta. It is mentioned in histories, even in the letter of the Hazak Han Yusuf’s letter. It is also mentioned along with River Kemelik in the oral histories of my lineage. I had a different reason for my searching for it. At the end of the last century, a Russian author by the name of Eugeni Markov published his memoirs under the title Crimean Sketches (*Ocerki Kirima*). In that, he mentioned an Altin-Orda princess at the castle walls, in Cifit Kalayan, detailing her love story and a marble monument erected in her honor at that location. He had also attached a photograph of it. Supposedly that girl was the daughter of Toktamis Han, who fell in love with a Jewish youth, and when she could not marry him, she threw herself down onto the rocks. From the attached photograph, he indicated all that happened during

Hicri 740, A.D. 1340. Ismail Limanov of Crimea had indicated that the Crimean and Astrakhan (Kundrav) Nogays knew all of those songs concerning this princess. I had written Molla about these. He told the soldier I had sent: “let him go and search for himself. Let him hire a boat from Krasnoyarks, and reach the home of Guzeyir Nogay’s home. I will prepare everything.” I did not waste any time and left to follow his instructions. At the home of Guzeyir, there were two guests. One of them was known as Balikci, a merchant of Nogay-Kazak descent. The other was a friend who arrived from the city of Yeni Kazan from Bukey-Orda. According to the instructions of the Molla, they had also prepared honey mead for me. There was also Kimiz, a type of meat known as Sor, other tasty Bozkir foods such as Qazi, Qarta, and all other types of pasta dishes were present. Arifullah from Yeni Kazan sang beautiful songs. Among those, the following couplet I now recall (stated as a means of reprimand, for the young man arriving earlier than the darkness has set in, as it was expected, for the girl he loved) from a pure Tatar song: “you arrive without knowing how to hook the door of the white summer house/ you do not know how to arrive, after the old-folks go to bed.” These poems, characteristic of Turk poems also containing the refined internal metering of alliteration and acrostics, were very attractive to me. The folk songs of the Kazan Turks are the same as the Altay Tatars, Mongols and even some of the Chinese. From that perspective, Kazan music has brought the old traditions down to our days. It is possible that they were descended from the Alci-Tatar branch who settled in the vicinity of Kazan during the Golden-Horde period. There was no instrumental music in our gathering; only songs were performed. During the deepening hours of the night, Guzeyir brought someone. The new arrival knew of only a couplet or two of Neneke-Can. However, there was no indication that those couplets were from Neneke-Can, as they contained no names or designations. They were indistinguishable from other Kundrav Nogay folk songs. They were reminiscent of the Teftilerv songs and airs of the Baskurts. Moreover, since I did not know how to read and write musical notes, I could not record them on paper. The friend known as Balikcili, related the following piece: “Friends arrived in the home of the friend/ they had topics to discuss/ How much honey can be bought for half an akca/ even then, that much honey will not be enough for the friends/ bring my gray horse, tied with Argamci/ we will sell it and make honey [mead] to drink/ we will turn the bees-wax into candles/ When friends visit, we will light those candles/ Those enemies spying on us will see the lights/ they will go away thinking we are drinking mead.”

Nogay folk-songs had us all excited. This last poem also had a parallel by the famed Iranian poet Hoca Hafiz: “generosity is short on time/ but, honor cannot be sold/ you must sell the sweater you are wearing in order to buy the wine and the rose.” The friend from Balikcili read very beautiful poems on Istirek Mirza and his son Ertargen Mirza (Tanrikul Mirza), the likes of which I had never heard before. That gathering caused us to re-live the times of Altin-Orda Nogay Mirzas.

Six years had passed after that gathering and I found the musical notes of this Neneke-Can in the library of the archeological museum of Istanbul, manuscript division (N. 1619), written in a collection compiled in the city of Saray of the Altin-Orda



during 740/1340. I showed the photographs of those notes to the musicologists and historians of music in the Iranian History Congress convened by the Shah. However, they still remain unread. The fact that the composition of Neneke-Can had arrived in the Ottoman domains is a document showing how strongly the national Turk culture was established and developed in the palace. Besides, what else is there not among the cultural treasures of Istanbul? We did not sleep all night. I left for Astrakhan early in the morning.

### *Baku via the sea—*

The large steamboats did not run directly between Astrakhan and Baku, because of the shallowness and narrowness of the waterways. There is one port that is twelve fut [feet] deep, and the Russians call it ‘dvednatsat futov.’ After staying at the house of Sokur Noyan another night, we arrived at this ‘twelve fut’ port in a small boat.

We arrived in Baku during 5-6 July. There, we met with the Tatar authors Hadi Atlasi and Abdullah Battal. Hadi Atlasi was a former member of Duma, an author and a historian. He had published works under the titles “Siberian History,” History of Kazan,” and “Suyunbike.” He escaped from the Bolsheviks, arrived in Baku; but, shortly afterward, the Bolsheviks occupied Baku. All the Azerbaijani elders were either already in other countries, or were in hiding. I only spoke with Mumtaz Suleyman, in secret. In Baku, I stayed at the home of Turkish Communist Mustafa Suphi. I knew him from Moscow. Even though he was a communist, he did not like their Eastern policies. He was especially sulky toward Stalin, because they were regarding the war prisoner Turks as the true communists instead of him. He was the one who proposed and invited me to stay at his home in Baku for my duration of stay there. He referred us to Emin Efendizade of Azerbaijan and Veli Ibrahim of Crimea. I spoke with him at length. I told him some of our plans in Turkistan. I was certain he would not tell the Russians anything. I knew that the Soviet Secret Police would be looking for me in Kazakistan and not in Azerbaijan, so I openly circulated in Baku. I visited the old buildings, han [not to be confused with Han—Ruler; office buildings of the old merchants], palaces, mosques and medreses. After spending a week there, we crossed over to Kizilsu (Krasnovodsk) on the Turkmenistan shores by steamboat. From there, we reached Ashkhabad at the end of July. We stayed at the home of Berdi Hacıogullari of the Teke branch. I sent one of the two soldiers travelling with us to Tashkent, and I waited for my wife, who had been pregnant, to give birth. She gave birth to a boy; I called him Iris Mehmet. Iris means fate. This was the name of the Kocum Han of the Baskurts’ descendent, grandson of Kucuk Sultan’s Busak Sultan’s son [sic]. He had traveled to Turkiye, and was the brother of Murad Sultan who was taken prisoner by the Russians in 1709 at the Dagistan Terek castle and killed. After the senior leaders of the Kocumlu, Aldar and Orakay Sultan were executed, Iris Mehmed was elected Han, who liberated all of middle Volga from the Russians. He then took position of sieging Kazan, having reached a distance of thirty-eight kilometers from that city, was poised

to take it. So, while I was wondering what I would call my first child, this hero’s name came to my mind. One of our soldiers was providing the communication with our friends in Tashkent. I spent all of August among the Turkmen around Ashkhabad and Merv. I was going to attend the Eastern Tribes Conference to convene in Baku during September. I sent my wife to Khorazm in the company of one of our soldiers, where we were going to meet during fall.

### *The days we spent in Ashkhabad—*

We published the newspaper Turkmenistan with my old friend attorney Kokacan, who was the son of Berdi Hacı. I wrote the entire first issue by myself. Meanwhile, we learned that the Cheka officers were looking for me everywhere. Moscow thought that I escaped in the direction of Uralsk from Bukey-Orda. However, they decided not to pursue me there, as they believed the Kazaks would not give me up. So, they started searching me in the region of Tashkent, Samarkand and Ashkhabad. They had tasked a Foreign Service officer from Moscow, by the name of Ostrovsky, to search for me. When I was living in the home of Kokacan, this Russian spoke with Kokacan in the garden. He spoke of me. Ostensibly, if he could find me, he was going to discuss the matters of the Baku Conference with me. Stalin had arrived in Baku, and added Emin Resulzade to his retinue; he also wanted to add me to his retinue. The two soldiers who journeyed with me were from the Salcuvut Branch, Haris Seksenbay and from the Burcen Branch, Ahmedcan Adnabay. These Salcuvut and Burcen were extremely loyal to our autonomy and national independence ideas. My aide-de-camp Arif Muhammedyarov and one of our Secretaries, poet Abdulhay Erkebayev were from the Salcuvut. We had very brave golden youths from the Burcen. This Ahmedcan, when we were forced to cross over to the Soviet side during February 1919, is the one on whose breast I had placed my head and we had both cried. I had not called him. He searched and found me. We had many such brave youths. They were taking the place of my old friend Ibrahim Kackinbay in my old army. My force in the army was based on the many Troopers and Sergeants who were personally loyal to me.

Berdi Hacı and his son Kokacan gave me, my wife and these two youths, four Turkmen horses. We were staying in the outskirts of Ashkhabad, in the home of an Armenian woman. Sometimes, we would go out into the desert for a ride. We were thinking of travelling to Khiva on horseback via the desert, if I could not journey to Baku. We definitely had to be present in Kongrat during November. Even though the administration was in the hands of the Young Khivans and the Russians, the Northern portion and Kongrat was in the hands of Turkmen Han Cuneyt. Now at the age of eighty, Han Cuneyt was a soldier in the service of the Khiva Han when the Russians occupied Khiva in 1873. He never accepted the idea of making peace with the Russians; he bravely remained independent of the Russians. While I was still in Moscow, our friends and I had discussed and decided on what needed to be done: to stay in Ashkhabad to organize the extant national forces; to attend Eastern Tribes

Conference in Baku; then travel via Astrakhan and Western Kazakistan to Northern Khorezm that was in the hands of Han Cuneyt, thence to Khiva. Fourteen prominent members of the Baskurdistan Government were going to reach Turkistan via different routes; a portion would buy horses for the army. About the work they were going to perform, two letters were sent from Moscow. One of them was meant to fall into the hands of Russians, and cause them to be astonished. That letter actually fell into the hands of the Russians. It was written in Baskurt, and the Russian translation containing many errors was published in Samoylov's memoirs and in Tipiyev's history, I had expressed my thoughts on how the Soviet Government was misleading the Eastern Turk Branches in relations, that the Russians were not going to allow a unification, that the Russians would take the administration into their hands, disband the national army. It also specified not to resist all that openly, that it was imperative for the Baskurt intellectuals to work officially toward establishing the development of the education and the economic administration of the country. It was also incumbent on those journeying to Turkistan and Kazakistan to work among the population until the Eastern Branches are awakened, to participate in the Soviet Congresses for the purpose of struggling, that it was necessary to establish an Asian or Eastern Communist Party. That those of us working in secret were few in number, therefore all the intellectuals must be loyal to the official work, and we would thus force Moscow to accept our conditions. However, the other letter was written in code and was included in the uncut copy of a new volume of Karl Marx's *Kapital*.

In the second letter, the tasks of those fourteen and where they were going to reach were provided in detail. My friend Fethulkadir Suleyman (Abdulkadir Inan) was going to the portion of Kazakistan known as "Arka [Back]," to meet with Ahmet Isan, to work with the Kazak intellectuals in order to organize them. Thence he would journey to Khorezm, then on to Kongrat; if he could not make it, he would journey to meet our friends in Samarkand. Ildirhan Mutin (Secretary of Treasury), along with Ibrahim Canuzagov of the Kirgiz, would reach the Basmachi Chiefs Sirmemet and Aman Pehlivan in Ferghana, and they would wait for us there; that I was organizing Turkistan and Khorezm in person. That latter letter did not fall into the hands of the Russians. We all acted as written in that letter. In Baskurdistan, a government was established in the leadership of our friend Allahberdi Caferoglu. A little later (25-30 July), the First Baskurdistan Soviet Congress convened with a little more than half (%54) non-Moslems, and cussed us out as 'Enemy of the People and the Soviets.' Then, Moscow attached Baskurdistan to the Ufa center with the lies that "in order to enlarge Baskurdistan and annex more rich places to it," where the Russians were in the majority.

In his writings, Samoylov ascribed our departure from Baskurdistan as a dark event, but also noted that I was not thinking of my personal benefit, even though the I had government gold in my hands, I had not taken any and left them in the treasury, and he recorded the fact that even though I was an enemy, I was a clean enemy. He also wrote of the characters of some of my friends. Even though we had not touched the official treasury, when it was apparent that I was going to be summoned to Moscow at

the beginning of May, we had already sent the diamonds in my possession, especially the gold and paper money collected from the nobility, primarily from the estates of Paskov and Schott, to Kazakistan to purchase horses. In other words, we had ensured that the individuals who would be leaving Baskurdistan would not remain hungry on the way.

I established a cell comprised of three individuals in Ashkhabad from the Turkmen who would not be obvious, to perform the tasks in Turkistan and Khorezm, and insured their way of communication with Samarkand, Khokand and Tashkent.

## *Baku Congress—*

Even though I advanced the first idea of the Baku Eastern Nations Congress (1-5 September) in the presence of Generals Camal and Halil, at the Baskurdistan Representative Offices, the entire affair was organized by Stalin's Nationality Commissariat, and the Moslem Communist Center. Zinoviev and K. Radek were appointed to head the Congress. I was now going to escape. Despite all that, the Soviets regarded my presence at the Conference a verity, and they had taken precautions to catch me. I was informed that the secret police had tasked nearly three hundred officers to catch me in Baku, Astrakhan, Derbend, Krasnovodsk, and elsewhere. Apparently, the great majority of those officers knew me personally. I was also advised who were arriving from Kazakistan and Ozbekistan, via a special train. I met that train on 29 August at an insignificant train station called Bamian, to the West of Ashkhabad. I found Turar Riskulov and Ibrahim Canuzakov in a passenger wagon after I jumped off a merchandise carrier wagon. We settled how we were going to work in Baku, how we were going to communicate, before the train reached the Cebel station, one stop before Krasnovodsk. There, Turar gave me an interesting writing. After we left Moscow, Pavlovic, a specialist in Near East for the Komintern, at the Komintern Congress that was convened, distributed a mimeographed sheet to his friends who would be working in the Near East and Central Asia. That sheet was not provided to the Moslem Communists. However, a Polish Communist, whom I also knew, gave Turar a copy secretly. Later on, during 1923, A Tatar intellectual Osman Tokumbet brought a copy to Berlin. In that writing it was stressed that since the class stratifications such as capitalism has not developed in the Middle East, and among the nations of Arabs, Turks, Iranians and Afghans, other factors must be exploited. Those other factors included keeping the conflicts alive between the sects, and tarikat [religious cults]. Even after those factors are eradicated from the Soviet domains, it was necessary to continue those activities in the neighboring countries, and such conflicts must be supported; that it was also necessary to benefit from personal intrigues and disagreements between individuals, merchants and the seyhs. Since the grammatical rules in the languages of these nations are not regular, it was also necessary to make use of that factor to prevent the formation of literary languages amongst them. Given that, approaching the population at large would necessitate the fracture of a language

into even smaller segments; that would be very important to make use, since the cultural workers and men of ideas in those nations form a very thin layer, it would be very easy to break them. My friend Turar gave me several other important documents to be utilized at the Baku Congress. He asked me to have them duplicated via the mimeograph method. I asked him to hand me those documents in Baku. I was going about in Turkmenistan in the garb of a Turkmen. Because of that, Turar's friends thought I was a plain Turkmen and they did not show any interest in me.

I disembarked at the Cebel station at a location unseen by anyone. After the scheduled steam-boat for the day left the port, I walked around the city of Krasnovodsk and arrived at the port, and I saw that a military boat was ready to cast-off. It transpired that it was allocated to transport the 'Azerbaijani Representative' comrade Abilov and his retinue to Baku, from Tashkent, on the way to Turkiye. I approached and asked one of the guard soldiers if they would also take me along. He said "come on in." I boarded. All of the soldiers were Turkmen, and they showed me a straw-mat where all the soldiers were staying; Comrade Abilov, whom I did not know well, and his retinue, was located upstairs. In the lower level where I was, there were approximately forty Turkmen cavalymen, and their horses. They also had some sheep for them. They were designated to be the Embassy Guards at the Embassy in Ankara. The steam-boat got underway toward the evening. A little later, a tremendous storm broke. Toward midnight, the storm reached such strength I had not seen anything like that in my life. It felt as if the steam-boat was standing vertically. The horses were taken down to the lowest level. The sheep remained where I was. The waves took away the majority of them and the bales of grass. The Turkmen soldiers also brought along a lot of watermelons. They were severely seasick. The watermelons were scattered from where they were stacked. They were hurtling around the space where we were, as if they were soccer balls; they were exploding by slamming into the walls, or jumping on the Turkmen. The Turkmen were shouting "catch-it; catch-it." I filled a large wooden-box with the ones that had not been split-open. I never get sea-sick. But, very few people were left on board the steam-boat who was not. About midnight, a lady who was working in the kitchen and the dining room emerged and told me: "a lot of food was prepared upstairs. Nobody is eating. All of them are ill. Go upstairs and eat." I did. For His Excellency the Ambassador, wine, broiled chicken, many different types of dishes, Korezm or Carcuy melons were prepared. After eating all that, I went and slept on the futon shown me. I woke early in the morning. The storm had ceased. I spoke at length with the serving woman who offered me food in the middle of the night. I thought of giving that woman a letter she can hand over to comrade Abilov. I wrote him as follows: "Respected Comrade Abilov; I was your guest on board your ship. Even though you could not get anywhere near your dining table, I benefited from the tasty food. I thank you for the feast you provided me. I wish you success; Head of Baskurdistan Government, and Member of the TSK, Zeki Velidov." The steamboat approached the landing. At that moment, I handed my letter to the server woman. I disembarked and disappeared. It transpired that that woman handed my letter to Abilov, who later told all that transpired to Turkistan

Representative Turar Riskulov. Ostensibly, even if he had met me, he was not going to turn me over to his government. Riskulov regarded that statement as a test of himself.

In Baku, I went directly to the Turk Communist Party Center. I saw Mustafa Suphi. He told me that I was going to stay at the party central building, in the apartments allocated to Member of the Party Emin Efendizade of Azerbaijan and Veli Ibrahimov, who later became the President of Crimea. He told me not to be afraid of anything. Emin Efendizade was originally from Baku, and he was sent to Turkistan during 1917 to Turkistan. I had spoken with him there. Later on, he arrived in Turkiye and I surmise he is still living in Turkiye along with his wife who was a Tatar. Since the Soviets could not imagine my settling in the Communist Party Center, this was a safe place for me. There, we spoke every day with a member of the Turkistan Representative Committee, Ibrahim Canuzakov, who was a Kirgiz in origin, and we would discuss what needed to be said at the congress, and the proposals to be made there. Those decrees I wrote were being proposed by Canuzakov or the Baskurt Representative Halikov. One day, Karl Radek, who was presiding the session stated: "Comrade Canuzakov, perhaps you already have a resolution ready in your pocket; why not read it." Afterward, as a precaution, he stopped seeing me thinking they had heard he was preparing the resolutions outside the sessions. Riskulov, and my former aide-de-camp and Ethemov continued to see me. With their aid, I had functionally and actively attended the Eastern Nations Congress. General Enver, Bekir Sami and Yusuf Kemal also attended this congress, who had arrived in Moscow shortly before. However, I had not contacted them. They were unable to visit where I was. If I had visited them, I would have been caught. However, General Enver heard that I was in Baku, and communicated with me via intermediaries. He, too, as General Cemal did, thought it was unnecessary for me to be hiding from the Soviets.

The Baku Congress was a vehicle for us to re-visit our Moscow decision of settling in Bukhara and aided us taking practical precautions. I was going to meet with my friends Haris Yumagulov, my brother in law Talha Resulov in Astrakhan and we would journey together to Khoesrm via Guryev-Ust Yurt. As soon as the Congress came to an end, we took our leave. Since agents of the secret police were looking for me at the port and the railroad stations, I left Baku for the Sumgait station by a phaeton I had hired. From there, I went to Petrovski in a compartment paid by Mollacan Halikov and my aide-de-camp Abdurresit Bekbayev. They had prepared a TSK, meaning Russian Central Executive Committee ticket, which I was a member on that date. In that manner I arrived in Perovsky comfortably. Both were members of the TSK, and I bid them farewell to both on that train. I never saw them again. They returned to Baskurdistan, and endeavored to help our people as much as they could. But, during 1943, I learned from prisoners of war that none of my friends remained alive as a result of the 1937 liquidations.



## *The letter I wrote to the RCP Central Committee on 12 September 1920—*

In the city of Petrovski, there was an imam I knew by reputation by the name of Zahit Efendi. I stayed in his house, and wrote my now famed letter dated 12 September 1920 in which I addressed Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky and Ryvkov, in four copies. Copies of that letter were also distributed more widely to my other friends via the friends who were at the Baku Congress. Thus a copy of it was brought to me in Berlin by my countryman Osman Tukumbetov during 1923. He later gave it to me. The summary of that letter, containing statements which nobody else had the courage to tell Lenin and Stalin and much analysis was published in my *Turkistan Tarihi* (Pp. 403-407). In that letter, it is stated: “It is apparent from the policies of the Central Committee of RKP(b), which is currently being implemented, you, like Artium and his friends, have accepted the Russian national chauvinist thoughts as the basis of your policy towards Eastern nationalities. Actually comrade Trotsky elaborated on this while he was investigating these matters in Ufa, he pronounced the activities of aforementioned as a provocation sequence. Undoubtedly, he also made the same statement to the CC [Central Committee]. Despite that, the Russian imperialism remained as the policy. In the same session held after I and Ryskulov had departed, comrades Frunze and Kubyshev --like Trotsky-- stressed that this policy of the CC was nothing but hypocrisy and deceit. In the same Turkkomisia (Turkistan Komisia) sessions, those members of the party who wish to perpetuate Russian imperialism behind a mask, openly stated their objectives; that of fanning the fires of artificial class distinctions among the Turkistan populations; to declare such nationalists as Ryskulov and Validov as the enemies of the laborers; to create loyal servants among the local educated under the category of “Octoberists,” to crush us with their help. On the other hand, you must know that we cannot become the artificial class enemies of the local farmers and cannot allow ourselves to become the target of general mocking. You can find the required sacrificial lambs. But we cannot be those victims. The Congress of the Toilers of the East has clearly shown our fellow-countrymen in attendance that the attacks on the rights of Turkistanis is not simply the machinations of the local Russian communists, but consists of the policies of the CC. The attitude of the CC representatives, towards the Easterners in attendance, is the same as those commissars at the beginning of the 1917 revolution toward the peasant congresses, whose members were regarded ignorant. The CC Representatives not only prevented, by shouting down, those resolutions prepared by the delegates at their homelands, but also utilized the Red Guard soldiers in silencing them. The delegates were forced to accept only those resolutions written in Moscow and sent for the purpose. The fact that the CC regards the Eastern Nationality issues principally as a matter of land disputes, a peasant problem, indicates that the CC has taken a wrong turn. The CC can keep alive this artificial class differentiation among the Eastern peasants only by the force of terror. Our comments written in relation to these theses of comrade

Lenin, before he addressed the Comintern on the colonialism issues, stressed that the social revolution in the East could not be confined to stratification (rassloenie); that this is a more complex matter. Since the European capitalist and laborers of the East are going to act jointly as the rulers of the colony, then the Eastern peasant will have to join forces with the wealthy Easterner. When you determine that the stratification is not taking place among the indigenous population, you will blame the local educated and declare a portion of the latter “class enemy petty bourgeois” and the remainder as left Octoberists “class enemy,” and liquidate them. In their stead, you will conjure new left Octoberists. Finally, you will be left solely with the illiterate peasant who is only familiar with his donkey, ox and spade. I do not believe that you can alter your distrust toward the native educated of Turkistan. You can at least allow the educated Turkistan elite the opportunity to renovate and populate the Soviet Bukhara, whose Emir has fled.” From the same location of Petrovski, I also wrote a letter to TSKP Secretaries and Members of the Politburo, Kretinski and Preobrazinski on the same date: “Though you and I had our differences in our understanding of socialism and nationalism, we cannot reconcile our positions with regard to the application of socialism in the development of great nations; as a person wishing to remain honorable, I have been honest with you two and many other Party members. I did not deceive you while I took the path of fighting against the Soviets and Communism. Those I have deceived are the likes of Stalin and other state officials who have deceived me. Those friends complaining of the masked Dictator’s ridiculing the dignity and the self-determination of humans, inform me of the severe terror that is yet to come within the party. Like them, I fear that one day your heads may fly. I did not wait for my head to fall. Even if I were to die, I must do so while engaged in open struggle.”

These letters were not without influence. Stalin made all sorts of promises in order to have me return to Moscow. Along those precautions, he sent Tatar intellectual Osman Tokumbetov to Ashkhabad, Bukhara and Samarkand where they thought I was. But, I avoided speaking with that person. According to what Turar Riskulov told me in 1922, Lenin had said of Rudzutak, whom he appointed as Turkistan Head of Government: “if this much distrust was not shown in him, Validov would not have gone to the mountains [sic].” In his volume “About the Nationality and Colonialism Problems,” published in 1933 (P. 122), Lenin wrote: “The Baskurts do not believe in Velikirus. Since Velikirus are more cultured than they, and used that discrepancy in order to plunder the Baskurts, that was the result. In the view of the Baskurts, Velikirus means oppressor and fraudster (ugnatel I mosennik).” I had known Kretinsky from Ufa since 1915; he was executed in 1937 along with Preobrazinsky, under infamous tortures and after making scandalous confessions. I saw Kretinsky in 1924, when he was the Ambassador in Berlin. He recalled the letter I sent from Petrovski and stated, laughing: “so, you threw the knot of the rope (pitlia) to my neck and to Preobrazinsky and saved yourself.” Of course, at the time he could not see himself being hanged thirteen years later. When he advised me not to change my citizenship and remain a Soviet citizen, I asked him: “are you possibly recommending that I return to Russia?” His response was: “no, stay outside, but do not change your citizenship status.”

## *From Daghestan to Khorezm—*

After staying in Petrovski a few days, I boarded a small steamboat at a tributary of Volga on the way to the twelve-fut. From Baku, I had sent a soldier to summon Talha Rasulov and Haris Yumagulov to the Twelve-fut landing, with whom I was going to travel. By chance, they arrived on the same day. We left on board a small fishing sailboat toward Goriyev. On board, the salted fish (vobla), that were dried at a fishing location, standing like sharp-peaked homes, were smoldering. They were emitting a tremendous odor. When we arrived at a location which the Russians called Jilaya Kosa, also known as Kanbakti, our boat could not approach the shore because of the adverse winds. The wind had taken the sea, which was very shallow, toward the South. Our boat stopped two kilometers away from the shore. We had very limited food and water. We remained there for a full day and night. On 17 September, we disembarked to Kanbakti. This was a fishing village and a landing for the Dossor (Dost sur) petroleum. We were the guests of the Kazaks. We assumed the identity of Kazan merchants. But, they told us we did not appear to be Tatars; you must be Istek Baskurts. From our behavior, they could definitely tell we were not Tatars. One of their elders stated: “The Baskurts have very capable soldiers. One of them, Zeki Velidi emerged; he will come and take our Kanbakti.” Upon hearing that, we became suspicious. A little later it appeared that they did not make that statement on any knowledge. We told them that we were going to visit the Aday branch to purchase sheep; we rented camels and horses to take us to a place called Sam at Ust-Yurt. We also slaughtered a few sheep, salted and stuffed them into skins to eat along the way. We also had them make blood-sausage called boce from the blood of the slaughtered sheep. We continued on our way along the eastern shore of the River Cian. Just before we ascended the Ust-Yurt high pastures, we encountered a dirge gathering known as “As” of the Kazaks at a Location called Kandirali. We were afraid that their chief, who was in favor of the Soviets, would appear. But, he did not. At that location, the cold had descended, and we purchased furs from the Kazaks. However, they were loaded with louses. We had escaped from the Bolsheviks; now we were attacked by the louses. From there, we ascended to Ust-Yurt by way of River Civindi and Cin. After travelling three days, we arrived at Sam. Three years later, when I had arrived in Meshed in Iran, and found the travelogue of the Arab traveller Ibn Fadlan [of the 10<sup>th</sup> century] during 1921, I was astonished to discover that he had travelled the exact same route a thousand years earlier when he arrived among the Volga Bulgars after crossing from Korezm. In Ibn Fadlan’s writing, this Cavindi River was written as Yagindi; the Cim River was exactly the same spelling. The Sam-Sam location is mentioned in the Khorezmshah history. The Arab geographer Yakut Hamavi mentions it under the name Sem of Magishlaq. He also related a portion of a poem, written after Atsiz of the Khorezmshah had occupied this territory. At that period, there was a strong border-guard castle here, built by the Korezmshah. Here, there was a mescit [small mosque] and an Imam. That Imam cooked us some camel meat. We were being tormented by the louses. Until that

day, I carried with me binoculars, and some military uniforms. From the books, I had Emperor Babur Mirza’s memoirs, *Kapital* of Marx and a few others. I left all that to the Imam. I only took my pistol with me. I was not using my eye-glasses continually. I would only use it when I really needed to see something, then I would put them back into my pocket. From there, we journeyed amongst the Aday branch of the Kazaks. One day, we encountered a mass of black tents, and we stopped. An old Aday butchered a sheep in our honor. They were still unaware of the Soviet Revolution. They were aware that the Tsar’s money was no longer redeemed but would not accept Soviet money. They were only using what they called Kerenke, the Kerensky government money. That old man talked about the English, Japanese and Chinese politics. Even though the world news reached him orally and with a delay of two to three months, his analyses were correct. He regarded Bolshevism as the drunkenness of the Russian population whom he thought was continually imbibing vodka. This caravan was very crowded. The Kazaks were going to the Khorezm market in Kongrat. We joined it, but could not tell who was leading it. The caravan would move during the night, and stop by sunrise. Wherever we stopped, we would light fires using the Saxaul and Bayalis trees of the Bozkir [steppe], hold our shirts to the fire and cause thousands of lice to fall into the fire. Discovering that the lice would drop into the fire by the hundreds was new to us. One day, we arrived at a location called Bilevti, containing an old castle and remnants of fortifications. It turned out, two of the large Aday Branches were there, to settle their dispute called barimta that were fueled by reciprocal taking of hostages and plundering, before the judges. However, since the judges were biased, no solution was forthcoming. As soon as we arrived, their leaders approached me and stated: “God sent you; be a judge [be a Bey] for us.” I did not accept and responded with: “I do not know of your complaints; how can I be a judge?” They stated: “for us, your not knowing the details is a boon; since our Beys know the matter only too well; their decisions are not being accepted by either side.” I told them: “*Edige* once was a Bey here.” They liked that. They said: “Here, you are the true Bey.” Edige was the political and military leader of the fifteenth century. As he fled Altin-Orda, on his way to Korezm and Samarkand, he was asked by the population of a location to act as a judge. He had, and decided who the owner of a camel was. His decision was regarded as just, and is still recited in the dastan named after him. Among the Kazaks, the “camel of Edige” is famous. They [the Aday Branch there] were happy that I knew the story. I learned the details of the dispute. While the food was cooking in the cauldron, I told them: “if you are serious about my decision making, I will be the judge.” They accepted my offer. I endeavored to settle this dispute going back years and pitting these two large branches in a just manner. I judged that all the property that was plundered had to be returned. I thought that they would agree to my judgment, but would renege later on, and would re-start their fighting and warfare. Later on, we continued our journey. Four months later, Kazak representatives arrived in Bukhara, from Aktube. They informed me that the Beylik I performed amongst the Adays resulted in an excellent outcome, that all the property was reciprocally returned. Alihan Bukeyhan, who knew the Aday very well, congratulated me with a letter: “you have successfully wrapped a



large bleeding and infected wound among the Kazaks.” On 20 October, we descended from the Cin heights, which the Arab geographers called “Khorezm Mountains,” and reached Khorezm plains. A day later, we approached the city of Kongrat, which is the first city in Korezm. A Baskurt intellectual Hurmetullah Idilbayev, whose name I had mentioned earlier, met us outside the city gates.

### *A few days in the city of Kongrat—*

Kongrat is a provincial capital of the Khiva Khanate. Even though it is a small city comprised of several hundred houses, on the maps it is designated with symbols similar to that of Hamburg in Germany, Manchester in England, and Shanghai in China. “Kungirat” is the name of the Tatar Branch who arrived in the West with the sons of Cengiz Han. The root of it is the Turk word “Konurlar,” with a Mongolian plural suffix. The remnants of Kongrat are now living in various locations among the Kazak and the Uzbek. And this city was established by the Kongrat Branch Beys from the time of Altin-Orda and ruled over the territory in shifts until the arrival of the Russians. It was called Bakirgan village in Turk history and in the tenth century Arabic geographer’s works. Today, Bakirgan is located in the Northwest of Kongrat, containing the mausoleum of Turk mystic Seyh Hakim Ata Bakirgan who lived here in the twelfth century. Ata Bakirgan left Turkish language works for the Turks in verse, on religion and mysticism. The Russian scholar Zaleman and Professor Fuat Koprulu in Turkiye studied them. His volume entitled *Baqirgan*, that began to be published during 1857 in Kazan and remained continuously in print since has been used as a primary school textbook for a century. When I was a child, I had read it as a Turkish religion book, and had it memorized. While we were approaching Kongrat city, our caravan remained in Baqirgan village for an hour. I took advantage of that stop, and went to see his mausoleum. I wrote two couplets into the book of the old caretaker, who was a descendant, that I could recall from his aforementioned book: “the ruler does not take back the hilat [robe of honor] he awarded/ will God take back the faith he gave to his worshippers as a hilat?/ the true dervishes can ride a lion and use a snake as a whip/ they worship God by embracing their knees, placing their heads on adobe.” I knew that one of his descendants by the name of Ibn-Yemin had joined the Young Bukharans. However, he was not there.

### *My old friend Hurmetullah Idilbayev—*

When we reached Kongrat at the end of October, as promised, another person from Baskurdistan had also arrived, in addition to Hurmetullah. We also learned that several of our friends arrived in Khiva as well. Hurmetullah was meeting all the arriving caravans every day, as our indicated date of arrival was coming close. Upon seeing us, he began crying with joy. I said: “before all else, relieve us from the lice.” He said: “before all else, you need to visit the Uzbek Bey Baba Bek, who is governing

this territory in the name of Han Cuneyt, and greet him. I informed him that my countrymen were arriving.” We entered a tea-house and consumed freshly baked flat-bread dripping with fat and black raisins and tea. These were great luxuries for us since Kangbakti. Later, we went to visit Baba Bek. He was seated on a cushion placed on the straw-mat located on the high ante-room location of the government building. He welcomed us. He offered us tea. He asked for the conditions in Russia. We gave short answers. However, we did not portray ourselves as political personages. We indicated that we wished to see Han Cuneyt. He told us: “Han Cuneyt is in the sands; you can see him if you were to journey to Urgenc.” I said: “I will go there; except, I would like a letter of introduction from you.” He said that he would write one.

Afterward, Hurmetullah and his friend, a Tatar from Orenburg took us to a house they rented for us. We immediately bought underwear, western shirts and Khiva capan [a type of long overcoat] from the market, and entered the hamam [public bath]. There, we had our hair razored, shaved all of our bodily hairs. Those lice had entered all of the nooks and crannies of our bodies and hairs. There was no other solution to rid ourselves. All of the clothes we had shed, clothes, leather coat and all, we put into the fire-box of the hamam to burn. The people there almost jumped into the fire to rescue them. We did not allow it. They were grouching: “can one get angry at the louse and burn the fur?” But, as a result of that hamam process, and the new clothes we obtained, we had become brand-new persons. We laid-down and slept fully for twenty hours.

There was no business we could undertake in Kongrat. Haris Yumagulov asked permission to journey either to Kazakistan or to work secretly in Baskurdistan by returning to the Sirdarya basin. We also had observed that he could not withstand the rigors of travelling. We told him that he could detach himself from us, to journey in the direction of Sirdarya when we reach Cimbay. We thought that it was necessary for Talha Resul to remain in Kongrat, and follow the left bank of Amudarya; we purchased three horses. Even though the entire population of Kongrat was comprised of Turks, the remnant of Khorezm culture was dominant among them. They were living in houses resembling chateaus surrounded by thick high walls separating them. Their irrigation, market life was exactly as described in old books, in the old Krezm style. A small detail I can never forget: Arab scholar Yakut Hamavi, who saw Khorezm in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and wrote about it recorded: “The streets of Korezm is full of filth, because they relieve themselves in the streets.” The owner of the house where we were staying would become infuriated if she were to hear our going to the stable for our natural needs, she would shout: “do not defecate in my stable; it is like my home; there is the street.” Truly, their stables were relatively clean, but their streets were filled by piles deposited by individuals who would squat and completely cover themselves with their capan. Our friends Hurmetullah and Tatar Zakir were engaged in trade here, and earning money. Night before our leaving town, Hurmetullah took us to a local “chateau.” His woman was with him. Our hostess was a middle aged woman at the chateau. They had prepared a variety of local dishes; they very excellent and very tasty. They also served a cloudy wine that tasted almost like Bordeaux. Two



young girls, as they presented drinking cups, were singing in a low voice, perhaps because they did not want to be heard from the outside. Hurmetullah had read many books about the nations of the world. Addressing me, he stated: “this is an example of Japanese Geishas in Korezm.” The reason for his bringing his wife to that locale was for the purpose of masking the objective of this as a family visit. But, his wife was unable to cover anyone else’s sins. Previously, that wife was distinguished with her generosity and Hurmetullah himself with his very wide tolerance. On the other hand, Hurmetullah used to accuse “our Muftu” Sait Miras, who was a womanizer, with the charge that he was aiding and abetting prostitution in our country, which never existed heretofore. In conjunction with that, while we were at a gathering of friends, I had related an historical anecdote: Ibn Kayiglig earned a high rank during the tenth century and was guarding the Byzantine borders. He would violently examine the passports and personal effects of those who wished to cross the Greek border. The Arab poet Mutenebbi, who tired of the length of the passport and customs control, wrote the following stanza: “Inb Kayiglig is protecting the Islam-Byzantine road with violence; however, the greatest road that needs to be protected passes through between the legs of his wife.” My brother-in-law Talha, who was a keen womanizer and drinker, perhaps made use of the Kongrat Geisha.

I saw the Governor Baba Bey once more, and obtained a letter from him for Han Cuneyd. I brought that letter home and sewed it inside the lining of my clothes. We left instructions to Hurmetullah, who was going to remain in Kongrat for the arrival of our other friends. We left, with Haris and a guide, toward Cimbay. Hurmetullah accompanied us for a long distance to see us off. I proposed that, if he were to choose, for him to join us in Bukhara in two months. He stated: “it is best for me to remain a guardian of our national movement here; I have many sins, let me die near Hoca Bakirgan.” That meant, a while back he was a nihilist just like the Russian intellectual type; now, over time, he became a believing Moslem. Perhaps his moral standards would also change. While we were departing he cried just like a child. I never saw him again. Even though Hurmetullah was old, he was an exact copy of his father, translator Sefer Ali Kart, who had aided us very much at the beginning of our Baskurt independence movement. While we were journeying on horseback, I was mentally recalling Sefer Ali and Hurmetullah and his brother, Army Officer Abdullah Idilbayev who was treacherously killed at Baymak at the beginning of the Baskurt National Army formation. The road from Kongrat to Cimbay, perhaps eighty kilometers, was crossing the Amudarya delta marshes. At many places, our horses were boarded onto small boats to cross canals and lakes. As recorded by old Arab geographers, wild boars were plentiful there. Cimbay had a new style school. We stayed at the house of a Tatar teacher of that school. Syphilis was raging. According to the teacher, many of the children were born of affected parents. We ate dinner in horror that night. Later on, when the Karakalpak Soviet Republic was established, the Karakalpak lineage educated fought this disease. They trained many medical doctors, and struggled with this disease fully, and won. But, during 1920, when we travelled through, the conditions were dire.

## *Our separation with Haris—*

Haris Yumagul separated from me here. I never cooled-off of him because he told me that he could not withstand the rigors of a liberation movement. Later on, he fell into the hands of the Soviets. Or, he surrendered. His life continued in Moscow jails. Later, he was amnestied and even made a member of the Party again. In sum, I never saw him again. He was overly fiery. But, he could not understand, if necessary, living a life outside Russia due to his upbringing. He suffered much because of that. He was younger than I and he would have served very beneficially in Turkistan and even outside. Fifteen minutes after mounting his horse, alongside his guide, he returned once again to apologize profusely. I told him Godspeed, pray for us. Those educated who separated from us and returned home, such as Haris Iglikov and poet Seyyidgeray Magazov, were simply killed by the Bolsheviks when they opened their doors. Since Haris was an old Communist, they made him suffer on his feet; his end remains uncertain. I read Samoylov’s and Mostovenko’s writings against him in the “Revolutionary East” journal, and answers by Haris to them with tears in my eyes. Later I heard that the answers Haris wrote were not even published.

I knew that there was a people’s poet among the Karakalpak by the name of Nureddin in Cimbay. I remained two days in order to see him. He knew the old Turk dastans, especially the Karakalpak and Kazak versions well. Earlier, the orientalist Biliyev had taken down some fragments from him. I saw Nureddin. He especially knew *Edige*, *Toktamis* and *Temur* dastans by heart. I took many notes. Among them there was the dialogue between the principle character Edige Bey of the Altin-Orda and his friend, Temur’s governor of Khorezm, Sahmelik Bey. It was not extant elsewhere. I saw a Dobruca Nogay in during 1925 in Kostence who knew well those dastans, and by chance his name was Nureddin as well. But the Karakalpak Nureddin Akin was the most capable and greatest of all the Kipchak dastan reciters I had ever met. He was excitedly reciting the portions on Khorezm from *Temur* and *Edige* dastans which was not extant in any other variant. He also recited the dialog between Sahruh, and his old friend Sahmelik, Sahruh desiring to come under Sahmelik’s protection, after he lost the battle with the Khorezm Governor Emir Sahmelik Bilgivit and his son Nureddin. Calling him “anda” and “my friend Semelik,” in verse references the Timur period as the golden age of two generations, proceeds: “My master, I was the one who served an entire deer roasted on a fire built on ice/ I was the apple of his eye, but, you, Master Edige are a very large figure/ you do not fit into the Beskala (Khorezm) continent/ it is best for you to find your son, and be reconciled/ he will fit your lap” [sic].

In the region between Kongrat and Cimbay and around the Nukus road, there are Baskurt urugs [branches] who had settled in the times old. They were references as either Baskurt or Istek. They are from the Manqanay, Qayipnazar, Qara Terenci and Qalmurtay urugs. The Karakalpak are also divided, just like the Baskurts, into Tube (administrative subdivision), and their general meetings are also like the Baskurts use, called Ciyin.

While I was journeying to see Nureddin at his village, I encountered those Baskurt and spoke with them. According to their testimony, they had arrived here seven or eight “buvin”, meaning generations, ago. That means, they settled here possibly during the time of Kayip Han, around seventeen hundreds. However, another portion of Baskurts were here from even an earlier period. The new arrivals had joined the older settlers. These had participated in important political events during the time of the Kongrat Beys.

## *Turkmen Basmachi at Kuhne Urgenc—*

Cimbay is not in Khiva administratively, but is attached to the Russian Amudarya Department in Dortkol (Petroalexandrovsky). When the rumor that Red soldiers were arriving from Qazali in Sirdarya basin began circulating, I hired a guide and left two days later. I arrived in Nukus on 2 November, which today is the cultural center of the Karakalpak Republic, and possesses a large airfield. Then, it was a small town. After spending the night, I journeyed to the Western shores of Amudarya, to the Xoceyli Township. Among the old Arabs, it was recorded as Ardaxusmitten, a flourishing settlement. The ranches here were the property of a rich man by the name of Ibn al-Furat, who was the wazir of Caliph of Bagdat during the 10<sup>th</sup> century. When Ibn Fadlan arrived, the director of those ranches was a Christian. However, the Caliph allocated the income of this region to the maintenance of the ambassador he had sent to the King of Volga Bulgars. According to the wishes of the Bulgar King, schools were opened; military fortifications were built there [sic]. Apparently, at that time, this region had sufficiently large revenues to meet the imperative expenditures of the state on Volga. On that day, I did not see any structures of interest there. At night, I arrived at Kuhne Urgenc (old Urgench), comprised only of the ruins of the old Khroezm capital.

The Khorezm name for Urgenc was Gurganc; in Arabic, it was known as Curaniye. When I arrived, Han Cuneyd was not there. At his apartments there was a Turkmen Bey and a few soldiers. They did not ask who I was; offered me tea. The Turkmen Bey asked what my occupation was. I told him I was a merchant, arriving from Kongrat. I presented the letter from Bala Bey. He had his Mirza read it, and returned it. I was told that the Han may arrive tomorrow. They were not concerned with me in any other way. I visited the ruins of the old city, the minaret of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and the wife of the 14<sup>th</sup> century Kongrat Bey’s wife Tuberek Hatun’s still magnificent mousoleum; the burial site of Necmeddin Kura and others. Nobody was accompanying me. I took notes from the inscriptions when I could read them. Seyh Necmeddin was participating in the defense of this city with his weapons on hand when the Army of Cengiz was sieging it, and he was killed by a Mongol arrow. While he was dying, he was reciting the creed and he got hold of the hair of a Mongol trooper. When he died, those around him could not open his hand holding the hair; so, they freed the Mongol trooper by cutting his hair. Celaledin Rumi portrays that event beautifully in one of his poems which he allocated to Seyh Necmeddin. I wrote the following couplet from one of the

Rubai by the Seyh, on a corner of his turbe wall: “the dew of love turned the burial soil of the man into roses/ because of that hundred fights and incitements took place/ the scalpel of love touched its tip to the veins of soul/ one drop of blood leapt, they called it soul.” I signed my name underneath. Twenty-five years after my visit, Russian Archeologist Professor Tolstov comprehensively examined that site. I wonder if what I wrote on the wall in indelible pencil was still readable. An old Ozbek, who was serving as turbedar [mausoleum keeper] asked the meaning of what I wrote. I explained. He showed me respect. He fed me some of his pilav [rice dish] that was about cooked. Just about that time, a man from Han Cuneyd’s representative Turkmen Bey arrived to inform me: “Han is one tree (approximately five kilometers) away, at the home of such-and-such wealthy man. If you wish, you can go.” I left my guide there, and in the company of the two soldiers provided by the Turkmen Bey, I went to that village. It was a completely free standing ruined chateau. It was ringed by soldiers. I sent in the letter of Bala Bey with the soldiers who brought me here. A little later, I was invited in. Apparently, Han Cuneyd had not yet arrived. I was given an audience by one of his Beys by the name of Anne Bala. He asked me what I desired. I told him I had classified words. He had four or five individuals with him. He told me all these men were privy, and to proceed. I told him who I was, why I was here, and that I was on my way to Bukhara, and wished to see a statesman who would not accept the overlordship of Russia, and that I could send news later. He asked me if the Jadids (meaning, those Ozbek educated who were governing that region with the help of the Russians) would not kill me if I were to venture there. I told him: “no, I know a few of them; that I would ask them not to send Moslem soldiers against you.” He stated: “if they comply with your request, let us know by leaving ten rifles and ammunition at a certain village and house in Tashavuz; we will then know they have agreed to do as you ask.” He asked me about general world conditions. Actually, he knew a lot. I told him about the Baku Congress. Apparently Han Cuneyd knew about the Congress; he even wished to send someone to attend, but could not manage to find a way. I remained there for about two hours. We ate together. During our meal, another Turkmen Bey and another by the name of Niyaz Baksi asked me what the English policy was and what Turkiye’s position was. They told me that all their problems could be summarized as weapons and ammunition supply; that they were in contact with Ferghana and the Basmachi commanders in other countries. And I asked that they do not tell anyone I was here, since I was travelling incognito.

I was unable to see Han Cuneyd even later. I had met one of his sons in Urgenc. Han Cuneyd passed away after he sought refuge in Iran and Afghanistan, in a village called Teymene near Herat. When I arrived in Herat the second time, I thought I was going to see his son I had met in Urgenc. He, too, passed away. I saw his grandson.

I took my leave from Anne Bala Bey, and in the company of two-three guards, returned to Urgenc. From there, I returned to Nukus with the guide who brought me there the next morning via Hocaili. I spent the night at the home of a villager near Nukus, and paid the guide. With another guide, I went to Xocakol, and spent another night at Biy Pazar. In that largish town, a man behaved as if he knew me. I became



very suspicious. Because, this place was in the jurisdiction of Russian representative posted to Dortkol and the Russian garrison there. But, my suspicions did not prove true. That person had journeyed to Orenburg, Nijninovgorod and Moscow for trade purposes. I had stuffed my eye-glass lenses into my collars, only to be used under dire conditions. I was wearing Khiva clothes. I was speaking with a Kazak accent. That person, despite my clothes and my speaking in Kazak, stated that I might be a mixture of Kazak and Tatar given my accent. I told him that we were originally from Orenburg, living in Kazakistan, and that I was engaged in trade. That saved me. Despite that, I avoided investigating the old remnants in that vicinity. I paid and left the guide I had hired in Nukus. The next day, without a guide, I arrived in the township now known as Seyh Abbas Veli containing the ruins of the old Kat City that had served as the capital of eastern portion of Amudarya in Khorezm. The tall defensive walls of this city were made of earth and still maintaining their old magnificence. At one time the old Afrig lineage of Khorezm, as well as the great scholars such as Ebu Nasir ibn-Iraq and El-Biruni lived behind them. Since nobody was following me, and I was alone, I went around quite a bit. I saw many written monuments and tombstones. But, since I did not have a camera, I could not record those writings to read later.

## *Ruins of Kat City—*

When Mahmud of Gazna was occupying this region during 1017 A.D., the famed scholar and prince Ebu Nasir Ibn Iraq had hosted Mahmud's entire army in his ranch, right next to the City of Kat. Today, Seyh Abbas Veli is a small township. Despite that, the famed Khorezm melons especially transported for the Abbasid Caliph Mamun inside zinc boxes are still available. I ate many till I was satisfied. Now, those melons are known as Seyh Abbas (Sabbas) melons.

On 11 August, I went to the Fridays Prayers. A short stature preacher delivered words. He was reciting Persian and Arabic hadis [words of the Prophet], translating and interpreting them. He was recommending preparations for the anniversary of the Prophet Mohammed's birth. He stated: "if there is no fear of God, His guidance, love and respect for the Prophet and his four friends, people will be misled by external influences and internal, secret desires." In Turkish, he recited a poem: "if you do not support us, God, then the Devil will cause us to lose control." He followed that with a Persian poem, attributed to the great Korezm Seyh Necmeddin Kubra, then an Arabic poem attributed to a scholar of Korezm, which he translated into Turkish: "we have love, belief and obedience to the Prophet and his four Companions. If, one day, we were to lose our religion, Ciz tirnak [copper fingernails] ghouls will destroy us in deserted desert." He was elating the congregation with his beautiful sermon. I was astonished to witness his skill in bringing to life in simple Turkish the copper nailed ghouls that is believed to deceive the humans to lose their way in the desert, then would plunge his copper nails under their armpits and eat them. Afterward, I recorded the portions of the poems I could recall from among those he recited into my notebook.

I wanted to meet the preacher. I entered a small grocery store close to the mosque, and asked how I could meet him. I was told he was: "just like Hizir that he does not stay in one place, he will stay at villages. Who knows where he is." I thus understood that he did not wish me to know his whereabouts. Perhaps he thought I would report him to the Government. Time passed, and I discovered that that poem was written by the great scholar of Khorezm, Ali bin al-Imrani. It is discernible that the traces of Khorezm culture are still alive. That preacher of course learned all he knew from a master. Possibly, he was teaching them to his own students. However, he did not yet know that the factors that would separate the people of Khorezm from religion and faith were the Russian communists that had settled in Dortkol. After arriving in Khiva, I told the head of government Hoca Niyaz of this preacher and his sermon. I also advised him to take care of the valuable remnants of this old Khorezm treasures. But, when in March 1921 when some members of the Young Bukharan government escaped and arrived in Bukhara, they told me that they had provided support to those religious scholars who had remained in the Russian administration of Amuderya department, which was not within the jurisdiction of Khorezm. However, that aid had brought tragedy to them, since the communists at Dortkol had heard of it, arrested those who had been noticed by the Khiva government and killed some. I was very sad that I had brought them to the attention of Hoca Niyaz Haci, and brought evil upon them.

I stayed at Sah Abbas for two days. Even though the Russian garrison at Dortkol was near, nobody arrived from there to Sah Abbas. I spent the night at the home of the other grocer; in the morning of 13 August, I hired a guide who had a horse, I departed for Khiva.

I crossed Amudarya on a boat, and arrived in Khiva in the afternoon. I had sent my family from Ashkhabad, and I needed to find them. Since she was a teacher, I thought that she would be hired as a teacher here, too. I found her without difficulty. My wife was appointed as a teacher. It also transpired that our officer who fled Baskurdistan, Osman Terigulov was appointed as vice-minister of defense of Khorezm. I saw my old friends, members of the government Molla Bekcan and Sultan Murad. The first one was minister of education, the latter, vice-head of Government. My arrival was a big event for my friends. However, I very jealously guarded the secrecy of my trip. I did not allow any visitors in our house; nor did I leave the house very much. One day (10 November), the members of the Young Bukharan government gave me a feast at the offices of the Government Head Pehlivan Niyaz Haci at the Han Saray. They had not invited some individuals whom they did not trust, among them War Minister Hasanov of Kazan, because they regarded him as a man of the Russians. Our talks were very pleasant. Pehlivan Niyaz Haci asked me why I did not remain in Moscow. He told me that, if I had, I would have helped them in the general affairs. I replied that, if it was possible to live in Moscow and still undertake beneficial activities, I would not have chosen to withdraw to the Bozkir and mountains, and told him the events leading to my arrival. We talked about how I could be of help while I was in Khiva, and a plan was made. I could only stay for a month and a half at the most. I needed to be in Bukhara at the end of December, as decided in Baku.



## *In Khiva, those from Turkiye, Tashkent and Baskurts—*

I worked quite a bit in Khiva. It was important that my closest friend Osman Terigulov was the Deputy Minister of War, who had worked with me since 1917 in military organization, sometimes as my aide-de-camp. They immediately sent ten rifles and ammunition to the Deputy of Han Cuneyd to the location specified. While I was in Khiva, contacts were established with the mentioned Turkmen Bey. During the early hours of the morning, I was visiting old buildings, madrasas, mosques, and Lodges. There were several Turkish [in this case, Ottoman] prisoners of war in Khiva. Pehlivan Niyaz Government had brought them from Tashkent and opened a War Academy. They were headed by Ridvan Bey of Uskudar and Huseyin Bey. They were working with Osman Terigulov and and Huseyin Alikeyev of our Baskurt Army. There were approximately one hundred Uzbek students in their school. However, there were tremendous intrigues against them. Moscow representative Safanov wished to remove them and close the school. Later on, these gentlemen showed me great respect in Istanbul, having returned to their homeland. There were also nationalist officers, Mirserepov from the Ozbeks and and Kirgizov from Ferghana. All these individuals and Molla Bekcan were working altruistically for the advancement of contemporary civilization in Khiva. If the Russians had not prevented them, they would have performed very good deeds for the Young Kivan Government. I was advising them to be working peacefully, since Khiva was a country far away from the railroad, without openly joining in with the Basmachi movements expanding across Turkistan. However, if it became apparent that the Russians would not allow such a docile organization, and take drastic action against them, they needed to take counter action and avoid capture. I invited them to arrive in Bukhara. Sometimes, I would study the manuscripts in the royal treasury left behind by Hans of Khiva. No expected valuable work was found in this treasury. The important historical finding was the archival material pertaining to the Kongrat Beys of the Khiva Khanate. I advised their classification. The Minister of Education, Molla Bekcan was a youth educated in Istanbul. After leaving his offices, he would arrive in his cell at the medrese. He would cook his pilav with his own hands, and we would talk. Sometimes he would write. His volume on Khorezm Uzbek Music and few others were published. After the Young Khivan Government was dispersed, he arrived in Bukhara. However, he did not leave the official path; became a communist. He was executed during the 1937 liquidations in Tashkent. I spoke with President Pehlivan Niyaz Haci. One day he asked me: “the Russians are pressing us day-by-day; they do not appear to be trustworthy. What would you advise me to do personally?” I responded with: “One day, the Han Saray where you are residing may become your prison. If you are sieged, in order not to fall into the hands of the Russians, have yourself a secret passage constructed, to an adjoining building.” Pehlivan Niyaz: “is that all?” I said: “no, not the only item. However that is the first among all others. First, save your own life, then you can think about what

you will be doing. For the time being, work with the Russians, and be useful to the population. Maintain very careful contacts with the Turkmen and the Ozbeks who are rebelling against the Russians; you may possibly need them one day.” When the Young Khivan Government was dispersed, Pehlivan Niyaz escaped from the Russians.

When my wife Nefise arrived here from Ashkhabad with her child, she found Osman Terigulov who had escaped from Baskurdistan. Molla Bekcan appointed her as a teacher. They took care of her well. They had hired a Kazak woman to care for my three month old son Iris. She had lice in abundance. When she was told to change her clothes, lice are jumping over to the baby, she would become very angry. She would state: “the source of filth is not lice, but flies. We Kazaks will move when a location would get dirty and flies increase. You all remain in the same place. Flies are everywhere; they land on filth first, then on your food. Why are you harping on lice and fleas?” However, she would sing beautiful lullabies to our child. The child would fall asleep immediately hearing them. For the sake of those lullabies, we endured her dirt; but, later on, she slowly became used to personal hygiene. She would wear clean clothes.

## *My departure from Khorezm—*

While I was in Khiva, some of our friends brought news from Tashkent, Bukhara and Kazakistan. They stressed the fact that it was necessary not to be late for the Congress appointed for January of 1921. I followed their advice. The roads were very dangerous, because, Carcuy was full of Russian soldiers; whereas the regions where those roads crossed were in the hands of the Turkmen Basmaci. Taking along a force of bodyguards meant fighting them. The greatest saint in Khiva was Pehlivan Ata, whom the entire population still reveres him. His mausoleum is very well preserved and is flourishing. He had stated: “If you are a traveler, you must look to the road. You must keep yourself from fear and worry.” I did that. I left without a force of bodyguard.

With the aid of the War Ministry, I obtained a Red soldier identity, uniform and rifle from one of the Khiva military regions. I hired a guide from the Turkmen village of Sadver by the name of Mahmud, at the second station on the way to Carcuy. My wife and son, my orderly Haris Sisenbay and Ahmedcan were going to stay in Khiva until they were able to travel, and possibility of journeying to Bukhara became conceivable, until the spring. I left Khiva on 19 December. One night we stayed at Hezaresp city, and another at the home of the Turkmen guide in Sadver. From there, we were going to arrive in Carcuy in seven days, via a winding route through the Karakum desert in order not to fall into the hands of the Red Russians. That was the only road open to us. The Turkmen told me: “you are a Red soldier; you are carrying a rifle. The Basmaci will kill you. Because of you, they will kill me, too. I cannot go; find another guide.” I told him: “I am not afraid of the Basmaci; I am only afraid of the Russians.” Finally he agreed, after I offered him more money. He knew very well how to travel in the desert. The first night we slept in an abandoned Turkmen alacik (constructed of wood

and mud, high plains house). The weather was very cold. We were able to withstand it with great difficulty. In the morning, we drank our tea and continued on our way. We were journeying on moving sands. There was no indication of a road. After we had passed, all of our traces were disappearing in a few minutes. At a location, I saw a deer, on a temporary hillock formed of the sands. I retrieved my glasses from the lining of my clothes, and took a better look. Since there was quite a distance between us, the deer was not running away from us. I fired at it with my rifle; I certainly hit it. Among the sands, there were patches of snow fields here and there. I wanted to move in the direction of the deer. My guide Mahmud stated: “do not go, definitely not; you will lose your way. My horse will be lost, too; what you shot is not a deer, it is a fairy. They take on the appearance of a deer to pull you deeper into the desert, and finally destroy you.” I ignored him, and moved in that direction. The Turkmen was repeatedly shouting: “do not go.” What was important for him, more than me, was his horse I was riding. I arrived at the hillock where I shot the deer. I had indeed hit the deer; there was blood on the patch of snow. The deer fell to the ground not being able to go far from there. I summoned the Turkmen. I told him: “here is the deer, let us slaughter it.” The Turkmen arrived, and killed the still alive deer. He took both legs and put them in his saddlebags. He left the remainder on the ground. He stated: “It is good that it was not a fairy; you are a good “mergen” (sharp-shooter). Tonight, we will build a fire and cook them to eat.” We travelled until the evening.

## *Becoming the guests of the Turkmen Basmaci—*

All of a sudden, a Turkmen tent appeared in the middle of the sands. Mahmud said: “This is not the abode of a ‘carva’ (a person occupied with animal husbandry); he is not a ‘dayhan’ (dehkan; villager). He must be a ‘kaltaman’ (meaning, Basmaci). Let us not go toward that tent, let us follow another route.” I told him: “I trust in God. Whatever the result, let us go to that tent.” We did. Next to the tent, there were two saddled horses. Upon arrival at the tent, we greeted them, but did not dismount. It turned out this was one of the Basmaci. Both of them grabbed their rifles. Previously they were leaning on those rifles. The older of those two asked: “Why did you arrive? Where are you going?” I told him who I was, where I was heading, that I was at the headquarters of Han Cuneyd, I was going to Bukhara, and that the Basmaci were my comrades in arms, I was in Red soldier’s outfit in case we had encountered Russians on the way. He did not believe me in that instance. I told him: “if you do not believe me, we cannot be your guests; allow us to leave.” My rifle was on the side of my saddle. The guide Mahmud spoke with them as well. Finally, the older of the two stated: “allright, I believe what you told us. You are our guests. We do not have anything, but we have a fire.” We dismounted. The younger of the two was eyeing my rifle and the pistol on my belt. Finally, while we talked, these two Basmaci got used to us. They especially believed my narration of my visit with Han Cuneyd’s men at Kongrat and

Kuhne Urgenc. While we were sitting around the fire chatting about Russian and world conditions, I got the impression that their belief deepened. I, too, placed my rifle under my knees. After we drank tea, the old one, addressing the young, said: “son, go get the ‘toklu’ (a one year old sheep), we will slaughter it for our guest.” We had not seen any animal while we approached the tent. A little later, the younger one brought a large pumpkin. The old Basmaci placed it between his knees, and cut off the top with the ritual statement of “in the name of God.” He stated: “this is the sheep we Kaltamans can offer a guest.” We all laughed. We produced the deer legs from our saddlebags, roasted on the fire. After our meal, we spoke a lot with our hosts. They were gathering and bringing saksaul [Anabasis ammodendron, or, holoxylon] wood from the outside. In short, we grew accustomed to each other. Without fear, with our clothes on and our rifles under our heads, we went to sleep.

In the morning, there was very hard bread cooked in the ashes and tea. We had those for breakfast. As a result, Anne Murad named Kaltaban (Basmaci) volunteered to serve us as an intermediary with Han Cuneyd and other Turkmen Basmaci. In fact, he performed that role in an excellent manner. When the Uskudar Seyh Ata and his companion arrived eight months later from Turkiye, this Anne Murad collected from Tashavuz and led them to the presence of Han Cuneyd in Karakum.

## *The adventure in Carcuy—*

From there, we crossed the desert by Anne Murad’s help, on the way stopping to see their men. At a place called Denau, one day away from Carcuy, I paid Turkmen Mahmud. I arrived in Carcuy with another guide, ten days after leaving Khiva. After paying that guide, I was alone, with my rifle, amidst the Reds. I sold my horse. From there, the only way to reach Bukhara was by crossing the Amudarya via the railroad bridge and the train. In order to do that, it was necessary to obtain “propusk” (laisser passé), even though I was in Red soldier uniform. Because of that, I lived through an adventure there.

I had not yet taken a good look at the identity papers I had obtained in Khiva via the War Ministry. There was no need. I remembered that my name and family names were written as Abdulhamid Suleymanov. At the Ceka station when I showed my identity papers and asked for a propusk, the commissar asked me in Russian: “what is your name? What is your father’s name?” I told them: “Suleymanov.” They told me: “no, Suleymanov is your family name. What is your father’s name?” Once again, I said: “Suleymanov.” All of a sudden, there was a suspicion toward me at the Ceka station. I was told that those identity papers were not mine. I behaved as if I was a Khivan who did not speak Russian. The commissar ordered someone to go fetch the translator. My circumstances were dire, but I did not let it show on my face. A little later, a tall Azerbaijani translator entered. At the same moment, I saw that Halmurad was written as my father’s name on my papers that were placed on the desk. The Translator started from the top: “what is your name?”

--Abdulhamid.

--What is your father's name?

--Halmurad.

--Your family name?

--Suleymanov.

--Now you are answering in this fashion; but why did you not tell us your father's name earlier?

--I could not understand. I thought I was being asked my family name.

--Where are you from?

--Hocay.

--What does your father do?

--Runs the tea house.

--What else does he do?

--He has an orchard.

--When did you enter the military service? What is your date of birth?

I responded not in A.D. but in animal calendar.

--Are you a member of the Party?

I responded in bad Russian "no, I am only a candidate."

The commissars laughed. What business I could have with the party?

--Why are you going to Bukhara?

--I have a paternal aunt there; I will see her.

As a result, I was issued a propusk. While the commissar was handing my papers to me, he observed: "it has been only twelve days since you were issued these; they are already worn-out. If you continue on in this fashion, soon nothing will be left behind. Wrap this entire well in paper of a cloth. He wrapped them himself and handed it to me. Thus I arrived in Bukhara, having obtained my propusk, with my rifle in my hands, at the Kagan station of Bukhara. I did not take the suburban tram; I walked and later hired a phaeton. I did not enter Bukhara from the crowded grand Qersi gate, but from the Mausoleum gate.

## *First days in Bukhara—*

I went straight in to the home of an acquaintance by the name of Mirza Abdulvahit. The date was Saturday 31 December 1920. Mirza Abdulvahit was a bilingual Bukharan intellectual poet and author who wrote in Tajik and in Turkish. His bio is mentioned in Sadreddin Ayni's volume "History of Tajik Literature." He was a very frightened person. Three years later he had arrived in Germany heading the students sent by the Young Bukharan Government. When he discovered that I had arrived in Paris via Afghanistan and India, he sent me a letter relaying his regrets that he could not meet with me, and returned to Russia. I did not understand why I was provided the address of this person's home. But, I noted that I could not stay there long.

Without letting him know of my thoughts, I indicated that I needed my residence to be away from major arteries. There, I was visited by my officers who were appointed to the Central Command Headquarters, Sultanoglu and my cousin Bayis, and the War Minister Arif, and a little later, Feyzullah Hoca. I was going to be settled in the home of another friend by the name of Hakimoglu Muhittin Mahdum and his vineyard. We went there. This was a guest house behind the main house, an outbuilding. The Hakimoglu family was completely Tacikified, were descended from the Beys of the Kines Uruk of Sehrisebz. Our condition was secure in Bukhara since Abdulhamit Arif was appointed Deputy Minister of National Defense and a Baskurt Officer by the name of Sultanov was a Commissar of the GPU. Since a relative of mine, an officer by the name of Bayisev was appointed Director of the National Library, I was able to greatly benefit from that. That library contained some thirty thousand manuscripts. When I found some free time, I was able to have them bring those I wished to see, to my residence. All that acquired a routine in a few months' time. A portion of those personages who were appointed to the "Revolutionary Committee" were carrying the title "member of the Central Committee" (Ze-Ka). Their chief was Mirza Abdulkadir. Another portion was the "Executive Committee," (Ispolcom) and their chief was Feyzullah Hoca. Minister of Education was Arif Yoldas; Minister of Treasury, Osman Hoca; Minister of War Abulhamit Arif [sic]; External Affairs, Hasim Sayik; Internal Minister, Muin Can; Justice, Mirza Abdurrahim. A little later, Osman Hoca was appointed TSKA Central Committee Chief. Serif Hoca named person was appointed Ambassador to Afghanistan. From Afghanistan, Abdulresul Han was the Ambassador in Bukhara. Osman Hoca was a son from the family of Atahoca lineage of Os, of Ferghana, who today lives in Istanbul. After he had studied in a Bukhara medrese, he went to Istanbul during 1910, established an "Educational House" residence for the Bukhara youths in Istanbul; after returning to Bukhara, he opened a "New" school of the Crimean Gasprinski style format, and he had published a newspaper. At the time of my arrival in Bukhara, he was an independent Minister [sic] of Eastern Bukhara Government.

Osman Hoca, much like Feyzullah Hoca, was one of the mainstays of the revolution. After the Bukhara Emir was expelled, the most important matters on the agenda were the matters of the Treasury and the capture of the Emir. After the Bukhara treasury was confiscated by the Soviets, and sent to Moscow, it is true that an important portion was given to the Turkish TBMM Government which was in dire need. At the time, all treasury matters were in the hands of the Osman Hoca and his deputy Nasir Mahdum. The former Emir was in the vicinity of Baysun when we arrived, and Osman Hoca was appointed the Chief of the "Eastern Bukhara Committee" tasked with capturing him.

Feyzullah Hoca (Hocayef) was a member of the millionaire family of Kasim Seyh of Bukhara. He had learned Russian privately. One of his two women was a Russian. In the past, he had visited Germany and learned a little German. Mirza Abdulkadir Muhittinof was a member of a family carrying the epithet "Mirza" (scribe). They, too, were millionaires. Abdulkadir also spoke and wrote Russian. Perhaps he was the



intellectual among all. Osman Hoca, Feyzullah and Abdulkadir had trade relations with Moscow. They had established contacts with the Russians via that route. Because of all that, their family names acquired the suffix “of.” Abdulhamit Arif was an Ozbek from Kaxistuvan village of Bukhara. He had not studied at a medrese, he spent time among the Tatars, had some education in Russian. He was my secretary in Orenburg within the Baskurdistan Government. Later, we had sent him to Tashkent. He was a youth very close to the Tatars and the Baskurts. Among all, Arif was the one who best grasped the modern administrative apparatus. The Foreign Minister Hasim Saik was a Bukhara convert. He had studied at Istanbul Darulmuallim [Teacher Training School]. He could recite poetry in Persian. He had written a compendium of contemporary Bukhara poets. Later on, he was appointed Ambassador to Afghanistan. He was close to the Turks. He did not know Russian or any other foreign language. Education Minister Qari Yoldas was a Kiyikci Turkmen who had settled in Kerki. All of these Ministers, including that Turkmen would speak in Persian. Though, I recall that Arif did not speak Persian well. He was fond of speaking about Persian literature. When we arrived here, the Taskent Turks Munevver Qari, Sadullah Hocayev, Abdulkadir Qusbegiyev; from Samarkand, Ekabir Sahmansurov, and other educated from Tashkent, Samarkand and Ferghana were already there. Many of them were settled in state governance apparatus. There were a few Tatars as well. The Bukharans spoke in Turkish with the Tatars, Baskurt and Kazaks. All of these individuals, without exception had devotion toward Turkiye. They had learned about Turkiye by way of Azerbaijan literature and schools. Mirza Abdulkadir and Ekabir Sahmansurov, being Tajiks by origin, would read the journals published by Iranians in Berlin. Despite that, their political thoughts were on the side of Turkism. In 1917 I had published a journal in Xoqand, Ferghana, entitled *Yurd*, which I had done jointly with Asur Ali. One night, Mirza Abdulkadir told me that one piece I published in that journal pertaining to the subject of the Turk spiritual wealth, had elated the educated readers, especially pertaining to the dastans. Especially a poem from Alisir Navai was very effective: “if the Turk wears his helmet on his head, Susen will raise his Sesper/ and the leaves of the tulip rose will fly away like the black bosomed (dovadak) birds.” That gathering made a believer out of me that the Tajik origin Bukhara Youths had very much internalized the Turkistan spirit.

There were incompatibilities among them. Especially the competition between Feyzullah and Abdulkadir, having inherited that problem from the relations between two millionaire families, now combined with their positions in governance, had reached critical proportions. Russians were benefiting from that. These “Cedid [new]” Bukharans all fully collaborated with the Russians in order to remove the Bukharan Emir. Yet, they were all against Russian colonization. Their unity in that regard was praiseworthy. They would invite me to their homes for feasts during the nights, but I would not even entertain the thought that they would tell anything to the Russians about me because of their internal discord. There were those who were addicted to alcohol among them. However, none drank a drop during the feasts they gave in my honor knowing full well I desired it as such and they knew they needed to be sober.

## *The business of Organization in Bukhara—*

Our primary business was to establish an army of Bukhara ostensibly to chase the Emir; and to bring representatives from Khiva, Turkmenistan and Kazakistan to establish a Turkistan National Union. In preparation we had sent representatives to all points in Baskurdistan, Kazakistan; to the Japanese in Gulca and the prominent Basmaci Chiefs in Ferghana and all the Kazak intellectuals. They all arrived at the end of June. Among the Baskurts who were in Kazakistan, Seyit Kirey Magazow was one. They had combed all of central Kazakistan, and established contacts with our friends. Ildirhan Mutin and Haris Iqlikov, who were in the retinue of the Ferghana Basmaci Chief Sir [not to be read in English] Mehmet Beg; and Mustafa Sakulov, who was with Rahmankul Qorbasi. This Mustafa was travelling with Sadrettin Han, who was the Head of the Taskent Committee of the National Union, and stayed, with Rahmankul for a spell. Later, while he was secretly journeying to Taskent in the company of Arif Kerimi of the Tatars to contact the Japanese representatives in Golca, they fell into the hands of the Russians near Evliya Ata and were jailed. Ozbek and Kazak nationalists, somehow, intervened and freed them. Mustafa Sahkul and Arif Kerimi arrived in Bukhara. They had studied in Russian universities. Previously, they held government positions within the Baskurt Government. We also had invited to Bukhara the Kazak “Alas-Orda Committee” and Turkmen intellectuals as well. While we were waiting for their arrival, we had stayed at the ranch of a wealthy man whose lands were expropriated by the Government, North of Bukhara in a village called Xargos. From among our Baskurt Army officers, Evhadi Ismurzin, my aide-de-camp Ibrahim Ishakov and many other officers; Colonel Heybetullah Suyundukov with all his retinue arrived and took positions within the Bukhara military organization. Qersi, Sehrisebz, Nur, Guzar, Kermin military organizations (meaning Central Commands) were in their hands. Arif was appointing them all. Our aim was to prepare ourselves for a general uprising if the Russians would not allow us to form a national army, or to attempt to quash what was already extant, by joining with the Basmaci. For that, it was necessary to conduct wide-scale propaganda in order to tell the Basmaci the national aims. Our friends from Tashkent and Ferghana were successful in that regard.

Arifov tasked the war-prisoner [Ottoman] Turkish officers who were in Bukhara with the duty of establishing a military school. Some of them, headed by Ali Riza Bey, were working on establishing a gendarmerie organization as well. Since these official offices were known, and were working officially, and were under constant observation by the Russian spies, we were maintaining our contacts with them via roundabout means. During February, attorney Qaqacan Berdiyef of the Turkmens, the Kazak Alas-Orda representative Hayrettin Balginbayev and Muhtar Avezov, plus two other Kazaks, who I think are still alive, arrived. It was not easy to work with the Bukharans and the Kazaks. There were disputes between Bukharans and the Kazaks. In addition, there was a very influential group within the Ozbeks who regarded the intellectual Kazaks, who had studied in Russian institutions, as ‘missionaries.’ We gathered the

Bukharan, Uzbek, Turkmen and Kazak representatives in Xargos, in our headquarters, and at a corner of the Emir's Sitare Mah Hassa Palace to discuss the program of the National Unity in formation. Some members of the national government of Khiva, which was disbanded by the Russians, secretly arrived in Bukhara. We held talks with them as well, but the Kazaks were tired of the excessive length of those discussions, as well as the inhibitions of the Young Bukharans. Finally, as a result of those talks, we decided to establish three political parties. The first was the Cedid Party, which was not socialist, and based on religion. Next, was the socialist Erk Party. The third was the Kazak Alas-Orda party. All three united in a platform comprised of seven planks which I wrote: 1. Independence; 2. Democratic Republic; 3. National Army; 4. The establishment of economic administration, railroad construction, building of canals was to be consonant with Turkistan independence; 5. Education was to become completely modernized, and contacts with the Western civilizations to be undertaken without Russian influence; 6. Nationality issues were to be resolved according to their proportion to the entire population, as well as the benefits they will derive from the national natural resources; 7. Complete freedom of religion, and not to mix religion with the affairs of government. After the Kazaks left Dinse as their representative, and returned home, the Cedid and the Erk Party programs were established. All these three items were the primary successes of our gathering in Bukhara. In general, we had agreed to govern the country in a bipartisan fashion with one liberal and one socialist party; with a common agenda. Everyone was happy about that outcome. Seyyid Kirey Magazov explained the common seven item program in verse, which was a masterpiece.

## *Death of my son Iris—*

My wife Nefise stayed behind in Khiva after I left for Bukhara. In June, she arrived in Bukhara with my young son. But, that year, there was a severe malaria wave gripping the vicinity of Bukhara. As a result of that, I lost my son. We buried him in the mausoleum of poet Musfiqi, who had passed away in 1583, having lived at the time of Abdullah Han. There, the caskets were stacked on top of each other. The fronts of those caskets were opened, and the new body was inserted. Later, the jackals would arrive and eat them. In order to prevent that happening to my son, I had Musfiqi's mausoleum repaired with bricks and concrete in a sturdy fashion. I wrote on the mortar a partial poem from Musfiqi with the notation: "in my son's memory: "our hearts are crying for you; we are ostensibly searching for you/ we are washing our faces with the bloody water with your longing."

In Turkmenistan, since it was not possible to summon a doctor or a mid-wife, I had acted as the midwife. The boy had fiery eyes. An old friend in Bukhara, Nazar Toksaba, would do fortune-telling for him; he would visit us just for my son's sake. He was a plain Uzbek; he would tell me to take his daughter as my daughter-in-law, and to bequeath him a grand-child just like my son. When I told him that it was

difficult to keep even one woman when one is far away from one's homeland, he stated "we will take care of my daughter and the offspring; you just provide the seed," and laughed heartily. Nefise would take his joke seriously and tell me to take his daughter as daughter-in-law, so she could be a baybice (hatun), who would help her cope. Nazar Toksaba brought so many different medications; but we could not save Iris. He died in my arms. Molla Nazar cried more than me. I like people with emotions; I was more devoted to Molla Nazar after that event. I discovered I, too, was tried; it became apparent that I loved that boy. I would repeat Musfiqi's poem and cry. Nefise would console me by saying: "God is great; we are still young, he will grant us children yet. Do not cry."

## *Halmurad is not a 'serf'—*

I had become more acquainted with Metmurat or Halmurad, who was taking care of the vineyard of the house where we were staying at Xargos, because he aided me in burying my son Iris. He was a typical Bukhara villager, from a place called Xalluxan, meaning Karluklar. The Karluk was a stratum that had enormous influence in Bukhara in the past. He did not regard himself Uzbek, but plain Turk. I wanted to test him in terms of whether or not he had any class resentments toward his former employer, and asked: "your Bey was a very cruel official of the Emir. He escaped. Are you villagers not thinking of dividing his vineyard among yourselves?" He answered: "God forbid, if he returns, we will be his caretakers again." I told him: "neither the Emir nor his Beys will return; the land belongs to those who work it. Now, whose property will it be?" He answered: "perhaps it will be the property of the Government; but not ours. Perhaps the government might distribute it. He was cruel, true; but God will hand his punishment at doomsday. He may have obtained a portion of the vineyards by usurpation. God will punish him for that, too. If I were to usurp his property, somebody else will usurp mine." I spoke with Halmurad many times. He had a head over his shoulders. I asked him: "if your Bey were to seduce and rape your wife or daughter, what would you have done?" He said: "there is the Emir, and the Kadi [judge]; if those did not resolve the issue, we would have killed him. We were his caretakers; not his slaves nor are we gypsies. If such an even had taken place, I would have left and gone back to my village." He was not at all like the "serfs" of the feudal European type. He was unable to think of "jus primae noctis" taking place anywhere in the world, where the Bey would spend the first night with the bride of the newlywed serfs. He regarded himself a soldier of his Bey, just as his ancestors were; meaning, if he were to have followers, he would become a small-scale Bey himself. He truly believed that. Revolutions have arrived; he had no business in them. He wanted to live comfortably as a Moslem caretaker. Around Tashkent, the land of wealthy Russians lost their lands that were distributed to the people. He had no business in that. He was basically stating: "Emir or the Bey may not return; but I pray for their safe return. "The ducks unaware of the existence of clear and clean snow-melt, will keep their

beaks in muddy and salty water for years.” He believed that prosperity was tied to an independent Bukhara, and understood general politics. He admired and supported us for working for independence.

### *Poet Colpan and Professor Samoylovic—*

While I was in Xergos, I would visit the home allocated to me every other day. The poet Colpan (Abdulhamid Suleyman) would always arrive and wished to see me. But, since he was a poet, fearing that he would accidentally let the word out, I would always decline to acknowledge my presence and would not see him. He somewhat resented that. One day, he left a poem: “if my being a poet had not left me under a cloud of imputation of disequilibrium, I would have seen you.” When he arrived the next time, I agreed to see him. He said: “your old friend Professor Samoylovic wishes to see you; could that not be out of only of friendship?” I told him: “that is the precise reason why I have been avoiding you; you could let slip a word. Samoylovic is a friend of mine. But, the Soviets catch their quarry by following family members and friends. How can we know that Samoylovic is not a Soviet spy? In 1925, shortly after I arrived in Ankara from Germany, Professor Samoylovic also arrived there. Naturally, his government had sent him. He urged me to return to the homeland. I told him the event in Bukhara, and stated: “for me, there is no return. I am now a citizen of Turkiye. The greatest skill of the Soviets is their ability to make the friends and family members a spy each to reach their enemies. I am not suggesting you are one of them. But the Soviet secret police succeeded injecting spies inside the families, and occasionally use naïve and innocent people such as Colpan. That is my general principle. Because of that, no Soviet agent could get near me in Turkistan. I wish all Western nations could understand this spying method of the Soviets.” In fact, until I crossed from Turkistan into Iran in 1923, only my organization, soldiers and suite could reach me. No unknown or suspected person could. Samoylovic remained in Bukhara several days. He attempted to see me via all types of friends. Undoubtedly, he was serving his government. However, despite their sacrifices, they could not fool anyone. Later, the Soviets destroyed him, too.

### *Seyh Ata—*

About that time, the Seyh of the Uskudar [of Istanbul] Ozbek Tekke [lodge], Seyh Ata stopped over in Bukhara on the way back from Khiva. He was able to see Han Cunejd in a crafty manner; he also spoke with Anne Mahmud whom I saw in the Karakum Desert during 1920, and Anne Bala with whom I spoke in Urgenc. Anne Bala was the one who indicated to me that “if the Cedids had good intentions, let them leave ten rifles with their ammunition for us.” Those rifles were left at the specified location, and he had received them; he stated about me that “he is a straight man; Han Cunejd was sorry he could not see and host him.” In sum, Seyh Ata brought us fresh news from that direction.

### *Feyzullah and Molla Bekcan as characters—*

As a historian, I feel privileged to have observed the best days of the Bukhara Republic as established by the Bukhara educated during 1920. They were held in high regard by the population, who were expecting good results. These two had money printed on silk cloth. Russians had taken away the gold of the Han; the treasury was empty. Despite that, the cloth money had an important difference than the money of the Kerenski and the Soviets: their exchange rate was constant. However, as we observe in Turkiye today, there was the thought of finding salvation on the left. Performing everything the Russians asked, becoming friends with everybody who did the same in order to get closer to the Soviets was seen as the shortest means of eliminating competing groups. Among them, Feyzullah Hoca and his friends were very wealthy millionaires. The Russians were showing everyone that they favored him among all the other millionaires. Feyzullah realized he was deceived, had pangs of conscience because of that, and he was executed after causing damage to his dear friends.

Molla Bekcan was one such educated in Khiva. He was a poor idealist teacher. He liked whatever was left. Since he did not know Russian, he did not know who were the Russian leftists or their ideas in the RCP. He had arrived in Orenburg during the summer of 1918, in order to have talks with our Government. He was intending to visit Moscow, if he could find a way. He did not hesitate to frame himself as an “internationalist,” and he believed he would be successful in Moscow because of that. His only aim was to destroy the Khiva Khanate and replace it with a new joint government with the aid of the Soviets and the Young Khivans. I had him read the Order Number One we had printed and distributed to our population describing that the Soviet regime could not be applied in our country. I also had him talk with the Baskurt Nationalist Salah Atanagolov, who collaborated with the Soviets and then returned home. Afterward, he told me: “so, you do not believe this regime. Let us try it in Khiva once. The conditions are different there. I am a teacher of literature and history. Under the Soviets, that will remain so.” In response, I told him: “according to the Soviets, there is no Turk history of literature. They will only portray the Russian invasion as the most brilliant period of our Great Nation. They will have you give speeches out in the squares, where you will stress that the only way forward is Sovietism; later, they will kill you stating you have nationalism in your heart and throw your remains into the trash heap. It would be very good if you were to remove Isfendiyar Han as the Khiva Han, and replace him with a government of nationalist intellectuals; but not with Soviet aid.” He could not journey to Moscow; perhaps my words had an effect, and he returned home. This time, three days before my departure from Khiva at the end of 1920, there were very sincere talks within the inner rooms of the Republican Palace of Kiva among three individuals. Hoca Niyaz was convinced that the Russians would not allow this republic to live long. Molla Bekcan believed that accepting all the leftisms the Russians wanted would extend the life of the republic. I told him:



“the leftisms wanted from the non-Russians are different than the real Russian leftism. Russian left communists are most reckless extremists. What is required of the non-Russian communists is to completely internalize the Russian ideals, which are: to swallow the nations that are prisoners of the Russians; to make the Russians superior in population, economics and cultural fields in the world; to have every non-Russian leftist agree to all this as if it was his own decision; to have them destroy all national feelings of their own nations from their foundations, only to live by the bread. If you are a leftist, you will in the end have to accept that your nation will become Russian.” Hoca asked what could be done if there was no benefit from the leftism of Bekcan. I answered: “Russians will take you seriously only if you are able to resist them by force of arms. Do not prevent the Ozbeks from joining the forces of Han Cuneyd. Some of your young men need to journey through the desert into Iran, and work to have the voice of Khorezm heard across the world. We are on this path; let my friend Molla Bekcan join the same road. There are others who can be Minister of Education. The Russians will allocate large numbers of aircraft and wireless radios in pursuit of suppressing the rebellion in Turkistan. You must work to have the counter-movement live in Karakum. The only thing you must do is to frame the movement in a format where it can be pursued inside and outside the country and to enable the individuals who will pursue the struggle anywhere.”

After the Russians dispersed the Khiva Government, they did not ask Molla Bekcan to “come join us, you were a leftist, work with us.” He was beaten in jail and was tortured much, and then executed. The famed Crimean author and poet Sevki Bektore had been jailed in Turkistan and in Siberian camps; he was later able to escape and arrive in Istanbul. He and one other friend were able to see the young left-socialists, among them Molla Bekcan, in detention. Molla Bekcan would tell them our talks in Khiva, and would cry in penitence that he would not leave for other countries in order to work for the independence of Turkistan.

## *The Programs of Erk Party and the Cedids—*

The Erk Party program originally comprised of twenty-seven items; it was reduced to nine, as follows, as a result of discussions in Bukhara:

1. The Society’s aim is to have a free Turkistan, and that the Turkistanis to take charge of their own destiny.
2. Free Turkistan’s form of government is a democratic republic.
3. Freedom can only be obtained through a national army. National government can only be based on a national army.
4. Turkistan’s freedom is dependent on economic freedom. Turkistanis must have control over the decisions concerning: the general outlines of the economic

policy; deciding the balance of vocational and agricultural training and the level of importance to be accorded to each; designating the locations and the directions of future railroads and irrigation channels.

5. Contemporary and professional education must prevail. The acquaintance with the European civilization should be undertaken directly and not through Russians.
6. Nationality issues and the exploitation of the nation’s natural resources will be organized according to census and prevailing proportions.
7. There will be freedom of religion. There will be no mixing of religious and state affairs.

As it can be noted, this program is primarily non- religious in character, and demonstrates religious tolerance. Shortly afterwards, the effort was expanded. According to Togan, the aim was to accommodate a full spectrum of political views then prevailing in Turkistan under a single umbrella, which, in today’s terms, would be akin to a Popular Front. During this period, the Sosyalist Tude (party) was formed, later changing its name to Erk Party, and its program was shortened from 27 statutes to 9:

## *Erk Party Program*

1. on the economic plane: In order to accomplish socialism; land, water and mineral wealth must be nationalized and village life collectivized.
2. to adapt, in a planned manner, the labor organizations of industrial countries to Turkistan. The farmers must also be regarded, from an organizational point, as laborers.
3. Turkistan must free itself from colonizers and become self-governing. This is the first and fundamental step for stratification and the acquisition by the farmers of means to fight for their own rights.
4. the government in free Turkistan will be the democratic system supporting the farmers and those supporting self-renewal without barriers. Turkistan parliament, provincial and city councils will be established and elected by the general population directly.
5. Establishment of the national army will aid the governance and the application of socialism.
6. In Turkistan, the nationality and minority affairs are governed according to census figures and in representative proportions.

7. on the educational plane: Affairs are to be arranged such that, the native population will have direct control of the country's governance; the national government will undertake all contemporary governmental services, modern transportation, railroads, post and telegraph, agricultural and industrial organization. Cultural affairs must be organized to reflect the strong national local culture, to remove foreign, meaning Russian influences. To establish business and trade schools in order to effect general education are among the principal objectives of education.
8. Religious affairs are kept totally separate from the affairs of the government.
9. Turkistan Socialist Party can participate in an "International," provided that such a gathering is composed, in principle, of parties like itself, for the purpose of fighting for the freedom of oppressed nations.

The detailed Program may be found in my *Turkili Turkistan* volume (Pp. 411-414) and the discussion pertaining to the aims and application of Socialism in Turkistan was published in Prague, after we left Russia, in Russian.

## *Jadid Terakkiperver Party Program*

1. To live as an independent nation, based on native culture, is the principle precept of life. This is the ideal of all nations. We aim to have an independent Turkistan with a national government. Nationality is based on the unity of language, religion, tradition, literature and custom.
2. The nature of government in free Turkistan is republic. Sovereignty is in the hands of the national assembly, councils for the provinces and cities, elected according to democratic precepts.
3. Members of the central government are appointed by the President, with the approval of the national assembly. Governors of the provinces are appointed by the central government. Chairmen of the provincial and city councils are elected by the members of those assemblies. The regulations governing the election of the members of the provincial councils are established by the first Kurultay (congress) of independent Turkistan.
4. In Turkistan, non-Turk minority communities will have full civil rights. Turk elements must work rigorously and collectively to preserve the Turkistan culture.
5. Turkistan national government will depend on its national soldiers. Military service is mandatory.

6. Provincial governments will establish local police forces, which will be under the jurisdiction of the national defense organization.
7. There will be freedom of religion in the country. The State guarantees the freedom of the performance of religious rights. Foreign (religious) missions will not be permitted to operate in the country.
8. Freedom of the press and publication and the personal freedoms will be secured through the constitution.
9. Taxes will be proportional to income. So will the inheritance taxes. In Turkistan, taxes that are the remnants of medieval times will be abolished.
10. Principles of land ownership will be based on the fact that water, land and the mineral wealth under and on the land, and the forests belong to the state. Land will be given to villagers as private property.
11. Private persons cannot engage in directly buying and selling of water and land with each other. These transactions can only be enacted through the state. Laws pertaining to ownership are determined by local custom and jurisprudence.
12. Turkistan's freedom can only be ensured with economic independence. In this vein, Turkistan will strive to establish and develop modern economic relations with neighboring countries.
13. The principal issue of land in Turkistan requires that the whole nation work with all its might to irrigate and expand cultivation. Water management must be handled with great care.
14. In Turkistan, especially Kazak, Kirgiz, and Turkmen provinces, the most important issue is the transition from nomadic to settled life. This problem can be solved by irrigating regions alongside large rivers. No immigrants can be brought to Turkistan other than ethnic Turks and Moslems.
15. The solution to the problem of workers in Turkistan is dependent on the development of industry. Working conditions of the workers, working hours, rights of child and women laborers are determined according to methods prevailing in developed countries.
16. Equal justice for everyone shall prevail. This will be accomplished, without regard to differences in religion and sect, by accepting and applying modern laws.
17. General free education is to be striven for. Citizens can establish private educational institutions, provided that they are not against the interests of the state.
18. Importance shall be attached especially to the establishment of trade schools and to sending students to Europe.

19. Turkistan being the hearth of an ancient civilization, those monuments of civilization accumulated throughout centuries will be preserved, organized to serve the development of the national civilization.

It must be categorically stated that the proposed future administration of Turkistan by two parties, one radical national and other socialist, was not influenced by any outside thought. This developed due to local conditions and in 1921 through consultations with the educated leadership representing the local population of Turkistan. The Alash Orda was added to others to form a three party system. At the time, during deliberations, Turkistan nationals were not aware of the existence of the two party systems in England and in America.

## *Formation of Turkistan National Union, and the First Congress—*

We prepared the Party Programs as well as the “Joint Platform” but we could not establish the Joint Committee. The primary reason was a sort of competition between the Bukharans and the Taskentians, as well as the distrust shown by the Bukharans and Taskentians toward the Kazaks. Because of that, there was not the possibility of electing the President of the General Committee. The Bukharans were convinced that there was nobody from amongst them who could perform the expected activities. Especially the Abdulkadir Muhittinov and the Feyzullah Hoca groups did not even wish to hear the other being nominated for the position. We Baskurts wanted to nominate Munevver Kari of Tashkent, but the Bukharans did not accept that. On the other hand, the President of the Committee, when required, would need to give-up open living and go underground. Munevver Kari wished to remain official, what may come. We proposed Sadreddin Ayni, a leader of the Tajiks; he, too, wished to remain official. Besides, those who supported him were very few.

During July, the member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, Ismail Suphi Soysallioglu had arrived in Bukhara. He was travelling, ostensibly, as a Turkish member leaning toward the Communist Party. As such, he obtained the conditions to travel freely in Turkistan. He even visited Khiva. However, he was tasked with duties by General Mustafa Kemal. This person spoke with me several times; then, at my request he spoke with the competing Uzbek and Tajik representatives. He was concerned with the impasse in the establishment of the Joint Committee, and proposed all parties to meet at a suitable place at night. We met the evening of 30 July, at the home of Mirza Abdulkadir. Suphi Bey apparently spoke with all parties in advance and proposed that I be elected to the Presidency of the Committee, which was accepted by all. At the evening meeting, he made a good speech, repeated the same proposal. It was agreed upon unanimously. Members of the Central Committee were also elected. As a result, I became active as the President of TMB [Turkistan National Union], meaning the Joint Committee, on 2 August. During those critical days, a People’s Deputy sent by

General Mustafa Kemal from Turkiye was decisively influential in the establishment of a national center in Turkistan and over the Kazak Alas-Orda representatives, especially over Dinse and the Afghan Ambassador Abdurresul Han [sic].

Mirza Abdulkadir very much appreciated that outcome, and gifted me a thick silk prayer rug containing beautiful writings on it, and a gold watch containing inscriptions.

Osman Hoca sent me a letter from Sirabad, expressing his happiness in my appointment as the President of the Society. Osman Hoca also wrote that he was in favor of armed rebellion against the Russians without reservations. He was the Independent Representative of Eastern Bukhara. Between 2 and 5 August, the “National Unity Congress” met. This was the Fifth Congress since the meetings in Moscow. The Society was designated as the “Union of Moslem Central Asian National Vami Society.” For the Society, a Seal had been commissioned by a Tajik Member of the Society for use by the Central Committee. I still have that Seal, on which the word “Orta [Central]” was spelled as “Otar.” We all laughed, and it remained as such. The draft by-laws of the Society were approved at that meeting. It was decided to convene another Congress in Samarkand during September, to immediately contact the Basmaci groups, and send them political advisers. Two deputies were set to Mustafa Sahkul, who was originally sent during June. They remained with the head of Basmaci Devletmend in the region of Kulab, representing the Society, and established contacts with the Lakay tribe whose chief was unbendingly Emirist.

## *Generals Cemal and Halil—*

Our first business was for Generals Cemal and Halil, the grandees of Turkiye, to be seriously concerned with the affairs of Turkistan. Our decisions were based on their previous statements of interest in that direction. General Cemal had been to Kabul via Tashkent and Bukhara, a year before. General Halil and Hacı Sami Bey had arrived in Tashkent, wishing to journey toward Kashgar. Their thoughts of Central Asia intended to benefit Turkiye, to continue the [First World] war which they had lost in the West against the Allies. General Cemal was intending to start an uprising in India with the help of Afghans, and to include the Central Asian Turks into his Army of Islam with the aid of the Soviets. He was acting seriously. He sent one of his officers by the name of Regip Bey and Qari Kamil from Ferghana to Bukhara with letters to be delivered to the chiefs of the Basmaci. I spoke with them. Ragip Bey verbally explained General Cemal’s ideas. They were completely imaginary. We regarded the matters of Turkistan only from the prism of Turkistan. We were against the idea of melding it with the operations in Turkiye, or to eliminate the English dominion in India. The delegation from General Cemal was able to make contact with some of the Basmaci Chiefs with the permission of the Russians. However, the Russians did not at all believe in them and arrested them in Tashkent. A little later the Russians allowed them to travel to Kabul, but disallowed a stopover in Bukhara. I was avoiding telling General Cemal



that his ideas were completely imaginary for fear of offending him. After Ragip Bey and Qari Kamil were sent to Kabul, a person representing the Ferghana Basmaci arrived in Bukhara (if I am not mistaken, he was Semi Kari) who told us with great regret that a completely negative impression of General Cemal was obtained when he explained that he wished to draw the Basmaci toward the Indian border and use it against the English, to abandon Turkistan completely to the Russians. At that time several of the Kazak and Ozbek intellectuals arrived in Bukhara who had spoken with Ragip Bey and Qari Kamil at Tashkent and Khokand. They told us that “the General Cemal turned out to be an adventurer who had no idea of the realities; which Basmaci would go to India to fight against the English?” In sum, the impression of ours was reminiscent of Shakespeare’s lines in *King Lear*: “I will do such things/ what they are, I know not, but they shall be/ the terrors of the earth.” We were depressed by those actions of the General that debased his reputation. We did not at all wish any impression be formed in the minds of our population against the grandees of Turkiye. In response we stated that “the General knows the issues of Western and Central Asia wholesale; we only know our local conditions,” by way of softening his words. We did not wish the General to know all this. We did not send on to Kabul the bitter letters written by the Basmaci Chiefs addressed to General Cemal stating: “you ought not to surrender us to the Russians.” Instead, we sent word to General Cemal that he needed to refrain from sending letters to the Basmaci Chiefs who did not believe the Russians, advising them not to fight the Russians. We advised General Cemal that the matters of Turkistan were being handled by the Turkistan National Union, and he needed to contact the Basmaci through that channel. We sent that letter, dated 25 July 1921 by way of a Bukhara External Affairs courier to Kabul, over my signature, in the name of our Union. I obtained a copy of that letter after I arrived in Kabul in 1923. A portion of that letter was published in my volume entitled *Turkistan Tarihi* (Pp. 430-431). In it we stated: “Our aim is... to find means of forcing the Russians to accept our existence, to strengthen our national society, and to provide modern, national and political spirit to the fighting component. To enter among the Basmaci to distance the supporters of the Emir and the conservatives, so as to eliminate their influences, to replace them with loyal and useful individuals to the National Union Society, and to re-form this Basmaci organization into the regular military wing of the young and independence minded. If the Russians agree to leave the military and economic affairs to the local Moslems in Turkistan, Kazakistan and Baskurdistan, and accept the full independence of Bukhara and Khiva, we are prepared to establish peace and resume relations with them. Otherwise, we are seriously preparing militarily and politically for an all-out struggle against them. We are going to establish Tashkent as the center for all three regions (East, South, and West) of Turkistan. At the moment, in Eastern Bukhara, we are concentrating on the formation of a national government in the Soviet style, to establish a military organization and inaugurating sincere relations with our neighboring countries of Afghanistan, China and Iran. We ask that your Middle East policies be drawn so as not to sacrifice the future of this old Turkistan to plans in preparation for the deliverance of the Islamic world. We request that you do not

sacrifice the future of Turkistan in favor of the plans made for the liberation of Islamic world. Please undertake all initiatives concerning Turkistan by way of our Turkistan National Committee Center, and not to contact the Basmaci or other strata otherwise. All this will be to your benefit. In addition, it is necessary not to show any closeness to the Bukhara Emir, who is now in Eastern Bukhara. Any such help rendered him will be regarded as enmity toward our Society. Let us recapitulate again the fact that, even if the Bolsheviks are sincere in liberating the Western countries from the hands of the capitalists, and assuming that they will remain loyal to all the statements they are making and are sincere about what they publish, Turkistan cannot subsume its future to the as yet unknown outcome of forthcoming struggle between capitalism and socialism. Thus these are the principles of any political policy toward Turkistan.” Since General Cemal’s representatives were not allowed to stopover in Bukhara after they were released from jail, and sent directly to Kabul, we sent another letter to Abdurresul Han, the Afghan Ambassador in Bukhara on 10 August. We indicated to him [apparently intended for General Cemal to read] that his correspondence with the Russians did not yield a resolution and asked him not to confuse the issues of Turkistan with the Russian policies toward Afghanistan and India. We received a copy of that letter after our arrival in Kabul. The following words summarize the whole: “you must once again review your idea of including the Turkistan Basmaci into your Islamic Army in order to liberate India. That is because, the Basmaci will not participate in activities outside Turkistan; the movement is comprised of individuals who have gone to the mountain due to local necessities. Your thoughts about us convincing the Russians to let a national army be formed in Bukhara is of course a dream, but it is so for those of us who have gone underground for political reasons; Feyzullah Hoca, Sadullah Hoca and Munevver Kari believe that they will succeed and they are right. In your letters, it will be best if you did not write words that would offend their faith, or to cause them to view you with contempt.”

## *Moving to Samarkand—*

I left all alone, with a single horse, for Samarkand via Kermine, in order to contact the rebellion movements more closely, and to observe the preparations of the Congress that would meet in September. My wife was accompanied by my orderly, Haris Sisenbayev, and travelled by rail. My outfit was that of an Ozbek villager. Despite that, I avoided localities where there were Russian soldiers. After passing Qorgan, I learned that there was a Russian detachment en-route and turned toward Ayabad where there was a mausoleum by the name of Kumusata toward the evening. I spent the night in the room of the keeper Seyh who was living in very reduced circumstances. He brought feed for my horse, prepared a meal for me. This was a meal called talkan, consumed by the poor. He apologized for not being able to provide clean coverings. There was a book in the window-sill on the lives of saints. I wrote a poem in Persian with the following meaning: “Here, there is a yellowed face, and only torn clothing is sold/ the market for

silk and brocade is elsewhere.” Seyh asked me what I wrote into the book. When he read what I wrote, the poem which he already knew, tears ran down his eyes. We spoke until midnight. His knowledge about the world was complete. He was acquainted with Qaraqul Bey, who had a militia in the vicinity. He roused me for the morning prayers. We performed together. He brought milk, and served sircay containing tea, milk, butter and salt. We had become friends. A year later, when we fought against the Russians with Qarakul Bey, we again visited this old man. It transpired that he had told Qarakul Bey that I spent a night in his lodgings, wondering perhaps I was Hizir. When Qarakul Bey laid eyes on the Seyh, he introduced me with: “here, I brought you, your Hizir.” I spent another night in his lodgings.

My wife Nefise was lodged in the vineyard of Kadi Haydar, who was a member of our Society. I joined her.

### *Kurban Bayrami [festival of sacrifices]—*

After spending a few days at the vineyard of Kadi Haydar Bey, we designated that place for our meetings, and rented a house for ourselves at a place called Mescidi Hizir. Kadi Haydar was an outstanding person. The majority of Samarkand residents are Turks, but they mostly speak Farsi. Kadi Haydar’s orchard was very large and rich with varieties. He had forty different species of apple trees alone. Grapes were as varied as well. It was a very mature orchard that was receiving very careful maintenance. He knew individuals from among the Russians. He had us settle at the back of his own home. There an event took place, as it did in Ashkabad with the Russian Ostrovski. My old and close friend, Professor Viatkin had arrived. There was a wooden wall between us. I was listening to his conversation with Kadi without showing myself. He specified that there was a rumor of me being present in the vicinity of Bukhara. I did not make a sound. He left a little later. He was an excellent historian. He knew Temur and Samarkand history especially well. In his library there were many manuscript sources. His most important volume was “Topography of Samarkand Province.” In it, he had marked many historical old cities in Samarkand Province according to vakif [pious foundation] documents. I had met Professor Viatkin along with Nalivin in 1913, because of his becoming Turkistan Governor General, and had corresponded with him regularly. The letters he wrote me on various historical problems had formed a book. He later was appointed a university professor. Perhaps he now passed away. I was very sorry I could not speak with him; I let him know of this in a letter, after I crossed the Iranian border two years later.

After we moved to the house at Mescid-I Hizir, we met with friends only at the gardens of Kadi Haydar. We did not let anyone else know where we were living with the exception of Kadi Haydar, Molla Arif and Murad Hoca. We had three horses. We took care of them, and visited old historical sites around town. Living underground

allowed me to learn the topography of Bukhara and Samarkand in great detail. Especially since I was living practically next to the historical monuments of Afrasyab and Sahi Zinde, I was able to read most of the inscriptions.

### *Haris Sisenbay—*

During that time, my orderly soldier Haris Sisenbay passed away from malaria. This youth had not left my side since 1918, and was from the Salcuvut Branch. He was very intelligent and sincere. I was thinking of taking him with me to other countries, if that was to be the case, and have him educated. I had told him that. Since he had completed the Russian city school, he was able to type the writings I had completed by hand. He was careful. Haris was also recording what was happening to us, and burying them in various designated places around Samarkand in bottles. Haris Sisenbay was almost taking the place Ibrahim Qackinbay whom I had lost. I was devoted to him with sincere feelings of friendship. There was nobody else to fill his shoes. I had given his friend Ahmetcan leave for him to return to our country. He went crying. Upon observing that Haris revolted, and asked: “are you going to send me away back to the country? If you do, I will kill myself.” He had already listened to our conversations that we would cross over to Afghanistan or to Iran, if the conditions required. He would state that: “if you are going to leave for foreign lands, I will go with you. Teach me those languages as well.” He began learning Persian in Bukhara and Samarkand. He was also reading books during his spare time. He would tell me: “if you were to be Sultan Mahmud, I would want to be Ayvaz.” When we were living incognito in Bukhara, he would take my smallest order in the ceremonial position. He liked the military ways. I finally asked him not to do that, because it would attract the attention of outsiders that I am somebody other than what I seemed. He thus stopped that. However, when nobody else could see it, he would arrive and take the same ceremonial respectful position. He was not shy toward me; sometimes he would speak harshly. I would call him “Kemen” as in the popular Central Asian novel, and sometimes address him as “Bozyegit.” When he died, we buried him in the cemetery next to Mescid-I Hizir. I had a tombstone placed over him and wrote the following on it: “he had no equal/ he shared my troubles/ when called Bozyegit/ he would respond with “you are my life”/ oppressor fate/ you have compassion to those who have no honor/ but do not compliment the ones in difficulty/ you are taking a friend from a comrade/ separating him from his parents/ you are never satisfied with all you take.” This Haris was the one who killed Minhac, the enemy of Baskurdistan autonomy, and the servant of the Russian Tsardom, and brought his pistol to me. That pistol was with me, even in Samarkand. The body of Haris was diminutive, but he was an unequalled hero. His death was the cause for me and my wife to cry much.

## *TMB [Turkistan National Union] Sixth Congress—*

When Sisenbay passed away, the entire weight was left to me and my wife Nefise to carry. The ones who had sacrificed most were Turekul Canuzakov of the Kirgiz and Sultan, who was an Uzbek from Andican. The latter youth was from the entourage of the Kazak intellectual Sirgaziyeu, who was the governor of Samarkand. With their efforts, Turkistan National Union Congress was held between 5-7 September. All the members entered the gardens of Kadi Haydar from various gates. One day, we convened at a vineyard at the Matrid ward of the city. At that meeting, Dinse of the Kazaks was also in attendance. That Dinse was also suffering from malaria. He was present even though he would lose consciousness at times. At one point, addressing me, he said: "I am burning, in flames. Bring me a bucket of water from Sumburun." It turned out Sumburun was a deep well north of Lake Balkash, in the Bat-Pakdala desert, where his Branch of origin used. Apparently, it was one hundred fathoms deep, and the water was just like ice. When he lost consciousness, he was referencing that deep well, asking me to bring him water from there. Later on, he got well. But, he went back to his lands stating that he would not be completely over it without drinking the water from Sumburun. He was a poet and artist. He had an itinerant troupe. He would go with them to a variety of places and stage theatrical productions. Soysallioglu Ismail Suphi Bey, during his Turkistan trip, was in his audience in Kizil Mescit, took a large-scale photograph of the Dinse troupe and brought it to Istanbul. While the congress was underway, Kudretullah arrived from Kashgar. While we were leaving for Turkistan, these four, Kudretulla, Inayetulla, Nimetulla and Fitratullah took their families and went to Kashgar. There, they were going to join the independence movement. Now, one arrived to give news and take instructions. He brought very good news, and left. He also brought photographs. We were very happy to learn their good health, a family whom I had known since my childhood, and their selfless work. Their father Sultan Gerey Hazret was an old friend of my father. He had worked selflessly in Baskurdistan autonomy movement. Now, his sons and daughters-in-law are working in Eastern Turkistan. Two sons and a daughter of Kudretullah arrived in Turkiye for their studies, via Tibet and India. Ataturk sincerely took interest in them. Now, the grandchildren of two friends are united in Istanbul. Among them, Enver Altay is a prominent engineer.

At the Samarkand Congress sessions, the by-laws of the society comprised of twenty-four items and the flag of Turkistan was approved. In the committee preparing the flag, I served along with Munevver Kari and Canuzakoglu and a few other individuals. The color red on this national flag was based on the Eleventh Century scholar Mahmud Kashgari who had shown that the color red was prominent in the earlier flags of the Seljukids and the Karakhanids. We had also seen the same color in the miniatures in the manuscripts of the Timurid period. The original of this flag is visible in a manuscript written in 1449 at the time of Timurid Sahrukh, in Hayir Hatun "Hamsa" held in Topkapi Palace (No. 781) on page 230. There are five red and

four white stripes for a total of nine stripes at length, and surrounded by a blue stripe. We announced 6 September a holiday, the day this flag was agreed upon. Accordingly, this became the unified flag of our nation which was in general uprising against the Russians across Turkistan. Also, poems were written in Cagatay and in Persian for this flag. At the moment, I do not have any copies to my hand. Again at this congress it was decided to send political advisers to the entourage of every Basmaci Chief. To the entourage of Bas Qorbasi, chief of chiefs, Alcibay, who was from the Nayman Branch as well as Qari Kamil named influential Uzbek intellectual were appointed. This congress was the most fruitful and sincere of all the congresses that convened. No sly competition between Feyzullah Hoca and Abdulkadir, as was the case in Bukhara, took place.

## *Events in Baskurdistan—*

After this congress, I contacted the Bukhara government, in order to send foodstuffs to Baskurdistan as famine was raging there. Several train cars of food was sent. Besides, representatives had arrived from Baskurdistan to obtain food. A young man named Suleyman Mirzabulatov had staged a revolt in Baskurdistan. We let him know that his revolt would have no immediate benefit, and advised him to surrender to the Soviets. He did. Mostavenko, a friend of Lenin, acting as representative of Moscow in Baskurdistan, in his printed memoirs, had written that the end of this revolt by peaceable means was due to his own skills. Meanwhile, two of our Baskurt soldiers arrived as representatives.



## General Enver in Turkistan

During September and October, several letters and some journals arrived from General Enver who was at the time in Moscow, via the Turkish Officers living in Bukhara and an officer named Ali Riza. In those journals, published in Berlin under the title *Liva-I Islam*, and other designations, General Enver and his friends were conducting propaganda in the name of Islamic Union and against the Allies, and in favor of agreement with the Soviets. We were very unhappy with all this since it was not possible to conjoin the life-and-death struggle of Turkistan with the very just and vital calculations of Turkiye in their struggle against the Allies. The word that he might be joining the general uprising had also arrived. Even though we were organized secretly, we were continuing our fight in complete consort and understanding with our friends who were working officially within the Communist Party and Soviet institutions. Therefore, our fight ought to have remained an internal matter of the Soviet Union, and our friends in official positions needed to grow the kernels of Red Army units comprised completely of Moslem soldiers, enlarge the circles of Moslem intellectuals within Soviet institutions and the Party, and also determined never to acknowledge any contacts, if that took place, with other countries. It was easily possible to have the Baskurt national Battalion, that just arrived, join the Basmaci. However, Turar Riskulov and similar minded individuals (who were working in official government positions) specified that they ought not to join the Basmaci, instead the Soviet Army as a national unit. As such, it was also advisable for the Basmaci to do so if possible, to make them official. As a result, it would then become feasible for those of us who were working secretly to become officials in Eastern Bukhara. We could not see Turar Riskulov who was under constant surveillance. However, I was able to meet with government and party officials often, in Samarkand and elsewhere. The news from Turar was reaching me via several Baskurt soldiers in Tashkent and friends of Dinse. We also had established communication with some Social Revolutionaries in Turkistan and the national organization of Ukraine. If General Enver would involve himself in this business, and take an anti-Soviet stance, since they could not obtain aid from the Allies, the Turkistan uprising would be completely isolated even from our friends who were working in the internal governmental institutions. Even though the slogans were to grow larger, the resources available would become even smaller. I was informed that General Enver was inclined to arrive in Turkistan. We discussed

the circumstances in our Committee. We responded stating it would be better for him not to arrive, but help us from the sidelines.

Meanwhile, the policies of the Russians in Bukhara took a better turn for us. The Russians, who ostensibly supported both Mirza Abdulkadir and Feyzullah Hoca groups in their struggle for primacy, announced on 27 September that they now officially supported Feyzullah Hoca. That was because Feyzullah Hoca had closer relations with the Russians. We had established a garrison organization with the hands of our War Minister Arifov in various cities of Bukhara. Feyzullah knew that they were prepared to join the Basmachi, their real objective. I had even heard him state to Arifov: “the real commander of our garrisons is Zeki Velidi.” It was becoming necessary for all the students studying at the military school we established at Kermine under the leadership of my former aide-de-camp Ibrahim Ishakov to join the Basmaci, even Ibrahim himself, and above that even War Minister Arif leaving the official Soviet side and joining the Basmaci. The police chief Mirza Muhittin, who was the primary support of Mirza Abdulkadir was Feyzullah’s real enemy. He immediately joined the Basmaci with all his police officers. Meaning, the events were taking place and we were getting caught without preparation. Mirza Muhittin sent a representative to our society and asked: “I am joining the Basmaci; where shall I station myself and what would be my duties?”

### *Arrival of General Enver in Bukhara and my talks with him—*

One day the news reached me that General Enver had arrived in Bukhara, and the next, a short letter from him stating: “I am in Bukhara; I request you arrive here earliest.” He had arrived in Bukhara on 20 December. I immediately mounted my horse and went to Bukhara alone. I arrived at the Afghanistan Embassy, outside the city, as I was informed from Bukhara. The Ambassador was Abdurresul Han, with whom we later became very close friends and got together many times in Kabul and in Berlin. He told me that he had sent word to the General that I have arrived. In less than an hour, the General arrived. He was accompanied by his aide-de-camp Muhittin Bey. I was laying eyes on General Enver for the first time in my life. He was dressed in civilian clothes. In his photographs, I always saw him in military outfits. As soon as he sat down, he stated: “General Cemal had arrived from Kabul, I sent Dr. Nazim to the Carcuy railroad station to meet General Cemal. However, the Russians prevented General Cemal to disembark, even to talk with him. He was not held in Tashkent but sent on to Moscow immediately.” He added that he was very sorry about all that. Then, we discussed his problems. He told me that I was right, referencing my letter to General Cemal, that the Russians would follow the policy of only badly exploiting them. He asked me what he could do that would benefit Turkistan as long as he arrived in Bukhara, and what would be my advice to him. He had no determination and was

not specifying that he had decided to do something. In truth, he was bewildered. I told him: "I was informed by the Turkish officers in Bukhara, those who are in contact with me, that you would join the Basmaci upon arrival. That, too, is a path. Another is your crossing over to Afghanistan from here. The Russians would not allow that, but it would be easy for you. We can help you to cross at a place called Burdalik; our organization there is secure." The General asked me why I did not see him joining the Basmaci a positive. I told him: "First of all, this struggle began as an internal problem of Russia. We have the possibility of uniting with other anti-Bolshevik forces and parties as enemies of the Bolsheviks. We can even, once again, come to terms with the Soviets if necessary. If you were to get involved, and get the 'liberals' of India into the mix as supported by General Cemal, this problem will assume the characteristics of an international problem. Since the Soviets are not sincere in these matters, then this problem will assume the face of an international problem. The Allies are regarding you another Wilhelm II. We had thought that we could obtain aid from the outside. If you were to join this movement, all those possibilities would be completely removed, and our case would become an international matter before we are ready. The White Russian groups will turn their backs to us; our Society would then be forced to openly join the Basmaci. Those of our friends who are in official positions would have to either join the Basmaci, or cut all of our ties and support the Soviet side. Hundreds of our friends within the Soviet institutions have been helping us because we are working on a completely internal matter of Russia. They regard the agreements with external governments an adventure, and since they are not based on guarantees, they are not in favor of them. The English, when they entered Turkmenistan during 1918, they favored the White Russians instead of the Turkmen. That had caused a terribly bad impression. It is not forgotten anywhere that the French and American forces arriving in Siberia during 1918 had taken a completely negative attitude toward the Baskurdistan and Kazakistan Governments, and treated their armies as the enemy to the point of wanting to kill their officers by order of field court-martials. The English had left behind the Turkmen who had worked with them when they withdrew. If we were to contact the rest of the world while we are pursuing our independence, those friends who are working at the Party center will take a position against us. The Second Point is, the Soviets are now gaining in the Polish Front. If they can solve that problem fast with compromises, they can shift all their forces here. This year, the crop in Turkistan is rather small. No valley can maintain more than four or five thousand soldiers. If you were to cross over to Afghanistan, and refrain from dealing with the issues of India, and manage the affairs of Turkistan from there, it would be very beneficial. The thorny side of our problems involves the Emir of Bukhara. He left; we do not want him back, he cannot return. He is an enemy of modernity and you. Here, he has partisans who are loyal to him. They will be opposing you. On the other hand, you are obliged to join those partisans first. If you were to cross over to Afghanistan, you might be able to communicate with the Emir of Bukhara and help him see the true path. Amanullah Han of course would help. Perhaps you might choose to seek aid from other countries, such as Iran with the help of Afghanistan. You might

maintain contacts with the Basmachi Chiefs and send instructors. We, on our part, can maintain our strategy. You could also come to an agreement with the English after obtaining the full trust of the Emir. Then you can return to Turkistan and command the entire movement. All forces under the command of our society would serve you. Otherwise, the majority will avoid getting involved in business that is not resting on a strong foundation. The Soviets can easily deceive our friends who wish to establish a National Turkistan Soviet Government based on 'national red army' by accepting our demands. They will announce your movement as Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkist. Those are not popular here. On the other hand, you have gained fame during the World War as a prominent opponent of the Russian people. The White Russian strata will never forget that. Your open involvement in this business may cause the Whites and the Reds to unite. If you were to cross over to Afghanistan, our possibilities of communicating with the White Russians and anti-Soviet groups will remain open. General Cemal remained in Afghanistan for a year. We have not been successful in transmitting these truths to him, which you have grasped during your Bukhara talks. All business you would undertake in Afghanistan, excluding those involving India, will certainly yield good results."

General Enver asked me: "why do your friends not desire the unity of the Turks and Moslems?" I responded with: "the common people of Turkistan only know of the Ottoman Caliph. He is the Sultan of Turkiye. The people here do not know that Turks in Turkiye speak Turkish. The educated know that, yet they are unaware of our common culture. On the other hand, the Russians are showing Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism as abhorrent so much that those who have contacts with the Russians find it necessary to stay away from those conceptions. Another aspect that is necessary to remember is that the local population is here are concerned with their own problems and that they have never heard of unity issues. Even those who have been to pilgrimage do not know them; if anyone does, those few who have studied in Istanbul, and those who read the journal *Turk Yurdu* and none other. Everyone here is in favor of Turkistan. Those who have statistical information on the dense Russian population north of the Caspian Sea and Iranian population to the south will not even think that Turkiye and Turkistan will have a common political issue. It is possible to propagandize that it is feasible to increase the contacts on the bases of Islam and Turk culture. The conditions are favorable for this. Every Turkmen, Uzbek and Kazak would state "if the Turk has the power, let him come and take us on." He will also notice that his relations with the Russians will become harsher if he were to pursue this because the Russian educated believe that that is possible and are afraid of this. Other than that, there is nobody around who would wish to prevent the unity of the Turks. He will state that we ought not pursue a ghost and make the Russian angry without a cause. Or, he is only negligent." General Enver listened to all I said intently. He responded with: "there is one more possibility beyond the two you indicated; namely either to cross over to Afghanistan or to take over the movement here. And that is to return to the Sultan by way of returning to Moscow." What he meant by 'Sultan' was his wife in Berlin. He added: "and not to be involved in the

affairs of Turkistan.” I replied with: “That will be your choice. Kindly do not decide on the bases of what I stated so far. I only spoke my private thoughts. Listen to the others as well. I do not wish to hear that I have turned back the General. Since you have come all the way to Bukhara, we must make use of this opportunity for the independence of Turkistan. Who can guarantee that what happened to general Talat in Berlin will not happen to you as well?” The Afghanistan Ambassador Abdulresul Han personally and modestly served tea. His respect for the General was enormous. He did not utter a single word during our discussions, left us alone. We also ate the evening meal there. After the General left, I spent the night there. I wrote the drawbacks of the General joining the Basmaci in fourteen points. I did not want him to decide without considering all these seriously.

### *My consequent talks with General Enver—*

The next morning, I went to the home of Hekim Bey in whose house we had lived earlier. In the afternoon, I went to the home of Hasim Sayik, the Foreign Minister of Bukhara. The General arrived there with his aide-de-camp Muhiddin and Haci Sami. He was wearing a pair of military trousers and German boots with thick rubber soles. He told me that he had read my fourteen points, and thinking about the problem, and wished to learn all he could about the true conditions of the Turkistan Basmaci. I told him the numbers of Basmaci groups, their chiefs and characters as I knew. There I learned that some of the educated in Bukhara, especially Mirza Abdulkadir and his friend from Samarkand, Ekabirsah, definitely wanted the General to take over the Turkistan uprising. In return, I indicated that Mirza Abdulkadir had lost his fight with Feyzullah Hoca, and since the Russians favored Feyzullah, and since some of their men joined the Basmaci, they would of course make such a proposal. I suggested that he ought to speak with others beyond Mirza Abdulkadir. In addition, Haci Sami indicated that General's crossing over to Afghanistan would mean wasting his life, and it would be a mistake in trusting Amanullah. That person was aggrandizing his role in the Yedisu rebellion of 1916, stating: “I am a plain Turk, yet I was able to rouse entire Kirgizistan. Your (meaning the General) fame and influence can aid us to cause a tumult Turkistan-wide.” I corrected him that moment with: “the 1916 uprising was not caused with propaganda but was the result of the 25 June decree of the Tsar ordering the conscription of the local populations for war service. We only heard that you had joined the Sabdan Batirogullari at the Karakol Township, at the very end when the Kirgiz were preparing to cross over to China. I presented, and continue to present all the naked facts to the General. I have been decidedly avoiding sending him into the incorrect path.” I thus endeavored to draw the attention of the General to the exaggeration of Haci Sami's words. Haci Sami reacted with indignation. After the General left that night, I did not, thinking that the Russian spies would trail him, and slept there. For every occasion of talking with the General, I would arrive before he did, and spend the night at that location. In such a manner, I spoke with the General four nights.

That night, we spoke a lot with Hasim Sayik. He was in a complete indecision. He was afraid of telling the problem to anyone, including Feyzullah. I told him I was going to see Feyzullah as well, but I could not tell him the truth. At a later hour in the hour, Haci Sami again arrived at Hasim Saik and that he had a matter he wished to speak with me separately. Haci told me: “Do not agree with the General for his return to Sultan; they will kill him there (in Berlin); the General's arrival here is an opportunity. Either a result will be obtained or not, but with General Enver's participation this event will constitute a global importance. Even if Turkistan is not liberated during the lifetime of this generation, the future generations will take the General's and your example and will finally liberate Turkistan. The General is attributing great import to your words; kindly inform him that his return to Germany is not an acceptable alternative.” I gave my word in agreement and indicated: “in order for the General to be successful in Turkistan, he first must go to Afghanistan; do not object to that path, and do not make exaggerated assertions.”

The third night we spoke, I noticed the influence of Haci Sami on the General. The General, addressing me, stated: “Zeki Bey, I understand you do not like me to be working in Turkistan.” I responded with: “may God forbid, there is work for thousands of individuals for the cause like you. Only the volunteers for the cause can save this nation. The international public opinion will now develop in favor of the independence of nations, colonies will be removed, and Turkistan will be free one day. But, I spoke only on the current conditions on our homeland. You had asked me for my thoughts and analyses. It is my duty to present all I know and understand, without adding or subtracting. At our fourth meeting, the General was inclined to cross over to Afghanistan. He was to apply to the Russians for this outcome; if that aid was not forthcoming, he intended to cross with our help. I obtained maps for him. I had called the members of our society from Carcuy and Burdalik, the Turkmen, asked them to help the General cross over to Afghanistan via Burdalik, Sakarkuduk and Andhoy, to accompany him, and introduce the General to the Turkmen Basmaci operating at Kerki region. We had done that very speedily. The General liked that.

The General spoke with the Russian Councilor Officer Jurinev at Kagan, and asked him when General Cemal was going to return to Afghanistan. The Councilor Officer responded with: “let alone allowing Cemal to travel, we also know what business you have been pursuing here.” The General regarded that as a direct threat. He thought that the Russians would kill him and General Cemal. He was entertaining strange thoughts such as entering among the Basmaci once, and then returning to Berlin. I indicated to him: “if you were to enter among the Basmaci once, you cannot return to Russia; it would be best for you not even to confess anyone that you had such thoughts.” I was about to leave Bukhara for Samarkand. I spoke with the General once more. He told me that he had left all business in limbo; he was going to cross over to Eastern Bukhara, and constitute a congress there with the educated and the Basmaci. He asked me



that I distribute his decisions in the name of our society to Khiva, Kazakistan, Ferghana, the Turkmen, and have them attend his proposed congress at Eastern Bukhara. In response, I indicated it was impossible for representatives to be called, and reminded him that it would be most appropriate for him to cross-over to Afghanistan. He did not like this. I could not leave the next day, because the General had indicated he wished to speak with me once more. We called two or three of our inner circle friends to the home of Mirza Muhittin Hakimbay. The General told us that he was probably going to join the Basmaci: "I still have a few more days. I am still thinking of what you told me; I am certain you are sincere in everything you told me. Let us not neglect the Burdalik path." Tears were streaming down his face. In his demeanor, he resembled a sportsman eager to join the competition, wearing the German made boots we had seen earlier. He spoke very sincerely, and expressed his thoughts openly. He believed that if he were to cross over to Afghanistan, he would be unable to join the Turkistan national struggle. He was determined to give his life for the liberation movement of this country. He indicated that General Xalilov was included in his organization in the Caucasus. He told us that we Turkistanis are unprepared, and will not be ready in the near future. It is necessary to do whatever that could be done in order to fight the Russians. He now felt himself at the motherland of the Turks, and wanted to lead the Turks of this land to the field of competition. I then saw that this person was a great [romantic] idealist who had not been tested with life and events, and that he had not read even the European publications of Russian and Western European origin on the geography and statistics on Turkistan. Without a doubt, this person had planned what he was to do in Turkistan only in the days he was in Bukhara. The greatest influences on him for that decision was definitely the fact that he was not allowed speaking with General Cemal and the threats slung at him by the Councilor Officer Jurinev.

### *Sitare Mah-I Hassa and my talk with Feyzullah—*

I was going to leave Bukhara in the morning. I had requested a horse from Feyzullah Hoca. He sent me word asking me to be at the Emir's Sirare Mah-I Hassa Palace at Nine in the morning. It is one of the new palaces of the Emir. Feyzullah Hoca arrived there shortly after me. I did not like the two horses allocated to me by the Minister of Finance Nasir Hekimoglu. I indicated that I was not taking a travel companion or guide that I would be travelling alone, and the horse needed to be not showy but a sturdy one. They brought out a black and another, white horse that remained in the stables of the Emir. The white one was a tad smaller was said to be a good runner and easy amble. Even though the black one was also an easy ambler, he was showier. I elected to have the white one, and asked that Arifov send the black one to Samarkand via the train.

After the horse matter was settled, Feyzullah invited me in. There, we had talks which led me to make definite decisions in Turkistan. Feyzullah Hoca asked: "what is General Enver is doing here? I wish to know what he spoke with you." I told him that the General was prevaricating between going to Afghanistan and returning to Berlin. Feyzullah Hoca stated: "when I was in Moscow, I saw Stalin again, he mentioned you. When I had seen him in March, he was eating fire. Now, if you were to return, they will accept you with honor; your choice." I told him: "for me, there is no return. Perhaps I will even go to foreign countries." His response was: "if you and Enver were to join the Basmaci, we will fight you openly. We will fire those suspicious individuals who are following you. Besides, the Russians desire me to fire Arif from War Ministry for a long time. You need to know all that. Perhaps we will not speak again after this. We will definitely act harshly. However, Sultanov will maintain his post; we can have means of communication through him." He began crying. He must have heard that General Enver was seriously considering crossing over to the Basmaci, and noted that I was reluctant to tell him that, he became aware of the deep chasm opening up between us, and that he was in a position to fight against his old friends in collaboration with the Russians and he was horrified of this outcome. More than likely, his teardrops were caused by that. When I saw him crying, my eyes inexorably swelled with tears.

After leaving the palace, I went to the Xargos village vineyard where we lived previously. I had left behind three Baskurt soldiers there. Jointly, under the knowledge of Sultanov, we had buried an important amount of dynamite under the fire pit of the cauldron used to boil molasses. There was also quite a bit of weaponry in the building inside the vineyard. I had called Arifov from the city; he arrived without delay. I transferred the weapons and these three soldiers to him. They had intended to send these three soldiers, who had been infected with malaria, to Samarkand, if necessary. These were soldiers I liked very much. They had arrived from Baskurdistan, looking for me. I stayed there that night; we poured out our hearts and cried. There was the possibility of not seeing them again. Arifov gave me another horse, against the possibility of the white horse being too showy. He made preparations to send this white horse to Samarkand. The horse they just provided was also black, and not at all eye-catching. But, it was a strong and good running one. When I mounted my horse on my way to Samarkand via Ucduvan on 8 November, I embraced my three soldiers who did not wish to be separated from me and we cried. Since Mirza Abdulkadir had joined the Basmaci with all his policemen, Russian military detachments were spread all across the land. In order not to fall into their hands, I galloped toward north of Zarafsan River. When I arrived in the vicinity of Vabkent, I heard that the bridge over Zarafsan was now guarded by Russian soldiers. I could not turn back, because the roads to Kermine were also occupied by Russian soldiers. The water levels were high, due to the rains. I let my horse into the waters of Zarafsan a few kilometers lower than the bridge at Ucduvan. The horse turned out to be really strong. He carried me across the river and deposited me to a sandy shore after floating across the current for a distance of half a kilometer. Of course, what I did was foolish. I entered the vineyard of an

Ozbek to dry my clothes and my heybe [saddlebags]. They gave me food. The head of the household asked me” “did you run into a calamity, why did you throw yourself into the rising waters?” I told him that I did not want to travel to Ucduvan Bridge in order to travel to Vabkend, and did not realize the waters were running so swiftly. I was able to continue on my way only in the afternoon. This was the homeland of Sadreddin Ayni, a leading intellectual of Bukhara, who later became the head of the Tajikistan Academy of Sciences. He was there, but I did not stop to see him. One of the leaders of the Naksibendi tarikat, Abdulmelik was also born in this township. Several other scholars also emerged from there. It was not the time to inspect the old ruins; I ran straight to a place known as Kalkan Ata. I spent the night there. From there, I arrived at Aferinkend, which was one of the centers of the Sogds before Islam. I was able to arrive in Samarkand in two days. A few days later the black and white horses given me by Feyzullah arrived in Samarkand by a friend via the train. I used these black and white horses to run errands but not in fighting. One of my soldiers from Xargos arrived in Samarkand. I tasked him to care for these horses in Samarkand. I thought that these horses might be of use to me some day. Later on they saved my life several times. After that trip to Bukhara, I never saw General Enver, Hacı Sami, Feyzullah Hoca, Abdulhamid Arifov, and Sultanov, others or the city of Bukhara again. Later on, I always regarded the day of 8 November a day of crying. That day constituted a turning point for me. On that day, it became apparent that I had to leave my homeland under Russian administration for foreign countries.

### *General Enver’s joining the Basmaci—*

Ten days after leaving Bukhara, I received a message from General Enver via a man sent by train. He had repeated the words he was made to memorize: “I decided to cross over to Eastern Bukhara. If we win, we will be gazi [victorious]; if we lose we will be martyred. Let the Turkmen at Burdalik not wait for us any longer.” The General’s aide-de-camp, who survived all the fighting and returned to Istanbul, published his memoirs in the newspaper *Vakit*. He wrote in the issue dated 25 November 1923: “The General stated, as he was leaving Bukhara: ‘It is necessary to struggle for Turkistan. If you are afraid of death that is rightfully yours, you will live like a dog. We will then be condemned both by our past as well as our future. If we risk death, we can provide freedom for the future generations.’” In addition, Muhittin Bey stated that the General was planning to establish a Turkistan state with Samarkand as the capital. He also wrote good things about my talks with the General in the same issue. I read them after arriving in Türkiye: “one of the strong faces of the Turk in the East is manifested as Zeki Velidi. He is the author of *Türk Tatar History*, and his actions are as wide and sincere as his knowledge. Zeki Velidi was encouraged by the Russian Revolution, believed that it would usher in recovery and abundance; however, he did not find what he was searching. After speaking with General Enver, and understanding the Bolshevik maneuvers, Zeki Velidi found it logical to disappear once again. We first

encountered him at the early stages of his fight in Moscow when we had arrived with General Halil. Our second encounter was in Bukhara where we stayed for twenty three days. Zeki Velidi was working under various outfits in order to wake the Eastern movement with the faith and energy of a saint. Zeki Velidi spoke with the General Enver, provided information on the results he had obtained and their profile, and left once again toward the direction of the Turkmen.”

Upon his return, Muhittin Bey wrote a lengthy report on the adventures of General Enver, and gave a copy to Mehmet Kazim Bey who had travelled in Turkistan. He had lauded him and me. He had stated that: “I wish the General had crossed over to Afghanistan as suggested by Zeki Velidi Bey. He would have been able to do a lot of good. He did not, followed the advice of Hacı Sami.” On his part, Hacı Sami, after his initiatives met with failure and he had crossed over to Afghanistan, told the Turkish Ambassador General Fahrettin: “Zeki Velidi showed the political circumstances as dark in Turkistan.” This was told me by General Fahrettin himself when I saw him in his waterside manor in Cengelkoy. In his letter dated 11 November, addressed to Osman Hoca, General Enver stated that he was inclined to cross over to Afghanistan after meeting with the Basmaci. That means, he had not completely abandoned my idea.

As soon as we received the news that the General joined the Basmaci, the members of the National Unity Committee met at a location called Kan-I Gul, North of Samarkand, and decided to support the General, for all secret members everywhere to come out into the open and join the Basmaci, and attend the congress proposed by the General in Eastern Bukhara. I; Naci, the poet of Samarkand; and Sabir Bey of the Turkish Officers, were going to head the delegation. We sent a man to let the General know of our decisions. The same man was going to let the Basmaci Cebbar Bey of our impending arrival. Less than ten days later, we had learned from our friends who were employed in the Samarkand provincial administration of the General’s contacts with the Eastern Bukhara Basmaci and that he was received with suspicion.

### *Joining the Basmaci and our first firefight with the Reds—*

Under those circumstances, our going to the Eastern Bukhara Basmaci became a necessity. I was advised to remain with Cebbar Korbasi at the Sehrisebz Province to manage the affairs. On 20 November, I, Naci and Sabir Bey arrived at the camp of Samarkand Basmaci Behram Bey at the Bahrin (Barin) named village. It was my first visit to a Basmaci camp. I left the horses that arrived from Bukhara with my wife. Behram Bey gave me a mare. Our intent was to leave for Sehrisebz in the morning, and that night, with the members of the Society who arrived from Samarkand, we became the guests of Behram Bey. In the Samarkand Province there were three Basmaci groups: Behram’s, Acil Bey and Qaraqul Bey in the vicinity of Kette Korgan. Behram Bey was a Tajik in origin. Despite the fact that according to Ozbek traditions a Tajik could not be

a Bey, he had chosen that epithet. The villages in the vicinity of Samarkand speaking Farisi had become mostly Farisi later on. For example, the Barin village was in origin Mongolian, and Behram Bey was one of them. Because of that, in Samarkand there is no Turk-Tajik distinction. Even those who are Tajik speak Uzbek. Behram Bey knew about politics. Acil Bey was from a village East of Samarkand. He was a Nayman, had a large body, an imposing man. We did not see him in this instance. But, he, too, sent his men to the meeting gathering at Behram Bey's camp. Both Korbasi had perhaps three hundred fighters each. On Monday 21 November we were climbing the Taht-I Karaca named mountain South of Samarkand, accompanied by twenty-five fighters detached by Behram Bey, following the road. It was snowing; a strong blizzard. When we reached the pass crossing the Sehrisebz side of the mountain, the fat mare I was riding was tired. Since we did not have a spare horse, I began wondering how I was going to complete the journey. Suddenly, the Russians appeared in front of us. Because of the snowstorm, they did not immediately see us. We had a brief standoff. The Red commander was in front. The young Behram, Sabir Efendi and I were in front of our formation. We fought sword-to-sword. The Red commander had penetrated our ranks and his head was wounded possibly by the sword of Sabir Efendi. The Red commander was attacking me. But he could not do anything else but wound the head of my tired mare, and threw himself down the chasm. We started fighting the remaining Reds with rifles. They left their commander and ran away. Our fighters were firing at the Red commander from above who was in the chasm. I gave my tired mare that was wounded in the head to the fighters to lead her away, and mounted the horse of the Red commander. It was a small but fiery good horse. Two of the fleeing Reds were shot. We did not suffer any wounded. The Reds ran away, throwing away their baggage. A lot of ammunition fell into our hands. We reached the village of Karasu village near Sehrisebz. I thus inherited the Red commander's horse, with his saddlebags and the sword attached to the saddle. It transpired that the saddlebags contained all the documents of the Red commander, private letters, and the letters of the other commanders written to their families and friends. That Red unit belonged to the formations in the Sirabad region where General Enver was. They were sent here in order to collect information on the conditions of Samarkand. We read their reports and thus received full information on the movements of General Enver and his officers in addition to the numbers of the Russian soldiers and their equipment. This was a gift granted to us by God. We could not have obtained this information even if we were right next to General Enver.

### *Birdhavn-I Xutteli—*

Perhaps a month later, we learned that the horse I inherited from the Red commander was confiscated from a newlywed groom at Kulab. This horse was of the lineage described in histories, in the poems of Farruhi and others as well as in the travelogue of Marco Polo, named as Xuttal horses (Esb-I Xutteli). These are small but very powerful

and durable. They will run among the boulders to catch partridges, running to the left and the right of the road, and endure despite increasing the distance to one hundred kilometers whereas the other horses could cover only forty. The only drawback was they are extremely headstrong. I did not sleep all night at Karasu, but read all the war-spoil writings. Captain Sabir Efendi was most happy about all this.

### *Poet Raci—*

While I was occupied with all this business, my friend Raci was sitting in a corner moaning and stating that he had become ill. The next morning he begged us to let him go to his relatives at the city of Kitab. It became apparent that this Tajik was become deathly afraid of the events along the way, and had no strength to continue. He was telling me: "I will rest for one day, and then I will join you at Cebbar Korbasi." All those were lies. I told him: "all right; if you were scared that much, take a day or two to recover," because, no good would come of him. He must have died long since. Even if he has not, since he ran away from us, and mentioned in my memoirs, Bolsheviks will not punish him. Fahreddin Raci was a friend of poet Vasli of Samarkand and a young friend of Hoca Behbudi. He was a Tajik who liked Turkism. His father, Mirza Hadi, who had passed away at the time of my birth, was also a poet. Raci had published his poems in 1913 in Farsi in Samarkand. Mirza Hadi also had translated Indian tales into Turkish. Our friend Raci could not withstand the fight we had with the Reds that lasted for fifteen minutes, became ill, and ran away from us. He did not go to Cebbar Korbasi either. He became a masterpiece of cowardice and became the subject of ridicule. No matter, he will return to us, or will be brought back.

### *Cebbar Korbasi—*

We arrived in the village of Tal Kislak, in the presence of Cebbar Korbasi, on 23 November. He was a very brave person and the head of Uzbek troops. After we stayed there for a few days, several representatives arrived from Eastern Bukhara belonging to the Uzbek tribe of Lakay (Ilaki) under the leadership of Ibrahim Bey. They were intending to conduct propaganda in order to collect all the Uzbek Basmaci under the command of Ibrahim Bey, in the name of the Emir. They did not know us. They told us that someone who went by the name of General Enver was under arrest by them. I had earlier related that how a person from them recognized me from the events that took place in 1914 when I was with them in the high pastures. The arrest of the General was a scandal for us. These Lakays were going to visit Molla Kahar, who was a Basmaci chief operating in the vicinity of Bukhara. I advised them to return home in short order instead of spending time here and release the General who was under arrest in the hands of Ibrahim Lakay. I told them that we would attend to the business with Molla Kahhar. They returned home.

My intention in arriving here from Samarkand was to join Cebbar Bey operating around the cities of Guzar-Sehrisebz-Karsi, and to contact the officers whom I



had appointed through War Minister Abdulhamit Arifoglu. If General Enver began to chase the Russians out of Eastern Bukhara, the objective was to join the General with the aid of the officers in the named cities, to cut-off the lines of communication of the Russians, and to obtain their arms and ammunition. From there, we would contact Nurata region, and from there, Khiva. I had already contacted the garrison commander Suyundukov in Sehrisebz, who was an officer of the Baskurt Army. The troops in Karshi were also under his influence. With the thirty or so Turkish officers accompanying the General, and my men, we would have been able to take over the Sehrisebz-Karsi region of Bukhara. Osman Hoca was the President of Eastern Bukhara. We would have blown the Amudarya-Zarafshan River Bridge with the dynamite we had collected in Bukhara. As a result, all of Bukhara government would have joined us. On the other hand, the men of the Emir and the energetic Lakays having acted in the entirely reverse direction and their imprisoning General Enver caused all those plans to account for naught. Since the General was imprisoned, Sabir Efendi did not wish to stay with me any longer. He wished to return to the Basmaci in Samarkand. The organization of Cebbar was weak. Since it was heard that the garrison officers in Sehrisebz were in contact with the Basmaci, they wished to join the Basmaci immediately. Suyunduk was sending his friends to a place called Cim Kurgan; I was speaking with them and sending them back to Sehrisebz. I told them the circumstances. They, too, had heard of General Enver's imprisonment from the Russian sources. I was telling them to be patient, and that we would tell them what to do when the right time arrived. Sometimes, I would mount the chestnut horse and go to Karsi. There, there was an individual named Omer Hoca. They were originally from Baskurt Devletsah Isan family. Men would arrive from Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara to speak with me. We thus established contact. After the affairs of Osman Hoca, and Ali Riza Bey were disrupted in Dusanbe, who intended to join General Enver, Danyal Bey, Abdurresul of Tashkent, Abdullah Recebi who was a youth of Bukhara, arrived from Baysun and joined in with Cebbar Bey. Danyal Bey was a Bey of Daghestan. He had served in the Azerbaijan Army, then arrived in Bukhara and endeavored to establish the Bukharan Army along with the Turkish Officers. He was energetic. Abdurresul who had entered the service of Bukhara was from Tashkent. But, he was not doing anything else but fighting his friends because of boys. Abdullah Recebi was a circumciser from north of Bukhara. He was an honorable man. Later he was part of General Enver's entourage. After arriving in Turkiye, in 1945 he published his own memoirs under the title of *Turkistan Milli Hareketleri*. He was a very timid person. The Russians would arrive and bombard us with their artillery in Talkislak and other places. He would enter the fray and fight stating Cebbar's village was ruined. Abdullah Recebi would not leave my side. The Russian artillery shells were bad, and they would not explode when they fell on soft ground. Abdullah Recebi would search for soft ground when he was preparing to fight. But, he would not pick-up a rifle and he would not fire. He was a complete medrese student and a molla. In addition there was a high level administrator of the Emir, an Ozbek Bey by the name of Evliyaqul Toksaba. I surmise he was from the Qavcin Branch. He did not exude confidence.

Individuals who were unhappy with the Soviets arrived regularly. Toqsaba's talks with them was not one sided. However, the fighters under the command of Cebbar and Danyal Beys were not bandits, but youths who were the sons of individuals living in comfortable circumstances. Sometimes, I would visit their homes in the near and far villages. I would especially search the locations mentioned in Temur history. Later, I would correct the large scale Russian General Staff maps which they called dvuxverstayna, where two kilometers were represented by an inch.

## *Malaria and Shamanism—*

I became ill with a severe case of malaria. I had it since Bukhara. Abdulhamid Arifov, a member of the government, had brought quinine. That was negatively affecting my ears. One day I was told: "nearby, in the village of Aq-car, there is a very experienced Baxsi, meaning shaman. Let us have him treat you." I was forced to agree. They sent word to the Baxsi. We went to his village. It turned out, they were from the Karluks. He agreed to prepare for the ceremony. We went back the evening of the second day. A large fire was lit inside an Ozbek tent. He appeared to be forty years old, his beard jet-black, sturdy-built, he sat down with us and had tea as we spoke just like a normal human being. He then formed a circle with his friends, beating the dungur named drum, began singing samanistic songs and twirling [around his vertical axis]. Others were twirling as well. When this ceremony stretched out time-wise, the Baxsi came to me and stated: "you do not believe us; thus the spirits are not arriving." I responded with: "please do not stop, I will believe." They twirled some more. They played, sang. Finally, one of them reached ecstasy. He was foaming white in the mouth, lost consciousness. They laid him down to a side. After several others also reached ecstasy in a similar manner, the Baxsi himself reached ecstasy. There was an iron spade in the fire. He inserted a wooden shaft into it, and lifted up from the fire. The wooden shaft caught fire. He filled his mouth with water and sprayed it onto the spade. The water droplets bouncing off were bouncing off my face, burning me. I was told: "do not be afraid, all is good." Finally the Baxsi took that burning spade into his mouth between his teeth. He circled me several times in that position, and threw the spade back into the fire. Meanwhile questions were being directed at the Baxsi from every direction. He stated that I would recover. He was asked if the Emir was going to succeed. He did not respond in the positive. He was asked some political questions. Finally he recovered. He told me that I would fully recover, not to take any medication. Even though he held the burning spade in his mouth, his black mustache was not even singed. I knew that the fire was not a fake from the hot water droplets bouncing off my face. Thus I had witnessed a true shamanistic ceremony. Even though I was also treated by another Baxsi called Bagucu when I was a child, he had not conducted a ceremony and I had not witnessed a similar miracles. After that, I did not take quinine and did not feel the malaria. He was considered a true Baxsi and not a fraudster. He did not accept a fee or presents. My having been through a shaman ceremony caused

the local Ozbeks to grow more sincere with me; they endowed me with great respect and referenced me as a molla. Cebbar Bey one day invited me to introduce me to forty prominent Ozbeks. They were not supporters of the Emir. We had very enjoyable talks with them. I stayed with Cebbar a little over a month.

## *Accrual of 28 December decisions and the Baskurt Officers—*

The Central Committee of our Society was to meet in the city of Guzar on 28 December. I borrowed one man from Cebbar Bey, and went there. I stayed with Mustafa Qavucin, whom I knew from 1914. Our men arriving from Bukhara had already performed their tasks by contacting Han Cuneyd in Khiva as they were sent by the General while he was in Bukhara. They had become depressed when they learned what happened to the General in Bukhara; but I calmed them down. I sent them there since I expected the General to be freed soon. I indicated that the movement was going to be expanded in three months. I also sent the Cildikoy horse that I acquired as a war trophy from the Russian Officer to the General so that he could return it to the rightful owner.

At the Guzar meeting, the Central Committee of our Society accepted the most important decisions. Meanwhile, an application was made to Kabul via the Afghanistan Ambassador in Bukhara to expedite the General Enver's conditions. All that was going to be speeded and all the official troops in Bukhara, Kermine, Sehrisebz, Qarshi and individual members were going to join the Basmaci in three months, approximately on 23 March. In the intervening period, the Basmaci will prepare to receive them.

A few days after our Guzar meeting we learned the freedom of General Enver by order of the Bukhara Emir to the Lakays and the intervention of the Afghan Government. Also, letters from the General arrived. A little later, the General sent me Captain Halil Bey to me from his entourage. He believed that he was going to handle Eastern Bukhara himself. He was suggesting that I manage the operations in the direction of Zarafshan. I asked that my horses in Samarkand be sent to Kette-Kurgan, with their soldiers, to Qarakul Bey. I also journeyed in that direction. I spoke with Major Hudayarov, who was maintaining my contact with Major Suyunduk in Sherisebz, at our regular meeting place Cim-Kurgan village and told him of our decisions. I also asked him to accompany us. A week later, Hudayarov, an Uzbek fighter from the Qavcin Branch reporting to Cebbar Bey and I met at a place called Kaspi, and went to Qarakul Bey. With this, my preparations for 23 March began.

We established the kernel of a cavalry division which was to be under the command of a Tajik intellectual named Molla Hemrakul at north of Quytas, after we visited Nurata, Uxum, Faris and Quytas in the company of a fighter reporting to Qarakul Bey from Saray. Thus we toured Nurata, Cizzak, Samarkand, Kette-Kurgan and Guzar during January and February on horseback. I left my horses, which were tired, with my wife in Samarkand, and returned to Cebbar Bey. He was a good man. I did not believe Abdurresul and Evliyaqul Tokbey who were in his entourage. Since the soldiers

of Suyunduk were going to be in Russian military uniform, I thought that the local ignorant populations would become suspicious. For that reason, I arranged for them to cross-over to Qaraqul Bey. On 23 March, they and the War Minister Abdulhamid Arifov joined the uprising. Major Hudayarov, who visited me often, fell ill to malaria. He was going to be treated at a place called Kazan, but since he could not join his friends joining the uprising, he thought he would be caught by the Russians, and committed suicide. Hudayarov was an idealist, brave and exceedingly clean youth. His death was a great loss to Arifov and me as well as other friends. Abdulhamid did not stay with us, but went to join General Enver. About that time, Heybetullah Yanbuktin from the Baskurt Reserve Officer Corps joined us. We learned of the conditions in our homeland. Along with Suyunduk and his friends, we toured the Qershi desert, among the Ozbeks. Since the Ozbeks slaughtered the Karakul lambs during these months, there was plenty of meat everywhere. We were being invited to feasts at every village. From there, altogether we went to Qaraqul Bey. We were happy to be together. Now, we were going to fight the Russians in Bukhara territory. One early morning, Russians suddenly attacked the headquarters of Qaraqul Bey, located in the midst of mountains in Saray region. Quite a bit of fighting took place. My white horse was wounded lightly. Bullets touched my maps in my saddlebag and my spyglass, but I was not hurt. In the midst of this chaos, my old friend Abdulkadir Inan and other friends arrived from Kazakhstan in Samarkand and to Qarakul Bey. Abdulkadir (Fethulkadir) had been in central Kazakhstan, known as Arka, since he escaped Baskurdistan in 1920 and performing the tasks for our Society. Now his arrival was a big support for me. I also had Suyunduk and his friends, and my aide-de-camp Ibrahim Ishak from the Kermine Military School. He was going to arrive with his military school students to Nurata, all of us were going to establish our organization between Nurata and Cizzak region, in the villages named as Oxum-Faris. If the operations of General Enver progressed normally, we were going to take over the entire region of Zarafshan basin with Acil and Qarakul Beys. Our soldiers gained the affection and trust of the Ozbeks by fighting the attacking Russians. I journeyed to the partisans, to Acil Bey, operating in the Samarkand Province via the region known as Cam.

## *Representatives of General Enver—*

Upon arriving in Samarkand, two or three men arrived sent by General Enver. They had brought a long letter from the General to me and our Society. The General was issuing an order to send those two men to Kazakhstan, with soldiers accompanying them. However, we had learned from Abdulkadir Inan who had just arrived from Kazakhstan, and the Kazakhstan representatives present that it was impossible to create an uprising in Kazakhstan at this time. Because of that, the men thus sent by the General indicated they would stay with us and Acil Bey permanently, or until they received an order from the General. At the time, I had five headquarters in the Zarafshan basin. One was in Samarkand, in our home in the Matrid subdivision,

another north of Samarkand in Cambay, further north in Bidene, and one further south, in Yarkurgan and Kuytas. I and my wife would be found in one of them. We would call those who wished to talk with me to either Acil Bey or to Qarakul Bey. We established a new partisan organization between Cizzak and Nurata, in order to organize the Ozbeks, at places called Sintas and Muqru, under the administration of Hemraqul of the Tajiks. The military school at Bukhara and Kermine was going to arrive in Nurata and collaborate with Hemraqul. All of Samarkand was in the hands of the partisans subject to the Society. The Russians could not go to the villages, and their administration was unable to go outside the railroads. If General Enver was able to take over the territories of Baysun and Termiz, based on the mountains between Nurata and Cizzak, all the roads were going to be closed to the Russians in the Zarafshan basin. The former War Minister of Baskurdistan, Evhadi Ismurzin, who had earlier joined the Bukhara Government, now joined the movement. When I went elsewhere, Abdulkadir Inan would stay with Tanatar Bey, who was a friend of Qarakul Bay. This Tanatar, after our business soured, crossed over to Afghanistan and became the head of an important commercial enterprise. Last year, I saw one of those who crossed over with him, while I was visiting England. He was involved in karakul trade. Thus, the Basmaci movement had thrown the Turkistanis all over the world, and in time, they headed important businesses. I was happy to observe that.

## *Breakdown of Affairs in Samarkand—*

Meanwhile, we fought with the Reds who made sorties around the regions of Persembe, Cilek and Yeni Kurgan. We, I and my friend Abdulkadir, and the individuals sent by the General, were present at those fights. But, all these good initiatives were despoiled due to three important events:

1. First of all, the Emirists, by remaining in opposition to General Enver, remained idle for a month-and-a-half. In the meantime, the Russians were able to send their military units to Eastern Bukhara. He was unable to take Baysun and Sirabad.
2. This was the second event: The bigoted Emirist Basmaci around Bukhara had killed the Baskurt Officers who arrived to help them, by ruse and cruelly. Nureddin Agalik, who was a man of the Emir and also a Russian agent, had a big part in that. Heybetullah Suyukdukov and his friend, who had left Samarkand on 8 April, were killed at a place called Qarneb by an Emirist Basmaci by the name of Molla Mustak. Forty of our officers from the Bukhara War Academy, in accordance with the order given them in the name of our Society, on the way to Nurata region after joining with Ibrahim Ishak, were attacked by an Emirist Basmaci by the name of Molla Kahar. A portion, including three Baskurts, was killed; the remainder was taken prisoner. Later, those prisoners were cut

down. There cannot be a clearer example of how ignorance and bigotry are the worst enemies of our nation. May God never show another such example to our nation. They were all invited to a feast in the name of brotherhood, to put their weapons to a side, and were ambushed and killed. The twelve friends of Heybetullah were from Kargali, Islanlikoy, Taslikol, Bozdek near Ufa, and mentioned in the old histories as Tumen Tatar. All had studied in Russian military schools. The term Tumen dates back to the time of the Hans [rulers], meant division, belonging to the military strata. During the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, they had again participated in the Baskurt Revolts. Those who were killed were, from Yeni Kargali: Heybetullah Suyundukov, Colonel; Ismail Suyundukov, Captain; Osman Suyundukov, Captain; Ilyas Aciyev, Captain; Izzettin Yenikeev, Captain; Ismail Yenikeev, Captain. From Taslikol: Salahattin Sakayev; Osman Memliyev, Scribe. From Islamkoy: Yahyin. From Bozdek: Ilyas Memliyev, Major. They were officers of the Baskurt Reserve Regiment. They had joined the Bukhara Army, only to work toward the independence of Turkistan. Major Ibrahim Ishakol and three Baskurts in my entourage were from the vicinity of Sterlitamak, and they were brave as well as intellectuals. Between 1917 and 1920, I always had an aide-de-camp by my side. From among those who arrived from Baskurdistan, the following remained alive because they were in my entourage: Ibrahim Suyunduk, Islamgiray Aciyev, Eyyup Sakayev, Major Hundayarov, Captain Heybetullah Yambuktin, Ahmet Varis, and Evhadi Ismurzin. Three of them arrived in Turkiye, and two are still alive. They were youths like my own offspring, and were loyal to the national ideal. After our soldiers were deceived and were killed cruelly after their weapons were taken away from them by those whom they have known as their brothers, a lot of those arriving in Turkistan to render aid were cooled-off. None of those who arrived with us would let their weapons fall away from them.

3. The third important event was the Soviet-Polish War turning in favor of the Russians. As a result, the Russians were able to send massive numbers of soldiers to Turkistan region. Molla Kahar and Molla Mustak were journeying between Kermine and Qarsi. When they realized they could no longer stay there, they moved to Nurata. We discovered that calamity very late. Along with my friend Abdulkadir Inan and other friends, and the soldiers of Hemrakul, we arrived in Nurata on 2 May. The murderers Molla Kahhar and Molla Mustak were present. Ostensibly they did not know, and were apologizing. At a wide open field, hundreds of us had a meal. At that location, I told them: “the primary calamity facing our nation is ignorance and bigotry. The men you killed were going to teach you how to use weapons, bombs, place dynamite under railroad tracks, establish lines of communication, work mimeograph machines, hand presses and radios. Now which of those can you do all that?” All had hung their head, were listening. I did not continue beyond that, thinking if I did, we



might be facing another calamity. We collected Eyyub and Islam Gerey, whom they had not killed, and left with our entourage. At a place called Uxum, we wrote words on the wall indicating we were fighting for the independence of Turkistan. We returned to Samarkand on 9 May.

## Panislamist Ahund Yusuf of Azerbaijan

Several individuals arrived from General Enver with letters. They were Osman Cavus, and religious scholar of Azerbaijan and philosopher Ahund Yusuf Talip-zade and one of the Grandees of Kazaks living in Eastern Bukhara, Burkut Esikagabasi. "Esikagasi" was the Head of all Chamberlains of the Ruler. Over time, it lost importance and took a place within the hierarchy of the Eastern Bukhara civil service. He was from the Kulab or Cildikoy Kazaks. General Enver was sending Burkut Aga, a respected member of his branch to addresses he had obtained from me earlier in the company of a detailed letter. They were mostly to Kazaks of Kazakistan. The head of the three-man delegation was Ahund Yusuf Talipzade. He was in possession of a document containing the signature and seal of General Enver, giving him the authority to organize the uprising in the regions of Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva and Kazakistan. Ahund was presenting himself as the "Extraordinary Commissar" of General Enver to handle the businesses of Northern and Southern provinces with wide powers. However, since General Enver was a Grandee of Turkiye, his real representative was Osman Cavus, who was born either in Erzurum or Trabzon, a large man of the Efe type [see "Views of the Outlaw in Perspective: Zeybeks in the Turk lands" in H.B. Paksoy, *Lectures on Central Asia*, (Florence: Carrie/European University Institute, 2005)]. Ahund Talipzade had made it clear that Turkistan National Union, which was physically controlling all this territory, was obliged to render aid to him in all aspects. Now, there were two items to handle: 1. Assign additional representatives from the Society and help them travel into Northern provinces; 2. Assign additional representatives in order to guarantee their behavior, and to conduct a gathering of the Basmaci of the Samarkand and Bukhara and conduct a military parade, after their trip, to read a message from General Enver to them. Ahund Talipzade regarded those matters trivial. I indicated to him that travelling in Kazakistan was very difficult, it would be necessary for him to undertake the initiative of travel for a minimum of two to three months in order to find Kiyki Batir and Amancur Bahadir, heads of the Kipcak Branch, to deliver the General's letters and presents and to discover and organize the forces operating in the "Arqa" region. They were possibly imagining to journey with the same horses [which will be instantly recognizable] and with all

the presents. But it was necessary to do so under various guises and secretly. When I told the Ahund that the railroad North of Sirdarya basin is completely under the control of the Soviet Army, he thought that I was against this trip. On the other hand, there were many other barriers to his undertaking this business. He was unable to eat because his metallic and rubber teeth were broken. Because of that, he needed to stay in Samarkand secretly and have one of the White Russian dentists reconstruct them. Ahund was afraid of being caught; he was ordering us to steal one of those dentists, replete with all his machinery, and bring him to one of the villages. Somehow we brought a dentist to a village and had the Ahund examined. But when he realized that he could not have the bridges in his teeth mended without going to the city, he stated: “then, I will go to Kazakhstan without teeth.” Even here, it had become necessary for us to constantly move as a result of firefights with the Red soldiers. He was unable to find the peace he wished. At the time, I was living next to the Rostovsove train station, within the vineyards around the village known as Ismail Ata, whose old name was Xarteng. The burial site of the famed Islamic Scholar Ismail Buhari was also here. Talibzade was paying attention to how I was spending my spare time. There were three items that came to the fore: 1. I was following the activities of the Komintern in Moscow and Leningrad. Members of our Army remaining in Moscow were sending me the clippings of interesting articles appearing in newspapers and journals on that topic. I was continuing to learn the theory and history of the Komintern that I had started in Moscow. I especially regarded learning Marxism important, in parallel with the ideas of Friedrich Engels, whom I had not heard before. 2. I was spending time with the three volumes printed in Istanbul [*Divan-i Lugat-it Turk*], originally written by Kashgarli Mahmut during the 11<sup>th</sup> century. My friend Hasim Sayik of Bukhara had brought it from Azerbaijan and presented it to me. 3. My friend from Samarkand, Kadi Haydar, had presented me with a pocket-copy of *Mesnevi* by Celaleddin Rumi printed at the time of Sultan Mecid, with the admonition: “when you feel bored, you can read this.”

As a philosopher and writer, Ahund Yusuf Talibzade occupied an important place in the intellectual life of Azerbaijan. He had volumes published in Turkish and a Kur’an commentary containing liberal ideas. His knowledge of Russian was very limited; but his Arabic and Persian were excellent. He was a complete pan-Islamist and pan-Turkist. From that aspect, he was overly devoted to General Enver, even like a disciple. He did not like any criticism of the General. During some of our talks, he behaved as if he was testing me. One day he addressed me: “Celaleddin Rumi is fine; but is it appropriate for you to be dealing with Russian books right next to the burial site of Imam Buhari?” I told him: “Since we are in a struggle with Russia and communism, we are, along with our friends in Moscow, Tashkent and Samarkand, seriously learning their theories and politics. We have no other choice.” Talibzade, addressing the youths who had secretly arrived from Tashkent during those days, stated: “the days

of Bolshevizm are about to pass; God willing, it will not be necessary to deal much longer with their publications.” One day, Burkut Esikagabasi approached me during a quiet moment and said: “Do not tell everything to our chief, Ahund. He will relay them to the General in the form he likes and cause you to fall away.” I was very grateful for the words of the Esikagabasi, and felt the necessity to be extra careful when speaking. One day, we were in the village of Bidene. Some religious personages highly regarded by Acil Bey, who was the head of the troops located here, arrived. Ahund was a Shiite theologian. He liked to discourse on those topics. He told the new arrivals that it was necessary for them to fortify the national movement from a religious point of view, and that they needed to provide information from the Islamic politics. He looked to his right and his left as if to imply that the new arrivals had to accompany him in the namaz. On the other hand, those in the entourage of Acil Bey, some performed the namaz, and did not say a word about it to those who did not. After that event, I told the Ahund: “among the Samarkand province Ozbeks, the traditions of Timur are still in force. The Beys may choose not to consult the religious scholars and seyhs, even those they may regard highly. The Hoca and seyhs never think of requesting that from the Beys. The Bey may perform namaz once a week, for the noon prayers on Fridays. If we feel like it, I and the Baskurt Officers in my entourage will go and perform namaz. If we do not, nobody will call us for the purpose. Because of that, while you are in the entourage of Acil Bey, and other Samarkand Beys, it would be best for you to pay attention to this point.” Ahund Yusuf Talibzade, who made it his principle to politically uniting the Turks and other Islamic nations on the bases of Islam, did not like my words. Again, another day, my friend Kari Kamil had brought kimiz to the same village. And, it was plentiful. *Koroglu* and *Yusuf Ahmet* dastans was the soul of those discussions. Late in the afternoon, one Uzbek flute player played beautifully. On that occasion, I had recited a poem from Celaleddin Rumi: “the fire of love fell into the flute; and inside the drink, the fire of love’s exuberance.” Kari Kamil and some other friends, who knew Persian well, repeated that couplet in Uzbek. Our Ahund stated: “there is the flute, but no drink.” I responded with: “in this country of ours, kimiz is consumed during the summer months. Since you are an educated Islamic scholar, you not being satisfied with kimiz and recalling other drinks may not be suitable for this environment, because we do not prefer drink to kimiz.” Ahund stated: “do you not drink wine?” I said: “why should I not? But, leave us to a side; since you are the representative of General Enver, there may be those who would not see it fit for you to turn down kimiz in the high pastures and start asking for wine.” Kari Kamil added: “we know you as a religious scholar, a commentator.” And prevented wine being served to Ahund.

A few days later, we sent our Ahund in the direction of Sirdarya Kazak Beys who were members of our Society in the company of couple of Kazaks from Samarkand, plus three soldiers, in addition to Burkut Aga and Osman Cavus.

## *How we almost fell for Muhiddin Mahdum—*

Before the representatives of General Enver left for Kazakistan, we wanted to gather all the Basmaci leadership in Samarkand so that they could talk. About that time, Ahund was present in a firefight with the Russians and wanted to leave immediately, that such a meeting could be held later, and if they were late in getting underway, the Russians may prevent the trip altogether. During those days, members of the Baskurt Army who were with other Basmaci groups around Zarafsan, namely Evhadi Ismurzin, Hibetullah Yanbukti, Islam Aciyef, Ibrahim Suyunduk, Eyyub Saqay-Gerey, Ahmet Varis joined me. Thus, we were all together in the entourage of Acil Bey. Minhac and Sahveli named Baskurts were providing our contacts with Tashkent. There were ten of us, after others were killed. That number could have been raised to hundreds. However, how could we provide for them? Because of that, we were advising those who wished to join us to postpone their arrivals.

But, the problem was not being solved easily. The representative of Ekabir Mahdum of Samarkand and Mirza Abdulkadir of Bukhara to the TMB [Turkistan National Union] were not at all amenable to leaving the Basmaci uprising to the internal development of the movement. Both of these individuals were suffering from the souring of Bukhara Police Chief Muhiddin Mahdum's circumstances. They were insisting that I call out the Baskurt units in the Soviet Army, who were under my influence, to join the Basmaci forming a regular military unit in the Zarafsan basin and using that to take over Samarkand. They were telling me that if the events did not take a serious form in Zarafsan, Muhiddin Mahdum would surrender to the Soviets. Two Baskurt soldiers who were within the Soviet Army arrived in Samarkand and spoke with me and Evhadi Ismurzin at the house I had rented next to Kadi Haydar's vineyard. They told me that if I were to receive them personally, they were prepared to join the Basmaci in Fergana and Uratube in the company of two hundred fifty troops. Evhadi enumerated to them the ignorance of the Basmaci, which resulted in the death of Suyunduk and his friends, and the fact that fighting between the Poles and the Soviets was developing in favor of the Soviets resulting in massive Soviet deployment into Turkistan, and indicated it would be better for them to wait a little longer. Ekabir Mahdum of Samarkand and his friends wanted the inclusion of these troops in the uprising immediately, and wanted me to join the Halbuta Bek to meet their arrival. The two soldiers indicated that their friends in the barracks were as eager as themselves to join us. I repeated what Evhadi said that it was necessary for them to wait another fifteen to twenty days, and if General Enver was to move in the direction of Guzar, I would let them know, ordering them to return to their barracks. Kadi Haydar and his friends from Samarkand approved what we did, indicating Muhiddin Mahmud was not trustworthy and our thought process was logical. Kadi Haydar recited a poem from Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi admiring the precautions of a commander, praising me; he thus quieted Ekabir and his friends. Fifteen days had

not yet passed since those talks, our business began to sour. Muhiddin Mahdum was valued by some on our side, especially Evhadi, who knew him. Mahdum had trained regular police officers in his entourage and had sworn that he would fight until the last drop of his blood. When he crossed over to the Soviet side, his action negatively influenced the spirits of my friends. When the events began developing in that direction, Evhadi stated: "it is not advisable for the civilians to get mixed-up in military matters, especially from among the Tajiks. We ought to account for ourselves against the Red forces a couple of times with our extant forces. If we are unsuccessful, we can cross over to Afghanistan taking with us the General." He also saw that it was not feasible to trust the Samarkand Basmaci any more than the Bukhara Basmaci, and that it was not possible to enter into serious fighting in conjunction with them.

## *The Samarkand Basmaci—*

During those days, there were partisan groups established directly under the authority of the Society:

1. Acil Bek was from the Qostamgali branch of the Ozbeks, aged thirty-eight, very brave, completely moral, serious, dignified and with a sense of caution about him. He was able to follow the Russian and world politics from the newspapers. He had with him his nephew, a fiery youth, Devran Acil.
2. Behram Bey. He was from the Dihnev village near Samarkand, from a Mogol-Barin uruk who had become tajikified. He knew enough Russian so as to be able to read and write in it. Behram and Acil Bek both served Seyyid Ekrem Ture, the uncle of the Bukhara Emir, in Guzzar. Both of them formed and organized their partizans with the order of the Society. Acil Bey had fifteen-hundred fighters and one of the luminary intellectuals of the Samarkand Province, Member of the Central Committee of the Society, Kari Kamil in his entourage. Acil Bey also had influential youths with him by the name of Acil Toksaba and from the Township of Cilek, ulama descendent Kette Mahdum and Kucuk Mahdum. The second in command of Behram Bey was Hemrekul Bek from Pest Kislak. He was also honorable and brave as Acil Bey; he was also educated. He was a student of Muallim Sekuri of the Samarkand Cedids. He later arrived in Istanbul; now he is in Afghanistan. Behram Bey had with him a Samarkand intellectual by the name of Hemrakul Bek, Abdulhalim and Kari Mehmet as well as Esat Bey of Azerbaijan. Behram Bey had influence among the Tajiks.
3. South of Samarkand, in the Kette Korgan sancak, an adventurer of common lineage by the name of Karakul Bey held the mountaneous regions south of Zarafsan with five-hundred fighters. They were from the Karluk Branch. Most of the intellectuals arriving from Bukhara were joining him. In the Cam region, a man named Akbas Bek was reporting to Karakul Bey, representing



the Saray branch. He had approximately one hundred fighters. He had a brave countenance, and was moral. They were reporting to Behram Bey.

There was also Haci Abdulkadir of the Urgut Tajiks; he knew Russian and had served the Soviets, an open minded individual. With his friend Muallim Sekuri he had formed a secret ban, ambushed the Russian garrison there, took their weapons and ascended to the mountains. He had a command of the old Farsi and Turkish literature. But, since they were hesitant in their demeanor, they were not liked much.

As part of Acil Bey Partisans, in the Cizak sancak, there were two intellectual Basmaci by the names of Niyazi Bek and Turab Bek. These were young men who had obtained middle level education in Russian in Tashkent, became members of the Communist Party and had served as Director of the Police. Both of them were from the Ozbek urugh which had suffered much during the 1916 uprising. Mamur Bek was from the Qir-sadak uruk; later, arriving in Turkiye, he worked in the *Yeni Turkistan* journal which we established together. He worked in the railroad construction and passed away in 1929 at Tavsanli of Kutahya Province.

Turab Bek was from the old Ozbek Grandees. He had approximately two hundred fighters. The mountaneous region between Samarkand and Ferghana was in their hands. He took refuge in Iran, but the Soviets kidnapped him from Meshed and after a long torture, the Soviets had executed him in Tashkent. There are letters he had written me from Khorasan, which constitute a valuable record of the Turkistan national struggle history.

Also, there was Molla Hemrakul of the Tajiks, in the mountaneous regions of the Nurata. He had established his center in Qoytas. He was an educated person who understood poetry. He was reporting directly to me since I was the head of the Society. The communications with Sirdarya and Khiva, over Kizilkum, was conducted by individuals who were in his entourage. A letter written to Khiva would take five days to reach a recipient, and another five for the answer to reach us. He had organized that business well. Reporting to him in the Oxum region Tajiks were Molla Mehmet Yasar and an Ozbek of the Aktepe, Molla Karaqul. They were trusted individuals of those regions. This Molla Karaqul knew history. He would call the mountains of Qoytas where Hemrakul lived as Ergenequn, inspired from the Turk dastans. We would take the tired horses there, for them to recover. I journeyed there several times. The Ozbeks in that area are very committed to the bozkir traditions, and the Ozbek they spoke was a very clean one. Their women would not shun the presence of the men. The people's literature they knew was virgin, nobody came and collected them. After all these events, the Education Director of Tashkent found Erges Cumanbulbul, and had many dastans transcribed from his mouth; some of those were published.

The head of the Tajiks living on the Maca Mountains around the Zarafsan River, Estrar Han and Hamid Bek, were reporting to Acil Bey.

The mountains between Samarkand and Fergahana, in the region of Uratepe, were in the hands of an adventurer by the name of Halbuta Bek. He had approximately five hundred fighters. He was extraordinarily brave, an enemy of the Russians and a

patriot. His fighters and the population in general loved him. He had an adviser by the name of Mustafakul, who was very intelligent, cautious, and cognizant of the world. He also looked after the finances. I think they were from the Yuz Branch.

Russians called all the Basmaci brigands and thieves altogether. However, the leaders of the Samarkand Basmaci were all patriots, self-sacrificing and knowledgeable about the world.

## *Fights in Celek—*

The primary objective of all these partisans was to prevent the Russians from expanding into the provinces; if they did, then to ambush them and take their weapons and ammunition. Besides the fighting, they were to conduct public meetings in various places of the province, to unite the population in support of the uprising; if there were favorable developments in Eastern Bukhara, to prepare the dismantling of the railroads in Samarkand. During June, there were somewhat important battles in Yar-Qorgan, Yana-Qorgan and Carsamba. At a certain point, there was a battle at Qala-I Ziyaeddin. This was a place known as Debusiye during the time of the Arabs. During that battle, I had taken positions with my entourage in the cemetery. I was reading the headstones written in the Kufi script. My friend Abdulkadir (Fethulkadir) shouted “an arrow [bullet] touched me.” But, when we looked, it turned out he was wounded by a thorn. Later on, that event became famous as the subject of a joke. Abdulkadir took my wife Nefise to Sirdarya basine, then to the city of Turkistan (Yese). They were to remain there until they heard from us. At a certain point, we were in a place called Cambay, north of Samarkand. The Soviets had sent the Samarkand ulama in order to conduct peace talks with Acil Bey. The ulama stated: “the Soviets told us to go and talk; so we arrive. You will know what to do.” Acil Bey almost killed an imam who had too close a tie to the Soviets among them. Kadi Isa and Isan Hoca named ‘grand ulama of Samarkand’ was also in this group. They spoke on certain religious topics with us, and wanted to lead the Basmaci in performing the namaz; nobody followed them. They were sent by the Samarkand Governor, Kazak Siraziyev. From the same channel, the Russian Army Commanders let us know that they wanted to send an officer to speak with Acil Bey. Acil Bek, addressing me, stated: “if you wish, you go and talk.” Samarkand Committee Members thought it was dangerous for me to go. The talk was going to take place between Cilek and Gumuskend villages. Five individuals were going to arrive from each side. Intellectual Basmaci known as Mahdumlar were going to surround the environs as a precaution, but, if the Russians did not attack, they were not going to molest them. They provided Abdulhalim from Acil and Behram Bek group, who knew Russian, and another person. It was the Mahdums who were going to carry on the primary conversation. I was not going to talk with the Russian Officer, and behave as if I did not speak Russian. It was carried out as planned. The Officer advised that we stop the fighting and agree with the Soviets. The talks ended without a result. This was the location where the representatives of Temur and Emir Huseyin

held peace-talks in history. Those talks also did not yield a result; they were probably a test by the Russians. Russians observed that no results could be obtained by talking.

### *Meetings at Yaryaylak high pastures—*

Ahund Yusuf, Osman Cavus and Burkut Aga went as far as lower Sirdarya in Kazakistan, but since all directions were loaded with Russian soldiers, they returned without conducting any Business. They could not even make contact with Kiyki Batir and other Kazak Basmaci and without relaying the swords and other presents sent by General Enver. Ahund Yusuf addressed me: “you of course know this country better than us. As you see, we have now returned, there is nothing we can do there.” We have considered what we were going to do, after the battle that was waged near the village of Carsamba, in which the Baskurt soldiers participated. Now that the conditions in Poland were turning in favor of the Russians, and if the events left no other alternative to General Enver but to cross over to Afghanistan, what we were going to do. Evhadi Ismurzin led the discussions on how the Baskurts would join Mamur and Turab Beys in the direction of Maca then join with General Enver; I would be establishing my headquarters in Turkmenistan, and we all would rejoin in Afghanistan. But, before all, I would be attending the Conference in Tashkent.

We spoke with Kari Kamil and Acil Bey and decided, for all of us to take a deep breath in the high pastures, to call all the Samarkand Province Basmaci and even the Halbuta Bey in Uratepe, just before Ahund Yusuf and Osman Cavus were to return to the entourage of General Enver at the beginning of August. At the end of July, we invited all the Partisans from the Eastern portion of Samarkand to gather at a place called Bagdan. From there, all of us would journey to the headwaters of Sangzar River, at Yaryalak, mentioned often in the histories of Afsin, Temur and Babur. They made Stuffed Tandir on the high pastures, just below the snowy caps of Turkistan Maca Mountains. They dug deep pits in the ground to perform as tandir ovens. They covered the inner walls with stones, built large fires in them. Then, they placed slaughtered sheep and a horse, after stuffing their bellies with rice, onions, peppers et al, and stitched them closed, placing all into these hot ovens. They covered them with leaves, and after that, with earth. We were able to eat these very tasty dishes only on the second day for lunch. The same day, when we had this kebap, I, Ahund Yusuf and Evhadi, with a couple of Ozbeks, mounted our horses and visited a waterfall we could see from the distance, formed out of the water coming down from the snowy caps. The afternoon sun was giving the water many different colors. The beauty of nature made me understand the reasons how our ancestors worshipped the mountains and rivers, and offer sacrifices. I placed my head on the ground in awe and admiration. Ahund Yusuf stated: “if you are worshipping, you have become a believer.” A few more of the soldiers arrived from the tandir.

That night we spent time in a way I could never forget. The poet Vasli from Samarkand, and an author from Tashent, who I surmise is still alive, were also present.

All of the important Basmaci Chiefs were here. All of my friends who arrived from Baskurdistan were with me. An old man, Hekim Tore, who arrived from Kashgar, was reading a poem, said to be known in Eastern Bukhara, was echoing from the mountains: “We no longer have the energy to be slaves to our enemies/ let our possessions and life be sacrificed to freedom/ we have our leader, we have our faith/ the blood we shed will turn this land into a tulip field.”

The love of freedom of our people, our sincerity toward each other, the self confidence of the soldiers, the wealth of the nature, and the glorious past of these lands which we read in histories, had filled the bottle of our hearts.

### *The evening discussions of cultural matters—*

On our third day of our stay on Yaryaylak, we became the guests in the tents of a rich Ozbek by the name of Omer Haci. He was of the hereditary type of rich-man seen among the semi-nomadic Turk branches of Kazak, Kirgiz, Baskurt and Ozbeks. The people here had deep respect toward Omer Haci. His entire wealth was comprised of the number of herds he owned. His kimiz and food was for his people. He was said to be fond of aiding the people with his mind as well as his money. He brought the majority of his wealth here, thinking he could save most of it from the Soviets. Omer Haci showed us the items he had inherited from his ancestors: quite a few old written works, ancient rugs, ceremonial dresses of his grandfathers, saddle and tack, women’s dresses left behind from a woman who was said to be a revered lady, her jewelry, illuminated manuscripts belonging to her preserved in trunks, embroidered manuscript Kur’ans and repetitive prayers and the Hafiz and Nevai Divans [poetry collections]. Those representing the reactionaries are unable to establish a government of continuity. He was crying and stating: “if you were to go, the Reds will arrive and and kill me and plunder my treasury and destroy them and that makes me sad.” Among those manuscripts, there were the famed Ozbek ruler Ubeydullah Han’s collection of poems he wrote in Turkish, Farisi and Arabic, and the “Eyyuha l’veled” meaning “my children” which he wrote as his last will and testament. They also contained the notes attributed to his grandfather whose name was mentioned in the histories. Kari Kamil, who was also present at this occasion, indicated that the manuscript Kur’ans did not belong to the ancestors of Omer Haci, but were left as a loan to this family by others. Apparently, this Ozbek family, from the first half of the 16th century until now, was able to preserve, for the past four centuries, a lot of valuable treasures without losing them. However, just like the possessions of my family that were preserved for two or three centuries that were lost to the plunders of the Soviet Army, these were also going to be lost to them as well. One of the treasures in the hands of Omer Haci was a belt embroidered with gold and silver. There were writings on it which I cannot now recall. The leather on which those gold and silver writing were embossed, maintained its flexibility, and the poems written on it in Farisi were still readable. Today, in Europe,

it is possible to press such embroidery on leather. But, how did the Ozbeks, several centuries ago, manage to do that? This was a masterpiece of art on leather. If the Russians were to plunder this treasury, their first act would be to cut and confiscate the gold and silver of this belt and throw-away the beautiful art of the leather away. Omer Haci asked us to find a solution for the preservation of these treasures. Ahund Yusuf asked that the most important pieces to be given him, so that he could take them to the General, and perhaps they would be able to take them to Afghanistan. Omer Haci indicated that he was not in favor of dividing his collection; all needed to be preserved as a whole. He stated that: "in order to reach the General, you are going to cross the Russian invasion lines. Who can assert that all this will not be taken over the Russians? You are not secure." Then, addressing the Basmaci, he made them laugh by stating: "if their 'qurjin,' their saddlebags, were to fall on the ground, they do not have time to stop to recover it." I made a suggestion which seemed very strange in that environment: "You need to take this treasure to the museum in Samarkand." Ahund Yusuf objected: "Is it logical to take all this to the Russians by your hands, against the possibility of them taking it by force?" I responded: "The official museums and libraries in large cities maintain presence despite regime change. If our aims are successful, those museums will once again be the property of our nation." Acil Bey joined: "it is a demonstration of disbelief in our struggle not to surrender the treasures found in our homes." I then stated: "in that case, Omer Haci might preserve this treasure elsewhere than in his home." Omer Haci responded with: "if giving this treasure to the Samarkand Museum will harm the national movement, then there are no bases for that movement. He also stated that he could take them far away from his home, to an unknown place; but, that would not be a serious solution. Perhaps giving them all to a museum might be a good outcome. A month after those talks we heard that the Red Army had completely occupied the Sengzar River basin, and took away all that Omer Haci from his home and family, at the TNU Congress at Samarkand. And, I could not learn if he was able to donate at least some of his valuable treasures to the Museum. All these valuable properties in the hands of Omer Haci provided a good proof of the very treasured pieces in the hands of the "Bekzade" families.

That night, we did not sleep in the home of Omer Haci. We spent the night discussing literary issues, especially those of *Mesnevi* of Mewlana with Ahund Yusuf Talipzade and poet Vasli. Omer Haci, who could not dream of the poverty he was about to face in a matter of weeks, was listening to those discussions, sitting on his knees, and participated in them with all his heart. In truth, I had heavily berated Celaleddin Rumi, and seriously, and in doing so, I had placed pressure on the very delicate senses of Ahund Yusuf. Mevlana produced metaphorical, philosophical and Sufi origin writings. Therefore, it was not easy for anyone to understand them who did not know religious literature, even Jewish traditions, prophetic fables, Harut-Marut, Balam-Bagur parables, and the necessity of understanding Arabic literature deeply, as I did. It was absolutely necessary to know the Bayazit Bestami, Mansur Hallac and Ibrahim Ethem admonitions, biographies of the Sufis, the verses of the Kur'an, Arabic and Persian folklore, and especially the intrigues of the devil. Mewlana

Celaleddin Rumi, who knew this entire quite well, only touches upon a portion of those stories. We are not allowed to know who those referenced Sufis were, what are the beginnings and endings of the statements of the Prophet were from, which he relates only a few words, why were they stated and in what context, we do not know. Besides, he passes on to a second or even third story without completing the first one. The connections of all are within the culture of tasavvuf [Islamic mysticism]. In those talks, I concentrated in a single story related by Rumi: During the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries, an ulema [theologian] family administered Bukhara by the name of Sadr Cihan. Those Sadr Cihan were such scholars, who administered the city in a theocratic style much like Tibetan Dalai Lama or the Pope of Rome that they left behind volumes on the Central Asian and Western Asian law and theology. One of the young members of this Sadr Cihan was also very beautiful [handsome?]. The central commander of the city, the "Sahne," who was also the the engineer, the highest civil servant appointed, fell in love with his luminous Sadr Cihan. Gossip developed. When he, the Sahne, realized that his love resembled a rabbit embracing the neck of a lion, and represented such a danger, he left Bukhara with the fear that Sadr would kill him. He wandered around Khorasan and in Irak in the cities and villages for twelve years as a bum; but never forgot the Sadr Cihan he loved. Finally, he went back to Bukhara to see him one last time, regardless of what may happen, before he died. It transpired that Sadr also loved Sahne secretly, and he was thinking that he would forgive him, if he were to return. But, arriving in Bukhara, before he could offer himself to Sadr Cihan, he faced many events and barriers. His friends scared him. Rumi embellished the emotional pains Sahne experiences with different stories he had collected from all manner and directions, and made it into a novel containing a thousand couplets or more. Since the people of Bukhara knew all of this in detail, in the words of Rumi "all aged, women, and children, and everyone" were taking the side of love and considered the position of Sadr taking an opposing view as a cruel act of forbidding the love one may feel for another human being. Rumi joins the people in that respect. He details the ending of the story in a rather dramatic fashion, and praises the Bukharans for the excitement they exhibited in this love story. But, since I knew that that story reflected the famed love of men in Bukhara even during the tenth century, it awakened feelings of loathing in me. Rumi also told the story of a young man who fell in love with a girl, but unable to reach her for seven years. However, that story does not relay the excitement he described in the love of one man for another male. Turkistan always witnessed the struggles of two cultures against each other. The great historian and philosopher of the Islamic world in the 12th century, Ibn Qayyim al Cezvi had described at length how the love of men in Bagdat during the first centuries of Islam became a great social disease. Imam Malik Ibn Enes, founder of one of the four major Islamic sects, who rose in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, had strictly forbade the existence of youths whose beards did not yet grown among those listening to his lectures on the sayings of the Prophet. If such were among the audience without his permission, he would have them whipped. He did not even allow the children of the tradesmen who were dressed ostentatiously and embellished. Because, when such individuals were mixed in with the rest of the



audience listening to lessons from the geart master, they were causing the Bagdadis to lose their minds. Even another scholar who flourished after Malik indicated that a single beautiful youth such as that would instigate more mischief than seventy attractive and beautiful girls. That was also recorded by Ibn Qayyim. That type of excitement was definitely not of the platonic type.

In his poems, Alisir Navai speaks of beautiful youths who would powder their faces, wear their hair in braids; that he was prepared to stroke their throats and lips, and if necessary, kiss their feet; and that such individuals would “cause the people to discord by their ‘lines’ and their ‘ghubar.’” However, for Navai, who lived as a bachelor all his life all this is a matter of aesthetics. Another of the Herat authors of the time (Kemaleddin Huseyin) wrote books such as “Mecalis al Ussaq” showing even all of the old men and saints as addicted to love of the males. During the time of the Safavids, the youths were pictured as embellished as women, in a manner unsuitable for our times. Even the works such as “Mahmut ve Ayaz” and “Koroglu ve Ayvaz” were turned into novels to excite sexual feelings by some 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century poets. Under these circumstances, we can no longer reform and reconstitute the “beautiful human culture” of the Middle Ages that had helped us take great steps in development. We must leave aside these stories and ghazals in the works of the greats such as Rumi and Alisir Navai, and translate into clean Turkish the works that resonate with the moral and artistic values of our day and publish them. The Turkish that has a future is the Turkish of the Kazaks. The Chaghatay, which has adopted the idioms of the Arabs and the Persians, much like the Divan period of Ottoman literature, will fall by the wayside. Mirseref of Ferghana was an intellectual Officer. He asked me: “are you considering Mawlana, Cami and Navai immoral humans?” I responded: “God forbid. Only that the era in which they lived does no longer suit us. That era was for the Persian literature, “worshipping the beauty.” It was the same in miniature painting as well. In our present day, when a movie beauty appears, the statement is “exploded like a bomb.” In those days, that was also the case. One of the Herat authors, Sihabeddin Devletabadi, while relating an event of his own time, specified: “in the Samarkand Province, a beauty by the name of Mirza Hemdem. Sultan Huseyin Baykara, listening to what is said about him fell in love with him. Molla Cami went to Samarkand only to see him.” That is possible. Except, amongst us, it will not be necessary to keep men playing the women parts on the stage. In general, the tastes of the middle Ages are evaporating.

The same person, Mirseref, next day, asked: “When you relate some poems from Mewlana, Navai, Allahyar, they appear to be the words of contemporary philosophers. We had buried them, believing they were the personification of recidivism. How could that be?” I answered: “Sofi-Allahyar is a small and single dimensional man. What you stated about him is true. However, there are fragments in his poems that make his name. Except, it is necessary to know how to do that. The great philosophers that emerged from among the Turks, Mewlana-I Rumi, El-Biruni and Navai are multi-dimensional and very cultured. They knew how to make a statement according to their surroundings. Navai was definitely not a drunkard. However, much like Omer Hayyam, who was much like him, said so much about drinking. When El-Biruni stated:

‘those humans who believe they are the center of everything also believe that the skies revolve around the earth.’ In doing so, he must have definitely known the true movement of the earth. He was content relating the words of the old Greeks and the Indians. In order to prevent gossip among his contemporaries, he stated: “this is a problem of physics; I am an algebraist.” That means, he was also a diplomat. Celaleddin Rumi also knows much. Because of that he stated: ‘the place of divine inspiration is the ear of the spirit. What is divine inspiration? It is making a pronouncement from the deep emotions where it was secreted.’ That means, Tengri [God of the Turks. See HB Paksoy, «Tengri on Mars» *Entelequia. Revista Interdisciplinar*, 11, Spring, 2010] addressing the deep feelings of the Prophet, making him pronounce statements; however, he is representing the process as the people understand, as if it was done by Archangel Gabriel. He is relating the process as if the Phophet is perspiring and Gabriel is cooling him with his wings serving as a fan. Individuals with a high culture use words that would not alarm the people in his environment, to live in that environment, to be of benefit to that stratum. However, for example, you are taking an unnecessarily nervous position against the principles of the people, driving them away from yourself in disgust. Rumi had stated: ‘I only take the morrow from the Kur’an, and throw the bones to the dogs.’ But, Rumi is not feeding us with that morrow; by telling us the rumors and myths’ constituting the bones, presents himself as the owner of those.”

A few days after arriving in Samarkand, I noticed that Mirseref had related those talks to his friends. We sent those words to the Afghanistan Ambassador to Bukhara, Mirza Rahmetullah so that they will not be forgotten. A year later when I arrived in Kabul, I received them from Hasim Sayik who had replaced Mirza Rahmetullah. I stated that, we were going to talk about very beautiful topics in independent Turkistan.

A lot of beneficial business was conducted during the period of Samarkand Basmaci. Evhadi Ismurzin, who was in my entourage, Osman Terigulov, who was working in Khiva, and the Ozbek Mirseref were translating the military field manuals into Ozbek. A law-man from the Kazaks was working on the future constitution of Turkistan.

## *Letter written to Mustafa Cokayoglu—*

Molla Rahmetullah, an intellectual, a poet and writer, was sent to Kabul as the Bukhara representative. A man from his entourage brought very interesting letters from Abdulhamid Arifov, the former War Minister of Bukhara, who was at the time in Kabul, and from others. Abdulhamid was relating his trip to India and Citral, and explaining the world politics. In addition, he had explained that he had corresponded with the former head of the Khiva National Government, and that he was now in Paris. For us, these were lights arriving from the world of freedom. After reading them, I wrote letters to be sent to Cokayoglu in Paris, to be sent via Ahund Yusuf and Abdulhamid. Actually, Ahund Yusuf was able to reach the Afghan border after General Enver had died, and was able to send the letters on to Kabul. I was able to read

that letter, written on 27 July 1922, during December of 1923 after arriving in Paris borrowing it from Mustafa Cokayoglu. I wrote in that letter the events taking place in Samarkand Province, and the news I had received from Moscow. From that letter, the following needed to be transferred to my memoirs:

“If the Soviet Government is able to succeed in the war against the Poles, it appears they will be applying a new cultural policy toward the Moslems. I learned that from a friend who arrived in Samarkand from Moscow three days ago. They had called the following to Moscow: Ali Han Bukeyhan, Ahmet Baytursun, Nezir Turekulov from the Kazaks; Abdullah Ismeti, Salah Atnagulof, Manatof from the Baskurts; Mehmet Aga Sahtahtinski, Ali Ejder Saidzade, Celil Mehmet Kulizade from the Azeris; Ahmet Cevat, Nazim Hikmet from the Turkish Communists; Sultan Ahliyev, Nevsirvan Yavusev from the Tatars. Each was tasked with the duty of producing a grand work on their own people’s cultures and the formation of Communism or to translate them. An ‘Eastern University’ is established in Moscow. Sunitze and Broyda are at the head of it. Broyda is now an assistant to Stalin. Now you can realize what an error it was to support him as a friend and help send him to Khiva as the governor. This Broyda and Professor Polivanov, after coopting the old Russianist Sahtahtinski of Azerbaijan and Ahmet Cevat of Turkiye, are following the policy of designing a different alphabet to each of the Turk dialects and so to distance us from each other. Nezir Turekulov and his wife Hanife Turekulova are stating that if Latin alphabet is agreed upon, it should be a unified one for all Turk Branches. However, Broyda and Polivanov are following the policy of creating a different alphabet, phonetically, for each branch. The Latin alphabet will of course will be used as an intermediary in order to make the transition to the Russian alphabet. In Dagistan, for the Ossetian and Circassian languages, the Russian Cyrillic letters are already in use. And for the Altaian Tatars, the Fins and the Yakuts, the Latin alphabet is not weven in the running. It is Broyda and Polivanov who are advancing these ideas. Qubland [sic; *Qoblandi Batir*?] and others are now being printed in the Arabic alphabet; they will re-print them in the Latin alphabet in a few years. After that, of course it will be in Russian. They are already taking youths from Khiva, Bukhara, Ashkabad, Kokand and Taskent to Moscow, to be trained at the Eastern University. You must write articles on these matters in order to make these new cultural polices of the Russians known to the world. Apparently, after defeating us in the field of battle, they will turn to matter to the cultural front. In Tashkent a serious journal by the name of *Inqilab* [Revolution] began to be issued since February of this year under the administration of Nezir Turekulov and Hadi Feyzi. So far, five issues appeared. This is an initiative of Safarov. They wish to gain the Turkistan intellectuals, and by their hands crush those opposing the Soviet policies. In that journal, Haci Muin of Samarkand, Abdulhamid Colpan, Sadreddin Ayni, Polat Saliyef, Abdurrahman Sadi and others are publishing. Nezir is also writing under the name of Dervis. Nezir is speaking of ‘reviving the Culture of Turkistan Turks by the hand of the Soviets.’ He had taken the nom-de-plume of Dervis in order to refute the intellectuals who have joined our Basmaci and had taken on Ibrahim

Canuzakov. Your friend who was descended from Cengiz Han, Sencer Isfendiyarov, is attacking the policies of Alas-Orda and Validov. Abdurrahman Sadi keeps talking of a common Turk language, but Professor Polivanov immediately opposes him on the grounds that that is not scientific but only Pan-Turkistic in the same journal. Nezir Tuekulov, while presenting the Treaty between Soviet Russia and Turkiye on 16 March 1921, and Yusuf Akcura’s speech on 20 December 1921 in Ankara where he declared himself a friend of Russia and Poland, he also touches upon the Culture of the Islamic Society, attempting to show that Soviets are applying the appropriate policies toward the Easterners. However, Pavlovic, Broyda and Polivanov and their likes, are endeavoring not to use Azerbaijan dialect as the bases of Turkish literature. They are also using all available means to prevent the local nationalists who are experimenting with establishing a common language and literature, writing in Ozbek, Kazak, Turkmen and Tatar in Tashkent. Polivanov is writing that when the Latin alphabet is accepted, all of the hopes of a cultural union will be defeated. This is the foundation of the future Soviet policies. You must note all this from this point on.”

### *The days of Kurban Bayrami—*

We spent the days of the Kurban Bayrami, 4-5 August at Bidene with the relatives of Kari Kamil. At the mosque, the public speakers were speaking directly against the Russians. That was because, nobody could have dreamed of Russians would be able to send massive amounts of military force here in a matter of days. On the surface, all matters were in the hands of the Basmaci. However, since I was reflective, Kari Kamil was troubled. We had arrived in the Cambay village near Samarkand. A few individuals we have known from Tashkent arrived. Since all thought that the administration was going to pass into the hands of the Moslems soon, they were not afraid to visit us. One of our Beys organized the game of Kopkeri [“Rod & Bat;” later, in London, known as “Tipcat.” [http://aton.ttu.edu/TWO\\_ALTAIC\\_GAMES.asp](http://aton.ttu.edu/TWO_ALTAIC_GAMES.asp)] for his soldiers. The soldiers played it with such discipline that they created the impression that they were especially trained with Kopkeri. We had become acquainted with an Arab scholar in Samarkand. He, too, had arrived in Cambay. He recited poems in Arabic, praising the soldiers. Essentially, he recited couplets that were used to praise the soldiers of the Prophet attributing them to the Basmaci, and had them translated. Among them, I had liked the following: “the soldiers are standing on their horses, as if shrubs on rocks. This is not because their saddle tie-downs are tightened well, but because their will to fight is strong.” Some recited beautiful poems in Turkish. We had fun till the evening. There was also someone from Daghestan who arrived to see our soldiers in Bidene and Cambay. In sum, the military parade, and free talks, poems recited had made everyone proud. I had written my predictions on the fate of Turkistan and Turk Branches and the Moslems under the Soviet administration

and redevelopment at the hands of the Russians at length while we stayed at Bidene village. It was dated 23 July 1922, and I was going to send that writing to Turkiye, and in a different format, to the statesmen of Iran and Afghanistan. I later brought that writing to Iran, and sent it to Ankara via the Turkish Consulate. I am going to write more about this piece further down, which bore the heading “Social Revolution in the East or the future of Recidivism and the duties of Eastern Revolutionary Intellectuals.” I was not in the mind to send this writing to General Enver. Because of that I did not show it to Ahund Yusuf Talibzade who was in my entourage. This writing is now in the Archives of Turkish Republic Ministry of Foreign Relations. Ahund Yusuf and his friends went to General Enver with the addition of some men from our side via Maca and Karatekin. By the time they reached his environs, The General was already martyred. Since Ahund Yusuf was a Shi’ite, he took refuge among Sugnan Tajiks who were of the same sect, and remained with Haci Sami who took over from General Enver. He was demoralized with the death of the General, and the severity of the Russian prosecution, and killed his friend Abdurresul because of a woman; finally he threw himself into the River Penc with the intention of crossing over to Afghanistan, and drowned. May God have mercy on his soul.

The fine meetings on the banks of the Sengzar (in Turkish, Taslik) were marred when Acil Bey had another Ozbek adventurist Abdulmecid Bey killed by drowning, whom Acil Bey saw as his competitor. It had been earlier decided that Acil Bey was not going to execute anyone, including the Beys in the Zarafsan basin, and any member of the Society, without the approval of the Society Committee members. Those who were most distressed by this was I and Kari Kamil, because, if something happened to Acil Bey, it was Kari Kamil who was going to replace him. He was from Sengzar Ozbeks. While we were at Sengzar, it was decided to journey to Oratepe, to contact Halbuta Bey, the head of the national military units, to search for means of cooperating with him. We did that, by journeying to Zamin region with Mamur Bey and Turab Bey at night. We conferred and returned to the Bidene region with the soldiers.

### *Piece-of-Work by Ahund Yusuf—*

Earlier I had mentioned what the representative of Eastern Bukhara Kazaks, Burkut Esikagabasi Bey had told me in confidence that it was not acceptable to completely believe in Ahund, and not to tell him everything, that he might relay the wrong impression to General Enver. It became apparent that the warnings of Burkut Esikagabasi were very appropriate and sincere, after he and Ahund Yusuf left for Eastern Bukhara during 6-7 August. A day or two after they left, a letter arrived from General Enver via Baysun, written during the last week of July. In addition, there was a letter from my friend Mustafa Sahkuli. These letters distressed me, for the following reasons: in his letter of 28 April, which he had sent with Ahund Yusuf and Burkut

Esikagabasi, General Enver indicated that if there were unfavorable conditions and if the Russians were able to send soldiers from the Polish front to Turkistan, he advised that the Basmacis in the Samarkand and Ferghana provinces under the National Union Committee should prepare to enter into peace negotiations with the Russians on their own. He added that, he would be speaking on behalf of the Bukhara Khanate, if necessary. It was apparent that General Enver was taking precautions to prevent the pockets of weakness that might form when the Russian forces may be increased, causing the impression of failure by the Command structure on the Basmaci Front. In addition, Osman Cavus told me matters verbally which were not written in the letter. He asked us to determine the condition of the Soviets on the Western Front. He wanted to know if it was possible to determine how many troops they could send. Actually, our intelligence gathering in Tashkent and in Moscow was not bad. However, it was not possible to learn how many soldiers could be sent by the Russians and when was not a possibility. Our Committee met in Samarkand on 11 May. We discussed this issue. The conditions in Fargana were bad. Besides, some Basmaci had already begun their discussions with the Russians. Kursimet and his brother Nurmuhammed were thinking of stopping the war and crossing over to Afghanistan. We had decided that, if the conditions were to change in the Polish Front, and the Russians proceeded to send massive military formations, we needed to initiate discussions with the Soviets. Commanders Acil Bey and Behram Bey were also of that mind. Before Burkut Esikagabasi, Ahund Yusuf and Osman Cavus left for Kazakistan, when we noticed that the conditions were deteriorating, we had convened the Committee at Bidene, and made some decisions. In principle, it was decided to enter into discussions by way of intellectuals who held positions in the government at Moscow and Tashkent. Ahund Yusuf was also present in that meeting. The decision to start the negotiations immediately was not taken. However, Ahund Yusuf had informed General Enver that Zeki Velidi and the Central Committee had decided to make peace independently by sidelining General Enver. That was an act of an informer. It appeared that Burkut Esikagabasi had warned us that Ahund Yusuf could do just that. The General did not dwell on this fact in his letter, but Osman Hoca and Mustafa Sahkuli may have seen that it was just the act of an informer, to the person of General Enver. Mustafa Sahkuli related the negative influences of that act of informing after he arrived in Turkiye. I wonder if the General did not understand the fact that this famed theologian was a yes-man. Besides that, Ahund Yusuf had many other initiatives that did not agree with the views of our country.

### *Our intention of joining with General Enver via the Oratepe and Maca route—*

A day or two had passed since Ahund Yusuf and his friends began their journey back. Our friends who were involved in intelligence matters in Moscow and those who were members of the Tashkent Government had let us know that when the Russians were



successful in the Polish Front, they would be sending large scale and different types of Divisions and that some of the soldiers and their commanders must have already arrived in the Samarkand region. We had relayed all that information to General Enver in detail by the Maca route, the fact that we would be concentrating our forces primarily in Oratepe and Maca, and, if necessary, we would be joining the General via the Belcuvan and Karategin route, and again, if necessary, we would cross over to Afghanistan, and, finally, that some dissolution among the Fergana Basmaci was being observed. The second day after we received the information, we were about to embark on the Oratepe route as decided earlier. We were informed that two Red military units had entered the Sengzar plains at a place called Rabat, and laid military telephone lines where they crossed. They apparently entered that region knowing that the Samarkand Basmaci was in the region. We spent the night in a tiny Uzbek village. It transpired that the name of it was “Yenge Kent.” This was the ancestral home village of Afsin, who, as the commander of the Abbasid Islamic Armies, conquered Central Asia Minor. Toward midnight, news arrived that Russians sent large-scale military units Sengzar Boyu.

## *The Battle of Davul—*

The night of the day after we left the Sengzar basin, the Russians arrived, and learning that we had gone in the direction of Zamin, they moved toward Davul region. Since we learned that they were going to move toward Davul, we were able to take up positions earlier, and settled on both sides of the creek among the hillocks and the rocks in order to cut them off. Very severe fighting took place. When the Reds realized that the sides and the hillocks of the creek were occupied by the Basmaci, and their front was also blocked, they attempted to climb the rocks to reach the heights above our soldiers, to scare and clear us out. However, the rocks and hillocks were much further away from us; their rounds were not reaching us. I and my entourage and some Uzbek troops left our horses in the creek, and took up positions in the fields on the right bank being attacked by the Reds. That was because, if the Reds were able to climb out of the creek, this was where they were going to reach. In the afternoon, the Reds abandoned the effort to climb the higher hills, and attacked the side with all their might where we were. A Red Officer giving orders reached the top of the hill on his horse. Where we left our horses the creek was approached by the Reds. They were unable to see us; we were dropping them off their horses’ one at a time. Islam, who today is working in the nitrogen factory in Kutahya and his friend Eyyup, who were both in my entourage, were going ahead of me, ostensibly intending to shield me with their bodies. I was whispering to them: “The Russian rounds hitting you will also hit me, do not go further; if we are going to die, we will do so together.” About this time, the Officer giving commands from the back of his horse fell down by our rounds. His soldiers also ran away. They left their machinegun as well. We had no time to deal with the machinegun; the Red soldiers returned with two donkeys to retrieve

the body of the Red commander. We immediately went back to our horses taking advantage of that, climbed the hills right before the eyes of the Russians on the right side at speed, caught up with the Basmaci units behind us, ordered them to block the exit of the creek. Evhadi was exuberantly running about from one hilltop to the next on his foaming gray horse, giving commands personally. Reds took advantage of our movement and their forces finally reached the hilltop where their commander was killed. They started firing their machinegun very heavily toward us. However, the machinegun barrel having been overheated, as well as their rifle barrels, rounds were unable to reach us. I was telling our soldiers who took to hold the end of the creek “do not be afraid, the Red bullets will not reach us; you hold the end of the creek now.” Even though our numbers were much smaller, the Basmaci units that came up from behind were able to close the Red exit point. The Reds were unable to bring down their vehicles into this roadless creek. They kept fighting inside the Davul Creek to open the end we had closed. They suffered quite a bit of casualties and left large amount of war booty to the Basmaci.

Even though we were successful in that event, since we learned the arrival of large amounts of Soviet troops in the vicinity of Zamin and Oratepe, we decided not to undertake the Oratepe expedition. Besides, we learned from the documents we collected as war booty, these troops and their weapons were brought from the Western front. That meant, the conditions were getting serious. We rested for two days at a place called Bes Koruk in the Sengzar basin, then arrived at Usmet. That day, Soviet newspapers published in Tashkent arrived. They were awash with the news of the battle in Davul, and they were cussing us out. It turned out that the Red commander who was shot dead while giving orders on horseback was an important personage.

## *Talks at Usmet and Samarkand—*

With all the war booty we obtained at the battle of Davul, we ascended to a yayla [high elevation pasture] and spent the night. In the consultation talks, we decided to keep under our hands, with all our might, the region starting from Uratepe, Yaryaylak, and Usmet all the way to Samarkand, Sehrisebz and toward the Eastern mountains and Maca. We sent letters to Ahmet Han, Chief of the Maca, and to General Enver, by the speediest means, informing them of the Russian attacks from all directions, and all the decisions we made in relation. Later on we learned that those letters speedily reached those of Maca and General Enver. In the morning, we arrived on the Western side of the Turkistan Mountains, at a place called Usmet, which had plentiful grass and water. As soon as we arrived, we gathered the important leaders of the Zarafshan Basmaci and held another, wider consultative meeting. At night we galloped at speed to Samarkand, to a place on the banks of Ab-I Rahmet River, where the Ulugh Bey Observatory is located and spoke with the Society’s Central Committee Members at a vineyard. Some of our friends from Tashkent and Ferghana were also present there. It was decided that those friends who could not accompany the military units and

whose lives were also in danger, to depart for General Enver's location. Apart from that, we decided to defend the Samarkand Province resolutely. Men were also present from Halbuta Bey. He was intent on staying at his location what may come. Russians took advantage of the fact that the Basmaci were scattered due to the Kurban Bayrami celebrations, and attacked their various gatherings. After that, all the scattered units regrouped at Usmet on 10 August.

## *Usmet Battles—*

In compliance with the decisions made at the Samarkand Meeting, those educated friends whose help to Basmaci were either uncovered or were suspected by the Russians, joined the Basmaci either individually or as groups. Those were headed by the Police Chief of Samarkand, Abdullah Tulebayev; his Deputy, Abdussekur Hekimbayoglu; Kari Mahmut of Samarkand and Esat Efendi of Azerbaijan. The day they arrived was an eventful one. Russians attacked Usmet, where we had our headquarters, but were thrown back. Usmet is an old cultural center, recorded as Usmend in old Arabic geography works. Quite a few scholars have emerged from here, medreses have flourished; the location was very wealthy, had excellent agriculture and cash crop garden output. Their garden, sometimes at an elevation of one thousand five hundred meters above the sea level, overlooks the Zarafsan valley. On 11 August, while we were all in town, Russians attacked suddenly. Police Chief Tulebayev and his friends directly attacked the Russians. Tulebayev was wounded gravely. He had not yet fallen off of his horse; his friends were holding him. When he saw me right next to him, touching, he told me: "hold me." I did. Others did as well. He told us that the body of one of his friends was left to the Russians, and that Abdussekur did not retrieve him either, in a criticizing manner. I immediately whipped the shoulders of Abdussekur repeatedly, stating: "why did you leave your friend there, go immediately." Abdussekur went with his friends to look for the body of his friend; not long after, they brought the body of the young policemen back. When Tulebay saw the body of his youthful relative and friend, Tulebay, who was on his deathbed, jumped on his feet and stated: "thanks to God, his body was not left to the Russians, now I can die in peace. We are going, let our people live." A few minutes later he passed away, repeating *shahadet* [formula in Arabic, witnessing God]. Abdussekur later arrived in Turkiye, via Iran, in the company of Hacı Sami. He became a merchant. He also established a factory. Sometimes, he would joke: "I still feel the pain of the whipping you gave me." He missed those battles and state: "when you whipped me, I should have attacked the Russians at Usmet and be martyred; that would have been the best." He passed away in Eskisehir during 1944. God rest his soul. The battle of Usmet was a severe one and became the stuff of legend because it also caused the demise of many of our friends. The Russian forces, either Regiments or Battalions, while they were attacking the township, they found themselves in two creeks and were surrounded. Perhaps they attacked without a plan. They found themselves under siege. When we prevented

them from climbing the creek banks, with my friend Kari Kamil, Evhadi, Esat Efendi of Azerbaijan, and other members of our entourage, the Red soldiers left their horses in the creeks, climbing the precipices, entering the planted fields, and hiding in the hay-stacks. Acil Bey, Kari Kamil and Evhadi pulled their soldiers into the tree line of the vineyards in order not to stop the Reds from doing so. Russians were, amazingly, hid in that fashion; later, mounted soldiers were sent after them and all of them were eliminated. Only a very few remained alive. After that event, I heard that dastans were written on the occasion. Abdussekur had a German lady friend; they were partners in the factory business. That lady wrote the Usmet events in the fashion of a story, after learning of it from Abdussekur. It was written in an interesting manner. I could not learn if it was published or not.

## *Decisions taken at Usmet—*

The Davul battles, then journeying to Usmet in one night, from there to Samarkand, and return to Usmet, and the ensuing battle at Usmet caused us as well as our horses on which we did all that, were tired. We spent the night of that battle at Usmet. They completed the reading of the Kur'an for the martyrs who fell in the battles. In the morning, we left the soldiers in the village and with Acil Bey as well as the other Partisan chiefs, ascended to a very high vineyard. We had consultations and took the following emergency decisions:

1. I, along with three friends, would secretly cross the Russian lines and attend the National Union Congress that was already meeting in Tashkent.
2. Turab Bek, Mamur Bek and Evhadi Ismurzin were police Chiefs at Cizak and Zamin, and when their positive aid to the national movements was heard, they had joined the Basmaci. They and the Baskurt and Tatar officers were to cross over to Eastern Bukhara via Maca, to join General Enver. Acil Bey and the Basmaci answering to him were to withdraw from the Northern portions of Samarkand Province and go to Sehrisebz and Guzar in the South. They will also withdraw the units in Bukhara and Nurata gradually.
3. What is to be done after that will be decided by the Tashkent Congress, and after consultations with General Enver.

After our meeting ended at the high vineyard, the darkness of the future had descended on us. The soldiers and their horses were rested. We were going to disperse according to the decisions made. In order not to scare the entourage, I only told Evhadi: "if I do not find you with Halbuta, perhaps we will meet-up in Afghanistan." Acil Bey, Kari Kamil and others, my entourage, we all embraced each other. We could not hold back the tears welling in our eyes, and we all cried. It was not certain if we were to see each other again.

## *Zarafsah River seen from the apex of Akdag—*

Two others were going to journey to Tashkent with me. One was Major Minhac of Baskurdistan. He had worked for the success of the national autonomy with sincerity and self-sacrifice, gave his relatives and sons to the Army, and he had served in administrative duties in the Usergen Region where he was from. He had arrived in Samarkand at the beginning of this year, hoping he could help. I had suggested that he may need to return to his home. He did not wish to separate at all, and stated: "if we are going to die, let us do so together." My second friend was a nationalist Kazak, who had completed the Moscow Military School. We had bestowed upon him the nickname Kalkaman. He was extremely intelligent and had the soul of a poet. He had left his home in the Akmola Province in order to join the nationalist movement in the company of several nationalist youths, mounted on their own horses, arrived in Tashkent. He left them in the Abliq village in my home to work as laborers. He arrived in Samarkand, while waiting for me in Cambay village he caught typhoid disease, and later recovered from it. Now, he was convalescing and was going to journey with me to Tashkent. Kalkaman had two very fine pistols and sufficient amount of ammunition for them. I had him give one of those to Minhac. I had Minhac wear the ammunition belt as well. I also had a pistol and a rifle. I wore them once again. I told the two friends to load their pistols. Here, we had only two horses; my gray horse and the black horse we allocated to the Kazak Officer. Acil Bey, just before taking to the road, had ordered a member of his retinue by the name of Mustak, to give his horse to Minhac and follow him [Acil Bey] on foot. I did not like this Mustak at all. I regarded him as having a treacherous constitution. After Acil Bey left, he remained behind with his friends. He was stating that he was going to ride on the back of his friend but was not surrendering his horse to us. When we noticed that, regarding that he might have bad intentions, we withdrew up higher with our two horses. Keeping our pistols and rifle at the ready, we shouted down at him to bring the horse to us. Even though the sun was about to set, he did not. The Kazak Officer, even though he was still ill, stated: "give me the rifle, I will shoot him." I responded with: "it is not appropriate to start such a dangerous mission by killing a man. I would like to do such things without spilling the blood of a Turk. Let it be." I called back down to him: "In that case, we are not going to wait for your horse; get under way, go straight. Follow that road; do not take a turn to the right or the left, or you will die." Both of those men mounted their horses and began following the footpath that was visible. At one point, I noticed that they were attempting to turn right, I picked up my rifle and and fired at a rock on their way. I shouted: "do not leave the path." They immediately turned back onto the road and ran down the hill at speed. Mamur Niyazi Bey, who remained behind at Cizak and Sanzar region with his Partizans for a much longer period, after arriving in Istanbul via Afghanistan and Iran, told me the rest of the story. This Mustak was a Soviet agent tasked to kill me and Kari Kamil. A much more important Soviet agent

was right behind us that night, following in order to reach us. He thought he had seen my gray horse from the distance, surmised we turned back to the plains not having found our way through Aktav, and thinking he could not find our traces in the dark, he turned back. He wanted to spend the night near Usmet Township at a village, but he vomited blood and died. On the other hand, Mustak finally succeeded and killed Kari Kamil while he was performing namaz.

After we got away from Mustak and his friend, we went toward Turkistan Mountain Range, to the most Western corner called Koktepe of the Aktav Mountains overlooking Maca. This was a magnificent place. The sun was about to set. The sunset was sprawled in full splendor before our eyes. Below, various feeders and channels of the Zarafsah River were dazzling our eyes with many different colors. That river was known as Mani in the old days. Renaming it as Zarafsah during the Islamic period, meaning 'scatterer of gold,' may have been due to this extraordinary reflection on the mountains during the sunset. I questioned myself: "if these independence wars were not taking place, would I have been able to see the wondrous waterfall at the headwaters of the Sengzar River and the glaciers, and the wonderful scene we were enjoying at the Turkistan Mountains?" The Arab conqueror, Kutaybe ibn Muslim, fell in love especially with Samarkand Province, and stated: "the greenery of the Samarkand province reminds one of the sky; her rivers, the milkyway; and her chateaus, the stars." Kalkaman, who was still suffering from the effects of typhoid, was admiring the scene. However, he was barely able to sit on his horse. He was in no condition to express his admiration of the scenery in poetry. We continued to follow the footpaths among the snow. At midnight, the road ran out. On our right, we could see the precipice all the way down to Maca. It was possible to see everything because of the full moon. The Falgar Mountains, at the headwaters of Zarafsah, seemed as close as to echo anything one might say; except, it would take many days of travel there! All of the hills of this mountain were snow-capped. However, there was not the cold to chill a human being. Both of our horses stopped and were looking at us as if to say "there are no more roads." It was exceedingly dangerous to ride a horse on the snow at night. We had thought that we would descend onto Sengzar without encountering any obstacles (snow). Now, our way was blocked. We placed both horses on the Northern side where the snow was a bit more flat. They were in the snow up to their knees. There was no tree or rock to tie them. I told my friends: "let the horses remain here; let us descend to the rock we see on our left, and go to sleep leaning on it." We did just that. We took our saddlebags, leaning on the rocks, singing the song favored by the Uzbek troops: "who sleeps on these mountains/ soldier youths do/ rocks stick to their breasts/ who love their land." We thus went to sleep. The sun was rising. Our horses neighed. They were ordering us to get up. Just like our horses, all three of us were hungry. But, the scenery was to be seen without being sated. In the East, which was just getting red in color, the Western Alay and Karatekin Mountains; in the Southeast, the mountains ringing Maca, all of which were forever capped with snow, appeared as if they could be reached in a single day. In reality, it would have taken a week or ten days to do so.



## *From the Maca Mountains to Tashkent via Kizilkum—*

How are we going to cross the Kizilkum desert, on our way to the secret meeting gathering at Tashkent, the three of us, with only two horses, in our hunger? But, we did, and how! When I picked up the pen to relate the surrounding events, I recalled the aphorism by Saltikov-Schedrin at the beginning of his volume “The Old Days:” “even though the story is fresh, it is difficult to believe it.” I was the only one able to advance ideas about the internal and external aspects of the trip; my two friends were in no condition to do so. Since the old Minhac was also ill, he, too, had to mount my reserve horse. The God gave me faith and an ideal, but the weight of it was falling on others rather than me. Both of them, ill, stated: “How are we going to descend from these snowy mountains, surrounded with precipices? Allow us to fire our pistols into our heads. You can use both horses alternately to reach Tashkent.” I told them: “no; whatever we are going to see, we will see together.” Under the snows, there was a pathway apparently has been in use for centuries. It was certain that it was used during the sovereignty of the Karluks. But, that road was following the heights of the mountain toward Alay Mountains. But, when we descended a little below the snow-line, we discovered that there was no pathway that would take us to Sengar River basin. I told my friends: “you two descend on horseback. I will walk down, searching a path. Do not move until I wave for you to start coming down. Otherwise, you will send a torrent of stones toward me.” I began walking down before the sun rose. I could see them from afar. The creeks below had snow in them. There was no pathway, but there were roads used by the sheep they made while they were searching for grass. They were visible from afar. All of a sudden, stones started falling on me. The rocks were dragging each-other on the way down in a horrifying fashion. I immediately took shelter under a rock resembling a fountain. Thousands of rocks were flying above me. Perhaps about an hour later, sounds resembling horseshoes reached me. Those sounds gradually approached, and when they reached me, I rose. Both of my friends were crying. I told them: “Thanks are to God; we did not die in the battle of yesterday, we did not fall into the precipice in the middle of the night nor did we freeze. Now, I am alive because of this small boulder.” It transpired that my friends thought I was waving and calling them down, and began moving. That put the rocks into motion. At this point, it was necessary for my friends to get down from their horses. But, it would have been very difficult for me and Minhac to get Kalkaman back on the horse if he did. I did not walk in front of them, but walked in line with them. After zig-zagging down hundreds of times, we finally and safely reached the creek and the snow-bridge on it. We knew that the snow on the mountains were strong, and serve as a bridge as well. But, we noticed that our horses were not going anywhere near that snow-bridge. We could easily descend into the running stream below on foot; but it was impossible to bring the horses there. The depth of the banks most suitable for the purpose was three and a half meters down. Even if we could get the horses to jump that distance, we assumed

that their legs would unquestionably be broken. These two horses, one black, the other white, were from the stables of the Bukhara Emir. They endeared themselves to their owners not only by their physical appearance, but through their loyalty and discernment. If I were to leave the white horse somewhere, he would run after me neighing and swishing his tail. After us three descended down, we could see that the horses wanted to throw themselves down the escarpment but were having a difficult time deciding. I ascended to their location, removed their saddles, tied a long rein to their halters and encouraged them to jump into an area which we cleared from the rocks. The white horse threw himself on his back; was not injured. He neighed with happiness. I again ascended and did the same to the black horse. He, too, jumped. Right side of his face was a little bruised. We and the horses were happy. After we crossed the creek, we had descended a bit more. It was high noon. Even though we had been on the road for seven hours, here and there there still were snow bridges on the creek. We encountered a single sheep, obviously ill and separated from the herd. We wanted to slaughter and eat it, but there was no wood for a fire. I held the sheep, and the two ill men suckled the sheep just like children. There was water between rocks for the horses, and next to them, grass. After we rested in that fashion for a spell, we continued on our way. Since our horses were carrying the two ill men, I could not use them even for a minute. On the contrary, since the pathways used by the sheep along the creek were cut-off by rocks on the right and the left, it fell upon me to search for a pathway all day long. That was because the bridges used by the sheep and the goats did not hold the weight of the horses. Since those bridges were of snow, they appeared to be growing soft and weak. Once, the bridge could not hold me, and I fell into the creek. In order to avoid a repetition, it became necessary to ascend quite a bit again and bring the two horses back down to the creek level carrying the two sick men through a sinuous way. Toward the evening, we saw a cow for the first time. Small trees were beginning to appear. While I was walking in the rocks looking for a pathway, the heels of my boots came off. I wore Kalkaman’s boots. We had travelled for fourteen hours. We still had not seen the face of a human. We milked that cow; I as well as the sick men thus obtained some nourishment. In the dark, about ten at night we reached a hut. In that hut, the mother of a prominent individual we knew well was living. She had nobody with her. She fed us bulghur, yoghurt and bread cooked in the ashes. The Beknazar village straddling the both banks of the creek we had been following, now had Russian soldiers since this morning. We showed the three pistols and the rifle to the old woman, and hid them between the rocks at a secure place. We removed anything that might bring suspicion if we were to be searched by the Reds. I only placed my eye-glass lenses, without the frame, into the felt of the saddle after making holes for them. We left that location at about eleven in the evening. During the midnight of thirteenth of August, an Ozbek faced us and said “Stop!” We did. He approached, and immediately recognized us. He told us he was one of the troopers of the partisan organization established here. A few days earlier, he was at Sangzar and Yaryaylak with us. He told us that the Red soldiers arrived here exhausted. They had lain down to sleep immediately, they had appointed guards from the villagers to watch

the roads, and he was one of them. He added: “if you have any force with you, it is possible to catch all of them.” I told him: “now our intent is not fighting; we need to somehow cross the river and reach the villages on the other side to rest a bit. We are arriving from Goktepe.” He was astonished: “I had never seen anyone arriving from that direction on horseback.” I continued: “if we were to follow the creek, in the direction of Baskoruk, the Reds will awaken from the hoof sounds. We can leave the horses to you, and cross on foot. Perhaps we can obtain other horses.” He said: “after you cross this village, there is a Bugut, meaning half a bend, in the creek. Wait there; perhaps I can bring you your horses. I have a friend here; maybe he can help, too. If the Reds ask whose horses are these, we will tell them we found them as they are. In that case, they will confiscate them.” After we reached the Bugut, we did not wait long. He brought the horses with his friend. We thanked him, embraced and cried and separated. Following our route, we reached the Yavas village by early morning. We knocked on the door of a person we knew. We told our adventure. He stated: “I will slaughter a sheep. Sleep a little until the meal is ready, because you cannot stay here during the day. All of the upper villages are full of Red soldiers.” They also took care of our horses. When the meal was ready, they awakened us. This was our first meal since the evening of 11 August. A little later: “news arrived; a portion of the Reds will be coming to this village. Apparently, nobody saw you coming into our house. They will pressure us to know who was here, and then follow you.” He, all the women and his brothers took down the wall facing the river of the stable where our horses were, to allow us to descend into the riverbank. They provisioned us with food and barley for our horses. We took our leave with moist eyes. All that showed the endless fidelity of the Ozbeks of this region to the independence idea and that they were trustworthy. When we began descending from the Goktepe heights of Akdag a day earlier at sunrise, we had not imagined that the Russians would have arrived here, or that we would discover the mother of a friend we knew well, or that we would encounter a couple of them welcoming us as the guards of the Reds. As we were leaving the family we knew at Yavas village, we told them we had left our rifle and pistols with the grandmother at the higher elevation. He gave us his pistol with ammunition. I told him that: “we are on our way to Tashkent; we cannot carry pistols with us.” We thus separated sweetly.

We continued following the footpath next to the creek. We did not get on the banks in order not to be seen by the Russians. We passed south of the Yanqurgan railroad station on the railroad line connecting Taskent to Samarkand. The old Minhac was going to walk to that station, board the train to Samarkand, take the news of our travel to our friends in Samarkand that we crossed the dangerous places with our health, and then join us in Taskent by train. After Minhac disappeared, we again found the creek. We ate the food we were given at Yavas, and the horses consumed the barley; we rested a bit. We slept about an hour. We began moving toward Mukuru village. A little time was left till sunset. One old, one young person were coming toward us on their donkeys. The young one whispered something to the ear of the old one. The old one addressed us with: “happy travelling.” We told him that we would be staying either at

Muquru or Cumapazar villages. The old man stated: “as you know, Major Molla Mustaq betrayed you. He has Red soldiers with him. He will catch you and turn you over to them. Wherever you are going, we will show you the way. We did not tell him we were on our way to Tashkent; instead we stated that we were going to the Kazaks we knew at Kizilkum. At that moment Kalkaman was moaning with pains next to me. I told them: “behold; we are going to them.” It transpired that the young one was a soldier in the entourage of Molla Hemraqul at Quytas. When that Partizan unit was disbanded, he came home. He dismounted from his donkey, grabbed my hand and kissed it. He was even kissing my stirrup and my boot. “Sir” he stated, that was the standard form of address here, “at the pinewoods facing me, there are two cemeteries. Follow this road all the way there.” He added: “go slow; after you cross all that, you can run your horses at speed. Nobody will hear you. Then, you will be free. After that, Kizilkum starts. God keep your road open; happy travelling.” Kalkaman, with me, was very sick. He continually told me to: “kill me and continue on your way; do not torture me anymore.” I was asking God’s help for him to stay on his horse until we crossed the cemetery. When we reached the small hill as described by the young man earlier, he whispered to me: “Tengri is your helper in all your undertaking; we have witnessed that all along the way. Should we not call those two Hizir? After that, we wanted to speed our horses a bit. It was two A.M. in the morning of 14 August. Kalkaman no longer could hang on; he fell off the horse. It was impossible for me to help him mount the horse. He was telling me: “sacrifice me to the beneficial works you will be doing, go on your way.” Those words were taken from the *Cora Batir* dastan well known among the Kazaks. I hobbled the horses, and let them graze. I was hoping that Kalkaman would get better by the morning. He placed his head on my knee and went to sleep. I slept by placing my back on a rock. A slow and cool wind was coming from the North. I awoke at Six A.M. Kalkaman was a little better. The crown of a Kazak tent, which appeared to be very far away, was shining against the rising sun. That had a good effect on Kalkaman. I asked him if he could mount the horse. I offered to have him step on the rock to do so, before I could lay him on the horse. He asked me to tie him to the horse from his underarms and legs. I did. We started moving toward the Kazak tents we could see. He was unable to keep his balance on horseback. At one point, I could not hold him; he fell down under the horse. I untied the ropes. We waited there for a spell. I told him that I would go to the tents, in the hopes of finding someone to help me bring him there. Kalkaman remained there, after I tied the reins and the rope of his horse to his feet. I was about three to four kilometers to the Kazak village. I reached them and told them: “I have a sick man, he fell off his horse, and I am unable to bring him; help me.” A couple of men immediately horsed and ran to help. They helped him on his horse, and ran on either side holding him. It transpired that what was shining with the early sun was a wash-basin placed on the crown of the tent. We arrived at that home. Kazaks are generally very good hosts. Even though the time was still very early (perhaps it took us an hour and a half to make the return trip), a sheep was slaughtered for us and it was already on the fire. The young brides were fussing over the sick man. Even though they were not a rich family, they also had kimiz. We let the sick man drink some. When the meat was cooked, he was also

given some of the broth in a wooden cup. As soon as he had that broth, his eyes opened. By the end of the meal, he stated: "I am no more ill; I got better." That day I understood the meaning of what the historian Residettin had stated: "Turks handle their ailments while they are on an arduous expedition; apparently, the related toils serve as a medicine for their cure." This place where we arrived was a well-head north of the Tuz-Kani salt lake of Kizilkum. On the Eleventh day of the month, ascending to the mountains from Usmet; the second day, our descent; the third day crossing Sengzar and arriving at Kizilkum, we traveled a distance of more than two-hundred kilometers under the most grueling conditions. This youth did not die on this road of hardships but got well at a place known as Kaskir Kuyu, Tilek.

We thought we would leave in the afternoon. But a piece of news arrived. The Bulis, meaning the administrative head of the region in which we were, was going to arrive in the company of twelve soldiers. We were told amidst laughter that: "travel after dark, looking at the North Star. The next day you will be in Mirza Desert." We were also told that after travelling two to three hours, we would come across a Kazak family with a single tent; we could rest there. Although we did not tell them who we were, they knew for certain we were two Mirza [prince] who had fought the Russians and afterward had taken refuge in the Kizilkum Kazak. That meant to them we were educated, political and individuals who work for their people. They inspected our horses as if they were X-Raying them, inspected every detail, including the underside of their tails; but, they did not ask our names. Kalkaman showed an astonishing energy. He mounted the horse even if he was helped by the men. We found the tent told us by the Kazaks. Besides, we were travelling without a road. We turned in that direction. Both horses were ambling. When the ambient temperature dropped, they let themselves go. Kalkaman was also revived with passion. We quickly arrived at the tents we saw from the distance. We rested there for about two hours. They took care of us very well. They made a soup out of the meat dried in the sun, with salt, which is called kak, and bread. We ate it with pleasure. Afterward, we continued in the direction of the stars we have been following. There was no wolf or bird [no creatures]. Occasionally we were facing saksavul or yantak [haloxylon ammodendron] named shrubs, but they were neither dense nor often enough to impede our travel. But, by the morning, our horses were completely drained. Despite that, they were running with the last bit of energy. By sunrise of 15 August, we arrived at the remnants of a caravansaray. We watered our horses, and we drank as well. When the sun rose, we were at a Town called Mirza Colu. That day was the market day. Outside the town, we arrived at a Kazak tent pitched next to a house built with sun-dried bricks. They also had a garden. They offered us melons. We drank tea. We also found cigarettes which we had not smoked for a long time. Kazaks use snuff. But the owner's son was smoking cigarettes. Meaning, he had tobacco. He was rolling it in newspaper sheets. We smoked it with such enthusiasm that Kalkaman passed-out. I was very afraid that his ailment had returned. He was himself again in half an hour. We fed our horses. We rested until people gathered at the market place. The clothes we were wearing were those of Uzbek villagers. We walked about the market without a care. We bought

cigarettes. Nobody knew us. We went to the home of the Kazak who was hosting us, in order to depart for Tashkent. We discovered that they had prepared a meal for us. We ate. We got on the way about noon. We arrived at the horsecart crossing, not too far away from the train bridge. We had to wait a bit, since it was crowded. But nobody asked any questions. About four or five kilometers after we crossed, we arrived at the home of a family we knew at the Township of Cinaz. We were relieved. We asked that they take care of our horses, we did not want anything more than a glass of tea, and let us sleep without waking. Thus we were able to sleep in a cool garden, in a secure place until eight in the morning, probably for fifteen or sixteen hours. When we woke in the morning, they had prepared a meal. We were told that our horses could not carry us any longer, that their tiredness would indicate we had arrived from afar. They gave us new horses and told us that they would send our black and white horses after us. These new horses were very select ones, too. We crossed a distance of seventy kilometers rapidly, and we entered Tashkent about late afternoon. Our headquarters here was known. It was the Kazakistan Pedagogical Institute, right in the middle of the city. This building was a gymnasium during the time of the Tsardom. It was surrounded by a park. We entered the garden of the Institute on horseback. Muallim Azimbek Berimcan met us; and in a few years, we were to meet again in Berlin. Besides, we were coming to see him. They took our horses to a vineyard outside the city. That night, we saw the former President of Turkistan, meaning Head of Khokand Autonomous National Government, Muhammed Can Aga Tinisbaev. We indicated to him that we were very tired, especially between Cinaz and Tashkent the hot weather tired us that it was necessary for us to sleep, we would tell them of the events in the morning, and read the letters that arrived. We again slept peacefully, this time right in the middle of Tashkent among the government buildings. We possibly slept for fifteen or sixteen hours once more. Travel from Samarkand-Usmet-Maca Mountains-Kizilkum arriving in Tashkent is not a route I read in history books. That route not only saved me from the hands of a Soviet agent, but also displayed to me the deep devotion of the Uzbek people to their national independence.



# **Tashkent Congress The Issue of Turkistan Must Take a Place Among the World Problems**

## *Secret life in Tashkent—*

The next morning we woke and arrived at the Ivanov vineyard by phaeton. I was expected there. My wife nefise, who stayed with friends in the city of Turkistan [Yese] during the months of July and August, with my friend Abdulkadir, was also there. Four concealed places were prepared for us in Tashkent and environs. One was the vineyard where we were. The second was a house rented for us in the Bes Agac subdivision of Tashkent. The third was the home of Major Abdurrahman of the Kazaks at the Keles location; the fourth was our own grove at Ablik. We decided to be at Keles during the day, hold the meetings at Besagac and at this Ivanov vineyard. They had wanted to give me two pieces of important news upon my arrival, but they did not for fear of keeping me awake. One of those pieces of news was that General Enver was killed by the Red soldiers two days ago in the Kulab location; the other was that Samarkand Province chief of the Organization, Kari Kamil, had been killed and his head was delivered to the Russians. I was asked if I believed the news that General Enver was killed. In response, I stated: “the Basmaci do not have castles or fortifications. Sometimes, one can cheat death several times in a single day.” With regard to the murder of Kari Kamil, that was done by traitor Mustak, who was required to give us his horse five or six days ago at Usmet hills, but did not. On that day, Kari Kamil had gone to visit his family, imprudently without guards. The treacherous Mustaq took advantage of that he shot Kari Kamil from a distance with a rifle as he was praying. Later, took his head to Cizaq. From there, they sent the head to be displayed at the Communist Congress being held in Tashkent. The young men were in a great deal of agitation. They agreed to catch and shoot Mustaq wherever he was. I surmise that turncoat did not live long.

Despite the fact that he was being protected by the Bolsheviks, he was eliminated. It was a shame about Kari Kamil. He was the most self sacrificing, educated and sincere fighter of Samarkand. My wife often stayed with them. In the Turkistan cultural and educational sphere Kari Kamil in Samarkand was what Munevver Kari was in Tashkent. For a few days, at Yaryaylak meeting, he had written poems and excited the young people, and recited them with his fine voice.

About that time, thirty or forty men from the Branches around the Lake Balkas had received the military orders by way of Dinse at the Bedbak-Dala Desert, who at one time was with us in Bukhara. Finally, they arrived in Tashkent ostensibly to trade horses, in order to join us in Samarkand and General Enver. They were all fiery youths. They were exactly the Bozkir type. The majority had not even tasted fruits such as apples, pears, peaches or melons even once in their lifetime. There were also the Kazak youths brought by Kalkaman, who were staying in our vineyard at Ablik. Dinse, who was a poet and a theater artist, had visited them there. He was going to bring more among those who wanted. Now that General Enver is dead, what will those excited youths do? They will be forced to return to their homes. They and the fighters of Kalkaman, and the organized youth in Tashkent did not at all believe, nor did they wish to believe the news of General Enver's demise. Either the Western or the Bolshevik press, during June-August news on the Basmaci Movement, did not mention the fact that the educated had decided to wage a life-or-death struggle everywhere in Turkistan. That was because, they did not know. If General Enver had not been killed by a Red bullet, and the Soviet Army had not succeeded in the Western Front that allowed them to send their soldiers to Turkistan, at the end of this August the railroad between Tashkent and Ashakabad was going to be cut, and many a Moslem serving the Soviet Army in Khiva, Bukhara and Ferghana were going to join the Basmaci. For those reasons, General Enver's movement was not something to be scoffed. The trip of Burkut Esikagabasi, Ahund Yusuf and Osman Cavus to the Southern Kazaks at the location of Buken Tav, and the encouragements sent by the General from Samarkand to Khiva were fully effective. When our Society had met at Samarkand on 5 August, it was decided to hold the Turkistan National Congress in Taskent on or about 20 September. It was a more hopeful time. We were going to discuss the organization and plans for action. Now, we had arrived in Tashkent after dispersing the Partizans in Samarkand to prevent them from being annihilated by the large Russian forces arriving. On top of that now there was the issue of General Enver's martyrdom which we could not completely believe. Under these conditions, at the Congress we were going to discuss what we were to do if the National Movement had met a complete route. The Congress was going to meet for three days between 18-20 September. However, since the prominent individuals of Turkistan, Ali Han Bukeyhan, Turar Riskulov, Ahmet Baytursun, Muhammed Can Tinisbay; Munevver Kari of the Ozbeks; Hekimzades, Mirza Abdulkadir Muhittin from Bukhara; Advocate Qoqacan Berdiyev of the Turkmen, and others could not participate in this Congress because they were under constant surveillance of the Soviets. Since it was not possible to gather everyone into a large convocation, the Congress was going to consist of

ten to fifteen individuals. With the precautions taken, instead of the above referenced individuals, others who are influential, most active young leaders as well as older intellectuals who are known not to be tightly followed were safe to attend. Members of the National Society working within governmental organizations and secret police ensured that the Congress was going to meet securely. I was having rumors circulated by way of my friends in the Samarkand Soviet Government that I and my entourage were percolating in that Province. The news of my then living in Tashkent Province never reached the Russians.

## *The demise of the white horse—*

The white and the black horses we left back in Cinas, we had declared them as votive offerings. Meaning, they were not going to be ridden again. After they were brought to Keles location, both fell ill. The saddle had scraped the back of the white one. Among the Kazaks, the dried dung of dogs, in powder form, was regarded as very beneficial for this condition. They would collect and bring it. Once, while I was taking a walk with my wife, I found a piece of dried dog dung, and put it into my handkerchief. At one point my wife stated: "on one hand, in order to save Turkistan you are running around the wide expanses of our country, leading the people. On the other, you are collecting dog dung from the grass and saving it in your handkerchief. Is there not a dichotomy in that?" I stated: "no, there is not. The gray horse that I like saved my life. Since it is difficult to find a veterinarian here, it is appropriate to undertake this. I will give my life to my beloved nation. What keeps me alive is love. A few days later, the front hooves of the same horse came off, as if galoshes tossed away from the feet. That meant, these horses spent their lives carrying us from Akdag to Kizilkum, and from there to Cinas. When his hooves came off, he laid down on the ground. Tears were rolling off his eyes, indicating he was in pain. I told the Kazaks to slaughter him immediately. I also told them to take away the black one, far from me. If he gets better, that is fine. If not, then you can slaughter him as well. We buried the bones of the white horse along the Senk at the Kelesi village. Feyzullah Hoca gave me that horse at the last instance when we had seen each other at the Sitaremah-Hassa, just before I left Bukhara in 1921. Even though it was small in stature, his eyes were always shiny and he was very lively. The first day I rode him, he had saved me from the Russian soldiers by swimming across the overflowing Zarafsan River. Perhaps I already wrote that event earlier. I asked Major Abdurrahman that if he had a chance, to have a carved monument placed where his bones were buried. I also wrote a poem and gave it to him: "Silver headed Aktav, where even the birds cannot fly/ where I made the sharp stones a pillow, and the white clouds my quilt/ you waited for me my fleet-footed/ made the enemy vomit blood/ before the sunrise, made the snowy roads a bridge/ running all night arriving at Sanzar River/ crossing the enemy's battle lines, life saving fleet-foot/ in the morning arriving in Yuvas, then to Tilek heights of Kizilkum the same midnight/ from Kizilkum to Sirdarya and in the morning to Cinas all well/

There will be resurrection, and when it comes, you will reach me swishing your tail, moving your mane, my beloved fleet-foot.”

I reached the city alone, riding across the Besalaca vineyards of Kekes. They had given me a good ambling horse. Almost every night there was a feast, we would all gather. Friends from Orenburg, Semipalat, Akmola, and Khiva were never in short supply. The topic would always revolve around the death of General Enver. However, we still had not received full account of what happened from the Basmaci Chiefs.

## *7<sup>th</sup> Turkistan National Congress—*

Our congress convened on 18 September. I recall there being sixteen members. Especially the Kazak intellectuals were well represented. Three consecutive nights we met at different locations. All the decisions made were taken with sincerity. When the Organization was in Bukhara, the designation was “Central Asian Moslem National People’s Federation of Societies.” Now, it was simply “Turkistan National Union.” It was decided that in Kazakhstan, instead of “Alas-Orda,” henceforth it was going to be referenced as Northern Turkistan. Among the primary decisions was the application of the Federation principle which would naturally remove the question of which uruks would be dominant in education and governance, and provide for equality and brotherhood among all. It was also important for the Turkistan question to be taken before the international community and not be left as an internal matter of Russia any longer. In addition, it was necessary to represent the Turkistan National problem outside the Russian realm. This meeting decided that I leave Turkistan, and arrive in Europe via Iran, Afghanistan and India, to meet with Cokayoglu Mustafa to establish the Center for Turkistan National Union there. I was also given a document to that effect, signed by the President of the Congress. Since there was nobody who could write it in any other language, it was written in Russian and in Turkish on a piece of cloth. I was going to take my wife along. I sent her to a family we knew in Ashkabad via the railroad. During the last day of the Congress, a letter arrived detailing the conditions of Eastern Bukhara. It informed us that, after General Enver’s martyrdom, Haci Sami and Danyal Bey of Daghestan were going to replace him. After that congress, I remained in and around Tashkent for about a month. Meanwhile, a youth took a picture of me without glasses and carried it to Baskurdistan. The old Minhac took a copy of that picture and a letter from me to the Head Fighter of the Kirgiz, Parpi Beke, at Ferghana Ovgend Mountains, which urged them to cross-over to Kashgar. In return, he brought back a picture of Parpi Beke on horseback, and his regards. Minhac returned to Baskurdistan. Later on, I met Parpi Haci in Turkiye; he had arrived via Hoten, Tibet and India. His life is the dastan of an intelligent, brave man. Another Baskurt and a Kazak, made the two-way trip to the Kirgiz adventurers in the north of Ferghana.

## *Imprisonment of Evhadi Ismurzin—*

We learned of an event that was very sad for us, via our friends working in the governmental offices in Tashkent. That was my friend Evhadi’s becoming a prisoner of war to the Red Army. Even though we could not obtain information about this event from any other source, we believed it. A year later, while we were in Kabul we learned that Evhadi was executed in Moscow; but, we were only able to learn the full progression of events after we arrived in Turkiye during 1925, three years afterward.

Evhadi and his entourage, after he and I made our farewells on 11 August at Usmet, continued fighting the Red Army units at Zamin and Uratepe mountains along with Mamur and Turab Beys for a spell. According to his friend Heybetullah, Evhadi fell prisoner to the Russians ten kilometers south of the Zamin train station, at the Kuru Guldurevuk high pasture, while fighting them. Evhadi seemed pessimistic during those days. According to again what Heybetullah told us, one night they were staying at an alacik at a yayla. The weather was rainy and foggy. He brought a bottle of cognac from his saddle bag, shared it with his friends. He was reciting a poem by Pushkin: “hurricane and fog is blocking the skies. Harsh wind mixed with snow turning everything upside down. The tent in which we are is dark and dreary. Where is the glass, let us drink a little wine. Perhaps our heart may be relived.”

He was not in favor of spending much time on these mountains, had the intent to find General Enver via Maca route; he did not wish to spend much time with him either, but to cross over to Afghanistan. Esrarhan, the Chief of the Maca had arrived with his soldiers. They attacked Zamin, and withdrew to Kuru Guldurevuk. Evhadi showed much bravery in that battle, but just as they were facing the Russians, his horse slipped on a rock and fell down. Just at that moment, the Red soldiers caught up with him. Evhadi killed a few of them with his pistol, but the Reds caught him. The next day, the commander of the Red unit, a colonel was also killed. They found his bag and his spy-glasses in his saddlebag. All of that are in the possession of Islam Gerey who is now living in Turkiye. They saw a Red soldier running away on Evhadi’s gray horse. Thus the valuable War Minister of Baskurdistan was taken prisoner and taken to Zamin while he was being beaten, thence to Moscow. However, our friends working for the government could not obtain details of the event.

## *The last night in Tashkent—*

I was going to leave Tashkent on 22 October for Turkmenistan. On the night of the 21<sup>st</sup>, my friends asked to convene one more time. They saw it fit that I still should work on the branches of the Turkistan National Union for another few months prior to my crossing over to Iran. Everyone thought that this may be the very last meeting of our Society.

Everyone was very sincere. There were those who cried because we might not see each other again. The spirit of belief in our existence, good spiritual brotherhood



dominated the meeting. After leaving that meeting at a very late hour, I went to spend the night at the home of a distinguished Kirgiz and Kazak intellectual, in order to leave early in the morning. That person had studied in Saint Petersburg. His wife was also a Moslem who had studied with him. Since they are still alive, I am unable to provide their names; they were my close friends in Saint Petersburg. When we had arrived at their home, his wife was not at home. They had food left over from lunch. The gentleman of the house warmed them, we ate. I was dressed exactly as a Kazak. My glasses were only two lenses that I carried in my pocket, and used them only when absolutely necessary. My beard and mustache was trimmed in the Kazak fashion. The gentleman of the house had me sit in the most revered chair in the house. He told me: "My wife must not recognize you; you must speak only in Kazak." A little later, his wife arrived. In Russian, she stated: "whoever arrives from the village, you invite them to your table; even have them sit in your chair" mumbling in a disapproving manner. I was sitting as if I understood nothing, and speaking as if I had no knowledge of the world talking about simple matters. A little later, the gentleman of the house motioned me to lie down at the corner of the house serving as the salon, after placing blankets and pillows on the couch, despite the protests of his wife. They went to bed in the next room. But, the upper portion of the wall between the two rooms was open. The wife was nagging her husband in Russian, objecting him to hosting me in their home, giving me blankets and pillows and has me sleep on the couch, angrily talking and preventing him from going to sleep. She was repeating "your loused Kazak." The gentleman did not say anything beyond: "be quiet, be quiet." In the morning I woke up, and got ready to leave. I wrote on a piece of paper, in Russian, a letter: "Dear Lady X; do not tire your brain for me. I was sorry we could not talk about our memories of Saint Petersburg. We are travelling under these conditions. Please destroy this letter." I signed it. I placed the letter in an envelope, left it on the dining table, and continued on my journey. A year had not passed; I had arrived in Germany via India and France. It transpired that a person close to the gentleman of the house was sent to Germany by the Turkistan Soviet Government for education and arrived in Berlin. He told me. Lady X, when she found my letter was pulling out her hair and crying with deep sighs, criticizing her husband with: "why did you hide him from me, you made me disgraced; if he arrives again one day, how will I be able to look him in the eye?"

## *Farewell to Tashkent—*

At our house in Besagac, a youth was waiting for me, to accompany me to Cinas. This was an Uzbek youth. Since it was not appropriate for me to take the train in cities like Tashkent and Samarkand, I was boarding a freight train one or two stations before or after such cities. Since I had learned that there was a tight control of documents between Cinas station and Mirza Desert along Sirdarya and Carcuy while crossing Amudarya, I decided to ride to Cinas, cross the river on a raft, and board the train at Mirza Desert.

That day, I visited my sick friend Ferid at Nogay Korgan, and spent the night with Hoca Makbuloglu Omer at Kavunci. We boarded the train on 24 October at Xavas station at a late hour. That was because I could travel on the train only at night. I disembarked a station before Samarkand. The horses were ready. We arrived in Samarkand with my friend Sahveli.

## *Farewell to Samarkand—*

I spent four days in Samarkand. After it was decided that I was going to other countries, for the purpose of the publications I was going to produce, I began keeping a regular diary without mentioning names. I stayed there four days. Every night, there was a feast in a different friend's house and we had sweet discussions. At the meeting near the Paykabak Gate, in another friend's house, the issues debated in Tashkent were once again discussed. The friends who had arrived via the railroad had already told other friends of my leaving the country.

The people of Samarkand, as it was in the past, are today truly brave and sincere individuals. Even though the Russian Commander in Chief General Kamenev was also here, our meetings were being held in complete security, trust in each other and without fear. The reason was there were trustworthy individuals in the administration of the Province. The meetings held in the vineyard next to the Paykabak Dervanesi left truly unforgettable memories of friendship in my mind; and it transpired that the friends wanted to place those pleasant memories in my heart. Kadi Haydar had brought a Samarkand Doppu [skullcap] especially ornamented for me, and a silk capan [overgarment]. Someone brought a few bottles of the best "triangles" found in Samarkand. I was going to send them to Turkmenistan by the hand of the Baskurt youth named Sahveli, who was to serve as our courier henceforth. My closest friend Murad Hoca Isan, in consultation with other friends, presented me with a "bunch" which they had prepared with care. It carried the written designation "rosebunch of bravery and fortitude." There was no table; we were sitting on the ground. One of the friends read the following which he read. It was sent to Hasim Saik in Kabul via the Afghan courier in Bukhara. I am relaying the pertinent portions here: "do not look down on this humble bunch. Regardless of how long it is kept in the water, it shall wilt. However, it is sufficient for us to know that it will live in your heart without perishing, to remind you of our regards for you always. We wrote upon it 'bunch of bravery and fortitude.' This is your own words. It had raised the banner of revolt in every province of Turkistan. But, why did you choose our city and province to serve as the headquarters of the Society that began the secret endeavors and operations for the national struggle? You had given us the the reason at the night meeting held at Ab-I Rahmet during the previous Kurban Bayrami. You made statements that left us filled with gratitude for you. You stated that the Arab Scholar Mukaddesi had written about the people of Samarkand, and stated that 'they are different than other provinces of Maverannehir; they are brave and have fortitude.' You then asked:

'let us see if you are still?' We surmise that the people of Samarkand Province did not do anything to cause you to experience disappointment. You arrived amongst us on Tuesday, 9 August 1921. Four days later, during the Kurban Bayrami, we made important decisions and a month later we had organized the Sixth Congress, fixed the flag of Turkistan and the bylaws of the Society. You gave each of us duties, and since the day you arrived in Samarkand, for the past fourteen months and fifteen days, we regarded you as the Commander in your capacity as the President of the Turkistan National Union. We endeavored not to have any shortcomings in carrying-out your commands. Prior to your and the Society's arrival, in this Province there were small groups of Basmaci who were fighting each other, lacking national ideals, and those who were at most under the influence of the Mollas instead of organized Basmaci groups. The Society provided them with the internal organization and discipline so as to hold them up to all Turkistan Basmaci as a specimen. 'Bravery and fortitude' we had in the past. We now see them in you. You were with Haci Abdulkadir at Urgut Mountains when General Enver sent for you from Bukhara. You rode there in two days, and solved the issue of the Turkish Grandees joining the Turkistan national independence movement. From Cabbar at Guzar, Karakul at Kette-Kurgan, Xalbuta at Uratepe, Molla Kahhar at Bukhara, you ran to them on horseback, sometimes crossing the enemy lines just like Battal Gazi, have them accept the principle of obedience to the Society. The men of Molla Kahhar treacherously killed the friends you brought from Baskurdistan. Despite that, you went to Nurata and freed your friends who remained alive. Your intelligent behavior gained those Basmaci for the Society once more; otherwise they would have become Emirists once more, away from the Society. And, they could have killed you there. Upon arrival in Samarkand, you used a room at the Ulug Bey Medrese for the purpose of 'interviews.' That was bravery. You were not going to Gur-I Emir (Temur's burial site), because you knew that there would be those who would be waiting continuously. That was acceptance of fortitude. Some of our friends requested you to have the Baskurt and Kazak soldiers in the directions of Tashkent and Ferghana to join the Basmaci for the sole purpose of helping Muhiddin Mahdum. They are today ashamed. That Mahdum now surrendered to the Russians. If your soldiers were to enter the non-official life, they were going to be left in dire circumstances. You were not angry at that either; you managed us. That is what we are calling fortitude. That was the best quality loved and appreciated by our Prophet and the grandees of Islam who were leaders and commanders. Now, it appears General Enver is dead. You will show us ways in order not to have our population fall into alarm because of that death. You will obtain aid from other nations for our salvation." The fortitude praised by Zamaxseri may be the hostage to guarantee of success in other countries.

In reality, I had learned the city and Province people of Samarkand very well during these battles, and I had a heartfelt affection for them. How can a human forget his friends, like Isan Murad Hoca? Kadi Haydar stated: "A man named Burhaneddin Sagirci had emerged from within us. He had worked in Bagdat, India and China for this country. God willing, you can surpass him; we wish you all the success. After

Sagirci had passed away, his burial here he had attained him the rank of people's saint. We are going to pray that you return to us in the shortest possible time."

## *Sisenbay—*

While I was living secretly in Samarkand, I had visited the burial sites of the Martyrs who were brought back to the city, and buried in the city cemeteries. Among them was the tomb of my friend Haris Sisenbay who was buried near Mescid-I Hizir. He had passed away not in a battle field, but in the city, from malaria.

While visiting the tombs of the loyal friends I lost, such as Ibrahim Kackinbay, Alimcan Tagan, and Haris Sisenbay, I felt I was performing a very important task. When I visited my village, I visited the grave of my beloved sister Aynulhayat; during severe battles of 1919 at southern Urals, Kackinbay's snow covered burial; during the 1954 winter in Hamburg, Dr. Tagan; I bestowed the verses I could remember to their souls in each case. Now, at Haris's tomb, I performed that duty. I longed for the day of resurrection so I could see them again. How would the members of religions who do not believe in resurrection remember their friends? The explanation of my Chinese student on this matter did not satisfy me. For Haris, his life on earth was almost like an episode one second long. On 6 May 1922 he had placed his head on my knees, cried and told me and my wife: "If I die, we will meet again on the day of resurrection; but always remember me, and read a few verses to beatify my soul" and passed away in my embrace. Just like my son Iris Mehmet who also passed away from Malaria in Bukhara. What is sweeter than believing that the fidelity is non-ending, and kneeling on the tombs of those we love to send a few prayers to their souls? Haris had managed my complete communications. He took care of my horses; he handled whatever money I had. He oversaw the secret armory we had established, just like two of his friends I had brought from Xarigos. He took my verbal communications to Baskurdistan once, twice to Khiva, several times to Bukhara. He did not have any other ideal than to see the independence of his people or to die working on that path. His Russian was good; he had learned Persian in Bukhara and Samarkand. If I were to go to other countries, he wished to travel with me. I thought we might benefit from him in the State administrative apparatus, as he was exceedingly intelligent, virtuous, exceedingly brave and prudent. In his spare time, he read the history of Mirhond. Even though he behaved in a very refined way toward my wife, he would sometimes be rough toward me and that gave him pangs of conscious. When he read that the Salciyut Beys' had been punished when they behaved in that manner toward Cengiz Han, he stated that perhaps this was a genetically inherited condition. I had given furlough to two of his friends and sent them to Baskurdistan. Haris did not want to serve in a place away from me. If he were in Turkiye today, he would have completed tasks beneficial to knowledge. He had the ideal of becoming a soldier in the footsteps of Babur, a poet knowing history. I had taught him the alliterative, internal rhyming poetry style of the Altaians. He had produced a good work expressing his

inspiration from visiting Temur's tomb called Kokgumbez. Some of his lines are in my memory now: "Kök kümbezin kürüldetip, Ürkütme bizni Biy Temir; / Qaraqaş taşın qımıldatıp, Qorkutma bizni Biy Temir/ = Do not scare us Bey Temir/ by making your blue dome thunder; / Do not frighten us Bey Temir/ by moving your black stone." The "black stone" mentioned was brought from Hutun Province; a hard nifrit stone. He had learned all that from reading Bartold. He was charmed by the Kazak and Nogay dastans. He had written beautiful pieces in imitation of them. It would have been so much better if he had lived.

After those four days I spent in Samarkand I was so much closer to the city and my friends there.

## *Turkmenistan once more—*

My friend Sahveli left for Ashkabad by train. Since I could not board the train in Samarkand, I went to the Utarci station by horse, boarded the freight train and reached the Amudarya shores. I disembarked at Farab Dort-Kuyu station, went to the Turkmen I knew and rested for three days. Two years ago we had arrived here with the poet Seyyid Gerey Magaz and had become their guests. They crossed me over to Carcuy by boat. From there, I again boarded a freight train and arrived in Merv. There I stayed with my friend Berdioglu Kokacan for a few days, and arrived in Askabad on horseback during 18 November. Sahveli had rented a house. He was also very pleased with the talks I had with my friends in Samarkand. He had recorded what was discussed, without mentioning the names of the individuals. He also believed that the participation of individuals from The Baskurt Army in this uprising was a good deed. On 1 December, my wife Nefise arrived from the city of Turkistan, in the company of a Kazak youth. She and Sahveli by train, and I, again in caution, by horse, arrived in the village of our Turkmen friend Kadi Mahmut. In Askabad we had rented a house in the outskirts of the city, and separate quarters for conversation with those visiting from the outside. We did the same at Yeni Merv. That was because we were going to live in two different cities alternately. My friend Fethulkadir had arrived in Askabad on 8 December. He was going to undertake the trips to Iran, Afganistan, India, Europe and Turkiye with me. We sent Sahveli to Samarkand. A few days later he arrived in Yeni Merv in the company of two literate Uzbek youths. They were providing our contacts with Tashkent, Samarkand and Bukhara. Sometimes, someone was making the trip to and from Orenburg. In that manner, we stayed there, until we exited to Iran, for the next four months. The Turkmen organization was also providing us with horses. We could go anywhere and be guests. During that time, I worked on the book of Mahmud Kasgari, and wrote the history of contemporary history of Turkmenistan. With the aid of our friends working in the Russian GPU, I was appearing as if I had stayed in the region of Samarkand, and as if I had crossed over to Eastern Bukhara after the demise of General Enver. As it was the case in Tashkent, we lived with ease in Askabad. Russians did not know. Only a very few Turkmen knew us. Haci Sami and

Danyal Bey, who had replaced General Enver after his martyrdom, had prepared a long report on the events of the General's demise, and sent it to the TMB [Turkistan National Union] headquarters with their men. This was the first report we had on the General's martyrdom after a span of month and a half.

## *Martyrdom of General Enver—*

Those who were in the entourage of General Enver on the day of his martyrdom had gathered around Basmaci Fuzayil Mahdum on 17 August and sent me a letter to Tashkent via one of their men, asked me to take over the movement. That letter had arrived during the Tashkent Congress. But, that letter did not provide any detailed information on the General's demise. During that time, Haci Sami was in Afghanistan. He finally arrived and wrote the aforementioned long report. His writing was expressing his sincere feelings, and almost like a poem. Additional letters also arrived from former members of the Baskurt Government, Mustafa Sahkuli and Heybetullah Yambuktin, who were with the entourage of General Enver. Mustafa Sahkuli provided the greatest details. The General fell in the battle with the Russians during the Kurban Bayrami on Friday, 4 August at Ceken village seven or eight kilometers from Belcivan. It was understood that the Russians did not possess clear details about that event. Several men from among the Russians emerged to claim that they had killed the General. Among them, there is the publication of the Ceka Officer Agabekov. An Australian by the name of Gustav Krist had heard it from Agabekov himself, and wrote it as if it was a documented case in his *Along Through the Forbidden Land*. After that the Yugoslavian Mahmut Muftic and C. Howard Ellis mentioned the event in the March and December 1962 issues of *The Islamic Review*. Those were complete fiction. The General was killed by the bullet of a Russian soldier, but it was not certain whose bullet it was. Those who wish to humiliate the late General Enver wrote many nonsensical pieces, and continue to do so. With that, they are attempting to belittle the Turkistan people. Ostensibly, the General did not know war tactics. The Turkistan forces could not be trusted. However, this is guerilla warfare. As I mentioned above, all of us, much liked the General, had our lives under danger at all times. Even at the time of the Seljuks, fighting against the Crusaders, the conditions were very much similar. Later on, I read in the history of Muneccim Basi, an event very much like that of experienced by General Enver in Ceken. The martyrdom of Giyasuddin Keyhusrev I, in 1210, the son of Kilicaslan II, the Sultan of the Seljuks, was very much like the demise of General Enver. While Giyasuddin was pursuing the defeated infidel units, and pillaging their weaponry and ammunition, while he was a lone, an enemy soldier not knowing who he was, shot him. The dead body of the Sultan was completely stripped of his clothes. General Enver had told me: "I do not wish to die like General Talat in the streets of Berlin with an Armenian bullet. It is necessary for my life to be lost for the sake of the Turkish nation. If we cannot be a Gazi [victorious fighter], then we will become a Martyr." He definitely was an idealist, and he was of course sincere in his wish to die on Turkistan soil, fighting for her independence. He attained his wish,



and his name has gone down into immortality of the Turkistan history. I wish the world only consisted of persons who would undertake warfare only when they knew that they would be the victors. In that manner, no foolish fighter would have emerged to lose the fight. The late General Cemal had left a different last testament. When he had sent letters from Kabul inviting the Basmaci to come to an understanding with the Soviets, while he was thinking of attracting them to Afghanistan for the purpose of expelling the English from India, among the Basmaci the idea was formed that General Cemal was a dreamer and an adventurist. There is no doubt that General Cemal was an idealist. However, General Enver was a pure idealist. When we were in Bukhara he had stated to me: “if we are not successful, by leaving my corpse here, I will serve the future of Turkism.” In that, he was sincere. He knew what he wanted to do. He regarded crossing over to Afghanistan as only an adventure, and he was stating he never had that intention. Besides, what he had stated to Efdalettin Han was just that. Many of my friends, who were with the General, in his entourage, during the hours of his Martyrdom, later arrived in Turkiye; all of them, especially Mustafa Sakuli’s and Mirza Nefes Turkmen stated: “Turkmen Abdurrahman, who was defending Kurgan Tepe for the General, had informed the General several days before the Kurban Bayrami that the Russians had sent massive forces to Kulab on the banks of Amudarya, in order to cut his retreat route to Afghanistan. Amanullah, King of Afghanistan had sent three hundred men under the command of an officer by the name of Efdalettin, to serve as bodyguards for the General. They were with him at the Baysun expedition. Another letter arrived from Amanullah Han, when the General was withdrawing from there, arrived at a mid-point between Belcivan and Kulab, known as Gevrekli. In that letter, the King was insistently inviting the General to Afghanistan stating: ‘the embrace of our nation and the door of our state are open for you.’ Danyal Bey was commanding the unit at Gevrekli. The General called the commander of the Afghan forces, Efdal Han, and stated: ‘your duty here is over; return to your country.’ He also immediately wrote a letter to Amanullah Han stating: ‘I will definitely stay here. If I die, soil will be found in the land of my lineage to cover my body. Departing from here will be a grievous error. I also granted permission to your soldiers.’” Amanullah Han had already invited the General to Afghanistan, even when he was under the surveillance of the Lakays, by sending a relative by the name of Nurullah. The General’s answer was the same at that time. The General fought the Russians bravely at Ceken. He was martyred by a bullet of a fleeing Russian. His soldiers were dispersed, but Danya and Faruk Beys immediately concentrated all the forces and surrounded the Russians and completely destroyed their Battalion that had reached Ceken. That was the cause of Russians not knowing how the General was killed when they first received the news. Russians themselves did not know whose bullet killed the General or who it was that was killed. According to Mirza Muhittin and Mirza Nefes Turkmen, who were in the entourage of the General, the local Tajiks who did not recognize the General, stripped his body, uncoiled their turbans and as was customary, using that material as a shroud, buried him. It is surmised that what fell into the hands of the Russian agents such as clothes and writings had passed onto their hands after those Tajiks.

In the letters reaching me in Askabad, besides the one written by Haci Sami, there were the signatures of Turkish [Ottoman] Officers and Basmaci Chiefs such as Ismail Hakki, Nafi Bey, Halil Bey, Hasan Bey and others. In his letter, Heybetullah provided a detailed report of the trip from Usmet battles to Belcivan via Maca. Along those lines it was mentioned that Evhadi Ismurzin was surrounded and taken prisoner, but there was no other casualties. Heybetullah detailed how Evhadi was killed. Once again, let us remember that friend on this occasion. Evhadi was my old friend; he was with me from the very beginning of the National Movement. His woman was a Russian; he always thought of her. I would tell him: “that kind of thinking would cause you to fall into a calamity. Leave it.”

## *Guests arriving from Merv—*

When those letters arrived, since my friend Abdulkadir had gone to Taskent along with Sahveli, my wife and I were alone. Atabay and Kurban from Khiva and Kadi Mahmut of the Turkmen arrived; they consoled us. Kadi Mahmut invited us to his home. Nefise did not wish to go. Kadi took me to his village. We drank our fill of the good wine Kadi had himself made. There was a flute player from the Turkmen, who played well, which we enjoyed. Kadi knew Celaleddin Rumi’s poems well, and he was reciting them. I was translating them into Chaghatay Turkish in verse. That made Kadi exuberant. A friend of him who was present at the gathering was cussing-out another person who was not, with epithets such as tightwad and perfidious because of some action he had taken. In that connection Kadi recited a poem from the poet Baqa’I from Balkh. I translated that into Turkish, because it was easy: “even if that miserable person promises to give you the treasure of Harun, do not ask for it; it is not worth the pain of waiting for the false promises to come true.” They liked it so much that, even though I received no share of poetic skill, I felt as if I had become a poet. At midnight, Kadi brought me and Kurban to our home at Askabad (Home of Huseyin Kasimoglu of Tebriz). Meanwhile, he was singing Turkmen songs, swaying from side-to-side on his horse. Kadi Mahmut was curious about history and worked on it; he had agricultural fields in the vicinity of Merv. When I hid in Turkmenistan the first time during 1920, he had taken me to a site, known as Mahmudi, where Emir Huseyin and the Oirat emirs had quarreled in 1362.

On the way, we stopped at a village. It transpired that it was a place where the soldiers of Han Cuneyd spent time. We spent a pleasant few hours with them. They had good looking uniform-like outfits. We sent a photographer from Askabad and had their images taken, and sent those to them. We also had our pictures taken.

## *My letter to Rudzutak—*

On the twentieth day of the month, another letter arrived from Tashkent. Turar Riskilov had brought news from our friends. “Velidov had been pardoned by the decision of the Party Centre. If he likes, he can immediately come and speak with

Rudzutak; but he must keep in mind that his activities during the last few years are referenced as ‘Comrade Velidov, whose whereabouts is unknown.’” In the private letter Rudzutak sent me he wrote: “if you do not wish to return, I am undertaking the task of facilitating your journey to any country you wish.” This invitation by Rudzutak, who was acting as the Governor General of Turkistan, was significant. I immediately responded to him: “During the 9<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, while the discussion was on the issue of Profsoyuz (labor unions), you had shaken my hand with both of your hands when I had indicated to you and Comrade Tomski that those laborers who were members of the labor unions but not members of the Party must not be treated as privates in the Army, their self-determination and freedoms must not be taken from them. But, what happened? Three months after that Congress, Lenin gave me his twelve theses on ‘Nationality and Colonialism’ for me ‘to comment’ for the Second Comintern Congress. Despite those, Lenin had dictated the passage of the principle of the dictatorship of the metropolitan proletariat over the colonial proletariat in that Congress. Thus, his request for my comments and writings was made only ‘to learn my views.’ Lenin, who ostensibly was in favor of the Trotsky and Buxarin’s ‘working front’ supporting the ‘working people have the right to have ideas and free will’ immediately accepted the opposing thesis, and took the road to deny the free will and rights of the working people. This demonstrated that not only Stalin, but Lenin himself was no longer trustworthy, and socialism in Russia was tumbling toward Russian imperialism. All of us witnessed that including Trotsky. Now, who shall I trust to return? Are you certain of yourself so that I can trust you? You know that we do not have any conflicts on social issues, but you also know that I am a person who believes in reciprocal trust and sincerity among revolutionaries. Who, even people like you, whose sincerity I believe, are able to trust? I am convinced that the Islamic statement ‘a believer will not stick his finger into a snake hole a second time, after he is bitten the first time’ is quite true. I will remain true to my decision, even if I am to remain in the world of unofficial, to remain in freedom and the right to take a free breath. I wish comrades like you, Tomski, Frunze and Rykov, who have regarded me a friend and trusted me, health.”

## *The letter I wrote to Lenin—*

“20 February 1923

Dear Vladimir Ilich,

Due to your illness, it is possible that you might have been prevented from reading this letter or it might not have reached you. But since I sent copies of it to some other friends, it is now a historical document. Comrade Stalin ostensibly stated that under Comrade Rudzutak’s auspices I could return to the Party. In other words they (Party) would disregard the letter I sent to the Central Committee from Baku in 1920, outlining my opposition to and initiatives against Moscow by joining the Rebellion. However, who can believe that and return? Especially since you have abrogated the 20 March

1919 agreement which was signed by you, Stalin, I and my friends; by your order of 19 May 1920 signed only by you and Stalin? When I personally protested that latter order, you had characterized our 20 March 1919 agreement “only a piece of paper.” However, that agreement announced that Bashkurts would retain the right of maintaining their own army and that army was going to be under the command of Soviet Headquarters without intermediary stages. With your 19 May 1920 order, you have deprived the Bashkurt army of those provisions, assigning it to the trans-Volga army, dispersing the Bashkurt units as the trans-Volga Headquarters saw fit among its formations. Indeed, that is what happened and today there is no physical Bashkurt Army. Similarly, in the same order what was deceptively termed “attaching Ufa to Bashkurdistan” turned out to be the reverse, attaching Bashkurdistan to the Ufa province. Consequently, what was conceded to the “Russian Moslems” on 20 December 1917, “the right to secede from Russia,” should they choose has been destroyed from its foundations by your order of May 1920. From now on, following the defeat of Bashkurts, Kazakhs and the Turkistanis in the South-West and my departure from Soviet Russia as of tomorrow, a new era shall begin in their history; that is, rather than seeking their legal equality with the Russians (in the Russian context), that experimentation having failed, the transition to the international arena (for seeking those rights) is being made. My task will be to familiarize the world with the history of those struggles. The Veklikirus nation has already decided on the specific policy to be applied to the captive nations and tribes they are holding, not only in economic and social matters, but also in cultural affairs. The “Eastern University” which you established last year is operating as a center for these policies. A specialized “eastern affairs” group, comprised of Velikiirus personnel around the Central Committee has also been formed. The Central Committee has brought in certain individuals of the eastern nationalities of the Soviet domains, charged with the specific duty of preparing material for these “eastern specialists.” Those eastern nationals even published certain books and pamphlets. But, the topics they are to work on are assigned by your Velikiirus. These non-Russian intellectuals are not even being admitted into the debates on the “constitutions” which are being prepared to govern them. Today, the main task on which the Central Committee Eastern Affairs Specialists are working is to prepare separate alphabets and literary languages for each nationality and tribe, based on the extant local “phonetic” differences between them. In principle, the non-Russian communists are said to be serving only as consultants in this endeavor. In the latest issue of the journal *Kizil Shark*, published by the members of the Eastern University, contained a commentary by one Omer Aliyev of Daghestan. According to him, should the Cyrillic alphabet be accepted for the Northern Caucasus Turkish dialects, this would lead to Christianization. Further, he has reportedly said, it would be necessary to borrow the Latin alphabet in use in Azerbaijan. It is imperative that the issues of Alphabet and literary language (according to Aliyev) not require Russian help, but the aid of those governments formed on the basis of national political freedom, and should be accomplished by native scholars. These writings and efforts of the Azerbaijanis to gather the intellectual communist of the Turk tribes around *Kizil Shark* and one literary

language is said to be making the Velikiirus specialists nervous, angry. When Shahtahtinskii and Jelal Guliev of Azerbaijan defended a single alphabet based on Latin, Prof. Polivanov and other Russians are said to have stated that even if the Latin alphabet is accepted, this would be replaced by the Cyrillic and a special sub-set will be created for Turkish dialects, whose numbers were approaching forty. Shahtahtinskii retorted that the aim of Russians was not to allow standard literary language to live. It is now understood that, when you Velikiirus friends begin playing with the language and the syntax of a people, you will not let their collars free until they, too, become complete Russians. It is not possible not to be surprised to observe the differences between your current policies and your writings in “Against the Tide” and in your other writings, where you state that ideally, the rights of nations should be placed in their hands. Your representative comrade Zeretskii gave numerous conferences to our people, during the summer of 1919 while we were refurbishing our army in Saransk, to the effect that the Soviet government was the first in history to base the freedoms of captive nations on their own national armies. I myself published an article in Pravda in the same vein. It has not been four years since those events and it appears that your policies will be developing in the opposite direction. RKP may continue to claim, in Asia and the countries far away from Russia, such as Africa, that it will liberate them. The truth is, your Velikiirus become angry when people such as Gregori Safarov display the colonial policies of the tsar in Turkistan. Those Velikiirus enjoy hearing the native communists liken themselves to small fish being eaten by the whale, better if that argument were presented as a proverb. When comrade Artium was visiting us, he used to state his belief that except for China and India, the Soviet Russian culture would become dominant in all of Asia. Those native languages and cultures attempting to prevent this would not be worth dwelling upon, since they are only going to be used to spread communism. These and similar words were repeated elsewhere. Without a doubt, this will be carried-out and as a result all those nations who wish to retain their independence but have become your prisoners will view Soviet Russia as their foremost enemy. I mentioned these matters to you while you and I were discussing your theses on “Colonialism and the Nationality Question.” Later, I read your aforementioned theses in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* journal (No. 11) once more. You have suggested that even after the establishment of the worldwide dictatorship of the proletariat, “it would be obligatory for the vanguard nationalities to actively participate in the establishment of socialist regimes in the less developed countries.” This translates into perpetuating the colonial regimes in India by the British, in Turkistan by Russia, in Africa by French and the Belgium through their labor organizations. When I spoke with you and your friends in Ufa during 1919, never was there a mention of the use of terror to destroy the human self-determination. What happened? Was that the object of those revolutions? Piatokov was correct when he directed this question to you while debating the “labor unions” issues. You were beseeched not to take away those revolutions from the labor unions whose sweat and blood were spilled for it. It is said that even Rosa Luxembourg was of the opinion that no good would come of socialism, should it become a prisoner of

imperialist traditions serving great nations. If Russia has not descended into the lows of becoming the prisoner of imperial traditions, what business did it have concocting literary languages and alphabets from the regional vernaculars? If you are alive, perhaps you can personally correct some of these errors. I have but one request: I ask that permission be given to my wife Nefise to meet me in Germany; she could not accompany me tomorrow on the way to Iran, due to her pregnancy.

Ahmet Zeki Validov.”

I sent the letters to Rudzutak and to Lenin by way of private couriers. Sadulla Hoca, who had arrived in Meshed while we were in Iran, knew about those letters. My letter to Lenin was presented by my former aide-de-camp and member of the Central Committee, Abdurresid Bikbav.

### *Letters of Farewell written to some friends—*

Since we were going to cross to Iran in two days time, I wrote a letter to one or two Baskurt intellectuals. We sewed that letter to the layers of Sahveli’s boots. During 1943, I was relived to learn from my compatriots who have joined the Germans, that letter had reached the intended destination, read by many and acquired the designation “famous letter.” I had given a copy of that letter, in addition to some important documents, to a Turkmen merchant for him to bring to Mehmedabad. The text of the letter I sent my friends is as follows:

“I worked as much as I could in pursuit of our nation’s rights and freedoms. Our movement had brought excitement to citizens in Baskurdistan as well as in Turkistan. That brought many from Turkiye, Daghistan and Azerbaijan, even Afghans and finally General Enver into the fold. It is a pity that the Polish war ended in favor of Moscow. If that war had continued a few more months, General Enver arriving from Baysun-Guzar and the Samarkand Basmaci arriving from Cizak-Nurata could have taken Samarkand and Bukhara. Dynamite was prepared at various points along the railroad; that route was going to be closed to the Red Army in August, in the direction of Kizilarvad and Sirdarya region. It is a shame that Moscow found the possibility of sending significant forces. Despite the fact that circumstances had turned completely against us during August, I was working to sustain our fight and have all Sehrisebz and Samarkand Basmaci to join with General Enver along with Baskurt, Tatar and Kazak Officers at the end of August in the Baysun region. But, events suddenly turned against us. General Enver was martyred in battle. At the same time-frame (in September), the Turkistan National Congress meeting secretly in Tashkent tasked me with the duty of continuing with this struggle in other countries, write the history of the movement and organize it as an international case. I am goin to live either in Europe or in Turkiye. However, it is necessary to open eyes wide to the reality: this stage of this movement, meaning local uprising against the Soviets in order



to gain concessions, is not working. Now, our nation is a sheep that fell into the paws of the wolf.

However, there is the next and new stage of this problem that is about to begin: organizing that struggle. The problem of Soviet dominance in Russia, after the internal struggles are over, has become a matter between the states. Henceforth, great states will be dealing with that. Some day in the future, it will stop being a matter for the great states and will become a problem for the entire world to consider. The lies about Soviets going to the rescue of nations and colonies are exposed. Furthermore that converted socialism, which must necessarily be on the side of and defending the rights and legalities of those shouldering the related troubles, into the objectives of an imperialistic administration of an egotistic nation. I stressed those facts to Rudzutak, Turkistan Governor General of Turkistan in a letter, and another for him to relay to Stalin, Lenin and their friends. The program of Soviet policies applies not only to those nations that are captives of the Russians but also the neighboring ones, to establish Russian linguistic and cultural dominance. World socialism, which they have everyone work for, is only a means to reach their aims. To make the world Russian is not possible. Of course, the world is slow to understand all this. That is because, it is not easy to explain those free nations the true meaning of the imperialist nature of the Russian problem. Even the Young Khivans could not, until four months before the Russians blew the ashes of their government into the skies. Otherwise, in order to understand the truth, it is necessary for each nation to be subject to the prison of the Russians. Under all conditions, rebellions and uprisings must not be allowed in our country. The movement of Suleyman Mirzabulatov can only cause harm to our nation today. I had personally told him that in Bukhara. Good thing the damage was not great.

Now, the matters you must pay attention as much as you can are as follows:

1. To work for the education of the youth, and the training of scholarly and technical specialists.
2. Individuals who can undertake business to eschew private trading to enter the cooperatives. They need to get used to the idea and see that as their means of serving the people. I also had mentioned this at the Sterlitamak meeting of August 1919.
3. Expend energies to save our language and religion. The heaviest operation will fall on these two principles. Since it will not be possible to keep any organization alive except those established by the Soviets, to serve only their benefit, it will be necessary to pursue legitimate as well as secret efforts to that end.
4. During the second stage of our struggle, we must prepare with the belief that Turkistan matter will become part of the international scene. It is also necessary for the Edil and Ural Turks to believe in the inevitability of joining in with Turkistan. It is essential that our children must be taught that at home, on whom we have been lavishing attention since 1917. Even if the world powers cannot stop Communism, and the majority of the Asian states become

communist, since Communism is a sect that fans the flames of national longings, they will fight among themselves. Since we are now living in an era where airways are expanding to include trade routes, it will be impossible for Russia to keep the East-West trade in their own monopoly. Russian's digestion of Turk branches cannot be completed in less than a century. Because, that matter is tied to the successful Russification of Caucasus and Ukraine. However, those nations who have been subjected to the Russification policies will not remain passive; they will progress as the Russians will. At this point, I will write some of my thoughts for the future; do not regard them as divination: The remainder of the Twentieth Century is pregnant with large and momentous events affecting the future of all nations due to Russian Imperialism and their forcing of world revolution. Since there are no limits to Russian appetite, they will be chasing those events. And, those big events that are certain to come will allow us to be reborn. Countries where there are sizeable Moslem communities, such as Turkistan, will benefit from that. It will serve us best to insinuate that belief to the younger generations, as the Jewish populations do propagate their belief in the rejuvenation of the State of Israel. We are going to be working in other countries; but, I trust, our generation will not perish without seeing those days of deliverance. We had given life to the Baskurdistan National Movement through legal means. We established a national regular army by the decision of the congresses, by means of open struggle. We displayed our thoughts and intentions openly in the schools, national press. All this had already started in Turkistan prior to our arrival, in the form of uprisings. Most of the Basmaci were under the influence of the mollas [theologians]. We injected national ideas, ideals into that movement. Finally, a national figure of Turkiye joined the movement with his own officers. This is not an event that can be forgotten in a few years, or even in a couple of generations. Since the Turkish nation is devoted to the idea of independence, the memories of Canibek Han, Temur, Edige, Kucum and his sons Kayib Han and Ablay Han remain always fresh. Even those groups of us who remained in non-Turk environments and thus have forgotten or were about to forget their mother tongue sprang to life when the conditions were right and established new states. Among them are Tuyuhun, Sato and Tavdac Turks among the Chinese; Karlik and Kalac among the Indians; Arpat among the Fin-Ugur; Oguz, Agaceri and Akkoyunlu in Iran, Arab and Kurds were minorities but maintained their identities and later established their own states. They constitute historical lessons for us. I wish to have them written as novels and published. Ergenekon legend tells us how a brave Turk community was rejuvenated long after it was regarded dead. Now, we are living the most dangerous period of our existence among the Russians; but, we must not be discouraged. Personally, I never lived a moment of disappointment at the hours of a failure, because I have always been thinking of the future. The Branches mentioned above left their homelands in pursuit of their freedoms, but attained their freedoms once again. Our nation

is just like couch-grass, even if only a piece is left in the soil, it will revive to take over the entire garden. If we had remained motionless during 1917-1922 and not taken advantage of conditions afforded us to develop, it would have been difficult to make use of other opportunities. However, we made use of them, even for a short period. What we did will create even greater memories than Kucuk Sultan, and his son Murad Sultan; Busay Sultan and his son Iris Mehmet Sultan; Sultan Gerey (Karasakal); Batirsa; Salavat; Ablay and Kinesari events. The poems and couplets stated during this struggle must not be forgotten. The enemy, of course, will exert maximum energies to have us forget them. Whatever publication that could not be done within Russia can be done outside. Russia cannot keep the borders closed forever. If the publications that inoculate freedom and national determination can not be read inside our country, then they can be read outside and brought to homeland. Now, what appears to be a dead end and terror must not lead the nation to despair. Faith and love of freedom always point us toward the path of deliverance and serve as a vanguard.”

In the letters I wrote to Asurali Zahiri of Kokand and Sirkpay Akay of the Kazaks, the following additional sentences was also present:

“The Russians will work toward having us forget our language, religion and our emotional capital (dastans) that excited us endlessly. We must remain true to our reformed Islamic thoughts. Today, I have a strange thought: I surmise I am representing the greatest sorrows of the Turks. I suppose I and all our friends who had joined the Basmaci kept the last stages of this initiative, era, alive for our nation. Perhaps, you, Yunus Can Haci and I may not see each other once again. However, our nation must await a world-wide reconstruction. This is my final word to you: you must resist the efforts to erase this history of struggles from the memory. In two days, we are leaving for foreign countries. Hopefully, God will allow our children to meet each other, even if we can no longer.”

The following was written to someone from Baskurdistan:

“Today, I am happy about only one aspect: while our Suyundukov in Sherisebz; Ibrahim Ishakov at Kermine and Nurata were garrison commanders, they desired to join the Basmaci with their battalions. Our battalions at Troysk Kazarma near Tashkent also fluttered to join us. I calmed them. I urged them not to be in a hurry. Now, if our regiments, instead of I and Fethulkadir were forced to leave our country, it would have been a big problem to feed and house them in Iran or Afghanistan. Besides, all those Ozbeks and Turkmen who were involved in our movement are leaving the country. I recommended that those whose names were not prominent to remain in the country secretly. I wrote letters in that context from here, in Askabad. It is best for you to remain in the country, in accordance with the conditions, in order to continue our struggle for our nation for our religion, language and national existence. To escape means only saving one’s life or to work in the diplomatic sense. Those who cannot remain in our country must come to live in Turkistan and Eastern Turkistan. When conditions are right, you must send the youth to Turkiye and European countries for education.”

## Seven Weeks in Iran Khorasan

### *Crossing over to Iran—*

My wife Nefise was remaining in country, since she was due to give birth. On 21 February we got under way with a Turkmen named Anne Mehmet serving as our guide toward the city of Meshed in Iran. Two days earlier, we had sent some of our writings to Seng-I Sulak with a friend of Anne Mehmet. We walked about five kilometers from Askabad with Abdulkadir, in order not to attract attention. Our horses and belongings were to be awaiting there. The weather was clear with a full moon. We arrived at the Annau ruins. The carved writings on the entrances of the mosque were perfectly readable, due to the rays of the moon. I walked around Annau under the full moon, which has protected a civilization since centuries before Christ, thinking “this may be the last time I am looking at Turkistan.” That night, we stayed at Kavdanli Village. In the morning we crossed the village of Gendi Cesme, and arrived at Seng-I Sulak, meaning Deliktas in Iranian soil. The population of Seng-I Sulak was entirely comprised of Turks. We were the guests of Kurban Mehmet. The border guard kept us for three days, until orders arrived from his commander in Mehmetabad. I also received the writings there, which we sent two days prior to our departure from Askabad. Kurban Mehmet and Iranian guards were very hospitable.

After the permission arrived, we stayed two more days. We listened to narratives on Nadirsah and his son Riza Kulu. The village of Silgen, where Nadir Sah was born, was near here. Since the name of that village is written as Sigilan, it must be the plural of Cigil tribal name. They must have arrived here during the time of Sultan Sencer and Karahanids. They told us a recollection: The Turkmen in this region, as they were plundering Kucan, Bucnurd and Meshed would not touch the Turks in the vicinity of Tesiktas and Siglen regarding them as nobility of the Turks. The Iranians (Tat) and the Kurds would run away on horseback from those Turkmen, and their clothes would snag on the thorns of the shrubbery along the way. Since they were afraid to look back, they would think a Turkmen caught them; so they would shout “you son of a dog, do not catch me” and cry.

They related the Turkish poems written after Nadir Sah had his sons eyes put out under the influence of his ministers' intrigues. They are telling these as a dastan. When Nadir realized that what were attributed to his son were all lies, he had his ministers and other guilty parties executed at Kucan. He had built a hillock from the bodies of the dead; he climbed on top and saw the burial site of Imam Riza at Meshed and decreed that all was done, and no one else be killed. Despite that, the relations of those who were killed found an opportunity and killed Nadir Sah. Nadir himself was from Silgen village, close to here, from the prominent Afsar people. They are Sunnis. As they related, every hillock and stream here has its own story and history. In the hands of someone, we saw an old copy of an Istanbul newspaper. They listened to the news, even though they were quite old, with pleasure. They also had us tell them our battles with the Russians, and listened with rapt attention. Especially the news we gave them about the death of General Enver was very astonishing to them. They know the Kacars as the family that put an end to the Turkmen, meaning Nadir Sah's dominance over Iran; they know the Kacars as Iranified Turks. They also call those Tahransians speaking in Farsi as Kacars. They were very disgruntled of the first ruler of the Kacars, Aga Muhammed Han, and call him Aqdasi Sah. That means, they know him as the stableman of Nadir. They have great respect for their own Beys, especially toward Zeberdest Han. According to their beliefs, in Iran, and even in the world, the best rule, the Turkmen governance, was going to be established in Silgen which was the wintering quarters of Nadir. According to their beliefs, Nadir was never a Shi'ite; he was an open Sunni.

### *We are the guests of Abbas Kulihan—*

We arrived in Mehmedabad on 28 February. The population was all Turks; Persian is spoken only by the merchants. The commander here was an Azrbajani by the name of Abbas Kulihan. We are told that there are one hundred and six villages under the administration of Mehmedabad, and all were Turks. We remained there for nine days, until permission arrived from Meshed. Abbas Kulihan gave us many books on history, the collection of Mirza Mulhem, the large scale book of Taqi Han with the title *Nasix ut-Tavarih*. He was pleased to be speaking with me on these works which he himself had also read. Two telegrams of welcome arrived. One was from the Commander-in-chief of the Eastern Army, Mir Penc; the other was from the War Minister, who two years later became Shah of Iran, Riza Han. The Turkmen Kurban Mehmet, who had been our guide since Seng-I Solaq indicated: "Abbas Kulihan had shown you great respect; it would have been appropriate to give him something." I responded with: "if we were to provide bribery, would it not be seen as all he did was for money? We are of the belief that whatever he did was the result of his regards." To that Kurban Mehmet asked our permission to relay our sweet words to him. Reportedly, Abbas Kulihan responded with: "Lord, why did you have to say that?" In short, we departed for Mehmedabad on 8 March and arrived in Kocan during the second day.

### *In the homeland of Imam Gazzali—*

On the way, at the Allah-u Ekber Mountain pass, we were subjected to the severe winds as we had also read in the histories. We dismounted and clung to the rocks along the way. On 11 March, we arrived at the ruins of the famed city of Tus. We visited the burial sites of Imam Gazzali and Firdevsi. The ruined buildings on their burial sites could not be called mausoleum. They were so modest; it was sufficient to look at their burial sites, whose works I had read and heard much about them, to understand these two grandees were not fully appreciated in their own country.

### *Meshed—*

On 12 March we arrived at Meshed and entered the Palace of Lagali. We immediately made a tour of old art masterpieces; the mausoleums of Imam Riza and Harun Resid, Gevher-Sad mosque, and the mosque that was originally built by Alishir Navai, but the gilded dome was renewed by Nadir Sah for which reason the mosque is now named after him. We also copied many of the incipations carved on them. Toward the evening, we met with the commander-in-chief of the Eastern Armies, Mir-Penc Huseyin Han and the Governor of Khorasan whose name I now forgot, and the representative of the Foreign Affairs. Huseyin Han, a prince of the Kacar, and the civilian Governor had shown much respect. They ordered their administrators to show us the historical monuments and libraries in Meshed. On the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the month, Kurban Mehmed returned to his country, carrying many letters from us. That day, I purchased many books; it became necessary to buy another horse to carry them to Kabul. That day, we made acquaintance of the Afghan Consul Serdar Abdulaziz Han. When we indicated that we were going to Kabul, he assured us that he was going to assign five to ten soldiers to accompany us, and that our security was guaranteed by the Afghan Government. We were invited to dinner by that person and by the Governor several times. The wife of the Governor was Russian. He himself spoke Russian well. That lady was happy that the discussions were taking place in Russian.

That lady also reminded me that I had to change outfits. We had new clothes made in the Iranian style and had pictures taken in the Old Iranian format.

### *Hekimov—*

The Soviet Counsul in Meshed, Kerim Hakimov, was a Tatar. I knew him and his wife Hatice well, due to the struggles we were engaged between us in Russia. I expected nothing but evil from both. As soon as Hekimov learned of my presence in Meshed, he sent a man to the Lagali Palace letting me know he wanted to speak with me. We did; he told me that he would aid me in any way he can in using the libraries in



Meshed. He also informed me that an Ozbek intellectual by the name of Sadullah Hoca Tursun would arrive in two days from Tashkent.

### *Turkmen Cebbarberdi—*

On 17 March, we had moved to a hotel-like place called Sehzade Huseyin Han. A Turkmen by the name of Cebbarberdi contacted us. When the English were in Turkmenistan during 1918, he had collaborated with them with the hope of gaining the independence of Turkmenistan with their aid. The Russians had killed his friends. He knew that he would also be killed, so he sought refuge in Iran. He also brought an invitation from the English Consul to speak with me. I told him: “we have the intent to journey to Europe by way of India; therefore, I wished very much to speak with him. However, I have business I need to discuss with the Soviet Representative in Kabul pertaining to my family. Because of that, I cannot speak with any English politician before actually beginning the trip to Europe via India. Cebbar Aga would arrive daily. Since we thought that he would be reporting every word to his English chiefs, we did not utter a single word of criticism of the English policies.

### *Communications with Riza Han—*

On 19 March I sent two letters in Farsi to Riza Han who was de-facto ruler of the country as the Minister for war, via the Khorasan Army Commander of Iran. First was introducing us and our aims in the future, the latter was more of a memorandum pointing to the necessity of Iran’s cooperation with Turkiye and Afghanistan to jointly work against the Communist invasion. In the first letter I detailed what I did after the 1917 Revolution in Baskurdistan and Turkistan, how the Russians separated the property and food of those individuals who are not Russian from those of the Russians, and our relentless work against the Russian insistence of placing governments under a minority. I also added that, “since 1920 the organization coordinating all those activities has been working secretly and managed the uprisings. As for our aim, we intended to cross to Kabul from Meshed, thence to Eastern Bukhara to the Partizans under the administration of Hacı Sami; to return to Kabul, to cross into Europe and return back to the East after a year.” After recounting that I was a historian, that I published volumes in Turkish and in Russian on the history of Turkistan; that my friend Abdulkadir Cilkitabay (later, Inan) was also an author, that we had pursued scholarly activities in addition to those of political ones and asked for his help to us so that we could use the Imam Riza Library in Meshed. The second writing had the character of a report, addressed to “the exalted presence of the Islamic State of Iranian Government.” In that piece, the details of the 1917-1922 struggles of Turkistan and Volga-Ural regions were detailed in statistics. I narrated the decline of the population in five provinces from 8.084.700 to 5.029.512 in 1922, and the loss of property and wealth. I also added: “the policies currently being followed by the Russians toward

the imprisoned nations are the examples they will be following when they will rule over other Moslem countries. I related how Professor Krijjanovski gave a presentation at the Tashkent Party Congress explaining that it was the Soviet aim to conquer all the river heads of all river systems emanating from Northern Iran and flowing into Russia.” I also relayed what Suric stated at the same conference about the impossibility of solving the Russian Islamic problem without bringing the Soviet borders to Kabul and the Persian Gulf. I explained that Iran, Turkiye and Afghanistan needed to concern themselves with the issues of Russian Islam as if that is their own private problems. In that manner, the Western countries will also attach import to the matter as well. I also explained that all the Moslem branch units in the East of Russia had joined together during August 1921 under the singular “Central Asian Moslem National and Commons Society Center” (in short, Turkistan National Union), and that I was the head of this union having been elected in the Bukhara Congress in 1921, and that both of us were representing this society today. We believed that this society needs to have representation in Tahran and in Meshed, and that Iranian Government needs to have a Consulate in Tashkent as it does in Baku. That the Turkistan National Union will send materials to Iran, Afghanistan and Turkiye in order to inform the conditions of the Moslems; that we were not expecting any physical help with the uprisings from any of the three countries named, only an understanding of ideas and interest in the case. Since there will no longer a national school available to the Russian Moslems, it would be very appropriate for a primary and agricultural school to be established in Meshed, to conduct classes in Turkish and in Farisi. I told all this in sequence. Nevertheless, after explaining the facts that the Soviets would want to exploit the differences between the Sunnis and the Shi’ites, suggestion was made that “the Shi’ites in Turkistan, especially Mirbaba in Bukhara and Seyid Ali Riza in Samarkand who was publishing the newspaper *Sule-I Inqilab* and Abdulcebbarov in Cizak who have been working in favor of the Soviets, with all their attendant organizations, need to be invited to have a heart, because they have high-regards especially for you.”

In addition, I explained in that letter that a wireless communication organization between Turkiye, Iran and Afghanistan would be very beneficial; those individual Basmaci who have been leaving their country have the intention of becoming merchants in the Northern regions of Iran and Afghanistan, and that would only bring benefits to Iran.

### *Arrival of the Turkish Consul in Meshed—*

During the night of 17 March, we learned that the new Consular Officers Sami Bey, Tahsin and Feridun Beys representing the new Government established by General Mustafa Kemal in Ankara arrived. Sami Bey was known as the Traveler of Great Desert, a member of the old Jeunes-Turcs and a member of the General Enver’s inner circle, sent for me as soon as he learned of my presence in Meshed, for us to meet at the home of Hacı Kazim Rizayef of Azerbaijan.

We ate dinner there as well, and we spoke from six in the afternoon until two in the morning, for eight hours with Sami Bey and his friends. At the recommendation of Sami Bey, I penned short letters to Yusuf Akcura, Ziya Gokalp, Agaoglu Ahmet and Koprulu Fuat Bey explaining the latest developments in Turkistan, with the wish that they relay my high regards to General Gazi Mustafa Kemal. That was because a courier would be leaving for Tahrán during the second day. The Consular Offices settled at the home of the aforementioned Rizayef. As members of the Consulate, Sami Bey, Feridun and Tahsin (Bac) Beys were staying at Rizayefs. Feridun Bey (Kandemir) and I spoke quite a bit since; he later began writing in a slew of newspapers in Istanbul, on Turkistan matters, and published his memoirs of General Enver. He had brought with him a complete collection of the *Varlik* newspaper he was publishing in Sarikamis with like minded friends. Those newspapers and other books and publications were a very valuable resource for me to learn more about the Turkish Reform Movement and the conditions in Asia Minor that I had been following. Abdulkadir and I read all of them from cover-to-cover.

Tahsin Bey, prior to his arrival in Meshed was the Secretary of the Turkish Embassy in Moscow; as such, he knew of me well. Later, he married Ataturk's adoptive daughter Sabiha, and entered Ataturk's entourage.

During Monday, 16 April, there was the flag-raising ceremony on the building where the Consulate was located. Tahsin Bey and I performed the task by climbing on top of the roof. This was a very pleasurable task for me, because Sami Bey had informed me that additional Consulates could be opened in Herat and Balkh with the permission of the Afghan Government.

### *Sadullah Hoca—*

On the twentieth day of the month, I spoke with Sadullah Hoca Tursun Hocayef, who arrived from Tashkent, as indicated by Hekimof. Hekimof requested that that meeting take place in his own Consulate. I indicated that I would speak with Tursun Hocayef only at the home of Rizayef, at the Turkish Consulate. He agreed. "Hoca" was a member of the wealthy Tashkent families who regarded themselves having descended from the Prophet and used the epithet. He had a commercial house in Moscow. He had entered the Communist Party as a "political convenience." He was a rare Moslem member who had not given-up his daily five prayers. Since he spoke Russian, he has been serving as an intermediary between the government and the local population. He was also an important member of the Turkistan Soviet Government. This time, he was sent to Iran by the Soviet government in order to discuss the use of the river-waters that emanate from Iran and flow into Turkmenistan. However, Sadullah Hoca told me that he was sent after Hekimof's telegram arrived indicating my presence in Meshed; no specialists were present with him to discuss the contention of the water usage, nor was he handed any documentation. He had brought letters from Rudzutak and Turar Riskulof, proposing that after I travel a bit, I ought to return. I told him

that I was definitely going to stay in the world of democracy, never to return to the Soviets, and that I had indicated all this in my letters to Lenin and Rudzutak written from Askabad on 19 February. He remained in Meshed for over two weeks. I spoke one last time with him on 7 April, again at the Turkish Consulate. He had asked for that meeting. Sadullah Hoca stated: "The Basmaci Movement is still in progress. Haci Sami and others are still operating. The Soviet Government believes that you will go to Afghanistan to regulate the rebellion from there. They knew that the Turkish Government was going to send a Consul to Meshed. Now that you reached here from Russia just at the time the Consul arrived, strengthens the thought that you were in close contact with Turkiye while you were at home and that Turkiye agreed to open the Meshed and Mezariserif Consulates at your behest. They also heard that you had suggested the establishment of wireless telegraph between Ankara-Meshed-Mezarserif. We, members of the Society (Sadullah himself was in contact with the Turkistan National Union Society) have other wishes about you. We wish you health, perform valuable and favorable business for the homeland, and not to immediately cut your contacts with the Soviets. Otherwise, we are afraid you might be subject to an assassination. He suggested I speak with Hekimof. He added that he had not yet told Hekimof and the Russians at Tashkent that I was never going to return to Russia. I gave him a copy of the letter I wrote to Lenin from Askabad.

### *Precautions taken in order not to fall into the hands of Teymuris—*

Turkmen Cebbar Aga indicated that the Teymuri Hezare who was living on our way to Afghanistan had a Bey by the name of Samsamuddevle who was sold to the Russians; his father Sucaal-Mulk is an Anglophile. Therefore, the Soviets would not easily allow me to cross to Afghanistan but I would be caught and turned over to the Russians. It would be better for me to travel by way of Duzdab-India to Kabul. I was also thinking that Kerim Hekimof, who later became the Soviet Ambassador at Cidde, could do such a thing. The next day I spoke with Hekimov at the Turkish Consulate. He asked me if I was going to Afghanistan and that he wished to help me. That meant, he wanted to prevent the possible attacks by tribes along the way, ostensibly in a brotherly manner. In response, I told him: "thank you; I have the notion to remain here for a couple more months. I found some very valuable historical sources; I must read and learn them. I will let you know when the time arrives for our departure." I also let Sami Bey know of these talks, and asked that he contact the local military governor for them to increase my security. He had done so. He also contacted the Afghan Ambassador Abdulaziz Han and asked him to provide guards for me until we reached the Afghan border. Representative of the Iranian Foreign Affairs (Kar Guzar) asked me to visit him, and indicated we needed to leave the hotel where we were staying and must move into the private home of one Haci Seyd Hasim. The Afghan Ambassador indicated that we must not tell anyone of our departure date, keep our horses at a han [caravansaray]

belongin to them outside the city, that we must not visit there at all but to appoint a man, and that we would be leaving Meshed with about ten men. We took on a Kazak military deserter by the name of Abdulhalik Konusbay as a groom. He took care of our horses until the day of our departure.

### *Discovery of important works—*

Thus we remained in Meshed for five weeks from 13 March to 20 April and spent a marvelous time. While I was studying the works on the era of the Timurids and Nadir Sah, the two volume work published by Sani'ud-devlet about Meshed and environs became my guide. The most wonderful work I have done in that direction was to investigate Ravza library, the central temple of Meshed, from top to bottom. In that regard, I received the help of Consul Sami Bey. I presented a paper to the French Asia Society on the important works I found there, a year later, upon arriving in Paris. The most prominent of those was the famed Arab geographer's work, which lived during the latter part of ninth and the early part of tenth centuries by the name of Ibn-al-Fakih, and the attached works by Ibn-I Fadlan and Ebudulaf who were travellers. Fragments of these two travelers' works were interspersed in the great volume of the Arab geographer Yakut Hamevi, therefore known to the Europeans. However, it was also known that, from paraphrases found in other works but not included in Yakut's volume, the travelogues of the two travelers were more detailed and comprehensive. The Meshed copy I discovered contained the full-reproductions of both travelogues which were known not to have reached us up to that time. The day after discovering that work, I invited Consul Sami Bey to the library, and obtained the permission of the library director to take it with me to the private home of Seyid Hasim in order to make full use of it. Since I did not have a photograph camera, it became necessary to work day and night to copy it by hand. There was no end to my happiness when I found that work. I had a strange dream when I was a child. Ostensibly, the Tsar Nikolai had gathered several people around him, and addressing me he stated: "these golden leaves are my present to you." Those leaves constituted an Arabic work on the history of the Bulgars and the Baskurt. At that time, my father opined: "perhaps you will find an important work on the history of the Bulgars and the Baskurts." Now, I remembered my fathers' words. Later on, I worked on this Ibn-I Fadlan travelogue at University of Vienna as my doctoral dissertation. When it was published by the German Oriental Society, I became an honorary member of that Society and several others in Europe. Professor Minorsky published the travelogue of Ebudulaf. Because of that discovery, I wrote the following into my diary: "perhaps Ibn-al-Faqih and Ibn-I Fadlan will provide a new direction to my life." In reality, that was so. Now, the second printing of the Ibn-I Fadlan is issued.

### *The answer arriving from Tahrán—*

We spent the greater part of our time in Meshed organizing the information I collected in order to inform Turkiye on the condition of the Moslems in Russia. At the same time, we were preparing copies of the twenty-six page memorandum written at the Bidene village of Samarkand on 23 July 1922 under the title "Social Revolution in the East and the duties of the Eastern Reformist Intellectuals against Recidivism." Previously, a summary of that work was sent to Ankara and to Mustafa Cokayoglu via Kabul. Finally, it was complete on 15 April. Meanwhile, the answer we have been impatiently expecting from Tahrán arrived. Riza Han was inviting us to Tahrán in order to discuss the details of the issues presented in my writings. Also, an article appeared in the newspaper *Asr-I Bistum*, meaning, the Twentieth Century, which was close to the Government, announcing the arrival of myself and Abdulkadir in Iran from Turkistan and that we were in contact with the Iranian Government. We were very happy to see that, because I had sensed from the telegram that had reached me at Mehmedabad had stated "Welcome, all help will be rendered" indicated that there was someone in the entourage of Riza Han who knew me, and would understand the issues we were representing. Seyid Hasan Takizade, who was originally from Tebriz, was the Iran's Governor of Meshed during 1921. He was representing Iran in Moscow during 1922. The primary support expressed in the telegram, and the interest in our writing and the reason for the appearance of the news of our arrival in the *Asr-I Bistum* was this Takizade and his entourage. A year later I met this esteemed gentleman in Berlin. He served as a member of the Government in Iran; Ambassador to London and later Speaker of the Iranian Senate. Now, he is a member of the Sadr-I Eshraf-I Iran [roughly: chair of the prominent personages of Iran]; he is alive. May God not let us experience his absence. I wrote to Tahrán in gratitude, that it was necessary for me to journey to Kabul; if I could return to the East after the European trip, I would definitely visit Tahrán.

### *The reports sent to Turkiye—*

The writing I produced for the Turkish Foreign Ministry, per the advice of Consul Sami Bey, was quite lengthy. I sent copies of that writing to Yusuf Akcura, Rauf (Orbay), Agaoglu Ahmed and Ismail Suphi Beys. We attached to that long letter a report on the activities of General Enver in Turkistan, and also copies of the aforementioned "Social Revolution in the East." In that writing, as it was suggested to the Iranian Government, the problems of the Russian Moslems were a matter that concerns Turkiye, Iran and Afghanistan at the same rate.

In that report, I mentioned the suggestions I made to the Iranian and Afghan Governments and the necessity of writing a common policy against the Communists. In addition, it contained commentary on the death of General Enver for the Turks of Central Asia, and how that constitutes an important turning point for Turkiye and



Turkish history; that the writings of Serif Bey on the Sarikamis events and his like against General Enver caused saddening; that Muhtar Bey's continuing with the old diplomacy at the Moscow Embassy is faulty, and that the intervention was received with irony among the very realist political circles of the Soviets, and that nobody was going to be deceived through those means in today's Russia.

That report was written in a *mélange* of Central Asian Turk dialects, with an effort to make it sound more like Ottoman, was carefully read by General Gazi Mustafa Kemal. I learned that fact from the mouth of Atatürk himself during 1930. Those writings are now in the archives of Turkish Foreign Ministry. During 1927, as Professor of Turk History at Istanbul University, I presented my lithographed course texts to Ahmet Hikmet Muftuoglu. He wrote back: "The language of these lessons are now in Turkish of this locality, and they are read easily and tastefully. However, I had carefully read the reports you had sent from Meshed, written in Central Asian dialect, despite the difficulties in 'decoding' them. In those reports, you had laid out the events before us truthfully and sincerely, and outlined your valuable thoughts for the future of *Türkiye*. Even if you had not produced any scholarly work in your life, and left only those reports to us as a legacy, they would have been sufficient to immortalize your memoirs in our country. However, those writings represent the latest chapter of the Turkish History. Now, you have defined the oldest Turkish eras in these lessons you have published, and utilized the works found in the Turkish libraries for this result. Let God grant you to the occasion to fill the two thousand year gap between those the oldest and the latest eras."

The memorandum entitled 'Social Revolution or possibility of Recidivism against the Duties of Eastern Revolutionary Intellectuals' considers the struggle between Capitalism and Communism around the world, and the future of that struggle. "That includes those who are being educated in the East, who are generally socialist, on the side of the social justice and reform. What could they do under the current conditions of communism becoming a tool of imperialism and the creation of colonies, after having lost its original purity of the time of Marx and represented by Trotsky in our time, is the focus. The primary principle advanced is that Socialism will never be defeated. However, since Russia and Germany were defeated during the First World War, in addition to their civil wars following, Socialism took a wrong turn. That would lead to the weak and exploited nations to live under very difficult conditions at the hands of the Communists-Socialists. It was also stressed that the Asian countries, which at the present are in a semi-colonial status, must not become the tools of great imperialist countries.

The Russian intelligentsia that has been worn-out from the World War and the civil war realized that they could not compete against the capitalist nations that are still standing, nor could they recover what they have lost. Because of that, when the extreme poverty is spread across the world and the Russian populations lead that spreading, they believe they can pull alongside the advanced countries, and even get ahead of them. For that result, they believe that Russia must concentrate all of her power, will and wealth in the hands of a dictatorial regime.

The continued plunder of Germany will increase the economic crisis in the West, and Bolshevism will benefit from that. When the Second and the Third Internationals lose their prominence in the agenda, dominating Europe will become a national goal for the Germans. However, socialism, meaning communism, left in the hands of an imperialist nation will turn into a tool to gain the weak Asian and African communities by every kind of lies and false promises. Those Asian and African nations will remain the source of raw materials and market for produced goods and after the realization of world socialism the local and African proletariat will remain weak. They believe they will join in with the nationalist, middle and small bourgeois against the Western proletariat who will be dominating them to establish socialism. Therefore, the local socialists and communists that are emerging, or made to emerge, in the Eastern colonies of the Russians will never gain the trust of the Western proletariat. They will never be allowed to independently develop socialism in their own countries; they will all be used as fire-tongs; a new layer of 'revolutionaries' will be elevated above them, and the old will be destroyed. Since the Western proletariat believes that after the world social revolution is realized, the Easterners whose countries provide the raw materials will always remain their prisoners, Russians take Europe as the center for the understanding of world history or the political, economic and social aspects and reference the Eastern countries only as reconquerable. The theses of Lenin on the 'nationalism and issues pertaining to colonialism' which he presented to the Third International, and have them approve, provides the bases of the entire policies in this regard.

The revolutionary Eastern intellectuals, under such difficult circumstances will collaborate with nationalist Easterners. All the while, they may join forces with non-communist Western nations, in order to benefit from their help, for the sake of the future of their countries. Even under those conditions, it will be necessary for the Eastern revolutionary socialists to continue their struggle against the recidivists in their own countries, which will be supported by the Western Imperialists. They must also work with all their might to strengthen the middle class. That means, even while the Eastern Revolutionaries are fighting the Russian Imperialist Communism, in their own countries they must side with revolution. That is because, if the Easterners can take appropriate precautions in time, they can avoid the danger of becoming the prisoners of Western proletariat. The future of the strata making their living by the labor of their hands is bright; because, the masks covering the face of the technical developments of the capitalists era are torn. We must send our offspring to Europe to learn the techniques; however, we must learn the economics and politics from the Bolsheviks from whom we must protect ourselves. Especially, taking advantage of the opportunities, in the sphere of intelligence, there is much to learn from them."

The above memorandum was duplicated with Sahpirograph and distributed to the Moslem Communists who were collaborating with us, at the time when the Soviets were semi-victorious against the Polish and were able to move their armies to Turkistan under the command of Kamenev and Budyoniy, and when the battles became very intractable. It proved very useful in concentrating the wide-spread ideas

and to illuminate some dark-spots and a copy was sent to Hasim Saik who was in Kabul as the Bukhara Representative.

After we left Russia, we wrote several copies. Despite the fact that it was in Central Asian Turkish, we distributed several copies beyond the governments of Iran, Afghanistan and Turkiye, to the following liberal intellectuals who were not socialists: Emin Resulzade of Azerbaijan, who was then in Istanbul; Mirza Abdulvahid, representing the Bukhara youth in Berlin; Azimbek of the Kazaks; Fuat Toktar of the Tatars; Islambey Hudayarhanof, Alimerdan Topcibasi, Mustafa Cokayev in Paris; Poet Muhammed Ikbal in Lahor; Seyid Hasan Taqizade in Tahran. Emin Resulzade published that writing in the journal *Yeni Kafkasya* (N. 16 & 17 & 18) which he began to issue after moving to Istanbul. However, since it was not translated into English or into Russian, it did not create a wide-spread reaction. On the other hand, the effects it created in Turkiye were important.

Another task I undertook in Meshed was to investigate Ravda, Gevhersad Mosque and the mosque that was constructed by Alishir Navaii, and later took on the name Nadir Sah Mosque from the perspective of history of art, to the extent I could understand at the time, and copied their inscriptions. After my arrival in Turkiye, I published those in *Encyclopedia of Islam* and elsewhere.

## *The Azerbaijanis in Meshed—*

There were many Azerbaijanis in Meshed. Among them, we spoke often with Hacı Kazim Rizayev; Mirza Ibrahim Tagiyev; Poet Esadullah Zavarzade and Mecid Efendiyev; Pharmacist Gulam Kolsuz and Gulam Riza. They helped me to see the manuscripts in private hands. Pharmacist Gulam, a lover of Turkish history, brought a copy of *Kelile and Dimne* which was translated from Persian to Turkish for Emir Kanber Ali bin Kopek Qusci. He was the vezir of Ubeydullah Han, from the Qaracin uruk, Qaucin Branch. In the introduction of this work, it is written that at the time of Ubeydullah Han, Turkish was valued more than Persian. Aside from that, they brought many very rare collections of poems in Persian and in Turkish allowing me to learn. All these Azerbaijanis were nationalists and intellectuals. Many were from Caucasian Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani Mahmed Hasan Baharli, who was a vanguard among the Turks of Russia in pursuing independence, had written a book entitled *Azerbaycan*, combining the geography, history and ethnography. While I was in Samarkand, I had heard that book was published in Baku during 1921. Kolsuz Gulam brought me that very book. That was because, I had written a similar volume on Baskurdistan and Autonomous Turkistan Republic combining the geography and statistics. We were only able to publish a large-scale map of Baskurdistan showing the cantons in 1920.

Among those Azerbaijanis, someone belonging to the Karakoyun uruk was busy writing the the Azerbaijan and Turkish history. I saw this person once more in Tahran during 1956. He has sons studying at the university. On 5 April, we were the guests of someone belonging to the Bayat Branch. He brought us works on the Turks of Iraq.

A portion of it was the printed work of Dr. Fahreddin Sevket, and some manuscripts written by others. I thus learned that the Bayats, who are the prime branch among the Shi'ite Red Heads, were living in the region of Diyarbakir when Temur arrived. There, they were called Bayavut. Later, Temur had the majority of them placed in the region of Bagdad as his own military force. The Safavids placed them in the regions of Mazendaran, Rey and Khorasan as their own military units. Originally, they had arrived with Hulagu. That means, they were Bayavuts, considering themselves a Branch of the Mongols. At a feast, Esadullah Zevvarzade recited some of his own poems. They were good. He and other gentlemen asked me many questions concerning history. The answers I provided occupy quite a bit of space in my memory. For example, what is the origin of Cengiz Han; why do Russians refer to us Azerbaijanis as Tatar? I responded with: "Cengiz Han, as Professor Bartold determines, is from Kara Tatars. According to the Chinese records, the ancestors of Cengiz lived to the West of the Chinese Geat Wall. They called themselves Kara Tatar and Sato. Another name they adopted was Cumuk. They moved from Western Turkistan to the East. The ancestors of Cengiz regarded themselves from the same roots as the Gokturk, from the Branches that emerged from Ergenekon. Later on, they went toward the East, perhaps due to internal wars, and dominated the Mongol Branches living on the banks of Kerulen and Onen Rivers, acquired their languages over time. That is much like the Hungarian Kings, who were originally Turks, who later acquired the Hungarian (Ugur) language. However, during the rise of the Cengiz, those Kara Tatars living in Kansu spoke Turkish. Those arriving in the West, in Asia Minor, during the time of Cengiz's sons, and along the Danube River, were all speaking in Turkish. That is perhaps they belonged to the Branches from Inner Asia when they arrived in Azerbaijan. The Arlats, who administered Seki and Noha were a Tatar Branch. Much like the Volga Bulgars, because they became mixed with Alci Tatar, they called themselves Kazan Tatar; and those Turkish Branches in the Crimea took the name Crimean Tatar.

## *From Meshed to Herat—*

Finally, during midnight of 20 April, we left Meshed and moved to the palace where our horses were. We travelled at speed for about seventy kilometers to prevent the word of our departure reaching the Russians in time, and became the guests of the Kaymakam [Provincial District Administrator]. The Afghan guards were with us. In the morning, a man dressed in Turkmen clothes, perfectly armed and riding the best of the Turkmen horses passed us at speed and continued on at a place called Turuk. We thought he was a man of the Suca-el-Mulk who was sold to the Russians as well as the English. This man travelling fast definitely let the Teymurids know of our pending arrival. We slept uncomfortably at Hayrabad. The second day we arrived at Turbet-icam, and met with Sevket-ul Devle, who was the Kaymakam. Apparently, the Governor of Meshed had let him know we were going to pass through here. In the morning, he assigned two of his soldiers to accompany us. He also directed that: "if there is

any indication of an assault by the Teymurids onto you, return here immediately.” We had not yet travelled five kilometers from Turbet-I-cam, armed cavalymen of the Teymuri came after us. We reached a small village of five to ten houses, and we told them that we had forgotten our belongings at the place of the Kaymakam. We returned to Turbet in the company of our Afghan and Iranian guards. We remained there that night. The next day, the Kaymakam provided a few more soldiers as guards. On 24 April, we arrived at Kafir Kale, which is an Afghan border castle.

A Turkish Officer was passing through, by the name of Kel Fehmi, who at one time was with the Basmachi in Eastern Bukhara; he was now visiting with the Border Guard Commander Colonel Muhammed Emin, on his way back to Turkiye. We obtained fresh news of the activities of Haci Sami. Haci Sami had heard that I was on my way to Kabul. On 26 April, we stopped over at a Turkmen Yamut village near Saray Cerxe and arrived at Herat.

## V. Five Months in Afghanistan

### *Scepter of Temur era in Herat—*

The Kabul Government Foreign Affairs official placed us in a building named Carbag. He informed us that we could leave for Kabul immediately, if we so chose. However, we stayed here for five weeks, in order to see the monuments in this city that served as a capital for one of the greatest periods of Turkish history. The Governor as well as the local scholar by the name of Salahattin Selcuki, who told us he was descended from the Seljuks, rendered us serious help in exploring this city and the environs. Every day, I visited the Timurid Herat, just outside the walls of the Old Herat, and investigated every structure. I also made a map of old and Timurid Herat. To stress the fact that the Timurid structures were much neglected, it will suffice to mention that nobody knew the burial site of great Turkish poet Ali Sir Navaii who led the cultural life of Herat during the latter half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and had the greatest influence on the development of this city. Alishir in his work entitled *Vaqfiye* clearly noted how far apart the medrese and mosques and the soup kitchens were. Since it was recorded in other sources the specific location where he was buried, it was easy for me to determine the place of his mouseleum. I measured the surrounding structures, where the foundations were visible. There was a headstone where the records indicated. But, according to the gentleman who was a keeper of the vineyards in the vicinity, that headstone was brought in later, and the site was called as “Sah-I Gariban” [roughly: ruler of the strangers, disowned] by the dwellers of Herat. In the old days, there was the tradition of lighting candles; later on, the stones were dismantled [perhaps by the pilgrims?] In that manner, I fixed the location of his burial site and learned that he was known as the ruler of the outcast. In addition, I also visited a village five kilometers north, known as Gazirgah, containing prosperous burial sites, as well as the buildings Alisir had constructed at a village known as Ebul Velid. I recorded many of the inscriptions therein. The results of these five weeks of archeological investigations, and the site-plans I recorded, I later published in the *Islam Ansiklopedisi* which was being published in Istanbul, under the entry Herat.



## *Manuscripts in Herat—*

During the time of the Timurids, there were many libraries in Herat. The wealth of those were recorded in and provided historical sources for the books written by Abdulrahman Cami, Mirxond, Xondemir and Muiniddin Esfezar. However, today there is no public library as it exists in Meshed. I saw some manuscripts being held by private hands, with the aid of the author of the *Ittifak-I Islam* newspaper, aforementioned Salahattin Selcuki, and the Undersecretary Besir Ahmed Han, and those remained safe in nooks and crannies, in the buildings surrounding the Great Mosque of Herat, and Gazirgah. There were no historical works besides the *Vesilet'us-sef'at* about the burial sites of Herat. However, in one the manuscripts on Islamic law, I discovered the remnants of an original Eastern Iranian language, "Khorezmi," which disappeared at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century during the invasion of Cengiz and left in place Turkish. This was just as important discovery as Ibn-Fadlan in Meshed. That was because no works were left behind in that language. I found more excellent copies of that cannon-law volume in Istanbul and published it in Germany during 1927 in the journal *Islamica*. I published the dictionary written in Korezm in that language, during 1951 among the Istanbul University publications and dedicated it to the Twenty-second International Congress of the Orientalists. I worked with the German Iranist W. Henning, who is today in University of California, and others, on the remnants of that language in other volumes. Later on, many scholars worked on that language in Russia.

## *Russian couriers in Herat—*

While we were staying at the Carbak Palace in Herat, two Russian couriers arrived. They wanted to speak with us by creating an occasion. They were pursuing Abdulhalik, who was working as our groom, to discover information about us, when we were going to leave for Kabul. I told all this to the Governor of Herat, and requested that we be transferred to another location. They did so. However, the Afghan Foreign Affairs Official also realized that even though as couriers they could leave for Kabul anytime they chose, they were finding excuses not to and wished to remain in Herat until we departed. As a result, we acted as if we sold our horses, and transferred them to another location. The Governor and the Foreign Affairs Official let us know that they had appointed several guard-soldiers to accompany us to Kabul.

## *Hezarecat—*

Finally we left for Kabul on 28 May via Hezarecat. On 30 May, we reached in the village of Kerrux. Since I knew that the last Ferghana ruler Hudayar Han had died here, I attempted to find his burial site; however, the accompanying soldiers did not

wish to stop. I was very sorry for that. During my second visit to Afghanistan, I was able to investigate that site thoroughly. The mausolea of the Han, his Chief Minister and Seyhulislam were well built, and ornate with inscriptions. I was able to copy all those inscriptions. When I was conducting research in Ferghana during 1913, I had published in 1914 the information I collected from the officers who were still alive of Hudayar Han's court under the title "The Last Days of Hudayar Han." I did not notice any of his sons or gradsons visiting his magnificent mausoleum.

On 4 June, we entered the country of the Gur, who had played such an important part in the history of Afghanistan and India. As of late, as a result of my my personal investigations, and the Japanese scholar Enoki, it is understood that the origins of this tribe goes back to the Turks and the Ephtalites. However, we were not able to establish contact with them on this route. When the Ozbek Ruler Sayibaq Han invaded here, he had an inscription carved on a stone; an English Officer saw it. When we asked about it, we were not able to discern any information. On 5 June, we recorded many Turkish geographical names around there. After crossing the Tasbulak location, we arrived in the main capital of the Gur of the Old, Ahengeran-Firozkoh. There are many ruins there, but the soldiers accompanying us stated that if we were to leave the caravan-saray to investigate them, we might be attacked by the Gur. For that reason, we must obtain permission from Kabul, and obtain additional guards. At the coffee-house, when I spoke with the local Gur, I found someone who knew the history of Mirhond well. According to him, Ahengeran is the name of the inner castle of the old city of Firuzko. They also told us stories that the workshop of the legendary Kave mentioned in the dastan *Sahname* was here. In the Province of Gur comprised of twelve thousand houses, the real Gur people constituted seventy-five hundred of them. From Herat to here, we had not encountered a traveler or a caravan on the road. From Ahengeran, when we arrived at Bedgah, we encountered our old friend Ali Riza Bey. He was a prisoner of war in Russia, and became the director of the Military Academy established by the Young Bukharans. In his entourage, he had his wife Meryem Hanim, daughter of the famed scholar of the Kazan Turks, Ubeydullah Bubi, some Basmaci, and a Tumen Tatar from Western Siberia by the name of Ahmed Canbak. They were taking the black horse mounted by General Enver, named Sultan, in their tow. In the middle of the mountain, we remained together for a while. They told us the latest events in Turkistan, and described the Kabul environment. They were returning to Turkiye via Iran. Later on, we spoke many times in Turkiye. He and his wife resided in a building given to them by General Fevzi, and died there. Ali Riza Bey was a Turkish Officer who had left Bukhara with General Enver and was with him throughout his adventures. Here, the Iranified Mongols, Bisuut Mongols, Bayat and Katagan Turk remnants were living between the mountains. We saw a couple of them. The Shi'ite Hazara was in a war with the Suleyman-Xil Afghans who had arrived from the border of India for the high pastures. Form those Hazara, a haci [pilgrim] and his two sons were accompanying Ali Riza. Now, they accompanied us. They were Turkophiles.

On 14 June, after leaving the station of Ak Ziyaret and arrived at Lersek, we encountered the Turkish Officer Halil Bey who had participated in the General Enver

events, along with Mirza Muhiddin of Ferghana who was also in the entourage of General Enver and their friends. They too were going to Turkiye via Iran. There, we remained among the Bisuut Mongol Hazara for several hours. They were calling themselves Turk. They told us that “we are Turks; Chaghatay brought us here,” meaning, they were referencing the son of Cengiz, Chaghatay. They complained about the bad treatment they were receiving from the Afghans. These Bisuuts were speaking Turkish until several generations. An old man from Derbis repeated several Turkish words he could recall; they were Chaghatay: for example, “gazgan,” instead of “kazan.” They were spread into branches such as Isentimur, Devletbay, Derbisli, Qaptasu, and comprised of some twelve thousand homes. Just like the Kazak Turks, they regarded themselves as descended from a companion of the Prophet, Sa’d Vaqas.

### *Race with the Russian couriers—*

While we were leaving for Kabul, the Russian couriers caught up with us on 17 June at a place called Cavkul. One of them was Russian, the other, an Armenian by the name of Karapet. They also had two or three Russian soldiers with them. They had long pistols and maps to their hands. They began speaking directly in Russian with us. We spent the night in the same palace with them. The Armenian was speaking knowledgeably about the fates of Generals Enver and Cemal. Even though they were feigning not to know who I was, from their speech they were making it clear that they knew very well. In the morning, with Abdulkadir and Abdulhalik, we thought how we could separate ourselves from them. I told them “I will find a way; you travel at all times looking at me. You can do what I tell you by my gesture and do it without talking.” On the way, I also told the Afghan soldiers that it was necessary for us to separate from these Russians. After leaving Carkul, and crossing a pass, we followed the river flowing toward Gazne. After we crossed a location known as Curleyis, the road following the deep waterbed became very narrow. From the other end, I noticed that a sheep-herd was coming toward us on the side of the mountain. When I saw that, I told the Russians: “let us race.” I told Abdulkadir and Abdulhalik to go on ahead, since their horses were not as good as mine. Right behind me, there were two Afghan soldiers, and behind them, the Russians. I stated in Russian: “now we race,” and moved ahead at maximum speed. Meanwhile, the sheep-herd and the caravan of donkeys had approached us. When I noticed that Abdulkadir and Abdulhalik passed that caravan, I crossed between the rocks and the sheep on the left at maximum speed. The two Russian couriers who were following were running at speed as well. However, they could not cross the path between the rocks and the sheep-herd, and fell among the sheep and the donkeys. In addition to throwing several sheep and donkeys into the river, they also tumbled down into the river with their horses. The loads on the donkeys, the wheat, and barley were also spilled. Even though the Russians did not die, they were left under the hooves of the horses, way down the river. I shouted at them in Russian: “you can no longer catch Validov; you have wasted your time since Herat”

and whipped my horse. Along with the Afghans, we moved fast. After spending a little time in Hestru, we continued on our way through the night. We arrived in Kabul on 18 June at eleven o'clock.

They hosted us at a building known as the Old Treasury. Three days later, an Uzbek employed by the Soviet Embassy saw me and told me the fate of the Russians. They had accounted the events as: “Validov ambushed us. He proposed a race, and threw us down the precipice, then ran away.” The clothes of the poor Russians were all torn, and arrived at the Embassy, wounded and covered in blood. I also learned in Kabul that that Armenian was the one of those who killed General Cemal in Tibilisi.

### *Kabul—*

As soon as we arrived in the city, we searched for the Bukharan Ambassador Hasim Saik and the former Bukhara Government Head Osman Hoca and their friends. We found them, and immediately went to the Afghan Foreign Ministry and the Turkish Embassy. Ambassador General Fahri called me “mucahit” [fighter for a sacred cause or ideal] lifted and kissed me. On 22 June we spoke with the Minister of Foreign Affairs Veli Muhammed Hand as well as the Minister of Education Feyiz Muhammed Han. I had spoken with both when they had visited Moscow during 1919. We had given a feast to their honor and spoke of the future of the Islamic world in my room. They invited me to eat with them at the Foreign Ministry, and stated that I could remain in Kabul as long as I wished; even permanently. In addition, Veli Muhammed Han also asked me to help him in reviving the scholarly life in Afghanistan, and to organize projects for the purpose.

### *General Fahrettin—*

On the twenty-third day of the same month, General Fahri gave a feast at the Embassy, and in summary, stated: “when I was the commander in Medina, I was crying that the Islamic nations could not get along. After I arrived in Kabul, I again told the newspaper reporters. I stated that I arrived in your country in order to wash the tears from my eyes, and to rest my aching eyes. Unfortunately, these eyes are still teary. You are a historian; you write it into your notebook ‘General Fahri states that Islamic nations will not unite, union of Islam will not take place.’” I responded with: “what you proposed in Medina and sought to pursue in Kabul, that union of Islam, was devoid of a base. The union among the Islamic nations must be established not only on religious feelings, but also on the bases of economic benefits. What is more important than a union around religion is the idea of nationality we are learning from the Europeans. However, it is not correct to base it upon fanaticism. That would make especially the shovenistic Iranians suspicious. Firdevsi had grafted that idea onto them, but their vanity is unhealthy. They wish to graft it onto the Afghans as well. The most important business for us to learn in the world today are the social revolutions and recidivism

movements fighting each other, and to determine our course. Respect for the laws of every nation, countering aggressions must be the principle pillars of the policies of the Turkish nation. I wrote all this a year ago while in Samarkand, and sent it here to the Bukharan Ambassador Hasim Saik. I recommend you take a look at it.” I added that: “after spending some time in Europe, I intend to visit Turkiye and, if necessary to return to Kabul.”

On 24 June, General Fahri, his aide-de-camps, secretary, doctor and adviser Vasfi Bey returned our visit. Such an act by a Turkish statesman is appreciation, because they knew me as a mucahit. Two days later, we saw General Fahrettin once more, but under curious conditions: there was a fire in a building on the other side of the river which was next to the palace where we were staying. Abdulhalik woke me. Along with Abdulkadir, we took hold of the buckets present in our palace, and went to the fire. After taking water and climbing the roof of the house, we saw our General who was busy putting-out the same fire. I told him: “praise be, two Turks, one from Asia Minor, the other from Central Asia putting out a fire in Afghanistan.” The Afghan crew that was like a firefighter group had not yet arrived, but the people were there; they were providing the General and us with water. The General responded: “thus, wherever there is an event, Turks are ready there.” We laughed. Later, the firefighter group arrived; the fire was extinguished.

## *Haci Sami leaving Turkistan—*

In the morning, Osman Hoca let us know that Haci Sami had left Eastern Bukhara and arrived in the city of Hanabad in Afghanistan. We spoke with General Fahri, and requested that Ismail hakki Bey, who earlier was a Liaison Officer in the entourage of General Enver, to be sent to Hanabad to gather information. Haci Sami was wounded in the knee. On 26 June 1923, a letter arrived from Haci Sami. He stated that he had great difficulty mounting a horse, and intended to return to Turkiye for medical attention. On 30 June, Osman Hoca and I wrote back to him, asked him not to leave Northern Afghanistan (Hanabad), and we would relay our thoughts to him via Ismail Hakki brother; that we were in discussions with Afghan Government and added: “you are a revolutionary; we are certain you will not be disappointed under difficult conditions. We will struggle on the path of this holy independence. Let us carry on that path with faith.”

A couple days later, those who left the country along with Haci Sami, individual letters arrived from Turabbek, Mamurbek, Sadrettin Han, Mustafa Sakuli, Arif Kerimi, and the members of the Baskurt Army whom I had left with Turabbek, namely Eyyup, Islam, Varis, Heybetullah, Ibrahim, and the Turkmen intellectual Ahmet Nafiz in addition to the new Turkish Officers Sabri Efendi, Nafi Efendi, Yusuf Ziya Efendi and others. They did not know what they were going to do, asking what to do, where to go, how to earn a living.

That day, one of the worst and biggest and calamitous events of our history was taking place. That was because the Turks of Central Asia had never before surrendered their destiny to the enemy unconditionally in this manner. Now, they will be just like a flock of sheep. Russians will apply any policy they choose. Nobody will be able to say anything, or complain, and a serious uprising will not be able to be sustained in the near future.

Our plans with Abdulkadir and I also will change. We had not thought of the Haci Sami Movement to dissolve this quickly. According to the plans we made in Ashkabad, we would journey to Iran, Afghanistan thence to Eastern Bukhara to Haci Sami. Later, if necessary, we would collect our families and return to Kabul. Now that Haci Sami, the leader of the Basmaci of that day having left the country, all plans changed. The Afghan Government was not in favor of all these Basmaci leadership to arrive in Kabul. All of them leaving via Iran to Turkiye meant the end of the independence movement. That, we did not want.

## *Decisions we made for our future activities—*

During 26-28 June, as the President of the Turkistan National Union [TNU], I invited Osman Hoca, Hasim Saik, Mirza Isamettin and others, and stated that we needed to talk in detail as to what we were going to do and take some decisions. We talked for three days. Our destiny took the shape in the direction it has now, during those three days. Accordingly the following actions needed to be taken:

1. Since Haci Sami has left Turkistan, it is necessary for the committee representing TNU outside the country to be restructured and strengthened. The coordination of matters is desired and needed to be completed in Kabul, Turkiye and France.
2. Determination of the main ideological statements of the TNU, and publication of a journal to carry them. Since Zeki Velidi is the Head of the general organization both inside and outside the country, Abdulhamid Arifoglu will be the Kabul Branch Head; Osman Hoca in Turkiye and Mustafa Cokayoglu the European Branch Heads. Hasim Saik, if the Afghan Government permits, will be sent to Japan. I was to establish the General Headquarters of the TNU in Berlin, after speaking with Mustafa Cokayev; or, if Istanbul were to be relieved of the military occupation, to live there. I was to occupy myself with scholarship, to write and publish a history of Turkistan national struggle; produce publications in foreign languages and acquaint the world with the issues of Turkistan. It was also decided that Abdulkadir were to be with me, for him to travel to Russia either secretly or openly and return to either Berlin or Istanbul; my possible visit of Kabul in one year; publishing a journal in Istanbul with Osman Hoca and Abdulkadir, were all decided. Sadreddin Han and Turabbek were to remain in Meshed and present themselves as the representatives of the Turkistan Society to the Iranian government; Mustafa Sakuli



and Arif Kerimi were to arrive in Kabul, if the Afghan government permits, to work with Arifov, the entourage of Haci Sami to be attached to him. They were to accompany him if he were to cross over to Iran, stay in Iran or cross over to Turkiye. Most importantly, Osman Hoca, Abdulkadir and I were to cross over to India with the permission of the English Government, to invite Sadreddin Han from Peshawar, Turabbek and Abdulhamid Arif who at the time was at Citral, in order to determine their operational plans closely.

These were the decisions taken. We let Haci Sami know of all this via Ismail Hakki. A portion of these plans could not be carried out due to want of financing or the opposition of the English Government in India; except, the general outlines were realized. Osman Hoca and Mirza Isameddin had some monetary resources left over from the Bukhara Government. They left for India on 10 August. Since I and Abdulkadir were intending to visit Europe, we applied to the Afghan Government for financial assistance. The Prime Minister Muhammed Veli Han definitely promised to render such aid. Later, via Osman Hoca, who was acquainted with the English, applied to the English Representation in Kabul for permission to travel to Europe via India. We also indicated that we wished to consult with our friends in Peshawar. The English Representation welcomed our application, and indicated that they will write all this to the English Indian Government in Simla. Since we were not aware that the Ankara Government was settling in Istanbul as well, we did not ask for a visa to stop over in Istanbul from General Fahri. That was a mistake. On 1 July, Osman Hoca, Hasim Saik and Mirza Ussam went to Baginan and spoke with Muhammed Veli Han, the Foreign Affairs Minister on what we were planning to undertake.

## *The writings we prepared for the Afghan Government—*

Muhammed Veli Han, addressing me, requested that I write our plans for Turkistan and our thoughts on the educational aspects of Afghanistan, in order to be presented to “Ala Hazret,” meaning King Emanullah Han. He also added that if four of us who arrived in Afghanistan were to stay here and concern ourselves with Afghan educational matters, they would be very happy.

I prepared those reports in a few days. With the help of Osman Hoca and Hasim Saik, we translated them into Farisi. On 17 July, Abdulkadir and I went to Bagman and saw our friend Feyz Muhammed Han, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and presented him the said reports. Those writings were received with very positive impressions. What I wrote for Emanullah Han occupied five large pages, on the Turkistan-Afghanistan relations. The following is the summary:

“The features of close relations between Afghanistan and the now imprisoned Moslem Turkistan people are known. However, the direction those relations are taking since the 1917 Russian Revolution deserves deeper learning and description. Until

today, the freedom of Afghanistan depended on the competition between the Russians and the English. However, if one day that competition ends, and Afghanistan remains alone, what would be the relations between imperialist Russia and Afghanistan? Invasion is Russia’s only aim. In order to prepare for that eventuality, Russia is already taking precautions:

1. First of all, Russians desire to create a nationality dispute in Afghanistan. They will support an extreme Afghan nationalism. A Russian arriving as the Russian Ambassador in your Court having already stated: ‘we Russians expanded our country basing ourselves on our nationalism and continue doing so. You, too, can only survive basing yourselves on the Afghan elements and forcing others to accept that fact you can remain alive’ is the demonstration of that policy. However, what they are speaking among the Hazara is different. They have already gained the leader of the Teymuri Hazara, Samsam-ussaltana, who is in Behriz. On the way to Kabul from Meshed, only the precautions taken by your Consul Abdulaziz Han, together with the Iranian Government, by providing Afghan and Iranian soldiers, we were able to prevent an attempt our being taken prisoner by the Russians. In order to occupy the Northern portions of Khorasan and Afghanistan already populated by the Turkish elements, they mean to tell the Ozbek and Turkmen Communists ‘half of your nation is left in Afghanistan and Iran; it is your national problem to join them together.’ In the journal *Voyennaya Mysl* [Russian Defense Policy], year 1919, on pages third and fourth, there are matters to be read by your Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. The invasion and occupation of the Northern portions of Afghanistan are sometimes presented as a matter of Soviet economic policy. I was informed of what Epstein, Michaelov and Suriz stated at the Tashkent Communist Party center during December 1922, in front of the Moslem Communists without hesitation. They had stated: ‘the Afghans do not wish to see the increase of Turks (Ozbek, Turkmen) elements in Northern Afghanistan. They are afraid of the Russians, as much as the Turks. However, it is necessary to occupy Afghanistan all the way to Kabul, and have an ignorant ruler like the Emir of Bukhara to govern it. That is imperative for the economic development of Turkistan.’ That means, they wish to inculcate enmity toward the Afghans among the Turks under their administration, while advancing the Russian policy of occupying Northern Afghanistan ostensibly according to the economic policies of the Soviet Union for the affluence of Turkistan. For that purpose, their mentioning your Excellency’s name in some Russian newspapers as ‘the Peter the Great of Afghanistan’ is nothing but a fraud. At some point, the Russians will come to you with a ‘water proposal’ in order to take the waters of all rivers, including Heri-rud and the left arms of Amudarya, under their influence. The writings in the journal ‘Turkistan Economy’ being published in Tashkent, and other serials on this topic talk about opening

a canal starting at your border, to pour their waters to the Caspian Sea via Merv, to water the Karakum Desert, are worthy of attention. The fact that the Russian thoughts on controlling the waters of the rivers flowing in Khorasan and Northern Afghanistan and the Professors Rosenkampf and Krjijanovski's economic plans concerning the development plans of Southern Russia based on the resources found in Afghanistan and Iran, such as the rivers, are important matters to learn concerning the future of your country.

What, one may wonder, can be done against those plans, which also involve the fate of Turkistan? Allow me to express my thoughts:

1. India may attain her independence some day. If the Russian and English competition ends in Central Asia, it would be the most important objective to create a third competitive factor rather than remaining alone with the Russians. The reason for Afghanistan and Turkistan losing their economic position in the world balance is due to the trade routes sliding into the seas. Today, it would be appropriate to search for a solution to revive that road which crosses Central Asia, for example by negotiating with the United States and Japan, to build railroads and car routes from China to Iran. It would be helpful to describe the profits to be derived from this activity both to Japan as well as the United States and the Central Asian Branches and sending a delegation to them, by adding representatives from Turkistan.

It is possible that United States and Japan may not wish to compete with Russia and England because of Central Asia. Unfortunately, they already have an issue because of Manchuria. However, I am thinking far into the future. They may choose to revive the historical Silk Road that connects Western Asia to Central Asia, with all the profits they may derive from that big project instead of fighting over Manchuria.

2. If a third power is not introduced into the mix, and Russians and the English remain where they are, Afghanistan cannot remain as a tampon state. It will be necessary to choose one of two powers. In that case, it will be necessary to choose the side of the English. That is because, if the Russians construct a large canal from Amudarya to the Caspian Sea, they will be able to place millions of Russian immigrants along that canal and the upper reaches of Amudarya. They are resolved to repeat what they did during the time of the Tsars, of placing Russian immigrants in the Curcan and Astrabad regions of Iran, which they were forced to halt due to the 1917 Revolution. If such a scenario develops, Afghanistan will have to cooperate with England or with the independent India that will replace her. We never had any contact with the English. That is because they never wish to see another Islamic state being established in Central Asia next to Afghanistan. However, their domination of India

cannot continue against the Indian national movement. Since they regarded their presence in India as temporary, they could not settle the English there as they did in America, New Zealand and Australia. The English will utilize an opportunist policy until they leave India. From that perspective, if a third power does not arrive in Central Asia via China, it would be appropriate to think about collaborating with England or India which will be replacing her. It would be suitable to come to an agreement with England to build a railroad connecting Quetta to Kosk via Herat. That would aid a rapid economic development of Afghanistan, Khorasan and Iran. In general, it is important to import transportation technology into Afghanistan. Otherwise, you will remain tied to Peshawar and Quetta in India in the smallest matter of steel.

Nothing will come out of a mutual Islamic understanding in Central Asia, in the form of a Pan-Islamic movement. That is because: all unions that do not have an economic base will only remain in words. However, if Turkiye, Iran and Afghanistan were to be tied to each other economically and culturally against Russia, in unison, it will be a realistic solution. In my opinion, Afghanistan and Iran need to concentrate their economic development in the Northern regions, next to Russia. The goal of building railroads from Turkiye to Iran across Northern Iran to Kizil Arvat Russian railroad station; railroad from India via Herat to Kuska as well as highways, need to be the aims of this triumvirate of nations. In that case, Tebriz, Rey, Tus, Herat, Balkh, Gazne will regain their true nature of being the central point of Islamic civilization. In that regard, I wrote to all three nations my opinions as a manifesto. Since I was completely sincere in what I wrote, there is nothing I hid from anyone. It is necessary to avoid the national shovenism which the Russians are systematically advocating. In that case, Islam will benefit for all three nations. In each of those nations, the rights of all tribal rights must be recognized, schools must be opened for the Ozbek, Turkmen and Tajiks in their own languages in Afghanistan, and in serving in the armed forces they must not be treated differently than the Afghans. In that regard, the contents of chapters 24, 25 and 26 as described in the Seljuk vezir Nizamulmuk's *Siyasetname* must be kept in mind.

3. It is an error to expect a revolution in the Eastern policies of Russia. The policies Soviets inherited from the Tsarists will develop in the same direction and will culminate on the bases of Marxism. I wrote a piece under the title 'Social Revolution in the East' while I was in Samarkand during the last year (1922) and had sent it to Hasim Saik Bey. Now, I provided a copy to Muhammed Veli Han. In our country, since we leaned on the communist intellectuals, that pamphlet was written for them. It had positive effects. In that work, since you are a revolutionary and intellectual ruler, I had touched upon matters that may to attract your attention. Our real enemy is the Russian communist-imperialism and the rotting recidivism found amongst our midst.

4. It is time to establish a wireless connection among all three nations, and to combine intelligence operations. Russians and the English possess strong intelligence organizations.”

In addition to that presentation, on 5 July 1923, written in Kabul, I wrote a short letter to Muhammed Veli Han, the Minister of Foreign Affairs:

“I prepared in writing, at your request, what I had indicated to your Excellency orally, for presentation to Ala Hazret. However, I thought about all for a period of one week, and now I am submitting it. I have a few words I would like add to you. I fear what I wrote may sound like giving advice to Ala Hazret. I am attaching great import to this matter of inviting the United States and Japan to Central Asia. Back in 1918, when the Japanese and American military forces arrived in Siberia as a result of the removal of the Tsarist government, we had sent my friend Talha Resul to the American and Japanese commanders, and members of our Tashkent Branch of our National Committee, Mustafa Sakul, Arif Kerimi and Sadreddin Han to the Japanese Representation that was opened in Gulca. Now, if your High Government approves, we wish to send Hasim Sayik to Japan for him to work toward these goals. During the past month, since my arrival in Kabul, I endeavored to learn what has been done to understand Russian policies in your country. I reviewed all the newspapers and journals since the death of Emir Habibullah. I also spoke with individuals you suggested in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; however, the impressions I gained is very troublesome. Some newspaper clippings have been sent from your embassy in Moscow, and from your Tashkent consulate. However, newspapers and journals containing such articles must be brought as a whole, and a collection must be established at the library of the Foreign Ministry. *Zarya Vostoka*, published in Tbilisi, is important. For the past five years, Russian immigrants in Europe have been publishing and the researches done by European countries on Russia are being issued as books and journals. I recommend a compilation of all. Now, as Haci Sami is leaving Eastern Bukhara, the aforementioned Mustafa Sakul, Arif Kerimi and Sadreddin Han are with him. Mustafa Sakul and Arif Kerimi are Tatars who had completed their university educations in Russian institutions. Mustafa also knows a bit of French. If you were to employ them, they can be helpful in following the Russian publications. Sadreddin Han knows Persian well, and is a scholar from Tashkent. He and Abdulhamid Arifov from Bukhara can help you follow all the publications emanating from Turkistan. I am grateful to Ala Hazret and to you for the care and respect shown me in your country. I am indeed certain that the positive impressions left on Your Excellency, Feyz Muhammed and Serdar Abdurresul Han of our talks in Russia will serv as a guarantee of our future good relations between us.

At the end of my letter, I must repeat that the destiny problems of Turkistan and Afghanistan are not matters that can be solved by half measures. Talking with Japan and the United States must be taken seriously and if they do not take the proposal seriously the first time, this issue must be repeatedly brought to their attention. This is all I know. Deep respects and greetings of brotherhood.”

Ahmed Zeki Velidi, 15 July 1923

## *A strange happenstance—*

We were writing this portion of my memoirs with my dear son Subidey at Uludag, during the nights, where we were due to the occasion of winter sports. We read the following news in the Istanbul newspapers dated 4 February 1966: “a Japanese scholarly delegation will arrive in Istanbul in order to research the old Silk Road stretching from Western Asia to Far East via Central Asia. The Japanese scholarly delegation will begin their work in Istanbul on 9 February. The delegation will investigate historical remnants, customs, and commercial conditions along the way following the route from Ankara, Kayseri, Aleppo, Beirut, Damascus, Hamadan, Tahrán, and Afghanistan on the way to Japan. The delegation is headed by the well-known author K. Fukuda and contains faculty member of the Tokyo University, K. Nagassawa; from Aichi University, S. Suzuki; from Hagasusia P. Company, K. Fujiu’ara; from the world’s largest newspaper, *Asahi Shimbun*, author M Takagi; and the television specialist from the same newspaper, M. Yoshikawa.”

I had presented a paper to the RCD [the former Regional Development for Cooperation organization] Congress meeting in Tahrán during March of 1965, stressing that the contemporary development of Turkiye-Iran and Afghanistan was closely connected to the revitalization of this old Silk Road. It was published in the journal *Turk Yurdu*, May 1965, Volume 4, No. 5. The English version appeared in the first issue of *RCD Bulletin* published in Tahrán; but was not included in Afganistan RCD.

My recommendations on educational matters and the response of Amanullah Han—

In the report I presented separately on 15 July:

1. I presented the fact that it was necessary to establish an Afghan scholarly and archeological society, in parallel with the French Archeological Expedition which was at that moment working in Kabul, along with the Afghan National Library. Since I had brought with me, for those purposes, volumes on the history of Iran and Afghanistan published in Russian, but I had not taken along works on the Islamic geography by Arabic scholars. I had thought that I would find them in the Kabul Central Library. After arriving in Kabul, let alone the works of Western Orientalists, I discovered that there was not a Kabul Central Library. Those manuscripts that belonged to the Palace were kept in a room of the Kabul Central Military Command, which let the rain water in on them and expressed my anxiety over these conditions. I proposed that a course be opened immediately to train the Afghans who would work in the aforementioned new scholarly society and the library.
2. The establishment of a university comprised of five schools. For the purpose, inviting scholars from the outside and Turkiye, to found a high level course to train university faculty members. A) Law and Politics B) Economics and commerce C) Natural Sciences and Mathematics D) Language and History



E) Medicine and Anatomy. The proposal for this university was quite long. Personally, I promised to provide help for the establishment of the scholarly societies, libraries and the university whether or not I was in Kabul, especially in the acquisition of books.

These proposals received such enthusiastic approval that Feyiz Muhammed Han, who was administering the Ministry of Education, gathered the Education Council on 19 July at the Palace of the Ruler Emanullah Han. From the Afghans, Mevlana Abdulvasi; Officials of the Ministry of Education; teachers of the War Academy and Security; Head of the Pashto Society, Abdurrahman; Ambassador to London, Abdulhadi Han in addition to Feyiz Muhammed Han as well as the Chief of the French Archeological Expedition, Monsieur Facher, along with four French scholars constituting his entourage; one German Professor; Vasfi Mentés Bey of the Turkish Embassy; Bukharan Ambassador Hasim Saik and I were invited. Feyz Muhammed Han, who was presiding, first read the report he himself had written, and explained that it would be best to start this project with the establishment of a Middle School. For that school, the educational program prepared by the teachers of the aforementioned school was perused. However, Feyz Han indicated that they did not have the teachers and books necessary to keep such a school in operation, and indicated sorrowfully that they were of the opinion of teaching even the Tajik youth in Pashto (meaning, Afghan). I indicated that it would be most appropriate to teach the classes in Afghan to the Afghan students; in Farsi to the Tajik and Turkish to the Ozbek and the Turkmen. They did not want to see that. On 21 July, I once again went to Bagman to speak with Feyz Muhammed Han who wanted to speak with me. He was very sincere. He confessed that his country had remained very backward, and their dreams were very wide, that he would remain Minister of Education and asked me to become his Deputy. That day we ate a bulgur lunch at the Foreign Affairs Villa with Veli Muhammed Han. They spoke of their memories about us during their visit to Russia. Feyz Muhammed Han indicated that they spoke quite a bit with a General who was the Deputy Head of the Russian General Staff in Tashkent, and showed me the sentence that General wrote in the day-book of Feyz Muhammed Han, in Russian, “I wish to speak with my close friend Feyz Muhammed Han in Kabul, soon.” That was even though there was no talk between the Afghan Delegation and the Russian General Staff about the latter’s visit to Kabul. So, the Afghan side regarded the words of the Russian General as arrogance, as if he was stating that “we will invade your country, and talk to you.”

On 23 July 1923, I obtained passports for myself and Abdulkadir from the Bukharan Embassy for our journey to India and Europe. Our photographs stuck to our passports were so ugly that we were worried how we were going to show them to other countries. Thus, we became citizens of the Bukharan People’s Republic which existed only in words.

The Kurban Bayrami began on 25 July 1923. The Ruler Emir Emanullah Han served as the imam, and after the prayers he climbed the pulpit and delivered his sermon. He spoke in Farisi. Among what he said, he related a poem: “when it comes to

Islam, it has no defects in itself; whatever shortcomings are detected, that is because of our Islamness.” His Grandfather Abdurrahman Han had also repeated the same poem. After that, he spoke in Turkish and stated, in the field of politics “I am not only working for the Afghan Nation. I pray to God for the prosperity of the Turks, Iranians and Turkistanis whose representatives are among us today.” Thus he beautifully replied to the long report I had written and submitted.

## *Hasim Saik and my little finger—*

On 29 July, we received many letters from our friends in Hanabad, from Haci Sami. Ismail Hakki Bey, who was sent there, brought them. Since the Afghan Government had not given permission for them to arrive in Kabul, Haci Sami, along with his entourage of thirty-five individuals, were on their way to Turkiye via Herat and Meshed. Especially the letters of Sadreddin Han and Mustafa Sakuli were very bitter. Hasim Saik was the one who was most sorry. Hasim was a Bukharan “donme” [convert to Islam from Judaism] but was assimilated into Turkism and a poet friend. He had written the “tezkeré” [biographies and prominent works] of Bukharan poets of late. He also had his own “divan” [a volume of collected poems]. He had gone to Turkiye with the Young Bukharans, and studied at Darul-muallimin [Teacher Training College]. In 1918, while he was returning to his country under very convoluted conditions via Baku, he brought with him *Milli Tettebbular* journal, Mahmud Kasgari’s *Divan-u Lugat-it Turk*, and *Dede Korkut*, which were very important discoveries for the Turkistan educated. It must have been because he stated that he had learned French at the Teacher’s College, they made him Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bukharan Government which was established during 1920. Since he was extremely cowardly and feared everything without cause, all he learned via the Foreign Affairs channel scared him. When he realized that events were getting dicey, he chose to be an Ambassador instead of Minister, and ran to Kabul. Now that Haci Sami and his friends were leaving the country, he was completely perplexed. That day, we went to see Veli Muhammed Han. He told the Minister of Foreign Affairs his reaction with his tears. On the way he kept repeating that he was going to commit suicide. After arriving home, he talked about bad dreams and that he had seen Feyzullah. Finally he went to his room and lay down on his bed. I went to his side and consoled him. It turned out that his pistol was cocked. I wanted to take it away, he did not let go of it. Osman Hoca and Haci Isamedding were also with us in the room. Then, the pistol went off; my little finger was shattered a second time after the war, which was at the end of the barrel. We immediately called the Turkish doctor Munir Bey and he arrived. Ismail Hakki Bey would always run everywhere when needed. That day, the head of the Ferghana fighters Sir Mehmed (Blind Sirmed) had arrived in Kabul with his entourage. When he heard that I was wounded, he cried and stated that his arrival in Kabul was a bad omen. Half of my finger was detached, and was tied to the remainder; and the doctor took us to the hospital. I was anesthetized, put under, and they took out

the scattered bone fragments, and stitched it back together. That finger was causing me torment, because it was wounded a second time. Since 1918, in armed struggles, I found myself under fire many times, during those five years. But I was never wounded in a manner that would threaten my life. Once, in the Ural Mountains, the Soviet machine gun riddled the saddlebag under me and the maps inside; my horse was killed. My calf was hit lightly. I mounted another horse, and continued fighting with that wound. At another occasion, at a place called Kana, the same poor little finger was wounded. Thus, I completed that long struggle with two little finger wounds. However, my friend Hasim Saik was very grateful to me for being wounded for him; he was happy that he avoided death. Three days later, I saw Hasim Saik in his home once more. According to what Haci Husamettin told me, he was drinking continuously, and speaking of suicide once again. Since I was his friend, I told him everything. He would not take offence. That time, I told him: “you are a remnant from the lineage of Moses and Harun [Aaron the Just]; how would you find the courage to commit suicide; you tore my little finger for naught. If you had begun to drink ten days earlier, my finger would have remained unhurt.” He grabbed my hand and kissed it. After we left Afghanistan, he remained in Kabul. He could not go to Japan. He was appointed a Counselor at the Ministry of Education and a Professor at the University. Finally, he left behind a large library on Turkistan and passed away at Kabul during 1961.

### *Sirmemet Bek—*

He was born in Ferghana, was mobilized in 1915 by the Tsarist Government to serve in the War-Front duties, and was sent with his cohort to the Polish Front. When he returned in 1917, he could no longer endure the atrocities committed by the Bolsheviks in Ferghana, raised the standard of rebellion with his friends and fought against the Russians for years. His story is long; he had written those, in the form of his memoirs and sent them to me.

After it became impossible to continue the fighting in Ferghana, he left his country with the aim of joining General Enver, and to cross over to Afghanistan. The Afghan Government placed him, along with his brother Nur Mehmed and their entourage, in the same palace with us. Back in 1920, I had sent a member of the Baskurdistan Government, an intellectual by the name of Ildirhan Mutin, to remain with Sir Mehmed in Ferghana. He had served as a secretary in Russian as well as a teacher in military matters. The first time I saw Sir Mehmed, he immediately told me: “it was a very good deed that you sent me Ildirhan; now it is our fate to join together in Kabul.” Even though he was not a literate man, he was a patriot. His leader and his military adviser was “Rumalaq” named round stones. The Afghan Government required him to visit the Russian Embassy to ask for permission to return. He went twice, and cried that: “Afghans forced me to go to the Russians and disgraced me.” While I was leaving Afghanistan, he remained in Kabul with his entourage. Finally, his brother was in jail for a few years during the Second World War; now both of them are in Turkiye.

While I was in Kabul, I took him to see General Fahri. The General came to visit us in return the second day. After the General left, Sir Mehmet stated: “As there are differences between individuals, I now understand that there are similar differences between nations. The personal visit of a High Official representing Turkiye was my greatest award at the end of our struggles. Otherwise, I regarded myself thrown to the deepest levels of hell when the Afghans sent me to the Russians. I arrived from Russia; it was not necessary to arrive in Kabul in order to beg the Russians. The General thus washed my wound.”

### *Other business I undertook in Kabul—*

Another important task undertaken in Kabul was to peruse the printed Turkish materials brought by the Embassy staff, including *Yeni Mecmua* collection, works by Ziya Gokalp, Fuat Koprulu, discussions among the Turkish philosophers on Ottomanism, Turkishness and Islamism “Tuzukat.” Likewise, I also studied the Afghan publications. In addition, starting on 3 July, my occupation was to study the manuscripts haphazardly collected in the Kabul Central Command, visiting the monuments around the city, especially those belonging to Babur Mirza and his sons, and Bagram ruins and carefully collecting their inscriptions into my notebooks. Among the manuscripts, the most important were: a copy of Resideddin’s *Cami’ut Tevarix* containing excellent miniatures, copied during the lifetime of the author; Timur’s Tuzukat, in various copies; the great *Cami’al Vathaiq* containing very valuable documents on the economic history of Turkistan during the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries, which, unfortunately, was lost later; works on the history of Kashgar and Kashmir; and documents pertaining to the last century Afghan rulers. Also, on the way to the English Embassy, I spoke with the representative of the Indian Ahmedi. They provided the printed copies of all works on their sect. An Ahmedi doctor by the name of Fazil Kerim requested that we visit Qadiyan Township, the center of the Qadiyan, and indicated he was prepared to provide the expenses of that trip. He indicated that they were descended from the Mirza of the Babur. There were two individuals whom I regarded close, beside the poet Abdurresul Han who thought clearly and open-mindedly and Feyz Muhammed Han. One of them was Abdulhadi Han, who was the Ambassador to London; the second was the Afghanistan’s Bukhara Ambassador Serdar Abdurresul Han. Abdurresul Han and I were in Berlin during 1924-1925. Abdurresul Han was very Islamic, but was very open minded and realistic, he wrote a kaside [eulogy] for me, and read it to the guests who were assembled at his home at his request. During that gathering, I told him, in a jocular manner, of the encounter with Doctor Fazil Kerim and his invitation for me to visit Qadiyan and his offer to pay for the travel expenses. I asked him “shall I accept the money against the travel expenses?” His response was: “of course accept it; it is a hair from the swine” and caused the Afghans present laugh. There were several other pleasant occasions in Kabul. I used to tell them that, even if it is a few kilometers long, the construction of a

railroad would be important to introduce transportation technology to Afghanistan, and the necessity of building highways.

## *My final talk with the Minister of Foreign Affairs—*

On Thursday 20 September 1923, I spoke with Foreign Minister Muhammed Veli Han one last time. This time, they provided funds for our travel to Paris. Muhammed Veli Han was not an Afghan by origin; he was from the Dervaz Beylik [roughly: principality] of the Pamirs. Their language is a different dialect of Farsi. Even though these Tajik Beys had many a time passed themselves off as the descendants of Alexander the Great, in reality are descended from the Karluk Branch of the Turks. In the Arab sources, there are many clear records to that fact. Muhammed Veli Han requested that I conduct research to their origins and their old history. I responded with: “if I were to return to Kabul, God willing, I will busy myself with these problems and histories.” He countered with: “that is why I wish to see you back here. In addition, for you to see through your proposals you made concerning the educational system, as soon as your business in Europe is concluded. I wholeheartedly desire that and Ala Hazret (meaning the Emir) also wishes that.” A few days earlier, Veli Muhammed Han had provided three thousand Rupies for our European travel; today, he provided that much more in the name of Ala Hazret. During March, just as we were leaving Askabad for Iran, we had drawn from the Turkistan National Union treasury Bukhara Tenges equal to nine hundred and fifty Rubles. All of our subsequent expenditures were met by the Afghan Government. Now, Muhammed Veli Han suggested that, if we needed, while we were in Europe, for us to see Mahmud Tarzi, the Ambassador in Paris. That means, the Afghan Government regarded us their own sons during that European trip. Thus, we were deeply grateful.

Muhammed Han then stated: “We fully regard you as Afghans. We wish your trip to be a short one. Promise me you will return here. I can inform you now that you will be added to the Highest Officials of the Ala Hazret. He liked the contents and your sincerity displayed in your writings.” I responded with: “I am thankful and grateful of your acceptance of me into your family, and the compliments by Ala Hazret. It would have been an honorable task to establish a university, a scholarly library and society of scholarly organizations. However, I cannot promise that I will. That is because; there still is Turkiye in front of us. What I can say to all three countries is from Hoca Hafiz: “we did not arrive here for grandeur and office. Perhaps we arrived due to the terrible events that happened to our homeland, as a refugee.” While I was taking my leave, I attempted to kiss his hand. He embraced and kissed me. Thus we separated in an amicable fashion.

The same day, on the afternoon of 20 September 1923, I was invited to the working-session of the Education Ministry’s Scholarly Commission; the program of the Teacher Education program was being considered for establishment in Kabul. The

proposed program contained tasks that were more suitable to high-schools or even universities. Upon my suggestion, only two tasks were assigned to that school:

1. Expansion of knowledge provided in primary schools;
2. Teaching methods in primary schools, pedagogy.

Feyz Muhammed Han told me: “this is a good resolution; with your help, we were able to reach a practical solution.” At the end of that session, we said our goodbyes, since we were leaving in two day’s time.

## *My letter to Hacı Sami—*

Hacı Sami’s letter, which he wrote as he was leaving Hanabad for Meshed, was very pessimistic. He was wounded and could not continue on, but he wanted the movement to continue. The following is what I apparently wrote him on 22 September, sent via the Meshed Consulate: “In your last letter addressed to me and His Excellency General Fahrettin, you had complained of the Bukharans and especially the negative attitude of the Lakay. During the winter of 1921 in Bukhara, when you were exuberantly and with certitude encouraging General Enver to join this movement, I had indicated that you were very optimistic and we needed to be realistic without mixing emotions into the process. Today, I must repeat the same words, as you are very pessimistic in your letter. The Basmaci Movement continued on for six years. Their proportion of success will be different now, compared to the time when Russia was busy in other fronts. I had written about that matter in my letter that I had sent last February from Askabad via Maca. It is normal for Russians to use a moderate policy toward the Basmaci who are not under your command, and use greater severity against the Laqays and the Karluk who are. They will tell the population that ‘our enemy is not you the Basmaci, but those who follow General Sami,’ and attempt to isolate the population from you. It would have been best for you to wait in Afghanistan or Iran until your wounds healed, and not to give up on this matter. This movement cannot live unless it is supported by fighters who are on the outside. You and the late General believed that you were going to immediately succeed. I had told the General that our generation may not succeed; but we must continue with the uprising knowing that. Some day, the problem of Central Asia will become a question of the world. Our efforts today will provide a basis for that future date. The death of General Enver for the cause of Turkistan revived the spirit of freedom; your actions became a new initiative on that path.

All this is also true for India. The earlier Sepoy Rebellion and the Tippu Sultan’s actions constitute the bases of the Indian Liberation movement. When the uprising of the Tippu Sultan met with failure, his subjects attempted to kill him. According to what Ali Sevket Bey is telling us here is, since the relations between your brother Esref Bey and Mustafa Kemal turned sour during the Turkish War of Independence, you might not be allowed to enter Turkiye. It is best for you to remain in Central Asia. If



you were to leave, the population of Turkistan will state: “Caliph Sultan’s men took a look at that, they could not succeed, and they left.” According to what Counsul General Sami Bey told us in Meshed, someone by the name of Serif Bey of Turkiye wrote a negative work against General Enver and you. They will not be hospitable toward you. It will be a shame for you to leave the Turkistan Struggle. The Afghan Government will not allow you to remain in Hanabad indefinitely. I do not know if a duty may be conferred upon you at the Meshed Consulate. I had suggested to Ali Riza Bey to remain there. However, I do not think the Russians will allow you to remain in Khorasan. In my opinion, would it not be best for you and Ali Riza Bey to establish a Tahran based commercial organization, to trade across Khorasan, Afghanistan and Turkistan? Abdulhamid, Turab Bek and Mamur Bek would work with you and earn their keep. Our Baskurts would also make their living alongside you. With such an organization, you could save the refugees from extreme poverty, and keep the spirit of independence alive. I, Fethulkadir and Osman Hoca will work toward keeping this movement active in the scholarly sphere. I am writing the history of this movement; I have in my possession many documents. I intend to sit and write them for publication in Turkish, and work toward their dissemination in English. If you were to take everyone who was involved in the Turkistan struggle helter-skelter to Turkiye, if you were not allowed in, you will leave them in a wretched condition. Your organization will also disappear. We must know that Turkistan struggle is a long-term matter, and act accordingly. Osman Hoca and Mirza Isameddin left for Istanbul on the fifteenth day of the previous month via India. Hasim Saik Bey may be going to Japan. I and Fethulkadir will leave for Peshawar in two days; from there, God willing to either Paris or Berlin. With deep respects and greetings.

Saturday, 22 September 1923.

## *Abdulhalik Konisbay—*

Our groom Abdulhalik was the person who was the most depressed to see that our departure day was approaching. He regards that as if he is being left alone in the midst of a desert, and sometimes crying. He had accompanied us since Meshed, and we had grown used to his sincerity and fidelity. Thus it was difficult for us to leave him behind. However, we could not find the finances for a third traveler. Since he thought that he could not get used to the Afghans, we recommended that he journey to Turkiye. We applied to the Embassy, and requested that the General and Ali Sevket Efendi, the imam of the Embassy, to look into that solution. They accepted. Abdulhalik is a Kazak of the Tabin Uruk; they live around the Teren Ozbek station in the Sirdarya basin. He was conscripted into the Red Army when the local mobilization orders were issued by the Soviets. Since he had studied Russian at the elementary school, and knew that language well, he had many assignments and along the way became a member of the Communist Party. Later, when the commander of the Red Army unit where he was assigned at the Iranian Border insulted him, he ran away to Iran.

He worked at a medrese in Meshed. There, he entered the Shi’ite sect. From there, he was hired by a wealthy Iranian to work in his own household. Since Abdulhalik was handsome and had the typical Turkish physiognomy, his employer began announcing his love for Abdulhalik. Sometimes, the employer would even write poems to him. Abdulhalik did not understand those poems, and would insult his employer. One night, his boss entered Abdulhalik’s bedroom bare-feet and began openly flirting. Our Kazak beat him up badly, took his own clothes and left. Now he had the idea of going to other countries, but afraid of Russia, it transpired that we arrived and helped him. On the day we were leaving Kabul, we went to see Ali Sevket Bey, and requested that he personally employ Abdulhalik; he agreed.

I knew Ali Sevket Efendi well. In addition to French and Persian, he had learned Urdu, and he was working on philosophical works, especially Indian philosophy. Together we discussed quite a bit the fate of the Islamic world. However, my Afghan friend Serdar Abdurresul Han one day told me: “according to my observations from afar, this Ali Sevket is in a tight relationship with the Bahai.” On the other hand, Ali Sevket was showing himself as a candidate for Islamic reformer. According to his ideas, in the future only those principles will remain in the Islamic world which will not be contrary to the Western Civilization, cleansed of superstition and in consonance with knowledge; thoughts on the jinn, devil and the angels will change; they will look at all this through the prism of laws of nature. Even though life will be entirely Western, Islam will live on as a perfect, religious precept. Possibly, music will enter the mosques. I had written a pamphlet of twenty pages on these issues as a result of our talks, along with our Afghan friends who liked to discuss this topic. I have not been able to publish it to this day. Abdulhalik was listening in to our discussions with Ali Sevket Bey. After we sold our horses, he was left alone and did not have any other occupation than speaking with individuals of all backgrounds. Since he also spoke Persian, he would join in the discussions, appropriate or not, ongoing with the Afghans and Ahmedis. On the day we were leaving Kabul, we sent Abdulhalik to Ali Sevket Bey, along with our belongings we could not take with us. When we arrived in Istanbul during June of 1925, after spending two years in Europe, this Abdulhalik searched and found us. Ali Sevket Efendi had brought him to Istanbul, gave him lessons on religion and philosophy; finally confessed that he was a Bahai, and made Abdulhalik a Bahai. He had read their publications, and he made the sect his own. Over time, Abdulhalik observed that Ali Sevket Bey was hypocritical and an unbeliever who pretends to be a Muslim, that Bahaism is not a religion but was something like being a mason which he also learned from Ali Sevket Bey. Finally he addressed Ali Sevket Bey with: “since you are one of the masters of Bahaism, why did you use the Embassy of the homeland to portray yourself a specialist in Islam? In that case, you are a spy working for some other country. Who were you spying for? The Bahai do not have a state; you could not be a spy for them.” That caused a collision between them. Later on Abdulhalik told him: “take away your Bahaism. From now on, whatever my own Kazaks believe, so do I; I am a Sunni and Hanefi,” and left his employer. We rented a house at Sishane, Abdulhalik worked for me. He provided the comforts; he cooked my meals, took care of my clothes, and did

all the errands and the printing business. He had supervised the construction of my bookshelves, in sum, he was my major-domo. He would sometimes bubble over with enthusiasm and state: “if necessary, I will die for you; a war should have broken-out by now, and I would have been dead.” In that, the poor man was right. He wanted to return to Turkistan and to fight for her independence. However, at this time, that was an impossible wish. He would sing in Kazak that openly displayed what was in his heart. He did not at all like to be a servant to anyone. He had songs about that as well.

One day, Cafer Seyid Ahmed of Crimea and Yusuf Akcora bey arrived together. We were talking: “the Arab Tabari stated that there are no slaves among the Turks. Plano Carpini, as representative of the Pope, travelling in Mongolia and William of Rubruck, representing the French King also second that. The traveler Pallas had said something similar about the Kazak and the Baskurt during the eighteenth century.” At that point I mentioned Abdulhalik’s words against being a servant; they liked that idea. In sum, Abdulhalik regarded himself very happy in our milieu. His only goal was to go to pilgrimage, as he understood Islam among the Kazaks. Unfortunately, he contracted cancer. He was a person apart. He had taken on several religions, became a Communist, but remained faithful to the religion, traditions and customs of the Kazaks. That suggest the strength of the Kazak religion, traditions and customs are stronger than communism, Shi’ism and Bahaism.

I surmise, regardless of the severity of the Russian policies to russify the Turks of Central Asia, they will remain true to the path of their forefathers in national character. Due to the moral quality of his character, Abdulhalik’s story would serve well as a theme for a Central Asian novel.

## *Ceremony and the Emir of Bukhara—*

On 5 August, the Afghanistan Independence Day was celebrated at the summer headquarters of the Ruler and the Government at Pagman. The weather was beautiful. An old elephant, given the name “Conqueror” because it served well Abdurrahman Han in defeating his enemies, constituted the central piece of the ceremony. The old Conqueror was wondering around the celebration square. Upon reaching the presence of the ruler, Amanullah Han, he turned right just like a human as a sign of respect, stretched out his trunk and placed it in front on the ground. He kneeled. At that moment, tears came down his eyes. Upon seeing the elephant crying, everyone present stated that he was remembering the Amanullah’s Grandfather, Emir Abdurrahman Han. It must have been an emotional moment. The Emir of Bukhara, Alim Han, had taken his place around this ceremonial square, along with his retinue. All were in their Bukharan uniforms. My friend Abdulkadir stated to me: “he is the last ruler of Turkistan; go and greet the Emir.” I told him: “during 1918, when we sent him our ambassador Abdullah Ilyas, he pronounced that ‘whoever lives in Moscow, we are bound to that Russian by treaty. Even if that person abrogates the treaty, I will remain loyal to him.’ He thus regarded the Soviets as the successor of the Tsar, and himself

as the subject, regarding us rebels, having the Lakay attack General Enver. I will not shake his hand. From this Mangit lineage, there has not been anyone else besides Prince Abdulmelik whose hand can be shaken. If they had a modicum of sense, they would have followed Hekim Kusbegi. He was the only statesman of this family. If Sadreddin Ayni was present here in this ceremony, would he have given his hand to the Emir?”

I had stated that I wrote and sent a poem in Persian. In it, what is referenced as “donkey driver” was the Tsar; the “donkey” itself, the Emir.

I also related a poem by Sadreddin Ayni: “in the fire orchard of our revolution, the world of the tyrant burnt down like kindling. Do not say the world is burnt; say that the wild grass burnt and the world is cleansed. In reality, he is a pustle; the Russian Bolsheviks replacing him are the cancer. And it was the Emir who brought that cancer to his own country. The Kur’an, referencing that type of Emir, states: ‘When God wishes to destroy a land, he will allow it to be dominated by a despot (in Russian, ears), and those will bring on the cause the destruction.’ He is the clear example. He did not want us, nor did he want Enver; why would I extend my hand to him?”

## *The feast of Abdurresul Han—*

On the day we were to leave, in the morning a letter arrived from Abdurresul Han, requesting an audience before we left. I arrived before noon. There was nobody else present at the feast. There were many dishes. After the meal, two of his friends arrived. He told me that he was happy to have the honor of representing Afghanistan at the time of the Revolution, and during the period of General Enver’s arrival, but he was also equally sorry to see me leave without observing the positive results of the movement. He added that he wanted to see me in Afghanistan permanently. He wrote the poem by Mevlana Rumi: “you will rise to the level of a prophet in the eyes of the congregation, if you were to continue performing a task in the service of your homeland” and other poems in my diary. He also stated that: “what you spoke in Kabul in the sphere of politics and education, especially about the Teacher’s College, was very much liked by the higher echelons of the State. Just like Veli Muhammed Han, I would request you return here. Han introduced me to his guests. He told them: “when I arrived in Bukhara as the Ambassador, the relations among the Bukharans was disarranged. The Russians were taking advantage of that. I was pessimistic as well. But, Zeki Bey and the Kazak Moslems arrived, reconciled them by mediation, and they established the joint National Union Society. Upon the proposal of the Turkish Representatives, Zeki Bey was elected President. The entire Samarkand Province revolted. There was union there. Zeki Bey toured all the villages of Samarkand and Bukhara and visited the Basmaci; he obtained beneficial results.”

One of the guests of the Han told me that he knew me well in absentia, and had heard a lot of good things about me. He stated that he was in favor of the establishment of a democratic government in Afghanistan. He further stated: “You are a

person who has learned the Tsar, the Kerenski Government and the Soviets by working with them. What caused democracy to not succeed there? If the Soviets were to be eliminated, will there be democracy in Turkistan? Can democracy be applied to Afghanistan, and how?"

I told him: "Democracy does not have a single recipe. The purpose of democracy is to provide the nations and communities the right to apply their choices to their lives without barriers. That type of a nation is multicultural, but possesses a primary requirement: the tradition of shouldering the responsibilities jointly within the nation and community. Among the English, and the Americans, Sweden and Norway, this is so. One party is brought to power to govern and the others help them. That approach does not exist in Russia. According to what is described by Ibn-Rusta, Russians did not have social trust even in the tenth century. Even when they were going to the bathroom, they had to unsheathe their weapons and be prepared to defend themselves against an attack. Otherwise, they could be easily killed. Thus, in 1917 they established good democratic parties. Then, the Bolshevik party emerged and declared that they were not satisfied with the decision of the majority, and destroyed all the other parties and established a dictatorial regime unseen throughout history. Ibn Fadlan, who travelled during the Tenth century, stated that the Oghuz who lived on the Western side of Khorezm have a tradition of consultations; even then a disgraceful person may emerge to erase all the decisions taken by the majority. Among the Bulgars, the decision of the Padişah is valid, and indicated it was possible to live among them comfortably. The task of responsibility sharing in the affairs of state is not only a matter of civilization, but also an issue of good manners and custom. The Baskurt, to which I belong, in terms of material civilization, is below that of the Russians. However, when it comes to affairs of state, the feeling of joint responsibility is the order of the day; there, a fully democratic regime can be applied. It is also possible for the Kazak and the Turkmen. The level of civilization is high among the Bukharans. On the other hand, they are used to obey the despotic orders. What can be observed among the old Baskurt, the common action of their partisan groups, was never experienced by the Bukharans. When the Kazak, Baskurt and the Ozbek are independent, it will be possible to apply socialism to pasturing, watering, mining operations and in transportation; but general socialism that will destroy personal initiative and self determination, never. When it comes to Afghanistan, you know it best. Since you are a neighbor of the Russians who only wish to saw seeds of discord from within, if political parties are established and a free press becomes operational to criticize the Government, they can be bought by the Russians. Free radio cannot exist [for the same reason]. You can organize the laborers on the bases of nationality. The national labor unions were established in Azerbaijan during 1918-1919; can they also be founded in Afghanistan? The days referenced by the poet Am'aq, who observed the time of the Karahanid, of the Karluk and Oghuz mischief-making, ten years of cruelty by a Ruler is preferable to two days of instigation by the common people, may arrive. Perhaps the best solution for Afghanistan is constitutional monarchy. But, you will know that best."

That person, who was a guest, wrote down most of what I said. When the time for prayers arrived, Abdurresul Han wanted me to be the imam. I stated that I have never been a prayer leader, and I did not even know the prayers well. After the namaz, he prayed for me beautifully. He also pressed a few gold coins into my hand with the statement: "they may be of use along the way."

Thus, I received a good sendoff from Afghanistan. Abdurresul Han was a Germanophile. He arrived in Berlin during the winter of 1924, in order to have his son enter school there. Once again, we engaged in good conversation. In general, Afghans are patriotic humans. They are aware of the Russian danger, and they appreciate those who fight them.



## VI. India –Turkiye

### *Peshawar—*

We left Kabul on 24 September 1923 toward India via an automobile. Our groom Abdulhalik was there to see us off, with his tears. With that car, we reached the famed Khyber Pass via Celalabad. This pass is like the Cungar Pass in Central Asia. Whenever the Turks boiled over in Turkili, they would cross it as they did many times. It was welcoming the conquering Turks. Now, we were thinking that the English Border and Customs Officers were going to inspect our belongings like the Bolsheviks in Russia did. I had left the papers I regarded as “secret” to General Fahri with the request that he bring them out for me. Twenty years later, during the war, when I heard that the Nazis were inspecting my belongings and papers while I was away at Hotel Adlon in Berlin, I had left my papers similarly to our Berlin Ambassador Saffet Arikan Bey. He brought them to Istanbul. Both of our Ambassadors brought out my papers. I am able to write these memoirs with the aid of the papers General Fahri brought out. In sum, Abdulkadir and I remained in India from 25 September until 1 November, for a duration of five weeks. After India became two independent states, I visited Pakistan three times, and India once during 1964. For a month, I visited the cultural centers of India as a guest of Nehru and the Indian Government. I held talks with the scholarly and political leaders. I perused the contents of their valuable libraries and discovered important sources pertaining to the Turkish cultural history. However, the India I visited during 1923 was very different. The English were the real owners and they gave us permission to travel under very tight conditions. There was no possibility of visiting the addresses given to us by our Afghan and Indian friends. Nevertheless after we arrived at the Khyber Pass, we were prepared to open our suitcases to show the customs officials. Instead, they asked: “what is inside?” We responded with: “clothes, books and papers.” When they asked: “is there anything else to declare?” We responded with: “we have one pistol; shall we show it?” Their answer was: “no; if you had brought two truckloads, we would have asked to see them. Welcome; continue on your journey.” As it was clear, even when India was a colony, it was completely different than Turkistan under Russian rule. In Peshawar, we stayed at a hotel with a name that starts with the letter D. I never thought that I would someday visit India. But, I did.

In the morning, the Governor sent for us. He told me: “we are awaiting instructions on the conditions of your travel in India from Simla. You will stay here for several days.” In return I asked him: “via our Kabul Embassy we had notified you that we were going to gather with Osman Hoca who arrived from Kabul; Abdulhamid Arifov from Chitral; and Sadreddin Han, Turabbek and Mustafa Sakuli from Meshed. Where are they and how can we speak with them about the problems of our own country?” That governor’s answer was: “I do not know their addresses. I will not permit you to gather here. In general, in our country we had voted the socialists to power. The head of the Labor Party and Prime Minister Mr. McDonald [sic. First time in office 22 January 1924 – 4 November 1924] is determined to have better relations with the Soviets. We cannot allow India to become a base for political movements against Soviet Union. You must know this.” His superior behavior made me angry. He began asking me questions looking at a sheet of paper. I responded with: “I, too, am a representative of an honorable nation. You are speaking by turning your back to me, stretching your legs on a table. I cannot answer your questions. If you so wish, you can send us back to Afghanistan.” He responded with “as you wish.” He was speaking in Persian. I stated “Huda Hafiz-I suma.” We left and went to the hotel. I was extremely unhappy. Their spies were following us. We wanted to eat somewhere. An undercover officer approached us and stated: “your meal is waiting for you at your hotel.” I responded with: “I will not eat the meal you are offering. We will buy our bread from the market. Our meals are not included at the hotel.” In sum, the conditions were bad. Just about at that time, I saw one of the Bukharans. We spoke a little. He introduced us to a Tatar imam by the name of Habibirrahman Bulgari. He invited us to his home. I thought he was one of the spies of the Bukharan who was following us, and arrived in his home. He represented himself as a man serving the Emir of Bukhara. He lent us the White Russian newspapers he had with him. Later, he took us to the home of another person in the service of the Bukharan Emir, by the name of Mirbedelov. I knew that person since 1914 as the translator of the Bukhara Emir. He was certainly in the service of the English more than the Bukharan Emir. He gave me a letter from the Baskurt lawyer Sahiahmedov, with whom we worked at the beginning of the 1917 Revolution. After the Russian rule descended on Turkistan, he went to Manchuriya via Siberia; he knew that I was in Kabul. This was a surprise for me. That is because; Sahiahmedov fought seriously against me and autonomy at the 1917 Turkistan congresses. Now, he wrote this letter confessing that I was right, and listing excuses. On the other hand, by the hand of Sahiahmedov, a communication channel would open to contact the Baskurt soldiers and officers who went to the Far East during the Kolchak regime of 1919, especially with Colonel Alimcan Tagan. Since the English definitely did not want the Baskurdistan and Turkistan national organizations contacting each other, or the outside world, continuing their policy in Siberia during 1918 and 1919, I did not mail the letters from Peshawar via the English Post. I gave them to the Italian ship on its way to the Far East from Bombay. Mirbedelov and Gerey Toksaba knew as well as the men of the Bukharan Emir, that the English Policy deeply desired the keep the Russian imprisoned Moslems under white or red Russian control.

Haydar Hoca Mirbedelov is not related to the Ozbek General Mirbedelov who lives in Samarkand. The epithet “Hoca” is generally attributed to the descendents of the Prophpet; our Haydar Hoca adapted it in order to give him the honor of becoming a “seyyid.” That is because; in reality he is the son of a Kazan merchant. During 1913, when I was in Bukhara, he gave me the lineage of his family. At that time, he was publishing a newspaper with the title *Buhara-I Serif* in Tajik (sometimes in Ozbek). Now, he welcomed me as an old friend. Even though he was managing the financial affairs of the Emir, he had deep grievances against him. He gave me some works written in “liberalish” style; among them the Moslem philosopher Muhammed Iqbal’s newly published work *Peyam-I Masriqi* (Message of the Easterner). I had learned many of the poems by this great poet and philosopher when I was in Bukhara, from my friends Mirza Abdulkadir and Ekabirsah. However, they were not printed and fragmentary.

### *Hasim Saik and a poem of Ebulfadl—*

Hasim Saik has journeyed all the way to Istanbul to receive an education, and served to bring progress to Afghanistan; yet he had an indistinct personality. When he saw a Turk, he would speak like a Turk; if he were to meet an Iranian, he would imitate that. He was intended as our representative to the Far East. However, a day before we left Kabul, he went to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and stated that if he were to find a “quti layemut” [roughly: ‘sinecure’] here, he would not chase after the Turkistan Independence Struggle. Feyz Muhammed Han told me that. I became very angry, and just before we left, I wrote the following poem in his notebook by Ebuldadl-I Allami, the writer of Ekber Sah: “Those who are not aware of the world, also do not know themselves/ instead of skill and virtue, they chase disgraceful topics/ when they reach the mind, they become a poisoning smoke (casting darkness to ideas)/ when they approach the candle, they become the wind to extinguish it.”

A Bukharan by the name of Gerey Toksaba, from the entourage of the Emir, gave me a letter sent by Hasim Saik. Poor man, he was sad because of this poem. He again stressed that fact in his letter to me received in Ankara during 1926.

### *The execution of Evhadi—*

I told Mirbeledof that I wanted to speak with some of the local scholars and men of ideas. He told us that we needed to obtain permission from the police for the purpose. After we returned to the hotel, we asked the police; they did not permit it. Mirbeledof gave me some newspapers several French newspapers and journals. That night, we read them at the hotel, as well as the Russian newspapers lent us by Habib-u Rahman. Two of the items we learned from those newspapers were important for me: First one was in the *Posledniye Novosti* newspaper published by Meliukov in Paris, the execution of Colonel Evhadi Ismurzin in Moscow, after he was tried, who was the former War Minister of the Baskurdistan Government. He was accused of participating

as a commander in the Turkistan uprising in the entourage of the “Famed Validov.” This was very bitter news for me. Evhadi was a Baskurt whom I have known since we were children, and the son of a Russian teacher. Like his brother Suleyman, he had studied in the Tasrist Military School and had graduated as an officer. Like their father, they were raised as nationalists. Evhadi had served as a commander in our army, and after I had been appointed Head of our Government, he became the War Commissar. We fought together in the battles around Samarkand. During July 1922 I had left Evhadi and his friends at a village near the headwaters of the Senzar River. They were going to journey to Bukhara to join General Enver. I had then journeyed to Tashkent to participate in the secret Seventh Meeting of the Turkistan Congress. At that time, the Russians poured into all of the creeks, and surrounded the forces in which Evhadi was also serving. When his horse stumbled over a stone and they fell on the ground, Russians caught him and took him to Tashkent. He was immediately sent to Moscow, tried and killed.

The second bit of news pertained to the new government established by the English Labor Party and their possible coming to terms with the Soviets. This was a brand-new piece of news for me. That is because, I knew England as a country of Conservatives and Liberals, meaning bourgeois and capitalists. What I knew about English Labor Party indicated it was a very opportunist institution; this news was upsetting all that I learned over the years, while I was living in Russia. Instead of an open conflict, I thought of conditions developing into a “cold war” and a shooting war never taking place. In my work “Social Revolution in the East” which my friend Hasim Saik in Kabul has been working on to translate into Farsi, I had regarded England and the Western world as pure bourgeois-capitalist states that would never come to terms with Bolsheviks. That late afternoon, I wrote into my diary: “that means, we are going to a Europe much different than we had imagined. That means, the issues of social revolution and recidivism are not going to be resolved by a war with weapons; they can go on at length by two sided talks and enter into dead-ends.”

### *Sir Olaf Caroe—*

On 27 September, two bureaucrats arrived from the vilayet [provincial administration; ruled over by a governor], and stated: “you did not wish to speak with the Governor. Perhaps you will speak with another official.” I responded: “if he does not turn his back to me, we will talk.” A little later, we went to the vilayet and we were welcomed. In a room of the vilayet, we were introduced to an elegantly dressed English Officer speaking Farsi. He stated: “welcome; I hope you’ll get better soon. The Governor apologizes. We English stretch our legs and sit without ceremony when we are in the presence of friends. If we do not wish to speak with someone, we will politely utter a few words. The Governor made a lot of statements to you. If you would like, we can continue.” I responded: “with pleasure; anyway, we are not going to remain in your country; we are temporary guests.” The Officer: “I surmise what offended you is our not permitting you to speak with your

friends. But the Governor explained the reasoning. There are big changes in England. Yet, we let Viceroy Lord Reeding know of the circumstances. You might stay here for a few days.” He picked-up the papers from a file containing the information on my life and activities, which they had collected, reading them aloud and asking me to verify each item. In that context, he asked me about our struggle with Admiral Kolchak and General Dutov; also about the declaration I made as reported by *Pravda* during 1919 concerning the general politics; my attitude at the Baku Eastern Congress of 1920 and the policies I had followed among some groups at Bukhara. From those, I was astonished to discover that the English Government saw it valuable to collect information on me with care. In addition, I thus discovered that some of the individuals who approached and spoke with me at Baku and Bukhara were members of the English Intelligence Service. When I was sent to England for six months by the Istanbul University Literature Faculty during 1954, I learned from Sir Olaf Caroe the identity of the Officer who showed so much interest in me. It transpired that Sir Olaf Caroe was at the time held an important post at Lord Reeding’s Cabinet, and was interested in our Turkistan matters. At that time, he collected the information which he placed in his very interesting book entitled *Soviet Empire and the Turks of Central Asia* published in 1953. Perhaps it was he who questioned me, because at the time he was seconded to the Governor of Peshawar. However, the other Officer knew Farsi well.

Even though it was not possible to speak with the natives openly, I went to the libraries and studied the works that were of interest to me. I discovered with amazement that my Indian trip was of concern to the English Government more than I imagined in the answer received from Lord Reeding. The instructions on my trip comprised of fourteen items, and arrived from Simla by airplane. We were ordered to travel to Bombay directly. All the permissions we had requested to speak with poet Muhammed Iqbal living in Lahore, the Historian Sulayman Nedvi in Bombay via the Peshawar Governor were denied item-by-item. On the way to Bombay, we could only stay at Ecmir and tour the facilities belonging to the Cesti sect.

### *The wedding of the Chaghatay—*

Our train remained at Lahore perhaps half a day. I requested permission from the Station Police Chief to speak with Iqbal by providing his address. The request was denied as was permission to tour the city. When we left Lahore, as a pure coincidence, we were at the same carriage with the descendants of the Chaghatay who had ruled this country for centuries. None spoke Turkish. They were speaking in Urdu. Some knew Farsi. We spoke quite a bit with them, and collected some information as to where they live. In the 1881 census there were 23,593 Chaghatay in Delhi and Rawalpindi regions; and there were 12,147 Barlas during the same year. The procession we encountered belonged to a wedding among the Chaghatay and the Argun. After arriving in Ecmir, their carriages were separated from our train. The young ones were still having fun.



Between Lahore and Bombay, the train remained in Ecmir for half a day. This is the cradle of the Cisti sect, after emigrating from the Cust Township of Ferghana. From among them, Lutfullah Cust became famous in Turkistan during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. We wanted to visit the mausoleums of their Seyhs. We were told the train was about to leave. We could not leave the station; only saw two mausoleums.

## *Bombay—*

At Bombay, we stayed at Hotel Sahcihan, visited the museums, libraries, Royal Asiatic Society, book markets. We perused the books published in Bombay and Rawakisur since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and bought many of them. From that perspective, our Bombay trip was very beneficial to my teaching life in Istanbul. Wherever I went, I was followed by Farsi speaking detectives. At one time, I entered into a covered bazar, mixed in with the crowd and disappeared from the view of the detectives. By showing the address in my hand to the driver, I arrived at the Action Committee of the Indian Moslems. I found the person recommended by Afghan Abdurresul Han at his room, and handed him the letter to my hand. Suleyman Nadvi whom I was looking for was living in another city. We talked at length. I had no business to conduct against the English in India. Despite all that, they were attaching great import not to have contacts between the Indian “Ahrar” [liberal] and the supporters of “Hilafe” [supporters of Caliph] as well as Central and South Moslem tribes and the revolutionaries. Dr. Anisari with whom I was speaking knew all this very well; he warned me so as not to get me into trouble, and suggested that I cross over to another building via another door, and then take a taxi. On the way, I changed taxis, and arrived at the Sahcihan Hotel and found my friend Abdulkadir in a tizzy, almost crying. That was because the English Police searched for me everywhere in the city and pressured Abdulkadir very much. During those days, the Indian Revolutionaries Sevkett Ali and Muhammed Ali were released from prison, and there were demonstrations in the streets. When they arrived across Sahcihan Hotel, they greeted some of their own men from within their car. The owner of the Hotel asked me if I wanted to be introduced. I responded: “let us not make the English anxious; let it pass.”

## *Foundation stones of my future library—*

I bought plenty of books from Bombay booksellers. Among them were the great scholar and philosopher of the Babur period, Nimetullah Veli Dihlevi’s *Huccetullah al Baliga* named philosophical work; works of El Biruni published in Leipzig; most of the Indian Islamic historians’ “mystics and poets” collections, Mihac Cuzecani, Bayhaqi, Serafeddin Yezdi’s and Islamic Mystics’ works; historical volumes in the Bibliotheca Indica, Vassaf, Khondemir; Abdulhaq Dihlevi and Husrev Dihlevi’s and Prince Darasukuh’s works. At that time even though I did not know English, since I

had decided that I was going to learn it, availing myself of this opportunity I bought the English translations of El Biruni and Cuzecani, as well as Elliott’s works.

Especially at the old “Melikul-kuttab Mirza Muhammed Sirazi”’s shop, I bought whatever I could find under a cover of dust. Bartold always complained that he could never get hold of these. In sum, I was transitioning from armed fighting to scholarly history. Thus I established the foundations of my library at Meshed, Kabul and Bombay. That was because we had money, and we would be able to take the books in crates all the way to Istanbul easily. In the establishment of this library, even the Chief of the Ferghana Basmaci Kor Sirmet Bey participated by presenting me with a copy of Mirxond’s *Ravdat-us-Safa*. Even though listing the names of books in a memoir is a superfluous business, I did so because it shows what I was thinking while I was buying them, and the direction of my scholarly life was taking in Iran, Afghanistan and in India. I apologize from those who might be reading this work.

## *Muhammed Iqbal [Iqbal]—*

I spent my time in Bombay reading the works of poet Muhammed Iqbal. When I visited the “Center for Caliphate” of the Indian Moslems, I was given different poems. What Mirbedelof presented me at Peshawar, Iqbal composed as an answer to Goethe’s “East-West Diwan.” The German philosopher and poet reflected the thoughts of Eastern allies. Iqbal, in his work, reflects the thoughts of Goethe, Nietzsche, Hegel, Tolstoy, Karl Marx and the like with the same skill and cultural level. Iqbal took the Islamic Word as a whole, and spoke of their problems. He remained loyal to Bukhara, Tabriz and Konya, since Islam in India carries the spirit of masters who rose from those three cities. In his poem praising Turkiye under the guidance of Mustafa Kemal who won a victory against the Westerners, he stated: “We the Moslems of the World had joined the world under the direction of an illiterate leader (the Prophet); even though we had not weapons in our hands, we hunted many quarries. Now, even though we hold many weapons, we have fallen into the hands of our quarries.” After that, addressing Mustafa Kemal, he stated: “wherever your horse can go, run there; until today, we have fooled ourselves that we have ostensibly been taking precautions. As a result, we lost everything. Now, run, let us take back what we lost.”

Since “Mustafa” is also the name of our Prophet, Iqbal is using that name in dual meaning, and mentioning him along with Mevlana Rumi who he regards as his greatest spiritual guide, expecting his inspiration from Turkiye: “The Turk sapling, despite her long-suffering under the European lightning, spread-out roots and formed fruits. As Prophet Muhammed Mustafa had reached maturity as a result of harassment by his enemy Ebuleheb, the Mustafa of the Turks (Mustafa Kemal) also reached maturity as a result of his fight with the Europeans. Do not measure my poetry with the standards of Indians and the Persians, because the essence of this poetry is derived from the tears falling during midnight. Come, Rumi seyh (Celaledin Rumi), let me bring a wine of words from his wine-jar, which is fresher than the grape-wine.”

At that time, I entered a mosque in Bombay. I discovered that there was a sign on the wall which read: “zinde bad Mustafa Kemal [roughly: living wind, Mustafa Kemal].” To the left of the mihrab [niche indicating the direction to be taken during prayers], there were two rahle [bookrest], one had a Kur’an, the other a copy of *Mesnevi* [a long poem by Celaleddin Rumi]. That meant, the Moslems of India regarded Mustafa Kemal their own hero. Among the poems of Ikbal, there were beautiful ones that would excite those from Turkistan. Among them: “the saz [traditional Turkish stringed musical instrument] of Temur was broken, but the melody still lives; that harmony will some day reappear on the stage from another saz of Samarkand.”

Ikbal is an Indian, but with his spirit and culture, he is very tightly bound with the Turks. He stated: “even though I am a son of India, the kohl of my eyes are from the clean soil of Bukhara, Kabul and Tebriz.” Like the Bukhara Seyhs do, Ikbal had deep respect; in Kabul, toward Babur, Humayun, Cihangir, Seyh Feyzullah Kabili; in Tebriz, among the Seyhs, Sems Tebrizi and regarded the soil of all these three cities as kohl. Those who constituted the biggest cultural revolutions in the history of India are the Turks, starting with Mahmud of Gazne. Ikbal regards that another deluge would arise from Turkistan, but he believes that it would evolve into Mevlana and Sems Tebrizi movements once again: “I fear that from the soil of Samarkand, another storm of Cengiz, and overflow of Hulagu will emanate; Mutrip, bring a gazel [ode] and couplet from Celaleddin Rumi, and let them wrap themselves around Sems Tebrizi and fan the flames.” Ikbal regards the Turks as a source of excitement, and likes to use such classic terms as “the beauty of the Turk will derail even the devout.” Ikbal’s poems such as those would immediately place them into my memory. As such, my days in Bombay were spent as “days of Ikbal.”

While we were in Russia, we regarded the League of Nations as an authority that would protect the weak, and give them refuge. Ikbal, on the other hand, criticized that institution as “a place where the shrewd thieves gathered in order to divide the loot.” If I could see him in Lahore, I was going to talk with him on similar topics. I hoped that the struggle in Turkistan excited him. If we could have talked he might have produced some poems that would rekindle the Turkistan struggle. But the English did not permit that.

## *The future of India-Turkistan relations—*

Our five weeks of travel in India, provided me with the opportunity to reconsider some of the different aspects of our struggle. What I learned there gave me the opportunity to write my thoughts on the joint aims of Turkistan and India in my book published in Egypt during 1929 under the title *Bugunku Turkistan ve yakin mazisi* [Today’s Turkistan and her recent past], Pp. 668-675.

During our talks in Kabul, we discussed the fact that the Russian proposed plans to open large canals from Amudarya, Sirdarya, Cu and Ile rivers would water the deserts of Karakum, Kizilkum, and Moyonkum; that would attract tens of millions of

individuals to those areas, and increase the populations of Eastern Iran, Afghanistan and India. On the other hand, in order to stop the waves of Slavic immigration, it is necessary for the Central and Southern Asian states to cooperate. I had reflected on these issues in the aforementioned book. Sir Olaf Caroe, who was the assistant to Viceroy Lord Reeding and Minister of Foreign Affairs while we were in India, made wide-scale use of my ideas expressed in my aforementioned book pertaining to the future relations between Turkistan and India in his *Soviet Empire and the Turks of Central Asia* which he published in 1953. When I attended the Congress of Orientalists held in Delhi during 1964, my ideas reflected in the work of Sir Olaf Caroe had already attracted the attention of the elders of India as well as Nehru, and they had the original translated from Turkish and read the details. This also let to my being invited to the lectern, after the long speech by Nehru, to respond to him at the same congress. After my response was completed, Nehru rose, along with everyone at the dais, and shook my hand and stated: “we knew of your works for a long time via your friends present here.” My ideas on the future relations between India and Turkistan had even greater effect on the Pakistan Moslems. I heard that personally from Professor Muhammed Safi as well as The President of Pakistan, Iskender Mirza, during the graduation ceremony (Convocation) of the Lahore University. Besides, Indians definitely read every work published on the affairs of the East and on Moslems. During 1964, when I was visiting the city of Patna, the educated Moslem ladies there had acquainted themselves with my ideas via Olaf Caroe’s work. They insistently encouraged me to have my memoirs translated and published in Urdu.

While we were in Bombay, the individuals I spoke with at the “Committee on Caliphate” stated: “if General Enver had succeeded, that would have resulted in different conditions. However, his reaching the rank of Martyrdom during his personal participation, had lent a holy air to the affair which affected the Indian Moslems. They also told us that they had learned of the feast given to honor Mevlevi Bereketullah, one of the oldest members of the Committee on Caliphate, in Baskurdistan, and the speeches supporting the independence of India, after Bereketullah moved to Paris and wrote them down. In sum, we left India after our short visit with good impressions, despite the barriers placed in our way by the English.

While I was in India, I had copied many beautiful poems by local poets in Persian into my notebook. Unfortunately, I had not written down the names of the poets. I obtained a copy of El-Biruni’s book on India, written in Arabic, published in Europe, through the bookseller Mirza Muhammed Sirazi. Even though it contains topics which are beyond my comprehension, I am reading that book. At the same bookseller Sirazi, I read the first half of the book by El-Biruni with the title “Qanun Mas’udi” in a manuscript form. In that book, this great scholar of Turkistan had discussed the revolution of the Earth around the sun.

## *The plans of our future scholarly work—*

On Thursday, 1 November at Eleven o'clock, we left Bombay on board Lloyd Triestino with the destination Beirut via Suez Canal. On board, the sailors were providing us with plentiful Italian wine. The food was good. My friend Fethulkadir (Abdulkadir), who enjoyed emptying the round bottles wrapped in wickerwork, was in a good frame of mind. He drank for days on end. If I had not requested from the sailors not to be so free with their generosity, our friend may not have been cognizant of our crossing Aden, Portsaid and Izmir, and may have opened his eyes only in Istanbul. We spent the ensuing 27 days of sea-travel making plans for our future academic studies. My primary field of interest was history; Fethulkadir's was language and ethnography. Since it was decided at our Kabul Meeting of 26-28 June that I was going to devote myself to scholarship, I began making a schedule of plans. Since that plan regulated my life for the next forty-three years, I will make a survey of it in my memoirs. Since my scholarly field of interest encompassed Central and Western Asia, in general the contemporary and past political and cultural life of Russian Islam, and that since I did not know where I was going to live, I constituted a portable library that could easily be transported without disturbing the placement of the books. Thus I made my study plans, giving priority to those topics that began with contemporary issues. The library was going to be comprised of wooden boxes with lids, one meter wide, and accommodate one or two rows of books. Today I have in excess of one hundred boxes in my home. At that time, my plan was for eighteen boxes. These boxes were to acquire box numbers, and the books, a book number. Now, during this sea-voyage, I had eighty-six volumes and many pamphlets. Scholarly communications, research materials, folio, quarto, octavo were going to be placed in VIII<sup>th</sup>, IX<sup>th</sup>, and X<sup>th</sup> boxes. Box number Eight will contain correspondence with some scholars, and their short writings. Since I did not know where I was going to reside, the entire library and papers are going to be kept in Istanbul. For that purpose, it is necessary to rent space in a concrete building to preserve my library. During our trip of Iran and Afghanistan whatever materials we collected on Chaghatay literature, we placed them in box X, section 9, volume 11 during this trip; it amounted to 1206 pages. Of those, 78 pages are systematic index. This Bombay-Istanbul trip allowed me to organize my scholarly work for the past forty-three years without fail.

## *Bundle culture—*

Since my library is going to be mobile, it will consist of such boxes. That is because of the "bundle culture" that was placed into my mind from my earliest days. All possessions of nomads are mobile. All clothes, underwear are placed in bundles, then in wooden boxes. If they have books, so are they. The bundles and boxes are loaded onto the backs of horses and oxen. Rugs, the skeleton of the tent, felt walls, the tent crown are loaded on the the backs of camels. Even though my family has not been

going to the high pastures for the past century, all the bundles at home are still kept in wooden boxes. After I reached the age of seventy, I began to place my library into permanent cabinets. My mother-in-law, wife of a Dobruca Nogay, even though she is eighty-six years old, maintains all her possessions in bundles and suitcases; as if we are going to migrate tomorrow. Two of my aged friends, Professor Paul Kable in the West, and Professor Muhammed Safi in the East (Pakistan) adopted my library system maintained in boxes. That means, the traditions of nomads do not easily leave the cognizance even after generations, and civilized individuals can also accept them. The huge libraries of philosopher Farabi [d. 950] and the 15<sup>th</sup> century Turkish scholar Husameddin of Siginak along the banks of Sirdarya were thus transported in bundles and boxes.

## *Zibunnisa—*

I was very happy to have obtained the books we did at Meshed, Herat, Kabul, Peshawar and Bombay, regarding them as a blessing. I would handle them one at a time, caressing. Among them there was a lithographed volume entitled *Divan-I Maxfi*. This was the collection of poems by the Princess Zibunni, and it was given to me by my beloved friend, the old Afghanistan Ambassador in Bukhara, Abdurresul Han who often read to me from it with love and sometimes even with excitement. Zibunnisa is a prominent member of the Temur family who had ruled India. The loves she experienced in the fields of sciences, literature, mysticism and political events can constitute scenarios for novels and movies. She is the daughter of the last great emperor Evregzib (1658-1707) [Abul Muzaffar Muhyud-Din Muhammad Aurangzeb] of the Babur's family. She memorized the Kur'an at the age of seven. Her father appointed a scholarly Uzbek woman teacher to her by the name of Miyabay during the year 1640. That teacher taught her Farisi, Arabic, astronomy and algebra. Even at the age of fourteen, she began writing commentary on the Kur'an, showing her understanding. Like her grandfather Babur's daughter Gulbeden, Zibunnisa was also a poet. She was influenced by Ekber Mirza, meaning she followed the route of religious tolerance; advance the thinking to bring together Islamic and Indian teachings. She believed that the Indians would accept Islam faster through that approach, and shared her Uncle Prince Darasukuh's thoughts on the subject. It is said that she liked to read, besides the Kur'an, the Book of the Holy, The works of Indan philosopher Bramanatra, Muhiddin ibn Arabi and the works of Celaleddin Rumi. This diwan, printed in lithograph, only contains her poems in Farsi. However, Zibunnisa also wrote poetry in Turkish and Arabic. She engaged in verbal competition with a poet by the name of Nasir Ali. Abdurresul Han had mentioned those poems. Some of her poems were included in her uncle Darasukuh's collection. She had the mastery of embroidery, just like Darasukuh. Some of her images are in private hands, in addition to one showing her reading the Kur'an. Her father had a villa built



for her in his Delhi Palace named “Arsin Tavus.” She had written and ornately adorned exquisite works there. However, Earthly blessings did not satisfy her. Every year, she would send scores of poor people to perform the hajj; she would entertain herself with gardening and sports. She would keep a sportsman poet by the name of Imami nearby. She was first in swordplay. Her grandfather Emperor Cihansah was going to have her marry Darasukuh’s son Suleyman. However, her father Evregzib was an extreme zealot and did not like Darasukuh and his son. For those reasons, he prevented that marriage. With that, he had his daughter’s life filled with tragedies. There were many others who wanted to marry her, but Zibunnisa wanted to speak with her suitors personally. From that aspect, she was just like Kutulun, the daughter of Kaydu Han, of the Cengiz lineage. It is possible that Zibunnisa knew of Kutulun from history. Mirza Faruk, son of Sah Abbas the Second, the ruler of the Safavids had seen her poetry and an image of her and fell in love with Zibunnisa. He arrived in Delhi with the intent of marrying her. There were verbal competitions and discussions between them. When Zibunnisa realized her own culture was higher, she declined to marry him. Faruk Mirza returned to Iran. Later on, because her name was mixed in with political matters, and when it was heard that she was communicating with her uncle Darasukuh who had revolted, her father imprisoned her at the Salimcar castle. The poems she wrote in the palace where she was imprisoned made her famous. After the rebellion was pacified, her father released Zibunnisa. Thereafter she occupied herself with science and arts, lived in Lahore and died of ailments at the age of fifty during 1689. Zibunnisa’s poetry was read at the gatherings of the pious, and the audience would reach ecstasy from those poems. In the diwan to my hand I liked the following poems: “in appearance I am a Leyla; but spiritually, I am more like Mecnun. Only modesty is chaining my foot, and prevents me from journeying into the desert.” “You are a princess among the world of beauty. All the beautiful are in the need of kissing your feet. At least do not allow the blood of the innocent to spill, do not pour oil on the flame of the cruel Haccac [etremely cruel governor of Iraq at the time of Islam rising].” She liked to dance. “Dance in front of your intimates as well as the strangers; but, know not to fall into the hands of the men while doing so. Do not let go of the source of love from your hand. Continue to dance among the drunker lovers.” Zibunnisa also knew that the tradition of ruling Turk women appearing with an open face, without a veil in ceremonial rooms also applied to her and wrote: “remove the veil from your beautiful face according to the ceremony of the rulers. Show your face to your subjects and provide solace to them.” Zibunnisa loved the Prophet Muhammad, and her biggest ambition was to visit Kabe [Prophet’s burial site]. However, being a Princess, she could not move about as she liked. Her nat [natural-spirit style poem] she stated for the Prophet [Nebi] is very beautiful. My friend Abdulkadir was asleep; I fell into sleep reading her “nat-I nebi.”

## *Homeland of our Prophet, Hicaz—*

On the morning of Wednesday, 7 November, we were scheduled to reach the Hadramut shores of Hijaz. I woke early. Below, on the deck, the Arab laborers who were returning home from Bombay were playing cards. One of them, with a good voice, reciting the Kur’an, and later, “Nat-I Nebi,” woke me. In those poems, based on the Busiri ‘kaside’ [eulogy] that I knew well in my youth, it is stated: “you, the community of Moslems! By the Grace of God, we are leaning on our religion which is a column that will not tumble or shaken. All of us, under the surety of the Prophet, who is the auspicious father and beneficial husband, the children will not be left orphan and the women will not become widow.” Several of the Rabas re-read those two lines several times. Their faith and their trust in our Prophet were so strong. Even though a portion of the Turks have been under the Russian yoke since the 16<sup>th</sup> century, they have been able to maintain their identity due to Islam. Now, what will happen to them? Even Zibunnisa had stated in her poetry, alluding to the family lineage of the Babur: “They have been grateful to the Prophet for allowing them to remain as the dominant element in a crowd of Mazdeans.” Now, we are arriving at the homeland of our Prophet whom I love. Those pilgrims arriving in Hijaz by way of India during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when they saw the Hadramut Mountains, would repeat “God is great.” I did that, too. All the events I lived through during the recent years were streaming like a movie before my eyes. My heart was filled with compassion. I prepared to perform namaz. We always turned to the Kible [direction of Mecca] toward the South. Now, it was in the North. That made me curious. I accompanied the Arabs on the deck and performed two rekats [roughly: sections] of morning namaz. Following, I wrote this “poem” into my diary: “we genuflected many a time looking South, my God/ looking toward the North, if I were to prostrate myself once, will it suffice?/ My nation and homeland is suffering untold pains. If you do not intercede, will they all come to an end by themselves, my God?”

Abdulkadir was still asleep. When we approached the Port of Aden, I woke him. We had arrived at the homeland of Veysulqarani [Üveys-i Karni], to Yemen. He was a contemporary of Muhammad, and deeply believed in him; but, he could not go visit him, which caused him a deep spiritual pain. I used to hear the Chaghatay poems describing all that from the mouths of the Dervish every market day. Several of those were still in my memory. But, Abdulkadir knew them much better. When we arrived at the port, I wanted to step on the ground of Veysulqarani’s homeland. This place now had become world’s transit point; the English police did not allow it. I asked the Arab policeman who was under the command of the English: “where is Veysulqarani’s village Yemen?” He did not know.

The greatness of illiterate Muhammad is not based on miracles. He was an ordinary person who showed the right path to humanity. He was a mature person who stated that, in every battle he fought, even though he believed of his victory, he had not received any sign from the invisible world in such matters. The religion he practiced

had become the laws of the state in Medina and he stated: “if the Polytheists kill you, you kill all of them” (II 491, 9.5 IX, 88.90 IV). In parallel, he spoke of the necessity to have full trust in Islam he specified “there is no forcing in religion” (256 II). “Your religion belongs to you, mine belongs to me” (6 CIX). The persons who understood that one of these statements did not cancel out others were understood by the descendent of Cengiz, Olcayto [1304 to 1316] and Yavuz Sultan Selim [1465–1520]. According to the understanding of Olcayto, the dictum “kill all the Polytheists; kill them wherever you find them” was stated for the commanders and statesman at large battles. “Live with the infidel, there is no forcing in religion” was received by the lawgiver Prophet during peace time. That is just like the Kazak and Kirgiz praising their alp [hero] Iset: “when Iset sees the enemy, he will make his horse play [in battle run]; when there is peace, Iset stays at home and makes cheese.”

As such Islam became a lovable national religion for the Turks. Other distinct features of the Prophet’s greatness are seen in morals and politics. The positive aspects he preached: single God, loyalty, fidelity, friendship, intelligent courage, thoughtfulness, discipline, moderation and joy. From the negative perspective, to scare the the people with: other Gods, lying, fickleness, insincerity, fearfulness, gluttony, anger, hypocrisy. The reason for the Busiri “Qaside” and the stories concerning Hazret-I Ali to be translated, read quite a bit and memorized during the times of the Karahanids, Chaghatay, Timurids and Ozbeks is due to the Prophet’s character being very suitable for the Turks. After removing whatever caused discord and disunion, and knew that he would follow the policy of establishing a world state and after the Sasanids, he realized the time of Byzantium would come. He also developed the distinct characters, after the four Caliphs, such as Muaviye, Abdurrahman bin Avf, Ebuzer Gufari, Halid-ibn Velid.

The Turks have always been active in history; there has never been another religion that suited them better than that of Muhammed. After trying-out most other religions, Turks stopped at Islam. I believe, their henceforth existence in the middle of Asia will be possible via Islam. For those reasons, after approaching the shores of Yemen, until we crossed Suze Canal, I kept remembering what I read about the life of the Prophet. Upon reaching Cidde, a desire for me to visit Kabe in the future and the Prophet’s burial, was awakened.

## *Shores of Mediterranean—*

We remained in a hotel at Port Said. I would have liked to visit Egypt, but our money was scarce and my Bukhara passport was complicated. Upon arriving in Beirut, we entered the city. When I saw that the education and research was primarily involved Christian Missionaries, I happily realized my efforts during 1908-1909 to reach here would have been a waste. I scrutinized the American complex where I wanted to study fifteen years ago; I obtained a schedule of courses. I went to the booksellers, bought history books in Arabic and the works of Arabic thinkers such as Emir Sekib Arslan

and Muhammed Ali Kurd describing the contemporary conditions of the Moslems; those I had seen in India. We arrived in Izmir on 24 November and spoke with General Halil, the brother-in-law of General Enver, and Ismail Seripov, the Commander of our Baskurt Second Cavalry Regiment. This Officer was one I greatly admired. When we enacted peace with the Soviets during March 1919, he had not crossed over to the side of the Reds, and was one of our officers who remained among the Whites. They were together with Sahibek Ozbekov and Resid Huseyinov in the Army of Denikin. Sahibek was wounded and died in a Crimean hospital. Resid was in Istanbul. Ismail wrote a report on the Baskurdistan National Movement and the Baskurt Army as requested by Recep Peker Bey, from the entourage of General Mustafa Kemal. He gave me copies. In the present work, great benefits were derived from them. He also told me that Resid Huseyinov was showing a great deal of enmity toward me, portraying me to anyone who would listen as a socialist and enemy of religion. This Resid was a son of Gani Bay Huseyinov, a millionaire Tatar of Orenburg. With his brother Abdurrahman, they became Officers in the Tsarist Army; they joined the Baskurt Army to use that institution in order to regain their millions confiscated by the Soviets. Some of their real estate was returned to them; however, since we were following socialism, they became our life enemies, and they crossed over to the side of the White Russian Generals. When we made peace with the Soviets during March 1919, Abdurrahman left our Army and went directly to the Commander of the First Red Army. He was imprisoned there. Red Army Command never gave any information to us about those who separated themselves from our mass. We never learned what happened to Abdurrahman Huseyinov. In that wealthy Huseyinov family, there was a millionaire missionary molla by the name of Veli Molla. He was a Monarchist, a severe opponent of anything to do with renewal. For long years he published a very recidivist journal in Orenburg that carried the title *Din ve Maiset* [Religion and Life]. These Huseyinovs were among the capitalist Tatars in our country. Gani Bey, on the other hand, was a very progressive thinker.

Three days later we arrived in Istanbul. The Port Police Chief did not allow us to disembark since we did not have a visa. When we were in Kabul during August, Istanbul still had not been liberated. To our thinking, a visa issued by the Kabul Ambassador of Ankara Government may have caused the Allied Administration to have us disembark in Istanbul. We had not obtained a visa.

## *At the Port of Istanbul—*

Since General Halil wired to Istanbul from Izmir, to General Enver’s aide-de-camp Muhittin Bey, who had returned from Kabul to Turkiye, was waiting for us at the landing. He indicated that since we did not have a visa, we had to apply to Ankara in person. He also brought with him copies of the newspaper *Vakit* that carried his serialized account of the Turkistan independence movement. We wrote a petition to the Foreign Ministry in Ankara, letters to Yusuf Akcora, Agaoglu Ahmet, and Ziya

Gokalp indicating we were on our way to France, and requested permission for us to stay for a few days in Istanbul. Since I was fed-up with the negative attitude of the Port Police Chief, I went to the vilayet [office of the Governor] without permission, and saw the representative of Foreign Ministry, Dr. Adnan Adivar. I requested permission to stay in Istanbul for a few days. Adnan Bey specified that “this business is in the jurisdiction of Ankara. They may think that the Kabul Ambassador may not have issued a visa” and indicated I had to return to the ship. He accompanied me to the office of the police chief. The Bukharan Minister of Treasury Nasir Mahdum Hekimoglu and Ayit Mehmet of the Kazaks, who had arrived in Istanbul before us, met us either at our ship or at the port police department. I gave my boxes full of books to Nasir Mahdum, and asked him to have library boxes constructed according to my specifications. I requested of Ayit Mehmet to label each book to enter those boxes, and to keep an index. While I was in Europe for the next eighteen months, I was sending the all books I found to Nasir Mahdum; he was having Ayit Mehmet place them into the boxes. When I arrived in Istanbul during the summer of 1925, I discovered that my library was comprised of eleven boxes, which made me happy. Even though four days had passed in the port of Istanbul, since we had not received an answer from Ankara, we sadly left on our way to France via Izmir by ship. There, we were the guests of General Halil for a few days. He had with him members of General Enver entourage, Sukru Bey Yenibahceli, Dr. Ali Haydar Bey (now in Bursa, Dr. Haydar Oner) and others. The General gave us excellent feasts, reminded us of our time with him in Moscow and the days of Turkistan independence struggle. Meanwhile, our permission to stay arrived from Ankara. But, since we had already obtained a visa from the French Consulate, we left for Marseille via a tramp steamer. We arrived there on 20 December. We had with us a very valuable Bukhara rug. Since the customs required a tax more than we could afford to pay, we had to sell it to the captain of the ship that brought us a reduced amount. That man had a deep interest in the arts of the East. I also had a ney [flute] with me, and I was playing it in our cabin. That captain, even though I was not playing it masterfully, liked to listen. He knew that I had another ney, and asked for it. I presented it to him. He was very happy.

## VII. Eighteen Months I Spent in Europe

### *Paris and Mahmud Tarzi—*

In Izmir I had obtained the address of a small hotel located on a street of Saint Germain in Paris, managed by a Jewish person from Turkiye. We went there. I had purchased a detailed plan of Paris while in Marseille. Despite the fact that I had a severe cold, we visited the famous quarters of the city by tramway and bus. Even though I had read about and saw movies on Paris, I did not acquire an impression other than the width and orderliness of Champs Elysees. That night, I took a medicine to make me perspire. I awoke in a pool of perspiration that had penetrated through my pillow to the mattress. I was completely healthy. While I was shaving, the wife of the Jewish manager was telling her husband in Russian: “what did this man do; piss into the bed, or pour water into it?” The owner of the hotel responded: “he is an Asiatic; he perspired and ruined the bed; but, bravo, he had completely cured himself.”

On 22 December we dressed and went to the Afghan Embassy. The great thinker and author of Afghanistan, Ambassador Mahmud Han Tarzi greeted and embraced me. That was because we had earlier corresponded without ceremony via the Afghanistan Ambassador Abdurresul Han. He stated: “you must change your clothes; dress well and walk accordingly. This is a land of infidels.” He brought out a new suit of clothes from his own wardrobe: “Emir Inayetullah Han (the king before Amanullah Han) had this made for me due to the wedding. It was a tad short, so I had not worn it.” I told him that because the suit I was wearing was made in Meshed in the usual Iranian style, and was wrinkled, the woman owner of the hotel called me Asiatic. We laughed. When Mahmut Han Tarzi visited Istanbul during 1928, we had taken a trip on the water [Bosphorus] facing the Hotel Tarabya. He joked: “what you are wearing is very nice; now, nobody can call you an Asiatic.” In truth, what we were wearing in Paris was very formless.

I had been reading the newspaper Mahmud Han Tarzi had been publishing in Kabul, with the title *Sirac ul-Axbar*, during 1913-1914 continuously. Since he was the father-in-law of Inayetullah and Amanullah Hans, he influence in his country was



great. He held us for lunch. He cursed out the English for not allowing us to talk with Muhammed Ikbal in Lahore, as well as Muhammed Ali and Sevket Ali in Bombay. He made us very happy by telling us that he would meet our expenses in Paris, and to buy books, and help us with our Berlin trip.

### *Grandson of the last Ferghana Ruler—*

Islambek Hudayarhanov, the grandson of the last Ferghana ruler Hudayar Han, was the diplomatic secretary at the Embassy. Since he knew that I knew his father, and I had been a guest at their Tashkent home during 1913, he stated: “when I saw you, I was as happy as seeing my father,” and showed respect. He helped me with my application to the League of Nations in acquiring a “Stateless” passport, a visa for Germany and other matters. The Ambassador objected: “why are you acquiring a stateless passport, is Afghanistan not your homeland? Let us issue you Afghan passports.” Islambek interjected: “it is beneficial for them to carry stateless passports for their political activities in support of Turkistan.” He was very much interested in initiatives concerning Turkistan. However, his official post at the Embassy prevented him from taking an open position.

### *Mustafa Cokayoglu—*

From the Embassy, we went to see Mustafa Cokayoglu. Even though there were no connections between them, Islambek helped us find Cokayoglu who was living outside the city at a place called Nogent sur Marne. I had read certain things about this Nogent. When the Russian Army had arrived in Paris during 1812, the Baskurt military units, as part of the Russian Army, were bivouacked in this Nogent. In the past, I had read a letter written by an imam of the Baskurt Army about Paris and Nogent that he had sent to Baskurdistan. Mustafa was a friend I had met during my 1913 Ferghana trip; he was a student at the Tashkent Highschool, and later when he was studying at the Petersburg University. His father was a Kazak of the Sirdarya Kipcak uruk. While he was serving at the Khokand Government with the rank of daxoh, when the Russian Army occupied all that territory, he had entered the service of General Peroviski, learned Russian and became a translator. He was from a family who were warm toward the Ozbek elders during the time of the Khokand; during the time of the Russians, they were friendly with the Russian notables. However, since he was one of the Kazaks who were included in the Khokand Government, their memories of independence were even fresher. Because of that, in the 1916 Duma Fraction, when I represented Ufa, and Mustafa represented Sirdarya Province, he always stood with me even though he was a Kadet. He participated in the Khokand autonomy movement during the 1917 revolution. When Khokand was invaded by the Soviets at the beginning of 1918, Mustafa escaped to Tashent and stayed at the

home of a Russian Officer. Later, he had his wife escape; they arrived at our home at Yormati via Turgay and finally arriving in Orenburg. Now he was going to be our host. Her name was Marya Yakorlevna, and since she was our guest at the Times location, we had good relations. Immediately they stated: “would it not have been better if you had sought us before you went to the Afghans?” Mustafa and I spoke for three days. Mustafa was not in a good financial state. He was eking out his living by writing articles for the newspapers of Milyukov and Kerensky. When we were leaving for Germany, we left the dresses we brought from Turkistan to Mustafa. He sold them and spent the proceeds. Possibly he sold them to a museum.

### *Sadri Maksudi Bey—*

It transpired that Sadri Maksudi Bey was living in Nogent, at a street close to Mustafa. On the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the month, Abdulkadir and I went to see him. His daughters, who today have important positions in Turkiye, Adile and Naile, were high school students. His wife, Kamile Hanim, who today is living in Turkiye along with her children and grandchildren, prepared us the food of our homeland before Sadri Bey returned home. We spoke of the conditions in Russia. They had arrived here via Petrograd and Helsingfors. Since Sadri Bey was a Kadet Party Member, some help was arriving via that channel. Kamile Hanim did not forget that we had clashed with Sadri Bey while in Russia. She immediately stated: “you fluttered and bustled, and then what happened? Struggling against the Russians is not a game. Since your elder [Sadri] knew that, he did not follow you. Look, you followed us all the way here.” A little later Sadri Bey arrived. He did not attempt to reproach us. He was looking at us as a new and fresh source of news from Russian and Turkistan. We ate the evening meal together as well. Sadri Bey stated that we needed to contact Ali Merdan Topcubasi, to determine what can be done in Europe. That was what we wanted.

### *Ali Merdan Topcubasi—*

On 26 December, we telephoned Ali Merdan Bey, and went to see him outside the city at a place called St. Cloud. In Europe’s big cities, as long as one has a plan of the city to hand, one does not waste time searching, as is the case in the East, in finding a house. Lovable Ali Merdan Bey opened the door as if he knew that precise minute of our arrival. We embraced and talked. Since we had defended the same idea during the 1917 Moscow Congress of the Russian Moslems, and a little later at the Russian State Congress, we had warmed-up toward each other. I regarded Ali Merdan Bey like my father and his wife like my mother. Both of their daughters and their son Ali Ekber, whom I had known since his student days at Petersburg, were present. This family was altogether well known to me since I knew the history of their Borcali (Boruc Oglu) tribe, Ali Merdan Bey, who has a bright spot in the independence

movement of Russian Moslems, and his father the Professor of Persian, Mirza Cafer Topcubasi at the Petersburg University. Our talks were in the family setting and very sweet. Since their house was below the railroad line, every train passing made a noise. Since our talks were very serious and sincere, I was not even hearing the train noises. Ali Merdan Bey cried, stating: “I grew old. I will perhaps die without seeing my homeland once more. I am leaving the business of Russian Moslems to Emin Resulzade and you.”

We consulted Ali Merdan Bey about what needed to be done in Europe. When I indicated: “now that I am Europe, I want to benefit from scholarly aspects most,” he responded: “you are still young. Scholarship is not running away. You have just arrived from the strongest center of Turkish Islamic world, after difficult struggles. Think of all these events first. Speak with the Georgians, Ukrainians. Let me also speak with Maksudof.”

During the night of the 28 December, at the home of Mustafa Bey, I spoke with an enlightened Moslem from the Lezgi of the Caucasus, a graduate of Petrograd University Oriental Faculty as well as a Lawyer, by the name of Israfil. He had arrived from Istanbul. His wife was also a Russian and a rabid Kadet, just like Mustafa’s wife. That Kadet milieu had left an abhorrent impression on me. Milyukov had a conference [delivering a talk] that night; we went altogether. It transpired that Milyukov knew of me in absentia. The hall was completely full, with no place to sit. Milyukov wanted to provide places on either side of the podium for us to stand where he was seated. Ostensibly we were going to stand either side of him, just like candles next to the priest in front of a church altar. I did not go. Mustafa did, and stood next to him. During his speech, Milyukov pointed to him and stated “Our inorodets [outsider]” complimenting him. After the conference, I criticised Mustafa in a friendly manner: “you should not have done it; why did you have Milyukov refer to you as inorodets? You are a son of Turkistan, owner of a country. The Russians are the inorodets there, compared to us. You represent Turkistan here.” I spoke with Sadri Bey on 20 and 22 January. On 24 January, we again met at Sadri Bey’s home with Ali Merdan Bey, his son Ali Ekber, Mustafa Cokay and Abdulkadir; we talked quite a bit. Ali Merdan Bey suggested the publication of a political journal. Sadri Maksudi stated: “give an interview in a journal addressing the League of Nations. Write that piece to address the Islamic World, Russian emigrants and Europeans, explaining the problems of Turkistan.” That night, at the home of Mustafa we talked until the small hours of the morning with an Officer by the name of Nikolay Nikolovic Xan Yomudsky, who is the son of a converted [into Christianity] Turkmen Officer named Xan – Yomudsky. Amazingly, he was also a Kadet. Despite the fact that Xan-Yomudsky was a Christian, he was a Turkmen nationalist. Besides, this Xan-Yomudsky was protected by a Russian General when he was a very small poor child (actually, taken by force). He was educated as a Christian. However, he never forgot that he is a Turkmen; he stated to me that every time he looked at the mirror, he was reminded of his Turkmenness. I knew him since 1913. We had talked many times in Tashkent and Petersburg.

## *Contacts with the Russian Émigré political organizations—*

During the first week of January, I spoke several times with Shulgin, one of the Ukrainian Chiefs and Ramishvili the leader of the Georgians. Ramishvili invited us to a dinner with only his Gerogian and Caucasian friends. We spoke at length and comprehensively. Perhaps that was the most beneficial and sincere talks we held in Paris. Everyone wanted to learn if a revolt in Central Asia could live and whether or not another Central Asian uprising was possible. I presented all the naked facts and indicated that even though the Basmaci Groups were still operating, they will disperse soon and that is also the assessment of the Turkistan National Union as well. That meeting took place during 12 January and Ali Merdan Topcubasi was not invited. He took umbrage at that. He invited his other Georgian friends and had me speak with them as well.

## *French scholars—*

Meanwhile, I was contacting the French scholars in Paris. I especially visited Paul Pelliot several times who had conducted excavations in Turkistan. His wife was Russian. Pelliot also spoke good Russian. He gave me copies of his own publications and presented me to the English Archeologist Sir Aurel Stein who at that moment was visiting Paris. Both of them regarded me their close friend until their death. Later on, when I was studying at the University of Vienna, Sir Aurel Stein used to travel from London specifically to visit me in Vienna. Sometimes he would stop over on his way to India; he would always inquire if my finances were in order and would render aid. He was originally a Hungarian Jewish man who had converted into Christianity. He was one of the most courteous individuals in the world. The number of letters I received from him is countless, and is preserved in my library. He had a house and a library at Srinagar. He was thinking of employing me at that library. According to him, I would also be able to work on the Central Asian political issues there. His suggestions were very serious, and to my observation, sincere. I think that because he would repeat his suggestions whenever he visited me in Vienna while I was studying there. When in 1932 there was a disagreement between the entourage of Ataturk and myself on the reasons for the spread of the Turks throughout history, which forced me to move to Europe from Turkiye, he stated: “If you had gone to Srinagar, this would not have happened.”

Another was Gabriel Ferrand. He was a Governor in Indo-China, knows Farisi and Arabic. He was busily translating into French the Arabic geographical works. He invited me to his home. He proposed that we jointly publish the works by Ibn al-Faqih, Ibn-Fadlan and Ebu-Dulaf that I had discovered in Meshed. I had mentioned the samples of the old Khorezm language I discovered to the Iranist Professor Gothiot. He insisted that I leave him a sample. However, I had left all the notes I had made in Herat

among my books in Istanbul. Professor J. Deny planned to work on Mahmud Kasgari with me. In sum, if I were to comply with the wishes of Pelliot, Ferrand, Gouthiot and Deny, I needed to stay in Paris and join the French milieu. But, I explained that I had some political business I needed to attend, therefore I could not immediately start any such project, and apologized by stating that I needed to spend some time travelling in Europe and I would communicate with them.

Another scholar I spoke with was E. Blochet, the Director of Eastern Materials of the French National Library. Monsieur Deny invited me to his house near the Pantheon, where Napoleon is buried. He stated: “see what kind of wines the French have” and had me taste from several bottles. With Monsieur Deny, we spoke mostly on Kasgarli Mahmut. Since he was born and completed his education there, his Russian was perfect. We remained friends with him until his death in 1961.

There is also the Frenchman Joseph Castagne who had lived in Russia. I knew him from Tashkent. He used to teach French in Orenburg and Tashkent highschoools. He had works on the archeology of Kazakistan. I had read his volume published under the title “Step Archeology.” Since it was published in Russian and in French, that work helped me learn French. He liked the Baskurts and the Kazaks. Now, he was publishing papers on Turkistan in the French publications emanating from France. On the Basmaci, he was the only one to publish a book in all of Europe. Since he regarded me a walking library and source, he would approach me at every opportunity to obtain information.

Then, there were also the Social Democrat Seyhul-Islamzade Ekber and SR engineer Abbaskuli Atamabelikov. Since they were socialists, they were acting differently than Ali Merdan Bey, and were encouraging me to create a socialist front among the emigres from Russia. In reponse I indicated that without taking a poll of all the emigres in Europe I was not going to prefer one direction, and in our country Socialism can become a principle in the party programs after divesting ourselves from the Russian yoke.

There were two Russian scholars, Minorsky and Brutskus. I knew the first from Russia. His wife was the daughter of the Turcology Professor Vasili Dmitrievic Smirnov, whom I knew from Petersburg, and they were showing me closeness because of that. Later on, this Minorsky got involved in wide-scale scholarly activities in London and in Cambridge. He was scholarly but a very narrow Russian nationalist. Brutskus was a Jewish scholar. He was working on the history of the Hazars.

However, the person I met with most and benefited from in Paris was the Iranian scholar Mirza Muhammed Han Qazvini. He was working especially on Cengiz Han and his descendents. At his home, I met and spoke several times with Muhammed Farugi, who later became the Prime Minister of Iran, and Sir Dennison Ross, the Director of the Eastern Languages School in London. We were all speaking in Farisi, because I did not yet know English. As a result of our repeated contacts, they introduced me to many Orientalists in Europe. All three gentlemen became my very close friends until they left this world, and whenever I had financial difficulties, they always rendered help. Sir Denison Ross was inviting me to London, to publish the

geography book by Ibn-ul Faqih that I had discovered in Meshed. For that, he had also arranged for Professor of Farisi at Cambridge University, E. Browne, to invite me as well. Professor Browne also sent a separate letter inviting me to work with him on the Turkish and Iranian texts brought back from Eastern Turkistan by Sir Aurel Stein. In sum, the pathways were open for my scholarly work both in Paris as well as in London. All these contacts took place during a seven week period, at a head spinning speed.

On 22 January 1924, a White Russian, Mayer, a leader of the SR Party, invited me to a restaurant. That invitation was made prior to the death of Lenin; but on the day of the meeting, Lenin was dead. I was asked for my opinion, as to what was going to happen, who was going to head the government. Without hesitation, I indicated that Rykhov would become the Head of Government, but the de facto governmental administration will pass into the hands of Stalin who had control of the Party; that will conflict with Trotsky. There were also two gentlemen publishing the journal of the Social Democrats at the meeting. Everyone regarded my comment on Rykhov as strange. After a few days passed and everyone heard that Rykhov became the head of government, I was asked: “how did you know Rykhov was the one? Lenin had even closer friends?” I responded with: “that was only a guess and a feeling. It has only been ten months since I left Russia, and my impositions are still fresh. However, the predictions of those who have left Russia two or three years ago are becoming incorrect. After a while, mine will, too.”

Even though I did not know French well, I also went to the meetings of scholarly associations, Asia Society and the French Geographical Society meetings. On January XX [unreadable] our compatriot Sadri Maksudi Bey delivered a paper on the Oguz and Uygur at the Asia Society. I respected my compatriot. He arrived at this conference in a tuxedo as if he was attending a ball. The tip of his white handkerchief was visible from his left pocket. He was perspiring and was using the handkerchief on his right hand to wipe his face. Possibly, he was feeling as if he was facing an examination panel. On the other hand, all those attending had arrived in their daily outfits. Among those present, Monsieur Deny stated that the change of R ~ Z in Turkish had been recorded one hundred years ago. Meaning, this conference did not bring anything new to scholarship; however, I enjoyed seeing a compatriot delivering such a paper at the high level Asia Society. Afterward, when Sadri Bey took me to a restaurant, I congratulated him. Among the Tatars, the news circulated that Sadri Bey was a Professor at Sorbonne. I went to his class on 22 January. There were seven individuals listening. I was the seventh. It transpired that this was one of those elective classes devoted to the Slavistics, designed by the émigré Russians; as such, it was not part of the Sorbonne curriculum. On 8 February, I delivered a paper to the same Asia Society on the “new manuscripts discovered in Meshed and Kabul.” I had written that paper in Russian. Professor Deny read it in French translation. Since that paper contained references and information on the travelogue of Ibn Fadlan who had journeyed to Bukhara, Khorezm, and Bulgar one thousand years prior to our day; a work on the history of Herat; the settlements established



by Temur on the canals built on Zarafsan River by Temur; manuscripts with miniatures in Kabul; Farisi collections of poems that had remained unknown to that day, questions were posed by Monsieur Ferraud, Pelliot, Carra de Vaux, Blochet, Benvist and Bovvet who asked repeated questions. Deny acted as my translator. Discussions lasted for an hour and a half. Mr. Ferrand stated: “we have labored and tired our friend with our questions. Henceforth, we can talk with him individually.” I was applauded enthusiastically. Later on, the summary of that paper was published in the *Journal Asiatique* helped me to enter and gather interest in the world of European Orientalists. With my friend Abdulkadir, we made notes from Arabic and Persian Manuscripts that are only found in the Paris National Library. An Arabic geographer, Serif Idrisi’s work on Central Southern and Eastern Asia sections were of interest to me; and the manuscripts were in Paris; I hand-copied the sections that interested me. They are still handy for my work. In sum, the interest and trust shown in me by Mr. Pelliot, Deny, Ferrand, Sir Denison Ross, Blochet, Mirza Muhammad Qazvini made my trip from Russia to Europe caused this trip to turn into an Eastern expedition.

While we were in Paris, Sir Denison Ross arrived twice. During his last trip, while we were having diner at the home of M.M. Muhammed Han, he asked me: “in the history of Islam, which words of wisdom attracted your attention?” I suppose, it was a kind of an exam. In response, I wrote statements of wisdom from the Prophet, El-Biruni, Ibn Miskeveyh, Celaleddin Rumi, Cami and Navai and handed them to him. He may have been planning on writing a work on that topic. He asked the reason for increasing the value of “desire” in the statement attributed to the Prophet: “all actions are tied to the desires. If the desire is there, the high intentions of reaching God or small private matters such as obtaining the love of a woman, will reach their goals.” I replied: “the object is to value the self determination of the humans. The Bolsheviks are attempting to break the free-will of the millions, in order to subjugate them, make them pliable to the Bolshevik will, that is the reason for the Moslems there fighting against it.” He liked that very much. He published that idea in the journal *Asia* published in London. When he arrived in Istambul as the English Cultural Attache, we spoke often.

On 10 February, Victor Chernov, Agriculture Minister of the Kerensky Government and a leader of the SR Party, invited me to a café. There were members of the SRs there as well. Chernov had heard about the paper I delivered to the Asia Society two days earlier, and wanted to obtain information. Afterward, he stated: “I understand the French Orientalists may take you away from our political milieu.” Those talks were very sincere. In general, while I was speaking with such individuals, I understood that among the Russian emigres in Europe no specific realization had developed about Soviet Russia, or any policies to be followed against them. However, ten months earlier, while we were in Russia, we were convinced that the free world already had determined the main lines of their policies concerning Russia. We will see what we are going to observe in Berlin.

## *Other business in Paris—*

On 13 February, we obtained a visa from the Germans. On that day, Ali Merdan Bey invited us to his home for diner and talks, and since they were also in Paris, Sadri Maksudi, Mustafa Cokayoglu and two of his Azerbaijani friends. We were going to determine what we could do in Europe. Abdulkadir and I arrived a little early. Cokayoglu and Sadri Maksudi Bey arrived a little later. During our talks after dinner, these two individuals, as if they had coordinated their words ahead of time, stated: “we are not in favor of burning our ships” and explained that they did not embrace the independence idea, and that they would work for a democratic Russia, and defend the legal rights of the Moslems within that framework. Ali Mersan Bey: “apparently, we will not be fully working together. Despite that, that, too, is an idea. Moreover, that idea was defended in the Moscow Congress by your friends. Apparently, the time of establishing a joint Committee of Russian Moslems has not yet arrived.” Cokayoglu attempted to soften the idea he had stated, but at a moment, a harsh verbal confrontation took place between Sadri Maksudi Bey and Ali Merdan Bey. The discussions ended there. We took our leave and left. In the metro, we did not say a word to each other. While we were reaching the metro station where we were going to separate from Sadri Bey and Mustafa, I addressed Sadri Bey: “regardless of the differences of opinions we may hold, all four of us as well as Ali Merdan Bey, we are members of the same family. I have high regards for both of you. When you convened the 1906 congress and while you were in the Duma, I was a child of sixteen years of age. I knew you only from the newspapers. You are our elders, and I respect you; you must be certain of that.” Sadri Bey did not lift his eyes that were focused on the floor and did not utter a single word. That was because, not only I had advanced the idea of a territorial autonomy in the past, but my insisting on it now was an unforgivable sin according to him. That caused the idea of publishing a strong journal becoming derailed.

That night I sat down and wrote letters to my friends in Kabul, Meshed and Istanbul, outlining what I spoke with the members of the White Russian politicians, Europeans and Russian Moslem émigré intellectuals.

## *Our life in Berlin—*

On 15 February, on our way from Paris to Berlin, it became necessary to change trains in Brussels. I had purchased a lot of books in Paris, and the Orientalists have also given me their publications as presents. We did not have Belgian currency to give to a porter. Abdulkadir and I were barely able to carry them. Someone greeted us in Russian. It turned out that he was a Russian Officer assigned to the Third Baskurt Regiment by the name of Demidov. We embraced, kissed and talked. He helped us carry our belongings. He had escaped Soviet Russia and caught his breath in Belgium. That was yet another time I had observed the struggle against the Soviets taking place

without the division of nationality. First Lieutenant Demidov left us crying; later on, he always wrote letters.

Upon arriving in Berlin the next morning, I discovered that I had forgotten the German I learned in Russia. After Abdulkadir and I took our possessions to check-room for baggage, the difficulty we encountered finding the toilettes I can never forget. At any rate, with all the German I could muster, we found the “city trains” and got underway to the Rheinickendorfer Station. Our friend, the Kazak intellectual Azimbek was going to wait for us there. He had provided a good plan, and we arrived at the moment he had stated. He took us to the rooms he had rented for us with our belongings. This was the house at Rheinickendorfer Strasse No. 102. As we have gotten used to in Russia, and because we did not have much money, we were staying at the home of a poor family. Every member of this family named Schlickeisen was unemployed. They were receiving a little amount of money in the form of unemployment insurance. They were able to provide only four of five brickets of coal to warm our room. The married daughters, when they arrived to visit their parents, brought their own meals. That was because the lady of the house could not provide a bite to them. Despite that, all their rooms contained many books. Almost all of the works of all German poets were accounted. During the extreme poverty days of Moscow in 1919, because the Russians did not have any wood, they would burn the books in the houses, in their stoves. That or selling the property of their ancestors was not the way here. The newspaper they read was *Worwarst*, meaning it was the labor party organ. Despite their impoverishment, they were going to the distant live-theater located in this laborer’s quarter of the city. Our first order of business was to visit the student dormitories purchased for the Turkistan Government, and visiting the Ethnography Museum managed by Monsieur von Le Coq and Muller, Prussian State Library, especially the Eastern Section, and the chiefs of the left SR Party. The Eastern Club that had opened here became the place for speaking with the Turks from Turkiye and Azerbaijan. I was asked to deliver talks there. Azimbek knew Berlin well; he showed us around. We were reminiscing about our good impressions of our cooperation in Baskurdistan and Kazakistan, and were happy that we are once again together.

Since I was thinking of writing my memoirs some day, I began checking and indexing the documents to hand. At the same time, I busied myself with reading the publications of the White Russians issued outside Russia. I also read the Soviet press since we left Russia (March 1923). That was because, while I was checking the extant documents, I realized I began forgetting some of the names. Then I wrote down the names of hundreds of individuals since 1917 from among the Baskurt, Tatar, Ozbek, Kazak, Kirgiz, Turkmen, Bukharan and Khivans, noting their personalities, their Branches, villages, where they studied, what type of duties they performed within the national movement. Today, these individuals who were nationalists and officers are almost completely eradicated. The resultant short biographies which I augmented from the knowledge of the students and authors in Berlin are so important, if I had the time, publishing that collection as a stand-alone book would have been worthwhile. In addition, there were many notes I had made prior to my leaving our country,

listing names of individuals, events dates without any organization so as to make it deliberately useless for the Russians if those fell into their hands. Now, I wrote down all I could remember, the names of individuals and localities mentioned in this work. Now, what I am writing today in these memoirs is based on the documentation I had organized in Berlin at that time. We were even acquiring the press output from Turkistan via the students. In that regard, the first congress of the Kazak and Kirgiz scholars took place in Orenburg on 18 June 1924. In addition to the information contained in the newspapers, there was a letter from Ahmed Baytursun to Azimbek. The list of scholars published in the newspapers and the attached short letter contained the words: “from all of us to all of you, greetings.” In the attached newspaper clipping, the names listed were: Alihan Bukeyhanov, Nezir Turekulov, Hahil Dostmuhammed, Muhtar Avezoglu, Ahmed Baytursun, Seyfullah Sadivakkas (Seken), from the Kirgiz, Isanli Arabayoglu, and at the end of the list, Miryakup Dulat was mentioned. That was the very first authentic greetings reaching me from my country. Later on, none of those were left alive. During the summer months of 1924, I spoke with the majority of Moslem and Russian writers arriving from Russia. Among them were the Tatar intellectuals Ayaz Ishaki, Fuat Toktarov, Omer Teregulov were foremost. Teregulov had escaped from Ufa, had stayed in Far East, was in the Japhanese sphere, and then arrived in Paris then Berlin.

## *Kincekev Boyar—*

One of those whom I met here was German origin Russian aristocrat Emanoyel Emanoyelovic Borel. He was living in Wensdorf. I spoke several times with him, the last time in August. He only had his wife with him. He belonged to a family known to us as the Kincekev boyar, which had exploited our village and the neighboring villages and owned a large farm. They probably had several thousand hectares, most of which they confiscated from our village. Father of my grandfather, Velid, was always in court with Borel’s grandfather because of this usurpation. They acquired a large part of the land via inheritance from a Russian land owner by the name of Kindekov. Now I learned that the origin of these Kindiakov was derived from a Mirza lineage converted to Christianity. In reality, this family was referenced as Kincek or Kincekov Boyar by our Baskurts. Kincek was a well known Turk branch way back, living in the vicinity of Bukhara and Kashgar. The headquarters of this Borel family was five kilometers away from us in a Russian village named Petrovski, and our Baskurts still call it Kincekev. The Kinceks also lived in the Urals during the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

Now I learned from Emanoyel Borel, that the estate handed to them comprised of twenty five thousand five hundred hectares. Most of it was the forests to the East of the Yigen River. The eldest son of Emanoyel lived in the East of the estate at a place called Qalgaya which I knew well since my childhood. They had acquired the estate from their mother’s side, who was a member of the Kindiakov boyars, and their son-in-law Timasav boyars. This Timasev was also a Tatar Mirza family, just like the

Kindeks. Timasev became a millionaire during the time of Alexander II. Timasev's main estate was at a place called Tasli, near Orenburg, and had four thousand five hundred hectares. One of the daughters of this Timasev became the daughter-in-law of a notable of Orenburg, Graf Musin-Puskin. And that daughter's share of the inheritance passed to the Musin-Puskin from the Kindiakov boyars. Borel had purchased the Timasev estate from Musin-Puskin during 1900. The Borel family was one of the German families brought from Germany by the order of Catherine II [9 July 1762 – 17 November 1796] and placed in the Saritav (Saratov) province, and their main estate was in Saritav province. Emanoyel Emanoyelovic Borel became the head of the Saratov stock market. He held the entire wealth of the Saritav province; they would only arrive at our neighborhood ranch to drink kimiz during the summer. He indicated that between the Buce and Makar villages near ours, there was excellent Portland cement in a mountain called Maksim. He intended to take on the partnership of the heirs of Graf Ignatiyev, who was earlier the Istanbul Ambassador of Russia, then the Governor of Orenburg, and establish a factory very close to our village to employ several thousand laborers. They had allocated five million rubles for the purpose. The cement to be used in the canal building for Turkistan agriculture was going to be supplied from there. There was also an adjacent estate to the Borel's, belonging to a Russian Boyar by the name of "Yigenbasi Boyari." It was owned by a Russian by the name of Melnikov, comprised of six thousand hectares, all of which did belong to the ancestors of our village, Kuzen. My ancestor Velid was also in the court with that person. Due to that connection, Borel went there and learned the issues concerning land ownership. It was then decided that the yayla and kislak (summer and winter quarters) in the Irendik region of Eastern Baskurdistan was the property of our village. Even though the inheritance rights were not taken away from my family, which was the reason for the Irendik estate to be taken away from us. [sic] This is all I was able to learn from Borel concerning my family.

Over time, the enmity between the Borels and my family subsided since the courts always sided with them. Some of those Borel's would come and be guests of my father. If the animals of our village would cross into Borel lands, they would immediately be confiscated and punished. Only our animals escaped that fate. I asked the reasoning behind that to Borel Boyar. He stated: "lands to the north of your village, to the tune of eight thousand hectares, was confiscated from your ancestors by my grandfather who was the son-in-law of Governor General Dashkov. This confiscation became the law in the year of 1892. Borel was telling me all this in minute detail. At one time, this Borel had arrived in our house with foreigners who did not know any Russian. I can recall from my memory that all their horses were black and fat. It turned out that this Borel family was in contact with the Prussian royal family. Someone by the name of Ahmet from a neighboring village was taking his mares to Germany by train, and making kimiz for them. It transpired that that kimiz was being made in the farm of the German royal family in the South of Germany, and the guests Borel brought us who did not know any Russian were the notable friends from Germany. Now the great exploiter Borel family escaped from

Russia, and all their acquaintances were wiped out of existence as a result of the revolution, and they were left destitute.

Meanwhile, Abdulkadir and my financial conditions deteriorated. Mahmud Tarzi was in no hurry to send aid from Paris. We were living by obtaining loans from various people. Abdulkadir is a very self-sacrificing friend. At the house where we were staying, I noticed that the butter he served me was white and the one he was eating was yellowish. I then understood that the white was butter and the yellowish one was clarified fat. Since the latter was much less costly Abdulkadir was giving me the good one, and eating the fat. So, I told him: "do not do this henceforth; whatever we are going to see let us do it together." All that meant was that our conditions were not that much better than those of our old neighbors, the Borels. Whenever I visited their house, Borel would offer me tea boiled in the copper teakettle known as "bakirca." They could not stop talking of their old memories.

## *Taqizade—*

While I was in Berlin, another person I met was the Iranian intellectual Seyit Hasan Taqizade and the Azerbaijani Kasimzade. Taqizadeh is from an ulama family of Tebriz. He is ten to twelve years older than I. His wife is German. She is just as likeable as he, and now both are living in Tahrán. In their home on Leibniz Strasse, Taqizade had an excellent library. This library from which I had borrowed books and benefited is today a part of the Iranian Senate Library in which he is also a member. Mirza Muhammed Qazvini in Paris and Taqizade in Berlin are the individuals who had connected me with the Iranian intellectuals. Whenever I still journey to Tahrán, I visit Seyit Hasan Taqizade and his wife in their home, and the mausoleum of Mirza Muhiddin Han at Rey. That was the beginning of our forty three years of friendship with him. During 1957-1958, both of us were visiting Professors at Columbia University of New York. Whenever they journey from Tahrán to Europe, they honor our home. Huseyin Aka Kasimzade was an author who studied and lived in Germany. He published a journal entitled *Iransehr*. We had arguments over his fraudulent alteration of history, due to his Persophilia tendencies, and his creations, to show mythical Iranian rulers as true, and as if the Turk families that ruled Iran forced the Azerbaijan Turks to speak Turkish. However, we always remained friends. Until the end of his life he did not deprive me of his publications and letters.

## *The Orientalists we met in Berlin—*

There were important men among those I met in Berlin. Among the, foremost are Professor Edward Sachau, Theodor Noldeke, Johannes Mordmann, F.W.K. Muller, von Le Coq and Joseph Marquart. At one time, the Director of the Eastern Branch of Prussian State Library, Professor Weil, had tasked me with the duty of preparing a catalog of Eastern manuscripts brought back from Eastern Turkistan by Professor



Martin Hartmann and others. The contents of many in that batch were undetermined. He was paying me a certain amount every month for that effort. Since he was Jewish, when the State of Israel was founded, he moved there. I invited him to the XXII Orientalists Congress during 1951 meeting at Istanbul, by sending him the travel expenses. In sum, while in Berlin, I had been the beneficiary of his good acts. He also introduced me to the aforementioned great Orientalists. Professor Sachau was a great scholar who had introduced El-Biruni to the world. Even in the summer, he would arrive at the State Library wearing a fox-fur coat. I spoke with him in Arabic. One day, I asked for an appointment, and went to his house. He was working on the canon law of the Shafii sect, preparing a book. I told him that my father had brought back, on his way home from performing Hajj, a hand-copied portion of an autograph by Biruni on Central Asian and Indian geography, which is extant in the Fatih Library in Istanbul. I relayed to him some of Biruni's interesting ideas that I could recall. He stated: "if I had the means, I would immediately go to Istanbul." He was devoted to El-Biruni. To the old F.W.K Muller, who had conducted digs in Turkistan, who had studied works written in Turkish, Uyghur, Sogdian and other languages, I showed some of my notes on the canon-law book I discovered in Herat during 1923 written in and in the language of Khorezm. He told me: "if you go to Istanbul, look for similar canon-law works." I also had the same idea. Two years after that talk, I published my first work on the Iranian language with the aid of my friend Professor Witek, in the journal *Islamica* published in Leipzig. In that connection, I often corresponded with F.W.K. Muller after I arrived in Turkiye. He used to especially ask me if I recognized a geographical name found in the documents discovered during the excavations. He also would regularly send me his own publications.

Ernest von Le Coq was the Director of the German Ethnography Museum. As to his origins, he was descended from the French political refugees who escaped from France during the French Revolution. He had excavations in Eastern Turkistan, and by splicing together what he brought back in terms of art and architectural fragments, he created a living museum of the Uyghur civilization. He also brought back many Uyghur language works written in the Arabic alphabet. Even though he knew Turkish, he could not speak it. He spoke a little Russian. He wished that I would stay in Berlin and help him with the study of the Manuscripts. Once he took me to his home and showed me works which were not placed in the museum. One of them was a historical pamphlet written in a mixture of Uyghur and Arabic letters on the history of Cengiz Han.

Johanness Mordmann had in the past lived in Istanbul, and was a Professor at Istanbul University during World War I, he spoke, read and wrote well in Turkish. Just like Professor Weil, he, too, wanted me to stay in Germany and work in the Prussian Library. He was old, just like Sachau and Noldeke. Whenever he spoke with me, he would mix-in Chaghatay into Ottoman Turkish. Mordmann gave me copies of his works, especially off-prints of his articles published in the German Islam Encyclopedia. Professor Noldeke, compared to Mordmann had a tiny physique. He had published texts pertaining to the Ottoman history, and a grand volume of the Sasanid

period of Iranian history. The Lithuanian Professor Yakub Sinkevic was describing this Noldeke as a great German intellect. I learned that was so only afterward. Once I asked him: "I read the review of your book by Professor Mednikov, pertaining to Prophet Mohammed. You believe in the divine inspiration of the Prophet and regard him so; is that true?" He replied: "yes, approximately so. That is because, we learn of Mohammed's life from historical sources written fifty years after his death. We cannot doubt that he was truthful and sincere. That is not the case for other prophets. For example, whether or not Jesus existed as a person is still under debate. If the existence of other prophets is believed, then one can believe that Mohammed existed as a prophet; except, he lived in a society with lower cultural strata." Noldeke was living somewhat distant from Berlin; he presented me with copies of his publications on Ottoman history and the life of our Prophet when I visited him again.

According to what F.W.K Muller told me, Professor Marquart was originally a Catholic Priest; his specialty was classical languages, old Iran Pahlavi language and Assyrian language. After the Gok-Turk inscriptions were found in Mongolia during 1892, he studied Turkish, and published a big volume on the Kipchak history. Professor Weil told him about me and my discovery of Ibn Fadlan travelogue in Meshed. Since, during those days he was busy having his volume printed on the Northern countries, based on Arab records, especially on the news of Ibn Fadlan, he indicated to Professor Weil that he definitely wanted to see me. I made an appointment to see him at his home. When I discovered that he could not speak in the languages I knew, I took along my friend Azimbek Birimcan. He was the translator. He stated: "I learned from the letter of Monsieur Ferrand in Paris and from Professor Weil that you found Ibn Fadlan and Ibn Faqih in Iran; I am very curious." I asked for permission to light a cigarette. "Please no permission for that. If there was wine or schnapps, we would imbibe together." We laughed and talked quite a bit; perhaps about three hours. I indicated that my first reports on the subject were going to be published in France and in the journal of the Russian Academy of Sciences. His immediate response was: "do not let them fall into the hands of the Russians; they will fraudulently alter them. Last century, they got hold of some Eastern manuscripts by way of Gottwald, and they destroyed them because those contained some records against the Russians. Do not let the same happen to Ibn Fadlan and Ibn Faqih." I went to see him several times. He told me: "there is no need for a translator; we can communicate in German as much as you know it." In truth, that is what happened. He presented me with the copies of his "Studies on Eastern Europe and Eastern Asia" and "On the history of the Cumans." In his work "Moslem News concerning the Northern Countries," which was being printed during those days, he mentioned me: "as such, a Bashkurt has discovered such an important source." Marquart, who was not that old, left a good impression on me. He was one of those German scholars who can be described as "genious." Marquart also wanted me to stay in Germany to work on Eastern sources. He believed that we would make important discoveries by working with a Sinologist Dutch scholar (later I learned that his name was De Groot) who was making translations from Chinese, and working with me we could solve quite a few problems. He had attached importance

of my discovering Khorezm language, Ibn Fadlan and Ibn Fakih. He was convinced that I truly understood the dastans of Firdewsi and Esedi-Tusi. He stated: “Germany is poor, the value of her money is non-extant; and social democrats pester her,” cussing them out. Apparently, he did not like them. After arriving in Istanbul, I corresponded with him. His writing was very illegible; however, each of his letters illuminated a serious scholarly issue.

## *Proposals of English scholars—*

The fact that I could seriously work on texts written in Arabic, Farisi, old and new Turkish dialects was communicated to Edward Brown by Mirza Muhammed Qazvini in Paris. They joined in with Sir Denison Ross in order for me to move to Cambridge. That meant, my proficiency in those languages gave me the opportunity to live in Europe. At the same time, Monsieur Gabriel Ferrand wanted me in Paris to work along the same lines. Meanwhile, my friend Joseph Castagne, who had aimed to learn the contemporary life in Turkistan, wanted me to work in the field of Islam, especially at the journal *Revue de Monde Musulmane*. He had indicated to me in writing that he spoke with Monsieur Massignon on this matter, and that it was not at all difficult to realize that solution. However, since we had decided in Kabul that it was more suitable for us to settle in Turkiye, and because of the increasing and seriousness in nature of our correspondence with these Orientalists, I began to research how it would be possible to arrive in Turkiye. Besides, Mahmud Han Tarzi, the Afghan Ambassador in Paris had plans to have me called to Kabul, and Islambek Hudayarhanov who was in his entourage, was working seriously toward realizing that.

## *My talks with a Polish gentleman—*

A correspondent of the Polish Telegraph Agency I met in Berlin, Monsieur Stempovsky, had a different plan for me. He stated:

1. “It is necessary to establish a political alliance among Caucasus, Turkistan and Ukraine against the Russian invasion and their attempt at digesting these people into Russia. We can establish an institute, and publish a journal. You can be very helpful in that regard. After our initial talks, I had relayed this matter to our government in Warsaw.”

Our talks with that gentleman, which began on 20 June 1924, continued. The details are written in my diary. He did not regard it appropriate for these activities to be undertaken by a political party. Instead, he foresaw a scholarly and semi-scholarly institute, “Vsxotniy Institut” [‘wschodni?’ ‘orientalny?’], centralizing these activities. He indicated that he was in contact with a group called “the Concord Club” in Warsaw. In France, he was in touch with “Society for the Defence of Human Rights” and the

reporters of the *Quotidien* newspaper. In sum, these talks with Stempovsky were very hopeful for my political activities. Mustafa Cokay was also in favor of these proposals. A White Russian by the name of Sokolnikov heard of these and spoke with me, indicating that it would not be appropriate for such an initiative to be entirely based on non-Russian “Inorodets,” otherwise we would be tied to the American and English capital as a result. From that date, my contacts with Ukrainians and Caucasians have increased. This journal was going to be published in France and not in Poland, and under the name *Prometheus*. Monsieur Stempovsky was indicating that in addition to those nations imprisoned by the Russians, it was necessary to follow a path that would favor the defence and gather the close political interest of the nations such as Turkiye, Iran and Afghanistan, whom the Russians want to invade under the mask of socialism.

2. The second stage of my talks with Stempovsky was attached to even more vital topics for me. He wanted to place me in the German-Polish “Ufa” movie company. Stempovsky and some of his friends were defending the thought that it was necessary to promote the Eastern nations and their histories around the world. I was urged to become the decoration specialist in that endeavor. The proposed salary was very high. The Ufa movie company representative who spoke with Stempovsky had indicated that: “since the decorations of the movies about the Eastern life were not based on scholarship, history or ethnography, they were not successful. For example, we do not know how Cengiz, Temur, Kubilay Kaan, Babur, Ekber would appear on stage, and what would their retinues look like. On the other hand, you indicate to us the source materials containing miniatures are present in the museums that we could use in making these movies. Thus we can make use of your talents.” This was truly an attractive offer. I thought about that offer for a long time. Finally I answered: “I spent my life on scholarship and in struggles to regain the rights of my nation. If I now join a movie company, they will say Validov has become an artist, and will conduct propaganda against the seriousness of our case. I cannot allow that.”

## *The students from Turkistan in Berlin—*

The Government of Feyzullah Hoca had sent seventy students to Berlin. Among them were Azimbek Birimcan from the Kazaks, whose name appears multiple times in these Memoirs, and Abdussettar from the Biytilev Ozbeks. We spent all manner of times with them. My hopes of the future were tied to them. There was also a Baskurt by the name of Osman Kuvatov. His name was mentioned in connection with the 1917 events. He became ill from alcohol, and returned to his country. His father was an intellectual who had written a book on the history of the Baskurt. He was determined to devote himself to political activities. Upon our arrival in Berlin we were very sorry to learn that he had left. That was because, there was nobody

from the Baskurt to defend our case, who had studied at a university and spoke German. During 1943, when I arrived in Germany to speak with the prisoners, I heard from a fellow townsman that he was very sorry that he had returned and cried, stating: “nothing but death called me back.” And, he was killed before long. In Europe, only Colonel Alimcan Togan was present from among the Baskurt. He had gone to Manchuria via Siberia, got involved in the struggles there, and finally arrived in Hungary with the aid of the Hungarian Ambassador in Tokyo. He studied in Debretsin Agricultural School in Hungary. Afterward, he did his doctorate at the Budapest School of Economics. He had learned excellent Hungarian during a very short interval and made friends in Hungary. He arrived in Berlin during the month of July, and altogether with other friends, we went on trips and spent the month in festivities. Abdussettar, unlike all the other Ozbek students who were studying medicine, commerce and technical subjects, had devoted himself to literature. He had learned German well. He also knew Farisi. In Turkistan, the concept of handsomeness has a special place among the urban populations. There is always joking about it. Since Abdussettar was very handsome, he took those jokes well. He especially liked the Farisi and Chaghatay gazel. He would work at the Eastern Division of the Prussian State Library. One day, the darkness settled about four P.M., rendering the reading room dim enough that nothing could be read. At that moment, Abdussettar Cabbaroglu entered the room, and at the precise moment, electric lights came on. I wrote the following poem by a Khorasan poet, and placed it on his bag: “ah-hey, light that provides heavenly radiance, you rendered our meeting into a rose garden by arriving/ as you stepped in you enlightened the house.” The poor man liked it very much. He asked: “did you create those lines impromptu as I walked in?” I responded: “no, this is a poem by an old poet. I recalled it when I saw you.” After that, we were sincere friends. He translated an article of mine into German and published it in the journal *Deutsche Rundschau*; later he wrote an article on Ozbek literature and published it in the same journal. After he completed his education, I worked hard to bring him to Turkiye, but could not obtain a visa. He went back to his country and was eliminated there. He had read all the works on Turkistan history, and especially those pertaining to the history of the latest independence movement, and had benefited from the materials I possessed.

Azimbek Birimcan is a Kazak intellectual mentioned in these Memoirs. If I were to write the life we lived in Berlin, and his good deeds, this work will become longer. After he completed his education, he wanted to live in Turkiye. Once again, it was not possible to obtain a visa. Even though he knew that it was going to be his end, he went back to his country crying. He, too, was eliminated just like Osman Kuvatov and Abdussettar. Also there, there were two flutists, “Koray players” there, by the names of Cintemir and Mehmet Devletcurin from among the Baskurts. Both were prisoners left over from the First World War. I discovered that Mehmet was the brother of my friend Sibgat from the Yoldibay village of the Tungevir. They both knew the Baskurt music very well. We would invite them to our houses, or would go visit them, and listen to the Baskurt national melodies. It was especially important

that Mehmet Devletcurin knew and played melodies very much like the Mevlevi music in Turkiye, for the history of music. After arriving in Turkiye, I mentioned them to the famed flutist in Turkiye, Neyzen Tevfik, and the last Mevlevi Seyh, Veled Celebi. I worked hard to bring those two flutists to Turkiye. For whatever reason, I could not obtain visas for them either. They were both eager to live in Turkiye. Cintemir died in Berlin. Devletcurin spent the Second World War in Germany. He was killed by the bayonette of a Red soldier while he was protecting his two beautiful daughters as the Russians were occupying Berlin. I can never forget these five individuals which I must remember painfully in these memoirs, concerning our life in Berlin.

### *My contacts with my friends and family in the East—*

While I was in Berlin, I wrote letters and reports to Turabbek Turebekoglu in Meshed, Abdulhamid Arifoglu in the Chitral Province of India, and to Hasim Sayik in Kabul on world political developments, on the destiny of Turkistan, about the personages, scholars, various political party leaders in a summary form. I also received letters from them. Turabbek and Abdulhamid were able to relay some of those letters to our country via the channels determined earlier. Those who had been in the entourage of General Enver, who had arrived via Iran, and those who were in my entourage, arrived in Turkiye and swelled the numbers of the Turkistan fighters and cultural workers. There was correspondence touching on very important issues with Osman Hoca in Istanbul, Haci Isametdin of Bukhara living in Eskisehir and Sadreddin Han living in Gazne, Afghanistan. I received the letters of Haci Isameddin and Nasir Mahdum Hekimov, the former Treasury Minister of Bukhara on 10 September and caused me a great deal of grief. Both indicated that I was the cause of the difficulties being experienced by the recent immigrants in Turkiye, when they could not find jobs and fell destitute. Those letters and my responses constitute the documents on Turkistan tragedy.

During those days, I received many letters from my father and brother Abdurrauf. My father sent me a copy of the pamphlet he wrote on the passing of my master and maternal Uncle Habib Neccar. That caused me to re-live in my mind my youth.

There were also letters from my wife Nefise and her father Haci Mehmet Yaksimbet. In my response of 27 November 1924 to hers dated 2 November, I indicated to her that I would be contacting the Russian Embassy to bring her either to Germany or to Turkiye. I had also added the following lines from the poems of Navai and Fuzuli: “if the heavens rotated according to my wishes/ and remove the sorrow of separation with the medicine of togetherness/ my spirits could not find a keel in the valley of unfamiliar/ I wish my friend would arrive soon to host me, to cure me/ my spirit is burning with the fire of separation/ now I wish to reach the face of my friend/ I am



ailing from separation, I would like to recover by seeing your face.” I also wrote to my father and Nefise’s father similar poems.

## *The first European meeting of Turkistan National Union—*

Shortly after arriving in Berlin, it became apparent that the Soviets have been taking measures to prevent my activities from bearing fruit. All this began by a statement from some shady characters that a Baskurt being the chief was something dishonorable for the Ozbeks. In Turkistan, such propaganda would not have any effect. However, outside, somehow, it began to take hold. The old Unitarists from among the Tatars led the way. I sent an eight page notice to the “Members of the Turkistan National Union living in diaspora,” with that heading, on 13 November 1924, proposing they elect someone else as the chief. I announced that the Turkistan National Union Congress was going to meet in Berlin on 23 November. Mustafa Cokay from Paris and Alimcan Tagan from Budapest arrived to participate. Both were sworn in and became members. Abdulvahhab Murad and Abdulkadir Inan oversaw the swearing in ceremony. Mustafa showed a considerable hesitation in joining, due to the Society program containing an item about independence. However, he finally relented. This congress did not at all accept my resignation. Important decisions were taken against the subdivision of one Turkistan into five republics under the names of Ozbekistan, Kazakistan, Kirgizistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The term Turkistan would continue to be utilized in our publications, and the separate republics would be referenced, for example, as the Ozbekistan section. Also, it was decided to continue to use the flag in the form it was accepted in Samarkand. The common language issue was discussed and all the decisions were accepted. Those decisions were sent to our fellow countrymen living in Turkiye, Egypt, Iran and Afghanistan.

## *Moslems of Finland—*

The esteemed merchants Ziyynetullah Ahsen and Imadeddin arrived in Berlin from Finland during October. They gave feasts at the home of Alimcan Idris and later at the hotel where they were staying. I had last visited the Finnish Moslems at the beginning of the 1917 Revolution. There were educated individuals amongst them. That meant, in addition to dealing with commerce, they were also closely following cultural issues, and had publications there. Since they were wealthy, they also contributed to the national movements amongst Russian Moslems. The educated Tatars living in Petersburg, the famed Musa Carullah Begi and the Imam of Petersburg, Lutfu Ishaki would go and be their guests. The beautiful work of Musa Carullah, entitled “Fasting during Long Days” was begun to be written while he was a guest among the Finland Tatars. They now arrived in Berlin in order to meet with those individuals who had

an influence on the life and culture of the Moslems in Russia, such as Ayaz Ishaki and me. Ziyynetullah Ahsen was determined to have the Kur’an and the publications that presented Islam well translated into Finnish and publish them. He was intent on publicizing the Islamic culture among the Finnish people. He had already engaged a high school teacher by the name of Georg Pimenev to translate the Kur’an, and he began the task. Ahsen wished to speak with me on such matters. He brought many a question in written form; my answers to a segment of his questions he liked. The remainder was indeterminate, since they touched upon topics I did not know. We will touch upon those shortly, which forced me to consider religious matters once again.

## *Burhan Sehidi—*

On 10 November, an educated Tatar merchant by the name of Burhan Sehidi arrived. According to the calling card he presented me, in German, he was called the representative of the Xingjiang Provincial Government, S. Burchous. Reportedly, he was from the Aksu village in the vicinity of Tetis in Kazan. He was a brother of the well-known author Burhan Seref and Alimcan Seref. He was living in Urumci since 1912. He was a friend of Hadi Atlasi whom I knew well. He was portraying himself as a nationalist and Moslem to the extreme, living in Eastern Turkistan since 1912, in Urumci, busying himself with trade and public affairs. He gave me some of his writings in Tatar that have been duplicated. He further represented that he is fluent in Chinese and established good relations with the Chiang Kai-shek. He indicated that he had thoughts about Moslems in China and the autonomy of Eastern Turkistan. He advised me to write a history volume on Eastern Turkistan, and stated “I will definitely have it published.” He stated that he was in Berlin to purchase supplies and a printing press, sent by the Xingjiang Government. Next day, I inquired of him from Alimcan Idrisi who knew all of the Tatar educated. He told me: “he is a merchant working both sides; for Chiang Kai-shek and the Russians.” Later on, he published a dictionary of Chinese, Uygur and Russian during 1935 in Eastern Turkistan events [sic]. Later on, I made more inquiries of him. He became a member of the Parliament of Chiang Kai-shek, but worked more sincerely for the Russians. At the end of 1949, when the Chiang Kai-shek government lost control to the Red Chinese, he immediately emerged as the most trusted man of the Red Chinese. When the Mesut Bey Government [in Eastern Turkistan] was dispersed, he had the Reds kill those members of the Government remaining in Eastern Turkistan. During 1940, he sabotaged the efforts of the great Altay Kazak leader Osman Batur, in helping both the Red Chinese and the Russians. When Osman Batur was captured in 1957 by the Red Chinese and imprisoned in Urumchi, this Burhan established a counterfeit court to kill this courageous leader and headed the said court and killed Osman Batur.

This Burhan, with whom I spoke on 10 November, was one of the greatest hypocrites I have ever encountered. While he was taking his leave, at the doorstep, he

expressed his desire to speak again; my response was that I would not have much time for that. His talk left the impression that he was a shady person. The series of events I cited above proved that my instincts about him were correct.

## *Congress of the Revolutionary socialists—*

Among the SR emigres in Berlin, the Chernov group had good relations with us. When Chernov arrived in Berlin from Prague, where he was living, we spoke. All the SRs find it strange that the Russian imprisoned nations would seek independence. In that regard, the Chernov group and the Left SRs were more tolerant. The Kerenski group of the SRs had slid to the Right. I had met Steinberg and Spero of that group during June. This Spero personally told me that he was the Commander of the Russian Black Sea Fleet and he was the one who annulled the Tatar Peoples Republic. He separated from the Bolsheviks by objecting to the Brest-Litovsk treaty; he was arrested and later escaped to Germany. On 19 December 1924, the English Government of MacDonald was brought down, largely on the bases of the letter attributed to the Head of the Third Komintern, Zinoviev. Many Russian politicians stated that it was a document forged by the English Conservatives, while other stated that it was a balloon let loose by Moscow. However, the Left SR leadership was claiming that that document was manufactured by the Russian émigré socialists, because they preferred the Conservatives instead of the moderate Laborites in the Mac Donald Government, and it was manufactured in Berlin. They seemed certain about that. All this was a great lesson for those of us who had arrived from Russia. That was because; it showed that those parties in the West, which as a principle chose to fight the Bolsheviks, did not have a common point. Instead, confusion reigned.

However, a result was obtained by my getting acquainted with these Left SRs: Steinberg invited me to attend the Cogress, in the name of Turkistan Socialists, which they were planning to hold in Berlin during 24-25 December 1924, of the Left Socialist Parties who did not acknowledge the leadership of the Russian Communism. I had Mustafa Sakuli and Mamur Niyazi in Istanbul; Abdulvahab Murad, Azimbek, Abdulkadir Suleyman, Damulla Biytiyev in Berlin had sign a writing [sic?] and gave it to Ledeburg, informing them that I would be attending as a guest representing the Socialist Arm of the Turkistan National Union.

This congress met at the late Karl Liebknecht's home on Scossestrasse No. 121 [Schloßstraße?] in Berlin, as the World Left Socialists Congress. The following Parties participated: German Socialist Alliance (Ledeburg, Wegman, Rabold); French Socialist Alliance (M. Letrange); Russian Left SR and Maximalists Party (Steinberg, Spero); Lithuanian Left People's Party (Perkinas); Byelorussian Left SR (Greb, Borovski); Ukrainian SR (Ripetski, Krax); Italian Socialist (Maximalist) Party (Nenni, A. Balabanova) and, as guests, Z. Validov and Ukrainian Socialist Sapoval. A. Balabanova, whom I had met in Moscow, was an Italian woman. She was very close to Lenin; she left the Party and returned to Italy due to differences in principles. At the consultative

session, this lady showed great interest in me and introduced me to Nenni and others. The papers read were very good, because they were free ideas expressed in a free world. My presentation was entitled "Toward Socialism over Bolshevism" (Über den Bolschewismus zum Sozialismus). The contents stressed that the Russians arriving under the flag of socialism were leaving the capitalists far behind in their imperialism; the Basmaci Movement was a people's action; it is necessary for the World Left Socialists to sincerely cooperate with the revolutionary leadership of the colonized people; and it is imperative that the Third International be forgotten and convene a Fourth International. My words were applauded. There was no possibility of my speech drawing applause from Socialist-Democrat Mensheviks, English Right SRs, French and German Right Socialists (Members of the Second International). However, there were those among the Left Socialists who avoided distancing themselves from Moscow-Communism. Some members of the Jewish Bund and the leadership of the Russian Left SRs were devoted to Sionism, and were religious Jews. Their occasional smiles toward us were for their own timely benefit and not entirely sincere. Those who sincerely listened to my speech were Nenni, Balabanova, Ledeburg, Wegman and Shapoval. They asked me questions to expand some of my statements and took notes. The brother of Karl Liebknecht, whose name now I forgot, published the text of my presentation in the journal *Klassen Kampf* (1925 No. 14, 21) which they were publishing, and also in the journal of the Russian Left SRs, *Znamia Borby* (1925 No. 9-10) with appreciative introductions.

In my life, I spoke with various party members; however, I appreciate the individuals who believe in their party doctrine and those whose activities carry some consequence.

## *Cokayoglu and Socialism—*

On 25 January 1925, I received a strange letter from Cokayoglu. Earlier I had written to him that his articles in Miliyukov's newspaper are not commensurate with his membership in the Turkistan National Union. He could not reconcile that statement with the presentation I made at the Left Socialist Congress which was published in *Znamia Borby*, and was confused. He took my letter to mean "cut all your ties with those Kadets." In his letter he stated: "if you are going to represent Turkistan in such congresses as a socialist, I cannot be a member of your Turkistan National Union. Do you think that you can drag the people behind you with the ERK party program?" On 1 February 1925, I wrote him an answer:

"During our Berlin meetings, you had read the text that I was going to present to the Congress of Socialists, which is now published in Russian, and you had approved it with the statement 'we need to take advantage of such occasions to make our case known.' Now, why did you turn in this fashion? Apparently, this paper and the letter I wrote you were not met with the approval of Maria Yakilna (Cokay's wife). Such instances were also observed several times during last year. The wives of Eleken

(Alihan Bukeyhanov) and Aqan (Ahmet Baytursun) were also Russian. However, they had managed to keep their wives out of politics. They would not have their wives read their letters. When politics was the subject of discussion, they would immediately rise and leave. I know Maria Yalkina as a good person, and respect her for being your wife. Because of that, I am sending you whatever you ask. Now, I sent you Turkish cigarettes; I trust you will like them. However, Maria Yalkina is not a member of Turkistan National Union. Accordingly, I am sending this letter by the hand of Ekber Aga Seyhulislam. Do not be offended. I delivered my paper not as a member of the Turkistan National Union, but as a member of the Erk Party. You also know that I attended the said congress, not as a member, but as a guest. Turkistan National Union is an organization of seven item platform that brings together the two largest parties of Turkistan and Alas Orda. All three parties constituting TNU can participate in any congress, according to their own party programs, outside of those seven planks of the TNU platform. The existence of those parties, after leaving Turkistan, is purely theoretical. From the Erk Party, in diaspora, we are only twenty-two members. We do not have vital communication with those members who remained in the country. Naturally, when our country can gain independence, those parties will live according to the electoral results. I hope that seven plank platform that can provide us with the possibility of establishing a coalition, or something similar in the future.

Why did the Erk Party make a program of open socialism? You, during 1917 in Khokand and Abdulkadir Muhittinov during 1921 in Bukhara having been deep anti-socialists, caused the labor strata to join in with the Russian labor organization. When you were deputy head of the Government, in the debates with Chernishev you had clearly shown that you understood legality as “bourgeois,” and did not at all side with the Moslem labor unions. You had rejected the idea that large “quarters” (block apartments) in which the laborers and middle class citizens would live should be constructed by the government and stated that ‘if Putelioxov in Khokand and Mirkamil Bay in Andijan wish to buy all houses in their cities and render the entire city population their tenants; that is so according to the law.’ Then this ‘laborer-tudeh’ idea emerged at that time. We had advanced that idea in order not to lose the Moslem laborers to the Russian Socialist Parties and organizations, and advanced the matter as a national issue. That was the reason for the establishment of national labor unions during June 1917 with Hamza Hekimzade in Samarkand, me and Mahmud Hoca Behbudi. Azerbaijan’s national socialist parties and the Musavat Party had organized that business much better during 1918-1919.

We had understood socialism as a free-federation to be established Russia-wide comprised of all organizations founded on the bases of all national characters. We were definitely against the dictatorship of tyranny. On the other hand, the Russian Communist Party was following a policy of a Russian imperialist socialism on the scale of Russia. They were allowing a Moslem Center for the Moslems only at the center of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow (as a secondary propaganda arm). However, they were not allowing that center to open affiliated centers elsewhere. By

1919, socialism had taken the lead in Turkistan. No party that was not socialist could be established. It was forbidden.

Even after we left our country, we believed that we could continue our influence in the country via a national socialist party. That is still possible. We did not see a reason to change the party program, which was written in 1920 according to the conditions of Russia.

You ask me if Erk Party can gain the masses; if it remains true to nationality and Islam, why not, as long as it can live under the conditions of freedom. We spoke quite a bit during 1917 with Mahmud Hoca and Hayreddin Balgimbayev on this matter. Now, we are learning the German organizations which are close to the same aims, with Azimbek. Here, the task of keeping together socialism with nationalism in the same organization is split into two. One is National Socialists; but their primary aim is animosity toward the Jews. The National Socialists are placing the German race and paganism against Catholicism, and following the path for a full dictatorship. In our case, in order to honor the Tajiks, in many cases, it will be necessary to use the term Moslem instead of Turk, and Turkistanis. That means, the race issue will not be valid with us. The second route is the path of the Christian Socialists. We may possibly learn some from them. My socialism is based on scholarship. I seriously learned Chernyshevsky, Marx, Plekhanov, Lenin, Herzen and Chernov. However, scientific socialism can only help while writing the history of the decline of materialism. But, a socialism that takes democracy as the primary principle along with believing in progress, joined with nationality and Islam, can lead large masses in Turkistan. Besides, ERK is a party solely for Turkistan; the party program and related ideas are not for export.

The program of the Cedids [roughly: ‘new’ or ‘renewal’] does not contain any order. I had written their nineteen item program draft. The talks among them lasted for months on those items. Those discussions were boring. There cannot be a nationalist party that does not include production, consumption and cooperatives in the party program. You wish to call that party ‘radical’ instead of ‘cedid.’ Still, you do not have a program containing economic items. For the time being the best for all of us is the seven plank platform. That is, as long as the details outside that platform are not aggrandized. I had suggested that you have a talk with Resit Saffet Bey; I understand you have done so. However, you had mentioned that you did not like my participation in the Congress of the Socialists. While you were stressing that you were writing articles for Miliukov’s paper, and that you were tolerant of Miliukov, you attempted to distance Miliukov from Mensikov. However, he was a secretary of General Talat at one time, and to them, such differences do not mean anything. I participated in the Berlin Congress, because they are socialists who will listen to the problems of numerically small nations. Now I see; the letters Rosa Luxemburg wrote before her demise bemoans Russian imperialism of the Russian Communist Party. She termed the promises of the Russian Communist Party announcements, that they would provide independence to the nations imprisoned by the Russians, as charlatanism. The world is changing fast. It would be useful for you to speak with those socialists who



are in favor of a federation with smaller nations, and those who are against colonies. You, as an attorney, could have labored to have the impounded properties of Putliaxov returned to him during 1917-1918. Now, you cannot open your mouth in favor of Emir of Bukhara or Putliaxov or Mir Kamil. These past seven years brought unimaginably fast changes. The next seven years will see even more changes. Even the liberals, who are not socialists, began to suggest that as well. Means of transportation and communication will be nationalized in the country as well.

Freedom of publication is one of the holiest rights of a nation. However, that cannot be left to the monopoly of the capitalists. Leaving the press under the monopoly of the state during the Soviet period, just as it was under the Tsar, is a most negative outcome. It appears that nations will choose to limit the dictates of capital and tyranny of inheritance over the people. You will not find that strange either. But, that is precisely the socialism you had rejected loathingly during 1917. All this is a problem of the world. There is no reason to expend separate efforts for Turkistan in this arena. Whatever the world will choose, so will we. And, that is: a national and sincerely democratic socialism, which will not be deceived by the imperialist and dictatorial socialism of the great nations, one that will not compromise the freedom of self determination of nations and individuals.

All these matters were discussed in detail during 1920-1921 when the center of Turkistan National Union was in Bukhara and Samarkand. Since you were not in the country at that time, I provided the details here. I sent a summary of this letter to Osman Hoca, Nasir Mahdum and Mustafa Sahkuli in Istanbul; Abdulhamid Arif and Turabbek in Meshed. If there are any errors, they will write you and me. 1 February 1925.”

## *Talks with German socialists and followers of Kautski—*

Among those attending this Congress, the views on the future of socialism and the rights of the weak nations were different. The majority of ideas expressed did not satisfy me. Because of that, I decided to speak with the representatives of other Parties, and non-Socialists in Berlin. I first contacted the Party of the President Ebert and Starenberg [here, the type-setter left out a couple of sentences]. Wegman fortified my idea. After the congress was over, I spoke with a correspondent [again, a sentence is missing] who had gained the sympathies of the Easterners during 1914. These talks took place at the colossal building of the *Worwarst* newspaper editorial offices. With the aid of the correspondents of the same newspaper, I found the spiritual leader of German socialism, Karl Kautski. That was because I knew his ideas expressed in his grand volume “Materialist Understanding of History” and that had formed the bases of Buxarin’s book of the same title. I had a chance to learn his ideas in greater detail ten years later in Vienna, during the time of Hitler; during our talks on 16 January 1925, it became apparent that this great scholar did not have any firm understanding of the

minority issues. During all these talks, Azimbek Birimcan helped me to express myself in German. From my talks with the Editor of *Worwarst*, Friedrich Stampfer, since their party was now in power, I understood that they were a bit too supercilious and that they did not attach much importance to the problems of minority nations while they were pursuing colonies. Wegman, friend of Karl Liebknecht, had pulled me to the side at the other congress that I attended as a guest, and we had a talk. He did not seem to be interested in the return of the German colonies. At the end of this Congress, during the closing session, I spoke with the German members and stated: “there is no benefit to be gained from German Social Democrats who are thirsting after Colonies. The German people need to demonstrate that they have abandoned this colony gathering greed to England, France, and Belgium in no uncertain terms and announce that they will honor the rights of the colonized people. At that time, they will gain tremendous respect in the East. [Here, once again, several sentences are missing in the printed text].

## *Talks with General Schleicher—*

I wished to speak with the chief representative of the non-socialist circles, General Schleicher. He was the Chief of the General Staff, and our meeting was facilitated by the German Officer Lemman. This Lemman was an enemy of the German social democrats. He told me that one of his close friends joined the Social Democrats. He sought Lemman for talks and offered his hand. Lemman stated: “withdraw your hand and put it in your pocket.” When I was in Kabul, I had told him that I was travelling to Europe and especially Germany, he had stated: “let me give you the address of someone I know; perhaps he can help you” and gave me a short letter. And that letter was not sealed; in it, he had written about me with the words: “he knows the conditions of Central Asia well.” I searched and found the said individual. He was an officer in the Wermacht, and knew Russian just like Lemman. He asked me: “what do you need?” I told him: “If possible, I wish to speak with General Schleicher,” and told him the outlines of the topic I wanted to discuss. It was difficult to find a suitable time of the General, but that officer finally did. I spoke fifteen minutes with the general. I asked him: “will you give us permission to work in Germany, and can you support us financially for us to publish?” His response was: “there is no need for permission. Work as much as you like, and keep me informed as well. However, we cannot provide financial support. We are still living with the psychology of war, and convinced that our real enemy is the French. Because of that we are intending to move our aircraft and chemical industries to Soviet lands. From that perspective, we cannot render any aid that would offend the Russians. You had helped our officer Lemman who was in Kabul; for that we are grateful.” From those words of the General, we understood that Lemman was in the service of the German General Staff, using a nom de guerre. I was astonished that the General was such an unwary person so as to transfer the chemical and aircraft industries to Soviet lands. I told him that in carefully worded statements.

## *Our talks with the Iranian Azerbaijanis—*

On 22 April, my friend Huseyin Kasimzade of Azerbaijan invited me to the home of a countryman of his who was living in Berlin with his family. Another Iranian also arrived with his wife and child. Also present was the Iranian author Kasim Ganizade, whom I had met earlier. We ate tasty Iranian food. My friend Abdulkadir observed that the child was speaking in Azeri Turkish with his mother and praised that. His father immediately interjected: “unfortunately he does” showing his disdain toward Turkish. Ganizade explained that the Turks of Azerbaijan never wrote in Turkish, but only in Farisi, and that Turkish would disappear over time and that there were no Turks in Azerbaijan. Ganizade had written a Turkish pamphlet which he issued in response to an Ottoman Turk by the name of Ruseni Bey. It was also stated that when the Turkish General Kazim Karabekir was in Iranian Azerbaijan, his troops ostensibly took the samovars of the Azerbaijanis by force; and that supposedly caused the Azerbaijanis not to like the Turks. Now, alledgedly, the Iranian Azerbaijanis were not naming their children in Turkish, but using names such as Cemsid, Huseng. In some, this meeting left a bad taste. Huseyin Kasimzade did not speak. The owner of the house was not in favor of becoming persianized voluntarily; but the opposing side defended their cause with fanaticism. I stated: “we Turkistanis love the Persian literature; we are even lovers of it. However, if that causes the eradication of our culture and Turkishness, that fondness toward it will be lost. Iskender Muradbek, in an article he wrote in 1882 stated that “we Dagistanis must leave our mother tongue and cross over to Russian.” However, that was an exceptional case. Forcing the Turks of Iran to forget Turkish, and preventing the children from speaking in Turkish with their mothers can only be realized in an era of the Kacar monarchy. If one day full democracy reigns in Iran, you cannot prevent the opening of schools operating in the non-Iranian languages. Banning that can only be possible under absolute monarchy or the dictatorship of Persian nationalism.”

That meant, besides the “Turkan-I Farsi goyan” [the Turk who sings in Persian] of Meshed, another type of humans are being reared who hate to be called Turks. That also meant the creation of a united front against the Turks between the Persians and the Soviets; especially during this year while the Soviets were establishing “national boundaries” according to the names of the Turk Branches’ lands, any by removing the words Turk and Turkistan. Ten years prior, we were not even aware that while we were reading the “Travelogue of Ibrahim Bey” and “Darurahad Moslems” that one was written in Farisi and the other in Crimean Turkish. Nowadays, we can encounter new type individuals who are tasked to remove “Turkish cultural union” and to deny Turkishness, to demean it. In sum, Abdulkadir and I returned home concerned about the future. Kacar in Iran and the Mangit in Bukhara have been the least skill-full among the Turk ruling families. Like the Mangit, the Kacar appear to be disappearing into history. The Manchu, who have ties to the Turks by virtue of membership in the Uralic-Altaic family of nations, while they were administering China, had

paid maximum attention to the life of national language and literature. Kacars, just the opposite, showed a disinterest in the subject, especially among the Azerbaijani Turks that constituted their main support, and allowed the contra, Iranian nationalist thoughts and ideas to take hold. The ensuing penance will be upon the current family members. However, despite those who were careless enough to regret their children speaking Turkish and now acting with pride as if they understood the real danger then, from a spiritual point, the Azerbaijani Turkish will not fall like Manchu after 1912. That is because; the Manchu were the minority acting as the tyrant and had to regard democracy as the enemy. When the family fell, their tribe and their language were also condemned to oblivion. Even though Azerbaijan is divided into two parts, their communities have been rearing strong fighters for democracy and have been succeeding against oppression. Besides, within their territories, they are not the minority; just the opposite, they are the majority. The Kacar family is a remnant of the days old, and they are condemned to oblivion. However, the community is desirous of living with their own language, in democracy, contrary to the likes of Irec Mirza whose aim is to persianize his own nation. The Azeri community I came to know in Meshed a year earlier inspired these observations.

## *Our communications with our friends remaining in the East—*

I knew the importance of speaking with the political and idea men from various nations while I was in Berlin. Especially after speaking with Kautsky and General Schleicher for a few minutes, I had arrived at the opinion that I finally understood the West. I wrote letters to the friends who were left in the East, and sent them by hand who were travelling to Iran. The recipients were Abdulhamid Arifov, the former Minister of War for Bukhara; Turabbek Turebekov, one of the Cizzak elders; and Sadreddin Han of Tashkent. The letter dated 12 January 1925, the original of which I still have, summarized the experiences of my two years since leaving Russia during March 1923. Turab Bek and Abdulhamid asked for visas from the Turkish Embassy in Tahrán, but their request was denied with some harshly hurting words. They had not received any interest from the Iranians either and they returned to Meshed, mostly on foot, hungry and miserable. They immediately asked what I learned in Europe, concerning what the free world would do seriously against the Soviets. They indicated that if there was nothing to expect, they were thinking of returning to Turkistan. As soon as I received that letter, I wrote this detailed letter.

After arriving in Europe, I wrote detailed political letters to my friends living in Meshed, Kabul, Peshawar and Istanbul on 24 February 1924, 15 October 1924, 18 October 1924, and 13 November 1924. Each was ten to fifteen pages long, and contained an analysis of what I learned in the free world pertaining to the conditions in Central Asia. They also analyzed the information sent from the three individuals from Tahrán, Kabul, Gazne, Meshed and Quetta. During 1926, I learned from Mehdi

Kadi, the Muftu of Kazakistan who stayed in Istanbul for a spell on the way back from performing pilgrimage, that two of those letters made it to the center of Kazakistan, to Kizilorda. That made me very happy. One of them was my letter dated 12 February 1925 and the last was the one dated 28 February 1925. The summary of that letter is as follows:

“What we heard while in Russia that the West knew everything and was in possession of plans for actions to be taken against the Soviets turned out to be only extant in the imagination of the Communists. There is no such thing here, and in general, there is no crystallized thinking about the Soviets. It is also true that the flow of ideas and events in the West is slower than that of Russia. For example, what Kautski wrote in 1925 on the Soviet agricultural revolution is based on the statistics of 1916. Likewise, the speed of the socialist revolution around the world, as is suggested to us, is exaggerated. I was first told of these ideas in Bombay at the Caliphate Committee. We also noted that the Egyptian newspaper *al-Muqattam* also stresses the same ideas (14 November 1924). In the journal *Yirak Sark* published in the Far East by émigré Tatars, which has so far published thirty-five issues, some articles taken from Japanese newspapers also advancing the same ideas. Meaning, the efforts to cause the Communist Revolution are slowing down, and the idea of evolution is gaining currency. The Italian Socialists Nenni and Balabanova stated during our talks that: “now, the Third International is doomed to dissolve within the prodigious Russian imperialism.” Since the German and English Socialists are remaining loyal to the Second International, it is not possible to find financial resources toward holding a Fourth International and announce it as widely as the previous ones. Balabanova, who left the side of Lenin, agrees with Trotsky that we must work to have the Russian Revolution not be sequestered by the Russian imperialist nationalism. In that task, Balabanova believes that the imprisoned nations need to cooperate with the revolutionary socialists. In that regard, the Second International does not help. As far as we have learned, since the Bolsheviks began to assimilate the Old Russian traditions, the émigré White Russians began to think that that will turn their own positions into a favorable direction. Thus, they will slowly return to Russia, or they will serve the Soviet Imperialism with or without a salary. The old *Novoye Vremia* is now being published in Paris. I am certain that even though Markov, Vtoroy, Meliukov and Kerensky are now criticizing the Bolsheviks, in time they will support them for external politics. The famed Rightist Izgoyev, in his articles published in the newspaper *Rul*, states that Soviet Foreign Policy is developing in accordance with the Russian national goals. In the latest issues of that newspaper, especially in the issue dated 25 April 1925, Izgoyev wrote: “now, Bolshevism is losing power as an ideology. Nobody is willing to forfeit his life for it anymore. However, the power of national feeling is on the increase. Now, the Soviets can mobilize hundreds of thousands against any other state in the name of Russian honor. Now, among the Soviets and their supporters in the Free World, business is conducted not with the excitement of ideology, but with money and compulsion. Russia’s wealth is inexhaustible; therefore, the Bolsheviks can buy the services of

people for sale indefinitely. However, when the matters take that direction, Bolshevism will be confined to Russia.”

The Moslem emigres have collaborated with various Russian émigré groups, according to their preferences. Sadri Maksudi and Mustafa Cokay are in unison with the old Kadet and Meliukov milieu. Ayaz Ishaki, Fuat Toktarov, Ahmet Salikov are together with Kerensky. As for us, even though we are talking with the Viktor Cernov group, and with some Left SRs, we wish to remain independent, and maintain contacts with Turkiye, Iran and Afghanistan circles; and with the close spheres of Resulzade and Ali Merdan Bey of Azerbaijan. We are in contact with Cernov, and with those Turks, Afghans and Iranians who are in Berlin. Since we are remaining loyal to the Erk Program, we are against getting close to any party who does not accept ideas of independence. Because of that, I attended the Congress of the Left Socialists, who are in favor of forced revolution, held during 24 December, only as a guest. We are intimate with the Poles. They will establish an Oriental Institute, and help with the publication of a journal in Russian and French, in order to aid the struggles of the nations imprisoned by the Russians. For our own struggle, if it is possible to receive help from America, to receive it, and even open an American School of Agriculture in Meshed to especially educate the youth of Turkistan. In that regard, we spoke with some Iranians, and requested help from the Iranian Government and presented them with a project. However, our idea of receiving help from the Americans is theoretical; we have not contacted them. If such an agricultural school can be established, that can also help the spread of English and French among the Turkistanis. However, we will definitely not approach the English for such help. They are thinking differently about the Central Asian politics than the time of Lord Curzon. Abdulhamid Arifov knows well that, during the two year stretch of MacDonald government [sic], the ideas have not changed. The English regard the Central Asian liberals detrimental for their own cause. Because of that, they did not grant us permission to contact anyone in India. If it will be possible to have an agricultural school in Meshed, you can settle there and conduct activities favorable to our country. Since there is no central government in capitalism and the world of democracy, and the politics are confined to the traditions of pre World War I, we are experiencing difficulties explaining the problem. Additionally, we do not have individuals who speak European languages. Cokayoglu only this year began to master French. Unfortunately, we have nobody who can write in English. By the time we explain our conditions to the Europeans and the Americans, the Soviets will immediately intervene. They can pressure the Iranians. Meaning, the Easterners are fearful, and the Westerners are supercilious, slow for our times, and obtuse. Perhaps the Poles can help us with regard to publications. They promised to aid us in publishing a journal with the title “Turkistan” in Turkish. At this time, the Soviets do not appear to be expanding beyond their current borders. However, they will deprive the small nations of their independence and property rights, as they did to their villagers, suppress Islam and support the Soviet religion which they call “international.” They will next work on eradicating our language.



More than likely, they will expend efforts to completely destroy the independence movement in our country with determination. Meaning, since they cannot bring about a world-wide communism, they will make the establishment of communism in Russia a priority in their program. No European country will declare war against the Soviets in order to return the Russian imprisoned nations their rights. Meaning, we are left alone with the Russian communists. However, the Westerners possess self-confidence; that is also our only ally. The Soviets can never remove the ghetto. According to Monsieur Castagne, a former highschool teacher in Taskent, among those Frenchmen who are dealing with Central Asia, there are those who think that the Russians have a right to destroy the Kazak, Baskurt and Turkmen in Central Asia to create a new Amerika just as the Americans did by destroying the Native American population. The same Castagne believes that the Third International will split the communists. In any event, we must work to keep our nation together with all our might. In my opinion, the future belongs to a progressive minded nationalism that accepted democratic socialism. Even in Europe, in the fight against Bolshevism, there is no other remedy than to use their methods against them to fight them.”

And the following is the letter sent to Abdulhamid and Turabbek on 12 February 1925:

“Even if you walked back from Tahrán to Meshed, do not leave this free world in which you arrived. That is because, if you return to Russia, you will long for the hungry walking days you spent in Iran. During the past two years, we spoke with many individuals especially with those pertaining to the future of Central Asia in Iran, Afghanistan, India, France and Germany. We cannot name names, as a bulwark against this letter opened and read on the way. I believe that, even though the world is dark, there is one hole with light shining through. That is:

1. Communism cannot conquer the entire world as previously feared; it is confined to the Russian borders, joined the Russian imperialism, and condemned to dissolve in that imperialism. Henceforth, Bolshevism will be forced to conduct matters with money, instead of weapons, in order to expand.
2. The Russian people, while enduring hunger and extreme poverty as they run after great imperialist objectives in order to take over the world for Russia by means of communism, will perhaps freeze within that faith. The Russians will not be able to break the will of the world, and as a result will recede. The Finnish Professor Nilson stated to me: ‘the Finnish Communists will never be taken in by the class struggle terminology and leave their homeland to their Russian friends. Even if you in Central Asia and we in Europe are left hungry, let us continue to believe that we can regain the will and freedom of our nations.’ During the Wey reign in China, the Turks were forced to forget their language and become Chinese. An opportunity arrived, and they recovered their language and national entity. At that time, Buddhism brought them into that hole

of calamity. It was causing the Turks to be Sinified. This time, Islam will be the element that will save us. The entire world will understand that communism is not an independent entity, but a tool in the hands of Russian imperialism. We the Members of the Turkistan National Union held a congress here two-and-a-half months ago. We spoke in detail that Turkistan will be abolished only to be replaced by five nations instead of the Turkistan Turk. For each, separate grammars and dictionaries will be written. Since the new languages do not possess historical depth, they will lose their existence and will be replaced by Russian. If the Turkish of Turkiye takes on a form that we can accept as well, the Turkish of Central Asia will discover a new dimension of growth. However, today, our political existence and literary language is entering a dark age rarely found in Turkish history. Perhaps there will be manifest destinies in the lives of world nations. This problem, meaning the strong swallowing the weak, is a problem faced by all Eastern European and Central Asian nations. The remedy against that will have to be found by all nations of this earth. The propensity of the Russians dividing and swallowing their neighboring countries is scaring all of her neighbors; that is because, the Soviets have taken the road to accomplish their goals by political means. That failing, they will attempt to do it culturally. God help our nation. What we learned is that we are not alone for our fight for our national will. 12 February 1925.”

## *Problems of writing the history of Turkistan—*

One problem I seriously concentrated on while living in Berlin was the writing of a history of Turkistan contemporary life in a Western language. Another was the establishment of a journal that would be issued in Turkish and in one Western language, and to find staff to accomplish all that. The writing of the History of Turkistan was developing nicely. After my arrival in Istanbul, it was published in Egypt. My friends Professor Eberhart and Dr. Anhagger had translated it into German for publication in Germany. Mr. W.E.D. Allen had it translated into English from German, on his own account; neither translation was published. I have the German translations in my possession; the English translation is in the library of the Harvard University. A former Governor in India, Sir Olaf Caroe, made a summary of the English translation and published his *Soviet Empire and the Turks of Central Asia*. Through that book, what I wrote in Berlin during 1924-1925, the Turkistan National Liberation war became known in the world. When I spoke with Iskender Mirza, the President of Pakistan, in Lahore during 1958 and Pandit Nehru, the President of India during 1964 in Delhi, both indicated they became acquainted with me and our struggle from the book of Sir Olaf, and they wished that the full translation of my work could be published.

## *The problem of journal pertaining to Turkistan—*

It proved not possible to interest the German circles in the matter of publishing a journal. However, among Ukrainian Socialists there were individuals who wanted to approach the matter as a common problem among the nations imprisoned by the Russians. On the issue, I spoke many times with Sapoval, leader of Ukrainian Socialist Party, whom I met at the Left Socialist Congress, at the Exelsior Hotel. In the beginning it was suggested that the socialists of Russian imprisoned nations to get together and publish a journal under the title “nationality problems from the perspective of revolutionary socialism in Russia and their legal rights.” Then, the suggestion was made to issue an idea journal with the participation of the Czechs and Poles; then to be issued three journals, one for each for Ukraine, Turkistan and the Caucasus. I stated that a single journal for all three nations would suffice. I surmised that the Polish Stempovski had spoken with this Sapovalin. I believed that the Czech and the Poles would have different ideas since the Russian revolutionaries had taken up headquarters in Prague. Stempovski, while proposing the establishment of an Oriental Institute in Warsaw, had not at all mentioned the Czech. He had spoken as if the Polish Government was going to underwrite the costs. Now the journal proposed to Sapoval would not be a wide ranging one as foreseen by the Poles but would be the organ of the national Socialist Parties. Shapoval had me speak with the Byelorussian and Lithuanian representatives who had arrived, like himself, for the Left Socialists Congress. That meeting took place on the first day of January 1925. I was told: “let us discuss your proposals three days later (on 4 January), at the home of Karl Liebknecht, with his brother as well as the reporter of *Klassen Kampf* newspaper, Wegmann; they have good impressions of you, and he has influence. If the Poles and the Czechs do not help, we can perhaps gain the help of all Left Socialist movements for the journal you are thinking of establishing in France.” At that meeting, I explained that, in addition to the journal proposed for publication by the socialist organizations of the Russian imprisoned nations, and equal to that, we must be tolerant of another journal to be published by the non-socialist nations, and those who are attached to the social democratic movement such as the Georgians and the Armenians. In that manner, my contacts with the Left SR and the Left Socialists of the Russian imprisoned nations, gave me hope. A little later, that journal gained the name *Prometheus*. I think the Caucasians gave that name.

In order to discuss these issues, I invited Mustafa Cokay from Paris to Berlin, realization of Stempovsky’s plans and the need for us to join them. Naturally, there must have been other aspects of the publication of the journal *Prometheus*. I count Mustafa Cokay’s agreement to join this organization my first success after we left Turkistan. In sum, an Oriental Institute is going to be established in Warsaw, to concentrate primarily on our problems, and with the aid of the Polish, the journal *Le Prometheus* is going to be published in Paris.

Talks along those lines resuscitated the third issue we had on deck, to prepare the staff who would work in Europe on the matter of Turkistan’s independence. For that task, I was keeping in mind Azimbek Berimcan of the Kazaks, who had been acting as my translator; from the Ozbeks, Abdulvahap M. Muradi; from the Bukharans, Ahmet Naimi; and from the Baskurts, Dr. Alimcan Tagan. I told these ideas of mine to some students from Turkistan who were then lodging in the Zoch house, advised them to find a way to send Azimbek Birimcan or Ahmet Naim to Paris so that either could work with Cokayev and learn French and English. For whatever reason, Cokayoglu did not agree to have these two youths to work with him even if all their expenses would have been paid. Moreover, from among the socialists he only liked those who were close to the Kerensky group. That was his previous position. Osman Kuvatov would have been the ideal individual to work on the journal which we had envisaged to publish in French and in Russian at Paris. Cokayoglu also had mentioned that fact. But, Kuvatov had returned to Russia immediately prior to our arrival in Europe, with the hope of returning. However, the Soviets did not allow him to return. In sum, due to Cokayoglu showing “unwillingness” toward his Kazak brother Birimcan, the matter could not go forward. I proposed an Ozbek youth by the name of Abdussettar. For whatever reason, he did not like him either.

## *Relations with Russian Academy of Sciences—*

On 3 January, twenty-five off-prints of my paper that was published in the Russian Academy of Sciences journal on the works of Ibn-Fadlan and Abu Dulef, which I found in Meshed, arrived. I sent one each to Monsieur Ferraud, Professor Deny, Minorsky, Castagne, Mirza Muhammed Qazvini and Sadri Maksudi in Paris; Professor Browne, Denison Ross in England; Sachau, Marquart in Berlin; Fuat Kopruluzade in Istanbul; Yusuf Akcora in Ankara. A few days later, I received congratulatory letters from them. Professor Bartold, Samoylovic and Krachovsky sent me a letter indicating that the Russian scholars would be grateful if I were to continue publishing such articles in the journals of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Separately, Krachovsky relayed the information that they would be interested in me preparing a volume on al-Biruni. There were no new barriers in my corresponding with my family in Russia or publishing scholarly works there. However, when my political writings began to appear against the Soviets in *Klassen Kampf* and *Znamia Borby*, all changed. Only Bartold continued to write.

## *Professor Janson of Finland—*

On 9 January, Professor Janson of the Helsingfors Technological University arrived in the company of Kazan intellectual Hamit Zubeyir, who had been educated in

Turkiye. We sat down and talked for four hours. His aim was to unite Finns with the Asian political units and those nations imprisoned by the Russians against the Russian colonial movements. He listed what aspects would be of interest to the Turks, Iranians and the Afghans. The Finns, according to him, were also inviting the Japanese to join this project via Professor Ramstedt who is their Tokyo Ambassador. And all this was a Finnish bourgeois project and they had a “Klub der Vorpostenvolker” named structure. They came to an understanding with “Clube de Concord” in Poland, under the administration of Senator Siedletsy, which I first heard of from the mouth of Stempovsky. Since the socialists in Finland are pacifists, they were not supporting the idea of National Socialism idea which was put forth by Ukrainian Sapoval and me. Since he mentioned the Concord club, I mentioned to Professor Janson a part of our discussions with Stempovsky and stated: “if the Polish Government guarantees the publication of a journal in that direction, it would be good for the Finnish Government to help as well.” Professor Janson indicated that he did not like the idea of Poles giving the leadership of that project to Ukrainians, Georgians and Armenians, which would cause the Moslems to withdraw, and told them so. According to him, the Asian populations and Moslem nations can cooperate with the Polish and Finnish tribes. However, according to him, it would be better for the Armenians and the Georgians to group with Ukrainian and Lithuanian Christian tribes. On the other hand, since the Georgians are deeply Socialist, they will not cooperate with other nationalist but non-socialist groups. According to Janson, the idea of “Turanism,” which includes the Hungarians, is a matter of ethnography and culture far away from politics. They may be tied to the Finns from one end, and the Japanese at the other. I indicated to him that it is necessary not to mix our political movement with the Hungarian position that includes racial and political relations with the Turks and the Mongols. I added that, it will not be possible to interest the Iranian and Afghan tribal units in the problems of the nations imprisoned by the Russians if unproven theories such as these are mixed in. After Professor Janson returned to his country, he sent letters to indicate he spoke with the leaders of the Vorpostenvolker and Concord Clubs, my ideas were received with very good impressions, that all would be well if I were to journey to Helsingfors and Warsaw to deliver papers on these topics and they would meet my expenses. He had duplicated writings in German pertaining to this topic.

### *Dr. Riza Nur Bey—*

The former Minister of Education of Turkiye arrived in Berlin on 13 March. He was staying at Hotel Eden; he sent someone to invite me. It is said that this person was very interested in Turkish history and ethnography and prepared a multi-volume work on Turkish history. He stated that he had heard of my contacts with European politicians and scholars from Ali Merdan Bey Topcubasi, and that many scholars were interested in keeping me in Europe. He was adamant that I

should leave all that behind and move to Turkiye, transfer my political duties to some other person and devote myself to scholarship in Turkish history. He also stated that he had discussed all this with Turkish elders Fuat Koprulu, Akcoraoglu Yusuf, Hamdullah Suphi, Agaoglu Ahmet Bey, and corresponded with them. He invited me to write the same people as well. On 15 March, we spoke alone for another three hours. I told him in detail what we were planning to accomplish in Europe. He responded with: “leave all this to others; it will be better for you to become a professor in one of our universities; you can also manage your friends politically and contribute in that manner as well. Besides, we are of one mind with you in those quarters.” He introduced me to General Kemaleddin Sami, the Turkish Ambassador, and suggested I meet with Dr Resit Saffet and Rauf Orbay Bey who were due to arrive in Berlin. Those talks were instrumental in my leaving Europe and moving to Turkiye. Riza Nur Bey’s absolute behavior that did not allow me to argue seemed interesting to me. I believed that the Turkists of Turkiye were regarding me one of their own. A few days later, General Kemalettin Sami called me to hand me the letter of Hamdullah Suphi Bey, the Turkish Minister of Education inviting me. I also received letters from Fuat Koprulu and Yusuf Akcora Beys. However, Yusuf Akcora being a guarantor only for me and not for Abdulkadir bothered me. Riza Nur Bey had that done as well. On 11 April, a letter arrived from Riza Nur indicating I was appointed to the “Original and Translated works Commission” at the Ankara Ministry of Education. That was a fait de compli, because the offer by Professor Browne and his invitation to England was very favorable; Mirza Muhammed Qazvini and Mustafa Cokayoglu were insisting that I accept that offer. I cast lots; I ended up with Turkiye, and that resolved the matter. Besides, the letter by Hamdullah Suphi Bey’s letter and the appointment arranged by Riza Nur Bey to the “Original and Translated works Commission” had already solved the problem. Now, regardless of how profitable the conditions Sir Aurel Stein, Denison Ross and Professor E. Browne proposed, I could not tell those two Turkish Beys “I am going to London.”

The papers I delivered to the Oriental Club in Berlin during January and February, and my friend Abdulkadir Inan’s paper was published on the Baskurt autonomy movement in the Azerbaijan journal *Yeni Kafkasya* in Istanbul; it caused severe arguments between us and the Tatar intellectuals resident in that city.

### *Conference on Cengiz Han—*

I presented a detailed paper on Cengiz Han on 22 and 23 January. On 1 February, I summarized a work that I had written on Azerbaijan history as a paper. On 4 February, the Azerbaijan intellectual Ali Asgar Bey’s paper on the Azerbaijan poet Sabir was much like the continuation of my paper on general Azerbaijan history four days earlier. Both occasions were very lively. Kazan intellectuals Ayaz Ishaki and Fuat Toktar objected on the bases that the Ali Asgar Bey’s paper was designed



to support the ideas of Zeki Velidi. Since the students arriving from Turkistan and all the Azerbaijanis defended me, those discussions did not develop in favor of the Kazan position. The statements by Mehmet Efendi, Mirza Haci Efendi and Ali Kemal Bey of the Azerbaijanis became individual paper presentations. Ayaz Ishaki attacked me for making materialistic and economic positions the center point of historical treatment. In response, Mirza Haci stated: “We were already prepared these papers. All of us are still here. Nobody here derived anything from Zeki Velidi’s speech such as that.” Fuat Toktar objected to my portrayal of Cengiz as the founder of the joint state established by the Turks and the Mongols, and stated that he regarded Cengiz only as a Tatar hero.

## *Economic history of Turkistan and the Unitarists of Kazan—*

On 1 April, again at the Oriental Club in Berlin, I delivered a paper on “The History of Agriculture in Turkistan.” Again I was accused of making economics the centerpiece of history and derailing the understanding of nationalism by Ayaz Ishaki. He also attacked Abdulkadir’s published paper in *Yeni Kafkasya* journal (No. S, 12-16, 1925), claiming it was written in order to insult the Tatars, and created a lot of noise. In response the Turkistani students Tulegen, Ahmet Sukru, Salih Ulus, Ahmet Can Okay, Afzal of Bukhara, Ahmet Naim and all of the Azerbaijanis, and from Turkiye Halil Vedat, Bekir Sitki and Ekrem Karan supported me severely, and returned the meeting to a positive channel. On 17 April, at the circumcision ceremony of Alimcan Idrisi’s son, they got a Finnish merchant involved in the argument, and reported me and Abdulkadir to the Turkish Consul Namik Bey, knowing I was invited to Turkiye, aiming to prevent that. As a result, at the initiative of Consul Namik Bey’s initiative, a commission was established to investigate the complaints of the Tatars. This commission comprised of citizens of Turkiye, Azerbaijan, and Turkistanis (Bekir Sitki, Harun, Malik, Halil Vedat, Afzal Bukhari of Turkistan, and Iskender Aga of Azerbaijan). During the deliberations, four Turkistani students presented the Commission with a copy of Ayaz Ishaki’s article, accompanied by a Turkish translation, which he wrote with Ahmet Salikatti of Daghestan, published in Kerensky’s *Dni* newspaper (22 August 1924, No 542, 544 and 560) presenting themselves as very sympathetic of Russian democracy, and thus fighting against all the autonomy and independence movements in Russia among the Moslem populations. The Commission solved the problem by deciding for us. This matter was explained in a thirty-two page pamphlet by Abdulkadir Suleyman, and in the articles published in *Yeni Kafkasya*. During those arguments, Ayaz Ishaki, addressing us directly, made a sarcastic comment to the effect that we had moved against Great Russia. Kemal Bey of Azerbaijan asked Ayaz Ishaki: “why are you happy that Baskurdistan fell, while opposing the Russian swords?” Ishaki could not answer. During those arguments, the negative stances of the Tatar unitarists became clear. The occasion

for that was the Turkish economist Dr. Harun Bey’s statement: “why are you Tatars so opposed to the economic aspects of national issues? Why did this talk about the economics and agricultural history of Turkistan made you so mad?” Ayaz Ishaki’s response: “economic issues will cause the separation of Moslems in Russia; for us it is only necessary to unite around cultural and religious issues. Previously, during the Tsarist regime, there was an Office of the Mufti. The reason for the abolition of that institution was the Baskurt Autonomy Movement, the Kazak-Baskurt land issues.” Earlier, Harun Bey seemed as if he was on the side of the Tatars, but now he stated: “there cannot be a nationalism issue without economics. Every regime will give you cultural autonomy like the Jews have. In order to obtain that, there is no need to leave your homeland.” Ayaz Ishaki and Fuat Toktar stated that previously the Kazakhstan was in Kazan’s sphere and that nowadays the national movements began in Kazan would make sure of that [sic]. Harun Bey, who was presiding, stated: “that is your internal issue. There is nothing for Turkiye to do with that,” and closed the matter.

With all that, the senselessness of many a Tatar intellectual declaring for unitarism during 1917 became apparent. It was especially poignant that Ayaz Ishaki and his friend Omer Teregulov, by joining the Oriental Institute in Warsaw, were forced to show themselves in favor of independence. However, they chose to change the nature of the old “unitarism and federalism” debate into Tatar-Baskurt tribal fight. They labeled me “number one Tatar enemy,” and began conducting propaganda against me among the Crimean and even Dobruca Tatars and in Turkiye. Since we were all going to congregate in Turkiye, it was apparent all that was going to result in unpleasant outcomes. Considering that possible ending, I sent letters to Yusuf Akcora Bey, Ali Merdan Bey, and Sadri Maksudi Bey, who was preparing to journey to Turkiye, and asked them to prevent that bad and lowdon propaganda. Yusuf Bey gave a positive answer. Sadri Maksudi Bey, in his reponse of 25 June 1925 from Paris, stated: “in the matter of Russian Moslems, your views are sufficiently known by me, and mine to you. Let us not be naïve enough to think we can convince each other.” Ali Merdan Bey wrote to indicate he personally sought Maksudi Bey and spoke with him, but could not succeed in explaining the general negative effects of the issue.

As a result of that dispute, I received a copy of a long letter sent to Ayaz Ishaki by Mustafa Sakuli from Eskisehir on 2 May 1925. Among other statements, it contained the following: “by opposing the independence movements of the Turk lands imprisoned by the Russians, and even that of Ukraine and Finland, by portraying your personal feelings as if they are held dear by all Tatars, you have isolated the Kazan Turks who have so far occupied such an esteemed position in the cultural history of the Turks from the Turks who are desirous of their independence and from other non-Russian nationalities. During the initial months of the Russian Revolution your application to Kniaz Lvov, head of the temporary Russian government in Petrograd, as the ‘delegates of the Kazan Moslems, to declare ‘we are not seeking autonomy or independence like Ukrainians; we shall remain citizens of Russia.’ Furthermore,

you announced all that in your newspaper *IL* by using words that were regarded as insulting by Ukrainians, calling their lands as Malorus and Xoxlandia, became your biggest mistake. However, there were only four of you applying to Kniaz L'vov. Now your attempt to show what you did was ostensibly for the unity of the Turks and placing that against your article in the Kerensky newspaper *Dni* as if you did what you did for the unity of Russia as a loyal patriot, simply amazes me. However, you, too, like those who participated in the Azerbaijan and Turkistan independence movements, will become a refugee like us in Turkiye. After your arrival in Turkiye, if you were to engage in publication activity to show that you have been right all along, your application to Kniaz L'vov may strike your face." With that and similar writings, the unitarists were silenced.

### *Various conferences—*

Since Berlin was one of the five greatest centers of the civilized world, it was possible to obtain information from the representatives of various nations in complete freedom on political and cultural problems. To us, and those who have arrived from Russia, Paris and Berlin was giving the impression that they represented an entirely different universe than Russia. During that April alone, several important, at least for me, conferences and talks took place. On 2 April, the aforementioned Dr. Harun, who was on the Staff of the Berlin Naval Construction Technicum, gave a good talk on the basic economics of Turkiye and the future of ship construction. On 5 April, a Russian political writer by the name of Peter Savitsky convened the Russian Moslem representatives and delivered a talk on Eurasia. Later, the text of that talk was printed in Prague under the title "Questions on Learning the Refugees" and used to present the refugees as if they represented Eastern European, Central and Northern Asian "Eurasian Civilization." The Tatar intellectuals present in Berlin liked that "Eurasia Movement" very much. At another gathering, I stated that that movement was another method of having the Easterners swallow and accept Russian imperialism. My statement caused a lot of disputes.

On 12 April, Chinese Professors and writers held a memorial meeting for their leader Sun yat-sen at the Siemens Oberrealschule which allowed us to speak on the close relations between Russian imprisoned nations and the problems of Far East as well as the application of the Latin alphabet to Chinese. From the Chinese Revolutionaries there was one whom I had met in Moscow. He stated: "comrade Validov is here. He is a scholar of Middle East and Far Eastern problems. We request he address us." I responded with: "I know very little about the topic and whatever I know is based on Soviet publications." Regardless, I was invited to speak. So, I stated: "I have not read any other book on the present matter other than your great leader Sun yat-sen's 'Principles of Democracy.' Accordingly, your late master was overly devoted to democracy. He ought to have been told that being a neighbor of the Bolsheviks, who have chosen the principle of most oppressive dictatorship as the governance

model, democracy must be conditional. Otherwise, the machinery of government, neither army, justice nor the economic and social institutions can work normally. Sun yat-sen, by sliding to the left during the last two Guomindang party congresses, and admitting the Communists into the Party, sent China into a most dangerous path. The Communists will cause your party to explode from within, or will take it over or cause you to leave. The fate of Nalivkin and his friends in Turkistan is known. If you show fortitude and not leave your party to them, China will be permanently split into two. Since the Great nations were not in favor of Turkistan becoming independent, as much as the Bolsheviks, and distant from the seas, there was no chance of local and Russian democrats to unite in Turkistan."

I gave these ideas to the Chinese friends in writing. A second paper of mine under the title "Cin Tecrubesi" [Chinese Experiment] was published two years after the meeting in the journal *Yeni Turkistan* we were then publishing in Istanbul (1927, N. 2-3, Pp. 9-13). Celaleding Wang-zinsan translated that into Chinese, and presented it to Chiang Kai-shek, then published it. My friendship with Abdulresul Han, the Afghanistan Ambassador to Bukhara during 1921 was mentioned earlier. Our first talk with General Enver in Bukhara was conducted in his home. Now, Abdulresul Han brought his son to Berlin for his education. We spent the day of 24 April together, had our photographs taken. On 25 April, we were together with Abdurresid Ibrahim (Resit Kadi), who was a known figure of the Russian Moslems and a close friend of my father. According to his wishes, we held a meeting on Wednesday, 27 April in order to discuss the problems of Russian Moslems.

### *Second Berlin Congress of Turkistan National Union—*

Resit Kadi spoke Farisi well. Abdurresul Han recounted his memoirs pertaining to the winter of 1920 while he was a guest of the Baskurt Government, and enlivened our meeting.

We were planning on leaving for Turkiye on 12 May, after convening the second European Congress of the Turkistan National Union, and invite Mustafa Cokay and Dr. Alimcan Tagan. We determined the problems to be discussed at the congress. Among them, the mutual Eastern Turkish literary language to be utilized in the publications we were going to publish outside Russia was also decided. That meeting continued on 29 April, and we derived good and positive decisions. We wished the conditions were ready for us to apply them.

I had applied to the Soviet Embassy as soon as we arrived in Berlin at the beginning of 1924, to ask for permission to bring my wife Nefise to Berlin. My wife herself, her father Haci Mehmet and my father had tried as well, but no answer was forthcoming from the Russians. Alimcan Idrisi, who had brought the students from Turkistan, was in constant contact with the Russian Embassy. The students were receiving their money from that channel.

## *Talks with the Russian Ambassador Kristinsky—*

On 16 April, he indicated: “it appears an answer may have arrived pertaining to your wife; they are summoning you.” On 17 April I went there; I was told to speak with the Ambassador himself. We did. I knew Kristinsky since 1912. He and Tsurup, who later became the Soviet Minister for Finance, were members of the Social Democrat Party. Kristinsky was working in Ekaterinburg and Tsurup was working in the city of Ufa where I was living then, in the respective municipalities. I had mentioned that before. It turned out that even though both Kristinsky and Tsurup represented themselves as SRs, in reality they were actually Bolshevik leaders. Later, Kristinsky became a member of the Communist Party Central Committee Secretariat (TSKP). He did not get along with Stalin. He had criticized the dispersion, with Mostovenko, of the Baskurt Army and the emasculation of the Baskurt Government. About the time of Lenin’s death, he had left his position at the TSKP and was appointed Ambassador to Berlin. Now, in his office, speaking alone, he welcomed me as an old friend. He stated: “it is not an easy matter to bring your wife, library and personal effects to Berlin. First, you need to declare whether or not you will return to Russia. In general, if you acquire foreign citizenship, it will not be possible to bring your family.” I told him what I wrote to our joint friend Rudzutak and to Lenin two years earlier and added: “my return to Russia is not even a topic of discussion. I understand the value of a human having self determination and cannot sacrifice it for anything.” I translated a poem by the Iranian poet Nizami on the same topic. He responded with: “I am not suggesting you return to Russia; except, do not cut your ties with Russia, have your works printed there, and I wish you would also continue your contacts with your friends. You can also write articles critical of the Russian politics, but it is imperative that you remain a citizen of Russia in order to bring out your family and belongings.” During those days, I had already obtained a temporary passport from the Turkish Embassy and was about to become a Turkish citizen. Even though I did not openly state that fact to Kristinsky, I stated: “henceforth, I cannot be a citizen of Russia; let it be, if my wife cannot join me here, then she will not.” We spoke a long period. At the end he said: “I wish you all the goodness; live long and healthy.” I responded to him that I, too, never could believe in Stalin, and wished him well likewise. That was because he did not believe Stalin. A little later, he was recalled to Moscow, jailed, and was executed along with his friends Rykov and Bukharin. I knew Kristinsky, just as I did Rykov, an honorable man. His final words to me: “it would be best for you to remain outside, even if you would continue your relations with your homeland” were the final signs of friendship.

On 9 May, we held the final meeting of Turkistan National Union in Europe. Mustafa Cokay and Dr. Alimcan Togan were also present. Our center would move to Turkiye, Mustafa Cokayoglu would be the European Representative

of TNU. We also decided on the language of the publications we were going to issue in Istanbul. Even though they would maintain their own dialects and vocabulary, the Kazaks, Ozbeks, Tatars and Baskurts would observe the same etymological and morphological rules when writing for publication. It was a good Congress. However, Cokayoglu refused to cut his contacts with the Russian Kadets (Miliukov) and the Right SRs (Kerensky Group), and did not at all accept the independence principle. That was because he believed in the necessity of struggling with the Russian emigres against Bolshevism. While we were in Berlin, we also busied ourselves with the Moslems of Finland on the one hand, and the Moslems of India and Iran on the other on the issues pertaining to Islam.

## *Finnish translation of Kur’an—*

Professor Pimonof, who had been translating the Kur’an into Finnish for the Tatar merchant Zinetullah Ahsen, had arrived in Berlin during 28-29 March. As understood from the letters he had sent me earlier, he was in written contact with Egyptian scholars; he was now in Berlin according to the wishes of Zinetullah, desiring to speak with those individuals who understand Islam well, such as Alimcan Idrisi, me, Dr. Yakub Sinkevich of the Polish Moslems, Iranian scholar Takizade and the Indian Ahmedi scholar Professor Sadreddin. The questions asked of all these persons, who were all in Berlin at the same time, were tailored to each individual but said to pertain to the points in the Kur’an he could not understand. He asked me fifty seven questions, mostly on topics I did not understand. I indicated to him: “I do not know Islamic theology. I have not read the commentaries of the Kur’an, only their translations. I do not know the reasons behind the verses nor the sayings of the Prophet. I understand the Kur’an only superficially as a person who knows Arabic.” Professor Pimonov’s aim said to be the writing of an “introduction” to the Kur’an and on the Prophet Muhammad. When I suggested to him to speak with Professor Noldeke who was in Berlin and alive, he responded with: “I read the writings of Europeans, among them Noldeke and Goldzieher; there is nothing I can learn from them. It is important for me to learn the ideas of intellectual Moslems.”

Question 1— some of the historical records in the Kur’an reflect the true events; some of them do not. What causes that? Even though Alexander of Macedonia was a believer of Greek Gods, why is he portrayed as a believer of a single God? What is the purpose of recounting this story?

Answer— this is a matter I faced fifteen years ago within my family. As for explanation of such issues, I follow the Mutezile sect reasoning. That means, what became known to the Prophet was not in Arabic words, but the meaning given to them. In order to describe that meaning to the Arabs, it became necessary to utilize the pre-Islamic legends, folklore and the terminology known during the time of the Prophet. For example, what is discussed in sura number 91, which references chapters 7-10: “God created the complex ego in the humans, and inspired the goodness and evil in



them; with those goodnesses, the evil can be cleansed and they can be free of them. Those who have not been able to accomplish that task but instead entered the path of sin have been frustrated.” Above those four chapters, according to the Arabic style of expression, there are oaths in the name of the sun, the moon, day and night and the human ego. Collectively, all that is foreign to our Turkish. The chapters after those four, recounts the tale of the old mythical tribe of the Arabs called the Themuds who killed the Prophet’s camel for him bringing the words of God; that not controlling their ego would cause calamity to them. Those chapters were written only to confirm the chapters 7-10. Alexander was shown as a select servant of God and bringing together the countries of the East and the West as a conqueror under the sun; while doing so, to convince the Arabs, he is portrayed as capable and protected because he followed the God’s will, thus he was favored (XVIII, 84). All this was done in order to convince the Arabs. Likewise, in your Christian Bible, two centuries before Christ, Cyrus, the King of the Abemenids, is presented as the lieutenant of God and sent to conquer Eastern countries, and tasked to bring justice. However, he too was like Alexander, a Polytheist. But the true objective of the story is to stress that selected conquerors have received the favor of God. Otherwise, the task of Kur’an, much like the Torah or the Bible, is not to teach history. These great lessons are brought to these tribes with the help of the stories and epics they already knew.

Question 2—do you believe the ascension of the Prophet was physical?

Answer— the Ottoman Commander of Pleven [during 1877], General Osman, after he was taken prisoner, was asked by Alexander II how Muhammad ascended to the skies. Reportedly he answered with: “he did so from the same staircase used by your Jesus, Your Majesty.” Kur’an, on the other hand, referenced that ascension as a ‘dream;’ Prophet’s wife recounted that the Prophet spent the night among his family. Certainly, the Prophet completed his trip during that night, and he understood the secrets of the universe. This ascension trip was the flowering of his consciousness as the Prophet. This can also be seen in the life of Buddha.

Question 3— The Kur’an, in many places (II, 22; XIII, 2; XXXI, 10; XL, 64) teaches cosmology with terms such as flat earth, bed; with the heavens as a seven story building covered with a roof on top, according to the understanding of common people. In other places (XXXVI, 40; XVII, 12; XXI, 33) we see the earth living alternate day and nights under the sun that will continue within their orbits until the end of the days. Is there a reflection of heliocentric versus geocentric understandings in that portrayal, and how did that dichotomy emerge?

Answer— in my view, you have put your finger on an important point by your statement on dichotomy. In chapters XXXVI, verse 40; chapter XXI verse 33, there are definite references to sun, moon and earth ‘swimming’ in different orbits. That is because, by referencing the day and the night, the earth is mentioned; if the sun and the moon was intended, the word would have been ‘both of them’ and not ‘all of them.’ Elsewhere in the Kur’an (XXVI, 88), it is stated: “you think the mountains are frozen. However, they are passing (moving) as fast as the clouds.” That was not stated to mark the end of the world, but to fortify: “the art of God’s creation is thus,

he makes everything unchanging,” that follows. This is the “vahy,” the word that came from God to the Prophet. Other vahy’s that came down from God to the Prophet are couched in words the Arabs would understand in that setting. The “Sufis” who also regard the Prophet as extraordinary individual, similar ideas have emerged that he is one who continually audits the humanity, social life and the universe. Celaleddin Rumi states: “beyond these stars starts another universe of stars. They will not burn down to ashes. They swim in skies beyond what is given to us as the seven story tall skies. Those stars gain their energy from the heat of the light bestowed by God. They are not tied nor will they separate.” Because of such statements, Rumi’s work has been called “The Second Kur’an.” Al-Biruni specified: “humans are sufficiently egotistical to state that the universe revolves around them, even though some Greek and Indian philosophers had understood that the earth rotates. However, I am not a physics scholar, I am an algebraist; physicists will prove that aspect.” Al-Biruni did not wish to provide the proof of earth’s rotation in order not to distance himself from his followers. Even though he himself accepted the theories expounded by Descartes and Galileo, he refrained from issuing his own volume containing the same information. The Prophet and Celaleddin Rumi did not dwell on this matter, but used the language of the people, and according to the understanding of the people, showed them the path to follow.

I definitely did not touch the rest of Pimonov’s questions; because they dwelled on issues on which I knew nothing. Pimonov continued to correspond with me after he returned to Finland. During 1937, when I was the Honorary Professor of Islamic Sciences at Bonn University in Germany, Zinetullah invited me to Tammerfors. I spoke with Pimonof several times there. He adopted Islam seriously and truly liked our Prophet.

Pimonof’s Kur’an translation was published in a good package by Zinetullah Ahsen. According to those scholars who speak Finnish, it is one of the best Kur’an translations in Europe.

## *Hoca Sadreddin—*

Pimonof also spoke with Hoca Sadreddin of India and told him that I belonged to the Mutezile sect. He was the head of all the Ahmedi living in Berlin, and was busily building a mosque in the Welmersdorf section of the city. He invited me and the Polish Moslem intellectual Yakub Senkevic to his home for an excellent feast. There were also several other Indians present. They all spoke beautiful Farisi. Sadreddin stated: “Pimonof told me you are a member of the Mutezile sect.” I responded: “I do not belong to any sect; I am only a Moslem. Except, I believe in the ideas expressed by the Mutezile on the meaning of the Kur’an and the language they use. Just like Temur had appointed imams from among the Khoesmiens under his regime, and had those Damascenes executed who wanted to revolt and did not want to perform namaz behind them.” Hoca Sadreddin gave me, as a present, some of his sermons in German.

That caused us to dispute the issue of the alphabets at that gathering. In those sermons, the Arabic and Persian names were written in the Latin alphabet, but according to the English pronunciations, for example, instead of “u” they were rendered with “oo” and instead of “a”, the letter “u” was used. Those who did not know English could not read them properly. I had observed the same tendency in India, that while writing the English words in Arabic or in Urdu alphabets, or the Arabic and Urdu words in Latin alphabet, no common, standardized principle was followed. The fact that all those transcriptions were rendered according to the English pronunciations would cause anarchy, and prove to create difficulties in the dissemination of knowledge. Hoca Sadreddin asked me to explain my ideas. In response I indicated that, while writing the Islamic names and terms, they need to be written not according to the local pronunciations, but according to the Arabic language rules. Accordingly while writing “fetha,” “kesre” and “damme” with “a,” “I” and “u”, with the horizontal bar above them as the Orientalists do. It would be necessary to bring together the intellectuals of the Islamic nations together to decide all that. I also wrote down the Latin equivalents of the Arabic consonants. Only Yakub Sinkevic who was at the gathering defended this style of writing knowingly. Hoca Sadreddin, even though he did not completely grasp the issues involved, accepted the fact that it was necessary to standardize the writing rules in the works being published in the Western languages. The other Indians who were present regarded the techniques I explained as “missionary writing” and did not at all acquiesce. Forty years after that date (in 1965), while attending the “Common Cultural Heritage” conference with the scholars from Turkiye, Iran and Pakistan, I presented a paper on this specific issue which was then published in the *Papers Read at the RCD Seminar on Common Cultural Heritage* (No. 1 1965 Pp. 22-23). I also explained the same ideas, once again, to other Islamic intellectuals, among them Adnan Adivar, Resit Saffet, and Muallim Cevdet in Turkiye; Muhammed Mustafa of Egypt; Mirza Muhammed Qazvini of Iran, and others, but could not have them accept any of it. None of those, except for the *Islamic Research Journal* being published as of late in Karachi by Pakistani scholars seem to have accepted the system. It is not easy to understand the true reasons of individuals who have the capability of writing in Western languages, in English, French or German but experiencing difficulties in applying the norms adumbrated even though they accept them in principle. While I was in Berlin, I spoke with Hoca Sadreddin multiple times. According to him, the inventor of the Ahmedi sect, Gulam Ahmed was in origin a Baburid, meaning he was a Timurid Mirza. These Ahmedi were very close to the English. When the English prevented us from contacting other Indian Moslems, they wanted to send us to Qadiyan with their money. Even though the Indians we met alongside Hoca Sadreddin were extremely against the English, Sadreddin and his friends would not say anything against the English.

## VIII. From Europe to Turkiye

### *From Europe to Turkiye—*

On Tuesday, 12 May, we left Berlin for Istanbul. In order to see us off, Azimbek, Abdulvahap Muradoglu, Ibrahim Arifhan (who is today a Professor in Ankara), Ahmetcan Okay (who is today a Professor in Istanbul), Ahmet Naim (who also arrived in Turkiye and became a high school philosophy teacher) of Bukhara, Alimcan Idrisi, Osman Tokumbet, Korayci (flutist) Mehmet Baskurt, Temirbek, Kazbekov and our German friend Max came to the railroad station. Since we were going to stop in Prague and Budapest, we had let those we knew our destination in those cities. In Prague, the aforementioned Ukrainian Left Socialist Party chief Sapoval and the head of the Kalmuk refugees, Balinov met us. That very night we met the leaders of the Czech Army who had raised the flag of rebellion during 1918 against Moscow, Bogdan Pavlo, Dr. Pataydel and others at the “Czechoslovak Legions Center,” and took our evening meal there. We had very sincere talks there. They had all become members of the parliament, and the legionnaires had influence in the parliament. Bogdan Pavlo had become the Minister of the Interior, and served as an Ambassador at various places. During the meal, I sat across an individual I did not know and we spoke quite a bit. It turned out that he was Dr. Benes, who later played a big part in the fate of Czechoslovakia.

After the meal, I asked Benes: “will you seriously help us our movement?” He replied: “Of course we will; however, I am dubious that any result will ensue. We Czechs have gained independence, became a member of the League of Nations, accepted by Great Nations, and organized all that via the Ambassadors appointed. You small nations in Russia have been late in accomplishing all that. Even though Ukraine, Georgians and Azerbaijanis have fully or halfway become members of the League of Nations, since they are not residing in their own territory, it is doubtful that the governments they established outside can accomplish much. You Baskurts and Turkistanis have not even entered the gates of League of Nations. I fear, all your activities will be confined to the use of several barrels of ink. In response, I stated: “Most of the civilians will think just like that. I now advise you not to trust all these diplomatic relations completely, and to increase your military strength so as to be effective. I spoke with Lenin many times. As

a civilian, he was using virtuous words. However, when Soviet General Vatsites desired that all national forces be brought to an end, the Lenin Government issued a law on 19 May 1920 subdividing the Baskurt Army and for it to be absorbed by the Zavolski Okrug. Dr. Pataydel knows well that sounded the death knell of our autonomy. On that day we decided to leave our country and settle in Europe. I hope that, the Western neighbors of the Russians, such as you and the Poles will not be caught unawares such as that. I would like to remind you who are of Slavic origin nations that, by appealing to your origins, you might fall into the trap much easier.” At that point, Dr. Pataydel stated: “These words of Validov are absolutely correct. While defending the Legion organizations against the critics, let us keep all these facts in mind.”

Even though only four years had passed since these Czech had seen Baskurdistan, many memoirs of them had already been published as serials in newspapers; also as separate pamphlets. Dr. Pataydel indicated: “whenever you like, you are welcome to visit Prague as our guest; if you like, you can live here and we will help you.” I thanked him for his friendly words, and indicated that I was happy to observe our joint struggle against the Bolsheviks had left such pleasant impressions. I had arrived in Prague, starting with 1927, many times. From among the Asians, the Kalmaks constituted a somewhat important mass. They had publications. As a result of the Second World War, they moved to America. I experienced the sincere hospitality of the Czechs.

## *Budapest—*

We arrived in Budapest on 14 May. Huseyin Makik Orkun and Hungarian Turanist medical doctor Baratusi, who later became my friends, Professor Corfi Istvan and Alimcan Tagan met us at the Train station. Before everything else, they showed us a “Rundschow” symbolizing the first emigration of the Hungarians into the Danube basin. That night, there was a feast at the home of Baratusi. It happened that that person had written a twelve volume history and ethnography of Turanian tribes. He gifted tem onto me. They gave very excited speeches. The next day, we visited the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Afterward, we visited their famed Professor Nemeth Gyula, and spoke for three hours. He, too, like me, was thirty-four years old. Huseyin Namik, at that time, leveled severe accusations against Kopruluzade Fuat. There, quite by chance, we encountered ethnography specialist Mesaros Gyula and his wife. When I was thirteen years old, this person had arrived in Baskurdistan with his brand-new wife to conduct ethnographic research, and had become our guest in our house. He had published a volume on the Baskurt, a copy of which which he gifted to me. In one of his articles, he had mentioned our village and one of our neighbors. His wife gifted a silver cigarette case. A few years later, Mesaros arrived in Istanbul to teach ethnography at the Istanbul University Faculty of Literature. While reminiscing, Mesaros presented me as a person with an extraordinary memory, exaggerating profusely. He asserted that I had recognized him while crossing the street, some twelve years after I had met him in my village. This was an exaggeration

unbecoming of a professor. That was because, I recognized him only after Alimcan Tagan introduced us, and we shook hands. Regardless, they were magnificent hosts, and they offered beautiful wines.

We saw the pictures taken by Mesaros at that time, and my friend Dr. Tagan gave me a detailed description of the contents of the book he presented me in Hungarian which was entitled *Magna Ungaria*.

I asked Mesaros: “what was the occasion of your meeting with my father?” He replied: “when I was at the Askar village, recording the old Baskurt dastans, I was told that Ahmetsa [sic] Molla knew them better than anyone, and that I ought to see him. Hibetullah Sufi brought us to your father. I wrote down a lot of the versions from your father and two old men, Isam and Safi.” That meant, my father and those old men were known as the resource. One of the true scholars of those versions was my Grand Uncle, Veli Molla Kuzenov. Perhaps my father was also regarded as knowledgeable in dastans due to my Great Uncle’s fame. Otherwise, my father was not the authority in such matters; he was a religious scholar. However, he knew the poems of many a dastan by heart.

That night, Alimcan Tagan and his friend Professor Georfi [sic] Istvan took us and Huseyin Namik to an even better restaurant than the day before. We ate Hungarian dishes and drank Tokai wines. That turned out to be a very strong wine. All three of us were singing Baskurt songs when we left one o’clock in the morning. Abdulkadir, whose nickname is Tuqan, sat in a chair on the street and passed out. We had difficulty carrying him. Dr. Tagan’s voice was beautiful and he knew almost all of the Baskurt songs. I noticed that some Hungarian women were curious about our songs, as they opened their windows to listen. The next day we went back to Mesaros, and listened to his strange theories about the origins of the Bulgar, Khazar and the Baskurt. He read to us the very interesting Oghuz dastan which he wrote down from the Baskurts. We concentrated on scholarly topics while we taked with Professor Nemeth Gyula. I indicated to him that a Chair in Central Asian Studies must be inaugurated at the Budapest University. We were the guests at the Turan Society between six and seven that evening, located at the parliament building. I made a presentation on the Kencak Branch living in Central Asia and the relationship between them and the first Baskurts. The head of the Society Professor Paykar, Prule and others listened carefully. They proudly stated that this was the first occasion for a Baskurt to make a scholarly presentation in their circle. We spent that night at another Hungarian restaurant until two in the morning. Our Tuqan, once again, passed out.

## *Kostence [Constanta]—*

We arrived in Bucharest on 18 May 1925. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, we searched for a restaurant and a hotel. Abdullah Efendi hosted us. Accordingly, we discovered that there were families present from the Nogay Yedisian, Kineges, and Alcin Branches. Aga Islam



Ali Efendi and Adil Yusuf Aga sent a messenger to the nearby Ali Aga village and brought us a man by the name of Nureddin. He recited *Cora Batir*, *Edige* and *Oraq Mamay*, which I also knew very well. During 1920, along the Northern reaches of Khorezm, among the Karakalpak, I had met another reciter by the name of Nureddin. He had recited the same dastans with even greater detail. We were astonished that both ozans were named Nureddin. Adil Yusuf Aga turned out to be from the Yedisian Branch, and the Kimsikli arm. He related a Nogay aphorism: “Alcinnin Alevi degince, Tanrinin talavi desene.” I had heard that from my Great uncle Veli Molla. They were three Branches: Yedisian, Yediskil, and Cimboyluq. The seven arms of the Yedisian are: Kineges, Mangit, Acigen, Alcin, Yaltir, Dersengi and Masgar. What is meant by the “Alcin Alav” was that, The Bey of the Alcin Branch was Alav; he was considered to be the scourge of God. We heard many beautiful quips in that milieu. We also related ours to them. These dialogues were even sweeter than the Hungarian Tokai wines at Budapest.

Being an ethnographer, my friend Abdulkadir provided ample information on the strong Branch of the Alcin, Kiciyuz Kazaks and their Arms found in Bukhara, Samarkand and their sub-branches Mangit and Kineges. Even though we did not know the dates of Alcin alp Alav, I added others who were from the Alcin Branch; for example, the poet philosopher Bidil, who lived at the time of the Emperor Aurangzeb in India; Yalantus Ataliq who was the medical doctor for Samarkand Ozbek Rulers and the patron of two of the three tiled medrese there. Afterward, addressing Islam Ali Efebdi, Adil Aga stated: “he is the man the ancients called genealogy.” Islam Ali and Adil Aga were so happy to be speaking with us that they insisted we stay few more days in Constanta, that there were more individuals they wished us to meet. In sum, whatever we told them, all was tied to the traditions they were familiar. That was because “san” means one hundred thousand. Therefore, “Yedisian” means a large Branch with a population of seven hundred thousand. This was the strongest Branch of the Nogay. A portion of them were living in South East Baskurdistan under the offspring of Aslan Mirza named Bey, along with the offspring of Kucuk Han. At the time of the Kalmak Ayuke Han, they migrated to Crimea, and joined their kin living there arrived earlier. They served the Ottoman Empire as loyal troops. A portion of them remained in the vicinity of Khiva. There are villages in South East Baskurdistan, in the region of Irendik, containing their remnants. Dil Aga had heard of the name Irendik. My ancestors, who had served the Kucumogullari, had contacts with these Yedisian Nogays.

As we spoke with Adil Aga and Nureddin, I recalled the narratives indicating that we were descended from the Nogays who joined the Yurmati Baskurts. Besides, I had encountered the proofs when I met the Nogays living in the vicinity of Astrakhan during 1908-1909. There was the issue of a marriage in Astrakhan. Adil Aga also suggested the same here. That idea was in my memory after I arrived in Istanbul. When I learned that my wife, who had remained in Russia, was remarried, I immediately recalled what Kireslikli Adil Aga had stated: “come back and we will have you

marry a Nogay girl.” However, I did not go. Instead, I married Nazmiye who was the daughter of Omer Ungar, a friend of Adil Aga, a member of the Yedisian Branch. She had studied history at Yorga and Curesco, and arrived in Istanbul to complete her doctorate. Meaning, this marriage was directly the result of destan inspired feelings that were awakened by my meeting the Nogays at Astrakhan, Khiva (Cimbay) and Constanta. Nazmiye wholeheartedly helped me with my historical works as well as in the writing of these memoirs. Isenbike, my daughter of this marriage, had studied Chinese at Istanbul University, and history with me. Later, she went to Taiwan to study history. Now, she is working on her doctorate at Harvard University. Subidey, my son, completed his studies in economics at Frankfurt, London and the Middle East Technical University in Ankara; now he is working on his doctorate at the Johns Hopkins University. Thus, my two day stay in Constanta during May of 1925 resulted in my family ties with the Nogays and the Tatars there. I dictated the last portions of these memoirs to both of my children. This was the way my family was renewed.

## *Meetings in Istanbul—*

We boarded the ship in late afternoon, and arrived in Istanbul. It transpired that Fuat Toktar and the Daghestani engineer Huseyin Bey were also on board, with whom we spoke in Berlin. My old friend Fuat was still sore at me because of the arguments we had in Berlin, he did not give me his hand, nor did he speak with me. On the morning of Wednesday, 20 May, we arrived in Istanbul. It turned out, we needed sponsors. Until that was resolved, we remained at the Beyoglu police station. Our friends, who are still alive, Yakup Alpanay and Mehmet Emin Resulzade; and from the Turkistanis, Osman Hoca and Meyan Buzurk became our surety and released us from the hands of the police. We were confused as to what happened, since we had Turkish passports, though temporary, and a visa from the Berlin Embassy, that we were thus entangled. We requested from those who sponsored us, to take us to the address of Mehmet Emin Resulzade at Ayasofya Yerebatan. A policeman accompanied us. Fuat, who would not speak with me, was the third person. We walked, and the policeman would provide information on us to every person he would encounter, stating “these must be Armenians.” We finally arrived at the home of Resulzade. He went all the way to the Sultanahmet police station and declared: “they are not Armenians; they are Moslems” and saved us from the police. It turned out that the reason for our meandering were the hats we were wearing.

Finally, we are in our beloved Istanbul. That afternoon, I boarded the horse drawn streetcar and went to the Fatih Mosque Library. Our friends had reserved a nice and clean room at a hotel. We slept for twelve hours comfortably. As soon as I woke, I visited Fatih, Suleymaniye, Ayasofya and Koprulu Libraries to inspect the books. I had known their existence from the works of others, heard from my father, from Bartold’s book on his trip to Istanbul. I was especially curious about Al-Biruni’s books,

and Hafiz Abruin's works on the history of Temur history. I immediately discovered Resideddin's works on theology and Chinese medicine at Ayasofya. At the Koprulu Library, I glanced at Al-Biruni's work on Indian history, and his volume entitled *Patencel*. I entreated God to allow me the chance to study them all and benefit from that. The director of the Fatih Library stated: "nobody had ever asked for these books. Who taught you their existence in our library, and their call numbers?" I indicated that I had acquired the printed indexes when I was in Russia. He recalled meeting my father.

The same day, we had plenty of photographs taken with our friends who participated in the Turkistan Liberation Movement. In the first group were Mamur of Cizzak; Abdussekur of Samarkand; Nafiz of the Turkmen and me. The other group contained again mamur of Cizzak; Hemrakul of Samarkand; Osman Hoca of Bukhara; Davran Acil of Samarkand; Abdulkadir Inan, and me. While we were in Turkistan, we could not have done that. First of all, we did not have a camera. Besides, we could not have the films developed, because the photographers were under the surveillance of the police.

We spent the night of 22 May 1925 talking with Mehmet Emin Resulzade. On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, I spoke with Koprulu Fuat and Riza Nur bey. On 26 May, the Azerbaijanis invited us to a tea meeting. They were full of affection. 27 May was the Azerbaijan Independence Day. I gave a speech at that meeting. I recalled the inclusion of Baskurdistan and Turkistan autonomy and independence movements in the Musavat Party Program with gratitude. On 28 May, I toured the Ayasofya, Suleymaniye, Beyazit Umumi, Nuruosmaniye and Koprulu Libraries. That night, we visited Yusuf Akcora Bey at Erenkoy. Meyan Buzurk of Tashkent was with me. Yusuf Bey, in a manner I never expected, stated: "when I saw you in Ufa, were you a Field Marshall or a Han? What comes out of five or six Basmaci? It is necessary to have obedience and peace of mind for progress." I responded with: "if you had told all this to Ivan Grozny during 1552, prior to his conquest of Kazan, it would have been better for the Kazan residents; no blood would have been spilled. Progress and peace would have been complete. Therefore, we now understand that what we discussed at Ufa has been left without a result." Our talks were unpleasant. I left in short order. The next day he arrived at our hotel seeking us. He stated that his words were misunderstood. I responded with: "A political person such as you ought not to state anything that requires explanation the day after. Regardless, I wrote the life of those times in book form. I wonder what you will say. Will you state that there was no need to struggle against the Russians, or that there was no need to detail the specifics in a book. Your Grandfather was on the side of the Tsar. Veliaminov-Zernov had documented that. I did not. We need to hear words that will bolster our morale, not those that will reduce it." Yusuf bey responded: "that day will arrive, too; do not be disheartened. I made those statements as a result of my disappointment that your struggles in the Urals and Turkistan have not met with success. I was observing that it would have been better if it was possible for you to stay there and continue the struggle." I replied: "I believe the sincerity of these words. However, one of your speeches you gave in Ankara supporting the Russians

was repeated in the journal "Revolutionary East" published in Moscow. What was that for?" Yusuf Bey responded with: "that was not a sincere statement. It was declared when the Russian Ambassador visited. Sometimes it is necessary to do such things here." I stated: "I could not condemn you for that. However, I suggest you must think in advance that whatever is stated in such circumstances, will have an effect on the Russian Moslems and Central Asian Turk communities. Your speech was re-printed in the "Revolution" journal published in Tashkent and in newspapers (naturally, with the command of the Russians), and had a bad effect. When that speech of yours was published, we were fighting at Usmet, North of Samarkand. Our troopers who are now in your employ, Eyyup and Islam were there, too." Believing that speaking further on this topic was going to lead to unwanted results, so I immediately turned the topic to another direction. After that event, Yusuf Bey and I spoke many more times, but we did not touch the above topic. On 28 May, I spoke with Kopruluzade at the Darulfunun [University] and other Professors. We spent that day and night with Abdurresit Kadi.

### *My first presentation at Istanbul—*

On 29 May, a group of students from Darulfunun who have known me by reputation asked me to give a talk on the basics of Central Asian Turks. Perhaps it was Koprulu Fuat organized that event. I delivered my talk at the Institute of Turkish Studies. I did not yet know the Turkish of Turkiye to deliver a talk in that dialect. Despite that, all listened carefully, and asked a series of questions. Ragib Hulusi Bey explained the words I could not understand. There was a Chinese Moslem student, Celaledin Wang-zin-shang in the audience. After completing his studies, he returned home, joined the activities of the Guomindang Party. He became the Minister of the Interior in the Eastern Turkistan Government. When the Bolsheviks took over China, he returned to Istanbul via Pakistan, and taught Chinese at the university. His offspring is following in his footsteps. Later on, I endeavored to be useful for the students who arrived from Asia, Europe and even from America.

### *Feast at Kucukyali—*

I worked in Suleymaniye and Koprulu libraries during 30 May. On Sunday, 31 May, the younger brother of the late General Enver invited me to the Camlik casino [here, a restaurant with musical entertainment] at Kucukyali. We stayed until the express train arrived in Bostanci [sic]. There were many friends and generals present. All were dressed in civilian clothes. Generals Halil, Erkelet, Cafer Tayyar, Mursel and the officers who were with General Enver in Turkistan were there. Among them were Haydar Tasan and Muhiddin Bey. There was also music. I gathered that, the event was in my honor. Sukru Baglarbasi and Haydar Tasan were the most excited. During this gathering, no outsiders were allowed into the garden. When I noticed the sandy

bottom through the clear waters of the sea at the end of the garden, I commented to Generals Emir Erkelet and Nuri “I wish I had a home here.” God granted my wish. Even if it was not at that time, I was able to build a home at Kucukyali and established my library.

## *Talks with Muallim Cevdet and Ferit Bey—*

Muallim Cevdet is one of the most well known intellectuals of Turkiye; besides French, he also knows Arabic and Farisi. We had spoken a few times at the Institute of Turkish Studies. He invited me to have coffee as if he had some private business to discuss with me. We went to Darulmuallim [teacher training school]. Apparently, Ferit Bey, the Farisi Professor at the Istanbul Darulfunun, was also going to be present. Reportedly, he even knew how to write poetry in Farisi and in French. In general, at that time, knowledge of French was much esteemed in Istanbul. When someone was introduced, I noticed that it was also pointed out how well he spoke French. The library of Cevdet Bey was truly rich. Most of the works published in Turkiye were on literature and history. It was also noticed that he carefully collected the works published in Russia. Most of my publications, other than the ones published in Russian, were also present. Cevdet Bey addressed me: “this is the matter I need to tell you in private,” and held out a copy of *Tedrisati Iptidaiye* journal, and showed me two articles he wrote against me and added: “do not dwell on this anymore; my thesis has lost value. Religion and state have been separated in the state governance, and this business is closed.” I responded with: “I thank you for your advice; you can rest assured I will not dwell on it. This is a matter of interpretation and became a part of history.” A little later, Professor Ferit Bey arrived, and pleasant talk began. Muallim Cevdet was very conservative, but Ferit Bey was expressing very liberal ideas. During those days, the matter of alphabets became very lively in the press, and there were writings in favor of Latin alphabet. It transpired that the ideas of the two friends were in opposition to each other. Ferit Bey asked me what I was thinking about the matter. Would Russia accept the Latin alphabet? I now discover that I then wrote down the details of this discussion in my diary: “technical developments will force us to accept the Latin alphabet, sooner or later. However, it will not be prudent to remove the old alphabet immediately. Both alphabets need to be used simulataneously at least half a century, or a quarter of a century. Newspapers and novels need to be published in the old script, and no damage must be sustained to our links to our past. Our old works must be published. However, the definitive path to joining the Western civilization does not pass through a change of the alphabet, but the way being followed by the Moslems of India and the Hindus. And, that is, the acceptance of English as a serious branch of study and the language of the universities. French language can no longer spread across Asia. If English is taught from middle school on, in a mandatory fashion, most of the university courses can then be taught in English. That will also allow the development of Turkish as a language of

knowledge. In my opinion, the Moslems of India will discover the right path, travel everywhere in the world, participate in conferences, and become a creative force as the keeper of an old civilization equipped with Western culture. I believe, if we were to continue in this fashion for fifty years, the problem of the language of knowledge can be gradually resolved. More than likely it will be difficult to translate all the university textbooks and encyclopedias, which are now eighty percent Arabic and Farisi, and expect to reach the Western levels. For the Moslem nations, it is necessary to adopt one of the Western languages as the language of the universities and academies. For example, English can be adopted and taught from highschool and be the language of education at the universities on topics other than philology and philosophy. It must be the language of the knowledge academies for work and publications. If that can be achieved, the backward nations of Asia will gain time and energy. According to the Malasian intellectuals I met in Berlin, the South East Asian and Buddhist circles are on the path of adopting English as the general language of scholarship. The Islamic world can follow them. The encyclopedias, which are expensive to produce and require the cooperation of international community, can be published for the Western and Central Asian nations jointly. During the next half a century, our national language, much like those of the Hungarians, can assume the form of a scholarly language.

Cevdet and Ferit Beys regarded my ideas in a negative manner. What made Cevdet Bey angry did not make Ferit Bey irritable. I stated: “that English is settling in China, Japan and India as the language of scholarship, is proof enough that it going to be without opposition in Asia. If we were to follow in that manner, the dream of making Russian as the language of scholarship will be removed.” Ferit Bey stated: “what you published ten years ago in the journal *Bilgi* had caused a negative impression of you on the problems of Caliphate and the sultanate, triggering Cevdet Bey’s angry responses to you. Likewise, if you were to publish what you are stating here will also create a negative impression of you. It is better that you do not publish them.” Cevdet Bey added: “if Turkish is going to leave the position of a language of scholarship, I will henceforth publish in French or in Arabic.” Despite that, Ferit Bey stated: “what Zeki Bey means that we are not leaving our Turkish as a language of scholarship. Since the change of alphabet and reaching the Western levels of knowledge requires time, he is suggesting it will be suitable for us to apply the current system in use in Galatasaray [a French language curriculum highschool in Istanbul]. He also believes that it is necessary to teach English from Middle School on, to prepare the children to follow lectures in English at the university level. It is useful to discuss these matters among ourselves, but you must not write these for publication.”

Ferit Bey had liberal ideas. He asked me questions on Shamanism. Later on, he chose the name “Kam,” meaning shaman, as his last name. He accepted my ideas in utilizing the Latin alphabet in scholarly research and technical subjects. Two years later, I wrote my ideas on using Latin alphabet in parallel with the old script for the duration of fifty years, in the journal *Yeni Turkistan*. At that time, the thoughts on the alphabet revolution had been common place. A year later, when I was appointed professor at the Istanbul University, I continued my sincere contacts with Ferit Bey. Upon



arriving in Istanbul, the three scholarly individuals I met were Fuat Koprulu, Ferit Bey and the Director of Beyazit Library, Ismail Saip Bey. Ferit Bey in Farisi; Ismail Bey in Arabic, were masters of their scholarship, whose knowledge was fully trusted, sincere and men of character. When I determined that Muallim Cevdet had a bigoted and suspicious character, I did not maintain contacts.

## *Mustafa Sakuli—*

I arrived in Ankara on 1 June. I discovered that Mustafa Sakuli waited for me on the way, at the Eskisheir station. He came with me to Ankara. On the train, we were together with an inspector from the Treasury Department. We spoke quite a bit about the affairs of the world and on the condition of the Turkish world. Our positions were so close that, Mustafa stated as if this person was with us in Turkistan during the time we were there, participating in the same events. After I registered at a hotel in Ankara, Mustafa gave me an elegant small box he purchased at Mezariserif as a present for me made of the “ac” tree. Ostensibly, it was manufactured for the purpose of keeping jewelry in it. He stated: “there are no pearls in it, but apparently it is of old manufacture.” Inside of the box was absolutely white, and there, Mustafa had written: “to my older brother Zeki Agay, I present this as a memento of our unforgettable life of struggle. He introduced us to the larger world of the Turks, and caused us to live the Turkistan national life, initiating us in that struggle, and his leadership in all that. Mustafa Sahkuli, Ankara 13141/1925.” He also prepared a large photograph of himself with the same inscription.

Mustafa belonged to the ‘Sahkuli Seyyid’ families from the time of the Kasim Hans. Veliaminov-Zernov published their history. He had completed the Higher Institution of Commerce in Moscow. I had first met him during 1914 at the home of industrialist Hasan Akcurin who was his relative. They all received a good education with the aid of Hsan Bey. He also busied himself with politics. With his sister Sare, they translated some of the writings of Leon Cahun on the Turks into Tatar. Without reservation, both of them joined our ideas of autonomy during 1917. They joined in the movement against the Unitarists at a feast during the days of the Russian State Congress. During 1918, Mustafa and his sister Sare Sakulova, who had completed her higher education in Switzerland after finishing her education in Russia, came and worked in the economic institutions of the Autonomous Baskurt Government. During 1920, he arrived in Bukhara with the rest of us; with Osman Hoca, crossed over to Eastern Bukhara and served as an instructor. When General Enver arrived, he worked with him; and later, with Haci Sami. He was related to Yusuf Akcora and Gaspirali Ismail families from his mother’s side. He also learned Farisi, and he loved Chathay Literature. He produced a full list of Ahmet Yesevi’s poems by inspecting all of his writings. However, it is yet to be published. At the hotel we were in Ankara, there was no bed frame. So, they placed the mattresses on the floor. Mustafa liked that very much and cooked Bukhara pilav with his own hands. He had also brought good wines and Turkiye foods to accompany

them. He missed his mother and sister left in Baskurdistan, sang, and cried quite a bit. I had taught him a poem of Alishir Navai “it is a great blessing to be left alone with a close friend to tell your troubles to him and to cry.” He kept repeating it. Why should I not join Mustafa whom I loved, in his tears of longing.

Mustafa wrote the independence movements of 1918-1923 as a book. I have a copy of it in my library. A photocopy is in the Columbia University archives. From that, Professor E. Allworth had a personal copy made for him.

We spoke with Consul Sami Bey. And on 2 June, we met with Hamdullah Bey. It was discovered that Ayaz Ishaki and Fuat Toktar gave a report against me to the Government. Hamdullah Bey stated: “those pertain to the affairs in your lands. They have no bearing on Turkiye. Do not worry, I will give their answer.” On 4 June, Hamdullah Suphi Bey organized a meeting at the Turk Ocagi. I made a presentation after apologizing that I did not know the Turkiye dialect well. Turk Ocagi had elected me as a member of the cultural committee. Other members were Yusuf Akcora, Fuat Koprulu, and Veled Celebi Beys. We had a group photograph taken.

## *Turkish citizenship—*

Today, a law was published in the *Resmi Gazete* [Official Newspaper] concerning my and Zubeyir Bey’s acceptance into Turkish citizenship, containing the signatures of the President of the Republic and members of the Cabinet. The following is the format:

Governmental Decree

Office of the Prime Minister, Private Secretary, number 2032

According to an application received from the Ministry of Education dated 3 June 1341 [1925] and record number 3840-8240, Zeki Velidi and Hamid Zubeyir Beys have been admitted into the citizenship of the Turkish Republic in order for them to be employed in the fields of Turkish History, Turkish Lineage Branches and Turkish language and publish the results of their researches. This was decided by the Cabinet of Ministers at their meeting on 3 June 1341.

The President of the Turkish Republic, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Pasa; Prime Minister, Ismet; Minister of the Interior, M. Cemil; Minister of Exterior Affairs, Dr. Tevfik Rustu; Minister of Defense, Recep Peker; Acting Navy Minister, M. Cemil; Acting Minister of Justice, Tevfik Rustu; Health and Social Services Minister, Dr. Refik; Minister of Agriculture, Mehmet Sabri; Minister of the Treasury, Suleyman Sirri; Minister of Education, Hamdullah Suphi.

After this Decree was published, my appointment as a member of the Committee of Writing and Translations has taken a legal form. Now I was on salary. According to form, this Decree was going to be sent by the Interior Ministry to the Governor’s Office of Ankara; by them to one of the sub-divisions of Ankara. There, I would be issued a set of new identity papers. It turned out that I was assigned to Haci Halil Subdivision. However, the person who was the Elected Head [Muhtar] dragged out the recording

process, perhaps because he wanted a bribe, or for other considerations. He was stating: “if Mustafa Kemal is the President of the Turkish Republic, I am the President of the Haci Halil Subdivision. If it is on the docket and if I feel like it, I will handle the recording.” In sum, I thought I needed to reside in that subdivision to complete the recording process. I rented a two room, small house. There were piles of straw, on either side of the house. That night I noticed a donkey was tied to one. It was braying.

During those times, citizens of Ankara were living on very narrow streets, in houses contrary to health conditions, always in danger of fire. I had paid the rent, but I did not stay there, I lived in a hotel. That was because, they would not rent a room in a home to a bachelor, and there were bedbugs. At the lover reaches of the city, there were clouds of mosquitos. I did not bring my writings and books into the house I rented. I placed them in the Ministry of Education. In general, my main concern after my arrival in Ankara was organizing my writings and my manuscripts. We all thought that our work needed to acquire a routine.

### *Some of our initiatives in Ankara—*

On 4 June, Osman Hoca and Nasir Mahdum (former Minister of the Bukharan Treasury) arrived from Istanbul. They, too, had problems with citizenship formalities. In our meeting we discussed the issue of representing Turkistan according to the laws of Turkiye. We will invite Mustafa Cokay from Paris and convene the Turkistan National Union Congress during 1926. Mustafa Cokay and Mustafa Sakuli will manage the representation of Turkistan in Europe. I and Abdulkadir will enter the university, and we will publish a journal with the title *Yeni Turkistan* with Osman Hoca. This journal will publish scholarly articles on the history, literature, sociology and economics as they pertain to Turkistan. We were aware of the efforts of the Russian agents attempting to prevent the presentation of Turkistan struggle as a single struggle. Their efforts were dovetailing the subdivision of Turkistan according to “national borders.” Therefore, as needed, we decided to reference the movement as “Turkistan and Eastern Turklands,” to ensure the inclusion of Tatar, Baskurt and Kazaks, and hold meetings, presentations jointly according to those principles. One of these meetings was held at the home of Yusuf Akcora Bey.

On 6 June, I gave a petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to bring my wife Nefise to Turkiye. I also spoke with Tefvik Rustu and Ahmet Hikmet Beys in detail on the issue. The same day, I presented Hamdullah Bey, the Minister of Education with the regulations of the “Academy of Sciences” that was necessary to be established in Turkiye, along with the bylaws of “Turkiye Archeological Society,” “Turkiye Geographical Society,” as well as the “Turkish Historical Society” and “Turkish Language Society” that will function as sub-units of the Academy. I also supplied the regulations of the Gottingen German Academy of Sciences regulations and laws.

On 10 June, a meeting was organized at the Turk Ocagi to introduce me; I went there. The same day, I was a guest of Veled Celebi Efendi at a place called

Cankaya Kavakli. Even though he did not know any Western languages, he was a master of Farisi and especially the literature of the Mewlevi. He had learned the dictionaries, whether published or not, and as a result he had translated *Kutadgu Bilig* into Ottoman. He spoke for three to four hours on these matters with me and Abdulkadir.

There were talks at the Turk Ocagi on 11 June, between 8:30 and midnight. Many members were present, such as Samih Rifat, Ahmet Hikmet, Hamit Zubeyir, Hasan Ferid, and Izzet Ulvi. At the suggestion of Undersecretary Nafi Atuf, I read my previously prepared paper entitled “The conditions under which Turkish research can enter international channels.” I had already presented a copy to Hamdullah Bey. It was discussed and received well.

At that time I also spoke with Cemil Bey, the Minister of the Interior. I found him to be very friendly. He told me: “whatever you need, come see me.” It appeared to me that the likes of Hamdullah Suphi Bey and Cemil Bey were not plentiful, who would show friendship without formalities. That was why the words of Cemil Bey seemed so sweet; I visited him from time-to-time.

### *Celal Unsi Bey—*

On 16 June, I spoke with Celal Unsi Bey. He was an Azerbaijani Turk and had published a newspaper in Turkish entitled *Keskul* in Tbilisi, before Gaspirali Ismail Bey [in Crimea]. I thought he was long dead. It transpired that he was living in Turkiye. He was a master of Iranian and Azerbaijani literature. He introduced me to a rug merchant by the name of Hulusu Bey. Reportedly he was a Crimean Turk, and was from the Ozbek Branch; but those Ozbeks did not arrive from Turkistan. They were a local tribe. It was said that he was a master of Farisi and the literary and religious works written in Altinordu period. With Celal Unsi Bey, we would visit Hulusu Bey and talk on literature. Hulusu Bey would tell fortunes from the *Hafiz Divani*. One day, he opened an ornate, good looking copy of the *Divan*, and read: “one day you will visit Khorezm or Hocend.” Celal Unsi Bey added: “ha, if you go to Samarkand, say Hello to Emir Temur!” Another day, when we visited, Celal Unsi Bey jokingly stated: “open Hafiz one more time for Zeki Bey; I wonder if he will not take you along.” He did, and read: “The Turkistanis love you. China and India are bringing tribute money for a twist of your hair.” Possibly Unsi Bey had placed an order ahead of time for Hulusu Bey to read those. He thus caressed my love of land and feelings.

Celal Unsi Bey stated: “Hoca Hafiz must be an intimate of yours. He is advising you like his closest friend. I have been here for the past thirty years; he never said anything like it to me.” Celal Bey addressed Hulusu Bey: “now, cast one for me.” Hulusu Bey read: “avoid jealous individuals.” Celal Unsi Bey addressed me: “this, too, is addressing you. That is because, my era has passed. Nobody can be jealous of me anymore.” I responded: “it is possible that they can be. Even Ali Kuscu, after he arrived in Istanbul, in his letters to Samarkand he talks about the many jealous persons and the

benevolence of the Emperor.” Celal Unsi Bay was a Russian translator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

17 June. I am spending my free time on writing my magnum opus on the historical geography of Turkistan. But, there were no books or libraries in Ankara. For those reasons, I started to agitate for an appointment in Istanbul. Besides, in his letter to me in Berlin, Hamdullah Suphi Bey indicated that I was going to be employed in teaching history. I was reminding him at suitable intervals.

On 19 June, I came down with malaria. I could not go to the office for two days. Hamdullah Suphi Bey sent his Undersecretary Nafituf Bey to discover the circumstances. When Atuf Bey noticed the condition of the room, he stated that they would help me.

## *Professor Samoylovic—*

On 5 July, I was told at the Education Ministry that: “Agaoglu Ahmet Bey would like to speak with you at the administration building of *Türk Yurdu*. He telephoned a little earlier.” It turned out that the famous Turcologist Samoylovic was in Ankara and wished to speak with me. I indicated that we could talk at a restaurant which is now near the Vakıf Hanlari, and indicated the time. We spoke the same day. This person was my closest friend during the Tsarist times. Our friendship began in 1913 after I published a paper of the Turkmen poet Mahdumkuli. He had arrived in Bukhara in 1921 to speak with me. I had recounted that before; and I thought that he was there under orders from the Communist Party and refrained from speaking with him. Even when he spoke with the Director Bisiyev in the next room, who was my relative, I did not let my presence known. When he had the Uzbek poet Colpan intercede on his behalf, I even avoided speaking with Colpan. Now, while we were speaking, he did not mention anything about the occasion in Bukhara, talking only of old friends, I immediately thought that this, too, was an arrangement. That was because he only spoke of scholarly issues; I waited to hear when and how he was going to divulge his principal mission. We met again in two days time. What he had to say was very much like what Kretinsky had stated: “we like you very much, continue on your journey while keeping in touch with your scholarly friends in Russia. You are the one to replace Bartold, do not change your citizenship.”

I mentioned the status of my family. He responded with: “if you heed my advice, the resolution is easy. Otherwise, they will not let you have them.” I continued: “my brother Abdurrauf mailed me most of my manuscript works, especially the draft of my book on the Nogay history via registered mail. However, they never reached me.” His response was: “all these are subject to politics.” Later, we went to the movies, and spoke on various topics. He avoided touching on my role in the revolt in Turkistan. I thought that he was definitely, officially tasked to speak with me. He mentioned that he had heard from Agaoglu that I had proposed a project concerning the establishment of an Academy of Sciences, and that he was very interested in that topic as well.

It was obvious that he did not at all wish to see scholarship flowering in Türkiye in an organized fashion, and wanted to secure the “advisory” position to the Russians in order to have those developments under their control. I stated that: “it was a simple memorandum,” and wished to change the subject. However, he asked again. I responded that it is a matter concerning the Ministry of Education, and that I did not know the details. Since that time, I wrote to the Türkiye Ministry of Education countless times on the matter of Academy of Sciences. I only learned that the real opponents of that issue were those leftist elements close to the Russians. I learned that from Avni Bey, the publisher of the *Türk Ansiklopedisi*. That was because he and I shared the same opinion. Who knows; perhaps Samoylovic was not a spy, since the Bolsheviks later killed him. However, I found it without benefit to speak with him, and stated: “henceforth, I am a citizen of the Turkish Republic, and I wrote the history of the uprising in Turkistan; what is it you wish old friend, esteemed Alexander Nikolayevic? The old sincerity is no longer there with the Russian friends. They had the intellectuals swallow the opium called “World Domination;” with that, they took away your self-determination, your friendship and sincerity. How did you lower yourself to the step of tracking me down in Bukhara? Would Vasili Valdirimic (Bartold) or Ignati Yulyanovic (Krakovski) have done that, too?” Upon hearing those words, the blonde Samoylovic lost all his facial coloring. He stated: “that is calumny; I never received any instructions for searching you in Bukhara; or today, here.” I continued: “were you not among the Russian Turcologists discussing the creation of nineteen different literary languages for the Russian imprisoned Turk Branches at the Eastern University in Moscow during 1922? I heard that there were also brave young Turcologists who were in favor of utilizing the Latin alphabet. However, those who insist that a common language must not be allowed among the Eastern Turks, and that the alphabets must be devised on the bases of phonetic differences by which completely independent languages must be formed, and those who are convinced that the Turk Branches will soon become Russified and will disappear, are in demand. I wrote all this to Lenin in a letter two days before I crossed the border into Iran. Now, I am in Türkiye, and I will stay here. When we spoke last during the past week, you remembered that even Strabo [64 BC – AD 24?] wrote that the aridness of the area between Ankara and Konya will remain, and can never be improved. During the past century, there were those who claimed that the Turks were busy conquering the outside world, and Asia Minor always remained a bald head. Now you see that the Turks will expend their energies in improving their barren lands.

Arrid Ankara becoming the Capital is not a dark symbol of Türkiye in the future; just the opposite, it is a representation of a bright prospect. Ankara and Haymana, now regarded as a blind alley, may become a large cultural center home to eight to ten million Turks. When the Seyh of your Academy, Professor Krjijanovsky and a friend of his were searching resources for the electrification of Russia in the Middle East, they had arrived at the headwaters of Aras River and mentioned white coal and mining industry in the region of Elazig, Malatya and Diyarbakir. One day, each of these three cities will become the home of millions of Turkish laborers. At that time,



no more fears will be left for the Turkish language from the Armenians of the Kurds; nor can that menace ever be used from the outside as a lever. Before the Russians can digest the Turks imprisoned in Russia, the endless ambition of the Russians, to which they are addicted, will cause them harm. At that time, Alexander Nikolayevic, we will once again be friends. In the past, that ambition was not lacking. However, that did not stop me from keeping the lines of *Eugene Onegin* in my memory along with the verses of the Kur'an. Now, that ambition is not allowing the right to life to any of the nations imprisoned by the Russians. I applied to Lenin and Kretinsky to bring out my beloved wife; they will use her to torture me.”

I felt as if the beer was affecting my head. I noticed that Samoylovic was also uncomfortable. We separated. I arrived at the hotel and wrote down these talks verbatim in my diary. I did not see him again. A year later, when Bartold arrived for delivering a series of talks in Istanbul, his wife indicated: “Alexander Nikolayevic was very sad about your talks in Ankara; he made a mistake by insinuating himself into political circles.”

8 July. The Imam of Petersburg Lutfi Molla had arrived in Istanbul; meaning, he had become an author as well. Now I just heard that he had passed away in Istanbul.

9 July. I visited Minister of National Defense Recep Peker Bey in his Official Office. I requested he appoint our Friends of Cause Mamur Niyazi and Mustafa Sahkuli to appropriate positions. He graciously agreed. It transpired that he was of Daghestan origin.

## *The Mountain of Huseyin Gazi—*

17 July. I was studying the battlefields of Temur and Bayazid [Temur 1336-1405; Bayazid 1389-1403. Battle of Ankara, 20 July 1402]. I climbed the mountain known as Huseyin Gazi in the South East of Ankara. A villager from Kizilhisar asked me: “why are you circling around here; someone will catch and kill you.” I responded with: “so what; I am looking for the battlefield between Temur and Bayazid.” He said: “let us climb that hill.” From that location, he showed me the place known as Cubuk Ovasi where the battle took place. I asked him: “did you learn this from the books?” He said: “no, our village arrived from Khorasan; we like Temur. Besides, those who provoked Bayazid against Temur were not the Turks, but the Serbians.” He added: “on your way back, stop by to see us.” I climbed up further, to the summit. The weather was quite cold. I built a fire between the rocks, using animal dung as kindling fuel. I added shrubbery to create hot ashes. I had several raw potatoes in my bag, and I was cooking them in the hot ashes. I also had a copper flute, manufactured in the Baskurt style. I was playing it. At some point, sounds of other men reached me. A little later, I saw their heads. It transpired that these were European engineers from Germany, France and Switzerland. They were working for the National Railroad Administration. Altogether, there were five of them. They brought quite a spread of chicken, European cheese, whiskey and wine. They took a look at the potatoes, and

told me to throw them away, and fed me from what they brought. Since I had buried the potatoes in the ash, fearing that would cause gossip, I did not tell them my name or reveal my identity, nor did I speak a single word of European languages. Two days later, at the Ministry of National Defense ante-room, one of them arrived. We spoke. He was from Sweden. With him, there was an Austrian whom I knew. He introduced me. From all that, it was discovered who that person was cooking potatoes in the ash. Afterward, that individual from Sweden became my friend just like the one from Austria. I spoke with them often. Huseyin Gazi was not the best place to study the Cubuk Plains battle. At that time, the maps of General Omer Halis were not available. That man from Sweden, a highschool history teacher and I rented horses from the villagers and toured the real battlefield of Esenboga, Cataltepe and Yagbasan regions. We arrived at the home of Yusuf Akcora in Kecioren on foot. At that time, there were Nogay villages around Ankara who had maintained their traditional clothes. The young brides did not know what a veil was; wearing “bogtag” and “sevgele” on their heads, as described by Marco Polo, they would bring “kurut peynir” [dried cheese] to the market and sell. I visited their villages. I spent my days off at the villages of Haymana.

## *My visit to Gazi Mustafa Kemal—*

Thursday, 31 July. Kurban Bayrami. Today I went to Haci Bayram Mosque for the celebration of the Sacrificial Feast. I was thinking of the atrocities in the Turk lands in Russia. I noticed the silk cloth hanging on the wall: “the mansion of the world will collapse, cannot stand a sigh/ do not believe that the life of those who burn others will not be touched.” I went to see Ahmet Han, the Afghan Ambassador to congratulate the Bayram, and told him of the writing. He read me his translation of that couplet into Farisi. It was nice. I told myself: “I visited the Afghan Ambassador. Now the time has come to visit General Mustafa Kemal; I should go do so.” I was with Hasim Nahit Bey. He spoke French well. He had published interesting works on the development and regression paths of Turkiye. He spoke many times with me on those issues. I asked him: “how would it be if we were to go and visit Gazi Mustafa Kemal to Bayram congratulations today?” He said: “that would be very appropriate; except, he only accepts visitors at the Parliament building.” We went together, and saw his aide-de-camp and told him our purpose. A little later, we were ushered in. He showed us great respect, and asked: “why were you so late for a visit?” I responded with: “Hamdullah Bey was going to bring me himself; besides, I wanted to have the Turkish identity papers in my pocket as I crossed your threshold.” He laughed and complimented me. He then asked: “there is a beautiful muqam [type of melody] called Suzinak among us. I wonder if it also exists in Turkistan.” I replied: “I think they call it Bi-Bahce.” I liked the fact that the General asked me such a question as if he had known me for a long time. My further discussions with General Mustafa Kemal will be recounted in the next volume, when I carried the title Professor. However, will it be possible to

write that volume? Even though Gazi Mustafa Kemal was forty-five years old, he left a very good impression on me. I divided my existence into two parts; my talk with him constitutes the beginning of the second portion of my life. While I was leaving, I saw the Representative [Member of Parliament] Semih Rifat Bey. He stated: “you did well seeing him; it is meaningful that he asked you about Suzinak; that is because he believes all Turkish culture arrived from there.” 18 February 1967

## Afterword; 20 July 1969

I intended to bring the story of my life until the day this volume is printed. All the pertinent materials were carefully collected for the volume to follow the present one, to detail the forty-four years spent as a Professor at a university in Atatürk's Türkiye and as a researcher. Since I had not participated in political life in Türkiye, have not become member of any political party, have not hitched my wagon to anyone's star, the story of that era would not have been monotonous either. My scholarly work forced me to spend eight years outside Türkiye, in Austria and in Germany. During World War II, since the Soviets were scared of Türkiye's influence on the Moslem Turk Branches in the Soviet Union, they caused calamities on the heads of those who worked on the histories and national cultures of those Branches. If the second volume of my memoirs is published, it will illuminate the higher education and research in Türkiye; not to mention the struggles to the study of the West by contemporary methods. The portion of my life spent in Türkiye is completely constructive, and has focused on the evaluation of the historical sources and documents carefully collected by the Ottoman state over the centuries. The stages of that effort are worth telling in a book of memoirs. However, my life span's length, and the desire to publish some of my more important scholarly works, had persuaded me not to dwell on the latter part of my life's story.

If I do not write a few words about the era after 1925, on the lands beyond the Caspian Sea, perhaps the impression may be given that my ideas are entirely based on my experiences prior to my leaving Russia. However, I regularly kept-up with the developments in those lands since 1925. Truly, Soviet Union is a country of great revolutions. I had described that when I spoke about Kautsky. Even though the life there is flawed due to the flaunting and propaganda of a dictatorship, since life flows according to categorical plans, the progress is heady. What appears today as reality, we could not have even imagined while we were in Turkistan half a century ago. The Westerners, such as Englishman [sic] Fitzroy Maclean recorded that as well, who visited Bukhara twice, during 1939 and 1959. After they were sovietized during the 1920, the ancient cultural remnants of Bukhara and Khorezm have been replaced by that of the Soviets. Since the discovery of natural gas in Bukhara during 1959, new residential subdivisions appeared with buildings climbing to the skies; the ancient protective walls nurturing very old cultures have been destroyed and new motorways took their places. Until 1963, some 3.3 billion cubic meters of natural gas was extracted there; masses

of individuals have been brought from the Western borders of the Soviet Union, and a three thousand five hundred kilometer pipeline has been built to carry the natural gas to the industrial centers of European Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> Nukus, mentioned earlier as a small town in these Memoirs, which constituted a part of the *Ergenekon* dastans, have become the most important waypoint between in international air-travel between Moscow, India and Pakistan. What was the high grazing pastures of the old Oghuz in Kazakistan, and was known to us as a field containing coal and copper mines in the back country, Bay Qunur, is now the Soviet Central Space installation. During 1932-1933, some three million souls died of hunger in Kazakistan. Twenty years later (in 1953), a land-mass of twenty million hectares were separated from Kazakistan under the rubric of “virgin lands,” distributed to the Russian emigrants. These occupied lands were increased to twenty-seven million hectares in 1963.<sup>2</sup>

As one result, the Kazak population was decreased to %25. When we were in Baskurdistan, no oil was being extracted; now, four times more oil is produced than Baku. During 1963, including the Toymazi sources of Tataristan, one hundred five million tons were extracted. Cotton, iron production, water resources are listed in parallel with the decline of the native population and the increase of the Russians.

Contrasted to that tragic showing of Turkistan, Turkiye, in which I spent forty four pleasant years, had entered into an era of development guaranteeing the independence of the Turkish nation. Today, the army of Turkiye is a force not seen in recent centuries. The esteem of Turkiye has increased in the world; the financial capacity is also increased. Theocratism, which I mentioned during 1913 with trepidation concerning the fate of Turkiye, has been eliminated. During last April in Rawalpindi, at the International Islamic Congress, despite the shortcomings, Turkiye showed herself as the model to the other Islamic intellectuals how to modernize Islam and to rid of theocracy.<sup>3</sup> Russian physicists regarded the Aras River as the headwaters of Russian water-power and stated that Firat and Dicle needed the Russian “creativity” for them to become the power sources for Western Asia. Now, our nation is converting those areas into industrial bases under her own will and own power. Bridge and tunnel construction in Istanbul will convert the city into a world cultural center housing several more million Turkish citizens.

However, the rapid development of Turkiye and the growth of Iran based on her rich oil wells have not softened the desires of Russia; just the opposite, her apeties have increased. Russia has reached the Mediterranean Sea, built dams in Egypt; working with all her might to establish the dominion of Communism in Indochina. The recent occupation of Czechoslovakia by Russian military forces is an indication that her earlier withdrawal from Austria and Iranian Azerbaijan were tactical moves. While she wishes to establish areas of influence in the Mediterranean, Western Asia, South East Asia, she is endeavoring to fortify her position in the Caspian and Black Seas and completely occupy Afghanistan. From that aspect, my trip to Northern Afganistan during last year can constitute the last portion and summary of these memoirs. An Ozbek emigrant of the Kongrat Branch from Bukhara, in Mezar-I Serif, who appeared

to know the flow of world events, stated: “many of us crave to emigrate to Turkiye. Some of us wish to return to Russia. However, I will stay here. That is because; Russia herself will be arriving in this land. Large concrete roads are being built from Herat and Mazar toward India that will accommodate main battle tanks; in some places these are one-and-a-half meters thick. She definitely wishes to reach and settle in Kashmir. Just like China has settled in Tibet.” The Russian progress is no longer the problem of Turkistan alone. Russia is becoming a misfortune for entire Asia. While I am writing this, plenty of articles are being penned in the West on the “Fundamental Aims of Russia in Asia.” The thoughts of the German thinkers are as follows: “Russian plans for Asia are now clear. She wishes to be the mediator in Kashmir and settle there in order to have full influence in South East Asia.”<sup>4</sup>

The Moslem nations bordering Russia are displaying ignorance against the psychological methods employed by Russia. Years are passing by. The statistics issued by the Soviets are believed because they are a different source to hand [sic]. As a result, the Russians gain in the public opinion and the natives appear as not believable. Even though years pass-by, an independent understanding of language, arts, theater and the justice system cannot be accomplished which the Russians have been projecting to their neighbors and even to their own citizenry. They do not even have specialized courts. With the success of her own propaganda methods, Russia is finding it easier to implement their plants. On one hand they are printing propaganda on the gilded life of their own Moslem subjects accompanied by photographs, on the other hand, they are publishing statistics that the said population is speedily diasappearing, thereby hoodwinking the world. Ignoring and not analyzing those statistics, appearing as thick volumes, under the guise and format of scholarly works, would spell doom. The roster of staff siding with the Russians in the neighboring countries is being expanded. However, the almighty Russians cannot be seen. For example, enormous precautions are undertaken to bond Afghanistan to Russia economically. At Sibirgan, the Russians are physically in control of natural gas production. The gas produced from there can be available, just like the case in Bukhara, to users thousands of kilometers away, in Russia and Eastern Europe. The Suzak tunnel in Hindikus has shortened the road used by Alexander of Macadonia to cross from Kabul basin to Balkh by two hundred kilometers. However, only Russians know the future of the oil and gas wells and roads in Northern Afghanistan. The Westerners can sometimes, even very late, protect themselves from the false information. For example, during 1954, the English newspapers were taken in by the information supplied by the Soviets and announced that the “Virgin Lands” program would result in world changing initiatives.<sup>5</sup> Fifteen years later, it was announced that the said initiative was bankrupt, and those regions turned into poor pastures for animal husbandry.<sup>6</sup> Among us, the effects of Soviet propaganda are still continuing. The talk is still about those virgin lands constituting the bread-basket of the Soviets. It has become an art to determine the truth from the Soviet publications that have been throwing-out false statistics under the monopoly of the Politburo.<sup>7</sup> We should have learned that a long time ago. For whatever reason, that is



not the case. The aim of determining the truth by the establishment of institutions for the purpose of independent analysis has not been successful. In the recent years, according to the deceitful psychological methods which have been in vogue as of late, the sly means of preventing the scholarly work from reaching culmination, and to capture and concentrate the scholarly and administrative positions in the hands of the reds have been ongoing with audacity and confidence.

Despite all that, it is necessary to mention some of the corrections taking place in the Islamic nations neighboring the Soviets, which were earlier mentioned as faults in these memoirs:

During our talks at Kabul in 1923, it was mentioned that democracy could not be applied to the Islamic nations in a devil-may-care come fashion as it is employed in Aglo-Saxon countries; it must be applied according to the national characters of nations. I am glad to note that the ideas I advanced concerning socialism have proven to be suitable to the thoughts of our intellectuals. During the past forty-four years, despite the efforts and insistent propaganda and expenditure of treasury, there has not been a serious fight within our community. Instead, the events that gave birth to such are sought with level-headedness. Even the Iranian and Afghan rulers did not resort to bloody measures to defend their crowns, they stressed that they would carry-out the revolutions with their subjects.<sup>8</sup>

Earlier, I had mentioned the necessity of taking solid precautions for their own lands by the neighboring countries against the Russian tendency to spread just like a swamp, for the good of the world.<sup>9</sup> Nowadays, large-scale financial contributions began to take place to support that. These preventative measures are being seriously supported by Pakistan will stretch from the West toward the East by the RCD Organizations. Russia had advanced an anti-thesis by the hand of Tajik leader Gafurov at the 1967 Ann Arbor Congress of Orientalists. It was fortified by a Russian from the UNESCO circles at the Iranian Arts Congress meeting in Tahrán. Accordingly, the RCD ought to be organized from North to South [as opposed to West to East, as it then stood], and instead of Islam as the common thread, it ought to take Iran, Tajik, Afghan and Aryanism regions as the principle of operation and all culture ought to be designed accordingly. Last year, a Kushan Culture Congress was organized and those theories were put into application. Despite that, the Afghans chose to remain loyal to the political traditions based on Islamic principles instead of the Soviet rayons. Because of that, the center of such a movement could not be established in Kabul; it was transferred to Moscow. In the Turk Republics of the Soviet Union, the national consciousness is now much stronger than 1925, despite the Russification efforts and lies. Mahmut Kasgari has become the national alp of all lands. During 1924 I had sent from Berlin a report to the intellectual Turkistan fighters who were left in Iran. In that, while complaining that the Western nations did not have a clear and consequential policy toward the Soviet Union, I had added: “despite all that, our best ally is the self-confidence of the Westerners; the Soviets will not be able to leave their ghettos.” During the past forty-four years, the Soviets did not leave that ghetto; nor were they courageous enough to do so. On the other hand,

the Western world is celebrating science, during the hours while I am penning these lines, not in secret, but openly; by showing their success to hundreds of millions of individuals around the world as the astronauts are stepping down onto the moon. Many individuals believe that entrance into the universe will bring a better world order and social patterns to the world.

# Notes to the Afterword

1. *Geologia Nefti I Gaza*, 1963, N. 3; *Neftianoye Xoziaystvo*, 1964, N. 9-10; Vavedensky, *Dergi*, N. 39-40.
2. *Narodnoye Dvijeniya za Osvoyennye Tselennyx Zemel*, Collective Work, (Moscow, 1959); Mecil Ayapbek, *Turkili* (Izmir 1968), N. 4 Pp 1821.
3. An article expounding on this is being published in *Islam Arastirmalari Enstitusu Dergisi* c. IV, cuz 3-4.
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