Forgetting Nothing, Forgetting No One: Boris Chichibabin, Viktor Nekipelov, and the Deportation of the Crimean Tatars
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# FORGETTING NOTHING, FORGETTING NO ONE: BORIS CHICHIBABIN, VIKTOR NEKIPELOV, AND THE DEPORTATION OF THE CRIMEAN TATARS

In 1985 an essay entitled 'Nichto ne zabyto, nikto ne zabyt' ('Nothing is forgotten, no one is forgotten') appeared in the Russian émigré journal *Kontinent*. The title invoked the last line of a short poem written by Ol′ga Berggol′ts and etched in a wall beside Rodina-Mat′, the monument to the Motherland in Saint Petersburg's Piskarevkoe cemetery that commemorates the 1941–43 blockade of the city.[1] Written by Ukrainian writer and journalist Vasil′ Sokil, the essay is at times very sarcastically disposed to its title.[2] It decries the selective forgetting of many Soviet citizens who suffered during the Second World War but whose experience upset the official post-war narrative of heroic victory: the crippled, the displaced, the imprisoned. 'Not all soldiers returned' from the war, writes Sokil. Many 'endured all the tortures of Hitler's concentration camps only [to be punished] for this and sent to the Siberian Gulag.'[3] He continues: 'What, in truth, does a human being need? Not much. Simply to be recognized as human [*Chtob ego schitali chelovekom*]. Not as an animal. Everyone deserves this recognition [*Kazhdyi zasluzhil eto priznanie*].'[4]

For Sokil, the Crimean Tatars stand as a searing example of a people long denied this recognition. A Sunni Muslim Turkic-speaking *ethnie* whose khanate ruled the Black Sea peninsula and its environs for over three centuries, the Crimean Tatars were given mere minutes to collect their belongings, ordered from their homes at gunpoint, and herded onto the cattle cars of waiting trains bound for destinations in Central Asia and the Ural mountains by thousands of NKVD officers in the middle of the night on 18 May 1944, after the ordeal of a three-year occupation of Crimea by German forces. This act of

I would like to thank Catharine Nepomnyashchy, Cathy Popkin, Alexander Motyl, Elazar Barkan, Nader Sohrabi, and the anonymous reviewers of the *Modern Language Review* for their insightful comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

[1] The use of Berggol′ts's poetry on a state monument is not without irony. As Katharine Hodgson remarks, Berggol′ts's poetry 'repeatedly turned to the commemoration of events which had no place in the public memory: the private tragedy of her daughters' deaths, and the national tragedy of the Terror' (*Voicing the Soviet Experience: The Poetry of Ol′ga Berggol′ts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 131).

[2] Born in 1905 near present-day Dnipropetrovs′k, Sokil graduated from Khar′kov University and made a career in journalism and in the theatre, acquiring a reputation for his operatic librettos and historical musicals. See Vasyl′ Sokil, *And Then There Was Glasnost: Two Novellas from the Ukraine*, trans. by Kevin Windle (Canberra: Leros Press, 1990), pp. viii–x.

[3] Vasil′ Sokil, 'Nichto ne zabyto, nikto ne zabyt', *Kontinent*, 45 (1985), 345–60 (p. 350). The title of Sokil's essay may also refer to the section 'Nikto ne zabyt, nichto ne zabyto' of the Tashkent-based Crimean Tatar newspaper *Lenin Bayrağı* [*Lenin's Banner*] (1957–91), which catalogued the deeds of Crimean Tatar heroes in the Red Army. See Alan Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978), p. 199.

[4] Ibid., p. 360.

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ethnic cleansing came at the prompting of NKVD chief Lavrentii Beriia, who noted on 10 May 1944 the 'undesirability [*nezhelatel'nost'*] of the continued residence of the Crimean Tatars in the border areas of the Soviet Union', and on the order of Stalin, whose secret Decree 5859ss of 11 May 1944 accused '*many* Crimean Tatars' ('*mnogie* krymskie tatary') of collaborating with Nazi occupiers during the Second World War and then mandated the expulsion of '*all* of them' ('*vsekh* tatar'; emphases added).[5] Thousands of the deportees, who also included many of Crimea's Greeks, Armenians, and Bulgarians, died over the course of the arduous two-week journey from wretched conditions, lack of water and food, and vicious treatment by the NKVD.[6] Even after their arrival, thousands more perished from hunger, exposure, and disease in special settlement camps or *spetsposeleniia*.[7] Many Crimean Tatars believe that half of the entire population died in the first years of exile.[8]

In 'Nichto ne zabyto, nikto ne zabyt' Sokil relates a vivid personal memory of encountering these Crimean Tatar deportees in the late spring of 1944. While waiting at a remote railway crossing in Kazakhstan, he sees a hand grasping tobacco leaves through a small opening in a waiting eastbound train car opposite his own. An urgent voice exclaims from within the car: 'Bread!' Moving closer, Sokil spies an old man desperate to exchange the tobacco for food. Behind his fragile, emaciated frame stand a group of figures barely clothed. Sokil recalls a frantic exchange:

> Confused, I asked the old man, 'What happened? What's wrong with these people?' The old man quipped with irritation, 'Take the tobacco and give me some bread!' 'How much?' He shot back, 'However much you'll give me, just make it quick! The train's about to leave!' I rushed back and grabbed half a loaf [. . .] The old man nearly ripped the bread out of my hand.
>
> The trains hadn't yet left the junction, so I asked once again, 'Where are you going?' The old man darkened and said in a detached voice, 'Wherever they take us.' 'But where are you from?' 'What, haven't you read the papers?' he replied angrily. 'From Crimea. We're Tatars . . . Now there are none of us in Crimea.'
>
> The whistle sounded, and the train went eastward with its prisoners . . . Slowly the train cars passed by me, and staring out from the narrow cracks of its doors were old women, young women, children, grey-haired grandfathers.[9]

[5] 'Tovarishchu Stalinu, 10 maia 1944g', *Deportasiia narodov Kryma: Dokumenty, fakty, kommentarii*, ed. by N. F. Bugai (Moscow: Insan, 2002), p. 85; and 'Postanovlenie GOKO No. 5859ss, 11 maia 1944g', ibid., pp. 70–73.

[6] According to Michael Rywkin, nearly 8,000 Crimean Tatars perished during the deportation itself. See Michael Rywkin, *Moscow's Lost Empire* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1994), p. 67.

[7] Brian G. Williams, *The Crimean Tatars: The Diaspora Experience and the Forging of a Nation* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), p. 237. The special settlement regime was lifted in 1956.

[8] Gul'nara Bekirova, *Krymskotatarskaia problema v SSSR, 1944–1991* (Simferopol': Odzhak'', 2004), p. 108. According to Brian G. Williams, the total percentage of those killed in the first five years is likely to have been lower, 'probably thirty percent of the deported population', or roughly 65,000 people (Williams, p. 401).

[9] Sokil, 'Nichto ne zabyto, nikto ne zabyt', pp. 353–54.

'Ty chto, gazet ne chital?': 'What, haven't you read the papers?' Sokil's encounter lays bare a central paradox of the events of May 1944: namely, that a deportation of an entire people on a peninsula of over 10,000 square miles—executed by NKVD agents in plain sight 'with the speed of a parachute attack', in the words of Alexander Solzhenitsyn—was not *perceived* by the Soviet public in the years immediately following the Second World War.[10]

This failure to perceive was to an extent wilful on the part of many Soviet citizens, particularly in Russia and Ukraine. As Sokil recalls, 'In the train there were many passengers with these golden leaves of tobacco. But no one uttered a word about the encounter. They were silent. Some refused to let it in and did not understand, while others were frightened to address what was a dangerous subject.'[11] For others scattered across the Soviet Union, however, this failure to perceive was the result of the Stalinist regime's perverse adherence to George Berkeley's dictum, *esse est percipi*. Removed from the field of perception, the Crimean Tatars would become Orwell's 'unpersons'.[12] After being ethnically cleansed from their homeland, they were 'discursively cleansed' from Soviet life, subject to a co-ordinated campaign of censure and slander that erased their ethnonym from the pages of print media and their toponyms from the face of the earth.

Poetry broke the tide of this discursive cleansing. Before international appeals and open letters agitated for the right of the Crimean Tatars to return to their homeland, it was passionate and purposeful *verse* that exposed Stalin's crime and sought to rouse the conscience of the Soviet public. The story of these poems has yet to be told. This article therefore centres on selected works by two understudied Soviet Russian-language poets, Boris Chichibabin and Viktor Nekipelov, who seek to find meaning in the deportation of the Crimean Tatars and to make meaning from it. I am guided here by Wolfgang Iser's theory of aesthetic response, which elaborates on the Aristotelian view that '*poiesis* or making-in-fiction is *philosophoteron*—a better instrument of knowledge—than *historia*—because it [allows] us to produce the probable rather than account for that which has been possible'.[13] As an 'occurrence without reference', literature does not principally document empirical reality, but rather generates a virtual reality by stimulating the reader's own con-

[10] Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *Arkhipelag GULag 1918–1956: opyt khudozhestvennogo issledovaniia*, vols I–II (Paris: YMCA Press, 1973), p. 95.

[11] Sokil, 'Nichto ne zabyto, nikto ne zabyt', p. 354. As Solzhenitsyn remarks, after the deportation 'Tobacco vanished from Crimea for many years to come' (Solzhenitsyn, *Arkhipelag GULag 1918–1956*, vols V–VII (Paris: YMCA Press, 1975), p. 407).

[12] George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) (New York: Signet, 1981), p. 46. As Aleksandr Nekrich observes with solemnity, the Crimean Tatars 'might just as well have not existed' (*The Punished Peoples: The Deportation and Fate of Soviet Minorities at the End of the Second World War*, trans. by George Saunders (New York: Norton, 1978), p. 136).

[13] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Ethics and Politics in Tagore, Coetzee, and Certain Scenes of Teaching', *Diacritics*, 32.3–4 (Autumn–Winter 2002), 17–31 (p. 23).

stitutive, ideating activity.[14] This 'ideation' stems from the literary text's characteristic indeterminacy, which is fed by what Iser calls *Leerstellen*, 'gaps' or 'blanks' that the reader is meant to fill with the force of his imagination.[15] This process of 'meaning assembly' is not a linear or uniform movement of an interpretative iron, as it were, smoothing out semantic wrinkles; it is the movement of a ratchet, a continual back-and-forth 'of anticipation and retrospection that leads to the formation of [a] virtual dimension, which in turn transforms the text into an experience for the reader'.[16] For Iser, this experience or event is one of 'repositioning' and 'boundary-crossing' in which the reader dislodges preconceptions and assumptions, disrupts the prevailing demands of the social and cultural systems around him, and 'stages' new version of the self.[17] In other words, it 'teases him out of thought' and into action.[18]

This article is organized into three parts. The first offers additional historical context and elaborates upon the process of the discursive cleansing of the Crimean Tatars, highlighting two prominent prose works that branded them as traitors after the Second World War, Ivan Kozlov's *V krymskom podpol'e* [*In the Crimean Underground*] (1948) and Arkadii Perventsev's *Chest' smolodu* [*The Honour of Youth*] (1949). The second explores the life and times of Boris Chichibabin and engages in a close reading of his 'Krymskie progulki' ['Crimean Strolls'] (1961), the first non-Tatar literary work to deal explicitly with the tragedy of the 1944 deportation. The third part takes up the tortured career of Viktor Nekipelov and analyses his 1968 Crimean triptych—'Chufut-Kale', 'Gurzuf', and 'Ballada ob otchem dome' ['Ballad about an Ancestral Home']. What unites the texts of Chichibabin and Nekipelov is their mobilization of imagery, metre, and rhetoric to stimulate affect and confront the reader's guilt and complicity in the plight of the Crimean Tatars. This project of 'guilt-processing' promises to effect a constructive catharsis capable of, indeed, teasing the reader out of thought and into action on behalf of the Crimean Tatar cause.

[14] Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 116 n. and p. 130; quoted in Wolfgang Iser, *How to Do Theory* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), p. 60.

[15] Brook Thomas, '*The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology*; or, What's Literature Have to Do with it?', *American Literary History*, 20 (Fall 2008), 622–31 (p. 624); Wolfgang Iser, *Prospecting: From Reader Response to Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 39.

[16] Wolfgang Iser, *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 281.

[17] Iser, *Prospecting*, p. 239; id., *The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. 5.

[18] Iser, *Prospecting*, p. 52.

### *'If you lose your honour, you lose everything': The Discursive Cleansing of the Crimean Tatars*

The discursive cleansing of the Crimean Tatars proceeded in two stages: the first enveloped them (and the deportation) in silence—creating what Robert Conquest calls, in an allusion to Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, a 'memory hole'[19]—while the second lifted the gag only to smear the entire nation as traitors to the Soviet motherland. During the first stage, from 1944 to 1946, Soviet authorities excised the Crimean Tatars from the pages of print media and, in a brazen process of reterritorialization, effaced traces of their past presence on the Black Sea peninsula from maps and street signs. In October and December of 1944, for instance, the Crimean oblast′ Party committee and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR issued decrees that replaced hundreds of Tatar (and German and Krymchak) names of cities, towns, and villages with Russian ones.[20] According to Edward Allworth, the task of renaming may have fallen to one man at the newspaper *Krasnyi Krym* [*Red Crimea*], who consulted a horticultural text, on the one hand, and a recent account of the Red Army's Crimean offensive, on the other.[21] As a result, post-1944 Crimean toponyms tend to smack of a hastily patriotic and descriptive functionalism: for example, a settlement in the Sak region called Aşağı Camin was renamed Geroiskoie, 'Hero Town', while a village named Kiçkene near Simferopol′ with a little over a hundred recorded residents before the war became Malenkoie, 'Smallville'. Some villages saw their unique place names—which could bear sacred religious meaning or allude to a founding family or a particular regional economic identity[22]—replaced by unimaginative collective ones: Alma Kerman ('Apple Fortress'), Savurçı ('Tanner'), and Yanış Taqıl (a Crimean Tatar family name) all became Zavetnoie, 'Darling Village', for instance.[23]

[19] Robert Conquest, *The Nation Killers* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), p. 67. Conquest asserts that 'nothing was said about the [Crimean Tatars and other deported peoples] for a period of about ten years' after the fact. The statement is inaccurate: as we shall see further below, the silence was broken as early as 1946 in order to malign the Crimean Tatar nation as treacherous and untrustworthy.

[20] Pavel Polian, *Against their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004), p. 152. Before the deportation there were, by one count, 1775 Tatar towns and villages in Crimea, each bearing a traditional Tatar toponym. After the deportation there were virtually none (*Krymskotatarskaia entsiklopediia*, ed. by Refik Muzafarov (Simferopol′: Vatan, 1993), pp. 653–57).

[21] Edward Allworth, 'Renewing Self-Awareness', in *The Tatars of Crimea: Return to the Homeland*, ed. by Edward Allworth, 2nd edn (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), pp. 1–26 (p. 13).

[22] See V. A. Busahkov, 'Svits′ki ta religiini tytuly i nazvy profesiinykh zaniat′, vidobrazheni v istorychnii toponimii Krymu', *Skhidnyi svit*, 1 (2004), 135–39.

[23] These new saccharine toponyms often 'forgot' the many tragedies endured by local Crimean communities during the war. Qutlaq, a village in the Sudak region first cited in historical records in the fifteenth century, had a majority population of 1,636 Tatars in 1939. For assisting the anti-German partisan movement during the war, its residents had to watch as Nazi occupiers

The second stage of discursive cleansing began on Wednesday, 26 June 1946, when the deportation was finally (albeit obliquely) announced in a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet published in *Izvestiia*. Under the heading 'Concerning the Abolition of the Chechen–Ingush ASSR and the Transformation of the Crimean ASSR into the Crimean Oblast'', the following text appeared on page 3 of the newspaper, couched below a prosaic announcement about the formation of a Ministry of Cinematography at the union republic level:

> Vo vremia Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny [. . .] mnogie chechentsy i krymskie tatary po naushcheniiu nemetskikh agentov vstupali v organizovannye nemtsami dobrovol′cheskie otrady i vmeste s nemetskimi voiskami veli vooruzhennuiu bor′bu protiv chastei Krasnoi Armii [. . .] [O]snovnaia massa naseleniia Checheno-Ingushskoi i Krymskoi ASSR ne okazyvala protivodeistviia etim predateliam Rodiny.[24]
>
> During the Great Patriotic War [. . .] many Chechens and Crimean Tatars, at the instigation of German agents, participated in volunteer brigades organized by the Germans and engaged in an armed struggle against units of the Red Army together with German soldiers [. . .] A critical mass of the population of the Chechen–Ingush ASSR and Crimean ASSR did not show opposition to these traitors to the Motherland.

The decree continues by announcing euphemistically what became of those who had failed to rise up against suspected collaborators with German occupiers: 'the Chechens and Crimean Tatars were resettled [*pereseleny*] to other regions of the Soviet Union. In these new regions, they were allotted land and given the government assistance needed for their economic development.' It concludes with Secretary Petr Bakhmurov calling upon the deputies of the Presidium to affirm the passage of the text into law.

Despite its heading, the 1946 Presidium decree has little to do with 'the abolition of the Chechen–Ingush ASSR and the transformation of the Crimean ASSR into the Crimean oblast''. These administrative changes had been made *de facto* a year before, on 30 June 1945.[25] Rather, the decree offered the Soviet regime an opportunity to legitimate the post-war deportation campaigns quietly—indeed, the bureaucratese of its heading and its relegation to *Izvestiia*'s third page did not encourage close reading—and at the same time

retaliated by burning the village to the ground. Qutlaq was later named Veseloie, 'Happy Town' (*Krymskotatarskaia entsiklopediia*, no pages given). It must be noted that the discursive cleansing of Tatar toponymy was thorough and enduring. For example, in a 1974 volume from *The History of the Cities and Villages of the Ukrainian SSR*, the entry for the village of Zelenoe ('Greenville') near Bakhchisarai lists its number of homes (93), its population (322), even the size of its nearby reservoir (12 million cubic metres); but nowhere is it mentioned that for over four centuries the village was known as Tatar Osman. See *Istoriia mist i sil Ukrains′koi RSR v 26 tomakh: Kryms′ka oblast′*, ed. by P. T. Tron′ko and L. D. Solodovnyk (Kyiv: Instytut istorii akademii nauk URSR, 1974), pp. 268–69.

[24] 'Ob uprazdnenii Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR i preobrazovanii Krymskoi ASSR v Krymskuiu oblast'', *Izvestiia*, 26 June 1946, p. 3.

[25] Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, p. 167.

to advance the main elements of the narrative of mass Crimean Tatar (and Chechen and Ingush) treason for uptake in the sphere of literary discourse, among other places. After all, the year 1946 saw Andrei Zhdanov, the resurgent ideological boss of the Party, forcefully repeat the maxim that where the state leads, literature follows. Soviet literature, he declared in an infamous rebuke aimed at the journals *Zvezda* [*Star*] and *Leningrad*, 'does not have, nor can it have, any interests besides [. . .] the interests of the state'.[26] The 1946 Presidium decree articulated these interests with respect to the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, furnishing *fabula* for a *siuzhet* that would emerge in the pages of Soviet documentary and historical novels.

The negative effect of these post-war novels would be felt for decades. In January 1973, for example, a Crimean Tatar petition to UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim condemned a 'special school dedicated to the distortion of the past and the present of the Crimean Tatars' and populated by such figures as Ivan Kozlov, whose popular novelistic memoir *V krymskom podpol'e* [*In the Crimean Underground*] won a Stalin Prize in 1948, and Arkadii Perventsev, whose novel *Chest' smolodu* [*The Honour of Youth*] won a Stalin Prize in 1949.[27] *V krymskom podpol'e*, which recounts Kozlov's exploits as a leader of the partisan underground based in Simferopol', holds the line of the 1946 decree, declaring that 'the Tatars were traitors [*predateli*] from the very beginning of the war'.[28] Yet when confronted with facts that testify to the participation of Crimean Tatars in the partisan movement against the Germans, Kozlov obscures the truth so as not to contradict the Presidium's pronouncement. He refers to the heralded Simferopol'-based underground organization of the Crimean Tatar Abdulla Dagdzhi, for example, only by Dagdzhi's Russian nickname, 'Diadia Volodia' (Uncle Volodia).[29] He also catalogues a number of individuals who, judging by their surnames, were Russian and Ukrainian collaborators with Nazi forces, but he never makes explicit mention of their respective nationalities. Crimean Tatars are not afforded the same courtesy.[30] The reader encounters, for instance, 'Mirka the Tatar prostitute' and the 'Tatar Karabash', 'leader of an [anti-partisan] retribution detachment [*karatel'nyi otriad*]'.[31] In the view of scholar and activist Refik Muzafarov, this telling identitarian double standard evokes Maksim

[26] 'Postanovlenie Orgbiuro TsK VKP(b) o zhurnalakh "Zvezda" i "Leningrad" 14 avgusta 1946 g', *Vlast' i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsiia: Dokumenty TsK RKP(b) — VKP(b) — OGPU — NKVD o kul'turnoi politike*, ed. by A. N. Iakovlev and others (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnyi fond 'Demokratiia', 1999), p. 589.

[27] 'Obrashchenie krymskikh tatar k K. Val'dkhaimu', *Arkhiv samizdata*, 1881 (January 1973), p. 2.

[28] Ivan Kozlov, *V krymskom podpol'e* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1947), p. 76.

[29] Ibid., pp. 81–82.

[30] Nekrich, p. 32.

[31] Kozlov, pp. 159 and 279. I have been guided to these particular passages by Refik Muzafarov in *Krymskotatarskaia entsiklopediia* (no pages given). Born in 1928 in Simferopol', Muzafarov was

Gor′kii's famous remark in *Zhizn′ Klima Samgina* [*The Life of Klim Samgin*] (1927–36): 'When a Russian steals something, they say, "A thief stole it", but when a Jew steals something, they say, "The Jew stole it".'[32]

The 1973 appeal to Waldheim singles out with particular scorn Perventsev's 1949 novel *Chest′ smolodu*, which is also set during the war.[33] The novel's protagonist and narrator, the partisan Sergei Lagunov, speaks at length about an egregious 'betrayal' of the Soviet motherland by the Crimean Tatar people. Lecturing his Tatar friend Fatykh (Fatih), Lagunov proclaims:

Pri sovetskoi vlasti krymskie tatary poluchili respubliku, bratskoe sodruzhestvo russkogo i drugikh narodov SSSR, svobodu ot eksploatatsii. Sovetskaia vlast′ podniala etot narod, postavila na nogi, dala vse dlia razvitiia, dlia nastoiashchei zhizni. A oni poslushalis′ svoikh zleishikh vragov i nachali massovoe predatel′stvo [. . .] *Mnogie krymskie tatary*, ty znaesh′, Fatykh, *po naushcheniiu nemetskikh agentov vstupili v organizovannye nemtsami dobrovol′cheskie otriady, vedut vooruzhennuiu bor′bu vmeste s nemetskimi voiskami protiv Krasnoi Armii*, protiv partisan. Kak mozhno prodavat′ svoiu sovest′, svoiu stranu? *Ved′ bol′shinstvo naseleniia krymskikh tatar ne okazyvaet protivodeistviia etim predateliam rodiny*, pomogaet im, i tem samym ves′ narod teriaet svoiu chest′ . . . A esli poterial chest′, znachit poterial vse [. . .] Nemtsy igraiut s tatarskim narodom Kryma. Poigraiut do pory do vremeni, poka nuzhny budut, i brosiat, zatopchut.[34]

Under Soviet rule the Crimean Tatars received their own Republic, the fraternal friendship of the Russian people as well as the other peoples of the USSR, and freedom from exploitation. The Soviet regime embraced the Crimean Tatar nation, stood it on its feet, and gave everything it could to aid in its development and to promote a good life. But they obeyed their own worst enemies and initiated mass treason [. . .] *Under the instruction of German agents, many Crimean Tatars*, you know, Fatykh, *joined volunteer brigades organized by the Germans and engaged in an armed struggle together with German troops against the Red Army* and the partisans. How could they sell out their conscience, their country? *The majority of the Crimean Tatar population did not oppose these traitors to the Motherland* and helped them, and the entire nation by its own devices lost its honour . . . And if you lose your honour, you lose everything [. . .] The Germans are playing with the Tatar people of Crimea. They will string them along as long as they are needed and then abandon them, even imprison them. (Emphasis added)

With care and precision, Perventsev funnels the text of the 1946 Presidium decree verbatim into his narrative, offering clear evidence of the top-down,

fifteen years old when his family was deported to the Urals. He became an active leader in the Crimean Tatar movement in 1957 and a doctor of philology in 1967. See Nekrich, pp. 198–99.

[32] *Krymskotatarskaia entsiklopediia* (no pages given); 'Kogda russkii ukradet, govoriat: "Ukral vor," a kogda ukradet evrei, govoriat, "Ukral evrei"' (Maksim Gor′kii, *Sobraniie sochinenii*, XXII (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel′stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1953), pp. 431–32).

[33] Perventsev's novel was heavily criticized by Crimean Tatar activists as early as January 1957, when Izmail Khairullaev declared to Soviet authorities in Uzbekistan that in *Chest′ smolodu* Perventsev 'rudely offended our people. Everything written about the Crimean Tatar people is incorrect in the book. He drew an equivalence [*postavil znak ravenstva*] between the Nazis and Crimean Tatars' (quoted in Bekirova, p. 75).

[34] Arkadii Perventsev, *Chest′ smolodu* (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1949), p. 370.

hand-in-glove working relationship between the Soviet state and its writers at the height of *zhdanovshchina*. In fact, decades after the publication of *Chest' smolodu*, Perventsev would confess to Crimean Tatar activists that his exploitation of the defamatory stereotype of the Crimean Tatar traitor came not at his initiative, but on order from above.[35]

The discursive cleansing of the Crimean Tatars persisted well past Khrushchev's Secret Speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956. Despite the fact that Khrushchev rehabilitated Chechens, Kalmyks, and other deported *nakazannye narody* (punished peoples) at this time, he failed to exonerate the Crimean Tatars—along with the Meskhetian Turks and Volga Germans—for their alleged mass collaboration with the Nazis.[36] He made no mention of them in his speech. A month later, however, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued Decree No. 27, marked 'not to be published' ('bez opublikovaniia v pechati'), which dismantled the 'special settlement' detention regime.[37] Freed from the camps, many Crimean Tatars naturally attempted to move back to Crimea, unaware of the fact that Moscow sent directives to local authorities to prohibit their return. The decree's false start made Soviet rule appear especially arbitrary and cruel, provoking what would become a flood of open letters, mass petitions, and visits to authorities in Moscow from the Crimean Tatar community.

This abortive rehabilitation would also provoke the lyrical poems under study, whose function as a particular genre of human rights literature deserves elaboration. What sets these texts apart is the way in which they challenge the reader to confront and work through (active or passive) guilt related to the deportation, a feeling that the non-fictive works of samizdat largely avoid. Indeed, most of the chronicles, appeals, and petitions from and on behalf of the Crimean Tatar community in the Soviet era explain the falsity of the claims of Crimean Tatar mass treason and the illegality of the deportation and forced exile in a juridical idiom. They present the deportation as an event whose victims are human but whose perpetrators are impersonal and distant or, alternatively, an inhuman few: Stalin, Beriia, NKVD Commissar Bogdan Kobulov. They address the reader as a potential ally and attempt to urge him to action by enumerating the state's violations of the laws and principles set

[35] The passage above was removed from the 1979 edition of Perventsev's collected works. See Arkadii Perventsev, *Sobranie sochinenii*, IV (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1979), p. 329. Perventsev also penned a screenplay called *Tretii udar* [*The Third Attack*], with many anti-Tatar passages which he removed in subsequent versions. In 1976 he published a book called *Navstrechu zhyzni* [*To Meet Life*], in which he included many passages with a positive inclination towards the indigenous people of Crimea. See *Krymskotatarskaia entsiklopediia*, pp. 380–81.

[36] Andrew Wilson, 'Politics in and around Crimea: A Difficult Homecoming', in *The Tatars of Crimea*, ed. by Allworth, pp. 281–322 (p. 281). Khrushchev also failed to include the Crimean Tatars (or the Volga Germans) in a subsequent law in 1957 that put a legal stamp on this exoneration.

[37] '"Delo" krymskikh tatar', *Novyi zhurnal*, 97 (1969), 167–217 (p. 202).

down in domestic constituent documents (e.g. the Soviet constitution) and international charters (e.g. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) 'external' to him. To a significant degree, these documentary and rhetorical texts strive to trigger the reader's agency in remediation of a wrong by looking past the agency he exercised in implicitly or explicitly supporting the Soviet state. They ignore the possibility of his complicity.

Guilt, silence, complicity—these are issues directly taken up by the poems of Chichibabin and Nekipelov. Their lyrical personae ponder and mourn the Russian colonization of Crimea that, in effect, presaged the deportation in 1944; they struggle with their position as individuals in a larger social system in which state-sanctioned violence and cynical deception corrode civic bonds. Through the peculiar indeterminacies of the verse form—a detachment from an identifiable context, an inherent lack of verifiability, an ambiguous lyrical address—these texts co-opt the reader into a unique communicative circuit and engage him in an act of 'owning up'. In the words of Aleksandr Tvardovskii, whose 'Po pravu pamiati' ['By Right of Memory'] (1966–69) is explored briefly below, they reveal the reader to be one of the 'guiltless guilty' ('vinovaty bez viny').

The identity of the authors of these texts is central to this process. They are not Crimean Tatars. A literary work that explores the complicity of Soviet citizens in the deportation but arises from the victimized community can be an instrument of shame rather than guilt. The difference between guilt and shame has consequences for a flourishing of solidarity and activism. As Paul Gilbert observes, 'Guilt tends to mobilise efforts to repair and make amends; shame tends to mobilise avoidance [. . .] If shame is powerfully aroused in individuals, they may fear making efforts to make amends even if they wish to [. . .] Guilt arises from a self-evaluative process [. . .] whereas shame arises from a social evaluation.'[38] In other words, guilt is a constructive force that helps restore altruistic behaviour, but this altruism, this Other-ism, is contingent on a perception of its emergence from within the self. As 'fictionalizing acts', the poems under study facilitate this perception by inviting the reader to confront and process guilt on his own, with primary reference to his individual, internally situated conscience rather than to externally codified law.[39]

### *'My conscience is clear': Boris Chichibabin*

An airbrushed photo in soft focus presents Boris Chichibabin on an empty residential street in Khar′kov, smokestacks billowing in the background. The

[38] Paul Gilbert, *Human Nature and Suffering* (Hove and London: Erlbaum, 1989), pp. 241 and 239.

[39] Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, p. 4.

image, tucked inside the front cover of *Molodost′* [*Youth*] (1963), his first collection of poetry published in Moscow, gives us Chichibabin the Soviet worker-poet, a gifted artist crafting verse during shifts as an accountant in a municipal trolley and tram depot. The first poem in the collection, 'Rabochie' ['Workers'], accords with this image, saluting the proletariat with lines of bounding epic dactyls:

> Slavliu liudei, preziraiushchikh kosnost′
> zhizni uiutnen′koi,
> ch′imi rukami zapushcheny v kosmos
> pervye sputniki.[40]

I celebrate the people who spurn the stagnancy | of a cosy life, | and by whose hands were launched into space | the first sputniks.

*Molodost′* is shot through with this hagiography of the Soviet worker, with the awkward conflation of the mythic and the prosaic common to Socialist Realist poetry. Chichibabin's lyrical persona raises a glass to 'those who toil' ('Za vsekh, kto truditsia!') and apologizes to more sophisticated readers for 'clumsy poems' ('stikhi koriavye'). Undaunted, he proclaims proudly: 'Love and work—this is my entire biography' ('Liubov′ da sluzhba | —vsia biografiia').

The biography of Boris Chichibabin (born Boris Polushin, 1923–1994) is, however, decidedly more complicated. What *Molodost′* conceals behind this 'romantic biography'—and behind its apotheosis of the worker-poet and its standard rhymes and rhythms—is a veteran of the Transcaucasian front whose post-war study of philology was interrupted by arrest in broad daylight at the age of twenty-three, a man imprisoned in the Viatlag labour camp from 1946 to 1951 for 'anti-Soviet agitation'.[41] It obscures the talents of an unusual versifier hailed by Roy Medvedev as 'highly original' and singled out by Evgenii Evtushenko as 'one of the most prominent contemporary [Russian] poets' and an heir to Pushkin.[42] Celebrated today as a godfather of contemporary poetry, Chichibabin was in fact a poet with many biographies.[43] As he explains in 'Rodnoi iazyk' ['Mother Tongue'] (1951),

[40] Boris Chichibabin, *Molodost′* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel′, 1963), pp. 3–4 (p. 3).

[41] Feliks Rakhlin, *O Borise Chichibabine i ego vremeni* (Khar′kov: Folio, 2004), pp. 30 and 54.

[42] Roy Medvedev and Giulietto Chiesa, *Time of Change: An Insider's View of Russia's Transformation*, trans. by Michael Moore (New York: Pantheon, 1990), p. 217; Evgenii Evtushenko, 'Krotost′ i Moshch″', in *Vsemu zhivomu ne chuzhoi: Boris Chichibabin v stat′iakh i vospominaniiakh*, ed. by Mark Bogoslavskii and others (Khar′kov: Folio, 1998), pp. 149–50 (p. 149).

[43] Chichibabin's popularity and prominence continue to grow in the former Soviet Union, and particularly in Khar′kov, where an annual international poetry festival in his honour has entered its tenth year. Annual public readings of his verse, featuring such poets as Bakhyt Kenzheev and Vladimir Leonovich, have also been held in Khar′kov since 1995. See, for example, *Materialy Chichibabinskikh chtenii (1995–1999)* (Khar′kov: Folio, 2000) and *Materialy Chichibabinskikh chtenii (2000–2002)* (Khar′kov: Ekskliuziv, 2002).

Ia na iuge — rossiianin,
A pod severnym siian′em
Srazu delaius′ khokhlom.[44]

In the south [i.e. in Ukraine], I am a Russian, | But under the Northern Lights, | I immediately appear a 'topknot'.

This interstitial position—which left him at something of a physical remove from the literary circles of Moscow and Saint Petersburg and at an additional linguistic remove from those of Kyiv and L′viv[45]—offered him a 'plurality of vision', a sensitivity to the porosity of national borders that subtends his poetic œuvre.[46]

While he paid his dues to Socialist realist practice in *Molodost′* and his subsequent collections *Garmoniia* [*Harmony*] (1965) and *Plyvet 'Avrora'* [*The 'Aurora' Sails*] (1967), which led to his invitation to join the Writers' Union in 1967, Chichibabin actively circulated poems critical of the Soviet state in samizdat and tamizdat ('published abroad') and read them in stirring fashion before audiences at literary evenings and poetry studios in Khar′kov, Moscow, and beyond. As friend and fellow poet Aleksandr Vernik remarked, 'God forgave the sins' of the programmatic verse of his first published collections because of the courageous work of the 'unofficial' Chichibabin.[47] He walked a tightrope between the canonical and the 'criminal' for years before being expelled from the Writers' Union in 1973, to which he responded: 'Nekhorosho byt′ professionalom' ('There's nothing good in being professional').[48] For the next fifteen years Chichibabin continued to write in Khar′kov and circulate his poetry in manuscript copies, travelling each year in the summer months

[44] Boris Chichibabin, 'Rodnoi iazyk', in *I vse-taki ia byl poetom . . .: Boris Chichibabin v stikhakh i proze* (Khar′kov: Folio, 1998), pp. 43–45 (p. 43). Chichibabin identified himself as Russian, even though he lived most of his life in Khar′kov and had a great love and respect for Ukraine and Ukrainian culture.

[45] The editors of the émigré journal *Glagol* noted in 1977 that 'the poems of Chichibabin are quite widely circulated in samizdat' but added that 'we do not have detailed information about the author at our disposal', betraying the consequences of his distance from the Western scholars and diplomats who smuggled literary works out of the Soviet Union and were largely confined to Moscow and Saint Petersburg. See *Glagol*, 1 (1977), 199. In a review of *Glagol* Christopher Barnes notes that Chichibabin's 'obscurity is undeserved, for he has a mature and individual voice' (*Slavonic and East European Review*, 57 (January 1979), 108).

[46] Edward Said, 'The Mind of Winter: Reflections on a Life in Exile', *Harpers*, September 1994, p. 55; quoted in *The Edward Said Reader*, ed. by Moustafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin (New York: Vintage, 2000), pp. xiv–xv.

[47] Aleksandr Vernyk, 'Boris A. Chichibabin', in *Antologiia noveishei russkoi poezii u goluboi laguny*, vol. IIIA, ed. by Konstantin K. Kuz′minskii and Grigorii L. Kovalev (Newtonville, MA: Oriental Research Partners, 1986), pp. 40–46 (p. 43).

[48] Grigorii Pomerants, 'Odinokaia shkola liubvi', in *Vsemu zhivomu ne chuzhoi*, ed. by Bogoslavskii, pp. 240–50 (p. 249). One of the poems frequently cited as an immediate cause for his expulsion is 'Pamiati A. Tvardovskogo' ['In Memory of Aleksandr Tvardovskii'] (1971), a eulogy to the influential editor of *Novyi mir* that mourns the passing of a 'standard of the epoch' ('epokhi etalonom') with an angry cry: 'Oh, where in the world is my homeland, my Russia?' ('O, est′ li gde-nibud′ na svete | Rossiia — rodina moia?').

to various destinations (Crimea, Armenia, the Baltic States) with his wife Liliia, whose work at a Khar′kov institute involved extensive travel throughout the Soviet Union.[49] In 1990, after being reinstated to the Writers' Union, he received the USSR State Prize for the collection *Kolokol* [*The Bell*] (1989).

By all accounts, Chichibabin's public performances were legendary. In the 1960s he led a Khar′kov poetry studio that regularly drew large crowds and proved a popular venue for up-and-coming poets: Vernik, Iurii Miloslavskii, Eduard Siganevich, Arkadii Filatov. Chichibabin moved and provoked his audiences, using readings as an opportunity to reach them with the 'political spirit' exorcized by Soviet censors in his printed works.[50] 'In his books everything was purged, prepared, and selected in advance', recalled the journalist Feliks Rakhlin. 'But on stage his words were much harder for the censors to monitor. The poems Chichibabin read at poetry evenings and the poems he published were often completely different works.'[51] He eschewed notes and recited his verse from memory, captivating audiences with a lissom voice projected by a tall frame. Elena Movchan, wife of Ukrainian poet and politician Pavlo Movchan, recalled a reading in Koktebel′: 'Chichibabin read last, and the room had grown tired. But his unusual, deep voice immediately riveted their attention [. . .] Like music, his voice was a force all its own. It was polyphonic, and his intonation was very organic, incomparably natural.'[52]

One poem became a mainstay in Chichibabin's performances, particularly in the *ottepel′* (thaw) of the early 1960s: 'Krymskie progulki' ['Crimean Strolls'] (1961), the first non-Tatar literary work to deal explicitly with the tragedy of the 1944 deportation. His frequent recitation of the poem caused friends to worry for his safety. As Rakhlin noted, 'I was concerned for Boris. He was very good on stage, which he often used to deliver his poems directly to people [. . .] And he consistently read "Krymskie progulki", a poem that condemned the Stalinist deportation of the Crimean Tatars and other peoples, *when it was not possible to hear about such things*' (emphasis added).[53] He recited the poem in the 1960s at Grigorii Levin's renowned Magistral′ literary gathering at the Railworkers' Central House of Culture ('Tsentral′nyi dom kul′tury zheleznodorozhnikov', TsDKZh) in Moscow. The Moscow-based poet and critic Vladimir Leonovich underscored the risk he was taking there:

> The Crimean theme [. . .] fell under article 58-10 [of the Russian SFSR penal code] and therefore under Article 70: anti-Soviet agitation, the distribution of state secrets

[49] Mikhail Stasenko, '. . . Skachut loshadki Borisa i Gleba', in *Vsemu zhivomu ne chuzhoi*, ed. by Bogoslavskii, pp. 326–29 (p. 326).
[50] Rakhlin, p. 23.
[51] Ibid., p. 97.
[52] Elena Movchan, 'Had sinim morem rozovyi shipovnik . . .', in *Vsemu zhivomu ne chuzhoi*, ed. by Bogoslavskii, pp. 397–403 (p. 398).
[53] Rakhlin, p. 97.

[*gostainy*], nationalist propaganda. Chichibabin was a former prisoner of the Gulag [*lagernik*], and he knew this all too well. But you should have seen and heard how he read the poem in Moscow at TsDKZh.[54]

'Krymskie progulki' was transcribed and passed hand to hand in samizdat throughout the Soviet Union. But because of the material transience of samizdat—its capacity to be 'ephemeral' and to 'disappear without a trace'[55]—it is difficult to follow more of the poem's journey in the literary underground after 1961. One of its final destinations may have been the Kremlin: 'Krymskie progulki' was attached to an appeal sent by the National Movement of the Crimean Tatar People to Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987.[56]

As Rakhlin's comment above makes clear, the immediate significance of 'Krymskie progulki' lies in its extended treatment of the deportation at a time 'when it was not possible to hear about such things'. Beyond the 1946 Presidium decree buried in the dense typeface of *Izvestiia*, the state continued to remain silent about the event. Even those, such as Kozlov and Perventsev, who slandered the Crimean Tatars in literary prose declined to speak of their 'punishment'. The fact that 'Krymskie progulki' was not published during the thaw (or at any point in the Soviet era)—unlike Evgenii Evtushenko's powerful protest against Soviet anti-Semitism in 'Babii Yar', for instance, which appeared in *Literaturnaia gazeta* in 1961—attests to the deportation's particular radioactivity: it was an identifiable, ongoing crime committed by the Soviet state, an *actus reus* whose envelopment in silence and disinformation betrayed a *mens rea*, a guilty mind. Chichibabin's 'Krymskie progulki' not only exposes this crime and places it in the context of a long-standing colonial 'de-Tatarization' of the peninsula, but also conducts the reader on a journey in which he considers his own complicity in the crime and his place in the system that perpetrated it.

The poem's whimsical title 'Crimean Strolls' stands in an ironical relation to its sober content. It evokes the Romantic peripatetic ideal, the wandering of a lyrical persona through an aestheticized landscape endowed with the power to restore and rejuvenate, and invites the reader's expectation of stanzas that celebrate a harmony between the human and natural worlds. 'Krymskie progulki' conjures up such expectations only to defy them. Instead of harmony, it foregrounds violence and death; instead of rejuvenation, it offers a diagnosis of a disease seizing the body of Soviet society. As we shall see, the poem frustrates the reader's expectations in order to engage him in an act of 'meaning assembly', not to depart from the tradition of peripatetic

[54] Vladimir Leonovych, 'Mezh rozovykh barkhanov', in *Vsemu zhivomu ne chuzhoi*, ed. by Bogoslavskii, pp. 226–31 (p. 228).

[55] Andrew Wachtel, *Remaining Relevant after Communism: The Role of the Writer in Eastern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 40.

[56] Correspondence between Viktor Sokirko and Rory Finnin, August 2009.

poetry for its own sake.[57] Indeed, like the meanderings of Wordsworth or Keats, the poem works to restore 'the natural properties of our perceptions, reconnecting us with [. . .] the moral order'.[58] It begins:

Kolonizatoram — kryshka!
Chto iazyki chesat'?[59]

The colonizers are finished! | What is there to wag your tongue about?

This opening or 'onset' of the poem, which literally places a 'lid' (*kryshka*) on the text, is a shot in the dark, a disorienting remark that calls attention to the poem's *désancrage* or 'uprootedness' from a clear context and cues the reader to a prior enunciatory moment now lost to silence.[60] 'Krymskie progulki' is in this sense headless: the very condition of its existence, an *ante hoc* 'wagging of tongues' about colonizers, is missing. This is less an absence than a vacancy, a gap for the reader to fill. To make sense of the couplet—to satisfy a persistent 'expectation of meaningfulness'[61]—he must make room for the assertion that colonizers are *not* 'finished', that they exist and therefore warrant discussion. In effect, the onset couplet invites the reader to engage the lyrical persona in dialogue and to make this assertion himself. It is what might be termed apopha(n)tic: it denies the existence of colonizers but, in doing so, asserts their existence by calling on the reader to supply what is not there.

The poem continues:

Pered zemleiu krymskoi
Sovest' moia chista.
Krupnye vinogradiny . . .
Duet s vershin svezho.

Before this Crimean land | My conscience is clear. | Voluptuous grapes . . . | A fresh wind blows from the peaks.

The lyrical persona ventriloquizes the leagues of poets who have cast the *zemlia krymskaia* primarily as an exquisite specimen of physical, rather than human, geography. In its celebration of Crimea's abundance ('krupnye vinogradiny') it recalls the voice that exclaims 'volshebnyi krai!' ('O enchanting land') in the lyrical coda of Aleksandr Pushkin's *Bakhchisaraiskii fontan* [*The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*] (1824). Yet couched in this celebration is an impli-

[57] Iser, *Prospecting*, p. 30.

[58] Anne Wallace, *Walking, Literature, and English Culture: The Origins and Uses of the Peripatetic in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 13.

[59] I take the text of 'Krymskie progulki' from Chichibabin, *I vse-taki ia byl poetom* . . ., pp. 73–76.

[60] William Waters, *Poetry's Touch: On Lyric Address* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 8.

[61] Hans Hörmann, *Meinen und Verstehen: Grundzüge einer psychologischen Semantik* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1976), pp. 187, 192–96, 198, 207, 241, 253, 403–04, 410–11, 500; quoted in Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, p. 18.

cit expression of guilt amplified by a variant, unsettled metre: 'Sovest' moia chista'.[62] The line's disjointed placement in the quatrain calls attention to *sovest'* (conscience, moral faculty), the watchword of such 'civic poets' (*grazhdanskie poety*) as Aleksandr Radishchev and Nikolai Nekrasov, to whom Chichibabin will return, directly and indirectly, at the conclusion of the poem.

This intrusion of the ethical alters the trajectory of the text, displacing a tribute to the Crimean Arcadia with a sudden and defensive denial of culpability in unspecified crimes of pillage and robbery:

> Ia nikogo ne grabil.
> Ia nichego ne zheg.

I have not robbed anyone. | I have not burnt anything.

This alternation between the pleasant and the unpleasant—from colonizers to bountiful fruit, from refreshing winds to criminal wrongdoing—is common in Chichibabin's poetry. According to the religious philosopher Grigorii Pomerants, the poet's close friend, Chichibabin 'exposed pain but did not get lost in it. Another wave would soon catch him, and joy would overwhelm the pain. And then the pain would come once again.'[63] For Pomerants, the oscillation in the text mirrors an emotional oscillation on the part of a poet writing in the service of something akin to mimetic representation. From another perspective, however, this oscillation may be thought of as an effective *minus-priem* or 'minus device': its renunciation of consistency and departure from the expected, which call attention to the poem's instability and indeterminacy, engage the reader in a heightened process of communication.[64]

This process is made complex by the vagaries of the lyric form. While 'Krymskie progulki' appears to be a representative of what T. S. Eliot calls poetry of the first voice—'the voice of the poet talking to himself, or nobody'[65]—the interrogative orientation of the onset couplet and the defensive tone of the lines above presume an address to an unspoken 'you' by the lyrical persona's 'I'. Because this address is opaque and open to question, the poem at once welcomes the reader's identification with the lyrical persona—a default identification, as it were, according to those who hold that 'the lyric is a script written for performance by the reader, who, as soon as he enters the lyric, is no

[62] Seven years after the composition of 'Krymskie progulki', Petro Grigorenko would ask the question that appears to prompt this statement in his first vocal defence of the Crimean Tatar cause: 'Est' li u tebia sovest', Rossiia?' See '"Delo" krymskikh tatar', p. 196.

[63] Pomerants, p. 245.

[64] Jurij Lotman, *The Structure of the Artistic Text*, trans. by Gail Lenhoff and Ronald Vroon (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977), pp. 51–52.

[65] T. S. Eliot, 'The Three Voices of Poetry', in *On Poetry and Poets* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1957), pp. 96–112 (p. 96).

longer a reader but an utterer'[66]—and prompts him to explore the participant role of an interlocutor to whom the lyrical persona's questions and resistive assertions could be directed. In effect, the beginning of 'Krymskie progulki' invites the reader to stage himself as a guilt-ridden and self-persuasive 'I' ('Chto iazyki chesat'? [. . .] Sovest' moia chista [. . .] Ia nikogo ne grabil') and as a right-behaving 'you' with a concern for justice. He shuttles willy-nilly between these two 'enunciatory poses', mobilizing the force of his imagination in search of meaning.[67]

To prompt the reader to imagine that he is both culpable in an as yet unspecified tragedy in Crimea and capable of seeking justice for its victims—this is Chichibabin's sleight of hand in the poem's first eight lines. The remainder works to educate the reader about this tragedy and to make sense of it as a symptom of a larger Soviet disease. After the disconcerting beginning, it settles into a more consistent strophic and metrical pattern tending towards iambic octaves. The lyrical persona catches a stride as well, discarding his defensive pose for a more contemplative one:

Dubovoe vino ia
Tianul i pomnil dolgo.

A bolee inoe
Mne pamiatno i dorogo.

I indulged in oaky wine | And became lost in thought. | And something other | Became dear and memorable to me.

To make available this 'something other', the lyrical persona turns to his Mnemosyne, the Black Sea, and then retreats from it into the mountains, searching for a Crimea that has receded from view:

Volny moi sled kropili,
Plechi tsarapal les.
Ulochkami krivymi
V gory dyshal i lez.
Dumal o Kryme: chei ty,
Krov'iu chuzhoi razbavlennyi?
Ch'i u tebia mecheti,
Prozvishcha i razvaliny?

[. . .]
Liudi na pliazh, ia — s pliazha,
Tam, u lesov i skal,
«Gde zh tatary?» — sprashival,
Vse ia tatar iskal.

[66] Helen Vendler, *The Given and the Made: Strategies of Poetic Redefinition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. xi; quoted in Waters, p. 14.
[67] I take the term 'enunciatory pose' from Waters, p. 95.

Shel, gde paslis′ otary,
Zheltuiu pyl′ toptal,
«Gde zh vy, — krichal, — tatary?»
Net nikakykh tatar.

Waves splashed against my footprints, | The wood scraped my shoulders. | Along crooked lanes | I clambered through the mountains and took in deep breaths. | I thought about Crimea: to whom do you belong, | You, soaked in strange blood? | Whose are these mosques, | ruins and place names? | [. . .] | People went to the seaside, but I left it, | And there, among the cliffs and woods, | I asked, 'Where are the Tatars?' | I searched everywhere for the Tatars. | There, where a flock of lambs grazed, | I walked along and trampled yellow dust, | And cried 'Where are you, Tatars?' | But no Tatars remain.

The Crimea that once elicited metaphysical reverie among Russian poets of the nineteenth century oppresses Chichibabin's lyrical persona: it constricts his movement, haunts him with spectres of bloody violence, and threatens to erase evidence of his presence. The 'something other' he seeks in this flight to the mountains is Tatar culture and society, whose absence resounds in a question—«Gde zh tatary?»—repeated as a mournful apostrophe—«Gde zh vy, [. . .] tatary?»

Here Chichibabin is intertextual with Pushkin's *Bakhchisaraiskii fontan*: 'Gde skrylis′ khany? Gde harem?' ('Where have the khans gone? Where is the harem?'). Pushkin's questions are rhetorical; Chichibabin's demand an answer. They are made ever urgent by a subsequent assertion of Tatar indigenousness on the Crimean peninsula. With a line marked by consonance and a prevalence of monosyllabic words, as if underscoring a felicitous and elemental relationship between the Tatars and Crimea, 'Krymskie progulki' continues by calling attention to the seven-century history of a Tatar Crimea, 'younger sister | Of Kazan and Baku' ('sestra men′shaia | Kazani i Baku'):

A zhili zhe vot tut oni
S oskominoi o Mekke.
Tsevli derev′ia tutovye,
I kozochki mekali.

Ne russkaia Riv′era,
A drevniaia Orda
Zhila, v Allakha verila,
Lepila goroda.

[The Tatars] lived right here | With reverence for Mecca. | Mulberries grew, | And young goats bleated. | This is not the Russian Riviera . . . | The ancient Horde | Lived here, worshipped Allah, | And built cities.

'Ne russkaia Riv′era'—the lyrical persona claims Crimea for the Tatars.[68] He portrays the colonial encounter that began to assault this claim in the eight-

[68] This disavowal of a Russian claim to Crimea is also at the centre of Chichibabin's 'Sudakskie

eenth century as the folly of noblesse oblige, a shortsighted 'civilizing mission' that, in the words of one admirer of Russian imperial power, sought to 'spread light' among 'a [Tatar] population that [. . .] had lived in ignorance'.[69] In 'Krymskie progulki' this ignorance is ascribed not to the Tatars but to a collective 'us':

Koniukhy i kulinary,
Raduias′ sineve,
Pesniami pelenali
Dochek i synovei.
*Ikh* nishcheta nazoilivo
*Nashi glaza* mozolilia.
Byl i ochag, i zelen′,
I dlia nochlega krov . . .

Grooms and cooks | Giving thanks to the sky, | Swaddled in songs | Their daughters and sons. | But *their* poverty intrusively | Calloused *our eyes*. | After all, they had food, a hearth, | And a roof for a night's shelter . . . (Emphases added)

This first-person plural *nash* operates 'vertically' here: it gathers the 'I' of the lyrical persona and the unspoken 'you' of the reader according to an established set of historical, linguistic, and cultural affinities which they are thought to share—in this case, presumably as part of a Slavic in-group distinct from a Tatar 'them'. It violates the movement of what Walter Benjamin calls 'horizontal, empty time' and identifies them not as descendants of the colonizers who dispossessed the Tatars but as colonizers themselves. In this way, the poem challenges the reader to assume responsibility for a legacy of wrongdoing against the Tatars, a legacy that culminated in May 1944.

The deportation itself is described with devastating economy:

Stalo ikh gore solono.
Brali ikh tselymi selami,

elegii' ['Sudak Elegies'] (1974), a lyric meditation of tail-rhyme stanzas set in Sudak on the northern shore of the Black Sea. The poem was published in the first issue of the Moscow-based samizdat journal *Poiski* [*Quest*] in 1979 and in the tamizdat anthology *Golubaia laguna* [*Blue Lagoon*] in 1986. (See Boris Chichibabin, 'Nastoi na snakh v pustynnom Sudake . . .', in *Poiski: Svobodnyi moskovskii zhurnal*, 1 (1979), 76–77 (p. 76); and Chichibabin, 'Sudakskie elegii', in *Antologiia noveishei russkoi poezii u goluboi laguny*, ed. by Kuz′minskii and Kovalev, IIIA, 75–76.) Given its frequent citation, one passage in particular appeared to resonate with readers: 'Kak nepristoino Krymu bez tatar. | Shashlychnykh uglei lakomyi ugar, | Zarosshikh kladbishch nadpisi reznye, | Oblezlyi oslik, dvizhushchii arbu, | Verbliuzhest′ gor s kustrami na gorbu, | I vse krugom — takaia ne Rossiia' ('How obscene Crimea is without the Tatars. | The delightful intoxication of shashlik on coals, | The carved inscriptions of overgrown graveyards, | The shabby donkey pushing its cart, | Camel-like mountains with bushes on their humps, and | All that surrounds them—this is not Russia'). See also 'Sudakskie elegii', in *I vse-taki ia byl poetom* . . ., pp. 226–30.

[69] As quoted in Edward J. Lazzerini, 'Local Accommodation and Resistance to Colonialism in Nineteenth-Century Crimea', in *Russia's Orient: Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700–1917*, ed. by Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 169–87 (p. 174).

Skol′ko v vagon pomestitsia.
Shel eshelon po mesiatsu.
Devochki tam zachakhli,
Ni ochaga, ni sakli.
Rodina optom, tak skazat′,
Otniata i podarena,
I na zemle tatarskoi
Ni odnogo tatarina.

Zhivy, podi, ne vse oni:
Malo l′ u smerti zhatv?
Gde-to na sivom Severe
Kostochki ikh lezhat.

The grief [of the Tatars] grew bitter still. | Entire villages of them were taken, | As many as could be stuffed into a train car. | The convoy travelled for a month. | There girls withered away, | Without a hearth, without a home [*sakla*]. | Their homeland was, so to say, | Taken and given away wholesale. | And now on Tatar land | There is not one Tatar. | Not all of them are alive: | After all, does death have small harvests? | Somewhere in the grey North | Lie their bones.

Here 'Krymskie progulki' exercises an educative function at a time when the brutality of the deportation was still, as Vladimir Leonovich notes (see above), a state secret (*gostaina*). What the 1946 Presidium decree briefly characterizes as a benevolent 'relocation' is chronicled here as a cruel assault on the innocent ('Devochki tam zachakhli | Ni ochaga, ni sakli') that killed thousands ('Zhivy, podi, ne vse oni'). The lyrical persona informs the reader of the event, as he explains in a subsequent stanza, 'not to disturb the dead' ('ne dobudit′sia umershikh'), but to urge him to contemplate its gravity and its meaning:

No chtob tseluiu natsiiu —
Eto zh nado dodumat′sia . . .

But to [deport] an entire nation— | How could they come up with such a thing . . .

The possibility of this contemplation is undermined, however, by a societal system bound in 'a circle of mutual responsibility' ('kak krugovoi porukoi') by lies, corruption, and careerism. Soviet authorities sit and plot campaigns of deception, which the radio and the newspapers attentively carry out before a passive public ('Vret bez zapinki radio, | Tshchatel′no vret pechat′'), while

A novye kradutsia,
Chest′ rasteriav,
K vlasti i k radosti
Cherez tela.

New [bureaucrats], slither, | Abandoning their honour, | Toward power and exultation | Over bodies.

Presiding over this grotesque scene are monuments to Stalin, 'before which',

the lyrical persona tells the reader, 'you bow' ('monumenty Stalina, | Shto gnul pod nimi spinu ty'). Addressed for the first time by way of the second-person singular, the reader is implicated in this *krugovaia poruka*—a term connoting the tsarist system of enforced 'all for one and one for all' mutual reliance in peasant communities, which 'generated some of the most attractive and most unattractive features in Russian social life'[70]—as a functionary who surrenders his agency to granite idols. In Chichibabin's reading, the crimes of the Soviet state are not the fault of one man who cultivated, as Khrushchev famously insisted before the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, a cult of personality (*kul't lichnosti*); they stem from a breakdown of the civic compact, from a failure on the part of the individual to stand for the honour, integrity, and respect of his fellow citizen.

Yet this *krugovaia poruka* works two ways.[71] Retrospectively, its assertion of agency on the part of the reader raises the issue of at least passive guilt and complicity in the deportation; prospectively, it raises the possibility of civic empowerment and activity in remediation of the crime. Guilt is fundamentally an acknowledgement of agency, and an acknowledgement of agency a precondition for activism. Chichibabin seeks to induce such activism towards the conclusion of 'Krymskie progulki' not by way of a direct appeal or an explicit recommendation of a particular course of action, but by way of two rhetorical figures of refutation that animate the faculties of the reader's imagination. The first is the lyrical persona's declaration that, in the light of a Soviet system run by liars and cynics, 'all the genuine ones have died out' ('vse vernye povymerli'). The moment may be read as a note of irrevocable despair or as an example of a rhetorical strategy akin to *accismus*, whereby what is sought is denied, refuted, or mourned as irrevocably lost. This rhetorical *via negativa* is meant to foment desire, to incite the reader to action—in this case, to become a 'genuine' individual who, like the lyrical persona, advocates a flourishing of truth and altruism in Soviet society.

The second rhetorical figure is found in the poem's concluding stanza:

Kogda zh ty rodish′sia,
V ogne trepeshcha,
Novyi Radishchev —
Gnev i pechal′?

When will you be born, | In a flickering fire, | A new Radishchev— | Anger and grief?

[70] Geoffrey Hosking, 'The State and Russian National Identity', in *Power and the Nation in European History*, ed. by Len Scales and Oliver Zimmer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 195–211 (p. 201).

[71] Geoffrey Hosking notes the essential ambivalence of *krugovaia poruka*, particularly in the tsarist period: it cultivated, on the one hand, 'the tradition of humanity, compassion and mutual aid towards one's fellow-human beings', and on the other, 'malicious rumour-mongering and denunciation directed against the poverty-stricken, the eccentric, and sometimes even against the talented and unusual' (Hosking, p. 201).

Anthypophora is a device whereby, for instance, a question is accompanied by its answer, and this quatrain sees it employed idiosyncratically. In effect, Chichibabin concludes the poem by posing a question in whose reading lies the answer. Offering both a 'new' Aleksandr Radishchev and 'anger and grief' in apposition to the second-person singular 'ty', the question spurs the reader to *be* the answer: to claim the mantle of the great eighteenth-century crusader against bondage and injustice and to feel these emotions. While the allusion to Radishchev is certainly apt in this final couplet, the evocation of 'anger and grief' would appear superfluous in a poem that calls attention to a plentitude of both in Soviet society, were it not for the fact that 'anger and grief' are Nikolai Nekrasov's preconditions for love of country in 'Gazetnaia' ['The Reading Room'] (1865):

> Kto zhivet bez pechali i gneva,
> Tot ne liubit otchizny svoei . . .[72]

He who lives without anger and grief, | Does not love his country . . .

Nekrasov was arguably Russia's greatest satirist and *grazhdanskii poet* (civic poet) of the nineteenth century, and his words here carry a bit of tongue-in-cheek exasperation along with their poignancy. With Radishchev, he emerges at the end of Chichibabin's 'Krymskie progulki' to model for the reader the kind of passionate and fearless civic activism that stands to make amends for his complicity in the deportation—and to instil a 'love of country' grounded in a resolute respect and empathy for the Other.

### *'I am a Crimean Tatar': Viktor Nekipelov*

As Chichibabin's 'Krymskie progulki' made its way through samizdat notebooks and poetry readings throughout the Soviet Union in the 1960s, the Crimean Tatars mounted a lawful and well-organized rehabilitation, reparation, and repatriation campaign based largely in Uzbekistan. In the face of arrest and imprisonment, Crimean Tatar activists regularly met in large numbers in Bekabad, Angren, Fergana, and Tashkent and appealed to Soviet authorities in Moscow with massive petitions calling for their return to Crimea, the recovery of their land and property, and the restoration of their good name. In 1962, for example, they presented a letter to the Twenty-Third Party Congress with over 125,000 signatures, or roughly the entire Crimean Tatar population at the time.[73] Meanwhile, activist leaders such as Mustafa Dzhemilev (Cemiloğlu), whose arrest and hunger strike became a rallying

[72] N. A. Nekrasov, 'Gazetnaia', in *Sochineniia*, 2 vols (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1976), I, 277–85 (p. 280).

[73] Ann Sheehy, *The Crimean Tatars and Volga Germans: Soviet Treatment of Two National Minorities* (London: Minority Rights Group, 1971), p. 14. In his memoirs, Petro Grigorenko

cry for the Crimean Tatar cause in the 1970s,[74] worked to instil in younger generations an unfiltered knowledge of their history, language, and culture in order to sustain and refresh the nascent movement with new energy.

This public relations war of attrition eventually led to a breakthrough on 9 September 1967. The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet issued Decree No. 493, 'On Citizens of Tatar Nationality, Formerly Resident in Crimea', which finally absolved the Crimean Tatars of the charges of mass betrayal and treason. Unlike the June 1946 decree that condemned the Crimean Tatars as traitors, it was published not in *Izvestiia* or *Pravda*, but only in Central Asian newspapers with Crimean Tatar readerships. The decree was both a step forward and two steps back: while it effectively rehabilitated 'the Tatars formerly resident in Crimea' ('Tatary, ranee prozhivavshie v Krymu') as rights-bearing citizens within the Soviet system, it emphasized their post-deportation 'rootedness' (*ukorenilis'*) in Central Asia, thereby precluding the legitimacy of their right of return.[75] It was also a backhanded act of discursive cleansing that sought to sever the relationship between Crimean territory and Tatar identity once and for all. In official Soviet discourse—from internal passports to the Great Soviet Encyclopedia—the *krymskie tatary* were now openly denied a distinctive national identity and recognized only as 'tatary'. As the prominent dissident Petro Grigorenko observed in a seminal speech to the Crimean Tatar community in 1968, Decree No. 493 was a logical cul-de-sac in almost every way imaginable: 'You were subjected to repressions as Crimean Tatars, but after this "political rehabilitation", it turns out that there is no such nation on this earth. The nation has disappeared, but the discrimination remains. You did not commit the crimes for which you were exiled from Crimea, but you are not allowed to return to Crimea.'[76]

relates how Crimean Tatar activists collected over 2000 signatures in only one hour. See Petro G. Grigorenko, *Memoirs*, trans. by Thomas P. Whitney (London: Harvill Press, 1983), p. 347.

[74] See, for example, 'Arest i golodovka Mustafy Dzemileva', *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii*, 32 (July 1974) <http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr/index.htm> [accessed 3 January 2009]; 'Delo Mustafy Dzemileva', *Novyi zhurnal*, 97 (1969), 207–10; or 'Sud nad Mustafoi Dzhemilevym', *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii*, 40 (May 1976) <http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr /index.htm> [accessed 3 January 2009]

[75] Peter Reddaway, 'The Crimean Tatar Drive for Repatriation', in *The Tatars of the Crimea*, ed. by Allworth, pp. 226–36 (p. 227). The excerpts from the 1967 decree are taken from Russkie druz'ia krymskikh tatar, 'Sudiat krymskikh tatar', in '"Delo" krymskikh tatar', pp. 172–78 (p. 174).

[76] 'Rech' Gen. P. G. Grigorenko', in '"Delo" krymskikh tatar', pp. 195–201 (p. 198). Grigorenko and the writer Alexei Kosterin were instrumental in championing the Crimean Tatar cause in the Soviet Union and, crucially, in connecting Crimean Tatar activists with Moscow dissidents and the West. There are no samizdat materials related to the Crimean Tatar movement registered in authoritative collections from 1956 to 1968, a lacuna that Liudmila Alekseeva attributes to the Crimean Tatars' distance from social and political networks in communication with parties in Europe and North America in the Krushchev era. Grigorenko and Kosterin helped narrow this distance. See Liudmila Alekseeva, 'Krymskotatarskoe dvizhenie za vozvrashchenie v Krym', *Kryms'ki studii*, 5–6 (2000), 4–16 (p. 9).

While Decree No. 493 was little more than a political concession made to appease an increasingly vocal, mobilized national minority, its knock-on effects were profound. By publicly recognizing the injustice suffered by the Crimean Tatars *and* perpetuating that injustice by refusing their right to return and effacing their national identity, the decree roused the conscience of the nascent human rights movement and inspired others to join Chichibabin in a poetic defence of the Crimean Tatar cause. One such poet was the influential editor of the journal *Novyi mir* and author of the hugely popular narrative poem *Vasilii Terkin* (1945), Aleksandr Tvardovskii. The son of a blacksmith who was exiled to Siberia during collectivization, Tvardovskii wrote an intensely personal lyric meditation towards the end of his life on the tortured movement of private and public memory in the Soviet Union, 'Po pravu pamiati' ['By Right of Memory'] (1966–69), a work now considered by some to be the 'brother' poem of Anna Akhmatova's seminal 'Rekviem' ['Requiem'] (1935–40) for its cathartic mourning and heartbreaking candour.[77] The poem is an attempt to give voice to 'a mute memory', to lift a mountain of guilt from the lyrical persona's shoulders. It was completed in 1969 but published in the journals *Znamia* and *Novyi mir* only after Tvardovskii's death in 1987.[78] The poem circulated widely in tamizdat, however, as early as 1969.[79]

'Po pravu pamiati' consists of three main parts: 'Pered otletom' ['Before Departure'], a romantic reminiscence of youth; 'Syn za ottsa ne otvechaet' ['The Son Does Not Answer for the Father'], an indictment of Stalinism rendered as a dark, terrifying psalm; and 'O pamiati' ['On Memory'], a premonitory appeal to the reader not to forget his past or sacrifice his memory on the altar of the state. In 'Syn za ottsa ne otvechaet', the poem's controversial centrepiece, Tvardovskii shares with the reader a devastating personal confession of guilt: he repudiated his exiled father, labelled by the Stalinist regime as a 'vrag naroda' (enemy of the people), in the service of another 'father', Stalin. Twisting the language of Matthew's Jesus, the voice of the Stalinist state counsels him with a series of sinister imperatives:

> Blagodari ottsa narodov,
> Chto on prostil tebe ottsa
> Rodnogo —

Be grateful to the Father of the Peoples | That he forgave you for the father | That begat you—

Amid these imperatives Tvardovskii inserts an allusion to the deportation:

[77] Aleksandr Ognev and others, *Akhmatovskie chteniia*: *Sbornik nauchnykh trudov* (Tver': Tverskoi gosudarstvennyi universitet, 1991), p. 37.

[78] The poem was published in *Znamia*, 1987.2, and *Novyi mir*, 1987.3.

[79] In *Arkhiv samizdata*, 266 (1969) the poem appears in English translation under the title 'For the Right of Memory'.

I dushu chuvstvami liudskimi
Ne otiagchai, sebia shchadia.
I lzhesvidetel′stvui vo imia
I zverstvui imenem vozhdia.

Liuboi sud′bine blagodaren,
Tverdi odno, kak on velik,
*Khotia b ty krymskii byl tatarin,*
*Ingush il′ drug stepei kalmyk*.[80]

Do not constrain your soul with human feelings, commit atrocities on behalf of the leader and perjure yourself in his name. Be grateful for your fate, whatever it may be, and swear one thing: that he is great, *even if you are a Crimean Tatar, Ingush, or Kalmyk, friend of the steppe*. (Emphasis added.)

The passage is intertextual with Pushkin's 'Exegi monumentum' ['I Erected a Monument'] (1836), a work that positions the national minorities of the Russian Empire as exotic vessels of memory bearing the promise of immortality for the poet.[81] The nineteenth-century Tungus and Kalmyk of 'Exegi monumentum' become, in Tvardovskii's rendering, three deported nations forced in the twentieth century to bury the memory of their homelands and express gratitude to the regime that oppresses them.

Tvardovskii's allusion is brief and oblique. A contemporary with less prominence in official literary circles, Viktor Nekipelov, would take up the deportation at length and more directly. Nekipelov is often remembered outside of the former Soviet Union as the author of *Institut durakov* [*Institute of Fools*], a documentary chronicle of his 1974 detention in the Serbskii Institute for Forensic Psychiatry ('Institut sudebnoi psikhiatrii im. V. P. Serbskogo'), the most infamous of the Soviet *psikhushki*, or psychiatric hospitals.[82] That he is, in the words of Andrei Sakharov, a 'wonderful poet' is less known.[83] Yet it was Nekipelov's poetry, declared an instrument of 'anti-Soviet agitation' under Article 190 of the Soviet penal code, that offered the regime a pretence to send him to Serbskii in the first place. His arrest in 1973 was originally prompted by the discovery of a number of his poems amid the samizdat collection of the

[80] A. T. Tvardovskii, 'Po pravu pamiati', in *Izbrannye proizvedeniia v trekh tomakh* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1990), II, 432–49 (p. 443).

[81] Here is Pushkin: 'Slukh obo mne proidet po vsei Rusi velikoi, | I nazovet menia vsiak sushchii v nei iazyk, | I gordyi vnuk slavian, i finn, i nyne dikii | Tungus, i drug stepei kalmyk' ('Rumour of me will pass through all of great Rus′, | And her every single tongue will call my name, | The proud descendant of the Slavs, and the Finn, and today's savage | Tungus, as well as the Kalmyk, friend of the steppe').

[82] Nekipelov wrote the manuscript in 1976 and arranged for its passage to the West, where it appeared in English in an edition published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux in 1980. Along with selections of Nekipelov's poetry, *Institut durakov* was finally published in Russia in 2005 by an organization called 'Pomoshch′ postradavshim ot psikhiatrii' ('Aid to the Victims of Psychiatry').

[83] Andrei Sakharov, *Vospominaniia*, vol. II (Moscow: Vremia, 2006), p. 434. Sakharov would write in Nekipelov's defence in 1980.

biologist and dissident Sergei Miuge, whose literary 'Thursdays' were popular happenings in the Moscow area.[84]

Nekipelov, who had degrees in pharmacology (Khar′kov Pharmaceutical Institute, 1960) and in literature (Gor′kii Literary Institute, 1970), saw his 1973 arrest come after six searches of his Vladimirskaia oblast′ home by the KGB. He recalls the first—which took place in July 1972—in 'Ballada o pervom obyske' ['Ballad about the First Search'] (1972), in which letters, telephones, and a typewriter were confiscated:[85]

Ia ozhidal ikh tak davno
Chto v chas, kogda prishli,
Mne stalo tak zhe vse ravno,
Kak lodke na meli.

I had waited for them so long | That, when they finally came, | I was as indifferent | As a boat on a shoal.

Nekipelov's use of ballad verse, alternating between iambic lines of four and three feet, at once elevates a distressing topic to sentimental heights in the service of parody and debases its own musicality with such topical and onomatopoeically coarse language as *rvanulis′* ('[KGB agents] tore through') and *zakriukali* ('they grunted'). This mixture of gallows humour and quiet outrage carries over in his 'Ballada o tret′em obyske' ['Ballad about the Third Search'] (1973):

A ia, kak budto dachnik,
Smotrel na tot pogrom,
Chto ishchut? Peredatchik?
Il′ provod v Belyi Dom?

And I, like a visitor, | Watched this pogrom. | What are they looking for? A transmitter? | Or a wire to the White House?

Nekipelov spent two months in Serbskii before being transferred to the ITK (*ispravitel′no-trudovaia koloniia*, 'correctional labour camp') in Iur′evets. He was released in 1975.[86]

The experience inside the Soviet psycho-penitentiary system did nothing to 'rehabilitate' Nekipelov, however. The pharmacist who 'was not involved in distribution of his own poems' before his arrest completely threw himself into

[84] Mariia Petrenko-Pod'iapol′skaia, 'Biografiia Viktora Nekipelova', in Viktor Nekipelov, *Stikhi: Izbrannoe* (Boston: 'Memorial', 1992), pp. 1–17 (pp. 2–3). Nina Komarova-Nekipelova, *Kniga liubvi i gneva* (Paris: Izd. avtora, 1994) <http://www.proza.ru/2009/04/02/1> [accessed 15 January 2009].

[85] 'Aresty, obyski, doprosy', *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii*, 27 (15 October 1972) <http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr/chr27.htm> [accessed 3 November 2008].

[86] Petrenko-Pod'iapol′skaia, p. 5.

the dissident movement afterwards.[87] In addition to writing *Institut durakov*, Nekipelov compiled a new collection of his poetry for release into samizdat circulation in 1976 and applied to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet for permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union in 1977. 'My departure is neither a withdrawal nor an escape to an illusion of a better life', he wrote in the letter, to which he received no response. 'It is simply impossible for me to act differently, to live one day or one hour longer in this country without a spiritual breakdown.'[88] A year after joining the Moscow Helsinki Group (Moskovskaia Khel'sinkskaia gruppa) in 1978, Nekipelov was again arrested, this time under Article 70-1, which forbade the 'distribution and possession of samizdat'. His trial in 1980 in the Vladimirskaia oblast' court provoked an outcry in the dissident community but none the less resulted in the harshest possible verdict under the law: seven years hard labour and five years exile. The poet was sent to camp BC 389/35 of the *permskaia politzona*, known in samizdat sources as 'Perm-35', where he slowly deteriorated as a result of the brutal conditions and untreated illnesses, including cancer. In 1986 he was sent into internal exile in Aban Krasnoiarskii krai, where he was reunited with his wife Nina Komarova-Nekipelova. A year later, they were permitted to emigrate to France. Nekipelov died from inoperable cancer in Paris in 1989.

During his first incarceration in the early 1970s, the poet sustained himself with thoughts of his wife Nina and of 'honey-sweet Crimea' ('medovyi Krym'), where the two enjoyed a happy summer in 1965.[89] Komarova-Nekipelova spent part of her childhood in Crimea, and Nekipelov was fond of calling her 'schast'itse moe krymskoe' ('my sweet Crimean happiness').[90] In fact, the first letter of every line in his 'Krymskii akrostikh' ['Crimean Acrostic'] (1974), composed in Serbskii, spells her name. But for all the uplifting memories and positive connections that Crimea elicited for the couple, there were also disturbing discoveries about the peninsula that haunted Nekipelov and expressed themselves in his 1968 Crimean triptych—'Chufut-Kale', 'Gurzuf', and 'Ballada ob otchem dome' ['Ballad about an Ancestral Home']. According to Mariia Petrenko-Pod'iapol'skaia, who along with her husband, the poet and scientist Grigorii Pod'iapol'skii, played a central role in the formation of the Initiative Group for the Defence of Human Rights in 1969, Nekipelov often read the Crimean triptych in Moscow in the late 1960s with uncommon emotion.[91]

[87] 'Sud nad Nekipelovym', *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii*, 32 (June 1974) <http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr/index.htm> [accessed 5 December 2008].

[88] Quoted in Petrenko-Pod'iapol'skaia, p. 5.

[89] See his diary entry for 12 January 1974, which is quoted in Nina Komarova-Nekipelova, *Kniga liubvi i gneva* <http://www.proza.ru/2009/04/26/1> [accessed 13 January 2009].

[90] Komarova-Nekipelova, *Kniga liubvi i gneva* <http://www.proza.ru/2009/07/25/1> [accessed 13 January 2009].

[91] Petrenko-Pod'iapol'skaia, p. 1.

The poems are three distinct journeys among the 'cold ruins' ('kholodnye ruiny') of a Crimean place devoid of living Tatar personality. In 'Chufut-Kale', written in iambic pentameters, the lyrical persona moves through an ancient fortress situated in the rock exposures high above the valleys radiating north from Bakhchisarai. Chufut Kale was a centre of life for the Jewish Karaim (or Karaites) of Crimea, 'yet another disappeared people' ('eshche odin ischeznuvshii narod') in Nekipelov's words, from the late fifteenth to the nineteenth century.[92] Before the arrival of the Karaites, it served as a stronghold for what would become the first Crimean Tatar khanate. For all its history, the site strikes the lyrical persona as frustratingly enigmatic and distant, as inaccessible and inhospitable to memory. A past of death and suffering marks the remnants of its honeycomb cave dwellings, markets, and temples hewn into stone.

In 'Gurzuf', which, like Chichibabin's 'Krymskie progulki', gestures towards the tradition of peripatetic poetry, Nekipelov's lyrical persona wanders a space seemingly more hospitable to human life. Windswept Gurzuf, the town near Yalta whose 'crooked lanes' stretch out before him, seems free of the decay and the thick patina of suffering that afflict Chufut Kale. It abounds in sites of religious and social communion:

> Ot minareta k minaretu,
> Ot chaikhany do chaikhany, —
> Ia vnov′ bluzhdaiu do rassveta
> V molochnom zareve luny.[93]

From minaret to minaret, | From teahouse to teahouse— | I again roam until dawn | In the milky glow of the moon.

Each stride is made in anticipation of a moment in which the lyrical persona will discern from afar 'the coy glance of a Tatar woman | From underneath a fragrant headscarf' ('Lukavyi vzor tatarskoi peri | Iz-pod dushistogo platka'). The moment does not come. Instead into Crimean homes, which the lyrical persona discovers are 'empty amphorae' rather than vibrant human dwellings, the night 'pours' an 'oily' ignorance. The lyrical persona then alludes to the mysterious presence of a doppelgänger, a Crimean Tatar poet in whose 'weary memory' 'an unfortunate night surfaces':

> Kogda truslivo i poslushno
> Orda *oprichnaia* —
> kak skot,
> Vdrug rastolkala po teplushkam
> Ego talantlivyi narod.

[92] I take the text of 'Chufut-Kale' from Nekipelov, *Stikhi*, p. 37.
[93] I take the text of 'Gurzuf' from Nekipelov, *Stikhi*, pp. 38–39.

I bedniakov, i bonz vysokikh,
I vinodelov, i kuptsov,
I sedovlasykh, i beznogikh,
I zvezdochetov, i sleptsov . . .

When cowardly and obediently | The horde of the new *oprichnina*— | Like cattle, | Suddenly pushed into heated railway waggons | His talented people. | The poor, the esteemed clerics, | The vintners, the merchants, | The old, the amputees, | The astrologers, the blind . . .

Nekipelov suspends the alliterative pair *orda oprichnaia* before a hanging indent to endow the terminal foot *kak skot* with an economical ambiguity: it can either modify the antecedent 'horde' or the punished *narod* in the final line of the quatrain. The agents of the NKVD executed their orders to deport the Crimean Tatars uncritically, without a protest of conscience, 'like cattle'; they forced human beings out of their homes, prodding and corralling them onto waiting railway waggons 'like cattle'. This conspicuous visual positioning of *orda oprichnaia* also draws attention to a pregnant metaphor that Nekipelov employs elsewhere in a series of human-rights appeals published by the Moscow Helsinki Group: the metaphor of the Brezhnev era as a new *oprichnina*, a twentieth-century incarnation of Ivan IV's notorious reign of terror.[94] Like the ruthless *oprichniki* who ravage villages and towns with indiscrimate regard for human life in Ivan Lazhechnikov's verse drama *Oprichnik* (1867), the Soviet NKVD officers in 'Gurzuf' persecute the vulnerable and the estimable in equal measure and dispatch them without remorse to remote settlements in Central Asia. The proliferative catalogue of human victims, underscored by the anaphoric conjunction *i* in the passage above, compels the lyrical persona to confront his own guilt:

Moe prestupnoe molchan′e
Prostish′ li ty, Gurzuf-Aga?

Do you forgive my criminal silence, Gurzuf-Aga?

*Ağa* denotes 'lord' or 'master' in Turkic languages, and Nekipelov's lyrical persona models for the reader a confession of 'criminal' (*prestupnoe*) complicity in the deportation before a higher authority. If 'the lyric is a script written for performance by the reader', then 'Gurzuf' provokes him to perform this confession in the act of reading.[95] As a speech-act, however, the confession is 'infelicitous'; it falls on deaf ears.[96] The lyrical persona's 'criminal silence' about the deportation has produced in turn a Gurzuf overcome by it:

[94] With Tat′iana Khodorovich and Tat′iana Osipova, Nekipelov released the *ekspress-zhurnaly* 'Oprichnina 76', 'Oprichnina 77', and 'Oprichnina 78', three of the most influential compilations of documents from the Moscow Helsinki Group. See Petrenko-Pod'iapol′skaia, p. 6.

[95] Vendler, p. xi.

[96] J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 16.

Tesniatsia mysli verenitsei
Izmiatykh chuvstv, bessil′nykh slov . . .
Gurzuf molchit.

My thoughts cluster in rows | Of haggard emotions and powerless words . . . | But Gurzuf is silent.

As with the conclusion of Chichibabin's 'Krymskie progulki', these lines constitute more than a simple statement of fact (e.g. 'Gurzuf is silent', 'the Tatars are absent'). They seek to provoke the reader to restore the conditions of felicity for this painful confession—to contest the discursive cleansing that silenced the voices of the Crimean Tatars and to advocate for their rightful return to Crimea.

With each poem in Nekipelov's Crimean triptych, the lyrical persona becomes ever more attuned to his physical surroundings and the human lives to which they stand as monuments. An exploration of the ruins of Chufut Kale provokes his wonder, even befuddlement, over the loyalty of the Karaites to the ancient fortress; the site, seemingly inimical to human life, alienates the lyrical persona. In 'Gurzuf', by contrast, a nocturnal stroll along the welcoming streets of the seaside town sees him increasingly sensitive to the absence of the Crimean Tatars and mournful of his passive, 'silent' complicity in the deportation. In 'Ballada ob otchem dome', the final poem of the triptych, the lyrical persona proceeds to identify completely with his subject, internalizing the perspective of a Crimean Tatar who returns to his homeland only to be displaced from it once more:[97]

Ia — krymskii tatarin.
Ia — syn etikh solnechnykh gor.
K kotorym segodnia prokralsia ukradkoi kak vor.[98]

I am a Crimean Tatar. | I am a son of these sun-drenched mountains, | Where today I must creep furtively like a thief.

This internalization of a Crimean Tatar 'I' is reminiscent of Evtushenko's 'Babii Iar', in which the lyrical persona casts himself as a Jew, as Anne Frank, as Alfred Dreyfus:

[97] Brian Glyn Williams incorrectly attributes 'Ballada ob otchem dome' to a 'secret [Crimean Tatar] returnee' (Williams, p. 406). Such confusion over the authorship of 'Ballada ob otchem dome' stems in part from an editorial comment in a Crimean Tatar newspaper that attributed the poem to both Viktor Nekipelov and the Crimean Tatar poet Lenur Ibraimov in 1995, after Nekipelov's death. As A. M. Emirova argues persuasively, Nekipelov is the poem's only author. She points out, to cite only one example, that a Crimean Tatar like Ibraimov would have known better than to situate a Tatar grave in the garden or yard of one's homestead, which is not a custom: A. M. Emirova, 'Krym v tvorchestve Viktora Nekipelova', *Izbrannye nauchnye raboty* (Simferopol′: Krymuchpedgiz, 2008), pp. 217–18.

[98] I take the text of 'Ballada ob otchem dome' from Nekipelov, *Stikhi*, p. 40.

Mne kazhetsia seichas —
ia iudei.
[. . .]
Mne kazhetsia, chto Dreifus —
eto ia.[99]

It seems to me now that I am a Jew. | [. . .] | It seems to me that I am Dreyfus himself.

Whereas Evtushenko's identification is moderated by impersonal constructions ('mne kazhetsia'), Nekipelov's is direct and unmediated from the very beginning. His lyrical persona is a Crimean Tatar to whom 'a grumbling bureaucrat' ('briuzglivyi chinovnik') has given a permit to visit Crimea for only twenty-four hours. He travels to the home of his forebears near the mountain of Aiu-Dag outside Gurzuf:

Poklon Aiu-Dagu i sizoi, tumannoi Iaile!
Kak dolgo ia ne byl na gorestnoi otchei zemle.

Vot dom glinobitnyi, v kotorom rodilsia i zhil.
Akh, kak on razrossia, posazhennyi dedom inzhir!

A nash vinogradnik i kroshechnyi kamennyi sad,
Kak prezhde, napolneny prazdnichnym zvonom tsikad.

Tverdy i uprugi, temny ot dozhdei i rosy,
Kak dedovy ruki — bugrastye myshtsy lozy.

Muskat dozrevaet! Da mne urozhai ne snimat′.
Kradus′ po zadvorkam ottsovskogo doma kak tat′.

I bow to you, Aiu-Dag, and to you, misty-blue plateau! | How long it has been since I was here in my sorrowful ancestral home. | Here is the clay dwelling where I was born and lived. | Oh, how the fig tree planted by my grandfather has grown! | And our vineyard and small rock garden | Are there as before, filled with the convivial ring of cicadas. | Hard and resilient, dark from rain and dew, | The sinewy muscles of the vine are like my grandfather's hands. | And how the Muscat ripens! But it is not for me to reap the harvest, | Creeping along the back of my ancestral home like a thief.

These lines, written in an amphibrachic pentameter traditionally employed to express solemnity and melancholy, may be read as a poetic translation of an account presented in an anonymous pamphlet entitled 'The Judgment against the Crimean Tatars', which was first included in the fifth issue of *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii* and released on 31 December 1968:[100]

*Crimea is a forbidden zone for the indigenous Tatars.* There is no law to this effect, but there are obviously secret instructions [. . .] Groups and families are returning to Crimea one by one. They return only to endure the hardships of a vicious cycle [*mytarstva zakoldovannogo kruga*]: [local Crimean authorities] do not register them,

[99] Evgenii Evtushenko, 'Babii Iar', in *Sobranie sochinenii*, 3 vols (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1983–84), I (1983), 316–18 (p. 316).
[100] Wachtel, p. 23.

because they have no home; and they cannot buy a home, because they are not registered [*net propiski*]. Yet at the same time the state sends to Crimea an unstoppable flood of settlers from Russia and Ukraine.[101]

This passage from *Khronika* simulates for the reader an aerial perspective—not uncommon to the activist imagination—from which to observe a bounded 'zone' populated by Crimean Tatars, a 'they' to whom sympathy and concern should be directed. This zone is devoid of human agency: even the new Russian and Ukrainian settlers of Crimea are but passive instruments at the bidding of an all-powerful and faceless state.

The optics in Nekipelov's 'Ballada ob otchem dome' are decidedly different. Not only does the poet present the tragedy of an abortive return to the homeland from the perspective of a Crimean Tatar 'I'—grafting the reader's unspoken 'you' onto his subject position—but he also gives the tragedy a distinctly human face, displacing the state from the centre of the equation. The poem continues:

V sadu koposhitsia kakoi-to likhoi otstavnik.
On pogreb kopaet (a mozhet byt', novyi sortir?)
Akh, chto on nadelal — on kamen' v uglu svorotil!

Plitu vekovuiu pod staroi, shcheliastoi aivoi,
Gde vse moi predki
Lezhat — na vostok golovoi!

On dumaet — koz'i i davit ikh zastupom v prakh —
Sviashchennye kosti . . .
Prosti nechestivtsa, Allakh!

In the garden an old pensioner putters about. | He is digging a cellar (or maybe, a new latrine?) | Oh, what has he done? He dislodged a stone in the corner, | An ancient slab under an old, cracked quince, | Where my ancestors | Lie buried, facing east! | He thinks—'goats'—and crushes into dust with a spade | These sacred bones . . . | Forgive this inhumanity, Allah!

In Nekipelov's poem the villain is not an impersonal, amoral state but a puttering 'old pensioner', a figure of frailty. His desecration of the bones of the lyrical persona's ancestors is based on similar acts described in samizdat documentary accounts. In a letter published in the second issue of *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii* on 30 June 1968, for instance, a group of Crimean Tatars led by the physician Zampira Asanova decries 'the defilement and effacement of the graves of our ancestors from the face of the earth'.[102] Whereas the

[101] Russkie druz'ia krymskikh tatar, 'Sudiat krymskikh tatar', p. 176 (emphasis added). Documents in *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii* detail that in 1968, at the time 'Ballada ob otchem dome' was written, over 10,000 Tatars who had returned to Crimea after the discreet promulgation of Decree 493 were forcibly exiled from their homeland once again. See Refat Chubarov, 'Peredmova', *Kryms'ki studii*, 5–6 (2000), iv–xii (p. x).

[102] *Khronika tekushchikh sobytii*, 2 (June 1968) <http://www.memo.ru/history/diss/chr/

authors of the letter avoid attaching an agent to these acts, using past passive participles wherever possible, Nekipelov prominently features an individual responsible for such 'defilement', an elderly man who does not occupy the corridors of power in the Kremlin. In doing so, the poet confronts the uncomfortable truth that the dispossession of the Crimean Tatars was, to an extent, a state crime enabled by moments of injustice perpetrated by ordinary Soviet citizens. There are no clean hands, he implies: guilt is not to reside among only a faceless or ghoulish few.

Nekipelov presents this moment of injustice by way of a specular confrontation between perpetrator and victim:

> Kak dolgo i trudno my smotrim drug druga v glaza.
> On klichet kogo-to, spuskaia grivastogo psa.
>
> Ne nado, polkovnik! Ia fruktov tvoikh ne voz′mu.
> Khoziaistvui pokuda v moem glinobitnom domu.
>
> Ia zavtra uedu obratno v dalekii Chimkent.
> Ia tol′ko smotritel′, khranitel′ ottsovskikh legend.
>
> Neproshennyi prizrak, sluchainaia ten′ na stene,
> Khot′ gorestnyi pepel stuchitsia i tleet vo mne.
>
> Ia — sovest′ i smuta, i chei-to dremuchii pozor.
> Ia — krymskii tatarin, ia — syn etikh solnechnykh gor.

How long and hard we looked one another in the eyes. | He calls to someone who lets loose a rabid dog. | Don't worry, colonel! I won't take your fruit. | Go keep house in my home. | Tomorrow I go back to distant Chimkent. | I am only a custodian, a keeper of ancestral legends. | An uninvited spectre, a chance shadow on the wall, | Even if mournful ashes knock about and putrify inside me. | I am conscience and dismay, someone's great disgrace. | I am a Crimean Tatar, I am a son of these sun-drenched mountains.

In these poignant concluding lines, the 'I' of the lyrical persona laments his fate as a 'custodian' of identity, a vessel for the 'ashes' of past generations. His tone of resignation and defeat stands in some contrast to the rousing force of the imperative that ends Asanova's letter of 1968, for example: 'POMOGITE NAM VERNUT′SIA NA ZEMLIU NASHIKH OTTSOV!' ('Help us return to the land of our forefathers!'). It is no less persuasive, however. Like Chichibabin's 'Krymskie progulki', Nekipelov's 'Ballada ob otchem dome' leverages despair for perlocutionary ends. Rather than positioning the reader as a mere recipient of information or a follower of commands, the poet ushers him into a more active, albeit decentred, enunciatory pose, inviting him to stage his unspoken 'you' as a Crimean Tatar 'I'. This act of staging is willy-nilly an act of solidarity: 'Ia — krymskii tatarin'. But this reconciliation with defeat—as well as the

index.htm> [accessed 15 December 2008]; 'Chto proiskhodit s tataramy, vozvrashchaiushchimisia v Krym', in '"Delo" krymskikh tatar', pp. 178–91.

deferral of justice—is not meant to sit well with the reader. He is provoked to act on behalf of the Crimean Tatar cause, and this provocation stems not from outside, in response to a command, but from within.

## *Conclusion*

'Ia — syn etikh solnechnykh gor': 'I am a son of these sun-drenched mountains'. The declaration in Nekipelov's 'Ballada ob otchem dome' of a fundamental, isomorphic correspondence between Crimean territory and Tatar identity becomes a central platform in the Crimean Tatar movement after the emergence of Decree No. 493 in 1967. With the Tatars formally cleared of the crime of mass treason, Tatar and non-Tatar activists framed the right of return to Crimea not only as a compensatory right, a means of (partial) reparation for the deportation, but also as a metaphysical right, a means of restoring the profoundly unique connection between a people and its homeland. In numerous appeals and petitions, Crimea is presented as the 'Homeland' (*Rodina*), a term whose capitalization conveys the peninsula's special position as the site of 'all the sources of [the Tatars'] existence' ('vsekh istochnikov sushchestvovaniia').[103]

Unlike such appeals and petitions, which put forward propositions and truth claims, the poems of Boris Chichibabin and Viktor Nekipelov do not aspire to concrete, determinate meaning or full disclosure. Their rhythm and rhyme are signposts of the aesthetic, prompting a particular 'expectation of meaningfulness' that exceeds the expository.[104] I have sought to demonstrate how these texts exploit this expectation both to endow the reader with a cognitive and affective knowledge of one of Stalin's greatest crimes—in the face of a state-sponsored campaign of 'discursive cleansing'—and to engage him in an act of 'guilt-processing' conducive to committed activism. As the Crimean Tatars continue to return from forced exile to a homeland that is now an autonomous republic in Ukraine, Boris Chichibabin and Viktor Nekipelov should be remembered as two of their earliest, and most uniquely vocal, advocates.

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[103] '"Delo" krymskikh tatar', pp. 177 and 217.

[104] Hörmann, *Meinen und Verstehen*, pp. 187, 192–96, 198, 207, 241, 253, 403–04, 410–11, 500; quoted in Iser, *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, p. 18.