

## Arařtırma Makalesi/ Research Article

# The Transfer of Information about Muslim Urban Cultures from the Tatar Public Discourse to the Ukrainian One in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Ismail Gasprinsky and Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi)

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### Abstract

Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi is a Ukrainian author, journalist, and political activist of the late 19th – early 20th century. He is considered one of the most talented representatives of Ukrainian literature. He is known as an elegant impressionist and master of psychological prose. In the 1890’s he spent a total of two years of his life in Crimea. As a result, he wrote the «Crimean series»

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(three short stories: “In the Shaytan’s Chains”, “On the Stone”, and “Under the Minarets”).

Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy's trip to the Crimean Peninsula coincides chronologically with the presence of progressive ideas in the Crimean public discourse. There were passionate supporters of European-style reform in Crimea. One of the leading figures for such movements was Ismail Gasprinsky - a Tatar enlightener and Pan-Turkist. He supported the concept of the modernization of Muslim cultures through the adaptation of some Western elements. Ismail Gasprinsky was convinced of the negative influence of traditionalism on the development of Muslim societies. The content of Kotsiubynskiy's short stories matches the Crimean reality of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and Gasprinsky's narrative considerably.

The paper aims to examine Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy's role in the transfer of information about Muslim urban cultures from the Tatar public discourse to the Ukrainian one in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Keywords:** Reception Studies, The Ukrainian Public Discourse, “Kievskaya starina”, “The Ukrainian National Renaissance”, Tatars, Islam, Intellectual History, The Ukrainian Historiography.

## 20. Yüzyılın Başlarında Müslüman Kentsel Kültürlerine İlişkin Bilgilerin Tatar Kamusal Söyleminden Ukrayna Kamusal Söylemine Aktarılması (İsmail Gasprinskiy ve Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy)

### Öz

Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy, 19. yüzyılın sonu ile 20. yüzyılın başında yaşamış Ukraynalı bir yazar, gazeteci ve siyasi aktivisttir. Ukrayna edebiyatının en yetenekli temsilcilerinden biri olarak kabul edilir. Zarif bir empresyonist ve psikolojik düzyazı ustası olarak tanınır. 1890'larda hayatının toplam iki yılını Kırım'da geçirdi. Sonuç olarak “Kırım serisini” yazdı (üç kısa öykü: “Şeytanın Zincirlerinde”, “Taşın Üstünde” ve “Minarelerin Altında”).

Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy'nin Kırım Yarımadası'na yaptığı gezi, kronolojik olarak Kırım kamusal söylemindeki ilerici fikirlerin varlığıyla örtüşmektedir. Kırım'da Avrupa tarzı reformların ateşli destekçileri vardı. Bu tür hareketlerin önde gelen isimlerinden biri, Tatar bir aydın ve Pan-Türkist olan İsmail Gasprinalı'ydı. Bazı Batılı unsurların uyarlanması yoluyla Müslüman kültürlerinin modernleşmesi kavramını destekledi. İsmail Gasprinalı, gelenekselliğin Müslüman toplumların gelişimi üzerindeki olumsuz etkisine ikna olmuştu.

Kotsiubynskiyi'nin kısa öykülerinin içeriği, 20. yüzyılın başlarındaki Kırım gerçekliği ve Gaspralı'nın anlatısıyla önemli ölçüde örtüşmektedir.

Bu makale, Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiyi'nin 20. yüzyılın başlarında Müslüman kentsel kültürleri hakkındaki bilgilerin Tatar kamu söyleminden Ukrayna söylemine aktarılmasındaki rolünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Alım Çalışmaları, Ukrayna Kamu Söylemi, “Kievskaya starina”, “Ukrayna Ulusal Rönesansı”, Tatarlar, İslam, Entelektüel Tarih, Ukrayna Tarihçiliği.

## Introduction

A city is an administrative center, where institutions of a vast variety of kinds exist. The same can be said about a town. It is especially true when we're talking about imperialistic states with bureaucratic and overcentralized structures. This environment is well suited for intersections of different kinds of people and ideas. In this article, one such case is presented.

Bakhchysarai is an old town in the southern part of the Crimean Peninsula. Under the rule of the Giray dynasty, it served as the capital of the Crimean Khanate. The town played a prominent role in the political and cultural role of the country. After the Russian annexation of Crimea in 1783, Bakhchysarai lost its major status. However, the town continued to serve as an important cultural center for the Tatar people.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century – early 20<sup>th</sup> century Bakhchysarai played a pivotal role in several important progressive processes in Muslim cultures. It influenced the Muslim perspective on politics, education, and social issues in Eastern Europe a Central Asia. And being an administrative center where different flows of cultures have larger chances to intersect, Bakhchysarai supported the spreading of its ideas even beyond the Muslim world.

## Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiyi and Crimea

In order to present the transfer of information from the Tatar discourse to the Ukrainian one, first and foremost we need to examine Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiyi. Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiyi was a Ukrainian author of the late 19<sup>th</sup> – the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a journalist, and

political activist. He is considered one of the most talented representatives of Ukrainian literature. He is known as an elegant novelist, master of psychological prose, and one of the important European impressionists. Kotsiubynskyi traveled a lot. In the 1890s, he worked as part of the Odesa phylloxera commission, which fought against the grape pest in southern Ukrainian regions, including Crimea<sup>1</sup>. Kotsiubynskyi spent a total of two years of his life in Crimea<sup>2</sup>. The life of the Tatar people and the peninsula itself with its brightness and natural beauty extremely impressed him, which is repeatedly mentioned in the author's letters<sup>3</sup>. However, most of the time academic works dedicated to Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi predominantly study his general biography or the quality of his texts, and only a few deal with the specifics of the author's interaction with Muslim communities<sup>4</sup>.

The work in Crimean locations such as Yalta, Kekeneiyz, Simeiz, Alupka, Alushta, Sevastopol, and Bakhchysarai<sup>5</sup> gave the author inspiration for writing the "Crimean" short stories" which includes "In the Shaytan's Chains", "On the Stone", and "Under the Minarets". The later one was published in one of the main Ukrainian scholarly journals of the period "Kievskaya starina" for the Ukrainian audience. The journal was very Ukrainian-centric. Among the Ukrainian academic community, it's often associated with the phenomenon which is called "The Ukrainian National Renaissance". Despite the hard focus on Ukrainian material, the journal spared some pages for texts that depict Muslim people. These include: "The Danubian Sich" by Fedir

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<sup>1</sup> Tamara Ivanivna Lazanska, *Kotsiubynsky Mykhailo Mykhailovych*, URL: [http://resource.history.org.ua/cgi-bin/eiu/history.exe?&I21DBN=EIU&P21DBN=EIU&S21STN=1&S21REF=10&S21FMT=ei\\_u\\_all&C21COM=S&S21CNR=20&S21P01=0&S21P02=0&S21P03=TRN=&S21COLORTERMS=0&S21STR=Kotsyubinskii\\_M](http://resource.history.org.ua/cgi-bin/eiu/history.exe?&I21DBN=EIU&P21DBN=EIU&S21STN=1&S21REF=10&S21FMT=ei_u_all&C21COM=S&S21CNR=20&S21P01=0&S21P02=0&S21P03=TRN=&S21COLORTERMS=0&S21STR=Kotsyubinskii_M) (10.07.2023).

<sup>2</sup> Solomiia Vivchar, *Ukrainski prosvityteli ta islam* [The Ukrainian enlighteners and Islam], Kyiv, 2020, p.162.

<sup>3</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Tvory v semy tomakh*. [Works in the seven volumes], Kyiv, 1974, T.5.

<sup>4</sup> Solomiia Vivchar, *Ukrainski prosvityteli ta islam* [The Ukrainian enlighteners and Islam], Kyiv, 2020, p.161.

<sup>5</sup> Solomiia Vivchar, *Ukrainski prosvityteli ta islam* [The Ukrainian enlighteners and Islam], Kyiv, 2020, p.162-163.

Kondratovych <sup>6</sup>, “Order of Governor General Glebov on the occasion of the Turkish envoy's passage through Kyiv”<sup>7</sup>, “Letter of the Pechersk Archimandrite Innokenty Gizel to collect alms for the ransom of a prisoner from the Tatars” <sup>8</sup>, “Letters of Archpriest Arseniy Lebedintsev ... on the course of hostilities and the state of churches and clergy during the 11-month siege of Sevastopol”<sup>9</sup>, “Information about Mikhail Doroshenko`s Crimean campaign” by K. Melnyk <sup>10</sup>, “Travels of a Chumak, a Bursak, and a Slave” <sup>11</sup>, “Where did the Pereyaslav Torcs Live?” by A. Storozhenko <sup>12</sup>, “The Last Girey” <sup>13</sup>, “Roksolana” by Galyna Komarova <sup>14</sup>, and “Under the Minarets” by Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy <sup>15</sup>.

Kotsiubynskiy`s Crimean short stories depict young Tatar people who challenge traditional Muslim ways. Characters are especially

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<sup>6</sup> Fedir Vovk, Zadunaiskaya Siech [The Danubian Sich], ), *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. V, 1883, January, p. 27-66.

<sup>7</sup> A.A., Rasporyazhenie heneral-hubernatora Glebova po sluchayu proezda tureckoho poslannika cherez h. Kiev [Order of Governor General Glebov on the occasion of the Turkish envoy's passage through Kyiv] *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. XXXVI, 1892, January, p. 146-148.

<sup>8</sup> A.L., «List» pecherskoho arxymandrita Innokentiya Hizelya na sbor mylostyni dlya vykupa u tatar plennika [Letter of the Pechersk Archimandrite Innokenty Gizel to collect alms for the ransom of a prisoner from the Tatars] *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. XLVIII, 1895, February, p. 53-54.

<sup>9</sup> Pys'ma protoyereya Arseniya Lebedinceva, b. blahochynnogo tserkvej yuzhnoho bereha Kryma, k preosvyashhenomu Innokentiyu, arxypyskopu Khersonskomu y Tavricheskomu, s donesenyamy o hode voennykh dejstvyj i sostoyaniy tserkvej y dukhovenstva vo vremya 11-ty mesyachnoj osady Sevastopolya [Letters of Archpriest Arseniy Lebedintsev... on the course of hostilities and the state of churches and clergy during the 11-month siege of Sevastopol], *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. LII, 1896, January, p.1-9

<sup>10</sup> Melnyk, Svedeniya o pokhode v Krym Mykhayla Doroshenka [Information about Mikhail Doroshenko`s Crimean campaign], *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. LV, 1896, November, p.274-286.

<sup>11</sup> Stranstvovaniya chumaka, bursaka i raba [Travels of a Chumak, a Bursak, and a Slave], *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. LIX, 1897, October, p. 16-20.

<sup>12</sup> Andrei Storozhenko, Hde zhyly Pereyaslavskye torky? [Where did the Pereyaslav Torcs Live?], *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. LXIV, 1899, February, p. 283-290.

<sup>13</sup> M.L., Ostannij Hyrej [The Last Girey], *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. LXXXV, 1904, April, p. 74-102.

<sup>14</sup> Galyna Komarova, Roksolana, *Kievskaya starina*, Vol. LXXXV, 1904, June, p.597-604.

<sup>15</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskiy, Pid Minaretamy (Opovidannia) [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p. 373-422.

critical of the education system and gender issues in Islamic cultures. This is heavily emphasized throughout the three texts. Also, they want to read Qur'an in the Tatar tongue. Generally speaking, these young people want to adopt elements of Western cultures and integrate them into Tatar society.

Kotsiubynskiy demonstrates excellent knowledge of the everyday urban life of the Crimean Tatars and the basics of the Muslim religion. Also, his reception of this society features an extraordinarily clear understanding of the social life of Crimean Muslims, especially for an outsider.

### **Ismail Gasprinsky and the Crimean progressive movement.**

In addition, Kotsiubynskiy's trip to the peninsula and the publication of the short story coincides chronologically with the presence of progressive ideas in the Crimean public discourse. There were vocal supporters of European-style reform, especially in the field of education there. One of the leading advocates of these ideas was Ismail Gasprinsky - a Tatarian enlightener and Pan-Turkist as well as the creator of the jadidism movement<sup>16</sup>. He supported the concept of solidarity among Turkic people as well as the modernization of Muslim culture through the adaptation of some Western traditions. Ismail Gasprinsky and his daughter Shafika were convinced of the negative influence of traditionalism on the development of Muslim culture. They actively defended their views and contributed to the formation of an ideological center around them<sup>17</sup>.

Gasprinsky was responsible for publishing «Terciman» ("The Translator") a progressive journal aimed at educating Tatar people and providing them with the news and served as a conduit of his ideas.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> M.A. Usmanov, *O triupfe i tragedii idey Gasprinskogo* [About the triumph and tragedy of Gasprinsky's ideas. Kazan, 1993, p.3.

<sup>17</sup> Ismail Gasprinsky, "*Molla Abbas*". *Vybrani literaturni tvory: krymskotatarska proza ukrainskoiu* /Per. Z krymskotatarskoi i rosiiskoi movy [Molla Abbas. The selected literary works: Crimean-Tatarian prose in Ukrainian], Kyiv: «Maister Knyh», 2021.

<sup>18</sup> Elmaz Asanova, *Ismail Gasprinsky – providnyk modernizatsii islamskogo prosvytelstva ta kultury v Krymu* [Ismail Gasprinsky – the guide of Islamic enlightenment and culture in Crimea.], p. 97, URL: <https://uars.info/index.php/uars/article/view/2197/1898> (10.07.2023).

Gasprinsky used an artificially created variant of the Tatar language for the journal to achieve a wider reach in the Turkic world. He believed that the development of the Literature standard of the Tatarian language is critically important for the Tatar people in the prevention of their discrimination.<sup>19</sup> Also, Gasprinsky and his daughter fought heavily for the creation of a special journal for Tatarian women. After a long struggle, this fight proved to be successful. Among the topic covered in the “Alemler Nisvan” (the name of the journal that means „Women’s World”) were stories about successful women and their achievements aimed at female empowerment.<sup>20</sup>

In order to examine the correlation between Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky’s short stories and Ismail Gasprinsky’s views we need to look into the content of “The Crimean short stories” (“Under the Minarets in particular”) and compare it with information about Gasprinsky’s activity in Bakhchysarai.

### The narrative correlation

Under the Minarets is based on the urban life of the Bakhchysarai city of the early 20th century. The story focuses on a young man named Rustem. He and his friends fight with what they perceive as archaic and dogmatic traditions of Crimean society. They want to see progressive changes in their town.

Ismail Gasprinsky critiqued religious superstitions. He believed that dogmatic thinking compromises the development of the Tatar culture, especially in terms of education. The protagonist of “Under the Minarets” protests against clergy, traditions, and even the Qur’an<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> L.I. Gimadeeva, “Historical and linguistic analysis of the language of the newspaper «Tercüman» (1883-1918) by Ismail Gaspirali”, *Abstract of the dissertation for the degree of candidate of philological sciences*, Kazan, 20000, p 8.

<sup>20</sup> V.Yu. Gankevych, S.P. Shendrykova, *Vyneknennya pershogo krymskotatarskogo zhinochogo periodychnogo vydanya* [The establishment of the first Crimean Tatar women’s periodical], p. 3, URL: <http://dspace.nbu.gov.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/74212/03-Gankevich.pdf?sequence=1> (10.07.2023).

<sup>21</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy* (Opovidannia) [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.379.

Also, Rustem encourages other people to eat pork.<sup>22</sup> While Ismail Gasprinsky wasn't a man of antireligion nature, the sheer opposition to traditional thinking grasps our attention.

Gasprinsky believed in intercultural communication. He put merit on the Tatars adopting elements of other cultures. Here we can see that Rustem is very excited about European culture<sup>23</sup>. Furthermore, the young man considers people of other cultures not infidels, but instead older brothers<sup>24</sup>.

Also, as mentioned above, Gasprinsky considered the creation of a literature standard for the Tatar language a strategically important task for the well-being of his people. In the short story, one of the characters makes a statement that Tatar people don't understand Arabic and Qur'an should be translated into the Tatar language<sup>25</sup>.

Ismail Gasprinsky understood the importance of the education system and its effectiveness and developed progressive methods of teaching students. Rustem critiques Tatar educational institutions. He claims that maktabas are useless and do nothing beyond retelling old religious tales<sup>26</sup>.

One of the key points in Ismail Gasprinsky's activity is his struggle for the rights of Tatar women. He was very vocal about this issue. The creation of "Aleml Nisvan" was caused because Gasprinsky was dissatisfied with the status of Tatar females in society. Here are Gasprinsky's words about the importance of "Aleml Nisvan" which illustrate this point: "In small numbers, Muslims enroll in various schools and universities of the empire and use Russian literature and newspapers; in addition, several newspapers are now published in the

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<sup>22</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy (Opovidannia)* [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.402

<sup>23</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy (Opovidannia)* [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.379.

<sup>24</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy (Opovidannia)* [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.393-394.

<sup>25</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy (Opovidannia)* [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.392-394

<sup>26</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy (Opovidannia)* [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.393-394

Tatar language, which served those who did not know Russian. But this cannot be said about a Muslim woman. This poor cut-off from life woman ... silently prays to heaven and earth for human-like treatment and life. May her prayer be heard."<sup>27</sup> Rustem says that progressive Tatars should liberate a Tatar woman. He expresses his dissatisfaction with Tatar females being unable to reveal their faces in public or learn to read<sup>28</sup>.

It should be noted that "Aleml Nisvan" contained information about the lives of women in other countries to give Tatar women a wider perspective. That was supposed to enable them to realize the substandard level of individual rights guaranteed in their society. Here we can see that one of the female characters of the short story (enlightened by Rustem's teaching) says that women in other countries are free to go wherever they want and to speak to whomever they want. Even if they are Muslims. They are not forbidden to enter a mosque or enroll in educational institutions. The girl wants the same quality of life for herself<sup>29</sup>.

The depiction of a Tatar woman in Kotsiubynsky's short story seems to be reasonably accurate, as well as the presence of the female rights movement in Crimea. At least since the time of Russia's annexation of the peninsula in 1783 Tatar women had been stripped out of political rights. They were isolated from the world, limiting themselves to housewife duties<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> V.Yu. Gankevych, S.P. Shendrykova, *Vyneknennya pershogo krymskotatarskogo zhinochogo periodychnogo vydanya* [The establishment of the first Crimean Tatar women's periodical], p. 3, .URL: <http://dspace.nbu.gov.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/74212/03-Gankevich.pdf?sequence=1> (10.07.2023).

<sup>28</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy* (Opovidannia) [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.394.

<sup>29</sup> Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi, *Pid Minaretamy* (Opovidannia) [Under the minarets (Short stories)], *Kievskaya starina*, T. LXXXVIII, 1905, March, p.402.

<sup>30</sup> Natalia Malynovska, *Genderna polityka krymskykh tatar u natsiotvorchykh protsesakh pershoyi polovyny XX stolittia* [The Crimean Tatar's gender policy in the proceses of national development of the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century] // *Materialy V Vseukrainskoyi naukovo-praktychnoyi konferentsiyi "Polityka pamyati v teoretychnomu ta praktychnomu vymirakh"*, Rivne, 2018 – URL: [http://mnemonika.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Malynovska\\_N..pdf](http://mnemonika.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Malynovska_N..pdf) (08.03.2019).

The portrayal of Bakhchisaray seems to be fair too. In the early 20th century, it became one of the main centers of the women's rights movement. The "Aleml Nisvan" journal was published in this exact city in 1905. What's more important, it was the first female-orientated journal in the Muslim world. Shafika Gasprinsky worked as an editor there. In addition, she was a notable political activist<sup>31</sup>.

The fact that speaks volumes about the Crimean progressiveness and the successes of the women's rights movement in the context of the era is the support shown by the Crimean mufti Noman Chelebijkhan. He was vocal about the importance of the inclusion of women in social life and intellectual activities for the prosperity of a nation<sup>32</sup>.

Natalia Malynovska in her works dedicated to the female rights movements in Crimea came to the conclusion that Crimean society demonstrated its democratic nature by achieving such success in the female emancipation struggle. It was the first case in the Turkic world (and the Muslim world in general) when there were female candidates in legislative body elections. And the victory of such candidates is even more solid evidence of Crimean progressiveness<sup>33</sup>.

## Conclusion

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<sup>31</sup> Natalia Malynovska, *Uryvky z istorii krymskykh tatarok u naziotvorchykh protsesakh Krymu 1905-1917 rokiv: gendernyi analiz komemoratsiy v Ukraini* [Fragments of Crimean Tatar female history in the processes of Crimean national development in 1905-1917: a gender analysis of commemorations in Ukraine], p. 1, URL: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333489357\\_Urivki\\_z\\_istorii\\_krimskih\\_tatarok\\_u\\_naciotvorcih\\_procesah\\_Krymu\\_1905-1917\\_rokiv\\_gendernij\\_analiz\\_komemoracij\\_v\\_Ukraini](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333489357_Urivki_z_istorii_krimskih_tatarok_u_naciotvorcih_procesah_Krymu_1905-1917_rokiv_gendernij_analiz_komemoracij_v_Ukraini) (10.07.2023).

<sup>32</sup> Yu. Kandym, *Ne zaroste travoyu pole boyu* [Battlefield won't be covered with grass], Ichnya, 2017, p.363.

<sup>33</sup> Natalia Malynovska, *Uryvky z istorii krymskykh tatarok u naziotvorchykh protsesakh Krymu 1905-1917 rokiv: gendernyi analiz komemoratsiy v Ukraini* [Fragments of Crimean Tatar female history in the processes of Crimean national development in 1905-1917: a gender analysis of commemorations in Ukraine], p. 3, URL: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333489357\\_Urivki\\_z\\_istorii\\_krimskih\\_tatarok\\_u\\_naciotvorcih\\_procesah\\_Krymu\\_1905-1917\\_rokiv\\_gendernij\\_analiz\\_komemoracij\\_v\\_Ukraini](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333489357_Urivki_z_istorii_krimskih_tatarok_u_naciotvorcih_procesah_Krymu_1905-1917_rokiv_gendernij_analiz_komemoracij_v_Ukraini) (10.07.2023).

The Bakhchysarai town, being an important cultural center of Crimea, supported the intercultural transfer of information in the region. The developed infrastructure and institutions positively influence the probability of foreign contact. In this case, contact was made with a representative of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, interested in the local culture.

The content of Kotsiubynskyi's short stories clearly matches the Crimean reality of the late 19th century - the early 20th century. The author demonstrated a considerable level of cultural awareness, writing about the Crimean issues.

Furthermore, we can observe the correlation of the content of Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi's texts with Ismail Gasprinsky's ideas. Today, it is not known for sure whether Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi and Ismail Gasprinsky were personally acquainted<sup>34</sup>. However, given Kotsiubynskyi's presence in Bakhchysarai, the character and magnitude of Gasprinsky's activity in the town, and the similarities between Kotsiubynskyi's texts and Gasprinsky's worldview, we can conclude that there is a very high probability that the Crimean enlightener's views were known to this Ukrainian author.

Thus, taking into account Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi's contacts with Crimea and the publication of his story in «Kievskaya starina», it is also fair to assume that the idea of the ability of Muslim society to make progressive changes spread from the Crimean public discourse to the Ukrainian one. Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi appears here as connecting element between the two discourses. He served as a conduit that helped the progressive Tatar narrative to reach a wider audience.

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<sup>34</sup> Solomiia Vivchar, "Krymskotatarski motyvy v opovidanniakh M. Kotsiubynskoho" [The Crimean-Tatarian motifs in the M. Kotsiubynskyi's short stories], *Islam v Ukraini*. URL: <https://islam.in.ua/ua/kultura/krymskotatarski-motyvy-v-opovidannayah-myhayla-kocyubynskogo> (24.05.2023).

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