

## Research Article

# The Importance of Child Education in the Context of Establishing a New Nation and New Society in Bekir ÇOBANZADE's Works

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## Abstract

The idea of establishing a new nation and new society reflected in Bekir Sıtkı ÇOBANZADE's ideology and poetry is an extension of İsmail Bey Gasıralı's national renaissance and rebirth movement. The concept of national renaissance and rebirth initiated by the Tercüman newspaper primarily influenced the children, who represented the new society that the Crimean Tatar people, seeking to return to their roots and escape Russian imperialism, aimed to establish. The Usûl-u Cedit education system was used to transform young Tatar children into heroic Turkish and Muslim people fighting against Russian imperialism. This system strengthened the rebirth process of Crimean Tatar children who were weakened by Russian imperialism. During this process, in 1905, Çobanzade initiated the Yaş Tatar movement along with young people like Numan Celebi Cihan and Hasan Mirza Cergeyev. In his poem "Anan Kayda," published here, he aimed to raise Crimean Tatar children under Russian imperialism into children who would fight against fate and the Russification policy within the poetics of the New Nation and New Society to be established. For the Crimean Tatar people, avoiding the loss of their true selves, the only way out is to create an enlightened and educated segment built on their ideals and national identity. Therefore, in his poems, Çobanzade created a child prototype. The most well-known of these prototypes is a girl named Esma. The poet designed the political panorama of the era through Esma. He desired to raise a new nation and new society that were free from the calamities and oppression the people were facing.

## Keywords

Crimean Tatar Literature, Usûl-u Cedit, Russian Imperialism, Yaş Tatar Movement, Bekir Sıtkı Çobanzade

## 1. Introduction

The migration that began with Russia's annexation of Crimea in 1785 affected the native Turkish population of Crimea. By the early 20th century, between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 Crimean Turks had left their homeland [9]. The administrative institutions and justice organs of Crimea were brought under control, and the educational institutions of the

Turkish-Muslim Crimean Tatar population were seized by the Russian government. These events marked the beginning of the collapse of the Crimean Tatar people. To escape the tragedy of Crimea, which began with its annexation by Russia, the most important way was through a strong education strategy. This strategic education plan was aimed at the young Tatar

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children. The influence of the Young Tatar movement was significant in this. Under the revival of the younger generation, the Turkish-Tatar nation living in Crimea was under the pressure of Russian chauvinists. The increasing pressure on the Turkish-Tatars prompted the innovative Ismail Bey Gaspiralı and his friends to take action. Under their leadership, cultural movements were initiated to start the rebirth process of the Crimean Tatar people. New-style schools, and the birth of the press and literature began [19]. With the birth of the press and literature, in the chaos brought by Russian oppression, the idea of a national school was embraced in Crimea to raise the Crimean Tatar children, who had become alienated from their original culture and language, in the Turkish national culture and their mother tongue, Crimean Tatar Turkish. [8].

## 2. The Idea of Establishing a New Nation and a New Society in Çobanzade's Ideology

Bekir Sıtkı Çobanzade is a poet representing the Turkish peoples annexed by Russia. Through the charity association Cemiyet-i Hayriye, which supported Gaspiralı's Usul-ü Cedid method, Çobanzade, together with the linguist Fitrat, received education in Turkey. He tried to spread the Usul-ü Cedid method, known as the New Method, to all Turkish people worldwide. He became one of the most important representatives of the revolutionary movement created by Gaspiralı. Consequently, he earned the reactions of the Russian administration, Russian missionaries, and the Kadımcılar (advocates of the Old Method). As a Young Turk educated in Turkey, he adopted Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist ideas. He engaged in various scientific and political activities in Crimea, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Bashkortostan, and Azerbaijan, primarily his homeland Crimea, which was under occupation. He produced scientific works for the unification of Turkish countries. He accepted Turkish spoken in Turkey as the common language. He fought for the future of his people and Turkish unity, even at the cost of leaving his homeland in response to various oppressions by the Russian government. He rejected various privileges offered by the Communists. To preserve fundamental elements such as Turkish history, Turkish culture, and Turkish traditions, and to ensure that the new generation received a good education, he taught in village schools. With the education he received in Budapest and Istanbul, he went to Hungary and exchanged ideas with Cafer Seydahmet Kırımer. During this period, the idea of establishing a United Turkish-Tatar Republic began to take shape. During this time, Çobanzade conducted various researches on the roots of Turkish history. In 1919, he was influenced by Bela Kun and his friends' idea of establishing a republican state. On July 17, 1920, he returned to Crimea through Istanbul and joined the Milli Fırka People's Party, the first step towards the idea of a New Nation and a New Society.

The most important duty of children for the advancement of Turks in the fields of science and civilization is to preserve national culture, maintain traditions, and protect the spiritual assets of the Crimean people. He played an enlightening role in the idea of a national school for this purpose. The establishment of Turkish schools in Tashkent, Fergana, and Bukhara were steps towards creating a United Turkish-Tatar state. His presentations in Dagestan and Bashkortostan and his speech in Tatarstan were all conscious steps taken in this direction. His aim was to dismantle the Soviet Union and establish the United Turkish-Tatar Republic, which he referred to as the New Nation [21]. Çobanzade trained Turkish intellectuals such as M. Hüseyinzade, M. Caferov, A. Tağızade, İ. Hasanov, A. Şerifov, M. A. Dadaşzade, M. Ş. Şireliyev, and H. M. Araslı to elevate Turkish education and create a new civilization [3].

## 3. Ideas and Construction Stages for Children in the New Education Method

In 1919, in Budapest, Çobanzade used his article "Cultural Movements of Russian Tatars," published in Turan Journal, and his works "Introduction to Turkish-Tatar Linguistics" written in 1921-1922 as sources in the education to be conducted in new-method schools. While teaching at the Crimea Tutayköy Pedagogical Technical School in 1922, he used these works to train students. Veli İbrahimov was the person who directed Çobanzade to this task. Çobanzade wrote in his article "Teaching Methods of Turkish Language and Literature" that many books on various fields were written in Moscow University and that the situation in Europe was similar. According to Çobanzade, writing separate books for each field of knowledge led to the emergence of new trends. The modernization of Russian and European science was due to these trends [4]. Çobanzade stated that Turkish-Tatar peoples should read and write together with European nations and create a new civilization and new life. According to him, the history of Turkish language entering schools dates back to the end of the 19th century.

"The Turkish language began to enter schools in Russia in 1744 and in Turkey in 1242 (Islamic calendar). In this regard, the influence of figures such as Kayyum Nasırı from the Northern Turks, Cevdet and Fuad Pashas from the Southern Turks, İsmail Gasprinski, and Hasan Bey Melikov is significant."

Çobanzade chose to use new-method educational techniques in the idea of a New Nation and New Society. The new method of education introduced many innovations concerning child education. As a linguist, Çobanzade emphasized the importance of phonology, phonetics, sentence formation, the use and pronunciation of the Turkish language, the lifespan of the used language, the definition and formation of court literature and folk literature, and the use of the New Alphabet in the new

schools to be established. In his Turkish language classes at Tutayköy Pedagogical Technical School, he showed special attention to [15]. Turkish language and fields. He chaired the linguistics department at the Society for Learning Azerbaijan. In short, he was a representative of language and linguistics in schools and educational institutions. He was once severely punished for spreading the Latin alphabet. To expedite the transition of the Turkish-Muslim people from the Arabic alphabet to the Latin alphabet during the establishment of the United Turkish-Tatar state, he taught his students the Latin alphabet. He created the scientific terminology of the Tatar languages. To create a strong education system, he secretly met with Mehmet Fuat Köprülü and Hüseyinbey Alizade. He also exchanged ideas with Cafer Seydahmet Kırimer.

### 3.1. The Issue of Centralizing Language and Literature in Children's Schools

According to Çobanzade, in European and Russian schools, teaching is centered around language and literature. He criticized the centralization of teaching around religion and religious topics in our schools. He noted the significant deficiency in our literature due to the lack of centralization around language and literature.

"According to some pedagogues and psychologists, teaching in schools should be centralized around language. Because language, as it can reflect all life very poorly, often stands against concrete ideas and experiences and hinders the natural development of the mind." [2].

According to Çobanzade, the purpose of these schools is to act as a bridge between Eastern and Western culture and civilization. [1]. It is to introduce foreign nations to our language, culture, literature, and civilization. The primary duty of schools is to bring Turkish-Tatar peoples to the level of contemporary civilizations. Schools will be the step taken together by Turkish-Tatar peoples on the path of science and civilization.

#### *Criticism of Language in Children's Education in Old Method Schools*

Çobanzade emphasized that the language in old method schools is lifeless and uninteresting. Therefore, he argued that subjects like nature and mathematics should be included in the new schools. [11]. In other words, he believed that language, like religious topics, has its own preoccupations and that language preoccupations should also enhance intellectual development and strengthen social tendencies, which are very pronounced in children [5]. Çobanzade adopted the syllable-voice system against the Old Method advocates. He advocated for the establishment of educational institutions in Western school styles rather than religious educational institutions. He proposed teaching literacy in a hygienic environment [20].

He argued that children's schools should impart the skills of reading correctly, writing correctly, and thinking correctly. He believed that schools should deal with all elements of the

spoken language, its usage area, and all issues related to the mother tongue as a whole. He stated that it was problematic for printed texts written with pen, paper, and printing to replace the living word and the native language familiar to the child's soul in the old school [2].

### 3.2. The Concept of School in New Method Education

One of the most important activities of the Cedid Movement is mother tongue education in schools. Turkish-Tatar youth should be enrolled in schools providing education in the mother tongue. The Russian government supported the old method to prevent the Cedidciler from implementing this method. However, the Cedidciler opposed the old method advocates and announced that they supported and adopted the new method of education. To hinder the progress of the Cedidciler, the Russian government increased the number of schools it established [18].

Çobanzade believed that Turkish-Tatar peoples should begin to read, write, and lead a civilized life together with new European nations in new schools. He emphasized that schools should provide information on language grammar, and the purpose of using new knowledge should be to provide benefits. According to him, in new method education, grammar should not take the first place. Grammar should leave its deserved place, and issues related to reading and the development of language should come first [6]. In 1914, Russia had definite ideas about new method education at the All-Russian Language Teachers Congress. The most important element in new method education is to understand the children's language.

#### 3.2.1. The Education of Girls in New Method Schools

The pioneers of the movement to send girls to school were İsmail Gaspıralı and his daughter Şefika Gaspıralı. Şefika Gaspıralı facilitated the birth and development of the women's movement in Russia through the journal *Alem-i Nisvan*. Çobanzade, one of the supporters of the women's movement based on the Cedid movement, waged an all-out war against the concepts of destiny and fate in his poems written in 1917. He confronted the strong fate with knowledge and came to the conclusion that Crimea's fate, marked by the turmoil of war, could be changed through knowledge. The primary goal of his poetry was the education of girls. The chaos and ignorance brought by war had driven the Crimean people into conflict. The most effective solution to save the people from this effect was to raise educated children and ensure that these children would lead the country. In this way, the Crimean Tatar people would be saved from ignorance and poverty. Accordingly, he educated his sister, Züleyha Hanım, and ensured she became an educated woman. Züleyha Çobanzade studied at the Darülmualimat school, where Şefika Gaspıralı was the principal. We obtain information about Darülmualimat from the memoirs of Züleyha Hanım. Dur-

ing the period when Züleyha Çobanzade studied at Darülmualimat, the directors of girls' schools were Şefika Gaspıralı, Mustafa Fevzi, and Abibulla Odabaş. The teachers at Darülmualimat included Mamut Nedim, Raşid Mümcü, Edem Feyzi, Abdulla Kürkçü, Midat Refat, Asan Çergeneyev, and Ayşe Targanskaya. According to the information provided by Züleyha Hanım, Darülmualimat graduated its first students in 1922, and the first female teacher candidates who graduated from Darülmualimat were Rabiya Bekirova, Refika Kutbettin, and Raima Müllina. Based on the article *Unutulğan oquv Yurtumuz Darülmualimat* by Neriman Abdulvahaapov, we learn that Züleyha Çobanzade's three daughters also graduated from Darülmualimat [12].

### 3.2.2. The Education and Teaching Career of His Sister Züleyha Hanım and Her Dismissal from 9 Children's Schools in Karasubazar

Züleyha Hanım, Çobanzade's sister, was born in 1904 in Karasubazar, Crimea. At the age of 18, she graduated from the Women's Pedagogical School (Darülmualimat) and later from a branch of the Crimean Pedagogical Institute [16]. Züleyha Hanım dedicated her entire life to teaching. At that time, being a female educator was not easy. Her brother Çobanzade was accused of nationalism during this period. Due to the accusations against Çobanzade related to the idea of establishing a United Tatar State, her sister was dismissed from 9 schools. In 1933, she was included in the list of teachers in the "Cemaatqa Yat" register. Later, she got a job at a village school but could not work there for long. This deeply affected Çobanzade. They corresponded about this issue. In 1937, Bekir Sıtkı Çobanzade was imprisoned and later executed. During this period, Züleyha Çobanzade found her brother's book *Crimean Tatar Philology*. She was dismissed from the school where she worked due to accusations of nationalism. Çobanzade gave special attention to the education of girls in his works. He created a prototype of a young Turkish-Muslim girl named Esma, dedicated to his sister Züleyha and other Turkish women, in his poems.

### 3.3. Female Soldiers in New Method Education: The Turkish Muslim Prototype Esma

The young girl named Esma, chosen as the prototype of a Turkish-Muslim girl, must study and save her people from the bad situation they are in. In his poem *Atama* (To My Father), he emphasized that Tatar girls should not be deceived by ignorance and that Esma, who is a Turkish Muslim, should be educated.

“Asker boldıq, urulduq,  
Cat ellerde qırıldıq  
Esmacıqını taşlanız,  
Oqutmağa başlanız,  
Kelsin, hatır sorasın!  
Sarsın qolum carasın,

Sarsın qolum carasın.”

To combat ignorance, the number of schools began to increase, and importance was given to the education of girls. The only remedy against the dark fate was for Esma and other Turkish-Muslim girls to be educated. [13]. "Esma's duty in this poem is not only to be a pioneer who will oppose fate but also to be a female pioneer who will oppose fate. In the *Manas* epic, the life path of Kadirgaç and other women is connected to *Manas* and his fate. However, Çobanzade entrusted the life path of the entire Crimean people to educated women. [22]. The only force that can triumph over darkness is light, so Esma and others like her must be educated to bring light to the darkness. If Esma changes her own fate, the fate of the entire Crimean people will unite" [8].

Baht pek kavi, yenilmiyor  
Yalvarıyoruz eğilmiyor  
Esmacığı bırakın  
Okutmağa başlayın  
Gavur bahtı tutalım  
Bir çukura atalım...

In the poem *Su Anası* (Water Mother), two names, Ayşe and Esma, are used. The poem deals with the story of a Turkish-Muslim woman, Esma (or Ayşe), who was deprived of her rights and denied the right to love and be loved, and who, out of her own will, commits suicide and attains freedom. The events that befell the girl named Esma or Ayşe are the tragic stories of Crimean Tatar women [8].

### 3.3.1. Children's Education in the Context of Establishing a New Nation and Society

Esma is intended to be raised as a mother who will educate Tatar children on the path to establishing a new nation and society. Esma will participate in the race of nations as a female soldier and will make the name of the newly established Turkish-Tatar civilization known in this battle of knowledge.

“Anan tek axmasın gözünün yaşı,  
Yetiştirdi hananı qurmak zamanı,  
Atam tek boynumu büküm ürem men de,  
Könlümde dirildi genc Tatar qanı.”

Çobanzade expressed that everyone was harmed in this dreadful race. [9]. Despite the occupation of Crimea, he argued that the Tatar people and the essence of Tatar civilization were preserved. According to Çobanzade, the time has come to reveal the identity of the Turkish-Tatar people and to establish a strong civilization. The theme of the idea of the New Nation and New Society to be established again includes Esma and the embroidered fez that represents her. While Esma represents Crimean Tatar girls, the embroidered fez symbolizes their preserved true selves. Esma and other Crimean Tatar children have never lost their national identity. Thanks to Esma and young Turks like her, Turkish Tatar blood and civilization will revive, and Turkish youth will become enlightened. They will win this race of civilization with the melodies from their kaval and the embroidered fez of Esma.

“Qalk, Esma, qardaşım, gey sırma fesi

*Çiyinine saldığın o şalın hanı?  
Savadlı nesiller yetişdir bize,  
Qoy şimal küleyi açsın havanı”*

### 3.3.2. Efforts Toward Diligence in the Context of Creating a New Nation and Society

In the context of creating a new nation and society, emphasis was placed on the education of girls. The prototype of Esma is the most crucial element in the effort towards diligence [8]. The idea of diligence mentioned by Çobanzade includes elements that encompass a collective struggle, sacrifice, and the spiritual unity of the Tatar people. In his poem "Rise Esma, My Sister," he united all Tatar girls under a common destiny. Çobanzade envisioned girls who value their religion, traditions, and customs, while also following Western science, in the new nation and society to be established. He invites Esma to the race for renewal and modernization with her ornate fez.

### 3.4. Alphabet in New Method Education Schools

Çobanzade explains his ideas on this subject in his articles "Teaching the Alphabet" and "Reading Without an Alphabet." After adopting the Arabic script, the Turkish-Tatar peoples accepted the syllabic method. The syllabic method was maintained in European and Russian schools until a certain period. However, the phonetic method was discovered and used by Ikelzamer and Stefani in the 16th century in European schools. After the 1905 Revolution, Ismail Gaspiralı introduced this method to Turkish schools. This method teaches individual sounds and their corresponding letters, forming syllables and words. However, the phonetic method is no longer suitable for new schools today. It separates children from the living language on one hand and contradicts the principles of scientific linguistics on the other. European and Russian schools have sought a new method. They found a method called the American method or the whole shapes method by the Russians. This method reads whole words and sentences at once rather than individual letters. It is a difficult and impractical method. The most important method in learning at schools is methodlessness. It is difficult to publish an alphabet book that aligns with the curriculum focusing on the native language and local dialect of children. Thus, the trend of reading without an alphabet emerges.

Çobanzade approaches the new alphabet issue from the stage of scientific and theoretical principles. Some of these principles are:

1. He emphasized the necessity of organizing the alphabet according to the sounds in a language, noting that the Arabic alphabet is insufficient in this regard.
2. The Arabic alphabet does not respond to the rules of the Turkish language.
3. The old spelling is incorrect.
4. New letters are the most favorable.
5. The thirteen alphabets used by the Turks so far are not

suitable for the nature of the Turkish language.

6. The most harmful alphabet to the Turkish language is the Arabic alphabet.
7. The Arabic and Persian alphabets are not useful for those who want to write in the people's Turkish.

Çobanzade's main goal is to create a fixed alphabet that the Turkish world can understand. [14]. He expressed in 1924 in the newspaper Yeni Yol that the Latin alphabet is the most suitable for the structure of the Turkish language: "A new alphabet that is in accordance with the rules of our language will demolish the wall between the people's language and the literary style, cultivating a unified class of enlightened individuals who will soon disseminate and generalize the benefits of science and technology among all the people" [7].

#### 3.4.1. Articles for School Teachers in New Method Education

1. The Position of Language in Schools, Old and New
2. Letters and Sounds
3. Teaching the Alphabet
4. Reading Without an Alphabet
5. Examples of Alphabet Lessons
6. Writing and Correct Writing
7. Composition and Writing
8. Correct Speaking
9. Reading
10. Turkish Language Cabinet

#### 3.4.2. Folk Literature in New Method Schools

Çobanzade believed that the gap between our written literature and folk literature would diminish with the new method of education. He advocated for the inclusion of folk poets alongside literary history in the books to be written for Turkish schools to equalize the value given to folk literature and enlightened literature (Divan Literature). [10]. He noted that Mirza Fetali Akhundov and Mirza Ali Ekber Sabir successfully accomplished this in Azerbaijan. He also referred to the works of Western researchers like Radlov, Kunoss, and Prohle, and the works of Ahmet Refik Pasha on this subject in Turkey. He sought answers to how we can benefit from our folk literature in our schools.

"Written literature means written thought. This is not just transferring folklore into writing. The written code is different from folklore" [17].

The most important poetic context of the relationship between written literature and folklore:

1. The influence of folklore on written lit.
2. The influence of written literature on folklore
3. The mutual influence of folklore and written literature [16].

#### 3.4.3. Programs in Russian Schools

a. The school should provide the ability to read, write, speak, and think correctly. b. This new knowledge and skill can be obtained not by dealing with only a part of the native

language but by engaging with the entirety of issues related to the native language as a whole life collection. c. In addition to general education and mental development, the school can provide other information. d. Grammar should provide information on language knowledge and not follow an empirical purpose. e. Considering the exceptional and significant impact of information related to linguistics on mental development, it is deemed necessary to include such information in the primary school curriculum. f. It should completely abandon the idea that the above-mentioned skills and knowledge can only be obtained through the teaching of grammar. g. Therefore, it should appreciate the scientific value of grammar not only as an empirical goal but also as a form of research on language. h. From this, it should process and prepare the samples, methods of logic, practice, and exercises in spelling style and abandon the belief that all this knowledge can be obtained only through grammar as it has been so far [23].

## 4. Conclusion

Çobanzade aimed to establish a United Turkish-Tatar Republic free from Russian domination. He adopted the idea of Turkism against the Bolshevik ideological movement, turning it into a document beneficial for Turkish interests. He advocated for the right of Turkish-Tatar children to determine their own destiny. Thus, he was one of the proponents of education in the mother tongue in new method schools based on the Jadid method. According to him, the people who will illuminate Crimea are the young generations and children. He believed that learning their nation's characteristics, culture, and traditions, and developing themselves materially, intellectually, and spiritually, is the most crucial factor in the fate of Crimea. The Crimean Tatar people will achieve victory in this struggle by overcoming fate through education, using good and bad expressions between Russian reality and Turkish national consciousness.

## Abbreviations

p.	Page
no	Number
c.	Cilt
lit.	Literature

## Author Contributions

Ozlem Altın is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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