

# On the early years of Taurida University in Simferopol (1917–1921)

T.I. Ulyankina

S.I. Vavilov Institute for the History of Sciences and Technology of the Russian Academy of Sciences; A. Solzhenitsyn House of Russian Abroad, Moscow

In the history of Taurida University (Simferopol, Republic of Crimea) a distinct «early» period of its activity stands out. This period is associated with the names of famous St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev professors and teachers of higher education who had fled to Crimea at the beginning of Russia's Civil War. Along with representatives of the local intelligentsia, these scientists participated in the activities of a number of important scientific and cultural institutions in Crimea. With the change of regime, many of them had to be evacuated from the peninsula, along with the remaining members of the Russian Volunteer Army. This most important period is covered extremely poorly and inconsistently in the literature currently available. In the writing of this article, materials were used from the following sources: the Archives of the Alexander Solzhenitsyn House of Russia Abroad, Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences, as well as materials from the family archives of the Dmitrievs, Metalnikovs and Olferevs, which have not previously been published.

**Keywords:** *Russian scientific emigration, Civil War in Russia, Russian Voluntary army*

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The history of the Taurida University (Simferopol, Republic of Crimea)<sup>1</sup> is notable for its "early" period. It is associated with the names of well-known professors and university teachers from St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev who all fled to the Crimea at the beginning of the Civil War. Along with representatives of the local intelligentsia, these scientists belonged to a number of important scientific and cultural institutions in the Crimea, including the Taurida University in Simferopol. With the change of the regime, many of them, along with the remnants of the Russian Volunteer Army, had to be evacuated from the peninsula. Some went to Europe on their own; the rest were exposed to repression and forcibly expelled. Now we can say with confidence that "the Crimean period" was decisive to the fate of many well-known immigrant scientists from around the world. G. V. Vernadsky recalled that in the 1917-1920, "the Crimea was the pinnacle of intellectual and religious life" [1]. The list of emigrant scientists at the Taurida University included: geologist and soil

scientist V. K. Agafonov, lawyer N. N. Alekseev, a geologist Academician N. I. Andrusov, historian G. V. Vernadsky, agronomist S. S. Crimea, biologists S. I. Metalnikov, biologists V. G. Koranchevsky, lawyer P. Novgorodtsev philologist V. A. Rozov, philosopher Shestov, philosopher and theologian S. N. Bulgakov, astronomer O. L. Struve, lawyer, historian F. W. Taranovsky and others.

This article is the first to reflect the role of Professor Sergei Ivanovich Metalnikova – protozoologist, immunologist and microbiologist. He and other prominent scientists at Taurida University in Simferopol were founders of psychoneuroimmunology. In Russia, S. I. Metalnikov was professor at the Higher Courses for Women of St. Petersburg. In exile, he became professor at the Pasteur Institute in Paris. None of the biographies of S. I. Metalnikova during "the Crimean period" of his work has been previously recognized. The author used previously unpublished documents from the archives of RAS (ARAN. 543 F. Nikolai Morozov. Op. 4) the Solzhenitsyn Russian Home Archives abroad (ADRZ. F. 69 Family Foundation Kovalevsky. Op. 2) and materials from the family archives of Dmitriev, Metalnikov, Olferevyh (Moscow). The works of Crimean historians were also

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<sup>1</sup> Currently Taurida National V.I. Vernadsky University, Republic of Crimea, Simferopol, etc.. Acad. Vernadsky, Building 4).

used [2], particularly the works of Professor S. B. Filimonov from Taurida National V.I. Vernadsky University [3, 4].

### S. I. Metalnikov

Sergei Metalnikov (April 23.1870, Krotkov, Simbirsk province. – September 17 (27), 1946, Paris) was born into an aristocratic family. His father was a permanent magistrate in Ardatov. His mother was Ekaterina Ivanova (Fateeva in her youth). After the death of her husband, she was left with five children (Dimitri, Faith, twins Michael and Sergei and Nikolai) and was forced to move to Kazan because the older children needed to go to school. There, she met military scientist, major-general of artillery, Boris Wiener. Their friendship resulted in marriage. Boris Wiener wrote N. P. Olferiev, a cousin of Metalnikov, "I received a dowry of four stepsons, a stepdaughter, and the management of 300 hectares of nursery land as the life estate of my wife". [5] Wiener was rich. He owned a four-story house in St. Petersburg, one on the corner of Panteleimon street (named Pestel street since 1923), one at Solyaya lane (home 4/16), and a large estate "Artek" on the slopes of Mount Ayu-Dag in Crimea (Suuk-Su, Taurian province) including the winery on its lands.

Thanks to Wiener, who was transferred to St. Petersburg, the Metalnikova family moved to the capital and the children obtained a first-class education. Upon "Powder Plant B. I. Wiener" near Shlisselburg. There, he manufactured "Sokol" brand gunpowder, dynamite and other products. He also founded the "Joint-stock company for the manufacture and sale of gunpowder, dynamite and other explosives" [5]. After the death of Boris Ivanovich, his widow, Catherine Ivanovna, inherited it all; her eldest son, D. I. Metalnikov, took charge of the "Joint-stock company".

The wonderful hospitality of the Metalnikov-Wiener family in St. Petersburg and the Crimea is preserved in the memories of N. O. Lossky, a former classmate of Sergei Ivanovich at St. Petersburg University [6]. Also to be found in the dacha at Arteke was Nikolai A. Morozov (1854-1946), the pardoned "Shlisselburg inmate", people's revolutionary, chemist astronomer, cultural historian, scientific organizer, writer, social activist Doctor of chemistry cum laude

(1906), and honorary member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (1932) [7].

Metalnikov's sister, Vera (married - Keller) also had an estate, "Partenit", at the foot of the Medvedev Mountains (Ayu-Dag, Dekoreyskaya parish, Yalta district, p / o Alupka) belonging to her husband, Collegiate<sup>2</sup> assessor Vladimir K. Keller. Keller also owned a villa, "Dardemis", with a lovely view of the sea. In 1918, the family of General Wrangel was photographed there [8]. With the departure of the Kellers from Russian, the estate passed into the possession of the mother – E. I. Metalnikov.

The wife of Metalnikov, Olga (1876-1952), was the daughter of the famous Yalta doctor Vladimir Nikolaevich Dmitriev (1839-1904), who had a large estate near Yalta. Before emigration, Olga donated large plots of land, near Yalta on the Isar, [9] to Tavrida University.

In 1895, Metalnikov graduated from the Natural Sciences Department of Physics and Mathematics Faculty of St. Petersburg State University and was granted a two-year sabbatical to prepare for a professorship. His first scientific work was done under the supervision of S. A. Kovalevsky (1840-1901) [10] in St. Petersburg and under I. I. Mechnikov in Paris. In 1894, when Kovalevsky established the special zoological laboratory IAN (OZL IAN) in St. Petersburg, he invited Metalnikov as laboratory assistant. Metalnikov was a member of Biological Laboratory P. F. Lesgafta from 1900 to 1917, and its director from 1910 to 1917. He was also a professor of the Higher Women (Bestuzhevsky, class 1911), the Chief Secretary of the "Biological Society" (1912), and one of the editors of the journal "Nature". After the autumn of 1917, Metalnikov left Petrograd and went to the Crimean. Upon his recommendation, the Biological Laboratory P. F. Lesgafta was headed by N. A. Morozov.

Sergei and Olga were married January 1896 in Yalta [11]. Their family included three children – Anna (1898-1964), Catherine (1900 and?) and Sergei (1906-1981).

The correspondence between Morozov and Metalnikov, stored in the archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences, contains detailed descriptions of the life of the family in the Crimea

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<sup>2</sup> Title of certain civilian officials in Russia before 1917.

on the eve of and during the Civil War. On July 31, 1917, Sergei Ivanovich wrote N. A. Morozov: "Things have never been as bad and as hopeless as now. No one knows when the madness will take us to "the brink of destruction", and throw us into the abyss. For three months we have been balancing on the edge". [12] Metalnikov first mentions the establishment of the university in the Crimea in November 1917: "Sweet and dear Nikolai, I safely arrived in Artek. There is complete peace and quiet here. I can rest my soul from the Bolshevik poison. Apparently, we are still able to start classes in Livadia this January and I have recommended you as a lecturer. It will all sort itself out soon. You and Xenia should come join us. We'll find a way to fix a meal for you" [13].

After Metalnikov resigned as director of the Biological Laboratory in St. Petersburg and was settled in Artek, he wrote Morozov (December 13, 1917): "... I am considering staying in the South for a year and maybe longer. If Russia continues with this abomination, I will emigrate somewhere to America or Paraguay. At least I won't have to see this stupidity and baseness. I would rather be a shoeshine boy in America than the Director of the Laboratory in a vile country like Russia. At least here in Crimea there is complete peace of mind and nobility – maybe it's the river air? [unclear]. But the news from St. Petersburg has me in total despair. How will all of this end? The makeup of the Constituent Assembly also gives little hope for a favorable solution to all of the enormous challenges facing the country. Write to me, dear Nikolai; tell me what you think of these events and if you have at least a modicum of optimism? .Here In Artek ... I feel terribly lonely, and I so miss your company" [14]. A letter from Morozov on January 1, 1918: I thought I would go to Saint Petersburg for the holidays; but, it's very difficult to travel now, and risky too" [15].

### **The work of S. S. Crimea in establishing the University of Tavrida**

In the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, the southern coast of the Crimea was not just a resort for those with pulmonary ailments; it was a favorite destination of the elite of Russian society. The first palace on the coast ("the Livadia Palace"), not far from Yalta, was built in the late 1860s for the wife of

Emperor Alexander II. She was suffering from tuberculosis. In subsequent decades, the imperial family acquired other estates in the Crimea. They had exotic names such as: Oreanda, Ai-Todor, Dulber, Massandra and Ai-Danil. The beauty and climate of the southern coast of Crimea attracted many members of high society; this included intellectuals such as writers, artists and scientists. They usually spend a few weeks a year in Yalta and the surrounding area. On August 15, 1916, the agronomist, famous statesman and public figure of Crimea, Solomon (Shneiderman) Crimea (real name - Neumann, 1868-1932), also a member of the State Council of Russia, raised the question of the need to establish a post-secondary institution in the Crimea at a meeting of the Tavrida Province Zemstvo<sup>3</sup>.

He drafted a bill that was submitted to the Minister of National Education, Count P. N. Ignatiev and was signed by thirty-one member of the State Council (approved January 14, 1917 at the 51th session of the State Council). The Taurian Province Zemstvo then allocated funds of 1 million rubles to the university and the county zemstvo allocated 500,000 rubles for construction needs [9, p. 7-8]. After the February Revolution of 1917, the Livadia Palace on the southern coast of the Crimea was liberated and it was decided that it would be used to accommodate future classes of the university. The idea of opening a university in the area of Yalta was supported by the "Society for the Advancement of Higher Education in the Crimea", the Yalta city government, the "Union professors of Yalta", the Director of the Nikita Botanical Gardens, member of the Russian Academy of Botanical Sciences N. I. Kuznetsov (1864-1932), mathematician N. M. Krylov (1879-1955), zoologist S. I. Metalnikova and historian M. V. Dovnar-Zapolskogo (1867-1934).

The University of St. Vladimir in Kiev played a special role in the creation of the Tavrida University. October 17, 1917, the University Council approved the establishment of a new affiliate law university in Crimean (Simferopol) and a small group of teachers were sent to the Crimea. It included world-famous scientists: academicians N. I. Andrusov, V. I. Palladin, V. A. Obruchev, P. P. Sushkin, Professor

<sup>3</sup> Zemstvo was a form of local government instituted during the great liberal reforms of Alexander II.

M. V. Dvornar-Zapol'skii, R. I. Gelwig, S. M. Bogdanov, L. O. Kordysh, V. G. Koranchevsky, E. K. Meyer, S. O. Kolyandyk, G. A. Semeke-Maksimovic and others. It was proposed for the four main faculties of the future university to be spread out over several cities of the Crimea: administration would be in Simferopol, the historical-philological and legal departments in Yalta, first and second year courses of Physics and mathematics and medicine in Feodosia, the economic-commercial and technical department in Kerch, the archaeology department in Sevastopol, etc. On May 10, 1918 the official opening of the Crimean branch of the Medical Faculty of the University of St. Vladimir took place in Kiev. May 11, 1918, was the opening of the Physics and Mathematics (with natural and mathematical branches) and medical faculties in Yalta.

Crimea, however, was in a constant fever. The Red forces came to replace the White Army troops. These dramatic events were reflected in the letters S. I. Metalnikova. On January 31, 1918, he wrote: "... you already know from the newspapers that the Bolshevik wave has come to Yalta and, as a result, a terrible storm has broken out here. Many have been hurt. Now things are starting to calm down. We live in Livadia and are trying to set up the university. So far, it's not finished yet, although there have been a lot of admissions" [17].

A month later (24 February 1918) Metalnikov again returns to the idea of the new university: "As I wrote to you, we live in Livadia, where we are trying to set up the university. Everything has been readied for the opening. We have professorial staff and premises. There are many admissions (over 400 people). However, we have decided not to open, as there is no free passage. Life is difficult now, awfully difficult. Moreover, it seems to me, it is nowhere more difficult than in Yalta. Yalta is in the hands of a gang of Red Guards and sailors. There were investments of 20 million rubles set aside for Yalta. Now, the Red Guards and sailors are busy trying to nullify the debt of the so-called bourgeois. No one from the city is allowed to leave and house searches are conducted. All the while, they are taking everything, not just money, gold and silver, but even linen and household utensils. Many wealthy people have been jailed and threatened with execution unless money is

paid. All homes and estates have already been nationalized and taken from the owners, some of whom have even been expelled. Everything has been transferred to the workers. The only thing left to the owners is the right to pay for work performed. Banks issue only 100 rubles every two weeks. Similarly, Artek has been seized and handed over to the workers. Everybody's mood is terrible. It's like being in a den of thieves who can do with you what they want and nothing can protect you. Newspapers are closed and no one dares speak on the phone. It's like living on an island, not knowing what is happening around you. We are waiting for a miracle to save Russia and all of us. .... Nevertheless, my soul is warmed by hopes for better times. I really dream of immigrating to America and wrote a letter to President Wilson to help the Russian intelligentsia immigrate to America. Would you agree to sign the letter? Write me my dear, dear Nikolai, more often. I beg you. Letters from friends are the only joy" [17].

On July 28, 1918, elections were held for acting rector of the University of Tavrida. The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, professor Gelwig Roman (1873-1920), was elected. He is a Doctor of Medicine, former prosecutor at the department of normal anatomy of the Kiev Women's Medical Institute, and professor of anatomy, physiology and histology at the Kiev Frebelevskom Institute. The Grand opening of the University took place October 14, 1918 in the Tavrida nobility Simferopol Theatre.

On the eve of the celebrations, in a letter dated September 4, 1919, Metalnikov writes to N. Morozov: "My sweet and dear Nikolai. You probably know that we have already settled into the university here. But unfortunately, we will have to move it to Simferopol, where we have been given extensive facilities, land, and money. The police and local regional authorities took Livadia, on which we had so counted on.

Now the University is on firmer footing. It has its own facilities and a very large number of students. All of the faculties have been open since fall. But I'm still thinking of moving to Kharkov, where I was selected to the University. The fact is that it is impossible now to arrange a permanent scientific laboratory in Kharkov, so I would be unable to work for at least another two years. I

cannot leave the local university right now, so I decided to stay here another 2-3 months, perhaps even the entire fall semester.

We now live in Artek, but I am on the road most of the time, either in Yalta or in Simferopol on university business [18].

### Events of 1919

After eight months, power in the Crimea passed into the hands of the Red Army. On April 4, 1919, their troops captured Perekop and on April 11 they entered Simferopol. April 15, 1919, the Crimean regional government and their families were forced to flee the Crimea on the small Greek ship "Hope" to the city of Piraeus (Greece). On board the vessel were the Chairman of the Crimean government - S. S. Crimea, the Minister of Finance - A. P. Bart, the Minister of Labour and the Regional Controller - P. S. Bobrowski, the Minister for Foreign Affairs - M. M. Vinaver, Minister of Justice - V. D. Nabokov. Also onboard was A. A. Steven, the Minister of Food, Trade and Industry (also Acting Minister of Railways, Posts, Telegraphs, and public works), and founder of the Taurian Scientific Archive Commission, the founder of the Simferopol branch of the Russian Society of Horticulture and Libraries of "Tavrida". And there were more. Most of those who left, including S. S. Crimea, left Russia forever. Under the command of General A. I. Denikin, P. S. Bobrowski, A. P. Bart and A. A. Steven returned to Crimea after six months.

Currently there is no data indicating the departure date of Metalnikov to France. Probably, he decided to immediately leave to France in the spring of 1919. The idea to immigrate was supported by an official invitation from Emile Roux, director of the Pasteur Institute in Paris, to head one of the laboratories for the study of immunity at the Institut Pasteur in Garches (near Paris). Apparently, Metalnikov left alone, but his wife and children came to France later. This is supported by the statement of B. V. Dmitriev in his "Memoirs", "Sergey has been in Paris for some time. Olga and the children managed to leave Crimea by sea to France" [19]

On July 12, 1919, the matter of the establishing and funding the Tavrida University was considered by a Special Meeting of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces in the South of Russia, General

A. I. Denikin. The resolution of the meeting was approved by Denikin on August 8, 1919. Two hundred thousand rubles were allocated for Tavrida University [20, p. 508-511]. On 30 August 1919, the Crimean regional government approved the "Regulations on the Tavrida University".

On October 1, 1919, the University celebrated its first anniversary. The Rector R. I. Gelwig made the Commemoration speech. General A. I. Denikin was elected honorary member of the University. The former chairman of the regional government, S. S. Crimea, sent greeting via telegraph from France. At 6 pm, professors and students began a march in the city [4, pg. 9].

On 10 (23) November 1919, the famous philosopher, Professor S. Bulgakov (1871-1944) began teaching at the Law faculty. The newspaper "Crimean Gazette" wrote: "Many scientist-refugees have begun to gather in the territory of the Crimea. Among them are people with names famous throughout Europe. On May 1, their wages were stopped and some of them were forced to sell bagels, matches, etc. To save them from starvation, the Rector of the University of Tavrida [R. I. Gelwig] raised the matter of the including them all as part of the Tavrida University. In a few days, the resolution is passed" [3, p. 9-10].

### V. I. Vernadsky as Rector of the University of Tavrida

Academician V. I. Vernadsky started work at the University of Tavrida at the end of April 1920 as extraordinary Tenured Professor in the Department of Geology. There, he continued to work on his major work "On the living matter". In addition, Vernadsky managed to establish the Tavrida University geochemical laboratory for studying the problem of the role of living organisms in mineral genesis (April 1920). In spite of the extremely difficult living conditions, Vernadsky participated in the preparation of the "Encyclopedia of the Crimea", devoted to the description of natural resources of the peninsula. He was also tasked with the editing of this publication [3, p. 10]. One cannot say that V. I. Vernadsky never seriously thought about leaving Russia, at least during the Civil War. "And he didn't just think about it. As early as 1920, he wrote a letter to the British Association of Science and the Royal Society asking that he be allowed

the opportunity to work in the geochemistry and mineralogy departments. In early July, a letter was received from the Secretary of the British Association of Science that "certain actions had been taken by the authorities" to pick him up. At the end of fall, when Vladimir had been elected Rector of the University of Tavrida, a Red Cross steamer arrived to take away him from Crimea. When the university learned that he was going to leave, a delegation of "professors, privatdozent, students and even the guards rushed towards him begging him not to leave them in this difficult time". Together with her daughter, Vladimir went to Sevastopol and apologized to the captain of the ship who was waiting for him", wrote N. N. Bolkhovitinov [21, p.13].

September 19 (October 2) 1920, at the age of 40, Professor R. I. Gelwig died of a severe form of typhus. On October 6, the day of his funeral, all flags were at half-mast in Simferopol, all entertainment activities were canceled and the City Council decided that one of the city squares be named after him [2, p. 34]. A week later, on 10 October 1920, V. I. Vernadsky was elected to the post of Rector of the University of Tavrida. Thirty-one members of the Council, voted for him and nine against [2, p. 35]. Vernadsky began his leadership duties at Tavrida University with great enthusiasm and excitement. He often met with the Head of the Armed Forces of the Southern Russian Army, General P. N. Wrangel, who had replaced General A. I. Denikin in the post. In an interview with a newspaper journalist of the "South of Russia" he said: "At the moment this is the only free Russian university where autonomy is fully preserved and it must assume responsibility for the revival of scientific work and re-creation of the graduate school ... The situation of scientists and teachers is very hard now; many live in dire financial circumstances and, therefore, cannot work properly. The university has begun an initiative to organize a number of productive centers - agricultural farms, breeding poultry, pigs, rabbits, dairy farms, fisheries, laundry" [3, p. 110].

The archives of V. I. Vernadsky preserved his petition to P. N. Wrangel concerning the young physicist N. P. Rashevskii (served on the destroyer "Jarky") and second lieutenant of the Drozdovsky Artillery Brigade O. L. Struve. "I feel it a duty

of conscience to ask you put yourself in place of the Struve family and return to the mother her only remaining son; what we have here, as with Rashevskii, is a case of a rare talent that requires careful protection" [3, p. 38], wrote Vernadsky. In the same petition, he asked General Wrangel to recommend the young scientist in the armed forces to the Tavrida University [3, p. 37]. On 17 (30) October 1920, the newspaper "Crimean Gazette" wrote: "By order of the Commander in Chief [Wrangell] all 3rd year medical students, having completed seven semesters and who are in the military units as medical assistants, are exempt from military service to serve the fourth year at Tavrida University" [3, p. 11]. Unfortunately, the order became effective two weeks before the arrival of the Reds to the Crimea and could not possibly have made a difference.

At the end of October (October 22-30 1920), V. I. Vernadsky made plans to hold a congress of the scientists of Tavrida (VII Congress of the Tavrida Science Association), in conjunction with the yearly report of Tavrida University. Many scientists gathered to participate at the conference in Simferopol, Russia. Quite unexpectedly, S. I. Metalnikov came from France to the Congress. Memories of this trip can be found in "The Diary of Peter Evgrafovich Kovalevsky" [22, p. 230].

The political situation in the Crimea changed quickly, radically and irreversibly: October 28, 1920 the Red Army crossed the Siwash, took Perekop (7-11 November), and by 17 November took the entire Crimea. Due to the apparent defeat of his army, General P. N. Wrangell ordered the evacuation of 140 thousand soldiers and civilians from Crimea to Constantinople. The Government of Southern Russia requested the aid of France in the evacuation of the White forces and the civilian population. The evacuation of military and civilians from all Crimean ports took two days. At 2:40, on 1/14 November 1920, the Russian warship "General Kornilov" with P. N. Wrangel on board and the French warship "Waldeck Rousseau" with Admiral Dumesnil on board, left the county seat in Sevastopol, and sailed through Yalta and Feodosia to Constantinople. Metalnikov, who at the last moment managed to get a pass from the French mission in Sevastopol, also left the Crimea on the French ship. On board

the "Waldeck Rousseau" was also the daughter of the professor N. I. Andrusova, Vera Nicolaevna [23]. The professor had left with his family to Constantinople four days earlier, March 25, 1920, on board the "Waldeck Rousseau". According to the memoirs of Metalnikov, "the situation in Constantinople is terrible: mud, huts, and refugees in San Stefano sleeping on the ground. Water is scarce, it is not released. He [Metalnikov – the author] visited his daughter there, and saw the Princesses of Peter and Paul Dolgoruky, who had did not have two coins to rub. All their belongings had been thrown into the sea during loading. The weather in the Crimea was 20 degrees below zero" [22, p. 230].

Georgy Vernadsky left the Crimea with his family two days before the evacuation on November 12, 1920, on the steamer "Rion" [1]. Soon, the Crimea astronomer Otto Struve, and the head of Physical Geography of Tavrida University, Professor Valerian K. Agafonov left as well.

#### **Closure of the Tavrida University and its reorganization**

Only two hours after the evacuation of the troops of the Southern Front, the Red Army, under the command of Mikhail Frunze, captured Simferopol. "The political agencies of the Bolsheviks and the Soviet government came along with the Red Army. Soon, the Crimean Party Committee was created and headed by Bela Kun and secretary Rosalia Samoilovna Zemlyachka. Under their leadership began the brutal repression of thousands of opponents of the Bolsheviks who had failed to leave the Crimea; they were arrested and executed" [8, p. 346]. The fight against the "counter-revolutionary underground" was conducted by special departments of the 6th and 4th armies of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. They proceeded to arrest professors and reorganize Tavrida University. On November 16, 1920, medical professor M. M. Diterih was arrested and V. I. Vernadsky immediately filed a petition for release with the comrade Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of the Crimea [3, p. 40-41]. December 23, 1920, at a meeting of the Regional Committee of Russian Communist Party, a resolution was adopted to close Tavrida University. It was assumed that after the dissolution of the University, with the exception

of the Faculty of Medicine, a new selection of student admissions would be made. January 12, 1921, Vernadsky officially resigned as rector, but made a written objection titled "Note on the need to preserve Tavrida University" [3, p. 11]. In total, V. I. Vernadsky was rector of the University of the Tavrida for less than three months.

January 14, 1921, Alexander Baikov the vice-rector (from 1918), was appointed rector of the University of Tavrida. He was a former professor at the St. Petersburg Polytechnic University (1908) and knew M. V. Frunze personally since before the revolution. Alexander Baikov was the one who decided to rename Tavrida University to the Crimean University M. V. Frunze. The Military Revolutionary Committee approved this on 15 January 1921. In spite of the major scientific achievements of Vernadsky, continuing his work in Crimea was considered politically unacceptable. "Fortunately, leaving by convoy was not necessary" wrote historian N. N. Bolkhovitinov. "This was because of a "safety list" from the People's Commissar of Health N. A. Semashko (who was a student of Vernadsky at the University of Moscow), which provided professors Vernadsky, Palladino and some others (including the son of Oldenburg) with private wagons to Moscow" [21, p. 13]. They left Simferopol on 23 February 1921. V. I. Vernadsky was arrested in Petrograd but was soon released [24]. He returned to his previous duties as chairman of the Commission for the Study of Natural Productive Forces of Russia at the Ministry of Education and the Director of the Geological and Mineralogical Museum.

In the period between 1920 and 1921, thousands of Wrangel's army officers, bureaucrats anti-Bolshevik government, the nobility, the clergy, publishers and editors of newspapers and magazines (A. J. Hodge and N. P. Choglakov), Tavrida University Professor F. N. Andrievskii (Andrews), A. P. Bart, A. A. Steven and others were shot [4, p. 97-99]. On December 27, 1922, the 51-year-old priest of the Yalta Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Russian thinker and citizen S. N. Bulgakov and his family (54-year-old wife, Helena, 24-year-old daughter Maria and 11-year-old son Sergei), were administratively expelled from the RSFSR to Constantinople via the steamer "Jean" without the right of return [4, p. 15-27].

So, for three years, between 1918 and 1920 Tavrida University did not have a single graduate. However, according to contemporary historians, "as a result of the activities of local self-government of the Crimea, the wider scientific community, intellectuals and this school, there emerged a focal point of

spiritual opposition to the things happening in the country, to the violence, bloodshed and fratricide" [2, p. 44].

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#### About the author

Ulyankina T.I. – Doctor of Biological Sciences, Chief Researcher at the S.I. Vavilov Institute for the History of Sciences and Technology, Russian Academy of Sciences; A. Solzhenicyn House of Russian Abroad (Moscow).

E-mail: tatparis70@gmail.com

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