

Eupatoria Pages of the Biography of the American Writer Ayn Rand (Alisa Rosenbaum, 1905–1982)*

Ludmila Nikiforova and Mikhail Kizilov

Introduction: Ayn Rand and the Crimea

"Ayn Rand" is the pen name of Alisa¹ Rosenbaum (1905–1982), a prolific novelist, playwright, and philosopher who developed a new philosophical system which she called "objectivism". The Crimean, or to be more precise Eupatorian, pages of the biography of this American writer and philosopher of Russian-Jewish origin, became known to the authors of this article fairly recently. Ayn Rand was generally known for her unwillingness to disclose facts about her origin: She virtually never mentioned her Jewish origin²

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1 Most studies on Ayn Rand that appeared in the West prefer spelling "Alissa" or "Alice"; we would use the form "Alisa" (English "s" is pronounced here as Russian "c", not as "3"; cf. Russian *Алиса*).

2 Nathaniel Branden, *Judgement Day: My Years with Ayn Rand* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 55. For more information about Ayn Rand's attitude to the Jews and Judaism, her own Jewish origin, and also about the role her Jewish colleagues played in her life, see: Jeff Walker, *The Ayn Rand Cult* (Illinois: Open Court, 1999), 277–287.

and seldom referred to the existence of friends and relatives who remained in the Soviet Union. She did this to prevent the Soviet authorities from inflicting possible repressions on these people.³ Ayn Rand's biographers, fans and critics focused mostly on the American period of her life and said virtually nothing about her earlier days.⁴

This is why until recently her name did not mean anything to students of Crimean history. The first references to the Crimean period of Ayn Rand's life began to appear in the 1960s.⁵ In 1987, five years after her death, a book by Barbara Branden, her intravital biographer, was published in New York.⁶ This book brought new insights into many aspects of the writer's biography, including essential information about her stay in the Crimea. According to this biography, the Rosenbaums fled from Petrograd Bolsheviks in autumn 1918. Subsequently, they spent some months in Odessa, whence, at the beginning of 1919, they moved further south, to the Crimea. However, the book did not contain a single reference to the names of Crimean towns, or addresses and names of any person in connection with the Rosenbaums' stay in the peninsula. Most studies on the Russian roots of Ayn Rand's thought, which were published afterwards, usually simply referred to the data taken from Branden's book and did not bring any new insights into the issue of the Crimean period of the writer's biography.⁷

3 As the writer once confessed: "I never tell anyone my original family name because if I still have relatives living in Russia, they'd be endangered" (Branden, *Judgement Day*, 73). As a result, even Ayn Rand's closest friends (including her disciple and lover, Nathaniel Branden) learned her real name, Alisa Rosenbaum, many years later (Ibid.).

4 The full bibliography of works regarding Ayn Rand's literary and philosophical oeuvre is too voluminous to be included here. See below references to several of the most important studies focusing on her biography.

5 Robert Mayhew, "The sacred in *We the Living*", in Robert Mayhew (ed.), *Essays on Ayn Rand's We the Living* (Plymouth: Lexington, 2012), 306.

6 Barbara Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand* (New York: Anchor press, 1987).

7 See for example: Chris Matthew Sciabarra, *Ayn Rand: The Russian Radical* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 72, 395; cf. Ibid.,

More data about the Crimean pages in the life of the writer were revealed in the 2000s. In 2004, Jeff Britting published a school photograph of young Alisa Rosenbaum in Eupatoria.⁸ The inscription above the photo reads as "Rand (bottom, far left) with her graduating class at High School No. 4 in Eupatoria, Crimea".⁹ This photo for the first time mentions Eupatoria in connection with Ayn Rand as the place where the future writer received her education. Her family connection with Eupatoria during the Civil War in Russia was also confirmed in the interview with Eleanora Drobysheva (née Nora Rosenbaum, a younger sister of Ayn Rand) published by Scott McConnell in 2010.¹⁰ It specifically mentioned that "in the Crimea the Rosenbaums lived in Eupatoria in a two-storied house with a terrace. The girls attended the Eupatoria 'gymnasium' (high school), whose windows faced the harbor".¹¹

Documents discovered by Ludmila Nikiforova in the State Archive of the Republic of the Crimea (Simferopol), Russian Central State Archive, Central State Historical Archive and Central State Archive (all three – in St. Petersburg) provided new and hitherto unknown data regarding the stay of the Rosenbaums in Eupatoria from January 1919 (perhaps, even from late 1918) to the middle of 1921. The sources found there include the circulars of the Odessa educational district relieving officer and the Directorate of national schools of Tauria province; archival documents from Eupatoria gymnasia and Petrograd University; metric books of Petrograd synagogue; and documents of the revolutionary committees of the Crimea and Eupatoria. The search for these valuable documents took the scholar several years of assiduous work since there was no indication in any published book or article in

second edition, 67–68, 412.

8 Jeff Britting, *Ayn Rand* (London: Duckworth Overlook, 2004), 18.

9 Ibid.

10 Scott McConnell, *100 Voices: An Oral History of Ayn Rand* (New York, 2010).

11 Ibid., 6.

which archival collections exactly one might find precious references to the early stages of Ayn Rand's biography. In a way, looking for references to the history of the Rosenbaum family might be compared to "looking for a needle in a haystack", as the saying goes.

The purpose of the article is to present these new sources regarding the Eupatorian period of life of the Rosenbaum family and of Ayn Rand – the author of four bestselling novels and a dozen philosophical books. This article not only provides the exact address of the house where the Rosenbaums lived, but also many other most interesting details of everyday and intellectual life of the family in Eupatoria from 1918–1919 to 1921. Moreover, we shall also argue that the first work of Ayn Rand, *We the Living* (1936), contains Crimean allusions and is autobiographical in nature. Furthermore, her central oeuvre, the novel *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), is based on the conceptual idea, which, in our opinion, dawned and took shape in young Alisa Rosenbaum's mind in the Crimea. In a sense, it became the basis of her philosophy of objectivism.¹² It is also worthwhile mentioning that until now nobody has challenged the veracity of the information about the Crimean period of her life that Ayn Rand provided to Barbara Branden. However, the archival documents analyzed below allow us to claim that the writer somewhat romanticized that period and considerably overestimated her intellectual influence on her classmates and her own excellence in studies.

12 Preliminary results of the research have already been published in Людмила Л. Никифорова, "Крымские истоки творчества американской писательницы Айн Рэнд (Алисы Розенбаум)", *Крымский Архив* 1 (15) (2014): 141–156; Людмила Л. Никифорова, Михаил Б. Кизилов, "Крымский период в жизни американской писательницы Айн Рэнд (Алисы Розенбаум)", *Judaica Ukrainica* 1 (Киев: Laurus, 2012): 287–313 (also available at http://judaicaukrainica.ukma.edu.ua/ckfinder/userfiles/pdf/JU_287-313.pdf).

Escape to the South: Why Eupatoria?

Zalman-Wolf (Zinovii Zakharovich) Rosenbaum, the father of the future Ayn Rand, was born in 1869. A pharmacist by training, he served as the supervisor of St. Petersburg pharmacies owned by Ezekiel Konheim and his wife Dobrulia Kaplan (daughter of Berko Itskovich Kaplan, the tailor who owned a large enterprise of military uniform manufacture). There, in 1904, he met Dobrulia Kaplan's sister, Anna (Hanah), who married him in 1904. Already in 1912, Zinovii Zakharovich became a co-owner, and since 1914 – the sole owner of the large pharmacy located at the corner of Nevskii Prospekt and Znamenskaia Square. Its staff included six deputy pharmacists, three trainees and several assistants.¹³ It seems very likely that Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum and his wife were not religiously observant.¹⁴ Nor were any of their daughters religiously observant either, while Alisa Rosenbaum, as will be demonstrated later, became a glowing atheist already at the age of 16, while still in the Crimea.

Berko Itskovich Kaplan, Ayn Rand's maternal grandfather, citizen of the town of Lida of Vilna province, a military tailor, resident of 74 Nevskaia Street St. Petersburg, had been working as a temporary supervisor in a tailor's workshop since 1876. On 13 April 1907, he approached the town authorities with a request to allow him to become a resident of St. Petersburg regardless of his occupation. The response to Kaplan's request (May 15, 1907) contains additional information. At that time the applicant was 63 year old, i.e. he was born in 1843–1844. His family consisted of his wife and their seven children. Being a tailor,

13 Anne C. Heller, *Ayn Rand and the World She Made* (New York: Doubleday, 2009), 2, 4, 6–10.

14 They at most observed some main Jewish holidays, but rather for purely social than any other reasons; see: Scott McConnell, "Parallel Lives: Models and Inspirations for Characters in *We the Living*", in Robert Mayhew (ed.), *Essays on Ayn Rand's We the Living* (Plymouth: Lexington, 2012), 62 no. 38.

he owned a military dress workshop and had lived and worked as an artisan in St. Petersburg since 1873. Kaplan's petition was crowned with success on May 29, 1907.¹⁵ Two years after the birth of his granddaughter, Alisa, and after 30 years of living in St. Petersburg in the central street of the capital, Berko Itskovich Kaplan received official permission to live in the capital of the Russian Empire. Electronic copies of parish registers of the Petrograd choral synagogue of St. Petersburg for the period of 1873–1893, kept in the Central State Historical Archive of the city, contained data about four children of citizen of Lida, B. I. Kaplun (such a form as well as the surname of Kaplan was recorded twice) who were born in St. Petersburg. Among them there was a daughter named Hanah.¹⁶ It seems that this Hanah, born in 1879, most likely, was the mother of Alisa Rosenbaum. The figure of Berko Itskovich Kaplan's wife is not as clear. All four metric records mention that her name was Sarah. In such a form, without patronymic, it was recorded in 1886 parish register when the birth of the son named Arkadii was registered.¹⁷ She was twice mentioned as "Sarah Avelev[n]a", but once, perhaps erroneously, she was named "Sarah Abramovna".

Anne C. Heller's study names Berko Kaplan's wife "Rozalia Pavlovna Kaplan".¹⁸ However, it seems very likely that "Roza / Rozalia" was the equivalent of the Jewish name "Sarah"; it was used for dealings outside the Jewish community. The same caveat applies to the name "Pavel" which seems to be a substitute for Hebrew "Avel". Thus, Berko Kaplan's wife, the maternal grandmother of Alisa Rosenbaum, Sara Avelev[n]a, seems to be the same as "Roza / Rozalia Pavlovna".

15 Российский государственный исторический архив Санкт-Петербурга (РГИА СПб), ф. 1284, оп. 224, д. 155, л. 182–188. We received this valuable information from Anatoliy Haesh, the St. Petersburg historian, who studies the history of the local Jewish community.

16 Центральный государственный исторический архив Санкт-Петербурга (ЦГИА СПб), ф. 422, оп. 3, д. 58, запись № 94.

17 ЦГИА СПб, ф. 422, оп. 3, д. 132, запись № 79.

18 Heller, *Ayn Rand*, 2, 4, 6-10.

Hanah Berkovna (Anna Borisovna) Kaplan had two sisters: Dobrulia and Elizaveta. The latter married Isaak Moiseevich Guzarchik, a well-known St. Petersburg doctor and physicist.¹⁹ Most likely, they were Hanah's elder sisters. The daughters of Berko Kaplan were quite well-to-do members of society. Their material prosperity was achieved through many years of work, stable residence in St. Petersburg, and – last but not the least – the solid reputation and talent of their father, maternal grandfather of novelist Ayn Rand.

As mentioned above, at the turn of 1918–1919, following the Bolshevik revolution and expropriation of Rosenbaum's property, the family of the future writer fled from Petrograd to the south of the country, which was still in the hands of the White army. It is difficult to establish their final destination, let alone the family's travel route from St. Petersburg to Odessa and from there to Eupatoria. It is known, however, that on their way to the Crimea the Rosenbaums were held up by some bandits. At that moment, according to Ayn Rand's own words, she wanted to meet her death as bravely as Victor Hugo's Enjolras: "Now if they are going to shoot, I want to die as well as he [i.e. Enjolras] did [...] that's what I want to be thinking of last – not of Russia not the horrors".²⁰ This event happened, most likely, on their way to Odessa. First they were attacked and robbed by these bandits, but were then released, and continued their journey.²¹

It also remains unclear what random occurrence made them come to Eupatoria, which due to its geographical location, was at a remote distance from the revolutionary events in Petrograd. Our hypothesis is as follows. Apparently, after the collapse of hopes for a prosperous life in Odessa, the Rosenbaums decided to leave this city. However, there remains a question: why Eupatoria? What prompted them to settle down

19 Ibid.

20 Shoshana Milgram, "We the Living and Victor Hugo", in Robert Mayhew (ed.), *Essays on Ayn Rand's We the Living* (Plymouth: Lexington, 2012), 264.

21 McConnell, "Parallel Lives", 60.

there and not in the more prosperous and better-known Yalta, Alushta, or Sevastopol? In our view, this most likely happened because their maternal relatives lived in the provincial city of Eupatoria.²² Indeed, lists of Eupatoria residents of the period when the Rosenbaums were there contain several families with a common surname of Kaplan, but did not reveal any Eupatoria inhabitant with the last name of Rosenbaum (apart from the family of Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum itself). It is very likely that among these Kaplans there were relatives of Alisa Rosenbaum's mother, née Kaplan.

A few words should be said about Jewish religious life in Eupatoria in that dramatic period. Before the Bolsheviks closed all places of worship of various religions in the late 1920s, two synagogues existed and functioned in the town: the central, so-called "Kupecheskaia sinagoga" ("Merchant synagogue"), and that of artisans called "Yeghia Kapay" which was built and consecrated on August 19, 1912.²³ At the time of the Rosenbaums' stay in Eupatoria, they were both open. Parishioners with the surname of "Kaplan" were discovered in the lists of the "Yeghia Kapay" synagogue for 1912 and 1913.²⁴ The main synagogue of the city did not have among its members anyone with such a surname. Thus, the Eupatoria Kaplans, being citizens of the artisan class, were, presumably, not particularly rich.

The specific details of their professional activity cannot be established with certainty. V. G. P'iankov's book of 1913 indicates that the electrical firm of F. W. Kaplan was situated in the Mangubi house²⁵

22 It seems also that something connected them to Nikita Bredikhin, who owned a two-storied house with a terrace where, as the current research will demonstrate, they lived.

23 The name comes from the Hebrew יגיע כפי ("the labour of my hands"; Genesis 31:42).

24 Государственный архив Республики Крым (ГАРК), ф. 681, оп. 2, д. 528, л. 20 об., 30.

25 "Mangubi" is a Karaite surname.

on Lazarevskaia Street.²⁶ This "F. W. Kaplan" seems to be identical with Falik Wulfovich Kaplan, whose name was discovered in the list of the parishioners of the "Yeghia Kapay" synagogue.²⁷ Several Kaplan families were registered in poll lists of Eupatoria of 1918–1919.²⁸ One does not have in the archival sources direct evidence of the fact that the Eupatoria Kaplans were family relations of Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum's wife, Anna (Hanah) Kaplan of St. Petersburg. However, in our opinion, this family connection seems very likely. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain the choice of Eupatoria as a place of permanent residence in the Crimea for almost three years from late 1918–1919 to 1921.

We do not know with whom the Rosenbaums socialized while they were in the Crimea: again, it is worthwhile mentioning that Ayn Rand did not want to reveal any names for fear that anyone she mentioned might be persecuted by the Soviet authorities. So far, we have managed to find only one reference: Ayn Rand mentioned that Antonina Platoshkina, a vulgar middle-aged female character from *We the Living*, was based on a certain Russian widow with two children whom the Rosenbaums knew in the Crimea – and whom she met in Paris on her way to America in 1926.²⁹

The Rosenbaums in Eupatoria between the Whites and the Reds (1918–1920)

The Rosenbaums arrived in Eupatoria in late 1918–January 1919, i.e. at a time of comparative stability for people with a status similar to that of the Rosenbaums. This was the period of the so-called "Second Crimean Regional Government", which relied on the volunteer army

26 В. Г. Пьянков, *Вся Евпатория: Адрес-календарь-справочник за 1913 год* (Евпатория: Типография И. Ф. Райхельсона, 1913), 48.

27 ГАРК, ф. 681, оп. 2, д. 500, л. 110.

28 ГАРК, ф. 681, оп. 2, д. 893, л. 76 и 8, л. 195 об., л. 201, л. 230.

29 McConnell, "Parallel Lives", 59–60.

(*Dobrovol'cheskaia armiiia*) and troops of the Entente. The archival document dated July 27, 1921 mentions that, at that time, the Rosenbaum family lived in Eupatoria in the country house of Nikita Evstaf'evich Bredikhin at 2/53 Sanatorskaia Street.³⁰ This was the number of a plot of land in the city quarter where the Pervaia Prodolnaia, Gogol, and Sanatornaia Streets meet. Gogol and Sanatornaia Streets form the south-western part of the plot belonging to Nikita Bredikhin.

There is no exact data as to why it was Bredikhin's house that the Rosenbaums decided to rent.³¹ Nikita Evstaf'ievich Bredikhin was well-known in the city. His *dacha* was quite a famous place as well: an advertisement of it was even published in the local guidebook.³² Starting from 1906, Bredikhin began purchasing real estate and land in Eupatoria in the Simferopol District Court.³³ By 1914, his *dacha* business was flourishing; he built a famous villa "Lux" on Duvanovskaia Street.³⁴ The advertisement of the Bredikhin's *dacha* of 1914 reads as follows: "[It is located] in the best new part of the city, near the sea, the seaside sanatorium and the city theatre. Light, dry and well-furnished rooms with all conveniences can be rented in the dacha of N. E. Bredikhin (corner of Gogol and Sanatornaia Streets) from 25 to 60 rubles per month and up to 170 rubles during the [high] season. The season is from 1 May to 1 September. Before May 15 and after August 15, the prices for rooms are significantly reduced".³⁵

Right across the tramline of this street (i.e. opposite the house),

30 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 188, л. 128.

31 Materials about the *dacha* of Nikita Bredikhin were obtained with the active support of the Eupatoria local historians K. S. Batozskii and I. M. Slepkan, and of the assistants of the Eupatoria Museum of Local Lore.

32 *Новейший путеводитель по Крыму на 1912 год*. (Евпатория: Издание З. Б. Каганович и К°, 1912).

33 ГАРК, ф. 681, оп. 1, д. 772, л. 91, 97.

34 ГАРК, ф. 681, оп. 1, д. 435, л. 60.

35 *Курорт Евпатория в Крыму: Приложение к "Новейшему путеводителю по Крыму" на 1914 г.* (Евпатория: Издательство З. Б. Каганович и К°, 1914), 74.

there was the Rushchinskaia "gymnasium", where Alisa Rosenbaum, the future novelist Ayn Rand, studied and graduated from. The Bredikhin's house survived, although it has been considerably reconstructed. Currently, it is a two-storey building with a terrace at 8 Sanatorskaia Street. Unfortunately, the sources do not provide exact information for how long the Rosenbaums lived there.

In general, Ayn Rand's memories of their stay in Eupatoria were not particularly warm. She remembered that life there was almost "like a battlefield". According to her memoirs, as elsewhere in south Russia, there was no proper heating system in this country house.³⁶ At some point, the family almost began to starve, since it was practically impossible to find any food, neither for love nor money. Finally, the Rosenbaums ate only millet and raw onions roasted in linseed oil. Indeed, scurvy was by that time a terrible problem and Alisa's mother believed that onions prevented it.³⁷

In the beginning, the family lived in Eupatoria mainly on the money obtained by selling the jewelry of Anna Rosenbaum, who had managed to bring it to the Crimea despite being held up and robbed on the way there.³⁸ Using the money procured in this way, the chemist-pharmacist Rosenbaum managed to open a small drugstore in Eupatoria. Nevertheless, a year later, with the arrival of the Bolsheviks, the store was nationalized in accordance with the order of the Crimean Revolutionary Committee regarding the nationalization of pharmacies and medical-pharmaceutical property (December 18, 1920, no. 138).³⁹ It is of interest that according to the order of the Crimean Revolutionary

36 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 30–31. On the other hand, one should mention that Eupatoria had fully-functional drainage and sewage systems (this was important in view of every day difficulties suffered by the aristocrats in Bolshevik Petrograd).

37 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 30.

38 For more information about this robbery see: Milgram, "*We the Living* and Victor Hugo", 264; McConnell, "Parallel Lives", 60.

39 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 30.

Committee from May 3, 1921 (order no. 351), as the former owner of a drugstore, Zalman (Zinovii) Rosenbaum had to donate to the city two thermometers and one syringe.⁴⁰ This was required from him in order to improve the poor situation of the medical facilities of the city. In Eupatoria, during the Bolshevik period or perhaps even earlier, Anna Borisovna Rosenbaum started working as a teacher. Obviously, she could be involved "in performing socially useful work for the socialistic society", both on a voluntary basis and under duress "to teach the illiterate as a labor duty". On December 14, 1920, Comrade Uiska (Уйска; first name and patronymic unknown), the Head of the National Educational Department, warned the Revolutionary Committee of Eupatoria about such a possibility.⁴¹ The most important result of this employment was the fact that she was able to procure a meal card for her family, thereby saving them from starvation.

In the State Archive of the Crimea in Simferopol, Ludmila Nikiforova discovered a questionnaire completed by Anna Borisovna Rosenbaum in December 1920 as an employee of the Soviet institution at the Eupatoria Revolutionary Committee Registration Department. The questionnaire contains the following information: age – 40; birthplace – Petrograd; education – Litei[naia] women's gymnasium, dent[al] medical courses and language courses.⁴² At the time of completing the questionnaire, she was working as a teacher at the evening school for adults. From other documents we know that this evening school of the second level really existed in Eupatoria. Moreover, it was included in the structure of the Unified School Sub-department of the Eupatoria Public Educational Department. It was located in the former girls' school where the younger Rosenbaum daughters studied.⁴³ The questionnaire

40 ГАРК, ф. Р-1188, оп. 3, д. 13, л. 191.

41 *Известия военно-революционного комитета г. Евпатории и уезда* no. 24 (14.12.1920).

42 ГАРК, ф. Р- 2379, оп. 1, д. 173, л.116.

43 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 377, л. 94.

also mentions that in 1918 (while still in Petrograd), Anna Rosenbaum joined the Union of Doctors; in the summer of 1920 (while already in Eupatoria), she also joined the Teachers' Union (Russian: *союз учителей*). On the question "Which work do you show a preference for?" she answered: "For pedagogical work". The review of Anna Borisovna Rosenbaum's work is rather laconic: "She performs her duties in good faith".⁴⁴ Pedagogical work would also become her future occupation. Having returned from the Crimea to Petrograd in 1921, she would be employed as a teacher at Volodarskii school no. 2.⁴⁵

For a short period, Alisa Rosenbaum also worked in Eupatoria as a teacher in the class for illiterate soldiers where she taught them to read and write. There were several evening schools at hospitals and at the guard team in Eupatoria.⁴⁶ She went to her first lesson terrified and scared. However, to her immense surprise, she liked the job. Alisa liked the willingness and honesty of these tough men who were trying to learn the intricacies of Russian grammar. In a later interview, Ayn Rand stated: "They treated me, as a teacher, with awed respect, and I felt safe among them".⁴⁷ It was also in the Crimea that Alisa started to see her father as her "intellectual ally". At the same time, she became closer to her sisters, especially to Eleanora.

The everyday life of the Rosenbaums in Eupatoria was extremely difficult. It was very cold in their damp house, where there was not enough heating; the furniture was old and broken. Most of the time, the family starved and had to wear old clothes. The Rosenbaums were afraid of the ruling regime, regardless of whether it was Red or White.⁴⁸ Indeed, while the family lived in Eupatoria, the governments

44 ГАРК, ф. Р- 2379, оп. 1, д. 173, л.116.

45 Центральный государственный архив Санкт-Петербурга [hereafter: ЦГА СПб.], ф. 7240, оп. 5, д. 3576, лл. 20, 21.

46 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 377, л. 94.

47 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 38.

48 Idem., 30–31.

changed hands at least four times. First, the Second Crimean Regional Government was replaced by the Crimean Soviet Socialist Republic. Several months later, the Crimea was taken by the armed forces of the South of Russia headed by A. I. Denikin. Denikin's government was replaced by that of P. N. Vranghel. Finally, the Bolshevik government of the Crimean Revolutionary Committee (*Крымревком*) of 1920 became the stable power which, from that moment on, began ruling the Crimea.⁴⁹

Perhaps a few words should be said about the state of culture and education in Eupatoria about the time of the Rosenbaums' arrival. In August 1918, almost 35,400 people lived in Eupatoria.⁵⁰ Among the city's institutions of culture and education before 1917, there were a city theatre, the Alexander II public library, the Pushkin auditorium, one boys' and one girls' state gymnasium, as well as a private girls' gymnasium, one high primary school, and 23 schools of various types, including the Aleksandrovskoe Karaite Religious College.⁵¹ Many of these institutions were founded and built by local Karaite philanthropists, such as M. I. Sarach, Semen Duvan, and others.

Zalman Rosenbaum did everything he could to give his daughters a chance to continue their education even in such a difficult time. Alisa did manage to complete her secondary education. In January 1919, she began studying at Eupatoria's commercial (*платная*) A. P. Rushchinskaia and A. A. Mironovich Gymnasium of the Ministry of Education.⁵² Perhaps, the choice fell on the gymnasium only because the public girls' gymnasia were overcrowded, while the commercial one had vacant places. Furthermore, it was located across the street from the

49 For more details see: Александр Г. Зарубин, Вячеслав Г. Зарубин, *Без победителей: Из истории Гражданской войны в Крыму* (Симферополь, 2009).

50 ГАРК, ф. 681, оп. 1, д. 772, лл.16, 19.

51 *Спутникъ по городу Евпаторіи (Листая пожелтевшие страницы)* (Евпаторія: электро-типографія І.Ф. Райхельсона, 1916), 7.

52 In original: *платная Евпаторійская женская гимназія Министерства Народного Просвещения А.П. Руцинской и А.А. Миронович.*

Bredikhin house where they lived.

By the beginning of 1917–1918 school year, most Russian schools had received the Circular of the Ministry of National Education no. 10100 (31 August 1917) about "The full assistance to the students of Petrograd educational institutions in those formal difficulties which may be encountered by them when moving to provincial schools".⁵³ This circular was relevant to the Rosenbaum sisters who arrived in Eupatoria from Petrograd. In 1919–1920 at A. P. Rushchinskaia and A. A. Mironovich girls' gymnasium (where Alisa studied) there were 43 pupils. 26 of them (i.e. 60.5%) arrived at this gymnasium during the Revolution.⁵⁴

It was a private institution that guaranteed "all rights to teachers and students". Alisa Rosenbaum entered this Eupatoria gymnasium in the 5th grade, having brought there the documents from the Stoiunina St. Petersburg girls' gymnasium (*Санкт-Петербургская женская гимназия Стоюниной*). On September 1, 1919, Alisa entered the 6th grade of the gymnasium; on May 29, 1920, she completed it. By the decision of the pedagogical council, she was accepted to the 7th grade.⁵⁵

With the establishment of the Bolshevik government in the Crimea, by order no. 57 of the Crimean Revolutionary Committee on the restructuring of educational institutions (November 30, 1920), the 7th class was declared a final secondary school class. Because of this, on June 30, 1921, Alisa Rosenbaum received a certificate marking the completion of the "IV group of the second stage at school №4, seven classes of the former girls' (*zhenskaia*) gymnasium".⁵⁶ This document is further evidence of the fact that the A. P. Rushchinskaia and A. A. Mironovich girls' gymnasium was transformed into a Soviet school.

53 ГАРК, ф.725, оп.1, д. 103, л.31 об.

54 ГАРК, ф. 726, оп. 1, д. 60, л.8.

55 Ibid.

56 ЦГА СПб, ф. 7240, оп. 5, д. 3576, л.4.

This gives grounds to assert that Rosenbaum's family continued living in Eupatoria for another (1920–1921) academic year. During this time, Alisa completed her school education, because the 7th grade of this year was declared final.⁵⁷

According to the memoirs of Ayn Rand, in Eupatoria her "teachers were old-fashioned, pro-Czarist ladies, who endured the rise of communism with grim resignation".⁵⁸ According to her assertion, Alisa soon became the intellectual leader of the class. She "was forgiven" for her acumen because she came from the educated north of the country. She recalled: "in the Crimea there was a tacit recognition of my superiority. I made no personal friends, I had no girlfriends, but I was recognized as the 'brain of the class', which surprised me".⁵⁹

It is interesting to notice that the marks of Alisa Rosenbaum (in the original: Розенбаумъ Алиса Зельмановна-Вульфовна) discovered by Ludmila Nikiforova in the State Archive of the Republic of the Crimea did not correspond to Alisa's claim that she had been "brain of the class". The main mark in Alisa's educational register for the 6th year class was "satisfactory", "4" (good) given for needlework and attention, and "5" (excellent) for three disciplines: drawing, diligence, and behavior.⁶⁰ According to Ayn Rand's memoirs, mathematics and logic were the subjects that she liked most of all. Here the memory also somewhat fails the writer: there was no such subject as "logic" in her school curriculum, while her grades for both algebra and geometry also were only "satisfactory".⁶¹

Barbara Branden claimed that "in her last two years in the Crimea, she [Ayn Rand] took classes in American history".⁶² One perhaps should

57 ГАРК, ф. Р-1188, оп. 3, д. 162, л. 6.

58 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 32.

59 Ibid.

60 ГАРК, ф. 726, оп. 1, д. 60, л. 8.

61 ГАРК, ф. 726, оп. 1, д. 60, л. 8.

62 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 35; Robert Mayhew, *Ayn Rand and Song*

explain here that there was no possibility of including the whole course on American history in the curriculum of a Russian school. Perhaps the writer meant that she took several classes dedicated to American history as part of the broader world history course.

Her mathematics teacher, as the writer recalled, had adored her. The temporary administration of educational institutions of Tavricheskaia province assigned eight teachers to the Rushhinskaia and Mironovich gymnasium for the 1919–1920 academic year. Among them there was the teacher of mathematics and physics, Konstantin Isaev.⁶³ Perhaps, it was he who supposedly admired the intellectual abilities of the future novelist and philosopher Ayn Rand.

Archive documents of the girls' gymnasium demonstrate that in August 1919, the younger Rosenbaum daughters passed the following tests: Natasha for the 2nd grade and Nora – for the preparatory grade.⁶⁴ As a result, in spring 1921 in Eupatoria Natasha entered the 4th grade and Nora – the 2nd grade of Eupatoria girls' gymnasium, which was also transformed into the school of the II level by order no. 2.⁶⁵

The Rosenbaums in Bolshevist Eupatoria (November 1920–Summer 1921)

The Rosenbaums arrived in the Crimea in a most difficult period of its history. It was the time of the Civil War, epidemics, hunger, and repressions. There is no doubt that the hardships of life in the Crimea resulting from political events, also affected the family of Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum. The Rosenbaums, who escaped from the Bolshevik government of Petrograd in the fall of 1918, were again under their

of Russia: Communism and Anti-Communism in 1940s Hollywood (Oxford: Scarecrow press, 2005), 72.

63 ГАРК, ф. 726, оп. 1, д. 41, л.23.

64 ГАРК, ф. 725, оп. 1, д. 119, л. 50, 51; д. 150, л. 19; д. 160, л. 170.

65 ГАРК, ф. P-1188, оп. 3, д. 235, л. 65 об.

power in November 1920 in Eupatoria. When late at night, on November 14, 1920, parts of the Latvian Soviet Division occupied Eupatoria, the new government immediately proceeded to fulfill the main tenets of Bolshevik doctrine. As the political establishment of Bolshevik regime in the Crimea was delayed by three years (compared to Petrograd), the Bolsheviks had to quickly and forcefully implement their party decrees. The Rosenbaums ended up witnessing the Bolshevik reorganization of life twice – first, in Russia's capital, Petrograd, and then in provincial Eupatoria. As mentioned, the property of the drugstore acquired by Zinovii Rosenbaum in Eupatoria was nationalized. As a result, the family was left with no means of support. This is how the theory of Bolshevism was correlated to its practice.

For the purpose of registration of the population and all employable people, the Crimean Revolutionary Committee announced "the compulsory registration of all workers, the unemployed, seeking labor and not engaged in socially useful work".⁶⁶ All the existing organizations and institutions of Eupatoria were supposed to provide exact data regarding the working-age population of the city. The Eupatoria department of the Revolutionary Committee published the following data in the local newspaper: as of 1 December 1920 there were 950 persons who served in the civil institutions of Baron Wrangel in Eupatoria, 1,105 refugees, 206 foreign nationals and (literally) "at this moment, 210 people of unemployed element".⁶⁷

A special Sub-department of Forced Labor (*подотдел принудительных работ*) of the Management Department of the Eupatoria Revolutionary Committee was formed specifically to deal with the latter category of Eupatoria residents (i.e. the "unemployed element"). It was the duty of its staff to work with persons of non-

66 ГАРК, ф. Р-1188, оп. 3, д. 13, л. 16.

67 In original: *пока 210 человек нетрудового элемента (Известия военно-революционного комитета г. Евпатории и уезда по. 16 [3.12.1920]).*

working class (*нетрудовой класс*) of both genders aged between 18 and 45. The non-working class included "all former landowners, manufacturers, plant-owners and dealers who used hired labor". They were supposed to be registered at the aforementioned sub-department in accordance with the specially arranged schedule of registration. The refugees with the last name beginning with the letters of the Russian alphabet *Р, С, Т, У, Ф, Х* ("R, S, T, U, F, H") had to be registered at the Sub-Department of Forced Labor on December 12, 1920. This means that Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum was supposed to be among them. It was announced that this department would provide the registered persons with special cards. People who violated the orders of the government were supposed to be punished according to martial law.⁶⁸

On December 13, 1920, the Bolsheviks started distributing meal cards in Eupatoria. For this purpose, the whole population was divided into three categories. Category "A" included the city's adult population engaged in physical labor; category "B" – the unemployed, housewives, and office workers performing intellectual work; and category "C" – all other citizens.⁶⁹ These categories became the legal field to implement a rigid state policy in accordance with the labor legislation.

Archived files, including those of the Crimean Revolutionary Committee Administration of the first half of 1921, contain a large number of orders regarding the issue of labor service (*трудова́я повинно́сть*). The General Law of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Code of labor laws forced all employable citizens of the country to be engaged "in socially useful work for the socialist society". In accordance with this regulation, the Crimean Revolutionary Committee declared its right to assign even foreign nationals to conducting labor service (paragraph 1 of order no. 195 dated January 3, 1921).⁷⁰ The number of

68 Ibid., no. 20 (9.12 1920).

69 Ibid.

70 ГАРК, ф. Р-1188, оп. 3, д. 13, л. 9.

people registered in the Eupatoria Administrative Department according to orders no. 62 and no. 52, as of the end of 1920, was 550.⁷¹ At the end of June 1921, the list included 679 people of "unemployed element".⁷²

Apparently, Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum failed to show up at the first call of the city authorities to the Sub-Department of Forced Labor in order to be registered. His name is not to be found in the first list of "unemployed element". However, the name of Z. W. Rosenbaum was included in the "Unemployed Element List" no. 425 from the end of December 1920.⁷³ The cover letter of the Eupatoria Revolutionary Committee Labor Department to the Administrative Department (July 27, 1921) mentioned that three lists of different categories of unemployed element were attached to the letter.⁷⁴ List no. 1 consisted of 93 persons that "were sent to work in a county". List no. 2, with addresses and names of famous people of Eupatoria, contains 161 people (Nikita Bredikhin, the owner of the house where the Rosenbaums lived, was on that list). List no. 3, with indication of age, address, occupation, and the size of a family, contains 432 persons. "Rosenbaum Zel'man Wol'fov" (*Розенбаум Зельман Вольфов*) is mentioned in the latter under no. 297. His age was 51; he lived in Gogolevskaia⁷⁵ Street, Bredikhin's estate. His occupation was locksmith (*слесарное дело*). In a graph of unknown meaning, the digit "4" was placed; perhaps, it indicated the number of dependents living with the head of the family (wife and three daughters).⁷⁶ Zalman-Wolf Rosenbaum was born in 1869. This means that in July 1921, he was indeed 51 years old and was not to be supposed to be subject to forced labor. Nevertheless, as one can see

71 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 160, л. 135–136.

72 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 188, л. 126–138.

73 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 369, л. 9.

74 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 188, л. 126–138.

75 In varied sources, the name of this street is written as *Gogolia* and *Gogolevskaia* (i.e. Gogol Street).

76 ГАРК, ф. Р-2379, оп. 1, д. 188, л. 136.

from the document analyzed above, the pharmacist, former owner and manager of pharmacies in St. Petersburg (and pharmacist according to the 1919 school Eupatoria documents) was working as a locksmith in Eupatoria in 1921.⁷⁷

The young and retentive memory of Alisa Rosenbaum preserved the episode when in early 1921, "excessive property" was confiscated from the bourgeois in support of the poor inhabitants of Eupatoria. Soldiers went from house to house, taking away the "excess items" from those who had "too many" things. Ayn Rand recalled: "When the soldiers burst into the Rosenbaum home, they took the family's one priceless luxury, saved from Fronz Rosenbaum's chemist shop: a few bars of soap".⁷⁸ Of course, they "burst into the home" not by accident. These actions took place in strict accordance with "infringement of the bourgeois". The purpose of such actions was the confiscation of surplus from the latter. There is also a brief description of the concept of "surplus": this is something that is owned in excess of the defined norm. Obviously, the Military Revolutionary Committee of Eupatoria was concerned about these surpluses. It issued an order on the establishment of a Commission on "collecting clothes from the bourgeois" which was published in the local *Izvestiia* newspaper.⁷⁹

The implementation of the order, according to the memoirs of Ayn Rand, was sometimes more horrific than the most ambitious thrillers. To give an example, during the so-called "Week of the poor" (*неделя бедноты*), organized by the Bolsheviks in Eupatoria, the father of Alisa's classmate was arrested and shot. His body was found on the seashore. Of all the things that soldiers plundered in the house of this family, a set of clothes for girls was sent to every school. Girls were pulling the lottery lot-ticket to decide who was going to receive the

77 ГАРК, ф. 725, оп. 1, д. 119, л. 50, 51.

78 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 37.

79 *Известия военно-революционного комитета г. Евпатории и уезда* no. 25 (15.12 1920).

used clothes. Ayn Rand recalled: "I can't tell you the horror I felt [...] when my class received a dress that had belonged to the daughter of the murdered man. That poor girl just sat numbly at her desk, watching silently as her dress was presented to the group. None of the girls wanted it; they refused to draw lots. But one 'socially minded girl' declared that she wanted it, she had a right to it, she was poor and her clothes were ragged – and she took it".⁸⁰

Thus, these terrible episodes of her life in Eupatoria provided the future writer with a clear picture of how the main dogma of the communist doctrine – negation of private property – was implemented in Soviet Russia and how ruthlessly the "bourgeois" citizens were deprived of it.

Conclusion: The Birth of the Writer Ayn Rand in Eupatoria

Having spent several months under the Bolsheviks in Eupatoria, the Rosenbaums decided to return to their native Petrograd in the summer of 1921: after all, the Bolsheviks were at that moment everywhere in the territory of the former Russian Empire and it did not really matter where to live under them. Apparently, the head of the family thought that he could use his former connections in Petrograd to secure a better job and earn more money for the family than in Eupatoria. This was the end of the Eupatorian period in the life of the future writer.

The horrible conditions of their way back were documented in detail in *We the Living*; once again, it is important to stress that the "Crimean" episodes of the novel have a purely realistic autobiographical character. The writer recalled: "The way we traveled was exactly described in *We the Living* [...] I mean the conditions and the trains and the bundles".⁸¹

80 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 37.

81 McConnell, "Parallel Lives", 48.

The Rosenbaums arrived in Petrograd apparently no later than August 1921. They returned to the same place where they had lived before – 120 Nevskii Prospekt, renamed by that time as "Prospekt of October 25th".⁸² Their return was not particularly pleasant: their apartment was occupied by a certain sign painter who took some of the furniture as his own and put the rest in the basement. Thus, the Rosenbaums "got back only what he couldn't use [...] And so we were living in real squalor of the same kind I describe in *We the Living*".⁸³ On August 24, 1921, Alisa Rosenbaum petitioned the rector of the Petrograd University to enroll in this university. On October 2, 1921, on the basis of the document received in Eupatoria on the completion of the 2nd-level school (i.e. secondary education), Alisa Rosenbaum became a student of the Petrograd University.⁸⁴ At that time, she had almost turned 17.

Many years later Ayn Rand recalled her apathetical attitude towards both sides of the Civil War in Russia. She felt that both White and Red ideology were somewhat wrong:

When it [the Crimea] was occupied by the White Army, I almost longed for the return of the Red Army, and vice versa. There was not much difference between them in practice, but there was in theory. The Red Army stood for totalitarian dictatorship and rule by terror. The White Army stood for nothing; repeat: *nothing*. In answer to the monstrous evil they were fighting, the Whites found nothing better to proclaim than the dustiest, smelliest bromides of

82 In February 1923, according to the certificate issued to Anna Borisovna Rosenbaum by the manager of the house (*управдом*), they already lived on Dmitrovskii lane. Thus, they had to move there (or were forced to do so) at some point between August 1921 and February 1923.

83 McConnell, "Parallel Lives", 48.

84 ЦГА СПб, ф. 7240, оп. 5, д. 3576, л. 6, 22, 2, 13.

the time: we must fight, they said, for Holy Mother Russia, for faith and tradition [...] In a passive, indifferent way, the majority of the Russian people were behind the White Army: they were not *for* the Whites, but merely *against* the Reds; they feared the Reds' atrocities [...] The Reds had an incentive, the promise of nationwide looting; they had the leadership and the semi-discipline of a criminal gang; they had an allegedly intellectual program and an allegedly moral justification. The Whites had icons. The Reds won.⁸⁵

The documents discovered in the archives of Simferopol and St. Petersburg allowed us to establish important facts such as the exact address where the Rosenbaum family lived in Eupatoria: Nikita Bredikhin's house on Gogol Street. One also knows now more or less exact chronological frames of the family's stay there: late 1918 / early 1919 – mid 1921. The graduation certificate of Alisa Rosenbaum from 29 May 1920 provides information about her marks in that academic year. Her poor marks allow us to claim that in her memoirs the writer romanticized her past and rather exaggerated her excellence in mathematics (in fact, Alisa Rosenbaum received only "satisfactory" in both algebra and geometry). Thus, it seems that her claims to be "the brain of the class", which she mentioned to the biographers, did not correspond to reality. The documents in question also provide us with such details as, for example, the names of Alisa's classmates, those of her teachers, or the date when Zalman Rosenbaum was registered with the Bolshevik authorities on the "Unemployed Element List" no. 425.

Furthermore, the abovementioned archival documents allowed us to restore the general picture of the dramatic life of the writer and her family in Eupatoria. For the most part, the family lived there on the

85 Ayn Rand, *The Voice of Reason: Essays in Objectivist Thought* (edited by Leonard Peikoff; New York: New American Library, 1989), 137–138.

verge of starvation, in need and hunger, in a house without a proper heating system. It is worth mentioning that the young Vladimir Nabokov enjoyed the Crimean scenery and beautiful nature at the same time when the future Ayn Rand was there (1918–1919).⁸⁶ However, in contrast to Nabokov, Alisa Rosenbaum seldom mentioned Crimea's excellent beaches, beautiful architecture,⁸⁷ nature and parks. It seems that it was political and intellectual life in Eupatoria that was actively fueling Alisa Rosenbaum's early-awakened philosophical interests. Alisa was only 13 when her family escaped from the capital of the Russian Revolution in late 1918. In Eupatoria, two years later, Alisa viewed the second circle of hell of Bolshevism. At that time, she did it more conscientiously: she had already become an independently thinking person.

The autobiographical sources state that it was in the Crimea that Alisa Rosenbaum made several major decisions. She decided that she would be a writer and be famous. According to her memoirs, this decision was "not a question of an uncertain future; this decision was an immediate, urgent issue". She decided that she would write in Russian,

86 For a comparative analysis of these two writers, see: Donald Barton Johnson "Strange Bedfellows: Ayn Rand and Vladimir Nabokov", *The Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* 2, 1 (2000): 47–67; Gene H. Bell-Villada, "Reply to D. Barton Johnson: Nabokov and Rand – Kindred Ideological Spirits, Divergent Literary Aims", *The Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* 3, 1 (2001): 181–193; Gene H. Bell-Villada, *On Nabokov, Ayn Rand and the Libertarian Mind: What the Russian-American Odd Pair Can Tell Us about Some Values, Myths and Manias Widely Held Most Dear* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2013); Anna Kostenko, "Ayn Rand and Vladimir Nabokov: The Issue of Literary Dialogue", *The Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* 15, 1 (2015): 42–52. For more information about Nabokov's stay in the Crimea, see: Михаил Б. Кизилев, "'Я бесконечно благодарен Соломону Самойловичу...' Евреи, Крым и крымские караимы в жизни и творчестве В.В. Набокова", *Параллели* 10–11 (2009): 161–178; Михаил Б. Кизилев, "Надежда, я вернусь!": Крым и крымские караимы в жизни и творчестве В.В. Набокова", *Историческое наследие Крыма* 24 (2009): 133–140.

87 Eupatoria, whose central part consists mostly of houses built in the late 19th–early 20th centuries by Russia's aristocrats of varied ethnic backgrounds, can be called the capital of the Crimean *art nouveau* architectural style.

but live mostly abroad.⁸⁸ As one can see, only one part of this decision became true: she indeed spent most of her life beyond the borders of Russia, in America. However, the main language of her literary and philosophical oeuvre (not counting a couple of popular books she published in the Soviet Union in the 1920s) was English, not Russian.

From Ayn Rand's memoirs one can learn that it was in Eupatoria, paving the way to school through puddles of mud, against the piercing Crimean wind, in thin patched shoes and in the over-folded summer jacket of her mother, Alisa Rosenbaum formulated her own concept of individualism.⁸⁹ It was also there that the essence of her value system and its character were formed. From that moment on, she felt that she was an adult and that she would be a writer.

In Eupatoria she practiced reflection and writing by keeping a diary in which she wrote the most seditious things. Prior to the trip back to Petrograd, Alisa burned her diary. She knew that if the document with heretical thoughts were found in Petrograd, she could have been jailed. Now one can only imagine what content of this Eupatoria diary of the 16-year old writer contained. Ayn Rand recalls: "I wrote all kinds of anti-Soviet things in it and I continued it when we were in the Crimea and burned it all when we were coming back to Petrograd".⁹⁰ Symbolically, the burning of the diary can be interpreted as burning the bridge between Alisa Rosenbaum-the child and Alisa Rosenbaum-the adult, future writer and philosopher.

Some realities of the Crimean life of Alisa Rosenbaum were reflected in *We the Living* – her first novel written as Ayn Rand. The protagonist of this work is Kira Argounova. She is the same age as Alisa Rosenbaum. Like the Rosenbaum family, Kira's family left Petrograd in the autumn of 1918, after their textile factory was nationalized. Like the prototypes of

88 Branden, *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, 38.

89 Ibid.

90 Britting, *Ayn Rand*, 19; cf. Robert Mayhew, "The sacred in *We the Living*", 306.

the novel, the formerly "bourgeois" family moved to the Crimea, to await the liberation of the capital from the Reds. The Argounovs regarded their trip as an "unpleasant but short misunderstanding". They hoped to return to Petrograd in the spring, but in the end lived in the Crimea for four years.

The text of the novel mentions only one Crimean toponym – Yalta – as the main scene where the beginning of the novel unfolds. The choice of the place is obvious: for the Western reader the name of Eupatoria meant nothing whereas Yalta, the name of the peninsula's main resort, was known virtually to everyone.⁹¹ The Argounovs spent four years in "crowded summer shacks where piercing Crimean winds whistled through porous stone walls".⁹² They drank tea with saccharine, ate onions fried in linseed oil, and witnessed "nightly bombardments and fearful mornings when only the red flags or the three-colored banners in the streets announced into whose hands the town had passed".⁹³ One can clearly see here the precise reflection of what the family witnessed during their stay in Eupatoria. Furthermore, as Ayn Rand stated in the foreword to the revised edition of the novel in 1958, "*We the Living* is as near to an autobiography as I will ever write [...] Kira, the heroine, is me. I was born in Russia, I was educated under the Soviets, I have seen the conditions of existence that I describe".⁹⁴ She mentioned the fact that the "Crimean" episodes of the book should be read as a "practically

91 She could also probably have read Vladimir Nabokov's *Podvig* (*The Glory*; 1932) whose action partially takes place in Yalta. There is a certain affinity between Kira Argounova's and Martyn Edelweiss' attempts at crossing the border of the Soviet Union, although they did it in the opposite directions: Kira was leaving while Martyn was attempting to get in.

92 It is important to notice that here the author apparently describes Eupatoria's strong winter winds. Such a "piercing" wind is possible in the steppe area in and around Eupatoria, but very seldom in Yalta, which is covered from all sides by the so-called first range of the Crimean mountains (the authors of the article express their gratitude for this remark to Boris Kizilov).

93 Ayn Rand, *We the Living*, second enlarged edition (New York: Signet Book, 1962), 14.

94 *Ibid.*, ix.

naturalistic autobiography".⁹⁵

Ideological lessons from the Russian revolution are obvious throughout the entire oeuvre of Ayn Rand, while the earliest of her novels, *We the Living* and *Anthem*, "are devoted to processing the painful Russian experience".⁹⁶ Although set in America, the novels *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead* also have a strong Russian subtext.⁹⁷ As demonstrated above, there is no doubt that the Crimean (Eupatorian) period of her biography became the cornerstone on which the author built her philosophical concepts and the conceptual framework of her novels. Thus, one may safely state that it was in the Crimea that Ayn Rand's Atlas for the first time shrugged his shoulders.

95 McConnell, "Parallel Lives", 48.

96 Александр Эткинд, "Из измов в демократию: Айн Ранд и Ханна Арендт", *Знамя* 12 (2000): 165.

97 Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, "The Russian Subtext of 'Atlas Shrugged' and 'The Fountainhead'", *The Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* 6, 1 (2004): 195–225.



Fig. 1: Group photo of students and teachers of the A. P. Rushchinskaia and A. A. Mironovich girls' gymnasium, Eupatoria (the Crimea), 1921. Alisa Rosenbaum is in the bottom row, far left (courtesy of the Ayn Rand Institute)



Fig. 2: Eupatoria city tram at the beginning of the 20th century. Turn to Gogol Street on which the family of the Rosenbaums lived from 1918 to 1921



Fig. 3: Pogorzhelsky House on Gogol Street in Eupatoria (the Crimea) where the A. P. Rushchinskaia and A. A. Mironovich girls' gymnasium was located (photo by Evgenii Nikiforov)

№	Фамилия и имена ученицы	Класс	Зачеты	Матем.	Русск. язык	Архивариат	Алгебра	Геометрия	Физика	Музыка	История	Писатели	Ручепись	Историческое	Нравств. ст.	Литература	Чистописание	Рисование	Музыка	Словоупотребление	Число прог. урок			Постановления Педагогического Совета
																					По. бол. вкл.	По учеб. пог.	По прог. ст.	
	Розенбаум-Алиса	1 класс	4/4																				13	20 мая 1919
	Розенбаум-Алиса	2 класс	4/4																				15	Иванов
	Розенбаум-Алиса	3 класс	4/4																				21	Иванов
	Розенбаум-Алиса	4 класс	4/4																				22	Иванов
	Розенбаум-Алиса	5 класс	4/4																				22	Иванов
	Розенбаум-Алиса	6 класс	4/4																				22	Иванов

Fig. 4: Alisa Rosenbaum's 6th grade graduation certificate from the A. P. Rushchinskaia and A. A. Mironovich girls' gymnasium (source: State Archive of the Crimea, Simferopol)



Fig. 5: Nikita Bredikhin's house where the Rosenbaum family lived from 1918 to 1921 (photo by Evgenii Nikiforov)