

# FUNDAMENTAL ARMENOLOGY

ՀԻՄՆԱՐԱՐ ՀԱՅԱԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

electronic journal

**ISSUE 1 (13) 2021**

History

Documents: Armenian Genocide

Philosophy and Law

Books & Book Reviews

Demography & Governance

Philology

Historical  
Cartography

Political Science & InfoSec

Arts

Archaeology



All Armenian  
Foundation Financing  
Armenological Studies

National Academy  
of Sciences of the  
Republic of Armenia



## Editorial Board

Editor in Chief

**KOSYAN A. V.**

*Doctor of Sciences (History)*

**AGHASYAN A. V.**  
*Corresponding Member of NAS RA*

**AYVAZYAN H. M.**  
*Doctor of Sciences (Political Sciences)*

**DEVRIKYAN V. G.**  
*Doctor of Sciences (Philology)*

**GHAHRIYAN M. H.**  
*PhD in History (Executive Secretary)*

**ISAHAKYAN A. V.**  
*Doctor of Sciences (Philology)*

**MELKONYAN A. A.**  
*Member of NAS RA*

**SAFRASTYAN R. A.**  
*Member of NAS RA*

**SUVARYAN YU. M.**  
*Member of NAS RA*

**AVETISYAN P. A.**  
*Corresponding Member of NAS RA*

**BARDAKJIAN K.**  
*(Foreign Member of NAS RA, USA)*

**DUM-TRAGUT J.**  
*(Doctor of Sciences, Austria)*

**HARUTYUNYAN V. L.**  
*Corresponding Member of NAS RA*

**KATVALYAN V. L.**  
*Doctor of Sciences (Philology)*

**POGHOSYAN G. A.**  
*Member of NAS RA*

**SHIRINIAN A.**  
*(Doctor of Sciences, Italy)*

**TER-GHEVONDYAN V. A.**  
*Doctor of Sciences (History)*

**APIKYAN T. Zh.**

*Web developer and technical coordinator*

## HISTORY

<i>Knarik Avakian</i> , THE FIRST ARMENIANS IN AMERICA DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD .....	6
<i>Aleksan Hakobian</i> , LES FAMILLES ARISTOCRATIQUES D'ALBANIE ET DES REGIONS ORIENTALES D'ARMÉNIE D'APRÈS LES SOURCES ARMÉNIENNES ET BYZANTINS .....	14
<i>Hovhannes Khorikyan</i> , ON THE ISSUE OF THE CENTER OF SATRAPIC ARMENIA .....	33
<i>Kristine Melkonyan</i> , THE 1921 RUSSIAN-TURKISH CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW: 100-YEARS AGO: A RETROSPECT .....	43
<i>Vanik Virabyan</i> , REVEALING THE KHAN TEKINSKY CONSPIRACY (from the history of counter intelligence of the First Republic of Armenia) .....	51

## PHILOLOGY

<i>Torq Dalalyan</i> , ON THE MAIN EPISODES OF THE EPIC POEM ABOUT ARMENIAN-ARAB ALLIANCE .....	81
---	----

## POLITICAL SCIENCES AND INFORMATIONAL SECURITY

<i>Mushegh Ghahriyan</i> , ARMENIA – IRAQ: BUILDING RELATIONS IN REGIONAL TURMOIL .....	92
<i>Nelli Minasyan</i> , THE WAR CRIMES AND GENOCIDAL POLICY OF AZERBAIJAN DURING THE SECOND ARTSAKH WAR AND THE INTERNATIONAL REACTIONS .....	105
<i>Lilit Sarvazyan</i> , THE PRINCIPLE OF DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNANCE IN SIMON ZAVARYAN'S POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT .....	116

## DEMOGRAPHY AND GOVERNANCE

<i>Yuri Suvaryan</i> , PROBLEMS OF CIVILIZATIONAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION .....	128
--	-----

## FOREIGN SOURCES AND AUTHORS ABOUT ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS

<i>J.M.Kinneir</i> , JOURNEY THROUGH ASIA MINOR, ARMENIA AND KOORDISTAN IN THE YEARS 1813 AND 1814 .....	142
---	-----

## DOCUMENTS: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

<i>B.J. Wintle</i> , ARMENIA AND ITS SORROWS, LONDON, 1896 .....	182
--	-----

## ARMENOLOGICAL HERITAGE

<i>Kamilla Trever</i> , ON THE CULT OF MIHR IN ARMENIA .....	201
--	-----

## CLASSICS OF ARMENOLOGY

JOSEF MARKWART .....	217
HAKOVBOS TASHYAN .....	219

## BOOK REVIEWS

<i>Gegham Hovhannisyan</i> , <b>ARPIAR ARPIARYAN: SOCIO-POLITICAL VIEWS AND ACTIVITIES, YEREVAN, 2019</b> .....	222
<i>Alexandr Sargsyan</i> , <b>PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, TRAINING MANUAL, YEREVAN</b> .....	229

## NEW BOOKS

<b>HISTORICAL RESEARCH</b> , Ashot Melkonyan .....	235
<b>ARMENIANS AND KURDS IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE</b> , Edited by Ara Sarafian and Ümit Kurt .....	235
<b>THE RESISTANCE NETWORK: THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND HUMANITARIANISM IN OTTOMAN SYRIA, 1915–1918 (ARMENIAN HISTORY, SOCIETY, AND CULTURE)</b> East Lansing, 2021, by Khatchig Mouradian .....	236
<b>KNOWING ABOUT GENOCIDE: ARMENIAN SUFFERING AND EPISTEMIC STRUGGLES</b> , Berkeley, 2021, by Joachim J. Savelsberg .....	237
<b>THE ARMENIANS OF MUSA DAGH: FROM OBSCURITY TO GENOCIDE RESISTANCE AND FAME</b> , Fresno 2020, by Vahram L. Shemmassian .....	237
<b>UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF CHRISTAPOR MIKAELIAN</b> , Lusakn, 2020 .....	238
<b>NIKOL DUMAN, “LETTERS”</b> , by Yervand Pambukyan, Lusakn, 2021 .....	238
<b>FEBRUARY 1921 ANTI-BOLSHEVIK REBELLION IN ARMENIA</b> , Lusakn, 2021, by Khachatur Stepanyan .....	238
<b>SHUSHANAVANK, MONASTERY OF BAGARAN</b> , Yerevan, 2021, by G. Nalbandyan, A. Harutyunyan, A. Hakobyan .....	239
<b>ARAMAZD: ARMENIAN JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES, VOLUME XIV. 1-2, 2020</b> , Oxford, ed. by Aram Kosyan .....	239
<b>ANNEXATION OF ARMENIAN TERRITORIES TO TURKEY AND SOVIET AZERBAIJAN IN THE 1920–1930S</b> , Yerevan, 2020, by Karen H. Khachatryan, Hamo K. Sukiasyan, Gegham M. Badalyan .....	239

---

# HISTORY

---

# THE FIRST ARMENIANS IN AMERICA DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD (Beginning of 17<sup>th</sup> – First Half of 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

**Knarik Avakian**

*PHD, Leading Researcher  
Institute of History, NAS RA*

## **Abstract**

It is difficult to determine the exact number of Armenians emigrated to America during the given period of British colonialism, since no documents have been preserved about the registration of newcomers, including that of the Armenians, till 1820.

It should be noted that the settlement of these few Armenians in America at this period is not connected with the intentional emigration to USA from the various Armenian-inhabited regions in the subsequent years; they were merely individuals outside the main stream of emigrants.

**Keywords:** New World, America, First Armenians, Virginia Colony, Jamestown, John Martin the Armenian



**Captain John Smith**

The Armenians have left for the United States of America for personal, educational, economic, political, cultural, religious and other reasons.

Still in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the first few Armenians were among the early settlers setting out from Europe to North America. In that period of British colonialism, very little incoherent information, often also in want of historical verification, has been presented about Armenians departed to America. Thus, according to the American historian Louis Adamic, the colony of Virginia, founded in Jamestown in North America, in 1607, by the Virginia Society of London, was populated by Polish, German and Armenian

laborers who had come after fighting against the Turks in Hungary for four years under the command of “the bulwark and savior” of the colony, the twenty-seven-year old captain, John Smith.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Adams 1932: 27; Gavian 1945: 4; Tashjian 1947: 1-2; Adamic 1945: 287; The National Experience 1963: 14; Avakian 2000: 13-17.

The American primary sources mention: “The Poles, Germans, and Armenians were the laborers and tradesmen of the colony; and unlike the colonists who shunned work, they were accustomed to hard and sustained labor.”<sup>2</sup> These people, having “crude manners,”<sup>3</sup> had become skilled in the production of pitch, tar, soap powder, glass beads and baubles, with which they traded with the American Indians, as well as they participated in the battles fought against them by the colonists, thereby favoring both the economic and the political progress of the newly-created colony of Virginia.<sup>4</sup>



In spite of the above-cited fact, the Armenians and the other laborers arrived with them, for twelve years, were found in a slave-like state and were considered in the eyes of the British as “inferior foreigners,” deprived of civil, economic and political rights whatsoever.<sup>5</sup> That is why, in 1619, in Jamestown, the Armenians, along with the Polish, German and Irish laborers had taken part in “the first consciously political upheaval in America for the purpose of extending rights to the common man,” which, at the same

<sup>2</sup> Tashjian 1947: 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Adamic 1945: 287.

<sup>5</sup> Adamic 1945: 287; Lang 1981: 120-121.



time, was a brilliant example of the manifestation of unity of the representatives of various nations in the struggle waged against the violation of human rights in the New World.<sup>6</sup> It is known that the rebellion had “fortunate conclusion,” since, in the same year, the first representative assembly created in America, the House of Citizens of Jamestown had decided that “they (the rebel laborers – K. A.) shall be enfranchised and made as free as any inhabitant there whatsoever.”<sup>7</sup>

Noteworthy is also the fact that, according to certain sources, in 1620, in Virginia, the names of Zorobabel (probably: Zohrab Abel<sup>8</sup>) and Stephan,<sup>9</sup> had been preserved in the lists of the deceased people, as well as a gravestone with a foreign, probably, in Armenian, letters was found in the cemetery of Jamestown,<sup>10</sup> but their Armenian origin is conjectural.

In the subsequent years, we are informed about the next Armenian, who set foot on that American region from certain documents which have reached us. In these documents, provided by the London Virginia Society, when the southern part of colonial America was proclaimed by the King James I of England a resettlement territory for economic, political and commercial purposes, the name of “Martin the Armenian” or “John Martin the Persian”<sup>11</sup> (probably, the fact that he had obtained Persian citizenship in at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, during the days of Shah Abbas, has been taken into account) is mentioned several times.

There is no adequate information about the motives of John Martin’s voyage to the New World. The disconnected data preserved allow us to conclude that Martin the Armenian had come to America in 1618 or 1619 as a servant for the governor of Virginia, George Yeardley,<sup>12</sup> who had come to Jamestown to accomplish the program of radical reforms, since “good hands were not to be had in America for love or money”<sup>13</sup> in the period of colonial America; besides, the entry of manpower was encouraged there in every possible way, in order to realize the riches of the New World. Consequently, it may be assumed that John Martin was one of the comparatively old servants enjoying G. Yeardley’s confidence, who had migrated to Europe, probably, in the years 1610-1612.<sup>14</sup>

Before long, in 1619, John Martin obtains British citizenship in Virginia, then a region of more than a thousand inhabitants, becoming thus “the first naturalized person on the American continent” in the colonial period.<sup>15</sup> He, as a free man, becomes the

<sup>6</sup> Adamic 1932: 288.

<sup>7</sup> The National Experience 1963: 15; Tashjian 1947: 3.

<sup>8</sup> Lang 1981: 121.

<sup>9</sup> Tashjian 1947: 2.

<sup>10</sup> Moushegh, Bishop 1912: 15.

<sup>11</sup> The National Experience 1963: 13-14.

<sup>12</sup> Adams 1932: 28.

<sup>13</sup> Tashjian 1947: 3.

<sup>14</sup> Tashjian 1947: 4; Mankouni 1962: 95.

<sup>15</sup> Kelty 1937: 206; Malcom 1919: 52.



owner of 95 acres of land (1 acre = 4.060 m<sup>2</sup>) and is engaged in the culture of tobacco, widespread at that time in Virginia.<sup>16</sup>

It is possible to conclude that the privileges to act freely, from which John Martin had also benefited, were made possible thanks to the rebellious protest of the foreign worker, in the same 1619, as a consequence of which certain economic and political rights had been gained.

John Martin, engaged in tobacco cultivation during about four years, he then returned to England, in 1622, with his “parcel of tobacco,” he himself had grown, where as a foreigner, a double tax was demanded at the custom house. In this connection, John Martin had applied to the law-court of the Virginia Society. His application, dated on the May 8, 1622, presented to the court of law, concerning the double taxing, has been preserved, of which a passage is quoted: “Iohn Martin the Persian makinge humble suite for the Companies fauo<sup>r</sup> to the ffarmors of his Ma<sup>ty</sup> Custome to free him from payinge double Custome w<sup>ch</sup> they required of him beinge a Stranger notwithstandinge he was made a freeman in Virginia by S<sup>r</sup>. Geo: Yeardley then Gouvernor as by Certificate vnder the Collonies Seale appeared”.<sup>17</sup>

John Martin succeeded in winning the case; he was permitted to import to the Mother Country his lot of tobacco with the usual duty imposed on British citizens. In this manner, the British court has, for the first time with John Martin’s case, clarified, in general, the economic relations between the Mother Country and the “foreign” colonists, further promoting the development of trade.

Attested, once again, as a British subject, John Martin, has had a further progress in position: he has become a member of the Permanent Committee of the London Virginia Society and has taken part in the numerous important sessions with the right to vote.<sup>18</sup> Thus, in the minutes of the “extraordinary” and important meetings, dated on October 20 and November 12, 1623, and on January 14, 1624, he is mentioned as “Martin the Armenian.” It is also known, that he, together with a certain Lord Argal and seven others, has voted in favour of the question of the delivery of the Society’s petition to the King. Al. Brown, in his book “The First Republic in America” has written, that John Martin’s real name, in Armenian pronunciation, should have been Hovhannes Martian.<sup>19</sup> We think that Hovhannes Martirossian is also a possible variant.

<sup>16</sup> Mankouni 1962: 95.

<sup>17</sup> The Records of the Virginia Company of London 1906: 633. It should be noted that the writings of these and the rest of the original materials are in Old English, even – in Latin, in some cases there are spelling and punctuation inaccuracies, which the author has left unchanged. The translations of the original materials are also done by the author of the present paper. In the English printed materials of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries non-traditional sound-units were used to present different words. Thus, the letter “v” – instead of the letter “u” (e. g.: “vse”/“use”, “seauen”/“seven”) or: the letter “i” instead of the letter “j” (e. g.: “Iohn”/“John”) or: the letter “e” instead of the plural suffix letter “-s” (e. g.: “booke”/“books”) [Smith 2006: ii], and some letters are presented with small letters in the abridged words.

<sup>18</sup> Tashjian 1947: 5.

<sup>19</sup> Malcom 1919: 54-55.

In 1624, following the liquidation of the London Virginia Society by King James I,<sup>20</sup> information about John Martin has also come to an end.

Subsequently, in 1653, two silkworm-breeder Armenians had come to America to restore the silkworm-breeding industry having an important state and trade significance for the Virginia colony in that period, which, however, had been suffering a major setback. These two Armenians had come to impart their skills to the native inhabitants. With their knowledge and experience, they were enjoying great authority in their homeland and were brought to America from the Ottoman Empire (probably: from Izmir) thanks to the personal efforts and material means of the eminent leader to the colony of Virginia, Edward Digges.<sup>21</sup> He, being engaged in the silk trade, had been informed about the successes of Armenians in the field of silkworm-breeding from his father, who, at one time, held the position of the Ambassador of Great Britain in Russia.<sup>22</sup> It is well-known that the larvae of the silkworm were imported to Russia mainly from the Armenians in Asia Minor.<sup>23</sup> This two Armenians were keeping a careful eye on the growth of mulberry trees, necessary for the ripening of silk cocoons in the Ed. Digges' silkworm-breeding territory, in Denbigh, Belfield (at present: Williamsburg) and in the vicinity of River James.<sup>24</sup>



Colonial Jamestown, 1614

We are informed about one of the Armenians, “George the Armenian” from the resolution passed by the Virginia Council in December, 1656, where it is reported: “...George the Armenian for his encouragement in the trade of silk and to stay in the country to follow the same have four thousand pounds of tobacco allowed him by the Assembly”<sup>25</sup>. It should be noted, that, in spite of the exerted efforts, the desperate

<sup>20</sup> The National Experience 1963: 18.

<sup>21</sup> Malcom 1919: 55. Tashjian 1947: 6.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Dawn Illustrated Year-Book 1922: 45.

<sup>24</sup> Mankouni 1962: 95.

<sup>25</sup> Malcom 1919: 56; Tashjian 1947: 7.

Armenians, who had not obtained any tangible results in the initial stage, had even wanted to return home.<sup>26</sup>

However, the job of silkworm-breeding had soon such a stunning success, that its “earnest supporter,” the English silkworm-breeder, John Ferrer has woven an extensive eulogy, composed of 173 lines<sup>27</sup> entitled “To the Most Noble Deserving Esquire *Digges*: Upon the Arrivall of His Two Armenians out of *Turkey* into *Virginia*.” Here is a fragment:

“But noble *Digges* carries the Bell away  
(Lass! want to eggs made so small the essay)  
His two Armenians from Turkey sent  
Are now most busy on his brave attempt.  
And had he stock sufficient for next yeare  
Ten thousand pounds of Silk would then appeare  
And to the skies his worthy deeds upreare.

\* \* \* \* \*

Courage, brave Sir: Sith Ayde from God is sent  
Proceed, go on, drive forth thy great intent.”<sup>28</sup>

The development of silkworm-breeding had a crucial significance for the British authorities. “Virginia provided Charles I with the coronation robe, while the silk robe of Charles II was undoubtedly prepared by the cocoons cultivated in his domain in Virginia. A gentleman named Digges had sent for Armenians to come to Virginia for the production of cocoons,” has written Ed. Eggleston at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup>

In this way, as Bishop Moushegh Serobian has noted in his “Armenian-American Almanac” (Year A, Boston, 1912), in Virginia, “the Armenian mind and skill have been able to promote the American industry of silk-spinning in the cradle of formation,” becoming the firstlings of the silkworm-breeding and sericulture in the New World.<sup>30</sup>

Very scanty, often conjectural pieces of information have been kept about the Armenians emigrated during the subsequent years to America. In the period covering the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Armenians arrived mainly from certain European countries having rather active relations with Great Britain (particularly from Holland), as well as from India,<sup>31</sup> and were resettled in the various newly-created colonies (Virginia, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Georgia). Thus, the first Armenian, who settled in Massachusetts in 1682 was the Hungarian-Armenian scientist Stepan Zadori (possibly a variant of the Armenian surnames Zadourian, Assadourian or Astvadsatourian);<sup>32</sup> then the clergyman, Reverend Fr. Peter Toostian (possibly: Petros Doostrian) and a member of his diocese, Jacob Sadouri (possibly a variant of the Armenian names-surnames

<sup>26</sup> Mankouni 1962: 95.

<sup>27</sup> The Reformed Virginian Silk-Worm 1655: 33-38.

<sup>28</sup> The Reformed Virginian Silk-Worm 1655: 38.

<sup>29</sup> Mankouni 1962: 95.

<sup>30</sup> Moushegh, Bishop 1912: 15; Buxton, Buxton Rev. 1914: 219.

<sup>31</sup> Malcom 1919: 56-57.

<sup>32</sup> Tashjian 1947:7-9; Wertsman 1978: 1.

Hakob Sadourian or Assatourian or Astvadsatourian),<sup>33</sup> who settled in South Carolina in 1719; subsequently, there is mention of the cultivator Stepan Tarrian (or Teryen, Tarrien, possibly Terian), who settled in Georgia in 1738.<sup>34</sup>

It is difficult to determine the exact number of Armenians emigrated to America during the given period of British colonialism, since no documents have been preserved about the registration of newcomers, including that of the Armenians, till 1820.<sup>35</sup>

It should be noted that the settlement of these few Armenians in America at that given period is not connected with the intentional emigration to USA from the various Armenian-inhabited regions in the subsequent years; they were merely individuals outside the main stream of emigrants.

Summarizing the desultory information which has reached us about the first Armenians, who had left for America in the period of British colonialism, it is possible to conclude that their vast majority was composed of Armenians scattered in various European countries due to economic and historical circumstances or their alienated generations, who, owing to commercial or other reasons, being related to Great Britain, had, independent from each other and mainly for individual motives, moved to the new resettling colony and had been involved in the various spheres of its economic and spiritual life. That is why they mostly bore alienated names and had adopted other trends of the Christian faith. Nonetheless, the allusions periodically met in the American official colonial documents, concerning their Armenian origin, assure of the great interest with regard to the national belonging of the foreign resettlers in the New World in that period, acquiring thereby a certain national and historical value.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Sources

The Records of the Virginia Company of London. 1622-24. 1906. Vol. I. The Court Book. Part A. (From the Manuscript in the Library of Congress). Edited by Susan Myra Kingsbury, Washington.

The Reformed Virginian Silk-Worm, Or, a Rare and New Discovery of a Speedy Way, and Easie Means, Found Out by a Young Lady in England, She Having Made Full Proof Thereof in May, Anno 1652. 1655, London

### Studies

**Adamic L.** 1945. A Nation of Nations, New York.

**Adams J. T.** 1932. The Epic of America, Boston.

**Avakian K.** 2000. History of the Armenian Community of the United States of America (From the Beginning to 1924). Yerevan (in Arm.).

<sup>33</sup> Tashjian 1947: 9-10; Wertsman 1978: 1.

<sup>34</sup> Tashjian 1947: 10-12. Wertsman 1978: 1.

<sup>35</sup> Avakian 2000: 17.

**Blum John M., Catton Bruce, Morgan Edmund S., Schlesinger Arthur M. Jr., Stamp Kenneth M., Woodward C. Vann** 1963. The National Experience. A History of the United States. New York.

**Buxton, N.**, Buxton, Rev. H. 1914. Travel and Politics in Armenia, New York.

**Dawn Illustrated Year-Book** 1922. Compiled by A. Melikian, Year C, Fresno (in Arm.).

**Gavian, R. W., Hamm, W. A.** 1945. The American Story, Boston.

**Kelty M. G.** 1937. The Beginning of the American People and Nation, Boston.

**Lang D. M.** 1981. The Armenians. A People in Exile, London.

**Malcom V. M.** 1919. The Armenians in America. Boston, Chicago.

**Mankouni Nazaret L.** 1962. From the History of the Armenian-American Community. Historical Philological Journal, 1962/1, 94-105 (in Arm.).

**Moushegh Bishop** 1912. The Armenian-American Year-Book. Year A, Boston (in Arm.).

**Smith John.** 2006. A Description of New England. 1616. Zea E-Books in American Studies – 3, Lincoln.

**Tashjian James H.** 1947. The Armenians of the United States and Canada, Boston.

**Wertsman V.** 1978. The Armenians in America. 1618-1976. A Chronology & Fact Book, Ethnic Chronology Series – No. 27, New York.

*Translated from the Armenian by Tigran Tsoulikian*

# LES FAMILLES ARISTOCRATIQUES D'ALBANIE ET DES REGIONS ORIENTALES D'ARMENIE D'APRÈS LES SOURCES ARMÉNIENNES ET BYZANTINES

Aleksan Hakobian

*Docteur en sciences historiques*

*Institut d'études orientales, NAN RA*

## Abstract

Après la chute du royaume des Archakides en 428, les Sassanides intégrèrent les provinces d'Arc'akh et d'Outiq du nord-est de Grande Arménie au sein d'une nouvelle province (marzpanate), qui a reçu le nom d'Albanie (Ałuanq, Aran, Ran, Rani) inspirée du nom du royaume d'Albanie, qui a existé dès le début I<sup>er</sup> siècle avant JC et qui se trouvait au nord du fleuve Koura jusqu'à la chaîne de montagnes du Caucase et la mer Caspienne. Ensuite, jusqu'à la fin du V<sup>ème</sup> siècle, ce nom a englobé aussi l'Arc'akh et l'Outiq arménien sur la rive droite de la Koura. Les arabes ont maintenu cette organisation administrative cependant, à l'époque de l'affaiblissement du Califat, ils mirent en place de puissants pouvoirs dans les régions orientales d'Arménie qui, à la fin du IX<sup>ème</sup> siècle étaient intégrées au royaume des Bagratouni. L'un des plus importants d'entre eux était *Khatchēn*: au centre de la province d'Arc'akh. Suivant l'interprétation des sources disponibles, sa dynastie régente était originaire du pouvoir médiéval du nom de *Tsavgdēac'i* mais avait déjà leur propre nom: *Aranchahik*.

**Keywords:** famille aristocratique, Sahl Smbatean, Ałuanq, Khatchēn

Après la chute du royaume des Archakides en 428, les Sassanides intégrèrent les provinces d'Arc'akh et d'Outiq du nord-est de Grande Arménie au sein d'une nouvelle province (marzpanate), qui a reçu le nom d'Albanie (Ałuanq, Aran, Ran, Rani) inspirée du nom du royaume d'Albanie, qui a existé dès le début I<sup>er</sup> siècle avant JC et qui se trouvait au nord du fleuve Koura jusqu'à la chaîne de montagnes du Caucase et la mer Caspienne. Ensuite, jusqu'à la fin du V<sup>ème</sup> siècle, ce nom a englobé aussi l'Arc'akh et l'Outiq arménien sur la rive droite de la Koura. Les arabes ont maintenu cette organisation administrative cependant, à l'époque de l'affaiblissement du Califat, ils mirent en place de puissants pouvoirs dans les régions orientales d'Arménie qui, à la fin du IX<sup>ème</sup> siècle étaient intégrées au royaume des Bagratouni. L'un des plus importants d'entre eux était *Khatchēn*: au centre de la province d'Arc'akh. Suivant l'interprétation des sources disponibles, sa dynastie régente était originaire du pouvoir médiéval du nom de *Tsavgdēac'i* mais avait déjà leur propre nom: *Aranchahik*.

En 837, le prince Sahl Smbatean de Khatchēn (Sahl ibn Sinbat dans les sources arabes, et Sahak Haykazoun dans la traduction de Michael le Syrien<sup>1</sup>) a emprisonné

---

<sup>1</sup> Chronographie du patriarche Michael le Syrien 1871: 365 ("Et Mahadi [Babek] lui-même, jetant sa couronne et son voile, s'est enfui et s'est retrouvé dans le pays du Sahak arménien... et le prince arménien Sahak fit prisonnier Mahadi..."). Ouloubabian 1975: 67.

l'insurgé Babek et pour cela fut grandement honoré par le Califat en recevant même le titre de *prince des princes* d'Arménie, d'Albanie (Ałuanq) et d'Ibérie (Virq). En toute vraisemblance, il s'agissait d'un titre transférable puisque, selon le témoignage de Movsēs Daskhouranc'i, celui-ci, depuis 1-2 ans, était donné à Iovhannēs<sup>2</sup> sous le nom de "maître des maîtres" ("tēranc' tēr"). D'après une opinion répandue, cet Iovhannēs était le fils de Sahl qui, selon les sources arabes à l'époque de l'arrestation de Babek, s'appelait *Mouavia*<sup>3</sup> mais notons tout de suite que at-Tabari et Ibn al-Assir appellent *Mouavia* le fils de Sahl que Bougha a emprisonné, c'est-à-dire notre très connu Atrnerséh.<sup>4</sup> Dans la littérature, il est aussi accepté que c'est le "maître des maîtres" Iovhannēs qui est cité par Daskhouranc'i dans l'inscription sur le vieux khatchkar du monastère St. Hakob de Méc'aranq: "en 302 du calendrier arménien [=853/854], pendant le règne du prince Iovhannēs, moi l'évêque Solomon de Méc'aranq, j'ai arrêté...".<sup>5</sup> Rajoutons que Movsēs Daskhouranc'i parle aussi des frères de Sahl<sup>6</sup> et, à la fin de X<sup>ème</sup> siècle, le géographe arabe al-Moukaddassi parle de sa soeur (attentée par Babek).<sup>7</sup>

Notons ici que, récemment, Constantin Zuckerman, en rappelant l'hypothèse formulée par Joseph Marquart, estima possible de comparer Sahl Smbatean avec le prince Sahak Haykide du Siuniq et ainsi de présenter le fils de Grigor Soup'an comme le frère cadet d'Atrnerséh.<sup>8</sup> Cependant, cette hypothèse ignorait absolument les célèbres et nombreuses sources documentaires de Stépannos Orbélean et d'autres historiens selon lesquelles Sahak était le fils du prince Vassak du Siuniq du début du IX<sup>ème</sup> siècle et n'avait aucun rapport avec Khatchēn. Cf. par exemple: "après la mort de Vassak, ses deux fils, Philippē et Sahak se partagent entre eux l'héritage paternel; et Philippē devient le prince principal du Siuniq et Sahak prend sa part avec toute la province de Guélam. Philippē laisse trois fils à son décès... Peu de temps après, meurt aussi Sahak au moment de la bataille de l'émir Hol sur les rives du fleuve Hrazdan près de la ville de Kavakert. [=831!], rappelons que Bougha fit prisonnier Sahl en 854/855 – A. H.], et lègue à son fils Grigor appelé aussi Soup'an".<sup>9</sup> Il est possible de rajouter que

<sup>2</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983: 330-331. Nous avons préparé un nouveau texte critique en utilisant certaines sources.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Adonts 1948:134-136; Minorsky 1953a: 509-510. Cf. Hakobian 2009:266-268.

<sup>4</sup> At-Tabari 1968: 54; Ibn al-Asir 1981: 159 ("...[Bougha] emène aussi Abou-l-Abbas al-Varisi dont le nom était Sinbat ibn Achout ainsi que *Mouavia ibn Sahl ibn Sinbat, patricien d'Arran*").

<sup>5</sup> Corpus épigraphiques arménienne V:12 (N° 1).

<sup>6</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 18, p. 326 ("à cette époque le maître Eranchahik Sahl Smbatean courageux et resplandissant: avec ses frères puissants et avec leurs forces, à l'aube en les attaquant et en les tuant tous et en parvenant à libérer les prisonniers des crocs des lions"). Pour la liste généalogique complète des Aranchahik de Khatchēn, cf.: Hakobian 2010: 71-170 (supplément); Hakobian 2020, Appendice.

<sup>7</sup> Qurdian 1958: 21-22; Ibn al-Asir 1981: 143.

<sup>8</sup> Zuckerman 2000: 570-571.

<sup>9</sup> Stépannos du Siuniq 1861, Châp. 54, p. 217.



Movsēs Daskhouranc'i date la mort de Grigor de 852 ce qui précède la venue de Bougha: "...et le maître Soup'an décéda la même année à Vayoc' Dzor [à la fin de l'an 300 du calendrier arménien]—A. H.]; et l'année suivante Boughkha est venu en Arménie".<sup>10</sup>

En 855 Bougha fit prisonnier Sahl ainsi que de nombreux princes arméniens et les emmena à Samarra ainsi que Sahl et son fils Atrnerséh ("le patricien d'Arran" par les auteurs arabes): T'ovma Artsrouni appelle ce dernier "...le prince d'Atuanq", Iovhannēs Draskhanakertsi – "...le grand prince... qui habitait le château de Khatchēn", Stépannos Asolik – "...le prince de Khatchēn". Très probablement, en 861 (après l'assassinat du calife Moutavaqqil), Atrnerséh est libéré et retourna dans son pays natal. Selon Daskhouranc'i, il construisit Handaberd (dans la vallée de Lévaquet, un confluent gauche du Trtou), et sa femme Spram construisit Noravanq, dans la province Sot'q. Après avoir construit la forteresse Havakhaghats (au bord du confluent droit du Trtou, au sud-est du delta du T'out'khout), leur fils cadet Grigor Atrnerséhean,<sup>11</sup> celui qui a érigé le grand khachkar de Mets Mazra en 881, a étendu son autorité "de ce côté" (d'après les mots de la source), aux provinces de Gardman et Qousti P'arnēs; cette dernière fut renforcée ("dominée en totalité") et au début du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle le puissant empire de P'arisis fut fondé par Sahak-Sévada, le troisième des 5 fils de Grigor.<sup>12</sup>

Corrigeant une erreur de Bagrat Ouloubabian, il faut noter que, parallèlement à celui de P'arisis, le renforcement de l'autorité de Khatchēn ne datait non pas du *fils* de Sahak-Sévada mais de son *frère*.<sup>13</sup> En conséquence, peuvent aussi être refusées les affirmations du savant selon lequel il est possible de considérer le père de *Sahak-Sévada*, *Grigor Atrnerséhean*, comme *Hamam*, le roi de Chaqi-Hérét'i, et sa fille, comme Chahandoukht I<sup>ère</sup>, la femme de Smbat I<sup>er</sup> devenu le premier roi du Siuniq en 970 (ou 987); selon Stépannos Orbélean et plusieurs inscriptions, cette dernière était vraiment la fille de Sévada, "prince d'Atuanq", mais était bien sûr la petite-fille de Sahak, Sévada-Ichkhananoun<sup>14</sup>: Iovhannēs-Sénéqérin, le fils cadet de ce dernier a fondé le royaume P'arisis et l'autre fille était la femme de Moucheł Bagratouni, le premier roi de Kars.<sup>15</sup> Le frère "Khatchēnian" de Sahak-Sévada ne pouvait être ni le cadet que Movsēs

<sup>10</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 20, p. 332-333.

<sup>11</sup> Corpus épigraphiques arménienne IV: 334, № 1358 ("...en l'an 330 du calendrier arménien [=881], moi, Grigor Atrnerséhean, prince du Siuniq et d'Atuanq, ai élevé ce symbole sacré..."). Selon Daskhouranc'i (Hist. Alb., chap. III, 22, p. 341): le nom de son père était Apouset' (= \*Abou Set'), c'est-à-dire en arabe: le *père* du fils cadet du nom de Set' (et, peut-être, c'est de ce "Set'" qu'il est possible de comprendre l'origine de la dynastie arménienne des \*Sévada).

<sup>12</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 22, p. 340-341.

<sup>13</sup> Ouloubabian 1975: 101-102. Cf. peut-être Akopian 1987: 241 (C. Zuckerman n'a pas répété l'erreur du chercheur, cf. Zuckerman 2000: 571, 573).

<sup>14</sup> B. Ouloubabian a, de sa propre initiative, retiré Sévada-Ichkhananoun (et son frère Atrnerséh) de la liste généalogique dressée par Movsēs Daskhouranc'i. Selon Hr. Adjarian 1944:386, la forme juste du nom était "Ichkhan-Sévada".

<sup>15</sup> Stépannos Asolik du Taron 1885, Châp. 17, p. 198). Cf. aussi Zuckerman 2000:571.

Daskhouranc'i appelle Apouli (ou Apou Ali) ni ce Smbat auquel l'historien attribue l'assassinat en 898 du frère cadet ("...quatre ans plus tard, quand le dernier jour de l'année correspond au jour de la Sainte Pâques, le prince arménien Apou Ali d'Ałuanq fut assassiné par son frère Smbat").<sup>16</sup> Il est plus probable que ce frère "originaire de Katchen" ait été le deuxième des 5 fils de Sahak-Sévada, et considérant le nom de son petit-fils cadet, on peut supposer (comme hypothèse) qu'il portait le nom *Sénéqérîm*. D'après les informations de Stépannos Orbélean, à l'onction de l'église principale de Tatev en 906, participaient et Sahak (Sevada), "le maître de Gardman", et les trois princes d'Ałuanq, Essai (le prince de Gorozou), Atrnerséh (peut-être vraiment le fils d'Hamam le Pieux, fondateur du royaume de *Chaqi-Hérét'i*) et Grigor<sup>17</sup> qui, sans aucun doute, était le prince de *Khatchēn*. Ce Grigor ne pouvait d'aucune manière être le fils de Sahak-Sévada, en raison de l'incompatibilité chronologique (Grigor, fils cadet de Sahak, devait, dans un délai de deux décennies, être rendu aveugle par Achot I<sup>er</sup> Fer, le mari de sa soeur, en même temps que son père qui ne lui avait toujours pas légué le pouvoir<sup>18</sup>) et ni son frère (selon l'observation juste de Hr. Adjarian "les fils n'ont pas les mêmes noms parmi les arméniens"<sup>19</sup>) mais seulement le neveu. En 949 le même "grand et glorieux, pieux et bienheureux prince Grigor" accueille chaleureusement le catholicos Anania Mokatsi, en visite du "pays d'Ałuanq" et arrivé dans la "province de Khatchēn". Probablement, il avait un âge avancé puisqu'en 958, son fils le remplaçait déjà depuis 9 ans ("...Sénéqérîm, fils du prince de Khatchēn Grigor de Khatchēn").<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 21, p. 336; III, 22, p. 341. Il est possible de supposer que l'équivalent possible arménien de la variante arabe du nom *Apou Ali* pouvait répéter le nom du grand-père: \**Atrnerséh*. Exepté cela, la variante arménienne du nom du fils d'*Apouli* (*Abou Ali*, c'est-à-dire: *Ali*, père du fils cadet dans la forme arabe) était peut-être \**Grigor*, en répétant de même le nom du grand père. L'histoire mentionne l'année de l'assassinat d'Apouli à la fin du premier passage (p. 337. "...la pleureuse criait en disant: "qu'il ne vienne pas et qu'il ne soit pas de telles années sur le pays aussi longtemps que la nation humaine existe". En 346 du calendrier arménien"). Le 346 du calendrier arménien commença le 16 avril (de l'année 897) et termina le 15 avril (de l'année 898) alors que St. Paque correspond au 16 avril 898 (Badalian 1970: 342, 438). Il est donc possible de redater l'évènement de 898 (et non de 897).

<sup>17</sup>Stépannos du Syunîq1861, Châp. 42, p. 171.

<sup>18</sup>Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i1912:313-314;Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1965: 247; Hovhannēs Draxanakertc'i 2004, Châp. 60, p. 338. Notons ici que selon Movsēs Daskhouranc'i, le nom du frère de Grigor était *Davit* (Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983,Châp. III, 22, p. 341), alors que le nom de la soeur qui était la femme d'Achot le Fer n'est pas déclaré par les historiens; C. Toumanoff l'appelle *Mariam* (Toumanoff 1976: 238), cependant, nous ne connaissons pas sa source.

<sup>19</sup>Atjarian1944: 278.

<sup>20</sup> A propos de la rébellion du pays d'Ałuanq par le catholicos Anania d'Arménie, – Ararat, 1897[publ. par G. Ter-Mkrtchean], p. 134 et 144. Dans la rédaction, il est aussi mentionné "du roi d'Ałuanq" (c'est-à-dire: de Chaqi-Hérét'i), Ichkhanik ("au roi qui était appelé Ichkhanak, fils de Sa Majesté Atrnerséh") et d'autres princes ("et au prince Vatchagan de Gorozou et au prince Gourguen d'Orient"), c'est-à-dire: le prince des princes *Sénéqérîm* (près de Daskhouranc'i: *lovhannēs-Sénéqérîm*). Mokac'i en 958 mentionne aussi la femme de ce dernier et une soeu, cependant, leur nom n'est pas donné (au meme endroit, p. 144).

Précisément, notons que, ne répétant pas l'erreur de B. Ouloubabian, C. Zuckerman estime que le fondateur Grigor du royaume de Khatchēn pouvait être le petit-fils de Sahl Smbatian, justement l'enfant d'Apouli, le fils cadet Grigor d'Atrnerséhian.<sup>21</sup> Toutefois, dans le cas de l'étude du contexte historique de manière élargie, il est nécessaire de considérer cette variante comme moins probable. Il n'est pas difficile de remarquer que de Sahl jusqu'à Grigor Atrnerséhian, donc jusqu'à l'accès au trône d'Apouli il nous apparaît un Khatchēn unifié avec l'Arc'akh central, Sot'q et Qoust-i P'arnēs, avec son centre qui se déplace progressivement vers l'ouest. Ainsi, Atrnerséh, d'abord seulement le fils de Sahl Smbatean, maître de la province de Mec' Iranq et des environs, construit Handaberde, situé dans la vallée du confluent Lévaquet, c'est-à-dire (ainsi que nous l'avons déjà montré) dans la partie orientale de la province de Sot'q; l'historien écrit aussi à propos de l'établissement du palais du prince dans cette région: "Atrnerséh construit la forteresse de *Handi* et le palais dans le village du nom de *Vayouniq* où étaient aussi les bains royaux".<sup>22</sup> Son fils Grigor dont le règne commençait à se répandre déjà vers P'arisos, construit (d'après Daskhouranc'i) la forteresse Havakhaghac' qui se trouvait au sud-est du delta du T'out'khout, au bord du confluent de Trtou, c'est-à-dire (ainsi que nous l'avons déjà vu) dans la région d'Hardjlanq tout près à l'est de la région de Sot'q;<sup>23</sup> et même si l'historien ne parle pas de "siège", dans ce rappel, il atteste de l'importance notable des environs de Havakhaghac' pour Grigor Atrnerséhean<sup>24</sup> (rappelons-nous aussi que Grigor se nomme "prince du *Siuniq* et d'Aluanq" dans l'inscription du khatchkar élevé en 881 à Mec' Mazra de Sot'q). Nous portons un regard différent de ce qui se passe (déjà au moins en 906) après l'assassinat d'Apouli (898), et la division de fait du royaume unifié de Khatchēn en deux principautés conséquentes: *Khatchēn* et *P'arisos* et dont les centres restaient en dehors des territoires de Sot'q-Hardjlanq (deviendra plus tard *Tsar*). Il semble que ce contexte historique soit suffisant pour penser que le fils d'Apouli (Ali-Grigor), en toute vraisemblance, n'avait pas hérité de l'empire de son père (peut-être étant enfant et mort avant l'âge) et d'où la partition entre les deux *oncles paternels* dont l'une des "propriétés" de l'un (probablement \*Sénégérim) était Khatchēn (en tant que fils du prince) et l'autre (Sahak-Sévada), P'arisos.

Il faut aussi noter que notre historiographie est suspendue à un problème lié à la résolution de sérieuses contradictions. D'après T'ovma Artsrouni, historien du Vaspourakan du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle (aussi bien d'après Draskhanakertc'i, Daskhouranc'i, Asolik

<sup>21</sup> Zuckerman 2000:571, 573, 577, 580.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Movsēs Kaňankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 22, p. 340. Le village de Vayouniq est, de manière juste, comparé avec la vallée supérieure du Trtou ou se situe Istissou-Djermadjour et n'a aucun de lien avec la région d'Arc'akh *Vaykouniq* dont le territoire était situé dans la vallée de la rivière Chaloua confluent de la rivière Hakari, confluent de l'Araxe (cf. Hakobian 2009: 52, 220-245).

<sup>23</sup> Hakobian 2009: 245-251.

<sup>24</sup> "Il construit la forteresse d'Havakhaghac' et il établit son autorité sur les territoires environnants" (Movsēs Kaňankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 22, p. 340-341).

et les auteurs ultérieurs qui les citeront), Bougha, en même temps que de nombreux princes arméniens, a fait prisonnier, en 855, Sahl Smbatean qui, de manière inattendue, était appelé “le maître de *Chaq*”.<sup>25</sup> D’après l’opinion juste de la plus grande partie des chercheurs, T’ovma considère que le centre du pouvoir chrétien de l’Albanie Propre dans la région se trouve dans la ville de *Chaqi* (aussi *Chaqē*, puis *Noukhi*, dans le futur) située au nord du fleuve Koura, alors que le maître Hamam Bagratouni a rétabli le royaume d’Albanie (les sources géorgiennes l’appellent *Hérét’i*, en arabes, *Chakki* ou *Chaqqin*) en 894.<sup>26</sup> Mais d’autre part, dans les nombreux messages de Daskhouranc’i on voit que l’empire de Sahl, même avant le prisonnement de Babek, se répandait seulement sur Khatchēn (à l’est de gorge-“khoradzor” de monastère Dadivanq) et ensuite aussi sur le Sot’q voisin (dans le nord-est du Siuniq). Mais de l’autre côté, il apparaît des très nombreux communiqués de Daskhoutanc’i que le pouvoir de Sahl jusqu’à l’écrit de Babek s’est répandu sur l’ensemble de la région de Khatchēn (à l’est de “khoradzor de Dadivanq”) et après cela, sur la région voisine de Sot’q (au nord-est de la province du Siuniq).

Toutefois, depuis N. Adonts, sur la base du témoignage de T’ovma Artsrouni, il a été essayé de lier les principautés sur les deux rives de la Koura, Khatchēn et Hérét’i. D’après N. Adonts et ses successeurs, Smbat, le père de Sahl, comme si grâce à son nom “particulier”, il peut être lié à la dynastie des Bagratouni qui, une ou deux génération avant, avait déménagé du Taron dans la province orientale d’Hérét’i et avait reçu ce pays du roi Artchil de Géorgie,<sup>27</sup> et Iovhannēs, le fils de Sahl (écrits cités plus haut de Daskhouranc’i datant de 838/839 et sur l’inscription de 853/854 du monastère de St. Yakob de Méc’aranq) pourrait confondre le royaume de Chaqi-Hérét’i fondé dans les années 890 avec Hamam le Bienheureux.<sup>28</sup> B. Ouloubabian avait déjà remarqué leur éloignement chronologique, mais il est resté arrêté sur une autre hypothèse qui contredit les témoignages des sources et il est possible de considérer comme identique le petit-fils de Sahl, Grigor Atrnerséh, avec Hamam (cette hypothèse était alors privilégiée par A. Krimsky).<sup>29</sup> Il y a eu aussi des tentatives pour confondre le nom de

<sup>25</sup> “...et ils l’emènèrent à Samarra: dont les noms se reconnaissent ici: général de l’Arménie Smbat, et Grigor, fils de Qourdik des Mamikonian, et le *prince Atrnerséh* d’Ałuanq, le prince Grigor du Siuniq, et *Sahl* [par erreur, Mahl], le fils de Smbat, le *maître de Chaqiqui* conquît *Baban*, et Ichkhanak Vasak, le maître de Vayoc’ Dzor, et le prince Philippē du Siuniq, et le prince Nerséh de Garit’ayan [= Gardman], et ensuite Esayi Apoumousē qui a suscité de nombreuses guerres” (MM, man. №10451, p. 193r; T’ovma Artsrouni 1887: 191; T’ovma Artsrouni et Anonym 2006: 213; T’ovma Artsrouni et Anonym 2010: 207).

<sup>26</sup> Dans l’historiographie daghestanienne moderne, il a été enraciné le nom du *Deuxième royaume d’Albanie* (cf. par exemple: Aitberov 2008).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Méliqset-Bek 1934:195-196; Annales Kartli 1982: 41.

<sup>28</sup> Adonts 1948: 125-136; Barkhoudarian 1971: 58-72; Zuckerman 2000: 564; Yeghiazarian 2009: 151-156, 166-167.

<sup>29</sup> Ouloubabian 1975: 74-82. Cf. Krimsky 1938: 374-375. Le même plus tard: Yeremyan 1953: 648-649; Ter-Ghevondyan 1988-1989: 324-326 (republication: Ter-Ghevondian 2003: 674-676); Toumanoff 1976: 200.

Chaqē du document original de T'ovma avec des noms géographiques du sud de la Koura, en Arc'akh (Slava Sargsian), ou même au Syuniq (Z. Bouniatov).<sup>30</sup>

Cependant il semble que pour cette contradiction inattendue des sources scientifiques il soit possible de donner une explication seulement dans le cas où nous acceptons simplement que l'on fait face à une erreur "technique" de T'ovma Artsrouni au moment du récit des faits. C'est-à-dire que nous pensons que la source écrite ou orale de l'historien du Vaspourakan a présenté Sahl emprisonné par Babek justement comme "le maître de Khatchēn" (dans les variantes des sources écrites peut-être que le nom de "Khatchēn" est une mauvaise transcription du nom de la province), mais l'historien a *remplacé* ce nom géographique qui lui était tout à fait inconnu par un plus familier (naturellement pas trop) le "le maître de Chaqē". Rappelons-nous que le *nom de la province* de "Khatchēn" n'était non plus pas connu au contemporain de T'ovma, Iovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i, qui avait mentionné une fois la forteresse de ce *fort* ("le fort de Khatchēn").<sup>31</sup> En fait, le premier des auteurs d'Arménie centrale est le catholicos Anania Mokatsi qui écrit ce nom à propos de la "*province*" qu'il avait lui-même visité (il se souvient aussi du monastère de "Khatchinay").

Ainsi que nous l'avons vu, les chercheurs ont daté le couronnement d'Hamam le Bienheureux et la restauration du royaume d'Albanie de la dernière décennie du IX<sup>ème</sup> siècle, sans pouvoir préciser l'année en considérant que celle-ci n'est pas dûement précisée dans les sources. Cependant, il semble qu'il soit possible d'examiner avec attention les notes classées suivant un ordre chronologique de Movsēs Daskhouranc'i fondées sur les sources à disposition de l'historien<sup>32</sup> et qui datent la proclamation comme roi d'Hamam en 342 du calendrier arménien (soit 893/894). Dans le chapitre 21 du livre III de Daskhouranc'i il est d'abord écrit à propos de la restauration du royaume d'Arménie ("en l'an trois cent trente six [=887/888] Achot Bagratouni s'assit sur son trône royal en Arménie"), ensuite il rappelle les invasions arabes de 893 ("et, en trois cent quarante-deux [=893/894], les Tadjiks vinrent en Arménie et conquièrent le pays et l'obligèrent à payer des impôts") qu'ont pris fin quand Guéorg Garnéc'i fut fait prisonnier ("le patriarche d'Arménie Guéorg, prisonnier dans des chaînes en fer fut emmené à Partav"). Et juste après cela il est abordé la restauration du royaume d'Albanie par Hamam qui put aussi sauver le catholicos des mains d'emir Sadjid ("ensuite le

<sup>30</sup> Sargsian 2002: 22; Buniyatov 1965: 184-190; Buniyatov 1987: 117-119.

<sup>31</sup> Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1912: 127-128; Hovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i 2004, Châp. 26, p. 190 ("...et Bougha en partant fait prisonnier le *grand prince Atrnerséh* qui habitait dans la *forteresse de Khatchēn* et avec ses compatriotes..."). Pour comparer, notons la phrase de Stépannos Asofik (livre III, châp. 2, p. 107). ("...[*Bougha*] fit prisonnier tous les princes arméniens; ... et le *prince Atrnerséh de Khatchēn*...").

<sup>32</sup> Classement chronologique de tout un passage (livre III, chapitres 12-13, 15-16, 19-22) par déduction, nous considérons comme source principale un document qui ne nous est pas parvenu en totalité (ou seulement les passages écrits par Movsēs Daskhouranc'i et Stépannos Orbélean): l'"Histoire" de Machtots Etivardec'i (897-898) du catholicos d'Arménie, à propos duquel Orbélean aborde dans son 33<sup>ème</sup> chapitre (cf. Hakobian 2009: 268-272; Hakobian 2014, Col. 1-54).

bienheureux Hamam qui était roi d'Ałuanq rétablit la maison royale perdue d'Ałuanq ainsi que le royaume d'Arménie par Achot Bagratouni.<sup>33</sup> Juste après cela, suit l'expression "ils se déroulèrent simultanément", et tout de suite il est clair qu'il n'était pas possible que ce soit écrit du même homme (l'auteur de la source) qui, juste avant notait la différence de 6-7 années entre les années 887 et 893/894. A la place, Daskhouranc'i pouvait tout à fait lui-même écrire à la place d'une expression de sa source, alors qu'il essaie fréquemment aussi dans les parties restantes de son chant à réaliser des "corrections franches", au moins faire correspondre les réalismes de sa vision "albanienne" et "arménienne". Cf. par exemple: l'expression à l'occasion de la christianisation de l'Arménie par Trdat le Grand, et de l'Albanie par Ournayr: "...et ils furent simultanément un miracle de Dieu".<sup>34</sup> Il n'est pas difficile de supposer que dans notre passage de la source: la phrase "qui semble non juste" et donc "corrigée" de Daskhouranc'i répète directement l'année déjà citée quelques lignes au dessus: "342 du calendrier arménien" (=17.04.893 – 16.04.894), non seulement en tant qu'année del'emprisonnement de Guéorg Garnéc'i mais aussi du couronnement d'Hamam. Notons aussi que cela ne pouvait pas correspondre à une année suivante puisque l'histoire d'Hamam suit directement: "...et quatre ans plus tard fut assassiné le prince d'Ałuanq Apou Ali", ensuite peu après, l'année de ce drame est commémorée ainsi que nous l'avons vu plus haut en 897/898 ("en 346 du calendrier arménien").<sup>35</sup> Ainsi: 04.898 – 4 = le début de l'année 894.

En essayant de trouver des données complémentaires sur les prédécesseurs directs (c'est-à-dire les générations des frères Bagratouni déménagées du Taron à Chaqi au cours de la deuxième moitié du VIII<sup>ème</sup> siècle) d'Hamam d'Orient,<sup>36</sup> portant aussi le nom d'lovhannēs et célèbre aussi pour ses travaux, il semble possible d'analyser sous un jour nouveau le problème en question du prince (prince des princes) lovhannēs des années 838 et 853. Plus haut, nous avons noté que le considérer

<sup>33</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 21, p. 335. c'est la suite du sujet quelques lignes après: "[Hamam] réalisait avec beaucoup de joie des actions phylanthropiques très importantes au profit de l'Eglise, de tous les personnes affamées et dans le besoin que le grand patriarche Guéorg en offrant d'innombrables cadeaux le libéra de l'emprisonnement illégal des Sadjiks et en lui montrant beaucoup d'honneur le ramena sain et sauf en Arménie" (p. 336). Pour les détails sur la libération de Guéorg Garnéc'i, cf. Aussi: Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1912: 170-171; Hovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i 2004, Châp. 30, p. 250.

<sup>34</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. I, 9, p. 14.

<sup>35</sup> Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 21, p. 336, 337 (cf. plus haut, réf. 16). Notons que les contrôleurs fiscaux arabes voyageaient habituellement l'hiver. Cf. par exemple: "...et le policier s'arrêtait à Dvin pour y passer l'hiver"(Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1912: 216; Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i 2004, Châp. 38, p. 290).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Mkhit'ar Ayrivanéc'i 1860:55 ("Hamam qui était *lovhannēs Bagratouni*, commenta les Proverbes et établit les derniers goubghes au début du chapitre des Psalmes"). Cf. aussi les deux MM manuscrits: № 2152 (p. 210v: "Qui est Hamam, le commentateur des Proverbes? Réponse – religieux sage des Bagratounis du nom d'lovhannēs"), et № 5128 (p. 249r: "... Le sanctificateur du roi Achot Bagratouni, le grand prêtre d'Arménie Hamam-lovhannēs..."). Pour les détails sur l'activité littéraire d'Hamam, cf. Adonts 1915: 251-285; Mnatsakanian 1966: 183-204.

comme le fils de Sahl Smbatian n'avait pas de fondement scientifique en réalité.<sup>37</sup> A présent, enregistrons spécialement aussi que ce fut un évènement historique particulièrement important. Du témoignage (singulier) de Movsēs Daskhouranc'i il apparaît qu'il avait bénéficié de la part de la cour du Califat de la charge de l'Arménie, du Virq et d'Ałuanq (c'est-à-dire du gouvernement provincial Arminiya), et ceci grâce à une importante réussite obtenue dans le nord Caucase en conséquence de quoi la structure autoritaire arabe avait été rétablie ("avait demandé à la cour") sur un territoire du nom de Boulkharkhoy<sup>38</sup> ("...cette même année [3 lignes plus haut: "en l'an deux cent quatre-vingt sept du calendrier arménien" = 1.05.838-30.04.839] le maître des maîtres lovhannēs qui était le prince d'Arménie et du Virq et d'Ałuanq, et demanda une nouvelle fois à la cour de *Boulkharkhoy* et le nomma *p'atgos*[c'est-à-dire:markgraf] sur ces trois pays").<sup>39</sup> De cette information, il apparaît aussi que dans la fin des années 830, lovhannēs avait atteint l'âge mur d'où il était possible de situer sa naissance au moins au début du IX<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Alors que dans l'inscription du monastère de St.Yacob, Solomon, l'évêque de Mec'aranq (dans la région centrale de Khatchēn), précise la date d'installation de son khatchkars "en 302 du calendrier arménien" (= 27.04.853 – 26.04.854) et "au temps d'Hovhannēs, *prince d'Ałuanq*";<sup>40</sup> ce moment précédait au moins la venue à Partav de Bougha, défait dans le pays des sanars et son arrivée au prince de Gorozou-Qt'ich Esayi Apoumousē qui lui avait résisté un an durant (T'ovma Artsrouni a utilisé par trois fois l'expression "général d'Ałuanq"<sup>41</sup>). Notons que les sources ne communiquent rien à propos des persécutions de Bougha dans le royaume d'Albanie (de Chaqi) et, durant son emprisonnement et son déménagement à Samarra en 855, l'intégrant parmi les ministres, elles appellent Atrnerséh, le fils de Sahl, et "prince d'Ałuanq – patricien" (T'ovma Artsrouni, auteurs arabes), et seulement "prince de Khatchēn" (Draskhanakertc'i, Asolik).<sup>42</sup> Si au temps de notre lovhannēs nous considérons non pas "Khatchēnc'i" mais le "Chaqec'i", alors il en résultera que les Bagratouni venus du Taron sont vite parvenus au poste de "prince d'Albanie", et au moins à un moment à la fonction aussi de prince des princes de la province d'Arménie. Dans ce cas, en 838 devenu prince des princes pendant un certain temps, et "prince

<sup>37</sup> Cf. plus haut, réf. 3-4.

<sup>38</sup> Pour le suffixe "khoy" (< "khay") cf. forme grecque de Tmoutarakan: "Tamatar<sup>k</sup>ha" (d'après Skrzhinskaya 1961: 79; Litavrin 1966: 221-234).

<sup>39</sup> Movsēs Kařankatouac'i 1983, Châp. III, 20, p. 330-331. Ce morceau n'a été préservé que dans le groupe B des manuscrits de l'oeuvre de Daskhouranc'i qui est partagé en deux sous-groupes: *crv* et *bl*. Cf. Hakobian 1986: 110-144 (en arm.); Akopian 1987:150-161. L'éditeur de texte 1983V. Araqēlian a donné ce passage: seulement les lectures du sous-groupe *crv*; ici il est devenu: "Boulkhar, Khoyta, P'atgos" ce qui crée la confusion. La forme juste est en *bl*.

<sup>40</sup> Corpus épigraphiques arménienne, livretV: 12 (N° 1).

<sup>41</sup> Histoire de la maison des Artsrouni du prêtre T'ovma Artsrouni 1987: 170-180; T'ovma Artsrouni et Anonym 2006: 205-206. Au début de l'histoire, l'historien écrit: "...et à cette époque un certain Apoumousē, réputé comme ...le fils d'un pretre dominait les grands territoires d'Ałuanq" (au même endroit, p. 198).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. plus haut, réf. 4, 25, 31.



d'Albanie" en seulement 853/854, il aurait pu être, sans aucun problème chronologique, le grand-père d'Hamam-lovhannēs Bagratouni devenu roi en 894.

De très nombreuses informations ont été préservées dans les sources arméniennes, géorgiennes et arabes à propos dufils d'Hamam d'Atrnerséh et d'Ichkhanik, fils de ce dernier. Selon les données parvenues à Stépannos Orbélean, participaient le catholicos Siméon d'Atuanq, le prince Sahak (Sevada) de Gardman (P'arisos) et les "princes des princes" Grigor (prince de Khatchēn), Esayi (prince de Gorozou) et Atrnerséh que les chercheurs considèrent comme le roi de Chaqi-Hérét'i, le fils d'Hamam le Bienheureux.<sup>43</sup> Vers 908, le catholicos d'Arménie lovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i, devenu banni, fut invité dans son pays; il écrit: "...à leur roi Atrnerséh qui est du nord-est du Caucase, parce qu'ils étaient de notre peuple et de nos troupeaux".<sup>44</sup> "Quelques années après cela, en 915, d'après le communiqué des sources géorgiennes, Atrnerséh (Adarnasé) était devenu ennemi avec deux seigneurs du Virq mais il avait finalement pu échapper à la guerre en faisant des concessions territoriales dans le plateau d'Alazan."<sup>45</sup> L'auteur arabe Massoudi nomme de son vivant *Adzar-Narsa, fils de Houmam*, le roi du pays de Chaqi.<sup>46</sup> Et dès 949, le catholicos d'Arménie Anania Mokac'i en visite à Khatchēn nomme parmi les seigneurs le roi Ichkhanak venu d'Albanie, fils d'Atrnerséh, petit-fils d'Hamam le Bienheureux ("...à cette époque il avait le trône royal au temps d'Ichkhanak, le fils de sa Majestée Atrnerséh, petit-fils du Bienheureux Hamam, pieux roi d'Atuanq, et il se conformait au rite chalcédonien en oubliant la doctrine des Pères").<sup>47</sup> Les auteurs arabes et géorgiens connaissent aussi le roi Ichkhanik. Selon ces derniers, sa mère Dinar (la femme d'Atrnerséh) était la soeur du prince Gourguen des princes d'Adjarie et de Koueli (Géorgie), celle qui avait pu convertir au chalcédonisme son fils et son pays.<sup>48</sup>

L'empereur byzantin Constantin Porphyrogènes (913-959) dans son chant "De Cérémonies" composé en 949 (du livre II dans le 48<sup>ème</sup> chapitre intitulé: "Les titres des lettres envoyées aux autres nations"), sépare le prince d'Albanie dans un passage du début (après les passages traitant de l'Arménie, de l'Ibérie, de l'Alania et de l'Abazguie) dans lequel entrent aussi le Charvan, le Khoursan (Χρύσα), le Varsan (Βρέζαν), le Movakan (Μωκάν) ainsi que l'Azie, la Kédonie et une partie des "Krébatad".<sup>49</sup> Notons qu'à cet instant (selon Anania Mokac'i, justement en 949) Ichkhanik Bagratouni était le

<sup>43</sup> Stépannos du Siuniq 1861, Châp. 42, p. 171.

<sup>44</sup> Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1912: 217; Hovhannēs Draxanakertc'i 2004, Châp. 36, p. 290.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Adonts1948: 133.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Minorsky1963: 211.

<sup>47</sup> A propos des persécutions de la maisons d'Atuanq par le catholicos d'Arménie Anania, p. 131, Cf. aussi p. 144 ("...le roi qui s'appelait Ichkhanik, le fils de Monsieur Atrnerséh").

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Méliqset-Bek 1955: 39-40 ("en souvenir du patricien du nom d'Adarnasé et de sa femme, la reine Dinar, et de leur fils Ichkhanik"), cf. T. I, p. 98, 203, ainsi que: Adonts1948: 104-107.

<sup>49</sup> Constantin Porphyrogènes 1970: 152. Cf. Minorsky1953a: 509; Zuckerman 2000: 532-537.

fil d'Atrnerséh et le petit-fils d'Hamam-lovhannēs. Pour la moitié de ce même X<sup>ème</sup> siècle, des descriptions des territoires de l'Albanie Propre étaient données par Massoudi et d'autres auteurs arabes suivant les informations desquels le royaume était chrétien alors que le Charvan (du temps de Layzan), le Movakan, le Varsan (du temps de Maskat), le Khoursan et leur voisin Anbassie (ou Absie, avec Kabala-Kapalak comme capitale), le Lakz et le Bab al-Abvab (Derbend) étaient musulmans.<sup>50</sup>

A la moitié du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle, Constantin Porphyrogènes était déjà parfaitement au courant du niveau d'indépendance de la principauté de Khatchēn (nous pensons aussi de même en ce qui concerne au moins P'arisos). Porphyrogènes, dans le même chapitre du chant "De Cérémonies", place le passage à part traitant de l'Arménie après le Califat arabe et avant les passages sur l'Albanie et l'Ibérie. Et à l'intérieur de celui-ci, après ceux qui ont envoyé des lettres aux rois du Vaspourakan et de la Grande Arménie, l'auteur traite de chacun de ceux qui ont envoyé des lettres aux responsables (8 ou 10 rois au total) des unités semi-indépendantes du pays: après Kogovit, Taron, Moks, Andzévac'i, Siuniq (Συνίς) et Vajoc' Dzor (Βαϊτζώρ), il donne deux derniers noms: l'Arménie au prince de "Khatchēn (Χατζιένης), Sévordeac', c'est-à-dire aux *trois* princes appelés les Fils-Noirs (τῶν Σερβοτιῶν, τῶν λεγομένων Μαύραπαιδία)".<sup>51</sup>

En conséquence, comme hypothèse, il est possible de penser que des confusions aient été faites par Constantin ou un transcritteur de son chant, laisser glisser des confusions alors qu'en réalité, dans les correspondances avec l'empereur, parmi les "correspondants d'Arménie" sont appelés *Sévordi* non pas les trois dernières principautés mais au plus, deux de ces trois, c'est-à-dire, d'après les sources arméniennes des IX-X<sup>ème</sup> siècles, le bien célèbre Tavouch-Dzoraguet (des *Sévordi* sans aucun doute ou aussi de la province appelée Outiq) et le Gardman-P'arisos. Si cette hypothèse était acceptée, alors sous la signature de "deuxième correspondant" de Porphyrogènes il est possible de supposer certainement le prince de Gorozou. En conséquence, l'essai de C. Zuckerman de voir dans les Sévordeac' de l'*extérieur* de l'Arménie<sup>52</sup> tant ethniquement parlant que territorialement, contredit et l'original de Constantin, et le reste des sources scientifiques (présentées aussi dans son article), et au moins les réalités de la période concernée, en conséquence il doit être simplement considéré comme le résultat d'une précipitation.

Le manuscrit arabe de la deuxième moitié du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle a été préservé par Ibn Hawqal, qui, en 955, transmet à deylemit émir Marzouban Salarid la liste des impôts versés par les formations étatiques des pays voisins et de l'Arménie.<sup>53</sup> Dans celui-ci, à côté de Chaqqi (Albanie), d'Ahr-Varzakan (dans le nord de l'Atropatène), d'"Arménie Intérieure" (Grande Arménie des Bagratounis), du Vaspourakan ("Al-Dayrani"), de

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Minorsky 1963: 106-117, 211-212.

<sup>51</sup> Constantin Porphyrogènes 1970: 151. Cf. Honigmann 1961: 147-148; Yuzbashian 1988: 87; Zuckerman 2000: 589.

<sup>52</sup> Zuckerman 2000: 589-592, en particulier p. 591.

<sup>53</sup> Minorsky 1953b: 519; Ter-Ghévondian 1969: 58-59.

Vayoc' Dzor ("Al-Vayzour") apparaissent aussi les seigneurs des 3 futurs royaumes de l'Arménie Orientale. Les voici: "Chef d'al-Roub" (al-Rb', selon toute vraisemblance, on a affaire à Sévordiq-P'arisos<sup>54</sup>) Sanharib Ibn Savada (Iovhannēs-Sénégérim, fils de Sévada-Ichkhananoun), 300 000 dirhams en impôts; "chef d'al-Djourz" (sans aucun doute: on a affaire à Gorozou) Vachakan Ibn Mousa (Vatchagan, fils de Movsēs), 200.000 en dirhams; et 150 000 en dirhams, le "chef Sanharib de Khatchēn", c'est-à-dire le prince Sénégérim de *Khatchēn* dont traitait aussi Anania Mokac'i (comme et le "prince des princes" Iovhannēs-Sénégérim et le "prince Vatchagan de Gorozou").<sup>55</sup> Ibn Hawqal n'est désormais plus leur roi bien qu'il faille constater qu'il se comporte de telle manière dans les événements de l'Arménie Intérieure, du Vaspourakan et de Chaqi que l'existence d'un pouvoir royal ne fasse aucun doute.

En conséquence, les noms géographiques Ar-Roub (al-Rb') et Khatchēn (Khadjin) se retrouvent de nouveau mis côte à côte par l'auteur arabe (d'origine Khorasan) Abou Doulaf. Le texte est (traduit du russe): "...d'ici [de la localité de *Bakou* du Chirvan" – A.H.], je suis allé dans le pays d'Arménie jusqu'à ce que j'arrive à Tiflis... De là, à Ardabil. J'ai traversé al-Vajzour [Vayoc' Dzor], Kaban [Kapan-Balq], Khadjin, ar-Roub [var. Al-Ry'], Khandan [?] et les montagnes d'al-Bazzayn [?].<sup>56</sup> A propos de l'ordre des pays, le traducteur a commenté fidèlement: "Abou Doulaf dresse sans ordre la liste des différents points géographiques qui sont soit-disant sur la route Tiflis –Ardabil".<sup>57</sup> Mais en tous les cas, ce désordre ne gêne pas pour comparer les pays concernés tel que *Khatchēn*, devenu connu de l'auteur, et son pays voisin, de toute évidence, *P'arisos*.

Le communiqué détaillé traitant de la fondation du royaume de P'arisos (couronnement d'Iovhannēs-Sénégérim) a été préservé dans l'avant dernier chapitre du chant de Daskhoutanc'i.<sup>58</sup> Celui-ci donne la possibilité de dater le couronnement de la période précédant la rédaction du chant (jusqu'en 982) et N. Adonts calcule et établit

<sup>54</sup> C. Zuckerman aussi oublie de nouveau les comparaisons des noms des émirats des études précédentes, et en tant qu'hypothèse propose de porter attention dans la variante du nom du responsable de Sénégérim, le fils de Sévada à la lecture de la forme primaire des noms (Zuckerman 2000:580). Et comme seule hypothèse, il propose de voir dans la variante du nom des terres *al-R.y'* (al-Ray') de Sénégérim, le fils de Sévada, la lecture modifiée par la forme originelle \*al-Rangh de la dénomination *Arrān / al-Rān (=Albania)*.

<sup>55</sup> A propos de la rébellion du pays d'Aṭuanq par le catholicos Anania, p. 144. Cf. aussi Ouloubabian 1975 :83-84; Ter-Ghevondyan 2003 : 326, réf.32; Zuckerman 2000: 571.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Abū-Dulaf Misa'r Ibn Muḥalhil 1955: 35; Abū-Dulaf 1960: 36, № 184b. Nom inconnu de "Khandan", peut-être il est possible de considérer (en tant que simple hypothèse) la principauté de Gorozou comme le résultat d'une erreur possible de dénomination de "Haband".

<sup>57</sup> Abū-Dulaf 1960:77, réf. 72.

<sup>58</sup> Movsēs Kaṭankatouac'i 1983,Châp. III, 22, p. 341 ("Iovhannēs, le fils cadet d'Ichkhananoun, qui était aussi appelé Sénégérim, élu du côté droit de Dieu, le rétablissant dans son pouvoir en suspens depuis longtemps, il le réaffirma lui-même et le roi de Perse le décorant somptueusement lui attribua la couronne de son père et son cheval royal; et au cours de la même année, aussi quand il était maître en Grèce, un homme du nom de Davit envoya la couronne royale resplandissante et en or en honneur et en signe de réussite de la part de Dieu à son encontre; et reçu la sancitification de la part du patriarche à la Gloire du Christ.").

cet évènement au cours de la période 966-978.<sup>59</sup> Les historiens Vardan et Asolik (châpître III, p. 198; III, 48, p. 286) nous donnent des informations sur Grigor, le frère d'Iovhannēs-Sénégérîm et son fils Philippē, les rois qui succèdent à P'arîsos.<sup>60</sup> Des informations documentaires sur le royaume de Gorozou ou de Dizak des années 997 et 1000 ont été préservées (par ex.: sur la fenêtre de l'église rouge près du village de Toumi: "...en 449 du calendrier arménien [=1000] et au temps du règne de Gaguik, fils de Mousē, moi, Sophie, fille de Mousē, j'ai construit la maison de Dieu pour sauver mon âme et celle de mes parents").<sup>61</sup> A la différence de P'arîsos et de Gorozou, aucune source directe de témoignages directs au sujet de l'établissement du royaume à Khatchēn n'a été préservée. Cependant, il y a les parallèles avec les royaumes voisins et les informations directes d'Orbélean qui concernent les liens de parentés de la dynastie royale du Siuniq. Particulièrement, nous savons que le roi Grigor I<sup>er</sup> (1051-1072) de Balq-Kapan était le beau-père du "roi Sévada d'Albanie [dans ce cas, de Khatchēn - A. H.]"; il était le père de la reine Chahandoukht II ("fille du roi Sévada le Grand de la nation d'Ałuanq")<sup>62</sup> et son frère, "membre de la famille du roi", Sénégérîm à qui fut confié le trône du Siuniq (1072-1094/1096), après Grigor resté sans héritier. Chahandoukht, à propos de son père, roi, écrit aussi dans la lithographie qui date de la construction de l'église à deux étages de Vahanavanq: "...en 535 [=1086], moi Chahandoukht, fille du roi Sévada d'Ałuanq et femme du roi Grigor...".<sup>63</sup> Dans le Vahanavanq, il fut aussi préservé la pierre tombale de la "belle-mère" de Grigor, la reine Sophie d'Albanie, dont l'inscription est: "Sophie, reine d'Ałuanq, belle-mère du roi Grigor, fils d'Achotik, mère de Chahandoukht. An 530 [=1081]".<sup>64</sup>

En étudiant la source documentaire scientifique, il est possible de remarquer que le renouveau des principautés de Khatchēn et de Gorozou des royaumes a eu lieu aussi, en toute vraisemblance, à la fin du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Ceci était la période quand les Bagratounis, rois—"chah des chahs", s'étaient vraisemblablement accommodés avec la fondation des petits royaumes féodaux sur leurs terres de "Grande Arménie" (c'était le nom officiel du pays<sup>65</sup>) et s'assurant un certain contrôle d'Ani sur la base d'alliance, justement leurs prérogatives royales les établissaient, c'est-à-dire leur investiture (les sources décrivent cette confirmation pour les royaumes du Lori et de Kars).<sup>66</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Adonts 1948: 138-140. Cf. Akopian 1987:213-214; Zuckerman 2000: 581-582.

<sup>60</sup> Vardan Bardzraberdci 1861: 134-135.

<sup>61</sup> Corpus épigraphiques arménienne V: 173 (N° 604), cf. aussi p. 169 (N° 587).

<sup>62</sup> Stépannos du Siuniq 1861, Châp. 58, p. 233.

<sup>63</sup> Corpus épigraphiques arménienne II: 138 (N° 405).

<sup>64</sup> Grigorian 1980: 162-163; Grigoryan 2006: 141.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Yuzbashian 1988: 81.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Matévossian 1982: 74-75, 120-123.

Probablement, le couronnement des princes de Khatchēn a suivi la rédaction du chant de Daskhouranc'i (jusqu'à 982-988<sup>67</sup>), d'où le fait qu'il n'y est pas fait mention.

Il semble cependant que cet acte pouvait avoir eu lieu avant la rédaction contemporaine du chant d'Asolik (1004) puisque l'historien du Taron ne donne aucune information non seulement à ce sujet mais aussi à propos de la proclamation du royaume de Gorozou qui eut lieu avant l'an 1000.

En résumé, notons que le royaume de Chaqi-Hérét'i s'est uni au royaume de Kakhét'i-Sanaria (dans des conditions restées inconnues jusqu'à aujourd'hui) au cours de la deuxième moitié du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle,<sup>68</sup> alors que les trois royaumes des Régions orientales d'Arménie ont perduré aussi au cours du siècle suivant au XI<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Peut-être, le dernier roi de P'arisos est Phipē-Philippē (1003-1048) qui, avec Atrnerséh, un autre roi "d'Albanie", a correspondu avec le célèbre prêtre Tiranoun (la "réponse" écrite par ce dernier aux 200 questions des deux rois a été récemment publiée par Azat Bozoyan).<sup>69</sup> En ce qui concerne ce roi Atrnerséh, très probablement il peut-être assimilé au père du "prince des princes Grigor" qui a dressé un khatchkar récemment découvert dans le monastère de Mayrédjour situé dans la vallée du ruisseau Rakhich d'Hakari; dans la moitié préservée de l'inscription, on peut y lire les trois premières lettres du nom de ce dernier, ATR{...}, et il est difficile de douter que ce nom ne soit celui d'Atrnerséh (voici le texte des 8 courtes lignes: "C'était l'an 518 du calendrier arménien [=1069]; moi, prince des princes Grigor, fils d'Atr{...}"). D'après cela, Grigor et son père, en toute vraisemblance, étaient les "princes des princes" de la moitié du XI<sup>ème</sup> siècle de Gorozou, c'est-à-dire, les rois.<sup>70</sup>

Il est aussi célèbre une autre "Réponse" du même prêtre Tiranoun (dans le manuscrit: *Tiran*) qui est adressée à une personne (les 8 morceaux de l'original ont été préservés grâce aux recueils de Vardan d'Ayguékc'i) du nom de Sénéqérım (Sénéqarım, Sinaqérem).<sup>71</sup> Par supposition, ce Sénéqérım pourrait être considéré comme roi et dans ce cas, peut-être, non pas du Vaspourakan mais ainsi que précisé plus haut comme le roi Phipē ou Atrnerséh de "l'Ałuanq" (= des Régions orientales d'Arménie). D'une telle hypothèse, dans le cas de la confirmation de nouveaux éléments, nous pourrions le confondre non pas avec Iovhannēs-Sénéqérım (deuxième moitié du X<sup>ème</sup> siècle), le fondateur du royaume de P'arisos, mais avec le prince

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Akopian 1987:222-223.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Minorsky 1963:117. Au début du XI<sup>ème</sup> siècle a eu lieu un changement de la dynastie royale dans le royaume de Kakhét'i-Hérét'i et la couronne est passée au représentant des Bagratouni arméniens du Lori (Gaguik I<sup>er</sup>, fils de Davit Anhořin).

<sup>69</sup> Prêtre Tiran(oun) 2009: 957. Le titre est: "Réponse du prêtre Tiranoun [*var.* Tiran] d'Arménie aux questions des rois d'Ałuanq Phipē et Atrnerséh" (MM, man. № 497, 625, 3006, 3710, 3824, 6380). Cf. Ter-Mkrtchian 1894: 22-26; Mnatskanian 1966: 204-210.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Hakobian 2009: 56-63.

<sup>71</sup> Vardan Aygektsi 1998: 206, 383.

Sénégérîm de Khatchên, connu de ses contemporains, Anania Mokatsi et Ibn Hawqal et nulle autre part mentionné, mais très probablement le petit-fils de même nom (première moitié du XI<sup>ème</sup> siècle).

En ce qui concerne la période de la chute des royaumes féodaux de P'arîsos, Khatchên et Gorozou, ou du moins le début, avec une plus grande probabilité, il est possible de lier avec les invasions destructives du sultan seldjouk Alp-Arslan. Selon l'historien Vardan, dans la période de la conquête réussie d'Ani en 1045 par Byzance, emir Fadloun Chaddadîd, sans aucun doute, en coopérant avec les seldjoukides (en devenant leur avant-garde dans la vallée de la Koura) établit sa domination sur le P'arîsos et les provinces alentour, en devenant déjà une menace sérieuse pour les rois du Lori (de Dzoraguet), de Kart'li et de Kakhét'i-Hérét'i. Voici le texte: "...et au nom de l'amitié, après le décès du père, Philippê [roi de P'arîsos], le fils de Grigor, lui rend visite mais lui l'enchaîne [Phadloun] et lui subtilise Chachouał et Chot'.<sup>72</sup> En appelant près de lui le chef Gaguik de Gandziq [Gandzeac'], le fils d'Hamam, il le tue et prend son pays. Et c'est ainsi en se renforçant qu'il établit son autorité sur *Khatchên* et *Gorozou* et les *Sévordeac'* et menace le roi Gaguik de la rivière de Dzor et le roi Kurikêd'Atuanq<sup>73</sup> et le roi Bagarat de Géorgie et les contraint et domine aussi Dvin".<sup>74</sup> Il est clair qu'il faut comprendre l'expression "chef de Khatchên et de Gorozou" de Vardan l'Oriental non seulement la conquête militaire des continents de *Khatchên* et *Gorozou* mais aussi dans le sens de la destruction du pouvoir royal dans leurs frontières ainsi que nous le savons de manière parfaitement établie pour le troisième cité Sévordîq-P'arîsos à propos de quoi rien ne nous est connu au sujet du royaume après Philippê (1003-1048), le fils de Grigor. Bien qu'il soit probable que dans le cas de Khatchên et Gorozou, le pouvoir royal ait été préservé plus longtemps, jusqu'au début des années 1070.<sup>75</sup> Selon quoi la fin des princes de Khatchên est rapportée par Sévada (le père du roi Sénégérîm et de la reine Chahandoukht), beau-père du roi Grigor I<sup>er</sup> (1051-1072) du Siuniq, et celle du royaume de Gorozou par le prince des princes Grigor, fils d'Atrnerséh (1069).<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Ce *Chachouał* (variante: *Chachouaz*), au moins, vraiment, c'est le *Chotouag* de la région de Guétarqounîq (dans le sud-ouest du lac Sévan), et *Choth*, au moins, vraiment, est la région de Sot'q (cf. Ouloubabian 1975: 92), peut-être dans des sources plus tardives (al-Yakout, Hamdallah Ghazvîni, an-Nasavî) nous avons la mention de la forteresse du nom de *Chotour* qui se trouvait à l'est de Gandzak (cf. Shîhab al-Dîn Muhammad al-Nasawî 1973: 163, 365). Une ligne en dessous l'original de Vardan mentionne *Gandziac'* qui, peut-être, est modifiable en *Tandzeac'* (en comparant avec la province de Tandziq l'est du Tsar, le sud-est du ville Qarvatchar).

<sup>73</sup> C'est-à-dire, de Kakhét'i-Hérét'i.

<sup>74</sup> Vardan Bardzrabertc'i 1861:134-135.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Hakobian 2009: 325-329.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. plus haut, réf. 62-64, 70.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIE

### Source première

Abū-Dulaf Misa'r Ibn Muhalhil 1955. Abū-Dulaf Misa'r Ibn Muhalhil's Travels in Iran (circa A. D. 950), Arabic text with an English translation and commentary by V. Minor-sky, Cairo.

Abū Dulaf 1960. La deuxième risala d'Abu Dulaf. Edition des texte. Traduction, introduction et commentaries par P.B.Bulgakov et A.B. Khalidov, Moscou (en russ.).

Annales Kartli 1982. Annales Kartli. Traduction, introduction et remarques par G.V.Tsulaya, Tbilisi (en russ.).

A propos de la rébellion du pays d'Ałuanq par le catholicos Anania d'Arménie [publ. par G. Ter-Mkrtchean], Ararat, 1897, 124-144.

At-Tabari 1968. Tarikh at-Tabari, Édition critique par M. Abu-l-Fath Ibrahim, t. IX, Le Caire, 1968.

Constantin Porphyrogènes 1970. Constantin Porphyrogènes. A propos des cérémonies de la cour byzantine; Livre II, Traduit de l'orginal, prologue et références de H. Bartikian (Les sources étrangères sur l'Arménie et les Arméniens, 6), Erevan (en arm.).

Corpus épigraphiques arménienne II. Corpus épigraphiques arménienne, livret II, Préparé par S. G. Barkhoudarian, Erevan, 1960 (en arm.).

Corpus épigraphiques arménienne IV. Corpus épigraphiques arménienne, livret IV, Préparé par S. G. Barkhoudarian, Erevan, 1973 (en arm.).

Corpus épigraphiques arménienne V. Corpus épigraphiques arménienne, livret V, Préparé par S. G. Barkhoudarian, Erevan, 1982 (en arm.).

Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1912. Histoire d'Arménie du catholicos Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i, Tiflis (en arm.).

Hovhannēs Draskhanakertc'i 1965. Histoire d'Arménie, Traduction de l'original arménien en géorgien par E. V. Tsagareichvili, Tbilissi (en. georg.).

Hovhannēs Drasxanakertc'i 2004, Histoire d'Arménie, Introduction, traduction et notes par P. Boisson-Chenorhokian, Lovanii.

Ibn al-Asir 1981. Traduit de l'original, prologue et références par A. Ter-Ghévondian, Les sources étrangères sur l'Arménie et les arméniens, 11, Erevan(en arm.).

Michael le Syrien 1871. Chronographie du patriarche Michael le Syrien, Jérusalem (en arm.).

Mkhit'ar Ayrivanéc'i 1860. Histoire d'Arménie de Mkhit'ar Ayrivanéc'i, Moscou (en arm.).

Movsēs Kałankatouac'i 1983. Histoire du pays d'Ałuanq, Texte critique et références par V. Araqélian, Erevan (en arm.).

Prêtre Tiran(oun) 2009. Réponse aux questions, Prologue et étude de l'original par A. Bozoyan, Matenagirq Hayoc', t. X, X<sup>ème</sup> siècle, Antilias.



Shihab al-Din Muhammad al-Nasawi 1973. Biographie de sultan Jalal ad-Din Mankburna. Traduction de l'arabe, préface, commentaries par Z.M.Buniyatov (en russ.).

Stépannos Asolik 1885. Histoire oecuménique de Stépannos Asolik du Taron, St. Pétersbourg (en arm.).

Stépannos du Siuniq 1861. Histoire de la maison Sisakan de l'évêque Stépannos du Siuniq, Moscou (en arm.).

T'ovma Artsrouni 1887. Histoire de la maison des Artsrounis par le prêtre T'ovma Artsrouni, St. Pétersbourg (en arm.).

T'ovma Artsrouni et Anonym 2006. Histoire de la maison des Artsrounis, Édition critique, prologue et références par M. H. Darbinian-Méliqian, Erevan (en arm.).

T'ovma Artsrouni et Anonym 2010. Histoire de la maison des Artsrounis, Préparé par G. Ter-Vardanian, Matenagirq Hayoc', t. XI, X<sup>ème</sup> siècle, Antilias (en arm.).

Vardan Aygektsi 1998. Livre de la confirmation des fondements de la croyance, Édition critique par Ch. K. Hayrapetyan, introduction de Y. Keosseian (en arm.).

Vardan Bardzraberdc'i 1861. Histoire oecuménique de Vardan Bardzraberdc'i, Moscou (en arm.).

## Recherches

**Adonts N.** 1915. Denys le Grammairien et arménien commentateurs, Petrograd (en russ.).

**Adonts N.** 1948. Études historiques, Paris (en arm.).

**Aitberov T.M.** 2008. Deuxième royaume Albanais et son rôle dans l'histoire du peuple avar, Makhachkala (en russ.).

**Akopian A.A.** 1987. L'Albanie-Aluank dans les sources gréco-latines et arméniennes anciennes, Erevan (en russ.).

**Atjarian H.** 1944. Dictionnaire des noms personnelles arméniens, t. I, Erevan (en arm.).

**Badalian H.S.** 1970. Histoire du calendrier, Erevan (en arm.).

**Barkhoudarian S.G.** 1971. Les principautés d'Arc'akh, de Chaki et de P'arisos au IX-X<sup>ème</sup> siècles, Patma-banasirakan handes, 1971/1, 58-72 (en arm.).

**Buniyatov Z.M.** 1965. Azerbaïdjan en VII-IX siècles, Baku (en russ.).

**Buniyatov Z.M.** 1987. Encore une fois sur la localisation de Shaki (en relation avec la publication de Guram Gumba), Izvestia de l'Académie des sciences de l'Azerb.SSR. Série d'histoire, de philosophie et de droit. 1987/1, 117-119 (en russ.).

**Grigorian G.M.** 1980. Inscriptions épigraphiques de Vahanavank des fouilles des années 1970-1978, Patmabanasirakan handes, 1980/2, 154-165 (en arm.).

**Grigorian G.M.** 2006. Royaume du Siunik (X-XII siècles), Patmabanasirakan handes, 2006/2, 134-145 (en arm.).

**Hakobian A.** 1986. Les copies manuscrites de "L'Histoire de l'Albanie" de Movsēs Kałankatuac'i, Banber Matenadarani, 15, 110-144 (en arm.).

**Hakobian A.** 2009. Recherches épigraphiques et historico-géographiques (Arc'akh et Outiq), Vienne-Erevan (en arm.).

**Hakobian A.** 2010. La forteresse de Khatchēn-Khokhanaberd et leur principauté au IX-XIII<sup>èmes</sup> siècles, Handes Amsorea, 2010, 71-170 (en arm.).

**Hakobian A.** 2014. Katholicos Maschtotz Yeghivardetzi: Geschichte (Untersuchung und Versuch der Wiederherstellung des Textes vom 9. Jh.), Handes Amsorea, 2014, 1-54 (en arm.).

**Hakobian A.** 2020. Les maisons royales et princières de l'Albanie Proper et des Régions orientales d'Arménie de l'Antiquité au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (un examen historique et des sources), Erevan, (en arm.).

**Honigmann E.** 1961. Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches, Bruxelles.

**Krimskiy A.E.** 1938. Pages de l'histoire de l'Azerbaïdjan du Nord ou du Caucase (Albanie classique). Shaki, En mémoire d'acad. N. Ya. Marr. Recueil d'articles, Moscou-Léninegrad (en russ.).

**Litavrin G.G.** 1966. À propos de Tmutarakan, Byzantion, t. XXXV, 221-234.

**Matévossian R.I.** 1982. Tachir-Dzoraguet (X–XII<sup>ème</sup> début du siècle), Erevan (en arm.).

**Méliqset-Bek L.** 1934. Les sources géorgiennes à propos des arméniens et de l'Arménie, t. I (V-XII<sup>ème</sup> siècles), Erevan (en arm.).

**Minorsky V.** 1953a. Caucasica IV: I. Sahl ibn-Sunbāt of Shakkī and Arrān, Bulletin of the Schools of Oriental and African Studies, XV/3, 504-529.

**Minorsky V.** 1953b. Caucasica IV: II. The Caucasian Vassals of Marzubān, Bulletin of the Schools of Oriental and African Studies, XV/3, 530-556.

**Minorsky V.** 1963. Histoire du Shirvan et Derbend en X-XI siècles, Moscou (en russ.).

**Mnatsakanian A.** Ch.1966. Autour de question de littérature du pays d'Ałuanq, Erevan (en arm.).

**Ouloubabian B.A.** 1975. Principauté de Khatchen en X-XVI<sup>èmes</sup> siècles, Erevan (en arm.).

**Qurdian Y.** 1958. Babak et Sahl ipn Snbat, Bazmavēp, 1958 (en arm.).

**Sargsian S.** 2002. Les forteresses de Khatchén, Stépanakert (en arm.).

**Skrzhinskaya Ye.Ch.** 1961. Inscription grecque de Tmutarakan, Vizantijskij vremennik XVIII, 74-84 (en russ.).

**Ter-Ghévondian A.N.** 1969. L'impôt en nature de l'Arménie à l'époque arabe, Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri, 1969/2, 52-60 (en arm.).

**Ter-Ghevondyan A.N.** 1988-1989. Notes sur le Šakē-Kambečan (I<sup>er</sup>-XIV<sup>e</sup> s.), RÉArm., T. XXI (1988-1989) (republication: A. Ter-Ghévondian, Recueil des articles, Erevan, 2003).

**Ter-Mkrtchian G.** 1984. Armeniaca, X, Ararat, 22-26 (en arm.).

**Toumanoff C.** 1976. Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de la Caucasic chrétienne (Arménie-Géorgie-Albanie), Roma.

**Yeghiazarian A.** 2009. A propos de certaines questions historiques sur le royaume d'Aluanq, Handēs Amsorya, 137-170.

**Yeremyan S.T.** 1953. L'Albanie en IX-XI siècles, Essais sur l'histoire de l'URSS. Période de féodalisme. IX-XV siècles, Moscou (en russ.).

**Yuzbashian K.N.** 1988. États arméniens de l'époque Bagratid et Byzance des 9-11<sup>ème</sup> siècles, Moscou (en russ.).

**Zuckerman C.** 2000. À propos du Livre des cérémonies, II, 48, Travaux et Mémoires, t. 13, Paris.

## ON THE ISSUE OF THE CENTER OF SATRAPIC ARMENIA

**Hovhannes Khorikyan**

*Doctor in History,*

*Mikael Nalbandyan*

*State pedagogical university, Gyumri*

### **Abstract**

In the period of Achaemenid domination the issue of the center of Satrapic Armenia continues to be a controversial issue even nowadays. Recent studies have shown that during VI-IV BC Armenia was not divided into two Satrapies - the XIII and the XVIII. The XIII satrapy corresponded to Armenia, and the XVIII satrapy was located between the Greater Caucasus and the River Kura).

In the article we have demonstrated that the administrative center (capital city) of Satrapic Armenia was the city of Van, which was probably also one of the residences of the Achaemenid "Great kings". As to Armavir being the center of the satrapy, after 331 BC it again became the military-political center of the independent Armenian State. Armavir had as vital economic importance for Satrapic Armenia like that of Susa for Achaemenids.

**Keywords:** Satrapic Armenia, Satrapic Center, Van, Erebuni, Armavir, apadana, Darius I, Xerxes I, Xerxes I's inscription at Van, Ervandids

The issue of the Satrapy of Armenia during the Achaemenid rule remains disputable, especially if we take into account that until the end of the XX century, according to widely accepted point of view, in the VI-IV centuries BC Armenia was divided into two satrapies, the XIII and the XVIII.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, Van was considered the center of the XIII satrapy, and Erebuni-Arinberd was the center of the XVIII satrapy.<sup>2</sup> We have already studied the issue of the administrative division of Armenia and concluded that the XIII satrapy corresponded to Armenia, and the XVIII satrapy was situated between Kura river and the Great Caucasian Mountains.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Achaemenid famous monuments of Armenia**

The archaeological monuments discovered during excavations in Armenia allow us to compare with similar Achaemenid architectural monuments. For example, the Draskhanakert architectural complex (second half of the V century BC), southwestern of the city of Gyumri, near the village of Beniamin, which dates back to the Achaemenid

---

<sup>1</sup> Tiratsyan 1960: 109; 1980; 1981; Grekian 2018: 65; Kesecker 2018/1: 31.

<sup>2</sup> Tiratsyan 1979: 161; 1981: 71; Ter-Martirosov 2013: 109, 112; Beikzadeh, Ghadim 2017: 139; Tarhan 2007: 120; Dan 2015: 11, 13.

<sup>3</sup> See especially in Harutyunyan 1999: 45-114; Khorikyan 2014, Chapter B.

period,<sup>4</sup> has parallels to the similar palaces of Saritepe and Gumbati.<sup>5</sup> Argishtikhinili (now Armavir) had lost its former importance during the Achaemenid period, but some items of material culture (such as bowls, lids of pots),<sup>6</sup> dating back to the Achaemenid or Hellenistic periods have been found here. Cuneiform inscriptions were also found, which date back to the first half of the VI century BC or V century BC,<sup>7</sup> and are not connected with the epic of Gilgamesh,<sup>8</sup> as it was previously thought.<sup>9</sup> However, judging by the controversial perusals of Elamite texts, it can be assumed that there were Persian rulers in Armavir, and Elamite was the language of administrative correspondence.<sup>10</sup> In fact, taxes from the surrounding areas were collected in Armavir, and the governor of Armavir held the office of comparable to the Persian *\*frataraka*,<sup>11</sup> a rank lower than that of the satrap. This circumstance, probably, demonstrates that Armavir could not have been a satrapic center<sup>12</sup> and, probably by its significance, corresponded to the satrapic palace mentioned by Xenophon in Armenia.<sup>13</sup> Yet, it is debatable whether the columned hall in Armavir dates back to the late Urartian or Achaemenid period.<sup>14</sup> However, it is more probable that the hall dates back to the Achaemenid period.<sup>15</sup> It should be added that during the Achaemenid period a temple center in Armavir existed, and it is not accidental that the religious significance of Armavir has been preserved in the post-Achaemenid period as well.<sup>16</sup> According to the accepted point of view, after the battle of Gaugamela in 331 BC, Armavir was declared the capital of the newly established kingdom of Yervandid dynasty.<sup>17</sup> As for the Erebuni fortress, the expansion and transformation of the 12-columned hall next to the temple of the god Khaldi into a large 30-column hall called "*apadana*," dates back to the Achaemenid period. The latter was built in the style of the palatial architecture of

<sup>4</sup> Grekian 2013: 337, 341; Ter-Martirosov 2013: 107-108; Vergazov 2017: 301.

<sup>5</sup> Knauss 2006: 100.

<sup>6</sup> Arakelyan 1969; Tiratsyan 1968: 197; Tiratsyan 1969: 148; Karapetyan 1973; 2003: 11.

<sup>7</sup> Knauss 2006: 100, 102.

<sup>8</sup> Vallat 1997.

<sup>9</sup> Diakonoff, Yankovskaya 1989.

<sup>10</sup> Koch 1993.

<sup>11</sup> Koch 1993: 230.

<sup>12</sup> Beikzadeh Ghadim 2017: 138.

<sup>13</sup> Xenophon 1970: 93.

<sup>14</sup> Herles 2017: 138. It should be noted that the author is not an expert in the historical geography of Armenia in the Achaemenid period, since he leaves the basin of Lake Van outside the territory of the Armenian Satrapy and takes as face value the outdated theories about the formation of the Armenian people. For example, he states that Xenophon considers Orontas as the ruler of the satrapy of Eastern Armenia, while Xenophon literally referred to Orontas as the ruler of all Armenia (Xenophon 1970: 81).

<sup>15</sup> Ter-Martirosov 1974: 62, 65; 2001: 16; Vergazov 2018: 278-279.

<sup>16</sup> Krkyasharyan 1963: 55; Tiratsyan 1979: 161.

<sup>17</sup> Tiratsyan 1979: 164.

Persepolis and had some similarities with that of the Pasargadae Palace of Cyrus II.<sup>18</sup> The construction of two new temples in the Erebuni Citadel, the so-called "Big and Small Fire" temples, dates back to the Achaemenid period as well, and is probably connected with the religious reform of Xerxes.<sup>19</sup> In fact, the elite of the castle was in contact with other subject countries of the Achaemenids, as evidenced by two Milesian coins of V century BC and silver rhytons dating from V-IV centuries.<sup>20</sup>

It is noteworthy that the parallels of *apadana* in Erebuni with the Median pillared halls, the construction technique, as well as the absence of anchors for columns typical of Achaemenid architecture, suggest that the colonnade was built after the fall of the Urartian dynasty, approximately in 600 BC, that is, during the Median period (for example, the parallels with the 30-pillar hall of Godin Tepe II<sup>21</sup>) or in the so-called "early post-Urartian" period.<sup>22</sup> Although this approach needs further rationale, the new proposal is interesting since Erebuni's significance for Armenia was important during the Median period as well.

While discussing the issue of the satrapic center or centers in Armenia,<sup>23</sup> one should not forget that two of the residences of the Achaemenid kings, Susa and Ecbatana, were the capitals of the ancient kingdoms of Elam and Media correspondingly, therefore the center of the Satrapy of Armenia for the Achaemenids could have been Tushpa-Van, the ancient capital of Urartu. This circumstance is possible in the sense that Xerxes, the son of Darius I, assigned to write the trilingual cuneiform inscription on the stone left by his father. Darius I could not just have left a stone in an unknown place, the content of which would undoubtedly have been different if Darius I had managed to finish the text of the inscription. It is not excluded that the inscription was supposed to symbolize the victory of Darius I in the struggle for the throne, and in Armenia the armies of the Persian king had fought five battles against the rebels. In any case, the inscription of Darius I, as stated in the Behistun inscription,<sup>24</sup> was to symbolize the latter's preservation of his kingdom and the abolition of falsehood.

<sup>18</sup> Tiratsyan 1960: 106-108; 1964: 150; Vergazov 2016: 28; 2017: 299.

<sup>19</sup> Tiratsyan 1969: 151.

<sup>20</sup> Grekyan 2013: 340; 2018: 63, 65; Stronach 2010. See also Tiratsyan 1960: 103; Karapetyan 2003: 10-11; Treister 2013: 343-424.

<sup>21</sup> Vergazov 2017: 277.

<sup>22</sup> Grekyan 2018: 64.

<sup>23</sup> We do not mention other monuments like Oshakan, Oğlankala (for details see Vergazov 2018: 275, 279-280) that were partially rebuilt in the Achaemenid period, because they could not be co-satrapic centers, and in fact, they were built for the representatives of the local aristocracy. For example, the items found in the tombs of Lori Berd mausoleum in 2008 confirm the dating of the monument to VI-V centuries BC. The tombs belonged to the representatives of the upper classes, who surrounded themselves with new items of the Achaemenid style and production, while preserving the old one - the traditional, Urartian (for details see Devedjyan, Hobosyan, Davtyan 2018).

<sup>24</sup> Kent 1953: 129-130.

Let us address an issue that has attracted the attention of many researchers in recent years. It regards the *apadana* of the V-IV centuries BC of Karachamirli, located on the right bank of the Kura River,<sup>25</sup> which repeats the palatial complexes of Susa and Persepolis.<sup>26</sup> The latter was considered one of the residences of the "king of kings", which was also used by the Armenian kings. If this point of view is more or less probable, then the opinion that Karachamirli was the residence of the satrap of Caspiane is not correct at all.<sup>27</sup> It should be noted to the north-east of Karachamirli, near modern Ghazakh, in the place of Sarı tepe, one of the Achaemenid defensive structures was found,<sup>28</sup> which protected the northeastern border of the XIII satrapy, that is, for the Achaemenids the natural strong defense line of the Kura river was further strengthened by the fortifications on the right bank of the river.

In our opinion, the Karachamirli's palatial complex was the residence of the satrap of Armenia in the eastern part of the satrapy, just as Altintepe was in the western part of the satrapy, that is, Karachamirli and Altintepe were geographically located in strategically important places. Moreover, the Karachamirli's palatial complex was one of the residences of the satrap, not the hyparch's. Therefore, the palatial complex of Karachamirli could not have been one of the centers of the XVIII satrapy, located north of the Kura River as well. One of the centers of the latter in the northern part, probably, may have been located in the area of the present-day village of Gumbatı, where an immense building dating back to the Achaemenid period was found and where a Persian official resided.<sup>29</sup> The archaeological sites of Gumbatı and Karachamirli have many parallels in terms of construction technique<sup>30</sup> and, in fact, were aimed at strengthening the defense system and the centralization of tax collection in the Empire. As for Altintepe, the second phase of the construction Altintepe, dating back to the Achaemenid period, has allowed to suppose that the residence of the satrap of the XIX satrapy was located here,<sup>31</sup> which is unlikely. It was probably the residence of the *hyparchos* of the administrative unit of Western Armenia or one of the satrapic

<sup>25</sup> The examination of the archeological material of the Karachamirli palatial complex in detail see Knauss, Ludwig, Mehnert, Sens, Wicke 2007 (<http://www.achemenet.com/document/2007.002-Knauss.pdf>); Knauss 2006: 97-99; Dan 2015: 13.

<sup>26</sup> Vergazov 2017: 301.

<sup>27</sup> See in detail Ter-Martirosov 2014: 56. On the location of XI and XV satrapies see Khorikyan 2016: 23-29. Cf. Hakobyan 1983: 87-99.

<sup>28</sup> Knauss 2006: 96-97. According to A.Hakobyan, the settlement at Sari-tepe could be identified as Hnarakert reported by the early medieval authors (unpublished).

<sup>29</sup> Vergazov 2017: 303; Knauss 2006: 89-91.

<sup>30</sup> Gagoshidze 2018: 226-227; Beikzadeh, Ghadim 2017: 132-136, 139-142; Briant et Boucharlat (éd.) 2005: 205, 208.

<sup>31</sup> Kosyan 2010: 24; Summers 1993: 96. About the site of Altintepe and particularly other parallels to *apadana* see Dan 2015: 14-15.



residences,<sup>32</sup> from where the Persians would have tried to reassert their rule in the ethnically diverse and semi-independent XIX satrapy. It should be noted that the layout of Argishtikhinili's pillared hall has obvious similarities with Altintepe's multi-column hall, the *hypostyle*.<sup>33</sup> It should also be noted that the *hypostyle* of the Altintepe II monument mainly reflects the influence of local architecture, based on the Urartian-Median heritage, having parallels with the arrangement of the pillared halls of the "pre-apadana" of Pasargadae.<sup>34</sup>

### **Satrapic Armenia - "microcosmos" of the Persian state**

When studying the history of the Achaemenid Persia one must take into account that the subject countries were separate "microcosmoses" of the Persian empire, governing system of which resembled the functions of the central court. Therefore, in the states under their rule the satraps appeared as small kings who resembled the king of kings and had several satrapic centers similar to the latter. For example, the satrap of Armenia had several residences, including Altintepe, Arin-berd, Karachamırlı, Van, etc. In this regard, it should be noted that from the ancient sources we know that the king of kings resided in different residences at different times of the year - in Susa (Shosh), Babylon, Ecbatana, Persepolis or from time to time in Bactra.<sup>35</sup> The mention of the latter indicates that Bactra could have been one of the mobile residences. The interesting thing is that all the mentioned residences were the centers of the ancient kingdoms, therefore in the case of Armenia we can conclude that Van, at least during the period from Cyrus II to Darius I, was also considered a satrapic residence, where the worked stone prepared for the inscription of Darius I remained. On the other hand, Xerxes' preparation of the text of the inscription in three languages (Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian) shows that Van continued to be considered a royal/satrapic residence for the Achaemenids. We think that the spiritual and cultural significance of Van was preserved by the Armenian satraps as well, who generally were kings at the same time.<sup>36</sup> It is no coincidence that the Yervandunik province known from *Ashkharhatsuyts*, named after Yervandunis-Orontases, was located southeast of the province of Tosp, which included the city of Van.

Below we quote the inscription of Van translated from Old Persian and answer several questions.

*"A great god is Ahuramazda, the greatest of the gods, who created this earth, who created the yonder sky, who created man, created happiness for man, who made Xerxes king, one king of many, one lord of many."*

<sup>32</sup> Vergazov 2017: 300.

<sup>33</sup> Vergazov 2017: 300.

<sup>34</sup> Vergazov 2018: 273-274.

<sup>35</sup> Dio Chrysostom 1949, 6.1, p. 251. For the information regarding other primary sources about the residences of the Persian kings see Tuplin 1998: 64-66.

<sup>36</sup> Xenophon 1970: 75, 81; Khorikyan 2014: 58-59.

*I am Xerxes, the great king, king of kings, king of all kinds of people, king on this earth far and wide, the son of Darius the king, the Achaemenid.*

*Xerxes the great king proclaims: King Darius, my father, by the favor of Ahuramazda, made much that is good, and this niche he ordered to be cut; as he did not have an inscription written, then I ordered that this inscription be written. Me may Ahuramazda protect, together with the gods, and my kingdom and what I have done.*<sup>37</sup>

It should be noted that the inscription of Van, in terms of the structure and template form, corresponds to other inscriptions of Darius I and Xerxes, for example, *Naqsh-e Rostam* (= DNa, lines 1-4, 11-3), *Elvend* (= DE, line 12-9) of Darius I, the inscriptions of Persepolis (= XPa, lines 1-6, 6-11; XPb, lines 27-30) of Xerxes,<sup>38</sup> etc. Undoubtedly, the inscription of Van should be viewed in the context of Xerxes' religious reform, therefore the old capital of Urartu remained a satrapic center in the Achaemenid period where Xerxes imposed the worship of Ahuramazda in Armenia,<sup>39</sup> especially, if we notice that the Iranian influence on the territory of Armenia was significant.<sup>40</sup> The cultural and religious significance of Van was undoubtedly preserved in the first half of the V century BC, and possibly, the satrap-kings of Armenia were buried in Van, which is evidenced by some rock-cut tombs dating to the Achaemenid period<sup>41</sup> (the so-called "Small Hollow", which has similarities with the *Naqsh-e Rostam* rock-cut tomb of Darius I),<sup>42</sup> like Persepolis which later became the royal burial place. The result of this inscription was the construction of the "Big and Small fire" temples in the Erebuni Citadel, which symbolized the struggle against demons, that is, the ancient gods. With the inscription of Van, Xerxes reaffirmed his supremacy over the northern regions of the empire, the *toparchy*, with Van as its center, as Sardis was the center of the western part of the empire. Despite the lack of archaeological material in Van from the Achaemenid period,<sup>43</sup> the existence of the inscription indicates that Van was a satrapic center. The trilingual rock relief inscription of Van, outside the borders of Iran itself, undoubtedly testifies to the importance of Armenia.<sup>44</sup>

As a scale model of the Achaemenid Empire, the Satrapic Armenia resembled the central governing regime of the Achaemenids, therefore like the Persian kings having a

<sup>37</sup> Kent 1953: 152-153; Lecoq 1997: 263-264; Vallat 1977: 218-220. Cf, also Santaljyan 1901: 224-226 and Movsisyan 2003: 188-189.

<sup>38</sup> Kent 1953: 137, 147, 148.

<sup>39</sup> Dandamajev, Lukonin 1980: 341.

<sup>40</sup> Xenophon 1970: 98: The Greek mercenaries in long-term military service for in Persia could hardly confuse Persian with the Armenian language.

<sup>41</sup> The burial in rock-cut tombs meant that we are already dealing with Zoroastrian beliefs (see Boyce 1994: 69, 76), thus, it is not excluded that the influence of Zoroastrianism in the city of Van, as an administrative center, was strong.

<sup>42</sup> Tarhan 2007: 122-123; Vergazov 2018: 274-275.

<sup>43</sup> Dan 2015: 13.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Herles 2017: 137.

number of residence-capitals, the satraps (kings) of Armenia had different residences too, but just as Persepolis was the capital of the Great kings of Persia, so Van was the residence of the satrap of Armenia. At the same time, attention must be paid on the interesting circumstance that it is alluring and possible to consider Van a residence of Achaemenid dynasty (at least until Xerxes) among other residences (Susa, Babylon, Ecbatana, Persepolis or Bactra), because Van along with the mentioned cities, was the center of an ancient civilization, and the Iranian culture of the Achaemenid period inherited many cultural realities from the Urartian civilization.

The Satrapic Armenia was important for the Achaemenids during the decline of the empire as well, when the latest king, Darius III Kodomanus was appointed the satrap of Armenia. Despite the absence of materials it is possible to believe that the residency of the Achaemenid satrap could have been only Van where his ancestor had left an inscription. It is not excluded that the inscription of Darius I symbolized the subjugation of Armenia to the Persians, and the place of the inscription is linked with the move of the administrative center from Armavir to Van and the change of the king-satrap. It is also interesting that Darius III, losing in the Gaugamela battle, fled to the north heading through the Armenian mountains (via Dasn and Npatakan mountains) to Media.<sup>45</sup> The problem is why Darius III would have escaped to Media via the southern border of Armenia? Probably, the former satrap of Armenia, in panic, regarding the first shelter of salvation in Armenia, however changed his way to Media for some reasons. Diodorus of Sicily wrote that after losing the battle Darius fled to upper satrapies,<sup>46</sup> and one of them was Armenia.

Further information provided by Diodorus allows us to make some proposals. In Ecbatana Darius collected the survivors after the battle and armed the unarmed people. At the same time, "he demanded soldiers from the tribes living nearby and sent angels to the satraps and commanders of Bactria and the upper satrapies urging them to remain loyal to him".<sup>47</sup> As further developments showed,<sup>48</sup> Armenia, one of the upper satrapies, refused to assist Darius.

In our opinion, in the period of the decline of the Achaemenid empire, Armavir was the economic, religious, cultural center of the Satrapy of Armenia which after 331 BC became the military and political center of the newly independent Armenian state. Undoubtedly, the significance of Armavir must have been important in the tenure of Achaemenids as well, which we have emphasized above. The very act of Armavir becoming the capital would have meant that before Armavir the administrative center of Armenia should have been located elsewhere. It concerns Van. On the other hand, the Yervandunis, by making Armavir the capital again, were restoring the pre-Achaemenid political status of Armenia, that is, the independent statehood. For comparison,

---

<sup>45</sup> Khorikyan 2017: 46.

<sup>46</sup> Diodorus of Sicily 1985: 97.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> See in Khorikyan 2017.

conditionally, Armavir had the same economic significance for the Satrapy of Armenia as Susa had for the Achaemenids. In fact, after the anti-Persian uprising of the Armenians in 522-521 BC until the 330s BC, Armavir was no longer the capital of Armenia.

Thus, our study allows us to suppose that the administrative center (capital) of Satrapy of Armenia was the city of Van, which probably was one of the seats of the Achaemenid king of kings as well.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arakelyan B.N.** 1969, On Some Results of the Archaeological study of Ancient Armavir, *Patmabanasirakan handes*, 1969/4, 157-174 (in Arm.).
- Beikzadeh S., Ghadim F. I.** 2017, Achaemenid Architecture in South Caucasus and the Black Sea Cultural Basin, *Tüba-Ar*, Vol. 20, Ankara, 129-146.
- Boyce M.** 1994, Zoroastrians: Beliefs and Customs (transl. from the English by I.M.Stebelin-Kamenskij), Saint-Petersburg (in Russian).
- Briant P. et R. Boucharlat (éd.)** 2005, *L'archéologie de l'empire achéménide: nouvelles recherches. Actes du colloque organisé au Collège de France, 21-22 novembre 2003*, Persika 6, Paris.
- Dan R.** 2015, From the Armenian Highland to Iran. A Study on the Relations between the Kingdom of Urartu and the Achaemenid Empire (Serie Orientale Roma, Nuova Serie 4), Roma.
- Dandamaev M.A., Lukonin V.G.** 1980, Culture and Economics of ancient Iran, Moscow (in Russian).
- Devedjyan S., Hobosyan S., Davtyan R.** 2018, Post-Urartian tombs of Lori Berd, *Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. XII, Issue 1, 109-123.
- Diakonoff I.M., Yankovskaya N.B.** 1989, The Elamite dialogue between Gilgamesh and Siduri and other Elamite texts from Argishtikhinele (Armavir), *Patmabanasirakan handes*, 1989/2, 55-62 (in Russian).
- Diodorus Siculus** 1985, *Historical Library* (translation from the original, Preface and notes by S.Krkyasharyan), Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Dio Chrysostom** 1949, With an english translation by J. W. Cohoon, Vol. I, London-Cambridge/Mass. (Loeb Classical Library).
- Gagoshidze I.** 2018, South Caucasus and Achaemenids, *Beyond Aragats. Archaeological studies in Memory of Telemek Khachatryan* (ed. H.Avetisyan), Yerevan, 225-232.
- Grekyan Ye.H.** 2013, Achemenid empire, in *History of Neighbouring countries of Armenia*, vol.I (ed. A.Kosyan), Yerevan, 289-343 (in Arm.).
- Grekyan Ye.H.** 2018, The Fortress of Erebuni, *Patmabanasirakan handes* 3, 38-68 (in Arm.).
- Hakobyan A.** 1983, On the Location of Caspians and the province of Caspiene (Caspk), *Bulletin of Social Sciences*, 1983/1, 87-99 (in Arm.).
- Haruthyunyan B.** 1999, On the Location of the Achemenid XVIII satrapy, *Handes amsoreay* 1999/1-12, 45-114 (in Arm.).

**Herles M.** 2017, Achaemenids and the Southern Caucasus, in *Bridging Times and Spaces, Festschrift in Honour of Gregory E. Areshian on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. by P. S. Avetisyan and Y. H. Grekyan), Oxford, 2017, 133-154.

**History of Armenian People** 1971, History of Armenian People, vol.I, Yerevan History of Armenian People (in Arm.).

**Karapetyan I.A.** 1973, New type of pottery from Armavir, *Bulletin of Social Sciences*, 1973/11, 68-73 (in Arm.).

**Karapetyan I.A.** 2003, Material culture of Armenia in the VI-IV centuries BC, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Kent R.** 1953, *Old Persian. Grammar. Texts. Lexicon* (2nd ed.), New Haven.

**Kesecker N. T.** 2018, The Elamite Version of the Inscription of Xerxes I at Van (XV), *VEM*, 2018/1, 31-37.

**Khorikyan H.** 2014, Armenia and Transcaucasia in the administrative division of Achaemenid Persia (historical-geographical study), Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Khorikyan H.** 2016, On Location of XI and XV Satrapies of Achaemenid Persia, *Historia i Świat*, Siedlce, nr. 5, 23-29.

**Khorikyan H.** 2017, Alexander of Macedon and Armenia, *Problems of Armenology* 3, 154-160 (in Arm.).

**Knauss F.** 2006, Ancient Persia and the Caucasus, *Iranica Antiqua* XLI, 79-118.

**Knauss F., Ludwig N., Mehnert G., Sens U., Wicke D.** 2007, Ein Perserbau auf dem Ideal Tepe bei Karačamırlı (Aserbaidschan), *ARTA (Achaemenid Research on Texts and Archaeology)*, 2007/2, Paris, 1-51.

**Koch H.** 1993, Elamisches Gilgameš-Epos oder doch Verwaltungstäfelchen?, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 83, 219-236.

**Kosyan A.** 2010, The Periphery of the Urartian empire (on the example of Altintepe), in *By the Might of Haldi ...*, Collection of papers dedicated to the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday of B.B.Piotrovskij, Yerevan, 21-33 (in Arm.).

**Krkyasharyan S.** 1963, Notes on the origins of old Armenian temple cities, Teghekarir hasarakakan gitutyunneri, 1963/9, 55-66 (in Arm.).

**Movsisyan A.** 2003, *Writing Systems of Pre-Mashtotsean Armenia*, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Lecoq P.** 1997, *Les inscriptions de la Perse achéménide*, Paris.

**Santaljyan Y.V.** 1901, *Cuneiform inscriptions of Assyrians and Persians*, Vienna (in Arm.).

**Stronach D.** 2010, The Silver Rhyta from Erebuni Revisited, *Patmabanasirakan handes*, 2010/3, 180-197 (in Arm.).

**Summers G. D.** 1993, Archaeological Evidence for the Achaemenid Period in Eastern Turkey, *Anatolian Studies* 43, 85-108.

**Tarhan T. M.** 2007, Median and Achaemenid Periods at Tušpa, in: *The Achaemenid Impact on Local Populations and Cultures in Anatolia (Sixth-Fourth Centuries B.C.)* (ed. by İnci Delemen), Istanbul, 117-130.

**Ter-Martirosov F.I.** 1974, Towards the Stratigraphy of the Armavir mound, *Traber hasarakakan gitutyunneri*, 1974/1, 57-67 (in Russian).

**Ter-Martirosov F.I.** 2001, Typology of columned buildings of Armenia in the Achaemenid period, *Scholarly works III*, Gyumri, 15-21 (in Russian).

**Ter-Martirosov F.I.** 2013, Armenia within the Achaemenid empire, Armenia-Iran: History. Culture. Modern perspectives of cooperation (Collection of articles), Moscow, 98-113 (in Russian).

**Ter-Martirosov F.I.** 2014, The Route of Artashes's campaign to Yervandashat, History and Culture, vol.III, 52-67, Yerevan (in Russian).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1960, Columned hall of Arin-berd and the problem of satrapic centers in the Armenian Highland, Teghekagir hasarakakan gitutyunneri, 1960/7-8, 149-164 (in Arm.).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1964. Urartian civilization and Achemenid empire, Patmabanasirakan handes, 1964/2, 149-164 (in Arm.).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1968, The Golden pectoral from Armavir (Armenia), Soviet Archaeology, 1968/4, 190-198 (in Russian).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1969, Material culture of Armenia in the VI-IV centuries BC, Patmabanasirakan handes, 1969/4, 147-156 (in Arm.).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1979, Cities of Armenia of Hellenistic epoch under the light of archaeological studies (Problems of genesis, topography, urban structure, architectural appearance), Vestnik drevnej istorii, 1979/2, 160-175 (in Russian).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1980, The Territory of Ervandid Armenia (VI century BC), Patmabanasirakan handes, 1980/4, 84-95 (in Arm.).

**Tiratsyan G.A.** 1981, The Territory of Ervandid Armenia (late VI – late III c. B.C.), Patmabanasirakan handes 2, 68-84 (in Arm.).

**Treister M.Yu.** 2013, The Treasure of silver rhytons of Achemenid circle from Erebuni, Scripta antiqua. Problems of ancient history, philology, art and material culture, vol. 3, Moscow, 343-424 (in Russian).

**Tuplin C.** 1998, The Seasonal Migration of Achaemenid King: A Report on Old and New Evidence, in Achaemenid History XI, Leiden, 63-114.

**Vallat F.** 1977, Corpus des Inscriptions Royales en Elamite Achemenide. Thèse présentée pour l'obtention du Doctorat de IIIe cycle, Paris.

**Vallat F.** 1997, La lettre élamite d'Arménie, Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie 87, 258–270.

**Vergazov R.R.** 2016. Typology of the palace-apadana in the classical architecture of Achemenid empire: the problem of genesis and development, in Actual problems of the theory and history of arts, State University of Saint-Petersburg, 2016/6, 23-30 (in Russian).

**Vergazov R.R.** 2017, Official style of Achemenids and its reflexion in the art of Northern Satrapies based upon architectural materials, Problems of History, Philology, Culture, G.I. Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University 2, 294-306 (in Russian).

**Vergazov R.V.** 2018, Official Style in the art of Achemenid empire and the artistic life of the Northern provinces of the Empire (Candidate of arts Dissertation), Moscow (in Russian).

**Xenophon** 1970, Anabasis (translated by S.Krkyasharyan, Yerevan (in Arm.).

*Translated from the Armenian by Mushegh Ghahriyan*

## THE 1921 RUSSIAN-TURKISH CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW: 100-YEARS AGO: A RETROSPECT

**Kristine Melkonyan**

*PhD, Institute of Oriental Studies, NAS RA*

### **Abstract**

When we look back at the events that occurred 100 years ago and draw parallels to the present, we come to the conclusion that the Armenian public mind should no longer have any faith in the plans of “great” diplomats for the “salvation” of the Armenian people. Moreover, we must realize that the propaganda of historical justice is unnecessary where the solution of the national issue is in fact conditioned by the realistic interests of the world’s powerful. From this point of view the Soviet-Turkish treaty of “Friendship and Brotherhood” signed in Moscow on March 16, 1921 is remarkable. It will give an idea of how the Armenian-Turkish border was drawn at the 1921 Moscow conference.

**Keywords:** Soviet Russia, Soviet Armenia, Kemalist movement, Eastern Front, international imperialism, Armenian lands, treaty, negotiations

From April 1920, the Kemalists established close ties with Soviet Russia, finding a common platform under the same slogan of struggle against international imperialism and presenting themselves as the bearers of the working class revolution in the Muslim East. The Kemalist national liberation movement had inherited the ideological program of the Young Turks’ expansionist policy. M. Kemal singled out the Turkish nation as the elite of a multinational state and announced that “the Turk was endowed with great and excellent qualities”.<sup>1</sup> Notwithstanding this, the Bolshevik leadership of Soviet Russia, guided by the slogan “victory of the world revolution”, supported the Kemalist movement, viewing it as the standard-bearer of the struggle of the oppressed peoples of the East against international imperialism.

On April 26, 1920 the Grand National Assembly of Turkey sent a letter signed by Kemal to Vladimir Lenin, chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of Russia. The letter expressed a desire to establish permanent relations between the two countries and to fight against imperialists together.<sup>2</sup> Kemal asked Soviet Russia to provide Turkey with “first aid” in gold, weapons, ammunition, military equipment, sanitary materials and food worth 5 million Turkish liras.<sup>3</sup> The letter also outlined the main principles of the foreign policy of the Ankara government - Turkey is independent, the Turkish state includes indisputably Turkish territories, Arabia and Syria are declared

---

<sup>1</sup> Öztürk 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Oran 2001 (ed.): 161.

<sup>3</sup> Öztürk 2010.

independent states, the Grand National Assembly adopts a decision granting Turkish Armenia, Kurdistan, Lazistan, the Batumi province, Eastern Thrace and the territories with a mixed Turkish-Arab population the right to determine their own destiny, the rights of national minorities are recognized in the new Turkish state, the issue of the straits is handed over to the Conference of the Black Sea states, the capitulation regime and the economic control of foreign states are abolished, all spheres of foreign influence are eliminated.<sup>4</sup>

It is clear that all the principles mentioned in the letter were acceptable to Soviet Russia: the Kemalist government's attitude towards foreign countries in many respects brought Turkey closer to Soviet Russia, which was in severe conflict with imperialist states. Naturally, what interests us most here is the part of the letter that refers to Armenia. According to Kemal's letter, the Grand National Assembly would give Western Armenia the right to decide its own destiny. But it was a deception, because the Kemalists had already declared Western Armenia an integral part of Turkey in their "National Covenant". Seeing the "goodwill" of the Bolshevik Russia, Ankara sent a letter to Moscow a few days later containing the following lines: "If the Soviet forces intend to launch military operations against Georgia or force Georgia to join the union through diplomatic influence and to expel the English from the Caucasus, the Turkish government undertakes the military action against imperialist Armenia...".<sup>5</sup>

Although the Soviet government assured that the Republic of Armenia would be protected, it strongly demanded that Armenia renounce the Treaty of Sèvres. Moreover, it provided economic and military assistance to the Turkish leader, who was making belligerent statements and was preparing for war against Armenia. The leaders of Azerbaijan which was sovietized at the end of April made "fiery" Bolshevik statements against the Republic of Armenia. From the point of view of modern political science and historiography, no empirical thinker or theorist can doubt that the foundations of Soviet Russia, especially that of Eastern policy, should be sought in the false theory of securing the "victory of the world revolution", even if it was achieved at the cost of violation of the vital interests of peoples, in this case the Armenian people, at the cost of trading their homeland.

There were calls for the physical destruction of Armenia during the Congress of the peoples of the East that took place in Baku on September 1-7, 1920.<sup>6</sup> Zinovyev, Kamenev and Radek, leading employees of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party participated in the Congress and coordinated its work. Inspired by the threats against Armenians that sounded from the rostrum of the Congress and by the calls "to destroy imperialist Armenia" and convinced that the Republic of Armenia stood before the Kemalists alone, the Kemalists who had received a large amount of weapons and ammunition, as well as huge financial means from

---

<sup>4</sup> Oran 2001 (ed.): 161.

<sup>5</sup> Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, inv. 3, folder 2, f. 1, p. 11

<sup>6</sup> First congress of the peoples of the East 1920.



Soviet Russia, waged a war against the Republic of Armenia at the end of September, 1920. Attacking Armenia Kyazım Karabekir Pasha, the commander of the Eastern Front, openly stated that his goal was to deliver the last deadly blow to the Armenian people and Kemal asserted that the goal of that war was to “destroy the Armenian army and the Armenian state...”.<sup>7</sup>

In November-December 1920, Soviet rule was established in the territory of the Republic of Armenia which had not been occupied by Turkey. However, the representatives of the former government that had lost power in the Republic signed a treaty with the Kemalists in Alexandropol on December 2, 1920. According to that treaty Turkey annexed from Armenia Kars and Ardahan that were part of the Russian Empire in 1878, the districts of Kaghzvan, Olti, Ardivin, the province of Surmalu with the city of Igdir, including Mount Ararat, the symbol of the existence of the Armenian people. With that treaty Turkey also separated from Armenia the regions of Nakhijevan, Sharur and Shahtakht, located in its center. The internal affairs and foreign relations of the rest of Armenia were under the control of the Kemalist state.<sup>8</sup> That treaty had no legal force because the power was factually in the hands of the Bolsheviks.

Moreover, the new political situation in the region created by the sovietization of Armenia forced Moscow to make adjustments to the Soviet Eastern policy. In the report of December 3, 1920 addressed to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party, G. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR government noted: “If we do not provide diplomatic assistance to Soviet Armenia, it will disappoint the supporters of the Soviet government everywhere”.<sup>9</sup> He considered it necessary to “moderate the demands of the Turks towards Armenia” and continue to insist on the independence of some parts of Western Armenia.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, with the sovietization of Armenia, the issue of convening a new Soviet-Turkish conference became urgent.

If after the sovietization of Armenia the Russian government repeatedly stressed the need to convene a Russian-Turkish conference as soon as possible and was worried that the Kemalists might “throw themselves into the arms of the Entente” at any moment, the Turks were in no hurry. According to British documents, on January 30, 1921 Jemal Pasha, one of the leaders of the Young Turks, telegraphed Enver telling the latter to find out from the British through the Afghans whether the rumors that Kemal had issued an ultimatum demanding the return of Kars were true and what were the relations between the Kemalists and Russia. This was followed by the response of the British that the Turks were faced with a choice: to choose the allied states or Russia.<sup>11</sup> As for the issue of Kars, the British diplomats were silent about it, which proves that

---

<sup>7</sup> Kemal 1932: 102.

<sup>8</sup> Hakobyan 2007: 19.

<sup>9</sup> Khachatryan 2010: 36.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Documents on British Foreign Policy 1967: 299.

official London was not concerned about the issue of Armenian territories and their main goal was to win over M. Kemal.

Meanwhile, the Kemalists, seeking to gain time and following the developments, were taking steps to obtain the necessary guarantees from the Russian authorities to resolve the Armenian question in their favor before the official opening of the conference.

The Turkish delegation appointed to the Russian-Turkish conference, headed by Yusuf Kemal, the People's Commissar of Economy of the Kemalist Government, held preliminary talks in Kars with Budu Mdivani, the representative of Soviet Russia, on their way to Moscow in January 1921. From the memorandum addressed to G. Chicherin on January 30, 1921 by Ahmed Mukhtar, acting Foreign Minister of the Kemalist government, it becomes clear that the Turks had achieved some success in the negotiations. Mukhtar mentioned: "Your representative has officially confirmed on behalf of the RSFSR that territorial concessions from Turkey to Armenia are out of the question... Therefore, there are no serious obstacles that could complicate the Moscow talks".<sup>12</sup> After the talks with the Turks, in his letter sent to Orjonikidze from Kars on January 20, Mdivani wrote: "It is true that we have to take care of Soviet Armenia, but it is no less true that we have to flatter the Turks as well and at the moment, that side of the issue is more important".<sup>13</sup> Mdivani expressed concern that there were conflicting views on the issue in Moscow. He wrote: "If Stalin and Lenin are telling me that one should not argue with the Turks about Kars, it turns out that Chicherin has demanded Van and Mush".<sup>14</sup> Chicherin's demand to the Turks became known to Stalin as well and he hurried to share his concerns with V. Lenin.<sup>15</sup>

Neither did the Turkish delegation waste time after arriving in Moscow. On February 23, 1921 the Turks met with Stalin. The details of the meeting are described in the monograph "Moscow Memories" by Ali Fuat Pasha (Cebesoy), a member of the Turkish delegation and the first ambassador of the Kemalist government to Russia.<sup>16</sup> According to Cebesoy, the delegation expressed their concern that the Armenian question might be included in the agenda of the Soviet-Turkish conference and negatively affect the Russian-Turkish relations, to which Stalin answered: "You have solved the Armenian question on your own. If there still are unresolved issues, solve them to the end".<sup>17</sup>

Thus, the strong Azerbaijani-Turkish cooperation and Soviet Russian government's attitude towards that alliance had already decided everything in advance. All that remained was to summarize the results of the Turkish-Armenian war, i.e. to

---

<sup>12</sup> Documents of Foreign Policy of the USSR 1959: 469.

<sup>13</sup> Zohrabyan 1989: 15.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Cebesoy 1955: 33.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 67

“legalize” the occupation of Armenian lands by the Turks. That was the goal of the Soviet-Turkish conference held in Moscow in February-March, 1921. It started on February 26. It was not unexpected that no representative of the government of Soviet Armenia was allowed to take part in the talks, although the issue concerned the territories of Armenia and the fate of the Armenians. The delegation led by Alexander Bekzadyan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Armenia did not receive an invitation to participate in the conference. The telegram sent to G. Chicherin, People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia by S. Vratsyan, chairman of the “Homeland Salvation Committee” in the last days of the conference, on March 12, is noteworthy. It said that since the Soviet power had already been overthrown in Armenia, Al. Bekzadyan was no longer authorized to represent the Republic at the conference.<sup>18</sup> That was exactly what the negotiating parties wanted. The Turkish side in particular used Vratsyan’s telegram to insist even more firmly on its view not to let the Armenians participate in the conference. Of course, it would be naive to think that without that telegram, everything would have ended well for Armenia.

The Russian-Turkish conference was held in a rather tense atmosphere of mutual distrust. The Soviet delegation, represented by Foreign Minister G. Chicherin (Head) and J. Korkmasov, was not going to satisfy all the territorial claims of the Turks, including at the expense of Armenia. The second Russian-Turkish conference, just like the first one, seemed to be doomed to failure. However, such a development of events was not in the interests of Bolshevik Russia. In the spring of 1921, its domestic and foreign affairs situation were both very complicated, and the Bolsheviks were ready to sign an agreement with the Turks at any cost. In the existing conditions, the “heavy artillery” of the Bolsheviks was put to use: Lenin, who, according to Chicherin, “was observing the fate of the talks with real interest”, decided to put Stalin to work.<sup>19</sup> At the height of the negotiations, on March 9, Lenin told Chicherin to interrupt the conference for half an hour under the pretext of meeting with Lenin and during that time Stalin “will speak openly with the Turkish delegation to clarify the matter and finish the case today”.<sup>20</sup> V. Lenin’s idea was realized as intended: on his instructions Stalin hastened to intervene in the work of the conference and settle the Russian-Turkish disagreements.

Discussing the Moscow conference, one must accept the following realities: first, the Kemalists did not intend to return even an inch of the land occupied from Armenia to its owner. Second, the interests of Soviet Russia in the East demanded that it should not create too many difficulties in its relations with “revolutionary” Turkey, which was fighting against imperialism. During the conference, the Turkish delegation repeatedly hinted that if Turkish territorial claims were not met, their country would turn to the Entente. And there was no gap between the words and deeds of the Kemalists. While negotiations were underway in Moscow, another Kemalist delegation was negotiating

---

<sup>18</sup> Vratsyan 1967: 70.

<sup>19</sup> Chicherin 1961: 283.

<sup>20</sup> Khachatryan 2010: 45.

with the British government in London. Lenin's "loyal comrade-in-arms" did not miss the opportunity to convince the British that Turkey could become a bastion against Soviet Russia.

Moreover, not only had the Kemalists started large-scale activities to get closer to the Entente countries, but also, on the instructions of the Ankara government, famous Ittihadist figures who had taken refuge in Europe, became involved in the same pursuit. Thus, in February 1921, when Tala'at left Berlin for Geneva, he met with a British diplomat and assured him on behalf of the Kemalists that the rulers of "new Turkey" had sincere political sympathy for the Entente countries.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, Idris Bey, an Ittihadist figure who had taken refuge in Berlin and then got Kemalist shades, was actively spreading pan-Turkic propaganda. He travelled to the Entente countries calling for the continuation of the irreconcilable struggle. While the Soviet-Turkish conference was underway in Moscow, in Berlin during the funeral of Tala'at, the bloodthirsty executioner of the Armenian Genocide, Idris Bey delivered a eulogy speech calling to continue the struggle against Russia, "the natural enemy of the Muslims", to consistently continue "great Turk Tala'at's" work, which was continued by the leaders of "new Turkey" under the leadership of M. Kemal.<sup>22</sup>

It is in such conditions that on last day of the Soviet-Turkish conference in Moscow, on March 16, 1921 the delegations of Soviet Russia and Turkey signed the "Treaty of Friendship and Brotherhood". That day is one of the saddest pages in the history of the Armenian people.

The treaty was signed on behalf of Soviet Russia by G. Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs and Jelal-ed-Din Korkmasov, member of the Central Executive Committee and on behalf of the Turkish Grand National Assembly by Yusuf Kemal, the People's Commissar of Economy, Reza Nur Bey, Turkish politician and Ali Fuat Pasha.

The treaty was a diplomatic victory for the Kemalists, as they had already declared Western Armenia an integral part of the Turkish state in their "National Covenant". The Moscow Treaty not only finalized that reality, but also ratified the occupation of the territories of the Republic of Armenia by the Turks during the Turkish-Armenian war in the autumn of 1920. The region of Kars, the province of Surmalu, the districts of Kaghzvan, Ardahan, Olti and other territories were handed over to Turkey - 19,215 sq. kilometers.<sup>23</sup> The occupation of the Nakhijevan region from Armenians was also very important for the Kemalists. During the negotiations the Kemalists became convinced that Russia would not agree to the handing over of that territory to Turkey, mainly due to its strategic position. Nakhijevan was of particular importance from the point of view of pan-Turkism. In fact, that territory was a link between Turkey and Azerbaijan, Turkey and other Turkic-speaking nations. Taking Nakhijevan from Armenians was of primary

---

<sup>21</sup> Documents on British Foreign Policy 1967: 294.

<sup>22</sup> Sarukhanyan 2011: 120.

<sup>23</sup> Zavriev 1936: 8.

importance to the pan-Turkists. Feeling the friendly position of the Soviet Russian government, the Turkish side did its best to hand over the region to its “younger brother”, Soviet Azerbaijan. According to Article 3 of the Moscow Treaty, the Nakhijevan region, which is located in the very center of the Ararat valley, was taken from Soviet Armenia and placed under Soviet Azerbaijan’s care, in short, it was annexed.<sup>24</sup> However, the Turkish side was not satisfied with that. The whole territory of Sharur was separated from the province of Sharur-Daralagyaz and affixed to Nakhijevan. In other words, under the contract, a territory of another 5.5 square kilometers was torn from Armenia. Thus, under the 1921 Moscow contract Armenia lost more than 25 thousand square kilometers. It should be noted that after that Turkey had to resort to various diplomatic means for more than 10 years in order to establish direct territorial ties with Nakhichevan, which had become an autonomous republic in Azerbaijan. And it finally succeeded. On January 23, 1932, a special agreement was signed between Iran and Turkey, according to which the two countries exchanged territories in the region of Mount Ararat. With a narrow strip, Turkey was directly connected to Nakhijevan. This fulfilled the long-cherished wish of the pan-Turkists<sup>25</sup>. The Moscow Treaty established the border that still exists today. Seven months after signing that treaty, on October 13, 1921, with the participation of a representative of Soviet Russia, a sham treaty was signed in Kars between Turkey and the three Soviet republics of Transcaucasia, which was, in fact, a copy of the Moscow Agreement and did not make any change to the created borders.

Thus, looking at the lessons of the past from a historical perspective, it is easy to see that in a broader, strategic sense, the Ottoman Empire traditionally was Russia’s main adversary in the South Caucasus and the Middle East. But, unfortunately, there were times of tactical rapprochement. Such were the 1920s. Actually we encounter the same situation in the present time, when for the sake of interest the Russian-Turkish “friendship and partnership” is becoming closer again. What is the actual conclusion of history lessons? These lessons imperatively demand that the Armenian social and political thought should not be indulged in illusions. It neither has grounds nor the right to connect the “salvation” or “security” of the nation with this or that country of the world. The lessons of history imperatively dictate to prioritize the slogan “The security of the Armenian people is in its collective power and powerful statehood” and to be unswervingly guided by that slogan in order for the Armenian people to draw their own state borders in the next stages of history.

---

<sup>24</sup> Armenia in the international diplomatic and Soviet foreign policy documents 1972: 501.

<sup>25</sup> Zavriev 1936: 8.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### ARCHIVES

Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, f. 132 (References on Turkey), inv. 3, folder 2, f. 1, p. 11 (in Russian).

Armenia in the international diplomatic and Soviet foreign policy documents, Yerevan, 1972 (in Arm.).

Documents of Foreign Policy of the USSR, vol. III, Moscow, 1959 (in Russian).

Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919–1939. First Series, Vol. XV. International Conferences and Conversations, 1921, Ed. By Rohan Butler and J. P. T. Bury, assisted by M. E. Lambert. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1967.

First congress of the peoples of the East. Verbatim report, Baku, «Communist International», 1920 (in Russian).

### STUDIES

**Cebesoy A.F.** 1955. Moskova Hatıraları (21/11/1920-2/6/1922), İstanbul.

**Chicherin G.V.** 1961. Articles and Speeches on the problems of international policy, Moscow (in Russian).

**Hakobyan A.** 2007. Historical-juridical evaluation of the Alexandropol, Moscow, and Kars treaties (1920-1921), *Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri* 2007/2, 17-30 (in Arm.).

**Kemal M.** 1932. The Path of new Turkey, vol. 3, Moscow (in Russian).

**Khachatryan K.** 2010. The issue of the borders of ASSR in the context of the 1921 Soviet-Turkish relations (Moscow and Kars conferences), *Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri* 2010/1-2, (in Arm.).

**Oran B.** 2001 (ed.). *Türk Dış Politikası. Kurtuluş Savaşından Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar*, Cilt I: 1919-1980, İstanbul.

**Öztürk M.** 2010. Consideration of Soviet help to Ankara in 1920-1922 on the basis of the Turkish historical sources, in *Scientific problems of humanitarian studies* 5, Pyatigorsk, 69 – 76 (in Russian).

**Sarukhanyan N.** 2011. True nature of the Soviet-Turkish March 16, 1921 treaty, *Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri* 2011/1-2, 113-125 (in Arm.).

**Vracyan S.** 1967. Through the paths of life, vol. VI, Beirut (in Arm.).

**Zavriev D.S.** 1936. Eastern Anatolia. Economic essays, Tiflis (in Russian).

**Zohrabyan E.** 1989. Territorial-demarcating problems in the second Russian-Turkish conference in Moscow (February-March, 1921), *Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri* 1989/2, 3-16 (in Russian).

*Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan*

## **REVEALING THE KHAN TEKINSKY CONSPIRACY** **(from the history of counterintelligence of the First Republic of Armenia)**

**Vanik Virabyan**

*Doctor in History*

*Khachatur Abovyan Armenian*

*State Pedagogical University*

### **Abstract**

In the article are revealed the efforts of Armenian counterintelligence in its struggle against the Azerbaijani secret services which were aimed at destabilizing the state structures and economy of the Republic of Armenia in 1918-1920. The Armenian counterintelligence was able to secure the internal peace of the country, neutralize the Muslim uprisings in the territory of RA and solve the most important security issues in general.

**Keywords:** Khan Tekinsky, counterintelligence service, T.Devoyants

Spies have always been a state's invisible and smartly disguised eyes directed at its not-underestimated enemy. Spies are a state's invisible, most loyal and trained soldiers among the enemy. Ancient Chinese martial arts expert *Xian Li* (VI-V centuries BC) knowingly noted in his book: “... *an army without reconnaissance is like a man without eyes and ears*”<sup>1</sup>.

The geopolitical consequences of World War I brought about radical changes in the content of the political map of the Transcaucasian region and in its manifestations. The upheavals and political tides caused by the 1917 October Revolution in Russia were of a “long-lasting” nature and affected almost the whole world, including Armenia. All the possible solutions to the Armenian Question collapsed one after another, the previous treaties and agreements lost their former validity and the peoples (Armenians, Macedonians, Arabs, Slovenes, etc.) standing on a difficult path of seeking independent national statehoods faced fatal dilemmas and geopolitical insecurities. In such an unfavorable geopolitical and grave military situation, when the Turkish hordes, carrying out the massacre of Western Armenians, were knocking on the doors of Eastern Armenia, the First Republic of Armenia was proclaimed on May 28, 1918. The Armenian National Council of Tbilisi that had undertaken the mandate of the first government, not only declared itself the supreme power of the Armenian provinces and creator of state power, but also considered one of its priorities the establishment of a vital body for every state – intelligence and counterintelligence - as the most important basis of the state security system. The processes in that direction were complex, contradictory and

---

<sup>1</sup> Sun Tsz 2006: 67.

ambiguous, due to the alignment of geopolitical forces in the region and the intensity of the struggle between them.

The study of various archival documents leads to the conclusion that in 1918-1920 the Government of RA sought to have not only important structures such as the army, bank, parliament, etc. in terms of understanding and establishing the idea of statehood, but also, of course, the necessary structures guaranteeing the national security of each state, such as the special services - intelligence and counterintelligence, as well as fully-fledged security forces of internal affairs bodies, militia, i.e. a more or less complete security system which would serve the solution of various foreign and domestic policy issues in the region, the detection and prevention of hostile conspiracies and provocations against the Republic. Due to such considerations, in spite of the grave geopolitical situation that arose in the second half of 1918, the government of the Republic of Armenia undertook the task of forming state and national bodies of the security system and directing their activities. The first more or less practical steps in terms of solving organizational-and-financial and human resources issues were taken immediately after the proclamation of the Republic. On August 13, 1918 the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia heard the request of the Ministry of Defense to release funds to cover the expenditures on aviation, intelligence and radiotelegraphy. After discussing the issue, the Council of Ministers decided to approve the steps taken, such as to release 6 million roubles financed from government loan: a) to allocate 20 thousand roubles for unforeseen expenses, b) 20 thousand roubles for intelligence, and c) another 20 thousand roubles for counterintelligence, for solving the organizational-and-political problems of the intelligence service.<sup>2</sup>

Considering these obvious historical facts, it can be argued that immediately after the arrival of the RA government from Tbilisi, when the RA Council or Parliament was formed and the government was appointed, one of its priority tasks was the establishment of the RA state security system and the organization of the relevant bodies, including intelligence and counterintelligence divisions, i.e. the Armenian Intelligence Service or special services, crucial from the point of view of the establishment of the Armenian statehood and its security, protection of state borders. Therefore, it can be unequivocally stated that the beginning of the establishment of the RA intelligence and counterintelligence services or special services should be considered August 13, 1918.

In this regard, it is important to clearly understand that statehood in general, its independence and more or less complete domestic policy and after all, national and state security cannot be imagined without the thorough organization of intelligence and counterintelligence, the constituent component of that system. In this regard, Tigran Devoyants<sup>3</sup> very accurately noticed: "*The intelligence is the eyes and ears of the state.*

<sup>2</sup> See NAA, f. 201, l. 1, d. 484, l. 9, F.P -202, l. 1, d. 13, l. 12, F.P - 204, l. 1, d. 216, l. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Devoyants Tigran Tadevos (20.08.1887, Yerevan - 02. 09. 1965, Belgium) – studied at the Faculty of Mining Engineering of Tomsk University, teacher. He is known by the nicknames Devo, Tigr, etc. See Hovakimyan 2005: 596.



*The intelligence division prepares for war during a peaceful time, and constantly studies the alignment of enemy forces, the movement of troops, the types and quality of the troops, the fortifications, means of communication, food and ammunition stocks, crops, the economic and health condition of the people, their mood, the relation between the nations and their attitude towards the state, reserve military units, the character of the commanders, the depth of the rivers during the four seasons of the year, the places to cross them, the newly-built roads, the airports, etc., etc. The job of the intelligence division is also to try to disrupt the means of communication of the enemy, to blow up ammunition depots, to burn supplies, to spread illness through microbes, to stir up rebellion and unrest within the enemy country, to connect with their telephone and telegraph communications, to decipher coded telegrams. In short, a skilled spy has no boundaries in his work and activities, he must move in accordance with the requirements and conditions".<sup>4</sup>*

It should be noted that Armenian spies had a good understanding of the essence of intelligence and its problems. Tigran Devoyants correctly noticed that circumstance: *"The intelligence, during peace or war, is the eyes and ears of every state. Intelligence studies the arrangement of troops of the enemy or neighbouring state, the alignment of forces, the weapons system, the layout of cannons, machine guns, rifles, tanks, armoured trains, air force, navy, fortifications, their type, quality, power, etc., means of communication, supply, military and supply depots, the economic and sanitary condition of the people, their mood, the relations of the powerful and their attitude towards the state, reserve forces, the description and character of commanders; in a word, everything connected with war - the construction of railway lines, highways, bridges, navy, type of air force, their speed, weaponry etc..."*

*The intelligence division prepares for war during the peaceful time of every state, thoroughly examines all the things irritating the given state in order to facilitate the implementation of its own state's strategic plans in the event of future war. Thus, the knowledge of the main connections of the railway lines, the depots, the location of important factories, the exact location of bridges will make it easier to bomb those centers, to blow up the bridges and temporarily disrupt communications behind enemy lines. Thus, in peacetime every state prepares for war with the help of its intelligence division"<sup>5</sup>.*

This situation is very well depicted by the well-known Armenian spy Tigran Devoyants, who wrote the following in his memoir "Episodes from my Life": *"And the budget was so small, with worthless Armenian roubles, that was of no significant value outside Armenia. Meanwhile, large sums of money should be allocated to those*

---

Other sources used - Horizon, 1914, № 230, 233, Armyanskij vestnik, 1916, № 33, p. 24, Kavkazskoe slovo, 1914, № 28-30, 3436, 1918, № 117. P.S. The date of birth has been corrected as opposed to the year 1980 circulated by us previously. See Virabyan 2018. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Devoyants 1938b: 59.

<sup>5</sup> Devoyants 1943a: 91.

*branches for the self-preservation of the country, because those two branches were to be the eyes and ears of the small country of Armenia, the basis of its diplomacy".<sup>6</sup>*

From the very first days of establishment the head of the intelligence division at the General Headquarters was highly-skilled Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Constantine Shneur, who had a small number of employees at his disposal. In the following years, the division was headed by a number of officers, whose names will forever remain in the pages of biography of that division. From September, 1919 to April, 1920 the head of the intelligence division was Vahagn Galust Muradyan, a rather famous, non-partisan captain. From April, 1920 to the end of June, the intelligence division was run by Tigran Tadevos Devoyants, who had political convictions and was a member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation party (by his own testimony, he had been Dro's classmate<sup>7</sup>). From July, 1920 to the Sovietization of Armenia (December 2) the intelligence division was headed by Mikayel Nikita Dodokhyan. On the path to the establishment of the Service, of great importance was the decree of the RA Military Minister dated April 14, 1919, which mainly completed the organizational work carried out towards the formation of the intelligence service; and an intelligence and counterintelligence division of the General Headquarters was established. As T. Devoyants noticed, becoming *"the eyes and ears of every state"* *"it prepares for war in peacetime, thoroughly examines all the things irritating the given state in order to facilitate the implementation of its own state's strategic plans in the event of future war"*.<sup>8</sup> *"It became a more or less complete institution, the immediate tasks of which were to gather facts about the enemy and terrain, to process those data and provide timely information about them, to lead the intelligence work of the brigade headquarters, to count the money provided for intelligence, to organize the fight against espionage"*.<sup>9</sup>

And at the time of the escalation of espionage passions against Azerbaijan, when the official diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Yerevan was Khan Tekinsky, who took advantage of his position and conducted conspiracy and reconnaissance activities against the Republic of Armenia, the resident representative of Armenia in Baku was Arshak Sargisyan<sup>10</sup> (according to a number of facts, in 1922 Tekinsky was already in Tabriz). In response to Tekinsky's expulsion from Baku, Arshak Sargsyan (Arshak Sargisov), resident representative of RA in Baku - a member of the diplomatic mission, was deported from Baku for alleged disruptive activity when Khan Tekinsky was the

---

<sup>6</sup> Devoyants 1945b: 84 -85.

<sup>7</sup> See Devoyants 1938a: 49.

<sup>8</sup> Devoyants 1943b: 91.

<sup>9</sup> See NAA, f. 204, l. 1, f. 132, l. 54-55.

<sup>10</sup> According to the investigation carried out in July, 1927 by General Political Department of the Crimean SSR (at that time he worked as an accountant) and according to the data of Grigory Khachatryan's interrogation in connection with the case, the work of intelligence in Baku went rather well. A large number of copies of very valuable correspondence of the General Staff of the Azerbaijani Army and the Military Ministry were received.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan. On February 20, 1920 this was reported to Foreign Minister Mustafa Vekilov.<sup>11</sup>

There is almost no fundamental work on the issues related to the Armenian army and intelligence especially in terms of the military and political relationship of the army and the RA intelligence service. In this respect, of certain interest is M. Karapetyan's work<sup>12</sup>, where the author addresses several issues of the formation and development of the Armenian army. It is important to mention several books<sup>13</sup> published in the Diaspora, where, however, the issue under discussion has caught our attention with some of its undisclosed pages. In general, they are undoubtedly of some interest, but the issues we are interested in are discussed from the standpoint of the activities of the ruling party, the ARF. They mainly focus on the analysis of the strategy of the Bolsheviks and largely blame the Bolsheviks for the slips and mistakes of the Armenian army, dimming the deeper causal findings, without delving into the errors and deviations of the internal political strategy implemented by the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The study of the main issue under discussion is particularly important from the point of view of the RA State Security System formation concept. In that respect of great interest are the issues related to the crisis and conflict situations for the Republic in 1918-1920 and the successful or failed attempts to overcome them, first of all having in mind, for example, the two-week Georgian-Armenian war in December, 1918 that ended in victory for Armenians,<sup>14</sup> as well as the 1920 Turkish-Armenian war which was disastrous for the Republic of Armenia, particularly the inglorious fall of Kars on October 30, around which there are conflicting views today - with sound approaches, as well as views dictated by opportune selfish motives.

This gives the impression as if Kars were one of the main points of confrontation between the world military and political forces, and the solution of many problems depended on the resolute will of the Armenians, the strength of spirit, etc., viewing them in isolation from complex regional realities. The need to shed light on the issues under discussion stems from the fact that today some authors discussing the problems of the Armenian army try to find the failures and slips of the Armenian armed forces in other areas, particularly putting the lion's share of the blame on the Armenian intelligence, without thoroughly examining the matter and showing a complex approach to the problem, without any real grounds. This is done unilaterally and mainly relying on literature in the format of memoirs, without showing an investigative or critical approach to them, almost without relying on archival data, as if they do not exist or are not very useful or suitable for use, contradicting narrow personal goals. It can be said that regarding that issue, with some reservations, Colonel T. Baghdasaryan duly noted: *"Writing about the reasons for the defeat of the Armenian army is absolutely beyond my*

---

<sup>11</sup> See Nazim 2018a. See Nazim 2018b: 80, 99, 110, 158 etc.

<sup>12</sup> See Karapetyan 1996.

<sup>13</sup> See Sahakyan 1937.

<sup>14</sup> See in more detail Virabyan 2003; Virabyan 2016; Hovhannisyan 2005: 99-135. See also Gevorgyan 2007: 269-316 etc.

*power. It is raw material and only strategists and skilled military men can write about it. My writings are my personal memories, very limited, a modest amount of material".<sup>15</sup>*

Thus, we once again refer to the publications of authors, who relied heavily on literature in the format of memoirs which requires a somewhat critical attitude. The authors of those publications were members of the junior command personnel of the Armenian army, and were not high-ranking officials (centurion Hay Gnduni (Hambardzum Toptchean)<sup>16</sup>, commander of the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion of the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment led by Sepuh, commander of the Armenian Army; Artashes Babalyan.<sup>17</sup> Minister of Social Affairs and had no direct contact with civilian and military departments (it goes without saying that they had to be less informed about the current events, especially that there were civilian albeit high-ranking officials in that role). Their references should be treated with reservation. They contain completely unverified, one-sided, often inaccurate and defective facts, the target of which, among other goals, is the activity of the RA Intelligence Service in 1918-1920 and therefore, Armenian spies, from the private soldiers to officers. It should be emphasized that the assertions openly denying the existence of the RA special services and certain activities carried out by them, are totally unacceptable and not convincing, inaccurate and one-sided, despite the aforementioned mistakes and slips of the RA intelligence division which must have been typical of the whole Armenian state in the process of its establishment and there is no intention to disguise or moreover, openly deny them. Thus, summarizing what has been said, we reject the "assertions" of the non-existence, indisputable dullness and absolute inaction of the Armenian intelligence service, as well as the viewpoint that "the latter were completely unaware of the plans and schemes of the enemy Turkey", the number of soldiers of the Turkish armed forces and their plans, and that the Republic of Armenia had no agents in Turkey etc. Under the irrefutable pressure of numerous undeniable facts all the above-mentioned is denied in the monographs published by us. Although there is some rationality in the points of view expressed, they are sometimes so contradictory and with vague purpose that they can confuse inexperienced readers and create a misconception about the history of the First Republic's state security system, particularly the intelligence service, leading to the erroneous conclusion of the non-existence of the Armenian statehood. It is unacceptable ignoring the existing facts on the activities of young Armenian intelligence against the republics of Azerbaijan and Georgia and other forces, and especially looking for the causes of the failures and slips in the field of army-building and defeats of the Armenian army only in the activity of the RA intelligence service, and doing so based solely on memoirs and other completely unverified sources.

Thus, by coming to random conclusions about the specific issues of the army and the activity of the intelligence, how could one ignore the circumstance and evident

---

<sup>15</sup> See Sahakyan 1937: 130-131.

<sup>16</sup> See Martkots, October 29, 1932, № 16, 1, 3, 5, 8, November 10, 1932, № 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

<sup>17</sup> See Babalyan 1923: 53.

historical fact that, no matter how disorganized and weak Armenian intelligence were (as some “supporters” of the non-existence of the Armenian intelligence services or merely “political deniers” claim), it was to some degree practically possible to prevent the aggression of the Republic of Azerbaijan against the Republic of Armenia in the fierce and long battles<sup>18</sup> from September-October 1919 to April 1920 due to the efforts of the Armenian intelligence service that was living through complicated and uncertain processes of establishment, born in grave conditions of starvation and destruction and persistently aspiring to be fully established (the mentioned problem is one of the completely unresearched issues in Armenian historiography). It was due to this that the Armenian armed forces under the leadership of Garegin Nzhdeh achieved an important decisive victory and thus, secured the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia in the territories very important for Armenia from the strategic point of view. There is an episode in famous Armenian spy T. Devoyants’s memoir, which we do not take as granted, but neither can we ignore, as it clearly testifies to a very important fact of the useful activity of the Armenian intelligence, a historical episode which, in fact, directly and practically to some extent enabled the audacious Armenian armed forces under the command of G. Nzhdeh (Garegin Yeghishe Ter-Harutyunyan, January 1, 1886 - December 21, 1955) to defeat and force out of Zangezur the aggressor army of Azerbaijan, as the invincible patriotic army had once done under the command of David Bek. In this connection, T. Devoyants very clearly claims: *“Armenia’s intelligence division bribed the chief of officers of the Azerbaijani army that stood against Nzhdeh by giving him 200,000 roubles. He arranged his troops, cannons and machine guns in the way we wanted, and when the fighting broke out, Nzhdeh’s forces defeated the much stronger Azerbaijani army, captured or destroyed the enemy’s strong artillery and machine guns.*

*The chief of officers of the Azerbaijani troops of that region was Georgian.*

*It was after this that Garegin Nzhdeh became Sparapet...”.<sup>19</sup>*

<sup>18</sup> At the end of 1919 two Azerbaijani regiments intruded into Zangezur headed by Generals Ali Agha Ismayil Agha oghli Shikhlinskij (April 23, 1865 - August 18, 1943) and Samed Bek Sadikh Bek oghli Mehmandarov (October 16, 1855 - February, 1931). [Shikhlinskij 1984: 209; Ibragimov 1975]. G. Nzhdeh organized a counterattack under Goris, and the enemy fled in panic to Avdalar [present Lachin]. After this defeat, the Azerbaijanis did not dare to attack Zangezur until April, 1920. Azerbaijan also used Turkish forces, which in April, 1920 tried to attack Kapan under the leadership of Nuri Pasha, but they suffered a crushing defeat in the Vorotan gorge. At the end of April, Nzhdeh not only repulsed all the attacks of the enemy, but also went to Artsakh with Dro, and helped the heroic Armenians of Artsakh (See Melkonyan 1998: 217; Danielyan, Melkonyan 2008: 297-299). In connection with these events and regarding the acts of heroism demonstrated by Arsen Shahmazyan, Garegin Nzhdeh, and other national devotees and well-known military figures during the long and fierce battles in Zangezur from September-October, 1919 to April, 1920 one of the totally undiscovered and unknown pages of Armenian historiography is addressed above. It is connected with the role of the intelligence and counterintelligence division of the General Staff of the RA Military Ministry in these very important events for the Republic of Armenia, which does not cast a shadow on the military and political activity of the famous general Garegin Nzhdeh.

<sup>19</sup> Devoyants 1944: 75.

In order not to give the impression that on the one hand we demand a critical attitude towards literature in the format of memoirs, and on the other hand we refer only to such sources let's turn to the help of archival facts to verify the above-mentioned evidence. A number of important archival documents help shed light on obviously insufficiently studied or, more exactly, completely unexplored issues, thus overcoming a number of hardened stereotypes, stereotyped conclusions and judgments. The first documents related to Major General Hovsep Artem Kishmishyan, the military attaché attached to the Armenian diplomatic mission in Tbilisi, i.e. the coordinator and head of intelligence-related issues, are of certain interest from the point of view of the above-mentioned questions despite some contradictory information contained. It should be taken into account that despite the fact that the Armenian intelligence was still quite young, inexperienced, and was taking the first steps to become a serious service, in the moral and political sense this did not hinder it from getting useful information. The document below is one of the best and indisputable proofs of that and confirms T. Devoyants's above-mentioned assertion about a really interesting historical event that testifies to the fruitful work of Armenian spies. It proves that the division's work was not so bad at all, as some eyewitnesses and contemporary authors "try to testify". Thus, H. Kishmishyan, the head of the Armenian special service in Tbilisi, in his report (N° 33) of January 17, 1920, addressed to the RA Military Minister, informed that a fully trusted person, Bogdan Davidovich Avan-Yuzbashi Khan Sagnakhsy (who was considered a loyal man among the Armenian military mission in Tbilisi), according to the assignment of the department he ran, had reached an agreement with Lieutenant Colonel prince Eristov,<sup>20</sup> chief of staff of the Azerbaijani detachment which had been given the "right" to act in Zangezur. For 200-300 thousand roubles Eristov had promised to provide them with the code (password) of the Azerbaijani Army, all the secret correspondence, deployment of Azerbaijani troops and the plan of alleged attack on Zangezur. Eristov was also obliged to make the combat order in a desirable way for them and to develop the whole plan of the operation according to the instructions of the Armenian side, at the same time keeping in touch and informing of all the military operations of Azerbaijan.

As we can see, this is very interesting information, which, of course, cannot be taken as granted. However, one should not ignore similar intentions of the Azerbaijani intelligence and the preparations being made, although in the information he gave General Kishmishyan confidently added that Khan Sagnakhsy had assured them of the reliability of the information, adding that it would be delivered through Lieutenant Colonel Eristov, and the money would be paid only after checking the above-mentioned documents. Apparently, expressing almost complete conviction that these Azeri officers could already be considered fully bribed or lured to their side, in this very interesting report General Kishmishyan expressed an opinion that it was necessary to immediately

---

<sup>20</sup> Eristov, Eristavi Ksansky, Alexander Nikolay (5.07.1873-10.02.1955) – prince, lieutenant general from August 23, 1917. He served in the army of Menshevik Georgia. As a member of the delegation of the Menshevik government he was sent to Turkey, where he remained until 1921, after which he was deported to France. See Zaleskij 2003: 712-713.

send Captain V. G. Muradyan to Tbilisi together with the money, so that the latter could directly contact the above-mentioned Lieutenant Colonel Eristov for a detailed clarification of all the circumstances. Kishmishyan informed that on the eve of Captain Muradyan's business trip it was necessary to ask the Chief of Staff about the questions that Lieutenant Colonel Eristov should be aware of 1) the number of troops, 2) their groupings, 3) directions of military actions, 4) auxiliary operations. At the end of this interesting report, General Kishmishyan stated that Captain Muradyan should be informed by a detailed, exhaustive instruction necessary for his work, which would include the verification of all the information. Besides, Kishmishyan informed that one of the best employees of the Tbilisi intelligence network, Lieutenant Yeghiazarov had been sent to Yerevan for an oral report. There is also a corresponding note on the document (N° 34) addressed to the Military Minister that the code, as well as the whole secret correspondence about the deployment of the Azerbaijani troops could be obtained for 200-300 thousand roubles.<sup>21</sup>

Ultimately, the important thing here is that although one might think that the Armenian intelligence was naive enough to believe the Azerbaijani army officers in such important matters, it should be noted that in this case the Armenian intelligence officers acted successfully and obtained very important information that could serve the issues of ensuring Armenia's security and defense capacity [such examples can be found in the practice of other countries as well]. They even turned to bribery and other means and methods of obtaining important information which in practice served the decisive victory against Azerbaijan won by military units led by Nzhdeh. Referring to T. Devoyants it should be once again stated that when Azerbaijan was concentrating large numbers of troops against Zangezur, thanks to the Armenian intelligence service the Armenian government was able to obtain information of great strategic value, which helped to achieve significant results in the military and political conflict with the enemy. In regard to this T. Devoyants simply emphasizes the following: *"The Armenian government was able to bribe the Azerbaijani army's chief of officers who was a Georgian colonel. The latter not only gave us information on the deployment of Azerbaijani troops, but also arranged the Tatar military units in such a way that our army managed to easily defeat them and seize their cannons, machine guns and ammunition"*.<sup>22</sup>

We think that additional comments are unnecessary and irrelevant here. Moreover, even Dr. *Nazim Mustafa*, the Azerbaijani researcher studying our monograph<sup>23</sup> on Armenian intelligence published in 2015 unwittingly and unconditionally acknowledged this fact and confessed that a significant role in the defeat of the Azerbaijani troops was played by the misinformation of Major General David Bey Yedigarov, who headed the 1<sup>st</sup> Azerbaijani division against Zangezur (he was

<sup>21</sup> See NAA, f. 275, l. 5, d. 184, l. 3-4.

<sup>22</sup> Devoyants 1945b: 83.

<sup>23</sup> Virabyan 2015.

disqualified directly by the order of Azerbaijani Military Minister Samed Bek Mehmandarov, and an official investigation was launched). At the same time Dr. Nazim Mustafa stated that before the famous operation, Armenian spy Tigran Devoyants had managed to bribe a Georgian officer of the Azerbaijani army with 200,000 roubles thanks to which G. Nzhdeh was able to strike with great accuracy and defeat the stronger Azerbaijani army.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, the RA Intelligence Service did not stop showing interest in the events unfolding around Armenia and the people involved in them. In his secret service telegram dated May 18, 1920 (N 01322), addressed to the RA military attaché in Tbilisi, General Kishmishyan, H. Khan-Kotursky, acting Head of Intelligence Division at the time, asked to interrogate retired rotmister Khan Sagnakhsky to find out if his adjutant Timiryan, who served in the Tbilisi Cavalry Regiment, had served during his tenure and what was known about him.<sup>25</sup> And on May 21, 1920 (N 218) in a secret letter addressed to the RA Chief of the General Staff, General Kishmishyan informed that Timiryan's interrogation had already taken place and it had revealed that Timiryan had served in the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun command staff of the Cavalry Regiment. He was from Shushi and as far as was known, he was from a wealthy family and his mother lived in Tbilisi at that time. He was said to be a generally negative person who had persuaded his friends to rob his own mother two years before, and it had been done. Kishmishyan reported that, according to Sagnakhsky, more thorough details about Timiryan could be provided by Timiryan's immediate staff-captain Melik-Adamov, who was in Armenia in Colonel Bek-Pirumyan's detachment.<sup>26</sup>

The detailed study of a number of other documents makes it evident that the special services of the First Republic of Armenia tried to work, to do their best in the conditions of the resources and manpower available. It is another thing that they were not able to achieve a more or less tangible advantage, e.g. in the fight against the Turkish special services (especially against counterintelligence) which felt more confident and secure, and in some situations were more proactive and bold. On the one hand, there was the centuries-old experience of a powerful world empire (albeit an Asian variant, savage and insidious), the availability of manpower and resources, and on the other hand, there was the newly-forming state of Armenia, with lack of manpower, and the available staff consisted of very young, untrained people not having much experience in operative work. The establishment of these services was also negatively affected by the isolation from Russia and from its educational and military support institutes, the geopolitical isolation, as well as the pro-Western sentiments, which then boomeranged, exposing their rear. Nevertheless, in this situation, the existing Armenian special services tried to interfere with the enemy agents, to strengthen the security of the Republic in extremely tense moments for the homeland

---

<sup>24</sup> See Nazim 2019a.

<sup>25</sup> See NAA, f. 275, l. 5, d. 154, l. 119.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 123.



(Böyük-Vedi and Zangibasar, Armenian-Georgian war for Lori and adjacent regions, etc.).

In order to have a more or less full disclosure of the history of the intelligence service of the First Republic of Armenia it is relevant to mention an important page of the activity of the Armenian intelligence service in regard to the plots of the Azerbaijani special services in Yerevan which had the diplomatic mission of Azerbaijan in Armenia as the headquarters of their activity, and a network of agents. In this connection Al. Khatisyan meaningfully noted: *“The other side confirmed that the special messenger of the government of Azerbaijan had distributed 5 million rubles to the rebel villagers of the Sharur region. Thus, the riot fed from the outside, not only disturbed the minds of the population, but also created a belief that in the event of an uprising foreign aid would be provided to them.*

*At the beginning of 1920 the other side would send them officers and soldiers...*

*Through their intelligence bodies the government of the Republic of Armenia received information on the preparations made in this or that region on a daily basis”.*<sup>27</sup>

All this is denied by the facts illustrated by V. Artsruni and others. According to them, the Armenian intelligence which allegedly operated during the years of the First Republic of Armenia, *“would also show its traditional weakness on the Armenian-Azerbaijani front”*. In practice it was not so: on July 31, 1919 the RA Minister of Foreign Affairs Al. Khatisyan lodged a strong complaint with the Azerbaijani government over the Böyük-Vedi incidents, in connection with its disruptive espionage and intelligence activities, emphasizing his great awareness: *“The Armenian government has evidence based on verified, undeniable documents not only about the armaments and financial aid provided to the population of Böyük-Vedi from outside, but also about the fact that all the subsequent insurgences are the work of an organization that pursues one goal - to artificially turn the Muslim population against the government of Armenia and to forcibly wrap this provocation around the neck of the Muslim population through the many agents from abroad. Without them the Muslim population would still continue to live a peaceful, cultural life in the mentioned regions of Armenia, as is the case in other parts of Armenia. After these exhaustive explanations about this issue, the Armenian government deems it necessary, based on solid data, to declare with sorrow that with his actions Mr. Tekinsky<sup>28</sup> personally contributed to the movements directed against the Republic of Armenia and against peace in the country”*<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> Khatisyan 1968: 205.

<sup>28</sup> Tekinsky Mamed (Muhammed) khan (1880-1938) –was a lawyer, worked as the official representative of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in the Republic Armenia from January 29 to October 10, 1919. From October 11, 1919 till April 28, 1920 he was Deputy Foreign Minister. In 1938 he was executed by the decision of the Council of 3 of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), later in 1955 he was acquitted. See Nazim 2018a.

Undoubtedly, Nazim Mustafa's book published in Baku in 2018 is worth paying attention to. It is written from the Azerbaijani point of view and a number of fundamental issues related to the activities of the Azerbaijani envoy in Yerevan Khan-Tekinsky, as well as the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict became a subject of discussion. See Nazim 2018a; 2018b: 20, 80, 84, 99-105, 107, 109-110, 113, 115, 158 and etc. Safarov Rafiq (National Archive Department of the

This is very clearly stated by T. Devoyants in his famous memoir “Episodes from my Life”: *“Azerbaijan had a very good spy network in Yerevan”*<sup>30</sup>. Then on another occasion he added the following: *“The diplomatic mission of Azerbaijan in Yerevan not only reported with unusual speed about the deployment of Armenian troops and transportation of troops and ammunition to Tbilisi and Baku, but also had in its possession Armenia’s secret orders and instructions.”*

*Armenia had given seats to Muslims in its parliament and for the election of those Members of Parliament the Azerbaijani government had allocated 40,000 roubles. Every day many of their spies freely passed Tokhmakhian Gjol behind the Tatar district of Yerevan and went from there to Sharur-Nakhichevan, Böyük-Vedi and Zangibassar, transporting ammunition, instructions, news and food from Yerevan. They had all kinds of certificates issued by the police, this or that member of Parliament or minister”*<sup>31</sup>.

At the same time, in honor of the measures and countermeasures undertaken by the Armenian intelligence service, Tigran Devoyants emphasizes the following: *“Fortunately, every day the Armenian government was kept informed of the enemy’s plans by these telegrams and accordingly, took measures. If the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan had not been robbed by “bandits” in the neutral zone, the number of the Tatar army in the Sharur-Nakhichevan region alone would have reached 10,000 with the money sent from Baku through Tbilissi. Similarly, the number of Tatars fighting in Böyük-Vedi, Zangibassar and other regions would have increased, and all Armenians of Armenia would have been in danger of extinction”*<sup>32</sup>. This view is also supported by S. Vratsyan: *“From the very first day of Khan-Tekinsky’s arrival in Yerevan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia was familiar with his code. All the telegrams sent by or to Khan-Tekinsky became known to the Armenian government before they reached him. In May, 1920, after the Sovietization of Azerbaijan, those telegrams were published in a separate booklet “Secret Documents” (a page of conspiratorial activities of Azerbaijan), 1920, Yerevan, publ. “Razmik”.*<sup>33</sup> In another place S. Vratsyan added: *“From the very first days of independence, Azerbaijan did not leave Armenia alone. With the support of the Turks, the Azerbaijanis tried to turn the*

---

Republic of Azerbaijan Chief Advisor, Documentation and Usage Department), Mammad Khan Birinski (1879-1938), one of the statesmen and prominent diplomats of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic. See <http://www.milliarxiv.gov.az/az/mammed-xan-tekinski-1>; Nazim 2018a; Kelbizade 2014.

Tekinsky was one of the most experienced and promising diplomatic and intelligence employees of Azerbaijan, whose neutralization and prevention of conspiratorial steps was one of the most successful and skillful actions ever undertaken by the RA Intelligence Service, particularly Tigran Devoyants.

<sup>29</sup> See Hayastani Ashkhataavor, August 19, 1919, N123.

<sup>30</sup> Devoyants 1945a: 88.

<sup>31</sup> Idem.: 81.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Vratsyan 1993: 310; Ruben 1982: 193; Vratsyan 1966: 102. It should be added that famous spy T. Devoyants had a significant role in this issue. He was the first to decode their key, to declassify them and prevent the destructive actions against Armenia and its authorities (See Devoyants 1945a: 87).

Turkish-Tatar population of Armenia against the Armenian government. The Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khan Tekinsky was a key player in these affairs. He kept agents in various parts of the country, received large sums of money from Baku and provided classified information to his government. An official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Yeakulian (P. Yakulyan – V. V.) soon deciphered the code by which Khan-Tekinsky exchanged telegrams with his government.<sup>34</sup> Abr. Gyulkhandanyan also wrote about it: *“Although seemingly friendly relations were maintained and the two countries had representatives in the other country, the government of Azerbaijan made every effort to prevent the Muslim elements in Armenia from submitting to the Armenian government. And that is why Azerbaijan supported them with weapons, military leaders, especially money. The representative of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Armenia, using his position, constantly reported to his government about the work he carried out through coded telegrams and received instructions...”*

*The Armenian government, which was aware of the content of all these telegrams from day one, was finally forced to actually expose the real image of that unique state ambassador and demand that the Azerbaijani government recall him. And although that representative was replaced by another, the latter also continued the work that his predecessor had begun”.*<sup>35</sup>

This is clearly confirmed by R. Hovhannisyan, who emphasizes the awareness of the Armenian intelligence: *“The Armenian intelligence service soon learned to decipher the briefs and provided declassified texts to the government and officers.”*<sup>36</sup>

*Mamed Khan-Tekinsky, Azerbaijan’s representative in Yerevan, worked tirelessly in order not to let Sharur and Nakhichevan to connect to Armenia. Since his arrival, he kept his government informed of the military and political situation in southern and other regions through coded messages. And in order to achieve those goals, Khan-Tekinsky constantly demanded large sums of money from the Azerbaijani government, at the same time demanding to use force on the Armenian government to immediately resolve the issue in favor of Azerbaijan.”*<sup>37</sup>

*Therefore, it is quite natural that during those years the Armenian special services not only had a certain interest, but also control over the activities of the Azerbaijani diplomatic mission in Yerevan, the capital of the Republic of Armenia (it was opened in March, 1919 and became an espionage and intelligence center for developing and directing anti-Armenian operations; the spy forces concentrated there, gathered information about the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, deployment of forces, conducted political observations, collected data on the RA financial capabilities and*

<sup>34</sup> Vracyan 1966: 102. It should be noted that in this connection Tigran Devoyants reported that he had declassified all the known 75 secret coded telegrams, which the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs illegally attributed to themselves (Devoyants 1945a: 87-90; 1945b: 82-83).

<sup>34</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, l. 9, number 150, f. 206, l. 1, d. 84, l. 27, Ghazakhetsyan 2000 (ed.): 110.

<sup>35</sup> Gyulkhandanyan 1967: 76.

<sup>36</sup> Hovhannisyan 2005: 213.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.: 263-264.

*gave instructions and advice to their own government on how to harm the national and state security of the Republic of Armenia). In this regard, the declassification of a number of coded telegrams sent to Baku by the Azerbaijani diplomatic mission provided an opportunity to disclose some important aspects of hostile activity. Moreover, the enemy's goals included providing financial and military support to the hostile and insurgent elements inside the country, as well as causing the implementation of various issues of state and political construction to fail. In order to have a clear understanding of the destructive and harmful espionage and intelligence work Azerbaijan carried out against the Republic of Armenia through its diplomatic representatives in Yerevan, let us bring a number of factual data, quotes from secret correspondence. This is reflected in the first secret coded telegram that Tekinsky, the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Armenia, sent to Baku immediately after setting foot in Yerevan, on March 22, 1919. It said: "On March 14 Armenia received 14 million bons from Tbilisi, but if you cause financial difficulties, Armenia will soon find itself in a difficult position. Because of lack of income, Armenia cannot lead an independent life"<sup>38</sup>.*

On April 10, 1919 a few days after arriving in Yerevan, Khan-Tekinsky briefed the Head of the Government and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, informing: *"Armenia has 6 infantry regiments, each consisting of 3 battalions. Besides, 6 Karabakh battalions and 1 Yerevan battalion are being formed. Chieftain military units are being formed. The whole infantry does not exceed 10 thousand. Conscription has been announced to replenish the regiments. The cavalry consists of 3 divisions, each having 3 squadrons. Only one squadron is provided with horses. There are 2 field, 5 mountain and 1 cavalry batteries, 3 armored vehicles, captured from the Georgians"*.<sup>39</sup>

Paying special attention to the events and incidents in the Nakhichevan region, on April 18 Khan-Tekinsky informed his government about the resistance of Muslims in the Zod-Bassargechar region and the fighting with the Armenian military units.<sup>40</sup> On April 29, Khan-Tekinsky wanted to find out what kind of help the government would provide to the Muslims of Nakhichevan in the event of resistance when Armenian troops entered there: *"Will they send troops, at least under the pretense of volunteers?"*.<sup>41</sup> S. Vratsyan testifies about Khan-Tekinsky's anti-Armenian conspiracies and provocations: *"On April 30, Azerbaijani agents Nakhichevansky and Makinsky arrived in Yerevan with large sums of money in order to get to Nakhichevan... A new period of conspiracies of Azerbaijani agents began"*.<sup>42</sup>

There is direct evidence of that in a telegram sent to the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan by Tekinsky, the diplomatic representative of that country in Yerevan, on May 1, 1919. It said: *"On April 30, Makinsky (Ganizade) and Nakhichevansky arrived. In*

---

<sup>38</sup> See Secret Documents 1920: 18.

<sup>39</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, l. 3, number 41.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., l. 4, number 60.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., number 72.

<sup>42</sup> See Vratsyan 1993: 311-312.

*Yerevan, Thomson prohibited Makinsky from crossing into Nakhichevan on the grounds that the area was under the control of the Armenian government. Makinsky has given the money to me. I am waiting for instructions on how to use the money allocated to Nakhichevan. Nakhichevansky is forced to return. The British took Makinsky's car".*<sup>43</sup> On May 4, 1919 asking for an urgent response to his April 29 telegram, Khan-Tekinsky added: *"The people of Nakhichevan are asking me how to behave. Will Azerbaijan come to their help if the people of Nakhichevan show resistance to Armenians?"*<sup>44</sup> In another telegram of the same day, Khan-Tekinsky informed the government of Azerbaijan: *"The Armenian regiments moved to Nakhichevan. In order to put pressure on Armenia, I consider it necessary to immediately deploy our regiments to the borders of Armenia. The population of the Nakhichevan region is ready to show resistance. The 4<sup>th</sup> Armenian Regiment is stationed in Dilijan but not at full strength. The accumulation of Armenian troops continues in Davalu. The Muslims stand near the village of Sadarak, in the region of Gayli Durk".*<sup>45</sup> Khan-Tekinsky demanded that the Azerbaijani government provide a large amount of money to the diplomatic mission to organize armed forces and use them against Armenia. *"Thanks to the measures I have taken, Sharur, Nakhichevan and Ordubad have united in the Nakhichevan (Muslim) National Council, which always keeps in touch with me",*<sup>46</sup> - Khan-Tekinsky informed. Here is the answer of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jafarov to the last telegram No. 130: *"I approve of the measures aimed at establishing contacts with Sharur-Nakhichevan. I agree to release funds for military organizations. Inform of the ways of implementation and organization of the mentioned plan".*<sup>47</sup> In a telegram dated July 24, 1919 Jafarov also informed Khan-Tekinsky of the decision of the Defense Committee of the Government of Azerbaijan about refusing to supply oil to Armenia: *"I inform you about it, do not say anything to Armenians".*<sup>48</sup>

Khan-Tekinsky, using the cover of diplomatic immunity, through evident espionage was in fact engaged in sending valuable information on many issues, including the structure and armament of the Armenian army. In his secret telegram No 94, dated May 10, 1919 sent to Baku, to the chief of ministers, Khan-Tekinsky wrote: *"Make the Bolshevik threat to Baku a pretence and ask the British to transport the cannons in Kars to Baku".*<sup>49</sup> This was later achieved by Azerbaijan. We learn about this from the letter dated April 14, 1920 sent to Colonel M. Zinkevich, the military representative of the General Command of the Armed Forces of the South of Russia, by Al. Khatisyan, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of RA. We have covered this previously. Due to

<sup>43</sup> Secret Documents 1920: 21.

<sup>44</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, l. 5, number 83.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., number 82.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., l. 8-9, number 129, 130, 151.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., l. 9, number 1599.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., l. 13, number 54.

<sup>49</sup> See Harutyunyan 2002: 61-62.

the efforts of the intelligence this and 75 other such secret and coded telegrams came into possession of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RA, which published them.<sup>50</sup>

A few more examples: thus, in response to telegram No 1599 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated June 5, 1919 Khan-Tekinsky reported that the Sharur-Nakhichevan region had a semi-regular army of up to 6,000 soldiers, cavalry, cannons, machine guns, *“they are not inferior to Armenians in combat capabilities”* and at wartime their number could increase to 10.000. *“I think we should make expenditures for 6,000 soldiers, with the old command staff, we should deploy troops in the places where they were before the arrival of the Armenians, and concentrate one military unit in the mountains of Zangezur. It is difficult to fully guarantee the right spending of money. The importance of the case makes us even reconcile with small abuses”*, - Khan-Tekinsky wrote.<sup>51</sup> At the request of the Azerbaijani government to urgently report on the situation in Nakhichevan, Sharur, Vedibassar, Goghtn, Ordubad and Julfa, on June 26 Khan-Tekinsky reported: *“The regions of Nakhichevan, Sharur, Vedibassar, Shahtakht are occupied by Armenian troops, an Armenian administration has been established. Julfa is under the control of Armenians, the Muslim troops are scattered. There are only 300 Chetniks”*.<sup>52</sup>

On June 22, 1919 the diplomatic envoy of Azerbaijan, who had arrived in Armenia to “establish good-neighborly relations”, but carried out active and provocative espionage and intelligence activities, wrote the following in a very hostile attitude: *“I think Azerbaijan has no other enemy besides Armenia. Special attention should be paid to Armenia: we need Kurdish Smko to take our side”*.<sup>53</sup> On July 16, 1919, he sent a coded telegram to the Azerbaijani military attaché in Tbilissi, Colonel Mahmed Bek Aliyev, saying: *“Armenia has 3 infantry brigades, each consisting of 2 regiments. A regiment has 3 infantry battalions, three cavalry regiments, each consisting of 6 squadrons, but the organization of all squadrons is not over yet; 12 batteries with 4 cannons each. In addition, there is one Karabakh detachment consisting of one infantry battalion, 3 squadrons and 4 cannons. There are approximately more than 500 cannons in Kars, from 8-inch to field cannons, and there are officers and soldiers on them. There are three armored trains. A strong mobilization is currently taking place. I think that only by mobilization the number of the mentioned regiments can be supplemented, because there is a lot of desertion. Please report all this to the Military Minister”*.<sup>54</sup>

Two days later, on July 19, in another telegram sent to the same addressee, the Azerbaijani diplomat engaged in espionage activities against the Republic of Armenia hurried to make the following addition: *“Besides the six infantry regiments, there is the seventh one. There is also one border brigade and the military unit of the military*

<sup>50</sup> See Virabyan 2007: 82-88.

<sup>51</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, l. 9, number 150, f. 206, l. 1, d. 84, l. 27; Ghazakhetsyan 2000 (ed.): 110.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, l. 10, number 184, 1695; f. 206, l.1, d. 84, l. 28; Ghazakhetsyan 2000 (ed.): 114.

<sup>53</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 10, number 202.

<sup>54</sup> See Haraj, June 6, 1920, № 117.

*headquarters. There are Armenian military units in Zangezur, but their number is unknown". Then he added: "The fifth Regiment is stationed in Kars. The fourth is somewhere in the Dilijan and Surmalu province. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> military units of the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment, as well as one unit of the border brigade, the military headquarters company, a mortar unit, two armored trains, the small military units of the cavalry and mountain cavalry battery are located in the regions of Vedibassar, Sharur and Nakhichevan. The military training contingent and the separate Yerevan battalion are stationed in Yerevan. The entire Karabakh detachment, under the command of Colonel Kafiev, have probably moved to Zangezur. The cavalry was stationed in Alexandrapol, but it is difficult to determine where it is now, as there are only three squadrons on horseback, the rest are without horses. Due to the fighting, the locations of the military units are being changed. Copies of General Shelkovnikov's secret orders to the regimental commanders have been sent to the Muslims of Sharur-Nakhichevan, which the Armenian authorities probably are not aware of".<sup>55</sup>*

As it becomes clear from the materials of the correspondence on the conspiratorial activities of the Azerbaijani agents, in addition to organizing internal unrest in the Republic of Armenia, Azerbaijan spared no effort and resources to dismantle Armenia economically, using oil, fuel oil and gasoline which were in their hands. As it becomes obvious from the well-known correspondence, Azerbaijan paid special attention to the railway as the main artery for the operation of the commercial and industrial system of the Armenian state, a means of rapid transportation of goods and troops. From this point of view, the military and political regions of Azerbaijan, the intelligence bodies and the agents operating in the territory of RA always gave instructions to their government to be very prudent and careful in the transit of oil and fuel oil to Armenia and avoid excessive "generosity". Thus, in a telegram dated June 4, 1919, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tekinsky emphasized the following: *"For whatever reason, postpone sending fuel oil to the Armenian railway because events are expected to take place in the Nakhichevan region"*.<sup>56</sup> And in a telegram dated July 24, 1919 the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jafarov instructed Khan-Tekinsky on how to act in the current situation: *"(On – V. V.) Bekzadyan's mediation on sending 500,000 poods of oil... the Security Council has decided not to release oil until the Azerbaijani government changes two conditions of the contract"*.<sup>57</sup>

Azerbaijani diplomatic spies were deeply convinced that by causing financial difficulties for Armenia they would be able to bring about military and political complications and unsolvable difficulties as well. Moreover, in their intrigues against Armenia the Azerbaijani agents also allocated a certain place to external forces, trying to find the most effective ways and means to influence them, giving appropriate instructions and advice to their own government. Thus, in his telegram dated April 16,

<sup>55</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, part I, l. 6.

<sup>56</sup> Secret documents 1920: 26.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.: 37.

1919 addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Khan-Tekinsky emphasized the following: *"It is necessary to protest before all the Muslims of India, Turkey, Afghanistan, the Malay Islands and the Caucasus, as well as before the Reconciliation Assembly against the desire of the British to subjugate several million Muslims to half a million Armenians"*.<sup>58</sup>

The Azerbaijani agents believed that their government should take some precautionary measures to ensure its interests in the means of communication. In this connection they asked the government to take actions so that the British would not harm them or hinder them from taking the appropriate measures. This view is defended in the telegram dated July 28, 1919 sent by Khan-Tekinsky to the Chief of Ministers: *"I think our government should make a solid offer to the British to hand over to us the Julfa-Shahtakht railway on the Aleat-Julfa line to start trade with Persia. The line to be handed over must extend to the village of Davalu. While making that offer to the British, point out Armenia's incompetence, the frequent interruption of train traffic. At the same time, promise to establish a new order in Sharur Nakhchivan. I think the British will agree"*.<sup>59</sup> Finally, when it comes to the operation of the Julfa-Yerevan railway, from the point of view of trade, without considering the sovereignty of any state, in his telegram dated February 10, 1920, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan, taking an openly anti-Armenian position, literally emphasized the following: *"Before the normalization of our relations and the establishment of the borders, I consider opening the Yerevan-Julfa road inexpedient. From the economic viewpoint, it is beneficial only to Armenia. For us the opening of the road is not of economic interest yet, and we can pursue political interests in both Nakhichevan and Persian Azerbaijan without that road"*.<sup>60</sup>

Back on July 21, 1919 Khan-Tekinsky demanded that his government concentrate Azerbaijani troops on the borders of Armenia and raised the alarm that Armenian troops continued to move to Sharur, where major events were unfolding, battles were going on: *"Armenia is concentrating all its efforts... The presence of our troops on the borders is causing panic among Armenians, is increasing desertion and lifting the spirits of Muslims. I have already informed Aliyev, the military attaché in Tbilissi about the number of Armenian troops, asking him to inform the Military Minister about it. If you want to take advantage of the moment, take urgent and decisive action"*.<sup>61</sup>

On August 1 and 3, Khan-Tekinsky wrote to the Head of Government of Azerbaijan: *"We must immediately declare war on Armenia"*<sup>62</sup> and put an end to Zangezur within two weeks and move troops to Ghamarlu. Now is the best time. It will be too late after the arrival of Colonel Haskel, American Commissar in Armenia.

---

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.: 19.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.: 38- 39.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.: 51.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.: 36.

<sup>62</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, part I, l. 14, number 601; Ghazakhetsyan 2000 (ed.): 116.



*Organize the attack without declaring war. Please use the moment and do not waste time”.*<sup>63</sup>

On August 3, 1919, the “diplomatic representative-spy” reported to the Azerbaijani government that artillery and projectiles had been sent to Dilijan, Nor Bayazet and Bassargechar in 8 trucks and that the 4<sup>th</sup> regiment was in those regions. He concluded that “the Armenians are preparing it against the Muslims” and demanded that the government “take the necessary measures”.<sup>64</sup> The anti-Armenian provocative and destructive activities of the Azerbaijani diplomatic representative, the establishment of an espionage and intelligence network and groups of agents throughout the Republic of Armenia encouraged the Muslim masses, whose leaders provoked them to run various manipulations, and pushed them to insurgent actions against the legitimate Armenian authorities and the Armenian people. Encouraged by this, Muslim bandits that had started anti-government riots in Zangibassar, Zod-Bassargechar, Kars and elsewhere, showed strong resistance to Armenian troops and local authorities under the leadership of Turkish officers and special service agents and with the participation of military men and Turkish soldiers.

In this respect, the information obtained by Armenian special services regarding the Azerbaijani aspirations towards Zangibassar is of interest. The telegrams sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Baku testify to that. Thus, in his telegram dated December 20, 1919 sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan the acting diplomatic attorney of Azerbaijan in Yerevan, Mir Babayev simply wrote the following: “... *if the people of Zangibassar surrender, we will lose a lot from the political, moral and material point of view. Please make every effort to repel the Armenian attack on the people of Zangibassar. They have taken all the possible measures*”.<sup>65</sup>

From the point of view of revealing the conspiratorial and disruptive activities of the Azerbaijani special services against the Republic of Armenia, of interest is the telegram regarding Zangibassar and Nakhichevan, dated March 4, 1920 sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by Musayev, acting Head of the Azerbaijani diplomatic mission in Yerevan: “*Failure to receive money for Nakhichevan until today makes the work of the governor general useless and causes significant damage to the Republic. Without our financial support, Zangibassar is also in a terrible situation which is beneficial for Armenia. I am defending the two regions by saying that the money is already in Tbilissi and as soon as it arrives in Yerevan it will immediately be sent as planned. Every minute of delay has a strong impact on our interests. I’m asking for your order before it is too late*”.<sup>66</sup>

Naturally, as we have already mentioned, the Armenian intelligence was well informed about all these preparations, because it was carefully monitoring it all. After

---

<sup>63</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, part I, l. 14-15, number 601, 606.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., l. 15, number 616.

<sup>65</sup> See Secret documents 1920: 47.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.: 55.

the neutralization of the Azerbaijani network of agents in Armenia by the Armenian special services, it became obvious that the Azerbaijanis also had serious ambitions towards the Böyük-Vedi and Kars regions and supported the local separatists. We learn about this from a telegram dated May 6, 1919 sent to Khan-Tekinsky by Khan-Khoisky, the Chief of Ministers of Azerbaijan: *“Contact the government of Kars immediately. Show them all kinds of support, find out what they need, write to us to take the necessary measures”*.<sup>67</sup> And in a telegram dated July 14, 1919 addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Khan-Tekinsky referred to the issue of Böyük-Vedi: *“The situation of Böyük-Vedi is serious, Armenia is concentrating all its forces. A mobilization has been announced... The Muslims can be saved by Azerbaijani armed intervention... The conflict continues. Send large sums of money to military organizations without wasting time”*.<sup>68</sup>

This position was supported by the government. In a telegram dated July 19, 1919 Jafarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan informed Khan-Tekinsky about it: *“Follow the events in Böyük-Vedi and in other villages. If possible, send an official representative, otherwise appoint an undercover agent. Report about the situation”*.<sup>69</sup> Finally, the same mentality prevailed in the telegram dated July 22, 1919 sent by Khan-Tekinsky to the Minister of Foreign Affairs: *“I have the impression that the Armenian troops will not leave Böyük-Vedi, but will stop the hostilities standing only on the positions. Take measures for the withdrawal of Armenian troops, otherwise the situation of the Muslims of Böyük-Vedi will become difficult, even dangerous”*.<sup>70</sup>

As a “result” of his conspiracy and espionage activity in Armenia Mamed Khan-Tekinsky was declared *persona non grata*. This was emphasized in Al. Khatisyan’s note addressed to the government of Azerbaijan: *“Based on solid data, the Armenian government finds it necessary to state with sorrow that through his actions Mr. Tekinsky personally contributed to the movements against the Republic of Armenia and peace in the country”*. Al. Khatisyan advised the Azerbaijani government to make the relevant conclusions about Khan-Tekinsky’s activities after receiving that information,<sup>71</sup> but the latter was appointed Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan for his services and “successfully” continued his anti-Armenian activities and his place was taken by “national poet”, former representative of Azerbaijan in the Mountainous Republic Abdurakhman Bek Hakhverdov (Abdul Rahim-Bek Hakhverdov).<sup>72</sup> After

---

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.: 23.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.: 31-32.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.: 33-34.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.: 36-37.

<sup>71</sup> See Zohrabyan 2002: 179-181.

<sup>72</sup> In a telegram (No 1671) dated November 8, 1918 addressed to the RA Minister of Foreign Affairs, RA diplomatic envoy in Tbilissi, A. Jamalyan reported that he had received a letter from Jafarov, the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Tbilissi, asking on behalf of his government to find out which of the persons represented by him would be considered desirable for the role of the representative of Azerbaijan in Armenia by the RA government - Tbilissi Mission Financial Officer Narimanbek Narimanbekov, Assistant to Sworn Envoy Amir Bek Narimanbekov or Sworn

March, 1920 the latter was replaced by Teimur khan Makinsky<sup>73</sup> (according to the decision of Prime Minister of Azerbaijan N. [Yusufbeyli] Bek-Usubbekov dated February 25, 1920).<sup>74</sup> They continued Tekinsky's vicious practice which the Armenian intelligence and government were aware of. Due to the negligence of the Azerbaijani agents, the Armenian side easily obtained the code number, which the Azerbaijani side found out with some delay,<sup>75</sup> but it did not give them significant results, which testifies to the good work of the special services in preventing and neutralizing the intelligence and destructive activities of the Azerbaijani agents which had hostile attitude towards the RA.

In order to make it clear that Azerbaijan really provided large financial aid to Sharur-Nakhichevan and Zangibassar, due to which the uprisings in those regions were organized, it is enough to point out that in 1919 a sum of about 5 million was sent to the governor of Nakhichevan in bonds and cheques. This money was stolen by the "robbers" who attacked the train while it was crossing the "Neutral" zone. They took all the money from Hakhverdov, the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan<sup>76</sup> and T. Devoyants wrote about it. This is also stated by K. Sassuni, R. Ter-Minasyan, Al. Khatisyan,<sup>77</sup> who assured that the money was intended for intensifying the insurgent and separatist moods against the Armenian authorities in Zangibassar, Sharur and elsewhere, with the aim of cutting off the known territories from the Republic of Armenia and annexing them to Azerbaijan. "One day, a telegram was received: Hakhverdov, the new ambassador of Azerbaijan and S. Harutyunyan, the leader of the People's Party were leaving Tbilissi for Yerevan by the same train. Ruben and I immediately gave the relevant instructions, and at dawn of March 8, in the neutral zone of Lori, between the stations Sanahin and Kober a group of masked and armed young people stopped the train and seized the belongings from Hakhverdov and Harutyunyan. They took 3,400,000 roubles worth of Azerbaijani and 2 million roubles worth of Transcaucasian bonds from Hakhverdov, and 296,000 roubles worth of Transcaucasian bonds from Harutyunyan, which he was taking to their party's "Zhoghovurd" newspaper in Yerevan. This incident caused quite a stir.

---

Envoy Mamedkhan Tekinsky. Jamalyan informed the Foreign Minister that in Tbilissi's private circles they believed that the response of the Armenian side should be delayed just as Azerbaijan was trying to do in T. Bekzadyan's case. Thus, based on the information in his possession, Jamalyan considered Tekinsky's candidacy undesirable. - See NAA, f. 200, l. 2, d. 18, l. 5.

<sup>73</sup> Teimur Khan-Makinsky - graduated from Yerevan Gymnasium, and in 1916 from the Faculty of Law of the University of Warsaw. He was a member of the Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan. He worked as the plenipotentiary representative of Azerbaijan in Armenia until December, 1918. By the decision of the Azerbaijani Government dated January 31, 1919, sworn envoy Mamed Khan-Tekinsky (1880-1938), a Turkmen national, a graduate of the Novorossiysk Imperial University was appointed the diplomatic representative in the Republic of Armenia. Tekinsky was succeeded by Abdul Rahim Bek Hakhverdov, and finally, the last diplomatic envoy of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Armenia before the Sovietization of Azerbaijan was once again Teimur Khan-Makinsky appointed in that position on March 16, 1920.

<sup>74</sup> See Slovo, February 25, March 18, 1920.

<sup>75</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 299, part II, l. 105.

<sup>76</sup> See Secret documents 1920: 9.

<sup>77</sup> See Sassuni 1968: 173; Ruben 1982: 246; Khatisyan 1968: 205.

The Azerbaijani government expressed its complaints to Yerevan. The Georgians were laughing at their Azerbaijani friends. The Armenian government expressed condolences to S. Harutyunyan, returned the money and the golden watch taken from him, in spite of the fact that the money brought by Harutyunyan to "Zhoghovurd" newspaper would be spent to fight against the government.<sup>78</sup>

An Armenian avenger at the root of "Nemesis", Misak Torlakyan<sup>79</sup> (he served in the intelligence unit of the Russian army from 1915 to 1918. Later he moved to Batumi, then Constantinople, where on July 18, 1921 he killed Behbut Khan Jivanshir, executioner of Armenians in Baku. On October 6, 1921, a British court found Misak Torlakyan insane and released him), gave an interesting reference and observation of it complementing and completing the above mentioned in regard to the conspiratorial and destructive activities of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Armenia: "...*The ARF Bureau in*

---

<sup>78</sup> Vracyan 1966: 103.

<sup>79</sup> Misak Torlakyan was one of the active members of the ARF Dashnaksutyun. In 1910, like many other Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, M. Torlakyan was drafted into the army. During World War I M. Torlakyan was in Erzurum as a member of the 4<sup>th</sup> regiment of the 12<sup>th</sup> army of the Ottoman Empire. Feeling that Armenian soldiers were likely to be annihilated in the army, M. Torlakyan secretly escaped and joined a group of hayduks operating in the Erzurum-Trabzon direction. In 1915 Torlakyan went to Tbilissi and from there to Yerevan. Afterwards, Misak Torlakyan first participated in a number of battles as a member of the 6<sup>th</sup> volunteer detachment, and then as a member of the newly formed Armenian Corps (commander General T. Nazarbekyan), including the battle of Bash-Aparan (May, 1918). There he joined the volunteer regiment of Ishkhan (Hovsep [Arghutyan-Long-armed] Arghutyan), took part in several important battles, after which, by the decision of the party, went over Sukhumi to Trabzon with his detachment. He soon became a member of the Trabzon region Self-Defense military body. In December, 1915 it became known that after losing the battle of Sarighamish, Enver Pasha, a fanatical Armenophob intended to go over Trabzon to Istanbul. At a secret meeting it was decided to terrorize him in Trabzon. However, at the last moment, Enver managed to avoid the punishment he deserved. During the 1915 massacres of Armenians in Trabzon M. Torlakyan and the other Hayduks organized the self-defense of the Armenians, thus saving many Armenians from death. In 1916, Russian troops liberated Trabzon. In his memoirs Torlakyan said that his first job in Trabzon was intelligence service in the Russian army in Trabzon, which gave him an opportunity to enter Turkish villages, conduct searches, look for and find Armenians hiding there, and get a good chance to avenge Turkish criminals and executioners. For his service in the Russian army M. Torlakyan was awarded the "Battle Cross" order. In January, 1918, the Turkish troops started their campaign to Transcaucasia. The Trabzon group of Hayduks joined the troops under the command of Drastamat Kanayan (Dro). Prior to that, the Trabzon detachment was located in Kars, where it controlled the retreat of Armenian troops and the peaceful Armenian population to the Araks River. At the end of May, the detachment took part in the battle of Bash-Aparan. Battle-seasoned Misak Torlakyan helped the great hero in that work. He was in the vanguard detachment that, at Dro's command, started the attack on the positions of Turkish troops in the battle of Bash-Aparan. In 1921, M. Torlakyan came to Istanbul where together with Harutyun Harutyunyan and Yervand Fundikyan, as part of the ARF Constantinople group he became one of the participants of operation "Nemesis".

During World War II, together with Dro and Nzhdeh, Torlakyan participated in the formation of Armenian military units within the Wehrmacht. He headed the secret agents and subversive-and-intelligence subdivisions of the Armenian Legion. He personally led the operation to seize the secret documents of the Turkish leadership concerning the spread of Pan-Turkism and the conquest of the Caucasus. The documents obtained in Turkey, which were presented to Rosenberg, became a reason for the Reich not to trust Turkey as an ally. After that, the Reich leadership refused to use the Turkish army in the Caucasus. For the brilliantly performed operation Captain Misak Torlakyan, along with many other intelligence agents, was awarded and received highest ranks. See Who is who 2005: 435; Torlakyan 2001: 357-490.

*Armenia instructed the Central Committee of Georgia to rob Azerbaijani Ambassador Hakhverdov's steam train in a neutral zone and obtain the necessary documents. In late March, 1920, when Hakhverdov was returning from another visit to Baku, a group of armed young men dressed in Georgian clothes attacked the steam train at night, in a neutral zone. Harutyun Harutyunyan, armed with a weapon, ordered the train driver to stop the steam train. The boys broke into Hakhverdov's wagon, stole everything from the people there. And in order to make the robbery look just like a bandit attack, they did not spare even the Armenian public figure Samson Harutyunyan, who was in the wagon and was heading to Yerevan. The documents obtained left no doubt about the intentions of Azerbaijan and Turkey to blow up Armenia from within. Some of these documents were published in the seventh volume of Rouben's memoirs".<sup>80</sup>*

Such a bold undertaking, which brought honor to its executors, had undesirable developments, of which we learn from M. Torlakyany's memories. And M. Torlakyany simply stated the following: *"A group of participants in the operation did not want to give the money to the Central Committee. That is why the Central Committee decided to terrorize their leaders.*

*Some of those who carried out this operation remained in the neutral zone, where one of their leaders, Gasim Ruben was intimidated by Harutyun Harutyunyan. After this intimidation, the others came to Tbilissi to take revenge on the Central Committee for their friend.*

*Considering this tense situation, the Central Committee of Georgia summoned me and my friends from Batumi to Tbilissi.*

*The friends and associates of the murdered man were outraged and would come to Tbilissi to terrorize both Harutyun and the members of the Central Committee that had been with him.*

*Barely a week after our arrival in Tbilissi, Ruben Safaryan, the second leader was assassinated on Yerevan Square by Yervand Fundukyan. After this terror, the others ran away and the issue was closed".<sup>81</sup>*

It was not confirmed either on March 11, 1920 during the Yerevan Provincial Court hearing on Hakhverdov's case, in which Samson Harutyunyan, a member of the People's Party of Armenia, Member of Parliament and Hakhverdov himself were questioned, but with no evidence, so the court finished its job.<sup>82</sup>

It is known that back on March 16, 1920, in the March 8 complaint (N 920) addressed to the Armenian representative in Tbilissi, the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Georgia, Vekilov stated that between the stations Kolageran and Kober Abdul Rahim Bek Hakhverdov, the Azerbaijani diplomatic representative in Yerevan was robbed by vicious bandits who had taken money and documents from him. He asked to take measures to find the robbers, to hold them accountable and return the

<sup>80</sup> Torlakyany 2001: 455-456.

<sup>81</sup> See Torlakyany 2001: 456-457.

<sup>82</sup> See NAA, f. 275, l. 5, d. 207, l. 48-50, 64-70.

stolen items and state documents. By the way, it was mentioned that the crime had been committed in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.<sup>83</sup> And already on March 18, 1920 a complaint (N 1920) was filed by F. Khan-Khoisky, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, who informed the British Chief Commissioner O. Wardrop<sup>84</sup> about the robbery that had taken place with Hakhverdov in the Neutral Zone of Lori, during which 5 million 300 thousand roubles taken from the state treasury and 40 thousand roubles of personal money had been stolen from him and the robbery was accompanied by shooting. Stressing that the crime had been committed in the Lori Neutral Zone belonging to the two republics, Khan-Khoisky noted that the incident affected the interests of the Transcaucasian republics, and therefore, asked not to refuse and take decisive measures to immediately find the culprits, return the seized items, money and documents.<sup>85</sup>

Further squabbles over this case continued, the RA Internal Affairs bodies became involved, and they were tasked with finding out what happened. In this connection, on March 19 (N 1066) and March 27 (N 2871) there was some exchange of correspondence. The RA Diplomatic Commissioner in Tbilissi was also informed about this, as well as about the testimony given by S. Harutyunyan, interrogated in connection with the case. It should be noted, however, that while investigating this very important case, the Internal Affairs bodies examined it from the point of view of RA interests. They completely denied the circumstance that the robbery had taken place in the part of the Lori Neutral Zone that was considered RA territory, claiming that there was no evidence to prove that. And as it turns out from the document submitted to the RA Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs bodies by the Militia Department on March 30, 1920 (N 101) and from the protocol approved by the prosecutor, the robbery had taken place between the stations Kolageran and Sanahin, not Kober, i.e. in the territory of the Republic of Georgia, therefore the Republic of Armenia could not be held accountable. They also noted that if the perpetrators had crossed the border and hidden in the territory of RA, the Internal Affairs bodies ordered the Gharakilisa provincial commissioner to take urgent measures to arrest the robbers.<sup>86</sup> The deep motives of such an approach are clear - to ignore the facts of the case for the sake of protection of the interests of RA.

The intelligence had revealed that in the telegrams dated September 18 (N° 736) and September 21 (N° 757), 1919 sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan by Mir Babayev, the secretary and substitute of the diplomatic mission of Azerbaijan in Armenia, there were interesting details about the financial support provided by Azerbaijan to the insurgent and anti-government movements in Armenia, as well as the

---

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., I. 24, 29.

<sup>84</sup> Wardrop John Oliver - General, specialist in Georgian Studies, former Consul General in Moscow. On July 2, 1919, the British War Department approved Wardrop's appointment as British Chief Commissioner to Transcaucasia, which was approved by Lord George Curzon as well. On July 22, the British Foreign Office approved Wardrop's candidacy, who knew Georgia and Caucasus very well. See Hovhannisyan 2014: 130.

<sup>85</sup> See NAA, f. 275, I. 5, d. 207, I. 33-34.

<sup>86</sup> See NAA, f. 275, I. 5, d. 207, I. 40-41, f. 200, I. 1, d. 520, I. 141.

disruptive espionage and intelligence activities. Thus, in the telegram dated September 18, 1919, the Azerbaijani diplomatic representative in Yerevan informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs that the Armenian agent in Baku had informed the head of the Armenian counterintelligence that Captain Kasumbekov, an officer on special assignments attached to the mission (it is interesting to note that on November 5 about half a million roubles were stolen from Azerbaijani diplomatic mission attaché, special assignments officer Kasumbekov's apartment by Armenian mauserists. Hakhverdov also informed about this in his telegram to the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan dated November 21, 1919 (N° 1455) adding that the Armenian government was powerless against what happened and could not take any measures (it is clear that such a large sum was not personal money and it can be said with some certainty that it was just for intelligence purposes), and Cornet Ali Khan Makinsky were registered in the Azerbaijani counterintelligence, and in his opinion the Armenians were trying to get rid of them under various pretexts. Mir Babayev reported that Armenian special services had discovered their activities in Yerevan and asked the Foreign Minister to give Kasumbekov and Makinsky military uniforms and to get them into the Azerbaijani army, and thus, free them from various incidents, placing them under the auspices of the mission and therefore, getting rid of the Armenian counterintelligence.<sup>87</sup>

And from the declassification of Mir Babayev's telegram dated September 21, 1919 it becomes clear that the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan reported that mobilization of 19-to 30-year-olds was underway in Armenia, that Yerevan mayor A. *Shakhkhatuni* had left for Dilijan to personally observe the positions. Mir Babayev also mentioned that weapons and ammunition were being brought urgently.<sup>88</sup> Thus, Mir Babayev was engaged in espionage activities in Yerevan, and the young Armenian counterintelligence was not asleep. They were intently watching the enemy and neutralizing the latter's schemes and fraudulent deals. As a result of all this, the work of Armenian intelligence and counterintelligence services in Yerevan yielded the desired results in terms of exposing hostile agents and preventing their conspiracy against Armenia.

As a result of all this, in the middle of May (May 19-22), 1920 the Information Department of the RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a telegram-message to the ARF Bureau, the RA Ministries of Justice, Interior and Military Ministries, Commander-in-Chief of the Army General Nazarbekyan, the Speaker of the Parliament, as well as the RA diplomatic envoy in Tbilissi, Consul General of Batumi, the Armenian delegation in Paris, the Ambassadors of the Republic of Armenia in Italy, London, Washington and elsewhere. It said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia had published the entire secret correspondence exchanged between the representatives of the diplomatic mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Yerevan and their agents. It stated that it concerned the anti-government, anti-Armenian aggressive activities of the

<sup>87</sup> See NAA, f. 199, l. 1, d. 73 (71), l. 155.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., l. 156.

Azerbaijani government and its representative in Armenia, which were aimed at organizing anti-government movements in the regions of Armenia and at undermining the foundations of statehood in the Armenian republic, and ultimately in practice deepening the insurgent situation in Zangibassar, undermining the authority of the Armenian officials, overthrowing them and annexing to Azerbaijan the Zangibassar region which was a legitimate and inseparable part of the territory of the Republic of Armenia.<sup>89</sup> Besides, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs applied to the newspapers "Haraj",<sup>90</sup> "Zhoghovurd", "Razmik", "Socialist-Revolutionary" (only due to the closure of the "Socialist-Revolutionary" newspaper by the government order, at the last moment that important material was not published though it was planned) and others and offered them to publish the well-known correspondence about the secret anti-government activities of the Azerbaijani agents, relying on the full version of the case, also publishing it in English.

Finally, on June 3, 1920 the RA Military Court held a hearing in the case of the former staff of the diplomatic mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Yerevan (the so-called *kavases*, patrol staff Mashadi Mamedov, Mashadi Hussein oghli, Hussein Vali oghli, Musa Mashadi Mamed oghli, as well as Ivakhnenko, the driver of diplomatic mission who was included in that list). They were accused of various criminal and political crimes, in particular of supporting the Zangibassar insurgents and inciting riots there. This was carried out on the direct instructions of the Azerbaijani diplomatic envoy to Yerevan *Temur Bek Makinsky*, and by coordinating with him the actions taken, as well as promising to transfer more than 600,000 roubles in Azerbaijani and Caucasian bonds (more precisely, 449,750 roubles in Azerbaijani bonds and 117,050 roubles in Transcaucasian bonds) addressed to the insurgents in Zangibassar and to hand the money over to Molla Kasum, the head of the Zangibassar "government". However, in the village of Jafarabad (now Argavand - V. V.) they were arrested by Hambardzum Hakobyan, Jafarabad frontier post senior mounted militiaman of the Etchmiadzin provincial militia. They offered him a bribe of 100,000 roubles which he strongly refused to take. He arrested them and to make the case legal, handed them over to the law enforcement bodies together with the confiscated money. For performing his official

---

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., f. 200, l. 1, d. 427, part II, l. 284, 288, 290, d. 461, l. 24-27, 28-31, 40.

<sup>90</sup> See for example Haraj, June 5, 1920, № 116, June 6, 1920, № 117, June 8, 1920, № 118, June 14, 1920, № 121.

In this connection, the robbery of Abdurahman Bek Hakhverdov was referred to by Nazim Mustafa, laureate of State Prize of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Doctor of Philosophy, during his speech at the international conference held on June 26-30, 2018. The relevant materials were posted on Azerbaijani websites in February 2012. He tried to evaluate the realities of those days, assessing them as an operation carried out by the Armenian Intelligence and Counterintelligence Services against Azerbaijan, particularly the diplomatic mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Yerevan. Referring to Hakhverdov's notorious robbery, M. Nazim described it as a violation of his diplomatic immunity, citing Armenian intelligence officer Tigran Devoyants, who was allegedly in Tbilissi at that time and followed the events. He said it was a calculated operation by Armenia in response to which the Azerbaijani government arrested the staff of the diplomatic mission of the Republic of Armenia in Baku, including Arshak Sargsyan, in return for which the Azerbaijani diplomats arrested in Yerevan were allegedly released. See Nazim 2018c; See also Nazim 2018b; Nazim 2019b.



duties conscientiously and honestly senior militiaman Hambardzum Hakobyan received thank-you from the Minister of Internal Affairs A. Gyulkhandanyan.<sup>91</sup>

The RA Military Court issued a verdict, according to which one of the defendants, Hussein Vali oğlu was sentenced to indefinite exile, the other two, Mashadi Mamed oğlu and Musa Mashadi Mamed oğlu [see the materials of the June 3, 1920 court case regarding the three *kavases* - guards of the Azerbaijani diplomatic mission in Yerevan] to 10 years of hard labor each.<sup>92</sup> The case was not over by this, as Azerbaijan took retaliatory measures by arresting several employees of the Armenian diplomatic mission in Azerbaijan. We learn about this from a telegram sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs addressed to the RA diplomatic envoy. The Azeris finally agreed to release the employees of the RA diplomatic mission in Azerbaijan in return to the release of secret agents of the Azerbaijani diplomatic mission arrested and convicted in Yerevan by the Armenian government, although their complicity in anti-government and espionage and intelligence activities against RA was absolutely evident.<sup>93</sup>

Based on intelligence data, it was noted that Khan-Tekinsky was actively organizing anti-Armenian operations, maintaining secret relations with the Tatars of the Sharur-Nakhichevan region, inciting them to riot, supplying money, etc. It was mentioned in the overview that in the face of anti-Armenian sentiments, the situation of a small number of Armenian patrol guards among a well-armed, rather organized Muslim population had become dangerous. The authors of the military overview also noted that in view of the resumption of Turkish-Kurdish-Tatar attacks on the region of Surmalu and province of Kars, as well as taking into account the intelligence data regarding the general offensive planned by the Muslims throughout the south and in the west of Armenia, it was decided to withdraw the Armenian troops from Vedibassar (Böyük-Vedi) as far north as possible to give them a chance to rest, also providing possible reserves.<sup>94</sup>

One thing is quite obvious - relying on secret telegrams and letters sent to Baku by Azerbaijani diplomatic representatives in Yerevan Khan-Tekinsky, Hakhverdov, Makinsky, as well as other sources, the Armenian counterintelligence was able to declassify them. They did not believe the “news”,<sup>95</sup> i.e. tried to work fully and effectively and obtain valuable information from the point of view of ensuring the RA security, which was aimed at securing the internal peace of the country, neutralizing the Muslim uprisings in the territory of RA and solving the most important security issues in general, and finally, aimed at the processes of the establishment of the Republic of Armenia as a state.

---

<sup>91</sup> See Ghazakhetsyan 2000 (ed.): 181.

<sup>92</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 249, part II, l. 415, 427, d. 461, l. 31, 40, d. 427, part II, l. 322-327. See also Secret documents 1920: 56.

<sup>93</sup> See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, d. 249, part II, l. 431.

<sup>94</sup> See Ibid., l. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Zohrabyan 2002. 233.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Periodicals

Armyanskij vestnik (Moscow, in Russian)  
 Haraj(Yerevan, in Arm.)  
 Hayastani ashkhataavor (Yerevan, in Arm.)  
 Hayrenik (Boston, in Arm.)  
 Horizon (Tiflis, in Arm.)  
 Kavkazskoe slovo (Tiflis, in Russian)  
 Martkoc (Paris, in Arm.)  
 Slovo (Tiflis, in Russian)  
 Vem (Paris, in Arm.)

### Studies

- Babalyan A.** 1923. The fall of Kars, Hayrenik, 1923/12, October(in Arm.).
- Danielyan E.L., A. A. Melkonyan** 2008. History of Armenia (from antiquity until modern period), Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1938a. Memories of the intelligence agent (an answer to critics), Vem, 1938/January-May (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1938b. Memories of the intelligence agent, Vem 1938/3, June-September (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1943a.From the episodes of my life, Hayrenik, 1943/3 (236), May-June (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1943b. Military intelligence and counter-intelligence, Hayrenik, 1943/3 (236) (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1944. From the episodes of my life, Hayrenik, 1944/6 (245), November-December (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1945a. From the episodes of my life, Hayrenik, 1945/2 (247), March-April (in Arm.).
- Devoyants T.** 1945b. From the episodes of my life, Hayrenik, 1945/4 (249), July-August (in Arm.).
- Gevorgyan H.** 2007, Dro (life and deeds), Yerevan(in Arm.).
- Ghazakhetsyan V.** 2000 (ed.). Republic of Armeniain 1918-1920 (political history),- Collection of documents and materials Yerevan(in Arm.).
- Gyulkhandanyan A.** 1967. Transcaucasian Republics, Hayrenikh, 1967/4 (in Arm.).
- Harutyunyan KI.** 2002. Armenian national military units in 1918-1945,Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Hovakimyan B.M.** 2005. Dictionary of Armenian pseudonyms, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Hovhannisyan R.G.** 2005. Republic of Armenia, vol.1. Year 1. 1918-1919, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Hovhannisyan R.G.** 2014. Republic of Armenia, vol.2. From Versaille to London. 1919-1920, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Ibragimov D.** 1975. General Ali Agha Shichlinskij, Baku (in Russian).
- Karapetyan M.,** 1996. The army of the Republic of Armenia in 1918-1920, Yerevan, 1996 (in Arm.).
- Kelbizade E.** 2014. Muhammed khan Tekinskij – History of Diplomacy, Baku, online (<https://bit.ly/3zDOEYv>: <https://bit.ly/35Bj3ZL>)

- Khatisyan A.I.** 1968. Creation and Development of the Republic of Armenia, second edition, Beirut (in Arm.).
- Melkonyan A.** 1998. History of Armenia. Course of lectures, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Military Encyclopedic Dictionary, Moscow, 1986 (in Russian).
- Nazim M.** 2018a. Muhammed khan Tekinskij - the first diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Armenia «Azerbaijan», May 27, 2018 (<http://www.azerbaijan-news.az/index.php?mod=3&id=147821>).
- Nazim M.** 2018b. Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyəti işığında (1918-1920), Bakı (in Azerbaijani).
- Nazim M.** 2018c. Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. A bright page in the history of the Azerbaijani statehood. Materials of international conference. June 26-30, Gyanja, 400-403 (1905.az/əbdürrəhim-bəy-haqverdiyevə-qarsi-ermənistan-hokumətinin-təşkil-etdiyi-quldurluq-hadisəsinin-təfəsilatı)(in Russian).
- Nazim M.** 2019a. The process of the unification of Nakhijevan and Azerbaijan in Zangezur of Armenia - 11.12.2019. Blog №: 2019/69 (<https://bit.ly/3xpxiwG>)
- Nazim M.** 2019b. Azərbaycan Cumhurbəşkanlığı Kütüphanəsi Bölüm Başkanı, 1-18: Blog No: 69 11.12.2019.
- Ruben** 1982. Memoirs of Armenian revolutionary, vol.9, 3 edition. In abroad, Sassun and the Republic of Armenia, Teheran (in Arm.).
- Sahakyan H.** 1937. Two years in the Armenian army, Paris (in Arm.).
- Sassuni K.** 1968. Riots of May and the revolted Tatar regions (Armenian in 1920), Beirut (in Arm.).
- Secret documents 1920. A page from the conspirative activity of Azerbaijan, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Shikhlinskij A.** 1984. My memories, Baku (in Russian).
- Sun Tszi** 2006. A study on military art (transl. by R.Sahakyan, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Torlakyan M.** 2001. With my days, 3rd edition, Beirut (in Arm.).
- Virabjan V.** 2016. Armenian-Georgian military-political relations in 1918-1921, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Virabyan V.** 1918. The 1918 Georgian-Armenian war, military-political activities of the government of the RA and political parties, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Virabyan V.** 2007. Pages from the intelligence activities of Tigran Devoyants, Armenian army, 2007/1 (51), p. 82-88(in Arm.).
- Virabyan V.** 2015. The creation and activities of the State security system of the Republic of Armenia in 1918-1920 (Intelligence and army), Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Vracyan S.** 1966. Through the life. Events. People. Emotions, vol.5, Beirut (in Arm.).
- Vracyan S.** 1993. Republic of Armenia, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Who is who. Armenians. Biographic encyclopedia, vol. I, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Zalesskij A.K.** 2003. Who was who in the World war I. Biographic encyclopedic dictionary, Moscow (in Russian).
- Zohrabyan E.** 2002. From the problem of Nakhijevan and «allies» of Armenia (December 1918-April 1920), Yerevan (in Arm.).

*Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan*

---

# PHILOLOGY

---

## ON THE MAIN EPISODES OF THE EPIC POEM ABOUT ARMENIAN-ARAB ALLIANCE

**Tork Dalalyan**

*PhD, Institute of Literature, NAS RA*

### **Abstract**

The most famous Armenian epic poem, “Daredevils of Sassoun” (“Sasna Tsrer”), is a folk heroic poem about the centuries-old conflict between Christian Armenians and idolater Arabs. In contrast, there was another epic poem in which Armenians and Arabs acted as allies. During the Soviet period the study of this epic poem remained in the shadows, as its main character was a real historical figure, the Armenian Catholicos of that time.

**Key words:** Epic poem, Hovhan Odznetsi, folktale, medieval sources, Arab emir, Byzantines

### **Introduction**

The most famous Armenian epic poem, “Daredevils of Sassoun” (“Sasna Tsrer”), is a folk heroic poem about the centuries-old conflict between Christian Armenians and idolater Arabs. In contrast, there was another epic poem in which Armenians and Arabs acted as allies. During the Soviet period the study of this epic poem remained in the shadows, as its main character was a real historical figure, the Armenian Catholicos of that time.

In various Armenian folktales, the written versions of which have been known since the 10<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, the main character is the 8<sup>th</sup> century patriarch Hovhan(nes) Philosopher Odznetsi (717-728). We are familiar with stories about him from the works of medieval historians, as well as from the legends written down in Vayots Dzor, Bznunik, Lori and Javakhk from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> The versions told in Lori have survived to the present day and have been recorded in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods as well. However, researchers have overlooked the fact that they are the constituent parts of a large epic poem.

The study of the legends about Odznetsi shows that they formed a complete logical series, where the fictionalized image of the famous 8<sup>th</sup> century Catholicos played a central role. The epic series or epic poem about Odznetsi apparently started with the following episodes or “chapters”: “Odznetsi and the Illegal Child”, “Odznetsi and the Pythons of Ardivi”, which are directly related to topographical legends, so it is natural that they have been preserved only in Lori, where Hovhan Odznetsi lived and worked for the most part. Later the epic poem introduces the episodes “*Armenians and*

---

<sup>1</sup> Kajberuni 1881; 2003, 171-182; Okhan Otsneli 1898; Lalayan 1903; 1983, 483-484.

*Romans”, “Handsome Look”, “Meeting with the Arab Caliph”, “Witchcraft paper”, “Odznetsi and His Troops on the Bridge”, “Cruciform Sword”, “Boiling in Saucepan”, “Odznetsi and Vasil”, “The Points of the Armenian-Arab Treaty”.*

### Historical and scientific references

The main historical (including historical-epic) information about Odznetsi is provided by Armenian medieval historians Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi (9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries), Kirakos Gandzaketsi (13<sup>th</sup> century) and Vardan Areveltsi (13<sup>th</sup> century).

Before Draskhanakerttsi, brief information was given by Movses Kaghankatvatsi. It is in fact a pure mention of the name of a certain Hovhannes Vardapet. Modern scholars identify him with Hovhan Odznetsi, who later became Catholicos. After Draskhanakerttsi and before Gandzaketsi information about Hovhan Odznetsi was also given by Stepanos Taronetsi Asoghik (11<sup>th</sup> century) and Mikayel Asori (12<sup>th</sup> century), who describe in detail Odznetsi's theological activity.<sup>2</sup>

However, we get the first detailed information about Odznetsi from Catholicos Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi who wrote “Armenian History” about two centuries later. The latter reported that Hovhan(nes) Odznetsi became Catholicos after Eghia Archishetsi (703-717).<sup>3</sup> After Draskhanakerttsi, one of the main sources regarding the life and activities of Hovhan Odznetsi is Kirakos Gandzaketsi's (1203-1271) “Armenian History”.<sup>4</sup> Another 13<sup>th</sup> century historian, Vardan Areveltsi, wrote a special work about Hovhan Odznetsi, called “A Speech on Hovhan Odznetsi”.<sup>5</sup> In this work Odznetsi is called Patriarch Hovhan *Udznetsi*.

In special studies Hovhan Odznetsi's folklore image was first thoroughly addressed by famous ethnographer Yervand Lalayan, who wrote down field folklore materials in Lori, Odznetsi's birthplace<sup>6</sup>. After Lalayan, in the Soviet period, folklorist Tamar Gevorgyan brought new versions of stories about Odznetsi in the general folklore collection on Lori.<sup>7</sup> They are most likely influenced by Y. Lalayan's versions.

Hovhan Odznetsi's folklore image was analysed in separate publications by Astghik Israyelyan, Lilit Simonyan and others.<sup>8</sup>

### Historical Context

The period preceding the reign of Hovhan Odznetsi was quite difficult for Armenia. The country had neither a king nor a unifying prince. At the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, Arab troops occupied Armenia and the capital of Dvin,

<sup>2</sup> See Papyan 1998: 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi 1996: 102-104.

<sup>4</sup> Kirakos Gandzaketsi 1961; 1982.

<sup>5</sup> Vardan Areveltsi 1888.

<sup>6</sup> Lalayan 1903.

<sup>7</sup> Gevorgyan 1999.

<sup>8</sup> Israyelyan 2001; Simonyan 2015; Dalalyan 2020.

creating the administrative unit of *Arminia* within the Arab Caliphate.<sup>9</sup> The province of Arminia included Armenia, Virk and Aghvank, and the Armenian Catholicos was recognized as its main political figure.<sup>10</sup> Unlike the patriarchs of Syria and Egypt, the Armenian Catholicos was considered first of all as political figure.<sup>11</sup> For this reason he was invited to the capital of the Arab Caliphate to meet with the caliph.

There is a certain disagreement in historiography around the person of the Arab caliph. Kirakos Gandzaketsi calls him *Heshm*, while Vardan Areveltsi calls him Umar (and Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi does not mention any name at all<sup>12</sup>). Thus, according to medieval Armenian historians, Hovhan Odznetsi's visit to Damascus took place either during the reign of Umayyad caliph Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz (717-720) or caliph Heshm/Hisham (724-743).<sup>13</sup> A. Ter-Ghevondyan was in favor of Caliph Umar II (717-720), considering that the visit would be improbable during Hisham's rule.<sup>14</sup>

Catholicos Hovhan Odznetsi managed to ally with Muslim Arabs and with their help to drive Chalcedonism out of Armenia: it was destroying the unity of the Armenian Church. This makes Odznetsi one of the most prominent spiritual figures of the early Middle Ages; his fame resounded not only in Armenia but also in the whole region. This is the reason why a separate epic poem was dedicated to Odznetsi, which has reached the present day both in writing and orally.

### **Odznetsi and the Illegal Child**

This episode is known only in the records from Lori<sup>15</sup> where it says that "Ohan Odznetsi" lived in Odzun and had a milkmaid who was a widow. It so happens that this woman gives birth to a son and people began to doubt Odznetsi. Odznetsi gets very insulted and on the eighth day of the child's birth served mass in the church, during which the child miraculously spoke and says that he is the son of shepherd Ohan. The people repent and fall at Odznetsi's feet, but the latter, nevertheless, puts a small curse on the people of Odzun, so that they never become too rich or too poor. And he leaves the village of Odzun, climbs Mount Ardvi and becomes a hermit. But since from there he sees Odzun every day, which reminds him of the unfair gossip of the villagers, he goes down to the gorge and founds the monastery of Ardvi. This episode is closely connected to the legend explaining the origin of the name of the village of Ardvi, in which also the main character is Hovhan Odznetsi<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Yeghiazaryan 2008.

<sup>10</sup> See Ter-Ghevondyan 1977: 73-74, 79-82; Miqaelyan 2004: 27-30.

<sup>11</sup> Ter-Ghevondyan 1965: 41.

<sup>12</sup> Just like Draskhanakerttsi, Stepanos Taronetsi Asoghik and Samuel Anetsi make no mention of the name of the Arab caliph (Ter-Ghevondyan 1977: 83, comm. 47).

<sup>13</sup> See Miqayelyan 2004: 27.

<sup>14</sup> Ter-Ghevondyan 1977: 83, comm. 47.

<sup>15</sup> Lalayan 1903: 217-218.

<sup>16</sup> Ephrikyan 1902: 283; cf. also Ghanalanyan 1969: 182 (№ 482).

### Odznetsi and the Pythons of Ardvi

To this day this episode was told as a legend which explains the emergence of the black layered rocky cliffs and the spring called “Snake Navel” not far from the village of Ardvi.<sup>17</sup> According to that legend, two huge pythons appear in the area between the village and the monastery, and they swallowed Odznetsi’s seven deacons one by one. Odznetsi curses the snakes, saying: “Abort the deacons, and turn into stones”. The curse is immediately fulfilled, and the pythons turned into black stone layers in the cliff. Iron water bursts out from the middle of them and it cures leprosy and other diseases. The same legend is briefly mentioned in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, in Kirakos Gandzaketsi’s work. Here, there is no mention of the seven deacons, but the fact that the spring water comes from the navel of one of the petrified pythons is mentioned more clearly<sup>18</sup>.

### Armenians and Byzantines

This episode tells how Odznetsi decides to go to the capital of the Arab caliphs, i.e. why the meeting with the caliph takes place. The reason for the decision lies in the conflict with the “Romans”. In old times the Byzantines or in general all the Chalcedonians were called *Romans* regardless of whether they were Greek or Armenian.

The key symbol of this episode is the wheat bread. In the Middle Ages, in order to emphasize national and ethnic differences, it was customary to characterize them with various components of identity, among which an important place was held by the diets and dishes of different peoples. The use of wheat and millet or barley was considered a significant difference between the *Romans* and Armenians, the first of which was typical of Armenians, and the second - of *Romans*. The latter, as it is told in the epic poem, exercised their dominant position and forbade Armenians to bake wheat bread.

A poor old woman begged a *Roman* miller to give her wheat bread for her only son who was dying. The miller made an indecent proposal to the woman. The poor woman, offended, went to Odznetsi and asked him for justice<sup>19</sup>. In Lori and Javakhk<sup>20</sup> it was told that Odznetsi did something and miraculously two (or three) loaves of bread appeared in the wall cupboard. He ordered the servant to give them to the woman. Thus, Odznetsi not only acted as a defender of justice and patron of the poor, but also opposed the *Romans*, and by his actions directly connected to wheat, the symbol of national identity.

### Handsome Look

Along with inner virtues, historians pay great attention to praising Hovhan Odznetsi’s appearance, starting with Draskhanakerttsi. There are significant miraculous elements in the description of Odznetsi’s features. This shows that two centuries after

<sup>17</sup> Lalayan 1903: 218-219.

<sup>18</sup> Kirakos Gandzaketsi 1961: 70; 1982, 61; cf. also Ghanalanyan 1969: 62 (№ 168 A).

<sup>19</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 83-84; Kajberuni 2003: 175.

<sup>20</sup> Lalayan 1903: 219-220; Lalayan 1983: 403-404; Lalayan 2004: 217.



Odznetsi's life his image was already fictionalized, and it is possible that Draskhanakerttsi referred to folk or church written sources. Similarly, when writing about Odznetsi, Gandzaketsi also used "church conversations or religious-and-folk stories". In the preface of the critical text of Kirakos Gandzaketsi's work, published with the diligence of famous Armenologist, philologist-folklorist Karapet Melik-Ohanjanyan, it is mentioned that Gandzaketsi greatly valued and used oral sources – folk tales, stories of eyewitnesses and earwitnesses<sup>21</sup>.

According to Draskhanakerttsi, under his outfit Odznetsi wore rough and unbearable sackcloth made of goat hair, not wool, which was called *tspsi*, while on the outside, he was adorned with an outfit made of fine colorful material. He sawed the gold, mixed it with fragrant incense and blew it on his grey beard which reached down to the pockets of his dress<sup>22</sup>. Vardan Areveltsi also praises Odznetsi's glorious appearance, but there is no mention of his golden beard. Instead, Odznetsi's cruciform sceptre is emphasized<sup>23</sup>.

According to a story recorded in Vayots Dzor in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, "Odznetsi had a golden beard, decorated outfit, under which he wore sackcloth"<sup>24</sup>. In general, in mythology gold was considered a symbol of heavenly supreme power, solar power and royal supremacy. This meaning of gold is manifested in Armenian, as well as Caucasian and other myths<sup>25</sup>. The component of gold in Odznetsi's image is not surprising, since at the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century the supreme power of Armenia, both political and spiritual, was concentrated in his hands.

In the Vayots Dzor story, Odznetsi's golden beard is mentioned for the second time during the soldiers' dedication ceremony. Here it plays a miraculous role, because when Odznetsi kisses the locks of hair on the heads of the skinhead soldiers, "in the middle of the lock of hair, touched by Odznetsi's lips, gold came out, from which originated the name *Kızılbaş*, i.e. golden-headed"<sup>26</sup>.

### Meeting with the Arab Caliph

In the epic poem about Odznetsi of great significance is his meeting with the caliph of the Arab Empire.

According to Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, Odznetsi was seen by an Armenian *ostikan* (governor) named Vlit<sup>27</sup>, who told the Arab emir about Odznetsi's grandeur and so the emir wanted to see him. According to the historian Vardan, the high-ranking Arab officials often took part in Armenian Church festivities, during which they repeatedly saw

<sup>21</sup> Kirakos Gandsaketsi 1961, 49, 51.

<sup>22</sup> Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi 1996: 104.

<sup>23</sup> Vardan Areveltsi 1888: 584-585.

<sup>24</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 84; Kajberuni 2003: 175.

<sup>25</sup> See Dalalyan 2002: 193, 206-207, note 90; Dalalyan 2008: 40-43.

<sup>26</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 85; Kajberuni 2003: 176.

<sup>27</sup> The name *Vlit* must have been a version of the Arabic name *Valid* (Ter-Ghevondyan 1977: 82).

Odznetsi and put in a good word for him with Emir Umar<sup>28</sup>. It was after this that Umar expressed a desire to see Odznetsi.

According to Draskhanakerttsi's story, Odznetsi was brought to the royal city with great honor, and the emir sent him a message telling him to dress ordinarily, so that he could see him like that. But Odznetsi went to see the emir adorning his tall figure with more shiny outfit, making his newly whitened beard look like a bouquet of golden flowers and holding in his hand the golden-painted scepter made of ebony wood<sup>29</sup>.

At first the Arab emir did not have a positive attitude towards Odznetsi's external splendor, but when he saw the rough sackcloth under his outfit, he honored Odznetsi, presented him with luxurious clothing, gave him gold and silver treasures and sent him to Armenia. Odznetsi lived for several years and died after having spent eleven years on the patriarchal seat<sup>30</sup>.

According to Gandzaketsi, Hovhan Odznetsi's modest behavior and words had such a great influence on Emir Heshm that the ruler honored and paid his respects to Odznetsi. He also guaranteed that Christians would be exempt from taxes and would be able to freely exercise their faith everywhere and no one would force them to renounce their faith. In return, the Armenian nation would submit to him politically. Heshm signed this agreement with his ring and sent Odznetsi back to Armenia with great gifts and troops. Then, with the help of the Arabs, the Armenian Catholicos persecuted and drove out all the Byzantines from Armenia, "both the overseers and the soldiers". Thanks to this he was able to effectively fight against Chalcedonism and re-establish the holidays established by Gregory the Illuminator<sup>31</sup>.

According to Vardan Areveltsi, Umar, trembling, astonished by Odznetsi's glorious appearance was able to come to his senses and asked Odznetsi a question only after a while. Then there took place almost the same dialogue that is described in the works of other historians. As a result, Odznetsi showed Umar the clothes he wore under after which Umar ordered to call all the sick ("deprived") in his troops, whom Hovhan Odznetsi healed on the spot. Umar promised to do anything Odznetsi pleased, like a son. At Odznetsi's request, Umar provided him with troops. With the help of Smbat Kyuropaghat and Arab regiments Odznetsi persecuted all the Byzantines "out of the Armenian world"<sup>32</sup>.

According to the version recorded in Lori, Odznetsi asks the caliph of Baghdad for help. When the latter sees the "clothes" with small nails under Odznetsi's outfit, a drop of blood falls on the caliph's blind eye, after which his eye immediately recovers. Then

---

<sup>28</sup> Vardan Areveltsi 1888: 584.

<sup>29</sup> Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi 1996: 105-107.

<sup>30</sup> Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi 1996: 106-107.

<sup>31</sup> Kirakos Gandzaketsi 1961: 67-69; 1982: 59-61.

<sup>32</sup> Vardan Areveltsi 1888: 585-586.

Odznetsi heals the caliph's leper hands. The delighted caliph promises to grant him any favor<sup>33</sup>.

In the Vayots Dzor version, "Hohan Odznetsi", seeing the sufferings of the Armenians from the Byzantines, goes to the city of Madinah to seek help from the Arab caliphs, with whom he was already acquainted<sup>34</sup>. In the story titled "Okhan Otsneli" known from the northwestern province of Bznunik of Lake Van, Otsneli is the leader of the Manazkert region, and his ally is Turkish *Mehmet*, who is later often referred to only as *Mamad*. According to the story, his residence is in Sham (Syria), although he is considered a Turk, not an Arab. Okhan Otsneli's opponent is the king of Urum, i.e. the emperor of Byzantium, and his name, *Costanos*, is mentioned several times<sup>35</sup>.

### **"Witchcraft paper"**

According to the Vayots Dzor story, the caliphs of Madinah consult and decide to give Odznetsi financial aid, not people. Odznetsi agrees and to determine the amount of money writes on a small piece of paper, and asks to give him money the weight of the paper. The consultants, seeing that, laugh out loud, surprised that Odznetsi intends to drive the *Romans* out of Armenia with money equal to the weight of a piece of paper. However, when they start weighing, the whole amount of the caliphs' treasury does not suffice, that is why they decide to provide manpower to Odznetsi. They impose the condition that Odznetsi should compensate the Arabs by giving them seven Armenians for each killed soldier. Odznetsi accepts this condition as well<sup>36</sup>. Approximately the same episode is told in the Lori story, where the caliph of Baghdad gives Odznetsi 500 soldiers<sup>37</sup>.

### **Odznetsi and His Troops on the Bridge**

The bridge and the river play a central role in the rituals of dedication. On the bridge, Hovhan Odznetsi manages to solve the tricky problem of not sacrificing seven Armenians. In the Vayots Dzor version, it is said that together with the Arab army, Odznetsi comes across a large river. He crosses the bridge and at the other end of it he prays to God and asks that the shadows of the soldiers who are to die or be killed should be reflected in the water of the river without their heads when they cross the bridge. God fulfills his wish and shows these soldiers without heads. Odznetsi picks them out and sends them back. And after crossing the bridge the soldiers of the rest of the army line up, and the Armenian army joins them. Here the dedication ritual of kissing the soldiers' heads takes place<sup>38</sup>. *The Lori version tells that Odznetsi returns*

<sup>33</sup> Lalayan 1903: 220; see also Ghanalanyan 1969: 305 (№ 773 D).

<sup>34</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 84.

<sup>35</sup> Okhan Otsneli 1898: 412-413.

<sup>36</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 84; 2003: 175-176.

<sup>37</sup> Lalayan 1903: 220; see also Ghanalanyan 1969: 305 (№ 773 D).

<sup>38</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 85; 2003: 176.

*200 headless soldiers to the caliph of Baghdad, and he sets off for Armenia with 300 soldiers. It is at this moment that a cruciform sword falls from the sky and Odznetsi ties it to his back*<sup>39</sup>.

### **Cruciform Sword**

From the mythological point of view, the motif of getting a celestial sword is one of the most interesting in the epic poem dedicated to Odznetsi. In that episode, Hovhan Odznetsi already plays the role of not only a religious but also a military figure; and according to mythological thinking he is endowed with the qualities of a thunder hero<sup>40</sup>. The motif of receiving a celestial “cruciform” sword in the Lori version clearly reminds of the concepts of Thunder Sword (Tur Ketsaki) and Cross War (Khach Paterazmi) in the epic poem “Daredevils of Sassoun”, as well as the folk stories about the Havluni Sword.

If in the Lori version the motif of the sword is very fleeting, the Vayots Dzor version addresses it in more detail. It says that *“when the Arab army was ready to come to Armenia, Odznetsi appointed a certain Ali as the commander of that army. Ali was a hefty, strong man with fierce red eyes. Odznetsi takes the sword, blesses it with the sign of the cross, and as a sign of the cross, has a cruciform copper piece built and puts it on the head of the sword. Odznetsi ties the sword to Commander Ali’s back with his holy hand and they set off for Armenia together”*<sup>41</sup>.

The army led by Hovhan Odznetsi, without losing a single person, persecutes and drives out all the Byzantines, *Romans* from Armenia. After that Odznetsi personally takes the troops to Madinah, gives them back to the caliphs and returns to Armenia.

In Haykuni’s version as well the motif of the sword is fleeting. It tells the story of how Turkish Mamad conquered the world with the sword anointed by Okhan Otsneli (which is why he is called Otsneli - Anointed), got to Istanbul and defeated King Costanos, who was beheaded by Mamad’s servant (Arab). The story ends with the following *“All of them remained under Turkish rule”*<sup>42</sup>. It is obvious that the second part of this version was adapted to the historical realities formed much later than the times of Odznetsi.

### **Boiling in Saucepan**

This episode tells the story of Odznetsi’s revenge against Roman priests. Thus, arriving in Armenia Hovhan Odznetsi’s joint Arab-Armenian army persecutes all the *Romans* and drives them out of its borders. According to the Vayots Dzor story, Odznetsi orders to catch their bishops and patriarchs and boil them in a saucepan<sup>43</sup>. In the Vayots Dzor story this episode is presented briefly, in just one sentence, while the Lori story reveals its details.

<sup>39</sup> Lalayan 1903: 220-221.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. also Israelyan 2001: 77.

<sup>41</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 84; 2003: 176.

<sup>42</sup> Okhan Otsneli 1898: 414.

<sup>43</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 85; 2003: 176.

According to the version written in Lori, the Greek patriarch was the first to threaten to put Odznetsi into boiling water. As a result, Odznetsi makes the Greek patriarch boil his hand in water. Odznetsi makes the sign of the cross over the water, puts the cross into the water and takes it out without hurting himself. The Greek patriarch, following Odznetsi, puts his hand into the water, but it immediately gets boiled. "This will do as a punishment for you", - says Odznetsi and releases him<sup>44</sup>.

### **Odznetsi and Vasil**

Acting with "*Witchcraft paper*", i.e. with the power of prayer, can be considered one of the most characteristic features of Odznetsi's image. A similar folk story was recorded near the village of Odzun in Lori. It tells that the Byzantine Commander Vasil marched to Armenia with a large army to massacre the Armenians. Odznetsi gives a written note to the sick Vasil, who swallows it with water and is cured. After that, Vasil sends his army back, and he secludes himself in Surb Nshan monastery and leads an ascetic life. One day Odznetsi visits him and by the miracle Odznetsi performs, the spring of Tndots starts flowing from the cave, and its water cures diseases<sup>45</sup>.

### **The Points of the Armenian-Arab Treaty**

According to the Vayots Dzor story, Odznetsi signs a treaty of mutual friendship with the Arabs. According to that treaty, every Armenian had to pay the caliph an annual tax "now equal to twelve coins". In their turn, when Arabs came across any sleeping Armenian they had to stop and cast a shadow on the Armenian to protect him against the rays of the sun with the hem of their clothes until he woke up. In return, every Armenian, coming across an Arab on his way had to get out of the way and give way to him in honor of the Arab race. "*This is how Arabs and Armenians became friends*", - with this Kajberuni's narrator ends the Vayots Dzor story<sup>46</sup>.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Gevorgyan T.** 1999. Lori (Tashirq-Dzoraget), Armenian Ethnography and Folklore (Materials and studies), vol. 20, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Dalalyan T.** 2002. On the Origins of the Person of Armenian epic Queen Satenik, Patmabanasirakan handes 2002/2, 191-213 (in Arm.).

**Dalalyan T.** 2008. The First "branch" of the epic "Vipasank" and the origin of Heroic Clan "Gift from Heaven". Myth, ritual, history (Studies in Honour of Sargis Harutyunyan on his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday)(ed. A.E.Petrosyan), Yerevan, 19-50 (in Arm.).

**Dalalyan T.** 2020. Comparative analyses of Hovhan Odznetsi's epic image, Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri, 2020/2 (659), 306-323 (in Arm.).

<sup>44</sup> Lalayan 1903: 221; cf. Ghanalanyan 1969: 269-270 (№ 722).

<sup>45</sup> Lalayan 1903: 222; 2004: 218; cf. also Ghanalanyan 1969: 104 (№ 281).

<sup>46</sup> Kajberuni 1881: 85; Kajberuni 2003: 176.

- Yeghiazaryan A.** 2008. On the Arab conquest of Armenia, Bulletin of Yerevan State University 1 (124), 157-164 (in Arm.).
- Ephrikyan H.S.** 1902. Illustrated Armenian geographic dictionary (A-B), vol. I, Venice (in Arm.).
- Israelyan A.** 2001. S. Hovhannes Odzneci in popular tradition, in Armenian Saints and Sanctuaries. origins, types, worship (ed. S.B.Harutyunyan, A.A.Kalantaryan), Yerevan, 71-78 (in Arm.).
- Lalayan Ye.A.** 1903. Borchalu region, Ethnographic Journal X, Tiflis, 113-268 (in Arm.).
- Lalayan Ye.A.** 1983. Studies, vol.1, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Lalayan Ye.A.** 2004. Studies, vol.3, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Kirakos Gandzaketsi** 1961. History of Armenia (edited by K.A. Melik-Ohanjanyan), Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Kirakos Gandzaketsi** 1982. History of Armenia (edited by V. Arakelyan), Yerevan, 1982 (in Arm.).
- Ghanalanyan A.T.** 1969. Avandapatum, Yerevan (in Arm.).
- Miqayelyan T.** 2004. Hovhan Odznetsi and Arabs (mid-VIII century), Catholicos Saint Hovhan Odznetsi and his time. June 3-5, 2003, Haghpap monastery (Materials of conference), Holy Etsmiatsin (edited by Azat Bozoyan), Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. "Garegin A" Armenological-theological center, 27-35 (in Arm.).
- Hovhannes Draskhanaterts** 1996, History of Armenia of Catholicos Hovhannes (edited by G.B.Tosunyan), Yerevan, 1996 (in Arm.).
- Papayan M.** 1998. Hovhan Philosopher Odznetsi. life and deeds, Yerevan, 1998 (in Arm.).
- Vardan Areveltsi** 1888. A speech about Hohan Otsneci by the request of bishop Hamazasp of Haghat, Vagharshapat, 1888, №10, 580-593 (in Arm.).
- Ter-Ghevondyan A.** 1965. Arab Emirates in Bagratid Armenia, Yerevan, 1965 (in Arm.).
- Kajberuni (Gabriel Ter-Hovhannisyan)** 1881. Travel notes, Ports. National and literary monthly journal, 5<sup>th</sup> year, April, № 4, Tiflis, 1881, 79-92 (in Arm.).
- Kajberuni (Gabriel Ter-Hovhannisyan)** 2003. Travel notes (edited by A.Kalantaryan, G.Sargsyan, H.Melkonyan), Yerevan, 2003 (in Arm.).
- Okhan Otsneli** 1898. Recorded by S.Haykuni, told by Arevshat (Saribek) of Qirs from the village Prhus of Khat, Ararat, Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin publishing house, 1898, N.9 (September), 32<sup>nd</sup> year, 412-414 (in Arm.).
- Simonyan L.** 2015. Popular cult of Hovhan Odznetsi, Countries and Peoples of the East, vol. XXXVI. Religions in the East (eds. I.F.Popova, T.D.Skrinnikova), Eastern Commission of the Russian geographic Society, Moscow, 362-377 (in Russian).
- Ter-Ghevondyan A.** 1977. Armenia and Arab Khaliphate, Yerevan (in Russian).

*Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan*

---

# POLITICAL SCIENCES AND INFORMATIONAL SECURITY

---

## ARMENIA – IRAQ: BUILDING RELATIONS IN REGIONAL TURMOIL<sup>1</sup>

**Mushegh Ghahriyan**

*PhD, Institute of Oriental Studies, RA*

### **Abstract**

Iraq is the closest Arab country to Armenia. From Agarak, the southernmost city of Armenia, to Haji Umran in Iraq is around 400 kilometers. In the recent decade, the relations between Armenia and Iraq are developing quite intensely, involving various fields of cooperation. This article is an attempt to discuss the relations between the two countries since the independence of the Republic of Armenia declared in 1991. In this study, I argue that Armenia-Iraq relations have been greatly affected by the regional situation in and around Iraq. This paper also represents how Iraq has become one of the largest trade partners of Armenia.

**Keywords:** Armenia, Iraq, KRG, trade, the US invasion, bilateral relations

### **The political situation in the Middle East and South Caucasus in the 1990s**

The collapse of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of new political realities in different regions of Eurasia. Armenia was one of the republics of the Soviet Union, and for the latter Iraq was an ally in the Middle East. Another thing connecting the two countries was the Armenian community of Iraq reaching up to 20.000 according to different estimates. The war between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988) severely affected the Armenians living in both countries and forced thousands of them to emigrate.<sup>2</sup>

In the Iran-Iraqi war, more than 17.000 Armenians were conscripted into both armies. On Iran's side, about 260 Armenians<sup>3</sup> fell on the battlefield and tens of soldiers of Armenian origin lost their lives fighting for Iraq.

When Armenia declared its independence in 1991, Iraq had already finished the enduring and devastating war with Iran and unleashed a new military campaign against neighboring Kuwait. Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, and the international coalition led by the US liberated Kuwait's territory and attacked Iraq in 1991. Although the war was limited and did not lead to the overthrowing of the ruling regime in Baghdad, it was a huge military, political and economic blow for Iraq, and the coalition levied a high price on the Iraqi state. Subsequently, no-fly zones and harsh economic blockade imposed on Iraq significantly weakened the capabilities of Saddam Hussein's regime.

---

<sup>1</sup> This work was supported by the RA MES Science Committee, in the frames of the research project №19YR-6F060.

<sup>2</sup> Pashayan A., The Iraqi-Armenian community faces new challenges, 05.03.2007, [http://www.noravank.am/arm/issues/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2385](http://www.noravank.am/arm/issues/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2385)

<sup>3</sup> The Iran-Iraq war and the Armenians, 19.10.2020, <https://bit.ly/36Emuzf>, Baiburtian 2013:



In the beginning of the 1990s, Armenia was involved in a years-long war with Azerbaijan over the Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) problem. The war ended in 1994, with Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh as the victorious side. In this period, the establishment of diplomatic and economic relations was not a priority for both countries; however, the search for new partners could have crossed the interests of the two countries.

### **Armenia-Iraq relations in the 1990s**

The political and military situation around Iraq in the beginning of the 1990s largely determined the relations between Armenia and Iraq. The Republic of Armenia was interested in establishing relations with Arab countries after declaring its independence. However, the Armenian government refrained from doing so with Iraq because of the international sanctions imposed on Iraq that followed the Iraqi invasion into Kuwait in 1990, as well as the strained relations between Iran and Iraq. Armenia synchronized its position towards Iraq with its partners and the key actors of the international community. Yerevan voted in favor of the UN resolutions related to Iraq.

In 1992, the government of the Republic of Armenia announced its position on the crisis in the Gulf. "Armenia, as a member of the UN, believes that the UN has shown common sense and flexibility in the issue of establishing the borders of the State of Kuwait, and based on the principle of peaceful coexistence of peoples and states, has made a fair decision taking into account the sovereign rights of the State of Kuwait and the freedom-loving aspirations of the Kuwaiti people," the statement said.<sup>4</sup>

In another statement, the Armenian Foreign Ministry called on Iraq to adhere to the decisions of the Iraq-Kuwait Demarcation Commission and UN Security Council resolutions 773 of 1992 and 833 of 1993. At this stage, Armenia has repeatedly rejected Iraq's offers to secretly establish diplomatic relations and receive oil aid.<sup>5</sup>

The partial easing of international tension over Iraq in the second half of the 1990s, a certain improvement in Iran-Iraq relations, allowed Armenia to act more boldly in the direction of Iraq. Armenian companies tried to participate in the Oil for Food program, acting as a company selling Iraqi oil, which was under sanctions. The Armenian side also started to send official delegations to Baghdad to discuss the possibilities of promoting economic ties. Armenia also refused to broadcast Radio Free Asia, taking into consideration that it could harm future relations with Iraq and negatively impact on the Armenian communities in the Arab countries.<sup>6</sup>

Armenia and Iraq established diplomatic relations in 2000. In the same year, Armenia opened its embassy in Baghdad, and Iraq opened its embassy in Yerevan in 2001. Because of war in 2003, both embassies ceased to operate. In economic terms, Armenia was interested in constructing energy facilities, planning and building hydro stations, selling electrical engines, transformers and other equipment.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The History-Diplomatic Archive of the MFA of the RA, Case 275, list I, p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> The History-Diplomatic Archive of the MFA of the RA, Case 275, list I, p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> The History-Diplomatic Archive of the MFA of the RA, Case 122, list VIII, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Case 122, list VIII, p. 85.

In 2001, the foreign minister of Armenia visited Baghdad where the Iraqi side highlighted its willingness to deepen relations with Armenia, create opportunities for economic cooperation and sign contacts with Armenian companies.<sup>8</sup>

In 2000, for the first time, Robert Kocharyan, the President of Armenia, congratulated Saddam Hussein on the occasion of the Iraqi revolution of 1968.<sup>9</sup> To promote relations with Baghdad the Armenian parliamentarians, members of the Armenia-Iraq friendship group in the National Assembly of Armenia visited Baghdad.

Following the developments around Iraq, as well as its foreign policy goal to deepen relations with the Arab countries, the Armenian government made cautious attempts to adjust its policy towards Iraq. Armenia could have benefited from the economic cooperation with Iraq. However, the attempts at developing ties stopped because of a new wave of tension around Iraq and the US led invasion in 2003.

### **Armenia's position on Iraqi invasion**

Before the invasion into Iraq, the United States was trying to build a broad alliance supporting its initiation. The decision of invasion caused deep controversies even in the frame of NATO. Many countries, including Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, had to choose to what extent to participate or to support the US or reject Washington's plans. The countries of the South Caucasus had different attitudes.

While Georgia supported the policy of the United States, Azerbaijan took a somewhat limited position, and Armenia took a wait-and-see attitude<sup>10</sup>. Russia and Iran were against the war, and the Turkish parliament rejected the United States for using its territory for the military campaign. On March 19, the Department of State of the US announced that Georgia and Azerbaijan are members of the "coalition of volunteers" consisting of 30 states united in the struggle against Saddam Hussein. On March 20, 2003, Eduard Shevardnadze, then president of Georgia said that if necessary, the military airports and infrastructure would be available for the US Army<sup>11</sup>.

Armenia did not express any support for the US military intervention in Iraq, in contrast to neighboring Georgia and Azerbaijan. However, after the war, Armenia sent a military contingent to Iraq. Armenia's neutrality before and during the war is explained by the existence of numerous Armenians living in Iraq and the fear that any verbal support may put at risk their safety. The second reason was the stance of its key ally, Russia, and partners in the European Union, France and Germany, which overtly opposed and did not support the military intervention.

To balance its position and support its Western partners Armenia decided to participate in post-war peacekeeping and humanitarian operations in the country under

---

<sup>8</sup> Case 122, list VIII, p. 94.

<sup>9</sup> Case 122, list VIII, p. 46.

<sup>10</sup> Iraq and the Caucasus, 3.06.2003, <https://www.golosameriki.com/a/a-33-a-2003-06-03-6-1/656972.html>

<sup>11</sup> Caucasus excited by Washington's operation against Iraq, 26.03.2003, <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/35495/>

the Polish command. In September 2004, the presidents of Poland and Armenia agreed that Armenian troops could serve with the Polish contingent in Iraq to carry out humanitarian work. The Armenian parliament approved the planned deployment, and 46 personnel left for Iraq in January 2005. Armenia's troops pulled out of Iraq in late 2008.<sup>12</sup>

In 2001, Armenia signed a memorandum of understanding with the UN on joining the peacekeeping system.<sup>13</sup> Armenia's participation in the UN peacekeeping and humanitarian mission commenced in 2005 in Iraq. Later Armenia deployed its servicemen in Lebanon and Syria, as well.

On December 24, 2004, the RA National Assembly passed a decision "On the Management of a Multinational Division in the Iraqi Stabilization Forces." The Armenian contingent was under the command of the Polish-led Center-South Multinational (KGB) Division and was stationed in the town of Al-Diwaniya in the state of Wasit. On January 18, 2005, the first contingent left for Iraq (46 servicemen). The main tasks of the Armenian contingent were to provide support to the divisions' units, to transport humanitarian aid, to escort convoys, to patrol, to carry out demining and engineering reconnaissance operations, to provide medical assistance to the division's personnel and to the Iraqi civilian population.<sup>14</sup>

Defense Minister Serzh Sargsyan said that Armenia would make some reservations, in particular, about the participation of the Armenian Armed Forces only in defense and humanitarian operations, as well as the inadmissibility of joint tasks with the Azerbaijani Armed Forces in Iraq.<sup>15</sup>

Speaking about Armenia's motivation to send troops to Iraq, Sargsyan, in another statement, said. "If we support the fight against international terrorism, then we must not only approach the issue from the consumer's point of view, but also make our contribution. Iraq is not far from our borders, and that fact does not allow us to remain an observer."<sup>16</sup> The Armenian military assured that peacekeepers were sent to Iraq as part of the global fight against terrorism as the problem is a global one and if Armenia stayed away, it may be affected by it, too.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests, 11.03.2010, <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL30679.html>

<sup>13</sup> In 2001, Armenia signed a memorandum of understanding with the UN on joining the peacekeeping system. The RA Armed Forces have been carrying out an international peacekeeping mission since February 2004, when a 34-member contingent of Armenian peacekeepers left for Kosovo to carry out a peacekeeping mission as part of a Greek unit. Armenia's participation in the NATO peacekeeping mission in Kosovo continues to this day: every year about 70 Armenian peacekeepers carry out their mission in Kosovo.

<sup>14</sup> Peacekeeping missions, <https://mil.am/en/pages/37>

<sup>15</sup> Today, President Kocharian presented a memorandum on the deployment of Armenian troops in Iraq to the National Assembly, 10.12.2004, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/1575017.html>

<sup>16</sup> Iraqi puzzle, 16.10.2004, <https://a1plus.am/hy/article/7541>

<sup>17</sup> Armenia To Rotate Troops In Iraq, 8.07.2005, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/1577645.html>

Public opinion was against participating in that mission. According to polls, those against participation prevailed over those in favor<sup>18</sup>. Several opposition parties in Armenia, as well as in Russian media also criticized this decision.<sup>19</sup>

The issue triggered debates in parliament, where Serzh Sargsyan said that Armenia's participation in the stabilization process in Iraq, in addition to the country's direct interest in strengthening the security climate and stabilization there, provides a good opportunity to participate in these processes and to neutralize possible developments that run counter to Armenia's national state interests.

Besides, Azerbaijan with 151 servicemen and Georgia with 864 military personnel were also actively participating in the mission in Iraq. Moreover, unlike Armenia, both Georgian and Azerbaijani subdivisions carried out direct military functions. In this context, Armenia's full neutrality may have had a negative impact on some important areas of military cooperation with the NATO countries.<sup>20</sup>

From January 18, 2005 until the end of the mission, 368 Armenian servicemen were sent to Iraq. Overall, Armenia sent eight contingents to Iraq, and the last unit was withdrawn from Iraq in November 2009.<sup>21</sup>

It is obvious that in its attitude towards the Iraqi problem, Armenia had to balance between its ally, Russia, which was against the military operation, and the US and NATO with whom Armenia was seeking closer partnership. In addition, Armenia had to consider the policies of its neighboring countries, Georgia and Azerbaijan, to adjust its stance on the issue. Armenia was navigating to find a solution, which would not have strained relations with major powers. Thus, the Armenian government decided to send a contingent to Iraq but limited the scope of its mission and the number of servicemen compared to its neighboring countries.

### **Building Armenia - Iraq relations: the second attempt**

The relations with the Arab countries are significant for Armenia, as the processes in the turbulent Middle East region directly influence the South Caucasus too, first, because of its geographical proximity. The security problems emerging from the Middle East are of great concern to Armenia.

While the 1990s was the period of establishing relations with the Arab countries, since 2000's Armenia has paid more attention to those relations, especially with the countries of the Gulf region due to their economic capabilities. This trend has become more obvious since 2010's as Armenia has initiated to develop more intense relations, opened embassies in several Arab countries of the Gulf, and the high-ranking officials of Armenia have regularly visited the states of the region seeking to boost trade and bring investments.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Script N85, 5.12.2006, <https://bit.ly/3xGEAg3>

<sup>21</sup> Peacekeeping missions, <https://mil.am/en/pages/37>

<sup>22</sup> About the visits of the Armenian officials see the website of the MFA of Armenia.

The stabilization of the political situation in Iraq and the latter's improved relations with Iran and the US enhanced the development of the relationships between Armenia and Iraq as many of the limitations hindering those relations weakened. This circumstance immediately had a positive impact on the Armenian-Iraqi relations.

The Iraqi war put an end to the rule of Saddam Hussein, and a provisional administration was established in the country. In 2005, Iraq adopted its new constitution, elected its first postwar parliament and formed a new government. After the toppling of the previous regime, economic sanctions against Iraq were lifted and it opened opportunities for the development of relations between Armenia and Iraq. The war drastically changed the balance of power inside the country, as Shia factions have become the predominant force in the country, Sunnis have lost their privileged positions and the Kurds made enormous gains enlarging their autonomy in the north of the country and the presence in the central government.

During the war and first post-war years, the bilateral relations between Armenia and Iraq were interrupted because of foreign occupation of the country, civil war and political instability. When the situation in Iraq was relatively stabilized the contacts between the two countries resumed.

The period of Armenian-Iraqi rapprochement coincided with the short period of political stability in Iraq and high prices of oil (2010-2013) which ensured unprecedented incomes for the budgets of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Armenia's primary interest in Iraq was economic, as Iraq was a net importer of many goods, and the Armenian companies could export their products to Iraq.

The economic interests, in their turn, promoted the political agenda, including political consultations, opening consulate general in Erbil, military cooperation.

To resume the relations, Armenia reopened its embassy in Baghdad in 2010 and in 2012, Iraq responded similarly reopening its embassy in Yerevan.<sup>23</sup> In 2012 and 2013, Armenia and Iraq signed several agreements on encouraging and protecting investments, and on economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation. In 2012, Armenia sent a delegation to Baghdad headed by the vice prime minister to discuss the cooperation between the two countries. The foreign minister of Iraq, Hoshiar Zebari informed that Iraq had made a decision to deepen political and economic relations with Armenia and there were all the necessary conditions contributing to it.<sup>24</sup> The first session of the Armenian-Iraqi intergovernmental commission took place in Baghdad in 2012 and the second session was held in Yerevan the following year. At the end of 2013, the foreign minister of Iraq, Hoshiar Zebari, visited Yerevan, and after several months, his Armenian counterpart, Edward Nalbandyan, arrived in Baghdad. These visits aimed at enhancing economic cooperation in various fields such as agriculture,

---

<sup>23</sup> Bilateral Relations, Iraq, <https://www.mfa.am/en/bilateral-relations/iq>

<sup>24</sup> Iraq has a position to deepen political and economic relations with Armenia, Iraqi Foreign Ministry, 8.11.2012, <https://armenpress.am/arm/news/698784>

tourism, civil aviation, construction and facilitating visa regimes. For its part, Armenia allowed the citizens of Iraq to visit Armenia without a special invitation.

In 2016, the third session of the Armenian-Iraqi joint intergovernmental commission kicked off in Baghdad, co-chaired by RA Minister of Territorial Administration Armen Yeritsyan and Iraqi Minister of Agriculture Falah Zeydan.<sup>25</sup> In 2017, the fourth session took place in Yerevan.

On February 22, 2021, political-diplomatic consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Iraq took place in Baghdad, chaired by Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Artak Apitonian and Senior Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry of Iraq Nizar Al-Khairallah.<sup>26</sup>

The Armenian-Iraqi cooperation also includes military aspects. However, it is limited within meetings between the officials of the defence ministries of the two countries. In November 2013, the representative of the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Iraq, Air Force General Nadeem Al-Ajvadi, visited Yerevan and discussed matters related to future prospects of cooperation in the field of defence between the two countries in areas such as military education, training, military industry and Air Force.<sup>27</sup>

Another visit took place in 2021. RA Minister of Defence Vagharshak Harutyunyan and Minister of Defence of the Republic of Iraq Jumaa Inad Saadun Khattab signed an agreement of intents for cooperation in the defense sphere that identified 13 areas of cooperation of mutual interest. The document also envisaged the preparation and signing of a Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Iraq.<sup>28</sup> Two ministers discussed possible cooperation in exchange of experience, regular military-political consultations, military-technical cooperation.<sup>29</sup> Iraqi delegation also was acquainted with Armenia's military-industrial complex. The companies of the military-industrial complex demonstrated the capabilities of Armenian weapons.<sup>30</sup>

The geographical closeness of Armenia and Iraq and open borders with Iran facilitated the trade between the two countries.<sup>31</sup> As soon as Iraq relatively restored internal stability, the trade between the two states rapidly expanded. For instance,

<sup>25</sup> Economic-humanitarian cooperation issues on agenda of Armenian-Iraqi intergovernmental commission, 26.01.2016, <https://parstoday.com/hy/news/armenia-il279>

<sup>26</sup> Armenian-Iraqi political consultations, 23.02.2021, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/02/23/arm-iq/10806>

<sup>27</sup> Future prospects of cooperation in the field of defence discussed, 9.11.2013, <https://mil.am/en/news/2905>.

<sup>28</sup> The delegation led by the Iraqi Minister of Defence is on an official visit to Armenia, 25.03.2021, <https://mil.am/hy/news/9133>

<sup>29</sup> Armenia, Iraq seek to deepen defense cooperation, 25.03.2021, <https://en.armradio.am/2021/03/25/armenia-iraq-seek-to-deepen-defense-cooperation/>

<sup>30</sup> HTI Minister received the delegation led by the Minister of Defense of Iraq, 25.03.2021, [https://hti.am/pages.php?lang=3&page\\_id=1&id=7656&page\\_name=news](https://hti.am/pages.php?lang=3&page_id=1&id=7656&page_name=news)

<sup>31</sup> On the contrary, Armenia's trade relations with Syria and Lebanon were negatively affected because of the Armenia - Turkey closed border.

according to official data, from 2007 to 2010 trade between the two countries barely reached 0.7 million USD. In 2011, trade volumes sharply increased reaching 20 million USD.<sup>32</sup>

Armenia's economic interests in Iraq included the exports of its food and tobacco products and imports of crude oil and oil products. Armenia with an overall large negative balance in foreign trade has a positive trade balance with Iraq.

In 2013, Armenia exported goods worth 48.5 million USD to Iraq; the import was 30 million USD. In 2019, Armenia's exports to Iraq reached its highest point, 177 million USD. Thus, Iraq has become one of the main trade partners of Armenia. Armenia exports to Iraq mainly tobacco, beverages and potatoes, instead importing oil products, oil gases and hydrocarbons.<sup>33</sup>

Iraq was interested in imports of agricultural products and electricity.<sup>34</sup> As Armenia has been implementing projects with Iran, including gas for electricity exchange and high voltage line construction and taking into consideration electricity shortages in Iraq, the cooperation in this field seemed realistic. With its nuclear power plant and hydroenergy facilities Armenia could have been a cheap market for electricity importing. An Iraqi official visiting Armenia announced that the Iraqi market was open for the investors from Armenia, outlining that Iraq needed investments in infrastructure, energy and healthcare.<sup>35</sup> Armenia also offered its capabilities in the IT sector and sharing its experience in introducing e-government and digital technologies.<sup>36</sup>

As of 2012 Armenia imported from Iraq 10 percent of its oil products, however Armenia's announcement of participation in Eurasian Economic Union and privileges given to Russian oil and gas companies led to reduction of oil imports from Iraq. As a result, the imports from Iraq drastically decreased from 28 million USD in 2013 to 270 thousand USD in 2017.

	Exports from Armenia to Iraq (thousand USD)	Imports from Iraq to Armenia (thousand USD)
2013	48473.3	28341.1
2014	35310.9	16032.1
2015	130691.9	1699.1

<sup>32</sup> Data available at the official website of the Statistical Committee of Armenia, <https://bit.ly/3iFTvHk>

<sup>33</sup> Baghdad-Yerevan-Erbil: A Commercial or Political Route? 26.02.2015, <https://hetq.am/hy/article/58739>

<sup>34</sup> Armenian-Iraqi economic cooperation prospects discussed 26.09.2017, <https://www.gov.am/am/news/item/13175/>

<sup>35</sup> Iraq opens its market to Armenian investors, 6.09.2012, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/24700309.html>

<sup>36</sup> Issues related to the development of Armenian-Iraqi economic relations were discussed, 26.09.2017, <https://www.gov.am/am/news/item/13907/>

2016	137895.9	147.5
2017	117239.7	201.9
2018	131 154.2	4 113.2

Among other Arab countries, these numbers of trade are comparable only to the trade turnover with the United Arab Emirates with the difference that Armenia imports from the UAE significantly more than exports. With other Arab countries, trade volumes are insignificant.<sup>37</sup> As of 2020, Iraq is the fourth largest export market for Armenian goods with a 6.7% share, behind Russia, Switzerland and China.

To enhance contacts between the two countries, Armenia and Iraq initiated direct flights between the two countries. In 2015, Iraq Airways announced its first flight from Baghdad to Yerevan with a stop in Erbil. The Iraqi minister of transport arrived in Yerevan on the occasion of the first flight. Later, Armenian Air Company also launched flights to Erbil.

### **The cooperation with Iraqi Kurdistan**

On February 24, 2021, Armenia became the first country of the South Caucasus to open its consulate general in Erbil.<sup>38</sup> The Armenian government formally decided to open its diplomatic mission in Erbil in March 2017 after the Armenian foreign minister Edward Nalbandyan held talks with Massoud Barzani, the Iraqi Kurdish president at the time. However, because of the confrontation between Baghdad and Erbil Armenia temporarily refrained from opening its consulate. The normalization between Baghdad and Erbil later facilitated the resuming of contacts between Armenia and the Kurdistan region.

The Iraqi constitution of 2005 granted large autonomy and privileges to the Kurdistan Regional Government. The weakness of the central government allowed the Kurds to enlarge their territory towards the south, including Kirkuk. Due to the growing capabilities, the Kurdish government pretended for more independence in foreign trade and relations. The KRG opened its diplomatic representations in a number of countries and many countries have opened consulates in Erbil. The war with ISIS further strengthened the role of the Kurds in the region. In 2017, the Kurdish authorities initiated a referendum for independence. Iraq and the international community denied it. As a result, the Kurds lost control over large territories.

<sup>37</sup> Data available at the official website of the Statistical Committee of Armenia.

<sup>38</sup> Opening of the Consulate General of the Republic of Armenia in Erbil, 24.02.2021, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/02/24/cons\\_erb/10810](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/02/24/cons_erb/10810)



KRG's expectations from the relations with Armenia seems obvious: in its aspirations to become an independent state, the Kurds seek international legitimacy and support from other countries. Armenia's interests in the Kurdish region relate to trade and the Armenian community. Erbil offers certain economic opportunities, as it has its own rich resources. That is why the Armenian political presence there could facilitate exchanges between Armenian industries and service sectors.<sup>39</sup>

The wars in Iraq and instability caused the exodus of Armenians from the country and few of them settled in the Kurdish region. Armenians living in the Kurdish region have their representative in the regional parliament and the Armenian language is one of the official languages of the region.

In terms of the relations with the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Republic of Armenia has not played a separate game, as the central government of Iraq claims that the foreign affairs are within its exceptional competence. However, it did not prevent official contacts between the sides, the Armenian and the KRG officials have regularly met and discussed the possibilities of enlarging the relationships.

Armenia has been advocating the principle of self-determination of the nations over the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, and Iraq has been struggling for its territorial integrity denying the emergence of an independent Kurdish state in its territory. Both countries maintain neutrality in each other's affairs, Armenia has not supported the Kurdish bid for independence and Iraq has not announced an emphasized pro-Azerbaijani stance. Notwithstanding the fact that in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Iraq votes in favor of the resolutions submitted by Azerbaijan, it does not address the issue beyond the frames of this organization.

With regard to the Kurdish referendum in 2017 and confrontation between Baghdad and the KRG, the MFA of Armenia expressed its hope that the authorities of Iraq and KRG would avoid the tensions and find an opportunity to solve the problems.<sup>40</sup> In sum, the above-mentioned issues have not had any significant impact on bilateral relations.

In 2012, the Chairman of the Commission on Armenian-Iraqi intergovernmental Economic cooperation Armen Gevorgyan met with Massoud Barzani, President of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The President of Kurdistan said that such mutual visits would promote the development of relations and highlighted that Iraqi Kurdistan was interested in the establishment of deep and strong relations with Armenia. According to Massoud Barzani, Armenian and Kurdish nations had a historical friendship and that one of the main factors of it was the Armenian community.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Gadarigian H., Armenia and Iraqi Kurdistan: Why Doesn't Yerevan Have Diplomatic Representation in Erbil? 4.11.2014, <https://hetq.am/en/article/57174>

<sup>40</sup> The RA Foreign Minister spoke about the referendum held in Iraqi Kurdistan, 27.09.2017, [http://ftp.arka.am/am/news/politics/hh\\_ag\\_nakhararn\\_artahaytvel\\_e/](http://ftp.arka.am/am/news/politics/hh_ag_nakhararn_artahaytvel_e/)

<sup>41</sup> Iraqi Kurdistan is interested in the establishment of active cooperation with Armenia. Massoud Barzani, 8.11.2012, <https://armenpress.am/arm/news/698884/iraqi-kurdistan-is-interested-in-the-establishment-of-active-cooperation-with-armenia-massoud-barzani.html>

In 2018, the prime ministers of Armenia and the Iraqi Kurdistan region met in Switzerland to discuss ways of reviving bilateral commercial ties complicated by Kurdish independence referendum.<sup>42</sup> According to the government statement, Karen Karapetyan and Nechirvan Barzani also discussed the resumption of weekly flights between Yerevan and Erbil. The flights were suspended in September 2017, following the Iraqi government's decision to close Iraqi Kurdistan's airspace to foreign airlines in retaliation for the independence referendum.<sup>43</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the Kurdish region is the main consumer of the Armenian products exported to Iraq<sup>44</sup> (however, no reliable data exists). Besides the food and tobacco products, Armenia also supplies internet connection to Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>45</sup>

## Conclusion

It is hard to find a research or policy analysis addressing the history of the relations between Armenia and Iraq notwithstanding the fact that the developments in and around Iraq have this or other way affected Armenia. This paper is an attempt to represent how these relations were influenced by the politics of regional and major powers and Armenia's political and economic interests in Iraq. Generally, the relations of Iraq and Armenia have been largely dependent on the political situation around Iraq. In the 1990s, Armenia refrained from developing relations with Iraq because of the sanctions against Iraq. Despite Armenia did not support the US invasion to Iraq, later it participated in the postwar international peacekeeping mission justifying it by the will to fight against terrorism. While building its relations with Iraq Armenia had to carefully weigh the attitudes of its allies and partner countries and maintain balance between them. In the 2010s, the relations between Armenia and Iraq started to develop due to favorable situation in the regions. In this period Iraq has become one of the key economic partners of Armenia in the Middle East region. Economic interests also contributed to the promotion of the relations between Armenia and the KRG.

---

<sup>42</sup> Armenian, Iraqi Kurdish PMs Discuss Closer Business Ties, 24.01.2018, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/28994403.html>

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Representatives of Armenian and Iraqi governments discussed prospects for increasing trade turnover and interaction in education, 30.08.2017, [https://finport.am/full\\_news.php?id=31187&lang=3](https://finport.am/full_news.php?id=31187&lang=3)

<sup>45</sup> Telecom Armenia will increase the bandwidth of the Internet supplied to Iraqi Kurdistan, 17.05.2021, [https://finport.am/full\\_news.php?id=44105&lang=3](https://finport.am/full_news.php?id=44105&lang=3)

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- The History-Diplomatic Archive of the MFA of the RA, Case 275  
The History-Diplomatic Archive of the MFA of the RA, Case 122  
Pashayan A., The Iraqi-Armenian community faces new challenges, 05.03.2007, [http://www.noravank.am/arm/issues/detail.php?ELEMENT\\_ID=2385](http://www.noravank.am/arm/issues/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=2385)  
The Iran-Iraq war and the Armenians, 19.10.2020, <https://bit.ly/36Emuzf>,  
Iraq and the Caucasus, 3.06.2003, <https://www.golosameriki.com/a/a-33-a-2003-06-03-6-1/656972.html>  
Caucasus excited by Washington's operation against Iraq, 26.03.2003, <https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/35495/>  
Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia: Security Issues and Implications for U.S. Interests, 11.03.2010, <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL30679.html>  
Peacekeeping missions, <https://mil.am/en/pages/37>  
Today, President Kocharian presented a memorandum on the deployment of Armenian troops in Iraq to the National Assembly, 10.12.2004, <https://bit.ly/3i9hR5S>  
Iraqi puzzle, 16.10.2004, <https://a1plus.am/hy/article/7541>  
Armenia To Rotate Troops In Iraq, 8.07.2005, <https://bit.ly/3ifsmnY>  
National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, Script N85, 5.12.2006, <https://bit.ly/3xGEAg3>  
Bilateral Relations, Iraq, <https://www.mfa.am/en/bilateral-relations/iq>  
Iraq has a position to deepen political and economic relations with Armenia, Iraqi Foreign Ministry, 8.11.2012, <https://armenpress.am/arm/news/698784>  
Economic-humanitarian cooperation issues on agenda of Armenian-Iraqi intergovernmental commission, 26.01.2016, <https://parstoday.com/hy/news/armenia-i1279>  
Armenian-Iraqi political consultations, 23.02.2021, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/02/23/arm-iq/10806>  
Future prospects of cooperation in the field of defence discussed, 9.11.2013, <https://mil.am/en/news/2905>.  
The delegation led by the Iraqi Minister of Defence is on an official visit to Armenia, 25.03.2021, <https://mil.am/hy/news/9133>  
Armenia, Iraq seek to deepen defense cooperation, 25.03.2021, <https://en.armradio.am/2021/03/25/armenia-iraq-seek-to-deepen-defense-cooperation/>  
HTI Minister received the delegation led by the Minister of Defense of Iraq, 25.03.2021, [https://hti.am/pages.php?lang=3&page\\_id=1&id=7656&page\\_name=news](https://hti.am/pages.php?lang=3&page_id=1&id=7656&page_name=news)  
The official website of the Statistical Committee of Armenia, <https://bit.ly/3ifTvHk>  
Baghdad-Yerevan-Erbil: A Commercial or Political Route? 26.02.2015, <https://hetq.am/hy/article/58739>  
Armenian-Iraqi economic cooperation prospects discussed 26.09.2017, <https://www.gov.am/am/news/item/13175/>

Iraq opens its market to Armenian investors, 6.09.2012, <https://bit.ly/2UQoLoj>

Issues related to the development of Armenian-Iraqi economic relations were discussed, 26.09.2017, <https://www.gov.am/am/news/item/13907/>

Opening of the Consulate General of the Republic of Armenia in Erbil, 24.02.2021, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/02/24/cons\\_erb/10810](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2021/02/24/cons_erb/10810)

Gadarigian H. Armenia and Iraqi Kurdistan: Why Doesn't Yerevan Have Diplomatic Representation in Erbil? 4.11.2014, <https://hetq.am/en/article/57174>

The RA Foreign Minister spoke about the referendum held in Iraqi Kurdistan, 27.09.2017, [http://ftp.arka.am/am/news/politics/hh\\_ag\\_nakharn\\_artahaytvel\\_e/](http://ftp.arka.am/am/news/politics/hh_ag_nakharn_artahaytvel_e/)

Iraqi Kurdistan is interested in the establishment of active cooperation with Armenia. MassoudBarzani, 8.11.2012, <https://armenpress.am/arm/news/698884/iraqi-kurdistan-is-interested-in-the-establishment-of-active-cooperation-with-armenia-massoud-barzani.html>

Armenian, Iraqi Kurdish PMs Discuss Closer Business Ties, 24.01.2018, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/28994403.html>

Representatives of Armenian and Iraqi governments discussed prospects for increasing trade turnover and interaction in education, 30.08.2017, <https://bit.ly/2UfAjSj>

Telecom Armenia will increase the bandwidth of the Internet supplied to Iraqi Kurdistan, 17.05.2021, [https://finport.am/full\\_news.php?id=44105&lang=3](https://finport.am/full_news.php?id=44105&lang=3)

# WAR CRIMES AND THE GENOCIDAL POLICY OF AZERBAIJAN DURING THE SECOND ARTSAKH WAR AND THE INTERNATIONAL REACTION

**Nelli Minasyan**

*PhD, Khachatur Abovyan*

*Armenian State Pedagogical University*

## **Abstract**

During the second Karabagh war were registered many war crimes committed by Azerbaijan, which primarily were directed against the civilian population of Artsakh. Azerbaijan carried out ethnic cleansing during the war and continues its policy of cultural genocide after the war. However, no international organization takes practical steps to preserve the Armenian cultural heritage, instead, Azerbaijan continues to destroy and falsify Armenian monuments.

**Keywords:** Second Artsakh war, genocidal policy, international reaction

## **Introduction**

Azerbaijan began the eviction of Armenians from Artsakh after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The violence against Armenians was begun in 1988, with the pogroms of Sumgait, Kirovabad and Baku. Then in 1990 the Azerbaijani government started the eviction of Armenians from the Shahumyan region, in particular, the fighting took place in the villages of Getashen and Martunashen. The Azerbaijani aggression turned into a large-scale war in spring of 1991. In response to this aggression, a referendum was held in Artsakh and on September 2, 1991 was declared the independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

The first Artsakh War (1991-1994) was ended with the victory of the Armenian side and by the mediation of Russia was signed a ceasefire on May 12, 1994 in Bishkek. A negotiation process had started within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. During the negotiations were presented options for the peaceful settlement of the conflict. We are convinced that Azerbaijan has always sought to seize whole Artsakh and, in fact, he had prepared for a war during the negotiation process. About this testifies the four-day military escalation of 2016, which didn't turn into a large-scale war, but it demonstrated the position of Azerbaijan to solve this conflict by forceful means.

## **War Crimes and the Genocidal Policy of Azerbaijan**

On September 27, 2020 Azerbaijan launched a large-scale war against the Artsakh Republic, which lasted a mere 44 days. The Azerbaijani armed forces, their Turkish allies and the pro-Turkish Syrian and other mercenaries carried out numerous war crimes during the Second Artsakh War. In this paper we will mention the following

crimes: indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas, the use of cluster munitions and incendiary ammunition, crimes against prisoners of war (POW) and captured civilians.

From the first day of the war Azerbaijan began bombing civilian areas and infrastructures. Such acts are war crimes according to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Geneva Conventions. Article 8<sup>2</sup> (b), (i), (ii), (iv) of the Rome Statute describes the following as war crimes: «intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities», «intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects, that is, objects which are not military objectives» and «intentionally launching an attack in the knowledge that such attack will cause incidental loss of life or injury to civilians or damage to civilian objects or widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment which would be clearly excessive in relation to the concrete and direct overall military advantage anticipated»<sup>1</sup>. Articles 51 («Protection of the civilian population»)<sup>2</sup> and 52 («General protection of civilian objects»)<sup>3</sup> Protocol I to the Geneva Convention also protect civilian lives and civilian objects.

Azerbaijan had violated all the above-mentioned points, about which numerous facts have been presented by the governments and officials of the Republic of Artsakh and the Republic of Armenia and also by foreign journalists and mass media. At first, numerous settlements in Artsakh, including the capital city Stepanakert, were subjects to indiscriminate shelling and bombing by Azerbaijani forces. Many residential buildings and houses were destroyed as a result of these bombings.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the war, around 50 civilians were killed and 148 were wounded on the Armenian side.

Azerbaijan deliberately targeted civilian infrastructures throughout the territory of Artsakh, such as the Shushi Cultural Centre, major electrical power substations, Stepanakert's electricity company headquarters and even cultural monuments and churches, particularly St. Ghazanchetsots Cathedral in Shushi, twice. Azerbaijan even targeted schools and kindergartens: as of November 2, 61 schools (around 28% of all schools) and 10 kindergartens were damaged.

Azerbaijan also targeted medical facilities - the military and civilian hospitals. Here we again quote the relevant articles of the Geneva Convention. So, article 19 of the First Geneva Convention protects «Fixed establishments and mobile medical units of the Medical Service» and is mentioned «may in no circumstances be attacked».<sup>5</sup> Article

---

<sup>1</sup> Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Published by the International Criminal Court, 2011, p. 5, <https://bit.ly/3gKsr3P> (15.03.2021)

<sup>2</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977, <https://bit.ly/3iU9k8z> (10.03.2021).

<sup>3</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977, <https://bit.ly/3xv8YcM> (10.03.2021).

<sup>4</sup> On the Azerbaijani Atrocities against the Artsakh Population in September-October, 2020, Stepanakert, 2020, p. 19-26, <https://bit.ly/35AHerd> (15.01.2021).

<sup>5</sup> Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. Geneva, 12 August 1949. <https://bit.ly/2TMJU2c> (10.03.2021).

18 of the Fourth Geneva Convention mentions «Civilian hospitals organized to give care to the wounded and sick, the infirm and maternity cases, may in no circumstances be the object of attack, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict».<sup>6</sup> Two facts should be mentioned in this regard. On October 14, the military hospital of Martakert was shelled and the Armenian side reported that there were civilians too. On October 28, the maternity hospital of Stepanakert was hit with air strikes, some days later on November 3 the same facility was hit again with a Smerch missile.

Journalists were also attacked by the Azerbaijani forces. The rights of journalists are enshrined in Article 79 of Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions according which journalists engaged in professional work in war zones «shall be considered as civilians» and «shall be protected as such under the Conventions and this Protocol, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians».<sup>7</sup> So, on October 1 French and Armenian journalists were injured in Martuni. The next day a minibus with 10 journalists travelling to the city of Martakert was shelled. On October 8 two Russian journalists and their guide were injured by the second bombing of St. Ghazanchetsots Cathedral of Shushi.

One of the war crimes is the use of incendiary weapons and cluster munitions. The use of these weapons is prohibited by international conventions and their use against the civilian population is inadmissible. The use of incendiary weapons is prohibited under the Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons, which is Protocol III to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.<sup>8</sup> The Armed Forces of Artsakh, Ombudsmen of Armenia and Artsakh published a number of videos and materials, which prove the fact of the use of incendiary ammunition by Azerbaijan. On October 30, Armenia's Government Ombudsman Arman Tatoyan released a video of what appeared to show white phosphorus dropping on forests in Artsakh.<sup>9</sup> On November 6, the Human Rights Defenders of Artsakh and Armenia released joint special report on the use of incendiary weapons of mass destruction against civilian objects in Artsakh.<sup>10</sup> They also published photos of severely injured civilians.<sup>11</sup> Independent studies have shown that white phosphorus has been used in

<sup>6</sup> Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. <https://bit.ly/3gEwZIX> (10.03.2021).

<sup>7</sup> Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. <https://bit.ly/3xBbMVB> (10.03.2021).

<sup>8</sup> The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons, (Protocol III), <https://bit.ly/3qbpdsQ> (11.03.2021).

<sup>9</sup> Tatoyan A., Human Rights Defender of Armenia, Azerbaijan uses Phosphorus munitions, <https://bit.ly/3wTgoXz> (31.10.2020).

<sup>10</sup> On the Use of Incendiary Ammunition of Mass Destruction (Incendiary Weapon) Against Civilian Objects of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces, the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Defender of Artsakh, Yerevan, Stepanakert, November 2020, p. 4-38, <https://bit.ly/3xCUsji> (10.01.2021).

<sup>11</sup> Նույն տեղում, էջ 15-16:

Artsakh. On December 5, Armenian's Government Ombudsman Arman Tatoyan published additional photos of soldiers injured from incendiary ammunition.<sup>12</sup>

Now about the cluster munitions, the use of which is a war crime. During the Second Artsakh War the use of cluster munitions by Azerbaijan has also been documented. The production, storage, transfer and use of this weapon is banned by the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions, which has not been signed by Azerbaijan and Armenia.<sup>13</sup> According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), cluster munitions have «widespread indiscriminate effect and long-lasting danger to civilians». Human Rights Watch identified the remnants of Israeli-produced LAR-160 series cluster munitions rockets and unexploded M095 dual-purpose submunition in Stepanakert and Hadrut. Each rocket carries 104 submunitions and each submunition is equipped with a self-destruct mechanism. Human Rights Watch identified the Israeli-produced M095 dual-purpose submunition in each location. When this submunition detonates on impact, it produces lethal pre-formed metal fragments and a jet of molten metal intended to destroy vehicles and materials. Human Rights watch observed hundreds of the distinctive impacts of M095 submunitions as well as remnants of the pink-colored nylon stabilization ribbons in three neighborhoods in Stepanakert. In a special visit on October 13, Human Rights Watch found the remnants of a LAR-160 series rocket less than 100 meters from the location the video of the attack was taken. Human Rights Watch observed damage to power lines, children's playgrounds, vehicles, production enterprises, houses, the main post office, and the Karabakh Telecom building.

During and after the Second Artsakh War, Azerbaijan executed a number of crimes against prisoners of war and captive civilians. The Third Geneva Convention prohibits mistreatment and execution of POWs, making them war crimes.<sup>14</sup> The first crimes were committed by Azerbaijani Armed Forces in Hadrut. On October 11, the Artsakh Government Ombudsman's office said that Azerbaijani side has killed at least four civilians in Hadrut – handicapped Misha Movsisyan, his mother Anahit Movsisyan, Nver Grigoryan and Artyom Mirzoyan. Pargev Soghyan (aged 75) was killed in Martuni and a woman (aged 65) was wounded in Shosh village. On October 15, two videos emerged on social media showing Azerbaijani soldiers, possibly from special forces units, capturing two Armenian men in camouflage, one of whom evidently an old man, and then executing them. The execution took place at a town park sometime between October 9 and 15 in Hadrut. Although Azerbaijani authorities claimed the videos were fake, but the BBC confirmed their authenticity.<sup>15</sup> Later the two men in the videos were identified by Artsakh Government Ombudsman Artak Beglaryan, who told the BBC that

---

<sup>12</sup> Tatoyan A., Human Rights Defender of Armenia, Azerbaijan uses Phosphorus munitions, <https://bit.ly/3gMWmXx> (05.12.2020).

<sup>13</sup> Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2008, <https://bit.ly/3vCu9rX> (12.15.2020).

<sup>14</sup> Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August 1949, <https://bit.ly/3vH48b9> (15.01.2021).

<sup>15</sup> Atanesian G. & Strick B., Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: 'Execution' video prompts war crime probe, BBC News, 24 October 2020.



the men were locals - Benik Hakobyan (73) and Yuri Adamyan (25). Beglaryan said that Hakobyan wasn't a soldier, he was a civilian from Hadrut and Yuri Adamyan was likely a serviceman from a neighboring village.

Beheadings of both soldiers and civilians is one of the crimes committed by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces. The beheadings took place during the war and after the ceasefire. Azerbaijani soldiers posted videos of beheading on social networks and even sent them to relatives of Armenian soldiers. Similar materials were published by the Ombudsmen of Artsakh Government Armenia.

The Azerbaijani armed forces also carried out executions. On October 30 a video emerged showing the bodies of at least 19 Armenian servicemen, some handcuffed and several unclothed and some of the soldiers had sacks on their heads. Open source investigator Benjamin Strick geographically located the video to Kovsakan (Zangelan), which was recently captured by Azerbaijani forces.<sup>16</sup>

Azerbaijan continued to publish videos about war crimes after the ceasefire. Armenian POWs and captives were humiliated, tortured, mutilated, killed and beheaded in those videos. On November 19, a video emerged on social media showing a group of Azerbaijani soldiers forcefully dragging an elderly Armenian man and kicking him from behind. Artak Beglaryan wrote that he has been identified as Jonik Tevosyan (80) a resident of Shushi who could not leave the town as it fell under Azerbaijani control.<sup>17</sup> It is obvious that the Azerbaijani soldiers treated him inhumanely. Several videos have been posted online showing Armenian POWs or civilians beheaded and mutilated.<sup>18</sup> One such video shows a severed head of an Armenian man on a slaughtered pig. Another video shows an Armenian soldier saying «Karabakh is Azerbaijan», then Azerbaijani soldiers showing the severed head of the same soldier impaled on a wooden stake. In another video Azerbaijani soldiers cut off both ears of an old man on the floor of his home. On December 8, another video appeared in which an Azerbaijani soldier beheaded an Armenian old man, who in Azerbaijani language begs not to behead him. That soldier was awarded for beheading an Armenian old man. All these videos testify to the danger of ethnic cleansing by Azerbaijan. The possibility of ethnic cleansing increases due to the high level of anti-Armenian sentiments in that country.

On December 2, Human Rights Watch released a detailed report on the treatment of Armenian POWs in Azerbaijan, who are subjected to physical abuse and humiliation.<sup>19</sup> HRW contacted relatives of some POWs to identify and verify the videos. Military analyst Ryan O'Farrell, who follows the conflict, argues that these war crimes are «widespread, consistent and systematic» and are «tolerated or even encouraged by commanders». He stated that «It's impossible to not assume that the Azerbaijani state

<sup>16</sup> Strick B., Geolocation of footage which shows bodies, some handcuffed, others unclothed, in Zəngilan, <https://bit.ly/3iR9ptI> (28.10.2020).

<sup>17</sup> Beglaryan A., the Human Rights Defender of Artsakh, <https://bit.ly/3wFPMsB> (19.11.2020).

<sup>18</sup> Azerbaijan's war crimes in Nagorno-Karabakh, <https://bit.ly/3cT9yIj> (03.12.2020).

<sup>19</sup> Azerbaijan: Armenian Prisoners of War Badly Mistreated: Investigate, Prosecute Violations; Ensure Protection of All Military Detainees, <https://bit.ly/3zFf3W0> (02.12.2020).

has given its tacit approval to these war crimes. These aren't accidental cases. This is systematic».<sup>20</sup>

It should be noted that Azerbaijan has begun to destroy and exterminate the traces of Armenian cultural heritage in the territories occupied by his. This is a cultural genocide committed by Azerbaijan in Artsakh. Azerbaijan did the same in Nakhichevan, especially by destroying *khachkars*, which are Armenian cultural masterpieces, in previous decades.<sup>21</sup> Azerbaijan continues to destroy first of all Armenian churches during and after the war. This is evidenced by a number of facts. Thus, after the occupation of Shushi Azerbaijani soldiers destroyed St. Hovhannes Mkrtych Church, popularly known as «Kanach Zham». It is noteworthy that the church was destroyed months after the war.<sup>22</sup> Another fact of cultural genocide is the total destruction of the Armenian Church in Mekhakavan (Jabrail), again after the war.<sup>23</sup> The Azerbaijani soldiers (The Turkish flag is also clearly visible on their uniform) cynically insult and vandalize the St. Yeghishe Armenian Church in Mataghis. In the video, one of the soldiers says: «This belongs to the Armenians, everything here belongs to the Armenians, and we tore it».<sup>24</sup>

In parallel with the physical destruction of the cultural monuments of Artsakh, which are currently under its control, Azerbaijan at the highest level has resorted to a deplorable practice of falsifying historical facts and alienating religious and cultural values of the Armenian people, in particular presenting the Armenian cultural heritage as being the so-called «Albanian». This is a state policy and sponsored by the president of that country Ilham Aliyev. The latter has made numerous statements of this nature. During his visit to the occupied Artsakh Aliyev misrepresents the nature of Armenian church of the 17th century in the village of Tsakuri of the Hadrut region claiming it to be «Albanian» and labeling the Armenian inscriptions on its walls as «fake», thus preparing grounds for yet another act of vandalism. It is noteworthy that in the published video the above-mentioned church has already been vandalized, as the religious symbols were removed.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> Natiqizi U., Kucera J., Evidence of widespread atrocities emerges following Karabakh war: The Azerbaijani government has promised to prosecute any war crimes, but many are skeptical of its sincerity, Eurasianet, Dec 2, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3vzOloY> (09.12.2020).

<sup>21</sup> The number of monuments destroyed by Azerbaijan was more than 89 medieval churches, 5840 khachkars and 22000 tombstones. This policy of Azerbaijan didn't receive a harsh assessment from international organizations.

<sup>22</sup> Statement by the Foreign Ministry of Armenia regarding the consistent violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by Azerbaijan in the occupied territories of the Republic of Artsakh, 18 March, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3cTP8jA> (20.03.2021).

<sup>23</sup> Nagorno-Karabakh: The mystery of the missing church, BBC News, 25.03.2021, <https://bbc.in/2S93epY> (25.03.2021).

<sup>24</sup> Tatoyan A., Human Rights Defender of Armenia, This is the St. Yeghishe Armenian Church in Mataghis, Artsakh (built in the 19th century), <https://bit.ly/3wl5gfM> (27.03.2021).

<sup>25</sup> Statement by the Foreign Ministry of Armenia regarding the consistent violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by Azerbaijan in the occupied territories of the Republic of Artsakh, 18 March, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3cTP8jA> (20.03.2021).

Azerbaijan has adopted the policy of destruction, misappropriation and distortion of the Armenian cultural heritage, which Turkey has done against the Armenians in their historical homeland at the beginning of the XX century.

### **International Reaction to the Azerbaijani Aggression against the Republic of Artsakh**

There are a number of international organizations and protocols for the protection of human rights in the XXI century. And what was the international reaction about the violation of human rights and war crimes against Armenian population in Artsakh? It should be noted that the international reaction to Azerbaijan's aggression against Artsakh and its war crimes was not active, it was even indifferent. The UN, which is called to protect peace and security, almost did not respond to these events. Michelle Bachelet, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights talked about war crimes only once: on November 2, when she mentioned that the central market of Stepanakert was hit and that 47 civilians in Artsakh and Armenia had been killed.<sup>26</sup> The Armenian side repeatedly raised the issue of pro-Turkish Syrian mercenaries during and even after the war. The fact that Azerbaijan brought Syrian mercenaries to the region did not receive proper response from international organizations and especially in the USA. It was not until November 11, a day after the armistice was signed, when the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued a statement on Syrian mercenaries deployed in Azerbaijan and called for their withdrawal.<sup>27</sup> The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights has addressed the conflict only once.

France pursued a more active policy during the Second Artsakh War. Ara Aivazyan, foreign Minister of RA made a clear statement on the activities of the French leadership during the joint press conference with French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on December 8, 2020. Aivazyan mentioned: «...On behalf of the Republic of Armenia, I express my deep gratitude to my French counterpart for resolute and, at the same time, impartial position of France since the very beginning of the war. The statements of President Emmanuel Macron were very important for us, where the latter clearly highlighted the aggressor and touched upon Turkey's extremely harmful and dangerous involvement in the war, as well as the transfer of jihadist terrorist fighters to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone...».<sup>28</sup> In contrast to many countries, the French president made targeted statements, especially mentioning the involvement of terrorists and Turkish support. Resolutions on the need to recognize the independence of Artsakh were adopted by the Senate and the National Assembly. However, the French

<sup>26</sup> Bachelet M., Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: Bachelet warns of possible war crimes as attacks continue in populated areas, <https://bit.ly/3vH2Z34> (20.11.2020).

<sup>27</sup> Mercenaries in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone must be withdrawn – UN experts, <https://bit.ly/3zCovlv> (05.12.2020).

<sup>28</sup> The press statement of the Foreign Minister of Armenia Ara Aivazian for the media representatives during the press conference following the meeting with Foreign Minister of France Jean-Yves Le Drian, 08 December, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3gEMzUR> (15.01.2021).

government rejected both resolutions. Most likely, the government's refusal is due to the position of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian. The Minister noted that such a decision would be tantamount to France's withdrawal from the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs, within the framework of which Paris, Moscow and Washington are participating in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict. It would mean giving up our role as mediator.<sup>29</sup>

The war coincided with the US presidential election. Some researchers attribute the passive role of the US to this fact. But we hold the opposite opinion. The American leadership did not condemn the aggression of Azerbaijan. The United States has not taken any serious steps to end the war and about war crimes committed by Azerbaijan except for statements. This issue also concerns the situation after the ceasefire, in particular of Armenian POWs and captured civilians which were taken hostage by Azerbaijan. About last issue and the aggressive actions of Azerbaijan some steps are taken by individual senators among whom the most famous is Bob Menendes, the chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee. One important observation: The United States is a member of the OSCE Minsk Group, which deals by regulation of the Artsakh conflict. In fact, the United States did not take any active steps to end the war or resolve the conflict.

The Russian Federation was active during the war due to several reasons: the South Caucasus region is a zone of Russian vital interests, Russia is a strategic ally of Armenia, Russia also has collaborative relations with Azerbaijan and Russian-Turkish multilayered and multifaceted relations. Russian President Vladimir Putin several times referred to the Artsakh conflict during the war. We have singled out two important observations from his speeches: Artsakh is a part of Azerbaijan from the point of view of international law and this conflict is an ethnic issue, which started earlier, in particular with the massacres in Baku and Sumgait and each side has its own truth.<sup>30</sup> In fact, there was mentioned the ethno-political nature of this conflict, in the conditions of which the Armenian-populated Artsakh cannot be part of Azerbaijan. The Second Artsakh war ended by ceasefire signed through V. Putin's direct mediation on November 10 in 2020.<sup>31</sup> Russian peacekeepers' contingent was deployed in Artsakh, which together with Artsakh Defense Army ensures the security of the population and the issue of Artsakh's status is left to the future. This means that the Artsakh conflict has not yet been resolved, so further military escalations and even war is not excluded.

---

<sup>29</sup> Melkumyan H., The government of France rejected also the decision of the National assembly regarding Karabagh, Azatutyun radio station, December 4, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2SeSir4> (10.01.2021).

<sup>30</sup> Big press-conference of Putin, Kommersant, 17.12.2020, <https://bit.ly/3q7NzE9> (02.05.2021).

<sup>31</sup> The statement of Putin, Aliiev, and Pashinyan about the ceasefire in Karabagh, November 10, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3zGt45B> (10.11.2020).

## Conclusion

On September 27 in 2020 Azerbaijan violated the peace negotiation process and began a large-scale war against the Artsakh Republic. This war was provoked and aided by Turkey. The Second Artsakh War is a part of the geopolitical processes taking place in the South Caucasus. In this regard, the role of Turkey and her vision about Turkic world is very important.

During the war we witnessed many war crimes committed by the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem, which primarily were directed against the civilian population of Artsakh. In the XXI century, when democracy and human rights must be priority values, we again face the genocidal policy of Turkey and Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan carried out ethnic cleansing during the war and continues its policy of cultural genocide after the war. In order to prevent cultural genocide the state structures of Armenia and Artsakh appealed to international organizations, including UNESCO. However, no international organization takes practical steps to preserve the Armenian cultural heritage, instead, Azerbaijan continues to destroy and falsify Armenian monuments. In general, the international reaction to the aggression of Azerbaijan was indifferent. On the other hand, until now Azerbaijan continues to hold the POWs and civilians and by which she violated the ceasefire of November 10. The Azerbaijani side is trying to use this circumstance for political bargaining, as well as she has a purpose to put psychological pressure on the Armenian society.

Materials referred to above allows us to conclude the following: a) Artsakh cannot be part of Azerbaijan, b) Within the framework of the right of self-determination, the people of Artsakh must be given the right to self-determination or separate from Azerbaijan, c) We must accept that international reaction is also a policy and, unfortunately, the Artsakh issue has become a subject of international political speculation.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### International Conventions and Protocols

1. Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field. Geneva, 12 August 1949, <https://bit.ly/2TMJU2c> (10.03.2021).
2. Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Geneva, 12 August 1949. <https://bit.ly/3qEwZIX> (10.03.2021).
3. Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2008, <https://bit.ly/3vCu9rX> (12.15.2020).
4. Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August 1949, <https://bit.ly/3vH48b9> (15.01.2021).
5. Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977, <https://bit.ly/3iU9k8z> (10.03.2021).

6. Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977, <https://bit.ly/3iU9k8z> (10.03.2021).
7. Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), 8 June 1977. <https://bit.ly/3xBbMVB> (10.03.2021).
8. Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court, Published by the International Criminal Court, 2011, <https://bit.ly/3gKsr3P> (15.03.2021).
9. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons, (Protocol III), <https://bit.ly/3qbpdsQ> (11.03.2021).

### Reports of officials

10. **Bachelet M.**, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: Bachelet warns of possible war crimes as attacks continue in populated areas, <https://bit.ly/3vH2Z34> (20.11.2020).
11. Mercenaries in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone must be withdrawn – UN experts, <https://bit.ly/3zCovJv> (05.12.2020).
12. On the Use of Incendiary Ammunition of Mass Destruction (Incendiary Weapon) Against Civilian Objects of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) by the Azerbaijani Armed Forces, the Human Rights Defender of Armenia and the Human Rights Defender of Artsakh, Yerevan, Stepanakert, November 2020, p. 4-38, <https://bit.ly/3xCUsji> (10.01.2021).
13. Statement by the Foreign Ministry of Armenia regarding the consistent violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by Azerbaijan in the occupied territories of the Republic of Artsakh, 18 March, 2021, <https://bit.ly/3cTP8jA> (20.03.2021).
14. **Tatoyan A.**, Human Rights Defender of Armenia, Azerbaijan uses Phosphorus munitions, <https://bit.ly/3wTgoXz> (31.10.2020).
15. Tatoyan A., Human Rights Defender of Armenia, Azerbaijan uses Phosphorus munitions, <https://bit.ly/3gMWmXx> (05.12.2020).
16. **Tatoyan A.**, Human Rights Defender of Armenia, This is the St. Yeghishe Armenian Church in Mataghis, Artsakh (built in the 19th century), <https://bit.ly/3wI5qfM> (27.03.2021).
17. The press statement of the Foreign Minister of Armenia Ara Aivazian for the media representatives during the press conference following the meeting with Foreign Minister of France Jean-Yves Le Drian, 08 December, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3qEMzUR> (15.01.2021).
18. On the Azerbaijani Atrocities against the Artsakh Population in September-October, 2020, Stepanakert, 2020, <https://bit.ly/35AHerd> (15.01.2021).
19. The statement of Putin, Aliiev, and Pashinyan about the ceasefire in Karabagh, November 10, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3zGt45B> (10.11.2020).

### Publications

20. **Melkumyan H.**, The government of France rejected also the decision of the National assembly regarding Karabagh, Azatutyun radio station, December 4, 2020, <https://bit.ly/2SeSir4> (10.01.2021).
21. Big press-conference of Putin, Commersant, 17.12.2020, <https://bit.ly/3q7NzE9> (02.05.2021).
22. **Atanesian G. & Strick B.**, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: 'Execution' video prompts war crime probe, BBC News, 24 October 2020, <https://bbc.in/3wGiTw6>



23. Azerbaijan's war crimes in Nagorno-Karabakh, <https://bit.ly/3cT9yJi> (03.12.2020).
24. Azerbaijan: Armenian Prisoners of War Badly Mistreated: Investigate, Prosecute Violations; Ensure Protection of All Military Detainees, <https://bit.ly/3zFf3W0> (02.12.2020).
25. **Beglaryan A.**, the Human Rights Defender of Artsakh, <https://bit.ly/3wFPMsB> (19.11.2020).
26. Nagorno-Karabakh: The mystery of the missing church, BBC News, 25.03.2021, <https://bbc.in/2S93epY> (25.03.2021).
27. **Natigqizi U., Kucera J.**, Evidence of widespread atrocities emerges following Karabakh war: The Azerbaijani government has promised to prosecute any war crimes, but many are skeptical of its sincerity, Eurasianet, Dec 2, 2020, <https://bit.ly/3vzOloY> (09.12.2020).
28. **Strick B.**, Geolocation of footage which shows bodies, some handcuffed, others unclothed, in Zəngilan, <https://bit.ly/3iR9ptI> (28.10.2020).

***Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***

# THE PRINCIPLE OF DECENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNANCE IN SIMON ZAVARYAN'S POLITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT

Lilit Sarvazyan

*Ph.D., Associate Professor at the Yerevan State*

*Pedagogical University*

*Senior Researcher at the Institute of Philosophy,*

*Sociology and Law of NAS RA*

***"If we want to get rid of our centuries-old numbness entirely and fully, we need to establish the order of our reborn country on a decentralized basis".***

**Simon Zavaryan**

## **Abstract**

Simon Zavaryan's political optimism, certainly, clashed with further harsh historical and political realities. The model of federal state proposed by him corresponded to neither the tendencies of Turkish policy nor the Turkish understanding of Ottomanism as citizenship. The Turkish element, which had occupied the homeland of the indigenous peoples, chose to and still continues to implement the policy of national and religious intolerance, endangering the foundations of the statehood they themselves had envisaged.

**Keywords:** S.Zavaryan, Ottoman Constitution, decentralization, local autonomy

In the context of the current political realities of the Republic of Armenia, it is essential to study the national-philosophical and political concepts of the XIX-XX centuries, where are enclosed arguments about the principles of state governance, the right of nations to self-determination, the historical-and-political and legal bases of centralized and decentralized government.

**Highly centralized** governance implies the supremacy of the central government over the entire territory of the state, ruling out the self-governance and administrative autonomy of local entities. In the case of **moderately centralized** governance, local authorities are endowed with certain rights of autonomy, but are subject to the decisions of the central government in matters of national significance. In a **decentralized** state, the legitimacy of the enforcement of the administrative rights of local governments is recognized. In other words, the principle of decentralization implies relative independence only within the internal autonomy of the administrative entity. In the case of **absolute decentralization** the unity of state power and the proportionality of the governance system are shattered, and autonomous entities may disobey the decisions of the central government.



Armenian thinkers have commented on the effectiveness of the principles of governance, taking into account the natural and historical and political conditions of a particular country, the challenges of the time, the legal-and-political culture and spiritual condition of nations as sovereign entities. Societies that have gone through a heterogeneous natural and historical course manifest different qualities in the political process, and these qualities become the basis for the choice of a certain form of governance. In this respect, the following argument is remarkable: "The nation should not simply submit to this or that form of political structuring, but should recognize that form of political structuring as the best way of its collective existence".<sup>1</sup>

There were two tendencies typical of the traditional Armenian state policy: on the one hand, the strengthening of centralized power and the right of royal succession, neutralizing the absolutely decentralized aspirations of the opposition groups; on the other hand, the protection of the jurisdiction of self-governance of local authorities, especially in the face of external invasion policy. The need for a **nation-centered** and **state-oriented** policy has always been emphasized in domestic political processes. Its purpose is to maintain the monopoly of the national administration and spiritual power under conditions of a national state or its absence. As Maghakia Ormanyan confirmed: "The use of the central style is more important and helpful in difficult cases and during hardships, which Armenians and Armenia have had no lack of".<sup>2</sup> However, in terms of relations with ruling powers, **it is natural to defend the principle of decentralization as an ideological and political basis for national self-determination**. Decentralizing from foreign power, the subject nation unites with the natural right of self-governance and gathers around national legitimate power.

Thus, self-governance is the manifestation of the principle of decentralization for the sake of preservation of the administrative territorial integrity of the homeland and political identity of the nation. After all, **decentralized national governance is the first step in a complex process of statehood restoration**. By this logic, from the middle of the XIX century, the principle of decentralized governance became one of the program principles of Western Armenian constitutional ideology,<sup>3</sup> and later, of Armenian national parties.

On July 10, 1908, the Ottoman Constitution was re-declared, and the very next day the Ottoman Parliament was ordered to be reopened. Armenian figures perceived this development as a guarantee of the Turkish dictatorial regime overthrow. Considering the re-establishment of independent statehood impossible in the current political situation, they hoped that as a result of the Ottoman state's constitutionalization and political reforms, new law and order would be established in the country, and the subjects would be granted broad autonomy and national-and-administrative jurisdiction.

---

<sup>1</sup> Harutyunyan 2000: 171-172.

<sup>2</sup> Ormanyan 1879: 15.

<sup>3</sup> The analysis of the principles of Western Armenian constitutionalism see Sarvazyan 2017b: 161-169.

On August 24, 1908, prominent national figure, political scientist and philosopher **Simon Zavaryan** (1865-1913) delivered a political speech at Bera Holy Trinity Church in Constantinople, explaining his concept of rebuilding the Ottoman state system through the principle of decentralization.

With historical and philosophical analysis Zavaryan first referred to the ancient political culture, especially valuing the Greek city-states as exceptional examples of political structuring of the society. The poleis were governed by the People's Assembly of free citizens and by elected officials. Legal and political relations contributed to the formation of polis patriotism and nationalism, the essence of which was the privilege of the Greek political order over the non-Greek. As the political scientist described it, each city-state "enjoyed **freedom** in its domestic affairs and **allied** with its neighbors to fight against foreign attacks".<sup>4</sup> This political culture became the basis for the development of Greek philosophy, science, culture, legislation and the art of rhetoric.

Zavaryan considered the prosperity of ancient Greece "**the natural offspring of decentralized order**". But later Greek civilization declined when sovereign political entities came under pressure from the central government. Due to the application of the principle of high centralization of governance, the ancient Roman and Byzantine empires were destroyed as the conquered nations were subjected to central authority and nationwide legislation. In addition, the national laws and traditions of the subjects were ignored, as a result of which they "embraced all those who raided into their "homeland" as liberators".<sup>5</sup>

Byzantine state policy was inherited by the Ottoman state with more brutal manifestations of domination and oppression of peoples. According to Zavaryan, due to its highly decentralized policy, this state lost half of its occupied territory and population during the XIX century, under the strong military-and-political and diplomatic pressure of European states. In the context of the political coup of the early XX century, he argued that **political reforms in the Ottoman state were possible through the establishment of a decentralized system of governance**. The thinker argued his point of view with the following considerations:

- ❖ It is impossible for any form of state institution and method of governance to be appropriate in all states. The geographical location of each country, economic, social, demographic factors, the level of intellectual development of nations, legal and political culture determine a certain form of political structuring of the society. Therefore, in multinational states, such as the Ottoman Empire, decentralized governance is the only feasible option. "To ignore these differences and to strive for the satisfaction of all regions with the same central governance and legislation means to ignore the demands of reality".<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Zavaryan 1908: 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 7.

- ❖ A highly centralized government in a multinational state may not be aware of the specifics and requirements of all provinces and regions. Indigenous peoples, as legal subjects of their homeland, can better govern themselves by national and administrative authority than by the instructions of the central government. Unaware of the conditions of the provinces and the problems of the population, local officials are more concerned with pleasing the central government than thinking about the country's prosperity. This reality will be neutralized only "... when each region, vilayet, gaza, mutiret and community manages the local affairs by the elected representatives of the people and decides its own fate".<sup>7</sup>
- ❖ The reaffirmation of the Ottoman constitution will not in itself eliminate the shortcomings of a highly centralized system of governance. In constitutional countries, the legislative initiative, financial management, the implementation of laws are transferred from the monarch to the parliament elected by the people. But with the preservation of the centralized system of governance in Turkey, the parliament legitimacy will not counterbalance the Ottoman supremacy. And if a limited number of people participate in state administration, the structure of the state will be a clan rule, oligarchy or authoritative governance.
- ❖ We should not ignore the fact that highly centralized governance in multinational states such as Turkey and Russia slows down the country's socio-economic development. Since the central government is busy with protecting national interests and solving the country's general problems, it is unable to address the problems of the regions. Therefore, "in case centralization is preserved, the constitution will hardly be able to change all this and speed up the study of laws and requirements that have matured".<sup>8</sup> The same applies to the bills submitted by local authorities to the Russian Duma, which do not get to be discussed for years.

It should be noted that some articles of the Ottoman Constitution (1876) **formally** contain the principle of **decentralization**. In Abdul Hamid's Imperial Declaration it is stated: "This basic law enacts... administrative decentralization in provinces without weakening the decisive action and power of the central government".<sup>9</sup> This provision is **contradictory**, as it is not possible to establish full local autonomy while maintaining the administrative jurisdiction of centralized governance. Article 108 of the Constitution also states: "The principle of decentralization is the basis of provincial administration".<sup>10</sup> Article 109 defines the need for a law establishing the electoral system and rights of administrative councils - local self-governing bodies. The councils should make decisions on the following issues: "construction of communication roads, establishment of lending coffers for farmers, development of art, trade and agriculture, and carrying

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>9</sup> Imperial proclamation manifesto declaring Ottoman constitution 1986: 7.

<sup>10</sup> Ottoman constitution, Article 108, p. 42.

out public education”.<sup>11</sup> The limitation of the authority of local councils is obvious, especially in terms of national issues. However, it was even impossible to carry out the established functions in the case of domination of centralized governance.

**There are other provisions of the Ottoman Constitution that also contradict the principle of decentralization of governance.** The very first article proclaims the territorial integrity and indivisibility of the empire. In other words, no province with the right to self-determination could “ever secede for whatever reason”. The sultan’s dominion and the exclusive rights of the caliphate and freedom from responsibility were preserved.<sup>12</sup> The Sultan appointed and dismissed the ministers, granted positions and ranks, approved the election of provincial princes: “His Highness the Sultan appoints his most trusted people to the positions of Great Eparch and Shaykh al-Islam”.<sup>13</sup> All the important internal and external affairs of the state were under the authority of the Council of Ministers appointed by the Sultan and all the decisions were implemented by imperial order. Thus, **the executive power was formed, functioned and dissolved by the Sultan’s will and orders.** All the ministers were accountable to him. They could also be members of the parliamentary assembly on the principle of monocentrism.

The legislative body - **the General Assembly**, consisted of two assemblies: a) Assembly of Elders (Senate), b) Parliamentary Assembly. The Sultan decided the time of convening the meetings, the number of sessions, as well as the need for dissolution. “All the members of the General Assembly swear allegiance to His Highness the Sultan, the Homeland, and swear to act in accordance with the Constitution...”.<sup>14</sup> The next article contradicted this one, according to which the members of the General Assembly had the liberty to vote and “no one can be bound by instructions or promises, or act under the influence of threats”.<sup>15</sup> How could the ministers appointed by the Sultan make a free decision without being prosecuted?

The supremacy of the Ottoman centralized governance was also reflected in the articles defining **legislative activity**. For example, “The proposal to pass a law or to amend an existing law concerns the ministry”. The Assembly of Elders and the Parliamentary Assembly might propose bills only on issues within their competence and not concerning state matters. In this case, too, the bills “are presented to his Highness the Sultan” in the form of **petition** and he “...will submit them to the State Council”.<sup>16</sup> The bill redrafted by the State Council was debated in the General Assembly **formally**, since only the Sultan had the right to ratify it. Moreover, “the chairman and members of the Senate are simply named by his Highness the Sultan” and they had the right to rule for life.<sup>17</sup> The chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly and the two vice-chairmen were

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Article 110, p. 43.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., Article 1-5, pp. 11-12.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., Article 27, p. 17.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Article 46, pp. 23-24.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Article 47, p. 24.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., Article 53, p. 26.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., Article 60 and 63, p. 28.

elected from the list of nine candidates presented to the sultan. The Assembly had the right to discuss, dispute and decide on bills concerning the Constitution, finances and budget "...by agreement with the ministers".<sup>18</sup>

Disputing the constitutionality of the articles of the Ottoman constitution, Zavaryan concluded: "Only the method of electing the minister is essentially changed by the constitution, but bureaucracy remains the same: every order comes from one center, officials depend on one **single** person".<sup>19</sup> According to him, ***the activity of the parliament should be limited to the discussion of issues of national importance, leaving the management of local-national affairs to the autonomous bodies.***

The attitude of the Turkish opposition parties demanding reforms to the Ottoman Constitution is remarkable. In particular, the party "**Young Turkey**" "...demands the introduction of modern ideas in Turkey, with the implementation of the constitution, for the benefit of all Ottomans, without discrimination because of nationality and religion".<sup>20</sup> The first article of the program of the party "**Decentralization and Individual Initiative**", founded by Abdul Hamid's nephew, Prince Sabaheddin, stated: "The political reforms to be carried out in the Ottoman countries must be based on a system of administrative "decentralization and broad autonomy", without discrimination of classes and subjects".<sup>21</sup> Opposition forces also demanded the revision of the Ottoman constitution and the amendment of those articles which did not contribute to the country's political reforms.

Explaining the importance of **local autonomy** for the Ottoman state, S. Zavaryan stated: "Freedom is in its embryonic stage here. Long-term efforts are necessary for the administration created on a whim to be replaced by a rule of law that is equally binding on everyone".<sup>22</sup> He considered the **rule of law** in the country to be the first condition for the autonomy of the provinces; then he proposed the following principles:

- adoption of the principle of national or ethnic representation,
- separation of powers (legislative, executive, judicial), independent jurisdiction, mutual control and balance,
- compliance of the legislation with the requirements of the country,
- definition of administrative rights of local autonomies.

After studying the historical experience of the constitutional states of the time, Zavaryan concluded: "Everywhere ***the degree of freedom of the country depends on the degree of local autonomy***".<sup>23</sup> As a classic example, he pointed out to the Swiss political system and constitutional order. He mostly valued ***the right of nations to self-determination***. The thinker commented on the essence of democracy: "True

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Article 80, p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> Zavaryan 1908: 8.

<sup>20</sup> Turkish Constitution 1908: 44.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>22</sup> Zavaryan 1908: 12.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 13.

democracy does not mean transferring the power of the monarch to several hundred elected officials”.<sup>24</sup> It is just the first step. There will be real sovereignty of the people and national government only when as many citizens of other nationalities as possible take part in the legislative process and in the organization of public affairs. This is possible through the formation of local self-government bodies and the operation of national administrative and legal systems. Democratic governance requires a proactive, active and politically-minded electorate.

Zavaryan analyzed **the idea of patriotism** on state and national levels. He did not advocate purely “national-local” patriotism at the expense of “state patriotism”. At the same time, he rejected the opinion that family and kin relationships hindered the understanding of national relations and the idea of philanthropy. Just the opposite: “Without the development of the idea of family and ethnicity, there could be no broader national feeling and it is with the generalization of the latter that one can love all of humanity”. Thus, just as family love expands into patriotism and philanthropy “healthy **state patriotism** can only emerge step by step, with the gradual development of **local (national – L.S.) patriotism**”.<sup>25</sup> Otherwise, state patriotism will become an abstract concept.

The Armenian thinker proposed the idea of **free competition** between the autonomous bodies of a multinational state for the sake of the general socio-economic and educational-and-cultural progress of the country. National laws must be adjusted to the traditions - unwritten internal laws - of separate nations. Religious differences should not become the cause of ethnic conflicts. Recognition of nations by the religious factor had long been common in the Ottoman state. With a special state policy the subject nations were granted a special ecclesiastical-and-political status,<sup>26</sup> as a result of which inter-ethnic relations were regulated by traditional national laws. Zavaryan considered this argument to be a proof of the fact that: “even in countries with a central government the principle of decentralization **considerably** prevails, and besides the general laws, every region, every community is governed also... by laws of local private nature”.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to officially accept this principle and to apply it in line with the common interests of the country.

Thus, **the realization of national and civil rights of individuals, the protection of the idea of democracy and the development of legislation in accordance with the requirements of the state determine the need for a decentralized political system**. Such systems of governance exist in Switzerland and the United States, where each canton or state has a legislative body and ministries. The central federal government ensures the security of the country, international relations and oversees the

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>26</sup> For more details on this issue see Sarvazyan 2013: 263-265.

<sup>27</sup> Zavaryan 1908: 20.

areas of national importance. And the local autonomous entities solve their own problems themselves according to the local laws.

Assessing the Western constitutional culture, Zavaryan did not advocate the identification of the political system of the Ottoman state with the political systems of these countries. Naturally, the state structure of each country is the result of the long-term national-and-political development of that country, therefore, it is unique. The political scientist considered **the historical-and-political experience of the development of Austrian statehood** to be more convenient for Turkey.

Until the middle of the XIX century, peoples of different nationalities and religions lived in Austria. As a result of administrative reforms, the state adopted the principles of **constitutionality and decentralization**. Separate autonomies were formed in Austria. In Galicia, Bohemia, Tyrol, Upper Austria and other places **the elected councils - Seims** oversaw the local socio-economic and financial affairs, made the budget, set up the taxes, etc. Zavaryan considered it important "what kind of autonomy the Austrian states enjoyed, only administrative or legislative as well".<sup>28</sup> The thing is that the Seims were not officially given the right to legislate, but in fact they exercised that right. Taking into account the local peculiarities, the Seims developed laws and **acquired consultative-and-legislative powers**. The language problem was also solved through councils. The national languages of local autonomies were used in educational institutions and official operations.

Thus, the Austrian state structure reformed by the principle of decentralization, allowed, on the one hand, to maintain **national legislation** in all states, and on the other hand, ensured **local autonomy** through the Seims' legislative initiative.

According to Zavaryan, the political environment of the Ottoman Empire allowed to reform the administrative and state structure of the country according to the **Austrian model**. In that case "the elected mejlises of the vilayets should be given the rights the Seims had, and with them the rights of local autonomy will be shared also by the administrations of cities, gazas, and rural communities".<sup>29</sup> He emphasized the importance of solving one more essential issue: **it was necessary to define the borders of administrative districts according to their ethnographic and geographical peculiarities**. It would contribute to the legislative-and-administrative unity of the state and to the full execution of the rights of local self-governing entities.

Thus, Zavaryan proposed **a model of Ottoman federal state structure**, in which **different nationalities with their native territories would form legal parts of the federal state**. According to the thinker, the decentralized state "...ensures local rights, hence the unique economic development: that is what limits the pressure of the majority and protects the rights of the minority, and that is what boosts the development of linguistic and other educational-and-cultural peculiarities of each nation".<sup>30</sup> He refuted

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 32.

all the theories that foresaw the elimination of national, religious and linguistic differences along with the development of civilizations. On the contrary, as Levon Shant affirmed: “becoming civilized... is the main condition for the development of nations, the strengthening of national characteristics... and the evaluation of its uniqueness”.<sup>31</sup> Peoples are valued the way their national identity, spiritual and cultural vitality, and volition to politically self-organize are defined.

Rejecting the autocratic order of the Ottoman state and the domination of the ruling Turkish element, Simon Zavaryan emphasized the operation of **the principle of national representation** in the legislative process. It was not reflected in the Ottoman constitution. According to him: “The minority - be it a nation, a religious-and-philosophical union or a party – cannot have a place in the legislative body of the country in the event of the unlimited power of the majority”.<sup>32</sup> **Without a state policy of making nations full participants of the legislative power, political reforms in the state are impossible.** The Constitution did not eliminate the highly centralized system of governance. According to Zavaryan, this dangerous situation could be changed only: “...by introducing the principle of proportional (proportionnel) decentralization in the electoral system, when each nation, religion and party, according to the number of its members, is **proportionally** represented in the body conducting the affairs of the whole country and makes their wishes heard”.<sup>33</sup>

By applying the principles of **decentralization** and **representation**, domestic political conflicts and ethnic clashes in the Ottoman state would be minimized. Zavaryan proposed the following ways to solve the problem: **a)** according to legislation each nation must be provided a certain number of votes in separate provinces as in Lebanon; **b)** following the example of Austria, each nation must nominate its electees without communicating with the other nations. In both cases, Armenians and other nationalities would have their representation in the country’s legislative body.

In the context of Ottoman state reforms, Zavaryan did not ignore the **national issue**. According to him, since the middle of the XIX century the national masses had played a great role in the social and political processes of different countries and “...the nationalist problem gradually becomes more acute”.<sup>34</sup> Just like L. Shant,<sup>35</sup> Zavaryan was also convinced that **ethnic and linguistic diversity was a hallmark of civilizational progress**. Therefore, it is necessary to show political wisdom not to hinder the unique development of nations and cultures. The ways of national development are conditioned by the spiritual-and-civilizational value system chosen by them.

<sup>31</sup> Shant 1979: 50-51.

<sup>32</sup> Zavaryan 1908: 34.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>35</sup> For the analysis of L. Shant’s political concept see Sarvazyan 2017a: 282-303.



On the basis of the national and religious factor, the Ottoman state authorized the exercising of constitutions of subject peoples by granting them national and administrative autonomy. According to Zavaryan, if they were applicable in totalitarian Turkey, after the redeclaration of the Constitution nations must be endowed with wider constitutional powers. National affairs must be handled by national administrations; otherwise “...**equality** of languages and nations will remain a beautiful but meaningless word”.<sup>36</sup>

Given the current political situation, Zavaryan considered **the issue of independence of nations** to be highly controversial. For example, the independence of states like Greece and Serbia was “problematic” because they had no political identity and were forced to obey the decisions of large states. Therefore, “...they, in fact, only enjoy internal autonomy”. Neither did he accept the independence gained at the cost of human lives, which they could not keep on their own. For this reason he stated: “I do not find an independent Armenia consisting of Erzurum and several other vilayets enviable. Surrounded by three major powers - Russia, Turkey and Persia, and raising suspicions within the Turks and Kurds, it will always be in a faltering state...”.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, **it is safer to be a self-governing legal entity in a constitutional federal state with the prospect of political self-determination and gaining peaceful independence**. He was sure that “...only the free development of each nation will ensure unity among many ethnic groups comprising the Ottoman Empire” and only “... decentralized allied regimes can contribute to the great and complicated task of rebuilding our common homeland on the basis of Freedom, Brotherhood and Justice”.<sup>38</sup>

Simon Zavaryan’s political optimism, certainly, clashed with further harsh historical and political realities. The model of federal state proposed by him corresponded to neither the tendencies of Turkish policy nor the Turkish understanding of Ottomanism as citizenship. The Turkish element, which had occupied the homeland of the indigenous peoples, chose to and still continues to implement the policy of national and religious intolerance, endangering the foundations of the statehood they themselves had envisaged.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Zavaryan S.** 1908. Decentralization, Constantinople (in Arm.).

Turkish Constitution and the Young Turkish parties, Tiflis, 1908 (compiled by T.Zaven)(in Arm.).

**Harutyunyan Ed.** 2000. Transitional society as a system of transformational activity, Yerevan (in Arm.).

<sup>36</sup> Zavaryan 1908: 47.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 50.

**Shant L.** 1979. Nation as a basis of human society (the denial of denationalized propaganda against us), Beirut (in Arm.).

Ottoman constitution (December 11/23, 1876), Constantinople (in Arm.).

**Sarvazyan L.** 2013. Maghakia Ormanyan (national-philosophical concept), Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Sarvazyan L.** 2017a. L.Shant's argumentation in regard to independence as national-spiritual and civilizational factor, History and social sciences, 2017/3, 282-303 (in Arm.).

**Sarvazyan L.** 2017b. National-constitutional, philosophical culture in the XVIII-XIX centuries, Yerevan (in Arm.).

Imperial proclamation manifesto declaring Ottoman constitution, Ottoman constitution (December 11/23, 1876), Constantinople (in Arm.).

**Ormanyan M.** 1879. The soul of Armenians (speech), Constantinople (in Arm.).

*Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan*

---

# DEMOGRAPHY AND GOVERNANCE

---

# PROBLEMS OF CIVILIZATIONAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

**Yu. M. Suvaryan**

*Member of the NAS RA, Department of Armenology  
and Social Sciences, Academician-Secretary*

## **Abstract**

In order to discover the patterns of development of nature and society and to apply them in practice, as well as to meet the needs of people and to provide a secure environment, there was an objective necessity for the development of human civilization with the components of culture, science, production, political science and state management.

Logically and based on historical experience, the security of the statehood of each country (people) and the efficiency of public administration are conditioned by the ratio of the degree of development of political and state administrative thought to the level of civilization achieved. If the former is inferior to the latter, the efficiency of public administration significantly decreases; the statehood and the destiny of the people and the possibility of them living safely in their homeland are endangered under the influence of that factor. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize the increase of public administration efficiency, in particular, to introduce scientific principles in the system of state and local self-government, to develop the political culture of the society and the level of analytical thinking, to attach essential importance to the training of personnel in the fields of political science, diplomacy and international law and to conducting scientific research in those areas with the aim of using the results obtained while making strategic management decisions, to strictly clarify the distribution of power between the branches of government, enshrining in the constitution the necessary counterbalances and checks.

In conditions of globalization the so-called deep state is a guarantee of the security of statehood and effective governance, a factor guiding and counterbalancing the activities of civil society. In the Republic of Armenia this role can be claimed by the Armenian Apostolic Church, the intellectual and mature business elite, the high-ranking officers of the army and the National Security Service which must undertake their patriotic mission as a tradition.

**Keywords:** human civilization, political science, public administration, statehood, security, deep state, democracy, political culture

## INTRODUCTION

From its inception to the present day the history of public administration has demonstrated certain tendencies of establishment and development. On its way from collective activity to production, i.e. the creation of material goods and security measures, humanity needed a legitimate institution that would guarantee its rights, property, security of the borders of the emerging countries: this became known as a state with important state bodies (king, ministers, police, army, security service, etc.) performing its functions.

Initially, state power was assumed by the leaders of the most powerful tribes, and as it was customary in ancient times, it was passed on to the heirs, thus beginning the tradition of hereditary transfer of power. This tradition continued until the complete establishment of the public administration system (18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries). It is noteworthy that partially, though, in fact, mainly as a manifestation of a deep state it was preserved in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it operates in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well. The hereditary monarch considers their most important task to be the preservation of the state power and territorial integrity of the country; in terms of the latter, especially in the Middle Ages, the expansion and conquest of new territories as well. New territories are new resources, a means of enrichment and strengthening the country, which is tempting at all times. If in the Middle Ages the main means of occupying territories were the power structures, today they are replaced or supplemented by the influence of the so-called "soft power".

Under the public administration system, which is predominant today, state authorities are formed through civil society institutions, electoral technologies, as a result of which the winning political force forms public administration bodies. If under hereditary monarchy the factor of civilization was important for the quality of the country's development, which is essential for economic, social, cultural and security development, under public administration the components of political perception of the country's interests, understanding of the need for statehood, state organization are added as the most important preconditions for the strength of the public administration system, which are materialized through political institutions - socio-political organizations, and then through the public administration bodies formed by them.

The country benefits if the political institutions are at a high level of perception and realization of statehood and national interests, and on the contrary, the state weakens if they emphasize personal and party interests, demonstrating an inadequate level of political science and state organization.

For the strengthening of the state and prosperity of the country, the level of civilization of the people in comparison with the world average is important, as it is the key resource for the further socio-economic and cultural development, as well as for the solution of security problems.

At the same time, the correlation between the level of civilization of the people and the degree of maturity of the political institutions of the country is extremely important, which, as real life shows, is not always proportional. Moreover, the latter can be

significantly inferior to the former, which will have a negative impact on the solution of the most important problems of the statehood and state and the implementation of its functions.

It is a well-known fact that people and the organizations consisting of them are mostly guided by their own interests which are more manifested in organizational relations at all levels and also influence the behavior of political institutions. And if the level of people's awareness of and protection of statehood and politics, including national values, is not high and yields to individual interests, such a situation proves the gap between the civilizational and political-organizational levels of the society, which must be overcome, otherwise it can be tragic for the fate of that society or people. It should be noted that in literature on public administration and in modern economic and political literature<sup>1</sup> the issue of its effectiveness has not been properly considered in terms of the ratio of the country's civilizational, political and state-organizational level, and since it has a significant scientific and practical importance, it is undoubtedly a topical issue from the research point of view. From a practical and political point of view, the issue of the ratio between the civilizational and political development is essential for underdeveloped or even newly developing statehoods, as they are more vulnerable to the impact of geopolitical risks. From this viewpoint, the situation of the Republic of Armenia is special, because, unfortunately, the Armenian people lost their statehood four times - in 428, 1045, 1375 and 1920; and at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the 20<sup>th</sup> century they were regularly killed during genocide, lost their homeland, their cultural values were desecrated by savage neighbors, their material values and territories were appropriated, and today efforts are being taken to falsify history with the aim of eliminating the Armenian trace in the South Caucasus. It is obvious that the way to overcome the mentioned calamities is to strengthen the Armenian statehood in the ancient lands of the Armenian people.

The importance of factors of civilization, political science, political institutions and state-management in the system of state-building and public administration and the priorities of their purposeful use will be considered in detail below.

### **THE COMPONENT OF CIVILIZATION IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM**

The ideas of the state and then of public administration are among the achievements of human civilization, just like the well-known scientific ideas, the objects of everyday use created based on them (telephone, TV set, other radio-electronic values, cars, airplanes, etc.), well-known spiritual and material values bringing artistic pleasure. The content of public, including state administration is the embodiment of

---

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g. Pal 2005; Weimer, Vining 2010; Denhard 2006; Linz, Stephan 2011; Suvaryan, Mirzoyan 2013, Suvaryan, Sargsyan, Suvaryan 2019, Acemoglu, Robinson 2016; Ferguson 2020; Sharma 2018; Stieglitz 2020; Mukhaev 2009; Pigachev, Soloviev 2005; Soloviev 2008.

certain scientific ideas through the basic law - the constitution; other sectoral laws, organizational structures of government, security services, structures for solving territorial and strategic problems. A significant part of the scientific ideas concern the political-administrative sphere, which means that the general level of civilization, especially in terms of achievements in the fields of science and culture, is not sufficient for effective state or public administration. Historical experience shows that state administration and state-building activities are possible if the level of civilization is low, but if there is certain aspiration for statehood and state organization. If the mentioned two components are present, it is possible to have a developing and effective statehood, and if the level of civilization is not high, and the level of state-building organization is active and sufficient, a state unit can be created, which will be inferior to the previous one. However, if the aspiration for statehood and the level of organization of the society are significantly lower than the level of civilization, such peoples are often not able to build a strong, developing state. If the mentioned two components are present, it is possible to have a developing and effective statehood, and if the level of civilization is not high, and the level of state-building organization is active and sufficient, a state unit can be created, which will be inferior to the previous one with its effectiveness. However, if the aspiration for statehood and the level of organization of the society are significantly lower than the level of civilization, such peoples are often not able to build a strong and developing state.

Thus, a state is an achievement of civilization and at the same time, the development of statehood is conditioned by the civilizational rise of the country - the constant growth of science, production, culture, as well as the degree of political and administrative maturity. The latter, as mentioned, is also a component of civilization, but parts of the whole, as evidenced by historical facts, do not always develop proportionally, in terms of combination of content, region and human societies, the main author of civilization.

Culture can develop faster than science, or vice versa; their development is unique and is expressed according to peoples and countries. Some landmark discoveries of human civilization, whose geography and authors' nationality and country belonging confirm this thesis, can serve as an example.<sup>2</sup> In terms of the effectiveness of public administration, of great practical significance is the issue of the correlation between the degree of civilization of separate peoples and one of its components – political and state management thought. It is difficult to quantify these two complex phenomena; however, they can be measurable and comparable in relative indicators. Particularly, to assess the level of civilization the number of scientific achievements, works of art and literature created by each nation and accepted in the world, can be used. The level of political and state management thought can be expressed by the period of statehood of the given nation (society of the country) and the indicators of effectiveness of public administration. Mathematically, the above-mentioned ratio can be expressed as follows:

---

<sup>2</sup> See 100 great scientific discoveries 2018.

$$\frac{x}{x_i} \geq \frac{y}{y_i}, \text{ or } \frac{x}{y} \geq 1, \text{ where}$$

$x$  – is the aggregate indicator of achievements of civilization,

$x_i$  – the same for an individual country or people (community),

$y_i$  – the generalized indicator of the political and state management thought of an individual country or people (community).

If the inequality goes in the opposite direction, or the value of the fraction is less than one, it leads to inefficient public administration, even the risk of losing statehood.

Without delving into that complex mathematics (by the way, it is the subject of a separate study), let us mention that during its more than 5 thousand years of existence the Armenian people have had a statehood of 1500 years, which, as already mentioned, was lost 4 times. Meanwhile, in the field of world civilization, they have significant achievements in the fields of mathematics, astronomy, physics, fine arts, music, literature, theater, cinema, etc., which are accepted as a reality in the world.\*

According to Nobel Prize winner J. Stieglitz, the wealth of the people rests on two pillars: the first is the increase in labor productivity, the main source of which is technical progress made by state-funded basic research, which enriches the state, raises the standard of living; and the second is the well-structured society that enables people to cooperate, trade and invest and which is characterized by the rule of law, democracy, necessary legal processes, system of checks and balances.<sup>3</sup> It is obvious that the two well-known components of civilization - science and the political-and-administrative system –are important for a rich and secure state, and therefore, for effective public administration, but both must be at a high level of development and maturity. Furthermore, the practical provision of scientific and technical progress can also be a result of political and administrative decisions. By the way, the correlation between civilization and its other component, economics and economic policy, is also essential for economic growth and innovative development. In reply to a question about the Industrial Revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century England, two Western authors give differing answers.

According to A. Toynbee, this revolution took place in England because the stagnation of politics, religion and lifestyle accelerated the concentration of industry, which stimulated the pursuit of technical discoveries, which were promoted by the development of mathematics and the achievements of physical science.<sup>4</sup> According to D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson, industrial revolution took place in England because there

---

\*In terms of scientific achievements, world-famous names are M. Khorenatsi, A. Shirakatsi, M. Gosh, V. Hambardzumyan, S. Mergelyan, Abraham and Artem Alikhanyans, Yu. Hovhannisyan, H. Orbeli, H. Adamyan, I. Knunyants, B. Margaryan, A. Takhtajyan. A huge contribution in the fields of art and literature has been made by T. Roslin, H. Aivazovsky, M. Saryan, A. Khachatryan, Komitas, S. Parajanov, R. Mamulyan, V. Papazyan, Narekatsi, H. Tumanyan, A. Isahakyan, V. Saroyan. Certainly the list is not complete, it can be continued, which proves the significant contribution of the Armenian people in various spheres of human civilization.

<sup>3</sup> See Stieglitz 2020: 14-15.

<sup>4</sup> See Toynbee 1991: 25.



were unique inclusive economic institutions, which in their turn were the product of similar political institutions and ensured property rights, had ended the state monopoly on foreign trade and removed barriers to the development of industry.<sup>5</sup>

Both answers are in fact correct, but taken separately they are not complete; they complement each other. Toynbee's answer emphasizes the concentration of industry and the pursuit of innovative development. All this is possible in the conditions of the existence of a corresponding political and economic environment, which is expressed in D. Acemoglu's and J. Robinson's point of view. And the concentration of industry is a consequence of accumulation of capital, which is based on the development of economic thought, classical macroeconomics [A. Smith (1776), J. B. Sey (1803), J. S. Mill (1848)].<sup>6</sup> In both approaches this important provision is missing. In other words, the degree of maturity of economic and political institutions in England, being proportional to the level of civilization, contributed to the industrial revolution, the innovative development of economy.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR STATEHOOD AND STATE ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS**

In the modern world, in every advanced country, public authorities form civil society organizations through democratic principles. These organizations are to exercise the people's right to power through the formation of state and local self-government bodies and arrangement of their activities. Human society has come a long way to achieve this structure of public administration bodies.

In the ancient world, politics was considered to be a set of moral and ethical preconditions for the rational organization of society, and its essence is the unification of people to achieve the lofty goals of the state and people (Aristotle).<sup>7</sup> Political science, as a teaching about politics, has developed in four stages:<sup>8</sup>

- initial phase (V century BC - XVII century AD, during which political philosophy was formed, and then the political science of the Renaissance emerged);
- rationalization phase (XVII-XIX centuries), which includes the theories of political thinkers of the new age;
- classic phase (first quarter of the XIX century - beginning of the XX century), when political science was formed as an academic course in the USA, Germany, France and Great Britain;
- modern phase (XX-XXI centuries) - the period of formation of the main schools and directions of modern political science.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Acemoglu, Robinson 2016: 284.

<sup>6</sup> See in detail Samuelson, Nordhaus 2000: 638-642.

<sup>7</sup> See Mukhaev 2009: 38-39.

<sup>8</sup> See Mukhaev 2009: 60-61.

The founder of political science is considered to be N. Machiavelli, Italian philosopher, diplomat, writer who believed that power in all its manifestations was the subject of political science.<sup>9</sup> In his famous work "The Prince", N. Machiavelli describes the types of the state, the methods of governing and maintaining power, the principles of conducting military affairs, the purposeful relations between society and state.<sup>10</sup>

It is noteworthy that Armenian thinkers have created well-known intellectual and material monuments of history, literature, culture, as well as valuable philosophical, constitutional (legal) works, but until the end of the XIX century (creation of the first political parties) the purely political thought seems poor, and later it gained momentum after the proclamation of the Third Republic of Armenia.

Armenian social and political organizations began to form at the end of the XIX century, when there was no independent Armenian state and the Armenian people with its ancestral territories, were part of the Russian and Ottoman empires. One of the first parties was the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), founded in 1890 with the initial aim of organizing the national liberation movement and solving the Armenian question. The Social Democratic Hunchakian Party (SDHP) was founded for the same purpose in 1887. The next political force was the Ramkavar Party (Armenian Democratic Liberal Party), which was founded in 1921, also with the aim of solving the Armenian question. The first two of these parties, especially the ARF, participated in the establishment of the First Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) and in the important work of state building.<sup>11</sup> After the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia (1920-1991), one party ruled, the Communist Party of Armenia, which was a subsidiary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and the above-mentioned Armenian traditional parties began to operate abroad, mainly addressing national preservation and cultural issues. After the establishment of the Third Republic of Armenia in 1991, a multi-party, democratic system of public administration was legally formed in the country, and the authority bodies were formed by civil society institutions.<sup>12</sup> As a result of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia (1995) adopted after 1991 and its reforms, and the establishment of a corresponding liberal legal field, the traditional national parties were given an opportunity to operate in the homeland. Besides, new social and political formations were established, the number of which as of 01.01.2020 reached 109. The institution of expertise was gradually formed. However, the inadequate quality of public administration and the political developments that have taken place especially after April 2018, prove that the level of political maturity of the civil society, the understanding of the need for statehood and state organization are not in line with the current geopolitical challenges. It can be assumed that this phenomenon is the result of not having a

---

<sup>9</sup> See Mukhaev 2009: 69-70.

<sup>10</sup> See Machiavelli 2010: 6-87.

<sup>11</sup> See in detail Suvaryan, Sargsyan, Hayrapetyan, Asatryants, Kocharyan 2018: 20-36.

<sup>12</sup> The process of establishment of civil society in Armenia, the role of mass media in the public administration system and the issues of their development were covered in the work Suvaryan, Sargsyan, Asatryants, Kocharyan 2021.

statehood for centuries, lack of experience in state administration, immaturity of political and expert thought or being in the process of establishment. However, unfortunately, the analysis of the historical course of the Armenian statehood suggests that there are other reasons as well, which are not overcome over time, but continue. Some of those reasons are:<sup>13</sup>

- internal instability between the branches of power, as well as disagreement with the church, disunity;
- inefficiency of the leader, often lack of the necessary qualities;
- the low political culture of the society - the near absence of universally accepted values, orientations, development priorities;
- unfavorable public environment, i.e. indifferent attitude of members of society, state officials to patriotic events;
- the disintegration of the political system because of not understanding the importance of unity and integration of political forces in case of necessity. In the past this phenomenon was manifested in the form of internal struggle between the royal power and feudal lords, as well as between each other. The constant presence of centrifugal forces is a sad fact;
- the insidious policy of foreign states, to which our resistance potential is weak for the above-mentioned reasons.

These are often supplemented by decision making in management without accurate calculation of geopolitical risks, without forecast calculations, which has catastrophic consequences for the country and the people. Unfortunately, our history is rich in such examples.

This proves that the efficiency of public administration needs to be significantly improved, and the most important factors for that are:

- raising the level of state organization and discipline with mandatory fulfillment of the rule of law and authority attached;
- introducing scientific principles in the system of public administration, especially in the process of making the most important strategic decisions, which can be achieved through the right selection of management staff, involvement of experts;
- attaching essential importance to the training of personnel in the fields of political science, diplomacy and international law, conducting scientific research in those areas, raising the level of political culture and mindset of the society;
- strictly clarifying the distribution of power between the branches of government, enshrining in the constitution the necessary counterbalances and checks, which was partially overshadowed by the recent constitutional reforms (2015);
- returning to the semi-presidential system of public administration, as the transition to the principles of parliamentary governance was untimely for the current level of maturity of civil society.

---

<sup>13</sup> See in detail Suvaryan, Sargsyan, Suvaryan 2019: 149-171.

In the context of the above, let us consider another problem which needs to be solved. At the end of the XIX century and during the XX century a modern classical democratic theory of the so-called political elite was formed, according to which the world should be ruled by a select minority - the elite, people endowed with special qualities (natural endowment, education, upbringing).<sup>14</sup> Moreover, according to this theory, being an elite or having an elite is a condition of effective activity of the society, it is based on the natural division between managerial and executive work, and the formation of the elite is a consequence of the natural selection of the society when the most deserving are singled out. The selection structures are different, among them are quality university education, work (including socio-political), elections, sociological polls, press reactions, etc.<sup>15</sup> By the way, the privileged (charismatic) individuals who exercise the power (leadership) of example are usually distinguished from the elite.<sup>16</sup> According to modern researchers, the problem of the modern democratic state is not the struggle against the elite, but the formation of useful, effective elite for the society, its timely qualitative renewal, the prevention of oligarchy and tendency of becoming a closed, privileged ruling class.<sup>17</sup>

### **DEEP STATE: ITS ESSENCE, NEED AND FORMS OF MANIFESTATION**

In the pages of publicistic or encyclopedic literature ("Regnum", "Wikipedia" encyclopedia, etc.) the phrase "deep state" is often found in connection with several elite families (for example, "General Motors", "General Electric" owners), a party, religious (Islamic Republic of Iran) or state politician, army (Turkey, Egypt), etc. It is noteworthy that the idea of a deep state is not covered in the scientific literature. At first glance, the perception of the phenomenon is negative, because, especially nowadays, there are democratically elected state and local self-government bodies, and it raises the question of what dictates the idea of a deep state. However, real life, military-and-political developments, vigorous economic competition and the struggle for spheres of influence lead to the conclusion that, as noted by the theorists of the "social alliance" of the origin of the state (T. Hobbes<sup>18</sup>, J. Locke<sup>19</sup>), the danger of "the war of all against all" is characteristic of people, if there is no state power, and in our opinion, nowadays the same phenomenon refers to interstate relations. And although the understanding of that danger led to the establishment of supranational structures (League of Nations, then the UN, various allied military-and-political associations), nevertheless, each state, by objective necessity, is obliged to strengthen its internal and external security. The army,

---

<sup>14</sup> See Pugachev, Soloviev 2005: 132-152.

<sup>15</sup> See Pugachev, Soloviev 2005: 139-149.

<sup>16</sup> See Mescon, Albert, Hedouri 2000: 468, 475.

<sup>17</sup> See Pugachev, Soloviev 2005: 147.

<sup>18</sup> See Hobbs 1991.

<sup>19</sup> Locke 1988.

national security and internal affairs structures are created with these considerations. Studies show that the deep state is one of the important parts in this system. It is especially necessary in the context of color revolutions carried out under the influence of soft power, when the state is threatened by domestic political institutions acting under the influence of external forces, in the interests of other countries. This can occur even under one of the most important rules of democracy, the rule of law. Especially, according to Western experts, civil society is experiencing a setback not so much because of technology (TV, Internet, Facebook, etc.) as because of excessive state harassment.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, “civil society seems to be an abandoned zone between corporate interests and all-consuming state” and “the rule of law, which is so important for democracy and capitalism, threatens to become the rule of lawyers”.<sup>21</sup> There is even a tendency for the United States to become a country where the economy and democracy are for one percent of the population and at the wish of that one percent.<sup>22</sup> Such a situation of inequality of people is dangerous not only for the given country, but also for others, since the rich elite seeks to extend its political and economic influence to different regions, continuing the medieval traditions of colonization under the influence of “soft power”, as described in Yu. N. Harari’s work.<sup>23</sup> Under a hereditary monarchy, the need for a deep state was minimal, as the monarch and his family ruled the country and its riches, and were interested in expanding and developing the existing wealth. In the current conditions of public administration, the phenomenon of heredity is ruled out, political institutions are relatively temporary rulers and their connection with the fate of the country is their devotion to national values and patriotism. In the current conditions of globalization, the latter are variable in relation to hereditary property, subject to interested influence. It is this circumstance that makes the deep state necessary, as security forces are largely under the subordination of elected state bodies, especially if the counterbalances between the branches of power are constitutionally structured incorrectly, a phenomenon typical of young and underdeveloped countries.\* Thus, the

---

<sup>20</sup> See Ferguson 2020: 130-161.

<sup>21</sup> See Ferguson 2020: 180.

<sup>22</sup> See Stieglitz 2020: 7 (By the way, this phenomenon is a proof of the inequality of people, the distortion of democracy, the existence of a deep state, the desire to spread the influence of small groups in different regions of the world).

<sup>23</sup> See Harari 2020: 512.

\* In conditions of globalization the formation of public administration bodies according to democratic principles carries risks that are difficult to manage for the following reasons:

- it is extremely difficult for an ordinary citizen today to orientate themselves to the proposed solutions of the most difficult problems of both domestic and foreign policy, which are presented by political forces;
- society is polarized according to the intellectual level and often the majority are people for whom it is almost impossible to understand geopolitical issues and deceptive demagogic promises concerning very pleasant personal interests, which increases the chances of populists to seize power;
- the institutions armed with the ideas of globalization of civil society, can quickly emphasize the universal values in the process of elections and further processes, instead of national values and interests.

phenomenon of the “deep state” is to complete the statehood of the country, not to allow the current political institutions to deviate from national values and the national vision of the development of the state and country. By its nature, it is an inapparent but stable and important component of national security. It should be emphasized that in terms of the formation of power, the content of state policy, the deep state can mean a crawling return to the concept of a noble state that existed until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which should be avoided by legislation.

Referring to the ways of manifestation of the deep state, which, as already mentioned, are diverse, it is noticeable that several European and Asian countries have preferred the institution of traditional hereditary monarchy (Great Britain, Spain, Japan, etc.). Russia will probably take that path, too (see Haldey 2020).

Among these options are the intellectual (also expert) or business elite, the religious ideology headed by the leader, various political organizations (parties), the army officers, etc. The historically well-established structure in Armenia, which can claim this role in the first place, is the Armenian Apostolic Church, which ensured the preservation of Armenian identity in the absence of statehood for centuries, even having a legal basis – the “Armenian Book of Canons”, in addition to its Christian ideology.

Furthermore, the responsibilities of strengthening the statehood must also be borne by the intellectuals and mature business elite, the high-ranking officers of the army and the National Security Service. By the way, the mentioned authorities are not enshrined in the legislative documents in any country. They are formed, established, accepted by the public over the years, becoming a tradition. The essential thing is that the above-mentioned entities should realize their mission, gain the public’s trust through their actions and become a strong bastion for the strengthening and development of Armenian statehood.

## CONCLUSIONS

For the efficiency of public administration and the security of statehood the level of human civilization in the country is crucial as a key resource for further socio-economic and cultural development and solving security issues, in addition to the high level of political science and state management thought, for making accurate forecast calculations taking into account the available resources and geopolitical risks and for making sound and purposeful management decisions.

Historical analysis shows that if the latter is significantly inferior to the former, which is observed in newly developing or still weak countries, it will have a negative impact on the process of solution of the most important problems of the statehood and state and its results. Considering the reasons leading to such a situation, in particular

---

It is noteworthy that Plato pointed out the possible shortcomings of democracy, emphasizing that under those conditions “equals and inequals” are equated, as a result of which demagoguery rules, moral standards are distorted (see Plato 1971: 150, 374, 380).

for the Republic of Armenia, it is important to increase the scientific level of public administration, which can be achieved by choosing the right management staff, by taking into account the results of scientific research and conclusions of industry experts for making strategic decisions. The most important issue is the balanced distribution of power between the branches of government and its mandatory implementation by the rule of law, enshrining in the constitution the necessary counterbalances and checks.

Transition to the principles of parliamentary governance in the current level of maturity of civil society was untimely. Therefore, it is necessary to return to the semi-presidential system of public administration.

By examining the phenomenon of the so-called deep state, viewing it as a guarantee of the security of statehood, a complex of ways of its possible application has been proposed for the purpose of neutralizing the globalization and geopolitical risks.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Acemoglu D., Robinson D.A.** 2016. Why are some countries rich and others poor?, in *Origins of power, prosperity, and poverty*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Denhard R.B.** 2006. *Theories of Public Organization*, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Ferguson N.** 2020. *The Great Degeneration: How Institutions Decay and Economies die*, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Haldey A.** 2020. Deep state in Russia - utopia or reality?, "Regnum", 21.05.2020 (in Russian).

**Harari Yu. N.** 2020. *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Hobbs T.** 1991. *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill*, in *Works in 2 volumes*, vol.2, Moscow (in Russian).

**Linz J.J., Stephan A.** 2011. *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Locke J.** 1988. *Two Treatises of Government*, in *Works in 3 volumes*, vol.3, Moscow (in Russian).

**Machiavelli N.** 2010. *The Prince. History of Florence*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Mescon M., Albert M., F.Hedouri** 2000. *Basics of Management*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Mukhaev R.T.** 2009. *Politology*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Pal L.** 2005. *Beyond Policy Analysis: Public Issue Management in Turbulent Times*, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Plato** 1971. *State*, in *Works in 3 volumes*, vol.3, p.1, Moscow (in Russian).

**Pugachev V.P., Soloviev A.I.** 2005. *Introduction into Politology*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Samuelson P.A., Nordhaus W.D.** 2000. *Economics*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Sharma R.** 2018. *The Rise and Fall of Nations. Forces of Change in the Post-Crisis World*, Moscow (in Russian).

**Soloviev A.I.** 2008. Politology. political theory, political technologies, Moscow (in Russian).

**Stieglitz J.** 2020. People, Power and Profits. Progressive Capitalism for an Age of mass discontent, Moscow (in Russian).

**Suvaryan Yu. M., Mirzoyan V.** 2013. Theory of public governance and history, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Suvaryan Yu.M., Sargsyan V.A., Hayrapetyan R.A., Asatryants S.A., Kocharyan M.R.** 2018. Public governance in the Republic of Armenia. the course of development and priorities of reforms, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Suvaryan Yu. M., Sargsyan V.A., Suvaryan A.S.** 2019. Methodological problems of public administration, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Suvaryan Yu.M., Sargsyan V.A., Asatryants S.A., Kocharyan M.R.** 2021. Infrastructures of public governance and efficiency, Yerevan (in Arm.).

**Toynbee A.J.** 1991. A Study of History, Moscow (in Russian).

**Weimer D.L., Vining A.R.** 2010. Policy Analysis. Concepts and practice, Yerevan (in Arm.).

100 great scientific discoveries 2018. Kharkov (in Russian).

*Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan*



---

# FOREIGN SOURCES AND AUTHORS ABOUT ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS

---

## **JOHN MACDONALD KINNEIR**

**Journey Through Asia Minor, Armenia, and Koordistan, in the years 1813 and 1814; with remarks on the Marches of Alexander, and retreat of Ten Thousand, London: John Murray, Albemarle-Street, 1818 (pp.343-435) .**

---

The extracted passages from captain J.M.Kinneir's memories describe his journey through western Armenia, from Trebisonde to Mardin, at the year of 1814.

---

### **DEPARTURE FROM TREBISONDE, AND ARRIVAL AT ERZERUM**

5th. We departed from Trebisonde at noon, and ascending the hills immediately behind the town, traversed for five miles a rough and stony road, when we descended into a narrow valley, and following the left bank of a small but rapid river, called the Mariamane su, reached at the close of the evening, and termination of fifteen miles, the hamlet of Maturage, where it was necessary to take a guard. The mountains on either side of the valley were cultivated to their summits, producing plenty of barley, flax and maize, and the cabins of the natives were perched on the steepest declivities. The river Mariamane, which at the eighth mile is joined by another stream from the S. E., and loses itself in the Black Sea a mile E. of Trebisonde, is said to have its source near a neighbouring monastery of the same name, described as being a large edifice standing on the top of a mountain so difficult of access, that any person desirous of entering the building must be drawn up the side of the precipice in a basket. The aga of Maturage said, that it was inhabited by a Greek abbot and several monks, at the same time remarking, as a most wonderful circumstance, that the roof was covered with lead.

8th. It rained so heavily during the night, and the early part of the morning, that we were unable to mount before nine o'clock. We travelled, for the first three miles, in the same valley as yesterday, when we reached the ruined village of Jemishee, where the Mariamane su is joined by another stream, flowing from the S. W. Here, after having crossed the Mariamane su near the junction, we began to ascend a very steep and lofty mountain. The river was on our right hand, and, at the end of the fifth mile, we observed, from above, that it was joined by a third stream from the south. The slopes of the mountains, for the first seven miles, were cultivated; but afterwards, as we still continued ascending, the country became more woody, and the size of the trees gradually increased as we advanced. Firs and beeches were the most common trees, the former below, the latter in more lofty situations. On each hand were deep ravines with rivulets flowing through them, and, at the fifteenth mile we reached a small hamlet, called Mation, where we halted to refresh our guards and horses, fatigued with the badness of the roads and the steepness of the ascent. A short distance from Mation we lost sight of the beech-groves, and only saw a few straggling sycamores, but those also soon disappeared, and, at the eighteenth mile, we were enveloped in a thick mist, whilst

the snow lay three or four feet deep on the ground. The cold was so piercing that we were completely benumbed: the mist, or rather sleet, fell so fast as to wet us to the skin, and when, at six in the evening, we reached the summit of the mountain, (from which the Euxine is visible in a clear day,) the melting snow presented a grand and singular spectacle. From the natural heat of the ground, that which is below is the soonest to dissolve; the snow consequently forms extensive concavities, and a person might walk, for a considerable distance, under a sort of arch, down the middle of which flows a rapid torrent of muddy water. These mountains are called Koat Dag by the Turks, and are probably the same that were defended by the Colchians against the Ten Thousand.<sup>1</sup> As the night advanced the cold became more intense, and therefore intending to push on before the baggage, I ordered my Greek servant to follow us, but he peremptorily refused to obey, and when I asked him to deliver up my pistols, he threw off his turban and cloak, and dismounting from his horse, presented one of the pistols to my breast, threatening, in the most furious and menacing manner, to fire. I was quite unarmed, but my friend, Mr. Chavassee, the moment he had recovered from his surprize at the man's extraordinary behaviour, immediately advanced, and would have killed him on the spot had I not interfered; for although the rascal richly deserved to be punished, I was unwilling to deprive him of life. He ran towards his horse, and mounting, galloped on in front, keeping us, however, always in sight. Our guard was several miles in the rear, and the Tatar stood perfectly composed, and not in any way inclined to take a part in the fray. We now began to descend through deep ravines in the mountains, down the sides of which torrents, occasioned by the melting of the snow, rushed in all directions. At the twenty-fourth mile we crossed a rapid stream flowing N. W. and winding through several narrow defiles, reached at the twenty-eighth mile the village of Estoury, where we passed the night in a miserable cabin. The climate is here so severe, that the people are compelled to live underground, fruits do not reach perfection, and the wretched crops of barley on the steep slopes of the mountains scarcely repay the labour of the husbandman. The nature of the country in short seemed to have entirely changed; all verdure had disappeared, and instead of green fields, fine groves, and flowering shrubs, nothing was to be seen but bleak and barren mountains tipped with snow, intersected with hollow glens and frightful precipices. The villages were hid from the view; the roofs of the cottages being on a level with the ground and covered with earth, so that the path led not unfrequently over the tops of the houses.

9th. During the whole of the night I saw nothing of my servant, and Mahomed Aga, who had been ordered to take the pistols from him, refused, with his usual obstinacy, to comply. In the morning, however, the Greek, humbled and afraid, came to make his peace, but I declined hearing him, unless he first delivered up the pistols, which Mr. Chavassee endeavoured to seize by force, but was prevented by some of our guards. A scuffle instantly ensued, in which we succeeded in getting the pistols into our

---

<sup>1</sup> From the top of the great mountain, which the Colchians defended against the Ten Thousand, the Greeks reached Trebisond in two days so that the distance exactly corresponds.

possession. The guards were sulky, and threatened us, and on our descending the hills, after we had taken our departure, began to fire their carabines, with the view, I suppose, of intimidating us; but the domestic shewed signs of contrition, and sent the Tatar to us several times to demand pardon. We had mounted at eight o'clock in the morning, although our horses were so much fatigued with the journey of the preceding day, that we despaired of reaching Gemishkhana that night. The road, for the first three miles, led through a defile, and along the left bank of the torrent which we had crossed the former evening; we then turned more to the south, and, at the fifth mile, forded another stream flowing N. W. These two rivers form a junction a few miles from this spot. We now began gradually to ascend by a narrow foot path, leading through a succession of hollows and ravines, until, at the end of the mile, we gained the summit of a mountain called Korash Dag, from which we had a view of the town of Gemishkhana bearing S., distant about five miles horizontally. This mountain was so steep, and the road so bad, that we were compelled to dismount from our horses, and walk on foot for nearly an hour, when we descended into a narrow but beautiful valley, washed by the river Kharshoot, which holds a N. W. course, and enters the Euxine between Tereboli and Euloi. The whole of the valley was one continued garden of fruit trees, irrigated by canals from the river, which we crossed on a stone bridge, and then travelled, for four miles, along its banks under a shade of walnut, plum, apple, pear, almond, and quince trees. We then crossed a small stream, which here joins the Kharshoot, ascended for about half a mile, and entered the gates of Gemishkhana, an extraordinary looking town, built, amidst rocks and precipices, on the brow of the mountains. After waiting at the gate of the governor's palace for some minutes, we were conducted to a pleasant lodging, where we spread our carpets on a wooden platform, erected under the shade of the trees.

Gemishkhana, or the Silver House, is so named from a silver mine in its neighbourhood, which still continues to be worked, but does not yield a third part of the silver which it formerly did. The town is said to contain seven thousand inhabitants, of which number eleven hundred are Greeks, and seven hundred Armenians. It is embellished with five khans, two baths, four Greek churches, and an Armenian chapel; the houses rise one above another, and are better built than those in most Turkish towns. The Greeks, who are very numerous in the adjacent country, have several monasteries, filled with monks, and one, in particular, called Jeuna, a place of pilgrimage, and said to be a large and handsome edifice, richly endowed. Gemishkhana is three days journey from Kara Hissar, over stupendous mountains, only to be passed in summer. The temperature this morning, at 7 o'clock, was 57 of Fahrenheit, and yesterday, at 6 in the morning, 43.

Shortly after our arrival, the master of the house where we were lodged, and several other respectable people, came and entreated us to pardon my servant, who throwing himself at our feet, promised to conduct himself with more propriety in future. Upon the whole we thought it better to receive him again into favour, for to say the truth,

we had it not in our power to punish him, and should have been much in want of his services.

We rested a day at Gemishkhana, and on the 11th, the postmaster sent us seven horses, protesting that there were no more in his stables, although he immediately afterwards brought the others in return for a few rubas. We were, as usual, beset by about fifty people demanding buckshish, but, after rewarding all those who had been of any service to us, we put spurs to our horses, and with difficulty extricated ourselves from the clamours and imprecations of the others. We left the city by the same road we had entered it, and descending the hill recrossed the Kharshout, along the right bank of which we continued to travel, for the first four miles, through groves of fruit trees, that formed a pleasant contrast to the rocky and arid mountains on each side. The valley then became uninhabited and deficient in wood; on the right hand we had the river, and on the left steep and rugged precipices.\* At the ninth mile we halted, for a few minutes, at a village called Peka, and, at the twelfth, passed the ruins of a second village, where the river is joined by another coming from the N. E. We then travelled, for four miles, through a country equally rocky and unfertile, the river being considerably diminished in size as we approached its source. At the sixteenth mile we halted, for half an hour, at the village of Boos Kela, which stands at the foot of a stupendous rock crowned by an ancient castle. We then continued our journey still up the valley, until, at the twenty-fourth mile, we quitted the river. As we had been gradually ascending the whole of the day, we gained the summit of the mountains at the twenty-fifth mile, and entered a more open country, affording excellent pasturage, and abounding in springs of good water. Neither tree nor shrub was anywhere visible, but the green meadows were strewn with tulips and a variety of herbs. At the twenty-sixth mile we descended into a plain, having a rivulet flowing parallel with the road on the right hand; at the twenty-eighth mile this is joined by another stream from the N., and the plain widening at the twenty eighth, we saw some signs of cultivation. The crops looked poor and thin, and although the corn in the vale of Gemishkhana was nearly ripe, here it was not more than three inches above the ground. At the twenty-ninth mile was the village of Booboordy, at some distance from the road on the left hand, and at the thirty-third we halted for the night at Balahare, a small place celebrated for the variety of its lilacs and poplars. The houses of this place were, as they usually are in the mountains of Armenia, built almost entirely underground; their roofs were overgrown with grass, and goats and sheep were seen grazing upon them. Notwithstanding the coldness of the night, we preferred sleeping in a large buffalo waggon to the gloomy and filthy interior of these hovels, where air is only admitted through the door, which is seldom left open; and where cows, sheep, and dogs are accommodated in the same room with the family.

---

\* The Greeks, during the first day's march through the country of the Macronians, had on their right an eminence of difficult access, and on their left a river, into which the river that served as boundary between the two nations emptied itself. The banks of this river were covered with trees, which were not large, but grew close to one another. Does not this description answer that of the Gemishkhana river?

12th. We rose before sun-rise, nearly perished with cold, and mounting our horses, continued our journey across a table-land varied by gentle slopes. At one and a half mile we passed the stream abovementioned, greatly increased in size; it receded to the left, taking an E. S. E. course along the foot of a high range of mountains, and fifteen or sixteen miles below the bridge where we crossed, it unites with the river Tehorah. The road, for the whole of the way, led through the same sort of country; that is to say, bare and bleak, but producing a rich kind of grass, and bounded on either side by a range of lofty mountains running parallel with the road; that on the right nearly twenty miles off, and that on the left about half the distance. At the tenth mile we perceived several small villages in the plain; at the thirteenth came in sight of the castle of Byaboot; and at the sixteenth mile reached the casaban of that name, where we were received by a chief, in a house fantastically decorated with the heads and horns of deer nailed upon the walls. Byaboot is a straggling place, about a mile in length, situated on a slope on the banks of the river Tehorah, called, in former times, the Boas and Acampsis; it seems, from its position, to represent the ancient Varutha, and it is defended by a castle which has some marks of antiquity. Several of the houses are tolerably well built, and amongst some ruins we observed the vestiges of a beautiful Turkish tomb, of the same order of architecture as that of Zobeida at Bagdad. The castle occupies an insulated hill of considerable diameter, at the north end of the town, which, according to the tradition of the inhabitants, was founded by a colony of Scythians in the days of Alexander, and flourished as a large city so late as the time of the house of Seljuck.

The natives, in this part of Armenia, are a short, stout, and active race of men, remarkably dark in their complexions; they are brave and hardy, enured to cold and fatigue, and passionately fond of hunting the stag, with which the mountains abound. Those who can afford it wear the Turkish dress, and the lower orders a short jacket and wide pair of trowsers, made of brown woollen cloth, manufactured at home, and trimmed with black or red lace; a small cap or turban covers the head, and, instead of shoes, they have a wooden sandal bound with untanned leather. We found them invariably civil, and, considering that they had never seen an European before, they regarded us with very little curiosity. The winters are so severe, that all communication is said to be cut off between Byaboot and the circumjacent villages for four months of the year, in consequence of the depth of the snow. There is no wood nearer than three days' journey, and cow-dung baked in the sun, and collected during the summer months, is the only fuel which the poor can afford to purchase. Instead of walls and bastions, the town is defended by portable towers made of logs of wood. They are musket proof and of a triangular shape, having raised turrets at each angle. If required in any distant part of the country, as not unfrequently happens, they may be taken to pieces, or, if the roads will admit of it, transplanted on three little wheels. We could not help being struck with the resemblance of those machines to the moving towers of the ancients; and in so secluded a part of the world, it is probable that little alteration has

taken place in the customs of the natives for centuries. Our bearings from Trebisonde were as follows: one mile and a half S. S. E., two miles and a half S. by E., two miles S., three miles S. by W., two miles and a half S. S. W., two miles and a half S. W., two miles S. W., one mile S. S. W., two miles S. W. by W., one mile S. S. W., three miles S., two miles S. S. W., two miles S. W. by S., two miles S. W., two miles S. by W., two miles S. S. E., two miles S. by E., two miles S., two miles S. by W., two miles S. S. W., two miles W. by S., one mile S. E., three miles S. S. W., one mile S., one mile S. S. W., four miles S. W., six miles S., two miles S. E., two miles S., two miles S. E., S. E., four miles E. S. E., three miles E. by S., two miles E. by N., one mile E. S. E., one mile E. N. E., two miles E. by S., one mile E. S. E., seven miles S. E., one mile E. by N., three miles and a half E. S. E., one mile and a half E. by N., four miles E. S. E., two miles E. S. E., one mile S. E., three miles E. S. E., one mile E. by S., five miles E. S. E.

13th. Byaboot is equally distant from Erzeroum and Arzingan\*, and the Tehorah, although here a stream of no great magnitude, afterwards becomes one of the finest rivers in Armenia. It flows from hence to Ispira<sup>2</sup> and constituting the boundary of the territories of Trebisonde and Guerian, enters the Euxine at Balxumi. An event occurred, which might probably have detained us some days at this place. The aga took a fancy to Mr. Chavassee's fowling piece, which he had seen from the window on the day of our arrival, and immediately expressed a desire to have it. He had promised that the horses should be in readiness the preceding evening, but finding that Mr. Chavassee could not be induced to part with his gun, he withheld them, under pretence that they had wandered into the mountains. The drift of his proceeding did not escape us, and we therefore wrote him a note, stating that we were resolved he should not have the fusée, and that if he detained us much longer, I would lodge a complaint against him with the pasha of Erzeroum. We heard no more of him, but the horses came, and at ten o'clock we had commenced our journey to Askela, a distance of twelve hours, or about forty-two miles. The temperature at nine P. M. was 56, at seven A. M. 50, and at mid-day 59.

We crossed the river on a bridge, and then pursued our journey up an uncultivated valley, on a sort of terrace raised along the right bank of the Tehorah. At the fourth mile the valley became contracted, the bed of the river occupied nearly the whole of it; the mountains on each side were grand and striking; but not a blade of grass, nor sign of cultivation, was any where to be seen. At the eighth mile we recrossed the river, here extremely rapid, and travelled for four miles on the left bank. At the twelfth mile we quitted the Tehorah, flowing from the E., and turning towards the S., marched along the edge of a tributary stream nearly as large as the principal branch. At the fifteenth mile passed this stream at a place where it is joined by another rivulet coming from the S., and then followed its right bank, crossing at the seventeenth a tributary rivulet from the

\* This is a town about the size of Gemishkhana, and celebrated for its vines.

<sup>2</sup> Ispira, the ancient Hispiratis, is twenty-eight hours distant from Byaboot. It is said to be the richest and the hottest district in this quarter of Armenia, and produces the most delicious fruits. The city itself is inconsiderable, and only derives consequence from the wealth and number of its dependent villages.

N. We had as yet travelled through a perfect wilderness, dreary and uninhabited; but at the eighteenth mile the country became less barren, the sides of the mountains assumed a verdant appearance, and the banks of the river were covered with beech and juniper trees. The tulip, the beauty of which I had often before remarked, was everywhere conspicuous; and I saw a bush much resembling the gooseberry, with this difference, that it had no prickles, and the leaves were somewhat larger. At the twenty-sixth mile we reached the base of the Cop Dag, formerly called the Scydisses, said to be the most lofty range in Armenia, not excepting Ararat,\* which, according to the information of our guides, might be seen from their summits in a clear day. We halted for an hour to refresh our horses, whose food being confined to green forage, they were unable to stand much fatigue. We had traced the river to its source; it was formed by a number of rivulets, some of which originated in the melting of the snow, but the greater proportion in the springs which were everywhere abundant. At sun-set we gained the top of the mountains, having travelled twenty-eight miles: here we enjoyed an unbounded and noble prospect of the surrounding country; a prodigious mass of mountains extended, in bold and successive ridges, far beyond the reach of the eye; the whitened summits of the more elevated ranges, opposed to the verdure of long and narrow vallies washed by foaming torrents, and the brown peaks of the less lofty hills, altogether displayed a scene of uncommon grandeur, and bore a strong similitude to the seas in a stormy day. We counted four distinct ranges running parallel with each other, in a N. E. and S. W. direction; the most northerly was that which I mentioned as being on our left hand the day we entered Byaboot; the second, and most lofty,\* that on which we were standing; the third, called the Kebban Dag, bounds the plain of Erzerum on the S. E., and the last, still farther to the south, skirts the borders of the lake of Van. These mountains are fruitful in springs, the sources of innumerable rivers; and the melting of the snows at this season of the year gives rise to many torrents which dash down the rugged steeps into the plains below. All the rivers on the north side of the Scydisses flow into the Euxine Sea, and all those on the S. are tributary to the Euphrates, which we saw bending its course to the W. in a valley beneath us. Those parts of the mountains where the snow had already melted were covered with a coarse grass, wild thyme, balm, and other aromatic plants, which, when pressed by the horses' hoofs, emitted a delightful perfume. By the time we had reached the summit our horses were completely exhausted; the night was fast closing upon us; and the nearest village being still about fifteen miles distant, we had no alternative but that of passing the night on the mountain: we found it, however, so intolerably cold immediately on the top, that we made an extraordinary effort, and walked for three miles along the edge of a torrent, which, from a small brook, became a rapid stream in the course of this short distance. Its banks were clothed with thick brushwood, the resort of lions and other ferocious

---

\* We had been ascending ever since we quitted Trebisonde.

\* We were prevented from ascertaining the elevation of those mountains, in consequence of our barometers having been broken.



animals, which, as our guides informed us, descend into the plains during the night, and carry off the sheep and cattle of the peasantry. At the thirty-first mile we unloaded our horses; and having made a fire to frighten away the lions, two of which had already crossed our road, we went to sleep\* until the dawn of day, when we awoke benumbed with cold, and continued gradually to descend until we arrived at Askela, the ancient Brepus. We passed several torrents rolling into the Euphrates, the banks of which we reached at the sixth mile, and for the first time since we had quitted Byaboot, perceived some detached plots of cultivated land, but the corn was not more than a couple of inches in height. Near the entrance to Askela we forded a small river coming from the N., and tributary to the Euphrates, which it joins half a mile south of the village. This is a miserable place, inhabited partly by Turks and partly by Armenians, and standing in a valley of the northern branch of the Euphrates, here called the Karasu. The houses are built in the manner so often before described, with this exception, that the scarcity of timber has compelled the natives to arch the roofs, which exhibit a number of little domes resembling lime kilns. We spread our carpet under a poplar tree, and fresh horses being brought us soon afterwards, we resumed our journey to Erzeroom, a distance of nine hours according to the Turks. Immediately on quitting Askela we crossed three streams, within a few yards of each other, all tributary to the Euphrates; the right bank of the latter being partly cultivated, and partly allotted for the feeding of cattle. At the fourth mile we crossed this fine river, which, according to the measurement I made of the bridge, was seventy paces from shore to shore: we then travelled on the left bank for nearly a mile, when we reached a spot where it forms a junction with another river of equal magnitude, the former coming from the E. N. E, and the latter running parallel with the road. The country was flat, interspersed with rising grounds, and tolerably well cultivated, until the twenty-second mile, when we entered the immense plain of Erzeroom, and passed through the village of Elija, anciently Elegia, celebrated for its natural warm baths. We then took a more southerly course, leaving the Euphrates on the left hand, and crossed, at the twenty-third mile, a tributary stream flowing from the S. W. The great plain of Erzeroom is, like all those in Persia, of inconsiderable breadth, compared with its length: it is tolerably well inhabited and cultivated; but the total absence of trees, combined with the lowness of the houses, which makes them hardly visible at a distance, presents a bleak and solitary appearance. At the twenty-fifth mile we passed the village of Giudje, and at the thirtieth entered the city which is situated at the foot of the Kebban range, and at the S. E. extremity of the plain: we traversed a number of mean and wretched streets, and at five in the evening halted at the post house, where we were shewn into a small and filthy balcony, in which we remained about an hour before the Tatar arrived with the baggage. I then dispatched him to the pasha to demand a konak; but the latter expressed a wish that we should remain all night in the post-house, promising to provide us with a lodging

---

\* During this day's march I observed numbers of that little species of animal, the jerboa, so common in Persia. It is here of a light brown colour, somewhat larger than those I had before seen.

in the morning: we however objected to this arrangement, and the pasha, in consequence, sent for the chief of the Armenians, and ordered him to procure an apartment for us without delay. We were accordingly conducted into the quarter of the Armenians, and accommodated with a comfortable room looking into a small garden, where we soon afterwards received a visit from the pasha's physician, a Venetian adventurer, who had now turned doctor, a situation not difficult to fill in Turkey. The person to whom I now allude had, from his own account, been a shawl merchant, and appeared to be acquainted with the most remote countries of the east. He was once in the service of Sir James Mackintosh, in the capacity of butler, and in passing through Erzeroom, on his return from India, procured the situation of physician to the pasha, on a salary of four hundred piastres a month. His dress was the first thing which excited our attention, and certainly his figure and appearance were altogether so perfectly ridiculous, that it was with difficulty we could refrain from laughter. He was of a diminutive stature, hump-backed, and crook-legged, with an enormous head, and long coarse black hair, which hung over his forehead, ears, and shoulders. He wore a shabby blue coat and an embroidered vest, a pair of pantaloons made of green angora shawl, trimmed with silver thread, a pair of silk stockings that had once been white, and yellow slippers. He had a cap of orange coloured silk, trimmed with gold fringe, upon his head, and a long orange pelisse, lined with green camlet, over his coat. This genius was come with a message from the pasha, who wished to know whether it was true that Buonaparte\* had been banished to a desert isle. We invited him to supper, and he afterwards entertained us with a history of his adventures.

16th. Mr. Chavasse and the doctor this day inoculated a great many children with the cow-pock, a blessing quite unknown in this part of the world, where great numbers die yearly of the small pox. When the operation was to be performed, our new acquaintance confessed his ignorance of the use of the lancet, but my friend promised to instruct him: crowds of people, old as well as young, came to be vaccinated, and, amongst others, the pasha sent all his children. The general direction of the road from Byaboot to Erzeroom was two miles E. S. E., two miles S. E. by S., one mile S. E. by E., one mile and a half E. S. E., one mile and a half S. E. by E., two miles E. by S., two miles E., one mile S. S. E., one mile S., one mile S. by E., two miles S. E., five miles S. by E., five miles S. E. by E., one mile and a half E., one mile S. E. by E., one mile and a half E. S. E., one mile and a half E. by S., one mile and a half E. S. E., five miles S. S. E., two miles E. N. E., two miles E., two miles S. E., three miles E. by N., seven miles E. N. E., one mile E. by N., two miles E., one mile E. by N., nine miles E by S.

---

\* The natives of the east have always taken great interest in the fortunes of this extraordinary man. His name and exploits had become familiar to them: they looked upon him as the favoured of heaven; and the exaggerated statements of his power were well calculated to make a strong impression on the minds of men naturally fond of pomp and grandeur. The thinking classes of the Turks and Persians contemplated in him their future protector against the hostile intentions of Russia, and listened at first with doubt and afterwards with consternation to the reports of his defeats and rapid overthrow.

## DESCRIPTION OF ERZERROOM AND ARRIVAL AT BETLIS

The pashalic of Erzerroom is one of the largest and most important governments in the Turkish empire, inferior only to Egypt, and equal to Bagdad. It extends from the boundaries of Persia and Georgia over the Lesgae and Mingrelia, to the frontier of the Russian territory, and the pasha has a superintending authority over all the begs of Koordistan as far to the south as Sert, while on the west his power is absolute to the neighbourhood of Arabkir. Ahmed, the present pasha, was governor of Ibraile when it was taken by the Russians, and for his gallant conduct on that occasion was advanced to the dignity of Grand Vizir; but being afterwards beaten by Kutusof at Rutchuck, he was deposed and sent to Erzerroom, where he has remained ever since. He is an able and accomplished man, and reported to govern his province with wisdom and liberality. Erzerroom,\* known by the name of Arze to the Byzantines, is the largest city in Armenia,\* situated in a fine plain about four or five miles south of the Elijak branch of the Euphrates. The houses are small and mean, in some places built of stone, and in others of mud and bricks dried in the sun; the windows being pasted with paper instead of glass. The citadel, which stands almost in the centre of the town, (or what may perhaps more properly be termed suburbs,) is three or four miles in circumference; the walls are in good repair, built in the old manner with battlements and angular towers, and formed of a grey stone, of a very durable quality, dug in the adjoining mountains. The pasha and the greatest proportion of the Turkish population reside within the walls: there are four gates, but none of them merit a particular description. The inhabitants are said to amount to fifteen thousand families of Mahomedans, three thousand seven hundred Armenians, three hundred Armenian catholics,\* and three hundred and fifty Greeks. The Armenians have two churches and a metropolitan, the Catholics and Greeks each a church: there are about fifty mosques, twenty khans, seventeen public baths; and the Ula Jami, or great mosque, is said to have room for three thousand people in the aisle. In the event of any European power ever undertaking the invasion of Persia or India, there is certainly no spot east of Constantinople better calculated for assembling a large force than the plain of Erzerroom; horses and cattle are cheap and abundant, forage is everywhere to be procured in the spring and summer, and a considerable stock of corn may be collected from the neighbouring provinces. The roads are excellent at this season of the year, and well calculated for the transportation of artillery in the level parts of the country, where carts drawn by oxen are much in use with the natives. The inhabitants of the towns carry on an extensive trade with all the large cities in Turkey and Persia, particularly with Constantinople, Bagdad, and Erivan. The principal exports

---

\* Procopius talks of Arzeneve beyond the Nymphaeus.

\* We had entered Armenia on passing the lofty range of Cop Dag. I have given a short description of this kingdom in my Persian Memoir.

\* None of the Armenian Catholics would allow their children to be vaccinated, as they said the pope had issued a bull prohibiting, under pro of excommunication, the use of vaccination.

are leather and copper from the mines of Mount Taurus, and the imports cotton, rice, silk, sugar, coffee, and European cloths. This city is twenty-four hours from Arsingan, forty-eight from Moosh, and thirty-six from Kars. We had several double observations for time and altitude, by which we place the town in 39° 58 N. latitude.

The greater part of the morning following our arrival was occupied in making inquiries respecting the best mode of prosecuting the remainder of our journey to Bagdad. The chief object of our wishes was to trace the retreat of the Ten Thousand; and as we understood that there were only two roads through Koordistan, the first by Paulo and Diarbekr, and the other by Betlis and Sert, we chose the latter as the most probable route of the Greeks. Both were said to be equally infested with banditti, but this did not frighten us; and as the horses of Erzeroom are famous for their size, strength and beauty, we intended to purchase three or four and take our chance of procuring others on the road. We had several brought to us in the course of the morning, but none that exactly suited our purpose; they were large and powerful, admirably calculated for cavalry or carriages, but not so capable of performing long journies as the small blood Arab horse. All animals, indeed, seemed to thrive at Erzeroom, and cows, sheep, and even dogs are larger here than in most other countries which I have visited. The latter are of the wolf breed, with shaggy hair and enormous heads, and are exceedingly fierce.

We had fixed on the morning of the 22d for our departure, but the Tatar was nowhere to be found during the greater part of the day. He had gone out the preceding evening under pretence of waiting on the pasha for our passport, but instead of going thither, he passed the night in a drunken frolic with some of his friends, and did not make his appearance until about three in the afternoon. We took horse at four, and pursued our journey over the hills at the back of the city. At the fifth mile we descended into a hollow, having a fine plain on the left hand and a high range of mountains on the right, as well as in our front. At the seventh mile we passed a torrent flowing to the N. E, and immediately afterwards the village of Neddy Khoi. At the eighth mile another small village, where the Tatar and soorajees wished to stop, being afraid, as they pretended, of travelling in the dark. We would not listen to this proposal but insisted on their proceeding, and on quitting the village began to ascend a steep ridge of mountains, down the sides of which tumbled numberless torrents fed by the melting snow. About a quarter of an hour before sun-set we gained the summit, the temperature being about 48° of Fahrenheit. We then descended a short distance, and afterwards continued our journey amongst the mountains, fording rapid streams at every instant, until midnight, when we discovered by the stars that the soorajees had lost the road. They persisted, notwithstanding, that they were right, and it was with great difficulty we could prevail upon them to stop until daylight; for they said that the mountains were haunted by robbers, and that it was therefore dangerous to halt. The cold was intense, and the ground\* under foot being damp and marshy, I told my servant to bring our carpets, but

---

\* Plutarch, in speaking of the invasion of Armenia by Lucullus, says that the corn was grown in the midst of summer, and that before the close of the autumnal equinox the weather became as severe as in the midst of winter the whole

the Tatar, who had not yet recovered from his inebriety, ordered the soorajees on no account to unload the horses; so that we were compelled to lie down on the wet grass. At sunrise, on the 23d, the thermometer was down at 36°, a hoar frost lay upon the ground, and we found ourselves close to the source of a river which we afterwards discovered to be the Araxes.\* The soorajees still maintained their former opinion respecting the road, but we knew from the compass that they must be wrong, and after much difficulty forced them to take an opposite direction. We travelled almost due S. down a fertile but uncultivated valley, and along the left bank of the Araxes, which was covered with willows and tufts of wood, the resort of lions, tigers and wild boars. At the sixth mile we discovered the road which we had lost the preceding night, and at the seventh mile crossed the river at a ford near a number of beds of salt, which is procured by pumping water from wells into these beds, where it gradually evaporates, leaving a crust of salt on the ground. We shortly afterwards re-crossed the Araxes, and at the ninth mile reached the village of Tatoos, which is eight hours or about twenty-eight miles from Erzeroom. We had passed through a country affording excellent pasturage on the sides of the hills, and fertile land in the valleys, but all was waste and uncultivated; the severity of the seasons and scarcity of fuel rendering it almost uninhabitable. We halted at Tatoos for a few hours to refresh ourselves and horses, for we had not slept the night before, and on quitting the village turned a range of low hills and lost sight of the valley of Araxes, here called the Tatoos su. The road lay through a broken and uneven country, so that we were continually ascending and descending, until the ninth mile, when we regained the banks of the Araxes. This river, which at the spot where we first saw it was but a petty rivulet, had now so wonderfully increased in magnitude that it was thirty-seven paces wide, and so deep that our horses were almost swimming. At the tenth mile we halted at the village of Gournda,\* the first we had seen since we left Tatoos; and afterwards following the right bank of the Araxes for nearly a mile, we turned more to the S., and left the river meandering through a plain towards the N. We travelled for seven miles over a country of the same feature as that which has just been described, and at the twentieth mile began gradually to ascend a very high range of mountains called the Teg Dag. By this time our horses were so much tired that we were under the necessity of turning them loose to graze in the fields for a few hours. The range of the Teg Dag runs in a N. E. and S. W. direction, throwing forth many branches which intersect the plain snow; glittered upon the ground at the place where we halted, although the thermometer, at three o'clock, was up at 68°; and it was five in the evening before our horses were sufficiently refreshed to allow us to proceed. We passed the Teg

---

country was covered with snow, the rivers were frozen, the country was woody, the paths narrow; and at night the army was compelled to encamp in damp muddy spots wet with melting snow.

\* Strabo affirms, that the Euphrates and Araxes falling from Mount Abas, the one pursues a westerly and the other an easterly course, the latter, flowing towards Atropatia, turns suddenly to the N. W., and pawing Mar and afterwards Artaxata, flows through level country into the Caspian sea.

\* It flows hence direct to Hassan Kela, anciently Theodosiopolis.

Dag by an opening in the range, descending at the twenty-third mile into the plain of Khinis, where we perceived some flocks of sheep and a few dwarf pear trees, the only shrubs which we had seen since our departure from Erzerum, excepting the willows on the banks of the Araxes. At the twenty-fifth mile is the Koordish village of Ameran, near which we observed some spots of cultivated land; hence we travelled for about three hours across the plain, and at nine P. M. arrived at the large village of Ginnis or Khinis, which D'Anville supposes to be the city of Gymnias mentioned in the Retreat.\* It is situated on the Binguel su, one of the principal branches of the Euphrates, formerly called the Lycus.

24th. The houses at this place are built in every way similar to those described by Xenophon, and the inhabitants, who had never seen an European before, seemed to eye us with the utmost surprize and wonder, but took no liberties. They, as well as most of the inhabitants of the adjacent villages, were Armenians; and, if we might judge from their dress and appearance, had to combat the extremes of poverty and wretchedness. Their church was surrounded by a number of uncouth tomb stones bearing the shapes of horses, elephants and cows. We mounted at nine and followed the course of the Binguel down a valley, in this part tolerably cultivated, but like all the surrounding country entirely destitute of wood. At the third mile forded the Binguel, here sixty-eight paces in width, and so rapid that the horses were nearly carried down by the stream; and, about fifty yards more in advance crossed a second river, equally deep with the former, but not more than twenty-seven paces wide.\* These two rivers become united about a quarter of a mile below the spot where we passed them, and their course certainly surprized us, since the Binguel, in all the maps which I have ever met with, is made to flow invariably towards the west, but here it took a direction nearly due east. We followed its right bank until the ninth mile, when our soorajee and Tatar were desirous of spending the remainder of the day at a village called Domaun, but not obtaining our consent they were compelled to move on. Turning to the south we quitted the banks of the Binguel, and entered the mountains, ascending gradually the bed of a small stream. Between the seventeenth and eighteenth mile we arrived at the source of this rivulet, near a spot where the mountains became exceedingly steep and difficult of ascent. We were about half an hour in getting to the top of this steep part, and at the eighteenth mile stood on the summit of the lofty range of Hamur Tegh, where the snow lay several feet deep notwithstanding the thermometer was at 70° in the shade at Domaun. We saw a vast plain below us, through which the Morad or Water of Desire flowed from the N. E. in a thousand serpentine curves; on the W. and S. we beheld nothing but mountains and snow; and bearing E. S. E. distant about thirty or forty miles, the white peak of the Sepan Dag soared above the clouds that floated along its sides. This is one of the most remarkable mountains in Armenia; it hangs over the N. W.

---

\* In five days from Gymnias the Greeks reached the holy mountain of the Theckes, from which they saw the sea; but had they marched at the rate of forty miles a day (which would have been impossible in a country covered with snow, and with an enemy to oppose them) they could not possibly have done it from Khinis.

\* This river comes from the S., and has, as we were informed, its source in the adjoining mountains.

corner of the lake of Van, and is said to be so lofty that no person ever reached its summit.\* We descended into the plain, and at the twenty-first mile halted at an encampment of wandering Koords, pitched on the banks of a rivulet which empties itself into the Morad. We alighted at the tent of the chief, who gave us a cordial reception, and who, instead of being an uncivilized barbarian as we expected to find him, was smooth and polished in his manners. He beckoned us to sit down, and ordered coffee to be served and dinner to be prepared. The tent was about fifty feet in length and thirty in breadth, made of coarse black woollen cloth, supported by nine small poles. The walls were made with cane bound together by twisted purple silk, and about four feet high; one end was allotted to the women, and the other to the chief, who sat on a silk cushion, having on each side long felts spread for the accommodation of the visitors. Soon after we were seated he addressed the Tatar, desiring to know what sort of a place England was, since he heard the people there were wise and made excellent cloth and pistols. Mahomed Aga, with great gravity, assured him that it was a city two hundred hours in circumference, completely filled with emeralds, rubies and all sorts of rich merchandize; an account which seemed to excite the surprize of the Koord, although he did not express a doubt of the Tatar's veracity. He then ordered his horses to be brought out for us to look at, and we afterwards sat down to dinner, which consisted of a large dish of meat, two plates of cheese, two bowls of sour milk and abundance of good bread, served up on a leather cloth.

We took our leave at five in the evening, and ascending a range of hills to the south of the tents, again descended into the plain of the Morad, when, at the end of the sixth mile, we stopped at the Armenian village of Karagool. The roads to-day were, generally speaking, tolerably good; the temperature, between ten in the morning and five in the evening, varied from 66 to 70 of Fahrenheit, and we had a slight thunder-storm towards sun-set. The country, through which we had passed, was for the most part fertile, covered with fine verdure and great quantities of wild asparagus. The inhabitants of Karagool, like most of the Armenians whom we have seen, appeared to be a rude and inhospitable race, so much so indeed, that it was not till the Tatar had applied his whip to the kia's back, that he would bring us a few measures of barley for the horses. The valley of the Morad at the western extremity of which the village of Karagool is situated, yields the finest pasturage in the world. The soil is rich and fruitful, and the climate mild, compared with what it is in general on the table-land of Armenia; but, notwithstanding these advantages, you hardly perceive a single inhabitant or even a cultivated field, these fertile meadows being now entirely abandoned to any wandering tribe which chooses to take possession of them. The Morad is seen from afar meandering from the N. E., and is joined by the Binguel,\* about five miles to the N. E. of

---

\* It rises in a cone and has every appearance of being volcanic. Quantities of opsidian are found along the border of the lake.

\* It appears strange that we should have so long remained ignorant of the real course of this river. It is in all the maps which I have seen made to pursue a westerly course, and to enter the northern branch of the Euphrates instead of the Morad.

the village, where we slept. It is the most considerable of all the rivers of this country, and is supposed to be the same, which the Ten Thousand passed by the name of Phrat. It has its source under the walls of Bayazed, and forms a confluence with the northern branch of the Euphrates near Kebban in Mount Taurus. About twelve miles in a E. N. E. direction from Karagool, is a noble lake called Shello, which the people informed us was at least a day's journey in circumference. It was visible from an eminence above the village, and the water is said to be sweet and palatable.

25th. We mounted at eight in the morning and travelled about a mile and a half, when we arrived on the banks of the Morad, here nearly as broad, deep and rapid as the Tigris at Mosul. We swam the horses across, and then passed it ourselves on a raft supported by inflated sheep skins, the river was swelled, and the water troubled and muddy, occasioned by the snow torrents from the mountains. Thence we ascended a gentle slope, and travelled for eight miles over rough and stony ground full of serpents, which were about four or five feet long, of a red colour, and reported to be poisonous. At the ninth mile we descended into a cultivated district called Leese, and crossing several small streams, all of which seemed to direct their course towards the Morad, reached at the tenth mile an Armenian village of the same name. Most of the inhabitants were busily employed in the fields, ploughing and harrowing, but they seemed to possess but little knowledge of agriculture. The plough is simple, made entirely of wood and drawn by four oxen, the handle is a perpendicular staff, about two feet and a half in height, and the person who guides the plough stands on a small stage projecting behind. We had a visit, soon after our arrival, from a party of the Lesgae, composing the guard of the pasha of Moush, who was encamped in the neighbourhood, and who dispatched them with a complimentary message, intimating that he would furnish us with an escort as far as the boundaries of his government. These people are the scourge of all the neighbouring countries, being generally employed as the guards of the great men; they are mercenary troops, armed with carabines, pistols and daggers, and during the period for which they engage themselves, will serve with great fidelity, even against their nearest relations. They are of a middle stature, firmly built, of black complexions and a fierce menacing air.

---

Procopius gives the following account of the Euphrates and Tigris. "From a mountain of Armenia not very steep, being five miles to the north of Theodosiopolis, issue two springs, the right spring forming the Euphrates, and the left the Tigris. Tigris, without winding, goes straight on to Armida, taking in no waters by the way, and by the north side of it passes into Assyria. But the Euphrates, not running far, vanishes, not sinking underground but with a kind of miracle. Over the water lies a bog, exceeding deep and six miles long, and two miles and a half broad, wherein much reed grows, and the mud is so stiff, that to passengers it seems firm ground. Horse and foot and waggons pass upon it every day, and stir not the ground, nor discover it to be a bog. The inhabitants every year burn off the reed, that it stop not the way and sometimes a strong wind blowing, the fire pierces to the root, and discovers the rivers in a small channel and the mud in binding up again soon after, restores to the place the form it had. Hence this river runs to the country of Ecclesa, where was the temple of Dians in Tauris: whence Iphigenia, Agamemnon's daughter, fled with Orestes and Pylades, carrying away the image of Diana."



27th. Leese is eight hours from Moush, and the same distance from Aklat and Malazghird. The temperature this morning at eight A. M. was 64, at ten 70, and at mid-day 74. From Erzeroom to this place, the general bearings of the road were as follows: two miles E., two miles E. N. E., two miles E., one mile E. by S., one mile S. S. E., one mile S. E., half a mile S. S. E., one mile and a half S. by W., six miles S. by E., one mile and a half N. W. N.W., four miles and a half S. S. E., nine miles E three miles E. by S., one mile and a half S. S. E., three miles and a half S. by E., two miles S. S. E., fourteen miles S. E., four miles S. S. E., four miles S. E., two miles S. E., four miles E. by N., three miles and a half E. by S., one mile and a half S. by E., one mile and a half S. E., two miles and a half E. S. E., one mile and a half E. by N., two miles S. E. by S., six miles S. E. by E., two miles and a half S. by E., five miles and a half W., four miles S. W.

The pashalic of Moush is small, but it contains a great number of rich districts in addition to the towns of Moush, Betlis, and Aklat. Most of the villages are inhabited by Armenian Christians, and each parish has its church and ecclesiastic subject to the patriarch of Erzeroom; but the lower classes are in general so poor, that numbers of them, as I before incidentally remarked, emigrate into distant countries, and, after an absence of many years, return to enjoy their savings amongst their families. The women are industrious and spend a great part of their time in spinning cotton and wool. Their dress consists of a loose pair of coloured trowsers, a cloak reaching to the knees, a leathern girdle bound by a large clasp in front, and a handkerchief tied over the head and ears. The Armenians are partly subject to the Turks, and partly to the Koordish begs, but equally oppressed by both.

29th. The pasha sent for Mahomed Aga this evening, and told him that he should be obliged to send us round by the city of Van, the route of Betlis and Sert being interdicted on account of the depredations of the Koords. As he had said nothing of this before, but on the contrary stated the Betlis road to be safe, I did not place much reliance on his assertions, attributing his change of opinion to some other motive. He had before repeatedly asked the Tatar, whether we had any watches, guns, or pistols, and being no doubt disappointed at Mahomed Aga's answering in the negative, proposed sending us by Van, under the idea of forcing us to give him a present, rather than make so great a round. But in this he was again mistaken, for I had no sooner received his message, than I sent my servant, (having had reason to suspect Mahomed Aga's intriguing disposition,) desiring him to state to the pasha, in the most determined manner, that we were resolved either to go to Betlis, or return to Erzeroom. He replied, with the greatest coolness, that if such were our determination, he would order horses and a guide to attend us in the morning on our way to Betlis. The temperature at six A. M. was 58, at nine A. M. 65, and at twelve, 64.

30th. An old and uncouth looking figure, clothed in the Koordish habit, entered our apartment this morning before we were dressed; he spoke the Turkish language so ill, that it was impossible to comprehend him, but we soon discovered that he was the person commissioned by the pasha to accompany us to Betlis. He quietly sat down in

the middle of the room, and calling in some of his ragged attendants, harangued them on the necessity of conducting themselves with propriety, and ordered coffee, cheese, and some other little articles, to be packed up for the journey. There was something so good, and at the same time so ludicrous about this old Koord, that we could not help liking him, and he behaved with so much kindness towards us ever afterwards, that we had no reason to retract the good opinion which we had formed of him. We mounted at eight o'clock, and, at the end of the third mile, arrived at a village called Puink, where we drank some coffee with a beg, the chief of the district. We then travelled over a stony road gently rising from the plain, and, at the eighth mile, passed the ruins of a town and castle, situated at the foot of a range of mountains, called Bellyjon. At the ninth mile we stopped at a miserable hamlet called Altæ Bayazed to refresh our horses, and at the thirteenth, gained the summit of the mountains, whence we had a view of the Lake Nazook, probably the Arethusa of the ancients. After descending the mountains, for about one mile, we arrived on the western shore of the lake, which seemed to be about thirteen breadth of about half a mile, but appeared more open at the east end. It is deficient in romantic beauty from the entire want of wood, and has but one village upon its borders, which is named Jezira Oka, and built on a peninsula at the S. W. side. The water, which I tasted, is sweet and wholesome, and consequently applicable to all the purposes of life. We travelled along the western margin of the lake before ascending the hills on the south, and passed a small river which flows out of it, and said to be one of the sources of the Tigris. At the seventeenth mile we lost sight of the Lake Nazook, and descending from the hills into a small cultivated plain, halted for the night at the Jewish village of Mishi. Here we were cordially received, and we spread our carpets on some fresh hay in a shed in front of the aga's house, which opened on a bleak and dreary country, and commanded a view of the great Sepan Dag, bearing two points north of east. The temperature at six A. M. 52, and at the same hour in the evening 63.

July 1st. We set off at seven in the morning, and, quitting the plain after the third mile, entered upon the ascent of the high range of Nimrood Dag, (called the Niphates mountains by the ancients,) at a place where the elevation is not so great as at others. At the fourth mile we entered upon a table-land, the more lofty parts being tipped with snow, and here, for the first time, we had a distant glimpse of the lake of Van. We travelled for six miles across the table-land with the highest part of the Nimrood Dag on our right hand, until the tenth mile, when, from a small eminence, the lake burst full upon our view. This immense sheet of water is called Arssisse\* by Ptolemy, a name supposed to be derived from the town of Argish or Arsis, on the northern shore of the lake. Its length from E. to W. is, I should suppose, about twenty-five or thirty miles, and its width, towards the middle, from nine to twelve; but the bays and inlets are so numerous that it is said to be upwards of ninety hours in circumference, while a vessel

---

\* Strabo informs us that the Lake of Martiana, sometimes called the Blue Lake, from the colour of its waters, is the largest in Armenia, and extends to the borders of Atropatia. He also mentions a lake called Arsena, the waters of which were of a quality to remove stains from cloth.

can sail in four hours with a fair wind from Tedevan to Van, nearly the opposite extremities of the lake. The water is brackish, but it contains, notwithstanding, abundance of good fish: on the N. it is bounded by the huge mountain of Sepan Dag, on the W. by that of Nimrood, and to the S. by a stupendous chain called Haterash or Karaish. All these different ranges, at the time we saw them, were covered with snow; and I presume that the term Niphates was not applied to any particular ridge but to the whole of this elevated tract.\* There are three islands on the lake towards the east side, on one of which stands an ancient Armenian monastery; on the N. and E. margin are the cities of Aklat (Chaleat), Argish (Arzes), and Van (Artemita), which in the Armenian language signifies a fortress; but the country on the W. and S. has a wild and solitary look.

We descended from the eminence into a valley, where we breakfasted at the Armenian village of Teyrout, about a mile from the lake, and forty hours from Van. At two P. M., when the heat was a little abated, we re-commenced our journey, and at the close of the evening had marched four hours, or fourteen miles, to Tchokar, also inhabited by Christians, and situated at the base of the last and most lofty peak of Nimrood. We had a delightful ride along the margin of the lake, and within about half a mile of the shore, the mountains descending in a gentle slope towards the water. At the second mile we saw the town of Aklat\* bearing E. N. E., and distant about five miles from us: it is a casaban, containing about a thousand houses, governed by a beg, and situated about a mile from the N. W. extremity of the lake, embosomed in orchards of fruit trees. At the seventh mile is the village of Gezag on the verge of the shore; at the eighth that of Teygag, also close to the water, and surrounded by wood, which, in so bare a country, had a pleasing effect. The day was calm and excessively hot, but we found great relief in eating the snow from the sides of the hills. The lake resembled an immense mirror, reflecting the mountains on either side: we could perceive the city of Van on the opposite shore, bearing nearly due E., distant twenty-five or thirty miles,<sup>3</sup> and at one particular place we crossed great masses of obsidian, which our guides told us had fallen from the mountains. At the twelfth mile is the village and port of Tednan, at the bottom of a bay or inlet running to the S. W., and three miles due W. of it another village amongst the hills, called Sharbas. As we approached the end of our journey, the slopes of the mountains became clothed with wild roses, intermingled with dwarf oak and pear trees: at the thirteenth mile we descended into a valley separating the range of

---

\* Of the mountains to the south of the Euphrates, which, from Cappadocia and Commagene, extend towards the east, the first is named Tauro, and by some the Gordian Mountains, which divide the valley of Sophene and Armenia from Mesopotamia. What is termed Mount Masius, adjacent to Nisibis and Tigranocerta, afterwards assumes the name of Niphates, where we discover the sources of the Tigris. Mount Niphates, continuing to extend itself, is subsequently called Zagros, and separates Media from Babylonia. – *Strabo*.

\* Aklat is a town often mentioned in the history of the wars of Armenia, and its possession was repeatedly disputed between the Greeks, Persians, and Armenians: it was taken by Jellaladeen, and retaken by Aladeen, Sultan of Roum, in whose family it remained for nearly a century, when it fell, with their other possessions, into the power of the Turks.

<sup>3</sup> The extremities of the lake at this place ran nearly E. and W.

Nimrood from that of Haterash, a lofty chain extending from Moush along the south margin of the lake, and which entering into Persia becomes connected with the mountains of Salrund and Giroos. They sink abruptly to the water's edge, jutting out into bluff capes and head lands; their summits are barren and rocky, and capped with snow the greater part of the year, but towards the base they are less sterile, and in some places fringed with brushwood. This rugged territory is in the possession of several Koordish begs, who reside in the strong holds with all the pomp and ignorance of our ancient feudal lords, and who have hitherto maintained their independence against both the Turks and Persians. The village of Tchokar could not afford us a decent place to sleep in, so that notwithstanding the coldness of the night, we were obliged to spread our carpets on a bank under the lee of the church, a small edifice of an oblong shape, built of hewn stone, and dimly lighted by small Gothic windows.<sup>4</sup> Each village has a papas, or priest, who is educated either in the convents or larger towns, and appointed by the patriarch of Erzerroom; the parishes are visited once a year by the bishops and deacons, who, under pretence of scrutinizing the conduct of their deputies, exact money from the peasantry. At Tchokar we purchased a lamb for three piastres (three shillings), in order to entertain our people after the following adventure. About half-way we had encountered a party of the Lesgae, who eyed us with a suspicious look, and seemed doubt ful whether or not they might venture to attack us; they passed on, however, and soon afterwards we met some others of the same stamp, well mounted and armed, as were also the former. I was a few yards in advance, and they endeavoured to intercept me, but I avoided them; they then made a push at Mr. Chavassee, and stopped the soorajee, demanding, with a menacing air, whither we were going: they held a parley for a few moments, and one of them cocking his carabine, rode up and seized a baggage horse. The guide and his attendants were not with us; but nevertheless, when we perceived that the Lesgae had seized the baggage, we spurred our horses towards them, with our pistols in our hands: finding us prepared and determined to resist, they abandoned their prey, and turning round, fled at full gallop to call in, as we supposed, the assistance of their companions. During the whole of this scene Mahomed Aga remained absolutely in a state of stupor, with his back towards the banditti, betraying in his countenance symptoms of the most abject fear; and when Mr. Chavassee called upon him to advance, he looked at him without appearing to understand what he said. The Koord and his followers coming up soon afterwards, we pursued our journey without further molestation.

2d. We mounted this morning at six A. M., with the thermometer as high as 64. Since we left Erzerroom the climate had gradually become milder, and we had lately, during the day, felt the sun oppressively hot, although the nights were always cold. For

---

<sup>4</sup> They have no bell, but a piece of carved wood, about two feet in length and three or four inches broad, perforated with small holes, and hanging from the roof of the church: it is struck upon by a small mallet or hammer to call the villagers to worship.

the first five miles the road ran across the valley, or rather plain, which separates the two great ranges. At the sixth mile we passed the Betlis su, near its source, and travelled the remainder of the way along its right bank, through an opening in the Haterash; at the eighth mile the village of Sahar; at the ninth crossed a small stream, forming a fine cascade on our left hand, where it meets the Betlis su, and at the tenth a third stream, joining the two former, the whole combined falling over the rocks in a succession of cataracts just before we entered the town of Betlis. The beg ordered an apartment to be prepared for us in his own house, where we should have been perfectly comfortable had we been left to ourselves; but the curiosity of the people to see us was so great, that our room was crowded with company from the moment we arrived until that on which we departed. About half an hour after we had been seated, the beg himself came to visit us: he was a tall handsome man, polite in his manners, and in all respects very different from his wild and clownish followers.

He seemed very desirous of examining our arms, but expressed great contempt for our pistols, which he said were much too short, and not sufficiently ornamented.\* He had been in Egypt,\* and talked of Sir Sidney Smith, and other English officers, as if he then knew them intimately. The Koords delight in arms more than any other race of men I have ever met with, and pride themselves on the beauty of their horses and value of their accoutrements. When a Koordish chief takes the field, his equipment varies but little from that of the knights in the days of chivalry; and the Saracen who fought under the great Salahadeen was probably armed in the very same manner as he who now makes war against the Persians. His breast is defended by a steel corslet, inlaid with gold and silver; whilst a small wooden shield, thickly studded with brass nails, is slung over his left shoulder when not in use. His lance is carried by his page, or squire, who is also mounted; a carabine is slung across his back; his pistols and dagger are stuck in his girdle, and a light scymitar hangs by his side: attached to the saddle, on the right, is a small case, holding three darts, each about two feet and a half in length; and on the left, at the saddle-bow, you perceive a mace, the most deadly of all his weapons: it is two feet and a half in length; sometimes embossed with gold, at others set with precious stones; and I remember to have seen one in the ancient armoury of Dresden exactly similar to those now used in Koordistan. The darts have steel points, about six inches long, and a weighty piece of iron or lead at the upper part, to give them velocity when thrown by the hand.

---

\* These people place no value on workmanship, but invariably prefer those which are long in the barrel, and gaudy in the mounting.

\* In my journeys through the different parts of the Turkish empire, I have questioned many persons who were opposed to the French during the expeditions into Egypt and Syria on the affair of Jaffa; and in justice to Buonaparte I must declare, that not one of them seemed acquainted with a circumstance which has made so much noise in Europe: making every allowance for the indifference of a people familiar with deeds of blood, we are certainly justified in considering this general ignorance of the fact as a strong presumption against its existence: since it is scarcely to be believed, that at set of such a deep and malignant die could, within a few short years, have been entirely buried in oblivion.

The bearings of the road since we quitted Leese are as follow: three miles S. S. E., three miles S. E. by E., one mile and a half S. E., one mile E. by N., one mile and a half S. E. by E., one mile and a half E. by S., two miles and a half S. E., two miles S. S. E., one mile S. S. W., one mile S. S. W., one mile S. S. E., two miles S. E., one mile S. E. by E., two miles S. S. E., three miles miles S. E. by S., six miles S. by E., three miles S. by W., two miles and a half S. W., two miles S. by W., two miles W. S. W., five miles S. W. by S., three miles S. W., two miles S. W., one mile S. S. W.

3d. The old Koord, who accompanied us from Leese, had behaved with so much attention and civility during the journey, that we thought it incumbent on us to make him a more than ordinary present; but still he was not contented, and, under pretence of treating his servants, demanded a few rubas extra, which I gave him. He returned however in the evening, and requested me to lend him ten piastres, promising to repay me in the morning; but as I well knew that the mention of repayment was a mere pretext, in order to extort more money, I pointedly refused him, adding that I was sorry I had already given him so much. Perceiving that he could make nothing of us, he bolted from the room in a rage, abusing us for infidels all the way down stairs, and mounting his horse, which had been waiting for him, set out on his return home. Interest and fear are, I believe, the only motives which can induce a Mahomedan to treat a Christian with common civility.

## DESCRIPTION OF BETLIS, AND JOURNEY TO SERT

BETLIS, the capital of this part of Koordistan, is situated in the heart of the mountains of Haterash, and on the banks of two small rivers which flow into the Tigris. In form it resembles a crab, of which the castle, a fine old building, is the body, and the claws are represented by the ravines, which branch out in many different directions. The city is so ancient, that, according to the tradition of the Koords, it was founded a few years after the flood by a direct descendant of Noah: the houses are admirably built of hewn stone, flat roofed, and for the most part surrounded with gardens of apple, pear, plum, walnut and cherry trees. The streets being in general steep are difficult of access, and each house seems of itself a petty fortress, a precaution not unnecessary in this turbulent part of the world: many of them have large windows, with pointed arches like the Gothic; and the castle, which is partly inhabited and partly in ruins, seems to be a very ancient structure, erected upon an insulated and perpendicular rock, rising abruptly from a hollow in the middle of the city. It was the residence of the ancient khans or begs of Betlis, the most powerful princes in Koordistan, until ruined by family feuds. The walls are built of the same stone as the houses, and the ramparts are nearly a hundred feet in height. The city contains about thirty mosques, eight churches, four hummams, and several khans, and the population is said to amount to twelve thousand souls, of which number one half are Mahomedans, and the remainder Christians of the Armenian persuasion. The rivers are crossed by upwards of twenty bridges, each of one arch, and built of stone; the bazars are well supplied with fruits and provisions; but most other articles, such as cloth, hardware, &c., are excessively dear, and indeed not always to be procured. Merchants sometimes venture to bring goods in well-armed caravans; but the state of the country is such, that they are in constant dread of being plundered and put to death.

Apples, pears, plums, and walnuts come to perfection at Betlis; the vineyards of Coultly, a village six miles E. of the town, produce excellent wine and brandy (arrack), but the lands are principally allotted to pasture; and the natives, if we may venture an opinion from appearances, prefer the culture of fruits and vegetables to that of wheat. Their gardens are irrigated by small aqueducts or canals, which convey the water from the rivers or mountains, and I have seldom seen any illiterate people who better understand the art of hydraulics. Some of their aqueducts carry water from a distance of five or six miles; these are small trenches cut round the sides of the hills, where the level is preserved with the utmost precision, without the use of any mathematical instrument; an extraordinary circumstance, considering that the Koords are a rude, uneducated and brutal race, naturally of a fierce and contentious disposition, and who, if we except the change of their religion, have not altered their manners or character since the days of Xenophon. Betlis is nominally subject to a beg, appointed by the pasha of Moush, but the real authority is possessed by the khan of the Koords, the descendant and representative of a long line of feudal lords who were formerly the masters of all the

surrounding territory. He has, I understand, within these few years, in a certain degree become subject to the Porte, and pays it an annual tribute.

The roads since we left Leese have been very good and passable for cannon, waggons, or indeed wheel-carriages of any kind. This is, however, only the case during the summer and autumn months; for in the winter the whole country is laid under snow, the melting of which in the spring occasions such a number of torrents as to render the communication between the towns exceedingly difficult. I look upon it as impossible to make war in any part of the western Armenia during four or perhaps five months in the year: and as the retreat of the Ten Thousand has often occupied my thoughts in my journies across the sultry wilds of Irak, Arabia and the rugged mountains of Koordistan, I could never reflect without a feeling of admiration and wonder on the difficulties which that heroic body had to overcome. The march of an army for so great a distance, through such a country, with one enemy in front and another in the rear, in daily want of provisions and in the full rigour of an Armenian winter, is quite unparalleled in the annals of war; and must ever be looked upon as a memorable example of what skill and resolution are able to effect.\* "The temperature at six A. M. this day was 62° of Fahrenheit, at noon 80° and at sun-set 72°.

We continued three days at Betlis, and on the morning of the 7th set out for Sert, the ancient Tigranocerta. We descended from the height on which the aga's house is situated, and, rounding the castle, passed through an old bazar, where I observed several handsome mosques and colleges neglected and fast falling to ruin. We entered one of the many ravines in which the city is situated, the houses being almost hid from the view by the luxuriant foliage of the trees. At the end of the first mile we quitted the suburbs, and, crossing the river twice successively, continued to travel on its left bank over rough and stony ground. It was a considerable time before we could clear the town, for our escort, consisting of twelve savage Koords, under no sort of controul, were continually stopping on one pretence or another, and when, at last, we had got fairly upon the road, they insisted upon mounting the baggage horses; so that in addition to their ordinary load, each of the poor animals had to carry one of these fellows. The confusion was increased by our being unable to speak to them, since not one amongst the number understood Persian or Turkish; and none of our own party knew the Koordish language. At the third mile we quitted the bank of the river, at that place about fifteen paces wide and exceedingly rapid; and turning S.S. W. followed the winding of a defile. After travelling about two miles up this ravine, with a rivulet on our right hand, we came to an open spot in the mountains; and, at the sixth mile, arrived at a small hamlet embosomed in walnut trees. Thence, without stopping, we gained the summit of a high hill, and again descending into a romantic and well cultivated valley, alighted at the end of the eighth mile at a village called Eulak. Here we halted for a couple of hours on the banks of a rivulet, and under the cool shade of a large walnut tree; for the sun was

---

\* Plutarch tells us that Anthony, during his disastrous retreat through Armenia, repeatedly used to call out-Oh! the Ten Thousand!



scorchingly hot, and I felt myself so much indisposed that I could with difficulty sit upon my horse. The mountains in the vicinity of this village abound in marble. In the cool of the evening we again mounted and rode for a mile and a half down the valley, through cultivated fields interspersed with gardens of apple, pear, mulberry, plum and walnut trees; and on quitting this delightful spot again entered the mountains, which were covered with small oak trees, producing abundance of gall-nuts. The road wound for four miles through the mountains over a rapid succession of steep and shaggy precipices, and during this march we were more than once under the necessity of calling a halt, in order to reprimand the guard, who were perpetually straggling from the road and entering the woods with the baggage horses; no doubt with the view of carrying some of them away. I learnt afterwards that they imagined Mr. Chavasse's portmanteaus were filled with gold, and I remarked, at the time, that their attention was in particular directed towards them. At the end of the fifth mile we descended into a narrow glen, between two ranges of stupendous mountains composed of quartz and clinkstone mixed with quartz, rising almost perpendicularly on each side. Their summits were clothed with hanging oaks and white with snow. A rapid river\* flowed through the centre of the valley towards the S., which, on inquiry, I afterwards found to be one of the two that flow through Betlis. We followed the course of the stream for two miles up this vale, darkened by the branches of oak, ash, apple and walnut trees; and here, for the first time since we entered Koordistan, we observed some fields of rice, watered by small canals drawn from the river. At the seventh mile we crossed a wooden bridge contiguous to the ruins of another very ancient stone bridge; and, at seven miles and a half, reached the village of Sheck Jama, a poor and miserable place, where we halted for the night. We had understood from the beg of Betlis that the guard and horses were to conduct us all the way to Sert, but on our arrival at Sheck Jama the commander of our escort informed us that his orders were immediately to return to Betlis, and that Ibrahim Aga, a chief who resided in a village two miles off, would provide for our conveyance the remainder of our journey. We had fortunately brought a written order for this Ibrahim Aga, which we lost no time in sending to him.

The thermometer at seven A. M. was at 70°, at ten 76°, at noon 79° and sun-set 74°.

8th. We received a visit from Ibrahim Aga at an early hour in the morning; he seemed, at first, disposed to give us the same guard and horses we had brought from Betlis, but afterwards changed his determination, and said, that we must wait at Sheck Jama until he could get a sufficient number of others from the adjoining villages. We were not much pleased at the idea of being detained, but our best policy was to submit in silence to our fate; and dismissing, therefore, the old guard with a handsome present,

---

\* I have before stated that two rivers flowed through Betlis. The first is that which has its source in the Nimrood Dag, near the lake of Van, and along the banks of which we travelled the day we entered the town. This, it appears, turns suddenly to the S. E. after it has flowed through about half the town, and is the same we again crossed in the valley of Sheck Jama. The second Betlis river comes from the W., and is that which I mention as having twice crossed the day we left the city.

we endeavoured to pass the time in walking about the village and gardens. All kinds of cattle appeared to thrive admirably in this part of the country; the oxen were nearly as large as those in England, and the horses were strong, active and good-tempered; but the inhabitants, who invariably give the preference to the mares, assign as a reason that the latter support the extremes of heat and cold better than the former. I have often had occasion to remark that, after a long journey in very hot weather, mares and geldings appeared to suffer less than entire horses; a circumstance not difficult to account for, if we consider that the latter are more fretful and consequently tire themselves sooner than the former. The Arabs esteem mares for another reason, and say, that they do not neigh like the horses to betray them in the night while on their marauding expeditions. Wheat, barley and sometimes rice seem to be the only kinds of grain cultivated in Koordistan; but there is abundance of common vegetables, such as lettuce, cucumbers, cabbage, &c.

9th. The horses were brought us early in the morning, but before we were permitted even to load them, Ibrahim Aga gave me to understand that he had taken a fancy to the amber head of my pipe. Although I well knew that I should be reduced to the necessity of ultimately granting his request, I refused him at first, that the gift might afterwards appear of greater value, and after much noise and bustle we took our departure at eight o'clock, with the loss of my pipe and a hundred piastres, which I was obliged to disburse amongst the Koords. After the first half mile we began to ascend the mountains which bounded the valley on the left hand; at the second mile saw the village of Sepra, the residence of Ibrahim Aga, on the opposite side of the river, distant about two miles west, and, at the third mile, we lost sight of the river, leaving it flowing through a chasm of the mountains to the right. We continued ascending for nearly three hours, the oak trees continually increasing in magnitude as we approached the summit; the wood was so thick that it entirely protected us from the heat of the sun, and when near the top of the mountains we passed through a small encampment of wandering Koords, pitched in a hollow, and in the vicinity of a spring. These people lived on milk, cheese, and bread made from acorns; their appearance denoted extreme poverty; their hair was long and dishevelled, hanging over their face and neck, and their only covering consisted of a dirty rag tied round their loins. At the end of the third hour we arrived on the summit, from which we had a commanding prospect of the adjoining territory, exhibiting, as usual, successive ridges of craggy mountains, separated by narrow strips or glens, many of which shewed signs of cultivation, and seemed to abound in fruit trees. We descended by a road or rather foot-path, both steep and dangerous, and at the fourth hour or tenth mile, passed a village called Eurak, standing on the face of the mountains. At the eleventh we got to the bottom, and crossing a stream flowing to the W., immediately began ascending another range on the opposite side. At the thirteenth we halted at a spring to refresh our horses, by allowing them to eat the grass which grew plentifully around, and at three P. M. continued our route up the mountain. A mile and a half brought us to the top of this range, which was so steep that we were unable

to descend the opposite side, without dismounting. The descent might be about three miles in length, and the road was one of the worst I ever remember having seen. It was in one part cut out of the rock, and in part formed of huge round stones, the greater portion of which had slipped from their places, and which presenting a polished surface, made it impossible for the horses to keep their feet. At the nineteenth mile we saw, on the right hand, in a small valley, the romantic district of Tasil consisting of two villages, and extensive vineyards, spread over the declivities of the neighbouring hills. At the twentieth mile reached a small stream, and continued to travel along its west bank down a narrow valley, where the Koords were employed in reaping a few scanty crops that shewed the season to be much more advanced here than even at Betlis. Our route, for seven miles, led through the vineyards and windings of this valley, when at nightfall we entered a wretched hamlet called Tiskin. We were here compelled to sleep in the open air, no money could procure us even a drop of milk or morsel of bread, and the guard had to keep watch during the whole of the night, to prevent us from being plundered by the villagers.

10th. We arose at the dawn of day, and ascending a high mountain behind Tiskin, left the stream flowing to the west. At the third mile we descended into a tract of undulating ground, and at the fifth passed the hamlets of Tag and Tolan, the former on the right hand, the latter on the left, at a short distance from the road. At the eleventh we stopped at a large and flourishing village called Halasni, which, like the other two, had a better and cleaner appearance than any we had hitherto seen. They are built of stone and mortar, afterwards whitewashed with lime, and each house is a castle, consisting of a square tower surrounded with a wall sufficient to protect the inhabitants from the attacks of cavalry, or musket shot. At the tenth mile we entered Sert, and rode directly to the aga's house, a large fortified building surrounded by a moat, where we were stopped at the gate by the guard, who said no person was ever admitted within the walls until his arms were taken from him. Mahomed Aga therefore resigned his pistols and dagger, and was introduced into the castle, whilst we remained to be gazed at without for about ten minutes, and were then also allowed to enter. We found the chief in an open veranda, surrounded by a number of men, who beckoned us to be seated; but, observing that the place pointed out was at the lower end of the veranda, we expressed our surprize and retired to a distance. The chief laughed heartily, but intimated his satisfaction at our conduct by giving us the most honourable seat, being that next himself, and calling for pipes and coffee. He could only speak a few words of Turkish, but his moolah, who was present and understood Persian tolerably well, informed us that the direct road to Mosul by Jezira ul Omar was impassable from the depredations of the Koords, who plundered indifferently every traveller and caravan. "The hakim of Jezira," added he, is the most bloodthirsty villain of them all, and therefore recommend you to take the route of Diarbekr." This intelligence seemed to destroy at once our hopes of tracing further the retreat of the Ten Thousand, and putting an early period to our toilsome journey, but we still trusted that the chief might be

induced to grant us strong guard and the protection of his name. The inhabitants of castle gathered around us as if we had been two wild animals; they fingered and carried away whatever they saw, notwithstanding we had taken the necessary precaution of concealing every article that we thought likely to excite their cupidity. In the evening the chief mounted his horse, and, attended by twenty persons on foot, went into the fields inspect, as was his usual custom, the labours of the people. At sun-set carpets were spread on the top of the tower, and all the inmates of his house brought together evening prayers, which were said by my friend the moolah, and no sooner concluded, than they sat down dinner, consisting of large dishes of soup and pillaws, each person being seated according his rank.

11th. We were awakened in the morning by who had brought with him five or six metal watches, desiring me to examine them, and tell him if they were valuable, as they cost him much money; but without waiting my reply, he changed the conversation, and talked about the antiquity of his town, that was once most famous city in the world, and that its ruins could be traced on one side to a village called Wamur, four miles off, and to the banks of the Kabour two miles distant on the other. When he had departed, a number of invalids came to be cured of their disorders, and amongst them one of his sons, who was blind of an eye, and expected his sight to be restored to him in three days, so credulous are these people, and so exalted their ideas of the skill and acquirements of Europeans;\* in short, during the whole of the period we remained at this town, we did not enjoy a moment's repose.

---

\* Amongst other acquirements, the orientlists imagine that Europeans are in possession of the philosopher's stone, and some are not wanting amongst themselves who pretend to this gift. A few days before my arrival at Bassora, Mr. Colquhoun, the acting resident at that place, received a message from an Arabian philosopher, requesting a private interview, in order to communicate a most important secret. Mr. C. consented, and next morning the mysterious stranger was introduced to him: embracing the knees of the resident, he said that he was come to supplicate the protection of the English from the cruel and continued persecution of his countrymen, who, having understood that he had the power of transmuting the basest metals into gold, daily put him to the torture to wring his secret from him. He added, that he had just made his escape from Grane, where he had long been starved and imprisoned by the Sheck, and that he would divulge everything he knew to Mr. Colquhoun, provided he was permitted to reside in the factory. My friend agreed to receive him, and in return he faithfully promised to afford a convincing proof of his skill. He accordingly retired, and soon afterwards returned with a small crucible and chafing dish of coals, and when the former had become hot he took four small papers, containing a whitish powder, from his pocket, and asked Mr. C. to fetch him a piece of lead: the latter went into his study, and taking four pistol bullets, weighed them unknown to the alchemist: these, with the powder, he put into the crucible, and the whole was immediately in a state of fusion. After the lapse of about twenty minutes, the Arabian desired Mr. C. to take the crucible from the fire, and put it into the air to cool: the contents were then removed by Mr. C., and proved to be a piece of pure gold, of the same weight as the bullets. The gold was subsequently valued at ninety piastres in the bazar. It is not easy to imagine how a deception could have been accomplished, since the crucible remained untouched by the Arab after it had been put upon the fire; while it is, at the same time, difficult to conceive what inducement a poor Arab could have had to make an English gentleman a present of ninety piastres. Mr. C. ordered him to return the next day, which he promised to do, but in the middle of the night he was carried off by the Sheck of Grane, who, with a body of armed men, broke into his house, and put him on board a boat, which was out of sight long before daybreak. Whether this unhappy man possessed, like

## DESCRIPTION OF SERT, AND JOURNEY TO MERDIN

SERT appears, both from its name and position, as well as the tradition of its inhabitants, to represent the ancient Tigranocerta, mentioned by Plutarch in the life of Lucullus: it was founded by the famous Tigranes, king of Armenia,\* who called it after himself, and made it the capital of his vast dominions; it was peopled chiefly by the prisoners whom he had seized during the invasion of Syria and Cappadocia, and who returned to their native countries when liberated by Lucullus: the city, nevertheless, preserved its importance until the country was subdued by the Arabs. Sert is now a casaban, or large village, situated in a small plain surrounded on every side by high mountains, and a short distance from a river formed by the junction of the two streams which flow through Betlis, called Kabour by the Koords, and Nicephorius by the Romans.\* It contains three small mosques, a college and Armenian church; and the inhabitants, who amount to about three thousand, are in part Mahomedans, and in part Christians of the Armenian, Chaldean (Chaldani), and Nestorian (Nestori) sects. The houses are built in the manner just described, when speaking of the village of Halasni, only on a scale somewhat larger, and having loop holes on the tops of the towers: the apartments are arched, and each house has a hall open at one end for the reception of visitors, and a flat roof where the inhabitants sleep in summer. There are no remarkable monuments of any kind, nor can such be expected in a country where the buildings are seldom composed of durable materials. Our attention was however attracted by several cisterns hewn out of the rock underground, and intended, not like those in Syria and Arabia, as receptacles for rain, but for spring water, which was delightfully cool, even at the hottest hour of the day.

The adjacent country is, comparatively speaking, in an improved state of culture, and the people were busily employed in collecting the harvest, which is not separated or removed from the field until thrashed, and the straw cut into chaff; a custom calculated, no doubt, to give rise to disputes where there is a division of property. But here the produce of the land belongs to the chief, and is retailed by him to his followers, whose labour he commands, and who look up to him for protection and support. These chiefs are regarded with great deference by their vassals, whom they treat with kindness, and

---

St. Leon, the secret of making gold, we are not called upon to determine; but the suspicion that he did so was amply sufficient to account for the unrelenting manner in which he would seem to have been persecuted by his countrymen.

\* This king was totally defeated by Lucullus a few miles from the town, and probably on the banks of the Kabour. It was on this occasion that Tigranes used the following expression descriptive of the small number of his enemies. If they come as ambassadors, they are too many; but if as enemies, too few."

The Greeks who were in the city betrayed it to the Romans, by whom it was plundered. Besides other treasure, Lucullus found in it eight thousand talents of coined silver. Strabo says, that Tigranocerta, from one of the most populous cities in the world, became, in an instant, almost a desert; for Lucullus permitted the natives of Cappadocia and Cilicia to return to their own countries.

\* The river Nicephorius, (says Tacitus) with a current sufficiently broad, washes a considerable part of the walls of Tigranocerta. Ann. l. 15. c. iv.

even familiarity, but their word is a law, and they have the power of life and death: they preserve a certain degree of state, seldom move from their seats without a dozen attendants, and their favourite topic of conversation is the antiquity of their families, and their long established independence, which they boast of having maintained since the days of Noah, their grand patriarch. It would indeed be no easy matter for a foreign invader to subdue a country so intersected with narrow defiles, difficult passes, and inaccessible mountains, to which the natives might fly for shelter without the danger of pursuit. Here they can subsist for months on the milk of their goats, and bread made from acorns, whilst the severity of the winter season, combined with the scarcity of forage and provisions, must compel an army to retire or divide itself, incurring, in either case, the risk of being destroyed. The Koords are without faith, and have so little respect for truth, that they systematically whenever it can, in the most trifling degree, answer their purpose: they are jealous of strangers, rude and uneducated, but full of patriotic feeling, and conceive it happy to be permitted to remain unmolested in their native mountains. They are not so strict as Turks in regard to their women, who go abroad with their faces uncovered, and do not shun the approach of the other sex; they venerate the dead, and invariably erect monuments to the memory of those who are supposed to have led a holy life. Their customary dress in this part of the province is a long robe, made of white cotton cloth; but in the neighbourhood of Betlis and Moush they manufacture a sort of striped stuff, resembling tartan. The chief of Sert is, in every sense of the word, a powerful feudal lord, and probably not very different from some of our dukes and earls six or seven hundred years ago.

12th. I endeavoured to prevail on him to grant us a strong guard to go to Jezira, which was but sixteen hours distant, whereas the road to Diarbekr, or even Merdin, was a circuit of at least six or seven days' journey; but he was deaf to my entreaties, and said he could not think of risking the lives of his followers in so hazardous an undertaking; that he would give us letters to his friends on the route to Merdin, and that horses were ready for us when we were sufficiently refreshed to begin our journey. We had no reason to doubt the sincerity of this man, as will appear in the sequel, and therefore, resolving to follow his advice, departed at noon, and having travelled about three miles through the plain of Sert, began to ascend a range of mountains which bound it on the south. At the fourth mile was the district of Shirvan, consisting of two villages: at the sixth, the top of the range from which we saw the Kabour coming from the north, and winding through the mountains: it crosses the plain of Sert, four miles from the town, and is, no doubt, the river of the Centrites, which the Ten Thousand found so much difficulty in passing, and which Xenophon represents as separating the Carduchi from Armenia, as being two hundred feet broad, and only fordable in one place. The Kabour was, I should guess, nearly eighty yards wide, very rapid, and certainly not fordable anywhere near the spot where we crossed it; but all the rivers of the east vary so much in size at different times of the year, as greatly to mislead those who are not aware of this circumstance; they swell in consequence of the melting of the

snow, at the end of March or early in April, and commence gradually to fall from the beginning of June to the end of July. Having reached the foot of the range at the termination of the tenth mile, we took shelter from the sun in a grove of oak on the banks of the Kabour, where the thermometer, under the shade of the trees, was up at 100, and where we remained until the heat had sufficiently subsided to enable us to continue our journey along the left bank of the river, which we passed at the twelfth mile, over an old stone bridge of five arches: we soon afterwards entered a succession of bleak and barren hills, intersected with gloomy defiles, the scene of many a murder, according to our guides, who indeed intimated that all the natives of the country might be looked upon as robbers, provided they could commit such acts without the fear of resistance. At the nineteenth mile we arrived at a place called Ooshu, consisting of a large castle, situated on an eminence, and surrounded by a number of mud huts. It was night before we reached this place, but the moon shone bright, and the long figures of the Koords, dressed in white from head to foot, were seen gliding along the battlements. We knocked at the gate, which was opened by five or six persons, who introduced us into an outer court, whilst our Tatar held a parley with the chief, who spoke to him from the top of the great tower or keep, as it is called in our old castles. He ordered his people to conduct us to the roof of the gate, where we slept soundly until morning; and on quitting his habitation the servants, for the first time since we left Constantinople, refused to accept of any present.

13th. We followed a path leading through, an undulating country, producing excellent crops of wheat and barley, and bounded on the left by a lofty chain of mountains. At the fourth mile is the district of Herbo Peri, consisting of several villages, possessed by a sect called Yezidee, who worship or rather deprecate the devil; and at the tenth we reached the castle of Redwan, a building similar to that of Ooshu, and the residence of a Yezidee chief: it stands on a rock overlooking the Erzen branch of the Tigris, and is surrounded by about a hundred huts, inhabited by Yezidees, Armenians and Chaldeans. The chief was himself absent; but we met with a kind reception from his brother, who conducted us into a large open shed, formed of the green leaves and branches of trees, replaced every second or third day, and erected outside of the castle. We were seated but a few minutes in this rural hall, when the whole village assembled to look at us, but our host, in a commanding tone, which shewed that he was accustomed to be obeyed, forbade them to molest us. Amongst the attendants I remarked an Armenian who was particularly civil to us, and who seemed to possess a good deal of local information, as well as the entire confidence of his master; for the Yezidees live in enmity with the Christians. This strange sect take their name from the Arabian general, who put the sons of Ali to death; they have places of worship, but in regard to the nature of their devotions, I could alone ascertain that they respect, or rather dread, the power of the evil spirit, whose name cannot be mentioned in their presence without exciting an indescribable sensation of horror. The tomb of their founder, Sheck Aad, is still shewn at Mosul; and although their principal resort is in the

mountains of Sinjar, they are also scattered over this part of Koordistan,\* and entertain an hereditary antipathy to the mussulmen, by whom their sect has suffered many bloody persecutions: they are a brave and active race of men, drink wine and other strong liquors, and although cruel from education and principle, yet more tolerant on points of religion, and free from many of the narrow prejudices of their neighbours.

We were requested by the Armenian, on no account to spit in their presence, since, if he told the truth, we could not offer them a greater insult. A short time after our arrival, a younger brother of the chief came into the room, whose rudeness equalled the civility of the other: he walked over our carpets without pulling off his boots, sat down upon our cushions without being invited, and frequently looking us directly in the face, burst into loud and repeated peals of laughter.

Fresh horses were brought us about two o'clock; but some dispute having arisen regarding the baggage, my Italian servant cocked one of his pistols, and threatened to shoot some of the attendants, so between the violence of his temper, and the fierce independent spirit of the Yezidees, I was fearful something unpleasant might occur, and therefore endeavoured to preserve peace; but this was unnecessary, for they treated him with great contempt, and by way of punishment, made him ride without a saddle to the end of the stage. We mounted at three P. M., with the thermometer at 98, and descended to the bank of the river, which we forded. The source of this branch of the Tigris is reported to be at a place called Susan, a little to the north of Betlis; it followed a S. E. course; was about sixty yards wide, but did not take our horses much above the knees. We travelled for two miles and a half along the banks of the river, and then halted at a village called Givers, to enable our polite host, who had accompanied us, to collect a body of horse to escort us on our journey. We then traversed a country rich in grain, gently ascending the slopes which led to the summit of the range on our left hand; and when nearly half-way up the hill, the Yezidee sent his friend, the Armenian, to demand buckshish, saying that, as he was about to return home, he hoped that we would give him something handsome as a token of remembrance. We gave him fifteen gold rubas, with which he seemed satisfied, and departed, leaving us at the mercy of about a dozen armed ruffians. He would not, however, receive the money at first, but told the Tatar to give it to the Armenian, from whom I afterwards observed him take it when he thought he was not observed. Shortly afterwards the Armenian came up close to me, and complaining bitterly that his master had not left him a single piastre, took a purse from his pocket, the mouth of which he opened towards me in such a manner that no person, with the exception of myself, could perceive it, and significantly pointing towards it, expressed a desire that it might be filled; but when I declined complying with this moderate demand, he suddenly changed his tone, and became as impertinent as he had before been troublesome with his attentions. At the sixth mile we arrived at a spot where several families of Koords were residing in caves cut out of the side of the

---

\* I was told that there are ten thousand families of them between Erzen and Jezira. The former is an ancient town, formerly called Thospia, situated in the vicinity of a lake eight hours from Redwan.



mountains. At the ninth mile we gained the summit of the mountain, which branched out to the right and left, and at last opened into the table land of Diarbekr. At the thirteenth mile descended by a gentle slope into the plain, which was covered with luxuriant crops of wheat and barley, and where the people, who were employed in reaping, came to us as we passed with handfuls of grain, requesting the present of a few piastres to enable them to keep the harvest. Almost the whole of the corn consumed by the inhabitants of Diarbekr is grown in this noble plain, which is about forty hours, or probably one hundred and twenty miles in length, and of a soil capable, as I was informed, of yielding two crops in the year. At the eighteenth mile passed the castle and village of Bashboot, situated under a low range of mountains running parallel with our route, and distant about two miles on the right hand. Here the roads, which ever since we had quitted Betlis might be considered as all but impassable, began to improve, and as we advanced into the flat became excellent. At the twentieth mile we got to the end of the stage, and stopped at a Chaldean village named Kiverzo, about four miles from which the kin, or lieutenant, of the pasha of Diarbekr was encamped, with an army of two thousand men, near a church which he had besieged for several months. We had not been seated half an hour, when a deputation of the principal inhabitants waited upon us to entreat that we would use our influence with the kia to save the church from being burnt, as it was, they said, an ancient and holy edifice. In reply to our question regarding the cause of the dispute, they stated that the pasha had demanded a larger sum from the natives of the village of Mercuri, where the church is situated, than they could afford to pay, and had thus driven these poor people, amounting to about three hundred Chaldeans and Armenians, into revolt. We promised to speak to the kia, but I had no hopes that anything we could say would have any effect. The temperature at three P. M. this day 100, and at sun-set 80. Some few miles before we reached the village, one of our guards, observing a stray sheep under the protection of a dog, made towards it, and, in the most dexterous manner, lifted it upon his horse without dismounting, whilst his manner of shifting it from one side of the horse to the other as any person approached him, shewed that such exploits were familiar to this promising youth. He and his companions then retired to a remote corner of the meadow, with the intention, no doubt, of supping on their prey, but I heard no more of them until the morning, when they sent a message to demand a present.

14th. The promise I had made the Armenians, to petition the kia in the behalf of their friends made them alert in bringing us horses in the morning. We were mounted and on the road at six A. M., and, in the course of an hour and a half, reached the Turkish camp, pitched about three quarters of a mile from the church, a quadrangular building, situated on the declivity of a hill which so completely commanded it, that it might have been taken in half an hour with the aid of a single field piece. The siege had, however, continued upwards of two months; not a man had been wounded on either side, and the Turkish camp, for confusion and irregularity, resembled more a country fair in England, than an encampment of soldiers in the face of an enemy. Mahomed

Aga, who was extremely anxious to go to Diarbekr, instead of taking the more direct route to Merdin, had gone on before to tell his own story to the kia; and on our arrival we were met by the byrakdar, or standard bearer, who informed us from his master that horses were ready to carry us to the former. I asked him the distance of Merdin and Diarbekr from the camp, to which he replied that they were each about thirty hours, and that both roads were equally safe. As therefore we had eventually to go to Merdin, I thought we might as well proceed thither at once, as make a round of eighteen hours (the distance between the two cities) merely to humour our Tatar\* and I accordingly requested an audience of the kia,\* to whom we were shortly afterwards introduced. We beheld an emaciated figure about forty years of age, reclining on a sort of portable wooden sofa, ornamented with yellow velvet fringed with gold: the tent was filled with people, but a place was reserved for us on the right hand of the kia, who appeared to be in a wretched state of health, and asked us for medicine. When we intimated our desire of going to Merdin instead of Diarbekr, he expressed his surprize and said that our Tatar had informed him, that we particularly wished to go and see the latter added "I advise you to go the more direct road, and will send my byrakdar to take care of you." We then took our leave, and mounting the horses that had been prepared for us, quitted the camp, after a fruitless effort to arrange the dispute between him and the villagers.

When we had gone about a mile, a person passed us at full speed, saying, that the garrison had made a sally from the church, and, on looking round, we perceived that there was great confusion in the camp, some firing their carabines and muskets in the air, and others riding furiously in different directions. This army had neither piquet nor outpost of any description, nor did they even take the trouble of surrounding the church; so that the besieged, as we were informed, came out every day for their provisions and water. We travelled for five miles through fields of wheat and barley, and stopped at a village called Tilmuz, where we were to change horses. On the right we had a range of hills running parallel with the road, at the foot of which flowed one of the branches of the Tigris, formerly called the Nymphaeus, and on the left, distant about eight miles, another range of high hills which we gradually approached. At Tilmuz the heat was excessive, and we were much troubled by the impertinent curiosity of the Koords, who thrust themselves into our room in such numbers, that we were afraid of being stifled. I had before remarked, that although it was the middle of harvest, the villages were crowded with men at all hours of the day, notwithstanding that each person, who chose to work, received, as the price of his labour, twenty-four paras, or about seven pence per diem, and as much bread, cheese, and milk, as he could consume.

We quitted Tilmuz at three in the afternoon, when the thermometer was at 96, and at eight in the evening reached the mud village of Gerizlar, where we were accommodated on the top of a house. We passed, about half way, the hamlet of Teppa,

---

\* His object of going to Diarbekr was to purchase a sort of chintz manufactured at that place, which he might sell for a considerable profit at Bagdad.

\* The kia is next in rank to the pasha.

three quarters of a mile from the road on the right hand; the hills, in this quarter, had now gradually sunk into the plain, and there was a gentle slope towards the Batman su, which flowed about four miles distant from the road. Gerizlar was inhabited by Christians of the Chaldean and Nestorian sects, who treated us with much attention and kindness. The evening was delightful, and it was pleasant to see all the inhabitants of the village, men, women, and children, enjoying themselves on the tops of their respective houses, which were all upon a level with each other. The men lay extended on their carpets smoking their long pipes; the women were either employed in suckling their infants or in pounding corn; children were squalling in one quarter, and dogs barking in another; whilst the melancholy but incessant croaking of the storks perched upon the chimney tops, formed altogether an interesting and animated picture of an oriental village. The stork, which is regarded by the natives of the east as sacred, makes its appearance in the spring, lays its eggs and hatches its young; it departs in August or September, and is said to winter in the Abyssinian deserts. I have repeatedly seen this bird disgorge large rats and other animals perfectly undigested.

15th. We departed at eight in the morning, and travelled for five miles over the low range which we had been gradually approaching on the left; it then rapidly descended to the village of Osman Khoi, situated about a quarter of a mile below the confluence of the Batman su,\* and the Diarbekr branch of the Tigris. This village was built on the declivity of a rocky mountain, where I observed a great number of artificial excavations, many of which were capacious, lighted by regular doors and windows, and adorned with well-proportioned pillars. They are used as habitations in the winter, as stables and sheep folds in the summer, and although they are very numerous all over Koordistan, none of them are the work of time. The chief of this place, a person of some consideration, having eight or ten villages under him, received us with great seeming reluctance, and, supposing that we did not understand him, abused the guide for bringing Feringi Gours to his house. He became somewhat more tractable, however, when the standard-bearer told him that his master desired we might be treated with attention; he offered us coffee, and calling for his horse and arms, said he would himself accompany us to Byram Khoi, on the opposite bank of the Tigris. He conducted us about a mile up the left bank of the Batman su, when he ordered his attendants to strip and prepare to pass the river; he allotted two men to each horse to prevent accidents, as the stream was deep and rapid, and there were doubts whether or not the cattle could pass without swimming. I certainly expected more than once to have been carried away by the force of the current, and this was actually the case with one of our escort, who was compelled to abandon his horse. We crossed the river half a mile above its junction, at a spot where it was one hundred and twenty yards in breadth, although it was then said to be very low, compared to what it had been a fortnight before. Having reached in safety the opposite shore, we traversed a sandy flat overgrown with fern, so

---

\* Some of the Turks call it the Bulespena or Barima river, and D'Anville supposes that this is the Tigris of Pliny, and the same whose sources were seen by the Ten Thousand.

high that it hid the horses from the view, and, at the end of half a mile, reached the Diarbekr branch, a stream nearly of the same width, but not so deep as the Batman su. We consequently forded it without difficulty, and entered the plain of Mesopotamia and the district of Byram Khoi, consisting of thirty villages under Beker Aga, Koordish chief. We halted at a small village, where, with the utmost exertion, we procured a cup of milk, but no horses were to be found, and our baggage was therefore conveyed, by four miserable asses, to a village called Murza, six miles farther. The road led through an undulating productive country: on the left, distant about nine miles, was a low range of hills, but on the right the plain extended beyond the view. At Murza they refused even to give us asses, and set at defiance the threats of the byrakdar, who went in search of some great personage to an adjoining village. We, in the mean time, made acquaintance with a delhi bashi, or trooper, belonging to Beker Aga, who happened to be in the village, and through his influence, with the aid of a few rubas, we were enabled to march six miles more, to a village called Mathra, where, an hour after sun-set, the thermometer was at 85.

16th. We departed, at six in the morning, with the thermometer at 70. Shortly after quitting the village, we ascended a low range of hills which broke off to the right, and travelling through a cultivated country, reached Kian Khoi, the residence of Beker Aga, at the end of the seventh mile. We were shewn into a long and dismal chamber lighted only by one small window, where, fatigued with the heat of the weather, and want of sleep the preceding night, we hoped to have a few moments of repose, but this hope was vain; since we had been scarcely seated before the chief entered with about thirty of his followers, and, harassed as we were, we had to undergo the usual penalty of shewing our arms, watches, &c. The watches and seals he did not fail to covet, but the short and plain English pistols were rejected with disdain. One of my seals, a Kairngorum, caught the eye of Beker Aga, who instantly imagined that it must be a diamond, and desired to have it. But I assured him that it was no diamond, and observed, if it had been one, I should not have been so imprudent as to wear it in public whilst travelling through his territories. He smiled, and putting his hand into his bosom, took from thence a small parcel, and opening ten or twelve different folds of paper, handed us an old drop of a chandelier, demanding to know its value, as he said he had taken it in pledge for a large sum of money. Not to put him out of conceit with his treasure, we told him it was a jewel of inestimable value, upon which he again folded it carefully up and returned it to his bosom.\* Before half an hour had elapsed, the room became so insupportably hot, and the air so oppressive, that we entreated him to order some of his people to retire, but he answered, that they accompanied him wherever he went, and that, if we were tired of his society, he would leave us to shift for ourselves. He paid little or no respect to the byrakdar, said that he never condescended to read fermauns, and that if the kia had not been so near him with an army, he would have

---

\* This is rather an extraordinary circumstance, since the natives of the East are in general excellent judges of precious stones.

stood in no sort of ceremony in appropriating to his own use any thing we possessed. Compelled by necessity to bear with him, we spent the greater part of the day in a state of absolute misery, and finding the standard-bearer of no manner of use to us, we gave him a present and dismissed him. After much entreaty, and the promise of a reward to some of the attendants, five mules were brought to us towards the close of the evening, but the chief swore we should have no more, and that he would make the Tatar and servants ride on the top of the baggage. They at first refused to suffer so great an indignity, but were in the sequel glad to submit, for this boisterous ruffian threatened to put them to death, and ordered the mules to be taken away. We at last contrived to pacify him, and he sent a horseman with orders to accompany us as far as Merdin. From Sert to Kian Khoi the country is rich in flax and corn, and totally devoid of wood or fruit trees, but at Byram Khoi the country had already changed its nature, and we soon afterwards entered the rugged chain of Mount Masius, interspersed with vineyards, and covered with a small bush similar to the sloe. At the eighth mile we descended from the mountains into a narrow valley; it was past eleven o'clock, and the moon shining with uncommon splendour, enabled us to perceive, at some distance up the dell, the high walls of the castle of Houseena built upon a rock, and the residence of Ibrahim Effendi, a powerful chief. After riding round the walls of this large and lofty edifice, we entered the gate, and passing under the Gothic arches of a ruined building, dismounted in the lower court, whence we were conducted up a flight of steps hewn out of the rock, and crossing another court, ascended a wooden platform or stage spread with carpets and cushions, where several people were preparing to go to rest. We were extremely fatigued, and, after a slight repast, also went to sleep, glad of the opportunity of enjoying a few moments repose.

17th. The effendi having prepared horses for us in the morning, we departed from his castle at eight o'clock, and, at four in the evening, entered with joyful hearts the gates of Merdin, after a journey of seven hours or about twenty-four miles. For six miles our route lay up the valley of Houseena, and along the banks of a small river, which separates the pashalics of Bagdad and Diarbekr. The hills were covered with vineyards, and the bottom of the valley with orchards and gardens of apricot, peach, mulberry and walnut trees. At the seventh mile we quitted the valley, and turning more to the S. pursued our course over a rough and stony road, and when nearly half way we discharged the horseman given us by Beker Aga, with what we conceived to be a handsome reward for his services. But he was nevertheless dissatisfied, and imagining he could frighten us, placed his lance in the rest, and, pointing it to my breast, demanded buckshish in a threatening tone of voice. I avoided him by turning my horse on one side, and, cocking a pistol, threatened to shoot him if he moved. This had an instantaneous effect, he drew back apparently much disconcerted, and carefully avoided coming near me afterwards, although he had nothing to dread from Mahomed Aga, who, as usual, remained a tranquil spectator, satisfied that it was dangerous to quarrel with the Koords. On passing the summit of a hill, at the eighteenth mile, the town

and castle of Merdin opened to the view, and we immediately afterwards descended, by a steep and narrow path bordered by vineyards, into a rocky valley, which separated the range we had just quitted, from that on which the city is situated. Here the effendi's son, who had accompanied us from Houseena, sent to demand a present, as he said he was fearful of entering the city walls, in consequence of having murdered one of the inhabitants some time before.\* The other man also came, and in the most humble manner entreated the Tatar to intercede for him; wherefore, taking into consideration the distance he had come with us, I ordered the servant to give him something more, and both together shortly afterwards disappeared amongst the mountains. These people have an idea that Englishmen are laden with gold, and invariably make a point of extorting as much as they can get. At the twenty second mile we began to ascend the rocky mountain on which the city stands, and after many turnings and windings entered the gate. We took up our quarters with my old friend the archbishop, who gave us a kind and most hospitable reception.

How delightful did this evening appear after the bustle and fatigues we had lately undergone! We now looked upon all our troubles as over, and little imagined that the worst were yet to come. In momentary dread of being assassinated, either by banditti or our guards whilst on the road, and pestered in the villages with the importunities of the natives, we might safely assert that from the moment we had quitted Trebisonde, until that of our arrival at Merdin, we had been in a perpetual state of disquietude and alarm. The terrace, on the archbishop's house, where we were seated, commanded an extensive view of the vast plain of Mesopotamia, once crowded with cities and villages, but now a dreary waste abandoned to the wandering Arabs, who sometimes pitch their flying camps amidst the remains of many of those cities.

At Ras ul ain, the ancient Resena, eighteen hours S. W. of Merdin, our host saw the ruins of a magnificent temple; eight or ten beautiful marble columns lay overturned in the sand; and the Arabs informed him that there were many more underground. This place takes its name from the source of the Kabour, the ancient Chaboras, which is close to the village, and is, according to my friend's account, a noble spring rising from the earth with prodigious force, and forming a considerable stream even at the fountain head. Five hours S. by W. of Merdin is a village called Cofurtoot, where he perceived the ruins of an ancient city, and amongst other remnants a noble bridge almost entire. Yengi Shehr, a village twenty hours hence, and five from Haran, also displays a fine arch and many other vestiges of former grandeur. Of the famous city of Haran little or nothing remains. Nicephorium, now called Racca, has been visited by the archbishop, who represents it as a considerable place chiefly inhabited by Arabs, and containing some handsome ruins. Of Dara and Nisibis I shall speak more at large hereafter. The land, in the vicinity of Merdin, is said to be so fertile, that, without culture, it will produce four and five hundred fold: and three hours W. of the city is a village called Kela Bin, or

---

\* Such atrocities may give the reader some idea of the state of the Turkish government at present in these parts, where the power of the pasha is in general continued to the place of his residence.

the thousand fold, so named from the richness of the land in its vicinity. The earth, when pressed in the hand, feels as if mixed with oil, and it appeared to me to be the same sort of soil as that in the plain of Antioch. From Sert to Merdin the bearings of the road were as follows: three miles and a half W., two miles S. W., five miles S. S. W., one mile and a half S. E. by S., one mile S. S. W., three miles and a half S. W., six miles W. by S.-one mile W. by N., two miles N. W., three miles and a half W. S. W., three miles and a half W. by S.-two miles W. N. W., three miles S. W. by S., one mile W. N. W., two miles W. by N., one mile W. by S., two miles W., two miles W. by N., two miles W. N.W., three miles N. W., two miles N. W. by W. four miles N. W. by N., three miles W. S. W., two miles S. W. by W. two miles and a half W. by N., two miles and a half W. N. W., three miles W. by S., one mile S. W. by W., two miles S. W., one mile and a half S. by E., one mile S. S. W., one mile W. S. W., two miles S. S. W., one mile S. S. W., eight miles S. W., four miles S. W., one mile S. S. W. one mile S. W. by S., one mile S. W., one mile W. by S., three miles S. S. W., three miles S., one mile W.-one mile S. W., half a mile S., one mile and a half S. S. E., two miles S., one mile W., two miles S. S. E., two miles S., six miles S. W., one mile S. E., two miles S. E. by E., six miles S. S. W.

18th. Our host presented us this morning with some beautiful gems, and several medals of Seleucus Nicator, found in an urn lately dug up by a peasant of Mount Thor, whilst ploughing in a field. A few of the coins had been saved by the archbishop, but by far the greater part of them had been melted down. The temperature at seven A. M. was 60, at noon 80, and at sun-set 70.

I have given, in a former work, a description of the town of Merdin, the old Roman position of Marde. It is situated on the south side of a steep and rocky mountain, the summit of which is crowned with a citadel now in ruins; the town is surrounded by a stone wall about two miles and a half in circumference, which, commencing at the castle, is carried round the face of the hill, in the shape of a half moon. The houses are well built for a Turkish town, and most of them are very ancient. The governor has the rank of Waiwode, and is appointed by the pasha of Bagdad. The inhabitants are a mixture of Turks, Arabs, Chaldeans, Nestorians, Catholics, Armenians, Jews and Jacobites. There are also, I understand, about a hundred families of Guebres or worshippers of fire, who hold their mysteries a profound secret, and expose their dead on the top of a tower to be torn by vultures as at Bombay, Yezd, &c.

I wrote to the mutesellim this morning, requesting him to give us post-horses to go to Nisibin; in the evening I received his answer, stating that we should have them in the course of a few days, but advising us to wait for a caravan, as the passage of the desert between Nisibin and Mosul was attended with much danger, in consequence of the depredations of the Yezidees of Sinjar. This daring community are said to amount to upwards of two millions of souls, and have, within these few years past, grown into such power as to threaten the adjacent territory with subjection. They dwell in villages, or rather subterranean caverns, excavated in the sides of the mountains of Sinjar, a lofty range which intersects the plain of Mesopotamia to the S. E. of Merdin; and where they

were originally compelled to seek refuge from the sanguinary persecutions of the Mahomedans, against whom they wage a cruel and incessant warfare. The soil is sufficiently fertile to render them independent of foreign supplies; the mountains every where abound in excellent water and pasture land, while the apricots, peaches, grapes and figs of Sinjar are acknowledged to be the most delicious in Irak Arabi. I could learn but little of the customs or religious rites of the Yezidees, who, like most nations in the East, are divided into tribes or families, governed by Shecks, who possess both the spiritual and temporal power, and are firmly united in one common bond of union for the preservation of their liberty and independence. In the side of a great mountain called Abdul Azeez, thirty hours S. by E. of Merdin, is a deep cavern, where, on a certain day in the year, they make their offerings to the devil by throwing jewels or pieces of gold and silver into the abyss, which is said to be so deep that no line ever reached the bottom and supposed to lead into the infernal regions. They dress in the same manner as the Turks; their force consists of bodies of irregular cavalry armed with long lances, swords and pistols; their horses are excellent and capable of supporting great fatigue; and in their plundering expeditions, they either murder those whom they attack, or strip them of the whole of their property, and leave them to perish in the desert.

19th. The temperature at six in the morning was 70, at ten A. M. 84, at noon 96, at three P. M. and at sunset 86. We received an order from the mutesellim, who had gone out the day before at the head of a body of horse to clear the road to Diarbekr of the banditti by which it has been for some time past infested.



---

# DOCUMENTS: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

---

**W.J.WINTLE, ARMENIA AND ITS SORROWS,  
LONDON: ANDREW MELROSE, 1896.**

The Chapters V-VII of the book describes the atrocities against Armenians in the Ottoman empire in 1890s, particularly in regard to the population of Sassoun and Mush based on eyewitnesses, both Armenian and foreign.

.....

**CHAPTER V.  
THE ORIGINS OF TROUBLE**

To appreciate the causes of the long chapter of Armenian horrors which has culminated in the fearful atrocities of the past few years, we need to recall the incidents connected with the introduction of Christianity into the country. What the people are now suffering is neither more nor less than what they endured in the fifth and following centuries at the hands of the fire-worshipping Persians. If they had then returned to Zoroastrianism, or if, two centuries later, they had embraced Mohammedanism, when the soldiers of Islam massacred thousands of them in cold blood, the whole course of their subsequent history would have been changed.

It should never be forgotten that the question is essentially one of religion. The Turks have no reason for disliking the Armenians apart from this. Indeed, we venture to assert that they greatly prefer the industrious and peaceable Armenians to the idle and turbulent Kurds. But the Kurds are nominally Mohammedans, while the Armenians are very decided Christians. Hence the Kurds are allowed to have their way, and the Armenians are subjected to every indignity and outrage.

In the fourth century St. Chrysostom described the state of affairs in terms almost identical with those which have appeared in the columns of present-day newspaper.

"Like ferocious beasts they (the Kurds) fell upon the unhappy inhabitants of Armenia and devoured them. Trouble and disorder are everywhere. Hundreds of men, women, and children have been massacred; others have been frozen to death. The towns and villages are desolated; everywhere you see blood; everywhere you hear the groans of the dying, the shouts of the victors, and the sobs and the tears of the vanquished."

The *Times* has drawn attention to the fact that in the year 1360 some Armenian refugees were in England, seeking the protection of Edward III., and asking permission to make the woes of their country known. History is repeating itself today. The rule of the Turk during the past five hundred years has been

productive of a never-ceasing stream of refugees, flowing towards happier shores.

Two hundred and fifty years ago, the English traveller, Sandys, published the following description of the sights he witnessed in Armenia:-

"The wild beasts of mankind have broken in upon them and rooted out all civility; and the pride of a stern and barbarous tyrant, possessing the thrones of ancient dominion, who aims only at the height of greatness and sensuality, hath reduced so great and goodly a part of the world to that lamentable distress and servitude under which it now faints and groans. Those rich lands at this present time remain waste and overgrown with bushes, and receptacles of wild beasts, of thieves and murderers; large territories dispeopled or thinly inhabited; goodly cities made desolate, sumptuous buildings become ruins, glorious temples either subverted or prostituted to impiety; true religion discountenanced and opposed; all nobility extinguished; no light of learning permitted, no virtue cherished; violence and rapine exulting over all, and leaving no security, save an abject mind and unlooked - on poverty."

In 1843 an incident occurred at Erzeroum, which is typical of the treatment habitually meted out to the Armenians by their Ottoman rulers. A merchant was sleeping at the caravansarai, with two soldiers near him. In the morning he found that his goods had been stolen, and charged the soldiers with the theft. They were taken before the judge, when they denied the charge, and were at once liberated. A Turkish woman now appeared who had seen the soldiers burying the property at a certain place, where part of it was found after a little search. The soldiers were again arrested, and now stated that they had stolen half the property, and that an Armenian, named Artin, had taken the other half. This man was then arrested, but denied all knowledge of the affair, upon which the Pasha ordered him to be tortured till he should confess. A cord was tied round his head, two sheep's knucklebones were placed upon his temples, and the cord tightened till his eyes nearly came out. As he still declared his innocence, his teeth were drawn out one by one, pieces of cane were thrust under his toe nails and finger nails, and his thighs were torn with pincers. He was then hung up by the hands, and orders were given that he was to be tormented until he either confessed or died. This went on for twelve days before it came to the knowledge of the British Commissioners, who were then at Erzeroum, and who at once assumed an attitude which compelled the Pasha to release his victim.

It may be well here to briefly describe the old prison at Erzeroum, in which many a wretched Armenian disappeared for ever. It is now disused, though its modern substitute is bad enough.

In the floor of a dimly-lighted and ill-ventilated cell, in the basement of the old clock tower, was a heavy wrought-iron grating, made of great bars some six inches apart, and strongly hinged and padlocked. When this grating was opened, there appeared under it the mouth of a narrow well cut in the rock, about two and a half feet in diameter, which sank down into the darkness for below. When the eye became

accustomed to the gloom, a large white stone could be distinguished in the midst of the dungeon. This served as a table, and upon it the jailers threw clown the prisoners' foods. Sometimes they threw down a large piece of raw flesh as well, in order that its decomposition might add to the miseries of the wretched prisoners. The dungeon was bottle-shaped, between twenty and thirty feet deep, filth and vermin forming its only furniture. Into this awful hole many and many an innocent Armenian was let clown, for no offence save that he was a Christian, and there he was left to perish unless his friends could provide a sufficiently large bribe to secure his release.

In the summer of 1877 occurred the Battak massacres, and in October of the same year a band of Turkish soldiers attacked a village near Yuzgat, and ordered the inhabitants to bring out all the money and food they possessed.

The terrified Armenians obeyed, and in a short time the whole band of soldiers were drunk. Then, in the words of the English Consul, "they made a hell of the place." The women, young and old, were outraged in the presence of their fathers, husbands, and brothers. All the cattle and horses were killed, and the village finally burnt to the ground. The scoundrels then departed for Yuzgat, forcing the men of the village to accompany them as porters, and in some cases actually riding on the men themselves. When the old and feeble broke down, they were forced to keep up by being pricked with knives and bayonets. Truly the horrors perpetrated by the slave-hunters of Africa are not worse than these!

On the night when the present Sultan of Turkey was proclaimed in the stead of his drunken, demented predecessor, a great wave of fanatical fury swept over the town of Beridjik, on the Euphrates. The cry was rised to kill the Armenians. All through the night bands of ruffians rushed through the streets, hammering at the doors of the Christians and threatening to murder them all. No one dared to have a light, and in the darkness whole families huddled to get her in the cellars, fearing even to speak. During the awful night children were prematurely born by mothers who died from fright, and many children lost their senses through sheer terror, and are babbling idiots to this day.

Without a doubt, the whole Christian population would have been murdered but for the strange apparition of an aged Turk in the streets, who was the sole survivor of the Deré Beys, and was regarded by the Moslems with peculiar veneration.

This man went everywhere demanding silence, and proclaiming that the peoples of the West were corning to avenge their fellow-Christians. He succeeded in stopping the riot; but, alas! his prophecy is still unfulfilled.

We have given the above instances *to* show that the persecution of the Armenians is neither a new thing nor a mere outbreak of spasmodic fanaticism. It has been the normal state of things in Asiatic Turkey for many years past. Other Powers have protested and threatened; the Sultan has again and again promised reforms; but the outrages have continued. Latterly it has become clear that the

Ottoman Government has adopted a policy of extermination. The facts which have been published in Blue Books, and still more in the powerful article of Canon MacColl and Dr. E. J. Dillon, have made this abundantly clear.

In 1892 the Sublime Porte issued decrees prohibiting Christian worship and education. This should be especially noted in view of the fact that by the Treaty of Berlin the British Government promised toleration for all religions, and the British Government received Cyprus as a pledge, and also as a recognition of the rights of England to see that the promise in question was duly carried out. How it has been carried out, we now proceed to show.

Christians are forbidden to build churches, and only after much delay and extensive bribes can they obtain permission to repair the old ones. There must be no bells, lest the religious feelings of the Mussulmans should be wounded, and for the same reason there must be no loud singing during the service. The most insulting language is applied to Christians in all public and official documents. They are described as "dogs" and "pigs," and in burial certificates they are said to be not "dead" but "damned." Here is a specimen:-

"We certify to the priest of the Church of Mary (in Armenia) that the impure, putrid, stinking carcase of . . . ., damned this day, may be concealed underground."

The above was not the spiteful work of a petty official: it was all quite in order, and was attested by the British Ambassador.

One of the Blue Books on "Religions Persecution in Turkey" states on the authority of Her Majesty's Ambassador and Consuls, that the port has definitely refused to permit the establishment of Christian schools, and has prohibited the publication of the Bible in the Turkish tongue. In 1891 meetings for worship in private houses were forbidden. The next stop was to prohibit Christian literature. So far bid the authorities go in this direction, that even the classes of English literature, such as Shakespeare, Milton, and Scott, were confiscated. When Mr. Brooke Lambert, the Vicar of Greenwich, was travelling through Turkish territory in 1892, his pocket Bible was taken from him.

Christians are forbidden to quote passages of Scripture in their writings, lest revolutionary doctrines should be thus promulgated. Any passage from the Bible is prohibited which contains such words as persecution, courage, liberty, strength, king, arms, rights, etc. Even the word "star" is excluded, on the ground that the magi were led by a star to worship the Messiah, and this might encourage the Christians to look for a deliverer. Preachers are forbidden to inculcate the virtues of manly courage, resignation under affliction, and hope in God's delivering mercy. Such expressions as the following are strongly objected to:-

"The grace of God," because Mohammedans deny that Christians can have this grace; "good news or gospel," because it is not admitted that the teaching of Christ is good news; and "apostle," because Moslems deny that the first disciples of

Christ were sent from God. On the other hand, books have been published containing the most abominable slanders about the Christian religion, and their authors have been decorated by the Sultan. It is not surprising, then, to learn that the work of Christian ministers and missionaries is beset by extraordinary difficulties.

In February 1893, Professor Thoumaian, of the Marsovan Protestant College, was arrested with several other Armenians on a charge of sedition, and for a time was treated with gross inhumanity, his hands being confined for five days in heavy manacles which cut into his flesh. He was also kept without food, and cruelly beaten. The charges against him were of the most absurd character. He had visited certain villages in connection with his mission work, and this was regarded as a cover for the spread of revolutionary teaching. No evidence whatever could be procured except the affidavits of some men who declared at the trial that they were tortured by the Government agents until they signed the documents. But notwithstanding these facts, M. Thoumaian and sixteen of his companions were sentenced to death, on the 12th of June, at Angora.

Happily for him, he was well known in England as a respected missionary and philanthropist. A great storm of indignation broke forth in all directions. Meetings to protest were held in many large towns, and urgent questions were asked in the House of Commons. Representations were at once made by the British Ambassador to the Porte, and he was informed that the case would be reconsidered by the Court of Cassation. But the British nation was in no mood to be trifled with. On 3<sup>rd</sup> July, Lord Rosebery sent the following telegram to Constantinople:-

"Her Majesty's Government cannot wait for result of proceedings of Court of Cassation. The Sultan is evidently determined to add to the cruel farce already perpetrated at Angora by another mock condemnation. Every additional day, however, that passes over the heads of these innocent prisoners is a new injustice."

The effect of this was instantaneous. On the following morning M. Thoumaian was set at liberty. It may be that other iniquities in Armenia would have been checked had the British Government held equally strong language on the subject.

Another step in the process of "diminishing" the Armenians was to reduce them to a condition of semi-starvation. The Ottoman Government is notorious for its unwillingness to pay its debts, and thus it comes about that the officials in charge of the various districts of Armenia have been left to live largely by their wits; in other words, by robbery and spoliation. Thus, Tahsin Pasha, a former Governor-General of Bitlis, made a practice of imprisoning scores of wealthy Armenians without the least pretext at a trial or even an accusation. Liberty was then offered in return for large money payments. Those prisoners who refused to pay the bribe were subjected to the most horrible tortures. Some were made to stand motionless for twenty-four, thirty-six, or forty-eight hours in a narrow box, bristling all over with iron spikes, and with hardly room on the

ground to stand upon. About a hundred Armenians died in the prison of Bitlis alone.

In 1890, the village elder of Odandjor was a rich man, as wealth is reckoned in Armenia. He possessed eighty oxen, fifty buffaloes, six hundred sheep, several horses, and other property. He paid £50 a year in taxes to the Government. But he and his neighbours were plundered of their goods by the Turks, and in 1894 he was a homeless vagrant, in danger of dying from want.

In 1891 the Sultan began to form a force of thirty thousand Kurdish cavalry, officered by the most notorious brigands and criminals in Kurdistan. These men "openly state," wrote the British Consul at Erzeroum, "that they have been appointed to suppress the Armenians, and that they have received assurances that they will not be called to answer before the tribunals for any acts of oppression committed against Christians." These are the men who served as willing tools in the hands of Sultan, whenever massacres and outrages were thought desirable.

The Kurds received general permission to feed their cattle in the pastures and cornfields of the Armenians. Reuter's agent, who spent some months travelling about Armenia in disguise, states that wherever he went he found Kurdish cattle, with their attendants, in the pastures of the Armenians, who dared not resist or even complain.

The crops having been destroyed, a year's taxation was demanded in advance from the wretched Christians. When they pleaded poverty through the destruction of their crops, their cattle and household goods were promptly seized, and divided between the tax-gatherers and the Kurds. In this way thousands of Armenians have been reduced to feeding for months upon grass and roots, and hundreds have perished through sheer starvation. For a long time past, many of the people have been living upon coarse cakes, made of a mixture of roots, leaves, and grass, and looking very much like concrete.

The personal testimony of the gentleman alluded to was summed up in the following words: "I went to Armenia with my sympathies rather in favour of the Turks. I have come back with my blood boiling against their fiendish inhumanity. If the English people only realized the true state of the case, they would not endure it for a week."

The very scum of Turkish officialdom has been let loose upon the unhappy country. As an example we may mention Hussein Agha, whose doings have been thus described by Dr. E. J. Dillon, in the *Contemporary Review*:-

"Commanding a gang of Kurdish brigands, which could be increased to about two thousand men, he continually harassed the peaceful inhabitants of the province, plundering, torturing, violating, killing, till his name alone sent a thrill of terror to the hearts of all. The Armenians of Patnotz suffered so much from his depredations that they all quitted the village *en masse* and migrated to Kamkilsse, where the Kaimakan resides; whereupon Hussein surrounded the house of the Bishop of Karakilsse with a large force, and compelled him to send the people back. Even the

Mohammedans felt so shocked at his doings that the Mussulman priest of Patnotz, Sheikh Nari, complained of him to the Governor-General of Erzeroum. Hussein then sent his men, who murdered Sheikh Nari and frightened his daughter-in-law to death. In one expedition he carried off 2600 sheep, many horses, kine, etc., took £.500, burnt nine villages, killed ten men, and cut off the right hands, noses, and ears of eleven others

Early in the year 1890 he outraged five Christian girls of Patnotz, and in September and October of the same year he levied a contribution of £300 on the people of the same district. *For none of these crimes was he ever tried.* In December 1890 he sent his brother to raise more money, which was done by raiding twenty-one villages of the Aintab district, the net result being £350 and 3000 lbs. of butter. Hatsho, an Armenian of Patnotz, who could not, or would not, contribute a certain sum to his coffer, had his house raided in his absence, and his wife and two children killed. All this time the gallant Hussein occupied the post and discharged the duties of a Mudir, or Deputy Sub-Governor. One day he drove off one thousand sheep and seven yoke of buffaloes from Patnotz and Kizilkoh, and sold them in Erzeroum to a merchant, after which he confiscated a fine horse belonging to Manook, an Armenian of Kizilkoh, and sent it as a present to the son of an Erzeroum judge. One night, towards the end of February 1891, Hussein and others entered the house of an Armenian, Kaspar, for the purpose of carrying off Kaspar's handsome daughter-in-law. The inmates, however, shouted for help, whereupon Hussein, raising his revolver, shot the young woman dead. A petition was presented asking that he might be punished, but the Vali of Erzeroum declined to receive it, and Hussein was summoned to Constantinople, welcomed with cordiality, decorated by His Majesty, raised to the rank of Pasha, and appointed Brigadier-General."

It is the fashion with the Sultan and his ministers to declare that all instances of oppression and outrage are the work of disorderly local officers, and are neither sanctioned nor approved by the authorities at Constantinople. But is it possible for any sane person to believe these protestations in view of the fact that the perpetrators of outrages not only escape punishment, but have been repeatedly promoted and decorated at the hands of the Sultan himself?

The case we have just quoted is not exceptional, but strictly typical. Everywhere throughout Turkish Armenia the same misrule prevails, and the same policy of extermination is rigorously pursued. Whole provinces have been decimated, and some - Alaschkerd, for instance- almost entirely cleared of Armenians. "Over twenty thousand woe-stricken wretches, once healthy and "well-to-do," says Dr. Dillon, "fled to Russia or to Persia, in rags and misery, deformed, diseased, or dying; on the way they were seized over and over again by the soldiers of the Sultan, who deprived them of the little money they possessed, nay, of the clothes they were wearing; outraged the "women in the presence of their sons and daughters, and then drove them over the frontier to



hunger and death. The Christians, by whose toil and thrift the empire was held together, were despoiled, beggared, chained, beaten and banished, or butchered. First their movable wealth was seized, then their landed property was confiscated, next the absolute necessities of life were wrested from them, and finally, honour, liberty, and life were taken with as little ado as if these Christian men and women were wasps or mosquitoes. Thousands of Armenians were thrown into prison, and tortured and terrorized till they delivered up the savings of a lifetime, and the support of their helpless families, to ruffianly parasites. Whole villages were attacked in broad daylight by the Imperial Kurdish cavalry, without pretext or warning, the male inhabitants turned adrift or killed, and their wives and daughters transformed into instruments to glut the foul lusts of these bestial murderers. During the year 1894, in the districts of Bo01anyk and Moush alone, upwards of ten thousand head of cattle and sheep were driven off by the Kurds.

This was the method in vogue all over the country; the details varied according to the condition of things, places, and kinglets, but the means and ends never varied. The result is the utter disappearance of wealth, and the rapid spread of misery, so intense, so irremediable, so utterly loath some in its moral and physical effects as to have inspired some of its victims with that wild courage akin to madness, which always takes its rise in despair. This has been the *normal* condition of Armenia ever since the Treaty of Berlin.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SASSOUN MASSACRE AND THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

"I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the accursed. In the name of Allah the Compassionate,the

Merciful! O Lord of all creatures! O Allah! Destroy the infidels and polytheists, thine enemies; the enemies of the religion! O Allah! Make their children orphans, and defile their abodes! Cause their feet to slip; give them and their families, their households and their women, their children and their relations by marriage, their brothers and their friends, their possessions and their race, their wealth and their lands, as booty to the Moslems, O Lord of all creatures!"

The above pretty sample of cursing is a literal translation of the official prayer of Mohammedanism, which is used daily throughout the Turkish Empire. It should be noted that Christians are included amongst the "infidels" referred to in the prayer. How the Turks have endeavoured to fulfil their own petition has been shown in the previous chapter, and will now appear in even more lurid colours.

We have seen how, ever since the Treaty of Berlin, the Ottoman Government had been taking steps to finally settle the Armenian question by the simple expedient of exterminating the nation. They had reduced the milder and less

spirited inhabitants of the plains by extortion, robbery, and imprisonment; now they began to turn their attention to the hardier and braver tribes dwelling in the mountainous districts of the Bitlis vilayet. It is practically impossible to arrive at exact facts, but it appears certain that secret orders were issued to exterminate the Christians of Sassoun. Rumours to this effect were abroad for many months, and a long report was sent by the Abbot of Moush to the British agent at Erzeroum, informing him of the plan, and appealing for aid from the English people. Nothing, however, was done, and in the autumn of 1894 the fearful massacre took place which has shocked the conscience of the entire civilised world.

In May 1893 an agitator named Darnatian was captured near Moush, and this was made a pretext for massing the Kurdish irregular cavalry in the district. During June the people of Talvoreeg saw the Kurds gathering clay by clay, to the number of several thousands, and began to make preparations to defend themselves. On the eighth day a battle took place, and the villagers succeeded in holding their own, about a hundred of the Kurds being slain. Upon this, the Governor-General of Moush announced that the Armenians were in revolt, and set out with troops and two field-pieces. He did not, however, attack the village, but contented himself with besieging it. This state of things was ended by the breaking up of summer, and all through the terrible winter the villagers were left alone.

In the early spring, it appears that the Kurds were encouraged to attack the various villages of the Sassoun district, while troops were sent from Moush and Bitlis to restore "order." It is a significant fact that they took with them ten mule-loads of kerosene. Then the villages were again besieged, the inhabitants occasionally making sorties to obtain food. "The Kurds on one occasion stole several oxen, and their owners tracked their property to the Kurdish tents, and found that one ox had been butchered. They asked for the others, and were refused, whereupon the villagers left, and later returned with some companions. A scrimmage ensued, in which two or three were killed on either side. The Kurds promptly took their dead to the Government at Moush, and reported that the region was filled with Armenian and foreign soldiers. The Government at once sent in all directions for troops, gathering in all from eight to ten regiments, and the Kurds congregated to the number of about twenty thousand, while some five hundred of the irregular Kurdish cavalry were brought to Moush.

"At first the Kurds were set on, and the troops kept out of sight. The villagers, put to the fight, and thinking they had only the Kurds to do with, repulsed them on several occasions. The Kurds were unwilling to do more unless the troops assisted. Some of the troops then assumed Kurdish dress, and helped them in the fight with more success. Small companies of the troops next entered several villages, saying they had come to protect them as loyal subjects, and were quartered among the houses. *In the night they arose and then slew the sleeping villagers, man, woman, and*

*child*. By this time those in the other villages were beginning to feel that extermination was the object of the Government, and desperately determined to sell their lives as dearly as possible. Then began a campaign of butchery that lasted some twenty-three days, or, roughly, from the middle of August to the middle of September."<sup>1</sup>

The above Quotation from the testimony of an American citizen at that time resident in Armenia, affords a significant comment upon the official explanation of the Ottoman Government that the

Armenians were in a state of insurrection, and that the outrages were the work of the nomad Kurdish tribes. Notwithstanding the utter - and obviously intentional - failure of the Commission of inquiry to clear up the facts, it is evident from the testimony of Armenian Christians, of native clergy, of Protestant missionaries, of British consuls, and of special commissioners who visited the district, that the massacres at Sassoun were the work of Turkish soldiers, both regular and irregular, and were executed under the direct orders of Ottoman officials. When it is remembered that the Sultan shortly afterwards decorated Zekki Pasha, who led the troops in the work of extermination, and also sent silken banners by special messenger to the four leading Kurdish chiefs, it is impossible for any man in his senses to believe that the Armenian atrocities were either disapproved or regretted by the Government at Constantinople.

The first intimation that something was wrong reached the British Government on 31<sup>st</sup> August, at which time the massacre was at its height. Sir Philip Currie, Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Porte, telegraphed as follows: "I have been informed at the Porte, in answer to an inquiry, that Armenians at Talori, in the vilayet of Bitlis, have risen, and that in order to quell the revolt a small number of troops are being sent to the scene." Again, on the 4th of September: "I have questioned the Grand Vizier on the subject, and he stated that the Armenians had risen, and that considerable bloodshed had taken place." Rumours soon began to spread that shocking barbarities had been committed, and Vice-Consul Hallward was instructed to proceed at once to the scene. The Turkish officials then endeavoured to seclude the district from all outside intercourse by a report of cholera, and actually prevented the British representative from visiting Sassoun. He, however, succeeded in ascertaining the general facts, as will appear from the following extract from his report, dated Moush, October 9, 1894: -

"Last year the Vali of Bitlis summoned some of the chief men from these villages on some pretext to Bitlis, but they did not appear, His Excellency Hassan Tahsin Pasha being notorious for his skill in exploiting 'the Armenian question.' There is, I believe, scarcely a single well-to-do Armenian in Bitlis or Moush who has not been either imprisoned or threatened with imprisonment on charges of sedition with a view to the extortion of money. The individuals on question, fearing similar

---

<sup>1</sup> From Rev. F.D. Greene's *Armenian Crisis*, by kind permission of Messrs Hodder & Stoughton.

treatment, preferred to remain at home. This appears to have exasperated His Excellency, and, taking advantage of certain disturbances that occurred last year between the Kurds and Armenians, he in the middle of June last sent a battalion of soldiers to that district, nominally to protect the Armenians. At the same time, a certain Kurdish sheikh, Mehemet by name, was brought to Moush from the Diarbekir region, and commissioned to collect large numbers of tribal Kurds, who accordingly assembled in July last in great numbers in the Talori district.

"Meantime the battalion of soldiers had lived on peaceable terms with the villagers for some six weeks, when, about the beginning of August, some Bekiranli Kurds from Diarbekir stole some cattle from one of the villages, and on the Armenians attempting to recover them a slight affray ensued, in which two or three were killed and wounded on either side. Thereupon the Kurds came to Moush to complain to the Government, saying that all the Armenians were up in arms, and that there were foreigners among them instigating them to remit. The commander of the troops is said to have reported to the same effect.

The Vali then demanded large reinforcements of troops, which were accordingly sent from Erzinjian, Kharpout, Diarbekir, Erzeroum, and Van. When they appeared on the scene, the Armenians surrendered to them on promise of protection against the Kurds. The troops then proceeded to massacre those who had surrendered, and everybody else they could lay hands on - men, women, and children. They plundered all the property they could carry off, and then burnt the houses. The work of massacre and pillage is said to have continued for several days, and some twenty-five villages were almost entirely destroyed. The Kurds drove off enormous quantities of sheep and cattle, *but did not assist in the massacre to any great extent*. They are said to have carried off a number of girls, and many others were raped by the soldiers. Churches were sacked and burnt, and priests' robes and church ornaments were publicly sold in the market of Moush. I have heard that shocking atrocities were committed, such as burying men alive, blowing them up with gunpowder, etc. A woman from Talori told me that thirty men had been buried alive by soldiers, and I have heard the same thing repeated in different quarters, but I am not in a position to sift the truth of such stories.

"Nor is it possible for me to estimate the loss of life, but from all I have heard I suppose there must have been a thousand or more killed. I saw one old man who had been wandering for about three weeks in the mountains with a small boy, and had at length taken refuge in a monastery. He was from the village of Ghelieguzan, and was a rich man, there being forty persons in his house. He did not know for certain what had become of any of them except the boy, but he supposed most of them must have been killed. In another case I heard of, six escaped out of a household of fifty. There are a few women and children in a destitute state in the town, and a few in some of the villages in the plain, and some have taken refuge with the Kurds of Sassoun.

Others are wandering about the mountains, as the Armenians about here are afraid to receive them in their houses . . .

"Had it not been for the attitude of the authorities in refusing to allow me to visit the district, and preventing me as far as possible from having any communication with the population here or elsewhere, by putting police to watch this house and to follow me wherever I go, I might have supposed there was some exaggeration in the accounts I have heard. But their object, evidently, is to stave off any close inquiry into the matter till winter, when all the mountainous districts will be under snow, and communication with the outside world extremely difficult: by the spring they, no doubt, calculate the whole affair will have blown over."

The same gentleman, writing on 6th November, was able to give the following additional particulars:-

The General, who came from Erzinjan, read an Imperial Firman, authorizing the punishment of the villagers, and exhorted the soldiers not to fail in their duty. It is said that at first they hung back, not relishing their task, but their officers urged them on with threats, and the work of destruction and butchery was carried through without mercy or distinction of age or sex.

A large number of the leading men, headed by a priest, went out to meet the commanding officer with their tax receipts in their hands, by way of proving their loyalty to the Government, and begging for mercy. They were surrounded and killed to a man.

"At Ghelieguzan a number of young men were bound hand and foot, laid out in a row, had brushwood piled on them, and were burnt alive.

"At another village a priest and several lending men were captured and promised release if they would tell where others had fled to; they did so, but were killed. The priest had a chain put round his neck and pulled in opposite directions, so that he was nearly throttled; finally, bayonets were placed upright in the ground, and he was tossed in the air so that he fell on them.

"The men of another village fled with their women and children to a grotto, where they remained for several days, till the weaker ones died of hunger; the remained were at last discovered by the soldiers and put to the bayonet, which was the weapon principally employed throughout.

"Some sixty young women and girls were driven into a church, where the soldiers were ordered to do as they liked with them, and afterwards kill them, which order was carried out.

"A larger number of the most attractive women were set aside and invited to accept Islam and marry Turks; they refused, and were accordingly killed.

"The petroleum brought from Bitlis was utilized for burning the houses, together with the inhabitants inside them. A soldier related in Bitlis how he had seen on one occasion a little boy run out from the flames, and pushed back into them with a bayonet by another soldier. It was also used to burn the corpses." Many other disgusting barbarities are said to have been committed, such as ripping open pregnant women, tearing children to pieces by main force, etc.: but the above will

serve as examples of the way in which this campaign of extermination was carried out . . . .

"The final scene "as enacted in the valley of Talvoreeg, where a large number of men, women, and children had collected; they were surrounded by Kurds and soldiers, and first thinned out by rifle-shots, and then the rest despatched with sword and bayonet. The operations lasted some twenty-three days, from about the 18th of August to the 10<sup>th</sup> of September, having been begun by the Bitlis and Moush garrisons, who were gradually reinforced by other troops of the 4<sup>th</sup> Army Corps . . . .

"The details given above were principally collected from soldiers who took part in the massacre, and I have heard the main facts substantiated from various different quarters, among others by a Turkish zaptieh, who was there and saw the whole affair."

These terrible statements are not the exaggerations of Armenian agitators, or the wild rumours of fanatical and ill-informed partisans; they are the official report of the British representative on the spot, after careful and discriminating inquiry in many directions. At the risk of horrifying the reader, we must add a few further details, gathered in the neighbourhood by American citizens and missionaries, who took them down from the lips of reliable eyewitnesses, and published both in England and in the United States by the Rev. F. D. Greene, M.A., who was for many years a resident in Armenia:-

"Children were placed in a row, one behind another, and a bullet fired down the line, apparently to see how many could be despatched with one bullet. Infants and small children were piled one on the other and their heads struck off"

"A large and strong man, the chief of one village, was captured by the Kurds, who tied him, threw him on the ground, and, squatting around him, stabbed him to pieces."

"Children were frequently held up by the hair and cut in two, or had their jaws torn apart. Women with child were cut open; older children were pulled apart by their legs. A handsome, newly-wedded couple fled to a hilltop; soldiers followed, and told them they were pretty, and would be spared if they would accept Islam, but the thought of the horrible death they knew would follow did not prevent them from confessing Christ."

"Many of the dead were thrown into trenches, which the rain had washed out, and were covered with earth. Where no such trenches existed, the bodies were piled up with alternate layers of wood, saturated with kerosene, and set on fire."

"In one place, the women, after being forced to serve the vile purposes of a merciless soldiery, were taken to a valley near by and hacked to pieces with sword and bayonet."

"To some of the more attractive women in one place, the proposition was made that they might be spared if they denied their faith. 'Why should we deny Christ?' they said, and pointing to the dead bodies of their husbands and brothers

before them, they nobly answered, we are no better than they; kill us too,' - and they died."

"The soldiers talk quite freely about matters at Sassoun. There was great spoil, - flocks, herds, household goods, etc., - but their chief work was to dispose of the heaps and heaps of the dead. The stench was awful. They were gathered into the still standing houses and burned with the houses."

"I saw an eyewitness to some of the Sassoun destruction. He passed through three villages. They were all in ruins, and mutilated bodies told the horrible tale. For four or five days he was in one village. During the day parties of the scattered inhabitants would come in and throw themselves upon the mercy of the officer in command. About two hours after sundown each evening, these prisoners of that day were marched out of camp to a neighbouring valley, and the air was rent with their pitiful cries. He saw nothing more of them."<sup>2</sup>

The following additional particulars from Armenian sources have appeared in the London press: -

"The Kurds killed people with bullets and daggers, but the soldiers delighted in torture. They put some to death with scissors, cutting them and opening veins in the neck. Others were sawed, others had their tongues cut out, eyes gouged out, and several fingers removed before death. I saw men and women thus mutilated, and they lay about the camp for two hours before they died."

"I saw a Turkish sergeant bind an old Armenian, head downwards, to two or three branches, and slowly cut him through with an axe. From this hiding-place I saw soldiers torturing Priest Ohannes of Semal, and Priest Der Arakel. Their eyes were gouged out, and they uttered horrible cries, and implored the soldiers to put them out of pain. But the soldiers made them dance, and for some time they danced, screaming with pain. Then the soldiers bayoneted them. When the dead were examined, the body of Priest Ohannes, whose corpse had still a rope round the neck, was identified. The eyes had been gouged out, and nose, ears, and lips cut off; and the skin flayed from both sides of the head."

"Just fancy such a picture as this, which actually occurred at Sassoun:- 'I bet you ten *tshireks* I'll cut clean through the necks of four Christian puppies at one stroke of my *khama*!' exclaimed one Turkish soldier. 'Done!' cry half a dozen of his comrades. And the trial is made at once. Four Christian children are pulled out of their mother's arms amid heartrending screams and piteous prayers, and are then tied one on top of the other, head upon head, neck upon neck. Then the man who made the het approaches with his sharp scimitar, touches the neck of the topmost just to measure his stroke, raises his trusty steel, and, with a swift sweep and a deft backward movement, produces a rivulet of blood, which runs along between the quivering little trunks and the bloody heads which have rolled on to the thirsty earth."

---

<sup>2</sup> Rev. F. D. Greene's *Armenian Crisis*.

Amid all these horrors one deed of woman's heroism railed forth the admiration of the world. It has thus been described:-

"The women of one village defended their position for twenty-four hours against the besiegers, but finally yielded to greater numbers. They scarcely left their camp when they found that they were surrounded on all sides. Their condition was terrible; many carried their babies on their backs, while the elder children stood by their mothers in the fight. They soon saw that they could never fight their way through the ranks of the enemy. Then the wife of Grgo stepped on a rock and cried, 'My sisters, you must choose between two things. Either fall into the hands of these Turks, and forget your husbands, your holies, your holy religion, and adopt the Mohammedan faith, and be dishonoured, or you must follow my example.' With these words, holding her year-old baby in her arms, she dashed herself from the rock into the abyss. She was followed by a second, a third, a fourth woman. Without a sound, one body fell after another. The unhappy children followed like lambs the example of their mothers. Very soon the ravine was strewn with corpses . . . The heroine who first cast herself from the rock was called Schakhe, and her name deserves to be known throughout Europe."

Surely we have told enough. The very pages seem to drip with blood, and yet we have not told all. There are other incidents within our knowledge so awful that we cannot bring ourselves to write them down. What we have here recorded is surely enough to make the blood boil in the veins and the tears flow from the eyes of even the most callous reader.

When information of the Sassoun massacre reached the British Ambassador at Constantinople, he once made formal representations to the Sultan, who promptly contradicted the reports, and charged Vice-Consul Hallward with instigating the Armenians to revolt. This charge was duly reported to the British Government, and Colonel Chernside was ordered to proceed at once to Sassoun and investigate the whole affair. But investigation by an impartial authority was precisely what the Porte most feared, and after considerable manoeuvring to defeat the intentions of England, the following message was delivered to Sir Philip Currie on the 15th of November:-

"His Imperial Majesty will send before tomorrow week a Commission to inquire into the events which have taken place in the Sassoun district, as well as into all the reports mentioned in the Memorandum presented to His Imperial Majesty by Her Majesty's Embassy on the 1<sup>st</sup> November.

"The Sultan considers that it is in his own interest to inquire into the facts as reported, and assures Her Majesty's Ambassador that the inquiry will be carried out in a just and impartial manner, and that punishment will fall on the guilty. The Commission will be composed of two or three Imperial aides-de-camp and of a civil functionary, all trustworthy men, who will be sworn to give a true report. His Majesty does not believe in the charges which have been



brought against Vice-Consul Hallward of inciting the Armenians to rebellion; he considers them null and void, and withdraws them."

No sooner had this proposal been accepted by the British Government than the wiles of the Turk became apparent. An official notice was sent to the papers, announcing that there had been no outrages, and that the Commission was only sent to inquire into the criminal conduct of Armenian brigands. This policy was pursued until the patience of England was exhausted, and on 30th November the Cabinet sent the following intimation to the Sultan:-

"In these circumstances, Her Majesty's Government, feel it their duty to protest formally against an inquiry so entirely unsatisfactory, as insufficient to fulfil the engagements entered into by the Sublime Porte under the 61st Article of the Treaty of Berlin, and in presence of the grave situation thus created they must reserve to themselves entire liberty of action in regard to the whole matter."

The veiled threat thus conveyed had the result of securing promises from the Porte that the Armenian outrages should be investigated, and it was arranged that Consular representatives of England, France, and Russia should be present at the sittings of the Commission. But it must be distinctly understood that they formed no part of the Commission, and had no power to examine witnesses, except through the Turkish officials who conducted the inquiry.

The Commission held its first meeting at Moush on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 1895, and completed its inquiry on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. The whole business proved to be a complete farce; the selection of witnesses was left in the hands of local Turkish officials, and the Commissioners exhibited most discreditable bias in their proceedings. Only with the greatest difficulty could the Consular Delegates obtain permission to examine Armenian witnesses, and when this was done, the officials promptly brought forward a mass of rebutting evidence. Most of the Armenians examined were plainly in a state of extreme terror, and refused to give evidence, while some admitted that they had been tortured as a foretaste of what they would receive if they told the truth. Nothing is more manifest, from a careful reading of the *proces-verbaux*, than that the inquiry was altogether one-sided and inadequate. The most absurd and contradictory evidence was accepted on the Turkish side, while evidence on the other side was promptly discredited. As a specimen of the methods by which witnesses were prepared for the Commission, the following quotation from a letter from the Vice- Consul at Van is significant:-

"A Sassoun prisoner was so beaten on his way here that he died soon after. Two others have since died. They had been repeatedly beaten, half starved, and, in this cold weather and in these damp dungeons, had on only a coarse, ragged cotton shirt and drawers. Inquisitional methods are being used to get these prisoners to testify that the leading Armenians here now in prison have been in league with them. Now that the Commission is afoot, they want

them to testify that the Government had nothing to do with destroying villages, but merely stepped into restore order between them and the Kurds."

On 29th April the three Consular Delegates telegraphed to their Ambassadors as follows:-

Hebo, of Shenik, was summoned by us to-day, and deposed that the Chief of Gendarmerie yesterday threatened him with death if he accused the soldiers instead of the Kurds of killing the Armenians; that by means of Nadir Agha and the Mufti acting as interpreters, he received a similar recommendation from the Mutessarif in the presence of a Pasha, *and of the Secretary of the Commission*.

"Further promises were made by the Mutessarif that he would give him 1000 piastres, 10 oxen, and 500 sheep, reconstruct his house and his village, making him Headman of the latter, and restore the £T. 360 taken from his brother, on condition that he would acknowledge that he had seen Mourad, whose revolutionary counsels had been followed by the Armenians; that he would attribute the burning of the villages to the Kurds, declare that Mourad and his band had fought with the troops at Ghelieguzan; and, finally, that he would refuse to reply when questioned about the massacre of the women in the church, or about the priest of Semal."

Without any investigation, the Commission declared this statement to be false, on the bare denial of some of the persons accused. What possible value can attach to an Inquiry conducted on such principles?

On 8<sup>th</sup> May the Commissioners were at Ghelieguzan, and, after much objection, allowed the Consular Delegates to open some of the trenches. We give the result in the words of the official report:-

"Two of these trenches were opened in their presence. In the first they found only fragments of clothing. Round the second, a space of some thirty yards by ten was strewn with pieces of human bones and bits of clothing; amongst other things they saw two skulls, and in the trench they found, among fragments of bone and clothing, a putrefied corpse clothed, and three skulls, one of which had still some hair adhering to it, and contained a portion of the brain. The peasants, however, refused to continue the digging on account of the nauseating smells . . . .

They, however, made the villagers dig up a fourth place near the village, and this brought to light a decapitated trunk, an arm with its hand, three skulls, and some small bones. The smells here were again overpowering. The villagers stated that on their return they had themselves removed many bodies from the three trenches, and buried them near the church.

"The Delegates found the village itself, which had contained something like one hundred and twenty houses, entirely burnt out, and the thirty families still left living in a destitute condition in huts . . . .

The Delegates left on the 9th of May, and for the first three hours Mr. Shipley reports that their line of march was dotted with hamlets of from five to

twenty houses completely ruined, not even the walls being left standing."

It is needless to say that when the official report of the Commission was issued, it proved to be utterly inconclusive and worthless. Many trivial matters had been threshed out at wearisome length, but the main charges, to investigate which the Commission was professedly appointed, had been in every case practically ignored. How the British representative, Mr. Shipley, was impressed by it, may best be gathered from an extract from his report:-

"I do not think, seeing as I did, in company with my colleagues, the entire ruin of a whole district, not a house being left standing, the fields even having been wantonly devastated, as well as the abject misery and destitution to which these Armenians have been reduced, that the epithets applied to the conduct of the Turkish soldiers and Kurds by the press are in any way too strong. We have in our Report give it as our conviction arrived at from the evidence brought before us, that the Armenians were massacred without distinction of age or sex; and, indeed, for a period of some three weeks, it is not too much to say that the Armenians were absolutely hunted like wild beasts, being killed wherever they were met, and if the slaughter was not greater it was, I believe, solely owing to the vastness of the mountain ranges of that district, which enabled the people to scatter, and so facilitated their escape. In fact, and speaking with a full sense of responsibility, I am compelled to say that the conviction has forced itself on me what it was not so much the capture of the agitator Mourad, or the suppression of a pseudo-revolt, which was desired by the Turkish authorities, as the *extermination, pure and simple*, of the Ghelieguzan and Talori districts."

---

# ARMENOLOGICAL HERITAGE

---

## KAMILLA VASILYEVNA TREVER (1892-1974)

Kamilla Trever was a prominent Russian and Soviet Orientalist, historian, numismatist, who specialized on the Caucasus, Central Asia and Iran. She is the author of several monographs like "Sassanid Metal", Moscow-Leningrad, 1935 (co-author I.A.Orbeli), "Monuments of Greco-Bactrian Art, 1940", «Essays on the history and culture of Caucasian Albania in the IV century BC — VII century AD», Leningrad, 1959, "Sassanian silver. Collection of State Hermitage", Leningrad, 1987 (co-author V.Lukonin, published posthumously) and about 100 articles.

K.Trever's «Essays on the history and culture of ancient Armenia (II century BC – IV century AD)», Leningrad, 1953 (in Russian) is a fundamental study where the author discusses crucial problems of Armenia of Classical period, particularly those connected with the pagan temple at Garni. The second part of her study deals with ancient Greek and Latin inscriptions found during excavations in different parts of Armenia.

Below is introduced the chapter from this study dealing with the cult of Mihr, one of the supreme gods of ancient Armenian pagan religion (77-95).

---

### ON THE CULT OF MIHR IN ARMENIA

The problem of religion and cults of ancient Armenians is so complex and equally undeveloped that even a small essay, without prior special research, seems an almost impossible task. However, this problem need to be discussed, otherwise more or less satisfactory explanation to the provenance of Garni temple could not be suggested.

The study of the forms and decoration of the Garni temple in comparison with written sources leads to the conclusion that it was dedicated to Areg-Mihr, the ancient Armenian Sun-god. The identification of the image of this god and its place in the Armenian pantheon is possible only after the preliminary although brief examination of common problems confronting scholars who deal with religious beliefs of ancient Armenians, and the critical overview of those methods through which they are resolved in general studies devoted to these problems.

The problem of religious beliefs of ancient Armenians before the adoption of Christianity is very important for the correct understanding of the ancient culture of Armenia with its epic and arts, ideology, and identification of roots of surviving phenomena which were preserved until recently in everyday life and folklore of modern Armenians.

With which sources possess historian who gets started with the study of ancient beliefs of Armenian people?

**Written sources.** The largest number of information regarding the gods, their temples and statues is preserved in the "History" of Movses Khorenatsi (V-VI centuries)

and in the study by Agatangeghos who, according to tradition, was the secretary of Trdat III who had converted Armenia into Christianity. Some dispersed information are extant in the studies of Pavstos Buzand (late IV century), also by Elishe, Łazar Parbeci and Eznik – authors of the late V – early VI centuries.

Movses Khorenatsi reports about the existence of information regarding ancient gods in passing, in the course of historical narrative without going into explanations and interpretations, using the data which was kept in folk memory and was reflected in epic tales, also “temple books” which were used by him; as to western and eastern authors, he mentions Olymp, Bardetsan, Mar-Abas Catina. It is impossible to reconstruct the coherent picture of the whole pantheon given the fact that Movses Khorenatsi did not seek to do it.

The situation is different in the case of Agatangelos,<sup>1</sup> who is regarded by historical tradition as an eye-witness or even participant of the implementation of Christianity in Armenia. His study – the history of Trdat III, mostly contains the story of pagan Trdat who was converted into zealous Christian; this topic gave him reason to provide us with interesting very information regarding the cult of some gods, mostly Anahit, about temples and statues which were destroyed by Trdat, treasures of temples which were given to Christian churches which usually were erected on the place of the destroyed temple. Despite the value of the information kept in the study of Agatangelos, they suffer from one-sidedness based on Christian worldview of the author and thus could not reconstruct the picture of Armenian pantheon.

As it was mentioned above, other Armenian historians of the V-VI centuries provide us only with fragmentary data whereas some of them (Elishe, Łazar of Parbi, and Eznik) from the position of Christian officials, who were first of all interested in the denial of pagan dogmas and opposing them the Christian teaching.

Classical authors also had preserved some dispersed information regarding the beliefs of Armenians, mostly Strabo, Diodorus, Plutarchus, and Cassius Dio. It must be said that the listed authors mention only very few deities of ancient Armenia, mostly Anahit, Aramazd, and Mihr. These authors were focused on external cultic manifestations of these beliefs – the problem of temples, statues etc.

The second category of sources is the epic, folk tales, where were preserved mythical images, echoes of ancient beliefs and rituals.<sup>2</sup> In the “History” of Movses Khorenatsi, as it was mentioned, were used some epic songs as, for example, the tale of the birth of Vahagn. The folk epic about the heros of Sassun contains many echoes and songs of ancient fairy tales, mostly about the god Mihr-Mithra who in the epic is bifurcated into two persons – Elder Mher and Lesser Mher, his grandson (see below).

---

<sup>1</sup> This ancient text which exists in its Armenian original, in antiquity was translated into Greek and, perhaps, its title “Agatangelos” (“Evangelist”) was made personal name of the author.

<sup>2</sup> M. Abeghian, *Der armenische Volksglaube*, Leipzig, 1899.

Ancient rituals and customs which survived until recently in some regions of Armenia also reflected ancient mythical beliefs reincarnated as game songs, dances, sayings now often already lost their sense.

As to archaeological data, until recently for the period from the II mill. BC to the III century AD we possess only with some occasional materials and scattered findings which could not provide us with any coherent picture, and those individual crumbs which archaeologists and historians are able to reveal are the more valuable. Until now the only archaeological object of this period is the fortress of Garni with its temple, walls, settlement, and also necropolis where excavations and study had started in 1950; the first finds promise to elucidate the problems of religious beliefs and cults.

Attempts to reconstruct combined picture of religious beliefs of ancient Armenia had been initiated still in the mid-XIX century by N.O.Emin, professor of the Lazarev institute, the French scholar-Armenologist V.Langlois, and Gh. Alishan, prominent Armenologist and Mechitarist.

In the book of V.Langlois<sup>3</sup> appeared in 1859 and devoted to numismatics of ancient Armenia, is collected the information from written sources about the religion of ancient Armenians. Based on this information he defines Armenian pagan religion as a syncretism of Zoroastrianism, Greek pantheon, Scythian “superstitions” and, finally, local deities. In this essay and all consecutive studies we encounter one and the same phenomenon – the attribution of local Armenian pantheon on the last place among those which allegedly comprises the picture of religious beliefs and cults of ancient Armenians. The reason of this is that V.Langlois was the son of his time and the illusion of “great cultures” of Mediterranean and Near East defined his scientific consciousness. As philologist, he compared data preserved by different authors and sometimes had achieved some interesting results, but could not succeed to generalize them. Thus, for example, collecting information about Aramazd he found in the Greek text of Eusebius (IV century AD) such correspondence to the image of this god - τὸν δε Βηλον, ον Δία μεθερμηνεύουσι “Bel whom Greeks call Zeus”, and in the Armenian translation (V century) of Eusebius’s text it turned out to be an addition “... Bel whom Greeks call Zeus and Armenians Aramazd”.<sup>4</sup> Here we encounter a vivid example of the fact that Greek authors and Armenian translators were trying to adjust to the image of Classical and Mesopotamian pantheon ancient local Armenian deities, but V.Langlois did not arrive to such suggestion and treats this phenomenon as “syncretism”.

The book of N.O.Emin published in 1864<sup>5</sup> is the first generalizing study on this topic. Thinking that at the heart of religion of ancient Armenians lays dualism, Emin looks at the whole assembly of the gods to whom worshipped in ancient Armenia – local, Iranian, and Babylonian from this angle. Individual chapters are devoted to Greek,

---

<sup>3</sup> V. Langlois, *Numismatique de l'Arménie*, Paris, 1859, p. III-XIII.

<sup>4</sup> V. Langlois, *Numismatique de l'Arménie*. Paris, 1859, p. IV.

<sup>5</sup> N.O.Emin, *An essay on the religion and beliefs of pagan Armenians*, Moscow, 1864.

Syriac gods, and also to *devs* and demigods. He touches upon also on the problem of rites, temples etc.

This study is a great contribution for his time, great compendia of information accompanied by the critics of studies written on this topic, mostly the study by Injijyan<sup>6</sup> and the poem by Arsen Bagratuni.<sup>7</sup> According to N.O.Emin, they give “the most perverse concept about the mythology of ancient Armenians” since the authors were trying to “by all means see monotheism or the worship of one true god in ancient Armenia bequeathed by their ancient compatriot Noah and his immediate descendants who came out of the arch after the flood and had settled down on the foothills of Ararat”.<sup>8</sup>

The novelty in the study of N.O.Emin was that he had made use of not only written sources, Armenian and Classical, but also materials of Armenian language and the results “which were achieved by European science in the field of the history and archaeology of ancient East and presumably Western Asia”.<sup>9</sup> Later in the book he mentions also the significance of cuneiform inscriptions of Van where figures the “name of some Armenian deity – “Haldia””.<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, the study of N.O.Emin now is outdated, however, this is the first summary of all information on the problem of ancient Armenian’s religion. Worthy to note its basics, namely a desire first of all to find out the question who among the deities of Armenian pantheon could be regarded as local Armenian later for some reasons pushed aside, a view<sup>11</sup> which even modern scholars do not always follow.

In 1895 appeared the study of Mechitarist Gh.Alishan,<sup>12</sup> which was profoundly used by H.Gelzer, representative of bourgeois science serving at the end the XIX century the interests of colonial policy in the East, hence could never satisfy some basics of N.O.Emin. The study of H.Gelzer appeared in 1896.<sup>13</sup> One of its first provisions attracts attention, that is the argumentation that “the deities of a people are representatives of different historical periods through which passes its self-consciousness”; but this thesis was not neither developed nor confirmed in his study. In the work were not shown any “historical periods”, and the development of “self-consciousness” reflected in the change of its religious beliefs were not revealed as well. Actually, the study of Gelzer is a typical spawn of bourgeois historical science where in the preface is said as “one of the greatest historical truth” that “national life of a people is developed through the struggle of ethnic antagonism”,<sup>14</sup> i.e. one of the most specific “theses” of the imperial policy of imperialism.

---

<sup>6</sup> Լ. Incicyan, *Archaeology*, P. III, Venice, 1835, Ch. XX (in Arm.).

<sup>7</sup> A. Bagratuni, *Hayk* (epic poem), Venice, 1858 (in Arm.).

<sup>8</sup> N.O.Emin, *Loc.cit.*, p. 9-11.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13-14.

<sup>12</sup> Gh.Alishan, *About ancient beliefs of Armenians*, Venice, 1895 (in Arm.).

<sup>13</sup> H. Gelzer, *Zur armenischen Götterlehre*, *Sitzungsber. d. Sachs. Ges. d. Wissensch.*, Bd. II-III, 1896.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.



Twice in his study Gelzer on various occasions says that during his historical period Armenia “did not have culture since he didn’t have neither script nor literature”<sup>15</sup> (this is about Armenia of the II-III centuries AD). Since he refers to Armenian historians and Classical authors he could not have been unaware that during this period Armenians used Aramaean and Greek script, that in the II century AD Bardetsan got acquainted with the archives of Armenian kings at Ani-Kamakh, that Plutarchus tells about literary works of the king Artavazd II, that in the I century BC in Artashat was performed “Bacchae” of Euripides. In 1896 all this not only could but should have been known to H. Gelzer, but anyway he considered necessary to represent Armenians as undeveloped, uncultured nation who was busy only with agriculture and gardening and bartered jewelry from Asiatic tradesmen.

According to such vision in regard to Armenians begins his consideration of Armenian pantheon with a chapter “Iranian influence” and ascribes to this group all main Armenian gods; to Syriac and Hellenic influence also are given separate chapters, and in the chapter “Local Armenian deities” figures only the god Vanatur as specific national god of Armenians and their supreme deity.<sup>16</sup> But the deity Vanatur never existed in Armenian pantheon; the name Vanatur, i.e. “hospitable” is nothing else than the epithet of Amanor, the deity of first fruits whose festival was performed, as it is told by Agatangelos, in Autumn.<sup>17</sup>

It is completely unclear how could Gelzer leave aside Mihr, Anahit, and Vahagn, and declare as the supreme national god the local hospitable-god Amanor who was casually mentioned by Agatangelos (and only by him)?<sup>18</sup>

On the more high level is written the study by the Moscovite scholar R.R.Shtakelberg,<sup>19</sup> but methodologically it is a step back compared with the study of N.O.Emin. The matter is that as the very title of the article shows, it is built on an absolutely unacceptable thesis, i.e. that the main core of ancient Armenian religion was Iranian origin.<sup>20</sup> For this reason the author step by step compares Armenian and Iranian images, cults, rites in order to conclude that the most characteristic feature of the religion of Armenians was its allegedly Iranian origin. Holding this position, he does not set itself a task to find out local Armenian core, free it from layering and shells, true or attributed. Like Gelzer, he mentions only the god Smanor(?), i.e. Amanor<sup>21</sup> of Agatangelos and the Aralezes (winged dog-headed deities) are recognized as

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 100, 147.

<sup>16</sup> H. Gelzer, Loc.cit, p. 132-133, 147.

<sup>17</sup> Agatangelos, § 150 (translation: V. Langlois, Collection des historiens de l'Arménie, t. I. Paris, 1868).

<sup>18</sup> H. Gelzer, Loc.cit., p. 147-148.

<sup>19</sup> R.R.Shtakelberg, About Iranian influence on the religious beliefs of ancient Armenians, Works of the Eastern Commission of the Moscow archaeological society (Eastern antiquities), v. II, issue II, Moscow, 1901.

<sup>20</sup> Indeed, here R.R.Shtakelberg uses the term “Iranian” in its broader sense, like “Iranian languages”, but not in its narrow sense meaning only Persia.

<sup>21</sup> By R.R.Shtakelberg it turned out “Smanor” instead of “Amanor” since in the Armenian alphabet the capital letter S-U is very similar to A-U.

Armenian deities.<sup>22</sup> He does not agree with N.O.Emin who accepts some relationship between the “religion of pagan Armenians with Zoroastrianism but rejects the borrowing of Armenian gods”.<sup>23</sup> This correct point of view of N.O.Emin shares N.Adontz who mentions that Armenian sources give reason to assert that for ancient Armenians was stranger the cult of Iranian gods, and were known only Iranian names.<sup>24</sup>

Among books published during the last decade first of all must be named the studies of G.A.Kapancyan, particularly his voluminous work “The cult of Ara the Handsome”,<sup>25</sup> “Hittite gods by Armenians”,<sup>26</sup> where he raises the question of the “genesis of Armenian pantheon in general”, and corresponding chapters of “Hayasa – the cradle of Armenians (ethnogenesis of Armenians and their primary history)”.<sup>27</sup>

The study “Hittite gods by Armenians” is wider than promises its title since it consists of two main chapters - “Hittite gods by Armenians” and “Iranian gods by Armenians”. The first chapter where as “Hittite” is named “all the common that is connected with ancient cultural world of Asia Minor and part of the Near East”, is of great interest; here for the first time are revealed ancient roots of certain religious beliefs of Armenians, roots that are common for them and for those peoples of Asia Minor with whom they were connected since ancient times. This part is a great contribution in the history of culture of ancient Armenia.

The second chapter “Iranian gods by Armenians” (Anahit, Nane, Aramazd, Mihr, Tir, Vahagn) causes some confusion; judging by its title and the list of gods, the main Armenian pantheon in its totality, like R.R.Stakelberg, is recognized as Iranian. But in practice the main Armenian gods in this chapter also are considered by the author from the point of view of local origin, besides that, are traced modifications undergone during the period when the historical situation first pushed against Iran then brought closer to it and its culture, when Armenian gods who had similar functions with one or the other Iranian deities were assigned with Iranian names. G.A.Kapancyan gave to this chapter a name which does not fully correspond to its actual content. It would be more correct to entitle as “Armenian gods who received Iranian names”, and show in addition how the local Armenian deities in certain historical situation and corresponding social environment got closer to Iranian gods at the same time preserving their content and image of Armenian deities; in fact “the gods of every individual people were national gods whose authority did not go beyond borders of national region which they protected”, as wrote F.Engels.<sup>28</sup>

In the study “Hayasa – the cradle of Armenians” G.A.Kapancyan holds the same terms, i.e. he speaks about Hittite gods in Armenia and Iranian gods, but at the same

<sup>22</sup> R.R.Shtakelberg, Loc.cit., p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> N. Adontz, *Histoire armenienne*, vol. I, Paris, 1946, p. 391.

<sup>25</sup> The book was published in Yerevan in 1945 in Armenian.

<sup>26</sup> Yerevan State University publication, Yerevan, 1940 (in Russian).

<sup>27</sup> Academy of Sciences of Armenian SSR publication, Yerevan, 1947.

<sup>28</sup> F.Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach, K.Marx and F.Engels, *Studies*, v. XIV, p. 674.

time quite clearly sets out his main thesis when he speaks about Iranian and Semitic names of gods, but “by contents are hidden and figure ancient local deities and cults ...”<sup>29</sup>

That in the process of formation of Armenian people took place hybridization and assimilation of tribes, spoke still in the V century Movses Khorenatsi,<sup>30</sup> when setting himself a task to write the history of “our people, kings, and nakharar clans and families who [descended] from whom, what each one them did, and which of various tribes [is] indigenous [literary “domestic”, i.e. “local”] and native, and which are of foreign origin but naturalized [lit. domesticated]”.<sup>31</sup>

It is about the period when Armenian people was being formed and when some Median and Iranian tribes also were assimilated with Armenians and when Armenian language was enriched at the expense of lexicon of these Iranian tribes. S.T.Yeremyan who traces the paths of the formation of Armenian language mentions that, among other things, “the hardest task is to reveal borrowed words from Old Persian and Median languages, since a significant part of Armenian-Iranian lexical correspondences occurred at the expense of those Median and partly Persian tribes who were assimilated with Armenians contributing to the vocabulary and grammar of Armenian language. It is a serious task which should solve Armenologists-linguists. They will appear in a completely new light “Iranian” religious pantheon of ancient Armenians and many such “Iranian” factors in the field of culture and superstructure phenomena in general”.<sup>32</sup>

After the review of main studies dedicated to ancient beliefs and cults of Armenia it should be mentioned that a summarizing study dedicated to the history of religion of ancient Armenians has not been written yet. Such study is necessary in the construction of which should be considered the fundamentals of F.Engels: “All religions of antiquity were primal-tribal, and later national religions which emerged from social and political conditions of each people and were closely intermingled with them”.<sup>33</sup>

It should be mentioned also that in none of the listed studies dedicated to religious beliefs of ancient Armenians was not made an attempt to sort through the great number of deities, demigods, *devs*, and ghosts whose names has reached us but whose nature in most cases remain unknown. The impression is obtained that all these deities were worshipped simultaneously by all population groups at the same period and on the same territory, which in fact, indeed, was not the case and could not be.

-----

<sup>29</sup> G.A.Kapancyan, *Hayasa – the cradle of Armenians*, Yerevan, 1948, p. 98.

<sup>30</sup> Movses Khorenatsi, Book I, Ch. 3 (transl. of I.A.Orbeli).

<sup>31</sup> Cf. also N.O.Emin, *The History of Armenia of Movses Khorenatsi*, p. 221, n. 5.

<sup>32</sup> S.T.Yeremyan, *Towards the ethnogenesis of Armenians*, p. 105.

<sup>33</sup> F.Engels, *Bruno Bauer and early Christianity*, K.Marx and F.Engels, *Studies*, vol. XV, p. 607.

The goal of this essay, as it was mentioned, is not the study of religious beliefs of ancient Armenians in its entirety; here should be discussed briefly only the question of the cult of Mithra since to that deity was dedicated, in all probability, the temple at Garni.

G.A.Kapancyan regards Mithra as being one of Iranian gods and thinks that he displaced the local god Ardi.<sup>34</sup> G.A.Kapancyan's clarification that in Armenia under Iranian names "are hidden and existed local deities", undoubtedly regards to Mithra also.

The problem of the origin of Mithra generally is more complicated as it may seem in a cursory look. As it is known, in Achaemenid Iran he is mentioned for first time around 400 BC. In the "Gathas" – oldest part of the Avesta, Mithra is absent at all, but a "Median god Mithra" was known already in the VII century BC, according to the presence of his name in the list of gods which was found in the library of Ashshurbanipal.<sup>35</sup> But before that, in the mid-II millennium BC the name of Mithra is mentioned in the treaties between the Hittite king and the country of Mitanni,<sup>36</sup> by which we have the right to conclude that this god was worshipped by the peoples of the Near East since ancient times,<sup>37</sup> which is quite natural taking into account his solar life-giving nature. In some periods and by some peoples he changed his name, his cult image, thus there is no reason to regard him as Iranian god.

The name of "Mithra" mainly accompanies the solar deity by the peoples of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia<sup>38</sup> (I leave aside the problem of Mithra in India and Central Asia which goes beyond the scope of this brief essay).

In the numerous pantheon of Urartian gods we did not find the name of Mithra, and here the Sun-god has a name Ardi. In Armenian milieu this name (in the form Mihr or Mehr)<sup>39</sup> the earliest mention of Mithra's name occurs in the second century BC Greek inscription of Armavir; A.I.Boltunova and Ya.A.Manandyan took it as the name of Armenian king, but it is hardly possible to arrive at such conclusion taking into account the fragmented state of the inscription and ambiguity of its content. But the very fact of the existence of Mithra's name (in the form of Μίθρας) in the II millennium Armavir inscription proves that not later than the II century BC, as it was mentioned above, and not earlier than the IV century BC to the ancient local god Ardi was given the name Mithra-Mihr.

<sup>34</sup> G.A.Kapancyan, Loc.cit., p. 59.

<sup>35</sup> N. S. Nyberg, *Religion der alten Iranier*, Leipzig, 1938, p. 334.

<sup>36</sup> B. Hrozný, *Histoire de l'Asie antérieure*, Paris, 1947. — P. E. Dumont, *Journ. Amer. Orient. Soc.*, № 67, 1947, p. 251.

<sup>37</sup> V.V.Struve pointed it out to me that the name of some Syrian Mtršme mentioned in one Egyptian text, probably of the XIX century BC, must be interpreted as "Mithra heard" which indicates on the worship of Mithra in the XIV century BC also by the Semitic speaking people (M. Burchardt, *Die altkanaanäischen Fremdwörter u. Eigennamen im Aegyptischen*, 1909, P. II, p. 29, № 544).

<sup>38</sup> About the cult of Mithra in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia see: E. Wüst, *Mithra*, PWK, and also Fr. Cumont, Loc.cit., vol. I, p 9; vol. II, p. 76f. and 464f.

<sup>39</sup> G.A. Kapancyan, *Hittite gods by Armenians*, p. 59: "Mihr, originating from ancient Miura".

The main data which let one to speak about special honor enjoyed the Sun-god by Armenians existed in the study of Movses Khorenatsi. There is said that the semi-mythical king Vagharshak “erected a temple in Armavir where he placed statues of Sun and Moon and his ancestors ...”.<sup>40</sup> In this text attention is drawn to the fact that the historian, speaking about the cult of the Sun-god in ancient times, does not call him Mithra but uses one of his local names – Aregakn. These statues of Sun and Moon were destined to be repeatedly displaced.

Further Movses Khorenatsi tells that the king Yervand, transferring his capital city to the newly built Yervandashat, “to the north of it he built a smaller city similar to his own on the River Akhuryan and called it Bagaran which means “there are placed altars”, and moved there all gods of Armavir. And having built temples he appointed his own brother Yervaz as chief priest”.<sup>41</sup>

In this story should focus on the name of the new city – Bagaran which in text of Khorenatsi is treated as the next: “here he erected altars” (in Armenian *bagin*).

According to some scholars, the root *bag* is one of the oldest Iranian names of the god Mithra,<sup>42</sup> but maybe in those times this word already denoted the concept of “god”: Bagastana in Persia, Bagadania in Cappadocia, Bagaïos in Phrygia etc.,<sup>43</sup> which correspond to Armenian Bagaran.

When at the beginning of the II century BC Artashes I became king and built a new capital city Artashat, according to Movses Khorenatsi he “erected there a temple and transferred to it from Bagaran the statue of Artemis and all gods of his ancestors, but the statue of Apollo put up outside the city on the (big) road”.<sup>44</sup> In this information of the historian is spoken about the statues of the same two deities which were mentioned in connection with the temple of Armavir, namely the Sun and Moon but it is remarkable that, speaking about the II century BC, he does not call them by their Armenian names (Aregakn and Lusin), but perhaps, taking into account the familiarity of Armenians with Hellenic culture in that period or following his source, uses Classical names – Apollo and Artemis.

As it is known, already in the times of Euripides began to identify Apollo with the Sun-god Helios and after Apollo-Helios with Mithra about which testify the Greek inscriptions of Antiochus of Commagene whose family, by the way, stemmed himself back to Yervandunis. The tomb of this king on the mound of Nemrut-dağ<sup>45</sup> is decorated with colossal statues of Aramazd-Zeus, Apollo-Mithra-Helios-Hermes (as it is stated in the inscription), the king Antiochus himself and Commagene – the goddess of the country. Besides that, there are also three reliefs on which the king depicted himself, in

<sup>40</sup> Movses Khorenatsi, Book II, Ch. 8.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Ch. 40.

<sup>42</sup> H. S. Nyberg, Loc.cit., p. 353.

<sup>43</sup> See „baga“ - PWK.

<sup>44</sup> Movses Khorenatsi, Book II, Ch. 49 (About the temple of Apollo outside the city see p. 57). By Emin here is wrongly translated as „at a distance“.

<sup>45</sup> K. Humann und O. Puchstein, Reisen in Kleinasien und Nordsyrien, Berlin, 1890, p. 281ff.

one case along with Aramazd-Zeus, on the next one with Veretragna-Heracles, and on the third – with Mithra-Helios. Is of special interest the relief where Antiochus is depicted with Mithra;<sup>46</sup> on the backside of the relief is engraved an inscription:<sup>47</sup>

Βασιλεύς μέγας Αντίοχος  
θεός δίκαιος ἐπιφανής  
φιλορώμαιος και φιλέλλην  
ὁ ἐγ βασιλέως Μιθραδάτου  
Καλλινίκου και βασιλίσσης  
Λαοδίκης Θεας Φιλαδέλφ[ης]  
Ἀπόλλωνα Μίθρην Ἥλιον  
Ἑρμην

“Great king Antiochus, god, righteous, glorious, friend of Romans, friend of Greeks [from the family] of the king Mithradates Callinicus and the queen Laodike – the ... [honored or erected] statues of Apollo-Mithra-Helios-Hermes”.

On this inscription Mithra, like on two similar inscriptions carved on the mentioned statues, also bears the names of Apollo and Helios which vividly illustrates the culture of the peoples of Asia Minor and neighboring countries of that period when attempt to reconcile religions of the East and West elaborated these syncretic images.

On the turn of the I century BC and I century AD Strabo, speaking about the cult of the Sun-god by the Persians, clarifies: “Ἥλιον δὲ καλοῦσι Μίθραν”<sup>48</sup> “Helios whom they call Mithra”. Dedicatory inscriptions which are found in the Mithreums and studied in the work of Cumont, usually declare: Ἡλίῳ Μίθρᾳ ἀνίκητῳ “To Helios-Mithra invincible”.<sup>49</sup>

At the end of the II century AD in one of the texts Clement of Rome is told about names by which the pagans call their gods and among them he mentions also Ἀπόλλωνα τὸν ἥλιον . . . γονὴν ὄντα τοῦ Διὸς, ὃν καὶ Μίθραν ἐκάλεσαν..., that is “of Apollo-Helios ... originating from Zeus, whom along with Mithra they call ...”.

In view of the above, we can conclude that, the image of Mithra, still in the I century BC merged with the god Helios-Apollo, as is seen in the inscription of Antiochus of Commagene, in the II century AD continue to be perceived under this threefold appellation.<sup>50</sup> But it does not follow from this that Mithra was absorbed by Helios-Apollo, that he had lost his significance as one of the supreme Armenian deities: “National gods could tolerate other national gods by them, and in the antiquity this was common, but by no means above them”, points F.Engels.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., Tab. XXXVIII, 2.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 321.

<sup>48</sup> Strabo, Book XV, Ch. 3, 13.

<sup>49</sup> Fr. Cumont, Loc.cit., v. II, p. 106, № 75 and p. 119, № 149.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. F. Saxl, Mithras, p. 77-78.

<sup>51</sup> F.Engels, Bruno Bauer and early Christianity, K.Marx and F.Engels, Studies, vol. XV, p. 607.

Agatangelos tells about Mithra in the story how at the end the III century AD, converting Christianity, Gregory the Illuminator was destroying temples and statues of ancient Armenian gods, mostly that of Aramazd, Anahit, and Mihr.

About the temple of the latter and other mentioned gods Agatangelos (in the Armenian text of his study) tells how Gregory the Illuminator proceeded “to the temple of Mihr whom call the son of Aramazd, in the city of Bagaric in the language of Parthians, and destroyed it to the ground. He gave the treasures to the poor, and lands dedicated to the church”.<sup>52</sup>

From this story it becomes clear that Mihr was regarded as the son of Aramazd. We are not intended to focus on the name and origin of Aramazd in this essay, we just want to notice that in the image of this god under its Iranian name “was hidden and existed” an ancient local god which is named by Eusebius (in the Greek text and its V century AD Armenian translation) as Bel-Aramazd-Zeus on the territory of Armenia, perhaps eventually assending to ancient Hayk.

Returning to Agatangelos’s text should be mentioned the second essential argument, the name of the city where the temple was located – Bagaric (containing the same term “baga”),<sup>53</sup> which is called by Parthian word in the study of Agatangelos. In the Greek text of Agatangelos in this passage instead of Mithra figures “Hephaestus son of Zeus”. The presence of Hephaestus, one of the Greek gods here, probably, could be explained by the fact that translator was aware of Mithra’s multiple names and his identification with Helios-Apollo-Hermes, and since he wrote or translated the text from the Armenian into Greek, apparently he considered it necessary to change the name of the god with Greek equivalent. Perhaps, here we deal with the continuation of the same phenomenon which is mentioned in the Greek inscription of Trdat I found in Garni where at the beginning of the text the name of Mithra is replaced by Helios.

The possibility of other explanation is not excluded, i.e. that in Bagaric the image of Mithra actually was intermingled with image of the god-blacksmith Hephaestus who also was connected with fire. In fact, we find Hephaestus not only by the Greek translator of Agatangelos, Movses Khorenatsi also speaks about him in the story Tigran II’s dealings who had put a statue of Hephaestus in Bagaric.<sup>54</sup> If in this case we do not deal with copying from one author by other, then, it is possible that Movses Khorenatsi speaks about the statue which was destroyed along with the temple during the spread of Christianity.

Concerning the issue of Mithra’s temples we shall note that the temples of this god in the East, particularly in Armenia are significantly different from the temples-crypts, the so-called Mithraeums in Rome and Western provinces of Rome. This could be explained by the fact that in the West Mithraism was alien phenomenon brought by

<sup>52</sup> Agatangelos, § 134 (V. Langlois, Collection des historiens anciens: et modernes de l’Armenie, t. I, Paris, 1868).

<sup>53</sup> About the worship of the Sun-god Mihr “in the place Baga-aric (literary – “settlement of the god”) in the province of Derjan (modern Mamakhatun) on the Euphrates River”; cf. G.A.Kapancyan, Hayasa – the cradle of Armenians, p. 86.

<sup>54</sup> Movses Khorenatsi, Book II, Ch.14.

returning Roman soldiers, hence his cult could not display local, consecrated by tradition peculiarities in architecture and rites, as it was in Eastern countries. From this point of view western Mithraeums and eastern temples of Mithra were not studied yet. We can say only that in the East also Mithra's temples differ from each other by some specific peculiarities in relation to historical situation where they came into existence, from local building traditions of one or the other people. A vivid illustration of this are the temples of Mithra in Dura-Europos (Mesopotamia) and in Niha (Syria).

The temple of Dura-Europos is closer to western Mithraeums but it still is different from them in that it is a terrestrial temple (without crypts) and the architecture of its cultic niche had slightly different appearance (a staircase and door leading to the niche which separates niche with the relief from general hall).<sup>55</sup> Roman legions located at Dura-Europos (IV Scythica, XVI Flavia Firma, III Cyrenaica etc.) who were restoring the temple and who had left their inscriptions in the Mithraeum<sup>56</sup> in other buildings were participants of the spread of Mithraism in the West where this "soldier's religion" quickly has taken root, but its external layout of the cult, since it was brought from outside, took those standard shapes which are seen in the Mithraeums of Germany, Italy, France, England, Switzerland etc.

The temples of Mithra in the West were not only different from luxurious temples of Garni, Niha and Perge<sup>57</sup> built by different kings of Armenia, Syria, and Asia Minor in terms of quality, they were distinguished also by their social content and class assignment. Temples built of stone with columns and sculptural decoration were erected by kings and his entourage and served him and his court, and ordinary Mithraeums of the West were built of mud brick and serve wide scope of population and Roman legionnaires as well. The ideological content which was invested into the cult of Mithra by both of them also didn't match.

Returning to the cult of Mithra in Armenia it should be specified that there are reasons to assume that in Garni since ancient times existed a temple dedicated to the Sun-god (first – Ardi, then Aregakn, and finally Mihr), and that by his return from Rome Trdat I re-built the temple destroyed during the invasion of Corbulo.<sup>58</sup> We can hardly make a mistake suggesting the first temple and that of Trdat by its general forms were connected with local building traditions.

Turning to the question of Mithra's image we can only express kind or another assumptions since none of the sculptures of Mithra reached us, but we are hopeful that archaeological finds could prove the information of Movses Khorenatsi, Agatangelos, and Plinius and other authors.

Judging by statues and figures on the reliefs along with bull found in western Mithraeums we are aware that the main "escorts" or assistants of Mithra were demigod

---

<sup>55</sup> Excavations at Dura-Europos, Report of 1933-1935, p. 85.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., Report of 1932-1933, p. 77-78, № 630.

<sup>57</sup> Ch. Lanckoronski . . ., Loc.cit., vol. I, p. 58, Pic. 39 and p. 65, Pic. 48.

<sup>58</sup> A.A.Sahinyan, The basilica of Kasakh, Yerevan, 1951, p. 20-21.



of the Classical titan Atlas, and beside that a polymorphic creature defined as Zrvan<sup>59</sup> (i.e. Time – titan Chronos).

“Atlas” on the reliefs of Mithra with bull usually is depicted on the bottom left side in the form of a figure down on one knee and with both raised hands supporting some weight above his head. Similar Atlases are depicted also on the reliefs decorating the pylons of Garni temple as it is mentioned in detail in corresponding chapter. What role had played this Atlas in the local Armenian mythology and what was his name here, unfortunately we could not find out since there is no available data. The same could be said also about Zrvan whose statues are found in numerous western Mithraeums – it is an old lion-headed man having four wings whose body is wrapped by a snake.<sup>60</sup> His statues are found only in western Mithraeums but pictorial image depicting an old man with stick existed in the temple at Dura-Europos.<sup>61</sup> Was there in Armenian mythology any connection with Mihr and Zrvan who is mentioned by Movses Khorenatsi and Eznik, we don't know (in Classical mythology Atlas and Chronos are brothers).

In this essay I will not dwell on very interesting historical-cultural problems regarding the connections of Mithraism with Manichaeism and also Christianity, I will point out only one detail – the cited by Ełishe words of Christian episcopos who, it turns out, still in the V century were forced to dispute the omnipotence of Mihr and who expressed doubts about the fact that this god born of earthly woman, however, was king and son of the god.<sup>62</sup> Similar features of Mihr and Christ maybe made it easier the transition from the cult of Mithra into the cult of Christ when inculcators of new religion at the beginning were looking for beneficial elements in ancient local cults for their propaganda.

But even after the adoption of Christianity in Armenia Mihr was not forgotten by Armenian people, but continue to live in folk epic bifurcated into the images of Elder Mher and Lesser Mher, as it was already mentioned.<sup>63</sup> The name Mher reveals the essence of this mythical epic hero ascending to the image of the god Mihr who to that date was expelled from his temples by the Christians. The connection between Mher and Mihr-Mithra in the epic is proved by two details. On all reliefs of Mithra and in Mithraic hymns is depicted the struggle of Mithra-Sun with the darkness appearing in the image of a bull, and in the epic, as it is known, Elder Mher kills the black bull who is connected with evil *devs*. Some rites connected with the cult of Mithra originally should have been performed in the cave, grotto, or in the crypt, dark apartment under the floor

<sup>59</sup> Fr. Cumont, Loc.cit., vol. II, p. 259, Pic. 96. – K.V.Trever, The reflexion in the art of the Zoroastrian dualistic concept, Studies of the Eastern Department of State Hermitage, vol. I, 1939, p. 244ff., Tab. III-IV.

<sup>60</sup> Fr. Cumont, Loc.cit., vol. II, p. 259, Pic. 96ff.

<sup>61</sup> Mesnil du Buisson, Gaz. des Beaux-Arts, Janvier 1935, p. 12, Pic. 12.

<sup>62</sup> Ełishe, Ch. II.

<sup>63</sup> I.A.Orbeli, Davit of Sassoun, Moscow-Leningrad, Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1939. Preface, p. XXIII-XXIV, – K.Melik-Ohanjanyan, Mithra – Mihr in the Sassoun epic, Literary-philological study, Academy of Sciences of Armenian SSR, vol.I, 1946, p. 269ff.

of the temple, and in the epic, as we know, Lesser Mher walked away into the rock and stayed in the cave.

In Armenian the word “temple” ascends to the name of Mher where it sounds as “mehean”;<sup>64</sup> in ancient Armenian calendar one of the months was named after Mher – “mehekan” (in Old Georgian calendar to this month corresponds “mihrakan-i”) and one of the days of the month “mihr”; with the name of Mihr were sealed oath contracts. The reflexion of his cult is also quadriga on which the Sun-god goes around the sky which is depicted on the coins of Artavazd II,<sup>65</sup> and also the depiction of horse (by Xenophon – dedicated to the Sun-god)<sup>66</sup> on the coins of Tigran IV at the end of the I century BC.<sup>67</sup> Especially clear is the connection with the cult of Mithra is depicted on the coins of Tigran II, whose tiara is decorated with the Symbols of the Sun-god – rosette and two eagles on both sides,<sup>68</sup> and also on the relief from Hatra (Northern Mesopotamia, I-II centuries AD), on which are depicted radiant head of the Sun-god and eagles on both sides.<sup>69</sup>

It seems to me that such explanation is possible, absolutely regardless of various groundless semantic comparisons which are extant in some of my previous studies where I had tried, based on N.Ya.Marr’s “stadial semantics”, to reveal the semantic meaning of one or the other fabulous or mythical image. I.V.Stalin’s work “Marxism and problems of linguistics” which had revealed deep fallacy of the “new theory of language” led me to the perception that the semantic clusters of N.Ya.Marr torn off in each given cases from specific reality can only lead away from the possibility of perception and explanation of one or the other image in cultural monuments, one or the other term or name which are kept in the people’s memory through oral tradition. Accepting the “stadial semantics” I had overlooked the fact that the existence of semantic connection does not mean overlapping of concepts which on the basis of “paleontology of speech” I have compared diachronic phenomena outside of their historical setting.

Let me return to the cult of Mithra in Armenia.

Armenian kings, as it is seen through cited passages, emphasize their connection with Mihr and did worship exactly him as their tutelary god, as long as we can assume by the mentioned above story of Cassius Dio about the meeting of Trdat with Nero when Armenian king says the next words: “I came to you, to my god, like Mithra”.<sup>70</sup> Through the mouth of Armenian king here is named his god. Therefore, it seems quite natural to assume that Trdat, as it was said above, by his return built in his residency at Garni a temple of his tutelary god Mihr, not for any other one.

<sup>64</sup> G.A. Kapancyan, Hittite gods by Armenians, p. 60.

<sup>65</sup> V. Langlois, Numismatique de l’Armenie dans l’antiquite, Paris, 1859, Tab. III, 1.

<sup>66</sup> Xenophon, Anabasis, Book IV, Ch. 5.

<sup>67</sup> E.Babelon, Rois de la Syrie, d’Armenie et de Commagene, Paris, 1890, Tab. XXIX, 20.

<sup>68</sup> Loc.cit., Tab. XXIX, 8-9, 15.

<sup>69</sup> W. Andrae, Hatra, Leipzig, 1908, Bd. I, Tab. XI; Pic. 20, Pic. 32.

<sup>70</sup> Cassius Dio, Book 63, Ch. 5, 2.

As to survival trails of Mihr's cult in the Armenian epic "David of Sassoun", to this problem is devoted the article of K.Melik-Ohanjanyan;<sup>71</sup> he discovered in the epic traces of morning and evening dawn, Sun-god's companions, and traces of Mihr in the images of Elder Mher and Younger Mher to whom in the tales was divided the former unified Sun-god.

The statue of Aregakn-Apollo-Mihr about whom is written by Movses Khorenatsi and Agatangelos, perhaps were completely destroyed during the adoption of Christianity, thus none of them have come down to us, neither completely nor in fragmentary state.

But we don't know also whether the statues of Mihr in Armenia stood only inside the temples or also in open air, on high ground like in Pontus (on the cliff near Trebizont)<sup>72</sup> or in Commagene (Nemrut dağ) where in both western and eastern terraces there were statues of sitting Mithra;<sup>73</sup> the god's figure is aggregately executed but the head of the young god in pointed capis distinguished by the subtlety of modeling.

In this regard two interesting references of Mithra are contained in the dialogues of Lucian, the I century AD Greek satiric author, "Voltaire of Classical antiquity who applied to all religious superstitions equally skeptically", as he was characterized by F.Engels.<sup>74</sup> In the dialogue "Tragic Zeus" it is told that when Zeus ordered Hermes to place the summoned gods by "their wealth, not by nobility of their origin", it appears that on top positions can count only "barbarian gods" made of gold, whereas Hellenic gods made of marble, bronze, ivory, and wood could occupy back rows. Hermes resented: "Here are these Bendida, Anubis and Attis, and next to them Mithra and Men are completely made of gold, they are heavy and really are valuable".<sup>75</sup>

Stories of Pliny, Agatangelos and others about "golden statues" of Armenian gods usually is assumed as legend, but Lucian's text, apparently proves and explains in part why these statues couldn't reach us.

Even more interesting is the passage from other dialogue of Lucian "The Parliament of the Gods" (par.9) where it is told about the filling of Olympus by barbarian gods among which is named also "Mithra in Persian cloths and with tiara, who doesn't even speak Greek and couldn't understand when they drink to his health". These words are a kind of illustration to the relief from Nemrut dag where next to the king is depicted young Mithra, exactly "in Persian cloths and tiara", that is completely from that on the reliefs with bulls.

***Translated from the Russian by Aram Kosyan***

<sup>71</sup> K.Melik-Ohanjanyan, Loc.cit., p. 269-327.

<sup>72</sup> Fr. Cumont, Loc.cit., vol. II, p. 55.

<sup>73</sup> K. Humann und O. Puchstein, Loc.cit., vol Loc.cit.,. II, Tab. XXXVIff.

<sup>74</sup> F.Engels, On the history of early Christianity, K. Marx and F. Engels, Studies, vol. XVI, Part. II, p. 411.

<sup>75</sup> Lucian, Loc.cit., Loc.cit., Tragic Zeus, 8.

---

# CLASSICS OF ARMENOLOGY

---

## JOSEF MARKWART (1864- 1930)



Jozef Markwart was a prominent German orientalist, an expert in the history, philology, geography, and ethnology of the Middle East, whose contribution into Armenology cannot be overestimated.

J. Markwart was born in Reichenbach, Würtemberg in 1864. He attended Tübingen University in Germany, where he studied Catholic theology, and then later switched his studies to classical philology and history. In 1889 he worked as an assistant to Eugen Prym, an orientalist. His doctoral thesis *Assyriaka des Ktesias* was accepted and he graduated in 1892. In 1897 he began as a lecturer in ancient history. In 1900 moved to Leiden, The Netherlands and became a curator at the Museum Volkenkunde (Ethnographical Museum). In 1902 he was appointed to the position of assistant professor for languages of the Christian Orient at Leiden University. In 1912 he moved to Berlin and became full Professor of Iranian and Armenian studies at Berlin University. Here L. Markwart established chair of Armenian studies, first in Germany. He taught in Berlin for the remainder of his life, even giving a lecture on the day of his death in 1930.

Armenological studies of J. Markwart (about 30, some remain unpublished yet) deal with such fields as “Ashkharhacuyt”, the identity of Movses Khorenatsi and his time span, “Life of Mashtoc” by Koryun, Mesrop Mashtoc and Armenian alphabet, Pavstos Buzand, the institutions of *hazarapet* and *bdeshkh* in Greater Armenia, Armenian Bagratids, origin of Georgian Bagratids, early history of Armenian Arshakid dynasty and their king-list, king Zareh of Sophene etc.

Along with scholarly activities J. Markwart was deeply concerned with the tragic events of the Armenian history of late XIX – early XX centuries. In the book published in 1919 he sharply criticized the genocidal policy of the Ottoman empire.

J. Markwart was one of those unique scholars whose interests embraces all spheres of classical Orientalistics - Iranistics, Armenology, Caucasian studies, Arabistics etc., philology and history. He was fluent in great number of languages, dead and modern - Greek, Latin, Aramaic, Avestan Persian, Hebrew, Syriac, Armenian, Pahlavi, Turkish, Russian, and even some Chinese and Afghani.

**Selected bibliography**

1. Beiträge z. Geschichte und Sage v. Eran, ZDMG XLIX, 1896, 628-673.
2. Ērānšahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenaci, Berlin, 1901.
3. Armenische Streifen, Hushardzan, Wien, 1911, 291-302.
4. Südarmenien u. die Tigrisquellen nach griechischen und arabischen Geographen, Handes Amsorya (German and Armenian), 1913, 79-100, 357-366, 525-535; 1914, 41-52, 106-17, 177-83; 1915, 126-135; 1920, 103-110 (later published as separate monograph - Südarmenien und die Tigrisquellen, Wien, 1930).
5. Mipherqet und Tigranokerta, Handes Amsorya, 1916, 68-135, 68-135.
6. Über d. Ursprung des armenischen Alphabets in Verbindung mit der Biographie d. h. Mašt'oc', Handes Amsorya, 1911, 530-43, 673-83 (German); 1912, 41-54, 199-216 (German and Armenian); 657-666 (Armenian); 742-750 (German)(Wien, 1917).
7. Die Entstehung und Wiederherstellung d. armenischen Nation, Potsdam, 1919.
8. Skizzen z. histor. Topographie u. Geschichte von Kaukasus. Der Itinerar von Artaxata nach Armastica auf d. römischen Weltkarte, Handes Amsorya, 1927, No. 11, 825-866.
9. Le berceau des Arméniens: Revue des études arméniennes, Paris, 1928, tome VIII, fasc. 2, 210-45.
10. Die Entstehung der armenischen Bistümer. Kritische Untersuchung der armenischen Bistümer, Roma, 1932.
11. Die Provinz Parskahajkh, Patmabanasirakan handes, 1961/1, 180-207, 1961/2, 212-244 (Armenian translation of the unpublished study).

## **HAKOVBOS TASHYAN**

### **(1866-1933)**

H.Tashyan (Franciscos Melqon Tashchyan) was prominent Armenian philologist, an expert in medieval Armenian manuscripts, ancient and modern history.

H.Tashyan was born in the village of Artsati, Erzerum province. After receiving primary education at Erzerum, in 1880 he moved first to Mekhitarist school at Constantinople, then to Vienna (Austria-Hungary) Mekhitarist congregation. Here in 1885 H.Tashyan joined the Mekhitarist congregation and was ordained as priest. Soon after graduating, in 1889 he was appointed as teacher of philosophy and Armenian language at the Mekhitarist school. Between 1893 and 1912 H.Tashyan visited Venice, Berlin, Constantinople, Erzerum and other places where he worked on Armenian manuscripts.



H.Tashyan's contribution into Armenology is tremendous. During about half a century long scholarly activity he has published numerous monographs and articles, mostly on Armenian manuscripts. His studies touched upon also Armenian language, problems of ancient and modern history and geography. The knowledge of many ancient and modern languages (Latin, Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopian, German, English etc.), constant contacts with well-known experts of his time (G.Ter-Mkrtchyan, B.Kyuleseryan, H.Hübschmann, H.Petermann, F.Müller, F.Conybeare, A.Meillet and other scholars) contributed much into the field of his interests. Besides his own studies H.Tashyan translated into Armenian several important Armenological studies written by foreign scholars (F.Conybeare, A.Carrière, H.Petermann, N.Marr).

### **Selected bibliography of H.Tashyan**

1. List of Armenian manuscripts at the imperial scriptorium of Vienna, Vienna, 1891 (in Arm.).
2. The letter of Agatangelos addressed to the bishop Gevorg Asori and the study of Agatangelos's writings, Vienna, 1891 (in Arm.).
3. The study of Callisthenus on the life of Alexander, Vienna, 1892 (in Arm.).
4. Armenological studies of Armenologist P.Fetter, Vienna, 1895 (in Arm.).
5. Small bibliographic studies of, Part 1, 1-6, Nemesios, Prokles, Khosrovik, Epiphanes and Secundus, Vienna 1895 (in Arm.).
6. Das Leben und die Sentenzen des Philosophen Secundus des Schweigsamen in altarmenischer Übersetzung, Vienna, 1895.
7. Essay on Armenian palaeography, Vienna, 1898 (in Arm.).

8. Small bibliographic studies and originals, Part 2, 7-10, Khikar and his philosophy, Agapetos and his teachings addressed to Justinian, correspondence between Abgar and Christ according to newly found inscription from Ephesus, and Vetsoryayq of Gevorg of Pisidia, Vienna, 1901 (in Arm.).
9. Arshakid coins, P.1, Vienna, 1917, P.2, Vienna, 1960 (in Arm.).
10. The Armenian population from Black Sea to Karin, Vienna, 1921 (in Arm.).
11. Lexicographical notes on literary Armenian language, Vienna, 1926 (in Arm.).
12. List of Armenian manuscripts at the Mekhitarist scriptorium of Vienna, Vienna, 1895 (in Arm.).
13. Hattians and Urtians, Vienna, 1934 (in Arm.).
14. Western border of ancient Armenia, Armenia Minor and Kolopene (Sebastia), Vienna, 1948 (in Arm.).



---

# BOOK REVIEWS

---

**GEGHAM HOVHANNISYAN, Arpiar Arpiaryan:  
Socio-Political Views and Activities, Yerevan, Institute of History of NAS RA,  
2019, 265 pages.**

In the series of books “Arch. Mesrob Ashjian” the Institute of History of NAS RA has published the research work “Arpiar Arpiaryan: Socio-political Views And Activities” by G. Hovhannisyanyan, which is dedicated to the life and activity of Arpiar Arpiaryan (1851-1908), a publicist, a prominent figure of the Armenian liberation movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He was one of those brilliant figures of Armenian intelligentsia, who had a profound impact not only on literary, but also on social and political spheres. A. Arpiaryan belonged to the generation of prominent figures of the time like Kh. Abovyan, M. Nalbandyan, Raffi, M. Khrimyan and others who made their mark on Armenian social and political life. Thus, it is not accidental that a number of researchers have referred to his activities, have covered different areas of A. Arpiaryan’s work, and G. Hovhannisyanyan’s work under discussion is a unique summary of A. Arpiaryan’s social and political activity.

The peer-reviewed study consists of 4 chapters, a conclusion, a list of sources and literature, English and Russian summaries and an appendix.

In the two sub-chapters of the first chapter G. Hovhannisyanyan covers the socio-economic condition of Western Armenia in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the second one is dedicated to A. Arpiaryan’s educational and cultural activity.

A. Arpiaryan started his enlightenment activity in 1864, when he was studying at the Translators’ College of Constantinople, and in April 1876, together with his supporters he founded the “Araratian Association”, with Mkrtich Portugalyan being elected chairman, and A. Arpiaryan - secretary. The association aimed to promote national self-awareness especially among Armenians from provinces, and then among the urban population through the spread of education. The ultimate goal of this was to introduce and implement the idea of self-defense among Western Armenians harassed under Ottoman rule. Among other issues, he considered it important to educate Armenian women and girls.

The 1878 Congress of Berlin caused deep disappointment among Armenians, however, a part of Armenian intelligentsia was not dispirited, and continued the propaganda of enlightenment and liberation ideas, which was carried out through articles and materials published in the newspaper “Arevelk”. Another such channel was “Mshak”, which published A. Arpiaryan’s publicistic articles as well.

One of the goals of the newspaper “Arevelk” was to strengthen ties with Eastern Armenians. Thus, in April 1884, the newspaper’s administrative council sent A. Arpiaryan to the Caucasus on a business trip under the pretext of Catholicos elections. In May, A. Arpiaryan was elected Deputy of the National Assembly of Constantinople as a representative of Baghesh. Unfortunately, some members of the administrative

council of “Arevelk” did not like A. Arpiaryan’s articles against national conservatives, therefore A. Arpiaryan had to transfer to the editorial office of the newspaper “Masis”<sup>1</sup>.

A. Arpiaryan was convinced that the city should train intellectuals who would settle in the provinces and contribute to a certain increase in the educational level of the rural population, which would be the guarantee for preparing people for the liberation movement. The idea of establishing a school in Van, the center of the most Armenian-populated state, was supported by M. Portugalyan and Khrimyan Hayrik: this would contribute not only to the development of education in Vaspurakan, but also in all Western Armenia. The “Central College” of Van became that institution, but the Ottoman authorities considered it dangerous and closed it in 1885, and M. Portugalyan had to leave.

A. Arpiaryan was one of the advocates of the spread of Modern Armenian (Ashkharhabar), but he did not deny the need for Classical Armenian (Grabar). He considered that it should be taught in higher education institutions.

In the Ottoman Empire, the Turkish rulers ensured that national minorities, including Armenians, did not receive education in the most demanded spheres, such as law and medicine. It was forbidden to teach Armenian children with textbooks received from Russia.

A. Arpiaryan realized that new teaching methods should be introduced in Armenian schools, and patriotic teachers should be highly esteemed, regardless of the subjects they taught. Like the great figures of the time, A. Arpiaryan was also convinced that education was one of the important guarantees of the liberation struggle, and that the Armenian Apostolic Church contributed to the preservation of national self-awareness.

In 1890 A. Arpiaryan was arrested along with a number of activists for participating in the Gum-Gapu demonstration. He was released from prison only at the beginning of 1891.

In 1894-1896, during the Hamidian massacres A. Arpiaryan preferred to go abroad. He founded and edited the magazine “Nor Kyanq” in London, the magazine “Hay Handes” in Venice, and in Cairo he edited the periodical “Shirak” and the newspaper “Lusaber” published thrice a week<sup>2</sup>.

Hygiene education of Armenians occupied an important place in A. Arpiaryan’s public activity. In his articles he covered various health issues. For these and other purposes he especially used the daily newspaper “Hairenik” where he assumed the position of editor in January, 1891. By the way, in 1892, for the first time in the history of Armenian society A. Arpiaryan mentioned the name of the young deacon Soghomon (Komitas), musician and folklore specialist in that daily newspaper<sup>3</sup>.

Throughout his whole conscious activity A. Arpiaryan tried to achieve national

<sup>1</sup> In the 1880s “Arevelk” was described by some as “inaccessible to common people and a counselor of the noble classes”. See L. G. Muradyan, Arpiar Arpiaryan as critic and literary historian, *Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri*, 1990/2, p.30.

<sup>2</sup> A. Arpiaryan, *Works* (compiled by S.G.Sahakyan, preface by H.Margaryan), Yerevan, 1987, p. VI (in Arm.).

<sup>3</sup> L. G. Muradyan, *Op. cit.*, p. 34.

unity, to put an end to endless disagreements and hostilities. In his works "The Price of a Dream", "A Joke", "The Convict" etc. A. Arpiaryan preached solidarity and unity, called for social justice.

A. Arpiaryan clearly saw the deprivation and stratification of Western Armenians, but he was against class conflict, since the Armenians, whether rich and poor, were under the excruciating Ottoman rule.

In Chapter II of the monograph, "Arpiar Arpiaryan's public views and activities", G. Hovhannisyan mentions A. Arpiaryan's assessment of the unique role of the Armenian Apostolic Church, which allowed to preserve the national self-awareness. At the same time A. Arpiaryan criticized the clergy who were ignorant and greedy. The intellectual did not fail to notice the various individuals who carried out missionary work, who "go and engage with people, interfere in many matters concerning their material life, and by that win their hearts" (p. 67). It should be noted that the Catholic and Protestant preachers were backed by European and then also by American governments, whose diplomatic missions forced the Ottoman authorities to grant privileges to missionaries and not to interfere in their activities.

The national bodies, especially the National Assembly of Constantinople played an exceptional role in the issue of national preservation of Western Armenians. A. Arpiaryan constantly called to put an end to internal splits, to unite secular and spiritual forces. Being elected deputy of the National Assembly in May, 1894, he raised a number of issues in his speeches that would give an opportunity to unify the Western Armenians. A. Arpiaryan severely criticized the conservative deputies of the National Assembly, who were trying to find a common ground with the government and with Sultan Abdul Hamid II. A. Arpiaryan was convinced that the National Assembly should deal with practical issues, the first of which was the Armenian reforms, for the realization of which it was necessary to develop a well-thought-out national policy.

It can be assumed that for the solution of the above-mentioned issue A. Arpiaryan considered the election of Mkrtych Khrimyan, "the great exiled clergyman" (p. 88) as Catholicos, very important.

In Chapter III of the research, "Arpiar Arpiaryan and the Problem of Liberation of Western Armenians", G. Hovhannisyan analyzes A. Arpiaryan's articles published in "Mshak" and comes to the conclusion that after the Congress of Berlin the oppression of Western Armenians intensified even more. Such a policy was aimed at forcing the Western Armenians to either leave their homeland or to nullify any anti-government, i.e. national-liberation aspiration. As A. Arpiaryan mentioned: "Day by day the question of improvements makes more regress than progress" (p. 100).

One of the evidences of that is the Ottoman press, which was full of anti-Armenian articles, praising and encouraging the Kurdish tribal chiefs and provoking them against Armenians. In addition to this there was the Ottoman censorship. In its turn, the government began to populate Armenian provinces with Muslims with the aim of reducing the number of Armenians.

As a result of the unrestraint of the Ottoman authorities, Nerses Varzhapetyan, Patriarch of Constantinople, resigned. However, fearing the intervention of European powers, Sultan Abdul Hamid II refused to accept his resignation.

It is self-evident that the European powers, mainly Great Britain, put pressure on the Sultan solely for their own interests. A part of Western Armenians had vain hopes that the Christian states would protect them, but their further actions proved the opposite. In his articles A. Arpiaryan especially demonstrated the evident pro-Turkish policy of Great Britain, but he placed his hopes in Russia. He considered that the Russian rule was more preferable than the Ottoman rule, comparing the situation of Armenians living under the rule of the two empires.

Referring to the first Russian revolution, A. Arpiaryan considered that Western Armenians should not take part in acts against autocracy, as it would only harm them. In his articles, he called to be realistic and to stay away from anti-government actions, since it would give the authorities the pretext to take steps against Armenians (pp. 122-123). As mentioned by G. Hovhannisyan: "... although the first Russian revolution had a noticeable influence on Arpiaryan's ideological turnabout, it cannot be conditioned only by the factor of revolution" (p. 128).

Analyzing the current situation, A. Arpiaryan came to the conclusion that Armenians could achieve their freedom only on their own. In fact, he preferred the path of armed struggle, citing as a vivid example the heroic struggle of Zeytun, as a result of which "Zeytun got its autonomy; the strong mountains, a few guns and a little blood were much more effective than congresses, countless protests and government interventions" (p. 130).

He was convinced that victory could be achieved only through a popular uprising, but at the same time he realized that a considerable part of Western Armenians had no experience of struggle and no action plan. Armenian Hajduk groups acting separately would not be able to achieve the liberation of Western Armenians. At the same time, he considered the tactics of individual terrorism wrong, referring to the assassination attempt on Abdul Hamid II on July 21, 1905. He wrote the following: "The problem is not with the person, but with the situation, with a fundamental change" (p. 140).

A. Arpiaryan agreed with Hambardzum Boyadjian (Metsn Murad), a prominent figure in the liberation movement and a member of the Hunchakian party, who called on his party members to unite with the ARF for the sake of national goals (pp. 143-144). As mentioned by G. Hovhannisyan: "In the person of Murad, Arpiaryan saw the individual who, "deserved to get the vote of the nation because of his morality" and who could become the organizer and leader of a new popular movement" (p. 144).

According to A. Arpiaryan, it was necessary to put an end to the confrontations of the national parties, the Hunchakian and ARF, which was beneficial only to the Ottoman and Russian authorities. Unfortunately, it was impossible not only to unite the two parties, but also to stop the deep conflicts between them. It should be noted that during the mentioned period the Hunchakians were experiencing a deep crisis. During the fifth

congress held in September, 1905, A. Nazarbek, R. Khanazat and others left the party. A similar event took place at the reorganized Hunchakian congress held in July, 1906.

A. Arpiaryan believed that the most united and unified party was the ARF, and the Hunchakians should join the ARF, and not the other way around (p. 148). At the same time, he called on the national parties to develop a joint self-defense program, since the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Russia were escalating day by day, which could turn into a large-scale war. A. Arpiaryan thought that the Turks would definitely use the occasion of the war to finally exact retribution on Armenians (p. 149).

A. Arpiaryan considered it important to cooperate with the ethnic minorities living under Ottoman rule, e.g. the Greeks and the Kurds. It is self-evident that the Ottoman authorities found excuses to drive a wedge between the three peoples.

In our opinion, cooperation between Armenians and Greeks was somehow possible but not with Kurds. Eventually, the same point of view was expressed by A. Arpiaryan. He wrote: "An alliance always presupposes equality between allies, and Muslims willingly assume the unbearable burden of taxes, rather than a mitigation, the price of which would be equality with Christians" (pp. 152-153). Only one thing is surprising, why did the prominent intellectual miss the issue of cooperation with the Assyrians?

In his research G. Hovhannisyan presents A. Arpiaryan's considerations on cooperation with the Young Turks. In 1896 he personally took part in the negotiations with the Young Turks in Paris. No cooperation agreement was signed between the two parties, since the Young Turks demanded that reforms be renounced. As mentioned by G. Hovhannisyan, after meeting with Ahmed Rza Bey, one of the leaders of the Young Turks in 1907, A. Arpiaryan came to the conclusion that they were more dangerous and could bring greater evils to the Armenians than Abdul Hamid II (p. 156).

In Chapter IV of the monograph G. Hovhannisyan covers A. Arpiaryan's party activity. In 1895 he became a member of the Hunchakian Party, which further increased the influence of that political organization. A. Arpiaryan first of all opposed the idea of socialism enshrined in the Hunchakians' program, finding that "first we must liberate Armenia from Ottoman yoke, then after we at least have a free Armenia similar to the state of Bulgaria<sup>4</sup>, we can think about socialism" (p. 158). ). Besides, there was a dispute concerning the council members of the Hunchakian organization in Constantinople. A. Arpiaryan and his friends did not want to be just financial supporters; they wanted to take an active part in the internal affairs of the party and to have a role in management (p. 159).

Faithful to the political line he had adopted A. Arpiaryan tried to persuade the Hunchakians in Trabzon that it was expedient to remove the provision on socialism from the party program, but he did not succeed.

Probably in order to increase his influence in the party and to gain more authority, A. Arpiaryan came to Yerevan and offered R. Khanazat a program adventurous by its

---

<sup>4</sup> From 1878 to 1908, Bulgaria was a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire.

nature, the goal of which was the capture of Constantinople. It is self-evident that this could lead to catastrophic consequences for Armenians (p. 160). A. Arpiaryan's relations with the party became tense again.

Soon disagreements arose with the ARF as well. A. Arpiaryan criticized the ARF for threatening the sultan, to which other issues were added. The situation became so tense that on December 25, 1895 the ARF attempted to assassinate him, but only wounded him.

The dissatisfaction with the party leadership was growing in the Hunchakian party. Information was spread among the party members that A. Arpiaryan was a traitor, an extortionist, etc. (p. 165). According to G. Hovhannisyan, all this was used by the ARF committee of Constantinople to slander and neutralize A. Arpiaryan (p. 166). And since it became dangerous to stay in the Ottoman Empire, he went abroad and founded the newspaper "Mart" (1897) and the biweekly magazine "Nor Kyanq" (1898).

At the beginning of 1896, prominent members of the Hunchakian party in London opposed the strategic actions proposed by Avetis and Maro Nazarbekyans, which provoked the Turks and led to new massacres (p. 167). One of the reasons for the radical disagreement was the problem of socialism. A. Arpiaryan believed that "the idea of socialism should be abandoned, which... enfeebles the national forces, artificially separates and damages the liberation struggle..." (p. 169). In fact, the party gradually split into two branches, which finally became a reality in London.

In September, 1896 a general parliamentary assembly of the Hunchakian party was convened in London where A. Arpiaryan, M. Tamatyan, L. Mkrtchyan and others raised the above-mentioned issues, but the Nazarbekyan couple and their supporters continued to defend the adopted strategy; thus, a number of prominent figures were expelled from the party (p. 174).

The politicians opposing the Nazarbekyans' actions established a new central administration. At the second parliamentary assembly held in Alexandria on October 9-11, 1898, the newly formed party was called the Reorganized Party and decided to focus exclusively on the liberation of Western Armenians (p. 175).

The official newspapers of the Reorganized were the "Mart" newspaper and "Nor Kyanq" magazine, the editor of which was A. Arpiaryan. The Reorganized established their branches in the USA, Cilicia, Bulgaria, Constantinople, etc. At the same time, steps were taken to join the ARF, which, however, did not happen, since the ARF demanded that A. Arpiaryan be expelled from the party, based on the false information that A. Arpiaryan was a traitor (pp. 178-179).

The ARF started a struggle against A. Arpiaryan, and in the 1899 appendix to "Droshak" he was even "declared a traitor and a spy for the Turkish police" (p. 180). This misinformation was refuted by prominent figures of the time, including Arshak Chopanyan, Yervand Otyan, Vahan Tekeyan and others (pp. 189, 200). Unfortunately, the above-mentioned accusations became the reason for A. Arpiaryan to leave the party on January 15, 1901, but he continued his ideological struggle against his opponents.

As a result of all this the second assassination attempt was made against A. Arpiaryan on February 15, 1903, but he was only injured. In his testimony to the Italian police, he stated that “the assassination attempt against him was probably fabricated by Abdul Hamid” (p. 210).

In 1905 A. Arpiaryan settled in Cairo and assumed the position of editor of the newspaper “Lusaber”. Unfortunately, as a result of the assassination attempt against him on February 12, 1908 A. Arpiaryan was killed, and his funeral took place on January 14. The murderer was arrested and called himself Petros Hyusnyan, but it turned out that his real name was Hovsep Alipunaryan, he was from New York. The investigation revealed that he did not even know A. Arpiaryan. He was only informed that A. Arpiaryan was a traitor. He had received the assignment from Alexan Arzuyan, from the editor of the newspaper “Azat Bem” Leon Larents and from the director of the same newspaper Zareh Gochyan (pp. 219-220). As M. Portugalyan described it, this political murder was nothing but “buttering the Turks’ bread” (p. 220).

According to the testimony of the author of the research, one of the main organizers of the murder was L. Larents, one of A. Arpiaryan’s former party friends (p. 221).

It should be mentioned that G. Hovhannisyan carried out a large-scale research work, which summarizes the publicistic, social and party activities of A. Arpiaryan, one of the prominent figures of the Armenian national liberation movement.

We have a number of considerations related to G. Hovhannisyan’s research.

1. The term “political parties” is used, which in our opinion is not correct.
2. The work does not have a list of personal names and place names.
3. It is not specified whether A. Arpiaryan’s murder was organized by individuals or the party.
3. The research by H. Avakian, “The Murder of Arpiar Arpiarian”, Cairo, 2018, was not used.

**RUBEN SAYAKYAN**

Doctor in History, Institute of History, NAS RA.

***Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***



**Sargsyan Alexander Armenak, Psychological Issues of Military Intelligence, Training Manual, Yerevan, Lusabats Publishing House, 2013, 83 pages.**



**Alexander Sargsyan**

Alexander Sargsyan,<sup>1</sup> a participant in the Artsakh Liberation War and an awarded police colonel, authored the textbook "Psychological Problems of Military Intelligence."

The booklet is valuable as the author participated in the Artsakh war and his research is based on his and his comrade-in-arms' military experience. In July 1992, when the Azerbaijan armed units and the Soviet former military launched a large-scale attack, A. Sargsyan and his squad were surrounded, and willingly or unwillingly he was forced to do disruptive-reconnaissance operations in the enemy's

---

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Armenak Sargsyan (1952-2015) was born in Mataghis village of Martakert region of Nagorno Karabakh. A police colonel. In 1959, he entered the secondary school of Mataghis, in 1967 continued his education at the Yerevan Shahinyan School of Physics and Mathematics, graduating in 1969.

In 1970-1972, he served in the Soviet Armed Forces. In 1973-1977, he studied at the Yerevan Machinebuilding College. After graduating, he got a degree in mechanics. In 1979-1985, he studied at the evening department of the Polytechnic Institute after K. Marx. After graduating, he received a degree in mechanical engineering. Along with studying, in 1979-1983, he worked as a mechanic in the 2976 military vehicle part, and from 1983 to 1985 as chief mechanic of the same institution. In the same year he studied as postgraduate at the Armenian State Pedagogical Institute after Kh. Abovyan (extramural). Since 1985 - Chief Engineer, since the same year - Director of "Hayaviashin" Trust Automobile Company.

The vehicles of the convoy took part in the liquidation of the Chernobyl disaster. After the earthquake of December 7, 1988, under his personal ordinance, without the permission of superior, he moved the cars working in Slavutich to Spitak and Leninakan, the disaster zone. For that reason he had a dispute with Voronin, the deputy minister of Civil Aviation of the USSR. He sent 14 of the transported cars to Artsakh (6 passenger cars to Mataghis, 2 to Tonashen, 3 to Hakob Kamari, 2 to Dastakert and 1 milk vehicle to Talish). "Jraberd" charitable union was formed which was chaired by Nanagulyan. A. Sargsyan was involved in the council and was in charge of procuring weapons and ammunition and for organizing the squads. Valerik Ghambaryan, Kamo Mirzoyan, Valery Nasachenko and Valerik Hovhannisyan aided him. On March 19, 1991, a 7 member group headed to Dastakert. Those 7 were 1. Me, 2. Oleg Grigoryan (died), 3. Mirzoyan Kamo, 4. Ghambaryan Valerik (died), 5. Simonyan Sokrat, 6. Barseganyan Sergo of Sergey, 7. Barseganyan Valerik, Yedigaryan Valerik (joined in Mataghis). We were armed with six automatic rifles (made in Hayelectro factory), 5.45 mm diameter, 1 AK-47, homemade grenades and homemade mortars. They were sent to organize self defending detachments from the locals. He was known as Alik of Maraghis or BTR Alik. He commanded a defending squad. The squad of Maraghis operated under the command of Ashot Ghulyan (Bekor Ashot, 1959-1992) of blessed memory. He was wounded twice in the battles. After the war he was in service in the educational complex of the Police of the RA and was a senior lecturer in the department of technical subjects. Awarded with "For Combat Service", "For NKRMilitary Service", "20th Anniversary of the Defense Army", "Drastamat Kanayan", "Admiral Isakov", "5th Brigade" medals and "Motherly Gratitude" commemorative medal.

Books: Basics of Higher Mathematics (methodical manual), Yerevan 2000, Motor Preparedness (instructional manual), Yerevan 2000, Handbook of Higher Mathematics Problems, Yerevan, 2000, Motor Preparedness (instructional manual for practical training), Yerevan, 2002, Ensuring the Safety of Road Traffic (Instructional Manual) Review, Yerevan 2003, Social-psychological violence and aggression, Yerevan, 2006.

rear.<sup>2</sup> It must be stated that nowadays little research is available that combines theoretical and practical knowledge.

In the preface of the research, A. Sargsyan substantiates the goals and objectives of the research. Notwithstanding the fact that modern armed forces are equipped with the latest military equipment and various apparatus, the significance of the human factor should not be diminished as the importance of a military operation largely depends on it.



**From right to left: Ruslan Marandyan, Ruben Sahakyan and Alexander Sargsyan**

During combat operations and combat protection, many factors affect a soldier, including a scout that in some cases can contribute to the increase of combat capabilities, and in some cases to a decrease. Any military operation, no matter how carefully and in detail planned, is subject to change. "Modern warfare imposes extreme tension on the soldier's physical and psychological capabilities. First of all, the war is an emergency situation, which is a real threat to life."<sup>3</sup> Any operation is constantly subject to change. According to Sargsyan, "even any military plan, no matter how genius it is,

<sup>2</sup> In the rear of the enemy, three trucks carrying 14 tons of fuel were destroyed. A. Sargsyan remembers. "We were reconciled to death. My health was getting worse as time went on. We had no problem with water, because there were springs all around us. The food problem was serious. We gathered wheat from the fields, but as we could not light a fire to roast the wheat, we filled the holes in the stones with water, left the wheat there for 4 to 5 hours to swell, and then we ate it. In addition, there was a glycyrrhiza plant, which was 20 times sweeter than sugar, and we used this as a food, as well. We treated the wounds with a plant called capparis, which disinfected the wounds well. Uncle Ohan taught us all these wisdoms. During the First World War he was a volunteer and fought in Andranik's volunteer detachment "(A. Sargsyan told us this information – R.S.).

<sup>3</sup> Sargsyan Al. A., Psychological Issues of Military Intelligence. Textbook, Yerevan, Lusabats Publishing House, 2013: 8.

cannot predict changes in the mental world of a soldier during the fights." (p.8). It follows from that "it is necessary to have a psychological model of combat." (p.9).

Based on this, A. Sargsyan highlights the role of military psychologists. The need for such a specialist has long been acknowledged "in several countries where universities of military psychology exist, and special psychology subdivisions are successfully functioning in the armed forces." (p.6). Therefore, the armed forces cannot function effectively without psychological service.

The author examines the manifestation of fear in combat situations. According to him, one cannot unequivocally claim that fear is a purely negative emotion: "It has its positive aspects, as well. The phenomenon we call caution in reality is a mild manifestation of fear necessary for every person, especially the soldier. However, the highest degree of the fear is not expressed on the battlefield, as in such situations any soldier sees his comrades-in-arms by his side. The image changes dramatically when we speak about a field of military activities, such as intelligence". (p.40).

In general, fear emerges in situations where a person is not used to acting on his own. "In the field of psychological training of a scout, great attention should be paid to the development of the ability to act on his own. The most important thing for a scout is to control his own emotions. A military scout, in addition to having comprehensive knowledge, must first of all be endowed with high emotional stability. Of course, emotional stability does not mean the complete absence of fear." (p.13).

It is a priority to train the servicemen involved in the relevant military intelligence unit so that the feeling of fear does not turn into dread. The scout "must take a conscious risk. Only then the fear will not restrain him. A person is not afraid when he knows for the sake of what he is working." (p.16).

In the part of the study "Psychological methods of overcoming fear" A. Sargsyan examines the methods that help the soldier overcome the fear. As a simplest example, he refers to a method used in ancient times.

It is well known that the human psyche is affected by darkness since childhood, which accompanies it throughout life. Why? According to A. Sargsyan, "Darkness conceals the real world from us, we wander in darkness, looking for opportunities to make the environment visible. Uncertainty creates anxiety, which can completely engulf a person, turning him into a weak-willed being." (p.48). Therefore, it is a priority to explain to the scout that darkness is his most loyal ally, as it allows him to act unnoticed in enemy territory.

One of the reasons for fear is obscurity. However, it must be taken into consideration that the same fear pursues the enemy. During relevant conversations or lectures, it is necessary to explain to the scout that the enemy soldiers are more afraid of a scout, "because the scout becomes a hunter" and they become prey. Especially those who are safeguarding must always be careful, because they do not know where or when to expect a surprise attack. On the contrary, a scout plans his actions in advance, even the ways of retreat. This idea should be strengthened in the

consciousness of a military scout. He has many more advantages than the enemy.

As A. Sargsyan correctly states, there is nothing easier than giving advice, therefore it is necessary to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, which will allow overcoming fear.

Colonel A. Sargsyan highlights the maintaining and ensuring the discipline in the Armed Forces. It is not possible to apply civil interpersonal relations in the army. Referring to his combat experience, A. Sargsyan affirms that discipline itself often becomes an effective method of overcoming fear in military units.

In the part of the study "Methods of overcoming negative emotional states" A. Sargsyan examines the ways of overcoming negative emotional states among servicemen. According to him, the most disturbing thing for a soldier is the uncertainty, which causes overstrain and anxiety. "Soldiers prefer to know the truth, whatever it may be." (p.55). It should be noted that Garegin Nzhdeh realized this truth in his time. For a soldier to be psychologically trained, it is necessary to get rid of negative habits, such as unjustified austerity. Under such conditions, an illusion of discipline will be established in the military unit or subdivision.

According to A. Sargsyan, when the Armenian Army was under formation, it was expedient to have a concept of the Armed Forces, and necessary means for it lacked at that time, as the Armenian people were forced to defend themselves from enemy attacks. According to him, first of all, subdivisions of psychological support should be formed, which would "raise the fighting spirit of the servicemen, to eradicate the vicious interpersonal manifestations, to eliminate the dangerous mental states." Of course, those who want to serve in such units should not only have in-depth professional knowledge, but also be familiar with military service from their own experience." (p.56).

The training of a reconnaissance unit for military campaigns begins with setting a military task and which must have several options as the reconnaissance group may encounter unpredictable changes of situation. As colonel A. Sargsyan mentions, "the military task must be of utter importance. For instance, disabling the communication means or the equipment of the enemy, capture **"the language"** (p.78). etc. By and large, the main goal of a task is to carry out disruptive actions in the enemy's rear.

At the same time, in parallel with the main task, there may be additional tasks, such as revealing the location of deployment of enemy military units and equipment, the concentration of the main forces, and so on. It is of utter importance to detect enemy's military reserves, photographing airports, etc.

The reconnaissance group in enemy's territory must always beware of ambushes. According to the author, the so-called "blind ways" – the poorly examined places in enemy's territory - are especially unpredictable (p.74).

The successful implementation of a military task is greatly dependent on how the ways of retreat will be planned and concealed. A. Sargsyan describes several methods of disguising the retreat, interrogating the captives and checking the truthfulness of the extracted information.

A. Sargsyan describes the profession of military scout as "elite military profession. If one becomes a soldier, a scout is born to be him." (p.80). According to him, the profession of military scout is essential for our armed forces, so it must be constantly improved. According to Sargsyan, "Risk is the father of intelligence, and caution is the mother" (p.74).

Let us add that A. Sargsyan wanted to continue his research on military psychology, but untimely death did not allow him to fulfill that intention.

**Ruben Sahakyan**

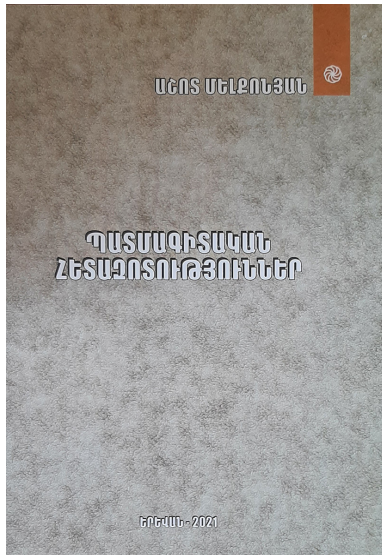
*Doctor in History, Institute of History, NAS RA.*

***Translated from the Armenian by Mushegh Ghahriyan***

---

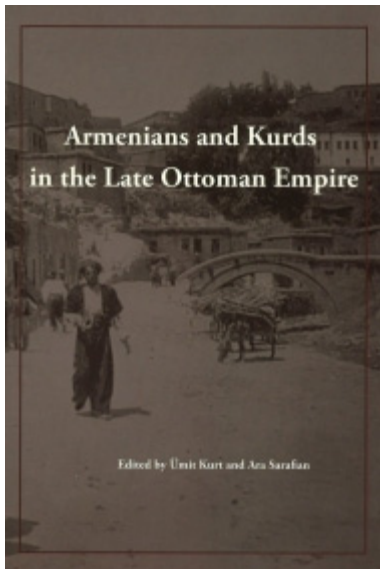
## NEW BOOKS

---



### ASHOT MELKONYAN, HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The book includes the author's published articles in various scientific journals and reports represented at conferences during the last decade. The materials refer to the Armenian Genocide, statehood, national liberation movements, history of demography and other issues. The book is intended for a wide range of scholars and readers.



### ARMENIANS AND KURDS IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

*Edited by Ara Sarafian and Ümit Kurt: The Press at California State University, 158 pages*

Armenians and Kurds in the Late Ottoman Empire is represented by five original articles, which were first submitted at a conference entitled "Armenians, Greeks, and Kurds: A People's History of the Ottoman Empire" organized by Prof. Barlow Der Mugardechian of the Armenian Studies Program and by Dr. Ümit Kurt. The conference was held at Fresno State on September 22-23, 2017 and was supported by a grant from the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation. The book, edited by Ara Sarafian and Dr. Ümit Kurt, is a seminal work in the field of Ottoman history. The volume explores the relationship between Turks, Armenians, and Kurds, and brings a new understanding to the dynamics that shaped these interactions. The first three articles focus on the Hamidian massacres of 1895-1896. They track societal changes to better explain the Hamidian massacres in Cilicia, Aintab, and the bishoprics of Aghtamar.

Owen Miller, in the first article, "Uplands, Lowlands, and Mass Violence in Ottoman Cilicia," looks at Ottoman Cilicia, with a particular focus on Zeitun.

Ümit Kurt's "The Breakdown of a Previously Peaceful Coexistence: The Aintab Armenian Massacres of 1895," looks at major changes in material conditions and the availability of communal resources over the course of the 19th century.

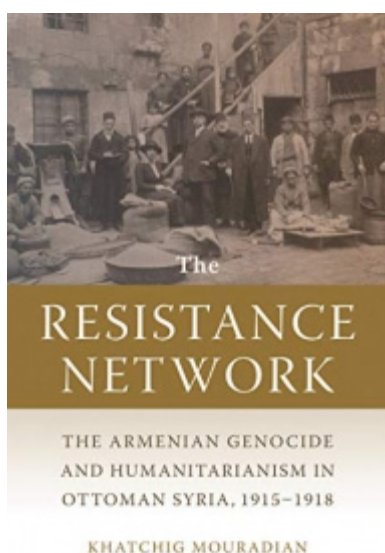
In his article, "In the Wake of the Aghtamar Catholicosate's Demise: The Report on the 1895 Van Massacre by the Last Aghtamar Catholicos Khachadour II," Emre Can



Dağlıoğlu argues that the Hamidian massacres in this region were directly related to the breakup of longstanding Kurdish-Armenian social relations.

Nilay Özok-Gündoğan's work is of seminal importance to the understanding of Armenian history and broader histories of the Middle East. Her article, "Are the Voices of the Ordinary Kurds Salvageable from the Enormous Condescension of Posterity? An Agenda for Social History in Kurdish Historical Writings," reflects on the methodical exclusion of Kurds in mainstream historiographies of the Middle East.

Varak Ketsemanian's work, "Ideologies Paradoxes, and Fedayis in the Late Ottoman Empire: Historiographical Challenges and Methodological Problems in the Study of the Armenian Revolutionary Movement (1890–1896)," is an important critique of the historiography defining the Armenian revolutionary movement in the late Ottoman period.

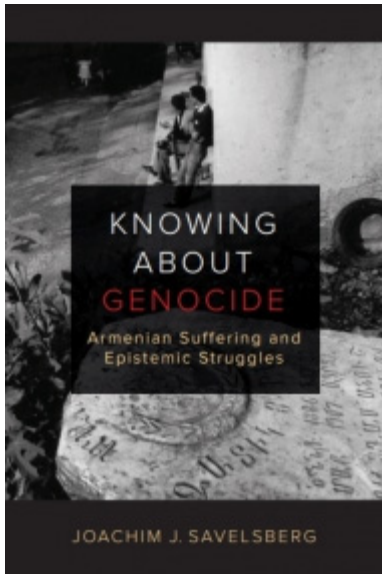


**THE RESISTANCE NETWORK: THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND HUMANITARIANISM IN OTTOMAN SYRIA, 1915–1918 (ARMENIAN HISTORY, SOCIETY, AND CULTURE)**

*Khatchig Mouradian*

The Resistance Network is the history of an underground network of humanitarians, missionaries, and diplomats in Ottoman Syria who helped save the lives of thousands during the Armenian Genocide. Khatchig Mouradian challenges depictions of Armenians as passive victims of violence and subjects of humanitarianism, demonstrating the key role they played in organizing a humanitarian resistance against the destruction of their people. Piecing together hundreds of accounts, official documents, and missionary records, Mouradian presents a social history of genocide and resistance in wartime Aleppo and a network of transit and concentration camps stretching from Bab to Ras ul-Ain and Der Zor. He ultimately argues that, despite the violent and systematic mechanisms of control and destruction in the cities, concentration camps, and massacre sites in this region, the genocide of the Armenians did not progress unhindered - unarmed resistance proved an important factor in saving countless lives.

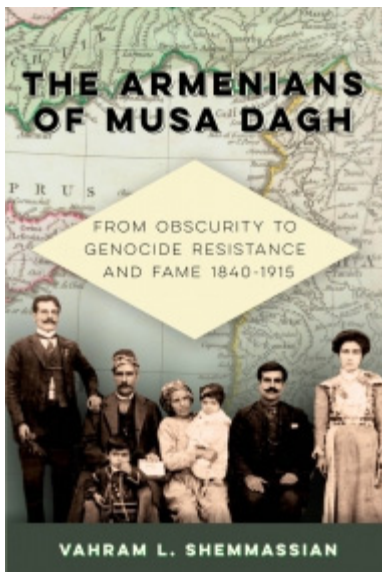




**KNOWING ABOUT GENOCIDE: ARMENIAN  
SUFFERING AND EPISTEMIC STRUGGLES, 1<sup>ST</sup>  
EDITION, JOACHIM J. SAVELSBERG**

*University of California Press, Illustrations: 17 illustrations,  
1 map, 7 tables, Pages: 264*

How do victims and perpetrators generate conflicting knowledge about genocide? Using a sociology of knowledge approach, Savelsberg answers this question for the Armenian genocide committed in the context of the First World War. Focusing on Armenians and Turks, he examines strategies of silencing, denial, and acknowledgment in everyday interaction, public rituals, law, and politics. Drawing on interviews, ethnographic accounts, documents, and eyewitness testimony, Savelsberg illuminates the social processes that drive dueling versions of history. He reveals counterproductive consequences of denial in an age of human rights hegemony, with implications for populist disinformation campaigns against overwhelming evidence.



**THE ARMENIANS OF MUSA DAGH: FROM OBSCURITY  
TO GENOCIDE RESISTANCE AND FAME**

*By Vahram L. Shemmassian*

*The Press at California State University, 555 pages*

The Armenians of Musa Dagh: From Obscurity to Genocide Resistance and Fame 1840-1915 is a comprehensive history of the people of Musa Dagh, who rose to prominence with their resistance to the Genocide in 1915. Vahram L. Shemmassian has presented a thorough analysis of the social, economic, religious, educational, and political history of the six villages which constituted Armenian Musa Dagh. His work focuses on the important period of the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century, offering the reader a previously unavailable insight into the people whose courage and persistence ultimately led to their successful self-defense. Shemmassian, whose roots go back to Musa Dagh, for the first time in English provides a clear view of the complex multi-faceted history of the region. The book demonstrates that this was a period of great change, during which the Musa Dagh Armenians transitioned from an isolated and largely unknown people to a collectivity that prepared to defend its national identity and rights against an increasingly discriminatory and oppressive Ottoman Empire. Shemmassian's work reveals much

information which has been uncovered for the first time, based on primary sources. This fascinating story is a must read.

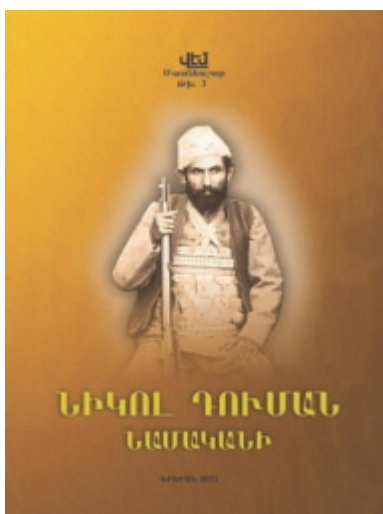
The book has been published as Volume 11 in the Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno and is supplied with maps, tables, illustrations and photos. General Editor of the Armenian Series: Barlow Der Mugrdechian.



## UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF CHRISTAPOR MIKAELIAN

*Lusakn, 2020*

This volume is the continuation of the ARFD founder Christapor Mikaelian's «Letters» edited by Hratch Dasnabedian, published in Beirut in 1993.



## NIKOL DUMAN, «LETTERS»

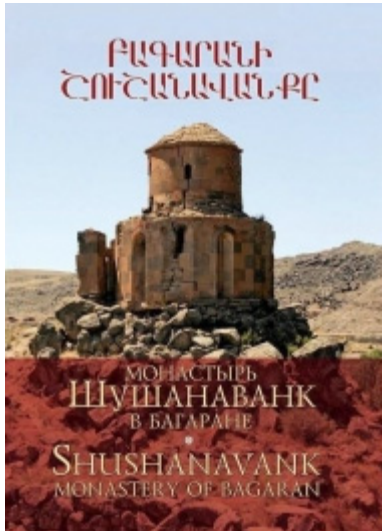
*by Yervand Pambukyan, Lusakn 2021*



## THE FEBRUARY 1921 ANTI-BOLSHEVIK REBELLION IN ARMENIA

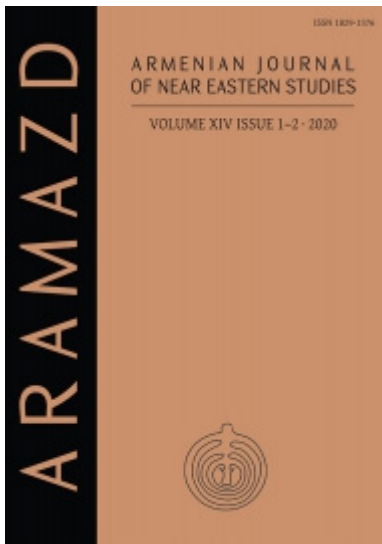
*Khachatur Stepanyan, Lusakn 2021*

In this book the author represented and analyzed the reasons, process and consequences of the rebellion in February 1921.



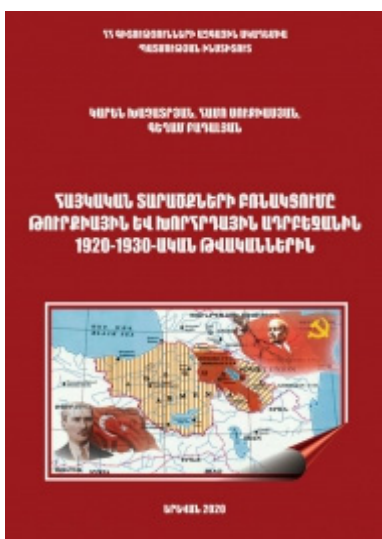
## SHUSHANAVANK, MONASTERY OF BAGARAN

*G. Nalbandyan, A. Harutyunyan, A. Hakobyan, Tigran Mets, 256 p. 2021*




**ARAMAZD: ARMENIAN JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES**

*Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies* Volume XIV. 1-2 2020 edited by Aram Kosyan (Editor in Chief).



## ANNEXATION OF ARMENIAN TERRITORIES TO TURKEY AND SOVIET AZERBAIJAN IN THE 1920–1930S

*Karen H. Khachatryan, Hamo K. Sukiasyan, Gegham M. Badalyan, 187 pages + 1 inset + 2 maps publisher L. Muradyan*



In the book, on the basis of the many-sided research of archival documents and materials, scientific and historical literature are presented the territorial losses of both Soviet Armenia and NKAR. For the first time in the Armenian historiography it is system presented the policy of the Communist Party and Soviet governmental bodies in formation of the borders in 1920–1930's, including the process of forcible annexation of native Armenian lands to Turkey and Soviet Azerbaijan.