

FUNDAMENTAL ARMENOLOGY

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electronic journal

ISSUE 1 (15) 2022

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HISTORY

THE ARMENIAN NATIONALIST-LIBERAL (REORGANIZED HUNCHAKIAN) PARTY IN 1917-1921

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-6

Abstract

The international and political situation that came into existence after World War I dictated to the Armenian political forces to reconsider their programs and practices. The Reorganized Hunchakian Party, which was dedicated to the liberation of Western Armenians and advocated liberal ideas, adopted the name “Nationalist-Liberal”. The Liberals believed that the Armenian state that would unite the Republic of Armenia, Western Armenia and Cilicia, should have a presidential system of government and temporarily accept the patronage of a great power. The party played a significant role in Armenian social and political life in 1917-1921. After the establishment of the Soviet regime in Armenia, the ideological differences between the Liberals and the Soviet government did not disappear, however, the party’s priority became to help Armenia, which continued after the unification of the Liberals and the Ramgavars.

Keywords: Reorganized Hunchakian, nationalist-liberal party, Western Armenians, liberation, Republic of Armenia

Introduction

Until the 90s of the previous century the history of the Reorganized Hunchakian party (1896-1921) was only superficially covered by Armenian historiography. It was mainly viewed in the context of the history of either the Hunchakian Party or the Democratic Liberal Party (the Ramgavar Party). Active work on the comprehensive study of the history of this national political organization has been carried out especially in the last two decades.¹

This article chronologically covers the activities of the party for the period 1917-1921, i.e. from the February revolution in Russia to the unification of the Constitutional Ramgavar Party and the Reorganized Hunchakians and the establishment of the Democratic Liberal Party (Ramgavar).

After the massacres of Western Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1890s, at the conference of the Hunchakian party in London in 1896, the Western Armenian Hunchakians came into conflict with party leader Avetis Nazarbekyan over theoretical and tactical issues. At the Council of Alexandria in 1898 the opposition formed their own party called the Reorganized Hunchakian. The Reorganized party renounced the

¹ Hovhannisyan 2003: 181-190; Hovhannisyan 2015; Hovhannisyan 2018: 247-260; Vardivaryan 2016: 57-275.

program of the Hunchakians of the propaganda of socialism, declaring that their only main goal was the liberation of Western Armenians from Turkish rule.

At the end of 1914, after Ottoman Turkey joined the Central Powers, the legal activities of national parties had ceased in Turkey. During the war, along with the other Armenian national parties the Reorganized party fought in defense of the Armenian people and suffered serious losses and their local organizations were demolished. After that, until the end of the war the Reorganized party, among other Armenian parties, carried out its activities outside the Ottoman Empire.

The activity of the party in 1917-1921

The 1917 Russian revolutions, the defeat of the German-Turkish bloc in the World War and the resulting events opened a new era of activity for the Armenian national parties.

The Reorganized Hunchakian party operated on a decentralized basis. It had branches in Greece, Bulgaria and France, but the most influential were the Reorganized Hunchakian organizations in the USA and Egypt.

Although the party did not have as many members as the Social Democrat Hunchakians and especially the ARF Dashnaktsutyun, however, it had great intellectual potential. The Reorganized party propagated their ideas through their print media, raising various Armenian national issues.

In 1917-1921 the periodicals of the Reorganized party “Pahak” (Boston), “Aror” (Fresno), “Kilikyan Surhandak” (Adana), “Aragats” (Constantinople), “Haykashen” (Tiflis) and others were published.

The important international-and-political events of the beginning of the 20th century (the Russian revolutions of 1917, the defeat of the German-Turkish bloc in World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the establishment of the first Republic of Armenia, etc.) dictated to the Armenian political forces to reconsider their strategy and tactics, therefore their programs. In 1917 the “Program-Code of Rules” of the American branch of the Reorganized Hunchakian Party was published in Boston, followed by the draft of the new program of the party.² The new program of the party was published in Boston, in 1919.³

The first noticeable change in the program was the name of the party. The term “nationalist-liberal” was added to the words “reorganized Hunchakian”. It reflected the rejection of the socialist ideology of the old Hunchakians (Social Democrat Hunchakian Party) and on the other hand, it emphasized the party’s national character, its commitment to national ideals. Besides, it was stressed that the party believed in liberal ideas. In the new program of the party, nationalism was separated from chauvinism and the harmful essence of the latter was emphasized.⁴

² Reorganized-Hunchakian. Program materials.

³ Program. Reorganized Hunchakian.

⁴ Reorganized-Hunchakian. Program.

According to some sources, the name of the Reorganized Hunchakian Party was changed on November 18, 1918 in the USA.⁵ The members of the central board of the Nationalist-Liberal Party were Mihran Svazlyan, Hrach Yervand and Lutvig Guyumjyan.⁶ The program declared the liberation of the Armenian people and the establishment of an independent and united state within the borders of their historical homeland as the political goal of the party.⁷

According to the Reorganized Party (hereinafter referred to as the Liberals - G.H.) the structure of the state of Armenia was to be a presidential republic like France or the USA, intertwined with local peculiarities.⁸

It was emphasized that the President of the Republic would be elected by popular vote. It was declared that the party did not accept the revolutionary way of social development. The program pointed out the need for a great power to assume Armenia's mandate. At the same time, it was stated that it should be temporary.

A number of other issues related to nationalism and liberalism, power and class relations, attitude towards socialists, as well as the party's ideological principles were covered in the pages of "Aragats", one of the party's periodicals. Speaking about nationalism and liberalism, Vahan Shahrman, its editor, a well-known party figure, publicist, emphasized that their nationalism did not threaten other peoples, it was a forced step of self-preservation against the genocidal policy of savage tribes. It would also contribute to the preservation of the Armenian national identity for further survival. As for the term "liberal", in Shahrman's opinion it was associated with progress.⁹ At the same time, he emphasized the idea that Armenian nationalism did not contradict the socialists, and at that time there was no need for the Armenian people to be either socialist or anti-socialist, but only to be Armenian.¹⁰ Pointing out Bolshevism, he did not consider it right to concentrate power in the hands of one class, which, in his opinion, would have catastrophic consequences. He believed that the legislative and executive power of the Armenian state should be formed without class discrimination.¹¹

The party took an active part in the establishment of the Armenian National Union of America in March 1917, the president of which became Mihran Svazlyan. The union united the ARF Dashnaktsutyun, the Social Democrat Hunchakian Party, the Liberal and the Armenian Constitutional Ramgavar parties, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian Apostolic and Evangelical churches. The goal of the union was to promote the reconstruction of Western Armenia, to provide assistance to the Armenian diaspora, to gather Armenian volunteers for the Eastern Legion and to carry out pro-

⁵ Ramgavar-Azatakan party.

⁶ Vardivaryan 2016: 233.

⁷ In 1919 the Republic of Armenia was already an established state. Accepting this reality, however, the Reorganized party viewed it as only one stage in the creation of future Armenian statehood. Within the borders of the Armenian state they saw the territories of the Republic of Armenia, Western Armenia and Cilicia.

⁸ "Pahak", September 18, 1917.

⁹ "Aragats", July 19, 1919.

¹⁰ Idem.

¹¹ "Aragats", July 12, 1919.

Armenian propaganda in the USA. During its activity, the union achieved significant success. Only in 1917, 1172 volunteers were recruited; during 1917-1922 about 1 million USD was raised. A large-scale pro-Armenian campaign in the US state-and-political circles had been launched especially by M. Svazlyan, the well-known figure of the union's leading party, who was the representative of the Armenian national delegation of Paris to the USA.¹² The Liberals were seriously concerned about the political situation in Russia. They rightly believed that the Russian revolutions and the dramatic events that followed would have a direct impact on the fate of the Armenian people. It was no coincidence that publications and articles on this subject occupied a large place in the party's print media. The Boston-based "Pahak" newspaper, the main body of the party in the American region, blamed the Bolshevik Party and its leader Lenin for the chaotic situation in Russia.¹³

The newspaper warned the Armenian people to stay away from social movements, which were considered dangerous because they alienated peoples from national ideas and from the consciousness of the nation's collective interests, instead sowing the idea of the priority of class interests.¹⁴ The party was against the class division of the Armenian people, the fragmentation of Western Armenian-Eastern Armenian, rightly believing that national unity was more than necessary to face the dangers threatening the Armenian people.¹⁵

Liberal figure Petros Tepoyan criticized the Bolsheviks for the collapse of the Caucasus front, as well as the Transcaucasian Commissariat, which according to him, did not take practical steps to preserve it. He also criticized the Armenian Mensheviks, who, avoiding being called "nationalists", refused to use the words "nation", "homeland" and "defended the great Russian homeland with the obstinacy of a slave".¹⁶

The party considered the statement of Kerensky, the head of the Russian Provisional Government, to be more in line with the interests of the Armenian people. According to him, the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Caucasus front would inevitably lead to new Armenian massacres.¹⁷

Addressing the issue of Soviet Russia's attitude to the Armenian issue, "Haykashen" emphasized the fact that although the Lenin government had by decree recognized the Western Armenians' right to free self-determination, however, it remained only a statement, since there was no real force to implement it. The newspaper emphasized the fact that the policy of the Bolsheviks largely facilitated the Russian soldiers on the Caucasian front to leave their positions and expose the front line, which stimulated the advance of the Turkish troops.¹⁸

¹² Vardivaryan 2016: 235.

¹³ "Pahak", September 7, 1917.

¹⁴ "Pahak", September 25, 1917.

¹⁵ "Hayashen", January, 1918: 127.

¹⁶ "Haykashen", November-December, 1917: 44.

¹⁷ "Pahak", September 25, 1917.

¹⁸ "Hayashen", January, 1918: 142.

“Haykashen” considered the fall of Karin a severe blow to the “sacred trial of Turkish Armenia”, considering that its reason was the weak combat effectiveness and low discipline of the Armenian military units. Speaking about the deep roots of these negative phenomena, the periodical put forward a remarkable point of view, writing that for years the Armenian people tolerated a number of ambitious, selfish and opportunist individuals speaking on behalf of the nation to play with the fate of the nation; and their activities had catastrophic consequences.¹⁹

An important event on the way to the establishment of the Armenian statehood was the proclamation of an independent and united Armenia, which took place on May 28, 1919. However, the act of the Government of the Republic of Armenia was not unequivocally adopted by the Armenian political forces. The Liberals accepted it with reservations and did not unequivocally reject it, unlike the Constitutional Ramgavars and the Armenian Populist Party, whose parliamentary faction resigned in protest. Speaking about the issue of the united Armenian government which was widely discussed during that period, the Liberals noted that it was to be formed with the participation of the representatives of the Republic of Armenia and the National Delegation headed by Boghos Nubar.²⁰ They warned the ARF not to form a government based on party principles only.²¹

By the end of World War I, the significant role of the United States in international politics was already noticeable. The Reorganized party sought to use this circumstance to resolve the Armenian question. M. Svazlyan wrote that the Armenian people had made great sacrifices during the war, fighting bravely alongside their allies and presented their just demands to the Paris Peace Conference like the Greeks, Serbs and other oppressed peoples. Svazlyan expected the support of the United States for the success of that process.²²

Welcoming the pro-Armenian position of US President Wilson, V. Shahrman rightly believed that the Armenian people should always be ready for self-defense. Referring to the bitter lessons of history, he pointed out that without one's own strength one could not hope that the Armenian people could establish lasting peace with their neighbors.²³ Back in the spring of 1919 the Liberals expressed concern about the influence the victory of Bolshevism would have on the Armenian issue.²⁴

At the same time, they did not place separate hopes in the anti-Bolshevik forces of Russia. In 1919 V. Shahrman warned that if the Kolchak-Denikin group won the civil war, a constitutional monarchy would be established in Russia, the supporters of which advocated the idea of a united and indivisible Russia, contrary to the national aspirations of the peoples of the Russian Empire.²⁵

¹⁹ “Hayashen”, February, 1918: 121-122.

²⁰ “Aragats”, July 5, 1919.

²¹ “Aragats”, January 19, 1919.

²² “Aragats”, October 26, 1919.

²³ “Aragats”, March 15, 1919.

²⁴ “Pahak”, March 21, 1919.

²⁵ “Aragats”, September 28, 1919.

After the US Senate rejected Armenia's mandate, the main body of the US branch of the Liberal Party wrote that after many disappointments it would be adventurism to anticipate our salvation from Europe again.²⁶

It became obvious that the Liberals were turning their eyes towards Russia. "Pahak" called on the Government of the Republic of Armenia, members of the Armenian delegation in Paris to direct their efforts to normalize relations with Bolshevik Russia.²⁷

Cilicia was of special importance to the Liberals. In the Party plan of 1898, Cilicia was considered the place from where the nationwide uprising for the liberation of Western Armenia was to begin and unfold.

In the spring of 1917, the United States joined the war on the side of the Entente. The National Union of American Armenians offered Jim (Petros) Changalyan, Liberal figure, experienced military man, to leave for Cilicia. Changalyan, who took an active part in the defense of local Armenians from Kurdish hordes in Van-Vasporakan with his American volunteers in 1915-1916, went to Egypt and joined the Eastern Legion. The French command highly appreciated Changalyan's professional and organizational skills, appointing him commander of one of the legion battalions.

The battalion led by Changalyan took an active part in the battle of Arara on September 19, 1918, from where he moved to Adana and was engaged in solving the social problems of the Armenians returning to Cilicia.²⁸

In 1919-1920 the main task of the Armenian national parties in Cilicia was to organize the self-defense of local Armenians against the intensifying attacks of the Kemalists. Their activities were coordinated by M. Tamatyan, the authorized representative of the Armenian National Delegation. The relations between the Liberals and the Constitutional Ramgavars were especially close. The newspaper "Kilikyan Surhandak" of the Nationalist-Liberal Party was published in Adana.²⁹

It should also be mentioned that in the conditions of intensifying Kemalist attacks there still existed inter-party contradictions in the social and political life of the Armenians of Cilicia. In particular, the periodical "Eritasard Hayastan" testified to the conflict between the Liberals and Social Democrat Hunchakians.³⁰

In 1919 the anti-Armenian essence of France's policy on Cilicia became more and more obvious. Liberals condemned the French defeatist stance towards Kemalists in press and rallies.³¹ They pointed to the hypocritical and deceitful policy of France, which, by signing an agreement with Mustafa Kemal, recognized the integrity of Turkey and ignoring the interests of the Armenian people, their devotion to allied countries and the countless casualties during the war, returned Cilicia to Turkey.³²

²⁶ "Pahak", June 15, 1920.

²⁷ "Pahak", June 15, 1920.

²⁸ Vardivaryan 2016: 200-201.

²⁹ Gangruni 1986: 303.

³⁰ "Eritasard Hayastan", May 11, 1920.

³¹ "Pahak", May 27, 1919.

³² "Pahak", June 10, 1920.

The party was watching the expansion of Kemalist-Bolshevik cooperation with concern, considering it a serious threat to the Republic of Armenia. The “Pahak” editorial of May 25, 1920 pointed to the dire political situation in Armenia, which was attacked by both Turkish-Tatar hordes and Soviet troops. In this context, the periodical condemned the May uprising of the Armenian Bolsheviks. Raising the issue of relations with Georgia and Azerbaijan, “Pahak” pointed out the two-faced policy of Georgia and did not believe in the Armenian-Georgian alliance. In the issues of the periodical of 1920 there are many reports about Azerbaijan’s aggressive policy towards the Republic of Armenia. The former was helped by the Turks. Liberals believed that Britain and the USA should provide military assistance to Armenia to counter Turkish-Tatar attacks.³³

Analyzing the relations between the Entente countries at that period, “Pahak” wrote that their alliance was shattered, and the British diplomacy “watched Bolshevik-Turkish” cooperation without action. According to the periodical, the immediate recognition of Lenin’s government by England would hinder the Turkish-Bolshevik alliance and allow Armenia to get out of the difficult situation.³⁴ Although the ideological differences with the Bolsheviks did not disappear after the establishment of the Soviet regime in Armenia, the factor of the national state became a priority for the Liberals. They considered Soviet Armenia the homeland of the Armenians. The party condemned the 1921 February uprising and demanded that the ARF cease its anti-Soviet activities and renounce its ambition for the political leadership of the Armenian people.³⁵ In 1921 the party had finally turned towards Soviet Armenia. Boston’s “Pahak” praised Chairman of the Armenian Government Alexander Myasnikyan, who worked hard for the establishment of statehood and had great faith in the future powerful Armenia.³⁶

The Liberals declared their readiness to help Soviet Armenia, and propagated the idea in the Armenian communities of the Diaspora through their periodicals.³⁷

The separate activities of the Armenian Nationalist-Liberal and Armenian Constitutional Ramgavar parties clearly showed that there were no significant ideological and tactical differences between them. Based on this, among Armenian intelligentsia who gathered around the Armenian National Delegation in Paris in 1919, a movement for uniting the two parties began. The movement was supported by famous intellectuals Arshak Chopanyan, Arshak Safrastyan, Tigran Kamsarakan, Yervand Aghaton and others.³⁸ The issue was discussed at the Armenian regional Second Congress of the Armenian Constitutional Ramgavar Party held in Yerevan in December

³³ “Pahak”, May 22, 1920.

³⁴ “Pahak”, May 22, 1920.

³⁵ “Pahak”, June 28, 1921, also August 6, 1921.

³⁶ “Pahak”, September 29, 1921.

³⁷ “Pahak”, September 29, 1921.

³⁸ Poghosyan 1987: 15.

1919 where the idea of uniting with the Nationalist-Liberal Party advocating Ramgavar (democratic) principles was adopted.³⁹

In February 1921 the negotiations on unification entered the final stage. The representatives of the parties agreed on the joint program, code and the name of the party.

In September 1921 the negotiations on unification resumed, first in Boston, then in Constantinople. They ended on October 1, and on October 25 the Democratic Liberal party was proclaimed. The official newspapers of the two parties were united under the name "Azg-Pahak". A year later the newspaper was called "Paykar".⁴⁰ Vahan Tekeyan was elected chairman of the central board of the newly formed party.⁴¹

SUMMARY

The international and political events that took place after World War I dictated to the Armenian political forces to reconsider their programs and activities. In 1918 the Hunchakian Party adopted the name Nationalist-Liberal. During the Paris Peace Conference, the Liberals supported the national delegation headed by Boghos Nubar. Its active figures carried out significant pro-Armenian activities in the United States, France and other countries.

In 1918-1920 the party was involved in the reconstruction of Cilicia, hoping that together with Western Armenia it would form an integral part of a united Armenia. Through their press they preached to stay away from the revolutionary-social movements and unite all the forces for the national priority - establishment of the Armenian statehood.

In 1917-1921 the activities of the Liberals and the Ramgavars showed that both parties stood on the same theoretical and ideological platform. After the unification of the Ramgavar and Liberal parties in 1921, the Democratic Liberal party was formed. Although the Democratic Liberal Party maintained ideological differences with the Soviet government, however, helping Armenia came to the fore.

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³⁹ NAA, Artak Darbinyan f., n. 424, l. 1, file 45, l. 6.

⁴⁰ Chizmechyan 1930: 490.

⁴¹ NAA, f. 424, l.1, f.45, p.49.

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WRITING THE ARMENIAN HISTORY

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-15

Abstract

In academic studies and textbooks, the history of Armenia is entitled the "History of Armenians" or the "History of Armenian people". Like other modern nations such attitude could better fit those ethnic groups who never had statehood during their history. In the case of Armenia everything is turned upside down.

Keywords: History of Armenia, N.Adontz, Movses Khorenatsi

The "History of Armenia" or the "History of Armenian People"

In academic studies, University and school textbooks published during the XX century and until recently, almost without exception, the Armenian history is entitled the "History of Armenians" or the "History of Armenian people". At first glance, it looks perfect. All these publications deal with the ancient, medieval or/and modern history of our country. Such terminology which originates still from Movses Khorenatsi and his successors in the late XVIII century was adopted by M.Chamchyan. But on the contrary, it contains an element of inferiority and the distortion of the status of our history. In this regard only the studies of G.Khalatyan, N.Adontz, R.Grousset and A. et J.-P.Mahé differ from the widespread attitude.¹

There is no nation without the territory where it used to live, lives currently and will live in the future. Statehood is an important criterion and driving force of the nation, its consolidation which secures further development, an important factor that distinguishes the nation from other nations. Historical analogies show that from the moment when the nation, due to the rise of statehood and spiritual-cultural values (political and social institutions, writing system, and religion), is becoming an independent and separable unit, regardless of the existence of statehood in the future is destined to exist.

On the other hand, the nation without statehood would remain an ethnic group with no chance to develop into a nation that creates its own state. This means that ethnos is a social-political, cultural, and civilizational phenomenon. In the remote past and in Middle Ages as well numerous ethnic groups had left the historical arena and were assimilated by others since they could not create their own states. Today we encounter this process in regard to those ethnic groups who live in different countries. Under the influence of several factors (globalization, the policy of assimilation, etc.) they are losing

¹ Khalatyan 1910; Adontz 1946; Grousset 1947; Mahé et Mahé 2012.

their national identity step by step and over time would disappear. Let us refer to some of these ethnic groups.

In the Russian Federation, these are indigenous ethnic groups of Siberia and northern regions (Tungusic peoples, Yakuts, Chukchi etc.). In the USA could be referred the descendants of many European and other nations who immigrated during the XIX and even XX centuries.

The creation of statehood of this or that ethnic group necessarily is accompanied by territorial expansion on behalf of its neighbors who could have been either closely related by language (i.e. belong to the same linguistic group) or had different linguistic affiliation.² Before the rise of Christianity, Islam and other monotheistic religions, the alienation of ethnic groups definitely was not a common phenomenon and rarely is fixed in written sources.

Now let us turn to the main topic of the article and see how our history is represented in modern studies.

During the Soviet period prevailed the title "History of the Armenian people", which now had turned into "History of Armenians". Actually, both are identical. The latter by no means could be understood as the "History of Hayk" (as it is regarded by some historians). Besides the scientific one, such terminology has a political context.

In fundamental studies dealing with the history of Armenia hardly we could find more or less detailed information regarding alien ethnic groups and political formations which once lived in the Armenian Highland (Shaddadids, Shah-Armens, etc.); some even lack any mention. Quite limited space has been given to the general political, social, economic, and cultural picture of the territory of former Greater Armenia during the foreign rule. Henceforth, in the study of our past historians mainly focus on the information which regards ethnic Armenians. And by doing this they very often artificially regard as indigenous Armenian evidently non-Armenian components of our ancient and medieval history. This method of studying the past needs special treatment.

It is worth to stress that today hardly any nation that has statehood writes its history as the history of the nation. For example, the "History of Germans", "History of Hungarians", etc. The histories of these countries are entitled "History of Germany", "History of Hungary" and so on. Even the peoples of Central Asia write the "History of Kazakhstan", the "History of Turkmenistan", etc. In the multiethnic Nigeria (Central Africa) where live several populous tribes (Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, etc.) the comprehensive studies are entitled as "History of Nigeria".³ But in our case, things are turned upside down.

It would be wrong to treat the Armenian case as an intention to preserve and stress national values. When M.Chamchyan still in the late XVIII century wrote his "History of Armenians" we were deprived of our statehood for many centuries. His goal was to show that Armenians used to be ancient people with a glorious past and thus in

² See below the chapter "Multiethnicity".

³ For example, Burns 1929.

the future should restore their statehood. Chamchyan's attitude was fully justified, but now, more than two centuries later we had granted it. The Republic of Armenia is a state recognized by the UN and heir to the ancient kingdoms of the Armenian Highland (Urartu, Artaxiad and Arsacid kingdoms, etc.).

Multietnicity. Indigenous ethnic groups of the Armenian Highland

Currently, actually, all peoples of the world have multiethnic structure as a result of ethnogenetic processes, the mixture of different ethnic groups.

One of the most remarkable examples is Great Britain. Hardly any more or less learned Englishman should try to distinguish inside the English nation its ethnic components, especially ancient ones. Countless ethnic groups, some quite numerous used to inhabit the British isles in the remote past - Celtic tribes, Picts in the north (during the Roman rule), German-speaking tribes in the early medieval period (Anglo-Saxons, Frisians), slightly later Scandinavian Vikings. To this impressive list should be added after the battle near Hastings in 1066 also Normans from Normandy (a branch of Vikings) who to that date were already intermingled with Franks and Gallo-Romans. All these ethnic groups in the course of history were integrated into the English nation due to the rise of the unified kingdom, the territorial, political, economic, and cultural development of English statehood.

In ancient period, similar scenarios of nation-building could be observed in Greece and Rome. In the Greek nation-making had participated numerous Greek-speaking tribes (Achaean, Dorians, Ionians, etc.) as well as of non-Greek origins - Pelasgians, Tyrrhenians, during the Middle Ages - Slavic peoples, Turks, etc.

In the case of ancient Rome before and after the foundation of the city used to live even more ethnic groups - Tyrrhenians, Etruscans, Sicani of Sicily, Corse of Corsica, Ligurians, Sards of Sardinia, Illyrians, Italic tribes, and in the Middle Ages - German tribes and others. During centuries of co-existence numerous Latin-speaking and other tribes of Italy were intermingled and formed a single Roman nation, and later German and other components had been flowed into this new nation.

In all cases mentioned above the differentiation of ethnic components should be the topic of only academic studies but in no way took the shape of propaganda.

But in the case of Armenia, the borders between scholarship and policy had been erased. Due to unknown motives, are regarded as Armenian only those historical persons and connected events in the Armenian Highland in which only ethnic Armenians participated. And this regardless of the obvious fact that the modern Armenian people is a result of a symbiosis of different ethnic elements who by the time were Armenianized. Below we shall bring a list of ethnic groups which once lived in the Armenian Highland and later became part of the Armenian nation.

The vast Armenian Highland, which stretches from the Southern Caucasus to Mesopotamia and from Eastern Asia Minor to western regions of modern Azerbaijan, in the remote past was home to ethnic groups of different linguistic affiliations. This

becomes evident due to the information provided by ancient Near-Eastern, Classical Greek and Roman, medieval Arabic, and other written sources and linguistic data (foreign loanwords in the Classical Armenian). Ancient Armenians had borrowed numerous foreign words from neighboring languages and also from those who live in different parts of the Armenian Highland that later were assimilated by Armenians. Foreign loanwords in Armenian had been studied by many Armenian and other linguists.⁴

A great number of written sources and vast linguistic data show that besides Armenians who spoke their Indo-European language, in the III-I millenniums BC the Armenian Highland was home to many other ethnic groups, which is testified by numerous written sources (cuneiform Assyrian, Hurrian, Hittite, Urartian). These were Hurrians, Hittites, Luwians, Urartians, Thracians, Phrygians, Indo-Iranians, in the Middle Ages - Arabs, Turkish-speaking ethnic groups and others.

First during Urartu (the Kingdom of Van), then Ervandid and succeeding Artaxiad and Arsakid kingdoms, that is about 1200 years had come into existence all necessary factors for the creation of the Armenian nation. That process had culminated in the creation of the Armenian alphabet and the adoption of Christianity. But soon the ethnic unification of Armenia was slowed down first due to Arab invasions and the outpour of a significant portion of the population from their homeland and the immigration of foreign population. From the XI century onwards with the mass migrations into the Armenian Highland of Turkish-speaking tribes from Central Asia and the lost of statehood that process took the shape of a disaster. Thus, during approximately 1500 years after the elimination of the Arsakid kingdom Armenia was literally crowded with alien ethnic groups. But from the XX century, during the immigration of the Armenian population into modern Armenia from abroad had culminated in the concentration of the nation.

In sum, it should be stressed that it is time to leave aside traditional attitude and join those historians who regard us as a nation that was able to restore its state which was lost centuries ago.

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⁴ For example, Acaryan 1971-1979 and Jahukyan 1987 (in general); Kapancyan 1948 and Greppin 1973; 1982; 1991 (Hittite), Mkrtchyan 2005 (Semitic); Hovhannisyan 1990 (Iranian), etc.

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RECORDS OF VARDAN OF KHANASOR ON ARMENIAN-TATAR CONFRONTATIONS OF 1905-1906

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-20

Abstract

The article presents the activities of Sargis Mehrabyan (Sergey) who is known as Vardan of Khanasor, one of those who devoted his life to the liberation of Armenia and an active participants of the Armenian-Tatar confrontations which took place in 1905-1907 in the Caucasus.

Keywords: Vardan of Khanasor, Armenian-Tatar confrontations

Sargis Mehrabyan (Sergey), who is better known as Vardan of Khanasor, Vardan, Vahe Syuni, and in songs as Lion of Shatakh,¹ was born in Shushi on August 10, 1867. In 1885 he finished the Diocesan School of Shushi.²

After finishing school, he moved to Baku, where his brother worked as an assistant chemist in an oil field owned by the Rothschild brothers. He was hired as a laborer in the same oil field most likely through his brother.



Rothschild oil refinery in Baku

In 1888 he was conscripted into the army and served in Goris, Alexandropol. As a graduate of a diocesan school he was to serve not 4 but 3 years.³ During this time he continued to read various literature, especially about the figures of the Bulgarian liberation movement, Raffi's novels, etc. Under their influence he became so encouraged that on April 8,

1890 he decided to go and see the historical capital of Ani with 8 soldiers from Shushi. Then they found out that Sargis Kukunyan planned an invasion, in which he took part.

¹S. Mehrabyan is better known as Vardan of Khanasor, Vardan, Vahe Syuni and in songs as Lion of Shatakh. See Vracian 1992 (ed.): 3. The research was carried out within the framework of the joint scientific project (code 20RF-103) funded by the Science Committee of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of RA and Russian Foundation of Basic Research (RF).

²NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 80 rev.

³NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 80 rev.

At the end of 1890 he came to Yerevan, and with the help of the representative of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun he received a Persian passport and went to the village of Ghalasar of the Salmas county of Persia.⁴

In September, 1894 he crossed the country with a weapon transporting group and then returned to Persia. In Atrpatakan, he disguised his liberation activities by introducing himself as a servant of an educational inspector. The position allowed him to freely roam the Armenian villages and carry out the party's instructions.

After some time he settled in Tabriz. With great respect Vardan remembered the local teaching group (which included women) and the cultural activities. He noted: "They (the teachers – R.S.) kept in close contact with the people, organized performances, meetings, parties... They brought the women and girls of Tabriz to the square, made them participate in the performances... These teachers had left the high salary of the Caucasus and received a rather modest salary there".⁵

In a safe place not far from Tabriz, with Sako of Sevkar they tested "Mosin" rifles, which fired with smokeless gunpowder. Vardan was satisfied with the weapon, but Sako preferred his "Berdan № 2" rifle. According to Vardan, "Mosin" "was both very strong and shot very far, and these were very great advantages for a fight. The fact that I was a soldier and Sako was not, also played a role here".⁶

In May 1895, with 22 people he crossed from Salmas to Van. At that time, Turkish-Kurdish attacks on Armenians had begun in Vaspurakan, so it was decided to task Vardan with organizing the self-defense of the Armenian population. They carried out propaganda activities in the villages, persuaded the villagers to buy weapons and repel the Kurds who robbed them. The Hayduks emphasized that the Armenians "could be liberated if everyone was well-armed, consolidated, united, did not betray, was not afraid; and in case of a general uprising the Europeans would intervene and give us freedom. That's what we believed and that's what we told the people".⁷

Referring to the battles of 1890s, Vardan and his comrades-in-arms were convinced that Western Armenians could be liberated and could have the chance to get freedom as Bulgaria had done. "We ... put our lives at the service of the Armenian people, we sacrificed the purest, most selfless, educated, best comrades capable of sacrifice, the elite of the Armenian people, large numbers of victims in different parts of the country".⁸

Returning from Van-Vaspurakan, he settled in Baku and start working in the oil field of the "Caspian Company".⁹ While there, Vardan continued his propaganda

⁴NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 81.

⁵NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 82.

⁶NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 43. Vardan tested his rifle in the battle with the Kurds and deliberately left several fired bullets. The Kurds became confused when they found the bullets unknown to them, as they had never seen such a thing. Various myths were told from village to village "as if the bullet of that rifle went after a man and could even go circuitously", NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 45 rev.-46.

⁷NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 50.

⁸NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 75.

⁹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 16.

activities. Among the laborers and employees in the oil fields there were groups organized by the ARF Dashnaktsutyun, in front of which he spoke, presenting the situation in the country.¹⁰ According to Vardan: “My poor mother complained, saying: “You have come, but I don’t see you much”¹¹. Vardan was so inspired by the liberation struggle that he even demanded that his mother donate the gold coins on her coronet to buy weapons.¹²

He carried out similar activities in his hometown Shushi. He mentioned that the wives of the rich people of Shushi were active, and they also participated in the meetings and “were ready for any kind of material support”.¹³ The women raised money to buy horses and rifles and give them to Vardan and his friends.¹⁴ Margar Zhamharyan, the son of one of the rich men of Shushi, want to join the Hayduks, but his father forbade him. He sent his son to Germany, where he studied medicine. Unfortunately, he died during the Armenian-Tatar confrontations of 1906.¹⁵

When Vardan was leaving Shushi, the ladies gave him a surprise gift - a gold watch. At first, Vardan tried to refuse, but in vain. He noted that “during the Khanasor expedition the watch showed the time of the attack in the dark”.¹⁶

They crossed the Khodaapharin Bridge from Artsakh to Persia, but before that, with the help of a Turk, they had their weapons taken to the Persian territory. It was more dangerous when they were passing through Karadagh.¹⁷ The local Turks focused their attention on the new “Mosin” rifles of the Hayduks, which they wanted to seize. According to Vardan: “Our saviors are our courage and our clothes”.¹⁸

As Vardan noted, there were two opinions on the future activities of the party. The first was defended by the Western Armenians, who believed that the uprising in the country would force the European powers to intervene in favor of the Armenians. The others, on the contrary, considered it necessary to punish the Kurdish Mazrik tribe for massacring the retreating people of Van in 1896. This action could also attract the attention of Europeans.¹⁹

The accumulation of the large number of Hayduks in Salmas was impossible to hide. Both the Turkish authorities and the Kurds understood that the Armenians had undertaken something, but what it was, remained unknown. As Vardan recalls: “The Kurds were sending us news: why aren’t you coming, why are you late, we do not have money, we do not have weapons. They were referring to the youth coming from Van

¹⁰NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 5.

¹¹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 79 rev.

¹²NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 79 rev.

¹³NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 9 rev.

¹⁴NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 9 rev.

¹⁵NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 10.

¹⁶NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 10 rev.

¹⁷ Gharadagh, Karadagh, Sia-Kuh (the Armenian Highland) –a khanate in Persarmenia between Lake Urmia and the Araks, one of the regions of Vaspurakanin the Middle Ages. See more details in Hovsepyan 2009; Jhangiryan 2021.

¹⁸ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 11.

¹⁹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 1.

who were massacred, robbed, all their weapons and the huge amount of gold were stolen from them. They wanted to say come now so that we can kill you, take your weapons and ... your money”.²⁰

Vardan informs that Vazgen’s²¹ group of 40 people was in Salmas, including “future Andranik, who was there as an ordinary, inexperienced soldier”.²² In his memoirs he highlights the fact that the Armenians of Salmas did not spare anything, they hosted and supported the Hayduks. At the same time he mentions that there were never cases of betrayal by the people of Salmas.²³



Yeprem Davtyan



Armenak Yekaryan

Vardan was elected the head of the operation of Khanasor, and Hovsep Ishkhan was his deputy²⁴. There were 275 Hayduks, 25 of whom were led by cavalier Sargis. Vardan notes: “In the cavalry group there was Yeprem,²⁵ dictator during the future Persian²⁶ Revolution, who played a significant role in Persia”.

²⁰NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 1 rev.-2.

²¹Teroyan Tigran (Vazgen, 1873-1898), a figure of the liberation movement, poet, Hayduk, member of the ARF. See more details about him in Sahakyan 1998: 22-27.

²²NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 2 rev.

²³NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 43 andrev.

²⁴ Arghutyan Hovsep (Yervand, Tasho, Ishkhan, Ishkhan of Khanasor, Yervand Ghazaryan, 1863-1925), a figure of the liberation movement, member of the ARF, commander of the 7th volunteer squad.

²⁵Davtyan Yeprem (Yeprem khan, 1859-1912), a figure of the liberation movement, Hayduk, member of the ARF. He participated in S. Kukunyan’s campaign (1890). He participated in the Persian Revolution. He was the Chief of Police of Tehran (1909), then of the country (1910). He personally led a number of military operations.

²⁶ He refers to the revolution in Iran that took place in 1905-1911, which turned the country into a constitutional monarchy. As a result, Persia was divided between Russia and Great Britain (1907).

The expedition was joined by a group of Armenakans led by Armenak Yekaryan²⁷ who were going to Van.²⁸

On July 25, 1897, Vardan led the Khanasor expedition²⁹ against the Kurdish Mazrik tribe. According to Vardan: "That invasion made a strong impression on the Kurdish tribes".³⁰ The Ottoman authorities, who were aware that the Hayduks had come from Salmas, demanded that the Persian government hand them the participants of the invasion. In their turn, the Persian authorities were forced to give in and to intensify violence against Armenians. Armenian merchants were in a particularly difficult situation. According to Vardan, one of them, an old man, approached the gathered Hayduks and rebuked them, saying: "What did you do? You put dirt in the basket, you left us in deprivation".³¹

To get out of the situation, they decided to choose the lesser evil. They handed several innocent boys over to the Persians, who in their turn handed them over to the Turks, who arrested them. According to Vardan: "But then we learned that they were not particularly harmed".³²

The above-mentioned allowed Vardan to cross to Nakhichevan with a few people, to Yerevan, then to Etchmiadzin, where they found out that Khrimyan Hayrik wanted to meet with them. The Hayduks were introduced to His Holiness. He inquired about crossing the border, the attitude of the Russian authorities. M. Khrimyan said the following: "I hear you have killed several Kurds, now go and stay calm, go into the cocoon like the caterpillar, calm down and let's see what comes next".³³ And when Vardan objected, saying that it was not several Kurds, but 300 people, the Catholicos closed the issue by saying: "Well, well".³⁴

The purpose of the expedition was not only to take revenge on the Mazrik tribe, but also to pave the way for importing weapons and sending Hayduk groups to the country. "This incident also gradually changed the attitude of the Kurds towards the Armenians. They started helping Armenian weapon transporters by working as guides (*vallad*), knowing full well that otherwise the Armenian avenger's bullet would spare no one".³⁵

According to S. Vratsyan, after 1898 "Vardan is a well-known figure in the Atrpatakan region. He is one of our most experienced Hayduks. Courage and intelligence are concentrated in him".³⁶

²⁷ Yekaryan Armenak (1870-1925), a prominent figure of the liberation movement, member of the Armenakan and then of the Armenian Constitutional Ramgavar party. He was the military commander of the self-defense of Aygestan (April-May 1915), investigator and organizer of the provincial-regional police in the province of Van (June 11, 1915).

²⁸ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 3 rev.

²⁹ Fischer 1897a: 106-108; Fischer 1897b: 112-119.

³⁰ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 11.

³¹ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 11 rev.

³² NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 12.

³³ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 12 rev.

³⁴ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 8, p. 12 rev.

³⁵ Melkonyan *et al.* 2010 (eds.): 568.

³⁶ Vratsyan 1992 (ed.): 7.



A group of fighters of the Khanasor expedition. Vardan is in the center.

On the way, they were joined by one of the Armenian meliks of Karadagh, who described in detail the self-defense battles of the local Armenians. Arriving in Tabriz, they witnessed the feverish speed with which the local weapons workshop “Khariskh” was working. Weapons and ammunition were transported to Salmas by trusted people.



In the villages of Gavar, young people received military training. At that time, the ARF center was located in the village of Kalasar.³⁷ Vardan states that the Persian authorities were not only aware of the weapons workshop, but were also sending “Chassepot”,³⁸ which was in their army’s arsenal, “to be adapted to another bullet. Our people undertook that task and were successfully making the transformation”.³⁹

³⁷NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 7, p. 12 rev.

³⁸ Chassepot - a French single-barrel rifle that was in the armament of France from 1866-1874. After the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), 20,000 of those rifles were sold to Persia.

³⁹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 62.



The French "Chassepot" combat rifle and bayonet

After the Khanasor expedition, in 1898-1899 he was in Tiflis, then in Baku, where he lived with his brother. In order not to be wanted by the Russian authorities, he decided to "take advantage of the peaceful situation, report himself to the military command and continue the rest of his service".⁴⁰ He continued his service in Dilijan, where he served at the office of the military unit through an acquaintance officer. He was demobilized after about 10 months of service.⁴¹

In 1898-1899 he began writing his memoirs, called "Memoirs", which ended with the Khanasor expedition and consists of about 400 manuscript pages.⁴² The memoirs began to be published in "Droshak", but in the meantime Vardan continued to work on the manuscript, so he wrote a letter to the editorial office asking them to stop printing, as he was making some additions. Then he confessed: "I did not have time to expand,"⁴³ so the memoirs got lost in Constantinople, and my manuscripts, which were at our house in Baku, were taken by the government during a search".⁴⁴

During the Soviet years, Vardan was probably unaware that Simon Vratsyan had published his memoirs including the years 1894-1896 in the "Hayrenik" magazine.⁴⁵

S. Vratsyan, the publisher of Vardan's memoirs, gives some clarifications. Vardan's memories were found at the office of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun. The notebook had the following inscription: "Transcribed by Vahe Syuni, July 10, 1901".⁴⁶ S. Vratsyan mentions that they were four thick notebooks, but it is clear from the manuscript that there are other handwritings besides the author's handwriting. From this he concludes that the "Memoirs" was written earlier.⁴⁷

In 1901 Vardan settled in Baku and for some time "led a self-contained, secluded and isolated life".⁴⁸ In 1903,⁴⁹ during his stay in Baku, a Russian reporter by the surname of Simbirsky came to Vardan and was very interested in the Armenian question and the Armenian liberation struggle. At his request, Vardan told about his past

⁴⁰NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 14.

⁴¹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 14 rev.

⁴²NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 14 rev.

⁴³ Make additions.

⁴⁴NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 14 rev.-15.

⁴⁵ Vratsyan 1936: 58-76, № 1, 85-115, № 2, 124-140; Vratsyan 1937: 100-119.

⁴⁶ Vratsyan 1936: 59.

⁴⁷ Vratsyan 1936: 59.

⁴⁸ Vratsyan 1992 (ed.): 7.

⁴⁹ Probably in 1908.

struggle. Simbirsky visited Vardan every night and carefully wrote down his memories, but when Vardan learned of the death of his comrade-in-arms Sako of Sevkar (Sargis Tsovanyan, 1870-1908), he refused to cooperate further with the reporter. Sako and Vardan were close friends, which is evidenced by the Memoirs: "We were very close friends... Sako made a condition, he said: "Vardan, if I die sooner, you will come to bury me, and if you die sooner, I will come to bury you"⁵⁰. Vardan remembered their agreement with pain, but failed to fulfill the promise, because Sako of Sevkar had fallen victim to a contagious disease, cholera.⁵¹

The III General Assembly of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun held in Sofia in February-March 1904 decided to step up its activities in Cilicia. The Assembly instructed Simon Zavaryan to implement the decision, and Vardan was to support. They went to Cilicia to "engage in the revolutionary organization of the Highlands".⁵² Vardan first of all start to procure weapons and ammunition. Initially, 3 rifles and 2 pistols were bought and transported to Ayntap.⁵³ Vardan believed that the liberation struggle in Cilicia could succeed only with the active involvement of the locals, so he considered finding a "capable Turkish-Armenian figure" a priority.⁵⁴

The IV General Assembly of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun (February-March 1904) discussed carrying out liberation activities in the Highlands – in Cilicia. It is known that before that there had been figures like Mikayel Ter Martirosyan (Mar),⁵⁵ Hayk Tirakyan (Hrach) and Mkrtich Hatikyan (of Pontus). Later, other figures were sent there, who founded ARF organizations. In 1904 Simon Zavaryan and Vardan were sent on a business trip to Cilicia, where they "had to deal with the revolutionary organization of the Highlands more closely and thoroughly".⁵⁶ S. Zavaryan left first, but not for Cilicia, but for Beirut to study the situation. After a while, he informed Vardan that his presence was needed. Vardan received a passport from Mikhail Nakashidze (1844-1905), the governor of Baku and on August 24, he left Batumi for Constantinople by boat, arriving there on August 31. From there they left for Geneva, where they arrived on September 7.⁵⁷

In the editorial office of "Droshak" he got acquainted with the information received from Cilicia, got some idea about a place unknown to him. More detailed information was provided by Sarhat, who was called "Doctor". He reported that at a meeting in Beirut, it had been decided to procure about 500 rifles, bullets and dynamite and sent

⁵⁰NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 15 rev.

⁵¹ The Memoirs were published later. See Simbirsky 1916, № 16, c. 2-6, № 17, c. 3-6, № 18, c. 2-5, № 19, c. 8-11, № 20, 4-7, № 21, 4-8.

⁵² Materials 2007: 178.

⁵³ Materials 2007: 222.

⁵⁴ Materials 1985: 255.

⁵⁵ See more details about him in Gasparian, Sahakyan 2015: 197-233.

⁵⁶ Materials 2007: 178.

⁵⁷NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 18.

them to Cilicia.⁵⁸ Vardan was against that plan, considering that first it was necessary to go to Cilicia, get acquainted with the situation, and then take practical steps. His opinion, however, was not accepted. He had to agree to the decision of buying 100 rifles and suitable bullets and sending them to Cilicia.⁵⁹

On October 20, 1904, they traveled to Paris with Rostom (Stepan Zoryan) to buy weapons, where Vardan got acquainted with Pierre Quillard,⁶⁰ editor of the newspaper "Pro Armenia".⁶¹ Here they found out that the most favorable place to buy firearms was Greece, so on October 27 they left for Greece by boat.⁶² In Athens they managed to buy Gras⁶³ combat rifles, several thousand bullets and tools to charge them.⁶⁴ The task of transporting the weapons and ammunition was more difficult, but they managed to reach an agreement with a Greek smuggler who promised to transport it to the necessary place for money.



"Gras" combat rifle

On November 18, he left for Alexandria, where he arrived two days later. After meeting with party friends in Alexandria and giving some instructions, he was to cross from Beirut to Cilicia. To avoid unnecessary dangers, Vardan obtained a passport of a Persian citizen named Yukhanna Yaghub, an Assyrian who was allegedly a carpet merchant.⁶⁵

Vardan confessed: "I have never entered Turkey legally and I have never thought as much as I do now. I keep thinking about what answer I should give during the interview. I am preparing myself, I keep repeating that I am from Tabriz, my father's name, my mother's name who I have buried, etc., and as I do not know Assyrian, I will say: "I have left since I was little", etc.". ⁶⁶ S. Zavaryan was to be waiting for him in Beirut, at the hotel "Oriental", but as it turned out, he was in Adana. After some time Vardan managed to contact one of his party friends, Simon Shatikyan from Trabzon.

⁵⁸NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 18.

⁵⁹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p.18 rev.

⁶⁰ Quillard Pierre (1864-1912), French poet, public figure, author of works on the Armenian Question.

⁶¹"Pro Armenia" weekly newspaper in French (1900-1914), published in France. The editor-in-chief was Pierre Quillard.

⁶²NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 19.

⁶³ "Gras" combat rifle, a single-barrel, made in France (1874).

⁶⁴NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 19 rev.

⁶⁵NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 22 and 22 rev.

⁶⁶NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 22 rev.

After getting acquainted with the situation in Beirut and especially in Cilicia, Vardan learned that there were no ARF organizations in either Aleppo or Cilicia. As he put it: "There are no people, there are only words, names, nothing else".⁶⁷ Vardan had to report the above to Geneva.

Vardan noted the following about Aleppo: "Aleppo is a rather big, commercial city. The climate is hot, the city has lack of water. The city has a so-called small European part, several good buildings, a city clock in the center".⁶⁸



The famous Aleppo clock
in Bab al-Faraj square

After Aleppo he went to Kilis, then to Ayntap, where the representative of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun was Avo of Yerznka. Ayntap was considered the headquarters of the ARF in Cilicia, but after studying the situation Vardan expressed the opposite opinion. According to him "Avo was an idle person, he did not engage in anything and lived on the money of the organization. He had some friends but there was nothing much in them".⁶⁹

During the meetings, it became clear that the Ayntap organization was nothing much, but several hundred rifles were demanded from the party. To verify his suspicions, Vardan resorted to trickery, reporting that part of the weapons was already in Ayntap, so it was necessary to move them to a safe place.

According to his testimony: "Everyone was stunned, and no one was able to take any steps in that direction".⁷⁰ After learning all this and other details, Vardan confessed: "Seeing them, the people of Vaspurakan rose in my estimation, I missed the people of Van".⁷¹

However, Vardan believed that it was possible to operate in Cilicia, given its geographical location. It was suitable for transporting weapons, ammunition and fighters. In his opinion "A gunshot here is more audible, more noticeable than the many heroic battles of Armenia, which are lost in obscurity".⁷²

On the way back, in Beirut he met S. Zavaryan and learned from him that on March 17, 1905, K. Mikayelyan was killed while testing a homemade bomb.⁷³

Being fully occupied with Western Armenia, the ARF ignored the issues related to Eastern Armenians, especially the organization of self-defense. The clashes that started

⁶⁷NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 24 rev.

⁶⁸NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 27 rev.

⁶⁹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 28. Vardan mentions that due to the financial support of the party Avo received medical education and started condemning the Dashnaktsutyun. See NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 30 rev.

⁷⁰NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 28 rev.

⁷¹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 29 rev.

⁷²NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 33.

⁷³NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 32 rev.

in February 1905 and were escalating were unexpected for everyone⁷⁴ being provoked by the Russian authorities. The possibility was ignored when there was information that in late 1903 “the government called on the Turkish beys to help against Armenians, but the latter refused”.⁷⁵

Nevertheless, the government continued the provocations, the pro-government Russian press prepared future clashes with anti-Armenian articles, publishing fabrications and misinformation.⁷⁶ The clash of February 6, 1905 in Baku was a signal for attacks on the Armenian population to begin. Muslim subjects of Russia were supported by fellow believers and compatriots of the Ottoman Empire and Persia.⁷⁷ The self-defense of the Armenians in the Caucasus administrative government and then viceroyalty was mainly assumed by the Dashnaktsutyun, whose “central figure of organization was Rostom”.⁷⁸ Vardan stated the following: “Dashnaktsutyun as a fighting party, as the embodiment of the demands and wishes of the Armenian people could not be in the role of a spectator; the peace-loving preaches and initiatives were useless and whether they wanted to or not, they had to lead the movement”.⁷⁹ The party appointed Vardan “general leader of Karabakh, from Gandzak to the Meghri region”.⁸⁰

A-Do gave a unique description of Karabakh, Shushi,⁸¹ according to which Artsakh is a fortress, “where Shushi, sitting like a sharp-winged eagle, rules with a certain pride over the territories lying in front”.⁸²

Arriving in Shushi, Vardan convened several meetings with his party friends and prominent local citizens, where he first instructed them to avoid fighting, but to prepare for self-defense. Shushi was divided into several defense districts, district governors were appointed, whose responsibilities included the organization of positions, arming of fighters, their food supply, etc.⁸³

On May 12, 1905, the Armenian-Tatar conflict started in Nakhichevan, and according to A-Do “This was, however, not a clash, but an attack, murder, robbery, which spread to all the Armenian-populated villages of the Nakhichevan region”.⁸⁴

⁷⁴ Back on January 5, 1888, two Armenians were killed by a Sultan Bey in the Yerevan market. Apparently, the day was not chosen by chance. A fuss started, during which more than ten Armenians and Tatars were killed. Instead of punishing the murderer, the authorities sentenced five Armenians to different sentences ranging from 4 to 12 years. See A-Do 2013: 30-31.

⁷⁵ See Materials 2007: 303-304.

⁷⁶ Melkonyan et al. 2015 (eds.): 19.

⁷⁷ Melkonyan et al. 2015 (eds.): 20.

⁷⁸ Melkonyan A. et al. 2015 (eds.): 21.

⁷⁹ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 33 rev.

⁸⁰ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 36 rev.

⁸¹ The total population of Shushi was 33 thousand, of which 18 thousand were Armenians, 14 thousand were Tatars and 1 thousand were other nationalities. See A-Do 1907: 148.

⁸² A-Do 2013: 152.

⁸³ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 37.

⁸⁴ A-Do 1907: 116.

When it became clear to the ARF Dashnaktsutyun that the clashes were organized by the authorities, in July 1905 they hurried to entrust the self-defense of Shushi⁸⁵ to Vardan⁸⁶ as the “military plenipotentiary of that region”.⁸⁷ He was accompanied by Mrav,⁸⁸ Khecho (Khachatur Amiryan-Gorgyan), Kaytsak Arakel (Tigran Abajyan), Sako of Sevkar, Sepuh (Arshak Nersisyan), Hamazasp (Srvandztyants), Kotoyi Haji (Hakob Kotoyan)⁸⁹ and others. A military body was established to organize the resistance. In 1905 the Armenian population of Shushi suffered heavy losses as the Tatars were joined by the army whose “vicious actions reached such proportions that the Armenian women of Shushi had to address the Empress with a long telegram”.⁹⁰

The regressive press did its part in provoking clashes in Shushi, deliberately publishing misinformation. On August 8, 1905 a provocative telegram sent from Shushi was published in the newspaper “Caspj” which said: “At 3 o'clock in the morning, three Armenians with big shoes (emphasis added by us – R.S.) and with fluffy hats and daggers, tore apart a lantern and ran away”.⁹¹

In a letter dated August 10, 1905, probably addressed to the Eastern Bureau, Vardan predicted the possibility of a potential clash and demanded that weapons and ammunition be sent urgently. Similar instructions were given to the provinces. Patrol or mobile groups were organized.⁹² If such issues were relatively easy to resolve, however, the issue of weapons remained unsolved. Vardan noted: “Our people were not used to weapons, the Turks were used to those weapons. And the process of our arming was under pressure and violence”.⁹³

There were other incidents as well, after which an Armenian-Tatar conflict broke out in Shushi on August 16-22, 1905. Vardan stated: “They fight in the houses, from positions built in the yards, the fight continues day and night”.⁹⁴ The inhabitants of the provinces came to the aid of the enemy. Unlike the Tatars, part of the urban Armenians

⁸⁵ The city was divided into two parts. The upper district was inhabited mainly by Armenians, and the lower district by Tatars. NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 38.

⁸⁶ Vardan's candidacy was proposed by Nikol Duman. See Gevorgyan 2010: 321. According to S. Vracayan: “Vardan is a little hesitant, while Nikol Duman is decisive and astute”. See Vracayan 1992 (ed.): 7-8.

⁸⁷ Materials 2007: 304.

⁸⁸ Zhamharian Margar (Mrav, 1877-1905), fedayeen, avenger, ARF figure. He served in the Russian army, studied in Germany for some time. He united and formed the first committee of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun in Artsakh (1904). He was a member of the Central Committee for the Caucasus self-defense. He died during the defense of Shushi (1905).

⁸⁹ Kotoyan Hakob (Kotoyi Haji, 1864-1915), figure of the liberation movement, fedayeen, member of the ARF. He took part in the Sassun uprising (1904), the Iranian revolution (1906-1908), he was the head of the self-defense of the Armenians of Mush (1915).

⁹⁰ A-Do 2013: 132. In his report to the Vienna Assembly, Vardan mainly positively assessed the attitude of the military: “I must say that in our regions the state soldiers and officers generally sympathize with us”. See Materials 1985: 92.

⁹¹ A-Do 1907: 147.

⁹² Gevorgyan 2010: 325.

⁹³ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 37.

⁹⁴ NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 38 rev.

and their families found shelter in the barracks of the Russian garrison. Vardan records: "In the beginning, I had a high opinion of the courage of the citizens, their ability to fight, but during the fight I saw that I was wrong".⁹⁵

In its turn, the Russian army in the city was divided into two parts: the soldiers and officers of the Turkish district were fighting for them, and those in the Armenian district were fighting for the Armenians. Vardan emphasizes the heroic, selfless work done by the pupils helping to prepare food, heal the wounded and refill cartridges.⁹⁶ Sanitation groups were organized to treat and care for the wounded and sick. District governors set up military canteens, from where food and water were taken to the fighters in the positions. The connection between the military body and the positions was maintained by couriers. Special groups delivered bullets to the fighters and replaced them if necessary. Intelligence groups were stationed in the canyons near Shushi and monitored the movement of the enemy, etc.⁹⁷

On the first day about 20 Armenians and Tatars were killed.⁹⁸ The latter developed a new tactic of attacking the houses of Armenians, setting them on fire.

During August, when the enemy was able to set fire to a part of the Armenian district, groups of arsonists were organized, which included even 14-year-old teenagers. There were also groups of firefighters consisting of residents, who had two fire trucks, water in barrels and the appropriate tools.

The clashes showed that the most preferable weapons were "Mosin" combat rifles and "Mauser" pistols, which were initially scarce.⁹⁹ Besides, some of the people of Shushi were not accustomed to fighting and at the slightest pressure of the enemy they quickly retreated, leaving the positions. Vardan cites an example when he had to fight alone against 6 to 7 Tatars. Margar Zhamharyan,¹⁰⁰ a brave fighter from Shushi, came to the rescue and was killed during the fight. The battle in the positions continued fiercely. The positions passed from hand to hand, houses were constantly set on fire.¹⁰¹

On August 18, a large number of Tatars from Aghdam came to help. The Armenians, respecting the order of the deputy governor, did not shoot anymore, and the Tatars seized the opportunity to attack the people of Shushi. The authorities left the Armenian district without protection, declaring that the Armenians should take care of their own protection. According to A-Do "This was the best way to make them fight and this was the tactics adopted by the government".¹⁰² One of the evidences of that was the official statement denying the information about the clashes in Shushi.¹⁰³

⁹⁵NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 39.

⁹⁶NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 39.

⁹⁷ Gevorgyan 2010: 364-365.

⁹⁸ A-Do 1907: 153.

⁹⁹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 38 rev.

¹⁰⁰ A-Do 1907: 156.

¹⁰¹NAA, f. 402, l. 2, f. 1, p. 40.

¹⁰² A-Do 1907: 155.

¹⁰³ A-Do 1907: 157.

On August 20, the Armenians were able to put to use the old, smoothbore cannon. The shot fired from it did no harm but caused such a thunder and smoke that “the Turks raised a white flag and asked for reconciliation, which took place the same day”.¹⁰⁴

After the reconciliation, the parties investigated the losses of those several days. Hundreds of houses had been burnt, including the Mariamian school, 20 shops belonging to the church and the theater. 100 Armenians had been killed and twice or thrice as many Turks. The enemy had property losses of 30 thousand and the Armenians- of more than 5 million roubles.¹⁰⁵

In the spring of 1906 Rostom came to Shushi. His presence was necessary to solve many problems and to enable Vardan to go to the provinces. Rostom's presence of two months was positive. He not only strengthened the ARF structures, but also helped to solve “a number of very important issues related to self-defense. With the support of masters in Shushi, including Kosti (Kostandin) Hambartzumyan, he made and tested bombs and missiles”.¹⁰⁶ Together they were able to repair or restore “three 2-inch¹⁰⁷ cannons, two 3-inch¹⁰⁸ cannons - again made by our master and two Turkish 5-inch¹⁰⁹ cannons”.¹¹⁰

On July 12-22, 1906 the second clash took place in Shushi. On the morning of July 12, the body of Sahak Mirzoyants from Shushi was found. Authorities arrived at the scene, but the Tatars opened fire on them. An exchange of fire began. After two soldiers were killed by the Tatar fire, General Goloshchapov ordered to open artillery fire on the Tatar district. The enraged Tatars opened fire on the general's house and accused him of “allegedly joining the Armenians and bombing and slaughtering them mercilessly”.¹¹¹

Before that, the enemy, taking into account the previous year's experience of clashes, had taken steps to completely encircle the city, depriving the Armenians of food supplies. In response, the Armenians of Askeran not only blocked the supply route of the Turks, but also severely repulsed the raiders advancing from Aghdam, significantly easing the situation of the struggling people of Shushi. The clashes showed that the enemy was preparing for a new, bigger operation.

On July 13, the fighting continued more intensely, but without the intervention of the army. Particularly fierce fighting was taking place in the Armenian villages of Karintak and Ghaybali. The repulse of the raiders rushing from Aghdam to Shushi by the Armenians of Askeran greatly contributed to the resistance of the people of Shushi.

¹⁰⁴A-Do 1907: 156.

¹⁰⁵ A-Do 1907: 156.

¹⁰⁶ Gevorgyan 2010: 361.

¹⁰⁷ 1 inch equals 2.54 cm or 25.4 mm. In fact 2.5 inches, corresponding to a diameter of 63.5 mm.

¹⁰⁸In fact 3 inches, corresponding to a diameter of 76 mm

¹⁰⁹In fact 5.5 inches, corresponding to a diameter of 140 mm.

¹¹⁰ Gevorgyan 2010: 361.

¹¹¹ A-Do 1907: 164.

On July 14, on account of a written application by Tatar doctor Mehmandarov and the mediation of Goloshchapov, the fire was stopped. Bilateral negotiations took place, during which the Armenians presented their demands:

- “1. Destroy two Turkish positions,
2. Prohibit armed groups or separate armed people from entering the city,
3. Stop the boycott,
4. Materially provide the family of Sahak Mirzoyants, who was killed by the Turks before the fighting,
5. From now on, remove all provocateurs from Gandzak province,
6. Open a 45-arshin-wide¹¹² street on a neutral ground, on the border of the Armenian and Turkish districts, where state institutions are located”.¹¹³

However, at night the shooting resumed. Houses were set on fire on both sides.

Mutual clashes resumed on July 15. The Armenians were able to oust the enemy from one of their important positions, Diktan Ghurun, after which the Tatars were forced to resume peace talks, which were unsuccessful as they refused to destroy the positions of Gohvar Agha and Haji Valiyev. After the Armenians occupied the latter position, the Tatars again asked for peace, which lasted for five days. According to A-Do “During those five days, Armenians never doubted there would be peace”.¹¹⁴

On July 20, at the suggestion of one of the officers of the 154th Infantry Regiment of Derbent that arrived in Shushi, General Goloshchapov pulled out the Armenian fighters from Aghamirzyan's burnt house, and the Tatars took their place there. On July 21, the Tatars fired from that position on government soldiers standing between them and the Armenians, killing one soldier and wounding two.¹¹⁵ As it turned out later, getting help from the provinces, the Tatars wanted to restore the shattered positions and resumed the attacks. The battles continued for a whole day and finally ended on July 22 with the signing of a peace agreement. During the battles, 24 Armenians were killed, 102 were wounded and the casualties of the Tatars were twice as many. More than 200 houses were set on fire, most of which belonged to the Tatars.¹¹⁶

After the fighting, the authorities sent one battalion to Shushi, consisting of 17 officers and 2 doctors. The number of soldiers was 570.¹¹⁷

According to Vardan, unlike 1905, in 1906 the Armenians of Shushi were relatively more organized and armed, they had accumulated some combat experience. Vardan noted: “The war was successful, there was no looting, the citizens continued their trade peacefully, and on the borders the war continued”.¹¹⁸ Initially, the Armenian population in Artsakh was confused, mainly pursuing defensive tactics, as there were not enough

¹¹² 1 arshin is 0,711 meters.

¹¹³ «Aliq», July 29, 1906, № 75.

¹¹⁴ A-Do 1907: 166.

¹¹⁵ «Aliq», July 25, 1906, № 71.

¹¹⁶ A-Do 1907: 167.

¹¹⁷ «Aliq», July 19, 1906, № 66.

¹¹⁸ Materials 1976: 92.

weapons and ammunition, and the civilian combat groups did not have enough experience. Taking advantage of the favorable situation, the Caucasian Tatars adopted offensive tactics, constantly attacking, killing and robbing Armenians.

The Caucasian Tatars were a serious fighting force. The nomadic life had taught them to quickly orient themselves in the area, to withstand the changes of the weather, to move quickly, to endure various hardships, etc., which the people of Shushi were “deprived of”. That was the reason why Vardan was forced to bring fighters from the provinces and to defend the Armenian district of Shushi with their help.

The situation changed in late 1905 when the Armenian population got some combat experience, weapons and ammunition,¹¹⁹ after which at the end of the same year the Caucasus Regional Assembly of the Dashnaktsutyun decided to launch offensive operations.¹²⁰ The fanatical Muslim mob in Shushi received a serious counterattack from the Armenians, after which the mob no longer took active action.

According to Vardan’s report presented to the IV General Assembly of the ARF Dashnaktsutyun on March 14, 1907, it can be inferred that about 30 of the 100 weapons in possession of the population were unfit for use.¹²¹ Significant sums of money were necessary to procure assault rifles and ammunition. Thus, on the eve of 1904, one single-barrel “Berdan № 2” combat, non-repeating rifle cost 25 roubles, and a repeating rifle “Mosin” - 35 roubles. One “Mosin” bullet cost about 3 kopecks.¹²² After the start of the Armenian-Tatar clashes, there was an unprecedented rise in firearms prices: “Mosin” cost about 300 roubles, “Berdan № 2” - 150 roubles and one bullet - 20-50 kopecks.¹²³ The Dashnaktsutyun committee in Shushi provided 100 thousand bullets to the self-defense forces during the fighting.¹²⁴ It should be noted that the annual profit of Eastern Armenians, the overwhelming majority of whom were peasants, was about 60 roubles. It is noteworthy that the number of family members could be up to 10 people.

In a number of cases, violence was used against the people of Shushi who did not want to perform military service or combat duty, or buy weapons, and the rich were forced to provide some money for the needs of the self-defense.¹²⁵

During the battles in Artsakh, particularly in Shushi, the Armenian side tried to find common ground and stop the fighting. Vardan and Sako of Sevkar believed that even victories economically destroyed the Armenians, as a result of which the youth was forced to leave for the cities to earn a living.¹²⁶

¹¹⁹ The people of Shushi had about 300 rifles, and the ARF had accumulated 200 rifles and 250,000 bullets. See Materials 2007: 304.

¹²⁰ Materials 2007: 304.

¹²¹ Materials 1976: 91.

¹²² Materials 1985: 112.

¹²³ Materials 2007: 393.

¹²⁴ Materials 1976: 91.

¹²⁵ Materials 1976: 91.

¹²⁶ Materials 2007: 394.

According to Vardan, during the Armenian-Tatar clashes of 1905-1906, the greatest danger was posed by government troops armed with cannons. According to him, it was possible to fight against the army if they were not supported by the local Tatars.¹²⁷

During the fighting, the enemy spread various misinformation, which forced the Catholicos of All Armenians Mkrtych Khrimyan to write a letter to Ahmad Shah, the Crown Prince of Iran, denying the massacres of the Persian subjects and asking him not to allow the massacres of Persian Armenians.¹²⁸

In a report presented to the ARF General Assembly in Vienna on April 20, 1907, Vardan and Sako of Sevkar described the enemy as follows: "Let us be careful and not mock our opponent's power. They are more military and stronger than we are (the Armenians are whiny and quick to despair, even in case of success). If Dashnaktsutyun had not been around and had not taken the situation into their hands, the Turks would have destroyed the Armenians".¹²⁹

The internal enemies posed a serious threat to the self-defense of the Armenians of Artsakh.¹³⁰ Among them were Hatam Bey and his brother Shamil, residents of the village of Kyatuk in Varanda. To put an end to the brothers' traitorous actions, Vardan met Hatam Bey and tried to persuade him, but he remained unshakable. Eventually, on Vardan's orders, the brothers were shot in their village.¹³¹

According to historian Hamlet Gevorgyan, Vardan was in favor of defensive tactics. As Mikayel Varandyan described "Vardan was gentle, with a soft heart, sometimes a little hesitant, indecisive... when he was the commander-in-chief in Karabakh, he often rejected the appeals of his friends to act against the enemy by the principle of eye for an eye, to burn this or that Tatar village, to destroy the mob..."¹³² Hamazasp was also dissatisfied with Vardan's tactics. He demanded to attack first and intimidate the enemy.¹³³

The same author states that after learning about the atrocities committed by the Cossacks in the Khachen and Varanda regions, Vardan instructed the commanders of the combat groups to attack the Cossacks if they continued their illegal actions.¹³⁴ Thus, it can be concluded that Vardan did not want to further strain the relations with either the authorities or the military, or with the local Muslim population.

After the first Russian revolution began to decline, the authorities invented the so-called "case of the Dashnaktsutyun" and started the persecution and arrest of the

¹²⁷ Materials 1976: 92.

¹²⁸ Khachatryan 2011: 28.

¹²⁹ Materials 2007: 394.

¹³⁰ According to Ruben's apt definition "If there were no traitors and informers among the nation, the government with its measures would become powerless, and even its secret police would become useless". See Ruben 1952: 96.

¹³¹ Gevorgyan 2010: 345.

¹³² Gevorgyan 2010: 344.

¹³³ Gevorgyan 2010: 346.

¹³⁴ Gevorgyan 2010: 351.

participants of the Armenian-Tatar clashes which made Vardan leave Shushi. At the beginning of the winter of 1907 Vardan left Artsakh for Baku, to his brothers, where he was informed that he would take part in the IV General Assembly of the ARF to be held in Vienna in February. He arrived there on February 25.¹³⁵

In the report presented at the assembly in Vienna, Vardan and Sako of Sevkhar made an important suggestion: they consider it necessary to exchange lands with the Tatars, “so that the Armenian provinces could be forever united with each other...”¹³⁶

Unfortunately, the above-mentioned could not be realized; and we have to admit that this issue remains unresolved to this day and causes a lot of complications.

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¹³⁵ He presents to the assembly the details of the Armenian-Tatar fighting in Shushi. See Materials 1985: 91-93.

¹³⁶ Materials 2007: 396.

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Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan

ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJANI TERRITORIAL CONFLICT AND THE KARABAKH ISSUE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MILITARY-AND-POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF GREAT BRITAIN IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA AND TRANSCAUCASIA IN 1918-1920

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-39

Abstract

In 1918-1920s the steps of the military policy of Azerbaijan were directed toward the frustration of the Armenian State system. With this intention, Andranik's and Dro's forces were taken out with the help of British generals Thomson and Shuttleworth. This allowed Azerbaijan to make the Armenian council in Karabakh temporarily obey the Azerbaijani Government on August 22, 1912, till the solution of this disputable issue by the French conference of allied nations, which was one of the steps of the Azerbaijani government planned beforehand.

In reality, as a result of further important military changes in the Republic of Armenia and the mutually beneficial agreement between Russia and Kemal Atatürk, as well as taking into consideration the evident connivance of allied powers, during 1920-1923 Azerbaijan managed to capture not only Nakhichevan, but Karabakh and other Armenian lands as well, the struggle for which restarted in 1988-1990.

Keywords: The Republic of Armenia, Karabakh-Artsakh, Azerbaijan, Russia, England-Great Britain, Baku

The 1918-1920 Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict was uncompromising and bloody for Artsakh. In order to protect themselves from various Azerbaijani encroachments and simply from anti-Armenian militant actions, the RA government took several steps in 1918-1919.¹ Thus, on November 16, 1918, the report of the Military Minister on the organization of military forces for Karabakh and Zangezur was presented at the session of the Council of Ministers. The session approved the draft. Taking into account that Azerbaijan had taken action without waiting for the settlement of the disputed issues of the borders of Karabakh and Zangezur by mutual consent, and seizing the mountainous parts of Artsakh-Karabakh and Zangezur, used violence against the population, armed

* The study is published through the sponsorship of the grant provided by the Commission of Science, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Armenia (21T-6A102. – “Armenia in the context of relations with European military-political representations in Transcaucasus (1917-1920)”.

¹ See Harutyunyan 1996: 11-235.

forces should be organized to defend the above-mentioned Armenian regions and to protect the population from encroachment.²

At the session of January 21, 1919, Minister-President (Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia) Hovhannes Qajaznuni presented to the approval of the Government a plan to establish an interim administration in the Armenian parts of Artsakh and Zangezur. The following plan consisting of 16 articles made with the participation of Alexander Khatisyan, acting Minister of Internal Affairs of Armenia, was adopted at the session of the Government:

1. «The Armenian regions of Zangezur and Karabakh, being an integral part of the Republic of Armenia, are governed by bodies approved by the Government of the Republic, based on the laws in force in Armenia.
2. Due to communication difficulties, the General Administration of the country is temporarily transferred to the existing “Zangezur National Council”, which will be called “Regional Council of Zangezur and Karabakh” ...
3. The composition of the council should be replenished with representatives of the Armenian-populated parts of Karabakh, as well as with the representatives of the Turkish population living in the region according to their number...
4. Until a new order is established, all state institutions of the country and state officials are subject to the council, are established and approved by the council and are accountable to it.
5. Country revenues (state taxes and other state incomes) are spent for the needs of the country, the deficit is filled from the treasury of the Republic...
6. 400,000 roubles will be allocated from the treasury of the Republic to cover the state expenses for February. Regardless of this, the treasury covers the expenses of the soldiers of one detachment...
7. The “Regional Council of Zangezur and Karabakh” will present to the central government a report on the spending of the above-mentioned 400 thousand roubles...
8. The government of the Republic sends a state commissioner to Goris, as its representative, for the Armenian region of Zangezur-Karabakh.
9. The state commissioner is instructed to oversee the activities of the Council and, if necessary, give instructions to the Council on behalf of the government...
10. If the state commissioner is a military person, the command of the Goris detachment must be handed over to him, otherwise the special commander must be appointed by the Military Minister.
11. Assign the election of the state commissioner to the Minister-President, with the consent of the Minister of Internal Affairs and the Military Minister.

It was decided to adopt the program and recommend the Minister-President to make the necessary orders to implement it”.³

² NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 6, p. 9.

³ Ghazakhecyan *et al.* 2000 (ed.): 85-86.

Based on the resolution of the June 16, 1919 session of the RA Council of Ministers and the June 5, 1919 law, the government passed a new law on allocating 1,500 thousand roubles from the 8 million Karabakh fund to organize a military unit of Karabakh. According to the law, the Karabakh military unit was to consist of one infantry battalion, two mountain cannons and 54 scouts. Based on the above-mentioned law, in another document, which is a logical continuation of the above, on behalf of the Military Ministry, the Chief of the General Staff, Colonel B. Baghdasarov asked G. Khojamiryan, the manager of affairs of the RA Council of Ministers, to speed up and put the mentioned sum at his disposal, at the same time noting that out of the sum of 8 million, 3,238,640 roubles remained.⁴ However, all this was either not effective enough, or the Armenian government fell victim to the vain promises and assurances of the military-and-political representations of the Allies in the Caucasus or their governments, who forgot that their small ally had shed blood in the Arabian sands.

Undoubtedly, Azerbaijan took advantage of the opportunities provided by the situation, in particular, the connivance and undisguised support of the British-European military-and-political representations in Transcaucasia and their governments. And this was in the circumstance when the Armenian government was taken aback by its Entente allies, who had made many promises before. The Republic of Armenia was an ally of the Entente, therefore of England. Given this fact, the ruling regions of Armenia naively and unconditionally believed that the allied powers would defend Armenia in the disputed issues with the neighboring Muslim power, and on that ground, especially in the beginning, they did not put a lot of effort into cajoling, showing a diplomatic approach to the heads of representation of the allied powers. Of course, there were some grounds for that. For the Armenians and their leading forces, who had enthusiastically welcomed the entry of allied powers, including the British, into the Caucasus, it was extremely difficult to soberly and unequivocally orient themselves in the context of the British policy and draw the necessary conclusions and be guided by viable and effective tactics. According to R. Hovhannisyan, the similar position of England was conditioned by the following circumstance: "At the end of 1918, they believed that Armenia would be given the Ottoman eastern vilayets. Therefore, it seemed natural to view Karabakh and Zangezur as compensation for Azerbaijan, whose claims to western lands would be rejected. Some critics single out economic exploitation as the primary factor in British politics.

... Britain managed to buy thousands of tons of oil products worth millions of pounds. "Whether or not oil imperialism dictated British policy, in any case, economic factors could not be ignored".⁵

In the current situation, W. M. Thomson,⁶ who replaced G. Forrestier-Walker, the British Commander-in-Chief in Transcaucasia from March 9, and D. I. Shuttleworth,⁷

⁴ See NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 28, p. 86-87.

⁵ Hovhannisyan 2005: 121.

one of his staff officers, who was left in Baku as the head of the imperial armed forces, openly favored Azerbaijan, and were initially intolerant of Armenians and openly sympathetic to Azerbaijanis. In November 1918, with General W. Thomson's intervention, General Andranik's detachment was prevented from entering Shushi and Artsakh, the real story of which is openly falsified by Azerbaijani historians. T. de Waal writes the following about that: "General William Thomson, who headed the expeditionary corps, appointed Dr. Khosrov bey Sultanov (an Azerbaijani who was extremely infamous among Armenians)⁸ governor of Karabakh and "persuaded" Andranik, the commander of the Armenian guerrilla detachments, to return to Armenia. Thomson said it was only a temporary agreement and all the other issues would be resolved at the forthcoming Paris Peace Conference".⁹

According to Azerbaijani historian Jamil Hasanli, Thomson also stated that the coalition government led by Khoyski was the only legal entity for all Azerbaijani territories, and that the Allied Command would provide full support to that government.¹⁰ In talks with Azerbaijani leaders, Thomson cynically tried to make it clear that he was not an "advocate of Armenians".¹¹

Thomson's image is largely negatively perceived by historians as a British man, because of whom Azerbaijan's domination of Karabakh became *de facto* accepted. The opponents of this -European, especially Azerbaijani authors argue that Thomson simply sought stability, rather than hatred of Armenians, that Azerbaijan's control of Karabakh would allegedly contribute to stability and peace in the region. In this respect, F.

⁶ Thomson William Montgomerie (December 2, 1878 - July 23, 1963) - Major General, from November 17, 1918 to March 10, 1919, he was the commander of the 39th Division, which occupied Baku, bringing about 2,000 troops from the British army deployed in India, after which he became Governor of Baku.

⁷ Shuttleworth Digby Inglis (August 23, 1876 - May 15, 1948) - a British brigadier general known for his anti-Armenian activities in Karabakh. In 1905 he received the rank of captain. In 1912-1916 he served as a major in India, Mesopotamia and northwestern Iran; in 1917-1919 he was the commander of the 39th infantry brigade in the Caucasus; in April-August, 1919, he was involved in the withdrawal of British troops from Baku and the Caucasus in general and was in warm relations with the Azerbaijani leadership. D. Shuttleworth commanded all British troops in Azerbaijan, Petrovsk and Krasnovodsk. In 1920 D. Shuttleworth was a member of the Allied Control Council for Military Management of the Ottoman State in Constantinople and the commander of the 83rd infantry brigade during the Chanak and Dardanelles crisis of 1920-1923, during the unstable situation following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. In 1936 he received the military rank of Major General. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digby_Shuttleworth. See https://military-history.fandom.com/wiki/Digby_Shuttleworth. See <https://bit.ly/3y2EYrS>: Isgenderli et al. 2011. 184-185. Azerbaijan: 279.

⁸ Sultanov Khosrov Bek Pasha Bey Oğlu (May 10, 1879 - January 7, 1943) - in 1903 he graduated from the Medical Faculty of the University of Novorossiysk; in 1917 he joined the "Musavat" party; in 1917 he became a member of the Transcaucasian Seim; in 1918 he moved to the "Ittihad" party; in May-June 1918 he was the Military Minister; in June-July 1918 and March 1919 he was the Minister of Agriculture. And from February 12, 1919 he was the governor-general of Karabakh; on April 28, 1920 he was deported to Turkey because of the sovietization of Azerbaijan. See Vekilov 1998: 29.

⁹ Vaal de 4: See <https://bit.ly/306P0hj>: View date 22.10.2021. Vaal de 2005: 181.

¹⁰ Hasanli 2016: 150.

¹¹ Hasanli 2016: 278.

Ahmedova writes as if in a telegram sent to London Thomson even wrote that the territories in Eastern Turkey should be handed over to Armenians,¹² which does not correspond to the facts, is based on false claims, and is rejected by certain sections of society: “For the first time the international community forced Armenia to withdraw its Armenian armed forces from Artsakh or to deploy new forces. For example, it is widely known that on December 2, 1918, in the area of the present-day village of Berdadzor, William Thomson, British General, the commander of the federal troops in Western Transcaucasia, handed a letter to Commander-in-Chief Andranik. In the letter, Thomson urged Andranik not to move forward, not to enter Nagorno-Karabakh, as the issue of the borders of the newly formed states of the South Caucasus was to be discussed at the Paris Conference in the near future. The implication was clear that there was no need to create unnecessary complications. And even without that Artsakh could be Armenian, because it was inhabited exclusively by Armenians (very important fact – V.V.). Later, the people of Karabakh could defend their territory completely without Andranik”,¹³ *and Azerbaijan, despite its ambitions and impudence, was not able to establish effective control over Nagorno-Karabakh, even with the support of Turkey*, which was not the case in 2020, and Turkey acted with impunity and more effectively, and as in 1918-1920, it felt the alienation and criminal isolation from the Republic of Armenia of the Entente countries, which were considered allies of the RA. And moreover, despite the fact that on February 19, Major-General G. T. Forrestier-Walker, the commander of the 27th military unit located in Tiflis, informed the Government of the RA that, in accordance with the principle proclaimed by the Allied peacekeepers, “conquest of a disputed territory by force of arms will seriously undermine the aggressor’s ambitions and that everyone must wait for a decision of the Peace Conference”, on February 24, the representative of Forrestier-Walker in Yerevan, Brigadier General Werni Asser, who was the British military representative in Yerevan from February 1 to the beginning of March, handed Foreign Minister S. Tigranyan an official message sent by Thomson from Tiflis. According to it, Dr. Sultanov was going to Shushi as the governor-general of the regions of Zangezur, Shushi and Karabakh, without making any demand on the future administration of Azerbaijan, only in order to maintain law and order in the mentioned territories.¹⁴ Tigranyan immediately drew Forrestier-Walker’s attention to the fact that the Armenian government could not consider General Thomson’s telegram as an expression of indirect recognition of Azerbaijani governance over Zangezur and Karabagh, even temporary rule over the disputed regions of the provinces that were to be subject to Sultanov’s rule. Tigranyan considered the maintenance of the status quo to be the only acceptable thing until the Paris Peace Conference adopted a decision on

¹² Akhmedova 2009: 174.

¹³ The letter was handed on behalf of Thomson by G. F. Squire, English Captain, Commander of the detachment of the 7th battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment of the 39th brigade and Nicholas Gasfid, French Captain, Officer of the 6th Hussar Regiment, Attaché to the French Military Mission in the Caucasus. See Hovhannisyan 2005: 94; Historical cycle.

¹⁴ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 177.

the borders. Referring to the February 19 declaration of the Allies, Tigranyan asked a question whether the declaration on “the conquest of the disputed territory by force of arms” was sent to the Baku government as well”.¹⁵ Afgan Akhmedov, who defended his doctoral dissertation at Lancaster University, considers these actions of Thomson to be a fact of recognition of Azerbaijan’s rights over Karabakh and Zangezur. Thus, he considered Khosrov Bey Sultanov’s rule established by the British to be legitimate, sending telegrams to the so-called Karabagh and Zangezur National Councils on behalf of the British military authorities, which the Azeri author considers sufficient, ignoring the internationally recognized right of the Armenian people to self-determination.¹⁶

On March 11, 1919, S. Tigranyan directly appealed to General Thomson, finding that the Peace Assembly’s instructions would be violated if Azerbaijan took unilateral action, reminding that Karabakh persistently defended its freedom during the war and now saw itself as part of the Republic of Armenia and that any violent attempt by Azerbaijan to impose its will would undoubtedly lead to the most serious consequences and thus considered Thomson’s proposal of a “so-called governor-general” to be unacceptable,¹⁷ although the Armenians of Karabakh were obviously shocked by the British patronage who had arrived as allies.

On March 21, 1919, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the RA informed Colonel K. Temperley, the British Military Representative in Armenia, that “Armenia considers the Karabakh issue to be in its vital interests”, finding that “1) Zangezur and Armenian Karabakh should remain independent of the Azerbaijani government and influence, as in the past. 2) If at the moment the British command finds it impossible to include these regions in the Republic of Armenia, it is necessary that Azerbaijan withdraw its troops from that region in any case, establishing an autonomous administration under the supreme authority and control of the British command, deeming it necessary that the governor-general be English”.¹⁸

On March 27, 1919, during a meeting with acting Prime Minister A. Khatisyan, in response to Khatisyan’s request to withdraw the Azerbaijani troops from Karabakh and temporarily keep it under British administration, Thomson sharply objected saying that even if Sultanov was hated by everyone, he still was necessary for the British effort of helping the people.¹⁹

Of course, the weakness of the Republic of Armenia in terms of military, energy, food and other issues left its mark on the whole course of the country, in terms of the success or failure of the steps taken by the Government. Difficulties and possible successful progress in the territorial delimitation depended on the British military-and-

¹⁵ Khatisyan 1968: 154.

¹⁶ Akhmedova 2019: 106-017: See <https://eprints.lancs.ac.uk/id/eprint/132565/1/2019afganphd.pdf>. Date of download 13.02.2022.

¹⁷ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 177-178.

¹⁸ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 121, l. 1-4.

¹⁹ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 188.

political mission and the supreme command, which, as advisers, played a negative role in the RA foreign policy calculations and expectations, often contributing to decisions unfavorable for Armenia, which has not significantly changed during the last century. One of the main arguments of the Yerevan rulers in those years was not the flexible, far-reaching diplomatic activity, but the armed forces, which were few in number, poorly armed, including with British-Canadian firearms which were not usable enough, were often defective, which did not allow establishing themselves in Kars and Nakhichevan, Karabakh, Basargechar and elsewhere. The British and the other allies did not show any practical interest in this issue, because for them the priority was the oil of Baku, and the division of Russia, be it Tsarist or Bolshevik. All of this did not allow the Armenian government to at least occasionally oppose the British dictatorship which in many cases was not pro-Armenian, to overcome the slavish devotion to the Allies, as in 2020. Apparently, the Republic of Armenia could not support Karabakh and Zangezur, falling victim to the deceptive and on-the-paper decisions made by the Allies, which very skillfully and toughly passed the strategic initiative to Azerbaijan, to which they were much friendlier.

In her assessment of the British policy implemented in Transcaucasia, F. Akhmedova writes: "Despite the fact that the Armenian government sought to increase the pressure on the leadership of the British Armed Forces in the Caucasus (Walker, Thomson and others), all their attempts were unsuccessful. Colonel Shuttleworth went to Shushi and demanded that the Armenians obey the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan. However, the Armenians continued their separatist activities. At the 15th/ Congress held in late April, 1919, they refused to accept the power of the governor-general of Karabakh. The Armenian government and its representation in Nagorno-Karabakh played a very destructive role in making such a decision. For the first time, international mediators gained experience in participating in the settlement process, following the example of territorial disputes in the Caucasus. The active role of Great Britain and the United States, examples of their participation in special projects are well known. On May 5, 1919, General Thomson announced that he had ordered the deportation of separatists. On June 5, the extremely reactionary Armenians were sent from Shushi to Tiflis accompanied by representatives of the English command. On June 6, at a rally in the part of Shushi where Armenians lived, Armenians declared their recognition of the Azerbaijani government. The Armenians, accepting the principles of the governor-general's actions, began to enter into negotiations. On August 15, 1919, the Armenians signed an agreement with the government of Azerbaijan, recognizing that the territories inhabited by Armenians are an integral part of Azerbaijan. It was assumed that the Armenians of Karabakh would be given the right to "cultural autonomy". It should be noted that at that stage, without the permission of the Azerbaijani government, foreigners arrived in Shushi as members of some organizations and did not present any mandate to the local authorities. Following the recognition of the government of Azerbaijan by the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh,

the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan expressed its protest over the arrival of the Americans in Karabakh without submitting any document”.²⁰

In April, 1919, General Thomson, the head of the British mission in the Caucasus, was replaced by General Shuttleworth. According to the assessment of Y. Ishkhanyan, chairman of the Artsakh National Council: “General Shuttleworth, who succeeded General Thomson, surpassed his predecessor, occupying us more and more with the issue of recognizing the rule of Sultanov, or rather, the rule of Azerbaijan. Through the mission he tried to persuade us to obey the governor’s orders”.²¹ Shuttleworth turned out to be so unbridled that in late April, 1919, he personally left for Goris to demand the recognition of Khosrov Bey Sultanov as the governor-general of Zangezur, but he met with persistent resistance. He was forced to return with threats against Armenians, with the threat of air bombardment and the demand to remove A. Shahmazyan²² insisting that the Armenian government must have publicly renounced Shahmazyan, but secretly financed him.²³ Shuttleworth, who had sent a message to Thomson about the resumption of the Armenian opposition in Zangezur in the person of Shahmazyan and other agents associated with Yerevan, insisted on the termination of repatriation to Nakhichevan until the cooperation between Yerevan and Zangezur ceased, which also displeased Thomson, who was angry with General K. M. Davy, the British military representative in Yerevan who in the first place forced to stop repatriation, using the armed forces if necessary.²⁴

After Shuttleworth’s departure, Rasulzade, the founder of Musavat, announced on August 28 that Azerbaijan would soon extend uninterruptedly from Dagestan to Julfa and the Araxes River in the south,²⁵ *thus claiming to achieve their long-cherished strategic goal of gaining control of the Araks Valley, just like today when Azerbaijan and Turkey persistently seek to open the road to Nakhichevan-Turkey through Syunik-Zangezur and to include the entire Araxes Valley in their ambitious plans, isolating Armenia from all active routes with the outside world.*

And the steps taken by the Government of the RA and the strategic pursuits in foreign policy did not yield significant results. The security of Armenian Karabakh was soon significantly endangered, and therefore the national-and-state security of the Republic of Armenia was undermined in this part of the country. In those circumstances, after isolating Andranik and Dro from involvement in the military-and-political events, Musavat Azerbaijan launched large-scale oppressive actions against the Armenian population of Karabakh, its legitimate national-and-state rights, violating the inalienable right of internationally recognized ethnic groups to self-determination, which had

²⁰ Akhmedova 2019: 174-175.

²¹ Ishkhanyan 1999: 378.

²² Shahmazyan A.P. [1883 -1937]. Well known military figure of the RA.

²³ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 210.

²⁴ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 266.

²⁵ «Nor ashkhatavor», September 1, 1919.

become a reality in some European territories. Azerbaijan had ambitions not only for Artsakh and Zangezur, but also for Sharur-Nakhichevan and even the eastern and northeastern regions of Lake Sevan basin. The command of the British troops in Transcaucasia and their military-and-political representation pursued pro-Azerbaijani policy on this issue. It was with the intervention of the British military-and-political mission in the Caucasus that the advance of Andranik's troops to Shushi was stopped, and for the sake of oil interests the way was paved for the establishment of Dr. Sultanov's repressive power in Karabakh-Artsakh.

In this regard, Azerbaijani historian B. Najafov welcomes Sultanov's actions in Karabakh, expressing satisfaction with the support of the British military-and-political authorities: "However, the confident actions of governor-general Khosrov Bey Sultanov, who was this time fully supported by the British, yielded results very quickly: calm and order were restored".²⁶ Assessing the recent June events in Karabakh, B. Najafov makes a judgement at his subjective discretion: "Dr. Sultanov was appointed governor-general and the British officer and the small British detachment were stationed in Shushi. According to the agreement, Sultanov had to issue his own orders and decrees only with the consent of the representative of England. Even such a governance was rejected by 66 Armenians and when the Azerbaijani messages and proclamations were posted all over the city, the Armenians, provoked by preachers, spoiled them or tore them".²⁷

It was with the knowledge of Great Britain that from the beginning of 1919, Azerbaijan was trying to annex Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan. However, the Armenians of Artsakh have never really recognized the Azerbaijani rule, constantly rebelling against the yoke imposed on them by Azerbaijan, which has had variable success.

The Armenian progress and aspiration for stability were halted by British intervention. On April 3, 1919 Shuttleworth, the representative of the Entente Command, stated that the region would remain as part of Azerbaijan until the Karabakh issue was resolved by the Paris Conference.²⁸

The position and decision of the English side on this issue was unequivocal. Ignoring the complaints of the Armenian government and in order to reaffirm their decision, on April 3 General Shuttleworth, the Commander of the British troops stationed in Baku, issued the following statement: "For the British the fate of Karabakh, as well as Zangezur, was decided. They had decided to annex those lands to Azerbaijan. On January 15, 1919, with Thomson's approval Dr. Khosrov Bey Sultanov, who had a reputation among Armenians as an anti-Armenian and slaughterer, was appointed governor-general. The English Command declared the following to be implemented by the population of Shushi, Zangezur, Jebrail and Jivanshir provinces: 1.

²⁶ Najafov 1994: 66.

²⁷ Najafov 1994: 66-67.

²⁸ Pilipchuk 2021: 132, 136.

by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan of January 15, 1919, Dr. Sultanov was appointed governor-general of the provinces of Shushi, Zangezur, Jebail and Jivanshir, and he enjoys the support of the English command... 2. All the disputed issues will be finally resolved at the Peace Conference.

Simple and sharp: the Karabakh issue was not only a matter of annexing Karabakh to Azerbaijan, but also annexing Zangezur and Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan. ... And indeed, after "resolving" the Karabakh issue, Azerbaijan began to make feverish preparations to "put Zangezur in a harmless position" as well".²⁹ In all of Thomson's subsequent demands in relation to the interim governorate-general, we are dealing not with Karabakh alone but with Karabakh-Zangezur.³⁰

According to A. Khatisyan, second Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, "it was not a purely Muslim policy, but a policy aimed at strengthening a young state with rich oil wells which had been part of Russia. The first steps of the active British policy in the Caucasus were, on the one hand, all kinds of efforts made to include the Armenian regions of Karabakh and Zangezur within the borders of Azerbaijan, to strengthen Dr. Khosrov Bey Sultanov's authority appointed governor there and on the other hand, the withdrawal of Turkish troops under the command of commander Shukri from the Kars region»".³¹

In this connection, at the session of April 3, 1919, the RA government naturally responded that Karabakh could be discussed only with the consent of the representative bodies of the Armenian population of Karabakh.³² However, contrary to the reasonable approach, with the active efforts of the British, in mid-1919 the regime of Khosrov bey Pasha bey oglu Sultanov, a notorious anti-Armenian who had a reputation among Armenians as an executioner, was imposed on the people of Artsakh and Zangezur by force. Naturally, the Azerbaijani politician Sultanov considered it a new "era" in the life of Karabakh. And as S. Vratsyan, the last Prime Minister of the First Republic of Armenia quite rightly wrote: "Unfortunately, a new era did not start, but Sultanov had the right to be proud, because, even if temporarily, Karabakh became part of Azerbaijan. Making the "temporary" "permanent" was a matter of the future, and the Azerbaijani politicians did not give up on that idea".³³

With the active support of General Shuttleworth, in order to establish his power in Artsakh and Zangezur Kh. Sultanov adopted a new strategy, particularly a tactic to flatter the Armenians and to mislead and persuade them with false promises. After the command of the British troops in Karabakh on behalf of Colonel D. Shuttleworth factually confirmed the recognition of governor-general Kh. Sultanov as the sole supreme authority on April 3, 1919, and the population was called upon to

²⁹ Vratsyan 1993: 330-331, 342-343. NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 193, part I, p. 40-40 rev.; MK 1992: 83-84.

³⁰ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 244, p. 2, f. 370, l. 1, f. 40, p. 15-17: Khatisyan 1968: 179-180.

³¹ Khatisyan 1968: 179.

³² See NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 43, p. 59.

³³ Vratsyan 1993: 341-342.

unconditionally obey all his orders the actions of the British became more purposeful and consistently pro-Azerbaijani. History was repeating itself: ignoring Colonel Shuttleworth's threats and baseless demands, on April 23, 1919, the Armenians of Artsakh convened the 5th Congress of Artsakh in Shushi and resolutely rejected the decision to accept the Azerbaijani authority imposed by the British command in order to create a mood to recognize the Azerbaijani rule.³⁴ As Y. Ishkhanyan wrote: "Sultanov conducted separate work with the Armenians, through well-known Turkish merchants, so that the Armenians would visit the governor, take part in provincial matters, and take up positions... Dr. Sultanov thought that by having Armenian officials, he could create the mood among the villagers to recognize the government of Azerbaijan".³⁵ All the efforts of the British and Sultanov aimed at establishing themselves in Artsakh initially failed. Facing the resolute resistance of the Armenians of Artsakh, Colonel Shuttleworth left for Shushi on April 23 to personally make Artsakh accept the Azerbaijani rule. The Zangezur-Karabakh Regional Council, not fearing at all and not giving in to Colonel Shuttleworth's threats addressed to the Armenians of Zangezur, gave the following sharp response: "...we cannot submit to Azerbaijan, the nomad cannot climb a mountain. Only over the ruins of our province and the corpses of the people can Azerbaijan conquer Zangezur and dictate its terms".³⁶ Following the instructions of General Thomson, who paid an official visit to Yerevan in early April and in a meeting with Prime Minister A. Khatisyan and Foreign Minister S. Tigranyan, tried to persuade them and impose his proposal that Karabakh could not survive without importing food from the Yevlakh station of the Batumi-Baku railway, Shuttleworth did not hesitate to threaten the people of Karabakh with economic arguments to impose Sultanov's regime, reasserting that otherwise Nagorno-Karabakh would starve if it disengaged from the eastern plain.³⁷ General Shuttleworth resolved the Karabakh issue within the framework of the British political course, without expressing any desire to oppose Azerbaijan's aspirations. General Shuttleworth returned to Baku on April 26, 1919 and on April 29 he authorized the government of Azerbaijan to make political arrests and restrict freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. Shuttleworth authorized the economic boycott of Karabakh by Azerbaijan resorting to the policy of subjugating Armenians by starvation.³⁸ This pressure on Karabakh was a continuing British behavior that caused some disappointment. It was expressed also in the fact that on the advice and exhortation of Shuttleworth, General Thomson put considerable pressure on the Government of the Republic of Armenia, demanding to put an end to the repatriation of refugees from the regions south of Yerevan until the Armenian government publicly renounced all insurgents in Karabakh and Zangezur. The above-mentioned punitive

³⁴ Ishkhanyan 1999: 393-406.

³⁵ Ishkhanyan 1999: 378-379.

³⁶ «Nor ashkhatavor», July 7, 1919.

³⁷ See Vracyan 1958: 285; Sarur 1929: 128-146.

³⁸ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 187-188.

measures were stopped only after receiving the diplomatically formulated answer of Prime Minister A. Khatisyan and the written complaint of General K. M. Davy.³⁹

The sharp response of the Zangezur-Karabakh Regional Council was not at all a surprise to General Shuttleworth, as he had already dealt many times with the events in Artsakh and was well acquainted with the resistance capabilities of the Armenians of Artsakh and the anti-Azerbaijani sentiment. After receiving the sharp response from the Regional Council, General Shuttleworth, accompanied by his guards consisting of British and Azeri soldiers, left Goris, but continued to take steps to impose his position on Zangezur.

The further developments in connection with the approach and decisions adopted by the Paris Conference in 1919 are interesting and in that sense the position of Azerbaijani historians on the political course of their government: "In early April, 1919, the Supreme Council of the Entente in Paris decided to withdraw the British troops from the region. It should be admitted that the Azerbaijani government initially opposed the withdrawal of the English troops from Azerbaijan because they were not sure whether they could defend themselves from the threat from the north, be it Denikin's army or the Bolsheviks. In the telegram of April, 1919 addressed to D. Shuttleworth, M. Yu. Jafarov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic opened up: "According to the official information of my government, the English troops will leave the borders of Azerbaijan in mid-August. In this regard, the Azerbaijani government decided to ask His Excellency to leave the English troops in Azerbaijan. I would like to add that the conditions under which the English troops can remain within the borders of Azerbaijan can be worked out by mutual consent in case of receiving a response from the British government that they principally agree to leave the troops".⁴⁰ After some negotiations, in his letter to F. Smith, US Consul in Tiflis, A. Khatisyan stated: "The Government of the Republic of Armenia is of the same opinion on the fate of Karabakh as before. The Armenian government wants the Armenian-populated mountaneous part of Karabakh to be declared [a territory] outside the Azerbaijani Karabakh governorate-general and its governance to remain in the hands of the National Council according to the will of the population, and the Azerbaijani troops to be immediately withdrawn from the borders of Armenian Karabakh. The Armenian government considers that region an integral part of Armenia. Control over the governance, approved by the British command, can be exercised by an Englishman as the governor-general of the two - Armenian and Azerbaijani parts of Karabakh."⁴¹ It was this approach that was defended by A. Khatisyan as the official position of the Republic of Armenia during the meetings with W. Thomson held on March 28, 1919 in Yerevan and on April 7 in Tiflis.

The alarmed RA government sent A. Khatisyan on a business trip to Tiflis where negotiations were held on May 3, 1919. The Armenian side was represented by Deputy

³⁹ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 190.

⁴⁰ DRA 1998: 309-310.

⁴¹ See NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 12, part 2, p. 88, 161.

Foreign Minister Khatisyan and Diplomatic Representative in Tiflis L. Yevangulyan, and on the other side there were W. Thomson, W. Beach, K. Davy and their chiefs of staff. During the meeting accusations consisting of 20 points were brought against the Armenian side in regard to Karabakh and Zangezur based on the report prepared by Shuttleworth and Monck-Mason. Thomson and the others were accusing the Armenian side of destructive activities, they presented the miserable situation of the Tatars in those regions who were faced with obstacles in connection with nomadic movement; they opposed the disarmament of nomadic Tatars believing that otherwise the Armenians would exterminate them, which was an absolute fabrication against Armenians. They condemned A. Shahmazyan for his statement that the Karabakh troops were part of the Armenian armed forces, that Zangezur would help Karabakh in any way it could, demanding that the Armenian government immediately withdraw him from Zangezur, etc.⁴² To oppose this, Khatisyan brought counter-arguments consisting of 11 points, stating that: 1) The Armenian government considers Karabakh an integral part of the Republic of Armenia, but before the Paris Conference it is necessary that the region be governed by a British governor-general, and the Armenian Karabakh - by the National Council, and the Muslim part - by the Muslim Council; 2) Karabakh National Councils should have their own armed forces, which are not military units of the Republic of Armenia, and the Armenian government does not give any instructions; 3) the Armenian government considers it possible to allow the Zangezur National Council to give permission to Muslim nomads to go to the mountains on the condition that they be accompanied by British troops and inspectors selected from Armenians and Muslims; 4) The Armenian government has not sent and does not have preachers in Karabakh, and if there are Armenian officers or local public figures who organize local forces and direct them to disobey the Azerbaijani authorities in Karabakh, it is not the result of the Armenian government's actions or orders, but the expression of the will of the 300,000 population of Karabakh which no one can change; and trying to change it through provocations and agitation contradicts the principles of the English policy in general; 5) the movement of refugees to Nakhichevan should be allowed, etc. After listening to Khatisyan, General Thomson made a few remarks, but resolutely demanded that the issue of Shahmazyan and nomadic movement be resolved, to which Khatisyan replied that Shahmazyan had already left Zangezur to report to the government. As to the nomads, Khatisyan expressed readiness to settle the issue on the condition that it be implemented in accordance with the rules approved by the Armenian government. In the end, Thomson reported that he had changed his mind, that he was convinced of the legitimacy of the Armenian arguments, and thus allowed the resumption of the Armenian troops and migrants, touching upon the issue of handing Nakhichevan over to Armenians, etc., after which it was ordered to send a telegram to Dro and Charles allowing to move forward.⁴³

⁴² See NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 12, part 2, p. 141-143; f. 200, l. 1. f. 309, p. 25.

⁴³ NAA, f. 275, l. 5, f. 133, p. 1-3.

On May 6, 1919, in his letter to A. Aharonyan, the RA ambassador to Paris, A. Khatisyan, the RA Deputy Foreign Minister emphasized the voluntary actions of the British command in Karabakh and Zangezur, who pursued not confederate but their own imperial interests, using the subordinate or dependent peoples as an empire from the point of view of their own interests: "The British command wants to keep the outside world unaware of what is happening in the Caucasus, which may attract the attention of the political world or even make the British command change its self-imposed orders. This is why we think that the British are causing some difficulties in having a regular relationship with Europe, especially with you. The Armenian government can never, even temporarily, accept the rule of Azerbaijan over Karabakh, which is an integral part of Armenia. In the complaint to General W. Thomson, Mr. S. Tigranyan offers to establish the British command in Karabakh which should act with the support of the local Armenian National Council until the Karabakh issue is finally resolved at the Paris conference. The Congress convened on April 23 and unanimously decided not to accept the rule of Azerbaijan under any circumstances, even temporarily. They suggested our government to remove A. Shahmazyan from Goris, objecting that he had disregarded the British authorities and declared Goris a region of Yerevan. The government refused to call Mr. A. Shahmazyan saying that his statement corresponded to the government's views on the Karabakh issue".⁴⁴

Not satisfied with the official telegrams and requests submitted to the Government of the Republic of Armenia, on May 8, 1919, General Thomson again for the same purpose, invited Yevangulov, Armenia's diplomatic representative to Georgia, and informed him that, according to the reports by General Shuttleworth and Colonel Monck-Mason, the situation and order in Karabakh, as well as in Goris and Zangezur provinces was disturbed mainly as a result of Captain Shahmazyan's aggressive policy. According to General Thomson, for some reason Captain Shahmazyan, who had declared himself governor-general in Karabakh, based on the authority and instructions of the Armenian government, injected the local population with the idea of disobeying the Azerbaijani authorities, since Karabakh was an integral part of Armenia.⁴⁵

And the main weapon of Azerbaijan against Armenians became Shuttleworth, the commander of the British troops in Baku succeeding General Thomson. Through him the Azerbaijani Musavatists tried to impose the rule of Azerbaijan on the people of Artsakh. Leo's axiomatic conclusion about the anti-Armenian attitude of Shuttleworth and others is very accurate: "Musavat knew what they were doing, and it was not by chance that the British command was their close, bosom friend. General Shuttleworth, who succeeded Thomson, stubbornly rejects all ... demands (of the people of Karabakh – V.V.), he is Sultanov's agent, he personally goes to Shushi to attend the congress and to demand Sultanov's recognition".⁴⁶

⁴⁴ NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 193, part 7, p. 222-225 rev., l. 2, f. 55, p. 1-5, f.c. - 4033, l. 2, f. 963, p. 130-136.

⁴⁵ «Nor ashkhataavor», April 17, 1919.

⁴⁶ Leo 2009: 388.

Azerbaijan used every kind of ambush to break the spirit of resistance of the people of Karabakh, using military force as well, to which Armenians, naturally, responded as best as they could. As we can see, Sultan Bey Sultanov, nevertheless, managed to deceitfully and spitefully overcome the resistance of the Armenians of Artsakh and impose the August 22, 1919 law, according to which Artsakh was obliged to temporarily submit to Azerbaijan until the decision of the Paris Peace Conference. But unfortunately the Armenian government had no doubt that the decision would be pro-Armenian, which was, in fact, the result of political miscalculations by the Armenian side, a gross political mistake and ultimately a defeat in the military-and-political conflict with Azerbaijan, which was greatly facilitated by the pro-Azerbaijani position of the British command in Transcaucasia. In this connection, R. Hovhannisyan noted very accurately: "The regulation of August 22, 1919 was a personal victory for Khosrov Bey Sultanov and a national victory for Azerbaijan. Karabakh eventually came under the temporary rule of Azerbaijan. And the Provisional Government was an influential and big step towards permanent rule. Whatever tactics the Republic of Armenia adopted in the future, it would not be able to force Azerbaijan to leave those Armenian-populated highlands. In addition to its stubborn persistence, Azerbaijan took advantage of the patronage of the British commanders, the delays of the Paris Peace Conference in taking practical action regarding the disputed territory and the general incapacity of the Armenian government. All that was left for Armenians was only the promise of autonomy to Karabakh and the contentment that Zangezur was not included in the general republic"⁴⁷.

During those historical and political upheavals there were also dangerous turns, political slips and deviations: thus, examining the situation and making sure that it could not receive any tangible assistance from abroad and that the British in fact defended the Azerbaijanis and in its turn the Armenian government was not able to provide any serious military-and-political support and real aid (in which case irreparable mistakes and political slips had been made by the Armenian government, particularly by certain military figures), after thorough considerations and weighing their own capabilities, the 7th Congress of Karabakh held on August 12, 1919, decided to accept the agreement with Baku on August 15, as a result of which on August 22, 1919 the notorious agreement was signed, "hoping" as if the fate of Nagorno-Karabakh would be resolved "unconditionally and justly" in the European Peace Conference of the great powers. It should be mentioned that the agreement of August 22, 1919 did not significantly change the situation of Armenians. On the one hand Sultanov, governor-general of Azerbaijan, tried to disunite the Armenians, and on the other hand, he tried to gather military forces to suppress them with weapons. On August 22, 1919, a grave mistake was made and as a result of the unnecessary military-and-political slip of the Armenian government the Armenians of Artsakh agreed to temporarily submit to the Azerbaijani authorities, but soon they were subjugated.

⁴⁷ Hovhannisyan 2005: 205.

As a result, Dr. Sultanov's Musavat administration, with the notorious agreement of August 22, 1919, was able to "persuade" the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh or rather force its will to temporarily accept the rule of Azerbaijan in Karabakh until the final settlement of the issue by the Entente states of the Paris Conference playing the role of "Arbitration" and claiming to be friends of the Armenian people (England, France, etc.), thus radically endangering the interests of the Republic of Armenia in that corner of the region, which was a very huge and gross political miscalculation, reflected in the results of the Assembly of Transcaucasian Republics of April, 1920.⁴⁸

Therefore, it can be concluded that Armenia could not achieve the desired results and strengthen the position of the Republic of Armenia by deploying regular army units in the region. Having strengthened itself in Zangezur, Armenia failed to establish itself in Karabakh, suffering painful failures and defeats, which was significantly facilitated by the British authorities with their pro-Azerbaijani policy, as well as the unpromising and reckless strategy of the Armenian government, which was fully anchored in the results expected from the Paris Conference of the Entente powers, as a result of which at first Andranik's and Dro's military units were deceptively removed from Karabakh, as well as A. Shahmazyan, who had won a number of victories against the Azerbaijanis, etc. This significantly weakened the position of the Armenian army in Artsakh,⁴⁹ which, on January 21, 1919, by the decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, established the Artsakh-Zangezur Provisional Board and Captain A. Shahmazyan was appointed commissar-general – governor-general of Artsakh-Zangezur, who was to operate in Zangezur in cooperation and in coordination with the National Council of the province,⁵⁰ which stemmed from the concern of the RA Government regarding the appointment of Khosrov Bek Sultanov as governor of Artsakh-Zangezur and the pro-Azerbaijani position of the British on that issue.

Dissatisfied with the official telegrams and requests submitted to the RA Government, on May 8, 1919, again for the same purpose General Thomson invited L. Yevangulov, the diplomatic representative of Armenia to Georgia and told him that according to the reports of General Shuttleworth and Colonel Monck-Mason, the situation and order in Karabakh, as well as in Goris and Zangezur province were disturbed mainly due to Captain Shahmazyan's aggressive policy. According to General Thomson, for some reason Captain Shahmazyan, who had declared himself governor-general of Karabakh, based on the authority and instructions of the Armenian government, injected the local population with the idea of disobeying the Azerbaijani authorities, because Karabakh was an integral part of Armenia. During the meeting with Yevangulov, General Thomson also made baseless accusations against A. Shahmazyan, which were as ridiculous as could be expressed only by a person with a

⁴⁸ See Virabyan 2004.

⁴⁹ See Hovhannisyan 2005: 169-215.

⁵⁰ See NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 38, p. 4.

pronounced anti-Armenian mood, sick and devoid of ideology. As General Thomson stated: "Neither Enver Pasha nor the Young Turks have done or are doing as much damage to the Armenian people as Shahmazyans and their ideologues, whom I want to believe, Mr. Khatisyan will be able to isolate..."⁵¹

It should be clearly noted that the role of the British military-and-political mission in Transcaucasia in the pro-Armenian settlement of the Artsakh-Syunik issue was rather negative. With their two-faced palliative political decisions they hindered the easing of tensions in the Armenian-Azerbaijani relations and the establishment of the status quo, of course, only after the elimination of the accumulated "wrinkles". At that time, the withdrawal of British troops began; on August 15 and 18 the 84th Punjab Regiment from Baku stopped in Yevlakh to take with them the detachment of Colonel Reginald Tyler, who had closed the British mission in Shushi two days earlier to allow the Armenians of Karabakh to reconcile with the Azerbaijani army; and the headquarters of Shuttleworth was closed on August 23, in honor of which a sumptuous dinner was organized on August 24.⁵²

In this regard, it is important to mention that in late November, 1919, during the Armenian-Azerbaijani conference in Tiflis, Colonel G. Ray, deputy of Haskel (High Commissioner of the Allies) made a statement and falsifying the real facts claimed that according to his information, Sultanov was appointed by the British temporarily, for the period of the evacuation of the Germans and Turks, and that Sultanov was later recalled by the British, after which he left for Baku and stayed there for a short period of time, and then he returned to Shushi, but already without any authorization from the British. Then Ray went further with his falsification, noting that the British were already preparing to send their troops to Karabakh as if unknowingly claiming that it later turned out that the Italians were to arrive there, occupy Shushi and rule the region. Then it was said that the Italians did not come, the British prepared to go there again, but an order was issued for their total removal through Batumi, and Dr. Sultanov still remained there, already without the British authorization, which was denied by the Azerbaijani leadership. During the conference, in response to Colonel G. Ray's statement, Usubbekov stated: "All of this regarding the recall of Sultanov by the British is absolute news to me, as Sultanov was not appointed by the British. *He was appointed by the Azerbaijani government with the consent of the British. I had a very long conversation with General Corey before he left and General Corey fully agreed that he (Sultanov – V.V.) should continue to stay in Karabakh*".⁵³

In February 1920, a large part of the Azerbaijani army, about 10,000 people, were gathered on the Karabakh front.⁵⁴ The people of Karabakh also, receiving some help from abroad, resisted the implementation of those plans. On February 19, Sultanov

⁵¹ «Nor ashkhatavor», April 17, 1919.

⁵² Hovhannisyan 2014: 151.

⁵³ Tumanyan 2012: 248-249.

⁵⁴ See Vracyan 1958: 394 -395.

demanded that Karabakh be declared part of Azerbaijan. The people of Karabakh rejected this illegal demand at their congresses. The Armenians of Karabakh revolted, defending themselves from the atrocities and policy of massacres of Azerbaijan. As S. Vratsyan mentions, the consequences could have been much more catastrophic if Dro's expeditionary unit had not arrived in Karabakh on April 13. He took power in the region, announced a mobilization on April 15 in Varanda and Dizak, strengthened the fronts and stayed in Karabakh for 45 days. On April 22, the 9th Congress of Karabakh was convened in the village of Taghavard where, with 44 votes against one, it was once again decided to reject the Azerbaijani government and to consider Artsakh-Karabakh part of Armenia.⁵⁵

During that time Azerbaijan, not taking into account anything and taking advantage of the permissiveness, continued to implement his anti-Armenian programs step by step. On September 10, 1920, the RA diplomatic representative in Baku wrote: "The Azerbaijani authorities, considering Zangezur, Karabakh, Nakhichevan, Sharur, Surmalu, Ghazakh an integral part of their republic, did not release from conscription Western Armenians living in different parts of Azerbaijan, such as Western Armenian refugees temporarily living in the village of Chardakhlou in the Gandzak region".⁵⁶

In April 1920 gathering at Tiflis the Transcaucasian republics did not make any fundamental and final decisions, but the Assembly's prehistory and its lessons are instructive, revealing the political-and-diplomatic orientations of each side, possible and overt mistakes in foreign policy calculations and why not the failures, which were obvious in the case of the Republic of Armenia. The Assembly was convened at a time when some "shifts" appeared to have taken place in Armenia, which again filled with hope, dulled the elements of sober thinking and restored the blind allegiance to the British-French allies. In January 1920 the government was *de facto* recognized by a group of great powers, and there was relative peace within the borders. The government managed to quell the Muslim uprisings in Zangibasar, Kars-Aghbaba, Zodbasargechar and other provinces, which alarmed the region. It was a temporary and unstable calm on the eve of the catastrophic developments, which weakened the attention of the Armenian government and its analytical capacity to perceive the internally accumulated alarms.

And the reason for convening this assembly of the Transcaucasian republics was the well-known events in Karabakh, which became inextricably linked with other regional issues.

In Tiflis the allies and the Transcaucasian Assembly demanded to end the bloodshed, and the parties were forced to obey. This was also demanded by E. Gegechkori who was concerned about the real dangers of Georgia getting involved in the chaos. On March 27, N. V. Zhordania, the Prime Minister of Georgia, appealed to the representatives of the allies, asking for their mediation to extinguish the fire of

⁵⁵ See Vratsyan 1958: 396.

⁵⁶ NAA, f. 278, l. 1, f. 321, p. 95.

Karabakh and to calm down the Transcaucasian region. On April 1 the representatives of England, France and Italy O. Wardrop, Count de Martel and Colonel Melkiade Gabba sent a collective telegram to Baku and Yerevan “ardently urging” them to peacefully and immediately resolve the issues of Karabakh and other provinces where “peace is at stake”. “If this solemn call for reconciliation is not heard at a time when the fate of the whole Transcaucasia is at stake, it could have very serious consequences for your governments”.⁵⁷ The Armenian government immediately responded on April 2, stating that they fully agreed with the proposal of the representatives of the allies and that on April 5 the deputies would be in Tiflis to participate in the Transcaucasian Conference with the aim of resolving all disputes peacefully. On April 4, the Parliament of Armenia also addressed the events in Karabakh and approved the policy pursued by the government.⁵⁸ On April 4, 1920, Tigran Bekzadyan, the RA diplomatic representative in Tiflis informed in a telegram sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that a meeting with M. Gabba took place on April 2, during which the Commissioner of Italy expressed regret over the Armenians’ uprising in Karabakh at a time when Armenia’s borders were being drawn and that such a step did not make sense, just like Azerbaijan’s interference in the situation in the Kars region. Bekzadyan also informed that he had tried to persuade Gabba and the other representatives of the Allies that the reason for the Karabakh uprising was not external, i.e. the intervention of the Republic of Armenia, but the violation by Azerbaijan of the interim agreement of August 22, 1919 and the illegal attempts to disarm the Armenians of Karabakh.⁵⁹

In its April 4, 1920 issue, “Mshak” blamed the British and others for the unfavorable course of Karabakh’s fate and the establishment of Sultanov’s bloodthirsty regime, considering that it was the British generals who sided with Sultanov against 200,000 Armenians and that Thomson’s, Shuttleworth’s and Corey’s hands were covered in Armenian blood.⁶⁰

The conference began on April 9, 1920. Influential politicians of Transcaucasia took part in the conference: from Azerbaijan - Hasan Bey Aghayev, Olgerd Bey Krichinsky, Faris Bey Vekilov (in this regard it should be noted that Hamo Ohanjanyan was not of this opinion. In his letter of April 8, 1920, addressed to Alexander Khatisyan, he, as we consider through some misunderstanding and erroneously believed that having the above-mentioned representatives in the well-known conference, Azerbaijan did not attach serious importance to that conference,⁶¹ which absolutely did not

⁵⁷ See Hovhannisyan 2015: 200.

⁵⁸ See NAA f. 278, l. 1, f. 321, p. 397.

⁵⁹ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 563, p. 62.

⁶⁰ «Mshak», April 4, 1920.

⁶¹ Fatali Khan Khoyski was expected in Tiflis but he did not arrive, and taking advantage of that, the Azerbaijani delegates by no means agreed to discuss the ceasefire in his absence, citing the lack of instructions. The head of the Azerbaijani delegation explained it by Agha-oghli Ahmed Aghayev’s illness. And despite the protests of the Armenian and Georgian delegates, Aghayev did not yield and the discussion of one of the most vital issues was delayed day by day, at a time when blood was flowing like a river in Karabakh, while the conference was busy discussing secondary issues, such as the publicity of the conference proceedings. See BAA 1996: 74.

correspond to reality and which is simply refuted by an impartial study of the conference materials. The level of the rather high preparedness of the “inexperienced” and “non-serious” representatives of Azerbaijan and on the contrary, both the inexperience and the certain unpreparedness of the Armenian delegates, and the biased unrealistic disposition and assessments of things and phenomena become obvious - V.V.); from Georgia - E. P. Gegechkori, G. S. Lordkipanidze, and from the Republic of Armenia - H. I. Ohanjanyan, T. Bekzadyan, S. H. Khachatryan and others.

The Georgian delegation wisely and prudently tried to use the situation to the advantage of Georgia, often finding hidden common ground with the Azerbaijanis, with whom back in June 1919 they signed a military-and-political alliance of a defensive nature. The Georgians did not make a decisive attempt to overcome the Armenian-Georgian issues and to settle the disputes, despite some aspirations of the Armenian delegation, which were not sufficiently consistent and were conditional. This was clear from the very first moment when the issue of the cessation of hostilities was being decided, which was postponed indefinitely from April 10 until the response from the Azerbaijani government.

Then E. Gegechkori expressed the view that the territorial issue was the main source of disagreement, considering the key to its regulation to be the “pacification” of the region with a homogeneous population, which was supposed to put an end to the divisive wars. Based on that, Ye. Gegechkori emphasized the issue of unification against external danger, namely against the Bolshevik threat coming from the north, saying that they had already started it by concluding transit agreements with Azerbaijan and Armenia. And as to how sincere it was, became obvious by Georgia’s further position towards Armenia and Azerbaijan separately, as it became a more or less real opportunity for trade, import of food and fuel, which was vital in Armenia’s case, especially since the necessary weapons and ammunition for the Armenian army, grain and flour were imported on the basis of the agreement on transit signed with Georgia on November 3, 1919. On April 10, St. G. Mamikonyan, a member of the Armenian delegation took the floor at the conference and first of all emphasized the issue of cessation of clashes. T. Bekzadyan joined him, however, according to Gegechkori the session was suspended because the Azerbaijani delegation had not yet received clear instructions from their government on their official position.⁶²

Nevertheless, Hasan bey Aghayev, the representative of the Azerbaijani delegation, announced that his government agreed on the cessation of hostilities in the whole territory of Transcaucasia. Accordingly, Gegechkori proposed to follow up on: a) the measures to be taken by the Assembly to end the bloody conflicts, b) the proposed solutions to the territorial disputes of the Transcaucasian republics, c) the decisions to be taken on the coordination of actions on foreign policy issues, d) the issue of agreeing positions on the establishment of a confederation.⁶³ T. Bekzadyan stated that if the

⁶² See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, p. 158-160.

⁶³ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, p. 164.

Assembly did not reach an agreement on the cessation of hostilities, the Armenian delegation could not take part in the formation of any union, which would cause a deadlock. The fuss and the atmosphere of disunity continued, and it is evident that, for obvious reasons, it was for the benefit of the Georgian and Azerbaijani sides, in line with their interests. G. S. Lordkipanidze offered the following: "The Assembly of the Transcaucasian republics, discussing the issue of the cessation of hostilities between the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia, decides: a) to announce its firm decision to cease all hostilities; b) to notify the governments of the respective republics of the decision of the Assembly; c) to elect a commission to investigate the events that have taken place".

Meanwhile, Aghayev, the Azerbaijani delegate, showed an ambiguous approach to the issue. In solidarity with the Georgian representative Lordkipanidze, he found it necessary to mention in the resolution that the war was being waged not only in Azerbaijan, but also outside its borders, which was a diplomatically calculated approach and drew the Armenian side into a more difficult phase. It is noteworthy that Aghayev, changing the real content of the national-and-political relations, saw in the ongoing clashes only war between the well-known "nations - Muslims and Armenians". That is why he insisted on "stopping the hostilities where they were taking place". Fairly, the Armenian delegation, rightly understanding the bias of the viewpoint of the Azerbaijani side, proposed to replace the word "*Muslims*" with the word "*Azerbaijanis*". However, the Azerbaijani delegation insisted that the resolution state that hostilities between Armenians and Azerbaijanis were taking place both within the borders of the republics and outside the borders of Azerbaijan, for example, in Armenia. The latest assertion caused the discussion of the issue to reach a deadlock.⁶⁴

The Azerbaijani delegation made a statement, according to which, considering that the conflict was taking place not between the "subjects of the republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, but between the Armenians and "Muslims", so in order to free the border from their or other Muslim immigrants' actions against Armenia, Azerbaijan proposed to point out in the resolution that it was a matter of clashes between "Muslims" in the Transcaucasian region and Armenians. According to F. bey Vekilov, in the conditions of general clashes there were no guarantees that the conflict zones would decrease, so it was necessary to show clearly and definitely that it was about the native Armenian population in Azerbaijan and respectively, the Muslim population in Armenia. The Armenian delegation offered to point out the places of clashes: "Stop the clashes in Karabakh, Nukhi, Nakhichevan, Ordubad and other places where they are taking place between Armenians and Azerbaijanis within the borders of Transcaucasia". The Armenian delegation emphasized that in connection with the situation of Muslims in Armenia, as well as that of Armenians in Azerbaijan, the Assembly could express a general opinion that no persecution or violence because of nationality should be allowed within the borders of these republics. As a result of the debate and following

⁶⁴ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, p. 166.

Lordkipanidze's proposals, the resolution was adopted as follows: a) immediately stop all the bloody clashes that are currently taking place in Nukhi, Nakhichevan, Ordubad and Karabakh; b) at the same time, the Assembly urges the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan to immediately take decisive action to rule out the possibility of any conflict between the Armenian and Muslim populations within the respective republics; c) immediately inform the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan of this decision for them to take appropriate measures.⁶⁵ However, ignoring the resolution already recorded by the conference to stop the hostile actions, not only the hostile actions, but also the massacre of the disarmed Armenian population continued in different Armenian-populated areas of Karabakh and Azerbaijan.

At its April 12 session the Assembly discussed Lordkipanidze's resolution on restoring the legal status that existed before the military conflict. In this regard, Olgerd Bey Krichinsky, the representative of Azerbaijan considered that there could be no question of full restoration of the August 22 agreement and of the previous status, but only the restoration of the factual situation that existed during the agreement of November 23, 1919, in which the two countries were before the latest clashes. And Aghayev added that it undoubtedly included the August 22 agreement between the Karabakh National Assembly and the government of Azerbaijan, as well as the other acts and agreements that existed before November 23, which was certainly a reasonably calculated approach by the Azerbaijanis.

After Aghayev, T. Bekzadyan took the floor stating that "the November 23 agreement does not say anything about any legal norm and status, but only accepts the non-use of weapons and applying to intermediary arbitration in case of disagreements". According to him, this agreement seemed to include the previous agreement of August 22 between the Armenian National Assembly of Karabakh and the Government of Azerbaijan. In response, Krichinsky made a remark, saying that the November 23 act was already being absorbed by the current Assembly. "The same provisions were adopted there as those we have included in our decision", - Krichinsky stated. He then added that it was necessary to restore the factual situation that existed before November 23, continuing to keep unchanged the stereotype of the position of the Azerbaijani side towards the solution of the problem.

Trying to oppose the Azerbaijani delegation, H. Ohanjanyan made a step back in his speech, saying that the August 22 agreement was violated by the Armenian National Assembly, and only then he claimed that the November 23 agreement and connection was broken by the Azerbaijani government in the sense that the latter turned to weapons instead of arbitration. Therefore, according to him, there were two ways out of that situation - return to the "*status quo*" in both Karabakh and Zangezur, or acceptance of the existing factual situation, assurance of a ceasefire and stopping clashes where they were going on.⁶⁶ Finally, at its April 12 session the Assembly of the republics of

⁶⁵ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 167-170.

⁶⁶ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 167-170.

Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia decided to: “immediately fully restore the legal status that existed before the clashes, based on the agreements reached by the Assemblies of Armenia-Azerbaijan and the Transcaucasian Republics, as well as the agreements of the National Councils with the respective governments”.⁶⁷

Member of the Azerbaijani delegation, Polish Tatar Olgerd Konstantin Krichinsky-Nayman, who was a rather experienced diplomat, opposed this, claiming that the August 22 agreement had been violated in many occasions, and there could only be the question of returning to the borders which existed on November 23 as the last resort, the final chord that they sought to see as the starting point, confirming the factual situation in terms of the borders.⁶⁸ Opposing it in principle, T. Bekzadyan claimed that there had been a certain confusion of concepts, not denying that Azerbaijan had taken over Karabakh (although temporarily, by deceiving the Armenians), so there could be no question of agreement with the population (there is a contradiction here, as the relevant agreement had been reached, albeit temporarily – V.V.). Then, continuing to develop his very contradictory speech, T. Bekzadyan came to the conclusion that this was no longer domination, but a well-known agreement based on special conditions. In his opinion, if that agreement had been violated by one side or the other, the *status quo ante* that existed before the clashes should be restored, i.e. the situation in which Karabakh could be under the rule of Azerbaijan, if there was this or that substantiation, by agreement with the National Council.⁶⁹

Here it is appropriate to state clearly: the Azerbaijani diplomatic delegates did not leave the impression of amateurs at all, especially Krichinsky, while the Armenian delegate-diplomats gave way to sensitivity, misguided and hopeless assessments of the situation. Thus, Krichinsky, speaking immediately after Bekzadyan, insisted on the viewpoint that the August 22 agreement with the Karabakh National Council should not be accepted as an act of an international nature, but as an internal governance act of instructional nature.⁷⁰ Yes, this is a brilliant classic example of diplomatic rhetoric, a good, centuries-old way of fooling others, which has often justified itself and benefited the side that used it. T. Bekzadyan opposed the above-mentioned viewpoint and failing to find a stronger argument, claimed that if the act was not published it would become clear that it was not an instruction of internal governance, but an international agreement, invented and approved by the Azerbaijani government.⁷¹ As expected, Krichinsky did not agree with this view and not without reason noted that the people of Karabakh, albeit temporarily, had agreed to submit to the Azerbaijani authorities, claiming that after Karabakh accepted the rule of Azerbaijan by the August 22 act, the Karabakh issue became an internal issue of the Azerbaijani government. And if it was

⁶⁷ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 167-168.

⁶⁸ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 167-169; Tumanyan 2012: 418, 449.

⁶⁹ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 167-170.

⁷⁰ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 168-170.

⁷¹ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 169-170.

claimed that Karabakh was in a completely isolated condition, then it created *a state within a state*.⁷²

As painful as this is, it is necessary to emphasize here an essential consideration regarding the Armenian historical and political literature that either covered up this fact or avoided the existing problem concealing unfavorable materials, as well as demonstrating an evident attempt to avoid comprehensive coverage and realistic political assessment of the issue. It is obvious that by the act of August 22, 1919, Armenians of Karabakh and Armenia made a grave mistake, albeit temporarily, which is a very questionable, unserious and reckless approach to diplomatic-and-political relations, that by agreeing to accept the rule of the Azerbaijani government, the Armenians of Karabakh, with almost no help from the RA government and hoping for the expected support of its allies of the Entente, found themselves in a deadlock and suffered a painful defeat. It should also be emphasized that the Karabakh National Council gave such a dangerous, politically undesirable consent, having given up all hope of receiving any real help from the metropolis, the Yerevan government. And if they got it, it was belated and incomplete. It is a fact and it should be pointed out that for the Azerbaijani government this “temporarily” had no restrictions; and in this case they were “right” to exploit that circumstance. It is another thing that the Armenians tried not to accept the diplomatic-and-political defeat they suffered in this Assembly (it happens, but it should not happen) or tried to get out of the deadlock. This is already understandable.

Nevertheless, Bekzadyan and Krichinsky did not come to an agreement on the viewpoints, mutually accepting that it was just an ordinary legal act. After that, Gegechkori made a confusing statement, as if trying to bring the parties to their senses, reconcile them or find the key to an interim solution to the issue. According to him, it was necessary to restore the situation that existed before the clashes, as the agreement of November 23, 1919 was also based on it which was accepted by both parties. Continuing to hold his point of view, he considered that a mistake had been made on Karabakh or another issue and in order to restore that status the parties should be called to order. Then he concluded that whether there was an uprising in the known region or an attack on the guards by the population or violence, disarmament - these must be resolved in the Assembly. Concluding his statement, E. Gegechkori, the well-known Georgian diplomat and skillful politician concluded that it was necessary to return to the well-known starting point, which was once again confirmed by the November 23 agreement, emphasizing the fact that the agreement included that of August 22.⁷³ This was just a “brilliant” classic example of verbose diplomacy, demonstrated by Menshevik Gegechkori, one of the patriarchs of Georgian diplomacy. In response to the latter, Hamo Ohanjanyan only insisted that the August 22 legal act be included in the agreement.⁷⁴ Finally, a resolution was adopted accepted by both parties, which was as

⁷² See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 10-170.

⁷³ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 171.

⁷⁴ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 171.

follows: "Immediately fully restore the legal status that existed before the clashes, based on the agreements reached by the Assemblies of Armenia-Azerbaijan and the Transcaucasian Republics, as well as the agreements of the National Councils with the respective governments".

It seemed that the ice started moving, but immediately after that (at first glance, it seems accidentally) the Azerbaijani delegate Aghayev published a telegram about the violation of the ceasefire by the Armenians in the Ghazakh region. This once again shows that very often one thing can be said, but another thing can be done, at the same time moving one's own case forward, which the Azerbaijanis did, while in Armenia they often only engaged in diplomatic card game, not seeing the real process of the development of events, and Azerbaijan often saw the way out of the undesirable situation by escalating the situation in this or that area and creating explosive hotbeds in different parts of Transcaucasia like the Allies.

Of course, it did not end there. It is noteworthy that on April 13, Krichinsky, the representative of Azerbaijan, presented the next Azeri "surprise", making a statement on the resolution adopted by the Assembly on April 12. In his speech it was emphasized that regarding the resolution adopted by the Assembly on April 12, 1920 on the need to restore the legal "*status*" on the basis of the agreements reached by the National Councils with the respective governments, the Azerbaijani delegation, in order to avoid "being misunderstood", considered it necessary to state that the legal status stemming from the act of August 22, 1919 led to the subjection of the known parts of Karabakh to the Government of Azerbaijan within the known territorial boundaries, if they had changed as a result of the clashes, and measures should be taken to eliminate them in accordance with the known resolution.⁷⁵

In his letter of April 14, 1920, addressed to the RA Prime Minister A. Khatisyan H. Ohanjanyan mentioned the Azerbaijani viewpoint, saying that the Azeri delegates to the Assembly had stated that by saying restoration of the *status quo ante* (initial state – V.V.) they meant only the restoration of the borders, and they understood the internal status of Karabakh only in terms of submission of Karabakh to Azerbaijan and nothing more.⁷⁶ In response, T. Bekzadyan objected arguing that it was unnecessary to make changes in the already adopted resolution. Gegechkori offered to eliminate the issue, to hand over the adopted resolution to the press, and not to start a debate about the statement made.⁷⁷ For obvious reasons Krichinsky opposed the publication of the resolution in the press, and this was opposed by Gegechkori, whose proposal was accepted. The Azerbaijani side declared that its government could never agree to that decision, renouncing its own consent given on April 12. The Armenian delegation involuntarily agreed to postpone the announcement of the resolution for two days. As a

⁷⁵ See NAA f. 200, l. 1, f. 516, p. 44-45.

⁷⁶ See BAA 1996: 80.

⁷⁷ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 175-176.

result, because of the Georgian neutrality and Azerbaijani insistence the Armenian side found itself in a deadlock.

At the April 14 session of the Assembly the issue of sending commissions (consisting of 6 people) to the locations of the clashes was discussed. The Armenian side insisted that first a commission be sent to Ghazakh, after which they went on to review the April 12 decision. Krichinsky emphasized that at that time they did not have the object of international discussion, in case of which they had the right to insist on abiding by any agreement. According to Bekzadyan, the agreement had lost its validity due to the violation of the terms of military actions and the amendment concerning the legal status proposed by Krichinsky should be rejected (i.e. concerning temporary demarcation lines). Krichinsky believed that if until the known time the state power in Karabakh belonged to the Armenian National Council, then, since the moment of recognizing the power of Azerbaijan, albeit temporarily, the power of that council was abolished, dissolving into the sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and at the mentioned time only that sovereignty existed in Karabakh because legally there could not be two sovereignties in the same territory. The Azerbaijani government did not refuse that viewpoint.⁷⁸ It must be admitted that Krichinsky's point of view was really somewhat invulnerably substantiated from the legal point of view, which the Azerbaijani side skillfully clung to and oppressed the Armenian side with its counter-arguments. Moreover, it is undeniable that it was a unique approach from the political point of view as well, which was perfectly comprehended by Krichinsky and the Azerbaijani delegation, building each calculation from the position of priority of their own national-and-state interests. And if Azerbaijan managed, albeit temporarily (it was not eventually clear what was the duration of that "*temporarily*") to persuade the Armenian National Council of Karabakh to accept Azerbaijan's rule, it should be considered a diplomatic-and-political defeat for Armenia and for Azerbaijan - a unique victory.

In response, S. Khachatryan continued to insist that in case the Assembly failed, the Armenian government might agree to the above provision, but the Assembly should discuss the issue of the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan's sovereign rights over Karabakh and if the Azerbaijani government had violated the terms of the agreement, it already lost its rights. Besides, there were contractual relations, relations between the known regions and the government. Instead, Aghayev said that they did not want the Assembly to affirm the right of force, that there had been no war, but a riot, and the government had established order through the armed forces, and he offered to pass their resolution. Then Lordkipanidze claimed that, undoubtedly, the Karabakh issue was of international nature. According to him, the contractual act of the agreement stated that the Armenian population submitted to the government of Azerbaijan before the decision of the Peace Conference (this is, of course, a remarkable approach – V.V.), and it should be taken into account as an international document. And since the ratification document on that agreement was violated, the interests of the case demanded that the two governments

⁷⁸ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 178-179.

restore the previous situation. And if the Assembly could maintain the purity of international law, the case might benefit from it.⁷⁹ Mamikonyan, the Armenian delegate who took the floor after him, claimed that the Azerbaijani government had taken over Karabakh only temporarily. Receiving no support from the Armenian government the Armenian population had been forced to agree only to temporarily submit to Azerbaijan, stating that if the Azerbaijani government found it difficult to agree to that provision, it must ratify it publicly, otherwise there could be no question of an Assembly. Gegechkori not accidentally inflamed the situation by suggesting whether the Azerbaijani delegation could guarantee the rights of the Armenian population of Karabakh. Naturally, the Azerbaijani side immediately expressed certain readiness and in this regard Aghayev, speaking on behalf of the government of Azerbaijan, declared that his government would provide all the national-and-cultural rights they enjoyed before the clashes to the loyal Armenian population of Karabakh that would return.⁸⁰ In response, the RA delegate H. Ohanjanyan emphasized in this regard that the mention of the words “loyal” and “national-and-cultural rights” in the declaration did not satisfy them, since besides those rights there were other rights in Karabakh as well. It should be pointed out that this was a very verbose and unprincipled approach to the complex political issue, which the Azerbaijanis would obviously cling to, offering an approach convenient for them. Nevertheless, the Armenian delegation insisted that the declaration include a reservation, i.e. all the rights and responsibilities enjoyed by the Armenian population be ensured. In this regard, the Armenian delegation stated that they were not satisfied with that declaration, therefore, they could not agree with the above-mentioned decision. On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan Aghayev, agreeing with Lordkipanidze’s new proposal stated that the Government of Azerbaijan would preserve the previously enjoyed national-and-cultural rights of the Armenian population of Karabakh who would return to their homes. Taking note of this statement, the Assembly decided to send telegrams to the places where the bloody clashes were still going on, and also to address the peoples of Transcaucasia with a special statement.⁸¹

In its further work (April 17 session), the Assembly heard the opinion of the commission that had gone to Ghazakh. G. Makharadze, member of the commission, reported that the clashes started on April 5 and ended on April 9 at the initiative of the local population. 10 villages were burnt, 9 of which were Muslim and one Armenian. These events took place between April 10 and April 17. It was informed that the commission had called for an end to the clashes and for returning to their places of residence. In this regard, Khan-Khoyski published the telegram from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan. According to Vekilov, the Muslim population in Ghazakh was in a state of alarm and was afraid of new attacks.⁸² S. Mamikonyan, not so sure of

⁷⁹ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 180.

⁸⁰ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 180.

⁸¹ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 548, 180.

⁸² See NAA, f. 200, l.1, f. 576, p. 4.

the completeness of his own approach, stated how such a telegram could have been received, as they were there on the eve of the clashes, talked to both sides, the villagers and the governor-general, and no such statement was made.⁸³ In response, Krichinsky offered his own solution, stating that the Karabakh issue should be separated from the issues under discussion, and that there could be no question of the legal status of Ghazakh, but only the borders should be restored. Instead, the RA delegate S. Mamikonyan said that they were guided by the principle of expediency, and he wanted the Assembly to clarify what status should there be in Ghazakh (as if Ghazakh were an indisputable Azerbaijani territory since time immemorial. Such an approach of the Armenian delegation is very strange or were they unaware of history or? – V.V.).

Feeling threatened, Khan-Khoyski wisely expressed the opinion that such a divided approach to the issue (to Ghazakh) could complicate its solution. Khan-Khoyski expressed the opinion that the well-known demarcation line had been violated in Ghazakh, and it had been violated by the Armenians, who occupied a part of the territory of Azerbaijan. Therefore, according to him, Armenians should go back to their place of residence, and it should not be confused with Karabakh. According to Khan-Khoyski, Karabakh was also a territory of Azerbaijan, and the matter concerned the internal law of the Azerbaijani government, and it was about the legal status of the Armenian population of Karabakh, about the attitude of the Azerbaijani government towards the known part of its population (interesting wording - the emphasis is ours – V.V.), and in Ghazakh it was only about the demarcation line. According to Khan-Khoyski, it was about the uprising in Karabakh, and there was an opinion that the commission going there might be able to expand the privileges of the Armenian population and thus solve the issue.⁸⁴ This is the way to approach the diplomatic-and-political issue, this is the way to manoeuvre and confuse the other side, which was not badly demonstrated by the Azerbaijani delegates to the Tiflis Assembly of the Transcaucasian Republics. This time Ye. Gegechkori considered that it was pointless to link one issue to the other: the issue of Ghazakh to that of Karabakh, that in the case of Ghazakh it was necessary to return to the old demarkation line and return the refugees, and in the case of Karabakh it was necessary to return the population to the old places of residence after which raise the issue of the legal status of the population and thus pacify the region.

According to the Azerbaijani delegation, the Assembly should have its opinion on the report of the commission on Ghazakh, and suggested the following resolution: “After hearing the report of the commission on the events in Ghazakh, the Assembly decides that in the parts of Ghazakh where Armenian-Muslim clashes are taking place, the territorial situation before the clashes must be restored”.⁸⁵ Instead, the Armenian delegation, in the person of Ohanjanyan, proposed its own resolution: the Armenian

⁸³ See NAA, f. 200, l.1, f. 576, p. 4.

⁸⁴ See NAA, f. 200, l.1, f. 576, 5-6.

⁸⁵ See NAA, f. 200, l.1, f. 576, 7-9.

delegation proposed to adopt a general resolution on the restoration of the legal status, adopted unanimously on April 12, to take it as a basis for both Ghazakh and the other regions, which was mentioned in Resolution 1 of the Assembly (April 11).

On the same day, on April 17, after the Yerevan odyssey, when Tekinsky's espionage and destructive activities against the Republic of Armenia were revealed, Mammad Khan Tekinsky, already as the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, sent a telegram to A. Khatisyan, in which he protested against the non-implementation of the decisions of the relevant commission by the Armenian troops. On April 18 Khatisyan responded to this by denying Tekinsky's information, and on his part pointed out Azerbaijan's continuation of hostilities in Karabakh, asking to stop them.⁸⁶

Khan-Khoyski immediately disagreed with the resolution, objecting to connecting the two issues, arguing that in Ghazakh it was a matter of conquering foreign territory, and in Karabakh it was an uprising within the state itself and that the Azerbaijani government would take every measure for the population to benefit from all the opportunities of national-and-cultural autonomy.⁸⁷ Then, Ohanjanyan answered positively to Khan-Khoyski's question whether the Armenians wanted to "liberate" Ghazakh, i.e. by withdrawing their own military units from the mentioned territory. Thus, from H. Ohanjanyan's letter of April 18, 1920 addressed to the RA Prime Minister A. Khatisyan, it becomes obvious that the Armenian side had some concerns related to both Karabakh and other related issues. In the above-mentioned letter H. Ohanjanyan directly emphasized the following: "In the current conditions, it is absolutely impossible to achieve more. Judging by your letters and telegrams from the ground on the current military situation, we are forced to make the biggest concessions."⁸⁸ At the April 18 session of the Assembly, Ohanjanyan noted that the Assembly did not want to dwell on the April 12 resolution, which was a fundamental basis for resolving the issues of Karabakh, Ordubad, Nakhichevan and other disputed territories, and suggested that the demarkation line be drawn where the Assembly's April 11 decision on ending the armed conflict was reached, and in each separate case, the Assembly should adopt a special decision which is agreed by the Foreign Ministers of Georgia and Azerbaijan. In addition, at the 10th session on April 18, a resolution was adopted which envisaged the restoration of the factual situation in Ghazakh before the clashes and the return of the population to their homes.⁸⁹

The British command in Transcaucasia, like in the other places where the implementers of its policy were mainly officers of the "Indian school", began to pursue a policy of all possible concessions to the Muslim element, persistently seeking to strengthen their authority in the Muslim world. The same idea was emphasized by H. Ter-Hakobyan, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic

⁸⁶ Tumanyan 2012: 300.

⁸⁷ See NAA, f. 200, l.1, f. 576, 8-9.

⁸⁸ BAA, 1996, N 1 (98): 82.

⁸⁹ Tumanyan 2012: 300.

of Armenia in his message of September 16, 1919 (No. 3741) addressed to the Armenian diplomatic envoy in Tiflis: "It turns out from the messages of our delegation in Paris that during their entire presence in the Caucasus, the British have been insincere to us and have systematically pursued a Muslim policy. The reports of both Thomson and other generals (even those of General W. H. Beach, the head of the political bureau of the headquarters of the British occupation forces in Transcaucasia who was considered pro-Armenian by us) particularly on Karabakh and generally on issues concerning us have always been to our detriment".⁹⁰

Naturally, there was a conflict of interest, and no agreement was reached. Soon there were developments, events off the "agenda", which nullified the efforts made, which was not a coincidence at all. After the departure of Great Britain, consequently, Soviet Russia and the reviving Turkey were the two countries that were to fill that emptiness in the Caucasus. But due to the state of affairs Armenia could not come to an agreement with any of those countries. There was the "ghost" of the Treaty of Sèvres between Armenia and Turkey, and between Armenia and Soviet Russia there was the deceptive hope of the Republic of Armenia regarding the support of great allies; and as British Caucasiologists D. M. Lang and K. I. Walker accurately noted, those allies skillfully fed Armenians and the political leaders of the Armenian people with "*the dream idea of creating an Armenia extending from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea*".⁹¹ Those hopes led to the fatal isolation and decline of the Republic of Armenia. There was never any significant help from the allies, there were only empty statements and encouragement. And for various reasons, it was not possible to find common ground with the neighbors.

And yet it was only after the defeat of Denikin's army by the Bolsheviks in January 1920 that the Allies recognized the Transcaucasian republics as independent states, with the aim of keeping the Caucasus and Persia out of the Bolshevik influence. Changes in the situation and the significant change in the attitude of the allies towards the Republic of Armenia were accurately noticed by D. M. Lang and K. I. Walker: "*During 1920 the situation in the world underwent such dramatic changes that the promises made by the allied powers to Armenia became meaningless... After heated disputes... the ARF government decided to peacefully hand over the power to the Bolsheviks and as the saying goes, they preferred 'to be red rather than dead'*".⁹² Already in the spring of 1920 the situation in the Transcaucasian region changed dramatically and the events started to develop rapidly, in particular in Artsakh, Zangezur and around them: a) the *de facto* power in Artsakh, starting from mid-1918 was in the hands of the local Armenian National Council. From May 1918 to May 1920 during the ten congresses it convened and even after that, until the infamous decision of July 5, 1921 of the Bureau of the Caucasus Territorial Committee of the Central Committee of

⁹⁰ See NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 62, p. 45; f. 275, l. 5, f. 97, p. 126.

⁹¹ Lang, Walker 1992: 31.

⁹² See Lang, Walker 1992: 32.

the Russian Communist Party (Kavbyuro), the Armenian National Council did not accept and did not recognize the rule of Azerbaijan. But there were also dangerous turns of events and political slips. Thus, the 7th Congress of Karabakh held on August 12, 1919, examining the situation and making sure that they could not receive any help from outside, that the British were supporting the Azerbaijanis, and that the Armenian government was unable to provide serious assistance, considering and weighing their own capabilities decided to accept the agreement with Baku on August 15, and thus, the notorious agreement of August 22, 1919 was signed “hoping” that the fate of Nagorno-Karabakh would be resolved “unconditionally and justly” at the European Peace Conference of the great powers. Naturally, Dr. Khosrov Bey Sultanov considered it a new “era” in the life of Karabakh. The joint Azerbaijani-Turkish armed forces responded to the liberation struggle of the people of Artsakh with mass massacres of Armenians: on March 22-26, 1920, the Musavat government organized the massacre of the Armenians of Shushi, as a result of which thousands of Armenians were killed.

In this situation, with Denikin’s final defeat, Russia became a new factor in Armenia and Transcaucasia. The Red Army, breaking down the barrier against it, entered the North Caucasus and descended to Transcaucasia and Baku. And this was at a time when the government of independent Azerbaijan had concentrated most of its military force to crush the uprising of Armenians in Karabakh and to finally annex Karabakh, as well as Zangezur and the other Armenian territories to Azerbaijan. And the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan, which was already Bolshevik, sent an ultimatum to the government of Yerevan, declaring war on the Republic of Armenia, if the Armenian troops did not empty the “indisputable lands” of Azerbaijan immediately, by April 30. The Revolutionary Committee did not even find it necessary to mention the names of those lands, and it immediately made military-and-political preparations. These radical developments were the main reasons that led to the failure of work of the Assembly of Transcaucasian republics in April 1920 and, of course, the conditionality of the decisions taken. It was the period when Bolshevism, as a military-and-political and social current in Russia was in the process of strengthening and was moving towards stabilizing, but at first it was incomprehensible. As a result of that the Armenian diplomatic and political circles counted on Vrangeli, Kolchak, Denikin and others, losing precious time and all hopes of using strategic opportunities, relying on the abstract assurances of the great European powers, absolutely not guessing what catastrophic geopolitical situation would be created by the fast changes and developments in the near future, first of all for the Republic of Armenia. It was this unfortunate circumstance that left its mark on all the actions of the RA Government, which did not follow the spirit of the time and did not comply with the altered geopolitical situation.

The situation changed dramatically in late April 1920, after the Sovietization of Azerbaijan. The local Armenians gave in to the Bolshevik slogans, and Karabakh was Sovietized. And later, on July 5, 1921, by the decision of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RCP(b), under I. Stalin’s pressure, Armenian Karabakh was

annexed to Azerbaijan, grossly violating the decision made the previous day, on July 4, 1921 on Karabakh-Artsakh joining Soviet Armenia, grossly distorting the content and essence of the Leninist-Bolshevik ideology of free self-determination of nations. This was categorically opposed also by the prominent Soviet statesman Alexander Myasnikyan who assumed the position of the party-political leadership of Soviet Armenia.

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Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan

PHILOLOGY

OSIP MANDELSTAM. THE POET AND THE TIME. HIS LIFE AND ARMENIA

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-73

Abstract

Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938) – a prominent Russian poet, art theorist, translator – takes a special place in the history of Soviet literature.

In the 1920–1930s, Mandelstam, being non-party man and not constantly being member of any literary association, tasted all the misfortunes that befell the intellectual class of his generation and a great many ordinary Soviet citizens; he faced repressions, he was arrested twice, was sent into exile where he died.

Mandelstam's name is closely related to Armenia and Armenian culture. His visit to Armenia (from May to early October, 1930) was life-changing for him. Under the indelible impressions of the biblical country, he wrote a collection of poems "Armenia" (1931) and an essay "Journey to Armenia" (1933). These pieces of art are among the best works in the Russian literature dedicated to Armenia.

There is rich literature on Mandelstam's life and art: memoirs of contemporaries, a great number of monographs, articles and publications. Nevertheless, there are almost no studies about Mandelstam in the Armenian language: the present article partially fills this gap.

Keywords: O. Mandelstam, N. Mandelstam, N. Bukharin, I. Ehrenburg, S. Ter-Gabrielyan, M. Shahinyan, Yerevan, Shushi, Tiflis, Ye. Charents, the subject of Armenia, «A voyage to Armenia»

В год тридцать первый	In the year thirty-one
От рожденья века	Since century appeared
Я созвратился, нет	I came from the run,
- Читай: насильно	-I was returned by fear,
Был возвращён	I came back again
В буддийскую Москву.	To Buddhist Moscovtown,
А перед тем	But what before that came
Я все-таки увидел	I saw it all around.
Библейской скатертью	The wealthy table ground
Богатый Арарат	With Ararat Great Mount,
И двести дней	And ten score days I spent
Провёл в стране субботней	In wealthy Sabbath Land.
Которую Арменией зовут.	Armenia is the Land. ¹

¹ Mandelstam 2012: 151.

Preface

The outstanding Russian poet Osip Emil Mandelstam holds a special place in the history of Soviet literature. In the 1920–1930s being a non-party man and outside of whatever literary union, he had tasted all the bitterness that befell the intellectuals of his generation and many rank-and-file Soviet citizens. He was persecuted, twice arrested, and died in exile: «He was an unusual ..., heavy ..., heart-breaking and a man of genius»², – this was the way he was characterized by a notable Russian writer and literary critic V. Shklovsky. While the great poet A. Akhmatova made the following note in her memoirs: «That was a man who was a vagabond in his soul in the highest sense of this word and a poète maudit par excellence, which was fully substantiated by his biography. He had always been drawn by the South, the sea, new locations. And the testimony of his crazy love for Armenia is an array of immortal poems»³.

O. Mandelstam's name is largely associated with the country of Armenia and with the Armenian people. Travelling in Armenia for him had become fateful, since his remaining short life had stayed attached to Armenia and to the Armenian culture. Attachment that had been very dearly valued by the Russian poet.

There is a very extensive literary legacy covering the research of O. Mandelstam's life, activities and creative compositions⁴. The latter, however, is mostly concerned with the arrays of poems and «A Voyage to Armenia», a composition written in prose. Certain literary-historical events, related to Armenia, in-depth motivations and premises of his approaches with regard to the life of the Armenian people, etc. have never been detailed.

O. Mandelstam's life, activities and creation.

The poet was born on January 3 (15) 1891 in Warsaw, to a family of a tradesman. In 1907 he finished the Tenishev school in St. Petersburg. His parents, concerned about his radical ideas leaning towards the SR party (Socialist Revolutionaries) sent him to Paris in September of that same year, and since mid-October 1908 he studied at the philological faculty at Sorbonne. During the summer he travelled in Europe with his family, visiting France, Switzerland, since Autumn 1909 to Spring 1910 for two semesters studied Roman philology, particularly Old French at philosophical faculty of the Heidelberg University, Romano-Germanic section. In early spring 1910 he took a trip for a short time to Italy and Southern Switzerland, and since July 21 to mid-October spent in the Zelendorf suburb of Berlin. It should be noted that the echoes of this travel, the architectural impressions, especially the Gothic Europe, run throughout his poetry.

² Mandelstam 1991: 274–275.

³ Mandelstam 1989: 6.

⁴ See Fragility and fearlessness of life 2021: 13 (enumerated in the talk are the most important works published on Mandelstam); literary materials and biographies, «New Poems», commentaries, research works. Averintsev *et al.* 1990 (eds); Ivanova *et al.* 1991 (eds.); Vorobyova *et al.* 2001 (eds.); Mandelstam 2003; Mets 2005; Mandelstam 2012; Golovin 2016. Others see in footnotes of this article.

On May 14, 1911, Mandelstam was christened at a Methodist chapel in Viborg.⁵ On September 10 of the same year he was admitted to the section of the Roman languages at Saint Petersburg University, Department of history and philology; however, he never finished the complete course.

In 1909, O. Mandelstam met the poets Viach. Ivanov and I. Annensky, became involved into the circle of poets grouped around the journal “Apollo”. It was this journal that published (1910, N. 9) the initial five poems by O. Mandelstam showing an influence of symbolism. In 1912, the erstwhile notable writers N Gorodetsky, A. Akhmatova, O. Mandelstam, M. Zenkevich, U. Kuzmin, V. Narbut *et al.* integrated into a literary union «Poets’ Workshop», published their slogans, whereby in 1913 in the Russian poetry, in contrast to mysticism, was formed a new literary modernistic stream – acmeism. Mandelstam’s poetry of that period had been reviewed in the “Rock” collection (1913) published in 600 copies financed by his father (1913). At the start of WW I, in December 1914, he made an unsuccessful attempt to get fixed up in a military train as a nurse, then for two years he collaborated with the Union of Cities. He welcomed the October Revolution enthusiastically, but remained an «apolitical» poet. In 1918–1919 he worked at the Commissariat for Education headed by E. A. Lunacharsky as well as at other cultural and educational establishments. On May 1, 1919 he met Nadezhda Mandelstam (maiden name Khazina, 1899-1980),⁶ his future life-long friend. Their separation lasted for eighteen months, in that period O Mandelstam visited the Crimea. He stayed there at the house of the poet M. Voloshin in Koktebel, from March to July 1920, following the famous discussion⁷ he set out for Batumi, Tiflis (Georgia), then Moscow, Petrograd, where he lived at the House of Arts. In 1921 the Mandelstams were in Transcaucasia – Baku and Tiflis, in March 1922 they settled in Moscow. In 1922-1923 they lived in the house of Herzen⁸ (presently the building of A. M. Gorky International Institute of Literature), at the «writers’ hostel», also sheltering, incidentally, a number of literary establishments, including the writers’ cafeteria. Mandelstam was given a second-rate “academic facility». In actual life, however, the poet had abandoned the literary «backyard», to spend the 1923–1924 winter in a hired room at Yakimanka Street. Subsequently, in 1924–1927, he lived in Leningrad and Tsarskoe Selo. In the period of uncompromising struggle among the literary groupings Mandelstam retained an independent position, resulting in his isolation within the literary domain, a blind

⁵ We shall briefly not that «With Mandelstam the Christianity was mainly in his world vision, but it was mostly of a philosophical, rather than every-day character» (Mandelstam 1990: 43). On O. Mandelstam’s approach towards Christianity and their commentaries by the Russian philologist and culturologist S. Averintsev see Averintsev 1990: 22–25; also Lekmanov 2003: 40–41.

⁶ It will be noted that N. Mandelstam later in her «Memoirs» (1970) showed the tragic destiny of her husband – the two arrests and the years of exile, in «the second book» (1972) her life with the poet, the psychological and creative portrait of the latter, the literary environment of the 1920–1930’s, etc. Also published was a book titled “Memories”. In the article we mostly used her ideas and formulations, which undoubtedly were O. Mandelstam’s thoughts as well.

⁷For details see Lekmanov 2003: 89–90.

⁸ See Vidgof 2012: 117–186. The book gives a detailed account of O. Mandelstam’s life and activities in Moscow.

intolerance with regard to the «attendant-writer». «At no time have I been contemporary to anyone», this first line of a poem written in 1924, has served as a multiple indictment against Mandelstam as an extra-political element torn off from actual life.⁹ The poems of 1921-1925 are presented with a feeling of acute “rejection”. Related to this period are «Tristia» (1922, «Second Book»), 1923, and «The Noise of Time» (collections of self-biographic stories, 1925). Those were followed by a collection of “Poems” (1928) published with the help of N. Bukharin, chairman of Komintern and editor-in-chief of the newspaper “Pravda”.¹⁰ It was the final intravivam collection by Mandelstam and the story «Egyptian Stamp» (1928) which are distinguished by speculations on the intellectual crisis of the intellectual, who prior to revolution had lived on a “cultural rent”. It is to be noted, however, that in 1925–1929 Mandelstam kept mum: he never wrote a poem for five years, mostly edited books, produced about 25 reviews (on German and French book authors), did some work on translations from W. Scott, Charles de Coster, J. Roben, J. Duamel, R. Stevenson and other authors, wrote research works on E. P. Chaadaev, A. Viyoni, A.A. Chenie. Highly valued theoretically are the articles «The Word and Culture» and «On the Nature of the Word» (published in the collection «On Poetry», 1928).

However, the malicious and urban environment was plotting against the poet, even within the political blessings. Mandelstam’s quiet life was disturbed particularly by the well-known skirmish with the literary figure and translator A. Gornfeld¹¹ and by the feuilleton «Modest Literature or Blatant Hackwork» by D. Zaslavsky published against

⁹ Mandelstam 2012: 357.

¹⁰ The Russian political and administrative figure, member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, victim of the Personality Cult, N. Bukharin (1888–1938) extended large assistance to the intellectuals of the time. This is what was written on that point by his American biographer Steven Cohen: «He (Bukharin– A. Z.) facilitated the development of artistic and scientific achievement, and among the party leaders was a rear exclusion, being in good relations with such different people as Osip Mandelstam, Mikhail Pokrovsky, Maxim Gorky and Ivan Pavlov. ... The non-party intellectuals, both technical and creative ... had no reason to be apprehensive of him. He not only protected some, e.g., the poet Osip Mandelstam, but also had a tolerant attitude to and, if not as an ideologist, then as a human being, valued their creative efforts» (Coen 1992: 280). Incidentally, in 1927, August 10 N. Bukharin, perhaps, by request from Mandelstam, Artashes Khalatov with the following problem: «You, probably know our largest literary figure, poet O. E. Mandelstam. They do not let him publish his works in the State Publishing House. I am deeply convinced that it is wrong. True, he is not quite a mass-demanded poet. But he has and must have his significant place in our literature. I am writing this letter privately, since I think you will understand my intentions, etc. My request to you is to talk to O. E. Mandelstam «for a few minutes» or you could show him your enlightened assistance: Your Bukharin» (Lekmanov 2003: 123). Following that letter, matters start moving and “The Collection of Poems” is published. It is to be added that in 1928, when Mandelstam was informed, that some bank workers had been arrested and that they might be executed, he appealed to Bukharin and sent him the newly published mentioned Collection with the following dedication: «... each line of this book speaks on what you are going to do ... » (Vidgof 2012: 175. Averintsev 1990: 34). The verdict was cancelled.

¹¹ In 1928. The publishers of «Zemlya i fabrika» printed the novel «Till Oilenspiegel» by Charles de Coster. On the title page, Mandelstam was presented as a translator, while A. Ginsburg and V. Kariakin only edited the translations. Mandelstam was the first to report that to Gornfeld, demanding the publisher to disclaim which proves it to have been a mistake. However, Gornfeld goes out into the media with accusations, Mandelstam gives a response, and so on (see O. Mandelstam, op. cit., p. 370). According to Averintsev, “that conflict isn’t worth a damn” (Averintsev 1990: 35).

him in "Literaturnaya Gazeta" on May 7, 1929. Because of all that the frustrated Mandelstam abandoned the United Soviet Writers' Federation although he was supported by a group of outstanding prose-writers and poets sending a letter of complaint to the newspaper, meanwhile, the court also rejected the charges brought against the poet.¹² Nevertheless, they started to summon him for interrogations, as if in connection with the mentioned Gornfeldian story, however the questions were asked on the period spent «with the whites» in the Crimea, 1913. The matter received extensive public reverberations, which in the early 1930s became a subject of public scrutiny by the Supreme Control Organs of the Communist Party Central Committee.¹⁴

... Since Autumn 1929 to February 1930 O. Mandelstam worked in the newspaper «Moskovsky Komsomolets», leading the «Literary Page» and providing guidance to the young poets. In February a commission investigating the editorial work of the newspaper gave the staff worker O. Mandelstam the following testimonial: «May be employed as a specialist, however under supervision».¹⁵ As a sign of complaint he left the editorial office and for some time worked at the newspaper «Vechernyaya Moskva».

The poet was wading through heavy emotional experiences, and all of a sudden, a miracle came about. The glowing and suffocating Moscow environment was replaced due to N. Bukharin interference in 1930 by a trip to Armenia since May to early October. Coming to Tiflis, he started after a considerable interval to write poetry. The latest works published in his lifetime were an array «Armenia» and the essay «A Travel to Armenia». «We came back from Armenia, and the first thing we did was to rename our friend (meaning Anna Akhmatova – A. Z.), – wrote O. Mandelstam. – All the earlier names sounded tasteless. Annushka, Anioota, Anna Andreevna. The latter one, of course, is for good. ... But the new name stuck to her, up to the latest days I have called her that new name, the same as she used to undersign her letters: Anoosh. The name Anoosh reminded us of Armenia, of which Mandelstam, as he wrote everywhere, never stopped dreaming».¹⁶

Having returned to Moscow from Transcaucasia, the Mandelstams tried to settle down in Leningrad. Again aided by N. Bukharin, they received an authorization, and up to January 7, 1931, they stayed in the rest home of the Scientists' Home Central Committee. In Leningrad, however, they did not find favor, since he was for some reason countered by Nikolay Tikhonov, Secretary of the Writers' Union. It was for this very reason that they applied to V. Molotov, the USSR Sovnarkom's Chairman with the problem of job and lodging, however, with no result. Since January 1931 to January 1932 they lived at random flats moving from one place to another.

¹² See details in Lekmanov 2003: 129–136. Also Mandelstam 1989: 414; Vidgof 2012: 195–197.

¹³ Averintsev 1990: 35.

¹⁴ Mandelstam 1989: 414.

¹⁵ Lekmanov 2003: 138–139. As noted by N. Mandelstam, that «friendly» characteristic says that he belongs to the row of intellectuals, who can be allowed to work, but under control of party leadership. Anyway, the characteristic did not come to the liking of Mandelstam (Mandelstam 1990: 432).

¹⁶ Mandelstam 2003: 77.

In 1931 O. Mandelstam wrote the most significant poems with the below-cited lines, seeming to provide an answer to all those critics, who for years condemned the poet to living a “museum” life lacking contemporary communication.¹⁷

Пора вам знать: я тоже современник,	You know me. I stand on modern ground
Я человек эпохи Москвошвея,	I am a man from Moscow Seamstress epoch,
Смотрите, как на мне топорщится пиджак,	Look at my jacket warping all around
Как я ступать и говорить умею!	Look how I step and hear the way I talk.
Попробуйте меня от века оторвать,	Just try to rip me from my age and time.
Ручаюсь вам – себе свернете шею!	I bet you, you will break your neck and spine.

In 1932–1933 the Mandelstams again dwelled in Gerzen’s house.¹⁸ «It was full of all kinds of dregs and stool pigeons».¹⁹ O. Mandelstam, still in the «Fourth Prose», which he dictated to his wife, in the winter of 1929–1930, wrote: «All compositions in world literature I classify into those written by permission and those written by no permission. The first cause disgust, the second one is fresh air. My wish is to spit first into the faces of the permitted writers, to hit their head with a stick and sit them around the table in Gerzen’s House to drink the police tea, every one of them holding a flask with urine analysis in his hand.

I would ban those writers from getting married and having children. How could they bring children into the world? After all, children have to go on with what we are, to utter our main word that stayed half-muted, in case when at least three generations of their fathers sold themselves to the pitted-face evil (he means Stalin - A.Z.)».²⁰

... At this period the poet’s financial situation had somewhat improved, again due to N. Bukharin’s interference, he purchased a two-room apartment at Nashokin Lane of Moscow (presently Furmanov Street).

In November 1932 Mandelstam was staying at the rest-home TSEKUBU (Central commission for the improvement of everyday life of scholars) «Uzkoe». On November 10 he travelled to Moscow for one day, to attend a close evening dedicated to Mandelstam’s literary work at the Literaturnaya Gazeta editorial office.²¹ Subsequently, the evenings were going on. On February 22, 1933 at Leningrad “Capella”, March 2 at the “House of Press”, March 14 at Moscow “Politechnical Museum”,²² April 3 at Moscow Painters’ Club.²³ In 1933 Mandelstam wrote a literary-critical Essay «Conversations on Dante» (published in 1967), presenting his general views on poetry. In September he

¹⁷ Lekmanov 2003: 5.

¹⁸ Vidgof 2012: 283–338. On these pages there is a detailed account of Mandelstam’s life and activities in Moscow.

¹⁹ Kuzin 1987: 141.

²⁰ Mandelstam 1989: 237.

²¹ Mandelstam 1989: 409; Vidgof 2012: 325–326.

²² See details in Vidgof 2012: 415–418.

²³ Lekmanov 2003: 158–159.

presented the complete essay to the top-level literary community at A. Akhmatova's apartment.²⁴

However, the personality cult had already been taking shape, and the public, political, literary and cultural life was becoming suppressed. It was yet in December 1930 that Mandelstam wrote a poem entitled «Leningrad», the lines whereof: «My Petersburg, I do not want to die yet» and «And for the whole night only waiting for the dear guests», being its eloquent testimony. In 1931 he said go Gerstein's father, the doctor, about Stalin: « ... a parasitic type ... a foreman who made children work in Egypt».²⁵ Added to all that is a «crushing» article in the newspaper «Pravda» written against his work «Travelling to Armenia» (that will be described below in detail). In November 1933 O. Mandelstam wrote the fateful poems on Stalin «The Kremlin Highlander», denouncing Stalinism. The poems were very widely spread, in both literary and quasi-literary environment they produced an impression of terror and trepidation:

²⁴ Of a cognitive value is L. Grinberg's article «Mandelstam» in his monograph (1982: 413–414), where the author under the impression of that evening gave the following characteristic to the poet: «Mandelstam at Akhmatova's reads conversations on Dante». Mandelstam is short, slim, narrow forehead, small curved nose, the lower sharp part of the face careless, almost gray-bearded, stressed look as if taking notice of nothing. When talking Russian, his toothless mouth is compressed, and the intonation is unexpectedly delicate and melodeous. He is full of rhythms, as well as wonderful words. When reading, he is rocking, moving his hands, by the nature of a luminary, he finds pleasure in breathing to the rhythm of words, after which there is a dancing performance. His walk is funny, with a spine too straight, as if on tiptoe.

Mandelstam has taken a dreamer's name, and indeed, he looks deluded in human environment, where people are wont to hide or falsify their impulses. For that, perhaps, there is no difference between impulse and deed, the difference that constitutes the essence of the European way of life. Anna Andreevna says: «Osip is a box of surprises». Probably, he is very different. And in a rout, perhaps, he is more natural. But decorated Mandelstam, how he is drawn to be near Anna Akhmatova is incomprehensible. He does not possess the simplest manifestations of our civilization. His collar and necktie are loose. What concerns his thin brown striped pants, there are no likes to them anywhere. His everyday behavior is wonderfully impractical. The strange courtesy of his greetings, inability to shake hands, grabbing the thumbs the singing sweetness of the voice pitch, when he asks for matches, all that is some rhythmic and entertaining comedy. He uses an everyday speaking voice, somewhat bohemian, and rough. For example, when reciting, he will look around, asking «am I not blabbering too rapidly?». But when going to an important subject, wide opening the demagogic gates. He is wagging his hands, his eyes express a complete rupture from the table and from the interlocutor, and bread and cheese in his tea saucer. He talks in words of his compositions: clumsy, heavy-tongued, ... greasy. In all cases not forgetting to suffle or joke.

Mandelstam is a phenomenon establishing optimism. We can see a man, who wants to have money and glory and is saddened when his compositions are not printed. But we can see how insignificant that sadness is compared with his feelings of creative inspiration, when those combine with the inexhaustible sensations of imagination. We see the best. The realized value and the man who moved into his work. He moved therein completely, all the way he could, and the rest turned out to be the devil knows what routs, public trials. People victimize their lives to work, their health, freedom, career, their property. Mandelstam's madness in everyday image is human sacrifice. That means that not a single particle of voluntary tension outside poetic work was wasted. Poetic work needs the poet's self-taxation. Without an incessant self-taxation it will rapidly get coarse and depreciated. Everything went there, and in everyday image remained a strange man with unregulated desires, «nuts».

He is full of rhythm, thoughts and pushing-forward words. His business he is doing in progress, ... and indifferent to the environment ... ». Incidentally, in the above-mentioned sense among others similarly interesting information on O. Mandelstam is also given by R. Ivnev in his memoirs, see Ivnev 1991: 143–155.

²⁵ Gershtein 1989: 108; Averintsev 1990: 29.

Thus, e.g., having heard the poems, the well-known literary critic G. Shengelia said: «We have read nothing here, I have heard nothing».²⁶

On February 17, 1934, V. Bonch-Bruyevich made a proposition to O. Mandelstam to sell his archive to the Central Museum of Fiction, Criticism and Journalism. On March 16, to replenish the funds of the museum, the newly organized expert commission for the archive proposed a ridiculously low price of 500 roubles. O. Mandelstam was enraged and wrote a letter to V. Bonch-Bruyevich refusing to sell.²⁷

In the mid-April of 1934 O. Mandelstam was in Leningrad. In early May he met Alexey Tolstoy at the «Writers' Union», who chaired the «Sarkijan–Mandelstam» well-known trial, and in the presence of all people lapped him on the face.²⁸

As a result, on the night of May 14, 1934, the poet was arrested at his flat in Nashokin Lane.

«The arrest warrant was signed by Yagoda personally, – remembered Akhmatova: – The search continued all through the night. They looked for poems, walking on manuscripts dumped out of trunks. All of us, we were sitting in the next room. It was very quiet... The investigator found “The Wolf” in my presence and showed it to Osip Mandelstam. He nodded silently. He kissed me farewell. They took him away at 7 in the morning».²⁹ The poem « We exist with no feeling of country or earth ...» in his case was the major object of indictment. Extremely sharp-pointed, with precisely targeted attributes, this poem is herein quoted in full:³⁰

Мы живём, под собою не чуя страны,	We exist with no feeling of country or earth,
Наши речи за десять шагов неслышны,	Our speech at ten steps will never be heard,
А где хватит на полразговорца,	And when there is half of the slander,
Там припомнят клемлёвского горца.	They will think of the Kremlin highlander.
Его толстые пальцы, как черви жирны,	His fingers are thick and fatty like worms
И слова, как пудовые гири, верны,	And words are as heavy and mighty as weights,
Тараканьи смеются глазища	The big eyes of cockroach are smiling,
И сияют его голенища.	And the bootlegs are happy and shining.
А вокруг него сброд тонкошеих вождей,	He is skirted with necks of the baby-giraffe,
Он играет услугами полулюдей,	He plays with the service of humans-in-half,
Кто свистит, кто мяучит, кто хнычет	Some are whistling, some mewling, or whining,
Он один лишь бабачит и тычет.	Only he is bawling and prying.
Как подкову дарит за указом указ –	As horseshoes he throws decrees and decrees,
Кому в пах, кому в лоб, кому в бровь,	Some in crotch, some in forehead, in brow, or
кому в глаз.	ears.
Что ни казнь у него – то малина	Each verdict is made in the den,
И широкая грудь осетина.	By the wide-breasted Ossetian man.

²⁶ Lipkin 1997: 398; Vidgof 2012: 331.

²⁷ Lekmanov 2003: 173.

²⁸ In detail, see Lekmanov 2003: 173–174, 218; Vidgof 2012: 323–325.

²⁹ Averintsev 1990: 38–39.

³⁰ Mandelstam 2003: 163. On the same poem, see Mandelstam 2003: 361–362. A remarkable analyzes of this poem put into historical context see Katsis 2021.

O. Mandelstam was condemned to three years exile for a free settlement first to Sverdlovsk oblast, the town of Cherdin, and later to Voronezh. The sentence was not too hard, they even let his wife accompany him. In Cherdin Mandelstam being in an aggravated state of mind jumped out of the window. Incidentally, N. Bukharin through V. Molotov, Chair of the USSR Council of People's Commissars, fixed up a pension for the 41-year old Mandelstam. On March 23, 1932 Mandelstam was awarded a pension of 200 roubles for life,³¹ which was withdrawn in the very first winter of his exile. «To this day it remains a riddle, what it was that saved Mandelstam's life. Whether it was Bukharin³² and Pasternak's sponsorship³³ that helped, or the helping role was played by the secret hope of the leader that the master would praise his name? It is not easy to say. Nevertheless, there was an order: «To isolate, but to sustain». To sustain: ... Following the devastating night-time question in go to exile to Cherdin in expectation of a death sentence: The hope of salvation at the sudden arrival of the exile order to Voronezh, as noted by the literary critic N.I. Velikaya: – The disgruntled poet endured: And the most important thing was that he mentally stayed afloat. The Voronezh period (1934-1937) was noted by a creative uplift, Osip Emilievich here composed three "Voronezh notebooks". It became clear that the poet's love for life, earth and man was unquenchable «You have died not yet, you are not alone ... You love the fields and their terrific heights// And in the blizzard, and in dire cold, in tempest and in snowstorm»: «being in dire need and extreme poverty», the poet remains calm and is consoled by that his sweet-worded work is perfect and immortal.

Anna Akhmatova wrote wonderingly: «It is surprising that in Mandelstam's poetry freedom, wide extension and deep breathing came about just in Voronezh, when he was very remote from being free»³⁴:

During the years spent in Voronezh, Mandelstam was allowed with wife to prepare literary radio shows on Goethe's youth (which was laid in the basis of creating a Goethe's biographic novel), to produce shows on Gulliver for children, on behalf of the local section of the Soviet Union's writers' Union he was employed at the local theater as literary director, wrote in the newspapers, went to business trips around the region. The Russian poet received visitors: A. Akhmatova, E. Gerstein, N. Stempel, et al.

Here Mandelstam in the initial period did creative work full-scale, again remembered Armenia, wrote poetry on the exiled Armenian shoemakers, which had

³¹«That (pension– A. Z.) was given «for having the great merit to the Russian Literature» «by virtue of the impossibility to use it in the Soviet Literature». This formulation in some sense matched the reality, and we guessed that it belonged to N. Bukharin» (Mandelstam 1989: 110, 405).

³²See details in Mandelstam 1989: 135–139.

³³See details in Mandelstam 1989: 135–139.

³⁴ Velikaya 1989: 8. S. Averintsev wrote: «They often ask: How was that? (It is about the order «To isolate but to retain»– A. G.) that they look for an explanation. Yes, there were care-givers. Akhmatova went to Yenukidze, Pasternak – to Demyan Bedny, Nadezhda Mandelstam to Bukharin. Yes, the Stalin's infamous telephone call did take place (June 13 – A. Z.) to Pasternak as well. However, did any of those matter? And N.A. Struve and B.M. Satnov think that Stalin wanted Mandelstam to become his hand dog» (Averintsev 1990: 39). In the latest period in Voronezh on poetry, see Averintsev 1990: 41–43, also Gasparov 1996.

unfortunately been lost. St. Stoichev, secretary of the Voronezh writers' union party group, reported that in February 1935 in the Voronezh newspaper «Commune» editorial office there was a meeting of writers. A report was presented on acmeism with a purpose of clarifying Mandelstam's attitude towards his past. It became clear that in his report the poet showed that he had learned nothing, remaining stuck at his old positions».³⁵

The year 1936 saw new persecutions against O. Mandelstam. «They cut off salaries, – wrote N. Mandelstam in her memoirs. – Acquaintances in the street turned off their faces or looked with blank eyes». In 1937 the almanac «Literary Voronezh» classified the poet as belonging to the Trotskyist gang, spreading around «the spirit of madness and depoliticization». On April 17, 1937 Mandelstam complained to K. I. Chukovsky: «I have come about to be like a dog, a stray dog. ... I am not there. I am a shadow. My only right is to die».³⁶ While in «The Fourth Prose» he confessed: «While to the French they say: Cher Maître – Dear Teacher, to me, Mandelstam, they say to scratch the dogs». Everyone will have his own lot. I am an ageing man... The eyes of the Russian writers look at me with canine tenderness, as if saying: go and die, to make us free. Where has it come from, that servile malice, that slavish contempt with regard to my name? A Gypsy has a horse at least, but I am neither a Gypsy, nor a horse. ... ».³⁷

... On May 16, 1937, the term of exile was done, and the Mandelstams came back to Moscow. However, having no registration, they had to temporarily live in Savelovo, in the vicinity of Kimri. «In Moscow he was always welcomed to the Shklovskies' house, and could visit Pasternak in Peredelkino. To procure money for the most essential needs, he made two visits to Leningrad in the Autumn of 1937, to see Stenich and his old friend Loginsky, and in February 1938, when Stenich was arrested, ... Loginsky was scared to death and refused to receive him (incidentally, O. Mandelstam yet in 1921 dedicated to Loginsky a very deliberative poem «Pedestrian» – A. Z.): «The times were apocalyptic, – remembered Akhmatova: – Disaster was upon the heels of everyone». Mandelstam had no money. They had absolutely nowhere to live. Osip had difficulty breathing, he hunted for air with his lips»... Tired of homelessness and shortage of money, Mandelstam was all of a sudden favored with a handout from the literary foundation – an accommodation at the Samatikha rest-home».³⁸ It seemed that the matters came to order, it was possible to go on with creative work with no worry, and in the month of March Mandelstam wrote inspiring letters to his close friend Kuzin and to his father. However, it was only an appearance. V. Stavsky, the first secretary of the USSR Writers' Union, and his well-known report with an appended negative resume on O. Mandelstam by P. Pavlensky dispatched to N. Yezhov, the Supreme Commissar of the USSR Internal Affairs,³⁹ have done their black deed.

³⁵ Mandelstam 1989: 412, 416; Lekmanov 2003: 185.

³⁶ Averintsev 1990: 40.

³⁷ Mandelstam 2003: 243. Life in Voronezh. See Gordin 1990: 53–60; Shtempel 1992; Lekmanov 2003: 180–204.

³⁸ Averintsev 1990: 43.

³⁹ See details in Lekmanov 2003: 209–211; Vidgof 2012: 577–578.

On the night of May 2, 1938, when the Mandelstams were having a rest at a resort home since March 8, the poet was arrested for the second time for the counter-revolutionary activity. «... but why?», ..., the poet was arrested for the second time, four years after the first time. He did not make any new acts of audacity – during the hard moments tried to glorify Stalin (Mandelstam was not even saved by the poem dedicated to Stalin and written on January 20, 1937, in Voronezh in 1937 – A. Z.). Then why? – the question is asked by S. Averintsev and that is how it is interpreted. – It seems ... The answer to the question is not difficult. If Stalin is a master of something, it is vengeance and the ability to wait for the right moment to take revenge. The fate of the poet who had allowed himself to inflict an open strike upon the person of the Leader of Nations, had been determined, once and for all: he had not have to tread the earth. From him celebrations were not required. What was required was death: However, it is not difficult to guess that an immediate execution or even a significant term of detention would excite curiosity with regard to the culprit poem that will undoubtedly have repercussions. No, the first punishment had to be ridiculous. A grown-up child had to stand in the corner for his improper behavior. But the bait is thrown, he will not be forgotten. And when the wave of terror will overtake the events and everyone would be roasted by his cares, the poet would unobtrusively vanish from the face of the earth».⁴⁰

Mandelstam was sentenced to five years detention and exiled to a transit trade camp in Vladivostok. Where from the last news from Mandelstam had been received. «My health is very weak. I am extremely exhausted, almost unrecognizable, but sending clothes, food or money, I am not sure whether it is worthwhile. You can try, anyway. With no clothes it is too cold.

Nadenka, my dear, I don't know if you are still there, my little dove».⁴¹

In that camp Mandelstam passed away on December 27, 1938.

... While living in Herzen's House, there was a writer among O. Mandelstam's neighbors, «a very good and talented man, S. Klichkov. Once, during a discussion, he said to Mandelstam: « Nevertheless, Osip Emilyevich, your mind is Jewish». Mandelstam's response followed momentarily. – «Well, quite possible. However, my poetry is Russian». «That is true, yes, that is quite true»– was Klichkov's acknowledgment in all sincerity».⁴² And, indeed, all Mandelstam's creation is written

⁴⁰ Averintsev 1990: 39–40.

⁴¹ Averintsev 1990: 44.

⁴² Kuzin 1987: 142–143. In connection with the above-mentioned dialogue it is appropriate to point out another relevant material by a renowned literary critic G. Kubatyan (Kubatyan 2005: 286–287). Incidentally, O. Mandelstam liked the following eloquent lines by S. Klichko:

Впереди одна тревога, //	Just ahead is only trouble,
И тревога позади. //	And a trouble in the rear.
Посиди со мной немного, //	Sit with me a little down,
Ради Бога, посиди ...	God be praised, sit down near.

...» (Mandelstam 1989: 191).

within the spirit of Russian poetry. On January 21, 1937, from the place of exile in Voronezh, the writer and literary critic in the letter written to Yuri Tinianov, the poet in a very convinced way wrote about that: «It has already been a quarter-century that I, mixing up important and empty things, float towards the Russian poetry, but soon my poetry would merge with to change something in its structure and content».⁴³

It is to be added that until the early 1960s O. Mandelstam's name and creative legacy had been unknown to the wide community of readers. There had been no corner (to say nothing of a museum), that would shelter miraculously saved poets' manuscripts or everyday items. Only in early 2021 there was a Permanent Exposition «Mandelstam Street. Osip and Nadezhda».⁴⁴

Mandelstam in Tiflis and Baku

In early 1920 «anticipating future punishments, from the agitated events, // I fled to the Black Sea ... »: The stops were Kharkov and Kiev, where he (O. Mandelstam – A. Z.) encountered N. Ya. Khazina, the future companion of his life, Koktebel, where he was unable to find peace with Voloshin, and Theodosia, where he was arrested by the Vrangels' counterintelligence and released through the efforts of colonel Tsibulsky, as well as Voloshin and Veresayev, – Batumi, where he was arrested another time by the coast guards of the Menshevik government and released due to the mediation by N. Vitsishvili and T. Tabidze, and eventually Tbilisi»,⁴⁵ – as recorded by S. Averintsev.

A notable Russian writer and publicist Ilya Ehrenburg in late September 1920, instead of arriving to Moscow from Theodosia, by the will of fate appeared in Tbilisi with his wife. He met Osip Mandelstam in an unfamiliar city on the very first day. About the days spent by the latter in the company of the Georgian poets Titsian Tabidze and Paolo Yashvili, Ehrenburg left memorable pages in his book of memoirs «People, Years, Life». While telling, that in Golovinsky Avenue the unexpected encounter caused a great joy to him and to Mandelstam who, as noted by I. Ehrenburg, being in Tiflis for two days only, «... was standing on firm ground ... the businessman said: «Now we are going to Titsian Tabidze, and he will take us to a wonderful bar...».⁴⁶ Subsequently

⁴³ Averintsev 1990: 5.

⁴⁴ See details in Room for the poet. In Moscow a permanent exhibition is opened. Mandelstam Street. Osip and Nadezhda («Literaturnaya Gazeta» N. 11b, March 17-23, 2021). Incidentally, On Mandelstam life and activity there is a huge amount of controversial literature. One of the latest was printed in «Literaturnaya Gazeta» (N. 19, 12-18 May 2021, p. 17). «The Poet and the Authorities: A few not very familiar episodes from Mandelstam's life». Several materials are under the same title. We read: «In these days biographies of poets often are interpreted in an anti-regime context. F. e., it is unambiguously accepted to present Mandelstam as an opponent and victim of the ruling regime. Members of the St. Petersburg section of the Writers' Union gathered at the Writers' house to exchange views in the difficult years of the century on the relations between the poets and the authorities. At the meeting, their views were presented by Evgeni Antipov». Under the titles «The List of Listeners», «The Personal Pension», «A Banket with Blumkin» and «Bath at Angleterre» there were interesting but partially familiar details concerning O. Mandelstam's life.

⁴⁵ Averintsev 1990: 26.

⁴⁶ Ehrenburg 1961: 508. By the way, this year we shall see the 130th Anniversary of I. Ehrenburg, this fragment of the article will be a tribute of respect by the Armenian people to the memory of the honorable friend.

Mandelstam told of what happened to him in Batumi, his appearance in jail and his liberation through the efforts of the Georgian poets. T. Tabidze received them very cordially, then, having found Yashvili, they made a reception to the poets, placed them at a hotel. On the next day they went to the Soviet embassy with Mandelstam asking to be sent to Russia, they promised to do so in two- or three-weeks' time. «We had lived in Tbilisi for a fortnight, those days seemed to me like the days of a lyrical retreat..., — recalled Ehrenburg. — I had never seen the Orient before, and old Tbilisi struck me as a city from «A Thousand and One Nights». We circulated the endless Meidan... attended the famous bath house ... in Vera's Gardens we drank wine... In old temples we saw stone-made queens, caressed by the spells. ...». «I was awarded «The Cohabitation Collection of the Tiflis Poets» (titled «Akme» - A.Z.), — wrote Ehrenburg. — I have preserved that booklet by chance. Many among the authors are female poets with poetic surnames. Nina Gratsianskaya, Bel-Kon-Lyubomirskaya, Magdalinede-Kaprelevich. The «Tiflis Cohabitation» poets write sonnets about Svarog, Eros, Sulamith, Sanavallat, Monfort and other closely related acting personalities». ⁴⁷ It is quite possible that Mandelstam had also received this gift. ⁴⁸

«... In the Autumn of 1920 ... the Georgian friends gave us shelter and warmth. ... Yashvili and Tabidze on the Military Road kept us company up until the first station ...» ⁴⁹, — the story about the Tiflis days is summarized by Ehrenburg without mentioning the literary evening dedicated to Mandelstam and himself, or individual noteworthy articles in the media.

The evening had to take place on September 26 at the Big Hall of the Conservatoire. The opening speech on «The Contemporary Russian Poetry» had to be made by G. Rabakidze, a multi-faceted erudite and speaker, a brilliant renowned literary figure. I. Ehrenburg recited compositions from the books «Art and the New Period» and «Fire», «The New Dawn», Mandelstam read poetry from the book «Rock». The latter poets' compositions were read by the Russian actor N. N. Khodotov ⁵⁰ who had found

⁴⁷ Ehrenburg 1961: 511–513. It will be noted that like the Petersburg «Workshop of poets» literary association S. Gorodetsky (1916–1921) lived and worked in Western Armenia and Transcaucasia, Zakaryan 2010; Zakaryan 2015). In 1918 in Tiflis he established cohabitation under the same name (in detail see Zakaryan 2011a: 113–130; Zakaryan 2011b).

⁴⁸ V. Golovin wrote that O. Mandelstam took part in the «Workshop of Poets» evenings (see Golovin 2016: 19). That is not true, since the Tiflisian «Workshop» yet in early 1919 terminated its activities. Since August of the same year the literary association of the same name was active in Baku (see Zakaryan 2011b: 179).

⁴⁹ Ehrenburg 1961: 516–517.

⁵⁰ «The poets O. Mandelstam's and I. Ehrenburg's arrival. From the Crimea to Tiflis came the poets O. M. Mandelstam and I. Ehrenburg. Their single evening will take place on Sunday. Program. 1) Gr. Rabakidze – A talk on contemporary Russian poetry, 2) I. Ehrenburg – a report «Art and the new age» and poems from the books «Fire» and «The New Dawns», 3) O. Mandelstam. Poetry from the book «Rock» and new compositions, 4) N. N. Khodotov – O. Mandelstam's and I. Ehrenburg's Compositions. The evening is of a great literary interest» («Slovo», 24. IX. 1920]. Incidentally, the newspaper «Slovo» on September 26 published an announcement on the title of I. Ehrenburg's book «The New Dawns».

refuge in Tbilisi, and, according to I. Ehrenburg, in those days was setting out to go home to Petrograd».⁵¹

There have unfortunately remained almost no echos from that literary evening,⁵² discovered instead were I. Ehrenburg's appearances in print, undoubtedly presenting interest in the history of literature⁵³.

In late October O. Mandelstam set out from Tiflis⁵⁴ with I. Ehrenburg to Moscow and then to Petrograd.

Unfortunately, we have not succeeded to establish contacts by O. Mandelstam with the Tiflis Armenians. However, as to whether they had existed is beyond doubt, at that time there lived in Georgia a great mass of Armenians, there were a number of acting unions and clubs. Meanwhile, let us not forget that that was the time of the Armenian-Turkish war, that was mostly drawing attention of the population, while the great Armenian poet Hovhannes Tumanyan, overburdened with cares, was in Lori.

... The days spent in Tiflis were so impressive that Mandelstam and his wife appeared in Tiflis another time. «In the year twenty-one ... we were going to Tiflis with Mandelstam by the Tsentroevac (Central department for evacuation of population) train... Going to Tiflis was a heated cargo train loaded with workers who had to see the Armenian exiles arriving from Turkey and to find them employment. Travelling on heated cargo train were ordinary hard-working people. They hopefully succeeded in doing something for the suffering multitude of the Armenians, – recalls Mandelstam. – For a whole week we, no one knows why, remained in Kislovodsk... The peaceful life suddenly ended in Baku. There were a few people in the train who were taken ill with cholera. We were taken to a reserve line, and we remained living in a stationary train, like a railway brigade, while the patients were staying in a city hospital».⁵⁵ The Mandelstams had visited Vyacheslav Ivanov and S. Gorodetsky, who in those years found refuge in Baku. Incidentally, Vyach. Ivanov was displeased that he could not succeed to arrange the return to Moscow with the “winners” – the Bolsheviks. He tried to do it through Lev Kamenev, Mossovet's Chairman, but nothing came out of it.⁵⁶

From Baku the Mandelstams came to Tiflis where they lived about half a year. The city, for which very characteristically, in the novel «In Mtatsminda Underground» the Russian writer R. Ivnev recorded the following lines: «You do not feel life anywhere like you do here. The city is in all bright colors of the Orient. That is why pain here is more painful, joy is stronger, while love is more beautiful and fiery. Even the matdusting here is done with a special joy. Fruit and vegetable vendors resemble jobless jesters. They

⁵¹ See Ehrenburg 1961: 512.

⁵² Usually with regard to the current events the next number of the newspaper «Slovo» prints information. The next number of this paper was published on September 28. The 2nd and 3rd pages of this paper in the National Library of Armenia were blank pages because of the typographic defect, there had to be information there about that evening.

⁵³ For details on that occasion see Zakaryan 2012.

⁵⁴ On O. Mandelstam's days in Tiflis, see Golovin 2016: 14–20.

⁵⁵ Mandelstam 1990: 33–34.

⁵⁶ Mandelstam 1990: 332.

cannot do quiet talking, they will click, giggle, and say jokes even without sparing their own merchandize. ... ».⁵⁷

In Tiflis O. Mandelstam for a short time got close with Boris Legran, the Russian ambassador to Georgia, who, incidentally, had been N. Gumiliov's alumnus in Gymnasium. Perhaps, on this ground Legran appointed Mandelstam a press media adviser, and even provided rations. However, after N. Gumiliov's execution,⁵⁸ that was related to him by the ambassador, the Mandelstams had visited the embassy no more.⁵⁹

Let us remember that B. Legran, a Soviet statesman, military figure and diplomat, in 1920 was head of the RSFSR mission for conducting negotiations with the Armenian Republic, the Representative Plenipotentiary of the RSFSR in the Armenian Republic, and then, since November, in the ArmSSR, and since March 1921 was ambassador to Georgia and Azerbaijan simultaneously. It is out of the question that Mandelstam and Legran could not have discussed the events of the past few years that had taken place in Armenia, in the life of the Armenian people ...

Anyway, in Tiflis O. Mandelstam lived in the House of Arts. For the poet, the Tiflis days were one of the most fruitful creative periods: he actively published in the local newspapers, came forward at the most crowded public disputes and evenings, arranged at N. Khodotov's theatrical studio and even became member of the Russian literary union in Georgia and received a monetary grant. He also did some translating work. The Commissar on Education, Kandelaki, paid for translations infinitesimal fees (to Mandelstam –A. Z.)». He translated Vazha Pshavela's «Gogotur and Apshina» that on the same days was translated by Alexander Kulebyakin, a Tiflis resident poet-gereral.⁶⁰ Incidentally, a public reading and discussion was organized of the two translations. Excerpts from the translations of those two works by O. Mandelstam were published in the newspaper «Figaro» and magazine «Plamya». The Russian poet also translated excerpts from the works by the members of the literary union «Blue Horns» T. Tabidze,

⁵⁷ Ivnev 1973: 158. Incidentally, R. Ivnev wrote about Mandelstam: «The next assistance (besides S. Yesenin's –A. Z.) for me was even more de-politicized on the part of O. Mandelstam. At that time it made me happy. Unlike Vladimir Gordin, Georgy Ivanov and many others, he did not turn away his face from me, but when meeting me, always smiled, being a few heads taller than the central committee opinions and prejudices» (p. 56). R. Ivnev has interesting notes on O. Mandelstam, where he considers the poet «... just an epoch himself ... » (Ivnev 1991: 154). We shall note that Ivnev dedicated to Mandelstam a sonnet titled «A White Night».

⁵⁸ For O. Mandelstam N. Gumiliov's execution on August 25, 1921, was very painful. On his death he in those days wrote the poem «I washed when they came to take us away ... », that was printed in Tiflis in the Russian newspaper «Figaro» (on the poem see Mandelstam 2003: 355): «... Through the whole of Mandelstam's life something passes like a declaration of loyalty for the memory of the friend, – as noted by S. Averintsev. – the letter sent to Akhmatova on August 25, 1928 (to Anna Akhmatova, Gumiliov's wife – A. Z.) reads: «Be informed I am capable to hold an imaginary conversation with only two people – Nikolay Stepanovich and you. My conversation with Kolya has not ceased and will never cease» (Averintsev 1990: 30).

⁵⁹ Mandelstam 1990: 62–63.

⁶⁰ On A. Kulebyakin see details in Zakaryan 2003.

N. Mitsishvili, G. Leonidze, V. Gaprindashvili, published in late 1921 in Tiflis as the First Anthology in Russian under the title “The Georgian Poets”.

However, it never prevented Mandelstam from «angry discussion» or critical grouping (even in the media) against confessing symbolism.⁶¹

It has to be added that in Tiflis O. Mandelstam also communicated with the Armenian literary community, which is proved by the following eloquent reality. After departing from Georgia, a widely known Armenian futurist Kara-Darvish's (Hakob Genjian) dedication to Gr. Robakidze «Dancing on the Mountains» (A Nocturnal Round Dance) is published in Tiflis translated by Mandelstam.⁶² A well-known literary critic Alexander Parnis stated: «The work on translating this composition prior to the active communication with the national culture just launched the Armenian subject matter that in the poet's mature period became an important step in his creative work».⁶³

The Mandelstams saw the new, 1922 year on a steamer “Dmitry”, and in March they reached Moscow.

O. Mandelstam in Armenia

«Like every good thing in our lives, so it was with the travel to Armenia that was organized by Bukharin, – as recalled by N. Mandelstam. – The first time he wanted to send us to Armenia was in the late 1920s. At that time the Narkom of Education (as well as the vice chairman of People's Council– A. Z.) was Mravyan. He invited Mandelstam to lecture at Yerevan University. The first trip failed because of Mravyan's sudden death».⁶⁴ This is what was written by O. Mandelstam on that occasion in the 7th Chapter of «The Fourth Prose»: «I had one sponsor – Muravian (a pun from the word *muravey*), an insect commissar of the Judah's younger sister, the country of Armenia. He sent me a telegram// Death occurred to my sponsor Mravyan-Muravyan ... // He will not any more come to Moscow naïve and inquisitive ... I had a letter sent to Narkom Mravyan. I took it to the Armenian Mansion located in the cleanest ambassadorial streets of Moscow (the matter is about the Representative Office of the Armenian SSR - A. Z.), to the secretaries. . // I was nearly gone to Yerevan ... On a mission from the Educational Committee to read terrible lectures at a miserable monastery-university to the round-headed shy youngsters. // If I had gone to Yerevan, I would three days and nights attend big railway-station canteens to eat bread and butter with red caviar. ... // Along the way I would read the best books by Zoshchenko (allegedly the collection of

⁶¹ On the days spent by O. Mandelstam in Baku and Tiflis see Golovin 2016: 23–34.

⁶² Translation of the poem printed on a post card «Tiflis, 1922» with a dedication and Kara-Darvish' photo, see Armenian Museum of art and literature, Dept. of Souvenirs, Kara-Darvish' Fund, Archive 597.

⁶³ Golovin 2016: 34.

⁶⁴ Mandelstam 1989: 241. Not to sin against justice, let us note that N. Bukharin found an «intermediary» by whose request V. Molotov commitioned S.Gusev, member of Bolsheviks' Party Central Committee Presidium, to organize a business trip of Mandelstam and his wife to Sukhum, and then to Armenia, and to see to their placement, no matter where they stay. S. Gusev in advance called the local Central Committee secretaries asking them to be helpful to the Mandelstams in every way (p. 168, also Mandelstam 1990: 430).

short stories «Who are you laughing at», 1928 – A. Z.) and would enjoy it. And at Yerevan station I would alight from the train, the winter coat in one hand, in the other my Jewish old man's cane».⁶⁵

On June 14, 1929, N. Bukharin, Editor-in-chief of the newspaper “Pravda”, wrote the following letter to S. Gabrielyan, Chairman of the Armenian SSR Education Committee: «Dear Comrade Ter-Gabrielyan, one of our prominent poets, O. Mandelstam, has an intention to do research on Armenia (i.e., Armenian art, literary history, etc.), – Incidentally, – he is a very knowledgeable man and can be of great use to you. He must only be left undisturbed for some time and given opportunity to work. He can write a work on Armenia. He is quite prepared to learn Armenian. Please, respond by telegraph on your apprehension. Yours, Bukharin».⁶⁶

The intention by Mandelstam to go to Armenia had not come by accident. It was rightly noticed that it was very much stipulated by Pushkin's visit to Armenia in 1829, Bryusov's travelling in January 1916, visit by A. Bely in the Summer, 1928 and Spring, 1929, as well as by their widely known works on Armenia, its people, history, and culture.

It should be added that, as was heretofore mentioned, in early 1920 he visited the cities Tiflis and Baku having huge Armenian populations, he had been acquainted with the Armenian reality, translated the above-mentioned work by Kara-Darvish, in Moscow communicated with A. Khalatov, Chairman of the Petrograd Publishers' Council, and with M. Shahinyan, enjoying great authority within the Russian public, political and intellectual environment, about whom in an essay («Shuba» written in 1922 there is an entertaining paragraph, and who in mid-1920s was in Armenia, Nakhijevan and Nagorno-Karabakh, by that time was well informed on the past and present of the Armenian people.

Anyway, the wish to learn Armenian was very imperative, and O. Mandelstam goes to the People's Oriental Institute (formerly the Lazarev Institute). The poet wrote about it: «I was encountered by a sad-looking Armenian youngster.

My amateurish arrival caused no joy to anyone. My plea to help study the Old Armenian did not touch the heart of those people.

As a consequence of false – subjective – orientation, I learned to see a philologist in every Armenian ... Though it may be true to some degree. Those are people who are even now ringing the keys of the language, while opening no treasure-box ... They gave out the names of some worthy Armenian writers, mentioned Academician Marr ...».⁶⁷

Right in the library Mandelstam met Ashot Hovhannisyan, the Soviet state and party figure, historian, who in 1928 lived in Moscow. Here are the poet's colorful lines characterizing this person: «... An elderly man entered the library with dictatorial

⁶⁵ Mandelstam 2003: 238. Cf. «Raduga», 1988, N. 3, p. 23.

⁶⁶ Kubatyan 1989: 11. Cf. Mandelstam 2003: 372. Incidentally, we shall note that N. Bukharin at that time was not editor-in-chief of the newspaper «Izvestiya».

⁶⁷ Mandelstam 2003: 249–250.

movements and a majestic posture. // His Promethaeian head emanated a light colored in blueish ash and smoke, like a powerful quartz lamp ... The Wizard's wide mouth did not smile resolutely reminding that word is work. Comrade Hovhanissyan's head possessed the interlocutor reluctance to leave, as a mountain summit that has a form of a head by accident. But the blue-quartz misery of his eyes was worth a smile. // Such are deafness and gratitude, left to us as heritage from the Titans. ...». ⁶⁸

... Waiting for the invitation documents from Yerevan in early April 1930, the Mandelstams were in Sukhum «by the Central Committee» paper, on recreation at the government-owned summer house named after Orjonikidze. In those days O. Mandelstam met many renowned people in Sukhum. ⁶⁹ In this way, being the guest of Abkhasian poet and scholar Dmitry Gulia, the President of the Abkhasian Language and Literature Academy, Mandelstam wrote: «He complained on the difficulties of inventing the Abkhasian alphabet, spoke with respect about the Petersburg prank Evreinov (meaning film director and theatrical critic N. N. Evreinov – A. Z.), who in Abkhasia was suspected in goat worship, and complained of serious defects in scientific research resulting from the great distance from Tiflis». ⁷⁰ From Sukhum the Mandelstams made their way to Noviy Afon, Gudauta, Tkvarcheli, then set out for Tiflis.

First thing when coming to Armenia, O. Mandelstam in Leninakan took part in the Mayday celebrations then came to Yerevan. ⁷¹ «In the tiny room of our hotel («Yerevan» – A. Z.) books on the Armenian culture appeared momentarily. Strzhigovsky (the matter is, in essence, about the latter's work «Architecture of the Armenians and Europe»– A. Z.), the Armenian Chroniclers, Movses Khorenatsi et al., what concerned that country's economy and nature, – wrote N. Mandelstam. – From the books on Armenia's economy O. Mandelstam selected the book by Chopin, a functionary of the Alexandrian times, «The working Description of Armenia». ⁷² He compared the vivid interest by Chopin to the

⁶⁸ Mandelstam 2003: 250.

⁶⁹ Mandelstam 1989: 310, 423. In those days having a rest in Sukhum was N. Ezhov, the future Narkom of the Interior, with whom the poet played tennis, Abkhazia's Educational leader N. Lakoba, the «proletarian poet» A. Bazimensky, the ethnographer, collector of Abkhasian popular songs M. Kovach, Director of the Tiflis National Museum Anatoly K-n and other celebrities.

⁷⁰ Mandelstam 2003: 261.

⁷¹ «Osip Mandelstam's (creation's –A. Z.) editor of the American publication <B.>Filipov, with a penetration, proper to all editors, decided that Osip Mandelstam had escaped to Armenia from the five-year construction plans.... It is a cheap political speculation, – noted O. Mandelstam. – At the outskirts construction was going on at a wider scale than in the center, and Osip Mandelstam in any case could have nothing against it. What should have been so upsetting to him from the planned economic organization? The matter was clearly elsewhere.

As perceived by Osip Mandelstam, the Crimea, Georgia and Armenia only relate to the Black Sea, it provides communication with the International culture of the Mediterranean» (Mandelstam 1989: 241–242).

⁷² The French ethnographer, and historian, I. I. Chopin in 1825 lived in Russia, he was head of the Internal Revenue Service of the Armenian region. He did statistical research. His historical monumental study on the situation in the Armenian region during the period of unification of Russia (1852, in Russian.) in 1840 (a manuscript) had merited the Demidov prize of the Russian Academy of Sciences. O. Mandelstam wrote: «I have been sent to Armenia by no one,

country with the innumerable businessmen that were encountered in the hotel».⁷³ On the very first day to the hall of the hotel “Yerevan” came “the miraculous painter” Martiros Saryan. At the time of their sojourn in Yerevan the Mandelstams visited his workshop, admiring his pictures of the “sky-colored period” of Art. They also met A. Tamanyan and Young Architects, listened to their discussions. Mandelstam attended the Armenia’s State Library, made use of its funds, was introduced and communicated with the philologist and theatrical figure Mamikon Gevorgyan who is « eloquent, witty and kind, but his elocution is too course and noisy, while speech is oily and factitious».⁷⁴ It is interesting that M. Gevorgyan sang for Mandelstam a few excerpts from Firdousi. In Yerevan the poet also heard recitals by the Komitas Joint Choir.

It is known that in Armenian Mandelstams had spent several days at Tsakhkadzor, in the Writers house.

In Yerevan Mandelstam was introduced and made friends with B. Kuzin, whom Moscow deputed to Armenia to investigate how the red ant that can produce «a wonderful red paint», the real red. The latter lived at 92, Spandaryan St., «at the house of very lovely people», the family of Ter-Ohanyan. «I was running to you on Spandaryan Street swallowing the stinging construction dust, so characteristic of the young Yerevan, – wrote O. Mandelstam. – Besides, I felt very nice when under renovation of Ararat Valley rudeness, bumps, city, that seems to be fully entering into the God-inspired...».⁷⁵

It has been noticed that «an encounter with the ancient Armenian culture for him becomes a formative living impression.

It was in Armenia that his friendship originated with B. Kuzin, a deep, straight man, absolutely incapable of conformism. It will be said on that point: «When I entered a sleep, shapelessness and formlessness, // The Friendship made me awake». And what happened was a miracle. «The shapeless and formlessness sleep» was terminated. The poems rushed again».⁷⁶

In those days visiting Yerevan was the most illustrious Russian literary figure Marietta Shahinyan. The Mandelstams met her, as confirmed by the poet’s letter to Shahinyan as of April 5, 1933, with a request to facilitate B. Kuzin’s release from detention (arrested in April 4). Here is a relevant piece from that letter: «Dear Marietta Sergeevna.... If you remember, in Yerevan ... The subject of our accidental encounter with you ... With his personality (B. Kuzin’s – A. Z.) is bundled my absolutely new prose and the whole latest period of my work to that and only to that I am indebted that he introduced into the literature the so-called “mature Mandelstam” period ... They deprived me of my interlocutor, my alter ego, the man, whom I could, and had the time

like, say, Prince Paskevich, the Griboyedov-type German and one of the most educated *chinovniks* Chopin. ... » [Mandelstam 1968: 182].

⁷³ Mandelstam 1989: 220.

⁷⁴ Mandelstam 2003: 269.

⁷⁵ Mandelstam 2003: 256.

⁷⁶ Mandelstam 2003: 36: On the relations of Mandelstam and Kuzin see details in Kuzin 1987: 127–144. O. Mandelstam dedicated to B. Kuzin a poem «To the German speech», written in August 1932.

to convince that Revolution has the intellect and the vital madness, and the luxuriousness of the living nature ... Marietta Sergeevna! I want you to believe that I am not hostile to those hands that seized Boris Sergeevich (B. Kuzin – A. Z.), since those hands do both strict and lively work.

However, Boris Sergeevich is not an expert and for that reason, the outer freedom itself, provided our authorities will consider it possible to give it back to him, will only be a small drop of the big internal freedom that has already been granted to him by our epoch and our state.

Yours, O. Mandelstam.

I am sorry for having written not with my own hand, I was not quite able to do that, but rather dictated it to my wife».⁷⁷ It can be noted that Mandelstam had been quite right to refer to M. Shahinyan on that matter, for after a few days B. Kuzin was released.

By the way, it is enormously symbolic that in the hardest moments of life, in 1933, on December 1, Yeghishe Charents, having become subject of political denunciations and persecutions, published insidious articles and addressed M. Shahinyan with a petition-letter.⁷⁸

... The Mandelstams were having a month's recreation time at Number 1 trade-union rest-home. Since it was very hard for O. Mandelstam to endure very hot and stuffy air in Yerevan in Summer time, he was offered to have a rest on the island on the Lake Sevan, and so the Mandelstams came up to that house – remembers Anahit Khudaverdyan. – The Mandelstam spouses had no children, but loved and wanted to have children. The poet's wife's dream was to have a boy. When Osip Mandelstam sat down at a table to work, she used to tiptoe out of the room, shutting the door behind her, calling to her the children playing near the window, lest they disturb her husband writing poetry».⁷⁹

At Sevan the Mandelstams communicated and became friendly with the ethnographer, historian and archaeologist Asatur Khachatryan, Chairman of Armenia's Central Executive Committee, State and Party official, historial and literary critic Artashes Karinyan, provincial expert Hovhannes Saghatelyan, chemist Stepan Hambaryan, and doctor Hertsberg, ichtiologist and entomologist, with L. Arnold, in "A Journey to Armenia", providing biographical data on each one and specific characteristics.⁸⁰ This is what N. Mandelstam writes about the Armenian scientists: «At Sevan we met with Egyptologists and numismatic scholars. They arrived in their homeland from every corner of the world. They came out to be genuine Europeans and

⁷⁷ Kuzin 1987: 131-132. In this connection speaking to A. Akhmatova L. Ginzburg asked: «–What is it, his hand does not work at all. // – No, but he dictates, and that is completely unimportant. In his whole life he had been so helpless, all the same he could not do anything with his hands» (Ginzburg 1982: 416). «I have no manuscripts, have no notebooks, have no archive. Have no writings either, because I never write – confessed Mandelstam: – I am the only one in Russia who writes with his lips ... » (Mandelstam 2003: 237).

⁷⁸ Details see in Charent 1987: 226–230.

⁷⁹ Lekmanov 2003: 141.

⁸⁰ See Mandelstam 2003: 246–249.

more resembled real scientists than those we met in Moscow, mostly in TSEKUBU hostels and health resorts. ... The Armenian old scholars were in control of not only territorial, but also temporal, i.e. historic visions. They were able to penetrate with their vision through the depth of time. The world had already forgotten all colors, but those had yet not died on the historic Armenian land proud of her old scholars».⁸¹

During the days spent in Armenia, the Mandelstams were full of fears on the Kurd's revolt in the Ararat Region and on the brutal actions by the Turks.⁸² N. Mandelstam wrote: «In the first quarter of the century the Kurds massacred the



From left to right Ya.S.Khachatryants,
N.Ya.Mandelstam.
O.E.Mandelstam and a group of children.
Yerevan, Avan, 1930.

Armenians, while in the second quarter themselves were massacred from the very host that had dispatched them to murder».⁸³ That was a full-blown assessment that O. Mandelstam had been perfectly informed of the Armenian Genocide executed by the Turks. While in the poem «Hafiz is nursing a rose...» the line «The living are over the mountain» said that the poet knew the real hosts of the lands behind Mount Ararat...

Since May 1930 up until early October the Mandelstams lived and went around Armenia, displaying a great interest in Armenia and the Armenian culture, attended historical and architectural monuments, saw the ruins of the Zvartnots Temple («Not ruins, not at all ... », that is the starting line of the poem describing Zvartnots), In Ashtarak, in the village of Byurakan, he climbed the environs of Mount Aragats, the Armenian and Kurdish nomadic places... He tried to learn Old Armenian,⁸⁴

decided to write a work on the subject «Arshak and Shapuh». Its confirmation is «A Journey to Armenia», prosaic work «Alagyaz» section at the end of historian Pavstos Byuzand's «Armenian History» free narration with Testimonies by the names of Arshak, Shapuh, Anhush Fortress, Drastamat.

⁸¹ Mandelstam 1990: 441–442.

⁸² On these events see in detail Saiyan 2017.

⁸³ Mandelstam 1990: 447.

⁸⁴ «I received my first lesson of Armenian from a girl named Margo. Her father was an outstanding diaspora Armenian, < ... > and, it seems, a consul approving of the Socialist build-up and the national progress from the bourgeois circles. < ... > Anyway, I have learned nothing < ... > It is enough to say that she was devoid of any pedagogical abilities. Margo had not the least notion about the mystic and its sacred beauty» (Mandelstam 1968: 183). We shall also note that, at Sevan the teacher A. Kh. took up the task to teach Armenian to O. Mandelstam. According to O. Mandelstam, was inspired by «hatred of the white guard, contempt of the Dashnaks, and a pure Soviet wrath» (Mandelstam 1968: 182).

It is known that during his stay in Armenia O.Mandelstam had received from Sovnarkom of Armenia 300 roubles monthly as *sinekura* – a well paid pension without holding any office.⁸⁵

On O. Mandelstam's days of stay in Yerevan, there was an interesting episode connected with the visit to the ruins of the Avani Hovhan Bagaratsi (the Temple Cathoghike). Residents of the Old Yerevan street «Tsarskaya ulitsa» remember: one day, all of a sudden, it was noticed that Mandelstam had not shown up at the hotel, nor at Spandaryan Street (where he often appeared to see B. Kuzin). It became clear that he had been in Avan, studying a chapel, the stones, cross-stones, while living in the church. «By his own words, he “conversed with a heathen dragon who was above the entrance to the Cathedral, and with a lion, who was in the small courtyard. “The rarest synthesis of Paganry and Christianity”. Mandelstam called a temple in Avan “a looted little pagan booth” and never stopped wondering at the architectural mentality of the builder».⁸⁶ It is to be noted that as a record of this event a group photo has been retained showing besides the Mandelstams also Ya. Khachatryants, the husband of M. Shahinyan, a philologist, translator, with a group of children. Incidentally, this picture is the only document of the Mandelstams' visit to Armenia. N. Mandelstam in connection with the visit to Armenia wrote: «For Mandelstam going to Armenia was a return to the native edge – to the place where there was the beginning of everything, to the fathers, towards the source. After the local silence the poems came back to him in Armenia and had never left ...».⁸⁷ For the Russian poet Armenia was “the Country's book ... that had been a manual for the earliest people». «There is nothing more instructive or happy, than when you plunge into a society of quite another race, that you respect, with which you sympathize, which you are proud of, despite being an alien. The Armenians' fulfillment with life, their course tenderness, their noble bone marrow full of working zeal, their unexplainable disgust towards every kind of metaphysics as well as an admirable intimacy with the world of the real things – all that told me: you are awake, never fear your time, do not dodge, – wrote O. Mandelstam. – And I wonder if that was not why I was placed among the people renowned for their trading activities, who, at the same time, live not by the passenger terminal clock or else, a sundial, as seen at the Zvartnots debris astronomic wheel or as a rose-flower entablature within a stone».⁸⁸

Anyway, «We have gone a lot around Armenia, and seen a great deal, although, no doubt, not all that we wanted. We knew little of people»,⁸⁹ – attested N. Mandelstam. A propos, the eloquent reality confirming the last statement is as follows. Thus, a notable literary man L. Mkrtchyan wrote: «In September 1959 Ilya Ehrenburg asked me about Osip Mandelstam. He came to Armenia and was interested specifically on

⁸⁵ Details see in Mets 2019: 262ff.

⁸⁶ See Ghazinyan 2002; also Kubatyan 2005: 18.

⁸⁷ Mandelstam 2003: 372.

⁸⁸ Mandelstam 2003: 249.

⁸⁹ Mandelstam 2003: 78.

whether the author of poems on Armenia, which were the work of genius, was known in this country.

I knew nothing about the repressed poet (died in December 1938 in a labor-camp hospital).

Here almost no one knows about him, – said Ehrenburg – Only Martiros Saryan and Saryan's son Sarik remember his poems».⁹⁰

A similar story is related to a «disfavored» Russian author V. Grossman. In 1961, November 3, he came to Armenia, and lived here for two months. He created Travelling notes "Good for you", dedicated to the Armenian people's history and culture through Hrachya Kochar (in the book mention is made of the writer Martirosyan) inquired about Mandelstam's visit to Armenia, the latter's written works on the subject of Armenia and it came about that not a single writer of the old generation knew anything about it.⁹¹

Incidentally, as we learn about Mandelstam from the memoirs by B. Kuzin, the Mandelstams had intended to settle in Armenia. «The latest days in Yerevan passed in endless conversations about the future. – To go to Moscow and strive to achieve something new, to settle there in some way or to remain in Armenia? It is not easy to count, how many times the solution of this question changed. But the day of my departure was finally resolved. – There is only one choice – to stay here. Only by plunging into the ancient Armenian culture, within Armenia's life, history and art (it was meant, as a matter of course, to master the Armenian language in its completeness) could there be an awakening of the creative lethargy. The return to Moscow was absolutely out of the question. On the eve of my departure I bade a farewell to the Mandelstams, as we had no doubt, for good».⁹² Life, however, made other arrangements ...

O. Mandelstam in Shushi

The city of Shushi is an important public, political, spiritual and cultural center. It is known that yet in 1837 this city was visited by the great Russian Poet M. Lermontov. In a letter to his relative S. Rayevsky he reported: «Since the day that I left Russia, from Kizliar to Taman, my way lay through the mountains, I was in the city of Shushi, in the cities Kuba, Shamakhi, and Kakhet» (emphasis is ours - A. Z.).⁹³

On March 23-26 1920, the troops of Turkey and Azerbaijan and the Muslims demolished the ancient citadel city and massacred the Armenian population. That had been the subject of multiple witness accounts, and publications by the Armenian and foreign intellectuals as well as public and political figures. Thus, M. Shahinyan in the 1920s travelled in Transcaucasia – Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, Mountainous Karabakh and Nakhijevan, leaving interesting notes on that account. In "The Ghost of

⁹⁰ Mkrtchyan 1998: 220; see also Kubatyan 2005: 73.

⁹¹ Grossman 1967: 210. See also Gonchar-Khanjyan 1989: 7; Kubatyan 2005: 73.

⁹² Kuzin 1987: 140.

⁹³ Sevyan 1991: 118. Incidentally, Michael Harutiunyan wrote about that fact a poem titled «In the Lermontov Shushi» (118–119).

Shushi", chapter VI of the essay on Karabagh, she recorded: «The first thing that struck me was silence. I had never felt such silence, and it seemed absolutely unnatural. It was all of a sudden as if the silence were whispering. The stones were breathing and their whisper made the hair on your head stand on end. In March 1920 here during three days the city was demolished and 7000 houses were set on fire, the number of murdered Armenians, according to different sources, reached 3 to 4 thousand, some say it was over 12 thousand. Fact is that of 35 thousand of Shushi no one was left alive. In some streams one could see corpses. A person having imagination here would hardly breathe, you walk and walk along pervasive smoke-painted remains of dwelling, or rather along the walls, they spurn you to hurry, you fear you will never get out at all. ...».⁹⁴

In the book wrote by Giovanni Guaita, an Italian historian, theologian, author and translator «A Scream from Ararat. Armin Wegner and the Armenians' Genocide» we read: «In March 1920 the Turks and the Azerbaijanis committed another atrocity – a massacre in the city of Shushi. In Karabakh Shushi was an important cultural center of the Armenian life. Since the 19th century it had its monastery, its church, theater, hospital, diocese school, publications were issued of Armenian books and magazines. In late 19th century the Armenians counted over 60 percent of the city's population. Only within a single day March 22, 1920, the evil Turks demolished thousands of Armenian dwellings, churches, libraries, printing houses, massacred over 30000 people. In this way the Kemalists in Shushi reiterated what the Young Turks perpetrated in Baku (i.e. the events in Baku in September 1918 – A. Z.)⁹⁵

Another important evidence is the reflections of those tragic events by O. Mandelstam and his wife.

On returning to Tiflis from Armenia, 10 years after the Shushi massacre in March 1920, the Mandelstams came to this oldest Armenian city. Why did they visit Shushi this time? That visit could largely have been stimulated by M. Shahinyan's aforementioned travel and the city's description that had been no doubt familiar to the Russian poet, following the interaction with the Armenian intellectuals, as well as with the Shushi-native Ter-Gabrielyan, the initiator of the Mandelstams' visit to Armenia.

On terrifying impressions of Shushi N. Mandelstam gave interesting information. This painful excerpt will be cited in full. «... At the latest trip from Yerevan, the end of our travel in Armenia. At dawn we set out from Gyanja (Gandzak – A. Z.) for Shushi by bus. The city started with endless cemeteries, then a small market place, terminating the demolished city streets: We had already happened to see abandoned villages, consisting of a few half-demolished dwellings, but in this once rich and prosperous city images of destruction and death were most terrible to see. We walked along the streets and everywhere the same double row of roofless, windowless and doorless images. The gaping openings of windows showed empty rooms, sometimes fragments of

⁹⁴ Shahinyan 1931: 362. Incidentally, the book was dedicated to «Ja. Khachatryants, spouse and comrade».

⁹⁵ Guaita 2005: 46.

casing, half-demolished ovens, somewhere remnants of broken furniture. The houses were of widely known rose-colored tuff, two-storeyed. All partitions were destroyed, and in the gaps between those skeletons were light spots of blue skies. They said that following the massacre all wells were full of corpses. If anyone remained alive, he had escaped from this city. On any mountain-side roads we met not a single person. Only below, on the market place, was a weeping group of people, not a single Armenian, only Muslims. O. M.'s impression was that the market-place Muslims were those murderers' remnants who ten years before had demolished the city, however, there was no use to them: the Oriental squalor, terrible cluttered traps, pus-stained face. They sold corn flour, pies, donuts... we dared not buy donuts from those hands, despite being hungry ... Neither could one drink water from those wells... Not only the city had no hotels, but the newcomers had to spend the night in the so-called "commons", men and women in the same room. The bus to Gyanja would have to depart in the morning... We were offered to stay at a private home, but I was apprehensive of the eastern boils, while the Mandelstams could not get rid of the idea that we dealt with robbers and murderers. We decided to move to Stepanakert, the regional center. To reach the place was possible only by a horse cart.

There we met a noseless coachman, the only one on the premises, with face half-covered with a leather mask. And then everything happened exactly as it was in the poem («Coachman»– A. Z.), and we did not believe that he would get us to Stepanakert. We passed the home-going way. Here we spent the night in the "common" and in the morning got bus tickets quite easily (through the regional Soviet) and reached the Gyanja or Nukha railway». ⁹⁶

That was the shocking impression left by Shushi upon the Mandelstams, ten years after the demolition of the city.

«Armenia» Array of Poems. The days in Tiflis with Ye. Charents

The Mandelstams go from Armenia to Tiflis, where they will stay up until November 5, 1930. Here, Mandelstam writes the array of poems "Armenia" published in the journal «Noviy mir» under the title: «Armenia. Twelve Poems. O. Mandelstam». ⁹⁷ Later he wrote on Armenia five more poems, which, however, were not included into

⁹⁶ Mandelstam 2003: 359–360. Recapitulating historic events is done not only to remember the past, but also to take lessons. Of those episodes are the mentioned events having taken place in Shushi. All those things were manifested in the Soviet years by the Azerbaijani state-level encroachments on the Armenian independence. However, in May 8 -9, 1992, the Armenian armed forces liberated the city. Not coming to terms with the situation, Azerbaijan with the immediate participation of Turkey with the involvement of International terrorists, using the Israeli military technology and Israeli combat equipment on September 27, 2020, unleashed aggression against Artsakh treacherously seizing Shushi. The 1920 massacre of the Armenian population and the 2020 demolition of the city is the manifestation of the genocidal policy against Artsakh and the Armenian people that remained with no response from the International community.

⁹⁷ «Noviy mir», 1931, Book 3, March, p. 62–63. By the way, printed in the same number was M. Shahinyan's second part of the novel "Hidrocentral" (pp. 5–17), while the previous parts were published by the Journal in 1930, Vol. 1–7, 10.

that array. Of course, the Biblical Spirit is felt, Armenia is presented with a spiritual image, the historical destiny of the people, their language and culture, the belonging to the European world, in the next poem he sculptured a more earthly image of Armenia, reflected the work of the people, their everyday life.⁹⁸ «In Mandelstam's poems of the 30s there is fear and confusion, and there also exists a somewhat growing admiration of everyday phenomena. He creates with love the language on works about history, art, life. Such is the array "Armenia", starting in 1930 the latest creative period of Mandelstam»,⁹⁹ – wrote the Russian literary critic and writer L. Ginzburg in his article «The Poetics of Osip Mandelstam».

In essence, the poems dedicated to Armenia, have been discussed, analyzed and commented in detail upon the depth of Mandelstam's poetry particularly in what concerns the symbols,¹⁰⁰ therefore, oral expression was sufficient.

... In those days Yeghishe Charents was in Tiflis. It was there that they first met and got close. Mandelstam wrote: «A basic friendship was waiting for us in Tiflis. In the hotel we were visited by Yeghishe Charents, and we spent with him two or three weeks, meeting nearly every day. I understand why the friendly free relations with Charents started in Tiflis, rather than Yerevan, however the reason lies elsewhere...¹⁰¹ I remember the way the acquaintance started. Mandelstam read to Charents the first poems about Armenia, he then just had started to write them, Charents listened and said: «From you, it seems, a book is flowing», I remember those words, for Mandelstam later said: «You heard that he said: he is a real poet». At that time I did not know that for a poet «the book» is a complete structural formation, a big unity. Then under some pretext Pasternak told me about «the miracle of binding the book» and the same was said by Anna Andreevna-Anoosh (Anna Akhmatova – A. Z.). All that was summed up in the words by Yeghishe Charents, and we always remembered that in Yerevan lives a real poet. I remember nothing of his other words, since one cannot write down a spouse's or a relative's word with whom you drink tea, walk searching for a place where you can buy cigarettes. At that time there could be a crisis on cigarettes, and men established friendship with a group of urchins, since with no cigarettes it is hardly possible to talk, while they used to talk a lot and long. Possibly, Charents' words that he was heading for a book, was just a friendly greeting, something that enables any poet to do his work, while in that life it was not so easy to get. Armenia, Charents, the old men of the University, children, books, the wonderful country all branching into architecture,

⁹⁸ On the occasion of O. Mandelstam's 125th Anniversary the History Museum of Armenia published a luxurious album-catalogue where photos were commented using eloquent excerpts from the poet's "Armenia" array, see Catalogue 2016.

⁹⁹ Ginzburg 1982: 288.

¹⁰⁰ Particularly deep, delicate and detailed notes and parallels are yielded by Kubatyan 1974: 103–116; 1989: 11–20; 1991: 79–88; 2005: 7–66. See also Semenko 2003: 89–111; Gonchar-Khanjyan 1989: 5–10; Andreeva 1995: 67–77; 1999: 63–70; 2001; Gonchar, Andreeva 1996: 82–93 etc.

¹⁰¹ We shall note, it is at least strange, Gurgen Mahari's statement that he met Mandelstam in the summer of 1930 in the hall of the hotel "Yerevan" and they were introduced to each other by Ye. Charents (see Mahari 1966: 47–48). By the way, Charents since July 1 was head of the fiction department of the State Publishing House and frequently visited Tiflis, attended «Hayartun», talked with writers, signed agreements on printing their works.

the unanimous singing (that of Komitas – A. Z.) and the whole position of this country is what gave Mandelstam second wind», to live his entire life».¹⁰²

Incidentally, in all probability, the close friendship between Charents and Mandelstam facilitated his translation of the poem «the sixth feeling».

It is to be noted that in Tiflis O. Mandelstam was supported by Beso Lominadze, the First Secretary of the Transcaucasian region, who had promised to arrange a job for him at the Archive, and to provide him with an apartment. However, B. Lominadze was accused with certain encroachments against the party and summoned urgently to Moscow. «Just when the tragedy of Lominadze burst out, whom Osip Mandelstam had visited three or four times for a personal reception, noticed that following us, wherever we were going, there was a tail of spies. Perhaps, the local surveillance decided in all cases to track down the mysterious visitors of disfavored prominent personalities. Just at that time we got it home to us that we had nothing more to do in Tiflis and we beat it to Moscow without delay».¹⁰³

The Motivation for Writing the poem “The Coachman”

Following “Armenia” Array of poems in 1931, June 12, the dire impressions received from Shushi were reflected in the poem “Coachman” by O. Mandelstam. It shows that Armenia for the Russian poet was not a random attraction, but rather a biographic fact, and that the Armenian subject for him was not a local but a universal factor, one can say, even metaphysical – it was an existential key to open the tragic character of existence.¹⁰⁴ «Its theme is the coachman, who ignores where he is heading, – the president of plague (that connects the Pushkin’s little tragedy «Feast during a Plague»–A. Z.), with a masked someone on whom we all depend ... Mandelstam had noticed long ago that we know nothing about those on who depends our fate ... We know even less about those plague-feasting presidents. The poem was born by a private person and a wider combination – that is the source of its meaning...»,¹⁰⁵ – wrote N. Mandelstam.

«The Coachman» poem also was honored with a detailed analysis and scrutiny, as noted in A. Pushkin’s lyric poetry, particularly by evident associations with the plots «A Travel to Arzrum», «A Feast during a Plague», with the motifs of the works named “The Devs”.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, given herein is only a single excerpt from the poem «The Coachman».

¹⁰² Mandelstam 2003: 79. With regard to looking for the place to buy cigarettes see also Mandelstam 1990: 438. On Charents and Mandelstam having not met in Yerevan, as well as on the subjects of probable conversations by Mandelstam and other writers, on the coincidental tragic events in the lives of the two poets (particularly on the Stalin’s call to Pasternak on December 30 1930 in connection with Mandelstam, and in the Kremlin through Charents Stalin’s Curiosity on St. Zoryan, the letter by the poets to M. Shahinyan) the late G. Kubatyan had interesting observations, see Kubatyan 2005: 71–87.

¹⁰³ Golovin 2016: 44.

¹⁰⁴ Mandelstam 2003: 359.

¹⁰⁵ Mandelstam 2003: 360. By the way, in 1929–1930 in Karabakh and Hadrut had suffered plague.

¹⁰⁶ See particularly Khzmalyan 1991: 89–92.

Так, в Нагорном Карабахе,	In Karabakh of the Mountains,
В хищном городе Шуше	In the predator city Shushi,
Я изведаль эти страхи,	I experienced all those fears,
Соприродные душе.	That my soul was willing to see.
Сорок тысяч мертвых окон	Forty thousand empty windows
Там видны со всех сторон	Can be seen from all the sides,
И труда бездушный кокон	And once working heartless cinder
На горах похоронён.	Is interred on the heights.
И бесстыдно розовеют	No shame in the rosy
Обнажённые дома,	Naked dwellings on the hill.
А над ними неба реет	And above the sky is fuzzy
Темно-синяя чума.	It is blue and black like hell. ¹⁰⁷

The Prose Work «A Journey to Armenia» and its echoes

In 1931-1932 O. Mandelstam wrote the Essay «A Journey to Armenia», which is mainly a story about Armenia, but also a meditation on human history and world languages, the French Impressionism, physiology and education. On the details of writing this work Mandelstam in April 1931 wrote to his father: «I wonder if there are programs or perspectives? Certainly, there are. I will make you known my writing ordeal. After Armenia I lately completed lyric poetry, the large array gave me not a single *copeck*. Nothing can be printed. (The journal editors complain and accept nothing). The praise goes high. I also write prose, a long-time and painful affair, however that is the reason why they do not close deals with me and do not pay in advance. That becomes clear in half-a-word. I have fully put up with it, never suggest anything anywhere, make no requests anywhere, ... It is important, dad, to create works, but where they are going to be placed, is not essential ... I do not put aside my pen due to everyday empty things, work is good and joyful».¹⁰⁸

Prior to printing «A Journey to Armenia» on April 5, 1933, O. Mandelstam wrote in an aforementioned letter to M. Shahinyan: «Dear Marietta Sergeevna. This work that I am sending to you and want you to read, has not been printed yet. (It will appear in the Publishing House «Zvezda» and Leningrad publishing house,¹⁰⁹ but it so happened that this work, this manuscript is already working and breathing as a living man, responding as if alive, and at the same time, it struggles. Can you remember, in Yerevan you gave me a volume by Goethe and we were reading an article from F.C.E. (see an article by

¹⁰⁷ Mandelstam 2003: 153.

¹⁰⁸ Mandelstam 1987: 204.

¹⁰⁹ M. Shahinyan was one of the members of the Leningrad Directorate of the «Writers Publishers». It was decided to publish «The Voyage to Armenia» as a book, it was in the process of proof-reading, however, after the appearance of the negative reviews, the publication was frozen.

Mandelstam «On the Problem of Darwin's Scientific Style» printed in the journal «For Communist Enlightenment», 1932, April 22 – A. Z.), where I and you on your part and mine admired the “living” nature. Our momentary encounters with you and even Yakov Samsonich (and even through M. Shahinyan's husband Ya. Khachatryan – A. Z.), (it was known that M. Shahinyan was tough on the ear – A. Z.), has always defended reality of his stillborn definitions. You have always opposed me for not listening to materialism's or dialectics' music or it does not matter, whatever it is called. The same conversation went on along my «Voyage». The material world is a reality, something that is given, but born with us. In order that the given become reality, one must revive it in the real sense of the word. That is indeed, science that is indeed, art. ... ».¹¹⁰

In one of his letters O. Mandelstam wrote: «My little book («A Journey to Armenia» –A. Z.) says that the eye is the means and tool of thinking, that light is force and ornament thought-idea. This is the way they speak about friendship, science, intellectual passion, rather than things».¹¹¹

To «The Journey to Armenia» I have given a many-faceted scrutiny and commentary, there were multiple publications,¹¹² that is why it is enough of that.

The Essay «A Journey to Armenia» was published in Leningrad, 1933-1935 (pp. 103–125). Editor – Cezar Volpe, not only published that work, but printed an excerpt of an article on King Arshak by critical literature, whom the Assyrian Shah held in a dark vault without exit and with no ray of light “the Assyrian has detained my heart...”¹¹³ For that Volpe was fired, but not arrested. The newspaper «Pravda», August 30, 1933, under the subtitle “Bibliography” published a very negative review by S. Rosenthal on this work titled «The Shadows of Old Petersburg («Zvezda», 1933, 1–7)». Following that publication O. Mandelstam was advised «to give up» the work «The Journey to Armenia». «The period of apologetic letters had not yet been canceled».¹¹⁴ Having read the stuff in the «Pravda», O. Mandelstam addressed his acquaintance in All-Union Bolshevik Central Party Committee. The latter received him immediately, expecting that the poet came to apologize, however, he simply declared that it was inadmissible to publish the yellow press materials in a central newspaper». «Mandelstam, you are talking about the newspaper» “Pravda”, – was the answer. «I am not to blame that the article was printed in the Pravda», – responded Mandelstam».¹¹⁵

Anyway. The “Pravda” critic mercilessly criticized the literary traces of the Petersburg period, the writers incorporating the remnants of layers and fragments of the old literary schools» - V. Shklovsky, K. Vaginov, N. Zabolotsky, but the main target was O. Mandelstam. «Osip Mandelstam made a «Journey in Armenia» and in 1933 told

¹¹⁰ Mandelstam and Kuzin 1987: 131.

¹¹¹ Mandelstam 1968: 191.

¹¹² Zolyan 1986: 226–236; Nerler 1987: 69–79; see also studies mentioned above in footnote 100. Recently an extremely remarkable study has been published dealing with the “Journey to Armenia” (Katsis 2022).

¹¹³ Mandelstam 1990: 335. Cf. Mandelstam 1989: 301.

¹¹⁴ Mandelstam 1990: 341.

¹¹⁵ Mandelstam 1990: 342–343.

about it in the journal «Zvezda». ... From Mandelstam's old, rotten, great-power chauvinism smell is coming, that, awarding praises on Armenia, glorified its exotics, its slavery of the past centuries, while on the present Mandelstam had not written a word, – as noted by Rosenthal. –To journey in this way» one can stay at home, and skirt yourself with engravings, old books and rare Armenian antiquities ... One can go by the witty notes by Mandelstam about Bezimensky. In that there is a relentless wrath of one who does not understand the proletarian literature... So spoke and wrote as well as journeyed before the revolution «Veni» poets, poets of the sea-side bear-house street, poets of the smelly saloons, heroes of literary «fridays» and «tuesdays». «The Petersburgian old-time poet-acmeist O. Mandelstam, – continues the article writer, – passed by the stormy, blooming and joyful Socialism-building Armenia ... O. Mandelstam enjoys poor opinion by M. Slonimsky (a representative of the Soviet prose – A. Z.). ... A poet, as they say, with no life experience, striving to serenity and well-being, indifferent to everything, except his wishes, is condemned to hell». And finally, as a conclusion, «Zvezda» on its pages published the best Works of the Soviet literature. However, in «Zvezda» there are still a lot of grim, fruitless writers. The journal needs a strong hand, a Bolshevik eye. The writers need to be re-educated, a relentless struggle has to be maintained against the evil class creativity. // We must boldly put forward new writers from the workers' environment».¹¹⁶

In all generality, O.Mandelstam was not too much affected with this review, he simply tried to forget it, whereas that was a threat and a notice.

As Mandelstam wrote, “Armenia produced a reaction to this article by giving the poet a handle of “Dashnak” in the media: that meant that for Mandelstam all subjects on Armenia will have been shut down except Martiros Saryan and his son Sarik,¹¹⁷ when leaving, he knew that he was destined to stay away».¹¹⁸ His testimony from the array «Armenia»:

¹¹⁶ «Pravda» (M.), 30. VIII. 1933. Note that prior to that, on July 17, the “Literaturnaya Gazeta” published a similar article by N. Oruzhenikov.

¹¹⁷ Our searches, in the Armenian press, however, had been vain. Let us also note that the abovementioned can be explained by, as it was noted above, in the 1960s the old-generation Armenian writers did not remember Mandelstam or any of his works on Armenia, except Martiros Saryan and his son Sarik.

We can add that years later, in late 1960s and early 1970s, in the literary life of Armenia, interesting but sad things were recorded. As written by G. Kubatyan, the editor-in-chief of the journal «Literaturnaya Armenia», Gevorg Emin, a well-known poet, in an interview to the Paris newspaper «Russkaya misl» for printing O. Mandelstam's work was removed from work in the journal (most probably, he mean the article Emin 1967: 82–83), and that in the Central Committee he was considered uncontrollable. Actually, in 1974 the «Literaturnaya Armenia» fired its employee G. Kubatyan, since he dared to publish an article about O. Mandelstam, wherein were printed the unpublished poems by O. Mandelstam which were condemned for «Armenian nationalism and Sionism» (Kubatyan 2005: 164). It is to be added that on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of O. Mandelstam's death in 1998, G. Kubatyan wrote “Air stealer or where is that street?”, a summarizing excerpton of Mandelstam as a poet (see Kubatyan 2005: 418–421).

¹¹⁸ Mandelstam 1990: 344.

Я тебя никогда не увижу,	I shall never perceive you again,
Близорукое армянское небо,	The sky that is near at hand,
И уже не взгляну, прищурясь,	And will never be hit by a frame
На дорожный шатёр Арарата,	That will form an admirable tent
И уже никогда не раскрою	And naught will be open, including
В библиотеке авторов гончарных,	The door to the pottery den,
Прекрасной земли пустотелую книгу,	The hollow resounding beauty
По которой учились первые люди.	The book that instructed the earliest men.

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Conclusion

Osip Mandelstam is a 20th-century original and interesting celebrity of Russian literature with a controversial and complicated life story. His life and literary way was staggering between uplifts and downfalls.

«Mandelstam always, during his whole life, was striving to go to South, towards the shores of the Black Sea, to the Mediterranean basin. First he recognized the Crimea and loved the Eastern Coast and then, in the year 1920 he was in the Caucasus... In 1921 he had already spent half a year with me in Georgia, and in 1930 we from May to November (early October – A. Z.) lived in Armenia and Tiflis, where after a long silence he returned to poetry. I am talking about the genuine journeys, rather than on the accomodations in the rest-homes, which were quite numerous. The Mediterranean basin, the Crimea, the Caucasus were for Mandelstam an historical land, the book, «that had been a manual for the earliest people». For Mandelstam, the historical world was restricted to the peoples confessing Christianity, and he perceived Armenia as an outpost “at the edge of the world” (“Whole days you at the edge of the world – Swallowing tears, standing upright. They spat in your face with shame and grief “From the bearded cities of the East.) ... In these years we have seen at every step traces of the Musavatist massacres (not just only Shushi ...), and that deepened the feeling of being an outskirts surrounded by alien people and countries. In the poems on Armenia creeping in unexpectedly was the subject of the end and annihilation. «And they remove from you your plaster after death (italics are mine – A. Z.)».¹²⁰

The indelible impressions received from Armenia were deeply reflected in Mandelstam’s lyric poetry and prose. The Armenian theme became linked with multiple reflections on human history and recognition of history, world vision, the nodal point of ancient cultures.

The journey made to Armenia was for O. Mandelstam the most illuminated pages of his life. The poetry and prose born from familiarity with the Biblical Country are of the best pages written in the Russian literature about Armenia.

¹¹⁹ Mandelstam 2003: 138.

¹²⁰ Mandelstam 1990: 381.

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POLITICAL SCIENCES AND INFORMATIONAL SECURITY

LEVON SHANT'S ARGUMENTS ON INDEPENDENCE AS NATIONAL-SPIRITUAL AND CIVILIZATION FACTOR

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-108

*“The idea of having an Armenian civilization
without full national existence, without state independence
is a desperate self-deception or a semi-conscious confession that
the days of the Armenian people are numbered”.*

Levon Shant

Abstract

The article analyzes the political-philosophical concept of Levon Shant, a prominent Armenian thinker of the XIX-XX centuries. Shant substantiates the idea of polycentrism denying monocentrism in intercivilization relations. He believes all civilizations are displayed by individual uniqueness conditioned by people's national and cultural originality. He stresses the national factor which reveals more profound qualities. According to the Armenian scholar's theory, the nation is “an organism producing civilization” and the nationality is the fundamental principle to identify people. He refuses the aspects according to which the national and nations disappear during the process of civilization. On the contrary, the development of civilization is the key condition for nations' prosperity, independence, equality of rights, manifestation of national and political identity, as well as for the solution to national problems.

Keywords: Levon Shant, independence, civilization, national factor, national-political identity, sovereignty of the state

The interpretation of the issues of natural-historical origins and development tendencies of civilizations, of cultural identity of peoples and national identification is necessary to substantiate political independence and national-and-state sovereignty as the highest values, to discover the possibility of preventing intercivilizational and regional conflicts. In this respect the philosophical-political concept of Levon Shant, the prominent Armenian thinker of the XIX-XX centuries, has a modern value.

Based on the historical-and-philosophical study of the cradles of civilization, Shant argues for the **idea of multicentrism of civilization**, by which he substantiates the interaction of different civilizations. According to him: “Human civilization originated in different parts of the world, but due to location, position, climate and other geographical and economic reasons, for the first time it reached a complex and high level of development on Asian soil, mainly in the basin of four major rivers – the Yangtze, Ganges, Euphrates and Nile...”¹ He views China and India as isolated countries. Emphasizing the cultural potential of the civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, Shant asserts: “... it is on the heritage of their combination that the modern magnificent edifice of human civilization was founded and built”.² With this cultural and civilizational heritage he reasons the existence of a modern European-Western civilization as well, concluding: **there is no pure, solely European civilization** and without inheritance, only Asian civilization would exist.

Shant interprets the essential attributes that define Asian and European civilizations. **Asia is a continental civilization**, which conditions the natural and spiritual being of Asian peoples, the state and legal systems, the theocratic way of governing. The religious factor is dominant in cultural and civilizational processes. According to him, in the Asian civilization “the religious connection and consciousness... are much deeper and stronger than the state and national...”³

Europe, on the contrary, is a **maritime civilization** and “... the breath, importance and influence of the sea is significant all over the European continent”.⁴ Historically, that influence was significant in ancient city-states, in ancient Rome, in European countries. Shant considers the Anglo-Saxons, who played a great role in the establishment of Western civilization, to be the most “maritime”. Maritime civilization is more dynamic, practical, inclined towards the principles of **political independence and democracy**.

However, both types of civilization are ambiguous. According to the Armenian thinker, “not all parts of Europe are equally European, nor do all periods and all peoples represent the same civilizational value”.⁵ In different historical periods Asian peoples have also manifested themselves in different shades of Asianness, local or ethnic uniqueness, but they generally bear the stamp of the same civilization.

Shant also points to the contrast between Asian and European civilizations as the embodiments of radical conservatism and progress, tyranny and democracy. Hence the centuries-old enmity and struggle between them that has continued with dominance by one of the civilizations. He presents the historical sequence of this dominance in the following historical periods:

- The 1000-year triumphal march of the **Assyrian and Babylonian** civilization, followed by the Persian civilization.

¹ Shant 2008a: 157.

² Shant 2008a: 57.

³ Shant 2008a: 159.

⁴ Shant 2008a: 160.

⁵ Shant 2008a: 162.

- **The Greco-Roman** millennium in the spirit of the West, with a new value system of culture and statehood, which became the basis of the civilizational domination of the West. Shant emphasizes the civilizing role of **Hellenism** and **Christianity** in the lives of a lot of peoples during this period. Interpreting Christianity as a combination of Middle Eastern and Greco-Roman religious understandings, he affirms that: “as a moral and social ideal it is a completely new leap of human thought and feeling, a leap that goes beyond the civilization brought by the sea”.⁶ However, the political realities of the time distorted the Western spirit, and Greco-Roman civilization declined.
- **The Muslim** millennium, which began with the rise of Islam in the Middle East, the establishment of Arab statehood and the power over various peoples. The Arab civilization flourished with the rapid development of various spheres of culture. According to Shant, in this period “the ideas East and West are identical with the words “Muslim” and “Christian”. And the irreconcilable... war between the two begins...” He also sees a commonality between Christianity and Islam, with the following remarkable political observation: “Both Byzantium and the papacy... by their very spirit and understanding have become utterly Eastern” and “papacy has an ardent desire to resemble the Eastern Caliphate”.⁷ The decline of the Muslim civilization was caused by the Turanian tribes, who, without adding anything to this civilization, dominated the Arab and Persian cultures.
- **The new era of civilization** marked by the awakening of the West that began in the 15th century. It was conditioned by the discovery of new sea routes and countries, colonial policy, economic, trade and political developments. According to Shant, the Western spirit was being reborn, “...the ancient Greco-Roman, the ancient European man, only with much wider horizons... with the participation of many nations...”.⁸ As a result, **the democratic principles of public administration, religious freedom of thought, the ancient understanding of human virtues and practical philosophy** became relevant. The East could not resist this new value system.

There is a unique argument for the **interaction of civilizations** in Shant's concept. According to him, in the prime of any civilization, the defeated civilization is always subject to the perceptions and spirit of governance of the dominant civilization, bearing cultural influences as well. Thus, just as the West was influenced by Eastern spirit and culture during the dominance of Muslim civilization “... Muslim countries also, in order to survive at least as secondary states, are forced to borrow weapons, ideas, institutions, parliaments and forms of economy from Europe completely contrary to their essence and psychology”.⁹ This is not about imitation at all. He brings the example of

⁶ Shant 2008a: 164.

⁷ Shant 2008a: 165

⁸ Shant 2008a: 167.

⁹ Shant 2008a: 168.

the Japanese people, who are closer to the sea, as “it is Europe at the easternmost end of Asia”.¹⁰

Shant does not unequivocally predict the prospect of Western civilization: he does not expect either decline or unprecedented development. He simply states with political optimism that ***the West still has an inexhaustible potential*** which can be discovered in different cradles of Western civilization: “When the Anglo-Saxon element is exhausted, Germany and the North come behind it... And behind the Germans is the Slavic element, in particular the Russians, so the reserve forces and historical possibilities of the European thought and spirit are still very large”.¹¹

Shant rejects ***monocentrism*** not only in intercivilizational but also in intra-civilizational relations. He does not rule out the dominance of the Eastern spirit as the result of the retreat of the European spirit. In this case, he considers possible the awakening of China based on neo-Confucianism. And if that happens, he considers the only way for individualism and liberalism to be “the road to America, to the islands”. Thus, while acknowledging ***the civilizational identity of all countries and the right of nations to independence***, he emphasizes the qualities and responsibilities of a “maritime civilization” in uniting the peoples of the world. But he does not advocate the idea of the monopoly of Western civilization at all.

Shant explains the foundations of civilizations and the criteria for identification of nations on the basis of the ***idea of nationality***. He analyzes the following natural-historical factors of the existence of nations and differentiation of peoples:

- ***Origin, blood relationship and racial typology:*** recognizing that family and kinship are the primary natural connection between people, Shant affirms that people interpret their identity in the image of their national ancestor. And although the individuals of not all nations are related by racial origin, nevertheless, it is the “characteristic ethnographic composition” that distinguishes one nation from the others.
- ***Homeland, geographical factors:*** these are important for the formation and existence of a nation. In addition, “the source of the greatness and decline, expansion and constriction, successes and failures of a nation... is the position and condition of the country where it lives and the historical conditions associated with that position.”¹² But sometimes different peoples live in the same country, or they are divided into several states. The border of the homeland is elastic, and “not all parts of the homeland represent the same geographical identity”, therefore, “different parts of a people are not subject to the same geographical signals”.¹³

Evaluating the influence of geographical factors on peoples, Shant concludes that

¹⁰ Shant 2008a: 168.

¹¹ Shant 2008a: 168.

¹² Shant 1979: 23.

¹³ Shant 1979: 25.

the homeland is not the main condition for dividing nations and uniting different parts of the people.

- **History** whose role is most important for the existence of the people. The past of a nation is only its own, by which it is separated from other nations. But, as the thinker points out, history is important only for those who know it. Thus, “Neither the origin, nor the homeland, nor the physical and mental composition, nor the past” are enough “...to include an entire nation in itself”.¹⁴

In Shant’s concept, these natural-historical factors are valued as the basic conditions for the formation, national characterization and development of the people, under the influence of which **cultural-civilizational factors** are formed. They are:

- **Customs, traditions** that affect national psychology: “Every people, every nation... has its own particular and unique national color of way of life, work, habits and daily routine”.¹⁵ However, it is well known that peoples close in terms of civilization (e.g. Europeans or Asians) have similar habits that do not characterize the entire national identity.
- **Language:** it stems from the spiritual formation of the people, from the depths of national psychology. Language is connected with the nation’s thinking, judgment and character. It plays an important role in religious, scientific and educational, cultural, administrative and other processes, being a state value. But language is not the main factor that distinguishes peoples.
- **Religion:** it relates to the political, moral and legal existence of peoples. Shant stresses the **identity of national churches**: “...every nation has its own god, its own church, its own creed and its church ranks”.¹⁶ Proof of this is the non-uniformity of Buddhist, Muslim and Christian peoples, both in the inter-religious and intra-religious (creed) sense: “Every nation forms the same general principles and worship according to its soul, its history and its conditions”.¹⁷ For example, Catholicism is different for the French, Spanish, and Polish, the same as Protestantism for the Prussian, English, or German. Orthodox peoples are not identical either. Thus, Shant does not consider religion to be the only factor that distinguishes peoples, especially since sometimes certain parts of the same nation adhere to different confessions as Armenians, adhering to Armenian confession, Greek confession or Catholicism.
- **State:** the forms of state structure and governance, administrative bodies correspond to the level of civilization of peoples. According to Shant: “The higher the civilization, the greater and the deeper the differences and inequalities”.¹⁸ He

¹⁴ Shant 1979: 28.

¹⁵ Shant 2008c: 85.

¹⁶ Shant 1979: 33.

¹⁷ Shant 1979: 34.

¹⁸ Shant 2008c: 70.

also acknowledges the fact of borrowing state-and-legal systems, at the same time affirming that ***the same form of the state structure is manifested in its particular way by different peoples***, especially during the political organization of the society, the formation of the state apparatus and the exercise of power: “Each nation forms or adapts its state according to its race, its place, its history and its composition...”.¹⁹ According to Shant, the state is the most visible external integrity of the people. And if it is united in one state, the latter becomes a subject that separates and represents the people. But there are also ***“artificial”*** states that have subjugated many tribes and nations. And in this case “... the state cannot personify one people; it cannot separate and integrate one people”.²⁰

- ***Culture***: cultural creations are a means of expressing the national spiritual potential, ideas and emotions that unite people and are embedded in the “temple of thought of humanity”, but they are not the only distinguishing factor either.

Thus, in Shant’s viewpoint, none of the natural or cultural factors characterizing peoples can ***separately*** “become an absolute principle of separating one people from others and including all parts and individuals of one people as a whole”.²¹ According to him, some ideologues saw the “lack” of this absolute principle as a basis for denying that peoples are separate national communities. In their opinion, there are only certain groups of people who are related by origin to one human community, by language - to other ethnic groups, and by state - to other nations. Therefore, it is impossible to establish one principle that distinguishes peoples.

Objecting to this view, Shant rests upon a simple rule of logic, namely when defining a concept it is necessary to identify the essential features of the object being defined. For example, he defines the concept of ***“people”*** as follows: a people of a certain ethnic origin, living in a certain geographical environment, having a historical past and present, having a certain mentality, customs, traditions, religion and state structure, being the inheritor of a unique culture “...is a completely different and unique entity compared to other similar entities”.²² Thus, the individuality of the people is revealed only by the combination of natural and cultural-civilizational potentials.

Shant interprets personality with the notion of ***“nationality”***: “We call the individuality of peoples a nation” because “what separates and differentiates one people from other peoples is its nationality, and what unites the parts and individuals of one people are its national features”.²³ Therefore, nationality is the ***basic principle that identifies and characterizes peoples***, which determines and combines the other factors.

¹⁹ Shant 1979: 31.

²⁰ Shant 1979: 32. The concepts about “natural” and “artificial” states see Sarvazyan 2013: 86-89.

²¹ Shant 1979: 40-41.

²² Shant 1979: 42.

²³ Shant 1979: 43.

The following idea is unique in Shant's concept: ***national identity crystallizes with the development of civilization***. He proceeds from his own premise that "...what is called humanity... is not a regular string of like-minded and equal, merciful and round souls", but "...a living forest with innumerable colors, endless forms... with endless juices, where everyone grows and lives one's own life... for oneself and all for one another".²⁴ If a person has individuality, their perceptions and aspirations bear the stamp of identity and they value ***the independence of their self*** more. Similarly, the lower the level of civilization is, the less noticeable the uniqueness of the people is. And with the development of civilization "the differences... embranchments are emphasized, private inclinations and personal development of each; a language of its own, understanding of a new form, religion of its kind, another kind of state structure, new kind of people".²⁵ The former sense of "community self" turns into a ***national consciousness***, as a result of which ***the national identity is valued as the independence of the individuality of the nation***.

Shant rejects the views according to which the national and nations disappear in the dynamics of civilization. On the contrary, "civilization... is the main condition for the development of nations, the strengthening of national features... and the assessment of its uniqueness".²⁶ Peoples are valued to the extent that their national identity, cultural viability and will to self-organize are specified.

The subject of civilization is the nations, because ***"all the organs of a nation are the organs of civilization, and the nation itself is an organism that produces civilization (emphasis added by L.S.)"***.²⁷ Shant interprets the concept of ***"nation"***: "A nation is not a simple collection of individuals of the same race, but a more complex, higher, unique and complete body composed of the connection of those individuals... with its own composition, new phenomena, new forces and new consequences".²⁸ And "civilization is the state the nation-organism has reached".²⁹ Nations were formed out of natural-historical necessity, so it is impossible to arbitrarily change, assimilate or destroy them.

Shant's interpretation of the ***nation-state*** relationship is remarkable. Without reservation, he affirms that ***"nationality is wider than the state"***. Indeed, when examining the problem on the basis of history, it becomes evident that nation is an older category than society, state or civilization. ***Nations are the natural primordial types of mankind***. They form unique political and administrative-and-economic systems. Along with the development of civilization, small powers unite, forming "...an economic-administrative integrity, with one center that includes the whole nation, i.e. becomes a

²⁴ Shant 2008c: 88.

²⁵ Shant 1979: 49.

²⁶ Shant 1979: 50-51.

²⁷ Shant 1979: 69.

²⁸ Shant 1979: 64.

²⁹ Shant 1979: 69.

national state”.³⁰ In fact, Shant means the **natural state**, which performs a political function of uniting the nation. However, the situation is different in the case of domination, when a new type of state, **an artificial state**, is created due to the lack of equality of rights between the ruling and subordinate peoples. He mentions three types of domination:

- **Tax domination** with the predominance of the ruler and the preservation of a certain degree of national sovereignty of the subject.
- **Full domination**, when the occupied country is annexed to the ruling state, being subjected to its legal-political system. In this case, the subject loses its statehood, but not its nationality.
- **Genocide**, when they try to deprive the nations of their homeland, to destroy the nations, their culture and civilization through massacres.

According to Shant, when a dominant state allows its subjects to preserve the elements of their national civilization, it is always afraid that this will lead to political independence and sovereignty. We can conclude that **the national civilizational value system is the basis for the restoration of independence and state sovereignty of the subject nation**.

According to the thinker: “Domination is in essence the enemy of the nations that have always been dominated and of the idea of “nation” in general: it promotes the idea of “state”.³¹ The ruling government prioritizes the state language, religion, and culture, forcing its subjects to identify themselves with those foreign civilizational values; and in their absence simply destroys the culture of its subjects in an attempt to assimilate them. It is obvious that the idea of a state is being manipulated for the sake of the dominance of the nationality, civilization and culture of the ruling country. Therefore, according to Shant, **it is only during the dictatorship that the idea of a state takes precedence over the idea of a nation**. And in this case, “...the phenomenon of crushing and destroying the individuality (identity – L.S.) of nations is demonstrated, as well as the contempt for the national idea, although all this is done to increase and spread the number, position and civilization of the ruling nation, i.e. eventually once again for the victory of the national idea”.³²

The problem under discussion is related to **the issue of sovereignty** which in Shant’s concept is discussed at the national, state and civilizational levels. According to him, the independent people “...must be the owner, supervisor and controller of their country, their government, their civilization and their economy: the basis of any social phenomenon is the people, and whatever is done must be done by the will of the people and for the people.”³³ He considers the idea of **the sovereignty of the people** to be the main lever of the political and cultural movements of the XIX century. He sees all

³⁰ Shant 1979: 86.

³¹ Shant 1979: 88.

³² Shant 1979: 90.

³³ Shant 1979: 90.

revolutions as the offspring of that idea, even in the East, contrary to the opinions that democratic ideas are alien to Eastern conceptions.

The result of the realization of the idea of the sovereignty of the people is **the parliamentary governance, the representative system, the republics**, etc. According to Shant: "One of the inevitable conclusions of that idea is **the demand for independence** of the subjugated and dominated nations, and the implementation of that demand is the series of liberation wars of the last century and a half.³⁴ He values the prudent policies of those countries (especially England) that assume the principles of independence and sovereignty, transforming the imperial government into a federal system of governance. In this context, he refers to the Soviet state, which he calls a "false federation".

Shant predicts with political optimism that human civilization can condemn any domination, as it rejected human slavery in the past. According to him: "It is a mature understanding and the reality of tomorrow that **every nation has the right and must have its own independent existence, legally equal to the others**, no matter how small: it is sufficient to have reached a certain level of maturity (emphasis added by L.S.).³⁵ The slogan "**Every nation - its own state**" is equivalent to the principle of **justice**. It has been the natural desire of all peoples for centuries, and now it has become a legal consciousness and a political demand. The relationship between the nation and the state is coordinated in the following conclusions of Shant:

1. There has never been a state without a nationality: "...Every state... has tried to strengthen and spread its own civilization",³⁶ not tolerating the existence of another national civilization within its state borders. And the main task of the subject nation is to preserve its national identity and civilizational individuality.
2. In natural-historical conditions the state is "...just one factory of a nation... a kind of a social nervous system and nervous center". If in the early stages of the development of the society there were many administrative political bodies, "... along with the development of civilization they strive to unite and form one center, one government, one national state".³⁷
3. As a result of domination, nations lose state structures, but the process of civilization leads to the principle of self-determination, the right of nations to self-governance, and the restoration of political independence.

According to Shant, ideal is the model of civilization, according to which "every nation has only one state, and every state serves only one nation, when humanity must recognize only the nation-state".³⁸ Certainly, this model differs from the European understandings of a nation-state, in which the national factor is ignored, and the origin

³⁴ Shant 1979: 91.

³⁵ Shant 1979: 94.

³⁶ Shant 1979: 95.

³⁷ Shant 1979: 95-96.

³⁸ Shant 1979: 96-97.

of nations is viewed as the result of modern socio-economic developments.³⁹ Linking the existence of statehood with national integrity and unity, he affirms: “Every nation is its own master and must choose both the form of its internal government and the external condition of its state”.⁴⁰

Shant does not accept the idea of cosmopolitanism, rejecting the slogan: “The whole world is my homeland, all humanity is my race”. According to him, the policy of the peoples and their relations are based on the idea of **national independence**. If in previous centuries the rights of the royal house were given importance, now **the idea of the sovereignty of an independent nation** is perceived as **a factor in the development of civilization**. And tyranny, enslavement of peoples and denationalization “...are seen as obstacles to the development of civilization and as immoral phenomena”. Hence comes the issue of “the separation of forcibly joined nations, and the need to unite the forcibly divided parts of the same nation, by which history and reality gradually take the national path”.⁴¹

Thus, the dynamics of civilization is manifested by 2 tendencies: on the one hand, the disintegration of states and the formation of free and independent nations, on the other hand, the establishment of international relations between newly independent states.

Since the old times political communication between nations has led to the idea of an international organization to limit the militarism and expansionism of powerful states and to regulate international relations at a legal level. That was the role played by the La Haye conference and the League of Nations, although their activity was imperfect. International politics should be aimed not at the annihilation of nations, but at their cooperation. According to Shant, the basis of international solidarity is not the states, but **“the nations that have existed and are the natural basis of human groups and unity, as well as those nations that will gradually become the main units of universal connection and alliance** (emphasis added by L.S.).⁴²

Shant finds improbable the assumption that there can be an “ideal union” in the world, i.e. one nation, one state, one civilization. Therefore, the idea of a united, undifferentiated, like-minded humanity, according to him “is more of a religious need than a political and civil one”.⁴³ In this context, he criticizes anarchism, positivism and Marxism: “... Socialism by its very nature is not a friend to small nations, small existence and small independences, it is the supporter of “big” races and “big” peoples...”.⁴⁴

³⁹ See the European theories about the issue in Nation and Nationalism 2002: 26-51, 121-145, 236-263, 332-346, 364-380. Hubner 2001: 22-35, 135-152.

⁴⁰ Shant 2008a: 171.

⁴¹ Shant 2008a: 171.

⁴² Shant 1979: 118.

⁴³ Shant 1979: 120.

⁴⁴ Shant 2008b: 145.

Shant's premise of *the nation as the natural-lifestyle basis of civilization* is based on a philosophical argument. Public life is a unity of counterbalances. On the one hand, it tends to create similarities in its components, which in turn multiplies the commonalities that bind nations together, on the other hand, "the more complicated a nation's civilization becomes, the more and stronger their special nuances become... On the one hand there is equalization, on the other hand - **individualization**. On the one hand it is centralized, striving for identity, on the other hand - **decentralized, striving for dissimilarity, diversity, uniqueness** (emphasis added by L.S.)".⁴⁵ Thus, Shant has a remarkable view on the historical-political perspective of nations, according to which: "The development of humanity and civilization leads us towards greater decentralization, towards small nations, of course with a common alliance".⁴⁶

The issue of *the identity of Armenian civilization* has a special place in Shant's concept. Regarding Armenia as a country located at the crossroads of the East and the West, he expounds on the criteria for the identification of the Armenian nation. According to him, **nationality** is the primary and main characteristics of Armenians in comparison to other nations. Another significant factor is the adoption and nationalization of **Christianity**, which fundamentally changed the Armenian political and civilizational position, making them more closely associated with the West. Armenians used to be associated with the western, especially with ancient civilization, but, in Shant's opinion "...half of their blood being Urartian... they were connected to the East with their behavior and manners, understandings, spirit and disposition: they were the people of the East".⁴⁷ After all, **national culture is synthetic**, which has had a significant impact on civilizational developments.

Shant criticizes the religious intolerance specific to Eastern politics, describing it as a struggle against national identity and independence. Thus, "...nation, religion and independence are always closely connected; and adhering to one's religion becomes a weapon, a means to protect one's national identity, to preserve one's state freedom".⁴⁸

The thinker values the religious revolution carried out by Trdat III, considering it **a prudent policy for the sake of strengthening independence and statehood**. Due to their religious identity, Armenians were saved from assimilation with foreign tribes, which would happen through conversion and intermarriage. Otherwise, "Armenian identity would have long been dead, becoming an element ennobling the soul and civilization of Turks, Tatars, Mongols, Ottomans and Azerbaijanis, as it partly happened". He emphasizes the role of the **Armenian religion** as a defender of the spiritual and political independence in the struggle against Christian states as well. Their aspirations to deprive the Armenian Church of its sovereignty and "...to put Armenians

⁴⁵ Shant 1979: 123.

⁴⁶ Shant 1979: 124.

⁴⁷ Shant 2008a: 180.

⁴⁸ Shant 2008a: 181.

into their political and civilizational bag” are well known.⁴⁹ It should be noted that the role of the religious factor was significant also because **the Armenian Church served only one nation**, not accepting foreigners and people of different belief in its structures.

According to Shant, one of the potentials of civilization of the Armenians is the existence of external and internal statehood in the Armenian world. External independence has always been shaky due to the independent, semi-independent or full subordination status of Armenians. Instead, they have always had a “...**strong and solid internal statehood**. The basis of that internal state formation is our ministers, the real rulers, the real owners of their land and the people on the land (emphasis added by L.S.)”.⁵⁰ The ministerial aristocracy maintained the political foundations of national independence until the XIX century, with some manifestations of sovereignty. The clergy played an important role in national life; according to Shant they are a new kind of government and an intellectual aristocracy with a high religious and philosophical value system. Religious nobility “... was the second important factor leading the destiny and policy of our people, along with our secular nobility until the Turanian centuries”.⁵¹ Both secular and religious figures sought to restore Armenian independence dreaming of a free civilization.

Shant distinguishes between two levels of application of the democratic principle: internal and external. In domestic life he emphasizes the sovereignty of the people, parliamentary governance, electoral system based on the principle of representation, civil liberties, etc.: “It is the people who own the country, and the people must be the supreme ruler of economic and political life. Every law, order and initiative must be carried out for the welfare and development of the people”.⁵²

The political scientist considers the external manifestation of the democratic principle to be **the issue of the national independence, the national liberation struggle**. This idea is presented in Shant’s concept as an “**absolute requirement of civilization**”, which is very close to the Armenian people. By the way, the Armenian nation’s inclination towards European (Western) values was tantamount to defending the idea of national independence. Submission is a threat not only to national but also to civilizational identity. The suffering of peoples begins when it ceases to strive for independence.

Thus, the civilizational viability of a nation is manifested in the existence of independent statehood. Statehood is not the basis of a nation’s existence, but it is the culmination of national identity and civilization on the level of political culture. Shant believed that **the new civilization should bring to “the belief in the equality of nations, self-determination of nations and independence of nations. And the temple of our new creed is our native land, our homeland, and we must strive and**

⁴⁹ Shant 2008a: 182.

⁵⁰ Shant 2008a: 184.

⁵¹ Shant 2008a: 186.

⁵² Shant 2008a: 189.

we do strive for its full and free rule (emphasis added by L.S.).⁵³ The full sovereignty of Armenia and Armenians requires the concentration of national spiritual-and-mental, political, economic and volitional forces, the strengthening of the national consciousness with the belief in the unshakable idea of independence.

SUMMARY

Levon Shant, prominent Armenian thinker of the XIX-XX centuries substantiates the idea of multicentrism of civilization, by rejecting monocentrism in intercivilizational relations. He believes that all civilizations manifest themselves with individual uniqueness, which is due to the national-cultural identity of independent peoples. Shant considers the national factor, which reveals deeper civilizational qualities, to be the main factor in the identification of nations. According to the political scientist, the nation is an “organism that produces civilization”, nationality is the main principle that individualizes peoples, and the issue of national independence is an “absolute requirement of civilization”. He refutes the views that the dynamics of civilization leads to the elimination of nations and nationalism. In fact, the development of civilization is the main condition for the independence of nations, progress, equality, the expression of national-political identity, as well as the solution of national issues.

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Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan

⁵³ Shant 2008a: 215.

DID AZERBAIJANIS COMMIT THE KHOJALY (AGHDAM) MASSACRE AGAINST THEIR OWN PEOPLE?

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-121

Abstract

The article deals with the evident falsification by the Azerbaijani official propaganda in regard to the massacre of the Azeri population of Khojaly in 1988. According to the Czech reporter Dana Mazalová, the massacre of about 200 Azeri population took place in the area controlled by Azeri soldiers. Mazalova's viewpoint is proved also by the famous Azeri journalist Chingiz Mustafayev.

Keywords: Khojaly Massacre, First Nagorno-Karabakh War, Azerbaijan's official propaganda

On 26 February 2022, Azerbaijan will commemorate 30 years since the Khojaly Massacre, one of the horrific events that took place during the First Nagorno-Karabakh War (1988-94).

Armenians should do the same, but not for the same reasons that Azerbaijan will.



Ruined Azerbaijani House, Khojaly, Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh)

The Khojaly Massacre of between 50 (first reported) and 200+ (later claimed by Baku) mainly Meskhetian Turk civilians on a frigid winter day has galvanised the Turkic world. Azerbaijan's dictatorial government labels this war crime as a 'genocide'. This conveniently obfuscates the world about who the aggressor was during the First Nagorno Karabakh War – Azerbaijan.

Labelling the Massacre as a 'genocide' is undoubtedly a counter to the narrative about the WWI-era genocide against indigenous Christians, including Armenians. It has also helped to distract from the many pogroms of Armenians by colonizing Turks and Azeris over centuries.

Khojaly has featured extensively in Azerbaijan's official propaganda to demonise Armenians, as part of a state-sponsored racism programme. Much of the imagery involved wasn't even taken at the Massacre site. But the misinformation doesn't end there.

The Khojaly Massacre should be more accurately labelled the Aghdam Massacre, as this is near the actual site. However, Baku labels it as occurring in Khojaly, to implicate Armenians.

Azerbaijan has a terrible human rights record (ranked 129th for corruption and 168th in the world for press freedom), and is known for falsely portraying events for political purposes. For example, during the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh conflict and since, Azeris have committed many human rights abuses against ethnic Armenians such as beheadings, use of chemical weapons, and the killing and abuse of prisoners of war.

Azerbaijan prohibits Armenians based purely on their ethnicity, irrespective of citizenship.

Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Watch (HRW) issued a statement dated 23 March 1997 that declared Armenians to be guilty of the Khojaly Massacre, without any supporting evidence to prove this allegation. Did HRW presume that no civilised people could murder their own, and therefore *assumed* that Armenians must have committed this terrible war crime?

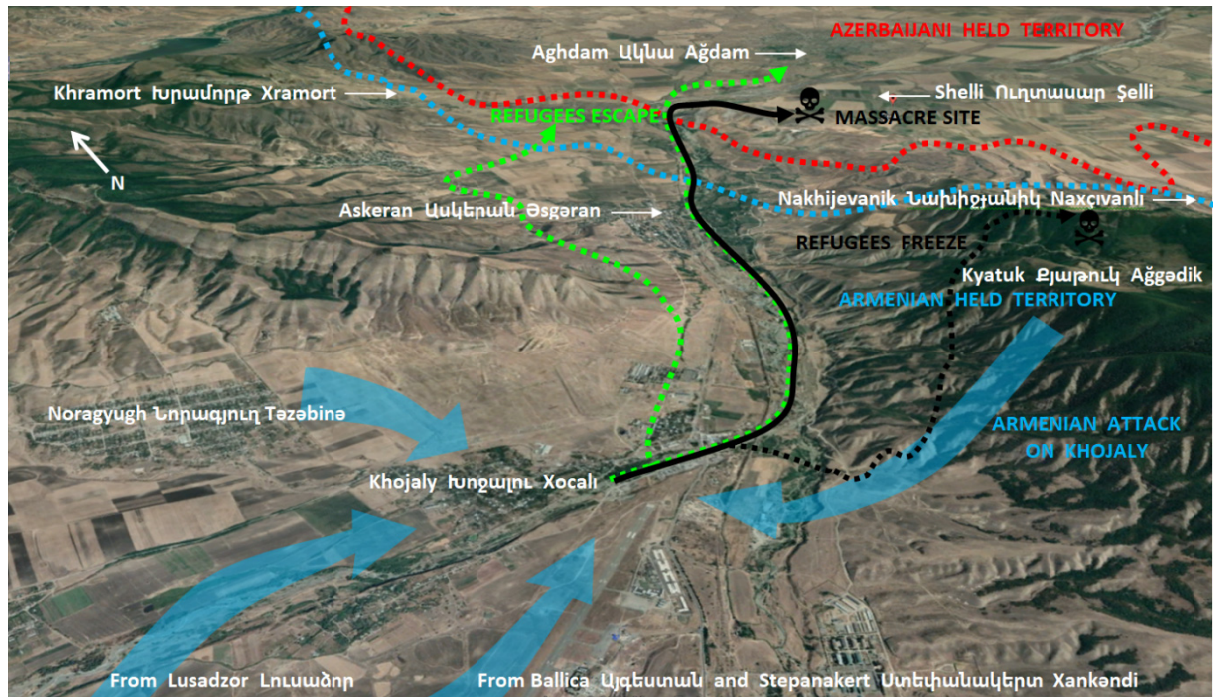
If HRW is wrong, then an entity responsible for defending human rights has shamefully supported Azerbaijan, with its poor human rights record, to falsely demonise Armenians for decades. Thus, HRW is arguably culpable of being complicit in gross human rights abuses.

Evidence

What does the Khojaly Massacre evidence reveal? Some of the most compelling testimony about the Massacre is from Czech reporter Dana Mazalová. She described her interaction with famous Azeri journalist Chingiz Mustafayev in the days following the event.

Mazalová's lucid recollection provides vivid details of the killings in an area controlled by Azeri soldiers. She noted how the video shows that victims were shot in the *knees*, and then some scalped after death, with no Armenians present. She also stated that the Azeri authorities used the horrific scene of decomposing bodies as a propaganda event.

There are two critical points from an evidence perspective. Firstly, it would have been virtually impossible for the victims to have been shot at knee level by Armenians kilometers away. Secondly, it is implausible that Armenians would be able to approach the site and disfigure the victims in an Azeri-controlled area, so this abuse must have been falsified.



Armenian Siege on Khojaly Breaking the Stepanakert Blockade, and Refugee Corridor

Most tellingly, there's little logic in creating a humanitarian corridor to enable those encircled to leave a conflict zone, but then killing them after they leave the Armenian-controlled areas. Azerbaijani writer Eynulla Fatullayev acknowledged the corridor, stating:

"The Corridor did exist, otherwise the residents of Khojaly, fully surrounded and isolated from the external world, would never be able to breach the circle and exit."

Azerbaijanis were undoubtedly killed as a result of being in the middle of an active firefight between Azeri and Armenian forces (there were armed Azeris among the fleeing civilians). However, there is no credible evidence that Armenians *systematically* and *deliberately* targeted Azeri civilians within Armenian-controlled territory.

Chingiz Mustafayev's videos of the Massacre site provide further critical evidence.

Mustafayev was so shaken by what he had seen – Azeri soldiers walking calmly around the bodies and later, victims that had been mutilated days after their deaths in an area controlled by Azerbaijan – that he later demanded answers from his government.

Mazalová noted that Mustafayev became very concerned about his well-being in Azerbaijan after that, mentioning that he might require 'armour' to walk in Baku. Chingiz Mustafayev died only weeks later on 15 June 1992, *reportedly* due to wounds sustained in battle.

The Russian Memorial Human Rights Centre reported that doctors on a hospital train at Aghdam reported at least four scalped bodies. One body had a severed head. Moreover, 10 people had died from blows with a blunt object. None of these murderous actions could have been perpetrated by Armenians, unless they controlled the Massacre site. Moreover, Azerbaijani soldiers have mutilated and beheaded victims on multiple occasions in the past.

Treatment of Captured Azerbaijanis by Armenians

Human rights abuse allegations must be examined on all sides. Armenians were reportedly responsible for some individual cases of wrongdoing. The Nagorno Karabakh Republic's Supreme Council expressed regret about cases of alleged cruelty during Khojaly's capture.

A heightened sense of anger of people whose families had been killed in pogroms may have led some individuals to take matters into their own hands in acts of temporary insanity. Unfortunately, no attempts were made to investigate individual crimes related to the capture of Khojaly. These acts must not be condoned and should still be investigated.

There is conflicting testimony about whether the [approximately] 700 Azeris captured in and around Khojaly were well fed and given clothes or not. Ultimately, these people survived in Armenian captivity, and were later repatriated to Azerbaijani authorities.

Armenians had little food themselves, because Azerbaijani forces had earlier encircled the Nagorno Karabakh capital Stepanakert, shelling it constantly from positions such as Khojaly.



Motives

Noting that refugees passing through the humanitarian corridor split after passing the Karkar River (with some proceeding north to Aghdam and others east to the Massacre site near Shelli in the direction of Nakhijevanik), Eynulla Fatullayev noted:

"It seems like the battalions of [opposition-controlled] National Front of Azerbaijan [irregular forces] were striving not to liberate the civilians, but to get more blood on the way to overthrowing [Azerbaijani President] Ayaz Mutallibov."

Further evidence indicates that Azerbaijani officials connected to the opposition sought to use this horrific event to depose their leader. In a television interview, Speaker of the Azerbaijani Parliament Yagub Mamedov stated that he was: *“well aware of those who are to blame for the Khojaly tragedy. And he was not talking about the Armenian side”*.

в интервью корреспонденту Азербайджанского телевидения Я. Мамедов откровенно заявил, что ему хорошо известны те, на чьей совести ходжалинская трагедия. Речь шла не об армянской стороне. «Как же могло произойти,

Ogonyok Magazine Report N14-15 (1992) of Yagub Mamedov's Statement

President Mutallibov blamed his political opponents for the killing of Khojaly victims near Aghdam. He later refuted this, but in Azerbaijan's totalitarian society, this is unsurprising.

Azeri authorities under President Mutallibov who ultimately benefited from the Khojaly Massacre included Heydar Aliyev. He had been a senior operative of the KGB Soviet spy service. Aliyev then became leader of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR) from 1969 to 1982, dominating Azerbaijan's politics. In 1993 he took power in a coup.

Heydar Aliyev had boasted of his racist anti-Armenian policies, stating that:

“...I was attempting to change the demography there.... We moved Azerbaijanis there from surrounding areas. I was trying to have more Azerbaijanis in Nagorno Karabakh, while the number of Armenians would go down.”

In 2003, Aliyev's son Ilham Aliyev took over as President. He has remained firmly in power ever since, and made a nepotistic appointment of his wife Mehriban as Vice-President.

As noted by Mazalová, the Azerbaijanis used this event to disrupt the first attempt at a resolution of the war by diplomacy. Later they would use Khojaly to demonise Armenians as a people, with false claims not substantiated by evidence. There has never been a credible, open and independent investigation in Azerbaijan about what took place near Aghdam.

Status of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh)

Azerbaijan wasn't an internationally-recognised sovereign state until 26 December 1991. The former self-declared Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (1918-20) was never *de jure* recognised by any state, and the League of Nations rejected its membership request

(note: the Paris Peace Conference recognised Azerbaijan as a de facto entity for the purposes of the Conference, but this did not constitute recognition of sovereignty).

Azerbaijan therefore had no case to brutally invade and prosecute war on the basis of 'territorial integrity', as the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast had legally declared its independence under Article 72 of the Soviet Constitution, and the Azerbaijan SSR was only a province. United Nations Resolutions did not empower violence, and are not compulsory, as evidenced by UN Resolutions being ignored by Turkey since its 1974 invasion of Cyprus.

Conclusions

Armenians must tell the world what the evidence shows really happened to the innocent Khojaly victims. They should attend Khojaly memorials to remember the fallen as a visible signal of truth – that the world knows the perpetrators weren't Armenian.

There was no justification for any brutal invasion and cruel war waged by Azerbaijani forces in Nagorno Karabakh, which led to the consequent bloodshed at Aghdam.

The Khojaly [or rather, Aghdam] Massacre has also contributed to state-sponsored racist hatred by the Azerbaijani government, ultimately leading to the deaths of thousands of Armenians. Thus, Armenians have also been victims of the Massacre; a war crime that irrefutable and overwhelming evidence indicates was perpetrated by Azerbaijanis.

DEMOGRAPHY AND GOVERNANCE

ON THE CONSTITUTIONALITY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL ARMENIA*

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-128

Abstract

Summing up, it should be noted that the state and regional government in ancient and medieval Armenia was realized via legal regulatory principles, consistent with the time and through sufficient constitutionality. Within the frames of Armenian intellectual culture, certain methodological bases were worked out, whereas the accumulated past experience, cultural heritage and the lessons of history in particular, deserve special attention in terms of the appropriate orientation of the civil society, the development of political thought and growth of efficiency in public administration.

Keywords: hereditary monarchy, constitutionality, state and regional government, the Armenian dynasty of Bagratids, Cilician Armenia, state system, statehood.

Introduction

For a ten-thousand-year old nation that has had statehood for more than 1500 years and lost it four times the issues of public administration and the strengthening of constitutionality are of great importance. Their importance is first of all conditioned by such priorities as restoration of the lost statehood (for example M. Gosh's "Datastangirk" (Book of Law, 1184) and Sh. and H. Shahamiryans' Vorogait Parats (Snare of Glory, 1773) were written in the absence of statehood) the management of public institutions, the development of their efficiency (e.g. Vachagan Barepasht's (Vacahagan the Pious) "Canonical Constitution" written in 488 and Smbat Sparapet's "Datastanagirk" created in 1265). Under the circumstances of non-existent statehood and the domination of foreign countries the Armenians' ecclesiastic, civil and everyday problems were solved through the canons of "Kanonagirk Hayots" (Book of Armenian Canons). "Kanonagirk Hayots" (Book of Armenian Canons) had the important function of a peculiar constitution and that of consolidating the nation.

Data on the system and principles of governing the state and regional institutions can be found in the famous works written by such Armenian historians as Movses Khorenatsi (Moses of Khoren), Pavstos Buzand (Faustus of Byzantium), Ghazar Parpetsi (Ghazar of Parpi), Agathangelos.

Historians, jurists, experts in management have tackled the underlying issues of constitutionality and regional government. Gh. Incicean the monk from Mekhitarist

* The present article was published first in the "Review of Armenian Studies", 2019/3, p.122-137. Since then the author had made some changes in the text.

congregation was the first to have thoroughly examined the abovementioned issues.¹ Based on the studies by the Armenian and Greek historians,² S.M. Krkyasharyan examined and described the state system of ancient Armenia in the 6th–4th centuries BC (about 700 years). R. I. Matevosyan published a study on the state structure, administrative system, and the peculiarities of governing a country during the Bagratunis' (Bagratids) rule of Armenia.³

The system of the state government was elucidated at length in A.G. Sukiasian's monograph.⁴

In the abovementioned voluminous works the issues on state and regional government are not viewed as isolated phenomena but rather from the perspective of historical-political, often legal matters. The state and regional government in historic Armenia as an issue of public administration has been studied in accordance with its structure and authority by the author of the present article.⁵

The legal basis for public administration is the basic law of the country - the constitution which consists in uniting the law (laws and canons) in the ancient eras of some countries. Constitutionality signifies the existence of the basic law (or laws and canons), its progressiveness, the mandatory and complete application of these laws in all spheres of public life.

Considering the fact that the improvement in the public administration in terms of historical experience and national traditions is of great importance, the given research particularly lays emphasis on more essential methodological characteristics of the issue which are still topical.

The State and Regional Government in Ancient and Medieval Armenia

M. Khorenatsi's "History of Armenia" summarizes more comprehensive data on the system of government in the Armenian state from the 6th – 4th centuries BC during Armenia's seven-centuries-old statehood.

According to those data, the king was the head of the state that fulfilled both legislative and executive functions. He was also the commander-in-chief of the military forces, was entitled to appoint heads of management institutions in regions, arbitrators at court, cities and towns. According to Khorenatsi, *"The King enacts laws in his regal residence, setting hours for entering the court, for gathering the council, for dinners and walks. He also establishes military orders (the first, the second, the third, etc.). The king appoints arbitrators at court, in cities and towns"*.⁶ It is both noteworthy and edifying that the king appoints two individuals "who are to remind him about goodness and vengeance in written form. The one who was to remind the king about goodness is

¹ Incicean 1835.

² Krkyasharyan 2005.

³ Matevosyan 1990.

⁴ Suqiasyan 1978.

⁵ Suvaryan, Mirzoyan 2013.

⁶ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 76.

given instructions to make him remember about the just and the humane in case the king was furious or has made an unfair decision".⁷

In modern interpretation those people were today's advisors, assistants of the leader, and according to the lessons of history, one of their responsibilities consisted in securing just resolutions. Describing the Armenian King Vagharshak's activity, M. Khorenatsi points out, "Being a brave and wise man, he fearlessly reigned in his country and established rules and regulations of everyday life, as far as it was possible he founded ministries, selected patriarchs from the sensible people that descended from Hayk's generation or belonged to another lineage".⁸ This is how the agencies were formed, representing the functional bodies of regal power. The main leaders of the regional government were the ministers, the governors of the cities and the heads of rural communities. According to S. Krkyasharian's accurate observation, the Armenian feudal *nakharars* (ministers) were divided into three groups:

- Court officials dealing with court economy,
- officials occupying different positions at court,
- officials carrying out prime-ministerial functions on the instruction of the king in country's different regions.⁹

By the order of the king the minister governed each unit. Thence the position became hereditary for the given ministerial house. The economy of the court was managed by the *hazarapetutyun*.¹⁰ Finances, including tax-collection, initially military affairs as well (up to the 2nd century BC) were in the domain of *hazarapetutyun*. *Maghkhazutyun* was one of the court agencies that regulated the activity of court guards. The crowned knight was also one of the court officials. The first to have been granted the title by the order of king Vagharshak was Bagrat. *Mardpetutyun* was another unit, having the same characteristics. One of the functions of *mardpetutyun* was carrying out court supervision and safeguarding the treasures and estates.¹¹ Another essential unit of government was *sparapetutyun* which was founded at the end of the 2nd century. *Sparapet* was considered the commander-in-chief of the king's armed forces in Greater Armenia.¹² The feudal *nakharar* was a great landowner. The king rewarded him for his service with land which was inherited from generation to generation. Some of the *nakharars* were given authority to manage smaller administrative units, while others had broad powers (in taxation, judicial and administrative spheres) of governing the regions (cities, villages) given to them. They were also legally entitled to own fortresses and army.

According to written sources, the foreign policy and establishment of international ties worldwide were also regulated by the king. He was responsible for dealing with such issues as waging a war, or signing a peace treaty. He had the competence to set

⁷ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 76.

⁸ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 67.

⁹ Krkyasharyan 2005.

¹⁰ The given position is more or less similar to intendancy.

¹¹ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 70–75.

¹² History 1971: 834.

regional borders, found cities and give name to them. The same sources evidence that after the proclamation of Christianity as state religion the Armenian Apostolic Church was entitled to overseeing such issues as spiritual development, education, legal affairs. After the disappearance of the Armenian state it also dealt with the regulation of legal, political relations. The court was an advisory body, which included the members of king's inner circle, who occupied certain positions at court or were representatives of elite. *Ashkharazhoghov* (general assembly) or the so - called general assembly was a special advisory body which was convened by the king on important occasions when an urgent state issue was to be discussed. Aristocracy, representatives of rural elite, along with ministers and noblemen participated in the general assembly convened by the king.

Ashkharazhoghov in essence was a supreme advisory body consisting of the Armenian noblemen.¹³

Dwelling upon the initial state structure of the Yervanduni dynasty, S.M. Krkyasharyan noted that pagan priests along with the king participated in governing the country. The Council of the noblemen which somehow restricted the king's power was also at the court. According to Xenophon, the Council had existed before Armenia was conquered by the Achaemenid Empire.¹⁴

The system of public administration developed and ramified after the Empire of Tigranes II, particularly during the later period of the rule of the Arshakuni dynasty (Diagram 1).¹⁵

After introducing the brief outline of the structural characteristics of the public administration and singling out the distinct functions of each institution we shall dwell upon two essential issues – 1) what conditioned the occasional strengthening of the Armenian state and 2) what caused its disappearance from the political arena? The answer to these questions can be found in the distinguished works by Movses Khorenatsi and other prominent historiographers.

“Tigranes II was the most powerful, the wisest and the bravest of them all. All his contemporaries envied him. We, his successors dreamed of him and his era”.¹⁶ M. Khorenatsi wrote, “During his rule the infantry transformed into cavalry, the fighters who fought in groups became well-aimed archers, while those who fought with sticks armed themselves with swords and lances, the bare protected themselves with shields and armor”.¹⁷

In modern interpretation the army was rearmed, becoming more powerful, the soldiers were protected and the potential of attacks was multiplied. According to Khorenatsi, “As an individual the king was wise, eloquent and had all the characteristics that any human being should have. He was a just king and had a balanced attitude due to which he treated everybody as equals, looking at life through the prism of his broad

¹³ History 1971: 828.

¹⁴ Krkyasharyan 2005: 154.

¹⁵ Krkyasharyan 2005: 154.

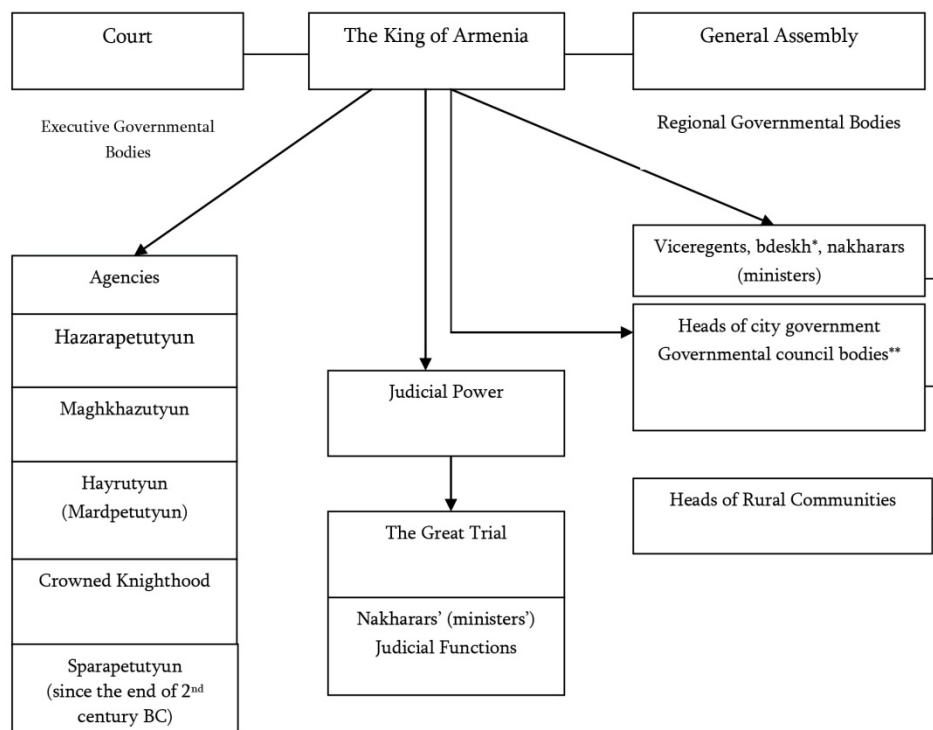
¹⁶ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 46.

¹⁷ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 46.

mind. He never envied the best, did not despise commoners and generally tried to shield everybody with his care”.¹⁸

Diagram 1

The System of Public Administration in Historic Armenia



The king was a monarch endowed with all the legislative and executive power. He made all the governmental decisions by himself, thus, his characteristics as a leader conditioned the quality and purposefulness of the latter. State councilors of high rank and senior ecclesiastic institutions, being the representatives of secular and religious institutions of the country, could have influence on his decisions. If the monarch had an efficient leader's stark characteristics, and the church and councillors cooperated with the king, then the country's inner and foreign policy might record achievements and the country would experience progress and become more powerful. The epoch of Tigranes II was identified by the aforementioned characteristics. The king himself was sensible, courageous and just, endowed with all the noble human traits, he had the propensity of encouraging progress and novelty. As a result, the country became absolutely independent, "turning from a tax payer into a tax-collector". He rearmed the army, spread peace and prosperity "plying people with honey and butter".¹⁹ Under such circumstances people lived in a society where the united, patriotic healthy social-psychological atmosphere prevailed. If the aforementioned trinity was broken, namely – problems arose among the monarch, nakharars (ministers) and religious center, their cooperation was ruptured and then unfair, ungrounded governmental decisions were made. This caused turmoil in the public environment, making it less stable and more

¹⁸ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 47.

¹⁹ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 46.

dangerous. Inner instability along with foreign threat undermined the safety of statehood and the country's independence. The given situation was described by M. Khorenatsi. It concerned the case when there was a rift among King Artashir, Catholicos Sahak and the nakharars (ministers). M. Khorenatsi described it in his famous "Lament": *"The Armenian King Artashir began to indulge in such depraved activities that all the nakharars (ministers) loathed him. They came to Sahak the Great, protested, appealing to him for helping them to charge the King (Artashir) with a slander before the Persian king. This would overthrow their king and a Persian would come to rule in their country"*.²⁰

"And Sahak said", – "I do not prove you wrong, I myself have heard about his lamentable and disgraceful acts, I have reproached him many times but he has denied it".²¹ When the Catholicos offered the nakharars (ministers) an alternative they said, "As you do not agree with us to overthrow him we do not want you to be our priest anymore".²²

Ghazar Parpetsi (Ghazar of Parpi) described these events in detail.²³ The Persian King Vram was very eager "to annihilate the kingdom of the Arshakuni dynasty". He rejoiced when he heard one of the king Artashes' accusers say, "Why do we need a king? Let a Persian ishkhan (nobleman) come temporarily and be our overseer and inform you about our obedience or disobedience".²⁴

Consequently, the kingdom was annihilated. The Persian king appointed a regional governor, the Catholicos was also replaced. Priest Surmak replaced Catholicos Sahak. However, a short time later the Assyrian Brikisho came to substitute the latter, then the Assyrian Shamuel succeeded him.²⁵

The sad consequence of this happening is that it led to a clash between the king, the nakharars and the church. This escalated the adverse public environment in which "the iskhans (noblemen) were rebels, not much different from common thieves, corrupting and devastating the country", while "the judges were inhuman, false, deceitful and corrupt, violating the law", "the clergy were hypocritical, pretentious and vain", "teachers were stupid, elected by money", "the military men were cowardly, boastful and lazy, detesting weapons", "the rulers breached regulations ruthlessly, the loved ones were betrayed, the enemies became more powerful", "kings gave unrealizable orders", "everybody had neither love nor shame".²⁶

Such decisive factors as conflict, highly unhealthy, dangerous and discordant atmosphere that had emerged due to inefficient government, the hostile and invasive ambitions of the external enemies led to the downfall of the 700-year-old kingdom and to the loss of the country's independence.

²⁰ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 235.

²¹ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 228.

²² Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 229.

²³ Łazar Parpetsi 1982: 45–85.

²⁴ Łazar Parpetsi 1982: 57.

²⁵ Łazar Parpetsi 1982: 59–61.

²⁶ Movses Khorenatsi 1990: 238–239.

As a result of a long-lasting and persistent fight the Armenian Bagratuni kingdom was created in 885. The kingdom survived for 160 years up until 1045. The head of the state was the king, whose power, like in Greater Armenia, was hereditary. The state government basically kept the same original traditions found in the Armenian statehood. However, it could be marked by some peculiarities. Firstly, the state government system was not unitary, since it was of a semi-federative nature. According to the historical sources, the administrative system consisted of two parts – one was of nationwide nature, while the other one comprised administrative bodies (the main *ishkhan* and appointed officials that were either local or approximated to the court), functioning within the jurisdiction of the given feudal house (which in its turn was the administrative unit).²⁷ In the middle of the 10th century up to the 11th century the Armenian kingdom consisted of the Bagratuni (central) kingdom along with such kingdoms as that of Vaspurakan, Syunik, Kars, Tashir, Dzoraget and the princedoms of Andzevatci, Sasun, etc.²⁸ The state council and court institutions formed the court. The Armenian Kings from the Bagratuni dynasty, the kings of Vaspurakan and Syunik along with reigning *Ishkhans* had their own courts.²⁹

Secondly, in the state system of government the Bagratunis preserved some names of positions, such as *marzpan*, *ishkhanats ishkhan*, which dated back to the near past. Such titles as “shahnshah” and “vostikan” (policeman), having penetrated from the Arab world, were also very common³⁰.

In historiography the Byzantine aggression and the loss of capital Ani³¹ were considered the main reasons for the fall of the Bagratuni state. According to another viewpoint put forward by Matteos Urhayetsi (Matthew of Edessa), the loss of statehood was due to the disintegration in a certain political system.³² Presumably, this viewpoint can be considered accurate for the semi-federative country which had neither legal nor ideological strong basis, as historians affirm, was mainly founded on bilateral interpersonal relationships. Moreover, in this case it is a very complicated task to secure unity and consolidation between constituent kingdoms and princedoms. The dissolution of the political system can be seen as the underlying basis for the aforementioned two reasons which led to the loss of statehood.

In Cilician Armenia (during the era of the Great *Ishkanapetutyun* (princedom) from 1080 up to 1198 and a kingdom lasting from 1198 up until 1375) the system of the government was formed on the basis of the principles typical of the Armenian statehood, where the European practice was also taken into account.

The state government of Cilician Armenia was realized via Smbat Sparapet's “Datastanagirk” (“the Book of Law” 1265) which being a peculiar document, was essential in terms of its legal and regulatory nature.

²⁷ Matevosyan 1990: 99–100.

²⁸ Matevosyan 1990: 199.

²⁹ Matevosyan 1990: 101.

³⁰ History 1976: 266.

³¹ Matevosyan 1990: 248–261.

³² Matevosyan 1990: 250.

The regal power, the functions and authority of governmental institutions in Cilician Armenia were comprehensively elucidated in the works by A.G. Sukiasyan along with the author of these lines.³³

Within the framework of scholarly literature, two reasons which brought about the fall of the Armenian state in Cilicia were of great significance.³⁴

- the foreign policy – i.e. the insidious policy realized by the western European countries along with the hostile attitude on part of the Catholic Church, for the population was against the unification of the Armenian Church with the latter.
- the permanent internal strife between the regal power and the individual defiant princedoms, as well as the disruptive, virulent discord between feudal houses led the Armenian kings to fail to eliminate state – defying forces and create a centralized strong monarchy.

Unfortunately, the last reason is the underlying basis for the demise of all the Armenian statehoods. The given phenomenon which is of ubiquitous nature should be alarming for the Armenian civilization specifically, both for those political forces and general public that focus on the Armenian political thought and the practical specifics of the state-building processes.

The Methodological Principles and the Constitutionality of Public Administration According to Armenian Thinkers

The fulfillment and development of the state, regional government was accompanied by the creation of the legal regulatory bases. The king as the head of the state and the church, having legal, authority for trials and as a responsible body for people's intellectual and civil life sought to create legal bases for their acts and decisions. Furthermore, in anticipation of future statehood, legal, regulatory and constitutional works were created. In this respect valuable are such works as "Kanonagirk Hayots" (The Book of Armenian Canons), "the Canonical Constitution" by the king of Artsakh and Utik Vachagan, "The Canonical Legislation" by Davit Alavka Vordi, "Datastanagrker" ("The Books of Law") by Mkhitar Gosh and Smbat Sparapet, Sh. and H. Shahamiryans' Worogait Parats (A Snare of Glory) written later, etc.

While the content of the aforementioned works has been analyzed in scholarly literature, we shall dwell upon the pivotal theses which are of great methodological significance in terms of public administration.

Armenian thinkers were primarily concerned about the ***nature of the state government and the structure of the state apparatus***. The given issue was elucidated in the works by the Armenian historians with reference to the state of Greater Armenia and the medieval statehoods mentioned above. The issue was thoroughly studied in the books of law written by Mkhitar Gosh and Smbat Sparapet as well as in Sh. and H. Shahamiryans' "Vorogait Parats".

M. Gosh and S. Sparapet adhered to the theological interpretation of the state. In their opinion, kings were selected by God and were his representatives.³⁵ According to

³³ Suqiasyan 1978; Suvaryan, Mirzoyan 2013: 127–130.

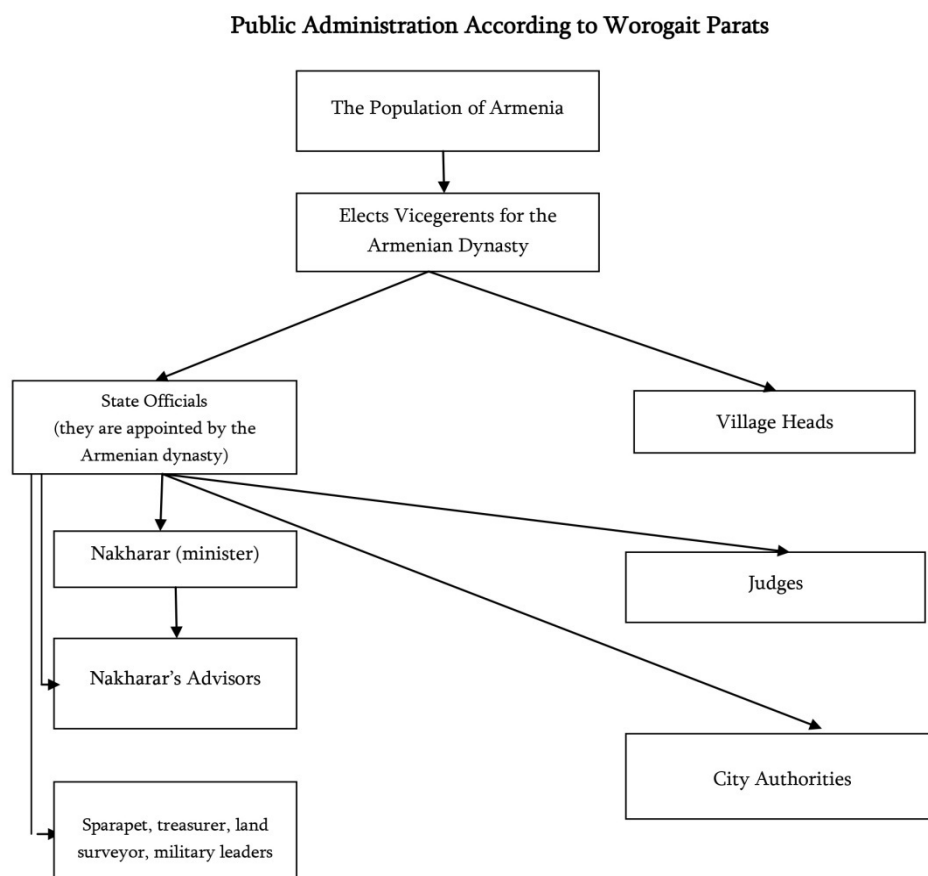
³⁴ Suqiasyan 1978: 99.

them, the appropriate structure of the kingdom consisted in centralized power, led by the monarch. Moreover, S. Sparapet considered the strong centralized power to be necessary, for he was sure it was conditioned by the imperative of securing the country's safety.

According to the characteristic feature of the theory put forward by Mkhitar Gosh, state and church are seen as two pillars which hold the building of the society as a political reality.³⁶ The given thesis was a certain step towards the idea of public administration, when apart from state institution, another body – church is essential in terms of the governmental system. In ancient Armenia bodies of regional government i.e. nakharars, mayors, the heads of rural communities along with the central authority were state institutions.

In Sh. And H. Shahamiryans' "Vorogait Parats" the concept of parliamentary state with its legislative, executive and judicial branches is substantiated.³⁷ Although the functions of those branches were not clearly differentiated, the formation of authorities through direct democratic election as well as the essence of state government could be seen as a vital progress compared to the state governing paradigm of the time (Diagram 2).³⁸

Diagram 2



³⁵ Mkhitar Gosh 2001: 301–305, 404–405.

³⁶ Mkhitar Gosh 2001: 15.

³⁷ Vorogayt parats 2002: 298.

³⁸ For details see Suvaryan, Mirzoyan 2013: 165.

The next pivotal issue observed by the Armenian thinkers refers to the rule of law, the consideration of human rights and justice in terms of governmental decisions which are the essential components of constitutionality.

“Kanonagirk Hayots” (The Book of Armenian Laws) is a comprehensive paper. Being of legal and regulatory nature it includes the decrees issued during the famous ecclesiastic meetings, namely – meetings in Ashtishat (4th century), Shahapivan (5th century) Dvin (6th and 7th centuries etc.) and writings by eminent religious figures. Those decrees refer to the principles of religious rituals, the behavior of the clergy, the acceptable norms of marriage and family, moral values in case they were violated certain penalties were imposed. The main idea of “Kanonagirk” consists in the existence of certain canons, rules of coexistence that are mandatory for all members of society. The collection of these canons which comprised 21 articles was called “Canonical Constitution” by King Vachagan. Davit Alavka Vordi named it “Canonical Legislation” (97 articles).

Nerses Shnorhali’s (Nerses the Gracious) “Toukht Enthanrakan” (written in 1166)³⁹ should be singled out, for it put forward theses on the rule of law, justice and election of leaders. The following thesis propounded by him is really noteworthy from the perspective of the rule of law, “The wealthy, who can lordly do what he wishes, is even more criminal as the law is broken”.⁴⁰

In the works under discussion the principle of fair taxation and tithes are of greater importance. In this respect, of particular interest is the following statement by Nerses Shnorhali: “*Do not treat your subjects unjustly by imposing heavy taxes, which cannot be endured. Judge everybody in accordance with law and their capacity*”.⁴¹ Statements of similar nature can be found in the Aghvank “Canonical Constitution” (chapter “D”) as well as in “Kanonagirk Hayots”, “Datastanagirk” by S. Sparapet.

In historic Armenia the **development of education, science and culture** was also essential from the perspective of legal, regulatory canons. Specifically, in “Kanonagirk Hayots” (The Book of Armenian Canons) in the canons formulated by Sahak Partev the organization of schools was considered indispensable.⁴² In the 6th chapter of the decree issued during the Ashtishat meeting it was required “to open schools of the Assyrian and Greek languages to spread enlightenment throughout Armenia”.⁴³

In “Vorogait Parats” special emphasis was laid on the development of science and culture, “The Armenian dynasty should provide assistance to specialists, especially in the spheres of philosophy, astronomy, medicine, music, eloquence, etc”.⁴⁴

³⁹ Nerses Shnorhali 2009.

⁴⁰ Nerses Shnorhali 2009: 85.

⁴¹ Nerses Shnorhali 2009: 80–81.

⁴² Kanonagirk Hayots 1964: 372–373.

⁴³ Avagyan 2001: 109–110.

⁴⁴ Vorogait parats 2002: 134.

In “Vorogait Parats” (Chapter 502) along with the assistance to science and culture, particularly prioritized was the encouragement of innovations, according to which, for the creation of new, high quality products (of European kind) the Armenian dynasty should offer financial incentive to the creators.

This is an issue which is currently extremely topical in terms of technological development.

Conclusion

Summing up, it should be noted that the state and regional government in ancient and medieval Armenia was realized via legal regulatory principles, consistent with the time and through sufficient constitutionality. Within the frames of Armenian intellectual culture, certain methodological bases were worked out, whereas the accumulated past experience, cultural heritage and the lessons of history in particular, deserve special attention in terms of the appropriate orientation of the civil society, the development of political thought and growth of efficiency in public administration.

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FOREIGN SOURCES AND AUTHORS ABOUT ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS

NARRATIVE OF THE EMBASSY OF RUY GONZALEZ DE CLAVIJO TO THE COURT OF TIMOUR

Narrative of the Embassy of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo to the court of Timour, at Samarcand, A.D.1403-1406. Translated, for the first time, with notes, a preface, and an introductory life of Timour beg, by Clements R.Markham, F.R.G.S., London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, M.DCCC.LIX.

Ruy González de Clavijo (died 2 April 1412) was a Spanish (Castilian) statesman and writer. In 1403-1405 Clavijo was the ambassador of Henry III of Castile to the court of Timur, founder and ruler of the Timurid Empire. A diary of the journey based on detailed notes kept while traveling, was later published in Spanish in 1582 (*Embajada a Tamorlán*) and in English in 1859 (*Narrative of the Embassy of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo to the Court of Timour at Samarcand AD 1403-1406*).

The passage extracted from the narrative of his journey from Spain to Samarkand describes the route of his journey from Trebizond to the east, the territory which Clavijo names as Armenia (Chapter IV, pp.6-85).

CHAPTER IV. TREBIZOND and the JOURNEY THROUH ARMENIA

On Saturday, the 12th of April, the Emperor of Trebizond sent for the ambassadors, and when they arrived at his palace, they found him in a saloon, which was in an upper story; and he received them very well. After they had spoken with him, they returned to their lodging. With the emperor was his son, who was about twenty-five years of age; and the emperor was tall and handsome. The emperor and his son were dressed in imperial robes. They wore, on their heads, tall hats surmounted by golden cords, on the top of which were cranes' feathers; and the hats were bound with the skins of martens. They call the emperor Germanoli,¹ and his son Quelex;² and they call the son emperor as well as the father, because it is the custom to call the eldest legitimate son emperor, although his father may be alive; and the Greek name for emperor, is Basileus. This emperor pays tribute to Timour Beg, and to other Turks, who are his neighbours. He is married to a relation of the Emperor of Constantinople, and his son is married to the daughter of a knight of Constantinople, and has two little daughters.³

¹ Manuel II.

² Alexis.

³ The empire of Trebizond was founded by the Comneni, when they fled from the cruelty of Isaac Angelus, at Constantinople, in 1186. Alexis Comnenus assumed the title of Emperor of Trebizond. His descendants retained the title, and ruled over this small territory, until David Comnenus was deposed by Mohammed II in 1461. The Emperor of Trebizond, at the time when Clavijo passed through the city, was Manuel II, who paid tribute to Timour. He died in 1412, and was succeeded by his son Alexis IV.

On Sunday afternoon, the ambassadors being in their lodging, two knights came to see them, the most honored and confidential of the emperor's household. The first was named Horchi, which means the page who bears the bow before the emperor; and the other Protovestati, which means the same as treasurer. The latter was very intimate with the emperor, who did nothing in the empire against his advice, and they say that he was of base lineage, the son of a baker. They also say that the young emperor, seeing that his father made so much of this knight, and that he took no notice of the nobles of the empire, was enraged, and rose against his father, saying that he must dismiss this man. He made war, and besieged the city for three months, being assisted by the greatest men of the empire; but afterwards they came to an agreement, through Horchi, who was a friend of the young emperor, and of the others who had risen; nevertheless there afterwards succeeded dishonour, trouble, and injury to the said emperor, through his friendship for this cavalier.

The city of Trebizond is built near the sea, and its wall rises up over some rocks, and on the highest part there is a very strong castle, which has another wall round it. A small river passes by the castle, and dashes over the rocks, and on this side the city is very strong, but on the other side it is on open ground. Outside the city walls there are suburbs, and the most beautiful part is a street near the sea, which is in one of these suburbs, where they sell all the things required in the city. On the shore there are two castles, with strong walls and towers, one belonging to the Venetians and the other to the Genoese, and they hold them with the consent of the emperor.

Outside the city, there are many churches and monasteries. In this city the Armenians have a church and a bishop, and they consecrate the body of God in the same way as the Catholics; but the priest, when he dresses, does not put the stole with the cross on his breast, and when he reads the gospel, he turns his face to the people. When they consecrate, they do not put water in the chalice. They confess, and fast during Lent, and eat meat on Saturdays, and at Easter. During Lent their fast consists in not eating fish, nor oil, nor suet; and the common people eat fish, but do not drink wine. From Easter to Pentecost they eat meat every day, as well on Fridays as on other days in the week. They say that Jesus Christ was baptized on the day he was born, and they have other errors in their faith, but they are very religious, and hear mass very devoutly.

The Greeks are also a very devout people, but they have several errors in the articles of their faith. In the first place they consecrate bread which contains leaven; and make it in this way - they take a loaf, about the size of a man's hand, and in the middle they make an impression, with certain letters, the size of a *dobla*,⁴ which they consecrate. The priest who says mass, wears an ornament before him; and when he has consecrated the bread, he puts it on his head, in a white cloth, and, singing, goes forth to the people, who all put their faces to the ground, crying, and smiting their bosoms, and saying they are not worthy to see it. The priest then returns to the altar,

⁴An old Spanish coin.

and consumes the impression which is in the middle of the bread. When mass is said, he takes the remainder of the bread, breaks it, as if it was consecrated, and gives it to the people. When the priests officiate at mass, they do not have either books or bells in the churches (except in St. Sophia, at Constantinople). The clergy are married, but they do not marry more than once, and with a virgin. When their wives die, they do not marry again, but remain widowers, and they are very unhappy for the rest of their lives. They only say mass twice a week, on Saturdays and Wednesdays; and when they have to say mass, they remain in the church all the week, and do not go out, or to their houses. They have six fasts in the year, in which they do not drink wine, nor eat fish which has blood, nor oil; and the clergy do not go to their houses, during these fasts; which occur as follows: - the first is from 1st of August to St. Mary's day in the middle of August; the second, from St. Catherine's day to the Nativity; the third is the forty days of Lent, which we also keep; the fourth is for twenty-four days, in honour of the twelve Apostles; the fifth is for fifteen days, in honour of a saint, whom they call Saint Demetrius; and throughout the year, they do not eat meat, neither on Wednesdays nor on Fridays; but they eat meat on Saturdays. They keep Wednesdays very strictly, and would rather eat meat on Fridays, than on Wednesdays: for they do eat meat on the following four Fridays in the year, namely, the Friday before Christmas day, the Friday in Carnival week, the Friday after Easter, and the Friday before Pentecost. They err in their doctrine of baptism, and in other things; and when any one dies, who has done evil in this life, and is a great sinner, they dress him in cloths, and change his name, that the devil may not know him. They hold these, and other erroneous opinions, yet they are very devout, and say long prayers.

The Greeks are armed with bows and swords, and other arms like the Turks, and they have cavalry.

The ambassadors were in this city of Trebizond from the Friday on which they arrived, being the 11th of April, until Saturday the 26th of the same month; preparing harness for their horses, and other things necessary for a journey by land. On Sunday, the 7th of April, the ambassadors set out accompanied by a guard which was provided for them, by order of the emperor, to guide them through his territory. On the same day they slept near a river called Pexic, in a ruined church. The road led over high hills, which were inhabited, and covered with corn, and mills; and many streams flowed from these hills.

On Monday they left this halting place, and the guard which the emperor had given them turned back, and said that they could not go any further, for fear of the enemies of the emperor; but the ambassadors went on their way. At the hour of vespers they came to a castle belonging to the emperor, called Pilomazuca, built on a very high rock. The entrance to it is by steps; and there were a few houses in the face of the rock. The road, on this day, was very good for travelling, and led through very beautiful mountains; but they found that a great piece of rock had fallen, which blocked up the road, and a river,

so that the ambassadors could not pass without trouble; and on that day they did not travel far, and encamped in the open plain.

On Tuesday they travelled on a very bad road, over very high mountains, covered with snow, and traversed by many streams; and at night they encamped near a castle called Sigana, which is on the top of a high rock, the only entrance to which was by a wooden bridge, leading from a rock to the gate of the castle. The owner of the castle was a Greek knight, named Quirileo Arbosita.

On Wednesday they came to a castle, on a high rock near the road, called Cadaca, on one side of which there was a river, and on the other a precipice, and the road led through a very narrow pass, between the river and the foot of the castle rock, so that only one man could pass at a time. A few men in the castle might defend this pass against an army, and in all this country there is no other pass. Men came forth from the castle, and demanded a toll from the ambassadors, for their effects. This castle always contains thieves and bad men; and the lord of it is also a thief; and this road is not used, except when many merchants travel together, and give a great present to the lord of this land, and to his men. Three leagues beyond this castle there was a tower, on the top of a high rock, in a narrow pass; and at the hour of vespers they approached a castle, on a high hill, called Dorile, which looked very beautiful, and the road came close to it. The ambassadors understood that the lord of the country lived in that castle, so they sent an interpreter to let him know who they were; and when they approached the foot of the castle, a man on horseback came out to them, and said that the lord of the castle desired that they should stop, and they put their luggage in a church close by. The man then told them that it was the custom for those who travelled on that road, to pay a certain duty to the lord of the castle, and that they were expected to do so. He said that his master had people in the mountains, who were making war on the Turks; and that he lived by the dues taken from travellers who used that road, and by the spoils taken from his enemies. When the ambassadors wished to visit the lord of the castle, to show him such courtesy as he might desire, his men would not consent, and said that they should not go to him, but that next morning he would come to them.

On Thursday, the 1st of May, Cabasica, the lord of the castle, came to the place where the ambassadors were encamped, with thirty men on horseback, armed with bows and arrows. They all got off their horses, and sat down, and Cabasica made the ambassadors sit down near him, and said to them that his country was barren and craggy, as they might see, that he was always at war with the Turks, who were his neighbours, that he and his people had nothing to live upon, except what was given them by those who passed that way, and what they robbed from their neighbours. He, therefore, desired that they would help him, with some clothing and money.

The ambassadors replied that they were not merchants, but ambassadors, whom their lord the king of Spain had sent to the lord Timour Beg, and that they had nothing but what they were taking to the said Timour; and the ambassador from Timour Beg said that he knew well that the emperor of Trebizond was lord of that land, and that he

was a vassal of Timour Beg; adding that the things they had with them belonged to Timour, and that they ought to be allowed to pass safely through that land. They of the castle replied that what he had said was true, but that they had nothing to live on, except what they had already described, and that, at all events, they must give them what they demanded. The ambassadors, seeing their determination, produced a piece of scarlet, and a silver cup; and Timour Beg's ambassador gave a scarlet cloth made in Florence, and a piece of fine linen but they were not satisfied with all this, and asked for more.

Notwithstanding all the courteous speeches that were made to them, they cared nothing for them, but continued to insist upon being given what they demanded, and declared that words were worth nothing. The ambassadors therefore bought a piece of camlet from a merchant who was with them, and gave it to the people of the castle. At last they were satisfied, and the lord of the castle said that the ambassadors should be guarded on their road, as far as the land of Arsinga, which then belonged to Timour Beg.

The ambassadors desired to depart at once, but they could not. They, however, hired horses to carry them as far as the land of Arsinga, and men to guard them. On Friday they set out, accompanied by ten men on horseback, and at the hour of mass they came to a castle, on the top of a high rock, which also belonged to Cabasica, where they found men in the road, who took a toll from them. At noon they came to a valley where they were told that there was a castle belonging to the Turks of a lineage called Chapenies, who were at war with Cabasica, and that in the valley there was a guard, which waited for passengers. At the hour of vespers they came to a town of Arsinga, called Alangogaza, and Cabasica's ten men took leave of them.

On this day the road was very mountainous; and in this town there was a Turkish cavalier, who held the place for the lord of Arsinga. He received the ambassadors very well, and gave them good lodging and food, and everything they required; and they learned from this cavalier that Timour Beg had departed from Carabaqui,⁵ where he had wintered, and had gone to the land of Sultanieh.

On Saturday, the 8rd of May, they set out again, and reached a town where they were treated well, and given food and fresh horses; and at night they came to another town, where they were given plenty of food and horses, and everything they required. The custom of the country was that, at each town where they arrived, small carpets were brought from each house, for them to sit upon, and afterwards they placed a piece of printed leather in front, on which they had their meals. The bread of these towns was very bad, and was made in this way: - they knead a little flour, and make very thin cakes, which they put on a pan, over the fire, and when they are hot, they take them out; and this is the bread which they bring on these pieces of leather. They also bring out plenty of meat, and milk, and cream, and eggs, and honey. This is the best food they have, and they bring it from each house; and if the ambassadors had to remain,

⁵Karabagh.

the people brought them plenty of meat, and all that they required. When the ambassadors came to any place, an officer went on before, and the ambassador from Timour Beg ordered food, and horses, and men for them; and if they did not come, the people received such a number of blows with sticks and whips, that it was quite wonderful. Thus the people of these towns were so severely punished that they fled, when they saw a Zagatay coming. A Zagatay is a man⁶ in the host of Timour Beg, of noble lineage.

In these towns, some Armenian Christians resided. On Sunday, the 4th of May, they arrived at the city of Arsinga,⁷ at the hour of vespers; and the road they had traversed that day was very rugged, and passed over high ridges of mountains; and near the city they found much snow in the road. Many people came out from the city, to receive and to see the ambassadors, and they were conducted to the lodgings which had been prepared for them. That night the lord of the city sent them boiled and dressed meat, and much fruit, and bread, and wine.

Next day the lord of the city sent them a certain sum of money, to maintain them while they were there; and at noon he sent horses to convey them to visit him, and men to guard them, to a plain outside the city. They found him seated in a saloon, under the shade of a silken canopy, supported by two poles, with cords to draw it out, and there were many people with him. When the ambassadors arrived, some cavaliers came forward to receive them; and when they came to the lord, he rose up, and gave them his hand, making them sit down near him, and treating them very well. He was dressed in a robe of blue silk, embroidered with gold, and he had a tall hat on his head, with precious stones in it, and on the top of the hat he had a crest of gold, from which descended two tresses of red hair, reaching to the shoulders, and this hair, thus worn, is the device of Timour Beg. The lord seemed about forty years of age, and he was a well made man, with a black beard.

After he had asked the ambassadors concerning the state of the king our lord, the first honour he did them was to take a silver cup full of wine, and give it, with his own hands, to the ambassadors, to drink, and afterwards to all their followers. He who thus drinks, must take the cup in both hands, it being disrespectful to take it in one; for they say that a man ought to take a cup in one hand, from his equal, and not from a lord; and when he has taken the cup from the hand of his lord, he raises it, and walks a little backwards, and does not turn his back to the lord. When he has drunk, he raises his finger in the air three times; and it is the custom to drink all that is in the cup. After he had given them to drink, with his own hand, they brought some mules, on which were wooden boxes, containing plenty of copper pots for cooking, and many chopping knives, of hard iron, and a hundred small iron porringers; and all the utensils were round and deep, like a trooper's head piece.

⁶ The Zagatays took their name from the son of Zengis Khan; just as the Uzbegs derived their name from another famous descendant of the great Mongol conqueror.

⁷ Erzingan.

They then put meat into these pots, and pickled mutton, and balls of forced meat into the porringers, with rice and other victuals; and over each pot and each porringer they placed a thin cake. Before the lord and the ambassadors they placed a silken cloth, on the ground; and on it they placed the pots and porringers of meat; and everyone began to eat.

Each person had his knife to cut, and his wooden spoon to eat with. But a man cut up the food, before the lord, and two cavaliers sat and ate with him; and when they had to eat the rice, and other dishes, they ate out of one porringer, with one spoon; when one had done with it, the other took it up, and so they went on eating.

While they were at this meal, a Turkish boy, about seven years old, arrived with about ten mounted attendants; and the lord received him, and made him sit down by his side. This boy was a nephew of Espandiar, the lord of Sinopoli, who was a great lord in Turkey; and he came from Timour Beg, with an order to Espandiar, to give the half of his land to this boy, because he was the son of his sister. Presently two other cavaliers arrived, who came from Timour Beg, and they were natives of this city of Arsinga. They said that Timour Beg had detained them for some time, but that now he had released them, and the reason he had imprisoned them was this: -

Zaratan, a great noble, was lord of this city of Arsinga, and of its land, which is a great territory; and when he died, he did not leave children by his wife, who was daughter of the emperor of Trebizond. Some time before he died, he declared that he who is now lord of Arsinga was his son, but when he died, they did not wish to receive this man as lord. A cavalier, who was the son of a sister of Zaratan, named Xevali, seized the land, saying that Zaratan died without children, and that he ought to inherit, as his nephew; and the two cavaliers who arrived at the meal, assisted him. When Timour Beg conquered the Turk, he came to this city, and seized the said Xevali, and the two cavaliers, making him, who is now in possession, and whom Zaratan had said was his son, lord of Arsinga. Timour Beg had now released these two cavaliers, but had taken Xevali to Samarcand.

The reason why Timour Beg and the Turk made war upon each other, was owing to Zaratan, the lord of this land, as will be related to you presently; it was a beautiful reason.

When they had finished eating, the ambassadors returned to their lodging, and the lord remained with his cavaliers; and at night the lord sent the ambassadors many things, such as pots of boiled meat, with the cooks who dressed it, and attendants to serve it up: and he gave them money for their expenses, as much as they required.

On Wednesday, after dinner, he sent for the ambassadors, and they went to him, and found him at his lodging. He was in a porch, before a fountain, with many cavaliers, attendants, and also buffoons, who were performing before him. As the ambassadors entered, he bowed to them, and made them sit near him, and gave them many pieces of sugar. He said that he and the knight who did not drink wine (which was Ruy Gonzalez) should that day be drinking companions, and they brought a great crystal

vase, full of water with sugar. He drank first, and then gave it to Ruy Gonzalez, with his own hand, but they gave wine to all the others. Afterwards they brought much meat, and rice, and various other dishes, and they ate in the same way as they did the day before. When the meat was eaten, they brought porringers of honey, and peaches cut in vinegar, and grapes, and capers; and they ate very dirtily. All this time the wine did not stop, and when this had lasted some time, they brought a cup, which the lord took, and gave it to certain of his knights, who drank all the wine, so that none was left, for this is their unseemly custom. These cavaliers then took the great cup, and gave it to each other, to drink, until most of them were drunk; but on that day the lord did not drink wine, to keep company with Ruy Gonzalez, and the lord's name was Pitalibet. At night the ambassadors returned to their lodging.

This city of Arsinga was built on a plain, near a river which is called Euphrates,⁸ which is one of the rivers that come from Paradise. This plain is entirely surrounded by very high mountains, and on the top of the highest of these mountains there is much snow. There are many towns, and fruit gardens in the plain, which is covered with corn fields and vineyards, and very beautiful gardens. The city was not very large, and the walls and towers which surrounded it, were built of stone. It was built by the Armenians, and the sign of the cross is cut on many parts of the walls. The houses all have terraces, and the people walk along the terraces, as if they were streets. The city is very populous, and contains many fine streets, and it is very rich, and has much trade, and many beautiful mosques and temples. It is inhabited by many christians, Greeks, and Armenians. They say that when Timour Beg took and destroyed a Turkish city called Sabastria,⁹ that the Turk came against this city of Arsinga, and entered it; but when Timour Beg conquered the Turk, he came to this city, and took it for himself.

While Timour Beg was at Arsinga, the Moors of the city quarrelled with the christians who were there, saying that Zaratan, their lord, allowed them to have churches which were better than the mosques; and Timour Beg sent for Zaratan, and told him what the Moors had said. Zaratan answered that he allowed the christians to be in the land, that he might take advantage of their industry. Timour Beg then sent for a Greek priest who lived there, and when he came before him, he, on account of the great hatred he had for the people of Constantinople, and for the Genoese of the city of Pera, ordered him to apostatize; and, because the priest did not wish to do so, Timour Beg commanded all the christians in the city to be put to death.

Zaratan interceded with Timour Beg, for them, and ransomed them for nine thousand *esperas*, each *espera* being worth half a silver rial; but Timour Beg caused all the churches of the christians to be destroyed, and he took a castle of that city, called Camag, and gave it to one of his Zagatays. He did this because the castle was very strong, and guarded all that country. From this city much merchandize goes to Syria, and to Turkey.

⁸The Kara-sou, or Western Euphrates.

⁹ Sebaste or Sivas.

The reasons why the Turk and Timour Beg came to know of each other, and why Timour Beg came to Turkey, to fight the Turk Bayazid, are as follows: - This cavalier Zaratan, lord of this city of Arsinga, held a territory which bordered on the dominions of the Turk. The Turk, being desirous of possessing the land of this Zaratan, and especially the castle of Camag, sent to demand tribute from him, and that he should give up the said castle of Camag. Zaratan replied that he would pay tribute, but that he would not give up the castle; and the Turk declared that if he did not, he should be deprived of all his land.

Zaratan, having heard of the great power of Timour Beg, and that he was then waging war in Persia, sent an embassy to him, with presents and letters, beseeching him to defend him from the Turk, and protesting that he was ready to obey him. Timour Beg, therefore, sent his ambassador to the Turk, with letters, in which he declared that Zaratan was his subject, and that the Turk must not molest him, threatening, if he did, to do as much for him.

The Turk, never having heard of Timour Beg, until that time, and believing that there was no man in the world equal to himself, got into such a passion that it was quite wonderful, and sent back letters to Timour Beg, in which he said that he was astonished that there could be a man so mad and insolent as to write such great folly; that he would do what he chose against Zaratan, and against every other man in the whole universe. He further promised to come and seek for Timour Beg, and that he could not escape from falling into his hands. He also swore that he would disgrace him, by dishonoring his principal wife.

Timour Beg, being possessed of great confidence, determined to show his power, and marched from the beautiful plains of Carabaque,¹⁰ in Persia, where he had wintered that year, with a great army, straight to the city of Arsinga. Thence he advanced into the land of Turkey, and besieged the city of Sabastria.¹¹ The people of Sabastria sent to the Turk, their lord, for help; and when he heard that Timour Beg was in his territory, he got into a great passion, and collected a force, which he sent against him, under his eldest son Muzulman Chalabi. The force consisted of two hundred thousand cavalry, and he intended to follow himself, with a larger army; but before the Turks could arrive, Timour had entered the city; and he did so in this manner: he fought the besieged very fiercely, so that at last they came to speak with him, and he agreed that certain men of the city should come to him; that he would cause no blood to be shed; and that they should give him a certain quantity of gold and silver.

When Timour Beg had received the tribute which he demanded, he said that he desired to tell those of the city certain things, which were much to their advantage; and that, for this purpose, the chief men should come to him. These, trusting in the safe conduct he had given them, came to him; and Timour Beg, as soon as he had got them outside the city, caused great holes to be made; and said to them that he had certainly

¹⁰Karabagh.

¹¹Sebaste or Sivas.

promised not to shed their blood; but that he would stifle them in those holes; and he ordered his troops to enter the city. He buried all who had come out to him, alive, and ordered the city to be pillaged, pulled down, and destroyed.

When this was done, he marched away, and on the day that he departed the son of the Turk arrived, with his two hundred thousand cavalry; and when he found that the city of Sabastria was destroyed, and Timour Beg gone, he waited there for his father; and Timour Beg marched straight to the land of the Sultan of Babylon.

Before he arrived there, he met with a race, called the white Tartars, who always wander over the plains; and he fought and conquered them, and took their lord prisoner; and took away as many as fifty thousand men and women with him.

He then marched to Damascus; against the people of which city he was much enraged, because they did not pay tribute; and he imprisoned their ambassadors, and entered their city, and destroyed it. All those who understood any art, he took with him to the city of Samarcand, together with the white Tartars, and the people of Sabastria, amongst whom were many Armenian Christians.

After this, he returned to the land of Persia; and passed the summer in a land called Alara, in Upper Armenia.

Meanwhile the Turk marched to the city of Arsinga; and, on account of the rage and fury which he felt against Zaratan, because he had been the cause of this insult, he attacked the city and entered it by force, capturing the wife of Zaratan. But he ordered her to be released, and that no harm should be done to the city. He then returned to his own land. They say that he thus displayed very little courage, in not destroying that city, as Timour Beg had destroyed the city of Sabastria.

After these two lords had returned to their own territories, they sent ambassadors to each other; but they were unable to come to any reconciliation.

At this time the emperor of the great city of Constantinople, and the Genoese of Pera sent to Timour Beg, to say that if he was going to make war upon the Turk, they would be able to assist him with troops and galleys; and it should be in this way: that they would arm certain galleys, in a short time, to prevent the Turks who were in Greece, from passing back into Turkey; and they also offered to assist him with a certain quantity of money.

When the Turk would not come to any terms with the city of Constantinople, or with Timour Beg, they each began to collect their forces; but Timour Beg, who could do this with great rapidity, because he was astute and sagacious in war, marched quickly from Persia into Turkey, by the same road as he had taken before, passing through the cities of Arsinga and Sabastria. When the Turk knew that Timour Beg was in his territory, he marched, with his army, to a strong castle called Angora. As soon as Timour Beg heard of this sagacious movement of the Turk, he left the road by which he was marching, and led his army over a high mountain. When the Turk, therefore, found that Timour Beg had left the road, he thought that he had fled, and marched after him as fast as he could.

Timour Beg, after marching through the mountains for eight days, returned to the plain, and came to the castle of Angora, where the Turk had left all his baggage, and be pillaged it. When the Turk heard this, he came back as fast as he could, and when he arrived, his men were tired.

Timour Beg had made this movement, to throw his enemy into disorder; and they fought, and the Turk was taken prisoner. But the Emperor of Constantinople, and the Genoese of Pera, instead of doing what they had promised, allowed the Turks to pass from Greece into Turkey; and when they were defeated, they assisted them to escape; and this bad faith made Timour Beg very furious against the Christians.

The name of this Turk, who was conquered by Timour Beg, was Ilderim Bayazid, which means "lightning." The name of his father was Amurath, a very good knight, who was killed by a christian count, called Lazaro, on the field of battle, by two thrusts in his breast, which came out at his back. Afterwards this Ilderim Bayazid avenged the death of his father, by killing Count Lazaro in battle, with his own hand. The son of this Lazaro marched with Bayazid, and he now lives with Muzulman Chalabi, the son of this Ilderim Bayazid.

I have written this, that it may be understood whom they call Murate; because all the lords of Turkey are known by the name of Murate. Also Timour Beg is the proper name of that lord, and not Tamerlane, as we call him; for Timour Beg is as much as to say, in his language, the same as the lord of iron; because Beg means lord, and Timour is iron. Tamerlane, on the contrary, is an insulting name; and means lame, because he became lame on the left side, and was wounded in the two small fingers of the right hand, from blows which were given him when he was stealing some sheep one night, as will be more fully related to you presently.

The ambassadors were in this city of Arsinga until Thursday, the 15th day of May, when they departed. The road that day led over high mountains, without vegetation, and the snow fell, so that it was very cold. They passed the night in a town called Xabega, which had a small castle, and a river flowed near it; and they passed many cornfields and villages that day.

On Saturday they passed the night in a town called Pagarrix, which had a lofty castle on the top of a rock; and in this town there were two wards, one inhabited by Armenians, and the other by Turks; and they said that it was a year since Timour Beg passed through it, when he ordered the churches of the Armenians to be pulled down; and the Armenians gave three thousand *asperas*, each *aspera* being half a rial, to ransom their churches; but he ordered the money to be taken, and the churches to be destroyed also.

On Sunday, the day of Pentecost, they set out, and reached a town, where there was a castle on the top of a rock, which belonged to Arsinga.

On Monday they passed the night in the open air; and the road they travelled over that day passed over high mountains, without vegetation, from which many streams descended; but there was much pasture, both above and below; and this land belonged

to the Turcomans, who wander as far as this, and they are a nation of Moors, allied to the Turks. On Tuesday they departed, and travelled over a plain, with much pasture, and plenty of water.

At noon they came to a town called Aseron,¹² which belonged to Timour Beg. It was in a plain, and was surrounded by a strong stone wall with towers, and it is very large. It also had a castle, but it is not very populous. In it there is a handsome church, for this city used to belong to the christians of Armenia, and many Armenians lived in it. Formerly it was the largest and the richest city in all this country. The lord of the city was a Turcoman named Subail.

On Thursday, the 22nd of May, they departed from this place, and passed the night in a town called Patir Juan, in the territory of a very strong city called Auniqui; and the lord of this land was a Zagatay knight, named Toladay-beque.

On Friday they arrived at a town called Ischu, and they remained there until Sunday. In this town there were many Armenians.

On Sunday they slept in a town called Delularquente, which means "the town of the mad men;" and the town was inhabited by Moorish hermits, called Caxixes; and many people came to them on pilgrimage, and they healed many diseases. Among them there was a chief whom they treat with great respect, and say that he is a saint, and that when Timour Beg passed by, he went to visit this Caxic. These hermits received many alms from the people, and their chief was lord of the town. Those who desire to be thought religious, shave their beards, and their heads, and take off their clothes, and go through the streets in heat and cold, dressed in the most tattered clothes they can find. They go about singing, day and night, with timbrels. On the top of the gate of their hermitage there was a pennon of black woollen threads, with a moon figured above them; and at the foot of the pennon were fixed many horns of deer, goats, and rams; and this is the custom of these Caxixes, to have these horns on the tops of their houses, and they carry them in their hands, when they walk in the streets.

On Monday, the 6th of May, the ambassadors departed, and passed the night in a plain, near a great river called Corras,¹³ which traverses the whole of Armenia; and the road passed over snowy mountains, whence descended many streams.

On Tuesday they passed the night in a town called Naujua; and the road, on that day, was along the banks of this river, being very rugged, and dangerous to pass. In this place there was a Caxic for governor, who received the ambassadors very well; and there were many Armenians.

On Wednesday they passed the night in a town, which had a high castle on the top of a rock; which rock was of salt, and any one may take this salt, who wants it.

¹² Erzeroum.

¹³ Kur, or Cyrus.

**THE CITY OF CALMARIN¹⁴, WHICH WAS THE FIRST IN THE WORLD,
AFTER THE FLOOD.**

On Thursday, the 29th of May, at noon, they reached a great city called Calmarin, and from it, distant about six leagues, they saw the great mountain on which the ark of Noah rested, after the flood. This city was in a plain, and on one side flowed the great river called Corras;¹⁵ and on the other there was a very deep and rocky valley, as broad as the flight of an arrow; and it encircled the city, until it united with the river. The valley and river made the city very strong, so that it could only be attacked where the river commenced; but at this place there was a very strong castle, with great towers, and it had two gates, one in front of the other. This city of Calmarin was the first city that was built in the world, after the flood, and it was built by the lineage of Noah. The people of the city said that, eight years ago, Tetani, Emperor of Tartary, besieged the city, and that they fought day and night for two days, and on the third there was a parley. They gave up the city, on condition that neither he, nor his people should enter it, but that the citizens should pay to him a certain annual tribute; with which the emperor was satisfied, but he demanded that half the people of the city should be given up to him, to go with him to the land of Jugania,¹⁶ where he was going to make war on the king Sorso. When the citizens had given up these men, the emperor attacked the city, entered it by force, pillaged and burnt it, making breaches in the walls, and killing many people.

The greater part of the inhabitants were Armenians; but the land of Armenia has been taken from the Christians by the Moors, as I will relate to you, presently. In this city there are very great edifices; and throughout all this country, they gave the ambassadors and their people lodging, and food, and horses; for all the land belonged to Timour Beg.

On Friday they departed, and passed the night at a castle, which was on the top of a rock, and belonged to a widow lady, who paid tribute to Timour Beg for this castle, as well as for other land which she held. In this castle there used to be robbers, and men who came out to plunder travellers on the road. Timour Beg marched against this castle, entered it by force, and killed the lord of it, who was the husband of this lady; and he ordered that malefactors should never be allowed to assemble in it again: and, that they might not be able to defend themselves, he caused the doors to be taken away, and ordered that they should never be replaced. He then gave it to this lady. The castle was, therefore, without doors, and was called Egida. This castle was at the foot of the lofty mountain of the ark of Noah; and all these mountain ranges, after leaving the land of Trebizond, were without woods. The lady received the ambassadors very well, and gave them all they required.

¹⁴ Etchmiazin ?

¹⁵ Kur, or Cyrus.

¹⁶ Georgia.

On Saturday, the 18th of May, the road led along the foot of the mountain of the ark of Noah. It was very high, and the summit was covered with snow, and it was without woods; but there was much herbage upon it, and many streams. Near the road there were many edifices, and foundations of houses, of stone; and great quantities of rye was growing, as if it had been sown by man, but it was useless, and did not come to grain; and there was also plenty of water cresses.

At the foot of this mountain they came to the ruins of a town long since deserted, which was a league in length; and the people of the country said that it was the first town that was built in the world, after the flood, and that it was founded by Noah and his sons.

After leaving these ruins, they came to a great plain, in which there were many streams of water, and trees, and rose gardens, and fountains. The mountain had a very sharp peak, which was covered with snow, and they say that the snow never leaves this peak all the year round, either in winter or summer, and this is on account of its great height. On this day the ambassadors took their siesta by a beautiful fountain, near a stone arch; and while they were there, the clouds moved away, and the peak of the mountain appeared, but they suddenly returned, and the people said that it was very seldom visible.

Next to this mountain, there was another, which also had a sharp peak, but not so high as the first, and between these two peaks there is one like a saddle, and they were all very high, and their summits were all covered with snow.

This night they slept at a castle called Vasis-calaside, which was on the top of a high rock, and was wonderfully strong. On another rock there was a large town, joined to the castle by a great wall, with towers; and from this wall, a flight of steps led to the castle gate. The rock was very high, and within the castle, there was a spring of water. This castle was besieged by Timour Beg; and the lord of it agreed to pay tribute, on condition that the troops should not enter it.

On Sunday, the first of June, at the hour of vespers, they came to a castle called Maca, belonging to a catholic christian named Noradin, and the people who lived in it were catholic christians, though they were by birth and language Armenians, and they also knew the Tartar and Persian tongues. In this place there was a monastery of Dominican friars. The castle was in a valley, at the foot of a very high rock, and there was a village on a hill above, and on the top of the hill there was a wall of stone and mortar, with towers, and against the wall there were houses. There was also another wall with towers, and the entrance to it was by a great tower, built to guard it, along steps cut in the rock. Near the second wall there were houses cut in the rock, and in the centre were some towers and houses, where the lord lived, and here all the people in the village kept their provisions. The rock was very high, and rose above the walls and houses; and from the rock, an overhanging part stretches out, which covers the castle, walls, and houses, like the heaven that is above them; so that when it rains, the water does not fall upon the castle, for the rock covers it; and thus the castle cannot either be

attacked from the land, or from the sky. Inside the castle a spring rises up, which supplies all the people, and irrigates many fruit gardens. At the foot of this castle there is a beautiful valley, full of vineyards, and corn fields, through which a river flows.

Timour Beg besieged this castle, and could not take it; but he negotiated with the lord of it, that he should supply him with twenty mounted soldiers, when he called for them. Soon afterwards Timour Beg marched away, with his army; and the lord of the castle sent his son, who was about twenty years old, with three richly caparisoned horses, as presents to Timour Beg, who received them; and the lord's son asked him not to damage the lands belonging to the castle.

Timour replied that the lord of the castle had so fine a son that he must accompany him, and he took him, and afterwards ordered him to live with his grandson, Omar Meerza, who was governor of Persia, and of that land. He still lives with him, and marches in his army; and that governor made the son of this lord turn Moor, by force, and named him Sorgart-mix, and made him one of his guards; but, though he became a Moor by force, he is not one willingly, or by his acts.

The ambassadors were well received by the lord of this castle, and he was much comforted by their being christians, and was very hospitable; and told them that it was about fifteen days since Janza Meerza, the nephew and favourite of Timour Beg, sent to him to say that he wished to use the castle as a deposit for his treasure; and he answered that he could not admit it. The ambassadors remained during the day on which they arrived, and afterwards they saw the son of the lord of the castle, who was in the host of the ruler of Persia, and spoke with him. The lord of the castle also had another son, smaller than this, and he told the ambassadors that that son was learned, and a good grammarian; and that when God willed that they should return, he should go with them to the lord their king, that he might be recommended to the pope, to be made bishop of that land. It is very wonderful that this castle should hold out, amidst so many Moors, with a garrison of christians, and of Armenians turned catholics, which is a very great service to God.

On Monday, the end of June, they departed, and slept in the open air, as they could not reach any village; and on that day they were shown a castle, on the left hand side of the road, called Alinga, which was on a high mountain, and surrounded by a wall with towers; within which there were many vineyards, and fruit gardens, and corn fields, and streams, and pastures for sheep, and on the highest part of the mountain there was, a castle. When Timour Beg conquered the Sultan of Persia, who was called Sultan Ahmed, he besieged this castle of Alinga for three years, and Ahmed fled from it, and went to the Sultan of Babylonia, where he is now.

On Tuesday they slept in a plain, where there were about a hundred tents of Zagatays, who were wandering over that land with their flocks.

On Wednesday they passed the night near some other tents of Zagatays, and in these tents they gave meat and horses to the ambassadors, in the same way as they did in the towns and villages. The road by which they had passed went over hills, in

which there was plenty of water and herbage, and there were many of these Zagatays, who belonged to the host in the city of Khoi.

On Thursday, the 5th of June, at noon, they arrived at a city which is called Khoi, and is situated in a plain, and is surrounded by many fruit gardens and corn fields, and near the city there are plains of very great extent, through which, and through the city, flow many streams of water. The city is surrounded by a brick wall, with towers and barbicans. At the city of Khoi the land of upper Armenia ends, and the land of Persia commences.

DOCUMENTS: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

THEODOR HERZL AND THE ARMENIAN QUESTION ACCORDING TO MARWAN BUHEIRY'S WORK

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.1(15)-157

Abstract

In the article is discussed the monograph "Theodor Herzl and The Armenian Question" written by the Lebanese scholar Marwan Buheiry, specializing in modern and contemporary history of the Middle East, Arab peoples and international policy of Zionism. The study is devoted to the Armenian-Jewish relations in the early stages of political Zionism.

Keywords: Marwan Buheiry, Theodor Herzl, Ottoman Empire, Zionism, Armenian question

Marwan Buheiry

It is known that in 1975 a civil war broke out in Lebanon, which turned that prosperous Middle Eastern country into ruins. The death toll was in the tens of thousands, the war entered every Lebanese home, many fled the country, state institutions ceased to function, and the army disintegrated. Each party or group had its own military force. The war affected all Lebanese communities without exception, including Armenians, people of different religions: Muslims, Sunnis, Shiites, Druze, Christian Maronites, Orthodox, Catholics, all parties and social groups. Although the Armenian community officially declared neutrality, however, twice in 1978-1979 it was attacked by the Maronite military force. There was a serious threat to the existence of the community.

In these conditions, to help the Armenian community the Armenian government sent a delegation of two people to Lebanon, one of whom was the author of these lines: "At that time I was the head of the Department of Arab Countries of the Institute of Oriental Studies of NAS RA. My relations with not only Lebanese scholars but also other state, political, military, religious and public figures played a big role in choosing the candidate. In 1970-1980 I visited Lebanon multiple times. My task was to mobilize their capabilities to ensure the security of the Armenian community, to establish contacts with Lebanese forces that could become an ally of the Armenians. We met with former Prime Minister Rachid Solh, then former Lebanese President Hussein Husseini, Head of the military-political organization "Amal" - Nabih Berri, Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party's influential leader Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Lebanese Sunni and Shiite Muslim communities, leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization Yasser Arafat, Abd Rabbo, Farouk Kaddum, Abdullah Haroun and many other figures.

I must say that I managed to solve the problems I was tasked with. Among the scholars, I had a very close relationship with Professor Darwaza, director of the Palestinian Research Institute. In 1978 I visited the institute headed by him at his invitation. There I had the opportunity to get acquainted with the Institute's publications, including the "Journal of Palestinian Studies", in one of the publications of which I found the above-mentioned work by Buheiry. I inquired about the author and asked if I could meet with him. I was very happy when they said he was in Lebanon. They promised to arrange a meeting with him, which took place at the same institute. He was relatively young, with very cheerful eyes, energetic and talkative. He was an assistant professor at the prestigious American University in Beirut and at the same time a member of the Institute for Palestinian Studies. Buheiry told me that he was a specialist in the contemporary and modern history of the Arab peoples, and simultaneously studied the international history of Zionism. Naturally, I wondered how he had come up with the idea to write a work on Herzl, the founder of Zionism and the Zionist movement in the context of the Armenian question. While studying the international policy of Zionism, I became acquainted with Herzl's "Diary", which discussed in great detail his views on the Armenian question in 1896".

Buheiry's work

"Theodor Herzl and The Armenian Question", a small but substantive in its scientific significance work by Lebanese scholar Marwan Buheiry, specializing in modern and contemporary history of the Middle East, Arab peoples and international policy of Zionism, is devoted to the study of Armenian-Jewish relations in the early stages of political Zionism.

The topic covers a relatively small period, several months of 1896, a few months after the Armenian massacres by Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1894-1896. It is full of important events, political intrigues, secret deals between the leaders of the Zionist movement and the Turkish executioner Sultan Abdul Hamid II, and a great deal of attention was paid to secret diplomacy against the national interests of Armenians.

The coverage of the key issues of the mentioned period reveals new layers in the Armenian question, both in the issue of the Ottoman sultan-padishah and in the Zionist secret diplomacy.

The work shows the attempts of the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire and the Zionist leaders to solve their problems at the expense of the national interests of Armenians.

Marwan Buheiry's work significantly enriches our knowledge about the Armenians and Armenia, Armenian-Jewish relations and the national problems of Armenians, the Ottoman regime - Zulum, as well as the Ottoman Empire and the non-Turkish peoples in that important period.

THE CONSPIRATORY PROGRAMS OF THE ZIONIST SECRET DIPLOMACY IN THE ARMENIAN QUESTION IN 1896

The 90s of the XIX century entered the history of Western Armenians as one of the bloodiest eras.

At the International Congress of Berlin in 1878, after making a decision to implement reforms in six Armenian vilayets - Erzurum, Kharberd, Sivas, Bitlis, Van and Diyarbekir - Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the Zulum regime established by him, instead of carrying out reforms, undertook the following policy: the best solution to the Armenian question is "the physical extermination of Armenians". The bloodthirsty Sultan Abdul Hamid II was a staunch supporter of discriminatory policy. In 1894-1896, massacres of Armenians were organized in Arabkir, Bitlis, Bayburd, Trabzon, Diyarbekir, Kharberd, Sivas, Sasun, Mush, Karin, Yerznka, Bitlis and other places in Western Armenia. The mass extermination of Armenians took place in Caesarea, Constantinople, Urfa and other cities as well. More than 300 thousand Armenians were annihilated. The extermination of Armenians and national minorities - Greeks, Assyrians, Balkan Slavs and others - was an organic component of the domestic state policy of the Ottoman Empire. The Armenian population did not stop fighting against the Ottoman dictatorship for the right to exist, to preserve its national identity, language, culture, traditions and religion. The Armenians regrouped their forces preparing for a new powerful struggle in the second half of 1896.

In those turbulent times, the Jewish journalist Theodor Herzl appeared in the Jewish political arena with his enthusiastic plan to use the Armenian question for creating a Jewish state by getting concessions from the Ottoman sultan in the territory of Palestine, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire.

Theodor Herzl or Benjamin Zeev went through a very controversial path, from advocating Jewish assimilation to being the founder and godfather of political Zionism, and was its undisputed leader from its creation in 1897 until his death in 1904.

His ancestors moved from Belgrade to Budapest, where Theodor was born on May 2, 1860. He was the second child in the family. In 1878, when Herzl turned 18, his family moved to Vienna, where he became a law student at the University of Vienna.

His parents were assimilated, they were German-speaking Jews, and the atmosphere in the family greatly influenced young Theodor. He was not interested in Judaism and grew up as an assimilated young German who rejected religion. Moreover, he mocked and sometimes cynically spoke about Judaism. He viewed the expression of religious sentiments as lack of education. After graduating from the University of Vienna in 1884, Herzl preferred the literary-journalistic genre to law. In Paris he worked for the influential Viennese newspaper "Neue Freie Presse". Paris stunned Herzl with its tumultuous political life. Paris expanded Herzl's horizon. He first encountered anti-Semitism there. He was greatly affected by the 1894 trial of Dreyfus, a French army officer of Jewish descent, accused of treason by the French court. Herzl, being the

Parisian correspondent for the Viennese newspaper, did not miss the court hearings. Thousands of Parisians often shouted “Death to the Jews” during the court hearings. Many of Herzl’s biographers note that the “Dreyfus affair” marked a turning point in his political career. He gave up his idea of Christianizing the Jews, although many Jews and their leaders, especially in Russia, considered that the only way to escape persecution and massacre was to convert to Christianity, preferring the Armenian Apostolic Church and they converted to Christianity through the Armenian rite. It is interesting why they preferred the Armenian Apostolic Church.

The mass conversion of Jews to Christianity with the Armenian rite began in 1910, when the anti-Jewish regime in Russia reached its peak. It is interesting why the Jews in Russia chose to become followers of the Armenian Apostolic Church rather than the Russian Orthodox Church. Answering this question, it should be noted that “when a Jew becomes a follower of the Russian Orthodox Church, they do not cease to be a Jew and do not cease to be called a “Jew”, being subjected to massacres. By becoming a follower of the Armenian Apostolic Church, a believer “Armenian”, they become safe. In this issue a great role was played by the following: after the conversion to Christianity 1700 years ago, humanism and love towards people became important features of the Church. After the conversion to Christianity, love towards people and neighbors penetrated into the body and blood of Armenians”. The Jews were well aware of this humanistic feature of the Armenian Church and they applied to the Russian Empire to allow them to become followers of the Armenian Apostolic Church. This is evidenced by the numerous requests of the Jews. Let us bring an example: in his request Khalevsky, an honorary citizen of Kharkov, expressed a desire to convert to Christianity, to become a follower of the Armenian Apostolic Church, representing the most sympathetic of Christian teachings – “love of the neighbor”. After the Dreyfus affair Herzl came to the conclusion that the only salvation for the Jews was to establish their own state in Palestine. Herzl devoted the rest of his life to the realization of this project. In 1895 he began working on his book “Der Judenstaat” (The Jewish State), which was published in February, 1896. In 1897 the World Zionist Congress (WZC) was formed, and Herzl was elected president of the newly-formed Congress, remaining in that position until the end of his life (1904). His book “The Jewish State” is considered the Bible of Zionism, and Herzl is considered the godfather of Zionism.

But the question arose as to where the Jewish state should be created. Of course, the Jews and Herzl himself would like the return of all the Jews to, as they call it, their historic homeland – Palestine. But the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid refused to give Palestine to the Jews. And Great Britain raised the issue of creating a Jewish state in Africa, in Uganda, but the WZC rejected it. An attempt was made to settle the Jews in Al-Arish in Sinai, but the Egyptian government refused. In 1903 Herzl tried to get the consent of Pope Pius X, to which the Vatican replied: “Since the Jews do not accept the divinity of Christ, the Church cannot issue a declaration in favor of the Jews”. After all this, the Jews and Herzl again opted for Palestine.

Herzl died from a heart attack on July 3, 1904, at the age of 44. He was buried next to his father in Edlach (Austria). His wish was to bury him there until the Jewish people returned to Palestine, and only then to move his body to Jerusalem. Indeed, after the establishment of Israel in 1948 his body was transported from Austria to Israel in 1949 and he was reburied on Mount Herzl.

But in this case, we are interested not in this but in the adventurous policy and the secret diplomacy of early Zionism on the Armenian question, Herzl's attempts to solve the problems of the Jews and their statehood with his Zionist comrades-in-arms and supporters at the expense of the national interests of the Armenians, entering into a deal with bloodthirsty Sultan Abdul Hamid II, executioner of Armenians. Marwan Buheiry devoted a rather interesting and unique scientific work to the study and coverage of this issue. Buheiry is a Lebanese historian who wrote the work "Theodor Herzl and The Armenian Question".

Zionism godfather Herzl's secret plan consisted of three points: first, to establish relations with the leaders of influential Armenian revolutionary committees, to persuade them that the Armenians should stop fighting against the Turkish barbaric yoke, against the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid and should express their readiness to obey him.

Second, the European press in London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna should stop exposing the monstrous struggle of the Turkish authorities against Western Armenians, should soften criticism of the Ottoman sultan and his policy and should change their pro-Armenian orientation and stop supporting Armenians and the Armenian question.

Third, the sultan should in return promise the Armenians his readiness to carry out reforms in the Armenian vilayets.

And most importantly, as Herzl hoped, in exchange for those services of the Zionists the sultan would agree to the establishment of Jewish autonomy and would offer Palestine "on a plate". That would be the price the Armenians had to pay by ending the struggle against the sultan and by declaring their allegiance to executioner Abdul Hamid II.

The astonishing thing with its cruelty and cynicism is that Theodor Herzl and his supporters, being the representatives of a nation that had been persecuted and massacred multiple times over the centuries, were supposed to be sensitive to the suffering of other people. But they were deaf to the misfortune of others.

The program of Herzl and the first Zionists, as Marwan Buheiry shows, completely failed, in which the patriotic position of the Armenians and their leaders played a very important role.

Avetis Nazarbekyan and his wife Maro Nazarbekyan, whom Herzl met in London in 1896, abruptly refused to submit to the Sultan, decided not to come to terms with their grave situation and fight against him and the Turks to the end. The position of the leaders of the Hunchakian party was an expression of the mood of all Armenians. As for the sultan, he refused to accept the plan of Herzl and the Jews to cede Palestine. The

Sultan responded to the offer of the Jews this way: "Let the Jews keep their billions. When my empire is divided, they can get Palestine for free".

Before presenting his plan to the Armenians and the Sultan, Herzl warned the Zionist leaders: "Armenians should not know that our participation is conditioned by the national interest". This warning of the godfather of Zionism to his comrades-in-arms gives us the right to conclude that Herzl's actions were secret and conspiratorial in nature and were directed against the vital interests of Armenians. Herzl was well aware that his secret diplomacy behind the Armenians' back and at the expense of their national interests could be described as villainy and immorality. Why did Herzl resort to secret diplomacy and conspiracy, trying to hide his plan not only from Armenians but also from the international community? Interestingly, there were honest people among the Zionists who criticized Herzl. For example, one of his close associates, Bernard Lazare, resigned from the executive committee of the Zionist movement, thus showing his protest against Herzl for establishing relations with the bloodthirsty Sultan Abdul Hamid. And Herzl's other close friend, the future president of Israel, Chaim Weizmann criticized Eduard Bernstein, a prominent leader of the German Social Democratic Party of Jewish descent for "taking the affairs of Armenians, not Jews, under his sponsorship". Weizmann referred to the fact that Bernstein, like many social democrats in Europe - Germany, France, Russia and other countries, publicly condemned the Ottoman sultan and his policy of "resolving" the Armenian question by physically exterminating Armenians, and was defending them. Weizmann criticized Bernstein, arguing that a Jew should sponsor Jews, not Armenians, even at the cost of the lives of Armenians.

Buheiry's article highlights an interesting idea that deserves special attention: Herzl's attitude to the national liberation movements of the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire in the 20th century. Observing these processes, Herzl tried to play the Armenian question.

Buheiry concludes that "Herzl views the Armenian national movement as a potential rival". This is where the roots of the conflict of interests between Armenians and Jews should be sought. This also partly explains the historical fact that among the Young Turk leaders, who in 1915 planned and carried out the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire, there were Jews, the so-called Donmehs. The latter officially renounced Judaism and converted to Islam. Many found the sincerity of the Donmeh Jews doubtful, suspecting that they secretly remained loyal to Judaism and served world Zionism. The Young Turk Minister of Finance, Javid, was of Jewish descent, and the Minister of Enlightenment (Education), Nazim was a Donmeh Jew. Nazim played a special role in organizing the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire in 1915. He was not only a minister of the Ottoman Empire, but also a theorist of the Young Turk Party, who theoretically substantiated the need for the Armenian Genocide.

The Ottoman author Mevlan Zade Rifat included in his book Nazim's speech at one of the secret Young Turk sittings, during which a final decision was made on the Armenian Genocide. Here is a part of that speech: "The Armenian people need to be

completely annihilated so that no Armenian remains in our country, so that even that name is not remembered. Now a war is waging and there will be no other such convenient occasion. The interference of the great powers and the loud protests of the world press will go unnoticed, and if they find out, they will face the fact that it has happened and thus the issue will be resolved. This time a complete annihilation of Armenians must be carried out, everyone must be exterminated, till the last person... I want the Turks to live on this land, only the Turks. Let all the non-Turkish elements get lost, regardless of their nationality or religion”.

Apparently, the refusal of the Israeli government to recognize the Armenian Genocide can be explained by the factor of rivalry. And the Jewish community in the United States supports Turkey and opposes the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

The Zionist leadership of the Herzl era had a negative, unfriendly attitude not only towards the Armenian national movement but also towards the national movements of other peoples of the Ottoman Empire. This is evidenced by the facts mentioned in Buheiry's work.

In 1887, during the Greek-Turkish war, Herzl and his supporters declared their pro-Turkish position, set up a fund to help Turkey, enlisted volunteers, particularly doctors who acted on behalf of Turkey. And as Buheiry points out, in this case also rivalry played a role - between the Jews and the Greeks.

The Zionist leaders had negative attitude towards the Arab national movement, which reached its peak in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The discussion of this issue undoubtedly increased the national value of the Arab author.

Buheiry's work, as mentioned, is based on sources, where a special place is occupied by Herzl's "Diary", published openly and available in many libraries around the world. Buheiry's main conclusions are based on his "Diary", especially its first and fourth volumes.

Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan

ARMENOLOGICAL HERITAGE



M. Abeghyan was one of the classics of Armenian philology. His fundamental studies are devoted to Armenian literature, language, lexicography and oral tradition.

The small passage from his study first published in German in 1899 (*Der armenische Volksglaube*, Leipzig; see Manuk Abeghyan, *Studies*. Vol.I, Yerevan, 1966, pp.29-32 [in Armenian]) deals with the religious beliefs of ancient Armenia.

Primary beliefs

The Iranian influence was solid also in the sphere of religious beliefs and cult. The names of some Armenian gods bear Iranian names, such as Aramazd, Anahit, Vahagn, Mihr, Tir. From Persians had passed to Armenians also some beliefs in regard to good and evil spirits, such as *hreshtak*, *dev*, *vishap*, *shahapet*, *parik*, etc.¹

In the sphere of religion also the Assyrians also had an impact. Their deities Barshamin, Nane, Astghik were borrowed by Armenians which were worshiped mainly in the south-western part of Armenia. The word *qurm* is of Syriac origin.

But that pantheon, the place of gods, is a result of comparatively later development. Primarily among Armenians, like in all patriarchal tribal societies, existed dark ideas in regard to the outer world and the nature of a man. In that primary worldview and religion we first of all find the belief of soul, a naïve understanding of a spirit who governs the body. With this is closely related animism which attributes a human psychology to all things and natural phenomena, i.e. people believe that they had soul and each one appears by its separate soul. Later, after the organization of tribal society with this belief was connected the cult of nature, deification of those forces on which well-being of the people depends. The deities of the sun, thunder and others were worshipped in the form of gifts, sacrifices, and rituals. Among them special place was given to the cult of ancestors – chieftains of the tribe, community, patriarch, one form of which was totemism, the worship of a totem (some sacred item, for example, an animal – bear, wolf, snake, or a plant, natural phenomena – wind, thunder etc., whom the worshipers regard as their ancestors and bear its name). Sometimes with the worship of a totem was connected also the cult of zoomorphic spirits and deities.

Naturally, this primary religion, like the tribal everyday life, did not cease to exist at once, some of its peculiarities continue to exist for a long time. Their traces are found not only during the feudal society, in our legends and beliefs, but were preserved and came until the XIX century and are visible even in the current folk beliefs and legends, and also in everyday life.

The relics of that ancient period in the XIX century were the size and structure of the Armenian patriarchal family, the patriarch's and also the grandmother's power over

¹ M.Abeghyan, *Der armenische Volksglaube*, Leipzig, 1899.

other members of the family, that of the grandmother – during the lifetime of the father, especially over the wives and children, kidnapping of women and their purchasing, and, finally, the blood revenge which was performed towards the killer or his relatives by the relatives of the murdered. Thus, the whole patriarchal family was responsible for the murder committed by its member. Indeed, in the remote past the peculiarities of tribal life were more strongly reflected. The patriarch or the head of the family in the II century AD, as it is seen, still experienced unlimited authority over the other members of the family. In Armenia in that period it was possible to kill the wife, children and childless brother and sister without responsibility.² In that period definitely used to exist also other murders, as it is told by Movses Khorenatsi in connection with the funeral of epic Artashes: "... many multitudes died at the death of Artashes, his beloved wives and concubines and faithful servants .. Around the tomb were willing deaths".

The relics of ancient legends and cults³ had been preserved until the late XIX century, and, indeed, until today. Like among the primitive tribes, many of rural Armenians even today believe that the spirit is a wind, breath (and that the word soul-spirit means also breath). They think that man's soul could be separated from the body and travel, "appear as a vision", and see many things. Supposedly, a special role could perform ghosts – souls of the deceased. Allegedly, they could take different visible forms – of people, animals, and birds. And that they harmed people, bring diseases, etc.

In our folk-beliefs even clearly appears a second stage of the development of ghosts, according to which the souls of the deceased turned into spirits who ruled over the nature. At that period along with the perception that the spirits and souls are the breath or wind appears the second one, that is the spirits are imagined as a light ("*lusahog*", "let the light become soul"), and the spirits as *hreghen* ("*hreghen* girl", "*hreghen* woman"). Besides that, souls and spirits are divided into two groups – luminous, kind souls, and black, evil souls, bright *hreghen* spirits and black smoke-like evil spirits. And also among us existed the old belief that after the death souls enter the underworld and face trial before the deceased which took place with every sunrise. Similarly also many other relics of ancient beliefs.

With the beliefs mentioned above is closely related the cult of the deceased which was performed during the whole year, beginning immediately after the death, aimed at the "illuminating" their souls. The souls of patriarchs-ancestors were widely worshipped. They believe that the souls of such deceased people took care of their descendants; allegedly, they were coming and walk around the house, speak to them and give advice. Like *fravashis* – ghosts among ancient Iranians, the souls of the deceased were worshiped during some of their festivals, among Armenians the worship of the deceased was performed five times yearly, during five great festivals. They believe that

² Eusebius, Praeparation evangelica, VI, 10. Par.12. Eusebius of Caesarea took that information, and that of the blood revenge from Syrian Bardatsan, the II century AD author. See G.Khalatyan, Essays of the history of Armenia, Moscow, 1910, p.327 (in Russian).

³ M.Abeghyan, Der armenische Volksglaube, Leipzig, S.8-29.

after passing five celebrations the souls return from the underworld, walk along their graves or houses, visit their descendants. So, they should perform “memory of the dead” with incense and candle. Allegedly, they remain in the world and at the third day, after performing the “memory”, they return to their place in the heaven.

And, finally, among the relics of the beliefs it is important to recall the next. Like *fravashis* of ancient Iranians, Armenians also the souls of the deceased and their cult was placed in close connection with the stars. They used to believe and until now the tellers of the “Daredevils of Sassun” believe that every man has its own star which eclipses when he appears in danger. “Bright stars which never fell belong to fair people who dwell on them”. Like *fravashis* among Iranians were identified with stars and were understood as good spirits, the Armenians also regard stars as tutelary spirits and taken as equal to tutelary angels. They even swear by the stars, like by the graves of their fathers (“On those big and small stars”, “My father’s grave is witness”), and even pray the stars: *Dzet-Pet* (big and small) stars, help and protect us, along with the angels Gabriel, Miqayel protect from troubles, evil people, evil hour.⁴

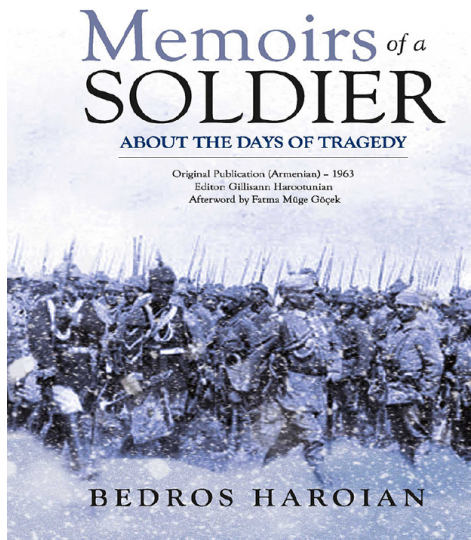
All these are remains of primitive beliefs and the worship of ancestors, indeed not completely, which originate from the ancient times as relics.

The relics of that folklore are sorcery prayers, many superstitious stories that we find in the History of Armenia of Movses Khorenatsi. These are the stories about Hayk, Ara the Handsome, Vahagn and others, and that of the *vishaps* of Vipasanq. Their study is impossible to carry without the investigation of corresponding spirits, deities or heroes.

⁴ G.Srvandztyants, *Manana*, Constantinople, 1876, p.308 (“Prayer of the old women of Van”).

BOOK REVIEWS

**MEMOIRS OF A SOLDIER ABOUT THE DAYS OF TRAGEDY,
Fresno/California, 2021: Tadem press, 544 p., 8 maps, 32 photos**



The newly established "Tadem press" publishing house, USA, took a good and valuable initiative. Under the supervision of Gillisann Harootunian, PhD, Executive Director of University Initiatives, California State University (Fresno) it should try to fill the gap in primary sources published in English regarding the Armenian genocide. The publishing house introduces the English translation of the Memoirs of the military man Bedros Haroian ("Memoirs of a soldier about the Days of Tragedy"), born in the village of Datem, Kharberd (Western Armenia). It is worth to mention that the Armenian variant of the Memoirs has been published in Boston by "Hayreniq" publishing house in 1963.

Bedros Haroian was born in the mid-1890s. His childhood and youth he spent in his village. During World war I he was a soldier in the Turkish army, after he joined the Russian army, in 1919-1921 participated in the defence of Cilicia as Pentecostal. He was a skillful soldier, helpful and honest person.¹

At the beginning of the Memoirs B.Haroian speaks about his village Datem with delight, describing in beautiful colors its wonderful countryside. He confesses that for the sake of this paradise it is worth to become a soldier and defend it.² The next important episode in the Memoirs of Haroian is the courage of the Armenian priest (Ter Aharon) that he showed against the Turks. Can't stand anymore anti-Armenian riots the Armenian priest began to fight against them.³ Here it is clearly visible the dedication of the Armenian priest to his people, country and church.

Born and grown up in this environment Bedros could not be indifferent to the riots of the Turks against his people. Still a young man along with some of his friends he joined the Armenian revolutionary party (ARF). The Datem group of ARF, according to him, was the main self defense organization of Datem.⁴

At the beginning of 1900s among the people of Datem was widely practiced emigration to the USA. After saving some money they used to return to their native village in order to supply their families with means of subsistence. Young Bedros also went to the USA. Here, in 1911, learning about the Iranian revolution and the

¹ See «Hayreniq», Boston, July 2, 1965.

² Haroian Bedros, Memoirs of a soldier about the Days of Tragedy, Fresno, Tadem Press, 2021, p. 1-10.

³ Ibid, p. 15-16.

⁴ Ibid, p. 38-51.

participation of Armenians, he decided to return. But due to some circumstances, he was forced to go to Datem.

From here begins the difficult military life of this honest Armenian full of struggle and dedication. After reaching the village he became the target of his Turkish neighbors.⁵

Soon begins World War I. The Ottoman government declared total conscription and in the summer of 1914 he joined the Turkish army.⁶ “I am not afraid of going to war,” I said calmly. “I will receive a good military education and gain experience in conducting battles. This will be helpful for me in the future. I will use the knowledge for my nation.”). In this part of the Memoirs Haroian actually proves that the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire were loyal to the military laws of the country, which unfortunately has not been rated by the Turks.

B.Haroian brings interesting information regarding the battle of Sarıkamış (late 1914 - early 1915), the retreat of the Turkish army and how he succeeded not to appear in captivity.⁷ Then took place the retreat of the Turkish army. It was here that the Armenian soldier of the Ottoman army became eyewitness to numerous episodes of Turkish ferocities in Western Armenia.

The policy of genocide was already begun. Haroian describes terrible scenes of genocide in Karin (Erzurum). He writes how the Armenian soldiers were withdrawn from the army and sent to Derjan, Erznka to be slaughtered.⁸

The author of the Memoirs appeared in one of such groups. On the way to the destination that group reached Kharberd. Since his native Datem was close to Kharberd, Bedros Haroian had succeeded to escape and by night reached the village where he saw their house destroyed by the Kurdish neighbor.⁹

The Memoirs contains no less interesting and valuable episode which describes the revolt of the Dersim Kurds against the Turks in 1915.¹⁰ Their revolt against the Ottoman government was not of considerable scales, but this very fact is worth to mention.

In the next part of the Memoirs Bedros Haroian speaks about his joining the Russian army in 1917. Here he took important notes in regard to the worrying retreat of the Russian army after Bolsheviks came to power in Russia.¹¹ It is worth to mention his notes regarding the attempt made by the Dersim Kurds to join general Andranik in the February 1918.¹² The author feels especially hard the retreat of Armenian detachments from Karin (Erzurum) which, as it is well known, was fatal for Armenia.

⁵ Ibid, p. 87-95.

⁶ Ibid, p. 98.

⁷ Ibid, p. 128-146.

⁸ Ibid, p. 148-151.

⁹ Ibid, p. 171-175.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 187-197.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 207.

¹² Ibid, p. 214-215.

At the end of the Memoirs Bedros Haroian mentions his participation in the 1919-1921 self defense of Armenians in Cilicia. In autumn 1918 he went to Constantinople and in 1919 to Cilicia.¹³ In Cilicia Bedros Haroian came to a conclusion that despite the presence of the French army the security of local Armenian population could be reached only by means of the Armenian military. In Cilicia the French authorities were mostly indifferent toward the Turkish riots, sometimes even atrocities.¹⁴ In this part of the Memoirs we see many episodes of heroic self defense, indifference of the French and betrayal in different places – Incirlik, Sheikh Murad, etc.¹⁵

The English version of B.Haroian's Memoirs, in contrast to the Armenian edition, is thoroughly worked up; it is divided into chapters and subtitles, were added also notes and maps. The book is supplied with the "Preface" written by Gillisann Harootunian, and "Afterword" by Fatma Müge Göcek, PhD, Professor, Sociology and Women's Studies, University of Michigan.

The English translation of B.Haroian's Memoirs is an extremely valuable book which offers additional information and undeniable facts proving the genocide of Western Armenians.

We wish success to the publishing house Tadem Press and personally to Gillisann Harootunian for this important undertaking.

Khachatur Stepanyan
Doctor in History, Professor

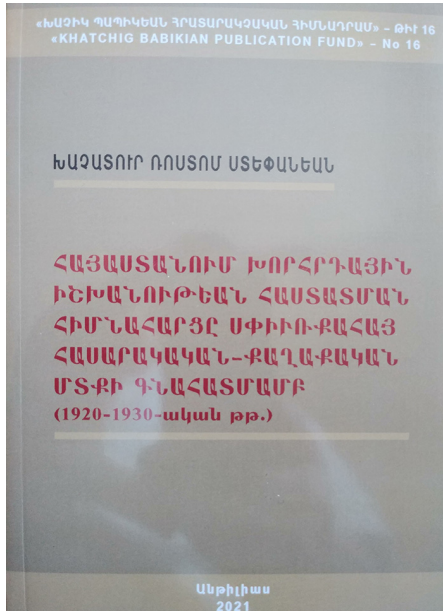
Translated from the Armenian by Aram Kosyan

¹³ Ibid, p. 230.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 231-232.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 233-312.

**KHACHATUR ROSTOM STEPANYAN, “THE PROBLEM OF ESTABLISHING
SOVIET POWER IN ARMENIA ACCORDING TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE
SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF THE ARMENIAN DIASPORA
(1920-1930S)”, ANTELIAS, 2021, 420 PAGES.**



One of the most controversial issues in the Armenian history of the 20th century is the Sovietization of Armenia. It is self-evident how this historical event was evaluated and glorified in the Soviet country during its 70 years of existence. The issue of Sovietization was also addressed by the Diasporan historiographer and memorialist authors, the press, the wider public and political circles, whose comments and assessments were multi-layered and ambiguous depending on their party, ideological, fragmentary approaches and preferences.

Nevertheless, the events of the end of November and the beginning of December, 1920, the 1921 February uprising and the issue of Armenia's independence were assessed by the wider public and political circles and press of the Armenian Diaspora in a quite interesting, free and comprehensive way. If we try to generalize the assessments of the public and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora regarding the establishment of Soviet power in Armenia, they can be divided into two large groups. One group, represented by the Dashnaktsutyun and their supporters, assessed the Sovietization of Armenia mainly negatively. The other group - the Democratic Liberal Party (Ramgavar), the Hunchakian Party and the Armenian Communists abroad, not only welcomed the coming of the Bolsheviks to power in Armenia, but also insulted their political opponent, the Dashnaktsutyun.

Khachatur Stepanyan's monograph is dedicated to the scientific study of this multifaceted issue. The issues examined by the author were partially discussed by Soviet-Armenian historiography. Some issues were also addressed in the post-Soviet period. However, so far there has been no complete and generalized study of the issue. We think that Khachatur Stepanyan's research is the first successful attempt in this respect and it fills the gap in our historiography.

Besides the scientific interest, the work has practical application as well – the study of the processes taking place within the Armenian Diaspora, especially if they are directly related to the motherland. The use of the potential of the Diaspora is of great importance in the difficult task of strengthening the Republic of Armenia. This potential implies not only material support, but also intellectual capacity. The study of the social and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora is very topical from this point of view.

The principle of discussion of the issue adopted by the author should be considered acceptable and appreciable. In addressing each issue, the author first briefly presents the issue, then in a detailed and regulated manner he refers to the comments and viewpoints of various public circles of the Armenian Diaspora - representatives of Armenian parties in the Diaspora, the press, memorialists and respected intellectuals. The author has made a successful attempt to classify the vast amount of available materials.

The author not only demonstrates the dichotomy of the social and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora regarding the issue of Sovietization of Armenia, but also reveals a number of deep reasons for the existing contradiction.

The monograph, written on the basis of rich materials, most of which are circulated in scientific research for the first time, consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusions and a list of sources and literature used.

In the first chapter of the work, Kh. Stepanyan demonstrates the clarifications of the Armenian political emigrants in the Diaspora about the peaceful Sovietization of Armenia. The author rightly notes that the main concern of the leaders of the first Republic of Armenia was to keep the country away from a new war. At the same time, preserving the independence was considered a priority, but the Bolsheviks did not keep their promise in regard to it. The author of the monograph also refers to the views of opposing circles, which unquestionably assessed the Sovietization of Armenia positively. Kh. Stepanyan has strong reservations about the principle of repeating the official Soviet position by the Ramgavar, Hunchakian and Communist circles of the Diaspora. If necessary, the figures of the Dashnaktsutyun also become the target of the author's criticism. For example, A. Khatisyan's and S. Vratsyan's explanations regarding the signing of the Treaty of Alexandropol are not a sufficient justification for the author.

From the point of view of a significant scientific novelty the second chapter of the monograph is no less valuable. Here the author analyzes the assessments of the social and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora regarding the 1921 February uprising. Numerous episodes of the reckless policy pursued by the Armenian Revolutionary Committee are revealed. According to the social and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora, the implementation of "military communism" and the use of violence against Armenian officers and intellectuals were completely baseless. Kh. Stepanyan also cites the social and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora who gave other reasons for the uprising, such as the violation of the idea of independence and national values, the special persecution of Western Armenians, etc. At the same time, the author refers with reservations to the attempts of the Dashnaktsutyun figures to present the failures of the foreign policy of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee as a reason for the uprising. Kh. Stepanyan rightly thinks that it was practically impossible to settle the border and territorial issues with the neighbors in a very short period of time.

Analyzing the discussions in the Diaspora regarding the consequences of the February uprising, the author comes to a number of valuable conclusions. First of all,

the salvation of the Armenian intelligentsia from the Bolshevik carnage is emphasized. It is also interesting to note the author's conviction that the February uprising was a successful experimentation of the idea of independence. According to the social and political thought of the Armenian Diaspora, the economic violence of the Bolsheviks was reduced as a result of the February uprising.

In his work the author also addresses the negative consequences of the uprising. At the end of this chapter, the author presents the views of a number of figures in the Diaspora on the Sovietization of Zangezur. According to them, due to the organization of Zangezur's self-defense and opposing its Sovietization it was possible to guarantee the region's inclusion in Soviet Armenia.

In the last chapter of the work, taking into account the actual loss of independence of Soviet Armenia, the author considers it necessary to properly address the viewpoints on the issue in the Diaspora. The position of the Dashnaktsutyun, which valued the idea of Armenia's independence, is emphasized here. At the same time, the author criticizes the anti-independence approaches of the Ramgavars, Hunchakians and Communists.

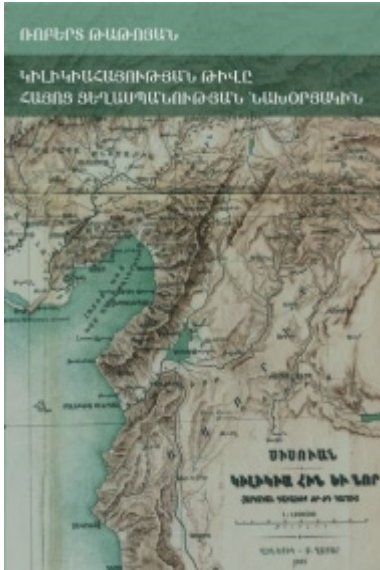
The author, in fact, fulfilled his task and presented a successful study with an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the events of the difficult period of the Armenian history - 1920-1921. With its topic and content it is the first of its kind in our historiography.

Amatuni Virabyan

Doctor in History

Translated from the Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan

NEW BOOKS



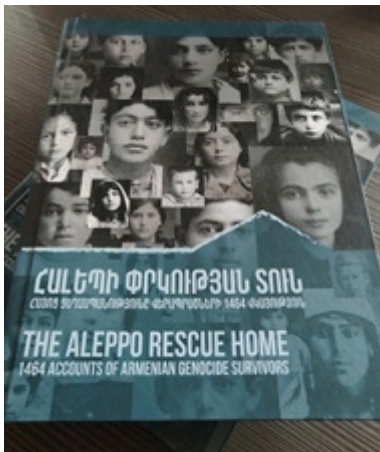
THE NUMBER OF CILICIAN ARMENIANS ON THE EVE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Robert Tatoyan

AGMI Publishing House, Yerevan, 2021, 240 p. + map

The book is dedicated to the study of the number of Armenians living in Cilicia before the Armenian Genocide.

In this work, calculations are provided about the number of Cilician Armenians on the eve of the Armenian Genocide, based on a comparative analysis of the main Ottoman (Turkish), Armenian and western primary, as well as auxiliary statistical sources.



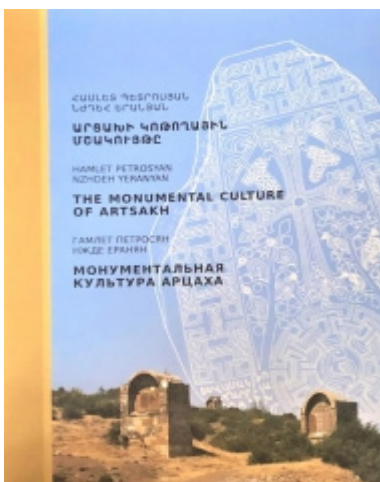
THE ALEPPO RESCUE HOME: 1464 ACCOUNTS OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE SURVIVORS

Edita Gzoyan

AGMI Publishing House, Yerevan, 2022, 832 p.

This book studies the issue of forcible child transfer and forced marriages during the Armenian Genocide, considering it as a structural element of the Ottoman genocidal policy. This book presents the original surveys of

1464 Armenian Genocide survivors who were rescued and sheltered in the Aleppo Rescue Home by the League of Nations Commissioner, Danish missionary Karen Jeppe. Those surveys were brought from the League of Nations Archives (Geneva, Switzerland) and are presented in the English originals with Armenian translations, with the verified geographical locations and the photographs of the survivors. The book presentation is being organized in the frames of the International Day for Protection of Children.



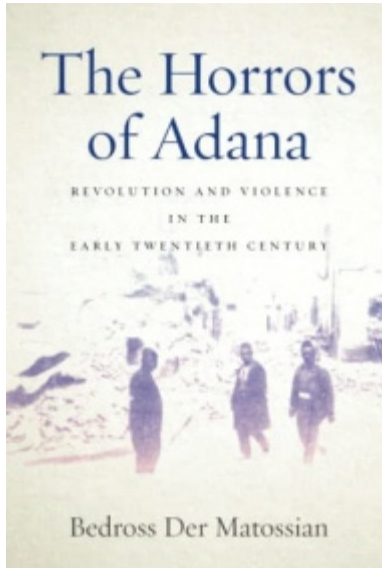
THE MONUMENTAL CULTURE OF ARTSAKH

Hamlet Petrosyan, Nzhdeh Yeranyan

2022, 232 p., 60 pen paintings, 3 maps, 300 photos, Yerevan

The book presents the monumental culture of Artsakh, including old, antique, early Christian monuments, *khachkars* and tombstones, by historical source study, architectural, pictorial and semantic examination. The

problems of ethno-religious affiliation of these monuments are explained and reasoned in detail. The Azerbaijani falsifications on the monumental culture of Artsakh are presented and denied by the examination of documentary evidence. The research has been published with the support of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

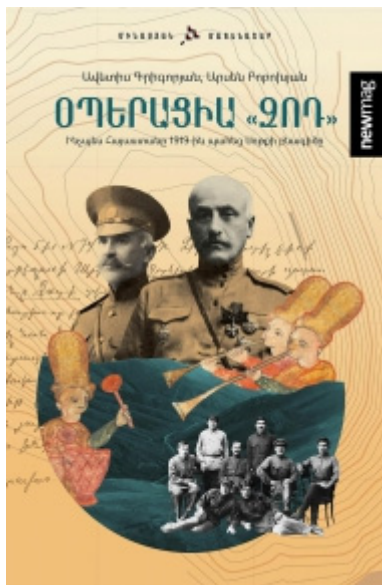


THE HORRORS OF ADANA: REVOLUTION AND VIOLENCE IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Bedross Der Matossian

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022, 360 p.

The book examines the 1909 twin massacres that shook the province of Adana, located in the southern Anatolian region of modern-day Turkey, killing more than 20,000 Armenians and 2,000 Muslims. The Horrors of Adana offers one of the first close examinations of these events, analyzing sociopolitical and economic transformations that culminated in a cataclysm of violence. Drawing on primary sources in a dozen languages, this book is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the rumors and emotions, public spheres and humanitarian interventions that together informed this complex event. Ultimately, through consideration of the Adana Massacres in micro-historical detail, “The Horrors of Adana” presents an important macrocosmic understanding of ethnic violence, illuminating how and why ordinary people can become perpetrators.



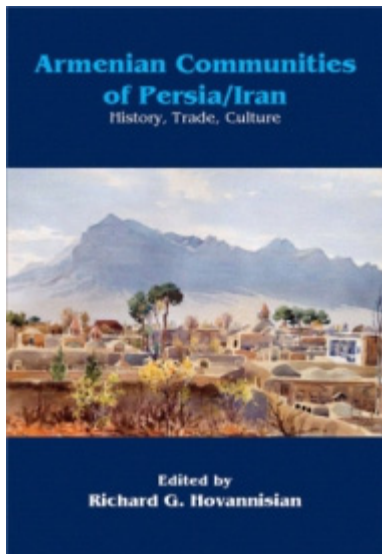
OPERATION «ZOD»

Avetis Grigoryan, Arsen Bobokhyan

Yerevan: Newmag, 2022, 404 p.

Azerbaijan doesn't hide its territorial ambitions towards the border regions of Armenia. This work shows that Baku's aspirations are not new, they have at least 100 years of history. In 1919, the Tatar population of the Sotk region, at the instigation of Azerbaijan, rebelled against the Armenian government and announced its that it is joining Azerbaijan. And only due to «Zod» operation this important region remains part of Armenia. Operation Zod is almost unknown to the general public, while it is one of the brightest pages in the history of the last century of Armenia. For the first time and on the basis of new factual data, the

authors of the book present the causes, chronology and consequences of the Armenian-Tatar clashes in the Lake Sevan region.

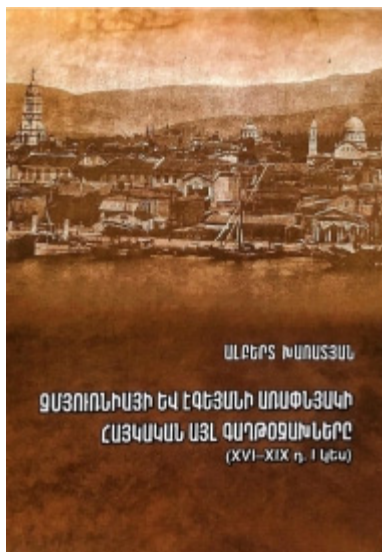


ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES OF PERSIA / IRAN: HISTORY, TRADE, CULTURE

Richard G. Hovannisian

Santa Ana: Mazda Publishers, 2021, 672 p.

Armenian-Iranian interactions date back to the depths of antiquity. At times, Armenia and Iran were friends and allies, even sharing common dynasties, and at other times fierce and unrelenting adversaries. Whatever their political relations may have been, their commonalities in pre-Christian and pre-Islamic social structures and cultural attributes, including linguistic affiliation, are striking. The boundaries between the Iranian and Armenian worlds were porous in many ways. The Armenian presence in Iran is attested from the Achaemenid period to the present. Although the Armenian community of Iran has decreased significantly since the nineteenth century, it still constitutes the most significant Christian element in Iran, finding means to preserve in large measure its religion, language, and traditions and to navigate between Armenian and Iranian identities. This volume of twenty-three chapters written by specialists in the field spans the centuries from antiquity to the present. It is based on two conferences held at UCLA in the series titled "Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces"



ARMENIAN COLONIES OF SMYRNA AND THE COAST OF THE AEGEAN SEA (16th - first half of the 19th century)

Albert Kharatyan

*Doctor in History, Corresponding Member of NAS
RA Institute of History, NAS RA*

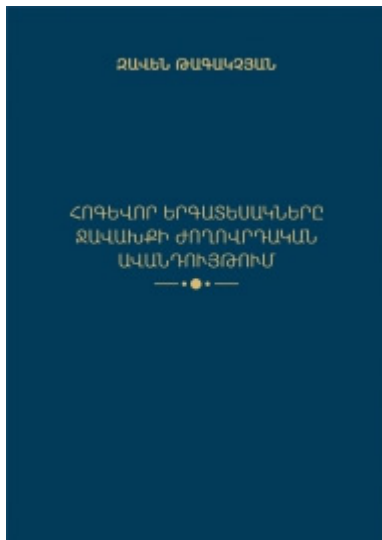
Yerevan: Gitutyun, 2022, 534 p.

The Armenian communities in Smyrna and western Asia Minor emerged in the VI-VII centuries are among the oldest ones of the Armenian communities. Their history which dates back to Byzantine period lasted in the following centuries.

The communities of Smyrna, Aydin, Manisa, Eodemish, Kesab, Akhisar, Gnk, Bergama, Krkaghach, Denizli, Nazili, etc., survived until September 1922 and as the last

act of the Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Turkey were destroyed by the Kemalists who invaded the region.

The community of Smyrna in particular has made a tremendous contribution to the development of Armenian culture (preservation of national church traditions, typography, pedagogy, periodical press, translation of literature, development of modern philosophical thought, etc.).

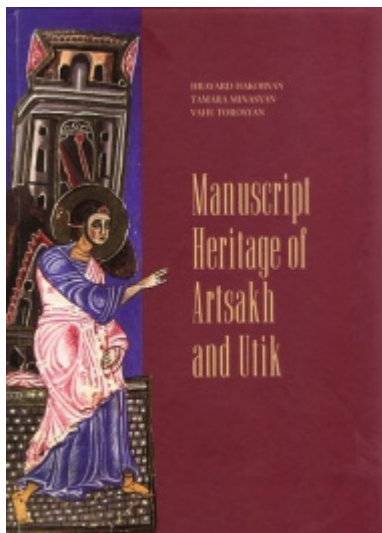


THE TYPES OF ARMENIAN SACRED SONG IN THE FOLK TRADITION OF JAVAKHQ

Zaven Tagakchyan

Yerevan: Gitutyun, 2022, 338 p.

The study presents for the first time the musicological examination of the folk songs kept in the library of the Institute of Art, National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Armenia after Aram Kocharyan and the scientific expedition recordings of the popular versions of the songs played in different church ceremonies (1927-1999).



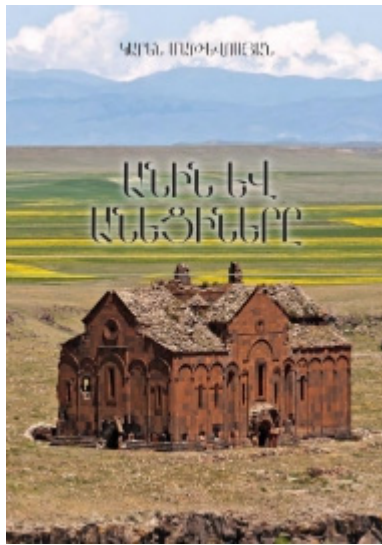
MANUSCRIPT HERITAGE OF ARTSAKH AND UTIK

**Hravard Hakobyan, Tamara Minasyan,
Vahe Torosyan**

Yerevan: Matenadaran, 2022, 334 p.

The new publication is dedicated to the history and manuscript heritage of the two historical provinces of Armenia. The first chapter of the book provides brief review of the history of Artsakh and Utik from ancient times to the 19th century. The second chapter gives detailed information on the scriptoria of Artsakh and Utik which functioned adjacent to almost all large monasteries. Manuscripts produced from the 13th to the 18th centuries have come down to us. The large part of the survived manuscripts is kept at the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Manuscripts (Matenadaran), and the others are stored in different libraries and depositories around the world, as well as in private collections. The third chapter of the book is dedicated to the miniature painting of these manuscripts, giving a general idea on the miniature school and artistic traditions of Artsakh and its neighboring provinces. More than hundred images of the

illuminated manuscripts are included in the book-album, aimed at propagating the rich and, at the same time, little known written culture of Artsakh and Utik.



ANI AND ITS CITIZENS

Karen Matevosyan

Yerevan: Matenadaran, 2021, 464 p.

In the history of medieval Armenia Ani played an extremely important role not only as the political and spiritual center of the country but also a first-class place for the development of urban life, economy, crafts and trade, culture and art. The book consists of two parts: the first is devoted to the history of the city, culture, inclusion of the city, monasteries and fortresses adjacent to Ani. The second part is dedicated to Ani - from members of the royal family and aristocratic tribes to a Big City. In 2016 Ani was included in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List, which increased interest in it. Therefore, a new study and presentation of the historical, cultural, and civilizational role of Ani is very important.

CLASSICS OF ARMENOLOGY

BORIS BORIS PIOTROWSKI

(1908-1990)



B. B. Piotrovski was a prominent Soviet archaeologist whose studies were devoted to the ancient Near Eastern and other archaeological cultures on the territory of the USSR. Among his scholarly interests was also the archaeology and history of the Armenian Highland (Urartu).

B.Piotrovski was born in Saint-Petersburg in February 14, 1908 to the family of teachers. In 1925 he entered the department of linguistics and material culture of the Leningrad state university where he studied ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian archaeology. Among his teachers were well known Soviet archaeologists - V.Struve, N.Flitner, A.Miller, etc.

B.Piotrovski held different high offices in the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and Hermitage in Leningrad. In 1953-1964 he was the head of Leningrad branch of the Institute of Archaeology, director of Hermitage since 1964 (until his death in 1990), from 1966 Head of the Department of Ancient Orient, University of Leningrad, and also Academician-secretary of the Department of History, Soviet Academy of sciences (1982-1984).

The impact of B.Piotrovski is especially great in the organization of archaeological expeditions into different republics of the USSR and Egypt (Crimea - 1931, Northern Caucasus - 1933, 1936, Volga region - 1934, Armenia and Georgia - 1935, Aswan in Egypt - 1961-1963).

Since 1930 B.Piotrovski undertook excavations of Cyclopean fortresses and Urartian sites in different regions of Armenia (Tsovinar, Redkin lager, Kirovakan, Aygevan etc.). Under his leadership had worked the Karmir blur permanent archaeological expedition (in the area of Yerevan).

B.Piotrovski had published over 150 studies, among which should be mentioned those dealing with the material culture of Armenia of the I millennium BC. Thanks to the Karmir blur expedition in Armenia came into existence solid archaeological school. Many of those who had participated in the expedition headed by B.Piotrovski later became leaders of Armenian archaeology (H.Martirosyan, S.Yesayan, G.Tiratsyan, G.Areshyan and others).

For his highly valuable impact into Soviet archaeology B.Piotrovski received numerous state awards. For the same purposes he was highly estimated also in abroad. B.Piotrovski was nominated by different European and other academies and universities (honorary doctor of the University of Delhi [India], corresponding member of the British academy, German archaeological association, Karlov university of Prague

[Chechoslovakia], egyptological institute of the university of Cairo [Egypt], and the Prehistoric association of Florence [Italy] etc.).

SELECTED STUDIES OF BORIS PIOTROVSKI

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GEVORG ARTASHES TIRATSYAN

(1926-1993)



G.Tiratsyan was a prominent Armenian archaeologist and historian, one of the leaders of Armenian archaeological schools.

G.Tiratsyan was born in September 18, 1926, in Akkerman, Romania in the family of the teacher and lexicographer Artashes Tiratsyan. In 1945 he entered the Department of History of the University of Bucharest. After repatriation in 1948 he became student of the Department of History, Yerevan state university. After graduating the university in 1952 G.Tiratsyan became postgraduate student of the Academy of sciences.

In 1957 he defended his PhD dissertation ("Material culture of Armenia in the first centuries of the I millennium BC") and entered first the Institute of History, later the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Armenian Academy of sciences where he worked until his tragic death in 1993. In 1986 G.Tiratsyan defended his Habilitation dissertation ("Armenia in the VI century BC - III century AD"). During 1974-1980 he held the position of the Archaeology of Ancient Armenia, then Deputy-director of the Institute in 1981-1988, and Director in 1988-1993.

The impact of G.Tiratsyan in the archaeology of Armenia could not be overestimated. He participated in various archaeological expeditions in different regions of Armenia (Karmir blur, Garni, Hatsavan, Armavir). From 1970 until his death G.Tiratsyan was the director of the Armavir archaeological expedition. He is the author of about 40 studies dealing with the excavated materials from Armavir.

G.Tiratsyan was fluent in many European languages (German, English, French, Romanian, Italian, Russian) that helped him in his highly valuable studies. His studies are devoted to different spheres of the history and material culture of ancient Armenia - the problem of Urartu-Armenia, Urartian civilization and Achemenid Iran, cities and their planning in ancient Armenia, border-stones of the Artaxiad period and the decipherment of Aramaic inscriptions, early medieval culture of Armenia etc.

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