

FUNDAMENTAL ARMENOLOGY

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electronic journal

ISSUE 1 (21) 2025

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National Academy
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HISTORY

COLIN RENFREW'S STATE-FORMATION CONCEPTS AND THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS OF THE ARMENIAN HIGHLAND IN THE 2nd MILLENNIUM BCE

Mariam Khanzadyan*

Abstract

The British archaeologist and historian Colin Renfrew, in the late 20th century, proposed the concepts of “multiplier effect” and “peer polity interaction” to understand the mechanisms of early state formation. He believed that close interaction among peer polities could act as a catalyst for the establishment of states, citing the formation of Greek poleis as an example. We propose applying this theory as a working hypothesis to the political formations of the Armenian Highland in the 2nd millennium BCE, specifically concerning the western and northeastern parts of the Armenian Highland. These areas were divided among numerous small polities of almost equal influence, whose competition and interaction could have had a positive impact on the subsequent emergence of more organized polities in those regions, such as Išua and the Etiuni confederation.

Keywords: early state, Colin Renfrew, concept of peer polity interaction, Armenian Highland, formation of states.

Colin Renfrew, Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn, a titan of global archaeology who passed away in 2024 at the age of 87¹, delved into the questions of state formation within his rich historical legacy, proposing two state-building concepts: the multiplier effect and the concept of peer polity interaction.

Colin Renfrew's “Multiplier Effect”

The first concept is presented in his 1972 work, *“The Emergence of Civilisation: The Cyclades and the Aegean in The Third Millennium BC.”*

Renfrew proposed two models for the emergence of Aegean civilization. He called the first the **“subsistence/redistribution model.”** Among three types of adaptational transformations (1. a change in the spectrum of exploited environmental resources; 2. a significant increase in the efficiency of exploiting certain resources; 3. the effective expansion of the range of successfully exploited resources), he suggested the third one for the Aegean world. The mechanism, according to Colin Renfrew, is as follows: production of goods not competing for land with already existing cultures (referring to

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Received 19.05.2025, revised 17.06.2025, accepted 25.06.2025

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¹ Pitts 2024.

olive and grape cultivation) – increase in production – population growth – higher degree of food security – certain specialization of production – emergence of a specialized goods exchange system – formation of a redistribution system – centralized exchange of goods – formation of a hierarchy of power and wealth.² Renfrew emphasized that such a mechanism can only operate in areas of productive diversity, population growth is possible in Mediterranean climates, and craft specialization is also possible in the same regions.³

He named the second model the “**craft specialization/wealthy model.**” In this model, the decisive factor is the formation of a stratified society, where high status correlates with material wealth and military prowess. These characteristics emerged largely due to the development of metallurgy and maritime trade, and their development is interconnected.⁴

Renfrew examined these two models within the framework of systems theory. The decisive event for the first model was the domestication of the olive, and for the second, the emergence of efficient bronze metallurgy. Both events must be explained in the context of a cultural system.⁵ The two models complement each other, despite having different causal chains of subsystems. Renfrew explained this complementary mechanism in terms of a **multiplier effect.**^{6 7}

The multiplier effect is the mutual interaction in different spheres of activity: innovations in one subsystem lead to innovations in another subsystem, and the interaction of subsystems (positive feedback) can ensure sustained growth.⁸

Culture has a conservative nature. The multiplier effect, where two subsystems are correlated in a way that mutually reinforces deviations (any innovation in a cultural system is primarily a deviation from existing patterns), is necessary to overcome this inherent conservative homeostasis of culture.⁹

“The Early State Module”

In 1975, C. Renfrew proposed the theory of “**The Early State Module (ESM).**” He linked the emergence of early civilization or state to the formation of early state modules, each of which had a stratified organization of exchange.

Renfrew identified **six processes** that can lead to the emergence of Early State Modules, all of which are based on the exchange of information or goods. Three of these processes are internal (endogenous), and three are external (exogenous). The endogenous processes are:

² Renfrew 1972/2011: 480–481.

³ Renfrew 1972/2011: 482–483.

⁴ Renfrew 1972/2011: 483, 488.

⁵ Renfrew 1972/2011: 485.

⁶ In this case, in the sense of “multiplicative.”

⁷ Renfrew 1972/2011: 485.

⁸ Renfrew 1972/2011: 486.

⁹ Renfrew 1972/2011: 488.

1. **Predominant Social and Religious Exchange:** Arises to ensure ritual ceremonies or social exchange that unite periodic central places. This model, according to Renfrew, is characteristic of early states in Mesoamerica.¹⁰
2. **Population Agglomeration and Craft Specialization:** Population agglomeration leads to the emergence of a distribution network and the development of craftsmanship, bringing about central control with all its ensuing consequences. Proto-types of this model can be considered Çatalhöyük and Jericho.¹¹
3. **Intraregional Diversity:** In a chosen region, specializations develop related to the cultivation of different cultures, and the procurement of metals and other resources. This again requires a redistribution network and a central place to implement it. This model is characteristic of Aegean civilization¹².

Next, Renfrew distinguished external processes that can develop in three ways through interaction with a more highly structured civilization (according to Renfrew, external trade and border conflicts can influence the morphogenesis of modules without making the process exogenous, and conflicts appear not as a process but as the initial phase of the latter¹³). These exogenous processes are:

4. **Urban Imposition:** Roman cities played such a role during the conquest of Britain; military camps gradually transformed into urban centers, but most of them ceased to function as a result of the severance of ties with Rome.¹⁴
5. **Implantation:** The emergence of another civilization's colony (usually a trading one) in an area. This can lead to the development of civilization without extensive adoption of the colonial newcomers' technologies, customs, and beliefs.¹⁵
6. **Emulation:** In this case, the society supplying the goods is already highly organized and stratified, and along with goods, information, value systems, and social procedures are exchanged. These are accepted with great readiness due to the prestige of the "**source society**" (unlike external trade, which does not lead to such transformations).¹⁶ Processes V and VI usually are combined.

In 1977, Barbara Price published the article "*Shifts in Production and Organization: A Cluster-Interaction Model*".¹⁷ Using material from Peru, China, and Mesopotamia, the author found that one could identify so-called clusters: several polities comparable in size, degree of complexity, and techno-economic structure. They are open systems and

¹⁰ Renfrew 1975: 26-27.

¹¹ Renfrew 1975: 27-29.

¹² Renfrew 1975: 29.

¹³ Renfrew 1975: 31-32.

¹⁴ Renfrew 1975: 32-33.

¹⁵ Renfrew 1975: 33.

¹⁶ Renfrew 1975: 33.

¹⁷ Price 1977.

periodically enter into contact (exchange, competition, wars). The author suggests that this cluster acts as a unique evolutionary unit, and that certain processes of adaptation and selection operate at the level of this super-system, and it is not necessary to consider them at the level of individual societies. The evolutionary sequences that lead to the creation of the primary states indicated by M. Fried are characterized by the organization of such super-systems as the origin of agriculture, the emergence of ranked society, irrigated agriculture, social stratification, and the emergence of the state.

In 1986, C. Renfrew, continuing B. Price's "cluster-interaction" hypothesis, proposed the **"concept of peer polity interaction."** Peer polity¹⁸ interaction refers to the full spectrum of exchange between autonomous socio-political units.¹⁹ Exchange includes trade, emulation, imitation, competition, warfare, and so on. Strong interaction between polities holds greater significance than external ties with other polities and can serve as a mechanism for change.

Neighboring polities, according to Renfrew, exhibit a "stunning range of structural homologies"²⁰; and apparently, these homologies developed as a result of long-term interaction.²¹

Organizational changes occurring in one polity typically lead to the same processes in neighboring polities; new institutional features also emerge, such as architectural similarities, similar systems for information transfer, artifacts associated with high status, customs (burial rites), and so on. Moreover, these features do not originate from a single source; rather, as far as chronology allows us to judge, they attest to the development of different polities in the same region during the same period.²²

Renfrew hypothesizes that the process of transformation occurs not only as a result of internal processes, and not only due to similar reactions to the same external stimulus, but as a result of interaction between peer polities, which can be viewed through the following categories: a) **competition** (including warfare, which contributes to both intensification and the emergence of hierarchical institutions within different polities²³) and competitive emulation; b) **exchange of innovations**; c) **increase in the flow of goods exchange**.²⁴

If a region contains peer polities that are not distinguished by a high degree of internal organization but exhibit strong interaction, both symbolically and materially, then it is presumed that transformations in these polities are linked to the intensification of production and the further development of structures serving the exercise of power.²⁵

¹⁸ The term "polity" in this context does not imply any specific scale or degree of complexity of organization, but rather refers to an independent socio-political unit. See Renfrew 1986: 2.

¹⁹ Renfrew 1986: 1.

²⁰ Structural homology [Lat. *structura* — structure; *homologia* — agreement, correspondence] – similarity of structures resulting from their common origin.

²¹ Renfrew 1986: 5.

²² Renfrew 1986: 7-8.

²³ Renfrew 1986: 7-8.

²⁴ Renfrew 1986: 7-8.

²⁵ Renfrew 1986: 7-8.

Renfrew also identifies another process he calls “**symbolic entrainment**.” This process involves the adoption of a more developed symbolic system (as well as a writing system, certain institutions of royal power, etc.) by a less developed system. This refers not to conflict between systems, but to peaceful assimilation or adoption.²⁶

According to Renfrew, a true innovation is not the discovery of a new quality or process, but its widespread dissemination within a society or societies. The adoption of an invention in one society facilitates or validates its adoption in another society, where that innovation might even have appeared earlier.²⁷

As an example, Renfrew proposes considering the formation of Greek city-states (poleis) in the 1st millennium BCE: it is difficult to identify specific state-forming causes for each polis individually; this is where the “concept of peer polity interaction” comes to help.

Political Formations of the Armenian Highland in the 2nd Millennium BCE

We can discern the **multiplier effect of various factors** already in the 3rd millennium BCE to understand the integration processes occurring within the Armenian Highland²⁸, particularly to consider the role that metallurgy and trade might have played in the Armenian Highland. However, this integration phase did not reach its logical conclusion due to the **4.2-kiloyear climatic event**²⁹, which was followed by the **depopulation of the Highland** (with the exception of the Upper Euphrates basin, where the same process would begin later, approximately in 1900 BCE, during the post-Kura-Araxes IIB phase³⁰) and the establishment of a **nomadic lifestyle** in most of the Highland³¹. In the next phase, during the 19th-18th centuries BCE, the factor of **Assyrian trading colonies (karums)** played a significant role in the development of state-forming processes in the western part of the Armenian Highland, as the western part (the eastern part of the Upper Euphrates, the right bank of the Euphrates³²) was a region where three important cultural zones of the Near East (Mesopotamia, Syria, Asia Minor) converged, and it had favorable climatic conditions.³³ This corresponds to points 5 and 6 of Renfrew’s “early state module” (implantation, emulation).

By the mid-2nd millennium BCE, there were already about two dozen “lands”³⁴ in the same regions (Išuwa and neighboring areas), whose subsequent development and strong Hittite influence led to the formation of the **state of Išuwa**.³⁵

At the end of the 2nd millennium BCE, the formations in the Armenian Highland, collectively referred to as **Nairi**³⁶, were apparently mostly small or medium-sized

²⁶ Renfrew 1986: 7-8.

²⁷ Renfrew 1986: 9-10.

²⁸ Avetisyan 2014: 66.

²⁹ Kosyan, Grekyan 2024: 269-274.

³⁰ Kosyan, Grekyan 2024: 275-276.

³¹ Kosyan, Grekyan 2024: 276.

³² Kosyan 2004: 51-52, 104-105; Michel 2011: 4; Kosyan 2016: 74-75.

³³ Kosyan 2016: 75-76.

³⁴ Kosyan 2006; Kosyan *et al.* 2018.

³⁵ Kosyan 2016: 74; Kosyan 2022: 182-183.

heterarchical tribal unions, which can be called **chiefdoms**, especially considering their number.³⁷ They were apparently in peer positions, as the appearance of **Cyclopean walls** already suggests constant warfare, especially among those chiefdoms that had important strategic locations (mountain passes, highlands, river crossings, pastures, etc.³⁸), while the emergence of citadels speaks of deepening social complexity and the process of early state formation.³⁹ The same can be said about the pre-Urartian irrigation system, which was organized at the level of separate political formations, evidence that agricultural production in the Ararat Valley was divided among separate and competing political formations.⁴⁰ The absence of a dominant center contributed to, rather than hindered, the formation⁴¹ of numerous centers.⁴² Apparently, even under conditions of nomadic lifestyle prevalence, each fortress with its surrounding area must have had its strategic and tactical objectives, which the construction of Cyclopean fortresses and control over the surrounding area aimed to solve. The flourishing of copper-bronze production⁴³ and elite kurgan burials, characteristic of the northeastern part of the Armenian Highland in the 2nd millennium BCE⁴⁴, are also expressions of this multi-layered process.

As a working hypothesis, we can propose considering the further development of the socio-political organizations of the Armenian Highland in the 2nd millennium BCE, both in the western (Settlement Area⁴⁵) and northeastern and central parts (or Fort Area⁴⁶), within the framework of Colin Renfrew's concepts. Apparently, both the **multiplier effect** (trade, metallurgy) and the activation of **peer polity interaction** in the west of the Armenian Highland led to the formation of a more significant polity, Išūwa⁴⁷ (in which case the factor of the Hittite empire had a significant influence⁴⁸), and in the northeastern part, and in a later period, to the formation of the **Etiuni confederation**.⁴⁹

Acknowledgements: I thank Aram Kosyan, Head of the Department of Ancient East, Institute of Oriental Studies, NAS RA, and Yervand Grekyan, leading researcher of the same department, for their valuable advice and productive discussions.

³⁶ Salvini 1967.

³⁷ Guarducci 2019: 161.

³⁸ Palmisiano 2018: 8.

³⁹ Kushnareva 1977: 9, 10. For a comparison with political formations in Northern Mesopotamia, see Wattenmaker 2009.

⁴⁰ Smith 1999: 54.

⁴¹ Wattenmaker 2009: 122.

⁴² For the number of Cyclopean fortresses in the northeastern part of the Armenian Highland, see Sanamyan 2022: 214.

⁴³ Gevorkyan 2022: 71.

⁴⁴ Wattenmaker 2009: 124. For kurgans excavated to date in Western Armenia, see Özfirat 2019.

⁴⁵ Guarducci 2019: 152-153.

⁴⁶ Guarducci 2019: 164.

⁴⁷ Kosyan 1997; Kosyan 2022 (with bibliography).

⁴⁸ Kosyan 2022: 182-183.

⁴⁹ For literature on Etiuni, see Amiryan 2012; Grekyan 2022; Hmayakyan, Bichione 2022.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

GENERAL VLADIMIR POLTAVTSEV'S UNPUBLISHED MEMOIRS ABOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF ARMENIANS IN THE CAUCASIAN CAMPAIGN OF WORLD WAR I

Ruben Sahakyan*

Abstract

Significant studies, articles, memoirs, and collections of documents and materials¹ have been written about Armenians, particularly Armenian volunteer detachments, on the Caucasian or Russian-Turkish front of the First World War. Among these is the unpublished memoir² of Vladimir Nikolayevich Poltavtsev (June 4, 1875 – January 19, 1937), a general of the Russian army, a participant in the White movement, and an émigré major general.³ Poltavtsev graduated from the Kiev Infantry Junker School⁴ (1897) and the Nikolaev Academy of the General Staff⁵ (1904). During the Russo-Japanese War, he was in the active army but did not participate in combat operations.⁶ He participated in the First World War and the White movement. In 1917, he was promoted to the rank of major general. On the eve of the First World War, on October 11, 1913⁷, and at the beginning, he held the positions of Chief of Staff of the Azerbaijan (Atropatene) detachment stationed in Northern Persia⁸ and the Caucasian 2nd Rifle Brigade within it, then the division (1913-1916), and other positions, and was awarded

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Received 13.04.2025, revised 10.05.2025, accepted 15.05.2025

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¹ Voluntary military units are known as group, regiment and army, and in official writings as druzhina.

² See Artizov *et al.* 2020 (eds). See the review: Sahakyan: 2024, № 2, Fundamental Armenology, 66-86.

³ State Archives of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as GARF), collection R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheets 1-19. Original. Manuscript

⁴ Junker (German: Junker) was the equivalent of a non-commissioned officer in the Russian army. The Kiev Military Junker School was founded in 1865 and operated until 1923.

⁵ Originally called the Imperial Military Academy, and from 1909 the Nikolaev Imperial Military Academy, it was the highest military educational institution of the Russian Army (1832-1918).

⁶ Service record of the Chief of Staff of the 2nd Caucasian Rifle Brigade of the General Staff, Colonel Poltavtsev. Compiled on January 27, 1914, sheets 1-6 and rev. see: <https://bit.ly/44RkPEq> (accessed 04.04.2025).

⁷ Service record of the Chief of Staff of the 2nd Caucasian Rifle Brigade of the General Staff, Colonel Poltavtsev. Compiled on January 27, 1914, sheet 3 rev. see: <https://bit.ly/4kJTUAK> (accessed 04.04.2025).

⁸ Service record of the Chief of Staff of the 2nd Caucasian Rifle Brigade of the General Staff, Colonel Poltavtsev. Compiled on January 27, 1914, sheet 3 rev. see: <https://bit.ly/44KIRSN> (accessed 04.04.2025).

the Order of St. George with Weapons and other decorations⁹. During the trial of Lieutenant General N. A. Marx¹⁰, he was a member of the field military court (1919), and then emigrated to Yugoslavia, Belgrade¹¹, where he was a member of the editorial board of the newspaper “Русский голос”¹² (“Russian Voice”).

Poltavtsev’s unpublished manuscripts are preserved in the archive¹³ of the former Quartermaster General of the Caucasian Army, Major General E. V. Maslovsky (1876-1971), which is located in the B. A. Bakhmetev Archive¹⁴ at Columbia University in the USA and in the State Archives of the Russian Federation.¹⁵



B. A. Bakhmetev



General E. V. Maslovsky

⁹ According to the Anglo-Russian agreement signed on August 18, 1907, the north of Persia came under Russian influence, the south came under the British influence, and the center became a neutral zone.

¹⁰ Service record of the Chief of Staff of the 2nd Caucasian Rifle Brigade of the General Staff, Colonel Poltavtsev. Compiled on January 27, 1914, sheet 3 rev. see: <https://bit.ly/3THqv5f> (accessed 04.04.2025).

¹¹ Marx Nikandr Aleksandrovich (1861-1921), Lieutenant General of the Russian Army (31.05.1913), professor, historian and archaeologist. Accused by the White movement of serving the Bolsheviks, for which he was sentenced to 4 years of suspended imprisonment (15.07.1919). First rector of Kuban University (19.12.1920).

¹² For more details about his service, see Russian army in the First World War. Project file. Poltavtsev Vladimir Nikolaevich. <https://bit.ly/4kw9nDN> (accessed 29.12.2024); <https://bit.ly/4kw9nDN> (accessed 29.12.2024); Ganin 2009: 312, 448.

¹³ Published in Belgrade between 1931 and 1941.

¹⁴ General E. V. Maslovsky used the information provided by V. N. Poltavtsev in his fundamental work on the Caucasian Front: “Extensive material on the actions of the Second Caucasian Rifle Division throughout the war”, see Maslovsky 1934: 11.

¹⁵ Bakhmetev Boris Alexandrovich (1880-1951), Russian scientist, political and public figure, businessman, Menshevik, professor, Russian Ambassador to the United States (1917-1922).

The general titled his memoirs “Армяне на Кавказском фронте во время Великой войны” (“Armenians on the Caucasian Front during the Great War”).¹⁶

Memoirs regarding the Armenian volunteer movement and Armenian servicemen mainly concern the 1st Armenian Volunteer Druzhina under the command of Andranik, which operated in Northern Persia.

Poltavtsev finished his memoirs with a clipping from a Belgrade newspaper announcing the death of General Andranik in the USA: “Чувени јерменски војвода генерал Антраниг, умро је у Калифорнију”¹⁷ (“The famous Armenian voyevoda, General Antranig, died in California”). The newspaper is dated October 5, 1927, and Poltavtsev finished the article on May 20, 1929.¹⁸



The First Armenian Volunteer Druzhina. In the center, Andranik

In his memoirs, the commander of the 2nd Rifle Brigade, General T. Nazarbekyan, provides interesting information about his Chief of Staff, Colonel Poltavtsev, which may shed some light on his passive attitude towards Armenians. After the battle near Dilman in April 24, 1915, the commander of the Azerbaijan detachment, General F. G. Chernozubov, came to T. Nazarbekyan and reported that a Turkish spy

¹⁶ The Russian State Archives contain other studies by the general, such as: The Russian State Archives contain other studies by the general, such as: “On the promotion to officer ranks in the White armies in the south of Russia”, “The occupation of Azerbaijan (Northern Persia) by Russian troops before and during the “Great War” etc., see: <http://online.archives.ru/guide/1001/543631001/543652001/> (accessed 29.12.2024).

¹⁷ The operational-strategic concept of the Caucasian Front came into circulation only in March 1917.

¹⁸ “The famous Armenian voyevoda, General Antranig, died in California”.

was operating in the brigade's headquarters. T. Nazarbekyan wrote in his memoirs: "I was surprised and asked who it could be. He told me (R.S.) that (the spy - R.S.) was my Chief of Staff, Colonel Poltavtsev".¹⁹

Unfortunately, T. Nazarbekyan does not elaborate on what facts or evidence Chernozubov based such a conclusion on.

T. Nazarbekyan categorically rejected the accusation. It is self-evident that such an accusation is debatable, as there are no reliable facts. Positive words addressed to Armenian volunteers and servicemen by Poltavtsev are rare in the memoirs; even if they occur, they are immediately followed by the identification or presentation of various shortcomings. It should be noted that some of these corresponded to reality, which the Armenian side had pointed out at the time and made efforts to overcome. Poltavtsev did not notice this latter circumstance.

Keywords: First World War, Caucasian front, V. N. Poltavtsev, Andranik, H. Zavryan, T. Nazarbekyan, Armenian volunteer movement, M. Silikov, N. N. Voropanov, Dro.

V. N. Poltavtsev's memoirs can be divided into the following conditional parts:

1. The assessment given to the Armenian people and the reason for their dominance in the Caucasus Viceroyalty.
2. The assessment given to the command staff of the druzhinas.
3. The armament and incomplete combat readiness of the volunteers.
4. The insufficient military discipline and tactics of the volunteers.
5. The first phase of participation in combat operations (autumn-winter 1914).
6. Participation in the Battle of Dilman.
7. The underestimation of the military and historical significance of the Van self-defense and liberation.
8. The dissolution of the detachments and the organization of Armenian rifle battalions.
9. The massacres of Armenians.
10. The organization of the Provisional Administration of Van and the problems associated with Armenian authority.
11. The disintegration of the Caucasian Army after the February and October Revolutions of 1917.
12. The organization of national military units in Transcaucasia and the participation of Armenian military units in combat operations.
13. The defense of Julfa.
14. The Turkish invasion of Armenia in 1918 and the May heroic battles.
15. The choice of the political leadership of the Transcaucasian peoples regarding a new geopolitical path (1917-1918).
16. Violations of the civil rights of the Russian population in Georgia and Azerbaijan.

¹⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 1 and back.



Old Tbilisi



Werner Graf von der Schulenburg



Viceroy of the Caucasus, Adjutant
General I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov
(1837-1916)

At the beginning of his memoirs, Poltavtsev makes no mention of the Armenian people's past or history, but considers his primary task to be to "explain" why Armenians occupied a dominant position in the Caucasus, particularly in Transcaucasia. The general identifies two reasons: economic and political. His first contacts with Armenians were in Tbilisi, where he began his service in 1911. As Poltavtsev notes, the widespread belief was that Georgians, unlike Armenians, did not think about autonomy²⁰, let alone independence, while Armenians dreamed of Greater Armenia, so the government was fighting against Armenian national parties. For this purpose, precautionary measures were taken: the service of Armenian officers of the

General Staff and non-Armenian officers married to Armenian women in the Caucasian Military District was restricted.²¹

Poltavtsev, one of the "front-runners" of anti-Armenian propaganda, mentions the State Duma deputy Purishkevich²², who on the eve of the war "God knows where he had obtained a map of "Greater Armenia", which included Turkish Armenia (Western

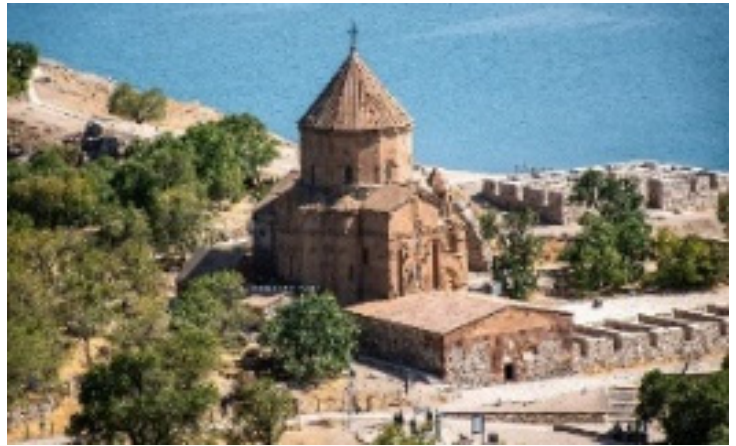
²⁰ Sahakyan 2019b: 317.

²¹ He was probably unaware that the Georgians were in active relations with the Germans. As early as 1914, a secret agreement was signed in Constantinople between the Committee for the Freedom of Georgia and the Ottoman government, see A-Do 2019: 119-122. Zakaryan 2005: 254-257. Secret ties with the Georgian opposition were maintained by the German vice-consul in Tiflis, Werner von Schulenburg, who organized the Georgian legion operating within the Ottoman army during the war, see Pipiya 1978: 36-38.

²² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 1 back.

Armenia - R.S.), Transcaucasia, the Caucasus, the Don Cossack Host territory²³, and even part of the Kharkov province".²⁴ These and other similar barefaced statements had an impact on many Russian officers serving in the Caucasus.²⁵ Some, such as General, military intelligence officer and diplomat Mayevsky²⁶, were known for their anti-Armenian and pro-Turkish stance and believed that "Russia needs a strong Turkey".²⁷

Distrust towards Armenians reached such a level that the high-ranking officer heading the intelligence of the Caucasian Military District, on the eve of the war, refused Armenian intelligence officers, completely liquidated the border agent network without creating a new one. According to Major General E. V. Maslovsky's assessment: "This circumstance severely affected the work of the headquarters, making it difficult to obtain agent information in a timely manner".²⁸ The same is testified by the military historian, Lieutenant General N. Korsun.²⁹



Akhtamar (modern photo)



V. M. Purishkevich

Poltavtsev's information was probably based on various rumors, which led him to a wrong conclusion: "Armenians, in general, do not enjoy sympathy in the Caucasus"³⁰, because being resourceful and active, they gradually took over the local economy. Before the appointment of I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov as viceroy, a significant part of the administrative positions were occupied by Georgian princes, as well as a certain number of Russian nobles.

²³ Vladimir Mitrofany Purishkevich (1870-1920), Russian politician, extreme monarchist. Participant in the murder of G. Rasputin (1916).

²⁴ It was an autonomous administrative unit of the Russian Empire (1870-1920). The region was inhabited by about 2,500,000 people, mainly Don Cossacks, and had an area of 152,700 km² (1897). During the Soviet years, the administrative unit was divided between the Russian SFSR and the Ukrainian SSR.

²⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1 sheet 1 and back.

²⁶ Austrian and German officers serving in the Ottoman army had a similar attitude towards the Turks, who considered themselves superior to the "allies" because they were largely unfamiliar with Turkish customs and manners, see Maslovsky 1934: 44.

²⁷ Mayevsky Vladimir Teofili (1857-?), Major General (09.11.1916), graduated from the Nikolaev Academy of the General Staff (1888), Russian Vice-Consul in Van, Rize (1900, 1903, 1909, 1911, 1913).

²⁸ Ter-Oganov 2014: 220.

²⁹ Maslovsky 1934: 47-48.

³⁰ Korsun 1940: 28, 122.



Three provinces of Iranian Azerbaijan (Atropatene) region

and the Countess. Poltavtsev suggests that the above was the main reason why Armenians enjoyed the Countess's sympathy.³²

In Poltavtsev's opinion, Armenians, taking advantage of the weakening of the Georgian nobility, one of the reasons for which was their difficult financial situation, were able to seize dominant positions in the Caucasus. Through various means, they managed to win the sympathy of the Caucasian Viceroy's wife, Elizaveta Andreyevna, who had a great influence on her husband³¹. The lady was angered by the arrogance of the Georgian nobility, who considered themselves equal to her



Viceroy I. I. Vorontsov-Dashkov with a group of officers (1914)

³¹ The "negative" image of the viceroy's wife was even used as a scapegoat to justify the army's failures on the Caucasian front. In a letter dated December 12, 1914, the Russian Minister of War V. A. Sukhomlinov wrote to the Chief of the Supreme General Staff, General N. N. Yanushkevich: "In the Caucasus, the leadership, probably led by Countess (Vorontsova-Dashkova), did everything to thwart any operation....", see Red Archive: 1923. 158.

³² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 1.



E. A. Vorontsova-Dashkova
(Shuvalova, 1845-1924)

According to Poltavtsev, the Georgians were more loyal to Russia, while the Armenians, who dreamed of Greater Armenia, had many parties, the most notable of which was the Dashnaktsutyun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation). In the general's assessment: "To the credit of the Armenian parties, it must be said that they worked harmoniously and energetically, did not stop at terrorist acts, and enjoyed the respect and trust of their nation".³³ It should be noted that the parties were particularly united when the Armenian people faced a serious threat.



**The officer corps of the 2nd Caucasian Rifle
Brigade (Yerevan)**



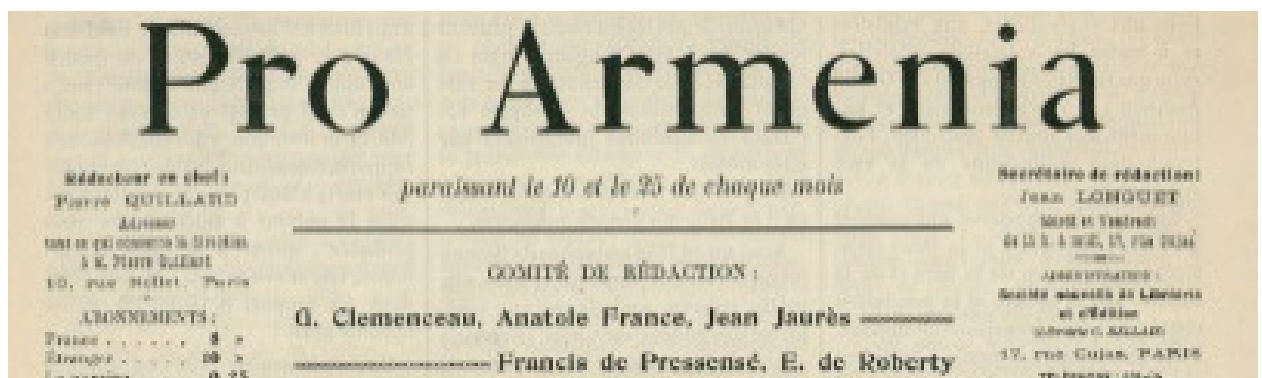
Mohammad Ali Shah and his suite, 1907

Describing the situation of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, Poltavtsev reports that they were hostile towards the Turks, who periodically massacred Armenians, which resulted in uprisings. Regarding the Armenians living in Persia, as well as other Christians,

³³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 2.

the general assesses that Muslims did not like them but did not oppress them.³⁴

The World War aroused hopes among Armenians that it would be possible to realize the dream of establishing a united Armenia, that is, “by uniting Transcaucasian (Eastern Armenia - R.S.) and Turkish Armenia (Western Armenia - R.S.), which did not exist, but there were regions where, in general, the Armenian population constituted a majority”.³⁵ This idea united the Armenian national parties, which were hostile to the Russian government, because only with Russia’s help could they achieve their long-standing dream.³⁶ In turn, the Russian authorities carried out propaganda work abroad in favor of the Armenians, stating their goal was to liberate the Armenians from the “Turkish yoke and Turkish atrocities”.³⁷ For this purpose, propaganda books and brochures were published in English and French.³⁸ It is self-evident that this was done based on their own geopolitical interests, and not for the sake of the Armenians.



The war against the Ottoman Empire relegated past contradictions to oblivion, and Armenian exiles persecuted by the Russian authorities had the opportunity not only to return and operate openly, but also “even negotiate with officials and institutions”.³⁹ Among such individuals, he mentions Dro⁴⁰ and Samson.⁴¹ Regarding the latter, Poltavtsev provides the following information: as early as 1913, the headquarters of the Azerbaijan detachment had received an order to arrest the prominent revolutionary Samson and transfer him to Tbilisi⁴². Samson, who was 40-45 years old, was in charge

³⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 2 and back.

³⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 3.

³⁶ The Russian government had no desire to grant autonomy to Western Armenia, but rather to annex part of it to Russia, see The Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014: 44.

³⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 3.

³⁸ The French weekly “Pro Armenia” was published in France (1914-1914). It was initiated by C. Mikayelyan. Editor-in-chief: Pierre Quillard (1864-1912), secretary: Jean Longuet (1876-1938), members: Georges Clemenceau (1841-1929), Anatole France (1844-1924), Jean Jaurès and others.

³⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 3 and back.

⁴⁰ Kanayan Drastamat (Dro, 1883-1956), prominent figure of the Armenian liberation movement, statesman and politician, participant in World War I, commander of the 2nd Armenian Volunteer Group, member of the ARF.

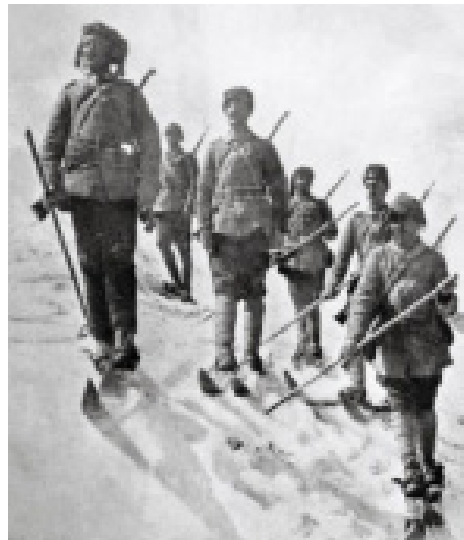
⁴¹ Tadevosyan Stepan (Samson), member of the ARF. He was a political representative in the 1st Armenian Volunteer Group, see Pambukian (ed.) 2015: 169.

⁴² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 3 and back.

of the 1st group's supply service. Poltavtsev characterizes him as an untrustworthy person, a drunkard, who was suspected of embezzlement, so at the end of December 1914, he was removed from the druzhina.⁴³



Drastamat Kanayan (Dro)



Ottoman soldiers



General N. N. Voropanov



Felix Guse, German Major: Chief of Staff of the Ottoman 3rd Army

The general reiterates the widespread view that the Armenians asked to form volunteer detachments, but in reality, the Russian authorities were the initiator.

At the suggestion of the Caucasian Army headquarters, the druzhina under the command of Andranik joined the Azerbaijan detachment of General N. N. Voropanov⁴⁴ (1854-1918) stationed in Northern Persia.⁴⁵ According to Poltavtsev, the druzhina, which consisted of about 1000 people, unexpectedly arrived in Khoy unarmed around October 20, 1914. Among the leaders, the general mentions Hakob Zavryan (Yakov Zavriev)⁴⁶ and Captain Artem Hovsepyan.⁴⁷ In Poltavtsev's assessment: "Andranik was a man of impeccable integrity, unselfish, a fanatical enemy disposed against the Turks. I even find it difficult to say what predominated in him: love for the Armenian cause or hatred for the Turks... He was a modest man in his

⁴³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 4 and back.

⁴⁴ Voropanov Nikolay Nikolay (1854-1918), Lieutenant General of the Russian Army (08.05.1914). Commander of the Azerbaijani detachment (1911-1914).

⁴⁵ For more information about the Armenian volunteer movement, see: The History of Armenia 2015: 467-478; Ambartsumyan K. R., Velichko L. N., I. V. Kryuchkov *et al.* 2024. 82-98.

⁴⁶ Zavriev Yakov (Hakob Zavryan, 1866-1920), liberation movement, state and party figure, participant in the volunteer movement, doctor by profession, member of the ARF.

⁴⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 3 and back.

demands, cruel, accustomed to command, very strict with subordinates, brave and resourceful”.⁴⁸



H. Zavryan

Poltavtsev singles out H. Zavryan, noting that he was not only a doctor but also one of the organizers of the Armenian volunteer druzhinas. He testifies: “He (H. Zavryan - R.S.) was a very intelligent, honest, kind and sympathetic person, wholeheartedly devoted to the cause (the liberation of Western Armenia - R.S.), an idealist who sought some kind of sublimity in everyone... He strived to evoke lofty feelings among the druzhiniks and make them serve for the future of their nation”.⁴⁹

Poltavtsev testifies that H. Zavryan steadfastly endured all the difficulties and deprivations associated with military life. He willingly gave his belongings, provisions, horses, tobacco, money, etc., to the volunteers.⁵⁰ The doctor eventually left the druzhina in 1915 and continued his energetic activities in Russia, Europe, and Western Armenia, which were entirely related to the Armenian Question.



Cossacks at the Battle of Sarighamish (December 1914)



**3rd Labinsky Cossack Regiment
(Kars, 21.08.1915)**

Poltavtsev positively assesses the activities of Captain A. Hovsepyan as a military instructor. The latter had been seconded from the 14th Georgian Grenadier Regiment: “He (A. Hovsepyan - R.S.) was an energetic, capable, brave, and honest officer who knew his job excellently”.⁵¹ The general notes that the company commanders of the druzhina, who had no military education, did not accept A. Hovsepyan’s authority. Neither the commanders nor the subordinates wanted to learn military affairs.⁵² In Poltavtsev’s assessment, the company commanders were resourceful and capable of leading small groups and carrying out partisan warfare with them. The majority of the

⁴⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 4.

⁴⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 4 and back.

⁵⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 4 and back.

⁵¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 4 and back.

⁵² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 6 and back.

rank-and-file were Western Armenians, there were *hayduks* (Armenian irregulars), as well as a small number of students, but most of them had not received any military education, although many were familiar with weapons.⁵³ This testimony contradicts the above. It can be concluded that a significant part of the volunteers had undergone some, albeit brief, training.

Based on his service experience, Poltavtsev expresses the following erroneous viewpoint: “In general, Armenians did not like military service, because by their nature they were merchants, the goal of their entire life was their well-being”.⁵⁴ In the general’s opinion, Armenians, as well as all southerners, were not able to remain in a tense state for long and quickly became exhausted.⁵⁵ He admits that the volunteers showed courage and endurance during battles, risking their lives while carrying out tasks.⁵⁶

The widespread view was that the Ottoman Empire would only enter the war in the spring of 1915, but for the Russians, the Turkish attack was unexpected. This forced them to throw all available forces to the front, so the physical condition and readiness of the volunteers were neglected. A thorough selection of volunteers was not carried out. For a significant part, the war was a “walk”, which was refuted shortly thereafter. Hence, the existing shortcomings and mistakes, which they were forced to eliminate during combat operations. It should be noted that the Russian side, in turn, had underestimated the enemy.



Mobile field kitchen

Poltavtsev expresses the following opinion about the volunteers: it seemed that they had enlisted to liberate their homeland, but the number of people with such ideas was small. Some of the volunteers, upon entering service, wanted to reach their birthplace, after which they deserted. Some wanted to take revenge on the Turks, and some were attracted by plunder. Some of the volunteers

hoped that the war would be short, but as the fighting dragged on, they began to desert.⁵⁷ General E. V. Maslovsky similarly mentions the undisciplined nature of the Armenian volunteers, but notes that they were irreplaceable as scouts, connoisseurs of the terrain, and guides.⁵⁸

⁵³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 5.

⁵⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 5.

⁵⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 5 and back.

⁵⁶ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 5.

⁵⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 5 and back.

⁵⁸ Maslovsky 1934: 39.



Russian military boiler



Map of combat operations (Caucasian Front)

Unlike the volunteers, the Armenian career officers were generally good military men from all points of view, and there were a significant number of distinguished officers. Poltavtsev complains about the reserve officers and Armenians who had undergone short-term officer courses.⁵⁹ We believe that such an assessment was wrong, as the responsibility lay with the military authorities, which ensured quantity rather than quality. The same applied to other nationalities, including Russians. The main reason for all this was that the Caucasian Front was considered secondary, not playing a decisive role in the World War. Only two years later did the Russian command understand that the weakest link in the Quadruple Alliance was the Ottoman Empire, but geopolitical changes did not allow for the final defeat of the Turkish army.



Andranik Ozanyan (1865-1927)

The same evening, a military council was convened, attended by the detachment commander Voropanov, Poltavtsev, Andranik, Samson, and H. Zavryan. The Russian side proposed dividing the druzhina into several combat groups and carrying out partisan, sabotage-reconnaissance work behind enemy lines, operating on the flanks of the detachment.⁶⁰ It was assumed that the proposal should have attracted Andranik, but probably the *hayduk* leader, realizing the inadequate combat readiness of the personnel, refused, finding that the druzhina could only operate jointly with the Russian troops.⁶¹

⁵⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 5 and back.

⁶⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 6.

⁶¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 6.



The sword presented to Andranik by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (Cairo, 1920)



Russian "Mosin" rifle

visited the druzhina, distributing tobacco, food, clothing, etc.⁶²

At the end of October 1914, the Azerbaijani detachment began combat operations against the Turks. At the same time, the command of the detachment was taken over by Major General F. G. Chernozubov⁶³, and the command of the Caucasian 2nd Rifle Brigade by Major General Tovmas Nazarbekyan⁶⁴, about whom Poltavtsev notes that he was Armenian by nationality but did not know Armenian "and was wholeheartedly devoted to the Russians"⁶⁵.

This was the only assessment given by Poltavtsev.

Poltavtsev did not attempt to assess T. Nazarbekyan as a commander or analyze the combat operations planned and led by him, which, unfortunately, the enemy, General Kyazim Karabekir, did later: "Armenia has three men: Nazarbekian, Aram (Manukyan - R.G., R.S.) and Alexander Khatisyan. If the Armenians had the wisdom to leave these three free to manage their affairs, there is no doubt that their fate would have been different".⁶⁶



German-made Ottoman cavalry sword



Russian officer's sword

⁶² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 6 and back.

⁶³ Chernozubov Fyodor Grigory (1863-1919), Lieutenant General (18.06.1915), military intelligence officer, commander of the Azerbaijani detachment: the 4th Caucasian Cossack Division (01.04-18.06.1915), the 2nd Caucasian Cavalry Corps (04.07.1916), the 7th Caucasian Army Corps (15.02.1917).

⁶⁴ See more about him: Sahakyan 2016a.

⁶⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7.

⁶⁶ Artsruni 2002: 380. Gasparian, Sahakyan 2017: 214-229.

Poltavtsev's similar attitude can be explained by the following: he himself wanted to head the brigade, so he does not express any opinion about T. Nazarbekyan as a commander. He does not appreciate the Battle of Dilman led by his commander. Later, A. Chernyshev, one of T. Nazarbekyan's officers and a participant in the battle, highly praised the general's military talent.⁶⁷

Thus, Poltavtsev complains about Nazarbekyan for demanding that the Armenians hand over the door of one of the Armenian churches in Bitlis (Baghesh) kept by one of the officers, which had carvings and inscriptions of various scenes. The door was a work of art and was worth several hundred thousand rubles.⁶⁸ On May 29, 1916, T. Nazarbekyan ordered the commander of the Caucasian 5th Rifle Regiment to send the Armenian manuscripts found in Bitlis to the Caucasian Museum in Tbilisi.⁶⁹

Probably, the relations between the two military men had become so strained, or T. Nazarbekyan could no longer tolerate the arrogance of his subordinate, so on February 19, 1916, Poltavtsev was replaced by another officer as Chief of Staff.⁷⁰



Alexander Khatishyan (1874-1945)



Thomas Nazarbekian (1855-1931)

According to Poltavtsev's testimony, Chernozubov did not like Armenians but tried not to show it and wanted to win their sympathy.⁷¹ He simply dreamed of taking the post of Governor-General of Western Armenia and, with the help of H. Zavryan, had begun to learn Armenian.⁷² When the dream did not come true, he drastically changed his attitude. On October 13, 1916, by Chernozubov's order, without an impartial investigation, the Field Military Court sentenced six Armenian volunteers to death, whose guilt was never proven.⁷³

⁶⁷ "Hairenik", 1955, № 13171, August 14.

⁶⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 12 back. See T. Nazarbekyan's order: NAA, fund 45, inventory 1, file 23, sheet 47.

⁶⁹ NAA, fund 45, inventory 1, file 23, sheet 49.

⁷⁰ Sahakyan 2020: 311-312.

⁷¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7.

⁷² Sahakyan 2019b: 301.

⁷³ Sahakyan 2015: 106.



A 76 mm mountain gun in action.



Commander of the Labinsky Cossack Regiment (1917), Colonel P. S. Abashkin with his family

Poltavtsev mentions the first combat operations when two companies of Armenian volunteers with two cannons engaged the enemy, which consisted of gendarmes, border guards, local militia, and Kurds. According to Poltavtsev's testimony, the volunteers managed to push back the Turks from Kotur⁷⁴, after which the druzhina was stationed in the town of Saray, where it remained for about a week.



The Turkish Mauser battle rifle. The Ottoman army was armed with several modifications of the German Mauser.



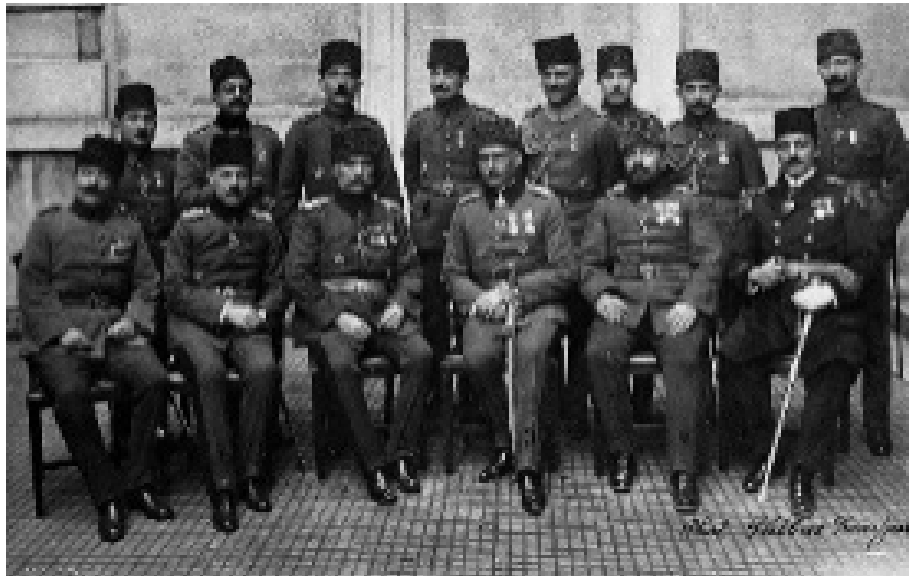
Captured Turkish machine guns.

Poltavtsev briefly mentions the Turkish operation that began in the Sarighamish area in December 1914, as a result of which the Caucasian Army found itself in a difficult situation, and without any basis, the Azerbaijani detachment was ordered to retreat to Julfa.⁷⁵ He constantly reports on the decline in the discipline of the volunteers but does not mention the reasons. The following had occurred: the Christian population of Northern Persia – Armenians and Assyrians – had warmly welcomed the Russians, who, after their hasty retreat, were forced to flee. The retreat route of the multi-thousand

⁷⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7.

⁷⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7 back.

population, which was about 50 versts, was also defended by the volunteers along with the Russian troops. After a long and sleepless march, they were exhausted and physically unable to carry out any orders, so they could not be blamed for being undisciplined. Poltavtsev, for some unknown reason not taking into account the situation, continues to note that the druzhiniks refused to obey orders and it was impossible to force them to obey in any way. However, he was forced to admit that on December 7, having regained their strength, the druzhina participated in the battle.⁷⁶



The officer corps of the Ottoman army



Yesaul of the
Transcaspian Cossack
Division Fyodor Eliseev

Poltavtsev characterizes the first battles of the druzhina as border clashes of no significant importance. He constantly emphasizes that the fighting was against a weak enemy⁷⁷, but admits that the operations took place in difficult climatic conditions, in a snow-covered mountainous area, and the supply was inadequate. The volunteers, Cossacks, and riflemen were forced to spend the night in tents in snow-covered areas, in frosty conditions.⁷⁸

Poltavtsev notes that he was with the druzhina throughout the aforementioned period. In his description: “For battle, they (the volunteers - R.S.) were still fit, the fighting itself did not require much effort, but outside of battle, it (the druzhina - R.S.) was a burden. During the march, the druzhiniks advanced in scattered groups and even alone and were very strung out... they mixed with other

⁷⁶ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7 back.

⁷⁷ The qualification does not correspond to reality. They are mainly border guards and gendarmes, who, according to General E. V. Maslovsky, “were made up of selected people, with good military training and the best troops in terms of their qualities”, see Maslovsky 1934: 43.

⁷⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7 back.

troops, created disorder, besides, they consciously did not perform guard duty, considering it superfluous, and under unexpected shelling, they fled in panic or engaged in irregular combat”.⁷⁹

During the battle, the volunteers advanced without a dispersed formation, without any order, attacking in a group behind the bravest and most initiative fighter, during which they shouted, made noise, and fired a lot, even when there was no need for it.⁸⁰

Poltavtsev was angered by the fact that in settlements, the volunteers occupied the best buildings, arguing that they were lightly dressed and did not have winter clothing.⁸¹ This last circumstance contradicts Poltavtsev’s claim that the volunteers had been given winter clothing, the absence of which is confirmed by T. Nazarbekyan.⁸²



Cavalry General Pyotr Ivanovich Oganovsky (1851-after 1917), commander of the IV Caucasian Army Corps

The druzhina participated in battles for about a month, during which it suffered minor losses. After the first battles, Poltavtsev reiterates his opinion about the volunteers, namely that they had not undergone any training, which, if done, could have resulted in decent soldiers. The problem could have been solved if line officers had been appointed as company commanders, which, however, was not possible because the commander-volunteers had great authority among the fighters.⁸³

After the end of the Sarighamish operation⁸⁴ in January 1915, the druzhina was sent for rest and replenishment and returned to the Azerbaijani detachment at the end of February.⁸⁵ In the rear, the druzhina command took steps to establish military discipline. At the same time, a simple military code was drawn up, which also mentioned the organization of a military police force.

The oath text of 9 policemen with their signatures has been preserved.⁸⁶

In his subsequent notes, Poltavtsev again tries to belittle the role of the 1st druzhina and its commanders, especially during the Battle of Dilman, on which the fate of almost the entire Transcaucasia, and in case of failure, the Caucasus, depended.

⁷⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 7 back -8.

⁸⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 8 back.

⁸¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 8.

⁸² He testifies: “Winter and snow took us by surprise. There was no warm clothing. The situation of the Armenian Druzhina was especially difficult. Their clothing was light... they suffered more during guard duty”, see: Sahakyan 2019a: 281.

⁸³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 9.

⁸⁴ According to the British-Turkish historian Norman Stone, the Ottoman 3rd Army was defeated due to disease and frost, which is not true, see Stone 2010: 79.

⁸⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 9 back.

⁸⁶ NAR, fund 1267, inventory 1, file 155, sheet 1, 2, 3.

Turkish intelligence managed to ascertain that the Russians had few forces in Dilman, and Halil Bey captured the city with a sharp attack. T. Nazarbekyan, who had few forces at his disposal, received an order to stop the Turks. In the battle near the city of Dilman from April 16 to 18, 1915, Halil Bey's division, suffering heavy losses, was forced to retreat.⁸⁷

Poltavtsev admits that the Armenian druzhina fought hard during the Battle of Dilman. "They (the volunteers - R.S.) initially stopped the Turkish attack, then they defended one of the sections of the positions... The losses were great, the Turks resumed their attacks several times, but all attacks were repulsed, and the druzhina stood firm".⁸⁸ True to himself, the general complains that the volunteers fired a large number of bullets. We consider it necessary to note that the entire army spent a large number of bullets, which is confirmed in T. Nazarbekyan's memoirs.⁸⁹ Poltavtsev accuses the Armenians of the fact that the Armenian company on the right flank of the Russian defense unnoticed left its positions and joined the druzhina.⁹⁰



Kurdish Hamidiye

Poltavtsev addresses the issue of the liberation of Van and again tries to underestimate the significance of the self-defense of the people of Van. He writes: "In Van (Turkish - R.S.), the garrison was insignificant, and the Turks hardly defended it (Van - R.S.). That is why it was easily conquered, which gave the Armenians an occasion to exaggerate the capture of Van as a major event".⁹¹ Such an attitude was understandable. He did not want to admit that the V druzhina or the Ararat Regiment⁹², which operated within the Russian Bayazet detachment, upon learning about the difficult situation in Van, decided to help their compatriots fighting

desperate battles with only the regiment's forces.⁹³

First of all, Poltavtsev makes no mention or allusion to the Armenian self-defense battles. In addition, the general downplays the number of Turkish-Kurdish forces besieging the Armenian quarters of Van.

⁸⁷ Sahakyan 2016: 210-215. Maslovsky 1934: 156.

⁸⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 9 back.

⁸⁹ Sahakyan 2019b: 313.

⁹⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 9 back.

⁹¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 9 back.

⁹² On April 1, 1915, the Ararat Regiment was formed, consisting of the II, III, and IV druzhinas. The commander was Vardan (Sargis Mehrabyan).

⁹³ Mehrabian 2022: 198-202.

Poltavtsev notes that the Turkish subject Aram⁹⁴ was appointed governor of Van and in no way comments on the activities of the Armenian authorities under Russian jurisdiction. He complains that the Armenian authorities provided their brigade with firewood at high prices.⁹⁵ The commander of the Ararat (V) Regiment, Vardan (Sargis Mehrabyan), also reports on the high prices.⁹⁶

As Poltavtsev notes, in November 1915, a telegram was received from the headquarters of the Caucasian Army, which demanded answers to several questions, including “Is it true that the Armenian druzhina captured the city of Van? Which Armenian druzhina captured it, this or that, etc., etc.?”⁹⁷ It follows from the telegram that rumors were spreading that the successes of the army were allegedly due to the Armenian volunteers. The news that Andranik and the Armenian volunteers had captured Van was widely circulated.⁹⁸



In 1909, in memory of the 250th anniversary of the regiment (June 28, 1892), the badge of the 13th Life-Grenadier Erivan His Majesty's Regiment was approved.

As Poltavtsev notes, he prepares a response, which, however, is not accepted by T. Nazarbekyan because it was not favorable to the Armenians. Therefore, the commander personally prepared the response and sent it to the army headquarters.⁹⁹

The 1st Armenian Druzhina, then the 2nd Rifle Brigade, moved from Northern Persia to Van, where the 1st joined the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th druzhinas. Poltavtsev notes that the unification took place at the end of July 1915¹⁰⁰, while in reality, it was in June. The general reports that in Van and Ardjesh, some of the volunteers left their druzhinas and went into peaceful life. Poltavtsev notes that in Adiljevaz (Artske), they witnessed alleged massacres carried out by Armenians. In the courtyard of one of the houses intended for the brigade headquarters, lay the bodies of 12 women and children with

⁹⁴ Manukyan Aram (Sargis Hovhannisyan, 1879-1919), prominent Armenian liberation, political and state figure. Temporary governor of Van and surrounding provinces (May 7-July 14, 1915). One of the founders of the Republic of Armenia, Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Armenia (1918-1919).

⁹⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 11.

⁹⁶ Mehrabian 2022: 207. The Chinese general Sun Tzi (late VI century BC – early V century BC) observed on this occasion: “The population living near the army sells everything necessary for the army at a high price. When everything is sold at a high price, the people's property is depleted, and it is difficult to fulfill the obligations.” Sun Tzi 2006.

⁹⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 12 and back.

⁹⁸ Price 1917: 140.

⁹⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 12 back.

¹⁰⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 9 back.

their throats cut.¹⁰¹ A doctor testifies to another similar case that he witnessed on the road from Mush to Bitlis.¹⁰²



Soldiers of the French "Oriental" or "Armenian" Legion

Poltavtsev notes the massacres of Armenians in Mush by the Turks, as recounted by the Muslim notables of the city. A local Turkish doctor had personally shot about 500 Armenians¹⁰³. Regarding the mass killings of Armenians, Poltavtsev cites another example witnessed by the officers of his division in an Armenian Apostolic church near Bitlis.¹⁰⁴



**Chief of Staff of the 2nd
Caucasian Rifle Division,
General P. S. Stefanovich-
Stasenko (from 20.03.1916)**

Continuing to underestimate the combat operations of the volunteers, Poltavtsev reports that in the summer of 1915, the Armenians did not participate in any serious battles and continues to note that a significant part of the volunteers left the druzhinas. Among the commanders, he mentions Dro and his druzhina, which was no different from Andranik's group. In his opinion, Dro was intelligent and made a better impression than Andranik. "He (Dro - R.S.) understood the situation better, understood the military situation more, and there was more order in his unit".¹⁰⁵

In the article, Poltavtsev avoids and even makes no allusion to the reasons and consequences of the July 1915 retreat from Van. It is self-evident that he would have had to admit that the retreat from Vaspurakan had no basis, as nothing threatened the city. And just as the retreat of the

¹⁰¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 10.

¹⁰² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 10 back.

¹⁰³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 10 back and 11.

¹⁰⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 11.

¹⁰⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 10.

Russian troops from Northern Persia in December 1914, the July 1915 retreat from Van was not a military operation driven by any military necessity.



„Глаза и уши армии“. Кавказские казаки перед разведкой.
По фот. нашего специального корреспондента.

"Глаза и уши армии". Кавказские казаки перед разведкой. Иллюстрация из ж.
© Макаров Алексей / Фотобанк Лорен



Cossack reconnaissance vanguard (Caucasian Front)



Staff Captain of the 2nd Caucasian Rifle Regiment



Hamazasp Srvandztyants

Falsifying the truth, Poltavtsev reports that at the suggestion of the Armenians, the army command allowed Armenian refugees to cultivate the lands of the Alashkert Valley, for which it provided the necessary supplies.¹⁰⁶ In reality, by allowing the refugees to restore settlements and begin agricultural work, the Russian authorities aimed to prepare the ground for the relocation of Russian settlers to the Alashkert Valley. Applications had already been received from various parts of the empire, expressing a desire to move to the Alashkert Valley for residence.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 11 back.

¹⁰⁷ Sahakyan 2014.



The Kuban Cossack army. In the center is Emperor Nicholas II.



Russian machine gun crew (Caucasian Front, 1914-1915)

In the winter of 1915 and 1916, Andranik's 1st and Hamazasp's¹⁰⁸ 3rd druzhinas participated in the offensive operations of the IV Caucasian Army Corps. "Both the druzhinas and the other troops faced a difficult task: advancing through snow-covered mountains, without roads, and suffering severe deprivations due to the lack of provisions".¹⁰⁹ Constant battles, difficult terrain, and low-quality food physically weakened the volunteers, and after the capture of Bitlis, the part of the fighters who were locals left the druzhina, while some began to engage in looting.

Poltavtsev reports that in March 1916, Andranik left the druzhina, noting that "By that time, the supreme command had been disappointed with the druzhinas and had decided to disband them".¹¹⁰ In reality, the Armenians were disappointed upon learning about the Russian authorities' intention to settle the captured territories of Western Armenia with Russians and Cossacks.

Poltavtsev believes that after the decision to disband the druzhinas, taking into account the sentiments of the Armenians, they decided to organize regular units from the Armenians: six rifle battalions with 5,719 soldiers and officers¹¹¹, and on September 11 and 30, 1917, it was allowed to form two Armenian rifle brigades, one of which operated in Persia. Each of the brigades consisted of 2 rifle regiments.¹¹²

Poltavtsev notes that in addition to the Armenians, a Georgian rifle battalion and a cavalry regiment, and an Assyrian rifle battalion were organized. A hundred was formed from the Transcaucasian Tatars. Neither the commander, Khan Khoysky, nor his subordinates had any idea of military affairs.¹¹³ It can be assumed that the formation of the hundred was merely a propaganda step, as it did not participate in combat operations.

¹⁰⁸ Srvandzdyants Hamazasp (1873-1921), figure in the Armenian liberation movement, commander of the 3rd volunteer druzhina, member of the ARF.

¹⁰⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 10.

¹¹⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 10 back.

¹¹¹ Nazaryan 1999: 73.

¹¹² Nazaryan 1999: 129-130.

¹¹³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 11.

The Caucasian Front of World War I in the Memories of Participants and Eyewitnesses



ARMENIAN OFFICERS IN THE WORLD WAR I. OFFICERS OF THE ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA. 1914-1920: HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY.



Caucasian front of the First World War. 1914-1917. Collection of documents. Moscow.



Poltavtsev's next meeting with the Armenian brigade takes place in the summer of 1917, when he held the position of Chief of Staff of the VII Caucasian Rifle Army Corps.¹¹⁴ The corps was stationed in Atropatene. The Armenian brigade and the IV Caucasian Cossack Division were located in the Baneh region, 150 versts southeast of Lake Urmia.¹¹⁵ The brigade consisted of volunteers and Armenian conscripts, and the commanders were Armenians.



76 mm mountain gun in action

The “innovations” of the Provisional Government formed after the February Revolution of 1917 dealt a heavy blow to Russian statehood. The order of March 1, 1917, required the immediate formation of elected committees of privates in the units of the Petrograd garrison, which became mandatory for the entire Russian army and navy.



Cossack centurion Fyodor Eliseev and his family

Poltavtsev reports that after the revolution, the army rapidly disintegrated¹¹⁶, the reason for which was the military committees, which in fact replaced the commanders,

¹¹⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 13.

¹¹⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 13.

¹¹⁶ As of August 1, 1917, the number of deserters on the front was 128,000, Nazaryan 1999: 92.

who had to coordinate all orders with the committees.¹¹⁷ As for the Armenians, Poltavtsev makes the following surprising, uncharacteristic confession: "...committees also existed in the Armenian units, but (did not interfere with the decisions of the command - R.S.) they maintained order and did not harm".¹¹⁸ From this, it can be concluded that the committees established in the Armenian units were formal; the Armenians had simply carried out the order of their superiors and created military committees because they were aware of the disaster that the disintegration of the army could cause to the Armenian people.



The personnel of the Persian Cossack brigade



Cossack cavalry



Кавказский фронтъ. Партия плѣнныхъ турокъ, взятыхъ въ періодъ алашкертскихъ боевъ.

Turkish soldiers captured during the Alashkert operation (June 26 – July 21, 1915)

In mid-June 1917, the VII Caucasian Army Corps launched an offensive in 4 important directions, which, according to Poltavtsev's confession, stopped due to the insubordination of the Russian units. They refused to continue the offensive; only the Armenian brigade carried out the operation¹¹⁹, which was quite successful; the Turks

¹¹⁷ The Socialist-Revolutionaries, represented by the infamous Yakov Blyumkin (1900-1929), also played a significant role in destabilizing the army in Persia, see Yemelyanov 1923: 178.

¹¹⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 13.

¹¹⁹ Actually, 4 battalions, with 3,000 soldiers and officers, see: The History of Armenia 2015: 602.

were defeated, and the Armenians captured several cannons.¹²⁰ The undertaken operation failed because false rumors spread that the Turks had managed to break through the rear of the Armenian brigade, which caused panic followed by a retreat. Poltavtsev is convinced that the Armenians could not be blamed. He assumed there had been treachery, but it was unknown who had spread the false rumors. Remaining true to his unfriendly attitude towards the Armenians, the general concludes that the instability of the Armenians reappeared, which manifested itself in a panicked flight.¹²¹



Turkish prisoners of war (Erzurum, February 1916)

The October Revolution of 1917 brought about serious changes. The Soviet government led by V. I. Lenin, in order to maintain power, began negotiations with the Quadruple Alliance countries. The Transcaucasian Seim, which replaced the Transcaucasian Special Committee, did not recognize the Bolshevik government and its proclaimed Soviet power. An armistice was signed on the Caucasian Front in Erzinka, after which the Russian army began to massively abandon the front. After the orders of the Bolshevik leaders L. Trotsky and V. Lenin on December 10, the collapse of the Caucasian Front accelerated¹²². Mass desertion began. The Russian army withdrew from the Caucasian Front. The soldiers wanted to return to Russia, where “they were dividing the land, factories, plants, and houses”¹²³. Therefore, certain steps were taken to form national military units. In Poltavtsev’s opinion, the Transcaucasian army, composed of Armenians, Georgians, and Caucasian Tatars, was not able to replace the six army corps that had left the front. As an example, he cites the VII Caucasian Army Corps, which occupied a 400-verst long area. In his assessment: “In essence, that (the replacement of Russian troops - R.S.) was a fairy-tale dream”.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 13 and back.

¹²¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 13 back.

¹²² The History of Armenia 2015: 599.

¹²³ Yemelyanov 1923: 179.

¹²⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 13 back. As of December 18, 1916, there were 19,436 Armenian and 16,115 Georgian reservists in the Caucasian Military District, see Artizov *et al.* (eds) 2020: 637.



Russian artillery calculation near Erzinka (1916, spring)

Regardless of everything, the formation of national military units begins. At that time, there were one Georgian infantry and one cavalry regiment, three Armenian infantry and one Assyrian battalion. It was planned to form Armenian, Georgian, Assyrian, and Russian volunteer units. According to Poltavtsev's testimony: "The Armenians worked most diligently of all, as they understood what threatened their nation... They are forming the largest number of troops of all arms. The Georgians did something, but their troops did not reach the front..., only one officer battalion was formed from the Russians¹²⁵ under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Yefremov, which, together with the Armenians, bravely operated near Kars and Alexandropol..."¹²⁶ Poltavtsev makes no mention that the creation of the Armenian armed forces met with the resistance of the Georgians and Tatars, "who did not tolerate the Armenian military-political dominance in the Caucasus and Western Armenia".¹²⁷

In Atropatene, Poltavtsev, as the commander of the Azerbaijani detachment, is instructed to organize battalions from the local Armenians and Tatars. He complains that the undertaking is unsuccessful because he did not have real authority. The Assyrians, under the leadership of Agha Petros¹²⁸, organize a combat unit. The Armenian unit, which numbered 80 people, is headed by Ensign Stepanyan.¹²⁹ Poltavtsev accuses the Armenians and Assyrians of allegedly looting and killing many civilians in the city of Urmia. On July 17, 1917, he submits a report to the command about the aforementioned events.¹³⁰

¹²⁵ It consisted of 300 officers, see: The History of Armenia 2015: 601.

¹²⁶ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet back and 14.

¹²⁷ The History of Armenia 2015: 598.

¹²⁸ Petros Elia of Baz (1880-1932), commander of the Assyrian forces. He served as the temporary translator for the Russian Consulate in Urmia. He was repeatedly praised by the Russian command, see: Artizov *et al.* (eds) 2020: 985-986.

¹²⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 14.

¹³⁰ Artizov *et al.* (eds) 2020: 981.



Petros Elia of Baz

Poltavtsev resigns from the post of commander of the Azerbaijani detachment and in mid-February 1918, after handing over the post to Colonel Kuzmin, comes to Julfa with the army corps headquarters.¹³¹ As for Kuzmin's forces, which were an officer battalion, in our opinion, Poltavtsev does not provide accurate information. The "Azerbaijani Special Detachment" was organized from the local Armenians and Assyrians, headed by Colonel Kuzmin, and the chief of staff was Colonel Goretsky. The detachment's composition was replenished on March 21, 1918, by the Armenian battalion that had retreated from Van.¹³²

According to his memoirs, the Muslim residents of Urmia and the Persian authorities, upon learning of the advance of the Turkish army, began military operations. Fierce battles took place on May 7. The "Azerbaijani Special Detachment" defended about 80,000¹³³ Armenian and Assyrian refugees, who suffered significant losses from the forces of Halil Bey (6th and 12th divisions) and Kurdish bandits. The Russian battalion, overcoming great difficulties through the mountains, managed to reach Northern Mesopotamia and join the British troops.¹³⁴



Andranik with his comrades in arms in Syunik (1918)

Probably, Poltavtsev, presenting the aforementioned operation, did not have the opportunity to compare it with other testimonies or sources. Fortunately, the report of an Armenian officer, a participant in the joint combat operations of the Armenian-Assyrian

¹³¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 14 back.

¹³² Sahakyan 2011: 348.

¹³³ Sahakyan 2011: 351.

¹³⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 14 back.

forces with the Russian battalion in Northern Persia from March 21, 1918, has been preserved, in which the author presents the real picture.¹³⁵

Arriving in Julfa, Poltavtsev cannot reach Tbilisi because the railway and road were controlled by the Tatars, who were constantly clashing with the Armenians. He admits that the local Armenians had a benevolent attitude towards the Russians, so they preferred to stay in Julfa until mid-April 1918.¹³⁶



The Turkish attack on Armenia in 1918

delivering a worthy counterblow to the Tatars, as the personnel consisted of battle-hardened and experienced servicemen.

Unlike the Armenians, the Tatars had no experience in military service; their commanders were beys who similarly had no idea about military service, so the Armenians were in a more favorable position. As an example, he cites the clash near Nakhichevan. The Tatars attacked the Armenians in a large crowd, but almost all of them were destroyed by machine gun fire. It remained incomprehensible to the surviving Tatars why, having an enormous numerical superiority, they could not achieve results. They explained their defeat by some miraculous means the Armenians possessed. "We know," they said, "a rifle, we know a top (that is, a cannon), but what is this that goes ta-ta-ta-, and people fall like logs, we don't know".¹³⁷



American-made Lewis gun (1913-1963)

Poltavtsev, true to his adopted policy, hastens to add that the Tatars, who numerically outnumbered the Armenians, their ignorance or backwardness was temporary. They were waiting for the Ottoman army to

¹³⁵ For more details, see Sahakyan 2011.

¹³⁶ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 14 back.

¹³⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 15.

nullify the Armenians' combat superiority.¹³⁸

As for the Armenians, Poltavtsev gives the following assessment: "Like all Eastern peoples, the Armenians, in general, are prone to exaggerations and extremes. Success intoxicates them and makes them arrogant and conceited, failure leads to a state of panic. Being balanced and practical by nature, they nevertheless easily succumb to excitement".¹³⁹ As an example, he cites Andranik, who in 1918 was supposed to defend Erzurum. And when the Turkish army launched an offensive, the Armenian army, almost without any resistance, began to retreat, destroying Turkish villages. In the general's opinion, the Armenians should not have taken such a step, as they only further enraged the Turks.¹⁴⁰

In Julfa, they were cut off from the rest of the world, but when they installed a radio station, they were able to get some information. Thus, it was a surprise for the Russians that the Germans had captured Kharkov and Rostov and were continuing to advance. The Russian military believed that all this was



French "Lebel" rifle (French: Fusil Modèle 1886 dit "Fusil Lebel") (1887-1940). The Russian army was also armed with these rifles

misinformation that should not be trusted. After such a short transition, Poltavtsev again refers to Armenian-Tatar relations. Armenian military units are sent in the direction of Alexandropol-Kars-Erzurum against the Turks. He reports that the command of the troops is carried out by General T. Nazarbekyan.¹⁴¹



General V. K. Karpov

Being in an isolated situation, the command of the Russian detachment considers its main task to be the defense of Julfa, for which a garrison is organized and guard posts are placed around the settlement. The Tatars occasionally approached the guard posts in small groups, after which a shootout would begin. However, during one such shootout, a terrible panic arose in Julfa; even a cavalry platoon was sent to help. A rumor spread among the population that the Tatars were advancing with large forces. In reality, there had been no serious attack. The battle lasted two hours and ended without any losses.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 15.

¹³⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 15 back.

¹⁴⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 15 back.

¹⁴¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 15 back and 16.

¹⁴² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 16.



The command of the Caucasian Army in 1917



Circassian Hamidiye

It follows from Poltavtsev's testimony that there were hostile forces in Julfa that, if necessary, would create artificial panic among the troops and the population. This was probably done deliberately, as after this incident, a military council was convened, headed by the corps commander, General V. K. Karpov.¹⁴³ Poltavtsev was the first to speak, proposing to contact the Armenian command and join them. Next, a young Armenian officer spoke, assuring that with the available forces, it was possible to resist the enemy. He proposed taking punitive actions against the Tatars, which would make it possible to stop their attacks. According to Poltavtsev's confession, the officer's proposal was approved by those present.¹⁴⁴

In Poltavtsev's opinion, the Armenians took no steps to establish good neighborly relations with the Tatars. The question arises, how should this have been done if the Tatars had an openly hostile position, and besides, were waiting for the Turkish army hour by hour?¹⁴⁵ In such a case, why should they have been interested in normalizing relations with the Armenians? In our opinion, the general either did not notice this important circumstance or deliberately overlooked it.

In mid-April 1918, information was received that a representative of the Tatars was coming to Nakhichevan on a peace mission, and since the area between Nakhichevan and Julfa was controlled by the Armenians, and Nakhichevan was in the hands of the Tatars, it was necessary to have the permission of both sides to move. The Armenians invite General Karpov to participate in the negotiations. The latter takes Poltavtsev and General Gashimbekov¹⁴⁶ with him. Poltavtsev is convinced that the detachment

¹⁴³ Karpov Vladimir Kirill (1864-after 1926), Lieutenant General. Chief of Communications of the Caucasian Army and Navy (20.10.1914-to 12.08.1917), Commander of the Caucasian Combined Infantry Division (02.04.1-12.08.1917). Chief of Supply of the 7th Caucasian Separate Army Corps, Acting Commander of the same corps (12.01-19.04.1918).

¹⁴⁴ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 16 back.

¹⁴⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 17 back.

¹⁴⁶ Aliar-Bek Mehti Gashimbekov (1856-1920), Major General. Commander of the 3rd Caucasian Rifle Brigade (10.07.1916), Head of the General Administration of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic (1919-19.02.1920).

commander agrees to participate, hoping to get to Tbilisi. Poltavtsev also had such a desire, but for some unknown reason, he only mentions his commander. They knew that there was a train with Russian passengers in Nakhichevan who had been waiting for two months for the opportunity to travel to Tbilisi.¹⁴⁷



General Aliar-Bek Gashimbekov

The negotiations last for two months. The Armenian side demands the withdrawal of the Tatar armed formations, monetary compensation to the families of the Armenians killed by the Tatars, and the extradition of the criminals who committed the murders, some of whom are named personally.

A Tatar negotiator from Yerevan makes efforts to reconcile the parties. Eventually, peace is established, although it is clear to everyone that it is temporary. This circumstance allows the Russians to leave for Yerevan by train.¹⁴⁸

Poltavtsev notes that both Armenians and Tatars are feverishly arming themselves. The general reports that the Armenian side had officially received weapons and ammunition, while the Tatars were buying them from retreating Russian soldiers, as the Provisional Government had refused to hand over weapons to them. He even mentions the prices: “A combat rifle cost three rubles, and a cannon is a little more expensive”.¹⁴⁹ It follows from this that the Tatars were worse armed, which does not correspond to reality. Poltavtsev forgets the Shamkhor massacre of Russian soldiers and officers in January 1918 carried out by the Tatars¹⁵⁰, during which they seized a large quantity of weapons and ammunition.



The coat of arms of the Republic of Armenia

¹⁴⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 17.

¹⁴⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 17 back.

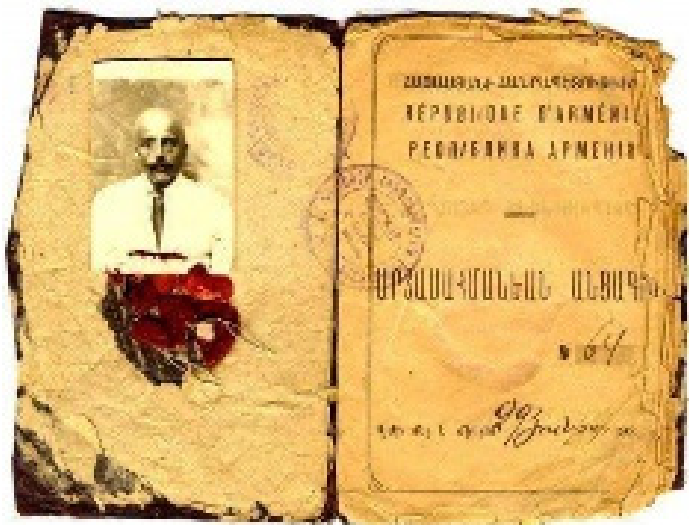
¹⁴⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 17 back.

¹⁵⁰ Baikov 1923: 113-114; Kadishev 1960: 36; Mukhanov 2019: 57-97.

Samples of RA passports



Zabel Yesayan's passport



Foreign passport of the Republic of Armenia: Issued to Georgi Gurdjieff



RA foreign passport



RA foreign passport



Armenian banknotes



General Movses Silikyan

On April 17, 1918, the train departs from Nakhichevan and arrives in Yerevan in the evening. Here, Poltavtsev meets his colleagues, among whom was General M. Silikyan¹⁵¹, about whom he notes: "He is a very good officer".¹⁵²

On April 18, on the way to Tbilisi, they meet General T. Nazarbekyan in Alexandropol. "The poor old man was in a state of despair. He showed us the fires of the Turkish positions near

Alexandropol and said that as soon as the Turks attacked, his troops would flee. In his opinion, nothing good was foreseen for the Armenians in general... he would do what the nation demanded of him. In his spirit, he was Russian, a supporter of a united, indivisible, and great Russia".¹⁵³



Old Alexandropol

On April 19, Poltavtsev arrives in Tbilisi. He notes that the power was in the hands of the Transcaucasian Commissariat¹⁵⁴ and had no separatist sentiments towards Russia, but was against the Bolsheviks and preferred republican Russia.¹⁵⁵

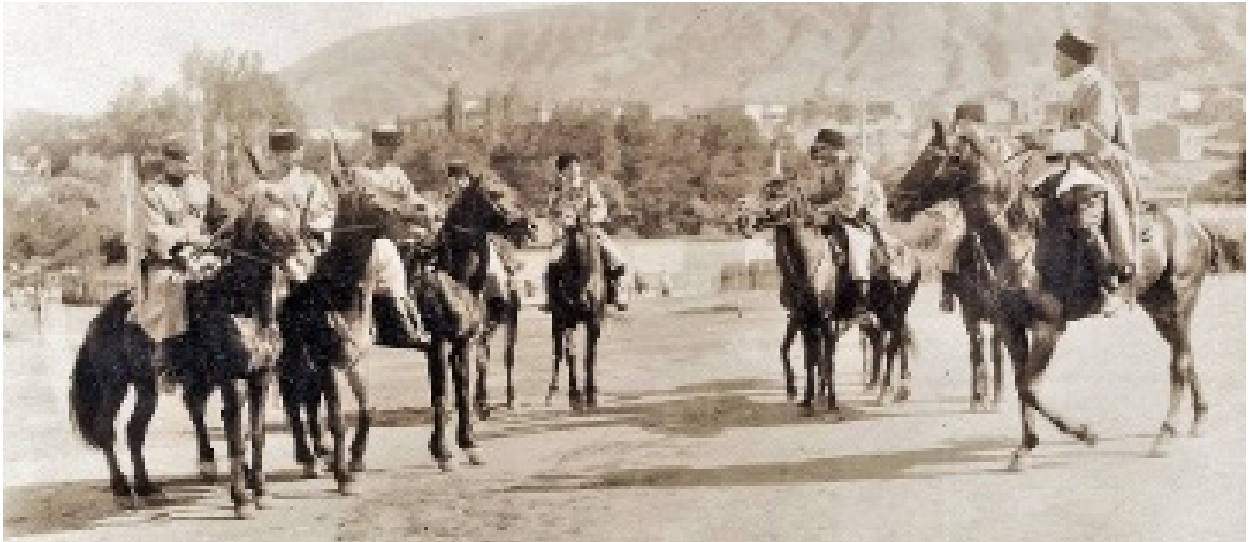
¹⁵¹ Silikyan Movses (Silikov Moisey, 1862-1937), Udi by nationality, lieutenant general (22.09.1917), Russian and Armenian military figure. Victim of Stalinist violence.

¹⁵² GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 17 back.

¹⁵³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 18.

¹⁵⁴ The author is mistaken. At that time, the Transcaucasian Special Committee (OZAKOM) was operating. The Transcaucasian Commissariat was formed in November 1917.

¹⁵⁵ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 18.



Georgian cavalry (1918)

Poltavtsev notes that the war continued and only the Armenians were fighting against the Turks. The Turks managed to capture Alexandropol and march on Yerevan. The Turkish advance was dangerous only for the Armenians. Under such conditions, the Transcaucasian government, where Georgians and Tatars predominated, decided to declare its independence.¹⁵⁶ The Georgians received the patronage of the Germans, and the Tatars had no problems with their co-ethnics and co-religionists, the Turks. Germans also fought against the Ottoman forces in the Georgian army.¹⁵⁷ During the clashes, according to Poltavtsev, the Georgians had 3 to 5 killed, who were “brought to Tbilisi and buried as national heroes”¹⁵⁸.



Georgian soldiers (1918)

¹⁵⁶ For more details, see Melikyan 2025.

¹⁵⁷ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 18 back. The Turks also shot captured German soldiers, see Baum 2010: 143.

¹⁵⁸ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 19.



Armenian cavalry and infantry in Sardarapat (May 1918)

Armenian population.

Poltavtsev mentions the Treaty of Batum of June 4, 1918, as a result of which the territory of Armenia was severely limited.¹⁶⁰ He notes that T. Nazarbekyan retired, while Andranik continued the struggle against the Turks.



General Hovhannes
Hakhverdyan (1873-1931)

Poltavtsev appreciates the attitude of the locals in the Transcaucasian republics towards the Russians. He is particularly dissatisfied with the Georgians, whom, in his opinion, the Germans partially incited. Azerbaijan hires the Russians they need, while others begin to be persecuted. "The attitude towards the Russians was best in Armenia... Many Russian officers and officials served with them, and the Russians were treated quite well, like their own".¹⁶¹

The Minister of War of the Republic of Armenia, General Hovhannes Hakhverdyan¹⁶², whom Poltavtsev describes as a distinguished and combat-ready officer of the General Staff, at the mediation of T. Nazarbekyan, wanted Poltavtsev to take the post of Chief of the General Staff of the Republic of Armenia's armed forces, which could not be realized due to the unfavorable conditions.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 19.

¹⁶⁰ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 19.

¹⁶¹ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 19.

¹⁶² Hakhverdyan Hovhannes (Ivan Akhverdov, 1873-1931), Major General of the Russian Army (21.01.1916), Lieutenant General of the Armenian Army (1918), participant in the Russo-Japanese (1904-1905) and World War I (1914-1918) wars. Graduate of the Nikolaev Academy of the General Staff (1902). Minister of War of the Republic of Armenia (04.1918-03.1919), Chief of the General Staff (1919), Assistant to the Minister of War (Deputy, 05.1920-11.1921). Victim of Stalinist violence (25.04.1931). Acquitted (20.09.1989).

¹⁶³ GARF, fund R 6120, inventory 1, file 1, sheet 19.

In September 1918, V. N. Poltavtsev left Tbilisi for the Volunteer Army to participate in the battles against the Bolsheviks, and information about the events in Armenia is scarce. In his opinion, there were two opinions among the Armenians regarding the future of Armenia: some believed that Armenia should link its fate with Russia liberated from the Bolsheviks, while others with Soviet Russia.¹⁶⁴

In conclusion, despite the fact that General N. Poltavtsev tries to underestimate the Armenian volunteers and Armenian servicemen who served in the Russian regular army in his memoirs, nevertheless, as an eyewitness and direct participant, he provides additional material on the events of 1914-1918.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

ON THE INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF CILICIAN ARMENIA IN THE 1320s

Aram Hovhannisyan*

Abstract

The work is dedicated to one of the most complex and difficult periods in the history of Cilician Armenia – the 1320s. This was a time when the Mongols were no longer allies, and the Armenian kingdom was fighting alone against the surrounding Muslim states. Drawing upon information provided by medieval primary sources, as well as considering the viewpoints present in modern scholarly literature, the author attempts to present the internal political events and the details of the power struggle in Cilician Armenia during this crucial period. Particular attention is paid to the murder of the regents by the Armenian king in Adana on January 27, 1329, the details of the event, and the individuals involved. The author seeks to substantiate all the reasons that led to this brutal crime, after which Levon IV began to rule the Cilician Armenian kingdom single-handedly.

Keywords: Cilicia, state, regent, murder, king, queen, sparapet, governance.

Medieval historians provide different, contradictory information regarding the number of Levon IV's regents. According to Abu'l-Fida, Levon IV had only one regent¹, although he does not mention his name. According to the chronologies of Hetum, Lord of Korikos, and Marajakht Vasil, the number of Oshin's regents was two: "On Thursday, June 19, 1320, the God-loving King Oshin died. His son Levon succeeded him, for whom Payl Oshin of Korikos and Baron Hetum of Akhtuts were appointed as regents for a period of 10 years".²

As we can see, this information is significant because it not only mentions the names of the Armenian king's regents but also informs us that the regency was to last for ten years. In other words, until the king came of age.

In contrast to the aforementioned accounts, one of the authors of the 14th-century Armenian manuscript colophons³ and one of the continuators of Samuel Anetsi's work⁴ consider the number of Oshin's regents to be three. These three mentioned individuals

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Received 13.12.2024, revised 15.02.2025, accepted 04.03.2025

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¹ Nalbandyan 1965: 247.

² Matevosyan 1963: 192.

³ Khachikyan 1950: 209.

⁴ Samuel Anetsi 1893: 157.

were Oshin, Lord of Korikos, his brother Constantine, and Hetum of Nghir. However, the viewpoints on the number of regents do not end here, and the 14th-century author Hovhannes Dardel mentions four regents, probably also including Marajakht Baldwin.⁵

As we observe, medieval historians provide different, contradictory information regarding the number of King Levon IV's regents, and it is naturally difficult to give a clear assessment of which historian's information is the most accurate. We believe that the information provided by one of the continuators of Samuel Anetsi's work and the author of one of the colophons, according to whom the number of regents was three, may be the most likely, as according to tradition, there was always more than one regent, and these three individuals were very active figures in the Cilician Armenian kingdom. L. Ter-Petrosyan has addressed the researched issue, expressing the opinion that the appointment of several regents aimed to create a mechanism of mutual control to exclude the possibility of one of them seizing power.⁶

It is very natural that in the early years of Levon's reign, the king did not have real power in the country. In the initial period, Oshin, in particular, showed great activity, and by assuming the position of payl, he concentrated all power in the country in his hands. His power increased even further when he married the widowed Queen of Cilicia, Jeanne, in 1320, and the following year he married his daughter Alice to King Levon IV, as evidenced by the medieval historians, one of the continuators of Samuel Anetsi's work⁷, one of the continuators of Smbat Sparapet's work⁸, and Hovhannes Dardel: "He married his daughter Alice to the king".⁹ Although his actions did not end there, a clear proof of which is the fact that he gave the position of sparapet in the Cilician Armenian kingdom to his brother, thus securing the army's support for himself. Indeed, Oshin's actions consolidated his absolute power in the kingdom. This situation continued until the Armenian king came of age.

Becoming approximately 20 years old, King Levon IV decided to get rid of his regents and remove from the scene those who, in all probability, would not give him power.

Thus, on January 27, 1329, a murder was carried out by Levon IV, which claimed the lives of the Armenian king's father-in-law and regent Oshin of Korikos, his brother, the sparapet Constantine, and Queen Alice. One of the minor chroniclers notes the following: "King Levon, son of King Oshin, killed Lord Oshin of Korikos, who was his father-in-law, and his brother".¹⁰

⁵ Hovhannes Dardel 1891: 28.

⁶ Ter-Petrosyan 2007: 397.

⁷ Samuel Anetsi 1893: 157.

⁸ Smbat Sparapet 1856: 128.

⁹ Dardel 1891: 28.

¹⁰ Hakobyan 1951: 88. According to G. Mikayelyan, at that time the Armenian king was only 19 years old (Mikayelyan 2007: 461).

In other words, the king got rid of his regents and wife, who would hardly allow his full rule in the future. According to researcher D. Tinoyan, the murder was organized in such a way that neither Payl Oshin nor Sparapet Constantine were aware of the planned arrest and execution.¹¹ One can agree with the researcher's viewpoint, because if Payl Oshin and Constantine knew about the planned conspiracy, they would hardly have left with only five people.

There are different viewpoints in scholarly literature regarding this atrocity.

Thus, according to K. Mutafyan, Levon poisoned his father-in-law and queen¹². In contrast to this viewpoint, the renowned Armenologist René Grousset expresses the opinion that the young king arrested and executed his regent¹³. Researchers G. Mikayelyan¹⁴, D. Tinoyan¹⁵, and others also agree with René Grousset's opinion. We believe that the second viewpoint is more likely, as it is supported by the information of a number of medieval historians, among whom we can single out Samuel Anetsi¹⁶, the continuator of Smbat Sparapet's history¹⁷, Hovhannes Dardel¹⁸, one of the minor chroniclers of the 13th-18th centuries¹⁹, and other medieval authors.

In fact, it can be stated that the king was so dissatisfied with the regents' rule that he killed them all at once. Here, the fact that Levon also removed his wife from the scene is also interesting, perhaps fearing that if she remained alive, she might seek revenge on the king in the future. Regarding the queen's murder, G. Mikayelyan expresses the opinion that she was also accused of infidelity.²⁰ Unfortunately, the researcher does not provide any other details about this nor does he indicate the primary source he used. Although Mikayelyan does not indicate the primary source he used, we find similar information in one of the continuators of Samuel Anetsi's work: "The queen was also killed for her unworthy and numerous shameful deeds".²¹ And it is not excluded that the renowned researcher used this very author.

In fact, the information provided by the continuator of Samuel Anetsi's work substantiates the real reason for the king's murder.

We should also note that King Levon IV, nevertheless, must have had a sufficiently serious reason and political support to carry out such an atrocity.

¹¹ Tinoyan 2011: 41.

¹² Mutafyan 2001: 464.

¹³ Grousset 2005: 345.

¹⁴ Mikayelyan 2007: 461.

¹⁵ Tinoyan 2011: 41.

¹⁶ Samuel Anetsi 1893: 158.

¹⁷ Smbat 1856: 123-124.

¹⁸ Dardel 1891: 30-31.

¹⁹ Hakobyan 1951: 88.

²⁰ Mikayelyan 2007: 461.

²¹ Samuel Anetsi 1893: 158.

Now let's examine the real reason for this murder and who the participants were. Medieval historians provide some information about this assassination. In particular, one of the continuators of Samuel Anetsi's work informs us that before the murder, nobles dissatisfied with Oshin's policies had gathered in the royal court and advised Levon IV to get rid of his regents.²²

Information regarding the aforementioned issue is also provided by the continuator of Smbat Sparapet's work, who notes that the nobles were also complaining that years ago, Levon's regent had seized many territories and fortresses in the country, of which he was not the rightful owner.²³ In other words, taking advantage of temporary successes, the payl had committed illegalities. Hovhannes Dardel also provides some information about this, noting that the nobles had told the king about all the evil and illegalities that his father-in-law and regent had committed in previous years: "And when King Levon IV ascended the royal throne, various nobles and people told the Armenian king all the evil and treachery that Oshin had committed and how he had married the king's mother, Hovhannes".²⁴

The fact that, taking advantage of absolute power, Oshin and his brother could have allowed themselves a number of illegalities may be close to reality, and the opposition nobles, taking advantage of the king's coming of age, tried to inform the latter about this and turn him against the regents.

In fact, over the years, Payl Oshin and his brother had managed to acquire a considerable number of enemies. At this point, it was advantageous for the Armenian king to gain new allies, and it is not excluded that these murders were carried out with the help of a part of the nobles. In addition, according to the same source, King Oshin had set the term of office for the regents of his ten-year-old son for a period of ten years: "The land of Cilicia was to be ruled by regents who would help the underage heir and serve honestly for a period of ten years. After the ten years were completed, they were to hand over the royal throne and the governance of the state to Levon IV".²⁵ Consequently, the ten years had already passed, and if the king had not carried out this murder, perhaps the regents would have killed him and completely seized power in Cilician Armenia. It is not excluded that the political opponents of Oshin and his brother tried to use this circumstance with the king as well. Although it does not entirely fit into logic, M. Ormanian points this out, offering an interesting viewpoint that is also worthy of attention. The great researcher expresses the opinion that if Payl Oshin had wanted to get rid of King Levon, he would hardly have waited ten years for him to come of age.²⁶

One can agree with this viewpoint as well, because in the previous ten years, power in Cilician Armenia was entirely in the hands of the regent brothers, and it would

²² Samuel Anetsi 1893: 158.

²³ Smbat Sparapet 1856: 123-124.

²⁴ Dardel 1891: 30.

²⁵ Dardel 1891: 30.

²⁶ Ormanian 2001: 2159.

not have been difficult for them to eliminate the underage king, which was not done. Naturally, after that, power in Cilician Armenia would have remained with his daughter, who was the Armenian queen at that time.

According to the same M. Ormanian, Payl Oshin used violence against royal figures during the regency, even against the king's aunt Zablun and her children, whom he even had imprisoned²⁷, which could also have aroused the king's displeasure. These accounts of the latter are also confirmed by information reported by medieval historians. The basis of this policy of Payl Oshin was, of course, the fear of losing his power, and the king's aunt and her sons could have had more rights by law than they did.

And finally, Hovhannes Dardel provides an interesting account, according to whose testimony the regents had killed the Armenian king's father, King Oshin, years earlier by getting him drunk and poisoning him.²⁸

As we can see, Hovhannes Dardel provides quite interesting information, but the latter's account is not confirmed by any other historian. Although that does not mean that this information may be far from the truth. Although on the other hand, according to D. Tinoyan, Oshin had already been ill for several months before his death, and he himself had appointed Oshin of Korikos as the regent for his son²⁹. If the king was indeed ill and he himself appointed Oshin of Korikos as the regent for his son and the kingdom, then in such a case, the viewpoint related to the king's poisoning, according to us, is negated.

In addition, as we can see from the author's accounts, Oshin had married the Armenian king's mother, which may also not have been to Levon IV's liking, and it is not excluded that he had done so forcibly. And if King Levon IV could not stop Payl Oshin's aspirations in his minority, then after coming of age, a different situation arose, and he tried to punish the regent.

Thus, King Levon IV, having come of age, waited for a convenient moment to punish the latter, and finding allies, got rid of his regents and wife, whom he probably did not love or trust, and that marriage was more of a political nature. The fact that the continuator of the historian Smbat's work spoke above about Oshin's past illegalities and the seizure of fortresses, and now blames the entire fault of the murder on slanderers, is also interesting.³⁰ No matter how much the slanderers tried to convince the Armenian king to commit such a murder, nevertheless, King Levon IV must have had a sufficiently weighty justification for such an act. We believe these were the following:

1. The most serious hypothesis is that perhaps the king had information that the regents were preparing to kill him and completely seize power in Cilician Armenia, but the

²⁷ Ormanian 2001: 2148.

²⁸ Dardel 1891: 30.

²⁹ Tinoyan 2011: 43.

³⁰ Smbat Sparapet 1856: 124.

king made a preemptive move. There is direct evidence of this in one of the continuators of Samuel Anetsi's work.³¹

2. King Levon took into account the dissatisfaction of a part of the Cilician nobles and tried to punish the regents who had previously committed illegalities.
 3. It is not excluded that the Armenian king was prompted to take this step by his mother, the queen, whom the regent Oshin had forcibly married, and the queen was also dissatisfied with the regents' policies, especially with Payl Oshin.
 4. The ruler of Cilicia could not tolerate the disrespectful treatment and betrayal by his wife.
 5. Having the support of a number of nobles and his mother, Levon, by killing the regents, wanted to single-handedly carry out the governance of Cilician Armenia.
- Finally, it should be noted that as a result of the murder of the regents and the queen on January 27, 1329, in the Cilician Armenian kingdom, a palace coup took place, and the ten-year sole rule of the regents came to an end, and the entire governance of the country passed to the young King Levon IV.

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³¹ Samuel Anetsi 1893: 158.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

THE REFUGEE ISSUE IN THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN THE CONTEXT OF STATE BUILDING IN 1990-1991

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Abstract

In July 1990, the newly elected Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR began state building by adopting the Declaration of Independence. In the context of the enormous problems of state-building, the Karabakh issue was sometimes relegated to the background. However, the intensification of the policy of persecution of Armenians in Azerbaijan, new manifestations of the mass deportation of Armenians with the consent and participation of the power structures of the agonizing Soviet empire forced the Supreme Council to bring it back to the agenda. The article deals with the discussion of the issues of mass deportation of Armenians in the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia and the forced change of the policy vector in the context of state-building.

Keywords: Mass displacement, refugees, deportation, Supreme Council, state-building.

Introduction

The Karabakh movement that began in 1988 shocked Armenian society, brought it out of a long slumber, awakened national aspirations, gave rise to new ideas, and formed a new reality. The initiator group, the “Karabakh” Committee, hoped that the issue could be resolved in the context of the democratization processes that had begun in the USSR under the “Perestroika” policy. The first blow to that belief was the Sumgait tragedy, when the words “massacre,” “refugees,” and “deportation” reappeared in the discourse of Armenian history. This not only led to a loss of faith in “Perestroika,” but also the Soviet authorities’ tendency to cover up that grave crime and the ethnic cleansing carried out in Azerbaijan and immigration of refugees shattered the myth of protection and security within the Soviet Union and the struggle for independence began.

As a result of the parliamentary elections held in May and June 1990, a new political elite formed in the squares of the republic’s cities and hardened by struggle, entered the parliament of the Armenian SSR. This broke the monopoly of the Communist Party in the parliament, and 45% of the parliamentary mandates were received by the members of the Armenian National Movement (ANM), and one mandate

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Received 04.12.2024, revised 23.03.2025, accepted 29.04.2025.

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by the National Self-Determination Union (NSU). At the beginning of its work, the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR approved the agenda for the coming months, which in terms of its content was an agenda for independence from the USSR. The Karabakh issue was relegated to the background and reduced to developing a program package on the socio-economic development of Artsakh. The leaders of the ANM who came to power were convinced that it was impossible to solve two very complex problems - state-building and the Artsakh issue - in the same period, and the issue of the return of national territories could be solved only by a powerful state. As a result of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on August 23, 1990, Armenia officially took the path of independence, preparatory work began for an independence referendum, and in parallel, a legislative framework for the transitional period was being developed. However, the anti-Armenian policy in the Azerbaijani SSR was gaining new momentum. Soon, a new wave of displacements of Armenians began, which forced the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia to return to the problems of the Artsakh and seek ways out of the existing situation.

The article covers the period from mid-1990 to the end of 1991, which represents the initial, breakthrough stage in the formation of the new state system of the Republic of Armenia. During this period, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia began to function not as a structure of the USSR union republic, but as the highest body of power creating the legislative foundations of the state building of Armenia in the process of gaining independence. During this period, the Supreme Council played a key role in making political decisions, defining foreign and domestic policy directions, as well as in resolving urgent problems facing the newly created state, including the refugee crisis. This period ends with the collapse of the USSR. Another feature of this period is that the displacement was carried out by Soviet military units and the Azerbaijani OMON (Special purpose mobile unit, the riot police) and is characterized as the implementation of the Soviet State's policy of terror against its own citizens. The topic of the article is relevant since the refugee problem continues to remain one of the key issues of Armenia's domestic and foreign policy, especially in the conditions of regional instability and new waves of displacements. In this context, the political perception of the 1990–1991 refugee crisis and the activities of the Supreme Council in responding to it are being reinterpreted as an attempt by the highest representative body of the newly formed state to provide political and legal solutions to refugee problems in unpredictable conditions.

The scientific source of the article is the materials of the 207 fund of the National Archives of Armenia, which include the minutes of the sessions of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia in 1990-1991. They include the ideas and positions expressed by the deputies, debates, as well as discussions and decisions made regarding the refugee issue. The analysis of the archival materials was carried out through content analysis appropriate for the topic, aiming to reveal the role of the Supreme Council in the process of policy formation towards refugees. In addition, in order to reveal the events, cases and issues addressed in the article, some scientific works were consulted, which contributed to the comprehensive study of the issue.

State terrorism in Getashen and the displacement of the Armenian population

The main concept of Armenia's independence and state building was reflected in the Declaration of Independence adopted on August 23, 1990. There were many problems: to gain independence from the USSR¹ as carefully and smoothly as possible over the next five years, to transform and democratize the political system, to gradually liberalize and decentralize economic management, to solve the accumulated problems in the disaster zone, etc. The Artsakh issue was temporarily overshadowed, although the Declaration of Independence stated that it was based on the joint decision of the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR and the National Council of Nagorno-Karabakh of December 1, 1989 "On the Reunification of the Armenian SSR and Nagorno-Karabakh."

There were already refugees in the republic from Sumgait, Kirovabad, Baku and other settlements of Azerbaijan, who were in a rather difficult mental, material, and social state. Taking into account the presence of a disaster zone in the republic and the numerous problems associated with it, there was no hope that the situation of the refugees would improve in the near future. In March 1990, with the active support of the Soviet army and internal troops, the population of the Armenian-populated villages of Azat and Kamo in the Khanlar region was forcibly displaced. This was followed by violent actions in the Shahumyan region and the Getashen sub-region, and the Armenians were presented with an ultimatum to leave their homeland.² On September 3, 1990, at a closed session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia, deputies Vladimir Aghajanyan and Arkady Manucharov presented a report on the events taking place in Artsakh, Getashen, and Shahumyan.³ On September 5, 1990, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia made a special statement, which, in particular, stated that "unprecedentedly cruel and widespread human rights violations in Nagorno-Karabakh have already become a common phenomenon. Mass anti-Armenian massacres and pogroms carried out by mobs, the constant blockade of the province and all of Armenia, the state of emergency, periodic military operations against the civilian population, displacements, persecution of the pioneers of the national movement and people's deputies, strict censorship, mass falsification of information - all these are links in the chain of activities of the union authorities, which directed the entire military power of the empire against a people striving to manage their own destiny."⁴

On October 1, 1990, the Supreme Council adopted a decision to instruct the RA Council of Ministers to form a relevant body dealing with the issues of forcibly displaced persons, and in December 1990, the Committee on Refugee Issues under the RA

¹ The transition period of up to five years was envisaged by the USSR Law "On the Procedure for Resolving Issues Related to the Secession of a Union Republic from the USSR", adopted on April 3, 1990.

² National Archive of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as NAA), F. (fund) 207, c. (catalogue) 62, f. (file) 16, p.(page) 120-121:

³ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.16, p. 34.

⁴ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.17, p. 15.

Council of Ministers was established on the basis of the State Committee for the Reception and Settlement of Armenians Returning to the Armenian SSR.

Thanks to Moscow's support, the policy of deporting Armenians from Azerbaijan was taking on new shades. On January 14, 1991, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijani SSR adopted a decision to dissolve the Shahumyan region, it was annexed to the Kasum-Ismaïlov (Geranboy) region.⁵ In response, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia announced that the Republic of Armenia would take measures to ensure the safety of the life and property of the Armenian population. The statement noted that, taking advantage of the fact that the attention of the world community and the peoples living in the Soviet Union was focused on the events taking place in the Persian Gulf and Lithuania, the Azerbaijani authorities were aggravating the already tense situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Shahumyan region and the Getashen sub-region, and the Armenian Shahumyan administrative unit was being dissolved into a larger Azerbaijani region. This step had the same goal as the illegal actions against the Armenian-populated regions of Hadrut, Martuni, and Askeran in the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Region (NKAO).⁶ Murders of Armenians, burning of houses, and destruction of Armenian-populated villages had become commonplace in the NKAO and the Armenian-populated territories of Azerbaijan. A rather difficult socio-economic situation had been created in the Armenian-populated regions. In order to obtain more detailed information, the Chairman of the Special Commission on Artsakh Issues of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia, Seyran Baghdasaryan, was sent to Martunashen and Getashen. The agenda of the second session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia was also changed and a discussion was planned on "Work with the forcibly displaced persons", regarding which the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Armenia Supreme Council Standing Committee on the Disaster Zone and the Forcibly Displaced Persons were instructed to develop proposals.

The independence of Armenia created favorable conditions for Azerbaijan, whose leadership, relying on the support of the USSR power structures, planned to deport Armenians. This policy became especially active after the All-Union referendum of March 17, 1991, when Azerbaijan, along with eight other Soviet republics, voted in favor of preserving the USSR. The Supreme Council of Armenia had decided to hold the referendum on September 21, but it was already clear that public opinion would be in favor of independence. Moreover, the policy pursued by the Center contributed to the strengthening of independence sentiments. The Center adopted a very hostile attitude towards those republics that did not hold a referendum on March 17. The democratic movement in Russia was experiencing a temporary decline and it was impossible to confront the Center in these conditions. Many of the deputies also linked the intensification of the policy of deporting Armenians from Azerbaijan to the Ozal⁷-

⁵ Ghahramanyan 1993: 64.

⁶ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.2, p. 106.

⁷ T. Ozal was the President of the Republic of Turkey from 1989 to 1993.

Gorbachev meeting held in March of 1991, assuming that it was possible that there was a secret clause regarding Armenia in the signed document. In other words, if the massacres and forced deportations organized before were linked to the actions of nationalist elements in Azerbaijan, which operated with the consent of the Azerbaijani authorities and their covert support, the policy implemented in Getashen and the Shahumyan region could already be qualified as state terrorism with the participation of some high-ranking representatives of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. The beginning of the operation "Getashen" is presented as follows by Thomas de Waal: "On 10 April 1991, the decision was made to launch the operation against Getashen and Martunashen, and in the last two weeks of the month the three thousand villagers were gradually sealed off from the outside world. A cordon of troops surrounded the villages, and its telephone lines and electricity supply were cut".⁸ On April 25, 1991, an extraordinary plenary session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia was convened on this issue. On April 30, 1991, a telegram was broadcast from the Getashen radio station, starting with the distress signal 'SOS! SOS! SOS!' and stating that 'The Soviet army is destroying Soviet citizens. They are firing from the ground, from the air, from artillery, and automatic weapons... We cannot stand against the army with hunting rifles'.⁹

On May 2, 1991, the "Text of the Letter of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia and the Presidium of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia on the Violence Committed in the Villages of Getashen and Martunashen"¹⁰ was approved. In it, the armed forces of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs and the OMON (Special purpose mobile unit, the riot police) of Azerbaijan were accused of organizing violence and conducting military operations against the population of the villages of Getashen and Martunashen. The scheme of the atrocities had already been elaborated: to keep the population under a long siege, to deprive them of any contact with the outside world, to create an atmosphere of fear by various means, and then to conduct a "passport regime" check ostensibly to identify Armenian militants, in reality resorting to atrocities and deporting or creating such conditions that people would be forced to leave. Those who were leaving were forced to sign documents stating that they were leaving voluntarily.¹¹

Referring to these events, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan noted with regret "We are confronted by such an empire, a fascist regime, and here we can say that we lost this battle," we lost Getashen¹². Unlike the massacres of the previous period, the Soviet internal troops and the army were used here, which, naturally, could not be resisted for long.

⁸ Thomas de Waal 2003: 116.

⁹ Abrahamyan 2007: 269.

¹⁰ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 101-102.

¹¹ Thomas de Waal 2003: 117.

¹² NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.107, p. 18.

Attacks on the Border Villages of the Republic of Armenia

The leadership of the USSR power structures also tried to create an atmosphere of fear for the population of Armenia. Along with the bloody displacements in Getashen and Martunashen, on May 8, 1991, the Soviet army and the Azerbaijani OMON launched an aggression against the border settlements of the Republic of Armenia. The list of villages subjected to violence and destruction increased: Voskepar, Kirants, Tegh, Kornidzor, Shurnukh, Khoznavar, Artsvashen and other settlements of Armenia. The bombing and shelling of peaceful villages from the air and land was again described by the Soviet authorities as a “check of the passport regime”. “Four Russian parliamentary deputies arrived on the scene and one, Anatoly Shabad, stayed in the village.... Shabad says that he later realized the bombardment was meant to intimidate the civilians into submission rather than to hit the fighters”.¹³ Anatoly Shabad stayed in Voskepar for several days.

Later, he noted that he had the impression that “the problem is obviously clear for Azerbaijan. The village needs to be deported, the Armenian population needs to leave and that wedge needs to join Azerbaijan. In the current case, we are talking about direct aggression by the army against the territory of Armenia”.¹⁴ In other words, there was a suspicion that population displacements could also occur from the villages of Armenia, which worried the deputies of the Supreme Council.

According to the statement of the Supreme Council¹⁵, the Soviet army and internal troops did not even consider it necessary to observe international obligations related to a state of war, for example, the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, and carried out actions that were incompatible with the conditions of the state of emergency. The use of modern military equipment and firearms against the civilian population of the occupied territories, violence against and brutal murders of women and children, the elderly and the disabled, illegal arrests of leaders and ordinary employees of local government bodies, economic leaders, and police officers without any sanctions became the daily routine of the border settlements of Armenia, and false testimonies were extracted from Armenian prisoners of war called “hostages” through inhuman torture in order to substantiate the hypothesis defended by the country's president about the so-called “Armenian militants”.¹⁶

On May 12-13, 1991, a group of deputies of the Supreme Council headed by the acting chairman of the Standing Committee on the Establishment of Independent Statehood and National Policy, a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Council E.Yegoryan was sent to the Taush region. The group included members of the standing committees of the Supreme Council Kh.Bezirjanyan and A.Chakhoyan. The group was joined by Doctor of Law, Professor, and well-known human rights defender B.L.

¹³ Thomas de Waal 2003: 117-118.

¹⁴ Arevshatyan 1991.

¹⁵ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 112-114.

¹⁶ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 113.

Nazarov, who arrived from Moscow. They were fired upon from military helicopters between the villages of Paravakar and Tsaghkavan in the Taush region. The Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia qualified this as "another brazen manifestation of the policy of state terrorism unleashed by the center against the Armenian people and the Republic of Armenia"¹⁷. The Presidium of the Supreme Council demanded that the USSR Minister of Defense immediately put an end to the bandit attacks carried out by army units on the territory of the Republic of Armenia, and the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Armenia initiated a criminal case.

Discussions on the issue of Artsakh and independence in the Supreme Council

The results of the state terrorism were worrying and frightening. In addition to the fact that the number of refugees was increasing, the possible loss of homeland was becoming more and more alarming. For centuries, Nagorno-Karabakh, the territory of Shahumyan region, and Getashen sub-region was the homeland of Armenians, and now they were forced to emigrate. Their homes were either completely demolished or settled by Azerbaijanis. The Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia was looking for ways out. The Primakov-Nishanov plan proposed in the USSR was also discussed¹⁸. The program was proposed by the Chairman of the Council of Unions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR E. Primakov. On November 10, 1990, it was discussed in Moscow with L. Ter-Petrosyan and the president of Azerbaijan SSR A. Mutalibov.¹⁹ According to the program, first of all, all decisions regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region that had been adopted in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the USSR after February 20, 1988, were to be abolished, the dissolved Soviet authorities in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region were to be restored, and elections to the regional council and local councils were to be held. Azerbaijan was to adopt a special law that would guarantee the autonomy of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region within its territory. A five-kilometer zone was to be established between Armenia and Azerbaijan on each side, where units of the Soviet army and internal troops were to be temporarily stationed. Any type of blockade was to be lifted. The authorities of the two republics were to compensate for the losses of all refugees and forcibly displaced persons and normalize relations with each other.²⁰ Negotiations with the parliamentary groups of the two republics were to be conducted by R. Nishanov, Chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Naturally, recent events did not inspire confidence in either Azerbaijan's security guarantees or the Soviet army.

According to the Founding Chairman of the "Constitutional Rights Union" party, Member of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia H. Khachatryan, this

¹⁷ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 122.

¹⁸ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.108, p.25.

¹⁹ Primakov 2015:111.

²⁰ "Iravunk", November 30, 1990.

program became known in the republic in February 1991. Analyzing the situation, he noted that the state interest of Azerbaijan is to unite with Nakhichevan. He again voiced the opinion prevailing in political circles that it is possible that the new Soviet-Turkish treaty signed on March 12, 1991, may contain annexes that “provide for the Union to cede another part of the territories of Armenia to the allied side at this time. In particular, recent events have shown that through the Soviet army, the Azerbaijanis have occupied the most important strategic positions in the southern and northeastern regions of Armenia”.²¹ Attacks on Armenian border villages increased the alarm.

Two approaches were formed in the Supreme Council:

1. To reject the decision of the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR of December 1 and agree to the inclusion of Artsakh within Azerbaijan, perhaps with a higher status.
2. Remain faithful to the decision of December 1 and pursue a more proactive policy, being prepared for a war.

The first approach was very painful for the participants of the Karabakh movement, as the question of the expediency of the movement and the mistakes made were raised. In addition, the issue of the demands of the Armenians of Artsakh was included in the Declaration of Independence, on the basis of which independence and state building were underway. The second approach also had many question marks: with whom to fight, and if the fight against Azerbaijan was understandable, opposing the Soviet army appeared futile.

On May 16, 1991, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia held a closed session on the Artsakh issue. The session was dedicated to new deportations and new flows of refugees. This time, more than 1,000 people from the Hadrut region and Berdadzor sub-region of the NKAO, the majority of whom were elderly people, women and children, were forcibly displaced. They were received in temporary camps located near the villages of Khndzoresk and Tegh in the Goris region of Armenia²². On May 17, 1991, the commandant of Artsakh Zhukov managed to prevent a new deportation by the OMON from Berdzor, but a small group of children was transferred to Stepanakert. A conflict arose between Zhukov and the OMON in Hadrut. But Zhukov was soon to hand over his authority to the 4th Army, which included many Azerbaijanis and new ethnic cleansing was becoming inevitable.²³

The Soviet forces and Azerbaijan were trying to disrupt the demographic picture of the NKAO and in this way solve the Artsakh issue. The displaced people were in a disastrous state. The deportations were accompanied by atrocities, thousands of old people, women and children were forcibly displaced from their homes, and young men were arrested. The homes of the displaced people were destroyed, their property was looted. The Supreme Council decided to send its representatives to get acquainted with

²¹ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.108, p. 26.

²² NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 130.

²³ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.109, p. 17.

the situation on the ground²⁴. There were rumors that the Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan Polyanichko had sent a bus to take the displaced people back to Hadrut, but the people were afraid of a new massacre and asked to be transferred to Armenia. Igor Muradyan, a deputy of the RA Supreme Council, asked to be sent to these people to convince them to return to Hadrut and go with them, but there was a danger that he could fall into the hands of the Azerbaijanis of the 4th Army. The Supreme Council sent deputy Shahen Petrosyan there.

The illegal flights of military helicopters from the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region to a number of regions of the Republic of Armenia had become frequent, turning into a unique form of forced displacement of Armenians.

In light of these circumstances, some deputies raised the issue of revising the decision of December 1, 1989. Deputy Ashot Bleyan once again voiced the thesis that two major issues, the resolution of the Karabakh issue and the restoration of Armenian statehood, are incompatible.²⁵ Arkady Manucharov, the chairman of the "Artsakh" Compatriot Union, Supreme Council Member, agreed that December 1 was an ill-considered step, since it was impossible to fight against a great empire. He saw the way out in participating in the union treaty and negotiating with the Center. Later, he even confessed that one of the two people who abstained when voting on the Declaration of Independence was himself, because he believed that if Armenia seceded from the USSR, Artsakh would be lost. The Republic of Armenia Supreme Council Member Artashes Tumanyan was not against renouncing December 1, but called for discussing the "pluses and minuses of renouncing," and believed that renouncing should be used as a political card.

The debate grew heated, with mutual accusations exchanged among deputies. Thus, accusations were made that time had been missed, that for eight months nothing had been done to strengthen the borders and for the security of Berdadzor and Getashen. The Republic of Armenia Supreme Council Member Mekhak Gabrielyan reminded that when the issue of assisting in the defense of Getashen was raised at the Supreme Council, only 20-25 people voted in favor. He noted that after the surrender of Artsakh, the Turks' goal would be to unite Nakhichevan through Zangezur. "Instead of talking to Gorbachev, who is our master today, we have been creating international opinion for 10-15 days".²⁶ He proposed holding a general mobilization and entering into a dialogue with Gorbachev to prevent the exodus of Armenians from Artsakh. Meanwhile, as long as Armenia was part of the USSR, the mobilization and the creation of armed forces could become a new occasion for Soviet troops to enter Armenia, and in that case, even talking about independence would become impossible.

Supporters of independence were against the defeatist policy, reminding that they imagined the possible dangers when going for independence. Addressing the issue,

²⁴ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 131.

²⁵ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.108, p. 23.

²⁶ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.108, p. 30.

Founding Chairman of the Republican Party of Armenia, Member of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia Ashot Navasardyan noted, "Two-three villages have been captured and we are already refusing independence. ... I am sure that the next government will hand over Armenia. It will hand it over to the Russians, or to another enemy... We must choose the path of liberation and it is not worth wagging the tail on that path. Selling this land... giving that land... keeping this much... and so on, and so on. Artsakh is ours, just like Yerevan, just like Ijevan. We must fight for every inch of the land for the sake of independent Armenia... We have one way. War is our way".²⁷

On May 20, 1991, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia addressed the Presidiums of the Supreme Councils of the USSR Union Republics and the Presidiums of the Supreme Councils of the Autonomous Republics, stating that under the pretext of the passport regime, the Azerbaijani OMON, with the support of the Soviet Army and the internal troops of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs, unleashed a new wave of terrorism and forced deportations in Armenian settlements, accompanied by looting, rape, and murder of civilians. Almost all the men of the Armenian villages of the Nagorno-Karabakh region were being arrested and transferred to the territory of Azerbaijan, and the elderly, women, and children were being subjected to humiliation and mockery²⁸. A separate letter was sent to the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the RSFSR on May 22, requesting that the kidnapped people against whom criminal cases had been initiated be transferred to Russia. On May 31, a letter was also written to the President of the USSR, M.S. Gorbachev, noting that no measures were being taken to return the displaced Armenian population of the villages of Getashen, Martunashen, Berdadzor and the Hadrut region of the NKAO to their permanent places of residence, and the hostages had not been released. It was warned that, as a result of these events, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia had decided that Levon Ter-Petrosyan should not participate in the sessions of the preparatory committee for the union treaty in Moscow.

A draft resolution "On measures to improve the socio-economic situation of forcibly displaced persons in the Republic" was submitted to the Supreme Council, which stated that, taking into account the need to resolve a number of urgent socio-economic issues of the forcibly displaced persons, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia decides:

1. To propose to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Armenia:

- To submit a comprehensive program for resolving the socio-economic issues of forcibly displaced persons by the beginning of September of this year.

- Based on the need for collective settlement of forcibly displaced persons, to examine the issue of allocating the necessary land for organizing the design work and construction of two-three urban-type settlements in the territory of the Republic of Armenia.

²⁷ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.108, p. 30-31.

²⁸ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.3, p. 130.

2. To instruct the Republic of Armenia Supreme Council's Standing Committee on Issues of the Disaster Zone and Forcibly Displaced Persons to prepare and submit a proposal on the law on the status of forcibly displaced persons.²⁹

The first deportations had also awakened the Armenians of the Diaspora and they had begun to put pressure on the governments of their countries. On May 25, 1991, a forum was to be held and 250 major Armenian businessmen from all over the world came to Armenia. It was during this period that Prime Minister V. Manukyan proposed to the Supreme Council establishing the post of president for more efficient governance of the country. After the fall of Getashen, he believed that «there should be one person responsible as the head of state... I called for the transition to a presidential system of governance».³⁰

The Shahumyan events and the discussion of the political concept on Artsakh in the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia

In July 1991, the situation in the Shahumyan region became extremely tense. The Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia was informed about these events by the Acting Minister of Internal Affairs A. Manucharyan. At 6 pm on July 6, 1991, an extraordinary session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia was convened regarding the situation in the Shahumyan region. Vezirov, who had previously been the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan, and the USSR Minister of Internal Affairs Pugo spoke at the session of the Supreme Council of the USSR and assured that there were no residents in those villages, only militants who needed to be neutralized. The deportations from Manashid and Bozglukh marked the beginning of the deportation in the Shahumyan region. All this caused serious concern. Even extremist speeches were heard in the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia. Thus, S. Baghdasaryan, on behalf of the "Artsakh" parliamentary group, proposed to apply the same policy towards Nakhichevan, forgetting that this would give the USSR leadership a new opportunity to take revenge on the Armenian independentists.³¹ It was proposed to the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Armenia to initiate a criminal case against Pugo, on charges of officially misleading state bodies and inciting interethnic clashes.³² And MP Igor Muradyan, unable to restrain his agitation, declared that Pugo was a criminal and he should be killed. He addressed the Armenian youth with the call "Pugo must be killed."³³

Z. Balayan noted that 1,420 children and their mothers had been removed from Shahumyan in 39 helicopters, and when he pointed out this fact during a meeting with Pugo, the latter still insisted that there were only militants there. In November 1990,

²⁹ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.4, p. 17.

³⁰ Manukyan 2002: 177.

³¹ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.123, p. 34.

³² NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.123, p. 87-88.

³³ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.123, p. 81. It should be noted that one month after these events, on August 22, after the suppression of the uprising in the USSR, Pugo committed suicide.

Pugo was provided with classified materials by a Soviet operational intelligence group, indicating that the Azerbaijani leadership had developed a plan for the deportation of the Armenian population from the Khanlar and Shahumyan regions³⁴, in other words, the Soviet Minister of Internal Affairs was aware of all this. The Russians had left one battalion near the village of Rus Boris, where the Malakans lived, and left the village of Hay Boris, located three kilometers away from that village, unprotected. The attack began on the villages of Manashid, Buzlukh, and Erkez. The deputies suggested that Levon Ter-Petrosyan urgently leave for Moscow and somehow take Kryuchkov, Pugo, and Yazov to Shahumyan so that they could see the displacement of the civilian population, see that there were mothers and children in those villages and no men. Moreover, the “passport regime” check in those villages was carried out by the Kirovabad police, the so-called “Baku Regiment”, which consisted of Russians, but was subordinate to Azerbaijan’s Minister of Internal Affairs Mamedov and Polyanchko, who led the entire operation. About 10,000 armed Azerbaijanis entered the villages with the riot police.³⁵ The policy of Armenian depopulation and its geography was gradually expanding.

On July 9, 1991, the session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia discussed a document developed by Supreme Council Members Vigen Shirinyan and Igor Muradyan, which proposed the following:

1. To qualify the actions of the USSR and Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh as a genocidal policy against the Armenian people.
2. To consider self-defense in Nagorno-Karabakh as a forced measure aimed at preventing the threat of the USSR and Azerbaijan, considering armed self-defense participants as combatants, whose rights are protected by the 1949 Geneva Convention and the 1977 Additional Protocol thereto.
3. To recognize the struggle of the Armenian people in Nagorno-Karabakh for their sovereign rights as a national liberation movement.
4. To appeal to international organizations, union republics, states and the UN to recognize the national liberation struggle of the Armenian people in Nagorno-Karabakh, and to recognize its governing body, the Nagorno-Karabakh National Council, as a subject of international law and to provide appropriate assistance and support.³⁶

Levon Ter-Petrosyan opposed the adoption of the document, noting that although the document was good, it was useless, since so far the UN had not interfered and would not interfere in the internal affairs of the USSR, and this application would give the USSR a new opportunity to strangle Karabakh by force. He drew a parallel with Slovenia and Croatia, when the UN declared their non-recognition and the Yugoslav authorities sent troops the next day. Slovenia and Croatia had armies and resisted. But

³⁴ Krivopuskov 2007: 201.

³⁵ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.123, p. 46.

³⁶ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.123, p.57-58.

if a regular army entered Karabakh, it would be a matter of days. "It is true, after that the international community can raise an uproar, defend our cause, protect our orphans, create funds for refugees. The world is very used to this, but the land will already be cleansed".³⁷ In addition, he believed that the document could not be adopted without the consent of the representatives of Artsakh.

On July 15, 1991, MP Albert Baghdasaryan, who had returned from Shahumyan, presented the situation at the Supreme Council session. He noted that the Azerbaijani OMON and the Kirovabad "police battalion" surrounded three villages of the Shahumyan region: Erkej, Bujlugh and Manashid. They had information that there were no outsiders in those villages, only locals who could not resist. But they received a worthy rebuff and fled³⁸. A few days later, the powerfully-equipped 23rd division surrounded those three villages. They began to make announcements over loudspeakers and promised in Erkej that the passport regime check would be carried out by the decision of the central authorities and only internal affairs units would participate, and the Azerbaijani OMON would not enter the village. But they broke their promise. There was no passport check; tanks, armored vehicles, armored personnel carriers, infantry fighting vehicles, surrounded the village and took it under gunfire, including the use of two Mi-24 helicopters. They began the operation of "combing" settlements and forests. The subtext was that either you would be deported or the fate of Getashen would be repeated. Manashid and Buzglukh could not stand, the people came out.³⁹ As of July 1991, 318,000 people had moved to Armenia from various regions of Azerbaijan.⁴⁰ After this information was provided, an oppressive atmosphere arose in the Supreme Council, accusations were again voiced for inaction, for not systematically dealing with the Karabakh issue. About 500 Armenians were arrested and were in various Azerbaijani prisons. One of the deputies, Hamlet Grigoryan, was imprisoned for ten months and upon his return was in a terrible psychological and physical state - he could not walk or speak.⁴¹ Such was the condition of the Armenian prisoners in Baku prisons.⁴² The Armenian authorities were unable to get them to be transferred at least to Moscow. Researchers later assessed the forced migration and dispossession of the Armenian population from their settlements, noting that the main reasons were the political crisis in the USSR, the haste of the newly elected authorities of Armenia, and their open and premature approach to confrontation. Additionally, Azerbaijan's exploitation of these factors led to the consequences of the "Ring" operation.⁴³ Foreign authors have also addressed the "Ring" operation.⁴⁴

³⁷ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.123, p. 58.

³⁸ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p.1.

³⁹ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p.2.

⁴⁰ Arutiunyan 1994: 48.

⁴¹ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p. 43.

⁴² The horrifying tortures of H. Grigoryan and other Armenian prisoners are presented in Soghomonyan 1994, Soghomonyan 1995. These books are based on the testimonies and interviews of survivors.

⁴³ Harutyunyan 2000: 25

Anyway, as a result of these events, in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia the issue of developing a political concept on Artsakh was put up for discussion. Two documents were presented. The first expressed the idea that Artsakh was an integral part of Armenia, and Armenia was obliged to defend the idea of reunification of Artsakh and Armenia from the position of claims. The concept paper was called "On considering the struggle of the Armenian people in Nagorno-Karabakh as a national liberation struggle." It had been signed by 59 deputies and it had been discussed in committees.⁴⁵ A discourse on the second concept had been open for a long time, but it was not so popular. Its meaning was that the Artsakh issue could not be resolved in any other way under existing conditions than through negotiations, political dialogue and compromises.⁴⁶ According to Thomas de Waal "If Operation Ring had been planned as an act of intimidation against the Karabakh Armenians, it began to achieve results. After its first phase, with villagers from Getashen flooding into Stepanakert, the Karabakh Armenian movement showed its first serious cracks". The transition began to be considered "the course from a policy of confrontation to a policy of dialogue and negotiations".⁴⁷

In essence, both concepts were risky. In the case of the first, the imbalance of forces and Moscow's reaction were worrying. There was a risk of losing not only Artsakh, but also setill unattained independence. In the case of the second, it was unpredictable what the outcome of the negotiations would be and whether it would be possible to achieve an increase in the status of Artsakh. Many believed that the time for this had been missed. A suitable moment had arisen for this after the genocidal events in Sumgait.

A. Manucharov had been in Artsakh for the last ten months and, as he himself said, after his return he lived, thought, and reflected only on Artsakh, where he had witnessed the atrocities. He believed that the Supreme Council of Armenia should deal with the Artsakh issue every day, but there was no such political body in Artsakh, what there was in the hands of the party elite, which had been hindering the movement from the very beginning. The people of Artsakh were in danger of total annihilation. Manucharov believed that the only way out was for Artsakh to agree to be an autonomous republic within Azerbaijan. This was the compromise that would convince the center and help keep Artsakh. We should be flexible; if necessary, Armenia should reconsider its previous decisions. He believed that it was impossible to wage war "against the Center, Azerbaijan and 60 million Turks".⁴⁸ He believed that the approach should be as follows, "There is no Artsakh as part of Azerbaijan. There is an autonomous republic within the center of the renewed federation." All other options would lead to deportation, the fate of Nakhichevan. Member of the Supreme Council of

⁴⁴ Zhirovov 2012; Krivopuskov 2007; Babanov, Voyevodsky, Cox, Eibner 1993; Tranca 2008.

⁴⁵ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p. 5.

⁴⁶ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p.6.

⁴⁷ Thomas de Waal 2003: 118.

⁴⁸ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p. 45.

the Republic of Armenia H. Khachatryan noted that the Artsakh movement became a national-liberation movement starting from Sumgait. He touched upon the new initiative to reject the December 1 decision and put the issue of leaving Artsakh as part of Azerbaijan on the agenda. At some point, the Presidium of the Supreme Council had begun to pursue this policy. He noted that he did not consider this policy anti-national, but he wanted evidence to convince himself that this path was more effective. Member of the Supreme Council A. Voskanyan noted that in reality nothing had changed: "Our strategy regarding the Artsakh issue has always been negotiations, and the tactics is to be ready for armed resistance".⁴⁹

No option was adopted at that session. The discussion continued on September 10. However, significant events occurred between those two sessions: from August 18 to 21, 1991, there was an attempted coup d'état in the USSR, which was suppressed and the collapse of the USSR was accelerated. In those days, the Armenian authorities were extremely cautious, because as Levon Ter-Petrosyan said, if the coup in the USSR had succeeded, the Armenian people would have been threatened with genocide. "A couple of hours were enough, a wrong behavior, and we could have lost another 20 villages in those two hours, which would not have been restored within 10 years. We would simply be facing a genocide, because the loss of each village is a genocide for us".⁵⁰ On August 30, 1991, the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijan SSR adopted a declaration on the restoration of the state independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on September 2, at a joint session of the regional and Shahumyan councils of deputies held in Stepanakert, Artsakh declared its independence.

So, the September session of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia was held under different conditions. After the putsch was suppressed, the speeches of the deputies became bolder. The issue of Artsakh and the attitude towards the union treaty were discussed. In essence, some of the deputies believed that it was necessary to prepare for a war, while others believed that they should try to negotiate, although Azerbaijan did not show any tendency to make concessions.

Vazgen Manukyan, who was still the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia at that time, described the forced displacement of the Armenian population from Shahumyan and Getashen as a form of punishment imposed by Moscow⁵¹. In his speech in the National Assembly, he mentioned: "We understood that as we went for independence, we would be constantly hit and hit through Artsakh. And at that time we understood that without giving up on the Artsakh issue, we should still try to separate these two issues. Make the Artsakh issue a problem of the international community, of the democratic forces of the Soviet Union".⁵² In essence, that policy failed, that

⁴⁹ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.124, p. 35.

⁵⁰ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.134, p.55.

⁵¹ Manukyan 2002: 93.

⁵² NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.134, p. 4.

calculation turned out to be wrong, and as a result of the war that began later, a different reality was formed, with different problems.

Ashot Navasardyan reminded that the Armenian National Movement entered the parliament with an independence program. He noted with concern that many deputies had faith in the democratic forces that came to power in Russia and in improving the Union, and reminded that this was how Armenians believed in the Young Turks and were destroyed. He proposed another program:⁵³

1. Adopt a statement that Levon Ter-Petrosyan is not authorized to represent Armenia and that the parliament does not recognize his participation in the creation of a new union.
2. Before the referendum on September 21, declare the independence of Armenia, including Artsakh, through the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia.
3. Create a defense ministry and an Armenian army.
4. Hold a referendum and presidential elections in Artsakh.
5. Form a Constituent Assembly.
6. Hold new elections to a multi-party parliament within two months.

This proposal did not pass.

Many considered a large-scale war inevitable. Thus, in MP Yerjanik Abgaryan's opinion, it was necessary to be prepared for a major conflict for Karabakh, "after which states will recognize the status and the ruler of Karabakh will be the one who can truly take care of it".⁵⁴

Some of the deputies did not hide their disappointment. Thus, V. Petrosyan, assessing the three-year struggle, noted that we could have achieved at least an increase in the status of Karabakh, but we got complete isolation of Karabakh and Karabakh was facing an "eternal guerrilla warfare".⁵⁵

The main discussions were held around the union treaty, the document signed in Moscow. Discussed were also issues related to the loss of territories. The problems of refugees were left to the executive authorities.

On September 11, 1991, a closed session dedicated to Artsakh was held again. The discussions concerned not holding a referendum in Artsakh on September 21, due to its impossibility. David Vardanyan and Shavarsh Kocharyan proposed to suspend the joint decision of December 1 after the Karabakh declaration of independence. Vigen Shirinyan proposed to ignore the declaration of independence of Nagorno-Karabakh, since it was a step back from the decision of December 1.⁵⁶ I. Muradyan and S. Zolyan proposed to adopt a statement entitled "Declaration of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia on the Restoration of Independent Statehood of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Proclamation of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh", which expressed

⁵³ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.134, p.14.

⁵⁴ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.134, p. 17.

⁵⁵ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.134, p.37.

⁵⁶ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.135, p.81-82.

readiness to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan, but at the same time recognized the independence of the NKR, urged both parties to initiate multilateral negotiations, and called on all Soviet republics, especially Russia and Kazakhstan, as a union of sovereign states of the newly created confederation,⁵⁷ to recognize the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Levon Ter-Petrosyan proposed not to adopt any documents, since the self-defense of Artsakh had become, by his definition, a “state affair” that was being carried out at the state level, and suggested thinking not about documents, but understanding that the situation was favorable and that the Soviet army could no longer intervene.⁵⁸

After the independence referendum, several sessions were devoted to the events unfolding in Artsakh and the border regions of Armenia, from which it was already clear that an Armenian-Azerbaijani war was beginning.

Thus, after the above-mentioned events, about 450 thousand Armenians from the cities and villages of Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh became refugees, more than 700 people were taken hostage and the fate of many of them was never clarified. Armenia joined the UN Protocol “On Refugees” in 1993. In 1999, the RA Law “On Refugees” was adopted, in 2000 - “On the Housing Program for Persons Forcibly Displaced from Azerbaijan in 1988-1992”. Some of the refugees were accommodated in hostels, hotels, sanatoriums, rest houses, caravans, self-built shelters, the rest in rented houses or in the homes of relatives. Taking into account the war and the extremely difficult socio-economic situation in the republic in 1992-1994, especially during the winter months, many of them were left in dire straits and had to emigrate.

Conclusion

Referring to the raising and discussing of the refugee issue in the Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia in 1990–1991, it can be concluded that it was located in the broad context of the state-building process. The supreme legislative body of the newly independent Armenia was engaged in the establishment of state institutions, the formation of the legal system, the development of the foundations of foreign policy, and issues of international recognition. Under these conditions, issues related to refugees and Artsakh initially occupied a secondary place on the agenda. However, the policy pursued by the Soviet and Azerbaijani authorities, the repressions carried out at the state level, which were accompanied by the forced displacement of the Armenian population and a mass refugee influx, influenced the change in the domestic political agenda. The Supreme Council of the Republic of Armenia never developed a systematic and long-term strategy for solving refugee issues. The problem was recognized and included in the agendas, but practical steps were essentially limited to short-term responses: logistical support, the provision of temporary shelters, and

⁵⁷ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.135, p.82.

⁵⁸ NAA, F. 207, c.62, f.135, p.104.

some legal regulations. Refugees were often excluded from the social system or not properly integrated. At the same time, it should be taken into account that the population of the disaster zone, which also lived in temporary shelters, was also in a deplorable state. The idea that it was necessary to adopt a strategy for the integration of refugees was voiced several times in the Supreme Council, but in the context of the enormous problems of state building, this did not materialize.

This study shows that the refugee problem is not only a socio-humanitarian, but also a political and institutional issue, anchored in the process of statehood building. Therefore, a historical analysis of the issue is an important prerequisite for further study, both from the perspective of rethinking the processes of political development in Armenia and the mechanisms of socio-political integration of refugees.

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Translated from Armenian by Nune Dudoyan

POLITICAL SCIENCES

PRINCIPLES OF PARLIAMENTARISM IN THE CONTEXT OF WESTERN ARMENIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

Lilit Sarvazyan*

“The National Constitution was something equal to national liberation and national autonomy, which greatly supported the strengthening of the capabilities of the Armenians of Turkey for self-governance.”

Babken Kiuleseryan

Abstract

The Western Armenian constitutional movement, as a unique attempt in the East to modernize the national administrative system based on parliamentary principles, has been interpreted by many Armenian and foreign thinkers. In the context of the historical and political realities of the 19th-century Ottoman Empire, foreign authors tried to understand the level of the Armenian nation's constitutional and legal consciousness, its capacity for self-government, the degree of its assimilation of European culture, and the essence of its system of governance. Within national circles, Western Armenian constitutionalism has been studied from various perspectives and with certain considerations, especially with the aim of predicting the nation's political prospects. The goals and patterns of the constitutional movement, the philosophical and ideological foundations and criteria of the “National Constitution,” and the possibility and outcomes of parliamentary governance in Western Armenia have been revealed.

Keywords: National Constitution, parliamentary principles, national sovereignty, representative assembly, social harmony, separation of powers

After the adoption (1860) and ratification (1863) of the National Constitution, the Western Armenian constitutional movement proceeded in various directions: the legal protection of natural-national and granted administrative rights, the consolidation of the idea of constitutionalism and the constitutional order, the development of legal and political culture, and the reform of certain provisions of the Constitution. Naturally, the Constitution received diverse assessments, depending on the expectations from the Fundamental Law, the effectiveness of its implementation, the methods of arguing and resolving national issues, the conceptual approaches of national thinkers, and so on. In this context, the valorization of the National Constitution is important at two levels:

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Received 03.03.2025, revised 11.05.2025, accepted 15.06.2025

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- Theoretical-ideological: considering the goal, logic, ideological and legal-philosophical foundations of the constitutional movement, the theoretical sources of the Constitution, its fundamental principles, the criteria of national governance, and the outlining of the necessary prerequisites for the reconstruction of statehood.

- Practical-political: considering the possible ways of resolving national key issues through constitutional means in specific historical and political conditions, and the degree of flexibility of the Constitution to undergo necessary changes in new situations.

The connection of the National Constitution with the Armenian Question is undeniable, which, with its sub-problems and the urgency of its solution, is both historical and contemporary. According to Saroukhan's assertion, "The history of the Armenian Question would be presented incompletely if the National Constitution were not simultaneously studied and described. One gave birth to the other, and the two are so intertwined that they influence each other and mutually complement each other".¹ That is, the Constitution was a natural product of its time, one of the manifestations of Armenian freethinking and the national liberation struggle.

In contrast to the autocratic regime of the Ottoman theocracy, Western Armenian intellectuals chose the parliamentary-constitutional path of self-government. Referring to this choice, Mkrtich Khrimyan argues the counsel of a contradictory and volatile time, evaluating it as "...a time of slavery and a time of freedom... a time of destruction and a time of standing. a time of autocratic rule and a time of Constitution".²

In that complex historical period, the correct political orientation was extremely important, the starting point of which was the preservation of national identity (nationalism) as an immutable law. The existing situation gave rise to a natural aspiration of the nation to re-establish its former unity of all its parts with the right to independence. According to Armenian figures, the correct legal and political path is the establishment of a constitutional order through the adoption of the Constitution, and the creation of a constitutional nation based on the principles of constitutionalism. According to H. Ipekjian's interpretation, constitutional order ("drutiun") means the establishment of power "derived from the nation" – elected and not transferred by hereditary right. According to Servichen, the elected government is the personified nation, the embodiment of its rights: "The moment the government of the nation takes you in hand, at that moment you must be entirely the nation".³

According to Armenian thinkers, constitutional capacity is a supreme value – the legal basis for the nation's freedom of self-government, the recognition of its rights, and their legal implementation. To be constitutional ("inknoren") means to be governed by one's own national laws. According to Markos Aghabekyan's assertion, the Armenian in the Ottoman Empire, as a nation or "national fraternity," was able to preserve, develop, and govern itself "by itself" thanks to three factors: "A. The primordial and self-governing

¹ Saroukhan 1910: II-III.

² Khrimyan Hayrik 1929: 241.

³ Vichenian 1851: 38.

Armenian Church with its national image, B. The Armenian family fraternity, with its special holy marriage law, C. Its public education, with its national language and schools".⁴ Thus, under the conditions of subjugation, the Armenian Church, the family, and the educational system are the natural basis for national preservation and the necessary factors for the nation's self-government. As inalienable rights of the nation, they are enshrined in the 1860 and 1863 versions of the Constitution.

The structure of the National Administration is defined in the National Constitution. From a constitutional perspective, the source, bearer, and sovereign of power is the nation, and all administrative bodies are accountable to the nation. The National Administration is constitutionally defined in a mixed form of governance, which combines constitutional monarchical (national leader), parliamentary, and democratic principles.

Parliamentary governance is implemented through a combination of centralization and decentralization principles, which is manifested in the vertical and horizontal relations of central and local (provincial) authorities. The central authority is represented by the National General Assembly, the Political and Religious Assemblies, the Patriarch, the National Councils and Boards of Trustees, and the Parish Councils. The provincial authority is represented by the provincial assemblies, chaired by the diocesan primates. The Patriarch is the official head of all legislative and executive departments of the national government, and the center is the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The jurisdiction of the national authority extends to all Armenians who are subjects of the Ottoman state.

In a vertical relationship, the National Assembly is at the first level of the administrative hierarchy, the highest and legislative body of the central authority. The very first article of the Constitution establishes the representative principle of governance: "The National Administration is representative. The nation shall be represented by the General Assembly, and through its mediation, the national authority shall be governed".⁵ According to the 1860 Constitution, the National Assembly consisted of 220 members, of which 160 were elected from the districts of Constantinople, and 60 from the leading provinces. In addition to the representative principle, the principle of membership is also enshrined in the Constitution, according to which members of the Religious and Political Assemblies, the Supervisory Councils, the chairmen of the Parish Councils, national and Ottoman state officials, representatives of the clergy (bishops, vardapets (scholar-teacher), archpriests), intellectuals (writers, doctors, teachers, editors, translators), and military personnel could join the representatives. Although the number of members was initially limited to 100 individuals, many became members, and it was decided that the General Assembly "should not have more than 400 members," since a session should not be convened in the absence of the majority of representatives (at least 111 members).⁶

⁴ Minutes of the General Assembly 1874: 385.

⁵ National Constitution of the Armenians 1860, Art. 1, p. 10.

⁶ National Constitution of the Armenians 1860, Art. 10, p. 16.

It should be noted that the authors of the Constitution had defined the principle of membership based on the merits of prominent and authoritative individuals. Their goal was to involve as many intellectuals as possible in the parliamentary processes to ensure an “elected” and educated majority. However, the principle of membership created considerable inconveniences in various processes of the National Assembly, especially since the organization of elections was quite complex in the provinces, and the membership of the planned number of intellectuals was unlikely. Moreover, the members were not elected by the people, which contradicted the democratic electoral system. Thus, no matter how justified the goals of the national figures were, Article 10 of the Constitution did not correspond to constitutional principles, and ultimately it was declared reviewable and subsequently reformed.

According to Arshak Alpayajian’s assertion, in the 1863 Constitution, “...the composition of the National Assembly was formed on a more reasonable basis, although it was again not perfectly based on justice. To be based on absolute justice, there should have been no distinction between the clerical and secular classes for both electors and the elected; in the General Assembly, Constantinople not being an exception, every province should have had its representative according to the number of its population”.⁷ The principles proposed by Alpayajian were not reflected in either version of the Constitution. However, the constitutionalists excluded any class distinction; representatives of the clergy and secular classes are equally considered representatives of the nation in the National Assembly, performing their functions.

Regarding the disproportion of representatives from Constantinople and the provinces in the National Assembly, it was somewhat mitigated in the 1863 Constitution in percentage terms. According to the revised article, the National Assembly consisted of 140 representatives, of which 20 (1/7) were clerical, 40 (2/7) were elected from the provinces, and 80 (4/7) from the districts of Constantinople.⁸ If previously only 60 of the 220 representatives of the National Assembly represented the provinces, then in the revised version, 40 of the 140 representatives were elected from the provinces. That is, the difference between the representatives of Constantinople and the provinces in the 1863 Constitution is 20 less than the indicators defined in the 1860 Constitution.

Members of the Religious and Political Assemblies can participate in the sessions of the National Assembly, but if they are not elected as representatives, they do not have the right to vote in the assembly.⁹ According to the law, the sessions of the National Assembly can be convened only with the presence of the majority of representatives (at least 71 people).¹⁰ This issue was also repeatedly discussed in the National Assembly, as sessions were often postponed due to the absence of many representatives.

⁷ Alpayajian 1910: 416–417.

⁸ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 57. Since the ratified Constitution of 1863 was in effect in Western Armenia, the articles will be interpreted based on it.

⁹ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 58.

¹⁰ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 59.

The powers of the General Assembly are: "To elect the Patriarch, the Catholicos, and the chief officials of the Nation, and the members of the Religious and Political Assemblies, to oversee the administration of the National Assemblies, to decide and resolve matters concerning these assemblies but considered beyond their competence, and to keep the National Constitution inviolable".¹¹ All other administrative bodies are accountable to the National General Assembly. According to long-standing national custom, the General Assembly is convened once every two years, at the end of April, for the following purposes:

- To discuss the Report of the National Administration, the executive authority, on its two-year activities.
- To calculate and examine the general account of the funds collected and spent by the financial officials.
- To elect new members of the Religious and Political Assemblies.
- To decide how the National Tax should be managed in the next two years.
- To participate in the election of the Catholicos of All Armenians.
- To elect the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem.
- To resolve disputes arising between the Religious and Political Assemblies or disagreements between the Patriarch and the assemblies. In such cases, the opposing parties in the General Assembly have only the right to speak, but not to vote.
- To review the National Constitution.
- To resolve such issues regarding which "...the decision belongs to the General Assembly".¹²

Members of the National Administration are entitled to speak on all issues in the General Assembly, but "...apart from tax and election issues, they cannot vote on other issues".¹³ In addition to regular sessions, the National Assembly can be convened by the Patriarch with the agreement of one of the Religious or Political Assemblies, or at the request of the majority of the members of the General Assembly. To convene such extraordinary sessions, the Patriarchate is obliged to inform the Sublime Porte of the reason for convening the General Assembly in order to obtain "...its pleasure".¹⁴

There is a special procedure for the election of national representatives in the Constitution. The 20 clerical members of the General Assembly are elected by all the clergy of Constantinople "...by secret ballot and absolute majority of votes." Bishops, vardapets, and priests can be elected as representatives, but they must be at least thirty years old, ordained at least 5 years prior, not hold office in other places, and "...not be under any judgment".¹⁵ The term of office for clerical representatives is 10 years, but every two years, 1/5 of them are replaced by election. After the expiration of the ten-year term, the clergy are again considered eligible for re-election.¹⁶

The basis for the right to elect secular representatives is the national tax and personal merits. According to the Constitution, "For the right to vote for the national tax,

¹¹ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 60.

¹² National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 61.

¹³ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Point A.

¹⁴ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Arts. 61-62.

¹⁵ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 63.

¹⁶ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 64.

the elector must pay at least seventy-five gurush of general tax per year.” Those with personal merits have the right to be elected “...those in the Imperial Divans and other offices of the State; certified doctors; authors of useful books; teachers of schools; and individuals who have rendered useful services to the nation”.¹⁷ All Armenians who are subjects of the Ottoman Empire and have reached the age of 25 have the right to vote.

The following are deprived of the right to vote:

1. Criminal offenders declared “politically dead” by the Ottoman Penal Code.
2. Those involved in national-political processes who have been found to have engaged in anti-national activities or have been condemned by one of the National Assemblies, “...for whom it has been decided by the judging assembly that they should not be involved in National affairs.”
3. Those serving “deterrent” sentences by Ottoman courts whose term of punishment has not yet expired.
4. The mentally ill, those recognized as incapacitated due to insanity, “...whose complete recovery has not been legally established”.¹⁸

Those individuals of the nation who have reached the age of 30, are subjects of the Ottoman Empire, are aware of state laws, participate in national affairs, and are not deprived of the right to vote according to Article 67, have the right to be elected.

The Constitution also outlines the method of election. Every two years, a Joint Council is convened to compile the lists of representatives to be elected from Constantinople and the provinces, with the participation of the chairmen of the Political and Religious Assemblies and the Supervisory Councils. Based on the general census of the nation by the Patriarchal Divan, the number of representatives to be elected is determined. For the districts of Constantinople, the number of voters is taken as the basis, and for the provinces, the population count.¹⁹

The term of office for representatives is 10 years; every two years, 1/5 of them are replaced, and the composition of the representatives is renewed by election from both the districts of Constantinople and the provinces. This procedure was to be carried out by lot for 8 years, provided that “...if the number of voters in a district or the population of a province has increased or decreased, the number of Representatives to be given to that district or province shall also increase or decrease proportionally”.²⁰ New individuals are elected to replace deceased or resigned representatives.

Parish representatives are elected by the residents of the districts of Constantinople, and provincial representatives by the General Assembly of each province. According to the national electoral system, it is not mandatory for representatives to “...be residents of the electing district or province; it is sufficient that they reside in Constantinople, be knowledgeable in the national affairs of the district or

¹⁷ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 65.

¹⁸ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 67.

¹⁹ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 69.

²⁰ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 6.

province they represent, and be individuals who have gained the respect and esteem of the electors through their patriotism, integrity, and fairness”.²¹ A very important principle is enshrined in the Constitution: the principle of national representation. “The National Representatives in the General Assembly are considered Representatives not of the district or province that elected them, but of the Nation, with equal authority”.²²

Thus, based on the principle of national unity and the supremacy of national interests, the constitutionalists exclude the supremacy or subordination of the interests of any district or province. If a problem arises in one of the districts or provinces, it becomes a matter of concern for all the representatives of the nation as a national issue. H. Khachatryan and G. Safaryan note in this regard: “The National Constitution enshrined the status of a free representative mandate for the deputy in the National Assembly as the representative of the general interests of the nation, and is not at all bound by its electoral body”.²³ We believe that the Constitution fully reveals the meaning and content of the concept of “national representative.”

The voting procedure: elections were held on the principles of universal, equal, and direct suffrage. According to the Constitution, “Voting is secret; therefore, voters must write their ballot individually so that no one else can see the names written”²⁴, and it must be completed in one day. Voters who do not vote on the specified day can no longer submit their vote and have no right to protest. No one has the right to vote in two districts. After the completion of voting, the ballot boxes are opened in front of the Parish Council, and special examiners count the votes, comparing them with the number of voters. If a discrepancy is observed, or if the Parish Council suspects fraud, a revote is scheduled (Art. 77). It is obvious that the preservation of legality is a paramount principle, the violation of which is inadmissible.

A majoritarian electoral system was established. Among those who receive more than half of the votes of the voters, those who receive the most votes are considered elected representatives. If two individuals receive an equal number of votes, the older of the two is elected. If a majority of votes is not obtained in the first round of voting, the Parish Council announces “...the names of the two individuals who received the most votes; and the second vote shall legally be held on those two names”.²⁵ Ultimately, the candidate with the most votes was elected. The procedure for the ratification of elections is also defined in the Constitution. After the elections, each Parish Council submits the names of the representatives elected from its district and the course of the elections to the Armenian Patriarch in a special report. The reports must include the name, surname, place of residence, occupation of all elected officials, and all the circumstances of the voting. The Patriarch forwards the reports to the Political Assembly, which “...examines them and verifies the conditions of the election of the

²¹ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 70.

²² National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 70.

²³ Khachatryan, Safaryan 1998: 14.

²⁴ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 73.

²⁵ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 80.

Representatives,” after which the Patriarch sends official notifications to the elected representatives, inviting them to participate in the formation of the General Assembly.²⁶

In its first session, the General Assembly reviews the reports examined by the Political Assembly and “...ratifies the authority of the Representatives, whereby the General Assembly is legally formed”.²⁷ If the majority of the representatives of Constantinople are elected, the Assembly can convene without waiting for the completion of the elections of the provincial representatives. If someone is elected by several districts or provinces, they can decide which district or province they wish to represent. Otherwise, the issue is decided by a vote in the National Assembly (Art. 83).

Thus, the National General Assembly is the supreme legislative body and holds supreme authority in the national administrative system as the representative body of the nation. Consequently, the bodies of the executive power, the Auxiliary Councils, and the Boards of Trustees are accountable to the National Assembly. The latter bears political and moral responsibility only to the nation as the source of national power and the supreme subject.

The aforementioned fundamental provisions of the National Constitution give rise to the fundamental principles of parliamentary governance, which are in line with the spirit of Western classical parliamentarism. Moreover, national constitutionalism was progressive in some principles compared to the European constitutional ideology of that historical period. Armenian figures primarily argue the following principles:

- Representative principle: According to the Constitution, “For the Administration to be national, it must be Representative”.²⁸ Proclaiming the people’s right to free elections as a national-constitutional right, only positions elected by vote and ratified in the National Assembly are considered legal. According to M. Ormanian, “...it is best to heed the voice of God, which is sometimes manifested in the voice of the people and sometimes in the voice of the elders, but it is safest when both voices are in harmony”.²⁹ Through its representatives, the nation performs legislative, oversight, and accountability functions. The right to the inviolability of the representative is inalienable, which they compensate for with constitutional activity. The representative of the nation must: a) recognize the essence and responsibility of their office, b) show initiative not only in law-making but also in the logic of right-making, c) not become a passive subject of office but come forward with nationally beneficial proposals, having first weighed their usefulness, d) contribute to the constitutionalization process of the Armenian provinces, neutralizing the consequences of Ottoman autocratic administration.
- The administrative jurisdiction of the government derives from the rights of individuals. In the opinion of Retheos Berberian, the criterion for valuing new

²⁶ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 81.

²⁷ National Constitution of the Armenians 1863, Art. 82.

²⁸ *National Constitution of the Armenians*, 1863, Fundamental Principle, Point E, p. 12.

²⁹ Ormanian 1880, No. 2695.

civilizations is the extent of freedom granted to the individual, and “The duty of the Government is to ensure that everyone... enjoys their rights... their freedom, which implies that no one violates the freedom of others”.³⁰ However, according to national constitutionalism, individuals do not directly represent their rights; they are directly represented by parish assemblies, parishes by provincial assemblies, and the latter elect the representatives of the National Assembly, who directly represent the entire nation, and indirectly also individuals. The authority of national deputies is higher, as their electors are also elected by the voice of the people, and they are the “chosen of the chosen.” It should be noted that this electoral system reflects the national trend of constitutional politics – to form a unified legal existence of Western Armenians throughout the empire through the exercise of electoral rights, as a basis for the future political unification of the nation.³¹

- In this context, the merits required by the Constitution for those elected are important, especially their role and the extent of their responsibility in national-political life. According to Ormanian’s observation, the rulers of the nation must recognize the following truth: “The right to vote is the greatest right by which one calls to national office the person whose principles, ideas, talents, achievements, and moral qualities not only make them absolutely worthy but also give reason to judge them suitable according to the circumstances of the time and need.” And the electors must exercise their right to oversee their future representatives, so that “...prominence and servility and private interests remain far from the ballot boxes; only merit and public benefit should determine the elected”.³² That is, everyone should mind their own business, which implies the accurate performance of the essence of the office, rights, and duties, and the exclusion of unnecessary interference in other areas of activity.
- Mandatory application of the principle of constitutional consultation: no official can govern arbitrarily while maintaining individual identity. Even the most serious national issues, of which the national leader-patriarch is most aware, must be subject to constitutional discussion in the National Assembly. Moreover, the majority of Armenian patriarchs have always had secular advisors who engaged in political activities during the resolution of unpublished national issues. Although the position of a consultative body is not defined in the Constitution, the members of the General, Political, and Religious Assemblies were considered the patriarch’s associates-advisors.
- Supremacy of national interests and well-being over individual interests: the activity of the national administration is based on the principles of national sovereignty and the supremacy of constitutional laws. Therefore, personal principles must be subordinated to official requirements and accepted national-political orientations. According to Ormanian’s observation, “...it is not personal directions that should

³⁰ Berberian 1883: 83.

³¹ See Sarvazyan 2004: 45.

³² Ormanian 1880: 51-52.

prevail in office, but the calling of the office... if one is called to an office, the official direction is immediately drawn before them”.³³ Resigning from an elected office is constitutionally unacceptable. The political resignation of the national leader must be justified in the name of national security and interests.

- Ensuring social harmony: the Armenian public was not homogeneous; it consisted of different strata endowed with certain social rights and functions. However, the force of constitutional law extended to all members of the nation, regardless of class, property, gender, and other differences. Natural law also does not exempt any group of people from duties; all are equal before the law. The Constitution defines not the rights of classes, but of the nation and its members, the people and the authorities. Consequently, class privileges are excluded: “The Constitution... sees only electors and the elected within the Nation and never classes...”³⁴ The constitutionalists generally rejected class discrimination and the idea of class struggle, as they considered nationality and pan-national key issues to be primary.
- Equality and cooperation of secular and spiritual authorities: In the National Assembly, secular and clerical deputies have equal authority. The eligibility of clerics is conditioned by their greater awareness of specific religious issues. If they were to defend only the rights of the clergy, then apart from ecclesiastical matters, they would have no voice in the voting on national-political issues. Similarly, laypersons would have no voice in the voting on ecclesiastical issues. The consequence of this would be the division of the National Assembly, the supreme body of national authority, and it would become “...an entity... a two-bodied creature, back to back, unable to move forward or backward.” According to the principle of parliamentarism, spiritual officials enjoy the respect of laypersons, but as members of the nation, they must bow equally with them before the principle of justice and legality. Therefore, all members of the supreme national body “...equally represent the Nation and have a decisive voice with equal authority in all national issues”.³⁵
- Constitutional correlation between the people and the authorities: The entire Armenian population is the subject of national law and the object of the national authority’s care. What is the right of the authority is the duty of the people, and what is the right of the people is the duty of the authority. According to Nahapet Rusinian’s assertion, the Constitution “...regulates the right and duty of each individual in their national relations with each other on the one hand, and on the other hand, mutually binds the Nation and the National Administration with obligations”.³⁶ The illegality of both the people and the rulers is rejected, and both tyranny and false democracy are condemned, because, in the end, both lead to anarchy. According to the thinker, when the authority is negligent, it loses its general administrative right and “...is

³³ Ormanian 1910: 22.

³⁴ Minutes of the General Assembly 1870: 21.

³⁵ Minutes of the General Assembly 1870a: 22.

³⁶ Rusinian, National Collection, Constantinople (n.d.): 25.

morally considered dissolved and ruined before its former rights and laws”.³⁷ And when the people are negligent, they lose their constitutional rights.

The people have the right to evaluate the activities of the parliament, determining its legality and fairness. But the people must also recognize the rights of the national authority, obeying the laws. Moreover, according to M. Khrimyan, they must also be aware of the laws of the ruling state, so that “...lawbreakers do not dare to oppress even by law due to the ignorance of the people”.³⁸ Grigor Odian recalls the constitutional principle that the people elect the officials of their nation with trust, realizing that “...they themselves will not be able to exercise the right to govern themselves well... [they] entrust it to those who know”.³⁹ Therefore, the people have no right to interfere unnecessarily in the activities of the authority, guaranteeing its freedom to act. The constitutional order is established for the sake of freedom, which also implies constitutional responsibility. According to Nerses Varzhapetyan, the nation is obliged to protect the authority and honor of its own power; otherwise, “...we lose the right to demand the same from foreigners. If we strengthen ourselves internally with unity, we will be respectable and powerful externally”.⁴⁰ Accepting the judgments of senior political figures, Ormanian also emphasizes the correct guidance of the people’s potential, having the national perspective as a mindset, because “The first element of nationality and national essence is to feel it in one’s will with force and firmness”.⁴¹

The constitutionalists call the nation’s deputies the “natural advocates” of the people, whose supreme duty is the protection of national rights, especially in volatile geopolitical conditions. They believe that national rights should under no circumstances be sacrificed to political considerations, keeping the national spirit invulnerable and impenetrable to harmful external influences. In such situations, Gr. Odian’s advice is: “...wait until the time comes, and act when the time arrives, this is... my principle in politics”.⁴² The people should not be incited to struggle unprepared and with doubtful consequences.

- Proportionality of centralized and decentralized governance principles: Armenian traditional politics is characterized by two trends: on the one hand, the strengthening of centralized power, and on the other hand, the protection of local autonomies⁴³. From Ormanian’s viewpoint, “When times are difficult, it is useful to gather around the authority from all sides, forming a single and united union, and with it to fight against all kinds of difficulties”.⁴⁴ Naturally, in a complex political situation, centralized governance is justified, and the role of the central National Administration increases,

³⁷ Minutes of the General Assembly 1874: 84.

³⁸ Khrimyan Hayrik 1929b: 437.

³⁹ National Constitution and Mejmu'a 1861: 4-5.

⁴⁰ Minutes of the Representative General Assembly 1870a: 6.

⁴¹ Ormanian 1880a: 44.

⁴² Grigor Odian 1931: 145.

⁴³ See Sarvazyan 2010: 134-142.

⁴⁴ Ormanian 1879: 34.

“...because it is the one that unites all individuals of the nation as the natural and legal head of the Armenian nation”.⁴⁵ Nevertheless, even in this case, it is not right to prohibit individual activity in the fields of education, charity, economy, and culture; on the contrary, it is necessary to support the people’s initiative: “...everything that belongs to the nation must not escape the supervision of the national center, so that nothing completely alien and separate remains on the national body as something inappropriate”.⁴⁶ In the 19th century, the principle of decentralized governance became one of the fundamental constitutional ideas. If in intra-national relations the centralization of national potential around the national authority was important, then in the status of subjugation, decentralized national self-government was necessary. The adoption and implementation of the Constitution was a unique manifestation of this principle, as the first stage of the restoration of statehood.

- Freedoms of debate, opinion, and conviction as essential conditions for parliamentary activity: National issues receive legitimate solutions only through debate and free discussion, which continue until a constitutional way of resolution emerges, new ideas are born, truths are revealed, and falsehoods are refuted. According to the principle of constitutionalism, freedom of speech is meaningful by the usefulness of the proposed goal, that is, not for that part of the people who presented it, but for the entire nation. According to N. Varzhapetyan, “...all essences must unite on the single Ego, that is, on the nation; in the circle of love, every person is great and at the same time small”.⁴⁷

The constitutionalists consider the free press a means of illuminating national key issues and monitoring the implementation of constitutional principles. But there are also issues that, under conditions of tyranny, they are forced to discuss secretly. These should be covered within national-official circles, in the presence of official correspondents, so that they “...do not mislead public opinion by receiving false information, the anchor of the Constitution”.⁴⁸ In the very first months of the Constitution’s implementation, it was proposed in the National Assembly to create a charter guaranteeing the freedoms and rights of the national press, as well as a national official gazette (it became the “Masis” periodical of Constantinople).

The existence of an official gazette was meaningful not only within national circles but also within and outside the borders of the Ottoman state: to publicly proclaim national and civil rights, to officially declare national issues and goals in the name of the nation, to demand solutions to issues related to the empire in the name of the nation, and to refute falsehoods about the nation in the foreign press. The National Parliament also has the right to discuss imperial decrees. If the decrees are not favorable to the

⁴⁵ Ormanian 1880: 19.

⁴⁶ Ormanian 1880: 20.

⁴⁷ Minutes of the General Assembly 1874: 6.

⁴⁸ Minutes of the General Assembly 1884: 518.

Armenians, the nation is authorized not to implement them, sending a response-protest in the name of the nation.

N. Rusinian interprets the limits of platform freedom in the national parliament. He considers the parliament's platform the "high national public square" from which one speaks to the nation and the world. Moreover, every word spoken is subject to the judgment of the nation and foreigners. Therefore, only well-considered issues should be presented from this platform. And since the limit of Armenian platform freedom is intra-national life, then, according to R. Berberian, everything should be spoken "...in the name of truth, in the name of justice, in the name of brotherhood, in the name of the Fatherland and God".⁴⁹ But the right to the inviolability of the national representative is proclaimed inalienable; unjustly slandering, depriving of mandate, exiling, or killing them is a gross violation of constitutional principle. If a representative commits a violation of the law within national circles, only the national authority has the right to condemn them, and if the crime is against the empire, they are punished by Ottoman laws.

Therefore, if the freedom established by natural-divine law is absolute and inalienable, and it is an ideal for humankind in general, then the manifestations of that freedom within a specific human community, within the framework of national existence, have mandatory boundaries, the violation of which endangers even the permitted freedom. According to constitutional ideology, it is necessary to recognize the limits of freedom and not to propose unsolvable problems in the existing conditions.

The constitutionalists proclaimed the people's right to discuss and criticize the activities of the national authorities: "the people know how to respect authority, they know how to honor the Administration, but they cannot remain silent against negligence, and apart from not remaining silent, they also know how not to recognize that Administration which does not protect their rights and justice".⁵⁰ However, criticism must be reasoned and lawful, observing the rules of civility. The people also have the right to present issues or petitions through public appeals, without dictating the methods of their resolution, the jurisdiction of which belongs to the National Assembly. Because the people presenting a petition, no matter how numerous, do not represent the entire nation. Accepting the people's free will and the right to free speech, Armenian figures warn against resorting to radical rebellious means by the subjugated people, considering peaceful, harmonious relations between the authorities and the people as primary. It is extremely dangerous under conditions of tyranny to provoke a reason to suspend the implementation of the Constitution; rather, it is necessary to protect the achievements of the constitutional order with law-abidingness, as they are the foundation of national sovereignty. Moreover, since the mid-19th century, the main demand of popular petitions to the authorities has been the implementation of the Constitution, not bringing the nation to an "anarchic state," and its well-being. "The

⁴⁹ Berberian 1907: 329.

⁵⁰ Minutes of the National Assembly 1870b: 333.

nation expects nothing else from you, if not the Constitution and its implementation”⁵¹, one of the petitions states.

In summarizing the above, it can be concluded that the protection of the nation's rights in intra-national life implied the resolution of a number of issues. Based on the fundamental principle of “right and duty,” the activities of the constitutionalists were aimed at constitutionally organizing national life and preserving the nation's sovereignty and internal independence. Along with the implementation of the latter, they tried to solve a more complex problem: the protection of the rights of a subjugated but self-governing nation within the empire. At this level, the issue was posed on two planes: the demand for equality of rights between Muslims and non-Muslims (the ruling people and the subjects), as well as between Slavic Christians and Armenian Christians (subject nations).

In addition, Armenian figures argued the issue of human rights in the context of both the rights and freedoms of the human being, and the rights and duties of the human-citizen. On the human being plane, the natural rights of the nation were defended, rejecting tyranny, while on the human-citizen plane, the principles of universal equality, justice, peaceful coexistence of all peoples, the establishment of solidarity, and the recognition of the equality of nations were emphasized.

If in intra-national existence the will of the Armenian people was expressed by constitutional principles through national authorities, then at the second level, it was the will of the entire nation to freely choose its own way of life. In protecting the natural rights of the nation established by natural law, the jurisdiction of the national authority is not limitable, while the applicability of positive law depended on the degree of authority granted by the empire to the subject nation. “Internal independence” is the right of the nation, accepted by the ruling power.

The constitutionalists repeatedly proclaimed in the National Assembly the right to information about the political and legal status of the divided parts of Armenia, as they too sought the protection of laws and equality, striving not to lose their innate national essence. Specifically addressing the situation of Eastern Armenians, M. Aghabekyan asserts that the blows of the Russian nation are in themselves “civilizing,” that is, corrupting morals, and “...its administration is not world-destroying or nation-destroying, but world-transforming or nation-circulating”.⁵² Therefore, it is not the physical existence or material property of the nation that is endangered, but its spiritual existence, which leads to greater devastation. Armenian figures emphasize the strengthening of cultural-educational and compatriotic-spiritual ties through publicism, translated literature, as well as awareness of Russian imperial laws and state and social norms, to understand what influence their compatriots are subjected to.

Thus, the aforementioned principles of parliamentary governance can be evaluated both by a specific-historical principle and in the context of contemporary political realities. Naturally, under foreign subjugation, it was impossible to apply all

⁵¹ Minutes of the Representative General Assembly 1874: 914.

⁵² Aghabekyan 1878: 111.

those principles of parliamentary governance that are applicable in independent and legal states. However, in terms of their ideological-political potential, they have not lost their relevance and, as theoretical-philosophical foundations, can serve as a scientific-methodological basis for modern political concepts.

Conclusion

The article interprets the principles of parliamentarism in the context of Western Armenian national constitutionalism. The role and supremacy of constitutional laws, the significance of representative democracy, the principle of separation of powers, and the Armenian nation's capacity for self-governance are substantiated. The Constitution includes a model of a rule-of-law state, on the basis of which a national parliamentary government was formed.

The National Constitution was intended to guarantee: a) the possibility of preserving the nation's freedom and rights, b) a balance between centralized and decentralized governance principles, c) the supremacy of the National Assembly as the legislative power, d) the administrative equality of the Political and Religious Assemblies, e) the neutralization of class discrimination and social harmony. Many articles of the Constitution are devoted to the rights and duties of the nation's representatives, as well as the relationship and cooperation of socio-political forces, to regulate political processes in national life. Freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of activity, the right to vote, and the equality of all peoples before the law are proclaimed.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

RELIGION

PREREQUISITES FOR THE EMERGENCE AND FORMATION OF INDEPENDENT THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT IN THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

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Abstract

The Christian faith stands as one of the cornerstones in the formation of Armenian identity, uniquely manifested through Armenian theological thought. Rooted in pivotal ecclesiastical-historical events, this thought has evolved, deepened, and been refined over centuries, creating a rich heritage that reflects both universal Christian traditions and the unique spiritual and cultural character of the Armenian people. This article addresses the early periods of the Armenian Church's history (from its foundation to the beginning of the 6th century). Its focus of study includes historical events such as the introduction of Christianity to Armenia and its adoption as a state religion, as well as the invention of the Armenian alphabet and its impact on Armenian Christian thought. The article also touches upon the universal and local ecclesiastical challenges of the time, aiming to reveal how the ecclesiastical authors and events of that era shaped and crystallized Armenian Christian theological thought. This thought responded to both internal religious needs and the developments in global Christianity, thereby defining the unique character of Armenian theological thought.

Keywords: Armenian Church, Christianity, St. Gregory the Illuminator, Nicene Creed, Mesrop Mashtots

The Armenian Church from its Foundation to St. Gregory the Illuminator

According to the history of the Universal Church, the disciples of Jesus Christ, departing from Judea, spread their apostolic activities throughout the world, preaching Christian doctrine and theology. Among the apostles, St. Thaddeus (43-66 AD) and St. Bartholomew (60-68 AD) came to Armenia, where through tireless preaching and the baptism of pagan Armenians, they laid the foundation for the Church of Christ. After their martyrdom, the Church continued its mission, becoming an important center for the spread of Christianity.

To ensure the continuity of the apostles' preaching and to meet the spiritual needs of new converts, bishops were successively ordained. These bishops operated

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Received 28.11.2024, revised 18.03.2025, accepted 29.04.2025

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clandestinely¹ until Christianity was declared the state religion, which elevated the issue of Christianity's development to an entirely new level. The first Catholicos of Armenia, St. Gregory the Illuminator (302-325 AD), upon ascending the patriarchal throne, spurred the development of ritual and spiritual educational life. However, given that Armenians did not have their own script, both during the preceding period of the apostles and their successor bishops, and during this era, the dissemination of Christian doctrine among the people occurred orally.²

It must be acknowledged that it is difficult to speak definitively about Armenian theological conceptions characteristic of this period, as the preserved works claiming to date from the 4th century³ were either directly created in Armenian or, at best, were translated into Armenian only after the invention of the alphabet, thus, in any case, bearing the imprint of the 5th century.

Nevertheless, there are some important points that are impossible to deny:

- From the preaching of the apostles until the adoption of Christianity as the state religion, Christian communities always existed in Armenia; consequently, the Christian faith and doctrine were preserved and passed down from generation to generation.
- After the adoption of Christianity as the state religion, the spread of faith and Christian doctrine not only became unhindered (at least at the official level) but also gained new momentum, as both Christians and preachers of Christianity increased in number.

Since it is characteristic of human thought to develop and progress in accordance with the times, alongside the preservation of faith and its subsequent spread, it is certain that the unique Armenian theological thought also underwent corresponding development.

Testimony to these views is the fact that among the 318 bishops who participated in the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea in 325 AD, was also the Armenian Patriarch Aristakes I (325-333 AD). According to Movses Khorenatsi's testimony, Aristakes I took with him to Nicaea a confession of faith (written) affirmed by King Trdat and his father, Gregory the Illuminator. Upon his return, he brought to Armenia the Nicene Creed, established during the Council, as a "credible foundation" for the Christian faith and a definition of Orthodox doctrine.⁴

¹ See Ormanian 2001: 27-68.

² See Ormanian 2001: 104-105.

³ This refers to works attributed to St. Gregory the Illuminator, two of which can be subjected to scrutiny from the perspective of theological study: "Frequent Discourses" and "The Teaching of Saint Gregory." Both, however, even if theoretically containing ideas specific to the Illuminator, cannot in themselves belong to the Illuminator's pen, as they are works composed as complete entities in the 5th-6th centuries (see Sahakyan 2022: 165-185, The Teaching of Saint Gregory, trans. from Grabar, preface and notes by Arevshatyan 2007: 10-12, Thomson 2001: 52-53).

⁴ See Movses Khorenatsi 2003: 1991-1992.

Armenia and the Armenian Church After St. Gregory the Illuminator Until the Mid-5th Century

With the declaration of Christianity as the state religion, the dissemination and development of Christian theological thought were initiated. However, it is necessary to briefly address the historical realities of the period to understand the direction of its development.

Even on the eve of the adoption of Christianity, two powerful empires of the time, Persia and the Roman Empire, were in constant struggle to extend their military-political influence over Great Armenia. From the mid-3rd century, Persian princes ruling in Armenia, within the same logic, attempted to forcibly spread Zoroastrianism in the country, opposing paganism, to which both the Romans and Armenians adhered. However, with the state adoption of Christianity, Armenia opposed both Persia and Rome, strengthening its religious and political independence.

Naturally, the two superpowers, engaged in mutual struggle, and Armenia, located on their path of conflict and capable of providing great assistance to them, could not reconcile themselves with the latter's religious independence and political autonomy. With the aim of subjugating Armenia and thereby succeeding in their struggle against each other, these powers constantly attempted to interfere in the internal affairs of Great Armenia, sometimes by creating discord, sometimes by attempts at appeasement, and sometimes by religious coercion.

After St. Gregory the Illuminator and St. Trdat III, up until the fall of the Arshakuni dynasty in the 5th century (428 AD), largely due to endless provocations by Rome and Persia between the royal court and the Nakharar (feudal lord) houses, and the struggle emerging from the royal approach against feudalism, Armenia and the life of the Armenian Church faced a struggle against internal fragmentation.⁵ Added to this was the presence of pagan elements and proponents of paganism, including members the aristocracy. As an example of their struggle against Christianity, it suffices to recall the hatred incited against the Illuminator's sons, when Patriarch Aristakes I was murdered by a Nakharar of Sophene, and Patriarch Vrtanes I (333-341 AD) was subjected to an assassination attempt by about two thousand pagans enjoying the patronage of the queen and some Nakharars.⁶

Thus, the Church, without neglecting other aspects of its mission, remained engaged in the struggle against direct paganism and pagan practices within Christian-professing aristocratic circles from the second quarter of the 4th century to the first quarter of the 5th century. Meanwhile, the kingdom, largely due to internal discord and external influence, was ultimately condemned to the division of Great Armenia between the Roman and Persian Empires (387 AD), leading to the passing of the majority of Great Armenia under Persian rule and the fall of the Arshakuni kingdom (428 AD).

⁵ See History of Armenia 2018: 45-166.

⁶ See History of Armenia 2018: 44, 46; Ormanian 2001: 129-130, 137-138.

After the fall of the Arshakuni kingdom of Great Armenia, Armenia, which was viewed as one of Persia's provinces, while preserving its internal autonomy and Christian religion, experienced economic, political, and spiritual-cultural development. This, naturally, would contradict Persia's state, political programs, and religious aspirations. Pursuing the goal of eliminating possible future rebellions of Armenians and weakening the Armenian Church, which was strengthening after the invention of the alphabet (404 AD) and embodying the country's statehood, Persian King Yazdegerd II, following many of his predecessors, decided to convert Armenians to Zoroastrianism and establish it in Armenia. This met with fierce opposition from the Armenians and eventually led to the Battle of Avarayr in 451 AD (May 26). This battle deterred the Persians from their intention to convert Armenians, but as a result, many Armenian Nakharars were captured or killed, dealing a severe blow to Armenia's stability and strength. High-ranking clergymen, including Catholicos Hovsep I Haghotsmetsi, were also taken to Ctesiphon with the captured Nakharars and executed.

Nevertheless, the first half of the 5th century is considered a favorable period for the spiritual, scientific, and cultural development of the Armenian Church and people. This is because it determined the "Golden Age" of Armenian history: the invention of the Armenian alphabet, the translation of the Bible, liturgical, theological, and philosophical works, the emergence and flourishing of original Armenian literature, and the strengthening of Christianity and national unity based on these developments.

It is noteworthy that the division of Armenia between the Roman-Byzantine and Persian empires compelled Armenia, and in some sense, provided it with the opportunity to benefit from two cultural sources. A vivid proof of this is that during the invention of the alphabet and in the subsequent period, St. Mesrop Mashtots and his disciples traveled to both Edessa and Caesarea. This, in turn, deepened the inherent dual Greek-Syriac character of Armenian theological thought.⁷

Syriac-type Christianity was widespread in Armenia even before the enthronement of St. Gregory the Illuminator, and thus was more influential. However, particularly during the period of St. Sahak I Partev (387-439 AD), he and his supporters began to show a clear and particular inclination towards the Greek tradition. This, in turn, became a contributing factor for Persia to temporarily deprive St. Sahak of the Catholicosate throne and entrust the Catholicosate to the Syriac-born bishop Surmak.⁸

Thus, by the 5th century, these two Christian currents, already firmly established in Armenia, never merged, retaining their distinct characteristics. Yet, from the 5th century onwards, they could no longer remain separate, as the religious-scholarly culture that emerged after the invention of the alphabet utilized both, creating its own unique synthesis based on them.

⁷ See Sargsyan 2012: 93-98, 109-133.

⁸ See Sargsyan 2012: 130, History of Armenia 2018: 161-166, Winkler 2000: 112-113.

The Nicene Creed and Its Application in the Armenian Church in the 5th Century

Ecumenical Councils, convened to resolve theological issues that challenged Church unity and to stabilize the general unity and concord of the Church, became milestones in the definition of Orthodox doctrine. The Armenian Church has accepted and continues to accept three Ecumenical Councils:

- The Council convened in Nicaea in 325 AD, attended by 318 bishops. By anathematizing Arius, the presbyter of Alexandria, and his doctrine that Christ was a created being, they defined the divinity of Jesus Christ as a matter of faith.
- The Council of Constantinople in 381 AD, attended by 150 bishops. By condemning the Pneumatomachian doctrine (πνευματομαχία) of Macedonius and his followers, they reaffirmed the Nicene Creed, adding to it the tenet of the divinity of the Holy Spirit.
- The Council of Ephesus in 431 AD, during which Patriarch Nestorius of Constantinople was condemned on the charge of dividing Christ into two. The Council was attended by 200 bishops who, as a definition of Orthodox doctrine, approved the teaching presented by St. Cyril of Alexandria, Nestorius's opponent, and in particular, his 12 anathemas.

As a result of the first two Ecumenical Councils, two well-known formulations of faith have reached us as definitions of the Church's faith: the Creeds of the 318 and 150 Fathers. The second, the Creed formulated during the Council of Constantinople, is a modified version of the Creed adopted at the Nicene Council. It gained wider acceptance over time, being codified in ecclesiastical ritual books as the "Nicene Creed." Later, as a manifestation of the common theology of the two Ecumenical Councils, it also received the name "Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed".⁹

Below is a comparison of the Nicene Creed texts. The first column presents the Armenian (Grabar) text, the second column the Greek text from the Council of Nicaea (318 Fathers), the third column the Greek text from the Council of Constantinople (150 Fathers), and the fourth column the Armenian (Grabar) text from the Council of Constantinople.

⁹ The issues of the origin and authorship of the two creeds are not yet closed, thus providing an opportunity for new studies (see Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta 1973: 2, 21-22).

Յոյքք [հաւատոյ] ՅԺԸ հարց Ἐκθεσις τῶν τῆς πατέρων¹⁰	Յոյքք [հաւատոյ] ՃԾ հարց Ἐκθεσις τῶν ρν' πατέρων¹¹
Հաւատամք ի մի Աստուած, հայր ամենակալ, ամենեցուն	Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓνα Θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν
երեւելաց եւ աներեւութից արարիչս	οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὁρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀορατῶν·
եւ ի մի տէր Յիսուս Զրիստոս՝ յորդիկն աստուծոյ, ծնեալ ի հորէ միածին, այսիւքն ի գոյութելէ հոր,	καὶ εἰς ἓνα κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ γεννηθέντα ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μονογενῆ, τουτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρός,

¹⁰ Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta 1973: 5, cf. Aznavoryan 2016: 11; Ajemian 2001: 4-6: Modern Armenian: Statement of Faith of the 318 Fathers: We believe in one God, the Almighty Father, Creator of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, born of the Father, the Only-begotten, that is, of the Father's existence; God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made, both in heaven and on earth. Who for us humans and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, became man, suffered and rose on the third day, ascended into heaven, and is coming to judge the living and the dead. [We believe] also in the Holy Spirit. But as for those who say that there was a time when he was not, and that he was not before he was begotten, or that he was created from nothing, or who say, as they claim, that the Son of God is of a different essence or existence, mutable or alterable, the universal and apostolic Church anathematizes them.

¹¹ Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta 1973: 24, cf. Aznavoryan 2016: 12, Ajemian 2001: 7-9: Modern Armenian: Statement of Faith of the 150 Fathers: We believe in one God, the Almighty Father, Creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us humans and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate and suffered and was buried, and rose on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He is coming again with glory to judge the living and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end. [We believe] also in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father, who is worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son, who spoke through the prophets. [We believe] in one holy, universal, and apostolic Church. We confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come. Amen.

աստուղած յաստուղծոյ,	θεὸν ἐκ θεοῦ,	φῶς ἐκ φωτός,
լոյս ի լուսոյ,	θεὸν ἀληθινὸν	θεὸν ἀληθινὸν
աստուղած ճշմարիտ	ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ,	ἐκ θεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ,
յաստուղծոյ ճշմարտէ,	γεννηθέντα	γεννηθέντα
ծնեալ,	οὐ ποιηθέντα,	οὐ ποιηθέντα,
ոչ արարեալ,	ὁμοούσιον τῷ	ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρί,
համագոյ իօր,	πατρί,	δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα
որով ամենայն ինչ	δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα	ἐγένετο,
եղել,	ἐγένετο,	
որ ինչ յերկինս	τὰ τε ἐν τῷ	
և որ ինչ յերկրի,	οὐρανῷ	
	καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γῇ,	
որ վասն մեր	τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς	τὸν δι' ἡμᾶς
մարդկան	τοὺς ἀνθρώπους	τοὺς ἀνθρώπους
եւ վասն	καὶ διὰ τὴν	καὶ διὰ τὴν
մերոյ	ἡμετέραν	ἡμετέραν
փրկութեան	σωτηρίαν	σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα
էջ	κατελθόντα	ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν
		καὶ σαρκωθέντα
եւ մարմնացաւ	καὶ σαρκωθέντα,	ἐκ πνεύματος
		ἁγίου
		καὶ Μαρίας
		τῆς παρθένου
		καὶ
մարդացաւ,	ἐνανθρωπήσαντα,	ἐνανθρωπήσαντα
		σταυρωθέντα
		τε υπέρ ημῶν ἐπὶ
		Ποντίου Πιλάτου
չարչարեցաւ	παθόντα	καὶ παθόντα
		καὶ ταφέντα
եւ յարեալ	καὶ ἀναστάντα	καὶ ἀναστάντα
յերրորդ ակուր,	τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ,	τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ
եւ	ἀνελθόντα	κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς
յերկինս,	εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς,	καὶ ἀνελθόντα
		εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς
		καὶ καθεζόμενον
		ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ
		πατρὸς
		καὶ πάλιν
գալոց է	ἐρχόμενον	ἐρχόμενον
		μετὰ δόξης
ի դատել զկենդանիս	κρίναι ζώντας	κρίναι ζώντας
և զմեռեալս	καὶ νεκρούς	καὶ νεκρούς,
		οὗ τῆς βασιλείας
		οὐκ ἔσται τέλος·
եւ ի սուրբ	καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον	καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα
հոգին:	πνεῦμα.	τὸ ἅγιον,

Իսկ որք ասեն՝
Էր երբեմն յորժամ
զի չէր,
եւ միւշչեւ
ծնեալ էր՝
չէ՛ր,
եւ զի
յոչէրց
եղեւ,
կամ յայլմէ
Էռթենէ կամ
գոյռթենէ
ասեն
որդին աստուծոյ Է,

փոփոխելի կամ
այլայլելի,
զայնպիսիս
նզովէ
կաթուղիկէ եւ
առաքելական
ելեղեցի:

Τοὺς δὲ λέγοντας
ἦν ποτε ὅτε
οὐκ ἦν
καὶ πρὶν
γεννηθῆναι
οὐκ ἦν
καὶ ὅτι
ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων
ἐγένετο,
ἢ ἐξ ἐτέρας
ὑποστάσεως ἢ
οὐσίας,
φάσκοντας
τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ
θεοῦ
εἶναι
τρεπτὸν ἢ
ἀλλοιωτόν,
τούτους
ἀναθεματίζει ἡ
καθολικὴ καὶ
ἀποστολικὴ
ἐκκλησία.

τὸ κύριον καὶ
ζωοποιόν,
τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς
ἐκπορευόμενον,
τὸ
σὺν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ
συμπροσκυνούμενον
καὶ
συνδοξαζόμενον,
τὸ λαλήσαν
διὰ τῶν
προφητῶν·
εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν
καθολικὴν καὶ
ἀποστολικὴν
ἐκκλησίαν·
ὁμολογοῦμεν
ἐν βάπτισμα εἰς
ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν·
προσδοκῶμεν
ἀνάστασιν
νεκρῶν
καὶ ζωὴν τοῦ
μέλλοντος αἰῶνος.
ἀμήν.

As noted, after the First Ecumenical Council, Catholicos Aristakes I brought the Creed defined during the council to Armenia. This Creed was presumably kept in Greek in the Armenian Church, considering that before the invention of the alphabet in the 5th century, church rites and the reading of the Holy Scriptures were also performed in Greek. It was only with the invention of the Armenian alphabet in 404 AD that indigenous Armenian literature began. After this, under the leadership and direct involvement of St. Sahak I Partev and St. Mesrop Mashtots, the Holy Scriptures were translated, the most important ecclesiastical texts were rendered into Armenian, and the theology of the Armenian Church gained written form. It was also at this time that the Creed used in the Armenian Church must have been translated.

At the beginning of the 6th century, Catholicos Babken I Otmtsi (490-516 AD) presented a creed in his first letter to the Christians of Persia, about which he testifies: "This is how we believed, as we were baptized, and the holy fathers canonized it; and there is no other rule outside of this, and we have not accepted it, and we do not accept it".¹²

The presented creed is the Nicene Creed, with very small differences.

Յոյցք [հաւատոյ] ՅԺԸ հարց	Թուղթ ի Պարսս ¹³
Հաւատամք ի մի Աստուած, հայր ամենակալ, ամենեցուն երեւելեաց եւ աներեւութից արարիչն եւ ի մի տէր Յիսուս Զրիստոս՝ յորդին աստուծոյ, ծնեալ ի հօրէ միածին, այսինքն ի գոյութենէ (<i>ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας</i>) հօր, Աստուած յաստուծոյ, լոյս ի լուսոյ, աստուած ճշմարիտ յաստուծոյ ճշմարտէ, ծնեալ, ոչ արարեալ, համագոյ (ὁμοούσιον) հօր, որով ամենայն ինչ եղեւ, որ ինչ յերկինս և	Հաւատամք ի մի Աստուած, Հայր ամենակալ, ամենեցուն երեւելեաց եւ աներեւութից արարիչ, եւ մի Տէր Յիսուս Զրիստոս, յորդին Աստուծոյ, ծնեալ ի Հաւրէ, Միածին այսինքն է ի գոյութենէ Հաւր: Աստուած յԱստուծոյ, լոյս ի լուսոյ, Աստուած ճշմարիտ յԱստուծոյ ճշմարտէ, ծնեալ եւ ոչ արարեալ, նոյն էութիւն Հաւր, որով ամենայն ինչ եղեւ յերկինս եւ յերկրի:

¹² [A] Letter of the Armenians 2004: 119: Modern Armenian: This is how we believed, just as we were baptized and the Holy Fathers established. There is no rule outside of this, and we have not accepted and do not accept any other.

¹³ Modern Armenian: Letter to the Persians. We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, Only-Begotten, that is, from the existence of the Father. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten and not made, the same essence as the Father, through Whom all things came into being, whatever is in heaven and whatever is on earth. Who for us humans and for our salvation came down and was incarnated from the Holy Virgin Mary, suffered for our sins, died and rose on the third day, ascended into heaven, sat at the right hand of the Father, is coming to judge the living and the dead. As for those who say that there was a time when He was not, and that He was not before He was begotten, or that He came into being from nothing, or, as they believe, is from another essence and being, or that the Son of God is changeable or perishable, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them.

որ ինչ յերկրի,
որ վասն մեր մարդկան եւ վասն մերոյ
փրկութեան էջ եւ մարմնացաւ,
մարդացաւ, չարչարեցաւ եւ յարեալ
յերրորդ աւուր, ել յերկինս, գալոց է ի
դատել զկենդանիս և զմեռեալս

եւ ի սուրբ հոգին:

Իսկ որք ասեն՝ Էր երբեմն յորժամ զի չէր,
եւ մինչեւ ծնեալ էր՝ չէր, եւ զի յոչեից եղեւ,
կամ յայլմէ եուրթենէ (ὑποστάσεως) կամ
գոյութենէ (οὐσίας) ասեն որդին աստուծոյ
է, փոփոխելի կամ այլայլելի, զայնպիսիս
նզովէ կաթուղիկէ եւ առաքելական
եկեղեցի:

Որ վասն մեր մարդկան, եւ վասն մերոյ
փրկութեան, էջ եւ մարմնացաւ **ի սրբոյ
Կուսէն Մարիամայ**. չարչարեցաւ **վասն
մեղաց մերոց**. **մեռաւ** եւ յերրորդ աւուր
յարեալ. ել յերկինս, **նստաւ ընդ աջմէ
Հաւր**. զայ դատել զկենդանիս եւ
զմեռեալս:

Եւ վասն այնոցիկ ոյք ասեն, Էր երբեմն զի
չէր, եւ մինչեւ ծնեալ էր՝ չէր, եւ զի յոչեւ
եղեւ, կամ իբրեւ յայլմէ եուրթենէ կամ ի
գոյութենէ համարին թէ իցէ, կամ
փոփոխելի, կամ անցանելի գորդին
Աստուծոյ, զնոսա նզովէ՝ կաթուղիկէ եւ
առաքելական եկեղեցի:

This Creed, drafted by Catholicos Babken, testifies that in the Armenian Church, at the beginning of the 6th century (and therefore also before that, in the 5th century), the Creed established at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD was used¹⁴. However, this does not mean that the ecclesiastical fathers of the 5th century were unfamiliar with the Constantinopolitan recension, as evidenced by phrases found in Catholicos Babken's text such as "from the Holy Virgin Mary," "for our sins; died," and "sat at the right hand of the Father."

A similar Creed is also found in the letter addressed by St. Sahak Partev and St. Mesrop Mashtots to Patriarch Proclus of Constantinople, which must have been drafted immediately after the Council of Ephesus, i.e., in the 430s.

It begins as follows: «Այլ մեք հաւատամք ի մի Աստուած, Հայր ամենակալ, արարիչ երկնից եւ երկրի, երեւելի եւ աներեւելի արարածոց: Եւ ի մի տէր Յիսուս Քրիստոս, ի միածին Որդին Աստուծոյ, այսինքն է **եուրթիւն յեուրթենէ, եուրթիւն ծնեալ՝** որով ամենայն եղեւ, Աստուած յԱստուծոյ, լոյս ի լուսոյ, ծնեալ եւ ոչ արարեալ, **իսկակից Հաւր**, որ վասն մեր մարդկութեան էջ եւ մարմնացաւ, յանձն առ չարչարանս, յարեալ յերրորդ աւուր, եւ ել յերկինս, եւ զայ դատել զկենդանիս եւ զմեռեալս: Եւ ի Սուրբ Հոգին հաւատամք: Իսկ որք ասենն՝ Էր երբեմն զի չէր, եւ մինչեւ ծնեալ էր չէր, եւ ասեն ի **չեուրթենէ** եղեւ, եւ **յայլմէ իմեմնէ եւ զաւրութենէ**, եւ կամ եղծանելով եւ փոփոխելով, զայնպիսիս նզովեմք»¹⁵:

¹⁴ Mekhitarist monastic H. Hovsep Gatrchyan, in his work dedicated to the Creed, objectively demonstrates that the Creed currently used by the Armenian Church is a later recension that differs from both the Nicene and Constantinopolitan Creeds (see Gatrchyan 1891: 2-4, 10). While acknowledging that the Creed used by the Armenian Church has undergone revisions over time, not all of the author's observations correspond to reality, which in turn speaks to the need for new research on the topic.

¹⁵Reply from Sahak and Mashtots 2003: 219-220. Modern Armenian: But we believe in one God, the Almighty Father, Creator of heaven and earth, of visible and invisible creatures. And in one Lord Jesus

Compared to the Nicene Creed and the Creeds presented by Catholicos Babken, the differences are very small, but significant. Unlike Catholicos Babken's Creed, that of Sahak Partev does not have the additions more characteristic of the Constantinopolitan Creed, such as “from the Holy Virgin Mary,” “for our sins; died,” “sat at the right hand of the Father,” which makes it closer to the Nicene Creed than Catholicos Babken's. At the same time, Sahak Partev's Creed uses terms that differ significantly from those found in the Nicene and Catholicos Babken's Creeds, as shown in the table below:

Յոյցք [հաւատոյ] ՅԺԸ հարց	Թուղթ ի Պարսս	Պատասխանի թղթոյն Պրոկղի
... այսինքն ի գոյութենէ հօր	... այսինքն է ի գոյութենէ Զաւր	... այսինքն է Էութիւն յԷութենէ, Էութիւն ծնեալ
... Համագոյ հօր	... նոյն Էութիւն Զաւր,	... իսկակից Զաւր,
... Եւ զի յոչեից եղել, կամ յայլմէ Էութենէ կամ գոյութենէ	... Եւ զի յոչնչէ եղել, կամ իբրեւ յայլմէ Էութենէ կամ ի գոյութենէ	... Եւ ասն ի չեութենէ եղել, եւ յայլմէ իմեմնէ եւ զաւրութենէ

Given the above, we can confidently state that throughout the 5th century, the Nicene Creed was used by the Armenian Church, most likely brought to Armenia by Aristakes I Partev. However, this does not mean that the Armenian Church's doctrine, particularly its Christology, was limited to the teachings of the Council of Nicaea (in which it participated). During this period, the doctrinal positions of the Councils of Constantinople and Ephesus were also widespread among Armenians, which is clearly evident from the aforementioned letter by St. Sahak Partev and St. Mesrop Mashtots to Patriarch Proclus of Constantinople. In this letter, in continuation of the Nicene Creed, the author states: «Եւ վասն մարմնագգեցութեան Որդոյ այսպէս հաւատամք. զի առ յանձն լինել մարդ կատարեալ յաստուածածին Մարիամայ Սրբով Հոգևով, առեալ շունչ եւ մարմին ճշմարտիւ եւ ոչ կեղծեալք, այսպէս եւ կատարեաց փրկել զմեր մարդկութիւնս, եւ ճշմարտիւ չարչարեցաւ: Ոչ եթէ ինքն պարտէր չարչարանաց, զի ազատ է աստուածութիւնն ի չարչարանաց, այլ վասն մեր Էառ յանձն զչարչարանս, խաչեցաւ եւ թաղեցաւ եւ յերիւր աւուր յարեաւ, եւ յերկինս համբարձաւ, եւ ընդ աջմէ Զաւր նստաւ, եւ գալոց է ի դատել զկենդանիս եւ զմեռեալս»¹⁶:

Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, that is, He who is Essence from Essence, begotten Essence, by whom all things were made, God of God, Light of Light, begotten and not created, consubstantial (= of the same nature, of the same essence, - M.S.) with the Father, who for our humanity came down and was incarnate, took upon himself sufferings, rose on the third day, and ascended into heaven and is coming to judge the living and the dead. And we believe in the Holy Spirit. But as for those who say that there was a time when he was not, and that he was not before he was begotten, and they say that he did not come from Essence, or came from something else and power, or by destruction and change, such ones we anathematize.

¹⁶ Reply from Sahak and Mashtots 2003: 220. Modern Armenian: And concerning the Son's taking on flesh, we believe thus: that when He undertook to become a perfect man from Mary the Theotokos through

This second part of the Creed¹⁷ presented in the letter to Proclus testifies that the author was familiar with both the Creed of Constantinople and the events and established doctrine of the Council of Ephesus.

the Holy Spirit, He truly and not fictitiously took breath and body, and thus accomplished the redemption of our humanity, and truly suffered. Not because He was subject to sufferings, for the Divinity is free from sufferings, but for our sake He undertook the sufferings, was crucified and buried, and rose on the third day, and ascended into heaven and sat at the right hand of the Father, and is coming to judge the living and the dead.

¹⁷ H. Hovsep Gatrchyan, a Mkhitarist monk, asserts that St. Sahak Partev and St. Mesrop Mashtots, in their letter to Patriarch Proclus, copied the Creed they presented from Evagrius Ponticus, whose Greek original, unfortunately, has not been preserved (see Gatrchyan 1891: 21-23). Following Gatrchyan, H. Barsegh V. Sargsyan also writes in his book dedicated to Evagrius: “The phraseology of Evagrius’ Creed and Sahak’s letter is generally the same; to doubt this is superfluous. Therefore, it can be concluded, with all probability, that St. Sahak or his Secretary was familiar with at least the Armenian translation of Evagrius’ Creed, for such a general similarity in phraseology could not have occurred by chance” (Sargsyan 1907: CXA). St. Sahak and his secretary, St. Mesrop Mashtots, were the first translators, and if they were familiar with the Armenian version of Evagrius’ Creed, then they themselves must have translated it, or at least supervised that translation. However, when comparing the two versions of the Creed – St. Sahak’s and Evagrius’ Armenian translation – serious terminological differences become noticeable, such as, for example, “from the power of the Father” – “essence from essence, begotten essence,” or “consubstantial with the Father” – “co-essential with the Father,” “from some other power or essence” – “from some other thing and power,” etc. (see Sargsyan 1907: CKT-CXA). Such terminological differences cannot be the result of chance, and it is evident that the Armenian translation of Evagrius’ Creed is more refined in this regard than St. Sahak’s Creed. For example, in the Nicene Creed, the term *ουσία* is translated by Evagrius as “power” – “from the power of the Father,” “consubstantial with the Father,” whereas in St. Sahak’s text, it is sometimes translated as “essence,” and at other times as “reality.” This means that although the texts of St. Sahak’s Creed and Evagrius’ Armenian translation of the Creed have the same structure and syntax, they cannot belong to the same scribe; therefore, they cannot be translations from the same period or copies of that translation. The more refined text, logically, should be dated later. We can speak more thoroughly about this issue thanks to the philologist Albert Musheghyan, who, unlike his predecessors, found and cited the Greek original of Evagrius’ Creed, which was considered lost (see Musheghyan 1987: 71-78). Here, too, interesting facts emerge. In certain places, St. Sahak’s Creed and Evagrius’ Armenian translation both have differences from the Greek original but are consistent with each other. For example, the Greek original says “ἀνέλαβεν ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐκ τῆς ἁγίας Θεοτόκου Μαρίας, διὰ Πνεύματος ἁγίου, οὐκ ἀπὸ σπέρματος ἀνδρός· σῶμα δὲ καὶ ψυχὴν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ” (= he took upon himself to be a perfect man from the holy Theotokos Mary through the Holy Spirit, not from human seed; truly body and spirit; see Patrologiae 1857: 1638). In St. Sahak’s text, the same passage is presented as: “undertook to become a perfect man from Mary the Theotokos through the Holy Spirit, truly taking breath and body,” and in Evagrius’ Armenian translation, it is: “He clothed himself in perfect humanity from Mary the Theotokos, through the Holy Spirit, true body and breath” (Sargsyan 1907: CKT-CH). Both in St. Sahak’s text and Evagrius’ Armenian translation, the phrase “not from human seed” is absent, which means that these two are related to each other. The only question is: Which of the two influenced the other (for more on this issue, see also Winkler 2000: 109-111, 114-116). In St. Sahak’s letter, we encounter terms and

The Council of Ephesus and the Sahak-Mesrop period

In 431 AD, the Council of Ephesus condemned Nestorius and his doctrine. Saint Yeznik Koghbatsi, one of St. Mesrop Mashtots' disciples who was abroad at the time, reported this in writing to St. Mesrop Mashtots. In a preserved fragment of the letter attributed to him, we read that at the Council of Ephesus, based on the definitions of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea ("having firmly the faith of the first three hundred"), every newly-born and foreign faith was anathematized, and the already accepted Nicene faith was redefined as follows: «... խոստովանել զՔրիստոս՝ Աստուած ճշմարիտ եւ Որդի Աստուծոյ եւ Միածին, ծնեալ ի ՀաւրԷ յառաջ քան գլաւիտեանս, եւ Տէր արարիչ ամենայն արարածոց, եւ զնոյն Բանն Աստուած ի վախճան ժամանակաց զգեցեալ մարմին եւ եղեալ վասն մեր մարդ, առանց շրջելոյ եւ անկանելոյ յիւր աստուածական բնութենէն, եւ ծնեալ ի սուրբ Կուսէն, Աստուած՝ ըստ մարմնաւոր ծննդեան մարդ կատարեալ. եւ կոչի եւ Է Կոյսն Տիրածին եւ Աստուածածին, եւ ծնեալն Աստուած եւ մարդ կատարեալ»¹⁸:

By identifying this formulation with the faith accepted at the Council of Nicaea and re-affirmed at the Council of Ephesus, the author of the letter demonstrates a principle that runs like a red thread through the works of authors of that period. That is, the understanding of the aforementioned doctrinal provisions must correspond to the theology established at the ecumenical councils: "to build upon the same and to teach the same".¹⁹

We find this same logic in the letters authored by St. Sahak and St. Mesrop addressed to Bishop Acacius of Melitene and Patriarch Proclus of Constantinople.

The motivation for writing these letters was the Council of Ephesus itself and the anathema of Nestorianism.

expressions that are not present in either the Greek original or the Armenian translation. For example, the aforementioned phrases "from the power of the Father" - "essence from essence, begotten essence," or "consubstantial with the Father" - "co-essential with the Father." Here, Evagrius' Armenian translation is consistent with the Greek, but St. Sahak's presentation is more liberal in its wording. He translates the term *οὐσία* in one place as "essence," and in another as "reality," whereas in Evagrius' Armenian translation, *οὐσία* is clearly translated as "power." In addition, St. Sahak is very liberal in his abbreviations, to such an extent that one might say he was not influenced by Evagrius at all, were it not for those sporadic passages that are characteristic of Evagrius himself and are repeated verbatim in St. Sahak's text. Bearing all this in mind, we believe that Evagrius' Armenian translation followed the letter of St. Sahak and St. Mashtots to Patriarch Proclus. Furthermore, it is also possible that the translator had before him not only the Greek original but also the very letter addressed to Proclus and partly followed it, making certain refinements.

¹⁸ Yeznik Koghbatsi 2003: 513. Modern Armenian: to confess Christ as true God and Son of God and Only-begotten, born of the Father even before eternity, and Lord, Creator of all creatures; the same Word, God, at the consummation of times, took on flesh and became man for us, without altering and losing His divine nature, and was born of the Holy Virgin, Himself God, who according to His bodily birth became perfect man; and the Virgin is called and is God-bearer and Mother of God, and the one born is God and perfect man.

¹⁹ Yeznik Koghbatsi 2003: 513. Modern Armenian: to build upon the same and to teach the same.

When different communities of the Universal Church began to burn the writings of Nestorius, many Nestorians fled, taking with them the writings they could “save.” Fearing, or more accurately, having information that some of these Nestorians might establish themselves on Armenian soil, the two aforementioned bishops, Proclus and Acacius, wrote letters to Catholicos Sahak I of Armenia (the first letter was also addressed to St. Mesrop Mashtots).²⁰

Their concern was justified because a large part of Armenia, by the Treaty of Erzinka of 387 AD between Sasanian Persia and the Roman Empire, had come under Persian rule and influence. This meant that the connection with Syriac-speaking Christians and the Antiochene theological school, and thus with Theodore of Mopsuestia and his followers, was not only unavoidable but, in some sense, forced.²¹ Nevertheless, in their replies (“Reply to the Blessed Proclus’ Letter from Sahak and Mashtots, Holy Doctors of Armenia” and “Reply of Lord Sahak to Acacius’ Letter”), the Armenian Catholicos first shows the aforementioned bishops that for Armenians, accepting two sons or two lords in Christ is unacceptable, a new kind of Judaism²², because Christ is not “two lords” or “two temples” and “two sons,” but “one Lord Jesus Christ”²³, the very Son of God and man, and then assures them that there are no Nestorians (disciples of Theodore of Mopsuestia) among Armenians, adding that even if such people should appear, they will not only not be accepted but will also be persecuted and punished.²⁴

The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church in the Second Half of the 5th Century

After the Council of Ephesus and the condemnation of Nestorius, theological disputes did not cease, just as they did not have after previous ecumenical councils. Numerous Nestorians continued to adhere to their views, leading to new clashes and problems. To resolve the existing theological and, by then, ecclesiastical-political schism and at least pacify passions within his empire, Emperor Marcian (450-457 AD) convened the Council of Chalcedon on October 8, 451 AD, expressing his full support for Pope Leo I of Rome. Due to this latter circumstance, Roman legates played a prominent role in the council, exerting every effort to ensure that Leo’s theological Tome, which summarized his Christological views, was unconditionally and entirely accepted. However, the exact opposite occurred. Although Leo’s Tome was affirmed, the internal stability of the empire was nonetheless undermined. The schism deepened

²⁰ See Pogharian 1994: 30-40, 49-51.

²¹ For details, see Sargsyan 2012: 109-133, 157-171.

²² See Reply of Lord Sahak 2003: 223.

²³ See Reply of Lord Sahak 2003: 219-221; cf. 223-224.

²⁴ See Reply of Lord Sahak 2003: 219, 221, 222, 223, 224. In both letters, the reference to Nestorianism is indirect, without even mentioning Nestorius’ name. The reason, most likely, was the Persian authorities’ favorable attitude towards Nestorianism.

further, and passions intensified, which is why, for over a century, all of Emperor Marcian's successors, without exception, remained involved in resolving the issue.

The problem was that the Christology adopted at the Council of Chalcedon was not in harmony with the prevailing Christological tradition in the East, as it had close ties to Nestorianism. Consequently, it faced strong opposition among monastics and the faithful, causing concern for the emperors as well. The formula of the Council of Chalcedon, "two natures coming together into one person"²⁵ (έν δύο φύσεσιν... εις έν πρόσωπον και μίαν υπόστασιν συντρεχούσης), was viewed as a contradiction to St. Cyril of Alexandria's formula of "one nature of God the Word Incarnate"²⁶ (μία φύσις του Θεού Λόγου σεσαρκωμένη), which was entirely excluded from the council's adopted theology. The main figures at the Council of Chalcedon were opponents of St. Cyril and sympathizers of Nestorius: Theodoret of Cyrrhus and Ibas of Edessa, which was already sufficient reason to view Chalcedonianism as disguised Nestorianism.²⁷

The schism caused by the Council of Chalcedon reached such an extent that Emperor Basiliscus (475-476 AD), in his edict of 476, anathematized it along with Leo's Tome. His successor, Emperor Zeno (474-475, 476-491 AD), in his famous Henotikon of 482, condemned them to silence. The same anti-Chalcedonian position was adopted by Emperor Anastasius (491-518 AD), and it was only at the end of the first quarter of the 6th century, during the reign of Emperor Justin I (518-527 AD), that Chalcedonianism regained state patronage and gradually began to dominate the Church of Byzantium.²⁸

After the Battle of Avarayr in 451 AD, Persia sought to prevent potential new revolts at all costs by keeping Armenia subservient. To this end, it pursued a policy of isolating patriotic forces in the country and removing them as much as possible from the political arena. It gave high positions to submissive, pliable, and characterless individuals who, in turn, persecuted those who had received Greek education, had a national mindset, and were loyal to spiritual values, including ecclesiastics. The Church itself suffered great persecutions. Its leader, Hovsep I Haghotsmetsi (440-452 AD), had been taken captive after the battle, where he died a martyr's death in 454 AD. His throne, starting from 452 AD, was successively occupied by the pro-Syriac Melite I (452-456 AD) and Moses I of Manazkert (456-461 AD).

Such an attitude towards Armenia led to another revolt, which lasted for 4 years (481-484 AD) and is known as the "War of Vahanants," named after its leader, Vahan Mamikonian. After the war, Vahan Mamikonian was recognized as the Marzpan of Armenia (485-505 AD), restored the country's internal autonomy, and granted the Church complete freedom of worship.²⁹ During this same period, Emperor Zeno's

²⁵ Modern Armenian: The two natures united with each other into one Person.

²⁶ Modern Armenian: The nature of the Incarnate Word of God is one.

²⁷ See Petrosyan 2016: 11, 14-15.

²⁸ For details on the Council of Chalcedon, its adopted theology, and the problems it caused, see Sargsyan 1907: 47-58, 68-83; Petrosyan 2016: 13-16, 21-28, 150-153.

²⁹ See History of Armenia 2018: 189-192, 204-208.

promulgation of the Henotikon and the closure of the School of Edessa (489 AD) caused Nestorian theologians to migrate to Persia and Nisibis, which was very close to Armenia, and establish their renowned school, posing a serious threat to the Armenian Church. The latter, now free in its operations, began to fight against Nestorianism without any obstacles and, at the First Council of Dvin in 505/6 AD, anathematized both Nestorianism and Chalcedonianism, viewing the latter as a continuation of Nestorianism.³⁰

The Theological (Christological) Thought of the Armenian Church in the 5th Century: A Generalized Overview

Before summarizing the first period of the origin and development of theological thought in the Armenian Church, following the examination of its ecclesiastical-political context, it is also necessary to address the theological aspect itself.

Studying the independent Armenian literature created in the 5th century—from the invention of the alphabet to the end of the century—we see that the Armenian Church characterized God as an inaccessible, unknowable essence. Driven by His love for humanity, whom He created, God humbles Himself towards man and becomes knowable to him only through His voluntary revelation: “The Nameless becomes named... The Creator of creatures is named”.³¹

God thus reveals Himself as the Most Holy Trinity: three perfect persons, one Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with one will, one nature, one hypostasis, one essence, and one power³². However, while being one God, the three persons distinctly differ from each other due to the Father, who is an unbegotten hypostasis and unoriginated essence, being the cause of the Son's generation and the Spirit's procession³³, the cause of their same unoriginated hypostases from the same nature.³⁴

The Son “is born of the nature of God the Father,” by which He is both distinct from Him, and yet both remain one God, because there is no difference between their natures; it is the same: “to understand the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as of one nature and Godhead”.³⁵

Generation by nature does not imply interruption, separation, or temporal succession, but rather an unchanging continuity and unity, similar to the sun, light, and warmth, or a spring, water, and a river. Here, generation by nature is understood as continuity: Life is born of Life, Light of Light, Goodness of Goodness. However, no

³⁰ See [A] Letter of the Armenians 2004: 122, 119-120; Sargsyan 1907: 175-177, 184-188; Petrosyan 2016: 29-30.

³¹ Sermons 2003: 13, cf. 9, 119, 126. Modern Armenian: The Nameless receives a name... The Creator of creatures is named.

³² See Agathangelos 2003: 1469-1470, 1479, 1496, 1597, 1621, 1639, 1641, 1662, 1734.

³³ See Sermons 2003: 7.

³⁴ See Sermons 2003: 25.

³⁵ Sermons 2003: 8, cf. Sermons 2003: 7, 33.

change occurs, because the divine eternality is unchangeable: Life remains Life, Light remains Light.³⁶

Nevertheless, the fact that the Son is born of the Father already speaks of the difference between them, in that one is the Begetter, the other the Begotten³⁷, who (the Begotten, and never the Begetter) is presented to us as “God-mixed with flesh”³⁸, that is, “having taken on human nature and mixed it with His divinity”³⁹, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Man, who perfectly unites the divine and the human.

Addressing Jesus Christ, the authors of this period speak of two natures characterizing the one and same incarnate God—divine and human—without ever separating “two natures” in Christ. By doing so, they perfectly accept His human and divine attributes and indirectly show that one nature does not imply confusion or fusion of the two natures, nor does it ever imply any division of the two in Christ.

As an example, let us quote from the works of St. Yeghishe: ա. «Անաճ բնութիւն է ըստ Հաւր Որդին եւ անյաւելուած, այլ ողորմութեամբն, որ առ մեզ, որդի մարդոյ եղել, զաւրէնս բնութեան մերոյ լնոյր ծննդեամբ ի կնոջէ, թե եւ ի Կուսէ եւ ի վեր քան զբնութիւնս, այլ սննդեամբ եւ աճմամբ մերաւրէն, որպէս եւ գրեցաւ իսկ զնմանէ. «Մանուկն աճեր, ասէ, եւ զարգանայր» (Ղուկ. Ա 80, Բ 40)»⁴⁰:

բ. ««Առ իս, ասէ, դարձիր» (Ծնն. ԽԹ 22բ) ոչ սոսկ բան, որպէս եւ էջն, այլ մարդ ճշմարիտ եղեալ, սակայն զիւրն ոչ կորուսեալ, այլ մնացեալ մի որդի եւ մի անձնաւորութիւն եւ բնութիւն, անշփոթ միաւորութեամբ եւ անբաժանելի Աստուածութեամբ»⁴¹:

գ. «Հայր յայտնեաց նմա զբոլոր աստուածութիւնն Որդւոյ, զի աստուածութեամբ եւ մարդկութեամբ զչարչարանսն ընդունիցի, եւ որ չարչարիցի՝ նոյն եւ յառնիցէ»⁴²:

դ. «Տեսնն մերոյ եւ Աստուծոյ, որ ասաց. «Տուաւ ինձ ամենայն իշխանութիւն յերկինս եւ յերկրի» (Մատթ. ԻԸ 18). յայտ է մարդկութեամբն ասէր տուեալ, զոր

³⁶ See Sermons 2003: 14, 19, 25, 37, 57, 90.

³⁷ See Sermons 2003: 33, Commentary Vardapet 2003: 829, Agathangelos 2003: 1733.

³⁸ Sermons 2003: 55.

³⁹ See Sermons 2003: 16, 118; David the Priest of Mamikonian 2003: 621, 694, Commentary Vardapet 2003: 842, Agathangelos 2003: 1343-1345, 1353, 1476, 1478, 1490, 1581, 1619-1620.

⁴⁰ Commentary Vardapet 2003: 899. Modern Armenian: “The Son is an ungrowing and unadded nature like the Father, but through mercy towards us, He became the Son of Man, fulfilling the law of our nature by being born of a woman, and though He was born of a Virgin and was supernatural, He was nourished and grew like us, as it was written about Him: ‘The child grew,’ it says, ‘and developed’ (Luke 1:80, 2:40).”

⁴¹ Commentary Vardapet 2003: 900. Modern Armenian: “‘He says, turn to me’ (Gen. 49:22b), which is not merely a word, just as His descent was not merely a word, but He became true man, yet did not lose His characteristics, but remained as one Son and one Person and nature with unconfused unity and indivisible Godhead.”

⁴² Commentary Vardapet 2003: 964. Modern Armenian: “The Father revealed to Him the entire Divinity of the Son, so that by both Divinity and Humanity He might accept the suffering, and He who suffers, the same also rises.”

ուներ Աստուածութեամբն սեպհական, որ եւ ասէր. «Ես եմ հացն յերկնից իջեալ» (Յովհ. 2 41)»⁴³:

Ե. «Ոչ անարգանս ինչ համարեցաւ զգէնուլ զհւր ստեղծուած մարմինս, այլ մեծարեաց իբրեւ զաստուածաստեղծ զհւր գործ: Ոչ առ սակաւ սակաւ շնորհեաց ինչ սմա զանմահութեան պատիւն՝ իբրեւ զանմարմին հրեշտակաց, այլ միանգամայն զբոլոր բնութիւնն մարմնով, շնչով եւ հոգևով զգեցաւ, եւ միաբանեաց ընդ աստուածութեանն. միութիւն, եւ ոչ երկուութիւն. եւ այսուհետեւ մի գիտեմք զաստուածութիւնն, որ յառաջ էր քան զաշխարհս, նոյն եւ այսաւր»⁴⁴:

Thus, St. Yeghishe, for example, shows that the divine and human manifestation of Christ cannot imply that God and man are separate in Christ. On the contrary, Christ Himself is God who also became man, preserving both divine and human perfection.

We find the same idea in other authors as well, among whom it is important to mention St. Yeznik Koghbatsi. In accordance with the aforementioned Christological logic, he calls Christ God and man, and the Holy Virgin not only Theotokos (God-bearer) but also Tiratsin (Lord-bearer): *Աստուած՝ ըստ մարմնաւոր ծննդեան մարդ կատարեալ. եւ կոչի եւ Է Կոյսն Տիրածին եւ Աստուածածին, եւ ծնեալն Աստուած եւ մարդ կատարեալ»*.⁴⁵

Jesus Christ, therefore, according to 5th-century Armenian literature, is the Son of God the Father who became incarnate, took what was not His own and made it His own, becoming also the Son of Man: God who also became man, or in other words, the incarnate God.

Conclusion

The study of independent Armenian literature from the 5th century testifies that these works were written during a period when Christological disputes were ongoing within the Universal Church. Many people simply could not accept the doctrines of

⁴³ Commentary Vardapet 2003: 894. Modern Armenian: “Of our Lord and God, who said: ‘All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth’ (Matthew 28:18). It is clear that being incarnate, He received that (authority - M.S.) which He possessed as His own by His Divinity, and therefore He said: ‘I am the bread that came down from heaven’ (John 6:41).”

⁴⁴ See Commentary Vardapet 2003: 563. A special place for the unique union of Christ’s perfect divinity and perfect humanity is also found in the admonition “Who Says Our Father,” where Yeghishe speaks of Christ being “brother” to humans in His humanity and simultaneously “father” in His divinity (see Commentary Vardapet 2003: 955-958). Modern Armenian: “He did not consider it a disgrace to put on His created body, but honored it as God-created, His handiwork. He did not sparingly bestow the honor of immortality upon that body, like upon bodiless angels, but at once took on the whole nature—with body, breath, and spirit—and united it with the Godhead: a unity, and not a duality, and henceforth we know one Godhead, which was even before the world, and which is the same today.”

⁴⁵ Yeznik Koghbatsi 2003: 513. Modern Armenian: He Himself, God, who according to His bodily birth became perfect man; and the Virgin is called and is Lord-bearer and God-bearer, and the one born is God and perfect man.

God's incarnation or Christ being simultaneously God and man, thus dividing Christ into two.

During that time, for both the Universal Church and the Armenian Church, preserving the orthodox faith concerning Christ became a fundamental necessity. However, given its political situation, the Armenian Church long exercised caution in its statements, often addressing the issue indirectly.

Therefore, in the works of this period, direct references to heresies arising on Christological grounds are found in only a few places, and those only to Arianism and Nestorianism.

Only Faustus of Byzantium and Movses Khorenatsi directly address Arius⁴⁶, while only Mambre Vercanogh and Movses Khorenatsi address Nestorius.⁴⁷ Sahak Partev and Mesrop Mashtots refer to Theodore of Mopsuestia and his disciples (= Nestorius and the Nestorians).⁴⁸ Yeznik Koghbatsi, without speaking of them directly, refers only to the Council of Ephesus, during which "newborn and foreign faith" was anathematized and the Nicene Creed was reaffirmed.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, all 5th-century authors, regardless of the nature of their works, include numerous relevant Christological passages. The majority of these aim to explain the divine and human unity of Christ, which in turn attests to the importance of Christology and the preservation of its purity in the life of the Armenian Church.

Such a presentation of theology, and specifically Christology, in historical, dogmatic, and moral-didactic works, became the foundation for the formation of a new theological thought within general theology: Armenian thought. Having the opportunity to utilize both the rich Syriac and Greek theological heritage, it developed a theological vocabulary and corresponding mindset unique to itself. This made it entirely independent and distinctive, interpreting orthodox ecclesiastical theology in its own native language.

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⁴⁶ See Buzandaran 2003: 330; Movses Khorenatsi 2003: 1990.

⁴⁷ See Mambre Vercanogh 2003: 1104, 1116-1117; Movses Khorenatsi 2003: 2097.

⁴⁸ See Reply from Sahak and Mashtots 2003: 219, 221, 222; Reply of Lord Sahak 2003: 223, 224.

⁴⁹ Yeznik Koghbatsi 2003: 513.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

ECONOMY

QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The quality of economic development is expressed by continuous improvement in the spheres of production, consumption and services, which ensures an increase in the quality of life of the population and environmental stability. Quality economic development includes sustainable growth, social justice, technological innovation, and increased access to education and health services. The efficiency of the development is determined by the optimal use of resources, the increase in productivity and the modernization of the structure of the economy. This implies not only an increase in the rate of economic growth, but also an improvement in operational efficiency, competitiveness of organizations and the investment environment.

The research presents the main ideas of the quality and efficiency of economic development, presenting the features of development processes aimed not only at quantitative growth, but also at qualitative improvement.

The article also discusses the structure of the GDP, the structure of RA foreign trade, including the export and import of high-tech products, emphasizing the role of scientific industrial technologies and knowledge as important factors of the quality of economic development.

Keywords: economic growth, quality, efficiency, GDP, export, import, development, evaluation

Introduction

It is well known that economic growth is the most important indicator of overall economic development and has not only a purely socio-economic content, but also a political significance. The latter is, perhaps, the reason why the upward movement of this indicator is highly valued, but the quality of growth is not valued as much. Probably under the assumption that in a free market economy, demand determines the content

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Received 25.01.2025, revised 11.06.2025, accepted 15.06.2025

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and structural indicators of supply, especially at the macro level. Of course, this is true in a general (global) sense, but in individual countries, demand can be satisfied through imports, and their production volumes and structure may not be up-to-date, both in terms of ensuring full demand and in terms of scientific and technological development. That is why it is essential to research and emphasize not only statistical, but also content indicators of economic growth, that is, quality, in order to more comprehensively assess the course of economic development* (*This issue was briefly addressed for the first time in the first author's article (Suvaryan 2019). Especially in the era of artificial intelligence, when the fifth technological revolution is underway, science and advanced technologies have become the most important factors of civilizational progress, in particular, also for ensuring the power of the state, since they determine the potential of the country's economy and armed forces.

The Interrelationship of Quality and Efficiency of Economic Growth

In economic literature and in spoken language, the expressions "economic development" and "economic growth" are used, the latter of which is narrower in its meaning, since it does not express the actual content of growth, that is, what is created: real goods or services, how they are created technologically, what their competitiveness and usefulness are. For the most part, economic development at the macro level is characterized by growth rates relative to GDP volume in different successive periods.¹ Therefore, growth rates can be considered merely as a result of statistical calculation, but it is essential to emphasize its material content and the technological structure of provision, the totality of which can characterize the quality of economic growth.

From this point of view, the importance of assessing the quality of economic growth is emphasized in the economic literature, which takes into consideration its inclusiveness and sustainability, productivity, quality of employment and human development.

Approaches to assessing the quality of economic growth include:

1. Inclusiveness means that growth should be distributed across different strata of society. Indicators characterizing income distribution: The Gini coefficient and the Lorenz curve are traditional indicators characterizing income inequality. Atkinson has developed a methodology that assesses income distribution and its consequences on the well-being of society.² Atkinson and Stiglitz, in their works, emphasize the role of inclusiveness as a marginal aspect of growth, and Klassen argues that focusing on the unequal distribution of income and calculating, for example, the Gini coefficient or the poverty level will allow to assess whether the country's economic growth has been widely distributed or not.

¹ Samuelson, Nordhaus 2000.

² Atkinson 1970.

2. Assessment of Ecological Impact: The “ecological footprint” and “carbon intensity” are used to assess ecological sustainability. Pearce and Turner introduced the concept of sustainable development, pointing out that growth should not be achieved at the expense of environmental health.³ Dasgupta further expanded this idea by introducing the concept of natural capital into economic analysis.⁴ And Daly, in his work, emphasizes *strong* sustainability, which requires that the ability of the environment to serve future generations is not undermined and is preserved.⁵
3. Costanza and a number of other authors have emphasized the importance of accounting for ecosystem services and ecological degradation when assessing economic growth.⁶
4. Productivity Indicators: Solow and a number of other authors have studied how improvements in productivity lead to long-term economic growth.⁷ The magnitude of GDP per hour worked, total factor productivity, and other similar indicators are used when considering economic growth from a productivity perspective. Kaldor⁸ and Jorgenson⁹, in their works, propose methodologies for measuring and analyzing productivity growth.
5. Indicators of Employment Quality: The employment/population ratio, average wage, and job stability indicators are used to assess the quality of employment. A detailed guide and metrics in this regard have been developed by the International Labour Organization.¹⁰ Friedman and Becker emphasize that job creation should also be accompanied by an improvement in the quality of jobs¹¹, while other authors also emphasize the issues of job stability and wage growth.¹²
6. Human Development: The Human Development Index (HDI), developed by the UN, combines indicators of life expectancy, education, and per capita income in order to form a complete picture of the quality of growth.¹³ In the context of human development, Sen developed the “Human Development Approach,” where health, education, and income are considered as key components of economic growth.¹⁴
7. Economic Diversification Indices: Diversification indices relate to the composition and structure of different types of economic activity, their distribution, and characterize

³ Pearce & Turner 1990.

⁴ Dasgupta 2001.

⁵ Daly 1996.

⁶ Costanza *et al.* 1997.

⁷ Solow 1957; Mankiw, Romer, Weil 1992.

⁸ Kaldor 1966.

⁹ Jorgenson 1995.

¹⁰ World Employment and Social Outlook 2016.

¹¹ Becker 1964; Friedman 1962.

¹² Blanchard, Olivier and Katz 1999.

¹³ UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) 1990.

¹⁴ Sen 1999.

the “strength/resilience” of the economy. The Herfindahl-Hirschman and Diversification Coefficient indicators assess the state of distribution of different types of economic activity. Hidalgo’s works discuss complexity indicators that assess the diversification of the economy.¹⁵ Rodrik, in his works, argues that economic diversification reduces vulnerability to external shocks and promotes sustainable growth.¹⁶

According to Capra and Henderson, “Instead of assessing the state of the economy with unprocessed GDP figures, we should distinguish “good” growth from “bad” growth, then increase the former at the expense of the latter so that natural and human resources involved in wasteful and insecure production processes can be freed up and reprocessed as resources for efficient and sustainable processes.”¹⁷

There is also a view in the literature that the quality of economic growth is determined by the price at which society has ensured that growth.¹⁸ Obviously, with such an approach, it is not the quality of growth that can be assessed, but the efficiency, which, as is known, is assessed by the ratio of the results obtained and the total costs incurred in a certain period of time.¹⁹ By the way, in terms of content, this indicator is just as flawed as economic growth, if the same statistical magnitude is used as an outcome indicator, which does not reflect the quality of economic development. In a broader sense, “the economy is efficient if it is able to provide consumers with a set of goods and services that are most preferable to them, given the current level of technology and the amount of resources.”²⁰

The latter formulation of efficiency, also known as the Pareto optimality criterion, has a complementary and normative significance for economic growth²¹, oriented towards the quality of growth.

In terms of economic logic, the quality of economic growth, in addition to the above-mentioned components, is determined by some essential factors, in particular:

- By the nature of growth in terms of resources, i.e., whether it is ensured by attracting new labor and fixed (capital) resources or by increasing the efficiency of their use. The quality of growth is considered high if it is ensured through intensification rather than through the expansion of resources.
- The structure of economic development, i.e., the ratio of the components of output creation. These can be the result of complex technological processes or the product of long-known technologies and communal-household and commercial services. In

¹⁵ Hidalgo *et al.* 2007.

¹⁶ Rodrik 2008; Hausmann & Rodrik 2003.

¹⁷ Capra and Henderson 2013: 10.

¹⁸ Lopatnikov 2003: 419.

¹⁹ Mescon, Albert, Khedouri 2000: 48-50.

²⁰ Samuelson, Nordhaus 2000: 178.

²¹ Black 2000: 540.

the second case, highly qualified personnel are not required, and, more importantly, it does not contain the potential for prospective technological development.

- The share of investments ensuring innovative programs in the total volume of capital investments.
- Contribution to increasing the combat capability of the state's armed forces, which is the same as strengthening the state. The problem concerns whether the high knowledge intensity of products is combined with the existence of a developed military-industrial complex.
- The progressiveness of the economic system and the international competitiveness of the produced products (services).

In terms of the quality of economic development at the macro level, the structure of the gross domestic product expresses the range of products and services produced and the share of each in GDP. However, these are purely statistical data, which can provide an opportunity to make the following observations of substantive significance and essentiality, which stem from the above definition of an efficient economy:

- To what extent is the country's demand for products and services ensured by its own production, i.e., what is the level of self-sufficiency?
- What is the quality level of products and services produced in the country, accordingly, the structure of the GDP predetermines the nature of foreign economic relations with volumetric and structural indicators of export and import?
- What is the technological and knowledge-intensive level of production, which can assess the real state and problems of the relationship between the economy, science, and innovation in the country?

Public activity as an integral system at the macro level can be presented as the interaction of certain key subsystems. Such subsystems of primary importance are science, economy, education, ensuring internal and especially external security, and management of public activities. Throughout human civilization, as a result of the development of science, new technologies, tools of labor, and types of products have been created, which have been accompanied by an industrial revolution. Even today, in the age of artificial intelligence, it is obvious that the determinant in public activity is the influence of science, from which the results of the work of other subsystems are derived, the relations of which are reciprocal, but the primary ones in them are the achievements of science and their applications.

- whether the solution of the most important problem of ensuring the country's external security and increasing the combat capability of the armed forces is ensured by its own production, or to what extent it satisfies the necessary needs.

Below we will turn to the substantive interpretation of the mentioned observations and the necessary solutions to the problems.

The Structure of Sectoral and Expenditure Components of GDP and the Competitiveness of Products (Services) as Indicators of the Quality of Economic Development

The structure of the sectoral and expenditure components of the country's gross domestic product reflects the content of economic development, as well as the potential and competitiveness of the economy.

The structure of the GDP of the Republic of Armenia in recent years is characterized by the following indicators (Table 1).

Table 1. Sectoral Structure of the GDP of the Republic of Armenia²²

No.	Economic Sectors	GDP Sectoral Structure by Year, %		
		2017	2018	2023
1	Agriculture, forestry, and fishing	15	13.7	8.4
2	Mining and quarrying	3.3	2.9	2.9
3	Manufacturing	10.6	11.3	11.1
4	Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply	4.1	3.7	2.6
5	Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.5	0.5	0.4
6	Construction	7.3	6.6	6.9
7	Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	11.1	11.3	12.7
8	Transportation and storage	3.0	3.2	9.9
9	Accommodation and food service activities	1.4	1.8	2.3
10	Information and communication	3.3	3.2	5.5
11	Financial and insurance activities	4.9	5.3	7.4
12	Real estate activities	7.8	7.9	8.3
13	Professional, scientific and technical activities	1.1	1.2	1.4
14	Administrative and support service activities	0.9	1.0	0.8
15	Public administration and defense; compulsory social security	4.7	4.2	5.3
16	Education	2.7	2.6	2.5
17	Human health and social work activities	4.2	4.2	5.4
18	Arts, entertainment and recreation	4.6	5.7	2.8
19	Other service activities	0.9	0.9	0.7
20	Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for their own use	0.1	0.1	0.0

According to information from the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia (Table 1), the share of agriculture and related sectors in GDP in 2023 was 8.4 percent, industry (including energy) – 17 percent, construction – 6.9 percent, and the share of

²² Armstatbank 2008.

trade and services – 59 percent. The share of agriculture in GDP decreased from the 2017-2018 level (14-15%), and the share of industry also decreased somewhat (18 percent in 2017). Education and culture indicators also show a downward trend. The share of trade and services has a growth trend: if in 2021 it was 52.8%, then in 2023 it increased by more than 6 percentage points. The share of manufacturing in 2017-2023 was in the range of 10.6-11.1 percent, while the share of wholesale and retail trade in the same period increased from 11.1 percent to 12.7 percent – more than the share of manufacturing. The intra-industry structure of manufacturing is also not good (Table 2). In 2018-2022, the share of the food industry fluctuated within the range of 58.5-63.3 percent, many times exceeding the production volumes of the high- and medium-tech branches of the manufacturing industry (chemical, electrical, machine-building products).

According to the information of the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, in 2023, the share of high- and medium-tech products and services in GDP was 7.6%, which is progress compared to the previous years' indicator (4.5%). It is also noteworthy that trade and services have a greater significance in economic growth (2023: 6.7 percentage points) than industry and energy (0.32), construction (1.07), and agriculture (0.02). The picture was the same in previous years.

Table 2. Sectoral Structure of the Manufacturing Industry in the Republic of Armenia²³

No.	Branches of the Manufacturing Industry	Sectoral Structure of the Manufacturing Industry by Year, %			
		2018	2021	2022	2023
1	Manufacture of food products	38.8	38.8	37.7	33
2	Manufacture of beverages	11.3	13.5	11.7	10.8
3	Manufacture of tobacco products	13.2	9.0	7.7	8.5
4	Manufacture of wearing apparel	1.7	2.7	2.3	2.2
5	Printing and reproduction of recorded media	1.4	1.4	2.1	2.2
6	Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.1
7	Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products	4.6	6.4	12.9	11.9
8	Manufacture of basic metals	12.9	12.1	10.4	15.6

²³ RA Statistical Office 2022: 310-311, Statistical Yearbook of Armenia-2024, pp. 327-328

9	Manufacture of fabricated metal products, except machinery and equipment	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.4
10	Manufacture of electrical equipment	1.1	1.6	0.8	1.2
11	Other branches	12.7	12.6	12.1	12.1

It is known that the expenditure components of GDP are consumption, government purchases, investments, and net exports. Among them, the investment component contains the potential for economic growth, thanks to which new production capacities should be created, as well as basic social and cultural assets²⁴. According to the data of the Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia, the share of gross accumulation in GDP was 19.7% in 2021, 19.4% in 2022, and 21.3% in 2023, the majority of which was allocated to the creation of fixed assets (for example, 20.7% in 2023). With this indicator, the Republic of Armenia is within the normative framework, since it is accepted that the investment sector makes up 10-20%.²⁵ Such volumes of gross accumulation can become the basis for stable economic growth, especially for the expansion of the production sector. However, from the structure of construction volumes for the same year, 2023, it turns out that the share of manufacturing in the volume of construction activity was 1.6 percent, while 46.1 percent was allocated to the creation of real estate. The area of residential buildings (sq.m.) in 2023 increased 2.2 times compared to the previous year. To some extent, capital investments in the form of construction were made in the branches of production infrastructure: energy (10.3%) and transport (18.1%), since without them the trade and service sectors cannot function.

Summarizing the presentation, it should be noted that the economy is not efficient for at least two reasons. First of all, it is not self-sufficient. Of course, according to the principle of the international division of labor, it is not mandatory for every country to produce everything; it can meet part of its needs through imports. However, it is undeniable that the country should have not only a modern, technologically developed industry, but also a military-industrial complex that ensures the security of the state.

Second, the country's economy integrates the intellectual and technological potential of its population and is a reflection of it. In this regard, the described picture of the economy does not correspond to the modern intellectual and scientific-technological level of Armenians and the requirements of the time. In the last 200 years, after the industrial revolution, according to Y. N. Harari, science and technology have determined the course of social development. Moreover, "modern states regularly turn to scientists when looking for a solution to every state problem: from energy and healthcare to

²⁴ Samuelson, Nordhaus 2000: 571.

²⁵ RA Statistical Office, Quarterly and annual preliminary data on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for 2021, 2022, 2023, <https://armstat.am/file/doc/99528978.pdf>, <https://armstat.am/file/doc/99536113.pdf> <https://bit.ly/4ISlIMd>

garbage disposal... The military forces of the world initiate, finance and determine the directions of a large part of humanity's scientific capabilities and technological development."²⁶

In the 70s and 80s of the XX century Armenia, for its time, had a developed instrument-making, machine-tool building, electrical and chemical industry, supported by high-quality engineers, technologists, and highly qualified working specialists and sectoral and academic scientific structures.

Naturally, today the problem is the adoption and implementation of a new economic strategy. It is positive that we have a developed service sector, but the country necessarily needs to have a manufacturing industry equipped with advanced technologies, which will contribute to the strengthening of the state, the development of education and science in the country at a higher level* (*The relationship between economy and science and their coordinated development have been repeatedly raised by the first author. See, for example, Suvaryan 2024). It is especially necessary to also take into consideration that if economic growth is not based on technical progress, then it cannot become sustainable.²⁷

An extremely important issue is the increase in the level of general international competitiveness of the country's economy, which, of course, is the sum of the competitiveness of products produced by individual branches and sectors. Economic growth is of high quality or real, if not only the economy is efficient, but also it or some of its leading sectors have international competitiveness.

The competitiveness of products and services, as is known, is determined by their qualitative characteristics and prices. Without going into the analysis of these multifaceted issues, especially since they are outside the topic, let us note that the international competitiveness of the country's economy is especially expressed through the structure of imports and exports of goods and services. Obviously, a product that has high-quality characteristics can be exported to the international market. Even within the same country, there is an assessment of the competitiveness of products: the consumer prefers high-quality products, and under the current conditions of free market relations, the level of competitiveness of domestic goods can be indirectly assessed by the structure of trade.

Let us look at the movement, structure and geography of exports and imports of the Republic of Armenia in 2020-2023.

The volume of exports of the Republic of Armenia is significantly inferior to imports (Table 3); the latter in 2020 and 2021 exceeded exports by 1.8 times, in 2022 by 1.62, and in 2023 by 1.46 times.

²⁶ Harari 2020: 318-319.

²⁷ Acemoğlu, Robinson 2016: 183.

Table 3. Volumes of Exports and Imports of the Republic of Armenia in 2020-2023 by Commodity Sections (thousand USD)²⁸

	Exports				Imports			
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total	2,536,993.5	3,022,408.9	5,419,064.5	8,415,155.1	4,583,273.9	5,356,825.3	8,775,859.2	12,307,957.0
Including:								
Live animals and animal products	78,271.4	107,067.7	170,832.5	98,189.9	131,569.7	166,908.3	261,145.7	248,349.3
Vegetable products	136,210.6	186,565.3	225,944.0	182,576.3	255,755.1	289,327.3	421,935.1	356,687.0
Animal and vegetable oils and fats	73.1	78.5	7,516.5	1,526.6	52,623.0	72,407.2	105,646.0	66,255.6
Prepared food products	562,943.1	623,968.0	882,197.1	885,061.9	397,609.9	434,288.6	579,422.2	617,800.4
Mineral products	814,733.4	982,250.9	1,027,520.8	887,650.7	746,851.5	937,089.0	1,196,064.5	1,113,167.0
Products of the chemical and related industries	29,590.7	41,414.7	83,491.5	120,940.5	417,289.3	454,973.8	588,239.6	622,775.8
Plastics and articles thereof, rubber and rubber articles	15,557.1	19,703.2	63,111.5	66,443.4	196,684.3	234,346.4	327,685.5	351,811.6
Raw hides and skins, leather, fur and articles thereof	5,166.5	5,878.9	11,130.5	21,988.4	15,340.9	24,185.4	28,444.1	42,344.0
Wood and articles of wood	606.9	1,117.4	4,726.6	9,353.0	53,654.7	72,240.0	93,977.9	88,373.5
Paper and paper products	1,256.9	1,690.2	6,742.2	4,771.2	87,233.5	87,351.5	137,730.2	147,545.8
Textile articles	133,532.6	183,498.7	224,409.9	357,657.2	245,183.4	301,547.0	397,899.9	648,713.9
Footwear, headgear, umbrellas	3,012.5	4,697.1	12,640.8	41,456.5	45,199.0	59,838.2	76,689.9	116,616.9
Articles of stone, plaster, cement	20,124.5	20,273.8	37,247.2	37,209.3	93,633.9	109,322.4	160,974.4	174,657.5

²⁸ Socio-economic situation of the Republic of Armenia 2023: 159.

Precious and semi-precious stones, precious metals and articles thereof	369,235.2	333,049.5	989,410.8	3,211,869.9	143,701.1	248,473.7	691,595.9	2,302,882.6
Base metals and articles of base metal	229,198.6	364,445.8	460,401.4	452,236.7	360,824.8	390,833.5	624,041.4	602,692.5
Machinery, equipment and mechanisms	42,359.3	59,494.8	718,756.0	1,290,921.6	878,361.4	898,228.3	1,728,318.9	2,459,173.6
Land, air and water transport vehicles	14,057.1	38,697.8	332,562.0	548,276.8	198,564.3	306,544.4	957,936.9	1,832,380.6
Instruments and apparatus	61,681.3	34,292.4	117,571.1	142,955.8	112,847.5	123,360.7	196,927.5	265,833.7
Miscellaneous manufactured articles	18,802.8	13,236.0	39,519.5	53,315.9	150,034.4	145,287.2	191,855.2	243,560.7
Works of art	580.0	988.0	3,332.7	753.5	312.2	272.2	9,328.4	6,334.9

Exports consisted of prepared food products and mineral products, precious metals and articles thereof, and precious and semi-precious stones. Their share in the export volume in 2023 was 10.5, 10.6 and 38.2 percent, respectively. Imports are also dominated by prepared food products - 5.0%, mineral products - 9%, precious and semi-precious stones, precious metals and articles thereof - 18.7 percent.²⁹ The list of imported goods includes products of the chemical and related industries (5.1%), plastics and articles thereof, rubber and articles thereof (2.9%), textile products (5.3%), instruments and apparatus, various industrial goods (4.1%). It is noteworthy that, having the potential for agricultural development, we import more products of plant origin (356.7 thousand) than we export (182.6 thousand). The same picture applies to products of animal origin. This means that there are food security risks.

The Statistical Committee of the Republic of Armenia for 2023 separately presented the indicators of foreign trade in high-tech goods according to the collective grouping of high-tech goods (Table 4).

²⁹ According to the table, the export and import of precious and semi-precious stones, precious metals and articles made from them increased by 3.2 and 3.3 times in 2023 compared to 2022. The export (1.8 times) and import (1.42 times) of machinery, equipment and mechanisms also increased at high rates. These are not regular or stable trends; therefore, they are not interpreted in detail.

Table 4**Exports and Imports of High-Tech Goods in 2023 (thousand US dollars)³⁰**

No.	Commodity Groups	Exports	Imports
1	Medical preparations and instruments	20,958.8	74,862.8
2	Scientific equipment and instruments	72,675.4	169,698.0
3	Electrical equipment	18,852.0	70,508.0
4	Electronics and telecommunications	664,467.5	916,623.4
5	Computer equipment	148,130.1	205,812.7
6	Non-electrical equipment	5,686.8	31,161.5
7	Chemical industry products	10,539.5	34,854.1
8	Aerospace industry products	29,976.8	70,184.3
	Total	971,286.9	1,573,704.9

The export volume of the goods listed in Table 4 constituted 11% of the total export volume from the Republic of Armenia, and the import indicator was 12.6%. In general, the trend is positive, but insufficient, especially since imports exceed exports by 1.67 times.

Now let us present the geography of the RA's foreign economic relations. In particular, let us note the main trade partners of Armenia in 2019-2023 (Table 5).

Table 5. Structure of Foreign Trade of the Republic of Armenia by Country, 2019-2023, %³¹

Country	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.	Exp.	Imp.
CIS, including:	30.3	33.7	29.3	40.8	31	41.8	48	35.9	43.4	34.9
EAEU, including:	28.8	30.7	28	37.6	29.4	38.7	47.2	34.6	42.9	33.9
- Russia	27.8	29.7	26.8	36.1	28	37.2	45.4	32.9	40.6	32.9
- Belarus	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.3	0.9	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.1	0.8
- Kazakhstan	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.8	0.3
- Kyrgyzstan	0.1	0	0.1	0	0.1	0	0.1	0	0.3	0
EU	22.1	20.8	16.9	20.4	21.7	19.2	14.3	20.2	8.4	18.3
Bulgaria	7.9	0.6	5.9	0.6	6.6	0.6	3.9	0.4	1.2	0.4
Germany	2.6	4.3	2.2	5.3	2.6	4.2	2	5.2	1	4.6

³⁰ RA Statistical Office 2023.

³¹ Socio-Economic Situation of the Republic of Armenia January-December 2019: 135-136; Socio-Economic Situation of the Republic of Armenia January-December 2021: 136-137; Socio-Economic Situation of the Republic of Armenia January-December 2023: 157-158.

Netherlands	5.8	2.4	3.9	1.5	6.3	1.6	4	1.6	2.8	1.5
Italy	2.3	3.3	1.6	3.6	2.1	3.6	1.2	2.8	0.8	2.6
Other EU countries	3.5	10.2	3.3	9.4	4.1	9.2	3.2	10.2	2.6	9.2
Other countries, including:	47.6	45.5	53.8	38.8	47.3	39	37.7	43.9	48.2	46.8
United Arab Emirates	2.2	4.2	4.2	2.1	2.5	2.3	9.9	5.3	26.4	5
USA	2	6.5	2.7	1.7	2.7	2.6	1.4	5.2	0.6	6.8
China	7.3	8.4	11.4	9.5	13	10.3	6.8	8	5.1	7.7
Switzerland	17.3	1.1	17.9	0.7	11.9	0.6	4.7	1.1	1	0.6
Islamic Republic of Iran	3.2	5.9	3.3	6.9	2.2	8.2	2	6.9	1.1	5
Georgia	2.6	8.8	2.3	7	2.3	6.6	3	8.2	1.7	7.7
Other countries	13	10.6	12	10.9	12.7	8.4	9.9	9.2	12.3	14

Armenia is working on diversifying its trade partners and exports in order to reduce dependence on a number of markets. Armenia is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), which affects its trade dynamics, including tariffs and trade relations with member countries. Efforts are being made to improve efficient trade and trade infrastructure, the main purpose of which is to expand export opportunities and attract foreign investment.

Conclusion

Armenia's foreign trade balance has been negative for the past five years. The country has faced challenges such as global economic disruptions and regional geopolitical problems. However, ongoing efforts are being made to diversify trade partners and improve economic conditions, contributing to a gradual increase in export volumes.

In summary, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of the quality and efficiency of economic development in the process of achieving sustainable development. The quality of economic growth is more important than mere quantitative indicators since it directly affects the quality of life of the population, ensures social cohesion, etc. The efficiency of development should be reflected in the correct use of resources, high productivity, and knowledge-intensive technological innovations that will reduce costs and increase competitiveness. Similarly, the quality of development requires a comprehensive approach that includes investments in human capital, as well as the need to create harmony between quantitative growth, qualitative improvements and efficient use of resources for economic development, which will make it possible to ensure long-term stability and well-being for all strata.

Thus, high-quality or real and sustainable economic growth can be ensured if the economy is efficient and relatively self-sufficient, the country's security, including food security, problems are solved, advanced high-tech industrial technologies are implemented, and the products produced are predominantly internationally competitive.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

EDUCATION

INTERSECTION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS IN THE OTTOMAN BORDERLANDS: THE SANASARIAN SCHOOL OF ERZURUM IN RUSSIAN CONSULAR REPORTS ON THE EVE OF THE GREAT WAR

Daniel Gazdik*

Abstract

This study examines the Sanasarian School of Erzurum as a contested site in Russian-Ottoman imperial rivalries on the eve of the Great War. Using Russian consular reports, it explores how the school became a focal point of geopolitical struggles, caught between Armenian national aspirations and foreign influences. Founded in 1881, the Sanasarian School was a prestigious Armenian institution, yet Russian authorities viewed it with suspicion, fearing its role in fostering nationalist sentiment and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation influence. The school's strategic location made it a nexus of competing Russian, Ottoman, and German interests, reflecting broader power struggles in the region. This paper argues that the school was not merely a passive recipient of imperial policies but an active participant in transimperial networks, demonstrating how education shaped identity, political activism, and great-power intervention in the contested Ottoman borderlands.

Keywords: Sanasarian School, Erzurum, consular reports, education, Russian Empire, Ottoman Empire

Introduction

The Russian Empire's relationship with its Ottoman border has been a rich subject for analysis, and this paper seeks to explore a hitherto rarely examined aspect. Russian encroachment in the Caucasus led to conflicts first with Persia and culminated in major territorial acquisitions for the Tsar through the Treaties of Gyulistan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828). As a result, the Tsarist regime absorbed nearly half of the Armenian-populated lands. A series of wars followed which emboldened Russia to push further into the eastern Ottoman borderlands, including Erzurum, the easternmost bastion of the Sultan's empire, with varying degrees of success. Consequently, the vilayet of Erzurum became a shatter zone between the Ottoman and Russian Empires. This geopolitical shift permanently divided the Armenian population, leaving them caught between the two competing empires. Thus, by the late 19th century, Erzurum's

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Received 19.03.2025, revised 01.06.2025, accepted 11.06.2025

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prestigious Sanasarian School emerged as a site of rival geopolitical and ideological agendas involving Russia, Armenian revolutionaries, and other major European powers in the contested borderland.

As early as after the Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774, Russia established a consular network in the Ottoman Empire, which significantly expanded during the 19th century due to Russian expansionist ambitions directed against Ottoman territories, despite occasional disruptions caused by subsequent wars. Initially, these consulates focused primarily on protecting commercial interests, but by 1867 they had already assumed diplomatic functions as well.¹ This consular network not only enabled Russia to assert imperial foreign policy interests effectively in border regions but also became a powerful instrument for providing political and religious protection to Christian communities, including the Armenians.² Consequently, Russian consuls emerged as active participants in the Erzurum vilayet, and their reports sent to the Russian embassy in Constantinople are excellent sources for analyzing the issues outlined above.

Through a detailed examination of these Russian consular reports written in Erzurum and sent to the Russian Embassy in Constantinople, sourced from the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire (AVPRI) and the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), I argue that the Sanasarian School in the Ottoman borderland was a target in the broader geopolitical struggles defining the region during the Eastern Question, as various political actors sought to assert dominance over educational institutions to advance their strategic interests. This article includes 3 major questions that this article seeks to answer:

- How did Russian consular reports reflect a broader Russian policy regarding the Sanasarian School and what were these policies motivated by?

- If such a policy existed, what specific attempts were made to influence this institution, and why were these efforts carried out?

- How did the borderland location of the Sanasarian School render it vulnerable to interference from great powers, and specifically, how was this geopolitical vulnerability perceived by Russia through its consular mission in Erzurum?

Building on this context, the borderland location of the institution requires scrutiny, as it helps the researcher explain certain intellectual phenomena present in Sanasarian from a Russian consular point of view, due to its position on the periphery, such as exposure to great power meddling and interventionism, as well as the facilitating nature of the porous Ottoman-Turkish borders in enabling intellectual transfers.³

¹ Petrunina 2023: online

² Zonova 2011: 173-183.

³ Bartov & Weitz 2013: 1-2.

The study of the latter aspect is complemented by the analysis of the interconnectedness of Russian, German, Armenian self-defense groups', and other foreign actors' transimperial agendas shaping local affairs. It also aims to highlight the multidirectional transfer of ideas among these actors which demonstrates that the Sanasarian School, including its teachers and students, was not merely a passive recipient of imperial policies but an active agent in the reconfiguration of power and identity in the region.⁴ Simply put, this research seeks to deepen our understanding of how the operations of a local institution reflected global state antagonism amid the transformative era on the eve of the Great War.

The establishment of the Sanasarian School and Russian-Armenian relations in the 19th century

Undeniable that the establishment of the Sanasarian School was a true transnational undertaking in itself. Mgrdich S. Sanasarian, a notable supporter of Armenian education, was born in Tiflis in 1818 to an Armenian family from Van, where he attended the famous Nersesian School.⁵ He later resided in St. Petersburg and played a pivotal role in shaping the school's vision while generously contributing to its establishment.⁶ Sanasarian (or, as Russian sources refer to him, Sanasarov) was an adamant supporter of educating Russian Armenians and was driven by his commitment to education and progress. However, his efforts to establish a secular benevolent society in 1865 were hindered by the Russian authorities. Despite his argument that educating Russian Armenians in commerce would secure Russia's superiority over external Armenians and reinforce its geopolitical dominance, his plans were rejected. This is unsurprising as throughout the 19th century, Russia was trying to prevent the formation of a modern cohesive Armenian transimperial state identity that could jeopardize Russia's control over Armenian territories in Transcaucasia and possibly destabilize Western-Armenia too. Therefore, Sanasarov's idea was doomed to failure from conception, as the authorities feared it would foster Armenian self-reliance and weaken loyalty to the state.⁷

After the 1878 Russo-Turkish War, the Armenian Question gained international attention, prompting Western Armenians to emphasize national consciousness and rights. Ottoman Armenians saw schooling as key to their national and intellectual awakening. It was in this climate that Sanasarov's endeavors eventually paid off, and on October 1, 1881, the Sanasarjan School opened its doors. The Sanasarian School opened in 1881-1882 with 19 pupils. By 1886-1887, enrollment had risen to 158, including 35 scholarship recipients, and it graduated its first class.⁸ A meticulous

⁴ Werner & Zimmermann 2006: 30-50.

⁵ Low 2024: 70.

⁶ Tarbassian 1975: 103, 106.

⁷ Riegg 2020: 142-145.

⁸ Tatoyan 2024: online

selection process identified promising Armenian students from both Eastern and Western-Armenia who were subsequently sent to European universities to further their education, guided by the understanding that they would return to Armenia and play a vital role as educators in the Sanasarian. This initiative exposed the students to European political ideas, which coupled with the acquisition of various languages during their studies enhanced their access to the currents of European politics.⁹

While foreign influence certainly enriched Armenian perspectives and positively contributed to the broader intellectual landscape of Armenian culture, it also posed a threat to the Russian administration, as these tendencies seemed to undermine its control over the Armenian communities within its borders. This control was channeled through the Armenian Apostolic Catholicos of Echmiadzin, who served as the representative of the dispersed yet spiritually united Armenian communities on both sides of the Russo-Ottoman border.¹⁰ The penetration of various religious denominations could potentially challenge the dominance of Echmiadzin, and thus Russia, in Western Armenia by proselytizing ideas that counter Russian ambitions in the region. This concern becomes evident in a specific instance in 1882 when the Russian ambassador in Constantinople, A. Nelidov, forwarded a report from the Russian consul in Trabzon in which highlighted that, following the Treaty of Berlin (1878), Western representatives were actively promoting "the idea of Armenian identity to erode the sense of sympathy for Russia among Turkish Armenians". Simultaneously, the consul stressed the significance of institutions like the Gevorkian seminary in Etchmiadzin and the Lazarevskiy Institute in Moscow as bearers of crucial spiritual and cultural links for Ottoman-Armenians with Russia.¹¹

Elaborating on the Lazarevskiy Institute and comparing it with the Sanasarian reveals a broader theme in the Russian Empire's Armenian policy, which raises the question: what made the Lazarevskiy Institute favorable in Nelidov's eyes? The Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages fostered Armenian integration into Russian society while serving imperial interests as it trained Armenian youth for diplomacy, administration, and academia. It became a hub for Oriental studies which equipped officials with Turkish, Arabic, and Persian skills crucial for Russian interests. While advancing Russian policies, it also contributed to Armenian national awakening as it allowed for Armenian-Russian intellectual exchange which bridged the gap between the Armenian diaspora, the Russian Empire, and the East.¹² For example, Garabed Yeziantz, a friend and colleague of Sanasarov in the Sanasarian School project, also attended the Lazarevskiy Institute in Moscow,¹³ as did Mikayel Loris-Melikov.¹⁴ Both were important figures who exemplify the integration of Armenians into the Russian elite.

⁹ Tarbassian 1975: 103.

¹⁰ Werth 2006: 203-204.

¹¹ GARF, f. 568, op. 1, d. 157, l. 1-11. 1882.

¹² Torkunov 2015: 9-22.

¹³ Low 2024: 70.

Contrary to the Lazarevskiy Institute, the Sanasarian School quickly lost favor in the eyes of Russian policymakers. As its charter dutifully proclaimed that "the purpose of the Sanasarian School is to educate Armenian children in accordance with the spirit and canons of the Armenian Apostolic Church...", one might assume this would meet the criteria for an "acceptable" institution for Russia.¹⁵ But, a clear indication of the Tsarist administration's apprehension towards the Sanasarian School remained and is evident in a confidential correspondence originated from the de-facto governor of Transcaucasia, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Freze. In this correspondence, Freze expressed his disapproval of the board of the Erzurum school. In his views, the two "Turkish-Armenians" teachers who were employed there were "Russo-phobic and hated everything that was Russian" and were "close to the Armenian revolutionaries, whom they accepted as their own students." In addition, another criticism was that the school, which was funded by Russian-Armenian donations, taught French and German but not Russian.¹⁶

Russian suspicion of the Armenian Revolutionary Movement and the role of the Sanasarian School

The quoted source implies that Armenian revolutionism in any form, whether within or beyond Russian borders, was highly unsettling for Russia and something it actively sought to get rid of. Armenian self-defense groups had been sprouting across Western Armenia since the 1860s¹⁷, but revolutionary activities intensified following the 1877–1878 Russo-Turkish War, the internationalization of the Armenian Question, and the failure of reforms to improve Armenian living conditions.¹⁸ Russia feared the spread of revolutionary sentiment and secessionist tendencies within and along its borders. In the post-war years, some Russian consular reports from Erzurum described Armenian revolutionaries as products of Western "nihilistic and antisocial ideologies," which, they claimed, were "causing social decay" in Armenian society and fueling Armenian separatism.¹⁹

Russian consuls in Erzurum maintained strict scrutiny over the Sanasarian as an educational stronghold, particularly because Russian authorities were well aware of its influence on young Armenian minds. After all, one of the first self-defense groups in Western-Armenia, the *Bashdban Hayrenyats* (The Defenders of the Fatherland) was established in early 1881 at the Sanasarian in Erzurum, just a year after the institution was founded in 1880. However, in 1882, the local Ottoman administration uncovered

¹⁴ Önel 2019: 169-170.

¹⁵ Najaryan 2017: 98.

¹⁶ GARF, f. 102, op. 308, d. 201, l. 27 - 28. 23 July 1904.

¹⁷ McCarthy, Arslan & Taškiran 2006: 41-42.

¹⁸ Ketsemanian, Kurt, Sarafian 2020: 138.

¹⁹ AVPRI, f. 151, op. 482, d. 1628, l. 123-128. 15 July 1883.

the organization, highlighting the heightened vigilance surrounding Armenian nationalist movements in the region.²⁰

Despite crackdowns on Armenian self-defense movements, the Ottoman administration could not curtail their development. The Hamidian massacres—during which tens of thousands of Armenians perished—ushered in a new era of revolutionary activity. The Dashnaktsutyun²¹ emerged as the dominant force in the revolutionary struggle, surpassing the Hnchak, due to significant shifts in its *modus operandi*.²² By the time of the rise of the Young Turk regime in 1908, the ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation) gained political recognition and strengthened its position as the most vocal advocates for Armenian interests within the Ottoman Empire's political sphere.²³ By cementing their alliance with the CUP²⁴ (Committee of Union and Progress), the Dashnaktsutyun became the focus of growing Russian suspicion that accused them of spreading revolutionary ideas among the Armenian population. According to Russian consul A. Shtritter, the Sanasarian school had become a target of the ARF's propaganda campaign. He claimed that a strong “Dashnak current” had taken root in the school and had successfully influenced the students.²⁵ Its strong influence was certainly present in the Sanasarian before the report was written as prominent figures of the 1890s ARF activities Vartkes Serengiulian and Karekin Pastermajian were also the graduates of the school.²⁶

ARF influence and turmoil around the Sanasarian School

After the 1908 Young Turk Revolution, a dispute arose between the school's Constantinople-based board of stewards and the Erzurum-based board of trustees. The stewards opposed the involvement of the ARF youth in the school, while the Erzurum Armenian authorities and trustees, dominated by members of the Dashnak party, sought full control over the school's administration.²⁷ Concerned about the growing influence of the Dashnaktsutyun and the next generation of students, the board of trustees in Constantinople, removed A. Khachaturyan, the Dashnak member director, and replaced him with a – as the consul identified him – “a *neutral Russian nationalist*” named K. Abulyan (Apolian). Before Abulyan's arrival, rumors circulated that his life

²⁰ Moumdjian 2012: 24.

²¹ The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), or Dashnaktsutyun, is an Armenian nationalist and socialist political party founded in 1890 in Tiflis, Russian Empire.

²² Libaridian 2011: 92.

²³ Der Matossian 2020: 79-80.

²⁴ The Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) was a revolutionary secret society and political party that led the 1908 Young Turk Revolution and established constitutional rule in the Ottoman Empire, and later dominated its politics until its dissolution in 1918.

²⁵ AVPRI, f. 180 op. 517/2 d. 2682, l. 13-14. 1 March 1912.

²⁶ Kaligian 2017: 56.

²⁷ Tatoyan 2024: [online]

would be in danger if he insisted on suppressing the existing school direction. To ensure Abulyan's safety, the *vali* of Erzurum was asked to intervene by the Russian consulate, despite the Dashnak party denying any involvement in terrorist activities anymore. Upon Abulyan's arrival at the Sanasarian, he was met with silence from both teachers and students, who turned their backs on him. As a result, Abulyan did not visit the school again.²⁸

Due to the protests and the revolutionary atmosphere at the school, Constantinople decided to temporarily close the school and remove the teachers. The incident caused concern among the local Armenian population, and Reverend Grigoris Balaklyan was sent from Constantinople to investigate the matter and resolve the conflict. However, somewhat controversially, before conducting the investigation, Balaklyan held early exams and dismissed both teachers and students associated with the Dashnak. When Balaklyan announced the school's relocation to Sivas, the local Armenians were greatly dissatisfied as many wished to continue their studies. Led by member of the ARF, a crowd marched into the courtyard to protest the evacuation of the school. They brought back the carried-out items and locked the door.²⁹

Despite these actions, the trustees in the capital announced that lower grades would start in Erzurum and Sivas, but this failed to reassure those who had reached high school level, as they now had to find a school elsewhere. The Russian consulate condemned these decisions as overly strict, irrational, and detrimental to Russia's interests. According to the Russian consular reports, the Dashnak party had an opportunity to demonstrate that they represented local Armenian interests, even if this led to the downfall of the so-called "Old-Sanasarian".³⁰

One intriguing aspect of this case is the Russian consulate's apparent protective stance towards Abulyan and their request to the *vali* for his safety. This suggests that the Russian consulate attached great importance to ensuring a "Dashnak-free Sanasarian school", which may have prompted their intervention in the board of trustees to launch a top-down cleansing of Dashnak members. As if the situation had escalated somewhat unexpectedly, the board of trustees decided to close the school, which angered the local Armenians whose future was endangered by the excessive measures taken by the investigators from Constantinople. This ran counter to the objectives of Russia, which sought to assert its influence over the Armenian community by ensuring the presence of a more pro-Russian stance. However, Russian attempts to consolidate the Sanasarian school backfired and resulted in significant turmoil in Erzurum. This outcome may have strengthened the support for the Dashnaktsutyun, which was able to position itself as the champion of Armenian interests in the face of adversity, while the Russian consulate was left a problem unsolved.

²⁸ AVPRI, f. 180 op. 517/2 d. 2682, l. 13-14. 1 March 1912.

²⁹ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2682, l. 45-46. 20 August 1912.

³⁰ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2682, l. 45-46. 20 August 1912.

Despite giving approval for the school to be relocated from Erzurum to the Surp Neshan Monastery of Sivas, the Catholicos directed the trustees to initiate the establishment of a new school in Erzurum. In compliance with this instruction, the trustees resolved the disputes concerning school properties. In 1912, the Educational Council of Erzurum, along with Artashes Rostomyan (Stepan Zorian, Rostom), Inspector-General of the Armenian National Schools, jointly recognized the necessity of establishing a secondary school in the region. Subsequently, they decided to reopen the Old Sanasarian School, simply renaming it as the "New Sanasarian."³¹ However, over time, non-partisan Armenians in Erzurum reportedly became increasingly dissatisfied with the ARF's control of the New-Sanasarian School. According to Consul Aleksandr Alekseevich Adamov, this dissatisfaction stemmed from the school's administration, led by Rostom, failing to maintain discipline among students, which resulted in unruly behavior and moral misconduct on school premise.³² Rostomyan had perhaps long been under the scrutiny of the Russian administration, given his active role in persuading Dashnak members to agitate the population in the South Caucasus during the 1905 revolution.³³

Recognizing the need to remove the ARF committee from the school's management, the Armenian community appealed to Bishop Sempat of Erzurum, who was also one of the school's board of trustees. The growing chasm between the bishop and the party stemmed from a school administration demand to cover a 420-lira deficit for 1913–1914. Adamov reported that the Armenian National Assembly, mostly composed of members of the Dashnakstutyun, approved the 2,135-lira budget, with 1,000 from the national treasury and the rest from tuition, income, and donations. However, parents who doubted the school's instructors enrolled their children elsewhere, which reduced tuition revenue and caused the shortfall.³⁴ During the National Assembly's discussions on addressing this deficit, attended by members of the Dashnak party, they aimed to compel the school administration to immediately present the school budget for the upcoming academic year. Their intent was to approve it and, in turn, maintain control of the school within the ranks of their party. Bishop Sempat's proposed solution to address this issue was considered inadequate, especially in light of the growing Dashnakstutyun exclusionary movement among the non-partisan Armenians in Erzurum, which sought to entirely remove Dashnak members from the school.³⁵

The Russian consulate in Erzurum consistently expressed disapproval of the school, perceiving it as having an anti-Russian orientation due to the Dashnakstutyun. Adamov consul specifically mentioned Gabriel Noradunkyan, the chairman of the

³¹ Tarbassian 1975: 106.

³² AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70. 3 June 1914.

³³ Berberian 2019: 9.

³⁴ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70. 3 June 1914.

³⁵ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70. 3 June 1914.

committee of trustees, in this negative context. He also emphasized that, despite being informally acknowledged as under the unofficial patronage of the Russian consulate, the Sanasarian operated independently of direct control by the Russian general consulate since its inception. Adamov conceded that the consulate's influence was so limited that it could not even enforce the inclusion of the Russian language in the school's curriculum.³⁶

Russian concerns of German influence in the Erzurum borderland

The questions surrounding the Sanasarian became especially pressing for Russia in August 1913, when the local newspaper of the CUP reported on the upcoming opening of the German consulate in Erzurum.³⁷ The consulate in Erzurum could now easily coordinate its activities with another important center for German reconnaissance, the German Consulate in Tiflis, which maintained a strong network of agents and contacts among Russian officers and was suspected of organizing an anti-Russian insurgent movement among the local Muslim populations.³⁸ Adamov consul's assessment suggested that the newly appointed German consul in Erzurum aimed to counterbalance Russia's influence within the Armenian community in the region. Consequently, the Russian consulate grew significantly concerned when reports surfaced that certain local representatives of the ARF were considering aligning with Germany. Allegedly drawn to socialist ideals—a recurring criticism in Russian consular reports on Armenian revolutionaries—they sought German protection for Western Armenian territories, which heightened the Russian consulate's vigilance regarding the situation.³⁹

For instance, regarding the re-establishment of the Sanasarian School, Adamov conveyed the following ideas to the embassy in Constantinople:

*“Thanks to this arrangement, the teaching staff and students, long before it was taken over by the Dashnaks, were imbued with anti-Russian ideas, particularly in the context of general Armenian dissatisfaction with our government's policies regarding the Armenian church's properties in the Caucasus. Given the variable moods in Armenian circles, we should take advantage of the return of the Old Sanasarian School to Erzurum to influence the direction of its policies, ensuring open patronage of this school funded mainly by Russian money. This is especially necessary because there are many reasons to fear that the school will not become a hotbed of German influence, following the example of the New School, thanks to the closer relations of the German consul with the Dashnaks.”*⁴⁰

³⁶AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70. 3 June 1914.

³⁷AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2684, l. 116 – 126. 12 September 1913.

³⁸ Öno1 2009: 169-170.

³⁹ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2684, l. 116-126. 12 September 1913.

⁴⁰ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70. 3 June 1914.

To curb the spread of German influence, it was crucial for the Russian consulate to appoint a school director aligned with Russian interests. This was particularly significant due to the backgrounds of the school's three former directors—Abulyan, Matatyan, and Sogikyan—all of whom had received their higher education in Germany or Austria. For instance, Sogikyan graduated from a German university. Given their educational backgrounds, they were regarded as potential conduits for German influence.⁴¹ Based on Adamov's reports, Consul Anders from Germany collaborated with Sogikyan, who was allegedly the owner of Anders's residence in Erzurum. He reportedly received a monthly payment from the German consulate to promote "pro-German propaganda" at the school, though Adamov did not specify what this entailed. Adamov's assessment suggested that the newly appointed German consul aimed to counterbalance Russia's influence within the Armenian community in the region. The Russian consulate grew significantly concerned when reports surfaced that certain local representatives of the Dashnak party were considering aligning with Germany. Allegedly drawn to socialist ideals—a recurring criticism in Russian consular reports on Armenian revolutionaries—they sought German protection for Western Armenian territories, which heightened the Russian consulate's vigilance regarding the situation.⁴²

The Russian consulate consistently viewed the possibility of Sogikyan assuming the role of the school's director with concern. This apprehension stemmed from the trust he reportedly enjoyed from Noradunkyan, to whom he was believed to provide detailed reports on developments within the Armenian community. Adamov argued that Sogikyan had considerable influence—so much so that even Bishop Sempat regarded him as a potential threat. There were fears that Sogikyan might portray the bishop in a negative light to Noradunkyan, potentially jeopardizing Sempat's candidacy for the patriarchal seat. Consequently, the Russian consulate considered Noradunkyan's potential appointment of Sogikyan—not only as director but even as a teacher upon the school's return to Erzurum—as undesirable for Russian interests. As Adamov put it:

"(...) Removing him from school activities would facilitate our task in influencing the direction of the said school."⁴³

Meanwhile, Consul Adamov also suggested ways Russia could influence the school. He argued that a Russian government subsidy ranging from 600 to 750 rubles should be allocated to introduce Russian language instruction, especially since the school had long taught French and, with financial support from the German consul Anders, had recently introduced German language instruction under Sogikyan. However, the current director of the New Sanasarian School, Rostomyan, had begun teaching Russian on Adamov's advice. Despite this, the consul was dissatisfied, claiming that the instruction was not being taken seriously enough. At the same time, he

⁴¹ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2684, l. 116-126. 12 September 1913.

⁴² AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2684, l. 116-126. 12 September 1913.

⁴³ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70, 3 June 1914.

expressed his concern that donations from Russia meant to support Armenian schools in Turkish Armenia should not be spent without the consulate's knowledge and approval, particularly to fund schools with an anti-Russian orientation—possibly alluding to the undesirable influence of the Sanasarian School for Russia.⁴⁴

Conclusion

Russian plans to provide financial support to the Sanasarian School never materialized due to the onset of the Great War. Even Russian archival records from the Erzurum consulate make no mention of the Sanasarian after June 1914, making it difficult to reconstruct Russian perspectives on the institution further on. However, the key findings arising from this analysis are the following:

First, the archival records suggest that Russia never had a consistent approach toward the Sanasarian or other educational institutions as a means of expanding Russian influence within Armenian communities, despite internal consular correspondence repeatedly emphasizing the perceived detrimental influence and meddling of the Great Powers in Armenian revolutionary activity and general Armenian sentiment toward Russia. Although Russian authorities feared excessive Western influence and the transborder exchange of ideas they identified as “socialist”, and thus foreign, intrusive and destructive toward Russian interests, Tsarist foreign policy seemingly lacked the capacity to intervene effectively in Ottoman affairs or exert meaningful control over the Sanasarian's direction.

Second, the study points out Russian concerns that the Sanasarian School had strong connections with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. As a result, Tsarist authorities viewed the school with suspicion as they feared that it fostered Armenian nationalist sentiment that could undermine Russian control over Armenians in both the Caucasus and the Ottoman Empire. Russian officials sought to control Armenian education in Erzurum to reinforce loyalty to the Russian Empire and thereby stabilize the borderland. Despite Russian diplomats closely monitoring the affairs of the Sanasarian School and attempting to curb perceived nationalist influence by influencing appointments and educational policies, their efforts ultimately failed and remained largely theoretical.

Finally, by the early 20th century, Russia became increasingly concerned about German influence in Erzurum and the wider Ottoman Empire. Russian consular reports indicate that German diplomats sought to cultivate ties with Armenian groups, possibly as a counterbalance to Russian influence in the area. The heightened alert regarding the German consular presence is evident in frequent Russian consular reports, highlighting Russia's priority of securing the shatter zone between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, and underscoring the reconfiguration of power structures in the Ottoman borderland resulting from the emerging German presence.

⁴⁴ AVPRI, f. 180, op. 517/2, d. 2685, l. 66-70, 3 June 1914.

Overall, the case of the Sanasarian School demonstrates how education in borderland regions could become deeply politicized. Nevertheless, with the onset of the First World War, the Turkish government conscripted students and younger teachers, resulting in the discontinuation of the Sanasarian School of Erzurum. Following this, the buildings were confiscated and transformed into a military hospital during the war.⁴⁵ During its operational period, the Sanasarian School functioned as a true cross-border institution in the Ottoman Borderlands, serving as a site where conflicting interests clashed. As a result, it was exposed to a diverse array of influences, with various actors seeking to support, benefit from, or exploit its operations. Nevertheless, it must be noted that Armenian life greatly benefitted from its presence and its destruction caused irreplaceable loss of cultural value.

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⁴⁵ Tarbassian 1975: 106.

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THE PROBLEM OF ENHANCING THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN MODERN ARMENIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract

Developments in the 21st century demand new approaches in the field of education, at the center of which is the teacher. The model of the teacher-pedagogue, where the teacher was a transmitter of knowledge, has currently exhausted itself. On the other hand, the master teacher model is developing in the world, which primarily implies the formation of abilities and skills in students, which in turn will allow them to acquire knowledge independently. The adoption of this model will, on the one hand, ensure the effectiveness of educational reforms, and on the other hand, will raise the role of the teacher in Armenian society.

Keywords: teacher-pedagogue, master teacher, licensed teacher, educational reforms, students, abilities and skills.

Introduction

The 21st century has posed a number of crucial challenges to the global community. These challenges are diverse, ranging from geopolitical to environmental, but a significant part consists of issues related to the education and upbringing of the next generation. In this regard, the visions of states' educational policies are key, particularly in what direction global civilization is developing and how prepared the next generation is to operate in the context of ongoing transformations. In addition, the availability of teaching capital that can organize and ensure the education and upbringing of the next generation is a serious problem.

Like all modern societies, Armenian society has faced the challenges characteristic of the 21st century. The educational system that Armenian society has been guided by for decades no longer justifies itself, for the simple reason that it does not provide the student with the necessary abilities and skills for application in life. However, this is only one side of the problem, since in order to carry out any process or reform in the field of education, it is necessary to have teachers equipped with the

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Received 17.11.2024, revised 20.05.2025, accepted 23.05.2025

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necessary knowledge and abilities. In other words, educational reforms require appropriate resources, first of all teaching capital, which will be able to effectively implement the actions stipulated by the state educational standards and, accordingly, provide the generation with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities.

In Armenian society, the teacher has been a respected individual; all strata of society have had respect for this figure. The profession and activity of the teacher have been considered the most honorable. However, in the 21st century, when global changes are taking place, naturally the role and image of the teacher are also undergoing changes. In Armenian society, these changes are conditioned by both global transformations and those taking place within society. As a result, the image of the teacher has suffered significantly, and this profession has become unattractive in our country. From this point of view, the educational reforms initiated in the Republic of Armenia are directly related to the role and image of the teacher. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to say that the effectiveness of reforms mainly depends on teaching capital. The aforementioned arguments condition the topicality and importance of the topic. In the process of educational reforms, two crucial circumstances must be taken into account: ensuring schools are staffed with qualified educators and raising the quality of pedagogical education.

The aim of the research is to present the approaches related to raising the role of the teacher in modern Armenian society, and an attempt is also made to present some proposals.

At the heart of the vision of the best future for the state lies the school and education, the cornerstone of which is the teacher. Therefore, the training of professional teaching staff should be part of the state's strategy. First, it is necessary to pay attention to the main institution training teaching staff, that is, Khachatur Abovyan Armenian State Pedagogical University. It is necessary to take steps to raise the authority of the pedagogical university, in other words, to increase state patronage and care for the university. Another important issue is the implementation of measures aimed at improving the quality of students admitted to the pedagogical university, in other words, to make the teaching profession attractive, under which conditions students with higher academic performance will be admitted to the university. The revision of curricula at the university, with the application of effective experiences in this field, is also important. And finally, the teaching profession should be one of the highest-paid jobs, which will be an important basis for motivation.

About the image of the teacher and the role played in society: A historical overview

In all civilizations known to mankind, the problem of transmitting existing knowledge to subsequent generations has been emphasized, which has been organized through the educational/teaching process. The teacher has been the individual through whom this process has been organized. Thus, let us briefly touch

upon the concept of the teacher, which essentially comes from the depths of centuries. All ancient peoples and civilizations have had their teachers: religious, scientific, cultural. In both Eastern and Western societies, teachers have been highly honored, even deified.¹ Later, prophets appeared, who in a broad sense were teachers, as they brought the true word of God to mankind. Among these teachers were Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Christ, and Muhammad, who are the founders of major religions. In addition to religious figures, other prominent individuals are known who dedicated their lives to pedagogical activity. Thus, Pythagoras was an individual with exceptional abilities, mastering magic, mathematics, and music. Among the famous figures is the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, who accepted death for the sake of science and knowledge, although he could have been saved.² It is interesting that the aforementioned figures did not leave written information. Their thoughts, ideas, and activities were written about by their students and associates. In a later period, a more mythical understanding of the teacher emerges: *guru*, *sensei*, *mullah*, *ustadh* (teacher in Arabic/Persian/Urdu). They were carriers of book knowledge and, as a rule, interpreted religious texts. For them, the source of knowledge was the Holy Scriptures, for example, for Christianity, the Old and New Testaments; for Islam, the Quran; for Buddhism, the Tripitaka; for Confucianism, the Analects; for Judaism, the Tanakh; for Hinduism, the Vedas; for Taoism, the Tao Te Ching; for Zoroastrianism, the Avesta, and others.³

Our information regarding the educational process and the role of the teacher in ancient Armenian society is limited. Essentially, this is primarily due to the policy implemented after the adoption of Christianity, when Armenian pagan culture was mainly eliminated. Unfortunately, no written information has been preserved about the existence and forms of the educational system in ancient Armenia. However, judging by the close cultural ties and interactions with neighboring countries such as Persia, Assyria, Greece, and Rome, specialists in the history of pedagogy believe that schooling in our reality has ancient traditions. Thus, Ts. Simonyan writes in his book “History of Armenian Pedagogy” that from the Artaxiad period, there were state secular schools in Armenia where instruction was carried out in Greek writing. “Although the writing of instruction (sometimes also the language) was not Armenian, the school was Armenian... During the Arsacid period (before the Mesropian script), non-Armenian-script Greco-Syriac Armenian state schools operated”.⁴

The Mehen schools existed until the adoption of Christianity. After their destruction, Greco-script and Greco-lingual (less frequently, Assyrian-script and Assyrian-lingual) educational institutions operated in Armenia for a century. After

¹ In ancient Egypt, teachers were bowed down to as the god Thoth; in China, they were called “holy sages”; in ancient Greece and medieval Europe, they were also respected as Trismegistus.

² Among Socrates’ students were famous political and military figures, scientists such as Alcibiades, Xenophon, and Plato.

³ Ilyin 2017: 10.

⁴ Simonyan 2012: 12.

creating the script and returning to Vagharshapat, Mesrop Mashtots first founded a school in Vagharshapat to train teachers, that is, the first higher school – the *vardapetaran* (seminary). Catholicos Sahak Partev was engaged in the instruction of the “Kainite forces.” “A generation of young people educated in their native language was being prepared, who would better understand the difficult situation of their homeland and be ready to defend it with their chests”.⁵ Mesrop Mashtots, along with his students Tirayr Kordzenatsi and Mushegh Taronatsi, traveled to Goghtn to found schools and monasteries. After that, Mashtots went to Syunik, where he also opened schools. To this day, one of the sites of M. Mashtots’s educational activities in the Goghtn region has been preserved – Mesropavan or Msrvanis, which is still a place of pilgrimage for the Armenian population of the surrounding villages. Subsequently, Mashtots also carried out activities in Byzantine-controlled Armenia. When Emperor Theodosius II ascended the throne (his predecessor Arcadius had not allowed it), Mashtots went to Constantinople and, after personally meeting with the emperor and Patriarch Atticus, received official permission to teach Armenian in the schools of Byzantine Armenia. The schools were under the care of the state, the church, and the community, were intended for all social strata, and had the warmest support of the people. After the second partition of Armenia, Byzantium spared no effort to weaken the Armenian forces, and this also affected culture and education.

During the Arab rule, education also declined. In the 9th-11th centuries, schools were established in almost all regions of Armenia, many of which became major educational and scientific centers. One manuscript in the Matenadaran reflects the scholars’ understanding of the organization of educational and scientific work of that period. The following 4 conditions were considered necessary for this: 1. the will of the vardapet (scholar-teacher), free from greed and ambition, 2. warm love for the student, 3. peaceful times, 4. a desert and quiet location.⁶

In the 12th-15th centuries, the development of education continued, and major educational and scientific centers, universities, appeared not only in Armenia (Tatev, Gladzor, Haghpats, Sanahin, Getik, etc.) but also in Cilicia (Black Mountain, Sis, Great Stone) and in diaspora communities: Constantinople, Crimea, Tbilisi. Personal example, moralizing conversation, admonition, encouragement, reprimand, punishment (including corporal), persuasion, etc., are mentioned in the sources as methods of upbringing.⁷ During the Turkish-Persian rule, many schools had turned into mere elementary literacy schools. However, from the beginning of the 16th century, several progressive figures organized new and reorganized several old schools (of the Great Hermitage of Harants, the Amrdolu Monastery, Akhtamar, Lim, Ejmiatsin).

The invention of printing was a turning point for world civilization. Books became mass-produced; scientific literature, and then textbooks, were created. Education also

⁵ History of the Armenian People 1984: 426.

⁶ Matenadaran, manuscript 573, sheet 39b.

⁷ Simonyan 2012: 43.

gradually became mass in nature, alongside which the foundation for the modern image of the teacher was laid, and this was secular rather than religious. The modern image of the teacher took shape 200 years ago and has undergone a series of transformations. The emergence of this image of the teacher is connected with scientific pedagogy and the teaching profession. Starting from the spread of the ideas of humanism and especially during the Enlightenment, church figures (who were also engaged in educational work) and the educational system (scholasticism) were widely criticized. In the 17th century, the famous pedagogue Jan Komensky, who is considered the author of the modern school, criticized the medieval school, particularly the rote memorization of material under the threat of physical punishment. Komensky proposed creating a school that would work like a clock mechanism, but it is obvious that today that mechanism no longer works.⁸

In the 19th-20th centuries, pedagogy was given a scientific character, and the connection with scientific psychology gradually deepened. In this case, the teacher acted not only as a subject teacher/lecturer but transformed into a teacher-pedagogue. Essentially, this model has been preserved to this day. During this period, the school system was finally formed, and legislative and regulatory frameworks were created, which also extended to teachers. Although there was no statehood in Armenia during this period, educational work was widely developing in Armenia and in the diaspora communities. In the 19th century, famous pedagogues carried out their activities, leaving their observations on both educational work and the role and activities of the teacher.

Khachatur Abovyan (1805-1848) is unsurpassed in the field of enlightenment, education, and pedagogy (it is no coincidence that the pedagogical university operating in Armenia bears his name). He was familiar with the advanced European educational system and pedagogical thought, so he sought to reform the Armenian school based on these principles. He spoke a lot about improving education, noting the numerous problems in this area, such as the choice of methods, moral education, etc. In this context, he also addressed teachers. According to him, all such problems are solved thanks to the teacher's diligence and dedication... consequently, he must be perfect in his knowledge and mastery, integrity and diligence, love and care... his characteristics are: honesty, modesty, patience, sincerity, fairness, firmness...⁹

It should be noted that in the 19th-20th centuries, pedagogy was increasingly turning into a science, both theoretically and practically. Experiments began to be carried out to improve methods and the teaching process. On the other hand, starting from the 20th century, upbringing loses its significance in the educational process. The main task of pedagogy becomes not upbringing, but teaching and instruction.

Thus, throughout history, both the concept of the teacher and the nature of his activity have undergone transformations. The role, image, and functions of the teacher in Armenian society have also undergone changes. Like all over the world, in Armenian

⁸ Ilyin 2017: 11.

⁹ Simonyan 2012: 116.

social perceptions, the concept of the teacher has been given a pedagogical-psychological characterization. On the other hand, from ancient times until the collapse of the USSR, the teacher held a high and privileged position in Armenian society.

The teacher in the 21st century: facing global and local challenges

The 21st century has brought a number of challenges that are both global and local in nature. Global challenges are faced by all societies and existing institutions and systems in the world, which are primarily related to globalization, innovations, the development of information technologies, and artificial intelligence. People's attitudes towards the environment and phenomena are radically changing. In these conditions, the educational system is naturally not isolated, so it is also subject to influences and transformations. In addition to global challenges, the teacher also faces local challenges. Local challenges are mainly conditioned by the attitude and perceptions of the state and society related to the educational system and its components.

There are many global challenges, but let's mention the pandemic that has spread in recent years and its consequences for the educational system. In the conditions of the pandemic and universal restrictions, when the educational process seemed to stop, the teaching community faced serious problems: how to organize the lesson process? The lesson process was organized on an online platform, but this brought new problems, among which two main ones should be singled out: technical equipment and the issue of teachers mastering modern technologies. In these conditions, it became obvious that no matter how well a teacher masters the subject they teach, they will not achieve results if they do not master technologies. Another important rule becomes that mastering technologies must also be a mandatory part of the teacher's activity. This is one of the main problems that the teaching community in Armenia is still overcoming, as a large number of teachers with 20th-century perceptions continue to work in schools.

Local challenges are no less important for teachers. As mentioned above, this is primarily related to the attitude of society. It should be stated that in recent decades, the role and image of the teacher in our society have suffered significantly. Even if we compare it with the Soviet period, we see obvious differences. Naturally, the formation of such an attitude is conditioned by both objective and subjective factors. We believe that, first of all, it is necessary for the teacher to be aware of modern challenges and problems and, by meeting them, try to find solutions. From this point of view, let's try to consider a few issues. First, it is necessary to take into account that the nature of the school has changed. From a general school, whose idea was J. Comenius's motto "to teach everyone everything," there is a transition to specialized school-institutions, where they teach only what is necessary to obtain a profession. Previously, the teacher was mainly a source of knowledge, in school life he was the leader and educator of his students, and now the teacher transmits information and shows his students how to use

it.¹⁰ In fact, the teacher is no longer the only source of knowledge. In the digital age, the student can obtain any information from many other sources, mainly the internet. Second, one of the important challenges for the 21st-century teacher is the new generation, which has new needs and, most importantly, different perceptions about them than teachers and parents. Teachers need to know what 21st-century learners need to learn and how 21st-century learners should learn.¹¹ That is, the goal of the teaching process is the formation of abilities and skills in students, rather than the direct transmission of knowledge.

Thus, all over the world, the teacher is the main implementer of educational work, therefore, he is the first to face both global and local challenges. The teacher-pedagogue model has exhausted itself. At the heart of the education of the modern generation should be the formation of skills and abilities, not the transmission of knowledge.

Some Observations on Raising the Role of the Teacher

Educational reforms are currently being implemented in the Republic of Armenia, the effectiveness of which will be conditioned by several circumstances. The teacher should be considered a primary and important condition. This means motivating the teacher and the teaching profession in general, and taking steps to raise his role in society. One of the characteristics of the 21st-century teacher is that he must take into account the needs of his students and prepare them to face challenges. The teacher's work is complex and responsible. To create a high-quality professional teaching force, it is important to have a high-quality professional teacher development program that should include the integrated use of technologies.¹²

The qualification, specialization, and professionalism of the teacher are of great importance for raising the teacher's role. It is necessary to especially emphasize the role and significance of pedagogical education. Here, two circumstances must be taken into account: what quality of students are admitted to the pedagogical university and what programs they study and are prepared as teachers. After graduating from the bachelor's program of the pedagogical university, the student is awarded the qualification of a teacher. However, in reality, this certified specialist is still quite far from being a pedagogue, although pedagogical practices – passive and active – are mandatory educational components, the purpose of which is to produce personnel with the most practical skills possible. Obtaining a bachelor's degree should be the first step, as the teacher must constantly self-educate and self-develop, raising professional and pedagogical abilities and skills. Regarding the professional growth and career advancement of teachers, a differentiated model is currently being proposed in the world. According to it, certified teachers should begin their pedagogical activity as

¹⁰ Szucs 2009: 3.

¹¹ Ming & Guan 2016: 3.

¹² Hafsah 2017: 51.

teacher assistants. Only after this stage can they move to the status of a master teacher, when they master the appropriate pedagogical skills and abilities, and then they can become licensed teachers. The idea of the master teacher is currently an actual phenomenon, although it was written about at the beginning of the century¹³. "The idea of the teacher as a researcher has been accepted with considerable enthusiasm for years. University education departments have adopted it as the basis for project work, on the basis of which they have awarded master's degrees"¹⁴. Essentially, the pedagogical university in Armenia should also adopt this policy. On the other hand, this will be aimed at raising the role and importance of the teacher, which to some extent will also ensure career growth for him. It should be noted that this approach is currently widespread in the world, in which the teaching council is presented in the following hierarchy:¹⁵

1. Authorized teacher
2. Master teacher
3. Certified teacher

Perhaps one of the most important outcomes of the educational reforms started in the Republic of Armenia should be providing schools with the necessary teaching staff. The 21st-century teacher must:

1. Know the normative legal documents related to the field of education;
2. Know the content of their taught subject and modern psycho-pedagogical technologies;
3. Possess in-depth knowledge of pedagogy and developmental psychology;
4. Be able to establish relationships with colleagues, parents, and students of different categories;
5. Engage in self-education, self-development, and professional growth;
6. Be able to create an individual learning trajectory for students during their education;
7. Be able to differentiate the application of various psycho-pedagogical technologies and methods related to education and upbringing;
8. Apply modern tools to assess students' strengths.¹⁶

In fact, to provide the next generation with quality education, highly qualified, competent, socially active, creative, and proactive teachers who keep up with the times must work in the educational system. The prominent Armenian pedagogue Ghazaros Aghayan (1840-1911), who possessed exceptional teaching abilities, highly valued the role of the teacher and demanded deep professional and pedagogical knowledge, mastery of teaching, innovation and ingenuity, and moral integrity. A teacher can only be loved for their "decent behavior" ... when they are the "ideal for students," then "be not so sweet that they swallow you, and not so bitter that they spit you out." The honor

¹³ Davidson 2009: 27-33.

¹⁴ Frost 2008: 80.

¹⁵ Rashid 2011: 82.

¹⁶ Antonova 2020: 193.

of the teacher must be kept high; wretched is the “nation that does not honor and provide for the teacher”.¹⁷

Conclusion

The 21st-century has brought a number of new challenges for the field of education and especially for the teacher. First, the conditions and nature of life have changed, which in turn have necessitated changes in the educational system. On the other hand, perceptions about the role and activity of the teacher have changed, based on objective and sometimes subjective conditions. It is obvious that the 21st-century teacher faces new challenges and problems, and therefore, steps must be taken to raise their role accordingly.

For centuries, the teacher has been one of the most honorable figures in Armenian society. However, with the development of society, the functions and role of the teacher have somewhat changed. This is due to both internal social developments and the establishment of pedagogical science and the teaching profession. The 21st-century teacher faces global and local challenges that require new approaches to their solution. In this regard, it is necessary to emphasize the teacher's qualification, particularly the preparation of a research-oriented teacher. In this case, the teacher transforms from a mere transmitter of knowledge into someone who also observes the problem and, consequently, seeks solutions. On the other hand, a teacher with purely professional knowledge is no longer competitive, as other characteristics are also needed: pedagogical abilities and skills, competence, creativity, etc. Education is one of the important foundations for the transformation of modern Armenian society, the purpose of which should be the preparation of a knowledgeable generation equipped with practical skills, for whom national and state interests will be a priority.

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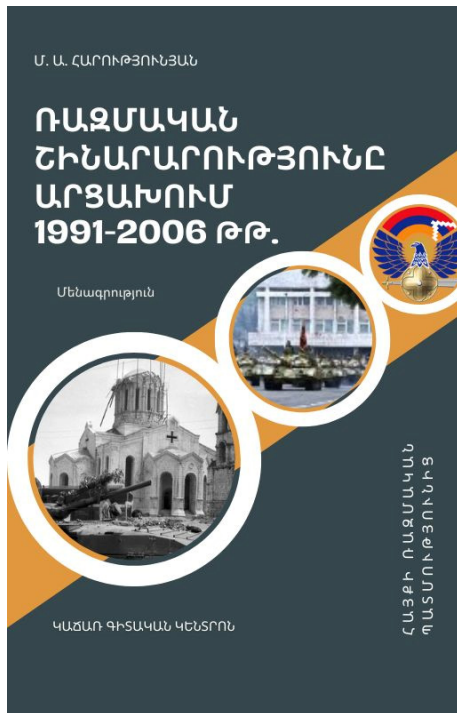
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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

BOOK REVIEWS



Mher A. Harutyunyan, Military Construction in Artsakh (1991–2006). Yerevan: Kachar Scientific Centre Publishing House, 2024, 416 pages, illustrated. ISBN 978-9939-1-1846-8

The monograph written by Mher Harutyunyan, PhD in History, Associate Professor, and Researcher at the Department of Modern History of the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, presents a theoretical, methodological, and epistemological analysis of key issues in military construction in Artsakh between 1991 and 2006, a subject that has not previously been the focus of comprehensive academic research.

Various aspects of this issue had been previously explored by Mher Harutyunyan in monographs, articles, collections of materials from international conferences, and a specialised thematic encyclopaedia.

The reviewed monograph consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusion, summaries in Russian and English, a list of abbreviations, bibliography, indexes of names and geographical locations, as well as an appendix containing 32 documents, most of which are published for the first time, and three tables.

In the introduction, the general characteristics of the work, the relevance of the research topic, its objectives and tasks, chronological framework, the state of research on the issue, the source base, scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significance, methodological principles and research methods, approbation, structure, and content of the work are outlined.

The first chapter, “Features of the Organisation of Self-Defence of the Republic of Artsakh and the Construction of Armed Forces (1991–1994),” is dedicated to the analysis of measures taken by the authorities of Artsakh to organise self-defence and repel the aggression of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The processes of forming self-defence management bodies and elements of territorial defence, as well as the role of the Defence Committee of the Republic of Armenia in establishing the self-defence infrastructure and providing military personnel to the newly proclaimed republic, are examined.

A significant focus is placed on the analysis of the activities of the headquarters of the Self-Defence Committee, including issues of planning military operations, training command personnel, and increasing the efficiency of troop management. Mechanisms for improving command skills in newly established training centres, as well as measures to enhance the combat readiness of the troops, are explored.

As an expression of progress in military construction, the work examines the expansion of repair bases for equipment and weaponry, the organisation of their maintenance during hostilities, the improvement of the medical support system, and logistical supply. In this context, particular attention is paid to efforts to enhance air defence and strengthen the security of the airspace of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic amid the adversary's attempts to achieve absolute air superiority.

The transformation of self-defence forces into a fully-fledged Defence Army and the completion of its legal formalisation are also examined in detail. The military successes and defensive capabilities of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic are presented as key factors that compelled Azerbaijan to sign the ceasefire agreement.

The second chapter – “Improvement of the Defensive System of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and Military Construction in the Post-Truce Period (1994–1999)” – analyses the process of strengthening the defensive complex of the Republic of Artsakh, the development of strategic directions in the field of defence, and the qualitative and temporary aspects of military construction.

The characteristics of army construction in the conditions of a truce, the establishment of the defence department of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, and the role of the Defence Army as a guarantor of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's security are comprehensively studied. The issues of military personnel training, troop recruitment organisation, and the legal framework for replacing volunteer personnel with conscription service are thoroughly examined.

The relationship between economic recovery processes and mobilisation readiness, as well as the introduction of effective mechanisms for logistical support of the Defence Army, are analysed. Significant attention is paid to improving the military command system and optimising troop deployment.

Furthermore, key issues of military construction and factors influencing it are studied, including the regulatory and legal support for army construction and the strengthening of ties between the army and society.

The third chapter – “Main Trends and Features of Military Construction (2000–2006)” – focuses on the legislative support for issues of military and border security of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, the development of a strategy for improving the quality of army construction, increasing combat capability, and establishing necessary units.

The issues of modernising and upgrading armaments and military equipment, as well as the technical outfitting of troops, are examined. Particular attention is paid to the preparation and accumulation of mobilisation reserves of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, the establishment of procedures for troop recruitment, conscription training, military and analytical cadre training, the formation of an officer corps, and the improvement of living and service conditions for military personnel.

The optimal management systems, organisation of supply across all military branches, enhancement of combat and conscription training, ensuring the highest level of mobilisation readiness of reserves under constant military threat conditions, as well

as mechanisms for conducting joint exercises, providing methodological assistance, and securing mobilisation resources in cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, are studied.

In the conclusion, the research results are summarised, practical recommendations and theoretical questions are consolidated, and the applied significance of the findings is elucidated.

By conducting a comprehensive analysis of the fifteen-year history of the Armed Forces of Artsakh, Mher Harutyunyan has laid the foundation for the development and approval of program initiatives for the further evolution of the Defence Army based on the studied models. Key issues of military construction, factors influencing it, legislative support for army development, and the strengthening of ties between the army and society are examined.

The historian has provided a substantive analysis of specific approaches dictated by the strategic changes in the dynamics of the armed conflict, including the necessity of training command personnel. The monograph presents valuable proposals concerning the improvement of the theory of armed struggle, considering the peculiarities of potential theatres of war, the composition and structure of opposing forces, and the specificity of the tasks set before them.

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**Andrey Maksimchik, Oksana Solopova, Ekaterina Roeva-Mkrtchyan, A Study Worthy of a Hero Admiral, Moscow, 2024, 384 p.
ISBN 978-5-6050678-5-6**

The world changes and renews every day. However, there are values that remain enduring and irreplaceable in this constantly changing and renewing world. In these difficult days for us, national consolidation and unity are extremely important. To be able to face the challenges presented to us, the proper and Armenian upbringing of the younger generation becomes absolutely necessary. For this

nation-benefiting work, a renewed and thorough appreciation of national values and our prominent figures is crucial. One such figure was Admiral Hovhannes Isakov of the USSR, whose life and glorious path offer many valuable lessons.

Recently, we gratefully received the magnificent volume, “Admiral Isakov”, from Armen Khechoyan, a dedicated advocate for the preservation and dissemination of national values and the head of the “Aniv” Armenian Studies Research Assistance and Development Fund¹. The authors of this high-quality printed book are A. N. Maksimchik, O. V. Solopova, and E. B. Raeva-Mkrtchyan. It was edited by A. V. Khechoyan, O. V. Solopova, and I. A. Permyakov. The volume is truly a worthy addition to the “Menk” (We) series dedicated to the Admiral, printed in Italy by “Artigrafiche and Diaries” publishing house.

Throughout centuries, due to historical fate, Armenians have found themselves in various countries around the world, making their undeniable contributions and leaving a deep mark in the art, culture, science, political life, and other spheres of those countries. Unfortunately, people know very little about them. It is precisely to fill this gap that the “Menk” series publishes research albums dedicated to prominent Armenians. These come to supplement the well-known fact that Armenians were fourth among the peoples of the USSR in the composition of generals and admirals of the army and navy, officers of the air force and artillery, and sixth in the list of Heroes of the USSR. And when comparing the number of Armenian victims and heroes with the population of the Armenian SSR during those years, it becomes clear that Armenians were leaders in the USSR². The total number of marshals, admirals, and generals of Armenian origin is 162 people³, of whom 68 received the highest military ranks between 1940 and 1945, and

¹ Maksimchik A. N., Solopova O. V., Raeva-Mkrtchyan E. B., Admiral Isakov, M. 2024, 383 pages.

² Malkhasyan A., Armenian Figures of the Soviet Army, Yerevan, 1965, 114 pages, 656 pages.

³ Harutyunyan K.A., Poghosyan G.R., The Contribution of the Armenian People to the Victory in the Great Patriotic War, M., 2010, p. 78, 874 pages.

94 between 1946 and 1997⁴. Among Armenian high-ranking naval officers, 4 held the rank of Vice-Admiral, and 6 held the rank of Counter-Admiral. Hovhannes Isakov was an Admiral of the USSR Navy, a rank equivalent to that of a Marshal of the USSR.

Isakov belongs to those whose lives are incomparably richer than the legends woven around them. This work, written based on verified and completely reliable factual sources, is complemented by photographs reflecting various episodes of Isakov's life and other useful materials. Incidentally, the authors of the project not only carry out patriotic work but also published this exquisitely and tastefully designed volume through their own financial sacrifices.

Composed of an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, notes, an appendix, and an Armenian summary, this volume dedicated to Admiral Isakov, "The Brain of the Soviet Fleet," uses materials from archives in Russia, Armenia, the USA, Finland, Belarus, Georgia, Estonia, and other countries. There are also a large number of photographs that make the narrative more objective, visible, and convincing.

It is known that in the USSR, the rank of Fleet Admiral was conferred on only three individuals: N. M. Kuznetsov, S. G. Gorshkov, and the Armenian I. S. Isakov. This excellent work dedicated to the latter presents the pages of his life and his glorious path in considerable detail and at an appropriate scientific level. The study is a unique heroic narrative to the immortal memory of Admiral I. Isakov.

The **introduction** describes how a youth in love with the sea left his native home at an early age and dedicated all his subsequent activities to strengthening the USSR Navy. It clarifies that a significant number of works have been written and several films made about Isakov's life and activities. At the same time, the authors express regret that the talented admiral did not write memoirs, and to this day, some pages of his biography need final clarification. This study-album, dedicated to the talented admiral's 130th anniversary, not only fills this gap and answers several unilluminated questions but also draws the attention of future researchers to writing deeper and more comprehensive studies. The authors rightly emphasized an important point: "Isakov's brief biography is presented against the backdrop of the era in which he lived"⁵. It is clarified that Isakov was born not on August 22, 1894, as stated in all records, but on September 3. The authors then expressed their gratitude to the organizations and individuals who willingly provided the archival sources used.

The **first chapter**, titled "Homeland. Family. Education and Combat Baptism," states that Hovhannes (Ivan) Stepani (Stepanovich) Isahakyan (Isakov) was born in 1894 in the village of Ajikend (Northern Artsakh) in the Elisabethpol Governorate, into an Artsakh Armenian family. His father was Stepan, a road engineer, and his mother was Ida. His older brother was Poghos, and his sister was Mariam. After living in Baku for 11 years, their family moved to Tbilisi in 1905. Here, Hovhannes entered the local real school, and after graduating, he moved to St. Petersburg in 1913 and enrolled in

⁴ Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia, Volume 13 (supplement volume "Soviet Armenia"), pages 665, 666.

⁵ Maksimchik A. N., Solopova O. V., Raeva-Mkrtchyan E. B., Admiral Isakov, p. 6.

the local Peter the Great Polytechnic Institute. After several unsuccessful attempts, he was finally admitted to the naval school on September 15, 1914. From June to September 1915, he sailed for the first time in the Pacific Ocean, always guided by the principle: "A sailor without order and discipline is a useless rag"⁶.

After sailing in various waters for a long time and passing a successful exam, Isakov became a junior naval officer on January 15, 1916. By May 27, for excellent performance of duties and successes in science, he was promoted to senior ensign, and on March 25, 1917, to midshipman. Participating in a number of military operations, Isakov met the October Revolution on the ship "Izyaslav," which had joined the Soviet army, and was elected senior assistant to the captain. Subsequently, Isakov was seconded to the Volga-Caspian Flotilla, where, as commander of the ship "Deyatelny," he participated in the liberation of Astrakhan, ensuring the victorious march of the 11th Army, and the battles for the return of ships that had fled to the Iranian port of Anzali. He received commendation from the command and was sent to Moscow.

The **second chapter**, "Promotion in the Navy," presents factual evidence of Isakov's activities in several important positions. For example, in 1920, he was appointed commander of the special purpose ship "Yakor" of the Baltic Fleet, which successfully cleared the Baltic Sea of mines, removing 2527 mines. In 1927, Isakov was appointed senior assistant to the commander of the cruiser "Pobeditel." Subsequently, at the age of 26, he became the youngest commander of the destroyer "Izyaslav" in the USSR Navy.

In 1923, he served in the Black Sea Fleet. He was appointed **Naval Commander of the Batumi port**, then of the Black Sea Fleet's operational division, and in 1924, commander of the ship "Corfu." Subsequently, he became head of coastal service, successfully **restoring all Black Sea ports** between 1926 and 1927. After brilliantly completing advanced training courses in 1927, he was appointed head of the First Department of the Staff in 1928. Notably, during all those years, he regularly published professional articles. In 1929, he was appointed assistant head of the Operational Management Department of the General Staff. In 1931, he was seconded to the Far East. In 1932, he began teaching at the Leningrad Naval Academy and rose to the position of its head. In 1933, he was appointed head of a special purpose expedition, then of the Baltic Fleet, and on December 30, 1937, **Deputy People's Commissar of the USSR Navy**. Having fully earned the trust of the authorities, the figure was sent to France in 1938, then to the USA, with the aim of modernizing and improving the USSR Navy. Isakov, having brilliantly fulfilled his mission, joined the **CPSU in 1939**. During the Finnish War, he was sent to Kronstadt and distinguished himself remarkably, for which he was awarded the rank of **Fleet Admiral on June 4, 1940**. That is, Isakov, who distinguished himself remarkably during the most difficult period for the Soviet naval forces, rose from ensign to the rank of Admiral.

⁶ Maksimchik A. N., Solopova O. V., Raeva-Mkrtchyan E. B., Admiral Isakov, p. 33.

The **third chapter**, titled “Ordeal of the Great Patriotic War Years,” states that this was Isakov’s fourth war, and he overcame this ordeal with heroic actions. At the beginning of the war, the USSR had four fleets - the Northern, Baltic, Black Sea, and Pacific. On June 24, 1941, Isakov left for Leningrad to organize the fight against fascist Germany on the spot. Marshal Zhukov wrote about those days: “Isakov was one of the strongest and most talented commanders, who brilliantly fulfilled all his tasks”⁷. In 1941, near Shlisselburg, the indomitable defender of Leningrad lost hearing in his left ear due to an aerial bomb.

In the same year, 1941, by government order, Isakov was seconded to Crimea, then to the Far East to counter the Japanese. Subsequently, we see him in Krasnodar, where he led and successfully carried out operations in the battles for Kerch. As Deputy Commander of the Transcaucasian Front, Isakov sustained a serious injury from aerial bombardment in 1942. When Professor B. Petrov told him that they would have to amputate his right leg, the admiral, suffering in pain, replied: “Save my head so I can fight against the despicable enemy.” Ultimately, with great difficulty, they managed to transport the wounded admiral to Tbilisi, where his leg was amputated. After this, Isakov focused more on scientific and organizational activities: in 1944, he was appointed **chief editor of the monumental work “Essays on the History of the USSR Navy.”** And in 1945, a special commission awarded him the degree of **Doctor of Naval Sciences without defending a dissertation**. On May 31, 1944, he was awarded the rank of **Admiral of the Fleet**.

The **fourth chapter**, titled “Ordered to Live and Work”: Post-War Activities, details Isakov’s patriotic work during the difficult post-war years. Due to his continuously deteriorating health, he was forced to resign from the position of Chief of Staff of the USSR Navy, which he had held since 1940, on April 21, 1945. His tireless talent and energy brilliantly manifested themselves this time in the scientific and organizational field. Since the USSR Navy was heavily damaged during the war, the government undertook the difficult task of restoring and rebuilding it. In these efforts, Admiral Isakov again proved to be intelligent and knowledgeable, contributing optimally to the successful implementation of this task.

On February 28, 1950, a medical commission declared Isakov unfit for military service. However, he did not despair and began to work with great zeal in the scientific and organizational sphere. Under his leadership, the monumental collection of maps, “**Naval Atlas**,” was created, which received the **State Prize in 1951**. It should be noted that he was also elected a **deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR**. In 1958, he was unanimously elected a **corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences**, and in 1967, an **honorary member of the Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences**. In 1965, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of victory, Admiral Isakov

⁷ Maksimchik A. N., Solopova O. V., Raeva-Mkrtchyan E. B., *Admiral Isakov*, p. 204.

was awarded the title of **Hero of the USSR**. He passed away on **October 11, 1967, in Moscow**.

The authors of the work present Isakov's visit to Soviet Armenia with particular enthusiasm, as well as the history of his warm friendly ties with Armenian military, political, and cultural figures, providing several anecdotes about this.

The **conclusion** section rightly notes that the history of the USSR Navy is closely linked with Isakov's name, that they complement each other and directly contributed to mutual development and improvement. At the same time, it clarifies that fate was never kind to him, and he achieved the rank of admiral from an ordinary sailor thanks to his selfless dedication and incredible diligence to his beloved work.

The fact that the work about the Armenian admiral also includes an Armenian summary is entirely understandable and commendable. It states that the study was written based on materials from archives, museums, and private collections in 9 countries, and features over 300 photographs. Structurally, the work consists of chronologically arranged chapters and supplementary sections. These meticulously and consistently present the important phases of I. Isakov's life. Finally, the conclusions drawn from the main content of the book are briefly summarized.

In conclusion, we should note that a colossal amount of work has been done, and all the requirements for a book-album have been met. The sources used are cited with proper scientific rigor. The material is written in literate and accessible Russian and is easy to read. As an Armenian historian, I not only highly appreciate the work done but also express my deep gratitude to the authors, the editorial staff, the printers, and indeed, the entire personnel who contributed to presenting this work to the reader. At the same time, I express hope that in the future, we will continue to see new works of such a high standard.

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Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan



Artsrun Hovhannisyan, *The Complex/Multilayered Warfare: Summary of Sixth-Generation Warfare*, Yerevan, 2025, “Antares”, 216 p.

By decision of the Academic Council of Vazgen Sargsyan Military Academy of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia, a quite remarkable and unique work (both in military science and military strategy theory) by Artsrun Hovhannisyan, Colonel, PhD, Associate Professor, Head of the Commander and Staff Institute named after Marshal Baghramyan of the same academy, has been published: “The Complex/Multilayered Warfare: Summary of Sixth-Generation Warfare.” This and previous works by the author are unique examples for the Armenian-speaking audience (particularly for high-ranking officers, specialists in military science theory, and military art history) for understanding modern wars and strategic concepts.

The publication of the monograph is consistent with the spirit of the reforms gaining momentum in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia. Moreover, this work can serve as a guideline for these reforms. All military science specialists, or non-specialists interested in the history of military art who have delved into the problems of military affairs and art, know that the 20th century, more than any previous century, brought numerous innovative directions in the field of military science. And this work comes to supplement that series. The basis of the work is the author’s unique theory of “Complex/Multilayered” warfare, which he put forward in military science, presented through the prism of simple and complex problems of determinism in military art theory. In confirmation of the above, the author notes in the preface of the work: “The Complex/Multilayered theory is a set of proposals to change the classical coefficients, rules, and tactics of forces and means of war, and to change the forms and methods of military operations” (page 8).

The work consists of an introduction, authored by former Colonel Vahram Grigoryan, a preface, 15 sub-chapters (although the author does not divide the work into chapters), a conclusion, an explanation of abbreviations, and a list of references. To make the problems raised in the monograph more illustrative, diagrams have been used according to the relevant section and problems.

In the first chapter (“Foundations and Connection of Strategy and Military Science,” pages 9-26), the author briefly presents the prerequisites for the development of classical military science in military schools (mainly in the USA in the West and in the USSR and its successor, the Russian Federation, in the East, as well as in the Republic of Armenia, which is interconnected with the latter) and its three main levels. Here, as in his other works, he rightly presents the incompatibility and inefficiency of Soviet-Russian

military science and theory when applied to the physical-geographical area of responsibility of the Armenian Armed Forces. Moreover, he considers the necessity and urgency of reforming the Armenian Armed Forces along the Western path. In this regard, he notes: "Eventually, the Armenian military science school will go this way; there are several reasons for this:

- The demands for mathematical concreteness of the Soviet and its successor Russian school do not correspond to our terrain and other conditions.
- The Russian military science school is not at all the most advanced and often follows Western schools, currently experiencing its difficult times.
- Our national mindset is freer, more creative; in real life, we, nevertheless, act by other rules" (pages 14-15).

In this chapter, the author also presents the main components of modern wars, which he outlines in 11 points (pages 22-23), as well as the three main challenges facing modern armed forces (pages 24-25).

In the next, short chapter ("New Concepts of War in the Digital Age," pages 27-31), the principles of superior-subordinate and subordinate-superior relations of the aforementioned military schools are presented: The "Teach-Trust-Follow" scheme was in operation, which fundamentally differed from the Soviet "Show-Permit-Control" scheme" (page 30). Here again, based on the ethno-psychological, value-based, and worldview starting points of Armenians, the author concludes that these principles of the Russian military school are incompatible with the Armenian Armed Forces and that there is a need to fundamentally change them. In a series of subsequent chapters ("The Role of Precision Weapons and Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Concept of These Wars," pages 32-34, "Electrofiring Battle and Operation," pages 35-41, "Six Rules for Ensuring Air Superiority," pages 42-67, "Network-Centric Operations and War," pages 68-75, and "Network-Platform-Centric and Complex/Multilayered Wars," pages 76-81), the author, in the process of developing his theory, presents the methods of using material and technical means and armaments in military operations conducted by the US and its allies (Vietnam, Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, etc.), the 44-day Artsakh War, and the Russian-Ukrainian War. Here he notes that in each war, mainly thanks to American military thought, not only the quantity but also the diversity, reliability, and accuracy of the means used increased. Precision means were among the first indicators that classical combined arms battle and military operation were in crisis. Electrofiring battle was born (page 33). The latter, in turn, is a new type of combined arms/combined platform battle. It is a combination of electronic and fire strikes and impacts, although it can also appear separately. Cyber attacks and cyber operations, which some specialists mistakenly call cyber wars, are separate components of electrofiring battle and its higher-level operation (page 38). He also states that all information-psychological work, with its multifaceted and deep sub-layers, which is widely spread today, is merely a sub-level or sub-section of electrofiring battle or its higher level, "Hybrid Wars" (page 39). And electrofiring battle, in its normal, gradual development,

can grow into an electrofiring battle, but at a higher level, it is already called Complex/Multilayered War (page 40).

In the realm of air superiority, he notes that in Russian military culture, the air force is an auxiliary branch of service. These forces always slowly gather their potential and are used passively, which is generally characteristic of the Russian army, but in the case of the air force, its shortcomings are felt more acutely. Implementing reforms in the armed forces based on this viewpoint is dangerous. And it is sadly emphasized that, by the way, the localization of Russian models still continues in Armenia (page 55). This is even though Russian military science today lags behind global developments, where operational art is in decline, merging with the upper and lower echelons (page 57). This is even though during the 44-day war, “Unfortunately, we Armenians also became victims of these non-existent concepts. In the 2020 Artsakh War, the Azerbaijani-Turkish air force won against the Armenian air defense forces” (page 57). And the Ukrainian war, in turn, simply proved once again that there can be no successful ground attack without classical air superiority, especially at the operational and strategic levels (page 63).

As a result of describing multi-layered, complex, and network-platform-centric wars, which are the author’s military-theoretical theories, looking back at the 44-day war, he states: “It turned out that societies, state, and private structures are not ready for long-term conflict. Often, from simple bomb shelters to the lack of necessary reserves of appropriate state reserve means, and the slowness of the mobilization system, serious problems arise for conducting modern wars. Here a very important question arises related to the training of the reserve, particularly in peacetime” (page 79). He then presents the global strategic, economic, political, scientific, sociological, and many other factors that, according to the author, are four (pages 79-80), influencing the degrees and layers of complexity of complex/multilayered wars threatening humanity in the future. Then, the 11 military factors and degrees of complexity (pages 80-81).

In the next chapter (“Measurements, Domains, and Layers of Complex/Multilayered Wars,” pages 82-84), the author presents the main factors of his theory: “The domains or planes of Complex/Multilayered Wars are as follows: land, air, water, space, cyber-virtual, and cognitive, which is more of a dimension than a domain, but we also consider it as a domain. Often, cyber-virtual and cognitive domains are considered as one plane, but we believe it is more correct to consider them separately, as all of this fits into three dimensions: physical (land, air, water, and space), informational (cyber-virtual), and cognitive (conscious)” (page 82). He then presents the starting point of the “Complex/Multilayered War” theory: “The simple layers (of Complex/Multilayered Wars – R. Ts.) are ordinary battles, from the weakest militia units to regular troops, while the most complex layers are electrofiring battles and operations with ultra-modern armaments, robotic systems, and control systems equipped with artificial intelligence and other solutions. One layer of war, regardless of everything, is the special forces

fighting in enemy territory, another layer is the regular army fighting at our border or at important nodal points, the third layer is the militia pursuing the enemy deep in our territory. However, these are only the layers of the land domain. Thus, each domain has its layers, and each dimension has its domains. That is why this war is called complex, and its management requires a super-professional team and systems, which today work much more effectively with artificial intelligence technologies” (pages 83-84).

Developing his theory (The Impact of the “Fourth Industrial Revolution” on Complex/Multilayered War, pages 85-95, New Perceptions and Concepts in Complex/Multilayered War as Layers of Complexity, pages 96-106, Solving Issues of Air Superiority, Precision Weapons, and Other Matters in Complex/Multilayered War, pages 107-116), he notes that in the case of powerful security systems and established institutions of comprehensive security, one of the important tools of complex/multilayered war are precisely these units capable of irregular warfare, which can manifest as high-quality private armies, as well as territorial defense and limited combat-capable militia forces, which will operate under a unified command, within the framework of a general operational concept (page 99).

Future wars, according to the author, can be transitional, hybrid, with an emphasis on irregular combat operations. However, it should be noted that they must be short-lived, because their prolongation becomes regular, albeit new, but regular (page 100). Then, addressing irregular combat operations, he considers them as a retreat from classical combat operations, a new phenomenon, an unusual, irregular form of combat used against classical military machines as an effective option, or conversely, some argue that irregular combat operations are more a type of new generation warfare (page 100).

In the chapter on the military-scientific measurements of complex wars (pages 117-134), 27 factors and components of this war are presented. In point 27, the author states that in future wars, the number of armies will increase, but the highly layered, professional army will be small, while the number of mercenaries, militia, and other formats of relatively low combat-capable troops will be very large. The former will be distinguished not only by fighting better but primarily by entering battle quickly, as the time factor is paramount (page 129). Furthermore, it is strictly necessary that territorial defense forces and militia should be constantly trained, and mobilization should always be carried out in peacetime, as a lot of time is needed for harmonization, since poorly trained reserves cannot be prepared to the required quality and enter battle during intensive combat operations (page 130). At the end of the chapter, the author sadly notes that for many years we were guided by wrong benchmarks in military art and army building, following the already dead Soviet military science and standards. And that it is long overdue to correct everything and carry out fundamental reforms, to create a new army (page 134).

In the chapter “Branches of the Complex Wars: Their Composition and Structure” (pages 135-159), the author covers everything from the continuous self-improvement of

officers and soldiers in line with the times, and the necessary reforms in the educational system, to the types and forms of conducting military operations. As for the branches of the Armed Forces, the author groups them into four main categories: 1. Ground forces (which, in turn, are divided by tasks), 2. Air and space domain forces, 3. Virtual-cyber-cognitive domain forces, and 4. Naval forces (pages 135-136). He then presents their structure by subdivisions (pages 137-140). And as for the Armenian Armed Forces, they must have both a regular force base and units and subdivisions for conducting irregular combat operations, the basis of which, of course, will be special forces (pages 144-145). In the case of the Armenian Armed Forces, for managing complex battles and operations with regular and irregular tactics in the air, on land, underground, in space, and in the virtual-cyber domain, powerful headquarters and a network-platform-centric command system are necessary for the complex structure of branches and force groups (page 145).

The penultimate chapter, titled “Cyber and Cognitive Domains of Complex Warfare” (pages 160-179), again looking back at the Artsakh War, states: “Today we clearly feel this on our skin. After 2003, Azerbaijan adopted an aggressive information-psychological influence policy. We are all witnesses to its forms of expression (hacking websites, social media accounts, changing pictures, etc.). However, that is not the essential point. Azerbaijan began to wage hybrid warfare with its full potential, actively using all its tools: information-psychological, cyber, propaganda, political, economic, and others, achieving great cognitive results. Especially during and immediately after the 44-day war, using a wide range of methods, it achieved the consciousness of Azerbaijani invincibility and Armenian helplessness” (pages 163-164). Examining in detail the cyber and cognitive domains of Complex Warfare, he notes their 3 dimensions and 4 components (pages 168-169), and then the 11 dimensions of cyber operations (pages 175-176). The chapter concludes with the finding that in modern warfare, you cannot achieve victory if, first and foremost, you have not achieved cyber and cognitive superiority over the enemy. Even traditional air superiority in the physical domain first requires cyber advantage (page 179).

In the last chapter, “Hybrid Challenges” (pages 180-187), the author emphasizes that cyber and information security are inextricably linked to hybrid risks. The modern understanding of hybrid warfare, as we mentioned, first and foremost refers to winning by using non-violent methods, imposing your will (page 181). He also notes that information has long since evolved into cyber, cyber, in turn, has long been a large part of hybrid challenges, and all of these, in turn, have long been a large layer of cognitive influences (page 183). And that in the domain of Hybrid Challenges, all branches of service operate, but mainly two branches are constantly and continuously active: cyber forces and special operations command forces (page 183). The author concludes the chapter not with a generalizing paragraph, but with a proposal: “We believe that in our country, a superior departmental body is first needed, which will be directly subordinate to the head of the country, which can be part of the Security Council or operate

separately. However, at the same time, functional bodies for this function must also exist in power agencies and all those agencies and bodies whose activities are to some extent related to the state administration system and the country's security" (page 187).

In the conclusion of the monograph (pages 188-191), the author, speaking about strategic issues, the educational level of military personnel, and the continuous improvement of their skills and abilities, generalizes his quite remarkable theory.

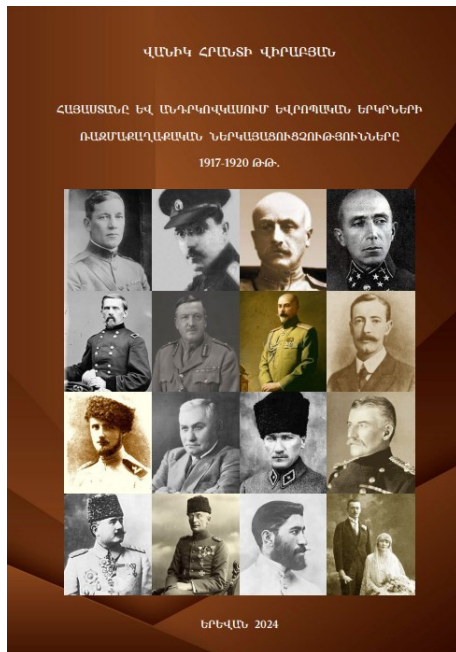
In summary, it is necessary to note that the author mainly used the historical-comparative analysis method, which contributed to demonstrating a correct scientific approach.

Within the scope of the topic, the author diligently collected and presented all available materials (pages 194-215).

Generalizing the above, we find that this new theory of "Complex/Multilayered Wars" opens a new horizon in the history of the upward development of military science. It is an entirely new word in Armenian-language military-scientific literature. And we are confident that as a result of the continuous development of the theory, a new chapter will open in the history of military science and military art. We hope and it is highly necessary that in the future, the author's theory of "Complex/Multilayered Wars" will be published as a separate article in the best periodicals in the field included in the list of international scientific databases or as a revised monograph by one of the international reputable publishers.

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Virabyan V. H., *Armenia and the Military-Political Representations of European Countries in Transcaucasia, 1917-1920. Yerevan: Vahe Mkrtchyan, 2024. - 410 pages + 2 inserts.*

In 2024, the “Vahe Mkrtchyan” publishing house, with the endorsement of the Chair of Armenian History at Kh. Abovyan Armenian State Pedagogical University (ASPU), the Faculty of History and Social Sciences, and the ASPU Scientific Council, published the extensive and valuable monograph “**Armenia and the Military-Political Representations of European Countries in Transcaucasia (1917-1920)**” by **Vanik H. Virabyan**, Professor of the Chair of Armenian History at ASPU, Doctor of Historical Sciences. It was printed within the framework of the grant from the State Committee of Higher Education and Science, RA Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (grant number 217-6A102, “Armenia in the Context of Relations with Military-Political Representations of European Countries in Transcaucasia (1917-1920)”).

The work, intended for historians-internationalists, military historians, and the general reading public, presents the activities of European military-political representations in Transcaucasia from 1918 to 1920 during the years of the First Republic of Armenia, focusing on their role in the formation of statehood, territorial demarcation, and military development.

The Gospel truth that “he who seeks finds” is indeed profound. Regarding the elucidation of numerous key topics in the new and modern periods of Armenian history, including the Armenian Question and international diplomacy, it sometimes seems that everything has already been written and so meticulously studied by many esteemed Armenian and foreign authors in previous scientific phases that the issue has become completely exhausted in terms of documentary material, losing its historical significance. It seems clear that hardly any significant new discoveries are possible. However, recent studies on various aspects of the state life of the Republic of Armenia, the multifaceted internal and external processes undertaken by its authorities, the political forces that governed the country, and their individual leaders, which increasingly decisively reject former stereotypes, are gradually refuting this notion. It turns out that historical science is indeed inexhaustible, and perhaps there are many opportunities to re-examine “beaten” and “worn-out” topics from a new perspective and make fresh discoveries.

Vanik Virabyan has undertaken precisely such a work, and his quite successful research is written with scientific skill and at a high theoretical level. He approached the successful solution of the problem before him with great conscientiousness and responsibility, and he was able to uncover a number of important underlying layers and

“white pages” hidden within the military-political and diplomatic processes of the problematic 1918-1920 period of Armenian statehood, approaching the issue from a new perspective.

The research has contemporary relevance and urgency, which is determined by the specific scientific, practical, and applied significance of the work.

Vanik Virabyan’s entirely original and valuable monograph has an acceptable structure and a correctly proportional division, which serves to clarify the topic thoroughly.

The work consists of a preface, four sections, four chapters, 14 parts, conclusions in English and Russian, and a list of used literature. Notably, the book’s typesetting and design were carried out by the author himself.

The first section is titled **“The Stance of European Military-Political Missions on Interethnic Developments in Transcaucasia”** and consists of three parts.

The author, with the help of rich and diverse archival information, was able to first uncover the interethnic developments in Transcaucasia after the October Revolution of 1917 and the stance of the Entente powers on all of this. He presented the pro-Georgian strategy of Germany’s military-political mission in Transcaucasia and the Armenian-Georgian War of 1918. He then analyzed the consequences of the Armenian-Georgian territorial dispute and the results of the activities of European military-political missions in Transcaucasia.

The second section of the monograph is titled **“The Strategy of Great Britain’s Transcaucasian Military-Political Mission in Territorial Disputes and Issues of Military Assistance to Armenia: Failed Attempts of Support”** and consists of three parts. The author believes that this issue, in general, has not been addressed in historical scholarship. The revolutionary processes that erupted in Russia in 1917 led to the collapse of the Russian Empire, and the consequences of this and the unpredictable developments of historical-political processes led to the emergence of independent national states in Transcaucasia. In this chapter, V. Virabyan attempts to uncover and present the international status of the Republic of Armenia in the context of conflicts between the Volunteer Army of Southern Russia, Great Britain, and Azerbaijani intelligence and military-political services during 1918-1920.

He has given particular importance to the Armenian-Azerbaijani territorial conflict and the Karabakh-Zangezur issue, considering all of this, of course, within the overall framework of the activities of Great Britain’s military-political representation in Armenia and Transcaucasia. According to the author, however, a crucial reality is evident: that “the roots of the Karabakh-Artsakh capitulation in 1920 should be seen not only in the overt acquiescence and egocentric geopolitics of the Armenian Republic’s Entente-European allies but also as a result of the incapable policies of the political-military forces and governments that assumed governmental roles in different historical periods of the last 100 years, in which a decisive role was played by the pro-Azerbaijani-Turkish stance of the Russian Tsars, communist dictators, and modern rulers, who declared

themselves heirs of the former Russian states after the collapse of both Tsarist, Bolshevik, and USSR Russia, which also determined the fall and annexation of Artsakh to Azerbaijan” (pages 148-149).

In the chapter, no less priority was given to the suppression of the 1919 anti-Armenian rebellion of the Muslim population of the Republic of Armenia in Sotk and the restoration of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia, thanks to the favorable and opportune stance and personal disposition of the British military-political representative, Colonel Clive Temperley. The author concludes that the existing facts circulating about the Sotk-Zod events clearly attest to the insufficient reliability, fabrications, and serious factual inaccuracies in the works of Azerbaijani historians. Archival documents allow V. Virabyan to deeply understand what a fundamentally important problem the heroes of the glorious “Zod” operation solved by saving and preserving the ancient region of Sotk-Gegharkunik for Armenia, without which it would also be deprived of vital resources essential for its survival. A significant conclusion was reached: that, however, in the current historical period, it was again endangered 100 years later during the capitulatory war for the Republic of Armenia in 2020 and continues to pose a threat in the present historical process. The events of Zod-Sotk in 1919 also serve as a unique message to the Armenian people and future generations, demonstrating what the Armenian armed forces can be like and what they should do when defending their own borders and when the country’s vital military-political interests are threatened. This is despite the special emphasis placed on the Armenian people’s peaceful approach to resolving border-territorial issues, striving to resolve complex and disputed matters through negotiation and diplomatic means, and only resorting to military force after all other means are exhausted. In this regard, the author believes that it contains a “Haikian counsel” (pages 148-149).

In the third chapter, **“The Activities of Italian, French, and US Military-Political Missions in the Republic of Armenia,”** V. Virabyan successfully elucidated the details of the activities of the Italian military-political representation and the French military-political mission in Armenia and Transcaucasia during 1918-1920. The author also discussed the activities of the Allied Supreme Commissioner, American Colonel W. Haskell, the representative of the British mission, John Oliver Wardrop, and the British military-political representative, Colonel B. Stokes, during 1919-1920.

One of the most important issues addressed in the chapter is the question of the Allies supplying the Republic of Armenia with arms and ammunition, providing military assistance, and choosing the country’s foreign policy orientation within the general plans of the British military-political mission.

Finally, in the fourth section of the work, titled **“The Sunset of the Republic of Armenia and Allied Military-Political Missions: Desperate Hopes and Decline in the Soviet Version,”** the author, employing a unique approach, attempts to present the Russian-Armenian agreement of August 10, 1920, the Turkish-Armenian War of 1920,

and the fall of the Republic of Armenia in light of the stance and strategy of the military-political representations of European countries.

One of the most crucial components ensuring the scientific value and scholarly nature of V. Virabyan's monograph is the author's ability to uncover and comprehensively analyze the deep-seated factors, tendencies, and manifestations characterizing the general and specific regularities of the activities of European military-political representations in Transcaucasia, utilizing rich documentary material. The author has expanded and deepened the study of the issue, taking into account the problems of the new era and employing a comparative methodology to create a work that has made the history of the investigated problem important.

V. Virabyan examined the investigated problems using a methodological approach of historical-critical, comparative, and chronological analysis of convincing historical facts, primary sources, literature, and meticulous data. The study is rich in bold scientific conclusions, generalizations, and well-substantiated, convincing assessments, which sometimes contradict accepted scientific approaches. The author, stepping outside the boundaries of already known and established civilian perspectives on the discussed issue, relying on facts, presents the formation of Armenian statehood in 1918-1920 as merely a simultaneously unfolding internal conceptual idea and a significant historical-political reality.

In writing the work, the author collected, discovered, studied, systematized, and for the first time introduced into scientific circulation about 590 studies and other sources in Armenian, Russian, and English, ensuring the completeness of the monograph. This includes diverse archival documents from the National Archives of Armenia, newly discovered and published primary sources, monographs, memoirs, scientific and theoretical articles, periodical press materials, and electronic databases, which shed fresh light on the study of the topic and impart an even deeper and more scientific character to the work.

Another important merit of the monograph is that the author did not merely advocate for the policy adopted by European countries towards Armenia. With his critical approach, he skillfully separated and differentiated the material under study, drawing logical and correct conclusions. The author succeeded in maintaining the problem-oriented principle of the study, isolating and systematizing the main issues within the research, thereby forming a well-established work that presents a certain novelty.

We should add that, in parallel with this noteworthy monograph, Vanik Virabyan has published another valuable monograph in English¹, dedicated to elucidating various aspects of the presented problem. This work also contains important conceptual

¹ Virabyan V. H. Armenia in the Context of Relations with European Military-Political Representations in Transcaucasia [European military-political representations and the Republic of Armenia in 1917-1920], Yerevan, Vahe Mkrtchyan, 2024, 200 p. + 2 inserts.

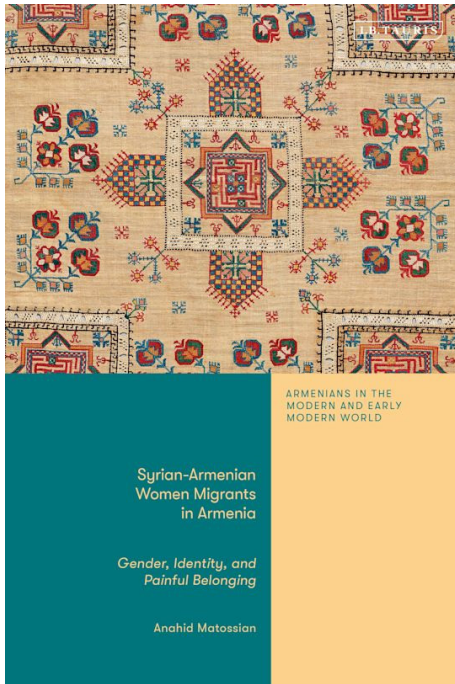
evaluations and conclusions that stem from current challenges and are consistent with the deep trends of modern developments.

Summarizing the above, we can confidently state that the realization of the purpose adopted by this study, its relevance, the author's effective efforts to uncover historical truth, and most importantly, the scientific rigor of the work, provide grounds to note that Professor Vanik Virabyan's research fully complies with all scientific standards, has an imperative orientation, a high utility factor, and in terms of content orientation, fills a gap in historical scholarship. The monograph can indeed be useful for historians and individual researchers engaged in the history of the First Republic of Armenia, as well as within the framework of relevant university courses on Armenian history.

Avetis H. Harutyunyan Dr. Sc. (Hist.), Prof./act.

Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan

NEW BOOKS

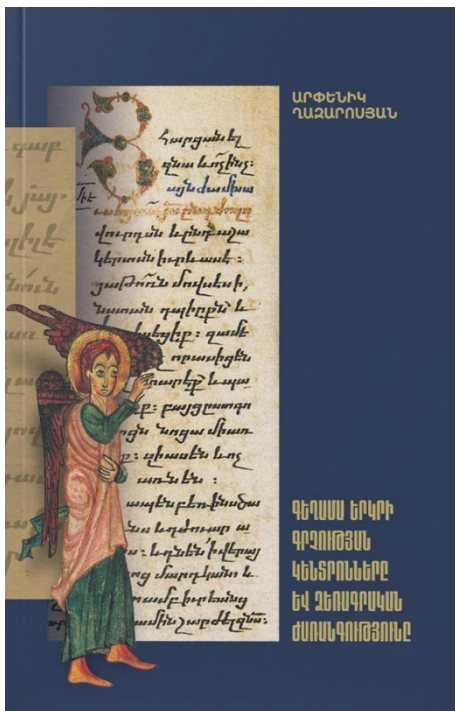


SYRIAN-ARMENIAN WOMEN MIGRANTS IN ARMENIA. GENDER, IDENTITY, AND PAINFUL BELONGING

By **Anahid Matossian**

I.B. Tauris/Bloomsbury, 2025, 211 pages

After the outbreak of the 2011 Syrian War, a number of Syrian-Armenians who had lived there for generations, fled to the Republic of Armenia. This book traces the experiences of Syrian-Armenian women as they navigated their changing and gendered identities from their adopted 'homeland' to their socially constructed new 'ancestral' home in Armenia. The rich ethnographic research conducted over 6 years by the author reveals how women adjusted to new lives in Armenia, supported themselves through gendered work such as embroidery production, yet mostly challenge simple identities such as 'refugee' or 'repatriate,' existing in a state of what the author terms "painful belonging". The book further reveals crucial insight into how experiences and traumatic memories of war in Syria and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict reciprocally shape each other in the minds of the women interviewed.

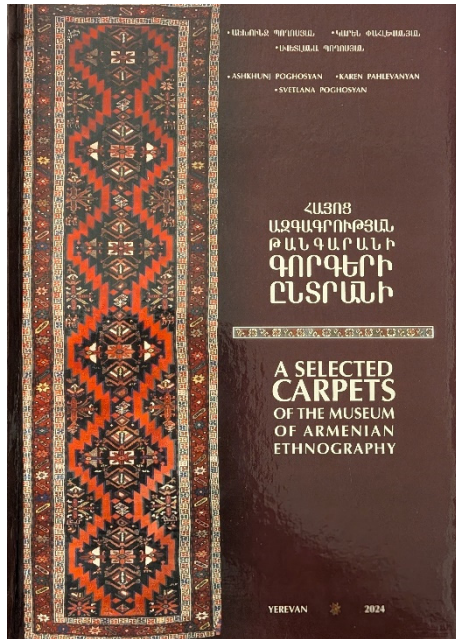


THE SCRIPTORIA AND MANUSCRIPT LEGACY OF THE REGION OF GEGHAM

By **Arpenik Ghazarosyan**

Yerevan, Matenadaran, 2024, 300 p. + 16 p. ill.

The book presents the history of the scriptoria of the Geghama region (Sevan Basin) and its rich manuscript heritage. In the region, Sevanavank played a particularly significant role as a center of scholarly activity and written culture. The book is intended for specialists of Armenian history and culture, as well as for the general public.



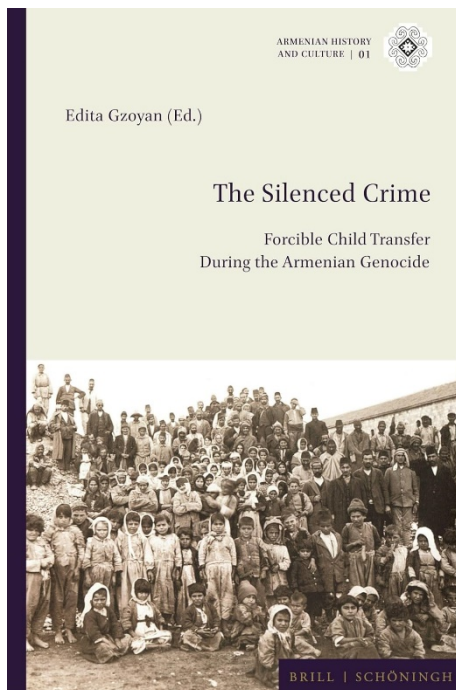
A SELECTION OF CARPETS FROM THE ARMENIAN ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

By Ashkhunj Poghosyan, Karen Pahlevanyan, Svetlana Poghosyan

Yerevan, 2024, 700 p.

The illustrated book, which presents selected carpets from the collection of the Museum of Armenian Ethnography (MAE), will provide an opportunity for specialists in decorative and applied arts, culturologists, ethnographers and people interested in carpet weaving in general to discover an inexhaustible source for the study of Oriental and, in particular.

Armenian carpet weaving culture. We think that this work will also clarify some of the confusion that exists in professional circles related to the origin and ethnicity of carpets. In the book, carpets are classified into appropriate groups and subgroups, and their types are named according to our system of typology. The book is written in four languages. The texts are written and translated into three languages by the museum workers. The Turkish version is translated by the “Geghard” Scientific and Analytical Foundation. This work will be a significant contribution to the appreciation of Armenian carpet weaving culture and the proper presentation of Armenian carpets in the system of oriental carpet art.



THE SILENCED CRIME

Forcible Child Transfer During the Armenian Genocide

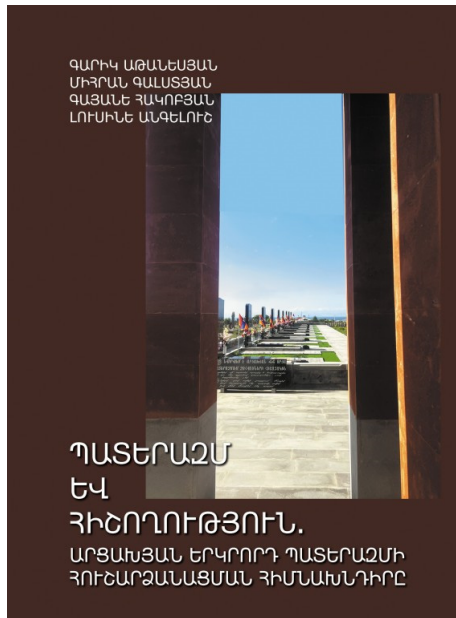
Volume Editor: **Edita Gzoyan**

Brill, 2025, XVI + 250 p., 40 b/w illustrations and 14 b/w images

The book examines the forcible transfer and assimilation of Armenian children during the Armenian Genocide, a systematic effort by the Young Turk regime to erase Armenian identity through Turkification and conversion to Islam. Targeted as part of a broader genocidal strategy, Armenian children were forcibly removed from their families and placed into Muslim households or state-run orphanages. Through a combination of government decrees and local initiatives, children's identities were systematically erased via religious conversion and changes to

orphanages. Through a combination of government decrees and local initiatives, children's identities were systematically erased via religious conversion and changes to

their personal data. This study analyses the legal, ideological, and sociopolitical structures that enabled this policy and explores the complex post-war attempts to recover these children in the aftermath of the Mudros Armistice. Drawing on historical, legal, religious, and sociological perspectives, the book offers a comprehensive analysis of child transfer as a core component of the Armenian Genocide.



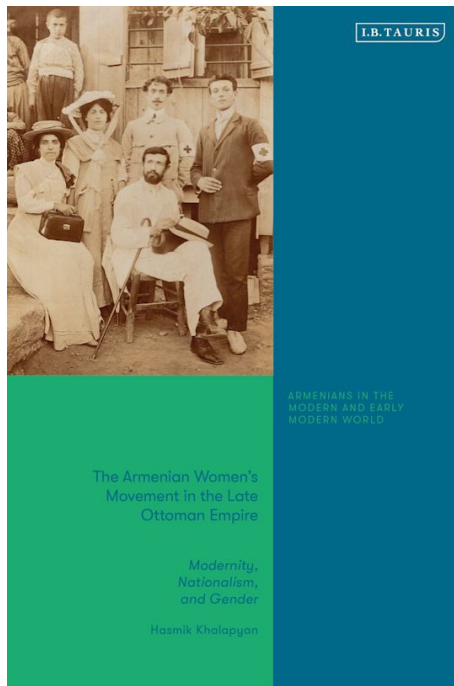
WAR AND MEMORY: THE PROBLEM OF MEMORIALIZATION OF THE 44-DAY WAR

By **Garik Atanesyan, Mihran Galstyan, Gayane Hakobyan, Lusine Angelush**

IAE Publication, Yerevan, 2024, 168 p.

This research analyzes the processes of official and public remembrance of the 44-day war, by observing memorialization and commemoration practices initiated by state and other mnemonic actors. The research is based on fieldwork over a three-year period (2022–2024), primarily in the borderland regions of Tavush, Gegharkunik, Vayots dzor, Ararat and Syunik.

The book illustrates official war commemoration practices that are reproducing ceremonial practices of post-Soviet period, while at the same time exposing some unique characteristics of informal commemoration practices formed around individual memorials. Being placed in public areas, war memorials have become an important part of the daily life of the community, around which new customs, community traditions and rituals continue to be formed. The highlight of this research is the study of virtual commemorating practices of the war, which distinguishes the commemoration of the 44-day war from previous Artsakh wars and illustrates new mourning practices, rituals and public perception. Social media platforms have changed the landscape of grief by encouraging mourners to create online shrines and share information about the fallen soldiers, and make their memorials more accessible to the general public.



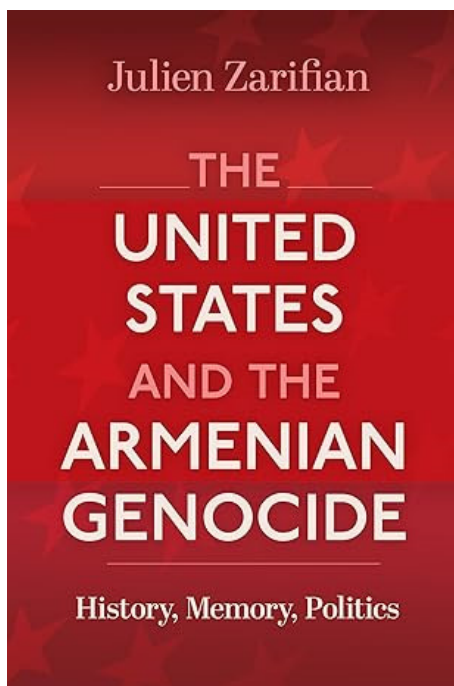
THE ARMENIAN WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN THE LATE OTTOMAN EMPIRE. MODERNITY, NATIONALISM AND GENDER

By **Hasmik Khalapyan**

I.B. Tauris/Bloomsbury, 2025, 224 p.

The last decades of the Ottoman Empire saw heated debates about and changes to the role of women in society. This book analyses the history of the women's movement among Ottoman Armenians. Examining debates on the role of women in the Armenian context, Armenian women's access to education, work and marriage rights, it reveals how women were empowered by nationalist discourses

and the wider movement for reform in the empire, and the ways these limited or broadened women's activism. Drawing from a wide array of archival primary source material, it provides a comprehensive and comparative analysis of changes to the socio-economic, political, cultural status of Ottoman Armenian women from end of the Tanzimat period to the outbreak of World War I.



THE UNITED STATES AND THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: HISTORY, MEMORY, POLITICS

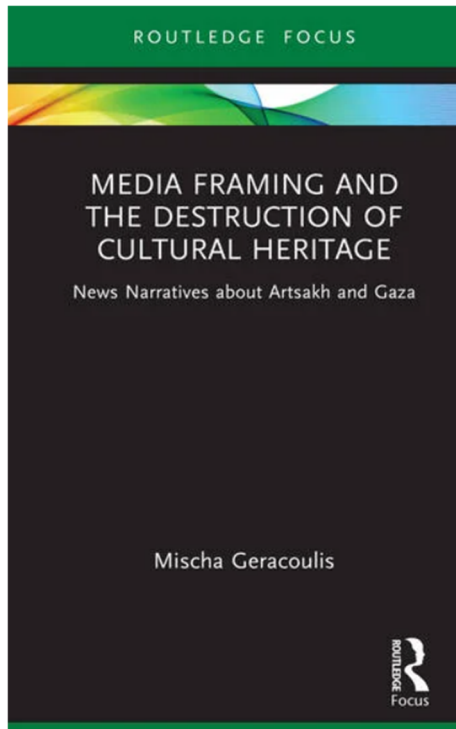
By **Julien Zarifian**

Rutgers University Press, 2024, 324 p.

During the first World War, over a million Armenians were killed as Ottoman Turks embarked on a bloody campaign of ethnic cleansing. Scholars have long described these massacres as genocide, one of Hitler's prime inspirations for the Holocaust, yet the United States did not officially recognize the Armenian Genocide until 2021. This is the first book to examine how and why the United States refused to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide until the early

2020s. Although the American government expressed sympathy towards the plight of the Armenians in the 1910s and 1920s, historian Julien Zarifian explores how, from the 1960s, a set of geopolitical and institutional factors soon led the United States to adopt a policy of genocide non-recognition which it would cling to for over fifty years, through Republican and Democratic administrations alike. He describes the forces on each side

of this issue: activists from the US Armenian diaspora and their allies, challenging Cold War statesmen worried about alienating NATO ally Turkey and dealing with a widespread American reluctance to directly confront the horrors of the past. Drawing from congressional records, rare newspapers, and interviews with lobbyists and decision-makers, he reveals how genocide recognition became such a complex, politically sensitive issue.

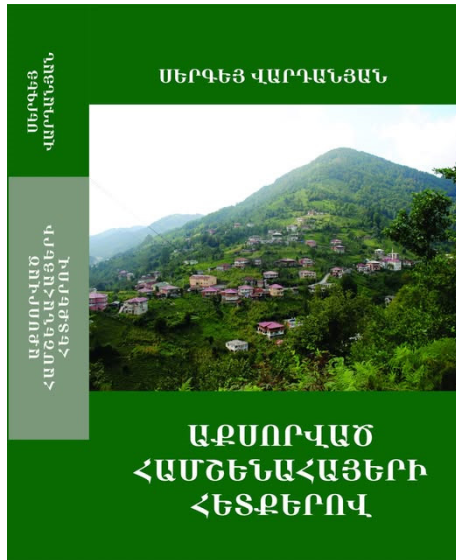


MEDIA FRAMING AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE NEWS NARRATIVES ABOUT ARTSAKH AND GAZA

By **Mischa Geracoulis**

Routledge, 2025, 146 p., 2 B/W Illustrations

Analyzing media coverage in cases where cultural heritage sites have been destroyed during conflict, occupation, and war, this book highlights the important role media play in the preservation of cultural heritage when states or other combatants engage in human rights violations. Author Mischa Geracoulis discusses how the role of journalism and the media during times of conflict is to report information from the front lines and war zones with integrity, and report accurately when states or other combatants engage in human rights violations. This book examines the media coverage, language, and discourse surrounding two key situations—the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh and that of Palestinian cultural heritage in Gaza—and explores the ways media coverage has succeeded or failed in accurately illustrating the destruction of cultural heritage as a human rights violation. Geracoulis emphasizes the importance of factual, ethical reporting and sufficient coverage, underlining professional journalistic standards and best practices for the future to ensure similar destruction is not only understood but responded to within a human rights framework. This book will be of interest to students and scholars of media, journalism, and cultural studies, as well as media professionals interested in the role and influence of media framing and narratives on war, conflict, human rights, and humanitarian response.



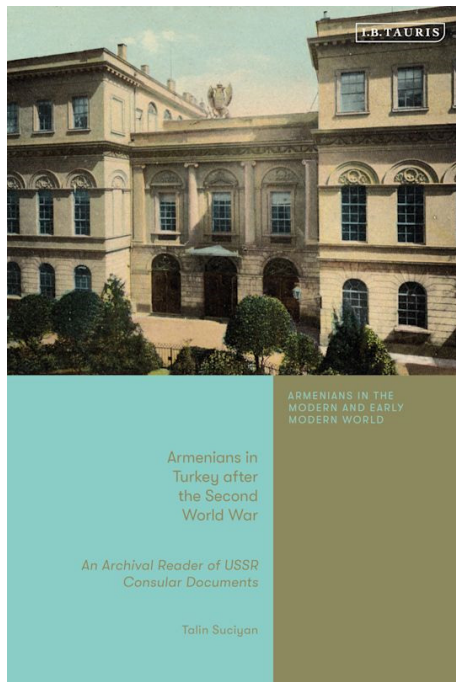
IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE EXILED HAMSHEN ARMENIANS (TRAVELOGUE, ETHNOGRAPHY, FOLKLORE, DICTIONARY)

By **Sergey Vardanyan**

Yerevan, Lusakn, 2025, 432 p.

The book is about Islamized Hamshen Armenians who, along with people of other ethnicities, were exiled in 1944 from the border villages of Adjara to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. For many years, nothing was published about this in the press or academic literature. It was only 40 years later, in 1984, that

Sergey Vardanyan managed to find them in Central Asia, uncover the unknown pages of the past of the Islamized Hamshen Armenians, and document unique ethnographic, folkloric, and dialectological materials.



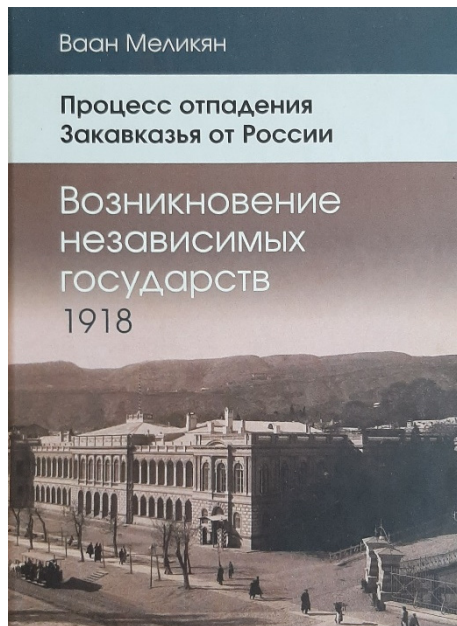
ARMENIANS IN TURKEY AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR. AN ARCHIVAL READER OF USSR CONSULAR DOCUMENTS

By **Talin Suciyan**

I.B. Tauris, 2025, 184 p.

This reader brings to light newly discovered archival material compiled by the Soviet Consulate in Istanbul. The book reveals the lives and experience of Armenians in Turkey in the 1940s, with a particular focus on the process of emigration to Soviet Armenia. The accounts, translated for the first time into English, are comprised of Soviet officials' reports and first-hand testimony by survivors of their lives during the

post-genocide period, making this an invaluable new contribution to the existing collections of Armenian survival testimonies. Placing the archival records on emigration in the context of both life in post-genocide Turkey and the 'repatriation' (*nergakht*) project in the Armenian Diaspora, this book, which also includes the original Russian documents, will be a useful resource for researchers and students of Armenian and Turkish history.

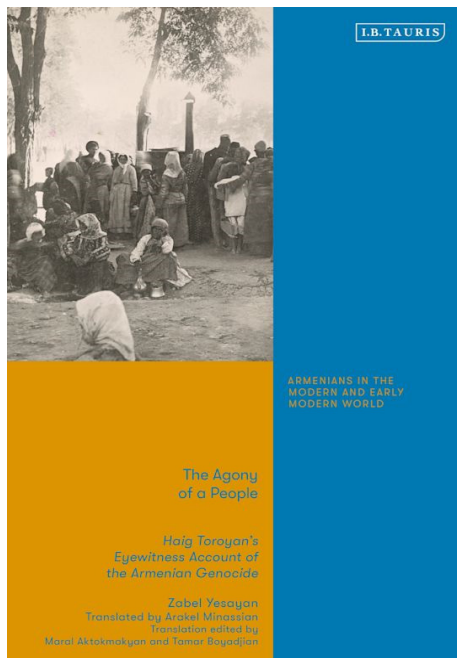


**THE PROCESS OF THE SEPARATION OF
TRANSCAUCASIA FROM RUSSIA: THE
EMERGENCE OF INDEPENDENT STATES
(JANUARY–MAY 1918)** (in Russian)

By **Vahan Melikyan**, *Yerevan, Author's Edition, 2025, 400 + 16 pages.*

The monograph, based on a broad historical source base, highlights the history of the formation and activity of the Transcaucasian Seim, the proclamation of the Transcaucasian Independent Republic, and the process of separation of Transcaucasia from Russia, as well as the formation of the independent republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia.

The book is intended for historians, political scientists, international relations experts, diplomats, politicians, educators, students, and a wide range of readers.



**THE AGONY OF A PEOPLE
Haig Toroyan's Eyewitness Account of the
Armenian Genocide**

By **Zabel Yesayan**

I.B. Tauris/Bloomsbury, 2025, 200 p. 2 bw ill.

Haig Toroyan's account of his journey from Dikranagerd (Diyarbakır in modern-day southeastern Turkey) along the Euphrates River to Mesopotamia and Iran is a unique and hauntingly detailed account of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Recounting first the ominous final months of 1914, Toroyan is employed in Jarablus by a sympathetic German Army Sergeant, Otto Oehlmann, as his assistant and

interpreter, on a mission to transport arms to Iran. Posing as a Syrian Catholic Arab, Toroyan keeps notes on the atrocities he sees being committed against his own people but knows he cannot reveal his true ethnicity. He records the stories of the refugees he meets, as well as the conversations he can have with Turkish soldiers, unaware they are speaking with an Armenian. In the summer of 1916, Haig Toroyan told his story to celebrated Armenian writer Zabel Yessayan, who had herself escaped from the round-up of intellectuals in İstanbul in April 1915. Yessayan published his testimony in 1917 in Western Armenian. With this translation, Haig Toroyan's testimony, the first full-length eyewitness account of the Armenian Genocide ever published in Armenian in the wake of 1915, is available in English for the first time.