

# FUNDAMENTAL ARMENOLOGY

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electronic journal

**ISSUE 2 (16) 2022**

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## ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <i>Anush Khachatryan</i> , THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF ALAN-KOA AFTER THE EXPANSION OF ISLAM ..... | 6  |
| <i>Verjiné Svazlian</i> , THE CONTRIBUTION OF EGYPTIAN-ARMENIAN REPATRIATES TO MOTHER ARMENIA .....            | 15 |

## HISTORY

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <i>Hovhannes Khorikyan</i> , THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN NESTORIANS AND MONOPHYSITES: BARSAUMA'S ACTIVITY .....   | 51 |
| <i>Aram Kosyan</i> , FIRST HAYKIDES AND THE "HOUSE OF TORGOM" (Some comments on the problem) .....   | 57 |
| <i>Vahan Melikyan</i> , IMPORTANT EPISODES FROM GENERAL ANDRANIK'S ACTIVITY .....  | 70 |
| <i>Yuri Suvaryan</i> , OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE STATEHOOD OF ARTSAKH AND THE CENTURY OF THE KARABAKH MOVEMENT .....   | 74 |
| <i>Vanik Virabyan</i> , THE SUPPRESSION OF THE 1919 ANTI-ARMENIAN UNREST OF THE MUSLIM POPULATION IN THE ZOD-BASARGECHAR REGION AND THE RESTORATION OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ACTIVITY OF COLONEL CLIVE TEMPERLY, THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVE OF GREAT BRITAIN ..... | 79 |

## POLITICAL SCIENCES AND INFORMATIONAL SECURITY

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Lilit Sarvazyan</i> , THE DELIBERATIVE PRINCIPLE IN THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH ..... | 115 |
| <i>Mushegh Ghahriyan</i> , SOFT POWER POLICY IN THE GULF ARAB STATES AND ARMENIA IN THAT CONTEXT .....    | 126 |

## PHILOSOPHY AND LAW

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Boris Osipian</i> , SHAHAMIRS. SHAHAMIRYAN'S "THE SNARE OF GLORY" AS THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF ARMENIA OF 1773 ..... | 136 |
|---|-----|

## FOREIGN SOURCES AND AUTHORS ABOUT ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Clive Bigham</i> , A RIDE THROUGH WESTERN ASIA ..... | 148 |
|---|-----|

## DOCUMENTS: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Horatio Southgate</i> , NARRATIVE OF A TOUR THROUGH ARMENIA, KURDISTAN, PERSIA AND MESOPOTAMIA ..... | 158 |
|---|-----|

## NEW BOOKS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <i>Hasmik Stepanyan</i> , <b>PARS TUĞLACI. PAGES OF LIFE</b> .....  | 201 |
| <i>Claude Mutafian</i> , <b>JERUSALEM AND THE ARMENIANS: UNTIL THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST, 1516</b> .....   | 201 |
| <i>Karen Matevosyan</i> , <b>ANI AND ITS CITIZENS</b> .....   | 202 |
| <b>ARMENIA-IRAN. HISTORICAL PAST AND THE PRESENT</b> <i>edited by Gohar Iskandaryan</i> , .....   | 202 |
| <i>Khachatur Stepanyan</i> , <b>ARMENIA AND THE REGION: LESSONS, EVALUATIONS, PERSPECTIVES</b> .....  | 202 |
| <i>Samvel Karapetyan</i> , <b>THE MICROTOPYMS OF ARTSAKH</b> .....  | 203 |
| <i>Aleksan Hakobian</i> , <b>ALBANIA-ALUANK IN GREEK-LATIN AND ANCIENT ARMENIAN SOURCES</b> .....   | 203 |
| <i>Khachik A. Harutyunyan</i> , <b>THE LANGUAGE OF THE ARMENIAN COLOPHONS (9TH - 15TH CENTURIES)</b> .....                                  | 204 |
| <i>Helen C. Evans</i> , <b>ART AND RELIGION IN MEDIEVAL ARMENIA</b> .....   | 204 |
| <i>Gohar Muradyan</i> , <b>ANCIENT GREEK MYTHS IN MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN LITERATURE</b> .....  | 205 |
| <i>Arthur Hagopian</i> , <b>COBBLESTONES OF JERUSALEM, THE: EVERY TILE HAS A TALE TO TELL</b> .....   | 205 |
| <i>Michael Stone, Aram Topchyan</i> , <b>JEWS IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL ARMENIA: FIRST CENTURY BCE</b><br><b>FOURTEENTH CENTURY CE</b> .....  | 206 |
| <i>Hakobyan Ararat</i> , <b>THE MILITARY-POLITICAL SITUATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN 1920</b> .....                                   | 207 |
| <i>Olga S. Vardazaryan</i> , <b>CATALOGUE OF THE CHURCH-SLAVONIC AND RUSSIAN MANUSCRIPTS OF</b><br><b>MATENADARAN</b> .....                 | 207 |
| <i>Verjiné Svazlian</i> , <b>RELICS OF THE ORAL TRADITION OF THE ARMENIANS OF RUSSIA (ROSTOV-ON-</b><br><b>208DON AND PYATIGORSK)</b> ..... | 208 |
| <i>Verjiné Svazlian</i> , <b>THE ORAL TRADITION OF THE ARMENIAN-AMERICANS IN THE COURSE OF TIME</b> .....                                   | 208 |
| <i>David Low</i> , <b>PICTURING THE OTTOMAN ARMENIAN WORLD ~ PHOTOGRAPHY IN ERZERUM,</b><br><b>HARPUT, VAN AND BEYOND</b> .....             | 209 |

## CLASSICS OF ARMENOLOGY

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| <b>ASHHARBEEK KALANTAR</b> ..... | 211 |
| <b>YAROSLAVDASHKEVICH</b> .....  | 213 |



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# ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

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# THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE CHARACTER OF ALAN-KOA AFTER THE EXPANSION OF ISLAM

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-6

## **Abstract**

The attention towards Islam and studies on the cross-cultural problems related to it has recently arisen, especially considering the role of Islam, the pivotal events happening in the Islamic world and growing interest in them.

The main goal of this research is to reveal the similarities in Turko-Mongolian environment between the stories attributed to the Mongol foremother and the cornerstone, “bridging” figure in both Islam and Christianity, Virgin Mary.<sup>1</sup> We intend to discuss the transformations of the character of Alan-Koa after the expansion of Islam based on written sources.

*Within the boundaries of the subject we set a goal to raise and solve the following problems:*

- *To try to analyze and understand the transformations of the character of Alan-Koa after the expansion of Islam*
- *To understand how these transformations took place and whether it was a result of manifestation of coexistence or not.*
- *Make a comparison between Mary and Alan-Koa uncovering the similarities between the stories attributed to them*

**Keywords:** *Alan-Koa, Christianity, parallels, Virgin Mary, Light-Holy Spirit, tribal Islam, Wolf-Man, Symbiosis, Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Mongols.*

## **Introduction**

The importance of the “bridging,” pivotal characters in the Islamic world and the Christian regions surrounding it, and of the role these figures have in understanding the relations between “the two worlds” first and foremost brings about the importance of revealing the mechanisms of regulating those relations. The best examples of these mechanisms are the cornerstone figures that include elements both from Christianity and Islam.

As it is known, after the Mongol invasion the Muslim world has undergone transformations. However, Islam in its turn had its impact on Mongolian empire and further on the development of the confessional images of specific uluses.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Khachatryan 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The term *ulus* is used in a variety of contexts for provinces, populations, and subjects of the khan in general. It is mainly used as an administrative unit of the Mongol Empire.

There emerged an image where Christianity (which was also well spread among Mongols<sup>3</sup>), Islam and ancient Mongolian belief systems were to create an interesting mixture, symbiosis which on its turn would have been expressed through the transformations and symbolic expressions of the cornerstone characters. Islam gradually took a dominant position among Mongolian *uluses* including Mongols themselves already beginning from the 14th century. It is important to notice that the process of the expansion of Islam started almost simultaneously with the division of *uluses* around different parts of the empire, in the Golden Horde, in Ilkhanate, etc. Nevertheless, Islam could not eliminate entirely Mongolian-Tatar belief system, especially as they were connected to the stories of the origins of Mongols. The spread of Islam in Mongolian-Tatar environment was also expressed differently.

A thesis is posed within this research according to which the character of the Mongol foremother Alan-Koa undergoes major transformations after the spread of Islam. It is as if the character of Mary that penetrated into Mongolian environment through Islam was synthesized with the beliefs attributed to Alan-Koa.

The Mongols that worshiped different religions and did not have a united belief system before converting to Islam, leaned towards this or that religion on behalf of political considerations or sometimes even inner urges.<sup>4</sup> Apart from that, they were very tolerant towards Christians.<sup>5</sup> And it is probable that as the Mongol rule was expanding over several Christian-populated regions it boosted the synthesis of stories on the foremother.

Especially eye-catching is the diversity of religions among the rulers and ilkhans of the Golden Horde: Batu Khan - shamanist-tengrist, **Berke Khan** - muslim, **Sartaq Khan** - christian. Another curious example of this diversity is when the **Mohammad-e Khodabande (Kharbanda) Öljaitü Ilkhan** (1304–1316) proclaimed Shia Islam as the official religion for a short period (The Hulagu's dynasty was already settled in the Near and Middle East during this period<sup>6</sup>). It would not be wrong to assume that this diversity brought about the existence of the characteristic similarities.

## 1. The genealogy of Mongols and the mystery of Alan-Koa: an analysis

When it comes to the genealogy of Mongols, according to the most popular opinion, they were considered to be the posterity of Alan-Koa.<sup>7</sup> As the myth claims, after the death of her husband<sup>8</sup> Alan-Koa never got married again. It raises a question among her elder sons and her entire tribe: whose children are the ones that were born

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<sup>3</sup> Margaryan 2020: 228–245, 232.

<sup>4</sup> Juvaini, Ala-ad-Din Ata-melik 2004: 20.

<sup>5</sup> Margaryan 2020: 228–245, 230.

<sup>6</sup> In 1256, the Mongol hordes who under the leadership of Hulagu captured Iran, Iraq and in 1257, Armenia, Georgia, Aghwank (Albania) and other countries, founded the Mongolian state-Ilkhanate.

<sup>7</sup> Rashid al-Din 1952: 152-153. Skrynnikova 2019: 180.

<sup>8</sup> The husband of Alan-Koa, Dobun Mergen (The Secret History of the Mongols 1982: 2; The Secret History of the Mongols 2015: 2; Rashid al-Din 1952: 152.

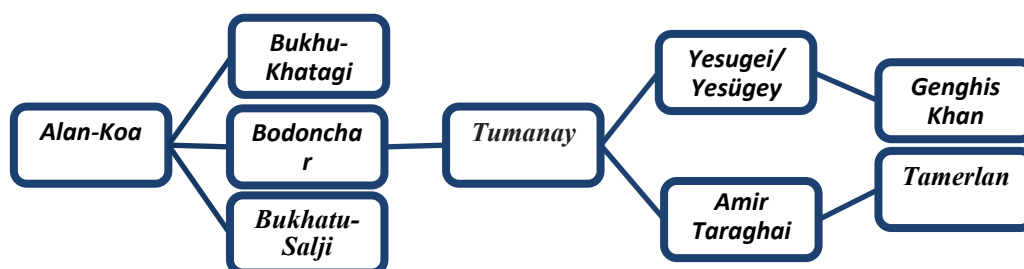
after the death of her husband? Alan-Koa tells the story of a blond man<sup>9</sup> who entered her tent every night. His origin was divine as no one except from Alan-Koa had seen him. From here the conclusion was followed that her three sons<sup>10</sup> also had divine origins. The tribe of Alan-Koa believed this story which most probably was weaved by her.

There is a mention of this myth on the tombstone<sup>11</sup> found in the mausoleum<sup>12</sup> of Tamerlane. It reaffirms the idea of Alan-Koa being the foremother of Mongols and her sons having divine origin which is quite similar to the story of Virgin Mary.

The Arabic record found in the mausoleum of Tamerlane reports the following:

*This tomb is the tomb of the nobleman Sultan Khaqan amir: Amir Timur "Gurakan"<sup>13</sup>, the son of Amir Taraghai, the son of Amir Barghul ... [Here] the origin of Genghis Khan<sup>14</sup> got separated from this root. And the nobleman [the sultan] was buried in this glorious and conspicuous tomb. Genghis Khan, the son of Amir Yesugei Baghatur... And the father of this high-born was not known.<sup>15</sup> What is known is his mother, Alan-Koa, the same Alan-Koa.<sup>16</sup>*

What follows is a listing of the ancestors of Timur. It is interesting that here the lines of origins of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane intersecting through a mutual ancestor finally form separate lines.



<sup>9</sup> Kozin 1941, § 21, p. 81.

<sup>10</sup> Kozin 1941, §10, p.80. The three sons were: **Bukhu-Khatagi**, **Bukhatu-Salji**, **Bodonchar**. The Secret History of the Mongols 2015: 3; The Secret History of the Mongols 1982: 3.

<sup>11</sup> Margaryan 2018, § 69-72, p. 72.

<sup>12</sup> The mausoleum of Timur was often mentioned in sources as the Guri Emir after his death. Many points of view regarding the name have been voiced, and the question of the names Guri Amir /Gur-i Amir/ or Guri Mir /Gur-i Mir/ has been discussed in particular. McChesney 2021: 17-21.

<sup>13</sup> The title *Küregen* or *Gurkānī* Timur received after he became associated with the Genghisid dynasty, becoming the son-in-law of the dynasty, he took the name Timur *Gurkānī* (Timur Gurkani, Gurkan). As the "son-in-law of the Genghisid dynasty" bearing this title, he legitimized his power. (Timūr Gurkānī, Gurkān mongolian *kȳrygen* or *khȳrygen* is the Iranian version of "son-in-law". Stephen F. Dale 2018: 23; Barthold 2002: 44; Semenov 1948: 53; Slatyer 2014: 318.

<sup>14</sup> According to another Mongolian myth, Genghis Khan also descended from one of the sons of Alan-Koa, Bodonchar. Myths of the Peoples of the World 1987: 80 and also Myths of the Peoples of the World: Encyclopedia 2008: 150-151.

<sup>15</sup> Since, according to the myth, Alan-Koa's husband died and after his death she had children. Her relatives and elder sons have doubts about who the father of these children is? The answer to this question was known only to Alan-Koa. Later, she tried to prove the divine origin of his children with her statements. Curtin 2008: 5.

<sup>16</sup> Semenov 1948: 53.

## 2. The reports of Armenian sources on the origins of Mongols and Alan-Koa

There are mentions on the divine origins of Mongols in Armenian sources as well. As an example, in his *History of Armenia (Patmut'iwn hayots)*,<sup>17</sup> Kirakos Ghandzaketsi refers to the divine origin of Mongols. Mentioning about the impregnation from an unseen light [the Light person] he writes:

*"... a light came from an unseen, entered through the garret window and told the mother [you will get pregnant and give birth to a monarch-son]. And they considered him to be born out of this."*<sup>18</sup>

As the author claims, it was told by a prince from the Mamikonyan family named Grigor who heard it from an old man called Ghutun. Considering this we come to the conclusion that this mention is yet another testimony of the divine origin of Mongols and that their foremother gave birth to a monarch-son who then became the great Mongolian Khagan Temüjin, that is to say, Genghis Khan.

A similar mention can be encountered later in a study by Buzand Yeghiayan. Speaking on the origins of Mongolian-Tatar tribes the author mentions a part from a family myth referred by the Mongol narrator Sanank-Sietsen [Սանկանկ-Սիէթսէն]. The latter states that Mongols originate from "the blue wolf"<sup>19</sup> which according to the author can be a totemic archetype. Further he underlines that according to another tradition the forefather of Mongols is someone called Butandzar (it is about Bodonchar, the second son of Alan-Koa showcased on the chart above who was considered the ancestor of both Genghis Khan and Tamerlane). He was the son of the widow who magically got impregnated. And the father of Genghis Khan, Yesugei, was from the 8<sup>th</sup> generation of that ancestor (the son of Alan-Koa).

In his study *A History of Armenian Emigration*, Arshak Alpoyachian (Alboyadjian) already mentions the foremother of Mongols as Alan-Koa or the Light Deer<sup>20</sup> reaffirming that Genghis Khan has descended from her.

Both in the case of Ghandzaketsi and Eghiayan the name of the foremother is not mentioned. It is, however, present in Alpoyachian's work. In conclusion, generalizing the mentions in Armenian sources one can claim that these testify to the same mysterious origin. It is the story of the mysterious impregnation of Mongolian foremother that gave birth to the Mongol forefather.

## 3. An analysis on the similarities between the characters of Mary and Alan-Koa

The following excerpts from the record on the tombstone found in the mausoleum of Tamerlane are related to our topic and are interesting from this perspective:

<sup>17</sup> Kirakos Gandzakets'i 1982.

<sup>18</sup> Kirakos Gandzakets'i 1982: 196.

<sup>19</sup> Yeghiayan 1989: 150.

<sup>20</sup> Alpoyachian 1955: 5.

*And as it is told and attested, [the pregnancy] was not promiscuity on the part of Alan-Koa but the consequence of the pure light.<sup>21</sup>*

Comparing this to the Biblical story of the impregnation of Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit it is obvious that both characters and the stories attributed to them are undeniably affected though distorted in “Mongolian” version.

| Excerpt from the record on the tombstone found in the mausoleum of Tamerlane  | Excerpt from the Quran   | Excerpt from the Gospel of Luke  |
|---|--|--|
| “It is said that she is righteous, unblemished, and pure in her essence. He [the light wolf-man <sup>22</sup> ] impregnated her [Alan-Koa] from the light <sup>23</sup> [which] entered from the above door and appeared in front of her in appearance of a perfect man.” | “And [remember] her who guarded her chastity: We breathed into her of Our spirit, and We made her and her son a sign for all peoples. ...and she testified to the truth of the words of her Lord and of His Revelations and was one of the devout [servants].” <sup>24</sup> | Hail, full of grace, The Lord is with thee...<br>The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God....<br>Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word.... <sup>25</sup> |

As in front of Mary appeared the Holy Spirit, there appeared the divine light<sup>26</sup> in front of Alan-Koa or as “the version of Tamerlane” states the pure light<sup>27</sup> which can be identical with the Holy Spirit from which she got pregnant. In front of her appeared the archangel Gabriel as a perfect man [it was a divine light in case of Alan-Koa] which then transformed to Ali<sup>28</sup> or his generations.

<sup>21</sup> Autobiography of Timur 1934: 248-249; Korogly 1976: 75-76; Mukhamade 2017: 87.

<sup>22</sup> The version about the light-wolf man: See Rashid al-Din 1952: 14.

<sup>23</sup> In other versions she conceived from a wolf (Korogly 1976: 75-76; Autobiography of Timur 1934: 248-249; Mukhamade 2017: 87). Another version mentions the golden man (Lococo 2008: 4).

Touching upon the hypothesis of pregnancy from the light of Mary, Tereza Amryan in one of her articles notes the following. According to one of the traditions accepted among the Yezidis living in Armenia, Mary became pregnant from the Divine Light. (nûra Xwedê, the literal "light of God") and gave birth to Jesus (Amryan 2019: 398).

<sup>24</sup> The Holy Quran... Sura 66, Ayat 12, p.

<sup>25</sup> The Gospel According To Luke 1931, Chapter 1:26-38, pp.151-152; The Holy Bible Translated From The Latin Vulgate Diligently Compared With The Hebrew, Greek, And Other Editions In Divers Languages, Douay-Rheims Version 1609, 1582. New Testament, 48 The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ, According to St. Luke, 1:26-38.

<sup>26</sup> Angels, the Holy Spirit and Christ are identified with light, often represented as fiery spirit beings even in Christianity [Isaiah 6:4, see also Luke 24:31, Matthew 28, etc.]. In Islam, for example, angels, jinns, demons, Satan, etc. are considered disembodied spiritual beings.

<sup>27</sup> Rashid al-Din 1952: 152.

<sup>28</sup> Semenov 1949: 51.



*“He said that he was one of the faithful sons and heirs of **Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib** and the claims [assurances] directed towards her [Alan-Koa] that he is [the son **Alī**] confirm its truthfulness many times.”<sup>29</sup>*



Picture 1. Alan-Koa in the manuscript of Mu'izz Al-Ansab of the XIX century.

Especially interesting is this transitional episode which purports that the Mongol forefather has later been “Islamized”. If in Islamic and Christian biblical stories there appears the archangel Gabriel, in case of Alan-Koa, it is the wolf. Both of them present themselves in human form. As opposed to the Islamic and Christian narratives where there is no mention of any man, here the appearance of one of the well-known Islamic figures, **Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib** is obvious: a fact that is probably not incidental. Presenting Ali as their forefather would attest to their Muslim origin, being the descendants of the Prophet and their correlations with Shia Islam.

There is a tendency revealing itself here according to which the genealogy of Mongols is being intertwined with Islam. The forefather of Mongols is being presented as one of the descendants of the fourth pious caliph **Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib**... The choice of Ali specifically gives us room to think that it could have been conditioned by Timur's policies of wooing the Shia Islamists and disseminating Shia Islam amongst Mongols (*Öljaitü Khan, Turkmenian Qizilbash [Kizilbash] tribes, the worship of Islam amongst Shia Kara Koyunlus*). Ali himself is the agent of Shia Islam. Thus, it turns out that the Mongol forefather was Shia Muslim and the foremother was Mongol. And the specific choice of Ali as the Mongol forefather attests to the fact that Turko-Mongolian Islamic world was trying to represent and propagate a genealogical link between themselves and the Prophet Muhammad as well as his descendants. It is also not incidental that Timur was usually accused of being Shia but presenting himself as Sunni.

The same tendency of turning towards Islam is traceable in a picture attributed to Alan-Koa from a manuscript called Mu'izz Al-Ansab. This manuscript is stored in the British Library, it is usually referred as “the book glorifying genealogy” and the picture of Alan-Koa found in it is presented as a “portrait.” We see here a Mongol woman – Alan-Koa – in an Islamic fashion: she is painted wearing a hijab which was not a common headwear amongst Mongols. Mongolian women never wore hijabs and it is not common to their iconography even in the Middle Ages.

<sup>29</sup> Semenov 1948: 58.

## CONCLUSION

According to written sources it can be concluded that the character of Mongol foremother Alan-Koa has undergone through pivotal transformations after the expansion of Islam. The character of Mary that came to the Turko-Mongolian environment through Islam has been synthesized with the belief system attributed to Alan-Koa. It can be stated that the character of Alan-Koa includes elements both from the Pagan belief system and from Christianity as well as Islam. These facts in their turn attest to the conclusion that despite the denominational diversity amongst Mongols the expansion of Islam could not remain inconsequential. The result of these interactions is the specific mixed symbiosis in the stories attributed to the Mongol foremother, the outcome of which are the distinct characteristic similarities.

The studies of the character and significance of Mary in both Christian and Islamic worlds shows the existence of features attributed to her in the stories on Alan-Koa. In the case of Virgin Mary it is said that the Holy Spirit showed itself to her appearing as the archangel Gabriel who was surrounded by a bright light (the Holy Spirit) which thereafter turned into a human character in order not to frighten her. In one of the versions of the story of Alan-Koa it is the wolf or the wolf-man. If Mary got impregnated through the Holy Spirit, in the "Timurian version" of Alan-Koa's story the pure light is mentioned as the source. If in the first case the biblical stories both in Christianity and in Islam there appears the archangel Gabriel, in Alan-Koa's case it is the wolf: both of these characters take a human form in the stories. Unlike the Christian and Islamic stories where there is no mention of a man, the name of **Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib** appears in the Mongolian version which cannot be accidental.

In conclusion, one can state that already in the 15<sup>th</sup> century the character of Alan-Koa included elements both from Christianity and from Islam. The best example of this is the impregnation of Alan-Koa by the Light or the wolf-man which has its parallels to the Holy Spirit. This Light or the wolf-man under the influence of Shia Islam thereafter turns to be one of descendants of **Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib**.

We can thus firmly state that after the expansion of Islam in Turko-Mongolian environment the character of Alan-Koa undergoes pivotal transformations.

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The article was delivered on 11.08.2022, reviewed on 29.11.2022, accepted for publication on 06.12.2022.

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF EGYPTIAN-ARMENIAN REPATRIATES TO MOTHER ARMENIA

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-15

## **Abstract**

In the forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, until the mass repatriation, the Armenian community of Egypt (around 45 thousand people) was rallied mainly around the Armenian Apostolic Church (spiritual leader: His Eminence Archbishop Mambré Sirounian).

A number of Armenian schools, cultural organizations and athletic associations were all active mainly in the Armenian populated cities of Egypt, Cairo and Alexandria.

It should be noted that the total number of repatriates from Egypt to Soviet Armenia in 1947, 1948 and the 1960-1970s constituted around 4.500 people. Most of them were already ideologically prepared and aware of the objective of their repatriation, namely dedicating their lives to the development of the Fatherland.

The study highlights the contribution of these repatriated families and individuals (more than 140 people) to the development and growth of Soviet Armenia in cultural, industrial, artistic, photographic, educational, academic, medical, political, administrative, athletic and other (over 40) spheres of life.

**Keywords:** Egypt, Cairo, Alexandria, Armenian Community, Repatriation, Soviet Armenia, Egyptian-Armenians, artists, doctors, intellectuals.

## **Historical Overview**

In the forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, until the mass repatriation, the Armenian community of Egypt (around 45 thousand people) was rallied mainly around the Armenian Apostolic Church (spiritual leader: His Eminence Archbishop Mambré Sirounian).

In Cairo, the functioning educational institutions were the Galoustian National School (founded in 1854), the Noubarian National School (f. 1925), the Manissalian School (f. 1905), in Alexandria – first, the Aramian National School (f. 1854), then the Poghosian National School (f. 1862) and the Haykazian School (f. 1924). The Armenian religious denominations had also their educational institutions, namely, the Immaculate Conception Armenian Catholic School for Girls in Cairo (f. 1897) and in Alexandria (f. 1914) and the Armenian Evangelical School in Cairo (f. 1899), etc.<sup>1</sup>

In these two main cities about fifteen cultural and athletic clubs were functioning: in Cairo, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) was founded in 1906, the

<sup>1</sup> Topouzian 1978: 184-185.



“Athletic Union Ararat” (f. 1914), “The Armenian Art-Lovers’ Union (Gegharvestasirats)” (f. 1920), The Armenian Cultural and Educational Union “Hamazgayin” (f. 1928), “The Friends of Armenian Culture” (f. 1941), “The Armenian National Fund” (f. 1942), the “Houssaber” Cultural Association of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) (f. 1945), while in Alexandria the “Tigran Yerkat” Cultural Union (f. 1902) and the “Kamk” Athletic Union (f. 1912).

The object of these one and a half dozen cultural and athletic clubs operating in the two main cities of Egypt: Cairo and Alexandria, was to rally the Armenian youth, to develop their artistic taste and physical capacities and “to favor the Armenian-maintaining power of the community.”<sup>2</sup>



Painting by Garnik Svazlian



Painting by Garnik Svazlian

With its essence and subject matter, “The Committee for the Assistance of Armenia” (HOK), founded in Soviet Armenia, in 1921, with the efforts of the poet of All-Armenians, Hovhannes Toumanian was altogether different. That pursued the object of assisting the starving population, establishing close relations between the Diasporan Armenians and Soviet Armenia. The Committee had its branches in the Armenian-

<sup>2</sup> Egypt 2003: 157-160.



populated communities of the Diaspora, including also Cairo and Alexandria (1926), one of the founders of which was the young poet and public figure rescued from the Armenian Genocide, **Garnik Svazlian** (b. 1904, Kayseri – deceased, 1948, Yerevan). With the various fund-raising activities he had organized, he has contributed to the development of Mother Armenia. With the collected sums numerous buildings have been constructed in Armenia, such as the complex of the Medical Institute in Yerevan, the “Yerevan Hotel” (now: the “Golden Tulip”), the building of the Sport Committee (at the crossroads of the Abovian and Toumanian streets, in Yerevan), the Palace of Culture of the Railway-men after Sevan in Leninakan, the Electric Power Station in Dzorages, as well as four-storied apartment buildings on Alaverdian (now: Hanrapetutian) street in Yerevan, and others.



Medical Institute in Yerevan



“Yerevan Hotel” (now: the “Golden Tulip”) in Yerevan

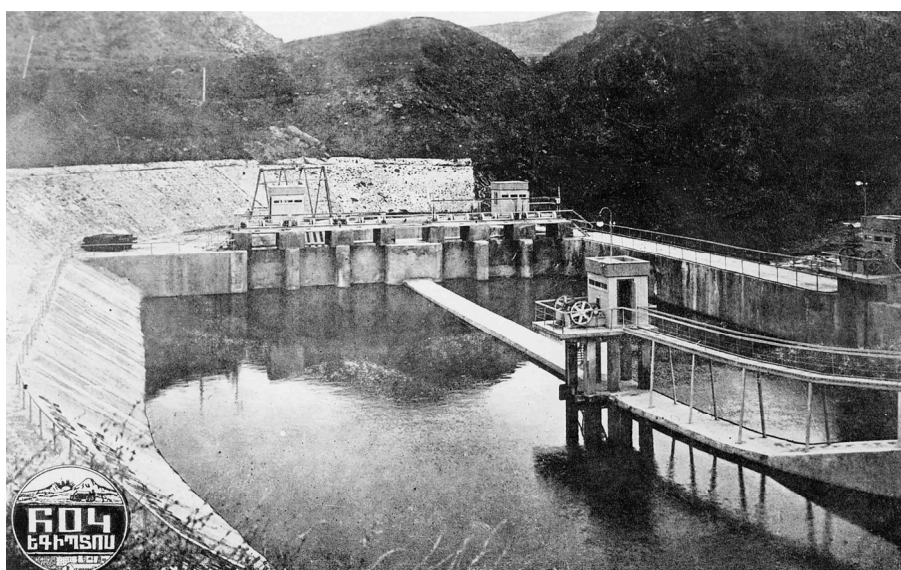




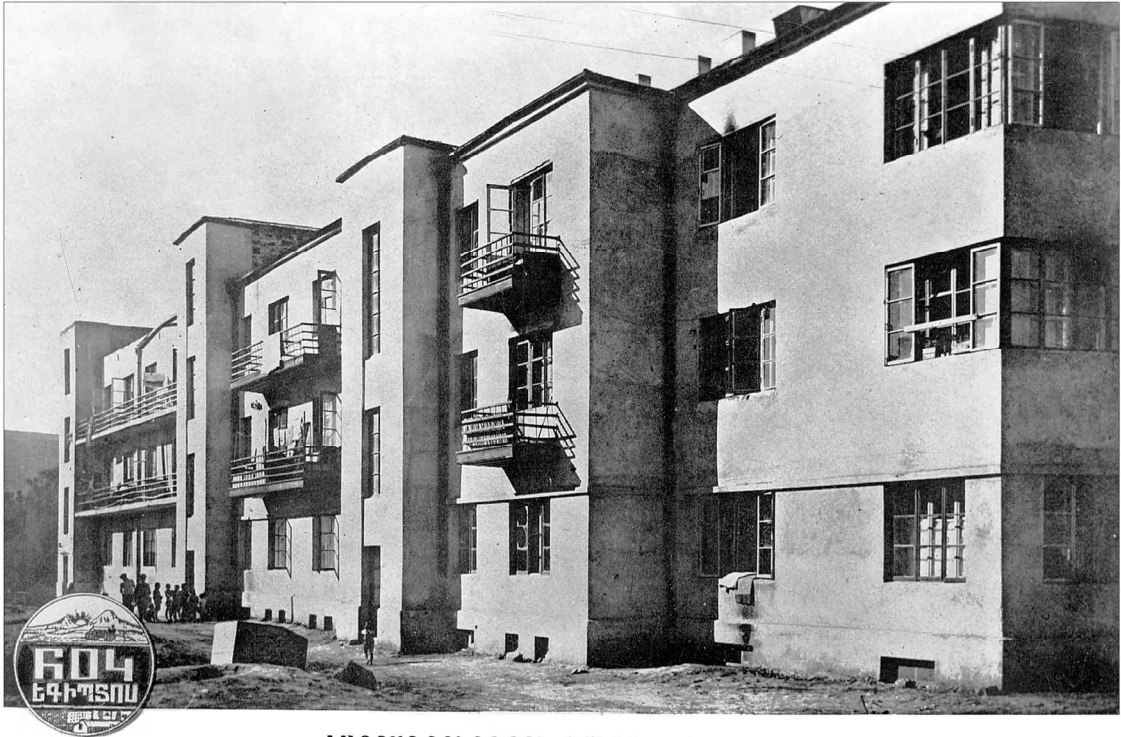
The Sport Committee Building in Yerevan



The Palace of Culture of the Railway-men after Sevan in Leninakan



The Electric Power Station in Dzorages



Apartment buildings on Alaverdian (now: Hanrapetutian) street in Yerevan

At that time, in the 1930s, an economic depression had arisen all over the world, and everywhere anti-communist feelings prevailed, as a result of which a number of progressive intellectuals were targeted and flung into the prison, among them G. Svazlian. Under the immediate impression of those processes, he published the leaflet entitled: *"We, the detainees."*<sup>3</sup> In 1937, the HOK organization was wound up.

Later, during World War II, the crushing victories of the Soviet armies near Leningrad, Smolensk, Crimea and Stalingrad marked a turning point in international relations. In 1943, the Egyptian-Armenians contributed to those enterprises and activities, which would favor the Soviet Union's victory. In the same year, the Egyptian-Armenians participated in the fundraising of the "David of Sassoun" tank-regiment. As the Egyptian-Armenian writer and publicist, G. Svazlian pointed out in his article *"Boil up, Armenian sentiments"* ("Arev" Daily, Cairo, 1943, December 17, № 7599, p. 2). *"...All the strata of the society, even the unemployed, fathers of a family struggling for their daily bread, workmen with their sooty hands, surpass themselves and give to this fund more than their earnings..."*<sup>4</sup>

In the various Armenian communities of the Diaspora and in the USA in the first place, National councils were created, whose object was to focus the attention of the world-scattered Armenians "swaying in despair and uncertainty" to the cause of the "Rebuilding of Armenia and the Repatriation, to be the advocate and the supporter of the return to the native land."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Svazlian 1965: 20-25.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid: 36.

<sup>5</sup> Topouzian 1978: 270-271.



With that end in view, the “Yerevan” Cultural Union in Cairo and the “Sevan” Cultural Union in Alexandria were founded,<sup>6</sup> the first of which has had a short life, while the second closed-down in 1947 due to the repatriation of its chairman, G. Svazlian.



The Board Members of the “Sevan” Cultural Union

(Garnik Svazlian – second from the right, sitting)

In 1943, the writer, public figure, caricaturist Garnik Svazlian had the intention, in the “Sevan” Cultural Public Union he had founded in Alexandria and by means of the recitation, theatrical art, painting and singing groups functioning there, to develop the capacities of the youth and with his Armenian-spirited lectures and the display of films (“Reconstructing Armenia,” etc.) to acquaint the Diaspora Armenians with the progress of Mother Armenia persisting and developing on a little fragment of our captured Motherland, to raise their level of consciousness and to materially and morally assist, with various measures, the repatriation, namely, the nation-gathering.

The chairman-founder of the “Sevan” Union, G. Svazlian, pursued the object, with his fervent journalistic articles<sup>7</sup> published in the Egyptian and Diasporan periodicals “Arev,” “Arax,” “Savarnak” and his well-aimed caricatures, to revive the self-consciousness of the Diasporan Armenians. He has written: “...*We are scattered in the*

<sup>6</sup> Ibid: 273. And since my father Garnik Svazlian, of blessed memory, became the founder of the “Sevan” cultural union,” I, after my daily studies at the Poghossian National School, speedily did my homework in order to go with my family in the evening to take part in the interesting social events organized there. Consequently, everything was engraved, at that time in my teen-age memory, and today, as an eyewitness, I can present it as an evidence.

<sup>7</sup> “From the past to the Future” (“Arev,” Cairo, 1933, April 24, № 4339, p. 2), “What day are we waiting for?” (“Arev,” Cairo, 1932, December 16, № 4232, p. 2), “You, Alexandrians, stand up with a virile posture!” (Leaflet of September 24, 1935, Alexandria), “Boil up Armenian sentiments!” (“Arev,” Cairo, 1943, December 17, № 7599, p. 2), “We have to strike the scalpel” (“Arev,” Cairo, 1943, November 13, № 7572, p. 2), “The Diasporan Armenians and the Repatriation” (Speech delivered on October 19, 1946, at the great popular meeting dedicated to the Repatriation), “The meaning and value of the Repatriation” (Speech delivered on May 9, 1946, in Alexandria, on the first Anniversary of the end of the Great Patriotic War, at the ceremony organized by the Armenian National Council), and other articles.

*whole world not in order to have a Diaspora, but because violence and persecution compelled us.*

*And when today all this has come to an end, and our Motherland has widely opened its doors, then it is preposterous to speak about sustaining the Diaspora, thereby dampening the fervent patriotism of this laborious people.<sup>8</sup>*

*...Now we have our Motherland...*

*...We have all to buckle down to work having one idea in mind, which is the assistance to the Motherland, having only one obsession – the reconstruction of the Motherland and one slogan at the tip of the tongue of everyone of us – toward the Motherland!*

*...Consider that this is a matter of dignity for you, and it is your destiny.<sup>9</sup>*

With similar Armenian-spirited articles, G. Svazlian was ideologically developing and educating the grown-up and young representatives of the Armenian community of Egypt, who gathered lovingly, in the evenings, under that modest roof and took part, free of charge, in the lessons of different groups (recitation, painting, singing). G. Svazlian had also organized there a “Knitting group,” where the women willingly knitted woolen socks for the Red Army soldiers.



“Knitting group” of the “Sevan” Union (1944)

I was then 9 years old and, during the midday break at the Poghossian National School, I used to knit giving the lead to my girl-classmates, while after school I rapidly did my next day’s homework in order to be able to go with my parents to our dear meeting place near Menshia Square in Alexandria on the street bearing the name of the founder of Egyptology,

Champollion; on the gate of our meeting place, on the handwritten wall newspaper was the precept: “Educate yourself, educate others; Rise yourself and raise others,” while in the hall, we were met with the sizable and impressive photographs of Mesrop Mashtots and Sahak Partev.

At the “Sevan” reading-hall, they also organized interesting lectures about the Armenian culture, the discovery of the Armenian alphabet, the medieval narrators and miniaturists, as well as about everyday life in Armenia, the heroic deeds of the Armenian generals and soldiers in World War II.

<sup>8</sup> Svazlian 1965: 76.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid: 11.



"Komitas" Chorus of the "Sevan" Union

During the training hours of the chorus of the "Sevan" Union, composed of the male and female members (Choir-Master, lawyer and musician: **Mtr. Salerian**), besides the songs composed by Komitas, we used to learn also songs dedicated to Armenia and Yerevan, as for instance:

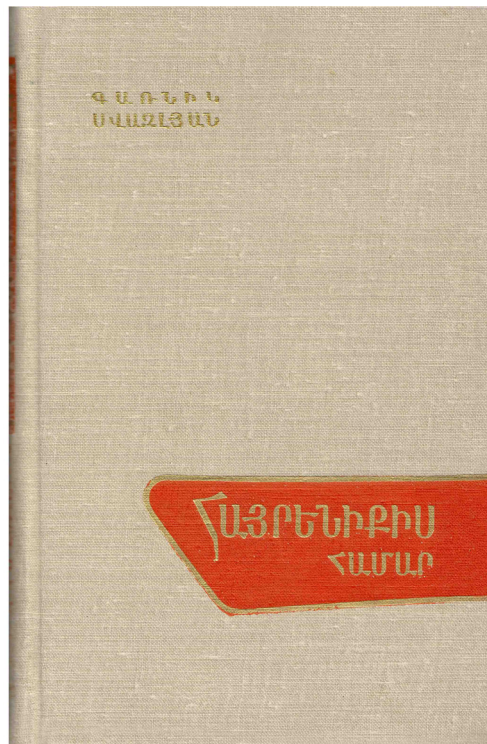
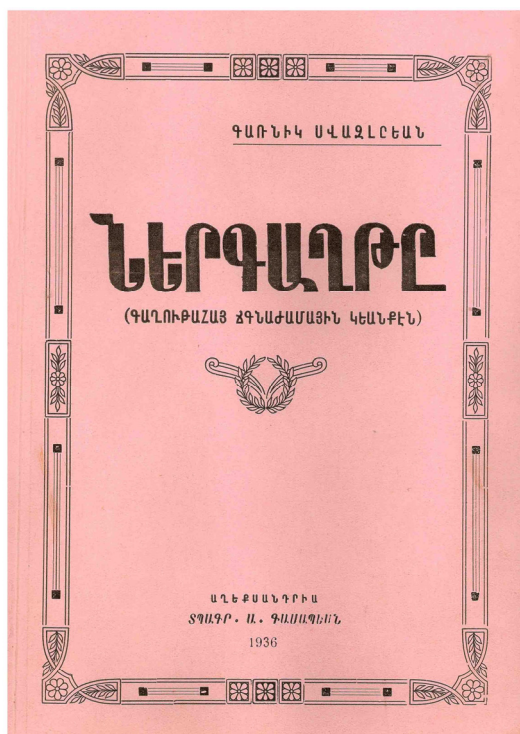
*"I yearn for you, sumptuous Yerevan,  
Higher than many seas, golden Lake Sevan,  
You have many fishes in your depths: Koghak and Ishkhan,  
Who does not love you, is not a real Armenian*

Refrain:

*Hey, you unflinching, dear Yerevan!  
Hey, dear, hey dear, sweet Yerevan!"*

In the theatrical group of the "Sevan" Union they were putting on the stage, with the combined efforts of the Union's male and female members and also with the willing participation of the meritorious artists **Mr. and Mrs. Onnik and Beatrice Voltaire, Garnik Svazlian's** play "*Repatriation*" (1936, Alexandria), about the critical life of the Diasporan Armenians, with the author's mise-en-scene and stage-direction. The principle hero of that play, Tigran's family had taken refuge, after having a narrow escape from the Armenian Genocide, in France, however, feeling the bitterness of unemployment and assimilation, he considers that the only salvation for the Diasporan Armenian is the Repatriation to Mother Armenia. This play has been repeatedly staged at the great hall of Lycée Français in Alexandria.





### Garnik Svazlian's works:

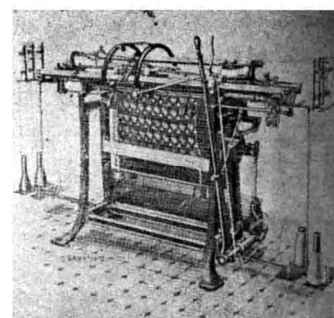
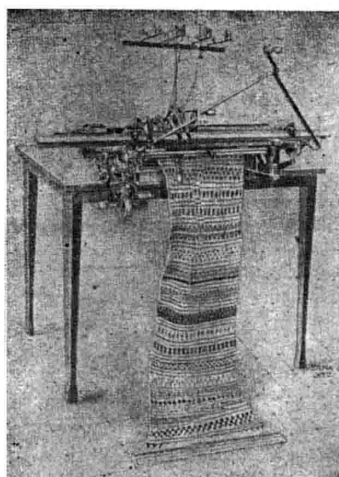
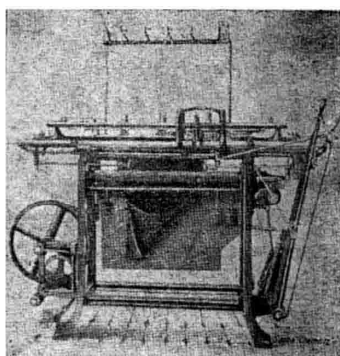
**"Repatriation." Alexandria, 1936.**

**"For My Motherland." Yerevan, 1965.**



**The poster of Garnik Svazlian's "Repatriation" play (Alexandria, 1944)**

I remember the wave of exaltation in which our Armenian community lived. I was 9-10 years old at that time and I took part in the mass scenes in the play of the people leaving for the Motherland on board of the steamship “Soviet Armenia.” The play “*Repatriation*” was also put on the stage in Cairo, at the Ezbekié Theater, then in Cyprus and elsewhere. The chairman of the “Sevan” Union, G. Svazlian, took the sums of the tickets obtained from the performance of the play, as well as the packed bunches of the knitted socks to Cairo and handed them to the Soviet **Ambassador Sultanov**, in order that the woolen socks be sent to the Red Army soldiers fighting on the front lines, while the collected sums were to be allocated to the development of the economy of Armenia and the construction of new dwelling houses. Through the same channel G. Svazlian had already sent the first machine tools and looms for the Leninakan (Gyumri) hosiery and knitted goods factory;<sup>10</sup> he had also organized fund-raising measures for the “David of Sassoun” tank-regiment, for the “Shoe Fund” of the Red Army soldiers, the “Repatriation Fund” and for the “Construction of Dwelling Houses Fund” in the Motherland, in order that the repatriates would not have the problem of habitation upon their arrival to the Motherland... All these actions have found a broad response in the periodicals of the time.<sup>11</sup>



First machine tools and looms for the Leninakan (Gyumri)

hosiery and knitted goods factory (1937)

Consequently, when the mass repatriation from Lebanon and Syria started in 1946, the Egyptian-Armenians and particularly we, the Alexandrian Armenians, were ideologically ready to live and work in the new social system. We were fully aware that we were going to Armenia not “to enjoy,” but to learn, to be of service to our Motherland. Hence those patriotic, ideological means undertaken earlier in Egypt had their positive effect.

<sup>10</sup> Concerning this theme, the following fragment of the song merrily and ardently performed by the women’s chorus of the HOK has made an unforgettable impression in my memory:

*“At the textile factory, we work all day long,  
We work hand in hand, we work together...”*

<sup>11</sup> See the responses and the photographs of the press kept at Garnik Svazlian’s family archives.

On September 3, 1947, the first caravan (head of the caravan: **Hakob Aramian**) carried 1,680 Egyptian-Armenians to Armenia, many of them brought trucks and other presents, while the **Dolabejian family** had with them machines for the spinning of fine broadcloth fabric to donate to the Motherland.

The second caravan sailed on August 22, 1948, having on board 2,018 Egyptian-Armenians (head of the caravan: **Khachik Hovhannissian**), who brought with them spinning-mill looms, which were installed and operated in the Sebastia quarter, in Yerevan.<sup>12</sup>

Incidentally, if the mass repatriation, started in 1946, was organized immediately following the Great Patriotic War, when the country was still unprepared and the historico-political and the grave economic conditions were, regrettably, unfavorable and full of undesirable consequences, then, in contrast to the 1947 and 1948 caravans, the government of Soviet Armenia had basically reconsidered its policy and had created in advance improved conditions for the reception and accommodation of the repatriates arriving from Egypt in four new consecutive caravans in the years 1960-1970s.

**Tigran Tsoulikian** (b. 1931, Cairo), a well-known intellectual, repatriate from Egypt in 1964, a pharmacist by profession, has testified: *"In the years 1962-1965, the Soviet authorities of Armenia organized four caravans of repatriation, as a result of which about 700 Egyptian-Armenians of various specialties and trades returned from Egypt to the Motherland, then in 1970-s a certain number of individuals and families came from Egypt to Armenia and settled in Leninakan, Kirovakan, Edjmiadsin, Alaverdi and other towns. The authorities of Soviet Armenia had granted them the following facilities and incentives:*

*1. Apartments with central heating were granted to the repatriates free of charge; 1- and 2-room apartments (with every convenience) were available for small families, while families consisting of 5- and more members received a 3-room apartment (with every convenience) and kitchens with gas-stoves and bathrooms with bathtubs and water-heaters. In the first few days, hot meals were also distributed.*

*Subsequently, the Egyptian-Armenian repatriates were given the opportunity to take part in the cooperative house-building projects and to move to Yerevan, paying 40% of the price of apartments in advance and then to pay the remaining 60% gradually, during 15 years.*

*Several repatriate artists and other specialists returned their previous apartments and received from the State new apartments in the city of Yerevan.*

*2. The repatriates from Egypt were offered jobs (more or less corresponding to their specialty).*

*3. The repatriate teen-agers and young people were given the opportunity to continue their studies or to receive a higher education by taking a correspondence course according to their preference.*

*4. A 2-year deferment was granted to the conscripts.*

<sup>12</sup> Topouzian 1978: 271.



5. *The certificates of the secondary schools, incomplete higher education and higher education diplomas obtained in Egypt (officially notarized) were acknowledged by the State authorities.*

6. *The certificates of length of working service in Egypt (officially notarized) were acknowledged by the State authorities and the repatriates received their corresponding pensions upon their arrival to the retirement age.*<sup>13</sup>

Summarizing the above-mentioned facts, we should note that the total number of repatriates from Egypt in 1947, 1948 and the 1960-1970-s constituted around 4.500 people.

As a basis for the present study not only T. Tsulikian's above-cited testimony has served, but also the biographical lists of the repatriated Egyptian-Armenians compiled by the Yerevan State University **Professor, Dr. Norayr Beylerian** (b. 1929, Cairo) and **Vanik Ajemian** (b. 1927, Cairo) and published in the 2003 and 2008 *“Commemorative Books of World Reunion of Armenian Schools of Egypt,”*<sup>14</sup> as well as **N. Beylerian's** article,<sup>15</sup> and finally the personal memories and impressions of the author of these lines as a repatriate from Egypt in 1947.



The Repatriation of Egyptian-Armenians

In the present, rather arduous study, we have tried to consider the Egyptian-Armenian repatriates, first, according to their appurtenance to the senior or junior generation, guided by their age peculiarities and by their place of professional education; furthermore, we have attempted to divide them according to their domains, laying emphasis on their contribution to the Motherland.

Besides the junior generation, who was educated in the Motherland, we have also, on our own initiative, specially included those representatives of the *senior generation*,

<sup>13</sup> T. Tsulikian's present hand-written testimony is kept in our personal archives (V. S.).

<sup>14</sup> Beylerian, Ajemian 2003: 111-137.

<sup>15</sup> Beylerian 2008: 18-32.

who had received their professional higher education in the universities of various foreign countries and, returning to Egypt, they had become well-known in the Armenian-community by their praiseworthy merit. Although they were of an advanced age, nonetheless, after repatriation, they were renowned also in Armenia by their devoted activity and had a remarkable contribution.

The representatives of the *junior generation*, who had received their elementary and secondary education in the Armenian schools of Egypt, they have, after their repatriation, continued their professional university education in the native higher educational establishments and have greatly assisted the Motherland.

In the years 1947-1948, during the period of repatriation from Egypt and under the conditions of extensive literary and the gratuitous professional education in the Soviet Motherland, when stipends were even assigned to the students, the thirsty for knowledge young repatriate students were bravely admitted to the Armenian higher educational institutions, entirely devoting themselves to their studies. There was not a family, who had not several students. The same is true of the repatriates from Egypt in the years 1960-1970.

Considering the large volume of the subject, we are, therefore, compelled to confine ourselves and to allude only to those Egyptian-Armenian repatriates, who, receiving a professional education in the Motherland, have worked and were awarded high scientific degrees, titles, prizes or had a marked input in the progress of the Motherland.

First, it should be noted that, in the years of mass repatriation both from the various colonies of the Diaspora and also from Egypt, a great number of skilled artisans of diverse professions, like hair-dressers, tailors and dress-makers, shoe-makers, carpenters, watchmakers, artistic metallurgists, masons, etc. came, and, raising their handicraft to the level of art, imparted a new fascination to the Motherland and to the external appearance of its population. In those years, the manufactured products of Armenian artisans had become highly sought-after in the whole territory of the Soviet Union.

### **JEWELERS**

The traditional Armenian jewelry had gathered a new impetus not only by the newly-created jewelry factory in Yerevan, where the majority of the working artisans were repatriates, but also our Armenian alphabet written and decorated in golden, bird-shaped letters kept at the treasure house of the Holy See of Edjmiadsin was designed and prepared by the Egyptian-Armenian jewelers **Zhirayr Chouloyan** and **Hayk Ter-Ghevondian** (b. 1924, Cairo). By the way, the latter had also compiled the study "*History of the Armenian jewelry art*," which remained unpublished due to the emigration of the author.

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Photography also changed from a trade into a branch of art. Worthy of mention are: the son of the heroic battle of Van, Armenak Yekarian, the Egyptian-Armenian **Gourgen Yekarian**, also **Shant Arakelian** and, particularly, **Andranik Kochar** (b.

1919, Alexandria), whose individual exhibition of portrait photography was the first in its kind in the history of Armenia. His black and white impressive portraits of *Vahram Papazian*, *William Saroyan*, *Martiros Sarian*, *Gourgen Mahari*, *Mihran Yerkat*, *Gohar Gasparian* and other celebrities were remarkable for their fine transitions of their volume, discreet taste and the disclosure of psychologic inner layers. In 1962, he founded the first photographic club in Yerevan. He has had individual exhibitions in the various towns of Armenia and Russia, also abroad and was honored with awards and prizes, such as the “World Press Photo” (Holland), etc. His son, **Vahan Kochar** (b. 1949, Yerevan), after his graduation from the Art Section of the Yerevan State Pedagogical Institute (YSPI), summed up his father’s documentary materials of the biographies of Armenian photographers collected during a great number of years (starting from 1858, Constantinople) and after updating them, has published the valuable voluminous book “*Armenian photographers*” (2007), in Yerevan. Moreover, the grateful son founded, in 2017, adjacent to his mansion, the museum of the photographer Andranik Kochar, which, by its nature, is the first in Armenia.

### **SPORTSMEN, COACHES**

Still in Egypt, the Egyptian-Armenian youths were already robust and well-trained.

**Armenak Alajajian** (b. 1930, Alexandria) has had a great input becoming a member of the principal collective team of basketball of USSR, champion of Europe, Honored Master of Sports of the Armenian SSR and USSR. He enjoyed great authority in those years.

The basketball players **Abraham Hamamjian** (b. 1930), **Zhirayr** (b. 1929, Alexandria) and **Varouzhan** (b. 1931, Alexandria) **Minassian** brothers, who had graduated from the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture (ASIPC), had a considerable input.

**Petros Amloyan** (b. 1928, Cairo), a repatriate from Egypt, was a distinguished player in the sphere of table tennis. He was a student at the ASIPC and performed the job of a coach and was awarded the title of Honored Coach.

The same should be said about **Suzan Arakelian-Zakarian** (b. 1930, Cairo), a repatriate from Cairo. She became the first champion of table tennis of Armenia and multiple champion of the USSR, a Sport Master of the ArmSSR and USSR, an Honored Coach of the ArmSSR.

In the sphere of track and field athletics, **Babken Vardanian** had a number of successes and became the deputy chairman of the Sport Committee of the ArmSSR, while **Varouzhan Minassian** (b. 1931, Alexandria) was a reputed sportsman in javelin throwing.

About two dozens of Egyptian-Armenian boys and girls, graduated from ASIPC, became not only distinguished sportsmen, but also eminent coaches. Worthy of mention is **Assatour Tatourian** (b. 1931, Cairo), who was the coach of the volleyball national team of Armenia, a candidate of Master of Sports and an Honored Coach of the ArmSSR. He has also been the Deputy Headmaster of the Sporting School in Yerevan.



## WRITERS

**Paydsar Yerkat** (b. 1887, Kayseri, Turkey). A writer, playwright, poetess, dancer, singer, violinist and pianist, the mother of Mihran, Marie and Arpiné Yerkat. First I met this talented lady in 1946, in Alexandria, at the “Tigran Yerkat” Club, during the performance of her “Aydsemluk” play, where the singer had assumed several roles and parts. In 1948, she was repatriated to Armenia with her family. I met her again in Yerevan, in 1988, when she was 101 years old and recalled, in full detail, the Hamidian massacres and communicated us her eyewitness testimonies of the Armenian Genocide, concerning the tragic end of the great Armenian intellectuals Grigor Zohrap, Daniel Varouzhan, Siamanto and others, deported from Constantinople to Eskishehir. She has also handed me her voluminous, but unpublished epic poem in Turkish and Armenian: *“The tragedy of 1915.”*<sup>16</sup>

**Garnik Svazlian** (b. 1904, Izmir). He is the first repatriate from Egypt (1947), who, having lived only five months in his dreamland, Armenia, has become a member of the Writers’ Union of Armenia. He has been one of the founders, in Alexandria, of the Committee for the Assistance of Armenia (HOK) and has been its active member till its dissolution, in 1937. He was the author of the play *“Repatriation”* (1936), which has been staged in the various colonies of the Diaspora and, according to the author’s desire, the proceeds of its staging were constantly assigned to the Repatriation Fund and to the Fund of the Construction of dwelling houses in Armenia. In 1943, he founded the “Sevan” Cultural-Public Union, which was closed down in 1947, due to his repatriation. He has published in the various Diasporan-Armenian periodicals journalistic and political articles and well-aimed caricatures calling for national gathering. He has broadcast on the Yerevan radio and written in the official organ “Soviet Armenia” a number of voluminous articles of political nature. Posthumously, his collected works *“For my Motherland”* (1965) was published in Yerevan.

## LITERARY CRITICS

**Garnik Stepanian** (b. 1907, Derjan). In the turmoil of the Armenian Genocide, he had lost his parents and, surviving in the various Greek orphanages, he had reached Egypt. He has worked in Cairo, as a type-setter at the editing house “Arev” (in the days of Yervand Otian’s and Vahan Tekeyan’s chief editorship). He had searched by correspondence and found his father, who had been rescued from his birthplace by the Russian Army units and was living in Soviet Armenia. At the invitation of his father, in 1930, he was repatriated and lived in Yerevan. He had graduated from the Philology Section of the Yerevan State University (YSU), he had worked at the Institute of Literature after M. Abeghian of the Academy of Sciences of ArmSSR and became a well-known literary critic, a Doctor in Art Criticism, an Honored Art Worker and Director of the Museum of Literature. He is the author of more than 20 books dedicated to the masters of the Armenian stage. He has translated the Armenian-lettered Turkish novel

<sup>16</sup> Svazlian 2011, Testimonies № 181 and № 555.

“*Agapi*”; he is also the author of the remarkable memoirs “*Nightmarish Days*,” which, transmitted to us as an eyewitness testimony of the Armenian Genocide, was included in our voluminous book.<sup>17</sup>

**Hayk Gasparian** (b. 1920, Cairo). With his wife, the singer Gohar Gasparian, he was repatriated from Cairo to Yerevan. He has worked at the Department of Cultural Ties and Relations of the Institute of Literature after M. Abeghian of the Academy of Sciences of the ArmSSR. He is the author of the scientific work “*Victor Hugo on the Armenian stage*,” for which he was awarded the title of Candidate of Philological Sciences.

**Hakob Aramian** (b. 1908, Antioch). He has been the editor of the “Arev” daily newspaper. He was the Head of the First Repatriation Caravan from Egypt, in 1947. He was a member of the Writers’ Union of Armenia and is the author of “*In the valley of the Nile*” (1954) and “*The Negress of Paris*” (1956) novels.

**Varouzhan Nalbandian** (b. 1929, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1947. He graduated from the Psychology department of the Armenian State Pedagogical Institute after Kh. Abovian in Yerevan. He is a member of the Writers’ Union of Armenia. He has written essays, fairy-tales and comedies.

**Perj Zeytuntsian** (b. 1938, Alexandria). He studied at the Yerevan State University, then at the Moscow Institute of Literature and graduated from the Moscow two-year higher course in screen-writing. He is a prose-writer, novelist, playwright, the general editor of the Artistic Union of Television films at the “Yerevan” studio, a member of the Writers’ Union of Armenia, the Secretary of the Management of the Writers’ Union, a member of the Editorial Staff of the “Literary Newspaper.” His works have been translated into Russian and other languages. Among his plays are “*The saddest man*,” “*The Call of the Gods*,” “*Stand up, the Court is coming*,” “*Khor Virap (Deep Pit)*,” etc., which are being staged in Armenia and abroad. He was awarded a great number of prizes and titles, among them the State Prize of the ArmSSR, “The Golden Pen” of the Writers’ Union of Armenia, Honored public man of culture and the Prize of the President of the Republic of Armenia.

### OPERA SINGERS

**Mihran Yerkat** (b. 1921, Constantinople). He graduated from the Lyceum after Giuseppe Verdi in Alexandria. He sang solos at the Alhambra Theater in Alexandria and at the Royal Opera House in Cairo. He was repatriated in 1947 and performed the main parts at the Yerevan Opera and Ballet Theater after A. Spendiarian, as well as at the Moscow Great Theater. His broad-ranged baritone voice and dramatic versatile talent have enabled him to perform multifarious parts, such as Arshak II (in T. Choukhadjian’s “*Arshak II*”), Tatoul (Al. Spendiarian’s “*Almast*”), Rigoletto (G. Verdi’s “*Rigoletto*”); at the Great Theater in Moscow he performed, in 1961-63, the role of Gryaznoy (Rimski-

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, Testimony № 95.

Korsakov's *"The King's bride-to-be"*), Kamo (G. Hakhinian's *"The Legendary Man"*) operas. He was awarded the title of "Popular Artist of the USSR" (1977).

**Gohar Gasparian (Khachatrian)** (b. 1924, Cairo). She has cultivated her voice in Cairo under the direction of the Italian maestros G. Feldman and V. Carro. She has performed in Cairo since 1940. She was repatriated in 1947. As a soloist, she has worked at the Opera and Ballet National Academic Theater after Al. Spendiarian in Yerevan. Starting from 1964 she has lectured at the Yerevan State Conservatory after Komitas (YSC), she has been awarded the title of "Professor." Her lyrical coloratura-soprano voice offered her exceptionally wide possibilities to perform complicated creations with an ideological-artistic, deep and convincing interpretation. The universally famed singer has marvelously performed the role of Anoush, Shoushan (A. Tigranian's *"Anoush," "Davit Bek"*), Olympia, Karine (T. Chukhajian's *"Arshak II," "Leblebiji Horhor Agha"*), Gohar (H. Stepanian's *"Heroine"*), Rosina (G. Rossini's *"Sevilian Barber"*), Margarit (Ch. Gounod's *"Faust"*), Lakmé (L. Delibe's *"Lakmé"*), Luchia (G. Donizzeti's *"Luchia de Lamermoor"*), Norma (V. Bellini's *"Norma"*), Marfa (N. Rimski-Korsakov's *"The king's bride-to-be"*). Her concert repertoire is also very rich (J. Bach, G. Hendel, W. Mozart, J. Strauss, E. Grieg, R. Glier, P. Tchaikovsky, S. Rakhmaninov and other composers, as well as Armenian Spiritual Music, Komitas and others). She has given concerts in the numerous cities of the Soviet Union and in the different countries of the world, fascinating everywhere the audience. She is the first repatriate to be honored with the titles of the "People's Artist of the USSR" (1956) and of the "Hero of Socialist Labor" (1984) and numerous State awards.

**Arminé (Zakarian) Toutounjian** (b. 1928, Cairo). She was repatriated in 1948. The modest and talented soloist singer has created at the Yerevan Opera and Ballet National Academic Theater after Al. Spendiarian a number of unforgettable characters; particularly impressive was her performance as Anoush in the opera of the same name. She has also performed along with Mihran Yerkat and Gohar Gasparian. She was awarded the title of "People's Artist of Armenia and the Medal of Honor."

**Anna (Papazian) Neshanian** (b. 1932, Cairo). Starting from 1964, she became the soloist of the Yerevan Opera and Ballet National Academic Theater after Al. Spendiarian.

## **DANCERS**

**Anna Marikian** (b. 1944, Alexandria). She is the granddaughter of the well-known artist Paydsar Yerkat and the daughter of Marie Yerkat. She was repatriated in 1947. She graduated from the Yerevan Dance College. The talented soloist has performed at the Yerevan Opera and Ballet National Academic Theater after Al. Spendiarian as a chief ballerina in the *"Giselle," "Spartak," "Gayané," "Don Quixote," "Swan Lake"* ballets. She has performed in various countries. She is now a well-known pedagogue and the head teacher-methodist of choreography. She was highly appreciated by the spectators and from the state. She was honored with State awards.

**Sona Vardanian** (b. 1947, Alexandria). She was repatriated in 1948. Since her childhood (age 3) her bias toward dancing was noticeable. She was admitted to the Yerevan State dancing college. She completed the eight-year educational period in seven years. She became the soloist dancer at the Opera and Ballet National Academic Theater after Al. Spendiarian. She assumed responsible roles in “*Tamar*,” “*Giselle*,” “*Swan Lake*,” “*Don Quixote*,” “*Gayané*” and “*Spartak*” ballets. She has performed in various countries with Vilen Galstian.

### **ARTISTS**

**Khachik Sandaljian** (b. 1900, Alexandria). The well-known artist was repatriated in 1948 and worked at the Yerevan Musical Comedy Theater after H. Paronian and has performed the impressive roles of Western-Armenian playwrights, enjoying the sympathy of the spectators.

**Zhirayr Srapian** with his peculiar exterior and powerful voice he has sung in the State Chorus of Armenia and was shot in the films “*Tezhvezhik*” and “*Kariné*.”

**The Ouzounian couple.** They were repatriated from Alexandria in 1947. They have acted on the arena of the Yerevan State Circus, amazing the spectators with their fascinating performance.

### **PRODUCERS**

**Hrach Frounjan** (b. 1934, Alexandria). He is the only Egyptian-Armenian person, who has graduated from the higher courses of movie-production at the All-Russian Cinematography State Institute after S. Gerassimov. He has worked in his profession at the Television of Armenia and the newly-created Yerevan Puppet Theater.

### **LECTURERS AT THE GEVORGIAN SEMINARY**

**Vahram Ardsrouni** (b. 1875, Yerznka). He received his elementary education at the Aramian School in Akn, then he studied at the Ketronakan School and the Imperial Art School in Constantinople. In Alexandria, he was appointed Headmaster of the Poghossian National School and, subsequently, he founded the Targmanchats (Translators’) School in Alexandria and assumed the post of Headmaster. In 1947, he was repatriated to Armenia and has officiated at the Gevorgian Seminary of the Holy See of Edjmiadsin as a lecturer of old Armenian language and bibliography.

**Barsegh Tashchian** (b. 1932, Cairo). He has been a member of the audit Committee adjunct to the Mother See of Edjmiadsin and a lecturer of general history and geography there.

### **CLERGYMEN**

**Perj Petikian** (b. 1928, Cairo). He graduated from the Gevorgian Seminary and became the abbot of Geghard Monastery under the name of the Very Reverend Fr. Kyuregh Vardabet. He had a short life.

**Aram Boyajian** (b. 1930, Cairo). He was ordained a priest and by order of His Holiness Vazgen I, Catholicos of All-Armenians, he was sent on mission to serve at the Diocese of Egypt as a pastor, whence he returned to Yerevan suffering from a grave disease and passed away.

**His Eminence Archbishop Arsen Berberian** (b. 1937, Alexandria). He graduated from the Gevorgian Seminary and continued his studies at the Theological Academy in Moscow. He was nominated personal secretary of His Holiness Catholicos Vazgen I. He was nominated the Vicar of the Araratian Patriarchal Diocese; subsequently, he was sent on mission to Geneva to continue his studies at the Ecumenical Institute. He was the primate of the Armenian Dioceses of Switzerland and Sweden. Later, he was sent on mission to London, where he defended his thesis entitled: *“The relations of the Anglican and Armenian Churches in the years 1840-1905.”* Simultaneously, he attended the course of studies of the London Royal Academy of Music. After his return to Armenia, he was nominated primate of the Diocese of Gougark.

### **PSYCOLOGISTS**

**Hovsep Toutounjian** (b. 1918, Alexandria). He taught psychology at the Armenian schools in Cairo. He is the first repatriate, who defended his candidate thesis in foreign language in Moscow, in 1956, and his doctorate dissertation thesis in 1967. In 1972, the title of professor was bestowed on him. He was a member of the French Union of Psychologists, an Honorary Member of the Scientific Council of the San Paulo Psychosomatic Institute. He is well-known for his original scientific trends. He has created psychology chairs in various higher educational centers. In 1976, he founded a psychology chair at the Yerevan State University, which he managed for long years; in 1979, he founded a laboratory of engineering psychology. He is the author of more than 100 scientific papers and 4 monographs in different languages, among them *“Henri Vallon’s psychological concept”* (1966), *“Problems of Child Psychology”* (1980), *“Soviet-Armenian Psychology. Selected Pages”* (1988), *“Psychological Etudes”* (1991). He has participated in international scientific conferences. He was a highly esteemed professor in the Motherland, he was awarded the “Medal of Labor Valor,” the “St. Sahak and St. Mesrop” medal and others. A Scientific library after H. Toutounjian is functioning at the Urartu University.

### **PSYCHIATRISTS**

**Garegin Amadian** (b. 1888, Yerznka). He graduated from the Ketronakan School in Constantinople, then from the Mourad Rafaelian School in Venice. He has received his professional education at the Medical Faculty of the Lausanne University (Switzerland). He was a renowned physician in Cairo. He repatriated in 1948 and worked in Yerevan at the Psychiatric Clinic. He was the first repatriate physician to support a dissertation and to be awarded the degree of a candidate in Medical

Sciences. He is the author of numerous scientific papers, which deal not only with medicine, but also with the history of the Armenian Genocide. His collection of poems has been published in Paris.

**Massis Amadian** (b. 1932, Cairo). He graduated from the Yerevan State Medical Institute after M. Heratsi. The son has continued his father's, Garegin Amadian's specialty and has defended, in Moscow, his doctoral thesis in the branches of biochemistry, pharmacology and psychiatry. He has worked in Yerevan, at the Institute of Fine Organic Chemistry after A. Mnjoyan. He is the author of a great number of scientific papers concerning psychiatry and radiological biochemistry.

### **PHYSICIANS**

**Poghos Shamlian** (b. 1900, Cairo). He was Head Physician at the French Hospital in Cairo. He was repatriated in 1946 with the Armenian-Lebanese people. He was well-known in Yerevan as a professional surgeon.

**Gevorg Arslanian** (b. 1925, Cairo). He has graduated with flying colors from the Yerevan State Medical Institute; he has worked as a surgeon and Head-surgeon in Meghri, then he moved to Moscow where he worked at the Arabic Section of the TASS information agency. He has published the "Russian-Latin-Arabic trilingual Medical Dictionary" with the participation of Professor N. Aslanian.

**Zaven Dolabjian** (b. 1928, Alexandria). A highly-esteemed and meritorious Egyptian-Armenian repatriate, cardiologist, doctor-professor; he is the author of numerous scientific papers and monographs, as well as of belles-lettres literature. He was Head of Department at the Institute of Cardiology after L. Hovhannissian; a member of the editorial board of the authoritative medical publication in the USA, a member of the International Cardiological Association. He has been elected thrice a deputy of the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR and a member of the presidency (1972).

**Noubar Aslanian** (b. 1931, Cairo). He graduated with flying colors from the Yerevan State Medical Institute, then he has worked as a physician at the hospital of the Kouchak village near Aparan. Subsequently, he has defended his doctoral dissertation in Yerevan and awarded the degree of Doctor of Medical Sciences. He has been Head of the Chair of Diagnosis at the National Public Health Institute, professor at the YSMI, of the Chair of Clinical Biochemistry of his conception. He is the founder of the scientific trend of Chronobiology and Chronomedicine in Armenia. He was Head of the Department of Clinical Biochemistry at the Institute of Cardiology in Yerevan, Head of the Chair at the YSMI. He was also a lecturer at the YSMI and at the different universities. He is the author of more than 500 scientific papers and several monographs. He has participated in international scientific conferences. He has imparted professional knowledge to numerous physicians and doctors

**Alice Levonian** (b. 1932, Cairo). She graduated from the YSMI, she worked as a surgeon at the Yerevan Clinical Hospital № 3.



**Noyemi Hovhannissian** (b. 1932, Cairo). She graduated from the YSMI. She has worked as a pediatrician at the Nor-Aresh Children's Hospital in Yerevan.

**Voskan Bahlavian** (b. 1938, Alexandria). Doctor-professor in Medical Sciences, a well-known cardiologist. Head of the Department of Cardiology at the "St. Grigor Lousavorich" Medical Center in Yerevan. He is the author of about 30 scientific papers.

**Edward Svajian** (b. 1941, Cairo). Doctor-professor. He has worked as an anesthesiologist in Moscow.

**Anahit Vardanian** (b. 1944, Alexandria). She graduated from YSMI. She has worked as a gynecologist at the Maternity Hospital № 2 in Yerevan.

**Azat Poghikian** (b. 1951, Cairo). Candidate of Medical Sciences. Cardiologist. He has worked at the Institute of Cardiology after L. Hovhannissian.

### ARABISTS

**Hakob Nalbandian** (b. 1890, Constantinople). He has been a highly respected Headmaster at the Galoustian National School in Cairo and at the Poghossian National School in Alexandria. He was repatriated in 1947 and was admitted to work at the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia. He is the first repatriate to defend his dissertation in Arabic Philology and to be awarded the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences. The theme of his thesis was *"Armenia in the period of Arab invasions"* (1956). He has published also the study *"The Arab policemen in Armenia"* (1958) and posthumously his work *"The Arab sources about Armenia and the neighboring countries"* (1965) was published by the Publishing House of the National Academy of Sciences.

**Vaghinak Biurat** (b. 1913, Constantinople). He is the son of the writer Smbat Biurat and the first lecturer of Arabic language at the Yerevan State University. He was also engaged in translation.

**Hrach Gaboujian** (b. 1926, Cairo). He graduated from the YSU, where he was the student of the academician Hrachia Ajarian and continued his studies at the Moscow State University after Lomonossov. He has been a lecturer in Arabic language, then Head of the Chair and Dean of the Institute of Oriental Studies. He has participated in international scientific conferences and was decorated with the "People's Friendship" medal. He lives in Moscow.

**Aram Ter-Ghevondian** (b. 1928, Cairo). Doctor in Historical Sciences, professor. He graduated from the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the YSU. He has worked at the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (NAS RA). From 1981 to 1988, he was Head of Department at the Institute of Oriental Studies of NAS RA. His scientific researches concern the medieval Armenian-Arab political and cultural relations: *"The Arab Emirates in Bagratid Armenia"* (1965), *"Armenia and the Arab Caliphate"* (1977, in Russian). He has translated the series of the publication *"The Foreign sources about Armenia and the Armenians."* He has published the work *"Ibn Al-Assir"* (1981). He has translated into New Armenian

Language, written a preface and commentaries and published Agathangelos' *"History of the Armenians"* (1983), Ghevond's *"History"* (1982). He has been an Honorary Member of the Institute of History of the Syrian Academy of Sciences, an associate member of the Tiberian Academy of Rome (1996). He is the husband of Seda Devejian, a repatriate from Lebanon, an archaeologist. He is the father of the present Director of the Museum Institute of Ancient Manuscripts "Matenadaran" after M. Mashtots, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Vahan Ter-Ghevondian.

**Haroutyun Zhamkochian** (b. 1932, Siouf, Alexandria). He has first graduated from the YSU and subsequently he has continued his studies at the Leningrad State University. He has lectured at the Faculty of Oriental Studies. He is a Doctor of Historical Sciences and a lecturer of Arabic language.

### **LECTURERS, TEACHERS, SCHOOL HEADMASTERS**

**Zarouhi Svazlian** (b. 1929, Alexandria). She was repatriated in 1947. She graduated from the German Department of the State Institute of Foreign Languages after V. Bryussov (YSIFL) in Yerevan. She lectured on German language at the same Institute. She was awarded the title of a docent. She has published textbooks for the higher classes of the secondary schools of Armenia (Co-authors: Artashes Tiratsian, Manoush Haroutyunian and Dora Sakayan). She has published the German reading-book *"Das Karoussel."*

**Aram Barlezizian** (b. 1937, Cairo). He graduated from the YSU, he is a Doctor in Philology, professor. He is a lecturer on French Language at the YSIFL and the Head of the Chair. He is the author of 45 scientific papers and 3 monographs, concerning the Armenian-French linguistic relations.

**Sona Hovhannissian** (b. 1938, Cairo). She graduated from the Romanic-German Philological Faculty of the YSU; she has given lectures on French language at the YSU and at the Yerevan Institute of National Economy (YINE). She is the author of a number of textbooks and also of the *"French-Armenian-Russian trilingual Economic Dictionary."*

**Perj Tyourabian** (b. 1947, Cairo). He was repatriated to Armenia with his family in 1964. He graduated from the French Section of the Romano-German Philological Faculty of the Yerevan State University. With a high artistic taste he has translated more than a dozen Charles Aznavour songs from the French into the Armenian language and also performs these songs with a peculiar and fascinating charm both in Armenian and French languages.

**Levon Galemkerian** (b. 1907, Ayntap). He has graduated from the Theological Seminary in Athens and subsequently from the American University in Beirut. He has founded in Calcutta the Armenian Philanthropic Seminary and the Art-Lovers' union in Cairo. He has taught the English Language in the Cairo schools, then also in the schools of Leninakan (Gyumri). He is the author of *"The Child's education at Home"* (1934, Cairo) and of *"The story of the Calcutta Armenian Philanthropic Seminary"* (unpublished).

**Hayk Voskerchian** (b. 1919, Alexandria). He is the son of the Rev. Father Haykazoun. He graduated from the Haykazian School, then he received a higher English education. In 1947, he repatriated alone to Armenia. He has been a lecturer on English language at the YSU and the Yerevan State Conservatory after Komitas. He has authored the first *“Armenian-English Phrase book”* in Armenia (1965). For many years, he has conducted on the Television of Armenia the newly created courses in English language, which were interrupted in 1968, when he emigrated to France.

**Alice Ardsrouni (Porter)** (b. 1920, Alexandria). She has graduated from the local Banat-el-Ashraf Egypto-English college. She has worked in Egypt at the Targmanchats (Translators’) School, founded by her father, as a teacher of English language. Following the repatriation of the family, she has worked in Yerevan at the School after Telman and has given private lessons to the high-ranking officials and to their children.

**Aram Inejian** (b. 1927, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1963. He graduated from the YSIFL. He was the Headmaster of the secondary school № 139 with an English language bias. At the same school, his brother **Gegham** and his wife **Astghik** have taught English language, while his brother **Sargis** has taught English at the school № 114 with an English language bias.

**Alice Poghikian** (b. 1926, Cairo). She was repatriated in 1963. With her skillful knowledge of the English language she was admitted to the Yerevan Secondary School with an English language bias after Y. Charents, where, together with her daughter, Astghik Poghikian-Kovkassian, and, implementing new and interesting methods of teaching, has significantly raised the level of teaching of the English language, thereby providing the Motherland with experienced specialists.

**Astghik Poghikian-Kovkassian** (b. 1945, Cairo). She was repatriated in 1963. She graduated from the English language section of YSIFL. She has taught English at the secondary school with an English language bias after Y. Charents in Yerevan.

**Noubar Hovhannissian** (b. 1930, Cairo). He graduated from the English Department of the Romanic-German Philology Faculty of the YSU. He was a lecturer at the YSIFL. He is the author of 3 textbooks, the *“ABC Book,” “My English Textbook”* and *“English.”*

**Ani Tsoulikian (Tashjian)** (b. 1947, Cairo). She graduated from the YSIFL. She has lectured on English language at the same institute.

**Atken Armenian** (b. 1944, Cairo). He graduated from the English school in Heliopolis, then from the oil-engineering department of the London University. He has worked as an oil-engineer in Edmonton, Canada, and subsequently has graduated from the Alberta University and defended his thesis entitled: *“The teaching of foreign languages in Armenia.”* He was the Headmaster of the French school in Toronto. In 1992, he moved to Armenia. He was the Dean of the Extension Courses at the American University of Armenia (AUA) and was the Director of the office dealing with the Student Problems, but he passed away after a short time.

**Hakob Tsoulikian** (b. 1942, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1963 and graduated from the YSIFL. He lectured on English language at the same institute, he was also a senior lecturer in AUA. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the “Azg” weekly and a translator of foreign languages.

**Armenak Nshanian (Zhano)** (b. 1930, Cairo). He graduated from the Artistic section of the Yerevan Art-Theatrical Institute (YATI). He has lectured on foreign languages at the Yerevan State Conservatory. He is the husband of the opera singer Anna Papazian-Nshanian. He passed away in Yerevan.

### ***POLITICIANS***

**Sargis Ekmekjian** (b. 1928, Cairo). He graduated from the Yerevan State Pedagogical Institute (YSPI) after Kh. Abovian. Subsequently, he graduated also from the post-graduate course of the Leningrad University. For over 30 years he worked at the Arabic section of TASS (Moscow) and enjoyed great authority at the Arabic Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

**Haroutyun Tatourian** (b. 1928, Zakazik). He graduated from the YSU; he has worked several years in Iraq at the Russian Embassy as a translator. He has lectured then at the YSU and filled the job of an editor and announcer of Arabic programs at the Radio Committee of ArmSSR.

### ***ECONOMISTS***

**Vahé Gapoujian** (b. 1930, Cairo). He has graduated with flying colors from the Faculty of Economics of the YSU. He has defended his thesis under the guidance of the renowned economist Z. Bashindjaghian and was awarded the scientific title of candidate and of docent. He has lectured at the YSU, subsequently he was nominated Deputy-Chancellor in Educational Affairs and later, first Deputy-Minister of Higher and Secondary Education of the ArmSSR. He is the first repatriate in a similar office.

**Hakob Terounian** (b. 1931, Alexandria). He has attended the Lycée Français in Alexandria. He was repatriated in 1947 and he graduated with flying colors from the Faculty of Economics of the YSU, simultaneously studying at the Yerevan State Conservatory; he successfully graduated, being qualified as an opera singer. He was entrusted, as an exclusive economist, with the responsible posts of the Head of the administration of the Central Bank of Armenia, Chairman of the Social Bank of Housing and a member of the Council of the Association of the Banks of Armenia.

### ***BIOLOGISTS***

**Poghos Svajian** (b. 1900, Constantinople). He received his elementary education in Constantinople, then, in 1930, he graduated from the Berlin Medical University. He has given lectures on biology and zoology at the Cairo American University (CAU). From 1948 he was a senior scientific worker at the Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia. He is the first candidate in Biological Sciences of Armenia. He



is the first candidate in Biological Sciences, who has studied the pathogenic organism of bilharzia in small cattle and has defended his doctor's thesis in English, in Moscow. He has given lectures on biology at the Pedagogical Institute in Kirovakan (Vanadzor).

**Gegham Barseghian** (b. 1926, Alexandria). He graduated from the Yerevan Medical Institute; he is a doctor-professor. He was a lecturer at the Institute of Veterinary Medicine and cattle-breeding and Head of the Chair of Natural Sciences. He is the first scientist in Armenia who has referred to the biochemical role of colamine. He has been Head of the Chair at the Yerevan Pedagogical Institute.

### **CHEMISTS**

**Norayr Beylerian** (b. 1929, Cairo). He graduated from the YSU in 1953. He is a longtime doctor-professor at the Faculty of Chemistry of the YSU, Head of the Chair of Physical and Colloid Chemistry (1976-2000), simultaneously, the scientific leader of the laboratory of the Kinetic problems of polymerization processes; later, Honorary Head of the Chair. He has studied the kinetics and mechanism of the radical chain reactions in liquids in the presence of peroxides, the kinetic correlations of polymerization and the transformation of the surface of inorganic oxides under the influence of laser, gamma- and X-rays. Doctor of Chemical Sciences (1975), professor (1977). He is the author of more than 700 scientific papers and 30 patents, published in the various countries of the world, and of a number of university textbooks. He is a member of the International Academy of Ecologists (1996), a member of the Armenian branch of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (1998), an Academician of the Engineering Academy of the Republic of Armenia (2010), a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Europe (2011), he has been four times awarded the title of "Man of the Year" of the American Biographical Institute (1998, 2008, 2010 and 2011). He has trained numerous high-quality specialists, 51 candidates and 7 doctor-professors of Chemical Sciences, among them 4 heads of the chair. He has been awarded the title of Honored Scientist of the Higher School of the ArmSSR and a number of medals. He has been the Chairman of the Society of Cultural Relations between Armenia and Egypt.

**Tigran Tsoulikian** (b. 1931, Cairo). He graduated from the Pharmaceutical Faculty of the Alexandria University. He was repatriated in 1964. He has studied the original medicinal plants of the various regions of Armenia and has published 4 scientific papers. From 1975-1992, he was Head of the Scientific Information Department at the Institute of Fine Organic Chemistry after A. Mnjoyan and has formed an *"Informative catalog of universal data on medicinal drugs,"* pharmaceutical chemistry and pharmacology. In those years, when the Internet was not yet available, the Catalog was of great service for the scientific workers of 46 institutions of Armenia and the Soviet Union. For these services, he was awarded an "Honor Diploma" in 1977, in Moscow, during the international exhibition "Chemistry-77," where he represented the medicinal products manufactured in Armenia, in various foreign languages. From 1993-2010, he was entrusted with the post of the Director of the Benevolent office at the Araratian

Patriarchal Diocese in Yerevan for the sponsorship of orphan children (as a result of the Spitak earthquake, during the liberation of Artsakh and other orphans). During the 18 years of his being in office, he has distributed financial aid amounting to about 6 million US dollars to 10 thousand Armenian orphans thanks to the munificence of the devout members of the foreign Dioceses of the Armenian Apostolic Church, as well as of German, Belgian, Dutch, British and other benevolent organizations and individuals by maintaining correspondences in foreign languages with them. Highly appraising his longtime faultless service, the Catholicos of All Armenians, Garegin II, has conferred a "Papal Bull of Blessing" on him. During his service at the Diocese, he has translated into English my (the author of these lines) voluminous books about the Armenian Genocide and of other nature, whose level of classical English has been highly appreciated abroad. He is, at present, the Chairman of the Society of Cultural Relations between Armenia and Egypt.

### **PHYSICISTS, MATHEMATICIANS**

**Vanik Ajemian** (b. 1927, Cairo). He graduated from the Yerevan Polytechnical Institute (YPI) after K. Marx; he has worked at the Yerevan Research Institute of Mathematical Machines as Head of the Department. He is one of the first authors in the USSR of the "NAIRI" computer, working with a high level language and microprogramming. He is also one of the first main designers of the powerful "YeS" computers. He is the co-author of the book *"YeS-1030 electronic calculator"* published in Moscow, in 1977. He was awarded silver and bronze medals. He has been the Chairman of the Society of Cultural Relations between Armenia and Egypt.

**Onik Piroumian** (b. 1931, Cairo). He graduated from the YSU and completed his post-graduate studies in Leningrad. He is one of the first people in Armenia, who specialized in the field of mathematical programming.

**Hovsep Asmarian** (b. 1934, Cairo). He graduated from the Leninakan branch of the YPI. During the years 1967-1993, he was the engineer of the Yerevan "Electron" factory, which enjoyed great authority in the whole USSR; he then became the deputy-chief constructor of the same factory.

**Karo Ispirian** (b. 1935, Alexandria). He graduated from the YSU; he is a doctor of Physico-mathematical Sciences, professor. He has worked at the Institute for Physical Research (IPR) of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia under the scientific leadership of A. Alikhanian. His works refer to the theoretical and experimental problems of quantum electrodynamics of the formation of photons during transitional radiation. He is a well-known and appreciated specialist. He has participated in international scientific conferences in different countries.

**Vardges Gaboujian** (b. 1936, Cairo). He graduated from the Faculty of Physics of the YSU; subsequently he has continued his studies at the Moscow State University after Lomonossov and was awarded the title of Doctor-Professor. He has published scientific papers relating to the semi-conductor physics and microelectronics. He has 4

patents. He was rewarded with the badge of “Inventor of USSR” and with the medals of “Labor Veteran” and “In commemoration of the 850<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Moscow.”

**Perj Tokatlian** (b. 1938, Cairo). He graduated from the Swiss Technological Institute in Cairo and was qualified as an engineer, electrician and a specialist in radio-electronics. He was repatriated with his family to Armenia, in 1963. He has worked at the “Stroymashina” factory in Leninakan (now: Gyumri) and, subsequently, at the “Hayhastots” factory in Yerevan as a chief specialist. He has created a number of precision metal-cutting lathes supplied with an “electronic brain,” which were much in demand in the various towns of the Soviet Union, then – also of the Russian Federation, as well as abroad.

### **ENGINEERS**

More than 30 Egyptian-Armenian repatriates have graduated with flying colors from the Yerevan Polytechnical Institute (YPI) and have worked at the various factories in Yerevan as competent and devoted engineers and many of them have held high responsible positions.

**Noubar Jrnazian** (b. 1931, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1948. He graduated from the YPI. He held responsible posts as an engineer, among them the principal technologist of the Electro-mechanical Engineering Factory in Yerevan.

**Noubar Bayramian** (b. 1945, Cairo). He graduated from the Mechanical Faculty of the Leninakan branch of YPI. He has worked at the Yerevan Watch factory as the Deputy Head of the Automation and Mechanization Department; subsequently he has worked at the “Almast” factory as Deputy Shop superintendent.

**Grigor Chakmakchian** (b. 1935, Cairo). He graduated from the Architectural Faculty of the YPI as well as from the Conductor’s Section of the YSC. He has worked as an architect.

### **GEOLOGISTS**

**Yervand Cherkezian** (b. 1919, Adana). He has studied at the Poghossian National School in Alexandria, at the Galoustian National School in Cairo and at the Melkonian School in Cyprus. He was repatriated in 1948. He has taught geography for 50 years at various schools in Yerevan; he published a *“Textbook of Geography.”* He was awarded the high title of “Honored Teacher.”

**Hakob Krkeyan** (b. 1927, Zakazik). He graduated from the Yerevan State Pedagogical Institute (YSPI). He has worked at the Editorial office of the Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia. He is a lecturer on Geography at the YSU, a doctor-professor. He is the author of a number of geographical dictionaries, handbooks and textbooks.

**Abraham Gyonjian** (b. 1931, Alexandria). He studied at the local Lycée Français, then he graduated from the Egyptian Higher Institute of Agriculture. He was repatriated in 1962. He has worked as a Deputy Head of the Municipal Construction Administration in Leninakan and has lectured at the Leninakan Field-crop cultivating technical college.

In the years 1969-1972, he worked at the Institute of Geophysics and Engineering Seismology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, where he was Head of the Chair 1976-1982. He was Head of the Chair of Thermotechnics and Hydraulics. He was an English translator at the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Armenia. He is the author of a number of scientific papers.

**Sargis Sargissian** (b. 1934, Cairo). He graduated from the YSU. He has worked at the Institute of Geology of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. He has a considerable contribution in the study and processing of the copper and molybdenum mines spread out across the southern provinces of Armenia. He has a number of scientific works. Apart from his specialty, he has published a Dictionary (including 6,000 words) of French loan words introduced into the Russian language with their Armenian equivalents (1997).

**Aram Ohanian** (b. 1945, Cairo). He graduated as a geologist from the YSU. He was fascinated by mountaineering. He has discovered a new mountain pass in the Pamir Mountains and named it Sassoun. While rescuing the life of his five friends during a blizzard, he seriously injured his head and passed away.

### **CHOIR-MASTERS**

**Hayk Frounjan** (b. 1924, Alexandria). He has continued his studies at the Zharangavorats Seminary in Jerusalem. He was repatriated in 1947. He graduated from the Choirmaster Section of the YSC after Komitas. He has worked at the Gevorgian Seminary of the Holy See of Edjmiadsin; he has lectured on music and has directed the Choir. Subsequently, he has worked at the Radio Committee of Armenia.

**Grigor Sandaljian** (b. 1933, Alexandria). He has graduated from the YSC. Until his serious illness, he has been the leader of the State Opera Chorus for several years.

**Karo Chalikian** (b. 1946, Cairo). He successfully graduated from the YPI, however, his great love for Armenian music has induced him to continue his studies also at the YSC. He was the skillful leader of the Chorus of the Writers' Union of Armenia. He has performed with his group in Armenian-spirited concerts. He is better known as a specialist to explore the Armenian musical notations. In that field, he has published a valuable work.

### **MUSICIANS**

**Tagouhi Aramian** (b. 1912, Cairo). She graduated from the Galoustian National School (GNS) in Cairo, then the Bologna Conservatory in Italy. From 1947-1983, she worked at the Yerevan Musical School after Tchaikovsky; she was a longtime, highly respected piano teacher. She has been awarded the title "Honored Teacher of the ArmSSR." She is the wife of the editor of the "Arev" newspaper, Hakob Aramian.

**Hakob Sandaljian** (b. 1930, Alexandria). He graduated from the YSC and there he has taught violin. He is a candidate in Musicology, a docent. He has trained a number of specialists.



**Armenouhi Svazlian** (b. 1943, Alexandria). She was repatriated with her family in 1947. She graduated from the piano and music theory sections of YSC. She has given lectures at the YSC and the YSU, also by radio and published articles on the theme of the art of Komitas, Grigor Narekatsi and Sayat-Nova. She has worked at the Musical School after A. Tigranian as a piano teacher. She has accompanied her brothers, and they have performed in trio Armenian-spirited songs.

**Zhirayr Svazlian** (b. 1945, Alexandria). He was repatriated with his family in 1947. He graduated from the violin section of the YSC. He has worked at the Opera and Ballet National Academic Theater after Al. Spendiarian in Yerevan and subsequently at the Opera and Ballet Theater orchestra in San-Francisco.

**Zohrap Svazlian** (b. 1945, Alexandria). He was repatriated in 1947 with his family. He graduated from the musical school after P. Tchaikovsky and then from the Cello Section of the YSC. He has worked at the Orchestra of the Radio Committee of Armenia as a cellist; he has participated with his sister, Armenouhi, in the Competition of the Transcaucasian musicians in Tbilisi (1965), as well as, during his student years, he has accompanied his sister Armenouhi and his brother Zhirayr in a familial trio and played Armenian-spirited melodies.

**Hrach Svajian** (b. 1943, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1947. He graduated from the Violin section of YSC. In 1956, he participated, along with Gohar Gasparian, Mihran Yerkat and Arminé Toutounjian, in the festivities of the ten-day Literature and Art Festival of Armenia in Moscow. In 1965, he continued his studies in Leningrad under the leadership of B. Goudnikov and, later, he improved his art in Moscow under the guidance of D. Oistrakh. Subsequently, he founded his violin school in Canada.

**Sirvard Svajian** (b. 1945, Cairo). She has graduated from the piano section of the YSC. She has performed with her brother Hrach in various concerts in Yerevan.

### **JAZZ PLAYERS**

Among the jazz players, the saxophonist **Sargis Hovakimian**, **Hayk Nalbandian**, the trumpet-player **Gevorg Otadjian**, the cellist **Nerses Abrahamian** have graduated from YSC and have performed at various concert halls.

### **SCULPTORS**

**Arto Chakmakchian** (b. 1932, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1948. He graduated from the Sculptural section of the Yerevan Art-Theatrical Institute (YATI). He has worked as a scientific worker at the Art Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, then he has lectured at the YATI. He gained a high reputation for his "*Hiroshima*" sculpture, which won an International prize. The "Komitas" statue of the artist is erected in Detroit city, while his meaningful sculpture "*Renaissance*" has found its place in Montreal. In 2003, an album of his works was published.

### **ARTISTS-PAINTERS**

**Hakob Hakobian** (b. 1923, Alexandria). He has studied at the Melkonian School in Cyprus, at the Higher Art Academy in Cairo and Grande-Chaumière Academy in Paris. He has participated in the International Youth and Student IV Festival (Bucharest, 1953, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize), the Modern Egyptian Art (1958) the Moscow and St. Petersburg exhibitions and the Alexandria Biennales (1959, 1961). He was repatriated in 1962. During the first period of his creative work, he has depicted miserable people with their sad life, the despondent mental state of the survivors of the Great Armenian Genocide persisting in the foreign countries. While his creations done in the Motherland are sunnier and brighter. The works of the master have found a higher resonance with the paintings *“No to the neutron bomb”* (1977), *“Sumgayit”* (1988) and the *“Memorial Stele”* (1989), which was installed on the Mount Aragats slope. He had individual exhibitions in Armenia, Russia, the USA and numerous other countries. He was awarded the State prizes of the ArmSSR (1977), of the USSR (1985) and subsequently the “All-Armenian Armenia Fund” (1994) and the “St. Mesrop Mashtots” (1996) medals. He is an associate-member of the Art Academy of the Russian Federation. His wife **Marie Hakobian** (b. 1929, Cairo) is also an artist-painter. She has taken part in a number of exhibitions in Yerevan and St. Edjmiadsin. Their daughter **Nora** (b. 1951, Cairo) graduated from the Architectural Faculty of the Polytechnical Institute in Yerevan and has worked in that field.

**Aida Boyajian** (b. 1932, Cairo). She was repatriated in 1948. A graduate of the YATI, the talented artist-painter is the author of numerous pictorial creations. She has organized individual exhibitions not only in Armenia, but also in the various cities of the USSR and abroad. Her contribution is particularly great to the field of the illustration of books (creations of about 30 Armenian and foreign authors' illustrations). Noteworthy are especially the character illustrations of Hovhannes Toumanian's fairy tales.

**Nerses Pidsakian** (b. 1946, Cairo). He has graduated from the YSPI. He is a candidate of Biological Sciences and a member of the Painters' Union of Armenia. He has participated in numerous exhibitions, which are devoted to the Applied Arts (decorative pictures and bas-relief carvings). He was awarded the Certificate of International Competition of Flower-Arranging in Tartu (Estonia). In 2018, an exhibition of 120 of his original creations of sculpture, graphic design and applied art was inaugurated at the Tekeyan Center-Foundation in Yerevan.

### **HANDICRAFT**

**Marie Yerkat** (b. 1910, Adabazar). She is the meritorious daughter of the talented Paydsar Yergat. Following her repatriation in 1947, she has worked for many years at the Yerevan Pioneer Palace, at the Yerevan Armenian Pedagogical Technical School and other educational institutions, teaching taste and decency to a great number of generations. She has lectured on the varieties of the Armenian traditional embroidery of different localities and the secrets of the French method of dress-making. She has

constantly organized exclusive exhibitions at the Yerevan House of creative popular art both of her students and of her own with dolls dressed in Armenian national costumes of various localities, with artificial flowers and other original creations.

**Shaké Zoulalian** (b. 1914, Constantinople). She was repatriated in 1948 from Alexandria. With her skill in needle, work and crocheting she has recreated the erstwhile traditions of the Western Armenians. The great artist Sergey Parajanov was enraptured with her handwork and decided to personally design the exhibition of her original works at the Yerevan House of Creative Popular Art (in 1987, in the days of Zaven Sargsian's directorship). Worthy of remembrance are her enormous magnificent, old-fashioned, handmade bedspread, crocheted curtains with original ornaments and other fine-spun needle-works. Mrs. Shaké has also left a bequest for the generations, namely, *"The Dishes and the Desserts of the Constantinople Armenians,"* as well as the unpublished manuscript copy-books of popular medicine *"Remedies and Means,"* which are kept at the Archives of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of NAS RA.

**Aghavni (Zoulalian) Sargsian** (b. 1934, Alexandria) was repatriated with her family in 1948 to Yerevan (Armenia). She has inherited from her mother the talent of fine needlework. Aghavni has studied at the Technical School of Art. She has embroidered landscape scenes and has created dolls with original national costumes peculiar to the different provinces of Western Armenia, which were mounted on the great physical map and permanently exhibited at the Sardarapat National Museum of Armenian Ethnography and History of Liberation Struggle.

### **LIBRARIANS**

**Levon Ajemian** (b. 1888, Van). He received his primary education at the Kedronakan School in Constantinople. He has worked at the Kelekian Orphanage in Dyort-Yol as a senior teacher. From 1935-1940, he published 6 text-books on the History of the Armenians, in two series (concise and extensive); he also published, along with his wife, **R. Ajemian**, 2 readers: "Armenian language" for the Armenian schools of Egypt and the Middle East. He has published the periodical "Poonj" for the children and youth. In Alexandria he has organized the Armenian Student Union and has assumed its leadership. He has pleaded for the writing down and printing of "The Memoirs of Armenak Yekarian," one of the leaders of the city of Van, who had brought the heroic battle of Van to its triumphant end (1947). He has contributed to the daily newspaper "Arev" and has been its chief editor for some time. He was repatriated in 1947 and has worked at the Public Library in Yerevan, as a senior specialist.

**Haroutyoun Mekerian** (b. 1924, Cairo). He was repatriated in 1948. He graduated from the Philological Section of the YSU. He has worked as the manager of the Library of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia. He has written *"The life and activity of Mikael Gyourjian"* (unpublished).

**Alice Tatoulian** (b. 1926, Cairo). She was repatriated in 1948; she graduated from the Library Science Section of YSU, has worked for many years at the Central Library of

the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia as the manager of the Department of Foreign Languages.

**Artemis Nalbandian** (b. 1927, Alexandria). She is the daughter of the Arabist Hakob Nalbandian. She received her education at the Armenian National schools in Cairo and subsequently at the German school in Alexandria. She has taught at the Poghossian National School. She was repatriated in 1947 and with her knowledge of foreign language she worked from 1947-2002 at the Municipal Central Library after A. Issahakian in Yerevan and, in the subsequent years, as Head of the Section.

### **HISTORIANS**

**Arakel Patrik (Patriarkian)** (b. 1894, Sebastia). He was a pupil of Daniel Varouzhan at the School in Sebastia. He has founded a school in Yevdokia. He was miraculously rescued from the Armenian Genocide. In 1920, he attended the courses of Art at the Academies after Leonardo da Vinci in Milan and Grande-Chaumière in Paris. Starting from 1925, he taught the art of painting at the National Schools in Cairo and at the Melkonian School in Cyprus. In 1937, he founded in Cairo "The Union of the Friends of Armenian Art." He is the first ethnographer repatriated from Egypt, who has worked for long years at the State Museum of the History of Armenia. He is the author of "*Armenian costume of the XIX-XX centuries*" (1967) colored album of an exclusively high value, in which the pictures and the scientific information belong to the author. He has also published the voluminous and valuable twin books of "*History-book and Memorial-Register of the Armenians of Sebastia and its province*" (Vol. 1, 1974; Vol. 2, 1983), "*The Needlework of Urha*" (1985), "*Daniel Varouzhan in my reminiscences*" (1965), the play "*Sayat-Nova*" (1942), which won a literary prize in Cairo, "*Ardsvik*" (1968), which earned the Tekeyan Union prize in Beirut, "*The Komitas Drama*" (1986), the study of "*The art of the Armenian Khachkars (cross-stones)*" (unpublished).

**Noubar Ter-Mikayelian** (b. 1917, Cairo). He graduated from the Berberian School in Cairo, then from the English section of the American University in Cairo. He was repatriated in 1947. From 1948-1967, he worked at the Holy See of Edjmiadsin as the Secretary of Catholicos His Holiness Vazgen I and His Holiness Garegin I, and, subsequently, as Deputy Chancellor and Head of the Manuscript Department. He is the author of numerous monographs, among them "*Notable Armenian people*," "*The Egyptian-Armenian colony in the 16-18<sup>th</sup> centuries*," etc. He was awarded the Papal Bull by the Catholicos H. H. Garegin I and the St. Sahak-St. Mesrop medal.

**Arminé Kyoshkerian** (b. 1932, Alexandria). She was repatriated in 1947. She graduated from the English Section of the Romanic-German Philological Faculty of the YSU. She has worked at the Old Manuscript Scientific Research Institute after Mashtots in Yerevan. She has defended her thesis in the theme of "*Depositary Collections*." She has published articles concerning the Medieval Armenian Literature.

**Aghavni Zhamkochian** (b. 1935, Siouf, Alexandria). She was repatriated in 1948 and graduated from the Faculty of History of the YSU. She is a candidate of Historical



Sciences. She works at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the NAS RA. For years on end, she devoted herself to the study of Medieval Archaeology, particularly with the excavations of Dvin. She has published *"The Pottery of Medieval Armenia IX-XIV centuries"* (1981) and separate reports on the excavations of Dvin.

### **FOLKLORIST-GENOCIDEOLOGIST**

**Verjiné Svazlian** (b. 1934, Alexandria). She is the daughter of the writer, public figure and caricaturist **Garnik Svazlian**. She was repatriated in 1947. She has graduated with flying colors from the Yerevan Pedagogical Institute after Kh. Abovian. She has worked at the Institute of Literature after M. Abeghian of the NAS RA, as well as at the Museum-Institute of the Armenian Genocide. Up to the present day she is working at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the NAS RA. She has studied *"The life and activity of the folklorist-ethnographer Sargis Haykouni"* (1973). She has compiled and published the volumes of the "Armenian popular fairy-tales": *"Artsakh-Outik"* (1973), *"Taron-Tourouberan"* (1984) and *"Van-Vaspourakan"* (1998). She has written down audio- and video-recorded and investigated the multifarious relics of the popular folklore of the Armenians of Western Armenia and Cilicia in the different dialects of their cradle: *"Moussa Dag"* (1984), *"Cilicia. The Oral traditions of the Western Armenians"* (1994), *"The Folklore of the Armenians of Constantinople"* (2000), *"Armenia"* (The Greenwood Encyclopedia of World Folklore and Folklife. USA, 2006, Vol. 2), the voluminous review about Armenians from the ancient times up to now, *"Relics of the Oral Tradition of the Armenians of Russia (Rostov-on-Don and Pyatigorsk)"* and *"The Oral Traditions of the Armenians of America in the Course of Time"* (in press); she has also saved from a total loss the memoirs and historical songs of the eyewitness-survivors of the Armenian Genocide: *"Great Genocide. Oral Evidences of the Western Armenians"* (1995), *"The Armenian Genocide in the Memoirs and Turkish-language Songs of the Eyewitness-Survivors"* (1997-1999), *"The Armenian Genocide and the People's Historical Memory"* (2003-2005), *"The Armenian Genocide. Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors"* (2000, 2011, 2013), *"The Heroic Battle of Moussa Dag. Testimonies of the Eyewitness-Survivors"* (2015). The genocideological volumes have been translated into Russian, French, English, German, also into the Turkish language (the latter has been published in Istanbul). She has given numerous reports in international scientific conferences, which were later translated into different languages. She is a doctor, professor and an Honored Scientist of the Republic of Armenia. Nearly all of her original works have been awarded a great number of national and foreign prizes and Gold medals. For the remarkable contribution to the acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide, she was awarded the Republic of Armenia's President's First Prize in Genocideology and the Gold Medal.

This retrospective review, which includes the contribution of more than 140 Egyptian-Armenians to the Motherland would have been incomplete if we did not mention the participation of our compatriots, the Egyptian-Armenians, also in the

process of the creation of post-Soviet history, when several of them sacrificed their young lives.

Indeed, the pilot son of the repatriate from Egypt, the English translator, **Vahé Dishchekian, Arsen**, as well as the son of **Zareh Zhamkochian** were killed in action in the heroic battle of Artsakh.

A major contribution is **Movses Gorgissian's** (1961-1990) devotion to the Motherland (he was the son of the repatriated from Egypt, in 1947, **Gevorg Gorgissian**). The valiant son, Movses was a political figure, publicist, one of the leaders of the Karabakh movement. His motto was: *"People belong to a nation only when they serve that nation..."* and *"Long live that Armenia, which will come tomorrow!"* Movses Gorgissian was killed in action during the Artsakh (Karabakh) heroic battle. He was commander of a company. He was awarded the highest title of "National Hero."

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Undoubtedly, it was impossible to condense in limited pages the zeal and enthusiasm displayed by the thousands of senior and junior Egyptian-Armenian repatriates, their diligence and devotion, such high volitional features, which could not escape even the local population's and the authorities' attention, deserving encouragement and appreciation, since the new comers, hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder with the local inhabitants were engaged, with everyday effort and exertion, in creating the new Motherland...

My ears are still ringing with the harmonious melody of our stonemasons' hammer strokes gradually creating the majestic buildings of the central square of our beloved capital Yerevan; these buildings, with their original Armenian high relief ornaments, have become a petrified symphony which even the foreigners admire...

It is with the conjoint strain of the mind and the exertion of the arms of countless architects and constructors that were built our today's bridges and huge electric power stations, our newly founded towns and villages symbolizing the names of our one-time appropriated cradle, our tufa-built rose-tinted Armenia, on the constantly erecting wall of which every Armenian's sacred duty is to add a stone...

### Conclusion

In conclusion, we should point out that during our study it was impossible to refer to all the 4,500 Egyptian-Armenian repatriates separately, since there are many among them, who have received their professional education and training in Armenia and have contributed with their knowledge to the progress of the Motherland, hence we have presented only those exceptional individuals (more than 140 people, only 3% of the total number), who, with their unreserved devotion have, in the various spheres (over 40) of public life, put their knowledge and ability in the service of the Motherland and have been awarded scientific and other high degrees, state and international medals and prizes and, with their exceptional successes have greatly furthered the prosperity of Mother Armenia.

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***Translated from Armenian by Tigran Tsoulikian***

The article was delivered on 20.09.2022, reviewed on 07.10.2022, accepted for publication on 14.10.2022.

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# HISTORY

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## THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN NESTORIANS AND MONOPHYSITES: BARSAUMA'S ACTIVITY

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-51

### **Abstract**

The article shows that the Sasanian monarchs in one way or another used to take into account the importance of Syriac role in the state economy. The Christian craftsmen and merchants paid colossal taxes to the state treasury. Indeed, Nestorianism antagonized the official Byzantine church; spreading out from Mesopotamia, it was the creed of the merchants, the class who sought independence, which confronted Zoroastrianism in Iran. The Armenian Church, being national in nature, had such an intolerant position against the Byzantine church and Barsauma. At the time when the Christian church was divided into Monophysites and Dyophysites, and the Byzantines persecuted the Nestorians, the latter settled in Iran and from that time on the Persians changed their attitude towards the Christians and started to patronize the Nestorians, who were the enemies of Byzantine Chalcedonianism.

In ancient and medieval ages, the ethnic affiliation was directly related to the practicing of religion, the Syrians were Christians, and the Persians were Zoroastrians. This factor forced the Syrians to have their own establishment and under its patronage they could exist. They were unified around the church and the union of the craftsmen ensured the financial support.

**Keywords:** Nestorians, Monophysites, Dyophysites, Barsauma, Syrians, Persians, Christian Church, Armenian Primary Sources

The doctrinal struggle between the Nestorians and the Monophysites became the subject of heated debates in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Purely doctrinal disputes further deepened the existing gap between the mentioned directions. In this regard, it is necessary to pay attention to the relations between the Monophysite Syrians and the Armenian Church, which is quite well studied in Armenology, but is hardly covered in foreign research. Simeon of Beth Arsham, a bitter enemy of Nestorianism, collected documents from Greeks, Armenians and Syrians all over Iran that they were against Nestor's doctrine. Simeon of Beth Arsham participated in the Church Council of Dvin in 506 and took a confessional paper from Armenians that they were far from Nestorianism.<sup>1</sup> The delegates from Iran also took similar confessional papers from the Georgians and Albanians participating in the council.<sup>2</sup> From a letter<sup>3</sup> of Hovhannes Gabeghentsi

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<sup>1</sup> Ter-Minasyan 1971b: 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ter-Minasyan 1971b: 42; Book of Letters 1901: 183.



addressed to the bishops of Caucasian Albania it becomes clear that Nestorianism and Chalcedonianism had strengthened in Caucasian Albania. The letter denounced all the schismatics, especially the founders of Nestorianism and the Council of Chalcedon, along with Leo's Tome. Priest Matheos was sent to Caucasian Albania to fight against the schismatics; bishops from Caucasian Albania were advised to persecute and expel the schismatics and to send three or more bishops to Armenia to recognize the true knowledge of faith.<sup>4</sup>

At the request of Monophysite Syrians, for example, the Julianites, the Armenian Church defended them in doctrinal disputes, and the Armenian Catholicos ordained their bishops. Catholicos Nerses II ordained the Julianite Abdisho, who came to his homeland – Syria after receiving a paper about that.<sup>5</sup> This position of the Armenian Church frightened the Nestorians. In general, it can be seen that the Syriac churches “hugely value the opinion of their Armenian neighbors and continuously work to maintain communication with them; or if they do not have that communication, they somehow try to create such a relationship”. Expanding on that thought, Y. Ter-Minasyants writes: “And that is understandable: Syria's neighbors had seen how the Armenian church courageously fought for its faith against the powerful Persians and emerged from the long unequal struggle honorably and victorious. They saw that the Persians even behaved differently with the Armenians, respecting their powerful princes. So why not maintain ecclesiastical communication with that church, especially since all relations with the Greek Church had already ceased?”<sup>6</sup> It is no coincidence that the metropolitan bishops of the Mor Mattai monastery, the main center of Monophysitism, were ordained by the Armenian Catholicos.<sup>7</sup>

After the death of Rabulas,<sup>8</sup> the renowned bishop of Edessa, during the reign of his successor Ibas, the influence of the Nestorians was strengthened in Edessa. His death in 457 brought about a powerful opposition, and all the Nestorian archimandrites were driven from Edessa to the Persian land. The final blow was struck in 489 by the closing of the castle of Nestorianism - the famous school of Edessa called Persian school.<sup>9</sup> The weaker the supporters of Nestorius became in the Greek lands, the stronger they became under Persian rule, especially enjoying the patronage of King Peroz.

The Persians had no particular policy towards Christians living within their state, although Persian officials were always suspicious of Christians and considered them to

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<sup>3</sup> Book of Letters 1901: 81-84.

<sup>4</sup> Ter-Minasyan 1971a: 377-378.

<sup>5</sup> Ter-Minasyants 2009: 86, 102; Ayvazyan 1976: 63.

<sup>6</sup> Ter-Minasyants 2009: 89.

<sup>7</sup> Ter-Minasyants 2009: 109.

<sup>8</sup> Atiya 1968: 248.

<sup>9</sup> Baum, Winkler 2003 (eds.): 26.

be a strong support for the Byzantine Empire in their country. They occasionally organized strong persecution against Christians, but for the most part they facilitated their activities.

That lenience was the result of the fact that in the Persian empire the Christians did a very important job in the field of handicrafts, production of goods, especially in the field of international trade, and, in addition, enriched the royal treasury and the pockets of the elite with the taxes collected from them. The situation changed when Yazdegerd II (438-457) ascended the throne of Persia. With his new domestic policy he tried to concentrate all the resources in the hands of Persians and, by converting the Christians, finally deprive them of other cultural and political relations and connect them with Persia. But his tactics did not justify itself, and the King of Kings Peroz (459-484) that succeeded him, took a better path. Following the former Persian policy, he again tried to take advantage of the conflicts between the Christian churches. Syriac sources say that the reason for that change, i.e. the person who prompted Peroz to do so, was Mtsbin's bishop Barsauma.<sup>10</sup> That is why the Nestorian authors of Syria give Peroz high praise,<sup>11</sup> perhaps referring to this change in Persian ecclesiastical policy. The zealous Barsauma managed to inspire Peroz the idea that Christians would never willingly attach themselves to Persian rule and would not turn their eyes away from the emperors until the chasm in religion separated them.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, it was necessary to advance and encourage Nestorianism, to forcibly make Christians of other faiths join the Nestorian, supposedly state church.<sup>13</sup>

Advancing thanks to the "Persian School", Barsauma paid exceptional attention to education. In 457, after Ibas's death, the opponents of Dyophysitism became active in Edessa;<sup>14</sup> Barsauma left the city to organize an Academy in Mtsbin where a large number of teachers and students from the Edessa school settled.<sup>15</sup> Thanks to its school, Mtsbin became the spiritual center of the Nestorian Church, although the seat of the Catholicos was located in the capital Seleucia-Ctesiphon.<sup>16</sup> By dictating such a political line to the Persian court, Barsauma, certainly, not only served the Persian government, but with such measures also wanted to unite the Christian churches and believers under the rule of the Nestorian Church. Barsauma's measures were beneficial for the Persians, because by concentrating and consolidating those forces, a strong front could be created against Byzantium and the Byzantine Church under its direct patronage. Influenced by Zoroastrian clergy, Peroz sponsored Barsauma to officially

<sup>10</sup> Chabot 1901: 123. Barsauma was born in Corduene and was a slave; he was freed and came to study in the famous school of Edessa under Bishop Ibas of Edessa (See Melkonyan 1976: 246, n. 49).

<sup>11</sup> Sources Syriaces 1908: 147.

<sup>12</sup> Adonts 2006: 33.

<sup>13</sup> Labourt 1904: 135.

<sup>14</sup> Labourt 1904: 130-152.

<sup>15</sup> Macomber 1958: 143-144; Pigulevskaya 1956: 340.

<sup>16</sup> Ter-Petrosyan 1979: 82.

make the church in Iran Nestorian.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, in this sense, the killings of Christians were aimed at the merging and unification of the Christian churches of Iran rather than prohibiting or hindering the spread and advance of Christianity.

The Syrian historian says that in order to achieve his goal, he resorted to various means: as a Persian army commander<sup>18</sup> he used force, persecution, exile and imprisonment with the help of the army; he handed over to the King of Kings Peroz the letter written by the Nestorian Church Catholicos Babua to the Emperor of Byzantium (it was written in the letter: "God has given us a cursed kingdom"), and as a consequence of Barsauma's betrayal the Catholicos was accused of espionage and beheaded.<sup>19</sup> It appears from Syriac sources that he took this step so that he himself could become Catholicos, but he did not succeed, because his actions were met with abhorrence by the Syrian clergy and people, and he was not elected.<sup>20</sup>

Armenian sources give interesting information about Barsauma. According to Tovma Artsruni, Barsauma came to Armenia – to Arzanene and Mokka, to sow the seeds of the Nestorian sect there.<sup>21</sup> The fact that the Armenian ministers were worried and took measures to disrupt Barsauma's Nestorian preaching in Armenia shows that this preaching probably had some success and caused confusion among the circles of the Armenian Church, otherwise the adoption of any preventive or persecutory measures would not be justified and would even be impossible.<sup>22</sup>

The information provided by Tovma Artsruni leads to the conclusion that probably because of facing strong opposition from the Armenian ministers for actively spreading the Nestorian schism, Barsauma slandered them in front of King Peroz and caused a lot of bloodshed because he presented the Armenian ministers and the Catholicos as rebels in front of the Persian king as if they wanted to become subjects of the Greek king.<sup>23</sup>

The information in "The Book of Letters"<sup>24</sup> shows, among other facts, that the Armenian Church rejected any communication with the Nestorians and their faith and denounced the Nestorians.

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<sup>17</sup> Macomber 1958: 147; Khorikyan 2017: 113.

<sup>18</sup> Pigulevskaya 1967: 99.

<sup>19</sup> Chabot 1901: 123. See also Labourt 1904: 130.

<sup>20</sup> Certainly, attention should be paid to the fact that Babua was formerly a Zoroastrian, which caused displeasure at the Persian court, and he even spent two years in prison before his death.

<sup>21</sup> Thovma Artsruni and Ananun 1985: 130. The Syrian historian Grigor Barhebreos also notes that Barsauma came to Armenia, the only difference is that according to him Barsauma was about to enter Armenia when he received a threatening letter from the Armenian ministers demanding that he renounce his intentions (see Ter-Minasyants 2009: 72; Ter-Minasyan 1971a: 348-349). Anyway, his advance in Armenia was prohibited (see Leo 1947: 110).

<sup>22</sup> Ter-Minasyan 1971a: 349.

<sup>23</sup> See in detail Ter-Minasyan 1971a: 349-351.

<sup>24</sup> Book of Letters 1901: 41-46.

Bishop of Edessa Ibas's disciple Barsauma, who was the propagator of the ideas of Theodore of Mopsuestia, had a special place in doctrinal disputes as well. The interpretation of the Holy Scriptures was the basis of the teaching of the medieval church school, therefore, the question of who and how interpreted the biblical texts, what views the teachers of Edessa and Mtsbin schools held, was important.

Barsauma's activity was significant not only for the history of the Mtsbin Academy. He occupied a unique place among the figures of the Syriac Church as a bishop, too.

The Shah of Iran involved Barsauma in the border negotiations with Byzantium,<sup>25</sup> but at the same time he was supervised by Marzpan Kardak by order of the Shah.<sup>26</sup>

As a bishop, Barsauma occupied a significant place and adhered to Nestorianism. While Catholicoi Babu and Akakios considered marriage incompatible with the rank of bishop, Barsauma had his own special approach to celibacy and "like all the Persians, he was married".<sup>27</sup> The Monophysites, whose stronghold was the monasteries, considered Barsauma an opponent both in terms of doctrinal teaching and church rules.

The struggle between the Monophysites and Nestorians in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century led to the division of the Syriac church into two branches, each of which developed its own views and beliefs. However, these doctrinal differences did not prevent the development of Syriac culture. The struggle between these two directions of Christianity, the so-called missionary expansion, was not only doctrinal, but also was an unrelenting struggle for territorial expansion and for gaining new followers. For example, the Nestorians struggled to weaken the strong influence of Monophysitism among the Arab tribes.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Chabot 1902: 529; Pigulevskaya 1979: 201.

<sup>26</sup> Chabot 1902: 526-529.

<sup>27</sup> Pigulevskaya 1979: 201.

<sup>28</sup> Pigulevskaya 1964: 274; Dorfman-Lazarev 2004: 86.

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***Translated from Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***

The article was delivered on 04.08.2022. reviewed on 14.12.2022, accepted for publication on 16.12.2022.



# FIRST HAYKIDES AND THE “HOUSE OF TORGOM”

## (Some comments on the problem)

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-57

*„This Hayk, son of T'orgom, son of T'iras, son of Gomer, son of Yapheth, was ancestor of the Armenians, and these were his families and offspring and their land of habitation. And afterward they began, he says, to multiply and fill the land“ (Movses Khorenatsi, Book 1. 12)*

### **Abstract**

In the article is discussed the “*Torgomian*” hypothesis of the Armenian ethnogenesis in regard to which until now scholars could not arrive at consensus. The study of various sources (written - cuneiform Hittite, Assyrian, Urartian, Hieroglyphic Luwian, classical Greek, linguistic, archaeological, mythological, etc.) points on the historical context in the history of the Armenian Highland which could fit our information drawn by Khorenatsi for the period of the First Haykides. Definitely, that period should be characterized by 1) the absence of considerably big political organization in the Highland, 2) the absence of more or less durative Assyrian control over several political entities in the south, 3) mobility of population.

**Keywords:** “House of Torgom,” Hayk, Armenian ethnogenesis, Movses Khorenatsi, Primary Armenia

### **The problem**

The “*Torgomian*” hypothesis of the Armenian ethnogenesis contains a crucial phase of the history of the people, which until now is curtailed by the absence of decisive criterias in the course of the comparison of different sources (written - cuneiform Hittite, Assyrian, Urartian, Hieroglyphic Luwian, classical Greek, linguistic, archaeological, mythological, etc.). This concerns primarily the chronological and onomastic difficulties. The chronology of the ancient Near Eastern history based upon the classical and medieval authors, purely correlates with that of cuneiform and hieroglyphic Egyptian inscriptions. As to the list of the the *First Haykides* (hereafter FH) which contains in Book 1 of Movses Khorenatsi's history, hardly it is possible to trace their names in the onomasticon of ancient oriental sources, concerning the Armenian Highland during the III-I millenniums BC.

In the Classical Armenian historiography, since the days of Movses Khorenatsi, *Hayk* was regarded as the „*son of Torgom*“, and the Armenians – the „*people of Torgom*.“<sup>1</sup> Nothing more about *Torgom* and the „*Torgomian era*“ could be found in

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<sup>1</sup> P'awstos Buzand 1912, Introduction, III.13, V.30; Agat'angelos 1909: 6, 776, 796; Ľevond 1887: XXXIV, Hishatakaran. Here and elsewhere citations from the „History of Armenia“ of Movses Khorenatsi are given after the 1978 edition by R.W.Thomson. English translations of Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi belong to the author.

medieval Armenian manuscripts, except the Biblical affiliation of the Armenian forefather. Torgom is regarded by Khorenatsi as the son of *Tiras*, grandson of *Gomer*. Unlike his “son” - Hayk and other Haykides (mostly FH, i.e. from *Aramaneak* to *Anushavan*), whose names were accompanied by narratives of certain historical events, obviously Torgom's role is obscure. He is not even *nahapet* (eponymous forefather), because this function is secured for Hayk. Torgom did nothing for the Armenization of the Armenian Highland. The primary homeland of Torgom is also untraceable.

Undoubtedly, the “Torgomian” ancestorship of the Haykides was borrowed by Classical Armenian authors from the Bible. Otherwise, Khorenatsi or one of the later historiographers could have been aware of some crucial points in this history.

Taking into account heavy western (the Upper Euphrates area) connections of the early Armenian history,<sup>2</sup> scholars mostly, beginning from Fr.Delitzsch,<sup>3</sup> were inclined to look for the „*House of Torgom*“ beyond the Euphrates where since the early II millennium B.C. the city *Ta/egarama* (Assyrian *Tilgarimmu*) was referred to in cuneiform Hittite and Assyrian texts.<sup>4</sup>

According to H.Manandyan,<sup>5</sup> the early Armenian tribes had migrated from Northern Balkans in the XII BC and settled down in the neighborhood of *Mount Argaeus* (modern *Erdjijas Dagı*, between the Kayseri-Gürün-Malatya triangle, and six centuries later had left this land for the sources of Halys-Kızılırmak and their second homeland - the Armenian Highland. This same approach was demonstrated by I.Diakonoff.<sup>6</sup>

Localizing the early Armenian ethnic element near the sources of the Upper Euphrates (Hayaša and Azzi of cuneiform Hittite texts), Gr.Kapantsyan had formulated a theory according to which the Armenian migration into Malatya-Tegarama-Kayseri was regarded as a gradual infiltration happened between the XII and VII centuries C, which was accumulated in the VII century BC, under the Cimmerian pressure from the east and north-east.<sup>7</sup>

S.Yeremyan, in contrary to most scholars, proposed that the Biblical „*Bet-Togarma*“ does not correspond to Tegarama-Tilgarimmu, but rather to *Armenia Minoris* (earlier Hayaša of Hittite cuneiform sources, the same as the land *Hate* mentioned by the Urartian king Rusa II).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> According to Khorenatsi, from here begins the migration of Haykides to other regions of the Highland (the point of departure of *Aramaneak*, son of *Hayk*); in addition, here we find 1) two ethnic designations of the Armenians (*hay* and *armen*), 2) most of the Pre-Christian Armenian sanctuaries, 3) royal cemetery of Armenian Arsakid kings (the fortress of *Ani* in the *Daranati* district), 4) the royal treasury of Arsakids (the fortress of *Bnabegh* in *Tsopk Shahuni*), etc.

<sup>3</sup> Delitzsch 1881: 246 (apud Manandyan 1977: 16). The author had proposed that the „*House of Torgom*“ is to be associated with the Cimmerians.

<sup>4</sup> The first reference to Tegarama comes from the „Cappadocian Tablets“ (XX-XVIII centuries BC)(Lewy 1964: 195 n.3). This important city is regularly mentioned in the Hittite texts during the XVI-XIII centuries BC (Del Monte und Tischler 1978: 383-384; del Monte 1992: 154).

<sup>5</sup> Manandyan 1977: 21f.

<sup>6</sup> Diakonoff 1968: 199ff. ; 1984: 22; 1981: 51ff.

<sup>7</sup> Kapantsyan 1947: 140ff.

<sup>8</sup> Yeremyan 1968: 109. Most of modern Armenian historians, linguists and archaeologists, while discussing the earliest period of Armenian history, i.e. the ethnogenetic processes, use the anachronistic term „*Armenian*“ (in regard to language, tribes, etc.). It should be remembered that this stage of the history of any nation is an extremely complicated

Resuming this brief summary of scholarly opinions regarding the localization of the „House of Torgom“, one could guess that the land of the Haykides, before their migration to the east, was located in eastern Asia Minor, in the general area between modern Malatya and Kayseri. Hence, the time and original place of residence of the Armenian-speaking tribes in eastern Asia Minor before their migration need to be explained. Today two contradictory theories deal with the problem of the arrival of Armenians to their historical homeland (to the east of the Euphrates - Greater Armenia).

1) Until the XII century BC the population of the Armenian Highland could not have been Armenian. The appearance of Proto-Armenian tribes here should be dated to the XII century BC, and even later period.<sup>9</sup>

2) The Indo-European (accordingly, Proto-Armenian) ethnic element was present in the Armenian Highland since the II millennium BC, if not before that date.<sup>10</sup> The population of Hayaša and Azzi could have been partly Proto-Armenian.<sup>11</sup>

Most recently, due to excavations in different parts of the Armenian Highland, had come up certain archaeological data in favor of the second view.<sup>12</sup> The archaeological situation in the Armenian Highland at the close of the II millennium BC testifies upon certain ethnic and cultural shifts, but only within the Highland itself. Any sizable migration from outside is still unrecorded for the XII-XI century BC. Here it would be worth noting that the traditional view concerning the arrival of the so-called Mushki tribes in the western and south-western parts of the Armenian Highland could not stand anymore. The excavations conducted in various sites of the Upper Euphrates region (modern province of Elazığ – *Norşuntepe*, *Korucutepe*, *Tülintepe*, etc),<sup>13</sup> comes to reject the western affiliation of this ethnic element. Now it is generally accepted that this population which appears in the texts of Assyrian kings (Tiglathpileser I and Aššurbelala), were either migrants from the north-west (i.e. the territory of modern Republic of Armenia) or local population who during the XII century BC Near Eastern crisis had migrated to the south and south-west and reached Northern Mesopotamia.<sup>14</sup>

Those who support the idea, according to which Armenian-speaking ethnic groups were among the population of the II millennium BC Armenian Highland, had proposed

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process in which the bearers of different languages (more correctly, „dialects“) have been participating, and actually the exact place of each of these ethnic groups hardly could be distinguished.

<sup>9</sup> Khalatyants 1910: 11; Markwart 1928: 211; Diakonoff 1968: 204ff.; Mallory 1989: 34-35, etc. In 1950s S.Eremyan had suggested the XIV-XIII centuries BC (Eremyan 1958: 59), but later lowered it for the XII century BC (Eremyan 1968b: 91).

<sup>10</sup> Today the scholarship has in its disposal a considerable archaeological data to suppose the presence of Indo-Europeans in the Armenian Highland as early as the III millennium BC (Winn 1981: 113ff.; Yakar 1981: 94ff.; Arechyan 1988: 84ff.; Burney 1993: 311ff.).

<sup>11</sup> Kapantsyan 1947; Jahukyan 1987: 340-341; Sarkisyan 1988: 51-52.

<sup>12</sup> A brief review of the results of surveys and related problems see in Kosyan 1996; 1997a, etc.

<sup>13</sup> Hauptmann 1969-1970; Van Loon 1975 (ed.); Whallon 1979; Burney 1980; Winn 1980; Conti and Persiani 1993; Bartl 1994 etc.

<sup>14</sup> Burney 1980; Sevin 1991 (from Transcaucasia); Muller 1999: 142 (local population of İšuwa). For the discussion of the Mushki problem see Kosyan 2022 (with references to current views).

their gradual migration (easy to say infiltration) towards other parts of the Highland after the XII century BC, a process which was accumulated during the VIII-VI centuries BC, when the Urartian Empire was running to its end. This theory<sup>15</sup> could be presented as follows.

The migrations of Armenian-speaking tribes from Hayaša and Azzi (in the general area near the sources of the Euphrates (maybe also in the plain of Erzinka-Erzincan), presumably to the north of the river)<sup>16</sup> took place in the XII century BC, during the disintegration of the Hittite Empire. It follows in two main directions: 1) to the south (Malatya, then the Taurus area until Northern Mesopotamia), 2) to the east and south-east (future Urartu). The earliest attestation of these migrations is that recorded in the texts of the Assyrian king Tiglathpileser III (1114-1077 BC) - *Mushku*, *Kashku-Apishlu* and *Urumu* tribes in the Upper Euphrates area.<sup>17</sup> The "Torgomian" affiliation of Hayk, according to Gr.Kapantsyan, could have preserved memories of early Armenian migrations towards Malatya and to the west of it.<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, the author had proposed that the Armenization of Eastern Asia Minor should be dated to a certain period after the XII century BC.

Later, in 1960-1980's the problem of the early Armenian presence in eastern Asia Minor was thoroughly discussed by I.M.Diakonoff. Holding the view in regard to the North Balkanic origin of the Mushki, the author thought that the early Armenian tribes ("Eastern Mushki") had migrated into eastern Asia Minor in the XII century BC. Here they came to power in the late VIII century BC, during the decline of local Luwian kingdoms.<sup>19</sup> Later, after the fall of Urartu and Assyria, this Armenian kingdom should have extended its territory to the east, including former *Arme-Shubria* and central Urartu.

Resuming, it must be stated that the Upper Euphrates area to the west of the river (Melid-Tegarama, later Armenia Minoris) should have played an extremely important role in the consolidation of Armenian people and statehood, in order to be commemorated in the Armenian self-confidence as the ancestor of Armenians, the father of *nahapet* Hayk. Therefore, the detailed study of ethnic and political history of this area is of utmost importance for the solution of the problem of the „House of Torgom“. When and in which political context could the Armenian ethnic group come to

<sup>15</sup> Manandyan 1977: 13ff.; Kapantsyan 1948: 154ff.

<sup>16</sup> Today scholars mostly look for the location of this important federation consisting of Hayaša and Azzi on the north-eastern boundaries of the Hittite Empire in the general area to the north of the upper reaches of the Euphrates - 1) the *Kharshit* valley up to modern *Giresun* (Diakonoff 1968: 81ff., n.16); 2) the valley of *Tortum* (Khachatryan 1971: 128ff.; idem 1998: 35), 3) the *Kelkit valley* (ASVOA 4.3): For complete review of proposed localizations see Kosyan 2004: 44-45, 48-50.

<sup>17</sup> Grayson 1991: A.O.87.1 (p.14, 17), A.O.87.2 (p.33), A.O.87.4 (p.42)

<sup>18</sup> Kapantsyan 1948: 140ff.

<sup>19</sup> Diakonoff 1968: 180ff.; 1981: 50ff. According to early scholars, the arrival of Armenian tribes into Eastern Asia Minor have taken place in the VIII century BC, in the context of the Phrygian expansion; certain Gurdi who in the times of Sennacherib, king of Assyria had created a kingdom in Tilgarimmu was considered as the leader of these Proto-Armenians (Forrer 1921: 80-81; Adontz 1972: 311).

power in the western Upper Euphrates area (to the north of the Taurus range), and, second, which political entity of this region should be regarded as the prototype for the „House of Torgom“? Was this kingdom referred to in the contemporary cuneiform and other sources?

It should be emphasized that the problems mentioned above could be solved only through the complex study of the sources of Movses Khorenatsi.

### **The sources of Movses Khorenatsi**

The problem of the sources used by Movses Khorenatsi for compiling his „*History of Armenia*“ was discussed thoroughly by most Armenologists since the XVIII century<sup>20</sup> and here we are not aimed to discuss all suggestions in detail. For the purposes of our study it will be of considerable interest to put some observations into the problem with the hope to be discussed in future.

Every scholar working in the field of the Armenian prehistory, is well acquainted with the debate concerning several crucial points of Khorenatsi's „History“: 1) the date of its compilation (between the V-VIII centuries AD), 2) the problem of *Mar Abas Catina's* historicity, 3) obvious discrepancy between the Armenian king-list of Khorenatsi and that coming from Classical Greek and Roman authors, 4) the absence of the FH's names in ancient Armenia (for example, *Hayk, Aram, Anushavan*), etc. Taking into account these difficulties, some Armenologists undervalued the „History“. It seems that these trends in Armenology are based primarily on obvious contradictory character of some passages of the „History“.

Those who took it easy to reject the historicity of Mar Abas should look upon motives which led Khorenatsi to falsify one historical event, that is the episode dealing with the request of the Armenian king *Vagharshak* to his elder brother - Parthian king *Arshak*. Every Iranist and even non-Iranist knows that there was not any Parthian king Arshak in the I century AD, when the Parthian Arsakids had managed to insert a branch of their dynasty in Armenia. On the other hand, we know that it was the Parthian king *Vagharsh* (*Vologez I* of Classical authors = Parthian *Balash*) who did this, and *Trdat I* (*Tiridates*) was the first Armenian Arsakid king.<sup>21</sup> How can it happen that Khorenatsi was unaware of this crucial historical event? It seems that the problem of Mar Abas could be clarified by the next proposal.

In a late Sassanian manuscript,<sup>22</sup> which, unfortunately, was not referred to until today in Armenological literature, it is told about a Persian king *Balash* (i.e. Greek-Roman *Vologez*, Arm. *Vagharsh*) who had ordered to collect and study the history of all provinces of his vast empire. Undoubtedly, these records were kept in his capital city.<sup>23</sup> Did Khorenatsi know about this undertaking of Balash-Vagharsh? In the case of a

<sup>20</sup> Emin 1881: 7ff.; Thomson 1978: 10ff.; Sarkisyan 1991: 12ff., etc.

<sup>21</sup> Bivar 1983: 79ff. for the history of this period.

<sup>22</sup> For reference to this manuscript see Lewy 1949: 29.

<sup>23</sup> On this manuscript which reached us through the VIII-IX century Parthian text see Kosyan 2017.



positive answer we should come to an assumption that he had ascribed this undertaking of the Parthian king to his Armenian colleague and brother. And not this single one but rather presenting Armenian Vagharshak as a mighty king fighting in the west („History“, Book 2, 3-7).

The above-mentioned new source must be thoroughly studied in order to define real motives of Khorenatsi's methods of writing the history of Armenia. But here it should be mentioned that the Parthian royal archive probably possessed with documents concerning the earlier history of Armenia, and Mar Abas or some other person could have had access to this archive by the request of Trdat I. As to the documents of the Parthian archive, hardly one should propose them to contain even a concise study of the Armenian prehistory in its full sense. Being the political heirs to the Achaemenid Empire which, in its turn, that of Babylonia and Assyria in some sense, the royal archive in Ekbatana could have had even possessed with translations from cuneiform inscriptions; worth to mention studies carried by *Berossus* and *Ctesias*. For example, the so-called „*Babylonian Chronicles*“, where the narrative of the Assyrian and Babylonian history includes even the Hellenistic period as well.<sup>24</sup> Here one can find several references to the principalities of the Armenian Highland made by the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian kings.<sup>25</sup>

If one accepts the historicity of Mar Abas, then the question rises: what kind of information could have contained this source used by Khorenatsi.

1) Which principalities referred to by Mesopotamian sources could be regarded by Mar Abas as being Armenian?

2) Could Mar Abas compare the alien proper names with those coming up from native Armenian oral tradition?

These points are far from rhetoric accent and should be borne in mind in future studies.

### **The historicity of Haykides and their localization**

In the first book of the „History“ Khorenatsi gives the names of 37 forefathers (*nahapets*) of the Armenians, from *Hayk* to *Parouyr Skayordi*. The first ten (from Hayk to Anoushavan) are said to have originated directly from Hayk. After Anoushavan there happened an usurpation of power and the alien dynasty ruled here until *Skayordi*, who restored the authority of the Haykides, being the ally of the Median king *Varbakes* (= *Ciaxes*). Among these *nahapets* the first ten stood isolated, since they are associated with the Armenization of the considerable part of the Armenian Highland, i.e. the creation of a political organization.

Until recently attempts to etymologize the names of the Haykides, as well as to look for their possible correspondences in the onomasticon of ancient Armenian Highland or in adjacent areas, especially the FH (from Hayk to Anoushavan), mostly

<sup>24</sup> Grayson 1987.

<sup>25</sup> Diakonoff 1981: 34ff.

appeared to be fruitless. Such names as *Hayk*, *Aram*, *Gegham*, *Anushavan*, *Ara*, etc. are not attested to in Classical Armenian historiography and one should state that these names were not used in the Armenian society. The restoration of these names in the modern period should be regarded as a tribute to Khorenatsi and the rise of the national self-science in the XVIII-XIX centuries.

Still N.Emin had stated that the names of the Haykides are of mixed origins, where at least 4 languages are represented - Armenian (*Gegham*, *Harma*, *Anoushavan*), Iranian (*Tigran*), Semitic (*Aramaneak*, *Aramayis*, *Amasya*, etc.), and Greek (*Kardos* = *Ara* son of *Ara*)<sup>26</sup>. The same assumption was reached by G.Jahukyan<sup>27</sup>.

How should this situation be explained? Even if one considers that the names of the FH were really Armenian, it will be very difficult to explain why they are absent for many centuries, until modern times. The idea that these *nahapets* were Armenians bearing alien names (the situation well attested for the period of the Bagratides and Cilician Armenian dynasties - Rubenides, Hethoumides), is highly impossible, since we deal with forefathers who had to bear native names.

Recent studies carried by Armen Petrosyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Yerevan)<sup>28</sup> could open new possibilities for this much-debated problem. Here it was demonstrated that the FH represented the primary Armenian pantheon of Indo-European origin, which existed before the secondary, Iranianized one. This important assumption is based on solid grounds, but needs some comments.

If one assumes that the relics of this ancient Armenian pantheon were preserved via the oral tradition to be fixed still in the times of Khorenatsi, then the next question should be in order. Changing the names of Armenian *nahapets* and replacing them by divine names Khorenatsi must have possessed the names of both. His tendency to hide the names of the former (*nahapets*) is open for discussion, hence we can only offer our preliminary attitude.

Actually, the names of the FH (maybe even some later ones) looked like alien, since they could have reached via Mar Abas, Classical authors (Abydenus, Cephalion, Olimpiodorus, Eusebius, etc.), or the archives of Edessa and Ani (all these sources are referred to by Khorenatsi).<sup>29</sup> How could a person who lives at least one thousand years later choose among these contradictory data. Indeed, the Armenian oral tradition could have preserved the reminiscences of the early stages of the Armenian ethnos and political organization(s), i.e. the primary historical-geographical environment. With this in mind, Khorenatsi had to find corresponding data among external sources. At best he could have had one or two similarities, if not none, then he had to make a choice between the two (in one such case see below). Making the list of the Haykides

<sup>26</sup> Emin 1884: 31-32.

<sup>27</sup> Jahukyan 1981: 61ff.

<sup>28</sup> Petrosyan 1996; Petrosyan 1997 (reviewed by J.A.C.Greppin in „Annual of Armenian Linguistics“, vol.18, 1997); Petrosyan 2017: 27ff. (reviewed by A.Kosyan). On mythological character of these names see Abeghyan 1944: 19ff.

<sup>29</sup> The existence of these archives is doubted by some (Thomson 1978: 12-13) and accepted by others (Sarkisyan 1991: 15ff.).

Khorenatsi risked creating something non-Armenian (Armenian *nahapets* with non-Armenian names). We guess that he had found a much safer variant, that is Armenian *nahapets* with pre-Christian Armenian divine names (before their Iranization). That he made use of external sources is easy to demonstrate through the next passage from the "History", which could be regarded as a key to our problem:

*„So if you were to ask: „Whence did we thus learn the names of our ancestors and the deeds of many of them?“ I reply: „From the ancient archives of the Chaldaeans, Assyrians, and Persians, since their names and deeds were entered on the royal acts as prefects and governors of our land appointed by them and as satraps“ (Book 1, 21).*

The importance of this passage is difficult to argue against. If one takes from the position of formal logics, then the problem of the FH' historicity could be solved through the clearing of some points:

- 1) Localization of the FH.
- 2) Identification of the FH' neighbors.
- 3) The status of the FH' „*Armenia*“.

Already during Aramaneak, the son of Hayk, the Haykides possessed with a considerable part of the Armenian Highland. But even five generations later when Aram had conquered vast territories in the south (*Mount Zarasp* and „*Assyrian field*“) and the west (Mazaka-Caesaria), „*Armenia*“ still remains under the political influence of Assyria. The possibilities of postulating with such a „*great Armenia*“ failed under the light of cuneiform sources antedating the Urartian Empire. That here the term „*Assyria*“ has nothing to do with Urartu, seems doubtless.<sup>30</sup> The „*Armenia*“ of the FH could have been one of the numerous considerably small political entities of southern or western parts of the Armenian Highland who were under durative Assyrian control. The reference to Armavir (to the west of modern Yerevan) as the capital city of the Haykides (built by Aramayis, son of Aramaneak) should be regarded as a later reminiscence or a synchronous one along with other - western Haykides (on other possible explanation of this problem see below).

For the localization of the „*Primary Armenia*“ the next observation will be useful.

Among the first six Haykides only Hayk and partly Aramaneak had contacted with Assyria (the rebellion and flight to the north + a battle in *Hayotsdzor*). The following four generations (Aramayis, Amasya, Gegham and Harma + related clans - *Khor*, *Manavaz*, *Baz*) were busy with settling different parts of the Highland; any account concerning

<sup>30</sup> Some arguments were brought in favor of Urartu: 1) the ascription of a canal near Van to Semiramis (recognized to be erected by Menua, king of Urartu), 2) the similarity of the name Aram with the name of Urartian king *A(r)rame/u*, 3) large-scaled conquests of the Urartian king Argishti I which reminds the deeds of Aram, etc. Though the existence of some Urartisms in the „History“ are obvious, nevertheless, one shall remember that the Urartian statehood and that of the FH are typologically different, one being a developed „eastern monarchy“, the second - only making its attempts to create a kingdom (this according to the „History“). If the „*Armenia*“ of the FH was the same as Urartu, then indeed Khorenatsi would have been aware of it. The first crowned king of Armenia, according to Khorenatsi, was Parouyr, the 37th *nahapet*. See also Khachatryan 1998: 2ff., where the „*Armenia*“ of the FH was regarded as the neighbor of Urartu and the author thinks that under the names of several Haykides after Anoushavan were hidden the Urartian kings.

their contacts with Assyria or other hostile country is missing. On the contrary, the next four generations have had relations with Assyria:

*Aram - Ninos*

*Ara - Ninos+Semiramis*

*Ara (son of Ara Geghetsik) - Semiramis*

*Anushavan - Zameses+Ninuas*

Again logically it could be assumed that after Aramaneak, the „*Armenia*“ 1) either was under Assyrian domination, loyal to its suzerain (hence, nothing “heroic” happened worth to be mentioned), or 2) was beyond its control (probably was located too far to be subdued).

Indeed, most probably, none of the above-mentioned Armenian *nahapets* could be regarded as real historical persons under the given names.

Before discussing the possibilities of determining the „*Armenia*“ of the FH under the light of the above-mentioned criterias, one shall focus on one peculiarity of their activities.

Hayk and other FH, along with their different branches demonstrated great mobility. Thus, after his victory over Bel, Hayk had settled in Hark'. With the death of Hayk his son Aramaneak had moved to Aragatsotn (in modern Armenia), leaving his sons (Khor and Manavaz) in the Lake Van area. Shara, the son of Aramayis, had settled down in Shirak (in the north-west of modern Armenia), etc.

Scholars had mostly treated the mobility of the FH as an attempt of Khorenatsi to etymologize the names of Armenian *gavars* (provinces) and settlements.<sup>31</sup> At the same time it was stated that among the FH the Hayk-Aramaneak section is a possible reflection of migrations of the Armenian tribes into different parts of the Highland. Indeed, the long march of Aramaneak from Hark' to Aragatsotn appears to be strange, as well as the far-reaching campaigns of the Armavir-dwelling Aram to Northern Mesopotamia and Central Anatolia.

Are the continuous migrations of several Haykides compatible with the postulation of a compact ethnic group and a corresponding political organization? The „History“ does not even mention the existence of an authority of any *nahapet* over different branches of the Haykides. After Hayk, every *nahapet* ruled in the region where he dwells. This situation is easy to explain as a long-termed continuous infiltration of the Armenian-speaking tribes into different parts of the Highland. Hence, the point of departure could be sought to have been in the area where Khorenatsi locates Hayk, Aramaneak (before his departure to Aragatsotn) and Kadmos, the grandson of Hayk, that is in the southern and south-western parts of the Armenian Highland (the „*country of Ararad*“ and *Kadmuhi* = the mountainous area to the south and south-west of Lake Van, Hark' = to the west of Lake Van). This is exactly the area affected by the Mushki migrations reported in the texts of Tiglathpileser I.<sup>32</sup> In Armenological literature the

<sup>31</sup> On these most recently see Sarkisyan 1998: 113ff.

<sup>32</sup> See above n.17.

migrations of the Armenian-speaking tribes is thought to have been started from this area.<sup>33</sup> In general, the activities of the FH under the light of the above-mentioned considerations could be resumed as follows:

1) The hypothetic „*Armenia*“ of the FH could not represent a compact political organization which includes a considerable part of the Armenian Highland. It will be easy to treat this term as a conventional designation of several political entities once active within the boundaries of later „*Greater Armenia*“ (most probably consisting of both Armenian and non-Armenian speaking population). At least some of them (i.e. northern ones) could not have contacts with Assyria.

2) The main peculiarity of the period of some of the FH should be regarded the political instability, reflected in wide migrations of population. Under the light of this point the existence of extensive political organizations in the Highland to that date should be excluded.

Which historical context could fit our information drawn by Khorenatsi for the period of the FH? That period should be characterized by 1) the absence of considerably big political organization, 2) more or less durative Assyrian control over several political entities, 3) mobility of population.

If one looks for these conditions, then during the XIV-VII centuries BC only two periods are in order: 1) late XIII-XII centuries BC (the „XII century BC Near Eastern Crisis“), 2) late VIII-VII centuries BC (the period of the Cimmerian-Scythian migrations). Leaving the discussion of this problem for future studies, here we shall state only that, according to the genealogical tree of Khorenatsi, the „Torgomian era“ is to be placed either slightly before the XII century BC or in the IX-VIII century BC. Do we have any clue to choose between these sections?

If the migrations of Hayk and his descendants originated from eastern Asia Minor (i.e. the „House of Torgom“), then we would have good written and archaeological background for their arrival in the area to the east of the Euphrates in the XII century BC. This migration could have been followed by later infiltration of this ethnic group into other parts of the Armenian Highland. It seems that this reconstruction of the Armenization of the Highland is in accordance with the account of Khorenatsi. Nevertheless, some difficulties make such a treatment of the problem highly unlikely.

1) Though the XII century BC Mushki migrations into the Upper Euphrates area were said to have originated from north-western parts of the Armenian Highland (Hayaša and Azzi of Hittite texts), the „Muški pottery“ has its clear parallels in the Transcaucasian „*Trialeti*“ culture, that is in modern Armenia and Southern Georgia. This could point to the possibility of the east-west migrations (or gradual infiltration) before the XII century BC.

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<sup>33</sup> Dr. S.Hmayakyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA) had supported the idea of bringing the Armenians from the south and south-east in the times of Tiglathpileser I by means of some remarkable arguments (Hmayakyan 1992).

2) If Hayk had migrated towards the east during the late XIII - early XII century BC, then the activities of Aram in central Asia Minor would appear to be merely strange. How could this Aram campaign to the area of modern Kayseri if he ruled somewhere in the Ararat Plain? Worth to mention that even among the mighty Urartian kings only Argišti I had succeeded to operate here only once in 783 BC.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Melikishvili 1960: No.127 II, 249; Harouthiounyan 2001: 173 II, 160ff.; Harutyunyan 1970: 203ff. (for the description of this campaign).



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The article was delivered on 24.08.2022, reviewed on 09.09.2022, accepted for publication on 10.11.2022.

## IMPORTANT EPISODES FROM GENERAL ANDRANIK'S ACTIVITY

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-70

### Abstract

The need to put a number of newly discovered materials into scientific circulation is aimed at refuting the still circulating faulty point of view that during the heroic battles of May, 1918 General Andranik was inactive, particularly in the region of Lori.

Those materials prove that the famous general, fighting victorious battles and strengthening himself in the Vorontsovka-Dsegh area, fought three victorious battles against the Turkish troops on May 22, because of which, in particular, he did not participated in the heroic battle of Gharakilisa.

**Keywords:** Andranik, Gharakilisa, Alexei Kolmakov

1. In issue N109 of the "Horizon" newspaper of June 7, 1918 we came across a remarkable fact, which is a significant and reasoned addition to the painful issue that is regularly discussed and speculated among our public and experts, namely the activities of Andranik in the Vorontsovka-Jalaloghli (Stepanavan)-Dsegh area and his non-participation in the heroic battle of Gharakilisa.

On May 21, 1918, the correspondent of "Horizon" stated: "In the evening I heard that the local army (Turkish-V.M.) came and took positions in Ghara Ina and the surrounding areas. Andranik went against them with his army and returned again to go better prepared. The whole evening and night passed restlessly: on the one hand the army was preparing, and on the other hand the people were evacuating according to Andranik's order.

The army was divided into three parts. Armed, taking shovels and pickaxes, they went to dig positions and strengthen themselves against the Turks. Jalaloghli was emptying. A battle between the Turks and Andranik began at 6 o'clock in the morning of May 22.

In the evening, when we reached Kurtan, a soldier came and told us that Andranik had repulsed three attacks of the Turks, defeated them, and pushed them back a few versts. One of his soldiers was killed, 4 were wounded, and he had brought them back to Kurtan. There were 4 trains in Sanahin: armored, sanitary, military and for refugees. All of them were full, not only inside the cars, all the sections and balconies, but also the roofs. Each car was filled with 2000-3000 adults and children. On May 23 we arrived in Alaverdi and on May 24 - in Tiflis".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Horizon, June 7, 1918, n.109.

2. Noteworthy information has been preserved in the memoirs of poruchik of the Siberian detachment Alexei Kolmakov, a neutral party in this case. The “Siberian” detachment that arrived in Armenia from Irkutsk in December, 1917 and the 210 Western Armenian soldiers that were part of it, joined Andranik’s “Separate Strike Force” at the beginning of 1918.

A. Kolmakov states the following: “Then came the news that Gharakilisa was in danger. But what could we do being tormented and hungry? We were not even able to send the cavalry, and we could not even think about sending the infantry. The next day (probably after May 30, when the Turkish troops entered Gharakilisa (Vanadzor) — V.M.) soldiers retreating from the pressure of the Turks began to arrive. There were officers with them, too, including the commander of the Armenian special regiment, Colonel K. (Korganov-Ghorghanyan - V.M.).

Andranik convened a meeting, during which the newcomers demonstrated the hopelessness of further struggle, believing that the only way out of the situation was fleeing to Tiflis. Andranik failed to convince them. They set out for Sanahin to surrender. Part of them was slaughtered, the other part fled to the forests. Hovhannes Tumanyan and his family also had to hide in the forests of Lori for about a week. We went to Dilijan by the mountain road”<sup>2</sup>.

3. According to A. Kolmakov, on April 10, 1918, i.e. during the days of the fall of Kars and the declaration of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic, the armed company moved to Akhalkalak. Andranik stayed in Alexandropol for a few days to issue orders to the border guard service, particularly not to violate the border line established by the Akhuryan River and, according to Kolmakov, he fought a victorious battle<sup>3</sup>.

At the same time, the Tiflis Bureau of the ARF telegraphed the representatives of the party in Alexandropol that “the Siberian company consisting of Western Armenian prisoners of war, led by Russian officers, is leaving this minute (April 10 - V.M.). The company gives the impression of a disciplined military unit. There are also 800 Western Armenians in that echelon, together with Andranik. According to the Self-Defense Council (they mean the Security Council under the leadership of V. Papazyan - V.M.), Andranik himself organized that military detachment. The National Council (Armenian National Council – ANC - V.M.) being against sending him to the front, why didn’t they take any measures to prevent his departure? Having informed you of this, the National Council believes that you can give Andranik such an assignment in some distant region that his activities would not adversely affect your military units. It is desirable to leave the Siberian company in your military detachment. It is necessary that Andranik receive your instructions at the Alexandropol station”<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Poruchik Alexei Kolmakov 2018: 34.

<sup>3</sup> Poruchik Alexei Kolmakov 2018: 37, 40.

<sup>4</sup> Banber Hayastani archivneri 1965, n. 1, p. 26.

This attitude towards Andranik was not new. After the fall of Erzurum, in April, 1918, when the Trabzon negotiations began and the ARF, following the Turkish position adopted by the Seim, underscored the negotiation process with the Turks, the Chairman of the Security Council, Vahan Papazyan, sent such an instruction.

On April 15, V. Papazyan gave an order to the commander of the Armenian Corps T. Nazarbekyan regarding the need to remove Andranik's detachment from the front line. The document stated: "Is it expedient to position the Western Armenians led by their brilliant military commander Andranik against the Turks under the conditions of a truce, while he may disobey your orders in the positions he occupies? So is it not possible to replace his detachment with another military unit?"<sup>5</sup>

In our opinion, in the issue of Gharakilisa the approach of T. Nazarbekyan, one of Andranik's "accusers" is controversial. On the one hand, there is his well-known order to Andranik to protect the Lori steppe and to strengthen himself in the Vorontsovka-Dsegh area, and on the other hand, there is the assessment that "having captured the favorable heights of Bzovdal and Jalaloghli, Andranik did not show resistance to the Turks and put the Gharakilisa detachment in a difficult situation"<sup>6</sup>.

In this regard, poruchik A. Kolmakov's testimony about Andranik's next steps is important. According to him, "we and all the refugees gathered in the village of Chivtali<sup>7</sup>", after which followed Andranik's order: "I have destroyed the large Tatar gangs, I have opened the road, move immediately in the direction of Jalaloghli". "We went to Jalaloghli, and from there to Kolageran, we went up to the village of Dsegh," mentioned A. Kolmakov<sup>8</sup>.

4. Remarkable details about Andranik are also revealed in the work of Susanna Hovhannisyan, the author of H. Tumanyan's scientific biography, in particular, about H. Tumanyan's activity in Dsegh, Lori during the period of March-July, 1918.

On March 1, 1918 the Armenian Patriotic Union was formed in Tiflis under the chairmanship of the writer, and its primary goal was the organization of self-defense<sup>9</sup>. On the instruction of the ANC, H. Tumanyan was appointed the authorized representative of the regions of Lori, Pambak, Ghazakh-Shamshadin and Borchalu. Together with others, he in fact managed, in particular, the self-defense operation of Lori and Gazakh-Shamshadin.<sup>10</sup>

By order of Georgian Menshevik Noah Ramishvili 50 soldiers, 1 officer and 2,000 rubles were put at Tumanyan's disposal in order to procure weapons. The transportation of weapons to Gharakilisa was carried out by H. Tumanyan himself. By the way, the ANC obstructed that job and refused to provide money; the US Consulate

<sup>5</sup> Andranik Ozanyan 1991: 282-283, according to Melikyan 1998: 58.

<sup>6</sup> NAA, f. 121, l. 2, f. 92, p. 6-12, according to Banber Hayastani archivneri 1965, n.1, p. 59.

<sup>7</sup> A village in the Alexandropol county, nowadays the village of Zuygaghbyur of the Ashotsk district.

<sup>8</sup> Poruchik Alexei Kolmakov 2018: 43, 45, 50.

<sup>9</sup> Hovhannisyan 2019: 664.

<sup>10</sup> Hovhannisyan 2019: 665.

in Tiflis helped. On May 15, after the fall of Alexandropol, the writer turned to A. Chkhenkeli, the President of the Seim. He distributed weapons to militiamen and he gave the 50,000 rubles that he received from the ANC for literary activities, as a monthly salary to the officials of 13 regions of the Patriotic Unions, soldiers, the military commissar of Gharakilisa, the Security Council of Armenia, and the National Council of Jalaloghli.<sup>11</sup>

On May 18-25, 1918 Andranik lived in Tumanyan's paternal house in Dsegh. The writer's paternal home served as a headquarters for the General,<sup>12</sup> and Andranik's victorious battles are related to those very days.

Thus, the combination of facts proves that Andranik was not inactive after the fall of Erzurum, "he was not having fun with Tumanyan in Dsegh", but he was fighting, receiving H. Tumanyan's active support, moreover, on May 22, he fought three victorious battles against the Turks in Jalal-Oghli.

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***Translated from Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***

The article has been delivered on 20.09.2022, reviewed on 07.10.2022, accepted for publication on 14.10.2022.

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<sup>11</sup> Hovhannisyan 2019: 666-667.

<sup>12</sup> Andranik Ozanyan 1991: 445.



# OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE STATEHOOD OF ARTSAKH AND THE CENTURY OF THE KARABAKH MOVEMENT

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-74

## **Abstract**

The problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is topical not only from the scientific point of view, but most of all because of the need for practical recommendations on the fate of Artsakh and the indigenous Armenian population inhabiting it for thousands of years. The claim of Azerbaijan that Artsakh is an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan has no legal, historical-geographical and ethno-cultural basis, since it seceded from the Azerbaijani SSR according to the law of the USSR "On the procedure for resolving issues related to the secession of a union republic from the USSR" dated 04/03/1990.

**Keywords:** Nagorno-Karabakh, Republic of Artsakh, self-determination

The problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is indeed topical not only from the scientific point of view, but most of all because of the need for practical recommendations on the fate of Artsakh and the indigenous Armenian population inhabiting it for thousands of years.

Finding any fair and legally justified solution to this problem is complicated by at least two circumstances:

- Azerbaijan's disregard for the historical, ethno-cultural and legal objective realities concerning the problem of Artsakh, the only purpose of which is to seize its territory by any means.

- For the same purpose the imposition of the unlawful verdict on some countries, which make political difference in the world, that Artsakh is an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan, without taking into account the fact of the centuries-old existence of this region as part of the Armenian state for 1300 years, as well as the fact that from the V century to 1813 Artsakh had various relatively independent state formations (kingdom, principality, melikdoms), while the Azerbaijani statehood is just over 100 years old, 70 of which it was part of the USSR.

Below we will try to substantiate some theses, which, in our opinion, will be useful for developing a strategy for effective solutions to the Artsakh issue.

1. A brief outline of the history of Artsakh, its ethnic composition and cultural heritage reasonably proves the inconsistency of the assertion that Nagorno-Karabakh is an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan. According to scientists (Strabo, Pliny the Elder, Movses Khorenatsi, etc.), Artsakh, as well as Utik, were part of the Kingdom of Van (IX-VI centuries BC), the Kingdom of Armenian Yervandids (VI-II centuries BC), the kingdom of Greater Armenia (the Kingdom of Artaxiads and

Armenian Arshakids) (189 BC - 428 AD) [1, p. 72, 2, pp. 43-63]. The history of Artsakh from the V century to 1813 will be discussed later.

Now let us present some statistical data on the ethnic composition of the population of Artsakh (within the boundaries of the NKAO) in the period from 1823 to 1914 [2, p. 564].

| Year | Population  | Armenians | %    | Tatars | %    | Others % |
|------|-------------|-----------|------|--------|------|----------|
| 1823 | Rural       | 27500     | 97.5 | 700    | 2.5  | -        |
|      | Shushi city | 3350      | 41.0 | 4670   | 56.0 | 3.0      |
|      | In total    | 30850     | 84.6 | 5370   | 14.7 | 0.7      |
| 1850 | Rural       | 29886     | 97.3 | 900    | 2.7  | -        |
|      | Shushi city | 6355      | 50.0 | 6370   | 50.0 | -        |
|      | In total    | 36241     | 83.3 | 7270   | 16.7 | -        |
| 1886 | Rural       | 83919     | 93.2 | 5839   | 6.5  | 0.3      |
|      | Shushi city | 15188     | 56.6 | 11595  | 43.3 | 0.1      |
|      | In total    | 99107     | 84.8 | 17434  | 14.9 | 0.3      |
| 1897 | Rural       | 91943     | 89.5 | 9631   | 9.4  | 1.1      |
|      | Shushi city | 14420     | 55.8 | 10778  | 41.7 | 2.5      |
|      | In total    | 106363    | 82.7 | 20409  | 15.9 | 1.4      |
| 1914 | Rural       | 113210    | 90.6 | 11013  | 8.8  | 0.6      |
|      | Shushi city | 22004     | 52.3 | 18864  | 44.8 | 2.9      |
|      | In total    | 135214    | 80.9 | 29877  | 17.9 | 1.2      |

From the above data it is evident that in the XIX century and at the beginning of the XX century the predominant part of the population in Artsakh - 81-85% were Armenians, and in the rural population this figure ranged from 91 to 97%.

In 1914, 90.6% of the rural population of Artsakh, 52.3% of the population of the city of Shushi were Armenians. Tatars accounted for 17.9% of the total population of the region, and in the city of Shushi - 44.8%.

Shushi received the status of a city in 1847, it began to develop intensively and became a major Armenian spiritual and cultural center.

In an attempt to change the demographic composition of the population of Artsakh and the city of Shushi and in order to expand the territory, on March 23, 1920 (a month before the Sovietization of Azerbaijan) the entire Armenian part of the city was burned and destroyed. During the fire and massacre, around 10 thousand Armenians died, the rest fled the city, leaving all their property [2, pp. 258-259]. Thus, in an artificial barbaric way, the Armenian city was "transformed" into an Azerbaijani one. This situation continued until 1992 - only 70 years of the thousand-year history of this Armenian settlement of Varanda.

Recently, on September 7, 2022, in his speech in Vladivostok the President of the Russian Federation, esteemed V.V. Putin attached great importance to the right of nations to self-determination. It is noteworthy that the self-determination of the people of

Artsakh took place twice: in 1991, and for the first time in the distant V century. After the fall of the Armenian kingdom of the Arshakids in 428, the kingdom of Artsakh and Utik was created in 485 (V-VII cc) [3, pp. 150-151, 2, pp. 70-72, 8, pp. 426-433].

Moreover, in 488, under King Vachagan III (the Pious), the first Armenian canonical constitution was adopted, which contained 21 articles. Then the principality of Khachen was established (X-XV centuries) [4, pp. 114-119]. Since the XVI century, five well-known melikdoms were formed in Artsakh (Varanda, Dizak, Khachen, Jraberd, Gulistan) [5, pp. 27-38, 64-69]. Thus, statehood in Artsakh in various forms and levels was preserved until 1813 - the year of the conclusion of the Treaty of Gyulistan between Russia and Iran on the handover of Artsakh to Russia.

2. Basically, 1918 should be considered the beginning of the Karabakh movement, because under the leadership of Turkey the Tatars started their struggle for the inclusion of the territory of Artsakh into the Republic of Azerbaijan newly created by Turkey. During 1918-1920 the Armenians of Karabakh heroically resisted and Nagorno-Karabakh did not become part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, not recognized by the League of Nations. A detailed analysis of this resistance is given in A. Ter-Sarkisyan's work [2, pp. 226-265]. However, later, under the Turkish-Azerbaijani pressure, the Bolsheviks included Artsakh into Soviet Azerbaijan. On July 7, 1923, Azerbaijan announced the establishment of the autonomous oblast of Nagorno-Karabakh on the territory of 4.4 thousand square kilometers, which comprised 38.2% of the total historical territory of Artsakh [2, pp. 326, 5, p.65]. Thus, most of the territory of Artsakh was torn away and was made part of Azerbaijan SSR as an administrative region, and the NKAO turned into an enclave - without direct communications with Armenia. Again, the ultimate goal is obvious - the expansion of this territory through the ethnic cleansing of the indigenous population. Recall that in 1923 the population of Nagorno-Karabakh was 157.8 thousand people, including 149.6 thousand Armenians, with the share of 91.8% in the total number. Of course, as a result of the intentional discriminatory policy of the Azerbaijani authorities during the Soviet era, the share of the Armenian population decreased and in 1989 it was 76.9% [2, p. 356].

Here are some facts to prove the discriminatory policy of the authorities of Azerbaijan SSR: according to our calculations, the industrial load of the territory of the NKAO was 2.6 times lower than the average indicator of Azerbaijan; the volume of per capita capital investments in the region amounted to 37% of the average republican level. In 1971-1987 capital investments aimed at economic and social development were 3.6 times higher per unit of the territory of Azerbaijan SSR than in the NKAO [6, pp. 263-264].

The struggle of Armenians for the reunification of Artsakh with Armenia has always continued. G. Harutyunyan and A. Kochinyan, the First Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia, twice appealed to the central authorities with a request to transfer the Armenian region of Nagorno-Karabakh to the Armenian

SSR, but to no avail. Apparently the elder brother-moderator forbade the younger one to agree with such a decision.

In 1988, a new active stage of the Karabakh movement began, and its results are well known.

Thus, at the first stage of the Karabakh movement Artsakh could not be reunited with Armenia. The Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast was formed, which was a state structure with minimal powers. The second stage of this movement ended in 1991 with the establishment of the Republic of Artsakh on the basis of the right of nations to self-determination. Trying to keep Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan by force, Baku launched an aggression against the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, which ended on May 5, 1994 with the conclusion of the Bishkek Protocol, a ceasefire agreement in the conflict zone. The result of Azerbaijan's aggressive war against the NKR was not only the defense of the independence of Artsakh, but also the liberation of the original historical part of its territory, conquered by the Azerbaijan SSR in 1923 during the establishment of the NKAO (Karvachar, Kovsakan, Kashatagh, the seized territories of Varanda and Dizak, among others). A modern democratic state was created - the Republic of Artsakh with a total constitutional area of 12.02 thousand square meters. [7, pp. 961-969]. But such a course of events was not part of the plans of the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem. Thus, taking advantage of the international situation which was favorable for them and due to other circumstances, 100 years after the beginning of the Karabakh movement and the Turkish-Armenian war of 1920, they captured most of the Republic of Artsakh, created the necessary conditions for the complete capture of Artsakh and Turkish dominance in the South Caucasus [7, стр. 961-969]. As Turkish President R.T. Erdoğan has stated, they carry on the work of their ancestors. In order to ideologically substantiate and justify their invasive actions and military aggression, since the 60s of the previous century Azerbaijani historians and politicians have been falsifying the history of Artsakh in an organized and purposeful manner, as ordered by state bodies. They are trying in every possible way to present the Armenian cultural heritage as Albanian, and the religion and world-famous Armenian temples as Udi. By order of the authorities, anything Armenian, the Armenian trace, including objects of culture and religion, cemeteries are being destroyed in the occupied territories.

It is obvious that the establishment of the state of Azerbaijan, the inclusion of the Armenian regions of Artsakh and Nakhijevan in it, were the primary elements to serve the purpose of the strategy.

As a conclusion it should be mentioned that it is necessary to achieve the following generally accepted goals:

- It is reasonable to deny the assertion imposed by the Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem on some countries that Artsakh is an internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan, since it has no legal, historical-geographical and ethno-cultural basis.

The integrity of this approach is confirmed by the above-mentioned historical and demographic realities. In addition, the NKAO seceded from the Azerbaijan SSR

according to the law of the SSR “On the procedure for resolving issues related to the secession of a union republic from the USSR” dated 04/03/1990 and, as noted, Nagorno-Karabakh was not part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, whose successor was independent Azerbaijan, which seceded from the USSR according to the declaration of the Supreme Council of Azerbaijan SSR on 08/30/1991. The denial of the mentioned unlawful assertion will pave the way for international recognition of the independence of the Republic of Artsakh.

– Develop measures to strengthen the Republic of Artsakh with the restoration of the territory and border of the NKAO and ensuring all reliable communications with the RA.

– Together with the Russian Federation and other friendly countries, ensure the proper solution to the security problems of the Republic of Artsakh.

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***Translated from Russian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***

The article was delivered on 20.09.2022, reviewed on 07.10.2022, accepted for publication on 14.10.2022.

**THE SUPPRESSION OF THE 1919 ANTI-ARMENIAN UNREST OF THE  
MUSLIM POPULATION IN THE ZOD-BASARGECHAR REGION AND THE  
RESTORATION OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN  
THE CONTEXT OF THE ACTIVITY OF COLONEL CLIVE TEMPERLEY, THE  
MILITARY AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVE OF GREAT BRITAIN**

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-79

**Abstract**

In 1918-1920s, the Republic of Armenia made huge efforts to prevent hostile forces and conspiracies, especially in Surmalu, Kars, Aralitch, Zangibasar, Vedibasar, Böyük-Vedi, Nakhijevan, Zangezur, Zod, Basargechar and other regions. Available archives and other documents show the difficulties the Armenian government faces in preventing the special operations of Azerbaijani-Turkish activities.

During the days of the First Republic of Armenia, the successful activity of the Armenian government had significant results in revealing the apparent anti-Armenian intrigues and espionage activities of Azerbaijan in Yerevan aimed at undermining the foundations of Armenian statehood. The anti-Armenian uprisings in Zangibasar, Böyük-Vedi, as well as in Zod and other Armenian territories, directly sought to separate these territories from Armenia, and this took place in the immediate presence of the British military representative, Colonel C. Temperley.

**Keywords:** Zod, Basargechar-Vardenis, Armenian troops, Tatar-Azerbaijani, C. Temperley, Muslim, Republic of Armenia

One of the most important manifestations of the state and political life of the Republic of Armenia in 1918-1920 was the constant struggle against the forces tearing down the Armenian statehood from within. The boundary and territorial disputes with the immediate neighbors - Azerbaijan and Georgia - had old roots and were always at the basis of the foreign policy choices and orientations that arose with the emergence of the three Transcaucasian republics, when each of them embarked on the establishment of their own armed forces.

In 1918-1920, from the point of view of ensuring the territorial integrity and security of the Republic of Armenia, more importance was attached to the issue of those regions where, from the government's point of view, the chances of violating the rights of the Armenian population were greater, because a great number of Muslim population lived there and they often did not have a law-abiding attitude towards the legal authorities.



During the Armenian-Tatar (Azerbaijani) conflicts, thanks to the joint measures taken by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the military units of the regular army, a significant number of the Muslim population was deported from Armenia. They mainly concentrated in the border zones, thus becoming carriers of a unique explosive charge, creating hotbeds of unrest.

It should be noted that back in 2003, 2009, 2011, 2015 we addressed the issue from a military and political point of view for the first time, highlighting the efforts of the RA government to ensure the security interests and territorial integrity of RA in the Zod-Basargechar region, and in 2008 the issue was very briefly discussed by Orientalist Davit Knyazyan, and in 2012 - by historian Hamlet Harutyunyan.<sup>1</sup> In 2018, on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Republic, based on the facts presented by us, A. Asatryan also briefly, in a few lines assessed the Sotk-Zod events and the role of the heroes of the Battle of Sardarapat, General Daniel Bek-Pirumyan and Chief of Staff Al. Chneour in them, noting that in early 1919 Major General Daniel Bek-Pirumyan brilliantly carried out the operations of the village of Zod with the squad he led, and Chief of Staff of the squad Al. Chneour took part in them as well. The operations of Zod were one of the instructive examples of mutual cooperation between the Armenian army and intelligence.<sup>2</sup> This was briefly noted by Artsvi Bakhchinyan from Armenia and V. Mateosian from the USA who highly appreciated Sardarapat hero Al. Chneour's "Zod" operation aimed at suppressing the Muslim riot in the Nor Bayazet region.<sup>3</sup>

As for H. Harutyunyan's work<sup>4</sup> published in 2012, it almost copies our study mentioned above, with minor reservations, and it is clearly seen from the references given in the author's footnote and from the content section in general. In terms of modern interpretation, notable is the work by A. Grigoryan and A. Bobokhyan<sup>5</sup> who highly evaluate our study in terms of covering the blank pages of the Zod military operation and they emphasize that this work was written from a different starting point, namely from the point of view of revealing the activities of the RA power structures, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the army in Zod-Basargechar in 1919, closely linking it to C. Temperley's (Temperley Clive Errington, the representative of the British military and political mission in Armenia) activity in Zod-Basargechar. And this determines the

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● <sup>1</sup>The study is published within the scope of the Contractual (Thematic) Application of the State Committee of Science (21T-6A102: "Armenia in the context of relations with the military and political representations of European countries in Transcaucasia (1917-1920)") approved by Order N1693-A/2 of October 11, 2021 of the RA Minister of ESCS.

Virabyan 2003a: 51; Virabyan 2003b: 98-141; Virabyan 2009: 222-253; Virabyan 2011:128-139; Virabyan 2015: 423-445; Knyazyan 2008: 91-93; Harutyunyan 2012: 283-286, 295-310.

<sup>2</sup> Virabyan 2003a: 51; Asatryan 2018: 334.

<sup>3</sup> Baxchinean A., Mateosean 2018: 100.

<sup>4</sup> Harutyunyan 2012: 285, 295-310.

<sup>5</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022.

scientific novelty, modern resonance and Armenological value of the presented problem.

Muslim uprisings against the Republic of Armenia followed one another, covering almost the entire territory of the republic, aimed at undermining and destroying the Armenian statehood. The frequent attacks of bandit Selim and other gangs on Armenian military units and militias in Aghbaba, Zod, Zarushat and elsewhere created hotbeds of great tension. Azerbaijani agents and officers sent and guided by Turkey were constantly calling secret meetings, arming the local Muslim population, training them to use firearms, making provocative calls to overthrow the RA government.<sup>6</sup> Back in July 1918, Azerbaijan began sending appeals to the Armenian government, demanding an end to violence against Muslims in the Nor Bayazet<sup>7</sup> region. In response, the Armenian government informed the Azerbaijani government that the Muslim residents who were subjected to violence should turn to the RA government, not to Azerbaijan, considering it unacceptable that the Armenians of Azerbaijan turn to them, and the Muslims of Armenia turn to Baku, viewing it as an interference in each other's internal affairs.

Azerbaijani historian I. Niftaliyev notes that under the name of the Gyokcha (Sevan-V.V.) region the eastern parts of the Nor Bayazet region of the Yerevan Governorate (according to him not Yerevan, but Ierevan-V.V.) were outlined, which lay between Lake Gyokcha and the Lesser Caucasus mountain peak and which administratively belonged to the Dovalinsk, Mazarinsky and Gazaldara police stations, including Zod, Basar-Gechar, Bashkend and other settlements. Referring to the report of A. Shchepoteyev (employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic) on "the disputed territories of the Caucasus" to which the self-determined Azerbaijani Turks allegedly had "legal" rights, Niftaliyev notes that the entire area east of the above-mentioned border had been inhabited by a large Muslim population (100%) without including any ethnic Armenians, stating that since the very beginning of the declaration of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic this population had been striving for the latter and for these natural aspirations they had been repeatedly subjected to bloody persecution by Armenians. As an example he cites the 1919 events in Zod, Bashkend, Basar-Gechar and other villages, claiming that the entire Muslim population along the eastern and southeastern shores of Lake Gyokcha was in ethnic, religious and domestic ties with the Muslim population of Gazakh, Karabakh and Nakhijevan regions<sup>8</sup>.

And Nazim Mustafa, famous Azerbaijani researcher, Doctor of Philosophy, I. Aliyev's aide, writes that in order to stop the Armenian armed forces, self-defense groups were organized by the Muslim population in the Zod-Basargechar region of

<sup>6</sup> Haraj, May 7, 1920, № 49.

<sup>7</sup> The Nor Bayazet region included the rural communities of Hajimukhan, Ghshlagh, Pashakend, Dalighardash, Yeranos, Gjol, Gharanlugh, Zolakhach, Gholankirlan, Alichalu, Basargechar, Sariyagub, Mazra, Zod and Nadezhdino (present Jil) - Harutyunyan 2008: 122-124; Harutyunyan 2012: 11, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Naftaliyev 2010: 22-23.

Gyokcha, and on March 2, 1919, the representatives of 26 villages of the Gyokcha region organized signature gatherings in the villages, allegedly on behalf of 60,000 people. Ogrucha resident Mashadi Isa Kerbalay Musa Oghli was elected the military minister of the region, and Zod village resident Agalar Bey Kasamansky was elected Commander-in-Chief, being entrusted with the mobilization of Muslim detachments in the entrusted territory, adding that the population considered him a citizen of Azerbaijan.<sup>9</sup> And Armenophobe Bakhtiyar Najafov emphasizes the allegedly endless attacks by Armenians, which were accompanied by atrocities and violence against the population, thereby explaining the Muslim anti-Armenian outbreak in the Zod region. Najafov considered it violence by the Dashnaks against the civilian population, who explained it by the problems caused by the establishment of Armenian statehood, which the Azerbaijani author by no means wants to accept as a normal reality.<sup>10</sup>

This explains the activation of Muslim movements throughout 1919. In the second half of 1918 - the beginning of 1919, all the more or less significant cases of deportation of the Muslim population from the territory of RA, and vice versa, from the Armenian regions of Azerbaijan to Armenia, took place. In his report addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs on March 11, 1919, the Commissar of the Territorial Administration and Militia of Armenia emphasized that during the entire period of the Armenian-Turkish clashes 111.560 Tatars were deported outside the borders of Armenia, of which 15.000 were Kurds and 29.000 Tatars returned, but the deported Kurds did not return, emphasizing that in the territory of Armenia the number of villages free from Muslims reached 248, 50 of which were destroyed, and 56 completely free villages were occupied mainly by refugees from Turkish Armenia and 142 villages – by refugees from the Kars province.<sup>11</sup> The RA government sought to create a homogeneous population in the border zone, insuring against the dangers that came from Azerbaijan and Turkey. In this regard, H. Harutyunyan expressed disagreement with the above-mentioned point of view, finding that it did not correspond to reality, that such things did not happen.<sup>12</sup> However, in this regard we would like to emphasize that it is one thing for any decent state to strive for the indigenous population to prevail in its territory and the management of ethnic minorities remains the only problem, which we can encounter today in many European countries, but it is another thing to be a minority in the territory of one's own homeland and to be constantly afraid and threatened. At the present stage, any more or less organized country, e.g. the USA, the Russian Federation and other countries, cannot at all feel threatened by, say, a few million non-ethnic Russians living in their territories, for example, Armenians. Only states that are weak and disorganized in terms of security are afraid of such phenomena and realities.

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<sup>9</sup> Mustafa Nazim 2018: 17, 198.

<sup>10</sup> Nadjafov 1994: 59.

<sup>11</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 44, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> Harutyunyan 2012: 307.

The significant mass of Muslims living in the territory of Armenia was enough (according to the memorandum of the RA government presented by Hovh. Qajaznuni to the US Senate on November 10, 1919, the number of Muslims [Tatar, Turk, Turkmen, Karapapakh] was 588.000 or 27% of the population)<sup>13</sup> to make RA always be in a state of alarm, especially since spies from Azerbaijan and Turkey, various emissaries armed with a huge amount of fake money, were trying to organize this mass and incite a rebellion against the legitimate authorities, supporting separatist sentiments. And in this matter, the RA government had a lot to do, trying to eradicate it almost everywhere - in Basargechar,<sup>14</sup> Zangezur, Kars etc.

The Muslim uprisings were felt wherever there was a more or less large Muslim population, and it was difficult to fight against them, therefore, to solve the issue, the military was involved, which was not strengthened, but weakened by participating in internal fights, “pacifying” the Muslim population in the territory of Armenia and reasserting the power of the legitimate authorities. It was clearly demonstrated in the suppression of the Zod-Basargechar (Vardenis) riot, when the Republic of Azerbaijan, relying on the Muslim population in the Lake Sevan basin, tried to make claims to a part of the legal territory of the Republic of Armenia. R. Ter-Minasyan writes the following: “With Zod<sup>15</sup> as their center, the Tatars had established the power of Azerbaijan there and firmly closed the roads of Jivanshir. The Tatar villages about 2000 square verst north of Lake Sevan in the Basargechar district of the region of Bayazet, which were directly connected with Jivanshir and bordered Azerbaijan, declared that they were not independent, but a part of Azerbaijan: agents and officials of Azerbaijan ruled there, and our officials did not have access to that country. The loss of that region was very harmful for Armenia not from the economic, but from the military point of view. Azerbaijan could enter the basin of Lake Sevan through it, it could keep in touch with Vedibasar and Sadarak over Jghin, and therefore with Turkey. All the roads of Armenia were open to it and it would be able to cut to the Daralagyaz and Zangezur regions, as well as the Dilijan and Yerevan regions. It was a hammer raised over the heads of the Armenian provinces”.<sup>16</sup> It is difficult to unequivocally agree that our officials had no access to those regions, that “the importance of this danger was not felt by the

<sup>13</sup> Qajaznuni 1993: 11.

<sup>14</sup> Basargechar - a region and a village of the same name in Nor Bayazet region of Yerevan province, in the south-eastern part of the Gegharkunik province of the present-day RA. By order of June 2, 1969 of the Supreme Council of the ASSR it was renamed **Vardenis**. The place name is derived from the Turkish words “**basar**” (to attack, trample) and “**gechar**” (to pass). See Hakobyan *et al.* 1986: 609; Hakobyan *et al.* 1986: 782-783.

<sup>15</sup> Zod – a village in the Sotk region of the Syunik province of Greater Armenia. Zod, Agheghush, Zot, Tsavdenk, Tsot, Hog, Sod, Sodk, Sot, Sotits avan, Sotk – a village in the Vardenis region of the ASSR, on the banks of the Sot-Zod river, near the Zod mountain pass, surrounded by mountains on three sides. To the east of the village there are the gold mines of Zod, which were developed several centuries Before the Common Era. In medieval Armenian sources it is known as Vasakashen village of the Sotk region of the Syunik province. In 1991 it was renamed Sotk. Hakobyan *et al.* 1988: 312; Hakobyan *et al.* 1998: 651.

<sup>16</sup> Ruben 1982: 210, 326-327.

government to the extent necessary” and resorted to negotiations to improve the situation, which Ruben considered inexpedient. However, it should be noted that considering the available military and political resources and opportunities, perhaps the RA government was more right to go for that option and try to resolve the conflict.

Information about these Azerbaijani-Turkish ambitions was obtained by intelligence agencies. The situation around the Sevan basin and RA is well represented by T. Devoyants: “Subsequent events are a consequence of the implementation of the Muslims’ plan by which Azerbaijan would join Turkey and Armenia would be neutralized, limiting itself to Lake Sevan, Yerevan and Alexandropol. At the same time, the full connection between the actions of Azerbaijan and Turkey and the role of the leader of Azerbaijan in all the hostile actions that are aimed directly against Armenia is absolutely revealed while Turkey is temporarily busier with its domestic affairs and the organization of resistance to the decisions of the Paris conference”.<sup>17</sup> The so-called Basargechar events made a lot of noise, where the Turks, ignoring the calls and warnings of the Armenian authorities, with the direct encouragement of their secular and spiritual leaders and the Azerbaijani authorities, continued to cherish the hope of joining Azerbaijan and carried out anti-Armenian and anti-government aggressive actions in the Basargechar region.

Judging by the correspondence between militia chiefs, governors and military bodies, alarming signs were discerned as early as in December 1918 and January 1919, until the well-known Zod-Basargechar Muslim uprisings, when the population, instigated by the Tatar beys, announced that they were joining Azerbaijan. The Muslim elements did not demonstrate loyalty towards the legitimate authorities in other parts of RA either, they often revolted and created a tense situation with their riotous mood. In this situation, the special services were forced to expose the enemy’s covert agents and spies in different places: Zangibasar, Kars, Basargechar and elsewhere, preventing their anti-Armenian actions.

Sometimes the RA authorities were faced with problems of “local” nature, preventing the transgressions of the provincial Armenian authorities. In 1919, in a note addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, a colonel of the General Staff wrote that according to the information of the head of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade, the Commissar of Qaravansara allowed armed men to move from Azerbaijan to Armenia for a bribe. He demanded that immediate measures be taken to stop the illegal crossing of armed men across the border.<sup>18</sup> In a letter addressed to the counter-intelligence department, assistant to the head of the intelligence department of the General Staff, Ensign Hovsepyan reported about the Azerbaijani-Turkish ambitions in the Kars province,

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<sup>17</sup> Devoyeanc 1945: 96.

<sup>18</sup> NAA, f. 201, l. 1, f. 168, p. 32.

which was also confirmed by A. Poidebard,<sup>19</sup> officer of the French military representation in Armenia, according to whose data at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919, Turkish agents were engaged in active propaganda in the mentioned area<sup>20</sup>.

The summary of the intelligence reported that Ali Riza, the former “Vice President” of “Shura” (the so-called “Milli Shura”, the Muslim “autonomy” in the Kars province) escaped from the Batumi prison, passed through Tiflis to Gharachakh, and from there to the Aghbaba region, and then to the Olti region through Zarushat (July 1919). It added that beyond doubt Azerbaijan sought to create a “second Karabakh” in the region of Aghbaba, Zarushat, Ardahan and Olti, that “there was also a Georgian-Azerbaijani confederation, that more than 300 Georgian soldiers had arrived in the border villages of Gorlovka and Troitsk of the Akhalkalaki province”. Ensign Hovsepyan referred to the data on the cooperation of the Tatars with the Kurds, stating that he had had a conversation with A. Rawlinson, Colonel of the British headquarters in Erzurum regarding this.<sup>21</sup> In the operational intelligence summary of May 24, 1919 Lieutenant Colonel A. K. Chneour<sup>22</sup> reported on Kurdish-Tatar and Turkish-Georgian encroachments in Kaghzvan, Merdenek and Ardahan regions, adding that an Armenian military unit was sent in the direction of Ardahan.<sup>23</sup> In the report of August 22, 1919, addressed to the RA Minister of Internal Affairs, governor of Kars St. Ghorghanyan reported on the espionage-provocative activities of the Georgian military units in the Ardahan region.<sup>24</sup>

According to the report of Staff-Rotmister Martirosov, the operational intelligence summary of the headquarters of the Yerevan Group of the Armenian Army, which refers to the events from August 20 to September 20, 1919, states that the Tatars from Kalvijar were preparing to attack Basargechar, gathering a detachment of about 2000 people under the leadership of Asker Bey.<sup>25</sup> On September 7, 1919 Captain Shumov telegraphed to Tiflis, to the military attaché General H. Kishmishyan, giving information about the preparations and movements of the Muslim population in the period from August 26 to September 4 on the Basargechar-Tazakend-Daralagyaz-Nor Bayazet-Ghamarlu line, where clashes with small Kurdish groups took place.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Antoine Poidebard (1878 -1955) – archaeologist, historian, pilot, cartographer and missionary who knew Armenian well.

<sup>20</sup> Ter-Minasyan 2004: 97.

<sup>21</sup> NAA, f. 201, l. 1, f. 168, p. 38.

<sup>22</sup> Chneour Alexander Constantine (20.08.1884 - 16.09.1977) – officer of the Russian army, Colonel, hero of Sardarapat (Heroic battle of Sardarapat 1967; Virabyan 2021).

<sup>23</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 73 (71), p. 21.

<sup>24</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 73 (71), p. 126.

<sup>25</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 155, p. 126.

<sup>26</sup> NAA, f. 275, l. 5, f. 177, p. 119.



Regarding the Zangezur realities, relying on the information received from intelligence, Major-General Hakhverdyan brought facts about the special measures taken by Azerbaijan in the border zone with Armenia, about the militia battalion of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan in Okuzli and Getabek, in Gazakh, consisting of 112 people, 3 machine guns and a frontier detachment with 80 cavalrymen and 50 infantrymen. It was then stated that the commander of the troops had ordered the commanders of the Dilijan and Nor Bayazet detachments to check the situation in the territories of the regions of Gazakh and Ganja (Gandzak) with constant intelligence by agents, noting that there was no doubt that in the event of the official start of military operations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, regular troops would be concentrated in the regions of Gazakh and Getabek to attack Dilijan or Karakilisa and Basargechar.<sup>27</sup>

In the telegram of July 26, 1919, addressed to the Minister of Internal Affairs, to Dro and to Colonel Chneour, Khosroyev, the commissar of the Nor Bayazet region, reported that the spy "Kurd" (Ali Alahverdi) had learned from 2 Tatars in the village of Shishkaya that the Tatars were going to take Basargechar, driving away the Armenians, expecting to expel the Armenians from Karabakh and Elizavetpol in case of success and settle the Tatars there.<sup>28</sup>

On August 3, 1919, the "diplomatic representative-spy" Khan Tekinsky reported to the Azerbaijani government about sending artillery and shells in 8 trucks to Dilijan, Nor Bayazet and Basargechar and about the presence of the 4<sup>th</sup> regiment in those regions, concluding that "the Armenians were preparing it against Muslims" and demanding that the government "take the necessary measures"<sup>29</sup>.

The anti-Armenian provocative and destructive activities of the Azerbaijani diplomatic representative, the establishment of an espionage and intelligence network and groups of agents throughout the Republic of Armenia encouraged the Muslim masses, whose leaders provoked them to run various machinations, and pushed them to insurgent actions against the legitimate Armenian authorities and the Armenian people. And encouraged by this Muslim gangs that had started anti-government riots in Zangibasar, Zod-Basargechar, the Kars province and elsewhere, showed strong resistance to the Armenian troops and local authorities under the leadership of Turkish officers and special service agents and with the participation of military men and askyars.

In another telegram dated July 30, 1919 addressed to Colonel Chneour, provincial commissar of Nor Bayazet Khosroyev informed that a spy named "Kurd" reported that the Tatars had sent a letter of demand to Elizavetpol, asking to send troops, otherwise they threatened to submit to the RA government.<sup>30</sup> In the telegram of August 7, 1919, sent to Dro and the RA Minister of Internal Affairs, Hamazasp emphasized the threat

<sup>27</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 73 (71), p. 190.

<sup>28</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 73 (71), p. 75.

<sup>29</sup> Secret documents 1920, N 1, 15, 616.

<sup>30</sup> NAA, f. 201, l. 1, f. 168, p. 12.

posed by the Azerbaijani troops stationed on the Dallar-Chardakhlu-Getabek-Ghalakend line to the Zod-Shishkaya region, asking to urgently strengthen the area with militiamen and other forces.<sup>31</sup>

It is noteworthy that, as A. Grigoryan and A. Bobokhyan aptly point out, before the resolution of the Zod operation, the RA armed forces first tried to find a peaceful solution and approached the Tatar settlements with the accompaniment of *zurna* and *dhol*, offering peace as a way to resolve the conflict, and only after being shot at responded with fire.<sup>32</sup>

In this situation, the Armenian authorities tried to suppress possible anti-Armenian Muslim uprisings, but the sending of punitive military units to the region became inevitable. In the autumn of 1918, the punitive military unit from Yerevan entered the Basargechar region after solving the problem of tax collection in Armenian villages. After the establishment of the Transcaucasian republics, Abbas Ali Bey, a resident of the village of Zod, the former provincial commissar of the region, tried to join the Basargechar region to the Republic of Azerbaijan. For the purpose of joining the Basargechar region to Azerbaijan, he sent some influential Turks to Gandzak to submit to the Azerbaijani authorities, expecting their direct military support. Having collected 60 000 roubles from ordinary people for the realization of the purpose, Azerbaijan also sent several influential Turks. In order to resolve the possible confrontation in a peaceful way, the provincial commissar of Nor Bayazet called Abbas Ali Bey to Nor Bayazet, but the latter refused, openly declaring that he did not recognize the authority of the provincial commissar. Ensign Tigran Baghdasaryan's punitive military unit arrived in Basargechar, because back on September 18, 1918 Aram Manukyan instructed the provincial commissar of Nor Bayazet to prevent the encroachments of the Tatars seeking to establish Azerbaijan's authority over the Basargechar region and to declare that they were obliged to fulfill the legal requirements of the RA government.<sup>33</sup> The latter called the representatives of the Turkish villages and informed them of the Armenian government's decision to disarm the people living in the territory of the Republic of Armenia, demanding that they hand over their weapons and pay taxes within three days, otherwise threatening to bombard the villages.<sup>34</sup> However, 3 days went by but the Turks expressed no willingness to submit to the Armenian authorities, which prompted the punitive military unit to act and bombard the village of Mets Mazra, after which the Muslim population, terrified by the sound of the cannon, came to T. Baghdasaryan with a white flag, handing over weapons and taxes, including 20,000 roubles and 450 rifles, promising to give the state grain as well, after which, on November 12, 1918, the punitive military unit left for Yerevan.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the region of Basargechar gradually turned

<sup>31</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 1, p. 311.

<sup>32</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 15.

<sup>33</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 108.

<sup>34</sup> Zang, 1918, December 11, N 78.

<sup>35</sup> Zang, 1918, December 11, N 78.

into the center of the anti-state movement and separatist sentiments of the Muslim population of RA.

The uprising of Basargechar encouraged the population of other regions of Armenia, and they began to openly interfere in domestic affairs, send appeals to the Azerbaijani government, asking to free them from the grave situation and from the Armenian authorities that were oppressing Islam, to occupy Armenia and to join the region to the Republic of Azerbaijan. For this purpose, on January 2, 1919, a meeting of Muslim public figures living in Armenia was held in Yerevan, in which dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Armenian government towards the Muslim population was expressed. Beg Bayrambegov, who made a speech during the meeting, presented information about the tragic situation of the Muslims of Yerevan province. In the resolution adopted at the meeting, it was decided to appeal to the commander of the Allied forces in Baku, General W. Thomson to occupy the province of Yerevan, and if for some reason it was not possible, to force the government of the Ararat (Armenia) republic to take real measures against the atrocities of the Armenian gangs. As a result of the meeting T. Bey Makinsky, Palabeg Bayrambegov, Rashid Bey Ismailov and Aziz Bey Sultanov were assigned to go to Baku and meet with General Thomson,<sup>36</sup> who became known for his Armenophobia and anti-Karabakh position.

Thus, under the threat of the appearance of Armenian troops, the local Tatars agreed to submit to the authorities, which was followed by an increase in taxes, and Tigran Baghdasaryan's punitive detachment returned to Yerevan on November 12, 1918. In addition to that, there were starving and furious migrants near the Tatar settlements.<sup>37</sup> So, on January 31, 1919, in a telegram addressed to the Commissar of Territorial Administration and Militia of Armenia, Shahinyan, the provincial Commissar of Nor Bayazet reported that about 1000 armed refugee Armenians were attacking the Muslim villages of Verin Zaghalu, Ghezel-Vank and Subbutan in the Basargechar region, which is why the head of the militia had been sent there.<sup>38</sup> From the official letter sent by Shahinyan to the head of the territorial administration on February 2, we learn that the refugees, led by Mushegh, Vahan, Ishkhan and Nikol, supported the local Armenians, drove the Muslims out of these villages and the frightened Turks fled to the neighboring villages.<sup>39</sup> On February 6, Shahinyan got a telegram from the commissar of the Territorial Administration and Militia of Armenia, in which it was requested to immediately take decisive measures to prevent the riots and bring the perpetrators to strict judicial responsibility.<sup>40</sup> However, judging by the documents, the events got out of control and began to develop in a different scenario. Becoming uncontrollable, they

<sup>36</sup> Mshak, 1919, January 16, N. 12.

<sup>37</sup> Kavkazskoe slovo, 1918, December 7.

<sup>38</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 4-8.

<sup>40</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 8, 115.

created new problems, during which, as it was emphasized in the telegram of the RA Foreign Minister addressed to the Prime Minister on February 18, 1919, "...the local administration has shown criminal negligence and incompetence".<sup>41</sup>

However, it would be one-sided to explain all that only by the administration's incompetence, because those events also had socio-economic motives, which became an additional impetus for the undesirable course of events, and the ambitious Muslim leaders of Azerbaijan took advantage of it. This was stimulated by the desperate steps of the refugee and starving Armenians of the Basargechar region in late January, 1919. Due to the steps taken by the administration and the division of Rotmister Silikyan, the refugees calmed down and were partially disarmed, the Tatar villages were freed from the refugees who occupied them, the administration began to return the looted property to the Tatars and started prosecuting the perpetrators. Rotmister Silikyan and cornet Khachaturov went to the Tatar to calm down the population,<sup>42</sup> which proves the non-discriminatory approach of the RA authorities to the problem. With the help of the military units, they were able to disarm the refugees and resettle the Tatars in their villages and return the looted property.<sup>43</sup> However, the events were already spreading beyond the village of Basargechar, becoming a cause of tension in inter-ethnic relations, which was complicated by the proximity of the border of Azerbaijan, about which Rotmister Silikyan telegraphed to Generals M. Silikyan<sup>44</sup> and Sardarapat hero D. Bek-Pirumyan.<sup>45</sup>

On February 12, 1919, the Council of Ministers heard the report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the telegram of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, in which the latter complained about the actions of Armenian military units near Lake Sevan, which, crossing the border of Azerbaijan, had allegedly attacked several Turkish villages, carried out oppression and looting. He demanded to prevent such phenomena and to bring the perpetrators to justice, asking not to consider them responsible for the potential future actions by the Turkish population on behalf of the Azerbaijani government. In the decision adopted in this regard the RA Council of Ministers emphasized: "In view of the Military Minister's report that there could be an attack by "groups", the Minister of Internal Affairs is instructed to immediately appoint a strict investigation in order to find out the authenticity of the attacks and pressures mentioned

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<sup>41</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 110.

<sup>42</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 115.

<sup>43</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 115.

<sup>44</sup> Silikyan Movses Baba (Mikhail) (14.09.1862-10.12.1937) – major general, member of the RA Military Council, hero of Sardarapat.

<sup>45</sup> Daniel Bek-Pirumyan Abisoghom (22.11.1861-1922) – lieutenant-general, Chief commander of the Sardarapat battle, hero of the Zod-Sotk operation, Hayastani Hanrapetutean Karavarutean nisteri arcanagrutyunner: 2014, 132, 136, 146, 156, 162, 169: NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 22.

in the telegram and to bring the perpetrators to justice.<sup>46</sup> In the response of the Armenian side it was mentioned that the regular RA troops had not participated in the Basargechar region riots, but about 10 000 Armenian migrants had attacked Muslim villages, and the RA authorities had returned the Muslims to their villages, given them back the looted property, and those responsible were called to account.<sup>47</sup>

However, it should be mentioned that in this regard D. Knyazyan supports the opposite point of view, noting that the Western Armenian migrants, who were left homeless and without food, were responsible for the aggravation of the situation in the Basargechar region. D. Knyazyan believes that the military unit from Yerevan drove out the migrants from the Muslim villages, and the irresponsible behavior of Rotmister Silikyan, the commander of the military unit, became an excuse for the Muslim uprising and the massacre of the troops.<sup>48</sup>

All these led to tension and the infiltration of armed groups from the territory of Azerbaijan into the territory of Armenia and the delivery of weapons to the rebels. Preparations to capture Chambarak and Bashkend began, at the same time, military mobilization was announced, and around 1000 Georgian officers came to the aid of Azerbaijan.<sup>49</sup> It should be said that it was positive for Armenia that the British command and its military and political representative actually supported Armenia in the settlement of the problem, contrary to their openly pro-Azerbaijani position in Nagorno-Karabakh, Zangezur and elsewhere, and thus, they contributed to the preservation of the territorial integrity of RA in the Zod-Basargechar region. The incident also clearly demonstrated that Azerbaijan, in one way or another, laid claim to all those Armenian regions where there was a concentrated Muslim population.<sup>50</sup>

On February 18, 1919, in its regular session the Council of Ministers was introduced to the problem in connection with the activation of the Muslim movement in the Basargechar region and instructed the Minister of Internal Affairs to investigate the activities of the local administration.<sup>51</sup> Soon new facts emerged, allowing the government to achieve a more realistic and complete understanding of the problem that had arisen in the Zod region. It is clearly seen from the official letter of the Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Tigranyan addressed to the Prime Minister on February 18, 1919: "The developments in the Basargechar region, which became the reason for the intervention of the Azerbaijani government, have already been clarified to some extent. In addition to the private individuals who committed the crime and will suffer the legal punishment, I consider it necessary to draw the special attention of the government to

<sup>46</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 96, p. 25; f. 100 (43), p. 26; f. 201, l. 1, f. 486, part I, p. 37. Arev, 1919, February 13; Haraj, 1919, February 16.

<sup>47</sup> Knyazyan 2008: 92-93.

<sup>48</sup> NAA f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 4, 6, 9-10, 15, 34, 44. Arev, 1919, February 11.

<sup>49</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 47, 54-55, 60, f. 294, p. 77.

<sup>50</sup> Kavkazskoe slovo, 1919, 5, April 25; Yedinaya Rossiya, 1919, March 26.

<sup>51</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (43), p. 28; f. 96, p. 27.

the fact that, according to importance, the local administration has shown criminal negligence and incompetence. I find it necessary that those governors be brought to justice, be punished, and perhaps removed from public office, and the commander of the division, Rotmister Silikyan, whose intervention restored order and peace, should be thanked. Please provide me with detailed and accurate information about the motives and nature of the events, so that I can inform both the British High Command and the Government of Azerbaijan".<sup>52</sup>

And from the February 18 telegram of the RA Minister of Foreign Affairs addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, it becomes clear that as a result of the dynamic actions undertaken by the Armenian armed forces in mid-February, in which the local administration and the bodies of Internal Affairs also participated, the Tatars were pushed back to their settlements, the property stolen by them in the Zod region was returned, and the perpetrators began to be questioned in order to be brought to justice.<sup>53</sup> This letter of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the investigation of the events in the Basargechar region was sent to the Minister of Internal Affairs.<sup>54</sup>

During that time Azerbaijan took feverish steps to rearrange the situation in its favor and with that intention, on February 24, 1919, A. Kh. Ziatkhanov, Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, presented an official note to General W. M. Thomson, commander of the allied forces in Baku, about the atrocities of the Armenian military units against the population of Azerbaijan and accused them of occupying a part of the territory of Azerbaijan, at the same time citing RA Foreign Minister S. Tigranyan's urgent telegrams addressed to them: "In response to your note received from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Armenian Republic I assume that the events of late-January are meant: *"1. The Armenian military units and officers are complicit in the crimes committed in the settlements of the Basargechar region, which is included in the territory of Armenia. Measures have been taken by the government to prevent crimes and restore order. An investigation is ongoing. The perpetrators will be severely punished. February 13, No. 27. Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Tigranyan". 2. "In addition to my telegram related to the events that took place in the Basargechar region [№ 278, February 13], I report that thanks to the active measures supported by the military units and taken by the regime, the Tatars have been returned to their settlements and what was stolen from them has been returned. The perpetrators have been brought to justice. № 304, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Tigranyan".*

Based on the biased assessment of the above telegrams, the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, Ziatkhanov, assuming that the facts provided

<sup>52</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (43), p. 28, f. 20, p. 31.

<sup>53</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 211, part I, p. 27.

<sup>54</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 20, p. 35.

by the Armenian side were clear evidence of the violence that the Armenian military units were carrying out against the peaceful Muslim population, wanting to forcibly occupy a part of Azerbaijan's territory near Lake Gyokcha (Lake Sevan), in the region of Nor Bayazet, also claiming that despite the assurances, the Armenians continued to inhumanely exterminate and oppress the Muslim population, pointing out to some Sultanov, their confidant in Nor Bayazet, that in the regions of Ganja and Shemakhu the number of Muslims who had escaped from Nor Bayazet reached several thousand, including many women, children, old people almost naked, exhausted, sick and hungry, emphasizing that the picture was terrible. In conclusion, referring to the act of the reconciliation conference of January 24, 1919, warning of the cessation of all kinds of violent occupations, the Armenian republic was humbly requested to categorically offer the liberation of the violently occupied region of Nor Bayazet, the southeastern parts of Lake Gyokcha and a part of the Gazakh region (which allegedly formed an integral part of the Azerbaijani territory) from the rampaging Armenian military units, resettling the worn-out residents in their places".<sup>55</sup>

On February 24, Rotmister Silikyan went with the division to the village of Mazra, where the Tatars met them with salt and bread, assuring them that they had already calmed down. In the evening, Silikyan went to Basargechar, and on the morning of February 25, he returned to the village of Pokr Mazra with the 1<sup>st</sup> squadron and half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> squadron. On the same day, on February 25, the 1<sup>st</sup> squadron returned to the village of Basargechar with Rotmister Silikyan and Cornet Khachaturov. And Silikyan, together with his adjutant Shimkevich and half a squadron left for Zod, where they stayed with a Tatar named Agilyar Samand Agha Kesmansky. Here, Rotmister Silikyan announced to the villagers that the Tatars should prepare hay, wheat and barley for the division at state prices. The Tatars promised to consult and answer in the morning. On the morning of February 27, the dignitaries of the Zod village announced to Rotmister Silikyan that they refused to give the requested forage and bread. Rotmister Silikyan's persistent demands became a signal for the Tatars to initiate an attack, which was also facilitated by the removal of the militia post a few days before those events. In the early morning of February 27, 11 soldiers stationed in the village, in the houses of Tatars, were killed, including 4 division officers who were hosted in the houses of the Turks in Zod: adjutant Cornet Shimkevich, Cornet Khachatryan, Commander Alexander Silikyan and his younger brother Arshak Silikyan (the officers spent the night in the house of Samed Agha Kyasamanski) - they were beheaded and mockingly demonstrated in the neighbouring Muslim villages.<sup>56</sup>

And on February 28, the RA Territorial Administration and Militia Commissar instructed the Nor Bayazet provincial commissar to personally go to the place with the precinct investigator, conduct an investigation, identify the perpetrators and arrest them

<sup>55</sup> Azerbajdjanskaya Demokraticheskaya Respublika 1998: 132.

<sup>56</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 113, 116-117.



in the presence and participation of the precinct inspector, public village commissars and militiamen, and if necessary, also turn to the army for support, however, not allowing to involve a representative of the Muslim refugees in the case in order to avoid the risk of inciting a new riot and violence. At the same time, on the instructions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, an assistant prosecutor was sent to the scene to lead the investigation and restore order.<sup>57</sup>

These facts in themselves are proof of the fact that the riotous Muslim population of the Basargechar region had set a practically serious goal to help Azerbaijan with armed actions to cut the region from Armenia and annex it to Azerbaijan. The Zod junction became the focal point of the agenda of the Armenian political and military circles, which threatened the country's territorial integrity, encouraged separatist-provocative demonstrations in other parts of the RA territory, which the RA government tried to resolve peacefully. Zod became a reason for the already aggressive government of Azerbaijan to intervene more openly in the domestic affairs of Armenia and to speak openly, considering it predetermined that the Basargechar region would be included as a part of Azerbaijan, which from a strategic point of view also included the entire basin of Lake Sevan, just like today, during the events of 2021-2022, after the Armenian-Azerbaijani capitulation war of the autumn of 2020. The Basargechar tangle escalated, it also touched upon the Armenian Bashkend region and the region of Getabek rich in copper mines, which the RA government supported as much as it could, because in many cases, supporting them with weapons and troops was not always effective.

On March 1, 1919, at the session of the Council of Ministers, the Minister of Internal Affairs presented a report on the events in the village of Zod of the Basargechar region, which concerned the murder of the officers and soldiers of the Karabakh Cavalry Regiment. After thorough discussion of the situation, the Council of Ministers made a decision to create an Extraordinary Investigative Committee chaired by the representatives of the Ministry of Justice, and with the participation of the representatives of the Military Ministry and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, instructing them to immediately investigate the incidents: 1) The Extraordinary Investigative Committee is formed by the assistant prosecutor of RA as a chairman, the investigator of special cases, one representative from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and one from the Military Ministry. 2) The Extraordinary Investigative Committee is sent to investigate the reasons of the events that took place in the village of Zod of the region of Nor Bayazet at the end of February, the result of which was the murder of 4 officers of the cavalry division and about 80 soldiers, to identify the perpetrators and to imprison and send to the Nor Bayazet prison those who had anything to do with that crime. 3) In case of complaints by the Turks about the violence of Armenians, the Extraordinary Investigative Committee undertakes to investigate these complaints and bring those

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<sup>57</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 115.

responsible to justice. 4) To place sufficient militia and military forces at the Committee's disposal in order to create normal conditions for the investigation.<sup>58</sup>

On March 4, for tactical reasons, the commission, not in full force, with only the provincial commissar and investigator, went to the Basargechar region in order to settle the conflict peacefully, but the leaders of the rioters responded with extreme position and declared that the guarantee of peace was possible only after the independence of "their lands" and they would do everything to force the Armenian side to give up the Basargechar region. The Turks greeted the Armenian envoys with gunfire. This convinced the RA authorities that should this continue, they would not succeed and their plans would turn in the opposite direction, since the Muslim population was resolute in its separatist actions.<sup>59</sup>

The Armenian government spared no effort to avoid a military confrontation with the Tatars. This is emphasized by Staff Rotmister Kudryavtsev in his telegram of March 5, 1919, sent from Nor Bayaset to Yerevan to Major Generals M. Silikyan, D. Bek-Pirumyan and the Commissar of the RA Territory, mentioning that on March 4, at 20:00, they went to that Tatar-inhabited region with the provincial commissar and investigator to settle the incident, but they were met with gunfire. Kudryavtsev, in consultation with the Staff Rotmister, asked for reinforcements, stressing that without cannons the problem was unsolvable and would lead to great losses; he also complained about the lack of food.<sup>60</sup>

In his telegram of March 5-6, addressed to General Silikyan, the provincial commissar Shahinyan, referring to the alarming situation, found it necessary to send a punitive detachment with cannons to submit the Muslims to the legal authorities, adding that there were only 200 bayonets in the Karabakh division, and no artillery shells at all.<sup>61</sup> In response, on March 7, 1919, Military Minister Hakhverdyan sent this letter to the RA Prime Minister, and at the same time he found it necessary to send one battalion and two cannons to Nor Bayazet, taking into account the possible resistance of the Tatars. The military minister also informed that in a conversation with him, colonel C. Temperley (Temperley Clive Errington) had agreed to the use of armed force if the Tatars did not allow the investigative committee to go to the scene.

Back on January 7, 1919, Captain C. Temperley, adjutant of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Rifle Brigade of the British troops in Transcaucasia, was appointed British Military Governor of Kars with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel according to the memorandum of General G. Forestier-Walker. In February-March 1919, the Muslim population showed a disrespectful attitude towards him which became intolerable; the Muslims did everything to ignore him. Qajaznuni's government initially called him an "arrogant and brazen

<sup>58</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (43), p. 34; f. 96, l. 33; f. 201, l. 1, p. 486, part I, p. 58.

<sup>59</sup> Harutyunyan 2012: 301.

<sup>60</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 64, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 27, p. 85.

Englishman”, who, in agreement with the Kars Shura (officially the Provisional Government of the South-West Caucasus) opposed every attempt to give a position to the employees of the Armenian administration and even made strict demands to the Armenian officials of the main railway junction of Alexandrapol, connecting Kars and Tiflis.<sup>62</sup> As of January 26, 1919 C. E. Temperley was the British Military governor of Kars, and to support him, the main body of the battalion that had reunited with the guards under Colonel Frederick Lattin of the 4<sup>th</sup> Rifle Brigade, was in Kars. After that, on March 2, 1919, Temperley moved to Yerevan as a military representative.

It was during his service in Yerevan that Temperley's attitude towards Armenians underwent a certain change, which is expressed in the reports he sent to the officers of the 27<sup>th</sup> military unit. In them, Temperley expressed concern about the difficulties the Armenian government faced. He had often tried to pacify the population of Muslim settlements that rejected Yerevan's jurisdiction. During that period, Temperley made considerable efforts to pacify the Muslims of Vedichai-Sadarak, who turned to riotous steps around March 10. He tried to prevent the frequent killings of Armenians and looting. Temperley tried to restrain the chieftains and khans, but to no avail. Temperley came to the conclusion that the riot was not just a separate incident, as the conscription in the Sadarak region was linked to similar incidents in Aralikh, Kaghzvan and Kars, and Colonel Lattin characterized the region as having an intransigent position, forming a common anti-Armenian chain with the Shura. Temperley's and Lattin's moderate efforts and attempts to prevent the criminal activities of the Muslim villages failed as the villagers responded by openly resorting to arms. This was already an ominous sign of rebellion that the Turkish propaganda contributed to. It spread from Maku and Aralikh to the Sadarak region through Araks, agitating the Muslim population from Böyük-Vedi to Nakhijevan. On April 28, 1919, Temperley, accompanied by General Andranik and Major William Gibbon, left for Tiflis, and on May 1, he received the temporary command of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Rifle Brigade,<sup>63</sup> which was followed by his activities in the Zod-Basargechar region.

The course adopted by the government and military authorities is clearly demonstrated by another document, the author of which is Major General Silikyan. Thus, on March 7, 1919, Silikyan, the head of the Armenian Division, addressed the RA Military Minister with an urgent secret report, in which he also touched upon the Zod issue, mentioning the information reported by Colonel A. Chneour that the Semyonovsky mountain pass was covered with snow, and General D. Bek-Pirumyan was still in Nor Bayazet, waiting for the arrival of the new troops in order to speak decisively, otherwise the impression would be weak, since the local Muslims were

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<sup>62</sup> Great October Revolution 1957: 256-258; Denikin 1925: 147; Hovhannisyan 2005: 220-223.

<sup>63</sup> Hovhannisyan 2005: 252, 257.

organizing themselves. Silikyan emphasized that according to Major General Daniel Bek-Pirumyan, a clash with the Tatars was inevitable<sup>64</sup>.

In the instruction issued to the Extraordinary Investigative Committee sent to Zod, signed by Minister of Justice Harutyunov, acting Minister of Internal Affairs Manasyan and Military Minister Hakhverdyan, it was stated that the Committee was sent to the village of Zod in the Nor Bayazet region to investigate the circumstances of the events that took place at the end of February (as a result of which 4 officers and 30 soldiers of the Karabakh cavalry division were killed), to find out the names of the perpetrators and uncover all the circumstances related to that crime. The instruction also stated that if there were declarations about violence committed by Armenians towards Tatars, the Investigative Committee had to investigate those complaints and bring those responsible to justice.<sup>65</sup> On March 8, the Extraordinary Investigative Committee arrived in Basargechar. The Extraordinary Investigative Committee sent two Muslims to Zod, offering to come to Basargechar on March 10 to find out the circumstances of the incident, to carry out the procedure and function of the investigation. Negotiations were held on March 11 in the village of Mazra. The Committee offered to hand over the bodies of the officers and soldiers killed, their belongings, weapons, horses, documents, division flag, setting the condition that only then the Investigative Committee would agree to enter the village of Zod to conduct an impartial and objective investigation of the causes, motives and consequences of the case. The Committee considered it its moral duty to also emphasize that all this was necessary in order to avoid the use of military force. According to the information obtained by the preliminary investigation, the criminal actions of the Turks had been prepared in advance by the local separatist forces and had been directed from Baku, which encouraged the local Muslims to continue the struggle, avoiding the peaceful settlement of the problem in every possible way and seeking to solve the Basargechar issue in favor of Azerbaijan through machinations, as well as influencing the pro-Turkish British generals, and in particular Thomson. Thus, the negotiations reached a deadlock; the enemy, both today and in those days, concentrated significant military forces, weapons and artillery around Zod and other settlements, which was a challenge to the RA authorities.

The RA Government wrote an official letter to the British Military Representation in Yerevan, which sent its officer to Basargechar on March 12 in order to personally make sure how legitimate the Armenian authorities were for the Muslim community, and how justified the actions taken by the Armenian authorities were.<sup>66</sup> We learn about this from the letter of March 10 sent from RA Justice Minister Harutyunov to Chairman of the Investigative Committee Parsadanov: "Tomorrow, on the instructions of General Thomson, English Colonel Temperley is leaving for Nor Bayazet to settle the Zod

<sup>64</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 4.

<sup>66</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 115.

events”.<sup>67</sup> On March 12, Temperley visited Basargechar. On March 17, 1919, the Council of Ministers addressed the issue of Basargechar-Zod, hearing the Prime Minister’s report on sending a punitive military unit to the village of Zod. At the session it was decided: 1) to leave the Investigative Committee in place, so that it could immediately start working as soon as the opportunity arose, 2) to instruct the Military Minister to issue an order to General D. Bek-Pirumyan, that he, if necessary, move the military force to the location of the riot immediately at his discretion, after seeing certain preparations.<sup>68</sup>

On March 17, the British military representative C. Temperley arrived at the scene and hearing the report of the Extraordinary Investigative Committee, he sent a letter through Tatars demanding that Tatar representatives immediately come to Basargechar for negotiations, but the envoys did not return and the British officer had to go back.<sup>69</sup> Meanwhile, the Tatars were concentrating considerable forces in the Zod region, armed with rifles and machine guns, preparing for military operations, evacuating their families, property, children, and concentrating rioters from the surrounding villages in the Zod region.<sup>70</sup>

On March 20, 1919, the minister-president’s report on the Zod events was discussed. In the adopted decision, the Council of Ministers instructed: a) to dispatch a statement regarding the sending of armed groups by Azerbaijan to the Armenian border and crossing it, b) to instruct the Military Minister to order General D. Bek-Pirumyan to contact Yerevan by direct cable before leaving Nor Bayazet, c) to instruct the Minister of Foreign Affairs to get press coverage of the Zod events.<sup>71</sup>

Some important details of the issue related to the activation of the Muslim movement in the Zod region also become evident from a telegram of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of RA of March 22, 1919 addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan (with a copy to the RA diplomatic representative in Baku). In it, the RA Foreign Minister emphasized that 4 Armenian officers and more than 10 soldiers of the second Karabakh Cavalry Division had been killed near the village of Zod, stressing that the Investigative Committee sent by the government was met with volley fire and the opposition to the authorities was supported by armed groups from Azerbaijan. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of RA found the passage of armed persons from Azerbaijan to the territory of RA completely unacceptable, emphasizing that, on the instructions of the government, he strongly protested against such actions and asked for urgent orders

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<sup>67</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 76.

<sup>68</sup> NAA, f. 201, l. 1, f. 486, part I, p. 69; f. 1 99, l. 1, f. 96, p. 45.

<sup>69</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 115.

<sup>70</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 115.

<sup>71</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (43), p. 48.

to be made to prevent the citizens of Azerbaijan from staging armed demonstrations and from violating the order in the territory of Armenia.<sup>72</sup>

The Zod junction created problems along the entire Armenian-Azerbaijani border, becoming an explosive for diplomatic relations, intensifying tension in the work of the Internal Affairs bodies and militia of the border regions. As it turns out from the telegram of General Baghdasarov sent from Gharakilisa to Yerevan, to the commander-in-chief on March 21, 1919, which was based on espionage and intelligence data, the situation had also worsened in the Bashkend region in connection with the murders in Zod. The telegram reported that the Tatars were preparing, and gatherings were taking place in the villages to help their compatriots in Zod. It said that 200 people had been sent from the Gedabek region of Azerbaijan; and two cannons and two machine guns had been brought through the Zegam Gorge. They were not able to move one mountain cannon which they left in the village of Shakhtala. An interesting detail was emphasized: the gunners were Russians and Georgians.<sup>73</sup> Other facts of those days become known from another telegram, the author of which is Staff Captain Mkrtichyan, the commander of the militia regiment. Thus, on March 24, 1919, in a telegram addressed to the division commander (with a copy to General Baghdasarov who was in Karvansara) Staff Captain Mkrtichyan reported that according to verified data, the Tatars had brought a field cannon to Shakhtala village, and the mountain cannon was taken to Zod through the village of Jil. At the end of the telegram, Mkrtichyan also added that the local forces would not be able to resist without cannons and asked for immediate orders on how to act.<sup>74</sup>

However, the RA government had instructed General D. Bek-Pirumyan to ensure the peaceful entry into the village of the Committee established in connection with the Zod events, and armed force could be used only with the special permission of the government. In the situation of inevitability of conflict, on March 24, 1919, the National Council of Muslims of Yerevan issued an unexpected call for sobriety: "The National Council of Muslims of Erivan urges the residents of the Zod village of Nor Bayazet region not to obstruct the investigation of the Government's investigative committee regarding the murder of officers, soldiers and several Muslims. The RA government guarantees the inviolability of life and property of the population. We consider it our moral duty to inform you that if you obstruct, the Government will be forced to send military force against you, as a result of which completely innocent people may suffer. Taking all this into account, the National Council urges again to prevent bloodshed, to provide full support to the Government's investigative committee. President: Asad bey

<sup>72</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 211, part I, p. 62, f. 199, l. 1, f. 73, p. 45.

<sup>73</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 48.

<sup>74</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 55.

Aghabekov, Council members: Mirza Husein Vaiz and Zilfigar bey Makinsky, Secretary: A. Naziyev".<sup>75</sup>

In the telegram of March 27, 1919 addressed to the commander of the Armenian division, Staff Captain Mkrtichyan reported from Karvansara that according to the information received, the Tatars of the Tarsacha (Getik<sup>76</sup>) gorge of the right tributary of Aghstev, were transporting wheat and barley to Zod, adding that on March 25, 300 poods were brought via Dilijan to Chibukhlu.<sup>77</sup> During this period, the Armenian civil, military and internal affairs bodies were making preparations, were organizing new military forces, replenishing the lack of weapons and ammunition, and solving conscription problems. In the telegram of March 18, 1919, sent by D. Bek-Pirumyan from Nor Bayazet to the Military Minister, it was reported that the concentration of the military squad was about to end, and the replenishment would be completed on March 28. Then it added that military intelligence had confirmed that up to 6000 Tatars armed with machine guns and cavalymen had gathered in the Zod region, and that information was still being verified.<sup>78</sup> In the session of the Council of Ministers of March 22, 1919, the Military Minister presented a report on establishing a military field court in the Nor Bayazet region. It was decided to approve and implement the bill, excluding the death penalty.<sup>79</sup> On April 2, 1919, the Council of Ministers heard the Military Minister's report on the problems of the village of Zod. They decided to instruct the Military Minister to order General Pirumyan to act in cooperation with Colonel C. Temperley and use all possible means to settle the incident peacefully and avoid military conflict. At the same time, the false claim of the Azerbaijani government that the village of Zod belonged to Azerbaijan, was denied, specifically emphasizing that it was part of the Republic of Armenia.<sup>80</sup> Certainly, during this time the Armenian government sought to use all the possible diplomatic means to end the incident peacefully. Simultaneously, certain military and political and police measures were being taken to strengthen the basin of Lake Sevan (having great strategic importance for Armenia) and the region of Nor Bayazet, where the ill-fated Zod junction was located. The command of the special Karabakh battalion, which had earned the honor of acting in that region, was entrusted to Major General Pirumyan; and Lieutenant Colonel A. Chneour was appointed chief of staff. The latter also led the intelligence service throughout the Zod operation. From December 31, 1918 A. Chneour was already the head of the Separate Karabakh Brigade.<sup>81</sup> In K. Araratyan's request letter addressed to M. Silikyan it was said that according to Captain Medvedev and Lieutenant Colonel Chneour, the Prime Minister

<sup>75</sup> NAA, f. 206, l. 1, f. 85, p. 12.

<sup>76</sup> Hakobyan *et al.* 1998: 422.

<sup>77</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 66.

<sup>78</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 5.

<sup>79</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (43), p. 51.

<sup>80</sup> NAA, f. 201, l. 1, f. 486, part I, p. 81; f. 199, l. 1, f. 100 (43), p. 54; f. 96, p. 58; f. 200, l. 1, f. 26, p. 58.

<sup>81</sup> NAA, f. 204, l. 1, f. 104, p. 53; f. 204, l. 1, f. 129, p. 6 -7; Avetisyan 1997: 223.



had ordered General Pirumyan to ensure the entry of the Investigative Committee to Zod. It was asked in the telegram to double-check everything and instruct what to do if the Investigative Committee's entry to Zod did not lead to positive results in a peaceful way. In that case, General Pirumyan was instructed to contact the government directly through the command and not to use armed force until he received such permission from the RA government.<sup>82</sup> Further, the RA government introduced new adjustments in its steps, trying to get out of the critical situation. On April 8, 1919, the Foreign Minister of RA received a telegram from the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan, in which the representative of Azerbaijan regarded the Zod region as the territory of Azerbaijan, considering the presence of Armenian armed forces in the territory of Azerbaijan unacceptable, and placing the responsibility of avoiding misunderstanding on the RA government.<sup>83</sup>

In the telegram of April 3 addressed to the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan (with a copy to Bekzadyan, the diplomatic representative of RA in Azerbaijan), the Foreign Minister of RA emphasized that the Government of the Republic of Armenia had sent the Extraordinary Investigative Committee to investigate the events that had taken place in the village of Zod, to find the perpetrators and to bring them to legal responsibility. However, the Committee could not get to the scene of the incident because of the resistance of armed Tatars. He added that the government had instructed the military squad to ensure that the Extraordinary Committee had access for investigation, informing that on General W. Thomson's instructions the British colonel C. Temperley had left for Zod to facilitate the arrival of the Extraordinary Investigative Committee in Zod and the conduct of the investigation, noting also that the Armenian government had instructed to resolve the conflict peacefully, and if that failed, not to resort to armed force without the government's permission.<sup>84</sup>

Involuntarily, Colonel Temperley went to Zod. This was reported in the telegram sent by Colonel Shakhanov to Major General Bek-Pirumyan on April 9. The British officer met with the population there. He was of the opinion that the maximum concession that the local Turkish population could agree to in that situation was that from April 11 Armenian troops should occupy the Tatar villages, which was the only condition under which he would agree to continue the conversation on controversial issues. The Turks agreed with Temperley on the condition that the English representative also participated in the deployment of troops, otherwise they threatened not to retreat.<sup>85</sup> It becomes clear from Major General Bek-Pirumyan's telegrams to the division commander that returning from Zod to Basargechar, Colonel C. Temperley announced to the Tatars that on April 11 the Armenian troops would occupy the

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<sup>82</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 59.

<sup>83</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 64.

<sup>84</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 62, 64.

<sup>85</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 76.

villages, the only peaceful solution to the problem. To this the Tatars replied that the occupation of the villages by the Armenian troops and their deployment in those villages was possible only with the participation of the British representative. Bek-Pirumyan asked for additional troops, adding that the Tatars continued to arm themselves, that according to the agreement with Colonel C. Temperley, on April 13 their troops could begin the occupation of the Tatar villages of Tashkend, Zod, Mets Mazra and Pokr Mazra, carrying out the disarmament of the Tatars in a peaceful way, and in case of resistance – by force.<sup>86</sup>

Colonel C. Temperley, an active participant of the Muslim movement, stayed in Zod for a few days, after which he returned to Basargechar, and a few days later, on April 14, a new wave of anti-state demonstrations began in Zod.

The Council of Ministers once again addressed the deepening of tension in the Basargechar-Zod region on April 14, 1919. At the session, the Military Minister reported that he had given instructions to General Pirumyan regarding the Zod developments. It was decided to instruct the Military Minister to telegraph Pirumyan so that: 1) he acted according to C. Temperley's instructions, 2) if it was necessary to resort to armed force, appeal to C. Temperley asking to submit a written proposal, and 3) try not to resort to confiscations, and take the most drastic measures to prevent violence against the population, announcing this to the people.<sup>87</sup> On the same day, in a special letter the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of RA informed the diplomatic representative of RA in Azerbaijan that in connection with the protest of the Government of Azerbaijan and the presence of Armenian troops in the Basargechar region, they believed that the area could not be considered the territory of Azerbaijan, that the Basargechar region was an inseparable part of the territory of the Republic of Armenia. He reiterated that the RA government protested against the passage of armed Tatar groups sent from the territory of Azerbaijan to the borders of the Republic of Armenia by the Azerbaijani authorities, who were spreading riots there and inciting the population to an armed conflict against the Armenian authorities.<sup>88</sup>

As it turns out from Major General Pirumyan's April 14 telegram to General Silikyan, according to Colonel C. Temperley's proposal, on April 14, at 7 A.M. the Nor Bayazet detachment of the Armenian troops started an attack in two formations to occupy the Tatar villages. However, the Tatars of Mets Mazra suddenly opened an intense rifle fire, to which the Armenian infantry did not respond, continuing their advance towards the village. Instead several artillery shells were fired at the village, which forced the Tatars to retreat. After that it turned out that the population had abandoned the village beforehand, taking with them all the property that could be moved; and the shooters were Tatar groups remaining in the village. The same thing

<sup>86</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 76.

<sup>87</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 96, p. 65; f. 201, l. 1, f. 486, part I, p. 96.

<sup>88</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 79, 82.

happened during the occupation of the villages of Husein Gharali, Aghalu, Kosha Balagh, Galbash and Siri Aghuni, and near the village of Tashkend battles took place, after which the Armenian military unit captured the village and the enemy fled to the mountains. In the battles of April 14 Armenians lost 3 people, Lieutenant Colonel Ishkhanov was wounded, and even after that he returned to the battlefield. But then 15 Armenians were killed and 8 horses. It is noteworthy that all the orders were given in the presence and knowledge of Colonel C. Temperley, who saw no violence or plunder by the troops during the fighting. The vanguard military units of the Armenian army occupied Mets Mazra, Husein Ghum, Aghalu, Galbash and Tashkend.<sup>89</sup> On April 15, at 7 o'clock, the Armenian side sent envoys with white flags to the village of Zod, but the Tatars fired at them, after which the Armenian side sent envoys for the second time, but they also failed to enter the village. Only after that the Karabakh battalion launched an attack and captured Zod without firing a shot - the Tatars had fled from there. The same thing happened during the occupation of the villages of Sar Yaghub, Ghara Gopli, Aghkilisa, Zarzibil, whose inhabitants had left beforehand, taking out all their property. During those battles 1 officer, 18 soldiers and 2 horses were wounded, 3 soldiers and 3 horses were killed.<sup>90</sup> As it becomes obvious from Major General Pirumyan's telegram sent from Basargechar to Major General Silikyan on April 16, 1919, scouts were sent to the village of Shorzhalu on April 15, but it turned out that there was no peaceful mood in the village, and shells were fired at them. On April 16, the military squads at the outskirts of the village of Taghi-Kend moved to Shorzhalu, and again shells were fired at them by the Tatars ambushed there. After shelling the village, the Armenian military unit was able to enter the village and capture it, and the Tatars who fled, took refuge in the nearby mountains. On April 17, the Armenian military units besieged Zod, the den of riots, from where the Muslim population had fled.<sup>91</sup> From Major General Pirumyan's telegram of April 23 addressed to Major General Silikyan we learn about the timeline and details of the military operations of the days that followed. On April 18, at 4 P.M., a company of the Karabakh battalion was sent to the village of Shishkaya and was met with fire by the Tatars. Despite the stubborn resistance of the Tatars, the village was captured, after which it turned out that there had been concentrated considerable forces - about 1000 infantrymen and cavalrymen. The Tatars had taken their property and families out of the village beforehand. As a result of these battles, the Armenian side had 8 wounded soldiers and 2 horses, 1 soldier was killed, Ensign Mkhitaryants was also wounded.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>89</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 86, 86a; f.199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 9.

<sup>90</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 89; f. 199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 10.

<sup>91</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 8.

<sup>92</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 97.

On April 18, Khan Tekinsky informed his government about the resistance shown by Muslims in the Zod-Basargechar region and the battles with Armenian military units.<sup>93</sup>

During all these operations, tension reigned along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, the Azerbaijanis resorted to various intrigues, to significant movements of troops, all of which were clearly anti-Armenian. On April 29, 1919, in a telegram addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Chief of the General Staff Colonel M. Zinkevich reported that according to the information received from the commander of the militia regiment, on April 23 groups of Azerbaijani troops went to Jil through Yaghubli, and on April 25 the arrival of Azerbaijani troops was expected in Novosaratovka and Novoivanovka. Zinkevich stated that the commander of the militia regiment was ordered to check this information and report back to him.<sup>94</sup> However, all this could not prevent the Armenian army from completing the Zod operation, teaching a lesson to the aggressive Muslim forces, which sought to cut off the Basargechar region from Armenia and annex it to Azerbaijan. The Armenian military units won an impressive victory, liberating an important part of the territory of the homeland, and at the same time, they demonstrated the order and discipline of a good and capable army, refraining from robbery and plunder. Thus, having the Armenian-populated Basargechar regional center of the Zod-Sotk plateau as their center, the regular military units of the Armenian army carried out offensive attacks for 5 days with the active support of the militia and the police squads of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 4 main directions: Shorzha, Ghshlagh, Zod and Tashkend. They were able to force the Turkish-Tatar fanatic mass to retreat through the mountain passes to Azerbaijan, as a result of which the Armenian authorities managed to take more than two dozen settlements under their full control, not allowing the disruption of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia.

And yet, the Extraordinary Investigative Committee sent to the Zod region by the RA government tried to reveal the motives behind the insurrectionary and seditious actions of the Muslims of Zod-Basargechar. Those conclusions were made as of April 27, 1919 and came to the following: 1) As a result of the impossibility of conducting an investigation among Muslims, it was not possible to find out the exact motives of the Muslim uprising against the Armenian authorities. It is presumed that Rotmister Silikyan's excessive demands to provide them with wheat and barley were just an excuse for the tragic denouement; and the dissatisfaction of the Muslims with the authorities grew day by day and turned into a conflict. A number of circumstances became the reason for that. 2) In August, 1918, the entire Zod region was recognized (or accepted) by the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan as a territory within the borders of Azerbaijan and was declared as the 9<sup>th</sup> police department of the Elizavetpol

<sup>93</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 4, n. 60.

<sup>94</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 100.

province, and their commissars and militia were appointed. And in October, 1919 that region surrendered to Armenia, and the Muslim residents, albeit unwillingly, expressed their willingness to submit to the authorities, without severing their ties with Azerbaijan.

3) In late 1918, Rotmister Silikyan was sent to the region of Nor Bayazet to form the Karabakh Cavalry Division, but no money from the state treasury was allocated for this. Silikyan was given the opportunity and the right to confiscate horses, equipment, weapons and everything necessary for the maintenance of the division. Confiscations were carried out, but besides the commissions provided for that purpose, they were carried out by anyone - any officer, commissar, constable, militiaman, etc. For the most part, only receipts were given for the confiscated property. During that process, there were cases of abuse, mainly during the confiscations of horses in the Muslim villages, because not all confiscated horses went to serve the needs of the division. The horses were sold at state prices to outsiders, to persons who had nothing to do with the division, or they were simply sold to their former owners, of course at higher prices, and confiscated fodder was sold. All these developments provoked the discontent of the Muslim population, which, of course, needed a pretext to rebel against the legitimate authorities of Armenia. And finally: 4) in late January, 1919, migrant Armenians led by some Nikolay Avetisov attacked and looted the Muslim villages of Zagalu, Ghezel-Vank and Subbutan, and the villagers fled to other villages of the Zod region. The Muslim District Commissar was warned in time about the planned attack, but no action was taken by him. True, an investigation was conducted regarding the case and a part of the looted property was returned to the Muslims, and generally to all those from whom the property was taken, but the perpetrators were not identified. According to the conclusion of the Chairman of the Extraordinary Investigative Committee Parsadanov, these important reasons, in fact, caused strong dissatisfaction among Muslims, who even had openly declared that there was no government in Armenia and they did not want to obey anyone. For the same reasons the militia post had been removed from the Zod village a few days before the murder of the Silikyan and others. The Extraordinary Investigative Committee sent to Zod by the RA Government came to this conclusion as of April 27, 1919, and on May 2 it was confirmed by the director of the office of the Ministry of Justice.<sup>95</sup> On May 5, 1919, after hearing the report of the Acting Minister of Justice on the activities of the Extraordinary Investigative Committee (rep. 951, May 2), the Council of Ministers instructed the Ministers of Justice and Internal Affairs to bring the perpetrators to justice.<sup>96</sup>

The issue brought diplomatic and political complications. On April 10, 1919, the Council of Ministers attached the Prime Minister's report on the motion initiated by Tekinsky regarding the withdrawal of the troops from the Zod region and the participation of a Turkish representative in the Investigative Committee. The Foreign

<sup>95</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 68-72; f. 199, l. 1, f. 64 (48), p. 11-15.

<sup>96</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 96, p. 83; f. 100 (43), p. 84.

Minister was instructed to announce to Tekinsky that under the existing conditions the withdrawal of the troops was impossible due to military reasons, and as to the participation of a Turkish representative in the Extraordinary Investigative Committee, there was no objection to that.<sup>97</sup>

As we can see, in the Zod-Basargechar region, the Armenian authorities tried to proceed from certain principles of legality, avoiding excessive and unnecessary complications and escalations. On April 6, 1920, after hearing the report of the Minister of Internal Affairs on the "illegal actions" of the Basargechar committee, in the adopted decision the Council of Ministers considered the order of the Investigative Committee illegal and highly harmful from the point of view of state interests and instructed the Ministry of Internal Affairs to hand over all documents and materials to the Military Court.<sup>98</sup>

In this complicated situation, the Armenian authorities, not giving way to Muslim pressure, ensured the security interests of RA in the Sevan basin by legal means, preventing the dangerous territorial and political ambitions of Azerbaijan, which was not an easy task.

The operations of the Armenian army in the area of the Zod village were highly assessed even by the colonel C. Temperley. The actions of the military squad during the capture of the Tatar villages were so excellent in terms of discipline and the bravery of the officers and soldiers that after arriving in Yerevan Colonel Temperley felt obliged to praise the steadfast and disciplined actions of the squad before the Armenian government. After hearing the opinion of Colonel Temperley on April 24, the Council of Ministers thanked Major General Pirumyan and all the officers and soldiers for the brilliant combat operations in the Zod region. Military Minister Major General Araratyan was happy to thank the young Armenian Army represented by Major General Daniel Bek-Pirumyan (who was replaced in July 1919 by famous warrior Hamazasp Srvandztyants, the commander of the military unit stationed in Nor Bayazet), and his chief of staff Chneour as officers with glorious combat experience, who created and commemorated Zod's squad and the flawless military operation it carried out, which for the first time even received a favorable assessment by the representative of the British Army. The military minister ordered to present especially outstanding officers to be promoted to the next military rank. And to reward the soldiers, Chief of Staff Alexander Konstantin Chneour was ordered to take 4 crosses of St. George for each company, battery and cavalry division.<sup>99</sup> After this operation, according to the order of the military department of April 28, 1919, the head of the Separate Karabakh Brigade, Al. Chneour, was appointed department head of the General Staff.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 96, p. 63.

<sup>98</sup> NAA, f. 199, l. 1, f. 146, p. 56.

<sup>99</sup> NAA, f. 204, l. 1, f. 132, p. 68.

<sup>100</sup> NAA, f. 204, l. 1, f. 131, p. 24.

Establishing order and rule in the Zod-Basargechar region, the RA government was guided in its steps by the principles of legality, trying to avoid unnecessary complications, creating foundations of sustainability for the future. For that purpose, according to the conclusion of the Extraordinary Investigative Committee of June 2, 1919, a number of officials and 8 police officers were fired and faced trial.<sup>101</sup>

After the confrontational military and political events that unfolded around the village of Zod in the Basargechar region, which was one of the most brilliant actions of the Armenian armed forces, in 1919, most of the Muslim population of that region moved to the territory of Azerbaijan. They returned from there only with the establishment of Soviet rule and it was imposed on the Soviet Republic of Armenia.

A. Grigoryan and A. Bobokyan's factful and spectacular work also highlights the discovery and assessment of a number of important circumstances related to the organizers of the murders of Zod and the participants in general. According to the important conclusion of the authors, **"Nemesis of Zod"** was carried out against the organizers of the murders of the Silikyan brothers in Zod. And so, the authors have found out that the main organizer of the conspiracy of Zod, Samand Agha Kyasamansky, was killed on May 2, 1919. According to Azerbaijani sources, this was carried out by General Silikyan, and according to Armenian sources - by Colonel Halabov, uncle of the Silikyan brothers, by the order and knowledge of Major General M. Silikyan, who was the cousin of the brothers. According to this version, Halabov tied Kyasamansky's body to a cart and passed through the streets of Basargechar in response to the demonstration of the heads of the Silikyan brothers in the Tatar villages.<sup>102</sup> According to the data given in the same work by A. Grigoryan and A. Bobokyan, Haji Rahim, who had beheaded Rotmister Silikyan, and Ashugh Najaf, the organizer of the Zod conspiracy, were also eliminated during the riot of the Zod Muslims in April, 1919. And another conspirator, Meshadi Isa, was eliminated on September 27, 1924. According to Azerbaijani sources, he was killed by two Dashnaks. And finally, Abbaskyul bey Shadlinsky (the son of Samand Agha Kyasamansky's sister) who is known for carrying out the massacres of Armenians in Nakhijevan and other places, and for his active participation in the suppression of the hotbeds of rebellion in Nor Bayazet during the February uprising of 1921, was eliminated in Davalu - present-day Ararat, in 1930.<sup>103</sup> And so, we can conclude that the operations of the **"Nemesis of Zod"**, born spontaneously, were not coordinated, and the actions of the Armenian avengers stemmed from the self-defense instinct of the Armenian population and were fully justified.

According to A. Grigoryan and A. Bobokhyan, the Azerbaijani sources came to a distorted conclusion regarding the events of Zod-Basargechar, placing all the blame on

<sup>101</sup> NAA, f. 200, l. 1, f. 263, p. 106.

<sup>102</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 156.

<sup>103</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 156-157.



Armenians and the Armenian authorities, trying to advance the anti-historical and anti-scientific view on false grounds, as if the Sevan basin and Zod-Sotk in particular were historically Azerbaijani territories where Azerbaijanis lived until 1988.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, as the above-mentioned authors assure, during the days of the “rebellion” of the Azerbaijanis, Samand Agha Vali Ahga Oghli Nasibbekov Kyasamansky was the one that negotiated with the Armenian clergy and government representatives in the regional center (Zod - V.V.) and reportedly Rotmister Silikov-Silikyan insulted him and Samand Agha, not forgiving the insult, organized the murder of Silikyan,<sup>105</sup> which is a baseless claim, as well as the false Azerbaijani news, according to which Silikyan organized murders of Azerbaijanis, set fire to houses, which is denied by archival documents. Instead of presenting the truth, Azerbaijani authors similarly distort the fact that more than 800 armed cavalymen were transferred from Azerbaijan to Zod in order to support the rioters in Zod and incite them to act against the central Armenian authorities. They participated in the looting of more than two dozen villages and brutally executed civilians, characterizing it as ethnic cleansing,<sup>106</sup> as it happened in the 1980s and 1990s, when the policy aimed at ethnic cleansing of Gandzak, Khanlar, Dashkesan and other regions was implemented. Also important is the fact that the distorted views of Azerbaijan are not based on real archival evidence, but on claims based on the falsified memories of contemporaries of the events.

It should be added as a postscriptum that even after all this, Azerbaijan did not give up its aggressive ambitions in the Zod-Basargechar region. This is proved by the note (N 3253) of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan M. Y. Jafarov addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of RA on September 22, 1919, in which the real facts were distorted and aimed at justifying Azerbaijan's aggressive goals: “Before the Turks came to the province of Yerevan in January 1918, the Armenians of the mentioned province had destroyed more than 300 settlements, killing the majority of Muslims in those settlements. When the Turks left and the allied powers came to the Caucasus, the Azerbaijani people hoped that the Armenian government would no longer allow the extermination of Muslims in order to establish peace and tranquility. However, in December 1918, after they left Yerevan province, the regiment of Sasun disarmed the Muslims of the rural communities of Karakhach and Vedichai provinces and destroyed the villages of Kadilu, Dokhpaz, Karabeklyar, Aghasi Bekli and others, exterminating almost all the Muslims of the mentioned communities. Muslims from a number of villages in the Milli Darasi region also suffered such a fate. Almost simultaneously, the Armenian troops surrounded the villages of the Basargechar district of the Nor Bayazet region and exterminated the Muslims of Kizil-Bank, Subatan, Zagali, Shahab and other villages, raped women and burnt many children of Shahab village in tandoors. The

<sup>104</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 165-166.

<sup>105</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 167.

<sup>106</sup> Grigoryan, Bobokhyan 2022: 167-168.

Azerbaijani government, deeply outraged by these atrocities, expresses a decisive protest to the Armenian government responsible for the possible consequences, and is convinced that the violence against the Muslims of Yerevan province will be stopped by the most decisive means".<sup>107</sup>

Some more incidents took place later, proving that Azerbaijan could not put up with such a conclusion of the Zod riot, as evidenced by the telegram of October 27, 1919 sent by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, F. Khan-Khoisky to the diplomatic representative of Azerbaijan in Georgia, M. Y. Jafarov, asking him to inform the RA representative in Georgia that the 9<sup>th</sup> department of the Ganja region was an inseparable, indivisible part of the Republic of Azerbaijan: "I have received the following telegram from the governor of Ganja: "The bailiff of the 9<sup>th</sup> department of the Ganja region, composed of rural communities that passed to the Nor Bayazet region, upon arriving in Ganja, informed that on October 12, the provincial commissar of Nor Bayazet came to the village of Basargechar, gathered the elders, dignitaries and clergy, and announced that the territory of the current 9<sup>th</sup> department belonged to the Republic of Armenia, not to Azerbaijan. No bailiff has been appointed, and the one who has declared himself the bailiff of Chaikhor is an impostor. The following demands have been made: first, to pay last year's taxes within one week, second, to hand over the entire wheat reserve, leaving 10 poods for each person, third, to hand over the weapons, fourth, to hand over Chaikhor's bailiff to the authorities, and fifth, to deport those who disobey from the RA borders without the right to bring out the wheat and cattle". Having reported this, I ask you to immediately contact the representative of the Armenian government regarding this matter, pointing out that the 9<sup>th</sup> department is a constituent part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, that is why our government is protesting and insisting that the Government of the Republic of Armenia cancel the above decision by a special order, because it is an intervention in the internal affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan".<sup>108</sup>

As a result, just like in the modern phase, in 1918-1920 as well the Republic of Armenia faced a complex choice of foreign political priorities and particularly, serious threats to the preservation of its territorial integrity. However, at that historical stage the Zod-Basargechar issue was successfully resolved by the RA government and the emerging Armenian statehood, which at that time received high British support, which was unprecedented unlike the Artsakh-Karabakh problem, in which Great Britain and other alleged allies of RA, for the sake of their oil and colonial-imperialist interests, openly sponsored and supported Azerbaijan, which acted as a barrier against Bolshevism and Russia and which annexed Armenian Karabakh. And yet, during the tumultuous events of Zod-Basargechar, Azerbaijan failed to disrupt the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia in the Sevan Lake basin and adjacent regions,

<sup>107</sup> Azerbaijan, 1919, September 25, № 205. Azerbajdjanskaya Demokraticeskaya Respublika 1998: 296-297.

<sup>108</sup> Azerbajdjanskaya Demokraticeskaya Respublika 1998: 347.

which was rather important in view of the challenges that the newly proclaimed Armenian statehood faced. The “Zod” operation is one of the most successful and flawless operations of the Armenian armed forces. It solved an issue of great strategic importance, which resolved an important communication problem, because the Zod-Basargechar region closed the rear of Karabakh-Artsakh and the only safe road leading to Syunik-Zangezur, which could essentially endanger the road passing through the Ararat valley. The Armenian side’s peaceful approach to solving the Zod issue was not successful; the only way out was to solve the problem with force, which became an instructive example from a military-scientific point of view. C. Temperley, the military and political representative of Great Britain in Armenia, who was to establish peace between the Transcaucasian republics with a mediating mission and contribute to the delimitation and establishment of stability, was involved in the process.

The forgotten pages of Zod-Sotk of 1919 are undoubtedly one of the brightest episodes in the annals of the First Republic, which reveal Azerbaijan’s territorial claims towards Basargechar, a significant part of the current Gegharkunik region of the Republic of Armenia, aimed at cutting off that vital for Armenia region from the motherland, which repeated 100 years later, once again proving Azerbaijan’s aggressive and illegal claims towards the Sotk region.

The facts clearly show Azerbaijan’s provocative and conspiratorial actions against RA. During 1918-1919 the Azerbaijani authorities incited the Muslim population living in different parts of Armenia to seditious, anti-government and anti-Armenian steps in the Sotk region, trying to cut it off from Armenia and annex it to Azerbaijan.

The archival facts demonstrate a significant circumstance as well: the peaceful approach of the Armenian side to the resolution of the Zod conflict, to which the Azerbaijani side responded with a provocative anti-Armenian move, killing the Silikyan brothers and their two companions, moreover, displaying their beheaded heads in Muslim villages, which was followed by the “Nemesis of Zod” carried out by brave Armenian warriors against the organizers of the murders of the Silikyan brothers.

It is also noteworthy that before the resolution of the **“Zod” operation**, the RA armed forces initially tried to find a peaceful solution and approached the Tatar settlements with the accompaniment of *zurna* and *dhol*, offering peace as a form of conflict resolution, and only after being fired upon they responded with appropriate fire. This important circumstance that has great resonance today is one of the significant merits of the Armenian armed forces. It was demonstrated in 1919, at the time of the suppression of the Tatar riot, characterized by a pronounced anti-Armenian orientation unfolding in the basin of Lake Sevan. This made it possible to ensure the vital interests of the Armenian people and the Armenian statehood, as well as the solution to security problems.

The Zod epopee of the Armenian armed forces is one of the most impressive pages of the last hundred years, one of the essential manifestations of the Armenian armed forces and Armenian military glory.

It is noteworthy that in the events of the Zod-Sotk region, the Armenian population resorted to self-defense, acting from a peaceful position and conciliatory approaches, striving to protect its interests, which has also been demonstrated since ancient times. Therefore, the military-and-political and historical-and-cultural significance of the **“Zod Operation”** is emphasized, which has essential meaning from the point of view of the future of Armenia.

It is evident that, just like today, in 1918-1919, in the grave economic and political situation of the First Republic, by sowing chaos in the Zod-Sotk region and elsewhere, Azerbaijan and Turkey, parallel to the open military and political aggression, used the anti-Armenian attitude of the large masses of the Muslim population guided by the dark instincts, implemented a clear strategy to destroy Armenia from the inside, to dismember it territorially, due to which the border zones of Armenia have become explosive, and in that sense, the Basargechar-Gegharkunik region was of key importance in terms of vital interests and security. The main supporter of the Muslim riotous sentiments was Azerbaijan, which laid claim to Armenian territories that over the centuries had been depleted of the Armenian element as a result of the Turkish-Persian war and other wars and disasters. Besides, the Armenian state born in May 1918 was from the start surrounded by a large Muslim population, and had no real friends in Transcaucasia and no common interests with any newly-born state. This demanded great efforts for overcoming the manifestations of anarchy in Zod-Sotk, Kars, Zangibasar-Vedibasar, and other regions, re-establishing the control of the Armenian state over the Armenian regions that had ended up in the range of seditious and anti-state actions provoked by Azerbaijan and Turkey, and stopping the Azeri-Turkish plan of the territorial dismemberment of Armenia. During the events of Zod, the Armenian army carried out an exceptionally successful military operation. Thanks to its implementation and the brilliant and competent actions of the national armed forces, Armenia was able to nullify Azerbaijan's devilish plan to make the Sotk-Gegharkunik region an integral part of Azerbaijan. And the military commanders leading the operation were the heroes of Sardarapat - Colonel Alexander K. Chneour and General Daniel Bek-Pirumyan.

The existing facts about the events of Zod testify to the insufficient reliability, falsifications and inaccuracy of facts in the works of Azerbaijani historians. The archival documents allow a deep understanding of the vitally important problem that the heroes of the *glorious “Zod” operation* solved, saving the ancient region of Sotk-Gegharkunik, and preserving it for Armenia without which it would also be deprived of vital resources that are very necessary for its survival, which again became endangered after 100 years, in 2020, during the war that ended in capitulation for the Republic of Armenia and in the course of history that followed it.

The events of Zod-Sotk of 1919 are also a unique message to the Armenian people and generations about what the Armenian armed forces can be and what they should do when they are standing in the positions of defending their own borders. It

contains an Armenian meaning and message about how the strategic borders and vital military and political interests of the native country can and should be preserved.

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***Translated from Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***

The article was delivered on 08.06.2022, reviewed on 09.07.2022, accepted for publication on 03.12.2022.



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# POLITICAL SCIENCES AND INFORMATIONAL SECURITY

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# THE DELIBERATIVE PRINCIPLE IN THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-115

## **Abstract**

The historical mission of the Armenian Church was manifested by spiritual-and-cultural, political-and-deliberative, diplomatic, legislative and judicial functions and specific principles of governance. After the fall of the statehood, the Armenian people concentrated the national power in the Armenian Church, which with its pro-national policy became the supreme authority in the national existence. The role of the rule of law, representative democracy and the principles of parliamentarianism in the management system of the Armenian Church has been particularly important in Armenian social and political circles. In this context, the results of the cooperation of the spiritual-and-ecclesiastical and secular-and-political authorities, as well as the unique self-governance ability of the Armenian nation were revealed.

**Keywords:** deliberative principle, self-government of the nation, representative democracy, constituent council, Synod, cooperation of secular and ecclesiastical authorities, national consensus

During the historical periods of the existence of independent statehood in Armenia, the Armenian state and church authorities adopted the principle of separation of powers, simultaneously cooperating in the process of solving national and state issues. After the loss of statehood (in 428 AD), for the sake of national preservation the Armenian Church performed not only spiritual-and-ecclesiastical, cultural, but also political and judicial functions. However, the Armenian Church never sought the establishment of theocracy, which, according to the testimony of Matteos Mamuryan, is confirmed even by European theologians: "The Armenian Church is based on true apostolic boundaries, free from monarchical and theocratic tendencies, free in its electoral and pastoral activities, and free from... the inadmissible spirit".<sup>1</sup>

In the life of the nation, the ecclesiastical authority never tried to replace the political authority, realizing that governance was more a political process than a religious one. Therefore, as Torgom Gushakyan noted, after the restoration of statehood

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<sup>1</sup>Mamurean 1899: 135.

“... it will be necessary to hand over the trouble and job of the preservation of national identity to its original master, the political power of the nation”.<sup>2</sup> The Armenian church did not claim the title of “**state church**” either, because “it would be an absolute denial of the principle of the identity and independence of the church”.<sup>3</sup>

Armenian Catholicoses intervened in state affairs not as representatives of an ecclesiastical state, but as spiritual fathers and advisers, taking responsibility for the correct course of the country's state and administrative affairs, its national policy. For the benefit of the motherland and the nation they reprimanded the self-interested ministers, supported the organization of the national liberation struggle, and prepared plans for the fight against oppression and the liberation of Armenia. And it is no accident that **the Throne of Catholicos always moved to where the center of political power was**. According to Maghakia Ormanyan, this fact confirms the interconnectedness of national secular and ecclesiastical authorities, because “... besides religious competence, the patriarchal office enjoyed political and national rights and occupied an important place with the royal authority”.<sup>4</sup>

As an administrative organization, the Armenian Church was valued for certain characteristics: **national essence and democratic principles**. The ecclesiastical authority acted with the motto “**for the sake of a person and the nation**”, proving that the church was the Armenian people and not only the clergy. The Armenian patriarchs were elected by national will, which gave them the right to participate in the national-and-political life, like secular figures. Referring to these decisions, Babken Kyuleseryan confirms: “For the Armenian people, the nationalization and popularization of their church means that their religion or spiritual life is the same as their social life. This is a phenomenon in the history of the Armenian Nation, an unparalleled phenomenon”.<sup>5</sup>

The study of the national history revealed the Armenian nation's exceptional ability of self-governance, which was assessed as an “ethnic primeval characteristics”.<sup>6</sup> It determined the existence of Armenian nationality and statehood. With these characteristics, the nation was established as a **unified political personality and a subject of civilization**. The ability of Armenians of self-governance was demonstrated in the **Universal Councils** organized since the 4<sup>th</sup> century, where all the representatives of the nation consulted, discussed and solved national problems by

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<sup>2</sup>Gushakyan 1927: 10.

<sup>3</sup>Gushakyan 1927: 11.

<sup>4</sup>Ormanyan 1912: 308.

<sup>5</sup>Kyuleseryan 1924: 14-15.

<sup>6</sup> See Ghahramanyan 2012: 35, 47-48.

common agreement. Universal Councils marked the highest level of manifestation of Armenian sovereignty, political and legal culture of the nation.<sup>7</sup>

**The order and principles of deliberative governance** were laid down as early as the time of the apostles, when they first convened a council and decided to forbid Christians to follow certain Mosaic laws and to be justified by the law. In the II-III centuries the successors of the apostles continued to resolve issues with the council, and this tradition was reflected in the Apostolic canons: «ԼՔ. Եպիսկոպոսաց իւրաքանչիւր ազգի պարտի գիտել զառաջինն եւ զնա համար ել գլխաւոր, եւ մի՛ ինչ առնել թարց կամաց նորա. բայց միայն զայն առնել իւրաքանչիւրում, զոր ինչ իւրումսկիճակի, եւ որ ընդ նորին իշխանութեան եղեալ տեղեացնան կէ: Եւ առաջինն... եւս չիշխե առնել թարց խորհրդոյ ամենից եւ ոչինչ».<sup>8</sup> This principle was generalized and spread among Christian nations through ecumenical councils and local assemblies. The ecclesiastical authority adopted as a principle the Apostolic definition of regularly convening councils, which commands: «ԼԵ. Երկիցս ի տարւ ոչ ժողով լիցի եպիսկոպոսաց, և քննեցեն ընդ միմեանս զվարդապետութիւնս բարեպաշտութեան, զպատահեալսն յեղեղեցւոջնդ դիմաբանութիւն՝ լուծցեն...».<sup>9</sup>

In the Armenian reality, the ideas of a council and deliberation showed significant specificity. In the Armenian Universal Councils not only spiritual and ecclesiastical, but also many other issues of vital importance (moral, social, marital, hereditary, etc.) were discussed. This is evidenced by the Council of Ashtishat (354 AD), which approved a number of rules with ecclesiastical and secular content. In this context, Nerses Melik-Tangyan confirms: “Armenia was the first to make Christianity a **civil religion**, i.e. besides the church administration it had a “**political government**”,<sup>10</sup> it demanded that ecclesiastical and secular rules be derived from general principles, that church rules be mandatory for all Christian subjects as civil laws.

The Council of Ashtishat was convened on a representative basis (the king, princes, clergy, cavalry, *azats* (noblemen) and others participated). It can be confirmed that the Council of Ashtishat marked **the beginning of a unique Armenian parliamentarianism (parliamentary government)** with the principles it established. That is what Faustus of Byzantium wrote: “Everyone willingly came to the Council and had a useful deliberation to improve secular rules and establish common rules of

<sup>7</sup> The tradition of solving problems through councils was formed as early as in the III millennium BC in the Armenian country of Aratta. According to ancient Sumerian inscriptions, Arattawas governed by rulers with the title of “supreme priest”, who resolved important state issues “in consultation with the council of elders”. See Movsisyan 1992: 53. The deliberative principle was inherited and implemented in the state system of the Kingdom of Ararat, as well as in the subsequent historical periods of the Armenian kingdom.

<sup>8</sup> Apostolic regulations 1913: 241.

<sup>9</sup> Apostolic regulations 1913: 242. See also Regulations 1913: 258.

<sup>10</sup> Melik-Tangyan 1903: 308.

faith”<sup>11</sup>. And Movses Khorenatsi assessed the decisions of the Council of Ashtishat as “canonical constitution”.<sup>12</sup>

The deliberative principle rooted in the Council of Ashtishat became a tradition in the **Council of Shahapivan** (444 AD). It was also representative.<sup>13</sup>

In the “Introduction” of the charter of the Council of Shahapivan, it is stated that according to the written order, they gathered to consult and establish godly laws, by which public relations should be regulated. In fact, without the ratification of the National Assembly, no order was canonical and binding. Even the orders of the king, the Catholicos, ministers, that the nation did not accept, were not implemented. And vice versa, the nation unanimously adopted many Patriarchal *kondaks* as binding law. We can mention as an example the canons and rules by Grigor Lusavoruch, S. Sahak, Nerses the Gracious, Nerses Ashtaraketsi, Nerses Varzhapetyan and others, which stemmed from the national spirit of the Armenian Church.

The deliberative principle was reflected in its own way in **Vachagan the Pious** “**Canonical Constitution**” (488 AD), which is correlated with the canons of Ashtishat and Shahapivan. According to G. Harutyunyan, it was an exceptional phenomenon: “If in the past the church was the initiator of convening national-and-ecclesiastical councils with the aim of “repairing” all the spheres of public life, in the V century King Vachagan showed such an initiative”.<sup>14</sup>

Vachagan addressed the prominent people throughout Armenia, consulted with them and received written answers. The principle of **national consensus** was important even in the preparatory phase of the adoption of the Constitution. The approval and ratification of the constitution took place in the National Assembly, which was attended by Archbishop of Partav, clergymen, noblemen, patriarchs of Artsakh and many others. The council was chaired not by the king, but by one of the princes.<sup>15</sup> The constitution was based on the socio-political situation in the Armenian East, with the need to create national unity, organize the domestic life of the Armenian kingdom, regulate social relations and ensure the welfare of the people.

In the processes of legislation and church management, **the deliberative principle** was also valued in Mkhitar Gosh’s and Smbat the Constable’s Codexes and in Shahamir Shahamiryan’s “Snare of Glory”.

According to Gosh, the church governed with the principles of centralization and relative decentralization. “Each person [bishop] can make decisions only in his domain... but he has no right of authority in other domains... to undertake anything, if there is no decision by the bishop of the capital. And neither can the Catholicos himself do anything

<sup>11</sup>Pawstos Buzand 1987: 119.

<sup>12</sup>Movses Khorenatsi 1981: 336.

<sup>13</sup> Regulations 1964: 427-428.

<sup>14</sup>Harutyunyan 2005: 57.

<sup>15</sup> See Movses Kaghankatvatsi 1969: 65-69.

without consulting with the other bishops”.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the tradition established by the national-and-ecclesiastical councils is reaffirmed in the “Armenian Codex”. Article 161 is noteworthy. In it Gosh urges: “It is not necessary to subject the old traditions of the provincial churches to fashion. That is what is commanded to provinces, positions and people. And if a patriarch wants to change the tradition, he is obliged to do it through the Council, safely, according to the code”.<sup>17</sup> Gosh also emphasizes the role of the council in defining the electoral system of leaders: “... the honor and grace of electing a successor belongs to the chief, i.e. to the Catholicos, the decisive will belongs to the great council”.<sup>18</sup>

Addressing the same issues, Smbat the Constable urges the religious class to learn **the definitions of S. Sahak**, among which he singles out the following – every year Catholicoses assemble a meeting in the capital city and abandon harmful church canons.<sup>19</sup> He considers the traditional procedure of election and ordination of clergy to be legitimate. The same concerns the bishops. And if the candidate is from another province, the legislator requires the people’s written testimony about his merits.<sup>20</sup> Smbat rejects the inheritance of religious ranks, ordering that episcopes have no right to choose their successors since the latter should be elected by the god and be worthy of Catholicos and all people». <sup>21</sup> In such cases, the offender is unfrocked and punished by the court (“gate”).

In his draft Constitution of Armenia, Shahamir Shahamiryan repeatedly emphasizes the deliberative principle and national consensus in the country’s governance and law-making processes. In the first part of “Snare of Glory”, he advises how the sovereign kingdom and free governance should be built.<sup>22</sup> In the process of approving legislation, especially constitutional laws, Shahamiryan considers indispensable the unity and cooperation of ecclesiastical and secular representatives of the nation (“Armenian elders” and “Bishop-deputies elected by the Patriarchy”) as a manifestation of the national will.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, the democratic essence of the Armenian Church is manifested by the principles established by Canon Law, which were re-proclaimed in the sources of Armenian law and were unquestionably implemented in Armenia, as well as in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. Democracy assumes **nationwide participation in the elections of the ecclesiastical authority**.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Mkhitar Gosh 2001: 460.

<sup>17</sup> Mkhitar Gosh 2001: 462.

<sup>18</sup> Mkhitar Gosh 2001: 451.

<sup>19</sup> Code of Law 1918: 28.

<sup>20</sup> Code of Law 1918: 37.

<sup>21</sup> Code of Law 1918: 23.

<sup>22</sup> Shahamiryan 1913: 21.

<sup>23</sup> Shahamiryan 1913: 151.

<sup>24</sup> Regulation 1876: 3.

In this context, it should be noted that it is not legal to appoint or remove from office the Patriarch only at the will of the political authority. According to MaghakiaOrmanyan: “The dethronement must take place after discussion and decision, according to the canon law and **authority of council**, so that the Catholicos is legally dethroned, and the person taking the place is not seen as an adversary”.<sup>25</sup> Without these conditions, removal from office is considered a result of violence. The administrative structure of the Armenian Church excludes the principle of strict concentration. Ecclesiastical officials are free to perform their functions, but not as they please, but with deliberation: “Every rank of the clergy... chiefs or leaders carry out their duties with the support of religious or clerical, and political or secular councils and assemblies”.<sup>26</sup>

The deliberative principle is reflected in **the kondak of Catholicos Simeon of April 5, 1774**, which was addressed to ZakariaKaghzvantsi. The Kondak sets forth six rules for the patriarchal position. By the way, Patriarch Zakaria implemented this principle and was evaluated as an exemplary ruler. The council he convened (1780) is symbolic. During the council the third of the 4 canons proposed in regard to the election of Catholicos was related to deliberative management: “the Catholicos should have advisers around him and act with their approval”.<sup>27</sup>

It should be noted that this principle did not violate the Patriarchal supremacy, and in the Council of the Etchmiadzin Congregation of 1781 the following was declared as an inviolable law – only the Catholicoses have the right to release canons.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the canons without the patriarchal seal are invalid.

The idea of the Synod (Council) originated not in Russia, but in Constantinople, during the struggle over the election of the Catholicos. It was mentioned for the first time on August 16, 1805, in the Epistle addressed to M. Yeghiazaryan, where it is said that Catholicos and bishops should consult each other.<sup>29</sup> And Daniel Maraghatsi's Patriarchal Kondak of July 10, 1806 was the **document of the national-and-parliamentary form of government**, in which he informed about the desire of the Armenians of Constantinople to have a governing synod for the national department. The Synod would support the Patriarch in administrative matters.<sup>30</sup> Maraghatsi proposed to create a consultative body, whose members should be elected by a united national will, be wise, know the laws and be a philanthropist. The power of the Synod was to be extended to the canonical, judicial, executive, supply and development branches.

<sup>25</sup>Ormanyan 1913: 2043, 2163.

<sup>26</sup>Ormanyan 1993: 166-167.

<sup>27</sup>Ormanyan 1913: 3143.

<sup>28</sup> Letter to Great Polis 1899: 194.

<sup>29</sup> Letter to archbishop Hovhannes 1902: 460-461.

<sup>30</sup> Holy governing assembly 1893: 210.

On May 25, 1808 the composition of the Synod was officially announced<sup>31</sup>. According to the document, the jurisdiction of the Governing Council extended to the examination of the Catholicos' orders, the rules enacted by law, the usefulness of which would be confirmed by the public. Violence, arbitrary legislation and opposition to the just judgment established by the universal will were excluded. However, the Catholicos was the head of the church and the overseer of the government of the Council. The ruling council ("Holy Synod") is more correctly called the **Catholicos' Council**, which ruled out the unlimited power of the Catholicos, and the activities of parliamentarians were expanded. The council functioned effectively during the reign of Barsegh and Nerses Ashtaraketsi.

The principles of deliberative management were reflected in other political tendencies in the 1836 **Charter**, the limits of the operation of which are defined in the inscription itself. The opinion that the document is a charter for the Armenian Church as a whole is not correct. In this regard, we would like to emphasize Maghakia Ormanyan's interpretation: "What has been said in Russia shows that the one who approved the ordinance had neither the thought nor the courage to draft a law for the whole Armenian Church, but only to specify the points of the relationship of the Armenian Church with the Russian Empire, which is really useful in order to ensure a firm application of the laws and a solution to the problems".<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the articles that concern the Armenian Church are borrowed from Armenian canon law or are adapted to it.

According to the Charter, the Catholicos was the chief governor and superior inspector of the Armenian Church, with the right to make the final decision in spiritual-and-religious matters. The Synod was given the privilege of being **a mere associate**. The Catholicos could not transfer his power, rights and privileges to another instance or person.<sup>33</sup> Catholicos' power was limited within the religious and ecclesiastical framework, while it had performed national-and-cultural and legal-and-political functions for centuries. The Synod consisting of eight members was presided over by the Catholicos. In addition to administrative, judicial and supervisory functions, the Synod had the right to pre-examine spiritual affairs.

The Armenians of India and Western Armenians criticized the novelties introduced in the structure of the Synod, because before the implementation of the Charter the body cooperating with the Catholicos had **consultative** nature and functions. Whereas, according to the new charter, the Synod was similar to the Synod of the Russian Church, which had ruled the Russian Church with absolute authority since the time of Peter the Great. In other words, the deliberative body was turned into a sovereign administrative structure, as a result of which the principle of centralized management in the ecclesiastical regime was violated.

<sup>31</sup> Holy governing assembly 1893: 218-219.

<sup>32</sup> Ormanyan 1927: 3684-3685.

<sup>33</sup> See State constitution 1842: 19.



One of the principles introduced in the charter was that ***the Synod directly depended on the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, and indirectly on the Imperial Supreme Council of Elders***.<sup>34</sup> In local (national) affairs, the Synod interacted with the governor, and in general affairs - with the ministry. The Charter defined ***a new position alien to the national regulation***, which was called procurator appointed as a governor by the Senate who receives salary from the royal treasury.<sup>35</sup> The Special Agent had the exclusive right to oversee the administrative and judicial affairs of the Synod.

One can criticize the provisions of the Charter according to which ***the secular element was deprived of the right to participate in eparchial elections***, and they could participate in patriarchal elections only if the number of clergymen was greater. In fact, only clergymen operated in administrative, judicial, educational and other fields. Criticizing this principle, Ormanyannotes: "Armenians do not consider the Armenian clergy to be the absolute master of the church, and apart from deliberation the secular people have an important role in the election and administration and supply branches".<sup>36</sup>

Another intolerable principle was ***the unnecessary interference of state authorities in ecclesiastical and national-and-cultural affairs***. Although the charter formally implied the observance of the traditions and laws of the Armenian Church, the Russian government always sought to subordinate them to state interests. The decisions adopted by the Synod were submitted for state approval and ratification. All diocesan correspondence was monitored by the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Thus, the Charter was a legal basis for the Russian government to interfere in national-and-ecclesiastical affairs, to limit the rights of the Catholicos, to change the electoral system of clerical officials, to arbitrarily solve the problems of preserving national estates and property.

The traditional deliberative principle was inherited and reflected also in the Western Armenian ***"National Constitution"*** of 1863, in which the rights of the legislative power - the National Assembly, and the executive power - the Political and Religious Assemblies, were separated. The National Administration was established in the format of mixed governance, i.e. monarchical (nationalist), parliamentary and democratic principles were combined. The Patriarch, the chairman of all assemblies, had a constitutional position, the operation of which was determined by the ratio of power bodies. The members of the Political and Religious Assemblies were advisers to the patriarch. According to ArshakAlpoyachyan: "The Patriarch, as the embodiment of the executive power, is not free to act independently, but must act in consultation with

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<sup>34</sup> State constitution 1842: 39.

<sup>35</sup> State constitution 1842: 45.

<sup>36</sup> Ormanyan 1927: 3696.

those two assemblies appointed by the national representative body”.<sup>37</sup> It should be noted that most of the Armenian patriarchs had secular advisers who secretly carried out political activities and gave very important information to the patriarchs.

The obligations of the Patriarch are to govern according to the principles of the Constitution, to prevent any action that goes against the Basic Law, to submit all issues, including proposals for dismissal, to the councils for discussion. However, in difficult political situations, when convening councils is impossible, the patriarch has the authority to manage national affairs under his own responsibility. On the other hand: “If the Patriarch acts or behaves against the provisions of the Constitution, he will be impeached”.<sup>38</sup> The National General Assembly, the Political and Religious Assemblies have the right to accuse him.

**The Mixed Assembly** which combines the functions of Political and Religious assemblies is a unique manifestation of the cooperation of the ecclesiastical and secular authorities. It was the Mixed Assembly that determined the direction and tendencies of governance and national policy. Especially during the massacres, when due to government bans it became impossible to convene the General Assembly, the national governance was carried out by the Mixed Assembly. This principle was substantiated as a policy of choosing the lesser evil to ensure the continuity of constitutional institutions.

Thus, to summarize the above, we can conclude: the Armenian Church has been valued by certain features - **national essence** and **democratic principles**. The self-governance ability of Armenians was demonstrated in **Universal Councils**, which become meaningful by the principles implemented in them (cooperation of representative, deliberative, secular and ecclesiastical authorities, national consensus, publicity, etc.). These principles were inherited and reflected in the Armenian Codices and other sources of law, the authors of which valued them as inviolable principles. In the current period it is also necessary to bring forward the national-and-constitutional principles that have passed the test of history, aligning them with the current political requirements.

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***Translated from Armenian by Syuzanna Chraghyan***

The article was delivered on 21.10.2022, reviewed on 18.11.2022, accepted for publication on 05.12.2022.

# SOFT POWER POLICY IN THE GULF ARAB STATES AND ARMENIA IN THAT CONTEXT

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-126

## **Abstract**

States around the world employ various tactics to ensure their security, attract investments and spread their influence. Soft power is one of the tools widely applied by governments worldwide. The Arab states of the Persian Gulf region are not an exception as they widely use that tool to reach their goals. This article discusses certain features and evolution of carrying out soft power policies by those states. It also represents how soft power is used in the context of relations between the United Arab Emirates and Armenia.

**Keywords:** *Soft power, Armenia, Gulf region, construction, humanitarian aid, sports, technologies*

## **Soft power and its advantages over hard power**

Any state in the world, be it a superpower or a state with more modest capabilities, has the primary and main task of ensuring its own security. This is a process that requires constant efforts and new solutions, the failure of which leads to disorganisation of public life, deterioration of living standards, interventions by other states and other negative consequences.

States use various tools and spend huge amounts of money to ensure their security. The main components of security are the armed forces, law enforcement structures, economic capabilities, formation of alliances with other countries, etc. One of the levels that provide security is the reputation and authority of a given country. Any state strives to increase and spread its influence in the world and thereby become attractive to others. This is known as soft power policy. According to the accepted definition, it is a non-coercive means of achieving its goals in the international arena.<sup>1</sup>

If hard power policy presumes the use of material resources, more direct and coercive methods, including threats, soft power achieves the same goal through various qualities and policies that arouse sympathy among other countries and peoples.<sup>2</sup> Hard power forcibly makes other states do what they would not otherwise do, while soft power persuades them to voluntarily do what they would like to do.

Soft power is therefore less conflict-causing than coercive methods, as well as less risky and costly. One of the reasons for the growing popularity of soft power is the difficulty of achieving the goal through hard power and military operations. Currently,

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<sup>1</sup> Nye 2017: 1

<sup>2</sup> Gallarotti 2011: 28

there is a tendency that the use of hard power weakens the given country more in the international arena and may lead to undesirable consequences. For example, it can lead to the fact that it will weaken the ability of the given state to attract visitors and investments. The use of soft power can pursue different goals: improving the external security environment by providing an attractive image, gaining the support of other countries for its own foreign and security policy, influencing the preferences of other countries, maintaining unity within the country, ensuring the internal support of the country's leader or ruling power.<sup>3</sup>

Joseph Nye and other researchers point out that the concept of attractiveness of any state largely depends on the useful application of intangible resources. Culture, way of life and diplomacy are able to legitimise the power and politics of the state in the eyes of others. Although the use of hard power may contribute to the conquests, one under the influence of hard power only temporarily capitulates. In such cases, the defeated country will try to liberate itself primarily through the promotion of its own culture, or it will turn to another country that will offer more than occupation. This also means that in the long term, the policy of soft power is more preferable in terms of achieving the goals.

According to Nye, the internal source of soft power is how the given nation manifests itself within the country: it can improve his reputation and give legitimacy to actions, which in turn contributes to the achievement of foreign policy goals. Internal sources can be divided into two groups: power inherent in the culture of a given country and power inherent in political institutions

Moreover, the political system provides, for example, democracy, pluralism, constitutionalism, and the cultural system is created by raising the quality of life, the attractiveness of the lifestyle, which causes a desire to be copied among other nations.

### **Manifestations of soft power in the Arab countries of the Gulf**

The Arab countries of the Persian Gulf: Oman, Kuwait, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, with the exception of Saudi Arabia, became independent in the 1950s-1970s. These countries are small in terms of territory and population, significantly inferior to their neighboring countries, which have always had ambitions towards them. Another feature of these countries is that, with the exception of Oman, the majority of the population is foreigners.

Thus, the mentioned countries entered the arena of international relations with small opportunities: population, territory, without traditions of independent statehood, but with rich oil and gas reserves, which became the only source of income and well-being of these countries. These countries could not solve the issue of ensuring their security without powerful allies, such as the United States. At the same time, the "void" -

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<sup>3</sup> Lee 2009: 207-208

either geographically, politically or economically - could not offer sympathy and attraction in other countries.

Meanwhile, according to the Brandfinance consulting organization's annual index, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar are among the leading countries in the world in terms of soft power.<sup>4</sup> This index is formed by combining a number of components, such as ease of doing business, having a strong and stable economy, influence in international relations, neighborly relations with other countries, support from other countries, education and science, etc.

The Arab countries of the Gulf have adopted a number of strategies, visions for the next 10, 20, 30 years, established departments, the details of which I will not go into, but I will try to focus on how these countries are trying to brand themselves.

The construction of the good reputation of the state in the international arena is carried out in different spheres, depending on the financial possibilities and ambitions. There are a number of peculiarities that are worth mentioning. Based on the monarchical nature of the state system, the Arab countries of the Gulf cannot promote democracy, political diversity, pluralism, the values of the liberal world, and cannot offer a culture of mass consumption because of religious, conservative factors, and cultural peculiarities.

Instead, these countries emphasise the strength and reliability of the state, the tolerance and solidarity of cultures, and the ideas of protecting the interests of the Islamic world or the Arab world. In particular, a good indicator of the vitality of the state system was the response to the coronavirus pandemic and the quick organisation of the vaccination process.

In foreign relations, the main "trademark" of the Gulf countries is mediation for resolving conflicts. Kuwait, the UAE, Oman, Qatar have made successful attempts to demonstrate their mediation abilities. Oman, Qatar offered platforms during the US-Iran negotiations on the nuclear deal, Qatar is a mediator on the Afghan issue, Kuwait carried out a mediation mission to resolve the issues that arose in 2017 between Qatar and a number of Arab countries.

These countries are also trying to find areas where they can convert their accumulated financial resources into other types of capabilities. Below we will discuss one of the many tools aimed at increasing the country's reputation. In this sense, there is a certain evolutionary similarity in the actions of the Gulf countries. If we divide it into stages, then the first stage is the implementation of construction projects, the second stage is the projects in sports, and the third stage, which the countries of the region are just entering, is science and technology.

Among them, we can mention the implementation of large construction projects by renowned architects and construction companies. As of 2022, 19 of the world's 100

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<sup>4</sup> Global Soft Power Index 2022: USA bounces back better to top of nation brand ranking, 15.03.2022  
<https://brandfinance.com/press-releases/global-soft-power-index-2022-usa-bounces-back-better-to-top-of-nation-brand-ranking>

tallest buildings, or about 20%, are located in the Arab Gulf countries, mainly in the UAE.<sup>5</sup>

The first official use of the term *soft power* in the UAE was in 2017, when the Soft Power Council was established. It was created to develop a soft power strategy for the UAE. The UAE's soft power strategy covers the following key areas: humanitarian diplomacy, scientific and academic diplomacy, people's diplomacy, cultural and media diplomacy, economic diplomacy.<sup>6</sup>

A simple search in the online Emirati media will offer hundreds of articles about Emirati soft power narrating about astonishing successes, transforming the UAE into a soft power superpower. All this, of course, is accompanied by the use of various epithets, which aim to create an image of a solid and strong state. One such epithet is, for example, "Sparta of the Middle East". Emirati soft power propaganda is not limited to media coverage. In recent years, dozens of articles have been published in peer-reviewed academic journals and theses have been defended, in many cases by UAE nationals, devoted to the study of soft power politics.

On the other hand, it should be noted that there is also a sceptical attitude towards the promotion of soft power branding by the Gulf countries in terms of tools and results. For example, Stephen Hertog notes: "The oil monarchies of the Gulf use their oil wealth to buy attributes of 'good citizenship' and 'progressiveness' in the international arena by implementing expensive political projects. Those projects - international universities, museums, green cities, internet cities, etc. - are exclusively aimed at an outside audience."<sup>7</sup>

One of the manifestations of the soft power of the Gulf countries is humanitarian support and international aid. In 2021, Saudi Arabia and the UAE were among the top ten countries providing international aid, Qatar is also among the leaders. Kuwait also uses this tool. Through its Arab Economic Development Fund, Kuwait has provided soft loans amounting 20 billion dollars to more than 100 countries of the world.<sup>8</sup> The Kuwaiti model was also copied by other Arab countries of the Gulf.

Manifestations of soft power are vividly expressed in sports. Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain host major sports events. These countries make large investments in leading European football clubs, attract the most prestigious football players, organise major football, tennis, motorsport tournaments. Sports diplomacy is the strategic use of

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<sup>5</sup> Tallest Buildings, <https://www.skyscrapercenter.com/buildings>

<sup>6</sup> The UAE Soft Power Strategy, 23.11.2017, <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/federal-governments-strategies-and-plans/the-uae-soft-power-strategy#:~:text=The%20UAE%20Soft%20Power%20Strategy%20aims%20to%20increase%20the%20country's,the%20UAE%20to%20the%20world.>

<sup>7</sup> Hertog 2017: 4 A quest for significance: Gulf oil monarchies' international 'soft power' strategies and their local urban dimensions <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/69883/>

<sup>8</sup> Kuwait's soft power is its biggest asset, 27.2.2018, <https://gulfnews.com/opinion/op-eds/kuwaits-soft-power-is-its-biggest-asset-1.2180201>



sports events by states to create a friendly international image, that is, it is one of the forms of continuation of politics by other means.

Investments are made in popular sports that are watched by hundreds of millions of people around the world. During sports events, advertisements of companies of those countries, particularly state funds, airlines are shown, naturally in a positive light. First of all, this policy ensures worldwide recognition for the Arab countries of the Gulf region. In addition, hosting sports events is primarily related to logistical and organisational issues. Conducting such events is proof of the state's ability to address complex problems.

Qatar uses sports to promote a number of narratives, including health despite the country's serious obesity problem, modernization and progress aimed at neutralising negative stereotypes about Gulf Arabs, and reputation and attractiveness aimed at promoting tourism.<sup>9</sup>

Qatar has made sports a key component of national branding and development. Although other Gulf countries started hosting international sports events much earlier, in this field Qatar has overtaken them all. Part of their long-term strategy is the 2022 FIFA World Cup: according to estimates, Qatar spent US\$220 billion on lobbying, construction of sports and other infrastructure affiliated with it, meanwhile the expected revenue is about 10 fold less compared to expenses.<sup>10</sup> For instance, Brazil spent around 12 billion dollars for hosting the World Cup 2014, the largest amount until WC 2022.<sup>11</sup> On the way to building a brand through sports, the Qataris bought PSG, a football club from Paris. They attracted high-profile football players, who also participate in the promotion of the Qatari brand within the framework of the contract.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that this policy, despite its successes, could not avoid a number of problems. Qatar's quest to do great things for a small state is often overshadowed by gross violations of workers' rights on construction sites that have resulted in dozens of lives lost. The investigations are spread by the world media and human rights organisations, which to some extent overshadows the efforts to create an appropriate image. In such cases, even the "Al Jazeera" television company with global coverage is not enough to provide an appropriate media environment. The same applies to tournaments organised in Saudi Arabia, when prestigious athletes visiting the country often speak about the rights of women and minorities.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Brannagan and Giulianotti 2014: 703-719 Brannagan, P. M., & Giulianotti, R. (2014). Soft power and soft disempowerment: Qatar, global sport and football's 2022 World Cup finals. *Leisure Studies*, 34(6), 703-719. doi:10.1080/02614367.2014.964291

<sup>10</sup> The Most Expensive World Cup in History, 10.4.2022, <https://frontofficesports.com/the-most-expensive-world-cup-in-history/>

<sup>11</sup> Total costs of the FIFA World Cup 2014 in Brazil, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/296493/total-costs-fifa-world-cup-2014-brazil/>

<sup>12</sup> Saudi Arabia to allow women into sports stadiums, 29.10.2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41798481>

In terms of sports soft power, the Gulf countries have become pioneers for the whole world, because in recent years other small countries are trying to host major sports events. The tool to ensure legitimacy and reputation through sports events is widely used by Azerbaijan, whose oil money allows them to regularly organise major international events, such as the European Games, Formula 1 racing.

One level up from sports events is the investments in the educational, cultural and technological spheres. In particular, taking into account the growth and reputation of such fields as artificial intelligence, bioengineering, and the growth of interest in space exploration in recent years, countries that are not the leaders in the field are also trying to get integrated into this new environment and trends. The UAE is the leader among the Gulf countries in this matter. The Emirati authorities are investing in the technology sector, building so-called technopark cities - Masdar City, Internet cities, and sending a space device to Mars. The UAE became the 5th country to send a device to Mars. Moreover, it was highlighted that most of the members of the scientific team of the Mars mission are Emiratis. These investments are made, because they are associated with the future of humanity. Countries try to present themselves as one of the creators of that future.<sup>13</sup>

Significant steps have been done in education and arts, for instance, the opening of a branch of the Louvre and the Guggenheim Museum in Abu Dhabi, the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, branches of a number of famous universities and inviting top professors and scholars to teach - branches of Georgetown, Texas, Carnegie Mellon universities, London University College were opened in Qatar, New York University, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology operate in the UAE.<sup>14</sup>

Gulf countries are increasing their spending on research and development. The UAE spent 0.7 percent of GDP 20 years ago, meanwhile, in 2020 it was around 1.5 percent.<sup>15</sup> The Saudis increased their spending on science from 0.06 percent in 2003 to 0.82 percent in 2013, but it decreased to 0.5 percent in subsequent years. Oman increased its spending from 0.14 percent of GDP to 0.4 percent.

In contrast to sports, in terms of reputation, the scientific, cultural, and technological spheres contain fewer risks, and first of all, related to human rights.

### **The UAE's soft power in Armenia**

As already mentioned, the countries of the Gulf regions try to create a favourable image around the world. The UAE is one of the leaders in the world in terms of soft power policy. The UAE and Armenia have developed political and economic relations

<sup>13</sup> UAE's Mars project director among top 50 future leaders in global list, 31.8.2021, <https://www.thenationalnews.com/uae/2021/08/31/uaes-mars-project-director-among-top-50-future-leaders-in-global-list/>

<sup>14</sup> International Universities in Qatar, <https://www.hziegler.com/articles/international-universities-in-qatar.html>

<sup>15</sup> Research and development expenditure (% of GDP) - United Arab Emirates, 6.2022, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/GB.XPD.RSDV.GD.ZS?locations=AE>

since the 1990s. The Armenia – UAE relations are not limited to only political and economic cooperation. The UAE's policy in Armenia aims at creating an image of an advanced and friendly nation by implementing projects in cultural, educational and humanitarian fields.

The restoration of the medieval Christian monastery of Haghartsin in the north of Armenia is a vivid instance of the UAE's soft power policy in Armenia. The project's funding came from Sheikh al-Qasimi, the ruler of Sharjah emirate. Another example is humanitarian aid. The UAE periodically sends humanitarian goods to Armenia. For instance, 7 tons of humanitarian aid in 2020 was delivered to help battle the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>16</sup>

The United Arab Emirates declared 2019 as a year for tolerance. The Ambassador of the UAE to Armenia, Mohamed Al-Zaabi, in an interview to the local media explained the aim of that global project. "This initiative aims at strengthening the UAE's status as a world centre through several major initiatives and projects for tolerance, including the research investments, social and cultural research on tolerance, and dialogue of cultures and civilizations. The main message of the initiative is to spread tolerance values across the world."<sup>17</sup> To promote the idea of tolerance, the Emirati embassy in Yerevan organised events, the Emirati representatives delivered a number of interviews, and provided poor families with humanitarian goods. The UAE also offers educational opportunities for Armenian students. They are eligible to be enrolled in the programs of the technological and educational complex of Masdar, a highest educational facility aimed at research of solar energy, sustainability and environment.

### **Concluding remarks**

The Gulf countries have integrated a number of fields in their soft power policy: architecture, humanitarian aid, sports, science and technology. The transition from one field to another happened gradually, and this trend is noticeable in all the countries of the region. The goal of soft power is ultimately to attract investment and visitors. One of the ultimate goals of the soft power strategies of the Gulf countries is to get the economy off the needle of hydrocarbon dependence and economic diversification. Low oil prices in 2014-2021 have proved that the income from this source cannot be stable. Taking into account the existing level of well-being in those countries, the tens of billions spent on security, possible financial difficulties can become a source of internal instability. In this regard, the Gulf countries have not yet achieved much. As the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, noted, "we have developed oil

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<sup>16</sup> UAE Sends Medical Aid to Armenia in Fight against COVID-19, 27.4.2020, <https://www.mofaic.gov.ae/en/mediahub/news/2020/4/27/27-04-2020-armenia>.

<sup>17</sup> Bilateral ties, Armenia's participation at Dubai Expo 2020, Masdar City: UAE Ambassador's interview to ARMENPRESS, 29.3.2019, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/969329/>

dependence in Saudi Arabia."<sup>18</sup>It is no coincidence that the Gulf countries are in the top ten in the world both in terms of the share of oil revenues compared to GDP and the share of oil in the volume of exports.

The soft power strategies of the Gulf countries can also be considered in the context of competition between elite, royal families. These countries often copy each other, trying to show who is more generous, elegant and superior. For example, who will build a higher building, will create an artificial island, who will have the most influential and richest football club, will buy masterpieces of art. It should be noted that this competition has taken a certain evolutionary path. The leaders of the first generation spent the first million dollars they received from oil on luxurious and expensive cars, gold smelters, and the construction of palaces. The leaders of the next generation went a step further by placing their own ambitions within the framework of the country's ambitions.

The use of soft power also aims to compensate and cover up the loss of reputation caused by the use of hard power. In the case of the Gulf countries, in the last decade, the aspiration to gain leadership in the region is noticeable, which is also carried out through the use of hard power. These states, in particular, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE conduct a more active, interventionist foreign policy. Involvement in the Syrian and Libyan conflicts, the war in Yemen also bring with them reputational risks.

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<sup>18</sup> Saudi prince unveils sweeping plans to end 'addiction' to oil, 25.4.2016, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-economy-idUSKCN0XMICD>

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The article was delivered on 05.12.2022, reviewed on 15.12.2022, accepted for publication on 21.12.2022.

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# PHILOSOPHY AND LAW

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# SHAHAMIRS. SHAHAMIRYAN'S "THE SNARE OF GLORY" AS THE DRAFT CONSTITUTION OF ARMENIA OF 1773

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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-136

*"The nation itself must be its own king and govern its own country. People must be and remain free, as created by the Lord. ... No one can reign over people, except God"<sup>1</sup>  
(Shahamir S. Shahamiryan).*

## **Abstract**

In his article "The Snare of Glory or" «The Trap of Ambition" by Shahamir S. Shahamiryan, as a draft of the Constitution of Armenia of 1773», the author, through a general overview and necessary analysis of one of the most outstanding monuments of Armenian legal thought, reveals the deep meaning and purposeful content of this historical and legal document, which shows the true and reliable ways to achieve genuine state-legal independence, freedom and responsibility of the Armenian people, as well as successful ways of its politically independent lawful and expedient state building.

**Keywords:** Shahamir S. Shahamiryan, "The Snare of Glory", Armenian legal thought, "House of Armenia"

A deep and thorough study of the entire content and a true knowledge of the meaning of the centuries-old, rather difficult and winding history of the Armenian people leads us to the unequivocal conclusion that only a real and true, sincere and voluntary personal and public Divine economy can and therefore should become the true beginning and the successful end of any subsequent long-term and fertile national, as well as Armenian state and legal construction.<sup>2</sup>This is evidenced by numerous spiritual and moral, as well as historical and legal documents compiled by the best sons of the Armenian nation, among them Sh. Shahamiryan, the author of the famous spiritual and moral, as well as state and legal treatise, presented in the form of a kind of a draft Constitution of the "House of Armenians" titled "Snare of Glory".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Avagyan 2000: 573.

<sup>2</sup> Osipian 2014; Osipian 2016a; Osipyan 2018a; Osipian 2019; Osipian 2020a.

<sup>3</sup> Avagyan 2000: 570-583.

“The Snare of Glory” (in Armenian “ՈրոգայթՓառաց”, officially “Armenian Code of Laws for Governing the Country of Armenia”), was written by Sh. Shahamiryan<sup>4</sup> in Old Armenian (“grabar”) in 1773 and was first published in Madras, India. As a draft Constitution of Armenia («ՀայոցՏնԼ», “House of Armenia”), this constitutional legal document consisted of four hundred and fifteen articles-provisions, which were developed with the substantial support and co-authorship of the author’s ideological and political associates, namely Joseph Emin and Movses Baghramyan (Moses Varlamov), who were from Karabakh<sup>5</sup> and in their youth studied in the capitals of England and Russia- London and Moscow - and at the time were under the clear and strong influence of Western European, especially English constitutional legal theory and history of state and law.<sup>6</sup>

In the Preface of this draft Constitution of Armenia, as “a ray of light in a dark kingdom”,<sup>7</sup> the authors called themselves “small and humble servants of the Armenian Country, first of all before God and people, ... desiring nothing for themselves personally, neither power, nor wealth, nor glory but entirely guided by love for their people and for their country”.<sup>8</sup> It is obvious that it was exactly this sincere love and faith in God and in their fellow man, as well as the best hope for the formation of an independent national state, that were the main driving force of their faithful and fruitful Christian and Armenian legal awareness, law-making, justice and state-building.<sup>9</sup>

The ancestors of the author of the draft constitution under discussion came from Eastern Armenia, from the region of Nakhichevan, and then they moved to Persia in 1605. Shahamir Sultanum Shahamiryan (1723-1797) was born on November 4, 1723 already in the Persian city of New Julfa, founded and built by the Nakhichevan Armenian settlers. At a young age, he decided to engage in entrepreneurship and moved to India, where, after long ordeals and wanderings, he finally settled in Madras, first working as a tailor, then engaging in the wholesale trade of gold and various precious stones. Later he became one of the most educated, wealthy and prosperous people, successfully selling jewelry throughout India. In the seventies of the XVIII century, he first organized and then he himself led his own Armenian patriotic group. His friend Movses Baghramyan, a native of Karabakh, was one of its members. He also managed to set up his own printing house in Madras.

In his mature years, Sh. Shahamiryan fully lived with the idea of the complete liberation of Armenia from Iranian and Turkish rule by carrying out a people’s revolution in his homeland. He sincerely believed and considered that without such national-and-

<sup>4</sup>Shahamiryan 1775; Shahamirov 1786; Shahamiryan 1998; Avagyan 2000: 554, 567.

<sup>5</sup> Avagyan 2000: 552-553.

<sup>6</sup> Avagyan 2000: 558.

<sup>7</sup> Avagyan 2000: 576.

<sup>8</sup> Avagyan 2000: 570, 584-640.

<sup>9</sup>Osipian 2006; Full text in Armenian: “The Constitution of the Participant to Eternity Gosh” // “Science” of the National Academy of Sciences, 1996. No. 5-12. “Science”. National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia. Osipian 2021a; Osipian 2022a; Osipian 2022b.



state independence, Armenia, as a country, would never be able to obtain and preserve its centuries-old national identity and its desired and real history. That is why his national-and-patriotic group in Madras soon developed the so-called “Southern Program” of the future state-and-legal structure of the House of Armenia, which differed significantly from the political views of the authors of another, the so-called “Northern Program”, developed by well-known pro-Russian Armenians I. Lazarev and I. Argutinsky, who believed that outside of the Russian Empire and without its centralized control, Armenia simply would not survive physically and politically.

The “Southern Program” assigned the main role in the military-and-political struggle against Turkish and Iranian rule to the then Nagorno-Karabakh regions under the leadership of five Armenian *meliks* (heads of administrative entities). Despite the huge difference between the programs of the “northerners” and “southerners”, they were nevertheless ideologically united by the viewpoint that the real liberation of all of Armenia could and should occur with the necessary help of the Christian, fraternal Russian *tsar* and people,<sup>10</sup> its huge and well-equipped army, and the supposed future state of the House of Armenia should be in “eternal friendship” with Russia.

As one of the active spiritual, moral and political leaders of the Armenian national liberation movement, Sh. Shahamiryan tried to unite around himself all the famous representatives of the Armenian clergy, nobility, the most enlightened and educated class (*intelligentsia*), who mainly had republican-democratic state-and-legal ideas, values and goals. It was these rights-based goals and the means of achieving them that were punctually and normatively set out by him and his friends in his work “Snare of Glory”. Its provisions were to serve as legal foundations of the new national-and-state system and legal order of the future free and independent Armenia, in which all illegal and pernicious remnants of feudalism and serfdom of the dark and humiliating centuries of the long-suffering Armenian people’s life would be canceled by law.<sup>11</sup>

According to the national liberation and political project of Sh. Shahamiryan and his associates and like-minded allies, the future Armenian state, free from foreign oppression and independent, was to be established on the territory of five melikdoms, self-governing regions of Nagorno-Karabakh (present Republic of Artsakh), which were to be liberated from Persian and Turkish rule through a revolutionary and national liberation movement and possible military-and-political assistance of the Georgian (Kartli-Kakheti) king Erekle II, who descended from the Armenian royal and princely family of the Bagratids, from the royal dynasty of Smbat and Ashot Bagratuni (885-1045).<sup>12</sup> For the successful implementation of this plan, the military-and-political assistance of Christian Russia during the reign of the Russian Empress Catherine II the Great was also expected.

<sup>10</sup>Osipian 2007a; Osipian 2007b; Osipian 2007d; Osipian 2008a; Osipian 2016b.

<sup>11</sup>Osipian 2006; Osipian 2018c; Osipian 2018a; Osipian 2020a.

<sup>12</sup>Avagyan 2000: 573.

According to the presented draft Constitution of the House of Armenians, the Armenian independent state was to be headed and governed, first of all, by a God-loving, God-fearing, philanthropic and conscientious head-president, who was to have a Christian-Armenian origin with constitutional-and-monarchical powers: “Remember, my lord, ... that you, being anointed by God, have been appointed as His right hand for the good of your state. ... Remember that the people were not created for you, but by God’s Providence you were chosen for your people, whose goodness and freedom is your freedom. God created everyone equally free so that they would be governed by good laws, equally fair to the rich and the poor... Remember that the main reason for the death of the Armenian statehood always was the arbitrariness of the kings, princes and feudal lords of Armenia”.<sup>13</sup>

The author of the draft Constitution of 1773 was sure that “if people want to remain free, govern their country themselves, freely dispose of their property and receive honors only in accordance with their virtue, it is necessary that no one rule over them except God and His lawful, expedient and mandatory law”. “In nature itself, a regular order prevails; everything, starting with the life of living beings and ending with the seasons of the year, is subject to a certain objective regularity and order. The same unchanging and mandatory state laws should reign in human society. The inviolable lawful and expedient laws of the state must restrain the changing human nature and soul so that no person would have the opportunity to plot and do evil. People must obey only the true legal consciousness and laws established by themselves, in accordance with their faith in God and nature, for the common good. No one should rule them otherwise than in accordance with mandatory laws. All the officials of the state, “to the extent of their knowledge and innate abilities”, are obliged to be servants of our country, faithful servants of the Armenian people”.<sup>14</sup>

The author of the draft Constitution also argued that the law should ensure everyone’s personal and property safety, everyone should be free in his affairs and should be sure that he is the master and owner of what he has. He wrote that among the Christian European peoples there were kings guided by the opinion of their national assemblies (parliaments, Armenian – “խորհրդարան”), as well as the Senate (Armenian – “ծերակույտ”). As good examples he cites, first of all, the nation of democratic Britons, i.e. an example of constitutional monarchy of “Anglo-Saxons” and the freedom-loving republic of North Americans, headed by G. Washington.<sup>15</sup>

The author of the draft Constitution notes that the current sad, miserable and bleak state of the Armenian people prompts him, all his like-minded allies and political associates to urgently seek the necessary and legitimate means for the liberation and salvation of the native Armenian people. Fortunately, the Armenian people are not yet in such a hopeless state as the Egyptians, Jews and Greeks, and may still have some

<sup>13</sup>Shahamiryan1775:362, 373. Also Avagyan 2000: 562-563; Baghramyan1772: 51.

<sup>14</sup> Avagyan 2000: 574-575. u

<sup>15</sup>Osipian 2018b; Osipian 2020b; Osipian 2021a; Osipian 2022b.

faint hope of their political liberation from under the foreign oppression of people of another faith. In his opinion, the Constitution and inviolable laws can make the liberated and independent Armenians free, responsible and happy, encourage them to perform all necessary and good deeds, motivate them to fulfill their personal and public duty voluntarily and in good faith.

According to Sh. Shahamiryan, Armenians have the same God-given human nature as many other happy peoples of the world. After centuries of slavery and humiliation, Armenians only need to completely get out of the state of habitual spiritual sleep and stupor through their diligence, prayers and labor. Spiritual freedom for every Armenian is the highest law-enforced constitutional goodness and goal.<sup>16</sup> He is sure that the ardent desire of Americans, led by “wise Washington”, to free themselves from British rule is quite natural, “since for a person there is nothing sweeter on earth than freedom”.<sup>17</sup> The author masterfully expressed all these and similar thoughts partly in his various scientific and literary works, including in his letter to the then King of Georgia, Erekle II.

In the same spirit, the Preface of the “Snare of Glory” was compiled, the main purpose of which was to identify the need to create an independent (from Persians, Russians, Turks and other empires) and free (“from slavery and oppression”) Armenian-Georgian state.<sup>18</sup> In this Preface he particularly wrote the following: “At different times, different circumstances carried me to different countries, in which I found myself under the control of the states of other free Christian peoples. ... I found out that among other countries, the most fertile, the most beautiful and chosen country under the sun is the biblical Country of Ararat, which the Lord God made together with its towering mountain Masis.... Just as the paradise of Eden became the foremother where our forefather Adam lived, the same way Ararat and Masis became the second mother, where our second father found refuge - the righteous Noah “whose first descent” took place in the native city of Nakhichevan (in Armenian – “first landing”<sup>19</sup>) and in the country of Ararat, ... where to this day the holy Armenian church professes all the sacraments commanded to us by our Christ the Saviour. I trust in the Lord God that He will keep us in perfect love and faith forever and ever. Amen”.<sup>20</sup> The independent and free Armenian state was also called by Sh. Shahamiryan “The House of Ararat”, “The House of Armenians”.<sup>21</sup>

It was on this God-chosen and holy biblical place that Sh. Shahamiryan wanted to see his free Christian country and state - the “House of Armenia”: “The country of Ararat and those living in it are the chosen heirs<sup>22</sup> who worship the holy Trinity and the One

<sup>16</sup>Osipyan 2009c; Osipyan 2010; Osipyan 2011.

<sup>17</sup>An excerpt from Sh. Shahamiryan's work “Snare of Glory”. Avagyan 2000: 562-563.

<sup>18</sup>Nersisyan 1990 (ed.): 590; Avagyan 2000: 566.

<sup>19</sup> Flavius Josephus 1996: 14.

<sup>20</sup> Avagyan 2000: 570-571.

<sup>21</sup> Avagyan 2000: 773.

<sup>22</sup>According to the Old Testament of the Bible, the Armenian people “descended from the generation of Japheth, the youngest son of righteous Noah after Shem and Ham; and Torgom (Togarmah), Aram, Hayk, Tigran, Armen and other ancestors of modern Armenians descended from Japheth”.

God - their Guardian and Saviour. ... The house whose foundation is laid on the rock of faith in Christ the Saviour will not be useless for the builders".<sup>23</sup> Therefore, Divine economy, while "preserving the honor and strength of our spirit" and "to the extent of one's knowledge and innate abilities" (in the absence of extremes and seething passions of "bestial youth", "lazy old age", "bestly and unreasonable deeds"<sup>24</sup>) should be the beginning of every subsequent Armenian state-and-legal construction.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, everything that is initially godless, wrong, shameless, selfish or cowardly and therefore unworthy of an honest and reasonable person having the image and likeness of God, does not constitute justice, governance and state, but is the bitter fruit of hypocritical injustice, selfish or slavish fear and people-pleasing (ungodly flattery to people), which abundantly feed the arbitrariness and lawlessness of the so-called "powerful of this world". Thus, true legal awareness, justice and law are an indispensable pillar and affirmation of any lawful state, without which the state is not true and is therefore doomed to self-destruction and quick death.<sup>26</sup>

Further, in his draft Constitution of Armenia Sh. Shahamiryan writes: "Because of the godlessness, infidelity, betrayal, autocratic power of Armenian kings and princes, their wayward acts and lawlessness, we - the Armenians were not only humiliated, but were also turned into captives of other peoples, into an object of reproach for people, contempt for those who look at us. ... Therefore, none of us would agree to again accept an Armenian king (prince, or commander) over the Armenian people, ... who would have autocratic power, as no person without sin has been born into this world, except for our Christ the Saviour."<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, it will be a great blessing for us and our country if the entire Armenian nation begins to reign over their house freely, following their nature (author – but they are already afflicted with "original sin"! ), destroying guile and envy and greed, ... to become kings over their own country. ... Only the Law of the Lord should be king over us, ... otherwise we will be scattered again and again over the face of the earth".<sup>28</sup> Here it should be noted that the author of the draft Constitution definitely had in mind Theodemocracy, i.e. self-government (with the complete absence of "guile, envy and greed" in the Armenians, and with a "pure and good conscience"<sup>29</sup>) of the Armenian people under the leadership of the supreme Sovereign, Legislator, Ruler and Judge - the Lord God, whose good will is the Right, Law, Justice and Legal order.<sup>30</sup>

In order to implement all of this successfully, Sh. Shahamiryan publicly calls on all those who believe in Christ the Savior, all the conscious, reasonable, conscientious,

<sup>23</sup> Avagyan 2000: 572.

<sup>24</sup> Avagyan 2000: 576-577.

<sup>25</sup> Avagyan 2000: 573.

<sup>26</sup> Osipian 2007c; Osipian 2020b; Osipian 2022b; Osipian 2022c.

<sup>27</sup> New Testament. Epistle to the Romans, 3:23; 5:12.

<sup>28</sup> Avagyan 2000: 574-575.

<sup>29</sup> Osipian 2015; Osipian 2016b; Osipian 2016a; Osipian 2021b.

<sup>30</sup> Osipian 2009a; Osipian 2014; Osipian 2019b.

free and responsible Armenian compatriots to do the following: “We need to build a House of Wisdom for ourselves, erect a pillar of guidance and choose good laws (lawful and expedient) for ourselves with the power of your rational soul and according to the will and desire of the entire Armenian nation, ... since no one, except for your law, drawn up by you, can reign and rule over your affairs, ... so that everyone makes a decision on their own case as they wish, voluntarily accepting both their honor and their punishment”.<sup>31</sup>

The author of the 1773 Constitution of the “House of Armenians” believes that every lawful and expedient state law in independent Armenia must be fully founded and clearly witnessed by the Divine authority and God-inspired power of the Word of God and the provisions of the entire text of the Holy Scriptures.<sup>32</sup> Only in this case the saying “the voice of the people is the voice of God” will be true and valid. He asserted that any law-making, law-interpreting and law-enforcement activity of all scientists and ruling lawyers and state advisory institutions (national parliaments, law enforcement bodies and courts) must comply with the objective, appropriate, unchangeable and mandatory laws of God the Creator, and not some illegal, newfangled, rather unsteady and changeable human fiction, various ungodly and worldly willful deeds, selfish obscene lust and ungodly coercive measures.<sup>33</sup>

To carry out the process of law-making, the author of the 1773 draft Constitution of Armenians proposes the following methods for the free election of people’s representatives: “We must invite two men from every ten thousand houses of our country, and these two men will be their deputies and will carry out the work of their voters, ...and will also be able to pass laws and sign them, representing the will of the whole country....In accordance with the law, each elected Armenian deputy will receive an appropriate certificate (mandate) confirming his popular election to the highest position, remaining the servant of our entire nation and the defender of our laws. He will become the mouth of the Armenian people ... in the Council of Elders of the Armenian House<sup>34</sup> in accordance with the law. His only advantage will be to fulfill his official duties faithfully. ...without fear or need of anyone’s protection, ... he will honor or punish offenders on the basis of the laws and decisions of our court....These are the keys to the gates of our second paradise, the Land of Ararat, and those keys are the strengthened faith, the wisdom of sciences, your laws and the rule of law for the happiness of the people....The fear of harm that unrighteous people can cause you will disappear from your hearts, and everyone will be free to think, speak and believe that everything they acquire is really their own....All of you will become the masters of your property, ... you will be able to devote part of the time of your life to work, exploits, prayers, entertainment, studying and other activities appropriate for a person in our country”.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Avagyan 2000: 575.

<sup>32</sup> Bible. Old and New Testament. Parables, 9:1; Matthew, 7:24-25; To Romans, 1:1-2; 1:9.

<sup>33</sup> Avagyan 2000: 578; Osipian 2003: 20-25; Osipian 2008b; Osipian 2009b; Osipian 2010; Osipyan 2021c.

<sup>34</sup> The “House of Armenia” («Հայրհայր»), elected for three years, was to become the highest legislature of the proposed independent Armenian national state, to which the executive branch would be accountable.

<sup>35</sup> Avagyan 2000: 579-581.

Further, the author of the 1773 draft Constitution of Armenia calls on all Armenians, “knowing the will of the Lord God and what needs to be done, not to sit idly by, not to be lazy, but to do what needs to be done according to the good will and for the greater glory of the Lord, as well as for voluntary fulfillment of their duty, which is the following: “Those of you who govern the people, instruct everyone born on Armenian land ... to learn to read, write and speak Armenian; fathers of the sons of Armenia, immediately send your sons to study the Armenian language, then teach them how to handle weapons and martial arts and instill law-abidingness in them. Wives, incline your hearts and the hearts of your daughters to take valiant and victorious warriors as husbands, and shame your husbands if they serve other peoples. This help of ours will be enough for the happiness of the Armenian People to shine on the Armenian Land. Amen”.<sup>36</sup>

In conclusion of our study, we should note that the then Catholicos of All Armenians, Simeon Yerevantsi, considered these and other ideological-political and constitutional-legal projects and plans of Armenian scientists and national patriots not only infeasible in real social and political life, but also very premature and dangerous for the peace and well-being of the entire Armenian nation.<sup>37</sup> For this and other reasons, all such national liberation ideas, goals and constitutional plans were subsequently harshly inhibited by the Armenian church and secular leaders, especially after the well-known Treaty of Georgievsk was signed between the Russian Empire and Georgia in 1783, and a little later, already in 1801 the whole of Georgia was officially included in the Russian Empire.

Moreover, as we know, on February 10, 1828, according to the Treaty of Turkmenchay concluded between Russia and Persia, Eastern Armenia (Yerevan Khanate, Nakhichevan Khanate and Ordubad region) was officially annexed to the Russian Empire. According to the then ambassador of the Russian Empire, Lobanov-Rostovsky, “Russia did not intend to allow the creation of another Bulgaria, since ... it needed Armenia without Armenians”.<sup>38</sup> That is why all the “southern” and “northern” political, legal and constitutional projects on the creation of “independent Armenia” proposed by the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Catholicos of All Armenians Hovsep Arghouthyan, Sh. Shahamiryan, Lazarev, Khudobashov and other Armenian patriots, were completely and forever rejected, and by the Decree of March 21, 1828, Russian Tsar and Emperor Nicholas I adopted a draft law on the establishment of the “Armenian oblast” governed by the Russian administration, headed by the commander of the Russian Caucasus Forces, Major General V. Behbutov, appointed in 1830.

It seems that the main reason for all such Armenian political and legal failures to restore their independent national statehood lost many centuries ago was the traditional

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<sup>36</sup> Avagyan 2000: 582-583.

<sup>37</sup> Avagyan 2000: 557.

<sup>38</sup> Avagyan 2000: 694.

spiritual vices of the overwhelming majority of the godless and self-serving leaders of the Armenian people and ordinary Armenians from generation to generation: on the one hand, almost all Armenians always felt that “every animal loves its own kind”<sup>39</sup> and in difficult times they did their best to support each other; on the other hand, Armenians, especially the power-hungry and conceited jingoists, always were and, alas, still remain excessively selfish and provincially limited, they often envy each other, treacherously harm each other and are at mortal enmity with each other.<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, they sometimes prefer powerful and influential people of other faiths and strangers more than their simple, conscientious and gifted co-religionists and compatriots. According to some foreign observers, “there was an unconscious influence of paganism and Islam in Armenia, which was under such a long and painful yoke and “Tatar” customs”.<sup>41</sup> Unfortunately, the majority of modern Armenians still retain some ungodly, unspiritual (more pagan than Christian) and unlawful national customs and habits, which significantly distort and weaken the beneficial effect of their centuries-old true Christian faith, proper legislation, justice and national-and-state legal order.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Bible. Old Testament. Sirach, 13:19.

<sup>40</sup>What kind of internal spiritual vices and obstacles (mental defects and cowardly prejudices) did the majority of Armenians initially and for many centuries have and still have which prevented the conscientious and constructive confession of their traditional Christian faith and did not allow them to live their everyday life in accordance with their faith? It seems that many modern Armenians are characterized by a certain naive, harmless, self-protective, not at all aggressive, but pagan nationalism and provincialism, which are the consequences of spiritual lack of faith, lack of love, pagan ignorance and cowardice, ethnic isolation and narrow-mindedness, insufficient awareness of their own human dignity, their spiritual vocation and life purpose.

<sup>41</sup>Baghranyan 1786; Beknazaryan 2013: 386.

<sup>42</sup>Osipian 2016a; Osipian 2018a; Osipian 2019a; Osipian 2020a.

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The article has been delivered on 11.10.2022, reviewed on 14.11.2022, accepted for publication on 09.12.2022

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# FOREIGN SOURCES AND AUTHORS ABOUT ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS

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**A RIDE THROUGH WESTERN ASIA**  
**By Clive Bigham, viscount**  
*London, Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1897*

DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-148

In his memories C.Bigham presents his travel notes across Western Armenia in the Summer of 1895. Here the reader could find remarkable notes regarding the attitude of Turks, Kurds and others toward Armenian atrocities which took place during the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

The Editorial board presents extracted passages of the book which describe Mr Bigham's journey from Erzurum to the east, until Russian-held territories of Armenia (Chapters VII and VIII, pp.56-75).

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**CHAPTER VII**  
**ERZERUM**

In 1330 Sir John Mandeville wrote of Erzerum:

Artyroum was formerly a good and prosperous city, but the Turks have greatly wasted it. Thereabouts grows little or no wine or fruit.

Whether Sir John ever visited Erzerum is doubtful, but the description is fairly accurate, and the decay of the city has steadily continued since that time - 120 years before the expulsion of the Christian Emperors from Constantinople - down to the present day. What prosperity the city still possesses is chiefly due to Armenian enterprise, and yet the Armenians have suffered more cruelty in Erzerum than anywhere else.

Lying at the junction of the Trebizond, Sivas, Kars, and Tabreez roads, Erzerum has at all times been a great mart on the caravan routes from Constantinople and the Black Sea to Persia, and from Asia Minor to the Caucasus. The Russians have always understood its importance, and they captured it in the war of 1877. The present fortifications consist of a parapet with high slopes, useless against modern siege guns, and a pestilential ditch which has been responsible for the death of two thousand soldiers in a single season. Yet the city, standing at an altitude of 6,000 feet, and just under the highest peaks of the Agri Dag range, is naturally healthy. Mandeville alludes to the "many good waters and wells that come from under the earth from the river of Paradise that is called Euphrates, which is a day's journey from the city." The Euphrates, here called Kara Su, runs south near Ildja, where there are hot springs still frequented by the inhabitants for their healing properties.

When we were at Erzerum it was the scene of the most important events in Asia Minor, There had been a massacre shortly before, and two others followed not long after. The feeling of excitement and insecurity had reached a crisis. It is perhaps unnecessary to recall in detail the events which are now a matter of general history, but

for the benefit of those who have forgotten them it may be well to sum them up briefly. In September, 1894, the massacre of Sassun had taken place, and had been followed by others until the end of the year. The Sultan then appointed a Commission to sit at the various places in the Sassun and Mush districts to inquire into the disturbances. The sittings were held from January 24 to June 1, 1895, and were attended by delegates from the European embassies. The Commission itself consisted of three Turkish judges, while the cavalry escort of 400 men which accompanied it was commanded by the notorious Tewfik Pasha. The Commission found that the Armenians had revolted, and that no unnecessarily harsh measures had been taken to suppress the insurrection. As I rode into Erzerum I met the Commission coming out. They were driving in carriages, and what with secretaries, clerks, servants, baggage, etc., there must have been sixty vehicles or more. Tewfik was in full dress, and rode a beautiful horse. All his soldiers were well mounted, and better turned out and equipped than the ordinary Turkish dragoon. But the judges, looked careworn and miserable. The class of Turk to which they belonged does not appreciate revolting details, and it was reported that on their first visit to the Sassun pits they had been overwhelmed with disgust. Mr. Shipley, our delegate, and his French and Russian colleagues had gone on by post to Trebizond and Constantinople, but the Commission were travelling by slow stages, tired no doubt of the arduous task of discriminating between conflicting evidence. And here it should be said that all that was done to convince Europe of the atrocious inhumanity of the crimes committed in the villayets of Kurdistan was entirely due to the zeal of the European delegates. They worked hard and faithfully to get at the truth in the face of systematic opposition from the official dispensers of justice.

When we reached the khan at Erzerum we heard that several Armenians were still in prison, and despite the efforts of our Consul, Mr. Graves, there seemed little chance of their being liberated. The Vali, Ismail Hakki Pasha, was a rabid Mohammedan, and when I met him a day or two later, he was wearing - Turkish dress, a very unusual thing - for a Governor to do in these days in Asia Minor. I gathered from all I heard that the Russians were considered to hold the key to the position. A short time before, when there had been a riot near the Russian consulate, the Cossack escort had turned out armed only with whips, and had chased the Turkish infantry, who had rifles, out of the street. The local prestige of Russia was increased by this incident, and it was well known that thirty to forty thousand of her troops were massed on the Caucasian frontier.

The English, on the other hand, were far away, and "though great in ships, nothing by land," as the general opinion in Turkey runs. The Kurds, however, in spite of it, had just sent a monster petition to the Queen setting forth the ungenerous treatment they had received and offering their alliance. They laid emphasis on the fact that they had always lived on friendly terms with the Armenians, many of whom were their slaves, until latterly, when they had been forced by peremptory orders from the Palace to ill-treat and murder them. Now they were told that the Sultan was exculpating himself to the Cabinets of Europe by alleging that the massacre had been wantonly committed by the Kurds!

Therefore [ran the petition], not content with leaving us in ignorance and barbarity by withholding the blessings of education, they have compelled us to do evil deeds, and finally have robbed us of our honour.

What amount of truth there was in these statements I should be sorry to say, but there was a general feeling among Turks, Armenians and Europeans that a great deal depended upon the action of the Kurds, and that they might at any time do something unexpected. Nothing but that masterly inactivity with which the Porte has frequently carried the day, could have triumphed over a situation so difficult as that prevailing when in August, 1895, I arrived at Erzerum.

We put up at the khan, where I was soon visited by a Canadian missionary who had lived in the city seventeen years. We had a long and interesting talk, from which I gathered that he was carrying on a hopeless struggle for a cause he loved. In spite of the zeal, the labour, and the money given by wise and energetic men to the work of conversion to Christianity, hardly any real converts are ever made. In Persia it is the same. I remember even meeting a missionary in China, at Kashgar, on the other side of the Pamirs, who had been working there ten years, and had not a single convert to show for his pains. One cannot help thinking that some of the money devoted to missions in Persia and Turkey would do more good if it were turned to the more prosaic ends of making roads, or building bridges, schools, and hospitals. The Mussulman knows that, according to the Koran, he will be eternally damned if he changes his faith. He knows, too, that it means death from the hand of his former co-religionists. So the missionaries work on almost hopeless ground, and often fill up the time by quarrelling among themselves. The American Methodists fight with the English Church, the English Church with the Roman Catholic, not for the Mohammedan so much as for the Armenian, professedly a Christian already. The personal character of the missionaries is beyond praise, but their efforts seem to be made in a wrong direction.

When the missionary, had gone, the Consul's dragoman came round — a pleasant old Armenian, who knew a little English. He told me that it was quite likely I should not be able to go on to Bayazid, as I might "see too much on the way." I was not allowed to visit the prison in Erzerum, probably for the same reason. The Consul asked me to go and stay with him in camp at Ilidja on the Friday after my arrival, so I left Murad in charge at the khan, and spent three pleasant days under canvas. His dragoman meanwhile worked the strings of Turkish officialdom to get Murad and myself permission "pour quitter la Turquie," for the passport system here is as severe in theory as that of Russia, although it is less rigorously carried out.

While at Ilidja I rode the winner of the Erzerum Derby, a horse with a history worth recounting. Early in the year, Mr. Graves had bought a three-year-old, called Dervish, which he backed to run against any horse in the town. A colonel in a Turkish regiment accepted the bet, and the race was arranged to take place on a flat course of about seven furlong-s outside the town. When the day came the Turk asked for another fortnight, as his horse was not ready. Mr. Graves let him have it; but, when it had gone

by, the colonel again wanted to temporise. Mr. Graves then said that although he was willing to waive the bet, he thought that the race ought to be run without further delay. The day happened to be the Queen's Birthday. All the inhabitants of Erzerum flocked to the racecourse in great excitement, and the Vali had a carriage waiting to take him there if the event should prove propitious to the Turks. On the other side, the Armenian bishops and clergy stayed in the town and prayed on their housetops for the Consul's victory. Mr. Scudamore, the Daily News correspondent, was up on our horse and won easily, the bet was never settled.

Mr. Scudamore, by the way, had been in Erzerum some months. He had hidden in the bottom of a carriage all the way from Trebizond and once in Erzerum had defied the Vali to remove him. When his letters were intercepted by the Turks he established a private post as far as Tiflis, and succeeded in getting his telegrams despatched from there. Although quite young, he has been a war correspondent in the Soudan as well as in the Russo- Turkish war.

One day we were visited by the Armenian Bishop, Monsignor Kuchukian, an agreeable and well educated man, who did not seem to share the dislike of his fellow Armenians to the Turkish nation. He condemned the relentless coercion of the Palace and said that unless something were done to relieve them, the Armenians would soon emigrate in a body to Russia or any country that would receive them, unless Russia annexed Armenia, which event he thought would prove the eventual solution of the problem. The Armenian clergy were living at that time with their lives in their hands, and the dragoman told me that in spite of the protection of his office, he dared not leave the town gate by day nor his house by night, and yet there were as many Armenians as Turks in Erzerum. The predominance of the Turk is again explained by the fact that no Christian subject of the Porte may carry arms, and in addition the Armenians are by birth and education a trading and not a fighting race. In Persia their genius for commerce has full scope, and even in Asia Minor it generally survives oppression. But in Erzerum death, bankruptcy, and confiscation have made great ravages in the Armenian trading community.

Before leaving Erzerum I had an interview with the Vali. We found him in a little kiosk outside the town playing chess with a general. A military band was playing a deafening tune outside. He did not get up when I came in, so I merely touched my fez, instead of scooping my hand up to it. The only thing to do when a Turk is rude, is to meet him on his own ground. As he did not speak a word, I began to talk to the dragoman. This nettled him — and he roused himself from his chess to tell a eunuch to bring some coffee. He then asked me where I had come from, although he must have known quite well, as the Sadr Azam had telegraphed my arrival.

"Stambul," I said.

"And where are you going?"

"Persia."

"What route have you chosen?"

"I do not mind what route I go by."

"That also matters nothing to me," said the Vali loftily. "What route you choose to go by, that one is open to you."

The dragoman then put in that the road by Kars and Erivan was a good one.

"Yes, certainly, but full of Armenian beggars and Kurdish brigands," the Vali answered sarcastically.

"Why should I not go by Mush and Van? " I asked.

Now the road to Mush was the road to Sassun, and in Sassun lay the evidences of the worst massacres, so I was not surprised to hear the Pasha, in spite of his indifference of a moment before, say hastily —

"By that road it is hardly safe for a European to travel. The brigands are dangerous there, though otherwise the country is peaceable. Any other road is easy, but that one impossible !" It was settled at last that I should travel by Bayazid, and he promised an escort. The buyuruldu and the Zaptiehs arrived in due course, and on the 21st of August I said good-bye to my kind host, and started for Bayazid.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **ERZERUM TO BAYAZID**

As we rode out of Erzerum in the early morning, we passed a cavalry regiment manoeuvring on the plain. The horsemanship of the troopers was singularly ungraceful, and they were riding with such short stirrups that their knees were almost on a level with the cantles of their saddles. A young officer came up and told me that he was teaching them to ride, that they were "ajem" (recruits). As he was on foot, we could not see what his own horsemanship was like, but one could not believe that it was good, when he trained his men to sit so short that they could not possibly use their swords with effect. However when I suggested this he answered lightly. "

"Oh it makes them all the taller, and they reach further! "

I felt inclined to suggest that they might overreach, but just then the colonel came up on a very fine Arab, and took me about a quarter of a mile across the plain to watch another troop being exercised. Both drill and manoeuvring here were inferior, and the riding poor, according to our ideas. But the men were a big strong lot, and if well led would prove formidable to any Cossack or Circassian regiments in the Russian service. But the Turkish troops are seldom properly led, and when there is any fighting to be done, a good deal devolves upon the "chawashes" (sergeants). Still behind earthworks the Turk is almost invincible.

We climbed the heights that lie to the east of Erzerum, and then passed the outer ring of advanced works which now constitute the main defence of the town against any aggressions from the north. The fortifications are out of date, and the detached redoubts which spread all along the frontier to Ararat are sadly deficient in guns and ammunition. Six new guns sent to Trebizond in 1895 by the War Minister were delayed there three months before the road was repaired enough to admit of their being conveyed to the

forts round Erzerum. And it is this lack of roads which has hampered the trade of the city. During six months of the year it is practically snowbound, and the only route kept in anything like order is the military road leading to Kars and the Caucasian frontier. This is due to the Russians, who repair it as much as they can. The other great caravan route from Trebizond by Erzerum to Khoi and Tabreez, which we followed, is barely passable for vehicles even in summer, and in winter even horsemen cannot get along it. The cost of transport is so enormous that miles of corn rot uncut, because the price of carrying it to a market is more than its market value.

At Hassan Kaleh the weather became sensibly colder. It was here that I met a gentleman who supplied me with lunch, and gave me his views on the political situation. Like Abraham, the little Jew doctor at Ersinjan, he said that doctors were the only class in Asia Minor with any education, and this was only because the Government recognised the necessity of their having some knowledge of European medicine in order to keep the troops alive. Speaking of the massacres he said that if left alone, Kurds, Turks, and Armenians were equally ready to lead a quiet and inoffensive life. But the slightest attempt at agitation from without was fatal, whether it came from the Porte, or from outsiders who fancied that by stirring up the feelings of Europe they could change the constitution of the Ottoman Empire. There was no doubt that for some time before the outbursts of 1894 and 1895 such pernicious agitation had continually taken place. The Armenians are a clever and avaricious people, and certain demagogues among them believe that reform in Armenia would suit the policy of England and Russia and perhaps put power into their own hands. They know that nothing is easier than to rouse the suspicions and wrath of their masters at Constantinople, and they deliberately set themselves to attract the attention of Europe by lighting a firebrand. That the lighting of it means rape, murder, and every conceivable misery for their own people these agitators do not consider.

The Kurds, the doctor went on to tell me, are an almost barbarous people, with fine instincts of chivalry and easily influenced by their religion. They look upon plunder as a lawful profession, and nothing will keep them from it except the fear of retaliation. So they were only too ready to obey the Sultan when he commanded them to pillage infidels, and it was only when they found themselves being made the scapegoats of the Government's crimes that they rebelled against the orders laid upon them.

As to the Turks, the doctor said it must be borne in mind that the peasants have no personal enmity to the Armenians. It is the soldiers, worked on by their officers, who exhibit that bitter and relentless fury against another religion which lies dormant in all Mohammedan races. At Yildiz Kiosk they know very well what a force they possess in this bloodthirsty fanaticism, and how easily it can be aroused. It is not surprising that they use such a force when a difficulty comes. Take a typical case according to their lights. They hear that there has been an Armenian agitation: they are anxious to prevent the Great Powers of Europe from annexing any more of the rapidly dwindling Ottoman Empire. An agitation is an excuse for such interference, so the one idea of the Palace



officials is to have the rising put down before the news of it reaches Europe. The Valis are commanded to suppress the rising, and that means a massacre.

The doctor had come to the conclusion that there were only two things to be done to settle the question. Either the Turk must rule his provinces in his own way, or the European must step in and rule them in his way. If the Turk rules, the old system will drag on: oppression here, petty tyranny there, speculation and immorality everywhere, and now and again a massacre. Perhaps there may be a slow improvement in roads, schools, and civilisation generally, but it will be a long time coming. If the European rules, he will rule after his kind, whether he be Russian or English, on some fixed plan for some definite result. Half measures, such as the appointment of Christian governors, or a mixed police force, can only bring about a worse state of things. The Turk will not submit to dictation from the Christian unless he is coerced, and he will never tolerate sharing a right with the despised Armenian. If the disastrous condition of Asia Minor is to be remedied, either England must act or she must let Russia act, and quickly. This was the substance of my informant's conversation. He was a broad-minded man, and his views struck me as interesting and worth consideration. At Keupru Keui the road divides, one branch leading to Russia and the other skirting the mountains; beyond, at Delibaba, we came across a regiment in camp. The Binbashi said, "They have been ill, very ill, but now they are better," and we found out that cholera had been among the troops. He and his officers were most kind and hospitable. He combined the civil office of Kaimakam with his military duties, and several peasants were tried in my presence. The indictment was always the same, failure to pay the imperial taxes, and the excuse the same, bankruptcy.

"Effendim, hich para banga yok dut" (My lord, I have no money). Whereupon, without further parley, the Kaimakam said briskly, "Git balk" (Go and see), and a sergeant marched the criminal off in a friendly way to the village, where no doubt a glass of arrack worked wonders.

The Turkish peasant is as good-natured as he is lazy, and except on compulsion he will hardly ever take the trouble to plough, sow, or reap his field. Consequently a rich and fertile country is rapidly becoming waste, simply from lack of energy.

After leaving Delibaba we passed through a magnificent rocky defile. The cliffs were so close together that fifty men could have held the pass. From here we went through several broken ravines until we came to Taar, where we stayed the night. We had great difficulty in getting new Zaptiehs at Taar, but a small bribe enabled us to start sooner than at one time seemed likely. From there we travelled to an Armenian village, where some men came out of their houses and asked what the English were going to do for them. They complained that the Kurds descended on them twice a year and annexed their cattle and horses, but they admitted that no women or children had been carried off, and not a single man killed. It may have been because it was close to Russia, but this village was certainly prosperous and happy. At Toprak Kaleh, a frontier post, I was provided with two very fine Zaptiehs belonging to the Kurdish Hamidieh

regiment, Bashibazouks, big men dressed in black Circassian uniform, and well mounted. Their Martinis were clean and in good order, not by any means always the case with irregular cavalry. On the way they talked freely, and confessed that they liked the Armenians quite as well as their Turkish officers. They could do the most marvellous tricks at full gallop, throwing up and catching their rifles, checking their horses and turning demivoltes on their own ground.

Our next stopping place was Kara Kilissa, where we were put up in the Kaimakam's office, the khan being full of drunken soldiers. A doctor, six officers, and a police agent came to call soon after our arrival. I gave the police agent my tezkereh, the strange names on which occupied him till the next morning. The others stayed on, drank coffee, and looked curiously at my indiarubber bath, which Murad had filled with water before they came in. After the ordinary compliments the doctor astonished me by saying in French —

"J'apprends que vous avez beaucoup cause sur la route avec vos Kurdes?"

"Oui, j'ai cause un peu avec eux," I answered.

"Et de quelle affaire d'importance avez vous cause?"

"Quelle affaire d'importance peut exister entre moi et les Kurdes?" I asked.

This puzzled him for a minute, but he soon put another question.

"Pour quelle cause etes vous venu ence pays-ci?"

"Pour m'amuser."

He meditated on this for some time and then asked me if I were much amused?

The others were more civil, if less talkative. They none of them knew a word of Russian, although the object of their presence in the village was to watch the Russians. I saw they were half afraid that I was a spy, but the Vali's seal on my buyuruldu eventually satisfied the police inspector. The officers talked a good deal about the cavalry in the place, and there was something so odd about their repeated refusals to let me see it, that on my way out of the town the next morning I determined to satisfy my curiosity without their leave. So in the morning with the aid of a corporal I rode into the stables, and once there I understood why the officers had been so much against my seeing them. There were a few miserable starved jades in the stalls, and the whole place was filthy. In the barrack rooms the men were sitting unshaved and unwashed on long wooden settles. Their arms and accoutrements were hanging anyhow on the walls, and were rusty and dirty. Going out of the square I saw two of the officers of the night before scowling at me, and when I rejoined Hassan at the end of the street, I found that my Kurdish Zaptiehs had been taken away, and two impenetrable Turks substituted.

That day we crossed the great plain of Alasgird and sighted Mount Ararat. We met many camel caravans coming out of Persia, but there were hardly any cattle about, as the country here is dry and treeless, and except on the river bank there is little vegetation. In the evening we reached Diardin, a Kurdish settlement, and our last station before Bayazid. All the huts in Diardin are built of dried cow-dung, and have no windows. We had no tent, and the night was bitterly cold, so we were obliged to look for

a room. It was a difficult matter to find one, and if the Kaimakam had not come to our help we should have been obliged to sleep out. He provided us with a room like the Jews' dungeon in the Tower, only smaller, dirtier, and less airy. The heating arrangements in these Kurdish huts are original. Half of the room is occupied by a mud ledge three feet by four. Underneath this is a hollow cave in which is piled the dung and charcoal used for fuel. This is lighted and the room soon becomes stiflingly hot. They have a similar system in Persia. We were not sorry to leave Diardin, and continue our way to Bayazid. As we drew closer to the huge peak of Ararat, we met a great many "Kizil Bashis" (Red Heads), as the Turks call the Persians. We also overtook two convicts who had been exiled to Persia. When the Sultan wishes to rid Turkey of an evil-doer, he ships him over the Persian frontier, and the Shah returns the compliment. The Russians wisely refuse to harbour the convicts of either monarch. These two wretches were walking barefoot, tied together with a rope, and driven along by a mounted Zaptieh. I asked him of what crime they had been guilty, and he answered — "Who knows? They are wicked men." We saw Bayazid for nearly four hours before we reached it. It is built on the face of a steep cliff, and is about ten miles from both the Russian and Persian frontiers. I had therefore now practically come to the end of my journey in Asia Minor, and was about to enter a perfectly fresh country inhabited by a very different people.

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# DOCUMENTS: ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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NARRATIVE  
OF  
A TOUR THROUGH  
ARMENIA, KURDISTAN, PERSIA,  
AND  
MESOPOTAMIA.

WITH  
OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONDITION OF MOHAMMEDANISM AND  
CHRISTIANITY IN THOSE COUNTRIES.

BY THE REV. HORATIO SOUTHGATE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



PERSIAN MIRZA.

LONDON:  
TILT AND BOGUE, 86, FLEET STREET.  
D. APPLETON & CO., NEW YORK.

MDCCCXL.

## **NARRATIVE OF A TOUR THROUGH ARMENIA, KURDISTAN, PERSIA AND MESOPOTAMIA**

*by Rev. Horatio Southgate*

DOI: 10.54503/1829-4618-2022.2(16)-159

Rev. Horatio Southgate (1812-1894) was a member of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America. He was consecrated as a missionary bishop in the Ottoman Empire and spent several years in the Middle East. He contacted with Christian communities of the region (Armenians, Jacobites, Nestorians, and Assyrians).

Chapters X-XV of travel notes (pp.195-275) contains important information regarding the Armenian population of Western Armenia (particularly in the Lake Van basin).

### **CHAPTER X**

#### **JOURNEY TO MOUSH. DESCRIPTION OF MOUSH.**

**MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS-YOUNG KURD-THE EUPHRATES-FISH-PLAIN OF MOUSH-BRIDGES-MOUSH-POSITION-INTERIOR-POPULATION-MEDRESSEH-CURIOSITY EXCITED-ARMENIANS-MIRACULOUS BOOK-MONASTERY-ARMENIAN CATHOLICS-KURDS-APPEARANCE-MANNERS-DRESS-TRADE-PRODUCTIONS-THE PASHA-VISIT OF THE RUSSIANS.**

We left Arous on Monday morning and continued to advance Southerly over the uneven surface of the plain, with the range of the Nimrod mountains on our left and those of the Thousand Lakes visible over our right shoulders. At two and a half hours from the village we crossed the KizzilTchai, or Red River, a small stream running to the Euphrates. On its bank we met with a party of Kurds, gaily dressed, who were on their way to attend a marriage-festival at Kheunneus. An hour farther on our course we stopped for our morning repast in a green dell, where we found water.

We had hardly seated ourselves before we heard some one hailing us from above, and a horseman immediately descended, followed by a single attendant. The former was a young Kurd in the full dress of his people. He wore a red tunic, reaching to his waist, and white shalvars, the great nether garment of the East. His sugarloaf cap was bound with a turban of the gayest colours, and in its folds the long tresses of his auburn hair were twisted. He wore in his girdle a brace of pistols and a dagger, and, hanging from it about his person, were a ramrod, a small powder-horn for priming, a cartridgecase, and numerous little trinkets for the care and repair of his arms. In his right hand was a spear, with a wooden shaft about ten feet long. One end was pointed with iron, that it might be stuck in the ground, and the other was ornamented with a large black ball of light feathers, from the middle of which projected the head of the spear about five inches in length and of a rhombic form. At his back hung a small round shield or targe, intended to be used in single combat with the sword. It was studded with small

pieces of brass resembling coin, and was decorated with silken tassels of various colours hanging from the circumference, and a larger one suspended from the centre. Thrusting his spear into the ground, he dismounted, and sitting down by us without ceremony, drew out his bread and cheese, and offered to join meals with us. We accepted the proposal and were at once good friends with him. We soon learned from him that, though his beard was not yet grown, he was the Bey of a village on the plain of Moush, which we were to pass. We therefore agreed to unite our forces for the way. Before we started two Turks arrived and joined themselves to our party.

As we advanced, the country became more mountainous, the ranges generally running East and West. We passed within sight of several villages perched among the hills. As we rode along, our young Kurd amused himself with brandishing his spear and rushing down upon some one of the party, as if to run him through, then looking round and laughing at his own adroitness, he would point on the steel how deep he could make it penetrate.

The path became more rocky and difficult until we reached the brow of a hill. Here a beautiful plain, covered with trees, suddenly opened upon us far below. Through the midst of it was winding the broad stream of the Euphrates, or as it is known in these regions, the *MouradTchai*. The river comes down rapidly from a valley to the N. E. and, making a detour in the plain, receives a stream called the Tchabour, from the West, and flows off through an opening in the hills, at first imperceptible, in a direction West of South. Its breadth before the junction is more than a hundred feet, and that of the Tchabour about fifty. We descended to the plain and forded the latter near its mouth, where it was only four feet in depth. We judged that at this point we had accomplished, from Arous, a distance of about twenty miles.

We then kept along the western bank of the Euphrates, through a pleasant valley, but a little broader than the bed of the river. The banks of the stream are low, resembling in some places the borders of a canal. Its surface was sometimes ruffled by the rapidity of its course, and sometimes calm and apparently as motionless as a lake. We travelled through the valley nearly two hours, when we came out upon the plain of Moush, which was before concealed from view by a solitary conical hill standing in the mouth of the valley. This hill has the ruins of a fortress on its summit. The villagers call it *Sultan Mahmoud Kalesi*, the fortress of Sultan Mahmoud. Around this mount the river makes a broad bend to the East, and winding through the plain, turns to the south and west, crosses the plain where it receives the waters of the Kara Sou, passes through an opening in the range of mountains which form the southern border of the plain, and goes off to the South-West. At one of the windings where the river enters the plain, we came to an Armenian village and there spent the night. On the opposite side was visible another larger village, called Ated. The course of the stream through the plain of Moush and the different localities are presented in the sketch.

As the sun went down our muleteer spread his cloak and performed his prayers twice in succession, to make up for the loss of his afternoon devotions—a mode of reparation sanctioned and recommended by the Koran. The river here is fordable in some places and abounds in fish, one species of which I judged by the description to be the sturgeon. The villagers take very few of them, not knowing, as they said, the art of doing it. They were equally ignorant of their names. The people of Arous were more expert, and had devised a mode of fishing which was new to me. They knead into dough the powder of the black kernels of a poisonous plant\*, and then throw bits of it into the water. The fish devour it and soon rise to the surface dead. We found them none the less savoury for this singular mode of catching them.

The next morning we pursued our course over a low rising ground running into the plain, the river lying on our left and the plain expanding as we advanced. The soil along the banks was of a rich black mould and under partial cultivation. We stopped at a village, and with many expostulations and promises obtained a breakfast. After two hours' march we came to the southern brow of the ground over which we had been travelling. The entire plain here opened upon us, extending far to the East and West. What we had first come upon was only a branch of it. Just below us appeared an ancient bridge over which our path lay. This noble structure was 500 feet in length, and had formerly been sustained by fourteen arches. Six only were still entire, the bases of the others being all that remained of them. Of those which were perfect some were in the curved or Roman style and the others in the pointed or Saracenic. The entire structure had been of hewn stone, with pointed buttresses of the same on the upper side, to break the force of the water. The intervals where the arches had fallen were supplied with timber rudely covered with mud and stones, presenting modern barbarism in singular contrast with ancient magnificence.

After crossing the bridge, our way lay directly over the plain towards the town of Moush. In less than two hours we passed the Kara Sou, or Black Water. Here are the ruins of a second bridge, of a structure similar to the former. Eight arches remain; the rest was entirely gone. Our manner of crossing the river, was an apt illustration of the pertinacity with which the Turks make use of the remnants of antiquity without attempting to supply their decay. We passed over the fragment of the bridge which remained standing, and then, descending, with great hazard to our necks, by the broken extremity, forded the rest of the river, here about forty feet wide. Geographers generally place this river beyond Moush, but we found that we had yet an hour to travel before we reached the town. We passed through the village of the young Kurdish Bey, who had left us the night before, promising to be on the look-out for us, and to give us a breakfast this morning. Seeing no appearance of a welcome as we rode by his door, and having provided against the consequences of forgetfulness on his part, by securing our breakfast beforehand, we went on quite independent of his hospitality. As we

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\*Probably the *NuxVemica*, which Chardin mentions used for the same purpose in Persia. Voyages, tome troisième, p. 44.



approached the city, cultivation increased, and, in entering the town, we passed through numerous vegetable gardens and vineyards.

The appearance of Moush, when approached from the north, is peculiarly romantic. It stands upon the sides of an eminence, within a deep recess of the mountains, almost entirely encircled and hid from sight by their projecting arms and a slight elevation in front of the opening. The heights above were tall and bare, excepting where patches of snow were still lying undissolved by the summer's sun. The red sides of the bills within and without the bay of the mountains, were covered with vines, and the eminence on which the town itself stands is crowned with a ruined fortress.

But the pleasant emotions excited by the distant view vanish on entering the place. The streets are filthy, irregular, and uneven, with rivulets of dirty water running through them. There are no covered bazars, and the few stalls which bear the name are ill-furnished and mean, without regularity or display. A brawling stream runs down from the mountains, through a deep gorge on the East side of the town, and goes to the Kara Sou. The houses are of the same description with those of Erzroum, The number of poor, insane, and diseased persons is astonishing. Boys and girls are seen running with a single rag, and often entirely naked, through the streets. The Christians appeared to be the most thriving part of the population, but all complained of poverty.

The population of the place is nearly 5000. There are 600 Mussulman families, 250 Armenian, and 50 Armenian Catholic. The Mussulmans do not call themselves Osmanlees, but Turks, and their language approaches nearer to that of Tebriz than of Constantinople. They have five mosques, ten medressehs, and three schools. One of the mosques was formerly a Christian Church, and bears over the door the date of its conversion to Islamism, 979 of the Hijreh. The principal mosque, though small, has a good external appearance, and is the finest building in the town. I was permitted to enter without scruple. Several worshippers were engaged at their devotions, though it was not the hour for prayers.

An old Mussulman, in answer to my inquiries, assured me that books in Kurdish were to be found in the medressehs, and I visited the principal one in quest of them. I did not then know that the Kurdish was an unwritten language, and hoped to add something to my stock of information by the search. None, of course, were to be found. The *muderiss*, or professor, informed me that all their text-books were in Arabic, from which be translated into Turkish and Kurdish, a part of the students being Kurds. There is no professional scribe nor seller of books in the town, and the chief medresseh has only two professors. Many of the Turks wear the Kurdish dress. I lodged, during my stay, in the house of one of the most respectable among them, and my room was constantly thronged with Mussulman visitors.

Our coming excited a great stir in the town. Our dresses being after the fashion of the capital, every one knew us to be from Stamboul. Crowds collected as we passed through the streets and gazed after us until we were out of sight. Various conjectures

were started to account for our visit. Some imagined that we were officers of the Sultan in search of recruits; others thought that our visit had some political design; and others that it was likely to affect the trade of the place. Either character was an unpropitious one, and I hastened to dispel the suspicions by going freely into the bazars, sitting with the sellers in their stalls, and conversing with any whom I met.

The Armenians have five churches and fourteen priests. One of the churches called the Church of the KeukVedavend, or Church of the Forty Steps, is said to be thirteen hundred years old. It stands on an elevated site overlooking the valley of the small strain which runs by the town. The approach to it is by a flight of forty steps, from which it receives its name. We found there four priests, and a school of twenty-five boys, who were reading their lessons upon the flat gravestones in front of the church. We asked for relics, whereupon one of the priests conducted us to a small upper room, and taking a bundle from a niche in the wall, began to open. One by one, twenty-five silk handkerchiefs were unfolded, when a large volume appeared. This the priest took and reverently kissing, opened. It was the New Testament, beautifully written on parchment in Armenian characters. We inquired its origin and were told it was a mystery. When the Church was built, the book had been found there and had been carefully preserved from that time to the present. It had, they said, the power of working miracles, and many instances were known of the sick having been restored to health by laying it upon them. My Mussulman guide was appealed to for the truth of the assertion, and, to my surprise, acknowledged that Mussulmans even, had tested its healing efficacy. As the priest was about to return the book to its place, an old man bowed with infirmities pressed eagerly forward, and seizing it in his hands, kissed it and rubbed his aged head upon it. May the day speedily arrive when all the poor and despised Christians of the East shall have this blessed book in their possession, and draw from it those spiritual truths which heal and purify the soul.

Six hours south-west from Moush, among the mountains, is the monastery of Tchangeuree, a famous place of pilgrimage to the Armenians. It is the same with that which St. Martin speaks of as existing in this region, under the name of *The Monastery of S. Garabied, Or St. John the Baptist*. It is at present the seat of a Bishop, and the brotherhood number one priest and eight monks.

The Armenian Catholics, or Papal Armenians, throughout this region, are called Franks, from their connection, doubtless, with a foreign Church. They have in Moush a priest, but the Church in which they formerly worshipped has been destroyed through the influence of the Armenians. Three of the villages on the plain of Moush are also peopled by them, in one of which they have three priests, in another two, and in another one.

No Kurds are resident in the town, but great numbers of them are found in the streets. They come chiefly from the region of Diarbekir as summer approaches, and spend the warm season in the mountains around Moush, gaining a poor subsistence from their flocks, and a scanty para by bringing yoghourt and wood to the town for sale.

Their women are poorly clad, and their small children, for the most part, are quite naked. The men appear in the streets armed with a sword and the small round shield which they constantly wear about them, and followed by their women and girls bearing burdens. Nothing can present a more wretched picture than these females. They are poorly dressed and filthy.

They go bending beneath their loads, and their faces, always unveiled, wear the deepest impress of misery. The countenances of the men were the most ferocious and brutal that I have ever seen. They were mostly of a middle stature, with stout and broad frames. Their faces were thin and dark, the nose hooked, and the eye black and merciless. I have never beheld so fiend-like an expression of countenance as they assumed when we appeared among them. They seemed to regard us as having come with some evil intent, instead of a friendly and benevolent purpose.

Several of a more gentle stock came to see me. I was much struck with the strong resemblance of features which prevailed among them—the long, regularly formed, and rather unexpressive face, the dull eye, the yellow, gipsy complexion. Their features and their speech were soft and mild, and nothing indicative of energy appeared. One, a son of a Pasha, came twice, sat long, smoked, and said nothing. Another, a merchant from Diarbekir, complained of the movements of the Sultan against his people and could not be persuaded that he designed their good.

The common dress of the Kurds of better rank whom I saw at Moush, consisted of the red tunic, the large white shalvars and the tall cap of felt, bound with party-coloured shawls.

The trade of Moush is with Bitlis, Erzroum, and Diarbekir; the latter place being distant four days by a road over the mountains, which, I was told by several who had travelled it, could be passed without much hazard, and ten days by the circuitous but safer route through Palou and Kharpout. Five hundred caravan horses are owned in the town, but are employed chiefly in trade originating elsewhere. The place has no manufactures of importance. Its staple is tobacco, which has some celebrity in the immediate region, but is, in truth, of inferior quality. Fruits are quite abundant, though not of a superior kind. Such are pears, apples, peaches, and cherries of different sorts. Grapes are the principal fruit, and some wine is made by the Christians. There is but one bath in the town, which is dark, filthy, and so thronged with vermin that we found ourselves in a much worse condition when we issued from it than when we entered. There is only a single khan, which is also small and mean. Winter continues five months and the summer is hot. During the two days which I spent there, the heat was so intense at mid-day that I could not venture abroad. Fuel for the winter is brought from the mountains, and the bodies of small trees stripped of their bark, which are used for rafters, are a considerable article of traffic between the town and the villages, each one selling at the time of my visit at the value of a dollar. I found current in the city the coin stamped by the Pasha of Bagdad, of which the smallest piece was half the value of a para, or about half a mill.

The *Sanjak*, or province, of Moush includes 600 villages, of which 75 or 80 belong to the same district with the town. The whole number of Kurdish families in the province is said to be 5000. The province itself is ruled by a Pasha of the second rank, who holds his place under the Pasha of Erzroum. The office, however, has been hereditary in the same family, and that a Kurdish one, for two centuries. The present incumbent, Emin Pasha, was spending the warm season in the mountains, and I therefore, lost the opportunity of seeing him. He has, for his summer and winter residences, two palaces situated without the town, both guarded by well-made walls with small bastions.

During the season of the Russian invasion, a detachment of the army came hither and sat down before the town. A party of the officers entered and surveyed the city without resistance. The inhabitants, however, suffered no injury or ill-treatment. Every thing that was needed was amply paid for, and the people seemed to have retained a grateful recollection of their invaders.

## CHAPTER XI.

### JOURNEY FROM MOUSH TO BITLIS.

DEPARTURE—PLAIN OF MOUSH—MARNIK—ARMENIAN PEASANTRY—  
VILLAGES—HOUSES—PEOPLE—CHURCHES—ROBBERS—RIDE TO BITLIS—  
KHANS —APPROACH TO THE TOWN.

We left Moush on the morning of the 29th of June, and turning from the southerly direction which we had hitherto pursued, moved eastward along the base of the lofty range which bounds the plain on this side. For the first three miles the declivities on our right were covered with rich vineyards, while the soil on the heights above them appeared barren and dry. Three hours distant from the city their character changed, and the summits and sides appeared clothed with the verdure of unbroken forests.

Our way lay the whole day over the plain, which was itself the greatest wonder of the scene. Although we started far from its western extremity we did not reach its eastern border till the next day. Its length cannot be less than forty miles, and the whole distance is an almost perfect level. It supports not much less than a hundred villages, most of which are Armenian and within a day's ride from Moush. In this respect the town is one of the most advantageous positions for a missionary station that can any where be found, especially when we consider that there are besides, numerous villages scattered in other directions among the mountains. Those of the plain, harbour during the winter, a large number of Kurds, who come down and live upon the Armenians. Some of them are large, thriving and unusually clean. One, called Hass Keui, through which we passed at a distance of about nine miles from Moush, has three churches, and was one of the most neat and flourishing villages I remember to have seen in Turkey.

Although the population of the plain is large, it appeared capable of sustaining a much larger one. Extensive tracts lay uncultivated. The soil appeared fertile, and the less productive portions might furnish pasturage to even more numerous herds than we saw scattered in every direction over its surface. Four hours from Moush we forded the Kara Sou, here, as before, a muddy stream about four feet deep. It runs through no valley but has worn its devious way through the easy soil of the plain, and, from the unstable character of its banks, is constantly changing its channel.

We alighted at 3 p.m. at Marnik, an inconsiderable Armenian village. The *Kiahya*, or village-chief, was abroad tending his flocks, and his *Kizir*, or deputy, showed little disposition to help us to a lodging-place. We undertook therefore to search for ourselves, and walking among the houses, soon lighted upon a vacant one belonging to the Kiahya himself. We immediately took possession, and before the owner arrived had it swept and furnished, a process which consumed but little time, as it consisted of only one apartment, and the furniture with which we provided it was no more than a few handfuls of fresh grass with our cloaks thrown over it. The Kiahya could not turn us out of our lodgings, but seemed determined that we should not be comfortable in them. In vain we assured him that it was our custom to pay for all we had. These poor, oppressed villagers are never so incredulous as when one talks of being kind to them. No one would do any thing for us until the compensation was actually in his hands. There was no water in the village and we were compelled to hire a man to bring some from the river. Fire to prepare our coffee and a dish of yoghourt with bread for our supper, were obtained only after as much negotiation and delay as if the demand were going to exhaust all the resources of the village. When, however, our coffee was ready, the Kiahya and half the population evinced no reluctance to partake of it.

This is the last Armenian village before reaching Bitlis, all the rest being Kurdish. It may not be amiss, therefore, to say something here of the general character of the Armenian peasantry along this route. Their villages may be described in nearly the same words which Xenophon used respecting them 2200 years ago. "Their houses were under ground. In them were goats, sheep, cows and fowls with their young;" and, if it had not been summer, I might have added as he does, "All the cattle were maintained within doors with fodder." The houses, however, are not properly subterranean, in the common sense of the term. They are generally made by excavating the earth and raising a wall of loose stones to the required height. - Trunks of trees are then laid across for rafters and covered with branches. Then the earth is piled on until the whole is covered and the fabric attains a semi-globular shape. Sometimes the whole is built upon the surface, but, in both cases, the external appearance is that of a bare mound of earth. As the traveller approaches one of these villages, he discerns nothing at first but an apparent unevenness in the ground. Soon the rounded tops become distinguished. These in summer are covered with cakes of manure formed by the hand and drying for the winter fire, a feature which gives the whole at a distance the appearance of a magnificent collection of dung-heaps.

The houses have generally two apartments, one for the family and another more interior for the cattle. These are almost entirely without furniture and are not remarkable for cleanliness. Sometimes there is a rude fire-place, or a hole in the ground which answers the same purpose, the smoke being of too little importance to have special provision made for its egress, excepting a small aperture through the centre of the roof, where, at the same time, a few rays of light seize the opportunity to struggle in. On the plain of Moush many of the houses have a pole on the top, which supports the nest of a stork.

The villagers are mostly herdsmen. They have the buffalo, but of a species unknown in America, the cow, horse, ass and goat. They subject the cow to burdens. A man's property is estimated by his herds. The produce, yoghourt, cheese and milk, furnish the chief articles of food. The villagers are poorly clad, timid and servile in demeanour, and their faces are unintelligent and spiritless. They do not appear the same race with the same people in Constantinople, or even in the cities of the interior. In some of the villages which suffer most from the Kurds they wear the aspect of deep misery, and one often wonders at the degradation which can endure such a position without an effort to change it. They are extremely ignorant and unclean in their persons and their houses. The women are especially ugly and filthy, and their domestic condition is as evil as can well be imagined. They are servilely treated, brutish, idealess, of peevish, complaining tempers and doing no service without a murmur. They have in many of the villages the care of the herds besides their domestic labours. Both men and women are generally unwilling to give lodging or food, or do it in so slow and sullen a manner as to render their hospitality hardly endurable. There are some exceptions to this picture, especially in the large villages. In some I have been cheered by the sight of domestic industry, cleanliness and thrift; in some I have been cordially received. But such exceptions are rare.

In all the villages the church is the most prominent building, and the only one erected above ground in a regular manner. Generally they are small and simple edifices constructed of square stone with a sloping roof. They are often venerably old and mantled with wild weeds growing from the chinks. They stand amidst moss-clad grave-stones, the last and only mammals of those who once worshipped within their walls.

As we were partaking of our hard-earned meal at Marnik, the Kiahya came in, and standing silently before us, drew a sigh so long and deep as to attract our attention and induce us to ask the cause. He looked timidly around him and then informed us that one of the villagers, having gone into the mountains in the morning, had been found by the Kurds and basely murdered. This information tended in no degree to allay the apprehension which the uncertain character of the country through which we were travelling had excited. An incident also had happened during the day which rendered us more than usually sensitive to evil reports. Several hours from Moush and in a desolate place, we were stopped by a party of these fierce mountaineers. When they first

discovered us they were scouring the plain in another direction, but, as soon as they caught sight of our party, they changed their course and made directly for us. The movement threw our muleteer into great terror. He suddenly ordered us to draw up into a body and to move forward slowly, while he hastened to meet the advancing horsemen. A warm parley ensued. The party eyed us keenly as we approached. My spirits sank very perceptibly when I encountered the same ferocious looks that I had seen in Moush. The conversation between the muleteer and the horsemen became more earnest, but, being in Kurdish, we could understand nothing, excepting, by their looks and gestures, that it related to us. The poor muleteer, who had served us most faithfully from the first, looked as if he were upon the rack. He succeeded, however, by what arguments I know not, in effecting his object, for, after some delay, we were suffered to proceed in safety. The Kiahya's story revived the recollection of the adventure, and, as if this were not enough, I began to feel some self-reproach for having undertaken the journey, John too became gloomy, called himself a fool for having exposed his life for the paltry consideration of monthly wages, and wished himself in Constantinople. All this induced a fit of loneliness, and for the first time since my journey began, I lay down upon my grass-couch with a heavy heart.

How healing is sleep! How repulsive of care are the bright beams of the morning! John rose a new man and I found in the protection of the night something still to be grateful for. My cheerfulness was a little dampened by another contest with the Kiahya for yoghourt and eggs, and by the unpleasant duty of reprimanding John for repaying the incivility of one of the villagers with a blow. We started, however, in tolerably good humour. In a quarter of an hour we again forded the Kara Sou and, six miles farther on, came to its source, a little pond of clear and excellent water issuing from a circular hole in the centre, which our muleteer affirmed to be unfathomable. The plain terminates at this extremity in a low rising ground, where we passed a large Kurdish village called Noshem, pleasantly situated in the midst of trees. Here resides the Ayan of all the Kurdish villages in the vicinity, of which we had already passed several. No habitations appeared beyond. Our way was over uneven ground, winding gradually round to the South and descending at length into a deep valley, on the opposite side of which the mountains rose in tall and bald peaks, preserving still the general direction of East and "West. We kept along the edge of this valley, until we met a caravan drawn up in a convenient spot, where we dismounted and were soon seated with the drivers at a joint-stock dinner, our coffee being accepted in return for bread and cheese.

In the course of the day we passed four old and deserted khans of an ancient and solid architecture. The principal one was built of hewn stone with round towers or abutments at the angles and sides. It was in the Saracenic style and had doubtless been erected many ages back, for Time had now decorated its walls with green tresses waving from every gaping chink. A stone fountain, which still furnished refreshing water, stood before it, and a merry cascade played near by. We penetrated deeper and deeper among the mountains as we advanced, and in one place passed through a narrow

passage cut twenty feet deep in the rock. Nothing was visible but the barren and desolate peaks which rose in gloomy majesty around us, when the sight of verdure suddenly burst upon us. As we descended yet deeper into the ravine, trees and gardens appeared, and we entered, before we were aware of it, the beautiful city of Bitlis.

## CHAPTER XII BITLIS

ARRIVAL—INTERVIEW WITH THE GOVERNOR—MR HOST—THE BANKER—  
SITUATION OF THE TOWN—BUILDINGS AND STREETS—TRADE—FRUITS—  
EVENING SCENE—VISIT TO THE ARMENIAN BISHOP—MOSQUE—ADVENTURE—  
MEDRESSEH—POPULATION—MANNERS—ARMENIANS—KURDS—CHARACTER  
OF THE MOUNTAIN KURDS—DEVIL-WORSHIPPER - GOVERNMENT-  
ANTIQUITIES— REGRETS-ARMENIAN HOSPITALITY.

The kindness of the British Consul at Erzroum had provided me with a letter to a wealthy Armenian of Bitlis, and, on entering the town, I made my way directly to one of the principal khans, with the hope of finding him there. The crowd which pressed upon us as we dismounted, was so great, that we could not stir to the right hand nor to the left. I inquired for the merchant, and he soon appeared, but when he heard that the letter which I had brought was an introduction to his hospitality, he professed to know nothing of the friend from whom I came recommended. Finding the crowd increase and their curiosity becoming rather troublesome, I returned the letter to my pocket and asked to be conducted to the Bey of the city, who, I accidentally heard, was in one of the rooms of the khan. In a few minutes I was in his presence. He sat in one corner of the room, gaily dressed in the Kurdish costume. His whole apparel was white, and his peaked cap was bound with shawls of the liveliest colours. He was young, with a fine open face and a good form. He saluted me gracefully as I entered, and pointed to a seat near him. Pipes and coffee were brought, and he began by asking some common-place questions as to my country, name, &c. He was more curious, however, to know my real design in travelling and pressed the question with considerable importunity. I told him, in plain terms, that my object was to see different people and countries, and to observe manners, characters, and religions. He could not understand it — an Oriental never can understand the motive of one who travels either for information or pleasure. I have sometimes heard Turks speak of the locomotive propensity of the English as a species of insanity. The Bey was not satisfied, and asked what had brought me into so strange a place as Kurdistan. I replied that its very strangeness was my motive, that I wished to see what nobody else had seen. He was not contented and grew suspicious. Finding that nothing else would avail, I intimated that I was travelling with proper credentials, and directed John to exhibit the Firman of the Sultan. It was received by his secretary, who opened it and offered it to the Bey, pronouncing at the same time the single word,



"*Mahmoud*." The Bey, instead of receiving it with the customary demonstrations of respect, waved his hand contemptuously in token of refusal. I then drew forth the bouyouroultou of the Pasha of Erzroum, and handed it to the scribe. When the Bey heard what it was, he ordered it to be read, and, at the close, drawing himself up, made some remark in Kurdish to the crowd who had gathered about the entrance. The meaning, of course, I could not understand, but the tone and expression of face which accompanied it, showed that it was of a bold character. The bouyouroultou, however, had its desired effect. The Bey added in Turkish that I must be provided for, and looking round upon the crowd who thronged the entrance, added, "We must assign him to some one who is able to show him proper attention," and then, as his eye fell on the Armenian to whom I had brought the letter, "M\_\_\_\_, will you receive him as a guest?" My Armenian, laying his hand upon his heart, professed himself all zeal to comply with the wishes of the Bey, and, turning to me with an equivocal smile of welcome, requested me to follow him. I did so, with a secret feeling of vexation at being thus unceremoniously thrust upon his reluctant hospitality, but I endeavoured to console myself with the thought that I was an instrument of justice to punish him for his parsimony. When we had arrived at his house, he conducted me to a balcony looking out upon a garden and shaded with magnificent fruit-trees. Here carpets and cushions were spread for us, and we were invited to repose. The motive for forgetfulness being now removed, my host's memory suddenly revived, and I delivered him the letter which I had brought for him. Though in Armenian, he could not read it himself, but, with the aid of his son, contrived to make out a lame interpretation, which gratified him so much that he afterwards showed the letter to all his friends.

In the evening, another Armenian, the banker of the Bey, came in to make our acquaintance. He welcomed us to Bitlis with the warmest cordiality, lavished upon us compliments in overwhelming profusion, made the most unbounded offer of his services, and concluded by insisting upon our being his guests on the morrow. I hardly knew to what to attribute this profuse kindness, but I was very grateful to meet with so warm a friend, and began to feel quite at home. The next morning he called again, but, alas, how changed! There was no welcome, no compliment, and the invitation for the day seemed entirely forgotten. The melancholy truth at last came out, that our new friend had come to us the evening before from the midst of his nightly potations, and it was under their influence that he had made all the fair speeches which the soberness of the morning had dissipated.

Bitlis cannot fail to interest and surprise a stranger at first sight. Its picturesque situation among the mountains, and the singular internal appearance which the peculiar construction of its buildings gives it, make it entirely unlike most other Eastern towns. The mountains form three deep valleys, which come down from the north, south-east and west, to a junction where the city stands, extending its arms up into each of them. Three little streams, following the same course, descend, unite, and flow off together in

one river emptying into the Tigris, which is said to be twenty-four hours distant. The streets of the town run in terraces along the steep sides of the valleys, and the passenger in looking up is often surprised to see houses and walls above his head. Most of the houses have gardens attached to them, which give to the city, from some points of view, the appearance of a paradise in the midst of bare and verdureless mountains. The mosques, houses, garden walls, and every other structure about the city, are built of a fine kind of sand-stone, with which the region abounds. It is cut into cubic blocks for building, and imparts to the city an air of remarkable regularity and solidity. In some houses the interior as well as the exterior walls are of this same stone. The streets of the city are ill-paved, though something better might be expected where so cheap and excellent materials for paving abound. The position of the town renders many of the streets steep and difficult. In riding through them I was sometimes compelled to dismount, in order to make an ascent. The bazars are extensive, covered, and well filled. They are built of stone, and the different parts of the interior show some management in the separate disposition of the various kinds of merchandize and trades.

The trade of the city is with Persia through Yan, with Erzroum, Diarbekir, Mossoul and Bagdad. The road to Mossoul is a dangerous one of eighty hours, or fifteen days. Jizireh is distant forty-eight hours, Diarbekir the same, Bagdad 220 and Busra 300. These are the estimates which I received from good authority in the place, but I cannot vouch for correctness in a matter where it is so difficult to procure authentic information. Raw cotton is brought from Persia, and cotton cloths are manufactured in the town. The other principal articles of trade are woollens, tobacco and gall-nuts. There are large dye-houses and as many tanneries in the place. Rakee is distilled only for the consumption of the city, which amounts to sixtyokkas, or about 150 pounds, daily.\* Fish are brought in considerable quantity from the lake of Van and salted. Gum Arabic is a large article of trade, 15,000 okkas, intended chiefly for the European markets, being annually carried away. The city has seven khans, two of which are exclusively for merchants, and the trade employs 200 caravan horses owned in the place, besides a large number owned elsewhere. The streams which run through the valleys supply no less than thirty-two grist-mills, and are crossed by as many bridges of stone. I met in Persia with a gentleman who had once passed through Bitlis, as bearer of dispatches from the ambassador at Tehran to the Turkish camp at Diarbekir. He added to my notes on Bitlis, a fact in which, as an Englishman, he was probably more interested than myself. There are, he said, in the town, twenty-five butchers' stalls where beef is sold. If the statement is correct, it is a very remarkable one to be recorded of an Eastern city.

The gardens of the town abound in a great variety of excellent fruit, among which are the apple, pear, mulberry, cherries and grapes of different kinds, the quince, apricot, peach, different species of melons, the fig, pomegranate, filbert, walnut and several

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\* In the East, liquids as well as solids are sold by weight.

others of which I had never before heard even the names. The market was well supplied with early fruits and vegetables, among the latter of which the cucumber was very abundant. The inhabitants boast the salubrity of the climate and the remarkable longevity of the people. I was disposed to believe them, for, during my own stay, the days were not immoderately warm, and the nights, which I spent in the open air, were remarkably calm, serene and pure. The robust and healthful appearance of the men, and the comeliness and fresh hue of the children also attested the genial character of the climate.

I spent the day in visiting places and persons, and the night in quiet repose upon the balcony. As I was sitting there one evening, enjoying the gentle calm and stillness of the hour, I heard distant music and a song, which gradually approached the house, and at length ceased before the gate. Soon after, our old friend the banker appeared upon the balcony, followed by two or three companions and a train of musicians and singers. He seated himself familiarly by my side and ordered the music and song to commence, while our host hastened away to prepare an entertainment for his guests. Our banker was even more profuse in his compliments and offers of service than on the evening of our arrival. He particularly pressed upon me the use of his horses in my perambulations about the town. Thinking that a compliance would be the most effectual lesson for him, as well as conduce greatly to my own comfort, I accepted the offer on the spot, promising to send for them the next morning. When morning came, the banker had as before quite forgot the events of the evening, and appeared mortified upon being reminded of his promise. He permitted the horses to be taken away by the servant whom I sent for them, but was afterwards more cautious in his words.

I availed myself of this new facility to visit some of the more remote parts of the town, and, first of all, went to pay my respects to the Armenian bishop. The church where he resided was situated far up one of the valleys. There was nothing of peculiar interest about it, excepting that it had a bell, a privilege which I had supposed was granted only to the church of the Catholicos at Etchmiadzin. The Bishop himself did not know how to account for the distinction, excepting from the remoteness of the place and its position within the borders of Kurdistan. The circumstance, though a slight one, indicated an extraordinary degree of religious freedom. Mussulman bigotry has long since deprived the churches of the East of the poor privilege of using bells, and to the same cause is, doubtless, to be attributed the generally plain and unpretending exterior of the churches themselves. It was delightful to witness a portion of the oppressed and scattered Armenians enjoying here, within the ancient borders and among the noble mountains of their fatherland, something of the immunities of freeborn Christians.

We found the Bishop seated upon a carpet under the trees of a garden adjoining the church. He would have arisen, with the aid of his servants, to receive us as we approached, if we had not hurried forward to prevent him. "I am old" said the venerable man, slowly passing his trembling hand over his silvery beard. The Armenians say that he is a hundred and twenty years of age. He spoke, in feeble tones, of some of the

events of his long life, while we sat by him on the carpet. He had formerly exercised the Episcopal office in Constantinople, but for the last twenty years had been resident in Bitlis. He gave me several items of information respecting his people, which will be found scattered about in other places, as occasions may call them out. While we were conversing, two or three of his presbyters came in, and, after making their obeisance, remained standing in reverent silence before him. This deep respect appeared to be both appropriate and impressive. I have often witnessed it elsewhere in Turkey. Though a peculiarity perhaps, no one, I think, will be disposed to account it one of the corruptions of the Eastern Churches.

After bidding adieu to the Bishop, I visited the principal mosque, situated near the centre of the city. The interior was dark and gloomy, and offered nothing of interest I had entered without any attempt at disguise, and as the servants who accompanied me were Christians, I supposed that I should myself be recognized as such. Just as I was retiring, however, the Imam came in, and stepping up to John, who stood near the door, demanded, in a furious tone, whether I were a Mussulman. John adroitly replied, by asking in return, whether they admitted any besides Mussulmans to the mosque. "No," was the prompt reply. "Why do you ask then," retorted John, "whether he is a Mussulman? If he is one, your question is impertinent. If he is not one why have you admitted him?" The dexterity of the reply raised a laugh from the crowd at the door at the expense of the Imam, who, after pausing for a moment to comprehend the logic of it, apologized, by saying that a Giaour had entered the mosque two or three years before, and he was unwilling that such an event should happen again. While this altercation was going on, I was engaged within, and was not aware of what had transpired, until John afterwards explained it to me.

While I was surveying the mosque, an invitation was sent to me by one of the teachers to visit the medresseh, situated immediately in the rear. It was small, consisting, as usual, of a low range of buildings around a square court. The institution had five teachers. One was engaged in giving a lesson in penmanship to a class of young men. Another was lecturing, in a recess opening on the court, to a single pupil who sat almost in contact with him. The master was absorbed in his subject, and took no notice of us, while the pupil was evidently undergoing a severe conflict between respect for his teacher and curiosity concerning the strangers present. His eye would now fix with reverent attention upon the lecturer, and now wander stealthily away to observe what was passing in the court. There are thirty-two mosques and eight medressehs in Bitlis, of which those now described are the principal.

The population of the city is estimated at 2000 Mussulman and 1000 Armenian families. As the same estimate was given me by all of whom I inquired, I have no doubt that it is nearly correct. In general, however, my reports of population, although collected with great care, must be regarded only as approximations to the truth. The want of a regular census in the East renders perfect accuracy impossible. There are, also, in Bitlis fifty families of Jacobites, who have a church and two priests. These are

probably all the Christians of the Jacobite Church to be found in the northern regions of Kurdistan. The manners of the people of Bitlis are more free and gay than is common in Turkish towns. As I sat in my balcony I could often hear the sound of music and the voice of merriment breaking upon the stillness of the evening. This gaiety, however, is mingled with no extraordinary refinement of manner; on the contrary, one is often annoyed by an indelicacy extremely offensive. I was astonished, on awaking the first morning after my arrival, to find all the male part of the family assembled on the balcony to see me dress, and my confusion was not a little increased on perceiving that the female portion had stationed themselves, for the same purpose, behind the lattice which separated the balcony from the inner apartments of the house. When I ventured to remark upon these and other such like novelties, the universal apology was, "What else can you expect? This is Kurdistan."

I have nowhere found the Armenians more respected and influential than in Bitlis, and consequently have seldom found them more intelligent and truly respectable. They have eight churches and four priests. Each of the churches is, in truth, a monastic establishment, and the number of monks is very considerable. The churches which I visited were all so dark that I could distinctly see nothing which they contained. Two or three of them were large, with vaulted roofs supported by stone columns, and walls covered with paintings. Connected with one of them was the only Armenian school in the city, containing two hundred pupils.

There are no Kurds permanent residents in the place, although many come from the mountains and find a home there in the winter. They also appear in streets in summer, but I saw less of them than in Moush. As I was sitting with my host one afternoon in a little bower in the garden, formed by an overarching vine, an old Kurd from the mountains entered. He was bent with age and infirmities, but wore the common armour of the mountaineer, and his fierce little eye seemed never at rest. He was the owner of large herds and flocks in the mountains. The account of his possessions given me by my host, almost equalled the inventory of Job after his affliction. He had come to conclude a contract with the Armenian for the partial sale of a mare, of which the latter was to receive a certain proportion of the foals. When the terms were settled, the Kurd took the hand of the Armenian, and solemnly swore by Allah faithfully to perform his part of the contract. This mode of concluding bargains illustrates many passages and allusions of Scripture.

The character of the mountain Kurds, according to all the information which I could gather concerning them, was agreeable with my own impressions. Their life is simple and pastoral. In the towns they profess themselves Mussulmans, but in the mountains they live without religion. Feuds and quarrels are frequent among them, and often end in bloodshed. Mutual confidence is almost unknown, and they always wear their arms for fear of each other. It is from them alone that the danger of travelling in these parts arises. Yet they are not a brave people, nor have they any of the high and manly

qualities I have observed in other Kurds. Their robberies are dastardly affairs. They seldom attack armed travellers, except in very superior numbers. They assault, more commonly, peaceful caravans, or defenceless villages. All the villages from Erzroum to Bitlis, and from Van to Salmas are more or less exposed to them. They are generally looked upon by the inhabitants of the cities with great aversion.

Another strange character whom I met at Bitlis, was a Yezidee, or devil-worshipper, of Mesopotamia. He was a ferrier, and being in the employ of my host, occasionally made me a visit, and sometimes ate with me. I endeavoured to glean something from him respecting his religion, but, although he received my inquiries with good-humour, he could be induced to make no confessions. I observed nothing singular in his habits, besides a practice of holding his little cup of wine with both hands. I did not, at the time, suppose it to be anything more than an awkward habit of his own, but I afterwards found, in Mesopotamia, that the same was a universal practice of the Yezidees. Their great reverence for everything Christian is well known, and this custom may have arisen from a superstitious fear of spilling upon the ground a liquid used in a Christian sacrament.

The Bey of Bitlis is himself a Kurd, and a brother of the Pasha of Moush, within whose province the city falls. The manner in which he received me shows with how free a spirit he holds his authority. He seemed, indeed, more like an independent chieftain, ruling in his own hereditary right, than a governor deriving his power from another. The same spirit prevails among the people. The name of the Sultan seldom reaches their ears. Retired within their own mountains, they think of no other country or ruler but the city they live in and the Bey who governs it. This indeed, to some degree, is Eastern feeling everywhere. The Turk has no name for patriotism. His local attachments seldom reach beyond his own village or town. One of the greatest evils of the late Sultan's reform was the ruthless manner in which these attachments were violated, and peaceful villagers were hurried away to recruit regiments in distant parts of the Empire.

Bitlis offers some interesting proofs of its own antiquity. Fragments of stone with remains of sculpture upon them, are seen in the walls of houses and gardens. One which I saw bore the figures of two lions rampant. The stranger is shown an ancient and deserted medresseh in the old style of Mussulman architecture, the work, evidently, of the same ages in which the khans before spoken of, were built. But the most imposing remains are the ruins of an extensive castle near the centre of the town. It is built on the craggy sides of a rock which forms the angle between two of the valleys, and the passenger, as he walks through the street, is surprised to see its walls towering above him to the height of several hundred feet. Some inscriptions in Arabic are found in the interior, which was occupied only by a few poor families, who had taken refuge there. The inscriptions add another proof to the style of the remains within and without the city, that it has anciently been a strong hold of some Saracenic ruler.

So pleasant were the hours which I spent in Bitlis, that I sincerely regretted the approach of that of my departure. I was loath to launch out from this quiet haven upon a way which threatened greater dangers than we had yet encountered, and there were hours when I thought that I could hardly expect to find any sphere, in which I could spend my life with higher hopes of usefulness than among this interesting people. But the greater part of my work was still before me, and my motto must still be, Onward. The pain of departure was, however, considerably alleviated by the manifest desire of my host for its arrival. He had not ceased to complain of my presence as an intrusion, and went so far, on one occasion, as to inquire of me, whether it was the custom in Frank countries to thrust guests upon a private man uninvited. I described to him our comfortable hotels. He sighed a regret that there were no such establishments in Bitlis. I, from my heart, sighed too. He seemed determined that we should profit little by his hospitality. Our fare would have disgraced the meanest village. No article but rakee was offered us in abundance — a circumstance from which John inferred that rakee must be cheap in Bitlis. I was even indebted for my pleasant resting-place upon the balcony, to his determination not to receive me into his house. The hours which I passed there were, however, none the less delightful on this account. In calm repose, during the heats of noon-tide, and in the hushed stillness of the evening, I found many a moment for quiet and pleasing meditation. The soft airs of the night made my slumbers light and sweet, and I was awaked in the morning by the early matins of numerous birds singing in the branches above me.

The evening before my departure I was invited to spend at the house of one of the principal Armenians of the place. I went at sunset and found several guests already arrived. They were seated in two rows of opposite sides of the room, and the master sat below them all. They all rose as I entered, while the host conducted me to a seat in the recess of the window at the head of the apartment. When all were again seated, sherbet, followed by rakee and sweet-meats, was sent round — a ceremony which was often repeated before dinner. This important meal was at length announced. Two waiters of great size were placed upon stools around which the guests seated themselves in two companies. Dinner was served up in Oriental style. One dish rapidly succeeded another until it became a task to taste of those which followed. Rakee was served, at the same time, in small glasses, but with a frequency which threatened to endanger the sobriety of the company. I thought it my duty, at the hazard of seeming to slight the hospitality of my entertainer, to set an example of abstinence. The master did not sit at meat, but stood by, attending to the wants of his guests and giving directions to his servants. The compliments with which I was greeted were as Oriental as the scene about me. My coming was a gift from God; it was the appearance of a rose in a garden where it had never before been seen. John, who was present, was complimented as a Constantinopolitan by a health to Sultan Mahmoud, whose virtues were extolled with a formality and vehemence which seemed not a little suspicious. After dinner, the company resumed their seats, and an hour was filled up with music

and song from a Kurdish musician. The scene, although orderly, was of a lighter kind than I would have chosen to be in, if I had foreknown its character. But I went away hoping that some good might have been done, by giving them, perhaps, the first idea they had ever received of temperance in the use of strong drinks. The party broke up at an early hour. The host accompanied me into the street and, on parting, seized and kissed my hand.

### **CHAPTER XIII FROM BITLIS TO VASTAN**

DEPARTURE-MUSICIANS MULETEER-PILGRIMS-FRIENDS-PEAK OF NIMROD-  
FOREIGNERS IN BITLIS-ROBBERS-FIRST VIEW OF THE LAKE OF VAN-VILLAGES-  
WATER-ILLNESS-ELMALEU-NIGHT OF THE 4TH OF JULY-DIFFICULT PATH-  
POUGAH-KURDISH VILLAGES-PILFERING-WANDERING KURDS-A DANCE-  
DIFFICULT PASSAGE OF A MOUNTAIN-COUNTRY ALONG THE SOUTHERN  
SHORE OF THE LAKE-ADVENTURE- AGRICULTURE-CASCADE VIRTUE OF COLD  
WATER-AKHTAMAR.

We left Bitlis on the morning of the 4th of July. Just before we started, several musicians in the service of the Bey, came with their instruments, and regaled us with music while we ate our breakfast. We thought it at first an honour done us by the Bey himself, but it proved to be a voluntary act of the players for the sake of a present. I had thought it the safest course to put myself under a Kurd, and my host, who showed a wonderful alacrity to serve me when I began to speak of departing, readily undertook to provide one for me. The bargain was struck, and the man promised to be at my lodgings early in the morning, but did not appear till the forenoon was half-spent. He was dressed in the Kurdish fashion, with the felt cap and striped pantaloons, the latter differing from the European garment of the same name only in being somewhat more capacious. I was surprised when I first saw such a mark of civilization among the mountains of Kurdistan, but I soon found that it was quite a common habiliment.

Our landlord was very profuse in his well-wishes when the moment of parting came. He refused all compensation, and I distributed the sum which I intended for him among his children and domestics. Another musician, a strolling player, met us at the door as we mounted, and marched before us through the streets blowing harsh discord, nor could we prevail upon him to desist, until we answered him with silver sounds. The streets were thronged with multitudes, both of men and women, who had come together, not to witness our departure, but to greet the arrival of a band of pilgrims from Mecca, whose approach had just been announced. A Western crowd, on such an occasion, would be all on foot and in motion, but here all were seated by the road-side quietly talking and smoking. In most parts of Turkey, native Christians would sedulously keep aloof from all participation in the festivity of such an occasion, and it is just at such



times that Musulmans are least disposed to see them present. But here there were quite as many Christians as Mussulmans, a circumstance which added another proof to the many which I saw, of the great intimacy existing between the two classes in Bitlis. I espied among them several of the friends that we had made in the city. They rose as we passed, and exchanged with us those Eastern greetings than which nothing can be more expressive, when uttered sincerely. As departing friends, we cried out to them, "To God we commend you." They replied, "God give you prosperity." Even the little boys wished us "a safe road." These expressions of good-will affected me at the moment, and seemed a happy augury for our journey through a more difficult country than we had yet traversed. Before we had passed the last of the throng, we descried the expected company approaching. First came the young Bey, dressed in his gayest costume, and mounted on a noble steed, which he managed perfectly. I remember still his martial bearing, and his open cheerful face. A long train of attendants followed. He drew up as we passed, and we seized the opportunity to apologize for not having waited upon him at his castle, which stands upon one of the hills out of the town, by informing him that we had once called there in his absence. He expressed the hope of seeing us again and we rode on. Next came the pilgrims, mounted and looking cold and proud. The worst effect of the Mecca pilgrimage is to create self-righteousness. In general, those who have performed it are the most bigoted and contemptuous of all Mussulmans. John saluted the company very respectfully as they passed, but they looked so well satisfied with themselves, that I thought it would be a waste of honour to imitate his example. A great crowd followed them, and, when these had passed, we were left to pursue our way alone.

For about five miles, our road was the same with that by which we approached the city. We then struck off N. E. and pursued our way over an uneven country. On our right were the mountains, bounding the opposite side of the valley before-mentioned, and on our left the gigantic peak called NemroutDagh, or, The Mountain of Nimrod, the same which gives its name to the range so called. It stood in a singular position, like a tower in the corner of a wall, just where the line of mountains turns rectangularly, going off, in one direction, to form the Northern boundary of the plain of Moush, and, in the other, towards the Western border of the Lake of Van. My guide informed me that on the summit of this peak is a fountain of unknown depth, which is said to communicate with the little lake in which the Kara Sou rises. It may be the same source which St. Martin, on the authority of ancient Armenian writers, mentions as existing in this region.

At Bitlis, when inquiring what European travellers had ever visited the city, we were told that a German had been there several years before, and had copied all the ancient inscriptions which he could find in the town. I conjectured this to be the unfortunate Schultz, of whom I afterwards heard more particularly at Van, but I have no positive information of his having visited Bitlis. I have since learned that two or three English travellers have passed through the city, but, besides the German just

mentioned, the old inhabitants of whom I made inquiry, knew of no foreigner who had been in the country excepting a Russian, who was murdered while approaching the town, and when only a few hours distant. We passed the spot where the event was said to have happened, just after turning off from the Moush road.

While surveying it I was suddenly startled at seeing two horses, fully equipped, feeding in a little hollow close by the side of our path. I was, at the moment, lagging a little behind the party. My guide, who seemed singularly affected by the sight, suddenly motioned to me to ride up. We had advanced only a few paces when we espied the masters of the horses, sitting close under the bank, and so well concealed that we did not discover them until we were within a few feet of them. Our guide offered them no salutation, and seemed endeavouring to appear as if he did not notice them. He rode by without turning his head, and we followed his example. But the hasty glance which I caught, sufficed to satisfy me respecting their character. They had the ferocious aspect of the mountain Kurds, and were too much and too well armed for honest travellers. They eyed us sharply until we had passed. There were three of them while we were four, for our Kurd had thought it best to take with him a stout Turk to act as guide in certain parts of the route, with which he was not acquainted. To this superiority of number we doubtless owed our safety, for we went on our way unmolested.

Farther on we passed the ruins of an extensive Khan, among which were remains of baths and other buildings which showed the whole to have been formerly on a magnificent scale.

Just three hours and a half after mounting our horses in Bilis, and two hours after leaving the road to Moush, John, who was riding a few paces in advance, announced that the lake was in full view. Overjoyed at the sight of blue water, he cried out, as he first caught sight of it, Stamboul! Stamboul! It was in truth as glorious a prospect as could greet the eyes. It opened full upon us in an instant. On the right of it was a barrier of tall rocky mountains rising in successive peaks, crowned with snow. Here and there, from their base, a promontory was running its long nose far out into the water. On the left of the lake, the land sloped gently upward, broken into hills, which were the continuance of the Nimrod range and which ended in the majestic form of Subhan, clothed far down its side with a robe of pure white. Between these two sides lay the lake, stretching off from us to the East. Its calm surface was reflecting the deep azure of the sky. Its gentle repose mingled in most impressive harmony with the awful grandeur of the mountains, and the hush of stillness reigned over all like the presence of a spirit.

We were standing on the brow of a steep declivity, between the foot of which and the lake, was a slope covered with fruit-trees, like a garden. This slope was about two-thirds of a mile broad and two or three miles long, forming the South-Western bend of the lake. Near its Eastern extremity stood a village called Ourtab, and at its Western end another called Tadvan. The latter has a little inlet which serves as an harbour and is

commanded by a semi-globular mound with ruins, like those of a castle, upon it. We wound our way down the declivity and reached Ourtab in half an hour.

Looking from this point, the general direction of the Southern shore of the lake is South of East, and the Western shore a little East of North East. We stopped two hours at the village and then struck down to the lake, which we reached in a quarter of an hour. As we stood by its edge I noticed that the water for a hundred yards from the shore, was of a milky whiteness. A light wind had arisen and the ripples were breaking with a low murmur on the sand. A row of birds, in size and appearance like gulls, were looking gravely into the water. I dismounted to taste of it. It must have changed its quality since olden times, or the ancient writers, both Armenian and Greek, have greatly erred in pronouncing it salt. It is brackish but not very disagreeable to the taste. I have often quenched my thirst with worse.

Close by where we came to the lake, was a field of red clover in full luxuriance of growth. Here my Kurd insisted upon stopping to say his prayers, but, as he had not said them at noon, the most meritorious hour of the five, as it was not now a canonical hour, and as I never knew him to say them afterwards, during the whole journey, I am inclined to believe, what John suggested at the moment, that his sudden devotion was excited by the thought that the time necessary for it would afford his horses a fine opportunity to regale themselves on clover. The delay was probably more beneficial to them than to me. I had felt, before leaving the village, considerable indisposition, which had now increased to a fever. While we stopped, my position on my horse became so irksome that I dismounted and flung myself upon the grass. It was fresh and moist and doubtless added to my disorder, for I journeyed on, the rest of the afternoon, with great difficulty. Our course skirted the lake and lay over rugged hill sides which descended to its brink. Most of the ground was covered with dwarf oaks, but here and there we passed through open groves of fruit trees apparently growing without culture amidst the wilder vegetation.

We reached, a little past six, the Armenian village of Elmaleu, nestling amidst a grove of fruit trees at the head of a little cove, itself completely sheltered by the surrounding rocks and trees. The scene was so retired and quiet that it seemed the very home of peace. The women were uncovered, as they generally are in the villages, and were spinning cotton before their doors. They appeared more neat and thrifty than I had been accustomed to see. But, what was best and strangest of all, they were kind to me. I wished to spend the night in the open air, but they dissuaded me from it by saying that the vicinity of the lake rendered it damp. The lodgings provided for me by the Kiahya, were in a subterranean guests' apartment at the end of a dark passage some forty feet in length. There was no aperture in the room for the light or air, and it was crowded with cattle. I wrapped my cloak about me and laid upon the ground. Even there I could not save myself from the incursions of vermin, which got beneath my clothes and tormented me almost to madness. The heat and stench of the stable were well nigh insupportable.

What with all these, my fever increased and effectually prevented me from forgetting my troubles in sleep. I lay all night tossing from side to side, struggling to command myself to repose, and praying that I might be spared from sickness in the midst of a barbarous and friendless land. Towards morning my fever subsided, I gained a little sleep and rose sufficiently refreshed to pursue my journey. Such was the day and night of a Fourth of July in Kurdistan.

The next was my birthday. We rode for three hours over the rough and mountainous region which borders the lake, sometimes making our way over the rugged summits of head-lands which jutted into it, and sometimes creeping along their face almost perpendicularly above the water. In such a position we met a caravan of fifty horses, coming from Van and laden with cotton. We succeeded in passing them, only by drawing up our little party into a niche in the rock, which fortunately offered at the moment. At the end of three hours we struck inward over the mountains, to get round the head of a promontory which was too bold and high to admit a passage near the lake, and at length reached the Kurdish village of Pougah.

These villages of the Kurds are altogether more neat and respectable than those of the Christians. Instead of being built, like the latter, half subterraneous, they are entirely above ground and are constructed with more regularity. The people who inhabit them are distinct from the wild Kurds of the mountains. They follow the quiet pursuits of husbandry, remaining in their villages, excepting in the hot months, when many of them choose a cooler position and spend the summer in tents. Others are always stationary in the villages. Most of those between Bitlis and Van have come over the mountains from the South and formed all their villages within twelve years, changing, as they told me, a nomadic for a settled life. The Armenians fear them, but I could not learn that they have anything to complain of against them more than Christians in other parts can bring against the Mussulmans. They assume a tone of authority towards the Armenians and treat them with the freedom of superiors. The latter regard them as intruders among them and heartily wish them beyond the mountains. Notwithstanding their former character, they appear superior, in every respect, both to the Armenians and Turks of this region. They are chiefly husbandmen and apparently industrious and good ones. They are far more cleanly in their houses and persons and generally better dressed. Their faces are open, cheerful and intelligent. Their women go unveiled, but are modest and often beautiful. Their children are well formed, active and bright. As a people they are the best looking peasantry that I found in the East. I never saw a mosque in their villages, but they profess themselves good Mussulmans and have an Imam who conducts the prayers in his own house. They are on the whole more strict in their devotions than the Turks, but they have hardly any intelligent idea of the religion which they profess.

The Kurds of Pougah received us well and set before us an excellent breakfast. They took us, from our dress, to be Turkish officers, but we did not judge it best to give

them any information with regard to ourselves. One of them, however, came forward and offered us a fine little boy for the service of the Sultan.

My fever had returned soon after leaving Elmaleu, but subsided a little when I had gained a shelter from the sun. It left me, however, so weak that I found myself obliged to seek refreshment by sleep before starting again. I, therefore, directed John to sit upon the watch while I took a nap, and stretching myself upon my cloak, covered my face with my handkerchief to screen it from the light, and lay still, endeavouring to compose myself to sleep.

Before many minutes had passed, I overheard John communicating to our Kurdish guide the same order I had given to him, and soon after heard from him certain nasal sounds which afforded indubitable evidence that he was not in a condition to be very vigilant. The guide himself soon grew weary of his watch, and, at length, but insensibly, doubtless, followed John's example. Our Turk was away tending the horses. While all this was passing, a crowd of the villagers sat round us in silent observation. Presently I observed that the conversation which they had been carrying on with us in Turkish suddenly changed to Kurdish, and soon after I felt a hand in my pocket twitching at something within. I immediately threw off the handkerchief from my face, deliberately sat up and looked round to detect the offender. He was a Turk who had overtaken us on the road, and made us very flattering offers of service. I did not at first like his appearance, for he had a malicious and sinister look. I had made several attempts to part company with him, but if we rode fast he was better mounted and would ride faster, and if we slackened our pace, he reduced his in equal proportion. He appeared a little confused at being caught, but soon recovered himself. Some of the villagers had stolen away. Others were still sitting by and doubtless were accessory to the act, for, with all their good qualities, the village Kurds have an incurable love of pilfering. I immediately called up John and, rebuking him for his negligence, told him I was ready to mount. I did not endeavour to conceal from the villagers that I was offended by what had been done, but, having remunerated the family who had entertained me, rode away without bidding them adieu.

I was still too feeble to ride far, and my guide promised to stop at the village of Geullu, one and a half hours distant, a large village, as he informed me, inhabited by Armenians. Our road lay over a rich plain, embosomed in the mountains, many acres of which were covered with grain. Here we described a line of black tents inhabited by wandering Kurds, a kind distinct from those of the villages and leading a sort of gipsy life. They were amusing themselves with dancing when we first observed them, but, as soon as they saw us, they broke from their ranks and ran towards us, dancing as they came. One, who appeared to be the chief among them, seized John's horse and demanded a present. John assented, on condition of a dance from the whole company. Forthwith they begun, young and old, men with gray hairs and little children, women with infants at their breasts and maidens, all moving to the music of the tambourine.

When the dance had ceased, they rushed forward for their expected presents. One of the girls seized my bridle with one hand, while, with the other, she dexterously attempted to pick my pockets, uttering all the time the only word of Turkish she seemed to know -Bakshish. Others performed the same service for the rest of the party, chuckling all the time with the greatest good nature imaginable. Notwithstanding this troublesome propensity, I could not but admire their open faces full of mirth. From old to young they appeared a comely race. Some of the girls, especially, slightly formed and with nut-brown complexions glowing with health and exercise, would have been accounted beautiful in more civilized lands than the bills of Kurdistan.

Geullu was in sight when we left this party, but my guide deceived me by telling me that it was another village and that our lodging-place was a little in advance. Almost before I was aware we had reached the extremity of the plain and had begun to ascend. There was no village in sight but the one in our rear, and nothing before us but a rough and steep mountain-side. I began to suspect that all was not right, but the Kurd persisted in advancing and I was too exhausted to resist. We could ascend only by keeping a zig-zag course. The path was composed of loose rocks which rolled incessantly from beneath our feet, and so steep that I was able to retain my saddle only by clinging to my horse's mane.

Such passages, however, are not remarkable in Eastern travelling, and the present one might have passed without notice, if it had not been for the suffering which it cost me. I had become so weak that I was unable to hold up my head, and the effort of riding was so painful that I was several times on the point of suffering myself to fall from my horse. The heat of the sun seemed to be penetrating me and drying up my blood. I thought I could feel every ray enter my flesh like burning iron. My brain was heated and the pulsations in my temples were painfully distinct. I looked up to the sun and its aspect seemed so merciless that my heart sank within me. Then I thought that God made it and that it was by his order that it consumed me. I remembered that I was in Christ's work, that he had told his disciples they must expect to suffer, and the thought that I was suffering for his sake, stole so sweetly into my spirit as to overmaster all my pain and make me rejoice in it. We reached the top of the hill, descended and crossed over many others, until, four long hours after passing Geullu, we reached the village of Narnigas. John helped me to dismount and laid in upon the grass, whilst he prepared a couch of straw for me in a stable.

The whole of this region which lies along the southern border of the lake, may be described in a word. Nearly parallel to the lake and about six miles distant, is a continuous range of mountains extremely rugged in appearance. They looked at the distance from which I viewed them, like bare rocks whose edges and peaks were sharp and pointed, as if cut into the angular and pyramidal forms which they bore. Snow rested on their highest summits. Between this range and the lake is an assemblage of lower mountains, covered with oak bushes and interspersed with plains of great

richness, from which beautiful slopes run up among the hills. Beyond the range, as the inhabitants informed me, the country is more level and inhabited by Kurds of the most ferocious character. Between the range and the lake are numerous villages of Armenians and Kurds. The former, I was told, have many convents in the mountains. We passed within sight of two or three of them in our ride from Geullu to Narnigas. The latter village was small and mean, inhabited by a mixed population of the two races who possess the land.

When my couch was prepared, John assisted me to it, and helped me to lie down, for I was now incapable of any effort. Though in a stable, only a few feet removed from a herd of cattle, and lying on a bed of straw spread upon the bare ground, the sense of repose was a more perfect luxury than, in better times, the couch of a king could have afforded. It was destined, however, to be soon interrupted. About sunset, a party of Kurds came to the door and demanded admittance. I saw at once that they were of the wild mountain stock, and the Armenians of the village said they were strangers. John told them that they might find some other stable, but that the one we occupied was our own for the night, and we wished for no company. He told them, moreover, that he knew very well their custom was to spend the night in the open air, and that they were not asking admittance for the sake of a shelter. They persisted, however, in their demand, and the strife grew warm. At length they asked that one of their number should be admitted, but this, of course, only strengthened our suspicion of some evil design. When this demand also was refused, they became furious, and pressed forward to enter. John, who possessed great muscular strength, and was, when occasion demanded, as bold as a lion, sprang at once to his feet and, seizing the foremost of them, hurled him with great violence out of the door, and shut it upon them. He then fastened it as well as he could and, planting himself before it, threatened to offer effectual resistance to the first man who should attempt to enter. They returned the threats with abundant interest, but no one ventured to carry them into effect. After loading us with all manner of abuse, they departed and left us to our repose.

We had come down to the lake an hour before reaching Narnigas, but had immediately left it again, and on quitting the village, the following morning, we still pursued our way at a considerable distance from it. The hills now presented a new appearance. They were more verdant and of a more regular form than before. Our course led us through a fertile valley, well cultivated, and watered by a little stream with a mill upon it. After four hours' travelling, we turned out of the valley into an extensive plain which conducted us once more to the shore of the lake. The Kurdish husbandmen were at work. In one place they were cutting grass with a sickle. I never before or afterwards, in the East, saw grass cut for fodder excepting in the Northern parts of European Turkey, nor did I ever, in any other instance, see an agricultural implement in form like the sickle. The food commonly given to cattle in Turkey is barley- straw, and the most common provender is barley. This is the most extensive product of agriculture

in the Empire. Wheat is next. Oats and rye I have seldom seen, and corn is abundant only in European Turkey, where the meal is made into bread equal to the brown loaves of New England. The grain that was growing on the border of the lake of Van was now ripe and nearly six feet high. In another part of the plain a party were ploughing, and singing right merrily at their work. An Eastern peasant singing at his work! This too was strange. I never heard it elsewhere, in those lands, than among the Kurds.

On the Southern side of this plain, away from the lake, was a singular natural curiosity. From the top of a high mountain-peak, a little stream descended in full view, and by a declivity so steep that from top to bottom the stream appeared a line of foam, looking in the distance like a silver thread stretched up and down the mountain side. We had travelled about sixteen miles when we reached a Kurdish village, where I found a tree, and reposed under it for several hours. I had been riding in incessant pain all the morning, and my strength was now so entirely exhausted, that when I was called to mount again, I was unable to rise. I wished to spend the night in the village, but the Kurd declared it to be a dangerous place, and that nothing would induce him to remain. John, too, was out of patience, and insolently asked me if I was going to die. After expostulating with them for some time, I happened to recollect what I had read in the memoir of Henry Martyn, of the relief which he received in a similar situation from the application of cold water. I determined to try its virtue, and ordered John to pour a jar of it on the back of my head. The effect was instantaneous. The blood ceased to throb in my temples; my strength returned; I rose and mounted my horse.

Our way now lay close along the shore. We were refreshed by a gentle breeze from the lake, and by the sight of its blue surface with its little isles. One of them, a few miles from the shore, was Akhtamar, renowned in Armenian history as the seat of a Catholicos of that Church. Though it lay without the precincts of my work, I should certainly have made a visit thither, had not the state of my health warned me to hasten forward to Van. I was told that I could find a boat at some of the villages which would convey me to the island, although the intercourse of the people with the shore is infrequent. The island appeared of a round form, and barren and rocky. It has a monastery upon it, but I could not, with certainty, distinguish it from the shore. I learned at Van that it was on an extensive scale, but the Armenians themselves knew little of the affairs of the island.



## CHAPTER XIV FROM VASTAN TO VAN

VASTAN-KURDISH BEY-MOHAMMEDAN PIETY-RIVERS-SHANIKOUM-  
ILLUSTRATION OF SCRIPTURE-VIEW OF THE LAKE-ERDREMID-INTRODUCTION  
TO THE PASHA OF VAN-CHAIRS-HOMAGE-LODGINGS.

The ride from the last village to Vastan, was only about ten miles. Vastan itself is a name of great antiquity, but the place has departed. It stood at the south-east corner of the lake, in an enchanting position, on a plain like that at the south-west extremity. There are now but five or six houses in the vicinity of the lake, but I was told that there were more in the gardens at the inner extremity of the plain, and that there are some slight traces of the ancient city remaining. The gardens themselves were in full view. They are the residence of several Kurdish Beys, or, as the Turks of this region and of Persia pronounce it, Begs. The residence of the ruler of the place, is on the top of a conical hill, overlooking the plain, and wears the air of a castle. Besides the few houses near the lake, were an old mosque and medresseh, the first I had seen since leaving Bitlis. One of the houses was the residence of a Bey, of whom we asked shelter for the night. We were received into a comfortable building, adjoining the house, and evidently intended for the reception of guests. It had in the middle a platform or stage, with a balustrade around it, where we could repose without danger of being trodden upon by our horses in the night. As the sun had not yet gone down, we preferred to sit for a while before the door, where carpets were spread for us. The Bey did not make his appearance for some time after our arrival, but I observed him eyeing us from a small window in the wall of his house. He sent us, however, a present of cherries and a bouquet of roses, in token of hospitality, and at last came himself. His sons, who had gathered round us, rose as he approached, and his appearance was so venerable that I almost involuntarily did the same. He was slightly bowed with age, but his figure was still tall and commanding. His beard, long since whitened by the frost of Time, descended to his breast. His face wore a grave, but kindly, aspect, and his whole appearance bespoke the simplicity of patriarchal times. He laid his hand upon his heart and bade us welcome. We pressed him to a seat upon the carpet, while his sons stood respectfully before him. The eldest was about forty years and the youngest just entered into manhood. So, I thought, the patriarch Jacob may have often sat at even-tide before the door of his tent, surrounded by his manly sons. The old Bey knew no language besides his own, but one of the young men was able to serve as interpreter.

When the sun had set, we retired to our apartment, and the Bey came in and ate and spent the evening with us. I have often met with Mussulmans who seemed to possess a deep religious feeling, and with whom I could exercise something of religious communion. I have sometimes had my own mind quickened and benefitted by the reverence with which they spoke of the Deity, and have sometimes mingled in harmonious converse with them on holy things. I have heard them insist with much

earnestness on the duty of prayer, when they appeared to have some spiritual sense of its nature and importance. I have sometimes found them entertaining elevated views of moral duty, and looking with contempt on the pleasures of the world. These are, indeed, rare characters, but I should do injustice to my own conviction, if I did not confess that I have found them. In these instances I have uniformly been struck with a strong resemblance to patriarchal piety. That reverence for God, that spirit of simple trust and resignation to his will, that disposition to observe the operations of his hand in the works of nature, and that kindly and beneficent feeling towards all which are the prominent characteristics of the faith of prophets and holy men of old, are also the peculiar traits of Islamism, whenever it assumes any thing of a spiritual character. And why should it not be so? It is essentially a transcript of the religion of the Old Testament, corrupted no more than that was corrupted when Mohammedanism arose. I would not appear as the panegyrist of the religion, nor would I deny to it what I sincerely believe to be its due. On the contrary, I exalt the religion of the Bible when I show that even its corruptions may sometimes have a beneficent tendency.

These thoughts are suggested by my recollections of the Kurdish patriarch. When we sat down to eat, he implored a blessing with great solemnity, and rendered his thanks when we arose. Before he left us, he spread his carpet and offered his evening devotions with apparent meekness and humility, and I could not but feel how impressive are some of the Oriental forms of worship, when I saw his aged head bowed to the earth in religious homage. I have not scrupled to adopt the same form when necessitated to perform the same duty in the presence of Mussulmans, avoiding, of course, their various and oft-repeated prostrations. The very posture help to create a feeling of lowliness and humility, and has been, I think, wisely adopted, or rather preserved as an ancient Oriental usage, among the Mesopotamian Christians.

We saw nothing of our venerable host the next morning, but sent him our *selam* before we left. Our way continued along the water's brink and soon turned the south-western extremity, and changed its direction from an easterly to a nearly north-westerly course. We passed at this point the most considerable stream that we found running into the lake. Its length, we were told, does not exceed five or six miles, and its width where we crossed it was about twenty feet. We had before passed several shallow rivulets, but nothing worthy of notice. Still the lake, embosomed as it is in mountains, must receive annually large supplies from tributary streams. Yet it has no outlet, and is never known to rise above a certain height. I was compelled to stop at an Armenian village called Shanikoum, and finding there a retired garden, I determined to spend the day. We entered it without permission, for none of the inhabitants would receive us into their houses or show us any civility. No one, however, disturbed our repose in the garden, and I enjoyed, for the first time since leaving Bitlis, a few hours of retirement.

We left with the declining sun, and rode two and a half hours over an uninteresting country. Excepting a few fields of grain standing in sheaves, all was a stony and barren soil. As we passed one of the fields, a little girl took up a sheaf, and came and placed it before our horses. This was to indicate that it was an offering, and we were expected to

recognize the courtesy by a small present. This is a very prevalent custom in Turkey. Lambs are often presented in the same way. Another custom is, for the traveller to invoke a blessing upon the grain while it is still growing in the field. The same is, doubtless, alluded to in Psalm CXXIX., where those who hate Zion are likened to the useless grass upon the house-tops, to which they who go by do not say, The blessing of the Lord be upon you.

The view from this point was very fine, and the whole scene was remarkably impressive. We were directly opposite the point at which we first approached the lake, and the whole breadth of its motionless surface stretched before us until lost in the misty distance. Beyond it the sun was going down. To the N.W. was the majestic form of Subhan. "And there," said the Turk as we turned a point, "is Van." It appeared across a bay, upon a plain extending from the same range of mountains before noticed, which come down near the lake behind Vastan and sweeping round, still preserving their parallel direction, run off to the north and form the great boundary between Turkey and Persia. The town appeared like a mass of parched earth, with vineyards in front and a high rock towering behind it. For announcing this addition to the scene, the Turk demanded a bakshish.

As it was too late to reach the city before night, and I wished on my first entrance, to present myself before the Pasha, we stopped at Erdremid, an Armenian village containing 100 families. It was built upon the steep side of a hill and the houses were well constructed of stone and above ground. Below it were gardens covering at least a hundred acres. These are inhabited by Mussulmans, and contain, the villagers told me, a thousand houses. The place is probably the site of an ancient city as there are still to be seen there some remains and inscriptions similar to those which I shall hereafter describe in Van. We found in it a comfortable resting-place and an excellent supper, both of them almost as great rarities as arrow-headed inscriptions.

We commenced our journey the next morning with unwonted alacrity. The distance to the city was short, but, as we were obliged to go round the head of the bay, we were nearly two hours in reaching it. Our way was over a uniform plain, but the city sat so low that we could discern nothing besides the minarets. Some one, coming from the town, informed us that the Pasha was in his summer palace in the gardens. We therefore stopped outside the walls, while I sent forward the Turk with the firman and letter from Erzroum. He soon returned with three attendants, who announced themselves as sent by the Pasha to escort me to the palace. As my fever was again upon me, I sent one of them to make my selam to the Pasha, with a request that he would appoint me lodgings and permit me to retire to them without ceremony. He was unsuccessful. The Pasha was ready to receive me-the Pasha was most anxious to see me-the Pasha would not detain me long, and I could not avoid appearing. One of the escort, a Kurdish Effendi, who will again appear in our narrative, observing my dejection, remarked that I was receiving my honour rather indifferently. But I had not enough of physical energy left to appear otherwise; and the conduct of the Pasha,

though Eastern politeness, seemed to me so unreasonable that I determined to show him my apology was no feint, and to look just as I felt.

We passed the great gate of the palace and through its outer court to another lying upon a garden. I stopped just without it to divest myself of my boots and assume a pair of Turkish slippers, and then entered. On the opposite side of the court was a pavilion built in stone, open on three sides and connected, by the other, with the palace. There sat the Pasha. As he was still some forty feet distant, he had a good opportunity to observe me as I approached, and measure the etiquette with which he should receive me. My dress, worn and stained with travel, and myself broken with illness and looking as forlorn and dejected as one of his own rayahs, I could not have presented a very formidable appearance. However, he received me civilly and with much more of respect than my outward man would indicate that I was entitled to.

The pavilion in which the Pasha sat was built of stone, and supported on three sides by columns. Ample curtains were suspended from above, which could be raised or lowered at pleasure. One fountain played in the middle of the pavilion, and another in the court without. The Pasha was a middle-aged man with a fine Osmanlee face.

He had put on, for the occasion, a cloak in the same style with that worn by the late Sultan, when abroad, with a gold-laced collar, and a golden clasp. He had also set a chair for me. I suppose he had never seen any other, and the sight of it made me ashamed of my own habits. What an idea of Western customs, I thought, must that tall, straight-backed, narrow-seated body-bearer give to an Oriental! I felt, too, how much less I was at my ease than the Pasha was, when I found myself perched upon it, and compelled, by its unyielding perpendicularity, to sit up straight. My reader will not understand the true nature of the position, without being informed, that the chair was one of those articles of Malta manufacture, made expressly for the Eastern market, and only, one would imagine, for a people who were not able to discriminate the proper qualities of such conveniences. Its back was as vertical as can be found in the most venerable remnant of Saxon antiquity, its seat of twisted flag, yielding to the weight of the occupant, and sinking so low that the legs swung over the front as upon a fulcrum, the feet, the while, seeking in vain to reach the floor, and the nether extremities tingling from lack of circulation. How much more natural and comfortable, I thought within myself, is the Eastern mode of sitting. The sofa, our most luxurious article, is only an approximation to a Turkish divan.

The Pasha asked many questions on America, and my object in visiting his country, to all which I answered discreetly. He then sent for John, who made a low obeisance as he entered, and, at the Pasha's bidding, knelt at the foot of his carpet. His examination ended, the Kurd was called. He went a degree farther in his respects than John, for he approached, knelt, kissed the border of the carpet, and then rising to his feet, stood with his hands folded before him. Upon being questioned, he had the assurance to say that he had been deputed by the Bey of Bitlis, in whose service he professed to be, to convey us into the presence of the Pasha. The whole story was a

fabrication, and his conduct had been an incessant torment to me from the moment of our leaving Bitlis. The Pasha, however, believed him and, according to custom, ordered a present of fifty piastres to be made to him by his treasurer. The Pasha offered me a room in the palace, which looked out on the pavilion and court, and at noon sent me a rich breakfast from his own table. Finding myself, however, exposed to constant observation, and feeling the need of retirement and repose, I begged the Pasha to assign to me a place of residence in the midst of the gardens. He readily complied with my request, and, as it was Saturday, I retired to my new lodgings before night.

## CHAPTER XV

### VAN

HISTORY OF VAN-SITUATION-ANCIENT REMAINS-PARTIAL DESTRUCTION BY  
TAMERLANE-GARDENS-ANCIENT INSCRIPTION-MY HOST-REPAST-ETIQUETTE  
OF THE TABLE-EASTERN AND WESTERN HABITS COMPARED-SUNDAY-THE  
CHURCH-GOVERNMENT OF VAN-MILITARY-SCHULTZ-THE CITY-TRADE-  
INHABITANTS-CHARACTER OF THE ARMENIANS-THE STATE OF  
MOHAMMEDANISM IN THESE REGIONS.

Although my object in these pages is not to gratify a merely literary or scientific curiosity, I shall be pardoned if I dwell with some minuteness upon a city so little known and yet so venerable for its antiquity as Van. The ancient historians of Armenia pretend that it was built by Semiramis, queen of Assyria, who, after her conquest of the country, chose this for her summer residence, and expended upon it her royal treasures. It afterwards fell into decay, and was restored by a king who flourished shortly before Alexander, and who gave to it his own name, the same which it now bears. Having again fallen, either beneath the shocks of war or the ravages of time, it was repaired by another king of Armenia about A. C. 150. A body of captive Jews were established there by the Armenian king Tigranes, and became very numerous. They were rooted out by the Persians, after their capture of the city, about A. D. 350. None of the race are now remaining. Its citadel was then accounted the strongest post in Armenia.

Doubtless it occupied the site of the present one, upon the apparently impregnable rock which overlooks the town. The city subsequently passed through several changes of domination, and in A. D. 1392 was taken by Tamerlane. It afterwards suffered another capture, and was finally taken by the Turks, A. D. 1533.\* The history of its changes since that date, as the head of a pashalik, which has been now half-independent of the sway of the Sultan, and now in open rebellion, would fill an interesting page in the modern history of the East; but we must turn to the present.

The reader may, perhaps, imagine a plain extending from the mountains before described to the shore of the lake. Out of that plain, farther from the mountains than from the lake, but at a goodly distance from both, rises a calcareous rock to the height

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\*St. Martin, l. 137 et seq.

of several hundred feet, and about a mile in length\*. It is entirely isolated, and presents so strong a contrast with the perfect level of the plain, that one is ready, at first sight, to pronounce it artificial. So indeed Schultz reported it to be; but upon careful examination, I could find nothing to justify the opinion. The direction of the rock is nearly East and West. The Southern side is a bare, solid, perpendicular face, while the Northern slopes gradually down to the plain. At the foot of the rock, on the Southern side, lies VAN. The wall of the city, which is double, composed of earth, and in an excellent condition, is in the form of a semicircle, of which the rock itself is the base. What plainly proves that the latter is not artificial is, that no joints can be discovered, and it has all the indentures and irregularities of a natural surface. The Northern or sloping side is covered with earth and vegetation. Art, however, has worked upon its surface and penetrated its bowels. Nearly in the centre of the vertical face, is a large and close inscription in the arrow-headed character. As it was too far up to be deciphered from the town, Schultz caused himself to be let down from above, and copied the whole. The citadel which crowns the summit, has a wall running along the Northern slope and meeting the wall of the town at its extremities. The garrison consisted of an old Turk, who refused us admittance, until he received a written order from the Pasha. The interior was in a neglected and desolate condition. Most of the buildings were in ruins, among others the mosque-an almost invariable accompaniment of Turkish fortresses. The ordnance consisted of a few old cannon, mounted on broken carriages.

At the Eastern end of the citadel are ranges of subterranean, or rather *subrupean*, apartments. The first is entered by a large door-way in the vertical face of the rock, which here forms, by a retreating angle, a broad platform on the very brink of the precipice. The rock about the door is smoothed so as to resemble the front of a house. The apartment is about forty feet long, from twenty to thirty wide, and of a corresponding height. It had no opening for light besides the door, and was partly filled with rubbish and stones. At its inner extremity was another opening leading to a second apartment, and beyond this, I was told, was still a third of the same character. On the other side of the angle made by the platform, was a second range of rooms, succeeding each other in like manner, but on a very small scale. They appeared to be intended either for store-houses or as receptacles for the dead. A late Pasha, whose tyrannical acts are still narrated by the inhabitants, used to send his victims hither for private execution. This at least was the story of our guide, and it received some corroboration from the great number of human bones which we found scattered about.

One day as I was wandering in the garden of an Agha of the city, on whom I had called to gather some information respecting the state of the medressehs, and whose gardens lay at the foot of the rock, near its Western extremity, I observed some distinct traces of a flight of stairs, which had led from the town up the face of the rock, out of which they were cut. They were evidently intended to conduct to apartments above. The doors of the apartments themselves were visible, looking out of the solid surface of the

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\*I measured the length only by the eye. Schultz reports it to be three miles. *Abrégé de Géographie*, par Balbi, p. 646.

rock, and inaccessible, also, excepting by ropes, either from above or below. In their vicinity whole apartments have evidently been destroyed, since what were once their interior faces now appear without. The ruin seems to have been the work of man, and is doubtless the same which Tamerlane is said to have effected, after taking the city. History records that he found here certain structures of great solidity, which he determined to destroy. Bands of his soldiers, practised in the work of extermination, laboured for months under his direction, but the task exceeded their power, and they were compelled to leave it partially accomplished.

The remains which now exist are to be regarded, therefore, as a portion only, and perhaps a small portion, of more extensive works. The whole are attributed to Semiramis. Hither, we may imagine, this powerful and voluptuous queen retired, amidst the heats of summer, to rooms decorated with all the magnificence of royalty. Now she has passed away, and the palaces which, in her life-time, were only the play-things of her power, and the favoured scenes of her pleasures, are become, though deserted and dark, the most durable memorials of her greatness. In those ancient times the plain around was covered with beautiful gardens, watered by running streams, and adorned with pavilions. Of these, also, something remains. The plain to the South East of the city, for miles in extent, is still covered with gardens, in which the richest portion of the population reside. The fruits are nearly the same as are found at Bitlis. Willows overshadow the water courses, and the tall, slender, cream-coloured poplar mingles with the darker foliage of the fruit-trees.

On a rock to the east of the town is another inscription. The face of the rock is sculptured in the form of a door-way, about twenty feet in height and proportionally broad. The whole is covered close with characters in a state of perfect preservation. My attention was drawn to it by the people who reported it to be an inscription in some Frank language, but the characters, though as strange to me as to them, were the same as those above the town. I had come to the spot without my pencil, so that I was unable to make a copy of any part of the inscription, and more important duties would not permit me to revisit the place. The characters, however, were of a uniform shape, bearing a general resemblance to those of the inscriptions found among the ruins of Persepolis and Babylon. They consist entirely of one form, which is that of a wedge, and the only variety seems to be in the different position of the characters, some being placed vertically and others horizontal.

The lodgings assigned to me by the Pasha were in the house of a wealthy Armenian. A servant had been sent forward to apprise him of my coming. He received me at the outer gate with an unconstrained welcome as if he had invited me thither himself. A room was already prepared for me in the most elevated part of the house, overlooking, on three sides, the forest of gardens beneath, and commanding a distant view of the city and the lake. The grounds belonging to the house, though but a speck in the midst of the gardens, themselves covered many acres and were cultivated by no less than thirty-six labourers. My host was still a young man, but had passed through

some interesting vicissitudes of fortune. His father had been the banker of the tyrannical Pasha before-mentioned, who had put him to death with the design of seizing his riches. The son, however, anticipating the event, had gathered his father's wealth and fled to a place of security, where he remained until his enemy was removed or dead. The catastrophe, he said, had been a warning to him to avoid public stations. He had, therefore, returned and purchased an estate among the gardens, where he could spend his life in retirement and quiet.

Near the house was a *kiöshk*, or summer pavilion, where my host sometimes entertained a party of friends. On one occasion I was invited to be present. The pavilion was empowered among trees and opened, upon one side, on a square tank or reservoir, like those often seen in the courts of Persian houses. The floor was covered with carpets and cushions where the guests, twelve in number, could repose at their ease. Around the reservoir musicians were seated, who played while we ate. Some of the instruments were new to me. One in particular attracted my attention. It was in form like the body of a piano, though so small that it could be lifted with ease by the player. Its construction and notes also resembled those of the piano, but its cords were struck by two pieces of wood or cork attached to sticks held in the hands of the performer.

Two large sofas were placed for the party. When we had seated ourselves, a narrow cloth, sufficiently long to extend around the table, was spread in our laps and a napkin richly embroidered was thrown over the left shoulder of each guest. Previously, however, servants came in with napkins on their shoulders, a ewer containing water in one hand and a basin in the other. The ewer is generally metallic, and somewhat resembling in form an old-fashioned teapot. The nose, however, is so small that only a slender stream of water is emitted, which is poured upon the hands of the guest by the servant kneeling before him, while the basin receives it below. To avoid the offence which the sight of the foul water might give the guest, the basin has a metallic cover perforated with holes, through which the water passes and is concealed beneath. From the centre of this cover rises a cylindrical post three or four inches high, on which the soap is laid. The guest, having performed his ablution, takes the napkin from the servant's shoulder, wipes his hands, replaces it, and the servant passes to the next. By this process fingers are made as fit to be thrust into a dish as knives and forks can be.

Generally a kind of soup is first served, into which each guest, the most respectable taking the lead, dips his spoon. Pieces of bread are placed in profusion around the sofa. There is no clashing of knives and forks, no changing of plates. Each dish is placed in the centre of the table, and they follow one another in rapid succession. Each one takes a portion from the side nearest him, so that the numerous fingers thrust in together do not interfere with each other. The guest has hardly time to fill his mouth before the dish is snatched away and another takes its place. Each dish is distinct in its kind. There is no intermingling of different articles. If there are vegetables, they follow separately and alone. A Turkish *sofra* is almost always furnished with pickles, which are esteemed a great provocative of appetite. Sherbets, though common, are not so often



found as at a Persian board. The variety of dishes is very great, and their number is proportioned to the rank and ability of the host. I have seen nearly twenty follow each other in the course of half an hour. Mutton is the meat most commonly eaten by the Turks. I have been served with a dinner in which there were brought forward about twelve dishes, each different from the other, but nearly all of them preparations of mutton. The last dish is the pilav. When this appears, the guest may understand that whatever remains of appetite he possesses must be satisfied upon that.

The etiquette of a Turkish repast is minute in the extreme. One can hardly imagine, without observing it, how much refinement there may be in eating with one's fingers. The radical difference between Oriental and Occidental manners is, that the first are formed upon nature, the second upon art. They may be equally refined, but the first have a rule which never changes, the second, one which is never fixed. That the Turk eats with his fingers, or sits upon the floor, does not prove him a barbarian, nor, on the other hand, are the forms of fashion always worthy of civilized men. Fashion, being arbitrary, may, at any moment, exhibit the indications of barbarous life. There is, in reason, no higher civilization in wearing ornaments in the ears or on the neck, than in the nose or about the ankle, nor is it an evidence of inferior intelligence to swathe the foot than to contract, unnaturally, a more sensitive and vital part. This, at least, is to be said for Oriental etiquette, that it is never grotesque, and I know of no juster principle on which to base the forms of society, than that which lies at the foundation of Eastern manners, which is, to follow and improve upon nature, instead of abandoning it for arbitrary devices.

But I am digressing. I was about to say, that the etiquette of the table among the Turks is extremely punctilious. The guest uses only his right hand in eating, the left being reserved for other purposes. All wait until he who is superior dips his spoon, or his finger, into the dish. When one drinks, the rest exclaim, '*Afiyetlerola*', - 'May it do you good,'-and he responds by the usual sign of thanks. The guests never become boisterous, excepting among the Christians, whose meals are generally accompanied with wine or rakee. There is no lingering at the table after the meal is ended, but all return to their seats, and the process of ablution is carefully repeated, the mouth and mustaches being included in the operation. Coffee and pipes are then served and the guests retire early.

The hour of the principal repast is shortly after sunset. When our dinner at Van was ended, candles were brought, roses were thrown upon the water, and the music was continued until the guests were ready to depart. The spot won so much upon me, that I frequently afterwards retired thither alone, to repose during the heat of the day, and to listen to the music of the birds and the gurgling of the water, as it fell into the reservoir.

The next day after my arrival was Sunday, when, according to my custom, I remained in my lodgings and read the service of the Church, reflecting, with great comfort, that the same petitions which I was offering in a strange land, were ascending

from a thousand sanctuaries in the land of my fathers. It was at such moments that I felt, as I cannot describe, the glorious oneness of the Church. Wherever her children roam, they never pass beyond her heavenly influence. While they kneel in her penitential confessions, or rise in her ascriptions of praise, or send up her devout supplications, separation and distance are forgotten, they bow in imagination before her altars, and mingle, once more, in the worship of their brethren.

On Monday, I went to pay my respects to the Pasha, and was well received. The government of his province was formerly hereditary. Each successive ruler, however, was formally recognized by a royal firman, and owed subordination to the Pasha of Erzroum. This order of things was interrupted, as late, I believe, as 1831, when the Governor of the province threw off even the form of subjection, and appeared in open rebellion. Instead of maintaining himself in the citadel, to which he at first retreated, he went out to meet the troops sent against him by the Pasha of Erzroum, in the open field. He was defeated, his office taken from him, and the line of succession broken up. The rulers of the province now receive their appointment from the Sultan, and are entirely subject to his authority. The present incumbent is an Osmanlee of the new school, and, though a strict Mussulman, professes to be a friend of reform. He had lately received orders to introduce the new military system into his province. A thousand soldiers had already been enrolled, and the Pasha was daily expecting the arrival of a caravan, laden with military equipments for them. A body of the new recruits were on duty at the palace, and appeared as if awaiting some momentous change. They still wore the rude peasant-garb in which they had been caught, and, instead of European muskets, shouldered their own rough fire-locks, or, where these were wanting, good stout clubs. The mock solemnity of their appearance, as they marched before the Pasha, in his visits to the city, was ludicrous in the extreme.

During my interview with the Pasha, he gave me considerable information respecting Schultz, who had visited the city several years before, and spent a month in his researches in Van and the vicinity. The Pasha described him as, in stature, the tallest man he had ever seen. He travelled through the country in lordly style, making magnificent presents wherever he went. He was accompanied by an interpreter, several servants, and no less than seven sumpter horses. In this manner he went into Kurdistan, where, doubtless, that upon which he depended for his security, proved his ruin. His display of wealth tempted the cupidity of a Kurdish Bey, who was entertaining him. His host dismissed him, when he was ready to depart, with a powerful guard, ostensibly as a mark of consideration and honour, but he gave the escort secret instructions to murder him on the road. On the second day of their march, the chief of the party invited him to turn aside, on pretence of visiting some ruin near at hand. As soon as they had reached a convenient place, the guard fell upon him unawares, and, before he could offer resistance, despatched him on the spot. The lesson was so instructive a one that I thought it worthy of being recorded.

Bull I could not but regret, in my own case, that I had not some presents with which to repay the courtesy of the Pasha of Van. He was unwearied in his attentions during my stay. Whenever I wished to go abroad, he sent me horses and gave me free permission to go where I pleased. In this way, although still in a weak state, I was able to visit every part of the town and to pursue my inquiries among all classes. The place has all the appearance of a Persian town, excepting its Turkish minarets. John remarked this on our first approach to the city. The houses are constructed of sun-dried bricks. The better sort are sometimes covered externally with plaster composed of earth and straw mixed together. Although the general appearance of the city is that of a great collection of mud-buildings, they are not individually unpleasant to the sight, when regularly and well made. The streets, however, like those of all Turkish towns, are narrow, ill-paved and filthy. The bazars also are very small and mean. There are but two khans in the place, one of which was occupied exclusively by Persian merchants, who reside here as at Bitlis. There is only one respectable bath, to which the Pasha did me the honour to invite me in company with himself.

The trade of the city is with Bitlis, Persia and Erzroum, but chiefly with the two latter. Cotton is the principal article brought from Persia, and cloths, which constitute the chief manufacture of the place, are the most common export. The distance to Erzroum is Seventy-two hours, or twelve caravan stages, and the route to that city by Arnes, ten hours distant, and Melezgherd, is, I was assured, quite safe. The city is the head of a district or county of seventy-five villages, besides being the chief place of the Pashalik. The cold season continues about five months, and is, in the estimation of the inhabitants, severe. All, however, united in extolling the salubrity and healthiness of the climate.

Tavernier, who travelled in the 17th century, reports that the majority of the inhabitants were Armenians. According to the best information which I could obtain, the same is not now true. There are between four and five thousand Mussulman families, who are chiefly, if not altogether, Turkish, and two thousand families of Armenians. A fourth part of the latter reside within the walls, and these are generally the poorest portion of the population. The city is the seat of a Bishop, who resides in a monastery two or three hours distant, and the Churches, though few in number, are served by forty priests. I could not learn that the Catholicos of Akhtamar exercises any authority over them, nor that he possesses any more than an ordinary episcopal jurisdiction. The Mussulmans have fifteen mosques and four medressehs, but all of an inferior order. They have also four schools of the ordinary kind, and the Armenians two.

I was very favourably impressed with the character both of the Mussulmans and the Armenians of Van. It appeared to me more like that of the same people in Constantinople, than I had seen since leaving Trebizond. On mentioning my impression to John, I found that he had been struck with the same resemblance; which he attributed to the fact that the intercourse of Van with the capital is much more intimate than that of any intermediate city. Large numbers of the people visit Constantinople in

quest of employment, and, as the laws of the Empire will not permit them to remove their families, they return after a few years to their native place. John assured me that servants from Van were the most esteemed among the Armenians of Constantinople. My intercourse with this people was of a most gratifying character. The more respectable among them I found unusually intelligent and consequently better able to appreciate justly any efforts for the improvement of their nation.

That part of Armenia which I traversed between Erzroum and Van presents, doubtless, a wider and more promising field for missionary labour among the Armenians, than is to be found elsewhere within the ancient borders of their empire. They have here been less disturbed by the changes of war and less oppressed by Mussulman bigotry. They have, in the cities, more of independence and equal privileges with the Mohammedans than I had before witnessed in any other part of the interior of Turkey, and, as a natural consequence, they are more intelligent and high-minded.

The picture which I have presented of the villagers is, indeed, not so favourable, but its shades are no darker than those in which the character of the Armenian peasantry throughout Asiatic Turkey must be drawn. And here let me say, once for all, that in describing them as in some respects inferior to the Mussulmans, I discard altogether the inference that Christianity, as it is now corrupted in the East, is less beneficent in its influence on character than the religion of Mohammed. The inferiority of the Christians, wherever it appears, is owing to civil not to religious causes. They are degraded by long ages of oppression. From a people more elevated than their masters now are, they have become slaves. Generous and manly feeling has been long since crushed by the iron hand of tyranny, and they have become churlish and inhospitable. Accustomed to seek every expedient to escape the incessant extortions of petty rulers, they have learned both to cringe and to deceive.

Their circumstances, not their religion, have made them what they are.

Wherever their condition is more free, their character rises in proportion. So it is among the Christians of Mesopotamia, and still more remarkably among the independent Nestorians, who inhabit the mountains of Kurdistan. So it is among the Christians of European Turkey, who, though most blindly devoted to superstition, are generally cheerful, industrious and hospitable. In all these instances their civil condition is more easy, and the influence which it exerts upon their moral and intellectual character is obvious to the most casual observer. In recording, therefore, the degradation of the Christian peasantry of Turkey, I would not be understood as detracting aught from the beneficent tendencies of our holy religion, even in its lowest estate, but would rather show thereby how deeply malignant is the influence of that false faith whose features it is the main design of these pages to delineate.

Still, as an honest reporter, I cannot deny to Islamism whatever of good I have found in it, and, in this character, I must acknowledge that I have seldom seen it presenting a less repulsive aspect than in the interesting region which we have just surveyed. From Erzroum to Van, the Turks, in general, seem sincerely attached to their religion, although they hold it in a very imperfect form. They know, indeed, hardly more

of it than its outward and ceremonial performances, and some of these, I thought, in many instances, I knew better than themselves. They are the most punctual in their prayers of any Mussulmans that I have ever seen, but they often seemed ignorant of the most common precepts of the Koran and the Sunneh, respecting the proper exercise of devotion. Instead of the perfect abstraction which is required, I have frequently seen them stop in the midst of their prayers to give directions to servants, or to join the conversation which was going on around them, and then resume their devotions. This became, at length, so common, that I almost ceased to notice it. They were also in the habit of praying without having performed the prescribed ablutions, evidently unaware that there was no point of religious practice on which the Mussulman precepts are more rigid and imperative.

Irregularities of this kind made it apparent, that the whole extent of their acquaintance with Islamism, was confined to the creed, which every Mussulman invariably knows, and to a few imperfect rites. In this form, doubtless, it is handed down from father to son—a traditional knowledge, imbibed with the first impressions of childhood, and remaining unenlarged in riper years. The very few educated in the medressehs are, of course, better informed, but, after conversation with several of them, I could not discover any systematic acquaintance with the doctrines of the religion. The medressehs themselves are few, and only the lower studies are pursued in them.

The people have less of exclusiveness and prejudice against Christians than the Osmanlees. They are more free and unreserved in conversation, and their intercourse with the native Christians is remarkably intimate and cordial. I had never before heard Mussulmans speaking the language of rayahs, and, as yet, I had nowhere seen rayahs so much respected by their Mohammedan neighbours. If I may judge from my own reception, they are also more courteous towards Franks than Mussulmans generally are. This difference is, perhaps, owing in part to the fact, that their prejudices required, I have frequently seen them stop in the midst of their prayers to give directions to servants, or to join the conversation which was going on around them, and then resume their devotions. This became, at length, so common, that I almost ceased to notice it. They were also in the habit of praying without having performed the prescribed ablutions, evidently unaware that there was no point of religious practice on which the Mussulman precepts are more rigid and imperative.

I have only to add, that the Turks of these regions are, for the most part, in the lowest state of ignorance. With regard to the most common matters of information, their ideas are like those of a child. It is this, doubtless, which makes their religion a mere superstition, devoid of all spiritual conception. Their minds are not sufficiently elevated, nor their moral nature sufficiently enlarged, to receive any other than a low and gross thought. This, indeed, is true of the common classes of Turks every where. With such, Islamism appears to be nothing more than a purely superstitious observance of certain external rites, and, saving the formulary of the unity of the Godhead, hardly to be

distinguished from Paganism. It is the performing of certain washings in a certain way, the repeating of certain prayers, not one word of which is understood, with certain genuflections and prostrations, the abstaining from certain meats and drinks, and the refraining from food during certain hours of the day, at a certain season of the year. Nothing of all this is objectionable in itself, excepting the prayers in an unknown tongue. Some Mussulmans, I know, associate these practices with spiritual ideas. But the multitude rest in the practices themselves, without any thought beyond them. The merit is in doing these prescribed things in a prescribed manner. This is their religion, that which is to save them. They tremble for themselves when they neglect them, while, at the same time, they may, without remorse, be impure in their thoughts, deceitful, and vindictive. They are confident in proportion as they scrupulously perform them, while, in truth, their confidence is no more than a Pharisaic pride. It is Islamism appearing under this form, of which I speak when I say, that it is essentially heathenism.

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## NEW BOOKS

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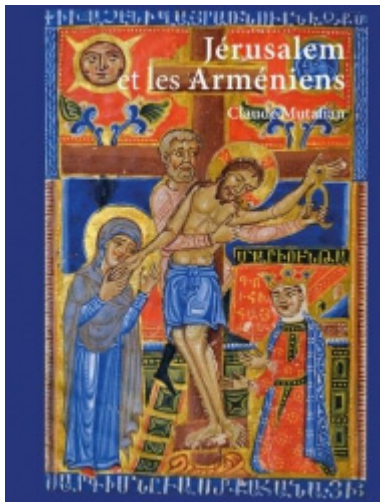


## PARS TUĞLACI. PAGES OF LIFE

By: **Hasmik Stepanyan**

*Institute of Oriental Studies, Yerevan, 2022, 132 p.*

Pars Tuglaci is a prominent English language and Turkish language encyclopedist, linguist, author of encyclopaedia, historian, culturologist and translator. His culturological, encyclopaedic and typographic heritage greatly contributed to the study of the history of Western Armenians. This book is dedicated to his publications in the fields of oriental studies and Armenian studies.



## JERUSALEM AND THE ARMENIANS: UNTIL THE OTTOMAN CONQUEST, 1516

By: **Claude Mutaïan**

*Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 2022 518 p. + 940 images*

In the fourfold division of the Old City of Jerusalem, the Christian and the Armenian Quarters are contiguous but independent. This situation corresponds to the ancientness and the importance of the Armenian presence. The relations of the Armenians with the Holy City have never ceased, and they culminated at the time of the Crusades. Jerusalem became the seat of an Armenian Patriarchate and the cultural activity was intense: inscriptions, sculptures, mosaics, and manuscripts decorated with miniatures which are among the masterpieces of Armenian art. Today, Jerusalem is the most important repository of Armenian culture outside Armenia. Claude Mutaïan's most recent book, *Jérusalem et les Arméniens: Jusqu'à la conquête ottomane (1516)*, presents the relations between Armenia and Jerusalem in their historical and artistic context with an abundance of maps, genealogical charts, and images.

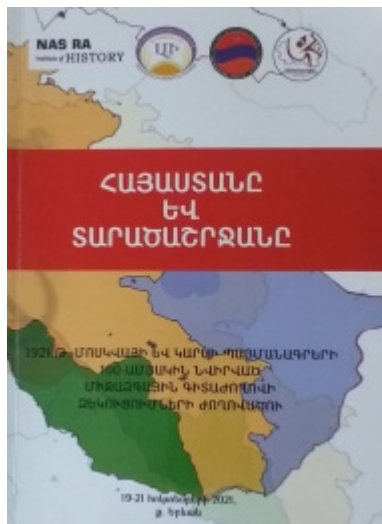




## ARMENIA-IRAN. HISTORICAL PAST AND THE PRESENT

*ed. by Gohar Iskandaryan, Institute of Oriental Studies, Yerevan, 2022, 396 p.*

Proceedings of the International Conference, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.



## ARMENIA AND THE REGION: LESSONS, EVALUATIONS, PERSPECTIVES

By: **Khachatur Stepanyan**

*Lusakn, Yerevan, 2022, 432 p.*

The collection summarizes the materials of the international conference “Armenia and the region: lessons, evaluations, perspectives” dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Moscow and Kars agreements organized in Yerevan on October 19-21, 2021.

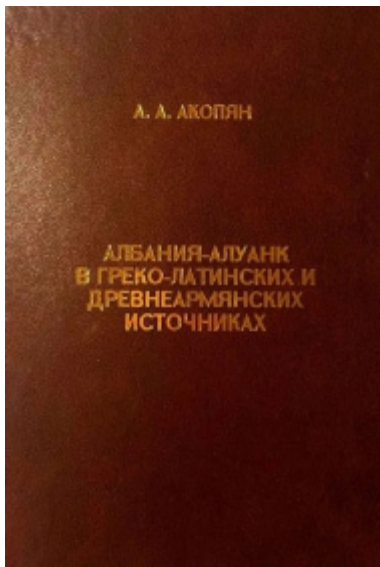


## THE MICROTOPYNOMS OF ARTSAKH

By: **Karapetyan S. G.** Head of Research on Armenian Architecture

*RAA, Yerevan, 2022, 472 p.*

The Microtoponyms of Artsakh contains mapped microtoponyms from about 200 villages of the land of Artsakh. Intended for specialists in the history of the Armenian nation.



## ALBANIA-ALUANK IN GREEK-LATIN AND ANCIENT ARMENIAN SOURCES

By: **Aleksan Hakobian** Docteur en sciences historiques  
Institut d'études orientales, NAN RA

*(second revised edition) by Aleksan Hakobyan, Gitutyun, Yerevan, 2022, 305 p.*

In the second, revised edition of this monograph on Caucasian Albania (the first was published in 1987), one of the components of the Caucasian historical and cultural region, a deeper semantic analysis of the terms "Albania" and "Albanians" in ancient and medieval sources in the period from IV century to X century AD is carried out. The author reasonably shows that the term "Albanians", which never reflected the self-name of the formed ethnic unit, meant only a meta-ethnic community - the population of political and administrative entities with the name "Albania". Concretizing the content of the studied terms for each historical epoch, the author reveals the most important moments of Albanian history, historical geography, chronology and ethnonymy, analyzes in detail the unique monument of Armenian historical literature of the 10th century - "History of Albania" by Movses Dashurantsi.

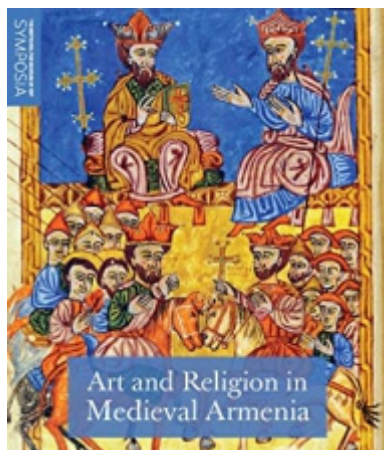


## THE LANGUAGE OF THE ARMENIAN COLOPHONS (9TH - 15TH CENTURIES)

By: **Khachik A. Harutyunyan**

*Matenadaran, Yerevan, 2022, 400 p.*

The study is dedicated to examining the vocabulary of the colophons of Armenian manuscripts. In particular, the words used in these written monuments were studied and classified according to the respective layers, as well as the manifestations of the influence of the language in the written speech of the colophons at different stages of the development of the Armenian language were highlighted. Special attention was also paid to the usage of words known from other literary works in the colophons.

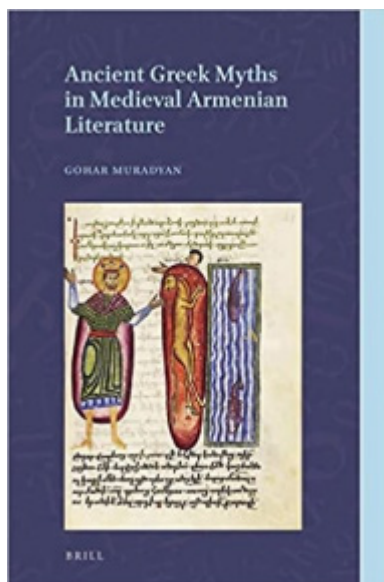


## ART AND RELIGION IN MEDIEVAL ARMENIA

By: **Helen C. Evans**

*Yale University Press, 2022, 136 p. + 100 color illus.*

Featuring texts by leading scholars of the history and culture of medieval Armenia, this book offers an in-depth look at its art, trade, and religious traditions. The papers in this volume, first presented at an international symposium celebrating The Met's blockbuster 2018 exhibition, *Armenia!*, explore the art and culture of a civilization that served as a pivotal crossroads on the border between East and West. Contributors address Armenia's roles in facilitating exchange with the Mongol, Ottoman, and Persian empires to the East and with Byzantium and European Crusader states to the West. Essays also explore the ways in which elements of these cultures commingled in Armenian art and religion—Armenian artists and craftspeople produced an astonishing range of religious objects that drew upon influences from both Europe and Asia but ultimately created a uniquely Armenian visual identity. The authors explore the effects of this dualistic tension in the history of Armenian art and how it persists into the present, as this land situated at a crossroads of civilization continues to grapple with the legacy of genocide and counters new threats to its sovereignty, integrity, and cultural language.



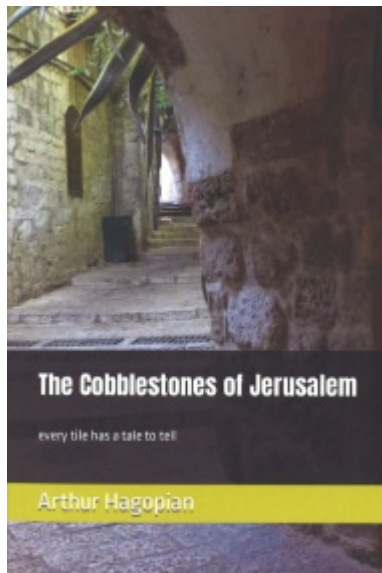
## ANCIENT GREEK MYTHS IN MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN LITERATURE

By: **Gohar Muradyan**

*Leiden: Brill, 2022, 441 p.*

Though references to Greek myths will hardly surprise the reader of western European literature, the reception history of Greek mythology is far richer and includes such lesser known traditions as the Armenian one. Greek myths were known to medieval Armenians through translations of late classical and early Christian writings and through the original works of Armenian authors. However, accessing them in their Armenian incarnations is no easy task. References to them are difficult to find as they are scattered over the vast medieval Armenian written corpus. Furthermore, during the process of translation, transmission, retelling, and copying of Greek mythical stories, Greek names, words, and plot details frequently became corrupted. In this first-of-its-

kind study, Gohar Muradyan brings together all the known references to ancient Greek myths (154 episodes) in medieval Armenian literature. Alongside the original Armenian passages and, when extant, their Greek originals, she provides annotated English translations. She opens the book with an informative introduction and concludes with useful appendices listing the occurrences of Greek gods, their Armenian equivalents, images, altars, temples, and rites, as well as Aesop's fables and the Trojan War.

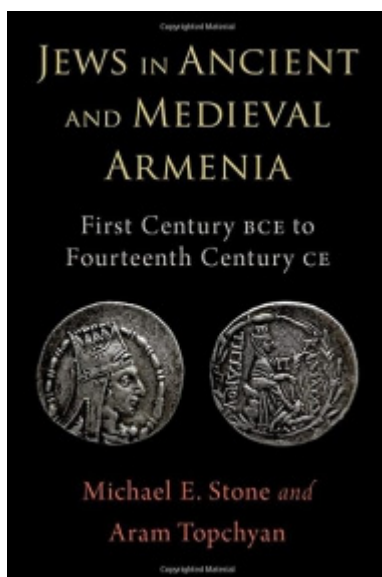


### **COBBLESTONES OF JERUSALEM, THE: EVERY TILE HAS A TALE TO TELL**

By: **Arthur Hagopian**

*Independently published, 2022, 349 p.*

Jerusalem, city of gold, city of light. A fascinating enclave that is said to be the center of the world, and that this is where history began. And it is also said that of the ten measures of beauty God bestowed upon the world, Jerusalem received nine. And of the ten measures of sorrow the world is afflicted with, Jerusalem's portion was nine. Every tile in the cobblestoned alleys of Jerusalem has a tale to tell, intertwining the annals of its fascinating people: the Christians (Armenians, Copts, Ethiopians, Greeks, Syriacs who still speak Aramaic), the Moslems and the Jews. The book delves into the labyrinthine fabric and tells the reader stories of wonder and mystery, of glory and disaster, of triumph and despair of all three protagonists, as seen from the perspective of an Armenian.



### **JEWES IN ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL ARMENIA: FIRST CENTURY BCE - FOURTEENTH CENTURY CE**

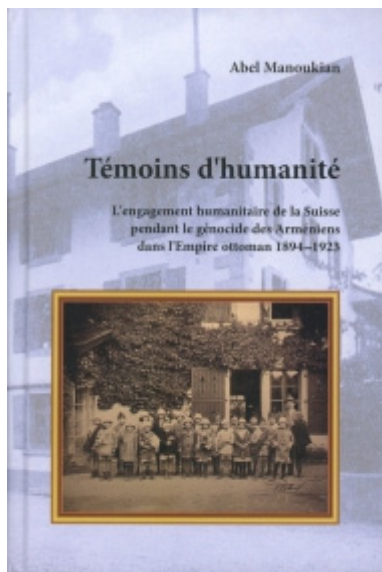
By: **Michael Stone, Aram Topchyan**

*Oxford University Press, 2022, 200 p.*

It was once common consensus that there was no significant Jewish community in ancient and medieval Armenia. The discovery and excavation (1997-2002) of a Jewish cemetery of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries in southern Armenia substantially changed this picture. In this volume, Stone and Topchyan assemble evidence about the Jews of Armenia from earliest times to the fourteenth century. Based on research of



the Greco-Roman period, the authors are able to draw new conclusions about the transfer of Jews—including the High Priest Hyrcanus—from the north of Palestine and other countries to Armenia by King Tigran the Great in the first century BCE. The fact that descendants of King Herod ruled in Armenia in Roman times and that some noble Armenian families may have had Jewish origin is discussed. The much-debated identification of the “Mountains of Ararat” of Noah’s Ark fame as well as ancient biblical and other references to Ararat and the Caucasus are re-assessed, and new evidence is adduced that challenges the scientific consensus. The role of Jews during the Seljuk, Mongol, and later times is also presented, from surviving sources in Armenian, Arabic, Hebrew, and others. The volume also includes studies of medieval Jewish sources on Armenia and the Armenians and of communication between Armenia and the Holy Land. Documents from the Cairo Geniza, newly uncovered inscriptions, medieval itineraria, and diplomatica also throw light on Armenia in the context of the Turkic Khazar kingdom, which converted to Judaism in the latter part of the first century CE. It responds both to new archeological discoveries in Armenia and to the growing interest in the history of the region that extends north from the Euphrates and into the Caucasus.



**WITNESSES OF HUMANITY, SWITZERLAND’S  
HUMANITARIAN COMMITMENT DURING THE  
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE,  
1894-1923, IN MEMORY OF THE MILLION AND A HALF  
VICTIMS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915**

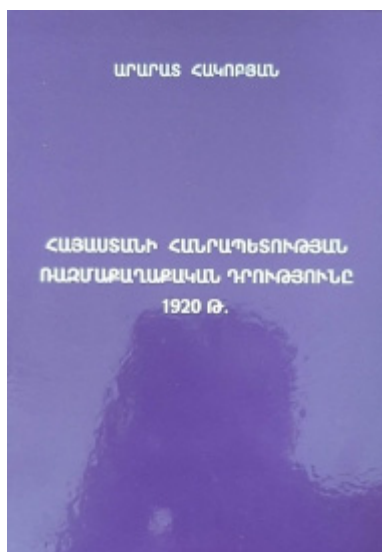
By: **Abel Manoukian Pastor, Dr. theology**

*Beyrouth, Antoine, 2022, 605 p.*

This book aims to pay tribute to the unprecedented solidarity of the Swiss people with the Armenians in the most difficult times. After giving a comprehensive overview of Armenian history and the events that led to the massacres and genocide perpetrated against the Armenians, the author explains how the Swiss people took a stand alongside their Armenian brothers and sisters in the Christian faith. There is a stark contrast between the ruthless policy of annihilation implemented by the Ottoman Empire and the shining examples of selflessness provided by the aid workers in Switzerland who - as doctors, nurses and educators - provided the Armenian people with a tremendous help in the most adverse circumstances.

Two examples, among many others, must be mentioned: Sister Béatrice Rohner (1876-1947), of Baie, who suffered a nervous breakdown after all the horror she experienced as a teacher and from an orphanage, and Jakob Kunzler (1871-1949), from Walzenhausen. Having known Kunzler, while he was Swiss vice-consul in Jaffa, Cari Lutz found him very inspired by his own heroic efforts to save the Jews in Budapest in 1944.

The author of this book gives his Swiss "witnesses to humanity" a living voice, without any loss of scholarship, as evidenced by the numerous footnotes and references. His extremely extensive research integrates for the first time unpublished documents from the Swiss archives and forms the basis of this comprehensive work which constitutes a significant enrichment of the subject.



## THE MILITARY-POLITICAL SITUATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN 1920

By: **Hakobyan Ararat**

*Institute of History, Yerevan, 2022, 510 p.*

The monograph is dedicated to the history of 1920, the fateful year for Armenia and the Armenian people, in particular, to the issues of the military and political complex situation. The course of the Turkish-Armenian war, the reasons for the failures of the Armenian army, the circumstances of the fall of Kars, etc., which ultimately

determined the fall of the First Republic of Armenia, are examined in depth in the book.



## CATALOGUE OF THE CHURCH-SLAVONIC AND RUSSIAN MANUSCRIPTS OF MATENADARAN

By: **Olga S. Vardazaryan**

*Matenadaran, Yerevan, 2022, 175 p. + 16 images*

The "Catalogue of the Church-Slavonic and Russian Manuscripts of the Matenadaran" contains a description of 33 Cyrillic manuscripts from the Fund of non-Armenian manuscripts of the Mashtots Matenadaran.

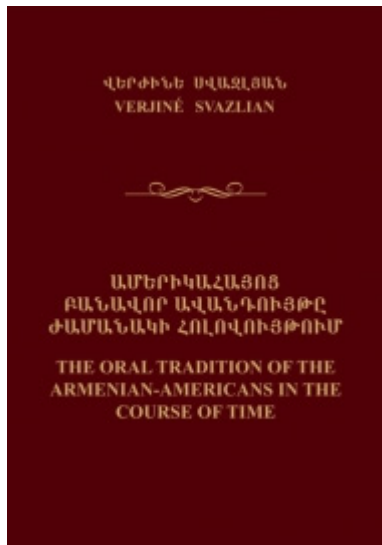


## RELICS OF THE ORAL TRADITION OF THE ARMENIANS OF RUSSIA (ROSTOV-ON-DON AND PYATIGORSK)

By: **Verjiné Svazlian** Doctor on Philology, Leading Researcher Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA

*Yerevan: Publishing House of Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA, 2020, 288 p.*

The book includes relics of the oral tradition of the Armenians of Russia, combining the primary source popular oral creations, communicated by the Armenian narrators who emigrated from Crimea and Artsakh to Russia – Nor-Nakhijevan and Pyatigorsk, which have been written down by the author. The historical-folkloric studies of the work is presented also in Russian and English languages. The collection is supplied with Documentary Tables of the narrators and their communicated materials.



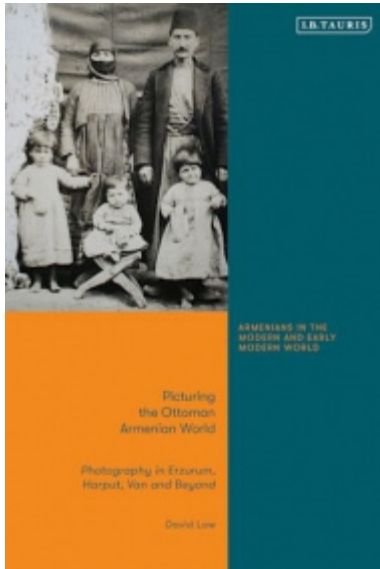
## THE ORAL TRADITION OF THE ARMENIAN-AMERICANS IN THE COURSE OF TIME

By: **Verjiné Svazlian** Doctor on Philology, Leading Researcher Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, NAS RA

*Yerevan: Gitutyun Publishing House of NAS RA, 2021, 904 pages, DVD + map)*

The book comprises a “Historical-folkloric study” (in Armenian and English) and “Primary Sources,” which have been written down and saved from a total loss from the representatives of the senior generation of the Western-Armenians miraculously rescued from the Armenian Genocide and taken refuge in the USA (and their subsequent generations) during the author’s five trips (1979-2008) to that country. These historical, folkloric and ethnographic materials (1,165 units) represent the general picture of the past and present life of the Armenians of the USA from the very beginning up to the present days, the difficulties the Armenian-Americans have overcome and the achievements they have recorded. The volume includes a Documentary Table of 206 narrators and their communicated materials, a Glossary, Commentaries, Indexes for the Narrators, personal names and toponyms, musical

notations of the songs, photographs of the narrators, a map of the “Resettlement of the Armenians in the United States of America” and a DVD – “Performances of the Popular Songs Widespread Among the Armenian-Americans.”



## **PICTURING THE OTTOMAN ARMENIAN WORLD ~ PHOTOGRAPHY IN ERZERUM, HARPUT, VAN AND BEYOND**

By: **David Low**

*IB Tauris, 2022, 272 p. + 45 illus.*

The Armenian contribution to Ottoman photography is supposedly well known, with histories documenting the famous Ottoman Armenian-run studios of the imperial capital that produced Orientalist visions for tourists and images of modernity for a domestic elite. Neglected, however, have been the practitioners of the eastern provinces where the majority of Ottoman Armenians were to be found, with the result that their role in the medium has been obscured and wider Armenian history and experience distorted. Photography in the Ottoman East was grounded in very different concerns, with the work of studios rooted in the seismic social, political and cultural shifts that reshaped the region and Armenian lives during the empire's last decades. The first study of its kind, this book examines photographic activity in three sites on the Armenian plateau: Erzurum, Harput and Van. Arguing that local photographic practices were marked by the dominant activities and movements of these places, it describes a medium bound up in educational endeavours, mass migration and revolutionary politics. The camera both responded to and became the instrument of these phenomena. Light is shone on previously unknown practitioners and, more vitally, a perspective gained on the communities that they served. The book suggests that by contemplating the ways in which photographs were made, used, circulated and seen, we might form a picture of the Ottoman Armenian world.



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# CLASSICS OF ARMENOLOGY

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## **Ashkharbek Kalantar**

(1884-1942)



A.Kalantar was a prominent Armenian archaeologist and art historian, one of the pioneers of Armenian archaeology.

He was born in Ardvin, Borchalu district of the Russian Empire to the aristocratic family of Loris Melik and Arghutyans. After graduating in 1905 the Nersisyan school and gymnasium in 1907 (Tiflis) he continued his education at the Department of History and Philology at the University of Saint-Petersburg. Among the teachers of A.Kalantar was the well-known Orientalist N.Marr.

Between 1912-1917 A.Kalantar participated in the excavations of Ani, the capital city of the medieval Armenian kingdom of Bagratids.

A.Kalantar was elected as a full member of the Archaeological Institute of Saint Petersburg in 1912 and member of the Imperial Archaeological Society in 1914. In that same year he was appointed as the keeper of the Asiatic Museum of Saint Petersburg.

During World War I A.Kalantar participated in the military operations in the Caucasian front as translator and advisor of general Andranik.

A.Kalantar had organizational skills. He was active both in scholarship and endowed with organizational skills. In 1918, during the First Republic of Armenia he organized the evacuation of about 6000 items from Ani to Yerevan, which are currently kept in the History Museum. In the next year he was among those scholars who established the University of Yerevan. This was followed by the establishment of the Commission of Ancient Monuments in 1919 (along with architect A.Tamanyan and painter M.Saryan). Later, in 1922 he opened the chair of Archaeology and Oriental history in the University. In the 1920-30s, until his arrest in 1938, A.Kalantar studied several archaeological sites on the territory of Armenia (about 30 expeditions), held lectures at the university, participated in archaeological conferences.

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11. From Stone Age to Middle Ages, Yerevan, 2007 (In Arm.).

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The Symbolic Construction of the Armenian Cross-Stone - Khachkar

On the Dating of the Odzun Basilica, 1917.

The Irrigation System of the Epoch of the Vishaps in Armenia, 1935 (In Arm.,).

Armenia in the Archaic Period of his History. Materials on Armenian History (Megalithic Culture, Hieroglyphs, etc.)(over 300 pages).

## Yaroslav Dashkevich (1926-2010)



Y.Dashkevich was a prominent Ukrainian historian-medievalist, particularly an expert in the history of Armenian colonies in Ukraine and Poland.

Y.Dashkevich was born in Lvov, Western Ukraine to Roman Dashkevich and Elena Stepaniv, both well-known military-political figures. After graduating the gymnasium at Lvov he entered the Department of Philology, University of Lvov (1944-1949). In 1949 Y.Dashkevich was arrested and sentenced to 10 years in the correctional labor camp where he remained until 1956. After being released he returned to Ukraine and worked as a bibliographer at the Institute of Social sciences.

In 1963 Y.Dashkevich defended dissertation ("Armenian colonies in Ukraine in the sources and literature of the XV-XIX centuries") and was awarded with the degree of candidate of science in history. Between 1967-1972 he held the position of the Head of Ethnography at the Museum of Ethnography and Arts, Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. From 1974 until 1980 Y.Dashkevich worked at the Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine in Lvov, Institute of Social Sciences of the Academy (1990-1992), Deputy-director of the Institute of Ukrainian Archaeography and primary sources of Ukrainian Academy. In 1994 he defended the second dissertation. In the late 1990s and early XX century Y.Dashkevich held different positions in the Academy of Sciences and higher education (University of Lvov).

Armenology is the main sphere of Y.Dashkevich's scholarly heritage. His studies include mostly the primary sources of the Armenian colonies of Ukraine (Lvov, Kamenets) and their history. Excellent knowledge of Armenian helped Y.Dashkevich in his Armenological studies.

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