

ANUSHAVAN ZAKARYAN
(On the occasion of the 70th birthday)



Doctor of Philological Sciences Anushavan H. Zakaryan, editor-in-chief of “Historical-Philological Journal”, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, celebrated his 70th birthday. The well-earned name of editor, publisher, journalist, pedagogue, researcher accompanies him from the very first steps in his work. His career is purely connected with the system of the National Academy of Sciences. Today, occupying the very important position of the editor-in-chief of this internationally renowned Armenian Studies journal, he simultaneously carries out effective activities in the field of scientific research.

A. Zakaryan was born on December 14, 1953, in the village of Paraka, Ordubad district (Goghtan province), Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, USSR, in the family of a doctor. The entire environment was intellectual and mainly philological, which left its mark on A. Zakaryan’s professional orientation.

From an early age he settled with his family in Yerevan, where he was admitted in 1961, in 1971 he graduated from N. Krupskaya (now Nikol Aghbalyan) 19th secondary school. Then he continued his studies at the Faculty of Philology of the Armenian State Pedagogical Institute named after Kh. Abovyan.

A. Zakaryan’s field of activity is wide and comprehensive: editorial-publishing work, state service, scientific research activity. It should be noted that the famous historian V. Mikayelyan, member of the Academy of Sciences has largely contributed to the development of professionalism of A. Zakaryan.

In 1977, he started working as an editor in the publishing house of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR (1977-1980). During that time he edited more than two dozen scientific studies and monographs. The editor’s work then becomes one of his main fields of work, which requires perfect knowledge of Armenian, scientific discipline of thought, as well as skill and patience in working with authors. In 1980, as a responsible secretary, he was invited to work at the “Bulletin of Social Sciences” (Lraber).

In 1989-1990 A. Zakaryan was also responsible secretary of the “Goyamart” weekly newspaper of the Socio-political organization “Hayastan”.

In 1993 A. Zakaryan was invited to work in the Staff of the RA Supreme Council as the head of the publishing department. In a short period of time, he did his best to organize the transcripts of the meetings of the sessions of the Supreme Council accumulated over the years and the current sessions, organize the work of publishing the Armenian and Russian bulletins of the Supreme Council on time.

From October 1995, A. Zakaryan headed various structural divisions of the newly formed National Assembly Staff. He was the deputy head of the protocol-publishing department, the head of the translation-publishing sub-department, the head of the office, as well as the deputy head of the secretariat.

A. Zakaryan's organizational abilities and activities were best demonstrated in the position of executive director of the newly created "Official Bulletin of the Republic of Armenia" of the RA Government Office (1998). Since then, he continued working in the Staff of the National Assembly. From 2000 to 2019, he was the head of the publishing department in the National Assembly and then in its various divisions. The Illustrated trilingual (Armenian, Russian, English) books of the "National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia" (second, third, fourth, fifth convocations) were made under his direct leadership.

With the National Academy of Sciences A. Zakaryan's ties were not interrupted during this time. In 1999, at the recommendation of the editor-in-chief of the "Historical-Philological Journal" V. Mikayelyan, he assumed the position of the responsible secretary of the journal, and then in 2003, the position of the deputy editor-in-chief. In 2018 A. Zakaryan was elected editor-in-chief of the periodical. In all these positions, he showed himself in the best ways, was a skilled organizer of work, conducted a knowledgeable editorial dialogue with the authors, not only accepted and edited materials for printing, but also ordered them, did not miss memorable dates and anniversaries. Thanks to A. Zakaryan and the harmonious and efficient work of the editors, the already 65-year-old journal has always been published on time and today occupies an undeniable leading position among Armenian journals published in the homeland and abroad.

From February 2022 A. Zakaryan also works as a senior researcher at the Department of Diaspora Armenian Art and International Relations of the Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia.

Wherever he worked, scientific work was always in the center of his attention. Today, he is the author of 16 monographs and 7 collection of articles, more than 250 articles, publications and reviews. Undisputed research and analytical abilities, knowledge of sources, knowledge of press and archival materials provided the horizon of his scientific interests. First of all, all this covers a wide range of Armenian-Russian historical and cultural relations, issues of the Armenian reality of the first quarter of the 20th century, coverage of the less studied problems of the Armenian Question and the Armenian Genocide.

Armenian-Russian historical and cultural ties, the history of our spiritual life of the first decade of the 20th century, have been newly revealed by A. Zakaryan. Those works refer to the Armenian-Russian literary-cultural ties in a comprehensive way, the herald of which was his candidate thesis defended in 1985 – "Russian writers in Transcaucasia and the Armenian literary life", and in 2005 "Russian literary figures and the Armenian reality (1910s)" was the subject of his doctoral dissertation.

In A. Zakaryan's studies, literary critic, historian, culturalist, chronicler, social scientists are combined. Here are connections and references, impulses and relationships, so it is more convenient to give him the definition of an Armenologist, which more fully represents his scientific image. His research method is historical-comparative, historical-cultural, which are combined into a more comprehensive comparative method.

There are well-known or little-known names among Russian literary and public figures. The latter were unfamiliar not only to the general public but also to specialists. In this regard, A. Zakaryan's "Russian Writers in Transcaucasia and Armenian Literary Life (1914-1920)" (1984), "Russian Writers and Armenian Reality (1910s)" (1994), "The Tragedy of the Armenian People in the Assessment of Russian Writers" (2003) monographs is the first step in filling that gap. Relying on newly revealed rich facts, he presents the literary and social activities of little-known Russian literary critics, writers, poets who lived and created in Western Armenia and Transcaucasia during the period in question. Their various impartial testimonies, sympathetic attitude towards the tragedy of the Armenian people, which were reflected in their works, ties with the Armenian intelligentsia, practical help to Armenia and the Armenian people, have been focused on.

A. Zakaryan's next monograph entitled "Alexander Kulebyakin and Armenia" (2003) is dedicated to Major General A. Kulebyakin, commander of the 4th Caucasian Army Corps, who actively participated in the military operations of the Russian army in Western Armenia on the Caucasian front of the First World War. In the monograph, for the first time, the military commander's career after the departure of the Russian army from the Caucasus has been covered. Living in Tiflis, the "poet-general" actively participated in the social-political, literary-cultural life, particularly in solving important issues and problems affecting the Armenian society. He had friendly relations with many prominent figures of Armenian culture, literature, social-political, and military spheres.

A. Zakaryan is a well-informed researcher of the history of the Armenian press of the beginning of the 20th century. It was this that helped him to reflect on Alexander Shirvanzade's public speaking legacy of the 1910s and publish the work "From Shirvanzade's public speaking legacy (1914-1919)" in 2006. Those articles of the writer in the press are daily responses to the difficult historical times of the Armenian people, which address many and varied issues of national and political life with a great resonance today.

During the First World War and the years following it, 1916-1921, the famous Russian poet, writer, public speaker, translator and public figure S. Gorodetsky lived and worked in Western Armenia and Transcaucasia, to whom A. Zakaryan's monograph entitled "Sergei Gorodetsky in Western Armenia and Transcaucasia" (2010, Armenian and 2015, Russian) is devoted. According to A. Zakaryan, S. Gorodetsky is one of those figures familiar to Armenians with his literary-cultural, social-political and pro-Armenian activities. In this regard, he mentioned the remarkable article entitled

“Karabakh” that he published in the newspaper “Caucasian word” in 1919, where the author considered Karabakh as a native Armenian territory.

In 2012, he published a book in Armenian and Russian headed “Tiflis days of Ilya Ehrenburg”, where the famous Russian writer and public speaker I. Ehrenburg’s literary and public activity in Tiflis in September-October of 1920 brought into circulation a series of portraits dedicated to Russian poets Al. Blok, V. Brusov, K. Balmont and V. Mayakovsky.

Among A. Zakaryan’s studies, the monograph “The Western Armenian reality according to the assessment of the Russian publicist T. Olgenin” (2014) has a special place. Here, for the first time, the details of A. Berezovsky-Olginsky’s 1913 trip to the six provinces of Western Armenia (Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Tigranakert, Sebastia, Kharberd), the economic, political and social aspects of Western Armenians under the Turkish-Kurdish yoke are presented in detail.

Famous Russian poet, translator, literary critic, literary critic V. Brusov’s contribution to the study of Armenian poetry and propaganda of the works of Armenian and Russian literary experts was mainly evaluated in terms of the compilation and publication of the anthology “Poetry of Armenia”. Along with that, he carried out extensive activities in the direction of popularizing Armenian literature, culture, and history in the Russian and Armenian society. The 1916-1917 lectures delivered in Baku, Tiflis, Yerevan, Etchmiadzin were not the subject of a special study in terms of the circumstances and significance of contacts with Armenian literary and social life. The goal of filling this gap is pursued by the literary critic by publishing the monograph entitled “Armenia in V. Brusov’s Literary and Social Activity” (2016).

Dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the birth of the all-Armenian poet Hovhannes Tumanyan, A. Zakaryan published the book “Russian Writers and Hovhannes Tumanyan” (2019), where he brought together and carefully presented Russian writers who lived and worked in Tiflis – Balmont’s, Brusov’s, Gorodetsky’s, B. Lazarevsky’s and A. Kulebyakin’s creative relations, simple and direct human contacts with the Armenian poet.

In 2019 A. Zakaryan published a work titled “Russian Composer Thomas Hartman and Komitas” in one book in Armenian and Russian, where for the first time the merit of the Russian composer Thomas Hartman in valuing the life and work of the famous musicologist and composer Komitas is presented.

Russian art theoretician, translator Osip Mandelstam has a special place in the history of Soviet literature. His name is also strongly associated with Armenia and the Armenian people. In 1930, living in Armenia for six months and traveling around the country became fatal for him, because his subsequent short life remained connected with Armenia, Armenian culture, a connection that the Russian poet valued very dearly. The latter, however, mainly refers to the series of poems dedicated to Armenia and the prose work “Journey to Armenia”. Important historical realities, motives and prerequisites of his visit to Armenia, his approaches to the events related to the life of

the Armenian people were not detailed. The poet's visit to Shushi, the massacre of the Armenian population in 1920 and the city turned into a ruin by eyewitnesses, and the poem "The Chariot" written as a result of all these have a modern resonance. A. Zakaryan's work titled "Osip Mandelstam: The Poet and Armenia" published in Armenian in 2022 has come to fill this gap.

Recently, A. Zakaryan's new monograph "David Ananun: life and activity" (2023) was printed. In the work, the prolific life and activities of Ananun, one of the bright figures of the Armenian reality of the first thirty years of the 20th century, are presented with many factual and creative references.

The collections made by him occupy a special place in his research works. They are works in which not only the actual story has a place, but also the seemingly insignificant facts of the period. The latter create a dense and complete picture of time with memorable facts and become science. The book "The losses of the Armenian people in the years of the First World War" (Collection of documents and materials of the Investigative Commission of the Damages suffered by the Armenian people from the World War", 2005) has its unique place in that chain, with a foreword and annotations by A. Zakaryan. The published documents, as primary sources, have for us not only cognitive, but also historical, political, and, of course, practical-applicative significance.

The collection entitled "Historical Armenian Regiment" (2009) written by A. Zakaryan and dedicated to the military career of the Andranik regiment (1918-1919), the legendary hero of the Armenian national liberation movement, is also included in this series.

There are separate pages, dedicated to the grateful people of the field of Armenian Studies (G. Hovsepyan, St. Malkhasyants, S. Ter-Hakobyan, Ye. Otyan, P. Makintsyan, A. Chopanyan, M. Babayan, K. Mikayelyan, L. Lisitsyan, Komitas, Z. Yesayan, Irazek (H. Ter Hakobyan), D. Ananun and many others) together with correspondence, memoirs of archival materials. A. Zakaryan's publications reveal new aspects of their life and activities with introductory words and skillful scientific annotations.

Parallel to the scientific work since 1989 in different universities of the republic (Yerevan Veterinary Institute, "Galik" and "Gladzor" universities, Vanadzor Hovh. Tumanyan Pedagogical University) A. Zakaryan also has been engaged in lecturing and pedagogical activities.

A. Zakaryan is a member of Union of Journalists of USSR and Armenia since 1986. He has the rank of 1st class counselor of the RA State Service. From 2021 he is a full member of the Academy of Humanistic Problems.

Although burdened with state and scientific works, A. Zakaryan was at the roots of the establishment of "Nakhijevan" patriotic union, he was the vice-president of the union.

A. Zakaryan is an individual who stands above daily and household issues and interests. Open-mindedness, demandingness towards one's own person and those around him characterize this human-citizen. In this sense, he has earned respect and prestige in the scientific community and in the socio-political circles.

Even today, the Armenian scientist, who is 70 years old, is engaged in various projects, with the implementation of which the panorama of the Armenian historiographical and cultural life of the first quarter of the 20th century will become more complete. His merit deserves high appreciation, because he has his unique place in modern Armenian Studies.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Russian writers in Transcaucasia and Armenian Literary Life (1914–1920), Yerevan, 1984 (In Arm.).
2. Russian Writers and Armenian Realities (1910s), Yerevan, 1994 (In Russian).
3. Alexander Kulebyakin and Armenia, Yerevan, 2003 (In Russian).
4. The Tragedy of Armenian People in the Evaluation of Russian Writers, Yerevan, 2003 (In Russian).
5. Boris Lazarevsky about Armenia and Armenian Women, Yerevan, 2004 (In Arm.).
6. From the Journalist Heritage of Shirvanzade (1914–1919), Yerevan 2006 (In Arm.).
7. Sergej Gorodetsky in Western Armenia and Transcaucasia, Yerevan 2010 (In Arm.).
8. The Tiflis «Cohabitation of Poets» of Sergej Gorodetsky and the Collection «Akme», Yerevan, 2011 (In Russian).
9. The Tbilisi Days of Ilya Erenburg, Yerevan, 2012 (In Arm. And Russian).
10. Western Armenian Realities in the Evaluation of T.Olgenin, Yerevan, 2014 (In Arm.).
11. Sergej Gorodetsky in Western Armenia and Transcaucasia (1916-1921), Yerevan 2015 (In Russian).
12. Armenia in the Literary-social activities of V.Bryusov, Yerevan 2016 (In Russian).
13. Russian Writers and Hovhannes Tumanyan, Yerevan, 2019 (In Arm.).
14. Russian Composer F.Gartman and Komitas, Yerevan, 2019 (In Russian and Arm.).
15. Osip Mandelstam. The Poet and Armenia, Yerevan 2022 (In Arm.).
16. Davit Ananun. Life and activity, Yerevan, 2023 (In Arm.).

DAVID GASPARYAN

Translated from Armenian by Gevorg Harutyunyan