

ISSN 1929-2003

# ՎԱՐԴԶԻ

ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՃԱՐՏԱՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆ ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՂ ԳԻՄՆԱԴՐԱՍ  
RESEARCH ON ARMENIAN ARCHITECTURE

## VARDZK

№ 6 APRIL  
- JUNE 2012

Sargis Israelian  
**PAGES FROM MY DIARY**  
p. 23







**6** ԱՊՐԵԼ - ԳՈՒՆԻՍ 2012  
N 6 APRIL - JUNE 2012

**ԳԼԽԱԿՈՐ ԽՄԲԱԳԻՐ  
ՍԱՄՎԵԼ ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ**

Editor-in-chief  
SAMVEL KARAPETIAN

**ԽՄԲԱԳՐԱԿԱԶՄ  
ԷՄՄԱ ԱԲՐԱԿՅԱՆՅԱՆ**

ԽՄԲԱԳԻՐ Editor  
EMMA ABRAHAMIAN

**ՀԱՍՄԻԿ ՀՈԿՀԱՆՆԻՍՅԱՆ**  
ԽՄԲԱԳԻՐ-ՄՐԱԳՐԻՑ

Proof-reader (Armenian text)  
HASMİK HOVHANNISSIAN

**ԳԱՅԱՆԵ ՄՈՎՍԻՍՅԱՆ**

ԹՄԱԳՄԱՆԻՑ Translator  
GAYANE MOVSISSIAN

**ԱՐՄԵՆ ԳԵՎՈՐԳՅԱՆ**

ՀԱՍՄԱԿԱՐԳՑԱՅԻՆ ՓԵՎԱԿՈՐՈՐ

Designer  
ARMEN GEVORGIAN  
LIANA HOVHANNISIAN-  
KORTOSHIAN

ԼՐԱՏՎԱԿԱՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՆԵՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ ԻՐԱԿԱՆԱՅՄՈՂ  
ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՃԱՐՏԱՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ  
ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՂ ՀԻՄՆԱԴՐԱՄ

RESEARCH ON ARMENIAN  
ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION  
Engaged in informational Activity

ՎԿԱՅԱԿԱՆ N 03U089223

ՏՐԿԱԾ 13.10.2010

Certificate No. 03U089223  
Given 13.10.2010

**ՀԱՄԱՐԻ ԹՈՂԱՐԿԱՆ ՊԱՏԱՍԽԱՆԱՏՈՒ  
ՍԱՄՎԵԼ ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ**

Responsible for this issue  
SAMVEL KARAPETIAN

**ՏՊԱԳՐՎԵԼ Է  
«ԲՅՈՒՐԱԿՆ» ՀՐԱՏԱՐԱԿՉԱՏԱՆԸ**

Printed by  
BYURAKN Publishing House

**ՏՊԱՁԱՆԱԿԸ՝ 1000**

Number of copies: 1000

ԵՆԵՎԱՆ, ԲԱԴՐԱՄՅԱՆ 24/4

24/4 Baghramian Ave., Yerevan, RA

<http://www.armenianarchitecture.am>

<http://www.raa.am>

✉ raayer@sci.am

📘 RAA Armenia

☎ 010 52 15 25

© ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ՃԱՐՏԱՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ  
ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՂ ՀԻՄՆԱԴՐԱՄ  
© Research on Armenian Architecture

Emma Abrahamian

**PRINTING-HOUSES THROUGHOUT  
THE ARMENIAN HOMELAND**



p. 1

Sargis Israellian

**PAGES FROM MY DIARY**



p. 23

Ashot Hakobian

**REVIEW OF "THE CITY OF A THOUSAND AND  
ONE CHURCHES" BY A. TER-MINASSIAN**



p. 63



## PRINTING-HOUSES THROUGHOUT THE ARMENIAN HOMELAND\*

Dedicated to the 500th anniversary of the first Armenian printed book

by Emma Abrahamian

“The invention of printing is the greatest event in history. ...In its printed form, thought is more imperishable than ever; it is volatile, irresistible, indestructible.”

Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, chapter 2

After the creation of the Armenian alphabet by Mesrop Mashtots, the printing of Armenian books is the second most important achievement in the cultural history of the Armenian nation. It goes back to 1512, when Hakob Meghapart published the first Armenian book entitled *Urbatagirk* in Venice, Italy, several decades after the invention of printing by Johannes Gutenberg.

The printing of Armenian books began and developed in the Armenian Diaspora, and it was only in 1771, 259 years after the first Armenian-language work had gone off press, that it was introduced into the Armenian Homeland. Printing business particularly developed and acquired larger scale in the 19th century, when appropriate establishments were founded throughout Armenia.

### VAGHARSHAPAT (ECHMIATZIN)

**Printing-House of Holy Echmiatzin (Mother See of Echmiatzin, Araratian Mother See of Holy Echmiatzin, Katoghike, Grigor Lusavorich).** The first printing-office in the territory of Armenia was established in 1771 through the efforts of Catholicos Simeon of Yerevan (1763 to 1780) and with the financial assistance of one of the inhabitants of the Armenian settlement of Madras, Grigor Michaelian Khojajaniants (Chakikiants), who was from Nor Jugha, Persia:



**Simeon of Yerevan, the founder of the first printing-house in Armenia**

The monastery has another printing-house founded in the times of Catholicos Simeon in 1771.<sup>1</sup>

The first work of this office was a Prayer Book of 184 pages (that is called a spiritual guide-book) which was issued in the *bolorgir* and *notrgir* types as well as in capital letters engraved by Archbishop Mkrtich of Shorot. It was illuminated with sculptured apses (namely, apse-shaped designs composed of columns and arches and used to frame synoptic lists which compare the contents of the Gospels), floral patterns and ornamental writings the author of which was Harutiun of Echmiatzin. The typesetters were Archimandrite Hovsep and Deacon Yeprem; Grigor and Manuk did the work of inking and printing respectively, and Sexton Khachatur disseminated the copies of the book. The Prayer Book was edited and proof-read by Isaac Geghamatsy, who became the manager of the printing-house 3 years later.<sup>2</sup>

The establishment, which was named after St. Gregory the Enlightener, was housed in a small building adjoining the winter residence of the Catholicos in the west. The following construction inscription was carved on its facade:

*Աստուծով հաստատեցաւ տպագրատունս նոր ի նորոյ ի սուրբ Աթոռոյս Էջմիածին, ամենայն պարագայիւրն հոգաբարձութեամբ տեառն Սիմէօն սրբազան կաթողիկոսին Երևանցոյ, արդեամբ Ջողայեցի ի Հինդ բնակեալ բարեպաշտօն Գրիգոր աղային Խոջաջանեան, որ մակնուամբ Չարիկենց կոչի ի յիշատակ իրեան եւ իր ի Քրիստոս հանգուցեալ ծնողացն՝ Սիքայէլին և Մամախաթունին, իր կենակից Մատիլնային և վաղաբառամ Սիքայէլ որդոյն և քերցն Անամարիային և Ջիպիտային, հօրեղբարցն՝ Եղիազարին, Սաֆարին և Աղէքսանդրին, պապուն՝ Գրգորին և կենակից Թագուհտոյն և հօրաքեռն՝ Ջիժագատային և մեծ պապ Յակոբջանին և հօրեղբօր դստերացն՝ Պէկզարային և Գիւլնարաթին, և այլ ամենայն հին և նոր անջեցեղցն նորին: Այսու պայմանաւ՝ զի ի տարին Բ անգամ ի տօնի Լուսատրչին և հրեշտակապետացն ի*

\* RAA Foundation has published a map entitled *Printing-Houses in the Armenian Homeland* on the basis of the information found in this article.

<sup>1</sup> **Սարաֆեան Գ.**, Էջմիածնայ վանքը [G. Sarafian, “Echmiatzin Monastery”], «Կոչնակ» [Kochnak], no. 33, 1914, 778.

<sup>2</sup> **Շահնազարյան Շ.**, Նոր նյութեր Հայաստանի առաջին տպարանի պատմության վերաբերյալ [Sh. Shahnazarian, “New Facts on the History of the First Printing-House in Armenia”], «Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես» [Historico-Philological Journal], no. 1 (1963), 262.



սուրբ Աթոռոջս պատարագ մատչիցի հանդիսատարութեամբ՝ յիշելով զնոսա, որոց յիշատակն օրհնութեամբ եղիցի, ամէն. ք(վիւն) ՌՄԻ (յամի 1771)<sup>3</sup>:

Transl.: With God's will, this printing-house was founded in the Holy See of Echmiatzin with all its accessories under the auspices of His Holiness Catholicos Simeon of Yerevan, through the means of pious Agha Grigor Khojajanian also named Chakikiants, a native of [New] Jugha who lives in India, in memory of his [soul] and his parents, the late Michael and Mamakhatun, his spouse Matlina and his son Michael, who died an untimely death, as well as his sisters Anamaria and Zipita, his uncles Yeghiazar, Safar and Alexandre, his grandfather Grigor and his wife Taguhi, his aunt Zizhazat, his great grandfather Hakobjan and his uncle's daughters Pekzada and Gyulnabat together with all his deceased ones, both those who died a long time ago and those who passed away recently, on condition that twice a year, at the feasts of the [Holy] Enlightener and the Archangels, the Holy See should offer a solemn service for them. May their memory be blessed. Amen. In the year 1220 (1771).

In 1773 the building of the printing-house was enlarged, Catholicos Simeon of Yerevan writing the following to the benefactor of the work:

...the printing-office slightly lacking enough space, this year we had it expanded so that all its employees will be near each other in a large area...<sup>4</sup>

The shortage of printing paper made the spiritual authorities find a paper mill attached to it in 1776, but it functioned only until the Catholicos's death in 1780.

The printing-house continued its activity under Catholicos Ghukas (1780 to 1799), the successor of Simeon of Yerevan, and later ceased functioning.

In 1807 French General Gardan said the following:

When the Russians took Echmiatzin in 1805, they plundered the church, its treasury and library. Later when it was conquered back by the Persians, they used its books to make cartridges and melted the types of the printing-house to get bullets.<sup>5</sup>

After a long-lasting interval, the printing-house of Echmiatzin resumed functioning under Catholicos

Yeprem I of Dzoragegh (1809 to 1830), namely in 1819, when a Psalter was published there. Its colophon states:

...His Holiness Supreme Catholicos Yeprem..., who repaired the printing-office in harsh times... had the printing-house of the Holy See, [the work of] which had been obstructed for many years, embellished and renovated almost from its very foundations...<sup>6</sup>

In 1820 the printing-office published an Armenian-language book entitled *An Account of the Saving Passion and Crucifixion of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*. Its title page read:

In the 10th year of the enthronement of His Holiness Yeprem... Catholicos... in the printing-house of the Holy Enlightener on 26 March 1820 A.D.<sup>7</sup>

The activity of the establishment was again stopped until 1833. The colophon of the Supplemental Chants published in the same year reports that it had resumed functioning:

...may you remember in your sincere prayers Catholicos of All Armenians ... Hovhannes Karbetsy, who reopened this printing-house...<sup>8</sup>

In the 1860s, Catholicos Gevorg IV (1866 to 1882) initiated the renovation of not only the building of the establishment, but also of the types:

...the presses are new, having been brought on the late Catholicos Nerses' order.<sup>9</sup>

The overhaul undertaken in the printing-house was completed in 1868. Thanks to the donations made by Mkrtich Sanasarian and Hovhannes Hovnanian, it received moulds, casting machines and a printing press<sup>10</sup> and reopened in the same year:

...in 1868 the printing-office of Holy Echmiatzin [re]opened thanks to a gift made by ...Misters Sanasarian and Hovnanian...<sup>11</sup>

6 **Shahnazarian**, 264.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.* Also see Հայ գիրքը 1801-1850 թվականներին [The Armenian Book between 1801 and 1850] (Yerevan, 1967), 198.

9 «Համբարաբեր Ռուսիոյ» [*Hambavaber Russio*], no. 1 (1861), 4.

10 Վաւերագրեր հայ եկեղեցու պատմութեան, գիրք ԺԱ, Գևորգ Դ Կոստանդնուպոլսեցի Քերեստեճեան [Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 11: Gevorg Kerestegian IV of Constantinople] (Yerevan, 2004), 37. According to another source, upon assuming office, Catholicos Gevorg IV embarked on the construction of a seminary and a press in Echmiatzin Monastery. The Armenians of Tiflis committed themselves to covering all the expenses of his undertaking, but His Holiness spared them as he did not want them to bear the burden of such a heavy sum (**Երիցեան Ա.**, Բարեգործութիւնը հայոց մէջ [A. **Yeritsian**, "Charity amidst Armenians"], «Արձագանք» [*Arzagank*], no. 17, 13 June 1882, 264).

11 **Yeritsian**, *ibid.* In January 1868, Harutium Khalipian from Theodosia sent the printing-house letters from his press. In April it also received three kinds of paper from Prince Hovhan Hovnanians (**Smbatians**, 86).

3 **Սմբատյանց Ա.**, Սուրբ Էջմիածնի միաբանության գրական-կրթական գործունեությունը և Մայր Աթոռի տպարանը [A. **Smbatians**, The Literary and Educational Activities of the Brethren of Holy Echmiatzin and the Printing-House of the Holy See] (Echmiatzin, 1973), 45-46. A. Smbatians and Ghevond Gharakhanian, the master of the press, found the stone of this inscription buried in the earth and broken to three pieces. It was moved to the monastic museum of antiquities. Also see **Լևոնյան Գ.**, Հայ գիրքը և տպագրության արվեստը [G. **Levonian**, The Armenian Book and the Art of Printing] (Yerevan, 1946), 152.

4 **Shahnazarian**, 262.

5 **Հակոբյան Հ.**, Ուղեգրություններ [H. **Hakobian**, Travel Notes], vol. 6 (Yerevan, 1934), 101.



It started publishing the *Ararat* journal (1868 to 1919): from 1869 until 1870, its editor was Gh. Aghayan.

In June 1868, Catholicos Gevorg IV addressed a bull to all Armenians calling on them to organise fund-raising in contribution to the further activity of the establishment.<sup>12</sup>

In 1869 Mkrtych Sanasarian presented the printing-house with types, a high-speed casting machine and other equipment. Mkrtych Grigorian Ter-Mkrtychians, who was from Agulis, Nakhijevan, gave it moulds with scenes from Armenia, a binding machine, letters, etc.<sup>13</sup>

In 1870 the printing-office received 2 presses from Tiflis.<sup>14</sup>

On 15 October 1874, it borrowed 5,654 roubles 88 kopecks from Hovhannes Hovnaniants for its financial needs.<sup>15</sup>

On 16 October 1876, Catholicos Gevorg IV applied to Pavel Nikolayevich with a request to intercede before the Caucasian Vice-Roy to leave the printing-house of Echmiatzin within the immediate jurisdiction of the Catholicos and approve the plan of its management without police control.<sup>16</sup>

British jurist, historian and politician J. Bryce, who visited Echmiatzin in the autumn of the same year, writes the following about the activity of the establishment:

“A magazine called *Ararat* has recently been established; it is printed at the monastery, and of course in Armenian; nor is the press of Etchmiadzin idle in producing educational manuals, the class of books which are at present most scarce among the Armenians of these countries.”<sup>17</sup>

Catholicos Matevos I (1858 to 1865) initiated the construction of a new building for the printing-house in the site of the old market of Vagharshapat, but his death left his desire incomplete. It was carried out only over two decades later, in the times of Catholicos Makar I of Teghut (1885 to 1891).

In accordance with a contract signed with architect M. Salambekian on 28 March 1888, the construction of the new building started in the east of Echmiatzin Cathedral and was completed in 1889<sup>18</sup>: it had a typesetting office, a press, a paper soaking room, a foundry, a barn, an assembly hall, a consultation room and office, a library and a large vestibule:

Under Catholicos Makar, another building was erected with store-rooms, a smelting-house, a separate hall for typesetters and a printing room with a small and two large high-speed presses... The printing-office is supplied with electricity and also houses a separate foundry for types, which has saved it from the problem of purchasing them.<sup>19</sup>

Under Catholicos Mkrtych Khirmian I (1892 to 1907), the printing-house was enriched with new equipment, which promoted its further activity.<sup>20</sup>

In 1895 the printing-house of Echmiatzin participated in the all-Russian exhibition of printing held in St. Petersburg with the books it had published since 1771 and was highly awarded there.<sup>21</sup>

The excellent work of this printing-office, something unusual for those times, is also attested by English correspondent Walter Harris, who visited Echmiatzin between 1895 and 1896: according to him, it printed books with clichés, which yielded quite fine results.<sup>22</sup>

In 1901 through the efforts of Archbishop Sukias Parziants,<sup>23</sup> a passageway and two large arched rooms were built close to the printing-house (the basement of these rooms was used as a storehouse of paper and different substances).<sup>24</sup>

As of 1909, the printing-house was in a bad state: the fonts of the typesetting-office and foundry were out of date and mostly unfit for further use so that it should either close or undergo repairs.<sup>25</sup> The binding-office was equipped with considerable facilities although it had some major shortages: it particularly needed a couple of machines for which 1,500 roubles would be sufficient enough.<sup>26</sup>

From 1907 until 1910, the Inspector's post of the printing-office was successively held by Archimandrites Mkhitar Ter-Mkrtychian and Yervand Ter-Minassian, as well as by Isaac Ter-Michaelian and Archimandrite Artak Smbatian.<sup>27</sup>

In 1908, when Archimandrite Yervand Ter-Minassian was the Inspector of the printing-house, the

12 Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 11, 228-230.

13 **Smbatians**, 88-92.

14 *Ibid.*, 86.

15 Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 11, 541-542.

16 *Ibid.*, 706-708.

17 **J. Bryce**, *Transcaucasia and Ararat* (London, 1896), 323-324.

18 **Smbatians**, 116.

19 **Sarafian**, “Echmiatzin Monastery,” *Kochmak*, no. 33, 1914, 778.

20 **Smbatians**, 117-125.

21 «Արարատ» [*Ararat*], 1895, 141-142. Also see **Smbatians**, 128-131.

22 **W. Harris**, *From Batum to Baghdad via Tiflis, Tabriz and Kurdistan* (Edinburgh and London, 1896), 76.

23 Archbishop Sukias Parziants (10.12.1837, Astapat - 12.9.1914, Vagharshapat) was a philologist, a pedagogue and a public figure.

24 **Smbatians**, 133.

25 Վավերագրեր հայ եկեղեցու պատմության, գիրք Ը, Մատթեոս Բ Բզմիրլեանի [Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 8: Matteos Izmirlian II] (Yerevan, 2001), 342.

26 *Ibid.*

27 Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 8, 336, 494, 662.



printing of books assumed a new quality from the standpoint of cleanness and beauty of art. The printing-office of the Holy See worked with great speed, publishing not only the books of the distinguished scholars who were members of the monastic community of Holy Echmiatzin, but also those of the teachers of Gevorgian Spiritual Seminary and other secular people and clergymen relating to history, philology, criticism and other fields.<sup>28</sup>

As of 1910, it was necessary to supplement the printing-office with new equipment and employ specialists experienced in that field:

The printing-house is one of the oldest establishments of the Mother See: it gradually made progress in the course of time so that now it is one of the richest printing-houses in Caucasia as far as printing in Armenian is concerned. It has a foundry and a binding-house, but it would give the Mother See more income if it belonged to a private owner. Every single operation is performed according to the old system; in addition, the managers of our printing-office are appointed from among the members of the monastic community of Echmiatzin who are not skilled in printing business and are unable to introduce and use the up-to-date machinery which yields income to other printing-houses.<sup>29</sup>

In 1913 the printing-office published an Armenological collection entitled *Shoghakat*.<sup>30</sup>

On 18 May 1918, the assembly of the monks of Echmiatzin decided to close the printing-house for an unspecified period of time entitling its Inspector to preserve the typesetter's post to set and print the works necessary for the establishments of the Mother See. As for the other employees, they should be paid for three months (May, June and July) and be dismissed.<sup>31</sup>

In 1919 the printing-house issued text-books at a small-scale edition, due to which, the existing demand for them remained unsatisfied:

The Armenian nation has a great craving for education.<sup>32</sup>

In the same year, the printing-house was in an inconsolable state:

The printing-house was placed at the disposal of a bishop who in his turn passed it to another. It is consigned to



[total] neglect. There is nobody to take care of its rich property and large amount of paper. People say that the paper of this printing-office may easily be bought at the market of Vagharshapat despite the fact that the state establishments in Yerevan are in bad need of paper and there is no normal printing-house in Yerevan...<sup>33</sup>

In January 1920, the printing-office started publishing the *Echmiatzin* weekly (11 issues) instead of the *Ararat* journal.<sup>34</sup>

On 23 June of the same year, the Inspector of the printing-house, Senior Archimandrite Arsen, applied to Catholicos Gevorg Surenians V (1911 to 1930) with a request to put it within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finances of the Republic of Armenia.<sup>35</sup>

During its activity (1771 to 1920), the printing-house of Holy Echmiatzin published hundreds of religious, historical and philological books, text-books and magazines.

**Printing-Office of St. Gayane Monastery, Vagharshapat (1874 to 1876).** This small establishment<sup>36</sup> was founded in 1874 by Senior Archimandrite Vahan Bastamiants,<sup>37</sup> who published the *Dprots* (*School*) pedagogical journal there for two years under his own editorship. He writes the following in a report on his work:

I founded a printing-office in this monastery and published the *Dprots* journal there for two years. During that period, I maintained a small school, but later my long-lasting absence made me sell the printing-house, terminate the [publication of] the journal and close the school.<sup>38</sup>

## SHUSHI

The second largest centre of printing in Armenia is Shushi, a record of 1891 stating the following with this regard:

34 *Ibid.*, 511-513.

35 *Ibid.*, 427.

36 Ուղեւոր Ա., Ուղեւորութիւն [A. Ughavor, "A Journey"], «Սիօն» [*Sion*], 1877, 185. Also see Smbatians, 115.

37 Senior Archimandrite Vahan Bastamiants (1842, Tiflis - 1881, Vagharshapat) was a publicist, a pedagogue and an ecclesiastical figure.

38 Բաստամյանց Վ., Նամակ Վաղարշապատից [V. Bastamiants, "A Letter from Vagharshapat"], «Մշակ» [*Mshak*], no. 63, 1879, 1-2.

39 «Տարազ» [*Taraz*], no. 22, 1891, 319.

28 Smbatians, 140-141.

29 Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 8, 599.

30 Հայ պարբերական մամուլը. մատենագիտական համահավաք ցուցակ (1794-1980), կազմ. Բաբլոյան Մ. [M. Babloyan, comp., The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Bibliographic List (1794 to 1980)] (Yerevan, 1986), 98.

31 Վավերագրեր հայ եկեղեցու պատմության, գիրք Ե, Մայր աթոռ Ս. Էջմիածինը Առաջին Հանրապետության տարիներին (1918-1920 թթ.) [Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 5: The Mother See of Holy Echmiatzin in the Years of the First [Armenian] Republic (1918 to 1920)] (Yerevan, 1999), 31, 61.

32 Զարեան Գ., Անցորդը եւ իր ճամբան [K. Zarian, "The Passer-by and His Path"], «Հայրենիք» [*Hayrenik*], no. 8 (1927), 36.

33 Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 5, 137.



The craft of printing is well-established in Shushi: it has two wealthy printing-offices with high-speed machines. After Tiflis, it ranks second in Caucasia in the publication of Armenian books, having left behind such a major city with a large Armenian population as Baku.<sup>39</sup>

Until 1920 the city had 10 printing-houses which published 160 books and 11 periodicals.

**Printing-Office of Protestant Preachers (ca. 1822 to 1833).** The second printing-house throughout the territory of Armenia opened in Shushi around 1822 by August Dittrich and Zarembo representing the Evangelical Mission of Bazel.

In 1830 E. Smith and H. Dwight attested that the Protestant preachers of Shushi had a printing-office functioning under Mr. Dittrich's supervision. The Armenian-language works issued there were obligatorily subjected to censorship at first by Archbishop Nerses and then by Echmiatzin Synod:

"The most important work which Mr. Dittrich has attempted, and the one from which the most good is anticipated, is a translation of the New Testament into the vulgar dialect of the Armenians. ...The operations of the press in every department, are in fact now entirely stopped by the inimical opposition of the censors. Thus is the Armenian hierarchy, by the aid of Russian laws, exercising, with the spirit and rigor of papacy..."<sup>40</sup>

This press is known to have issued 22 books.

**Press of Artsakh Diocese (also known as Press of Holy Echmiatzin/the Spiritual Inspectorate of Armenians/the Spiritual Department of Armenians/the Spiritual School of Armenians). 1837 to 1902.** In the 1830s, the Government banned the preaching, teaching and printing activity of the Protestant preachers in Shushi. Taking advantage of it, the Primate of Artsakh Diocese, Metropolitan Baghdasar (1830 to 1853), bought their printing-office for the Armenian spiritual school<sup>41</sup> and renamed it Press of the Armenian Spiritual Inspectorate:

"...I purchased the Germans' Armenian press, which was sold in September, together with all the necessary machinery, following the advice of the high-ranking authorities of the city... at one thousand two hundred and nineteen roubles, four hundred and eighty roubles of which was voluntarily raised by the local people. As for the remaining seven hundred and nineteen roubles, I borrowed it pledging myself to repay it by small amounts... Buying the press, we pursued the goal of leaving it here, in this city..., for if we missed this

opportunity, it would be impossible to ever have another printing-office functioning here."<sup>42</sup>

The first book printed in this press was *The Prisoner of Chillon* by G. Byron (translated into Armenian by M. Zohrapian), which was issued in 1837. Its title page reads:

The Primate of Karabakh Diocese, ...Metropolitan Baghdasar.<sup>43</sup>

The printing-office functioned until 1840 and issued 11 books.

Under his first will dated 13 April 1853, Metropolitan Baghdasar left the press under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Consistory of Artsakh Diocese:

I am leaving the printing-house bought with my own means to the Armenian Diocese Consistory of Karabakh. If it ceases existing, which I hope will not ever happen, it should be rented and half of its annual income ought to be passed to the monasteries of Gandzasar and St. Hakob, and the other half to sons of poor families, students and others.<sup>44</sup>

In 1858 the Primate, Bishop Gevorg Vehapetian, re-equipped the press with a new hand press and Armenian letters through Moscow-based benefactor Hovhannes Hovnanian's financial support and named it Press of Holy Echmiatzin placing it under the jurisdiction of the Consistory<sup>45</sup> (between 1858 and 1863, 3 books were published there).

In 1862 the press, which was rented by printer Minas Targhlijants, started the publication of Catholicos' bulls and the statutes of the diocesan school at the suggestion of its trustees. However, on the order of the Vicar, Archbishop Vardan Odznetsy, the Consistory of Shushi hurried to inform the municipal police of Shushi that the private press of Minas Targhlijian was publishing the documents of the spiritual authorities without their knowledge and permission so that they were asking them to close it. The police applied to the Board of Trustees for explanation, and the latter confirmed that no permit or censorship were necessary for the publication of those papers as they belonged to them, namely the trustees. The police gave them the right to continue the publication and the printing-house did not close.<sup>46</sup>

42 **Լեօ**, Պատմութիւն Ղարաբաղի Հայոց բնական հոգեւոր դպրոցի. 1838-1913 [**Leo**, A History of the Armenian Spiritual Eparchial School of Karabakh (1838 to 1913)] (Tiflis, 1914), 121-122.

43 This publication is not preserved: it is first mentioned by Leo (*ibid.*, 124).

44 Վաւերագրեր հայ եկեղեցու պատմութեան, գիրք Թ, Հայ առաքելական եկեղեցու Արցախի թեմը (1813-1933) [Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 9: Artsakh Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church (1813 to 1933)] (Yerevan, 2001), 232.

45 **Leo**, 302.

46 *Ibid.*, 273.

40 **E. Smith** and **H. Dwight**, *Researches in Armenia*, vol. 1 (Boston, 1833), 318-320.

41 **Գուկասեան Հ.**, Բողոքականութեան հաստատուիլը Կովկասու հայոց մէջ [**H. Ghukassian**, "The Establishment of Protestantism amidst the Armenians of Caucasia"], «Մեղու Հայաստանի» [*Meghu Hayastani*], no. 55, 18 July 1885, 2.

Two years later, the press shifted back to the jurisdiction of the diocese school of Shushi:

...one of the trustees of the school, Hambardzum-Bek Sarukhanbekian, applied to Hovnanian with a request to allocate the press which the latter had presented [to the spiritual school of Artsakh] to the eparchial school. The benefactor turned to the Consistory and the Primate and declared that he had not presented the press to Echmiatzin, but to the spiritual school of Karabakh so that he demanded that it should be immediately placed at the disposal of its trustees. The Consistory complied with it, and in 1864 the Board of Trustees received it back from Targhlijian... and again gave it to him for management.<sup>47</sup>

The printers who worked there later were Priest Khachatur Ghalabekian, Avetis Tarumian and Babajan Grigorian.<sup>48</sup>

On 1 September 1873, the newly-appointed Inspector of the spiritual school, Archimandrite Khoren Stepane, started repairing the non-existent library and the half-existing press so that he would continue the publication of the *Haykakan Ashkhar*.<sup>49</sup> Not only did he revive the printing-house, but he also succeeded in publishing (in 1874) the April to August issues of the *Haykakan Ashkhar* magazine, the publication of which had ceased in 1871 (the first issue of this magazine was published in Tiflis in 1864).<sup>50</sup> The establishment was housed in one of the ground-floor rooms of the diocesan school.<sup>51</sup>

Most probably, the printing-office faced grave financial hardships for its activity was soon stopped and resumed only in 1885 thanks to the means provided by the eparchial school and the local people. According to a viewpoint, it reopened not to yield up its place to the press of *Mahtesy* Mirzajan Hakobiants, who was an adherent of Protestantism:

...the rumour spread that this press yielded great income to its proprietor so that it was thought necessary to harm that Protestant by having a strong opponent against it. The trustees called for voluntary fundraising: the donations were made willingly for the purpose of causing harm to the Protestant, although he was of Armenian origin, and at the same time, doing good for the diocesan school... The amount collected totaled 2,505 roubles, the trustees adding 1,847 roubles to it

from the school budget and embarking on the reopening of the press in the same year (1885).<sup>52</sup>

In 1885 the press acquired a small machine with Armenian and Russian letters. The trustees attempted to run it themselves, but they suffered losses and had to have it rented.<sup>53</sup>

After 1893 the condition of the printing-house gradually deteriorated so that it finally closed after 1902:

...the agreeable establishment which played a modest, but praiseworthy role in Shushi...<sup>54</sup>

During the period between 1864 and 1902, 37 books were published in this press.

**Press of Minas Targhlijants (1854).** This was the third printing-office in Shushi founded by Minas Targhlijants. It functioned only in 1854 and published 2 books.<sup>55</sup> In 1851 Minas Targhlijants also opened a press in Shamakhy together with his two colleagues.

**Press of H. S. Hovnanians (1870).** This private printing-house functioned only in the year of its opening and published a single book.<sup>56</sup>

**Press of Mahtesy Mirzajan Hakobiants (1879 to 1900).** This was another printing-house in Shushi established in 1879.<sup>57</sup>

Archpriest Yeghishe Geghamiants (Haykuny), who visited the city in 1885, writes the following about the founder of this press:

Mirzajan Hakobiants is the leader of the Armenian Evangelists of Shushi, their assembly room being in his house, close to his own press and bookstore. As I read in an official newspaper, several years ago, this Mirzajan Hakobiants stole boards and dyes from the house of a Turkish inhabitant of Shushi and was sentenced to exile for a year or a year and a half in the prisoners' battalion. This same person is now under police investigation for having stolen silk from the mill of Hadrut: I read a material about this, too and heard a lot of other things just by word of mouth. I do not know how much they can be trusted.<sup>58</sup>

Certain details regarding the press are reported by Petros Zakarian:

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 429.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 430.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 431.

<sup>55</sup> Հայ գիրքը 1851-1900 թվականներին [The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900] (Yerevan, 1999), 23, 25.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>57</sup> According to other sources, the printing-house was founded in 1880 or 1881 (**Բալայան Վ.**, Արցախի պատմությունը հինադարից մինչև մեր օրերը [V. Balayan, History of Artsakh from the Ancient Times to Our Days] (Yerevan, 2011), 211), but its first book, which was a translation by Archimandrite Aristakes Sedrakian, was published in 1879 (The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900, 260-261).

<sup>58</sup> **Հայկունի**, Ուղեգնացական ակնարկներ [Haykuny, "Travel Notes"], «Մերոս Հայաստանի» [Meghu Hayastani], no. 62, 11 August 1885, 3; *ibid.*, Ուղեգնացական ակնարկներ [Travel Notes] (Yerevan, 2010), 34.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 303.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 374.

<sup>49</sup> **Շահունյանց Վահան**, Նամակ Շուշուց [Vahan Shahunians, "A Letter from Shushi"], «Մշակ» [Mshak], no. 41, 1873, 2-3.

<sup>50</sup> **Babloyan**, 33. Also see **Ավագյան Ս.**, Նյութեր Ղարաբաղի նախասովետական շրջանի մամուլի պատմությունից [S. Avagian, Materials from the History of Karabakh's Pre-Soviet Press] (Yerevan, 1969), 20.

<sup>51</sup> **Leo**, 375.



...Mahtesy M. Hakobian returned from exile in Baku and founded a printing-office in a special building adjoining his house. The new press, where his sons worked, prospered from the very day of its establishment. By the way, our [prominent] writer Leo received his baptism of literature here, for he was the first proof-reader of the printing-house...<sup>59</sup>

The first book (1879) published in *Mahtesy M. Hakobians's* press was the Armenian translation of the first volume of John William Draper's *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe* translated by Archimandrite A. Sedrakian:

As for printing, it should be noted that outwardly it does not boast a high quality, for there are printing errors and the letters are vague and irregular in certain parts. All this, however, is not the result of the translator's carelessness or negligence; rather it is due to the press owner's lack of conscientiousness. As is known, the press of the spiritual school of Shushi, which used to publish a considerable number of books, no longer exists at present. Last year a private press opened here, its first fruit being the [Armenian] translation of Draper. That printing-office had an agreement with ...Sed. to issue [the work] properly, but as is apparent from the book, he did not have many letters to use...<sup>60</sup>

In 1881 this press published one of the novels by Raffi entitled *The Madman* («Թունիք»). As for its printing quality, its author wrote the following about it in his letter to benefactor Melkon Panian from Verin (Upper Agulis, Nakhijevan):

...I entitled them to print it in Shushi. The first pages of *The Madman* were sent to me so that I would see them. The paper was quite fine and the printing was without errors: evidently, the press is now in more or less improved conditions.<sup>61</sup>

Probably, it was in this press that the first issue of the *Azghagrakan Handes* (*Ethnographical Journal*) was published in 1896 under Yervand Lalayan's editorship (later its publication continued in M. Rotiniants' Press, Tiflis, Georgia).<sup>62</sup>

The press of *Mahtesy M. Hakobians* was destroyed during the 1905 fire of Shushi.<sup>63</sup>

Throughout the 25 years of its existence, it published 54 books and a journal.

**Press of *Mahtesy Yeghisabet (Yegh.) M. Hakobians* (1901 to 1904).** Most presumably, she was *Mahtesy* Mirzajan Hakobians's daughter, who continued her father's business and published 4 books between 1901 and 1904.<sup>64</sup>

**Press of *Bagrat Ter-Sahakians* (1901 to 1917).** B. Ter-Sahakians, who taught arithmetic at the diocesan school of Shushi, started the activity of his printing-house parallel with that of *Mahtesy Yegh. Hakobians*.<sup>65</sup> His press existed until 1917 publishing 20 books and the *Paylak* newspaper (1915).<sup>66</sup>

**Press of *Melkum Babajanian (Babajanov, 1910 to 1919).*** The *Gharabagh* three-day newspaper, which was the first district organ, was published in this printing-office:

...N. Yaramishian's *Gharabagh* newspaper is to be issued in the press of Melkon Babajanian, which is located in Yaghubian's house, Tamirian Street, Shushi City...<sup>67</sup>

Its publication began on 13 September 1911 and lasted until August 1912 (74 issues on the whole).

In 1917, when the *Netsuk* newspaper was being issued, the press had only a single worker who was both a typesetter and a printer.<sup>68</sup>

During the nine years of its activity, the press published 19 books and 10 newspapers.

It should be noted that from 1895 a number of newspapers and magazines were published in Shushi through hectographic printing: the *Kokon* (*Bud*) monthly under Ishkhan Michaelian's editorship; the *Krunk* (*Crane*) periodical as well as the *Ashakert* (*Pupil*), *Shushinskaya Zhizn* (*Life in Shushi*), *Mirazh* (*Mirage*), *Paykar* (*Struggle*), *Tzitzagh* (*Laughter*) and *Sring* (*Pipe*) newspapers. Between 1913 and 1917, *Mirage* Organisation published its illegal magazine of the same name in the house of Simon Apian, an inhabitant of Shushi, who says the following about this:

The press was in our house... we published the newspaper with a hectograph, that is to say, we used glycerine and gelatin with high-quality (Alexandrian) paper. The Unionists followed us for many times to find out the location of our press and give us away, but they never succeeded in doing so.<sup>69</sup>

59 Ավագյան Ս., Էջեր Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի կուլտուր-կրթական կյանքի պատմությունից [S. Avagian, Pages from the History of the Cultural and Educational Life of Nagorno Karabakh] (Yerevan, 1982), 12.

60 «Մշակ» [Mshak], no. 69, 1880, 2.

61 Րաֆֆի, ԵԺ [Raffi, A Collection of Works], vol. 10 (Yerevan, 1959), 566. Cf. 568.

62 Babloyan, 49.

63 Avagian, Materials, 65.

64 Հայ գիրքը 1901-1920 թվականներին [The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920] (Yerevan, 2007), 15, 64, 71, 110.

65 According to other sources, the press opened in the 1880s (**Levonian**, 1946, 233) or after 1905 (**Balayan**, 211).

66 The first 3 issues of the newspaper were printed in B. Ter-Sahakians Press, after which its publication continued in that of M. Babajanian (**Avagian**, Materials, 137-139).

67 Avagian, Materials, 85.

68 Ibid., 187.

69 Ibid., 133.

## VARAG MONASTERY

**Artziv Vaspurakani Press (also known as Press of Varag Monastery) - 1857 to 1864, 1872 to 1874, 1876, 1883, 1908, 1913.** In 1857, in the first year of his assuming the post of Father Superior of Varag Monastery, Archimandrite Mkrtych Khrimian founded the first printing-house in Western Armenia there with a wooden press of 70,000 *kuruses* which he had brought from Constantinople. His goal was to start the publication of the *Artzvi Vaspurakan* [*Eagle of Vaspurakan*] magazine and encourage the Armenian nation with patriotic, historical, religious and poetic articles.<sup>70</sup>



Mkrtych Khrimian in 1889

The press, which was situated on the lower floor of the Patriarchate, started its activity in January 1858: it published not only the *Artzvi Vaspurakan* monthly, but also different books.

In one of the issues of this periodical, M. Khrimian explains the existence of printing drawbacks to his readers, particularly stating:

The press functions in a place where printing business has no traditions: its employees, the printers, smelters and typesetters, are young fellows with no experience... The printing machine is small in dimensions, whereas the work to be carried out is large in scale.<sup>71</sup>

In 1862 Archimandrite Mkrtych Khrimian was appointed Primate of Taron and Prior of Sourb Karapet (Holy Forerunner) Monastery of Moosh:

First and foremost he prepared one of the presses of Varag with its accessories to take it to Sourb Karapet

Monastery... He consigned the continuation of the work in the printing-office to the brethren and leading pupils...<sup>72</sup>

The press of Varag Monastery stopped functioning in the middle of 1864 and resumed its activity for a short time only in August 1872 working until 13 January 1873. The editor was Manuel Ananian, and the employees were Manuel Artametsian, Tigran Amirjanian, S. Gnuny and others.<sup>73</sup>

In 1884 the press was sealed on the order of the Turkish Government:

Itare Eminy, the Mufetish of Mearif, another Turkish official, Agha Margar Nalbandian and six policemen... first went to Varag Monastery and sealed its museum and press, after which they came to the central school...<sup>74</sup>

In 1892 Governor of Van Bahri Pasha had the printing machine moved to Van by force and started the publication of the *Van* Turkish-language newspaper.<sup>75</sup>

An inhabitant of Van, P. Mekhikian, writes the following about the painful closing of the press:

Unfortunately, I do not remember the year: on an autumn day that was Sunday... the press of Varag and its accessories were slowly carried away to the city loaded on ox carts, covered so that they would not be seen, and surrounded with guards armed with bayonets. The Government was said to have made an agreement with our national organisations to provisionally borrow or rent the press. ...Many people, especially the young, had tears in their eyes, their fists clenched tightly: they knew very well what was meant by saying 'provisionally borrow or rent.' They had come to look at the captured [press] for the last time... The press was placed in two large single-storey rooms close to the Government building in Kaghakamej: they started using it by publishing an eight-day Turkish-language newspaper of 4 pages named *Van*... I do not remember how long the Government used it or what happened to it in the long run, but I know that on the eve of the first war, a Turkish newspaper called *Van* was still published in the city.<sup>76</sup>

A record of 1893 says the following about the removal of the printing machine of Varag to Van:

70 **Ծերուկ (Արտակ Դարբինյան)**, Վանի նահանգը ներկայումս [Tzeruk (Artak Darbinian), "Van Province at Present"], «Մուրճ» [Murj], no. 12 (1904), 51. For information about the press, also see **Բաբայան Ա.**, Հայ տպագրության 450 տարին [A. Babayan, "The 450 Years of Armenian Printing"], «Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես» [Historico-Philological Journal], no. 1 (1963), 39. Archimandrite Mkrtych brought wooden and metallic presses from Constantinople (see **Չիտունի Տ.**, Վարագայ յոբելեան. յիշատակարան եւ կոչ Վարագայ կրթական հաստատութեան յիսնամեայ յոբելեանի (1857-1907) [T. Chituny, Varag's Anniversary: In Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Educational Establishment of Varag (1857 to 1907)] (Constantinople, 1910), 13).

71 **Կոստանդյան Է.**, Սկրտիչ Խրիմյան. հասարակական-քաղաքական գործունեությունը [E. Kostandian, Mkrtych Khrimian's Public and Political Activities] (Yerevan, 2000), 66-67.

72 **Chituny**, 13.

73 **Տեր-Սկրտիչեան Ե.**, Գանձեր Վասպուրականի [Yer. Ter-Mkrtychian, The Pearls of Vaspurakan], vol. 1 (Boston, 1966), 619.

74 «Արձագանք» [Ardzagank], no. 1, 9 July 1885, 7.

75 **Վարդ** (Գարեգին Սրվանձտյանց), Մի պտոյտ Վանի շրջակայքում [Vard (Garegin Srvandztiants), "A Walk in the Vicinity of Van"], «Արար» [Arax], book 1 (1898), 61.

76 **Մխիկեան Պ.**, Վարագայ տպարանի գերութիւնը [P. Mkhikian, "The Captivity of the Press of Varag"], «Վարագ» [Varag], no. 4 (1954), 21-22.





Mr. Petros as leaning on the press of the *Artzvi Vaspurakani*

Reprinted from: Փափազեան Վ., Իմ յուշերը [V. Papazian, My Memoirs], vol. 2 (Beirut, 1952), 293.

“Some short while back the officials appeared and walked off with the precious instrument, of which the voice had been mute for many years. They erected it in Van, and, having kidnapped an Armenian compositor, used it to publish an official gazette.”<sup>77</sup>

After the proclamation of the Turkish Constitution, in 1908, when the aforementioned Turkish newspaper ceased being published, the press was returned to Varag. The Turkish authorities returned the press and moulds bound to the brethren of Varag. The overseer of the monastery, Mr. Petros, ordered the shepherds to immediately go down to the city with a cart harnessed by enduring oxen. The books bound by the press were moved to Varag on carts of oxen under a shower of happy greetings and songs.<sup>78</sup>

In the same year, the teachers of Varag Monastery started publishing the *Artzvik* biweekly with a hectograph, but it continued for only 3 months.<sup>79</sup>

The Union of the Alumni of Varag, which was founded in 1910, wanted to reopen the press of their *Artzvi Hayrik*<sup>80</sup> in the same year to perpetuate his memory for ever.<sup>81</sup>

The activity of the press finally terminated in the days of the Great Genocide of the Armenians (1915):

We also saw the press of the *Artzvi Vaspurakan*: a hand press now ruined and thrown aside...<sup>82</sup>

77 H. Lynch, *Armenia: Travels and Studies*, vol. 1 (London, New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), 114.

78 Ter-Mkrtichian, 620.

79 Ibid., 622.

80 They meant Mkrtich Khrimian, whom they regarded as their father (*hayrik* is the Armenian equivalent for *father*). *Artzvi* is the Armenian equivalent for *eagle*: by calling him in this way, they emphasized his boundless energy and courage (translator).

81 Պողոսեան Ե., Պատմութիւն Հայ մշակութային ընկերութիւններու [Ye. Poghossian, *History of Armenian Cultural Societies*], vol. 2 (Vienna, 1963), 33. Also see «Յասագ» [*Haraj*], no. 49 (Karin, 1910).

82 «Հովիտ» [*Hovit*], no. 39, 1915, 609. The casting machine of Varag Monastery was moved to Echmiatzin and used in the 1st Printing-House of Yerevan in the Soviet years. Since 1960 it has been kept in Yerevan History Museum.

## INNAKNIAN SOURB KARAPET MONASTERY

Press of the *Vaspurakan Artzvoyn* (1863 to 1865).

On assuming the post of Prior in Sourb Karapet Monastery of Moosh in 1862, Archimandrite Mkrtich Khrimian moved the wooden press of the small printing-office of Varag Monastery there and started publishing the *Artzvik Taron* (*Eaglet of Taron*) biweekly under the editorship of Archimandrite Garegin Srvandztiants<sup>83</sup> (its publication lasted from 1 April 1863 until 1 June 1865).<sup>84</sup> The latter wrote the following in the first issue of the newspaper:

...this is a difficult undertaking, for to establish a press in Sourb Karapet Monastery of Moosh... to imbue the hearts of the people with a striving for study... The printing-house is small and lacks a lot of things. Like an old wine-skin, the people's minds are torn and filled with total misery, but the *Artzvik* will do everything to fit and feed them considerably at least at this extent and in this way for the time being.<sup>85</sup>



Garegin Srvandztiants

During the short existence of the press of Sourb Karapet Monastery, the Government closed it for several times due to the slander of Mambre Mamikonian, one of the members of the monastic community who served as Prior between 1873 and 1882:

Khrimian established a well-furnished school named Zharangavorats with excellent teachers in the aforementioned Sourb Karapet Monastery and placed the press he had brought from Varag there. He published a monthly called *Artzvik* there, although it closed for several times as the present-day Superior, Bishop Mambre, had reported the Government that Khrimian had allegedly incited the people to revolt through it.<sup>86</sup>

In 1875 the brethren of Sourb Karapet Monastery applied to Catholicos Gevorg IV with a request to renovate the large school together with its press<sup>87</sup> during the construction activities to be unfolded there.

83 For information about folklorist, philologist, ethnographer and public figure, Archimandrite Garegin Srvandztiants (born in Van on 17 November 1840, he died in Constantinople on 17 November 1892), see Կոստանդյան Է., Գարեգին Սրվանդտյանց [E. Kostandian, Garegin Srvandztiants] (Yerevan, 2008).

84 Կ. Մասունի, Պատմութիւն Տարոսի աշխարհի [K. Sasuny, *History of Taron Province*] (Beirut, 1957), 206.

85 Ibid., 212.

86 Եզնիկ Մատթոս Տարոնացի, Խրիմեան Հայրիկ [Yeznik Mattevos Taronatsy, Khrimian Hayrik], «Մեղու Հայաստանի» [*Meghu Hayastani*], no. 7, 21 February 1876, 2.

87 Documents on the History of the Armenian Church, vol. 11, 596.

The press of Sourb Karapet Monastery published only 46 issues of the *Artzvik* newspaper.

#### YEREVAN

**Press of Zakaria Gevorgian Hakobiants (1874 to 1880).** This was the first printing-office in Yerevan founded by Z. Hakobiants in 1874. One or two years after its establishment, its management passed to E. Ter-Grigoriants.<sup>88</sup> This press bore the burden of the publication of all the official and non-official orders, announcements, notes of condolences, obituaries and emergency news of the city.<sup>89</sup> It was particularly weighed down with work during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877 to 1878.<sup>90</sup>

The first book of the press, which was published in 1875, was entitled *Tzaghik Entanyats* («Ծաղիկ ընտանեաց»): its editor and publisher was Abgar Gulamiriant.<sup>91</sup> During its six-year activity, the press issued 14 books.

**Press of Abgar Stepanossian Gulamiriant (A. S. Gulamirian, also known as Stepan A. S. Gulamiriant's Private Press), 1879 to 1910.** The available information regarding this printing-house dates from 1879, when it published a calendar for the following year. By the way, it was established after it had become evident that Zakaria Hakobiants' press had yielded large income between 1877 and 1878:

...whetted several men's appetite to open a new printing-office. The year 1879 marked the establishment of the second press in Yerevan, that of Abgar Gulamiriant.<sup>92</sup>

The proprietor of the printing-house first published books under his editorship in the first press of Yerevan, then he opened his own one, which mainly published



E. Ter-Grigoriants and his printing-office flanking his house (in former Karvansara, today's Yeznik Koghbatsy Street)

works either written or edited by him.

Between 1896 and 1901, the press did not function and resumed its activity only in 1902 continuing it until 1910 and publishing 27 books.

**Press of Emin Ter-Grigoriants (1880 to 1917).** In 1880 Emin Ter-

Grigoriants founded his private press in a building flanking his house. Prior to this, in January 1876, when he worked as Manager of the press of Zakaria Hakobiants, he signed an agreement with him under which, he was to accumulate his salary for 5 years to take possession of the printing-house.<sup>93</sup> One of the managers of E. Ter-Grigorian's press was Perj Proshian.<sup>94</sup>

In 1883 the press started the publication of the *Yerevani Haytararutyunner* (*Announcements from Yerevan*) two-day semi-comic newspaper, which was published in Armenian until 1886. Then censorship made its publishers to issue it in Russian (*Erivanskiye Obyavleniya*) between 1900 and early 1909. From the second quarter of 1909 until 1917, it was published in both these languages.<sup>95</sup>

This press chiefly published the works and translations of its owner, as well as the reports of the deputy of St. Grigor Lusavorich (Gregory the Enlightener) Church of Yerevan: a total of 46 Armenian and 5 Russian books with a single newspaper.

88 Armenian playwright, cultural and public figure Emin Ter-Grigorian (born on 1 January 1855, he died in Yerevan in 1939) received education at Aghababian School of Astrakhan as well as Lazarian and Gevorgian Seminaries of Moscow and Echmiatzin respectively. He taught at Yerevan's Gayanian School of Girls. E. Ter-Grigorian held membership of the Aldermen's Council of the Municipal Club from 1906 until 1907 and the City Duma between 1910 and 1911. He is one of the founders of the theatre of Yerevan (for details, see Նազարյան Ս., Երևանի պարբերական մամուլը (1880-1917) [S. Nazarian, The Periodical Press of Yerevan (1880 to 1917)] (Yerevan, 1986), 91-100).

89 Հակոբյան Թ., Երևանի պատմությունը (1879-1917) [T. Hakobian, History of Yerevan (1879 to 1917)] (Yerevan, 1963), 445.

90 Ibid.

91 In 1866 teacher Abgar Gulamiriant started working in the newly-opened National Book Depository of Lovers of Reading (Չարսրիա Տեր-Օհաննիսեան Տեր Չարսրեանց, Ազգային ընթերցարան յԵրևան քաղաքի [Zakaria Ter-Ohannissian Ter-Zakariants, "The National Reading House of Yerevan City"], «Մեղու Հայաստանի» [Meghu Hayastani], no. 6, 12 February 1866, 43-44). He also held the post of treasurer in Yerevan's Sourb Astvatzatzin Church (1896 to 1909).

92 Hakobian, 1963, 446.

93 Ibid., 445. For information about E. Ter-Grigorian, also see Հովհաննիսյան Հ., Հայ բարոնի պատմություն (XIX դ.) [H. Hovhannissian, History of the Armenian Theatre] (Yerevan, 1996), 428-432.

94 Hakobian, 1963, 453.

95 Nazarian, 81-91.



**Psak Newspaper Press (1880 to 1884).** The publication of the first literary, historical and pedagogical weekly of Yerevan, the *Psak (Crown)*, traces back to 15 March 1880 (its editor, publisher and the owner of the press was Vasak Papajanian).<sup>96</sup> Its first several issues were published in the press of Z. Hakobiants, after which it became clear that it was absolutely unprofitable to publish the *Psak*, which had a small edition, in another printing-house, as it was fraught with major inconveniences. Several weeks after its birth, its publisher, who was at the same time its editor, established his own press, which became known under the name of the weekly.<sup>97</sup>

In the early 20th century, Yerevan had three small printing-houses of which that of the *Psak* was the only one with permanent work, namely newspaper publication, whereas that of the other two depended on accidental circumstances<sup>98</sup> (this is attested by one of its correspondents).

The publication of the weekly continued at certain intervals until 7 April 1884, when it terminated due to the censorship imposed by the Tsarist authorities. Its editor and publisher V. Papajanian suffered punishment for having participated in the [Armenian] liberation movement personally and through his newspaper.<sup>99</sup>

Apart from the *Psak*, between 1881 and 1884, the press published the *Aroghjapahakan Tert (Health Newspaper)* monthly<sup>100</sup> under Doctor Levon Tigranian's<sup>101</sup> editorship, but the Tsarist censorship put

an end to its publication several months after the closing of the *Psak* Press.

The *Psak* Press was situated in Nahapet Hovakimian's house opposite the church of Sts. Peter and Paul, which used to stand in the site of the present-day Moscow Cinema in Doctors' (nowadays: Tumanian) Street.<sup>102</sup> During its four-year activity, it published 7 books and 2 newspapers.

**R. K. Edelson Press (1890 to 1903).** In 1890 Roman Edelson, a Jew in origin, bought a printing-house from the Armenians<sup>103</sup> and published 18 books there, including 16 in Russian.

**Press of P. Hovhannissiants (P. Hovhannessiants & Comp.) - 1905.** This press functioned only in the year of its establishment and published 5 books, 4 in Armenian and one in Russian. The author of 3 of the former was Makar Ter-Sargissian (pen-name: Parnakes), a literary, theatrical and educational figure from Astapat, Northern Artsakh.<sup>104</sup>

**Ayvaziants & Nazariants Press (1907 to 1911).** In 1907 Ayvaziants and Nazariants opened a press in Yerevan and published 7 books between 1907 and 1911.<sup>105</sup>

**Arshak Hakobian Press (Arshak Hakobiants & Comp., Arsh. Hakobiants & Sons, Luys).** In 1908 this printing-house, the establishment of which goes back to 1907, published the *Hrazdan* literary, social and economic newspaper. The editor and publisher of its first two issues was Poghos Kanduralian,<sup>106</sup> whose work was later continued by A. Ter-Hakobian. Until 1909, the press published 31 issues of this paper at irregular frequency.<sup>107</sup>

In 1911 to 1912, Luys Press published the *Nor Dzayn (New Voice)* literary and social weekly (editor:

<sup>96</sup> Vasak Papajanian (born in Yerevan in 1847, he died in Tzaghkadzor in 1893) was an editor, a pedagogue and a public figure. After completing a course at Tiflis Gymnasium, he continued his education in Germany and returned to Armenia with a PH.D degree assuming the post of Inspector at the diocesan school of Shushi in 1877. On 8 May 1878, V. Papajanian was dismissed from this post on the decision of Echmiatzin Synod due to his viewpoints on instruction and education. In 1879 he worked as editor for the *Haykakan Ashkhar* magazine in Yerevan. From 1881 until 1883, he held membership of Yerevan's body of Municipal Autonomy; in 1883 he was a member of the City Administration also holding the post of Acting Mayor. In 1885 he was exiled from Caucasia as one of the leaders of the underground organisation of Hayaser-Azgaser (Armenophile-Patriot), which had been founded in 1881. In 1889 he returned from banishment and took up residence in Tzaghkadzor, Armenia, where he died in 1893 (for details, see *Nazarian*, 45-48).

<sup>97</sup> *Hakobian*, 1963, 446.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 433.

<sup>100</sup> Հայոց պարբերական մամուլը. լիակատար ցուցակ հայ լրագրության սկզբից մինչև մեր օրերը (1794-1934), կազմ՝ Գ. Լևոնյան [G. Levonian, comp., The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete List of Armenian Periodicals from Their Establishment to Our Days (1794 to 1934)] (Yerevan, 1934), 23. Also see *Babloyan*, 40; *Babayan*, 38. According to another source, the newspaper was published in the press of Emin Ter-Grigoriants (*Hakobian*, 1963, 434).

<sup>101</sup> Doctor and public figure Levon Tigranian (born in Yerevan on 10 December 1842, he died in the same city in 1906) received education at the provincial school of Yerevan, then in Tiflis and St. Petersburg. In 1875 he graduated from the Faculty of Medi-

cine of Dorpat University, Estonia. In 1880 he was elected Chairman of the Public Health Care Committee set up at the Municipal Administration of Yerevan. In compliance with the decree of Yerevan Police Department, issued on 15 January 1885, L. Tigranian joined those leaders of Hayaser-Azgaser Organisation (he was one of them) who were exiled to Dorpat for 3 years (for details, see *Nazarian*, 49-72).

<sup>102</sup> *Hakobian*, 1963, 432.

<sup>103</sup> Амбарян А., Амбарян С., К характеристике промышленности Восточной Армении [A. Ambarian, S. Ambarian, "About the Characteristics of the Industry of Eastern Armenia"], «Պատմա-բանասիրական հանդես» [*Historico-Philological Journal*], nos. 2-3 (1967), 201.

<sup>104</sup> The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920, 144.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 176, 195, 201, 232, 252, 376.

<sup>106</sup> Poghos Kanduralian, who was an agriculturist, received education at Moscow Academy of Agriculture after Petrovsky. From 1901 to 1905, he worked as an agriculturist in the Department of Agriculture attached to the provincial schools of Yerevan. He was one of the trustees of the eparchial school of Yerevan (for details, see *Nazarian*, 117-126).

<sup>107</sup> *Babloyan*, 73 (according to M. Babloyan, the editor and publisher of the newspaper was first A. Ter-Hakobian and then P. Kanduralian). Also see *Levonian*, 1934, 55.

Vahan Abrahamian)<sup>108</sup> and the *Kran* literary, socio-economical and comic weekly<sup>109</sup> under Mushegh Bagratuny's editorship.<sup>110</sup>

In 1918 to 1919, Luys Press published the *Shant* newspaper (editor: H. Asatrian), the organ of the Pupils' Union of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, and between 1918 and 1920, the *Zhoghovurd (People)* paper was issued there.<sup>111</sup>

Throughout its activity, this press published 54 Armenian and 6 Russian books with 10 newspapers.

**Cultura Press (1912 to 1920).** The activity of this printing-house goes back to 1912, when it published an Armenian-language book entitled *The Vilayets of Van, Bitlis and Erzurum by A-Do*.

In 1913 editor Mushegh Bagratuny started the publication of the *Nor Mamul (New Press)* three-day comic newspaper (1913 to 1915) first in *Cultura* and then in *Luys Presses*.<sup>112</sup>

In 1913 *Cultura Press* began the publication of the organ of the Communist Party of Armenia, the *Khosk* (translated as *Word* or *Speech*) paper under Arshavir Melikian's<sup>113</sup> editorship. After his arrest in 1914, its publication ceased, being resumed on 22 September 1918 and continuing until 22 March 1919.<sup>114</sup>

On 4 May 1916, the publication of the *Ashkhatank (Labour)* newspaper of Van moved to *Cultura Press* (1916 to 1919).

In 1917 it published the *Zang (Bell)* newspaper, and in 1918 to 1919, the *Kaytz (Sparkle)* together with a single issue of the *Spartak*, the organ of the same-name Union of Young Socialist-Internationalists.<sup>115</sup>

On the whole, the press published 8 Armenian and 6 Russian books with 8 newspapers.

Yerevan also had some other presses which represent the following chronological picture: 1907-1918: Press of Yerevan Provincial Department; 1914: Kh. Ayvaziants Press; 1917 to 1920: Press of the Ministry of the Interior; 1919: Avagian Press; 1919 to 1920: Press of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, Hayrenik and Urartu Presses; 1920: Armenian Polygraph Press and the General Headquarters Press.

## GANDZAK

**Fyodorov & Tarumians Press (1874 to 1879).** In 1874 Fyodorov and Tarumian founded the first printing-house in Gandzak, which functioned until 1879 and published 6 books,<sup>116</sup> as well as the *Haykakan Ashkhar (Armenian World)* magazine under Khoren Stepane's editorship between 1874 and 1875.<sup>117</sup>

**Avetik M. Tarumian Press (1888 to 1895).** Most presumably, the press of Fyodorov and Tarumian later shifted into the ownership of Avetik M. Tarumian and functioned at intervals from 1888 until 1895. During this period, it published 2 text-books and a report on the income and expenditure of St. Hovhannes Church of Gandzak for the period between 1893 and 1894.<sup>118</sup> Probably, later Avetik M. Tarumian moved to Tiflis as a press of the same name is known to have functioned there from 1907 until 1919.<sup>119</sup>

**Sahakians' Press (1891 to 1893).** This press functioned during the period when Avetik Tarumian's printing-house no longer worked. It published merely 2 booklets containing a report on the income and expenditure of St. Hovhannes Church of Gandzak for the period between 1889 and 1892.<sup>120</sup>

Other similar establishments known to have functioned in Gandzak are the presses of Nanassiants (1912); Levon Aghayants (1913 to 1916) and Pechatnoye Delo (Printing Business, 1917 to 1919). In 1918 the *Mer Dzayne (Our Voice)* three-day workers' newspaper was published in the city<sup>121</sup> (probably in Pechatnoye Delo Press).

108 **Babloyan**, 89. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 69; **Nazarian**, 128-135.

109 **Babloyan**, 88. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 68; **Nazarian**, 147.

110 Mushegh Bagratuny (born in Karbi Village in 1870, he died in 1945) received primary education at the four-year school of Shamakhy and moved to Yerevan after his father's death. In 1904 he was imprisoned for his adherence to the Social-Democratic Party and for the dissemination of banned literature, but in 1905 he was set free. He worked for several Bolshevik and Social-Democratic newspapers published in Tiflis and Baku. In 1920 his property was confiscated and he was exiled first to Garni Village and then to Persia. In 1921 he returned to Yerevan, where he was appointed Head of the Revolutionary Committee of Bash-Garni Village. He is the author of the script of the film of Shor and Shorshor (for details, see **Nazarian**, 160-166).

111 **Babloyan**, 114, 118. The newspaper *Shant* was printed first in Luys Press and then in that of the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

112 **Babloyan**, 98. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 77; **Nazarian**, 147-166.

113 Revolutionary and public figure Arshavir Melikian (born in Pashalu (at present: Zaritap) on 9 February 1879, he died in Tbilisi in 1937) received education at the Male Gymnasium of Yerevan and Kharkov University, whence he was expelled in 1901 due to his participation in revolutionary movements. He studied philosophy at Zurich University and literature at Neuchâtel Academy, Switzerland. In 1906 he acquired membership of the Workers' Social-Democratic Party of Russia and took up residence in Yerevan in 1911. He also taught at Gayanian Female College. In 1921 Arshavir Melikian assumed living in Tiflis, where he collaborated with numerous newspapers as a correspondent (for details, see **Արշավիր Մելիքյան [Tz. Aghayan, Arshavir Melikian]** (Yerevan, 1969).

114 **Babloyan**, 96. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 75; **Nazarian**, 167-185.

115 **Babloyan**, 110, 115, 129. The *Zang* was published from 1917 until 1919 first in *Cultura Press* and then in the printing-office of the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

116 The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900, 225, 228, 238, 254, 257-258, 266.

117 **Levonian**, 1946, 234. Also see **Babloyan**, 33.

118 The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900, 400, 402, 515, 536.

119 The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920.

120 The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900, 448, 493.

121 **Babloyan**, 113, 117. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 89, 93.



## ALEXANDROPLE

During the period between 1876 and 1920, Alexandrople had 10 printing-houses which unfolded a prolific activity:

...the number of the books and especially booklets published [there] is imposing for a district city.<sup>122</sup>

**Gevorg Sanoyants Press (1876 to 1915).** The founder of the first printing-house of Alexandrople (1876) was Gevorg Sanoyan. It functioned until 1915 and published 88 various books. From 1907 until 1911, it also published the *Zhayr (Rock)* newspaper.<sup>123</sup>

**Abraham M. Malkhassian (Malkhassians) Press (1892 to 1919).** The second printing-office of the city was established by Abraham Malkhassian, who entered into rivalry against Sanoyants and gradually expanded his business together with his four sons.<sup>124</sup> During its 27-year-long activity, his press published 53 books (Ghazar Parpetsy, Aristakes Lastiverttsy, text-books of Armenian, fairy tales, fables, educational manuals, etc.);<sup>125</sup> the *Akhurian* calendar-magazine for Armenian women (1902, editor: Nvard Apinian); the *Arev (Sun)* paper (1914, editor & publisher: Gevorg Khoyetsian); the *Nor Kyank (New Life)* paper (1917), the organ of Alexandrople Branch of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia (editorial staff: B. Gharibjanian, G. Atarbekian, G. Haykuny, etc.), and the *Alexandrapoli Lraber (Alexandrople Herald)* daily (1919, publisher: L. Malkhassian).<sup>126</sup>

**Stepaniants Press (1901)** functioned only in 1901 and published 2 books.<sup>127</sup>

**Sanoyants & Stepaniants Press (1902 to 1903).** Most presumably, in 1902 Sanoyants joined Stepaniants, their press working in 1902 to 1903 and publishing 3 text-books of Armenian and 7 books (a total of 10 works).<sup>128</sup>

**Hovhannes A. Apinians Press (1903 to 1904).** During its short existence, this printing-office published 14 various books.<sup>129</sup>

**Hakob Ghasabiants (Ghasapiants) Press (1903 to 1920)** published 33 books and 4 papers, the latter comprising the *Luys (Light)*, 1918, the organ of Alexandrople Branch of the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries; the *Huys (Hope)*, 1919, the weekly of Alexandrople Pupils' Union of the Armenian

Revolutionary Federation; the *Shiraki Ashkhatavor (Workman of Shirak)*, 1919 to 1920, the organ of Shirak's Central and Alexandrople's Local Committees, and the *Ashkhatanki Droshak (Flag of Labour)*, 1920, the organ of Alexandrople Branch of the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries.<sup>130</sup>

**Shirak Press (1904 to 1920)** published 64 books and the *Akhurian* paper (1907 to 1915), the editor and publisher of which was Karapet Apinian.<sup>131</sup>

In 1903 the first periodical of the city, the *Alexandropolskiye Obyavleniya (Announcements from Alexandrople)* weekly, was issued, its publication lasting until 1906 (editor & publisher: K. Apinian).<sup>132</sup>

**H. Sanoyants (Hovh. Gevorg Sanoyants) Press (1910 to 1919).** From 1910 until 1919, the press of Gevorg Sanoyants was within his son Hovhannes's jurisdiction:

The printing-house of Sanoyants preserved its existence until 1918 publishing a great number of books and periodicals.<sup>133</sup>

The press of Hovhannes Sanoyants issued 38 books and 7 periodicals.

Other presses functioning in Alexandrople were Azatutun or Svoboda (1917 to 1918) and H. S. KH. H. (1920).<sup>134</sup>

## AINTAP

One of the pioneers of printing business in Aintap was Vahan (Movses) Kyurkchian, who saw a printing machine and letters when still a college student (1880) and succeeded in printing a small poem hardly in 3 to 4 copies, as gaudy as the first printing attempts of Hakob Meghapart.<sup>135</sup> In 1886,<sup>136</sup> when V. Kyurkchian edited the *Mentor* magazine and sent its handwritten copies to G. Paghtatlian (Aramian) Press, Constantinople, he started taking steps for the acquisition of permission to found a printing-office in Aintap. In 1886 he went to the Turkish capital taking with him the telegraph of the Minister of Education Myunif Pasha (he lived in Aintap) addressed to the Governorate of Aleppo:

One of the inhabitants of Aintap, Mr. Vahan Kyurkjian, has submitted a petition to us to learn

122 **Lbn.**, ԵԺ [Leo, Works], vol. 5 (Yerevan, 1986), 613.

123 **Babloyan**, 67.

124 **Levonian**, 1946, 234.

125 The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900. Also see The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920.

126 The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete Bibliographic List (1794 to 1980), 55, 100, 111, 119. Also see The Armenian Periodical Press: A Complete List (1794 to 1934), 39, 78, 88, 95.

127 The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920, 4, 8.

128 *Ibid.*, 28, 30, 33, 46, 50, 52, 56, 66, 81.

129 *Ibid.*, 54, 57-58, 61, 70, 80-81, 91, 95, 107, 110, 114.

130 **Babloyan**, 115, 125, 127, 130. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 91, 102, 103, 105.

131 The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920. Also see **Babloyan**, 66.

132 **Babloyan**, 453.

133 **Levonian**, 1946, 234.

134 **Babloyan**, 110, 111. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 86-87.

135 **Պողոթնաճ Գ.**, Այնթապահայեր [G. Pogharian, Aintap Armenians], vol. 1 (Beirut, 1974), 12.

136 According to G. Pogharian, the *Mentor* saw the light in 1886 in the publishing house of Vardanian School (**Pogharian**, 7-8, note 4).

137 *Ibid.*, 14.

whether or not we agree to the foundation of a Turkish- and Armenian-language press in the city.<sup>137</sup>

His request was rejected:

...the place has never had a printing-house before and there is no need for it at present...<sup>138</sup>

In 1889 V. Kyurkchian again attempted to raise the issue of the press (he intended to establish it in Aleppo and then move it to Aintap), but in vain.<sup>139</sup> He writes the following about his fiasco:

Hasan Hagge Pasha, the former Governor of Van, said to me with a wide sneer: “If you want to establish an Armenian press, go to Ermenistan.”<sup>140</sup>

Eventually, it was only after 1908 that printing-houses were established in Aintap.

**College (Central Turkey College) Press (1876 to 1878, 1908 to 1915, 1919 to 1921).** As attested by Dr. Meril, as early as the years of the foundation of the college (1876 to 1878), a foot press was brought from America and was used for only the publication of school questionnaires and official documents until the fire of 1890.<sup>141</sup> After the proclamation of the Turkish Constitution in 1908, the issue of the reopening of the printing-office was again raised and received a positive response:

It will be possible to repair the broken machine and bring new letters within several years. The year 1910 may be considered as marking the beginning of a new stage of activity for the press of the college of Central Turkey.<sup>142</sup>

Special mention should be made of Levon Rupian, the calligraphy teacher of the college who played a great role in the re-operation of the press: together with the senior-class pupils, he initiated the cleaning of the letters that were covered with dust and organised their arrangement.<sup>143</sup>

The proprietor of the printing-office was Nshan Paleozian, who taught Armenian at the college, and the duties of printers were performed by the pupils. Priest Garegin Pogharian wrote the following about the activity of the press in a note addressed to Arshak Alpayajian on 21 October 1914:

They do not have a permanent official and truly, they are not skilled in this craft and have learned everything in practice... The press is not a large one and is operated with feet.<sup>144</sup>

In order to make the work of the press as fruitful as possible, in 1913 two pupils of the college (one of them was the head typesetter, Sargis Laleyan, who worked for the *Hay Antep* periodical (1960 to 1970) published in Arlington) advanced several conditions before the Inspector such as the removal of the printing-house to a light airy place, the ground floor of the newly-built Andrews Hall. They also raised the issue of the acquisition of a variety of Armenian, English and Turkish letters.<sup>145</sup> These conditions being complied with, between 1909 and 1915, 11 books and booklets, as well as a monthly were published by the College Press (in Armeno-Turkish).

Between 1919 and 1921, the College Press was again put into operation and published the *Rahvira-Rahnyuma* newspaper, the editors and publishers of which were Meril and Lutfi Khoja (Levonian); a song collection in Armeno-Turkish, and a booklet (1919) by Gr. Sarafian entitled *Answers to a Number of Religious Questions* («Կրօնաբնական կարգ ուր հարցումներու տրուած պատասխանները»)<sup>146</sup> Probably, it was this printing-office that issued the *Ukhunet-Yeghbayrutian* newspaper in Armenian and Turkish (1919).

**Commercial Press (1911 to 1914).** This printing-house, which had a small hand press, was founded on Supurju Avenue on 18 March 1911 by Avetis Khanzetician & Comp., which was established in 1909 and carried on trading business (its members were Avetis Khanzetician, Toros Pyulpyulian, Khoren Varzhapetician, Hakob Gappenjian and Nazar Geverian, who were graduates of Vardanian College of Aintap).<sup>147</sup> Prior to its foundation, Nazar Geverian went to Aleppo in order to gain further knowledge of printing business and brought another press which was slightly larger than the first one and was operated by foot.<sup>148</sup> The printing-office had Armenian, Turkish and French letters the types of which were modern and more splendid than those of K. T. College.<sup>149</sup> The Commercial Press stopped its activity after the outbreak of WW I, when its Director left for America to escape military service.<sup>150</sup> Apart from invitations, visiting cards,

138 Pogharian, 15. Also see Քիրքճեան Վ., Հայ մամուլը Կիլիկիոյ մէջ [V. Kyurkchian, “The Armenian Press in Cilicia”], «Կոչնակ Հայաստանի» [Kochnak Hayastani], no.39 (1919), 1243.

139 Pogharian, *ibid.* Also see Kyurkchian, 1244.

140 Սարաֆեան Գ., Պատմութիւն Անթէպի Հայոց [G. Sarafian, History of Armenian Antep], vol. 2 (Los Angeles, 1953), 459.

141 Pogharian, 22. According to Yeghia S. Kasuny, probably in 1890 the ink plate of the small printing machine of the college was carried away by some Governmental officials (Սարաֆեան Գ., Պատմութիւն Անթէպի Հայոց [G. Sarafian, History of Armenian Antep], vol. 1 (Los Angeles, 1953), 821).

142 Pogharian, *ibid.*

143 *Ibid.*

144 *Ibid.*, 18.

145 *Ibid.*, 23. The newspaper *Yeeni Eomr* saw the light in the College Press.

146 *Ibid.* The *Rahvira-Rahnewma* was published in the College Press.

147 *Ibid.*, 18.

148 *Ibid.*

149 *Ibid.*, 20.

150 Sarafian, vol. 2, 292.



posters, documents of the Ottoman Bank and other commercial papers, it also published the Poster of Cilician Seminary («Կիլիկյան ճեմարանի հայտագիրը», 1912, 1914); a bull by Catholicos Sahak Khapsayan II (1902 to 1939); The General Statutes of the Union of Vardanian College Graduates («Հիմնական կանոնագիր Վարդանեան ընթացաւարտից միութեան»), 1913; two booklets in the Arabic script entitled *Golera and Aghze Tyutyuklu Mikroplar* as well as the *Hagigat* religious journal (1914).<sup>151</sup>

**A Nameless Press (1911).** Seeing the activity of the Commercial Press, Gevorg S. Palian decided to open his own printing-house:

...he had a printing press made in 1911 and worked it for about a year collaborating alternately with Ryushti Effendi and another Turk. He had no idea about typesetting, but he himself had made the machine and used it without anybody's help. He was hardly able to continue his work for a year: the press, which was mostly made of wood, grew weaker in summer-time and became something quite different in winter so that it was impossible to produce any work properly. In the long run, it completely fell out of use.<sup>152</sup>

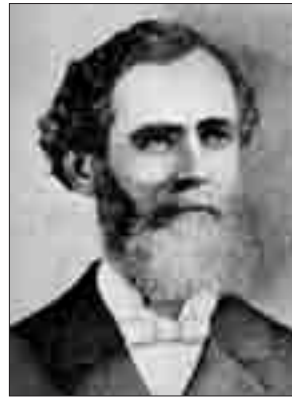
It should be pointed out that before the establishment of presses, there were handwritten newspapers and magazines in Aintap. The latter included the *Ainlepen* (1872), published by the pupils of Nersissian National School in Armeno-Turkish; the *Byurakn* (1875), published by the senior pupils of Cilician Boarding-School in Armenian and Armeno-Turkish; the *Yedem=Aden* (1876), published by the junior pupils of Cilician Boarding-School in Armenian and Armeno-Turkish (editor: Vahan Kyurkjian); the *Shirak* (1876, only a single issue, editor: writer and correspondent Vahan Kyurkjian) and the *Drakht* (1877 to 1878), published by the Company of Mesropian Pupils of Sourb Vardanants (editor: Vahan Kyurkjian). The former comprised the *Setaye Hagigat* biweekly (ca. 1878), published by the pupils of K. T. College; the *Astghik Vardanian* (1888 to 1903), published by Vardanian School in Armenian and Turkish; the *Arajin Kayler* (1897 to 1900), published by Aden College, and the *Doghdojun Kayler* weekly (September 1898 to June 1899, publisher: Hakob Ter-Melkonian).<sup>153</sup> From 1903 the *Astghik Vardanian* was published under a new name, *Khoher (Meditations)*, and around 1914 the *Usum (Education)* paper was issued through hectographic printing (publisher: Society of Lovers of Education).<sup>154</sup>

151 **Pogharian**, 20-21. The *Hagigat* was published in the Commercial Press.

152 *Ibid.*, 19.

153 *Ibid.*, 8-11.

154 **Babloyan**, 57, 103.



**Crozpy Houyler**

**KHARBERD Euphrates College Press (1889 to 1896, 1909 to 1914)** was founded in 1889 by the first President of the college, American preacher Crozpy Houyler, who brought machine moulds as well as English and Armenian letters to Kharberd seeing the necessity of a printing-house there.<sup>155</sup> The

newly-established press was worked by Manuk Tinjian, who was assisted by Khachatur Pennian, Hovhannes Pashkian and Mkrtich Jamalian. They mastered the contemporary art of printing and gradually issued Armenian text-books, copy-books as well as English Readers A and B, which proved greatly useful means for students longing for knowledge.<sup>156</sup> After the Hamidian massacres, the Turkish Government terminated the activity of the press, which reopened in 1909, when the book-loving fellows of Euphrates [College] plucked up courage and wiped off the dust of the old printing machines and letters brought to Kharberd in 1889. Then they attempted to repair them and started a printing activity with moulds which were very difficult to work with. These endeavours continued for several months and considerably encouraged them. They easily acquired permit for publishing a newspaper under Prof. K. M. Soghikian's editorship. In accordance with the wish of the College Administration and the pupils of both sexes, this official periodical was called *Euphrates*. Its first issue was published on 1 November 1909.<sup>157</sup>

A record states the following about the reopening of the printing-house:

The press began its work parallel with the Constitution of 1908. It published an average number of 3,000 pages per diem. All its work was placed under the charge of one of the classes, and the boys carried out their duties in their spare time. A number of books had already been published, with three magazines—a weekly, a semi-annual and a monthly—issued regularly. The work was very far from being perfect, but it was in an incessant process of development. There was no better means of propagating the college work in such an impressive way.<sup>158</sup>

155 **Վահե Հայկ**, Խարբերդ եւ անոր ոսկեղէն դաշտը [**Vahe Hayk**, Kharberd and Its Golden Plain] (New York, 1959), 359.

156 *Ibid.*

157 *Ibid.*, 346.

158 **Փիլիպոսեան Յարէք**, Յիշատակարան Եփրատ Գօլէնի [**Habet Pilipossian**, A Journal of Euphrates College] (Boston, 1942), 124.

From 1909 until 1914, the Euphrates Press published a magazine of the same name which was first a biweekly and then changed into a monthly:<sup>159</sup> its publisher was Euphrates College with Karapet M. Soghikian as its Editing Director.<sup>160</sup>

Euphrates Press had its own bindery where the college pupils worked.<sup>161</sup>

Most probably, between 1910 and 1914, the *Amenun Hamar* (*For Everybody*) religious weekly was published in this press: its editor was German preacher Johannes Ehmann, the Head of the German orphanage of Mezire, and the owner was Petros Karapetian.<sup>162</sup>

From 1913 until 1914, Euphrates Press published the *Det* monthly, which belonged to American missionaries, with V. P. Amirkhanian as its Editor-in-Charge, and Henry Rix as its owner:

Euphrates Press began publishing the 3rd newspaper in Kharberd, the *Det*, under the editorship of the American Mission<sup>163</sup> (it had an entirely religious trend).

For four years, the typesetter and printer of the press was Hovhannes S. Pashkian.<sup>164</sup>

Kharberd also had a number of handwritten newspapers and magazines such as the *Asparez* (K. Soghikian, Khoren Andreassian and Ruben Vorberian); the *Tzovak* (1909), the literary newspaper of the pupils of the Central National School, and the *Hayreni Arvak*, the literary journal of the pupils of the German college



Karapet Soghikian

of Kharberd (editor: Nshan Pashkants).<sup>165</sup> There were also some newspapers issued through hectographic printing: the *Dat* (1896, editor: Azarik Goloyan); the *Patani* (1909), the publication of the Youths' Union of Kharberd, the *Gyughatntes* (*Agriculturist*, 1910) and the *Lusashavigh* (1911), the publication of the Armenian Catholic college of the city (editor: Suren Pahlavunyan).<sup>166</sup>

## MEZIRE

**A Nameless Press (about 1903 to 1914).** The village town of Mezire was situated in Kharberd District, Kharberd Province. The available sources do not report any information regarding the activity of the local printing-house: it is only known that the pupils of the Central National School of Mezire published the *Nor Garun* (*New Spring*, about 1903 to 1908) and the *Tzopats Artziv* (*Eagle of Tzopk*, 1908 to 1914) newspapers, the first of which was in hectographic printing.<sup>167</sup>

## KARIN

**The Press of the Provincial Governorate** was the first printing-house in Karin, which began the publication of the *Envare Shargiy* newspaper in 1866:

...[its] first and last, i.e. fourth, faces are in Turkish letters, while the second and third ones are in the Armenian script, but in the Turkish language...<sup>168</sup>

In the 1860s, Archimandrite Mkrtich Khrimian, who was anxious about having an Armenian press in Karin, asked Garegin Srvandztiants, who was in the city, to find out the state of the Turkish press of Karin to determine whether it was possible to purchase it and enrich it with Armenian letters.<sup>169</sup> However, M. Khrimian failed to carry out his plan, and the city acquired an Armenian press only in 1908.

**Araj (Haraj) Press (1908 to 1914).** On 11 July 1908, the intellectuals of Karin established the Armenian Youths' Union, the aim of which was to publish a periodical to serve for the rebuilding of the general [Armenian] homeland and the protection of the oppressed without national and religious discrimination.<sup>170</sup> In order to fulfill their goal, the members of the Union embarked on the foundation of a press:

159 Ճիզմեյան Ա., Խարբերդ եւ իր զաւակները [M. Jizmejian, Kharberd and Its Sons] (Fresno, 1955), 402.

160 A record states the following about Karapet M. Soghikian (born in Kharberd on 26 June 1868, he died in the same city on 25 June 1916), who was a teacher of the Armenian language and literature: *This great worker of thought, who was endowed with different skills, was a poet and expert in literature. After a year spent in the prisons imbued with the spirit of death, he was set free in order to teach house-painting to Turks... His heart proved unable to endure [all that] and one day, a day before his birth anniversary... he consigned his soul to God... Soghikian taught Armenian, literature and chemistry at the college. This establishment sent him to Venice and Vienna so that he would study Armenian literature deeply... This editor of the Euphrates biweekly of Euphrates College and the author of the Volorak, which is enriched with the splendid vocabulary of the Armenian language, spent all his life teaching as a selfless worker* (Pilipossian, 151-152).

161 Ibid., 124-125.

162 «Կոչնակ» [Kochnak], no. 21, 1910, 499.

163 Kochnak, no. 31, 1913, 752; no. 21, 516-517.

164 Pilipossian, 172-173.

165 Vahe Hayk, 398, 463.

166 Babloyan, 50, 79, 81, 87.

167 Ibid., 57, 72.

168 Տրիցեան Ա., Սի երես Կարինյն նորագոյն պատմութիւնից [A. Yeritsian, "A Page from the Recent History of Karin"], «Փորձ» [Pordz], I (1879), 178.

169 Kostandian, 2000, 128.

170 Գազար-Չարբղ. Յուշամատենան Բարձր Հայքի. Կարինա-պատում [Ghazar-Chareg, A Journal on Bardzr Hayk: Karin] (Beirut, 1957), 314. Also see Poghossian, 90.



Soon this daring plan was carried out thanks to large financial sacrifices... the Haraj Press opened with its own machine and moulds...<sup>171</sup>

On 31 May 1909, the first issue of the *Haraj* newspaper (the press was known under its name) was published under Yeghishe Topchian's (Yervand Tamarian) editorship (director and owner: Aram Atruny). After the editor's murder (11 October 1909), his post was successively held by Liparit (Aptakuny), Simon Vratsian, Sargis Hovhanjanian and Shavarsh Misakian. The last issue of the newspaper was published on 25 March 1914 (director-in-charge: Vahe Togajian, owner: A. Atruny).<sup>172</sup>

The establishment of the printing-house was welcomed with high praises by the contemporary intellectuals:

For the first time after so many centuries and years after the invention of printing, Karin has acquired a newspaper printed with Armenian letters; for the first time, a printing machine with Armenian letters is operated [here]. ...Truly, the inhabitants of Karin are to consider this year as epoch-making for their literature: the Haraj press came to put an end to the difficult work of publishing handwritten newspapers and several tens of monthlies by means of a copygraph, the fruits of which could not be everlasting.<sup>173</sup>

The Haraj Press was not equipped with high-quality printing machines, but its activity proved of a great role in the lives of Karin Armenians:

The printing tools of the Haraj newspaper are still far from the perfection required for a printing-house, but it renders a considerable service to the Armenians of Karin, also publishing notices, invitations, visiting cards, etc. The two simple machines doing this work are operated by hand, one of them being small and the other larger: the steam work is carried out through the power of foot movements and human hands. For many centuries or long years, Karin had not seen the fruits of the Armenian press: it now saw what it had never seen [before]...<sup>174</sup>

The press was located in a rented house first in Chamur and then in Murtar Streets. In 1913 it was moved to the building of Aghabalian College.<sup>175</sup>

Haraj Press also published the *Sirt* (*Heart*, 1911), *Yerkir* (1914) and *Alik* (*Wave*, director and owner: Hrachia Lusparonian) two-day newspapers. The owner and director of the *Yerkir* was Maruke Maranjian, but it had only 9 issues as the Government banned its publication.<sup>176</sup>

Between 1911 and 1912, the press published 2 books.

Before having their own printing-office, the Armenians of Karin issued some handwritten newspapers and magazines such as the *Enkerakan Sirt* (*Friend's Heart*, April to September 1895, editor: Hovh. Shavarsh) monthly; the *Manr Yerger* biweekly magazine (1895)<sup>177</sup> as well as the *Mi Sirt yev Mi Hogi* (*One Heart and Soul*, 1895) and *Vospor* (1896)<sup>178</sup> monthlies. The *Paros* (*Pharos*, 7 to 14 March 1909) weekly and *Nor Luys* (*New Light*, 1910 to 1911) monthly, the organ of the pupils of the French college of Karin, were issued by means of a copygraph.<sup>179</sup>

## KARS

**A Nameless Press.** The newspapers published in the city (the name of the printing press remains obscure) represent the following picture: *Kars Hayastani* (*Kars of Armenia*), a three-day newspaper published around 1880 (2 to 3 issues) under Nshan Artzruny's editorship; the *Banvor* (*Worker*) weekly (1917); the *Razmik* (*Warrior*) paper (1918)<sup>180</sup> and the *Dirkerum* (*In the Positions*) daily (1920 to 1922).<sup>181</sup>

**Sh. K. Sureniants (Surenian) Press (1907, 1920).** In 1907 it published A. Porsughian's text-book on arithmetical sums,<sup>182</sup> and in 1920 the *Ashkhatavori Dzayn* (*Workman's Voice*) daily in 21 issues.<sup>183</sup>

**Other Presses.** As of 1877, a military press was being built [in Kars]. The typesetters who had been invited from Tiflis were to arrive within ten days.<sup>184</sup>

In October 1882, Isa Sultan Shakhmatinsky, the Manager of the Office of the Military Governor of Kars Region, founded a printing-house in the city on a Governmental order. From 1883 to 1916, the *Kars* Russian-language weekly was published there,<sup>185</sup> together with 17 Russian books issued between 1885 and 1901.

From among the books published in the Regional Press of Kars between 1902 and 1911, only 13 are known to us, all of them in Russian.

<sup>177</sup> It was published on Kecheyan's and Heyranian's initiative: *Hardly had two copy-books been produced in handwriting... [when they] stopped it and tore what they had written...* (**Kossian**, 254-257).

<sup>178</sup> Its owner and publisher was Yer. Yazjian, who was succeeded by Gh. Grgoyan (ibid.).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> In 1917 to 1918, this paper was published in Ashkhatavor Press, Tiflis, Georgia, prominent Armenian writer Aksel Bakunts participating in its editing (**Babloyan**, 40, 109, 112, 132). Also see Levonian, 1934, 85, 94.

<sup>181</sup> **Babloyan**, 40, 109, 112, 132. Also see Levonian, 1934, 85, 94.

<sup>182</sup> The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920, 208.

<sup>183</sup> **Babloyan**, 130. Also see **Levonian**, 1934, 105.

<sup>184</sup> *Mshak*, no. 86, 1877, 3.

<sup>185</sup> **Babloyan**, 454. Also see [http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Шахматинский\\_Иса\\_Султан\\_Наджафгулу\\_оглы](http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Шахматинский_Иса_Султан_Наджафгулу_оглы).

<sup>171</sup> **Ghazar-Chareg**, 275.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 276-277.

<sup>173</sup> Զօտաւն Զ., Բարձր Հայր. Կարին քաղաքը [H. **Kossian**, Bardzr Hayk: Karin City], vol. 1 (Vienna, 1925), 260.

<sup>174</sup> **Kossian**, 263.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> **Ghazar-Chareg**, 277-278. Also see **Kossian**, 265-266.

## VOSKANAPAT

Between 1904 and 1905, the village had a **private press** and **another belonging to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party**: each of them published merely a booklet during this period.<sup>186</sup>

## AGHTAMAR

The printing activity unfolded in Aghtamar Monastery represents the following picture: 1905 - the *Aryan Dzayn* (*Call of Blood*) newspaper, the publisher of which was Ishkhan (Nikol Michaelian);<sup>187</sup> 1908 - the *Kotosh*<sup>188</sup> (*Horn*) illustrated comic newspaper with a hectograph (publisher: Haykak Kosoyan), and 1908 - the *Kriv* (*Fighting*) newspaper intended for pupils.<sup>189</sup>

## SHATAKH

In 1907 the *Zhayr* (*Rock*), *Kohak* (*Wave*) and *Tigris* semi-annuals were issued in Shatak by means of a hectograph.<sup>190</sup>

The *Tigris*, which was the most wide-spread newspaper thanks to its rich contents, topographical maps and studies,<sup>191</sup> was published under Tigran Baghdasarian's editorship.<sup>192</sup>

## GYAVASH

The only available information regarding the press of Gyavash is that between 1908 and 1909, it published 4 issues of the Tzovak biweekly, the organ of a cultural society of the same name functioning in Van, through hectographic printing.<sup>193</sup>

186 The Armenian Book between 1901 and 1920, 84, 136.

187 Վասպուրական. Վան-Վասպուրականի ապրիլեան հերոսամարտի տասնհինգամեակին առթիւ (1915-1930), կազմ. Հ. Աճեմեան [H. Ajemian, comp., Vaspurakan: In Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the Heroic April Self-Defence of Van and Vaspurakan (1915-1930)] (Venice, 1930), 218. According to another source, in 1904 Ishkhan published the *Aryunot Dar* small-size paper on Aghtamar (Մխիթարեան Զ., Մամուլը Վասպուրականի մէջ. 1858-1913 [H. Mkhitarian, "Press in Vaspurakan"], «Աշխատանք» [Ashkhatank], no. 48 (144), 12 October 1913, 6).

188 Ajemian, 279. Also see Ժ. Մ., Անհետացող դէմքեր [Zh. M., "Disappearing Faces"], «Վարագ» [Varag], no. 65, April 1969, 125.

189 Babloyan, 72.

190 Ibid., 67, 69. According to philologist Levon Khachikian, from Van, 3 newspapers were published in Shatak (Շահասար, Ազգային կացութիւնը Վանայ մէջ [Shahsuar, "The National Situation in Van"], «Կոչմակ» [Kochmak], no. 52, 1909, 1225), but another source mentions only the *Tigris* and *Ankakh Tigris* newspapers (Mkhitarian, 6).

191 Փափազեան Վ., Իմ յուշերը [V. Papazian, My Memoirs], vol. 2 (Beirut, 1952), 22.

192 Ibid.

193 Babloyan, 72.

## AKHALKALAK

**M. Grigoriants (M. Grigorian, M. Kh. Grigorian) Press (1908 to 1916)**. The earliest available records regarding the activity of this printing-house trace back to 1908. Between 1913 and 1916, the first newspaper of Javakhk was issued there under the same name, its editor and publisher being cultural figure, writer and publicist Vardan Shahparonian.<sup>194</sup> Its publication was planned to last until the end of 1912, but for some technical reasons, it was issued only on 12 January 1913. Journalist Hovhannes Pijikian clarifies the aim of the paper as follows:

We are making the first attempts to publish a literary and social periodical in Akhalkalak devoted to the needs of the district. Neither futile vanity nor the flip-pant desire of imitating others made us undertake such heavy work of great responsibility. The complexities of life themselves have aroused the necessity of a periodical...<sup>195</sup>

During its 9-year activity, the press of M. Grigorian published 6 books and a newspaper.

## SEBASTIA

The first person to raise the issue of founding a printing-house in Sebastia was Archimandrite David Ulnetsy, whom the spiritual authorities wanted to appoint Prior of Anapat Monastery located near Davra Village, Sebastia District: he agreed to assume that post only on condition that a press and a school should be established there.<sup>196</sup> The members of the community of the monastery allocated 600 *kuruses* for the realisation of the archimandrite's goal, he himself donating his horse, costing 500 *kuruses*, for the same purpose. Unfortunately, however, his desire was not fulfilled.

**Andranik Vardanian Press (1875 to 1878)**. The first Armenian printing-house in Sebastia was founded by Andranik Vardanian from Kovtun:

A printing machine ...was brought to the city by [our] compatriot Andranik Vardanian from the village of Kovtun late in 1875. He published the Sivas weekly...: its first and fourth pages were in Turkish, the second and third ones being their translation into pure Armenian. The publication of the Sivas started on 16 March 1876 and it had 3 issues. On 1 April 1876, the Government purchased Andranik Effendi's press and moulds. The purely Armenian section of the Sivas changed into Armeno-Turkish. Andranik Effendi ...was

194 Մաղախեան Վ., Հայ մամուլը եւ գրաստայութիւնը Ջաւախքում եւ Մեխիթրոն [V. Maghalian, "The Armenian Press and Printing in Javakhk and Meskhet"], «Հայրենի Ջաւախք» [Hayreni Javakhk] (Beirut, 2002), 208-209.

195 «Ջաւախք» [Javakhk], no. 1, 12 January 1913.

196 Poghossian, 314.



appointed Inspector of the printing-house and director of the Sivas. In two years' time, the Armenian section of the newspaper was found unnecessary, the Armenian types were returned to Andranik Effendi, and it became a Governmental organ entirely in Turkish (1878).<sup>197</sup>

The first and only product of Andranik Vardanian's press was a Prayer Book (1875).<sup>198</sup>

**Hayk Vardanian (Hayk A. Vardanian) Press (1909 to 1911).** In 1909 Andranik Vardanian's son Hayk continued his father's printing activity:



Hayk Vardanian

Andranik Vardanian's son turned the mould of a cutting machine into a press and established his own printing-office with the letters that had been returned by the authorities...<sup>199</sup>

On 24 January 1909, he started publishing the *Andranik* weekly being both its editor and typesetter. Due to his poor health, the weekly was issued at intervals, its publication being finally terminated in 1911 with a total number of 88 issues.<sup>200</sup>

**Hoghdar Press (1910 to 1913)** was founded by Karapet Parsamian on 13 August 1910:

What we had bought was ...shabby and frayed. It was the first press brought to the city that could be used in printing commercial documents... His newspaper, the *Hoghdar*, was published in *Hoghdar*, its first issue tracing back to 27 October 1910. The owner, director and chief editor of both the press and the newspaper was K. A. Parsamian.<sup>201</sup>

The *Hoghdar* collaborated with such prominent personalities as Daniel Varuzhan, Karapet Gabikian, Tlkatintsy and others. The typesetters were Tigran Korkotian, Suren Metz-Morukian and Martiros Pekian.

Karapet Parsamian writes the following about the subsequent fate of the newspaper:

On 20 December 1912, I passed the ownership of the *Hoghdar* to Mr. Hovhannes Bolatian in the presence of Government officials. On 16 February 1913, I finally parted with the *Hoghdar*. On 13 April 1913, it was published (no. 36) as already belonging to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, and its extent was doubled after one or two issues. Letters were brought from Constantinople and the press was enriched. For some time, the *Hoghdar* was published on a Governmental press. It ceased [being published] due to the general conscription of 1914...<sup>202</sup>

**Kabira Press of K. A. Parsamian (1913 to 1914).** Giving over the *Hoghdar* to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in 1913, Karapet Parsamian went to Constantinople and returned a short time later with three presses brought directly from Europe. He started his activity anew on 9 September 1913. The large press was a quarter of a patal, but it was of fine quality (foot pedal). The other two had hand pedals, one of them being only for visiting cards.<sup>203</sup> At first the typesetter of the press was Martiros Pekian (he had previously worked for the *Hoghdar*), who was later succeeded by Hayk and Hovakim Chugasezians.

Kabira Press functioned until the end of 1914 and published 6 books during its short-term activity. K. Parsamian also intended to issue a newspaper under the name of the printing-office, but he failed due to certain financial hardships.<sup>204</sup>

Between 1869 and 1913, a number of newspapers were issued through hectographic printing: 1869 - *Dzayn Sebastio (Voice of Sebastia)* with only a single issue, and the *Bat*; 1870 - *Mamulin Dzag*; 1890 - *Sev Hogher (Black Lands)*; 1905 - *Ket (Point)*; 1910 - *Neshdrak*, the publication of the graduating class of Aramian National College, and 1913 - *Aghavni (Dove)*, another publication of the same college.<sup>205</sup>



Karapet Parsamian

## TREBIZOND

There is almost no information regarding the presses of Trebizond, and it is only known that it had 5 such

197 Առաքել Պատրիկ, Պատմագիրք յուշամատենան Սեբաստիոյ եւ գաւառի հայրութեան [Arakel Patrik, A Historical Journal on Sebastia and the District Armenians], vol. 1 (Beirut, 1974), 392. Also see Պարսամեան Կ., Անոնց յիշատակին [K. Parsamian, "In Their Memory"], «Հողդար» [*Hoghdar*], no. 27, 12 October 1913, 4.

198 The Armenian Book between 1851 and 1900, 213.

199 Patrik, 395. Also see Parsamian, *ibid.* While away from his homeland, Hayk Vardanian received treatment in an American hospital, where he died in 1918.

200 Patrik, 395. Also see Babloyan, 75.

201 Patrik, 393. Most presumably, the press took its name from an Armenian quarter of Sebastia: *There is an Armenian quarter named Hoghdar, which is close to the monastery of Sourb Nshan, being separated from the city with only several fields...* (*ibid.*, 298).

202 *Ibid.*, 393-394.

203 *Ibid.*, 394. Also see Parsamian, *ibid.*

204 Patrik, 394.

205 Babloyan, 35, 36, 60, 84, 95.

establishments between 1907 and 1912: **Michaylides Press** (1907), **Meshveret Press** (1909), **Serar (Serar) Brothers Press** (1909 to 1914), **Voskinar Press** (1910 to 1911) and **Sh. Mirkovich Press** (1912 to 1914). Most probably, it was in one of them that the *Geghjuk* (*Peasant*, 1909 to 1910),<sup>206</sup> *Motzak* (*Mosquito*, 1910), *Pontos* (1910 to 1913) and *Pitzak* (1911 to 1912) newspapers were published.<sup>207</sup>

In 1900 the Turkish press of Ismayil Hake published P. Kajuny's Armenian-language booklet entitled *A Copy-Book of Monographs* («Տնտր մեմուարներ»). From 1909 until 1910, the *Petak* (*Beehive*) paper was issued in Meshveret and Voskinar Presses (later its publication continued in Kirason District, Trebizond Province).

Before the foundation of an Armenian printing-house in Trebizond in 1847, the *Hayastan* (*Armenia*) handwritten newspaper was published there.<sup>208</sup>

### URFA

After the proclamation of the Turkish Constitution in 1908, the publication of the *Paykar* (*Struggle*) newspaper began in Urfa with a hectograph under the editorship of Harutiun Semian, Levon Eghberlerian and Hovhannes Nagashian, who were members of the Union of Progress Lovers.<sup>209</sup>

### NORASHEN

The available information regarding the press of Norashen Village, located in Moosh Plain, is very scanty: it is only known that in 1909 the authorities of Targmanchats (Translators') School (H. Hajian) of Arakelots Monastery published 10 issues of the *Dprots-Dastarak* (*School-Educator*) newspaper in hectographic printing.<sup>210</sup>

### GORIS

**Sasun Press (1909 to 1919/20)**. The printing-house of Goris, which was established in 1909, published the *Gavar*, *Vorotan* and *Siunik* newspapers together with 4

booklets.<sup>211</sup> It also issued wedding invitations, blanks of the District Administration and various other materials on tributes, migrations and conscription.<sup>212</sup>

Most presumably, in 1920 this press also published the *Zangezuri Komunist* (*Communist of Zangezur*) and *Karmir Zangezur* (*Red Zangezur*) newspapers.<sup>213</sup>

### YERZINKA

There is almost no information concerning the printing-office of Yerznka. It is only known that the *Ardi* weekly (from 1909 until 1911) and the *Aror* monthly (between 1910 and 1911) were published there under Armenak Melikian's editorship. The first numbers of the latter were issued in hectographic printing, then in regular typesetting.<sup>214</sup>

### MALATIA

As of 1909, it was planned to establish a press in Malatia and begin the publication of a newspaper.<sup>215</sup>

On 20 January 1909, the *Jah* paper was issued with a hectograph through the efforts of Masyats Aghavni Society and under Khosrov Keshishian's editorship.<sup>216</sup> Between 1910 and 1914, the *Krtasirats* was published in hectographic printing under Yeghia Topalian's editorship.<sup>217</sup>

### TIGRANAKERT

In 1863 some American missionaries planned to establish a press in Tigranakert,<sup>218</sup> but most probably, their intention was not carried out as the history of printing-offices in the city goes back to 1909 reaching the year 1913.

Between 1909 and 1910, 3 newspapers were published with a hectograph: the *Ankakh Tigris* (*Independent Tigris*, 1909), *Tigris* and *Tsolker* (as of 1910, the owner of the last two was Vahan Teppahian).<sup>219</sup>

206 According to another source, the *Geghjuk* newspaper was published in Yomura: *Chronologically, the earliest was the hectographic periodical of Yomura, which was published by the local teachers. Its first editors were Edward Hrapian, Tigran Kakossian and Vahram Kyurjian* (**Յովակիմյան (Արշակունի) Յ.**, Պատմություն Հայկական Պոնտոսի [**H. Hovakimian** (**Arshakuny**), *History of Armenian Pontus*] (Beirut, 1967), 203).

207 **Babloyan**, 85, 90. For information about the newspapers and magazines published in Trebizond, also see **Թորլակյան Մ.**, Օրերուս հետ [**M. Torlakian**, *With My Days*] (Beirut, 2001), 149-150; **Hovakimian** (**Arshakuny**), 202-203.

208 **Hovakimian** (**Arshakuny**), 102.

209 **Babloyan**, 74. Also see **Սահակյան Ա.**, Դիցազնական Ուրֆան և իր հայրողիները [**A. Sahakian**, *Heroic Urfa and Its Sons*] (Beirut, 1955), 717.

210 **Babloyan**, 76.

211 **Babloyan**, 75, 118. According to another source, this press also published the *Siunik* newspaper (**Իշխանյան Ռ.**, Հայ գիրքը (1512-1920) [**R. Ishkhanian**, *The Armenian Book* (1512 to 1920)] (Yerevan, 1981), 119).

212 **Ակսել Բակունց**, Կյոթես, Երկեր, հ. 2 [**Aksel Bakunts**, *Kyotes, vol. 2 of Works*] (Yerevan, 1964), 14-15.

213 **Babloyan**, 132, 134.

214 *Ibid.*, 75, 81. Also see **Ստեփանյան Գ.**, Երզնկա [**G. Stepanian**, *Yerznka*] (Yerevan, 2005), 395.

215 «Արարատ» [*Ararat*], nos. 5-6 (1909), 534-535.

216 **Ալպոյաճեան Ա.**, Պատմություն Մալաթիոյ հայոց [**A. Alpoyajian**, *History of Malatia Armenians*] (Beirut, 1961), 797. According to another source, the newspaper was published in Constantinople (**Babloyan**, 79).

217 **Babloyan**, 83. Also see **Alpoyajian**, 797-798 (according to this author, the Society of Education Lovers published a handwritten weekly in Malatia under Stepan Manushian's editorship).

218 *The Missionary Herald*, vol. 60 (Boston, 1864), 176.

219 **Babloyan**, 75, 85.



**Harajadimakan Press (1913).** The *Trutsik (Leaflet)* lithographic periodical (1913) is the only work known to have been published in this printing-office.<sup>220</sup>

#### PAGER-MATEN

In 1909 the *Azat Khosk (Free Speech)* newspaper (editor: Azarik Goloyan) was issued by means of a hectograph in Pager-Maten Town, Diarbekir Province, Western Armenia.<sup>221</sup>

#### KAGHZVAN

In 1910 the *Bruntsk (Fist)* magazine was issued in hectographic printing in Kaghzvan City, the administrative centre of the district of the same name in Kars Region.<sup>222</sup>

#### SHAPIN-GARAHISAR

In 1910 only a single issue of the *Mtrak (Whip)* newspaper was published in hectographic printing.<sup>223</sup>

#### VAN

From 1910 until 1915, Van had 4 printing-houses which mostly published newspapers.

**Barseghian Press (1910 to 1915).** Between November 1910 and 10 June 1915, the *Ashkhatank (Labour)* newspaper was published in this printing-office with Gutenberg's press<sup>224</sup> (222 issues), its editors being Ishkhan, Armenak Maksapetian and Hmayak Manukian.

The press was situated in a building named Labour House in the quarter of Tutlugh Poghan, Aygestan.<sup>225</sup>

**S. Zhamkochian Press (1911 to 1912).** In 1911 one of the members of the Society of Young Christians (founded in 1908), Spiridon Zhamkochian, brought a press and letters from Constantinople to establish a printing-office in the city. For a year, it published the *Van-Tosp* biweekly. S. Zhamkochian, who was the owner and director-in-charge of the press and newspaper, used the nicknames of Sar and Det. The editorial staff also comprised Hovhannes Avagian and K. Sital.<sup>226</sup> Among the permanent employees of the newspaper, philologist Khachatur Levonian is mentioned.

**Hovnanian Press (1913 to 1914).** On 26 January 1913, Ruben Hovnanian's press started publishing the *Van-Tosp* newspaper, the organ of Ramkavar Party of Van (director-in-charge: Armenak Ter-Poghossian, owner: R. Hovnanian), which had purchased the press of S. Zhamkochian, also taking the name of the paper as the Turkish Government had rejected their petition for permission to start a new paper.<sup>227</sup>

**Meliksetian Press.** During 1913 to 1914, 24 issues of the *Luys (Light)* monthly magazine, the publication of the Charity Society of Van, were published in this printing-house (director-in-charge: Arshavir M. Avetaghian, chief editor: Michael Minassian).<sup>228</sup>

Between 1895 and 1918, a number of hectographic papers were published in Van: 1895 - *Amokich* (editor: Movses Ter-Hovhannissian), the organ of the same-name group of Armenakan Party; 1907 - *Asup* (editor: Artashes Solakhian); *Kaytz* (editor: Vardan Papikian), the organ of Armenakan Young Men's Union; *Karkut* (editors: Tigran Apaghtsian, Hayk Galjian and Arshavir Avetian); *Krvan Kotosh*; *Hnchak*, the organ of the Young Men's Union of Social Democrat Hnchakian Party; *Nor Serund (New Generation)*; *Sourb Vardan*, the organ of the pupils of Yeramian Orphanage; *Vtak (Tributary)*; 1907 to 1908 - *Azat Khosk (Free Speech)*; *Hayatsk*, *Gavari Dzayn*,<sup>229</sup> *Yerkunk*; 1908 - *Zartir*, *Kaytz*, the organ of the Charity Society; 1909 - *Kohak*, *Dzgtum*, *Mayreni Mamul* (editor: Tigran Chituny), *Ovasis*; 1909 to 1910 - *Hordzank*, *Sharivari* (editors: Artashes Solakhian & Abraham Brutian); *Sapah-youl-Khaye* (in Turkish, editor: David Papazian), and 1918 - *Ner Vana*.<sup>230</sup>

Early in 1915, only 2 issues of the *Teghekatu* paper were published by means of glue in Van on the initiative of a group of young men.<sup>231</sup>

#### OROR

In 1911 to 1912, Oror Village of Keghi District, Karin Province, saw the publication of the *Veratzkund (Revival)* periodical (editor: teacher Sedrak Shahan)<sup>232</sup> with a hectograph.<sup>233</sup>

220 Ibid., 96.

221 Ibid., 74.

222 Ibid., 81.

223 Ibid., 84.

224 **Mkhitarian**, 6. On 4 May 1916, the publication of the newspaper continued in Yerevan's Cultura Press (1916 to 1919).

225 **Papazian**, 287.

226 **Ter-Mkrtichian**, 629. Before having their own printing-house, the members of the Young Christians' Society published their same-name organ by means of Dr. Usher's Armenian press (ibid., 622; **Mkhitarian**, 7).

227 **Ter-Mkrtichian**, 623-624.

228 Ibid., 622.

229 According to other sources, the *Gavari Dzayn* newspaper was published in Arjak (**Mkhitarian**, 6; **Այլազյան Ա.**, Արձակ [S. Avagian, Arjak], «Հայ ազգագրություն և բանահյուսություն» [*Armenian Ethnography and Folk-Lore*], vol. 8 (Yerevan, 1978), 62).

230 **Ter-Mkrtichian**, 622-625. For information about the hectographic press, also see **Mkhitarian**, 6.

231 «Աշխատանք» [*Ashkhatank*], no. 21 (220), 1 June 1915, 1.

232 Sedrak Shahan, who was from Oror by birth, was one of the graduates of Euphrates College. He taught in Tigranakert, Taron and Keghi (Տարեգիրք Քրիի հայրենակցական միության [A Year-Book of the Patriotic Union of Keghi], vol. 1 (Detroit, 1937), 125-126). Also see **Vahe Hayk**, 1233).

233 **Babloyan**, 91.

## KRMAN

The press functioning in Krman Village (Khotorjur Subdistrict, Sper District, Karin Province) published the *Tayots Ashkhar* (*Land of Tayk*, 1913) newspaper and the *Aghavni Tayots* (*Dove of Tayk*, 1914) magazine (both of them in hectographic printing) under Archimandrites Atanas Ghazarian<sup>234</sup> and Vahan Kchurian.<sup>235</sup> The *Aghavni Tayots* was published in only two issues.<sup>236</sup>



Vahan Kchurian

234 Archimandrite Atanas Ghazarian (born in Kerman in 1882, martyred in 1915) was ordained priest in 1909 being appointed teacher and assistant of the local Catholic leader.

235 Archimandrite Vahan Kchurian (born in Karin in 1874, he died in Beirut in 1936), who was from Khotorjur, was ordained archbishop in 1930. He is the author of some poems and a work entitled *Memories of Exile* («Տարագրություններ»). All of them are unpublished.

236 Հուլունյան Զ., Հանեան Մ., Յուշանատեան Խոտորջուրի [H. Hulanian, M. Hajian, A Journal on Khotorjur] (Vienna, 1964), 260, 264.



## PAGES FROM MY DIARY

by Sargis Israelian

With this issue of the journal *Vardzk*, RAA Foundation is beginning the publication (with some minor abridgements) of the unpublished memoirs of meritorious teacher and philologist Sargis Israelian (architect Raphael Israelian's father), who was from Shushi by birth. We extend our cordial gratitude to his great granddaughter Ruzan Kharazian for providing us with his life story.

### Chapter One Our City. My Childhood

I was born in Shushi City, Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). Although it was considered just a district city, it was far more advanced from commercial and cultural points of view. The local merchants had ties not only with the major cities of Russia, but also with a number of foreign countries. Shushi consisted of two parts: Armenian and Turkish-Azerbaijani. The former was culturally more developed than the latter, and all the cultural and educational establishments (the real school, the Armenian eparchial school, the municipal Russian school, the Russian female progymnasium, Mariamian Armenian Female School, etc.) were situated there. It was also home to the Municipal Library, the Winter and Summer Clubs, the park, the City Duma with the Mayor as well as Khandamirian Theatre, where performances were given by such prominent actors and actresses as Abelian, Siranuysh, Beroyan and many others. The Armenian part had wide streets with pavements and blocks of flats built of finely-finished stones, all this attesting that it was well-constructed and in good condition (suffice it to say that before the erection of the building of the real school, it was housed in Movses Bey Atabekian's private mansions, and the Female Progymnasium was situated on the first floor of Bakhshibek Asribekian's house). Other establishments in the Armenian part of Shushi included the Post Office, the State Treasury, both the bookstores of the city and two presses belonging to the *Mahtesy* Hakobians and Ter-Sahakian. Each of its five churches stood in a prominent place, Ghazanche-tsots being distinguished among them as a monument of a high architectural merit. The entire city was paved, and the centre of the Armenian part had sewerage.

Our house was in Ghumlugh Quarter at the outskirts of Shushi, and our neighbours were Azerbaijani

Turks with whom we were in good-neighbourly relations. We, however, were on closer terms with the family of Balakhanum Bajji, who had a daughter, Durnusa (she was a widow). Balakhanum Bajji spent all her time at our place, talked to Mother, and we weaved carpets in their hall, Durnusa helping us (I can never forget how she one day took me to a witch-doctor on her back). Balakhanum Bajji had two grandchildren, Sovud and Musal, who were my playmates: we used to run about together and play *tambi* and dice (we often asked Durnusa to paint them green and red). Very frequently we sat down and solved riddles (riddle is *tapmaja* in the author's dialect). I still remember one of them that Musal told me:

*We have only one of it,*

*It has seven tongues.*

*It has no mouth,*

*But it bites (nettle).<sup>1</sup>*

We made cages for quails and shut them there so that they would sing and we would be able to count the sounds they made: "Vegh-vegh-- ve-te-led-ve- te-let." Some quails sang "ve-te-let" for four times, others for five, but those doing so for 6 to 7 times were something rare and expensive: they cost a rouble. Who could buy them? In winters we made sleighs and went outdoors to compete with each other, but we envied Mollubelan's son Riza for his sledge, which was beautiful with bells hanging from it and a piece of carpet fitted onto it. It was the fastest of all and nobody could leave him behind.

One day—it was in 1890—Mother took me to the diocesan school.

The teacher examining me asked: "What is your family name?"

"Can you count?"

I started counting: "1, 2, 3..."

"That will do. Good for you. You are admitted. Come here on 1 September."

<sup>1</sup> The same in the original: «Բիզը բիրը վար, երդի դիր վար, աղըը յոխ, ստամ բութար».

### Our School

Our school was a large three-floor building adjoined by the Consistory, another structure of great dimensions the entire upper storey of which served as the Diocese Primate's residence. The school yard was paved and had a large entrance gate near which one of the servants of the school, Mughdusi, always stood. He let in those who wanted to enter, but nobody was allowed to leave the building. The classrooms were airy, full of light, with the desks arranged in two rows. There were no corridors, these being replaced by spacious entrance chambers. When it rained, the pupils gathered there after the bell had gone.

Before classes, in the morning, our classes lined up in rows and did exercises, after which we went to our classrooms accompanied with senior pupils. The pupil accompanying us to the classroom stayed with us until the teacher came. I fully understood the meaning of this action only later when I myself became a teacher: the point is that when pupils enter the classroom without order and discipline, with cries and screams, they are under the impression of the breaks and their games and preserve their cheerfulness and vivacity in the classroom. Very often they do not even notice that the teacher has already come, and in these cases, he (or she) has to waste part of the classtime on restoring order. It was obligatory to pray before and after classes: everybody stood up and the pupil on duty said the daily prayer, *Our Father*.

In the primary preparatory classes, each subject was taught by a skilled specialist: thus, in the first preparatory class, my teacher of literacy was Hakob Jagharbekian, who also taught Literary Theory to senior classes with a manual he himself had written entitling it Syntax. This fact shows that in those times great importance was attached to the instruction of the elementary classes, which formed the basis of the secondary school.

In the lower, preparatory classes, we did not write in copy-books and did not have ink or pens. The former were replaced by a black board of stone with a thin, narrow frame of wood, one face of which was used for the Armenian language, and the other for arithmetic. We had a "stone pen" to write on this board of stone and a sponge hanging from it to erase what we had written. Another board of stone was used for homework so that we had to take it to school with great care not to delete what we had put down on it.

We, the pupils of the lower classes, treated our seniors with veneration. Very often we turned to them for different problems worrying us and they always explained to us the meaning of this or that word, a difficult arithmetic sum, etc. with great willingness.

Who were the pupils of our school? What classes of people sent their children to the diocese school? The overwhelming majority of the pupils were sons of craftsmen, the villagers coming second to them and comprising sons of village priests and petty tradesmen. There were also a small number of boys from rich families. A considerable part of the pupils came from Zangezour (Goris, Ghapan and Sisian). The major merchants, beys, princes and state officials sent their sons to the real school, which was something out of reach for the poor and middle class.

The pupils of the eparchial school differed from those of the real school in appearance: the former wore what they had, while the latter had their own uniform sewn of broadcloth. They also had their special hat emblems, whereas those of the diocese school covered their heads with whatever they could. The boys studying at the real school took their books to school in expensive bags of leather fitted onto their backs, while we put them in a handkerchief of some cloth or another and held it under our arms. The diocesan school had a great number of pupils studying without a tuition fee, which totaled eight roubles per year, while that of the real school far exceeded it.

The real school was maintained with state means, and that of the Armenian Spiritual Diocese through common people's donations. Both of them were secondary institutions with the only difference that the curriculum of the real school stipulated for either Greek or Latin, while that of the diocese school was overburdened with religious subjects: Religion, Christian Doctrine, Order of Divine Worship, Holy Scripture...

The Tsarist Government did not grant eparchial schools with the status of secondary educational establishments, and for this reason, the doors of Russian higher schools remained closed before their graduates. They went to Gevorgian Seminary in Echmiatzin to continue their education in the Department of Free Attendance, where admission was limited.

In foreign countries (Germany, France, Switzerland), eparchial schools had the status of secondary schools. Those of their graduates who were fortunate enough to find patrons went abroad to receive higher

education there, but it was not easy to find such a benefactor (Armenian writer Muratsan provides a good description of these “patrons” in one of his Armenian-language stories entitled *The Public Adoptee* («Հասարակաց որդեգիր»).

The entire course of the diocese school may be divided in two parts:

a) the first three years of preparatory classes, when pupils received preliminary knowledge to form a basis for the subjects to be studied in higher classes;

b) six main classes, where pupils received scientifically-substantiated knowledge and acquired a Certificate of Secondary Education.

The teaching of Russian began from the second preparatory class and continued to the end of the whole course. Apart from Russian proper, the pupils also studied Geography of Russia and Russian History in that very language.

As for foreign languages, either German or French was taught. Beating was abolished at our school, but the bad pupils were punished and the good ones encouraged.

...The academic year 1895 to '96 was marked with great tumult and troubles at our school.<sup>2</sup> It was a struggle between light and darkness, the rivaling sides being represented by clergymen headed by Bishop Karapet Ayyvazian, the President of the school's Board of Trustees, on the one hand, and the more progressive part of the teaching staff on the other.

Levon Sargissian,<sup>3</sup> who was a progressive and skilled person of great erudition endowed with up-to-date knowledge, was devoted to his school activity and enjoyed liking and respect amidst the pupils. Apart from being an Inspector, he also taught Natural Science to the higher classes. During his lessons, he touched upon such issues as the origin of mankind and held discussions about the Earth as being one of the planets of the Sun. At these lessons, the idea of the Bible, God's existence, His “creative activity” and the absurdity of the age of the world were rejected. These discrepancies grew especially striking after the following incident: while talking to a 5th-form pupil, Tarkhanian, teacher Petros Melkonian stated that the legend of the Holy

Scripture, according to which Christ fed 2,000 people with only two loaves of bread and two fish, and even something was left after it, is merely a concoction. Seven 5th-class pupils, led by Tarkhanian and Arshak Ter-Michaelian's (he was the theologian of the school) brother Christopher, addressed a written statement to Bishop Karapet Ayyvazian, the President of the Board of Trustees, in which they wrote about teacher Melkonian's Christ-denying approaches and L. Sargissian's atheistic views. The bishop was well-known for his regressiveness and other vicious qualities. The struggle between enlightenment and darkness gradually spread to the entire school, which had turned upside-down as a result of the endless pedagogical assemblies and high passions. This struggle was no longer confined to its walls: it now involved the more prejudiced and bigoted inhabitants who were members of the five churches of the city. Led by Priest Mushegh Vardapetian, the priests kept inciting the people in churches, houses, streets and markets, thus recruiting adherents. Even the Catholicos of All Armenians, Khrimian Hayrik, interceded, but the darkness, namely the power of Bishop Karapet Ayyvazian, won. Levon Sargissian and the teachers sharing his views were released in accordance with their resignations, and many of the pupils adhering to them abandoned the school.<sup>4</sup> That year the graduates of the 6th main class totaled only two. In order to arrange the school affairs until the end of the academic year, our teacher of German, Stepan Kanayan, was appointed Acting Inspector.

### A New Inspector

The next academic year Archimandrite Mesrop Ter-Movsissian<sup>5</sup> was appointed Inspector of our school: he had just defended his dissertation and received Master's degree. He was the first Inspector of our school to represent the clergy.

Archimandrite Mesrop was a man of an athletic constitution, handsome and manly face and a rich beard. His thick and dense brows seemed a bunch of hair fixed above each of his eyes: they imparted unusual brilliance to his face and made his eyes deeper. He distinguished himself for several novelties, the first of

<sup>2</sup> In fact, the events took place in 1894 (note by the editor).

<sup>3</sup> Levon Sargissian was appointed Inspector of the diocese school of Shushi in the summer of 1892 and held this post for two years (Leo, Պատմություն Գարաբաղի Հայոց բենական հոգևոր դպրոցի. 1838-1913 [Leo, A History of the Armenian Spiritual Eparchial School of Karabakh (1838 to 1913)] (Tiflis, 1914), 454) (note by the editor).

<sup>4</sup> For information about the movement against the commandments of the Holy Gospel, see Leo, 472-536 (note by the editor).

<sup>5</sup> Archimandrite Mesrop Ter-Movsissian held the post of Inspector from 8 September 1896 until June 1897 (Leo, 545-546) (note by the editor).



which was the elaboration of a pupils' bylaws (they were published in a booklet entitled *Colophon*/ «Հիշատակարան», which had special pages at the end for the pupils' quarterly and final-term marks). The second novelty was the introduction of special hat emblems: the Inspector who represented the clergy wanted our pupils to differ from those of other schools, as the alumni of state schools did. Besides, these hats, which were to form part of a common uniform, were to have an educating significance. The Inspector considered the form of the hats for a long time and it was decided to suggest that the goldsmiths of the city submit projects for them. Eventually outstanding master Badam's project won and he received a proposal of making the necessary number of hat emblems which represented the initials of the following Armenian phrase: «Ղարաբաղի Հայոց բնական հոգևոր դպրոց» (Armenian Eparchial Spiritual School of Karabakh). The pupils, and especially those of the lower classes, bore these hat emblems with great pleasure.

The third novelty was the teaching of a military march. Balasan, the newly-admitted servant of our school, who had just been demobilised with the title of a non-commissioned officer, became the teacher and commander of our military march. Every morning he trained us in accordance with all the military rules. He gave orders in Russian, these exercises being obligatorily attended by the Inspector himself (he would always follow them caressing his glorious beard with the thumb and index finger of his right hand). Our diocesan school was very close to the real school, the pupils of which did military exercises, too, but not in the school yard but in the street. Their commander was not a civilian, but a serviceman with gilded shoulder straps. We did our exercises peacefully while theirs were accompanied with a brass band conducted by composer N. Tamrazian.

It should be noted that the pupils of the diocese school were distinguished for great patriotism and love of their nation. Everything connected with Armenia and Armenians, everything Armenian was lofty, unsurpassed and unique for us. This mode of thinking made us highly enthusiastic about the past glory of our nation and we dreamt of the bright days of the future: we dreamt of seeing Armenians liberated and having achieved statehood in their homeland, Armenia. Our enthusiasm was particularly fostered by a handiwork-picture called *Spirit of (Mother) Armenia* that decorated a wall in the house of

every Armenian family. The *Spirit of Armenia* represented a girl of unmatched beauty sitting on the ruins of the capitals of Historical Armenia: Ani, Dvin, Artashat... and other historical Armenian cities. When the daughter of a family became 15 or 16 years old, it was her sacred duty to weave the *Spirit of Armenia* on a tambour with multi-coloured silk threads. The propaganda of patriotism was realised at the school through the teaching of such subjects as Armenian literature, Armenian history and *Grabar* (Classical Armenian). Lofty and praiseworthy patriotic feelings were also impregnated in our young souls through patriotic songs. All the festivities held at the school began with M. Nalbandian's song entitled *Our Fatherland*. The motet entitled *Norahrash*, which we sang at the feast of the Vardanants, imbued our world of emotions with a wonderful melody. Apart from opening all our festivities, the *Song of the Italian Girl* was also used in expressive recitals as an artistic piece and was very often staged. Let us imagine someone saying the poem: when he reached the part saying, "Here brother, for you a flag," a girl approached the pupil reciting it with a flag in her hand, knelt before him and recited:

*Here brother, for you a flag,  
That I made with my hands  
Nights I didn't sleep,  
With tears I washed it.*

*Look at it, 3 colours  
It's our gifted symbol.  
Let it shine against the enemy.  
Let Austria perish.*

After these last four lines, the hall roared: "May Turkey go to hell!" The pupils believed that when writing *Austria*, Michael Nalbandian meant Turkey. After the flag was handed to the boy and the hall grew quiet, both the boy and the girl recited together:

*Everywhere death is the same  
Everyone dies only once  
But lucky is the one  
Who is sacrificed for his nation's freedom.*

No solemn ceremony was held without the recital of several couplets from Ghevond Alishan's *Plpuln Avarayri* («Պլպուլն Ավարայրի») and R. Patkanian's poem entitled *Te Im Alevor* («Թե իմ ալևոր»). The

song entitled *Bam Porotan* («Բամ փորոտան») by Ghevond Alishan was performed with a special solemnity during the festivities of the school. Another song of the same kind was *Take up Arms, Armenians, Take up Arms* («Ի զեն, հայեր, ի զեն»), after a couplet of which the pupils sang *Towards, towards, towards Armenia* («Դեպի, դեպի, դեպի Հայաստան») and *Armenia, a Heavenly Land* («Հայաստան, երկիր դրախտավայր»), this last one being performed solo. It was particularly well sung by one of our senior pupils, Grigor Mirzayan (later: composer Grigor Siuny). Here is another song entitled *An Appeal to Brave Armenians* («Կոչ հայ քաջերին»):

*Suffice it to bow our heads, brother,  
It is something miserable.  
It is now high time  
That the Armenian flag was hoisted.  
Let Armenian mounts thunder  
And Armenian fighters cry.*<sup>6</sup>

These were the types of songs that were performed both inside and outside the eparchial school creating patriotic moods and a willingness to sacrifice our lives for the liberation of our land. If we add to this the echoes of the liberation of the Christian peoples living on the Balcanic Peninsula—it was a topic of everyday conversations at our school—it will be clearer how great our striving for freedom and the flight of our patriotic spirit were. And we, young fellows aged only 14 to 16, became recruits for the struggle of the liberation of our Turkish Armenian brothers. Was it not the result of this education that the best pupils of the diocesan school, Duman, Tuman, Ishkhan, Yegor, Isajan and many, many others, fell victim to this struggle having hardly completed their school course, being still too young?

### My Teachers

Indeed, I cannot remember all my teachers and have not forgotten only those who made a deep impression on me or remained in my memory for some event or another.

<sup>6</sup> The original reads: «Բալ է եղբայր վիզը ճկել,  
Ողորմելի երևույթ,  
Ժամանակը հասել է,  
Հայ դրոշակին ծածանել:  
Հայոց լերինք թող թնդան,  
Հայոց քաջեր թող գոռան».

*Hakob Jagharbekian*. In the first preparatory form he taught us the Armenian language. He was a tall handsome young man not above thirty.

Once a new pupil was admitted to our class although it was a long time since the school year began. His family name was Atayan. He spoke a dialect and had no command of the literary language. The Armenian word «ճնճող» (the equivalent for ‘sparrow’ - translator) was written on the blackboard with movable letters.

“Now you repeat it, newcomer.”

Atayan murmured something. The teacher said:

“Say loudly.”

Atayan cried:

“Loudly.”

The class started laughing. Atayan burst into tears.

*Gabriel Ghulikevkhian* (the father of Hayk Ghulikevkhian, who was a lecturer at Yerevan State University)<sup>7</sup> was known as teacher Kapriel and taught arithmetic on the third preparatory class. Before coming to work in the morning, he would go to the market (*topkhana* in the original) and buy a jug of milk, greens, etc. He brought these products to the classroom and arranged them on the table to use them in making up sums of 3 to 4 questions. We always did these sums with great willingness.

After the bell had gone, all of us were eager to take his shopping to his place with great pleasure as his wife, Sofia Bajji, always treated those who would do this task to apples or some other fruits.

*Bagrat Ter-Sahakian*<sup>8</sup> taught arithmetic in our Second Preparatory Department. First and foremost I remember him because apart from being a teacher, he also had a bookstore where he sold stationery. Besides, he would always say: “You should know the table of multiplication by heart just as you know *Our Father*.” When he became convinced that we had mastered the table of multiplication very well, he taught us to do the same by means of our fingers, from 6 times 6 to 9 times

<sup>7</sup> Gabriel Ghulikevkhian taught at the school in 1896/97: *Gabriel Varzhapet* (he was known to the people of Shushi and all his pupils by this name) received education only at the diocesan school, which he left in 1871, beginning his teaching activity there in 1874... Later he also worked as a teacher in Nukhi and the female parochial school of Shushi, but he unfolded most of his pedagogical activity in his alma mater (Leo, 611). On 14 March 1910, the 35th anniversary of his pedagogical activity was celebrated at the eparchial school of Shushi (note by the editor).

<sup>8</sup> In 1901 Bagrat Ter-Sahakian founded a printing-house in Shushi (it functioned until 1917) (note by the editor).

9. Even today I remember him drawing lines on our stone boards with a knife and making arithmetical squares on them.

*Zatik Gatinian.* Those studying at an old school are said to have a beautiful handwriting and that is true. Calligraphy was taught to us not just by a teacher, but by a calligrapher. Zatik Gatinian was specialised in this field, being not only a good calligrapher but also a fine artist. We admired his graphical drawings and always asked him to bring one of his albums for us to see them. I still remember one of his pictures named Winter. We studied calligraphy neither on the blackboard nor in our copy-books: Zatik Gatinian had four-page printed sheets of special lines by means of which he taught us calligraphy.

*Stepan Demurian.*<sup>9</sup> The image of our teacher of singing, Stepan Demurian, is vivid in my memory as thanks to his hard work, our school acquired a choir of four voices. It had successful performances during the school festivities and in the city's magnificent church of Ghazanchetsots. I remember him very well because firstly I was a solo singer in that choir, and secondly, because he taught us very encouraging national patriotic songs. During the classes of musical notation, he sang and we recorded what he performed on the blackboard with Armenian notes, which were written on a single line and not on five ones as the European ones. Armenian notes are seven in number: po, ye, ve, be, kho, ne, po. The first exercise of the notation was the scale, which was written in this way and was called a passage.

Stepan Demurian told us that Armenian notes go back to the depth of centuries and are called khaz, but nobody is able to explain and interpret them or sing in accordance with them. As for the Armenian notes that we studied, he said that they had been invented by Sexton Baba Hambardzumian (this clergyman had great knowledge of music) on the basis of these *khazes*. Although Music was taught at a most primitive level at the diocese school of Shushi, it gave such prominent composers and singers as Grigor Siuny, Yeghishe Baghdasarian, Daniel Ghazarian, Hovakim Meghuniyan (this outstanding singer fell prey to envy) and others.

*Maghakia Pluzian,*<sup>10</sup> our teacher of *Grabar*, was a good specialist and distinguished Armenologist. He was a reserved person who did his utmost to share his knowledge with his pupils. In his work devoted to the history of the diocesan school, one of his former pupils, Arakel Babakhanian (better known under the name of Leo), says the following about Maghakia Pluzian: *A short Turkish Armenian who always shaved with great care and was distinguished for a surprising modesty in public life. He avoided new acquaintances and almost never went anywhere constantly living all by himself, devoted to the school life... His knowledge was restricted to linguistics... Despite all this, however, within three years, Pluzian was able to set up an entirely new and independent circle which remains unmatched in the history of the diocese school of Karabakh. That circle should be considered as a predominantly Armenological one devoted to the history of Hayk's nation. Excellent knowledge of Grabar, old Armenian historiography, history and geography of Armenia—these were the tools by means of which Pluzian succeeded in training pupils knowing Armenian and thinking in Armenian. This, however, was not enough: Pluzian also imbued his pupils with love of literature.*<sup>11</sup>

This was Maghakia Pluzian, whom I have not forgotten. Every time Khorenatsy or Yeghishe are mentioned I see Pluzian, with an expression of annoyance on his face, before my eyes. On that day, he was reading Yeghishe's history for us when one of the pupils, Gerasim Petrossian, burst out laughing. Pluzian noticed it, got off the rostrum and said angrily: "Are you laughing, scoundrel, when tears are shed here?" No excuse could help Petrossian: Pluzian's indignation was beyond imagination. We were petrified in silence. We knew that Petrossian had been laughing right at Pluzian imitating his mode of calling Balasan, the servant of the school: "Palasan, Palasan!" Pluzian lived in the school house and very often sent Balasan shopping to the market. Nevertheless, we treated gray-haired Pluzian with veneration and liking, appreciating his knowledge greatly. Maghakia Pluzian made a great invaluable contribution to the teaching of *Grabar* at the school.

9 At the end of the academic year 1893/94, Stepan Demurian, who taught singing, was dismissed from work at the suggestion of the trustees despite the fact that he had made strenuous efforts throughout a year, doing his best to train a fine four-voice choir the performances of which aroused delight and admiration both in church and at the pupils' festivities (Leo, 468) (note by the editor).

10 Maghakia Pluzian, who was from Van, Western Armenia, began teaching at the diocese school in the academic year 1870/71 (ibid., 360-361) (note by the editor).

11 Ibid., 364-365 (note by the editor).



*Karapet Tyunibekian*<sup>12</sup> was our teacher of the Russian language. We had a lot of teachers (Jashitian, Terterian, Pirjanian, etc.), but none of them gave us so much knowledge of Russian as Tyunibekian. He showed a humble, modest, kind-hearted and merciful attitude to the pupils. He taught them something even when he was very angry with them. We never heard him say: “You do not know it, sit down.” When the pupil did not know the answer to the given question, he would ask so many guiding questions that he not only understood, but also learnt everything, and this helped the others fully comprehend this or that grammar rule. Tyunibekian was not tall: even his appearance spoke of his politeness as if he was born to be a teacher. He was a graduate of the Teachers’ Training Institute of Tiflis, which was well-known for the highly-competent specialists educated there. Karapet Tyunibekian taught the Russian language, Russian History and Geography of Russia in Russian. He taught these subjects not for the sake of teaching, but made the pupils comprehend and master them in such a way that they could never forget what they had learnt...

Yes, from among our teachers of Russian, it is Karapet Tyunibekian whom I remember with veneration and gratitude.

*Hasan-Jalalian*. We had a lot of teachers of arithmetic, but none of them was so renowned as Zurabian, the mathematics teacher of Nersissian School, whose fame had reached even the diocesan school of Shushi. Nevertheless, I remember Hasan-Jalalian, a tall handsome person who always stood by the blackboard, one of his hands in his trousers’ pocket. He had a nickname, Inchu? (the equivalent of ‘Why?’ - translator). I cannot forget an incident that happened during one of the lessons of Hasan-Jalalian: when he entered the classroom at the lesson of trigonometry, one of the pupils cried out: “Inchu?” The teacher came in, mounted the rostrum, put the register onto the table and said without opening it:

“The pupil who cried ‘Inchu,’ to the blackboard!”

The boy approached the blackboard with his copy-book in his hand to answer the lesson (this was the rule: the pupil answering the lesson showed his homework to the teacher so that the latter would verify whether he had done it all by himself or not). The teacher started asking questions in trigonometry, algebra and arithmetic. The class followed that strange exchange of questions and replies, and the teacher’s ‘why?’ questions in petrifica-

tion. Everything seemed to proceed well, but when the question of common fractions was asked, the pupil proved unable to explain why the figure diminishes instead of increasing when the whole number is multiplied by a fraction, and on the contrary, why the figure grows instead of being reduced when the integer is divided by the fraction. The teacher turned to the class, but they failed, too. Thus, he eventually drove the pupil answering the lesson into a tight corner. He began analyzing the question logically, explained it quite in detail and asked first the pupil at the blackboard and then the class: “Now do you understand why the figure diminishes instead of increasing when the whole number is multiplied by a fraction, and grows instead of being reduced when the integer is divided by the fraction?”

“Yes, we do,” the class replied in unison.

Hasan-Jalalian said: “Mark it well! Mathematical subjects like the question ‘why?’ If you cannot answer it, it means that you have not understood the task and have done it mechanically. Now take your copy-book, sit down and never forget that the question ‘why?’ opens up your eyes, clarifies complicated sums and reveals what has been unknown to you so far.”

“I’m sorry, Mr. Hasan-Jalalian.”

“Take your seat, do your lesson well, behave yourself and you will be my favourite pupil.”

*Yervand Lalayan*. In the academic years of 1895/96 and 96/97, the Geography of Armenia was taught by Yervand Lalayan. He was a vigorous and lively person of a middle height, with fair hair, blue eyes, a pointed beard and an appearance attesting his politeness. He wore glasses as he was too short-sighted. When reading the names and surnames of the pupils, he either bent down and brought his nose closer to the register or vice versa. The pupils took advantage of this fact: when somebody did not know the lesson his friend would answer instead of him, and the teacher would put 4 or 5 in front of the name of the pupil who actually had not answered anything.

Yervand Lalayan spoke about the valley of Alashkert with great enthusiasm saying that it was so fertile that could provide dairy products, meat and forage for the entire region of Transcaucasia. During holidays he travelled through the villages of Karabakh and collected ethnographical and folk-lore materials. Being well-aware of this “weakness” of Lalayan, we wrote such materials for him, and in return for that, he raised the mark of the pupil who had provided more or less valuable information. Later we heard that he had given

<sup>12</sup> Karapet Tyunibekian, who was a graduate of Alexandrople’s Teachers’ Training School, was invited to work early in 1895/96 (Leo, 538) (note by the editor).

up teaching and assumed residence in Tiflis. He also established an Ethnographical Society and continued his favourite work. For the second time, I met Lalayan in Yerevan. I told him who I was and he remembered the diocese school of Karabakh and his youth.

“Yes, I remember, your class was very naughty, but studied well.”

“What are you doing in Yerevan at present, Comrade Lalayan?”

“Pursuing my profession: I am conducting excavations, publishing popular scientific books and collecting ethnographical materials.”

Lalayan had not lost his freshness: at an old age, he had married a young woman whose name was Zari.

*Gevorg Gharajian* was a short man with blue glasses who had just left behind his youth. He taught us General History and Literature. His lessons were very interesting as he accompanied the topic with episodes connected with the given writer, historical personality, etc.

*Theologian Arshak Ter-Michaelian* had a very handsome, one might even say feminine, face and wore glasses with gold frames.

### I am Leaving School

The year 1898 brought a tragedy into our family: Mother died and Father moved from the village to town. He proved unable to undertake any work so that our family found itself in a grave financial state. What could I do? It was impermissible to cease going to classes as I was about to leave school soon. Nor was it possible to abandon my family under those conditions when a piece of dry bread was something out of reach for us. I was just going mad. I was obliged to leave my school course incomplete to earn our everyday living. I started wandering in Baku, in the Trans-Caspian country... Manual labour, shop servant..., but the thought that I had left school untimely constantly tortured me. “This year I can’t, next year...” Every time I cherished this vain hope and thus lived until 1905, deceiving myself all the time. Then I made up my mind and set out for home, for my school. I reached Baku: that was the period of the Armeno-Turkish fights. I lived with Balakhan, my married sister. I lived through the massacres of the workers’ quarter (Banavan) of Romany and they inspired me to write my first press material (see «Աշխարհ» [*Mshak*], no. 26, 18 February 1905).

The Armeno-Turkish fights had terminated, but I was warned against going to Shushi. The diocese school was

in a great tumult: its notorious Inspector, Archimandrite Benik, had closed two of the senior classes with the intercession of the Government and the pupils had scattered here and there. I also learnt that the Inspector of Echmiatzin’s Gevorgian Seminary was Archimandrite Mesrop Ter-Movsissian. This news made me happy. I wrote an imploring letter to him, told him that I was one of his alumni and asked him to enable me to complete the Class Department of the seminary. The reply was not late: I received a note in a clumsy and hardly intelligible handwriting in which he told me that regretfully the Class Department did not have any vacancy so that he could not meet my wish. I left for Tiflis. It was the first time I had gone there: a large city where I had neither acquaintances nor relatives. I found Nersissian School with great difficulty. Mr. Grigor was the first person whom I saw there. I told him about myself and the purpose of my going there.

“They will not admit you,” he said briefly and sharply, but nevertheless, advised me to apply to Acting Inspector Stepan Malkhassian.

I entered his office with my application in my hand. He read it and shook his head.

“My dear fellow, firstly, we do not have a vacant place, and secondly, your age does not permit you [to be admitted to this establishment]: you are 22 or 23. I would advise you to prepare, if you can, and take examinations without attending lectures.”

I went out of Nersissian School in great despair and sadness. Standing nearby, I kept thinking for a while and decided: “Eh, I shall go to my village.”

Several days later, I was in the village, but not in ours: I had gone to the neighbouring place of Pirjamal, where my friend Grigor Mirzabekian lived (he had left the eparchial school of Shushi some years before).

“You will stay here. I shall help you and you will pass your exam without attending classes. Don’t lose your hope. Everything will be all right.”

The peace reigning in the village greatly helped me in my preparations. My friend’s brother Poylan Simon, who was in the final form of the eparchial school, put his notes in various subjects (including psychology, which was taught by the then Inspector of the school, outstanding pedagogue Arshak Chilingarian, the author of the Armenian-language ABC book entitled *Classmate*) at my disposal. At my leisure I went to Shushi.

In September 1906, I passed my exams successfully. The President of the school’s Board of Trustees and the Primate of the Armenian diocese of Georgia,



A view of Shushi

Bishop Ashot Shekhian, said to me: “My boy, would you like to work as a teacher in a village?”

“Why not, Your Grace?”

He called the Secretary of the Consistory, Anania Ter-Danielian (he was from Pirjamal and knew me very well), and said: “Mr. Israelian has been appointed teacher at the parochial school of Togh Village, which is to open soon, with an annual salary of 400 roubles.”

### The First Year of My Teaching

The year was 1906. The spiritual authorities of Karabakh Diocese appointed me as a teacher at the parish school of Togh Village, which had not opened yet. The order in my bosom, I set out for Togh Village of the Melikdom of Dizak, which was situated within about 60 kms of Shushi. The way passed through wooded mountains and picturesque valleys. The streams flowing down from elevations, the babbling canals and murmuring springs were the inseparable companions of my journey and gave rise to various meditations... Involuntarily my inner voice cried out: “Is this divine nature not like that in Switzerland?” In addition, the cemetery of Taghavard Village was something beyond any expectation... It was covered with vegetation and flowers of a thousand and one colours and forms. I just could not help watching those scenes which seemed to have been taken from some fairy tale. I regretted that I had to leave that paradise of Eden. Still fascinated with that view, I continued my way. Now I entered a dark wooded gorge called Khorkhorat: the vault of heaven was not visible, for the crests of trees which were hugging each other like sweethearts had veiled the sky and did not let in the sun rays. At first sight you felt horrified in that harrowing gorge...

You feared lest the lord of the forest, the bear, should turn up in your way or lest you might fall prey to bandits. It was in those very times that ghachagh Nabi,<sup>13</sup> who did not have any human features, had made himself notorious and kept spreading ruin and devastation in Mountainous Karabakh. He made no difference between the rich and the poor, women and children: he plundered everybody without exception. The Government was trying to catch him and the people were ready to help them to get rid of that mean gangster.

Once I ascended the gorge, the azure of the sky opened up before my eyes together with the remote horizons and I breathed freely and heartily watching the villages perched on the mountains in the distance, one of them hanging just from the slope of the mountain on which I was standing. It was the village of Metz (Large - translator) Taghlar. When speaking about this place, it would be a crime not to mention its former renowned *Kyokhva* (Head - translator), Patali. Firstly, he was a giant like the mountains of Dizak, dressed in a black *chukha* and wearing a silver belt from which his dagger of silver-decorated handle hung, with a knife called *ghamalti* put in a sheath beneath it. His thick moustache reached his ears, and his magnificent Armenian nose rested on his face. His fame was not confined to only the village of Metz Taghlar: he was well-known throughout the district.

Patali *Kyokhva* had puppets, two of the most distinguished peasants without whom he did not imagine his life and without whom he did not eat a piece of bread. They were ever together, from morning until evening. There was something they habitually did every day without ever ignoring it.

Patali *Kyokhva* went out of his house in the morning, took a piece from the firewood arranged in the yard and went to the village centre, his puppets doing the same. They sat side by side on the beams lying there, took their knives (their handles were made of buffalo's horn by the village blacksmith) out of their pockets and started their work. First of all, they cleaned the pieces of wood of shoots and small branches to such an extent that they turned into clubs. Each of them tried to make his finer and more beautiful in shape.

<sup>13</sup> This *ghachagh* (an Armenian colloquial word meaning *bandit*) Nabi, who was just a scoundrel, was proclaimed hero of the Azerbaijanian nation, his bust being placed on the pedestal of the destroyed bust of Armenian Marshal Baghramian in Gandzak (see «Վարձք» [*Vardzk*], no. 3 [in Armenian & English] (December 2010-April 2011), 46) (note by the editor).



They needed these clubs to defend themselves against the village dogs when any of the peasants invited them to drink a cup of vodka together in the morning. Returning from the place where they had tasted vodka, they continued their work, which was a struggle between clubs and knives: using their knives to the utmost, they kept hewing the clubs until they turned into pointed spits in order to use wooden spits instead of iron ones if *Mahtesy* Kapy or barber Haby happened to invite them to eat barbecue together. And what were they to do if neither Mughdusi nor the dallak invited them? They went on with their work: the spits were consigned to the knives and they kept hewing them endlessly until they got smaller and thinner, turning into toothpicks in the size of a pin so that if anybody invited them to supper they would use them. This is how Patali *Kyokhva* spent his day. Let us leave him in Metz Taghlar “working incessantly all day long” and continue our way.

When I left Taghlar behind and ascended the ravine, I caught sight of Togh, the residence of the Meliks of Dizak, hanging from the slope of the mountain of Gtich. I asked the first person I came across in the village about the trustees. The peasant did not understand what the word ‘trustee’ meant, but pointed to the priest’s house. I turned my horse’s head to that building: a short, gray-haired priest with a short beard met me. He turned out to be a member of the Board of Trustees. I extended the order of the spiritual authorities to him. After reading it, he shook his head and said:

“This cannot be arranged...”

“Why?” I was surprised.

He cut it short: “There are no appropriate conditions.”

Eventually, at the end of our conversation or, better to say, argument, the priest was driven into a tight corner and said:

“I am not the sole representative of the Board, am I? There are some other members, too. Let them gather together and decide.”

“And where can I see them or hold a meeting with them?”

“In the church.”

In the evening four of the five members of the Board of Trustees gathered together. President Harutiun Musayelian opened the meeting saying:

“All right, we are very glad.”

I became happy myself and looked at my host who wanted to cheat me.

“But,” the President continued, “the issue of having a school is connected with many difficulties: first of all, we need a place to hold classes, then desks, tables, and what is most important, money, whereas the church lacks it. And do you know, Mr. Israelian, that our village has a state school with its own building, 5 teachers and 200 pupils? It does not need a second one.”

Even after a long conversation I failed to convince them of the necessity of having an Armenian school: I guessed that none of the trustees was interested to have one.

The fifth member of the Board of Trustees, Village Head Arakel Shaburian, who had joined us later, said:

“Mr. teacher, do you know that before you another teacher was sent here, Ishkhan Hayriyan? He stayed with us for two days, grew convinced that the village does not need a second school and left.”

“What can I do?” I thought. “I can’t return to Shushi empty-handed.” I was ashamed of my friends. They would laugh at me and say: “Here you are! You were just boasting...”

“Look here, dear members of the Board,” I said, “tomorrow is Sunday. Let’s hold a parochial meeting and discuss the issue of having an Armenian school. If the assembly truly decides that Togh Village does not need one, I shall take its minutes and submit them to the spiritual authorities.”

After repeated refusals, the trustees eventually agreed to hold a parish meeting in the church yard.

It was Sunday, one of the finest days of autumn. The people had gathered in the yard of the church, which was surrounded with ramparts like a castle. “It is both a church and a stronghold against the enemy,” I thought.

The meeting was opened by Harutiun Dustumants: he explained its purpose and said that the village had a state school with its own building, teachers and pupils. It did not need a parish one. Besides, he continued, the church was very poor while the establishment of a parochial school required a separate structure, desks, tables and a salary for the teacher. Money was necessary for all these, but how could the school preserve its existence when they were short of it? The President’s speech was followed by those of the other trustees. They confirmed Harutiun Dustumants’s words or repeated them. The people kept silent: they did not speak out and did not express their opinion, but they were to decide, were they not? The school was to belong to them. Why were they silent? Did they agree



A view of Togh Village (photo by Manvel Sargissian, 1986)

with the trustees or were they of another opinion? Probably, they were in hesitation. Yes, this was the case. I noticed this when somebody winked at the peasant sitting opposite him during Harutiun Dustumants's speech, and another hit the one by his side with his elbow. What could I do? The people being unwilling to speak, I myself asked for the floor.

"Dear parishioners," I said, "you know what a blessing education is. An uneducated, illiterate man is like a blind person who cannot see the clear sky and his dear ones' faces. However, education is a blessing if it is given to children in their mother tongue which is spoken by their parents, the people surrounding them, in the tongue in which their mothers sang them lullabies and rocked their cradles; in the tongue in which the child babbled his first words (mummy, daddy); in the tongue in which their grannies told them fairy tales. Is there a language sweeter for a child than his mother tongue? It is only in that language that children should be given education and knowledge so that they will be able to understand what is good and bad, evil and kind in the world; to understand how one can be happy and fortunate and the other unlucky, one wealthy and the other destitute. Dear participants of this meeting, another thing to know is that if you give a suckling something else to eat instead of its mother's milk it will not be able to digest it and will fall ill.

The same is true of the school: if children get knowledge in a foreign language they won't understand anything. They won't understand as that language is not for them and is not close to their souls and hearts."

"It's right, it's right," I heard from this and that direction.

I plucked up courage.

"People," I went on, "our ancestors retained our mother tongue for us for hundreds of years. How many heroes sacrificed their lives for it! Remember the martyrs of the field of Avarayr! Remember Great Commander Vardan, who was killed in an unequal fighting together with his valorous soldiers for the sake of that language, our religion, the language that was invented by Mesrop Mashtots and Sahak Partev!

"What would these martyrs say to us if they rose from the dead for a minute and saw us renouncing the language which they preserved through fire, sword, wars and massacres and cherished it to hand it down to us so that we in our turn retain and pass it to the coming generations? Are we preserving our mother tongue, which has gone through carnage, by sending our children to a foreign school where they are to study in an alien language rejecting their native tongue? 'May these worthless descendants be cursed and damned! May fire and lightning befall them!' This is what our forefathers would say. This is how they would express their indignation. I do not think that Togh Village of the Melikdom of Dizak in Mountainous Karabakh deserves this curse. Let each of you think deeply and say his opinion."

The villagers were at a loss: they looked at each other and whispered something...

"I want an Armenian school to open in our village. I'm donating five roubles for it," one of them said.

"I'm donating three roubles," another said.

"I don't have money, but I have boards and shall give five of them to the school."

"I'm a carpenter and will make tables and desks of those boards," Muki Dayi said.

Everybody was in high spirits: the participants of the meeting *did* wish to have an Armenian school.

"I have a proposal," one of the trustees, Arakel Shabarian, said, "let's ask Mr. teacher to give us fifty roubles from his salary."

"You are welcome," I said without hesitation, "I am giving not fifty, but one hundred roubles."

The ice was broken. The village of Togh was going to have an Armenian parochial school. For that pur-

pose, we rented a large room on the second floor of the double-storey house of Avan's family. Several days later, thanks to three skilled carpenters, the room was furnished with ten desks, a blackboard, a table and a chair. The classroom was ready, the admission of pupils had started. The first swallows appeared: I registered them and let them go. I was waiting for new children to come on the second day, but their number did not exceed eight.

I was thinking: "What am I to do? To wait for the pupils' number to grow means to frustrate the work."

And I started the classes. I divided the pupils in two groups: literate and illiterate ones. Everything was all right: for those literate, I wrote exercises on the blackboard for them to copy them in their note-books. As for the illiterate ones, I taught them the letters. Although I had begun the lessons I was engrossed in thoughts: was the number of the pupils to be limited to eight? It was sheer disgrace and mockery when the state school had two hundred pupils. "What am I to do, God?"

"Go home," I said to the pupils when the lessons were over, "but come again in an hour: I am going to read a book for you. Do you see this instrument? I am going to play it for you" (I pointed to my flute, which was a gift from Nikita, the son of our rich relatives who had left the real school and gone to Leningrad to continue his education).

These grave thoughts tortured me for ten days, during which the number of the pupils reached 14, including two girls: Mariam Ter-Hovhannissian and Lusik Ohanian. The former was modest like a dove, and the latter was beautiful like a wild fawn.

I very seldom went to the village centre: I was ashamed. All day long I had classes with a group, then the second and third ones. Not only did I teach them something but also helped them do their homework and then let them home. They had so much time in class that they did their homework under my supervision. After every lesson I asked myself: "What new knowledge did I give to my pupils?" This helped me much in preparing for the lessons and unclosing the clue of making pupils attached to school. All my children, both the boys and girls, also came to take lessons after the official ones were over. What did I do at those hours? I read them fairy tales, children's books, materials from the magazines *Hasker* and *Aghbyur*, also teaching them songs and accompanying those singing with my flute. The children liked this very much. I taught them fables and staged them. All this lasted two months, and dur-

ing that period, nobody ever took any interest in the conditions of the school: neither the trustees nor the villagers. Very rarely I went to the village centre to remind them of the existence of the Armenian school. This, however, was of no avail: nobody was interested in the school and nobody knew what was going on there. This indifference was beyond all imagination.

Sometimes I went to the village centre on Sundays. The people gathered near the local shop and talked sitting on beams and stones. None of them paid any attention to me. I participated in the conversation, expressed my opinion, sometimes also gave them certain information from newspapers, but even this did not help me attract their attention or increase the number of my pupils. Their neglect did not insult me as I was still young and my appearance did not impart confidence. I had reconciled myself to all this and kept doing my favourite work without demanding anything. Probably, nothing would have changed but for an incident which shocked me and turned all my inner world upside down.

Once I was again in front of the shop in the village centre. One of the peasants who stood near a pole looked down and said: "The Inspector's coming." Everybody turned downwards and so did I. We saw three people with gilded shoulder straps and hat emblems coming upwards: it was the headmaster of the state school with two of his teachers. Hardly had they approached us when all the villagers stood up and bowed down before them. I was so insulted as if somebody had struck my head with an axe. I knew that these were merely officials who carried out no public work in the village and were very far from rural life. There was only official communication between them and the local people, connected with the repairs of the school house and the supply of firewood for it. Who could assume the renovation of a building by contract or the provision of fuel if not the rich? The common people and working peasants had no ties with the school. I knew this very well; that is why the respect shown towards the teachers of the state school and their honorary reception stormed my young inner world filled with energy and enthusiasm. I immediately returned home but my emotions stifled me. Tears were involuntarily shed from my eyes. What could I do? How could I show the people what was right and real? To intensify my work and expand the scale of public activity in such a way that they would be able to see the difference between the Armenian and state Russian schools. "Never again will I go to the village centre."



Apart from the children, in the evenings I also held classes with several young men who were either totally illiterate or semi-literate. I already knew them better and they gathered in my place every evening. As the pupils did their homework in class they returned very soon. Very often Lusik and Mariam did not even manage to clean the classroom; nor did I have enough time to have dinner. I wondered why the girls did not allow the boys to take part in the cleaning of the classroom.

One day a stranger came to our school, introduced himself as a representative of the *Horizon* paper and asked me to become its correspondent and send my materials to it and not to the *Mshak* and *Nor-Dar*. I agreed and began sending articles on rural life, with its everyday routine, to the *Horizon*.

Once I wrote that a great number of children in Togh Village had got ill with scarlet fever and there were some victims. In connection with that news, a district doctor came to the state school and started searching for the person who had published "disinformation" in the newspaper. He showed the reproaching note that he had received from the Vice-Roy's office. The Village Head and Inspector of the school, Ter-Davidov, unanimously declared that the local children were not ill with scarlet fever and gave him a corresponding certificate bearing their signatures and ratified by their seals. Anyway, the district doctor insisted on seeing the correspondent who had disseminated that disinformation (apparently to give vent to his bile). I was invited to the Village Head's office. Besides Shaburian, there were two more officials there whom I did not know.

"Let me introduce our teacher, Mr. Israelian, to you," the Village Head said to these officials.

"Please, sit down, Mr. Israelian," Shaburian said.

"What's the matter, Mr. Arakel? Why have you called me?"

Before the Village Head could say a word, one of the officials said to me: "Are you the author of the information that your village has been visited by an epidemic of scarlet fever and there are victims among the children?"

"Yes, I am, but what has happened? Why have you called me?"

"I am the district doctor and have come to verify the false information you have submitted."

"I do not understand what false information. Why are you verifying it?"

"Please, read this certificate and sign it yourself," he said extending the paper to me. He was like a roos-

ter which had won the fight and was about to crow.

I started reading the certificate, unable to believe my eyes: Village Head Shaburian and Inspector Ter-Davidov attested that the children of Togh had not had an epidemic of scarlet fever. I began quivering with anger while the doctor was waiting for my reply, as if ready to attack me at any moment.

"This is what is false," I cried having lost my temper and threw the paper onto the table.

Those present stared at me in amazement. They were very quiet and did not expect me to behave in that way. The surprised doctor, Village Head and Ter-Davidov kept looking at me successively. With a questioning expression on his face, he was looking for an answer in the eyes of those present and wanted them to blame and reproach me. Nobody expected me to shout and throw the paper onto the table. The atmosphere was very tense and everybody felt ill at ease, but I did not let that situation of uncertainty continue for a long time.

"Stand up," I said in a demanding tone, "stand up and let's go. I shall show you the children who are ill and the parents of those who have died."

Going ahead of them, I was dragging the three of them behind me: one sick child, two children..., here is a house where a six-year-old child died of scarlet fever.

"That's enough," the Village Head said. Ter-Davidov repeated him.

The doctor was silent: he was putting down something in his note-book.

Thus, our walk in the village confirmed the truthfulness of my material and exposed the falsehood of the certificate provided by the Village Head and the Inspector.

A day after the doctor's departure, a medical attendant came to Togh and stayed there throughout a month (he lived with me) rendering aid to the sick children. Before leaving the village, he left the medicine he had brought (salol, aspirin, etc.) with me writing on each of them their names, prescription and mode of taking them. This fact seemed to change the attitude of the villagers and especially Arakel Shaburian towards me. It was a commonplace for him to swear at the peasants, whip them and demand a rouble for the ratification of a certificate, but my presence restrained him. Many of the villagers were aware of this and tried to have the certificates written in the office approved through me. I did not fail to notice the Village Head's "benevolence" towards me, his inquiries about the condition of the school attesting to this.

It was in those days that an aged woman came to me with a small parcel in her hand:

“I’m your pupil Lazar Atayan’s granny,” she said and put the package on the table, “I’ve come to see what sort of person you are that you changed my Lazar in such a way.”

To tell the truth, I was taken aback and did not know what had happened.

“What’s the matter, mother?”

“I’m so very thankful to you teacher. He’s my daughter’s only son, but he isn’t fond of reading and doesn’t like school. Lazar was at first at the royal school, but he would run away from classes and come home every day. We begged and implored him, but nothing helped. We somehow cheated him into going to school, but he managed to return home in another way even before us. For many times, we filled his pockets with fruits, but again of no use: he ate them and ran away home. Now he’s changed beyond recognition. Now he doesn’t come home from school. He returns there instantly. Formerly we never saw him with a book in his hands, whereas now he’s inseparable from books. We’re amazed. My daughter says, ‘Granny, is this our Lazar? He is so changed!’

“ ‘My girl, I’m myself very surprised. Give me something and I’ll go and see what kind of person that teacher is that he has changed our Lazar in such a way.’ We’re grateful to you, my son. May God grant you longevity and may you live as long as Simon the Old Man! May your parents rest in peace! Come on, open the parcel and give the handkerchief to me.”

“No, mother, don’t do that. You shouldn’t have brought it. I’m simply doing my duties. Every teacher should love his pupils, teach them to read and write and give them knowledge. Take it back. I won’t take it.”

“Woe is me! You shouldn’t say so! You’re my son. I’ve another son like you in a foreign land. I’ve brought it for you. You shouldn’t give back what has been brought for you. No, my dear, open it and give me back the handkerchief. As for the plate, Lazar will bring it back tomorrow.”

With these words, she herself opened the handkerchief without waiting for me, took it and left. The parcel comprised a cooked chicken, two loaves of *gata*, a piece of honeycomb and a bottle of wine.

Indeed, I was morally satisfied, but I could not forget the villagers’ attitude towards the teachers of the state school who wore gilded shoulder straps. “What else can I do?” I kept thinking and remembered that the

academic year always began solemnly at the diocesan school. All the pupils generally lined up in the yard class by class and then went up to the hall on the stage of which you could see the Primate, who was the President of the Board of Trustees, and the teaching staff headed by the Inspector. After receiving their greetings and kind wishes, every class went to its classroom and this marked the beginning of the academic year. And what about me? It was already two months since I started the lessons, but without any solemn ceremony. Late as we were, we could still celebrate the beginning of the year. I prepared a small-scale programme consisting of the songs, poems and staged fables that my pupils had learnt. Besides folk songs, our choir also knew children’s songs. Specially for that day, I wrote a couple of poems in the dialect of Karabakh so that they would be easily understood by the people. The children already knew that a festivity was about to be held, but they did not know what it was.

They asked me every day: “When is the celebration?”

“Soon, soon,” I answered and continued the rehearsals.

I wanted our festive event to be attended by as many people as possible, and for this purpose, I talked about it to my neighbours, pupils’ parents and the youth of Togh. It was to be held in the classroom with an open stage (without a curtain); to put it more exactly, we were going to have a wide rostrum which could accommodate 14 pupils. Everything was ready, and I was only to affix an announcement on the walls. I prepared sheets of paper and wrote the following in a fine handwriting:

#### **Announcement**

*On 3 November, Sunday, the solemn opening of the parochial school of Togh Village takes place. The pupils’ parents may attend it together with those wishing to be present.*

*School teacher: S. Israelian.*

The day of the festivity came: there were more people than I had expected. There was no room inside and a lot of people had gathered in the balcony. The ceremony opened with the priest’s greeting, after which I began speaking about the school, its needs, the paucity of pupils, the cleverness and skillfulness of the children, their love of knowledge and literature, etc. After the report the children started singing, reciting the poems

they had learnt and performing the fables they had staged. At the end of the festivity, the pupils danced in a ring and sang the song *Clap Your Hands and Put Your Foot Ahead* («Առաջ մի ծափ, մի նրբն ւտաջ»).

The peasants could not believe what they had seen and heard.

“Is all this the result of only two months’ work? No, brother, I don’t believe.”

“Truly, it’s incredible,” said the person sitting by his side.

“May it fall prey to flames,” another villager said pointing to the state school. “We haven’t seen such skillfulness and such a gratifying performance for twenty years.”

The audience did not find words to express their gratitude and satisfaction. The parents and relatives kept kissing their children for their being so gifted, something they had been unaware of so far.

Village Head Arakel Shaburian, who was also a member of the Board of Trustees, took the floor and said: “People, we came, watched the ceremony, had a nice time and now we are about to leave. I’m donating five roubles to our school and I’m asking you to do the same giving as much as you can.”

I was opposed to this fundraising lest the people should think that the festivity had been held specially for that purpose, but who would take my opinion into account? The donations made on that day amounted to more than one hundred roubles.

This was the first victory I had won on the front of enlightenment, a victory thanks to which, the closed mouths opened and the ice melted away...

It was twilight and I went to the village centre: I wondered what the people were talking about our festivity.

The peasants whom I came across said: “Good evening, teacher. You turn out to be very gifted whereas we didn’t know that.”

“Fellows, let the teacher sit down,” the peasants sitting in front of the shop in the centre of the village said.

“What a school! What a teacher!” The villagers kept lavishing such words on me mentioning this or that peasant’s child’s name.

“Welcome, teacher, you’re welcome.”

I enjoyed the fruits of my “victory.”

“Once our village had a teacher whose name was Galust. He was a good teacher, too,” old Tsafi said.

The following day was Monday. Hardly had classes begun when several children came to enter my

school. I admitted them gladly. Then another three children came, I admitted them, too, after which four new pupils were added. I examined them and divided them into groups of literate and illiterate ones. By the time the evening set in, the number of my pupils had increased by 12. This was something inexplicable. Was it thanks to the festivity and the children’s performances that such an influx began towards the school? Now it had 26 pupils. This was good enough: a children’s performance, a literary evening and that number would surely double.

My happiness was beyond any description... What beautiful prospects and promising horizons were opening before me! However, scarcely had two days passed when I received a letter from the headmaster of the state school. It said:

*To Mr. Israelian, the teacher of the Armenian spiritual parish school of Togh Village*

*I have found out that you are admitting the pupils of our school to yours in some roundabout way. If you continue enrolling our pupils I will have to apply to the supreme authorities.*

*A. Ter-Davidov,*

*Headmaster of the double-class normal school of Togh Village, 5. 11. 906.*

What was this? What a calamity was this? What a libel? Now how was I to prove that it was not true, that it was just a false statement? I did not reply to the letter, but addressed a note to the Primate telling him about it. His answer was laconic: the parents themselves decided to what school they should send their children. I was not satisfied with this response and decided to meet the headmaster of the state school and explain everything to him. I went and told him that I myself was surprised at the strange influx of pupils to my school. I also added that he had rushed at a conclusion without verifying the fact.

“I am not to blame,” I said, “while you are libeling me in using some ‘roundabout ways.’”

In the course of our conversation I found out that part of the pupils whom I had admitted to my school were truly from the First Preparatory Department of the state school. When I eventually managed to convince the headmaster that I was not to blame for that, he apologized.

My conversation with headmaster Avanes Bek Ter-Davidov became a friendly one. He started asking me



where I was from, who my parents were and where I had received education...

When I told him where I was from, he cried out: “O! I know your grandmother and your late mother. We are relatives. You had an uncle (mother’s brother) whose name was Hovhannes, too: he died in Tiflis. Your granny liked me very much. When your uncle died, she said to me, ‘Hovhannes, now I will regard you as my son. You’re my Hovhannes. Come to our place often so that I will see you and not miss my son.’ Yes, yes, we are relatives!” With these words, Avanes Bek invited me to his dwelling, which was inside the school house.

“Let me introduce my wife and children to you.”

Our talk lasted very long, and during that time, he showed me around his school, a single-floor building specially built as a school house with large rooms full of light and all the facilities. However, despite the imposing dimensions and comfort of the building, its last two classes held their lessons in a private house rented in the village.

Then Avanes Bek showed me the classrooms, visual devices and their rich library. The school worked for seven villages and had about 200 pupils with 7 teachers. He promised to do his utmost to help me: the doors of his school were always open to me and I could apply to him for anything.

Avanes Bek was a short man of a middle age and had a dark complexion: a true official, but a kind-hearted person with vast pedagogical experience. He had six daughters and a son. Only one of his daughters was married, his son-in-law being one of his teachers, Tevan Ter-Grigorian (he was from the neighbouring village of Tummy).

This acquaintance marked a turning point in my life and opened a new field of work for me. I started visiting the state school more often, got acquainted with the teachers, attended their lessons and then asked permission to form a singing group and have weekly talks on Armenian literature with the senior pupils. Now I felt at ease at the state school, too. My choir already included a lot of pupils from this establishment. I did not admit everybody without distinction but only those who had a musical ear and a fine voice. I also thought of using the hall of the state school for performances and concerts.

At this point I would like to touch upon a problem that was closely connected with my work. The point is that many inhabitants of Togh and all the other villages

of Nagorno Karabakh were in foreign lands, particularly in Baku, almost all the cities of Middle Asia, North Caucasia, etc. My calculations for that year (1906) showed that 50 families of Togh and 300 private peasants were immigrants elsewhere. Reading my correspondence from Togh in the periodical press, some of them entered into contact with me and wrote letters to me from time to time. Once I got a letter from the brothers Dadayan, who had a painting workshop in Baku: they wanted me to write them about the needs of the parish school and asked if they could be of any use to it. I did not delay with the answer and asked them to send us fir tree toys and decorations. Hardly had two weeks passed when I received two parcels of New Year tree toys. It was December 1906. We were soon to celebrate the New Year, and the pupils were on a two-week holiday. I was thinking of organising a splendid New Year performance and concert instead of going to town. I was doing the work connected with the fir tree in the comfortable building of the state school. As a rule, many of my friends went to town for their winter holidays and several of them passed via Togh on their way there. Once I saw Samson Hovhannissian, Hamaspyur Shahnazarian and Hakob Yesayan, who worked as teachers for the villages of Rakel and Banazur.

“Aren’t you coming, Sergo? We’re going home.”

“No, I don’t. Nice journey to you. I’m preparing for a New Year party.”

That day, 31 December 1906, eventually came. Our fir tree looked as brilliant as a bride. The large hall of the state school was overcrowded. The audience also comprised Turks.<sup>14</sup>

The New Year party began with a performance in which I played the teacher’s role (for me it lasted just a minute). When the child playing the pupil’s role brought in the meals, they emitted vapour: Avanes Bek’s wife had arranged this and decorated the holiday table on the stage with real pilav. The performance that consisted of a single act was over and the concert began. The pupils sang together and solo and recited poems. After the concert, they began dancing and playing musical instruments. One of those present told them to play the melody called *Lazgihangi*. The dancer

<sup>14</sup> The Turks of Togh are of Armenian origin: the point is that after Melik of Dizak Yegan’s death, one of his two sons, Aslan, embraced Islam, while Bakhtam remained loyal to the Armenian Gregorian faith. The Turks of Togh are the descendants of Aslan and their family name is Melik-Aslanov (note by S. Israelian).

was one of my pupils, ten-year-old Pani. He was wearing a *chukha* of the type of *cherkezka* with a thin belt of silver and a small silver-plated sword. These clothes made him very handsome. Pani's beautiful dance fascinated everybody and they were eager to have a closer look at him. When the dance was over, I hugged and kissed him.

It was late at night. The pupils received their presents and scattered to their homes. That evening my heart swole with moral satisfaction. Everybody was pleased for it was the first time they had seen a New Year tree party.

The following morning I was looking out of the window of my room still under the impression of the previous day's festivity, engrossed in thoughts. I saw a tall aged man climbing the stone steps of our house with a small boy. The man knocked at the door and entered.

"Good morning, teacher. Happy New Year!" With these words, he took a bottle of vodka out of his pocket and put it on the table.

In my turn, I wished him a happy New Year.

"I've a request to you, teacher."

"What's the matter, father?"

"I was at the school last evening," the old man began, "and I saw everything. I saw what you've taught our children within this short time, but now I want to say something else. I want to speak about your attitude to the pupils, to the children. When you embraced and kissed the Avants' child, tears came into my eyes and I said to myself, 'Is this possible?' I remembered my childhood. Our village had a priest: he was the father of Isak, the clerk of our office. My father sent me to him to study and said: 'Father, I'm giving my child to you so that you teach him to write and make him a man. Do whatever you wish: I only want him to become literate. This Father Sargis had several other pupils: sitting close to the wall and holding our primers, we read: Ayb, Bem, Zhe, Je, Ra (the letters of the classical Armenian alphabet - translator).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The old man meant the literacy teaching method of letters.

German pedagogue Hans says that no disease or epidemic takes such a heavy toll of young children's lives as that method of literacy teaching (note by S. Israelian). It required that the child should first say the traditional name of the letters making up the word, then form syllables with the vowels and consonants and read. Thus, for instance, if he was to read the word «Կարմրյուն», he had to say:

Յի - ալբ = Յա; ըն - լն - հուն = ըն; Հա - ըն - ըն - ինի - հուն, նու = թին; Հարմրիւն, Հարմրյուն (note by S. Israelian).

"This neighbour of yours, our former *Kyokhva* Petros, was with us, too: we kept studying endlessly, but we remained illiterate. Very often he went to perform his duties (burials, baptisms, grave blessing, reading the *Mashtots*<sup>16</sup> for the sick, etc.) and did not come to classes. Whenever he came, he made us do his household chores: we cleaned his cattle-house, grazed the yearling calves, etc. Once—I can never forget it—on a rainy autumn day he gave this Petros and me a short rope and told us to bring two *ashaks* of cut vine shoots from the garden. You see what a steep position our village has, don't you? We made two loads of them with that short string and somehow brought them to the base of the village on our backs. We could not ascend towards it: when I went forward, Petros slipped and fell down and vice versa. Both of us were all covered with mud. We were no longer able to even move: two small children, we sat by a fence and burst out weeping bitterly. In addition, it was getting dark and it was drizzling. Now, my dear teacher, I've brought my grandson to be admitted to your school."

"Father, it's nice of you to have brought him, but I can't admit him as half of the year has passed while Atanes cannot write yet. I'll admit him in coming September."

"No, teacher, let the child come and be present [at the lessons]. Let him be at your school and let him not study. It's all right."

"Ok, father, let it be so."

The old man blessed me and said good-bye to me.

Now I was free and went to the state school every day. Avanes Bek had placed its rich library at my disposal. It was a thesaurus of classical Russian literature: Karamzin, Pushkin, Lermontov, Lev Tolstoy, Goncharov, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov, etc. It also abounded in methodological manuals. I was now absorbed in reading: there I got acquainted with the works of Belinsky, as well as Russian poets Tyutchev and Fet. Russian pedagogues Ushinsky and Shakhartrotsky became my everyday assistants. Teacher Tevan Ter-Grigorian and I kept reading books on social science. Even now I remember the half-hourly lessons of the Swiss school described by D. K. Ushinsky: during these classes, whenever the slender woman-teacher accidentally put her bony hand on a desk, the little pupil sitting there touched it with his lips. I could not

<sup>16</sup> A book of rites and prayers intended for the administration of the sacraments. Its name derives from that of Catholicos Mashtots Yeghivardetsy (note by the translator).

quench my longing for reading. If I add to this the exchange of experience with the teachers of the state school, I can consider the time spent in teaching practice in Togh Village as my “university.”

After the holidays were over, the teachers of the state school decided to visit my school in a group and be present at my lessons. They attended two classes, the Armenian language and arithmetic, and then made a number of remarks some of which I have not forgotten. Thus, for example, when solving arithmetical sums, the question “What does the sum require?” should be asked by the teacher who also formulated the sum and not by the pupil, as we generally did. I did not argue with them as they had wide experience and accepted what they said as an axiom although we had done so many arithmetical sums made up by the pupils themselves that they always gave a correct answer to that question. The second observation concerned the Armenian language: they were against the pupils’ learning their new lesson almost in the classroom. “And what are they going to do at home?” they said. “It is not right. Pupils should do their lessons at home.”

I did not enter into debate with them, but continued working according to my methods as my inner voice told me to do so. “I am a teacher and I ought to teach and not give them the lesson and tell them to learn it at home.” Thus, for instance, when we were learning a poem I taught it in such a way that the pupils of average abilities had just to read it twice at home and they were ready to say it by heart.

To tell the truth, I did not know whether my method of making the pupils learn a poem was right or not: first of all, I introduced its contents, then explained the unknown words and put them down on the blackboard for the pupils to write them in their vocabularies. Then I enunciated the poem and repeated it, after which the class read it in group. Then the pupils with satisfactory marks and the weakest ones read it successively. When we concluded the lesson the pupils answered my questions with a sentence or a word from the poem. Thus, the lesson was over.

The more I had exchanges of thoughts with the teachers of the state school and the better I got to know their teaching methods, the clearer I realised that the teachers who were graduates of teachers’ training seminaries had a much higher level of competence, erudition and methodological training than those who had simply received education at municipal schools, then taking six-month teaching courses and being awarded

Teacher’s Certificates. The seminar graduates taught me a lot of things and I gained much from their deep pedagogical knowledge.

Classes had resumed after the winter holidays. Once in the evening my landlord’s son Ivan knocked at the door and said that I had a visitor. It was a dark night and it was drizzling. I went downstairs and saw a horseman wrapped in a *yapunji*.

“Good evening,” he said.

“Good evening. Please, dismount,” I said without asking who he was. At such a late hour it was impermissible to ask who he was or what he wanted particularly given the fact that it was raining.

“Please, dismount, dismount,” I said. “Ivan, take care of the horse and you, Mister, come upstairs, please (I lived on the second floor). You are welcome.”

When we entered the room, the stranger took off his *yapunji* and greeted me.

“Artashes Melkonian, Diocese Inspector. I have come to examine your school.”

“You are welcome.”

The following day he got acquainted with everything connected with the school and expressed a desire to be present at some classes. We were in the First Department, where I held lessons with those illiterate pupils who had been admitted later. The subject of the lesson was the letter «Ծ» (“Tz”): “The bird is twittering on the tree: tziv, tziv, tziv!”<sup>17</sup> The children analysed the sentence word by word, then divided the words into syllables and extracted the sound of “tz” from them. Then they said words with «Ծ» at their beginning, end and middle part... They also wrote the letter in their copy-books, read the text in their text-books and wrote the words *ծւն* (the Armenian equivalent for *tree* - translator) and *ծիւն* (the Armenian equivalent for *bird* - translator) on the blackboard. “There is still some time for the bell to go and it should be used,” I thought. “What should I do?” I drew a tree on the blackboard and wrote the newly-learnt letter «Ծ» amidst its branches, almost lost in them in such a way that it could hardly be distinguished from the branches.

I said to the class: “Children, do you see this tree? I have hidden the letter «Ծ» amidst its branches. Which of you can find it? Let the pupil who has seen it come and erase the tree from its roots to its top in such a way as only that letter remains on the blackboard.”

<sup>17</sup> In the Armenian language, all the words of this sentence begin with the letter «Ծ» («Ծիւնը ծառին ծվլում է՝ ծիվ, ծիվ, ծիվ»).



The class was in petrification. Total silence reigned in the room. Then one of the pupils raised his hand... Then the second, the third. I called Alexandre Michaelian to the blackboard.

“Look here,” I said. “Be careful and erase the tree in such a way as not to damage the letter «Ճ».”

Michaelian started deleting the tree slowly. The class gazed at the blackboard with bated breath. And when the entire tree had been erased, the letter «Ճ» became visible against the black background of the blackboard. The pupils breathed a breath of relief and sat back.

I do not remember what observations were made by the Diocese Inspector: the only thing I know is that he later told the teachers of the parish school of Metz Taghlar Village, Avetis Gasparian and Levon Zarapian, that Sergei was endowed with a creative mind; he was an artist-teacher and had a promising future.

The classes entered their routine. Apart from my school, I also conducted lessons for the pupils of the state school twice a week and for adults at the same frequency. I spent the rest of my time reading the books I took from the state school. I continued living in this way until the feast of Easter and the spring holidays.

I took twenty pupils and we started a journey through the adjacent villages, travelling via mountains and gorges and giving “concerts” everywhere. It was difficult for me to give my pupils knowledge of natural science and geography within the classroom walls whereas now it was quite possible in the bosom of Nature, through factual evidence and visual devices.

Looking at the layers of the earth, the children saw how they formed; looking at the rocks, we could select those from which lime is made through burning (for this reason, they are called limestones). When passing through a forest, we examined the trunks of cut trees and decided their age. I pointed at a dried up tree and asked: “Why has it dried up?” The children did not know. I explained it by telling them about some evil person who had cut the bark of the tree with a knife in a round way in order to make a basket (to put the biwas or cornels he had picked in the wood in it and take them home) and thus stripped it of the nourishing vessels providing it with juice from the earth. These vessels were severed from each other, as a result of which, the tree stopped getting nourishment.

The children asked: “What about leaves?”

“Leaves, children, are for the breathing of trees. They breathe with leaves, and who can say how

humans breathe? Don’t you know? That’s bad. Man breathes with his nose. Every human being has only one nose, while trees have one thousand and one noses. See how many leaves every tree has! They take the gas necessary for them, namely oxygen, from the air.”

We ascended a mountain.

“Children, look far, far away. What do you see?”

One of the children said that he saw villages, the other gardens, mountains, fields...

“Farther, much farther!”

“Nothing else is seen. The sky has joined the Earth,” one of the children said.

“Here you are. I mean that very place where the sky becomes one with the Earth! Do you know the name of that place? It is called a horizon.”

Thus, chatting, talking, laughing, singing and dancing, they learnt what we call a valley, a mountain, a hill, a mountain top, a slope, a base, a river, its bed, a river tributary, how the right and left banks of a river are specified, etc.

We approached the village of Tummy. We lined up and entered the village singing—something unusual for the place. The local children ran to meet and accompany us. The yards and roofs of the village were filled with curious people: children, girls, women and men.

“He is the teacher of Togh,” they said to each other.

We stopped at the newly-erected double-floor house of teacher Tevan Ter-Grigorian, which had not been thoroughly completed yet. I selected a large room which was to be divided in two parts so that we would be able to give a performance there. The people gathered without an invitation: some of them sat on the chairs, others squatted by the walls, on the floor, with their legs crossed or even extended, but the majority of them remained standing. We performed the programme we had presented during the school ceremony, and it made a deep impression on the audience. Tummy did not have a school and the local inhabitants had never seen such a festivity. The children’s performances were something new for them. When the event was over, those present started praising the children and expressing their surprise at their skills. Many of them turned to me holding the hands of one or two of my pupils.

“Teacher, we want to take these two children to our place. Let them stay with us at night.”

“Teacher, this is my nephew. Let me take him to my place.”

These requests continued endlessly. And what about the children? All of them unanimously declared that they did not want to go.

“We want to stay with our teacher,” they said with one voice.

Hardly did I manage to convince them that the house where we had given the “concert” could not accommodate twenty people at once. The family hosting us could not feed all of us and provide us with bedding. I persuaded them to go, saying that we would again be together in the morning. Despite all this, however, Lazar Atayan, Nerses Shaburian and Mariam Ter-Hovhannissian stayed with me.

In the morning all the pupils gathered around me and started telling me about their impressions, about how they had spent the night and what they had been treated to (their hosts had filled their pockets with dried fruits for the rest of the journey). They kept chatting and treating each other to what they had. We were all ready and set out for Mukhranes, thence for Jrakus, Azokh... Everywhere we were given the same reception and shown the same attitude. Unlike the inhabitants of other villages, those of Jrakus even slaid a sheep specially for us.

Eventually we reached Hadrut, which was the administrative sub-centre of the district and had Russian and Armenian schools with a post office and a border-guarding army unit. We stopped at the Russian school, which stood at the extremity of the place and the headmaster of which was a kind-hearted Russian (his family name was Voronov). The Armenian school lacked facilities, for it was housed in a rented private dwelling. We had a rest there, and the following day gave a performance in the large hall of the Russian school. It was attended by the pupils and teachers of the Russian and Armenian schools, including Priest Arshak Voskanian, who worked as a senior teacher at the Armenian school. Our performance was a success. The headmaster of the Russian school praised us stating that they should follow our example and organise afternoon and evening performances. A critical speech was delivered by Avetis Ter-Avetissian, one of the teachers of the Russian school. He stated that children should not be taught folk songs, especially those which were about love as it was contrary to pedagogy: he adduced the following examples: *Haberban Janejan* («Հաբրբան ջանեջան») and *Khumar is Lying with Her Face Open* («Խումար պառկեր երես բաց»). What was especially annoying, he was criticising me

ignoring the fact that the whole school was busy discussing his liaison with Voronov’s wife right inside the school, before the very eyes of the pupils. We had a long argument, but I failed to make him change his conviction.

From Hadrut we returned home via mountains and forests, singing and having some rest near cool springs.

Now that more than half a century has passed since then I wonder how great the confidence and trust inspired by the teacher were that parents allowed their grown-up girls (Lusik Ohanian and Mariam Ter-Hovhannissian were only 14 or 15 years old) to travel through gorges and mountains day and night for ten days with a young man of 20 to 22. This was in those times when the grandfather of the family would say: “Hit a girl on the back with your cap; if she does not fall down, it is time for her to marry.” The praiseworthy fact that Lusik and Mariam travelled with the group for ten days, far from their parents’ watchful eyes, attests that truly the teacher is the pupil’s spiritual parent... holy of holies, as was customary to say in those times. Besides, there existed a certain notion about the relations between a teacher and a pupil; if the former got angry with the latter it was only for the purpose of educating him and not for taking revenge for his rude answer. The teacher should not descend from his position of eminence to the level of a pupil who has not grown up yet in order “to get even” with him. A vindictive and unforgiving teacher loses his vocation of being the “spiritual parent” of the pupil, no matter how impudent and shameless the latter is. In such cases, their interrelations become hostile, and the teacher loses the trust and confidence that the pupil should have in him; moreover, he is disgraced and dishonoured in the eyes of all his pupils, and should no longer bear the lofty title of a teacher. First and foremost, the pupil should see a high level of development and lofty features in his teacher whom he should view as his “spiritual parent,” trying to follow his example.

I know a teacher of the Armenian language and literature, Arshak Ter-Avagian, who worked for over fifty years at first in some districts and then at the Armenian schools of Tiflis. I am not going to enlarge upon his teaching methods and modes and will only confine myself to saying that throughout all those years, he never shouted at his pupils or even spoke to them in a loud voice. Even in the naughtiest class with forty unruly and disobedient children, he would work in such a way that in a week’s time you would not recog-

nise them. His lessons passed in total silence, the pupils being as silent as grave. Let me tell you one of the numerous episodes of his teaching experience for you to form a clearer idea about him.

What I am going to tell you happened after the overthrow of the Tsarist Government, when the peoples formerly subject to it were granted a right to self-determination. All the five gymnasiums of Tiflis, where instruction was in Russian, were nationalised. The 3rd Male Gymnasium of the city, where the overwhelming majority of the pupils were Armenian children, became an Armenian secondary school. Arshak Ter-Avagian was invited to teach the Armenian language and literature there.

It was his first lesson at the school. A. Ter-Avagian entered the 5th main class (they were in the 9th year of their course) with the register under his arm. He got acquainted with the pupils and started the lesson with an introductory speech. Forty pupils, boys aged 16 to 17, sat listening silently to the new teacher's mild and sweet talk. The latter noticed that two pupils sitting on the last desk, Harutiunian and Poghossian, were not attentive and kept pushing each other. They just wanted to hamper the course of the lesson and attract the teacher's attention. Without interrupting his speech, Ter-Avagian called one of them with his hand and made him stand by his side. Poghossian, who was now alone on the desk, continued his naughtiness and tricks without letting the others listen to the teacher. A. Ter-Avagian called him, too. After the bell had gone, Harutiunian, whom his fellow pupils called Pugachov because he wore a pistol and was known as an instigator of quarrels, asked the teacher in a reproaching tone: "And why did you punish us?" With these words, he touched the pistol hanging from his side, as if asking: "Do you see my pistol?" (probably, he wanted the "newly-arrived" teacher to know that he was not an ordinary pupil). It should be noted at this point that the strong and powerful Tsarist authorities who had reigned for centuries had been replaced by an inexperienced Government the members of which were still unable to restore order and discipline in the country. Total anarchy reigned everywhere: anyone could wear arms without any difficulty; everywhere acts of plunder, robbery and murder were perpetrated endlessly, and therefore, it was not surprising that the pupil who considered himself a "brave" boy had a pistol hanging from his side.

"Look here, my boy," A. Ter-Avagian said, "don't touch your side. Are you sure that I don't have one in

my pocket? But why do we need a pistol if we can talk and understand each other without it? Did you see how attentive the class was listening to me? In contrast to them, you were not listening and did not even let others follow me. Is it right, tell me?"

"Yes, it is," he answered.

"You can't make progress. You won't become a good person and your parents won't be proud of you. They will look at the successful sons of other parents with grief and envy. I see that you're good boys, but nice fellows shouldn't have a bad behaviour. I advise you to think about these words deeply and make a conclusion."

When Ter-Avagian entered the teachers' room after this talk, all the teachers giving lessons to that class started showering him with questions:

"Well, did anything happen?"

"How did the lesson pass?"

"It is a noisy and naughty class, is it not?"

"No, what are you talking about? I had an ordinary peaceful lesson."

"That's incredible," all the teachers said unanimously, together with former archimandrites Benik and Ter-Michaelian, who had renounced their spiritual rank and become teachers.

"Well, that's why all of you refused to take that class! Now I understand the goal of your maneuvers," Ter-Avagian said.

After classes Arshak Ter-Avagian's door was knocked at. What a surprise! Harutiunian and Poghossian had come to see him. For a moment he suspected something, but anyway he decided to act as a grown-up person and invited them to enter.

When they sat around the table, one of the boys bowed down his head while the other remained silent.

"Perhaps, there is something you want to tell me. Please, speak, I am listening to you," Ter-Avagian said.

Eventually Harutiunian started talking.

"Arshak Bogdanovich, Poghossian and I thought over what you've told us today. We've come to say that never, never will we be naughty at your lessons and will be as attentive as the others."

"But why only at my lessons?" Ter-Avagian asked.

"Because nobody has ever talked to us in such a friendly way as you did; that's why we decided so and now we've come to tell you that we'll always be attentive during your lessons."

"No, that's not right, boys. If you want to leave school and be of any use to the society and to your par-



ents, you should be attentive and behave yourselves at all the lessons. From this day onwards, I am not only your teacher, but also your close friend, your spiritual parent. Promise me that in your turn you will be my friends, and I won't feel ashamed of you before the school authorities and teachers."

"We promise," both of them said together. Harutiunian took out his pistol and put it on the table.

"Take and keep it, Arshak Bogdanovich, as a token of our pledge and sincerity."

The following day Arshak Ter-Avagian was on duty in the school yard together with the children when he was told that headmaster Alexandre Davidich Safarov<sup>18</sup> wanted to see him.

"I beg your pardon, Arshak Bogdanovich, I forgot to warn you that there are several unruly bandit-like boys in the fifth class. One of them even wears a pistol: you should be very careful with them."

After this warning, Safarov was unable to believe what Arshak Ter-Avagian told him about those boys saying that they were not hooligans but orderly pupils and they no longer wore any pistol (it was already in the drawer of his table).

Several years later, Harutiunian and Poghossian wrote to Ter-Avagian: "Our dear and most respectable teacher, you can congratulate us, for we work as teachers in Dilijan. Due to being bachelors, we have our meals at a dining-hall and every time take half a bottle of wine, always drinking the first glass for you. We remember you a lot. We are so very obliged to you, our dear, sweet and unsurpassed teacher."

I told you about Arshak Ter-Avagian to prove that truly the teacher is the pupil's spiritual parent.

The academic year was coming to an end. The Board of Trustees decided to invite a second teacher for the Russian language for the coming school year (1907 to 1908) and pay me my full salary: 400 roubles. Having been entrusted with the task of inviting a teacher of Russian, I immediately went to Shushi for that purpose. First of all, I wanted that teacher to be a competent, well-educated and modest young lady. I spoke to several ones whom I knew and who were gymnasium graduates, but all of them refused, as if having previously arranged it with each other, under the same plea: it was not interesting to work in the country. There was nothing of interest there. I told

them that those assuming work in a village were to create interest themselves, introducing cultural values and civilisation there. The village was like an uncultivated soil and needed tillers. Getting disappointed with such ladies and seeing that the spiritual authorities, who held parochial schools within their jurisdiction, were of no use for that purpose (they never registered teachers and school property, as a result of which, it was not customary to record what the teachers and other school employees took under their charge, and the property of parish schools, their visual and didactic objects and library books were consigned to neglect and disappeared, the schools remaining with only their blank walls), I gave an announcement.

I intended to spend the summer holidays by visiting those inhabitants of Togh who were in foreign countries as I wanted to establish a patriotic union. I was to leave Shushi, and for this reason, I gave the address of my best friends, the Ghondagsazians, in the announcement so that those wishing to apply for the post of teacher should turn to them. Nikita Ghondagsazian was the chief architect of Shushi and his wife Srbuhi was a former teacher of Hovnanian Female School. They liked me very much and were anxious about my further education. Each of the letters Srbuhi addressed me to Togh was a guiding lecture to me.

During the summer I managed to visit Baku and almost all the cities of the Trans-Caspian Region. I succeeded in establishing five branches of the Patriotic Union, their goal being to collect money and send it to the trustees of the parish school of Togh to enable them to erect a proper building for it.

### The Second Year in Togh

In the last days of August, I set out for my place of work, Togh, without having found a teacher of Russian. Two days later I received a telegram from Shushi: "The teacher has been invited. Send her fare. Nikita."

The trustees sent him forty roubles.

"Have you seen the monastery of Gtich, teacher," one of the young men of Togh asked me once.

"Yes, I have. I visited it with my pupils. Why are you asking?"

"Get ready. We're setting out at 3 o'clock. We're going for two days and are taking a sheep with us."

"I can't. I'm waiting for the teacher."

"Don't worry. She won't disappear. Zari Bajji (she was my landlord's wife) will receive and accommodate her."

<sup>18</sup> Safarov was the headmaster of the former 3rd Gymnasium and remained in that post after its nationalisation (note by S. Israelian).

The early autumn rain made us seek refuge in one of the rooms of the monastery like hens running away from hail.

Hardly had we put the first spits of barbecue on fire the following morning when my landlord's son Ivan came and whispered in my ear: "The teacher has come." Without paying attention to my messmates' entreaties to stay until evening, I hurried to the village in my high boots, at the same time thinking: "God, who is she? What a person is she?" I was burning with curiosity, but I felt embarrassed to ask anything about her to Ivan, who was only 12 to 13 years old.

"At last you've come, teacher! The poor girl kept weeping the whole night."

"What's the matter, Zari Bajji?"

"I don't know. Trustee Artun came, I treated them to tea, then he left and she began crying."

I entered the room. A young polite-looking and intelligent girl wearing glasses was sitting on the chair. We got acquainted.

"Mariam Danaghian," she said. "It is the first time I have left Tiflis. I have never been to a village, moreover, to such a village that clings onto the mountain slope like a picture hanging from the wall."

"And how did you get here?"

"The Ghondagsazians showed me a cordial reception. I am grateful to them. The following day Mr. Nikita hired two horses and an old man accompanied me to the village."

"But why did you cry at night?"

"Who said so? I have not wept," she said with wet eyes and bowed down her head.

We started the lessons in two days. The new teacher prepared for her first class with my help viewing me as an "experienced" teacher. For several times I had heard that Armenak Beglarian, who taught in the First Department of the state school, always held lessons of lexicology before starting teaching the letters, for the Armenian pupils of the state school often did not know a single Russian word in an institution where instruction was in Russian. Thus, following their example, I made up plans for these oral lessons of vocabulary intended for the second and third departments together with Mariam Danaghian. Thanks to this team-work, I got to know her better. We selected words of children's usage together and composed short sentences with them consisting of two, three, four words... During this work one of us acted as a teacher and the other as a pupil. It goes without saying that we made friends.

Very often some of the villagers, no matter they had a child at our school or not, invited us to their places on different occasions and we went together. If we were to reject an invitation we did it together, too. When we were invited to wedding parties I was always chosen to be the tamada, although I did not drink wine or vodka. "It doesn't matter. You just propose a toast using your fine eloquence and we'll drink," the guests would say. They knew that as a tamada, I kept everybody active and cheerful, and the toasts raised everybody's spirits.

Miss Mariam Danaghian was born in a craftsman's family in Tiflis and received education at the 2nd Female Gymnasium of the city. She held membership of the Parents' Assembly of the 4th Male Gymnasium and also worked as secretary for that institution, where her younger brother Ashot studied (the parents of the children receiving education there were polite and educated people, mainly servicemen). It was from that environment that she all of a sudden found herself in the village. Their house in Tiflis was very close to Nersissian School and she very often saw its trustees who were men of high intelligence and good breeding, always dressed in good taste. In the village, however, Mariam saw shopkeeper Artun pouring his tea into the plate and drinking it from it. When he said good night to her and went out of the room, she saw the back of his trousers patched and thought: "If this is the trustee, what is their teacher like?" And this made her involuntarily burst into tears.

The new woman teacher liked the children very much and the pupils liked her, too. "Punish the child in whatever way you wish, but do not hurt his dignity, his self," Mariam Danaghian would say. She was very strict and exacting first of all towards herself and then towards her pupils. Her strictness was not manifested in anger or shouts: she demanded that the children keep their books and copy-books clean, that they write clearly, in a fine handwriting and pronounce words correctly. She always had a cake of soap and a towel in the classroom so that the pupils with dirty hands and face should wash. In those years, state schools taught the Russian language according to the natural method and that of translation was not allowed: the teacher of Russian spoke that language and explained the lesson through it. As a teaching method, translation was ousted from state schools. The goal of the natural method was to help the teacher of Russian at schools where pupils spoke other languages, and make the teaching of Russian prolific there. If the teacher of a state school in any Armenian village was an

Armenian, he used both the natural and translation methods only in two cases: when the word was an abstract one and the former was useless in trying to teach its meaning to the children, and when the teacher wanted to verify how much the pupils had understood the meaning of the given word. Mariam Danaghian used this very method at our school for the teaching of Russian. Once in order to teach the pupils the meanings of the words 'donkey' and 'tail,' she took the children to the yard, pointed to the landlord's donkey and said in Russian: "This is a donkey." Then she made them repeat it, after which she showed them its tail and said (again in Russian): "This is a tail." The pupils already knew the Russian equivalent for the word 'to have' so that they joined both the words together and made up the following sentence: "The donkey has a tail."

When preparing for the lesson, Mariam put down its whole process; besides, she also had a copy-book where she wrote the words and sentences the children had learnt and used this material to teach them new ones. At the lessons of spoken speech, she taught them how to write the Russian letters, but she did not teach them their names.

Our close friendship grew into love and in six months' time we got married against the will of my unmatched friends, the spouses Ghondagsazian.

"Look here, Nikita," Srбуhi said when Mariam Danaghian arrived at their place. "I fear lest this girl might not let Sergei receive a higher education."

I do not know why I did not answer Srбуhi's letters in which she was trying to guide me and give me pieces of useful advice: some inner voice kept me at a loss and confusion. My silence troubled the Ghondagsazians and one day I received a handwritten telegram saying that they were calling me to town as soon as possible. I left it without a response, too. Alas, my dear, respectable friends! How guilty I feel before you!

The summer holidays came. We went to Shushi, whence we planned to go to Tiflis for me to get acquainted with Maro's parents. In the city we first paid a visit to the spouses Ghondagsazian.

Srбуhi said: "He's finally turned up!" We kissed. "I'm very happy about your marriage!"

She kissed Maro. No reproaches or remarks for leaving her countless letters without any answer.

"Nikita," she called her husband, "come here! Your daughter-in-law has come!"

Nikita and Maro started talking about what sufferings the poor old man had had with her while taking

her to Togh. She had proved unable to mount a horse, and when dismounted refused to sit on it any more. Then she told him about her impressions of her first night in the village, about shopkeeper and trustee Artun's drinking tea from the plate and his patched trousers... She did not forget to tell him how she had burst out crying feeling like a bird in a cage.

While Maro and Nikita kept talking heartily and laughing, Srбуhi took me to her husband's study.

"Dear Sergei, do you know what you've done?" She took two letters out of the drawer: one of them was from Doctor Budaghian, who promised to support me, and the other from Hovhannissian, the Head of the choir of the Armenian church of Petersburg, who pledged himself to include me in his group and pay me 25 roubles monthly. "Nikita and I thought of helping you receive a higher education, but what did you do? 'I don't want to study; I want to marry!' In addition, she's now pregnant! Are you going to confine yourself to secondary education?"

"What can I do? I don't think I can correct my mistake."

"What about your future plans?"

"We're not going to return to Togh."

"Why?" Srбуhi was surprised. "What's the matter? You kept writing about that village all the time. What has changed now?"

"It's a long story."

"It doesn't matter. Tell me, please."

"I worked as an 'information bureau' for the *Horizon* paper repeatedly providing them with news regarding the everyday life of the village and everything happening there, indeed, without an honorarium."

"Was it worth working for that newspaper of bashi-bozuku?"

I continued: "It was a long time since I became aware of the corruption and depravity of Village Head Arakel Shaburian, who was also a member of my school's Board of Trustees. Beating the villagers and swearing at them were a commonplace for him. Unfortunate was any pretty woman who dared to reject *Kyokhva* Arakel's impudent and loathsome proposal: as a rule, he would accuse her husband of "theft" and imprison him for weeks. I wrote in the *Horizon* about this, but instead of signing it under some pseudonym, I naively sent the article without any signature. The editorial staff of the paper published it under my name: S. Israelian. Unspeakable and unprecedented persecu-



tions started against me. Those young men of Togh who regarded me with respect and were well-aware of the Village Head's base character advised me to leave as soon as possible. Arakel was not the kind of person who could put up with that insult easily. He was sure to report me to the Government or do me some harm through another person.

"Whenever a warder or a police officer came to the village I thought: 'Aha! He's come to arrest me.'

"Once an aged Russian official came to Togh and I was called to the Village Head's Office. The official received me politely, greeted me and told me to sit down. Our conversation lasted long: he asked who I was; where I had got education; why I was working as a teacher; why I had chosen to work especially in a village; whether it was a long time since I came to that place, etc. As I was late, Maro came to see what the matter was. Hardly had she entered when she cried out at once in Russian: 'Vasily Alexandrovich! Mr. Petrov! My dear teacher! Fancy meeting you here!'

"Her 'dear teacher' forgot me and started talking with her. As it turned out, he used to teach literature at the Second Female Gymnasium of Tiflis, where Maro had got education, but now he had become an official for special assignments. When he asked about our political party affiliation, both of us said that our political ideology, mentality and faith were the enlightenment of our people. We did not adhere to any other ideas, our political Alfa and Omega being our people's education. Our conversation with Mr. Petrov ended with our inviting him to dinner, during which we discussed political issues. He asked us about our relations with *Kyokhva* Shaburian and I explained clearly that we had been on very good terms before the publication of my article on his corruption and other disgustful acts. Our interrelation worsened only after it. In the end, Mr. Petrov advised us to be on our guard and, if possible, change our place of work."

"And what are you thinking now?" Srбуhi asked when I finished my story.

"What are we to think if we don't have money."

### **Kakh Township**

All the members of the Board of Trustees in Kakh were *Zoks* (this was the name used with reference to the Armenians of Agulis, Nakhijevan - translator) who had resettled in the township from Agulis Village, Goghtan District. They were mostly merchants, very few of them being craftsmen: tailors, dyers, shoemak-

ers and bakers. The local people were engaged in gardening, silkworm breeding and cattle-raising.

The Armenians had their own houses within the Citadel, but they did not possess plots of land and gardens. Food was fabulously cheap in Kakh: ten eggs cost five kopecks; a one-year-old sheep one rouble; a hen 10 kopecks, etc. Nobody bought apples by weight: a whole tree cost a rouble, and after filling five sacks, you just said: "This is enough. Keep the rest for you." Nuts and hazel-nuts were inexpensive, too: a pood of the former cost 60 kopecks and that of the latter 80 to 90. The parishioners had a small church with a number of buildings in the yard adjoining it. Two of the rooms in one of them were occupied by the priest, Meliksedek Selderian, a graduate of the Teachers' Training Seminary of Gori. The other rooms of that building were allocated to the school. Selderian was a good man: he was a priest only at the church rites and ceremonies, while during the rest of the time he was a secular person in the broadest sense of the word. He was an Uti from Vardashen Village, Nukhi District, had a good command of Armenian and Russian and was distinguished for a very fine handwriting as all graduates of teachers' training seminaries. During funeral repasts, he proposed toasts and made speeches.

It was this very priest who received me in Kakh Township, showed me the school house and convened an assembly of trustees. A completely different atmosphere: there were mountains and valleys between Togh and this place. Here the peasant did not eke out a bare existence and there was less poverty and destitution. The poor, if we may call them so, represented the class of craftsmen who did not suffer unemployment and had sufficient income.

The majority of the Armenians lived within the Citadel, the centre of which was decorated by a basin. The dwelling that had been allocated to us was there, too: it consisted of a room and a small garden. In Togh the villagers had a single topic of conversation, their harvest (they kept discussing whether that year spring had set in in time or not), whereas here, in Kakh, they talked only about money. They adored it like a fetish and everybody strove to have as much of it as possible without any discrimination among the means used in gaining it.

The school of the township comprised three preparatory classes with 60 to 70 pupils of both sexes. I started the lessons with Priest Selderian and distributed them as follows before Maro came there: the

priest was to teach Religion and Russian, and I the rest of the subjects. When Maro came with our baby, our work entered its usual routine, and only the lessons of Religion were left to Selderian. I kept thinking over what public activity I could unfold there: a) to organise a choir and give concerts; b) to prepare performances with the involvement of the local children, and c) continue my collaboration with the periodical press, but not with the *Vtak* (it had replaced the *Horizon*, because of which I had been forced to leave Togh and give up all my dreams). I sent all my articles from Kakh to the *Surhandak* (*Messenger*) paper (that year the publication of a new, comic weekly, the *Khatabala*, had begun, with Astvatzatur Yeritsian as its editor).

First of all, I managed to form a choir. Being stripped of a proper place of entertainment, the local youth attended these lessons with great pleasure. Within a short time, Maro succeeded in establishing a group of theatre amateurs (she was their head). That year we gave a performance and two concerts.

Arriving at this place, we came to understand that we ourselves were to procure the means of getting a salary. Not only were we obliged to organise concerts and performances but we were also to walk from one shop to another to sell the tickets, but no shop bought them without bargaining with us.

“I can’t take a ticket,” a shopkeeper would say.

“None of our family wants to go to the theatre,” another would state.

We did our best to talk a tradesman into taking at least a single ticket. We were to persuade, to beg, to humiliate ourselves, but before whom...? This was only the tip of the iceberg. One should see what was going on at Christmas or Easter! After the church service, the senior teacher or any of the trustees, dressed in white shirts, would go from house to house, congratulating the landlords on Christmas and showing them the paper of fundraising for them to sign it and give any amount they wished. And they would again start bargaining.

“Our child doesn’t go to school,” one of them would say.

“I don’t have a schoolchild,” another declared.

“Last time I bought a ticket for the performance. Isn’t it enough?” A third man would complain thinking that he had given us alms by buying a performance ticket.

This continued endlessly: everybody avoided giving even the slightest amount of money. In our turn, we made every single endeavour to exact as much of it as

we could, getting angry in one place, using all our eloquence in another, either making jokes or saying fables. Before going on these “tours,” we thought: “Where should we go first to evade bargaining? The first person paying was an example for others to follow, was he not?” We returned home mentally tortured, emaciated and depressed, cursing Armenian teachers’ luck and their economically unstable condition for a thousand times. We handed the paper of fundraising and the amount collected to the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees. If he was a conscientious person we spent that money on the needs of the school and the salaries of the teachers, but such individuals were the exception rather than the rule. Their overwhelming majority used the collected financial means to their own benefit, and the payment of the teachers’ salary would be delayed. “There is no money.” The teacher would get this laconic answer from the trustee-Treasurer. Another would say: “Take these five roubles and try to make both ends meet until we see what we can do,” as if performing an act of charity. There were other trustees who demanded that teachers should do their shopping in their stalls. On 13 August 1917, the *Horizon* (no. 72) published contemporary humourist Ler Kamsar’s satirical article (in Armenian - translator) entitled “A Play of Fate” («Դաւկաստազրի խաղ»), in which he writes that shopkeeper Manuchar subjected teachers to all kinds of suffering if they did not do their shopping in his stall and even dismissed them from work for this reason.

And the Armenian teacher was to bear his cross, to endure what had fallen to his lot. The way through which he advanced with the fire of Promethy in his hand was full of thorns. Did all of them succeed in reaching their Golgotha with their cross? No, indeed. With broken hearts and humiliated dignity, many of them abandoned their favourite field of activity and assumed another job starting a struggle for everyday bread in the capitalistic world.

Our academic year in Kakh was a success. We made a report about the work carried out during that period, and the trustees made the following decision: “To invite the spouses Israelian for the next school year at an annual salary of 900 roubles.” The Treasurer of the Board, Karapet Gharibjanian, was charged with paying what was due to us: he had his own interests in our staying there, for his three children were our pupils. One of them, 14-year-old Artashes, was in the first form for already a long time and could not move to the second. We tried to somehow help him through

extracurricular lessons, but we did not achieve any results: he became a cabman at the age of sixteen.

We had a three-month (June, July, August) summer holiday, but instead of enjoying it, Maro and I kept thinking how to get fully prepared to see in the new school year in Kakh Township. We had already had a great achievement, had we not? We had succeeded in persuading the trustees to make it a fully double-class institution. We also planned to turn the fourth class into the first main class, and the following year the 5th class was to become the second main class.

When we went to Tiflis for summer, we first of all acquired a curriculum (the subjects as per classes and their weekly hours) and the programme of each subject. There were a great number of novelties for us: the use of visual methods had been added for the second form, and history of Homeland for the third. In the fourth class, which was the first main class, natural history and geography had been added, and the teaching of arithmetic began with simple fractions. We managed to acquire text-books and auxiliary manuals for teachers. When selecting them in the bookstore, I suddenly saw the Russian translation of prominent French physicist Paul Bert's manual entitled *The World of God* ("Мир божий"). It consisted of three parts and was intended for the third preparatory, as well as the first and second main classes. We liked these books very much: they explained the topics relating to physics and natural history in an interesting, clear and simple way, being illustrated with pictures of various experiments so that we could not tear ourselves from them. The second part differed from the first one as it represented the same material more extensively, with new materials added. Later these books proved of great help to me in explaining to my pupils the physical and natural phenomena in a simple, easily understandable way. We also carried out very interesting experiments: the children made a Walt's pillar through which they felt energy on their tongues or saw it in water. Following the instructions found in Paul Bert's books, they prepared devices of air and water pressure, etc. Their self-made devices and tools, the "magic lamp," magnet, magnifying glass, compass, tuning fork and thermometers created a kind of Corner of Physics in our bookcase.

That academic year Nikolai Nikolayevich Pogorelov, the Inspector of state schools, came to visit us. The arrival of the State Inspector was something rare in the monotonous rural life, reminding of Gogol's story entitled *The Inspector* (in Russian) with the only

difference that this official's family name was Pogorelov. He was the only topic of conversation in the village and amidst its Armenian inhabitants. Neither Kakh nor its Armenian community had a hotel so that he stopped at the state school and expressed a desire to see the Armenian one, too. Learning about this, Priest Selderian said to me the following in the tone of a person who was going to tell me some extraordinary, shocking news:

"Inspector Pogorelov has come! Do you know that he wants to visit our school, too? We should meet him at the entrance to the yard."

To his surprise, I took his "striking" news quite calmly and said:

"The person who is able to come to the entrance of our school from Kakhbash (this was the part of Kakh where Engilors lived) can also reach the very school from the yard."

Then I told him an anecdote I had heard from the teachers of the state school of Togh: "The Russian czar visited a village and expressed a wish to see its school. The only teacher working there learnt about this, but continued his lesson calmly. The monarch came to the school and waited until the bell had gone and the lesson was over. When the teacher went to meet him, he said in a strict tone: 'Why did you not come to meet me?' 'Your Excellence,' the teacher said, 'if my pupils learn that there is somebody greater than me they will no longer listen to me.'

"The czar liked his excuse and even awarded him."

Indeed, this is an anecdote, but it has a deep meaning: the skilled and experienced pedagogue wants to say that the only lord and master of the class is the teacher who is conducting the lesson. Nobody, be him a czar or God Himself, has the right to interfere in it.

Inspector Pogorelov *did* visit our school accompanied by Mr. Zazunov, the headmaster of the state school. He got acquainted with the establishment and us, and we entered the classroom together to be present at the lesson. He apologised to Maro and asked her what textbook she used, which class was sitting there and what was the subject of the lesson. Having got the answers to all his questions, he did not sit down to listen to the lesson but started asking the pupils questions concerning their past topics. Then he called them to the blackboard, gave them some exercises to do and asked a number of questions in grammar. He did the same in the other classes, too, then made some notes in his note-book, spoke about the level of the teaching of



Russian at our school, made a couple of observations, told Maro to what particularly to pay attention and thanked her. Pogorelov noticed *The World of God* on my table: apparently, he was familiar with it for he advised Zazunov to acquire it by all means. We again met that kind-hearted aged man after the establishment of the Soviet rule in Georgia, where we held the post of Inspector in the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment together.

Life in Kakh Township had become active thanks to our choir and the theatrical group organised by Maro. Her simple frankness won the liking and respect of the women of the place within a short time, and they did not hold any event or gathering without Maro as their honorary guest. The only public establishment in Kakh was the school. In Togh the entire public activity centred around the school, too, and for this reason, both the parents and the whole township were always aware of everything going on there. Indeed, there was much to speak about the school the doors of which did not close after classes: either the choir held rehearsals there or Mrs. Maro gave a lecture on the role of mothers in the education of their young children (her lectures had the following heading: *Give Me a Mother and I shall Return You Conscientious Citizens*).

Mrs. Maro invited the children to rehearsals, but what about the clothes necessary for those playing in the performance? The Aghamirzayans had what was necessary for them, but they would not give them: they had a *Tomb Tombluny* but feared lest the children should spoil it... Almost all the township took part in these preparations. At the festive event dedicated to Holy Commander Vardan and his followers, the whole community accompanied us from church to the school singing the motet entitled *Norahrash*.

Unprecedented cheerfulness and liveliness reigned in Kakh on Kurmakh Day (there was a pilgrimage site called Kuramukh near the township). On that day, a countless number of pilgrims visited it both from Nukhi, situated 35 to 40 kms left of Kakh, and Zakatala, located within the same distance of it, on the right. For the night, all the pilgrims stayed with their acquaintances and relatives in Kakh or right in the pilgrimage site. We knew about this and planned to take advantage of the opportunity and give a performance there (we were very enthusiastic about it). The whole township looked forward to its successful outcome: it was a matter of honour for they feared lest the school's performance should arouse laughter amidst the people

of Nukhi and Zakatala, and it should become an object of mockery for them. The senior teacher of the Armenian school of Nukhi was prominent writer Vrtanes Papazian, and that of the school of Zakatala Artashes Vantsian. The rehearsals were attended by the competent members of the Board: Manas Muradian, Stepan Minassian, some representatives of the intellectuals of the place such as Hayrik Ohanjanian, Karapet Hovnatanian and others who often visited Tiflis and other cities.

On the day of the performance, the hall was overcrowded. All the tickets had been sold out, the first seats having been allocated to the guests from Nukhi and Zakatala. The people looked forward to the opening of the curtain with beating hearts. They feared lest Yeghish, one of the local young men, should not be able to perform his role properly, which might disgrace us before our guests. But no. Everything was a success. Applause, a storm of applause...

The academic year came to an end. The trustees of the school decided to invite us to the same work for the third time, our salaries being raised to 1,000 roubles.

The following academic year the parochial school of Kakh Township became a fully double-class institution. That year we were to have our first graduates and all our attention was focused on our final class: we realised that we should give those pupils as much knowledge as possible so that they would be able to do well in their exams and enter the third main class of the secondary school.

At the end of the academic year, Eparchial Inspector Stepan Ter-Avetikian visited our school. He wrote works on rural subjects and used to be a deputy of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in the Second State Duma. He spent ten days at our small school. The township of Kakh did not have a hotel, and for this reason, he stayed with Manas Muradian, the President of the Board of Trustees. The latter, who was one of the merchants of the place, was engaged in viniticulture. The Diocese Inspector carried out a very detailed survey at our school. He did not listen to classes in order to check the pupils' knowledge, as today's Inspectors do. He made the teacher just sit down in the class and himself started asking the lesson checking the pupils' reading technique, their abilities to understand what they read, their logical and concluding thinking when solving arithmetical sums, their knowledge of Russian and so on and so forth. To my mind, he made a mistake while checking the pupils' knowledge of

their mother tongue: he wrote a sentence full of mistakes on the blackboard and told the children to find them. Experimental pedagogy did not accept the teaching of spelling through mistakes as they are perceived easily and are immediately taken by the brain (I agreed to this), whereas the Inspector thought otherwise. He said that the pupils themselves could do the correction of dictations in the class via the exchange of their copy-books, but I found it wrong and even harmful as very often the pupil may consider wrong what his classmate has written correctly, etc.: there might be many such misunderstandings. That method of correcting written works was applied by the teachers of the state school of Togh as well. At that time I was inexperienced and unaware of teaching methods so that I took an example of all the modes and methods of teaching used by skilled teachers: I did not even think of discussing or analysing them. Now everything had changed: my five-year experience had formed my own viewpoints regarding teaching methodology, and you should just imagine how pleasant it was for me to reveal that my opinion coincided with that of the author of some pedagogical or methodological work who said what I thought and applied in teaching.

Before leaving Kakh, the Diocese Inspector convened a parents' assembly and told them the results of his monitoring. Those speaking, including the trustees, expressed their gratification with our work and efforts.

M. Muradian, the President of the Board of Trustees, concluded his speech with the following words: "The fact that many of our children publish materials in the *Hasker* and *Aghbyur* nursery magazines is another manifestation of their knowledge and progress."

Several days later, the *Surhandak* published my article entitled "The Diocese Inspector in Kakh Township" (in Armenian).

We kept telling our final class pupils that they should not confine themselves to the knowledge acquired at the parochial school and ought to persuade their parents to allow them to continue their education at secondary schools. That was an everyday subject of talk in their families: the parents were against it and did not want to hear even a word about it. In response to that, the pupils of the final class staged a play with united efforts: its plot was about sending a girl to town, and I published an article about them in the *Surhandak* entitled "The Small Playwrights" (see «Մոլիպիստներ» [*Surhandak*], no. 98, 30 April 1910).

### Nizh Village

It was the end of May, the last days of the academic year. We were busy with concluding the year: exams, parents' assemblies, etc. It was during that busy period that all of a sudden we received a note from the spiritual powers of Karabakh in which they suggested that I should immediately go to Nizh Village in Nukhi District and assume work at the local double-class school named Sourb Mesropian (St. Mesrop). The order of the ecclesiastical authorities was attached to this note. I folded it and put it into my pocket: why should we go if our conditions were not bad in the township of Kakh? We felt very well there. What on earth were we to do at a school speaking a foreign language? There was no need in telling the trustees about this. The following day, however, I got a letter from Diocese Inspector St. Ter-Avetikian, in which he said: "Nizh has a large school of more than 200 pupils and a multi-member teaching staff. It is going to destruction due to the lack of solidarity among the teachers. It is necessary to save it." In the end he added that he had spoken to the trustees of that school and I was going to get an annual salary of 700 roubles, that of Mrs. Maro was to be 500. "Hurry to Nizh and convene an assembly of the teaching staff as soon as possible!" After receiving this letter, I was obliged to show the order of the ecclesiastical authorities and Stepan Ter-Avanessian's letter to the trustees of Kakh. They held a meeting on the same day and decided to apply to the spiritual powers with a request to leave the spouses Israelian in the township of Kakh. Several days after this petition had been sent, I received the following telegram: "Go to Nizh immediately and take its school. Bishop Ashot Ter-Avetissian." I also got a note from Inspector Stepan Ter-Avetikian, who advised me to go to Nizh and even threatened me in case I did not do so.

The school year was at its end in the township of Kakh. Both of us, Maro and I, were very sad. The trustees and pupils were depressed, too. Neither we wanted to move away nor the people wanted to let us go.

A foreign language-speaking school... I kept thinking about this incessantly. I even dreamt about it at night—a school speaking a foreign language where neither I understood the children nor they understood me. It was a sheer pantomime.

### At St. Mesrop Double-Class School of Nizh Village

A large multitude had gathered to see us off: our dear pupils, their parents, all the members of the Board

of Trustees, as well as those of the choir and the amateur group.

“We are leaving you against our will, our dear pupils, parents and trustees,” I said when saying goodbye to them. “Please, do not think badly about us: it is not the high salary that is separating us.”

We reached Nizh.

The village consisted of 1,200 families and had a diameter of 7 kms with a circumference of 35 kms. The houses stood in groups far from each other. The inhabitants were Utis, but considered themselves Armenian Gregorians. The priests performed church service in Armenian. They were very pious and regarded church rites and rules with veneration. They had Armenian names: Hayk, Aram, Sargis, Ashkhen, Siranuys, etc. The villagers were engaged in gardening (hazel-nut cultivation), grape silkworm breeding and husbandry (rice, corn). The climate was humid: wherever you dug at a depth of a metre you already saw water (it was used by the local people). Nizh was a patriarchal village, a peculiar place with very conservative customs. Nowhere were women so stripped of their rights as in Nizh. There you could see spouses paying a visit to somebody with their two children: the man would go ahead of the family, empty-handed, his wife going behind him holding one of the children in her arms and the other by the hand, the sack on her shoulder. It was beneath a man’s dignity to walk side by side with his wife. Anyway, the people of Nizh were hospitable as all the other nations of Transcaucasia.

The academic year had begun. Our family consisted of four members: Maro, our two children and I. My son Rafik was three years old and my daughter one year old (we had not given her a name yet).

The school had six teachers: Hovhannes Gyulkhandarian, a graduate of the Class Department of Gevorgian Seminary, his sister Haghine Gyulkhandarian, who was qualified to teach the Armenian language, two alumni of Nersissian School, Avetik Shatirian and Khachik Ghulian, as well as Maro and I.

The teachers were not invited for this or that specific subject as was generally the rule at secondary schools. This made the distribution of classes rather difficult. During the first pedagogical gathering, I suggested that each of us teach the subject he liked in any class he chose. We distributed the lessons according to this principle, but for the first time in my teaching experience, I committed a pedagogical “mistake.” Due to this distribution of lessons, the subjects were kind of

“split up”: thus for instance, the Armenian language was taught by different teachers at different classes, as a result of which, the subject lost its face and no particular person became responsible for its level of teaching.

The lessons proceeded in their natural course. Each of us attempted to give the pupils as much knowledge as possible. We, however, were displeased with our work as our efforts and hard work did not yield the results we desired. We kept thinking: “What is the reason? How can we raise the level of the school?” The whole teaching staff burnt with this desire. This was our only topic of conversation during the breaks. Every teacher finishing his (or her) lesson told the others about his impressions and the funny incidents that had happened during it. The pupils’ retardation and its reasons remained high on the agenda of the Pedagogical Council.

We held an emergency pedagogical gathering with the participation of the members of the Board of Trustees, including Priest Jotanian, a graduate of the diocesan school of Shushi. We had a single question to discuss: the pupils’ backwardness and its reasons. As the senior teacher of the school, I myself made a report on this issue.

In its first part, I spoke about the Armenian language, which was taught at that foreign language-speaking school, and touched upon the methods which might facilitate the perception of the given knowledge for the children speaking a language other than Armenian.

“Teaching at foreign language-speaking schools will be prolific and fruitful only when the teacher checks how much a foreign language-speaking child has understood what he said. We should not think about only fulfilling our plan. It is better to make progress slowly, but give the pupils good, permanent knowledge. This is the chief reason for the retardation of our pupils.

“Another reason is their repeated absence from school: the point is that formerly the whole school was let free after two classes on Tuesdays so that the pupils might be able to help their parents sell the hazel-nuts got from their garden or the rice yielded by their fields at the fair of Nizh, which is held on this day of the week. The pupil who is always late for an inadequate reason thinks: ‘If I can be absent from school every Tuesday in order to help my father, why can’t I go to the market of Kutkashen on Wednesdays, to that of Bum on Thursdays and so on and so forth?’”



Another reason impeding fruitful teaching was the presence of pupils of different ages in class. In the first form, children aged from 8 to 12 sat side by side; another class comprised pupils from 10 to 14. This age difference was a serious reason hindering the normal course of instruction.

These were the main drawbacks which should not be tolerated at the school.

The Pedagogical Council elaborated certain means to do away with these obstacles: a parents' gathering was convened and private talks were held with those parents whose children were most of all absent from classes, etc. I also delivered talks in the village churches urging the children not to be absent and showing the disastrous consequences of their inadequate absence (I had plenty of facts and evidence at my disposal). Within a short time, some progress was observed: at first we managed to keep the pupils at school until the very last lesson on Tuesdays and afterwards we totally abolished their inadequate absence.

Then we started making our classes homogeneous, which led to the productivity of our work.

The teaching team had a high spirit of solidarity and everybody was imbued with a single wish: to make our efforts as prolific as possible. We lived in the school house and very often the whole staff gathered at our place for a cup of tea. During these gatherings, we exchanged thoughts, and as we talked without constraint, we shared our experience and told each other what difficulties we encountered and how we overcame them. We also told one another about the curious and funny incidents that happened during classes.

One day an aged man came to me with a big club in his hand.<sup>19</sup>

"Senior teacher, where's your teacher of singing?"

"He's having a class, father," I said.

"I'll show him a lesson!" He said angrily. "Do you see this club? I'm going to break it on him!"

"Why, father? He's a good fellow and likes the pupils very much."

"If he's a good fellow, why is he teaching bad things to the young children?"

"What bad things?" I asked in surprise.

It turned out that the teacher of singing had taught the children a song entitled *Our Baby is Sitting in the*

*Pit Sleeping* («Մեր ձագուկը փոսում նստած ննջում է»), which contained the word 'kut' (the Armenian equivalent for 'grain' - translator) and ended with the sentence «Կուսն մսոսում է, կուսն մսոսում է, կուսն մսոսում է» (*Eats the grain, eats the grain, eats the grain*). When the child sang it at home, the old man got very angry as the word 'kut' signifies the female sexual organ in the Uti language. When he learnt that in Armenian it means a 'grain' of barley and wheat, and hens eat it every day, he burst out laughing and asked not to make the children sing that song any more.

The teacher of the Armenian language, Heggine Gyulkhandanian, told us that whenever the children had to read the phrase «շան հաչոց» (the Armenian equivalent for 'dog's barking' - translator), they either omitted it entirely or read it without the word «շան» ('dog's'). Eventually she found out that 'shan' is the Uti word for 'buttocks.'

In order to achieve a higher level of instruction, very often we listened to classes and organised open lessons which we later discussed outside the scope of pedagogical meetings. Each of us tried to listen to the voice of his conscience. The teacher is a senior friend who can help his colleagues with advice and his own example. He can correct his junior friend's mistakes and make the meetings of the Pedagogical Council more useful. The joint organisation of concerts, performances and New Year parties had united us into one family. I cannot forget a performance in which Maro, who was an embodiment of modesty, played the role of Mrs. Kataghian (in Armenian, 'Kataghian' implies a furious person: it derives from the Armenian verb 'kataghel' meaning 'to hit the roof' - translator). She played it perfectly well especially when she entered the stage with her umbrella in her hand, struck it on the floor and shouted infuriated: "Where's my husband? Give me my husband!"

When some of the audience made enquiries and found out that Kataghian was my wife, they said: "Poor senior teacher! How does he live with that virago!"

At the school of Nizh I felt for the first time that I needed more knowledge and skills in order to head a large establishment like that. Yes, I had to work and enrich my pedagogical knowledge. First of all, I thoroughly searched the school library of Nizh, which had some old books. I came across some English pedagogue named Komb. He said that the education of a child is at the same time that of an adult. The child takes good and bad features from his surroundings.

<sup>19</sup> He spoke Azerbaijani with me. Knowing that language well, I used it at the parents' assemblies and in churches. Nizh is wholly surrounded with Azerbaijani villages; that is why, the elderly people had a good command of it (note by S. Israelian).

What you do not want the child to do do not do yourself! An English child speaks English because it is the language he hears in his environment. The child is polite and shows good manners as the people in his surroundings are well-bred and courteous. The child is rude and can tell lies because the people around him have the same qualities, etc. The other books of the library did not give me anything of interest. I subscribed to the *Svobodnoye Vospitaniye (Free Education)* and *Nor Dprots (New School)* magazines (the latter was published in Tiflis). Besides, I also had Vishnevsky's manual of arithmetic brought for me and subscribed to Brem's eight-volume publication on natural history. For Maro I arranged the bringing of the *Lexical Lessons ("Лексические уроки")* by Davis and the manuals of Schultz and Levitsky.

It was in those days that the spiritual powers sent us the Curriculum of Parish Schools with an instruction to invariably follow it. It did not contain the slightest reference to foreign language-speaking schools, and perhaps we were to conclude that it was obligatory for this type of schools as well. I started looking through it and getting acquainted with its contents. No, that curriculum was absolutely unfit for foreign language-speaking schools where the language of instruction was Armenian. Transcaucasia did not have a small number of such schools. What were we to do? To accept the curriculum and follow it unflinchingly, as we were instructed, would mean to cheat ourselves. It was necessary to raise the issue in the press stating that the order was a nonsense for foreign language-speaking schools. My articles started following each other in the *Surhandak*: I analysed the new curriculum proving that it could not be applied at schools where pupils spoke a language other than that of their instruction.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, I proposed my own programme for this kind of schools which was to be used from the department called Varzhots to the fifth one.

Nobody said any word of objection against this programme of mine in the press with the exception of prominent Armenian pedagogue Sedrak Mandinian, who had nothing against it but anyway rejected the application of the natural method that I put forward. He suggested applying the method of translation for Armenian schools, thinking that the natural method

had a single goal: to train officials for state institutions. In order to substantiate what he said, he adduced the example of Georgian schools saying that they had given up the natural method and it was all right. In contradiction to this statement, I wrote that the state offices of the country had a great number of Georgian officials. Unable to reject this argument, Sedrak Mandinian suggested that we set up a committee and hold classes through the application of both methods in the presence of its members. I thought, however, that teaching in the presence of a committee was not something actual for those times as in many cases, it was not the method of instruction that mattered much but the teacher himself. As is generally said: "It is not the weapon that decides anything but its holder."

When I went to Tiflis for the holiday of that year, I thought it my duty to pay a visit to great pedagogue Sedrak Mandinian. He lived in a two-floor building in one of the streets of Tiflis that was not a very famous one. He was sitting at the table, his face red with many wounds. I told him who I was and we started talking mainly about the teaching of Russian. I explained to him that the Armenian language had the same status at foreign language-speaking schools as Russian at Armenian schools, and the Armenian teacher could not use the method of translation as he did not know the child's mother tongue. Eventually he said in despair: "And where are we to hold an open lesson now when all schools are closed? Have you read my works?" He added.

"No, Mr. Mandinian," I said.

"And how are you arguing with me if you have not read my work?" With these words, he extended one of the books arranged on his side to me.

I started turning over its pages. What a surprise! It was a collection of all his articles published in the periodical press.

"Yes, Mr. Mandinian, I have read these materials in the press and I am familiar with this work."

Our conversation gradually assumed a more friendly character especially when I said: "Mr. Mandinian, of course you have not taught me, but you were an Inspector at the diocesan school of Shushi, where I got my education."

He smiled, recollected the days spent in that city and we parted as friends.

That summer an Armenian teachers' gathering was to be held in Tiflis with the participation of teachers from the Armenian schools and districts. I took part in that assembly as a deputy and correspondent of the

20 See the series of articles entitled «Նոր ծրագիրը և օտարախոս լեզուները» ["The New Curriculum and Foreign Language-Speaking Schools"] in: «Մտքի և հոգու» [*Surhandak*], nos. 166, 198, 201 & 221, 1910 (note by S. Israelian).

*Surhandak* paper (my correspondence had the following heading: *The Armenian Teachers' Assembly in Tiflis*). The meetings were held in the building of Hovnanian Female School.

First Day. In my first article I spoke about the participants of the gathering and their lack of an approved agenda (this was stressed in Aramays Yerznkian's speech). I also wrote about Hovhannes Ter-Mirakian's report on the education of the child and the exchange of thoughts concerning it with the participation of Isaac Harutiunian, Sargis Abovian and others.

Second Day. The meeting confirmed its agenda. I listened to Gevorg Ghazarian's report on *Arithmetic in Primary Classes*. The discussion passed with the participation of A. Yerznkian and others. This article also included the decision on making certain changes in the plan of arithmetic.

Third Day. The chairperson gave the floor to Tarverdian, who made a report on *The Subject of History of Our Homeland and Its Connection with the Use of Visual Methods*. Another talk was delivered by Alikhanian. A committee was set up for the revision of the plans of these subjects.

Fourth Day. The meeting listened to Hovh. Ter-Mirakian's report on *Geometry and Morphology* together with Father Khutsian's talk on Religion.

Fifth Day. The issue of the day was *The General Condition of Teachers*.

After a long dispute, it was decided to make up a questionnaire through which it would be possible to find out the economic, family and pedagogical state of teachers. The participants also listened to Gr. Vardanian's reports on the history of the Armenian and Russian nations separately. After an exchange of thoughts, it was decided to begin the teaching of the history of the Russian people from the 5th class, in the fifth year of instruction.

Sixth Day. The participants of the assembly listened to a talk on geography, after which they adopted decisions on separate sections and meetings.

It was the last day of the teachers' assembly. I took the last of my articles to the editorial office of the *Surhandak*. My large-scale articles were issued one after another without any changes made to them. At that time, writers Nar-Dos and Stepan Zorian worked at the editorial office of the paper. Their working tables were close to each other. After handing my last article to them, I wanted to say good-bye to them when Nar-Dos said:

"Dear Sergo, I want you to write a review of the text-book I've compiled: it is a total mess."

"Mr. Nar-Dos," I said, "you have just evaluated your text-book. What else should I write?"

Indeed, the text-book of the Armenian language entitled *Life* («Կյւսիք») that Nar-Dos had authored was a total mishmash. Of course, it contained some materials of interest, but they were so disorderly that good and bad qualities were mixed there. Some material was fine, but for lower classes, whereas another was beyond understanding for that same class. The text-book had been compiled without any systematic order and it was impossible to make out for what year of instruction it was intended. This was the reason why its publication was not widely welcomed by teachers.

Then we started talking about my translations of certain works which had already been published in the *Surhandak*. We particularly enlarged on one of the letters of Lev Tolstoi and the novel *Star Night* by Brylia. Nar-Dos made an important observation which I accepted with thanks.

"Look here, Sergo," Stepan Zorian said, "do you get any honorarium for your articles?"

"Isn't it funny, Mr. Zorian? What honorarium are you talking about?"

"Don't worry," Nar-Dos said, "I'll tell Bogdan Sergeyich to pay you an honorarium."

I do not know whether he spoke to Bogdan Sergeyich or not, but on that day, Astvatzatur Yeritsian, the editor of the *Surhandak* paper, was going to have a party at his place and invited me there. I thought: "Aha! Let's think that this is my honorarium." We had a very nice time at the party. Bogdan Sergeyich kept amusing and entertaining his guests with his humour and jokes. He was such a person: witty and full of life.

When the party was over I thanked my host and said good-bye to everybody in order to leave. At that moment Yeritsian shook my hand and thrust a gold coin in it. For the first time I learnt that one could be paid an honorarium for what he had written.

There was another factor in Nizh that contributed to the teachers' spending more time on their self-education. It was not like our mountainous villages where very often the roof of one house formed the yard of another. It extended in a broad plain and the houses stood far from each other. This fact created certain difficulties for our extracurricular lessons as it was hard for the pupils to come to school for the second time. For this reason, we began these out-of-school lessons



immediately after classes and the teachers had a lot of free time. None of us was fond of drinking so what else remained for us to do if not go deeper into our profession and spend our time reading.

One of our friends, Avetik Shatirian, collaborated with the periodical press. Hovhannes Gyulikhanian published his booklet entitled *The Man of Pen* («Գրչի մարդը»). I was engaged in translations from Russian into Armenian and also wrote articles. Apart from this, I gave talks under the general heading of *Short Pedagogical Talks* at our special pedagogical gatherings. My lectures had the following contents:

1. The Teacher-Pedagogue. To be a pedagogue and a teacher does not mean to be just an ordinary craftsman. He is a worker of art and an actor in his work. The teacher should study the pupil's psychology and have good command of contemporary methodology and knowledge. I said that the school is a place of a struggle between (or among) classes and substantiated this with examples from text-books intended for bourgeois schools. An article said: "As soon as the rooster crowed early in the morning the employer woke up the labourers and made them work. The latter killed the rooster so that their master would not wake them up so early. Now fearing lest he might be late the employer woke them up earlier than the rooster's crow."

Telling his pupils this story, the teacher of the bourgeois school led them to the conviction that it was not right to oppose one's master as the result would be what happened to the workers who had killed the rooster.

Another example: an eagle was soaring high in the sky. Seeing it, the tortoise said to it:

"Eagle! Eagle! I want to fly like you!"

"No, you can't. You haven't been created for it," the eagle said.

"Eagle! Eagle! I want to fly very, very much. Put me onto your wings so that I shall be able to fly, too."

The eagle did so, raised the tortoise to the sky and threw it down. It fell on the ground and was smashed.

The conclusion is as clear as day: a prince is to reign, while he who is a subject should only obey him. If the latter ever wishes to rule he will be destroyed like the aforementioned tortoise. Hence the moral: "One should remain as God has created him: a lord is to remain a lord and a subject a subject." The pupils wrote this saying in their copy-books and learnt it: it is for this reason that I regarded the school as a place of class conflict.

The issue was clear: our schools were places of struggle. Those illiterate could become wise there, and the worker could learn to govern a country. This is why I thought that the pedagogue and teacher should be well-aware that the giving of knowledge is closely connected with issues of upbringing and education. He should know that he does not deal with a candle, as Ghazaros Aghayan says, which may assume any form you give it. Without denying this truth, we should also know that the teacher deals with human beings each of whom has his or her peculiar character, abilities, etc. Here is a child who is cheerful, active, an embodiment of energy and restlessness, and on the contrary, you can see another who is slow in his movements, melancholic, etc. Now tell me, please, if the teacher can show the same attitude and approach to these children of varying features. One may blush, bend his head and have tears in his eyes when you make a remark to him, while another child may laugh and look at you with a cheerful smile. The teacher should know his pupils very well and have the ability of understanding their psychology and thinking logically.

Perhaps, everybody knows *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. This work of the great playwright contains an episode in which Hamlet gives his nurse a simple pipe and asks her to play it. She refuses saying that she cannot do so. Hamlet tries to persuade her, saying that it is a very simple instrument and she has just to move her fingers over its holes. When the nurse refuses for the second time, he asks her how she is going to deal with such a complicated creature as man, with his psychological world, if she cannot handle a simple instrument like that.

Everyone cannot be a teacher.

2. Lesson Planning. Some teachers are of the opinion that this is unnecessary, just something formal. It was these considerations that made me choose the topic of my next talk, *The Plan of the Lesson*. I myself was against conventional, stereotyped plans: 1. questions from the previous lesson; 2. a new lesson; 3. home assignment, etc.

Indeed, this kind of plans were senseless. During my talk, I tried to convince my colleagues that when preparing a plan for the lesson, we should first of all have the subject of the coming class at our disposal. The teacher should study it deeply before making up the plan. He should avoid preparing it without this, even if he is well-competent in that material. Even if you are well-aware of the subject, you might conceive

some new idea when looking through it. When doing so, the teacher should select what is essential and important about it. He should also think how to create a link between the material and the current time connecting it with the pupil's everyday life as much as possible, adducing examples and facts... All this should be reflected in the plan.

Perhaps, these two brief talks may seem too simple and ordinary for today's world but my readers should not forget that they were delivered sixty years ago and their author was not specialised in what he did, simply having five years' teaching experience (probably, this was his very praiseworthy feature).

The other short talks I delivered treated the following subjects:

1. Language teaching in elementary classes;
2. Pupils' retardation and the means of abolishing it;
3. The ways of examining and documenting pupils' knowledge;
4. The elementary school as the basis of the secondary school.

The academic year was coming to an end and we were to summarise the work we had carried out throughout that period. I myself was not pleased with our progress and achievements because I compared the knowledge of the pupils of Nizh with that of the schoolchildren of Kakh and Togh.

We held our last pedagogical gathering, which was attended by the trustees of the school. The teachers reported the progress made by their classes. After their reports, I took the floor and summarised them particularly focusing on the hardships we had overcome, achieving some success.

Priest Jotanian made a speech on behalf of the trustees, compared our work with that of the previous teaching staff and emphasized the negative influence of the teachers' disunity on the work of education, stressing the positive results of their solidarity. In the end, Khachi Youzbashi said on behalf of the trustees that the whole teaching personnel was invited to work in the coming academic year in accordance with the decision of the Board.

### **The Second Year at St. Mesrop School of Nizh**

In Tiflis we learnt something unpleasant for us: the brother and sister Gyulkhandanians had refused to continue their work at a foreign language-speaking school; Khachik Ghulian had given up teaching altogether and

started working for a co-operative enterprise, while Avetik Shatirian had abandoned his post without any explanation: he was an inhabitant of Tiflis and wanted to stay and work there permanently. Only Maro and I remained, and I told the trustees of Nizh about this. In their reply, they asked me to invite a new teaching staff.

Our situation, and particularly, that of mine could not be envied: on the one hand, I faced the difficulty of inviting teachers for our foreign language-speaking school, and on the other, I had to raise the level of progress amidst our pupils. They studied two foreign languages: Armenian and Russian. There were a great many hardships and we had to overcome them. I was of the opinion that the school should be "reconstructed" from its very foundations.

1. After a five-year course, Armenian was to become the "mother tongue" of the pupils of that foreign language-speaking school. They should be able to express themselves in literary Armenian without any difficulty both orally and in written form. At the same time, they should also be able to understand others' thoughts expressed both in spoken and written speech.

2. Their command of Russian should enable them to understand others' simple, not complex thoughts in that language and write short notes such as addresses and applications.

3. They should know the other subjects (arithmetic, geography, history, etc.) only inasmuch as to be able to enter the third main class of the secondary school in the sixth year of their studies.

We had failed to achieve this goal fully the previous academic year, and I thought: "What am I to do? Should I give up everything as my colleagues did or should I think of raising the level of education there? Is it possible to achieve success with a new staff?" In my letter to the trustees, I told them to wait for our reply until 1 July.

In Tiflis Maro and I kept thinking whether we were to return to Nizh or not. It was impossible to go but fail to solve the problems facing the school without a remorse: nor was it possible to abandon it and leave it to the mercy of fate. We were confronted with a dilemma.

"To forsake the school? Never! Where is our sense of citizens' duty? Where is our vocation of people's teacher and his sense of responsibility before his nation? No, we should think about raising the level of instruction instead of manifesting worthlessness and abandoning the school," Maro kept saying with enthusiasm.

At the end of June, we wrote a telegram to the trustees saying that we would be in Nizh with a new teaching staff on 20 August.

After long meditation and hesitation, Maro and I decided to open three kindergartens in Nizh. We named them Varzhots (from the Armenian verb ‘varzhetsnel’ meaning ‘to teach,’ ‘to train’ - translator) as their task was to teach foreign language-speaking children to speak Armenian. Two of them were to be situated at both extremities of the village and the third one in its centre. They were to admit 7-year-old children who were to learn to speak and sing Armenian and count in this language through oral talks within a year. After this they could enter the First Department with a considerable vocabulary and we would not face the difficulties that we encountered when taking an eight-year-old child immediately from his family.

While in Tiflis, we embarked on the formation of a new teaching personnel. First of all, we wanted to find appropriate specialists for the nursery schools. Who could be invited for this purpose? At that time, there existed the Frenelian course in Tiflis which trained specialists for nursery schools. Unfortunately, the head of this course, pedagogue Sofia Arghutian, was not in the city at that time. We got acquainted with a lady whose family name was Titossian and who had completed this course. We were happy to have invited a person who could have classes with children under school age. Then we invited Miss Satenik Dovlatian, a graduate of Hovnanian Secondary School of Tiflis. Several days later, we had a meeting with Christophor Matinian (he was from Nukhi District), a graduate of Nersissian School, who agreed to work in Nizh. As for the other two kindergartens, we left the issue of their teachers to be solved by the trustees. That summer Tiflis was to host a conference of teachers of Armenian schools.

We participated in that conference and set out for Shushi.

At the railway station of Yevlakh, we came across my school friend Daniel Ghazarian, who studied at the Music School of Tiflis and was now returning home for his summer holidays. We were very close friends as early as our school years: both of us lived in the same quarter and were members of the four-voice choir of the school.

We were on the same omnibus going to Shushi. I asked Daniel whether he would like to teach singing at our school of Nizh. He answered that he had not completed his education yet and could not work, but he

advised me to invite Manvel Sarubabian, one of the pupils of the same Music School, who was from our quarter in Shushi, too and wanted to work at a school very much.

Then we started sharing our sweet memories of childhood.

When we reached Shushi, we first of all visited the spouses Ghondaghsazian, who were moving to Moscow permanently. We had just left them when we came across Daniel Ghazarian and Manvel Sarubabian. The latter agreed to assume work at the school and promised to be in Nizh on 20 August. We were near the new building of the diocesan school and heard somebody playing an instrument there. Daniel suggested going upstairs and seeing who it was and we did so. The person playing was another school friend of mine, David Ghahramanian, who was with Alexandre Mirzoyan (composer Grigor Syuni’s younger brother) and actor Hovhannes Abelian (he was on a tour in Shushi).

“Now sing *The Tears of the Arax* with my accompaniment,” David said.

We started singing. Maro was at the window at that time.

“Come and see how many people have gathered to listen to you.”

We approached the window: truly, a great crowd had gathered at the street looking at our window. Manvel Sarubabian was a good baritone, Hovhannes Abelian being not inferior to him with this regard. David suggested singing another song, *Oh, How Sweet It is to be a Drunkard!* («Ոհ, ինչ սնունդ բան լինել կոնծարսն»): we did so but the time was late for us so that I apologised and left them to pay a visit to the Primate, Archimandrite Zaven. He showed a warm welcome to us. We did not know each other personally, but he knew me from the periodical press.

“I follow your articles and read them with pleasure,” he said.

Our conversation unfolded around the topics that I always raised in the press: the inconsolable state of Armenian schools; the poor economic conditions of teachers who were stripped of all their rights; their qualification and the inability of the spiritual powers in handling school affairs, as a result of which, our schools did not have libraries and didactic means of teaching. It was sheer disgrace that the specialists who could work as teachers were never registered. As far as the distribution of teachers was concerned, the ecclesi-



astical authorities had washed their hands of this issue and did not ever do anything with that respect.

The Primate did not have any evidence to contradict what I was saying and only repeated from time to time:

“You are right. You are right. What can a Primate do if Echmiatzin, our religious capital, does not take any measures?”

I did not agree with him.

“You can be independent as far as school affairs are concerned, can you not? You can achieve what we have just been talking about.”

Thinking awhile, his head in his hands, Archimandrite Zaven said:

“Mr. Israelian, can you make a summer tour through the Armenian villages of Nukhi for a month, elect trustees and contribute to the opening of schools wherever it is possible?”

“With great pleasure, Father.”

Several days later, when I again went to see Archimandrite Zaven and receive the official note of my business trip, he showed me a telegram in which the Vicar of Nukhi Diocese, Archimandrite Aaronian, said: “I find Israelian’s trip inexpedient. Archimandrite Aaronian.”

“I do not agree to this,” Archimandrite Zaven said. “I do not know what he wants to say with this telegraph. I wrote him to provide you with the necessary financial means. I think it necessary to open schools in the Armenian villages of Nukhi. Here are the note of your trip and my letter to the Very Reverend Aaronian.”

On 20 July, I was already in the Consistory of Nukhi Diocese, where I saw its members: Priests Sahak and Arshak Palchian, with the Secretary of the Consistory, Makar.

“Bless me,” I said and greeted them.

They and particularly Priest Arshak Palchian knew me very well: the latter was from Nizh and whenever I visited Nukhi, either alone or with my family, I always stayed in his place. They were taken aback as they did not expect me at all.

“The Very Reverend Aaronian telegraphed that he was against your coming, did he not? He is very annoyed with you,” Father Sahak said.

Once Archimandrite Yeghish Aaronian had said: “It is five years since he began working in my bishopric but he did not deign to visit me at least once. Even if Israelian comes, I will not receive him.”

“It is all right. Let me enter even if he does not want to receive me.”

I entered Archimandrite Aaronian’s office: he received me coldly but politely. I had the same conversation with him that I had had with Archimandrite Zaven and concluded saying that the spiritual authorities had proved powerless to govern Armenian schools properly. The atmosphere changed at once. He moved his head out and said to those sitting in the Consistory:

“Are we not going to treat this man to at least a cup of tea?”

The members of the Consistory looked at each other in surprise. What they had expected and what they saw now!

My visit to the Vicar ended with a breakfast, after which he ordered to provide me with the money necessary for my trip and saw me off wishing success for my undertaking.

My tour through the Armenian villages of Nukhi District lasted for eighteen days, during which I succeeded in organising elections of trustees in seven villages and invited teachers to Sabatlu, Sugutlu, Charghat, Sultan-Nukhi (this was a Turkish-speaking village) and other places. I prepared two reports on my trip, one for Primate Zaven the Archimandrite and the other for the Vicar, Archimandrite Yeghish Aaronian.

On 20 August, we were in Nizh together with all the newly-invited teachers. We started making preparations to properly see in the new school year. The trustees turned down my proposal of having three kindergartens in the village due to the lack of means. We also invited local teacher Balabek Ter-Ghukassian, a graduate of the municipal school who had completed a six-month pedagogical course and had long years’ experience.

The academic year began. The nursery school had admitted 37 seven-year-old children. As there was no appropriate place for it in the centre of the village, we located it in its lower part. Teacher Titossian, who had been invited to work there, turned out totally unfit for it. Maro and I did our best to help her, but in vain. We even made up a plan with her participation; one day Maro held classes in her presence, but anyway she proved unable to teach the children a single word, to say nothing of sentences, poems, songs or dances. The Pedagogical Council held in the presence of the trustees decided to release her and consign the kindergarten to Balabek Ter-Ghukassian.

Our new teaching staff was more than united and friendly. No week passed without the teachers’ gathering

at my place for a cup of tea, Balabek Ter-Ghukassian, who was a local inhabitant, being always present, too. At these meetings, we talked with greater ease and without constraint in contrast to our pedagogical assemblies. Everybody said what they knew and learnt what they did not know. Thus, we carried on our work in an atmosphere of love and solidarity. When the first quarter came to an end, we summarised the fruits of our efforts and revealed both drawbacks and some progress. The pupils coming late for inappropriate reasons had become an exception. It was only now that we saw the fruits of the previous year's hard work. The pupils were making progress: they were fond of reading books out of the curriculum. Every time I saw the children grouped in front of the poor library of the school, my heart was imbued with unspeakable delight and happiness.

The second quarter had not come to an end yet when I got a letter from Priest Arshak Palchian, the President of the Board of Trustees of the Armenian school of Nukhi. He was asking me to go there for some days and get acquainted with the condition of the local school. This clergyman was a very courteous and multilaterally developed person of high erudition. I did not hesitate to write him that I would arrange my school affairs in Nizh and visit Nukhi for some 3 to 4 days, but what had made Priest Palchian apply to me? The point was that the senior teacher of their school, writer Vrtanes Papazian, had resigned his post for some reason or another and left the city when half of the academic year had not passed yet. The trustees decided that the more active teachers of the school would perform his duties in turn until the end of the year. At the time I went there Aram Tonian occupied the post of senior teacher (later he became Inspector of the Ministry of Enlightenment of Armenia). I knew many of the local teachers; moreover, some of them, such as Aram Tonian, Misak Ter-Ghazarian and Ishkhan Hayriyan, were my friends.

I listened to the lessons of Mrs. Sofia Alaverdian (Russian), Aram Tonoyan and Misak Ter-Ghazarian, and all of them made a good impression on me. Having been present at different lessons for two days, I convened a pedagogical meeting which was also attended by the trustees of the school.

Analysing all the lessons I had listened to with objectivity, I concluded that thanks to Aram Tonian and other skilled teachers, the school had only some slight drawbacks and manifested a high level of instruction. The following day I set out for Nizh.

Nizh had a humid climate and marsh water. Its springs were not like those of mountainous places where you can put the jug under water and fill it. The springs of Nizh were merely one-metre-deep pits whence water flowed out. Those coming to take water from these pits had to bring two jugs to fill one of them with water by means of the other one. The fields of rice were in many places close to the houses and for this reason, I fell ill with fever. The only Governmental doctor of the district who was a Russian advised me to avoid working in places of marsh climate as a person accustomed to mountainous climate is unable to endure moisture. I again got ill at the end of the year, but fortunately I recovered within a short while. This time the doctor strictly forbade me to continue working in Nizh. After I had got over my illness I thought of preparing a written report on my two-year work at the school.

At the end of the academic year, we held a parents' general assembly which was attended by both the trustees and the whole teaching staff. I presented them my report with Balabek Ter-Ghukassian interpreting it into the Uti language. I regard it as a document of historic importance and do not think it unnecessary to give a brief account of it, especially given the fact that St. Mesrop Double-Class School of Nizh, which boasted a history of 75 years, has ceased existing.

It continued its activity as an Armenian educational institution after the establishment of the Soviet rule in Azerbaijan, but after the publication of a bitterly anti-Armenian article, it closed being replaced by an Azerbaijanian one, where instruction was conducted in the Azerbaijanian language. It goes without saying that the people of Nizh could not tolerate their children's learning Azerbaijanian as their mother tongue. "If Armenian is not a mother tongue for Uti children, the Azerbaijanian language cannot be regarded as such either," the people of Nizh said. They raised a storm of protest, as a result of which, the Azerbaijanian school was replaced by a Russian one. Now that 75 years have passed, Russian is heard at Sourb Mesropian School of Nizh instead of the Armenian language.

### **A Brief Outline of My Report**

In my written report, I spoke about the insoluble state of the school before my appointment as a senior teacher: its low level of instruction, the lack of unity among teachers, the inappropriate absence of pupils and the presence of grown-ups in lower classes. Then I mentioned the measures we had taken to save the school from this grave situation:

1. We had acquired didactic and visual objects such as pictures relating to natural history and fauna, as well as others for our talks; vessels and devices for the explanation of certain physical phenomena.

2. The library had been enriched with children's books as well as the *Hasker* and *Aghbyur* magazines.

3. We had made the classes homogeneous thus putting an end to the situation when 40 children of different ages sat together in the same class.

I also spoke about the extracurricular work: collective reading of books, the rehearsals of the choir and the amateur performances organised by pupils, the preparation of festivities (such as the one at Vardanants' Feast), our matinees, etc. Then I mentioned the work relating to the teachers: pedagogical meetings, reports, open lessons and discussions as well as performances with their involvement. What actions should be taken to lead the school to perfection and the highest level of education? I suggested that:

1. Uti children speaking a language other than Armenian should learn it before being admitted to school. Three nursery schools should be established for the children to acquire some knowledge of Armenian and not to face many difficulties at school.

2. The school ought to become specialised in husbandry, with gardening and silkworm breeding as its subjects. A skilled teacher should be invited to teach there and head practical work in a large plot of land.

3. The teaching of agricultural subjects should start from the first main class in the fourth year of education and the programmes ought to cover two years.

4. The last two classes specialising in farming should be boarding ones.<sup>21</sup>

On 30 May, the whole Board of Trustees, headed by Khachi Youzbashi, convened a meeting with the participation of the teachers to confirm the teaching personnel for the following school year. Khachi Youzbashi first read Balabek Ter-Ghukassian's name:

"Mr. Balabek, you are dismissed. You are unable to promote our children's education."

"What do you mean by saying 'our children,' Khachi Youzbashi?" Balabek said. "Of course, you do not mean your own children, do you? They study in Tiflis, do they not? I have been teaching for already thirty years and I have never spared any effort for our children's education. And today, instead of thinking of celebrating my jubilee, you are dismissing me! I am so very "grateful" to you!" With these words, he took his hat and went out.

Khachi Youzbashi had not managed to read the next teacher's name when Balabek returned and stood in front of him.

"Do not forget, Khachi Youzbashi, that if we break my *abasi* (a silver coin worthy of 20 kopecks), hard labour and sweat will pour from it, but if we break yours, it will shed orphans' and widows' blood and bitter tears," he said and again went out.

"You have to blame this very tongue of yours that you are now in this situation," Khachi Youzbashi said.

Yes, Balabek Ter-Ghukassian was right to struggle against Khachi Youzbashi, who had been the Head of the village for many years and was extremely rich. Most of the village gardens and lands belonged to him: he had got them through corruption and usury. He lent the peasants money at interest, but not according to the state law, namely at 8 to 12 %, but at much higher interest: 20 to 25 %. If the villagers proved unable to repay one hundred roubles within four years, it doubled. It is clear that if they were unable to pay back one hundred roubles in time, they could not give two hundred roubles either. In these cases, they were obliged to sell their real estate, and at this point, Khachi Youzbashi acted as a "benefactor" giving them some 20 to 30 roubles, tearing the bill and taking possession of a garden or plot of land costing 500 to 600 roubles. And this continued endlessly. In the course of time, Khachi Youzbashi became a "landowner." The largest of the village shops belonged to him and were managed by his son Alexan. He gladly lent goods to teachers knowing that his father was the person who gave them money.

I remembered Khachi Youzbashi's persecution against Balabek Ter-Ghukassian, that experienced teacher of venerable age, and his dismissal from school, which was abominable, in 1947 when I was called to the House of Government to receive the highest award of the Soviet authorities, the Order of Lenin, together with a number of teachers of immaculate work experience. Sitting in the hall of the Supreme Council, I thought: "Could Balabek Ter-Ghukassian ever think that the Armenian teacher, whose path of life has always been covered with thorns, might be awarded the highest prize of the Government?"

The trustees invited the rest of the teachers to work for the coming academic year 1912 to 1913.

"As for the senior teacher, Mr. Israelian, the Board wants him to be the head teacher of our school until the end of his life," Khachi Youzbashi said.



“I agree, but with Balabek Ter-Ghukassian,” I said.

Khachi Youzbashi smiled: this was enough for me to persuade him later and gain the trustees’ consent in leaving Balabek Ter-Ghukassian in his post.

During that meeting, the trustees again put into consideration my proposal regarding the reconstruction of the school. Apart from the construction of a hostel, we also had to add a floor to that single-storey building and furnish it. Rough calculations showed that we needed between 2 and 5 thousand roubles, but the school lacked this amount. The trustees decided to raise this issue at the parochial meetings of the village churches and do their best to procure means for the foundation of three kindergartens, the specialisation of the school in agriculture and building of a hostel for 50 to 60 boarding pupils. These decisions, however, were consigned to paper due to not only the trustees’ indifference, but also my fever, which had seriously impaired my health.

Maro and I worked at Sourb Mesropian School of Nizh Village until the academic year of 1914 to 1915. That year I proved too weak to continue my work and

had to leave my wife and children in Nizh and move to Tiflis to receive treatment. It did not last long: in 3 to 4 months’ time I had recovered so fully that I could work again, but where? To go to Nizh meant to condemn myself to death. To remain in Tiflis? But how if my illness had deteriorated not only my health but also my economic state. So it was necessary to find work somewhere else.

I applied to Hovsep Khununts, the Inspector of Nersissian School, who boasted high influence and authority in Tiflis and knew me very well. That year three of my pupils of Nizh, Art. Karapetian, Avet Ghukassian and H. Keletian, had been admitted to this establishment.

“The academic year is coming to an end and we can hardly find a vacancy at schools,” he said and made a call.

Through his mediation, I assumed work in the Municipal Laboratory as a secretary.

To be continued

*Review & Criticism*

**Ashot Hakobian**, review of “The City of a Thousand and One Churches” by Anush Ter-Minassian, «Ճարտարապետություն և շինարարություն» [*Architecture and Construction*], nos. 11-12 (69-70, November-December 2011), 22-29

The November-December 2011 issue of the journal *Architecture & Construction* [in Armenian] contains an article by Anush Ter-Minassian, Ph. D. in Architecture, dedicated to the 1050th anniversary of the proclamation of Ani, the city of a thousand and one churches, as capital of Armenia.

Indeed, first and foremost Armenian specialists should present various publications in commemoration of this (and not only this) anniversary as the legal ownership rights to the Armenian cultural heritage now within the borders of the Republic of Turkey pertain only to them. With this regard, the initiative of the authoress of this article should be welcomed and encouraged.

She dwells on the architecture and some of the most important monuments of the city, but regretfully, her article contains certain inaccuracies which, to our mind, should be rectified.

Thus, speaking about the Royal Church of Ani, the authoress writes:

Its construction inscription, preserved on its southern wall, bears the year 622.<sup>1</sup>

As is apparent, she is not aware of the fact that the southern facade of the church was preserved standing only until the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, after which it entirely collapsed. As for its construction inscription attributed to 622, in 1914 H. Orbeli presented its decipherment<sup>2</sup> and provided scientific substantiation putting an end to all the existing discrepancies,<sup>3</sup> according to which, the last two letters of the inscription do not mark a year, but form part of the

incomplete Armenian word «huj(jng)» (meaning ‘Armenian’). Consequently, the exact year of the construction of this early medieval church, which supposedly stood in the site of the Royal Church, remains obscure.

The article says the following about one of the churches of the city named Georgian:

...its semi-ruined southern wall preserves some Georgian inscriptions.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, this information creates confusion, for it suggests that the aforementioned wall of the church is still preserved standing, whereas in fact, between the 1920s and ‘60s, it was totally destroyed; therefore, it is absolutely senseless to speak of the Georgian inscriptions in the present tense.

A. Ter-Minassian has carried out the following analysis concerning the Cathedral of Ani:

The depth of the recesses and the play of light and shade created by them produce an illusion of immense mighty walls, which are actually rather thin—this is a new approach to the well-known architectural type. The arcature of its facades is created in accordance with the same illusive idea, giving the impression of an outer hall which does not exist in fact.<sup>5</sup>

It should be pointed out that only the eastern facade of the Cathedral has wide and deep niches which have been created for the purpose of reducing the weight of the massive wall, rising between the small apses of the sanctuary and double-floor vestries. The recesses of the southern and northern walls are smaller than those of the eastern one, which is due to the volume of the wall pylons behind these niches. Consequently, these recesses were not created with the objective of producing an “illusion” of thick walls, but being made into the outer surface of the walls adjoining the intramural pylons, as well as in the space between the apses of the sanctuary and sacristies, they have the function of freeing the walls from the needless volumes of the filling; besides, they also secure the seismological safety of the building.

Another statement which arouses perplexity regards the arcature of the Cathedral giving *the impression of an outer hall which does not exist in fact* [italicised part quoted]. If the authoress means the exterior porticoes typical of basilicas of the 6th to 7th centuries, how can she explain the existence of a similar decorative element on the facades of other churches which have absolutely nothing in common with Ani’s multi-composition domed basilicas with porticoes? It is only to be added that arcatures are means of ornamentation which impart slenderness to thick facades, at the same time also enriching their smoothness.

Another monument treated in the article is the church of Tigran Honents Monastery, which is also mentioned under the name of Nakhshlu. First and foremost, it should

1 Ter-Minassian, 22.

2 Орбели И., Шесть армянских надписей [H. Orbeli, Six Armenian Inscriptions] (Petrograd, 1914), 81-82. The decipherment of the same inscription is also published in: Գիվանի հայ վիճագրության, սրակ 1, Անի քաղաք [A Corpus of Armenian Inscriptions, vol. 1: Ani City] (Yerevan, 1966), 8.

3 Марр Н., Раскопки в Ани в 1904 году [N. Marr, “Excavations in Ani in 1904”], a reprint from: Известия Императорской Археологической Комиссии [Proceedings of the Imperial Archaeological Commission], no. 18 (St. Petersburg, 1906), 19; *ibid.*, Новые археологические данные о постройках типа Ереванской базилики [“New Archaeological Evidence on Buildings of the Type of Yerevan Basilica”], ЗВО РАО [Proceedings of the Oriental Branch of the Russian Archaeological Society], vol. 19, 065; Գարեգին վարդ. Յովսէփեան, Գրչութեան արուեստը իրն հայոց մէջ, մասն Գ, Քարտեզի հայ հնագրութեան [Archimandrite Garegin Hovsepian, The Historical Armenian Art of Writing, part 3: A Corpus of Old Armenian Writings] (Vagharshapat, 1913), 6-7, plate 1.

4 Ter-Minassian, 23.

5 *Ibid.*, 24.

be reminded that in the bilingual information boards placed at the entrance to the ghost city and near the monument, the Turks themselves give preference to the name of Tigran Honents, so was there any point in putting into circulation the alien name of 'Nakhshle,' which was widespread amongst common people in the early 20th century? The spire of the church is described as follows:

...the fan-shaped covering of the dome forms an organic part of the entire structure with some of its features.<sup>6</sup>

In fact, however, the dome of the church does not have a fan-shaped covering, but a dioctahedral spire shaped like a pyramid.

A. Ter-Minassian writes the following about multi-apsidal churches:

Central-domed churches became quite widespread in Ani particularly as multi-apsidal structures. This type is represented by the churches of Prkich (Holy Saviour), Abughamrents, Hovvi and Kusanats (Holy Virgins'). Among them especially noteworthy is Hovvi Church with its peculiar star-shaped plan and the three-tier Zvartnots-type composition of its exterior volumes. Inwardly, the star, which has numerous ends outwardly, represents a complex system of niche-like apses, which encircle the under-dome space. The arches surmounting the pilasters placed in the middle of the niches join together in the central section, on the capstone.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, Hovvi Church is represented as a multi-apsidal central-domed monument, whereas in composition, it was a three-tier structure like Zvartnots outwardly, and a double-tier circular structure resembling Burtelashen Church of Noravank inwardly. The first tier of the church had a six-apse composition enclosed within an octadecagon. The apses did not have a semi-circular plan, but were table-shaped with walls widening inwardly. Each of these apses ended with a window opening into the outer wall and widening inwardly, with the exception of the eastern and south-western apses, which ended with an apse-shaped recess and a door opening respectively. Each of the exterior sides separating the apses had two triangular niches in its whole width. It should be stressed that the first tier could not have had under-dome space, as the dome surmounted not the first, but the second tier of the monument. The interior covering of the first tier represented a system of six arches which began not from the middle of the apses, but from the wall pylons between the apses, being supported in their central part by the capstone hanging from the ceiling.

Inaccurate information is also found in the description of the second tier:

...and the octagonal part above it is decorated with niches only at the point where the sides intersect, and this makes it more conjoint. This peculiar composition is crowned by the upper tier, namely, the dome proper with its smooth round tambour.<sup>8</sup>

The point is that the second tier of the church was hexagonal and not octagonal outwardly. As for the dome, which rested on four arches leaning on the internally circular walls, it represented not the third tier as a separate division, but the upper part of the second tier. The first tier was covered with a smooth conical spire in the centre of which the second tier rose. The latter had a fan-shaped covering rising on the large central and small angular pediments of the sides. The dome used to have a conical spire.

Abughamrents St. Grigor is described in the following way:

...it is distinguished among multi-apsidal monuments for the rich ornamentation of its inner composition—sculptured window crowns, niches, arcatures, etc.<sup>9</sup>

These elements of decoration are actually part of the outer, and not inner, composition of the monument, the interior ornamentation of which is simpler, being remarkable for the sculptured capitals of the pilasters placed between the apses (the walls are entirely covered with plaster).

Another weak point in the description of Sourb Prkich Church is perhaps its expressive emotionality:

...it is the first monument seen when you approach Ani from the Armenian, i.e. left, bank of the Akhurian: divided in two halves by storm, it nevertheless stands as a powerful stone witness of the once magnificent city of Ani.<sup>10</sup>

These lines clearly show from what side A. Ter-Minassian approached Ani, for if we go there, say, by the historical road stretching to the bridge, we shall first of all see the Cathedral: in other words, what monument appears before visitors' eyes depends on the direction from which they arrive at the ghost city.

As for the storm which allegedly destroyed the church of the Holy Saviour, it should be pointed out that its eastern half collapsed in consequence of the continual removal of the finely-dressed stones of the lower masonry of its walls. For this same reason, in 2005 the central part of the southern wall of Mren Church fell down, for the finely-finished stones of its interior and exterior revetment had been stolen away.

It is the Turks and Azerbaijanians who usually ascribe the destruction of Armenian monuments to natural disasters (for instance, in response to the accusation of the annihilation of the medieval Armenian cemetery of Jugha, the religious leader of Azerbaijan declared that its cross-stones had been overthrown by an earthquake). Therefore, the demolition of the monument, which fell prey to Turkish barbarities, should not be attributed to storms which are not so severe in Armenia as to halve a church, which used to resist earthquakes for centuries...

6 Ibid., 25.

7 Ibid., 27-28.

8 Ibid., 28.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RAA Foundation extends its gratitude to Mushegh Lalayan, Vice-President of the Republican Party of Armenia, for his donation of a number of books on Armenian Studies.

Our thanks are also due to archaeologists Gagik Sargsian and Husik Melkonian for providing the RAA library with some publications of the Institute of Archeology of the RA National Academy of Sciences (a copy of each work).

The RAA is grateful to Hayk Demoyan, the Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, for enriching its library with some of their publications (a copy of each work).

The Foundation also owes a debt of gratitude to Ashot Melkonian, the Director of the Institute of History of the RA National Academy of Sciences, for presenting its library with some of their publications (a copy of each work).

# NEW RAA PROJECTS

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Great Armenian Genocide of 1915, the RAA plans to complete its decades-long research in Western Armenia in 2015 and present the history of its over 70 districts in 36 volumes. We shall start this series of publications in token of our deepest respect of the memory of the innocent victims of the Genocide.



The members of RAA are also preparing a series of publications on the history and material culture of the towns and villages of Artsakh.





Emma Abrahamian

# PRINTING-HOUSES THROUGHOUT THE ARMENIAN HOMELAND

p. 1



PREPARED FOR  
PUBLICATION  
AND PUBLISHED  
WITH THE FINANCIAL  
ASSISTANCE  
OF THE MINISTRY  
OF CULTURE  
OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF ARMENIA



ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ  
ՃԱՐՏԱՐԱՄԵՏՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆ  
ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՒ  
ԳԻՒՄԱՐԿԱՄ  
RESEARCH ON  
ARMENIAN  
ARCHITECTURE  
ԵՐԵՎԱՆ - YEREVAN  
2012