

"Armenian Issue" In the Caucasus and Anatomy of Ongoing Expansionism

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Abstract: Numerous archival documents and studies show that, as in the South Caucasus, in the lands of Western Asia, where the Armenian community lives, there has never been a problem called the "Armenian issue". Only since XVIII century this "question" was raised by the ruling circles of Tsarist Russia, supported by the Armenian nationalist-separatist circles. The goal was the desire of tsarism and Armenian nationalist circles to justify the expansionist policy and occupation of the region. There are numerous archival materials related to the beginning of XX century about this.

During the entire XIX-XXI centuries, the united Russian-Armenian forces carried out bloody pogroms in the South Caucasus and Western Asia, resorted to terror and deportations to resolve the "Armenian issue". However, the course of events convincingly shows that the future of the region lies in peace, peaceful coexistence and cooperation among the peoples living here.

Key words: *"Armenian issue", expansionism, "Eastern issue", "Armenian state", terrorism*

INTRODUCTION

Numerous archival documents and studies show that the "Armenian issue", raised by the Russian colonialists during XVIII century and subsequently raised by large states to the level of an international problem, at the beginning of XX century, for a number of reasons, became a purely "Caucasian problem". The fact is that in the then historical conditions and in the balance of power, the Armenian terrorist organizations could not create an "Armenian state" within Turkey without the explicit help of the West and Russia and set themselves the task of implementing this idea in the South Caucasus. However, in this region they lived insignificantly, in most cases mixing with local Azerbaijani Turks. Despite the regular and systematic resettlement by the tsarist government, the Armenians did not constitute an absolute majority of the population anywhere in the region, even to create autonomy. Therefore, the Armenian ideologists set themselves the task of expelling the local population from their historical lands through terror and the deportation and resettlement of ethnic Armenians in their settlements. From the beginning of 1905, the bloodiest wave of Armenian terror swept the specified region.

In 1905-1907, throughout the entire South Caucasus, as a result of the Armenian terror against the Azerbaijani Turks, which acquired the character of a real genocide and deportation, tens of thousands

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of innocent people were killed, hundreds of thousands became refugees, and a number of territories in the region were almost devastated. The liberated territories were massively populated by Armenians. While in such historical Azerbaijani lands as Karabakh, Zangezur, Daralayaz, Zangibasar, before these events, it was the Azerbaijani Turks who made up the majority of the population.

Armenian gangs, fully armed by the Russian authorities, not only massacred civilians, but also destroyed infrastructure, looted and burned mosques, schools, hospitals, valuable architectural monuments, and turned entire territories into ruins. The goal was to wipe out traces of Azerbaijani Turks from these territories.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated March 26, 1998 “On the genocide of Azerbaijanis on March 31” stated: “Armenian invaders, inspired by the idea of creating “Great Armenia”, openly carried out large-scale bloody actions against Azerbaijanis in 1905-1907. The atrocities of the Armenians, which began in Baku, engulfed Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani villages on the territory of present-day Armenia. Hundreds of settlements were destroyed, thousands of Azerbaijanis were brutally killed” (Heydər Ə, 1998).

RESULTS

The Armenians, who did not achieve their goals in Eastern Anatolia, achieved this to a large extent thanks to the anti-Azerbaijani policy of the imperial power circles in the South Caucasus and, in many cases, thanks to the patronage of the Armenians. Having preserved the disagreements between the tsarist authorities and the Armenian terrorist organizations, they joined forces to suppress the revolutionary movement, terror and deportation of the local population of the South Caucasus.

The Austrian scientist Erich Feigl wrote about this: “Whenever Russia needed executioners, she resorted to the help of Armenians so as not to get her hands dirty”.

Unlike the imperial circles, which at that time considered the Armenians as their political instrument in the region, the broad layers of Russian socio-political thought knew this unreliable society very well and condemned the bloody massacre perpetrated by them.

The article “Attempts to overthrow the Armenian state” in the issue of September 14, 1908 of the newspaper “Kharkovskiye Vedomosti”, owned by representatives of the Russian democratic press, spoke about the atrocities and destruction committed by Armenians in the South Caucasus and Iran: “Russia must immediately take measures to warn this Armenian sour d'etat (state perovort - Sh.M.). Not only in the name of the interests of her people, but also in the name of true humanity, she must save her richest outskirts from the Armenian conquest; Armenians as conquerors are more terrible than any Mongols” (10.Файл Э. 2000).

The well-known Russian publicist and public figure M. Menshikov, in the article “Sugary anarchy”, published in the issue 11583 of the newspaper “New Time”, wrote that the Armenians play a vile role in the social and political life of not only the Caucasus, but also Iran and Turkey: “Like the Polish uprising, which is dangerous for the three empires that divided Poland, the Caspian revolution is a gangrene of parts of Persia, Turkey and Russia adjacent to each other. The common contagion of this gangrene is the Armenians” (10.Файл Э. 2000).

The Russian public figure and publicist A. Yakhontov, one of the representatives of the Russian democratic press of that time, and in the 122nd issue of 1908 of the aforementioned newspaper "Kharkovskiye Vedomosti" wrote about the "Armenian issue": "Only by disarming the Armenian population, the Russian government can take in Transcaucasia, a place that rightfully belongs to it there ... History threw it (the Armenian people - the author) into submission to one or another people, and all the successive conquering peoples erased all traces of independence from the Armenians and turned them into cosmopolitans with an ugly development of national feeling. Their nationalism is alien to the nobility that we see among the European peoples. This is a narrow tribal egoism of the lowest kind, maintaining an internal connection between the Armenian colonies scattered all over the world (in Turkey, Persia, Romania, Galicia, Transylvania, Crimea, Poland, Astrakhan, Nakhichevan on the Don, Armavir, East Indies, America), but making they are unaccommodating and unbearable for the surrounding peoples ... Only a strong, unyielding power, only an iron hand is able to keep them in that obedience to the laws, without which there can be neither order, nor peace, nor cultural development" (10.Файл Э. 2000).

DISCUSSION

At the same time, the newspaper "Outskirts of Russia" in its article, published in issue 33-34 of May 14, 1908, wrote that the Armenians were a people who moved to the Caucasus, and that they were servants of the Russians: "When we appeared in Transcaucasia, then there was no Armenian intelligentsia: we created it at the cost of great sacrifices, with Russian money; and there were no Armenians at all; and they represented such an insignificant force that, of course, they could not support us. They could do only one thing from the full consciousness of their usefulness - they joined the force, i.e. to the Russian authorities, they pretended to be unusually devoted to her servants and so managed to bewitch her that when she fell into the hands of persons suffering from political blindness, she populated the entire southeastern or southwestern Transcaucasia with them"

However, neither during that period, nor during the First World War, Armenian efforts to create their own national state in the South Caucasus through terror and deportations against local peoples, as well as servitude to the Russian colonialists, did not yield any results. Only after the fall of tsarism, with the help of the imperialists of the Entente, a small toy state called the "Ararat Republic" was created on the Azerbaijani lands.

As a result of the imperial policy of the Russian Bolsheviks, who continued the colonial policy of tsarism in modern times and in a new plane, this small state acquired new territories, as a result of resettlements and deportations it became one of the three main states of the South Caucasus. Armenian ideologists, who did not abandon their expansionist policy towards the other two republics, achieved the expulsion of more than 150 thousand Azerbaijanis from the Armenian SSR from their historical lands after the World War II, the resettlement and placement in the region of more than 100 thousand ethnic Armenians from foreign countries. Due to the geopolitical interests and pro-Armenian positions of successive Soviet leaders, the territorial claims of Armenians to neighboring peoples and countries, claims to "genocide", and the illusions of "Great Armenia" did not stop.

Armenia, proclaimed an “independent republic” after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but never becoming independent, being the “outpost” of its patrons, has become the main focus of ethnic separatism, interethnic conflicts, deportations and expansion in the South Caucasus. The Armenians, who committed mass deportations and genocide in 1991-1994, occupied up to 20 percent of the territories of Azerbaijan in 1992-1993 with the direct support of Russia and its patrons in the West, also took an active part in the well-known events in Georgia and Abkhazia. (Öztürk, A. 2024).

After the Azerbaijani state expelled the Armenian invaders from its lands in the fall of 2020 in the 44-day war and restored its territorial integrity, the true picture of the occupation became obvious. During the period of occupation of Azerbaijani territory (about 10 thousand square kilometer) by Armenia, the entire infrastructure, residential buildings, institutions of science, education, culture, religious and historical monuments were completely destroyed, material and cultural samples, underground and aboveground wealth were plundered. Foreign journalists, diplomats who arrived in these places after the end of hostilities rightly called this place "Hiroshima of the Caucasus" because of the scale of destruction. The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, had in mind precisely these predatory and destructive actions of the Armenians. “Every person who comes to the liberated lands is horrified that the person who did this is not a person. I can even tell that it's not the animal that did it. This is a tormented, rabid Azerbaijani-phobic mass, a tribe” (Semyuel A, 2004).

Some Armenian jurists are already comparing the actions of this "poor", "cultural", "long-suffering" community with the actions of the Mongol invaders in the Middle Ages. In January 2022, the Armenian lawyer Ruben Vardazaryan, in his article titled “Did ours use hydrogen bombs in Aghdam and Zangilan?”, posted on epress.am, wrote: “They (foreign journalists - Sh.M.) remain in woeful perplexity in front of this scene. Are you still talking about Mongol-Tatars? Now let's answer the international arena, but what to say? Say, a hurricane claimed a quarter of the territory of Azerbaijan? But as? Who, having seen what was happening on the territories and civilian objects of the Azerbaijanis, will believe in the Armenian peacefulness and sincerity of the liberation struggle living in Karabakh? Do you think that the whole world is stupid, and only you are cunning, gentlemen pirates and vandals?

CONCLUSION

Studies show that the revanchist circles of Armenia today, with the support of their patrons, are trying to change the current geopolitical reality, to give a special status to a handful of Armenian communities in Karabakh, to question the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and to put the “Armenian issue” that never existed on the agenda. Armenian leaders and their patrons do not give up their expansionist intentions, but try to continue them. These include the refusal to provide maps of the mined territories of Azerbaijan, the creation of obstacles to the signing of a sustainable peace treaty, periodic provocations at the borders. But, as President Ilham Aliyev said, this issue is forever "thrown into the dustbin of history." And the future of the region passes through peace, peaceful coexistence and cooperation between the peoples living here.

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