



# ARMENIA AND IRAN VI. ARMENO-IRANIAN RELATIONS IN THE ISLAMIC PERIOD

---

## ARMENIA AND IRAN

### vi. Armeno-Iranian Relations in the Islamic Period

*Before the coming of the Saljuqs.* The Arab invasions brought about a major transformation in the political life of the countries of the Near East and had a profound influence upon the relations between the peoples living there.

The expansion of Islam in Iran caused a big rift between Armenia, already converted to Christianity, and Iran. During the rule of the Omayyad and 'Abbasid caliphs, the Iranian Muslim communities were looked upon as having essentially equal rights with other member communities of the whole Islamic world, but the Armenians were considered *ahl al-ḍemma*, who as a community believing in monotheism and having a holy book (*ahl al-Ketāb*), were in accordance with Islamic law subject to Islam and had to pay a head tax or *ḡezya* for protection and security (*ḡemāya wa amnīya*).

Even though they were in different legal status, both Armenians and the peoples of Iran found themselves under the yoke of a theocratic, imperialistic power which sharply conducted a policy of conquest. During the eighth and



ninth centuries, successive eruptions of violence and popular rebellions within wide strata of the populace, such as the movement of the “white-robed” (the *mobayyeza*) in Khorasan led by al-Moqanna’, the *Ḳorramiya* movement in Azarbaijan led by Bābak, as well as the *Ṭ’ondrakite* movement in Armenia led by Smbat of Zarehavan, with their accentuated social nuances were part of the efforts of liberation from the Arab conquerors (see Ioanissian, *Dvizhenie*, pp. 100, 108; Ya’qubī, *Boldān*, p. 463). The Sajid amirs Moḥammad Afšīn (q.v.) and Yūsuf, appointed prefects of Azarbaijan and Armenia, carried out harsh judgments against the rebels. Even though they were considered governors appointed by the caliph, yet towards the end of the ninth century and the beginning of the tenth century, they were, in fact, autonomous rulers of Azarbaijan, who suppressed the liberation movements which had begun in Armenia. There were exceptional events, specially after Caliph al-Moqtader sent a crown to Ašot II Bagratuni in 919, and honored him with the title “Šahnšah.” The amirs of Azarbaijan and he were fighting against the Byzantine incursions. In 922, near Dvin the combined forces of Ašot II and amir Subuk of Azarbaijan defeated the Byzantine troops which had invaded Armenia (see *Hay žolovrdi* III, p. 44).

Even after that the Sajid amirs continued to maraud the southeastern regions of Armenia, subjugating Naḵjavān and the former capital, Dvin (Ar. Dabīl), until they were stripped of their authority in 930.

Conditions did not, change, even after 945 when in reality the domination of the caliphate had been put to an end in central Iran and Fārs, where the kingdom of the Daylami Buyids had been established. During this period also the kingdoms of the Bagratids and Arcrunis, having risen to power in Armenia, were in constant collision with the Rawwadid amirs, descendants of the Arab Rawwād b. Moṭannā, later Kurdicized (but see Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History*, pp. 122-23), who had conquered Azarbaijan. Mamlān (Moḥammad), son of Abu’l-Hayjā’, invaded Armenia a few times, but during his last campaign in 998 in which troops from Khorasan took part, he was defeated in the plain of Bagrevand by the joint Armenian and Georgian troops led by Vahram Pahlavuni and fled (see Matṭēos Urḥayec’i, pp. 36-37; Step’anos Taronec’i, pp. 268-74; Kasravī, *Šahriārān-e gomnām*, pp. 162-72; *Camb. Hist. Iran* IV, pp. 236-37).

In the following decades, particularly during the reign of Gagik I Bagratuni (990-1021), Dvin, former capital of Armenia and the southern regions (Naḵjavān, Goḵ’n) were not subjected to new attacks. In 1021, the mercenary



Turkish soldiers of the Daylamis embarked on a raid of plunder. They were able to penetrate to the village of Nig in the province of Ararat, where they were met by Prince Vasak Pahlavuni. In the battle near the river K'asax, 300 of the invaders were killed, and the rest fled (see *Vseobshchaya istoriya*, p. 122).

The military clashes, characteristic of feudal states, and the subjugating efforts and hostile attitude of Muslim rulers toward non-Muslim peoples and countries, from time to time created obstacles in the development of relations with neighboring countries, including the countries of the Iranian high plateau. Even so, the traditional economic ties by necessity persisted, conforming to the demands of the time. The sources testify particularly about close commercial relations. The information about commercial goods exported from Armenia given by Ebn al-Aṭīr, Ebn Ḥawqal, *Ḥodūd al-ālam*, and other original sources, confirms the fact that the traffic of caravans along the traditional routes from Iran through Armenia continued. From the farther countries of the Orient—Central Asia, India, China—as well as from various regions of Iran, the trading caravans passed through Tabrīz, entered Armenia and from there were linked with the markets on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean countries of Europe. On the return trip, the merchants took with them farm and handicraft goods produced in Armenia. In their turn, the Armenian traders brought indigenous products through Iran via Khorasan to Central Asia, China, and India (see Bartol'd, *Khudud al-Alem*, fols. 32a-33a; *Svedeniya arabskikh pisatelei*, p. 92).

*Under the Saljuqs.* Beginning with the 1040s, when following the invasions of Toḡrīl Beg, the domination of Saljuq Turks was established in Iran and the greater part of Armenia, the relations of Armenia with Iran continued to develop, though on mostly non-equitable terms. Although the conquest-seeking Saljuq rulers and their army were Turkish, yet the administrative, financial, and cultural life of their empire developed entirely in the Iranian tradition.

Until the battle of Malāzgerd (Manzikert) in 1071, in which Alp Arslān inflicted a crushing defeat upon the armies of the Byzantine emperor Diogenes Romanus and extended the domination of the Saljuqs as far as the provinces of Asia Minor, in Armenia the domination of the Saljuqs had had the nature of frequent incursions; after that event it became a stable domination, inasmuch as by then the Bagratid Kingdom of Ani and the Arcruni Kingdom of Vaspurakan were eliminated as a consequence of the deceitful policy and continuous attacks of the Byzantine emperors.



The Saljuq empire during the times of Jalāl-al-dīn Malekšāh (r.465-85/1072-92) reached its highest degree of development, thanks to the wise policy conducted by K̄vāja Neẓām al-Molk, the Persian grand vizier. The Saljuq rulers, lacking tried functionaries, were forced to depend upon their co-religionist Persians for the administrative links of the state, and the Persians governed the country in the traditions of the Iranian state. Persian was the state language. At the royal court, Persian language and literature flourished, talented writers and scholars were discovered, all of which gave impetus to the cultural life of the country.

But in Armenia, no such relations existed. After 1072, in different regions of Armenia, such as Ani, Kars, Karin, Erzrnka, and elsewhere, the minor officials under the Saljuq military leaders were Persians, who governed the country in identical traditions, having as their guideline the principles of the *šarī'a* in dealing with non-Muslim subjects.

This condition became more accentuated specially during the period of the disintegration of the Saljuq empire, when the atabegs who had assumed great power in border districts, became autonomous. The Danishmandids ruled in Lesser Armenia and Cappadocia 1005-06. Further in the west, in 1077, the Saljuq sultanate of Rum was established. From 1100, in the center of Xlaṭ' (Aḳlaṭ) in the western part of Greater Armenia, the Sukmanids ruled, calling themselves "Šāh-e Arman" (see *Hay žolovrdi* IV, chap. 28).

The representatives of Armenian feudalism, either deprived of political power or subjugated, were able to rebel against the conquerors from time to time. That struggle became more intensified when the strengthened Christian Georgia came out victorious in the fights against the surrounding emirates. Under the leadership of the Armenian generals Zak'arē and Ivanē, who had assumed the high command of the Georgian Army, violent battles were being fought in the second half of the twelfth century against the amirs settled in Ani, Ganja, Dvin, and against the Šah-Armans ruling in Xla'. In 1162, eastern Armenia was attacked by the atabeg İldegoz of Azarbaijan. In 1170, with a new invasion, the Armenian Kingdom of Siunik' was terminated. The Armeno-Georgian armies, challenged by the troops of the Azarbaijan atabegs and the emirate of Ganja were defeated in the great battle of 1196, and a few years later the Zak'arids liberated the capital Dvin (see *Vrac' albyurnerə*, p. 34).

In the first decade of the 13th century, the Armeno-Georgian military forces won new victories, challenging both the amirs of Xlaṭ' and the sultan of



Ardabīl, who had embarked upon a marauding raid toward Ani. They occupied the city of Ardabīl. During 1207-08, the domination of the Šah-Armans was eliminated. The Ayyubids came to power, with a more friendly attitude held vis-à-vis the Armeno-Georgian principalities. During 1210-11, the Armeno-Georgian troops, having liberated the whole of eastern Armenia and the larger part of central Armenia, were waging victorious fights against the Īldegoz atabegs of Azarbaijan (see *Hay žołovrdi* IV, chap. 31, par. 2).

*The Mongols and the Timurids.* This situation lasted until the 1220s when the Mongol invasions began. The countries of Mā Warā' al-Nahr and Khorasan, subject to the K̄vārazmšāhs were seized, pillaged, and ruined. The Mongol hordes leveled the flourishing cities and the artistic culture which over the centuries had reached a high level of development. Jalāl-al-dīn, son of the defeated K̄vārazmšāh Sultan Moḥammad, fled to the west, and assembling under his banner a large number of soldiers, invaded Azarbaijan, Šervān, and Armenia (1225-30), spreading ruin in the occupied areas (Nasavī, *Sīrat-e Jalāl-al-dīn*, pp. 142-48, 150-51, 194ff.; Jovaynī, II, pp. 158-80).

These destructive raids dealt a heavy blow to economy and capability of resistance, disorganizing the armed forces and facilitating further the invasion of the Mongol hordes into Azarbaijan, Armenia, Šervān, and eventually Georgia.

These invasions were not mere military conquests; moving with the armies were entire nomadic, Turkish-speaking tribes, in migrations which became fateful not only because the foreign Turkish-speaking element established itself permanently in Azarbaijan and Armenia, but also because it spread that language in the northwestern areas of Iran, thereby creating an ethnic barrier between Armenia and Persian-speaking Iran. The penetration of Oğūz and other Turkish tribes into the Iranian plateau, Azarbaijan, and Armenia, brought about major changes in the ethnic structure of the population of those countries.

The mass movements of the population received new impetus with the conquest of Azarbaijan, eastern Armenia, and Šervān by No(Nōyān) and Sübedei (Sobṭāy) Bahādor, generals of Jengiz Khan. A little later, in 1236, when Jūrmāgūn Noyin occupied eastern Georgia, the greater part of eastern Armenia was joined to it, forming the so-called Vilayet (welāyat) of Gurjistan. Meanwhile and during the following decades, numerous nomadic Mongol and Turkmen fighting tribes penetrated into Azarbaijan and Armenia and settled



permanently in regions which with their rich pastureland and nearby winter shelters were favorable for cattle raising.

After 1258, when Hülāgū (Hülegü) Khan founded the eastern Il-khanate which included the whole of Iran as well as the major part of Armenia and Georgia, a new unrestrained regime of systematic pillage and oppression was imposed on the peoples of those countries, which led to the massive annihilation of production capacity and the destruction of economic life (see Ḥamdallāh Qazvīnī, *Nozhat al-qolūb*, pp. 117-19). After the attack by Baiju Noyin in 1242, the Vilayet of “Arman” was created in the area of the former domains of the Šah-Armans, and thus in the major part of the entire historic Armenia the domination of the Mongols was established and then it was incorporated within the Il-khanid state. Later (1249), there were certain attempts at shaking off the Mongol yoke, but they were brutally suppressed by the conquerors.

However, Prince Smbat of the Orbelid feudal dynasty ruling in the province of Siwnik' in southeastern Armenia, had been able to obtain certain rights from the great khan Mōngke (Mangū Qā'ān) preserved later on by Hülāgū Khan and thereafter. Thanks to this feudal immunity, there existed in that part of Armenia relatively bearable conditions which reflected in the economic and cultural life.

More favorable were the repeated visits in Qara Qorum (1253-56) of Heṭ'um (Ḥātem) I, King of Cilicia. Thus, the great Khan recognized the sovereignty of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia and promised to support it as an ally in the struggle waged by the Cilician state against the incursions of the surrounding Muslim principalities (see Kirakos Ganjakec'i, p. 285).

During the Mongol domination until the time of Ġāzān Khan, while the Mongols had not accepted Islam as their religion, there was no discriminatory treatment of Christians living within the boundaries of the state. Even wide latitude was given to the activities of papal missionaries, who had penetrated the Il-khanid court. It was noted above that during this period the Il-khanid state came forward as an ally of the Cilician Armenian kingdom.

In 1259-61, rebellions took place against the Il-khanid yoke, particularly in eastern Armenia. These were suppressed by the subjugators. Rebellious against Hülāgū was Zak'aria the amir-captain, who eventually was captured and executed. A likewise tragic end befell Ḥasan Jalāl, prince of Xaç'ēn (see Kirakos Ganjakec'i, p. 393). These armed clashes were followed by diplomatic



initiatives aiming at creating trust in order to grab certain permissions from Hülāgū Khan and to restore the former autonomous rights of the Armenian feudal lords. In 1264, Vardan Vardapet Arevelc'i, a great scholar, spiritual and community agent of his time, went to Hülāgū trying to influence the Mongol ruler with his authority (see *Vseobshchaya istoriya*, pp. 190-97).

During the governorship of *Argūn Āqā* in 1273, there was a general census and registration of taxable objects. As a consequence, the duties and taxes collected from the population were multiplied, and in the final decades of the century, the condition of the people became increasingly burdensome. Nowrūz, son of *Argūn Āqā*, who had occupied the position of chief amir of the Il-khanate, started new persecutions against Armenian and Georgian feudal lords and princes. Against these pressures, in the beginning of the 1290s rebellions once again broke out, which were brutally suppressed in the course of the punitive raids of Qutluğšāh, commander of the troops of *Gāzān Khan*. Northern Armenia and eastern Georgia were ruined and plundered, and when *Gāzān Khan* accepted Islam (1295), strong persecutions were initiated against the Armenians, carried out pointedly in *Naḵjavān* and nearby areas. Once again the poll tax *jezya* was imposed on the Armenian population (see *Hay žolovrdi* IV, chap. 37, pars. 1, 2).

The enlightened vizier *Ḳvāja Rašid-al-dīn Faḏlallāh* counseled *Gāzān Khan* to embark upon reforms, but these were unable to prevent the downfall of the Il-khanid state, which after *Gāzān Khan* experienced an acute crisis and disintegrated completely. From the times of the Il-khan *Abū Sa'īd* (717-36/1316-35), centrifugal actions of local influential Mongol rulers become visible, reaching major proportions in 1335-40 during the dissensions concerning the succession (see *ibid.*, par. 2).

During these years of confusion in certain Armenian provinces, the feudal principalities were partially revived, particularly the Orbelids of *Siwnik'* and their vassals the *Prošians*, within whose boundaries comparatively favorable conditions were created for the development of Armenian academic life, literature, and medieval science.

In those years (1282), the famous university of *Glaḵor* was founded, which extended its function to the other spiritual and cultural institutions of the province of *Siwnik'*, e.g., the monasteries of *Taḑ'ev*, *Hermon*, *Aprakunis*, and *Vorotni* and elsewhere (see *Arevšatyan and Maḑ'evosyan*, pp. 45-52).



During the period of anarchy which prevailed in the Il-khanid state in 1330 and the following years, the struggle between the Chobanid and Jalayerid amirs ended in the 40s with the victory of the Chobanid Ḥasan(-e) Kūček, adversary of the Jalayerid Ḥasan(-e) Bozorg. The victor took under his domination northern Iran, Persian Iraq, Azarbaijan, and almost all of Armenia. Malek Ašraf, successor of Ḥasan Kūček, subjected the peoples under his rule to plunder and oppression. His domination was put to an end with the invasion of Jani-beg Khan of the Golden Horde and the capture of Tabrīz, after which once again the Jalayerids rose in power, and in 1358 Ḥasan Bozorg's son Sultan Oways established his rule at Tabrīz (see *Hay žolovrdi* I, chap. 1).

The military prop of all these Turkish-Mongol rulers aiming at a pan-Iranian domination was the nomadic, mostly Turkish-speaking population settled in Azarbaijan and Armenia. By the second half of the 14th century, a violent struggle for political superiority had spread within this element, but it was interrupted temporarily during the years of Tamerlane. After the final invasion and the defeat and capture near Angora of the Ottoman Sultan Bāyazīd, Tamerlane had appointed his son Mīrānšāh as governor of the western principalities. But after Tamerlane's death in 1405, the power-seeking nomadic amirs everywhere rebelled against Mīrānšāh.

The Qara Qoyunlū Qara Yūsof, who had been chased by Tamerlane and had taken refuge in Egypt, returned and reassembling the armed forces of tribes subject to him, was able to reoccupy Tabrīz and extend his rule over the whole of Armenia, Azarbaijan, and northern Mesopotamia (see Դ՛ovma Mecop՛ec՛i, *Patmuṭ՛iwn*, pp. 70-73).

In 1420, Qara Yūsof died, and Šāhroḳ who had embarked on a punitive campaign against him defeated his son Eskandar, who nevertheless succeeded in repossessing his rule. Eskandar was attempting to curb the separatist operations of the local minor Turkmen and Kurdish principalities, and was promoting and sponsoring individual representatives of Armenian feudalism. By this he aroused discontent against himself and was finally defeated by Šāhroḳ. Then he had a friction with his brother Jahānšāh, appointed by Šāhroḳ. Beaten, Eskandar took refuge in the fort of Erenḵak where he was assassinated by his own son. For a while, Jahānšāh accepted Šāhroḳ's hegemony and settled in Tabrīz. Then, taking advantage of the weakening of the Timurids, he extended the boundaries of his domain to Khorasan and Fārs.

The years of Jahānšāh's rule (1435-68) may be viewed as a relatively stable



period of time. Although in the southern and western regions of Armenia the internal conflicts continued, yet for a while the external invasions had ceased, and the economic life could develop some.

Through the efforts of Armenian lay and clerical agents in 1441, the central authority of the Armenian church, the See of the Catholicate of all Armenians, was moved from Cilicia where it had been since 1149, and reestablished at the monastery of Echmiadzin, its foundation place in the province of Ararat in central Armenia. (See Դ՛ovma Mecop՛ec՛i, *Yišatakaran*, pp. 62-72). This event had great significance, since the Armenian church emerged as the only national authority whose rights were recognized by the ruling Muslim powers. As a pan-Armenian center, the patriarchal See would prepare the ground for the country's independence, establishing cultural and idealistic ties between Armenian colonies in other countries, by founding educational centers and in linking them through traditions.

The dispute which was going on between the Qara Qoyunlū and Āq Qoyunlū ended in 1468 with the victory of Uzun Ḥasan (q.v.) over Jahānšāh and the latter's assassination. Thereupon Uzun Ḥasan occupied Tabrīz and extended his rule to all the countries subjugated by Jahānšāh.

In the early period of the rule of the Āq Qoyunlū, particularly during the days of Uzun Ḥasan (r. 857-82/1453-78), attempts were made to introduce control over state finances and to normalize the duties and taxes collected from the populace. Uzun Ḥasan formed a rule-book, known as "Qānun-nāma-ye Ḥasan Pādešāh," which was also put to use in subsequent centuries. But because of the many small feudal lordships it was impossible to secure a central authority and supervision of taxes and state revenues.

After Uzun Ḥasan, specially during the reign of Ya'qūb Pādešāh (883-96/1478-90) the conditions of the last remnants of Armenian feudalism deteriorated, when everywhere the "Bayt al-mālī" was put into effect. Persecutions and forced apostasies became intensified, the lands of the Armenian feudal lords were confiscated (see P'ap'azyan, *Beyt-ul-mali*, pp. 193-203), and in the course of 9th/15th century the Armenian feudal system lost all its political force. However stubborn their resistance, many of the feudal chiefs, for the sake of maintaining their property rights, finally gave up and embraced Islam. On the other hand, those who at the cost of large material sacrifices attempted to keep their landownership, were gradually reduced to the state of minor property owners or were driven out of the ranks



of landowning feudal chiefs and went into trade and commerce (see *ibid.*). Also, since monastic landownership was tolerated, many of the last representatives of the Armenian feudal families, to save the final remnants of their powers, “donated” them to the monasteries and, taking religious vows, attempted to preserve their rights over those properties and to maintain their dominating position vis-à-vis the Armenian working class.

*The Safavids and their successors.* On the ruins of the state of the Āq Qoyunlū rose the Safavid state, founded by Shah Esmā’īl I (r. 907-30/1501-24), descendant of the famous Sufi Shaikh Ṣafī-al-dīn of Ardabīl. The founders of this new state were leaders of a militant Sufi order. Their military consisted of Shi’ite Turkmen tribes, yet their semi-theocratic state, officially named “State of the Qezelbāš” (Dawlat-e Qezelbāš), was called to regenerate the traditions of Iran and to contribute to the development of a feudal monarchy (Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, pp. 1-26).

From the outset opposing Ottoman Turkey and unifying under the banner of Shi’ism his military forces of Turkish-speaking nomads wandering in Azarbaijan and Armenia and declaring themselves as *qezelbāš* or *šāhsevan*, Shah Esmā’īl, had strong collisions with the Ottoman empire which by that time had reached the zenith of its might. These conflicts continued with only brief intermissions during the time of his successors, almost during the entire 10th/16th century. These ruinous wars, whose main arena was Armenia, seemed to be of dogmatic-religious nature, yet, in reality, they had political, strategic, and economic reasons, the chief among them being the Ottomans’ intention to conquer Transcaucasia, Dagestan (Dāğestān) and Azarbaijan and to control the trade routes through Armenia and Azarbaijan and the main centers of silk production.

The constant movements of hundreds of thousands of armed fighters and the bloody clashes of the opposing armies devastated the central provinces of the country. The Armenian population was subjected to plunder and slavery. Mass flight and emigration to foreign countries grew to large proportions.

In these confused and critical times, the Muslim chieftains in Armenia intensified their pressure on the remnants of Armenian feudalism and their attempts of assimilation by forced apostasy. During the days of the more fanatic rulers the so-called “Ja’farī” (i.e., of Imam Ja’far al-Ṣādeq) law was put to wider use, whereby an Armenian accepting Islam was able to claim as his alone the entire wealth of his parents (see *Persidskie dokumenty*, document no.



16).

The external invasions ceased partially only after 1590, when the Safavid Shah Abbās I (r. 996-1038/1588-1629), enthroned two years earlier, was forced to sign a peace agreement of heavy conditions with Sultan Moḥammad III, ceding to him Armenia, the whole of Transcaucasia and Azarbaijan. But after settling his account with the Uzbek amirs who had invaded Khorasan, he reorganized his army with advanced weaponry and in 1603 attacked in order to take back these lands, where the 15-year Turkish domination had created severe discontent within all levels of the population. The new redistributions and dispositions of the Ottoman authorities regarding lands and feudal possessions fostered rebellion of the native feudal elements, and many Armenian, Georgian, and Muslim princes took refuge in Iran, receiving a cordial welcome from Shah ‘Abbās. The working population was subjected to unrestrained plunder and oppression by the authorities assigned by the Ottomans, and many hoped that the new campaign started by the shah would free them from that heavy yoke (see Arakel Davrizhetsi, *Kniga istorii*, pp. 46-47).

The Safavid army captured Tabrīz, Naḵjavān and Erevan (Īravān) and extended its incursion to Ganja. It also invaded central Armenia, approaching Erzerum. But when news was received that the Ottoman army had already reached Mūš and was preparing to move in the direction of Erevan, the shah decided to avoid battle, and ordered retreat by destroying and depopulating the villages and towns on their way (see *ibid.*, chap. 4). In the course of its history of many centuries, the Armenian people had not yet been subjected to such a major disaster. Central Armenia in its entirety was in disarray. Detachments of *qezelbāš* soldiers stormed the whole countryside, leaving behind everything totally devastated. Immense masses were being driven from all directions to the Ararat plain to be sent from there to the steppes of central Iran. The strategic aim of this forced deportation was to depopulate the area which the adversary’s army had to traverse. Yet, at the same time the shah was thinking of relocating this large multitude of refugees in the wide areas around his capital and to promote agriculture, crafts, and trade in the central provinces of the country. For this reason he showed particular eagerness in deporting the population of Julfa (Jolfā), the thriving commercial city on the banks of the Aras river. According to contemporary testimony, the number of deported from this area was in excess of 300,000; the same sources, however, state that in mountainous areas, the population of certain villages succeeded in hiding in the rifts of the mountains and thus avoided the forced



exodus (see *ibid.*, p. 69; Eskandar Beg, II, pp. 643-44, 654-57, 665-66; Falsafī, *Šāh ‘Abbās* III, pp. 201ff].

The relocation of the huge Armenian colony and the founding of large Armenian populated towns and of the Armenian city of New Julfa next to the capital resulted in major changes in Armeno-Iranian relations. From the beginning of the 11th/17th century, the segment of the Armenian nation which remained under Safavid rule, both on its native soil and in its colonies formed on Iranian soil, entered into close relationships with the Safavid state and with political, communal, administrative, and economic circles of Iran, on the whole playing an important role in the country's life, particularly in its economy. The role of Armenian commercial capital in the country's internal and especially in its external trade was great. Armenian commerce, by then widely recognized, received the special attention of Shah ‘Abbās and enjoyed the patronage of government authorities. Thus, within a short period of time, it was able to concentrate in its hands the lucrative and productive business of the exportation of silk. Accumulating great material potential, it even succeeded in gaining control of certain institutions which directed the finances of the state (see Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, pp. 174-75, 198).

High-standing Armenian businessmen were entrusted with the supervision of currency, gold, precious metals, and wealth brought in from abroad, performing, as it were, banking functions. This circumstance definitely earned them the confidence of the Safavid shahs, who often granted the Armenian businessmen the rights of royal merchants—*tājer-e kāšša-ye šarīfa*—and gave them diplomatic assignments in the Safavid state's political and economic dealings with Europe and Russia (see Kukanova, pp. 67-69).

The fighting which began with Shah ‘Abbās' invasion did not end during his reign; it continued with fluctuating success and came to an end only after his death (1038/1629) during the days of his successor Shah Šafī, who signed a peace agreement in 1639. By this agreement, the boundaries between the two states which were drawn by the treaty of Amasia in 962/1555 (q.v.), were reconfirmed with minor changes. In accordance with this, in Armenia the Perso-Ottoman boundary began from the mountains of Javaxk', and passing along the Axuryan river, the range of the Armenian mountains, the western slopes of Mt Ararat and along the Vaspurakan mountains joined the Zagros mountains. The Safavid state included within its boundaries the totality of the historic Armenian provinces of Siwnik', Arc'ax, Utik', P'aytakaran, and Persarmenia and also the eastern countries of Ararat, Gugark', and



Vaspurakan. According to the new administrative division, these provinces were under the authority of the beglerbegs of Čuxur-Sad, Qarabāg, and Azarbajjan (see *Tadkerat al-molūk*, pp. 100-02).

The peace following 1639 lasted eighty years and had a definite significance for the development of the peoples of the two countries, particularly for those who lived within Safavid Iran's boundaries. The sources testify to the brisk growth of economic life noticed everywhere during the second half of the 11th/17th century, particularly during Shah 'Abbās II's reign, 1052-77/1642-67. There was a noticeable resurgence also in monastic-scholastic life. Famous scholars and cultural workers came on the scene. Monasteries and churches were renovated and restored. Secular and church architecture entered a new stage of development (see Arakel Davrizhetsi, *Kniga istoriï*, chaps. 24-26).

But, as the century neared its end, the discrimination and repressions aimed at assimilation instigated by the Muslim clerics and the unruly actions of military provincial chiefs, khans, and their functionaries gradually intensified, oppressing and robbing the populace and persecuting the Armenian clergy.

The agitation for liberation from foreign yoke which had started among the circles of high-echelon Armenian secular and clerical leaders in the sixteenth century, received new impetus near the end of the seventeenth century.

In 1677, with the leadership of Catholicos Yakob of Julfa, a secret meeting was held in Echmiadzin attended by representatives of the clergy, the secular aristocracy, and of the *meliks* (secular lords) of Siwnik' and Arc'ax. The assembly decided to send a delegation to Rome and hoped that by expressing obedience to the Pope they would receive armed assistance to achieve the task of liberation.

Catholicos Yakob crossed into Georgia in secret, conducted negotiations with the lay and clerical leaders of Georgia and then traveled to Constantinople with his colleagues, intending to depart for Rome from there to request help from the Pope. But the 82-year old catholicos fell sick at Constantinople in 1680 and died. Of his fellow travelers, only Israel Ori, scion of an Armenian *melik* family, for about two decades conducted unproductive negotiations with a number of Western governments, and finally became convinced that their only hope was Russia which was getting stronger. In 1701, Ori traveled to Moscow with the Archimandrite Minas Tigranean, and presented to Peter the Great his plan for the liberation of Armenia, with the help of Russia, by means



of the military forces of the *meliks* of Siwnik' and Arc'ax. The implementation of that plan was put off until the 1720s, during which time Ori went to Isfahan as ambassador of Russia, to survey the internal situation of the country, and upon his return he died in 1711 (see *Persidskie dokumenty*, docs. 66-138).

During the time of Shah Sultan Ḥosayn (r. 1105-35/1694-1722) the Safavid state experienced a rapid decline. In 1722, the Afghan Maḥmūd son of Mīr Ways seized Isfahan, putting an end to the 200-year Safavid kingdom. Meanwhile, in the provinces of Arc'ax and Siwnik' in eastern Armenia (Qarabāg and Zangezūr), armed strife spread between rebelling Armenian soldiers and local khans and Turkish-speaking nomadic feudal lords seeking self determination in the face of anarchy. The Armenians and the Georgians were hoping that the Russian army which was moving southward would come to their assistance, but the Russians limited themselves to occupying the areas near the shores of the Caspian Sea and by the treaty concluded at Constantinople in 1724, agreed not to oppose the Turkish occupation of the northwestern provinces of Iran.

Having only recently shaken off the yoke of the *qezelbāš*, the Armenian people reengaged in a struggle for liberation, this time against Ottoman occupation troops. The armed Armenian forces waged heroic battles on the outskirts of Erevan, in Qarabāg, in the mountainous regions of Siwnik' and elsewhere. Daviṭ' Beg, leader of the liberation battles being waged in Siwnik', defeated the Ottoman troops and reached the banks of the Aras. He linked with Shah Ṭahmāsp II who was conducting the war against the Ottomans in Azarbaijan. Shah Ṭahmāsp by special edict recognized the dominion of Daviṭ' Beg over the province of Siwnik' (see *Hay žołovrdi* IV, pt. 1, chap. 3, pars. 3-6).

But the figure who won general sympathy and recognition in the fight was Nāder-qolī, the future Nāder Shah, who after capturing Isfahan and chasing the Afghans out of the country, also, after securing the departure of the Russians from the shores of the Caspian Sea, advanced in the direction of Azarbaijan with the purpose of expelling the Ottomans from the country. After the Russo-Iranian agreement signed at Rašt in 1732, the Armenians armed in Ararat, Siwnik', and Arc'ax, including the Armenian *meliks* and the clergy, were proving themselves allies of Nāder. Nāder's entry into Transcaucasia and the departure of the Russians from the near-Caspian provinces were creating real bases for military-political cooperation between Armenians and Iranians (see *ibid.*, par. 8).

Professing loyalty to Nāder, the Armenian *meliks* took part in the capture of



Ganĵa, where the Russian artillery came to Nāder's aid. Here the Armenian detachments were consolidated and grew in numbers, and when Nāder moved towards Kars (Qārş) to face the main Turkish forces, the detachments of the *meliks*, under the leadership of Melik Yegan, were accompanying him everywhere.

The decisive battle against the main Turkish forces dispatched from Constantinople was fought on 8 July 1735 in the plain of Eĵuard located north of Erevan. Here, not only the Armenian military units commanded by Melik Yegan were fighting against the Turks, but also, according to the historian Mīrzā Moĥammad Mahdī Khan's testimony, armed detachments of the surrounding Armenian villages gave destructive blows to the Turks from the rear. From one side, the attacking Persian infantry and cavalry and from the other side the armed Armenian peasantry totally destroyed the panic-stricken enemy. The Turks had to beg for conciliation, promising to surrender the forts of Ganĵa, Tiflis, and Erevan and to withdraw their troops from Transcaucasia (Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, pp. 84ff.).

After these events, Nāder was obligated to recognize the rights of the Armenian people. He bestowed honors upon Catholicos Abraham the Cretan, and reinstated by special edicts the property rights of Echmiadzin and granted privileges to the catholicos. He instructed the new beglerbeg of Erevan to always consult with the catholicos in the matter of governing the land, rather than with the *qezelbāş* chiefs (see Abraam Kretatsi, *Povestvovanie*, p. 200). He confirmed also the rights of the Armenian *meliks* of Arc'ax, creating a self governing administrative unit composed of five *maĥāls* of the mountainous region of Armenia, the unit being called maĥāl-e Kamsa, and appointed Melik Yegan as khan and beglerbeg of that territory. In the spring of the following year after the enthronement held in the plain of Moġān he granted new positions to the Armenian *meliks* of Geĵarkunik' and Erevan. However, he displaced a large number of the Armenian population and nomadic tribes and took them with him to Khorasan (see *ibid.*, p. 209).

All this was being done to win over the upper levels of Armenian leadership and to put an end to the Russian orientation of the Armenians. Very soon, it became clear to the Armenian ruling circles that all this was temporary. Beginning in 1746, a new census of the taxpaying population and of arable lands was held and harsher laws for the collection of taxes were put into effect. The sources give testimony that the tax collection was executed in multiple rates.



After Nāder's death (1160/1747) anarchy developed, and once again the khans and beglerbegs in Armenia who craved for power began to stir. Large masses of Turkish-speaking nomads exiled by Nāder to Khorasan returned, and from among those the chieftains of the Javānšīr tribe succeeded in exploiting the dissension within the Armenian *meliks* and took charge of their fortifications, thus terminating the Armenian autonomy of Էkamsa (see *Hay žołovrdi* IV, pt. 1, chap. 4).

During the 1760s, particularly during the reign of Empress Catherine II (1762-96) when Russia through new conquests was approaching Transcaucasia, both Georgia's and Armenia's lay and spiritual leaders again began to appeal to the Russian court, proposing new plans for placing Georgia and Armenia under the patronage of Russia. The Echmiadzin catholicos Yakob of Šamax and Simeon of Erevan in 1760 and 1766 appealed to the empress requesting help. In 1768, she issued a special edict to provide help to the Armenians in freeing themselves from the Muslim yoke.

In 1780, the famous Russian general Suvorov left for Astrakhan to prepare for the campaign directed at Transcaucasia. A preliminary plan for the restoration of an Armenian state under Russia's patronage was prepared. However, the czar's court was obliged to postpone the execution of that plan due to the complicated political and military circumstances of the end of the eighteenth century.

In 1783, King Erekli (Herakl) II of Georgia, signed an agreement with Catherine II, whereby Georgia was to enter under Russia's patronage, while the latter assumed the obligation of defending Georgia against foreign enemies. These developments filled the Armenians, too, with new hopes, but in 1796, [Āqā Moḥammad Khan](#), who had founded a new centralized state (see *ibid.*, pt. 1, chap. 5), led a punitive expedition into Transcaucasia which culminated in the sack of Tiflis and the massacre of a large number of its population. However, with the death of Āqā Moḥammad Khan and the ascension of Fath-'Alī Shah in 1212/1779, the Armeno-Iranian relationship entered an entirely new phase (see below).



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

In Armenian: *Hay žalovrdi patmuṭyun* (History of the Armenian people) III-IV, Erevan, 1972-76.

*Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* (Armenian Soviet Encyclopaedia) 1-10, Erevan, 1974-83.

*Vrac' albyurnerə Hayastani ew hayeri masin* (Georgian sources on Armenia and the Armenians) II, tr. L. Melik'seṭ'beki, Erevan, 1934.

A. Alpōyačean, *Patmuṭ'iwn hay galtakanuṭ'ean* (History of Armenian diaspora communities) III, Cairo, 1961.

Aṙak'el Dawrižec'i (Arak'el of Tabriz), *Girk' patmuṭ'eanc'* (Book of histories), Vałaršapat, 1896; Russ. tr. L. A. Khanlaryan, *Kniga istorii*, Moscow, 1973.

S. V. Boṙnazyan, *Hayastanə ew Seljuknerə XI-XII dd.* (Armenia and the Saljuqs, 11th-12th centuries), Erevan, 1980.

B. L. Č'ugazyan, *Hay-iranakan grakan aṙṇčuṭ'yuvnner V-XVIII dd.* (Armeno-Iranian literary relations, 5th-18th centuries), Erevan, 1963.

S. T. Gasparyan, *Sp'yurk'a-hay galṭ'ojaxnern aysor* (Armenian diaspora centers today), Erevan, 1962.

N. Goroyan, *Parskastani hayerə* (The Armenians of Iran), Tehran, 1968.

Kirakos Ganjakec'i, *Patmuṭ'iwn Hayoc'* (History of the Armenians, 13th century), ed. K. A. Melik'-Ōhanjanyan, Erevan, 1961.

Leo, *Erkeri žolovacu* (Collected works) II-III, Erevan, 1967-73.

H. Manandyan, *K'nnakan tesuṭyun hay žalovrdi patmuṭ'yan* (Critical examination of the history of the Armenian people): *Seljukyan šrjanic' miṇč'ew Sefyanneri hastatumə Iranum XI-XV dd.* (From the Saljuq period to the establishment of the Safavids in Iran, 11th-15th centuries), in *Erker* (Works) III, Erevan, 1977.

Matṭ'eos Urhayec'i (Matthew of Edessa), *Žamanakagruṭ'iwn* (Chronology,



952-1136), Vałaršapat, 1898 (Jerusalem, 1869).

H. P'ap'azyan, "Sefyan Irani asimilyatorakan k'alak'anuťyan harc'i šurjə" (On the question of the assimilationist policy of Safavid Iran), *Banber Matenadarani* 3, Erevan, 1956.

Idem, "Beyť-ul-mali institutə ew hay Feodalneri hołeri bñnagravumnerə 15-rd d." (The institution of *bayt-al-mālī* and the seizures of the lands of Armenian feudal lords in the 15th cent.), *Patmabanasirakan Handes*, 1958, 2.

Step'anos Taronec'i (Stephen Asołik of Tarōn), *Patmuť'iwñ tiezarakan* (Universal history), St. Petersburg, 1885.

Ŧ'ovma Mecop'ec'i *Patmuť'iwñ Lank ř'emuray ew yařordac' iwroc'* (History of Tamerlane and his successors), Paris, 1960. Idem, *Yišatakaran*, Tiflis, 1892.

In Russian: Abraam Kretatsi, *Povestvovanie*, tr. and ed. N. K. Korganyan, Erevan, 1973.

S. S. Arevshatyan and A. S. Matevosyan, *Gladzorskiĩ universitet tseñtr prosveshcheniya srednevekovoĩ Armenii*, Erevan, 1984.

*Armyano-russkie otnosheniya v pervoĩ treti XVIII veka* II/1, Erevan, 1964.

V. V. Bartol'd, *Khudud al-Alem* (Ĥodūd al-ālam), *rukopis' Tumanskogo*, Leningrad, 1930.

S. T. Eremyan, *Kul'tura rannefeodal'noi Armenii IV-VII vv.*, Erevan, 1980.

A. G. Ioannisyan, "Dvizhenie tondrakidov v Armenii," *Voprosy Istorii* 10, 1954.

N. G. Kukanova, *Ocherki po istorii russko-armyanskikh trgovykh otnosheniĩ v XVII-pervoi polovine XIX veka*, Saransk, 1977.

*Persidskie dokumenty Matenadarana. Ukazy*, pt. 2, ed. A. D. Papazyan, Erevan, 1956.

*Svedeniya arabskikh pisatelei o Kavkaze, Armenii i Azerbaidzhane*, Sbornik materialov dlya opisaniya mestnostei i plemyon Kavkaza 38, Tiflis, 1903.

A. N. Ter-Gevondyan, *Armeniya i Arabskiĩ khalifat*, Erevan, 1977.

*Vseobshchaya istoriya Vardana Velikogo*, tr. H. Emin, Moscow, 1861.



In other languages: Abraham Kretatsi, tr. M. F. Brosset, *L'histoire des événements sous le règne de Nadir Chah*, Collection d'historiens arméniens II, St. Petersburg, 1874-76.

N. Falsafī, *Zendagānī-e Šāh 'Abbās-e Awwal*, 4 vols., Tehran, 1334-46 Š./1955-67.

A. Kasravī, *Šahrīārān-e gomnām*, Tehran, 1335 Š./1956. L. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, repr. New York, 1973.

V. Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History*, Cambridge, 1953.

Ḥamdallāh Qazvīnī, *Nozhat al-qolūb*, Tehran, 1336 Š./1958.

R. Savory, *Iran under the Safavids*, Cambridge, 1980.

Šehāb-al-dīn Moḥammad Nasavī, *Sīrat-e Jalāl-al-dīn*, ed. M. Mīnovī, Tehran, 1344 Š./1965.

(H. Papazian)

*Armeno-Iranian relations under the Qajars up to the conclusion of the Treaty of Torkamānčāy.*

The fall of the Safavids and the Russian invasion of Transcaucasia inspired the Christian population of the region to seek emancipation from Iran. A number of Armenian and Georgian leaders believed the numerous promises of Peter the Great and began to dream of autonomy under the protection of the Russian empire. As the eighteenth century progressed the Armenians and Georgians continued to look to Russia, the only Christian power in the region, for their eventual emancipation. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century they both received assurances from Catherine the Great, who continued Peter's expansionist policy. Although a minority, the cooperation of Transcaucasia's Armenian population figured largely in the Russian plan. The Russians hoped that the Armenian population, together with the Georgians (to whom Russia had granted protection by the Treaty of Georgievsk in 1783) would rise up against their Muslim "overlords" and aid their Christian "liberators" in annexing Transcaucasia. A number of promises and guarantees were extended to the leaders of both peoples.

Catherine's political offensive in Transcaucasia coincided with the rise of the



Qajars and the speedy reunification of Iran under Āqā Moḥammad Khan (r. 1193-1212/1779-97). The Russian overtures in Transcaucasia angered Āqā Moḥammad Khan, who planned to re-create the Safavid empire and who considered Transcaucasia, not only part of Iran, but a part of the ancestral Qajar tribal domains, granted to them by the Safavids. He did not waste time on political maneuvers, but instead, invaded the region, blinded or beheaded disloyal governors and officials, and sacked Tiflis, the center of Georgia in 1796. His infamous massacre of Armenians and Georgians in that city (one of whose victims was the great Armenian bard Sayat Nova) turned the Armenians of Transcaucasia even closer to Russia. Āqā Moḥammad Khan's assassination in 1796 ended his short but violent reign and began a new page in Irano-Armenian relations.

Āqā Moḥammad Khan's nephew and heir, Faṭḥ-ʿAlī Shah (r. 1212-50/1797-1834), after stabilizing internal rebellions and witnessing the loss of Georgia to the Russians in 1801, embarked on a policy of cooperation with the Armenians of Transcaucasia, now the only remaining Christians in the region. Together with his son, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, an advocate of modernization, and the new, capable governor of eastern Armenia, Ḥosayn-qolī Khan Qājār (q.v.), they initiated a benevolent policy which echoed that of Shah ʿAbbās. The Armenians, composing barely 20 percent of the population of eastern Armenia, received numerous privileges, decrees, and honors. The right to construct and maintain their own churches and schools, the right to practice their faith freely and openly, the exemption from military service, fair and uniform taxes, answering to their own local officials and courts, and equality before the law in the šarīʿa courts were the culmination of this policy. A secondary effect was the segregation of the Armenian cultural and religious life. Only in crafts and commerce did some mingling occur, although most guilds continued to be segregated. Linguistically, however, a significant number of Persian words entered the Eastern Armenian, particularly the Erevani dialect, as found in the literary works of Khatchatur Abovian, the father of Eastern Armenian literature.

The renewed political interest in the region once more made it a center for the important trade between east and west. Various goods from Russia, the Ottoman empire, Iran, Europe, and the Orient passed through Eastern Armenia. The Armenians in Iran proper, particularly the Armenian merchants of Tabrīz kept the commercial ties between the two communities. It is not surprising, therefore, that in a short time the province enjoyed the same



prosperity that it had at the height of the Safavids.

The Armenian catholicos (supreme patriarch), whose Holy See was within Eastern Armenia, and the Armenian *meliks* (secular lords) not only corresponded with the shah and ‘Abbās Mīrzā, but frequently visited and exchanged gifts with Iranian officials. The Qajars reaped the benefits of this policy when the majority of the Armenians of Transcaucasia failed to cooperate with the Russians during the First Perso-Russian War (1804-1813; q.v.).

The loss of most of Transcaucasia following the Treaty of Golestān (q.v.) and the actions of certain Iranian zealots (particularly Ḥasan Khan Qājār, q.v.) and Armenian nationalists (such as Nerses of Aštarak) initiated the deterioration of Armeno-Iranian relations. A large number of Armenians in the Erevan region still kept faith with the Persians, however. The inability of Faṭḥ-‘Alī Shah to forestall the better-equipped Russian forces, combined with the British abandonment of their promises of military and financial aid, resulted in Iran’s defeat in the Second Perso-Russian War (1826-1828; q.v.). The Treaty of Torkamāñčāy (q.v.) brought the rest of Transcaucasia under Russian rule and the Armenians of Eastern Armenia became subjects of the Russian empire.

M. Atkin, *Russia and Iran, 1780-1828*, Minneapolis, 1980.

Bāmdād, *Rejāl I*, Tehran, 1968.

J. F. Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus*. London, 1908.

G. A. Bournoutian, *Eastern Armenia in the Last Decades of Persian Rule, 1807-1828: A Political and Socioeconomic Study of the Khanate of Erevan on the Eve of the Russian Conquest*, Malibu, 1982.

V. Gregorian, “The Impact of Russia on the Armenians and Armenia,” in W. S. Vucinich, ed., *Russia and Asia*, Palo Alto, 1972.

F. Kazemzadeh, “Russian Penetration of the Caucasus,” in T. Hunczak, ed., *Russian Imperialism from Ivan the Great to the Revolution*, New Brunswick, 1974.

D. M. Lang, *The Last Years of the Georgian Monarchy, 1765-1832*, New York,



1967.

J. Morier, *A Second Journey Through Persia, Armenia, and Asia Minor to Constantinople between the years 1810-1816*, 2 vols., London, 1818.

M. Sarkisyanz, *A Modern History of Transcaucasian Armenia*, Nagpur, 1975.

(G. Bournoutian)

#### *Armeno-Iranian relations 1828-1925.*

As the result of the defeat of Iran in the second Perso-Russian war and the Treaty of Torkamānčāy of 1243/1828 signed by the two parties, the greater part of Eastern Armenia was annexed to the Russian empire, but a large number of Armenians remained in Iran in areas where traditionally Armenians had settled: Mākū (Artaz), Կոյ (Her), Salmās (Zarewand), and Arasbārān (Parspatunik'), and the region of Urmia (Parskahayk'). These, regions, according to nineteenth-century administrative division, became a part of the northwestern Iranian province of Azarbaijan, and were subject directly to the Viceroy (Nāyeb-al-salṭana) at Tabrīz, then 'Abbās Mīrzā (q.v.), the eldest son of Faṭḥ-'Alī Shah.

The fifteenth article of the treaty provided for the mass emigration of Armenians from these areas, including Tabrīz itself, to Russian Armenia, where a new administrative district, the so-called Armenian March, had been created (*Hay žołovrdi patmuṭyun V*, pp. 162, 171). During the years 1828-29, about 45,000 Armenians left Iran (*ibid.*, p. 175; Goroyan, *Parskastani hayerə*, pp. 75-93), but a large number of Armenians remained, also, in the areas of Mākū, Կոյ, Tabrīz, and the villages of Arasbārān (Qaradāg) (*ibid.*, pp. 102-208; Frangean, *Atrapatakan*, pp. 97-101).

'Abbās Mīrzā tried to stem the exodus from the area under his rule of its entire Armenian population, and tried to win their affection by various means. He promised concessions to the Armenian mercantile class of Tabrīz and broad privileges for the upper class and clergy. He provided funds for the renovation of the monastery of the Apostle Thaddeus, in an attempt to elevate the authority of that spiritual center as the focus of Armenian national authority of the Diocese of Azarbaijan, partly in opposition to Ečmīādzīn (Echmiadzin), which was by now outside Iranian jurisdiction (Goroyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82, 93).



Geographical division, however, did not keep the Armenians of Azarbaijan separated from their compatriots in Russian-ruled central Armenia—the land of Ararat, Arc'ax, and Siwnik'—or from the Western Armenians in the Ottoman empire.

In order to have better access to the Iranian provincial administration, the Armenian Diocese of Azarbaijan transferred its seat in the 1830s from St. Thaddeus of Tabrīz (Ačemean, *S. T'adēi vank'*, p. 11; Martirosyan, "Iranahay gaḷuṭ'i patmuṭ'yunic'," p. 196). The Diocese of Azarbaijan as well as that of southern Iran (at the Monastery of Amenap'rkič', New Julfa, Isfahan), the latter having authority over the Armenians of India, most of whom had gone there from Iran, were both regarded as "dominical" and subject to the catholicos of all Armenians at Echmiadzin.

Some scions of Armenian feudal families settled in Tabrīz or Tehran and took up administrative and financial posts. These included such figures as Manučehr Khan Mo'tamad-al-dawla, who was captured by Āqā Moḥammad Khan (q.v.) at the end of the previous century in the conquest of Tiflis. He was made first chief eunuch, later provincial governor of Gīlān, Fārs, Kermānšāh, and Isfahan, and took part in the negotiations at Torkamānčāy. Of his brother's sons, Mīrzā Rostam Khan, Āgālar Khan, and Solaymān Khan also occupied high posts (*Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* III, p. 517; Goroyean, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99). Dawiṭ' Khan Melik' Šahnazareanc' Šahp'otean, son of Catur Khan, of the Melik'-Šahnazareans of Geḷark'unik', occupied high positions in the foreign ministry. He was appointed extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador at Baghdad, Paris, and elsewhere. His reports, which are published, contain plans for basic reforms in the country (*Hay žolovrdi patmuṭ'yun* V, p. 519).

The Armenian merchants in Azarbaijan, Gīlān, Isfahan, Shiraz, and other centers of trade continued to play an important part in trade with Russia and European countries. There were large commercial houses in Tabrīz, Marāḡa, Ardabīl, Rašt, New Julfa (near Isfahan), and Shiraz, with agencies at the ports of Anzalī and Būšeher, which belonged to Armenian merchants; these firms exported dried fruit, leather, and other goods. From Russia they imported cotton and flaxen stuffs, ceramic and glass vessels; from Europe, fabric, tools, and machinery needed for the developing manufacturing industry (Goroyean, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-34; Frangean, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-89).

Iranian-Armenian merchants established in the Transcaucasus and in Russian



cities—Tiflis, Baku, Astrakhan, Rostov, Moscow, and other trading centers—maintained ties with Armenian merchants in Iran, facilitating a large part of the trade between the two countries.

The Armenian mercantile class in Iran also played the role of *Kulturträger* to a certain extent, acting for the diffusion of Western civilization; Armenian government officials took upon themselves the same mission. One of these figures was the above-mentioned Dawit' Khan. But the greatest Iranian-Armenian diplomat, educator, publicist, and writer was Mīrzā Malkom Khan (q.v.). A liberal thinker and activist, he became a major force in the intellectual awakening of Iran and was instrumental in fostering the constitutional movement in Iran.

At the end of the century, Yovhannēs Khan Masehean held the position of palace dragoman, and other high diplomatic posts, defending Iran's state interests at a number of international conferences. He was an important educator and cultural figure, and president of the Tehran "Society of Philomaths." Later, he produced the highly-acclaimed Armenian translation of the works of Shakespeare. At Tehran, where the Armenian population grew rapidly, Masehean in 1894 founded the first Iranian-Armenian newspaper, *Šawił* (Path). In the following decades about thirty Armenian newspapers and monthlies were founded in cities with sizable Armenian populations (Tabrīz, Rašt, Isfahan) (*Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* VII, pp. 266-67; *Hay zołovrdi patmuṣyun* VI, pp. 718-19). Many other important Armenian public figures are known from the period of the Qajar dynasty.

There were strong cultural ties between the Armenians of Iran and those of Russian Armenia and the Transcaucasus. Instruction in schools paralleled the curriculum in Caucasian Armenian schools. There were elementary and middle schools in cities and in many villages; their free operation was ensured by firmans of Nāṣer-al-dīn and Moẓaffar-al-dīn Shah. Eastern Armenian newspapers and literature circulated widely in the Iranian-Armenian communities; and Raffi (Yakob Melik'-Yakobean), the novelist, is particularly notable amongst the Iranian-Armenian writers who contributed to the development of Armenian literature.

The Iranian-Armenian community was always absorbed, and often involved, in issues affecting the whole Armenian nation. Morally, materially, and sometimes militarily, it participated in the liberation movement of the Western Armenians, which began in the 1890s against Ottoman tyranny. Many



young men joined the partisan groups that left the Caucasus through Mākū and Salmās for Van, to participate in the battle for freedom.

In the days of the anti-Armenian policy of Sultan ‘Abd-al-Ḥamīd II and the mass killings of 1896, many Armenian refugees found refuge in the Armenian villages of Salmās and Urmia (Frangean, op. cit., p. 68).

Iranian-Armenians of every region took an active part in the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-11. The famed partisan and folk hero Ep’rem Dawṭ’ean, later called Yeprem Khan, directed Armenian armed revolutionary units; there were other such figures, and researchers have pointed out that of twenty-four major revolutionary leaders, some sixteen were Armenians (Şafā’ī, *Rahbarān*, p. 567). Voluntary units of Armenian fedayeen enlisted in the Transcaucasus and in Ottoman-occupied Western Armenia also came to the aid of the Iranian revolution. The Armenian armed units under K’erī (Aršak Gafafean), together with the Azarbaijani *mojāhedīn* fighting under the general command of Sattār Khan, participated in the defense of Tabrīz (*Haiykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* IV, pp. 452-53). In 1909 Yeprem Khan’s Armenian fedayeen groups fought victoriously at Rašt, linked up with the forces of Sepahdār Tonokābonī and Sardār As’ad Baḳtīarī, and entered Tehran in triumph. After this victory, Yeprem Khan was made general commander of the armed forces of the provisional government, and was killed fighting counter-revolutionaries near Hamadān in 1912 (Ēlmar, *Ep’rena*, pp. 572-89).

The years of World War I were tragic for the Armenian people, most of whom lived in the Ottoman territory. Taking advantage of war conditions, the Turkish government started mass deportation of Armenians from their traditional homeland. More than 1.5 million Armenians were uprooted, and a very large number of them lost their lives on the road into exile (Rā’īn, *Qatl-e ‘ām*, pp. 62-63).

Although Iran had declared neutrality from the beginning of the war, much of the country was still subjected to enemy occupation and destruction; the incursion of Turkish forces into Iran and their entry into Tabrīz was particularly hard upon the Assyrians and the Armenians of Azarbaijan. Although the Iranian authorities in Tabrīz were able to prevent the slaughter of the Armenian inhabitants, there were massacres of Armenians at Mākū, Salmās, and especially Kōy; many Armenians fled to the Caucasus, reaching as far as Tiflis (Mamean, ed., *Yušamatean*, p. 74).



In April, 1915, near the village Dīlmān of Salmās, Russian forces which included Armenian volunteer units dealt a crushing blow to the Ottoman armies of Ƙalīl Pasha and drove them out of Iran, eventually reaching Van, where the Armenians had been putting up a last-ditch defense against the Turkish enemies (*Haykakan sovetakan Hanragitaran* III, p. 387; *Hay žołovrdi patmuṭyun* VI, p. 567).

The February uprising and Great October Revolution of 1917 that gripped Russia produced profound reactions in neighboring countries, particularly in Iranian political life. The withdrawal of Russian forces from the southern front, Iran's northern districts, and the Transcaucasus, presented to the Turks a fresh opportunity to attack broad areas of northwestern Iran, with grievous results again for the local Armenian and Assyrian populations. Pursued by the Turks, the Armenians of the Van area were unable to enter the Transcaucasus and were forced to flee to Iran, where at Salmās and Urmia they joined masses of local Armenians intending to flee via Hamadān to the more secure regions of central and southern Iran; at New Julfa (Isfahan) and in surrounding villages, far from the horrors of war, their compatriots had dwelt for centuries. But a small group of refugees scattered at Hamadān, whilst at the demand of the British occupation authorities the rest moved towards Iraq, suffering great losses on the road. The refugees were lodged finally at Ba'qūba camp (*Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* IV, p. 462).

In 1918-20, when the newly-created republics of the Transcaucasus seceded from Russia, relations between Iran and the Republic of Armenia did not take decisive shape. Some time after the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia diplomatic relations were resumed, in the course of which an agreement was concluded for partial immigration and for the transport to Soviet Armenia via Iran of Western Armenians who had found shelter in Iraq in 1917 (*ibid.*). In 1922, when Armenia, as a part of the Transcaucasian Federative Republic, was joined to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, relations between Armenia and Iran were conducted by the diplomatic representatives of the USSR.

Many intellectuals had emigrated from Armenia in the early 1920s; these emigrés participated in and contributed to the educational and cultural life of Iran, especially of Azarbaijan, but this was not to be a lasting effect, for many returned, and Iran experienced renewed turbulence with a change of dynasty.

In the twilight of Qajar Iran, the Iranian-Armenians continued actively to participate in the social and political affairs of the country. Although as a



religious unit the community continued to be dominated by the Diocese of Azarbaijan in the north and by that of India and Persia in the south, at New Julfa, the role of the expanding Armenian community of Tehran was becoming crucial in the establishment of ties with the authorities of the central government.

*Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* (Armenian Soviet encyclopædia) III-VI, Erevan, 1977-80.

*Hay žołovrdi patmuṭyun* (History of the Armenian people) V-VI, Erevan, 1974-81.

N. H. Goroyean, *Parskastani hayerə* (The Armenians of Persia), Tehran, 1968. E. Frangean, *Atrpatakan* (Azarbaijan), Tiflis, 1905.

H. Ačemean, *S. Ṭadēi vankə* (The monastery of St. Thaddeus), Tehran, 1960.

A. Mamean, ed., *Yušamatean Tēr-Nersēs ark'episkopos Melik'-Ṭ'angeani* (Memorial volume of Lord Nersēs Archbishop Melik'-Ṭ'angean), Tehran, 1968.

Ēlmar, *Ep'rem*, Tehran, 1964.

H. H. Martirosyan, "Iranahay gaḷuṭ'i patmuṭ'yunic'," (From the history of the Iranian-Armenian settlement), *Merjavor ev Mijin Arevelk'i erkrner ev žołovurdner* (Lands and peoples of the Middle East), VIII: Iran, Erevan, 1975.

E. Şafā'ī, *Rahbarān-e mašrūṭa*, Tehran, 1344 Š./1965.

E. Rā'īn, *Qatl-e 'am(m)-e armaniān dar dawrān-e salāṭīn-e Āl-e 'Oṭmān*, Tehran, 1973.