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ELEONORA DUSE AND THE ARMENIANS

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Eleonora Duse (1857–1923), considered the queen of Italian classical theater, had occasional contacts with Armenians during her lifetime, although there were quite few in comparison with those of her famous contemporary and competitor, the legendary French actress Sarah Bernhardt¹. Yet, the “Armenian” connections of the Divine Duse – as Victor Hugo called her – are significant, even if some of them may have been fictional in their nature.

In Vahram Papazian’s Memoirs

The tragic actor Vahram Papazian (1888–1968), one of the most outstanding figures of the Armenian stage, received his theatrical education in Italy (1908–1911) and studied with two eminent actors, Ermete Novelli and Ermete Zacconi.

Papazian worked in Eleonora Duse’s theater company for a short while and wrote about the great actress in his memoirs, *On the Theaters of the World* (in Russian)² and *A Retrospective Glance* (in Armenian). The relevant passages of the latter are presented below in English translation, given their interest for European

* Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է 15.05.21, գրախոսվել է 21.05.21, ընդունվել է տպագրության 02.08.21:

¹ On Sarah Bernhardt’s connection with the Armenians see Բախչինեան 2007.

² Папазян 1937, 55–61.

and, particularly, Italian theater historians. The same information had previously appeared in the Russian memoirs.

In the second semester, along with other six students, I studied with Eleonora Duse, whose art was the contrast of what I had seen hitherto and which no one would ever repeat! It was an art absolutely and literally devoid of any kind of artificiality, which ruled over and straightened the spectator without the need for means of expression. It was a warm, inner fire, which was endlessly convincing as it made you happy; a lantern that burned and irradiated without any oil or wicker. A creation of sublime feelings, horrible in its natural simplicity: it was impossible to follow or understand it; you could only be subjected to it! It was an art that reached the most delicate of all, without reaching the end of the ends. The ignorant eye, as it watched her, doubted whether it was art or total hypnosis.

*Yes, it was art, art deprived of any artificiality, art in its sublime sense, which was expressed by endless tonalities of the recited word. A word was everything on **Duse's lips: she** turned the scenic word at once into a spiritual inner irradiation, an invisible flow of electrons, as it filled the intellect of the spectator, neutralizing his personality and enchanting him in a way that made the ordinary means of expression vain and useless.*

*Her personal life – did that poor woman have a personal life? – has been subjected to the concept of her art so much and she has watched the suffering and thinking human soul so much, that she has become a lake of tears, a torch smoking in front of **the altar of art until it was extinguished...***

She was the most emotional and delicate among women, but, for the sake of her art, she came to terms with living the Golgotha of love and remaining totally inseparable from love.

*This is not a legend. Her relationship with **d'Annunzio attested what I say.***

Such life could not have a normal end, and Duse passed away because of mental illness³.

I was following her all the time, trying to penetrate the soul of that exceptional actress and explain her creative process. I understood that all masters I had seen so far sought and found their creative matter and the means of transferring it to others outside of themselves, in their surroundings, while Duse found and took out all that from her inside.

³ This is indeed inaccurate. In fact, Duse died of pneumonia.

In the balcony of the hotel where she lived or in the lonely corner of the theater coulisses where she sat silently on a bended chair, with half-open eyes, her hands on her knees, mashing up her black-edged handkerchief of sorrowful person with her nervous fingers. Exhaling the words of her role she was going to perform, through her delicate lips, which gradually became bloodless, her ivory-like pale forehead was covered with heavy drops of sweat, and she stayed in that position for a long, long time.

*I have approached her many times with yearning and cherishment at those tense moments and asked her whether she is sick. I have always received the same **distressed and tolerant answer: “I am not sick, my son, and I am not alone either... I am speaking with my role.”***

She was always with her role, and the role was with her, that is why she was not from the world, although she was in the world.

She loved that we called her mama, and she called us son. Our exceptional Siranush⁴ also loved, even demanded to call her mama; Siranush, who resembled Duse in many ways . . .

*Since Duse’s art was like this, she became a totally different person on stage, even though remained the same physically. She remained the same outside, while becoming a totally different creature inside, according to the role. For that reason, Duse never used or needed any makeup, and there were neither makeup nor wigs in her modest dressing room. Whatever role she played – the Egyptian **Cleopatra** or d’Annunzio’s **Gioconda** – she wore just the necessary clothes as she relived the inner world of that role, according to her creative ideas.*

*She was like that on stage and off stage, from Ibsen’s **Nora** to Shakespeare’s **Cleopatra**, from d’Annunzio’s **Gioconda** to Dumas’ **La Dame aux Camélias**.*

It was impossible to hand over such art to anybody and no one could learn that. Duse had no followers and did not leave students.

Duse was the crossing point of unrepeatable spiritual abilities and various essences; she was that unknown quantity of creation for which human algebra does not have a solution.

*All these led me to the conclusion that there is something in the depth of every art that is impossible either to learn or to explain. Thus, I owed the **development of my own creative instinct to the fact of being under Duse’s***

⁴ Siranush (Merope Kantarjan, 1857–1932) was a celebrated Armenian actress.

influence and subjected to her creative charm for six months. True, I have not forgotten what I have seen and studied, mostly about the craft of the art, and I have enriched my means of expression. But the spiritual nurturing I received from Duse taught me to subject that art to what gradually grew in my inner self, to use that expression only to explain and communicate my art, and to be extremely afraid from being an artless craftsman or even a virtuoso one deprived of any content. My impression from my previous teachers was so big and I was so inclined to offer an emotion or feeling coming from sources external to me that I could have gotten lost in the realm of a bloodless, empty, and lightless art, if I had not met Duse while taking my first steps.

I was so enraptured by her and loved her so much that I crisscrossed Austria and Germany, as well as various cities of Central Italy without seeing anything. I did not go away from her, like a puppy, always warming up from her life, trying and learning to see my inner world like she did, hearing and understanding my inner voice, speaking to my soul all the time like she did.

You will surely agree with me, reader, that everything in life, even happiness, should end in time. I broke away from my worship of Duse's person and art, and thus I saved my own creative instinct from that unavoidable mysticism to which the irresistible charm of her acting used to push me.

It is true, Duse was magnificent and exceptional, but the spectator sees in her acting a strong personality struggling with a certain feeling. Yes, it is most beautiful and great, but it is not the core of the art of an actor.

Acting should identify with a certain feeling of the spectator's collective struggle, and only this is the core of the art of an actor.

Duse was an exception, and the exception does not form the rule. Yet, there are exceptions, proving the existence of the rule, and Duse was one of them.

If I had not seen Duse's exceptional art, perhaps I would have never understood proper art; likewise, I would not understand light without seeing darkness.

It is impossible to forget her while reading Armand Duval's letter in the fifth act of "La Dame aux Camélias," reading the fatal old manuscript with Paolo in "Francesca da Rimini," inquiring of her maids about Antonio in "Cleopatra." Her hands, her all-embracing and very expressive hands in d'Annunzio's Dead City are especially unforgettable.

*Reader, I remained one of those few living persons who have seen, felt, and loved that marvelous actress. I would like to do a lot to transmit that impression to my contemporary actors*⁵.

As it is the case of any memoir, the pages quoted from Papazian are not entirely reliable – we have already noted an inaccuracy in Duse's biography, regarding her death – yet his writing adds to the creative portrait of the great actress.

*Armenian Origin?*⁶

At one time, rumors about Duse's putative Armenian origins circulated in the press and literature. Besides obvious goals of enhancing national feelings, the evidence for such origin is flimsy and often contradictory. We discuss the available data below in the hope of bringing the matter to a definite conclusion.

Official sources and Italian encyclopedias have never mentioned the hypothesis of Duse's Armenian origin, which has been the subject of repeated speculation and mentioned time and again in articles devoted to Duse and written by Armenian and non-Armenian authors alike⁷. Duse's name and biography, with some exceptions, have been also included in several books dedicated to the Armenians and dictionaries of prominent Armenian figures⁸.

The first references about the Armenian roots of the actress appeared after her death on April 21, 1924. The French Havas news agency released information about Duse's death and mentioned her Armenian descent. The Armenian daily *Hairenik of Boston* credited Havas in May 1924: "*The Havas agency was informed from Pittsburgh about the death of the tragic actress Duse, who is known to the world as Italian but has Armenian origins and descends from the Duzian Armenian Catholic family of Constantinople*"⁹. Unfortunately, the source used by the agency to disclose Duse's Armenian ancestry is unknown. This report was repeated both by the Armenian and foreign press. The Swiss newspaper *Feuille*

⁵ Փափագյան 1979, 136–140.

⁶ See the discussion in Բախչինյան 2004, 599–604.

⁷ See «Արարատ», 1944, հոկտեմբեր-նոյեմբեր, 146–147. According to this article, allegedly Napoleon's general Joachim Murat, playwright Edmond Rostand, and Eleonora Duse "were proud of their Armenian origin" (147).

⁸ See, for example, Totomianz 1938, 55; Hagop-Krikor 1976, 73; Boghossian 1987, 331; Hermet, Cogni Ratti di Desio 1993, 64.

⁹ «Հայրենիք», 18.05.1924:

d'Avis de Lausanne ran the actress's obituary in its issue of June 14, 1924, mentioning that she was a descendant of the Duzian family. It added that the Duzians managed the Ottoman mint house and had made great contributions to the development of Armenian literature and fine arts. This last piece of information is also confirmed by historian Jacques de Morgan's *History of the Armenian people*¹⁰.

The Trieste-based newspaper *Il Piccolo della Sera* also mentioned Duse's Armenian origin in its August 1, 1924, issue, but its references were a newspaper in Constantinople and an Armenian intellectual, both anonymously sourced. On August 22, the French translation of the *Il Piccolo della Sera* report appeared in the *Le Gaulois* newspaper of Paris, as quoted in one of Duse's biographies:

"According to a journal in Constantinople, Eleonora Duse was... an Armenian!

(...) A prominent Armenian figure, writes our Constantinopolitan colleague, has especially traveled to Italy to place flowers on the grave of his compatriot, the illustrious tragedian Eleonora Duse. On his way to Trieste, this Armenian told reporters that the famous actress was an authentic descendant of the Duse-Duzian family, whose members had settled in Venice under the Republic (Venetian, from 697–1797 – A.B.) and acquired citizenship. One of Eleonora's great-uncles had even been director general of the customs of the Ottoman Empire.

*To better convince the Italian journalists, this Armenian has quoted the passage of the History of the Peoples of the Orient, of Georges Morgan (sic), where this author mentioned the Armenian origin of Eleonora Duse"*¹¹.

¹⁰ See ԹԷՆՈՂԻԿ 1926, 183.

¹¹ "...secondo un giornale di Constantinopoli, Eleonora Duse sarebbe... armena!

Leggesi, in fatti, nel *Gaulois* del 22 agosto 1924 : Eleonora Duse était Arménienne d'origine, du moins un journal de Constantinople l'affirme, et il donne de curieux détails a l'appui de cette affirmation.

Un éminent personnage arménien - écrit notre confrère constantinopolitain - s'est rendu expressément en Italie pour déposer des fleurs sur la tombe de sa compatriote, l'illustre tragédienne Eleonora Duse. A son passage a Trieste, cet Arménien a expliqué aux journalistes que la célèbre artiste était une descendante authentique de la famille Duse-Duzian, dont les membres s'étaient établis a Venise sous le République et avaient obtenu leurs lettres de naturalisation. Un des arrière-oncles d'Eleonora avait même été directeur général des douanes de l'empire ottoman.

The reference to the book and its author were inaccurate. Jacques de Morgan's book, *History of the Armenian People*, mentions the Duzian family¹², but not Duse.

Who could be this “prominent Armenian figure” who had reported about Duse's Armenian origin?

According to Vigen Isahakian's memoirs, his father, the famous Armenian poet Avetik Isahakian, who lived in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy from 1912 to 1923, was personally acquainted with Duse. In 1924, Isahakian was in Italy with his family. His son wrote that the family visited Eleonora Duse's grave in Asolo and added: “*Eleonora was a daughter of an Armenian shoemaker¹³ living in Vigevano, and her grandfather was an actor of Italian itinerant theaters. Before dying, Duse expressed a desire to be buried in the Armenian land, that is, in the lands belonging to the Mekhitarists. Along with my father and mother, we went to kneel before her tomb. My father had seen her on the stage and was personally acquainted with her*”¹⁴. The Mekhitarists are a famous Armenian congregation founded in 1701 and established in San Lazzaro degli Armeni island of the Venetian Lagoon in 1717. Vigen Isahakian then recalled how once they were hosted by an Italian duke of Armenian descent, who offered his father to stay and work in Italy, and in the future, “*when the day comes, you will be buried in the ‘Armenian land,’ in the Mekhitarists’ country seat, next to Eleonora Duse*”¹⁵.

The possibility of Duse's Armenian origin was also mentioned in the literature about the actress. Thus, French theatrical writer Eduard Schneider wrote in a monograph published in 1927: “*Recently, I read that Duse came from the Armenian Duzian family, which settled in Veneto during Venice Republic. Hypothesis or truth: on her luminous face, does not one see the long suffering of many generations, and does not the pure nobility of her hands reveal the rare nobility of her family?*”¹⁶ In 1931 another biographer, Austrian writer Emil Alphons

Pour mieux convaincre les journalistes italiens, cet Arménien a cité le passage de l'Histoire des Peuples d'Orient, de Georges Morgan, où cet auteur mentionnait l'origine arménienne d'Eleonora Duse” (Antona-Traversi 1926, 9).

¹² “...les Duz, qui ont été les directeurs de la Monnaie impériale ottomane, et ont accordé une puissante assistance aux lettres et aux arts chez les Arméniens” (Morgan 1919, 263).

¹³ This information is inaccurate; Duse's father was an actor too.

¹⁴ Իսահակյան 2000, 173–174:

¹⁵ Իսահակյան 2000, 195.

¹⁶ Schneider 1927, 212.

Rheinhardt, mentioned Duse street (Calle Duse) in Chioggia and added: “*What a strange name! Some say they are of Armenian origin*”¹⁷. Biographers still remembered the hypothesis decades later: “*It is legitimate to think of the supposed Byzantine origin of the Duse family, according to the assertion of a newspaper (‘Il Piccolo di Trieste della sera’... intended to attribute the Armenian descent of the Duse family, from the Duzians, landed in Veneto at the time of the Serenissima Republic)*”¹⁸.

A later source attested that the members of the Mekhitarist congregation of Venice had researched their archives and proven that the Duse family was a branch of the famous Duzian family of Constantinople¹⁹. However, the literature on the Duzians contains no testimony about any such branch. Philologist Arsen Ghazikian, a prominent member of the same congregation, rejected the claims about Duse’s Armenian origin, reporting that the actress was Italian, since her grandfather and father were already born in Chioggia, near Venice²⁰. In an extensive article about Duse, another Armenian researcher, Khoren Kapigian, wrote: “*It was written that this world-famous Italian actress has an Armenian origin. It highlights our patriotic feelings, but it goes against reality. Her grandfather, Lodovico Duse, was a sailor from Chioggia, born in 1792*”²¹. Kapigian also mentioned that more than half of Chioggia’s inhabitants bear the family name Duse²².

¹⁷ “Una delle molte viuzze tortuose fra le case del borgo tutte ammassate quasi a difendersi, si chiama Calle Duse. Che nome strano! Taluni affermano sia di origine armena” (Rheinhardt 1931, 15).

¹⁸ “Vien lecito pensare alla supposta origine bizantina della stirpe dei Duse, secondo l’asserzione di un giornale (‘Il Piccolo di Trieste della sera’... inteso ad attribuire la discendenza armena della famiglia Duse, dai Duzian, sbarcati nel Veneto al tempo della Serenissima Repubblica” (Setti 1978, 17).

¹⁹ Clipping from an English language newspaper in the personal files of director Rouben Mamoulian, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

²⁰ See ԹԷՂՈՂԻԿ 1926, 406.

²¹ ԹԷՂՈՂԻԿ 1926, 407.

²² ԹԷՂՈՂԻԿ 1926, 407.

On the other hand, Vahram Papazian, who, as we have seen, worked in Duse's troupe for six months, did not give any hint on the Armenian origin of the actress²³.

Thirteen years after Duse's death, a French journalist, Marie-Edith de Bonneuil, visited Chioggia and wrote the following in her article "In Duse's Land": "*The Diva's origin is less known. I found this on the spot. As they say, her family has come from Armenia and lived for a long time on Chioggia island of the Venetian Lagoon*"²⁴. As we see, there is no reference to the Duzians. If we recall Kapigian's observation that most residents of Chioggia carry the surname Duse, it is quite possible that the information about their ancestors was still available among them.

Nevertheless, by 1951 it was possible to find the phrase "Eleonora Duse, actress of Armenian origin" in the title of articles published in the Armenian press of the Diaspora²⁵. Three years later, writing on the thirtieth anniversary of Duse's death, a columnist of the American-Armenian newspaper *Hairenik Weekly* who used the pen-name **Bostonian** reported: "*The Bostonian recalls a conversation some years ago with Alice Stone Blackwell, who volunteered the information that during Eleonora's final trip to the United States, she had told Miss Blackwell about her Armenian ancestors*"²⁶. This information, which also comes from an indirect source, was written down after the death of Alice Stone Blackwell (1857–1950), a prominent American Armenophile and translator of Armenian poetry, which gives room to question its authenticity.

Still in 1968, Nshan Beshigtashlian (1898–1972), a well-known satirist, novelist, and theater scholar, wrote that Duse "was the last offspring of the

²³ Writer Aram Bedrossian wrote that Ruben Zarian, a historian of Armenian theater, suggested that he should undertake the Italian translation of Papazian's Russian memoirs, dealing with Duse through Giorgio Nurigiani, an Italian scholar of Slavonic studies. The latter refused, as he was not willing to hurt Italian national feelings by exposing Duse's Armenian origin (see «Աշխարհ», 22.06.1986). The argument is quite groundless; as we have seen, Papazian's memoirs have nothing about Duse's assumed Armenian origin. Yet, in 1971 it was reported that Papazian's memoirs on Duse would soon be published in the Italian press by the same Professor Nurigiani («Պայքար», 22.06.1971).

²⁴ Bonneuil 1937, 337.

²⁵ See, for example, «Հայրենիք», 5.10.1951.

²⁶ "Hairenik Weekly," 8.08.1954.

Duzian *amira family*”²⁷. This claim was devoid of any factual basis. Father Gabriel Menevishian, a philologist from the Mekhitarist Congregation in Vienna, had accomplished a study of the genealogy of the Duzian family, where he noted that Mihran Bey Duz(ian) (1817–1891) had six children, including four sons, of which two at least were married²⁸.

A summary of available testimonies shows that the data on the Armenian origin of Duse appeared posthumously through mediated sources (Armenian writers and an American Armenophile who knew her, Armenian monks who studied some archives), which appear to be doubtful. On the other hand, those sources are mainly based on the version about the descendance from the Duzians.

The Havas agency and the French journalist are non-Armenian sources, yet their references are also rather vague.

The version of Eleonora Duse’s possible Armenian origin could be corroborated if the Mekhitarist archives yield actual evidence about the establishment of a Duzian family branch in Italy.

It cannot be excluded that Duse might have an Armenian origin, since there are not valid reasons to reject Marie-Edith de Bonneuil’s reference *prima facie*, but it is out of the question that she was a Duzian offspring. Duse was rather removed from her possible Armenian ancestry, which does not give any right to call her “an actress of Armenian origin” even if this was proven. For this reason, it is surprising that Aram Bedrossian called Duse both Armenian and “*our daughter*,”²⁹ claiming that her volcanic soul identified her with Armenians³⁰. Armenians have the right to be proud of the eminent actress Siranush, who had an equal high standing with Duse, her contemporary, according to the sources of the time.

Eleonora Duse and Kostan Zarian

Kostan Zarian (1885–1969), another famous Armenian writer, lived between 1911 and 1912 in Venice, 1915–1916 in Rome, and 1916–1921 in Florence. He told the recently deceased philologist Armen Ter-Stepanyan that he was personally acquainted with Duse, who had disclosed her Armenian extraction to him at a

²⁷ «Հայրենիք», 28.06.1968.

²⁸ ՄԷՆԵՎԻՇԻԱՆ 1890, 49–50:

²⁹ ՊԵՏՐՈՍԵԱՆ 1972, 10:

³⁰ «Աշխարհ», 22.06.1986:

Venetian restaurant³¹. In such a case, Zarian could be another potential candidate, along with Avetik Isahakian, to identify the “*prominent Armenian figure*” who reported to the Italian press on Duse’s Armenian origin after her death.

According to Zarian’s middle son Armen (1914–1994), a noted architect, his sister Nevarte Zarian-Cimara (1917–2005), later a famous sculptress in Italy, was born on August 6, 1917, in “Eleonora Duse’s home” in Florence³². We have two letters addressed by the writer to his French Armenian colleague Archag Tchobanian from the address Villa della Robbia 54 or Via Robbia 54 respectively on June 28 and November 29, 1917³³. Therefore, Nevarte Zarian was born in that address, where the Zarians lived until mid-1918 at least³⁴.

Eleonora Duse corresponded extensively with her England-based daughter Henriette Marchetti-Duse, who kept copies of many of those letters. Via Robbia 54 appears as address in two letters written by the actress in July 1911 and January 1915³⁵. She returned in January 1917 from Rome to Florence, living until April first on Via Lorenzo il Magnifico 38 and then at Hotel Italie³⁶. After being on the road (Rome-Viareggio-Milan-Viareggio) in April-May 1917, she went back to Florence for two days in June 1917, again on Via Robbia 54, and then returned to Milan³⁷. She was again on the road (Milan-Bergamo-Udine-Milan) between June and September, and spent two days to Florence, writing on October 2 from Via della Robbia 54 before departing to Milan³⁸. Her absence from the city was shorter this time. She returned on October 24 and remained in Florence for two months until December 24³⁹. Duse’s and, indeed, Zarian’s full address, Via Luca della Robbia 54, bears the name of fifteenth century sculptor Luca della Robbia (1400–1482). The street should not be confused with another street called Via dei della Robbia, linked to the della Robbia family in general.

³¹ Armen Ter-Stepanyan, personal communication to Artsvi Bakhchinyan, Yerevan, May 2007.

³² See «Գրական թերթ», 8.02.1991:

³³ Մատթեոսեան 2007, 378, 380.

³⁴ See Zarian’s letters to Tchobanian, February 8 and May 11, 1918 (Մատթեոսեան 2007, 382, 384).

³⁵ Duse 2010, 17, 35.

³⁶ Duse 2010, 150, 158.

³⁷ Duse 2010, 199–20.

³⁸ Duse 2010, 215.

³⁹ Duse 2010, 219–237.

The details about the movements of Eleonora Duse in 1917 allows making two important inferences

a) Duse was not in Florence at the time of Nevarte Zarian's birth (August 1917).

b) She wrote from Via della Robbia 54 in 1911 and 1915, from other addresses in January-April 1917, and returned to the old address in June and October 1917, perhaps also later on. Therefore, this was not a stable residence.

This conclusion is fully supported by Maria Ida Biggi, publisher of the actress's letters, who has written, in reference to Duse's wandering life during World War I, that she lived in Caterina Consigli's pension on Via della Robbia 54, while her apartment was rented or subletted⁴⁰.

Armen Zarian was not totally wrong, indeed. Their family lived in the same place where the actress did, but that was not "Duse's home." Otherwise, she would have made any minimal reference to her guests in the correspondence with her daughter. Like Duse, they rented some quarters in the same pension. This is all we know about their relationship.

Literary scholar Artsrun Avagyan has written that Kostan Zarian's family "lived for a short while in the residence of famous actress Eleonora Duse, who the writer had gotten acquainted with in Venice, enjoyed the pleasure of forbidden and dangerous love, and had days of ecstasy"⁴¹. This claim combines Armen Zarian's passing reference with an inaccurate identification of Eleonora Duse and a young woman of aristocratic origins named Eleonora, with whom Zarian had a brief relationship in Venice around 1911–1912. She appears briefly in his memoir *West*, published serially for the first time in the monthly *Hairenik* of Boston in 1928–1929. The description of the initial encounter of Zarian with Eleonora is key to clarify the issue and avoid future misunderstandings:

"I had met her for the first time in the Benedetto Marcello Hall during a symphonic concert. My friends pointed at her, who carried the name of a noble family, who despite her advanced age, was still wonderfully beautiful and the subject of conversation in all of Europe due to her royal links. Eleonora was sitting beside her, with the natural arrogance that characterizes families, bearing a

⁴⁰ Duse 2010, XXI.

⁴¹ Ավագյան 1998, 33:

historical name. At the same time, she had those simple, humble, and forthcoming manners to talk that caused sympathy and attraction.

I was looking at her from a distance. The mother's blue, deep, and devouring eyes scrutinized the faces (...). Eleonora was sitting almost immobile, minding her own business, used to living under her mother's shadow, totally carried away by the music. For me, she was prettier than her mother, because she was spiritually deeper"⁴².

Conclusion

This present article comes to show that:

a) It was not Eleonora, but her unnamed mother "of advanced age" who could have been a potential age match for Duse, who was fifty-three in 1911, but had lost her mother, Angelica Cappeletto, in 1906.

b) Eleonora belonged to a noble family with royal connections, while Duse did not have any connection with nobility.

c) Between 1900 and 1911, Duse did not live in Venice. She had rented a modest villa named La Porziuncola in Settignano, on a hillside located to the northeast of Florence⁴³.

Of course, it is tempting to suggest that Kostan Zarian could have created a fictional episode out of a potential relationship with Eleonora Duse, but for the time being, his connections with the actress should remain within the realm of legend.

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ԷԼԵՈՆՈՐԱ ԴՈՒԶԵՆ ԵՎ ՀԱՅԵՐԸ

ԲԱԽԶԻՆՅԱՆ Ա., ՄԱՏԹԷՈՍԵԱՆ Վ.

Ամփոփում

Քանայի բառեր՝ Էլեոնորա Դուզե, Վահրամ Փափազյան, հուշագրություն, Տյուզյան ընտանիք, Միխիթարյաններ, Կոստան Զարյան, Ավետիք Իսահակյան:

Հողվածում երեք դրվագով ներկայացված են իտալացի հռչակավոր դերասանուհի Էլեոնորա Դուզեի (1857–1923) հետ կապվող հայկական առնչությունները:

Առաջին դրվագում անգլերեն թարգմանությամբ ներկայացված է հայ մեծանուն դերասան Վահրամ Փափազյանի հուշագրության՝ Դուզեին վերաբերող հատվածը: Հայտնի է, որ 1908–1911 թթ. Փափազյանը թատերական ուսման է հետևել Իտալիայում և կարճ ժամանակ հանդես է եկել Դուզեի թատերախմբում:

Երկրորդ դրվագում ի մի են բերված 1920–1950-ական թթ. իտալական, ֆրանսիական, շվեյցարական, ամերիկյան մամուլում Էլեոնորա Դուզեի՝ հայ ընտանիքից սերված լինելու վերաբերյալ վկայությունները: Այդ մասին առաջին անգամ հիշատակել է ֆրանսիական «Հավաս» գործակալությունը 1924-ին, իսկ նույն թվականին իտալական «Իլ պիկոլո դելա սեռա» թերթը Դուզեին համարել է պոլսահայ Տյուզյան գերդաստանից սերած՝ հիմնվելով անանուն հայ մտավորականի վկայության վրա: 1937-ին ֆրանսիացի լրագրող Մարի-Էդիտ դը Բոննոն եղել է Դուզեի նախնիների ծննդավայրում (Քիոջա) և վկայել, որ տեղում պարզել է դերասանուհու ընտանիքի հայասերունդ լինելը:

Հեղինակները ձեռնպահ են մնում Դուզեի հայկական ծագման վարկածի հարցում, սակայն մտացածին են համարում դերասանուհու՝ Տյուզյաններից սերված լինելու վկայությունը:

Երրորդ դրվագում ճշտվում են իտալացի դերասանուհու և հայ գրող Կոստան Զարյանի փոխհարաբերությունների վերաբերյալ վկայությունները:

ЭЛЕОНОРА ДУЗЕ И АРМЯНЕ

БАХЧИНЯН А., МАТЕОСЯН В.

Резюме

Ключевые слова: Элеонора Дузе, Ваграм Папазян, мемуары, семейство Дюзян, мхитаристы, Костан Зарян, Аветик Исаакян.

В статье представлен вопрос связей известной итальянской актрисы Элеоноры Дузе (1857–1923) с армянами.

В мемуарах выдающегося армянского актера Ваграма Папазяна имеются отрывки, касающиеся Э. Дузе. Известно, что в 1908–1911 гг. В. Папазян учился в Италии и играл в труппе Дузе.

В воспоминаниях В. Папазяна приводятся свидетельства из итальянской, французской, швейцарской и американской прессы 1920–1950-х гг. относительно, якобы, армянского происхождения Элеоноры Дузе. Об этом впервые упомянуло французское агентство «Гавас» в 1924 году. В том же году на страницах итальянской газеты «Ил пикколо дела сера» Дузе была названа потомком константинопольской семьи Дюзян. В 1937 году французская журналистка Мари-Эдит де Бонно, побывав на родине предков Дузе (Киоджа), написала об армянском происхождении актрисы.

Оставляя в стороне вопрос об армянском происхождении актрисы, авторы статьи отвергают домыслы о том, что Э. Дузе является потомком семьи Дюзян.

Что же касается отношений между итальянской актрисой и армянским писателем Костаном Заряном, то авторы опровергают слухи об их любовной связи и ложной информации о том, что в 1917 году семья Зарянов проживала в доме Э. Дузе.