

ARMENIAN NATIONALISM AND THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT¹

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The establishment of the Evangelical Church of Armenia on 1 July 1846, is an event of historic significance and like all events that happen in history, it could not have happened in a vacuum; there should have been a number of underlying and immediate causes that produced it. One should try to find out what were these causes. I present this paper not as some kind of "apology" for the establishment of the Evangelical Church of Armenia, nor as a polemic against the Armenian National Church. I must, however, acknowledge that objectivity in historical research is a rare commodity. Even the primary sources quoted as reliable witnesses are often very subjective.² I doubt that I will be able to shed new light to the on going debate, because the field is well worked over.

I am sure whatever I say will satisfy neither the proponents nor the opponents of the establishment of the Evangelical Church of Armenia. Division in the body of Christ is a violence against the unity of the Church whatever the causes of that separation. Debates and war of words do not resolve any conflicts in human relationships; it is only love that in time can heal the wounds left on the body of Christ, and even so the scars remain. We as Evangelicals need to show greater love and open mindedness toward the National Church despite all that happened a century and a half ago. The ties that bind us together are far stronger than those that separate us. The theological, cultural, linguistic and ethnic common ground that is found between us is far greater and more significant than the differences we have.

Having said the above, I must hasten to add that the Church is not a human institution. We can study the causes and consequences of the establishment of a Church but there is more to it than simple historic accident. The Church is a divine institution; it is established and founded by God (I Thes 2.14; I Cor 3.11, 19). Hence the Church belongs to God. She is One, Universal - i.e., Catholic - and Holy. This unity is not an arithmetic sum of the various congregations or dioceses but an organic unity which links each believer to Christ and hence to one another (I Cor 1.9; I John 1.3). The establishment of the Evangelical Church of Armenia should not be looked at as being a simple historic event but as a divine intervention and an expression of His will.

Despite the fact that the Church is local and has the ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and social imprint of its members (I Cor 1.2. II Cor 1.1) she is Universal. The opposite of universality is not to be local but to be denominational. Worshipping in Armenian, Arabic or English does not contradict her universality, nor the fact that she is found in many geographic locations change the nature of the Church. She is in this world but she is not of this world, hence she is holy, separated and dedicated to her Lord.

One needs to clarify some misconceptions that are found in books and articles written on the establishment of the Evangelical Church of Armenia. It has been the bone of contention on both sides. The defenders of the opposing sides have put forth emotional and forceful arguments trying to justify their position and condemning the opponent. This has led to a degree of subjectivity and polemical spirit which is not acceptable in scholarly research. The Evangelicals insist that their movement was an indigenous, a reform and revival movement whose underlying causes are to be found in the state of the National Church of the time. They further claim, that the immediate cause of the separation was the persecution of the Evangelicals at the hands of the Patriarchs and their excommunication from the National Church.³ The Orthodox authors, on the other hand, insist that the establishment of the Evangelical Church was the work of foreign missionaries and had nothing to do with church reform or revival.⁴

Some truth is found in the assertions of both sides. But both sides miss the point by persisting in their argumentative positions. To say that our side has committed no fault and that all the mistakes are on the other side is a totalitarian frame of mind which leads us no where. As I said above, there is not one cause that brought about the separation, and it should not be considered in human linguistic categories only. The break was not the result of a single cause nor of human causes alone but through the divine Will.⁵ Parallel to the external causes there arose a movement of spiritual significance, the need for reform and revival within the National Church. If we separate the birth of the Evangelical Church of Armenia from the outer causes and reforming movements within, we distort the facts of history.

One should not judge what happened a hundred and fifty years ago in the light of the situation within the Armenian Orthodox Church today. Now we are living in an ecumenical age when both the Armenian Orthodox Church, with its two branches (Etchmiadzin and Cilicia), and the Armenian Evangelical Church with its three unions (Middle East, France and North America) are members of the World Council of Churches, as well as the Middle East Council of Churches. I am convinced that the separation of the Evangelical Church of Armenia would not have taken place if we had had Catholicos with the breadth of spirit and the depth of mind of H. H. Garegin I of All Armenians, and H. H.

Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia, both of whom are highly educated and ecumenical minded ecclesiastical hierarchs; both are Catholicos of highest integrity, with large enough hearts to bear all Armenians irrespective of their confession or political affiliation. I have personally known both of them and have had dealings with them, both before and after they became Catholicos. History, however, cannot be rewritten, the clock cannot be turned back. We have to accept the turns of history as they are and try to see where do they lead. History is the best teacher if we are eager students ready to learn.

As a result of the undercurrent of discontent and demand for reform, a small group of the disciples of Grigor Peshtimaljian, both laymen and priests⁶ came together in 1863 to form a group interested in religious revival and renewal known as **The Society of the Pious**.⁷ This society was headed by Hovhannes Ter-Sahakian until 1842 when he left to the United States for theological studies and Abisoghom Utujian, the older brother of Rev. Stepan Utujian, succeeded him as the head of this Society. The members of the Society of the Pious were men of integrity, with impeccable moral character, deep spiritual experience and were fervent servants of the National Church.

The testimony of Rev. Stepan Utujian, concerning his elder brother Abisoghom, is very touching:

"During the five yearly religious festival⁸ he would always go to confession and then partake of the communion. On the eve of these five festivals, he would spend the whole night in prayer. Next to his bed one could see the Psalter, the Nareg, the book of the liturgy and the book of chants. He would wake up his parents and brothers and ask for their forgiveness for the sins committed against them and then he would go to church to partake of the communion." Then he adds, "He could indeed say like the apostle that as to righteousness under the law blameless."⁹

The members of the Society of the Pious were interested in becoming a leaven for the renewal of the Church. They were interested in prayer and reading of the Bible; to develop a spirituality based not on the performance of the ritual demands of their religion but on the study of the Bible and prayer. They did not consider themselves as laying the foundation of a new church but as an instrument for the revival of the whole nation.¹⁰ I must underline the fact that they did not want to break with the National Church and establish a new Evangelical Church of Armenia. Utujian says:

"Let it suffice for us to say here this much, that the Mission, when it first arrived, found the ground ready. There was among our Nation a Group of illuminated and vigilant men who welcomed with love their coming, and joined them in working and co-operating with them for the illumination and reform of the majority of our Nation."¹¹

Even under the severest of persecution and hardship imposed on them

by the Patriarch, the enlightened individuals did not want to leave the National Church. In their response to the Patriarch's new confession of faith, in a letter dated 22 January 1846, they gave a summary of their confession of faith and concluded with the following words:

"We are Armenians by nationality and Christians by faith or religion. Loyal subjects of the Ottoman government. Nevertheless, if we have erred in some religious or political matter -for we do not regard ourselves as being infallible - if you could indicate to us where we have gone wrong, we would be willing to accept...But we cannot work against our conscience for fear of God

We remain Your Beatitude,
Your well wishing, persecuted Christian subjects."¹²

It was this Society of the Pious that later became the nucleus of the Evangelical Church of Armenia.

The way in which the founders of the Evangelical Church of Armenia called themselves has always intrigued me. The form of the name follows exactly the model of the Armenian National Church. The National Church is called "Hayastanyaytz Arakelakan Yekeghetzi," rendered functionally it means "The Apostolic Church (of those) of Armenia." The Evangelicals when asked what do they want to call their church they replied, "Hayastanyaytz Avetaranakan Yekeghetzi," meaning, "The Evangelical Church (of those) of Armenia."¹³ They changed one word in the title "Arakelakan-Apostolic" to "Avetaranakan-Evangelical." One should ask why?

THE ROLE OF THE MISSIONARIES

It would be wrong to give the impression that the missionaries did not have an important role in the rise and development of the Evangelical Movement. They did! Unfortunately, however, we see a dichotomy in the policy statements of the American missionaries toward the Armenian Church and their actions. On the one hand we find the official declaration of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions which is clear and categoric, that they are not interested in establishing a separate Evangelical Church. Let us quote the statement of James L. Barton, the secretary of ABCFM:

"In order that misunderstanding may be cleared up, it should be stated here that missionaries to the Armenians and Greeks were not sent to divide the churches or to separate out those who should accept education and read the Bible in the vernacular. Their one supreme endeavor was to help the Armenians and Greeks work out a quiet but genuine reform in their respective churches. The missionaries made no attacks upon churches, their customs, or beliefs, but strove by positive, quiet effort to show the necessary changes."¹⁴

Barton further asserts that the purpose of the missionaries was not to establish an Armenian Evangelical Church but to spread the New Testament in the vernacular tongue among the Armenians, and help them reform their National Church under their own leadership.¹⁵ And when the break came, it was against the wishes and effort of the missionaries.¹⁶

Contrasted to the above stated intentions we see a contradiction in the reports the missionaries were sending back to their board in which they were extremely critical of the Armenian Church, its beliefs, rituals and hierarchy.¹⁷ William Goodell himself was very critical and waited for the time when the Armenian National Church would be completely changed¹⁸ and says:

...Like all the Oriental churches, the Armenian had become exceedingly corrupt. It was almost wholly given up to superstition and to idolatrous worship of saints..."¹⁹

Goodell, despite the policy of non-proselytism, was encouraging many Armenians to leave their Church and follow the truth and when the break came, he expressed great satisfaction.²⁰ Similarly, Dwight seemed to be indifferent to the possibility of a separation. It looks as though he encouraged the members of the Society of the Pious to be intransigent in their attitude when Patriarch Mattheos tried to find ways of bringing the two sides together.²¹

One does not need to doubt the sincerity of the missionaries. I would go a step further and grant them the benefit of the doubt in their criticism and say that despite all the virulent criticism, their policy was not to proselytize. However, this does not mean that policy statements or declarations done by missionaries, and actions that the missionaries undertook in the field were compatible. One can sow the seeds but he cannot control the consequences. Let us not forget the words of our Lord, one cannot put the new wine in old wineskins (Mt 9.17).

THE CONSEQUENCES

Although the missionaries asserted that they did not intend to set up a separate Evangelical Church, and despite the fact that the Society of the Pious was against the establishment of such a separate entity, exactly fifteen years after the arrival of the missionaries in Constantinople,²² on 1 July 1846, the Evangelical Church of Armenia was established. Again we need to ask why?

I cannot accept "persecution" as being the only or main "cause" for the break between the Armenian National Church and the Evangelically minded Armenians. Nor do I see "the excommunication" by the Patriarch as being the determinant factor. Both the excommunication and persecutions were the symptoms of the underlying marasmus which was "the symbiotic relation between the Church and the Nation." And if we add to that the attitude of the missionaries toward this "symbiosis" - who regarded it as being the root of all

the evil - we can see what an explosive situation it had created.²³

But we Evangelicals are in no position to criticize the Armenian National Church for the symbiotic relation it has with the nation nor do the missionaries have the moral authority to criticize the Armenian National Church for the persecution of the Evangelicals. I do not mean to say that the National Church was justified in using strong-arm tactics in its attempt to win back the Evangelicals; these are lamentable and unacceptable under any circumstance. But it is worthwhile to ask to our Western Colleagues:

i) What happened to the Anabaptists on the European continent, where are they now? They were wiped out by the Protestants as much as by the Catholics;

ii) If we cross the ocean, the situation was no different in the colonies. The Puritans and the Separatists joined to form churches that followed the Congregational pattern. "In principle New England was made up of Christian commonwealths where Christians controlled both the Church and the state and where all society was governed by Christian standards...at first the Congregationalists in Massachusetts sought to force conformity with their conceptions of the Church. Quakers especially fared badly at their hands."²⁴

All of this was happening in New England a hundred and fifty years before the coming of the Congregational missionaries to the Middle East.

Catholicos Garegin I Hovsebiants of the Great House of Cilicia - in his answer to the questions raised by the Rev. G. Adanalian - explains why such a symbiotic relation had developed between the Church and the Nation among the Armenians. This symbiosis was not the result of an accident but the outcome of long historic evolution.²⁵ We should, however, note that from the very beginning there was this symbiosis and it was not the outcome of a historic evolution as Catholicos Hovsebiants claims. When Christianity was declared the State religion in the beginning of the 4th century, the Church adapted herself to the sociopolitical and territorial structure of the land. Prof. N. Adontz has summed up the situation superbly with the following words:

"The bitter struggle for the nationalization of the Church in Armenia was in reality for its nakhararization, for the transfer of nakharar customs into the ecclesiastical sphere...Wherever the Church was successful in accomplishing this, it became nakharar-national, but in the parts of the country where, under the influence of Imperial policy, it failed or did not see the necessity of adapting to local forms, the Armenian Church remained a part of the common ecclesiastical structure. This political framework for ecclesiastical events is a fundamental factor in the isolation of the Armenian Church from the Catholic Church, regardless of dogmatic principles or disagreements."²⁶

Thus the Church conformed to the feudal pattern both in her external hierarchical structure and in her internal organization. Hierarchically the Church conformed to the feudal stratification of the noble class. Just as the feudal lords²⁷ ranked in importance according to their thrones²⁸ and dignity,²⁹ similarly the bishops had an ascending scale, with the Catholicos forming the apex. Thus the nationalization and isolation of the Church, brought about even a closer relationship and almost total union of Church and Nation. To be an Armenian meant to be an Orthodox Christian; if one is not an Orthodox Christian, he is not an Armenian.

The question we need to raise today is: should the situation continue as it was throughout our history, when we are standing at the turn of the twentieth century, looking toward the twenty first century? or should there come about a separation of Church and Nation? The answer varies according to which Armenian situation we are referring to. In Armenia and in the diaspora the situation is not the same, and therefore, the answer cannot be the same. When Armenia became independent of the Soviet Union and the Republic of Armenia was established, after some hesitation, the government officially recognized the Evangelical Church as being part of the Nation, but still does not permit her to evangelize outside the walls of her churches. In the diaspora the situation is a little more delicate. There, beside the Church, the political parties are playing a key role. These are often ultra nationalistic, revolutionary and totalitarian in their outlook and governance. There is no place for non-conformity, even from members of the National Armenians let alone the Evangelicals or the Catholics.

Modern revolutionary nationalism was born out of the Polish resistance to the partition of their land between Russia, Prussia and Austria (1772-1795).³⁰ The French Revolution saw a greater stirring of this sense of nationalism, turning it into a passion. At the outbreak of the French Revolution, in 1789, people shouted *vive la nation!* The Armenian Evangelical Church has no place for such "romantic nationalism" with its political, economic and revolutionary purports. The Armenian Evangelical Church is not a revolutionary political party, it is a church. In our constitution and by-laws, it is stated very unambiguously that members of political parties and secret organizations cannot be pastors in our churches, nor should they become members of the church council. We are a church and not a political organization. First and foremost our loyalty as a pastor is to God and His people. There is no way that we should sell our souls to any political party or secret organization for whatever national, economic or political reason.

The above statement does not mean that we are not involved in the affairs of our Nation of which we are part and parcel. On the contrary, we do not need to learn from any political party how to serve our people. Evangelicals have been in the forefront of national affairs. Let us not forget Rev. Tigran

Andreasian who played a prominent role in the salvation of the people of Musatagh.³¹ Nor should we ignore the work of Mr. Sghomon Tehlirian, who was himself an Evangelical.³² One could go on to number all the Evangelicals who have been active and leaders of political parties, but that is not our task.

To come back to the question of the Evangelical Church and the Armenian Nation, I should point out that the founders of the Evangelical Church stated that they did not want to break with the National Church nor to separate from the nation. One of the first and greatest Evangelicals was Priest³³ Eznak Ter Vertanes Grigorian. Before his death he wrote a booklet entitled *Kronabokhoutioun Barekargoutioun che*.³⁴ He was the most persecuted member of the Evangelical Church. He suffered torture, exile and humiliation at the hands of the Patriarch and perhaps it was because of it that he became an Evangelical. He was a man of integrity and an ardent defender of the freedom of conscience. The missionaries as much as the Patriarch could not stomach him. The missionaries fired him from his post as a book seller because he was not willing to compromise with his conviction. In his old age he was obliged to start a school to support himself, and when he was too old to work, he was in a very adverse condition and he died in extreme poverty, on May 17, 1875.

Two days before his death, he had heard that the Bythinian Union was having its annual convention in Istanbul. Thinking it was held in Pera, at the Beyoghlu Church, he went there walking to give his last testament to his brothers, and found out that the meeting was at the Langa Church. But he was too weak to walk all the way back to Langa, so he asked a friend to go there and give his testament saying:

*My departing time is near, night is drawing closer, speak to those dear servants that they should not deviate from our first glorious resolution, let them not hurt the work, let them spare the Nation, let them spare the immortal souls. From the beginning the earnest desire of our hearts was that OUR CHURCH, OURS, SHOULD BE REFORMED THROUGH THE GOSPEL, AND IN IT RELIGION AND PIETY BE REVIVED. LET THEM NOT DEVIATE FROM THAT HONORABLE PURPOSE, WHICH IS OUR RIGHTFUL PRIDE.*³⁵

Rev. A. Shemavonian, in his preface to the history of Stepan Utujian, writes:

"Among the Armenians there could be found a few undaunted souls who had the courage to stand up and declare that by the Grace of God they are taking upon themselves the dangerous role of being the vanguard of religious reform among the Armenians. They were forty persons in all. Simple, humble, meek, praying Armenians, who had been cast out of their houses and churches. They were insignificant in number and position... Some thought that with a few threatening words, one or two severe bulls

of excommunication and official anathemas, they would be able to silence them and destroy their movement. But they remained unmoved, their voice drowned in the clamor of the day, yet it will echo with a roar from generation to generation and, it will force the Armenians to take note of their statement. 'We respect the ecclesiastical authorities, we accept with utmost respect our national traditions which have been sanctified by the blood of the martyrs. We accept the confession of faith (creed) of the Church Universal. We love the Armenian Nation with all our heart and all our soul, but the freedom of our conscience we consider to be more valuable than everything else, and will not allow that any authority or tradition or command pluck up from our hands the Gospel of Christ, or be a hindrance for us and for our sons when we come, without a mediator or intercessor, to fulfill our spiritual duty to God the saviour according to our conscience,' They said. "If there was a separation, that separation could be considered external and temporary. The best elements of the Nation will ultimately grasp the meaning of that voice and adopt its spirit,"³⁶ concludes Shemavonian.

How much more nationalistic can one get to be? On 1 July 1846 forty persons, 37 men and 3 women, at 08:00 hours gathered together in the chapel found in the house of Rev. H. J. O. Dwight. There were also other seven American and two Scottish missionaries. Before the start of the worship service the missionaries asked the gathered believers,

"Now that you want to establish an organized church, which denomination³⁷ have you chosen or to which denomination will you attach yourselves?" The gathered believers answered, "We do not need to designate any new denomination or adopt a foreign system point by point. Having been disciples of the Holy Gospel and having accepted its soul reviving principles, we desire to take our mother church to informer apostolic orthodoxy and its simplicity, therefore, we have decided to establish THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF ARMENIA AND NOTHING ELSE."³⁸

NOTES

1. This is a paper read by Rev. Doct. Manuel Jinbashian at the "Theological Seminar on Church and Nation," organized by the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East and held on November 1, 1996, at the Near East School of Theology, Beirut, Lebanon.
2. See the works of Avetis Perperian (*Patmoutioun hayotz, 1772-1860, Costantnoupolis, 1871*) and Stepan Utujian (*Tzagoumen yev Entatsk Avetaranakanoutian Ee Hays, Costantnoupolis, 1914*) both of whom were contemporaries of the events and were directly involved in one way or another. The former is clearly biased toward the

Orthodox point of view and the latter to the Evangelical.

3. See Utujian, pp. 92-135; Yeghia Kassouny, *Lousashavigh*, Beirut, 1974, pp. 24-53; Tigran Kherlobian, *Voskematyan*, vol. I, Beirut, 1950, pp. 8-14; G. B. Adanalian, *Hooshardzan*, Fresno, 1952, pp. 40-46; Levon Arpee, *A Century of Armenian Protestantism*, New York, 1946, pp. 11-35; J. D. Sahagian, *Le Mouvement evangelique arménien*, Paris, 1986, p. 25-28; Vahan Tootikian, *Hay Avetaranakan Yekekhettsi*, 1846-1996, Detroit, 1996, pp. 14-16; and H. P. Aharonian, *Hay Avetaranakan Yekekhettsin Djanaparhnerou Khatchadzevoumin*, Beirut, 1988, p. 25.
4. See Perperian, pp. 265-300; M. Ormanian, *Azgapatoum*, vol. III, pp. 3720-3722, 3801-3807; P. Yeghiayan, *Hay Katolik yev Avetaranakan Haranvanoutians Bajanoume XIX Daroun*, Antelias, 1971, 1176-1180. G. Hovsebiants, *Depi Louys yev Kyank*, Antelias, 1971, p. 309; N. Bakhtikian "Boghokakanoutian Moutke Tzopats Ashkharh," *Akos*, vol. VII, VIII, X, 1945, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, pp. 104-111, 94-103, 83-92, 101-108, 94-102, 127-133, and 95-103 consecutively; G. H. Chopourian, *The Armenian Evangelical Reformation*, New York, 1972, p. 36.
5. Tootikian, pp. 11-58; Chopourian, pp. 7, 62-108.
6. Utujian mentions the names of some of the disciples of Peshtimaljian who later became members of the Society of the Pious: Hovhannes Ter-Sahakian, Priest Georg Ardzruni, Senekerim Ter-Minassian, Sargis Hovhannessian, priest Vertanes Yeznakian, Abisoghom Utujian, etc. See Utujian, p. 45.
7. "Barepashtoutian Miyabanoutioun" in Armenian.
8. "Taghavark" in Armenian.
9. Utujian, p. 103; Philippians, ch. 3, v. 6.
10. According to Utujian, "at that time missionaries had not yet arrived, but there is no doubt that among the Armenians there were such whose minds were ready to listen to the preaching of the life giving word of God." see Utujian, p. 46.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 241 sq..
12. *Ibid.*, p. 162.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
14. J. I. Barton, *Daybreak in Turkey*, Boston, 1908, p. 108; W. E. Strong, *The Story of the American Board: An Account of the First Hundred Years*, vol. I, Boston, 1910, pp. 91 sq; Chopourian, pp. 1 sq, 29-34; Yeghiayan, pp. 212 sq.
15. Barton, p. 157; cf. E. D. G. Prince, *Forty Years in the Turkish Empire*, New York, 1883, p. 315; W. N. Chambers, *Yoljuluk*, London, 1928, pp. 109 sq; Strong I., p. 93.
16. Barton, p. 109.
17. A short quotation from Anderson indicates clearly what I mean, "Enough has been said to justify the American churches in laboring to restore to the degenerate churches of the East the Gospel they lost...", see Rufus Anderson, *History of the Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches*, vol. I, Boston, 1872, p. 6. See also Strong, I, p. 80; American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Annual Report*, Boston, 1932, p. 153; E. Smith, *Researches of the Rev. E. Smith and Rev. H. G. O. Dwight in Armenia*, vol. I, Boston, 1883, pp. 57, 140 sqq. and 287 sq.
18. See Prime, p. 174.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 126. For a report on the "corrupt" state of the Armenian clergy as described by the three former Armenian churchmen to Mr. Goodell, see American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Annual Report*, Boston, 1925, p. 7.

20. Prime, pp. 180, 306, 317.
21. H. G. O. Dwight, *Christianity in Turkey: A Narrative of the Protestant Reformation in the Armenian Church*, London, 1854, pp. 170 sq, 214, 217.
22. The first American Board missionary came to Istanbul in June 1831. See Utujian, p. 47.
23. Richter regarded this symbiotic relation as being the stumbling block for the spread of the Gospel among the Armenians. See J. Richter, *A History of Protestant Missions in the Near East*, New York, 1910, pp. 111sq. Chopourian calls this "Historic Symphonic Relationship of Church and Nation." See Chopourian, pp. 35-47; see also Perperian, pp. 295 sq; Tootikian, pp. 28-30; and Adanalian, p. 6.
24. See K. S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, London, 1964, p. 953.
25. Hovsebiants, pp. 307-313; Adanalian, pp. 102-104.
26. N. Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian: The Political Conditions Based on Nakharar system* [translated and annotated by N. A. Garsoian], Lisbon, 1970, p. 166.
27. "Nakharars" in Armenian.
28. "Gah" in Armenian.
29. "Pativ" in Armenian.
30. R. P. Palmer and J. Colton, *A History of the Modern World*, New York, 1965, pp. 218-223.
31. Kassouny, p. 393.
32. V. Minakhorian, *Soghomon Tehlirian: Verhishounner*, Cairo, 1953, p. 348.
33. "Kahana" in Armenian.
34. "Changing One's Faith Is Not Reformation" in English.
35. Utujian, pp. 226-227; Adanalian, p. 44.
36. Utujian, pp. IV-V.
37. "Haranvanoutioun" in Armenian.
38. Utujian, p. 167.

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(ԱՄՓՈՓՈՒՄ)

ՎԵՐ. ՄԱՆՈՒԷԼ Մ. ՃԻՆՊԱՇԵԱՆ

Հակառակ ոմանց այն կարծիքին եւ համոզումին թէ Հայ Աւետարանական Շարժումը հետեւանքն էր մէկ կողմէ օտար միսիոնարներու ճիգերուն եւ միւս կողմէ Պոլսոյ Հայոց Պատրիարքութեան ձեռք առած խստութիւններուն՝ հակաեկեղեցական շարժումներու դէմ, եւ թէ անիկա իր գոյատուրի առաջին իսկ օրէն կը միտէր պառակտել հնադարեան Մայր Եկեղեցին՝ փաստերը ցոյց կու տան սակայն, որ անիկա ծնունդն էր բարեկրօնական ընդհանուր այն հոսանքին եւ ամոր ընկերացող ազգային ու ազգայնական գիտակցութեան, ազատութեան եւ իրաւունքի հասկացողութեան, որոնք իրենցմէ ներս առին ոչ միայն Օսմանեան Կայսրութեան հայ համայնքը այլեւ ամբողջ կայսրութիւնը: Այս կացութիւնն օգտագործուեցաւ արեւմտեան միսիոնարութեան կողմէ, ի՞նչ փոյթ որ ամերիկեան միսիոնարութեան զանազան ներկայացուցիչներ յաճախակիօրէն հաստատած ըլլային, իրենց տեղեկագիրներով թէ իրենք Արեւելք էին հասեր պարզօրէն հոն բերելու համար Աւետարանին լոյսը եւ չէին միտէր միջամուխ ըլլալ արեւելեան եկեղեցիներու ներքին կարգ ու սարքին, հաւատամքին եւ գործունէութեան: Փաստերը սակայն, եւ նոյնիսկ կարգ մը տեղեկագիրներն անոնց՝ այդ միսիոնարներուն, ցոյց կու տան, թէ անոնցմէ ոմանք, եւ բազմաթիւ էին անոնք, վարեցին պառակտիչ գործունէութիւն, քաջալերեցին Աւետարանական Շարժումի առաջին հետեւորդները հակադրուելու Մայր եկեղեցիին եւ հաստատելու անջատ համայնք մը եւ եկեղեցի մը իրենց գիտցած եւ հասկցած ձեւով:

Իսկ այդ գիտցուածն ու հասկցուածը ուղղակի կը հակադրուէր Հայ Առաքելական Մայր Եկեղեցիի կառոյցին, որ այսպիսով կը ստանար հիմնական առաջին հարուածը, եւ որ, սակայն, պիտի չխախտէր հաւատամքային եւ կառուցային իր դրոյթնը:

Դար մը եւ գուցէ աւելի Հայ Աւետարանականութիւնը մնաց դուրս հայ ազգային բոլոր շարժումներէն, այդուհանդերձ վերջին տասնամեակները եկան ցոյց տալու թէ անտարանական հայն ալ հայ էր ազգութեամբ եւ յաճախ կը գտնուէր առաջին շարքին վրան ազգային շարժումներուն, եւ թէ կարելի չէր ուրանալ անոր հայութիւնը եւ դուրս դնել զայն ազգային իր պատկանելիութենէն: Այժմ բան մը փոխուած էր անտարակոյս, եւ այս՝ Ամբիլիասի Յովսէփեանց Կաթողիկոսէն ասդին: Իրաւ էր որ կար անհամատեղելի բան մը Հայ Եկեղեցիին եւ Հայ Ազգին միջեւ, եւ անոր հետեւանքն էր եղած այն բանը որ պատահէր էր երէկ: Արդարեւ՝ երբ սկսան փչել ազատականութեան եւ իրաւունքի հովերն ամէնուրեք, Հայ Եկեղեցիի ծոցէն ներս սկսած խլրտումներուն դէմ ամրակոտ մնաց Հայ Ազգային Եկեղեցին եւ ոչ մէկ բան կարողացաւ շարժել դարերու ընթացքին ամրացած պահպանողականութիւնը եւ առիթ մը ստեղծել եկեղեցիին համար՝ վերա-

դառնալու սկզբնական իր անտարանականության, բերելու վերանորոգումի շունչ մը հայության եւ նոր օրերու նոր պայմաններով վերակերտում մը հայ ազգային կառոյցի:

Այսօր՝ Էջմիածինի Գարեգին Ա. եւ Անթիլիասի Արամ Ա. կաթողիկոսները որոնք բացսիրտ, բացմիտք եւ համախոհութեան ու համակեցութեան հետեւող եւ բարձրագոյն ուսումնառութեամբ զարգացած եկեղեցական առաջնորդներ են՝ ամեն յոյս կը ներշնչեն, որ զարգանայ եւ խորանայ Մայր Եկեղեցիի, Հայ Անտարանականութեան եւ Հայ Կաթողիկէ համայնքի միջեւ սկսուած ազգային համագործակցութիւնը, որովհետեւ այժմ բոլոր կողմերն ալ զիտակից են, որ շա՛տ ատելի պատճառներ եւ տուեալներ կան ազգային միասնութեան քան բաժանուածութեան: Ի վերջոյ՝ պէտք չէ մտահան ընել, որ հայկական կեանքի ներկան, Ազատ ու Անկախ Հայաստանի մէջ թէ սփիւռքի ամբողջ տարածքին, բաց կը պահէ հրապարակը եւ անհրաժեշտ կ'ընծայէ համագործակցութիւնը, համախոհութիւնը եւ իրարհասկացողութիւնը ազգը կազմող հայ տարրերուն միջեւ:

Իսկ այս տարրերը: Բայց հայ են անոնք այսօր, ինչպէս որ էին երէկ ալ: Արդարեւ՝ երբ 1 Յուլիս 1846ին Պոլսոյ մէջ Ամերիկացի միսիոնար Տուայթի բնակարանը հաւաքւած քառասուն հայորդիներու հարց տրուեցաւ հոն ներկայ եօթը այլ ամերիկացի եւ երկու սկովտիացի միսիոնարներու ներկայութեան թէ հաւատամքի ո՞ր մէկուն եւ համայնքային ո՞ր դրութեան կ'ուզէին հետեւիլ՝ անոնք պատասխանեցին միաբերան թէ իրենք հայ էին եւ Անտարանի հետեւողը, եւ իրենց եկեղեցին պիտի կոչուէր լոյս «Հայաստանեայց Անտարանական Եկեղեցի» եւ ուրիշ ոչինչ:

Հայ Անտարանականները միշտ ալ հաւատացին, թէ հայ էին իրենք եւ կը պատկանէին հայության եւ անբաժան մէկ մասնիկն էին ազգին:

