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THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR AND THE ARMENIANS*

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Introduction

The participation of Armenian volunteers in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) is almost unknown. At that time, there was no Armenian community in Spain; however, hundreds of Armenians from different countries, along with other nationalities, participated in the struggle of the Spanish people.

Although the Soviet Union actively supported the Republican side, the participation of Armenian volunteers has been only briefly mentioned by Armenian historians in the Soviet era¹. The memoirs of an Armenian volunteer, Vahe-Azat Atamian, published in the late Soviet period, are the most important source on this subject². The first comprehensive research on the issue was published in Armenian by the current author of these lines in Armenian in 2021³.

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¹ See Սիմոնյան 1968, 415–416 (the same see: Մըսըրլեան 1979, 91–92).

² See Ադամյան 1988, 37–57.

³ See Բախչինեան 2021, 83–94.

Diaspora Armenians' Participation

Armenians mainly formed part of the International Brigades (Brigadas Internacionales), military units created by the Communist International to help (support) the Popular Front government of the Second Spanish Republic⁴. "Diaspora Armenians who distinguished themselves in the battles of Madrid, Guadalajara, Jarama and Ebro also fought in the 4th, 10th and 14th International Brigades. **Krikor Haroyan, Gaidzag Karagozian, Karnig and Toros Lobesians, Hovhannes Boghalian, Boghos Berjentsi, Hovhanes Topalian** perished as heroes, while **Vahe-Azat Atamian, Rudolf Shahinian, Khachik Amirkhanian, Hagop Mardirosian** and many others fought bravely. In December 1936, 'Milisia Roja' (Red Militia) wrote about the heroism of the Republican Army Captain **Vahan Chrkayan**. In 1937–38, the Armenians of France collected and delivered one million francs to the Committee for Aid to Republican Spain" (emphasis mine)⁵. Unfortunately, most of the names have not been found in other sources.

During the Spanish Civil War, the Armenian press repeatedly referred to this issue, sometimes publishing articles by Armenian authors⁶. This historical event had a certain influence among Armenians, both in Armenia and in the Diaspora. Thus, according to the testimony of a Syrian Armenian intellectual, among young Syrian Armenians, "the Spanish revolution and the war events also stimulated

⁴ According to Armenian press of 1937, there were 212,000 foreign soldiers in Spain, fighting against government forces (see Օտար զինուորներ Սպանիոյ մէջ, «Արաքս» (Ալեքսանդրիա), 10 ապրիլի, 1937).

⁵ Ինտերնացիոնալ Բրիգադներ հտր. 4, 1978, 355–356: On page 355, there is also a photo of French-Armenian volunteers.

⁶ Ասատուր 1936: Ահարոնեան 1936: Առնակ 1936:

reflections and mental alertness about the need to protect democracy”⁷.

In 1937 there were about a hundred Armenian volunteers in Spain. According to an Armenian-American newspaper, “these people are not adventurers hired by various armies: not at all! They are volunteers in the most honest sense of the word. People who volunteer their lives for the liberation of peoples and in the struggle against bloody fascism. May these brave men serve as an example to us all”⁸.

Another Armenian-American newspaper, “Banvor”, reported on the death of Armenian volunteer **Misak Chelebian** in Spain in early January 1937: “Comrade Chelebian joined the group of volunteers from America to Spain in December 1936. He belonged to the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, which included other Armenian workers. Comrade Chelebian was a member of the sniper group and was very skilled in that task. He was killed by a bomb fired by the fascists”⁹.

Vahram Kevorkian, editor of the aforementioned “Banvor,” participated in the Spanish Civil War and was killed in July, 1937¹⁰. On 23 April, 1937, he sent a letter from Spain to the same publication. He stated that he had met with an Armenian member of the Franco-Belgian battalion, and that his Bulgarian friend had told him that 25 Armenians from Bulgaria had come to Spain to fight against fascism. There were also Armenians from Turkey in the International Brigade, and the Abraham Lincoln Battalion had four Armenian members¹¹. “The victories and successes of our People’s Army [he means

⁷ Ճեպլեհեան 1999, 217–18:

⁸ The citation is according to the Սպանիոյ հայ կամաւորները, «Արագ» (Պուքրէշ), 25 Յուլիս 1937.

⁹ Հայ կամաւորներ... Սպանիոյ մէջ, «Արագ», Պուքրէշ, 14 մայիս 1937:

¹⁰ See Սիմոնեան 1968, 416.

¹¹ Ընկեր Վահրամ Գէորգեան կը գրէ հերոսական Սպանիայէն, «Նոր Ուղի» (Լոս Անճէլէս), 11 յունիս 1937, also «Արագ» (Պուքրէշ), 1 յուլիս 1937:

nationalist army – A.B.] encourage us, as well as all those fighting fascism outside Spain. Our friends gave wonderful proofs of combat readiness in the battles of Guadalajara and Cordoba. The great success recorded by our victorious army was a proof of what armies under disciplined and centralized command are capable of. This was not accidental, but the result of many months of hard work by those who know how to fight the enemy on two fronts: military and political.”¹².

After the war, many Armenian soldiers were unable to return to their countries of residence. Some of them went to France, where they were imprisoned in concentration camps. This was evidenced by **Hagop Mardirosian**, a veteran of the civil war, in a letter written to another Armenian-American volunteer, **Hovhannes Atamian**, which was published in 1939 in the New York newspaper “Lraper”. It is not redundant to quote it almost in full here:

“First of all, let me ask you about your well-being. If you ask me, I am alive and well. Behold, my dear friend Hovhannes, I crossed from France to Spain. ONLY WE KNOW WHAT WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH. No one from the Armenian organizations in France supported us, nor did they look for us. My dear friend Hovhannes, I beg you very much to publish the following names in the Armenian newspaper “Lraper”. I hope that the Armenian-American anti-fascist brothers will send us help. When we lost Catalonia, we crossed to France on foot through the mountains. And the French took us to the concentration camp. Now they are treating us like captives. We are in a very bad situation. I think you have already read about it in the newspapers. Concluding my note, I send cordial greetings to all my Armenian-American anti-fascist

¹² Ընկեր Վահրամ Գեորգեան կը գրէ հերոսական Սպանիայէն, «Նոր Ուղի» (Լոս Անճելէս), 11 յունիս 1937, also «Արազ» (Պոլսքէշ), 1 յուլիս 1937:

brothers. I trust you will have no qualms in doing everything possible for us”¹³.

Mardirosian also recalls the names of Armenians who participated in the Spanish War: **Kevork Aramian, Davit Davitian, Vahan Tashjian, Aristakes Hakobian, Vahan Vahanian, Daniel Gazanjian, Aram Hakobian, Sedrak Hakobian, Garnik Kelekian**. Although 11 names are mentioned here (including Mardirosian himself), the same source notes that “in addition to these 14 veterans, four veterans are at another station”¹⁴.

“Lraper” opened a column for donations, recording sums to be sent to the Abraham Lincoln Battalion office for Armenian concentration camp veterans. By July, \$39.80 had been collected¹⁵.

In 1938, the Armenian National Association of Uruguay called to support the anti-fascist struggle of the Spanish people. One of its members, Bedros Bardizbanian, wrote: “The Armenian National Association of Uruguay should be the headquarters of all anti-fascists. For 20–50 cents a month (...) and/or donating old and new clothes, you can do it through the Spanish Aid Committee. Yes, fellow citizens, let's help the Spanish people so that they can bury fascism in Spain”¹⁶.

In 1940, the Central Board of the American-Armenian Youth Association appealed to Armenians in the United States to help Spanish volunteers and refugees. It was pointed out that among these volunteers there were 20 young Armenians who had left different countries to go to Spain and fight against fascism. Among them were

¹³ Սպանական հայ կամավորները պետք ունին մեր օգնութեան», «Լրաբեր» (Նիւ Եորք), 18 մայիս 1939:

¹⁴ Սպանական հայ կամավորները պետք ունին մեր օգնութեան», «Լրաբեր» (Նիւ Եորք), 18 մայիս 1939:

¹⁵ «Կը պատասխանեն Սպանիայի հայ կամավորներու դիմումին, ի նշան երախտագիտութեան», «Լրաբեր» (Նիւ Եորք), 13 յուլիս 1939:

¹⁶ National Archive of Armenia, fund 314, list 1, file 19, document 10.

members of the organization: **Ashod, George, Herald**¹⁷. In April a conference dedicated to Spain took place in New York, in which Grace Shahinian participated as a delegate of the American-Armenian Youth Association and testified that the association had had the best fighters on the Spanish front¹⁸.

Two Armenians who participated in the Civil War wrote memoirs about their experience. The first was **Vahe-Azat Atamian** (1913–1981), born in Constantinople, later emigrated to France and finally repatriated to Armenia. In his memoirs “Toda la vida es un lucha” he gave a detailed account of his participation in the chapter “In the International Brigade of Spain”¹⁹. Having suffered from the anti-Armenian policy of the Ottoman Empire, Atamian interpreted his decision to go to Spain in terms of his ideological position. “I became convinced that no force would stop me, that I would fight against the organizers of the Armenian Genocide, international fascism, which threatens to turn the whole world into ruins”²⁰. Atamian and his companions left Lyon for Paris, after which the volunteers crossed the French-Spanish border on foot. The group of which Vahe Atamian was a member first stopped at a school in the city of Figueres, where hundreds of volunteers belonging to 52 nationalities had already arrived. Then they headed for the International Brigades' assembly center in Albacete. “Every time the train stopped at the stations, the Spaniards greeted us with enthusiastic and joyful shouts. Women and girls greeted us effusively, presented us with bouquets of flowers and filled our wagons with oranges. On the way, people's souls were stirred with shouts of joy, riotous cries of overflowing emotion, rain of

¹⁷ Կոչ սպանական կամաւորներու եւ գաղթականներու օգնութեան համար, «Լրաբեր»,» (Նիւ Եորք), 4 Մայիս 1940:

¹⁸ **Շահինեան** 1940:

¹⁹ See **Աղամյան** 1988, 37–57:

²⁰ **Աղամյան** 1988, 40.

tears and flowers. ...Pleased by their greetings and hugs, we sang "The Internationale" in dozens of languages. ... Although I was in the French group from the middle of the song, I recited the Armenian translation of Yeghishé Charents with the idea of making the Armenian people participate in those historical events"²¹.

Atamian first served as a private in the Henri Barbusse brigade of the Marseillaise Battalion. Then, for his merits and his participation in public and political activities, he was appointed captain, squadron commander and battalion commissary²². As a member of the battalion, he participated in several battles, the most important being those of Alcañiz, Gandesa and Ebro. Atamian described the last battle in detail how his battalion fought against Franco's Moroccan mercenaries on the banks of the Ebro River and how "before our eyes, the Ebro was stained with the blood of our friends."²³. And then: "The fate of this battle depended largely on us. The Spanish army had crossed the river and the fierce fighting was going on. The International Brigades had to prove this time that the volunteers would fight against fascism. ...the International Brigades fulfilled without hesitation the promise made to the Spanish government, that is, to fight as shock units"²⁴. When the order was given to withdraw to the initial positions, the wounded were placed in separate boats with the machine guns and the rest jumped into the water to swim across the river. Vahe Atamian also swam across the river: he was not an expert swimmer and barely escaped death. "Under the barrage of explosions and shelling, two people came out and carried me. In the 21 August, 1938 edition of the newspaper 'El voluntario de la libertad', under the title 'La 14ª Brigada a sus héroes', a note was published in Spanish with the following content: "VAHE

²¹ Աղամյան 1988, 45–46.

²² Աղամյան 1988, 47.

²³ Աղամյան 1988, 49.

ATAMIAN was the first to speak when the volunteers had to swim across the river under enemy fire during a hard battle”²⁵.

Atamian concluded the chapter on Spain with the reflection that, although Franco triumphed, he was unable “to involve in the war the thirty million people with aspirations of freedom and to repay the aid received from the Hitlerite and Italian allies in 1936–1939.” Symbolically, he only managed to assemble a weak unit that was crushed by the first blows of the Soviet army and was shattered, undertaking a shameful escape”²⁶.. He then recounts the Soviet involvement in the Spanish Civil War.

Atamian’s memoirs add to the already rich eyewitness accounts of the Spanish Civil War and confirm a number of facts (e.g., that the food, equipment and weapons of the French army were of a much higher standard than those of the Spanish army, and that the French army had a much higher standard than that of the Spanish army²⁷ or that the volunteers were suffering from a lack of weapons²⁸), but especially his data on the participation of Armenians are very valuable. According to him, two dozen Armenians from Marseille participated in the Spanish Civil War. In particular, he recalled Krikor Haroyan, a native of Kharberd, who stood out for his bravery in the battles of Gandesa and was appointed commissar of the battalion. According to Atamian, “for the bravery shown in the battle of the Ebro, in the 1938 issue of the newspaper ‘The Freedom Volunteer’, in the reports about the heroes of the 14th Brigade, the name of Krikor Haroyan was also mentioned. Haroyan died as a war hero after the battle of the Ebro, in the defense of La Sierra-la-Cabals. Years later, when I moved to a

²⁴ Ադամյան 1988, 51–52.

²⁵ Ադամյան 1988, 54.

²⁶ Ադամյան 1988, 57.

²⁷ Ադամյան 1988, 60.

²⁸ Ադամյան 1988, 64.

leading position in France, I learned that the French police, ignorant of the fact of his death, were constantly looking for him in 1941 in order to arrest him as a dangerous and recognized communist-activist”²⁹.

Atamian also recalls the following names among the Armenians killed in Spain: Captain Vahan Chrkayan, Garabed Demirjian, Hovhannes Bogdalian, Sokren Lopasian, Karnig [Lopasian], Hakob [Mardirosian] and others³⁰.

Another Armenian, this time from Canada, **D.P. (Pat) Stephens**, also left his account of fighting with the International Brigade against the forces of Franco. D.P. (Pat) Stephens (1910–1987) was born Badrig Der Stepanian in Armenia and emigrated with his family to Canada in 1926, where he soon adhered to leftist politics. He arrived in Spain on 14 February 1937, being one of those approximately 500 Canadians who went to Spain. He served in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion of the 15th Brigade as a machine gunner and a quartermaster (a supply post), and later as a military investigator³¹. In his memoirs, Stephens mentioned his encounters with fellow Armenians. He once discovered that the ammunition depot manager was an Armenian-American from New York named Bill Sahagian. “I introduced myself to him as an Armenian-Canadian, and he asked me to stay with him in the ammo dump. He said it was much safer than the trenches, and he arranged my transfer”³². Once he “asked Comrade Sahagian, who was in charge of the ammunition detail, and he said he would speak to Comrade Davidian, who was in charge of the machine gun company. Davidian was also an Armenian, like myself and Sahagian. In due course, I was introduced to Davidian and he told me to get my gear together”³³.

²⁹ Ադամյան 1988, 50.

³⁰ Ադամյան 1988, 50:

³¹ Stephens 2000, 11.

³² Stephens 2000, 38.

³³ Stephens 2000, 42.

On another occasion, Stephens even met another compatriot whom he knew personally: "My group was in a lorry with some infantry men from the First Company. I noticed someone I knew, an Armenian-American from Worcester, Massachusetts. This man was one of the worst bitches in the Battalion"³⁴.

Stephens described one more interesting meeting with another Armenian, this time from France. "That night, after supper, I started walking to Almoguerra.... I hailed the driver and he stopped. I asked him for a lift. He could not understand English, and asked me in French where I wanted to go.... When I told him I was Armenian, he pulled his bike to the side of the road and stopped. He jumped off his bike and gave me his hand. He was Armenian too, serving with (in) the French 14th Brigade."³⁵

Writer Toros Toranian testified about another Armenian veteran of the Spanish Civil War, **Haigaz Khachadurian**, whom he met in Beirut, and some others:

"He [Haigaz Khachadurian – A.B.], a strong young man, who was orphaned by the Turks, wished to take revenge on dark fascism when the opportunity arose, not one occasion, but many. He takes the documents out of the chest and looks at them for a long time.

Makruhi thinks that Haigaz is looking at the letter, while our Haigaz is in Spain, in Barcelona, carrying weapons, carrying secret weapons to Spain, to help the heroes fighting for life and death against Franco.

What a time that was, Haigaz! Armenians had crossed such distances and oceans to join the partisan armies, which had only one name: anti-fascists.

³⁴ Stephens 2000, 57.

³⁵ Stephens 2000, 69.

Ashod Antreasian came from America. There were guys who came from Alexandretta, from Beirut and from France. And Haigaz came from the orphanages in Greece and brought hundreds of weapons and ammunition to Spain dozens of times.³⁶

It should be noted that a small group of left-wing Armenians also participated in the Spanish Civil War. The former commander of the Armenian Revolutionary Party (Dashnaktsutyun) Torkom (Arshak Baghdasaryan, 1878–1953, with the self-proclaimed title of General) formed a volunteer group in Greece, went to Spain and cooperated with Franco's forces against the Republicans³⁷. According to the testimony of an author from Soviet Armenia: "The disreputable General (!) Torkom.... Is recently making criminal attempts playing again with the fate of the Armenian working people, with the help of General Franco sneaking into Spain with some nationalist Armenian adventurers"³⁸. The credibility of this information, however, is not certain, being the only testimony in this regard.

In 1937, the writers Antranig Antreasian and Peniamin Nuriguian published extensive articles on the Civil War in "Nor kir", a New York literary magazine. The same issue of the magazine contains translations of poems by Federico Garcia Lorca and Manuel Altolaguirre (*translated from English*)³⁹. After the war, Rev. Arsen A. Gorgizian tried to assess the political situation in Spain in the Armenian Diaspora press⁴⁰.

The participation of the Soviet Armenians

It is known that more than 5000 volunteers from the Soviet Union also participated in the Spanish Civil War. In Soviet Armenia, already in

³⁶ Թորանեան 2004, 384:

³⁷ See Սիմոնյան 1968, ibid.

³⁸ Թուլայեան 2019, 506:

³⁹ See Կարսիա Լորկա 1937, 273, 300, Ալթոլակիրրե 1937, 273:

⁴⁰ Կէօրկիզեան 1947:

the early 1930s, the society was somehow aware of the political developments in Spain. In 1931 Gurgen Kellerian (1895–1937), a young journalist and later a victim of Stalin's cult of personality, published in Yerevan the volume “Revolutionary Crisis in Spain”. In 1936–1938 **Tadevos Mandalian** (1901–1941) also took part in the Spanish Civil War, being appointed commissar of the USSR in Spain. In 1937–1939 Lieutenant General Hayk Tumanian (1901–1971) worked in Spain, probably actively participating in propaganda and the partisan struggle. In the play “Noyem” by Agnesa Sevunts, an Armenian fighter in Spain is mentioned: “Behold, my brother Andranik ... He was still a man before the war.... He was fighting in Spain”⁴¹.

Ordinary Armenian citizens reacted to the Spanish Civil War in their own way, but through actions imposed by the state policy. In 1935–1936, the government organized in needy Armenia the collection of aid for the wounded communists from Spain and their families⁴².

During this period, the Soviet-Armenian press frequently published articles about Spain and its culture⁴³. In 1936, a Spanish Music Concert was held in the Yerevan Music Hall in solidarity with the Spanish people in struggle⁴⁴. In 1937, the Republican House of Folk and Amateur Art of Armenia translated from Russian the play about the

⁴¹ Севунц 2020, 136.

⁴² See Իսպանիայի արդյունաբերական համար, «Խորհրդային Հայաստան» (Երևան), 10 հունվարի, 1935: Օգնություն Իսպանիայի մարտնչողներուն, «Յուսաբեր», Գահիրե, 26 յունուարի, 1935: Օգնություն Իսպանիայի, «Արագ» (Պուլքոշ), 5 նոյեմբերի, 1936: «Խորհրդային Հայաստան» (Երևան), 12 հոկտեմբերի, 1936:

⁴³ See, for example, Մ. Դ. 1936: Նիկուլին 1936: Կելին 1936.

⁴⁴ Իսպանական երաժշտությանը նվիրված երեկո, «Խորհրդային արվեստ» (Երևան), 1 հունվարի, 1937:

war “They Will Not Win” to be staged in amateur theaters⁴⁵. Several books were also published in Armenian dedicated to Spain⁴⁶.

In 1930–1940s Soviet Armenians had some relations with Spanish communists who took refuge in the USSR. Some of them were stationed in the Caucasus, including José Díaz (1895–1942), who died in mysterious circumstances in Tbilisi⁴⁷.

Spanish communists and the Civil War heroes, especially Dolores Ibárruri, la Passionaria (1895–1989), were a source of inspiration for Soviet peoples, including Armenians. Arnold Aghababov’s film “Where Were You, Man of God?” (1992), which portrays life in a Soviet Armenian village in the 1930s, recalls how a couple wanted to name their newborn son José Díaz after the aforementioned Spanish revolutionary; in their everyday conversations people remember the Civil War.

The same moods also appear in the story “That Amazing Khaki Color” by Elda Grin. The hero, Marlen Yeghishevich, an Armenian from Tbilisi, says that there have been many phases in his life, one of which was Spain:

“When I was studying at the pilot school in Tbilisi, they were bombing Madrid,” he said. The radio announcer reported: *Itsvi Madridi, itsvi Madridis quchebi*, which means in Georgian: *Madrid is on fire, the streets of Madrid are on fire*. He said he had seen Dolores Ibárruri at the Tbilisi airport and asked her for an autograph as a souvenir. And Dolores hurriedly wrote one word on a slip of paper (while boarding the plane), ‘Cordialmente’, which means: cordially.

⁴⁵ Արուեստի լրատու, «Խորհրդային Հայաստան» (Երևան), 1 սեպտեմբերի, 1937:

⁴⁶ See **Շաղգամյան, Հարությունյան** 1936: **Բլազոյևա** 1938: **Օսիպով** 1938:

⁴⁷ **Сагомонян** 1998, 138.

“The fiery Dolores Ibárruri! Pasionaria!... Amor a primera vista! Love at first sight,” cried Marlen Yeghishevich.⁴⁸

In 1936, an author under the pseudonym Gugaruni published a poem, without any literary value, dedicated to Ibárruri in the Soviet Armenian sports press⁴⁹. In 1937, the poet Gegham Sarian (1902–1976) published the poetry book “Young Heroes of Spain,” while the writer Lucy Targul (1905–1955) published “To Spain,” a book in which she asked for help to the Spanish rebels with volunteer detachments.

Agassi Ayvazyan (1925–2007) combined the story of his Spanish studies and the 1988 earthquake in Armenia in his short story “The Spanish Language.” It begins with his memory of learning the language from his Spanish friend Saturnino in Tbilisi during the Second World War. Saturnino was the son of a Republican, who had left Spain and escaped to the Soviet Union and later returned to Spain⁵⁰.

Conclusion

Summarizing the material presented, we can state that the participation of Armenians in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) is a historical fact. At least one hundred Armenians from different countries (France, USA, Canada, Bulgaria, Turkey) participated in that war on a completely voluntary basis, forming part of the so-called International Brigades. These Armenians, who became stateless due to the xenophobia and genocidal policies of the Ottoman Empire, simply could not tolerate the outbreak of fascism in another part of the world and joined the struggle against fascism, sometimes at the cost of their lives. The names of Vahe-Azat Atamian and captain Vahan Chrkayan deserve special mention.

⁴⁸ Գրին 2004, 190:

⁴⁹ Գուգարունի 1936:

⁵⁰ Այվազյան 1990, 3-6:

As for the Soviet Armenians, several servicemen were officially sent by the USSR to support the Spanish communists. Armenian citizens, like all peoples of the Soviet Union, were obliged to express their support for the Spanish people through donations and raising awareness about Spain by organizing various events, publishing books about Spain, etc. The Spanish Civil War and its heroes became a source of inspiration for some Armenian writers.

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Ամփոփում

Իսպանիայի քաղաքացիական պատերազմին (1936–1939) հայերի մասնակցության պատմությունը գրեթե չի ուսումնասիրվել: Այդ պատերազմին կամավոր մասնակցել է առնվազն հարյուր հայ տարբեր երկրներից (Ֆրանսիա, ԱՄՆ, Կանադա, Բուլղարիա, Թուրքիա և այլն)՝ միանալով Ինտերնացիոնալ բրիգադներին: Նրանք, լինելով հիմնականում նախկին թուրքահայատակներ, որոնք գաղթական էին դարձել օսմանյան իշխանությունների պաշտպանության և ցեղասպան քաղաքականության պատճառով, չէին կարող համակերպվել աշխարհի մեկ այլ մասում ֆաշիզմի բռնկման հետ և, ի թիվս այլ ազգությունների, միացել էին դրա դեմ պայքարին, երբեմն՝ իրենց կյանքի գնով: Հատկապես հիշարժան են Վահե-Ազատ Ադամյանը և կապիտան Վահան Չրքայանը:

Բացի այդ, մի քանի հայազգի ռազմական գործիչներ ԽՍՀՄ կառավարության կողմից պաշտոնապես ուղարկվել էին Իսպանիա՝ սատարելու տեղի կոմունիստներին: Խորհրդային Հայաստանի քաղաքացիները ևս ստիպված էին նվիրատվություններով իրենց համակրանքը հայտնել իսպանացիներին, նաև կազմակերպվում էին տարբեր միջոցառումներ, հրատարակվում Իսպանիայի վերաբերյալ գրքեր և այլն: Իսպանիայի քաղաքացիական պատերազմը և նրա հերոսները ոգեշնչման աղբյուր են դարձել մի քանի հայ գրողների համար:

Քանալի բառեր՝ Իսպանիայի քաղաքացիական պատերազմ (1936–1939 թթ.), կամավորներ, սփյուռքահայեր, Ինտերնացիոնալ բրիգադներ, Խորհրդային Հայաստանի աջակցությունը, Վահե-Ազատ Ադամյան, իսպանական թեման խորհրդահայ գրականության մեջ:

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Резюме

История участия армян в гражданской войне в Испании (1936–1939) не была достаточно изучена. Не менее ста армян из разных стран (Франция, США, Канада, Болгария, Турция) участвовали в этой войне на совершенно добровольной основе в составе специальных военных подразделений, известных под названием «Интернациональные бригады». Эти армяне, преимущественно родом из находящейся в составе Османской империи исторической Армении, ставшие беженцами из-за ксенофобии и геноцидной политики турецких властей, не могли смириться со вспышкой фашизма в другой части света и присоединились к борьбе против фашизма, иногда ценой собственной жизни.

Имена Ваге-Азата Атамяна и капитана Ваана Чркаяна заслуживают особого упоминания.

Кроме этого несколько военных деятелей-армян были официально направлены СССР в поддержку испанских коммунистов. Граждане Советской Армении были обязаны выражать свою симпатию испанскому народу путем пожертвований, а также организации различных мероприятий, публикаций книг об Испании и т.д. Гражданская война в Испании и ее герои стали источником вдохновения для некоторых армянских писателей.

Ключевые слова: Гражданская война в Испании (1936–1939 гг.), добровольцы, армяне диаспоры, Интернациональные бригады, поддержка Советской Армении, Ваге-Азат Атамян, испанская тема в советско-армянской литературе.