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DOI: 10.54503/1829-4073-2023.2.80-92

REFLECTION OF WESTERN ARMENIAN VIEWS ON WAR AND PEACE, NATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN THE PERIODICAL “HAYASTAN”

Keywords: Western Armenia, national solidarity, Zoravar Andranik, “Hayastan” periodical, orphans and immigrants, Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian views, nationwide consultation.

Introduction

During the First World War, the whole of Western Armenia was turned into ruins. Armenians were put to the sword or evacuated. However, the desire of the Russian troops to recapture Western Armenia strengthened the surviving Western Armenians both physically and mentally. Some Western Armenians who temporarily settled in the territory of Eastern Armenia and various regions of Russia also lived with hopes and a desire to return to the country.

The views of Western Armenians were truthfully reflected on the pages of the “Hayastan” periodical which was published by Zoravar Andranik. Let's emphasize that this process was not expressed so deeply in any other Armenian periodical during the above-mentioned period as it was in the periodical of “Hayastan”. That concerned not only the official bodies of Western Armenians (the Western Armenian Council, etc.) but also the relations between the various social forces and currents of the Western and Eastern Armenians.

* Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է 09.05.23, գրախոսվել է 09.05.23, ընդունվել է տպագրության 28.08.23:

Reflection of Western Armenian Views on War and Peace, National...

The issues of war and peace, national solidarity touched all Western Armenians because every one of them felt the future course of the fate of himself, his family and relatives.

When writing this scientific article, we referred to several works published by our famous scholars who, to a certain extent, have attempted to elucidate the above issues¹.

Difference Between Eastern Armenian and Western Armenian Views and Positions

In one of the first issues of the newspaper, it was mentioned that the political standpoints of Eastern and Western Armenians were not the same, hence, "the case could not be carried out with the same method, by the same forces and in the same place"².

The following questions were discussed in the article "The dead have a question": "A question has been raised as to how our votes should be regulated. Should the Armenian provinces (this refers to Western Armenia) have a voice in comparison to the census of the survivors? Have the interests of the survivors changed and differ from the interests of the dead? Do the dead have no questions and are they separated from us?"³.

The editorial of the newspaper stated again: "When these questions are raised, and when we ask these questions to ourselves, we will hear that our dead are speaking, and the question will justly become the collective issue of the deceased and the survivors"⁴.

And since the forthcoming Western Armenian Congress will be the collective national representation, then "... we must give a place and a voice to the dead in this national assembly, even if they cry out"⁵.

The following observation is especially noteworthy - we, survivors intercede in the name of the martyrs because this fact is more important for our survival than diplomatic interventions and pacts.

¹ Աղայան 1994, 811, Ներսիսյան 2002, 488, Չելեյան 1990, 719, Ավետիսյան 1998, 302:

² «Հայաստան», թիվ 4, 1917:

³ «Հայաստան», թիվ 4, 1917:

⁴ «Հայաստան», թիվ 4, 1917:

⁵ «Հայաստան», թիվ 4, 1917:

On May 7, 1917, the editorial "The Essence of Our Protest" put forward the idea that Eastern Armenian newspapers spread information about the justified protest of the Armenians of Turkey. According to the editorial, the above-mentioned protest "is organized around those persons who have allowed themselves to speak in the name of the people without understanding their situation and psychology since the beginning of the war"⁶.

Criticism was directed at those forces and individuals that no longer had political values (first of all, this referred to the Armenian Revolutionary Federation)⁷. The editorial criticized the neglect of Western Armenians and the Western Armenian press in Armenian journalistic pages: "We consider the rejection of the "Western Armenian" to be a reprehensible neglect. Ignoring the press also means ignoring the people"⁸.

The newspaper urged its readers and the representatives of the Armenian National Committee several times, to be extremely careful. A caution that active revolutionaries did not have. "It is so, because the revolutionary temperament is not like political affairs in general. In other words, a political statesman must have prudence. A revolutionary does not have such political virtue"⁹.

About Orphans

Western Armenian orphans were often mentioned in the pages of the newspaper. On August 13, 1917, V. Totovents noted: "Today, there is no one who will write your history. You have to draw a picture of your mental world yourself. Only the picture drawn by your hand can give the real description of your sorrow, pain and torments"¹⁰. According to him, space and time are still needed to understand today's history, today's real situation. However, the feeling of hope and faith is strong and unchanging: "The philosophy of your world is not childish because the childhood that lives in you is like a bird that has already disappeared. I have read your literature, your song and poem. I know that you will rise up and sing, with

⁶ «Հայաստան», թիվ 17, 1917.

⁷ «Հայաստան», թիվ 18, 1917.

⁸ «Հայաստան», թիվ 22, 1917.

⁹ «Հայաստան», թիվ 93, 1917.

¹⁰ «Հայաստան», թիվ 95, 1917.

deep sorrow, with a new lyre and an unworldly song from city to city and from village to village..."¹¹.

In general, any question raised during public discussions was inevitably related to the pain and sorrow inherited by the Genocide.

The trace of the path of the greatest tragedy of the Armenian people is present even in the most pleasant personal feelings. However, the shades of Armenian sorrow are prevailing in the "Forget Me" lyric: "Here, my dear... Today my heart cannot be dedicated to anyone except the victims of the Genocide, today I need nothing else but the struggle for the freedom of my homeland"¹².

The Western Armenian Congress

On May 7, 1917, the newspaper opened with the extensive article entitled "Western Armenian Congress". The speech of Zapel Yesayan, a famous Western Armenian writer and public figure was published on the first page, in which the following very modern and current emphases were laid: "Today we are in one of the most decisive situations in our national history, and perhaps never before has the issue of life and death of the Armenian people been raised so harshly and so directly as now ... In these circumstances, we must feel ourselves superior even to our individual values, and if the unfortunate history of our people has given us a role that may not be suited to our abilities, we must have before our eyes only the highest responsibility that will be imposed on us, and not the insufficiency of our means"¹³.

At the end of her speech, Z. Yesayan once again reminded the unforgettable lesson of the Armenian history and that Armenians of all classes, and living in all countries should walk the same path in solidarity because the enemy did not show any discrimination in his threats and attacks. So, "let's not put discrimination and intransigence in our activities because our main goal is to collect and heal the fragments of our scattered Armenians and restore the integrity of our Homeland"¹⁴.

The newspaper contains detailed information on the preparation process, ceremonial opening and sessions of the Western Armenian congress. The honor

¹¹ «Հայաստան», թիվ 95, 1917.

¹² «Հայաստան», թիվ 17, 1917.

¹³ «Հայաստան», թիվ 18, 1917.

¹⁴ «Հայաստան», թիվ 18, 1917.

of opening the Congress was given to Zoravar Andranik who was greeted with applause. However, during the work of the Congress, a very tense atmosphere was gradually created. During the discussions of the most important issues related to the fate of Western Armenians, deep contradictions arose between the deputies representing the groups of Andranik and Aram Manukyan. The positions expressed by Andranik at the Congress were supported by the representatives of the *Constitutional Ramgavar* and Hunchakian parties as well as some deputies of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party (Dashnaktsutyun).

The Congress came to important decisions on implementing changes in Western Armenia. The Western Armenian Council consisting of 25 people was elected, and according to the adopted working order, it had to convene a meeting once every three months and respond to the existing concerns.

On August 10, 1917, in the article entitled "Daily Problems", L. Tutunjian noted that the Western Armenian Council had started its session but it was not definite what it could and would do. Even the Turkish-Armenian press "did not know what the assembly as the supreme body of our leadership could do"¹⁵. The criticism was directed at the right address because the above-mentioned Council held its sessions behind closed doors in a strict regime. Meanwhile, that was not acceptable as the Council elected by public vote was obliged to publicize its activities.

The Discussion of Sentiments Towards the Present and Future of Western Armenia

On August 17, 1917, the correspondence received from Khnus was published in the newspaper under the title "Letter of the Motherland". There were situations when the morale of the troops at the front was quite high and doubts about retreat disappeared from people's minds, for doubts about retreat created a rather desperate situation.

It is mentioned again that the Kurds continued to be very dangerous for the peaceful Armenian population. They played a dual role; that is, they had a relationship with both Turkish and Russian troops: "It should be noted that the Kurds having settled directly in the mountainous parts of advanced positions, were in direct contact with the Turkish army, and on the other hand, they were

¹⁵ «Հայաստան», թիվ 92, 1917.

able to move behind the Russian troops without obstacles and transport food to both themselves and the Turkish army”¹⁶.

Peaceful residents were surprised by the situation that the Russian military authorities learning all about that, did not take measures to remove the Kurds from the frontline, on the contrary, they welcomed newly arrived migrant Kurds to settle in the mountainous areas immediately adjacent to the front.

In the article “Bayazid and the Kurdish Bandits”, it was mentioned that the Kurds continued to carry out their hostile actions against the Armenian population in the region of Bayazid, as it was before the war. Let us emphasize that if Kurdish barbarian forces were united, a more difficult situation would be created.

L. Tutunjian, the author of the publication “In the Midst of Disaster”, generally described the situation of the Armenians in which he could see no hopeful exits. He presented this important fact in the following way: “You should not act in such a way as to stimulate the people’s emigration. We need an organized force that will bravely look towards the salvation of the motherland, breaking all relations with the wrong reality here, all misunderstandings and wrong thoughts and opinions... all those misunderstandings will lead the Armenian country to destruction. I know that the best youth agrees with this idea. If someone tries to create obstacles for those young people who can carry out the task of saving the Motherland, it will be the greatest and vulgar crime”¹⁷. Therefore, regardless of the situation, the attention of every Armenian should be directed at Western Armenia. The defense of the Armenian country can never be forgotten.

On August 20, 1917, the newspaper published on its first and second pages Arshak Chopanyan's extensive article “Holy Armenia” where among the big issues there was also a call and exhortation to the compatriots: “Yes, the executioners must be punished. They must be punished in every way. But your glorious victory, my Armenia, should be a great punishment for them. And the greatness of your humanness should do even more; it is necessary to prevent the impending danger of your executioners, that will be the salvation of our nation”¹⁸.

¹⁶ «Հայաստան», թիվ 96, 1917.

¹⁷ «Հայաստան», թիվ 97, 1917.

¹⁸ «Հայաստան», թիվ 99, 1917.

The article ends with the thoughts addressed to undefeated Armenia that the latter, with such a huge sacrifice, contributed to the full victory of freedom and justice of different peoples against all criminal groups. So, "You were Mother Armenia for us, today you are Holy Armenia for humanity"¹⁹.

To encourage the suffering, wounded and struggling Armenian people, "Hayastan" periodical also included the notes of famous foreign writers and intellectuals in its pages. On August 22, 1917, the newspaper was opened with the article by Emile Pinyo titled "Why I love Armenia". It is not voluminous, but it is written with great warmth. It begins with the following words: "It will be the greatest honor in my life to put my pen and my words or rather my whole soul in favor of the point of view that the Armenia Question should be the highest, the most cherished, the most noble, the most human in history"²⁰. The French poet and intellectual sent a message to the Armenian people: "You have been stronger than suffering and death, because you are under the protection of the wings of human freedom"²¹.

The pages of the newspaper reflected the encouraging words of other famous intellectuals addressed to Armenia and Armenians. The "Hayastan" periodical continued to closely follow the current developments and challenges formed around the country.

In the summer of 1917, the "Hayastan" periodical was already deeply concerned about the tense internal political situation in Russia and the tendencies leading to instability. It was predicted that the further weakening of Russia would have serious consequences on the future fate of the Armenian people. The exceptional strength of the legitimate government was considered necessary for the security of Russia, which was to act "as a regime that would make it possible to eliminate the three great misfortunes that lay on our shoulders: internal discord, unscrupulous German provocation and anarchy"²².

The problems of the Western Armenian immigrants located in the region of Yerevan were referred to in the article "Cries of Desperation". The immigrants were in better condition than those resettled elsewhere. But "today the cry of despair will be raised for the first time from Yerevan. Whether other places will

¹⁹ «Հայաստան», թիվ 99, 1917.

²⁰ «Հայաստան», թիվ 99, 1917.

²¹ «Հայաստան», թիվ 99, 1917.

²² «Հայաստան», թիվ 104, 1917.

be silent or they have no reason to shout – that is still a question”²³. The editorial emphasized the point of view that it is necessary to find and provide work for the immigrants living on benefits, “because the benefits can make the people unable to work”. Therefore, the Western Armenian Council is obliged to provide Western Armenian immigrants with work (even if it is temporary) in the near future. According to the editorial, mass migration to America is not very wise. Those who want to emigrate explain their desire in this way: “There are certain things they cannot do, they cannot work on the road, as if America should welcome and care for them”²⁴.

During 1917, until the Russian troops left the territory of occupied Western Armenia, the “Hayastan” periodical always hoped that the majority of the emigrants would return to their places of residence and would repair and build the country.

Even in connection with the upcoming academic year, the periodical noted: “The Western Armenian students should see our changes this year, we will deeply believe that the best changes will be implemented in the lives of the refugees. The pleasant liveliness has already begun, and it seems as if a small bright image of the former school life is reflected on the gloomy horizons of our migration”²⁵.

Thus, step by step, the periodical “Hayastan” tried to become a pillar where “all those who tended to forget all political creeds and intended to create Armenian national freedom should join and shake hands with each other. Eastern Armenians and Western Armenians can be among them”²⁶.

The Importance of the National Joint Council

The newspaper highlighted any nationwide level event from the point of view of contributing to the Armenian Question and creating an atmosphere of national solidarity. In the article titled “National Joint Council and the Turkish Armenians”, it is emphasized that the national consultation to be held in Tiflis on September 29, 1917, will create a new situation among the Armenians. It is the profound conviction of the editors of the “Hayastan” newspaper: “We will wait

²³ «Հայաստան», թիվ 103, 1917.

²⁴ «Հայաստան», թիվ 103, 1917.

²⁵ «Հայաստան», թիվ 105, 1917.

²⁶ «Հայաստան», թիվ 111, 1917.

until all the leading bodies and organizations included in the joint consultation understand the current serious need, put an end to the conflicting opinions expressed towards each other, unite their forces on the national issue and advance the desired national union”²⁷.

However, the circumstances preventing the formation of the desired national union were quite many, and this was due to the national mental temperament and other factors. Inter-party disagreements and contradictions were clearly manifested even before the meeting of the Joint consultation, when the elections of deputies were underway. The newspaper informed the readers that 228 people were elected as deputies, Andranik was elected by the Armenian communities of Rostov and Nor Nakhichevan. According to historian H. Karapetyan, Andranik “went to the co-consultation not on behalf of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, and he also announced about it in the press”²⁸.

Joint consultation could have a fatal role and significance in the Armenian national life. All the powerful forces of the Armenian reality, except the Bolsheviks, take part in it. All important issues related to the Armenian national life were on the agenda of the co-consultation. However, the most important issues were the defense of the front and the self-defense of the Armenian provinces.

More tense debates followed one another during the co-consultation. The periodical “Hayastan” made efforts to prevent unwanted conflicts and unite national forces around the most important challenges, threatening the country.

At the second session held on September 30, 1917, Andranik made a speech and announced that the members of the Western Armenian Council did not reserve the right to interfere in the Transcaucasian political and social problems. The next day, the editor of the newspaper made the necessary clarifications on the occasion of Andranik’s above statement. Totovets mentioned in connection with that issue that the Western Armenian Council was elected by the Congress of Turkish Armenians to resolve specific issues, so they did not have the right to interfere in other affairs, because they did not have such authority.

²⁷ «Հայաստան», թիվ 112, 1917.

²⁸ **Կարապետյան** 1992, 438.

At the sixth session of the joint consultation, Andranik emphasized in his extensive speech that without class discrimination it was necessary to form a nationwide unity and go out in full force to fight for life and death at that moment. He did not consider it appropriate to engage in propaganda and strengthening of socialist ideas at that alarming moment. The legendary figure emphasized that he came to the joint consultation to talk about the defense of the front and to take part in solving that issue. However, according to him, "the assembly does not deal with issues of vital importance for the Armenian people but deals with inter-party issues"²⁹. Andranik resolutely insisted on the following: "Our situation and existence are in a really dangerous situation; we are faced with the question of preserving the physical existence of the Armenian people"³⁰.

The newspaper thoroughly covered not only the process of the joint consultation but also the various ideological and political transitions related to it. Often, the periodical proposed possible ways and options for solving problems affecting the Armenian reality.

Conclusions

Summing up, let's record that the "Hayastan" newspaper always remained faithful to its name and title. The latter always covered the important episodes of the lives and rights of the Western Armenian immigrants who were subjected to genocide and depatriation during the aforementioned difficult times.

The periodical "Hayastan" expressed the process of reconstruction and revival of Western Armenia, charting real ways and points of view that excited the broad sections of the Western Armenian and Eastern Armenian public.

As noted by the distinguished historian Hr. Simonyan, the "Hayastan" periodical made great efforts to bring the two parts of the Armenian people closer together. In its publications, the newspaper regularly discussed the tragic and heroic life of all Armenians and was a unique connecting link between Western Armenians and Eastern Armenians³¹.

²⁹ «Հայաստան», թիվ 126, 1917.

³⁰ «Հայաստան», թիվ 126, 1917.

³¹ Սիմոնյան 1996, 560.

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- «Հայաստան», Թիֆլիս, թիվ 18, 1917 թ.:
- «Հայաստան», Թիֆլիս, թիվ 22, 1917 թ.:
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**ՊԱՏԵՐԱԶՄԻ ԵՎ ԽԱՂԱՂՈՒԹՅԱՆ, ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ
ՀԱՄԵՐԱՇԽՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱՐԵՎՄՏԱՀԱՅՈՑ ՏԵՍԱԿԵՏՆԵՐԻ
ԱՐՏԱՑՈԼՈՒՄԸ «ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆ» ՊԱՐԲԵՐԱԿԱՆՈՒՄ**

ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ Ա.

Ամփոփում

Քանայի բառեր՝ Արևմտյան Հայաստան, ազգային համերաշխություն, Ջորավար Անդրանիկ, «Հայաստան» պարբերական, որբեր և գաղթականներ, արեւելահայ և արևմտահայ տեսակետներ, համազգային խորհրդակցություն:

1914 թ. գարնանը Թիֆլիսում Ջորավար Անդրանիկի նախաձեռնությամբ հրապարակ ելավ «Հայաստան» օրաթերթը, որի խմբագիրն ու աշխատակիցները բացառապես արևմտահայեր էին:

Այս պարբերականի էջերում բազմակողմանիորեն և խորությամբ քննարկվում էին ցեղասպանությունից մազապուրծ արևմտահայության մնացորդների հետագա ճակատագրի, ավերակ Արևմտյան Հայաստանի վերականգնման, ճակատի պաշտպանության հետ կապված հիմնախնդիրները:

Դիտարկվում էին արևմտահայերի և արևելահայերի միջև ազգային համերաշխության մթնոլորտ ձևավորելու հարցերն ու հարցականները: Թերթը մշտապես արժարժում էր բազմահազար որբերի և գաղթականների հետ կապված տագնապներն ու մտահոգությունները:

«Հայաստանն» իր էջերում հրապարակում էր հայ և օտարազգի անվանի մտավորականների կոչերն ու ուղերձները՝ ուղղված եղեռնազարկ հայությանը և, դրանով իսկ փորձելով ներքուստ ջերմացնել և ոգևորել բզկտված և տառապյալ ժողովրդի հոգեկան աշխարհը, նորից ուժ և վստահություն հաղորդել ապագայի հանդեպ:

ОТРАЖЕНИЕ ЗАПАДНОАРМЯНСКИХ ВЗГЛЯДОВ НА ВОЙНУ И МИР И НАЦИОНАЛЬНУЮ СОЛИДАРНОСТЬ В ПЕРИОДИЧЕСКОМ ИЗДАНИИ «АРМЕНИЯ»

КАРАПЕТЯН А.

Резюме

Ключевые слова: Западная Армения, национальная солидарность, Зоравар Андраник, периодическое издание «Армения», сироты и беженцы, восточно-армянские и западноармянские взгляды, общенациональное совещание.

Весной 1914 г. по инициативе Зоравара Андраника в Тифлисе стала издаваться ежедневная газета «Айастан», редактором и сотрудниками которой были исключительно западные армяне.

На страницах этого издания подробно обсуждались вопросы, связанные с дальнейшей судьбой переживших геноцид западных армян, с восстановлением разрушенной Западной Армении и обороной фронта.

Газета обращалась также к вопросу национальной солидарности между западными и восточными армянами, к проблемам тысяч детей-сирот и мигрантов.

Газета публиковала обращения-призывы многих известных представителей армянской и зарубежной интеллигенции к армянам, пытаясь тем самым вселить в них уверенность в будущем.