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THE REFLECTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL LIFE OF ARTSAKH ON THE PAGES OF “MSHAK” NEWSPAPER (THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY)

Abstract

The role and significance of the national school is emphasized in the system of studying the centuries-old history of Armenian culture. The role of education is especially significant in the preservation of national values and traditions.

The article presents a number of issues related to the educational life of Artsakh (at the beginning of the 20th century), one of the regions of Eastern Armenia based on materials published in the “Mshak” newspaper. We have briefly touched upon the policy of Tsarism in the Caucasus, the process of closing and reopening Armenian schools in the Artsakh Diocese. The educational problems of a number of settlements of the Artsakh Diocese are studied in relation with school programs, student and teacher complaints and the activities of the overseers. The activities of the Diocesan School of Artsakh, the Realakan College of Shushi, the Marinsky Girls’ School as well as one and two-grade schools of the villages of Tsmakahogh, Hadrut, Maghavuz, Taghavard, Haterk, Voskanapat and Banants are presented in separate subsections according to the information obtained from different issues of the “Mshak” newspaper. The circumstances hindering the development of educational life of Artsakh (related to the law on the confiscation of church property of June 12, 1903, the Armenian-Tatar Clashes of 1905–1907) as well as the activities of individual teachers are

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briefly highlighted. The charitable works of individual benefactors are appreciated, according to materials from the "Mshak" newspaper.

Keywords: culture, parish school, Diocesan School, Real School, Caucasus, Getashen, Gandzasar, Eastern Armenia, Artsakh, gymnasium.

Introduction

At the beginning of the 20th century, the economic and political crisis gradually deepened in Eastern Armenia. The problem is that the Golitsyn Regime (Grigory Golitsyn, Governor of the Caucasus from 1896 to 1904)¹ established in the Caucasus in the late 19th and early 20th centuries intensified the harsh policy directed against Armenians.² Armenian schools began to be closed, and the Armenian periodical press came under strict control.³ The Tsarist Government forbade the press to touch upon national problems, to publish articles about Western Armenia and the Armenian Issue in general. The publication of new periodicals was also prohibited.

The policy of Tsarism caused great discontent in various places in Transcaucasia including the Karabakh Diocese (Artsakh Diocese).⁴ The popular struggle spread everywhere. Revolutionary calls, leaflets, etc. were distributed. On the eve of the First Russian Revolution,⁵ a tense atmosphere was created among the students of Artsakh.

In the conditions of intense persecution against Armenians, there were no favorable conditions for the development of educational work in the Karabakh Diocese, as in other Armenian dioceses: Armenian schools were closed for about ten years (1896–1905) by the decision of the government. According to the report of the Primate of the Karabakh Diocese presented to the Synod of

¹ "Mshak", 1905, № 2, January 5.

² Muradyan 2005, 165–168. Witte 1960.

³ Avagyan 1989.

⁴ By the Tsarist Decree of March 11, 1836, known in history as the "Polozhenie", the Armenian Church operating in the territories under the Russian rule was divided into six dioceses, the fifth of which was the Karabakh Diocese. The Karabakh Diocese existed until 1930, when Azerbaijan having received the consent of the Soviet authorities, closed it. About the Diocese, see Minasyan 1914, 636–637.

⁵ Arzumanyan 1975, 3–14. The First Russian Revolution of 1905, <https://www.pnp.ru/social/pervaya-russkaya-revolyuciya-proshla-115-let-nazad.html> (accessed: 10.01.2025).

Etchmiadzin, the number of schools closed in the entire Karabakh Diocese in 1903-1905 was about 25, the number of unemployed teachers – 30, and the number of students deprived of education – 790.⁶

The Tsarist Government's violence against Armenian cultural and educational centers did not discourage Armenians. On the contrary, their political and national self-awareness, the spirit of patriotism and aspirations for national preservation became stronger. Since Armenian language and literature were not taught in Armenian schools operating under new principles, Armenian parents preferred to organize their children's education in Armenian at home. For this reason, secret schools providing education in the native language began to be established in various Armenian-populated areas.

The rise of the First Russian Revolution (1905) forced Tsarism to reconsider its policy towards Armenians. On August 1, 1905, a decision was made to repeal the law of June 12, 1903.⁷ According to the decision, church-parish schools were allowed to be opened adjacent to churches and monasteries within the borders of the Caucasus Viceroyalty.⁸ With a special kondak from the Catholicos of All Armenians, the people were allowed to open Armenian schools. In the 1905–1906 academic year, Armenian schools were reopened in the Artsakh Diocese.⁹

Numerous issues related to the topic under discussion have been studied by representatives of Armenian culture: Leo,¹⁰ H. Arakelyan,¹¹ R. Ter-Gasparyan,¹² V. Yerkanyan,¹³ S. Khudoyan,¹⁴ M. Barkhudaryan,¹⁵ V. Balayan,¹⁶ H. Grigoryan, G. Harutyunyan,¹⁷ G. Harutyunyan,¹⁸ M. Harutyunyan¹⁹ and others.²⁰ Many

⁶ National Archives of Armenia (NAA), fund 56, list 3, file 3, 4. **Harutyunyan** 2010, 50.

⁷ NAA, f. 94, l. 9, f. 58. See also **Danielyan** 2014, 338–346.

⁸ For more details, see **Yerkanyan** 1982.

⁹ For more details, see **Harutyunyan** 2000.

¹⁰ **Leo** 1914.

¹¹ The 75th Anniversary of the Armenian Theological Diocesan School of Karabakh 1913.

¹² **Gasparyan** 1993.

¹³ **Yerkanyan** 1982.

¹⁴ **Khudoyan** 1987, 354–383.

¹⁵ **Barkhudareants** 1996.

¹⁶ **Balayan** 2002.

¹⁷ **Grigoryan, Harutyunyan** 2001.

¹⁸ **Harutyunyan** 1984.

¹⁹ **Harutyunyan** 2010.

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economic, political, and cultural problems of the Armenian people of those years were covered by the press of the time. Appreciating the scientific studies of the above-mentioned researchers, we intend to emphasize that the issue under study has not been considered in depth based on the materials published in the "Mshak" newspaper.

The purpose and objectives of the research: The main goal of the study is to present valuable information about the educational life of the beginning of the 20th century of Artsakh, one of the regions of Eastern Armenia, based on materials published in the "Mshak" newspaper. **The main objectives of the study are:** 1.) to highlight the problems of the educational sphere in Artsakh 2.) to provide comparative analyses of the newspaper articles under consideration.

The scientific novelty of the topic: The scientific novelty of the research consists in the new interpretation of materials published in a number of issues of the newspaper.

Methodology: The study is conducted by employing the historical-comparative, descriptive, and analytical methods.

The problems of the Diocesan School of Artsakh as reflected on the "Mshak" newspaper pages

At the beginning of the 20th century, various issues of the "Mshak" newspaper published interesting information about various problems of the schools of Artsakh. Let us emphasize that some information also refers to the events of the late 19th century.

In one of the articles titled "Everything has a Limit" we encounter information about certain problems of the Diocesan School of Artsakh.²¹ Another article of the same issue ("Letter from Shushi") discussed problems related to students' progress, social status, curriculum and other questions that arose in the Board of Trustees of the Diocesan School in 1900–1901.²² In one of the following issues of the newspaper, it was stated that a demand was made to expel some rebellious students and teachers from the Diocesan School.²³ These

²⁰ The opening of the Our Lady of Karabakh St. Mary's College for Girls, Shushi, 1864. Memorial of the Armenian Diocesan Theological School of Karabakh (Artsakh), Shushi, 1901. **Avanesyan, Harutyunyan** 2014, etc.

²¹ "Mshak", 1901, № 125, June 12, p. 1.

²² "Mshak", 1901, № 125, June 12, p. 2.

²³ "Mshak", 1901, № 131, June 19, p. 2.

problems were also mentioned in another issue of the newspaper of 1901. According to that information, internal student riots took place at the school, directed against the school superintendent and some students.²⁴

An interesting article by A. Chilinkarian titled "Letter to the Editor" was published in one of the 1901 issues of the "Mshak" newspaper. In the article, the author presented the disagreements that arose between Chilinkarian and H. Hovhannisyan, a teacher at the same school, over the issue of teaching hours for the discipline of history in grades III, IV, V and VI during the time of Vardapet Benik,²⁵ the superintendent of the Diocesan School of Shushi.²⁶

The newspaper covering in detail the years of Vardapet Benik's leadership, testified that the students and teaching staff of the Diocesan School participated in a number of cultural events. An example of this is the congratulatory note in one of the issues of the "Mshak" newspaper regarding the opening ceremony of the Gamar-Katipa monument:²⁷ "The teaching team of the Armenian Theological School of Shushi welcomes the opening of the monument to the singer, our magnificent poet Gamar-Katipa, who, with his lyre, inspired love for the nation and its oppressed sons."²⁸

The existence of Armenian schools of Artsakh was also maintained through an income from theatrical performances,²⁹ other events and donations provided by individuals. The newspaper mentioned the concert of E. Baghdasarian,³⁰ a student of the Conservatory, the proceeds of which were directed to the benefit of the library and poor students.³¹ This was also written about in another issue of the newspaper – a note by G. Ter-Ghazaryan. According to that article, in

²⁴ "Mshak", 1901, № 189, August 28, p. 2.

²⁵ For information about the superintendent Vardapet Benik, see "Mshak", 1901, № 163, July 27, p. 2. "Mshak", 1902, № 111, May 28, p. 2. "Mshak", 1902, № 138, June 28, p. 2. "Mshak", 1902, № 274, December 12, p. 3. "Mshak", 1903, № 11, January 18, p. 3.

²⁶ "Mshak", 1901, № 4, January 10, p. 3.

²⁷ The opening ceremony of the monument to Gamar-Katipa took place at the Holy Cross Monastery of Nor Nakhijevan (September 23, 1901). <https://arar.sci.am/Content/12081/26-30.pdf> (accessed: 15.02.2025).

²⁸ "Mshak", 1901, № 219, October 4, p. 1.

²⁹ "Mshak", 1903, № 37, February 20, p. 3.

³⁰ "Mshak", 1902, № 180, August 17, p. 3. "Mshak", 1902, № 190, August 30, p. 3. "Mshak", 1902, № 194, September 4, p. 1.

³¹ "Mshak", 1901, № 179, August 16, p. 2.

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August 1901, a charity concert was held in Shushi for the benefit of poor students and the city's library-reading room.³²

Among the Armenian wealthy people, the name of Baba-beg was mentioned, and to perpetuate his memory, his relatives, the Tunibekyans bequeathed 5,000 roubles to the Artsakh Diocesan School.³³

In one of the 1901 issues of the "Mshak" newspaper, there is information about Bababeg Tuniregeants, a wealthy man from Shushi who had been one of the trustees of the Diocesan School of Artsakh for many years. After the latter's death, his brothers made large donations to schools and churches of Artsakh. The newspaper wrote about this: "Today the body of Bababeg Tuniregeants was buried. The 70-year-old deceased has no heirs. He was very active in our public affairs; he was always respected by prominent people due to his wealth. He had been a trustee of the Diocesan School for many years, and he was a city deputy and a legal representative. The brothers of the deceased made the following large donations: to the Diocesan School – 5,000 rubles, 3,000 rubles to renovate the assembly hall of the same school, 1,000 rubles to the Meghretsots Church, 500 rubles to each of the two girls' schools of the city, 200 rubles were given to the treasury of poor students, 400 rubles to the four churches of the city and the Kusanats Desert, and 1,000 rubles in old coins to the Etchmiadzin Museum. A huge crowd was present at the funeral."³⁴

The descendants of Arzuman Beg Avanyants from Shushi donated 200 rubles to the Diocesan School to perpetuate the memory of their father.³⁵

Artsakh schools organized performances of various contents (theatrical, musical, other events) as well as children's (8–12 year olds)³⁶ and student³⁷ performances in the theater hall. As S. Avagyan noted, the theater groups created in the schools of Artsakh had to some extent supported the satisfaction of the aesthetic demands of the students. "Forced Marriage", "Poet" and other vaudevilles were staged by the students and teachers of the Realakan, Mariamyan and other schools.³⁸

³² "Mshak", 1901, № 183, August 21, p. 2.

³³ "Mshak", 1903, № 27, February 6, p. 3.

³⁴ "Mshak", 1901, № 100, May 10, p. 3.

³⁵ "Mshak", 1902, № 34, February 14, p. 3.

³⁶ "Mshak", 1902, № 18, January 26, p. 2.

³⁷ "Mshak", 1902, № 40, February 23, p. 2. "Mshak", 1902, № 282, December 21, p. 2.

³⁸ Avagyan 1982.

School students actively participated in church services in separate choirs.³⁹

The newspaper mentioned the regular performances⁴⁰ of the Diocesan School of Shushi: "A student performance took place in the building's hall (the new building had not yet been built). They performed the drama "Daspar Ami" and the vaudeville "Mado's Will" («Մադոյի կտակը»). The performance was generally a success. After the performance, there were lively dances accompanied by a group of Asian musicians. Admission was free."⁴¹

It is particularly noteworthy that among the events organized in Artsakh schools, various events dedicated to foreign cultural figures were also considered important. There is an interesting note about Nikolai Gogol, one of the famous representatives of Russian literature: "They write to us from Shushi that on February 20, in memory of Gogol's fiftieth birthday, there will be events in the Realakan and city schools."⁴²

There is an interesting note about the performances⁴³ held in the hall of the new building of the Diocesan School in issue 33 of the newspaper "Mshak" for 1901: "They wrote to us from Shushi that on February 8, the feast of Vartanants, a ceremony was held after the liturgy in the new building of the Diocesan School. The people filled the large hall which was modestly decorated. It is gratifying to see that women and girls attend such events in greater numbers than men. But what is the point of this? The Diocesan School was preparing to put on a performance for the benefit of the poor on the feast day, but none of the girls agreed to participate in the performance, and for this reason the performance was canceled."⁴⁴

The Artsakh Diocesan School⁴⁵, like other Armenian schools, was closed and reopened several times. It was reopened again in 1905. This information was mentioned in one of the 1905 issues of the newspaper "Mshak": "On the 5th of the month, by the order of His Holiness the Catholicos, Bishop Ashot, the Primate of the Diocese of Karabakh with Vardapet (Archpriest) Husik went to

³⁹ "Mshak", 1902, № 271, December 8, p. 2. "Mshak", 1902, № 282, December 21, p. 2.

⁴⁰ "Mshak", 1901, № 16, January 24, p. 2. "Mshak", 1902, № 223, October 9, p. 1. 1903, № 38, February 21, p. 2.

⁴¹ "Mshak", 1902, № 4, January 10, p. 3.

⁴² "Mshak", 1902, № 38, February 20, p. 3.

⁴³ "Mshak", 1902, February 27, № 43, p. 3.

⁴⁴ "Mshak", 1901, № 33, February 14, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Leo 1914.

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the Viceroy of the Caucasus. The Bishop asked the Viceroy to intercede with the Russian Emperor for the reopening of the Diocesan School of Shushi, which had been closed two years earlier by an imperial decree..."⁴⁶ This information was mentioned in detail in issue 162 of the newspaper of the same year, in an article entitled "The Reopening of the Diocesan School of Shushi". "The Emperor taking into account the mediation of Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, Viceroy of the Caucasus allowed the reopening of the Diocesan School of Shushi, which had been closed in 1903 ... The Diocesan School of Shushi was a center of education for a Diocese with a population of approximately 250,000 Armenians. More than 600 children and adolescents studied at that school, who in 1903 were deprived of the opportunity to continue their education because the former administration of the Caucasus based on erroneous and inaccurate information had closed an entire educational institution..."⁴⁷

It should be noted that despite the opening of the Diocesan School, the school programs continued to remain incomplete,⁴⁸ which led to frequent strikes by the students.⁴⁹

The Reflection of the Educational Problems of the Realakan College in the "Mshak" newspaper

In one of the issues of 1901, the newspaper published interesting information about the construction works of the Realakan *College*⁵⁰ of Shushi during which a number of problems arose. Grigor Arafeleants made a great charitable contribution to those works. The newspaper wrote: "Readers of the "Mshak" newspaper know that a year ago the foundation for the construction of the Realakan School was laid in our city. It is currently being built by Mr. Grigor Arafeleants allocating 108 thousand rubles. It was June 10 of last year that the foundation of the school building was blessed with a grand ceremony. In honor of the citizens, the same donor had prepared a sumptuous banquet with inspiring speeches. They did not suspect for a moment that the foundation of

⁴⁶ "Mshak", 1905, № 130, July 7, p. 3.

⁴⁷ "Mshak", 1905, № 162, August 14, p. 1.

⁴⁸ "Mshak", 1906, № 97, May 7, p. 3.

⁴⁹ "Mshak", 1906, № 54, March 11, p. 3. "Mshak", 1906, № 97, May 7, p. 3. "Mshak", 1907, № 2, January 4, p. 2.

⁵⁰ For more information about the Realakan College, see **Grigoryan, Harutyunyan** 2001. "Dprutyun", 1991, № 47-48, August 22, p. 3.

the structure was weak. However, as it turned out, the construction work had been entrusted to an unscrupulous builder. That contractor is Avag Mahtesi-Hakovbyan. He began to demand money from Mr. Arafelyan at the beginning of the work, when in reality the special commission was supposed first to evaluate the work done and then give him money. As a result, the work had just begun, but soon it was stopped and a year was wasted. The court will soon clarify the circumstances of this case. Now new people have emerged, Gharageozyan and Ghondaghsazyan who have also built the Diocesan School building. The ruthless treatment of a public institution by these gentlemen is simply outrageous. Any person sometimes enters the outwardly beautiful building of the Diocesan School with trepidation. If its foundation had not been laid on stones, it would have collapsed today. Part of the auditorium floor was covered with large cracks, and this year students had to be released for a day to repair the new structure. We invite Arafeleyan's attention to these facts".⁵¹

Graduates of Artsakh schools continued their studies at the Realakan College (the latter operated from 1881–1920).⁵² The newspaper wrote about this: "Exams of city schools are gradually being cancelled: The Diocesan School has already released students from May 20... The graduates went to the Realakan College, 18 of which were from the Mariinsky Girls' School."⁵³

The newspaper also wrote about the increase in tuition fees of the Realakan College.⁵⁴

The newspaper "Mshak" emphasized that graduates of realakan schools could be admitted to the Petersburg Military Medical Academy. The conditions for admission were also mentioned (for the academic year of 1902).⁵⁵

A number of cultural events were held with the participation of students from the Realakan College. During one of the events, the beautiful performances of the singing group formed by teacher Mr. Prokofiev were welcomed, and teacher Mr. Livnberg taught the students to play excerpts from various operas on the violin...⁵⁶

⁵¹ "Mshak", 1901, № 115, May 31, p. 1. "Mshak", 1901, № 134, June 22, p. 2.

⁵² "Dprutyun", 1991, № 47–48, August 22, p. 3.

⁵³ "Mshak", 1902, № 113, May 30, p. 3.

⁵⁴ "Mshak", 1902, № 114, May 31, p. 2.

⁵⁵ "Mshak", 1901, № 248, November 7, p. 3.

⁵⁶ "Mshak", 1902, № 282, December 21, p. 2.

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The closure of the Realakan College was mentioned in one of the 1905 issues of the "Mshak" newspaper: "Currently, classes at the Realakan College have been completely suspended."⁵⁷ Another issue of the newspaper of the same year mentioned that the small classes of the Realakan College of Shushi and their annexes, which were outside the main building, were burned down during a major fire.⁵⁸

The Schools of other villages of Artsakh

In various issues of the "Mshak" newspaper of the early 20th century, there is remarkable information about the schools of Tsmakahogh, Hadrut, Maghavuz, Taghavard, Haterk, Voskanapat and other villages as well as the Marinsky School of Shushi.

From the village of Tsmakahogh (Artsakh, Jivanshir province) they wrote: "A long time ago, the people asked the state to open a two-grade school in the community of Arajadzor (Dovchanlu). However, due to numerous complaints from the landlord, it was left unattended until today. Finally, two individuals elected from the community, B. Akopjanyan and H. Abrahamyan went to Gandzak and presented themselves to the superintendent. They raised the forgotten issues again, and after overcoming great hardships, they received a final decision of approval and returned to the village. Less than seven days after that, by the order of the superintendent, B. Zakhareanc, a teacher at the Sarov two-grade school was transferred to the position of Senior Teacher in Arajadzor, and he laid the foundation for a two-grade school. From the beginning, the teacher enjoyed great sympathy from the public. For the construction of the school, the landowner Mr. M. Dolukhaneants, at the request of the people and for the benefit of the society, promised to give three rooms of his own building until the construction of the new school. The number of students reaches 80, and it is increasing day by day, all of them are placed in only one classroom. We hope that Mr. Dolukhaneants upon hearing about the opening of the school, will soon fulfill his promise."⁵⁹

The newspaper referring to the Mariinsky School of Shushi, particularly emphasized the theatrical performances held at the school: "Performances were

⁵⁷ "Mshak", 1905, № 79, April 29, p. 2.

⁵⁸ "Mshak", 1905, № 206, October 9, p. 5.

⁵⁹ "Mshak", 1902, № 58, March 16, p. 3.

held for schoolgirls at the Mariinsky School for two days. And on February 8, a raffle with a dance performance was held at the theater in favor of poor schoolgirls."⁶⁰ The students of the Mariinsky Girls' School later continued their studies at the Realakan College of Shushi.⁶¹

In its article titled "The Educational Work in Shushi," the newspaper reflecting on the difficulties of educational life in Artsakh at the beginning of the 20th century, noted that education at the Mariinsky School was in poor condition.⁶²

At the beginning of the 20th century, the educational life of a number of villages of Artsakh was more difficult. Some villages did not have schools for primary education. The "Mshak" newspaper noted about the village of Banants in Gandzak where a decline in economic life is noticeable everywhere. The children were deprived of the conditions for elementary education.⁶³

And in another issue of 1901, it was noted that special attention had been paid especially to the teaching of foreign languages (French, German) in the public educational institutions of Gandzak, in male and female gymnasiums in recent years.⁶⁴

There is a mention in one of the newspaper issues of 1905 of the Gandzak folk schools, where the level of education of teachers was discussed emphasizing that villages should have teachers with not only secondary but also higher education.⁶⁵ Some information about boys' and girls' schools⁶⁶, and the city college of Gandzak⁶⁷ was also presented.

The newspaper covered the closure of schools of Artsakh at the beginning of the 20th century in one of its issues of 1905. There is information about the two-grade elementary school of the village of Getashen. According to this information, the main reason for the closure of the school was that a number of poor students were unable to pay the tuition fees. The newspaper emphasized that the Getashen school had been operating for two decades. In the first years,

⁶⁰ "Mshak", 1901, № 34, February 16, p. 3.

⁶¹ "Mshak", 1902, № 113, May 30, p. 3.

⁶² "Mshak", 1905, № 92, May 14, p. 2.

⁶³ "Mshak", 1901, № 168, August 2, p. 1.

⁶⁴ "Mshak", 1901, № 232, October 19, p. 2.

⁶⁵ "Mshak", 1905, № 39, March 6, p. 2.

⁶⁶ "Mshak", 1905, № 59, March 31, p. 2.

⁶⁷ "Mshak", 1905, № 208, October 12, p. 4.

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it operated on a private basis. The newspaper also thoroughly covered other issues related to the educational life of Getashen.⁶⁸

In one of its 1901 issues, the newspaper referred to the school in the village of Voskanapat,⁶⁹ which had been operating since 1897. The school had two classes and about 100 students. Students from neighboring villages (Mirzik, Brajur, Murud) also attended this school, as there were no schools in their villages, and there were a number of problems with education.⁷⁰

At the beginning of the 20th century, Armenian schools operated in the villages of Taghavard⁷¹, Hadrut⁷², Maghavuz, Haterq, Gharabek, and Chaylu of Artsakh.⁷³ The "Mshak" newspaper wrote about the Hadrut school: "After long delays, we, the people of Hadrut will finally have our own school building, which will cost about 17,000 rubles. Today, on May 25, the foundation of the building, which is being built with public funds, was blessed in the presence of a large crowd of people. The commander of the local troops with his commanders, many officials, the representatives of the merchant class, Russian and Armenian clergy are present at the event. The school's superintendent, Y. Davitbegeants delivered a speech. After the event ended, the contractor Mr. G. Melkumeants treated all the participants to a sumptuous dinner during which the military orchestra played."⁷⁴

An article about the school of the village of Maghavuz (Jevanshir District⁷⁵) of Artsakh was published in the newspaper under the title "Letter from the Jevanshir District," which noted that there were some social and economic problems in the village. Life in the village improved somewhat when a church⁷⁶ and a one-class parish school were built in the same village thanks to the efforts

⁶⁸ "Mshak", 1905, № 74, April 23, p. 2.

⁶⁹ The village of Voskanapat is located in the northern part of Artsakh. For more information, see **Karapetyan** 2004.

⁷⁰ "Mshak", 1901, № 84, April 20, p. 3.

⁷¹ "Mshak", 1902, № 226, October 12, p. 2.

⁷² "Mshak", 1902, № 117, June 4, p. 3. "Mshak", 1903, № 9, January 16, p. 3.

⁷³ "Mshak", 1902, № 174, August 10, p. 3.

⁷⁴ "Mshak", 1902, № 117, June 4, p. 3.

⁷⁵ Jevanshir District – an administrative-political unit within the Russian Empire. It was formed in 1869 separating from the Shushi Province. It was included in the newly created Elizavetpol Province. It mainly included the regions of Martakert and Shahumyan, Barda and Tartar. See **Arakelyan** 2003. Review of the Elizavetpol province for 1894, Tiflis, 1895.

⁷⁶ "Mshak", 1904, № 39, February 28, p. 2.

of the son of the famous oil producer Musael Shahgedanyan, a resident of the same village. The newspaper wrote about this: "...This sad situation would have continued for a long time if there had not been an external favorable circumstance. Twelve years ago, the famous oil producer Musael Shahgedanyan, who was originally from our village, died in Bagu (Baku). He bequeathed to his son, Mr. Mkrtich Shahgedanyan to build a church and a one-class parish school in his native village of Maghavugh. In addition, he donated 3,000 rubles to the Seminary of Echmiadzin, on the interest of which his adopted son from Jraberd was to study there."⁷⁷

At the beginning of the 20th century, educational life in some villages of Artsakh continued to proceed in difficult conditions. In one of the newspaper's issues of 1906, B. Zakareants making a general reference to the schools of some villages noted: "Education in the two-year schools of Kusapat and Arajadzor as well as the one-year schools of Mardakert, Janeatagh, Talish, Haterk, and Vank (Gandzasar) was almost disrupted until January 1 of this year; and from January 1, as we hear, many of these schools are closing because the people are unable to pay the school fees due to poverty. According to local residents, for the same reason, up to 70 elementary schools in the Gandzak Province are being closed from January 1 of this year. The poor rural people are now deprived of education due to their poverty."⁷⁸

The newspaper "Mshak," presenting interesting information about the agricultural life of Artsakh, noted that certain steps had been taken to open agricultural departments at Artsakh schools so that students could improve their skills in agricultural work.⁷⁹ Later, some of the graduates also began working in Artsakh's silk factories.⁸⁰

The "Mshak" newspaper also touched upon the activities of some teachers of Artsakh schools. Among those teachers were Arshak Ter-Mikelyan, Samuel Gyulzadyan, Father Vahan,⁸¹ a religion teacher of the Realakan College, Ter-Astvatsatryants from Gandzak (student of the Gevorgyan Seminary),⁸² Levon

⁷⁷ "Mshak", 1902, № 246, November 6, p. 2.

⁷⁸ "Mshak", 1906, № 40, February 23, p. 2.

⁷⁹ "Mshak", 1902, № 143, July 4, p. 1.

⁸⁰ "Mshak", 1903, № 27, February 6, p. 1.

⁸¹ "Mshak", 1903, № 49, March 6, p. 3.

⁸² "Mshak", 1904, № 58, March 21, p. 1.

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Sargsyan,⁸³ Priest Yeghishe Tarkhaneants⁸⁴ (Religion teacher at the Realakan School) and others. The newspaper noted about Arshak Ter-Mikelyan: "On June 25, at three o'clock after lunch, Arshak Ter-Mikelian died at a young age from pneumonia. The deceased had received his theological education in Germany, and for about five years he taught religion at our diocesan school. He had several publications with religious content. He bequeathed his library, worth about 1,000 rubles, to the Etchmiadzin Museum."⁸⁵ The newspaper emphasized that Samuel Gyulzadyan had taught in Artsakh schools for about 41 years, of which for more than 20 years he had taught at the Diocesan School of Shushi: "Mr. Samuel Gulzadyan, a teacher at the Diocesan School of Shushi has been teaching in our schools for 41 years. He taught at the Diocesan School of Shushi for more than 20 years. His late wife had worked as a teacher for 15 years, and his daughter has been working in the same position in Persia for about 10 years. So, three members of one family have served our education for a whole year. In other words, an entire generation has spent its childhood, adolescence, and adulthood under the teaching of those figures and been educated by them ..."⁸⁶

Educational life in Artsakh became extremely difficult, especially in 1905–1907, due to the Armenian-Tatar conflicts.⁸⁷ The newspaper "Mshak" provided very little information about the educational life of Artsakh during those years. Among the schools operating during those years, the newspaper highlighted the role of the orphanage-school opened for girls and boys in Shushi.⁸⁸ The school was opened on October 9, 1906, and its principal was Mrs. Z. Chilingaryan who also taught at that school. There were 20 orphans in the orphanage-school, 14 of whom were girls and 6 were boys. Among the orphans were children from 6 to 14 years old. That school was maintained through donations. Among the

⁸³ "Mshak", 1906, № 55, March 12, p. 3.

⁸⁴ "Mshak", 1907, № 48, March 6, p. 3.

⁸⁵ "Mshak", 1901, № 141, June 30, p. 3.

⁸⁶ "Mshak", 1901, № 156, July 19, p. 2.

⁸⁷ Armenian-Tatar clashes - military clashes that occurred during the Russian Revolution of 1905–1907. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, present-day Azerbaijanis were called "Caucasian Tatars." Armed clashes took place mainly in the Elizavetpol province, partly also in the Yerevan province, in the cities of Tbilisi and Baku. Most of the territory of Artsakh was included in the Elizavetpol province (1868–1917). For more details, see **A-Do** 1907. **Gyulkhandanyan** 1933. **Gevorgyan** 2019.

⁸⁸ "Mshak", 1907, № 35, February 16, p. 1.

donors were the Zhamharians, the Council of Armenian Churches of Petersburg, the Ter-Mkrtchyan brothers, Sofia Hakobyan, E. Bahatryan, Ashkhen Bahatryan and others.⁸⁹ There is some information about the educational life of the village of Taghlar, where the role of teacher Alahverdyan was emphasized.⁹⁰

There is interesting and valuable information in the newspaper about the "Weaving School" of Shushi. The author of the article emphasized that the workshop produced Armenian carpets.⁹¹ The role of Hripsime Ghukasyan in the development of weaving was highly appreciated, as she donated the entire row of shops on the inner floor of her house to the weaving workshop for free.⁹²

Conclusion

To summarize, let us emphasize that at the beginning of the 20th century, Eastern Armenia was in an economic and political crisis. Armenian schools began to be closed, and the Armenian press was placed under strict control. Later, after schools reopened, several schools continued to operate in Artsakh under very difficult conditions. Those schools were maintained with the financial means received from both individuals and various theatrical performances. Thanks to the support of individual benefactors, in parallel with educational life in Artsakh, some branches of agriculture, weaving, and silk weaving continued to operate.

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⁸⁹ "Mshak", 1907, № 35, February 16, p. 1.

⁹⁰ "Mshak", 1907, № 36, February 17, p. 1.

⁹¹ "Mshak", 1907, № 61, March 21, p. 3.

⁹² "Mshak", 1907, № 89, May 1, p. 3.

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ՄԱՐԻՆԵ ՀԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՅԱՆ

Պատմական գիտությունների թեկնածու

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ԱՐՅԱՆԻ ԿՐԹԱԿԱՆ ԿՅԱՆՔԻ ԱՐՏԱՑՈՒՄԸ «ՄՇԱԿ» ԹԵՐԹԻ ԷՋԵՐՈՒՄ (XX ԴԱՐԻ ՍԿԻԶԲ)

Ամփոփում

XX դարի սկզբներին Արևելյան Հայաստանի տնտեսական և քաղաքական կացությունը շարունակում էր մնալ ծանր: Կովկասում հաստատված գոլիցինյան ռեժիմը ուժեղացրեց հայահալած քաղաքականությունը: Խիստ վերահսկողության տակ դրվեց հայկական պարբերական մամուլը: Հայկական դպրոցների մեծ մասը շարունակում էր մնալ փակված: Էջմիածնի Սինոդի տեղեկագրի համաձայն՝ ամբողջ Արցախի թեմում 1903–1905 թթ. փակվող դպրոցների քանակը հասնում էր 25-ի: Սակայն հայկական մշակույթի ու կրթական օջախների նկատմամբ ցարական կառավարության ճնշումները չէին ընկճել հայերին: Նման պայմաններում նրանց մեջ ավելի էին ուժեղացել քաղաքական ու ազգային ինքնագիտակցությունն ու հայրենասիրության ոգին, ազգապահպանման ձգտումները: Որոշ մասնավոր դպրոցներ գաղտնի շարունակում էին իրենց գործունեությունը: Արցախում երեխաների հետ դասընթացները հիմնականում իրականացվում էին տնային պայմաններում: Արցախի թեմում հայկական դպրոցները վերաբացվեցին 1905–1906 թթ. ուսումնական տարում:

The Reflection of the Educational Life of Artsakh on the Pages of “Mshak” ...

Հոգվածում լուսաբանվում են Արցախի կրթական կյանքի զարգացմանը խոչընդոտող հանգամանքները (կապված 1903 թ. հունիսի 12-ի եկեղեցական գույքի բռնագրավման մասին օրենքի, 1905–1907 թթ. հայ-թաթարական ընդհարումների հետ), առանձին ուսուցիչների գործունեությունը: Արժևորվել է առանձին անհատների բարեգործական գործունեությունը՝ ըստ «Մշակ» թերթի նյութերի:

Բանալի բառեր՝ *եկեղեցական-ծխական դպրոց, թեմական դպրոց, ռեալական դպրոց, Կովկաս, Գեղաշեն, Գանձասար, Արցախ:*