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HUNCHAK FIGURE TASHIR (SIMON HOVVIAN): PUBLIC AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES, 1915–1921

Abstract

The First World War created a crisis within the ranks of the Hunchak Party, rendering its central administration in Paris virtually non-functional. Under these conditions, a new party leadership emerged in Tiflis, where Tashir (Simon Hovvian) was elected. By that time, he was already a prominent publicist, Hunchak theorist, and was recognised for his pedagogical work at the Gevorgyan Seminary in Etchmiadzin.

Between 1916 and 1917, he contributed to the newspaper "*Gaghapar*," also serving as its editor. The pages of this publication reflected his socialist worldview. Tashir was sceptical of the Armenian volunteer movement and associated the resolution of the Armenian Question with the triumph of the international social democracy and principle of national self-determination.

Following the 1917 February Revolution, Tashir actively participated in the establishment of new local government institutions in Armenia. Between 1917 and 1920, as the inclination to join the RSDLP grew among the Hunchaks of Transcaucasia, Tashir advocated for the independent existence of the Hunchak Party. In 1919, he edited the newspaper "*Gortsavor*." In his writings, Tashir argued that the liberation of the Armenian people depended not on the policies of the European powers, but on those of Soviet Russia, and on the internal conditions within the Armenian society.

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He criticised the nationalist policies of the Georgian Mensheviks and condemned the massacres of Armenians carried out by the Musavat government of Azerbaijan. Though he maintained an oppositional stance towards the ruling ARF Dashnaktsoutyun during the First Republic of Armenia, Tashir called upon the Armenian people to defend their homeland during the Turkish invasions of 1918 and 1920.

In November 1920, when the Republic of Armenia was suffering a severe defeat in the war, the Hunchak Centre in Tiflis was engaged in discussions concerning the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia. Tashir and other Hunchaks viewed the establishment of Soviet authority not only as the realisation of their party's long-term objective, but also as the salvation of the Armenian people and the Armenian state.

Keywords: *Tashir (Simon Hovvian), Hunchak Party, "Gaghapar," "Gortsavor," social-democracy, Menshevik Party, Bolshevik Party.*

Introduction

A famous Hunchak figure and party theorist, Tashir (Simon Hovvian) was born in 1869 in the village of Ardvi, in the Lori province. He received his early education at the Nersisyan School in Tiflis and later attended the Gevorgyan Seminary in Etchmiadzin. He graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Leipzig, where he also earned a doctorate in philosophy.

In the 1890s, he joined the Hunchak Party. While studying in Europe, he conducted extensive propaganda among Armenian students in support of the Hunchak cause. By the beginning of the 20th century, he was already recognised as one of the prominent and influential figures of the party. He collaborated with the "*Hunchak*" and "*Young Armenia*" Hunchak newspapers.

In 1915, one of the main concerns of the Hunchak Party was the election of a new central leadership. Already at the 7th Deputy Meeting of the SDHP (Social-Democratic Hunchak Party) in September 1913, it had been decided that the party's central board would serve for a maximum of two years, after which it would be considered dissolved. Thus, by autumn 1915, the party was due to elect a new central board.

However, in 1916, the Hunchak Party was unable to convene a general deputy meeting due to the unfavourable political circumstances. Its branches in the Ottoman Empire had been crushed and had ceased to function. Under these

conditions, it was decided – mainly through mutual agreement among Hunchak figures in the United States and the Caucasus – “to elect a central board by referendum. The board’s members were located in the Caucasus, and the centre was established there (i.e., in Tiflis – H.G.), although the party’s official headquarters, archive, and printing press remained in Paris.”¹

Prominent Hunchak figures in the Caucasus – Lazo (Hakob Ghazaryan), Yerkat (Arshak Babyan), Mars (Vahan Marsyan), and Tashir (Simon Hovvian), formed the new central administration of the Hunchak Party.² This central leadership continued to function until 1924, when the party held its 8th Congress.³

Tashir’s Publicity in the “Gaghapar” Newspaper

At that time, the party was publishing the “Gaghapar” newspaper in Tiflis. Tashir actively corresponded with the newspaper and, in editorial articles, expressed his viewpoint on the Armenian people and, in general, on important international-political events of the period. “Gaghapar” was published three times a week as a literary, social, political, and economic daily. It was published from February 17, 1916 to February 19, 1917. The editor of the newspaper in 1916 was Avag Hakobyan, and in 1917 – Tashir. Most of the editorials of the periodical are titled “Political Thoughts,” the main subject of which is the policy pursued by the United States and European states.

In one such article, for instance, Tashir expresses his surprise and, at the same time, disappointment at the practices of German Social Democracy, which, during the First World War, setting aside the ideas of socialism and class solidarity of the international proletariat, firmly stood in defence of the German government.⁴ In the article entitled “Futile Efforts,” Tashir condemns the ongoing bloody war and especially the fanatical ideas of pan-Germanism. The arrow of criticism is also directed against Russia, whose “Military Minister Sukhumlinov is throwing millions of soldiers into the enemy’s artillery.”⁵ The

¹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 60.

² NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 60.

³ Tcheretchian 2014, 234.

⁴ “Gaghapar,” Tiflis, 1916, № 3, February 21.

⁵ “Gaghapar,” 1916, № 6, February 28.

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article shows the “countless” thefts and frauds in the supply of the Russian army, the “uncontrolled” situation.⁶

From “Gaghapar” we learn that Tashir was a representative of the 6th Armenian volunteer detachment (druzhdina) in the Hunchak centre.⁷ Speaking of the volunteer movement, let us note that a significant part of the Hunchaks of the Caucasus, including Tashir, were sceptical. The statements of the Entente countries to crush Turkey “... had aroused enthusiasm among the Armenian people,” Tashir wrote in his memoirs.⁸ “Who would not have wanted the collapse of the Turkish dictatorship, even if it had been led by those political adventurers and swindlers masked by the liberal ideas of Enver and Talaat Pashas? The notorious viceroy Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, the representative of the Russian dictatorship in the Caucasus, wonderfully used the mood of the upper classes of the Armenian people, through Bishop Ter-Movsisyan, Samson Harutyunyan, Alexander Khatisov and Catholicos Gevorg V, when the latter, with his patriarchal blessing, consecrated the volunteer groups formed under the chairmanship of the Dashnaksoutyoun and the National Council (i.e., the Armenian National Council of Tiflis – H.G.).”⁹

A. Kitur notes in his book that among the Hunchaks, the “organisers-leaders of the volunteer movement were Lazo, A. Babian, and Tashir.”¹⁰ The Armenian theme runs through the issues of the periodical like a red thread, in which the situation on the Caucasian front and issues related to the future of the Armenian people occupy a primary place. The editorial of the very first issue of “Gaghapar” emphasises the idea that although the capture of Erzurum by Russian troops was of strategic importance and the defeat of the Turks could create an opportunity for a separate reconciliation, at the same time Tashir is wary that the mentality of capturing the “Armenian plateau” is still viable in the Turkish society.¹¹

In the editorial “The Future of Turkey,” Tashir argues that, in order to preserve its integrity, Turkey needed to become a state of peoples endowed with

⁶ “Gaghapar,” 1916, № 6, February 28.

⁷ “Gaghapar,” 1916, № 15, March 20.

⁸ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 18.

⁹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 18.

¹⁰ History of the S.D. Hunchakian Party (1887–1962), Volume I, Beirut, 1962, 471.

¹¹ “Gaghapar,” 1916, № 1, February 17.

local autonomy. Its absence, according to the author, left no doubt that *“the old, dilapidated edifice of the Turkish state will collapse.”*¹²

Tashir’s Activities During the February Revolution

The 1917 February Revolution gave new impetus to the activities of the Hunchak Party. Its branches in Transcaucasia and Russia emerged from illegality. The Hunchak organisations in Yerevan, Kars, Batumi, Sukhumi, and New Nakhijevan, which had nearly ceased functioning, were reorganised.¹³

News of the February Revolution reached Tashir at the Gevorgyan Seminary in Etchmiadzin, where he had been invited from Baku in 1914 and was working as a teacher of chemistry, natural sciences, and German.¹⁴ *“My enthusiasm reached its peak when, two days later, the news of Tsar Nicholas’s abdication came. The old government no longer exists...”*¹⁵

The overthrow of tsarism, though greeted with general enthusiasm, also raised new challenges. Local authorities had ceased to function, and no new ones had yet been created. In the meantime, a period of anarchy and political uncertainty arose, negatively affecting all the aspects of public life.

Addressing this issue, Tashir wrote: *“In order to prevent anarchy and banditry, a local executive committee is formed from the revolutionary, Social-Democratic, and Socialist-Revolutionary parties present in the area. This committee takes over all functions of the local government and establishes contact with the executive committee of the Yerevan provincial government. The committee included Gevorg Altunyan, a teacher at the seminary (i.e., Gevorgyan – H.G.); Tadevosyan, Mantinyan, Avagyan, and others from the Dashnaks; Tashir from the Hunchaks; Ashot Hovhannisyan from the Social Democratic Party (i.e., RSDLP – H.G.); and Arsham Khondkaryan from the Socialist-Revolutionaries. There were also several non-partisan members from the local intelligentsia. We, as representatives of the executive committee we had formed, became the masters of the situation.”*¹⁶ At the end of March 1917, new elections to the Executive Committee were held, with women also participating. All the

¹² “Gaghapar,” 1916, № 3, February 21.

¹³ Hovhannisyan 2017, 187.

¹⁴ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 17.

¹⁵ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 26.

¹⁶ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, shs. 26, 28.

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members of the previous committee were re-elected, and Dashnak Vahan Navasardyan, among others, joined as a new member.¹⁷ Tashir notes that, despite the Executive Committee comprising individuals with differing worldviews and political leanings, they nonetheless *“acted in solidarity.”*¹⁸ The work was entirely public in nature and unpaid.

The aforementioned committee, in accordance with the instructions received from the Yerevan Provincial Executive Committee, was tasked with organising the Etchmiadzin district under its jurisdiction. New village executive committees were to be elected to replace the former landlords, village elders (*“kyokhvas”*), and other officials.¹⁹ Tashir and Ash. Hovhannisyan undertook the responsibility of organising the elections for the new local government bodies in the villages. According to Tashir, this was accomplished with great difficulty, particularly in the Turkish-populated villages of the province, where

*“stratification of the poor peasantry and kulaks, and class conflict were most clearly observed.”*²⁰ Following the election of the village executive committees, they proceeded with the election of commissars (previously the provincial governor or *“pristav”*). Under pressure from both ARF Dashnaksoutyoun and non-partisan members of the committee, ARF member Gevorg Altunyan was nominated as a candidate for the position of the provincial commissar of Etchmiadzin.²¹ After the February Revolution, all parties began to operate legally, though they lacked premises in Tiflis. The Hunchaks were allocated a room at 20 Sololakskaya.

Under the new legal order, it became necessary to clarify the party's position on a number of issues. For this reason, it was decided to convene a conference of the Hunchak branches of Russia, the Caucasus, and Persia. The conference opened on 15 June 1917 in the hall of the former Tiflis City Duma. Congratulatory speeches were delivered by Noy Ramishvili and several other Mensheviks, with whom the Hunchaks of the Caucasus had acted in solidarity during the revolutionary movements of 1905.²²

¹⁷ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 40.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 41.

²⁰ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 51.

²¹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 53.

²² NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 64.

At the conference, the Hunchaks supported the programme of large-scale democratisation adopted by the ministers of the Provisional Government – Kerensky, Chernov, Skobelev, Tsereteli, Pereverzev, and Peshekhonov.²³ In the resolution adopted on the liberation of Western Armenia (in the text: Tatchkahayastan, i.e., Turkish Armenia – H.G.), the Hunchaks linked the solution of the Armenian Question with the right of nations to self-determination and considered it their duty to continue *“defending that cause as a question of Armenian autonomy.”*²⁴

In general, the overwhelming majority of the Hunchaks in the Caucasus and Russia connected the resolution of the Armenian Question with the victory of the international social-democratic movement. The resolution enshrined the belief that European socialists *“were ready to solve the Armenian Question in accordance with the long-standing expectations of the Armenian people and the principle of the liberation of small nations.”*²⁵ It is evident, of course, that inspired by the achievements of the February Revolution, the Hunchaks overestimated the role of the social-democratic movement in international politics.

At the conference, Flora Vardanyan proposed joining the RSDLP, arguing that the Hunchak Party was disintegrating and lacked its former strength and authority. However, the conference adopted the position of Tashir, Lazo, Mars, and others, who insisted that the party should first be strengthened and then, under certain conditions, join the RSDLP *“either completely or partially.”*²⁶

Tashir, who had been recalled from Etchmiadzin by the Hunchak Centre in June 1917, defended a *“social-democratic left-wing point of view”* at the conference, for which he was criticised by the Western Armenian Hunchak figure Hrant Galikyan.²⁷ At the same time, Tashir wrote: *“However, it is noticeable that many at that moment had a Menshevik orientation.”*²⁸ He further noted that *“Lazo demanded to adopt a Plekhanovist orientation and act in that direction,”* which, however, was rejected.

²³ Khurshudyan 1978, 25.

²⁴ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 210, sh. 1.

²⁵ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 210, sh. 1.

²⁶ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 21, sh. 64.

²⁷ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 21, sh. 68.

²⁸ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 21, sh. 65.

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In the end, the conference adopted a resolution according to which the Hunchak Party should act in solidarity with the RSDLP.²⁹ Regarding this issue, V. Melikyan writes: *“The Hunchak Council almost entirely expressed its dissatisfaction with the propaganda and tactics of Leninism.”*³⁰

Tashir notes that despite this, after the conference, the Hunchaks sought to *“form a bloc with any of the sections of the social democratic parties, the Mensheviks or the Bolsheviks,”* but were unsuccessful, as the Bolsheviks refused to form a bloc with any other organisation – although *“the Bolsheviks did not yet have the formidable power of 1917.”*³¹ As for the Mensheviks, who at the time held leading positions in the socio-political life of Transcaucasia, events showed that the Georgian Mensheviks in particular were not eager to form a bloc with Armenian parties.

One of the significant events in the socio-political life of Transcaucasia in the summer of 1917 was the election to the Tiflis City Duma, in which all political forces, including the Hunchaks, participated with great enthusiasm. As previously mentioned, the majority of Hunchaks in Transcaucasia leaned towards the Menshevik orientation; thus, the question of forming a bloc with the Georgian Mensheviks for the elections was raised. Although the Georgians offered the Hunchaks two or three positions on their list, however, this was conditional upon the exclusion of A. Babyan.

Negotiations were held between Tashir and Ramishvili on the matter. The latter was categorically opposed to Babyan’s inclusion in the joint list, and all of Tashir’s arguments in favour of his candidacy were rejected.³² The Georgian Mensheviks’ characterisation of Babyan as a *“nationalist”* and their refusal to include him was, in reality, a pretext for avoiding a bloc with the Hunchaks altogether.³³

Following the Mensheviks’ response, some Hunchaks advocated sacrificing Babyan in the interest of broader electoral success. However, the majority opted to uphold the dignity of the party and refused to form a bloc without him.³⁴

²⁹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 21, sh. 72.

³⁰ **Melikyan** 1997, 234.

³¹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 21, sh. 72.

³² NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 74.

³³ **Khurshudyan** 1978, 26.

³⁴ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 74.

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After the failure of attempts to run a joint list with the Mensheviks, the Tiflis branch of the Hunchaks debated whether to stand in the elections independently. Opinions were divided. Lazo and his supporters argued in favour of a separate list, while others, including Tashir, who doubted the electoral viability of the Hunchaks, argued against it.³⁵ Ultimately, Lazo's position prevailed.

The party's electoral list included sixteen candidates, among them A. Babyan, M. Stamboltsyan, Lazo, Tashir, and others. They conducted their campaign in workers' and artisans' clubs, held events at the City Duma, and distributed campaign leaflets.

Tashir notes that during the campaign, the Hunchaks criticised the Dashnaks, accusing them of "*sowing discord between our people and the neighbouring Georgian people with their nationalist ideas.*"³⁶ Nevertheless, these efforts proved ineffective. "*The masters of the situation were the Dashnaks and the Mensheviks, who were pushing purely nationalist-political propaganda and therefore had great success,*" writes Tashir.³⁷ As for the Hunchaks, they lost the election and did not secure a single mandate in the City Duma.³⁸

In September 1917, Tashir, along with Arshak Babyan and Lazo, was invited to take part in the work of the "*National Council,*" which had been formed by representatives of all Armenian political forces and was tasked with addressing the "*urgent problems of the day*" facing the Armenian people.³⁹

Tashir's Activities in 1917–1921

The overthrow of tsarism and the outbreak of revolution further deepened Russia's economic crisis. The position of the Provisional Government was weakened by the failures of the Russian intelligentsia and the anti-state activities of opposition forces, particularly the Bolsheviks. On 25 October 1917, the Bolshevik Party, led by Lenin, overthrew the Provisional Government in Petrograd through an armed coup and seized power.

³⁵ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 76.

³⁶ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, sh. 81.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, sh. 77.

³⁹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, sh. 85.

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The October coup was perceived in Transcaucasia as a betrayal of the February Revolution and of the prospects for the democratic development promised by the Provisional Government. All parties in the region, except the Bolsheviks, condemned the seizure of power. Convening a Constituent Assembly was regarded as the only path and guarantee for the establishment of political stability.⁴⁰ The majority of the Hunchak Party also supported this ideological position.

The local governing body of the Provisional Government in Transcaucasia – OZAKOM, was dissolved and replaced by a new authority: the Transcaucasian Commissariat. In order to prevent possible armed actions by the Bolsheviks and to overthrow the Bolshevik-led government, the Commissariat called a consultative meeting to clarify the positions of the region's political forces. Lazo and Tashir represented the Hunchaks and declared that their party *"would never turn its weapons against the Bolsheviks."*⁴¹

After coming to power, the Bolsheviks unilaterally withdrew Russia from the war and, in March 1918, signed a peace treaty with the Quadruple Alliance in Brest-Litovsk. Following this, Russian troops began a rapid withdrawal from the Caucasian front. This situation favoured the Ottoman Empire, which launched a counteroffensive.

The Transcaucasian government, which had not recognised the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, entered into negotiations with the Turks in Trebizond in an effort to conclude a peace treaty favourable to its interests. However, these negotiations proved fruitless. In April 1918, at Turkey's request, the Transcaucasian Sejm declared the independence of the Transcaucasian Federal Democratic Republic, thereby severing ties with Russia. On 11 April 1918, the Central Executive Committee of the SDHP condemned this decision in an appeal to the citizens of Transcaucasia, denouncing it as a *"betrayal of the Great Russian Revolution."*⁴²

The separation of Transcaucasia from Russia ultimately freed the hands of the Turks, who proceeded to occupy Western Armenia and, after crossing the Akhuryan River, seized Alexandrapol on 15 May 1918. A mortal danger now loomed over the Eastern Armenians. In response, Armenian partisans issued

⁴⁰ Melikyan 2010, 27.

⁴¹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 89.

⁴² NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 216, sh. 2.

appeals to the people to rise in defence of the homeland. The Hunchak Party's slogan declared: *"It is better to die with a weapon in hand for the people's achievements and the revolution than to fall slavishly before the enemy's sword and bullet."*⁴³

The SDHP was one of the eight political parties active in the socio-political landscape of the First Republic of Armenia, established after the heroic battles of May 1918. Together with the Mensheviks, Bolsheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Specifists, it constituted the left wing of the Armenian political spectrum, advocating for the primacy of state ownership of the means of production and the overall state management of the economy.⁴⁴

The Hunchaks' perspectives on the October Revolution, the resolution of the Armenian Question, and several other key issues were articulated in the weekly *"Gortsavor,"* published in Tiflis from March 1919 under the editorship of Tashir and Syunik (Bagrat Avetyan).⁴⁵ Most of the leading articles were authored by Tashir himself.

In the editorial of the first issue of *"Gortsavor,"* titled *"Our Unwavering Path,"* Tashir asserted that the liberation of the Armenian people would be achieved *"not as a result of the benevolent disposition of the victorious powers, but through the Great Revolution in Russia and the political conditions and internal impulses arising from that revolution..."*⁴⁶ He considered it likely that at the Paris Peace Conference, *"small nations will be granted national self-determination by the 'great benefactors' as a separate gift..."*⁴⁷ Among these, he contended that the Armenian people deserved to be foremost, as *"the terrible ghosts of a million slaughtered cannot demand anything less from the great powers who determine the fate of the world."*⁴⁸ Yet he also expressed concern that, if unresolved, the Armenian Question might be *"buried finally and irreversibly."*⁴⁹

As a committed socialist, Tashir addressed the Armenian Question from a class-based perspective, asserting that any solution proposed by the European

⁴³ NAA, f. 1456, l. 1, cs. 219, sh. 1.

⁴⁴ History of Armenians, 2010, 66.

⁴⁵ *"Gortsavor,"* 1919, № 1, March 24.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

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imperialist powers could not, from our standpoint (that is, from the socialist-Hunchak perspective – H.G.), amount to genuine liberation for the oppressed strata of the Armenian people. Concluding the article, he affirmed that the Hunchak Party saw the resolution of both the Armenian Question and broader international issues in the decisions of the Third International (International Workers' Organisation – H.G.), convened in Moscow in 1919. The article ended with the rallying cries: *"Long live the socialist revolution! Long live the Third International!"*⁵⁰

The Menshevik newspaper *"Borba"* («Борьба» – *"Struggle"*) launched a campaign against *"Gortsavor,"* calling upon the Georgian government to shut it down as a *"Bolshevik newspaper."* In response, Tashir wrote that they voluntarily ceased publication after the 21st issue, even before the government issued any formal order.⁵¹

In the editorial *"The Constituent Assembly of Georgia,"* Tashir described the prevailing political situation in the region. He condemned the Transcaucasian republics *"spawned by foreign bayonets,"* the Armenian-Georgian war, the *"terrifying regime"* in Azerbaijan, the Musavat government, and its *"secret and open massacres of Armenians."*⁵²

On 28 September 1920, Kemalist Turkey launched an attack on Armenia. The war developed unfavourably for the Armenians. On 11 November, a consultation of the Central Board of the Hunchak Party took place in Tiflis, where the party's position *"towards the Dashnak government in particular and the Turkish-Armenia's (Tatckhayastan) issue in general"* was discussed.⁵³ The establishment of Soviet power in Armenia was also on the agenda.

Reflecting on these issues, Tashir wrote: *"The Armenian Question in its former sense has lost its significance and thinking in that direction is foolishness, a Quixotism. The Dashnaksoutyoun government must be overthrown and Soviet power must be established in Armenia. Isn't the distant goal of the Hunchak Party the socialist, communist revolution?"*⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 91.

⁵² NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 92.

⁵³ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 93.

⁵⁴ NAA, f. 1456, l. 2, cs. 21, sh. 94.

Conclusions

Following the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia, the Bolsheviks' aspiration for exclusive power intensified daily. The liquidation of non-Bolshevik parties swiftly became a central priority on the political agenda. The efforts of the Hunchaks in Transcaucasia to maintain their party's independent existence proved unsuccessful, and their attempts to join the Comintern culminated in a decisive ruling by the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on 5 February 1923. This ruling mandated that the Russian branch of the Hunchak Party and its central administration in Tiflis renounce their international affiliations, with all Hunchak organisations to be absorbed into their respective regional communist parties.⁵⁵

Consequently, as a direct outcome of Soviet policy, non-Bolshevik party activities in Armenia ceased entirely by 1923–1924. At the December 1924 plenum of the Transcaucasian Regional Commissariat (TRC, or ZKK), A. Myasnikyan remarked in his speech that the Hunchak Party had effectively disintegrated, issuing a formal declaration of its self-dissolution.

Throughout the Soviet period, Tashir continued his work as an educator and publicist. He led the chess section of the newspapers *"Soviet Armenia"* and *"Avangard,"* served as director of the Yerevan Pedagogical College, and subsequently headed the Workers' Faculty (Rabfak) at the State University. He passed away in Yerevan in 1924.

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⁵⁵ Ghazakhetsyan 2006, 320.

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ԳԵՂԱՄ ՀՈՎՀԱՆՆԻՍՅԱՆ

Պատմական գիտությունների թեկնածու

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**ՀՆՉԱԿՅԱՆ ԳՈՐԾԻՉ ՏԱՇԻՐԻ (ՍԻՄՈՆ ՀՈՎԿՅԱՆ)
ՀԱՍԱՐԱԿԱԿԱՆ-ՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՆԵՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ
1915–1921 ԹԹ.**

Ամփոփում

Առաջին համաշխարհային պատերազմը ճգնաժամային իրավիճակ էր ստեղծել Հնչակյան կուսակցության շարքերում: Փարիզում գտնվող նրա կենտրոնական վարչությունը փաստացի չէր գործում: Այդ պայմաններում Թիֆլիսում կազմավորվում է կուսակցության նոր ղեկավար մարմինը, որի կազմում ընտրվում է Տաշիրը (Սիմոն Հովվյան): 1916–1917 թթ. նա աշխատակցել է «Գաղափար» թերթին, եղել է նաև թերթի խմբագիրը:

Տաշիրը Հայկական հարցի լուծումը կապում էր միջազգային սոցիալ-դեմոկրատիայի հաղթանակի և ազգերի ինքնորոշման իրավունքի հետ:

1917 թ. Փետրվարյան հեղափոխությունից հետո Տաշիրն ակտիվ գործունեություն էր ծավալել Հայաստանում՝ տեղական իշխանության նոր մարմինների ձևավորման ուղղությամբ:

1917–1920 թթ., երբ Անդրկովկասի հնչակյանների շարքերում ուժգնանում էր ՌՍԴԲԿ-ին միանալու ձգտումը, Տաշիրը հանդես է եկել Հնչակյան կուսակցության ինքնուրույն գոյության տեսակետի պաշտպանությամբ:

1919 թ. նա խմբագրել է «Գործավոր» թերթը: Իր հոդվածներում Տաշիրը ընդգծում էր այն միտքը, որ հայ ժողովրդի ազատագրությունը կապված էր ոչ թե եվրոպական տերությունների, այլ Խորհրդային Ռուսաստանի վարած քաղաքականության և հայ իրականության ներքին պայմանների հետ:

Տաշիրն ընդդիմադիր կեցվածք ուներ Հայաստանի Առաջին հանրապետությունում իշխող ՀՅԴ-ի նկատմամբ:

1920 թ. նոյեմբերին, երբ Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունը կանգնած էր պատերազմում կրած ծանր պարտության փաստի առաջ, Թիֆլիսի Հն-

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չակյան կենտրոնը քննարկում էր Հայաստանում Խորհրդային կարգերի հաստատման հարցը: Դրա մեջ Տաշիրն ու մյուս հնչակյանները տեսնում էին ինչպես իրենց կուսակցության հեռավոր նպատակի իրականացումը, այնպես էլ հայ ժողովրդի և հայոց պետության փրկությունը:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Տաշիր (Սիմոն Հովվյան), Հնչակյան կուսակցություն, «Գաղափար», «Գործավոր», սոցիալ-դեմոկրատիա, մենշևիկյան կուսակցություն, բուշևիկյան կուսակցություն: