

FROM THE HISTORY OF THE POLICE SCHOOL OF YEREVAN

(Dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Police of RA)

Ruben Sahakyan

Institute of History, NAS RA

Rostom Sargsyan

Educational center of police of RA

Like in other languages, where the term «police» originates from the word «city», in Armenian also *vostikan* is formed from *vostan* «capital city, royal city». Thus, the police and the city life are inseparable. Hence, the leading police educational centres were operating in the cities, particularly in the capital cities.

The 2800 years old Yerevan has a hundred years' tradition of training policemen. This is fully supported by the archival materials of the First Republic of Armenia. Soon after the declaration of independence in May 28, 1918 was established the Interior Ministry, which included also the police. The government does its best to secure this office with own personnel, thus in July 9, 1919¹ were organized the «Judicial-legal courses». Here it was taught to give military orders in mother tongue. The goal of the courses was to teach the policemen laws, introduce them to there rights and obligations.

Initially it was assigned to involve in the courses 20 members of the staff. These were thought to be «unstained and literate» people, who would know, besides Armenian also Russian and Turkish.

The following disciplines were included in the courses.

1. State and police law
2. Criminal procedure
3. The statute of Transcaucasian guard
4. Instructions of the prosecutor of RA
5. Legislation of the government of RA

Besides this it was assigned to organize in the provinces police courses with the duration of 8 months.² For this purpose in July 12, 1919 the government decided to give additional 80.640 roubles to the Interior ministry. The safety inside the country demands skilled police specialists.

The solid grounds laid at that period later was used for training policemen during the second republic. In 1930s the policemen were trained in Tbilisi, and only from 1936 in Yerevan the school of the secondary command began to operate. Later, here the teaching process was continually improved, and the material-technical base enriched. On this background in 1980s in the police school were organized all-union courses, where studied policemen of 15 Soviet republics.

¹ Virabyan 2003: 13.

² Idem.

According to the N.500 order of A. Gyulkhandanyan, the Interior minister, In December 4, 1919 was established the police school, with Zohrap Bagrevanyants as its chief-lecturer. The minister evaluates the role of police too much to order the chief of the Yerevan police, Commissar, the director of the warehouse of the ministry to actively support the school. About this order were informed the «Bulletin of the government», the body of the State control, the city hall of Yerevan etc. Due to active preparations, in December 28, 1919 the newly appointed director of the school submitted a program, according to which at the school should work 3 trainers-officers, 5 non-commissioned officers, had to study about 150-200 policemen-soldiers; their age shall not exceed 20-25, they shall be literate, physically healthy, with no criminal past, supplied with food; the duration of courses varies from 3 to 5 months.

The following disciplines were assigned to be taught.

1. Military training,
2. Military education,
3. Inner police statute,
4. The body and structure of the state,
5. Consistent legislation,
6. Relations between policemen and their competence,
7. Consistent anatomy and health care,
8. Factual account and factography.³

In the financial planning in July 1, 1920 was assigned a sum for the staff of the «Police School». The staff consists of chief of the school, head of the economic body, teachers (three), and listeners (100).⁴

In December 2, 1920 in Armenia was established Soviet rule. The power had passed to the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia. With the first order of the Committee was organized the Peoples Commissary of Inner Affairs (PCIA), which was headed by Isahak Dovlatyan. On behalf of the Revolutionary Committee PCIA took the whole authoritative functions. Due to the extreme commitment of revolutionary forces were released from their duties numerous professionals of the former government. Shortly after this became the most important problem for PCIA, the main solution being the return of former staff, since it was not possible to organize teaching courses and prepare professionals during such a short period. Hence, in August 29, 1921 with the special decision of the Presidency of the Central Executive Committee of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic the former policemen and gendarms who had restored their civil rights, could be taken into police and criminal intelligence service. This decision was accepted also by the Soviet republics. Moscow instructed the executive committees to be extremely careful in regard to the restoration of civil rights of such people, since some of them might have been discredited during the Tsarist period.

³ NAA, Fund 201, l. 2, file 236, p.1-20.

⁴ The archive of the training center's museum of the police of RA, Interior ministry, July 1, 1920 until January 1, 1921. Personnel, p. 38 and reverse.

In Soviet Armenia were also made some steps, but they were directed on the «releasing the police of untrustful and socially unrelated elements». In the USSR the police was «purified» twice, in 1922-1923 and 1929-1930. It should be mentioned that in some cases the leadership of Soviet Armenia, especially in 1920s, makes more strict decisions, sometimes contradicting the instructions of Moscow. Was felt the desire of the so-called «revolutionary» spirit and fundamental changes. The obvious example of this situation are the statistics and facts which we give below.

At the **beginning of 1922 30%** of the staff of the police of Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic was withdrawn.⁵ For this purpose were organized «purging commissions». In 1922 the central office of PCIA consists of **353** and police - of **1450** people. Most of them were peasants and workers, predominantly illiterate and they does not have professional skills.

In 1923 the personnel of police reaches **1041**. Of these **106** were illiterate, **554** semi-literate, **315** had primary and **66** secondary education.

In 1924 the number of policemen was **872**, of which **23** were illiterate, **521** semi-literate, **280** has primary and **48** secondary education.

In 1925 the number of policemen was **798**, of which **13** illiterate, **536** semi-literate, **210** has primary and **39** secondary education.⁶

The reduction of the PCIA and police personnel took place throughout the USSR.

The reduction of the police personnel had negative impact. In June 12, 1922 the chief of Zangezur police reports that in the province remain only **150** policemen. He mentions that the watch house does not have any comfort, policemen sleep on the floor and due to this about half of them are ill and are not ready to perform their duties. The sum given to the police, 777.000 roubles is not enough to meet the needs; many policemen does not have uniforms, and even weapons and bullets.⁷

THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF STAFF. ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE COURSES

The Soviet authorities pay special attention to the elimination of illiteracy. This problem did not bypass also the police. This was the reason that PCIA and the General department of police ordered their staff to abolish the illiteracy within a short period but also to supply the law-enforcement authorities with qualified and literate persons, since the police recruited from the working class mostly was illiterate, and the illiterate policemen (especially in the Soviet country), indeed, could not perform their duties.⁸

⁵ NAA, Fund 116, I. 1, file 52, p. 9.

⁶ Soviet Armenia. 1920-1925. Five years. Published by the Central Executive Committee and the Council of the Peoples' Committee of ArmSSR, Yerevan, 1926, p.66.

⁷ NAA, Fund 116, I. 3, file 163, p. 33 and reverse.

⁸ Soviet Armenia. 1920-1925: 64.

For this purpose next to the general department of PCIA was formed Political secretariat, in the regional centers were appointed commissars, and in the regional sections – political leaders. Due to this, already in 1922 **85%** of the police personnel became literate⁹. It makes possible to organize courses for the commanding personnel of police. PCIA and the General department of police organized six month courses where, along with the general educational principles, were taught special subjects¹⁰.

Were organized six month courses for the policemen where studied 40 people. In **November 12, 1922** the school gave first graduates. **That day became the day of the celebration of Armenian police¹¹**. At the same day the trainees solemnly swore in the presence of the police staff. In their honor was published the book «The Day of the Red police» where were included different articles and letters describing everyday life of the police¹².

In 1923 the second group had graduated the school. Thus, PCIA and the General department of police had succeeded to partly solve the problem of the associate commanding staff¹³.

At the fall of 1922 was organized a depot battalion for confronting the criminal bands. In January 1, 1925 the battalion was liquidated and instead a police depot-school organized. Here the duration of courses was six months. In 1925-1926 it was supposed to organize two month and three week courses for police in the regions¹⁴.

By the decision of the Transcaucasian commission of staff in October 1, 1925, the police, criminal intelligence and correctional-working sub-sections of the PCIA administrative department of the Soviet Republic of Armenia became autonomous bodies (community policing, central criminal intelligence, place of imprisonment). The number of personnel was increased reaching 57 instead of 34. The police reserve became the **police school**.

THE STAFF OF THE POLICE IN 1925

	Region	Commanding personnel	Police men	Total	Number of sub-regions	Number of Cities	Number of people 1925	Number of people Per one policeman
1	Reserve school	7	48	55	-	-	-	-

⁹ Apiyan 1979: 53.

¹⁰ Soviet Armenia. 1920-1925: 65.

¹¹ Idem.

¹² Idem.

¹³ Idem.

¹⁴ Idem.

2	Yerevan regional police	36	138	174	6	2	170600	980
3	Leninakan regional police	31	117	148	7	2	193743	1309
4	Echmiatsin regional police	11	62	73	5	-	114620	1570
5	Lori-Pambak regional police	8	65	73	5	-	133601	1830
6	Dilijan regional police	9	70	79	5	-	80096	1014
7	Nor Bayazet regional police	8	50	58	3	-	103008	1776
8	Daralagyaz Regional police	4	33	37	1	-	29904	814
9	Zangezur regional police	8	83	91	3	-	73280	749
10	Meghri regional police	1	8	9	-	-	8603	956
Total		123	674	797	35	4	907455	113 ¹⁵

In January 9, 1936 for the personnel of the correctional-working bureau were organized short courses consisting of 24 days. The lessons were expected to organize daily, except Sunday, twice a day, from 10:00 until 14:00 and from 19:00 until 21:00, on the whole territory of the republic.

At the same time the teaching of the following principles for the commanding personnel was regarded as obligatory - Russian language, mathematics, modern history, history of the USSR and geography.

By the order of April 13, 1936 in PCIA four educational groups were organized for the commanding and operative personnel. The duration of the course for the first group

¹⁵ Soviet Armenia. 1920-1925: 66.

was established as one year (16 people), for the second - two years (24 people), for the third - three years (22 people), and for the fourth - one year (25 people). The lessons was expected to begin in April 1, 9:00 AM until 22:50 PM. After finishing the course the students had to be examined.

Such courses were necessity but their organization was not purposeful on account of their leisure time. Indeed, it had a negative impact on the quality of their service.

Such general educational groups were organized also in subsequent years, until the World war II.

Even so, the educational and professional level of policemen remains unsatisfactory quite a while. In PCIA, particularly in the police the selection mostly was based on social principle and party membership. As a result, police was replenished with people having low educational and professional level.

At the end of 1925 and early 1926 the Communist party, in order to secure its presence in the public-security bodies, provided them with quite a big number of communists. As a result, about **60%** of the Yerevan police and **47%** in the republic comprise communists and Komsomols. Since the replenishing was the goal of securing the influence and control, the educational level of policemen was not regarded as essential. Due to this, like in the past, the police again was replenished with people having low educational level. Only **5%** of them had secondary and **30%** primary education.

In order to fill this gap was organized a Central secretariat, which was ordered to deal with the «the educational work of the police», and the elimination of illiteracy.

In August 1921, next to the General department of police in Yerevan were opened two month courses for the police.¹⁶ In April 19, 1922, by the decision of the PCIA board, the General department of police was ordered to organize three month courses for the commanding personnel.¹⁷

In April 30, 1923 the number of listeners at the Yerevan school of police was 36. The duration of the course reaches 16 weeks, of which two weeks for repetition and examinations. The following disciplines were taught:

1. Armenian language,
2. Russian language,
3. Mathematics,
4. Geography,
5. Biology,
6. Hygiene,
7. Military training,
8. Administrative training,
9. Political literacy.¹⁸

¹⁶ NAA, Fund 116, list 1, file 528, p. 67.

¹⁷ Idem: 756, p. 2.

¹⁸ Sargsyan, Sahakyan 2015: 94.

The second institution for the preparation of personnel was the «Depot of police» established at the end of 1922, an equestrian unit against the banditry. In November 1924 the warehouse-school was reorganized as a **warehouse-school of the police**.

In 1925-1926s in the regional centers every year were organized three month courses for ordinary policemen, and two month - for commanders. From September 1, 1926 until April 20, 1927 next to the PCIA functioned the **school for the lower personnel**¹⁹, with five months duration of teaching.²⁰

In January 1928 next to the PCIA of the Russian Social Socialist Federative Republic were established six month courses of scientific-technical specialists, where Armenian policemen also were sent.

Beginning from 1929, those policemen of Azeri nationality who were not familiar with Armenian and Russian languages, were sent to attend the courses for the secondary commanding personnel to Azerbaijan.

From September 1, 1931 began to function the Yerevan school of police. Bardugh Ghazar Petrosyan, a person who was fully devoted to his field, was appointed as the director of the school. His inborn qualities later were revealed during the World War II when he, being imprisoned by the enemy, along with his supporters, had succeeded to organize an anti-Nazi group in the concentration camp, then had joined the French partisans (MAKI). For his heroic participation in the military operations against the Germans he was awarded with highest order of the French government - «Legion of Honor»²¹.

¹⁹ NAA, Fund 116, l. 1, file 172, p. 31.

²⁰ Idem, file 789, p. 1.

²¹ Pahlavuni 2014: 10. Armenian partisans were distinguished in August 22-30, 1944, during the battles near the French towns of Alès Florak and La Calmette. In August 30 the battalion of B.Petrosyan liberated the city of Nim. After the war they returned home as heroes. Unfortunately, when the legionaries came back to their motherland, many of them were imprisoned and sent to concentration camps or were exiled to remote regions of the USSR due to false documents and facts.

Only after the death of I.Stalin in 1953, along with the arrests of L. Beria and their minions in the republics, it became possible to revise the criminal dossiers of some legionaries. In April 18, 1955 by the decision of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR were released 1134 people including 877 members of the ARF and 700 legionaries.

In June of that same year Sh.Arushanyan, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic applied to K.Voroshilov, the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the USSR regarding the case of the legionaries. He wrote: «On contrary to the 1946 decision of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, where was decided to sent into exile the legionaries for 6 years, without their families, the Ministry of State Security of Armenian SSR organized also the deportation of Armenian legionaries». 103 people from the staff of the National security were honored with orders and medals. The Chairman of the Supreme Council of Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic suggests to withdraw the orders from 6 people.

Indeed, only the Ministry of State Security and personally the minister were not guilty for the lawlessness in regard to the legionaries. The highest party officials and other people also had participated in this action. In our case the personnel of the security service was regarded as scapegoats. More detailed about this see NAA, Fund 207, list 10, file 105, lists 1- 3.

In 1935 the police schools of Transcaucasia were united and was established the «United Transcaucasian school (the Tbilisi Interregional school of PCIA)»²² or the Tbilisi school N.2, which was located in the Armenian-populated district of Havlabar. After the adoption of the new constitution of the USSR and elimination of the Transcaucasian Federation in 1936, in September 1, 1937 the Yerevan interregional school for the commanding personnel of the PCIA was re-opened. In summer 1938 the courses began at the summer camp of Tsakhkadzor. The teachers were distinguished officers-in-charge of PCIA. The summer camp was attended also by the students of the primary commanding personnel headed by B.Petrosyan.

The summer school has the following structure:

1. One year courses for the secondary commanding personnel. The number of listeners - 90.
2. One year courses for the secondary operative personnel. The number of listeners - 30.
3. One year courses for the local policemen and combatant commanders. The number of listeners - 30²³.

The following disciplines were taught:

1. General educational
2. Special
3. Military

The school returned to Yerevan from Tsakhkadzor and was located at Mayisyan street 31 and 32²⁴, and the assistant commanding school was closed. In 1940 the school gave its first graduates.

During 1938-1941 the two year courses had graduated 180 and one year courses - about 200 people.

During World War II the school continued to function despite the fact that most of the leading staff and lecturers went to the front. In November 1943 Abgar Bozinyan was appointed as the director of the school. The number of listeners was 30, of which 7 women.

In order to compensate the decreased staff the officers of police department and the school of police were travelling through the republic, meet the people, hold lectures in order to find disciplined and educated young people to join the police courses. Due to it the number of applicants was increased and the school became a real center for the preparation of qualified policemen. It is not accidental that Hrachik Petros Petrosyan who had graduated the school with credit in 1947, in 1966 was appointed as the chief of the

²² Until 1937 officially was known as interregional school of the PCIA of Transcaucasian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, then the Tbilisi school of the central department of State security of PCIA.

²³ The archive of the museum of the police educational center, Dayants Mikhail Anushavanovich, The Police school during the 1938-1941s, I. 2 (in Russian).

²⁴ Is located between Amiryan, Saryan streets and the Mashtots prospect.

same school, and the other graduate, lieutenant-general Hovhannes Kim Varyan is the head of the educational center of the RA police since 2009.

In 1951 the school was renamed as the Yerevan police school of the Ministry of National security²⁵. In 1953, after the unification of the Ministry of National security and Interior ministry the school functions under the guidance of the Department of Educational institutions of the Interior ministry of the USSR. In 1947-1953 the school has also a system of distance education. As to October 17, 1953 the school had two departments:

1. Re-training of the commanding personnel (one year)
2. Training of the commanding personnel (two years).

The school was closed in **January 29, 1955**.

In August 14, 1956 the Central committee of the Communist party of the Soviet Union decided to establish police school in the republics. In September 17 of that same year in Yerevan was opened the republican educational center for the primary and secondary commanding personnel of police which later was renamed as the **Educational center of the Interior ministry of Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic**, then - teaching center of police of RA which now functions in the Educational center of the RA police.

The police of most of the Soviet republics including Armenia does not have special educational institution. Policemen were forced to study in different professional institutions of the USSR, which was connected with additional expenditures. In order to close this gap, in February 18, 1966 the government of the USSR (Council of ministers) decided to establish new police schools in the republics²⁶. On this background, in June 16, **1966 the government of the ArmSSR makes a decision to establish a secondary professional school of the police** (for the primary and secondary commanding personnel)²⁷. The number of listeners was established 100²⁸, the duration of teaching - two years. Military service in the army was obligatory for all applicants. The entry exams include Armenian language and literature (composition) and history of the USSR (oral). The monthly scholarship was established as 40 roubles. The graduates receive the rank of the second lieutenant²⁹. The number of students by correspondence was established as 25 persons³⁰.

²⁵ By the order of the Minister of State security of the USSR in October 17, 1949 some functions of republican structures, including also that of the Interior ministry of Armenian SSR, were subordinated to the Ministry of State security; the Yerevan school of police was among them. See Police archive of RA, Fund 16, I. 39, 1949 № 001-0037/00374, p. 2.

²⁶ NAA, Fund 116, I. 6, file 273, p. 25

²⁷ NAA, Fund 116, I. 6, file 275, p. 5-6

²⁸ By the order of the Interior minister in December 3, 1966 the number of listeners was established as 80 people, See NAA, Fund 116, I. 6, file 284, p. 284.

²⁹ NAA, Fund 116, I. 6, file 297, p. 100-103. According to the order of the Ministry of public order of December 3, 1966, the number of listeners for 1966/1967 was established as 80, see NAA, Fund 116, I. 6, file 284, p. 206.

³⁰ NAA, Fund 116, I. 6, file 283, p. 55.

The search for the new, more advanced forms and methods for the preparation of the qualified personnel of the Interior affairs were ongoing. For this reason in 1985 the Yerevan police school of the USSR Interior ministry was closed and on its base in the next year were established higher courses of the Interior ministry of the USSR. The courses began in November 3, 1986. All 173 listeners were divided into two divisions and eight groups.

The higher school of the Interior ministry and National Security ministry of RA was reorganized into the higher educational institution on the base of the former higher courses of the Soviet Interior ministry (1990-1991) and the secondary professional police school of the same ministry (1966-1990); in 1991-1995 it had functioned as the higher school of officers of the Interior ministry of RA, and from September 26, 1995, according to the decision of the Prime-minister of RA, the higher school of police of the Interior ministry of RA and the higher school of officers of the interior forces were attached to the higher school of the Interior ministry of RA; in 1996, in connection with the needs to prepare specialists for the realization of the criminal detentions and the establishment of departments of the officers of interior forces this institution was renamed as the higher school of the Interior ministry of RA.

By the decision of the government in July 16, 1993 the military-applied college after King Varazdat was taken from the department of physical culture, sports and youth of the Government and put under the authority of the Interior ministry.

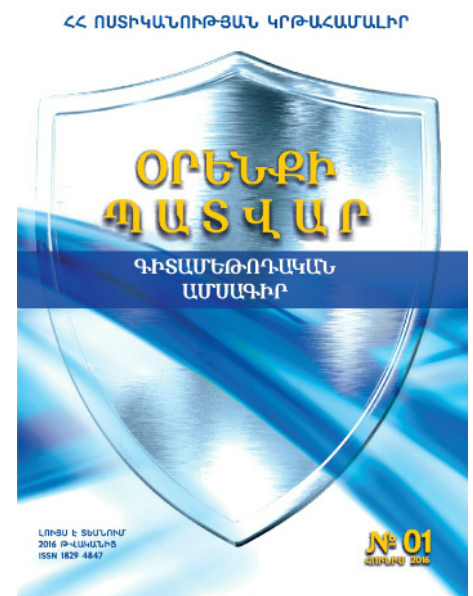
By the commissioning of the Interior ministry and Ministry of National Security the school prepares juridical specialists:

- detective/investigating
- operative and intelligence activities
- traffic police
- the system and departments of criminal detention, as well as officers of pedagogical profile for the interior forces.

The goals of the High school are the following:

1. Preparation of professionals for the Interior ministry and Ministry of National Security with deep theoretical and practical knowledge,
2. Scientific work for the Interior ministry and Ministry of National Security,
3. Training and improvement of professional skills of the senior commanding personnel.

In August 18, 2000 the educational institution



was renamed as the Academy of the Interior ministry of RA, and in April 28, 2011 - Educational center of police of RA³¹.

In 2013 to the Educational center was given the museum of police. From March 25, 2016, by the order of the director of the Educational center was established the «Stronghold of Law», a scientific-methodological journal where are publishing articles dealing with the field of jurisprudence on three languages (Armenian, Russian and English).

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³¹ See the decision № 615-M of April 28, 2011. <http://www.e-gov.am/gov-decress/item/19547>