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PhD in History

DERIVED FROM THE HISTORY OF AZERBAIJANI DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN ARMENIA (1918-1920)

Muhammad Khan Tekinski

Although Azerbaijan and Armenia were actually in a state of war in 1918-1920 due to a territorial conflict, diplomatic missions were active in both republics. "Azerbaijan" newspaper reported on October 22, 1918 that Teymur Khan Makinsky, an associate of the minister of justice (1, p. 89), was appointed the first (and furthermore the last) authorized representative of the Azerbaijan Republic in Armenia. One of the descendants of the Maku Khans, who lived in Irevan, he was an immediate relative of the bearers of the Irevan Khans' family name. T. Makinsky graduated from the Irevan Gymnasium and in 1916 he completed his studies at the University of Warsaw, majoring in Law. Following the convocation of the Azerbaijani parliament in early December 1918, Makinsky became an MP, representing the Azerbaijani community of the Irevan governorate. The Parliament's records and documents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic still include the speeches and letters of T. Makinsky describing the tragic situation faced by the Azerbaijani population in Armenia. In the wake of Makinsky's election as a member of the Azerbaijani parliament, Mahammad Khan Tekinsky, an attorney-at-law of Turkmen descent, was appointed the new diplomatic representative to Armenia (1, p.147), in accordance with a decision passed by Azerbaijan's government on January 31, 1919. M. Tekinsky, who lost his parents at an early age, was adopted by Ehsan Nakhichevansky, a Russian army colonel. In 1908, Tekinsky graduated from the department of law of the Novorossiysk Imperial University. He worked for judicial bodies in the cities of the South Caucasus, including Baku. In September 1918, Tekinsky, serving in the capacity of attorney-at-law, was chosen to sit on the Extraordinary Investigating Commission, which was established by the government of the Azerbaijan Republic to scrutinize the facts of violence, pogroms and pillaging perpetrated against the Muslim residents and their property throughout the South Caucasus region from the outbreak of World War I. Tekinsky received a special



message on June 10, 1919 from the Foreign Ministry of the Azerbaijan Republic while serving as the Azerbaijani authorized representative in Armenia. The message instructed him to "collect statistical data -- without disclosure and with the aid of representatives of the looted Muslim-populated villages of the Irevan governorate and, if possible, in the Kars province -- regarding the loss incurred by the Muslims in terms of both human casualties and property, while citing the first and family names and the place of residence of the affected persons, those killed and wounded, their age, the captives, the men and women who were released or were still in

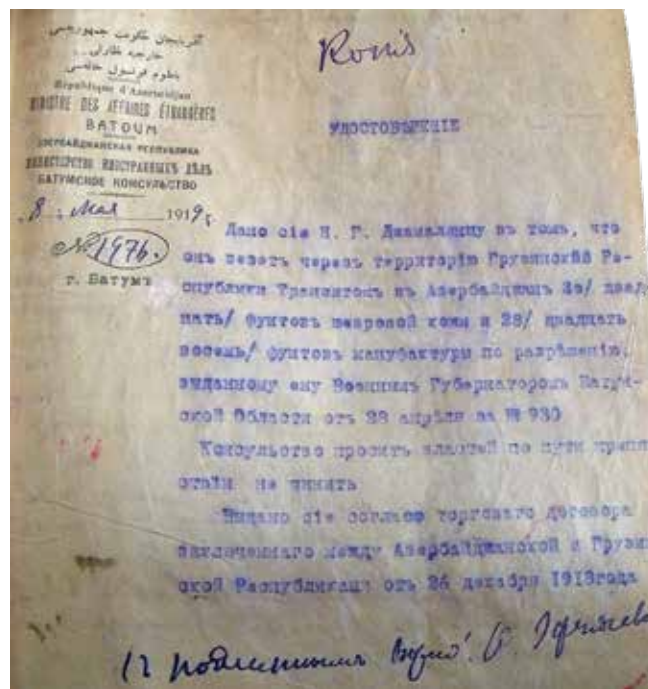
ID card issued by Azerbaijan's diplomatic representative in Batum to someone named Dzhamalyants allowing him to transport transit goods to Baku. 8 May 1919

captivity, as well as the destroyed villages and gardens, stolen cattle, etc." (1, p. 263).

During his tenure as the diplomatic representative Tekinsky opposed forging economic ties with Armenia and supplying it with oil until the Azerbaijani refugees returned completely to their homes. Tekinsky consistently pursued a policy aimed at arming the Muslim population of the Azerbaijani territories (Nakhchivan, Sharur-Daralagez and Ordubad provinces, Vadibasar, Zangibasar, etc.), which had been transferred to the Armenian control by the decision of the British command for its military resistance. In the long run, Armenia lost control over these territories, which was considerably facilitated by Tekinsky's diplomatic efforts. This fact, which is referenced in relevant documents, is also admitted by contemporary Armenian historians. They believe that the Armenian government, which was aware of the extensive efforts made in this regard by the Azerbaijani diplomatic representative (the Armenians were decoding the cables of M. Tekinsky), had made a gross error by failing to expel him from the country in due time (5.p.291-292).

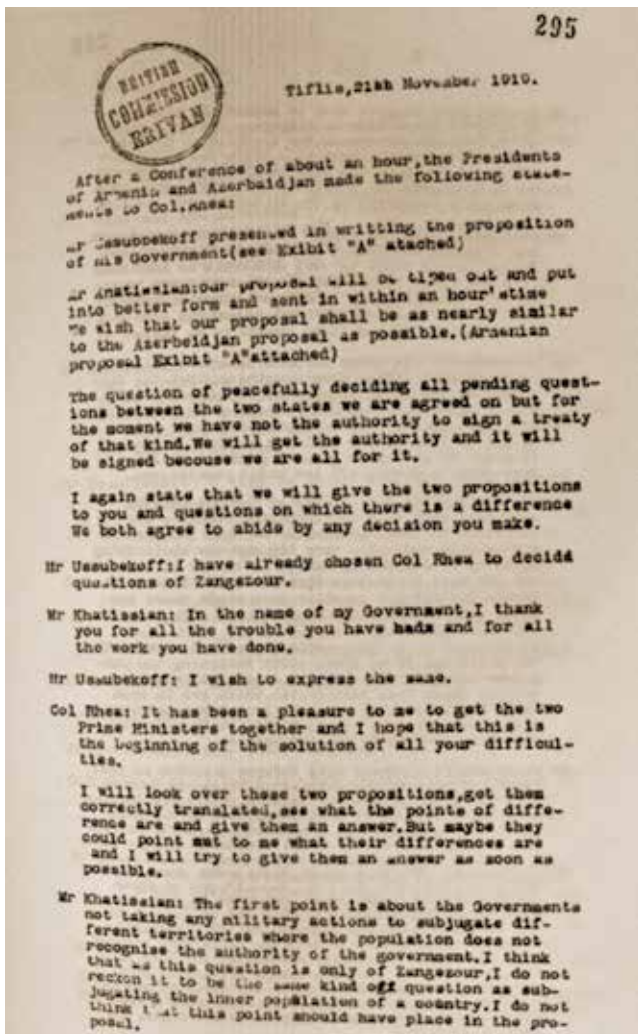
Following M. Tekinsky's appointment as ADR's Deputy Foreign Minister, in January 1920, Abdurrahimbay Akhverdiyev, an outstanding public figure and publicist, was appointed Azerbaijan's new authorized representative in Armenia. Prior to this appointment, he served as ADR's diplomatic representative in the Mountain Republic. Akhverdiyev held this post until mid-March 1920.

Teymur Khan Makinsky, who was re-appointed as the diplomatic representative of the Azerbaijan Republic in Armenia on March 16, 1920, was the last person to serve in this capacity. Following the shutdown of the diplomatic mission in May 1920 due to the Sovietization of Azerbaijan, T. Makinsky, who was in Tiflis at the time, prepared a comprehensive report on its activity and the reasons for its closure. The report Makinsky sent was addressed to People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Azerbaijan SSR, M.D. Huseynov. Referring to the challenges that the diplomatic mission had faced during its activity, Makinsky noted that his efforts focused not so much on defending the interests of Azerbaijani citizens, who did not reside in Armenia, but rather concerned limitations on the individual and property-related security of



the Muslim nationals of Azerbaijan. Therefore, the diplomatic representative and other members of the mission faced a very complicated situation. The Armenian authorities were completely neglecting the principles of extraterritoriality. Physical assault and arrests of the mission staff were widespread. The protest voiced in this regard to the Armenian foreign minister remained unanswered. Makinsky wrote that following the establishment of the Soviet rule in the Azerbaijan Republic, the Armenian government's attitude toward the mission and him personally changed abruptly. The likelihood of an imminent arrest prompted Makinsky to leave Irevan. Shortly after Makinsky's departure, on May 15, 1920, the diplomatic mission received a cable from Armenian Foreign Minister A. Oganjanyan notifying it that the Azerbaijani representation in Armenia had been abolished due to the establishment of a new government in Azerbaijan (4, l. 25-26). Since no instructions were further issued by the Soviet authorities, the diplomatic mission severed its ties with the Armenian government.

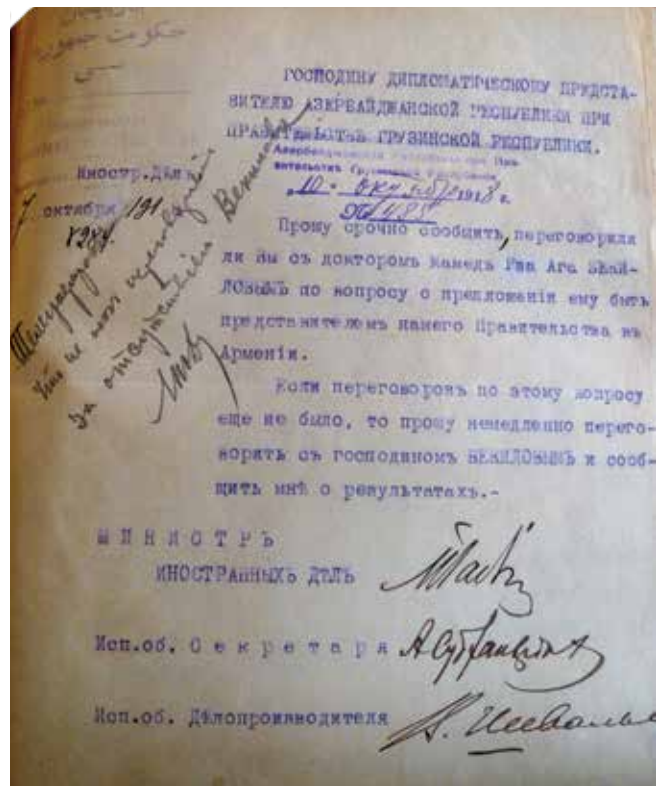
The shutdown of the diplomatic mission in Armenia deprived the new Azerbaijani government of a chance to directly communicate with the Dashnak authorities. From then onward, Azerbaijan communicated with Armenia strictly through the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia and the branch of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party of Bolsheviks in the Caucasus, represented by the RCP's Caucasus Bureau (b). The People's Commissar for Foreign



Minutes of the Azerbaijani-Armenian conference, 21 November 1919

Affairs of the Azerbaijan SSR became a merely formal position and served as a smokescreen for non-existent independence. Nevertheless, Armenia’s diplomatic representation headed by Martiros Harutyunyan remained active in Baku until the Sovietization of Armenia in late November 1920. Harutyunyan, who had an economic education, was a member of the Armenian parliament from the Dashnaksutyun party. He was appointed Armenia’s diplomatic representative in Azerbaijan in February 1920, succeeding Tigran Bekzadyan.

In July 1920, Soviet Russia appointed Boris Legran its diplomatic representative in Armenia. Legran was also expected to represent the Azerbaijan SSR, holding talks with the Armenian government unbeknownst to it regarding the fate of Azerbaijani land. Legran’s status was later legally confirmed by an agreement on a military



Letter testifying to the fact that Mammad Rza Vakilov’s candidacy was also considered for the position of the Azerbaijani diplomatic representative in Armenia

and economic alliance between Soviet Russia and the Azerbaijan SSR, which was concluded on September 30, 1920. Although the agreement did not include a special clause on incorporating the commissariats for foreign affairs, Azerbaijan, in fact, was deprived of a chance to pursue an independent foreign policy. The post of People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs became sheerly formal, while the republic’s diplomatic missions in other countries were just emulation of seeming independence. From then onward, Soviet Azerbaijan conducted negotiations with the outside world, including Armenia, under the direct supervision and with obligatory participation of a representative from Soviet Russia. Moreover, Azerbaijan was represented during the talks with Armenia by such Armenian communists as A. Mikoyan and I. Dovlatov. This justly drew ire from the leadership of the ACP Central Committee (b). Thus, chairman of the Council of People’s Economy of the Azerbaijan SSR, N. Solovyov, in a memo titled “Our policy in Azerbaijan two months (May-June) after the coup”, sent to V. Lenin in 1920, wrote, “It seemed like mockery that Armenians

Boris Legran, Soviet Russia's diplomatic representative in Armenia

are taking part in the talks with Armenia as part of the delegation from Azerbaijan, while only Armenians are involved in those from the Armenian side, without the participation of Muslims" (7, l. 38).

On July 2, 1920, an Armenian-Azerbaijani agreement was signed to convene a conference in the city of Gazakh soon to seek peaceful solution of all disputed issues between the parties. This issue is covered in detail in N. Narimanov's "Azerbaijan and Armenia" report, delivered at a session of the Political Bureau (Politburo) of the ACP Central Committee (b) on August 24, 1920. In the report, Narimanov noted that in accordance with the agreement reached with Armenia's diplomatic representative, a decision was passed in the Azerbaijan SSR to schedule a conference in Gazakh for August 20, 1920 (3, l. 140-145). Furthermore, a cable sent on August 10, 1920 to Irevan indicated the composition of the delegation representing the Azerbaijan SSR (Dovlatov as chairman, Mikoyan and Lominadze as its members) and also mentioned delegating the authorized representative, I. Dovlatov, to Armenia (6, p. 321). It is beyond doubt that such a composition precluded protection of the Azerbaijani delegation's interests during the negotiations.

Upon return to Baku, I. Dovlatov delivered a report "On the situation in Armenia" at a session of the Politburo of the ACP Central Committee (b) on August 27, 1920. Dovlatov said he had several meetings with Foreign Minister A. Oganjanyan, who actually sought to comprehensively justify the policy pursued in Armenia and signed a response cable in Dovlatov's presence declining the suggestion to call a conference. Thus, Dovlatov's mission to Armenia was a failure. The following ruling was issued at the mentioned session upon the results of Dovlatov's report: A. not to send a mission to Armenia; B. to allow henceforth the representation of an Armenian mission in Baku with oversight of its activity (2, l. 5).

A joint session of the Politburo of the ACP Central Committee (b) and the Caucasus Bureau of the RCP Central Committee (b), which took place on November 4, 1920 and heard a report of the authorized representative of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) in Armenia, B. Legran, concerning the situation in Armenia, pulled the plug on the issue of delegating a representative there. A decision was also made at the session not to send Dovlatov to Armenia (2, l. 20). Following the Sovietization of Armenia in late



November 1920, the issue of establishing a diplomatic mission of the Azerbaijan SSR in Armenia lost its relevance, given that uniform political regimes controlled by Moscow were in power in both republics. ✿

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