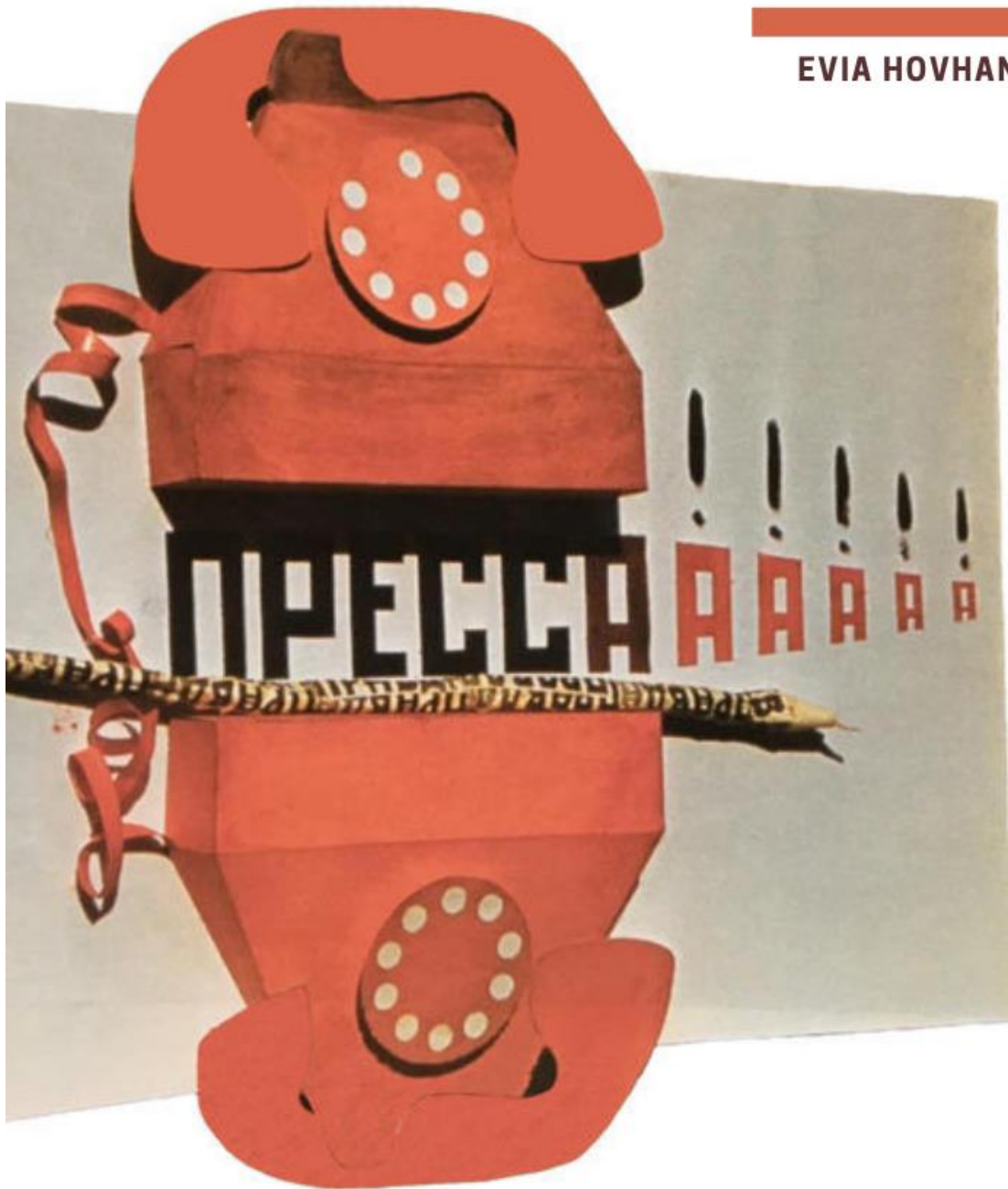


CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW DISCOURSE ON RUSSIA IN THE SCOPE OF THE ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJANI CONFLICT IN THE SAMIZDAT OF 1989

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Summary

The purpose of the research is to analyze characteristics of the late Soviet-period Armenian samizdat and to study the representation of Armenian-Azerbaijani and Armenian-Russian relations within it. It was at this time samizdat gradually became official. The policy of glasnost that was announced in the USSR in 1986 and the gradual escalation of the Karabakh conflict led to the fact that in a short period of time the Armenian dissident press was scourged by articles of nationalist anti-Azerbaijani and anti-Russian content. It should be noted that this was a bottom-up movement, since the official press in the Soviet Union bypassed questions of national content in every way, adhering to the policy of "friendship of nations."

Key words: dissident literature, samizdat, independent press, national identity.

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Introduction

A great amount of literature known as *samizdat*, self-published or dissident literature, was left out of the Soviet period bibliography. The reason is that during the Soviet era, there was no bibliographic coding of prohibited literature. In most of the cases, it was simply discovered and destroyed by the Committee for State Security (hereafter KGB) or was attached to the criminal cases of political prisoners and kept in the archives of the KGB (Harutyunyan, 2014, p. 20). Dissident literature was published quite irregularly - only one or just a few non-periodical copies throughout the year. That is why today it is quite difficult to find certain names of the Armenian samizdat in general bibliographical catalogs.

First of all, we need to clarify what we understand by samizdat in order to distinguish it from officially published literature and press. Samizdat is a certain type of books, magazines, newspapers, leaflets, posters, and other similar literature, that regardless of the number and periodicity of publishing, has some circulation and is published independently of the state's control and ideology. Samizdat can be conditionally divided into two types: anti-state ideology literature (leaflets, newspapers, magazines, books, etc.) and personal household literature (letters, handwritten notebooks, questionnaires, etc.) (Myalo, Sokolov & Sverdlov, 1990, p. 4-5).

In this article, we will only consider the *anti-government, anti-Soviet samizdat press*. The reason is that the purpose of the study is to analyze the characteristics of the late Soviet-period Armenian samizdat and to present the discourses found in the latter covering the topics of constructing a national identity and anti-Russian sentiment in Armenia and Armenian-Azerbaijani relations.

The research included self-published magazines “Inqnoroshum”, “Mashtots”, “Hayreniq”, “Hayots Khorhrdaran”, “Zangakatoun”, “Miabanutyun” and “Azat Hayq”, “Hayastan”, “Dashink”, “Hayq”, “Khosnak” and “Goyamart” newspapers. The discourse analysis method was used to analyze the collected material. In order to comprehend the phenomenon, I conducted interviews with publicists, journalists, and researchers Tigran Paskevichyan, Satenik Paramazyan, and Vardan Harutyunyan, who stand at the roots of the Armenian dissident press.

From a chronological point of view, 1989 was selected for the study. 1989 was chosen by the project as a historically significant year for Eastern Europe and in particular, for Germany, when Eastern and Western Germany reunited after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Nevertheless, this year is unfairly less important for Armenian historiography. The main reason is that the most semantically and emotionally charged year for Armenia was 1988, when the Nagorno-Karabakh Movement escalated¹. In those days Theater Square in Yerevan had become the center of political and public struggle, where protests of the Armenian people against the Soviet Union's policy were expressed (Marutyan 2009).

The year of 1989, having mainly fallen out of focus, is noteworthy due to a set of events that stood at the core of the construction of independent statehood. Moreover, within topical literature, 1989 is mentioned as the golden age of the Soviet samizdat press when approximately 500 to 1000 self-published newspapers and magazines came to light in the USSR, as stated in different sources (Myalo, Sokolov & Sverdlov, 1990, p. 17) (Strukova, 2005, p. 4).

The rise of the samizdat press was conditioned, first and foremost, by "glasnost" (openness) law (Strukova 2005, p. 9) which, to some extent, gave freedom not only to the official mass media (hereinafter media) of the country, but also to all the organizations and individuals who tried to impart alternative and pluralistic information in different ways. Before that, the entire media in the Soviet Union was administered by the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Moscow kept permanent and total control over this realm (Rostova 2015). Many very different parts of the population actively responded to the idea of the freedom of speech, initiated from above by the highest-ranking bodies of party and state apparatus. As a result, a number of non-official organizations started emerging all throughout the Soviet Union, a part of which started publishing their own press (Non-governmental organizations in Armenia, 1989).

¹ Still in 1987, protests took place in Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (hereinafter NKAO) and Soviet Armenia, claiming NKAO's reunification with the Armenian SSR. On February 20, 1988, in a special session of the NKAO Council of People's Deputies that took place in Stepanakert, a decision was adopted to apply to the Supreme Soviets of the Azerbaijani and Armenian SSRs with the request to reunite NKAO with the Armenian SSR, withdrawing it from the Azerbaijani SSR's territory due to their intermediation. That very day protests in support of the Karabakh Armenians commenced in Yerevan. One of the most important characteristics of the Karabakh Movement was that it was a pan-national movement: for more than two years in a row several hundreds of thousands of people participated in demonstrations and marches (Marutyan, The main features of the Karabakh Movement or the Armenian Revolution, 2013).

The next most important reason for the rise of samizdat press in the late Soviet years was that the ideology of the Communist Party had receded from the reality reigning in the country (Yurchak, 2017). This circumstance contributed to the gradual formation of an extensive layer of dissident media outlets which existed in parallel with the official press and tried to present alternative news. In the majority of cases, the dissident press had a dialogue with the official press, that is, a challenge vs. response principle was a foundation of the logic seen in references regularly made in the samizdat: *“We did not include Part One of the current article by S. Zavarean, a great Armenian national figure, inasmuch as it will be published in one of the official periodicals. The Editors”* [the original citation is in Classical Armenian, ed.] (Mashtots, 1989). Therefore, the independent publications were a natural reaction of the non-conformist part of society to the entrenched totalitarian regime.

Dissident Thought and Movements in Soviet Armenia until 1989

The phenomenon of dissident literature is widely discoursed in various academic works within the fields of historical science and literature studies, as well as in documentary films about the Soviet era. Two primary development phases of the formation of samizdat are distinguished among them: classical and late (new or in print) (Paskevichyan, 2014) (Strukova, 2005). Classical samizdat stretched near and far within the Soviet Union from the 1960s onward, succeeding the exposure of Stalin’s personality cult. Its chief characteristic feature was the following: printed samples were copied (written out, photographed, or reprinted) and passed along by each subsequent reader (Figure 1.). *“The rights of the copyrighters of classical samizdat press were rarely reserved, inasmuch as the danger of imprisonment still existed in those years².”*

Samizdat of the later period was formed following the year of 1986, when the law on openness was already declared in the Soviet Union. *“It was typewritten and distributed or sold on the street in a public square during public meetings. We had set the price at 70 kopeks*

²Eviya Hovhannisyan, Ethnographic Research Materials (ERM), Yerevan, 2019, Vardan Harutyunyan.

*(Russian word meaning coins), but people gave us one rouble and did not take the change. They said: - keep it for the prosperity of your business. We immediately sold them out.*³ For example, from 1988 to 1989, “Mashtots” magazine was intentionally published every Friday to make its distribution among the participants of the protests in Theatre Square possible during the weekend. The public square became one of the top places for the circulation of the dissident press of the later period.

Proof of the aforementioned is “Lurer Taterakan Hraparakits” (News from Theatre Square), an independent periodical published simultaneously in Stepanakert (Strukova, 2005, p. 24). Some leaflets and informative materials of the same kind were pinned up around the public square and this approach became one of the practices reinforced by public behavior. This practice continued by way of special “bulletin boards” or temporary “exhibitions of leaflets” throughout the protests of the following years until 2008, when the leaders of the Karabakh Movement appeared with the status of protestors and used the methods of public behavior from 1988 and 1989.

Academic works devoted to samizdat first of all focus on the study of the activities and functions of dissident movements, organizations, and individuals in the countries of the socialist camp (Zisserman-Brodsky, 2003) (Komaromi, 2015). The self-published press, in essence, was the printed version of the new political thought and language formed during the period of underground activity through which the culture of imparting information via networks was formed (Reid, 2006) (Paskevichyan, 2014). In the dissident press, references to other samizdats in the form of reprinted articles, analyses, and letters can be found frequently. Using the latter as a tool and method of innovative communication, the dissidents developed a new type of a media.

The information was conveyed not only on a horizontal platform, but also over time. For decades, the issues brought forth by the dissidents in the Soviet Union have continuously been the same in many aspects. Quite frequently, the dissident groups and organizations functioning in the country in the years between 1960 and 1980 were formed on the basis of one another and had a certain ideological heritage. Almost all dissident organizations included people having connections with other groups operating simultaneously, or ones that had operated before the formation of their group (Harutyunyan, 2014, p. 21). Such a working style

³Eviya Hovhannisyan, ERM, Yerevan, 2019, Tigran Paskevichyan and Satenik Paramazyan.

has provided the continuity of dissident thought and the networking character of its dissemination, encompassing a connection with its forerunners.

Dina Zisserman-Brodsky considers the rise of nationalist thought in the Soviet republics from 1964 to 1986 to underly the dissident movements (Zisserman-Brodsky, 2003). Perhaps since that very time the future sustainability of the Soviet Union had been thrown into question. Opinions started to emerge gradually, implying that the proletarian internationalism declared within the Soviet Union did not comply with reality and that it was a part of Russia's imperial policy (Farmer, 1980, p. 60).

Still in 1975, in his article entitled "The National Problem in Russia", Pipes pointed out the discordant contradictions between the imperial center and colonies that existed in the Soviet Union (Pipes, 1977, p. 296). Consequently, the nationalist and separatist ideologies that fermented in the underground organizations played a crucial role in the processes of the gradual erosion and collapse of the Soviet Union (Yurchak, 2017) (Brun-Zejmis, 1996). The main impetus of dissident thought was the Soviet intelligentsia, which indulging in a dissenting activity, overcame the challenges of repressions and among the defense of the various citizenship principles, became an issue of aresurging national identity and self-determination (Brun-Zejmis, 1996) (Harutyunyan, 2014).

In line with nationalist sentiments, democratic thought aimed at the defense of human rights was developing in the Soviet underground. On the one hand, it resulted from the natural requirement of the people who had passed through the Soviet concentration camps to re-integrate into society and defend their rights, on the other hand, it was a blend of Russian nationalism and western democratic values (Zisserman-Brodsky, 2003, p. 150) deepening the disparity between the metropolis and the colonies.

Julia Brun-Zejmis describes the anti-Soviet and particularly anti-Russian sentiments and actions in the Soviet Union in detail (Brun-Zejmis, 1996), which the Armenian nationalist dissidents could not fail to notice. They begin establishing connections with the underground organizations of the Baltic states, Ukraine, and Georgia. During these interactions, they exchanged not only the experience of the printing press, but also the skills of organizing various activist and anti-government events and performances (Ter-Abramyan, 2006). Unlike Baltic countries, where samizdat was published predominantly under the influence of democratic ideologies, nationalist ideology prevailed in the Armenian dissident press (Strukova, 2005, p. 25). It was conditioned by the political fermentation the country underwent:

the Karabakh Movement, the downfall of Armenian and Azerbaijani relations, and the upsurge of a national liberation struggle against the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the dissident movement was linked with the Karabakh issue only after the 1980s. The main topic of Armenian samizdat and the first phase of the dissident movement in the 1960s around which the national liberation discourse took shape was the genocide and it is not by accident that the prevalent and uniting public topic of the 1988 movement was also the genocide (Marutyan, 2009), regardless of the fact that the declared pan-national struggle was intended for the reunification of Karabakh. This differentiation and influence of the genocide in both samizdat and dissident movements were noteworthy due to the fact that they were indeed characteristic Armenian features.

The sources of Armenian dissident literature originated from as early as the 1950s and 1960s in parallel with the “National Awakening”. At that time a row of underground organizations (“Union of Armenian Youths”, “Patriotic Party of Armenia”, “National United Party”), where extremely varied groups of society - youths, elderly people, students, lecturers, priests, workers, even the personal translator of Catholicos Vazgen I⁴ - were involved. They began translating and publishing various literary works prohibited in the Soviet Union, e.g. *Armenians* by Magda Neyman, *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* by Franz Werfel, *Khodedan* by Khachik Dashtents, *Armenian Dante-esque* by Hovhannes Shiraz, etc (Manukyan, 2006, pp. 83-84). Under conditions of information scarcity and distortion, the underground organizations tried to voice manifold topics taboo in the USSR, such as independence, leaving the Soviet Union, reunifying Karabakh and Nakhidjevan with Armenia, etc., through their printed organs (Manukyan, 2006) (Ter-Abramyan, 2006).

The work of those organizations was continued by a set of public organizations, for example, “Mashtots”, “Zangakatun”, “Fund of Amberd Restoration”, “Renaissance”, which had taken shape in Armenia throughout the years of perestroika (restructuring) and were externally non-political organizations. However, in reality they dealt directly with politics (Galoyan, 2015). The former ones started publishing dissident literature on a regular basis starting in 1987, a part of which also came to light in Russian in order to become a part of the pan-Soviet dissident movement and be accessible to Armenians residing in other republics.

⁴Eviya Hovhannisyan, ERM, Yerevan, 2019, Vardan Harutyunyan.

Since 1988, Karabakh committees were set up in a number of working collectives all over Armenia, geared to support the leadership of the Karabakh Movement. These were the prototypes of the people's fronts formed later on in a few other USSR republics and unique alternatives to the committees of parties, Komsomol, and trade unions operating within Soviet enterprises and institutions (Marutyan, *The main features of the Karabakh Movement or the Armenian Revolution*, 2013).

*"The activities of almost all organizations bear a national and sometimes nationalistic direction. (The latter should be understood not importantly in a negative sense due to the Marxist and Leninist theories that have seized our worldview since childhood.) It is enough to say that even an organization such as "Renaissance", which does not have a political character at first glance, cannot escape from mere "national" issues such as the preservation of national identity, independence, national gene pool, national unity, national language, and other concepts either. The majority of non-official organizations are interested in the problems of the country's democratization, socio-economic development, culture, and other problems as well.*⁵*"(Non Governmental Parties in Armenia, 1989) The author of the citation notes that despite all the people in the USSR having been brought up with Marxist and Leninist ideologies since early childhood, national identity plays an important role in the agenda of non-official organizations. Such organizations and the literature published by them served as an impetus for a transition to the public organizations operating in the USSR and Independent Armenia: a new language of politics, independence, and nationalism was taking shape within them.*

Characteristics of the Armenian Self-published Press

Neither the name "samizdat" nor "self-published" can be found on the pages of the Armenian dissident press. The magazines and newspapers published in Soviet Armenia free of state control are more popular as the "independent press", an "independent periodical", or the "dissident or non-official press".

⁵ The orthography and punctuation of the source text is preserved in Armenian.

Inasmuch as the dissident press published in the Soviet Union in later years was severely diverse (especially in Russia), many authors studying samizdat try to classify the dissident press published in the USSR (Suetnov, 1992) (Myalo, Sokolov and Sverdlov, 1990). It is interesting that the contemporary Armenian dissident press is not subject to that classification by any means (Galoyan, 2015, p. 85). If the classification is based on the principle of the genre of the published material, it is impossible to identify a specific genre of the Armenian dissident press, as the texts published in the same magazine or newspaper belong to many genres, starting from political analyses and historical reviews, ending with poems and anecdotes (Figure 2.). If the classification is based on the principle of an ideological political stance, it is again impossible to place Armenian samizdat in any political current: it stands at the crossroad of the principles of nationalism, socialist society, and democratic governance. More precisely, the core feature of the Armenian dissident press is forged by the concepts of national identity and the creation of independent statehood.

The thought of the Armenian dissident press takes shape around a set of topical junctions. The most frequent topics are texts related to the Karabakh Conflict, Armenian language, Armenian Apostolic Church, texts directed against Russia and colonialism, reports on pro-independence and human rights defense organizations, topics casting light on the issues of economic siege and ecology, etc. All the aforementioned topics, one way or another, are a part of a broader topic, that of the construction of a national identity.

An array of techniques commonly used by the dissident press played an important role in the fortification of the topic of national identity and its exposition. Firstly, major dissident media outlets started using Classical Armenian orthography⁶ and the date of publication was mentioned in accordance with the Armenian Major Calendar (Boon Hayoc Tvakan)⁷ (Figure 3.). *“For many years before 1988, during Paruyr’s (Paruyr Hayrikyan⁸) imprisonment, the*

⁶Until 1922, the Armenian language had a more or less stable system inherited from Old Armenian. It has different classifications - Traditional, Classical, Mesropean, Haykazeen orthography. Armenians living in Armenia and former Soviet countries write in that altered style of Eastern Armenian.

⁷ According to the tradition preserved in Armenian manuscripts, the start of the Armenian Calendar - the Armenian Major Calendar, has been associated with the victory of Hayk the Forefather over Bel. Ghevond Alishan has tried to calculate that date and it is estimated to be 2492 B.C., that is, 1989 was the year 4481 on the Armenian Traditional Calendar (Badalyan, 1963).

⁸ Paruyr Hayrikyan is an Armenian politician and former Soviet dissident. Hayrikyan is one of the founders and most active leaders of the democratic movement in the Soviet Union. In 1968, he became a head of Armenia's underground National United Party.

newspaper “Ankakhutyun” (*Independence*) had been edited by Rafik Hambardzuyan⁹ and he was an upholder of Classical Armenian. Many would write in Classical Armenian, Paruyr Hayrikyan took it up, too.¹⁰ ”Despite most people reading the self-publishing press not knowing Classical Armenian and the texts in Classical Armenian containing a number of orthographic errors, it was important to the publishers and authors to show the independence of the national identity from the pan-Soviet identity at a linguistic level. This was one of the most important landmarks of the Armenian samizdat - to express anti-Soviet and anti-imperial sentiments, inasmuch as right after Armenia’s Sovietization in 1922, the orthography developed by Manuk Abeghyan entered into use. The orthographic change of the Armenian language was a part of the policy of the omnipresent elimination of illiteracy declared by the USSR (Voloshina, 2017). For that very reason, the dissident press, stressing the issue of the language in the first place, decided to return to the classical orthography in order to restore and erect a national identity. Materials and dictionaries teaching Classical Armenian orthography appeared in self-published magazines and newspapers (Figure 4.). A widespread campaign commenced against the everyday usage of the Russian language and the intellectuals who used borrowings in their political speeches. *“Wake up, Armenian intellectual! Wake up and understand that you lead the Armenian nation into an abyss and annihilation! No more lying to yourself by looking outside, blaming others, swearing on them and admiring yourself! Look inside yourself! See the illness and the dirt of alienation and estrangement within you! Heal, cleanse yourself of them: you have a mission in serving your nation”* (Ishkhanyan, 1989).

Various images with national symbols started to appear on the covers of the samizdat press, for example, the coat of arms and the flag of the First Republic of Armenia with an eagle battling against a snake, icons borrowed from medieval Armenian manuscripts, altars, etc. (Figure 5). This symbolism aimed to show the existing controversy between the independent and Soviet Armenias. Thus the symbols of the First Republic of Armenia contradicted the coat of arms and the flag of Soviet Armenia, and the battling snake and eagle embodied the people struggling for independence.

In line with the iconography, organizational slogans and countless writings upholding the national liberation struggle started to have a common use by being placed at the top of

⁹ Rafayel Hambardzumyan is an Armenian historian, public figure, publicist.

¹⁰ Eviya Hovhannisyan, ERM, Yerevan, 2019, Vardan Harutyunyan.

the cover pages of the magazines or at the top of each page (Figure 6.). Starting in the late 1980s, samizdat starts to include religious content, which also referred to another component of the Armenian identity – being a follower of the Christian and, in particular, the Armenian Apostolic Church (Figure 7.). All these techniques were used in order to place the inspiration of the national identity movement and the movement against the Soviet Union in a nationalist direction. Due to such techniques and topics, an independent national identity took form, bringing with it different kinds of discussions about the new or revived symbols and plots.

Armenian-Azerbaijani Relations and the Emergence of Anti-Russian Discourse

Again promises of a slice of bread
and permittance to give birth.
They say, except us,
there are blind people who've never seen daylight.
(T. Paskevichyan, 1989)

These lines are cited from Tigran Paskevichyan's "To Imprisoned Members of the Karabakh Committee" poem, which was published in the February issue of "Mashtots" magazine, 1989. They encompass an explicit complaint against the Soviet Union as a model of an empirestate which pursued a "carrot and stick" policy of fake promises and certain permittances. This policy became the reason for the formation of a circle of critique and dissent in the USSR through which almost all political actors having had crucial input in the construction of the independent Armenia had passed.

The facts of the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia and Armenian-Russian relations underwent a phase of a re-evaluation and re-comprehension of the reasons of the 1989 Karabakh Conflict. Via their printed materials, a set of underground organizations tried to spread an idea implying that one should get away from the stereotypes in which Russia is an "eternal friend" on the way to independence. The same sentiments also appeared on the posters made in protests. Moreover, due to the activity of the "Union for National Self-

Determination”¹¹ (hereinafter UNSD), a number of issues were brought forth that had never been presented in such formulations in the historical study of Soviet Armenia, especially within the official ideology, and, with some reservations, were rather alien to Soviet citizens. On April 24¹², 1989, UNSD members had prepared posters with the following captions: “The culmination of the Armenian Genocide is the Treaty of March 16, 1921”, “Lenin-Ataturk Treaty is illegal”, “The endpoint of our Genocide is Armenia’s forced Sovietization” (Marutyan, 2009, p. 267) and other similar captions, which evoked new anti-Russian sentiments in the Karabakh Movement and the struggle for independence.

Ideas of a similar nature started appearing not only on posters, but also in Armenian samizdats: *“From 1965 on, they began to speak about the Genocide, but blamed only the Turks, presenting Russia as a “weak and helpless” saint. On the eve of February, 1988, 99.9% of the nation did not understand how Karabakh and Nakhidjevan appeared within the territory of Azerbaijan. Considering it more as confusion, people naively thought that they could reunite Karabakh with Armenia by urging “perestroika” and Gorbachev” (Non Governmental Organisations in Armenia, 1989).*

“Another cause of Armenian and Turkish enmity was also a recurring Russophilia that reached a level of suicide. The Armenian people, from the Armenian intellectuals to the last Armenian villager and laborer, were captured by the disastrous sorrow of Russophilia” (The Issue of Armenian and Turkish Friendship, 1989).

This and a number of similar texts are proof that the independent press became an alternative political platform where the role of Russia as an indisputable friend of Armenia in the relations of Armenia with other countries was thrown into question. As we see in the citations, not only Russia was blamed, but also the part of the Armenian people who were possessed by love towards Russia.

¹¹ In 1987, Paruyr Hayrikyan founded the “Union for National Self-Determination”. It was the first national-political-democratic organization functioning explicitly in the territory of the Soviet Union. NSDU published “Ankakhutyun (Independence)” weekly, which was one of the alternative political periodicals existing in the territory of the Soviet Union (National Commonwealth Cooperative: Union of National Self-Determination, 2016).

¹² April 24, 1915 is considered as Armenian Genocide Commemoration Day, given that around 235 intellectuals of Armenian descent were imprisoned according to lists prepared in advance in Constantinople. In 1965, mass protests took place in Armenia dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the Genocide that were partly arranged by the same dissident groups, and the information was spread through samizdat (Lehmann 2015).

The controversy between Armenians and Turks in the late samizdat and the public discourses stemming from the discourse of the Genocide, was replaced by the controversy between Armenians and Azeris. Since 1988, other features popped up in that controversy regarding Russia. In that respect the Armenian samizdat categorically differs from the official press, where serious issues with reference to Azerbaijan could be included and historical facts could be discussed, but anti-Russian sentiments were excluded. Furthermore, Karabakh's transmission to Azerbaijan was presented in the samizdat as another crime of Stalin, inasmuch as it fit the anti-Stalinist discourse of the time. On the contrary, Lenin's participation in Karabakh's inclusion into Azerbaijan's territory was not being discussed, for in the official Gorbachevian stance and interpretation, Lenin was one of the heroes of that period who was discovered anew (Yurchak 2017).

In this context, one of the most discussed things was perhaps an article entitled "The Rule of the Exclusion of the Third Power" by Rafayel Ishkhanyan¹³. The author, citing many examples from history, states his viewpoint relative to Russia's age-old imperiocratic policy: *"It was in February, 1988, a meeting that took place at Lusashkh's¹⁴, I recall. Some renowned Armenian people had gathered – S. Kaputikyan, Z. Balayan, S. Khanzadyan, S. Sargsyan¹⁵, people from the Artsakh Committee, etc. As they spoke, all of them were extremely sure that Moscow (the third power) would give Artsakh to us on the occasion of perestroika. I told them: "Over the last 300 years of our history, Moscow has not given us an inch of a land. Why do you think it will be given to us now? How do you substantiate it? I do not see such a basis." I remained alone among the general choir of the third power's supporters. For a long while after that, the Artsakh Committee cherished a hope that the third power would yield Artsakh to us. I have proposed the committee to enter into direct negotiations with Azerbaijan on the Artsakh issue. They tell me Azeris will not yield Artsakh. However, - I say, - Moscow is not going to yield it either, is it? Negotiating with Baku will at least ease this horrendous hostility between Armenians and Azeris, and perhaps more bearable national conditions will be formed for the Armenians of Artsakh..."* (Ishkhanyan, 1989). This part shows that the idea implying that

¹³ Rafael Ishkhanyan was an Armenian linguist, philologist, member of Supreme Council of Armenia.

¹⁴ A trade union of the employees of enlightenment (culture, education, science) functioning in the USSR.

¹⁵ Silva Kaputikyan was an Armenian writer and poetess, publicist, public figure. Zori Balayan is an Armenian writer, public and political figure. Sero Khanzadyan was an Armenian writer, member of CPSU since 1943. Sos Sargsyan was a theater and cinema actor, USSR People's Artist.

Russia should be accused of the Karabakh Conflict and the aggravation of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations starts taking form within Armenian society.

As a technique of opposing Russia and the Soviet Union, the author of the citation applies the name Artsakh instead of Karabakh, although in 1989, the official name of the territory was “Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast” and the name of the movement’s initiator group was the “Karabakh” Committee. The application of pure Armenian names was another characteristic feature of the samizdat’s language.

The dissident press urged a cessation of the hostility with the neighboring peoples and, excluding Russia’s participation, tried to get to a negotiation table with them. *“No, it is not about becoming enemies with Russia, but acknowledging Russia in a correct way and not counting on it in the matter of our lands. It is because becoming enemies with Turanian nations involving millions of members, as well as devotion to Russia or Europe have been destructive for us and can ultimately ruin the Armenian nation”* (Mehrabyan, 1989).

In essence, the samizdat condemned Moscow’s actions toward the organizers of the national liberation movements in Armenia and Azerbaijan: *“[...] The leaders and activists of a positionless movement are imprisoned in Armenia and Azerbaijan. [...] In the democratic social system the sole accepted way of the settlement of arguments and conflicts is negotiation along with mutual respect, the firm searches for ways of mutual understanding among public organizations expressing the aspirations and hopes of the nations, authorities and many people”* (“Moscow Tribune” club statement, 1989). As stated in a set of anti-Russian articles, using the Karabakh Conflict, Russia tried to freeze the danger of the national movements in the collapse of the USSR. *“The Karabakh Movement should not have birthed the Armenian National Movement, but an already formed and sustained ANM should have raised the Karabakh issue. However, one thing is clear: it would be very difficult or almost impossible to establish the ANM without the Karabakh Movement, inasmuch as [...] we had forgotten about many things that had happened before 1920 and only the anti-Turkish sentiment had remained in people”* (Kirakosyan, 1989).

“Azerbaijan’s people robbed, massacred, and enslaved by the groups of Russian “red” bandits. They cannot fail to feel and recognize the great historical mistake they have made toward the Armenian people, their brothers and neighbors sharing the same fate, by not finding a common language with them and making the job of the fervent enemies of freedom and independence of both Armenians and Turks easier. If the Turks became honest friends

and allies to the Armenians, Azerbaijan would be able to withdraw the Bolsheviks' raid and defend its independent existence" (The issue of Armenian and Turkish friendship, 1989). This approach was not so common. It stemmed mainly from the ideological principles of UNSD and contradicted the policy that the Karabakh committee had adopted in a number of points. It was especially shocking to the activists of the Karabakh Movement, inasmuch as many of them still did not imagine the existence of Armenia without Russia. And this very factor makes the samizdat interesting, which, in the conditions of the freedom of speech, provided a platform for such ideas that could not be published even in those conditions at least because they in particular were anti-imperial and anti-Russian. On the other hand, these ideas were unpopular among the large masses of society not solely because of the anti-Russian stance, but also because of the lack of willingness to negotiate with other Turkish-Azeri peoples.

Conclusion

Summarizing everything previously mentioned, it should be noted that the dissident press in 1989 was created fertile ground for the seeds of introducing a national identity. The language of independent Armenia was shaped, playing a key role in building a national state. Various tricks were used to identify elements of national identity - language, religion, and symbols - that were more influential and were targeted to raise the nationalistic spirit.

There were a significant number of anti-imperial and anti-Russian texts, the main message of which was that Armenia can handle its relations with its neighbors independently without Russia's violent intervention. In particular, the emphasis was on the fact that Russia was the only culprit in the gradual deterioration of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations and that the only guarantee of peace between the two nations should be the quick "overthrow of the Soviet empire".

The dissident media became a platform for discussions and a workplace where a new national identity was built. It also played an important role in the struggle for independence and the establishment of the Armenian Pan-National Movement, ensuring the entire network culture of the anti-Soviet movements.

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Appendix

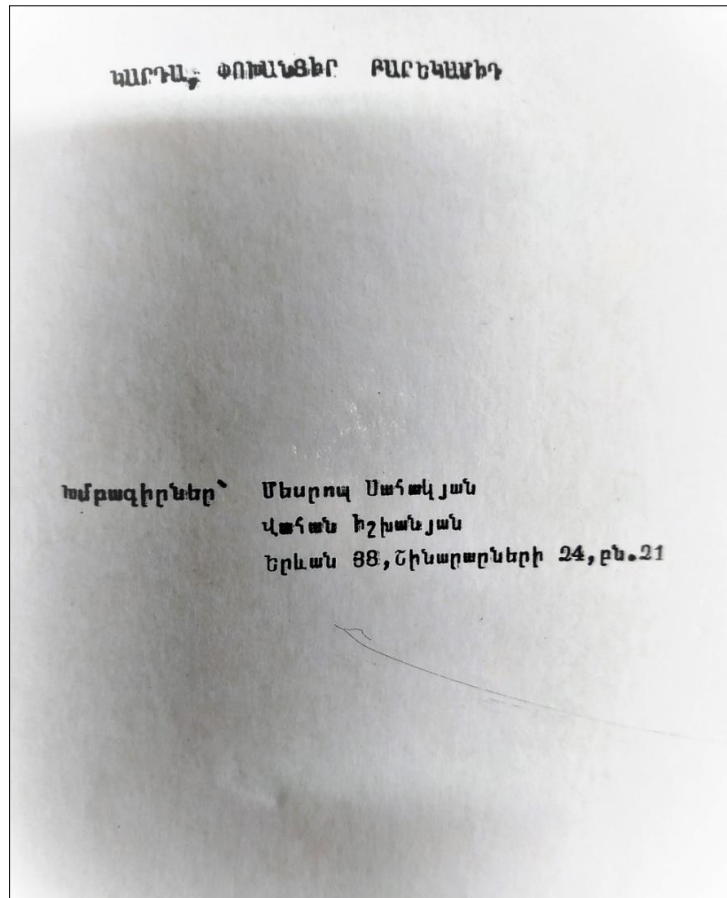


Figure 1. "Mashtots": "Goyapayqar" Youth Union, May, 1989.

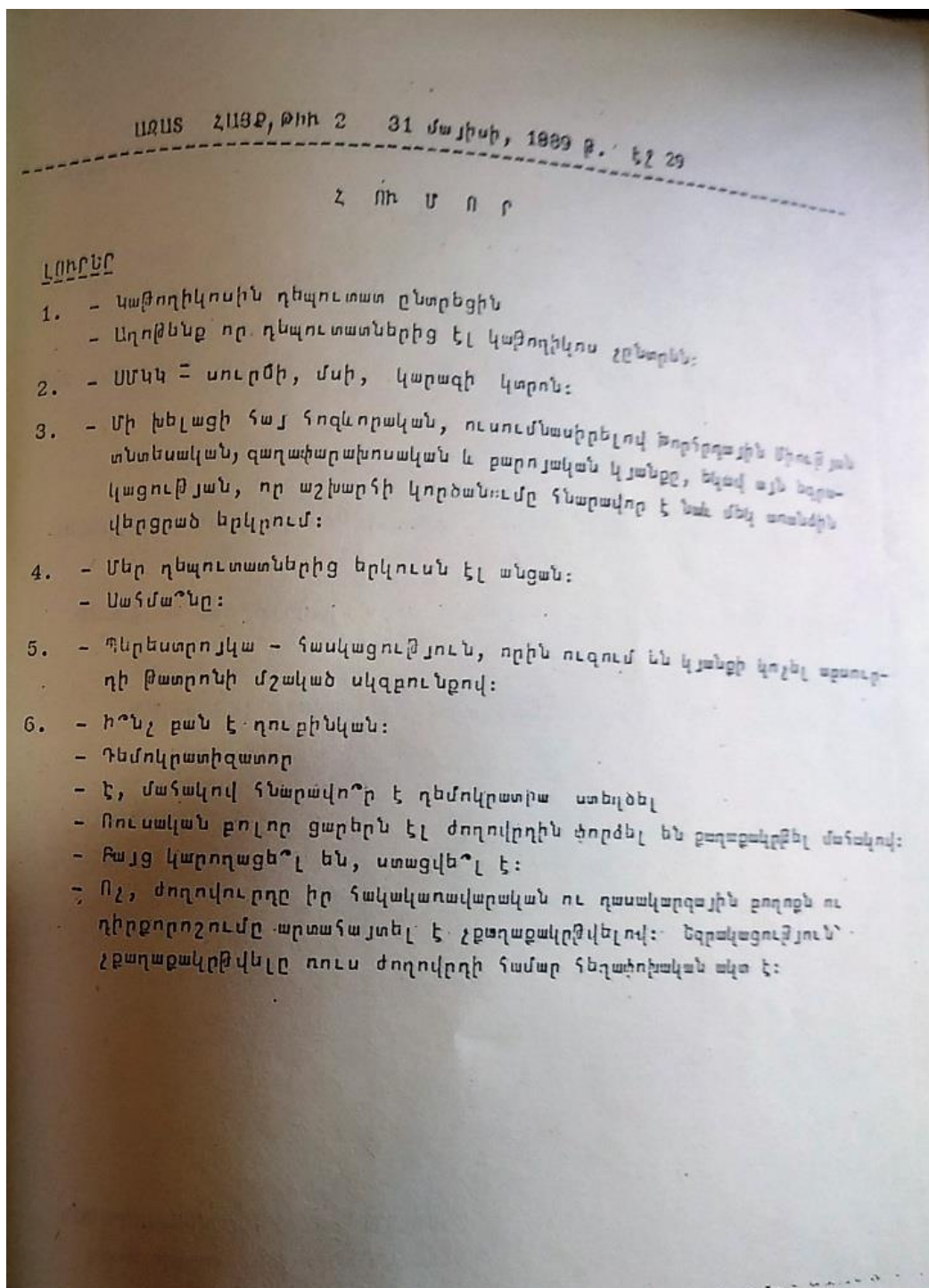


Figure 2. "Azat Hayq": anti-government, anti-Soviet jokes.

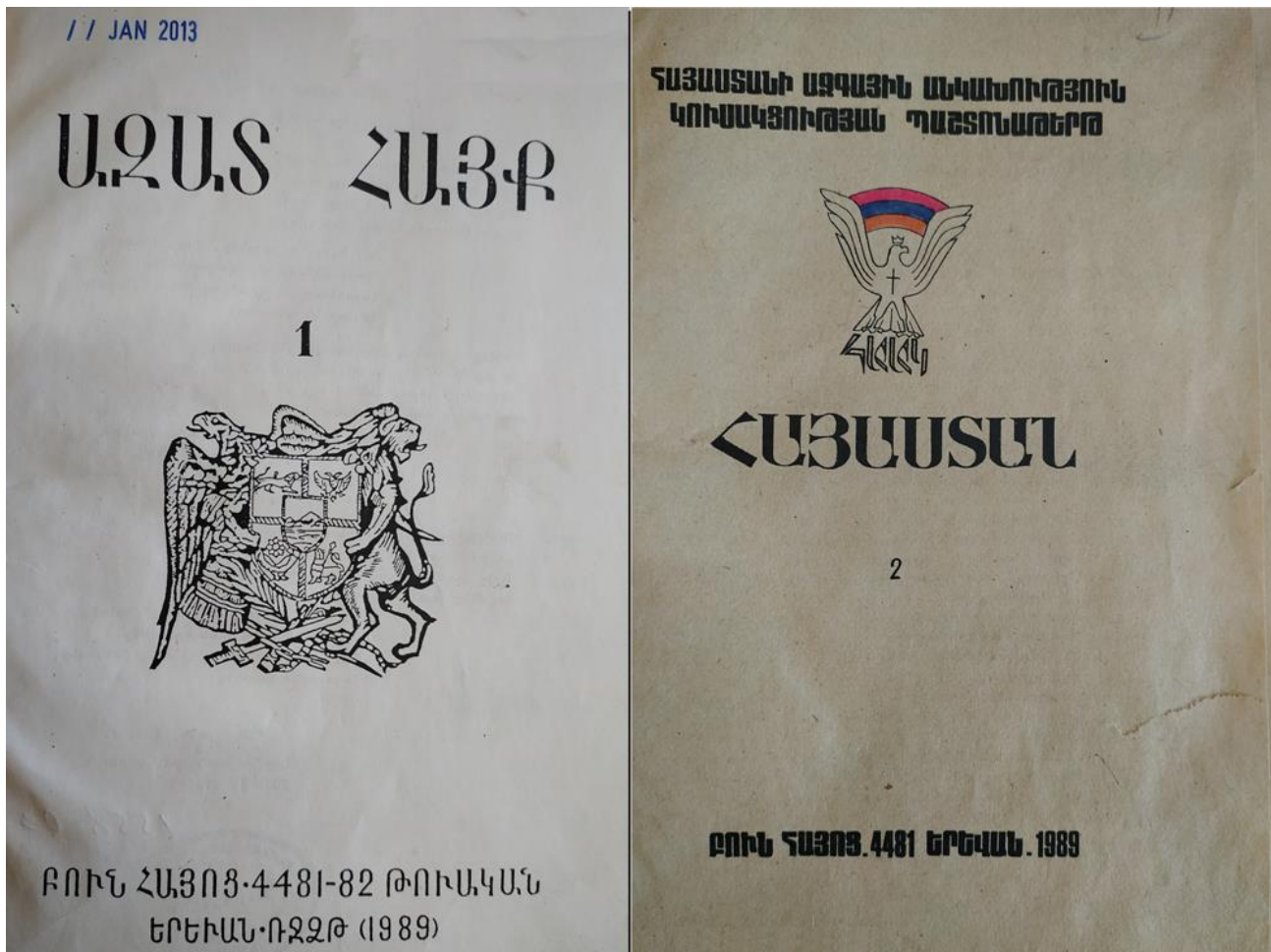


Figure 3. "Azat Hayq" & "Hayastan": examples of classical orthography and Armenian Major Calendar.

Այսուհետ «ՄԱՇՏՈՑ» ամսագիրը կհրատարակուի ազգային դասական ուղղագրությամբ: Ճիշտ ընթերցելու համար պէտք է իմանալ հետեւեալ հինգ կանոնը.

Ա. Զայնաւորից առաջ, բաղաձայնից յետոյ գրուած ու-ն կարդալ վ (օր. մաշուած):

Բ. Բառասկզբի յ-ն կարդալ հ (օր. յիշատակ):

Գ. Բառավերջի յ-ն չկարդալ, բացի արտասանուող յ-երից (օր. տղայ, երեխայ բառերի յ-ն չկարդալ, իսկ հայ, նոյ բառերի յ-ն կարդալ):

Դ. Բաղաձայնից առաջ ոյ-ը կարդալ ույ (օր. լոյս):

Ե. Իւ բաղաձայնից առաջ կարդալ յու (օր. երջանկութիւն), իսկ ձայնաւորից առաջ և բառավերջում իվ (օր. հիւանդ, հազիւ):



Figure 4. "Mashtots": classical Armenian orthography rules.

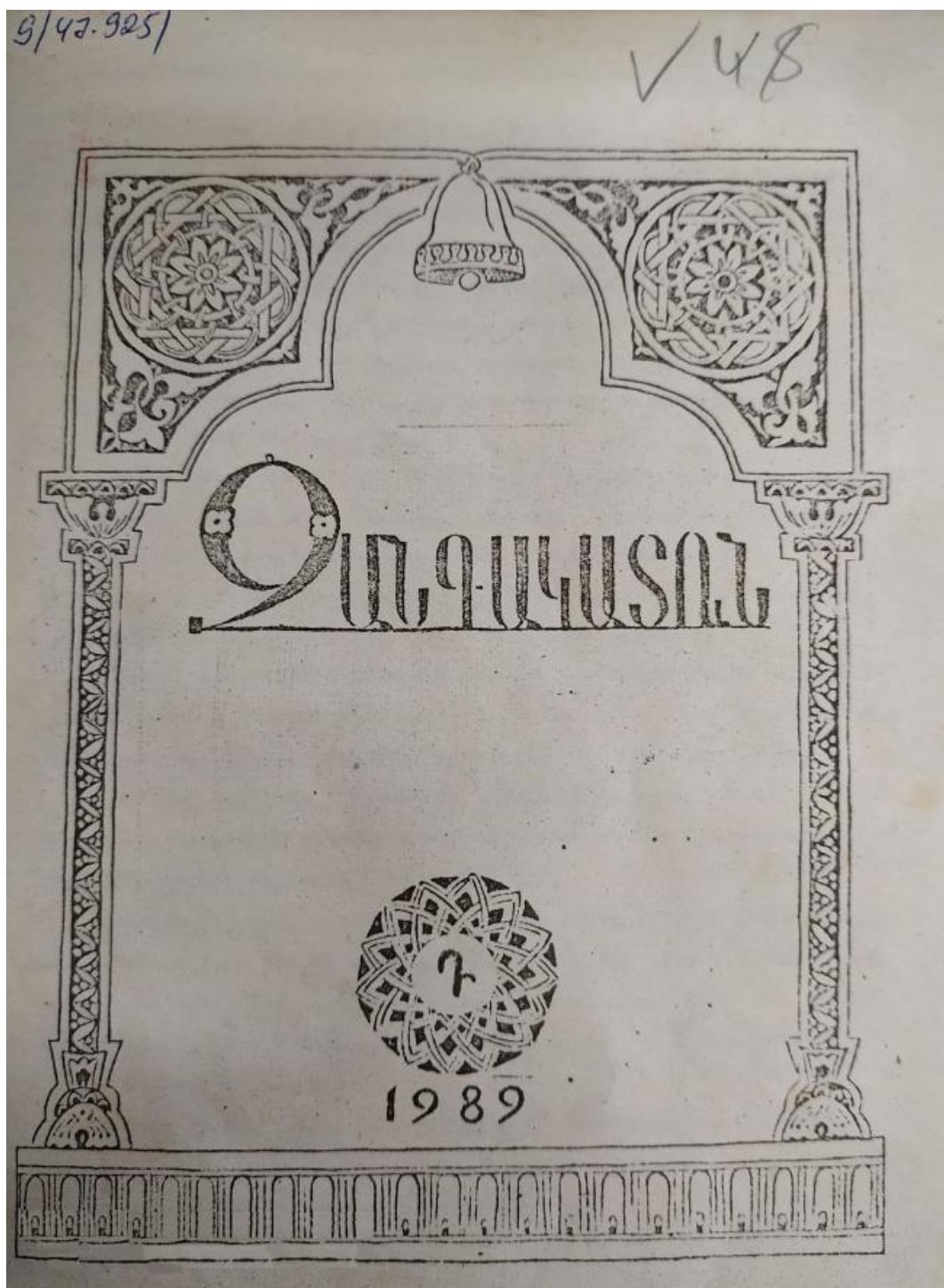


Figure 5. "Zangakatoun": a typical image of the altar from the medieval Armenian manuscripts used in samizdat.

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ԻՆՔՆՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ՃԱՆԱՊԱՐԶՈՎ
ԴԵՊԻ ԱՆԿԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

ԻՆՔՆՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ

ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԻՆՔՆՈՐՈՇՄԱՆ ՄԻԱԿՈՐՄԱՆ ԹԵՐԹ

21 Հունիսի 1989թ. հ.5

Լույս է տեսնում 1988թ. դեկ.

ՊԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ ՀԱՅԴԻՄՈՒՆԻ ԽՈՍՔԸ ՀԱՅ ԺՈՂՈՎԱԴՐԻՆ

Հայրենակիցներ, թեև ձեզանից հազարավոր կիլոմետրեր հեռու, բայց այս պահին ես ինձ պատկերացնում եմ ձեզ հետ, կանգնած ձեր առջև, և խոսքս ուղղված է ոչ անհատների, ոչ թե կազմակերպությունների, այլ այն զանգվածին, որ ամիսներ շարունակ մաքառում է անարդարության դեմ՝ տարբեր պահերի տարբեր նպատակները նշելով: Տարբեր պահերի, տարբեր ամիսների նպատակները, պահանջները տարբեր են եղել, բայց իմ էությունը մեր ողջ ազգային շարժումը այս վերջին մեկ տարվա ընթացքում եղել է ազգային ինքնորոշման դրսևորման պայքար: Մենք ունենք մեր իրավունքները և պայքարում ենք այդ իրավունքների համար: Կայսերապաշտ ուժերի վաղուց փորձված գործելակերպն է՝ զանգվածային շարժումները թուլացնելու համար այդ շարժումները զրկել իրենց ղեկավարներից: Այդպես մարտ ամսին կալանավորվեցի ես, այդպես հետազայում կալանավորվեցին Հայոց համազգային շարժման առաջնորդները, այդպես, կարճ ընդմիջումներով, ռազմական դրուժյան ընձեռած հնարավորությամբ, այսօր կալանավորվում են տասնյակ, հարյուրավոր մարդիկ: Մենք այսօր տիրու փաստի առաջ են կանգնած. Հայոց համազգային շարժումը կանգնած է փակուղու առաջ: Արդեն մի տարուց ավելի է ցույցեր, գործադուլներ, նույնիսկ համազգային գործադուլներ, բայց ոչ մի էական առաջընթաց: Ես էլ շատերի նման կարող էի ինքնախաբույթյամբ զբաղվել, ոգևորվել նրանով, որ մենք հասել ենք մեծ նվաճումների, այ, օրինակ, առումական է փակվել, կամ մենք հասանք նրան, որ Հայաստանում արդեն եռագունյն է ծածանվում, եռագունյնի ոգին հաղթանակել է... Այս ամենը կան, գոյություն ունեն, բայց մեր պայքարը այսօր միայն ոգու համար չէր, միայն ոգու

ԱԽՏ-ի ,,ինքնորոշում թերթ,,. 21 հունիսի, 1989թ., հ.5, էջ 1

2 013

Figure 6. "Inqnoroshum": slogan - "Through self-determination towards independence".

ՏԷՐՈՒՆԱԿԱՆ ԱՂՕԹՔ

Հայր մեր որ յերկինս ես, արեւ. եղիցի անուն քո. եկեացէ արքայութիւն քո. եղիցին կամք քո որպէս յերկինս և յերկրի. զհաց մեր հանապազորդ տուր մեզ այսօր. և թող մեզ զպարտիս մեր, որպէս և մեք թողումք մերոց պարտապանաց, և մի՛ տանիր զմեզ ի փորձութիւն, այլ փրկեա զմեզ ի չարէն. զի քո է արքայութիւն և զօրութիւն և փառք յաւիտեանս. ամէն:

Ս. ԷԶՄԻԱԾՆԻ

ՅՈՒՆԻՍ ԱՄՍԻ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԱԿԱՆ ՏՕՆԵՐԸ

- Յունիս 4 Բարեկենդան Սրբոյն Գրիգորի Լուսավորչի պահոց:
 10 Գիւտ նշխարաց սրբոյն Գրիգորի Լուսավորչին մերոց:
 15 Սրբոց Թարգմանչացն մերոց Սահակայ եւ Մեսրոպբայ: Եկեղեցական հանդէս յՕշական: Տօն Ազգային:
 17 Սրբոյն Տրդատայ Թազաւորին մերոյ եւ Աշխէնի տիկնոջն եւ Խոսրովիդիտոյն:
 25 Բարեկենդան վարդապառի պահոց:

ՅՈՒԼԻՍ ԱՄՍՈՒՄ: ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ-ԵԿԵՂԵՑԱԿԱՆ ՏՕՆԵՐԸ

- Յուլիս 1 Նաւակառիք
 2 ՎԱՐԴԱՎԱՌ, Գայժառակերպութիւն Տեառն մերոյ Յիսուսի Քրիստոսի
 8 ՍՐԲՈՅՆ ՔԱՂԵՈՍԻ ԱՌԱՔԵԼՈՅՆ ՄԵՐՈՅ ԵՒ ՍԱՆԴՈՒԽՏ ԿՈՒՍԻՆ
 15 ՍՐԲՈՅՆ ՈՐԴԻՈՅ ԵՒ ԹՈՌԱՆՑ ՍՐԲՈՅՆ ԳՐԻԳՈՐԻ ԼՈՒՍԱՎՈՐՉԻՆ ՄԵՐՈՅ՝ ԱՐԻՍՏԱԿԻՍԻ, ՎՐԹԱՆՇՍԻ, ՅՈՒՍԱՆՆ, ԳՐԻԳՈՐԻՍԻ ԵՒ ԴԱՆԻԵԼԻ

Figure 7. "Azat Hayq": The Lord's Prayer and the Armenian national and church calendar.