



THE EXECUTION OF DANIEL VAROUJAN* AND HIS FOUR COMPANIONS

"The Memorial Book..." (Page 375)

From: Haygashen Yearbook, Istanbul, 1922

(The story of a coachman)

The following is an eyewitness's testimony of the execution of unfortunate Daniel Varoujan, Rouben Sévag (Doctor) and their three companions, which took place 13/26 August 1915, between Chankeri and Kalayjik. It is not possible to read this story, told by a villager, without being moved.***

Kalecik

Çankiri (near Antakya)

I am a coachman by profession. My name is Hassan. For a long time I have been the head of coachman of Kastémoun's Mahir Effendy, who used to own many carriages. During the deportations of the Armenians I was in Tchankeri, where, some Armenian ~~notables~~ were banished.

One evening, I was seated in front of my stable and smoking a cigarette, after fixing my carriage. I saw a horseman - a stranger - coming in my direction. He had a severe (or rough) face. Approaching, he got down from the saddle, and, without asking for my hospitality, held the bridle of his horse, led it to the stable and tied it near my horses. This attitude seemed queer to me, but I kept silent, thinking that he might be an important official.

I was not mistaken. Just before leaving, he told me - with a commanding accent - to take care of the horse and make it ready early next morning. He went away. I tracked him from a distance, for curiosity. He entered into the house of a noted person of our town, an Ittihad ~~leader~~ man, where frequent meetings were being held lately.

Next day before dawn, another man came and took the horse. He ordered me to go with my carriage to a certain place fifteen minutes from the village, and put myself at the disposal of the gendarmes. It was an order, so I felt compelled to obey. In the proposed place there was another carriage waiting. There was a gendarme-official accompanied by an armed policeman and ~~five~~ five Effendies who were banished from Istanbul to Chankeri. One of them was a youth with a black beard and sparkling eyes. All of them were well dressed, like the Beys of our town. Their hands were tied. They looked depressed and full of anxiety. The gendarme-official led them to my carriage. He entered in the other carriage with the armed policeman. We were

* Daniel Varoujan was one of the most popular of Armenian poets, living in Istanbul, when the war broke out, in 1914. He was a graduate of Brussels University in Belgium. His name is engraved on a marble plate in the University. His picture is on page 376 of "The Memorial Book..."

** Since there was so much talk about "The Special Organization" created and conceived by Dr. Behaeddin Shakir in Mevlan Zades book, I thought it would be worthwhile to give a sample of the work done by the released-from-jail assassins, under orders of "The Three-man Executive Body". For this reason I translated this eyewitness' story.



ordered to set forth in the direction of the village Tunay which was six hours from Chankeri.

We had advanced about half an hour, when, at the turn point of the road, was seen the horseman of yesterday evening. He crossed the road and went forward, without uttering a word. After a while for a second and a third time he crossed our road as though wandering around us. There was half an hour from Tunay, when the same horseman appeared again. He came straight to my carriage. He got down his horse, and, holding from the bridles of my horses, tried to lead them out of the road, towards the foot of a hill in the valley, which had deepened because of the floods. I jumped down. The armed policeman did the same thing. We thought that an attack by bandits was imminent. We were preparing to defend ourselves when the gendarme-official came and ordered us to withdraw, at the same ~~th~~ time saluting the stranger-horseman with great respect.

At that moment, four more people appeared, armed up to their teeth. The stranger, who looked as though he was their chief, nodded to them. These men got hold of me and the other coachman, and, after tying our hands, ordered the ~~five~~ five exiled men to get down from the carriage. They told them to hand their money, but because their hands were tied, the gendarmes undertook the job of searching them. They robbed them of everything they had - money, other objects, cigarette-cases, pocket-books, beads, etc. The gendarme official whispered a few words into the ear of the Tchété-leader. Obviously, he asked him to leave the booty to himself and the armed policeman. Then the gendarme official and the armed policeman entered the other carriage and left. Untying my hands, they allowed me to return back to town. As to the exiles, they were ordered to follow the four Tchétés and their leader.

I was watching them from a distance. Curiosity was making me restless. Where were they taking those Effendies? Those armed men and their leader were causing me anxiety. Crossing the valley they passed to the other side where there was a grove. Taking a few steps their leader said a few words. I understood nothing because I was rather far. Then they assailed the Effendis, took out their clothes and made them completely naked.

I cannot describe the scenery which I witnessed. These poor victims were tied to the trees one by one. Their hands being tied they could not defend themselves. Then the Tchété-leader and his men drew their swords and proceeded to skin them calmly and tardily. The victims' cries and their ~~own~~ desperate impetuosity were compressing my heart.

I have myself killed a man and been ~~condemned~~ condemned 15 years of ~~hard~~ hard labor, but I have never been as cruel as these assassins. My victim had dishonoured me, so, in my fury I had taken a gun. The bullet went and killed my adversary. I was sorry to kill him. After all that man had threatened me with dishonouring words. While the five Effendis had done nothing to those Tchétés and they had not even known them. And yet, they were being calmly and tardily slaughtered.

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P.S. The importance of this document is the fact that it was published in 1922, in Istanbul, seven years before Mevlan Zadé published his story of "The special organization." Before the publication of Mevlan Zadé's book, I do not think ~~that~~ that the Armenians knew anything about Behaeddin Shakir's "Special Organization."

A.C.



"MEMORIAL BOOK OF THE ARMENIAN MARTYRDOM" by K. Aharonian

Page 953

SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN

"Thus, ~~Soghomon Tehlirian~~, who only two years ago passed away in the United States, and in whose memory a monument is being built, opened the way for the vengeance of the Armenians. With one bullet he assassinated Talaat Pasha, one of the most influential members of the Ittihad ve Terakki party who was Minister of the Interior and later prime minister. The killing took place on March 15, 1921, during day time, in Berlin's Hardenberg Street."

In "The Mitigation of Soghomon Tehlirian", page 23, it says: "Soghomon Tehlirian, born in April 2, 1897, in Pakaridge (must be in Turkey), a Turkish citizen and Armenian Protestant. He used to live in Charlottenbourg, Hardenberg Street 37, at the Tidmann's. He is accused of killing the Grand Vizier of Turkey, Talaat Pasha on March 15, 1921, in Charlottenbourg."

(The picture of ~~him~~ Soghomon Tehlirian is on page 953 of "Memorial Book.").

Again on page 953:

"He was followed by MISSAK TORLAKIAN, who killed Interior Minister of Azerbaijan, Behoud Khan Djivanshir, on July 19, 1921, in Constantinople. Djivanshir was one of the two organizers of the Armenian massacres of Baku, during September 1918. The other of the two villains, Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, Khan Koyski (or Khoyski), was assassinated in Tiflis, in 1920, by the hero ARAM YERGANIAN.

On December 6*, 1921, in Rome, ARSHAVIR SHIRAKIAN killed former Prime Minister (of Turkey) Said Halim Pasha, with a heroic assault on his carriage and with one bullet. It was this monster ~~th~~ who had signed the decree for the annihilation of the Armenian nation.

On April 17, 1922, on the midnight of All-Souls' Day, the same ARSHAVIR SHIRAKIAN and the same ARAM YERGANIAN, this time in Berlin, assassinated simultaneously, another two of the Ittihad leaders, the big monsters Dr. Behaeddin Shakir and Djemal Azmi. The first was killed by ARAM, and the second by ARSHAVIR, in front of Mrs. Talaat's stupified eyes... Behaeddin Shakir was that man-like beast, who, amongst other crimes, had conceived the monstrous idea of drowning thousands of Armenian children into the ~~the~~ Black Sea. As for Djemal Azmi, the Governor of Trabzon, had executed the plan.

Still unpunished were Enver and Djemal Pasha. The first was Turkey's War Minister, and the second was the Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish armies of Syria Lebanon and Palestine. The latter had hanged many notable Syrian and Lebanese patriots.

Djemal Pasha's turn came on July 25, 1922. Two courageous youths from Khodor-chour, BEDROS DER BOGHOSSIAN and ARDASHES KEVORKIAN, during day-time, killed him in Tiflis, in front of the "Tchéka"-s (Bolshevik's equivalent to FBI. ~~ix~~ I am writing it as it is pronounced. I do not know how it is written.) Building.

Enver was killed in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, where he had gone to foment Pan-Turanian (Pan-Turkish) activities. It is said that he was assassinated by an Armenian "Tchékist".

* ARSHAVIR SHIRAKIAN, on page 187 of his book entitled "It was the Will of the Martyrs", published in Beirut, 1965, Antylyas Catholigosate Press, says that he killed Said Halim Pasha on Dec. 5, 1921, and not on Dec. 6, as it is mentioned in the "Memorial Book."



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P.S. The man who played an important role in masterminding (am I using the right word?) the plans for the assassination of the Ittihad leaders was SHAHAN NATALI. A former Tashnak leader, who later withdrew from the Party. He lives in the States, is an ardent supporter of Armenia, and has paid at least two visits there. Someone told me once, that, as a means of revenge, SHAHAN NATALI suggested to the Party "to poison all the rivers of Turkey", but the party refused the plan lest it ^{might} alienate the European powers. He is the author of a book entitled, "The Treaty of Alexandropol."

A.C.