

Karadeniz Uluslararası Bilimsel Dergi

Volume: 44, Winter-2019, p. (30-41)

ISSN: 1308-6200 DOI Number: 10.17498/kdeniz.630462

Research Article

Received: October 07, 2019 | Accepted: November 16, 2019

This article was checked by intihal.net.

**THE CONSISTUENT ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA AND ISSUES OF
GEORGIAN-RUSSIAN RELATIONS (APRIL-MAY 1920)***

**GÜRCİSTAN'IN KURUCU MECLİSİ VE GÜRCİSTAN-RUSYA
İLİŞKİLERİ KONULARI (Nisan-Mayıs 1920)**

**УЧРЕДИТЕЛЬНОЕ СОБРАНИЕ ГРУЗИИ И ВОПРОСЫ ГРУЗИНО-
РОССИЙСКИХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ (АПРЕЛЬ-МАЙ 1920 ГОДА)**

Malkhaz MATSABERIDZE**

Otar JANELIDZE***

ABSTRACT

The article depicts the attitude of the Consistent Assembly, the Supreme Legislative Body of the Democratic Republic of Georgia to events taking place between the Soviet Russia and Georgia in April-May 1920: At the end of April 1920, the Soviet regime was almost invigorated in Azerbaijan, there was revealed union of the Soviet Russia and Turkey of Mustafa Kemal, which, according to Georgian politicians, resembled the "Brest-Litovsk New Deal" for division of the South Caucasus.

The threat of Bolshevism actually threatened Georgia as well. In this situation, the Democratic Republic of Georgia expressed its readiness both to defend itself and negotiate with the Soviet Russia. The developments showed that both of these proved to be necessary: By the beginning of May 1920, Red Army units invaded the territory of Georgia from within Azerbaijan. The Georgian Armed Forces repulsed the enemy and forced them to retreat.

Negotiations with the Soviet Russia on May 7, 1920 also led to the conclusion of a peace treaty between the two countries in Moscow. Under the treaty, Russia unconditionally acknowledged Georgia's state independence and recognized it within its historical borders. There are revealed unknown before details of the negotiations between the Democratic Republic of Georgia and the Soviet Russia in May 1920 in Moscow; are covered the views of the Georgian political spectrum within the Consistent Assembly on Bolshevism as a political regime of the Soviet Russia, its imperialist nature and ideology; There is analyzed

* The research was carried out within the framework of the Shota Rustaveli National Science Foundation of Georgia Grant Project "Consistent Assembly of Georgia: Experience of Georgian Parliamentarism". Grant Code: FR-18-20157

** ORCID ID: 0000-0001-7989-1480 Professor at Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. malkhaz.matsaberidze@tsu.ge 57

*** ORCID ID: 0000-0003-0132-4341 Professor of Gori State Teaching University. Otar_janelidze@yahoo.com

The Consistent Assembly Of Georgia And Issues Of Georgian-Russian Relations...

the work of the sessions of the Supreme Legislative Body of Georgia on April 30, 1920 and May 11, 1920, dealing with critical issues concerning the regulation of relations between Russia and Georgia.

Keywords: *Georgia, Turkey, Russia, Bolshevism, Moscow.*

ÖZ

Makalede Gürcistan Demokratik Cumhuriyeti'nin Yüksek Yasama Meclisi olan Kurucu Meclisi'nin Nisan-Mayıs 1920'de Gürcistan ile Rusya arasında meydana gelen gelişmeler üzerine yaptığı yaklaşımları ele almaktadır. 1920 Nisan sonunda Azerbaycan'da neredeyse mücadele verilmeden Sovyet Hükümeti kuruldu. Aynı dönemde Sovyet Rusya ile Atatürk Hükümeti arasında bir birlik açıklandı ve bu gelişme dönemin Gürcü siyasetçilerin açıklamalarında Güney Kafkasya'yı bölmeye yönelik "Yeni Brest-Litovsk Anlaşması" olarak değerlendirildi.

Bolşevizm aslında Gürcistan'ı da tehdit etti. Oluşan durum yüzünden Gürcistan Demokratik Cumhuriyeti gerek kendini savunma konusunda, gerekse Sovyet Rusya ile görüşmeler yapmak için hazır olduğunu beyan etti. Olayların gelişimi bu hazırlıkların gerekli olduğunu gösterdi: Mayıs 1920'de Azerbaycan topraklarından Kızıl Ordu birlikleri Gürcistan'ı işgal etmeye kalktılar. Ancak, Gürcistan'ın silahlı birlikleri tarafındangeri çevrildiler.

Sovyet Rusya ile başlatılan görüşmeler, 7 Mayıs 1920'de iki ülke arasında anlaşma imzalanarak sonuçlandı. Bu anlaşmaya göre Rusya şartsız ve koşulsuz Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığını tarihi sınırları içerisinde tanıdı.

Makalede Gürcistan Demokratik Cumhuriyeti ile Sovyet Rusya arasında 1920'de Moskova'da yapılan görüşmelerin günümüze kadar bilinmeyen ayrıntılarını ortaya koymaktadır. Makalede Kurucu Meclisi'ne dahil olan Gürcü siyasetçileri tarafından Sovyet Rusya'nın siyasi rejimi olan Bolşevizm hakkında ileri sürülen düşünceler ve Bolşevizmin emperyalist doğası ile ideolojisi tetkik edilmiştir. Ayrıca, Gürcistan Yüksek Yasama Meclisi'nin 30 Nisan 1920 ve 11 Mayıs 1920 tarihlerinde, yani ülke için kritik bir dönemde Gürcistan ile Rusya arasında oluşan ilişkilerin düzenlemesi üzerine yapılan toplantıların analizi yapılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Gürcistan, Türkiye, Rusya, Bolşevizm, Moskova.*

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье представлено отношение высшего законодательного органа Грузинской Демократической Республики – Учредительного собрания – к событиям, развивавшимся между Грузией и Россией в апреле-мае 1920 года. В апреле 1920 года в Азербайджане почти без боев установилась советская власть, стал очевиден союз Советской России и Турции Ататюрка, который, по мнению грузинских политиков, был направлен на раздел Южного Кавказа и выглядел как «новое Брест-литовское соглашение».

Грузия стояла перед реальной опасностью большевизма. В созданной ситуации, Грузинская Демократическая Республика выразила готовность как к самообороне, так и к переговорам с Советской Россией. Развитие событий показало, что было необходимо и то, и другое: в начале апреля 1920 года соединения Красной армии вторглись в пределы Грузии с территории Азербайджана. Вооруженные силы Грузии отбили противника и вынудили вернуться обратно.

Переговоры с Советской Россией привели к оформлению мирного договора между двумя странами 7 мая 1920 года. Согласно соглашению, Россия безоговорочно признавала государственную независимость Грузии в ее исторических границах.

В статье выявлены неизвестные доселе факты московских переговоров между Грузинской Демократической Республикой и Советской Россией; освещена точка зрения грузинских политических сил, представленных в Учредительном собрании, о большевизме как политическом режиме Советской России, его империалистической сущности и идеологии; проанализирована работа заседаний высшего законодательного органа Грузии 30 апреля и 11 мая, которые были посвящены вопросам урегулирования грузино-российских отношений в критической ситуации.
Ключевые слова: *Грузия, Турция, Россия, Большевизм, Москва.*

1. Introduction

The spring of 1920 proved critical in the relationship between the Soviet Russia and the Democratic Republic of Georgia, which naturally came under the spotlight of Georgia's highest legislative body - the Consistent Assembly.

By the end of April 1920, the geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus had changed dramatically - the Soviet power was almost invigorated in Azerbaijan, there was revealed union of the Soviet Russia and Turkey of Mustafa Kemal. In Georgia they expected invasion of the Soviet Russia, hostilities even began, but Lenin opted for a cease-fire with Georgia, as the Soviet Russia had a hard time in the ongoing war with Poland and temporarily suspended hostilities in the South Caucasus. However, at the end of April, after the occupation of Azerbaijan by the Red Army, no one knew how things would turn out.

At the Consistent Assembly meeting, on April 30, Noe Zhordania, the Chairman of the Government, announced about "the arrival of the Bolsheviks in Azerbaijan." Jordania noted that "bordering with the Soviet Russia gradually became a threat to our new republic" (Georgia VI, 2019: 270).

It is well known that the attitude of Lenin and the Bolshevik elite towards the Georgian state separated from Russia was initially negative. In the top Soviet political circles Georgia was still regarded as a part of Russia and they did not recognize its sovereignty. Moreover, the Democratic Republic of Georgia was viewed as a hostile country by the Kremlin and they considered it necessary to destroy it.

According to Noe Zhordania, Bolshevik Russia opposed to Georgia "ideologically and nationally." The government took care that "the people would not believe the propaganda from Moscow, disregard thoughts and ways, and that the masses would be conscious about the differences between our own and their lifestyles" (Jordania, 1990: 107).

The Democratic Republic of Georgia aspired to establish peaceful and neighborly relations with all the surrounding countries, including the Soviet Russia. Tbilisi did not rule out the possibility of political and economic co-operation with its northern neighbor; it was even looking for the ways of cooperation but the issue of recognition of Georgia's state independence was put forward as a precondition.

The Bolshevik provocations, the covert and even outright aggression of the Soviet Russia against Georgia did not result in anti-Russian hysteria, neither in the persecution of the Russian population nor the deportation. On the contrary, many representatives of the Russian intelligentsia, who had fled the proletarian regime

The Consistent Assembly Of Georgia And Issues Of Georgian-Russian Relations...

from their homeland, were looking for Georgia, finding a cozy harbor here and continuing their activities.

After the announcement of the Chairman of the Government in the Consistent Assembly, the representatives of the parliamentary factions made speeches. The purpose of these speeches was to partially assess the situation and demonstrate the unity of the country in the face of the impending attack.

2. Research Method

By the method of content analyses in the article there are studied the shorthand reports of the sessions of the Consistent Assembly of Georgia of April 30 and May 11, 1920, At the first session they discussed the situation created after the Sovietization of Azerbaijan, and at the second session, the Treaty of May 7, 1920 with Russia. The positions of the party factions in the Consistent Assembly are also shown.

The analyzes of the shorthand reports of the April 30 and May 11, 1920, of the sessions of the Consistent Assembly of Georgia is based on investigation of the historical context, for which case analysis and historical comparative methods are used. The research is based on archival materials, data from recent press, political figures' memories, and existing scientific literature.

Discussion

3. The New Brest-Litovsk Threat

According to the Agreement between the Democratic Republic of Georgia and Azerbaijan, on April 27, 1920, official Baku requested military assistance from Tbilisi over the Soviet invasion of Azerbaijan.

Noe Jordania explained the Georgian government's position: Georgia was preparing to send troops to Baku, but it appeared that Azerbaijan was not resisting the invading of Bolsheviks (Georgia VI, 2019: 270-271). According to Jordania, the authorities in Azerbaijan were easily overthrown by a deal between the "Communists and Anatolian Nationalists" (Georgia VI, 2019: 271). The deal was aimed at combating the common enemy - the Entente.

According to Noe Jordania and Akaki Chkhenkeli (Social Dem.), there was a new Brest-Litovsk agreement when Russia and the Ottomans came to a deal and split the South Caucasus between themselves (Georgia VI, 2019: 276).

According to Spiridon Kedia (National Democrat), a new reality had emerged - if previously there was a hope that the Transcaucasian republics would oppose Russia together, now Azerbaijan surrendered to the Bolsheviks and the same could happen to Armenia (Georgia VI, 2019: 288).

Leo Shengelaia (SR) noted that Azerbaijan betrayed not us, but itself (Georgia VI, 2019: 283). Regarding Azerbaijan, A. Chkhenkeli remarked: "We wanted this state to really be a state, to really defend its independence and freedom," but they were deceived. A. Chkhenkeli also hoped that "the people of Azerbaijan itself will realize where its ruling circles threw the country" (Georgia VI, 2019: 277).

The representative of the Dashnak faction, Garegin Ter-Stepanian, emphasized that Georgia's was threatened not only by the Soviet Russia invading Azerbaijan, but also by the Ottomans (Georgia VI, 2019: 298).

According to the general assessment, in case the Bolsheviks conquered Georgia, the democratic order would be abolished and tyranny would be established. Noe Jordania reaffirmed the country's European choice, in favor of democracy. He said Georgia was ready both for defense and negotiation (Georgia VI, 2019: 270-271).

4. Georgia was left alone again

The victory of the Soviet regime in Azerbaijan was an ominous signal for Georgia, as the threat of Bolshevism also practically threatened it. N. Jordania the head of the government declared about the fact that Georgia was left alone in danger of a possible Soviet invasion from Russia, the same was noted by A. Chkhenkeli (Georgia VI, 2019: 277).

N. Jordania believed that the Bolsheviks could not invade Georgia from Sochi or Darial, and the attack from Azerbaijan was quite real, as "the borders were open" (Georgia VI, 2019: 270).

The Georgian politicians, left alone, were obviously trying to encourage the public. According to Noe Jordania, "Loneliness does not always mean hardship. On the contrary, staying alone sometimes means strength" (Georgia VI, 2019: 272).

The representatives of factions hoped that Georgia would not be abandoned in the face of the expected Bolshevik aggression and that Europe would support it. According to Kedia, Entente would understand Georgia's important role in the fight against Bolshevism and help her (Georgia VI, 2019: 290). Gr. Veshapeli was surprised that Britain did not understand Georgia's important role in stopping the Soviet Russia at the ridge of the Caucasus (Georgia VI, 2019: 293-294). He also imagined the scenario of the Great War - the Russo-Ottoman war against England, in which Germany would also be involved on their side (Georgia VI, 2019: 294-295).

According to Valiko Jugeli, Georgia was not alone and if it fought Europe would help Georgia (Georgia VI, 2019: 303).

Georgia really had to fight. Parts of the Soviet army invaded the Democratic Republic of Georgia from within Azerbaijan. Their political leader, Georgian Bolshevik Sergo Orjonikidze assured V. Lenin that Tbilisi would be taken in a few days.

Government of Georgia implemented additional measures: strengthened state borders, announced mobilization, introduced military rules in eastern Georgia, established a Defense Fund, etc. General Giorgi Kvinitadze was appointed commander of the Georgian Armed Forces, who immediately began vigorous actions and reorganized forces in the appropriate direction.

The Consistent Assembly of Georgia adopted a resolution and allocated an additional 300 million rubles to the government for the defense of the republic (Janelidze, 2013: 218).

5. Bolshevik imperialistic politics

Representatives of the factions spoke in detail about the real goals of the Bolsheviks and emphasized the imperialistic character of their actions.

Akaki Chkhenkeli noted that the Bolsheviks adhered to imperialist policies, policies of conquering other nations (Georgia VI, 2019: 275). According to him, "penetration of Bolshevism in Transcaucasia" was "the restoration of the old yoke - Russian imperialism" (Georgia VI, 2019: 275-276). According to Leo Shengelaia, Georgia was attacked by "Veliko Russian imperialism" (Georgia VI, 2019: 285). According to evaluation by Shalva Nutsubidze, Bolshevism itself was imperialism, in particular a socialist imperialism (Georgia VI, 2019: 281).

According to Shengelaia, the situation demanded "the greatest sacrifice from the nation, from its every citizen," as the war was aimed at destroying the Georgian State (Georgia VI, 2019: 284-285).

A. Chkhenkeli believed that the confrontation between Georgia and Soviet Russia was a confrontation between democracy and despotism (Georgia VI, 2019: 274), "the fight between Bolshevism and democracy" (Georgia VI, 2019: 277). However, the Socialist-Federalist Sh. Nutsubidze emphasized that the fight against Bolshevism was not a political one, of certain socio-political programs, but a struggle between "two states" (Georgia VI, 2019: 279).

Sh. Nutsubidze saw as particularly dangerous the illusions, that the world socialist revolution was going on, that followed introduction of Bolshevism for one part of the Socialists, which would end up in the practical implementation of socialist ideals. According to Sh. Nutsubidze, many found it difficult to determine who came to Georgia's borders, "an enemy or a friend" (Georgia VI, 2019: 278). According to him, Georgia should declare neutrality regarding the idea of a world Bolshevik revolution (Georgia VI, 2019: 280).

Leo Shengelaia, the leader of the Socialist-Revolutionary faction, also confirmed that the "illusions that followed Bolshevism" were a threat. He said that if the Communists were in the Consistent Assembly, they would not have many issues disputed concerning programs. Georgian SRs opposed the Bolsheviks simply because they wanted to conquer Georgia. At the same time, L. Shengelaia called on the ruling Social Democratic Party to pursue a "more left-wing" policy in order to show the workers and peasants in the army what they were fighting for (Georgia VI, 2019: 284-285).

6. Bolshevik regime in Russia and the Georgian political spectrum

Representatives of Georgia's left-wing or right-wing opposition, which repeatedly criticized the ruling Social Democratic Party and the government for flaws made in various areas of state-building, for fluctuations in foreign policy orientation, and so on, were sympathetic with the authorities in assessing Bolshevism. Georgian political forces were well aware of the essence of the Bolshevik regime. They perceived Bolshevism as a reactionary, unacceptable course for the goals and ideals of the Georgian nation. They were convinced that the introduction of Bolshevism in Georgia would undermine Georgian statehood, lead

to the loss of national identity, and so on. But Georgian politicians did not either forget that Bolshevism was also the dominant state power in Russia and that it needed to be taken in consideration.

Giorgi Gvazava, chairman of the parliamentary faction of the National Democratic Party, said: "Although the views and doctrines of the Bolsheviks are not acceptable to us, they hold the whole state, we can negotiate with them... as with the state." The Socialist-Federalist party also shared the same opinion, one of its leaders, Samson Pirtskhalava, stated: "We must pursue a peaceful policy towards the Russian Bolsheviks and use every measure to establish good neighborly relations with them" (Public Affairs, 1920: 18 XI).

A noteworthy point was made by the independent periodical of the National Democratic Party, the newspaper "Klde." On its pages we read: "Talking to Russia is definitely acceptable, but on one basis: Russia should once and for all stop controlling Georgia and exerting its influence on it in any way. Georgia's sovereignty should be the basis of our policy and economic relationship with other states. "

At the end of the article one of the most important points was mentioned, namely, the newspaper emphasized the following: "It is possible to establish economic relations with Russia and make political links with it, but on the ground of absolute independence only" and that "Russia may agree on this, but we must get international guarantees" ("Klde", 1920: 30 IV).

The Georgian political elite was aware of the aggressive nature of Bolshevism, sensing the seriousness of the threat posed by Bolshevik Russia, seeking ways to strengthen the country's defense capability and at the same time trying to achieve peaceful relations with this state.

7. Readiness for defense and negotiation

According to Noe Jordania, Georgia was ready for both for defense and negotiation (Georgia VI, 2019: 270-271). The same was repeated by Shalva Nutsubidze on behalf of the Socialist-Federalist faction (Georgia VI, 2019: 283).

According to Akaki Chkhenkeli, Georgia defended neutrality and did not interfere in Russia's civil war. Georgia's policy was generally loyalty and neutrality to all its neighbors (Georgia VI, 2019: 275). According to him, "we only defend ourselves, our independence, achievements of revolution" (Georgia VI, 2019: 274).

The statement of readiness for negotiations was not a mere declaration. Noe Jordania had a representative sent to Moscow for this purpose who knew Lenin personally and other Bolsheviks. However, only a few people knew about this fact (Jordania, 1990: 112).

There were also those who doubted the possibility of an agreement with the Bolsheviks. V. Jugeli saw it as a mistake to make concessions to the Bolsheviks in the hope of reaching an agreement. According to him, "to give in to the illusion that any agreement or negotiation with the Bolsheviks can take place" is the most dangerous illusion (Georgia VI, 2019: 302).

8. On the Borders of Georgia

Along with the question of repelling a possible invasion of Soviet Russia, the issue of Georgia's borders became the subject of discussion at the Consistent

The Consistent Assembly Of Georgia And Issues Of Georgian-Russian Relations...

Assembly. After the English troops left, Georgia expected to return Batumi district to the Georgian jurisdiction. Also, with neighboring Azerbaijan there was a disputed Zakatala district and part of the former Borchalo district in Armenia (the so-called "neutral zone").

On behalf of the Social-Democratic faction Chkhenkeli noted: "Right today, at this very moment, Georgia will be within its natural borders" (Georgia VI, 2019: 274).

Grigol Veshapeli considered it necessary to align Georgia's borders with Saingilo and Borchalo. He said that Georgia should stand on "real, natural borders, both with Azerbaijan and Armenia", "and also with Batumi" (Georgia VI, 2019: 295-296).

Sp. Kedia said that the Georgian nation would protect its homeland and restore territorial integrity - it would return back Batumi District (Georgia VI, 2019: 291).

9. Hope to win

What was the hope for victory based on? In protecting independence of Georgia's integrity. According to Sp. Kedia, Bolshevism "suffers a severe defeat wherever it directly encounters organized, national units" (Georgia VI, 2019: 289).

The rift could have happened inside the political party - there was a danger that the sympathies of the left-wing Socialists being in opposition would shift to the Bolsheviks. It was also possible to use ethnic minorities by the Bolsheviks.

V. Jugeli recalled the year 1918, when the Bolsheviks began an uprising in Tskhinvali region during the most difficult period for Georgia, and "Tatar crowds came out" in the vicinity of Sadakhlo (Georgia VI, 2019: 300). As it turned out later, Jugeli did not recall the Ossetian invasion of Tskhinvali in vain - after the May 1920 Bolsheviks again organized a rebellion of the Ossetians, but soon signed a ceasefire agreement with Georgia.

Faction representatives said Georgia would be united in protecting its homeland. According to Sh. Nutsidze, all the political parties in the Consistent Assembly stood on the "ground of Georgia's independence" and the Bolsheviks could not use the opposition forces existing in Georgia (Georgia VI, 2019: 282). Sp. Kedia called on the parties for an ideal union in defense of their homeland (Georgia VI, 2019: 291). Gr. Veshapeli hoped that the Georgian people would prefer their own government to foreigners (Georgia VI, 2019: 296). The need for unity of the country was most clearly emphasized by A. Chkhenkeli on behalf of the Social Democratic faction. According to him, "the Georgian nation regardless of political beliefs, irrespective of nationality, will stand as one man, as one person and will perform its sacred duties to the end" (Georgia VI, 2019: 273).

Garegin Ter-Stepanyan, on behalf of the Dashnak party, said that his party "accepted the independence of Georgia from the very first day" and would stand on that ground until the end (Georgia VI, 2019: 298).

The unanimous spirit of the MPs was reflected in the resolution of the supreme legislative body, which reads: "The Consistent Assembly is deeply

convinced that the people of Georgia, irrespective of nationality, religion and direction, the Georgian nation, Georgia's democracy, its glorious armed forces and people's guard will resolutely defend the independence and freedom of Georgia.

The Consistent Assembly appeals to democracy to raise its voice in the defense of supreme justice, and strongly believes that in the face of adversity, European democracy will not leave Georgia's democracy alone on the battlefield" (Georgia VI, 2019: 306).

The speeches made by MPs at the Consistent Assembly hearings indicated that the threat posed to the country made the authorities and the opposition forget political or class opposition and pushed them to unite and stand together. In this regard, Akaki Chkhenkeli saw the hallmark of the nation's culture, saying: "When there is a danger from the outside, we are united regardless of faith or nationality."

10. Behind the scenes of the negotiations

In the spring of 1920, by the order of the Chairman of the Government of Georgia, N. Jordania, a member of the Consistent Assembly Grigol Uratadze was sent to Moscow. His selection for this mission was conditioned by only one circumstance: According to Jordania: "The envoy was to be familiar with, Lenin and his staff, a social-democrat having attended the party congress" (Jordania, 1990: 112). (G. Uratadze was a member of the Stockholm and London congresses of the Social Democrats, and met Lenin in 1911 as a student of the Longzhium Party School).

V. Lenin agreed with the Georgian government's proposal to start negotiations on the mutual recognition and acknowledgment of states. Deputy People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs Lev Karakhan was entrusted with protecting Russia's interests in the talks. The Kremlin thought that if diplomatic negotiations did not achieve their desired outcome, Georgia would still be distracted and that the military intervention plan would work more effectively.

During the peace talks G. Uratadze learned from a private source that parts of the Soviet Russia's troops had invaded Georgia from Azerbaijan and were waging a war with our troops. The representative of Georgian, as he himself recalls, appealed to Lenin and declared that if he did not issue a decree to cease the war, he would stop negotiations. Lenin responded that he knew nothing about it, and that "rumors should not hinder the negotiations" (Uratadze, 1958: 79).

How did Georgia meet the peace treaty? Here's what the Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia, N. Kartsivadze wrote about this.: "The signing of the truce with Russia made a great impression on the people. People was encouraged and the aspiration for independence became more alive. The state of the government was also strengthened. An extraordinary session of the Consistent Assembly was held, which, with the total consent welcomed the treaty with Russia. The city was decorated with flags and cannons were fired 21 time. The streets had a festive tint. We received reports from all parts of Georgia that people were happy to receive this message. . . The representatives of the Allied States also were impressed by the truce

The Consistent Assembly Of Georgia And Issues Of Georgian-Russian Relations...

with Russia and our authority was grown in their eyes" (National Archives of Georgia, no. 753).

11. Treaty of Russia-Georgia, May 7, 1920 and the Consistent Assembly of Georgia

By the beginning of May 1920, Red Army units invaded Georgian boundaries from within Azerbaijan. The Georgian Armed Forces repulsed the enemy and forced them to retreat. After Moscow saw that it was impossible to defeat Georgia, S. Orjonikidze was given a direction to stop the hostilities and return to Azerbaijan (Toidze, 1991: 14).

The negotiations in Moscow continued successfully, and a peace treaty was signed on May 7, 1920. Russia unconditionally recognized Georgia's state independence, recognized it within its historical borders (all former Mazras of the Governorates of Tbilisi and Kutaisi, as well as the Okrug of Batumi, Sukhumi and Zagatala) and stopped any kind of interference in Georgia's internal affairs. Alongside these promises of great importance to Georgia, there were also articles in the text of the treaty that contained risks for the national interests of the Georgian state and threatened its sovereignty (neutralizing the Caucasus mountain passes, granting Bolshevik organizations the right to operate legally, restricting free relations with other states).

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Eugeni Gegechkori wrote to the diplomatic envoy to Moscow Uratadze: "Some articles of the ceasefire agreement with Russia do not satisfy us. We shall endeavor at the time of ratification, which the Consistent Assembly has the right to do, and which must be done without delay, to give these articles a different look and, as far as possible, modify their edition."

The authorities of the Democratic Republic of Georgia also hoped for the ratification of the Treaty of May 7, 1920, but this document came into force from the day of its signature without ratification by virtue of "the fact itself." Thus, the fact in Noe Jordania's recollections that the Consistent Assembly seems to have approved this treaty (Jordania, 1990: 115) is not accurate.

The treaty signed with the Soviet Russia in Moscow was not discussed by the Consistent Assembly of Georgia in detail, but the very fact of the treaty between the two countries became the subject of discussion. In 1920 at a Consistent Assembly on May 11, on behalf of the government, Foreign Minister Yevgeny Gegechkori announced that a cease-fire agreement had been signed between Russia and Georgia (Georgia VI, 2019: 321).

MPs, both from the majority and minority, endorsed the signing of a peace treaty with the Soviet Russia and expressed many epithets concerning it like: "A Great Day" (Eugene Gegechkori); "The Great Historical Event" (Akaki Chkhenkeli); "Great Victory for Our Nation, Democracy of Georgia" (Ivan Gobechia); "This is our national victory" (Giorgi Gvazava) and others. (Georgia VI, 2019: 322; 323; 335).

The representatives of the right-wing, the head of the parliamentary faction of the National Democratic Party Giorgi Gvazava, as well as others, highly praised the

fact of signing a treaty with Russia. He also criticized Noe Jordania, the head of the government, for sending a telegram to Lenin where there was expressed a desire for Russian-Georgian cooperation to "transform common life on socialist ground" (Georgia VI, 2019: 341).

Members of the Consistent Assembly were well aware of the importance of the treaty, which primarily indicated that the former metropolis legally recognized the independence and territorial integrity of the former colony. This circumstance would undoubtedly strengthen the prestige of the Democratic Republic of Georgia at home or abroad, facilitating international acknowledgment and recognition of its sovereignty.

That is why the Assembly adopted such a resolution: "Having heard the statement of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on concluding a ceasefire agreement between the Soviet Russia and the Republic of Georgia, the assembly endorses the government's policy, welcomes the establishment of a neighborly relationship between Russia and Georgia, and is convinced that the government will continue to take appropriate measures to safeguard the independence of the republic and its borders" (Georgia VI, 2019: 342).

The peace treaty signed in Moscow with the Soviet Russia on May 7, 1920, reinforced optimism and a sense of hope in the Georgian political elite. This treaty, as an international legal document, has significantly contributed to the legal recognition of Georgia's independence by the Great powers of the West but failed to regulate relations with Bolshevik Russia itself.

Soviet Russia stopped attacking Georgia this time, but not for long - only until February-March 1921, when parts of Red Army ended existence of Democratic Republic of Georgia by defeating them in the imposed war.

Results

The work illustrates the attitude of the Consistent Assembly of the Supreme Legislative Body of the Democratic Republic of Georgia to the events of April-May 1920 between the Soviet Russia and Georgia.

In the spring of 1920, relations between the Soviet Russia and the Democratic Republic of Georgia became critical. Immediately after the establishment of the Soviet power in Azerbaijan, the danger of a Red Army attack also threatened Georgia.

The research showed that in times of external danger, the government and the opposition forgot political or class opposition and managed to consolidate forces to defend the country's independence.

The Consistent Assembly of Georgia endorsed the government's measures to repel Soviet Russia's aggression; The ruling party and the entire opposition spectrum evaluated Bolshevism as an imperialist regime and considered unacceptable to let it enter Georgia, though peace talks with the Kremlin were not excluded.

Examination of the documentary and other materials showed: a) The peace treaty signed in Moscow between the Soviet Russia and the Democratic Republic of Georgia on May 7, 1920 strengthened the spirit of optimism in the Georgian political

The Consistent Assembly Of Georgia And Issues Of Georgian-Russian Relations...

elite; B) The Treaty promoted the legal recognition of Georgia's independence by the Great Western states, but failed to regulate relations with Bolshevik Russia itself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

a) Monographs

(Georgia III, 2019) Saqartvelos damfuznebeli kreba. Sxdomis oqmebi. Tomi III. 1919 wlis 28 ivlisi – 11 noemberi, Tbilisi, saqartvelos erovnuli bibliotekis gamomcemloba (Consistent Assembly of Georgia. Session Minutes. Volume III. July 28 - November 11, 1919, Tbilisi, Publishing House of the National Library of Georgia).

(Georgia VI, 2019) Saqartvelos damfuznebeli kreba. Sxdomis oqmebi. Tomi VI. 1920 wlis 19 marti – 6 ivlisi, Tbilisi, saqartvelos erovnuli bibliotekis gamomcemloba (Consistent Assembly of Georgia. Session Minutes. Volume VI. March 19 - July 6, 1920, Tbilisi, Publishing House of the National Library of Georgia).

Jordania N. (1990). Chemi warsuli, gamomcemloba „sarangi” (My Past, Tbilisi, Publishing House “Sarang”).

Janelidze O. (2013). Narkvevebi saqartvelo-rusetis urtiertobis istoriidan, tbilisi, gamomcemloba „saari” (Essays from the History of Georgian-Russian Relations, Tbilisi, Publishing House “Saari”).

Toidze L. (1990). Intervenciac, okupaciac, zaldatanebiti gasabwoebac, faqtobrivi aneqsiac, tbilisi, gamomcemloba „iverta mxare” (Intervention, Occupation, Forced sovietization, Actual annexation, Tbilisi, “Iverta Mkhare” Publishing House).

Uratadze G. (1959). Namdvili da yalbi istoria, parizi (True and False History, Paris).

b) Archival material

(National Archives of Georgia). Saqartvelos erovnuli arqivi, saistorio centraluri arqivi (National Archives of Georgia, Historical Central Archives, Harvard Foundation Microfilms, Case # 753).

c) Publicity

Sakhalkho Sakme (1920). Newspaper Sakhalkho Sakme, 1920, November 18.

Klde (1920). Newspaper “The Klde”, 1920, April 30.