



*Uluslararası Türkçe Edebiyat Kültür Eğitim Dergisi Sayı: 10/4 2021 s. 1659-1673, TÜRKİYE*

*Araştırma Makalesi*

## MASSACRE AGAINST TURKISH-MUSLIM POPULATION IN TIFLIS IN 1905

**Fahri VALEHOĞLU HACILAR\***

*Geliş Tarihi: Ağustos, 2021*

*Kabul Tarihi: Aralık, 2021*

### Abstract

The Armenian-Turkish conflict that started in 1905 in Baku, Revan (Yerevan), and Elisabethpol (Ganja) provinces of the South Caucasus also deteriorate the situation in Tiflis province. Since the fall of the same year, members of Armenian chauvinist-terrorist organizations and forces that were at one with them commit provocative crimes against Turks in Tiflis and its surrounding areas. The Turks were being offended, oppressed and even killed without any reason. Despite all the Turkish intelligentsia's efforts, it was impossible to avoid the bloody events on 22-30 November, in Tiflis. Turkish population of the city targeted the Armenian armed force's bullets and were exposed to a massacre.

Based on the early written sources, this article investigates the skirmishes between Armenians and Turks in November of 1905. The facts of savagery and massacres committed against Turks were revealed based on the official documents of the Central Historical Archive of Georgia and Georgian and Russian press of 1905-1906.

**Keywords:** Turkish-Muslim massacres, “Dashnaksutyun”, Tiflis, Armenian terror.


### 1905 YILINDA TİFLİS’TE TÜRK-MÜSLÜMAN NÜFUSA KARŞI KATLİAM

#### Öz

Çarlık Rusya'nın Güney Kafkasyadaki Bakü, Revan ve Yelizavetpol (Gence) guberniyalarında (eyaletlerinde) 1905 yılında başlayan Ermeni-Türk çarpışmaları sonucunda Tiflis guberniyasında da durum bozulur. Aynı yılın sonbaharından beri Ermeni şovenist-terör örgütlerinin üyeleri ve onlarla bir olduk güçler Tiflis'te ve çevresindeki alanlarda devamlı olarak Türk-Müslüman ahaliye karşı çok zaman ölümle sonuçlanan kışkırtıcı-provokatif suçlar işlemeye giriştiler. Yerli Türk aydınlarının tüm çabalarına rağmen, Tiflis'te 22-30 Kasım'da kanlı olayları önlemek mümkün olmadı. Şehrin Türk-Müslüman nüfusu ermeni silahlı çetelerinin mermilerine hedef oldu ve katliama maruz bırakıldı.

Bu makalede ilk yazılı kaynaklara dayalı 1905 yılı Kasım ayında Tiflisde Ermeniler ve Azerbaycan Türkleri arasındaki çatışmalar araştırılıyor; Gürcistan Merkezi Tarih Arşivinde korunan resmi belgelere ve 1905-1906 yılları Tiflisin Gürcü ve Rus gazetelerine atıfta Türk-Müslüman ahaliye karşı işlenen vahşet ve katliam kanıtları ortaya çıkarılmıştır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Türk-Müslüman katliamları, “Taşnaksutyun”, Tiflis, Ermeni terörü.

\*  Dr.; Azerbaycan Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı, haciyevf@yahoo.com

## Introduction

The beginning of the twentieth century is a historical period rich with important and dynamic events for the South Caucasus people. That causes more interest and needs more investigation. Since the XIX century, along with exposing the South Caucasus region to territorial occupation and demographic expansion, the Russian Empire was trying to oppress Turkic ethnicity in the ancient Azerbaijani-Turkish provinces to increase the non-Turkic component. For this purpose, alien ethnic groups for the Caucasus region, such as Armenians, Greeks, Russians, and Germans, were settled in the area in a planned manner. In the resettlement process, Armenians constitute the majority in terms of mass. Soon after, Armenian political-military organizations start to fulfill the anti-Turkish mission. These organizations, at the beginning of the XX century, through an open-armed struggle against the peaceful Turkish-Muslim population, committed mass murders.

In the Soviet historiography, it was impossible to reveal the truth about Turkish-Armenian relations because of certain ideological reasons. Explanation and interpretation of relevant historical events were falsified under the influence of the dominant ideology. In other words, it was not allowed to conduct objective scientific research.

In terms of the above-mentioned, the study of Turkish – Armenian relations in the South Caucasus in the context of the social and political processes in the early twentieth century in the Czarist Russia is of great importance.

### 1. Causes of Transformation of the Political and Social Tension into an Ethnic Conflict in the South Caucasus in 1905

In 1905, along with taking an active part in the Russian Empire's revolutionary processes, the South Caucasus region also focused on the deterioration of relations between nations related to the artificial creation of "Armenian factor" in the nineteenth century. From the late nineteenth century, Armenians who were massively settled in the South Caucasus after the Peace Treaties of Turkmenchay (1828) and Edirne (1829) started to politically and militarily organize, and from the beginning of the XX century to assert the demands for autonomy. They start aggressive activities towards their illusion of creation of "Great Armenia" on the native territories of Azerbaijan and Georgia, with the capital city of Tiflis. In the first stage, the Armenians gain leading positions in key public administrative bodies and try to seize all income areas of the region, properties belonging to Azerbaijani-Turks and Georgians, a large share of lands.

The Empire that created such favorable conditions for Armenians who were moved from Iran and Anatolia intended to form a loyal force to itself in the South Caucasus. However, these newcomers soon become a "headache" also for Russia. In 1903, the government that was forced to prevent the Armenian arbitrariness closed some of their schools and churches and confiscated their property (Makharadze, 1932; p. 303). Even clashes between police and Armenians occur in Tiflis (CHAG, F. 153, L. 2, D. № 4).

The government's tough decisions push Armenians to take more aggressive steps. Armenian press that was distinguished with its radicalism plays a crucial role in promoting activities in this direction. On October 14, 1903, as a result of a terrorist act organized by the Armenian Social-Democratic Party "Hnchak" ("Bell"), the head of the civil part of the

Caucasus, Adjutant General G.Golitsin took several dagger wounds on the head and at the end of 1904 was forced to resign due to health problems. Armenian organizations had used such methods many times. Most of the time, to avoid the fate of the former governor, the newly appointed governor was inevitably forced to support Armenians hostile position towards the local Turkish-Muslim population.

Aggressive and chauvinistic Armenian organizations tried to take advantage of tensions and instability throughout the country after the "Bloody Sunday"<sup>1</sup> that give rise to the First Russian Revolution, for their own goals. Armenian chauvinists, who hold influential positions in government agencies, control most industrial and commercial enterprises in the region, and benefit from this kind of advantage, began to show apparent hostility against Turks. The Armenian Orthodox Church and activists of the "Dashnak" Party ("The Armenian Revolutionary Federation – Dashnaksutyun"), which was established in Tiflis in 1890, played a crucial role in the formation of ethnic and religious conflicts in the South Caucasus.

At the third congress of the "Dashnaksutyun", held in Vienna in 1904, a military charter was adopted, which laid the foundation for a military organization Dashnak's for the armed struggle (Encyclopedia of the Azerbaijan People's Republic, 2004, p. 299). Just after this session, due to Dashnaks' provocations, social unrest in the South Caucasus turned into a National conflict, the Armenian-Turkish confrontation. Thousands of innocent people in Turkish inhabited regions, such as Baku, Ganja, Karabakh, Nakhchivan, Revan (Yerevan//Erivan//İrevan), Zangezur, Pembek, Tiflis, Borchali were killed, in front of the eyes of imperial authorities, 158 Turkish villages were destroyed and razed to the ground (Swietochowski, 2000, p. 55; Valehoğlu, 2012). Regardless of age and gender, unarmed civilians were massacred for simply being Turks.

The first massive ethnic clashes took place in February of 1905, in Baku and Revan. As a result of a brutal murder of the city's influential man Meshedi Agarza Babayev by Armenians on February 6, massive disorders began in Baku in front of the Armenian Church. These disorders continued until February 10 that later embraced the whole South Caucasus. It should be noted that from the archive sources and Georgian press of the period, it comes evident that reason for the bloody events that took place in 1905 in the cities and regions of the South Caucasus were provocations of the Armenian politico-militarized groups and the murder of the peaceful Turkic-Muslim population for any reason.

## 2. Tiflis on the Eve of 1905 November Massacres

The Armenian-Turkish conflicts that after Baku were spread in Revan and Elisabethopol (Ganja) provinces extend to Tiflis and escalate the situation in the fall of the same year. While browsing through the pages of the local press of the period, one can see that from October 1905, in Tiflis and the surrounding territories, provocative crimes were committed against Turks by members of Armenian organizations and forces that collaborated with them.

Below are some facts about this type of information found in 1905, October and November editions of – the Georgian *Iveria* and *Tsnobis Purtseli*, the Russian *Tiflisskiy Listok*, *Novoye Obozreniye*, and *Vozrojdeniye* newspapers-published in Tiflis:

<sup>1</sup> On Sunday January 9, 1905 in St. Petersburg a peaceful demonstration of workers were fired by the troops of the emperor.

- At the beginning of November, in Borchali region's Durnuk village, inhabited by Armenians, two Turks were killed (*Iveria*, 1905, № 202);
- On November 13, in Norashen Street, located in Tiflis's Sheytanbazar district (Meydan, VI district) three Turks were murdered by Armenians. Although the incident that led to the local Muslims' attention had taken place before the district guard's eyes, the criminals were missed. The burial ceremony of one of the killed – Meshedi Memmedali, who was from South Azerbaijan, was on November 15, and on November 18 was the burial of the other killed – the said, whose name is not mentioned (*Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 235; *Vozrojdeniye*, 1905, № 32; *Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 241);
- The *Novoye Obozreniye* newspaper reported that in Tiflis on November 17 at about 6 pm, an unknown person dressed in Circassian came on a carriage to the Muslim quarter Sheytanbazar and without any reason several times opened fire to the sky and then crossing the Metekhi bridge went to the Peska district (*Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 241). The *Iveria* newspaper which published information that on the same day at 7 pm at the bridge Vorontsov, "Tatar"<sup>2</sup> dressed man with a revolver shot another person in a European suit, was writing: "Witnesses say that the person dressed in Tatar clothing was not a Muslim. It seems that he was a saboteur and wanted to cause a slaughter among Armenians and Tatars" (*Iveria*, 1905, № 211).
- On the morning of November 19, on the Nekrasov Street tram stop of the Avchala tramway, four Armenians, one of them in soldier uniform, enter the tram that was moving to the railway direction and they approaching to two Turkish workers sitting in the wagon want to check their clothes. The Turks resisting say, "Who allowed you to check us? It is freedom. Even the government does not test the people who are you?!" However, despite this, Armenians check the Turkish workers' tops by force and take away their money. A lot of people collect around. Among the people who watched the tension, a few come to the Turkish workers and beg them not to tell anything about this to their compatriots. Agaronov, who was dealing with the sewing machines' trade, gives them 9 rubles and, like the others around, asks them not to say anything about it their fellows (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2957).

The facts mentioned above demonstrated Armenian organizations' attempts and their supporters concerned to hold the massacres in Tiflis like those they had done in other South Caucasus cities. Georgian press was also alarming about the impending danger.

Meanwhile, local Turkish intellectuals did not idle. Making use of the visit of the Catholicos of all Armenians to Georgia, they were trying to hold a meeting in his presence to develop mutual confidence-building measures on both the intellectual and spiritual levels (*Vozrojdeniye*, 1905, №32). By working hard towards eliminating the potential threat, through regular meetings, they were putting forward a different behavior from the Armenian intelligentsia. The information reflected in the pages of the 1905 press confirms the above-mentioned facts (*Vozrojdeniye*, 1905, №№ 27, 33; *Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236).

---

<sup>2</sup> Tatar - Azerbaijani, Caucasian Turk.

### 3. Chronological Description and Analysis of the Massacres in Tiflis

#### November 22-23, 1905:

Despite the Turks' best efforts, crime incidents and the general tension leaves its place to a height of battles, and the expected bloody events on a style of the Armenian nationalist-terrorist organizations also spreads in Tiflis. Thus, in the evening of November 22, 1905, in "Tatar Square" of Tiflis, located in VI Quarter called Sheytanbazar mainly populated with Azerbaijani Turks, two Armenians' opening fire from a revolver at Turkish butchers and wounding one of them causes the start of bloody events in the city on the same day which lasts till the December 1. Being ready for such a course of events, the "Dashnak" Party's armed forces position all the important points of the city, especially in the suburbs of Sheytanbazar (Meydan). The same day, the district of Sheytanbazar was being shot down from Avlabar height. As a result, two Turks were killed (*Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236), the houses of podporuchik Huseyn Bay Yadigarov, Aghalarov, and the house of an influential resident of the city M.Y. Aleskerov were seriously damaged. When H. Yadigarov's house in Vorontsov Street was caught on fire, a teacher gets wounded. (*Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236). At the same time, a collision takes place in front of the Coffee house near Saint George (the Holy-Karapet) church. Here, according to some sources five and according to the other sources, seven Turks and Armenians were killed (*Iveria*, 1905, № 213; *Vozrojdeniye*, 1905, № 34).

On the morning of November 23, armed attacks against the Turks start again and continue until noon. Streets of the city filled with dead bodies of Turkish civilians killed by Armenians. In the afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Tamamshev's caravanserai, a Turk named Ahmed gets a bullet wound in the chest. Almost an hour later, some Armenians in the Armenian bazaar attack Ibrahim Osman's son, who lived in Kirpicni Street, house № 1. They wound him in the head with a dagger and take away his money in 150 rubles (*Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236). Shops owned by Turks – a grocery store at Kvizireli-Kopadze's home in Saradjev turn, knick-knack shop in the same Street, knick-knack shops in Tutasvili's, Ivritisvili's, Alkhazov's (in Peska Street), Tairov's and Imnadze's homes, and Khosroyev's caravanserai were robbed (CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 516; CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 1044). The police chief of Tiflis, in his report, was also approving the fact that Turkish stores in the V and VIII quarters were being robbed (CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557).

In the city center, on Golovin Avenue on the bridge of G.Kurts and Nikolayev in front of Ter-Sarkisov's gun shops assembled crowd of Armenians break down doors and take over all of the available weapons. Furthermore, Lezghi owned weapon shop in the Armenian bazaar was looted, and all the weapons were also taken from there.

On that day, a meeting related to the city's events was organized in the Nakhlovka quarter by the Tiflis organization of the Social-Democratic Workers' Party. Meeting participants decide to make a peace march through the city Streets with white flags (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 293). Immediately after the shooting in the Streets stop, in parallel to the Nakhlovka meeting, the deputy mayor (acting head of the city) knyaz V.N. Cherkezov, the members at the urban management bureau of the peace N.E. Argutinski-Dolgorukov, A.S.Babov, Shahbudagov, and others, the city police chief, and the spiritual leaders and well-known representatives of both nations go to the Turkish and Armenian quarters – Avlabar and Sheytanbazar to monitor the Streets where the shooting took place and to reassure the population. They were accompanied

by the influential Georgian intellectuals, religious leaders, representatives of the local periodicals, including *Iveria* newspaper's editor and publisher I.Chavchavadze, editor of the *Tsnobis Purtseli* – Al.Jabadari, and also *Tiflisskiy Listoks* reporter whose signature was "G-Burg". Later they reflect their impressions from this walking in their newspapers. Thus, although the *Kavkaz* newspaper published in Russian in its pages was trying to maintain a "neutral" position regarding this issue and was hiding the truth, the Georgian *Iveria*, *Tsnobis Purtseli* newspapers were putting a more objective approach to the events in their newspapers and were revealing the authors of the committed atrocities on November 23 (*Iveria*, 1905, № 213; *Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2958; *Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236; *Kavkaz*, 1905, № 293).

An outstanding Georgian journalist Al. Jabadari, who witnessed the bloody events in Tiflis, in the *Tsnobis Purtseli* newspaper, where he was the editor, gave detailed information about what he saw on November 23. Emphasizing the terrible rumors spread by Armenians that as if on November 23 the city looked like hell, shops were closed, Armenians massacred by Tatars, that they caused damage to a number of Georgians, a few hundred people came from Borchali and so on, the author was writing: "Where the danger was coming was obvious. There was no threat to this side from the Tatar square" (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2958).

The author who saw the killed Tatar in front of the Sioni Church with his own eyes wrote about what he had heard, as well. From Jabadari's notes referred to what Soso Ivanishvili and Arto Somkhisvili said, it is known that about 60 Armenians, armed with pistols, encircled two Tatars sitting in a chariot in Mognisi square. According to witnesses' reports, one of them was Radikhov (Sadikhov – F.V.). After taking their money, and whatever expensive they had, they wanted to kill these Tatars. However, the Tatars were released on the witnesses' requests and were accompanied by Georgians to a secure place. Another terrible event also occurs in Mognisi square. After killing a Tatar wineskin-maker in Meydan, they drag his dead body to "Jvaris mama" Street. Pulling the Tatar with horses along the Street, they throw his body to a place where Sioni and Jerusalem Streets join. In "Jvaris mama" Street, they kill a mobile tea-seller aged 68. The Tatar tea-seller was shot by a pistol by an unknown person from behind at the intersection of Jerusalem and "Jvaris mama" Streets, at the beginning of the shooting when he wanted to come back. His robbed body was thrown into the Street near Rike.

The author, who along with the quarter controller Berdzenishvili and four police comes to Tatar square, sees dead bodies of two Tatars and a villager who had come here to sell wood. They witness a scene in front of Avlabar Street, where about 10 Armenians try to break the doors of Gulakhmedov's fabric and carpet shop, where a Tatar was hiding. Ignoring them, the Armenians break the door, but after an intervention of the soldiers and Berdzenishvili, a guard was put in front of the store.

After that, joining the deputy mayor knyaz V.N. Cherkezov, accompanied by the police chief, city council members - Babov and Shahbudagov, an employee of the City Executive Office Argutinski, A.G. Jabadari along with Armenian and Muslim religious leaders inspect all the neighborhoods. At first, the group that came to the Tatar neighborhood was accompanied by the population. "Glassed balcony of Aleskerov's three story house had been pierced by bullets fired from that side. A wineskin-maker was killed in Argutasvili Street" (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2958).

When approaching the Avlabar bridge, the group moving towards the Metekhi prison see about a hundred Armenian *hooligans* (ruffians) trying to rob the store of Haji Gahraman Vali oghlu in the Bakkhali Street. Although police surnamed Monastirsky wounds one of them and brings him to the police chief, the caught can escape. Here the group members were informed about three Tatars and one Armenian wounded and killed near Mirzoyev bath-houses. The group visits some houses located on the ascent of Metekhi prison (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2958).

Finally, on the same day, the editor of the *Tsnobis Purtseli*, Alexander Jabadari visits the Michael hospital and asks about the wounded Tatars' situation. Chokhadze, who saved the life of a seriously injured small Tatar kid named Ali Chalmadan Verdi, informs that while Ali and his two relatives were returning from Irakli square to the Tatar quarter, about twenty people attack them. Elders were killed, wounded Ali hides behind bricks in front of the Mantashov's house. Chokhadze, saving Ali's life, takes him to Michael hospital. The famous writer was also giving information about the wounded people he saw in the hospital:

Ismail Hustin oghlu-was wounded in Vera; Hasan Ismail oghlu-was wounded in Tatar square, his coat and watch were stolen; Abram Sarkisov –charcoal-dealer aged 76; Sandro Mazniashvili (dead) – according to what he said while alive, when he in a Phaeton was going from a Malakan yard to Rike Street, a couple of Armenians have taken him out of the phaeton, beat him with their feet and then shoot with a gun; Hasan Deyrshal oghlu – was wounded in Ortachala and thrown into the Kura river. Soldiers take the Hasan out of the river and bring him to the hospital; Ali Ismail oghlu – his master sent him to Chukhureti to buy bread; he was hit twice with a knife and twice with a dagger; Gulu Babayev – owned a shop in Didube. A person named Oganezov enters into his shop and wounds him; Victor Archvadze was wounded in the middle of Bazaar" (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2958).

Another article that was written based on the facts gathered during the inspection was published on November 27, 213th edition of another Georgian newspaper *Iveria*. "G-Burg" signed reporter of the *Tiflisskiy Listok* newspaper also recorded in detail the terrible scenes that he encountered during the inspection-raid:

... they saw the first blood puddles near the Sioni Church, in front of Osipov's shop in the Silver rows, opposite the house No.9. Here a Tatar-porter was killed; his body has just been taken. At this time, everybody's attention turned to fire directed from the mountain to the VI quarter houses. A little later, those who were going saw the second dead body. This was a Tatar-porter, too. The body of the third Tatar-porter was near the Dark rows. The fourth dead body at the Kuzanov's shop and the fifth dead body found near the Nikogosov's shop also belonged to Tatar-porters... Looking at the place on the Kura where the seventh Tatar was killed and the other was wounded, all of us set off through the Vorontsov Street. In front of us, they were carrying out a wounded Tatar... (*Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, №236).

"G-Burg", also described the desperate situation of unprotected and helpless Turks in those days. The correspondent, noting that three Tatars and one Armenian were wounded and sent to Michael hospital at the bathhouse doors, had witnessed how a group of Tatars there begged the police chief and press workers were asking to take them to Vera quarter where they lived.

"Other Tatars standing in the Vorontsov Street, with scared faces, ask police chief to protect them. The police chief promised to give guard to protect them and sent some of them to the other parts of the city when he comes back" (*Tiflissskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236).

During the inspection, residents of the VI quarter inform that early in the morning, the quarter was intensively shot from Avlabar Mountain, the churchyard on the Kura River, and private buildings, as well as the mountains in the quarter. The inspection, in place examining facts of murder of a Tatar in a small square near Alekberov's house with a bullet, fired from a mountain. A Tatar boy being wounded, in addition to the murder of water selling Tatar with his two horses with water barrels, approve these facts (*Tiflissskiy Listok*, 1905, № 236).

According to reports of the *Kavkaz* newspaper published on November 29, 1905, on November 23, 13 dead were brought to the morgue in the Michael hospital. 10 of them were Turks, 2-Armenian, and the nationality of one of them was unknown.

November 24-26, 1905:

Since the early morning of November 24, the massacre of Turks and bullets' shower on their quarter continues. A group of Armenians attacks and brutally murder a Turkish man going on the road near the Commercial school (CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 519). Armenians killed five Turks in Peska Street. Dead bodies of the two of them were taken to Michael hospital, and bodies of the three were thrown into the Kura river (CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 516). The *Tsnobis Purtseli* newspaper was reporting that the same day, a total of 9 people were killed, and 26 were wounded (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2958).

Regarding the events, a people meeting was organized by Social Democrats in Nakhlovka. The rally adopted a resolution, and the following requirements were put forward:

- The weapon should be given to people`s *druzhinas* (squads) for the protection of peaceful inhabitants;
- Commanders of the soldiers assigned to establish an order in the city should be operate in cooperation with the city's political parties.

On the same day, with the Viceroy's approval, all political organizations in Tiflis were armed. At first, 500 rifles (*berdanka*) with enough bullets, and later, 700 more rifles were distributed. Despite the initially gained agreement, the armed *druzhinas*, incoherent from each other, start to operate independently. *Sotmyas* (armed group consisted of a hundred people), battalions, and armed forces mainly composed of workers and Dashnaks who were corresponding to the situation pose peacekeepers, hung rifles from their waists start to patrol in the Streets. Thereby, Dashnak terrorists gain an opportunity to carry out their heinous goals against Azerbaijan Turks under the banner of *druzhina*, as well.

The *Tsnobis Purtseli* newspaper was reporting that on November 22-24, 19 dead (15 Muslims, 3 Armenian and 1 Georgian) and 32 wounded (most of them Turks) were brought to Michael's Hospital. As a result of three days of fighting, among the city's Turkish residents, the number of missing, dead, and wounded that were not taken to a hospital was high.



In the *Iveria* newspaper, an open letter, regarding the events that occurred on that day, of the well-known Georgian intelligentsia, to Georgian political organizations was published as follows:

We - a group of Georgian citizens living in Tiflis, address to you- members of committees of the above-mentioned organizations:

1. The causes of the Armenian-Tatar massacre of November 22, 23, and 24, to be seriously investigated by the committee consisting of among you have chosen members;
2. To detect and investigate the true essence of the Dashnak organization and its activity in this case.
3. We demand the participants of this shameful and atrocious massacre be identified and such individuals to be punished by independent public organizations (*Iveria*, 1905, № 213).

From this open letter, it is seen that Georgian intelligentsia suspected Dashnaks as the cause of the massacre that took place in Tiflis.

Turks' brutal massacre in Tiflis infuriates Karapapakhs of surrounding territories - in Borchali and Kazakh provinces, and those living in Garayazi part of the Tiflis province. A sub-ethnic group of Azerbaijani Turks, Karapapakhs<sup>3</sup> are gathering cavalry groups, take the direction to Tiflis. Despite the government officials sent selected troop types to block their access routes into the city, they could manage to come to rescue their fellows in Tiflis in different ways. Thus, a part of the Borchali fighters that camped around the Tiflis on November 25, already on the morning of November 26, were standing in the front positions in defense posts in Sheytanbazar. Borchalis, who enter the Tiflis, immediately demanded a peace guarantee from the Dashnak. One of the guarantee conditions was the creation of a condition along the city Streets for the armed march of the Turks. This was necessary for Turks to show Armenian terrorist groups that they can defend themselves.

November 27-28, 1905:

Armenian advantage was removed in the balance of powers, and incidents on November 27-28 clearly showed it. Fighting experience of the brave and fearless Borchali Turks who always were in the front line of the wars in the region (See: Valehoğlu, 2005) and were actively involved in the *Kachak movement*<sup>4</sup> (*Vozrojeniye*, 1905, № 34; See: Hacilar, 2003), had its say. Sometimes the situation was even arriving to the extent that Armenians, being in a helpless state and facing difficulties in the prevention of well-aimed fires and attacks of the Borchalis, were using the imperial army soldiers' services.

The Armenian population of the city was in a panic. Rumors that Borchalis will begin to attack and murder Armenians covered the city. The majority of houses were emptied in Avlabar and in another quarter – Sololak, located near the Sheytanbazar, which was mainly inhabited by Armenians. Armenians living in these quarters were sheltered in other Georgian and Russian districts of Tiflis. On the other hand, the front of the governance and urban management

<sup>3</sup> About history of Borchali Karapapakhs see: Valehoğlu, 2005; Alyılmaz, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> An illegal, non-organized, spontaneous and far from a political idea movement.

buildings were crowded with frightened Armenians who demanded the government take immediate, decisive measures to establish peace.

Also, on November 28, at intervals throughout the day, more or less violent skirmishes continue. The report letter of Tiflis police officer to the governor stated that the houses located in the VI quarter were fired from the near located Armenian - controlled Kharpukh height (*Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 249). The same day, only to the hospital's Kharpukh branch, 70 wounded Turks were brought (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 295). A police officer of the VI quarter Gurgenzidze gets injured by the fire shot from K. Mamamtavrishvili's house in Seyidabad Street in Kharpukh. The next day, 15 armed Armenians were arrested in the house (CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557; *Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 249).

On November 29, in the early morning, a big fire was committed by Armenians in Meydan. Fire became wider at 5 p.m., and this time houses, shops, and stores between Vorontsov Street and Krasilni Street turn to burned and turn to ashes. Firefighters twice tried to go to the event place. However, as a result of revolver and rifle fires of Avlabar Armenians, they were forced to go back and return only at 9 pm. surrounded by infantry troops and Cossacks, bypassing Mnatsakanov Bridge, they reach the Meydan.

In the police chief's report, addressed to the Governor of Tiflis, was given information about that some Armenians who burn the house of Haji Huseyn Baghirov in Surp-Sarkis Street, were captured in the place by Turks, and that fire flaring pass to Mirzoyev's and Oskarov's houses, and to Greek Church of the Holy Catherine (CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557; *Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 249).

Later, becomes apparent that as a result of this provocation of the Armenians in the Turkish-populated part of the city, six houses (3 of them 2 floors) in Vorontsov Street, ten houses in Meydan, six houses (2 of them with two floors) in Krasilni Street, two big houses belonging to Bagirov brothers in Surp Sarkis Street, and also 40 shops and the inner part of the Greek Church in Vorontsov Street burned (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2960; *Kavkaz*, 1905, № 301).

Among the burned houses was the house of a prominent public figure Alimardan bek Topchubashov, located at the entrance of the Narinkala (*Iveria*, 1905, № 223).

#### November 29, 1905:

Although on November 29, skirmishes between the Turkish and Armenian districts do not occur, Armenian military groups armed persecution and atrocities towards Turks continue in other quarters of the city. At 12 p.m., 10 Turks, who get on the Korganov trolley coming from the railway station side, were attacked by an armed Armenian group of bandits on the Nekrasov Street trolley station. Though Turks start to flee in different directions to escape the bullets, not all achieve it. Two of them were killed - one in Nikolayev square, the other in the Razyezjaya Street, and their bodies were thrown into the river Kura at the Didkhevi slope. Wounded in the right shoulder and on hand, the South Azerbaijani - named Naghi Sadikh oghlu in order not to be captured and killed, throws himself into the river and survives. He was taken out of the water by unknown Molokans in the territory of VIII district, a little bit below the mill on the Kura River, and taken to Michael hospital (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 296). An hour later, one more Turk was killed in Peska Street.

On the same day, noon at half-past 1, two Turks who were going on near the "Georgian printing company", in the Vank Street were shot from a revolver; One of them dies on the spot, and the other, on the carriage, was taken to the Michael hospital (*Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 246). At 3 o'clock, in trolley wagons near the Vorontsov's statue, two Muslims were killed by Armenian *druzhinas*, and one Georgian get slightly wounded. Dead bodies of the killed and wounded Georgian were sent to Michael hospital (*Iveria*, 1905, № 215; *Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 247). Archival documents also confirm the above-mentioned facts referred to in the newspaper reports. (See: CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557).

The above-mentioned last brutal action took place in front of the editorial office of Georgian *Tsnobis Purtseli* newspaper, at 3 pm, at the intersection of Nersesov and Russkaya Streets, cause a harsh reaction of the newspaper employees. They addressed a decisive demand to put an end to the savageness of the "Dashnak" Party. The content of the demand was as follows (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2960):

*To the Committee of the "Dashnaksutyun" Party*

Yesterday (November 29 – F.V.), a murder took place in front of our editorial office. Two Tatar workers tried to hide, and they hid by crouching. Our printing press staff called the unfortunate - come here, but the Armenian guardians (Dashnak *druzhinians* are intended – F.V.) who saw Tatars began to fire. It was easy to capture the two Tatars who were unarmed or armed with just ordinary knives, but the armed mob cruelly killed the poor workers. Not being satisfied with killing them, the soulless corpses began to beat the dead bodies with truncheons and knives and insulted them. Then, the "guards" took one of the bodies and threw it to Kura River...

Abominations cannot go far from this! What phenomenon is this? We ask the Dashnaks who yesterday were applying proclamations and declaring not being guilty in any Tatar's death: who are the "guards" committing such murders?

When seeing this transgression and intervening, trying to calm the Armenians and pointing on the atrocities, "guards" felt offended: That is not your business! Then we should sit down and put our hands on our hearts and see how they merrily trample down the principles of morality and humanism?! The "guard" aimed his revolver to the heart of a Georgian student who protested against him and said, "why do you kill an ordinary people"; This disgust happens, because you-sitting there-don't take any measures... What does it mean?

All of these happen under the name of the "Dashnak" Party. However, its proclamation says another thing. Response! A direct Response! This is the first. The second: immediately to put an end to this kind of abomination!

Another incident that reveals Armenian politico-militarized organizations' true essence and causes a severe reaction of Georgians occurs in the slaughter-house. In a slaughter-house located at Palavandov Street in Naftluk quarter, two intestinal processing shops were operating that belonged to Tiflis small business people - Sarkis Mailov and Mashadi Ibrahim oghlu. On November 29, Sarkis Mailov, making use of turmoil and chaos in the city, with his armed fellows rob and ultimately destroy his Azerbaijani rival's plant. Angered by this, Georgian residents of Naftluk gather and decide to ask the Armenian to re-build the destroyed shop of the Muslim; that otherwise, they will take punitive measures against him (CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557; *Vozrojeniye*, 1905, № 38; *Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 241; *Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 249).

The *Iveria* and the *Kavkaz* newspapers were reporting about another incident that resulted in the brutal murder of Turks by Armenians beyond the quarters where clashes had taken place. From the information, it becomes clear that when in the VI police district, "Lewis" cigarette factory and leather factory were burning, the Dashnaks suspect four unarmed Tatars going on the way and taking them to the front of the commercial school in Chukhureti they start to shoot the Tatars by pistols. Two of them were murdered in the place, while the other two run away. By Kukia bridge, they run to the Armenian bazaar side. Dashnaks, who pursued them, kill one of the Tatars with ten shots. The other wounded in the head with a dagger was saved by dogs (*Iveria*, 1905, № 217; *Kavkaz*, 1905, № 295). The *Tsnobis Purtseli* newspaper, under the title "The murder and wounding of Tatars," it was written: "Apart from the two killed in front of our office, on November 29, Tatars were killed and wounded in different places, as well. Totally twelve dead Tatars were seen in Kukia. Some of them were killed in Vorontsov Street, some in Rike Street and some were murdered near the Commercial school. It was possible to save just 3-4 of them" (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2960).

On the same day, making use of the fire's continuation, an Armenian, dressed like a Turk, armed with a bomb wants to enter the Sheytanbazar, but was identified and captured by Turks (CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557). At 8 pm, in Gorganov's building, in the V police quarter, at the intersection of Bagrationi and Mukhrani Streets, trifles goods shop owned by Ahmad A. Meshedi was plundered by about 30 Armenians. As a result of a quick implemented search, four of the criminals were caught (*Iveria*, 1905, № 218).

The Czar government, seeing the change of the situation in an undesirable direction with the arrival of Borchali Karapapakhs in Tiflis on November 28 and 29, place regular army troops of Revan leyb-Grenadiers regiment's part and Georgian regiment's grenadiers. At the same time, the Caucasus governor decides the weapons of the social-democratic workers' party be taken back. *Druzhinas* leave their positions in the quarters to the soldiers and hand over their guns to the Social Democratic Party's office.

After additional troops, deployed in the city, held the position, Borchali Turks make sure of the safety of their fellow Turks in Tiflis, and from November 29, in groups start to return to their villages (*Iveria*, 1905, № 217; CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557). In general, the number of fighters who came to Tiflis from Borchali was not exactly known. Some sources wrote that this figure was 1000, some 1300, 1500, or even 2000.

#### November 30 - December 3, 1905:

On November 30, the general situation still was tense in the city. The majority of Turks go out of the city. Some Turks, who lived long in Tiflis and were engaged in trade, also leave the city. (*Iveria*, 1905, № 218). Fires in Sheytanbazar were completely turned off. The *Kavkaz* newspaper was writing: "This part of the city's population needs assistance. Children suffer most from hunger and cold " (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 297).

Medical staff volunteers in Sheytanbazar do particular work for Turks, who were wounded during the war and were treated at home, to be taken to Michael hospital (*Tiflisskiy Listok*, 1905, № 238).

On the same day, in the Tiflis city administration, a meeting with representatives of Armenian and Turkish-Muslim communities was held. In the meeting, it was decided to create a

reconciliation commission consisting of representatives of the hostile parties. The Commission had to prepare proposals to eliminate national hatred and establish friendly relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

On December 1, the city was calm. The next meeting of Turkish and Armenian intellectuals to discuss peace was held at the meeting hall of the city council, and the reconciliation was achieved.

On December 2, despite the Muslim holiday, all shops, teahouses, and other businesses owned by Muslims were open (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 298). Because "All the wounded, orphans, widows, those who lost their property because of lootings and fires" (*Tsnobis Purtseli*, 1905, № 2967; *Novoye Obozreniye*, 1905, № 254) were in great need, Muslims had no will to celebrate the holiday. Most houses in this part of the city were empty. There was no shade of the previous revival.

In Michael hospital morgue 27 dead bodies (25 Muslims and 2 Armenian) of people killed in the clashes were kept (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 298). Armenian armed forces still attacked Muslims out of their districts. That is why they were deprived of the opportunity to bury the body of the 25. Hospital officials did not dare to take any one of the bodies to the Muslim graveyard.

The city council informs the bailiff of the VI quarter and the Sheikh-ul-Islam on the issue.

It was decided to bury the bodies on December 3. Bodies of about 30 dead Muslims, in the presence of Islamic religious leaders, were buried in the Muslim cemetery. According to the agreement reached earlier, 25 bodies were brought from Michael's hospital morgue in the night (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 299).

In Tiflis, due to the clashes and massacres against the Turks, Muslims from Iran, who lived in the VI quarter, hurriedly selling their properties, apply to the Iranian consulate in Sololak to be sent to their home country (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 302). Besides proving the start of Dashnaks' ethnic cleansing policy against the Turks in 1905, the above-mentioned facts also show that they, although not entirely, but at least to some extent, reach their goals.

### Conclusion

Although at the end of the nineteenth century, Armenian terrorist organizations raise a rebellion against the government and commit inhuman crimes in the Eastern Anatolian provinces, they fail to achieve any political goal. After that, just to carry out their evil plans to create mono-ethnic areas only consisted of Armenians, they direct their forces to the Caucasus. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the political chaos and internal tensions in Russia create an opportunity for Armenian chauvinist organizations that had strong supporters in the government structures to realize the same of what they had committed against the radical Turkish-Muslim population in Anatolia, on Muslims living in the South Caucasus.

In 1905, taking advantage of the unstable situation in the Russian Empire, radical Armenian organizations to reach their goals begin to implement steps towards establishing an Armenian state in the Caucasus. In this regard, the Armenian nationalists hold important positions in government agencies, with dominant positions in the South Caucasus' major industrial and commercial centers, particularly the Armenian Gregorian Church and the

"Dashnaksutyun" Party play a crucial role. Specifically, the social discontents in the South Caucasus turn into Turkish-Armenian conflict due to the Dashnaks' provocations.

In 1905, a hotbed of conflict on a national basis arose in the Tiflis province and other regions of the South Caucasus where Turks and Armenians lived together. In the same year, from November 22 to December 1, massacres in Tiflis against the Turks and the Turkish-Armenian conflict goes on.

The Caucasus viceroy (*namestnik*) the Adjutant-General graph I.I.Vorontsov-Dashkov, in the official telegram sent to the St. Petersburg, to the address of the Emperor, clear declared that the massacres on a national basis in Tiflis was driven by the Armenians (*Kavkaz*, 1905, № 316).

The Consulates General of the Ottoman Empire in Tiflis, Kars and Batum regularly informed their authorities about the arbitrariness of the Armenian armed formations in the South Caucasus in 1905-1908 (See: "Armenian Question" in the Caucasus, 2018).

Documents sent from the Ottoman Embassy in St. Petersburg to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs show that the Ottoman Empire made diplomatic efforts to protect the Caucasian Muslims, who were persecuted by the Armenians at that time. Even in May 1906 the Ottoman ambassador held a separate meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Empire, Alexander Izvolsky to discuss this issue ("Armenian Question" in the Caucasus, 2018, pp. 257, 573-574).

In order to prevent the continuous Armenian-Turkish conflict and to prepare concrete proposals, from February 20 to March 6, 1906 under the leadership of the Caucasus Viceroy a peace congress with the participation of Muslim (Turkish) and Armenian representatives of the South Caucasus was held in Tiflis. The peace congress was attended by 28 Muslim delegates from Baku, Tiflis, Revan, Nakhchivan, Shamakhi, Ganja, Shusha, Zangezur, Surmali, Nukha, Arash, Kazakh, Akhalkalak and Borchali districts. Armenians were represented at the congress by elected representatives from Tiflis, Baku, Revan, Shusha, Ganja, Nakhchivan, Kars, Borchali, Kazakh, Batum, Gyumri and Nukha, including a representative of Catholic Armenians.

Programs presented by Muslim and Armenian representatives, each consisting of 12 articles, were widely discussed at the congress. In the discussions, as a result of sharp speeches of well-known public figures and intellectuals such as Alimardan bey Topchubashi, Ahmad bey Aghaoglu, Mahammad agha Shahtakhtinski, Gara bey Garabeyli, Mahammad bey Shahmaliyev, Adilkhan Ziyadkhanov, Huseyn bey Yadigarov, Ibrahim agha Vakilov, millionaire Karbala Israfil Hajiyev the destructive activities and massacres committed by Armenians were politically exposed.

Despite some measures, the peace congress did not yield any results in reducing tensions in the region, and ethnic clashes continued until 1907. Seeing the impossibility of reaching an agreement with the Armenians through negotiations and of the solution of the problem, the active representatives of the Azerbaijani society were forced to create a national self-defense organization "Difai".

The Turkish-Armenian riots in different cities and regions of the South Caucasus region in 1905-1906, besides being the first bloody confrontation in the twentieth century, laid the foundation of the Turkish-Armenian conflict repeated here in subsequent periods.

### References

- “*Armenian Question*” in the Caucasus: 1895-1912 (*Ottoman Archive Documents*) (2018). [*Kafkasya`da “Ermeni Meselesi”: 1895-1912 (Osmanlı Arşiv Belgeleri)*] / Edotors: Q.Shukurov, V.Qafarov. Baku: TEAS Press (in Turkish).
- Alyılmaz, S. (2015). On the history of Borchali Karapapak/Terekemes [Borçalı Karapapaklarının/Terekemelerinin tarihine dair]. *Yeni Türkiye Dergisi*, 21(78), 179-182 (in Turkish).
- Central Historical Archive of Georgia (CHAG), Fund 13, List 6, Dossier № 684.
- CHAG, F. 153, L. 1, D. № 1060.
- CHAG, F. 153, L. 2, D. № 4.
- CHAG, F. 17, L. 2, D. № 557.
- CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 1044.
- CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 516.
- CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 519.
- CHAG, F. 115, L. 1, D. № 522.
- Encyclopedia of the Azerbaijan People's Republic* (2004) [*Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyəti Ensiklopediyası*]. Volume I / Editor: Y.Mahmudov. Baku: Lider Press (in Azerbaijani).
- Hacılar, V. (2003). *Kachak movement in Borchali in the XIX century* [*XIX yüzillikdə Borçalıda qaçaqlıq hərəkatı*]. Tbilisi (in Azerbaijani).
- Iveria* [ივერია] newspaper, 1905.
- Kavkaz* [Кавказ] newspaper, 1905.
- Kavkaz* [Кавказ] newspaper, 1906.
- Makharadze, F. (1932). *1905 in Transcaucasia* [ფილოზე მახარაძე. 1905 წელი ამიერკავკასიაში]. Tiflis: Sakhelgami Press (in Georgian)
- Novoye Obozreniye* [Новое обозрение] newspaper, 1905.
- Swietochowski, T. (2000). *Russia and Azerbaijan: a borderland in transition* [*Rusiya və Azərbaycan: dəyişən sərhədlər*]. Baku: Khazar University Press (in Azerbaijani).
- Tiflisskiy Listok* [Тифлисский листок] newspaper, 1905.
- Tsnobis Purtseli* [ცნობის ფურცელი] newspaper, 1905.
- Valehoğlu, F. (2005). *Karapapakhs and their nineteenth-century military history* [*Qarapapaqlar və onların XIX əsr hərbi tarixi*]. Baku: Seda Press (in Azerbaijani).
- Valehoğlu, F. (2012). The First Russian revolution and the First Armenian-Turkish conflict of the XX century in the southern Caucasus [Birinci Rus devrimi ve Güney Kafkasya`da XX. yüzilin ilk Ermeni-Türk münakaşası]. [*International Journal of Turkish Literature Culture Education*], 2, 275-283 (in Azerbaijani).
- Vozrojdeniye* [Возрождение] newspaper, 1905.