

UDC 94 (479.24)

**THE CAUCASIAN ADMINISTRATION POLICY WITH REGARD TO ARMENIANS
DURING THE PERIOD OF THE MANAGEMENT OF A.M. DONDUKOV-KORSAKOV
(1882-1890) – THE SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE REGION**

F.R.Jabbarov

(Presented by Academician of ANAS N.M.Velikhanli)

It is accepted to consider that the change in policy of the Caucasian administration against the Armenians occurred in the late 90s. of the 19th century. However, as sources indicate, it happened in the early 1880s, when Prince Alexander Dondukov-Korsakov became the Supreme commander of the Caucasus. He, namely, was the first senior government official in the Russian Empire, who expressed an idea of the need to establish tighter control over the Armenian church and schools and combating anti-government activities of certain circles of the Armenians.

Keywords: *the Armenian separatism, A.Dondukov-Korsakov, a memo, the Supreme commander of the civil part of the Caucasus*

Starting from the 18th century the Russian Empire actively used the Armenians in its Middle East policy, considering them as one of the main factors of consolidation of positions in the Caucasus and the military and political pressure on the Ottoman Empire. Upon successful completion of the war with Iran and the Ottoman Empire and having joined the South Caucasus at the beginning of the 19th century, Russia had carried out a large-scale campaign to resettle the Armenians in the newly conquered territories, creating for them the political-administrative unit under the name of the "Armenian province". The broad autonomy was introduced to the imperial government of the Armenian Gregorian Church – the only, at that time, real power, unifying the Armenians. The Echmiadzin monastery – the seat of the Patriarch-Catholicos of all the Armenians passed under the Russian rule. The government received additional opportunities to use the Armenian Church as the main lever of influence on the Armenians living outside the Empire, as well as interference in the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, where quite a large Armenian community was. As the Russian historian Valentine Dyakin noted, "Only the extreme interest of Russian diplomacy in the creation of most of the external authority of the Catholicos helped the Armenian Church later re-

sist pressure of secular power and acquire considerable weight within the country" [1]. The Armenian-Gregorian church had huge estates, funds that were virtually beyond the control of the Government. This was the basis for contemporaries to characterize Echmiadzin as a theocratic state within the state, virtually inaccessible to control and had a great reputation in the eyes of its "political congregation" [2].

Along with the possession of considerably political and economic power over the people, the Armenian Church completely was in charge of the education system too. Hundreds of parochial schools in the Caucasus, reported directly to the Catholicos, who zealously shielded these institutions from government oversight, in other words, secular authorities. The Armenian population had allegedly confessional, but in reality - general and national schools in the Caucasus. The Armenian population enjoyed highly broad school autonomy, which was not represented by any of the ethnic groups living in Russia. These schools became hearts of education of Armenian youth in the spirit of separatism and nationalism, in its crudest form. The textbooks which spoke about the notorious "Great Armenia" and global calling the Armenians to civilize all of its neighbours were used there; – the maps of Great Armenia up to Vo-

ronezh with its capital in Tiflis were spread at those schools [3]. Such facts periodically triggered attempts of the Russian authorities to interfere in the educational process at Armenian schools and have an impact on the Armenian Church. However these attempts, as a rule, ended in failure: there were even cases, where the educational department of the Caucasus lost lawsuits during the trial with Armenian Church authorities.

With the strengthening of positions of the Armenian Church and bourgeoisie in the region, trends began increasingly to appear among intellectuals and young people. Those trends didn't coincide with the interests and official course of the Russian Empire. The Armenians decided to use reforms in Turkish provinces inhabited by Christians. The idea was that after the signing of the San Stefano and Berlin treaties (1878), in which the European powers and Russia obliged the Ottoman Empire to hold them as convenient excuses to achieve autonomy in the Ottoman Empire. Further intention of the Armenians was the expansion of self-government rights, and spreading them on their compatriots already living on the territory of Russia. The government circles of Russia were clearly not satisfied with such a turn of the Armenian politics. They admitted open and illegal aids by sending arms, money and "volunteers" from the territory of Russia to the Armenian separatists in the Ottoman Empire. They constantly exaggerated the so-called "Armenian question" with the aim of putting pressure on Istanbul; but when certain circles of the Armenians got the position of National separatism, fraught with dangerous consequences at home, the government began to act more decisively. The desire of the Armenians to separate and reconstruct an independent state was more often seen among young intellectuals in the cities and clergy. Least of all the peasants and urban residents had been exposed to these ideas. However, these sections of the population were obliged to donations and forced exactions on the so-called "Armenian cause" under the influence of an agitation and hidden threats.

In such circumstances the government of the Russian Empire worried, first of all, in the face of the Caucasian administration, about the

establishment of a vigilant control over the Armenian Church, parochial schools and various public organizations controlled by the church. Those organizations were under the name of educational and charitable ones to stop the agitation and protect the Armenian rural and urban population from the influence of the clergy at the first manifestations of adverse actions.

It was assumed in the historiography that the change in the policy of the Caucasian administration, and consequently, the central authorities of the Russian Empire, with regard to the Armenians, occurred in the late 90s. of the 19th century, when the Prince Gregory Gallitzin was the Supreme commander of the civil part of the Caucasus. However, as evidenced by the sources, this happened much earlier, to be precise, in the early 1880s, when the Prince Alexander Dondukov-Korsakov became the Supreme commander of the Caucasus. Namely, he was the first senior government official in the Russian Empire who expressed the idea of the need to establish tighter control over the Armenian church and schools and combating anti-government activities of certain circles of the Armenian people. The range of issues that A. Dondukov-Korsakov was going to decide to implement was quite extensive and included the following areas: 1) the weakening of the economic position of the Armenians in the region; 2) the establishment of control over the property of the Armenian – Gregorian Church; 3) bringing the school system among the Armenians in accordance with the laws of the empire. Having filled the position of the Supreme commander already on October 29th, 1882, A. Dondukov-Korsakov sent a memo to the Emperor Alexander III, wherein gave a sketch of the political status of the Caucasus. Noting that over the last 20-30 years, the Armenians occupied the prevailing economic situation in the province and concentrated all the trade, industry, most of the estate in the cities and part of the landed property in their hands, Supreme commander wrote with alarm that, there was a risk, due to devastation of Georgian nobles, their estates moved into the hands of the Armenians. And then he gave his thoughts about the

dangers that could come in that case: "The Armenians are very well aware of the fact that the influence is in those hands, where the land is. And that's why they persistently and systematically prepare this kind of social and political upheaval. Moving of large estates to the Armenians in the Caucasus has a political significance only because, that this element doesn't farther represent to the government those safeguards, by which other indigenous Christian nations differ. If the rural Armenian population is remarkably industrious and submissive and remains completely indifferent to all sorts of political trends, then, on the other hand, recently, however, still vague separatist aspirations for some kind of autonomy and dreams of restoring the ancient limits of Khaestan are seen among Armenian intelligentsia..." [4].

A.Dondukov-Korsakov noted in the memo, that those ideas were implemented in the Armenian masses through schools, which were in complete and uncontrolled run of the Catholicos, "who, in that respect, had used unparalleled rights in Russia and harmful effects for the government's objectives". The Supreme commander explicitly pointed out, that the superiority of the Echmiadzin patriarchal throne of all the Armenians was at one time profitable for the Russian Empire.

Then under the positional changes of Turkey, growing strength of the Armenians, their developing aspirations to a common political autonomy and unification of all the Armenian people, the official rate should change in the direction of easing the impact of the Catholicos. A. Dondukov-Korsakov proposed concrete measures in that direction: to keep the Catholicos of Echmiadzin only as the spiritual head of the Russian Armenians and appoint him to his flock in the same conditions with spiritual leaders of other heterodox confessions with respect to the Russian government [5]. According to the supreme commander, that measure would also give an opportunity for more severe supervision of the Caucasian school authorities over Armenians' schools and the weakening of unreliable effect of the Echmiadzin monastery on them.

The thoughts expressed in a memoran-

dum dated to the 29th of October, 1882, were made by the Supreme commander also in the second note to the emperor, dated to 1883. Having repeated some of his views on the question of the attitude towards the Armenian churches and schools, A.Dondukov-Korsakov completed them in the second note with interesting facts apropos how the Armenians planned to carry out their separatist activities in the Caucasus. He reported that in Erivan there was discovered an Armenian circle, which had the aim of collecting private donations under the veil of assistance to the Armenians living in Asia Minor. Among the papers, selected by the members of the former circle, there was something a kind of the Programme of Action recommended to the Russian-national Armenians with the aim of achieving their dominant position in the administrative and judicial spheres of the region. In the case of an appointment of the Russian officials, in one of the South Caucasian localities inhabited by the Armenians, they were encouraged to put all possible obstacles until he would be forced to resign. The next step should be the promotion to the vacant post an Armenian candidate furnished in advance with best recommendations [6]. A.Dondukov-Korsakov attached particular importance to that circumstance due to the fact that a significant number of posts for the administration of justice in the South Caucasus region, populated by Armenians, were already occupied by them.

Memoranda of the Supreme commander were perceived in St. Petersburg, with due attention and not left without an answer. That was evidenced by a letter of Peter Orzhevsky – Minister of Internal Affairs to A. Dondukov-Korsakov dated to August 18th, 1883, in which he outlined the will of Alexander III to take precautionary measures against the national-separatist tendencies of the Armenian population [7]. In his response to Orzhevsky P. dated to September 7th, A. Dondukov-Korsakov listed measures which Alexander III intended to take, "to put, in the bud, a limit to further development of yet vague ideas about the revival of the political independence of the Armenian people": 1) to change the attitude to the Armenian schools, especially parochial ones

that were under politically unreliable influence of the Echmiadzin throne; 2) to establish strict control over the activities of all the Armenian private companies;

3) not to appoint people of the Armenian origin, as a rule, in an area populated by the Armenians and current employees - gradually transfer to other places [8].

A.Dondukov-Korsakov's proposed measures were reflected in the Highest behest of Alexander III dated to December 27th, 1888, on the equation of the Muslims' rights to other religions in the participation of the various ethnic groups in urban and economic affairs. This decision that aimed at gradually reducing the dominance of the Armenians in the administrative offices of the South Caucasus, only slightly changed the situation. More decisive and concerted actions were required at all levels of the government to counteract the Armenian separatism, fallen deeply af-

ter a while in blatant extremism in the territory of the Caucasus. However, it was not possible to achieve that during A. Dondukov-Korsakov's management period.

REFERENCES

1. Дякин В.С. Национальный вопрос во внутренней политике царизма (XIX-началоXX вв.). СПб., Лисс, 1998, с. 18.
2. Величко В.Л. Кавказ. Русское дело и междуплеменные вопросы. Баку, Кавказ, 2010, с. 166.
3. Ibid., p. 139.
4. «Армянский вопрос» на Кавказе. По материалам российских архивов и изданий. 1724-1914: в 3 т. Т.1: 1724-1904 / Сост. и коммент. Гейдаров Т.К., Багиев Т.Р., Шукюров К.К. СПб., Академия исследования культуры, 2011, с. 241-242.
5. Ibid., p. 243.
6. Ibid., p. 267-269.
7. Дякин В. Op.cit., p. 693.
8. Ibid.

*National Museum of History of Azerbaijan
farhadcabbarov@mail.ru*

QAFQAZIN BAŞ HAKİMİ A.M.DONDUKOV-KORSAKOVUN DÖVRÜNDƏ (1882-1890-cı illər) QAFQAZ ADMINİSTRASIYASININ ERMƏNİLƏRƏ MÜNASİBƏTDƏ SİYASƏTİ

F.R.Cabbarov

Tarixşünaslıqda belə bir fikir formalaşmış ki, Qafqaz administrasiyasının ermənilərə münasibətdə siyasəti XIX əsrin 90-cı illərinin sonundan dəyişməyə başlamışdır. Lakin mənbələrdən məlum olur ki, əslində bu siyasət 1880-ci illərin əvvəllərindən etibarən – knyaz Aleksandr Dondukov-Korsakovun Qafqazın Baş hakimi təyin edilməsindən sonra həyata keçirilməyə başlamışdır. Məhz A.Dondukov-Korsakov, erməni kilsəsi və məktəbləri üzərində ciddi nəzarətin tətbiq edilməsi və erməniliyin bəzi dairələrinin hökumət əleyhinə fəaliyyətinin qarşısının alınmasının vacibliyi haqqında fikir irəli sürən Rusiya imperiyasının ilk hökumət məmuru olmuşdur.

Açar sözlər: erməni separatizmi, A.Dondukov-Korsakov, Cənubi Qafqaz, məruzə, Qafqazın mülki hissə üzrə Baş hakimi

ПОЛИТИКА КAVKAZСКОЙ АДМИНИСТРАЦИИ В ОТНОШЕНИИ АРМЯН В ПЕРИОД УПРАВЛЕНИЯ РЕГИОНОМ ГЛАВНОНАЧАЛЬСТВУЮЩЕГО А.М. ДОНДУКОВА-КОРСАКОВА (1882-1890 гг.)

Ф.Р.Джаббаров

В историографии принято считать, что изменение политики Кавказской администрации в отношении армян произошло в конце 90-х гг. XIX в. Однако, как свидетельствуют источники, это случилось в начале 1880-х годов, когда Главным начальствующим на Кавказе стал князь Александр Дондуков-Корсаков. Именно он был первым высшим правительственным чиновником в Российской империи, выразившим мысль о необходимости установления более жесткого контроля над армянской церковью и школами и противодействия антиправительственной деятельности определенных кругов армянства.

Ключевые слова: армянский сепаратизм, А.Дондуков-Корсаков, докладная записка, Главным начальствующим гражданской частью на Кавказе