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The Voice of Free Georgia



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THE VOICE OF FREE GEORGIA

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Georgia and Communism

By N. M. KVITASHVILI

Last September, the Tbilissi radio announced that the Premier of the Soviet Republic of Georgia, Valerian Bakradze, had been dismissed from his post. Three Ministers, the First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, and nine other top-ranking Georgian Communists had also lost their jobs. In October, the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Georgia and two other Ministers were dismissed, and the Georgian newspapers for September and October, received here in the U.S.A., are full of reports of minor officials of the Party and the Government having been dismissed all over Georgia. All these men have presumably been arrested and there is little doubt that the same fate awaits them as befell all their predecessors, namely, liquidation.

It is obvious that a major purge is under way in Georgia, the fourth such purge in less than two years. The Government of the Georgian Republic seems to be in a state of constant reorganization. Premiers, Ministers, Party officials, are constantly being removed, reinstated, and removed again. The end, though, for all of them, has always been the same. You can not find in Georgia today a single Communist who has ever held a position of importance in the Government or the Party. They have all been shot.

The point to remember about all these changes in the Government of Georgia is that the Georgian people have had no say whatsoever in them. The Communists never tire of claiming that, together with all the other Republics which form the Soviet Union, Georgia is an independent, democratic, socialist state. But in a truly democratic state, the Governments are appointed or removed by the will of the people. Can this be said of Georgia? Nobody asks the Georgian people whether they want or do not want Bakradze, Djavahishvili, Charkviani or any of the others who have been going up or down with such monotonous regularity. These men come to power or are removed on direct orders from Moscow, usually by men especially sent by the Kremlin. The latest purge in Georgia is apparently being con-

საქართველოს პარლამენტი
პროვინციული ბიბლიოთეკა

ducted by someone named Shatalin, one of Khrushchev's henchmen. By what right is this Shatalin—not a Georgian judging by his name, a man who probably does not even speak Georgian, by what right is he telling the Georgian people who they should or should not have in the Government of their own country? The Georgian people have 2,000 years of proud history behind them and on countless occasions have given proof of their political wisdom. It has always been obvious that there is not a semblance of freedom or democracy in Georgia or, indeed, in any part of the Soviet Empire, including Russia itself. The developments in Georgia over the past eighteen months make this even more abundantly clear.

Yet another thing is clear: that is, that the bitter hate which from the very beginning the Georgian nation has felt for communism is not only not abating, but on the contrary that it is growing stronger and more bitter. From the day Georgia was treacherously attacked by the Russian Red Armies and forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Empire, the Georgians have been struggling for the restoration of their national independence and the rights of man. Armed uprisings, culminating in the great, nation-wide insurrection of August and September 1924; underground, but nevertheless bitter and merciless struggle against Communists with their hated Russification and their hated collectivization, terror, executions, deportations: this has been the pattern of life in Georgia for the past thirty-two years.

The Georgian Communists have never represented the Georgian people. They have always been renegades, hypocrites, and opportunists of the worst kind, but now, it seems, even they have had enough. There is little doubt that the chief reason for Beria's downfall was the fact that he was a Georgian and not a Russian. And "bourgeois nationalism" has been mentioned in all the latest purges in Georgia. Moscow can no longer find in Georgia men who will do its every bidding and on whom it can rely. There is deep unrest and bitter hatred for communism—that foreign creed brought to Georgia by foreign bayonets—in every class of Georgian society. The Georgians have rejected communism. It is safe to say that there are no Communists in Georgia today and that every Georgian, Party member or not, waits only for the downfall of the hated régime and for the end of foreign occupation.

All this is true not only of Georgia but of every nation forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Empire. They all long for the restoration of their political rights, destroyed by Russia, and for the rights of man, destroyed by communism. There are no more bitter enemies of communism than the non-Russian peoples inhabiting the Soviet Union. Surely it is time to recognize this fact. The Free World has no truer allies in the struggle against the Communist world conspiracy. For three decades, unaided, they have been carrying on a desperate, heroic struggle against the arch enemy of mankind. Surely the time has come when they should be given the encouragement and help which they so richly deserve and to which they have every right.

The Georgian purges and many

other recent developments can mean but one thing. The Communist régime is approaching its inevitable end. Is this the time for any concessions, any hint of appeasement? Is this the time to talk about guaranteeing the frontiers of the Soviet Empire? Does anyone really consider that it would be just to declare inviolate the frontiers of the Soviet Empire in the Baltic, to take just one example? Or that Georgia, who has shown without the shadow of a doubt that she does not want communism and longs to be free and independent once again should be condemned to live forever under foreign domination?

Any agreement with the Communists which ignores the basic rights of any nation, however small, will not lead to a permanent, stable, or just peace. And neither will it bring to an end the threat of an atomic and hydrogen-bomb war. On the contrary, it will make such a war a certainty. There is little doubt that ever since Stalin's death the Communist world has been going through a very serious crisis. But given time and encouragement, it may survive, consolidate its positions, and grow strong again. An agreement with the Communists today will be just such an encouragement, Every normal, sane, and decent man thinks with horror of the slaughter and destruction, perhaps the end of our civilization, which an atomic war would bring in its wake. Not so the Communists. It should be clear to everyone by now that the Communistic creed holds human life in utter contempt. Millions of dead, cities and nations destroyed, Dark Ages come back again—why, this would be just the grist for the Communist mill. It would be so much easier to impose its perverted doctrine on mortally wounded humanity, the doctrine which proclaims that the supreme state to which a man can attain is the state of abject slavery, physical and spiritual. The doctrine which insists that man should forget everything to which he has aspired through the ages; that he should crush his instincts of kindness and decency; that he should lie and denounce and betray; that he should do only what he is told to do, think only what he is told to think; live the life he is told to live.

The only reason why the Communists do not start a new world war today is that they are not yet strong enough. No agreement will stop them from starting total war, the most destructive, most horrible war, as soon as they are ready. The Communists do not want peace. They only want a breathing spell.

Why should the Free World give it to them? A determined stand today may well mean the end of this horrible tyranny which is torturing and destroying millions of human beings.

We do not call for a war on the Soviet Union. That way lies madness. Every Georgian knows that such a war may well bring with it the total physical extermination of his small country and his people. But we do say to the Free World—STOP AIDING YOUR MORTAL ENEMIES! Yes, *your* mortal enemies, not only ours. Throw them out of the United Nations. They have no place there. Can anyone name just one single instance when the presence of the Soviet Union in the United Nations has been of any help to this organization,

or to humanity in general? Take back the recognition you gave the Soviet Government. It has broken every promise, every agreement, every treaty it has ever made or signed. Declare once and for all that you do not recognize a régime which only brute force, treachery, and terror keep in power. Declare that you do not recognize a government which has enslaved so many nations, including its own. And, finally, declare that you do not recognize the right of one nation to be master over others alien to it.

The Communists know that they are in danger. Not so much from the outside, for they know as well as anyone that nobody is going to attack them. They do not really want or need any guarantees. But they do know, better than anyone else, that they are in mortal danger from within. That is why they are trying to give some lttle sops to their desperate population. That is the reason for the new stress on consumer goods, for the slowdown of collectivization. They must somehow, by any means, live through this period, so dangerous for them. Once they are strong again, all the small concessions they are making now will be taken away and an even worse tyranny and degradation will be the lot of Soviet man.

The truth must be faced. The Communists may succeed. But only as far as the RUSSIAN people are concerned. We say this without meaning any disrespect for the great Russian nation, which has given so much to humanity and human culture. But concessions, however small they may appear to be to us, may satisfy the Russian people, for a time at least, long enough for their masters to become strong again.

But no concessions, short of absolute freedom from communism and from Russia, will satisfy the non-Russian peoples who are enslaved by Soviet Russia today. They will not be satisfied with an extra pound of bread or the promise of an eventual refrigerator. There is no certainty whatsoever that when and if war breaks out the Russian people will be on the side of the West. But the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Empire most certainly will be. The Russians have always valiantly defended their soil against an invader. The West will be the "invader" to them in the next war. Communist propaganda will see to that. It is idle to imagine that the tremendous "hate America" campaign in Russia has had no success. The majority of the Russians will not meet the Western armies with open arms. They will fight them as they fought Hitler's legions. Communist propagandists know their job.

And the non-Russian peoples? The Georgians, the Poles, the Lithuanians, the Ukrainians and all the others? Nothing, no amount of propaganda can convince them that the Free World and not Russia—Communist or otherwise—is their foe. They are the logical, the true and the reliable allies of the West. And the West must treat them as such.

On November 18, 1953, the Secretary of State, Mr. John Foster Dulles, addressed the CIO convention in Chicago. We quote just a few of the words he said on that occasion: "...To defeat despotism, it is not necessary nor desirable to foment violent revolutions. For this would only mean the exposure and massacre of those who cherish freedom.

"Despotism [the destruction of] depends on whether those people now ruled by despots know they are not forgotten and, above all, that the Free World is not prepared to seek its safety by a bargain with their masters which will confirm their captivity."

Mr. Dulles, the nations held in captivity by Soviet Russia are not at all sure that they are not forgotten. Neither are they sure, that just such a bargain will not be struck!

AFTER STALIN

By D. SINDIKELI

Nearly all of mankind, aspiring toward peace and freedom, have thought in recent years that the nightmare of the Soviet way of life and the perpetual menace of war hovering over the world were the result of a personal whim of Stalin or a twist of his personal politics and not that they stemmed naturally from the Marxist-Communist doctrine. This notion led to the naïve belief that with the death of Stalin the horror of the Soviet oppression and the threat of a third world war would diminish. The outwardly peace-loving and conciliatory declarations of Stalin's successor, Malenkov, seemed to confirm in the Western World this already widespread impression.

In order to realize the full impact of the Communist oppression and whether any possibility of change of the external policy exists, it is interesting to study the structure of the apparatus of the Communist Party and the relationship between the Party and the people.

Everyone in the Soviet Union—including those within the Communist Party, top-ranking officials, and members of the Politburo—is oppressed by fear: everyone is afraid of everyone else and has always to be on guard whether in a restaurant, a theater, in his friends' homes, or even among his own family, because everyone knows that he is being constantly watched by his fellow Party members, his best friends and his own relatives and family. Everyone is ready to betray everyone else at the first opportunity. This is not only because of the established Party system, but also because of the general psychological atmosphere prevailing throughout the Soviet Union.

Fear compels the people of the Soviet Union to accept submissively the present régime, despite the horror and revulsion it inspires; fear compels compliance with demands contrary to every principle of morality and decent human behavior; fear compels the people to work in conditions of virtual slavery; fear compels them to rush headlong into deadly competition as to who will be the first to betray and accuse someone else in an attempt to prove loyalty to the Party and in the vain hope of preserving/ even temporarily his own life. Every Soviet citizen, every member of the Party, every top-ranking official and leader of the Government, has the duty laid upon him of informing the secret police with regard to the doings, the comings and goings, of his intimates, his acquaintances and colleagues; the more he informs, the more he rises in the esteem and trust of the Government. However, in the end, no amount of merit acquired or service performed provides a guaranty for keeping a position or avoiding being imprisoned and shot. Everyone is subject to arbitrary dismissal from the Government service, to in-

crimination and summary execution without trial. The higher anyone rises in the Communist hierarchy, the greater the danger of his downfall and liquidation on some flimsy pretext. It can be safely said that this is the reign of the law of the jungle.

This outlook on life permeated by fear is perfectly illustrated in a poem written by a Communist poet, one stanza of which runs as follows:

"...and my mother would I behead
and my father would I hang
if the revoulution so dictates..."

Nevertheless, even this type of abject subservience to the régime did not save the author from being shot in his turn.

In order to get a better insight into the real situation in the Soviet Union and to be convinced of the impossibility that the present régime may become more liberal or democratic, it is interesting to glance through the Constitution of the Soviet Union (which has never even been introduced into Soviet life). This document, in comparison with the actual conditions existing there, seems to be democratic and humanitarian; however, on closer study it reveals a pattern altogether inconsistent with the principles of democracy. As an example one can cite the clause which prohibits the creation or existence, within the territory of the Soviet Union, of any political party or organization except the Communist Party. A Soviet citizen may establish or create a cultural or a scientific organization, but never a political one. The Communist Party is proclaimed to be the only legal political party and the Constitution confers on it the right of directing the internal affairs and the external policies of the state and endows it with the duty of controlling every aspect of national life.

The privileged position of the Party is based, according to the terms of the Constitution, on the assumption that the Party protects the interests of the "working masses" and consequently that it represents the majority. In actual fact, nothing could be further from the truth, as the membership of the Russian Communist Party does not exceed the figure of 6 millions out of a population of one hundred and ninety-three millions; this fact alone demonstrates the falsity of the assertion. The Constitution arbitrarly establishes and promulgates the dictatorship of the minority over the majority, and gives it absolute authority and the means to maintain and spread its power.

The Party is the organ which holds all legislative and executive functions, dictates decisions on all the problems of the state and controls their implementation. The people of the Soviet Union have no alternative but to accept the Party's decisions, submit to its orders, and unwaveringly follow its line; all of this is legally justified and termed "democratic procedure" by the Soviet Constitution.

If we go into further detail and assume for a moment that at the Party meetings a Party member is free to express his views on any given subject and can, without any fear of reprisal or pressure, defend such views and press for their adoption, even then the procedure could not be termed democratic, as it shows that only a small minority (the Party) of the population participates in the political and national life of the country.

Neither does the fact of holding periodic Party congresses constitute a proof of democratic procedure, as the system and methods of organizing and functioning of these congresses are based on purely totalitarian concepts, devised in such a way as to deprive the overwhelming majority of the population of the right of taking any part in the political and national life, an elementary right fully exercised by the citizens of the so-called capitalistic countries.

In the Soviet Union a privileged group, an élite of the Party, emerged under the name of Politburo, in whose hands is concentrated a tremendous power, and which rules the vast population of the Soviet Union without being responsible to anyone and without any control whatsoever. But it would be erroneous to think that unity and cohesion are predominant in this group, or that it is bound closely together. It is torn within by deadly hatreds, rivalries and jealousies, with endless strife going on between various factions and individuals, and plots and intrigues flourishing, culminating from time to time in the downfall of one of the members of the group, who is then declared to be "a traitor," "an enemy of the people," "an agent of the capitalistic and foreign powers," and the like, with the inevitable result of expulsion from the Party, arrest, imprisonment, and death.

This situation is a direct result of the all-pervading fear, deliberately created and maintained by the Communist Party, to which everything and everyone in the Soviet Union is subject. This fear is based on universal mistrust and the knowledge that everyone is betraying and accusing everyone else, in the vain hope of escaping destruction himself.

Stalin used this technique in building his career and his reputation of the "infallible leader." By false accusations he undermined the position, ruined the reputation, and gradually destroyed every one of his former associates—the leaders of the Russian Revolution and of the Russian Communist Party—finally to succumb himself, perhaps to a natural death, perhaps to one prearranged. who knows?

In order fully to understand the manner in which the Politburo holds the power within the Party and the Party in its turn rules unchallenged the people of the Soviet Union, reference should be made to the 28th paragraph of the Statue of the Party, wherein is stated: "Only the Communist Party is competent to deliberate upon and adopt decisions regarding the affairs of the State and all the problems relating thereto which are to be discussed exclusively by the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the provincial Local Committees of the various Republics having the right only of proposing an item for inclusion on the agenda and the Central Committee deciding on its appropriateness, In the event of an item being accepted, the Central Committee will undertake the task of the preparatory work, will submit the item for consideration at its session, and will reach a final decision." In this manner the Statue of the Party establishes a dictatorship of the Central Committee, providing an illustration of the fact that the Politburo is absolute ruler of the Soviet Union and that the Cabinet Ministers and various Ministries are mere subordinate organs of the Party. This system of government—the concentration of power in the hands of the Politburo—was established in 1917, immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution, and it reached a culminating point under Stalin's dictatorship.

In this connection, it is interesting to recall that in 1937 Mr. Jdanov made the following remark: "While it is true that the present situation makes it necessary for us to liquidate the agents of foreign powers and the elements of the opposition guilty of being in contact with them and having helped them, yet, in my view, it is imperative to introduce as soon as possible into the functioning of the Party such concepts of democracy as free elections and debates."

Two years later, in 1939, he added the following: "I deplore the intolerable injustice during the 1937 purge, the victims of which have become some of our Party leaders." It was the only voice within the Party which was ever raised in an attempt to introduce liberal views. It should be noted that there is a strong suspicion that his premature death was due to the boldness of his opinions.

Even this summary review of the Soviet Constitution and of the Statute of the Communist Party gives an indication of the unlikelihood of the

Communist Party relaxing its oppression. However, despite the fundamental absence of any liberal tendencies in the Soviet Union, after Stalin's death the Western World conceived a hope that his successor, Malenkov, might adopt a more liberal policy, soften the methods of the Government, and that it would be possible to establish with him peaceful relations and better cooperation.

Sufficient time has now elapsed to enable an unprejudiced mind to analyze the facts underlying this opinion.

To the free world Mr. Malenkov is an unknown entity, with his personal biography hardly known or ever mentioned. It appears that he had been formed and had worked under Stalin's direct supervision, earning his complete trust by unflinching loyalty, and becoming his closest associate and intimate confidant. An interesting indication of Malenkov's way of thinking is provided by his well-known statement: "I have two fathers, an actual one and a spiritual one—Comrade Stalin—who showed me the light and led me in the right direction."

One of the former associates of Mr. Malenkov, Ilya Molin, who at one time occupied a high position in the Internal Security Police and who at present is a refugee in the West, relates a few episodes characterizing Mr. Malenkov.

In 1941, when the Soviet Union was in danger of being overrun by the German armies, Mr. Malenkov was entrusted with the task of supervising internal security measures. On one occasion, in the course of discharging his duties, he announced to his colleagues that he had received an order to liquidate a group of 300 citizens consisting of military and civilian personalities. "They are guilty of storming and breaking into a warehouse and pillaging food stocks," he declared, "they have to be shot immediately and their bodies left on the spot of the execution..." The ruthlessness displayed in this action shows a complete lack of any human feelings on his part. Normally, he should have referred the case to the Court of Justice which should have prosecuted the culprits in accordance with the law. Moreover, he knew perfectly well that these unfortunate people attempting to break into a warehouse containing foodstuffs could not be regarded as ordinary thieves, for they were people driven to despair by prolonged starvation.

Last August, at the Plenary Session of the Supreme Soviet, Mr. Malenkov made a significant speech outlining the main points of his future program. One of the points he particularly emphasized was that from now on the Soviet Government would endeavor to increase the production of consumer goods so that Soviet citizens would be able to find in the stores and buy, whenever they needed it, any sort of household utensils or toilet articles, such as brushes, combs, etc. But he did not say that he would endeavor to transform the present régime into a liberal constitutional mode of government. He left unchanged the Stalinist methods, that is the dictatorship of the Politburo within the Party and the dictatorship of the Party within the Soviet Union, with Ministerial Departments and Cabinet Ministers remaining subordinate organs of the Party. This attitude was examplified in the indictment of Lavrenti Beria when he was accused, among other things, of having attempted to put the Ministry of the Interior, of which he was the Head, above the Party. But it is doubtful whether a faithful servant of the Kremlin, moreover one who had greatly contributed to the suppression of freedom in his own homeland, Georgia, and who owed everything to the Russian Communist Party, would find it desirable or expedient to place a mere Ministerial Department above the omnipotent Party. It is equally unlikely that he would have become an agent of the "foreign and capitalistic" powers.

In this case Mr. Malenkov repeated with absolute accuracy the technique used by his predecessor Stalin in eliminating his potential competitors in the struggle for power. Stalin destroyed Trotzky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, and a large group of Lenin's old-guard revolutionaries of the earlier period, who had to perish because Stalin suspected them as potential rivals of his own rise to power:

One of the numerous examples of the continuation of Stalin's methods of retaliation was the recent savage suppression of the workers' demonstrations in East Berlin, where groups of unarmed civilians were met by the fire of machine-guns and crushed under 35-ton tanks, just as protest has always been violently suppressed in the past under Communist rule.

It should be noted that if in his speeches Mr. Malenkov frequently proclaims his belief in the possibility of co-existence of capitalism and communism, it is only a repetition of Stalin's technique which he used whenever he felt insecure and in need of placating the outside world. Similarly, in his efforts to consolidate his newly-acquired position, Mr. Malenkov has had recourse to the same strategy.

Therefore, Mr. Malenkov is Stalin's successor not merely because he actually occupies his seat, but because he was his best pupil, his most devoted follower, and because he absorbed better than anyone else the rules and methods of a despotic and tyrannical government system. In his position, it is a sine qua non requirement, because communism is built and exists on the basis of absolute power, without which it faces disintegration and total collapse.

The free nations opposing communism do not as yet have a very clear picture of the internal conditions in the Soviet Union; perhaps they are not completely convinced that the unprecedented tyranny of this régime is the result of the Communist ideology as such, and that the name or the personality of the dictator is not a factor of primary importance. But the Communist doctrine does not tolerate any form of independent thinking or deviation from the Party line, and hope that Mr. Malenkov would favor any changes is in the domain of wishful thinking, far removed from reality. Either he has to reject the Communist dogma and become in his turn an "enemy of the people," etc., or he must follow in the footsteps of his predecessor and conform to the established pattern. There are strong indications to show that he has adopted the latter course.

In the final analysis it is clear that the present tense situation is the result of the hypocrisy and rigidity of the Marxist-Communist doctrine, and, as long as it continues to be dominant in the Soviet Union, a mere change of the name of the dictator is unlikely to produce any significant improvement either in the internal life of the country, or in its external policy.

The task of the free nations consists in not letting themselves be lulled into inaction and indifference by the outwardly conciliatory pronouncements of any ruler or dictator, but to combat the effects and attack the roots and the foundation of this abject and inhuman doctrine which destroys the human soul, enslaves the spirit, and reduces men to the level of dumb animals and obedient robots.

Armeno-Georgian Cultural Relations of the Past

When we think of future Caucasia, we hope for and imagine a federation, or a confederation, of all the Caucasian nations. With this object in view, much has already been done by the political and cultural forces of these nations in emigration. Today, when our peoples are the victims of the same tyranny and stand in danger of losing their national identities, we consider it a great mistake, not to say worse, to start a press polemic which can only embitter the relations between the Caucasian peoples and weaken their common effort for the liberation of their countries.

Nevertheless, we feel that Mr. H. Kurdian's article, "Armeno-Georgian Cultural Relations of the Past," which appeared in the *Armenian Review* (Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 22, 1953), can not be left without an answer. Mr. Kurdian talks about the relations between the Georgians and the Armenians and makes some truly astounding and fantastic statements; statements which, notwithstanding some compliments he pays the Georgian people, can not serve the cause of mutual respect and understanding of the Armenians and the Georgians. These two peoples are bound by thousands of years of political, cultural and religious ties and, almost throughout their whole history, they have had the same enemies to deal with.

Mr. Kurdian tries to prove that the Georgian alphabet was invented by the inventor of the Armenian alphabet, St. Mesrop Mashtots. Even had this been true, we would not have seen in it anything lowering to the self-esteem of the Georgian nation and would have accepted the fact without any argument or discussion. The whole of the Anglo-Saxon world uses the Latin alphabet; does this prove the cultural superiority of the Latin races over the Anglo-Saxons? Or does it mean that England, Germany, the Scandinavian countries, etc., had no culture of their own? If the Armenians can prove scientifically (not relying on dreams and fables) that the Georgian alphabet was indeed invented by an Armenian, we will accept the fact with the greatest equanimity, but up to now absolutely no scientific proof of this exists. Mr. Kurdian relies on an Armenian source, namely the Chronicles of Koriun, but he fails to mention that the latest studies of Koriun by qualified historians show that the part of the Chronicles which deals with the invention of the Georgian alphabet was not written by Koriun at all but was added much later, by some anonymous scribe or commentator. But even had it been written by Koriun himself, it would still have been quite untrustworthy and unacceptable. The Chronicles say that St. Mesrop travelled in Georgia and, *as he did not know the Georgian language*, he composed the Georgian alphabet with the aid of an interpreter. Even if we had no other proof whatsoever, this statement alone would be amply sufficient to enable us to say quite positively that the whole story is nothing but a fable. The inventor or inventors of the Georgian alphabet must have known not only the Georgian language but its dialects as well. There can hardly be an argument about this. The Georgian alphabet suits to perfection the phonetics of the Georgian language and its derivatives. To believe that St. Mesrop or anyone else, no matter how big a genius he may have been, could have composed the alphabet of a language which he did not know and after only a short visit to the country where this language is spoken, is to carry credulity beyond reasonableness.

Scientific historians have been studying the question of the origin of the Georgian alphabet for a considerable time. A definite answer has not as yet been found, and until it is found there is absolutely no reason why the statement of the Georgian Chronicles should not be accepted, namely, that the Georgian alphabet has been in existence since before the Christian era.

All this would not have been of great importance, and we certainly would not have troubled to reply to Mr. Kurdian, if he had restricted himself to the question of the Georgian alphabet. But Mr. Kurdian went much further. Without a shred of proof, without even trying to find one, he simply states that Shota Rusthaveli, the greatest genius Georgia has produced and one of the truly great men the world has ever known, was not a Georgian but an Armenian. His only argument seems to be that the Georgian name "Shota" and the Armenian "Ashot" sound alike. Truly a brilliant deduction! No doubt Germans can claim that William Shakespeare was a German because William and Wilhelm are two versions of the same name and sound alike. Mr. Kurdian obviously does not consider of any importance the fact that Rusthaveli's immortal poem was written in Georgian and not in Armenian. Neither did he consider it of any importance to read the poem either in its Georgian original or in its English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Armenian, etc., etc., translations. If he had, he could not have failed to notice that Rusthaveli himself states quite definitely that he was a Georgian from the village of Rusthavi in the province of Meskheti.

Mr. Kurdian's statement about Rusthaveli is so ridiculous that it can not be explained by simple, crude ignorance. Mr. Kurdian knows perfectly well that Rusthaveli was a Georgian: he also knows that the great poet was, is, and always will be, the pride and glory of the Georgian nation. Yet he makes this monstrous misstatement. What purpose he thought to serve by it is difficult to imagine, except, perhaps to prove his own words, when he says that the relations betwen the Armenians and the Georgians have often been jeopardized by QUOTE: "...ignorance and stupid fanaticism, often promoting discord and even a rift between the two peoples." We, ourselves, could not have written a better description of Mr. Kurdian's article.

Mr. Kurdian has a grievance. And this grievance is that someone dared to write about the history of Georgia without mentioning the "cultural influence" of Armenia. That neighboring nations always exercise a certain influence on each other is quite obvious. It could not have been otherwise. But it hardly follows that one could not write the history of France, for instance, without mentioning the influence England, Germany, Italy or Spain had on it. It can be done and has been done, time and time again. Does the fact that Mazarin was an Italian prove that Italian culture was superior to the French?

It is obvious that Mr. Kurdian is not well acquainted with the latest scientific historical works on the Caucasus, its peoples, and their relationships in the past. He may find of considerable interest to him the article by Dr. G. Magalashvili, which appeared in *United Caucasus* (No. 1 27, Munich. 1953) and which we reprint below.

The Editors

Armenian-Georgian Relations

By G. MAGALASHVILI

Mr. Kurdian[1], in a reply to Mr. A. Tsomaia's[2] article entitled "The Georgian Question," touches on past Armenian-Georgian relations. He shows affection for the Georgian nation, calling it the twin sister of the Armenian nation. He finds some words of praise for the outstanding personalities of Georgian history like King David the Builder and Queen Thamar. He emphasizes the steadfastness of the Georgians in their struggle for their independence, etc.

But at the same time, in dealing with fundamental questions of Georgian culture and the Georgian State, he throws a light on some "facts" which — we hope through ignorance of historical materials—are diametrically opposed to historical reality.

It is hard to answer Mr. Kurdian exhaustively within the confines of a newspaper article, because many of the questions on which he has touched superficially have a most extensive bibliography, the study of which has led researchers to arrive at completely opposite deductions.

We also of course look upon the Armenian people as the brothers of the Georgian people. The brotherhood of our two peoples does not arise only because they have been neighbours for two and a half thousand years and from the political, cultural, economic and traditional relations which living side by side has entailed. This brotherhood has a deeper foundation: about 700 B.C. the Armenian tribe, related to the Phrygians, settled in the country which later received the name of Armenia. The territory where the Armenians settled had already been inhabited, thousands of years earlier, by people with their own specific high culture.

Who were these native peoples and to which language group did they belong? There is no doubt that these peoples, or their greater part, belonged to the Georgian (Karthvelian) family of nations. The best proof of this assertion—historical data and archaeological information apart—lies in the modern Armenian language itself.

The Armenian language, according to known grammatical and lexicographical signs, is considered to be an Indo-European language. But like most cultured languages, it is a mixed language. Phonetically it is almost identical with the Georgian language, and both are sharply distinct from the Indo-European languages, and considerably distinct from the other Caucasian languages.

The Armenian language has no genders, which are characteristic of European languages, and has come nearer in this connection to the Georgian language which also lacks grammatical genders.

G. Deeters,[3] in his work on the Georgian and Armenian languages, adduces several other grammatical examples which remove the Armenian language from Indo-European languages and bring it closer to the Georgian (Karthvelian) group of languages.[4]

In the Armenian language there exists a great number of roots which cannot be explained by either Indo-European, Semitic, or Turanian philology. N. Marr considers these roots to be of Georgian origin.[5] Deeters, in his above-mentioned work, without essentially denying this, suggests a more thorough study of Karthvelian roots in order to find a better explanation.

There exists an old legend, recorded by Georgian chroniclers of the 8th and 9th centuries and later adopted by the Armenians, that the Armenian and Georgian peoples descend from two brothers—Haos and Karhtlos. Further on in the same legend the fraternal origin of all the Caucasian peoples is mentioned.

Having confirmed Mr. Kurdian's opinion regarding the kinship of the Georgian and the Armenian peoples, we shall turn to his other assertions.

Mr. Kurdian writes that the Georgian alphabet was compiled by Saint Mesrop-Mashtots, who also compiled the Armenian alphabet. He also promoted the spread of Christianity in Georgia and was even allegedly the founder of Christian teaching there. Further on, Mr. Kurdian claims that Shotha Rusthaveli was of Armenian origin, that the princes Orbeliani, Curopalates of Tayk, and Mkhargrdzeli were also Armenians, and that Armenian architecture had a great influence on Georgian architecture.

We are compelled to go into these claims more or less thoroughly.

Koriun's life of Saint Mesrop is universally known. But it is equally well known that church and other legends, traditions, and myths have ceased long ago to serve as the basic sources of historiography. Legends and myths are only taken into account by historians to this extent, that they not infrequently show a correct tendency, tell of the archaic experiences of peoples, and echo true events. Today, however, historians rely on more real data for their deductions.

In the legend about Saint Mesrop it is said that he saw "a vision" according to which he wrote the Armenian alphabet. In the present text of this legend it is furthermore stated that with the help of an interpreter Saint Mesrop compiled the Georgian alphabet as well.

"If however, Mesrop was, as the Armenians claim, the creator of the Georgian alphabet, it remains quite inexplicable, *why he created a script of its own for the Georgian alphabet, and did not introduce among Georgians the Armenian alphabet he had created, more particularly as the sound system of both languages is absolutely identical,*" wrote Friedrich Müller of the Vienna Academy of Science.[6]

Indeed, at the time there could not have been as much national sensitivity, as developed later. The Georgians of those days, who had adopted Christianity, an alien religion by origin, are hardly likely to have protested against the introduction of the Armenian alphabet either.

In reply to Mr. Kurdian's conviction that the legend about Saint Mesrop is true, we would venture to say: Not a single alphabet in the world has ever come ready-made in a dream to anyone. The compilation

[1] H. Kurdian, "Armeno-Georgian Cultural Relations of the Past," "The Armenian Review", Vol. 6, No. 62-22, Boston, 1953.

[2] Tsomaia, "The Georgian Question," "The Voice of Free Georgia," New York, January 1953.

[3] G. Deeters, "Armenisch und Südkaukasisch", "Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Sprachmischung", "Caucasia", Fasc. 3 und 4., Leipzig, 1926 und 1927.

[4] The Georgian or Karthvelian language is divided into three dialects or closely related languages: Georgian proper; Lazo-Megrelian; and Svanian. The written Georgian language, based on the Karthvelian dialect, subsequently assimilated the elements of all Georgian dialects and became the sole national, church, and literary language of the entire Georgian people.

[5] N. Marr, "Jafetic elements in the languages of Armenia", I.A.N, 1914, 5—8, 10, 12, 13, etc.

[6] Friedrich Müller, Über den Ursprung der Gruzinischen Schrif," Sitzungsberichte der Kais. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Band CXXVII, Wien, 1897 (The underlining is by source.)

of alphabets is a lengthy collective labour, mostly by unknown paleographers. Thus, for example, the gradual transitional forms of the Greek alphabet as it changed to the Latin are known from the history of paleography.

Recently the opinion of V. Gardthausen was advanced that the Georgian and Armenian alphabets were derived, independently of each other, from the Greek alphabet.[7]

The most thorough and detailed work on this subject was presented by the Georgian scholar I. Djavakhishvili[8] who, contrary to the opinion of N. Marr[9], proved that the "Khutsuri" (church) alphabet is older than the "Mkhedruli" (military or secular) alphabet. He cites several transitional forms from the first alphabet to the second. Further on, he analyzes the opinions of Armenian and other authors who, quoting Koriun and Moses of Khorene, considered the Georgian alphabet to have been derived from the Armenian.

Djavakhishvili proved that the part of Koriun's work where the common origin of the Georgian and Armenian alphabets is mentioned is *an inserton by subsequent transcribers of Koriun's work.* It is quite permissible to doubt the accuracy of Moses of Khorene. *The Armenian scholar, N. Adonts, says that you can use the works of Moses of Khorene as a literary example but not as a historical source.*

Djavakhishvili points out that the most ancient form of the Georgian alphabet does not coincide with the Armenian alphabet either in sequence or in outline. By means of a detailed and comparative study of the individual letters in ancient Georgian manuscripts and signs, Djavakhishvili arrives at the conviction that the Georgian alphabet is derived from the Phoenician alphabet or one of its most ancient branches.

According to the almost unanimous opinion of all scholars, the Phoenician and other ancient Semitic alphabets—irrespective of whether these scripts are written from left to right or right to left—are the bases of nearly all the alphabets *in Europe and Asia.* The Greek alphabet, in which European alphabets originate, is also derived from the Phoenician alphabet.

That Mesrop was allegedly the enlightener of Georgia, who "purged the Georgian children of the dross and the rust of the pus-infected demons" (we quote the source from Mr. Kurdian's article), also calls for a few words.

Before Christianity, Georgia had a rich national religion mingled with the teachings of Zarathustra[10] from Persia. According to Georgian ecclesiatical tradition, Saint Nino of Cappadocia was the enlightener of Georgia, in the same way as Saint Gregory the Parthe, according to Armenian traditions, was the enlightener of Armenia.

In fact, Christianity gained admission to Georgia before Saint Nino. In all the countries of the ancient world, the Jewish diaspora served as the starting point for Christianity. In Athens, Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and so on, wherever there were Jewish communities, Jewish proselytes became the first missionaries of Christianity. This picture is particularly clear to us from the life of Apostle Paul and his travels as a missionary in Mediterranean

[7] V. Gardthausen, "Griechische Paläographie", II, 47, "Der grosse Brackhaus", Band 17, Schrift, Tafel II, Leipzig 1934.

[8] I. Djavakhishivili, "Aims, sources, and methods of history before and now," vol. 3, part. 1, Georgian paleography (in Georgian). Thbilissi, 1926.

[9] N. Marr, "Grammar of the Ancient Georgian Language," Leningrad, 1925 (in Russian).

[10] I. Diavakhishivili, "History of the Georgian People" (in Georgian), part 1, Thbilissi, 1929.

O. G. v. Wesendonk, Über georgisches Heidentum", Leipzig, 1924.

countries. It was the same in Georgia. Already before our era there were, in the capital Mtskhetha and other towns, Jewish communities in touch with Jerusalem. The first Christians in Georgia were likewise Jewish proselytes.

Georgia became Christian gradually, but judging by Georgian, Greek, Roman, and other sources it was considered to be a Christian state as early as the 4th century with a Christian king and Christian clergy. The contribution of Mesrop to the cause of spreading the teaching of Christ in Georgia—if there was any at all—cannot be as great as it is claimed to be by the chronicler of his life.

Unfounded also—not to express it more forcibly—is the following assertion in Mr. Kurdian's article: "Likewise we cannot forget the contribution of the Armenians to Georgian literature, whose most shining star, Shotha Rusthaveli, was an Armenian, called Ashot, from the little village of Rusthavi between Akhaltsikhe and Kherthvisi."

Apparently the only evidence to support this assertion is the name of the great Georgian poet—Shotha. Assuming that Shotha is derived from Ashot and that Ashot is an Armenian name—although there is also another etymology for this name—what does this prove? According to this reasoning it could be claimed that if Rusthaveli had been called George, Alexander, or Nicholas—he was a Greek; or if his name had been David or John—he was a Jew; or Constantine or Julius—a Roman; or Tariel, Zurab, or Nodar—a Persian; and so on.

Rusthaveli came from Rusthavi. There are two places with this name in Georgia—one near Tbilissi and another near Akhaltsikhe. *"Rusthavi"* comes from the Georgian word *"ru"*—canal, and *"thavi"*—head or beginning—and "Rusthavi" literally means "canal's beginning." *"Akhaltsikhe"* means *"akhali"*—new in Georgian and *"tsikhe"*—fortress, in the same way as *"Akhalkalaki"* comes from the Georgian *"akhali"*—new and *"kalaki"*—town. The geographical name of Kherthvisi has likewise a purely Georgian etymology, like Tbilissi, Kuthaisi, and so on, and means "the place of the confluence of waters."

Akhaltsikhe lies in the ancient Georgian province of Meskhethi or as it was called in the Middle Ages, Samtskhe-Saathabago. The inhabitants of Meskhethi are the Georgian tribe of Meskhi. (Rusthaveli calls himself a Meshki in his poem.) Meskhis are mentioned in Assyrian chronicles several centuries before the Armenians' appearance in history.

Rusthaveli is not only not an Armenian, but there is not the slightest cause to think that he is of Armenian origin. But even if one were to grant that this great master of the Georgian language is of Armenian origin it would not prove in any way that Armenian literature influenced Georgian literature. The Georgians from the 11th to the 13th century developed their own independent lay poetry, which in form and content resembled on the one hand Persian poetry and on the other the poetry of the troubadours and "Minnesäengers" of Europe.[11] In Georgian poetry Rusthaveli had predecessors, contemporaries, and heirs, while the Armenians had no chivalrous secular poetry. We invite Mr. Kurdian to cite examples which could show the influence of nonexistent 12th century Armenian secular poetry on the poem of Rusthaveli—"The Knight in the Tiger's Skin."

Let us again assume that Rusthaveli was of Armenian origin. All who have had Russian schooling are well aware that Pushkin's mother was the grand-daughter of Peter the Great's famous "Arab," the Abyssinian Abraham Hannibal. What is less well known is that the Pushkins

[11] Z. Avalishvili, "Questions of Vepkhis-Tkaosani" (in Georgian), Paris 1931, and relevant literature therein.

themselves, Boyars of Moscow, came, according to their family tree, of "an honest German husbandman called Ratsch." Lermontov's ancestor was a Scot called George Learmonth who came to Russia at the beginning of the 17th century. If one follows Mr. Kurdian's reasoning Pushkin and Lermontov were not Russian and—using their origin as an argument—you could speak of a German, Abyssinian, or Scottish influence on Russian poetry!

Mr. Kurdian, incidentally, mentions the Curopalates of Tayk, who, together with other personalities whom he lists, became the pride and glory of Georgia. We do not know which Curopalates[12] the author had in mind. If he means the best known of the Curopalates, David the Great Curopalate (+1001), ruler of the Georgian province of Tao, he was a Georgian by origin, religion, and political tendencies. As this Curopalate also owned Armenian lands, Armenian historians called him the King of both Armenia and Georgia (Iberia). Georgian sources invariably call David Curopalate King and Great Curopalate of Tao. Curopalate David was not only a Georgian, but a Georgian patriot in the modern meaning of the word. In putting into force the political plan of the eristhavi (Duke) of Karthli, Ivane Marushisdze, he, being childless, adopted Prince Bagrat, the son of the King Gurgen II of Karthli and upheld the hereditary rights of this prince (who later became King Bagrat III of Georgia) to the Akbhazian kingdom, which then included the whole of Western Georgia. Incidentally, he is the builder of the famous monastery of Khakhouli.

Whoever is interested in the personality of David the Great Curopalate and his attitude towards other Georgian and Armenian rulers and the Byzantine Emperors, and in the political and cultural situation in Tao itself, can learn all this from the comparatively short, but extremely comprehensive work of Z. Avalishvili.[13]

The commander-in-chief of this ruler, Tornike (John, as a monk), was also a Georgian, an eristhavi[14] of the Georgian family of Chordvaneli. He was one of the builders of the Orthodox Iberian monastery on Mount Athos where, having laid down his arms, he died as a monk.

The Princes Orbeliani are also Georgians. Their origin goes back deep into antiquity. According to the, of course, legendary genealogy of this family, it comes from an eminent Chinese, who came to Georgia in the 16th century B. C.[15]

N. Adonts mistakenly assumes that the Orbeliani, like the Bagratids, come from the Chorokh territory. The full family name of this princely line is Djam-Bakur-Orbeliani. Adonts, examining the first part of this name, thinks that Djam comes from Chan, the real name of the Lazs, the native inhabitants of Chorokh territory, and that Djam-Bakur must be Chan-Bakur or the Chan (Laz) ruler. The legend of the Chinese origin of the Orbeliani family Adonts likewise connects with the name Chan. He assumes that after leaving Chorokh territory, the Orbeliani, in later centuries, not understanding the word Djam or Chan, erroneously created, because of its similarity to "Chin" (China), the legend about their Chinese origin.[16]

Professor M. Tseretheli writes as follows on the origin of the Orbeliani family:

12 Kuropalat (in Greek Kuropalates) — highest dignity at the Byzantine court, which was also bestowed on befriended kings and princes.

13 Z. Avalishvili, "La succession du Curopalate David d'Iberie, Dynaste de Tao," "Byzantion," t. VIII, Fasc. Bruxelles, 1933.

14 "Eristhavi," in Georgian, is a military leader, duke, or appanaged prince.

15 M. Brosset, "Additions et éclaircissements a l'historie de la Géorgie."

16 N. Adonts, "Armenia in the times of Justinian" (in Russian), I.A.N.

"... 1. The name Orbeliani is purely Svanian, as the suffix 'iani' indicates. All other names with this ending which may be encountered in Georgia, are of Svanian origin. Not a single name of non-Svanian origin has this suffix.

2. Evidence that the Orbeliani come indeed from Svanethi is provided by the name of the village Orbeli, which exists to this day and lies on the border between Lechkhumi and Svanethi. (In antiquity Lechkhumi and Racha[17] were inhabited by Svanians.)

3. In the Middle Ages we see the Orbeliani as the rulers or eristhavis of Argvethi (upper Imerethi). Lechkhumi and Racha of course belonged to them and Svanethi itself probably belonged to them. In Argvethi they had their ancestral estate and in the Katshki monastery their family mausoleum. In the 11th century Georgian kings gave them extensive possessions in South East Georgia, where their residence and stronghold was the fortress Klde-Kari.[18]

The Orbeliani revolted against the kings on several occasions. Whenever the kings emerged victorious over the Orbeliani they seized that family's estates until the Orbeliani pleaded for mercy and asked the kings to leave them their estate of Katskhi, to which the kings invariably agreed. The Orbeliani were always buried in the Katskhi mausoleum, no matter where they died.[19]

The best known representatives of this family—Liparit I, Liparit II, John Orbeliani the father-in law of Prince Demna, Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani, David Orbeliani son-in-law of King Herakles II, Commander-in-chief of Georgian troops, and later Vakhtang and Gregory Orbeliani, were outstanding Georgian politicians, soldiers, writers, and poets. One of the Orbeliani family, Stefanos Orbeliani, was an Armenian historian. He comes from that part of the family which, after the suppression by King George III (father of Queen Thamar) of Prince Demna's revolt, left Georgia, changed to the Gregorian faith, and became armenianized.

Talking of the Orbeliani, we might say incidentally that Armenians, when they see a Georgian family name with the ending "iani," think that they have to do with a georgianized Armenian. As already stated above by Professor M. Tseretheli, this ending is characteristic of Georgian families of Svanian origin. For instance Dadeshkeliani, Kipiani, Asathiani, Akhvlediani, Avaliani, Gabliani, Ioseliani, Kuraspediani, Khvedeliani, and hundreds of other family names with this ending are by origin Georgian-Svanians or families which originate in Svanethi. The Armenian suffix "ian" has nothing in common with the Svanian suffix "iani".

Among individual personalities and families of allegedly Armenian origin who brought great benefit to the Georgian State, Mr. Kurdian mentions the Mkhargrdzeli family. This is the only one of all the above-cited cases where Mr. Kurdian may have proof for this assertion. But, unfortunately, here also it is not so simple a matter. According to the Armenian historian of the 13th century, Kirakos, the sons of the ruler Sargis (Mkhargrdzeli) — Zakariva and Ivane—came from the Kurds of Babirakan-Khele. Another Armenian historian of the same period, Vardan the Great, confirms this version of the Kurd origin of this family and examines this question in even greater detail.

The Georgian historian of the 12th-13th century who described the epoch of Queen Thamar, records a version of the origin of the Mkhargrdzeli

17 Lechkhumi and Racha—districts of West Georgia.

18 Klde-Kari, from the Georgian "Klde"—rock and "kari"—gate.

19 From Professor M. Tseretheli's letter to the author of this article.

საქართველოს პარლამენტის ეროვნული ბიბლიოთეკა

family from the Persian king Artaxerxes I—Longimanus. According to noteworthy proof provided by the Georgian scholar Sargis Kakabadze, Mkhargrdzeli comes from the ancient Georgian family of Toreli, which went in the 10th century to Armenia, where it adopted Gregorianism.[20]

This shows how risky it is to draw tendentious conclusions based on as yet unclarified historical details. There is no doubt about one thing, that the Mkhargdzeli, serving the Georgian kings truly and faithfully, did indeed render an enormous service to the Georgian people.[21] At the same time, all of them with the exception of John Mkhargrdzeli, who adopted Orthodoxy, were zealous Gregorians, who richly endowed the Armenian Sanian monastery and other churches, and carried on a correspondence with the Armenian Kings of Cilicia and with the Cilician clergy on church and state affairs.

Let it be noted that the name of Mkhargrdzeli, under which they became famous, was not known to their contemporary Armenian historians. The word "Mkhargrdzeli" comes from "mkhari", which is shoulder or arm in Georgian, and "grdzeli" which is long in Georgian.

The descendants of the ancient Mkhargrdzeli, before whom Georgia's enemies quaked, who dealt with foreign kings and sultans as equals and conducted a direct correspondence with the Popes in Rome, were already in Russian days "permitted" to bear the family name of Princes Argutinsky - Dolgorukiys.* From John Mkhargrdzeli, who changed to Orthodoxy, are descended—according to some sources—the Georgian Princes Pavlenishvili.

If we wanted to start a controversy with Mr. Kurdian, we could adduce proof, according to which there is reason to suppose that certain Nakharar families[22] were of Georgian (Karthvelian) origin. But is it worth while indulging in such arguments, particularly if this does not present any purely scientific interest? If we were to succeed in proving that a few well known Armenian personalities or families were of Georgian origin, the Georgian people would not be any better or worse off for it. It would not prove any Georgian political or cultural influence on the Armenians, and it would be wrong to make any political capital out of it and claim the superiority of one people over the other or the influence of one people on the other.

The Armenians and Georgians are two peoples who grew to maturity long ago, and we think that he who considered himself or considers himself to be a Georgian is a Georgian, and he who thought of himself or thinks of himself as an Armenian is an Armenian. Among the peoples of two neighbouring countries there can be found individuals or whole families who move from one country to the other. Let us take a simple example—many Germans bear French names and vice versa.

Armenians and Georgians are two peoples fighting hard for their survival. They must unite in order to preserve their national characters out of respect for the national traditions which grew up through the centuries, and should not try to filch from each other the remnants of their spiritual and material heritage.

Mr. Kurdian's assertion regarding the great dependence of Georgian architecture on Armenian architecture is apparently based on the well known work of the Viennese scholar Joseph Strzygowski, called

[20] S. Kakabadze, preface to his edition of "The Knight in the Tiger's Skin" (in Georgian).

[21] I. Djavakhishvili, "History of the Georgian People," part 2.

*) Translated from Georgian "Arghuthashvili-Mkhargrdzeli."

[22] "Nakharar" are ancient Armenian military leaders or princes.

"The Architecture of the Armenians and Europe."[23]

In this form this opinion was not voiced by anyone before Strzygowski. Later, if was voiced at all, it took the form of a reference to Strzygowski.

In his comprehensive work of two volumes, J. Strzygowski has collected some most valuable material about Armenian architecture and described its details with great love. Unfortunately, some parts of his work, regarding Georgian history and art, provoke the astonishment of anyone who knows Georgia's past. For this reason the forthright assertion by O. G. von Wesendonk to the effect that it is absolutely wrong to speak of the dependence of Georgian architecture on Armenian architecture, may be taken as an answer to Strzygowski.[24] Strzygowski describes, together with Armenian examples of architecture, Georgian memorials of art, but he often omits to mention their Georgian origin. Thus, for instance, he does this in describing the Georgian church of Bana in the ancient Georgian province of Tao, about which the traveler Karl Koch wrote more than one hundred years ago that this church was more beautiful than any he had seen in the East with the exception of Constantinople.[25]

T. Kluge asserts that even a layman can distinguish at a glance Georgian architecture from the Armenian, although sometimes they are structurally similar.[26]

Even Strzygowski himself, who gives pre-eminence to the Armenian architecture, notes the difference in the expression of art between Georgians and Armenians, and writes:

"But to the ornamental wealth of Georgia, Armenian flatness takes second place. The lighter, upward-tending architecture in Georgia, with its great variety and playful inventiveness, may be contrasted in Armenia with closed-in massiveness, so that the spirit of the landscape with its occasional mighty volcano is reflected in the building.[27]

We would like to say a few words about the chronology of the Armenian examples of architecture cited by Strzygowski and the priority of
gian.
Armenian architecture over the Geor-

In 1924, an expedition of archaeologists and art historians went from Tbilissi to Armenia. It included the well known Armenian archaeologist Milikset-bek. This expedition came to the conclusion from the inscriptions on memorials of architecture, the study of building styles, archaeological realities, and corresponding historical documents, that no Armenian church can be dated earlier than the 7th century. Similarly, the development of the construction of cupolas, which Strzygowski considers to be the decisive deed of ancient Christian Armenian architects and which in his opinion served as an example, not only for Georgians, but for all European architecture, did not appear in Armenia before the 7th century. In Georgia, however, it has been established that cupolas were already being built in the second half of the 6th century.[28]

Mr. Kurdian, saying that the Georgian State had greater vitality than the Armenian, continues:

"But when it comes to culture and economics, it is an entirely different question. Georgia has greatly benefited from the indisputable Ar-

[23] J. Strzygowski, "Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa", Wein, 1918.

[24] O. G. Wesendonk, "Archäologisches aus dem Kaukasus", Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Band XL, 1925, Heft I u. II.

[25] Karl Koch, "Reise im pontischen Gebirge", Weimar, 1846.

[26] Theodor Kluge, Versuch einer systematischen arstellung der alt-georgischen (grusinischen) Kirchenbauten, Berlin, 1918.

[27] J. Strzygowski, "Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa", Band I, Wien, 1918, p. 346.

[28] O. G. Wesendonk, "Archäologisches aus dem Kaukasus," Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Band XL, 1925, Heft I u. II.

menian superiority in creative genius, in the arts, and in economic and cultural activity."

From these words of Mr. Kurdian there is apparent an assurance or conviction of the national or racial superiority of the Armenians over the Georgians. We have encountered this opinion in other Armenian sources and in the works of European writers who accept Armenian arguments uncritically.

Mr. Kurdian writes that Mr. Tsomaia, in his article about Georgia, had forgotten the "lion's share" which the Armenians had in the political, military, economic, and cultural life of Georgia. We also regret that the Georgian author did not find a place in his work in which to mention the collaboration between Georgians and Armenians and relations in general with other Caucasian neighbours during the period when the Georgian State flourished most. But Mr. Kurdian himself obscures this collaboration, which indeed existed, by using—to prove its existence—evidence which distorts the true situation. At the same time he forgets that great and real service which the Georgians rendered to the Armenian people.

In 1043-4 and 1064, through an unhappy turn of historical destiny, the last two Armenian states in the Caucasus—Ani and Kars—ceased to exist. The Georgians, on the other hand, perhaps because of force of arms, or "flexibility" (to use Mr. Kurdian's expression), or thanks to their more favourable geographical situation, succeeded in preserving their independence for the next 750 years until the beginning of the 19th century. In the course of this time, many thousands of Armenians gradually resettled in Georgia,where they found a second home for themselves. This movement of Armenians into Georgia increased during the reign of David the Builder and continued until the end of the independent Georgian State or States.

In their day, Armenian historians gave their due to the Georgian Kings. Thus the Armenian historians—Vardan the great and Matthew of Edessa, say that when King David at the request of the inhabitants of Ani themselves, captured this fortress, the entry of King David into the ancient capital of Armenia in 1123 was solemnly celebrated by its citizens and that through this action King David freed Ani from "sixty years of bondage." Matthew of Edessa writes about King David, who was his contemporary, as follows:

':He was a saintly and virtuous king, filled with faith and justice, who was good to the Armenians and useful to them. The remnants of the Armenian people gathered around him: he built for them in Georgia a town, in which he erected several churches and monasteries, and called it Gorha."[29]

All the Georgian Kings, to the last of them—Heracles II and George XII — showed the same kindness to the Armenians. The Armenians enjoyed equal rights in Georgia, had their own churches, their own clergy, church schools, etc. State service was open to them, despite religious and national differences, as national and religious fanaticism was alien to the Georgians, so that we meet Armenians at all levels in the government service. We are unaware of a single case deserving of attention of the Armenian minority being oppressed in the history of independent Georgia. A more brotherly attitude than that which the Georgians had for the Armenians is unknown to us in the history of other peoples.

The Armenians took part in the cultural life of Georgia and we know of Armenian writers (but not Rusthaveli!), who wrote in Georgian. For instance, Pešhangi Bertkadze or, as he was also called, Pashvibertkishvili,

[29] We quote from M. Brosset, "Additions et éclaircissements a l'histoire de la Géorgie", St. Pétersbourg, 1851, p. 230.

In M. Brosset's opinion "Gorha" should be taken for "Gori," where many Armenians live to this day.

was of Armenian origin. He wrote the historical poem called"Shakhnavaziani," largely devoted to the life and work of King Vakhtang V (1658—1675), whom the Persians called Shah Navaz.[30] The well known Ashug[31] of Tbilissi, Sayat-Nova, was also Armenian. His father was an Armenian from Aleppo and his mother an Armenian from Tbilissi. Sayat-Nova, whose real name was Arutyun, sang and wrote in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaidjani. At one time he was the court singer of King Heracles II, whom he called "the soul and heart of all Georgia."[32]

Basically, Armenians, like Georgians, are farmers. Uprooted from their own lands, the Armenians took to industry and trade when they resettled in foreign parts. In Georgia, most of the Armenians continued to farm. Throughout Eastern Georgia there was hardly a village without a few Armenian households.

In Georgian towns the Armenians engaged in crafts and commerce and were among the wealthiest inhabitants. Many Armenians living in Georgia, when they adopted Orthodoxy, or even if they remained Gregorians, became georgianized.

In the history of national minorities, it is known that they become assimilated most rapidly where such minorities are not persecuted. On the other hand, any pressure on the minorities intensifies their insistence on maintaining their identity.

Mr. Kurdian regrets that there is no comprehensive work in the field of Armenian-Georgian relations and in this he is to some extent right. But if he knew modern Georgian historiography, he would become convinced how seriously many Georgian scholars had worked on this subject. Professor I. Djavakishvili, one of the founders of Tbilissi University, has devoted his whole life to the study of historical documents in all languages about Georgia. Being one of the greatest experts on Armenian historical memorials, he has studied them most conscientiously and critically and appraised them at their true value. Chauvinism is absent from his work of many volumes.

The same may be said of the universal scholar Zurab Avalishvili. In his two works, in the above-mentioned study "David the Curopalate" and particularly in his authoritative book "In the days of the Crusades,"[33] he often touches on Armenian-Georgian relations and examines them with complete objectivity, showing a visible sympathy for the Armenians. We could quote many other examples of a similar approach to Armenian-Georgian relations.

Neither the old, nor the new Georgian historians and other scholars ever concealed or passed over in silence the services of Armenians to Georgia. When these services were in fact rendered, they were always mentioned.

From early days we can observe among the Georgians a wish to establish friendly relations, not only with the Armenians, but with all their Caucasian neighbours.

One of the main reasons for the success and prosperity of the Georgian state in the Middle Ages is that the Georgian kings of that period knew how to coordinate the ambitions of the Georgian people with the interests of their Caucasion neighbours. Already in 1885, the Georgian historian D. Bakradze wrote that the Georgian State, beginning with the reign of King David II the Builder to the death of Queen Thamar, resembled a federative union of the Caucasion peoples.[34]

[30] K. Kekelidze, "History of Georgian Literature," Vol. 2 (in Georgian), Thbilisi, 1924.

[31] Ashug is a popular singer.

[32] A. Baramidze, Sh. Radiani, V. Zgenti, "History of Georgian Literature" (in Russian), Moscow, 1952.

[33] Z. Avalishvili, "In the days of the Crusades" (in Georgian), Paris, 1929.

[34] D. Bakradze in Commentaries on the history of the Georgia of Prince Vakhusht (in Georgian), Thbilisi, 1885.

The Kremlin Underground

By K. TAMBY*

It was during the sad, rainy autumn of 1934. My next-door neighbor was an old worker, an excellent carpenter—a simple person, usually frowning and silent. He had a large family consisting of a wife and nine children, the eldest of whom might have been about fifteen years old. We lived as neighbors in a basement, and we were all proud to have our domicile in a big city. Each family had one room, with a common kitchen, toilet, and corridor.

The living quarters of my neighbor consisted of an area about sixteen meters square. To live with such a large family in a space like that sounds impossible, and it is incredible in America, but in Russia it was a fact, and the majority of the Moscow population lived in just such conditions. This was one of the "main achievements" of the Soviet Government sixteen years after the October Socialist Revolution. Out of this critical situation the Soviet Government had not been able to find a way, even up to the time of the war. It could only facilitate and accentuate the calamity of the want of "living-space" by several methods, among which were partly new and partly reconditioned and added-to structures, the transformation of basements into family dwellings and—as the main method—the compulsory eviction of "untrustworthy and socially dangerous elements" from the capital city, as was done before under the slogan of the "crystallization of Moscow."

Being in a state of constant depression, my neighbor used to drink, thus seeking consolation. I observed this family with pity and I tried to help them in whatever way I could. As compared with them, I was far better off, for my room was twenty meters square and we were only two.

My neighbor was very industrious. He always worked at home late into the night, doing repair jobs on furniture for private clients, to make some extra money to augment his scanty wage. His wife also worked, going out almost every day to do washing for others, leaving her eldest daughter to take care of the children.

I could not help knowing the weakness of my neighbor and his burdened life, so I once invited him in to have a glass of vodka. I was at home alone and we could spend the evening in conversation, man to man.

Until this evening I had no idea where my neighbor's job was, although I often heard him going out early in the morning and returning in the evening after dark.

Under the conditions of the Soviet régime we all knew full well that we had to keep our mouths shut, but one is sometimes possessed by the desire to speak openly. It was at such a moment that, in the course of our conversation, my otherwise close-mouthed neighbor confided to me his secret, which was a secret to all the country except the denizens of the Kremlin.

* Copyright by K. Tamby and *The Voice of Free Georgia*.

What I learned was that, deep down underneath the Kremlin, there had been built another Kremlin which was called the "Kremlin underground." It was here that my neighbor was employed, working as a cabinet maker, making furniture, and polishing and caring for the woodwork in the rooms of the underground kingdom.

This underground citadel is located at a considerable depth, and equipped according to the latest word in modern devices and techniques: an electric plant, elevators, reservoirs for water; canalization, central heating, ventilation, a special signal system, telephones and radios of all known wave lengths. There are two kitchens located opposite each other; bedrooms, bathrooms, rooms for various games, billiards for one; a library, two conference rooms adapted also for cinema performances; and, lastly, there is a storage room for ammunition filled with all manner of bombs and machine guns.

The underground is built entirely of reinforced concrete. The walls are about two meters thick, and the depth of the roof (in addition to the ten meters of solid earth from the surface to the underground) is more than five meters. Each room separately, or any part of the underground, can be hermetically closed and thus completely isolated from the others. All the rooms are furnished with great luxury, the furniture being of highest quality. Everywhere are seen the most precious carpets. All the bathrooms are faced with with marble. Almost every room has its own radio and telephone.

The underground kingdom—as my neighbor used to call it—has a number of entrances and exits. One of these leads to the bank of the Moscow River. At one of the entrances, probably the main one, there are special rooms for guards. The signal system and the automatic equipment function with the utmost precision. One officer can, within a minute, and without any noise, close and open any door of any room. Within the rooms an even temperature is maintained, and the carpets, pictures, and furniture, are looked after very carefully. My neighbor told me that the members of the Politburo, with Stalin himself at the head, had visited the underground several times. On these occasions the workers were forbidden to stop working or to look at the visitors.

Such was the story of one of the workers assigned to this unusual job, one who knew almost every secret of the underground kingdom of which few Muscovites knew, let alone the the country at large.

For the sake of greater secrecy the construction of the underground was carried out simultaneously with the construction of the Metro (the Moscow Subway). To be unseen by the people, the workers on this project were obliged to go to and from their work in the darkness of the early morning and late evening hours.

In our conversation my neighbor warned me that he had been screened by the officials of the MKVD and had to sign a document which pledged him to keep strictly secret whatever he might witness. I am quite sure that my neighbor, later and more

than once, repeated what he confided to me. I was very eager to know more details than were related to me; nevertheless, I was cautious not to show my curiosity.

In 1934, on December 1st, Kirov was assasinated. The Soviet Government used this as a good reason for its scheduled repressions, seizing everybody it did not trust. At such a time, even to think of that new Kremlin underground could be dangerous. The whole winter passed on a note of nervous tension. The wave of arrests finally took me, too...

Nineteen years have passed since the time when I first learned of the Kremlin underground. But I could not even dream of writing anything about it, for to divulge a secret like this in the Soviet Union would have been to sign one's own death sentence. Here, however, I recently read in a New York newspaper that in Washington under the White House there is a bomb shelter. This is not kept a secret from the American people, nor would the reporter who first made it known be sentenced to death or imprisonment. This is how the Russian "People's Democracy" differs from the American Democracy.

WHO IS GUILTY?

by A. D.

The American public took a very great interest in the return home of several thousand American soldiers who were captured in Korea and released at the end of the hostilities in accordance with the provisions of the Armistice agreement. Every shipload of released POW's was met with joy, not only by the immediate families, relatives and friends of the repatriated men, but by the nation as a whole.

At the same time, a certain unease was felt and a question arose, both in the press and elsewhere,—how to treat those men, who under a terrific pressure from the Communists broke down and committed acts against the interests of their country? The American public was astounded to learn that there were cases when Americans spoke, wrote, broadcast, and admitted completely false and imaginary crimes, including that of having taken part in bacteriological warfare.

Before we go any further, we should like to say that, personally, we are far from being astounded to learn that such cases have occurred. If anything does astound us, it is the fact that only a handful of men succumbed to the terrific pressure—the physical and mental torture which their Communist jailers inflicted upon them. If America is surprised to know that some of her sons showed weakness, it is only because, even at this late hour, the nature of communism is not understood, neither here, nor in the Free World generally. The Free World still can not really believe or imagine the sadistic cruelty which the Communists use when dealing with a helpless victim

Let us remember some facts of the near past. At one time or another, Stalin arrested and subsequently executed the whole leadership of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution, the so-

called "Lenin's Guard": Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Bukharin, to name only a few. All of them saw in themselves the leaders of the future world revolution, but after going through the Communist methods of interrogation and "conviction," all admitted to being traitors to communism and to having worked as agents of the "imperialistic world." Of course, neither they themselves nor their accusers, nor, in fact, anyone else believed this ridiculous charge and even more ridiculous admission. However, this did not stop Stalin from "liquidating" the disgraced leaders. It is natural to ask how, by what means, by what method were these men forced to cover themselves with opprobrium, to lose all human dignity and proclaim themselves to be the worst of criminals and traitors? Perhaps we could try to explain it by some Communist phenomenon quite beyond the understanding of anyone not a Communist. But how then explain that even such a great Prince of the Church as was the Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty broke down and admitted himself to be guilty of crimes of which he was, quite manifestly, innocent? What pressure did the Communists bring to bear on him. How did they succeed in breaknig this great and good man? It is impossible to believe that, in normal circumstances, he would have said what he did say during his trial. What is it then, how does it happen, that nearly all the accused in the Communist countries always admit themselves to be guilty?

We should like to recall a story, supposedly true. It appears that Stalin once lost one of his favorite pipes. Beria immediately took action. A dozen or so were arrested and taken to be interrogated. The next day Beria, very pleased with himself, reported to Stalin that the culprit, or rather culprits, had been discovered. Three men had confessed to the sacrilege and the only thing remaining was to find the pipe. Stalin smiled and said that obviously Beria's department was exceedingly efficient; however he, Stalin, was even more so, because he had already found the pipe. It had fallen behind his bed.

How do the Communist police force a man to admit something of which he is quite innocent, force him to make fantastic statements about himself, his family and his friends? If the Free World will understand the answer, it will also understand how it happened that a few American POW's broke down and admitted everything they were ordered to admit.

There is no nation which is composed exclusively of heroes and supermen. There are limits to an ordinary, normal man's moral and physical endurance. To force a man beyond these limits will usually result in a catastrophe for him—physical or mental. The Communist inquisitors know this fact and use it for their own ends. By every means at their disposal they bring their victim to the absolute limit of his endurance In such a condition, most men lose their personality and will power and become helpless slaves and tools of their tortureres and masters. Always first of all, the Communist attack the personality of a man, that is to say, his soul and will. Once this is broken, the rest is easy. Some have physical endurance but not moral. In some, the will power is stronger than the body. Such men die

before their spirit is broken and before they become the tools of their jailers. The Communist world is full of men who have been tortured. The millions of slaves in the Soviet labor camps have been through it: every man, woman, and child of them. Even outside the Iron Curtain one still finds men who have managed to escape the Communist hell, but who have lost their personalities and will power and are only wrecks of men, after going through the Communist methods of interrogation and punishment.

For us, who are well acquainted with the Communistic processes of "conviction," the surprising thing is not that a few American soldiers broke down and became the tools of Communist torturers. What amazes us is that there were so few of them. It is a proof of the extraordinary resistance of the American fighting man, physiological and spiritual.

But everything that took place in Korea may, tomorrow, be repeated somewhere else. The soul-destroying inquisitors may begin their dirty work in some other country. This is why all that happened in Korea is so important. It is not enough to isolate a sick man in order to cure him It is useless to combat the microbes of a plague if their breeding place is left untouched.

Moscow is just such a place. That is where the horrible microbes of evil and cruelty are born and nurtured. And as long as that breeding place exists, there will always be the danger that all humanity may become its victim.

*Georgia and Russian Expansion**

By ALEXIS IMERI

II

THE LOOT OF LIBERTY

In the first article we saw how Russia added Georgia to her teritory. In this article we shall see how the Georgian Nation reacted to this act of annexation.

THE FIRST REVOLT

The tenor of the manifesto read to the public in Sion Cathedral, and compulsion, under the whiplash, to swear an oath of allegiance to the Russian emperor and to declare the abdication of their own independent statehood, had a catastrophic effect in Tbilissi, and later throughout the entire nation. News of the abolition of the Georgian kingdom and the overthrow of the old Georgian dynasty of the Bagrations spread like wildfire over the whole of Georgia. Surprise at this incredible turn of affairs heightened quickly into general indignation and roused the unanimous, implacable determination of the people to re-establish their own kingdom.

In August 1802 the first revolt broke out in Kachethi (Khisiki). To judge from the initial measures of the national spokesmen, it would seem that the Georgians had no suspicions regarding Russian policy and good faith, and they imagined that their petitions and decisions taken at public meetings might make an impression in Petersburg.

On the 25th of July a great meeting took place and a resolution was sent to the Russian Emperor, as follows:

"We, the inhabitants of Kachethi, members of the clerical and civic states, submit to your majesty the following:

"Sire, most gracious emperor, when we swore allegiance to your majesty, the manifesto informed us that we had presumably informed your majesty's court that we had renounced our king and sought your protection without our king. This would have been a Frenchman-like republicanism. What is the crime of our superiors that we should repudiate them? The Bagrations have been ruling our country for more than 1200 years, many of them were tortured for us and have shed their blood for us and for Christ. Therefore, we kindly request that you confirm the Last Will of our well beloved King Irakli, by giving us a king according to this last will, and that you bestow your gracious protection upon us and the king that we may fulfill our duties as good citizens." Signed by the representatives of the nobility, the clergy, the body of the merchants and farmers.*

In this document, issued without any mental reservation, the actual and clear position of Georgia was expressed. According to the Russo-Georgian convention of 1783, Kharthli - Kachethi maintained its traditional state with the Bagration dynasty at its head, and the kingdom accepted the Russian Protectorate. This was the tenor of Irakli's Last Will on which the authors of the resolution based their protest, and it is quite clear that the Manifesto of 1801 represented a direct violation of the Irakli Testement.

The resolution of the Georgian protest meeting was forwarded to Emperor Alexander I in Petersburg. In response to it, Russian units under General Guljakow were sent by order of General Lasarev, to suppress the "rebellion" and to punish the "rebels" in Kachethi. The people resisted with arms and the struggle continued from August into the winter.

This was the first action of the Georgian nation against Russia and the first struggle to re-establish the lost liberty of their country. The aroused patriots informed all the Georgian districts about the facts by couriers, and Prince Alexander of Georgia, son of Irakli II, then in Persia, received a special message. He was the outstanding leader in these national struggles and the chief representative of the national aims of the Georgian people. Prudent and shrewd, with keen political instinct, he had seemingly anticipated the inevitable, fatal consequences of his beloved father's politics and he had therefore begun to move in a different direction.

The revelation of the real Russian political intentions justified the fears of the prince and influenced the heart and the thinking of the Georgian people. Prince Alexander remained in Persia when the leaders of the first open revolt called for recruits and partisans in the struggle against Russia; he could not comply with their wish that he take over the direction of the struggle; he sent an encouraging letter with hearty words for the volunteers, but he could not leave Persia, as he was in direct negotiation with the Persian Government, hoping to influence it to intervene on behalf of the Caucasian interests and to help oust the Russians from Georgian territory. Until he had a definite contract of assistance in his hands, he could not rejoin his own folk.

General Guljakow received re-inforcements, and his soldiers behaved with unrestrained cruelty, establishing gallows in order to suppress the "riots." Two hundred and eighty people lost their lives without trial, solely on the allegation of officers, or soldiers, and an equal number were killed in action. Besides, prosecution of the families of the "unreliables" was carried out. They were driven from their homes and their property was confiscated.

This, then, was the answer of the Russian emperor, administered by General Lasarev, to the reasonable and respectful petition of the Georgian people. This answer opened the eyes of the people to the ways of Russian politics and the aims of the "co-religionist" neighbor nation; even the Russophile circles were bereft of their illusions.

A Russian military occupation regime was established: all the old Georgian organizations were proscribed, the Georgian army was disbanded, Georgian administration and legislation were abolished, and the finance authorities disappeared; Geor-

-* See "Voice of Free Georgia" No2.

——* Documents of the Caucasian Archeographical Commission, Vol. I, p. 387.

gian schools were closed: the Russian language, hiterto unknown to the Georgians, became obligatory and the official means of communication; the Georgian national emblems were banned.

QUEEN MARIAM KILLS GENERAL LASAREV

From time to time we shall have occasion to refer to the modus operandi of the Russian regime. But the first and most inportant measure was, besides those already mentioned, to eliminate all those who were of importance in Georgian culture and national life and of political influence, especially the members of the royal family of the Bagrations, so beloved and esteemed by the Georgian people. The Russians could feel neither sure of themselves nor safe in this occupation regime as long as the members of the Bagration family were in the country.

David, son of George XII, successor to the Georgian throne and so acknowledged by Emperor Paul, was the first to disappear. He was called to Russia to receive investiture, but he never returned. Queen Daria, the clever and energetic widow of Irakli II, remained in Georgia, as did also Queen Mariam, widow of the last king, George XII, with her young children. The numerous family of King Irakli, with all their kinsfolk and their faithful servitors, were an aggregation of imposing strength, and they would have been able to mobilize the whole country, if necessary. After the kingdom had been abolished and the national liberty destroyed, the presence of members of the ancient national dynasty, especially that of two queens, was very dangerous for the Russian regime; therefore, after doing away with the kingdom, in accordance with old Russian custom, the family of the Georgian kings had to disappear.

On September 8, 1802, Emperor Alexander I sent General Zizianow, Administrator of Georgia, the following instruction:

> "In the files of your predecessor you will find several instructions for the transfer into Russia of the members of the Georgian Royal house. In consideration of the peace of this territory and the calm of our troops, the source of potential trouble must be removed. Your first duty is therefore to take all measures for the removel of the members of this unreliable Royal family, especially of Queen Daria, by persuasion, pressure, and even power. In my opinion, this is the first and most urgent matter."
>
> Alexander. *

Following the Emperor's order, the Russian authorities began at once to remove the descendants of Irakli II to places already prepared in Russia. This was done with the utmost caution, to simulate the appearance of voluntary travel, as the Russian government was afraid of the resistance of the people, if expulsion were suspected. General Zizianow began to carry out his assignment. The Emperor's order was made known to the queens and the Russian officials insisted on their removal to Russia. Queen Daria was confined to bed with paralyzed legs, and Queen Mariam was still very ill from her last delivery and the grief caused by the death of her husband. Both queens protested against the edict of the Russian authorities and asked for its revocation, because of their physical condition. The letters of the queens forthrightly and with simple dignity described the heart-rending realities in such a way as to move every normal thinking human heing with sympathy and compassion, but the Russian officials were filled with malice and rage.

In her letter of February 2, 1802, to the Administrator of Georgia, Queen Marian protested bitterly at the wrong and at the bad treatment by tbe Russians, and she requested that the order of removal to Russia be annulled in consideration of her bad health and because of her seven small children; she asked to be allowed to stay in her homeland, and to be buried beside her husband. The Russian government did not consider for one moment this request of the queen. She was told that the Imperial order could not be changed. Then she decided to flee from Tbilissi into the mountains, where the Russians could not find her. But to organize such an enterprise with seven small children called for considerable preparation and the Russians were informed of the queen's intention by a paid spy. On the date set, a Russian detachment led by General Lasarev encircled the palace.

This was the general's last expedition. The queen stabbed him to death with a dagger. Thus, General Lasarev—the Russian administrator of the Caucasus who, together with General Knorring, had read the death sentence of Georgia in Sion Cathedral and with whiplash and rifle-butt forced all those present in the church to take the oath of fidelity to Russia—met his end.

This action of the desperate queen is rarely told in Russian and Caucasian litereture, for the Russian police forbade recounting the event. A true and fairly exhaustive résumé can be found in the notes of Colonel Rothier in the "Journal Asiatic" of June, 1827 (Paris), and issued as a book in Bruxelles in 1829.*

Colonel Rothier (of Belgian descent) was at the time serving in the Russian army in Tbilissi. Being of high rank, he was able to attend the court inquiries into this case, and his description is based upon the official findings and trial files. Therefore his statement, which we quote in part, has special value:

"After the removal of David, legitimate heir of the last Georgian King, GeorgeXII, the royal family was dethroned and sentenced to exile. The widow of George XII, Queen Mariam, was the second wife of the king, who died on December 28, 1800. She resided in the palace of Tbilissi, was the mother of seven children, five sons and two daughters, the eldest being nine years old. She requested the Russians to let them stay in their homeland in view of the age of her little ones and of her illness. But this demand was refused by the Russians and she was ordered to go at once to Russia. The queen resolved to flee, to take refuge with her children in the high mountains, and she was in communication with Gadila, a strong and resolute mountaineer. All plans had been made in secret, but the Russians, who knew the bravery and cleverness of the queen, shadowed all her movements. The day of the flight was fixed and a Russian paid spy informed on her. The next morning, Sunday, the castle was encircled, under the direction of General Lasarev himself, who had strict orders to arrest the queen and to send her to Russia. In public the exodus was to have been arranged as though the queen were traveling with all the honors due her dignity, therefore General Lasarev was accompanied by troops of honor and by an interpreter, Captain Sorokin. The general appeared before the palace and broke into the room of the queen,where she was lying in bed. Lasarev roughly ordered: "Get up, you must be off now." The queen answered very quietly: "Why shall I go now? You see, the children are still sleeping. Who sent you such an urgent order? You know I am ill and cannot travel in such a state. Please give me sufficient time." Then the queen half-rose in the bed and pulled onto her knees a cushion in which her husband's dagger was hidden. Now Lasarev, furious that the queen did not follow his order, approached the bed and tried to draw her violently out. At this moment the queen leaped up and planted the dagger into his left breast with such a hard blow that the point came out at the back. Them she drew it out of the wound, and again with the blood-stained weapon she struck his face, saying: "Such a death is the just desert of such a fellow, who tried to add to my misfortune by violence."

Lasarev fell to the floor and died shortly after. At his first shriek, the interpreter, Sorokin, drew his sword and struck the queen several times, wounding her on the shoulder. The mother of the queen, Helen, awakened by the noise, appeared and shielded her daughter with her own body. Russian officers carried the corpse of the general out of the house. The castle was filled with soldiers, and the wounded queen, together with her children, was driven by the riflebutts of the soldiers into a carriage which was waiting for them. From Tbilissi to the N. Caucasus a strong escort accompanied them. On the way, many Georgian people came to see them and to

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——* Documents of the Caucasian Archeographical Commission, Vol. II, p. 4.

——* Colonel Rothier, Itineraire de Tiflis a Constantinople, Bruxelles, 1829.

express their sympathy. But the guards were hard and refused to allow the people to approach. Once one of the children asked for a drink, and when a Georgian man brought it, the soldiers snatched it from his hands and broke the vessel on his head."

The tragedy of Karthli - Kachethi was another hard experience for the queen. The small children were separated from her and she was transferred from one prison to another, arriving at last at Tambow. The Queen was incarcerated in a nunnery of criminals to serve there for her "crime."

The violation of the bedroom of the crowned queen, the exertion of pulling her from the bed, the use of force against her, the four sword-strokes, and the deportation of a half-dead woman into unknown Russia—all these circumstances filled the Georgian people with hot anger and indignation. Whatever people may have thought about the death of the general, the method of defence and the use of arms, all sympathies were on the side of the queen, for the murder of General Lasarev was caused directly by the brutal Russian policy and the indecent activities of Lasarev.The queen had stood guard over the dignity of her house and her people against the atrocities of the despots, and her bravery and energetic will evoked the enthusiasm and pride of all the people.

This should have been a warning to the Russians. A country like this, where even the queen did not fear to kill a general in presence of his entourage and escort of the military units, deserved special treatment; but the Russians could not understand and could not evaluate the events, hence the following years were filled with struggle and bloodshed on both sides, Russian as well as Georgian.

DEPORTATION of QUEEN DARIA

After the general's death the Russian regime grew harder and the treatment of the royal family more severe. Now Russia considered the whole family of Bagrations as its irreconcilable enemies and deported one member after another to Russia. The next in turn was Daria, aged widow of the late king, Irakli II. Because of her age she could never have engaged in political activity but she was still the living witness to Georgia's glory of yesterday. Therefore she remained, in the eyes of the people, the queen, even after the abolition of the Georgian kingdom. She was very prudent and astute and her wishes and ideas were executed promptly, without criticism. That this was recognized as a danger for Russia appears clear, since Emperor Alexander gave special orders for the removel of Queen Daria to Russia, as one of the first and most important measures. Her illness and her demands did not move the hearts of the usurper, and the local authorities were not able to change the situation. When she received the summons to leave on September 11, 1803, she answered the administrator in the followng words:

"I have received your letter of the 10th inst., by which you order my removal to Russia. I assure your excellency that I am ill, and under a solemn oath I assure you again and again that my illness is such that I cannot move my legs, neither stand nor walk; the upper part of the body is quite normal, but the lower part is without life and paralyzed, and a cure is quite impossible. I believe neither the emperor nor your excellency would have any profit if I should die on the way. Considering my bad state of health and my age, I beg you to hand a passport to a messenger to take my polite request to the emperor and have me delay until a favorable answer is received." *

The queen made a grave mistake in writing: "I believe neither the emperor nor your excellency would have any profit if I should die on the way." This was precisely the aim of the Russian administration, and the request of the queen to give her a respite was not to be allowed. It is a bitter irony of history that the wife of Irakli should have been expelled by those who had been called upon for the protection of herself, her husband and her crown. The invited guests seized the country and sent their host to Siberia!

On October 25th, 1803, Queen Daria was taken to Russia; this is described by a Russian historians as follows: "Two com-

——* Documents of the Caucasian Archeographic Commission, Vol. II, p. 98-99.

panies of seventeen riflemen were sent to Muchrani to encircle the castle. Then six sergeants of the riflemen and dragoons were ordered to enter the house and to look for arms which might be in the possession of the queen and her attendants. The interpreter told her to go down or to let herself be carried down, but to follow him voluntarily and without delay. As the queen saw what had happened and that two companies of soldiers confronted her, she consented, and after having taken Holy Communion once more, she was removed to Russia.**

RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATION

After having banished the two queens, the Russians began to expel all members of the royal family and the political leaders of the country. All thought of national liberty and every remembrance of the ancient, independent Georgian State must be completely eradicated; not before this goal had been reached could the Russians be satisfied. Consequently the Russians were forced to remove or to annihilate physically and mentally this living generation which held adamantly to the idea of the old political order. It was necessary not only to displace some score of influential persons, but to destroy all people active in the political, cultural, economic, and clerical sectors, as well as military and administrative men, and to educate the young generation according to Russian ideals. This was a long-range plan, but the Russian regime began at once to activate it, cold-bloodedly and with unremitting energy, and deportations to the north of Russia and Siberia became a daily occurrence. These rigorous measures of the Russian occupation authorities aroused the Georgian people and the will to defy and the power of resistance increased steadly.

The fighting spirit of the Georgian people was strengthened by the incompatibility of the Russian social order which the intruders tried to establish in the occupied country. In addition to the national suppression, a special system after the Russian political pattern, the like of which Georgia had never known, was introduced. To establish the Russian administration, scores of so-called "officials" were transferred to Georgia In order not to be charged with one-sidedness, critical examination may be cited from Russan sources and official documents and reports. To begin with, Alexander I himself invented the title of the "Warm Siberia," and therefore all officials who showed themselves unfit, unsocial, and criminal in Russia were punished by transfer to Georgia. These "functionaries" who were banished from Russia because of corruption, debauchery, and other disqualifications, felt totally unrestrained, and being far away from Petersburg, they fashioned their "administration" to suit their own notions and convenience.

The first administrator of Georgia, Kovalenski, who had been the first plenipotentiary of Russia at the court of the last Georgian king, started his activities by hoarding in his residence all currency of gold and silver. Later he used this money to purchase immense stocks of wool which he sold to the Russian state factories at favorable price.* N. Dubrowin writes:

"The crimes of the Russian officials reached the maximum. The unfitness of the new government was more apparent from day to day, and the people remembered with joy and love the past era. Before the public courts, the Georgian people were insulted and plaintiffs and defendants were very often beaten. The least suspicion was sufficient for an arrest, and the apprehended person was taken from one town to another, walking with hands bound on the back and a rope around the neck. Besides this, the officials often seized and raped the women of the villages.**

All these Russian officials had but one aim —to enrich themselves as much as possible —and for this purpose all ways and means were sanctioned. No Georgian inhabitant could appeal in the courts. At

—** N. Dubrowin. History of the War and Russian Government in the Caucasus, Vol. IV, pp. 124-125,

——* See documents of the Caucasian Archeographical Commission, Vol. II, p.14. sides this, the officials often seized and raped the women of the villages.**

——** See documents of the C. A. C., Vol. II, p. 14 & 17.

that period, the so-called "formal jurisdiction" in practice in Russia was transplanted to Georgia, and everybody was forced to submit his complaints in correct Russian. It is doubtful that even one Georgian was able to present a report in the Russian language without a single mistake. Thus it was impossible for the Georgians to bring their cases before the court, and the country was governed by corrupt and immoral "officials" who assessed at their own discreton, taxed the people, issued orders, imposed fines and warrants of arrest against the "culpable," and executed them. In addition, there were compulsory billetings. The inhabitants of all communities were forced to lodge a certain number of soldiers in their homes. Because of the permanent war activities and the frequent movement of troops, nearly every village was constantly filled with soldiers. The theft of food, cattle, and other property increased more and more in the occupied places, and the rape of women was in the order of the day.

It must be remembered that, at that time, Russian soldiers served from twenty to thirty years and even a whole life-time in the army, and it is quite understandable that these men, tired of the severe life in the barracks, the hard regulations, and the continual combat, should have lost all sensibility and regard for family life and respect for women. One must also consider that in Russia the relation between men and women was very primitive, especially among the common folk; it was not even considered immoral when a married woman amused herself with a friend. On the other hand, in Georgia, quite another attitude prevailed with regard to marriage, esteem for women, and an unimpeachable code towards married women. In Georgia the family is sacred, the mother of the family is the object of the highest veneration, and indecent behavior or violence towards women are counted as extreme crimes. Offences and insults levelled at families and at women were intolerable, therefore encounters between Russians and Georgians very often took place. Frequently the inhabitants of a whole village took up arms to protect the family honor of a neighbor.

These circumstances proved sufficient to create a tense atmosphere tending towards insurrection. Armed riots broke out on slight pretext and the Russian authorities gave abundant provocation. The insurrection of 1802 was quickly and easily suppressed, for the people did not expect an answer by arms and cannons to a petition made in the proper way. The source of the discontent did not change, however, and the reprisals increased, bolstering and deepening the existing enmity and hostility.

(to be continued)

A CORRECTION: In *The Voice of Free Georgia,* No. 3, September 1953, the chronology of the Georgian kings on page 31 should read as follows: After David came Dimitri (1125-1156); David IV (1156-1150, a reign of six months); Giorgi III (1156-1184); and the great Queen Thamar (1184-1214).

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