

Armenians in India

According to the widespread Armenian version, Armenians ended up in India in 327 BC with the army of Alexander the Great. The Commander's route to India, allegedly, ran through Armenia, and the Armenians then joined his army. The earliest documentary references concerning relations between Armenians and Indians can be found in the Cyropaedia by Xenophon (430 BC - 355 BC). According to the source, Armenians often traveled to India and knew the overland routes well. They were also well-informed about the political, socio-cultural, and economic life of the Indian subcontinent. But is this true?

According to classical sources, in 327 BC, Alexander the Great started a campaign in India. He passed through the Achaemenid Empire and set foot on lands hitherto unknown to the Macedonians. The Commander and his companions had mostly exotic perceptions of India. There was an objective idea about neither the country's size nor the difficulties associated with the campaign, and even more so the countries laying even further to the east. In those years, e.g., the ancient Greeks had very poor knowledge about the existence of China. It's about the 4th century BC.

On his way to India, Alexander the Great faced Darius III at Issus (near the current Turkish city of Hatay on the border with Syria) in 333 BC and Gaugamela near the present-day city of Erbil in Northern Iraq in 331 BC. After these victories and the conquest of Central Asia, he moved to India. He did not pass through the province of Armenia, which was part of the Achaemenid State. And the Armenian ethnos did not yet then exist as such. Many centuries later, the ancestors of present-day Armenians gave the name 'Armenia' and formed a new Armenian nation around the Church.

The earliest Armenian monument discovered in India is a khachkar of 1611, preserved in a cemetery in Agra.

In 1794-1796, the world's first Armenian periodic Azdarar was published in Madras, edited by Archpriest Harutyun Shmavonyan.

When and how did Armenians end up in India?

The Turks first appeared in India around 1000. These were the Ghaznavids - the Turkic dynasty of Emirs and Sultans of the city of Ghazni (present-day southern Afghanistan), ruled in 961-1186. The Ghaznavids founded a state that occupied the territories of present-day Khorasan, Afghanistan, Khorezm, Bukhara, Gurgan, and the northern provinces of India.

Less than two centuries later, in 1194, the Turkic Commander Qutbuddin Aibak conquered India and founded the Delhi Sultanate, which was the first major Islamic Turkic state on the territory of present-day India, existed in the northern part of the latter until 1526. During that period, Delhi became the capital of the

State for the first time. Also for the first time in history, millions of Hindus were ruled by the followers of Islam.

Then the Great Mogul Empire emerged - the Timurid State that existed on the territory of present-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and southeastern Afghanistan from 1526 to 1858. The entire ruling class that came to India together with Babur, according to Kazakh orientalist E.I. Rudenko, called themselves 'Turanian.'

The name 'Great Moguls' appeared already under the English colonialists, although neither the Empire founder nor his descendants called themselves this way. The term 'Mogul' was used by the Indian population to refer to all Muslims of North India and Central Asia.

The dynasty founder Babur, a native of Andijan (a city in Uzbekistan), wrote in his memoirs, "The Andijan inhabitants are Turks; there is no one in the city and the bazaar who does not know Turkic. The people's speech is similar to the literary one." "Babur's memoirs are written in the Turkish language dialect, which is known as Turkic, the native language of Babur," noted English orientalist E. Denison Ross. Babur was a direct descendant of the legendary Tamerlane (by his father) and Genghis Khan (by his mother).

The first to support Babur in Central Asia was Shah Ismail I, the ruler of the Safavid State established by the Qizilbash tribal confederation and existed from 1501 to 1722.

The Safavids were of Azerbaijani origin.

Babur conquered all of Central India by 1529.

Caravan trade between the two empires intensified.

Safavid Persia had strengthened again during the reign of Abbas I (1587-1629), known in the history of Iran under the honorary name of Mirza (Great). He strengthened his sole power, cruelly disposed of internal enemies, and moved the capital from Tabriz to Isfahan (a city in Iran).

Among other things, Shah Abbas granted great privileges to Armenians. He gave Armenians land on the outskirts of Shah's capital, where they founded their settlement. Armenians were allowed to profess their faith and culture and be engaged in trade. Isfahan was one of the main cities on the Silk Road from India to Constantinople. And Armenians used their chance. Many of them became the richest people in Persia. Since the Safavid State continued to support the Great Moguls, Armenians started migrating from Iran to India.

Akbar I the Great, the third Padishah of the Great Mogul Empire and the grandson of the Babur Dynasty founder, also favored Armenians. At the end of the

16th century, he allowed them to settle in Agra, and by the middle of the 19th century, Agra had already a significant Armenian population.

By his decree, Armenian merchants were exempted from taxes on imported and exported goods. Like all Christians, they were free to move throughout the Great Mogul Empire.

History of India by Khojamalyan

Armenians claim that the key historical source on the history of Armenians in India is Tovmas Khojamalyan's manuscript 'History of India.'

Tovmas Khojamalyan spoke ancient Armenian, English, Persian, Bengali, and some other languages and knew the history of Armenia and India very well. In 1768, Tovmas Khodjamalyan started working on the manuscript 'History of India' and completed it the same year. According to the surviving aid-memoir by T. Khojamalyan, his famous 'History' was based on real historical facts described in the documents of the royal archive of Shah Alam, where he managed to penetrate and make the necessary extracts.

Tovmas Khodjamalyan died in 1780 in Agra and was buried in Delhi in the 'Armenian cemetery.' His grave with a tombstone and an inscription in Armenian can still be found today. Unfortunately, the original manuscript of the 'History of India' has not come down to us. One of the well-known public figures of the Armenian colony in India, Martiros Mkrtychyan, believed that Khojamalyan's manuscript was of great interest as not only a source about the history of India but a work illuminating the life of the Armenian community in this country.

Khojamalyan's manuscript 'History of India' further fell into the hands of a publicist, democrat-educator, and a great friend of the Indian people Mesrop Takhiadyan, who in 1845-1848 published in Calcutta the 'Azgaser' ('Patriot') journal, and in 1848-1852, - Azgaser Araratyan.

How could Khojamalyan penetrate the archive of Shah Alam and 'make the necessary extracts'? The fact is that the original manuscript of the 'History of India' has not come down to us. According to an Indian Armenian scholar, the 'navigator and merchant' Khojamalyan had close ties with the ruling circles of India. Then the manuscript of Khodjamalyan's 'History of India' somehow fell into the hands of Mesrop Takhiadyan, who composed 'History of India' at the age of 25. Here the question arises, is not Takhiadyan's 'History of India' a revision of the cognominal work by Khojamalyan?

The Sad End of Gorgin Khan

According to Armenian sources, several Armenians occupied high positions at different times and under different rulers of India. One of them was Gurgen Khan - the Commander of the Bengal troops (India) under the Nawab (governor)

Mir Qasim. Gurgin Khan originates from an Armenian knyaz family. In their writings on the history of India, English authors pass over in silence the history of the Indian Armenians. Armenian sources call Grigor Harutyunyan Gorgin Khan and note that he earned great respect from the Hindus and on significant days, cross flags were also raised along with Indian banners 'in honor of 'Armenians.' Gorgin Khan was the only Christian who was honored to be buried according to the military rite of the Sikhs. A square named after Gorgin Khan is in Delhi (its second name is 'Square of Courage'). Let us try to investigate the merits of Gorgin Khan. For a start, the residential area of the Sikhs is the northwest of India. Bengal is in the northeast of India. Then Gorgin Khan should have been buried according to the rite of the Bengalis?

An Armenian source reports that during the meeting between Shah Alam and Mir Qasim, the Commander of the Bengali troops Grigor Harutyunyan was personally received by the Ruler of India, who awarded the Armenian the highest rank of five thousander.

In his work 'The Initial History of All Nations from the Birth of Christ to the Present Day,' Harutyun Charyan (18th century) reports that "the number of Armenians – junior and senior officers in the Bengal army reached 10,000." Along with them, a special Armenian battalion fought in the ranks of the Nawab army. Here the question arises, if the number of Armenians in the Bengal army was 10,000, then why did Shah Alam award him the rank of five thousander?

Shah Alam II was the Padishah of the Great Moguls from 1759 to 1806. After the defeat at Buxar (a city in the state of Bihar, in eastern India) in November 1764, Shah Alam II ceded Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa to the British East India Company. Being exiled by the British to Allahabad, however, in January 1772, he took the throne again through the mediation of the Safavid Prince Mirza Najaf Khan.

In 1735, Nadir Shah dethroned the Safavid Dynasty and performed a campaign to India in 1738-39, whereupon Mirza Najaf Khan arrived in Delhi in 1740. He married the sister of Shah Alam II from the Shia family of the Nawab of Oudh and received the title of Deputy Wazir of Oudh. Mirza Najaf Khan participated in the Battle of Buxar and was the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Great Mogul army from 1772 until his death in April 1782.

In 1633, the British received permission to trade in Bengal. In 1690, the British East India Company started settling Calcutta since it was engaged in trade with Bengal. According to the Shah Alam II Firman dated August 12, 1765, the East India Company received the right to rule and collect taxes from the population of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. Currently, Bihar, West Bengal, and Orissa are the northeastern states of India. East Bengal is Bangladesh.

In those years, Grigor Harutyunyan entered the scene, who bore the name Gorgin Khan and then became Gurgin Khan. Grigor Harutyunyan was a native of Nor Jugha (Isfahan, Iran), the son of a prominent merchant, Kalantar of the

Armenian community Isfahan Harutyunyan and the brother of the famous Petros Harutyunyan (Agha Petros).

In the 17th century, India greatly intensified its overland trade with countries situated to the west and northwest of it, which led to the emergence of settlements of Indian merchants, mainly from Punjab and Rajputana, on the main routes of caravan trade. During the same period, the Safavid State stimulated and actively expanded foreign trade to the countries of Asia and Europe. The status of the merchants was honorable: they enjoyed the special patronage of the ruling dynasty and were closely related to the feudal class. Among the merchant guilds and companies, Armenians from Nor Jugha stood out in particular, who participated in foreign trade on behalf of the Shah. At the same time, ships were sailing between the ports of Bandar Abbas (Iran) and Surat (India).

Petros Harutyunyan came to India when he was young, most likely, during the Indian campaign of Nadir Shah in 1738-1739. He was engaged in trade in Calcutta. There he was well in with the governor and supplied the British with food, which took him to their advisor. He played a major role in the appointment of Jafarali Khan Nawab in 1757, and then Mir Qasim in 1761, to whom his brother Grigor was appointed advisor.

Grigor Harutyunyan came to India on the recommendation of his older brother Petros, where he was first engaged in trade in Murshidabad.

Grigor Harutyunyan, his older brother Petros Harutyunyan, and some Armenian merchants helped Mir Qasim, who, with their assistance, gratitude the East India Company with generous gifts for the support in his ascension to the Bengal throne. Then Grigor was appointed advisor to Mir Qasim, but was not satisfied with this position and started pandering to the British. Soon he was killed in the camp of Mir Qasim's army. According to one version, Grigor did not pay or paid only part of the salaries to the soldiers, and they killed him. Upon learning of this, Mir Qasim hurried to the wounded Grigor on an elephant. Why not on a horse? According to another Armenian version, contacts with the British caused Gregory to be distrusted by the Padishah of Great Mogils Shah Alam, who ordered his death.

Mariam Zamani Begum

Armenian authors assert that one of Akbar's wives, Mariam Zamani Begum, was an Armenian: "The wife of Akbar I was an Armenian Mariam Zamani Begum, for whose sake the Emperor built an Armenian Church in the city in 1642. The Church is distinguished by national color (most of the Armenian churches in India resemble Catholic and Protestant ones) and the cross, which was soon depicted everywhere, up to the walls of residential buildings, and became a symbol of healing from any disease." Further, during Ottoman rule, Armenians emigrated en masse from their historical homeland to India. The family of Mariam-uz-Zamani's ancestors was no exception.

"The Rajput Princess or, as she was called in her maiden name, Hira Kunwari, originated from a noble Armenian clan. This is confirmed by many

testimonies left to us by the Indian Armenians who moved to India in the 16th and 17th centuries.”

Armenian sources read this. Who actually was Mariam Zamani Begum (1542-1623)? It should be noted that she was also referred to under several other names including Hira Kunwari, Harkha Bai, and Jodha Bai. Mariam uz-Zamani professed Hinduism. Born in 1562 as a Hindu-Rajput Princess, Mariam uz-Zamani was given in marriage to Akbar by her father, Raja Bharmal of Amber.

Rajputs are representatives of ancient Indian clans. Raja Bharmal also professed Hinduism.

The wedding, which took place at Sambhara, had a political nature and was a sign of her father's complete submission to his imperial overlord. Her marriage to Akbar led to a gradual change in his religious and social policies. Her example is traditionally cited in contemporary Indian historiography as Akbar's and the Great Moguls' tolerance for different religions and their comprehensive policy within an expanding multi-ethnic and multireligious empire.

Mariam uz-Zamani was the mother of the eldest (by the moment of his father's death) son Akbar and his successor Jahangir. The wedding took place on February 6, 1562, when Akbar was returning to Agra.

For the whole world, the marriage with the Amber Princess became the evidence that Akbar decided to become the Padishah or Shahinshah of all his people, i.e., both Hindus and Muslims.

Akbar took many Rajput princesses as his wives since rajahs could get many benefits from relations to the Padishah's family. He made such marriages honorable for the Rajputs. Akbar did not convert any of his Hindu wives to Islam and allowed them to perform their rituals in the palace; sometimes he even took part in them.

Mariam uz-Zamani died in 1623. Her tomb, built at the behest of her son in 1623-1627, is located on the Tantpur road, now known as Jetti Nagar, just a kilometer from Akbar's tomb. The Mariam Zamani Begum Sahiba Mosque has been built by Jahangir in her honor and is located in the Old City of Lahore (present-day Pakistan).

Mumtaz Mahal

As the respected reader may guess, the Armenian tradition of appropriation and mythmaking could not do without claims to the identity of Mumtaz Mahal, the beloved wife of Shah Jahan (1627-1658). The ruler's faithful wife and wise assistant died during the next delivery. Shah was shocked by the death of his beloved wife. He started building a mausoleum in honor of her. Tens of thousands of workers were involved in the grandiose construction, and after 18 years, humanity received the pearl of architectural art, a masterpiece of world heritage, 'a tear on the cheek of eternity,' - the famous Taj Mahal mausoleum. The glory of the

Taj Mahal could not give rest to Armenian ‘historians,’ and to somehow signify their involvement in one of the seven wonders of the world, they start promoting a fictitious story that supposedly, Mahal Mumtaz was an Armenian.

However, the facts say something completely different. It is known for certain that Mumtaz’s father Abdul Hasan Asaf Khan was the brother of Empress Nur Jahan, Jahangir's wife. Her paternal grandfather Mirza Giyas Bey was the great Wazir of Shah Jahangir.

Were poets Mirza Zul-Qarnayn and Sarmad Armenians?

In Akbar’s palace, the senior judge Mir Adil Abdul Ai was the Armenian. His daughter Lady Juliana was a doctor in the Padishah’s harem and was given in marriage to Jean Philippe of Bourbon-Navarre from the French royal family. There was no other Armenian woman in the palace.

Armenian authors write that the son of Abdul’s another daughter and an Armenian merchant from Aleppo was adopted by the Padishah and given into care to his Armenian wife, from whom he had no children. This boy later became a famous poet in Indian history Mirza Zul-Qarnayn.

According to Mesrovb Jacob Seth, Abdul's daughter Lady Juliana (died 1598), a doctor in Akbar's harem, married Sikandar Mirza.

Mesrovb Jakob Seth was a writer, historian, and schoolteacher of classical literature at the Armenian College and Philanthropy Academy in Kolkata.

Sikandar Mirza (or Iskander/Alexander Mirza) (died in 1613) was an Armenian merchant who traveled from Aleppo to Lahore and became a trusted figure within Akbar's court in the Great Mogul Empire.

His son was Mirza Zul-Qarnayn (c. 1594 - c. 1656), who was an important official in the court of Shah Jahan.

Mirza Zul-Qarnayn, the adopted son of Akbar, was a polyglot, in particular, he was fluent in Portuguese. There is no exact information on Mirza Zul-Qarnayn. Akbar did not have an Armenian wife. Maybe he was Akbar’s illegitimate son.

Another famous ‘Armenian poet’ in India was Sarmad, who lived in the 17th century.

Sarmad Kashani, also known as Muhammad Said (1590-1661) was a Persian-speaking poet and mystic of Jewish origin, a Sufi saint revered in India. He was born in Iran to a family of Jewish merchants. Then Kashani converted to Islam and became a supporter of Sufi mysticism. In his Rubaiyyat, Kashani characterized his confessional identity as follows: “Furqan supporter, Christian priest, Buddhist monk, rabbi, atheist, and Muslim.” It is assumed that Sarmad was executed by Aurangzeb (Padishah of the Great Mogul Empire Alamgir I, 1658-1707) in 1671 being accused of heresy and/or atheism. Sarmad had nothing to do with Armenians.

Blacksmith Nazar Khan

Armenian authors and 'Indian historians of Armenian origin' report that from 1760 onward, Indian weapons were mainly manufactured by Armenians. Prominent weapons specialists were Shah Nazar Khan, who worked for Ahmad Shah Durrani in Lahore, and his compatriot Gurgun Khan, the Armenian minister and Commander-in-Chief under Nawab Mir Qasim in Bengal (1760-1763).

As 'Armenian Indian historian' Mesrobian Jakob Seth wrote, Zam-Zammah was a symbol of the military spirit, preserved among Armenians, and their ability to make weapons. Armenians can not only drive a plow or hold a 'daftar' (trade book). It turns out that they can also create greatest weapons, and Shah Nazar Khan was not alone in this view.

Gurgun Khan, i.e. Grigor Harutyunyan, had nothing to do with the manufacture of weapons.

The Zamzama Gun ('Zam-Zammah' or 'Zam-Zammeh'), also known as Kim's Gun or Bhangianwali Toap, was a large-bore cannon. It was cast in about 1757 in Lahore, present-day Pakistan, during the Durrani Empire. It is currently on display in front of the Lahore Museum in Lahore, Pakistan.

The Durrani Empire was founded by Ahmad Shah Durrani in Kandahar (Afghanistan) in 1747, after the death of Nadir Shah, one of whose commanders was Ahmad Shah.

The era of firearms begins in the 14th century with the invention of gunpowder and its use as a propellant. Cannons replaced the ancient throwing weapons. Different countries started manufacturing light cannons from steel, and then large ones from bronze.

Not only blacksmiths were involved in creating weapons. The manufacturing process included drawings, molding, casting, bore drilling, external turning, and final hand finishing. Dozens of people of various profiles participated in the process, and the Armenian Shah Nazir was just a blacksmith.

In 1757, in Lahore, Shah Nazir (metal blacksmith) created the Zamzama large-bore cannon under the leadership of the Wazir Shah Wali Khan, by the order of Ahmad Shah Durrani. The cannon bears the date of manufacture, the names of the monarch and the technician, as well as verses in Persian with floral patterns on the barrel. The inscription on the front side reads: "By the order of the Emperor, Duri Durran, Shah Wali Khan Wazir made the gun named Zamzama or the Taker of Strongholds." The cannon's creator is Shah Wali Khan.

Armenians call the Christian cemetery in Agra Armenian.

The oldest European cemetery in India was founded in Agra in the 17th century by Armenian merchant Khwaja Mortenepus. Several tombstones with inscriptions in Armenian have been preserved, including those of blacksmith Shah Nazir Khan and the cemetery's founder himself.

The distance from Agra to Delhi is about 200 kilometers. Together with Delhi and Jaipur, Agra forms the Golden Triangle - the most popular tourist route in India. There is a mosque, a college, and a Catholic cemetery. The cemetery (Roman Catholic Cemetery) hosts the tombs of European missionaries, merchants, and military men. The largest mausoleum was built in 1803 from the red sandstone for Dutchman John Helsing, who commanded the army of the Ruler of Gwalior from the Maratha Sindhia clan.

One of the oldest tombs belongs to J. Mildenhall, who arrived at the court of the Mogul Emperor Akbar in 1603 as an envoy of the English Queen Elizabeth I with a request to trade with India. He died in 1614.

There is no information on merchant Khwaja Mortenepus. How could he establish a cemetery? Armenians saw the merchant's tombstone and immediately spread the information that merchant Khwaja Mortenepus 'founded an Armenian cemetery.'

The facts show that Padishah Akbar allocated the land, which became a cemetery for Christian Europeans, including Armenians. Starting from the 1660s, Indian Armenians began to actively support the British and cooperate with the East India Company. Armenians received all the privileges and rights of British citizenship in India. They were allowed to settle and trade freely in the cities. The British allocated land to Armenians for churches, which were built at the Company's expense.

Recent History

Armenians continue residing in India after the establishment of the Republic of Armenia.

The most famous Armenian institution in India is the Armenian College and Charitable Academy (founded in 1821). Currently, about 125 children from the local Armenian population, the Republic of Armenia, Iran, and Iraq study at the College.

There is also an Armenian Sports Club (founded in 1890, operating).

There are 8 Armenian churches. In total, there are no more than 130 Armenians in India. In India, Armenians were mainly engaged in trade and commerce.

Recall that the population of India is about 1.4 billion.

Presidents L. Ter-Petrosyan, R. Kocharyan, and S. Sargsyan visited India, respectively, in December 1995, October-November 2003, and November 2-4, 2017.

Armenia supports India's position on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Azerbaijan supports the position of Pakistan.

Herewith, India has diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan and Armenia. Pakistan has friendly relations with Azerbaijan, explicitly supports Azerbaijan's

position on the Karabakh issue, and neither recognizes Armenia nor has diplomatic relations with it.

In Pakistan, an Armenian diaspora has also resided for several hundred years. Armenians live in Islamabad, Karachi, and Lahore. Their number is about one hundred.

In October 2021, Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar visited Yerevan. In April 2022, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan visited India.

Afterword

Worldwide

In his book 'Armenia: Cradle of Civilization,' English historian David Lang tells the history of spreading Armenians around the world. According to him, in 965, Emperor Nicephorus II takes the city of Constantinople back under the reign of the Byzantine Empire. The ruling Greek elite appoints several Armenian governors of important cities, entrusting them with the command of local military units and endowing them with large estates. Gradually, these governors acquired the status of hereditary rulers and made their possessions relatively independent enclaves and private baronies. Armenians actively helped the crusaders with food and military equipment in Cilicia (southeast Turkey). Cilicia opened the door to the Western world for Armenians. Through this door, they were destined to pass to the Mediterranean and Western countries and settle in Cyprus, Cairo, Smyrna (Izmir, Turkey), and even Venice and Marseilles. In later years, their community flourished in Constantinople (Istanbul) under the reign of the Ottoman Empire. An Armenian Patriarchy was established in Jerusalem. They even managed to settle in Holland and be engaged in printing in Amsterdam since the 17th century. Armenians also managed to take root in Romania, Poland, Hungary, and later Russia.

David Marshall Lang (1924-1991) served as a military officer in Iran during World War II. In 1944, he was appointed acting Vice Consul in Tabriz, where he met Armenians living in the city. In 1949, he started working for the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the London University, first as a Georgian language teacher and then as a lecturer; in 1964, Lang became a professor of Caucasian studies and for a long time, headed the cognominal department at the London University. He has also taught at Columbia and California Universities. He repeatedly visited the USSR, primarily Soviet Armenia (three times). His books 'Armenia: Cradle of Civilization' and 'The Georgians' have been translated into Russian. He is considered an expert in the history of Georgia, Armenia, and Bulgaria. Lang also studied the history of Christianity in Rus. In 1959, his work 'First Russian Radicals' was published, in which he studied the early heretical movements in Ancient Rus. All these works become the basis for his book 'History of Georgia' (1962), where he consistently describes events of the early stage of forming the Georgian people and statehood in this region.

Lang made no secret of his sympathy for Armenians and Georgians. This is evident from the titles of his books and epithets in the text.

However, his writings contain a lot of inaccuracies and distortions, especially in the names of cities and individuals and toponyms. His writings are based on Armenian mythmaking and therefore, have many errors. However, there are points in his writings, which provide useful information to objectively cover the issue.

Serving the High and Mighty

From the beginning of the 4th century, Vagharshapat (now Etchmiadzin) was the residence of the Catholicoi of the Sasanian province called Armenia. Then there were no Armenian language and the Armenian nation. In subsequent centuries, there were continuous wars in these territories between the Byzantines, on the one hand, and, in different years, the Sassanids, Arabs, and Seljuk Turks, on the other hand. Starting from the second half of the 11th century, the center of the Armenian Church was located on the territory of Cilicia (the eastern part of the Mediterranean coast of Turkey). Catholicoi then returned to Etchmiadzin in 1441.

The first stage ended with Armenians serving the high and mighty of the time: either the Byzantines or the Sasanids or the Arabs or the crusaders.

The second stage covers the period up to the beginning of the 18th century. During that period, thanks to the patronage of the Turkic rulers, Armenians achieved everything they have today.

Then, the third stage begins - serving strengthened Russia.

Armenians among the Turks

In the eastern part of Asia Minor (the eastern part of present-day Turkey, the southern part of Dagestan of the Russian Federation, Iran, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan), there were the Turkic States of Karakoyunlu (1375-1468), Akkoyunlu (1467-1501), the Kyzylbash State of the Safavids, and the States of the Afsharids and Qajars (1500-1925). These States are directly related to present-day Azerbaijanis, the descendants of these formations.

At the end of 1441, when the crisis within the Armenian Apostolic Church intensified, the Catholicosate moved to Uchkilisa or Uchmuazzin with the permission of the Ruler of the Azerbaijani State of Garagoyunlu (1410-1468) Jahan Shah. According to the opinion of Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi (1763-1780), the reason for moving from Cilicia was that in 1439, the Patriarch of Cilicia sent his representatives to Florence expressing a desire to accept Catholicism, which caused discontent among Armenians living in other regions.

‘Uchkilisa’ in Turkic means ‘Three Temples.’ ‘Uchmuazzin’ means ‘Three Muezzins.’ There were also mosques and Albanian temples in this area. Later, rich Armenians started buying land and villages around Uchmuazzin from the heirs of Emir Saad, who owned these lands.

In the suburbs of Yerevan, the mausoleum of Emir Saad stands. On February 2, 2019, Deputy Director of the Research Center for Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Ministry of Culture of Armenia, Hovhannes Sanamyan, in an interview with Armenian News - NEWS.am, said that a representative of the Karakoyunlu Dynasty, Emir Saad ruled part of Armenia. The mausoleum was built in 1441 by the order of his son, Emir Pir-Hussein.

In the 15th-18th centuries, there was a historical region of Chukhur-Saad as part of the States of Karakoyunlu and Safavids, which included the territories of the Republic of Armenia and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan.

After the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottomans (1453), Armenians were allowed to establish their Church in the new Ottoman capital. In 1461, Sultan Mehmet II Fatih founded the Patriarchate of Armenians in Constantinople.

Akbar I the Great (1542-1605) permitted the free exercise of all religions in India. Armenians were allowed to perform free trade, as in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, and then in the territory of the Great Moguls. In 1562, with the permission of Akbar I, Armenians built their Church in the city of Agra (India).

In 1602-1622, the Safavid and Ottoman Empires waged continuous wars. Etchmiadzin passed from hand to hand. Shah Abbas I decided to create a diocese (a reserve for the case of the loss of Etchmiadzin) for Armenians. He gathered Armenians, who were scattered in different places, in the suburbs of the capital Isfahan. Shah Abbas I gave them land plots to build the city, which was named New Julfa. The Armenian community of the city enjoyed the right of self-government, Armenians elected the headman - 'kalantar.'

This is how the Turkic rulers treated Armenians. Armenians were free. They knew European languages, Persian and Arabic, and quickly mastered the Turkic language, which became their second native language. They were hired as interpreters for public and private institutions. Over time, they became assistants to major merchants and governors, diplomats, then ministers, etc. They traded freely within a vast territory from Morocco to Bangladesh and quickly got rich.

Armenian Disinformation

E.g., the 'Armenian genocide.' At the Lausanne Conference, the Armenian delegation announced figures on the resettlement of Armenians in Arab countries and the movement of Armenians to Russia and other countries.

In 1914, the population of the Ottoman Empire was 14 million. About 10% of the population, i.e. 1.4 million, were Armenians. The Russian, French, and English archives specify the figures of 1.3-1.4 million Armenians. When subtracting the figures provided by the Armenian delegation, it turns out that 280-300 thousand people are missing. The Armenian population lived densely in the eastern regions. In these areas, the Armenian population made up almost 30%. The

eastern front passed just there. According to Turkish data, during the First World War, more than 1 million people died in these areas from hunger, cholera, and typhoid. Armenians were also among them.

Here the brazen distortion of facts and figures begins. The figure of 300,000 transforms into 700,000, 1 million, and even 2.5 million; then they stopped and probably thought that 1.5 million was enough. This figure was voiced on radio and television, in information channels throughout the world, and specified in articles, books, and textbooks. The whole world repeated that 1.5 million Armenians were killed but factually, there were about 300,000 dead and not from the genocide, which did not happen. Naturally, Armenians managed to approve the figure of 1.5 million with the help and strong support of, first of all, France, England, Russia, and the United States, then some other countries joined them for political and religious reasons.

Of course, such an excellent result inspires new disinformation. Armenian authors write that 10,000 Armenians fought in the Bengal army. Some indicate that there was a battalion of Armenians. When speaking about the size of the Armenian community in India in the 18th century, Armenians themselves report the figure of 5000, 1500, or 2000.