

**Acknowledgment of Armenian Terrorism by an Armenian Author  
(Book Review: Markar Melkonyan. My Brother's Road:  
An American's Fateful Journey to Armenia)**

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A book on Armenian terrorism is not and should not be a new and surprising phenomenon for anyone. There is more than enough factual information contained in web-sites, books and booklets on Armenian terrorism, which claims for thousands of lives.

However, the memoir in which Markar Melkonyan discusses the career of his brother Monte, is significant not only because it opens a window to the hidden world of Armenian terrorism, but perhaps even more so because it represents a rare Armenian acknowledgment of Armenian terrorism, war crimes and crimes against humanity in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. The author's descriptive style that takes the reader to a murky and taciturn life of terrorist Monte is useful to get his, if not complete, but at least comprehensive life picture that may pave the way to investigate yet unknown other crimes committed by him.

The memoir is also unique, at least I can claim, in acknowledging Armenian terrorism and the grave war crimes committed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Of course, acknowledgement of Armenian terrorism and killing of innocent civilians is not a direct goal pursued by the author. However, his attempts to mount his brother to the peak of "national heroism" tempt him to blame others rather than his own brother for all his wrongdoings.

**Motivations justified by myths**

Monte Melkonyan was born on 25 November 1957 in the United States, California, Visalia in an Armenian family of a farmer. As a typical diaspora Armenian, he apparently grew up with feelings of hatred and revenge against Turks. Since the very early days of his juvenile life he had been manipulated by his parents and diaspora relatives to determine his lifelong mission of terrorism as following: "For me, everything was simple and logical that it was even mathematical: diasporan Armenians live outside Armenia because the genocide took place, and they were obliged to leave the country. Today, they can't go back because of the Turkish government.....Therefore, our nation should carry out an armed struggle over there, in order to achieve any tangible rights. And every Armenian patriot, including me of course, should go and participate in that struggle"<sup>2</sup>.

At the University of California he started his studies as a mathematics and history double major, but after excelling in four higher math courses, he transferred to an individualized major in Ancient Asian history and archeology. His intention was to finish education as soon as possible and to join the life of terror.

Following internal political instabilities in Turkey in the 1970s, he believed that sooner there would happen the socialist revolution in Turkey, and therefore Armenians would come together to claim their territorial "rights" from Turkey.

With these views in mind, student activist Monte restored Armenian Students' Association (ASA) as the initial step towards organizing Armenian terrorist band. Yes, a terrorist band. Once being a student activist and co-founder of student associations during my university studies, it is beyond my intention to defame a student organization as terrorist. However, it is enough to take one example from the inaugural ceremony of ASA. Recalling the first meeting of ASA Judy Sanonian wrote in the second issue of ASA newsletter: "Who can forget what was, for most of us, our first glimpse of Monte, passing out Xeroxed bomb literature at the first ASA meeting. You have to admit, it made an impression"<sup>3</sup>.

Following ASA inauguration in 1977, an improvised bomb shattered the door and broke windows of history Professor Stanford J.Shaw's residence. Author of two-volume "History of the Ottoman empire and Modern Turkey", Prof. Shaw described the wartime "genocide" of Armenians as a myth concocted by "Entente propaganda mills and Armenian nationalists". No one injured, however, the blast was the price the Professor should pay for writing the historical truth and objectivity.

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<sup>2</sup> Markar Melkonyan: My Brother's Road: an American's fateful journey to Armenia; I.B.Taurus&Co Ltd. London-New-York NY 2005/2007 pp. 39-40

<sup>3</sup> p.37

In April of 1978 Monte arrived in Beirut. He did not receive a warm welcome. Fellow Armenians in Lebanon suspected that he was a CIA or KGB agent, or the agent of some other nefarious groups. In his autobiographical *Self-Criticism* referred in the book, he wrote "...it was a little difficult to gain the confidence of some Armenians [in Lebanon]".

It was difficult, but not a little. Suspicions and lack of confidence towards him, indeed, were not groundless. Why should someone trust a twenty year-old young American-Armenian, who left everything and came to Lebanon with the purpose of opening an Armenian terrorist training camp in Ainjar, an Armenian village in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley? One would be naive to trust that there was not an "invisible hand" behind these leftist oriented gentlemen, who dared to come to Lebanon in the height of the civil war. Dashnak party, which had chosen the path of maneuvering between the actors of the civil war, east and west, did have particular suspicions on Monte, who admired Engel's Socialism and Lenin's Imperialism.

Chilly welcome disappointed young Monte. But time was ripe for Iran. Persia was boiling in the storm of revolution. Perhaps the "invisible hand" instructed young terrorist to go to Iran in order to seek possibilities for Armenian revolt in the trembling country.

"We don't need any more fighters at the front"<sup>4</sup> responded Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, high ranking leader of Kurdish Democratic Party in Iran when Monte mentioned that he was from the United States. Nevertheless, Monte and his entourage enjoyed a better reception from Komala, an organization dedicated to autonomy in Iran for Kurds and from its leader Ezzedin Hosseini, who promised to provide arms and training to Armenians. However, new revolutionary government strengthened the central power and crushed all armed separatist movements. Therefore, the Armenian uprising in parallel to the Kurdish one in Iran did not go beyond dreams.

Now, he had no other option except returning to Lebanon. In Lebanon, young career terrorist impatient for killing could not go unnoticed from the attention of ASALA - "Armenian Secret Army for Liberation of Armenia". Describing his brother's recruiting process to ASALA, the author provides further details about the ASALA and its founder Hagop Hagopyan. According to the author, his original name was Harootyoon Takooshian, born in the late 1940s in Mosul, Iraq. At the age of sixteen he had joined a small Palestinian group called "Abtal Al-Auda" and then Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP. With the recommendation and financial aid of one of the co-founders of the Fatah movement Hagop created "Armenian Secret Army".

It is apparent that uneducated and poor Hagopyan could not create such a nefarious organization as ASALA on his own initiative, whose terror operations covered Europe, Middle East, United States and later on occupied territories of Azerbaijan. ASALA's affiliation with the Soviet Union and Armenia SSR KGB is now an open secret. By activating ASALA the "invisible hand" represented by the Armenian SSR KGB was hankering to play ever more active role in the theatre of operation of the Middle East through the services of different organizations for geopolitical considerations.

### **Culmination of terror**

In the beginning of 1980's ASALA was in the peak of its might after numerous terrorist operations, some of which were implemented directly by Monte.

On October 3, two bombs exploded in Milan, one at a Turkish-owned shop and another at the Mandadori Press office. On the same day, his colleague Alec exploded Hotel Beau-Site in Geneva.

The author with the sense of pride writes about "apply pressure" operations on Swiss authorities to release his brother's terrorist colleague Alec from the custody. The book called "A Critique of Armenian Armed Action" quoted by the author Monte "lists a total of eighteen bombings and attempted bombings" against Swiss Government. Therefore, after a hasty trial, Swiss officials expelled Alec from Switzerland.

Another example of "apply pressure" fact provided by the author is the Italians' alleged negotiations with the ASALA on "ceasefire". Author writes, "in mid-January 1981, Italian officials has asked a Fatah official named Hael Abdulhamid to help negotiate a "ceasefire" with the Secret Army. The Italians send word that they were prepared to support Armenian demands for Turkish recognition of the genocide, in exchange for a Secret Army pledge to desist from bombings in Italy".<sup>5</sup>

As a continuation of his terror actions, he desired to explode Turkish trade ship in France in the margin of Turgut Ozal's visit to Paris. However, enough was enough. Now time was to stand before the justice. In 1985 at last he was captured by French Police at the Brasserie Le Zeyer on Rue d'Alesia in Paris.

Markar Melkonyan happily writes that in spite of the prosecution's best efforts, Monte was not convicted of plotting to sink the Turkish ship. Instead, he was convicted of entering France illegally and possessing a falsified US passport and illegal handgun. Shamelessly, Monte himself considered a six year composite sentence "more insulting than anything else".

### **Armenia at last and terror against Azerbaijan**

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<sup>4</sup> p.61

<sup>5</sup> p.92

With the direct involvement of Levon Ter-Petrosyan and Khachig Stamboultzian, one of the leaders of the pro-independence movement in Armenia, an invitation was sent to the Soviet Embassy in Bulgaria for the name of Timothy Sean McCormick. This was Monte Melkonyan hiding under the name of Timothy.

After warm welcome at Yerevan airport by Armenian SSR KGB officer Armen, he placed in the KGB rest home in Hrazdan River Gorge and Dilijan to receive further instructions and to reestablish new form of relations. Now Monte under the name of Simon was registered at Yerevan Ethnology Institute as a researcher.

Within a short period of time the master of terror and killings was successful in creating "Aramo" and "Arabo" killing units composed of ASALA members and sympathizers. "...If you give them half chance, they'll "do" an Azeri-village - they'll kill everyone in sight, men, women and children"<sup>6</sup> he said in a conversation with his brother. Garadagli village demonstrated that Monte was absolutely right in describing killing the "potential" of his units. More than fifty Azerbaijani captives had been butchered at Garadagli. One of the members of Monte's group Shram Edo, dousing several wounded Azerbaijani soldiers with gasoline, tossed a match to burn them alive.

Garadagli was followed by the Khojali massacre. It was terrorist Monte, who had made reconnaissance and intelligence operations around the city and had identified points of attack against the city and its population. Only a narrow exit path from the city towards Agdam covered by the cross fire of "Aramo" and "Arabo" death units had also been chosen by Monte "skillfully" to ensure full extermination of civilians.

Expert on killing innocent civilians, Monte Melkonyan had killed 25 more civilians in the Zulfugarli tunnel during occupation of Kalbajar. These cases are only visible signs of invisible and insidious death iceberg of Armenian terrorism.

Despite unsuccessful attempts of the author to depict his immoral and vandal brother with the colors of innocence and morality, all these killings have only one name- crimes against humanity!

### **Beginning of the end**

During the occupation of Agdam and continuation of the policy of crimes against humanity, in the village of Merzuli terrorist Monte and his four associates came across an Azerbaijani BMP-1 armored personnel carrier. Terrorist Monte was killed in an exchange of fire.

"...Monte's figure lying on his right side ten meters away, a few steps behind the staff car. He was not moving".<sup>7</sup>

"Soldier of fortune", as once described by FBI, and a criminal against humanity that killed Turks, Israelis, Swiss, French, Italians and, mas sively, Azerbaijanis had been liquidated forever.

### **Epilogue**

Markar Melkonian with the sense of regret writes that his brother's desire for Armenia "without corruption and just" did not come true so far. Inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh decreased up to 65.000 and more than million of Armenians emigrated from Armenia. And the country continues to sink deeper into the bog of corruption.

"Kechal Sergey, close associate of Monte, who kidnapped Azerbaijani Seyid and cut his throat in Yerevan next to the grave of ASALA member, after the ceasefire had been promoted to the high ranks of Armenian National Security Ministry"<sup>8</sup>.

Monte Melkonyan is dead, but unfortunately Armenian terrorism and its vanguard ASALA is not. It has just transformed into another shape.

In the example of Kechal Sergey(s), closer affiliations between Armenian political, military and security circles and ASALA demonstrate that the Republic of Armenia is the continuation of ASALA and Armenian terrorism in the new millennium.

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<sup>6</sup> p.189

<sup>7</sup> p.264

<sup>8</sup> p.215; p.303