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THE PRINCIPALITY OF TAYK IN THE GEOPOLITICAL PROCESSES IN SOUTH CAUCASUS (The second part of the X century)

XIV ashkharh (region) of Great Armenia - Tayk, after the Anti-Arab uprising of 774-775 years, acquired new owners in the face of Bagratids, who had family relations with the former owners of Tayk - Mamikonians. In the beginning of the IX century Ashot meat-eater Bagratid settled in Chakq - one of the provinces of Tayk, not far from the village Ishhanats, and built a fortress Kaghamakhi.

The northern part of Tayk covered the dynasty of the Bagratids in Kgharjq, which emerged in the beginning of the IX century[1]. In IX-X centuries this principality enlarges its areas to some extent. In the X century the principality of Tayk Bagratids bordered on the Kaysiks (Marwanids) emirates and Vanand province of Ayrarat to the south and south - east, to the north - east Georgia and the Byzantium empire to the north-west. Besides Gugarq and Tayk provinces some Georgian provinces (Meskheti, etc.) were incuded in this power, as a result of it principality became a state with mixed population[2].

Anyhow, in the X century good relations and close cooperation were established between Armenian and Georgian kingdoms and Tayk's principality. Tayk gets great importance for Byzantium and South Caucasian countries as for its position as well as due to its considerable local authority which was at its zenith under David Kuropalates (960 - 1001). David Kuropalates deserves great appreciation by Armenian historians Asoghik, Aristakes of Lastiver, Matthew of Edessa as well as by Georgian chroniclers.

Aristakes of Lastiver considered him to be a person with powerful, world making manner, generous and poor supplier, a real peace definier[3], Matthew of Edessa considered him a saint person of God and God lover[4], the Georgian chronicler - as a kind, peaceful person who also patronized monks and builded churches, and was philanthropic[5]. It was just David Kuropalates according to Georgian chronicler, who was one of the apologists of "the united Georgian kingdom", though in Georgian historiography there exists another kind of point of view according to which for chroniclers the role of Tayk in the affair of establishing united Georgian state is overestimated[6].

According to Georgian sources, in 975 Kartli's eristavi (head of the nation) Ivane Maroushis-dze (Ivane, the son of Maroushi) being oppressed by Kakheti lords, sends his ambassador to David Kuropalates and offers him to come out with his troop and seize Kartli in order to rule there or yield it to Bagrat, the son of Tayk's northern part manager Gurgen

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[1] *The founder of The Tayk's principality was Ashot Bagratid - the grandson of Ashot "blind" Bagratid's son Vasak Bagratid.*

[2] *See:* ***Տաշեան Հ.,*** *Հայ բնակչութիւնը Սև ծովէն մինչև Կարին, Վիեննա, 1921, էջ 70:*

[3] *See: Պատմութիւն Արիստակեսայ Վարդապետի Լաստիվերտցւոյ, Թիֆլիս, 1912, էջ 3:*

[4] *See:* ***Մատթէոս Ուռհայեցի,*** *ժամանակագրութիւն, Վաղարշապատ, 1898, էջ 36:*

[5] *See: Летопись Картли, перевод, введение и примечание Г. В. Цулая, Тбилиси, 1982, стр. 57.*

[6] *See:* ***მელიქიშვილი გ.,*** *ფეოდალური საქართველოს პოლიტიკური გაერთიანება და საქართველოში ფეოდალურ ურთიერთობათა განვითარების ზოგიერთი საკითხი, თბ., 1973.*

and Abkhaian George king's daughter Gurandukht[7]. Complying with Ivane Marushis-dze's offer David reigned Kartli's center Uplistsikhe. As he was heirless he adopted Bagrat then he called Kartli's "frees" and forced them to obey Bagrat as "the heir of Tao, Kartli and Abkhazia"[8]. These events were the basis of the establishment of the united Georgian state, the author of which was I. Javakhishvili[9].

At the end of 970-s the state of Byzantine Empire became difficult. At the beginning of Basil (Barsegh) II's reign (976–1025) mighty revolt rose against him by the head of Bardas Skleros, one of the powerful representatives of Minor Asian nobility. Skleros bent a great part of empire's troop as well as nearly all Minor Asia. For suppressing the revolt imperial power uses all its means. Arabian emirates enjoyed the hard times of the empire. Marwanid emir Bat occupied Manazkert. At that decisive instant Basil II with the help of Tornik Tormikyan[10] resorted to the help of Tayk's lord asking auxiliary troop for the empire's eastern army. As a consideration he promised to give him new earthen areas "until death": Khaldoyarich, Kghesurq, Chormayri, Karin, Phasiane, the province of Mardali (or Sevuk castle), Hark and Apahuniq[11]. David accepted the offer and in 979 by the guidance of lord Jojik and Tornik Tornikyan sent a 12.000 military unit as a help for the imperial army[12]. This military unit is striking for the battle occurring on the bank of the Halis in Saravane field where Skleros's army suffered a defeat.

As a consequence of Skleros's revolt Basil II who had been in serious condition took a subtle diplomatic step. In fact, such areas were given to David that at that instant Byzantium could not transfer to Tayk even in case of great desires as Hark and Apahuniq did not belong to him but Khaldoyarich and Chormayri were the possessions of the Tornikyans. David could mostly get the neighbouring areas lying from south to Tayk, i. e. Karin and Basen[13], Basil II's policy meant that in the near future Byzantine Empire could get those lands back. David Kuropalates who had not thoroughly taken into account so-called Byzantium positive and negative sides of "compensation" when he tried to settle in his "rewarded" areas, then he immediately realized that in exchange for his services he did not have definite areas but simply the right to occupy them.

If Karin and Phasiane united to Tayk principality, then Hark and Apahuniq passed to David Kuropalates only in 990, when "Armenian Kuropalates David besieged Manazkert"[14], occupied it resettling them with Georgians and Armenains.

With new strength the struggle of opposed forces restarted in Byzantium in 980-s. At that time David joined Bardas Phokas who was aganist the empire and was another representative of Minor Asian nobility. Kuropalates's help to Phokas was conditioned by the fact that the latter was in close relationship when Phokas was "Khaldian (Khaghtiq)

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[7] *See: Летопись Картли, стр. 57.*

[8] *See: ქართლის ცხოვრება, ტ. 1, თბ., 1955, გვ. 274:*

[9] *See: ჯავახიშვილი ი., ქართველი ერის ისტორია, წ. 2, თბ., 1960, გვ. 123–124.*

[10] *See:* ***Ստեփաննոսի Տարօնեցւոյ*** *Ասողկան պատմութիւն տիեզերական, Սանկտ-Պետերբուրգ, 1885, էջ 192:*

[11] *In the same place.*

[12] *Tayk was a small country to have 12000 troops. But David Kuropalates had diplomatic abilities and charisma, so due to the Armenian and Georgian troops David helped the empire.*

[13] *See:* ***Степаненко В.*** *Апахуник в византийско-таоских отношениях в период мятежа Варды Склира (976–979), Античная древность и средние века, вып. 10, 1973, стр. 221.*

[14] *See* ***Ստեփաննոսի Տարօնեցւոյ*** *Ասողկան պատմութիւն տիեզերական, էջ 266:*

duke"[15]. But not only these close relations were the case that had made Tayk's ruler join Phokas. David felt fraudulent as he had not got the compensation promised by Basil II for about ten years and now the time was convenient for taking a revenge, all the more his ancient relative had weakened Tayk's lord ability of judging sensibly.

At that time the relations of Davit Kuropalates and Bagrat III (975- 1014) became worse. According to Georgian chronicler its reason was the disobedience of Rat Baghvash (one of the eristavs of Kartli) to Bagrat, "the king of united Georgia". Georgian king enters Kartli pursuing the aim of charming, taking him prisoner.

The latter turns to David Kuropalates for help adding that the real goal of Bagrat III is to kill Tayk's ruler[16]. According to M. Lordkipmaindze, Rati Baghvashi did not tell a lie and that invasion was directed to David Kuropalates. In 988 obvious collision occurred and David who was in serious state asked king Smbat for help and also "all the kings of Armenia" - from the kings of Kars, Vaspurakan, Syunik and the ruler of Albania.

David Kuropalates joined this great troop with his non - numerous forces in Javaghq's Dlivek village. The troops of David and Gourgen (the father of Bagrat III) collided with each other in the place called Gardatkhrili (on the boundaries of Tayk and Shavshat) where Gurgen's troop suffered a severe defeat.

After Gourgen's defeat Bagrat III seeing the real correlation, comes to David and announce that his real goal has been to punish Rati and these annoyance between "father" and "son" are only a case of misunderstanding. It is not known whether David believed or not, however, hearing his explanations he set his force free, but till that time he made Bagrat yield Sakureti castle in Javaghq for the sake of Armenian king Smbat[17].

Bagrat III's plan to invade on David Kuropalates seems strange. For a long time David was not a young person, and Bagrat in any case would inherit David's areas. Making war against kuropalates Bagrat cherished hopes for his surprising undertaking and the weakness of David conditioned by the latter's participation of Phokas revolt[18]. But there is a circumstance that is not mentioned in the early sources but in our opinion it is the only logical explanation of Bagrat's adventurous steps. It is possible that Bagrat's performance against David Kuropalates was organized by Basil II. Being in serious state, asking for help from Russia, Basil could also turn to Bagrat with such kind of request[19]. This hypothesis gives some assurance on Bagrat's and his father Gourgen's presence to Basil II after the death of David Kuropalates in 1001 and the great honours addressed to them for their previous services.

Basil II managed to defeat Phokas. It made David Kuropalates fall into a difficult situation. David had to address Basil II with asking pardon, promising obedience and submission. In this case Basil II displayed his diplomatic abilities. The emperor gives David Kuropalates the right to occupy Hark and Apahuniq and enlarge the borders of principality. Basil II was only demanding from David Kuropalates to leave Tayk by will for the empire as David Kuropalates was heirless but his relation with the probable heir Bagrat

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[15] *See* ***Հովհաննես Սկիլիցես,*** *Օտար աղբյուրները Հայաստանի և հայերի մասին, հ. 10, Բյուզանդական աղբյուրներ, Գ (թարգմանությունը բնագրից, առաջաբանը և ծանոթագրությունները Հ. Բարթիկյանի), Եր., 1979, էջ 64:*

[16] *See: Летопись Картли, стр. 59:*

[17] *See:* ***Մելքոնյան Ա.,*** *Ջավախքը XIX դ. և XX դ. 1-ին քառորդին, էջ 50:*

[18] *See:* ***Лордкипанидзе М.*** *История Грузии XI – начало XIII века (научно-популярный очерк).- Тбилиси, 1974, стр. 50:*

[19] *Ibd.*

III were far being good. In fact, if the collapsion between Bagrat and David was "taged" by the Byzantium , with that step the empire got rid of real pretender Bagrat on the one hand and fixed his rights towards Tayk on the other hand.

After Armenian king Smbat II's death 's death in 990 close inter-allied relatios were quickly formed between the ruler of Tayk and new king of Armenia - Gagik I, who was apointed a king in Ani that were manifestated in close correlation of their common enemy - Arabian emirates.

In 990 the Arabs who were deporterd from Manazkert, became discontented with the occupation of Manazkert by David Kuropalates. It gives Atropatena's emir Mamlan a chance to stand from the protection position of Arabian element in Armenia and coming aganist David. Mamlan comes to the province of Tsaghkotn with his army. Mamlan's power seening the numeral dominance of allies leave their positions at night and withdraw from Armenia[20].

David Kuropalates was fully aware that after his death Byzantium without a drop of blood could own all which he had got as a result of many long-term wars. But he did not lose his hope that he could change some terms of the forced peace treaty agreement, which obligated him after the defeat of Phokas.

The fact that Bagrat and Gourgen would not be the heirs of David were obvious. In 987–988 after the above-mentioned events the contacts between David and his ex-heirs were on minimum level. In this created diplomatic situation Gagik I could also be considered as a heir of David's areas if we take into account the allied bonds between them and Tayks principality's exceptionally consistiong of Armenian lands.

On the other hand, realizing the whole seriousness of formed army poltical situation, or maybe by commanding by Basil II, Bagrat III displays willingness to join David's and Gagik's undertakings. It can to some senses be profitable for Bagrat: a) he could become a direct participant of the undertakings of Tayk's ruler and Armenian king, b) his international authority could become larger, c) Georgian king could be closer to the "inner cuisine" of Armenian and Tayk's rulers, d) Bagrat could get an opportunity to improve his relations with the ruler of Tayk and get a theoretical chance to be his direct heir once again, e) In case of need Bagrat could prevent any kind of undertaking made by Gagik I and David Kuropalates.

Carrying on his active military policy in winter 997 David send forces to invade Khlat, but he was defeated, Arab emirates took that advantage and tried to give back the areas taken from the Marwanids, Apahuniq was in the first place. But this attack headed by Atropatena's emir Mamlan in 998 was defeated near Tsumb village by the joint forces of Tayk, Armenian and Georgian powers.

According to Asoghik, David Kuropalates died in the Easter of Armenian year 449 - in the 31 of March, 1001. According to Aristakes of Lastiver and Mattew of Edessa, Georgian archbishop Illarion mixed the death-poision in the liturgy eucharist, had drunken David it, but seeing its unefficiency strangled him on the day of Holy Thursday[21]. Illarion in his turn was punished by Basil II[22].

In fact for whom was profitable David Kuropalates's death. According to the early sources Kuropalates was already aged thus there was a serious reason of getting rid of him. Unfortunately, the early sources convey information only on the death of the Great

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[20] *See:* ***Լեո,*** *Հայոց պատմություն, հ. 2, Եր., 1947, էջ 626–627:*

[21] *See: Պատմութիւն Արիստակեսայ Վարդապետի Լաստիվերտցւոյ, էջ 3:*

[22] *See:* ***Մատթէոս Ուռհայեցի****, ժամանակագրութիւն, էջ 38:*

Kuropalates and pass the cases of his death by in silence. What could be a suitable occasion of getting rid of him if not the great political game that was played by Basil II in 70-s in the course of Bard Skleros' revolt. The events especially the close relations of Armenian king and David Kuropalates had spoiled all plans concerning Tayk. After the death of Tayk's ruler the emperor had to get his areas with "legal" way, thus the emperor would insure him from unnecessary long drawn-out proceedings. Under such circumstances Georgian archbishop Ilarion was just a tool for those who eagered David's death or a witness who was neglected for covering the committment[23].

After David Kuropalates'death Basil II arrived in Armenia, took walks around the new areas visiting Hark, Apahuniq, then Tayk, took the possession of numerous provinces, fortresses and towns. In Ekegheyats province the "frees" met him, Bagrat III and his father Gourgen introduced themseves. Basil II awarded Gourgen with magistres rank and Bagrat with a title of kuropalates[24].

A part of David Kuropalates's areas was given to Bagrat "for using until death". In winter 1001–1002, Gourgen being discontented with the unjust share of Kuropalates's heritage, took an attempt to snatch the other parts of Tayk from Byzantium. With his troop he began his military actions in Tayk but the town Ughtiq made strong resistance. Nikephoras Kanikles was sent against Gourgen by Basil II. The fighting sides began to silve the issue. The Byzantium side agreed Gourgen's areal demands. His areas were enlarged on the account of David's former areas, but as it is not easy to separate the areas of David, thus it is impossible to determine the yielded areas[25]. It is common knowledge that after Gougen's death they had to pass Bagrat and after the latter's death they were giving back to Byzantium. According to N. Adonc Gourgen got a great part of Tayk[26] which in 1008 after his death had passed to Bagrat III as a land gift.

According to the early sources, during the division of David Kuropalates's areas Gagik I did not present himself . The Armenian king considered his introduction to the ermperor as faint- heartedness. But what was humiliating is not known: going to Basil II or the glorification of "kuropalates" or "magistres" which was accepted by Bagrat III, Gourgen and several Armenians. It is also known that in 1001 Armenian king was engaged in the pressure of performance of David Anhoghin (landless) - the king of Tashir-Dzoraget kingdom. The requisition of Tayk Principality's areas had a great influence on the fate of South Caucasus as the alliance of David Principality and Gagik I was the only viable power that could struggle against South-Western Armenia and Atropatena's emirates as well as resist the expansionary policy of Byzantium.

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[23] ***According to H.*** *Bartikyan David Kuropalates's death was accelerated by the Byzantians that long for invading Tayk. See:* ***Բարթիկյան Հ.,*** *Հայաստանի նվաճումը Բյուզանդական կայսրության կողմից, ՊԲՀ, 1970, № 2, էջ 81–92:*

[24] *See: Сумбат Давитис-дзе, История и повествование о Багратионах, перевод, введение и примечание М. Лордкипанидзе, Тбилиси, 1979, с. 57, Ասողիկ, էջ 270:*

[25] *See:* ***Такайшвили Е.*** *Археологическая экспедиция в южные провинции Грузии 1917 г., Тбилиси, 1952, стр. 63.*

[26] *See: Ադոնց Ն., Դավիթ Կյուրոպաղատ, ՊԲՀ, 2002, թ. 3, էջ 24:*

ՏԱՅՔԻ ԿՅՈՒՐԱՊԱՂԱՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՀԱՐԱՎԿՈՎԿԱՍՅԱՆ ԱՇԽԱՐՀԱՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆ ԳՈՐԾԸՆԹԱՑՆԵՐՈՒՄ (X դարի II կես)

Ա. Ակոպով

Ամփոփում

IX դարում առաջացած Տայքի իշխանությունն իր հզորության գագաթնակետին է հասնում Դավիթ Կյուրապաղատ Բագրատունու օրոք (960-ականներ – 1001 թթ.): 977-979 թթ. Տայքի տիրակալն օգնություն է ցուցաբերում Բյուզանդիայի Վասիլ II կայսրին Վարդ Սկլերոսի ապստամբության ճնշման ժամանակ, ինչի դիմաց բյուզանդական կայսրից ցմահ օգտագործման է ստանում պատմական հայկական մի շարք տարածքներ՝ Բասենը, Կարինը, Հարքը, Ապահունիքը և այլն: Զգտելով փոխել այդ հողերի կարգավիճակը՝ 989 թ. Դավիթ Կյուրապաղատը մասնակցում է կայսեր դեմ Վարդ Փոկասի ապստամբությանը, սակայն պարտություն կրելով, ստիպված է լինում իր տիրույթները կտակել Վասիլ II-ին: Տայքի տիրակալի և Հայոց շահնշահ Գագիկ I-ի արգասաբեր համագործակցության խրթացումից անհանգստացած՝ վրացի արքեպիսկոպոս Իլլարիոնի ձեռքով Դավիթ Կյուրապաղատին 1001 թ. թունավորում և սպանում են, ինչից հետո Տայքի «օրինական» ժառանգորդ Վասիլ II-ը երկրամասը ցմահ օգտագործման է հանձնում միավորված Վրաստանի առաջին թագավոր Բագրատ III-ին:

Տեղեկություններ հեղինակի մասին
Ակոպով Արկադի Արտյոմի – *պ.գ.թ., ՀՀ ԳԱԱ Շիրակի հայագիտական հետազոտությունների կենտրոն,*
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