

THE GOALS OF KEMALIST TURKEY AND RUSSIA TOWARDS THE CAUCASUS IN 1920-1921

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Abstract: From 1920 Russia again returned to the South Caucasus and tried to restore old borders of its empire. In the case of Persia it justified. It became necessary to cede certain territory to Turkey on the expanse of Sovietized Georgia and Armenia.

New states formatted on the place of an old empire managed to mark off their interests in the Caucasus via negotiations.

At the end of 1919 and the beginning of 1920, the Soviet Russian army completely destroyed Denikin army [3, 332] and later from 1920 Russia again returned to the South Caucasus and tried to restore old borders of its empire. After the World War I 'Image of External Enemy' – (Antanta was perceived under this image)- prompted Bolshevik Russia and Kemalist Turkey to unite forces for realizing the Caucasus policy.

There is a well known letter sent to Lenin by the head of the national meeting Mustafa Kemal Pasha dating back to April 26, 1920 (i.e. the letter written two days before introducing the Soviet regime in Baku). In his letter Mustafa Kemal Pasha wrote that he was ready to take all the responsibility for uniting with Russian Bolsheviks.....in case Soviet military forces were planning military actions against Georgia.....for dislodging English military forces from Caucasus region. Turkish side was ready to take the responsibility on realizing military operations against imperialistic Armenia and would force the republic of Azerbaijan to unite under Soviet Union.

Soviet Russia responded on this suggestion without any particular enthusiasm. Nevertheless these two old rivals under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal and Vl. Lenin managed to combine their interests according to certain technical interests.

At the beginning of October, 1920 the diplomatic mission of Soviet Russia paid a visit to Ankara. It was the first diplomatic representation in Ankara. An Ambassador Plenipotentiary of Russia – Budu Mdivani visited Ankara at the end of 1920. He was the member of Caucasian Central Committe and his appointment to this post could have been approved by Stalin's recommendation.

Svimon Mdivani, the deputy head of Constituent Assembly of Georgia, was appointed as an Ambassador Plenipotentiary of Georgia in Ankara. Svimon Mdivani was Budu Mdivani's brother. Not a single precedent is known in the history of diplomacy for two brothers occupying the ambassadors' posts of different countries at the same time.

The violent situation intensified among Ankara and Armenia governments. In this situation Dashnak Armenia was forced to ask for truce though the Turkish side announced the very complicated conditions. The Soviet regime was announced in Armenia with the help of Russian military armies on November 29. As a result several victories in Armenia, Turkish military forces approached the borders of Georgia. Much attention was paid on Russia's position at that time. The Georgian ambassador in Russia – G. Makharadze met G. Chicherin - the Commissar of External Affairs of Soviet Russia, who publicly declared that Russia didn't possess any kind of aggressive missions towards Georgia. At the same time Russia's Central Committee took the decision about sending Stalin to Tbilisi as an Attorney-General who would arrange the situation in Caucasus.

While being in Baku, Stalin was preparing a plan about Russian army's invasion in Georgia. In the middle of October Stalin was announced about the invasion in Georgian territories being earlier for that time.

Colonel Kiasim Bay, the official representative of Ankara government, paid a visit to Tbilisi on November 13, 1920. The colonel declared that the principal interest of Angora Government was to see Georgia independent and powerful [1,33].

Svimon Mdivani mentioned in his respond that they needed the powerful Turkey and Georgia in the East. Georgia was aware of invasions as it tortured the Russian Tsarism annexation and struggled for the independence for 117 years and its effort was approved after Entente's official announcement. Georgia was unable to conduct any kind of actions in Caucasus and it strongly needed Turkey to be the supporter [1,39].

On January 31, 1921, Georgian ambassadors arrived in Ankara at night. On February 2, Svimon Mdivani met Turkish Minister of external affairs. He informed Svimon that first official meeting and delivering diplomat's accreditation would take place on February 8. [1, 37].

On February 8, at 15 o'clock official audience with Mustafa Kemal Pasha was appointed. Svimon Mdivani said: "I'm not a diplomat with the old meaning of the word, I don't know rules of secret diplomacy and I am sent here as everything in this negotiation will be based on sincerity".

At first he congratulated to Svimon Mdivani the legal recognition of Georgian independence. We have strong enemy in the west and need for strong East. We especially need strong Caucasus and the most important in Caucasus – the nation; we need strong and independent Georgia. Georgia and Turkey should care about other Caucasus states to become free" [1, 38-39].

Establishing diplomatic relations between the two neighboring states had great importance, among them in the case of developing political, economic and cultural relations.

Ankara Government recognized de jure the independence of Georgia and promoted the diplomatic relations [1,40] between these two countries though the situation was seriously changed after 17 days when the Soviet regime was announced in Georgia.

The Kremlin owned three principal geo-political missions: 1. The Kremlin strictly needed Baku.2. It also needed Batumi. 3. The Kremlin was not interested in existing the mutual border between Azerbaijan and Turkey sharing the neighboring languages.

The tense negotiations with Turkish delegation lasted for almost one month (autumn, 1921) where Russia didn't hide its position that the matter concerned the very Caucasus which was considered as the possession of Russian Public Federal Socialistic Republic. Nevertheless it was recognized by the Turkish side. [2, 252-253].

The borders stated by Moscow-Turkey memorandum was approved by Ankara and Kremlin on October 13, 1921 in Kars agreement and even now they are considered to be the existing borders between Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan [2,].

Conclusion: At the end of 1920 and at the beginning of 1921, Georgian democratic republic appeared completely in unfavorable condition. Unfortunately:

1. England acknowledged Russian interests in Georgia, i.e. England wouldn't obstruct Russia, if it would conquer Georgia after Azerbaijan and Armenia. The position of England defined the decision of subcontractor states (Entente).

2. After the end of the World War I, the confrontation of England and generally Entente with Turkey, made Turkey to ask for alliance to Soviet Russia and in return for this, Russia forced Turkey to acknowledge his interests in Transcaucasia and in Georgia as well.

Thus, Georgia democratic republic appeared in diplomatic isolation. It was obvious that in case of Russian aggression, Georgia would stay without military-political subcontractor [4, 596].

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