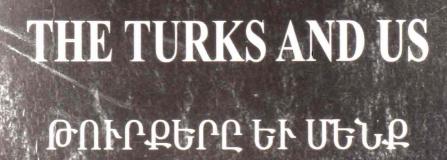
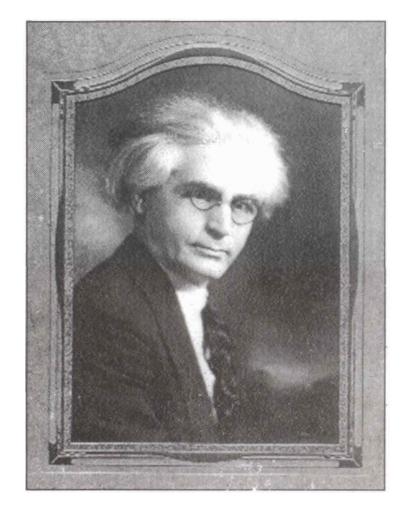
SHAHAN NATALIE





SHAHAN NATALIE ፕԱՀՍ.Ն ՆԱԹԱԼԻ 1884 - 1983

TURKISM FROM ANGORA TO BAKU AND TURKISH ORIENTATION ԹՈՒՐՔԻՁՄԸ ԱՆԳՈՐԱՅԷՆ ՊԱՔՈՒ ԵՒ ԹՈՒՐՔ ՕՐԻԷՆԹԱՍԻՈՆ

THE TURKS AND US
ԹՈՒՐՔԵՐԸ ԵՒ ՄԵՆՔ

by Shahan Natalie

(NEMESIS)

PUNIK PUBLISHING ©2002

Dedicated to the memory of

Shahan Natalie

who believed that the Armenian nation could survive not only by talk, but by action, and to all the people who have followed, who are following, and who will follow his example

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INTRODUCTION

In the decade following the independence of their homeland, Armenians surprisingly find themselves in an unanticipated international forge of new developments. A forge, because these developments and their subsequent consequences once again threaten their existence and that of their decimated homeland. And naturally as well, the pursuit of the dismal Armenian cause. That which is being done or is happening at present in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and especially in the former Soviet Union, is unquestionably going to have its reverberation as well on us - both in Armenia and in the Diaspora.

We cannot prophesy or divine what character these developments and the implementation of these anticipated changes will receive - and especially the portion of those reserved for us - because the cultivated and pursued plan is familiar only to the great powers, who realize their intended purpose in a meticulous and systematic step-by-step manner. It is not possible, for example, to foresee by making assumptions, what is exactly going to happen or change in the former Soviet Union, and under this clarification, to determine what is going to be the destiny of the independent Republic of Armenia. But without hesitation, it is possible to assert that changes will occur there, and naturally, Armenia also will experience the fever of the same upheavals.

It is not permissible for us, Armenians, within similar circumstances, to passively follow day by day the developing events and to only show indifferent interest to the stage production. The painful reality is that the enthusiastic environment created by our recent independence and desires to join the greater democratic world has caused us to become naïve and to draw erroneous conclusions, to become forgiving and open-minded, and thus to blur our clear vision by willingly veiling realities. Meanwhile, the bitter experience of our past demands that we be more sensitive and objective, so as not to once again be caught in the same trap.

Moreover, with this concern and in order to enlighten the youngest generation, Punik Publishing has undertaken the publication of Shahan Natalie's most important works¹. This book includes two of them, with their opinions and conclusions. These are very bold and beneficial booklets, which complement each other, in thought and content. First published in Athens in 1928, reprinted in Boston in 1931, and after being long out of print, they were republished in one volume by Shushan Press, Yerevan, in 1992. We hope that making these works available in a one-volume English translation will render them more easily accessible to the general reader.

Shahan Natalie, the Nemesis of Armenian justice and his covert spirit, was the mastermind and executor of the 1919 decision, which unfortunately remained unfulfilled -- the decision which aimed to carry out the death sentences handed down by The Ottoman military tribunal against the principal architects and executors of the Armenian genocide and their collaborators. It was the righteous decision of those who had experienced the dread of the Turkish yoke and survived which was entrusted to Natalie and his companions by the leadership at that time. Within a short period of time, Soghomon Tehlirian, Arshavir Shiragian, Aram Yerganian, Misak Torlakian and others, under Natalie's leadership and supervision, succeeded in bringing down some of the Turk henchmen, who were in the process in finishing what they had started in 1915 with the cooperation of influential Azerbaijani-Turks who were awaiting their arrival in Baku for the start of an intensive effort to eradicate the Armenians of Nargorno-Karabagh and then those who remained in Armenia.

The assassination of Talaat Pasha, on a Berlin street, had a particularly shocking effect. The interruption of this dedicated effort, by order and recommended diplomatic naïveté of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) leadership, proved more damaging to the Armenian people and to the pursuit of its just cause. The entire world no longer had reason to pay attention to the Armenians, who did not know how to speak to their centuries-old, murderous enemy in his own language - by enslavement and annihilation - their only available means at the time. And the inevitable happened. The Armenian genocide was forgotten, and over time was

even denied, because it remained unpunished.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Natalie, dejected and resentful, would express dissension and wanted to transmit to the people his views on this question, based on his bitter experience.

His words, clear and unadorned, clearly stated that:

- 1. In order to suppress the Turk and to stop his monstrous acts, the Armenian had to be equally uncouth and to slaughter his enemy mercilessly. Because the believer in force and violence can recoil and retreat only by escaping from force and violence.
- 2. The Turks have been able to build a nation, because throughout the centuries they have massacred all those elements and peoples who have attempted to prevent their nation-building.
- 3. The Armenians can only boast of having reached the level of being a race, but failed in building a nation. Having been impelled by human principles and feelings, they have been unable to use the same methods. That is, they have not had the courage or wisdom to slaughter their enemies.
- 4. While Turks have always depended upon themselves, Armenians have always preferred to rely on outsiders, expecting their salvation from them. And naturally outsiders have always deceived them, taking advantage of them when convenient.

Today, eighty years later, we curiously still think and act in the same way. It seems that we have not gleaned any lessons from our past experiences.

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SHAHAN NATALIE ՇԱՀԱՆ ՆԱԹԱԼԻ

1884 - 1983 (A Concise Biography)

Shahan Natalie (né Hagop Der Hagopian) was born in 1884, in the village of Husenik, Kharberd province, the only son of a sevenmember family, along with four sisters.

Hagop received his primary education in the local Armenian school. More than 300,000 Armenians fell victim during the 1895 to 1897 Hamidian massacres in Western Armenia. At the beginning of the massacres, his father, maternal uncle, and numerous other relatives were killed. Separated from his family during the slaughter, he was taken in by a neighboring Greek family, who hid him for several days, knowing that he too would be slaughtered. The 11-year-old orphaned Hagop was sheltered for three days before being reunited with the surviving members of his family.

He found his mother mourning over his father's lifeless corpse, which they dragged together and buried under a walnut tree. He would write about this event later, adding, "The living began to bury the dead." The scene of his mother, prostrate on her husband's body, left a deep and indelible impression on the young boy's subconscious and conscious being.

After studying for a year at the famed Euphrates College in Kharberd, together with other orphans, he was sent to the St. James Orphanage in Constantinople, where a wealthy Armenian rug merchant living in New York adopted him. The following year, he was admitted into the Berberian Academy, where he studied until 1900. His teacher in the Academy was the noted pedagogue and philosopher, Reteos Berberian, out of respect for whom he chose the latter's son's Shahan's first name as his own. Together with the choice of Natalie, from the Latin, *natalis* (born), and the Persian shah, his nom de plume is thought to signify "born of kings." Thus, the young Hagop's love of culture, art, beauty, goodness, and truth and the concept of justice had been imprinted in his very being.

In 1901, he returned to his birthplace, where for three years he served on the St. Varvara Church Armenian School teaching staff, at the same time studying the provincial dialect of Kharberd. This philological study earned him special honor in Patriarch Izmirlian's literary competition.

In 1904, in Kharberd, he joined the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), in whose ranks he would serve with true patriotic spirit for a quarter century. The same year, he immigrated to the United States, where for three years he worked as a laborer in a shoe factory. In 1908, after the proclamation of the Ottoman Constitution, he returned home to Husenik, where he remained barely one year. The 1909 massacres of Armenians in Cilicia drove him back into exite in America. From 1910 to 1912, he attended Boston University, where he studied literature, philosophy (particularly Plato), and theatre (particularly Shakespeare).

In 1912, he decided to return home and boarded a ship headed for Turkey. However, during that period the war had erupted in the Balkans and the Turkish passport-bearing Shahan Natalie was ejected from the ship by Greek authorities as a citizen of an enemy nation. His attempts to explain his Armenian identity proved fruitless. He was put aboard a ship leaving for the United States and was deported from the country.

An unwilling returnee to America, he undertook responsible work within the Armenian Revolutionary Federation's United States district. He became a member of the party's "Hairenik" monthly editorial staff and was elected a member of the party's United States Central Committee, participating in the latter's Executive Body.

During this period, the First World War began, providing the opportunity for the criminal Turks' attempt to totally exterminate the Armenian people. Upon receiving the news of the Great Atrocity, like all exiles, Shahan Natalie experienced nightmarish moments of anguish and rage. And he, the orphaned boy and vengeful youth, made "his vow" not to leave the Genocide perpetrators unpunished, should the world choose to ignore their crime.

On March 23, 1915, one month before the gathering and slaughter of the Armenian intellectuals in Constantinople, Natalie became

a citizen of the United States, assuming "John Mahy" as his official name.

Shahan Natalie's doubts became reality after the War. Ottoman military tribunal, convened in Constantinople, condemned to death the principal perpetrators, who had been extradited to Malta by British authorities. The British placed no value whatsoever on the sentence and ... secretly released the enemies of Armenians and humanity.

From September 27 to the end of October 1919, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation's 9th General Congress was convened in Yerevan. Shahan Natalie participated as the United States District delegate. On the Congress agenda was also placed the issue of retribution against those principally responsible for the Great Atrocity. Natalie experienced here the first serious embitterment of his political life, when some of the delegates deemed this policy wrong, rationalizing that the newly created Armenian Republic needed Turkey's friendship - such justifications have proliferated today also, within the new Armenian Republic.

Contrary to many of the Eastern Armenian delegates' vociferous objections, it was decided by Armenian force to deem the Armenian nation as reconciled with the Turk monsters. It is assumed that at this meeting the Responsible Body was also organized to realize the work, whose primary motivator, planner and spirit was Shahan Natalie, with Grigor Merjanov as principal collaborator. Bureau members, specifically Simon Vratsian, Ruben Ter Minasian, and Ruben Darbinian, decided to prevent Shahan Natalie's determined efforts, but Natalie had given the verdict, which was the demand of more than one and a half million victims.

Under the most clandestine circumstances, the work of eliminating the Turk executioners was organized and the preliminary step's - surveillance, arms-gathering and transport, etc. - were carried out. A "black list" of marked executioners contained the names of approximately 200 beasts in human form.

The executioners of the Armenian people were moving freely and boldly in Berlin, Rome, Baku, Tbilisi and other city streets. Some among them were enjoying local secret and overt police protection.