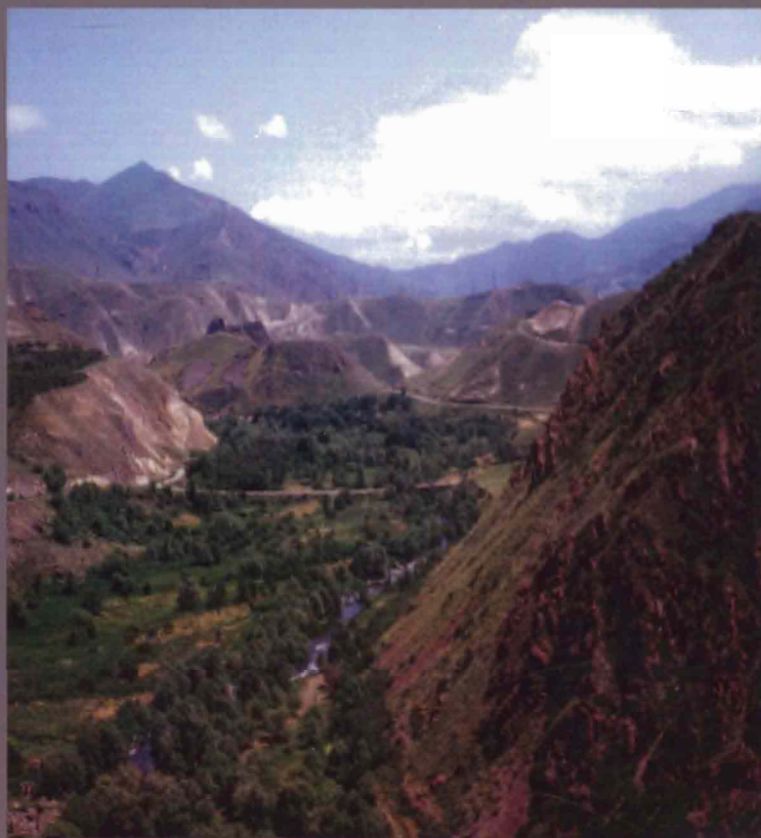


Artavazd M. Minasyan

HOW DID I SURVIVE?



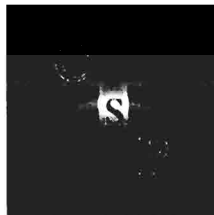
**Translated and Edited
by Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan**

How Did I Survive?

By Artavazd M. Minasyan

Edited Annotated Translation and Introduction by

Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan



Cambridge Scholars Publishing

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This book first published 2008 by

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

15 Angerton Gardens, Newcastle, NE5 2JA, UK

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library**

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ISBN (10): 1-84718-601-7, ISBN (13): 9781847186010



Professor Artavazd M. Minasyan

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the first English language edition of *How Did I Survive?* by Professor A.M. Minasyan. The original hand-written manuscript was completed by the author in Russian in October 1992. Intensive work on editing and translation of the book went on for several years.

In translating the book, every effort was summoned to preserve originality and convey the individual peculiarities of the text's unique language and way of expression saturated with epithets, rich imaginary creative constructions intertwined with critical thoughts of Professor A.M. Minasyan.

The primary task was to make the translation clear, accurate and all encompassing. Without inflicting any deficiencies to the core content, that was accomplished through balance of strict grammar rules of English and a wide specter of synonyms and epithets of the Russian language.

Most problematic in translating and editing were references to historical events, specific expressions, and play of words customary in Russian but a bit complex for English language reader. For those cases explanatory notes and commentary were added within the text in square brackets. Additional background information was arranged in the Notes section of the present book. All such added commentaries are marked with my initials "AVG".

I am indebted and sincerely grateful to everyone who has reviewed numerous drafts of the text for their interest and comments that assisted in my work. I would like to express special appreciation and gratitude to my grandmother, Hera Kh. Minasyan, my Gevorkyan and Minasyan families without whose active dedicated assistance and support completion of this project would have been difficult.

Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan

PREFACE

The 21st century has brought a new era of advanced technology, grand scientific achievements, increased globalization and deeper interconnection, and interpenetration of cultures, philosophies, ways of thought and values of different peoples and countries. History teaches us that every phenomenon unfolding in the present has a specific chain of events preceding it in the past, serving as the concrete phenomenon's premise and cause. In turn, this present phenomenon is a prerequisite for events to come. This book is exactly about this developing process: this chain reaction in human history. In his autobiography spanning over the 20th century the prominent philosopher Professor Artavazd Mikhailovich Minasyan (01/21/1913 – 05/23/1993) analyzes each event [even those that seem unimportant] through the prism of his time; cause and effect bond as he speaks to the reader about his life and personal experiences. Strictly adhering to the laws of dialectic cognition of the world, the author studies each event in unity of its ingredient opposite occurrences, that at first appearing as separate and dispersed events, are integrally bound with each other and diverse events of the last century and vice versa. It is a dialectical analysis of one's life in macro perspective.

Beginning with the description of the author's childhood, *How Did I Survive?* depicts many of the details in the establishment of Soviet power in the Trans-Caucasus and related events in the early years of the 20th century. As he connects each day of his life with the national and international events occurring on a much grander scale, Professor A.M. Minasyan tells the story of 1937 in the USSR and Stalin's purges that affected him and his family directly. He critically assesses the conditions under which he served in the Red Army, taking part in all decisive battles of World War II and rising from the rank of private to major. Our author speaks with a great pride and honor about the courage and dedication of his comrades in arms, those with whom he defended their Motherland and that of the Soviet people in general. As he returns to academe and his study of science after the war, Professor A.M. Minasyan continues his struggle for the just and correct understanding and application of Marx's political economy within the realities of the Soviet Union. At times, the author's character—opposing and always intolerant to any forms of injustice, inequality and prejudice—created problems with those who tried to use science and academia for their selfish and often political goals.

Interestingly despite all trials and tribulations, all obstacles set by nay sayers on his way, and often feeling himself on the edge of total collapse, Professor A.M. Minasyan managed to create and preserve a hospitable and large family. He published many monographs, articles and textbooks in philosophy and earned recognition for his work. On innumerable occasions he lectured in the most prestigious universities of the former USSR and Eastern Europe. Above all he retained warmth in his heart and openness in his soul to his fellow human beings. This is what the book is about! The ancient Christian proverb, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," found its realization in this philosopher's life. Seeing the richness in the teachings of Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Marx and many other classical philosophers; understanding the true—underlining—essence of the processes taking place in the society of his time; being a contemporary of—often in direct contact with—the people empowered to change the lives of others, the author retained sincere love for his "neighbor," his family, and anyone who turned to him for advice or help.

This is the last book of Professor A.M. Minasyan. He finished writing the book in 1992. He died on May 23, 1993. At that time, I, his eldest grandson, Khachatur (as he used to call me) was just finishing my last year of high school. The loss of a thinker of such great caliber, of a person with the kindest soul, and of a grandfather was a great shock for all of us. People came to bid their last farewell from all over Rostov-na-Donu, Moscow, a number of cities in Russia and Eastern Europe, and Armenia. Those who could not come telephoned or sent letters and telegrams to express their condolences and the feeling of a terrible loss to the world. Each person wanted to say their farewell to their teacher, friend, brother, and "knight" (as the academic U.A. Zhdanov characterized A. M. Minasyan at the memorial service).

In the years since his death our large family has grown larger, stronger and more solid. Now we his children and grandchildren have begun to realize the meaning of his words and the stories he used to share with us, most of which are found in his autobiography. Our grandfather's books and teachings changed the course of the lives of many and have compelled us to ask controversial questions and continue his search for the truth. Still, as in our childhood we cry at the sounds of sad Armenian songs, not for fear but from realization of all that our grandfather endured for his family, for his people and for his neighbor—all so that people would live in peace and continue to hope for the best for humanity.

Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan

PROLOGUE

“How did I survive?” Well, you might say, anyone can ask the same question especially given the cruel time, in which we live. This is true, anyone. However, *any one* has one’s own “I,” one’s own “ego,” one’s own peculiar history. The story of my life coincides with the history of the 1917 Russian Bolshevik Revolution and the history of the USSR. Not many have experienced this. I am eighty years old. At this age, one can better comprehend the life path in its totality and recognize the various aspects and stages of existence differently. Is it not wisely said: “Human anatomy contains a key to the anatomy of the ape.”¹ Not “everybody” has all of that either. I have been through fire and water, I witnessed war against one’s own people, I fought Fascism, and I survived and returned to science. I created a strong family for posterity and life to go on. Please allow me to tell my story beginning with my childhood...