A BRIEF HISTORY OF ARMENIAN BIBLIOCLASM

Key words: history of Armenian biblioclasm, Armenian vandalism, book burning

Abstract
No matter how difficult, we have to remember that book burning or biblioclasm is one of the oldest mental-psychological diseases that the Nazis, radical Islamists, were sick at one time. Oddly enough, armenians too, have long-term biblioclasm disease. Since the 8th century up to now, Armenian vandals have burned at least 10 million valuable manuscripts and books in the territory of Azerbaijan. Only in the March massacre of Azerbaijani in 1918 in Baku were burned more than 20,000 volumes of books. The article is devoted to the study of the history of this problem.

Introduction
The paradox ‘You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them’, which we find in Ray Bradbury’s famous work named Fahrenheit 451 is not actually a ‘philosophy’ kneaded in a passive fantasy to please booklover readers. Probably there are people who conceive this metaphor as a sporadic artistic example removed from its context without reading the mentioned work. However, when analyzing the work in detail it becomes clear that this artistic technique – logical oxymoron, contrast that Bradbury used to create both a stylistic effect and mental self-returning impact talk about serious issues that we have to from generation to generation.

Although the work’s protagonist Guy Montag serves as a ‘firefighter’, according to the new rules, the fire that he will put out must be created by him, not others. Montag’s job is to fire the libraries and bookstores in the city and at the last stage dowse ‘satisfactory’ water to the books he fired and burned to ashes. Some day comes and Montag understands that he axed the future of the world and leaves his job, family, friends, the city where he lived, in short, everything that he regarded as valuable; joins those ‘who retired the world’, that is, knowledgeable-informed persons, scientists, librarians and starts to fight against those burning books like him.

In this anti-utopist walk, the final conclusion of Bradbury is that the book is only valuable then when it is read. If books are not read in a society, then these values may be treaded and even easily burned. Surely, this thought said by the writer ‘out of spite of’ supporters of a society without books and libraries is a heart-wrenching conclusion that a thinker made by

\[1 \text{ The ignition temperature of paper is 451 degrees Fahrenheit, or 233 degrees Celsius.}\]
feeling the global pain. Who knows maybe the writer is entirely right and books of non-reading societies should be burned?!

**Armenian biblioclasm from the Middle Ages to modernity**

When approaching the issue with the logic of Aristotle, the thought ‘all societies burning books die, a non-reading society is the society burning books, hence, a non-reading society is dead’ will arise.

Although this syllogism consists of the historical development criterion of both the Eastern and Western cultures, there are very few nations (societies, unities, groups or teams united ideologically, and etc.) who destroyed the books, libraries of reading societies. For example, in the ceremony of ‘book burning’ in 1933, Nazis burned to ashes the national resources that the German nation collected for years – hundreds of thousands manuscripts, books and art works in a night. Thus, the books and manuscripts of Sigmund Freud, Erich Kastner, Heinrich Mann, Kurt Tucholsky, Erich Maria Remarque, Theodor Wolff, and many other prominent scientists and artists were destroyed.

And the ‘genocide of books’ committed in Bessarabia in 1941 by Nazis of Romania, who were members of Hitler’s Coalition, has not been forgotten by history yet. Nazis who destroyed all the books in various cities of Ukraine and Moldova fully burned the book funds of the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, including the Institutes of History, Economy, Language and Literature, burned the Central Library of Tiraspol, which had a fund of 250 thousand books, and built fires with 15 wagons of books in Belsi and burned them to ashes. [1]

It is not strange that although the process of book burning was for example, ‘misunderstanding’ among Chinese, a ‘ritual’ among Nazis, and a ‘mission’ among medieval Catholics in various periods of history, it has become a ‘disease’ (biblioclasm) among Armenians. In addition to the senses of groundless hate and enviousness against other nations, in particular Turks-Azerbaijanis, in the structure of Armenian thinking, the disease of arrogation of other cultures and destroying those cultures that they fail to arrogate has been for centuries. It is such a disease that its first symptoms show themselves in the very mists of history.

Although ‘cultural genocide’ were committed by burning books in Alexandria, at various times (it is supposed that with the aim to stop propagandas for idolatry. *Although its definite reason has not been defined with historical facts, rumor has it that in Egypt, 4,000 bathrooms were heated with those books for 6 months*); in Bukhara (To prevent reading of the books in that library by others after Avicenna. *It is alleged that Avicenna was a librarian in that library and burned that place personally after reading all the books in the fund*); in Andalusia (To destroy all the traces of the Islamic culture); in Roma and Ephesus (To strengthen Christian religious dogmas); and in Berlin (To destroy the mass of documents-information that were ideologically ‘harmful’), the fact of destroying of Bagdad libraries several times is specifically underlined in the history.

All historians unanimously think that mass destructions happened as a result of the attack of Mongols under the leadership of Hulaku Khan to Bagdad in 1258 and 36 libraries, including Baeyt al-Hikma (the main library) were burned and grabbed. [2-10]

However, there are different thoughts on how those libraries and books were burned or grabbed. For example, Al-Kalkashandi writes that the books were stolen and taken to an unknown place during the occupation of Bagdad [11], Ibn Khaldun notes that all the books were poured to the Tigris [12], As-Sai Ibnul-Anjab notes that a barn was made of books for the horses of the Mongolian soldiers [13], Ibn Tagribardi writes that they were completely burned [14] and Lestrange writes that a bridge arose from the books poured to the Euphrates and the color of the river became black due to the inks of the books. However, the moment drawing

\[\text{All men are mortal} / \text{Socrates is a man} / \text{Therefore, Socrates is mortal.}\]
attention mostly in the grabbing of the Bagdad libraries is the assiduousness that Armenians demonstrated in that work.

A.Mammadli writes that at the time when Mongolian occupations started in the 20-30th years of the 13th century, Armenians, by abiding by their ethnic-psychological characteristics, chose the tactics of stab Saljugs in the back. When the Mongolian commanders started to attack towards Asia Minor, they needed for spies who knew that region well. As if feeling that, Atabay Ivan’s son paron Avag ‘was captivated’ by Mongolians before everybody in 1236 and started to serve under the leadership of Chormogu. The Mongolian commanders used the services of those like Avag to occupy other principedoms of Caucasus. When the Mongolians started the occupation of Anatolia in 1242, the number of Armenian soldiers were too significant in that army. They aimed at using such favorable conditions to struggle against the Arabian Muslim Califate and Saljug Turks, and then get a ‘fatty share’ from the Mongolian Khans. [16, pp. 39-41]

One of those who provided the Mongolian troops with soldiers and wanted to get a ‘fatty share’ by directly participating in the occupation of Bagdad was Armenian ruler Hetum (1213-1270). In his work titled The Flower of Eastern History, which he wrote against Muslims, he regretted that he could not murder the Khalifa with his own hands, but proudly writes that he destroyed many humans, libraries, books and historical monuments instead of that.

And Z.Bunyadov’s researches [18, pp. 121-123] give a ground to say that the history of the Armenian disease of ‘burning books’ goes more far from the Bagdad events – to the 8th century. It is known that the point that was common for Armenians and Caucasus Albans at that time was not, as asserted by the formers, the sameness of the national roots, but idolization of the sect of Monophysitism (Christianity’s sect accepting Issus Christ as God distinctly. A very small part of Christians accept this sect as a correct one) of Christianity by both of them. In the 8th century, Albanians wanted to get united with Byzantine to return to the sect of Dyophysitism (A large or opposite version of Monophysitism. It is a Christian sect accepting that Issus is both the God and a human), to which they belonged previously.

Referring to Musa Kalankatli’s ‘Albanian History’ work, Z.Buniatov writes about this: ‘Early 8th century, Armenian Catholicos Ilia snooped for Khalifa Abdu l-Malik (685-705) and informed him that Albanians (Albanian Catholicos Nerses –J.J.) would conclude an agreement with Byzantine against the Kalifate. Then, based on the military and political power of Arabsians, Abd ul-Malik gave the Arran catholicoses under the control of Ilia. Calling of the lands of Armenia, Arran and Iberia as ‘Arminia’ in Syrian and Arabic sources only reflected their administrative unity and the closeness to Armenian priests of the Kalifate that was treating assertions of the Office of Catholicoses of Armenia kindly. Arabsians absolutely did not like the searching of the Albanian (dyophysite) Church for the help of Byzantine and relying it on Byzantine. Therefore, Arabsians were accepting the requests of the Office of Catholicoses of Armenia very cheeringly and were shooting ‘two rabbits’ with one arrow by this way, that is, they were shocking the interests of Byzantine in Transcaucasia and were supported by Gregorian priests; and these priests in their turn were pursuing their interests in Arran.’

Getting a consent letter from the Kalifate, Ilia came to Partav, the capital of Albania, and had Nerses taken to him, and arrested him after humiliating him. Then, the rich library of the Alban Church was burned brutally and the valuable historical books were destroyed. [19]
And according to another source, all books of Nerses, which were full with schism were put to boxes by Armenians and were thrown away to Trtu (Tartar) River. [20, p. 239-241]

Armenian vandals also did not relinquish the disease of biblioclasm (burning of books) even in the 20th century and on the contrary, significantly increased the scale of their ill-favored acts. For example, in the letter sent from the Office of Commander of the Armed Forces of Turkey’s Amasya City on July 22, 1915 to the Headquarter of Sivas Brigade with the code ‘absolutely confidential’ (Fig. 1), information about the burning by Armenians of Amasia’s 14 settlements and more than 2,000 houses, and most importantly, the Abdullatif Afandi Library, where very valuable handwritten books were maintained, were given.

![Figure 1. Telegram Related to the Genocide Committed by Armenians in Amasya (Ottoman Empire) in 1915](image)

Armenians also committed the same brutality in Azerbaijan after 3 years. Dashnaks fired and burned people lively in Baku on March 31, 1918, destroyed schools, libraries, hospitals and mosques, and devastated the city. In his work, A.Khalafov describes the state of the libraries and ‘the March tragedy of the libraries’ in Baku on the eve of the March Genocide as follows: ‘Although there were many libraries acting in Baku at that time, 2 of them were particularly important for the history of national culture. One of them was the first public Library
organized by Nariman Narimanov, a great educationist and statesman in Baku in 1894 and the other was Nijat Library.

Unlike other libraries in the city, Nijat Library was a library where mainly the national literature and books in the Azerbaijani language were maintained. Also, being of the majority of its readers Azerbaijani nationals demonstrated that Nijat Library had a great role in the development of the national conscience. The increasing role of this library in the society and becoming of it a public library led to increasing of the attention to it. Therefore, the library was moved in 1914-1915 to the center of the city from Saadat School to the building of Ismailiyya, which was one of the largest buildings of the city (Current building of the Presidium of ANAS). That time there were more than 10,000 books in the fund of the library. It was a huge number for that time.

Unfortunately, when the building of Ismailiyya was burned by Armenian dashnaks in Baku in March 1918, Nijat Library, which had a great place in the history of the library work in Azerbaijan and played an important and honorable role in the education and ethics of our nation, awareness raising, development of the culture, promotion of our national literature and history, and thus, renaissance of the national conscience, was also burned and destroyed.’ [21, pp. 86-88]

The damage made to our culture of book and material-cultural heritage by Armenian dashnaks during the March events was not ended with only burning of Nijat Library, but also the operation of many libraries of the country became paralyzed and tens of libraries had to be closed.

In addition to Baku, Azerbaijanis were also murdered with a special brutality in Shamakhi, Gouba, Karabakh, Zangazour, Nakhichevan, Lankaran and other regions. Besides inflicting reprisals to the civil population in these territories in April-May 1918, Armenians also destroyed villages and national cultural monuments and burned libraries and mosques.

Referring to grounded facts about the genocide that took place in Gouba in April-May 1918, S.A.Roustamova-Tohidi writes that Armenians brutally murdered the Muslim population of the city, including women, elder people and infants within several weeks, raped the Muslim women, including minor girls, destroyed buildings, and burned libraries and books (in particular Korans). [22, p.78; 104; 148]

Not only public libraries, but also private libraries were burned and valuable manuscripts maintained in private houses were burned. Armenians removed and burned more than 400 manuscripts and books from the houses of Gouba habitants Moussa Alirza Asgarzade and Dadash Majidoghlu. [22, p. 197; 396]

We would like to particularly note that this disease of Armenians, that is, biblioclasm or burning of books did not absolutely arose ungrounded. They have always understood well that in order to trump up their past and falsify facts, for of all, there is a need to destroy the realities, documents, books and libraries, in short, original sources that obstruct enhancement of the Armenian pseudo-history. Thanks to this national-psychological defect that has not absolutely decreased, but on the contrary, increased, the Armenians now unintentionally or intentionally – no matter – first of all burn the books and libraries as their key function in the places where they come as a guest and live, attack or grab. If not, they would never burn as one of their key duties 9 Centralized Library Systems and 927 libraries when occupying Nagorno Karabakh and neighbor regions in 1992-1993, including 32 libraries in Shusha and the ancient and unique books maintained in those libraries; 119 libraries in Lachin, 120 libraries in Kalbajar, 107 libraries in Aghdam, 31 libraries in Jabrail, 90 libraries in Fuzuli, 85 libraries in Gubadli, 70 libraries in Zangilan, 65 libraries in Aghdara, 69 libraries in Khojali, 9 libraries in Kojavand, and tens of libraries in other places. As a result of this relapse of Armenians who burned to ashes books in 5 million copies within 2 years, material damage in the amount of 20 million and 815 thousand USD was made to the library-information sphere of Azerbaijan.
Conclusion

We are well aware of the ingenious phrase of the great German philosopher-Heinrich Heine (1797-1856), which directly fits for the Armenian disease of books burning. Heine, whose books were burned by Nazis in Berlin in 1933, said yet in 1821 in his work named ‘Almansor: A Tragedy’ that: ‘Be sure where books are burned, in the end, people will also be burned’.

There are very harrowing examples for becoming of this ‘forecasting’ real in the world: After the burning of the National Library in Jafna City of Sri Lanka in 1981, which was opened with participation of Ranganata, a prominent Indian library researcher, a civil war started in that country; after the destroying of thousand year old monuments, including book monuments, and libraries by terrorists and Islamic radicals in Iraq and then in Syria since the 1990s, millions of human beings were murdered as the continuance of the ‘cultural genocide’, ‘tragedy of library; in the Near East; as a result of the burning of Koran by priest Terry Jones in US in 2011, radical Islamists committed terror acts against many people in Afghanistan, and etc.

Armenians always personally chained up the ring of reason-result that we showed in the above examples, and burned firstly cultural monuments and books and then our people and infants across the world, such as Bagdad, Istanbul, Amasia, Baku, Gouba and Shusha. And if today there is not any information about subsequent acts of destruction of libraries and cultural monuments on TVs, radios and press, it does not mean the remission of the ‘disease of burning of books’, as all diseases related to the name of the Armenians, including the Armenian Disease in the medicine (the other name is periodic disease or ‘Yerevan Disease or Genetic family amidiosis without neuropathy), the Disease of arrogation (Armenian arrogation syndrome) in the social-cultural terminology and the disease of biblioclasm are very serious, chronical, incurable and rare genetic family diseases.

References:


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**Erəmən biblioklazmının qısa tarixi**

XÜLASƏ

* Açar sözler: erəmən biblioklazmının tarixi, erəmən vəhşiilikləri, kitabyandırma*


Məqalə sözləşdən problemin qısa tarixini araşdırən üzə çıxarmaq məqsədə ilə qalsın alım.
Джавид Джафаров

Краткая история армянского библиоклазма

РЕЗЮМЕ

Ключевые слова: история армянского библиоклазма, армянский вандализм, сожжение книг

Библиоклазм (намеренное уничтожение или повреждение книжного наследия, сожжение рукописей или книг) – одно из самых страшных понятий в лексиконе мировой культуры. Еще в III веке до н.э. библиоклазмом занимались в Китае при императоре Цинь Шихуанди, в Европе в VII столетии; в XX веке нацисты, радиокальные исламисты тоже торжественно сжигали книги. Как ни странно, и армяне, уже давно и лихорадочно болеют этой необычной болезнью – библиоклазмом.

Начиная с VIII века до наших дней, армянские вандалы сожгли не менее 10 млн. единиц ценных рукописей и книг на территории Азербайджана. Только в мартовской резне азербайджанцев в 1918 г. в Баку, было сожжено более чем 20000 томов книг.

В течении двух лет (1992-1993) со стороны армянских террористов в оккупированных землях Азербайджана, в Нагорном Карабахе и прилегающих к нему районах были уничтожены 927 библиотек, в фонде которых хранились 5 миллионов книг.

Статья посвящена изучению истории данной проблемы.