

**“MATENADARAN”
MASHTOS INSTITUTE OF ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS**

BANBER MATENADARAN

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**“Nairi” publishing house
YEREVAN – 2014**

**“МАТЕНАДАРАН”
ИНСТИТУТ ДРЕВНИХ РУКОПИСЕЙ ИМ. МАШТОЦА**

ВЕСТНИК МАТЕНАДАРАНА

21

**Издательство “Наири”
ЕРЕВАН – 2014**

pressed¹⁵. It was typical that the authors of articles and drawings used without commentary and explanation language¹⁶. The fight against religion was apparently a real struggle with a real enemy. This language of propaganda became more evident after 1928, when the campaign of collectivization commenced.

16. The Church as an opponent of collectivization

The focus of the approved Soviet agitators according to the political leaders in Armenia was collectivization. Implementation of this social policy was a necessary step leading to, as Stalin called it, "social revolution". As the First Secretary stressed, the collectivization was a revolution in terms of a "total revolution on all fronts of the construction of the Soviet system"¹⁷. The collectivization was linked with the Soviet policy of industrialization. Stalin needed liquidity of all branches of economy – especially in agriculture. The collectivization was an obligate way step forward in the direction of social communism. In this case, Stalin was the follower of Karl Marx's idea according to which communism could be built only in a country with large farmssteads. On the other hand the implementation of the collectivization was one more reason for Stalin to strengthen the society.

In Armenia the collectivization began in 1928, like in the whole USSR, as a part of the Five-year Plan. In the first year the results were disappointingly weak. Only a 1.7% of all farms joined the state farmsstead¹⁸. Moscow reacted promptly: the old government in Yerevan was replaced, and new agitators were brought to Armenia. First secretary of the Communist Party in Armenia became Aghvan Chapman. In the next year the Soviet Armenian propaganda found more targets.

For the initial failure of the collectivization the "Dashnks" and the clergy were declared responsible. According to the Soviet press, the anti-kolkhoz agitation was conducted by clergymen, often during Sunday masses and religious feasts¹⁹. This conception was convenient for the Bolsheviks.

The intention of the members of the editorial board of "Anastvats" was not to attack the Church hierarchy, but to manifest competently the crisis in the Church and to convince the Armenian nation that the liquidation of the Church (as an organization) is only a matter of time.

¹⁵ *Armenians: "Anastvats"* 1929, p. 10.

¹⁶ *Approved article from Stalin on village farmssteads: "Anastvats"* 1929, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Speech from the Politburo Meeting, 1929, p. 10.*

¹⁸ *В. И. Ленин. Избранные сочинения. М.: Госиздат, 1929, p. 125.*

¹⁹ *Armenians: collectivization information, "Anastvats"* 1929, p. 21.