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Armenological Centers in the Diaspora as Institutional Intellectual Resource

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The issue of revelation and consolidation of the national potential is peculiar for the countries with Diaspora. In such countries, the importance is also attached, besides domestic resources, to the external resources, represented by the Diaspora communities. The latter has great potential – human, economic, political (as a means for lobby), etc. – for any country.

The issue of using the potential of the Diaspora should not be considered as simply receiving one-sided help from abroad, which is based on national affiliations, i.e. as a sincere aspiration to help your motherland and compatriots. The cooperation with Diaspora is efficient only when it is based on mutually beneficial actions directed to the solution of nationwide goals. It is not a mere chance that recently expert community's interest in Diaspora studies has grown in many countries.

Besides political, economic, cultural and other aspects, the cooperation between the motherland and Diaspora is also crucial in the aspect of academic and intellectual sphere in general because the role of the intellectual potential in the success of the nations and states can hardly be overestimated. This fact makes the issue of revelation, consolidation, elaboration of ways of cooperation with the Diaspora imperative for the Republic of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

Some steps have already been taken in this direction. The all-Armenian conferences in different fields (medicine, architecture, law, etc.) organized by the Ministry of Diaspora of RA are remarkable. In this context the All-Armenian Conference of Political Scientists and International Relations Experts, organized by Ministry of Diaspora of Armenia, YSU and “Noravank” Foundation in November 2012 is remarkable [1].

Several research programmes directed to revealing of the national intellectual potential have been carried out by the Ministry of Diaspora and “Noravank” Foundation in recent years. These programmes are “Armenians in Israel: Some Problems” [2], “Armenian Community Information Resources in the Post-Soviet Countries” [3], “The Identity Problems and Information Resources of the Armenian Communities in the Post-Soviet Countries” [4], “The Issues of Self-

¹ **Source:** <http://www.noravank.am/eng/articles/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=12354&sphrase_id=76990>

Organization of the Armenian Communities in the South Russia” [5], “Armenian Community in the USA” [6], “Problems of the Armenian Communities in Eastern Europe” [7].

Currently two research programmes are carried out: *“Research and Analytical Community in the Diaspora: Issues of Organization and Prospects of Cooperation”* and *“Armenological Centers in the Diaspora: Estimation of the Potential”*.

The goal of the first programme is revelation and counting of the specialists in humanities of the Armenian descent and elaboration of the ways of cooperation with the research and analytical community in Armenia. The second programme is directed to the revelation of potential of the Armenian Diaspora in the sphere of the Armenology and its most effective use. Revelation and counting of the intellectual potential of the intellectual organizations or institutions are especially important because while solving system problems group work is more efficient than the individual. Mostly the Armenian Studies (Armenology) Centers undertake the mission of intellectual institutions in the Diaspora. There are dozens of such centers (Zorian Institute [8], Haigazian University [9], Mkhitarian Congregation in Venice, etc.). They all together form the main Armenian intellectual potential in the sphere of Armenology.

The Armenology centers in the Diaspora, being of common Armenological thematic scope, differ in other characteristics. For example, according to the type of activity they can be of academic-educational, research, analytical and other character, or they can have different sources of funding.

As for the thematic scope, it should be mentioned that Armenology is a broad academic field and it has its own directions and braches. Correspondingly, general Armenologcial orientation does not imply uniformity in the thematic scope of the Armenology centers. Some centers have political orientation; the others study ethnography, Diaspora studies, etc.

Until today studies of separate Armenology centers were carried out. But there has been no comprehensive study of the Armenology centers directed to the revelation and estimation of their potential. It will be of great significance in the aspect of putting their activity on more efficient and purposeful track, elaborating ways of cooperation, strengthening ties with academic circles in Armenia, etc.

The study of the Armenology centers in the Diaspora from the academic point of view solves two key problems – theoretical and practical, which in their turn are divided into sub-problems.

In the theoretical aspect the study of the Armenology centers is of introductory character and is mostly reduced to revealing and estimation of their potential. In this context setting and solution of the following main problems are singled out:

- Drawing a list of Armenology centers mainly by means on web search;
- Formation of a database about the centers by means of gathering and systematization of the information from the web and other sources (media, books, bulletins);
- Analysis of gathered information by means of comparison and matching and other methods;

- Elaboration of a distinct methodology of estimation of the Armenology centers' potential: setting of estimation standards;
- Estimation of the potential of the Armenology centers by means of the elaborated methodology.

In the practical aspect study of the Armenology centers in the Diaspora implies the most effective use of the revealed and estimated potential in the interests of the Republic of Armenia, NKR and Armeniacy.

- Setting spheres, levels and goals of the core activity of the Armenology centers in accordance with their potential;
- Elaboration of ways of raising potential of the Armenology centers;
- Revelation of common spheres of activity, goals and mechanisms.

Though the practical issue of raising effectiveness of the Diaspora's Armenology centers implies serious academic researches and detailed analysis, today a number of observations, which can become a guideline for further studies, can be made.

It is referred to the spheres of studies the Armenology centers. By their character these studies can be divided into three types: educational, agitation and applied.

Educational researches are mainly concentrated on the issues of Armenian history, Armenian philology, culture, ethnography and other academic fields.

Agitation researches are mainly carried out in the sphere of Genocide studies. Their goal is to introduce the tragedy of the Armenian Genocide to the Armeniacy and world community. In these researches, besides Genocide studies, other problems of the "Hay Dat" (Armenian question) are also considered.

The researches of applied character are called to impact practical policy, contributing to the resolution of the nationwide problems in the practical plane.

Though the educational and agitation researches do not directly impact practical policy, nevertheless they are not deprived of applied character. In case with the researches of educational character, their applicability in the Diaspora is connected with the preservation and development of the Armenian identity, national self-consciousness and culture. The applied aspect of the agitation researches in the sphere of international recognition of the Armenian Genocide as well as "Hay Dat" problems solution is in formation of the favourable public opinion.

Accepting the importance of the researches of educational and agitation character dominating in the activity of the Armenology centers in Diaspora, it should be mentioned that the applied studies, which are underestimated today, are of no less importance.

We suppose that the applied studies should be concentrated on topical problems which are faced today by the Armeniacy, Rep. of Armenia and NKR. The applied task of these researches may become elaboration of the practical ways of solution of these problems in case of timely revelation of the causes and circumstances of their appearance.

We find it necessary to concentrate our attention on the following problems:

- «*Hay Dat*». In this sphere it is reasonable to concentrate the researches on the elaboration of favorable political, legal and other ways of solving of the issue of international recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, reclamation of damage [10], compensation and other issues.
- *Raising the blockade of Armenia*. Here it is reasonable to study the issues of choosing effective strategy and tactics, adequate means of struggle against the blockade of the Rep. of Armenia and NKR by Turkey and Azerbaijan.
- *Settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict*. This issue also covers wide range of problems – from containment of militarist policy of Azerbaijan to the legal recognition of NKR's independence.
- *Programmes of development of the Rep. of Armenia and NKR* [11]. Social-economic, scientific and cultural, educational, demographic development of two republics as well as their deep integration are meant [12]. This sphere is of strategic importance because without comprehensive development and integration the security of the Rep. of Armenia and NKR will be seriously imperiled.

As for the first three points, the Armenology centers have wide field of actions with the lobbyist organizations of the Diaspora which did not receive the academic support of the Armenology centers while struggling for the international recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide, raising the blockade of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement. Meanwhile, such a support can considerably trigger the effectiveness of this struggle. As the result of the activity of the lobbyist organizations and Armenology centers, the latter can turn into a kind of “think tanks” of the Diaspora, providing academic support to the lobbyist organizations' activity.

As for the programmes of development of the Rep. of Armenia and NKR this issue provides wide field for cooperation with the authorities, political powers as well as academic and analytical organizations in the Rep. of Armenia and NKR.

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- [11]. While speaking about the issues of development of the Rep. of Armenia and NKR we should also remember about Javakhq which should not stand apart from other regions of Armenia (Lori, Kotayk, Gegharkunik, etc.) in the world perception of the Armeniacy.
- [12]. The final goal of any integration is the uniting of the Rep. of Armenia and NKR in one state formation and programmes should be aimed on it.