

The origins, course and consequences of an intelligence operation held in the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, or- ganised by Office No. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff of the Polish Armed Forces and Georgian Military Organisation in 1930

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Georgian emigrants, who in June 1931 began to read the fifteenth edition of the monthly journal “Brdzolis Chma” (Echo of the Battle), the social democrats’ official body, encountered an unclear picture of a young man wearing a white shirt with a tie and a dark jacket on page 4. The photograph was an illustration of a short reminiscence by one of them: *And today in front of my eyes stands, as if he were real, a handsome and broad-shouldered Artimon, smiling at me from beneath his manly moustache. As if it was yesterday when I saw him off to the fatherland, walking proudly towards the battlefield. A year has passed - exceptionally hard, full of grief and lament for the Georgian nation. A year ago, Artimon and his two companions took shelter in their home mountains. He faced the enemy and death - as his own destiny - he accepted like a man. He fell on the home-ground with a gun in his hand, and she embraced him. The wind blowing from the Surebi mountains will sing to his tomb and the murmuring streams will whisper the mysterious story: “Victory is on the nation’s side. You surpass many among the living. Rest in peace. The sun will rise again.” The whisper of nature is overshadowed by a battle cry which grows and turns into a wave. A breakthrough is coming, soon the wave will cover this land of sorrow. And then, my Artimon, Georgians will learn your name in others’ stead. Rest in peace, brother, victory is near. Your friend¹.*

A year before, Artimon Kikvadze together with two other Georgians who lived in Paris, had gone missing overnight, without a trace. This caught the attention of the remaining emigrants. It had happened before that someone would travel to a province or another town and people said he had left to Georgia. There has been no contact with the homeland for a long time and different rumours were circulating among the emigrants. It comes as no surprise that Artimon’s departure quickly

¹ *Artimon Kikvadze*, „Brdzolis Chma” [Echo of the Battle], 1931 (June), no. 15, p. 4.

² Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voennyi Arkhiv [Russian State Military Archive, Moscow, Russia] (RGVA), f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishwiliiego [Shalva Berishvili’s additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 201-205.

became a subject of gossip among the community that was desperately hungry for hope².

At the beginning of the 1930s, the spirits among the emigrants were not running high. In the practice of national government, the lack of any plan was becoming more evident. The main focus was placed on publishing political releases and propaganda. People were still seeking for signs of crisis in the Soviet Union and waiting for a coup which they supposed was to take place soon. With each year, these hopes faded, though. The defeat of the uprising in Georgia in 1924 and the wave of emigration among its participants echoed throughout the Georgian community in exile³. Political conflicts from the time of independence evolved into idle disputes and mutual accusations. Ordinary emigrants on the other hand, were struggling with poor living conditions and unemployment. Apathy grew among them due to the lack of changes, often turning into depression⁴. Voices saying that “the government is like a living dead corpse that cannot do any good and won’t do any good”⁵ were heard more and more often.

Many organisations were created to mobilise the community and prepare their members to fight for the independence of Georgia as an answer to the opposition’s accusations and a way to meet the expectations of Georgian emigrants. The Second Department of Main Staff of Polish Armed Forces⁶ got involved in the Georgian government’s initiative and became responsible for the intelligence and information services, including both intelligence and counterintelligence. Poland had already established diplomatic relations with the Georgian Republic in 1920. After the fall of the country, the Poles recruited a fair amount of Georgian officers into military schools, who were later accepted by the Polish Army as foreign servicemen⁷. The representatives of both nations, seeing in the Soviet Union their greatest enemy, quickly established political and intelligence ties. In the 1920s, the Polish side supported the activities of the Georgian government in exile, engaging their services as well as finances⁸. At the beginning of 1928 in France, both countries started to work on the creation of a secret organisation whose members were to create a workforce for further inde-

³ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishwiliiego [Shalva Berishvili’s additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 201-205.

⁴ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 292, Odpis pisma nr 1538/X/32/20 [brak daty dziennej] listopada 1932 r. w sprawie aktywizacji pracy Gruzinów [Copy of a document no. 1538/X/32/20 [no date given] November 1932, about spurring the Georgians into action], p. 52 verso.

⁵ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 291, Notatka Waleriana Tewizadze nr 515 z dnia 21 kwietnia 1932 r. [Valerian Tevizadze’s note no. 515 from 21 April 1932], p. 21.

⁶ On 1928, the General Staff of Polish Armed Forces was renamed the Main Staff.

⁷ A. Rukkas, *Georgian Servicemen in the Polish Armed Forces (1922–39)*, „The Journal of Slavic Military Studies”, 2001, no 14 (3), pp. 93-106.

⁸ P. Libera, *Ewolucja ruchu prometejskiego w okresie międzywojennym*, [w:] *Ruch prometejski i walka o przebudowę Europy Wschodniej (1918-1940)*, red. M. Kornat, Warszawa 2012, pp. 219-245.

pendence campaigns. This task was given to Major Valerian Tevzadze⁹, a Georgian serviceman in the Polish Army. 9 people began training, mostly originating from the former Georgian Army. One of the first tasks of “Organisation K” was to reestablish connection with the country¹⁰. A little later, similar to the Polish Military Organisation, an underground Georgian Military Organisation was established. It also had a strictly controlled membership and functioned both in Paris and in Audincourt. Its goal was to prepare non-commissioned officers for a future army¹¹. The recruitment of suitable people turned out to be quite easy as many of the emigrants were former conspirators and partisans who had gained their experience in the times of the revolution and uprising of 1924¹². From 1931, they functioned under the guise of a legal society known as the “Societe Des Anciens Combattants Georgiens”, which translates as “Association of Ex-Servicemen”, which allowed any former Georgian soldiers to become members, regardless of their rank¹³. The last entity created in that period was a sports society called “Shevardeni” (eng. Falcon), established in 1929 in Paris¹⁴.

In his announcement from 17 July 1929, General Alexander Zakariadze¹⁵ informed the Polish military authorities about the reestablishment of their connection with Georgia. He tried to convince them that further actions aimed to liberate the country depended on contact with organisations already functioning in Georgia,

⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Valerian Tevzadze (1894-1985), alias: “Korsak”. After the fall of Georgian Republic, he left to Istanbul and then to Poland. After finishing training, he started his service in the Polish Army as a Major. In 1925 he finished the Higher Military School (Wyższa Szkoła Wojenna) in Warsaw. In 1928 he was in France where he created a secret Georgian organisation that was meant to prepare emigrants to fight for independence. D. Kolbaia, *Under polish wings. The Georgian emigration in Poland 1921-1939*, Warszawa 2016, pp. 208, 211.

¹⁰ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 279, Meldunek placówki wywiadowczej „Martel” nr 7 z dnia 9 lutego 1928 r. [Intelligence office ‘Martel’ Report no. 7 from 9 February 1928], p. 5; RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 279, Meldunek placówki wywiadowczej „Martel” bez numeru z dnia 10 lutego 1928 r. [Intelligence office ‘Martel’ report, without number, 10th February 1928], p. 7.

¹¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 284, Kwestionariusz organizacyjny Gruzińskiej Organizacji Wojskowej. Sprawa nr 482/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 22 marca 1933 r. [Organisational questionnaire of Georgian Military Organisation. Case no. 482/II.Inf./2/X From 22 March 1933], pp. 29-31.

¹² RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 284, Notatka gen. Aleksandra Zachariadze na temat Gruzińskiej Organizacji Wojskowej z dnia 17 lipca 1929 r. [Alexander Zakariadze’s note about the Georgian Military Organisation, 17 July 1929.], p. 1.

¹³ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 282, Sprawa Nr 129/II.Inf./2/X w sprawie pracy Rtm. Glińskiego na temat organizacji Centrum Gruzińskiego na emigracji. [Case no. 129/II.Inf./2/X regarding the organising of the Georgian Centre in exile, issued by Cavalry Captain Gliński], p. 16.

¹⁴ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 297, Sprawa nr 3767/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 31 grudnia 1931 r. w sprawie gruzińskiej organizacji sportowej “Szewardeni” [Case no. 3767/II.Inf./2/X from 31 December 1931 about the Georgian sports organisation “Shevardeni”], p. 1 verso.

¹⁵ General Alexander Zakariadze (1884-1957) – chief of staff of independent Georgian Army and a contract general in the Polish Army. D. Kolbaia, *Under polish wings. The Georgian emigration in Poland 1921-1939*, Warszawa 2016, p. 212.

and on their reinforcement. The plan assumed the forging of connection centres in Istanbul and Trabzon, and then sending two members of the organisation who would then make their way into Georgia¹⁶.

Captain Edmund Charaszkiwicz¹⁷, Chief of the Office No. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff, predicted that this campaign would definitely expose the organisational shortcomings of the Georgian side in the field. It had been decided, though, that the completion of this project was well-founded and Poland ought to support the Georgians despite the expected obstacles. The predictions made by Polish intelligence were unpromising, although they were based on rational arguments. Only one expedition held in 1926 among the last fourteen, proved successful¹⁹.

In the first days of March, 1930 intense preparations were made by Office No. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff of Polish Armed Forces and the Georgian Military Organisation for a joint operation, where small amendments were applied to General Alexander Zakariadze's plan. In the end, Lieutenant Colonel Tadeusz Pelczyński²⁰, Chief of the Second Department of Main Staff and General Zakariadze set the details for the operation and its budget during a meeting organised on 9 April 1930²¹.

David Erkomaishvili²², Artimon Kikvadze²³ and Shalva Berishvili,²⁴ who was the head of the group, were chosen to execute this mission. Captain Stefan Nowaczek

¹⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 284, Notatka gen. Aleksandra Zachariadze na temat Gruzińskiej Organizacji Wojskowej z dnia 17 lipca 1929 r. [Alexander Zakariadze's note about the Georgian Military Organisation, 17 July 1929.], p. 1.

¹⁷ Major Edmund Charaszkiwicz (1895-1975), Polish Army officer, between 1929-1939 chief of the Office No. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff (Wyszendrówny 2012, 194).

¹⁸ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo w sprawie próby nawiązania kontaktu z terenem gruzińskiej S.S.R. Sprawa nr 3050/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 17 sierpnia 1931 r. [Pro Domo regarding the attempts to establish contact with the area of the Georgian S.S.R. Case no. 3050/II.Inf./2/X from 17 August 1931.], p. 159 verso.

¹⁹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Studium nad przebiegiem prac związanych z akcją terenową trzech Gruzinów [A study on the progress of work related to the field mission undertaken by the three Georgians.], p. 168.

²⁰ General Tadeusz Pelczyński (1892-1985), Polish Army officer, between 1929-1932 chief of the Second Department of Main Staff.

²¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo w sprawie kosztów transportu trzech Gruzinów. Sprawa nr 1077/II.Inf./2/X/30 z dnia 17 kwietnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo regarding the cost of transport for the three Georgians. Case no. 1077/II.Inf./2/X/30 from 17 April 1930.], p. 16.

²² David Erkomajshvili (1900-1957), alias - "Dionizy Szachrajczuk", "Bazyli Kalapiński", "Czara" and "Rajuk". RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo. Sprawa Nr 1907/II.Inf./2/X. z dnia 9 grudnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo. Case no. 1907/II.Inf./2/X. from 9 December 1930.], p. 250).

²³ Artimon Kikvadze (?-1930), alias - "Mikołaj Kazak", "Mikołaj Kazański" and "Mizak". RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo. Sprawa Nr 1907/II.Inf./2/X. z dnia 9 grudnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo. Case no. 1907/II.Inf./2/X. from 9 December 1930.], p. 250).

²⁴ Shalva Berishvili (1901-1989), alias - "Teodor Omerof", "Stanisław Lubański", "Karo", "Homer". RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo. Sprawa Nr 1907/II.Inf./2/X. z dnia 9 grudnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo. Case no. 1907/II.Inf./2/X. from 9 December 1930.], p. 250); H. Kuromiya, G. Mamouliya, *The Eurasian Triangle, Russia, The Caucasus and Japan, 1904-1945*, Berlin 2017.

was supposed to coordinate the operation in Turkey from the Polish side²⁵. He was an officer responsible for Caucasian matters in the Faculty for nationalities in Office no. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff. The Georgians received Polish passports at the General Consulate in Paris and arrived in Warsaw as Dionizy Szachrajczuk, Teodor Omerof and Mikołaj Kazak on 3 April 1930²⁶.

The next day they started an intense 16 day long sabotage training consisting of theoretical and practical classes. The Georgians learned the rules for creating the structures of an underground organisation as well as confidential communication and gained knowledge on partisan war. They also studied various means of sabotage and production, and use of explosives. The participants also were taught to shoot and operate motorboats. Let us note here that both those providing the training and the participants paid special attention to the specific environmental conditions in Georgia. Special emphasis was placed on discussing the possibilities of sabotaging the oil transport infrastructure as the main branch of the local industry or specific forms of sabotage on the railway. Because the Red Army suppressed independence fighting with their air force, adapting machine guns for anti-aircraft purposes was well rehearsed. Finally, the feasible means of communication were established²⁷.

Later on, the group instructor reported the first worrying signs about the state of the Georgian emigres. The training attendees complained about the significant numbers of rival Georgian organisations. They emphasised their indifference and blamed those who were safe in Poland for not taking any action towards independence. It was known that these bodies had very poor connectivity or no connectivity at all in the field. Scouts suspected that they would only be able to count on themselves. With no trust towards the Georgian centre in Paris, they did not intend to reveal to them all the information that they had acquired. The only reliable person according to them was minister Noe Ramishvili²⁸, who was also Shalva Berishvili's uncle. They considered it beneficial to create in Georgia a Caucasus Independence Committee, including Azeris, Georgians and highlanders from North Caucasus who

²⁵ Captain Stefan Nowaczek (1896-1940) alias "Gong". Polish Army Officer, between 1929-1932 referee in National Division, subdivision "B-k" (Caucasus, Crimea). Between 1932-1933 Chief of the Division "B" (East) in Office No. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff. A. Wyszendyrówny, *Ekspozytura Nr 2 Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego*, [w:] *Ruch prometejski i walka o przebudowę Europy Wschodniej (1918-1940)*, red. M. Kornat, Warszawa 2012, p. 194.

²⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo. Sprawa Nr 1907/II.Inf./2/X. z dnia 9 grudnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo. Case no. 1907/II.Inf./2/X. from 9 December 1930.], p. 250.

²⁷ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Sprawozdanie z wyszkolenia dywersyjnego grupy gruzińskiej [Report on the sabotage training of the Georgian group], pp. 36-46; P. Libera, *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 175-181.

²⁸ Noe Ramishvili (1881-1930), Georgian politician. Between 1918-1921 Minister of Internal Affairs in Democratic Republic of Georgia. From 1921 political emigrant.

would prepare a Caucasian uprising. It was clear that without cooperation, the efforts expended by all such groups alone would not be enough to win over Bolsheviks²⁹.

On 22 April 1930, two days after the training had finished, Captain Stefan Nowaczek left for Istanbul. According to the order received on 15 April 1930, his first and most important task was to prepare the transportation of Georgians from Istanbul to Georgia, in accordance with the scenario agreed with the Georgian authorities. As a next step, he was supposed to scout the road from Trabzon to Erzurum and further afield to Bayazit. After coming back to Istanbul, he planned to connect with the local authorities of the promethean nations and to buy some necessary dictionaries as well as publications. He was travelling incognito on his usual passport, although he carried diplomatic luggage meant for the Polish Legation Affiliate in Ankara in Istanbul³⁰. Inside an inconspicuous suitcase there were guns for the troops, 1050 American dollars for the necessary expenses and the correspondence, for example from Tadeusz Hołówko, Capt. Edmund Charaszkiwicz and Minister Noe Ramishvili³¹.

The ship from Constanța with Captain Nowaczek on board, arrived in Istanbul on 22 April 1930. The characteristic silhouette of the old town, where a major part of the Byzantine and Ottoman architecture was located, especially pleased those who came to the city from the sea, as he had. Istanbul, the city lying on two continents, had always been known for its multi-ethnic mosaic. The beginning of the twentieth century was remarkable in that the city's location encouraged many emigrants to arrive in this former capital of Turkey, as well as diplomats and the spies who followed them. Nowaczek's contact was supposed to be the counsellor for the Polish Legation in Ankara, Jan Gawroński³², but during the first visit, they did not meet and the parcel was received by Major Tadeusz Śniechowski³³. The courier and the receiver of the correspondence spoke about the completion of the task in detail. After a short exchange of opinion it turned out, though, that the second part of mission would

²⁹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Sprawozdanie z wyszkolenia dywersyjnego grupy gruzińskiej [Report on the sabotage training of the Georgian group], pp. 36-46; P. Libera, *II Rzeczpospolita wobec ruchu prometejskiego*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 175-181.

³⁰ The Polish Legation in Ankara had their affiliate in Istanbul. It was established for the organisation of Polish Industry Exhibition in Constantinople, which took place from 12.IX until 7.X 1924. Later on its actions were continued in order to maintain connection with diplomatic corps in Istanbul as well as Caucasian political organisation representatives. H. Bartosiewicz, *Misja Romana Knolla w Ankarze 1924-1925*, „*Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*”, 2001 no. 36, pp. 112-118).

³¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], p. 59.

³² Jan Gawroński (1892-1983), Polish diplomat and political activist.

³³ Major Tadeusz Śniechowski (1893-?), Head of intelligence office codename “L-3”; in the meantime he was also the unofficial military attache of the Polish Legation in Ankara A. Peplowski, *Wywiad polski na ZSRR, 1921-1939*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 148-149.

be impossible to carry out due to a ban on foreigners entering Anatolia. They also discussed the necessary safety precautions concerning Captain Nowaczek and other diplomats contacting him. The arrival of a new courier with a diplomatic bag had already raised some interest among other workers of the Legation. This could have posed a threat to completion of the mission. They established contacts only through the counsellor Gawroński, and outside of the Consulate. Potential meetings with Major Śniechowski were reserved for emergency situations only. The next meeting was scheduled for the following day in a scenario worthy of the best spy novels³⁴.

At 11 in the morning on 23 April 1930, the two men shook their hands in front of the Hagia Sophia mosque. Counsellor Gawroński, just like yesterday's interlocutor, said the second part of the task was unrealistic. He promised to put Captain Nowaczek in touch with a Georgian who would organise the further journey of the sabotage team and deliver correspondence from the Georgian authorities. The next day at 8 pm, the Polish officer, counsellor Gawroński and a certain Gogitauri³⁵ alias "Piotr" met at a tram stop. Despite their expectations, the conversation was not very fruitful. The resentment in the Georgian's voice was palpable. Information that the team has not yet arrived in Istanbul caused a stir and the discussion regarding the number of people in that group almost led to a quarrel. Gogitauri claimed that, as he had already told Noe Ramishvili, it would only be possible to transport two emissaries, because the guides would not want to take responsibility for a three-person group. All the same he ordered the three emissaries to come and he counted on a solution being found along the way. He asked for the personal details of the group. This proposition was met by refusal from Capt. Nowaczek's side, who said that he had travelled to Istanbul for the Georgians to arrive only after everything was ready and well-planned. This caused the Georgian to explode and he was reported to have said that *Poland always puts a halt to Georgian matters*³⁶. Nowaczek responded that if the correspondence written by Ramishvili was not enough to gain his trust, he would leave. Such accusations hurled at the Polish authorities he thought to be unfair and risky. This test of strength that the conversation had turned into led to more questions than answers. The men concluded that further talks would be undertaken after finding out the guides' view³⁷.

³⁴ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 62-63.

³⁵ It most probably concerns Simon Gogitauri, a Georgian emigrant living in Turkey.

³⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], p. 64.

³⁷ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 63-64.

During the following days, the situation became more and more unclear. It turned out that Gogitauri blamed Noe Ramishvili for not keeping his promises made earlier on. According to them, the campaign was planned for May and not in April, due to harsh weather conditions in the mountains on the Turkish-Georgian border. It had been established earlier that the group would consist of two people. What is more, agent "Piotr" had not been informed about the course of the plan by his Georgian supervisors. Soon it turned out that he blamed Noe Ramishvili and Simon Mdivani³⁸ for losing touch with Georgia. A Turkish merchant, who was also a patient of the agent, used to be their contact. The medic managed to gain the merchant's trust, who even opened a branch of his company near the border. Unfortunately, after some time the underground practice was discovered. The branch was closed and the goods were confiscated. Georgians were supposed to cover the merchant's loss, which were evaluated at 900 American dollars. According to his testimony, the Georgian authorities did not do anything to settle their obligations. Thereby, the Georgians lost support from a man who had been helping them without any personal profit. Moreover, he later suffered for his actions³⁹.

As their plan progressed it turned out that it depended fully on a man named Ahmed Bey, with whom Noe Ramishvili and Simon Mdivani were apparently familiar. It was he who was responsible for previous attempts to reach Georgia and maintained contact with the guides. Capt. Nowaczek mentioned later in his report: *This whole plan seemed to be over adventurous and the risk too high. There was a lot of ambiguity and dishonesty that was only too visible. Most of all, it turned out that the guides were in Hopa and not in Constantinople, as he had told me the day before*⁴⁰. Finally, some tangible action occurred in the first days of May in the year 1930. Ahmed Bey proposed transferring the team using a boat from Istanbul to Hopa, a Turkish town located almost 20 km from the Georgian-Turkish border. The journey was supposed to last 5 days. Next the guides would lead the group through the mountains where they were supposed to cross the border illegally and enter Georgia. The overall cost increased to 250 dollars for renting the boat, 250 dollars for the guides and

38 Simon Mdivani (1876-1937), a Georgian politician, between 1921-1928 an unofficial representative of the Georgian government in exile in Turkey. He was also a representative of the national Georgian centre in the Caucasus Independence Committee. J. Czainskij, *Tevfik Rüstü i iolska polityka prometejska w kontekście sprawy wydalenia Simona Mdiwaniego z turcji w 1928 r.*, „Nowy Prometeusz”, 2014, no. 6, pp. 103-118.

39 RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 63-69.

40 RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], p. 65.

100 dollars payment for Ahmed Bey⁴¹. Captain Nowaczek did not have permission to decide on such a matter so he sent a report to the Chief of Office No. 2 of the Main Staff in Warsaw, asking him to decide about the completion of their plan and increasing the funds for that purpose⁴².

Warsaw gave the green light to the plan on 10 May. Four days later they received a telegram confirming the departure of three Georgians⁴³. While waiting for their arrival, Captain Nowaczek received arms and money from Maj. Śniechowski, booked a room in a hotel, gave a deposit for the boat to “Piotr” and bought necessary clothing for the Georgians. Gogitauri reported that the price of transport had increased by another 85 dollars due to the prolonged waiting⁴⁴.

The Georgians in the meantime were travelling through Poland, Romania and Bulgaria to Turkey. Their arrival at the Romanian-Bulgarian border raised interest among the border authorities. Choosing the overland route to Istanbul – longer, more expensive and less comfortable than travelling by ship from Constanța – their journey was so unusual that they had been escorted by policemen to the Bulgarian-Turkish border. The group led by Shalva Berishvili arrived in Istanbul on 18 May 1930. On the same day, in the hotel room where the Georgians took residence when they arrived, a meeting with Gogitauri and the leading officer was organised. It turned out that the boat had not arrived yet because it had, apparently, been sent to transport a shipment of corn as a cover for the cruise to Hopa. A man of unknown identity entered the room during the meeting. He delivered a package containing shoes to David Erkomaishvili. His appearance and the lack of reaction from Georgians bothered the Polish officer. Suspicion bordering on certitude indicated that the Georgians had made some connections independently which could in turn pose a serious threat to the completion of the mission⁴⁵.

⁴¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 65-70.

⁴² RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Depesza z filii Poselstwa Polskiego w Ankarze, w Stambule do Szefa Ekspozytury 2 O.II.S.G. nr 233/30 z dnia 5 maja 1930 r. [Telegram from Polish Legation Affiliate in Ankara in Istanbul to the Chief of Office no. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff no. 233/30 from 5 May 1930], p. 27.

⁴³ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 70-72.

⁴⁴ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 71-72.

⁴⁵ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 73-75.

The departure was postponed by new troubles and the increasing financial demands from the guides and middlemen. Two days later, Captain Nowaczek spoke with the group's leader. The conversation did not particularly alleviate his concerns. Shalva Berishvili then announced that he was afraid that Ahmed Bey would blackmail the group and blow the whistle on them. He explained that the strange man who had appeared during the meeting was Kola, a Georgian police officer in Turkish service. It had been he who offered help and the assistance of the Turkish policemen. The group felt betrayed. They agreed to participate in the meeting because they had been told the whole mission was organised exclusively by Poles. In the meantime, their fate had been entrusted to unreliable people. Apparently, when Simon Mdivani learned who was organising the mission, he was reported to have stated: *Gogitauri blindly trusts Ahmed Bey, who likes money and is known for his unsoundness*^{46,47}. Perhaps Gogitauri was supposed to tell Ahmed Bey about the mission and reveal the identities of the Georgians and Captain Nowaczek as well. Information on Polish sponsorship came as particularly valuable. At the end, it was established that the Georgians would not act of their own accord and would wait for the signal to depart⁴⁸.

The situation was becoming more tense. On 21 May 1930, the boat had still not arrived. Captain Nowaczek decided to bluff. He informed Gogitauri that on 25 May he was going to return to Poland and if the case had not been resolved until then, he would take the Georgians back to Warsaw. Gogitauri guaranteed this would not happen and offered to procure the group's passports. The Polish officer strongly opposed such a move. On the following day at noon, Gogitauri informed Capt. Nowaczek that the boat was ready. The Polish officer gave the Georgians some cash and took the passports back. In the evening, the Georgians left the harbour on the Bosfor and turned to the Caucasus peaks, which they had been longing for⁴⁹.

It took a week to reach the Georgian-Turkish border. After landing, supposedly in Hopa, they had to march for hundreds of kilometres. They travelled armed only by night, while during the day they rested by hiding in the woods. The troop met only a few people on their way, mostly the guide's relatives or acquaintances. Their additional asset was the fact that David Erkomaishvili knew that region. The

⁴⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], p. 76.

⁴⁷ It remains unexplained how Simon Mdivani learned about the mission's details and when, and how Berishvili discovered his opinion on this case.

⁴⁸ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 75-78.

⁴⁹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Raport kpt. Stefana Nowaczka z prac dokonanych na terenie Turcji w czasie od 20 kwietnia do 11 czerwca 1930 r. [Capt. Stefan Nowaczek's report issued on work completed in Turkey between 20 April and 11 June of 1930.], pp. 79-82.

guide planned to cross the border in the Artvin Province and lead the group to a place called Bachmaro in the Ozurgeti Municipality. Unfortunately, the plan did not work out because the border turned out to be almost hermetically closed by Soviet Army. The group circled around the mountains in the search of the right way and went further east until they reached the Ardahan Province. They managed to find a path there that raised their hopes of getting back on track. It led along the Arsiani Range⁵⁰, which was not so tightly secured by the army due to heavy snow cover. This way, close to a village called Cerdža⁵¹ the group crossed the border and hid in a forest nearby Waki or Bako⁵². Because the guide did not know the way ahead, he helped them to hire a local shepherd and came back to Turkey. The men still moved only at night. They reached the Goderzi Pass⁵³, after which they crossed the road connecting Batumi with Akhaltsikhe and entered Czeceł Aul⁵⁴ located in the Arsiani Range. The way became easier, because Artimon Kikvadze knew the region. The group still moved systematically towards Gagwa⁵⁵ in the Akhaltsikhe Province⁵⁶.

On the fifth day after crossing the border, the team still marched on. Close to Gagwa their spirits raised and the men became less careful. After a few weeks of tough passage, the Georgians were wet and exhausted. To make matters worse, their food supplies had already ended. After a whole day of marching, the Georgians built a camp on the ashes of a burnt forest and stayed there overnight. In the morning, they noticed a group of horsemen with arms who were riding into the burnt woods. The men stood beside one another: Berishvili in the middle, with Erkomashvili one side and Kikvadze on the other side. They opened fire on the horsemen. The following events happened almost instantaneously. The Parabellum pistols that were a part of the Georgians' equipment were accurate and the men managed to repel the attack. After shots fell on them from all the sides, it became clear that they had been ambushed. The attackers charged closer with a machine gun. The shooting continued. After a few rounds had been fired, Kikvadze tried to change his position and was shot fatally in the head, jaw and chest. In spite of this, the Georgians

⁵⁰ Arsiani Range or Yalnızçam Mountains. Mountain range in northeast Turkey, and the Autonomous Republic of Adjara, southwest Georgia. The range continues along the Lesser Caucasus to the Armenian highlands.

⁵¹ Names of the smaller settlements traced by the group, found in the article were taken from the reference documents. Their identification is given in the annotation. Probably Kurşunçavuş nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Posof, within the Ardahan Province of Turkey.

⁵² Probably Bako currently it is a village in the administrative district of Khulo, within Adjara.

⁵³ The Goderdzi Pass is a 2025 m mountain pass located in the Adjara Autonomous Republic.

⁵⁴ Probably Chechla nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Adigeni, within Samtskhe-Javakheti.

⁵⁵ Probably Gagvi nowadays is an abandoned village in the administrative district of Adigeni, within Samtskhe-Javakheti.

⁵⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Beriszwiliego [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 201-205.

overcame the ambushers and were also saved by the dense fog that helped the two survivors to make their way undetected into the nearby woods. Kikvadze was not the only casualty in the fight - the Bolsheviks had lost five people⁵⁷.

Further steps were crucial for the completion of the mission. Kikvadze, who had been slain, knew the region and trustworthy people from the times when he used to hide from the monarchy and bolshevik occupation until 1924. Fortunately, he had managed to tell his companions some stories which enabled the two men to reach people who would be able to assist them. Berishvili alone knew that region a little because his father owned a summer house and a stopover for cattle there. Finally, after they had met a familiar shepherd, the Georgians were taken to a safe place where they could rest after their journey⁵⁸.

We do not know much about the envoys' activity in Georgia. Berishvili himself pointed that their work was made easier thanks to the summer season, during which people used to leave for their stopovers. This encouraged the men to discreetly meet representatives of local organisations. Once refreshed, the surviving two set off further to a place called Abastumani. They travelled only at night accompanied by two shepherds who would go in front of them and speak to people on the road, allowing the envoys to hide. They met a few familiar activists in Abastumani. Next, the group left for Borjomi. There they met up with a communist whom they knew, who worked in the rail protection guard. He helped Berishvili and Erkomaishvili to obtain the necessary clothing and documents, and helped to organise the next stage of their journey. They travelled to Tiflis⁵⁹ in the guards' wagon disguised as rail guards going on leave. There they had many political meetings. Afterwards, they returned to Borjomi and having taken all the necessary precautions, passed through the mountains to Czyatura⁶⁰, where they spent 10 days on a series of secret meetings. The local activists could not change location so the two men were in constant motion because they sought to see as many people as possible. Next, they passed through Zestafoni, Swiry⁶¹, Bogdad⁶², Dwaliszwileby⁶³, Sapajczewo⁶⁴ and Sureby⁶⁵ to the Turkish border⁶⁶.

57 RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishviliiego [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 208-210.

58 RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishviliiego [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 210-212.

59 Currently Tbilisi.

60 Chiatura nowadays is a city in the administrative district of Chiatura, within Imereti.

61 Probably Meore Sviry nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Zestafoni, within Imereti.

62 Baghdati nowadays is a city in the administrative district of Baghdati, within Imereti.

63 Sulori nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Vani, within Imereti.

64 Probably Kumuri nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Vani, within Imereti.

65 Probably Surebi nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Chokhatauri, within Imereti.

66 RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishviliiego [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 201-205.

While Berishvili and Erkomaishvili were in Georgia, between 20-22 July 1930, the fifth conference of the anti-Soviet Caucasian political parties was held in Tiflis. 29 people from 19 Caucasian organisations were present at the conference. Such conferences were biannual. They were organised to elect authorities and make the most important decisions. Berishvili did not participate in the proceedings himself, but he declared that he had worked on its organisation by meeting delegates in person and sharing information about the current political situation. Bearing in mind that secrecy was essential, matters of sabotage and military campaigns were not discussed during the conference⁶⁷.

The image of the underground independence organisations painted by Berishvili was surprisingly positive. As the leader of the mission reported, after 10 years of work under the extremely hard conditions of the Bolshevik occupation, the Georgians gained experience in underground operations. The traditional clan-based structure of those organisations was an asset. The chief or leader would gather his relatives and they would in turn reach out to their own kin. Despite this fact, the struggle of these illegal organisations proved to be perilous as well as hazardous. It required constant reorganisation, adapting their working practices and ever present vigilance in detecting provocateurs or traitors⁶⁸.

Berishvili presented the organisational details enigmatically. Two members of the Georgian National Centre were supposed to have contact with the military headquarters in exile, which consisted of three representatives of the Georgian political parties: social democratic, social-federal and national democrats. Social Democratic Central Committee had some information about how this organisation functioned. Nobody knew the details though, except for Berishvili, General Alexander Zakariadze and his close associates. The local organisations were responsible for military and sabotage campaigns. After the arrival of the envoys, they were to accept the authority of the organisation in exile and convey all their stocks to Berishvili. All operations would cease at the same time⁶⁹.

When it came to underground activity, sending some activists to serve in the GPU⁷⁰ had particular significance. Thanks to their work, the organisations were provided with valuable information. Obviously, the risk was extremely high and the game with the Bolsheviks would not always end on a positive note. The list of

⁶⁷ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 215-216.

⁶⁸ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 216-217.

⁶⁹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 201-205.

⁷⁰ Troops in USSR republics, subordinate to headquarters in OGPU (Joint State Political Directorate also translated as the All-Union State Political Administration and Unified State Political Directorate, Rus. Obyedinyonnoye gosudarstvennoye politicheskoye upravleniye).

patriots who were captured and shot after 1922 grew consistently. Still the stakes were high. In 1930, the social democratic party had five agents inside the GPU, who delivered current information about the activity of the soviet forces. The Georgians tried to obtain information using different tactics, too. They would lure prominent GPU servicemen into some women's arms. Those women could then access relevant information. Sometimes they would steal documents during GPU officers' railway journeys or even they would arrange robberies. Lower ranking members were bribed; corruption turned out to be an indispensable ally. In this way, Berishvili gained a list of possible informers in the GPU working in France or information on the location of troops in the Southern Caucasus⁷¹.

At the beginning of September 1930, envoys set off back to France. They duly completed the tasks entrusted to them. They established collaboration with local organisations and gave them essential information as well as instructions. During their stay, they also learned valuable details of the political situation in the country. The departure date was dictated by the fact that taxes were about to be collected in October. The local organisations were expecting some riots. David Erkomaishvili, Shalva Berishvili with his brother Tite and their relative, Lazar Berishvili set off for their return journey in the last days of August⁷². They took the same route as they had in the spring. When the emissaries reached a place close to the Turkish border, some familiar shepherds had already been waiting for Turkish smugglers who were supposed to take care of the group. They did not appear on time; the men had to leave assisted by a local shepherd to a village called Goderes⁷³ in the Chechla district. They travelled slowly, often making detours to ensure their safety. It harvest time, during which people would work day and night. The scouts marched only during the night. In the daytime they studied the maps to discover further points leading to freedom. They were well-armed and their determination boosted their courage. They decided to kill every person they would meet on the road as they were afraid someone might report them to border guards. After a five-day march, they finally arrived in Chertwisi⁷⁴ on the Turkish side of the border. There the shepherd left the travellers and indicated the way leading to the district town of Digur^{75, 76}.

⁷¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 218-220.

⁷² It remains unexplained when, and how Berishvili met relatives.

⁷³ Probably Goderdzi nowadays is an abandoned village on the Goderdzi Pass, in the administrative district of Adigeni, within Samtskhe-Javakheti.

⁷⁴ Probably Sariçiçek nowadays is a village in the administrative district of Posof, within Ardahan Province of Turkey.

⁷⁵ Posof nowadays is a city in the administrative district of Posof, within Ardahan Province of Turkey.

⁷⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], p. 220.

When they crossed the border, they put white handkerchiefs on their rifles. On the way to the town, they would meet local shepherds, farmers and land owners who were not surprised to see Georgian fugitives as this was their daily bread. None of them alarmed the Turkish border guards. While they were crossing the border, whole group was aware of the high risk of being arrested and handed over to the Soviet services. For years, the Turkish authorities had not paid attention to political emigrants, but in recent years they changed their position and issued a total ban on receiving emigrants. At the moment of crossing the border, the group knew that there were already hundreds of fugitives being sent back to Georgia⁷⁷. This time good luck prevailed for the men and they reached Digur where they entrusted themselves to the local gendarmerie. Because they evaded the border posts and entered the town fully armed, they caught the local authorities by surprise. They were quickly disarmed, though, and all their belongings were confiscated. After completing the formalities and undergoing a thorough interrogation, it turned out that their biggest worries were yet to come. They were told that they must be sent back and handed over to the Soviets, which was crushing news. Seeking help among local Muslim Georgians was their last chance. When these people found about what had happened, they sought to free their kinsmen⁷⁸.

The interrogation conducted by the chief of gendarmerie and the head of the border guard turned into negotiation. Berishvili's old friend from the times of captiv-

⁷⁷ There was a variety of circumstances coinciding in late 1920's that negatively impacted Caucasian immigrants in Turkey. Until then, Ankara's politics was a dual system. On the one hand, anti-Soviet operations led by fugitives were tolerated unofficially. On the other, because of pressure from Moscow, Ankara tried to limit their scope. In 1928, Turkey and USSR signed a series of treaties. Moscow then demanded from Turkey that the country eliminate Georgian immigration to their country. As a result, a known political activist, Simon Mdivani, who was a Georgian representative in the Caucasus Independence Committee, had to leave Istanbul. J. Czainskij, *Tevfik Rüştü i polska polityka prometejska w kontekście sprawy wydalenia Simona Mdiwaniego z turcji w 1928 r.*, „Nowy Prometeusz”, 2014, no. 6, pp. 103-118; S. Kazimowa, *Działalność antysowieckiej emigracji kaukaskiej w Turcji*, „Nowy Prometeusz”, 2013, no. 2, pp. 213-222. The change of position of the Turkish authorities had a huge implication for political emigrants. The economic situation in France was an additional setback. Turkey let emigrants cross its territory only if they were able to prove they would obtain visas for other countries. Before 1930, France did not forbid emigrants from receiving asylum, because they needed to boost their labour force. The economic crisis and growing unemployment caused the situation to change and they stopped issuing visas, what was seen as a reason for Turkey to close the border with the Soviet Union. At the end of 1930, Polish diplomats reported that Turkish authorities rejected about 400 requests for asylum from people who had illegally crossed the border. They were all transferred to the Soviet Union, where they were probably shot by the GPU. Sealing the Turkish-Soviet border coincided with the return of the scouts, but it is impossible to establish whether this had happened earlier and, if it had any impact on Turkey's decision. Diplomats pointed out, though, that one reason for the Turkish authorities' behaviour was a fear of having too many “elements hostile towards the Soviets”. RGVA, 461k, op. 1, d. 288, Sprawa nr.2263/II.Inf.2/X/ [bez daty dziennej] 1931 r., Opinia Rady M.S.Z. Karola Dubicza o działalności organizacji gruzińskich na emigracji [Case no. 2263/II.Inf.2/X/ [No Day Given] 1931, Counsellor Karol Dubicz's report on the activity of Georgian organisations in exile], pp. 3-6.

⁷⁸ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishwili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], p. 223.

ity in Cheka⁷⁹, a certain Kemal Bey Muchanski, who claimed that they were political fugitives. He would argue their case until they reached a consensus: 900 Turkish lira, the equivalent of 150 dollars turned out to be the price for their life. The following days passed relatively peacefully and the men, thanks to this freedom, bought weapons and proceeded with their preparations for escape. Their plan was jeopardised by a sudden call to Kars for further interrogation in the governor's office. Despite their unclear position, the prisoners were still taken care of by local Georgians. On the one hand, they were trying to get permission from the authorities to set off. On the other, they had made escape plans, should the Turkish turn out to be incorruptible. Their worries were unfounded. The Turkish authorities must have been aware of who were they dealing with and it was a rare occurrence for intelligence service to have foreign agents under their control. Still one question remained, how much would they be able to learn from the Georgians⁸⁰.

Because Berishvili was an idealist, an active and committed man, he began semi-official negotiations. It must have had impressed a young Georgian to see envoys from Ankara on the other side of the table. The talks concerned working permanently in Turkey. The Georgian agents would be located around Kars. The Turkish side undertook the organisation of transport through their land and promised to help with crossing the border. In return they requested information about the situation in the Caucasus. It was suggested that the operational costs would be divided equally between both parties. A man called Werner was trying to find out if Berishvili would agree to work for Germany. Berishvili was supposed to respond from Paris, but apparently there was no further contact^{81, 82}.

After a longer time, the Georgians were granted permission to leave to Istanbul and travel onwards to Warsaw⁸³, where they arrived on 6 November 1930. During their month-long stay in Poland, the group reported in detail what had happened

⁷⁹ Cheka, an acronym of the name "The All-Russian Emergency Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage", Rus. Vserossiyskaya chrezvychaynaya komissiya po bor'be s kontrevolyutsiyey i sabotazhem. Political police in the Soviet Russia between 1917-1922.

⁸⁰ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], p. 224-226.

⁸¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvili [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 227-229.

⁸² Georges Mamoulia in *Les combats indépendantistes des Caucasiens entre URSS et puissances occidentales: Le cas de la Géorgie, 1921-1945*, Paris 2009, calls in annotation 337 a report prepared by Shalva Berishvili in Georgian about the stay in Turkey. Believed to be issued on 1 January 1931. It can be found in Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine w Nanterre, in microfilm collection of Georgian government archive, sign. mfm 881- 206.

⁸³ Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe [Central Military Archives, Warsaw], I. 303.4.1996, Pismo placówki wywiadowczej „L-3” (Tadeusz Śniechowski) bez numeru z dnia 17 października 1930 r. w sprawie wydania wiz dla Gruzinów [Document without number from intelligence office “L-3” (Tadeusz Śniechowski) to the Consul General of Poland in Istanbul regarding visas for Georgians, from 17 October 1930], p. 111.

in Georgia. The mission ended when the Georgians under the guise of Andrzej Dubicki (who was a holder of passport series I no. 089251 no. 11777/14236/30) and Wojnarowicz Jakub (with series I no. 089252 no. 17778/14237/30) left Warsaw for Paris⁸⁴.

Once the operation ended, there was time for summaries and reflections. The Head of the Office no. 2 of the Second Department of the Main Staff ordered a case study to be drafted for the completed operation⁸⁵. As the rapporteur emphasised, the operation was a serious organisational and financial challenge for Polish intelligence. While analysing the documentation, reserve lieutenant Władysław Milanowski⁸⁶ paid special attention to the mistakes that were made both by the Office and Georgian authorities. One basic mistake that was immediately visible was the fact that the operation had been planned as a one-off event and not a part of a wider initiative aimed at the creation of a communication network with the South Caucasus. As a result, for the following 8 months the operation was not resumed, which had a negative impact on the Georgians' attitude towards Poland. Communication was a matter of great importance if the Georgian government wanted to have any real impact on the workings of the national organisations. But to make this happen, constant communication was necessary. The lack of it had a detrimental effect on all the efforts expended and results achieved at great cost.

People made mistakes in the underground operation at every single stage. The three Georgians went missing in France without any notice. The lack of appropriate camouflage as well as the gradual separation of the members of the mission from the Georgian society became notorious – especially dangerous considering that the emigrants were under the GPU's constant observation. The prolonged stay in Warsaw and insufficient precautions led to meetings with local Georgians, which increased the risk of unmasking and crushed spirits within the group.

The sojourn in Istanbul proved to be pivotal, though. The departure of Captain Nowaczek from Turkey was much delayed. A similar mistake was the lack of adequate mandate to make decisions independently in accordance with changing circumstances. Both factors later significantly delayed the completion of a major part of the mission.

⁸⁴ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo. Sprawa Nr 1907/II.Inf./2/X. z dnia 9 grudnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo. Case no. 1907/II.Inf./2/X. from 9 December 1930.], p. 252 verso.

⁸⁵ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo w sprawie próby nawiązania kontaktu z terenem gruzińskiej S.S.R. Sprawa nr 3050/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 17 sierpnia 1931 r. [Pro Domo regarding the attempts to establish contact with the area of the Georgian S.S.R. Case no. 3050/II.Inf./2/X from 17 August 1931.], p. 159 verso.

⁸⁶ Lieutenant Władysław Milanowski (1897-1941), a Polish Army officer, between 1929-1932 referee in Division "A" (West), Subdivision "A-1", (Lithuania, Latvia). A. Wyszendyrówny, *Ekspozytura Nr 2 Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego*, [w:] *Ruch prometejski i walka o przebudowę Europy Wschodniej (1918-1940)*, red. M. Kornat, Warszawa 2012, p. 194.

As Lieutenant Wladyslaw Milanowski wrote, it was completely incomprehensible to allow Gogitaur and Ahmed Bey to intercede in the organisation of transport through Turkey. Analysis of later data showed that these people were unreliable. Ahmed Bey was not a diligent person and he was greedy. It also turned out that Gogitauri had ties with Turkish intelligence along with his friend Kola, who also contacted the group. This is clear evidence that Turkish intelligence knew about the operation. It was likely that Soviet intelligence knew about it, too. One question had to arise: why did the Georgian authorities not learn any lesson from the number of earlier failures? We can only assume that this was their only chance after the expulsion of Simon Mdivani, who was a Georgian representative in the Caucasus Independence Committee and he was a resident in Istanbul⁸⁷.

The results of this decision were twofold. The fact that the costs of the mission had increased seems less significant. The completion of plan that Gen. A. Zakariadze devised was supposed to cost 1900 dollars. Chief of the Second Department of the Main Staff of Polish Army reduced the budget to 1200 dollars. The final cost reached 2893,08 dollars⁸⁸. The initial costs in relation to field spendings were disproportionately high, 70.5% to 29.5%. The cost of returning through Turkey was only 160 dollars; therefore, reaching Georgia definitely turned out to be too expensive.

What is more important was the fact that, thanks to the information gained in Istanbul, it was highly likely that the Soviets knew about the whole procedure. As a result, when the team reached the border, it had been heavily secured. After crossing the border in extremely hard conditions, the Georgians turned to regions which they knew well. This might have led to the ambush organised by the GPU. It was then that Artimon Kikvadze died. Only later did Berishvili learn that 300 communists were directed to work near the border forest along with GPU troops and the local militia, too. He suspected though, that they had been detected by a local agent or those forces were sent against numerous partisans who hid in that area⁸⁹.

Their return from Georgia was completely unprepared. The groundwork to establish a permanent communication network in Turkey started in August, but the results remain unclear⁹⁰. For this reason, the men – after having crossed the border

⁸⁷ S. Kazimowa, *Działalność antysowieckiej emigracji kaukaskiej w Turcji*, „Nowy Prometeusz”, 2013, no. 2, p. 213-222; J. Czainskij, *Tevfik Rüştü i iolska polityka prometejska w kontekście sprawy wydalenia Simona Mdiwaniego z turcji w 1928 r.*, „Nowy Prometeusz”, 2014, no. 6, p. 103-118.

⁸⁸ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Pro Domo w sprawie kosztów transportu trzech Gruzinów. Sprawa nr 1077/II.Inf./2/X/30 z dnia 17 kwietnia 1930 r. [Pro Domo regarding the cost of transport for the three Georgians. Case no. 1077/II.Inf./2/X/30 from 17 April 1930.], p. 16.

⁸⁹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Dodatkowe sprawozdanie z podróży do Gruzji autorstwa Szalwy Berishvilięgo [Shalva Berishvili's additional report from journey to Georgia], pp. 210-211.

⁹⁰ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 292, Odpis pisma Ekspozytury 2 Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego do placówki wywiadowczej „Rollin” (Stanisław Gliński) Nr 1496/2/X z dnia 12 sierpnia 1930 r. [Copy of the docu-

– had to hand themselves over to the Turkish authorities, which led to semi-official negotiations with Turkish intelligence⁹¹.

The Polish officers were skeptical towards the information provided by Berishvili while discussing the effects of the whole mission. What he declared about his stay in Turkey raised reservations. The Poles doubted that 2 and a half months of underground operation was sufficient to create the organisation that Berishvili mentioned. Everyone agreed that the group crossed the border and entered Georgia for a period of time. They considered it probable that Berishvili talked to local activists and received information about the political situation in the country. He himself shared the information about current international situation and gave advice on the organisation of political, and military campaigns. Perhaps he reached out to some military organisations and made several steps for their unification. For the Polish intelligence analyst it was clear that the description presented by Berishvili on what had been accomplished in Georgia had been constructed in order to win maximum approval from the Polish side. He overestimated the anti-Soviet factions and their abilities. He also presented the situation inside Soviet Union in an overly pessimistic manner⁹².

Berishvili per se was thought to be a man of ideals. This former partisan earned the Georgian authorities' trust and he was known for his persistent struggle for his nation's independence. However, the negotiations with the Turkish authorities cast a shadow over his actions. Poles considered it disloyal that Berishvili concealed this fact and then distorted the characteristics of the negotiations. Such an approach was understood to have been driven by the motivation to receive as much help from Poland as quickly as possible⁹³.

Despite all the imperfections in the mission, it yielded results shortly after, to many people's surprise. Two Georgian men – Iwane Chavtasi and Giorgi Chelidze – arrived in Paris in mid-December of 1930. They were members of an anti-Soviet organisation. Their arrival was connected directly with the work of Berishvili. Their goal was to contact the leaders of the Georgian national centre and receive further instructions for the entity in Georgia. They asked to see Gen. Alexander Zakariadze

ment from Office No. 2 of the Second Department of Main Staff to intelligence office "Rollin" (Stanisław Gliński) no. 1496/2/X from 12 August 1930], pp. 6-7.

⁹¹ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Studium nad przebiegiem prac związanych z akcją terenową trzech Gruzinów [A study on the progress of work related to the field mission undertaken by the three Georgians.], pp. 164-178.

⁹² RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Studium nad przebiegiem prac związanych z akcją terenową trzech Gruzinów [A study on the progress of work related to the field mission undertaken by the three Georgians.], p. 188.

⁹³ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 287, Studium nad przebiegiem prac związanych z akcją terenową trzech Gruzinów [A study on the progress of work related to the field mission undertaken by the three Georgians.], pp. 178-188.

in Warsaw, according to the plan. They crossed the Persian border illegally, unlike Berishvili's group. Thanks to 50 dollar bribes, they easily received Persian passports. Subsequently, they drove to Iraq and further onwards to Syria. In Syria they embarked a ship headed towards Marseille⁹⁴. One of them returned to Georgia and the other stopped in Persia. In November 1931, a courier from Georgia to President Noe Zhordania⁹⁵ arrived in Paris⁹⁶.

Unfortunately, the lack of materials in the archives makes it impossible to answer any question regarding the events that followed the construction of a communication network with anti-Soviet organisations in the Southern Caucasus. In the document referred to above, Capt. Stanisław Gliński reported that communication points were established in Persia and Turkey⁹⁷. In October 1931, the Second Department of the Main Staff was considering whether they should buy a car for a Georgian connection in Persia. This project was rejected due to lack of finances. It was also indicated that the operation was carried out in order to create a communication plan, which would be covered and secured by the Caucasus Independence Committee. The author of the relevant report concluded bitterly that since the Poles had the experience, they should no longer tolerate the uncoordinated activity of their friends - because they had yielded no tangible results so far⁹⁸. Only further research would explain whether the bold plans of the Polish military intelligence service were accomplished.

⁹⁴ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 292, Sprawa nr 2111/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 10 lutego 1931 r. na temat powrotu do kraju emisariuszy gruzińskich [Case no. 2111/II.Inf./2/X from 10 February 1931 about Georgian emissaries' return to the country], p. 12 verso; RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 292, Sprawa nr 2552/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 21 lutego 1931 r. na temat powrotu do kraju emisariuszy gruzińskich [Case no. 2111/II.Inf./2/X from 21 February 1931 about two Georgian emissaries'], p. 15 verso.

⁹⁵ Noe Zhordania (1868-1953), a Georgian politician. Between 1918-1921 Prime Minister of Democratic Republic of Georgia. From 1921 political emigrant.

⁹⁶ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 282, Sprawa Nr 129/II.Inf./2/X w sprawie pracy rtm. Glińskiego na temat organizacji Centrum Gruzjińskiego na emigracji. [Case no. 129/II.Inf./2/X regarding the organising of the Georgian Centre in exile, issued by Cavalry Captain Gliński], p. 42.

⁹⁷ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 282, Sprawa Nr 129/II.Inf./2/X w sprawie pracy rtm. Glińskiego na temat organizacji Centrum Gruzjińskiego na emigracji. [Case no. 129/II.Inf./2/X regarding the organising of the Georgian Centre in exile, issued by Cavalry Captain Gliński], p. 42.

⁹⁸ RGVA, f. 461k, op. 1, d. 292, Sprawa nr 3166/II.Inf./2/X z dnia 20 października 1931 r. dot. wniosku o zakup auta dla łącznika gruzińskiego w Persji [Case no. 3166/II.Inf./2/X from 20 October 1931 about the request to buy a car to a Georgian connection in Persia.], p. 25.

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*Figure 1: Berishvili's group in Kars with local friends, 1930.
Seated in the centre: Shalva Berishvili (no. 4). In the first row third from the left:
Tite Berishvili (no. 7), next to him are David Erkomaishvili (no 8).
The first from the right: Lazar Berishvili (no. 10).*

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**Geneza, przebieg
i konsekwencje
operacji
wywiadowczej
przeprowadzonej
w Gruzińskiej
Socjalistycznej
Republice Radzieckiej,
zorganizowanej przez
Ekspozyturę nr 2
Oddziału II
Sztabu Głównego
Wojska Polskiego
i Gruzińską
Organizację
Wojskową w 1930 r.**

Grzegorz Gilewski

Ruch prometejski propagowany przez Polskę w okresie międzywojennym zakładał udzielanie wsparcia ruchom niepodległościowym wśród narodów w składzie Związku Radzieckiego. Niniejsza praca to wynik badań dotyczących współpracy wywiadowczej pomiędzy siłami zbrojnymi Polski a gruzińskim Rządem na Wychodźstwie. Omówione zostały geneza, przebieg i wyniki operacji wywiadowczej na terenie Gruzińskiej Socjalistycznej Republiki Radzieckiej, zorganizowanej przez Ekspozyturę nr 2

**Генезис, ход событий
и последствия
разведывательной
операции
организованной
Экспозитурой
№ 2 Второго Отдела
Генерального штаба
Польской армии
и Грузинской
военной
организацией
и проведенной
в Грузинской
Советской
Социалистической
Республике
в 1930 году**

Гжегож Гилевски

Концепция prometeизма, пропагандируемая Польшей в межвоенный период, предполагала поддержку движений за независимость народов, входящих в состав Советского Союза. Данная статья является результатом исследования сотрудничества в сфере разведанных между вооруженными силами Польши и правительством Грузии в изгнании.

Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego i Gruzińską Organizację Wojskową w 1930 r.

W operacji udział wzięło trzech gruzińskich emigrantów: Dawid Erkomaiszwili, Artymon Kikwadze oraz Szalwa Beriszwili, którzy wyjechali do Gruzji. Wykonali swoje zadanie nawiązując kontakt z gruzińskimi antysowieckimi organizacjami i przekazując potrzebne informacje. W trakcie drogi powrotnej, po przekroczeniu granicy gruzińsko-tureckiej, oddział oddał się w ręce władz tureckich. Po serii przygód, przez Warszawę wrócili do Paryża.

Inicjatywa, która spotkała się z ogromnym logistycznym i finansowym wsparciem z polskiej strony, okazała się sukcesem. Realizacja misji uwidoczniała również niedociągnięcia w technice przeprowadzania operacji wywiadowczych zarówno ze strony polskiej jak i gruzińskiej.

Szczegółowy przebieg wydarzeń został zrekonstruowany dzięki badaniom i kwerendzie dokumentów Oddziału II Sztabu Głównego Wojska Polskiego przechowywanych w Rosyjskim Państwowym Archiwum Wojskowym w Moskwie.

В исследовании обсуждаются Генезис, ход событий и последствия разведывательной операции организованной Экспозитурой № 2 Второго Отдела Генерального штаба Польской армии и Грузинской военной организацией и проведенной в Грузинской Советской Социалистической Республике в 1930 году.

В операции приняли участие трое грузинских эмигрантов: Давид Эркомаишвили, Артимон Киквадзе и Шалва Беришвили, которые тайно вернулись в Грузию. Им удалось выполнить свое задание, установив контакт с грузинскими антисоветскими организациями и предоставив последним всю необходимую информацию. На обратном пути, после пересечения грузино-турецкой границы, они были задержаны турецкими властями, но позже через Варшаву вернулись в Париж.

Инициатива грузинов, имевшая огромную материально-техническую поддержку со стороны Польши, оказалась успешной. В то же время реализация миссии также выявила недостатки в проведении разведывательных операций как со стороны Польши, так и грузинской эмиграции.

Детальный ход событий был реконструирован на основе документов Второго Отдела Генерального штаба Польской армии, находящихся в Российском государственном военном архиве в Москве.



