

# ԲԱՆԻԵՐ ՀԱՅԱԳԻՏՈՒԹՅԱՆ

ՀԱՅԱԳԻՏԱԿԱՆ ՄԻԶԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ ՀԱՆԴԵՍ



## INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF ARMENIAN STUDIES



ՀԱՅԱԳԻՏԱԿԱՆ ՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԱՍԻՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ՖԻՆԱՆՍԱԿՈՐՈՂ  
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**Խմբագրական խորհուրդ**

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# ՊԱՏՄՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

## HISTORY


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## ON THE NAMING OF LAKE SEVAN AS GÖKCHA

### ***Abstract***

In any given part of the world, forced demographic changes to the ethnic population inevitably result in changes to the local linguistics as well as the evolution and alteration of toponyms. The resulting changes can give politicians and extremists the possibility to exploit the changes to augment their claims and incursions.

In extreme cases, such as the “scorched earth” policy adopted by Shah Abbas of Iran in the so called “protectorates” of Nakhchivan, Syuniq and Karabakh, the Armenian ethnic population was decimated. The elimination of the ethnic Armenians gave an opportunity to the Turkish speaking remaining minority of the local population the possibility to claim ownership of these lands.

Through the citation of historical facts and cartographic evidence, the article discusses the reasons for the naming of Lake Sevan in Armenia as “Gokcha”, and

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## **On the Naming of Lake Sevan as Gökcha**

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the exploitation of this new toponym in an attempt to prove ownership of the lake, through the presentation of dubious documents and arguments.

**Keywords:** *Armenia, Sevan, Azerbaijan, Gökcha, Shah Abbas, Cartography, Toponyms.*

### ***Introduction***

Recently, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan announced that in all maps of Tsarist Russia the name of the lake presently located in Armenia and called "Sevan", is shown as lake "Gökcha" or "Gokcha". Hence concluding, that as this is an Azerbaijani name, it is proof that the lake belongs to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Only in-depth analysis of the Tsarist Russian and European maps of the eighteenth to twentieth century could possibly clarify the issue, separating fact from fiction. The following study confirms the source of the name of "Gokcha" and its use during two centuries of Persian occupation of the South Caucasus, also showing that the majority of European and Tsarist Russian maps, in fact, display both names "Gokcha" as well as "Sevan" – for the lake in question.

There is, moreover, another problem with the abovementioned claim, and that is that all the maps published between 1700 and 1918, in the regions presently occupied by the Republic of Azerbaijan, there is no such toponym. It is a fact that during that period, the toponym "Azerbaijan" had only been given to the northwestern province of Iran, located south of the Aras River, while the region of Baku and surrounding area was generally named "Shirvan".

### ***The Analysis***

Two Middle Eastern military powers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Ottoman and the Persian empires, had usurped the territory of Great Armenia and often went to war, each trying to conquer more of the Armenian lands. All fighting took place on the territory of Great Armenia, which had lost its independence and was at the mercy of the two empires. As a result, it became impossible for the Armenian peasants and citizens living in the territory of their historical homeland to take full ownership of their property and utilize and cultivate their lands, or to lead a peaceful life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Walker 1980.

## **Galichian (Galchian) R.**

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In the early seventeenth century, the Persian king Shah Abbas the Great conquered most of the South Caucasus, including Eastern Armenia, and in order to retain control of the territory, he planned and implemented a “scorched earth” policy, to make the territory uninhabitable and useless for the Ottomans, so that they would not even wish to recapture that region.<sup>2</sup>

During the years of 1604–05 Shah Abbas organized large-scale deportations, whereby the majority of the Armenians of Syunik, Ayrarat, Nakhchivan and Artsakh regions of Armenia, more than 300,000 souls, were deported to Iran and were settled in the northern, western and central regions of this country. The peasants and the working class were resettled in villages and towns, while artisans and craftsmen as well as traders and merchants were directed to the capital Isfahan, where a specially chosen district was allocated to the Armenians.<sup>3</sup> The plan was to benefit from the professional skills of master craftsmen, as well as encouraging Armenian merchants to continue trading with Russian and European merchants, with whom they already had close contacts and ties, thus promoting trade between Iran and the West. To this end for a period of time he gave the Armenian merchants the monopoly of exporting Iranian silk.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, the indigenous Armenian population of Eastern Armenia was drastically reduced, their towns and villages being gradually reinhabited by the people of Iranian Azerbaijan – the old Atropaten/Media – as well as other Turkish-speaking tribes from Central Asia.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of these demographic changes, during the 18th and 19th centuries, “Geghama”, the ancient name of the Armenian lake “Sevan” was Turkified and in their colloquial language became “Gokcha”. All this time, the Armenians continued to call it “Sevan”.

Since those who remained in the area and the newcomers were mostly Turkish speakers, during the two hundred years under Iranian rule many of the toponyms gradually changed under the majority Turkish-speakers to new names given by the newcomers. Such is the reason that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the name of the Armenian lake “Sevan” or “Geghama” was

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<sup>2</sup> **Galichian** 1995, 26–28.

<sup>3</sup> The district was and still is called New Julfa, since most of the merchants originated from the Armenian town of “Julfa in Nakhchivan, just north of the Aras River.

<sup>4</sup> **Babaie** 2004.

<sup>5</sup> **Kasravi** 1976 (in Persian).

## **On the Naming of Lake Sevan as Gökcha**

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Turkified and became “Gokcha” or “Gökcha” in their colloquial language, while the Armenians continued to call it “Sevan”.<sup>6</sup>

Today, some authorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan declare that the name of Sevan is actually “Gökcha”, which is allegedly confirmed by all the maps of Tsarist Russia. This study proves that this naming not to be completely true. As seen on the accompanying maps, during the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. on most maps of tsarist Russia, the names “Sevan” and “Gökcha” are mentioned in conjunction with each other, indicating that the Armenian speakers call it “Sevan”, while the Turkish speakers of the last two centuries had changed it to “Gokcha” or “Gökcha”.

Concerning the recent claim that “since the name “Gökcha” is Turkish, therefore the lake belongs to Azerbaijan”, its proponents should be reminded that on any of the Tsarist Russian or other European maps of this particular region, prior to 1918 there was no country named “Azerbaijan” to the north of the River Aras. On the same maps the countries mentioned in the region are *Georgia*, *Armenia*, *Shirvan* and the Iranian province of *Azerbaijan*.<sup>7</sup>

### ***Maps of the region***

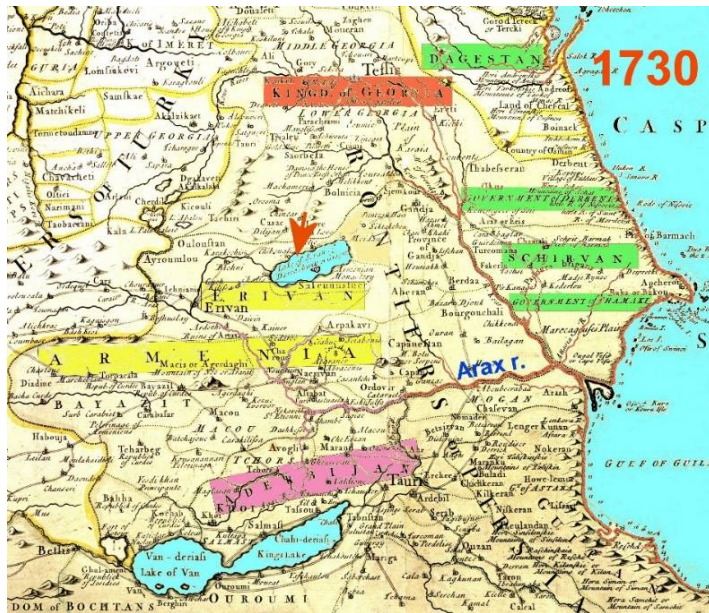
All the regional details reprinted herein have been taken from well-known Russian, Ottoman and European maps. The originals are held in the Matenadaran, Yerevan. Exceptions have been mentioned.

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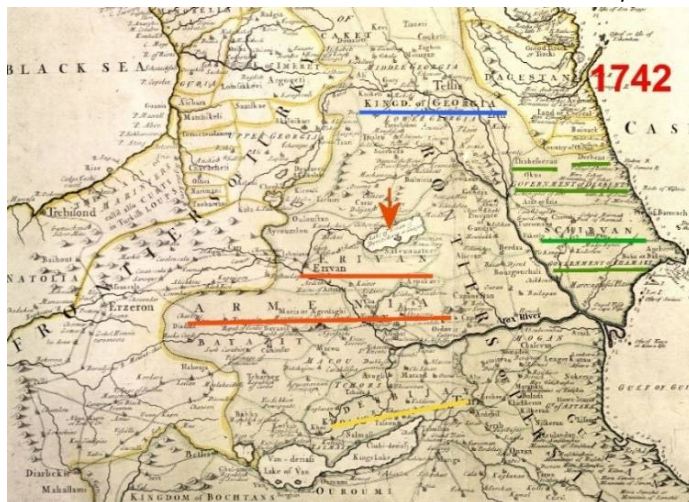
<sup>6</sup> The name *Geghama* or *Gegharquniats* appears in the first Armenian geographical work *Ashkharhatsuyts*, penned in the seventh century, indicating present-day Lake Sevan. This naming can be seen in all versions of the manuscript kept in the Matenadaran in Yerevan, the Library of the Mekhitarist order in Venice, as well in the Armenian Patriarchate Library of Jerusalem, as well as in other libraries all over the world.

<sup>7</sup> **Galichian** 2012, 19–28.

## Galichian (Galchian) R.

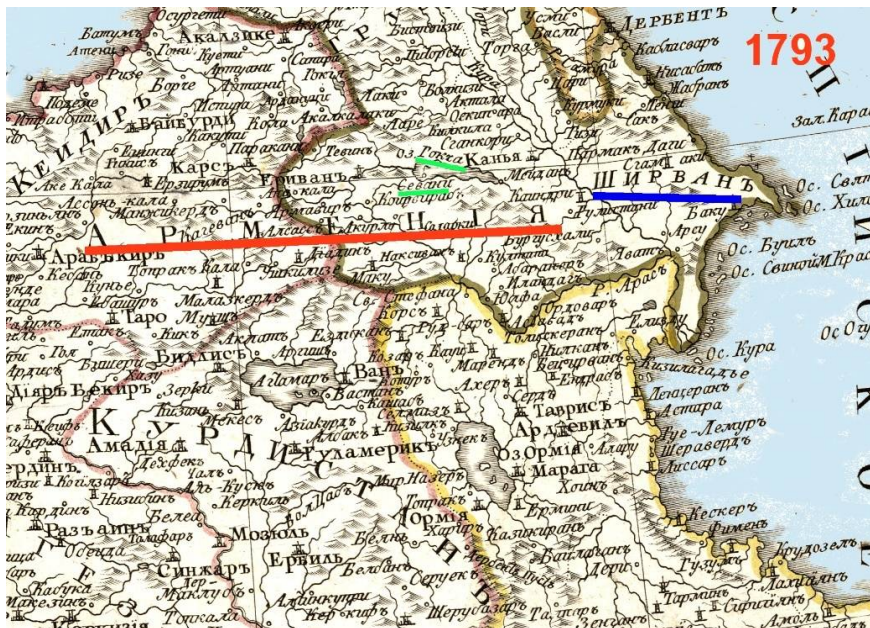


01 – Frenchman De L'Isle's map of the Caucasus published in 1730, where the lake is called "Sevan Daryachirin [sweet water], Giagum [Gegama]", and the current Azerbaijan Republic is ruled by the Iranian khanates, highlighted in green. The region called "Azerbaijan" is a province of Iran, located south of the River Aras, highlighted in maroon. There is no "Lake Gokcha" on this map.

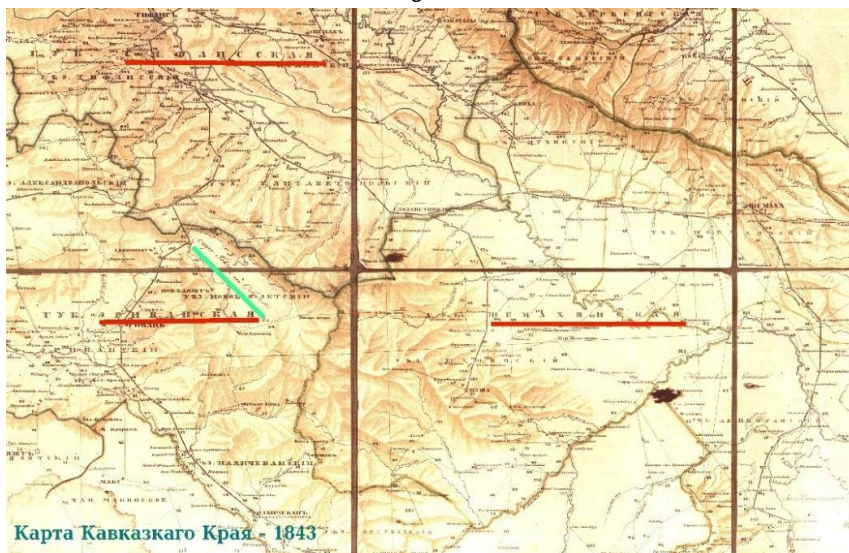


02 – English map of Senex, 1742, showing the Caucasus, where the lake is named "Sevan or Daryachirin [sweet water], Giagum [Geghama]". The area of the Republic of Azerbaijan is occupied by Muslim khanates, underlined in green. The region called "Azerbaijan" is the northwestern province of Iran, underlined in yellow, located south of River Aras. The name "Lake Ghokcha" does not exist.

## On the Naming of Lake Sevan as Gökcha



03 – Tsarist Russian map of 1793. The lake is called by two names, separately, “Sevan” and “Gökcha”, both underlined in green. The name of “Armenia”, extending from Euphrates to Sevan, is underlined in red. “Shirvan” is underlined in blue, as the name of the region of the present-day Azerbaijan – the latter name is missing from the area altogether.



04 – “Map of the Caucasus region” of Tsarist Russia, published in 1843. Here the name of the lake is “Sevan or Gökcha”, underlined in green. The tsarist Transcaucasia, Georgia, Yerevan and Shamakhi gubernias are underlined in red on the map. The name Azerbaijan as a gubernia or region is missing from the map.

## Galichian (Galchian) R.



05 – The map of Pierre M. Lapie, from Pierre Amedee Jaubert's book "Travels to Armenia and Iran" showing his route from Constantinople to Tehran via Armenia and the South Caucasus, published in Paris, 1821.



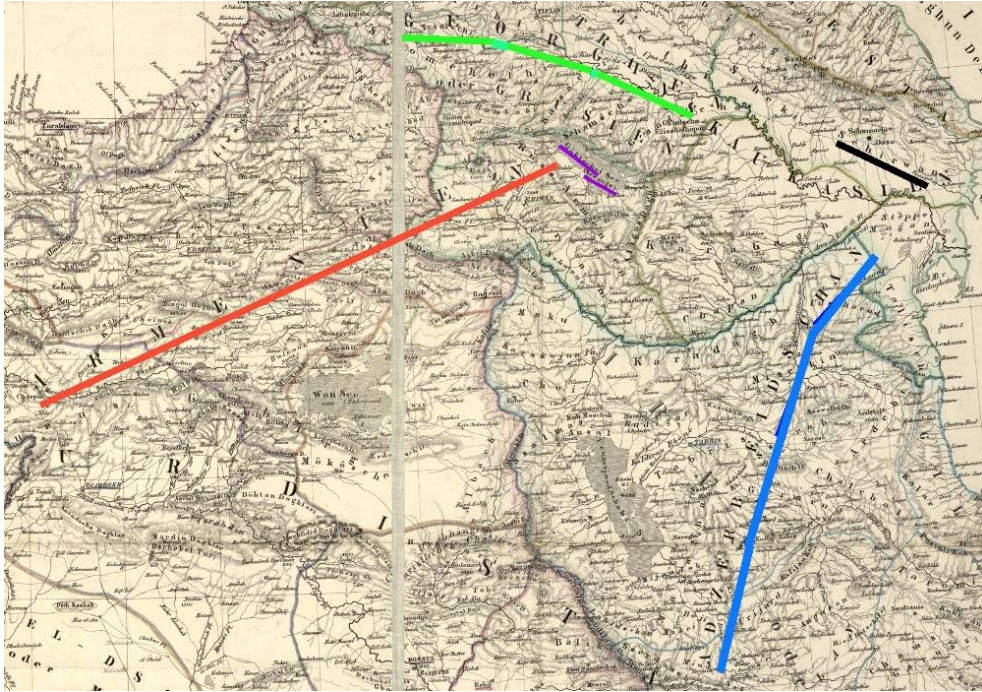
06 – Detail of the region of Sevan from the above map.

Early during the nineteenth century the French traveler Jaubert travelled from Europe to Iran, passing through Armenia and the South Caucasus. His friend and cartographer Pierre Lapie produced the map reprinted in image 05 above, showing the regions that Jaubert travelled through.

On this map the name of Greater Armenia is underlined in red. The region of present-day Republic of Azerbaijan is entitled "Shirvan" and is underlined in green, while the name "Azerbaijan" indicate a province of Iran south of the River Aras, and is underlined in blue.

The detail of the region of Lake Sevan is shown in map 06 above, where the name of the city and region of "ERIVAN"/Yerevan and its proximity to the lake can also be seen. On the map the lake has been misspelt "Sivan".

## On the Naming of Lake Sevan as Gökcha



07 – German cartographer Heinrich Kiepert's "Ottoman Empire map" dated 1844. This is the section from the map showing the region of the South Caucasus. The name of the lake is indicated as "Sevan or Gökça". The names of the countries specified in the area are "Armenia" – underlined in red, and "Georgia" – underlined in green, while "Azerbaijan" denotes the Iranian province, south of the River Aras (underlined in blue). The toponym "Shirvan" is marked on the territory of the present-day Republic of Azerbaijan, underlined in black.



08 – A detail from the same map by Kiepert, translated into Ottoman Turkish and published in 1855. On this map the name of the lake is indicated only as "Sevan", underlined in dark blue. And among the local countries, only "Armenia" is indicated, underlined in red. Original of the map is in the National Library of Vienna.

## Galichian (Galchian) R.

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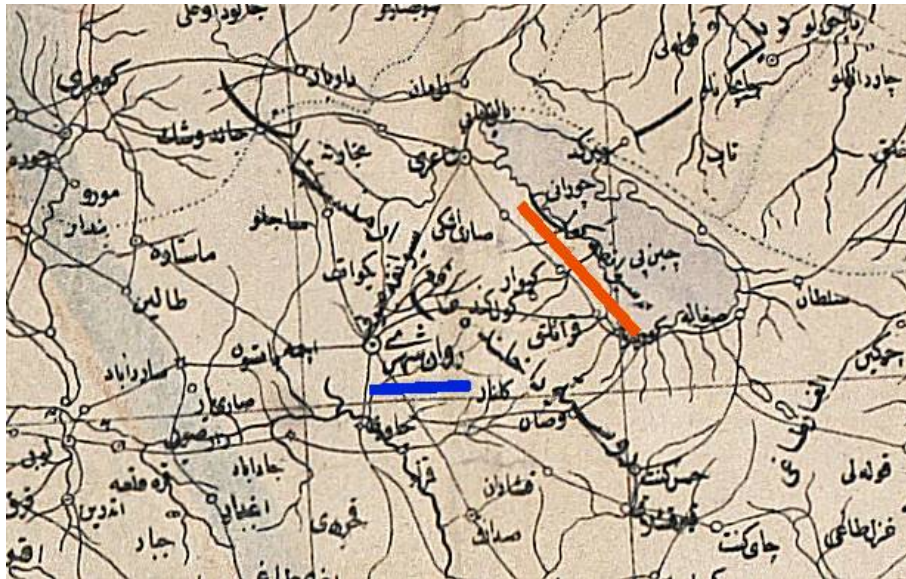
It is interesting that the original map named the lake "Gokcha or Sevan", but the Azerbaijan-allied Turkish translator has named the lake simply as "Sevan".



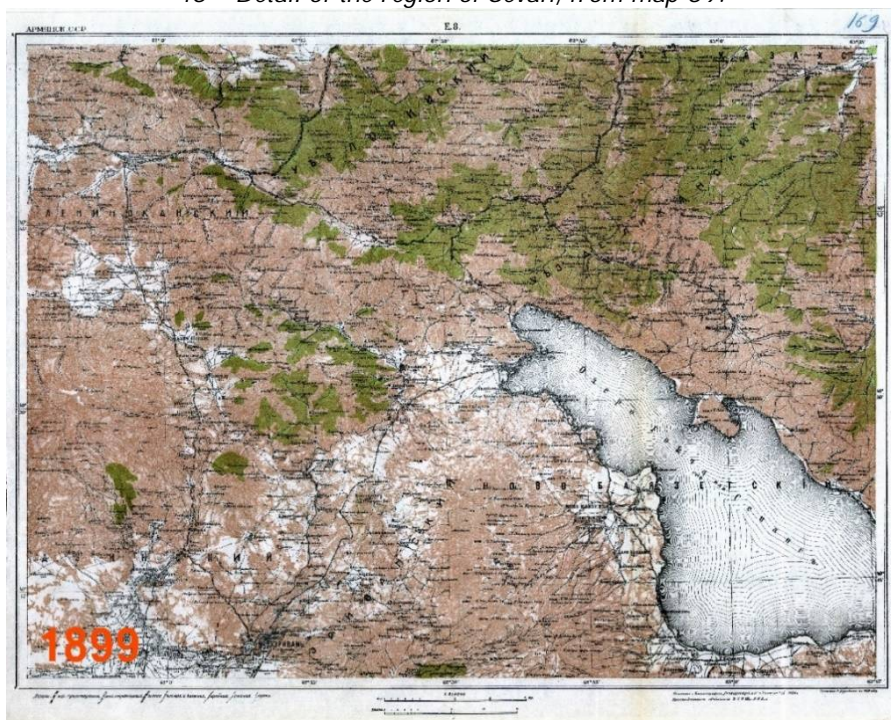
09 – Another map of the Ottoman Empire in Turkish, dated 1853.

As seen on map 10 below, the detail of map 09 above, here the name of the lake in question has been given only as Sevan, that is "Sivane Goli", underlined in red. The other Turkish toponym claimed by some is not mentioned on this Turkish map. The toponym "Yerevan" also appears, underlined in blue.

**On the Naming of Lake Sevan as Gökcha.**

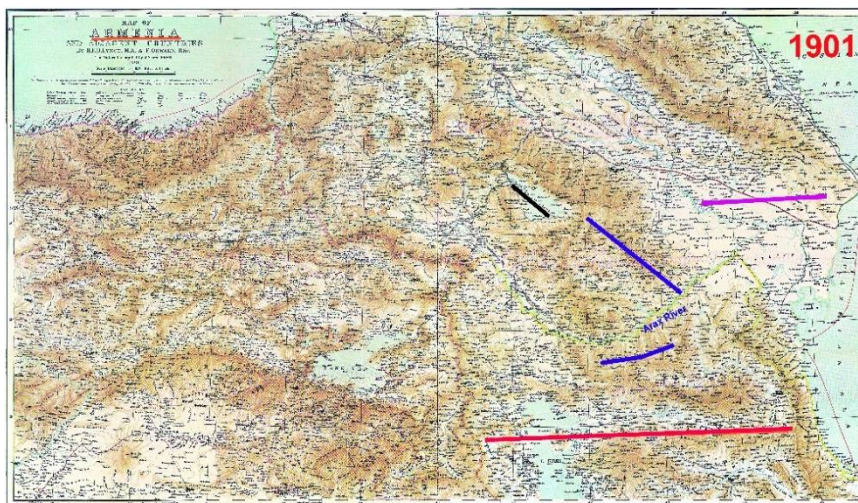


10 – Detail of the region of Sevan, from map 09.

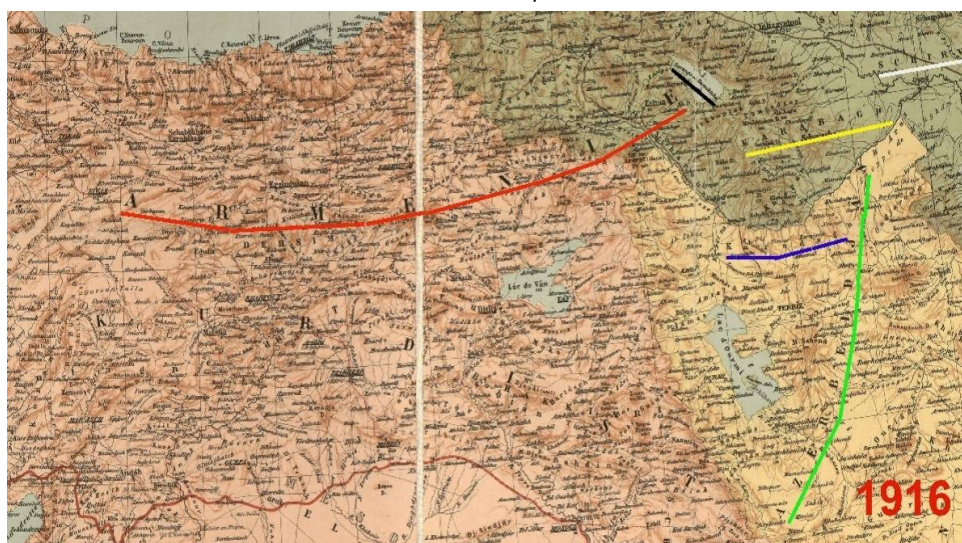


11 – A Tsarist Russian map of the area of Sevan, from a set of detailed maps of Armenia, originally published in Tsarist Russia, in 1899. The same maps were, however, also published by the USSR in 1926. On this map the lake is called by both its names, “Gökcha or Sevan”.

## Galichian (Galchian) R.



12 – This British map is by Lynch, published in 1901. The map is entitled “Armenia and neighboring countries”. Here, too, the lake is called “Sevan or Gökçe”, underlined in black. The names of the region are “Shirvan is underlined purple, “Karabakh” and “Gharadagh”, both underlined in blue, the former is placed north of River Aras and the latter, south of the river. The name “Azerbaijan” is underlined red and placed south of River Aras, as one of the provinces of Iran.



13 – Kiepert’s 1916 map of the region. Here the lake is called “Sevan or Gökça”, underlined in black. The name “Armenia” is underlined in red. The regio of “Karabakh” is underlined in yellow and is to the north of the River Aras. “Shirvan” is underlined in white and refers to the region of present-day Azerbaijan. On the map the name “Azerbaijan” denotes the Iranian province, located south of the River Aras, highlighted in green, where the region of “Gharadagh” is also shown, underlined in blue.

## **On the Naming of Lake Sevan as Gökcha.**

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The above is one of the last European maps of this part of the world prior to the establishment of communist rule in the Caucasus and before the founding of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1918.

### ***Conclusion***

When discussing maps, one should be careful to consider all the variants of maps of the same region, prepared and published by various cartographers and specialists, as it is through the comparison of alternative maps that one can be properly informed about the veracity of various claims and statements.

Earlier historical records show that during the Middle Ages the Armenians called the lake, "Geghama" or "Gegharquniats", and since the seventeenth century it was also known as "Sevan". However, until the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, most Western medieval cartographers called the lake by the name "Lychnitis".

In later times the name generally used has either just been "Sevan" or by a combination of both names, as "Sevan or Ghokcha", and only in very few instances as merely "Gokcha".

Whatever its name, the lake could hardly belong to a country which was established in 1918!

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**ՌՈՒԲԵՆ ԳԱԼՉՅԱՆ (ԳԱԼԻՉՅԱՆ)**

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## **ՍԵՎԱՆԱ ԼՃԻ ԳՅՈՎՉԱ ԱՆՎԱՆՄԱՆ ՄԱՍԻՆ**

### **Ամփոփում**

Վերջերս Ադրբեջանի կողմից հայտարարվեց, որ Սևանա լիճը ցարական Ռուսաստանի բոլոր քարտեզներում անվանվում է «Գյոկչա», և քանի որ սա ադրբեջանական անվանում է, հետևաբար Սևանն Ադրբեջանի տարածքում է գտնվում:

Հոդվածում պարզաբանվում է, թե որտեղի՞ց և ե՞րբ է եկել այդ նոր անվանումը, ընդամին առկա ցարական ժամանակների քարտեզների ճնշող մեծամասնության մեջ լիճը կոչվում է «Գյոկչա» կամ «Սևան»: Այդ նույն քարտեզները նաև փաստում են, որ տվյալ տարածքում, այսինքն՝ Արաքսից հյուսիս ընդհուպ մինչև 1918 թ. Ադրբեջան անունով երկիր գոյություն չի ունեցել, իսկ Արաքսից հարավ գտնվող *Ադրբեջան* տարածքը, հիշվում է որպես Իրանի պատմական նահանգներից մեկը, որը հայկական աղբյուրներում անվանվում է «Ատրպատական»:


**Բանալի բառեր՝** Հայաստան, Սևան, Ադրբեջան, Շահ Աբբաս, Գյոկչա, քարտեզագրություն, տեղանուններ:

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## **THE CREATION OF SELF-PROCLAIMED “TURKIC-TATAR INDEPENDENT REPUBLICS” IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE “GREATER AZERBAIJAN” PROGRAM (1918–1919)**

### ***Abstract***

Looking back at the path taken by the First Republic of Armenia (1918–1920), which was formed under difficult military and political conditions, it should be noted that this path was unfolded through complex and challenging turns. The Republic lived and operated in complicated internal and external circumstances, where the most urgent issues facing the state required immediate solutions.

The independent Armenian state, first and foremost, had to establish its territorial integrity. This commission was also conditioned by the unfavorable attitudes of the newly formed neighboring states (Georgia and Azerbaijan), which had made their aspirations to seize territories historically belonging to Armenia a cornerstone of their state policy.<sup>1</sup>

It is well known that, having been defeated in the First World War, the Ottoman Empire, following the Armistice of Mudros (October 30, 1918), was forced to withdraw its troops from Transcaucasia, including the occupied territories of Eastern Armenia, and retreat to the borders of 1914.

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<sup>1</sup> **Vratsian** 1925, 70–71.

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The official newspaper of the Yerevan Bolshevik organization, *Khosk* (“Word”), which sharply criticized the Young Turks, wrote in its editorial titled “The Withdrawal of Tachkastan”.

“The official Tachkastan (Turkey) of Enver and Talat Pashas is leaving the Caucasus. We have also experienced the taste of Turkish imperialism-it is Asian conquest and plunder... During the time of historical reckoning, it must be said that it has been a calamity both for its own people and for other nations. It has been a complete scourge for all the peoples of the Caucasus during these last five or six months, and especially a disaster for the Armenian working people.”<sup>2</sup> However, after the withdrawal of the Tachiks troops, remnants of the Young Turk–Musavat forces and Ottoman officers still remained in Armenia. Establishing connections with local Muslim populations, they did everything possible to keep the soon-to-be-liberated territories under their influence, to neutralize Armenia’s rights over them, to strangle the Republic of Armenia from the outside, and to “blow it up” from within through the creation of ethnic enclaves.<sup>3</sup> Thus, as the Ottomans were leaving Armenia, they deliberately left all their military supplies to them. The Turks retained their forces and armaments in Kars, Nakhchivan, and other regions. It should also be noted that the Caucasian Tatars did not conceal their separatist aspirations and openly declared them.

“As the Tachiks were leaving, they handed over Sharur and Nakhchivan to us-the Tatars,” they stated. “We will independently form our own government, and therefore we will not allow the Armenians to return to their homes.”<sup>4</sup>

**Keywords:** *Republic of Armenia, Stepan Ghorghanyan, Samtskhe–Meskheti, Tachkastan, “Greater Azerbaijan,” Server-bek Atabekov Kobliansky, Amir-bek Narimanbekov, Yakub Shevki Pasha.*

### **Introduction**

Based on the above observations, there is no doubt that these ambitious expansionist aspirations were embedded within the programs aimed at creating an Oghuz state under the patronage of Tachkastan. First, it would serve as a

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<sup>2</sup> “Khosk”, 14.12.1918.

<sup>3</sup> “Chakatamart”, 1.03.1920, see also **Ruben** 1982, 193–204; **Harutyunyan** 2016, 84–85.

<sup>4</sup> “Haratch”, 14.02.919.

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connecting link with the formation of “Azerbaijan,” and second, it would bridge Tachkastan with the Turkic-speaking peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Within the foreign policy shaped by the new realities of the Kemalists and the Musavatists, the Republic of Armenia continued to occupy a certain place. In this regard, noteworthy is the observation of a Baku-based author, signed “A.N.”<sup>5</sup> It is not difficult to observe that the Turks were thus cultivating even more far-reaching intentions. In the article titled “The Collapse of Azerbaijan” published in the Constantinople newspaper “Chakatamart” by the same author signed “A.N.,” it was stated in this regard: **“Tachkastan had created ‘Azerbaijan’, just as it had created the ‘southwestern’ or ‘northern governments’ for itself”**<sup>6</sup> (emphasis ours – G.S.).

Nevertheless, through its strategic program of creating Muslim “independent” entities within the territory of the Republic of Armenia, the Ottoman state intended, by means of these formations, to encircle Armenia and Georgia with a densely Turkish-Tatar-populated zone.<sup>7</sup> This policy of territorial expansion was, in turn, embedded within the broader concept of establishing a “Greater Azerbaijan” state.

Proceeding from the aforementioned evident objectives, the Ottoman state undertook the creation of “independent” entities in strategically important centers: Kars, Nakhchivan, Ardahan,<sup>8</sup> and even in Samtskhe–Meskheta (including the districts of Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe, and Aspindza).<sup>9</sup> These entities took the form of “Muslim National Councils” (shuras, from Persian: council), as well as smaller local units-local “shuras.”<sup>10</sup> In general, within the territories under the jurisdiction of Armenia, nearly twenty large and small Muslim quasi-independent entities had been established, which refused to submit to the authority of the republican government.<sup>11</sup> These self-proclaimed entities, encouraged by the Ittihadists and the Musavatists, were entirely directed against the Republic of

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<sup>5</sup> “Chakatamart”, 27.10.1920.

<sup>6</sup> “Chakatamart”, 26.10.1920.

<sup>7</sup> See **Demoyan** 2006, 46, 49.

<sup>8</sup> “Mshak”, 24.01.1919.

<sup>9</sup> See **Melkonyan** 2003, 37, see also **Sargsyan** 2006, 11. Akhaltsikhe city and its district occupy the central part of the present-day Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia (see **Karapetyan** 2008, 8).

<sup>10</sup> See **Vratsian** 1982, 292.

<sup>11</sup> See *History of the Armenians: Key Issues (From Antiquity to the Present)*, 2000, 367.

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Armenia. They were intended to become local governments, allowing the Ottoman state, even after the withdrawal of its troops, to preserve its influence in the region and to prepare the ground for the eventual return of the Turks.<sup>12</sup>

Below, we present in general terms the process of the formation of these entities and their inglorious end.

#### ***“Republic of South-Western Caucasus” (“Kars Republic”)***

Conspiratorial plans against Armenia had been devised as early as during the period of Young Turk rule, when, following the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918, the provinces of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum were ceded by Soviet Russia to the Ottoman Empire, an ally of Imperial Germany, despite the latter having been defeated by Russia.<sup>13</sup> The facts indicate that Enver and Nuri Pashas, having been defeated in the war and dissatisfied with their unfulfilled pan-Turkic expectations, had already, during February-March 1918, in the course of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, intended-on the basis of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 4 of the peace treaty-to establish the so-called “South-Western Republic” in the regions of Kars, Ardahan, and Batum<sup>14</sup> that had passed to the Tachiks. This entity was to be formed under the leadership of Nuri and Halil Pashas,<sup>15</sup> who had at their disposal a force of 5,000–6,000 troops.<sup>16</sup> Enver conveyed his intentions in a letter addressed to Grand Vizier Izzet Pasha, noting that he was “going to the Caucasus, where he intends to found a new Turkic state.”<sup>17</sup>

And thus, the Ottoman authorities, seeking to maintain their control over the territories acquired under the Treaty of Batum (June 4, 1918), hastily organized a “referendum” in these regions in the summer of 1918 through the local Muslim population. It was conducted by all possible unlawful means, at a time when a significant portion of the local Armenian population had been massacred, while those participating in the elections included individuals brought there by the Tachiks, particularly military personnel. Under such conditions, the “referendum” could not but turn into a farce, especially as the

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<sup>12</sup> See **Vardanyan** 2014, 70.

<sup>13</sup> See “Haratch”, 07.10.1967.

<sup>14</sup> See **Avetisyan** 1994.

<sup>15</sup> See **Denikin** 1925, 146.

<sup>16</sup> See **Kadishev** 1960, 170; see also **Sargsyan** 1989, 245.

<sup>17</sup> “Zhoghovrdi Dzayn”, 08.04.1919.

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Tachiks themselves were violating Article 4 of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. The objective was clear: the Ittihadists sought to give a semblance of legality to their expansionist policy by means of falsified elections, thereby achieving “self-determination” and subsequently unification with the Ottoman Empire.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the Turks, avoiding a secret ballot in the “referendum,” conducted it openly, according to the results of which 83,000 voters cast their ballots in favor of unification with the Ottoman Empire, while 2,000 voted against.<sup>19</sup> The official newspaper of the Armenian community of New Nakhchivan and Rostov, *Hay Hamaynk* (Armenian Community), in its article titled “The Ottoman Plebiscite,” ridicules and exposes the so-called “referendum” as a mockery, as well as the fraud of the Turkish authorities.

“Who carried out this plebiscite?” writes the weekly. “Who led this act of popular voting? Undoubtedly the agents of the Turkish benevolent government, using their long-known methods. When was this operation carried out? Now, when, due to the arrival of the Turkish army, not a single Christian inhabitant has remained there because of the terror of the bashi-bazouks. It is evident that only the Muslim portion of the population participated in the voting, or, if any Christians remained, their votes were forcibly extorted in favor of Turkey.”<sup>20</sup>

In order to place this program, directed toward pan-Turkic objectives, on practical foundations, a special committee was established in Constantinople under the leadership of Ali Riza Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of the Navy (November 1918 – March 1919). This committee had at its disposal substantial financial resources and emissaries. Based on reliable information received from Constantinople, the official newspaper of the ARF in Georgia, *Haratch* (*Forward*), informed its readers: “A committee has been formed in Constantinople whose aim is either to retain for Turkey the regions of Batum and Kars, the district of Ardahan, and the province of Akhaltsikhe, or, if that does not succeed, to unite these regions and form an independent state. The head of the committee is Riza Pasha. The committee has at its disposal large sums of money and maintains agents in all the aforementioned regions.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See **Vardanyan** 2014, 67.

<sup>19</sup> See “Chakatamart”, 24.07.1918.

<sup>20</sup> “Armenian Community”, 23.07.1918.

<sup>21</sup> “Haratch”, 14.02.1919.

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In order to implement this program, extensive preparatory work had long been carried out in the depths of Transcaucasia through a wide network of Turkish-Tatar agents. It is noteworthy that in Kars, under the guise of charitable activity, particularly active intelligence operations were conducted by the Young Turk agent Khosrov-bek Sultanov. General-Major Stepan Ghorghanyan, governor of the Kars province, was well informed about the activities of Turkish agents and the events taking place in Kars. In his documentary memoirs, he writes: “...before the revolution, Dr. Sultanov, under the banner of the Baku Turkish charitable society, was carrying out in Kars the duties of a political agent of the Musavat. This cunning and flexible Turk effectively took into his hands the administration of the Kars province.” He was feverishly arming the Turks; bypassing the “Provincial Commissioner” Dzamojev<sup>22</sup> he had reached out to the Ottoman authorities. Under the guise of Turkish national councils, he was carrying out preparatory work in the Province of Kars for the future Shura, thereby smoothing the path toward Baku, toward the future Azerbaijan, and the Pan-Islamic dream...<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, Sultanov had succeeded in surrounding himself with Turkic-Tatars driven by Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic aspirations. “The Turkish population of the Kars Province,” notes St. Ghorghanyan, “immediately surrounded Dr. Sultanov. His door became a sanctuary for the Turks, and the landscape of international relations in the Province of Kars suddenly shifted.”<sup>24</sup>

On September 27, 1918, during a convention of Muslim leaders in Kars-attended by Yakub Shevket Pasha, commander of the Ottoman 9<sup>th</sup> Army stationed in the city, Fahreddin (Erdoğan) Bey, and Hilmi (Uran) Bey<sup>25</sup> the

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<sup>22</sup> **G.S. Dzamojev (G.S. Dzamoyan)** – (1865, Tiflis – 1937) – Doctor of Law and member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF). During the First World War, he was dispatched by the Armenian Benevolent Society of the Caucasus (ABSC) to various localities of Western Armenia liberated by Russian forces in order to provide assistance to the Armenian population. In 1916, he served as an authorized representative of the Armenian Central Committee attached to the ABSC. In 1918, he was appointed commissioner of the Kars region. From October 15, 1918, to 1919, he served as the diplomatic representative of the Republic of Armenia in Ukraine. On June 30, 1919, he was appointed diplomatic representative of the Republic of Armenia to Admiral Kolchak’s government in Siberia.

<sup>23</sup> **Harutyunyan** 2018, 24–25.

<sup>24</sup> **Harutyunyan** 2016, 174.

<sup>25</sup> See **Hovhannisian** 2005, 219.

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governor of the Kars Sanjak-the “Muslim National Committee” (Milli Shura)<sup>26</sup> was established. On December 1 of the same year, this committee resolved to form the so-called “Provisional Government of the Southwestern Caucasian Republic,” centered in Kars.<sup>27</sup> This provisional government was headed by Server-bek Atabek Kobliansky, a prominent landowner from Samtskhe-Meskheti driven by Pan-Islamic ambitions.<sup>28</sup> It is worth noting that the Ottoman state has consistently utilized the Turkic-speaking element of Samtskhe-Meskheti as a strategic asset to advance its regional geopolitical interests across all historical periods, including the Soviet era and into the present day.

That this self-proclaimed “republic” fell under the influence of the Ottoman state and was directed by it is evidenced by a declaration from the Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Evgeni Gegechkori, addressed to General George Francis Milne, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in the East: “The Kars government is nothing other than a Turkish organization. We have provided factual proof to them that this entire government was constituted by Turkish commissars and agents.”<sup>29</sup>

Notably, the selection of Kars as the “republic’s” capital was by no means accidental, given its immense strategic significance. As a fortified city-fortress, it served as a vital military outpost for the Turkish-Musavatist forces in the pursuit of their expansionist ambitions within Transcaucasia. The importance of Kars was equally pronounced from an economic perspective; it functioned as a major commercial hub on the trade routes stretching from Trebizond through Armenia to Iran.<sup>30</sup>

The primary objective and ultimate goal of this artificial entity was to unite with the Ottoman state under the guise of the “right to self-determination.” In this context, it should be emphasized that the Turks intended “...first and foremost, to annex to Turkey the Kars “Shura” government (in other words, Kars-Ardahan-Batum), Caucasian Azerbaijan, Dagestan, and subsequently

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<sup>26</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 53.

<sup>27</sup> See **Kadishev** 1960, 170, see also **Hajiyev** 2004, 52–53.

<sup>28</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 53. **Server-bek** was one of the wealthiest and most influential landowners of Samtskhe-Meskheti. He later settled in Turkey, where he died in a car accident in 1962.

<sup>29</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 13.05.1919.

<sup>30</sup> See **Pogosyan** 1983.

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Turkestan, Mongolia, and the Russian Muslim territories.”<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the Kemalists intended-should this plan prove unfeasible-to establish “...a separate independent state comprising the regions of Kars, Batum, and Akhaltsikhe, under the name of ‘Southwestern Transcaucasia.”<sup>32</sup>

It must be noted that the Ottoman state’s predatory designs on the Republic of Armenia aligned perfectly with Azerbaijan’s expansionist intentions. Driven by its own territorial interests, the extremist chauvinist Musavat government established clandestine, close ties with both this and subsequently formed Muslim entities, consistently supporting and monitoring their activities. The [Azerbaijani] government was keen for these to become functional state formations; they were to serve as the connecting link between the Ottoman state and Azerbaijan-an objective shared by these entities themselves. It is no coincidence that upon assuming office, Server-bek Atabek Kobliansky took the initiative to establish direct contact with the Azerbaijani leadership and its representative office in Batum.<sup>33</sup>

Notably, certain Azerbaijani authors-such as Aydin Hajiyev in his work *The Democratic Republics of Southwest Caucasus (Kars and Aras-Turkic Republics)*-deliberately assign a specific role to Azerbaijan in the creation of these “republics.”<sup>34</sup> These authors view such entities as formations leaning more toward Azerbaijan than the Ottoman state. Nevertheless, it remains clear and indisputable that, regardless of the external positioning or political sympathies of these artificial constructs, they were ultimately intended to serve the long-term realization of Pan-Turkic objectives.

Furthermore, the Musavat government, following a pre-established scenario characteristic of its policy, began disseminating historical disinformation to pave the way for its expansionist designs. For instance, in a communication sent to General William Thomson on January 8, 1919, the Azerbaijani Ministry of Foreign Affairs distorted historical realities, stating: “...at no point in history has the territory composed of the Kars and Batum provinces and the Akhaltsikhe district ever been part of Armenia or Georgia; therefore, their claims to these

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<sup>31</sup> “Soviet Armenia”, 06.08.1921.

<sup>32</sup> **Vratsian** 1982, 243.

<sup>33</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 53.

<sup>34</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 50–51.

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territories possess no legal or moral basis."<sup>35</sup> These formations were intended to act as a strategic link between Baku and Constantinople.<sup>36</sup> Driven by these considerations, M.E. Rasulzade, the leader of the "Musavat" party, made no secret of traditional Pan-Turkic aspirations. In an editorial titled "The Old Melody" in the party's daily *Istiklal*, he wrote: "The Turk of Azerbaijan, for example, cannot love Constantinople-with its national monuments, sacred mosques, and Islamic memorials-any less than the "Constantinople-loving" French writer Pierre Loti; for every Turk and every Muslim, that city represents the altar of civilization."<sup>37</sup>

In parallel, another Musavatist organ-the daily *Azerbaijan*, published in Perso-Arabic script-hastened to fulfill the political mandate of the ruling elite by publishing provocative anti-Armenian articles filled with inconceivable fabrications. For instance, in an editorial titled "Be Ready," the paper employed maximalist rhetoric to claim inherently Armenian territories as its own. Calling the Caucasian Tatars to arms in a Pan-Turkic spirit, it wrote: "O, Young Turk... one by one, the regions of Kars, Nakhchivan, Surmalu, and Sharur are being torn from us; we have lost them. Our link with the Muslim states of the South has been severed. Even now, we are unable to fully possess our various lands."<sup>38</sup> In response to the paper's conspiratorial and insidious conduct, the Tiflis-based periodical *Ashkhatavor* (*The Laborer*) wrote: "For Azerbaijan, the supreme virtue is provocation; it has built its accounts upon provocation, which has become its very flesh and blood, such that it cannot exist without it."<sup>39</sup>

Thus, it is evident that this military-political process was deliberately transformed into a policy of anti-Armenian persecution.

On January 8, 1919, an agreement was signed in Western Transcaucasia between General George Forester-Walker, Commander of the Allied Forces, and S. Tigranyan, the Foreign Minister of Armenia. According to this agreement, a British military governor was to be appointed in Kars until the signing of a final peace treaty, while the civil administration-subordinate to said military governor-

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<sup>35</sup> **Hajiyev** 2004, 54-55.

<sup>36</sup> See **Knyazyan** 2008, 67.

<sup>37</sup> "Ashkhatavor", 05.04.1919.

<sup>38</sup> "Ashkhatavor", 08.06.1919.

<sup>39</sup> "Ashkhatavor", 13.06.1919.

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was to be composed of Armenians.<sup>40</sup> Colonel Clive Errington Temperley was appointed to the post of Governor (January–March 1919).<sup>41</sup> Under this agreement, the British military governor and the Armenian civil authorities departed for Kars. However, the Turks met the Armenians with such hostility and threats that the British advised the Armenian officials to withdraw to Alexandropol.<sup>42</sup> “This incident,” writes Simon Vratsian, “as well as the Turkophilia displayed by the English on other occasions, caused intense agitation and indignation in Armenian circles.”<sup>43</sup>

On January 14, 1919, the parliament (*Majlis*) of the “Kars Republic” was inaugurated in Kars with the participation of 64 deputies; Asad-bek Hajiyev was elected as its president.<sup>44</sup>

Following these developments, a second convention was held on January 17–18, 1919, led by Dr. Esad Oktay of Childir.<sup>45</sup> This gathering included numerous Muslim delegates infected with Pan-Turkic fervor and an *Ittihadist* (Committee of Union and Progress) orientation toward the Caucasus. The convention aimed to unify the “National Shuras” of all districts into the so-called “Provisional National Government of Southwestern Caucasia”<sup>46</sup>(also known as the Kars Shura). Although complete unification was not achieved, the formation of this “government” galvanized the activities of Turkic-Tatar emissaries throughout the region, who were driven by Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic sentiments. As Stepan Ghorghanyan notes in his memoirs: “The Ottoman command was in constant communication with Baku, and Azerbaijani emissaries were incessantly traveling between Kars and Baku via the Ardahan-Tiflis route.”<sup>47</sup>

The architects of this Ottoman puppet “republic” were so convinced of the viability of their designs that they sought to integrate a unified territory stretching from Adjara on the Black Sea coast to the Persian border at Nakhchivan. Accordingly, this was to encompass the regions of Kars and Batum,

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<sup>40</sup> Vratsian 1982, 243.

<sup>41</sup> See Vratsian 1982, 247; see also Virabyan, 2024, 71.

<sup>42</sup> See Vratsian 1982, 244.

<sup>43</sup> Vratsian 1982, 244.

<sup>44</sup> See Hajiyev 2004, 57.

<sup>45</sup> See Hovhannisian 2005, 223; see also Vardanyan 2014, 69.

<sup>46</sup> See Knyazyan 2008, 64–65.

<sup>47</sup> Harutyunyan 2018, 32–33.

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the districts of Akhaltsikhe, Akhalkalaki, Sharur, Nakhchivan, and Surmalu, as well as the southeastern portion of the Yerevan district.<sup>48</sup> “The Muslims of Kars,” Ruben Ter-Minasyan writes, “employed a different tactical approach than those in Nakhchivan, Vedi, and other regions... Here, the Shura's objective appeared to be the preservation of the Muslim presence in the Kars province by building organization and strength, while avoiding the provocation of Armenians through premature uprisings; instead, they were to remain patient and await developments in Turkey. Should Turkey find a favorable opportunity to return to Kars, they would then be liberated.”<sup>49</sup> It must be noted that Turkish expansionist aspirations were particularly conspicuous regarding Adjara to the west and northwest, a strategically vital area on the Black Sea, along with its capital and port, Batum, the preeminent maritime gateway to the Caucasus, from which Turkey had withdrawn following its defeat in the World War.<sup>50</sup>

Under these dire circumstances, a severe struggle unfolded at the beginning of 1919 over territories historically belonging to Armenia. The British, seeking to avoid antagonizing the Muslim population, created various pretexts to obstruct the Armenians from establishing control over the Kars province. Furthermore, the Musavat government, adhering to its policy of disinformation, “...proposed to the British command that Kars be occupied as part of Azerbaijan, arguing that the region's population consisted predominantly of Muslim elements.”<sup>51</sup>

Emboldened by the anti-Armenian propaganda emanating from the Ottoman state and Azerbaijan, the leaders of the Kars Shura actively impeded the return of approximately 100,000 Armenian refugees to their ancestral lands.<sup>52</sup> In a communication dated January 31, 1919, addressed to the Persian government, Sargis Araratyan, the Envoy of the Republic of Armenia to Iran, stated: “Following the withdrawal of the Turks, the Armenian government, by a unanimous decision of Parliament, dispatched half a million refugees to their homes; one hundred thousand were sent to the districts of Sharur and Nakhchivan-to their native villages... Unfortunately, the Tatars, instigated by

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<sup>48</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 53; see also **Hovhannisian** 2005; **Hajiyev** 2010, 337–338.

<sup>49</sup> **Ruben** 1982, 211.

<sup>50</sup> See **Mayilyan** 2016, 59.

<sup>51</sup> “Mshak”, 05.01.1919.

<sup>52</sup> See “Mshak”, 24.01.1919; see also **Hovhannisian** 2005, 223.

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deserting Turkish officers, murdered the first Armenian parliamentarians and barred the refugees from using the railway to reach their destinations. Those who arrived in Ghamarlu were massacred, while the survivors were driven back toward Yerevan.”<sup>53</sup> As ARF member and journalist Vazgen Shirakuni attests in the documentary publication *Reconstruction Work in Armenia, 1918–1920*: “...the English smiled more upon the beys and khans of Baku than they heeded the just grievances of Armenia, failing to protect it from encroachments. While the “Little Ally” was rising from blood and ashes, they provided no immediate assistance, not even to ensure the physical survival of the living, nor any real or direct aid to consolidate its independent statehood.”<sup>54</sup>

During its session on March 27, 1919, the Parliament formed a new ten-member cabinet<sup>55</sup> under the leadership of Ibrahim-bek Jangiri (Cihangiroğlu)<sup>56</sup>, a former officer in the Tsarist army and a notorious local chieftain. Nearly all members of this cabinet were Ottoman agents acting in the interests of the Ottoman state.<sup>57</sup>

Entirely Turkish in orientation and under the direct influence of *Ittihadist* (Committee of Union and Progress) leaders—specifically Nuri and Halil Pashas<sup>58</sup> – this predatory “republic” adopted the Ottoman flag (a white crescent and five-pointed star on the left) and declared Turkish as the official language.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, following the Turkish example, the Caucasian Tatars began to destroy or appropriate the Christian civilizational heritage of the region. For instance, the Russian churches in Kars were desecrated, with crescents erected in place of the crosses atop their low, rounded domes. Notably, Armenian churches were temporarily spared from such vandalism simply because the perpetrators were unable to scale their steep, pointed conical domes.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, Governor Clive Errington Temperley, by granting unofficial

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<sup>53</sup> “Haratch”, 14.02.1919.

<sup>54</sup> “Hairenik” 12.07.1923.

<sup>55</sup> See **National Archives of Armenia**, f. 275, inv. 25, file 5, fol. 35; see also **Hajiyev** 2004, 67.

<sup>56</sup> **Ibrahim-bek Jihangir** also served as Minister of War of the “Aras-Turkic Republic” (see **Hajiyev** 2010, 307).

<sup>57</sup> See “Ashkhatavor”, 14.03.1919.

<sup>58</sup> See **Lernyan** 1926.

<sup>59</sup> See **Hovhannisian** 2005, 223.

<sup>60</sup> See “Ashkhatavor”, 29.04.1919.

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recognition to the Kars Shura<sup>61</sup> and reaching a working agreement with the “Southwestern Caucasian Republic,” opposed every attempt to appoint Armenian administrative officials.<sup>62</sup> Through its conduct, the British command effectively facilitated Turkish anti-Armenian activities in Transcaucasia.<sup>63</sup>

Numerous facts attest that the Azerbaijani government, capitalizing on these favorable circumstances, sought to “legitimize” the Kars Shura’s expansionist claims over territories under the sovereign jurisdiction of the Republic of Armenia. T. Bekzadyan, the diplomatic representative of the Republic of Armenia in Azerbaijan, noted the following incident in his diaries: On March 15, 1919, during a visit to the Azerbaijani Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ismayil-khan Ziyatkhanov, Bekzadyan presented the Armenian government’s instructions regarding the “close unity of the three young Transcaucasian republics.” Ziyatkhanov insolently included the so-called “Southwestern Caucasian Republic” among these states. However, as Bekzadyan writes, he “...very quickly withdrew [the claim] upon seeing my agitation and bewilderment.”<sup>64</sup>

Beyond the challenges posed to Armenian statehood and territorial integrity, Azerbaijan was particularly interested in utilizing this artificial entity as a geopolitical outpost for the vital interests of the “Great Azerbaijan” project—specifically with the aim of seizing Batum and its port, which opened a gateway to the Black and Mediterranean Seas. Furthermore, Batum was to be transformed into a crucial transit point for the export of Baku oil. Another objective was to establish control over the strategically significant Batum-Baku railway line. It is no coincidence that among the Transcaucasian republics, only Azerbaijan recognized and provided material and diplomatic support to the Kars Shura. Representatives of the Shura consistently submitted reports to the leadership in Baku.<sup>65</sup> Prime Minister Fatali Khan Khoyski even declared that “...hostility toward that government, regardless of its source, would be viewed as hostility toward Azerbaijan itself.”<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> See **Vratsian** 1982, 244.

<sup>62</sup> See **Hovhannisian** 2005, 225, 228.

<sup>63</sup> See **Petrosyan** 2004, 26.

<sup>64</sup> **Harutyunyan** 2025, 51.

<sup>65</sup> See **Harutyunyan** 2025, 122.

<sup>66</sup> **Hovhannisian** 2005, 230.

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Furthermore, it should be emphasized that Azerbaijan-through its diplomatic representative in the Republic of Armenia since January 29, 1919, Mamed-khan Tekinski<sup>67</sup>-had established a clandestine intelligence network. Tekinski, an employee of the Azerbaijani Cheka and aptly described by Simon Vratsian as a “Pan-Turkist figure,” operated a network of agents. Beyond his formal diplomatic mission, he was effectively engaged in espionage and maintained direct contact with the leadership of the Kars Shura. This is evidenced by an encrypted message sent by Prime Minister Fatali Khan Khoyski on May 5, 1919, which stated: “Establish contact with the Kars government immediately. Provide them with every type of assistance. Find out what their needs are; telegraph us so that we may take the necessary measures.”<sup>68</sup>

It is also worth noting that the Musavat party, mindful of the British military governorship in Kars, sought to maximize the efficacy of its intelligence operations by placing a recruited agent-a Jewish individual proficient in both English and Turkish-at the Shura’s disposal.<sup>69</sup> This agent was simultaneously tasked with providing intelligence to the Ottoman command. The memoirs of Stepan Ghorghanyan contain remarkable details regarding this uncovered operative: “Anticipating the role of the English in the country, the Musavatist “Caretaker Committee” of Baku had sent this man to Kars in advance to serve the Shura. This clever son of Israel was concurrently performing espionage

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<sup>67</sup> See **Vratsian** 1982, 293. From September 1919 Tekinsky was replaced by Akhverdov (see “Socialist Revolutionary”, 04.09.1919).

<sup>68</sup> **Vratsian** 2005, 294.

<sup>69</sup> It should be noted that the Soviet authorities of Azerbaijan, which followed the Musavatists, also involved individuals recruited into their intelligence services in anti-Armenian activities against Armenia. For example, in early December 1920, a Jewish student, **A. Bandus**, arrived in Yerevan from Baku as a member of the “Revolutionary Tribunal” (see **Darbinyan** 1972, 539). The document issued to Bandus, written on the letterhead of the “Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal” of the Azerbaijan SSR, stated: “A.C.C.P. Председатель верховного революционного трибунала. Совершенно секретно” (see **Stepanyan** 2016, 828–829). Bandus directly participated in the massacre of Armenian public and political figures in Yerevan Central Prison on the night of February 17–18, 1921. This is evidenced by eyewitness **O. Baldwin**, son of the Prime Minister of Great Britain Stanley Baldwin, an officer of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, journalist, and ARF member. According to him, on the order of a “short, pale, stuttering, bearded, bespectacled little Jewish commissar (i.e., A. Bandus),” 25 prisoners were executed (see **Baldwin** 1933, 129, 139).

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duties for the Turkish commander..."<sup>70</sup> What is particularly striking is that shortly thereafter, this individual defected to the British and began spying on their behalf. As Ghorghanyan recounts, the agent "very quickly went over to the English side. When, a month later, the English resolved to disperse the Shura and arrest its members, the polyglot took a position as a translator for the English and proceeded to betray his former associates with great skill."<sup>71</sup>

Nevertheless, the officials of the Kars Shura spared no effort in their arbitrary actions. In a bid to establish their territorial claims and "rights" on the international stage, on the eve of the Paris Peace Conference, Ibrahim-bek Jangiri-on behalf of the Kars Shura-dispatched telegrams to Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, and Raymond Poincaré. The appeals demanded that the Conference recognize their rights over Kars, Ardahan, Batum, Olti, Kağizman, Igdir, and other regions. Furthermore, following a deceptive Turkish modus operandi, they blatantly falsified demographic data, claiming in the appeal that the number of Muslims in the aforementioned regions reached 3 million, while Armenians and Greeks allegedly constituted barely 10%.<sup>72</sup>

Although these demands presented serious political challenges, the leaders of the Allied nations did not act upon the petition, as it fundamentally contradicted their own geopolitical interests in Transcaucasia.

In this context, one must also consider the shared position of Armenia and Georgia regarding the frustration of the Kars Shura's expansionist ambitions.<sup>73</sup> However, it is essential to emphasize that this "diplomatic rapprochement" occurred against a backdrop of principled differences and distinct political objectives, particularly following the Armeno-Georgian War (December 9–31, 1918) and the Menshevik government's chauvinistic policies and territorial claims toward Javakhk. While inter-ethnic tensions were gradually subsiding, Armenia's position was dictated by strategic necessity. Encircled by the Ottoman state, Azerbaijan, and the pro-Turkish Kars Shura, the route through Georgia

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<sup>70</sup> Harutyunyan 2018, 30.

<sup>71</sup> Harutyunyan 2018, 30.

<sup>72</sup> See "Haratch", 11.03.1919; see also Hovhannisian 2005, 224–225.

<sup>73</sup> See Knyazyan 2008, 71.

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was of vital strategic importance for Armenia to maintain its connection with the outside world.<sup>74</sup>

Despite these factors, the Kars Shura-emboldened by the overt support of the British in the region and specifically by the patronage of the Ottoman state and Azerbaijan-began to encroach upon neighboring territories.<sup>75</sup> This entity possessed its own armed forces, equipped with artillery and machine guns. Numerous Turkish officers and soldiers who remained in the area trained the local Caucasian Tatar population, raising a substantial force.<sup>76</sup> The number of these armed forces reached between 18,000<sup>77</sup> and 20,000.<sup>78</sup> General Yakub Shevki Pasha<sup>79</sup> played a particularly significant role in the formation of these troops. A. Malkhazov (Malkhasyan), head of the “Information Bureau” within the Republic of Armenia’s diplomatic mission in Baku, reported the following in his memorandum dated February 7, 1919: “It is confirmed that this government [referring to the “Southwestern Caucasian Republic” – G.S.], which includes the Kars province, Batum, and Ardahan, and claims the Akhaltsikhe district, is receiving clandestine support from the British government.”<sup>80</sup> According to Malkhazov, the British utilized this maneuver to exert pressure on both Armenia and Georgia.<sup>81</sup>

It should be observed that Georgia also maintained claims over the Kars province, Samtskhe-Meskheta, and Adjara, which led to a severe conflict between the Georgian government and the Kars Shura.

On November 10, 1918, the Sunni Turks of Samtskhe-Meskheta<sup>82</sup>-with the support of Eyub Halil Bey, commander of the Ottoman 3rd Division-established an artificial entity known as the Akhaltsikhe “National Shura.” This was followed

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<sup>74</sup> See *History of the Armenians: Key Issues (from Ancient Times to the Present Day)*, 2000, 372; see also **Melkonyan** 2003, 310.

<sup>75</sup> See **Torosyan** 2016, 106.

<sup>76</sup> See **Lernyan** 1926.

<sup>77</sup> See “Ashkhataavor”, 14.03.1919.

<sup>78</sup> See **H. A.** 1920.

<sup>79</sup> See **Harutyunyan** 2018, 32. Notably, **Yakub Shevki Pasha** commanded the so-called “Kars” grouping of the Ottoman army advancing into Transcaucasia in the spring of 1918, composed of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> army corps and several auxiliary units (see **Harutyunyan** 1984, 169).

<sup>80</sup> **National Archives of Armenia**, f. 223, inv. 1, file 75, fol. 21.

<sup>81</sup> See **National Archives of Armenia**, f. 223, inv. 1, file 75, fol. 21.

<sup>82</sup> The ethnoreligious group of Meskhetian Turks... (see **Galoyan** 2019, 40).

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by the formation of the “Provisional Government of Akhaltsikhe” under the leadership of Server-bek Atabek Kobliansky<sup>83</sup>, which held an exclusively pro-Turkish orientation. Notably, during the Batum negotiations, the Turks of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki sent a formal petition with forty signatures to the Turkish delegation, demanding the “annexation of these districts to Turkey.”<sup>84</sup>

Consequently, the Menshevik government of Georgia also refused to recognize this artificial formation. The authorities in Tiflis were deeply alarmed by the Kars Shura’s intentions to subordinate Adjara and Samtskhe-Meskheta.<sup>85</sup> Despite this, the Meskhetian Turks-influenced by the Pan-Turkic propaganda of Young Turk emissaries and in exchange for several railcars of oil-preferred the authority of the “Southwestern Caucasian Republic.” This movement was led by Omar Fayik-Neymanzade (Kipiani), chairman of the “National Committee” of Samtskhe-Meskheta Muslims, and the Turkish officer Shurut Bey.<sup>86</sup>

Furthermore, Omar Fayik-Neymanzade utilized his agents to incite an armed rebellion against the Georgian government with the aim of its overthrow. On February 12, 1919, the forces of the Kars Shura, under the command of Server-bek Atabek Kobliansky, invaded Samtskhe-Meskheta from the Potskhov sub-district (Ardahan region). Military operations were directed by the Turkish officer Latif Bey.<sup>87</sup> By annexing the districts of Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, and Borchalu, the Turks intended to establish a direct link with Azerbaijan while simultaneously driving a wedge between Armenia and Georgia.<sup>88</sup> Following a heavy defeat of the Georgian forces, Akhaltsikhe fell to the Turkish forces.<sup>89</sup> However, shortly thereafter, on March 7, 1919, Georgian troops succeeded in recapturing Akhaltsikhe<sup>90</sup>, followed by the recovery of Ardahan on April 20.

For obvious reasons, official Baku received the military counter-operations undertaken by the Georgian side with deep dissatisfaction. Azerbaijan sought to thwart the inclusion of both Samtskhe-Meskheta and the Batum region into the Georgian state. Consequently, to justify and rationalize the incursion into

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<sup>83</sup> See **Melkonyan** 2003, 316; see also **Knyazyan** 2008, 64.

<sup>84</sup> **Khatisian** 1968, 75.

<sup>85</sup> See **Mailian** 2022 334.

<sup>86</sup> See “Haratch”, 02.01.1919; see also “Zakavkazskoe Slovo”, 28.01.1919.

<sup>87</sup> See “Haratch”, 04.03.1919; see also **Karapetyan** 2008, 66.

<sup>88</sup> See **Melkonyan** 2003, 286.

<sup>89</sup> See **Mayilyan** 2016, 62–63.

<sup>90</sup> See “Haratch” 09.03.1919.

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Samtskhe-Meskheti, Azerbaijan exploited the presence of the Meskhetian Turks, positioning itself as the guarantor of the interests, rights, and security of its “ethnic kinsmen.” Under the false pretext of protecting the latter, Deputy Foreign Minister Ismayil-khan Ziyatkhonov dispatched a telegram on March 8, 1919, to the Georgian Foreign Minister, Evgeni Gegechkori, raising the issue of “self-determination” for the Meskhetian Turks: “The Government of Azerbaijan considers it its moral duty to amicably request the Georgian government to cease all military operations against a people who are kinsmen in ethnicity and faith to Azerbaijan, and to take all necessary measures to resolve all arising disputes through peaceful means, mutual agreement, or international arbitration.”<sup>91</sup>

Naturally, the Georgian side viewed this move as a blatant interference in its internal affairs. To neutralize the Turkish-Azerbaijani encroachments, the Georgian government convened a peasant congress in the district, where they persuaded the delegates to “declare their loyalty to the Georgian Republic,” thereby recognizing Samtskhe-Meskheti as an inseparable part of Georgia.<sup>92</sup> To avoid future complications, the Menshevik government intended to alter the demographic composition of Samtskhe-Meskheti in favor of the Georgians by resettling several hundred Imeretian colonists in the region.<sup>93</sup> In the apt observation of Academician A. Melkonyan: “the policy of ‘colonizing’ Javakhs with Georgians had begun.”<sup>94</sup>

As previously noted, Adjara also held a uniquely significant strategic position within the expansionist designs of both the Ottoman state and Azerbaijan. Consequently, the Georgian government resolved to extend its authority over Adjara as well, with the objective of permanently annexing the region to Georgia based on the principle of autonomy.<sup>95</sup> In this regard, on January 15, 1919, the Chairman of the Government, Noe Zhordania, issued a declaration addressed to the Muslim population of the Batumi region, stating: “In accordance with the will of all the citizens of Georgia and the resolution of Parliament, and in order to dispel all manner of misunderstandings among us,

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<sup>91</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 15.03.1919.

<sup>92</sup> See **Mayilyan** 2016, 68.

<sup>93</sup> See **Melkonyan** 2003, 318.

<sup>94</sup> **Melkonyan** 2003, 318.

<sup>95</sup> For a detailed analysis of events in Adjara, see **Mailian** 2022, 351–386.

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the Government of the Republic of Georgia hereby declares for general information and most resolutely that it grants autonomy to Muslim Georgia.”<sup>96</sup>

In an effort to derail Georgia's initiatives, Baku utilized its consulate in Adjara to lavishly fund anti-Georgian propaganda throughout the province<sup>97</sup>. To implement their conspiratorial designs, the leader of the “Musavat” party, M.E. Rasulzade, resorted to a cunning maneuver: he inducted his associate from Adjara, Ahmed Hamdi-bek Karaaghazade,<sup>98</sup> into the Azerbaijani Parliament as a member of the Musavat faction. This was intended to demonstrate to the international community that “...Muslim Georgia already has its representatives in the Azerbaijani parliament, and Adjara is nothing more than a mere province of Azerbaijan.”<sup>99</sup> Furthermore, to realize these plans, the Musavat government even plotted to organize an “Adjarian uprising” against Georgia through its consul in Batum.<sup>100</sup>

Returning, however, to the subsequent course of events unfolding in Kars. From the end of April 1919, the policy of the British command in Transcaucasia shifted significantly in favor of the Armenians.<sup>101</sup> According to Anton Denikin, this circumstance was conditioned by “the sharpening of Anglo-Turkish relations and the expansion of the Pan-Islamic movement in Central Asia.”<sup>102</sup> Taking into account the undisguised Ittihadist orientation of the “Southwestern Caucasian Republic,” Governor Colonel Clive Errington Temperley became convinced that they had acted prematurely in surrendering Kars to the Turko-Tatars. The Turks no longer deferred to the British military governor and pursued a steadfast objective: to “emancipate themselves from all external oversight, including that of the British command.”<sup>103</sup> The Muslim leadership in Kars subsequently became

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<sup>96</sup> “Haratch”, 17.01.1919.

<sup>97</sup> See **Mayilyan** 2016, 74.

<sup>98</sup> **Karagazade** (1893, Batum – Constantinople). Later he settled with his family in Constantinople. In 1917 he returned to Baku. He collaborated with the newspapers “Achiq Söz” and “İstiqlal”. He was a member of the Transcaucasian Seim. After the establishment of Soviet power in Azerbaijan, he moved to Constantinople, where he worked on editing M. E. Rasulzade’s newspaper “Yeni Kafkasya” (see **Ahmad** 2018, 101–103).

<sup>99</sup> “Haratch”, 15.04.1920.

<sup>100</sup> “Yusaber”, 10.04.1930.

<sup>101</sup> See **Vratsian** 1982, 247.

<sup>102</sup> **Denikin** 1925, 173.

<sup>103</sup> **Uratazde** 1956, 87; see also **Hovhannisian** 2005, 231.

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so emboldened-and indeed, so insolent-that they began to openly disregard and treat with contempt not only the authority of Colonel Clive Errington Temperley,<sup>104</sup> but also the directives of his successor, General Werner Asser.<sup>105</sup> Following prolonged consultations on April 2 and 3, 1919, in Batum with General George Francis Milne, Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in the Near East and Black Sea region, William Thomson was compelled to reach a decision to overthrow the Kars Shura. On April 12, General George Allen Preston-who had succeeded General Werner Asser-attended a regular session of the Shura, where he arrested its leaders and formally dissolved the entity.<sup>106</sup> For obvious reasons, the governments in Baku and Constantinople received the news of the collapse of the fabricated “Southwestern Caucasian Republic” with deep dissatisfaction.<sup>107</sup>

By agreement between the Armenian government and the British High Command, it was decided to seize the city through combined Armenian-British forces. On April 23, 1919, the joint Armenian-British troops advanced via the railway and the main highway; entering Kars without encountering resistance, they secured the city<sup>108</sup> thus eliminating the self-proclaimed “Southwestern Caucasian Republic” that had entrenched itself in the heart of Armenia, and through decisive action, re-establishing legitimate authority.<sup>109</sup> The three-member Shura-presided over by Mamed-bek Alibekov,<sup>110</sup> who operated under the directives of the “Musavat” party in Baku-attempted to offer resistance. However, the British arrested the Shura members and other prominent Turkish figures, totaling approximately 150 individuals. They were subsequently deported to Tiflis and the island of Malta.<sup>111</sup> In a telegram dispatched on April 24

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<sup>104</sup> On March 2, 1919, **Clive Errington Temperley** arrived in Yerevan as a military representative.

<sup>105</sup> See **Denikin** 1925, 231.

<sup>106</sup> See “Ashkhatavor”, 17.04.1919; see also **Hovhannisian** 2005, 239.

<sup>107</sup> See **Torosyan** 2016, 109.

<sup>108</sup> See **Petrosyan** 2004, 34.

<sup>109</sup> See **Khatisian** 1968, 156; see also “Ashkhatavor”, 29.04.1919; “Ashkhatavor”, 29.04.1919.

<sup>110</sup> **Mamed-bek Alibekov** was from the village of Huseynkend in Surmalu district. During the rule of the Armenophobic district governor Boguslavsky, he served as his secretary. After the October Revolution of 1917, he found refuge in Kars (see **Harutyunyan** 2018, 30).

<sup>111</sup> See “Ashkhatavor”, 03.05.1919; see also “Ashkhatavor”, 23.05.1919; History of the Armenians, vol. IV, 2010, 133.

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to the Armenian mission in Tiflis, the Prime Minister of Armenia, Alexander Khatisian, stated: "Our troops have occupied Kars. The administration is being organized throughout the district. Regular life is being restored. The refugees are returning."<sup>112</sup> On May 2, the Arpachay-Sarykamish railway passed into Armenian control, and regular traffic commenced on May 4. On May 9, Armenian forces occupied Merdenek, and by May 13, they entered Olti and Kaghyzvan without encountering resistance. On May 10, Alexander Khatisyan and General Keith Maitland Davie arrived in Kars, where they were received with great solemnity.<sup>113</sup> The Kars Governorate-General was established. The British official, [Captain] Wolke, was appointed as the military representative, while Stepan Ghorghanyan was named Governor.<sup>114</sup> Thus, the short-sighted adventure of the Kars Shura came to an end, and the entire Kars province was united with the Republic of Armenia.

The transition of the Kars province to the jurisdiction of the Republic of Armenia was met with open hostility by the ruling circles of Azerbaijan. It is no coincidence that Ali Mardan-bek Topchubashev, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation in Paris, set the anti-Armenian propaganda machine in motion. On September 1, 1919, he dispatched a special note of protest to the President of the [Versailles] Peace Conference, stating: "The Azerbaijani delegation is anxiously awaiting the recognition of its country's independence, yet at this very moment, an intervention is occurring against the authority of the Peace Conference; the borders of Caucasian Azerbaijan are being forcibly reshaped, and its inhabitants are becoming refugees in their own homeland (*sic!*). News has now been received that the Kars province, the Erevan province, the Nakhchivan and Sharur-Daralagez uyezds [districts], and part of the Erevan uyezd have been annexed to the Republic of Armenia."<sup>115</sup>

It is evident that Topchubashev, through a declaration filled with falsehoods and deceptive content, was attempting with preconceived intent to "legitimize" the delusional territorial claims presented to the [Versailles] Peace Conference. Beyond any doubt, Topchubashev's statement was programmatic in nature, exposing the full extent of the delegation's fraudulent activities and objectives. It

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<sup>112</sup> "Ashkhatavor", 30.04.1919.

<sup>113</sup> See **Vratsian** 2005, 247–248.

<sup>114</sup> See "Mshak", 11.01.1919.

<sup>115</sup> See **Topchibashi** 2016, 259; see also **Hasanli** 2011, 452–453.

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illustrated the scale of the expansive and hostile actions undertaken by the Musavatists against the Republic of Armenia. In the same spirit of falsification and distortion, the Azerbaijani government also dispatched a note of protest to the President of the Peace Conference in Paris, providing forged demographic and statistical data regarding the Kars province.<sup>116</sup> Notably, Topchubashev’s and the Azerbaijani government’s fabrications and slanders continue to be circulated today, in one form or another, within official Azerbaijani “historiography” and state propaganda.

It should be observed that even after the dissolution of the Kars Shura, the “Musavat” intelligence network continued to operate underground for a significant period. According to the testimony of Governor Stepan Ghorghanyan: “Baku’s Musavat still maintained its organization within the Kars province; it had its secret agents here. If previously they had collaborated with the Shura and, under its name, coordinated the Pan-Islamic movement, today these adventurers had to appear in a different guise and in a different form.”<sup>117</sup>

Parallel to the regulation of the situation in the Kars Shura, the issues of Ardahan and Olti were also on the agenda. The Musavat government had established an extensive intelligence network among the Turkish-speaking inhabitants of these areas as well, seeking to realize its expansionist ambitions through the guise of so-called “self-determination.” Under the financial patronage of the latter, the self-proclaimed “Minbashi” Jafar-bek, who led a marauding band of approximately 150 men, was constantly “...in negotiations with the Turks of Baku, receiving funds from Baku, sheltering Turkish emissaries arriving from Baku, and kneading some sort of Pan-Islamic dough in those remote and wild mountains.”<sup>118</sup> However, as Governor Stepan Ghorghanyan recounts in his memoirs, these individuals represented the misguided and naive strata of the people. “It is quite interesting,” he writes, “that while all these adventurers were extorting gold from Baku’s Musavat and receiving instructions from there, they did not truly know what objectives they were pursuing. The “self-determination” plague of the era had misled even these opportunists; recognizing the sovereignty of neither the Turks nor

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<sup>116</sup> See **Hasanli** 2011, 454.

<sup>117</sup> **Harutyunyan** 2016, 168.

<sup>118</sup> **Harutyunyan** 2016, 255.

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Armenia, they dreamed of creating separate domains of power within their own mountain gorges..."<sup>119</sup>

As subsequent events demonstrated, Northern Ardahan passed to Georgia, while Olti practically remained under Turkish control-despite the fact that the British, prior to their withdrawal from the Kars province, had intended to annex Olti to the Batum district.<sup>120</sup>

### ***"Aras-Turkic Republic" (also known as the "Eastern Caucasian Republic" or the "Republic of Sharur")***

It should be noted that amidst the ongoing conspiratorial actions against Armenian statehood, the Ittihadists had developed another plan within their secret political arsenals: to subvert Armenia from within and partition it, pushing forward various programmed scenarios tailored to the political climate. Within the framework of this policy, in late November 1918, the Caucasian Tatar khans of Nakhchivan-certainly not without the knowledge of the Ittihadists-under the leadership of Eyub Halil Bey, the former commander of the Turkish 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, first [advanced toward] Igdir,<sup>121</sup> and subsequently, with Nakhchivan as its center, they proclaimed the artificial state entity known as the "Aras-Turkic Republic" (also referred to as the "Republic of Sharur"). A puppet provisional government was even formed, presided over by Amir-bek Narimanbekov (Zamanbekzade).<sup>122</sup>

The territory encompassed the districts of Nakhchivan and Sharur-Daralagez, as well as the regions of Sardarapat, Ulukhanlu (now the Masis region), Vedibasar, and Meghri.<sup>123</sup> According to the Eriean-based ARF official newspaper *Zang*: "The Turks living in the districts of Sardarapat, Surmalu, Ghamarlu, Sharur, and Nakhchivan have formed the "Republic of Aras" and declared their independence. At the head of the "Republic of Aras" stand beys, aghalar, notorious bandits, and *ghochis*."<sup>124</sup> The governing body of this self-styled "republic," which maintained an Ittihadist orientation, had also

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<sup>119</sup> Harutyunyan 2016, 255.

<sup>120</sup> See Pogosyan 1983, 225; see also Torosyan 2016, 109.

<sup>121</sup> See Hajiyev 2010, 307.

<sup>122</sup> See Hajiyev 2010, 309–310; see also "Haratch", 15.01.1919; Hajiyev 2004, 106.

<sup>123</sup> See Hajiyev 2004, 107.

<sup>124</sup> "Zang", 05.12.1918.

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proclaimed Turkish as the official language and adopted the Ottoman flag as its own.

In early 1919, Amir-bek Narimanbekov was replaced by another Azerbaijani agent, Jafarkuli Khan Nakhchivanski,<sup>125</sup> who possessed significant influence among the Muslim population.<sup>126</sup> Primarily situated upon the roads connecting various regions of the country, this “independent” entity frequently paralyzed the nation’s external and internal communication routes, placing the Republic of Armenia in a dire situation.

Under conditions of diplomatic and political struggle surrounding the preservation of the Republic of Armenia’s statehood and territorial integrity—specifically concerning Nakhchivan—the commander of the British armed forces in Transcaucasia, Major General G. Forestier-Walker, issued an order on January 26 [1919] to establish the Sharur-Nakhchivan Governorate-General.<sup>127</sup> On February 4, in Erevan, an agreement was signed between Captain F. Lawton—a Scotsman and head of the British diplomatic mission—and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, S. Tigranyan. Under this accord, Sharur and Nakhchivan were established as distinct military provinces [governorates] pending a final resolution of the issue at the Paris Peace Conference. Captain Lawton was subsequently appointed as the head of the Nakhchivan Governorate-General.<sup>128</sup> At Lawton’s proposal, the southern part of the Erevan district [uyezd]—extending to the Vedi River—was included within the territory of the [Sharur-Nakhchivan] Governorate-General. While the Armenian civil administration was to remain in place there, the Armenian military forces were to be withdrawn.<sup>129</sup>

It should be noted that alongside these developments, the actual power in the region remained in the hands of the local khans. Furthermore, the latter were even patronized by the [British] Governor. As stated in a report sent on February 28, 1919, by **B. Bahatryan**, the representative of the Republic of Armenia attached to the Governorate-General—to S. Tigranyan: “...they [the

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<sup>125</sup> **Jafargulu Khan Nakhchivanski** (1859–1929?). After the Sovietization of Azerbaijan, he moved to Iran.

<sup>126</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 112.

<sup>127</sup> See **Makhmuryan** 2002, 50.

<sup>128</sup> See *History of the Armenians* 2000, 185.

<sup>129</sup> See **Zohrabyan** 2002, 55–61; see also **Knyazyan** 2008, 94.

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British officials – G.S.] treat the Turks very leniently, to the extent that the British orders themselves are not being carried out...”.<sup>130</sup>

It is evident that this “independent republic,” established in the heart of Armenia and enjoying the patronage of both the Ottoman military-political leadership and the British command, had also organized its own armed forces with far-reaching objectives. A Turkish military force of 400–500 men was concentrated in Nakhchivan, created with the assistance of Eyub Halil Bey and five Turkish officers under his command.<sup>131</sup> Furthermore, at the initiative of Azerbaijani officers, trained armed forces had been formed from the Caucasian Tatar population.<sup>132</sup> Receiving military and political support from the government of Azerbaijan, the “Aras-Turkic Republic” began to act with greater decisiveness.

Notably, as the latter’s positions strengthened, the Musavatist government—whose expansionist expectations remained unfulfilled—developed yet another plan. Taking more practical steps to resolve the issue of this Muslim entity in its own favor, and simultaneously aiming to increase its role, [Baku] began to employ the newly-invented name “Southwestern Azerbaijan” instead of the “Aras-Turkic Republic.”<sup>133</sup>

Incidentally, we cannot fail to draw the reader’s attention to an essential circumstance: much like the former leader of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev, his son—the current president—driven by the frenzy of Pan-Turkic ideology, continues to this day to persistently refer to the Republic of Armenia as “**Western Azerbaijan.**”<sup>134</sup>

Thus, the trajectory of Azerbaijan’s expansionist policy has essentially remained unchanged. In other words, the policy of the “Yeni Azerbaijan” party, led by [the Aliyevs], is closely linked to the ideological roots and bloody activities of the “Musavat” – imbued with Pan-Turkism. We shall address this anti-Armenian propaganda more comprehensively in its relevant section.

Returning to the matter at hand, it is clear that the objective of the Musavatist government was transparent: to categorize Armenia, situated to its

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<sup>130</sup> Nakhchivan-Sharur, 1918–1921 (Documents and Materials) 1993, 85.

<sup>131</sup> See “Haratch”, 15.01.1919.

<sup>132</sup> See **Lernyan** 1926.

<sup>133</sup> See “Azerbaijan”, 28(15).02.1919.

<sup>134</sup> See **Galchyan** 2017, 37.

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west, as the “western historical territory” of the artificially created entity of “Azerbaijan.” Their vision was to gradually seize and then annex it to the Azerbaijani formation, where, according to the Musavatists, “Turkic culture had been sufficiently prepared.”<sup>135</sup> Thus, it was no coincidence that the article titled “On Azerbaijan and Turkey,” published in the April 21, 1920 issue of the London daily *The Times*, unmasked the expansionist ambitions of the so-called “Southwestern Azerbaijan.” Detailing its territorial claims, the article reported that it was comprised of “parts of the Erevan province, as well as parts of the Tiflis province (the districts of Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki).”<sup>136</sup>

Furthermore, Azerbaijan’s predatory territorial ambitions were embodied in the forced declaration of the “Unification of Southwestern Azerbaijan and the Republic of Azerbaijan,” which sought to spread “from sea to sea”.

To Azerbaijan shall be annexed: **Adjara**, reaching as far as **Batum** and extending through **Lazistan** to the **Black Sea**.<sup>137</sup>

The annexation of **Armenian Mountainous Karabakh** to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The unification of the **Lankaran-Mughan Republic** with Azerbaijan.<sup>138</sup>

Revealing these aforementioned aspirations of the Musavatists, the author of the article concluded: “...the local leaders of Azerbaijan are already dreaming of a “Great Azerbaijan,” which is to extend from **Terek** through **Dagestan** to **Karabakh**, Persian **Karadagh**, **Tabriz**, **Maragha**, and as far as **Saujbulagh**”<sup>139</sup>”<sup>140</sup> (emphasis ours – G.S.).

It is undeniable that all these Musavatist actions were directed and dictated by the Ottoman state and were intended to serve the realization of the “**Great Azerbaijan**” project.

M.E. Rasolzade, who maintained close cooperation with the Kemalists and was well-acquainted with their military-political plans, publicly announced in one

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<sup>135</sup> “Soviet Armenia”, 06.08.1921.

<sup>136</sup> “Haratch”, 19.06.1920.

<sup>137</sup> Located in the northwestern part of the Armenian Highland, east of the Eastern Pontic Mountains.

<sup>138</sup> “Haratch”, 19.06.1920.

<sup>139</sup> **Souj-Bulag** was one of the districts of Atropatene Province, whose center was the town of the same name. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the town had 12 Armenian households. The Armenian Parviz Khan Serheng lived there (see “Mshak”, 31.08.1910).

<sup>140</sup> “Haratch”, 19.06.1920.

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of his speeches on April 8, 1920, that the Ottoman state intended to realize the creation of “**Great Azerbaijan**” simultaneously through two directions. “Turkey sets the task for itself,” he said, “to create **Southwestern Azerbaijan** from parts of the **Erevan** and **Tiflis** provinces (**Akhaltzikhe** and **Akhalkalaki** districts) and parts of the territories of the proclaimed Republic of Azerbaijan. After **Southwestern Azerbaijan** and **Adjara** are annexed to Azerbaijan, along with the Muslim populations of **Terek**, **Dagestan**, **Karabakh**, Persian **Karadagh**, **Tabriz**, and **Maragheh**, they will-together with **Southwestern Azerbaijan**-form **Great Azerbaijan** under the tutelage of Turkey.”<sup>141</sup>

Undoubtedly, much is revealed in this statement for a correct understanding of the “Great Azerbaijan” project—a strategic blueprint formulated within the Kemalist-Musavatist diplomatic circles.

Based on these general considerations, the writer and public figure Hakob Khojamiryan, exposing the Pan-Turkic conspiratorial plans of the Kemalist-Musavatists against the Republic of Armenia, wrote: “It was only yesterday that Turkish officers, Azerbaijani emissaries, and a number of irresponsible individuals were operating in the regions of **Kars**, **Zangezur**, and **Igdir**, inciting anti-state movements and shedding innocent blood. This was necessary for the [Fatali Khan] **Khoyski** group and their satellites to raise a needless clamor and demonstrate that the Armenian and Turkic laboring populations allegedly cannot live side-by-side; therefore, it is “necessary” to sever several regions from Armenia and annex them to Azerbaijan.”

The author continues: “What a “beautiful idea”; for in that way, they “will be able” to unite Azerbaijan with Turkey, Persia, and other Muslim countries, realizing their long-standing ideal—the Pan-Islamic movement and state (meaning the Oghuz state – G.S.). And today they... no longer hide their true face, bringing forth the project to create Pan-Turanism.”<sup>142</sup>

“The same was confirmed by the newspaper *Vperyod*, published by the ARF Central Committee in Baku. Revealing the plans pursued by the Kemalists and Musavatists, and rightly tracing the ideological roots of their expansionist policy to Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic ideologies, the newspaper wrote in its editorial titled “Pan-Islamists”: “Observe with what vigor and skill they are organizing

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<sup>141</sup> **Vartanyan** 1959, 297–298; see also **Sargsyan** 1964, 492; see also **Simonyan** 1991, 319.

<sup>142</sup> “Yordzank” 27.03.1920.

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and arming themselves in the territory spanning from **Trebizond** to **Batum**; see how they are encircling Armenia in a firm ring of “independent” Muslim states-**Southwestern** [the Shura], **Ordubad**, and **Azerbaijan**. You will be convinced that at the opportune moment, Pan-Islamism will in an instant crush Armenia, which is driven like a wedge into the Muslim world, and they will unite Turkey with **Azerbaijan**, **Dagestan**, **Turkestan**, **Kyrgyzstan**, and **Bashkiria**.<sup>143</sup>

“The expansionist tenets of Azerbaijan’s Musavatist government, particularly its overt aspirations toward indigenous Armenian territories, were explicitly expressed in the government’s “declaration” presented by Prime Minister Nasib-bek Usubbekov during the parliamentary session on April 14, 1919, marking the republic’s first anniversary. It stated: “...alongside the issue of our independence, we are faced with other, no less important challenges. One of these challenges is the problem of ensuring the territorial integrity (sic!) of Azerbaijan. You are aware that the **Lankaran** district, an inseparable part of Azerbaijan, is still in foreign hands. ...In the parts belonging to us (sic!) in the **Erevan** and **Tiflis** provinces, we encounter pretenders who wish to extend and establish their authority over those regions.”<sup>144</sup>

“Incidentally, during the same session, M. E. Rasulzade, the leader of the Musavat party faction, addressed the assembly and gave his unconditional approval to the government’s declaration. Responding to deputies Behbud Khan Javanshir and Khosrov-bek Sultanov, who had asked why “the declaration remains silent on the issue of **Karabakh**,” he cynically declared: “Interrogating a government that has a territorial dispute in the **Erevan** province regarding **Karabakh** makes no sense. Because a government that is advancing toward the **Erevan** province cannot reach there without passing through the mountains of **Karabakh**. There is no **Karabakh** issue, just as there is no Baku issue.”<sup>145</sup>

It is not difficult to observe that the Musavatist government and parliament-harboring maximalist aspirations toward the territorial integrity of Armenia and considering the issue of **Artsakh** “settled” through a veiled mindset-further reinforced this stance with Nasib-bek Usubbekov’s declaration during the same parliamentary session: “**Karabakh** constitutes an indisputable part of

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<sup>143</sup> “Vperyod”, 09.04.1919.

<sup>144</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 27.04.1919.

<sup>145</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 30.04.1919.

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Azerbaijan”<sup>146</sup> through such insolent declarations, they consistently attempted to realize the “Great Azerbaijan” project. Regarding the “Baku issue” mentioned by Rasulzade, he undoubtedly referred to the question of the city’s ownership—a question that, according to him, had been “solved” through the mass genocide of the indigenous Armenian population, who were among the true creators of Baku’s civilizational character and the foundational drivers of its universal development. The fact that the Musavatist government was in conspiratorial contact with the “Aras-Turkic Republic” within the framework of the “Great Azerbaijan” project—and that its political course was, to a significant extent, formulated in Baku within the Musavat stronghold—is evidenced by the regular special missions of a highly empowered delegation. Led by the educator and playwright Huseyin Javad Efendi, this delegation frequently traveled by express train from **Nakhchivan** to **Baku** on special assignments.<sup>147</sup>

In order to implement their insidious plans against Armenia, the prominent figures of the “republic”—led by **Bahram-khan Nakhchivanski**,<sup>148</sup> the chairman of the provisional government and minister of foreign affairs—proceeded with practical measures. In mid-March 1919, they departed from **Nakhchivan** for **Baku** to receive instructions for their future activities from the Musavatist government, specifically regarding the appointment of a governor-general within the self-proclaimed “republic.”<sup>149</sup> The delegation conducted negotiations with **F. Khan-Khoyski** and **W. Thomson** regarding the potential discussion of **Nakhchivan’s** future status at the **Paris Peace Conference**.<sup>150</sup> The newspaper *Mshak*, presenting numerous facts regarding Azerbaijan’s anti-Armenian conspiracies, wrote: “Azerbaijan’s diplomats are gradually bringing their hidden and astonishing “talents” to light. ...Simultaneously, they recognize the

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<sup>146</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 10.05.1919.

<sup>147</sup> See “Azerbaijan” 24.02.1919; see also “Mshak”, 12.03.1919.

<sup>148</sup> **Bahram Khan Nakhchivanski** was born in 1872. He was educated at the Tiflis Real School. From 1899 to 1904 he served in Nakhchivan as assistant city police officer. From 1898 to 1903 he was honorary inspector of the Muslim school of Nakhchivan. He held the ranks of collegiate secretary and court counselor. From January 1919 he served as chairman of the provisional government and foreign minister of the “Aras-Turkic Republic”. At the end of 1919 he was a representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Azerbaijan. In 1920 he emigrated to Iran and settled in Tabriz.

<sup>149</sup> See “Azerbaijan” 28.02.1919.

<sup>150</sup> See **Hajiyev** 2004, 121–122.

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existence of “Southwestern Azerbaijan” headed by **Khan-Nakhchivanski**, and by honoring his mediation, they release tea, soap, and other goods for the Muslims of the “Erevan province.”<sup>151</sup>

Although the existence of that artificial entity was terminated on May 14, 1919-when, with the entry of Armenian troops, **Sharur-Nakhchivan** officially passed under the control of the **Republic of Armenia**,<sup>152</sup> nevertheless, with the active support of the Musavatist government, **Bahram-khan Nakhchivanski** continued his “diplomatic” conspiratorial activities, driven by the urge to make the “republic” a reality in the political life of Transcaucasia. In early September 1919, Bahram-khan Nakhchivanski traveled from **Baku** to **Tiflis** to meet with representatives of the British command, who “...expressing their approval for the annexation of the mentioned districts to Azerbaijan, promised to report this to the **Versailles Conference**.”<sup>153</sup> According to the official newspaper of the Musavatist government, “*Azerbaijan*”, “regarding that issue, a fundamental agreement has almost been reached between the government and the British command.”<sup>154</sup>

During his stay in **Tiflis**, on September 9, 1919, **Bahram-khan Nakhchivanski** also met with the Allied High Commissioner in Armenia, **Colonel William Haskell** of the U.S. Army.<sup>155</sup> They presented to him [Colonel Haskell] a ten-point “memorandum” written by the Musavatist government in Baku, which stated in part: “Considering that every nation has the right to independence and to take its rights and destiny into its own hands, the regions

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<sup>151</sup> “Mshak”, 15.03.1919.

<sup>152</sup> See **Yeprikyan** 2016, 119–120; see also **Charlotte** 2010, 171. The dissolution of this self-proclaimed entity and the measures undertaken by the government of the Republic of Armenia to counter Turkish-Azerbaijani encroachments in Nakhchivan will be discussed in the relevant section of this study.

<sup>153</sup> “*Azerbaijan*”, 28 (15).02.1919.

<sup>154</sup> “*Azerbaijan*”, 28 (15).02.1919.

<sup>155</sup> **W. Haskell**, appointed Supreme Commissioner of Armenia by the Council of Five of the Paris Peace Conference on July 5, 1919, and confirmed in that post by Georges Clemenceau, remained in office until August 17, 1920, replacing General James Harbord. For a more detailed account of W. Haskell’s activities, see **Hovhannisian** 2014, 231–244; **Makhmuryan** 2017, 49–75.

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of **Surmaly, Vedi-Basar, Milistan**,<sup>156</sup> **Sharur, Nakhchivan**, and **Ordubad** consider themselves an inseparable part of Azerbaijan. The people of these regions demand from both the Government of Azerbaijan and the Allied High Commissioner for Transcaucasia that they no longer be subjected to the status of subjects of Armenia; otherwise, they would prefer to die with honor, weapon in hand, than to be dishonorably destroyed at the hands of Dashnak bandits.”

The “memorandum” concluded with the proposal that “...until the final disposition of the **Paris Peace Conference**, a provisional status be established under the control of the High Commissioner [meaning W. Haskell – G.S.], on the condition that the aforementioned regions are not severed from Azerbaijan (sic!).”<sup>157</sup>

As follows from the logic of the “memorandum”-specifically its concluding thought-the Musavatists, through a distortion of reality, attempted to “prove” to **W. Haskell** that the aforementioned regions had allegedly belonged to Azerbaijan and should now “not be severed from Azerbaijan.” This maneuver by the **Musavat** party pursued a far-reaching goal. The objective was more than clear: first, through a masked game, to have the so-called “**Southwestern Azerbaijan**” recognized as an “inseparable part of Azerbaijan” under the aegis of the American mission, thereby creating a legal basis for its future formal annexation. Regarding this, **S. Vratsian** wrote: “It is understandable that such petitions and “facts” were bound to influence the American, Haskell, who was neither familiar with Caucasian conditions and customs, nor possessed the shrewdness of an Englishman experienced in governing colonies.”<sup>158</sup>

Copies of the so-called “Memorandum” were also dispatched to the British High Commissioner, **John Oliver Wardrop**.<sup>159</sup> As it becomes evident, the British command in Transcaucasia, proceeding from its long-term geopolitical objectives, had adopted a blatantly pro-Azerbaijani stance.<sup>160</sup> Encouraged by British assurances, the Musavatist government, in March 1919, appointed a

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<sup>156</sup> **Milistan-Millidarasi** was a district in the Yerevan uyezd of Yerevan Province, in the Garnibasar police district (see Dictionary of place names of neighboring regions of Armenia, vol. 3, Yerevan, 1991, 819).

<sup>157</sup> **Vratsian** 2005, 306.

<sup>158</sup> **Vratsian** 2005, 307.

<sup>159</sup> **John Oliver Wardrop** was appointed High Commissioner of Great Britain in Transcaucasia on July 22, 1919.

<sup>160</sup> See **Lernyan** 1926.

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certain **Samid Jamalinski** as the governor of “Southwestern Azerbaijan” in place of Bahram-khan Nakhchivanski. From January 1920, his assistant was the notorious Armenophobe, **Khosrov-bek Sultanov**.<sup>161</sup>

In conclusion, although the project to transform these self-invented “republics” into permanent outpost entities failed after their dissolution, the Ottoman state did not abandon its conspiratorial plans, shifting its focus to other Armenian territories. As the daily *Ashkhatavor* witnessed: “Following the fall and disintegration of the Young Turks’ forward positions-the republics of **Akhaltzikhe, Kars, Nakhchivan,** and **Aras**-they began to concentrate their forces in the regions of **Erzurum, Karabakh, Van,** and **Trabzon,** where, by order of the Young Turks, it is highly probable that new “republics” will be established. The knot of this conspiracy is centralized, on one hand, in the capital of **Azerbaijan,** and on the other, deep within Tachkastan<sup>162</sup>: While initiating the implementation of that plan during the days of the **Second Sivas Congress** (September 4–11, 1919), **Nuri Pasha** appealed to the commander of the Turkish 15<sup>th</sup> Corps, **K. Karabekir,** with the aim of creating a single unified “republic” to preserve and protect the regions of **Kars, Batumi,** and **Ardahan.** Karabekir, considering the execution of such an idea inopportune at that time, advised Nuri Pasha to move to **Azerbaijan** and support the **Kemalist movement** from there.<sup>163</sup> The fact cited by the daily *Ashkhatavor* (*The Laborer*) is noteworthy, stating that the Ottoman state, “...in its hour of agony, is exerting its final efforts from **Dagestan to Erzurum** and **Sivas,** and from **Turkestan to Ardahan** and **Batumi,** to find support for itself through a unified Muslim movement.”<sup>164</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Having been defeated in the First World War, the Ottoman Empire, following the Armistice of Mudros (October 30, 1918), was compelled to withdraw its troops from Transcaucasia, including the occupied territories of Eastern Armenia, and retreat to the borders of 1914. Nevertheless, the Ottoman state undertook the creation of “independent” entities in strategically important centers, Kars, Nakhchivan, Ardahan, and even Samtskhe-Meskheti (including the

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<sup>161</sup> See “Chakatamart”, 20.06.1920; see also “Razmik”, 21.06.1920.

<sup>162</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 15.06.1919.

<sup>163</sup> See **Gafarov** 2004, 241.

<sup>164</sup> “Ashkhatavor”, 08.02.1920.

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districts of Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe, and Aspindza), in the form of “Muslim National Councils” (*shuras*, from Persian: council), as well as smaller local units, namely local “shuras.” Among these Turkic-Tatar entities were also the so-called “Republic of South-Western Caucasus” (“Kars Republic”) and the “Aras-Turkic Republic” (“Republic of Eastern Caucasus” / “Sharur Republic”). These self-proclaimed entities, encouraged by the Ittihadists and the Musavatists, were entirely directed against the Republic of Armenia. They were intended to become local governments, enabling the Ottoman state, even after the withdrawal of its troops, to preserve its influence in the region and to prepare the ground for the eventual return of the Turks. Nevertheless, through its strategic program of creating Muslim “independent” entities within the territory of the Republic of Armenia, the Ottoman state aimed, by means of these formations, to encircle Armenia and Georgia with a densely Turkish-Tatar-populated zone. This policy of territorial expansion was embedded within the broader concept of establishing a “Greater Azerbaijan” state.

As a result of the decisive actions of the Government of the Republic of Armenia, the existence of the aforementioned self-proclaimed “republics” was brought to an end. On April 23, 1919, Armenian–British forces entered Kars, abolishing the self-styled “Republic of South-Western Caucasus,” which had entrenched itself in the heart of Armenia, and through decisive measures reestablished legitimate authority. The existence of the artificial entity known as the “Aras-Turkic Republic” was terminated on May 14, 1919, when, following the entry of Armenian troops, Sharur–Nakhchivan officially came under the control of the Republic of Armenia.

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## ԳԵՎՈՐԳ ՍՏԵՓԱՆՅԱՆ

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## ԻՆՔՆԱՀՆԱՐ «ԹՅՈՒՐՔ-ԹԱԹԱՐԱԿԱՆ ԱՆԿԱՆ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ» ՍՏԵՂԾՈՒՄԸ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ՀԱՆՐԱՊԵՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՈՒՄ «ՄԵԾ ԱԴԻԲԵՋԱՆ» ԾՐԱԳՐԻ ՀԱՄԱՏԵՔՍՏՈՒՄ (1918–1919 ԹԹ.)

### Ամփոփում

Պարտվելով Առաջին աշխարհամարտում՝ Օսմանյան կայսրությունը Մուդրոսի զինադադարից հետո (1918 թ. հոկտեմբերի 30) հարկադրված էր Այսրկովկասից, այդ թվում՝ Արևելյան Հայաստանում գրաված տարածքներից դուրս բերել իր զորքերը և հետ քաշվել մինչև 1914 թ. սահմանները: Այսուհանդերձ, օսմանյան պետությունը ձեռնամուխ էր եղել ռազմավարական կարևոր նշանակություն ունեցող կենտրոններում՝ Կարսում, Նախիջևանում, Արդահանում, ընդհուպ նաև Սամցխե-Մեսխեթում (ներառում է Ադիգենի, Ախալցխայի և Ասպնջակի (վրաց.՝ Ասպինձա) շրջանները) անկախ միավորների՝ «Մահմեդական ազգային շուրայի (պարսկ.՝ խորհուրդ)» և ավելի փոքր գավառակ միություններով՝ տեղական «շուրա»-ների ստեղծմանը: Թյուրք-թաթարական

### **The Creation of Self-Proclaimed “Turkic-Tatar Independent Republics” ...**

այդ միավորներից էին նաև այսպես կոչված «Հարավարևմտյան Կովկասի Հանրապետություն»-ը («Կարսի Հանրապետություն») և «Արաքս-թյուրքական Հանրապետություն»-ը («Արևելյան Կովկասի Հանրապետություն/Շարուրի հանրապետություն»): Իթթիհադականների ու մուսավաթականների կողմից խրախուսվող այդ ինքնահնար միավորները, որոնք սրությամբ ուղղված էին Հայաստանի Հանրապետության դեմ, պետք է դառնային տեղական կառավարություններ՝ հնարավորություն տալով օսմանյան պետությանը զորքերը դուրս բերելուց հետո պահպանելու ազդեցությունը տարածաշրջանում և հող նախապատրաստելու հետագայում թուրքերի վերադարձի համար: Այդ ամենով հանդերձ, օսմանյան պետությունը Հայաստանի Հանրապետության տարածքում մահմեդական «անկախ» միավորումներ ստեղծելու ռազմավարական ծրագրով նպատակադրվել էր Հայաստանը և Վրաստանը օղակել թուրքաթարական խիտ բնակեցված տարածքով: Իսկ տարածքային ծավալման այդ քաղաքականությունը տեղավորվում էր «Մեծ Ադրբեջան» պետության ստեղծման հայեցակարգի մեջ:

Հայաստանի Հանրապետության կառավարության վճռական գործողությունների արդյունքում վերոնշյալ ինքնահնար «հանրապետությունների» գոյությունները դադարեցվեցին: 1919 թ. ապրիլի 23-ին հայ-բրիտանական զորքը մտնելով Կարս՝ վերացրեց Հայաստանի սրտում բուն դրած ինքնակոչ «Հարավարևմտյան Կովկասի Հանրապետությունը» և վճռական գործողություններով վերահաստատեց օրինական իշխանությունը: Իսկ «Արաքս-թյուրքական Հանրապետություն» արհեստական միավորման գոյությունը դադարեցվեց 1919 թ. մայիսի 14-ին, երբ հայկական զորքերի մուտքով Շարուր-Նախիջևանը պաշտոնապես անցավ Հայաստանի Հանրապետության հսկողության ներքո:


**Բանալի բառեր՝** Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն, Սյրեփան Ղորղանյան, Սամցխե-Մեսխեթ, օսմանյան պետություն, «Մեծ Ադրբեջան», Սերվեր-բեկ Աթաբեկ Քորլիանսկի, Ամիր-բեկ Նարիմանբեկովի, Յաղուփ Շևքեթ փաշա:

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## **CAUSES AND PREREQUISITES OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND GENOCIDAL ACTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**(comparative analysis)**

### ***Abstract***

The study of various examples of genocide is impossible without studying their causes and preconditions. Criminal regimes are guided by specific motives and narratives when implementing genocidal policies. The perpetrators of genocide attempt to justify their criminal actions against specific groups with ethnopolitical, religious, socioeconomic and other “justifications”. Modern genocide studies focuses on the comparative analysis of the causes and preconditions of various genocides, seeking to identify both their common features and specific characteristics.

The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative analysis of the causes and preconditions of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire and the genocidal acts committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on this goal, the objectives are to examine the discriminatory policies against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire and the Christian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to explore the ideological preconditions for the crimes committed and to examine the preparatory processes that preceded them.

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## **Causes and Prerequisites of the Armenian Genocide and Genocidal Acts...**

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**Keywords:** *Armenian Genocide, Ottoman Empire, Pan-Turkism, Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, genocidal acts.*

### **Introduction**

Over the course of centuries, a system of government developed in the Ottoman Empire in which the Christian population was deprived of equal rights with Muslims. While the punishment for killing a Muslim by a Muslim was death, killing a non-Muslim by a Muslim was not subject to any punishment. The testimony of non-Muslims in Ottoman courts did not have the same evidentiary value as that of Muslims. Armenians, like other Christians of the empire, did not serve in the Ottoman army and were generally forbidden to have weapons.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in the Ottoman Empire, a disenfranchised status was formed for the Armenian population, which was effectively placed outside the law.<sup>2</sup>

Before the Ottoman conquest, Bosnia and Herzegovina was inhabited by two main groups: Serbs and Croats (Catholic Serbs), while the Muslim population was small. Although the Croats living in Bosnia were a minority, they nevertheless had their own state entities.<sup>3</sup> After the establishment of Ottoman rule, the Christian peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina also began to be subjected to religious discrimination.

### **1. Discriminatory policies against the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire and the Christian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

During the reign of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876–1909), along with mass pogroms, a policy of religious persecution and forced Islamization of the Armenian population of Western Armenia was carried out. As a result of this policy, some of the Armenian population was forcibly converted to Islam. In 1895, 40 Armenian villages were destroyed in the Erzurum Valley, their population was exterminated and only the inhabitants of three villages survived, which were forcibly Islamized.<sup>4</sup> The Armenians who renounced the apostolic faith hoped that at least religious persecution against them would cease and they would receive equal rights with Muslims.<sup>5</sup> However, the goal of Islamization was

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<sup>1</sup> **Gunter** 2011, 2–3.

<sup>2</sup> **Gunter** 2011, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Slavic peoples of South-Eastern Europe and Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century 2003, 62.

<sup>4</sup> **Nersisyan** 1983, 83–84.

<sup>5</sup> **Simonyan** 1986, 245.

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not to equalize the rights of former Christians, including Armenians, with Muslims, but to assimilate the latter.

With the establishment of Turkish rule, the demographic picture in Bosnia and Herzegovina began to change significantly, as a policy of Islamization of the Serbian population was pursued. As a result of this policy, some Serbs were also forced to convert to Islam in order to avoid religious persecution, as well as to enjoy the rights, economic and political privileges granted to Muslims.<sup>6</sup> However, despite the conversion of some Serbs to Islam, Serbs continued to constitute a stable ethnic and religious majority in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the 1879 census, 42.87% of the population of Bosnia were Orthodox Serbs, 38.73% were Muslims, and 18.08% were Catholic Croats.<sup>7</sup> Despite the Turkish authorities' policy of Islamization, Croats expressing separatist sentiments oriented themselves toward Zagreb, seeking to unite the Bosnian territories with the Croatian state, while Muslims were in the process of searching for their own identity. Most Muslims of Slavic descent, after adopting Islam, gradually began to identify themselves with the Turks, creating their own unique way of life and culture. Constantinople became a more familiar center for them than Belgrade or Zagreb.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the so-called "Bosniaks" or "Bosnian Muslims" were not a separate ethnic group, but descendants of former Serbs and Croats who were Islamized during the Ottoman rule.

Despite their disenfranchised position, Armenians played a significant role in the development of the Ottoman Empire's economy, as they held leading positions in the country's crafts and trade.<sup>9</sup> The German missionary and public figure J. Lepsius noted regarding the participation of Armenians in the trade of the Ottoman Empire that the bulk of import trade was controlled by the largest Armenian trading companies, which had their branches in the commercial and industrial centers of Europe. The bulk of the Ottoman gold imports through the empire's main ports, amounting to 15 million, was carried out by Armenian traders.<sup>10</sup> Based on the fact that Muslims, and Turks in particular, who lacked certain knowledge and skills, considered crafts and trade to be unworthy

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<sup>6</sup> **Guskova** 2001, 220.

<sup>7</sup> **Valev** 1996, 9.

<sup>8</sup> **Ralić** 1992, 5.

<sup>9</sup> **Sahakyan** 1990, 12.

<sup>10</sup> **Lepsius** 1965, 247–248.

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spheres of activity for themselves and preferred military or government service, until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the economy of the Ottoman Empire was predominantly developed by non-Muslim peoples. At the same time, Muslims, primarily Turks, abused their privileged position, used their positions and weapons for the purpose of plundering and appropriating the property of the non-Muslim population.<sup>11</sup> However, from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman authorities began to pursue a policy of ousting non-Turkish enterprises from the country's economy and the formation of a Turkish national bourgeoisie, which was accompanied by anti-Armenian propaganda, the essence of which boiled down to the fact that the Armenians had unjustly enriched themselves at the expense of Muslims, therefore, it was necessary to severely punish and physically destroy them in order to return property from illegal possession to Muslims.<sup>12</sup> It is characteristic that even after the mass pogroms and forced Islamization of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries on the eve of the First World War, compared to the Turks, Kurds and Circassians, Armenians in Western Armenia continued to be a relative majority, making up 38.9% of the total population.<sup>13</sup>

It is obvious that, unlike the Armenians, the Christian population of the Balkans did not play such a significant role in the socio-economic life of the Ottoman Empire, however, the uniform discriminatory tax system also extended to the Christian population of the Balkan Peninsula, in particular, the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which first led to the latter's exorbitant debts, and then to the loss of real estate and property, which passed to local Muslim officials.<sup>14</sup> The empire's judicial system also allowed the local Muslim elite to legalize the seizure of Christian lands through false lawsuits.<sup>15</sup> For Christians, the only way to preserve their ancestral lands and their status as property owners was often to convert to Islam. It's no coincidence that the main cause of the 1875 uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina was also exorbitant taxes.

Another manifestation of discriminatory policies towards Christian peoples was the process of changes in the administrative-territorial units of Western

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<sup>11</sup> **Matosyan** 2005, 7.

<sup>12</sup> **Khudaverdyan, Saakyan** 1995, 20.

<sup>13</sup> **Sahakyan** 1990, 12:

<sup>14</sup> **Ekmečić** 1973, 45–52.

<sup>15</sup> **Ekmečić** 1973, 54–55.

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Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the purpose of which was the mixing of ethno-religious groups, some of which found themselves in different administrative units surrounded by another hostile group, which led to clashes between these groups

From the mid-1870s, the Turkish authorities began more radical changes to the administrative borders of Western Armenia, which continued until the early 1890s. The Ottoman Empire sought to create administrative units in which Armenians and Christians in general would not constitute a majority. In 1877, the Van district, separated from the Erzurum province, together with the Hakiari region, became a separate province, which was later joined by the Mush district. The Kharberd district, which separated from the Diyarbakir province, also received the status of an independent unit, to which the Malatya district was also transferred from the Diyarbakir province in 1882–1883. In 1880, the new province of Bitlis was formed from the separated neighboring counties of the Van and Diyarbakir provinces. The Shapin-Karahisar district, which had been part of the Trebizond province, was transferred to the Sebastia province in the early 1880s. Thus, by the end of the 19th century, the administrative system of Western Armenia consisted of the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, Diyarbakir, Kharberd and Sebastia, which remained unchanged until the First World War.<sup>16</sup>

The territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Ottoman Empire was initially included in the province of Rumelia and divided into the counties of Bosnia, Herzegovina (Hersek) and Zvornik (Izvornik). In 1580, the Ottoman authorities created a separate Bosnian province, which was in turn divided into the districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Later, as part of subsequent administrative reforms throughout the empire, the region was divided into two provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the district of Novi Pazar.<sup>17</sup> Both when changing the administrative borders of Western Armenia and when dividing the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the imperial authorities sought to achieve a numerical superiority of Muslims in the provinces and districts, as well as to disperse the Serbian population across different administrative units.

With the policy of Islamization of the Serbian population and artificial changes to the administrative borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ottoman authorities planted deep roots of hatred between Orthodox and Islamized Serbs,

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<sup>16</sup> History of Armenia, vol. III, 2010, 448–450.

<sup>17</sup> **Koller, Karpat** 2004.

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between whom, even after liberation from the Ottoman yoke, violent clashes continued based on historical hatred.

After the Balkan Wars (1912–1913), the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina were liberated from Ottoman rule, but the struggle for leadership in the region intensified between Serbs, Croats and Muslims under the patronage of one or another great power. The Balkan Peninsula became an arena for struggle between the German-Austrian alliance and Russia. The Balkans served as a link to the Asian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, where Germany was expanding, while Russia supported the Serbs, who sought to reunite Bosnia and Herzegovina with Serbia.<sup>18</sup> At the end of the First World War, the Kingdom of Serbs, Slovenes and Croats emerged, which in 1929 became known as Yugoslavia, where during the Second World War a brutal and bloody civil war was waged between the Croats and Muslims on one side and the Serbs on the other. Later, Yugoslavia, following the model of the Soviet Union, transformed into a federal state with a centralized government, which, similar to the Ottoman Empire's policy towards the Armenian population, was guided by the principle that the administrative division of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be carried out in such a way that the Serb population should be dispersed among various administrative units, surrounded by Bosnian Muslims and Croats. The policy of discrimination against the Serbian population and artificial administrative divisions of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the central authorities of Yugoslavia led to the fact that the Muslims, who already constituted the majority there, formed a coalition with the Croats against the Serbs.<sup>19</sup> The Croats did not forget that some regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina had once been under the rule of the Croatian state and sought to restore their position in these territories, while the Muslims hoped to create their own state in which there would be no place for the Serbs.<sup>20</sup>

According to the 1981 census, in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Muslims already constituted a relative majority of the population – 39.5%, and Serbs – 32.2%.<sup>21</sup> It is noteworthy that the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were also recognized by the Yugoslav authorities as a separate ethnic group of

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<sup>18</sup> **Leshchilovskaya** 1994, 52.

<sup>19</sup> **Valev** 1996, 14–15.

<sup>20</sup> **Ralić** 1992, 6.

<sup>21</sup> **Ralić** 1992, 3.

“Bosniaks”. In the context of the anti-Serb discriminatory policy pursued by the central authorities, some of the Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina began to identify themselves as Yugoslavs, as a result of which an “ethnic” group of Yugoslavs appeared in the population census, which initially constituted only 1.17% of the population, but then steadily increased in proportion to the decrease in the number of Serbs.<sup>22</sup>

***2. Ideological preconditions for the genocidal policy towards the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire and the ethno-religious groups of Bosnia and Herzegovina***

It is obvious that both during the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire and in the case of the genocidal acts committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, nationalist ideologies were used for the psychological and propaganda preparation of future crimes, with which radical masses were directed against specific ethno-religious groups.

The policy of the Ottoman Empire authorities towards non-Turkish peoples, and primarily Armenians, was carried out on the basis of a racist ideology that went through the stages of transformation “Pan-Islamism” – “Pan-Osmanism” – “Pan-Turkism”.

The implementation of policies based on the ideology of “Pan-Islamism” led to the forced Islamization of some disenfranchised non-Muslim peoples, including the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, who were thus seeking to avoid brutal oppression and persecution.<sup>23</sup> This ideology, however, did not lead to the expected result, so the Young Turk Party, which came to power in 1908, proposed uniting all the peoples of the Ottoman Empire into a great “Ottoman nation». <sup>24</sup> The new ideology of “Pan-Osmanism” was in fact an attempt to turn the entire population of the empire into so-called Ottomans, based on the language, customs and traditions of the dominant Turks, regardless of religious and ethnic affiliation.<sup>25</sup> However, not only non-Muslim peoples, who in addition to their faith had to renounce their identity, did not want to put up with this, but also Muslims, who were against the formerly disenfranchised Christians being

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<sup>22</sup> **Leshchilovskaya** 2003, 58.

<sup>23</sup> **Gamelen, Bron** 1995, 30.

<sup>24</sup> **Zarevand** 1993, 35.

<sup>25</sup> **Safrastyan** 2009, 85–90.

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given equal rights with them and thereby depriving them of their superiority over them.<sup>26</sup>

Taking these sentiments into account, at the 1911 congress of the Central Committee of the Young Turk Party, a decision was made to move to the ideology of "Pan-Turkism", which, under the slogan "Turkey for the Turks", implied the Turkification, and if impossible, the physical liquidation of the non-Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>27</sup> Along with the implementation of the ideology of "Pan-Turkism", another key component of the criminal policy of the Armenian Genocide was the desire of the Turkish authorities to finally appropriate the homeland of the indigenous Armenian people by physically eliminating them in Western Armenia.<sup>28</sup>

In parallel with the mass extermination of Armenians, the Turkish authorities initiated the process of Turkification of toponyms in Western Armenia. According to the first article of the new government program of January 5, 1916, it was proposed to change all Armenian, Greek and Bulgarian names of provinces, villages, mountains, rivers and other geographical names in the empire to Turkish ones.<sup>29</sup> This further confirmed that one of the main motivations of the Turkish authorities for carrying out the Armenian Genocide was the final appropriation of the Armenian homeland – Western Armenia.

Similar ideological transformations are also observed in the policies of various regimes that controlled the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in certain historical periods. The consequence of the policy of the Ottoman Empire authorities based on the ideology of "Pan-Islamism" was the Islamization of part of the Serbian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Already during the Second World War, under the regime of A. Pavelić in the puppet Croatian state created by Germany on the basis of Nazi ideology, the Croatian Ustaše and Bosnian Muslim forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina exterminated hundreds of thousands of not only Serbs, but also Jews and Roma, and about 200,000 indigenous Serbs were forced to leave their homes.<sup>30</sup> In the Jasenovac concentration camp alone, more than half a million Serbs were exterminated. In

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<sup>26</sup> **Marukyan** 2010, 21–22.

<sup>27</sup> **Avagyan** 2013, 21.

<sup>28</sup> **Marukyan** 2014, 271.

<sup>29</sup> **Akcam** 2015, 68.

<sup>30</sup> **Valev** 1996, 9.

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addition to mass extermination, the Serb population was also driven into uninhabited areas of eastern Bosnia, Herzegovina and Krajina. As a result of the mass pogroms and ethnic cleansing of Serbs during the Second World War, their population declined significantly, and the balance among the various ethno-religious groups in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina also changed.<sup>31</sup> In a later period, the communist authorities of Yugoslavia, supposedly guided by internationalism and the equality of all peoples, in fact harshly and irreconcilably fought against Serbian nationalism and encouraged Croats and Muslims.<sup>32</sup>

During the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the formation of independent states, pan-Islamic ideas began to spread again among Bosnian Muslims. The newly-appointed leader of the Bosnian Muslims, Alia Izedbegović, presented his political program in the work "Muslim Declaration", which stated that the independence of Bosnia was an intermediate goal, while the main goal was considered to be establishing cooperation with all Muslims of the world to create a common Muslim state in Europe.<sup>33</sup> According to Izedbegovic's program, Bosnia and Herzegovina initially needed to be separated from Yugoslavia, after which, already in an independent state, Muslims would constitute the majority, ensuring a high birth rate and later unite with other Muslim states.<sup>34</sup> It is obvious that Izedbegovic's ideas on creating a single Muslim state in Europe were directed against Christian peoples and, first and foremost, the Serbs, who, in his opinion, stood in the way of an independent Bosnia and Herzegovina and therefore were subject to destruction or expulsion from its territory.<sup>35</sup>

Immediately before the onset of mass crimes both in the Ottoman Empire and during the disintegration of Yugoslavia, a process of "victimization" was observed in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, when an image of an enemy was artificially created in the person of a specific ethno-religious group, which automatically became a victim of future crimes.<sup>36</sup> The process of

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<sup>31</sup> **Guskova** 2001, 220.

<sup>32</sup> **Simic** 1993, 79.

<sup>33</sup> **Gibbs** 2009, 111.

<sup>34</sup> Yugoslavia in Flames: Documents, Facts, Comments (1990–1992). Modern History of Yugoslavia in Documents 1992, 24.

<sup>35</sup> **Matveev** 2001, 206–207.

<sup>36</sup> **Harf** 1995, 25.

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victimization preceded the policy of extermination of the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire in the preparatory stage of both the pogroms organized by Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1894–1896 and the genocidal policy of the Young Turks, when the Turkish authorities blamed the Armenians for all the troubles of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>37</sup> Before the Armenian pogroms of 1894–1896, the “bloody sultan” Abdul Hamid II used Islam as a means of inciting Muslim Turks and Kurds against Christian Armenians. Propaganda against Armenians was conducted through sheikhs and mullahs, who in various settlements across the country incited Turks and Kurds against the infidel Armenians. The Armenians of the empire were portrayed as servants of the Christian world, hostile to the Ottoman Empire, who were to be exterminated.<sup>38</sup>

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were also instances of victimization when anti-Serb propaganda began in Muslim media, which resulted in the Serb population becoming a target for Muslims. On September 26, 1991, the Muslim newspaper “Večernji Novosti” stated that Serbs would have to accept the fact that they would live in a Muslim country, deprived of the right to create public organizations and parties, would be able to appear in public places only with special passes and buy food only in places specially designated for them.<sup>39</sup>

#### ***3. The preparatory stage of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire and genocidal acts in Bosnia and Herzegovina***

In parallel with the development of nationalist ideologies, the ruling Young Turk Party created paramilitary structures tasked with coordinating the actions of state bodies and security agencies during the Armenian Genocide. To this end, the Young Turk Party Central Committee established the “Special Organization” (“Teşkilat-i Mahsusa”), funded by the state treasury, quickly increasing its membership to 30,000. In order to increase the number of this structure, the Young Turks even resorted to the help of criminals.<sup>40</sup> Criminals who had committed the most serious crimes were released from prisons and promised pardon if they rendered a service to the Turkish nation and empire.

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<sup>37</sup> Marukyan 2010, 43.

<sup>38</sup> Safrastyan 2009, 163–165.

<sup>39</sup> Guskova 2001, 228.

<sup>40</sup> Dadrian 1999, 65–80.

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Behaeddin Shakir, a member of the Central Committee of the “Union and Progress” Party and head of the eastern branch of the “Special Organization”, was held responsible for organizing the deportation and extermination of the Armenian population of Western Armenia.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the organizational preparation for the genocidal policy towards the Armenians by the beginning of the First World War was practically complete and only a signal was needed, which was the beginning of the First World War.

The process of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the declaration of independence of the former Soviet republics was accompanied by military actions between armed units of various ethno-religious groups. The largest and most brutal war was in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–1995), involving Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats, which followed the independence referendum in that republic. This resulted in a shift in refugee flows and a change in the composition of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. According to the 1991 census, 43.7% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina were Bosnian Muslims, 31.4% were Orthodox Serbs and 17.3% were Catholic Croats<sup>42</sup> and of the 36,600 inhabitants of Srebrenica, where the tragic events took place, 75.1% were Muslims and 22.6% were Serbs<sup>43</sup>. As expected, the Muslim-Croat majority voted for the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the Serbs boycotted the referendum because they feared a repeat of the mass pogroms committed against them by Muslims and Croats during World War II in the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbian Krajina<sup>44</sup>. Insisting on their right to self-determination, the Serb population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the support of Serbia and Montenegro, proclaimed the Republika Srpska, which was subsequently planned to be united with Serbia, which Muslims and Croats regarded as a violation of the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To avoid military clashes, the Serbs proposed transforming Bosnia and Herzegovina into a confederation, each of whose constituent entities would include territories populated by Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. Negotiations between representatives of the three groups began in Lisbon to discuss these

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<sup>41</sup> **Avakyan** 1999, 76.

<sup>42</sup> **Annikova, Radusinovich** 2015, 96.

<sup>43</sup> **Postnikova** 2020.

<sup>44</sup> **Guskova** 2001, 287.

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proposals.<sup>45</sup> However, the unexpected announcement by the EU and the US of recognition of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 7, 1992, led to the failure of the Lisbon negotiations, and on the same day, A. Izetbegović ordered all Muslim armed units to prepare to defend the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

If the start of the Armenian Genocide was the outbreak of the First World War, then the spark that ignited the civil war was the act of recognition of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the EU and the US, which led to mutual genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing.

Even before the start of the civil war, armed formations of Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Serbs had already been concentrated in certain areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina – the eastern and central regions – was controlled by units of the Yugoslav army, consisting of local Serbs, about 30% of the country's territory – mainly the western regions bordering Croatia – was under the control of Croatian forces.<sup>46</sup> Only 20% of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory was controlled by Muslim forces numbering about 20,000 people, of whom only 10,000 came as volunteers from Turkey, and more than 2,000 from Malaysia, Pakistan, Algeria, Libya and other Muslim countries.<sup>47</sup> After the intensification of military action, the Croats and Muslims began to coordinate their forces and then came out against the Serbs as a united front.<sup>48</sup>

### **Conclusions**

Based on a comparative analysis of the causes and preconditions of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire and the genocidal acts committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it can be concluded that the crimes committed share many similarities. Discriminatory policies of various regimes underpinned both the Armenian Genocide and the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The manifestation of this policy in the Ottoman Empire was not only the forced Islamization of the Christian population, in this case, Armenians and Serbs, but also the artificial fragmentation of the administrative units of Western Armenia

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<sup>45</sup> **Gibbs** 2009, 111.

<sup>46</sup> **Ralić** 1992, 5.

<sup>47</sup> **Guskova** 2001, 279.

<sup>48</sup> **Sassoli, Bouvier** 2008, 19.

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and the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The administrative division of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territory was reminiscent of the Ottoman Empire's policy of reorganizing the provinces of Western Armenia, when neighboring territories with a Muslim population were artificially annexed to provinces and districts with a predominantly Christian population, or these areas began to be actively settled by Muslims from other regions.

Similarities are also evident from an ideological perspective. While the policy of mass extermination of Armenians was initially based on the ideology of pan-Islamism, and later on pan-Turkism, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing committed by Muslims against Serbs were based on Izedbegović's ideas for the creation of a unified Muslim state in Europe. The Serbs' retaliatory criminal actions against Muslims were also carried out on the basis of nationalist ideas about the creation of a united Serbia, which would include the Republika Srpska of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In both cases, the intervention of external forces served as an additional trigger for genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing. The exploitation of the Armenian Question by the great powers, not so much for the purpose of resolving it but rather to pursue their own interests in the Ottoman Empire, further incited the Ottoman authorities to commit mass extermination of the Armenian population not only in their historical homeland, Western Armenia, but also in other Armenian-populated regions of the empire. The recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina's independence by the EU and the US inspired Muslims led by Izedbeković, as well as Croats, to take radical action against the Serbs, which led to harsh retaliatory actions by the latter, which included genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing.

It is obvious that the ten-year time gap between the Armenian Genocide and the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the civilizational aspect associated with the peculiarities and specific conditions of the historical development of the indigenous Armenian people in Western Armenia and the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, undoubtedly left their mark on the causes, preconditions and preparatory stages of these crimes. Based on the above, in the causes, preconditions and preparatory stages of the Armenian Genocide and the crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be identified the following main differences:

1. If the Armenian Genocide was planned and carried out by the authorities of the Ottoman Empire, then on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, at

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certain stages of the confrontation between Bosnian Muslims and Croats on one side and Serbs on the other, mutual genocidal acts were carried out. Thus, during the Second World War, under the Nazi regime of A. Pavelić, the Croatian Ustaše and Bosnian Muslim forces exterminated hundreds of thousands of Serbs. Therefore, during the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the declaration of independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Bosnian Serbs feared a possible repetition of these processes, and therefore insisted on their right to self-determination. During the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, these fears were fully confirmed, as both Bosnian Muslims and Croats committed genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing against Serbs, and Serbian units committed against Muslims, which led to significant human losses and refugee flows on both sides. Despite the fact that the International Court of Justice recognized only the mass murder of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica as genocide among all the crimes committed on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia convicted Bosnian Serb commanders for this crime, the actions of the latter can to some extent be seen as retaliatory measures to previous and/or ongoing crimes committed by Muslims against the Serb population.

2. The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire was carried out in the context of the First World War, and mutual genocidal acts between Bosnian Muslims and Croats on the one hand and Serbs on the other took place during the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3. If the start of the First World War was the signal for the Ottoman Empire to commit the Armenian Genocide, then the trigger for the start of the civil war, mutual genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing of both Croats and Muslims against Serbs, and Serbs against the Muslims of Srebrenica was the recognition of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the EU and the United States.

4. Before the genocidal acts and ethnic cleansing, the Serbs and Bosnian Muslims had statehood, and the armed forces of these opposing sides were approximately equal in size on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which cannot be said about the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire, which became victims of genocide.

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**ՀԱՅԵՐԻ ՑԵՂԱՍՊԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ԲՈՍՆԻԱ-  
ՀԵՐՑԵԳՈՎԻՆԱՅՈՒՄ ՑԵՂԱՍՊԱՆԱԿԱՆ  
ԳՈՐԾՈՂՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ՊԱՏՃԱՌՆԵՐԸ ԵՎ  
ՆԱԽԱԴԻՅԱԼՆԵՐԸ  
(համեմատական վերլուծություն)**

**Ամփոփում**

Ցեղասպանության տարբեր օրինակների ուսումնասիրությունը առանց դրանց պատճառների և նախապայմանների ուսումնասիրության պարզապես անհնար է: Ցեղասպանական քաղաքականություն իրականացնող հանցավոր վարչակարգերն առաջնորդվում են որոշակի պատճառներով ու շարժառիթներով: Ցեղասպանության կազմակերպիչները որոշակի խմբերի նկատմամբ կայացված իրենց հանցավոր որոշումները փորձում են արդարացնել էթնոքաղաքական, կրոնական, սոցիալ-տնտեսական և այլ «հիմնավորումներով»:

Ժամանակակից ցեղասպանագիտական ուսումնասիրությունները կենտրոնանում են նաև ցեղասպանության տարբեր օրինակների պատճառների և նախապայմանների համեմատական վերլուծության վրա՝ ձգտելով վերհանել ինչպես դրանց ընդհանրությունները, այնպես էլ առանձնահատկությունները:

Տվյալ նպատակից ելնելով անհրաժեշտություն է առաջանում ուսումնասիրել Օսմանյան կայսրությունում հայերի և Բոսնիա-Հերցեգովինայում քրիստոնյա բնակչության նկատմամբ իրականացվող խտրական քաղաքականությունը, հետազոտել կատարված հանցագործությունների գաղափա-

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րական հիմքերը, ինչպես նաև դրանց նախորդած նախապատրաստական գործընթացները:


**Բանալի բառեր՝** Հայոց ցեղասպանություն, Օսմանյան կայսրություն, պանթյուրքիզմ, Հարավսլավիա, Բոսնիա և Հերցեգովինա, Սերբիա, ցեղասպանական գործողություններ:

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## **THE NUMBER OF ARMENIANS IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY, ACCORDING TO THE DATA OF JOSEPH WOLFF**

### ***Abstract***

Joseph Wolff (1795–1862), a British missionary of German-Jewish origin, wrote six travel accounts about his journeys to Eastern countries. During these travels, he considered it necessary to record the populations of the various peoples living in the places he visited, including Armenians. In this respect, his travelogues constitute an exceptional source for clarifying the quantitative picture of the Armenian population in the first half of the nineteenth century, both in Eastern and Western Armenia, as well as in neighboring and other regions (the Ottoman Empire, Persia, the Middle East, Afghanistan, and India).

In particular, in his works *Missionary Journal of the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, *Missionary to the Jews* and *Researches and Missionary Labours among the Jews, Mohammedans, and other sects, by the Rev. Joseph Wolff*, he recorded the number of Armenian inhabitants in the cities and villages he visited. Thus, according to his data, there were 8,000 Armenian families in Karabakh, 114 in Baku, 4,000 Armenians in Shapin-Garahisar, 5,000 in Sivas, 130,000 Armenians in Constantinople, 40 families in Kabul, 1,000 Armenians in British India, and so on.

When noting the number of Armenian inhabitants in the cities and villages he visited, Wolff almost always distinguished between Apostolic and Catholic

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Armenians, and often found it necessary to indicate the number of clergy as well.

Considering that Joseph Wolff, as a missionary, was in contact with Armenian ecclesiastical and educational figures and obtained his information from them, the data he provides may be regarded as at least largely reliable.

**Keywords:** *Joseph Wolff, travel accounts, Armenians, rural population, Ottoman Empire, Mesopotamia, Persia.*

### ***Introduction***

The British missionary of German-Jewish origin Joseph Wolff (1795–1862) was one of many Jewish converts who served as clergymen in the Anglican Church and became among the most notable figures of their time. He was probably the most widely traveled British missionary of the 19th century: he visited not only Europe but also the United States, Africa (Egypt and Abyssinia), and especially the East (the Ottoman Empire, Persia, Mesopotamia, Central Asia, India, and others), often more than once—an exceptional phenomenon for travelers of that era.

Joseph Wolff was born in Bavaria into the family of Rabbi David Wolff. At the age of eleven he left home, wandered for six years, and then entered the Lutheran Lyceum in Stuttgart. At eighteen, having embraced Christianity, he became a Catholic priest. He studied the languages of the Near East at the universities of Tübingen, Vienna, and Cambridge, after which he pursued theology and missionary training at the Roman College. Being in constant disagreement with the Catholic Church, he was excommunicated and expelled by the Inquisition for his heretical views. A decisive role in Wolff's subsequent fate was played by his meeting in Rome with the English banker, political figure, and writer Henry Drummond (1786–1860), better known as one of the founders of the Catholic Apostolic, or Irvingite, Church. Drummond invited him to join him and collaborate.

The twenty-four-year-old Wolff departed for England and, this time joining the Anglican Church, began working for the British and Foreign Bible Society<sup>1</sup> in

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<sup>1</sup> The British and Foreign Bible Society, also known simply as the Bible Society, was founded in 1804 as an interdenominational Christian biblical charitable organization whose aim is to make the Bible accessible throughout the world through translations, publications, and the promotion of biblical literacy.

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London. Two years later he began his extensive missionary travels: first in 1821–1826, visiting Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula, Jerusalem, Aleppo, Mesopotamia, Persia, Georgia, and Crimea. In 1828–1834 Wolff again traveled to the East, visiting the Ottoman Empire, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and India. His third journey along the same route took place in 1836–1838, and in 1843–1845, while in northern Iran and Turkestan, he set out in search of two missing British officers.

Beginning in 1824 and continuing until the end of his life, Joseph Wolff published six substantial travel books. In them he described the various countries and peoples he visited, among whom Armenians could hardly fail to appear. Alongside well-known facts, they contain valuable testimonies concerning the size of the Armenian population in Eastern and Western Armenia and in many places beyond the Armenian world, their places of residence, shrines, and many other realities; they also provide assessments of the Armenian people and mention several prominent figures of the time.

The current article presents the information recorded by Joseph Wolff on the number of Armenians in Armenia proper and in various countries.

#### ***Armenians in Wolff's Travel Notes of 1821–1824***

Joseph Wolff published the account of his first missionary journey to the East (1821–1824) in 1824 as a separate volume entitled *Missionary Journal and Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Wolff, Missionary to the Jews*. The book was republished with some editorial changes in 1827 as the first volume (without the indication “vol. 1”), followed by the second and third volumes issued respectively in 1828 and 1829.

While in April 1823 in the Holy Land, Wolff, describing Nazareth, noted that at present there were no Jews living there, but about 1,000 Catholics, 400 Greeks, and a small number of Armenians.<sup>2</sup> Further, speaking of the inhabitants of Damascus, Wolff mentioned 200,000 Muslims, 4,000 Rabbinic Jews and three families of Karaite Jews, as well as 12,000 Christians–Greeks, Catholics,<sup>3</sup> Syrians, and Armenians.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See **Wolff** 1828, 150.

<sup>3</sup> Here and hereafter, by the term “Catholics,” Wolff refers to all Eastern Christians of the Roman Catholic confession.

<sup>4</sup> See **Wolff** 1828, 184.

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In a letter written in 1824, Wolff reported that he had been in the town of Bir (now Birecik, Turkey) on the Euphrates, where "*Here are likewise twenty-five Armenian Christians, with three priests.*"<sup>5</sup> Continuing his journey toward Urfa (now Şanlıurfa, Turkey), Wolff visited the local Armenian bishop and testified that the city was inhabited by 200 Syrian and 2,000 Armenian families possessing two large and ancient churches.<sup>6</sup>

While on the territory of present-day Iraq, Wolff noted that "*There are in the whole about five hundred Christian houses, consisting of Armenians, Armenian Catholics, Syrians, and Syrian-Catholics, and Chaldean Catholics.*"<sup>7</sup> He then reported on the Armenians of Basra: "*There are at this place twenty-five families of Armenian Christians, who are from the land of Persia, who speak both Armenian and Persian, and some few English, those immediately about British residency. They have one church and one priest.*"<sup>8</sup>

In an entry dated 24 July, Wolff devoted eleven pages (pp. 346–357), arranged in seventeen points, to a conversation in the form of questions and answers with the Armenian bishop of Basra concerning the Armenian people and, in particular, the Armenian Church. Among other questions he asked: "*Where are the Armenians now chiefly established?*" To this the bishop responded with the following list of places (we retain the original forms, providing the correct spelling and contemporary names in parentheses):

1. *Teflis* (Tiflis-Tbilisi); 2. *Tabriz*; 3. *Amedea* (Amid-Diyarbakir); 4. *On the banks of Euphrates*; 5. *Karabakh*;<sup>9</sup> 6. *Bayazed* (Doğubayazıt); 7. *Erwan* (Yerevan), "*near Ararat*;" 8. *Ech-Miazin* (Echmiatsin); 9. *Waan* (Van); 10. *Warmi* (Urmia); 11. *Moosh* (or *Toron* [Taron]); 12. *Kars*; 13. *Erzeroon* (Erzurum); 14. *Tokat*; 15. *Mekhre*; 16. *Bambag* (Pambak); 17. *Arsangan* (Yerznka-Erzincan); 18. *Khoi*; 19. *Salmast*; 20. *Hakhbat*; 21. *Shatakh*; 22. *Mook* (Moks-Müküs); 23. *Constantinople*; 24. *Passan*; 25. *Paloo* (Bolu); 26. *Akhalzkha* (Akhaltzikhe); 27. *Arabkir*; 28. *Maskkir*; 29. *Thermakzag* (Chemshkatsag-Çemişgezek); 30.

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<sup>5</sup> Wolff 1828, 232.

<sup>6</sup> See Wolff 1828, 235.

<sup>7</sup> Wolff 1828, 289.

<sup>8</sup> Wolff 1828, 308.

<sup>9</sup> In one of his later travel notes, when mentioning Karabakh (Artsakh), Wolff—seemingly foreseeing the unfounded claims that more than a century later would emphasize its Armenian character—considered it necessary to note that it forms part of Armenia ("*station called Shushee, in the province of Carabagh, in Armenia Major*": Wolff 1860, 364).

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*Khoshab (Hoşap); 31. Archez (Arjesh-Erciş); 32. Kalat (Khlat-Ahlat); 33. Arzke (Artske-Adilcevaz); 34. Paghesh (Baghesh-Bitlis); 35. Tshabagtschur (Japaghjur-Bingöl); 36. Hayuzzur Ayoç Dzor (Gürpınar), "where Haik fought the battle against Bel, and Bel was killed and buried there;" 37. Astrachan; 38. Lankoran (Lankaran); 39. Gelan; 40. Antab (Gaziantep), "in Turkey;" 41. Sis (Kozan), "where the Patriarch resides;" 42. Marash (Kahramanmaraş); 43. Orfa (Şanlıurfa); 44. Seitoon (Zeitun- Süleymanlı); 45. Kaisari (Kesaria-Kayseri); 46. Ispahan; 47. Shiraz; 48. Bassora (Basrah); 49. Abushir; 50. Bombay; 51. Calcutta."*<sup>10</sup>

As can be seen, the list of Armenian-inhabited places is presented rather unsystematically, mixing together regions of Armenia proper, neighboring countries, and settlements of the diaspora.

In the third volume of his travel notes<sup>11</sup> Wolff reported in detail on the Armenians of Persia: "*To Julfa belong several Armenian districts near it: 1. Tarmahal (Charmahal – A.B.), two days distant from Ispahan. 2. Fereidoon, three days distant from Ispahan, in which are fourteen villages inhabited by Armenians. 3. Porporat, in which there are eleven Armenian villages. 4. Kabala, with fourteen villages. 5. Kamara, with five Armenian villages. 6. Kaasas, with seven Armenian villages: Hamadan also belongs to the archbishop of Ispahan. There are at Hamadan, fifteen Armenian houses, with a village, Shawareen, where eighteen families of Armenians are residing. .... There are, at Caboul, in the land of the Afghans, likewise forty Armenian families, who are under the Archbishop of Julfa too.*"<sup>12</sup> As about the Armenians of New Julfa, Wolff provides old and new numbers: "*New Julfa, once inhabited by twelve-thousand families, is now inhabited by scarcely five-hundred families of Armenians.*"<sup>13</sup>

Wolff also mentioned the population of Ooromea (Urmia), which he estimated at 15,000 inhabitants, among them Muslims, 300 Jews, 300 Nestorians, and sixty Armenian families.<sup>14</sup> Among the Armenian-inhabited

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<sup>10</sup> Wolff 1828, 345–346.

<sup>11</sup> See Wolff 1829.

<sup>12</sup> Wolff 1829, 89–90.

<sup>13</sup> Wolff 1829, 99.

<sup>14</sup> See Wolff 1829, 152.

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localities of the Urmia region he also named Tamalabad, "*inhabited entirely by Armenians, among whom I distributed Armenian Psalters and Testaments.*"<sup>15</sup>

Entering the territory of Armenia, Wolff regularly recorded the number of its Armenian inhabitants. The number of Armenian families in Old Julfa (Jugha) he indicated as fifty. From there he proceeded to "Nakhshawan" (Nakhchivan), which, according to him, was inhabited by 200 Armenian families and had three priests. Visiting Erivan (Yerevan), Wolff noted that there were four churches, twelve priests, and 500 Armenian families. In a note he added that his friend Major Monteith informed him that the number of Armenians in Erivan amounted to 5,000 persons.<sup>16</sup> After staying in Etchmiadzin, Wolff departed for the village of Masdara, "*entirely inhabited by poor Armenians, consisting of about twenty families, who have two priests and one church.*"<sup>17</sup>

Five days later Wolff reached Tiflis. There he met Major Monteith, who provided him his notes containing the demographic data on the population of Russia and neighboring country, including Armenians. Thus, according to Monteit, "*At Karabakh are 8000 families of Armenians. The province of Shake contains 2700 Armenian families, containing 7933 men and 6893 women; Bakoo contains 114 families, making 348 males and 209 females; Shirvan contains 1688 families of Armenians, forming a population of 5337 males, 4643 females. The city of Teflis contains 2931 Armenian families, forming 7696 males, 6836 females. The country of Georgia contains 12041 families of Armenians (Teflis excluding), making 29274 males, and 34027 females.*"<sup>18</sup>

Departing from Tiflis to the Ottoman Empire, Wolff in Constantinople met the Armenian Patriarch Karapet, who informed him that there were 130,000 Armenians in the city.<sup>19</sup> Arriving in Bursa, he noted that 1,050 Armenians lived there. Three days later he reached Muhalitsh (Muhulich, modern Karacabey), where 300 Greek and Armenian families resided.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Wolff 1829, 149–150.

<sup>16</sup> See Wolff 1829, 186.

<sup>17</sup> Wolff 1829, 189.

<sup>18</sup> Wolff 1829, 192.

<sup>19</sup> See Wolff 1829, 292.

<sup>20</sup> See Wolff 1829, 317.

***Armenians in Wolff's Travel Notes of 1835***

In 1831 Wolff once again undertook a journey to the Ottoman Empire, then to Persia, the Russian Empire, and British India, and in his travel notes—alongside other information—he again everywhere reported data on the number of Armenians and on his personal encounters with them. His next travel work was published in London in 1835 under the title *Researches and Missionary Labours among the Jews, Mohammedans, and other sects, by the Rev. Joseph Wolff, during his travels between the years 1831 and 1834, from Malta to Egypt, Constantinople, Armenia, Persia, Khorossaun, Toorkestaun, Bokhara, Balkh, Cabool in Affghanistaun, the Himmalayah mountains, Cashmeer, Hindoostaun, the coast of Abyssinia and Yemen.*<sup>21</sup>

In this travelogue he first mentioned Armenians in the entry of 21 February, when he arrived in Adalya (Antalya) and indicated the number of local Armenian inhabitants—150 persons<sup>22</sup>. In an entry of 3 March, he noted that he met an Armenian priest in Bultur or Burdur who told him that 500 Armenians lived in the settlement.<sup>23</sup> In the entry of 6 March Wolff reported that there were 280 Armenian houses in Konya,<sup>24</sup> 10,000 Armenians in Kayseri, and 25,000 in the surrounding villages. The number of Apostolic Armenians in Kütahya he indicated as 3,500, and of Armenian Catholics as 2,500.<sup>25</sup> In Bursa he noted 15,000 Armenians and 3,000 Armenian Catholics; in Nicomedia (İzmit) 2,000; in the Torbalo district 1,000; and in Nali-Han 500 Armenians.<sup>26</sup> The number of Armenians in Angoroo (Ankara) he gave as 250, while Armenian Catholics numbered 15,000. “*The latter were converted to the Catholic religion, one hundred and fifty years ago. ... The Armenian Catholics have twenty-two Priests. If you ask an Armenian Catholic, whether he is an Armenian, he replies: ‘No, I am a Kotolok (Catholic – A.B.).’*”<sup>27</sup> Wolff’s testimonies that Armenian Catholics considered themselves not Armenians but just Catholics once again confirm the alienated character of certain strata of Armenian Catholics.

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<sup>21</sup> Wolff 1835.

<sup>22</sup> See Wolff 1835, 8.

<sup>23</sup> See Wolff 1835, 9.

<sup>24</sup> See Wolff 1835, 10.

<sup>25</sup> See Wolff 1835, 13.

<sup>26</sup> See Wolff 1835, 15.

<sup>27</sup> Wolff 1835, 16.

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Continuing his route, Joseph Wolff visited Isthanos, situated six hours' journey from Ankara, describing it as "*an interesting place, inhabited by 5,000 Armenians, who speak only the ancient Armenian language.*"<sup>28</sup> Here, by "*ancient Armenian,*" the author most likely meant the literary language rather than the classical *grabar* proper. In the settlement of Galatshik he mentioned 500 Armenians with a church and a priest,<sup>29</sup> and in Sangorloo (now Sungurlu) 300<sup>30</sup>; there he also met Armenians from Erevan who informed him that they were now traveling with Russian passports.<sup>31</sup> He indicated the number of Armenians in Alatsha (probably current-day Alaçati), 24 miles from Sangorloo, as thirty.<sup>32</sup> In the settlement of Seela, located thirty-six miles from Tokat, according to Wolff, 1,000 Armenians lived (and here, as was often the case, he stayed in the house of a hospitable Armenian), while in Tokat itself there were 4,500. At the same time, he noted that the local Armenian Catholics had no church, whereas the other Armenians possessed two monasteries and seven churches.<sup>33</sup>

On 20 May Wolff reached "Shebin Kara-Hizar" (Shapin-Garahisar, now Şebinkarahisar) – "*the Nicopolis of Armenia. It is inhabited by 4,000 Armenians and 200 Greeks*"<sup>34</sup> – and observed that the local Armenian bishop had nine villages with 4,800 inhabitants.<sup>35</sup> On 22 May he was invited by the Armenian bishop Hakobus. "*He was born at Sivas, the ancient Sebaste, which is inhabited by 5,000 Armenians; it has a bishop, two churches, twenty Priests, and the monastery, Surp Neshan. He informs me that at Marsawan, are 2,500 Armenians, an Archbishop, and a church, besides the great monastery Astwazazin.*"<sup>36</sup>

The following day Wolff was invited by the head of the Armenians of Goroon (Armenian Kyurin, now Gürün), who told him that the settlement

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<sup>28</sup> Wolff 1835, 20.

<sup>29</sup> See Wolff 1835, 22.

<sup>30</sup> See Wolff 1835, 22.

<sup>31</sup> See Wolff 1835, 22.

<sup>32</sup> See Wolff 1835, 22.

<sup>33</sup> See Wolff 1835, 23.

<sup>34</sup> Wolff 1835, 24.

<sup>35</sup> See Wolff 1835, 25.

<sup>36</sup> Wolff 1835, 26.

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possessed a church and a priest and that the number of Armenians amounted to 5,000; they recognized the authority of the Catholicos of Sis.<sup>37</sup>

On 26 May Wolff reached Oolu Sheiran (this toponym is unrecognizable), where he saw numerous church ruins, testifying that Christians had once lived there; now only one Armenian and two Greek families remained.<sup>38</sup> Referring to Armenian bishops and archbishops of his time, Wolff noted that *"The dioceses of the Armenian Bishop of Gumushkhane contains 1620 Armenians, one monastery, a church, and 5 priests. Trebison, which is also under his jurisdiction, contains 1,900 Armenians, and thirty five villages with 2,500 Armenians."*<sup>39</sup>

On the road to Trabzon Wolff mentioned several settlements: Hamshoon (Hamshen), *"where the inhabitants were Armenians, but have turned Mohammedans"*<sup>40</sup>; Baiboot (Bayburt), where 300 Armenians lived; he noted that before the war with Russia there had been 4,000 Armenians there, after which General Ivan Paskevich resettled them to Akhaltsikhe<sup>41</sup>); Ashgala (Armenian Ashkala, now Aşkale), where previously 300 Armenians had also lived but were likewise resettled to Akhaltsikhe by Paskevich; and Klise (Kilis), where before the Russo-Turkish war 300 Armenian families lived, of whom only ten remained, the others having followed the example of their compatriots.<sup>42</sup>

*"When the Russians came to Erzerroom, the Armenians poured out their vengeance against the Turks, for all they have from them in former times. When the Russians retired, Paskewitch told them, he was apprehensive, if they remained, that the Turks would fall again upon them; moreover, this shrewd general through his influence with their Bishop, induced the whole Armenian and Greek population to emigrate with him, except 48 Armenian Catholics, and 100 Armenians, who remained at Erzurum."*<sup>43</sup> In Erzurum Wolff met the Russian captain Voynikov, who was selling the houses of the resettled Armenians. *"There were in this place 17,000 Armenians before the invasion of*

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<sup>37</sup> See Wolff 1835, 26.

<sup>38</sup> See Wolff 1835, 26.

<sup>39</sup> Wolff 1835, 28.

<sup>40</sup> Wolff 1835, 32.

<sup>41</sup> See Wolff 1835, 32.

<sup>42</sup> See Wolff 1835, 32.

<sup>43</sup> Wolff 1835, 33.

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*the Russians. The ancient name Erzeroum is in Armenian, Garim (Karin – A. B.).*<sup>44</sup>

Wolff's next stop was Persia, where he visited Ispahan again. *"Armenians from the neighborhood of Ispahan called on me; they inform me that around Ispahan, and as far as Kerman-Chah, 16785 Armenians are residing in sixty villages."*<sup>45</sup> Wolff considered it necessary to devote an entire chapter (about eight pages, pp. 81–89) to a "A short sketch of the history of the Armenians." He noted that he had collected information from the learned Johannes Avdall (Hovhannes Avdalyan) of Kolkata and from the bishop of Gumushkhane, and that this information corresponded to the data he had previously received in Echmiadzin, Shushi, Tbilisi, Constantinople, and other places.<sup>46</sup> Wolff then reproduced a letter from his friend Avdall concerning the doctrine of the Armenian Church. He also noted that, according to Avdall, the number of Armenians in the world amounted to twenty million: *"I think that he is very much mistaken, and that will be very difficult to make out 3 millions of Armenians."*<sup>47</sup> Indeed, the number of twenty million is greatly exaggerated.

Having visited Kabul in May 1832, the missionary reported that fifty Armenians lived there; they had been brought there sixty years earlier by Ahmed Shah from Meshed. However, after the prohibition of trade in alcoholic beverages most of them left Kabul. The Jews returned to Mashhad after ten months, while the Armenians went back to Yerevan. It should be recalled that during his journey of 1834 Wolff indicated the number of Armenians in Kabul as forty families; yet *"now only 4 Jewish families and 4 Armenian men, and 19 Armenian ladies."*<sup>48</sup> Notably, seven years after Wolff's visit, in 1839, when the British army victoriously entered Kabul, Anglican clergymen accompanying it visited the Armenian community and baptized unbaptized children. One of the English clergymen, J.N. Allen, testified that the Armenians of Kabul told him that they had once numbered 200 families, but because of persecution by the Afghans only four families–thirty-five persons–remained.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Wolff 1835, 33.

<sup>45</sup> Wolff 1835, 81.

<sup>46</sup> See Wolff 1835, 82.

<sup>47</sup> Wolff 1835, 89.

<sup>48</sup> Wolff 1835, 226.

<sup>49</sup> See **Derenik episkopos** 1957.

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Joseph Wolff also encountered individual Armenians in Central Asia. “*There were also at Bokhara two Armenians: one, who came from Russia and lived there for many years, and another who lately came from Astrachan, via Orgauntsh.*”<sup>50</sup> In Kashmir, bordering Afghanistan, among the inhabitants of the city of Yarkand (now Yarkant County in China) Wolff mentioned that fifteen years earlier (that is, in 1817) a certain Armenian named Akhoond Lok Suleiman had arrived there.<sup>51</sup> This name is not Armenian, and Wolff did not explain who he was or why he mentioned him.

Wolff considered it also necessary to devote a separate chapter to the Armenians of India (“Armenians in British India”), their number is 1,000 and they reside in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Penang, Singapore, Chinsurah, Sydabad, Dacca, Gwailor and Surat.<sup>52</sup>

Incidentally, Wolff’s subsequent book, published in 1845 (*Narrative of a mission to Bokhara, in the years 1843–1845, to ascertain the fate of Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly...*), also contains information on the number of Armenians in several settlements of Armenia, though this time it is rather limited.

### **Conclusion**

During his travels through various countries of the East, Joseph Wolff considered it necessary to record the number of inhabitants of different peoples in the places he visited, including Armenians. In this respect his travel notes constitute an exceptional source for clarifying the quantitative picture of the Armenian population in the first half of the 19th century - both in Eastern and Western Armenia and in neighboring and other regions (Persia, the Middle East, Afghanistan, and India). In indicating the number of Armenian inhabitants in the cities and villages he visited, Wolff almost always distinguished between Apostolic and Catholic Armenians, often also considering it necessary to note the number of clergies.

Given that Wolff, as a missionary, maintained contact with Armenian ecclesiastical and educational figures and obtained his information from them, the data he reports should be regarded as at least approximately reliable.

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<sup>50</sup> Wolff 1835, 189.

<sup>51</sup> See Wolff 1835, 341.

<sup>52</sup> See Wolff 1835, 427.

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**ԱՐԾՎԻ ԲԱԽՉԻՆՅԱՆ**

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**XIX ԴԱՐԻ ԱՌԱՋԻՆ ԿԵՍԻ ՀԱՅԵՐԻ ԹՎԱՔԱՆԱԿՆ ԸՍՏ**

**ՋՈՂԵՖ ՎՈԼՖԻ ՀԱՂՈՐԴԱԾ ՏՎՅԱԼՆԵՐԻ**

**Ամփոփում**

Գերմանա-հրեական ծագումով բրիտանացի քարոզիչ Ջոզեֆ Վոլֆը (1795–1862) գրել է վեց ուղեգրություն՝ արևելյան երկրներ կատարած իր ճանապարհորդությունների մասին: Դրանց ընթացքում նա անհրաժեշտ է համարել արձանագրել իր այցելած վայրերում ապրող տարբեր ժողովուրդների, այդ թվում նաև հայերի թվաքանակը: Այս առումով նրա ուղեգրությունները բացառիկ աղբյուր են XIX դարի առաջին կեսի հայության թվաքանակը պարզելու համար ինչպես Արևելյան և Արևմտյան Հայաստանում, այնպես էլ

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հարևան և այլ երկրներում (Օսմանյան կայսրություն, Պարսկաստան, Մերձավոր Արևելք, Աֆղանստան, Հնդկաստան):

Մասնավորապես, իր «Միսիոներական օրագիր և հրեաների միսիոներ վերապատվելի Ջոզեֆ Վոլֆի հիշողություններ» (1827–1829) և «Հետազոտություններ և միսիոներական աշխատանքներ հրեաների, մահմեդականների և այլ աղանդների մեջ վերապատվելի Ջոզեֆ Վոլֆի՝ 1831–1834 թվականների ճանապարհորդությունների ընթացքում» (1835) ուղեգրություններում նա նշել է իր այցելած քաղաքների և գյուղերի հայ բնակիչների թվաքանակը: Այսպես, նրա տվյալներով, Բաքվում ապրել է 114 ընտանիք, Շապին--Գարահիսարում՝ 4000, Սվազում՝ 5000, Կոստանդնուպոլսում՝ 130,000, Քաբուլում՝ 40 ընտանիք, Բրիտանական Հնդկաստանում՝ 1000 հայ և այլն:

Նշելով իր այցելած քաղաքների ու գյուղերի հայ բնակիչների թվաքանակը՝ Վոլֆը գրեթե միշտ տարբերակել է առաքելական և կաթոլիկ հայերին, հաճախ անհրաժեշտ համարել նշել նաև հոգևորականների թիվը:

Հաշվի առնելով, որ Ջոզեֆ Վոլֆը, լինելով միսիոներ, շփման մեջ է եղել հայ եկեղեցական և կրթական գործիչների հետ և իր տեղեկությունները ստացել է նրանցից, նրա հաղորդած տվյալները կարելի է համարել հիմնականում հավաստի:


**Բանալի բառեր՝** *Ջոզեֆ Վոլֆ, ուղեգրություն, հայեր, գյուղական բնակչություն, Օսմանյան կայսրություն, Մետսպոլիտան, Պարսկաստան:*

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## **THE RUSSO-TURKISH AGREEMENT OF JANUARY 26, 1914 IN THE PAGES OF CONSTANTINOPLE ARMENIAN PERIODICALS**

### ***Abstract***

The Russo-Turkish Agreement signed on January 26, 1914, did not resolve the Armenian Question. The Ottoman authorities invalidated it, thereby preventing the European inspectors N. Hoff and L. Westenenk from commencing the activities stipulated by the document. This course of action was officially justified by the fact that World War I had begun on July 19, 1914, and under wartime conditions, there was no longer a need to implement the agreement. These realities were reflected in the Armenian press published in Constantinople. In particular, the widely circulated daily newspapers *Azatomart* and *Zhamanak* actively covered this issue. They also presented to their readers the expectations and hopes of Armenians regarding the agreement. Opinions varied. Many believed that under the general supervision of the Russian Empire, the agreement would finally safeguard the long-violated rights of Armenians. A significant segment of Armenian society, however, remained skeptical, recalling a number of previously adopted decisions and documents that had in no way contributed to a pro-Armenian resolution of the Armenian Question. *Azatomart* called upon everyone to remain realistic, while *Zhamanak* urged patience and waiting for further developments. Alongside expressing their own positions, these periodicals also addressed the viewpoints of pro-European and pro-Russian groups. Analytical articles conclud-

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ed that, overall, Western Armenians aspired to live a peaceful and secure life in their ancestral homeland. It was noted that although the agreement envisaged reforms in Armenian-populated provinces, the Ottoman government had for decades merely spoken of implementing reforms across the empire, in practice leaving such programs confined to paper.

**Keywords:** *Russo-Turkish Agreement of January 26, 1914, Azatamart daily, Zhamanak daily, Armenian reform program, Armenian Question, Nikolai Hoff, Louis Westenenk.*

### ***Introduction***

On January 26, 1914, in Constantinople, Konstantin Gulkevich, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of the Russian Empire, and Said Halim Pasha, Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, signed the Russo-Turkish Agreement,<sup>1</sup> according to which reforms were to be implemented in the Armenian-populated provinces. This document had undergone a preparatory period of more than two years, the beginning of which may be traced to the re-emergence of the issue of Armenian reforms during the liberation wars of the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula in 1912. In September 1912, the European Great Powers and Russia intervened in the adoption of a reform program developed by the Ottoman authorities, which ostensibly envisaged improvements in the Armenian-populated provinces of Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, and Trebizond. However, this program was rejected by the National Assembly of Western Armenians and the Patriarchate due to its limited and inadequate provisions. In April 1913, through the efforts of active Western Armenian national and political figures, a draft reform project was prepared and submitted to Mikhail Girs, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Russia in Constantinople. It reflected the aspirations of the Armenians, according to which the reform process was to be supervised by representatives of the European powers and Russia. In January 1913, the Young Turk government put forward a counterproposal: to carry out reforms not only in the Armenian provinces, but throughout the entire territory of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>2</sup> The Great Powers, driven by their geopolitical interests in the region, began negotiating and turning the Armenian Question into a subject of “bargaining.” The reform project for the

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<sup>1</sup> History of the Armenian People 1981, 533–534.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Armenian People 1981, 522–524, 527.

Armenian-populated provinces, presented by Andrey Mandelstam, First Dragoman and adviser of the Russian Embassy in Constantinople and based on the programs of 1880 and 1895, was set against the general reform project developed by the Ottoman authorities. After prolonged discussions, the parties reached a compromise, which ultimately resulted in the signing of the aforementioned Russo-Turkish Agreement on January 26, 1914. In Armenian historiography, the Russo-Turkish Agreement is regarded, in certain respects, as a step forward compared to previous documents concerning the Armenian Question, while it is also rightly noted as a step backward in relation to the initial reform project prepared by Mandelstam.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the views and opinions of representatives of the Armenian socio-political elite of the time, as well as of the intellectuals grouped around the periodical press, differed regarding the aforementioned document. A significant portion of them did not believe that the provisions of the agreement would be implemented. At the same time, there were also many figures expressing the opposing view, who supported a just resolution of the Armenian Question through the assistance of European powers and the military support of Russia. According to the conviction of many Western and Eastern Armenian figures, under Russian patronage the Armenian people would, at the very least, be spared the threats of physical annihilation, devastation, and plunder.<sup>4</sup> The *Mshak* daily newspaper, published in Tiflis in 1915, wrote the following in this regard: "Turkish Armenia must ultimately fall under Russian rule, thanks to the victorious advance of Russian troops."<sup>5</sup> The clash of opinions was most visible in the pages of Constantinople Armenian periodicals.

This document, aimed at improving the living conditions and rights of Western Armenians, had not yet been fully understood by all segments and strata of Armenian society when, under the pretext of the outbreak of the First World War, the authorities annulled it and refused to implement its provisions. The reaction of the Armenian press was particularly noteworthy in that, instead of putting forward proposals or making decisions, the majority of newspapers remained in a state of expectancy. Undoubtedly, censorship played a decisive role in distorting public opinion, prohibiting even the publication of minor reports about the deportations,

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<sup>3</sup> History of Armenia 2015, 144–145.

<sup>4</sup> History of the Armenian People 1981, 533–534.

<sup>5</sup> "Mshak," № 159, 23.07.1915 (see **Hovsepyan** 2024, 142).

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massacres, and plunder of Armenians in Armenian-populated areas, and allowing only official information concerning the wartime situation to be published.<sup>6</sup>

Within the framework of this article, drawing upon the available scholarly literature on the subject, as well as relying on the historical-comparative method and the analysis of publications from two of the most influential Constantinople Armenian periodicals of the 1910s (*Azatamart* and *Zhamanak*), an attempt will be made to present a comprehensive overview of the expectations of Western Armenians from the Russo-Turkish Agreement of January 26, 1914, the actions they undertook, and, more broadly, the views they expressed regarding the Armenian Question.

### ***“Azatamart” and “Zhamanak” on the Russo-Turkish Agreement***

There was not a single article in the periodicals *Azatamart* and *Zhamanak* in which journalists expressed a dismissive attitude toward the agreement. The publications clearly reflected the expectations and hopes of these newspapers regarding the agreement and the Great Powers. At the same time, they largely failed to take into account the previous ineffective diplomatic efforts concerning the Armenian Question, which had remained at the level of written and verbal declarations.

It should be noted that the *Azatamart* daily (1909–1915) was the official organ of the Western Bureau of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (*Dashnaktsutyun*) and reflected the party's position on the issue. The *Zhamanak* daily,<sup>7</sup> by contrast, was not the mouthpiece of any political party. It was distinguished by the independent views of its editorial staff and their associates, although for a brief period (1920–1924) it was published jointly with the Armenian Ramgavar Party's newspaper “*Zhoghovrdin Dzayn*” (The voice of the people) under the title “*Zhoghovrdi Dzayn–Zhamanak*.”<sup>8</sup>

*Azatamart* addressed the Russo-Turkish Agreement almost on a daily basis, primarily through analytical articles, focusing on developments in the Armenian Question following its signing, as well as on the expectations and disappointments of the Armenian people. At times, it published series of articles on the subject, which were placed on the front page.

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<sup>6</sup> **Kharatyan** 2015, 10–11.

<sup>7</sup> **Hovsepyan** 2016, 211.

<sup>8</sup> **Kharatyan** 2015, 242.

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Zhamanak, by contrast, did not frequently address the Russo-Turkish Agreement of January 26, 1914, although from the early months of 1913 it actively discussed the circumstances arising from the reopening of the Armenian Question. By the end of the year, the newspaper had introduced a dedicated section titled "Armenian Reforms." The publications within this subsection were mostly placed on the third page.

These materials, typically written in the genres of correspondence, news reports, and only rarely analytical articles, and characterized by a neutral tone, were primarily informational in nature. However, "between the lines," one could sense the concealed concern of the editorial staff regarding the new developments in the issue of Armenian reforms.

The editors exercised considerable restraint in organizing their work in a country where state officials and the leaders of the ruling Young Turk party were by no means interested in resolving the issue of Armenian reforms. The staff of Azatamart adopted a more radical stance in their approach.

For such positions, the government ultimately took decisive action: on April 24, 1915, it permanently shut down Azatamart and arrested its editor-in-chief, Ruben Zardaryan, along with nearly all members of its staff, sentencing them to death.<sup>9</sup> During the years of the Armenian Genocide, despite being subjected to the tightened requirements of censorship, the *Zhamanak* daily and several other Constantinople Armenian periodicals continued to be published almost on a daily basis. Following the signing of the Russo-Turkish Agreement of January 26, 1914, the editorial staff of *Zhamanak* appears to have followed the course of events with patience, particularly in connection with the arrival of the general inspectors, the Norwegian colonel Nikolai Hoff and the Dutch diplomat Louis Westenenk, and the activities they were expected to carry out on the ground. In this regard, the correspondences titled "On the Armenian Reforms" and "General Inspector of Armenia Hoff Bey to Visit the Holy Patriarch" were particularly indicative.<sup>10</sup> Although these reports presented to readers details of the visits and meetings of Hoff and Westenenk, not only with Patriarch Zaven Archbishop Der Yeghiayan, but also with the Grand Vizier and the Minister of the Interior of the Ottoman Empire, the newspaper remained silent regarding the issues discussed. The secretaries of these officials had requested that the *Zhamanak* correspondent who had contact-

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<sup>9</sup> Hovsepyan 2003, 44–45.

<sup>10</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1846, 03.07.1914.

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ed them refrain, for the time being, from publishing any material on the subject.<sup>11</sup> The newspaper merely reported that the general inspectors of Western Armenia had concluded employment contracts with the government, according to which they were to depart for their posts on July 14, 1914.<sup>12</sup> Hoff was to become the inspector-general of the provinces of Van, Kharberd, Bitlis, and Diyarbakir, while Westenenk was to assume the same position over the provinces of Sebastia, Erzurum, and Trebizond.<sup>13</sup> This did not take place due to the outbreak of the First World War on July 19, 1914. Until the establishment of censorship dictated by wartime conditions,<sup>14</sup> *Zhamanak* addressed the emerging situation only briefly. In one of its analytical articles, citing the claims of certain Turkish publicists that Armenians allegedly sought to establish an independent state, the newspaper argued the contrary.<sup>15</sup> The periodical asserted that Armenians, as a people living in the common Ottoman homeland, would devote themselves wholeheartedly to its defense. *Zhamanak* had fully translated and published the section of the document about Armenians.<sup>16</sup> It was specifically stated therein: "Armenian soldiers have demonstrated qualities proving that this son of the homeland remains fully loyal to the Ottoman flag."<sup>17</sup> The newspaper published the inaugural encyclical written by Archbishop Zaven on the eve of the war, which was read in all Armenian churches of Constantinople. In it, the Patriarch assured that, thanks to the reform program, the issues troubling Western Armenians would gradually be resolved.<sup>18</sup> Despite the hopes of the Armenian population, Ottoman diplomacy managed not only to skillfully exploit the clash of geopolitical interests and contradictions among the Great Powers, but also to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the First World War. It thereby promptly renounced all previous political and economic agreements with those states, the economic privileges it had previously granted them, as well as the debts accumulated by the Ottoman

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<sup>11</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1854, 11.07.1914.

<sup>12</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1856, 13.07.1914.

<sup>13</sup> History of Armenia, 2015, p. 147.

<sup>14</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1881, 08.08.1914.

<sup>15</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1999, 04.12.1914.

<sup>16</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1997, 02.12.1914.

<sup>17</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1997, 02.12.1914.

<sup>18</sup> "Zhamanak," № 1856, 13.07.1914.

Empire. *Azatomart* perceived dangers for the Armenian Question in this new policy.<sup>19</sup>

***The Reflection of Public Attitudes in the Newspapers Azatomart and Zhamanak***

Arshak Vramian, a deputy of the Ottoman Parliament, wrote in the newspaper *Azatomart* that it was necessary to approach the Russo-Turkish Agreement with realism.<sup>20</sup> In his article series titled *"The Reform of Armenia and the Inspector-Generals,"* he presented the views of various segments of the public. Addressing those dissatisfied with the agreement, Vramian urged them to also consider opposing viewpoints.<sup>21</sup> He showed understanding toward those figures who did not believe that this agreement, aimed at meeting the minimal demands of Western Armenians, would be implemented,<sup>22</sup> while remaining convinced that its execution was in the interest of international diplomacy.<sup>23</sup> Vramian urged not to express dissatisfaction but to make use of what had been achieved, which in fact could create fairly broad opportunities for the peaceful life of Western Armenians.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, he posed the following question: "When will the result come? This is the question to which every Armenian awaits an answer with anxious anticipation."<sup>25</sup>

E. Aknuni, a prominent figure and contributor to *Azatomart*, dividing the views formed within Armenian society regarding the Russo-Turkish Agreement into two groups, observed the following. According to those who supported the first view, Hoff and Westenenk symbolized a promising future for Western Armenians, whereas adherents of the second approach believed that "a country cannot be transformed by two individuals, and hell cannot be turned into a kingdom through paper programs."<sup>26</sup> Aknuni maintained that Hoff and Westenenk would succeed in their work if they were supported by the Ottoman authorities.<sup>27</sup> In

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<sup>19</sup> "Azatomart," № 1603, 12.09.1914.

<sup>20</sup> "Azatomart," № 1547, 08.07.1914.

<sup>21</sup> "Azatomart," № 1546, 07.07.1914.

<sup>22</sup> "Azatomart," № 1544, 04.07.1914.

<sup>23</sup> "Azatomart," № 1544, 04.07.1914.

<sup>24</sup> "Azatomart," № 1510, 26.05.1914.

<sup>25</sup> "Azatomart," № 1510, 26.05.1914.

<sup>26</sup> "Azatomart," № 1494, 07.05.1914.

<sup>27</sup> "Azatomart," № 1494, 07.05.1914.

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reality, however, the opposite picture prevailed. In this regard, indicative was the article titled *"Turkey's View on the Armenian Reforms,"* translated and published in *Azatomart* from the French newspaper *Le Temps*. The correspondent of this periodical had spoken about the Russo-Turkish Agreement with a high-ranking official of the Ministry of the Interior of the Ottoman Empire, who asserted that the document was intended to ensure that "the reform program would be implemented not only in the six provinces of Eastern Anatolia, but also throughout Asiatic Turkey; at least, this is the position and intention of the Sublime Porte."<sup>28</sup> The newspaper's readers, however, witnessed an entirely different reality: the dispossession of Armenians from their lands and property, massacres, and the falsification of the number of Armenian deputies in parliamentary elections.<sup>29</sup>

*Azatomart* presented a letter by Boghos Nubar, head of the Armenian National Delegation, which had been published in translation in the London newspaper *The Times*. In it, he noted in particular:

"Only through the sincere, complete, and unconditional implementation of the reforms will the Armenian Question cease to exist."<sup>30</sup> Nubar was confident that the Sublime Porte would implement the provisions of the Russo-Turkish Agreement. However, the guarantees underlying this confidence proved to be illusory, while the Ottoman authorities were, day by day, making their anti-Armenian intentions increasingly explicit.

#### **Conclusion**

The newspapers *Azatomart* and *Zhamanak* did not provide an answer to the question of what course of action the Armenian political and intellectual elite would adopt if the authorities failed to implement the provisions of the agreement. The strict censorship established in the Ottoman Empire at the outset of the First World War explains why *Zhamanak* and *Azatomart* did not address the annulment of the agreement, and later also refrained from reporting on the deportations and massacres of Armenians. Published under conditions of imposed relative silence, *Zhamanak* was able to present an objective and impartial account of the anti-Armenian policies carried out in the Ottoman Empire only after the signing of the

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<sup>28</sup> "Azatomart," № 1435, 21.02.1914.

<sup>29</sup> "Azatomart," № 1435, 21.02.1914.

<sup>30</sup> "Azatomart," № 1437, 24.02.1914.

Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918.<sup>31</sup> While each of the European Great Powers, through its manipulation of the Armenian Question, posed to some extent a threat to the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire, the materials published in *Azatomart* and *Zhamanak* demonstrate that the aims of Western Armenians were limited to securing their livelihood and preserving their national identity. This is clearly reflected in the following statement by Boghos Nubar in his aforementioned letter to the editor of *The Times*:

“The populations of the Armenian provinces, rejecting all ideas of separation or autonomy, wish only to remain Ottomans. It is sufficient that, through the implementation of the reforms stipulated by the Treaty of Berlin, an end be put to acts of banditry, killings, and land seizures... and that, in this way, security and justice be guaranteed.”<sup>32</sup> The newspaper *Tercüman-i Hakikat*, regarded as an official press organ of the Committee of Union and Progress (Ittihat), wrote that the most dangerous bandits resided in Western Armenia, and that the seemingly insignificant conflicts between the local Kurdish and Armenian populations were always “exaggerated under foreign influence.”<sup>33</sup> The Young Turk ruling circles, seeking to preserve the territorial integrity of their state and to prevent foreign intervention, decided to resolve the Armenian Question by emptying Western Armenia, the ancestral homeland, of its Armenian population. The Kemalist authorities that succeeded the Young Turks, in turn, adopted decisions that prohibited Western Armenians who had been deported during the First World War and had survived the massacres from returning to their homeland.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> “Azatomart,” № 1496, 09.05.1914.

<sup>34</sup> History of the Republic of Turkey 2014, 78.

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**ՄԱՐԻԱՄ ՀՈՎՍԵՓՅԱՆ**

*Քանասիրական գիտությունների թեկնածու*

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**1914 Թ. ՀՈՒՆՎԱՐԻ 26-Ի ՌՈՒՍ-ԹՈՒՐԲԱԿԱՆ  
ՀԱՄԱՁԱՅՆԱԳԻՐԸ ՊՈԼՍԱՀԱՅ ՊԱՐԲԵՐԱԿԱՆՆԵՐԻ  
ԷՋԵՐՈՒՄ**

**Ամփոփում**

«Ազատամարտ» և «Ժամանակ» օրաթերթերը պարբերաբար անդրադարձել էին 1914 թ. հունվարի 26-ին կնքված ռուս-թուրքական համաձայնագրին՝ կարևորելով դրա դերը հայկական բարենորոգումների խնդրի լուծման գործում: «Ազատամարտ»-ը դա արել էր գրեթե ամենօրյա կտրվածքով՝ խմբագրականների, վերլուծական հոդվածների, թղթակցությունների միջոցով: Իբրև ՀՅԴ պաշտոնաթերթ՝ այն արտահայտել էր առաջին հերթին կուսակցության դիրքորոշումները և դիտողություններն այդ փաստաթղթի վերաբերյալ: Թեև պարբերականի խմբագրակազմը փորձել էր իրատեսորեն մոտենալ համաձայնագրին, բայց չէր նկատել կամ չէր մատնանշել իշխանությունների ներթաքույց նպատակը. հնարավորության դեպքում Հայկական հարցում հրաժարվել ստանձնած պարտավորություններից: «Ժամանակ» օրաթերթը ոչ հաճախակի էր ներկայացրել խնդրո առարկա թեման: Պարբերականի էջերում համաձայնագիրը լուսաբանվել էր առավելապես լուրի և թղթակցության ժանրերով: Դրանք հաճախ թարգմանություններ էին թուրքական, եվրոպական թերթերի և լրատվական գործակալությունների նյութերից: Որպես անկախ մամուլի օրգան՝ «Ժամանակ»-ը չէր պաշտպանել որևէ կուսակցության տեսակետները: Այս թեմայով հրապարակումներն առանց մեկնաբանությունների էին տպագրվել: Թերթը չեզոք կեցվածք էր

### The Russo-Turkish Agreement of January 26, 1914 ...

որդեգրել, թեև զգացվում էր խմբագրության աշխատակիցների մտահոգությունն արևմտահայության ճակատագրի նկատմամբ ու անհանգստությունը՝ հանուն Հայկական հարցի լուծման գործադրվող ջանքերի հաջող ավարտի:


Օսմանյան կայսրության իշխանությունների կողմից 1914 թ. հունվարի 26-ին կնքված ռուս-թուրքական համաձայնագրի չեղարկումը թուրքական դիվանագիտության նախորդ տասնամյակների աշխատանքի հետևանքն էր: Նպատակը Հայկական հարցից և մեծ տերությունների կողմից դրա միջոցով Թուրքիային քաղաքական ու տնտեսական շահարկումների ենթարկելուց ազատելն էր: Այս հարցին նվիրված վերլուծական հոդվածներ չկային «Ազատամարտ» ու «Ժամանակ» օրաթերթերի 1914–1915 թթ. մեզ հասած հավաքածուներում: Եթե եվրոպական մեծ տերություններից յուրաքանչյուրը, Հայկական հարցի շահարկմամբ, ինչ-որ տեղ վտանգ էր ստեղծում Օսմանյան կայսրության ամբողջականության համար, ապա, ինչպես «Ազատամարտ» և «Ժամանակ» պարբերականների էջերում զետեղված նյութերն են վկայում, արևմտահայության նպատակները զուտ նրանց կենսապահովմանն ու ազգային դիմագծի պահպանմանն էին վերաբերում: Իշխող իթթիհատական կուսակցության պաշտոնաթերթերն իրենց հերթին պնդում էին, որ Արևելյան Անատոլիայում (Արևմտյան Հայաստանում) պարբերաբար ծագող «ապստամբական» շարժումները տասնամյակներ շարունակ եվրոպական մեծ տերություններին դիվանագիտական խաղեր վարելու հնարավորություն էին տալիս, ինչը կարող էր վտանգել Օսմանյան կայսրության տարածքային անձեռնմխելիությունը և անկախությունը: Դրան վերջ տալու համար էր նաև, որ թուրքական իշխանությունները հրաժարվեցին 1914 թ. հունվարի 26-ին կնքված ռուս-թուրքական համաձայնագրից և գտան Հայկական հարցի՝ լուծման իրենց պետության համար շահավետ տարբերակ:

**Բանալի բառեր՝** 1914 թ. հունվարի 26-ի ռուս-թուրքական համաձայնագիր, «Ազատամարտ» օրաթերթ, «Ժամանակ» օրաթերթ, հայկական բարենորոգումների ծրագիր, Հայկական հարց, Նիկոլայ Հոֆ, Լուի Վեսթենենկ:

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## THE ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN GABRIEL SUNDUKYAN'S VAUDEVILLES

### ***Abstract***

The article examines the art of characterization in the vaudevilles of Gabriel Sundukyan and beyond. Gabriel Sundukyan is one of the greatest representatives of Armenian dramaturgy. His vaudevilles constitute an important and irreplaceable part of Armenian theatrical literature. Sundukyan's vaudevilles are distinguished not only by their comedic structure but also by their deep social subtext and the multilayered development of characters. The author creates typical yet individualized figures that reflect the social relations, moral values, and contradictions of the time. The analysis shows that Sundukyan skillfully combines humor with a critical perspective, revealing social inequality, false morality, and materialism. It is also noteworthy that his characters often bear the influence of cultural intersections, such as the character Yavangul, who represents a fusion of Armenian and Georgian cultures. Through his characters, Sundukyan frequently raises issues related to

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the moral and social decline of society. His characters often find themselves at the center of internal and external conflicts, facing the clash between old and new values, material interests, and ethical principles. Thus, Sundukyan's vaudevilles possess not only artistic value but also serve as an important source of socio-philosophical reflection.

**Keywords:** *Vaudeville, dramaturgy, European culture, Gabriel Sundukyan, characterization, Values, theatre.*

### **Introduction**

The vaudeville genre flourished in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the Alexandrinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, out of 1606 performances staged between 1826 and 1855, 850 were vaudevilles.<sup>1</sup> "Vaudeville is a play in which dialogue and dramatic action, built on an intriguing plot and an anecdotal storyline, are combined with music, quartet singing, and dance."<sup>2</sup>

Comedy in Sundukyan's vaudevilles is not considered merely for the purpose of entertainment, but rather as a form of moral critique. In his vaudevilles, Gabriel Sundukyan expresses the customs and psychology of society in his time, ranging from individual crises to social inequality. Sundukyan's vaudevilles combine serious social issues-such as family relations, romantic relationships, financial interests, and moral values-with comedic plots and humorous characters.

### ***Human contradictions hidden behind laughter in the vaudevilles "Gishervan Sabry Kher e" and "Oskan Petrovichn En Kinkum"***

Gabriel Sundukyan's art of characterization combines emotional intensity, humor, and profound social observation. Through comedy, Sundukyan presents not only entertaining situations but also the human flaws hidden beneath them, revealing the disorders and contradictions of different social classes and moral values within society. His characters often find themselves in situations that are both comical and tragic, where personal interests and individual desires come into conflict with one another. Nevertheless, Sundukyan's plays would not have achieved such impact and classical depth if he had not deeply understood the complex relationships and contradictions among various layers of society,

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<sup>1</sup> Sakhnovsky-Pankeev 1964, 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Kratkaya Literaturnaya Entsiklopediya* 1962, 1003

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thereby creating monumental and memorable characters. For the first time, Sundukyan tested his literary strength in the play "Gishervan Sabre Kher e", one of whose characters was inspired by Artashes Sukiasyants, a prominent Armenian popular actor of that time.<sup>3</sup> Although the play is a simple and light comedy, it simultaneously reflects the life of certain layers of society-in this case, the conflicts among petty traders and individuals involved in the struggle for income. The characters are mostly presented with surnames such as Irasatsov, Chartarov, and Tanakutoghints, which helps to highlight the social strata that were already "established" in society at that time through their names. Each character is portrayed as a unique symbol rather than a fully developed psychological or philosophical individual, as might be found in more complex dramas. Gabriel Sundukyan emphasizes, through his characters, the mentality and behavior of certain social groups-particularly petty traders-placing them in comedic situations. In the play "Gishervan Sabre Kher e," Sundukyan gives special importance to the depiction of human character traits. From the very first vaudeville, the social psychology of the petty trader is presented: Oskan Petrovich Irasatsov is entirely immersed in vulgar and pragmatic thinking, where everything is evaluated in terms of money and calculation. For him, every situation-whether family or social-revolves around financial gain. The power of money is also felt by Martha. Kekel's fate is dependent on her father's will and money. Through Kekel, Sundukyan raises questions related to the practical mentality of society, where everything is measured by material value. Oskan is simply obsessed with money and driven by its desire, while still preserving a patriarchal worldview. In Sundukyan's vaudevilles, typical characters are depicted in vivid colors: on one hand, their social flaws are ridiculed, and on the other, human weaknesses such as lying, greed, and malice are revealed. By presenting Oskan Petrovich's idea of "leasing" the theatre, Sundukyan does not merely portray "bandits" or "businessmen," but instead creates a clear perspective on how the interaction between high society and the world of art can lead to contradictions. The dramatist, who studied the phenomena of life, observed that the source of comedy can be the hero's real-life situation, his intellectual capacity, and the contradiction between that situation and the

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<sup>3</sup> **Sundukyan** 1951, vol. 1, 460.

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demands that are incompatible with his abilities.<sup>4</sup> Gabriel Sundukyan compels the audience to reflect on the idea that art-especially theatre-can become unprepared and "mercenary," and that, despite its comedic and extraordinary elements, the author also incorporates the fact that a crisis in art cannot fail to be reflected in a crisis within society. In this sense, Oskan Petrovich, through his actions, demonstrates the emptiness of life and the tendency in which art turns into a form of "commerce," while theatre, as a sacred institution, becomes merely a source of financial profit. The difficulties of livelihood and the decline in commercial profitability are explained by Irasatsov as a result of changing urban morals: everyone has become preoccupied with accumulating money, and he himself is forced to do the same-thinking about the means by which large merchants become wealthy.<sup>5</sup> And thus, already in the play "Oskan Petrovichn En Kinkum", Irasatsov enters the kingdom of hell and tries to gain freedom, attempting to seduce Satan with lavish gifts, but he is unable to escape. Through this character, Gabriel Sundukyan seeks to show that people cannot escape their sins by means of extravagance or personal gain, since they do not yet fully understand the depth of their guilt. Oskan Petrovich, upon hearing the confessions of the tormented souls in hell, begins to act as an accuser, as if trying to free himself from his own sins by separating himself from others. This character development demonstrates how he, upon entering the world of hell, attempts to judge others, thereby trying to deny his own guilt. An interesting character in the vaudeville is the servant Kidesi, who represents one of the members of "lower" society-a lively, perceptive young man who creates a distinctive presence on stage. The author introduces his character not through special narrative devices, but directly from real life, preserving his manner of speech, the color of his environment, and his linguistic features. The character of Kidesi represents a part of the "voluntarily integrated" lower social stratum-active, sharp, and at the same time faithful to the new ideas of his time. In his movements and speech there is a subtle witty irony hidden between social classes, showing that he appears not only as a servant but also as someone with his own social position. Through this character, Sundukyan emphasizes that representatives of the lower classes possess their own original way of thinking and sense of dignity. It should be noted that one of the key aspects of

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<sup>4</sup> Harutyunyan 1934, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Abov 1953, 79.

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Sundukyan's art of characterization is his use of a large number of typical characters-housewives, liars, greedy individuals, and farcical figures-often contrasted with honest or virtuous characters. These characters possess clearly observable and realistic traits drawn from various layers of society. Through his art and characters, the playwright subtly reveals human inner turmoil, the inability to overcome mistakes, and the contradictions that consume the essence of human existence.

#### ***Social and moral portraits of characters in the vaudevilles "Evayln or New Diogenes" and "Baghnsi Bokhcha".***

It must be noted that Gabriel Sundukyan appears not only as a critic of social phenomena, but also as an author attempting to deeply understand the real condition of society. A vivid example is the vaudeville "Evayln or New Diogenes", where Sundukyan, through each character with its specific traits, presents a segment of society. The author builds the work on contrast, creating a unique protagonist Evayln who is the main character of the play and represents a "false bearer" of European culture, while being completely detached from the corresponding values and moral principles. He is young, well-dressed, seemingly refined in European fashion, and stylistically "decorated" in language, using literary Armenian and imitating European civilization. At the same time, however, he preserves the manners of his native environment, acting in a cunning and manipulative way. Through this character, Sundukyan demonstrates that the "new" does not always mean something better or more moral. Thus, Evayln is a kind of fashionable young man who outwardly represents European civilization but does not internally adhere to its ideals and values. The character is even given no proper personal name; instead, he is called "Evayln" ("and so on"), because he frequently uses this expression in speech. The author deliberately does not assign him a conventional name, as Evayln is not a specific individual but rather a type, an attribute of a certain social phenomenon. He remains a "phrase" rather than a fully defined identity, and his essence lies in linguistic play, where "and so on" reflects speech and thoughtlessness. This expression, often repeated in his speech, conveys something unstructured, uncontrolled, and at the same time vague and ambiguous. "And so on" thus symbolizes something that seems to contain everything but in reality contains nothing. Sundukyan's attitude toward

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European culture is complex and multilayered. He does not fully cling to patriarchal customs and traditions, as can be seen, for example, in Kh. Galfayan's comedy "Alafranga".<sup>6</sup> Gabriel Sundukyan did not aim to create a completely negative type for the protagonist of his comedy. On the contrary, he endowed him with certain attractive traits: a fine voice, beautiful singing ability, and the capacity to perform both national and European music. Sundukyan did not seek to discredit his character; rather, he shows that although he is Europeanized, he is not, in essence, a degenerate cosmopolitan. The character does not renounce his nationality. When Eastern songs are performed during a feast, Evayln says: "Please leave those Asian songs... take, for example, the sweet and tender songs of Europeans..." And in response to the question of where he is from, in one of the manuscripts Evayln answers: "First of all, I am Armenian, the rest... and so on." Later, the author crossed out the words "first of all".<sup>7</sup> The question "Where is he from?" and Evayln's answer-"First of all, I am Armenian, the rest... and so on"-carry a deeper meaning. Gabriel Sundukyan may be expressing the character's inner struggle between preserving his identity and adapting to the flows of global culture. The phrase "First of all, I am Armenian," which the author later removed in the final version, can also be seen as an element revealing his own complexity and hesitation. First, he states that his primary and essential identity is Armenian, and then comes the "rest" part, which may refer to his European aspirations and his connection to the wider civilized world. Thus, the character reflects not only a social type but also an individual experiencing an identity crisis, positioned between the traditional and the modern, the national and the global.

It is also necessary to single out the character of Yavangul, who in Sundukyan's drama can be viewed as an example of the artistic transformation of a real historical figure, reflecting the distinctive features of Gabriel Sundukyan's theatrical thinking and aesthetic approach. Yavangul, as a historical personality, is presented as a singer and tar player who lived in Tiflis. Through his character, the play highlights the social and cultural dynamics of the period, showing how artistic figures were embedded in and shaped by the cultural environment of their time.<sup>8</sup> However, Gabriel Sundukyan presents him not only

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<sup>6</sup> Terzibashyan 1964, 289-290.

<sup>7</sup> Terzibashyan 1964, 291-292.

<sup>8</sup> Terzibashyan 1964, 295.

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as a tar player or singer, but also as a character who carries a broader contextual role as a representative of an entire era and society. This allows Sundukyan to deepen the character's function, emphasizing his theatrical thinking, which is realized across different times and realities. In his works, Sundukyan often avoids generalization into purely romantic or epic figures. Instead, he presents characters as individuals acting within specific situations, performing concrete actions determined by the conditions of their time. Yavangul makes this concreteness even more tangible. Yavangul is not only a character but also a form of autonomous musical synthesis, intertwining Armenian and Georgian cultural and musical traditions. He operates aesthetically within the cultural frameworks of both peoples, adding diversity to his character and demonstrating his unique place within the boundaries of world art. Unlike other characters, Yavangul is distinguished not only by his art but also by the broader traditions surrounding him. He does not create only moral conflicts but rather serves as an example of Armenian–Georgian cultural unity. His character develops smoothly according to the environment of his time, simultaneously embodying both enslavement and freedom, existing between past and present cultural conditions. Through Yavangul, Sundukyan conveys values related to social compromise and cultural reconciliation. Thus, Yavangul is not only a historical figure but also an artistic character who combines real life and episodic representation, creating an artistic environment rich in universal human values.

In the vaudeville "Baghnsis Bokhcha", the characters form a unified whole—a model of society in which human morality, or its absence, becomes tangible and visible. Gabriel Sundukyan gave the well-known plot of marital infidelity in world literature a local, distinctive, and contemporary coloring, which can be interpreted not only as a reflection of reality but also as a deep representation of human relationships. His work stands out for its vividness and realism, where each character expresses the specific psychology of that society. In Sundukyan's interpretation, this becomes a new level of artistic expression, where the boundaries between past and present are merged into a unique environment, and the reader encounters situations that speak not only of past times but also of complex human relations in the present. Sundukyan skillfully constructs contrasting psychologies in the play, presenting different characters that reveal the complex and multilayered nature of human temperament. Katarine and

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Samvel serve as standards of morality and humanity, while Talal, Yeghisabet, and Aghalo symbolize the darker sides of inhumanity and hypocrisy.<sup>9</sup> This contrast is not merely episodic between individual characters, but rises to a theoretical level, where Gabriel Sundukyan attempts to construct an entire world in which the boundaries between the human and the inhuman become slightly blurred. Katarine and Samvel embody the values that enable the affirmation of truth, love, and morality, whereas Talal, Yeghisabet, and Aghalo, in a state of moral crisis, reveal those aspects where greed, hypocrisy, and soullessness prevail. The prototype of Zimzimov's character is Aghalo a wealthy merchant who has accumulated significant wealth. Through the money he has gained, he has acquired considerable influence, at times using it to impose his will on others and secure his material success, thereby strengthening his position in society.<sup>10</sup> In the comedy "Baghnsis Bokhcha", Gabriel Sundukyan artistically and remarkably presents the character of Samvel. Through Samvel's character, Sundukyan effectively reveals the social injustices and disorder that threaten every member of society. Particularly interesting are the characters Maton-the "motsikul"- and Yeghisabet, Talal's mother. Maton considers her shameful profession to be completely lawful. Her words are as follows: "Why shouldn't I be bold? You just say money, and I can manage everything... Haven't I given away a few girls? Half the city are my matches. It all depends on mutual liking. No, by God, who asks about the girl? It's just that they like each other...".<sup>11</sup> Gabriel Sundukyan fully reveals the character of the "motsikul" in the comedy "Baghnsis Bokhcha". He uses this character to create a contrast between old and new morals, or more precisely, to criticize false Europeanization and the degradation of moral norms. Maton has her own understanding of honor, and her profession is her means of survival. In her view, she does not earn her living through dishonest means; yes, she deceives naive people, but she does not use force, does not oppress others, and does not exploit the poor and needy-rather, she takes "payment" from the wealthy. Maton speaks about rich people who, instead of moral principles and values, prioritize material gain. She criticizes those who "sell" their honor and dignity for greed or for imitating Europeanized stereotypes. Going further, Maton believes that society has lost its essential

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<sup>9</sup> **Asmaryan** 1980, 96-97.

<sup>10</sup> **History of Modern Armenian Literature** 1964, 179.

<sup>11</sup> **Sundukyan** 1951, vol. 2, 367.

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human values, and in her opinion, those who live by honest labor are not considered as “worthy” as those who sell their morality. Maton thus presents a kind of “justification” for her profession, arguing that she does not exploit people but simply earns her living, even if society judges her actions negatively. It is as if she suggests that if she deceives, it is not a crime but a consequence of the social system in which she lives. Thus, Sundukyan’s artistic evaluation is achieved through contrast: the human element is preserved through colorful characters that reveal deep psychological nuances, while inhumanity appears as a destructive force that undermines all moral foundations. This opposition allows each character’s complexity and ambiguity to be observed without condemnation but also without compromise, creating a strong artistic value that reflects the human struggle within oneself. The dramatist’s rejection of evil and longing for good form the essence of his entire creative vision.<sup>12</sup> Among the great masters of our literature, only very few have succeeded in creating typical characters through precise and clear depiction of the diverse characteristics of human nature, as Gabriel Sundukyan did.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Thus, it should be emphasized that Gabriel Sundukyan created characters who become not only individual personalities but also symbols of social groups and broader societal phenomena. These characters are often simple in appearance, yet simultaneously profound, conveying the problems, conflicts, and contradictions present in society during a given historical period. It should also be noted that the characters frequently find themselves in dynamic and contradictory situations, revealing what it meant to live in the society of that time. The figures created by Sundukyan essentially reflect the social complexity and conflicting ways of thinking of that era, attempting to summarize an inner struggle that also touches upon the uncertainty of the individual living within that period. It should be emphasized that Sundukyan revealed the true nature of his characters, particularly through their monologues, which become expressions of their psychological world and inner impulses. The monologue serves as a powerful literary device for the author, enabling him to reveal the inner world of the characters—their contradictions, illusions, or struggles born

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<sup>12</sup> **Mkryan** 1982, 215.

<sup>13</sup> **Gyuli-Kevkhyan** 1944, 21–22.

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from the hardships of life. Monologues expose not only the internal complexity of the characters but also provide a deeper depiction of the surrounding world.

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### Ամփոփում

Սունդուկյանի վոդևիլները առանձնանում են ոչ միայն իրենց կատակերգական կառուցվածքով, այլև խորը սոցիալական ենթատեքստով և կերպարների բազմաշերտ զարգացմամբ: Հեղինակը ստեղծում է տիպական, սակայն միևնույն ժամանակ անհատականացված կերպարներ, որոնք արտացոլում են ժամանակի սոցիալական հարաբերությունները, բարոյական արժեքները և հակասությունները: Վերլուծությունը ցույց է տալիս, որ Սունդուկյանը հմտորեն համադրում է հումորը քննադատական մոտեցման հետ՝ բացահայտելով սոցիալական անհավասարությունը, կեղծ բարոյականությունը և նյութապաշտությունը: Հատկանշական է նաև, որ նրա կերպարները հաճախ կրում են մշակութային խաչաձևումներ, օրինակ՝ Յավանգուլի կերպարը, որը ներկայացնում է հայկական և վրացական մշակույթների միաձուլու-

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մը: Իր կերպարների միջոցով Սունդուկյանը հաճախ բարձրացնում է հասարակության բարոյական և սոցիալական անկման խնդիրները: Նրա հերոսները հաճախ հայտնվում են ներքին և արտաքին հակասությունների կենտրոնում՝ կանգնելով հին և նոր արժեքների, նյութական շահերի և բարոյական սկզբունքների բախման առջև:


**Բանալի բառեր՝** վոդևիլ, դրամատուրգիա, եվրոպական մշակույթ, Գաբրիել Սունդուկյան, կերպարակերպում, արժեքներ, թատրոն:

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ԽՈՍՈՒՅԹՈՒՄ. ՄԱՐԴԿԱՅԻՆ ԷՈՒԹՅԱՆ  
ԲՆՈՒԹԱԳՐԻ ԼԵՂՎԱՃԱՆԱԶՈՂՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ**

*Les apparences sont trompeuses*

*Արդարքինը խաբուսիկ է*

**Ամփոփում**

Առաձային խոսույթում կերպարանափոխության լեզվաճանաչողական կաղապարը ֆրանսերեն ու հ այերեն առաձների օրինակով վերհանում է մարդկային էության բնորոշումն ու հատկանիշների ճանաչողությունը: Կենդանական աշխարհի պատկերի ու հասկացության փոխհարեությունների օգնությամբ դիտարկվում են մարդկային բնույթն ու վարքագծի կաղապարները, և այս համատեքստում ընդգծվում է կերպարանափոխության բացասական հարանշանակությունը: Վերոնշյալի հիմքը վարքագծի ու լայն իմաստով ինքնության փոփոխության հիմնահարցն է, ինչը քննվում է ինչպես գոյաբանական հարթությունում, այնպես էլ հասկացության ընկալման մակարդակում՝ լինելու և թվալու սահմանագծին: Շեշտադրվել է պատճառահետևանքայնության վերլուծությունը՝ նոր ինքնության կառուցման համատեքստում:

Հարկ է նշել, որ առաձային խոսույթն ընդգծում է մարդկային բնույթի հաստատուն լինելը, իսկ կերպարանափոխության արտաքին դրսևորումը ներքին որևէ փոփոխության չի հանգեցնում: Քննության առարկա առաձներում լեզվաճանաչողական ու լեզվաոճական դիտանկյունից վերլուծվել են

\* Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է 10.03.2026, գրախոսվել է 26.03.2026, ընդունվել է տպագրության 30.04.2026:

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## **Կերպարանափոխությունը առածային խոսույթում...**

արտաքին ազդեցության ծախսողման, բնածին հատկությունների, վարքագծի վրա էության արտապատկերման ճանաչողական կաղապարները:

**Բանալի բառեր՝** կերպարանափոխություն, առածային խոսույթ, մարդկային էություն, կենդանուն, հասկացութային փոխաբերություն, լինել, թվալ:

### **Ներածություն**

Առածներն ու ասացվածքները բարոյախրատական ասույթներ են, որոնք աղերսվում են էթիկային: Կենդանական աշխարհը՝ իբրև ոչ էթիկական աղբյուր՝ տիրույթ, առածներում հիմք է դառնում կերպարանափոխության համատեքստում բարոյախրատական իմաստի կառուցարկման համար: Կենդանու պատկերի օգնությամբ մարդկային էությունն ու հատկանիշը վերացարկման հարթությունից փոխադրվում են կոնկրետի տիրույթ, և առածային խոսույթը բնական միջավայրի պատկերի օգնությամբ վերհանում է հասարակական ոլորտում բարոյախրատական իմաստի կառուցման հայեցակերպը: Այս դիտանկյունից կենդանու՝ որպես միջնորդի դերով արտահայտվում է էության բնորոշման կամ վարքագծի կաղապար, որը, փոխադրվելով հասարակական տիրույթ, ստանում է գնահատական: Հասարակական կյանքում մարդու վարքագծի փոփոխությունը կամ էության անփոփոխությունը բացորոշվում են կենդանու պրիզմայով, ինչը թույլ է տալիս ճանաչողական-գործաբանական դաշտում փոխաբերության միջոցով քաղաքավարության շղարշ հաղորդել՝ այդպիսով խուսափելով ուղիղ քննադատությունից: Ավելին, կենդանու վարքագծի մատնանշումը ենթադրում է սուբյեկտի էության հետ ամբողջական նույնացումից խուսափում: Այս համատեքստում կենդանին դառնում է հասկացութային դաշտում հայելի, որում մարդը տեսնում է իրեն՝ արդյունքում գնահատական տալով վերջինիս կերպարանափոխությանն ու վարքագծային այս կամ այն կաղապարին:

Սույն հետազոտության նպատակը *ՄԱՐԴԻԿ ԿԵՆԴԱՆԻՆԵՐ ԵՆ* հասկացութային փոխաբերության համատեքստում համեմատական մեթոդի օգնությամբ ֆրանսերեն ու հայերեն առածներում կենդանիների կերպարանափոխության լեզվաճանաչողական հայեցակերպի վերլուծությունն է առաձաբանական աղբյուրների փաստական նյութի հիման վրա<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Ղանալայան 1960. Միրզոյան 2007. Նազարյան 1994. Refranero multilingüe

**Կերպարանափոխության ճանաչողության շուրջ**

Իրականության ընկալման փոխաբերական հայեցակերպն առնչվում է վերացարկման հարթությանը: Այս դիտանկյունից ցանկացած փոխաբերություն ինչ-որ առումով կերպի փոփոխություն է, այլ կերպարանքով տեսնելու ճանաչողություն՝ հասկացությային մակարդակում, իսկ ըստ Ջ. Լակոֆի և Մ. Ջոնսոնի առաջադրած փոխաբերության տեսության՝ ռացիոնալ միտքը ևս ենթադրում է փոխաբերական բնույթ:<sup>2</sup> Հեղինակները պատճառահետևանքայնությունը դիտարկում են իբրև ֆիզիկական ու հասարակական իրականության կազմակերպման միջոց. ինչպես ֆիզիկական նյութի՝ մի վիճակից մյուսին անցումը, այնպես էլ որևէ իրադարձության բխումը պատճառային շղթայից փոխակերպումներ են:<sup>3</sup>

Լեզվաբանության գիտակարգի շրջանակում կերպարանափոխությունը դիտարկվում է իբրև ռճական հնար՝ հիմք ընդունելով այն հանգամանքը, որ կերպարի փոփոխության անցումը տեղի է ունենում «փոխաբերաբար»:<sup>4</sup> Լը Գեդնի պնդմամբ՝ կերպարանափոխությունն իրականանում է միայն փոխաբերության բացակայության պայմաններում, քանի որ, եթե առաջինը ենթադրում է առաջ և հետո ժամանակային ցուցիչների դրսևորում, ապա վերջինը ապաժամանակային ուղղվածություն ունի:<sup>5</sup> Կերպարանափոխությունը դիտարկվել է նաև կենդանական աշխարհի պատկերի օգնությամբ երևակայության տիրույթում փոխակերպումների օրինակով:<sup>6</sup>

Գիտական հարացույցում մի շարք հետազոտություններ նվիրված են գրական ստեղծագործություններում կերպարանափոխության առանձնահատկություններին,<sup>7</sup> այնուամենայնիվ առաձային խոսույթում կերպարանափոխության լեզվաճանաչողական քննության համակողմանի հայեցակարգը բացակայում է, և այս համատեքստում սույն հետազոտության արդիականությունն ու նորույթը նշյալ երևույթի՝ իբրև լեզվամշակութային ու լեզվաճանաչողական իրողության բովանդակ վերլուծությունն է:

<sup>2</sup> Lakoff, Johnson 1980, 193.

<sup>3</sup> Lakoff, Johnson 1980, 69.

<sup>4</sup> Mikkenon 1996.

<sup>5</sup> Le Guern 1981.

<sup>6</sup> Bachelard 1939.

<sup>7</sup> Gymnich, Segão Costa 2006. Harel 2020.

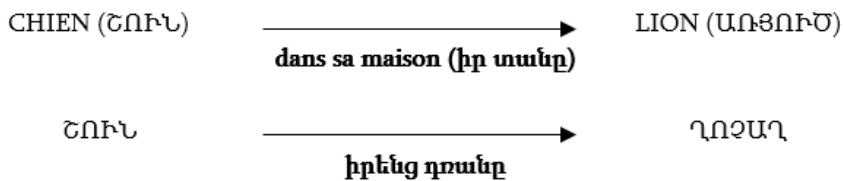
**Կերպարանափոխությունը լինելու և թվալու սահմանագծին**

Մարդկայինի բնորոշման դիտանկյունից ներքոնշյալ առածները կերպարանափոխության տիրույթում բնորոշում են քաջությունը՝ շեշտադրելով հատկանիշի վերհանումը հասկացության հաշտում.

*Tout chien est lion dans sa maison*

*Շունն իրենց դռանը դռչաղ կլինի:*

Քննության առարկա առածներում կերպարանափոխությունը՝ նոր կերպարի ստեղծումը, աղերսվում է տարածական ուղղվածությանը, կամ լեզվաճանաչողական կաղապարի հիմքում *ՔԱՋՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՍԵՓԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՎԵՐԱՀՍԿՈՒՄ Է* հասկացության փոխաբերությունն է: Առածներն ընդգծում են տարածության, լայն իմաստով՝ համատեքստի ու ինքնության փոխառնչությունը: Պատճառահետևանքայնության շրջանակում կերպարանափոխության մեկնակետը սեփական տարածքի վերահսկումն է, ինչը լեզվական մակարդակում առկայանում է *dans sa maison, իրենց դռանը* կառույցների միջոցով: Ֆրանսերեն առածն ընդգծում է գոյաբանական կարգի կերպարանափոխումը, իսկ հայերեն համարժեքում առանցքը հատկանիշի վերագրումն է:



Ինչ վերաբերում է կերպարային անցման շղթային, այն ֆրանսերենում *être* բայի ներկա ժամանակաձևի (*est*) օգնությամբ արտահայտում է ամբողջական կերպարանափոխություն՝ շունը վերածվում է առյուծի: Հատկանշական է, որ առածը ստեղծում է «իրավիճակային առյուծ», որի ուժը որոշարկվում է կոնկրետ տարածությունում՝ համատեքստում: Այս տեսանկյունից հատկանիշը դիտարկվում է իբրև ոչ կայուն կարգ, և կենդանուն հասկացության աստիճանակարգումն առկայանում է շան և առյուծի համեմատական շեշտադրմամբ: Մասնավորապես՝ առյուծն ուղղահայաց շղթայի վերևում է, և շան՝ առյուծի վերածվելը՝ քաջության դրսևորման արտահայտությունը կախված է տարածական բաղադրիչից: Հայերեն առածը ժամանակային տեսանկյունից *լինել* բայի ապառնի խոնարհմամբ (*կլինի*) ընդգծում է շա-

**Շալունց Ն.**

նը մարդկային հատկանիշի՝ քաջության վերագրումը (դոչաղ՝ կտրիճ, քաջ, արի, խիզախ):

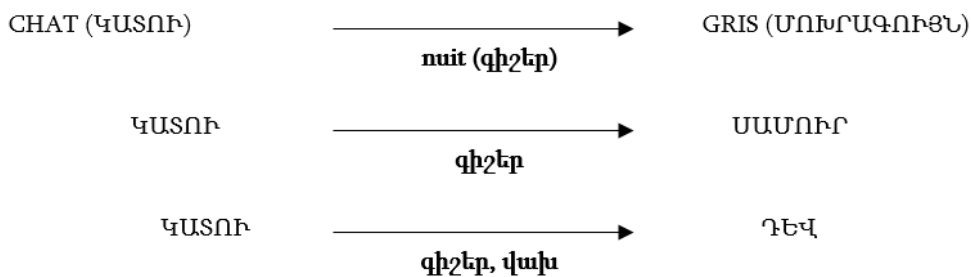
Այժմ դիտարկենք առածներ, որոնց հիմքում խաբուսիկ արտաքինի լեզվաճանաչողական կաղապարումն է, *ԹՎԱԼԸ ԼԻՆԵԼ ՉԷ*, և ի հակադրություն գոյաբանական տիրույթում կերպարանափոխման հայեցակերպի՝ այս պարագայում քննությունն ուղղորդում է ճանաչողության ու իմացաբանության դաշտ.

*La nuit, tous les chats sont gris*

*Գիշերը կապուն էլ սամուր կերևա*

*Վախկոկի աչքին կապուն գիշերը դև է երևում:*

Վերոնշյալ առածներում կերպարանափոխությունն իրականանում է տեսողական ընկալման ճանաչողության մակարդակում ժամանակի հայեցակերպի շեշտադրմամբ, ուստի *ԸՆԿԱԼԵԼԸ ՏԵՍՆԵԼ Է, ԻՄԱՅՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԼՈՒՅՍ Է*, իսկ *ԱՆՈՐՈՇՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԽԱՎԱՐ Է*: Այլ կերպ ասած՝ կերպարի վերակառուցումն արտաքին ազդեցությամբ տեսողական պատկերի պատրանքի արդյունքում կորցնում է իմաստային կառուցցի սահմանները, ինչի ցուցիչը լեզվական մակարդակում ֆրանսերեն առածում կենդանուն գույնի վերագրումն է (*sont gris*), իսկ հայերենում՝ երևալ բայի կիրառությունը լինելովալ հակադրության շրջանակում (*սամուր կերևա, դև է երևում*): Ինչպես մթությունն է քողարկում, շղարշում կենդանու արտաքինը, այնպես էլ մարդկային որակներն ու հատկանիշներն են տարրալուծվում անորոշության մեջ:



Հարկ է նշել նաև, որ մարդկային էությունը և համատեքստային իրադրությունը երկու լեզվամշակույթներում արտահայտվում են միևնույն լեզվական միավորների միջոցով: Մասնավորապես՝ կատուն բնորոշում է մարդուն, իսկ գիշերը՝ անորոշ իրադրությունը: Այնուամենայնիվ, արտաքին ազդեցությամբ ներքին էության թյուրըմբռնումը միջտիրույթային հասկացության դաշտում երևան է գալիս տարբեր հարթություններում: Ֆրանսերեն

### **Կերպարանափոխությունը առածային խոսույթում...**

առաձը շեշտադրում է անորոշության պայմաններում մարդկային յուրօրինակությունների անտեսումը. գիշերը բոլոր կատուները մոխրագույն են: Գույնի ըմբռնման լեզվաճանաչողական հայեցակերպը ցույց է տալիս, որ մոխրագույնը սևի ու սպիտակի խառնուրդի, սահմանների անորոշության և այդպիսով մարդկային որակների ու հատկանիշների տարբերակման անհնարինության փոխաբերական արտահայտությունն է: Մինչդեռ հայերեն առաջին առածի առանցքում աստիճանակարգման դիտանկյունից հասարակ կերպարի (կատվի)՝ իբրև ավելի բարձր ու ազնվական (սամուր) *երևալու* իրողությունն է, ընդհանրականից յուրօրինակի թվացյալ անցման իմաստային կառույցը: Ի լրումն վերոնշյալի՝ հայերեն երկրորդ առածն արտակա ընդգծում է մարդկային հատկանիշը՝ *վախկոտ*: Տվյալ պարագայում վախը լույսի բացակայության պայմաններում կատվին վերագրում է գերբնական ուժ՝ դարձնելով թվացյալ դև:

Մարդակենտրոն հայեցակերպի շրջանակում ներքոնշյալ առածները ևս վերհանում են խաբուսիկ արտաքինի, թվալու ու լինելու հակադրամիասնության ճանաչողության առանցքը, և արտաքին ձևի ու ներքին բովանդակության հակադիր պատկերն առածներում առկայանում է հասարակական դիրքավորման հատույթում.

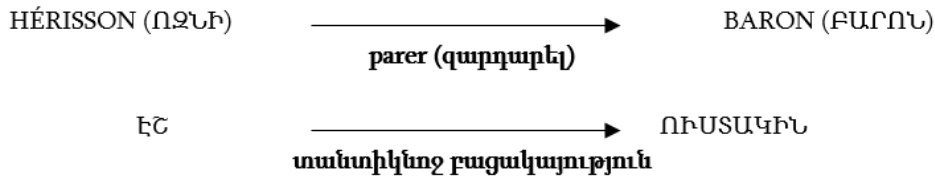
*Parez un hérisson, il semblera baron*

*Գյուղում չկար տանտիկին, էշին արին ուստակին:*

Գոյության ձևերի աստիճանակարգումը վերհանում է կերպարանափոխության վերընթաց ուղին, սակայն վերջինս միայն արտաքին դաշտում է, իսկ ներքին էությունն անհաղորդ է մնում ձևական կաղապարին: Մասնավորապես՝ ֆրանսերեն առածում *hérisson* և *baron* գոյականների օգնությամբ շեշտադրվում է զարդարանքի միջոցով ոգնու՝ իբրև բարոն, ազնվական կերպար թվալու արտաքին դրսևորումը, ինչի արտահայտությունը *sembler* բայի կիրառումն է: Այլ կերպ ասած՝ ոգնին ըստ էության, էապես նույնն է, իսկ հասարակական բարձր դիրքի պատճառը՝ զարդարանքը, ուղղորդում է սոսկ թվացյալի տիրույթ: Հայերեն առածում *էշը* մարդկային կերպարանք է ստանում՝ դառնալով *ուստակին*, իսկ պատճառը *տանտիկնոջ* բացակայությունն է (*գյուղում չկար տանտիկին*): Ուստի առածում իրական արժեքի բացակայության պայմաններում այն որոշարկվում է հարաբերականության առանցքում: Համապատասխան որակական չափանիշի բացակայությունը ստեղծում է իրավիճակային կերպարանափոխություն, հիմք դառնում անհամապատաս-

**Շալունց Ն.**

խան փոխարինման համար, փաստացի կառուցում կերպար՝ արտաքին ազդեցության օգնությամբ (*էշին արին ուստակին*):



Միջմշակության ղիտանկյունը ցույց է տալիս, որ ֆրանսերենում հագուստը վերածնակերպում է ինքնությունը, իսկ հայերենում դրա բացակայությունը վերաբաշխում է գործառույթի բաղադրիչը: Լեզվամշակության իրողությունների համատեքստում հայկական իրականությունում էլը մտազուգորդվում է հիմարության, համառության ու աշխատանքի հետ, իսկ առածը նրան վերագրում է հասարակական հեղինակություն: Ճանաչողական-գործաբանական հարթությունում առաձներն արտահայտում են մարդկային կերպարը միայն արտաքինից դատելու քննադատություն:

Ներքոնշյալ հայերեն առածը *ՀԱՐՄԱՐՎՈՂԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԿԵՐՊԱՐԱՆԱՓՈԽՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ Է* հասկացության փոխաբերության դիրքերից ցուցանում է արտաքին ազդեցության պայմաններում վարքագծի փոփոխության կաղապարը՝ լեզվագործաբանական ղիտանկյունից քննադատելով փոփոխական վարքը:

*Ջուր տեսնի, ձուկ կլինի, կապու տեսնի, մուկ կլինի:*

Առածում կերպարանափոխությունն իրականանում է գոյաբանական դաշտում՝ սուբյեկտի բնույթի ամբողջական կերպարանափոխությամբ, ինչը լեզվական մակարդակում առկայանում է շարահյուսական զուգահեռություն ոճական հնարի միջոցով (*.... տեսնի, .... կլինի, .... տեսնի, .... կլինի*): Հարկ է ընդգծել, որ վարքագիծը, իսկ լայն իմաստով՝ ինքնությունը, առավել կախված են արտաքին փոփոխականներից, քան ներքին բնույթից: Այս համատեքստում կերպարանափոխության պատճառը տեսողական ընկալման դաշտն է, կամ *ԼԻՆԵԼԸ ՏԵՍՆԵԼ Է*: Տեսողությունը ղիտարկվում է ճանաչողական ընկալումից անդին և մտածական մակարդակում առաջ բերում վարքագծի կաղապար՝ այդպիսով ընդլայնելով գործառույթային շրջանակը, քանի որ տեսնելիս մարդը ոչ թե նմանվում է, այլ ինքն է կերպարանափոխվում: Հատկանշական է ենթակայի գեղչման փաստը, ինչն իրողությունները ղիտարկում է ոչ թե անձի, այլ վարքագծի կաղապարի մակարդակում: Հենց այդ պատճառով էլ սուբյեկտի ինքնության բացը ստորոգման օգնությամբ



## Շալունց Ն.

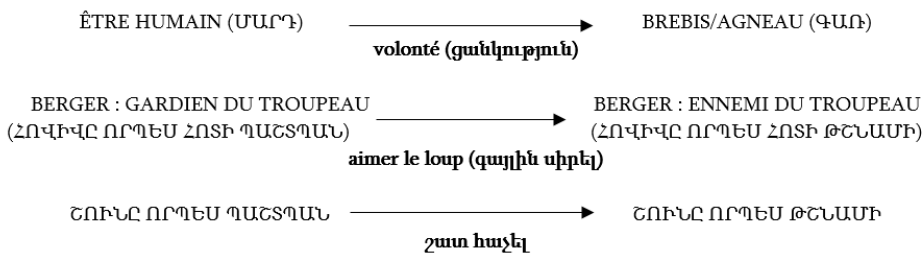
փոխության. մտազուգորդվելով վտանգի հետ՝ վերջինս ի հայտ է գալիս, երբ տեղի է ունեցել կերպարարանափոխություն:

*Qui se fait brebis/agneau, le loup le mange* առածում մարդը գոյաբանական տիրույթում կերպարանափոխության արդյունքում գոյության ձևերի շղթայում աստիճանային վայրէջք է ապրում՝ դիրքավորվելով իբրև գառ՝ զոհի ու հպատակի կարգավիճակում, ինչին հետևում է վերջինիս սպառումը գայլի՝ ուժեղի, իշխանության կողմից: Առածի լեզվաճանաչողության իմաստային կառույցի հիմքը *se faire* բայի գործածությունն է, ինչը ենթադրում է պատասխանատվություն՝ սեփական դերի առումով, քանի որ տվյալ պարագայում գործող անձն ինքն է իրավունք վերապահում գայլին գործելու իր բնությանը համապատասխան: Այլ կերպ ասած՝ իբրև գառ *ինքնակամ* դիրքավորումը հանգեցնում է շահագործման, և հարկ է նաև ընդգծել, որ վտանգն արտապատկերվում է հենց դիրքավորվողի վրա, կամ սուբյեկտը վերածվում է օբյեկտի (*le loup le mange*):

Ինչ վերաբերում է *À mal berger qui loup aime* և *Շալո հաշան շունը ոչխարին գել կբերի* առածներին, վերջիններս դիտարկում են *հովվի* և *շան* կերպարանափոխությունը ոչ թե գոյաբանական, այլ հասկացութային տիրույթում՝ դերի կերպափոխման համատեքստում: Ի տարբերություն քննության առարկա նախորդ ֆրանսերեն առածի՝ այս առածներն ընդգծում են դերային կերպարանափոխության վտանգավոր ազդեցությունը ոչ թե կերպարանափոխվողի, այլ շրջապատի վրա: Նշենք, որ կերպարանափոխումը տեղի է ունենում էթիկական ինքնության մակարդակում. հովվի, ինչպես նաև շան դերը հոտը պաշտպանելն է, հսկելը, սակայն հովվի պարագայում *գայլին սիրելը*՝ թշնամու հետ գործակցելը, իսկ շան պարագայում *շալո հաշելը*՝ չափից շատ պաշտպանելը՝ վնասելը, վտանգ են հարուցում հոտի համար՝ երաշխավորելով պաշտպանից թշնամի կերպարանափոխությունը: Ֆրանսերեն առածը հնաբան կառույցի օգնությամբ ընդգծում է հովվի էթիկական ծախողումը (*à mal berger*)՝ գնահատական տալով (*mal (mauvais)*) և սահմանելով վարքագծային կաղապարը (*qui loup aime*), որն առաջ է բերում այդ գնահատականը: Հենց այս իրողությունն էլ հանգեցնում է լեզվաճանաչողության մակարդակում *հովիվ* հասկացության իմաստային կառույցի վերաբանաձևման: Տվյալ պարագայում արտաքին մակարդակում հովիվը իբրև հասկացությո հակահովիվ է, քանի որ լեզվական դրսևորման միջոցով սոցիալական դերի վերագրումը աղերս չունի այդ դերի գործառութային տրամաբանության հետ: Հարկ է նշել, որ եթե ֆրանսերեն առածում վտանգը ներակա

**Կերպարանափոխությունը առաձային խոսույթում...**

է, և առկա է միայն հովվի որակումը, ապա հայերեն առաձը պատճառահետևանքայնության համատեքստում ցուցանում է վտանգավոր հետևանքը (*ոչխարին գել կբերի*): Նախապես բարի մտադրությունները առանց չափի զգացողության ու վերահսկողության կարող են փոխակերպվել վնասի: Դերային կերպարանափոխության պատճառը ոչ թե բուն գործողությունն է (*հաչելը*), այլ դրա կատարման չափը (*շարի հաչելը*): Ընդ որում՝ պատճառի լեզվական առկայացումը գործողությունը փոխակերպում է վարքագծի ընդգծմամբ հատկանիշի կաղապարի (*շարի հաչան*):



Այսպիսով՝ կերպարանափոխությունը կենդանական աշխարհի պատկերի օգնությամբ բարոյախրատական դիտանկյունից առաձներում մարդկային էության արտաքին դրսևորման ու ներքին բնույթի փոխհարաբերության, լինելու և թվալու հակադրամիասնության բնորոշման ուղի է, և ինքնության փոփոխությունը՝ լինի գոյաբանական տիրույթում, թե հասկացության դաշտում, հաճախ բացասական հարանշանակության մասին է: Այս առումով առաձային խոսույթն ընդգծում է մարդկային բնույթի, բնատուր էության հաստատուն լինելն ու արտաքին ձևափոխությունների ժամանակավրեպությունը:

**Կերպարանափոխության կաղապարի պարզությունն ու բնության հաղթանակը**

Առաձային խոսույթում մարդկային բնությունը որոշարկելու լավագույն միջոցը հենց բնությունն է, աշխարհի բնական կերպը կենդանական աշխարհի զուգահեռով: Այս համատեքստում կերպարանափոխության արտաքին դրսևորումը ներքին բնույթի փոփոխության որևէ արդյունքի չի հանգեցնում, այլ կերպ ասած՝ կերպարի փոփոխությունը չի հաջողում ո՛չ լինելու, ո՛չ էլ թվալու մակարդակում, իսկ լեզվաճանաչողական մեկնակետը *ՀԱՏԿԱՆԻՇԸ ԲՆՈՒԿԹՅՈՒՆ Է* հասկացության փոխաբերությունն է:

Հաշվի առնելով վերոնշյալը՝ նախ դիտարկենք առաձներ, որոնք շեշտադրում են մարդկային էության անփոփոխ բնույթը՝ ի հակադրություն արտաքին ազդեցության:

## Շալունց Ն.

*Le singe est toujours singe, fût-il déguisé en prince*

*Un singe vêtu de pourpre est toujours un singe*

*Serpent qui change de peau est toujours serpent*

*Ագռավը ինչքան լողանա, դագ չի լինի*

*Էշին թիմարելով նժույգ չեն դարձնի*

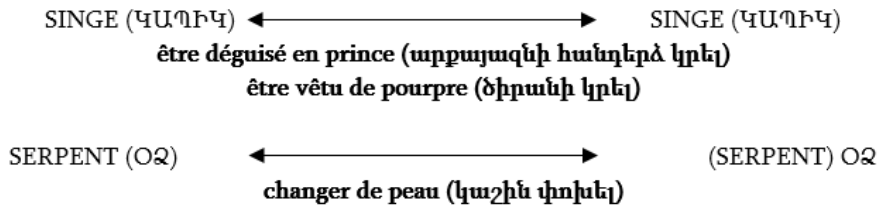
*Շան պոչը կտրելով անմեղ գառ չի դառնա*

*Վրադ գառան մորթի ես առել, տակից գազան ես*

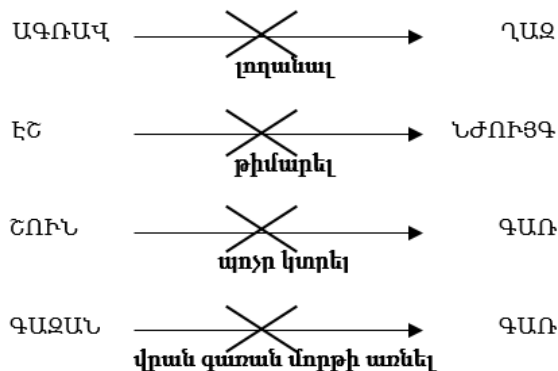
Վերոնշյալ առածները վերհանում են ֆրանսերենում ու հայերենում ներքին բնույթի լեզվաճանաչողական կաղապարման տարբերությունները: Մասնավորապես՝ ֆրանսերենում լեզվական կառույցը կրկնաբանությունն է (*le singe est toujours singe, un singe ... est toujours un singe, serpent ... est toujours serpent*), և այս դիտանկյունից կապիկը կապիկ է, իսկ օձը՝ օձ՝ չնայած արտաքին ձևավորմանը (*déguisé en prince, vêtu de pourpre, qui change de peau*): Արքայազնի կերպար ստանալը կամ ծիրանի կրելը երբեք չի փոխում կապիկի, իսկ կաշին փոխելը՝ օձի բնույթը: Հատկանշական է *toujours* մակբայի կիրառումը, ինչը ժամանակային ցուցիչի արտահայտություն է, որ ներառում է ժամանակի եռաչափ հարթությունը: Եթե հիմք ընդունենք կրկնաբանության լեզվագործաբանական հայեցակերպը<sup>8</sup>, ապա կարելի է պնդել, որ այս պարագայում ինքնության կրկնակի շեշտումը տալիս է ավելին, քան բառացի կրկնությունը: Ներակա իմաստի շրջանակում կրկնաբանությունը մեկտեղում է կենդանուն բնորոշ բոլոր հատկանիշները, իսկ արտաքին ազդեցության գործողության լեզվական դրսևորումը աստիճանակարգային համեմատության դիտանկյունից առանձնացնում է առանցքայինը: Այսպես, գոյության ձևերի աստիճանակարգում կապիկը արքայազնի ու թագավորի հանդերձանքի միջոցով՝ սնապարծությամբ, փորձում է մարդկային կերպար ստանալ, սակայն ներքին էությունն անհաղորդ է հանդերձանքի փոփոխությանը, ուստի վերջինս մնում է իր աստիճանին՝ ցածրադաս: Օձը, կաշին փոխելով՝ խորամանկելով, մնում է նույն օձը, և այս դեպքում կաշին փոխելը բնորոշում է տարբեր համատեքստերում վարքագծի փոփոխությունը:

<sup>8</sup> Yule 1996, 31.

**Կերպարանափոխությունը առածային խոսույթում...**



Ինչ վերաբերում է հայերեն առածներին, դրանք ժխտման միջոցով ցույց են տալիս կերպարանափոխության անհնարինությունը և շեշտադրում հակադրությունը: Բացասական երանգավորում ունեցող *ագռավի, էշի, շան, գազանի* վերածվելը համապատասխանաբար *ղազի, նժույզի ու գառան*, որոնք մտազուգորդվում են դրական հարանշանակության հետ, չի իրականանում արտաքին ազդեցության պայմաններում (*լողանալ, թիմարել, պոչը կտրել, վրան գառան մորթի առնել*): Հարկ է ընդգծել *անմեղ* ածականի կիրառությունը, որ բնորոշում է գառանը, իսկ գառան մորթի կրելը գազանի պարագայում կեղծավորության դրսևորում է:



Մարդկային էության փոփոխության անհնարինության դրսևորումը ժխտման հայեցակերպի տեսանկյունից դիտարկենք հետևյալ առածներում.

*Le renard change de poil, mais non de nature!*

*Le loup change de poil, mais non de nature!*

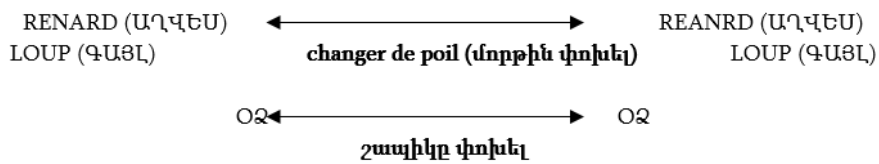
*Գայլը բուրդը կփոխի, բնավորությունը չի փոխի*

*Օձն իր շապիկը կփոխի, բնությունը չի փոխի*

Առածներում աղվեսի, գայլի բուրդը և օձի շապիկը մարդկային վարքագծի արտաքին դրսևորումն են, որոնց փոփոխությունը հակադրվում է բնության ու բնավորության հաստատունությանը: Նշյալը լեզվատճական մակարդակում առկայանում է շարահյուսական զուգահեռության ու հակադ-

## Շալունց Ն.

րության միջոցով, ընդ որում՝ ֆրանսերենում փոփոխություն ցուցանող բայը՝ *changer*, բացակայում է առածի՝ ներքին բնույթին աղերսվող երկրորդ բաղադրիչում, որը ներառում է *mais non de naturel* լեզվական կառույցը: Ձեռնարկում ինքնին լեզվաճանաչողական դաշտում արտահայտում է փոփոխության անհնարինությունը: Հայերեն առածներում վերոնշյալի լեզվական արտահայտությունը .... *կփոխի*, .... *չի փոխի* կառույցի գործածությունն է:



Առածային խոսույթում առկա է նաև հակառակ պատկերը, ըստ որի՝ կաշին աղերսվում է էությանը՝ հաստատուն ու անփոփոխ:

*Dans sa peau mourra le loup*

*En sa peau mourra le renard*

*En la peau où le loup est, il y meurt*

*Կարմիր կովը իր կաշին չի փոխի*

*Սև շունը չի սպիտակի*

Քննության առարկա ֆրանսերեն առածները կենդանու էությունը տարրորշում են տարածության ու ժամանակի հարաբերակցության համատեքստում: Այսպես, գայլի ու աղվեսի կաշին դառնում է տարածական տիրույթ՝ հիմք ընդունելով մարմնի ճանաչողությունը, ինչը լեզվական մակարդակում առածների կառուցվածքի առաջին պլանում դրսևորվում է *dans* և *en* նախդիրների միջոցով (*dans sa peau, en la peau où*): Կաշին ընդգրկում է անփոփոխ էությունը, ինչին հաջորդում է ժամանակային բաղադրիչի ընդգծումը՝ մինչև մահ (*mourra le loup/le reanrd, il y meurt*): Տվյալ դեպքում մահը դառնում է լինելու վերջնակետը, որտեղ բնույթն իր անփոփոխ էությամբ հաստատում է լինելը: Եթե ներկա ժամանակաձևը (*meurt*) ցույց է տալիս փոփոխության անհնարինությունը իբրև բնույթ՝ ժամանակի սահմաններից դուրս, և այս պարագայում գայլը, կաշին ու մահը դիտարկվում են ժամանակի միաչափ կտրվածքում, որտեղ սկիզբն ու վերջը նույնական են, ապա ապառնին (*mourra*) գործողության շեշտն ուղղում է դեպի վերջ՝ կառուցելով նոր տարածություն: Հայերենում էությունը որոշարկվում է գույնի միջոցով: Մասնավորապես՝ կարմիր կովի կաշին էությունն է, համառությունը, իսկ սև շունը՝ բա-

### Կերպարանափոխությունը առածային խոսույթում...

ցասական հատկանիշների կրողը, և գունային անցումները չեղարկվում են ժխտման միջոցով (*չի փոխի, չի սպիտակի*):

Էության տարածական ուղղվածության բնութագրումը վերլուծենք նաև հետևյալ առածում.

*Sous la peau est l'âne*

Բառացի ընթերցմամբ՝ կաշվի տակ է էշը: Տարածական ցուցիչը *sous* նախորդի կիրառումն է, սակայն ի տարբերություն նախորդ առածների, որոնցում կաշին բնորոշում է էությունը, այստեղ լայն իմաստով հակադրվում է, քողարկում կենդանու էությունը՝ հիմարությունը, և հանդես գալիս իբրև վարքագծի արտաքին դրսևորում, իսկ մակերեսային տեղորոշումը լեզվական մակարդակում առաջին պլանում է:

Այժմ դիտարկենք մարդկային բնույթի անփոփոխության հարցը բնածին հատկությունների ու էթիկական էության փոխառնչության պրիզմայով.

*Jamais un corbeau n'a fait un canari*

*L'aigle n'engendre pas la colombe*

*De mauvais corbeau, mauvais œuf*

*Il n'y a pas de méchant lièvre ne de petit loup*

*Աղվեսը կորյուն չի բերի*

*Օձի ձվից հավի ճուրղ դուրս չի գա*

*Էշից քուռակ կլինի, շնից գառ չի լինի*

*Էշի քուռակը վերջն էշ կդառնա*

Առածները կենդանական աշխարհի պատկերի օգնությամբ փաստում են՝ բնածին հատկանիշները նախանշում են մարդկային էությունը, և այս համատեքստում շեշտադրվում է կենդանիների կենսաբանական շրթան. մի կենդանատեսակը չի կարող վերարտադրել մեկ այլ տեսակ: Ուստի անհատի էությունն ու բարոյական նկարագիրը սահմանափակվում են բնածին հատկանիշներով: Սույն դրույթը՝ մի տեսակից մեկ այլ տեսակի առաջացման բացառումը, առածների լեզվաճանաչողության շրջանակում առկայանում է ժխտման միջոցով (*jamais ... n'a fait, n'engendre pas, il n'y a pas, չի բերի, դուրս չի գա, չի լինի*): Հատկանշական է ֆրանսերեն առածում *jamais* մակբայի կիրառումը, ընդ որում՝ լեզվական կառույցի առաջին պլանում տրամաբանական շեշտի ընդգծմամբ: Այն անցյալ կատարյալ ժամանակաձևի համադրությամբ փաստագրում է ասույթն իբրև անցյալի փորձի հավաստի արդյունք, մինչդեռ սահմանական ներկան, ցուցանելով ընդհանուր ճշմարտություն, առածներում ժամանակային ցուցիչի բացակայության պայմաններ

## Շալունց Ն.

րում ընդգծում է հենց կենդանու բնույթը ոչ իբրև փորձի արդյունք, այլ ներհատուկ բնութագրում: Հարկ է ընդգծել, որ *Il n'y a pas de méchant lièvre ne de petit loup* առածում նապաստակն ու գայլը ստանում են բնորոշիչ՝ համապատասխանաբար չար և փոքր, ինչը, սակայն, ժխտվում է, այլ կերպ ասած՝ նապաստակը նապաստակ է, գայլը՝ գայլ: Առաձներում հիշատակված առաջին կենդանին առավելապես բացասական հարանշանակություն ունի, իսկ երկրորդը՝ իբրև ցանկալի արդյունք, դրական: Միջմշակութային առանձնահատկությունների վերհանումը ցույց է տալիս, որ ֆրանսերենում ագռավը չի կարող դեղձանիկ ծնել, արծիվը՝ աղավալի, իսկ հայերենում ընդգծվում է երկրորդ կենդանու ծագը՝ աղվես և կորյուն, օձ և հավի ճուտ, շուն և գառ, էշ և քուռակ: Հատկանշական է նաև պատկանելության լեզվաճանաչողական կառույցի դիտանկյունից *de mauvais corbeau, օձի ձու, հավի ճուտ, էշի քուռակ* կառույցների վերլուծությունը, ըստ որի՝ ծագի էությունը սերում է ծնողից: *De mauvais corbeau, mauvais œuf* և *էշից քուռակ կլինի, շնից գառ չի լինի* առաձներում կիրառվում է ոճական հնար՝ շարահյուսական զուգահեռություն, իսկ վերջինում՝ նաև հակադրություն (*.... կլինի, .... չի լինի*): Հայերեն առածի լեզվական կառույցի առաջին բաղադրիչը (*էշից քուռակ կլինի*) փաստարկ է երկրորդի (*շնից գառ չի լինի*) ճշմարիտ լինելը հիմնավորելու համար: Ֆրանսերեն առածում բայի զեղչումը արտահայտում է գործողության բացակայությունն ու ժամանակային հայեցակերպի դիտանկյունից անմիջականությունը:

Առաձային խոսույթում բնածին հատկանիշներն արտապատկերվում են նաև վարքագծային կաղապարի վրա, ինչն արտացոլված է ներքոնշյալ առաձներում.

*Quiconque est loup agisse en loup*

*Qui naquit chat court après les souris*

*La brebis béle toujours d'une même sorte*

*Շունն իր շնությունը կանի*

*Խոզն իր խոզությունը չի թողնի*

*Գայլի միտքը ոչխարի հոտն է*

*Գելի գլխին ավերարան կարդացին, ասաց՝ շուտ արեք, ոչխարը սարն անց կացավ*

Առաձներում կենդանիների վարքագիծը պայմանավորված է բնությամբ, ինչը հասարակական տիրույթում մարդու վարքագծի ու բնության մասին է: Մասնավորապես՝ *agir en loup* բառակապակցության ու կրկնաբանության

### **Կերպարանափոխությունը առածային խոսույթում...**

միջոցով գոյականը՝ գայլը, լեզվական կառույցի շրջանակում փոխադրվում է մակբայի մակարդակ: Շան ու խոզի բացասական վարքագիծն արտահայտվում է ոչ թե գործողության շեշտադրման, այլ գոյականի միջոցով՝ շնություն, խոզություն, ընդ որում՝ բնավորությունը դիտարկվում է իբրև սեփականություն (*իր*): Ուստի կենդանուն գոյականը մտազուգորդվում է ածանցյալ գոյականի հետ, որն ընդգրկում է հատկանիշների ու վարքագծի ամբողջական կաղապարը, իսկ վերջինիս աղերսվող գործողությունն առկայանում է հաստատման կամ ժխտման միջոցով (*agisse en loup, կանի, չի թողնի*): Տվյալ պարագայում առարկայական վարքը նշյալ ածանցյալ գոյականների միջոցով փոխադրվում է բնագանցական տիրույթ՝ ստանալով որակական բնութագրում: Գայլի կերպարը հայերեն առածներում մտազուգորդվում է որսի հետ: *Գայլի միտքը ոչխարի հոտն է* առածը լեզվաճանաչողական կտրվածքով հասկացությային փոխաբերություն է, միջտիրույթային արտապատկերում: գայլը ոչ թե մտածում է ոչխարի մասին, այլ միտքն ամբողջությամբ կլանված է: Մյուս պարագայում գայլն անհաղորդ է խրատին, ներքին բնությունը՝ բնագդը, հաղթում է արտաքին ազդեցությանը՝ բարոյախրատական քարոզին: Արդյունքում գայլը անձնավորում ոճական հնարի միջոցով մարդկային կերպարանք է ստանում, հրամայում (*ասաց՝ շուտ արեք*), քանի որ գայլի միտքը ոչխարի հոտն է: Ինչ վերաբերում է ֆրանսերեն առածներում կատվի ու ոչխարի հասկացությանցմանը, այն առնչվում է ժամանակային հայեցակերպին: *Qui naquit chat* լեզվական կառույցը հարաբերական դերանվան ու անցյալ կատարյալ ժամանակաձևի օգնությամբ շեշտադրում է կատվի ծննդյան անփոփոխ փաստը, ինչին հետևում է ներկա ժամանակաձևով արտահայտված վարքագծի կաղապարը՝ մկների ետևից վազելը (*court après les souris*): Այլ կերպ ասած՝ ներքին բնույթը ներհատուկ վարքագծի տրամաբանական զարգացման պատճառ է, իսկ *toujours* մակբայի կիրառումը ոչխարի մայրցի պարագայում ցուցանում է կրկնությունն ու մշտական բնույթը:

Ներքին բնույթը պայմանավորում է նաև հասարակական դերն ու ընկալումները.

*À ne convié à noces, eau et bois y doit apporter*

*Էշին կանչեցին հարսանքափուն, ասաց՝ կամ աղն է պակաս, կամ մաղը*

Առածների փոխաբերականության հիմքում նույն պատկերն է՝ էշը հարսանիքի արարողության համատեքստում, որտեղ հասարակական դերերը առաջնային չեն, սակայն էշը մնում է իր կարգավիճակում՝ իրադարձությանն

## Շալունց Ն.

իր մասնակցությունը դիտարկելով աշխատանքի պրիզմայով և բացառելով իբրև հյուր կերպարանափոխությունը: Երկու առաձեռնի առաջին պլանում էշն է, այնուամենայնիվ, վերջինիս դերային կերպարանափոխության անհնարինությունը լեզվաճանաչողական մակարդակում քննության առարկա լեզվամշակույթներում տարբեր է: Եթե ֆրանսերենում ընդգծվում է պարտավորության հանգամանքը *devoir* բայի միջոցով, ապա հայերենում էշն ինքը գիտի իր անելիքը: Ֆրանսերենում բացակայում է հողը, ինչի արդյունքում կենդանին բնորոշում է ընդհանրական կարգ, իսկ կրավորական սեռի գործածումը՝ հրավիրված հարսանիքի (*convié à nocés*), զրկում է վերջինիս սուբյեկտայնությունից, ինչը վերականգնվում է միայն պարտքը կատարելու պարագայում (*eau et bois y doit apporter*): Հայերենում անձնավորում ոճական հնարի օգնությամբ էշն ինքն է գիտակցում և գիտակցածին խոսքային դրսևորում հաղորդում (*ասաց*):

Ներքոնշյալ առաձեռն ընդգծում է կենդանու վարքի վրա արտաքին ազդեցության արդյունքի բացակայությունը հասարակական տիրույթում մարդու վարքագծի պրիզմայով.

*On ne peut pas empêcher les chiens d'aboyer et les menteurs de mentir*

Առաձում շարահյուսական զուգահեռության ու զեղչման միջոցով շան հաչելն ու ստախոսի ստելը դիտարկվում են նույն հարթությունում, այլ կերպ՝ կենդանու բնազդային վարքը մտազուգորդվում է մարդու հասարակական ընտրության հետ: Այս պարագայում առաձի երկրորդ բաղադրիչի (*les menteurs de mentir*) հավաստիության ստուգման միջոցը առաջին բաղադրիչն է, որը կենդանու բնազդային վարքի կաղապարն է: Լայն իմաստով հասարակական տիրույթում ստախոսի ստելուն խանգարելը հնարավոր է, սակայն առաձը այն դիտարկում է բնազդի պրիզմայով, ուստի արտաքին ազդեցությամբ խանգարելը ժխտվում է (*on ne peut pas empêcher*), և ասույթն առավել հիմնավոր ու պատկերավոր է դառնում հատկանիշի՝ իբրև կայուն կարգի բնորոշման առումով:

### **Եզրակացություն**

Այսպիսով, կերպարանափոխությունը ֆրանսերեն ու հայերեն առաձային խոսույթում մարդկային էության բնորոշման միջոց է, որի լեզվաճանաչողական քննությունը վերհանում է մարդկային հատկանիշների, լինելու և թվալու, ներքին բնույթի ու արտաքին դրսևորումների փոխառնչության բազմաշերտ համակարգը: Հատկանշական է կերպարանափոխության առկայա-

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ցումը կենդանուն հասկացությունների միջոցով, և այս պարագայում կենդանական աշխարհի պատկերը բացորոշում է հասարակական համատեքստում մարդկային էության ու վարքագծի կաղապարները, այլ կերպ ասած՝ *ՄԱՐԴԻԿ ԿԵՆԴԱՆԻՆԵՐ ԵՆ* հասկացության փոխաբերությունը հիմք է կերպարի ստեղծման ու վերստեղծման համար: Հաշվի առնելով հետազոտության արդյունքները՝ հարկ է ընդգծել, որ կերպարանափոխությունը՝ ինքնության փոփոխությունը, առավելապես դիտարկվում է բացասական երանգավորման շրջանակում: Գոյաբանական տիրույթում կամ հասկացության ընկալման մակարդակում պատճառահետևանքայնության ընդգծմամբ կերպարանափոխությունը հակադրվում է ներքին էությանը և աղերսվում խաբուսիկ արտաքինին: Ավելին, ընդգծվում է նաև երևույթի վտանգավոր ազդեցությունը ինչպես ներքին, այնպես էլ արտաքին աշխարհում: Այս դիտանկյունից այն ենթադրում է բարոյախրատական ուղղվածություն և զգուշության հորդոր հղում: Ուստի առաձներն ընդգծում են մարդկային բնատուր էության հաստատուն լինելն ու արտաքին ձևափոխումների պարտությունը: Այս համատեքստում շեշտադրվում են արտաքին ազդեցության ապարդյուն լինելը, բնածին հատկությունների կարևորությունը, ինչպես նաև էության ու վարքագծի փոխառնչությունը:

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## **METAMORPHOSIS IN PROVERBIAL DISCOURSE: A LINGUOCOGNITIVE CHARACTERIZATION OF HUMAN NATURE**

### **Summary**

Within proverbial discourse, the linguocognitive model of metamorphosis reveals how French and Armenian proverbs portray human nature and the cognition of human traits. In this context, human nature and behavioral patterns are analyzed through the prism of animal imagery and conceptual metaphors, and the negative connotations associated with metamorphosis are highlighted. At

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the core of this analysis lies the issue of behavioral and, more broadly, identity shifts, analyzed both on an ontological plane and at the level of conceptual perception, at the intersection of being and seeming. Furthermore, the analysis emphasizes the role of causality in the construction of a new identity.

It should be noted that proverbial discourse highlights the immutability of human nature: the external manifestations of metamorphosis do not result in any substantive internal change. From a linguocognitive and linguostylistic perspective, the proverbs under study reveal cognitive models that illustrate the failure of external influence to alter innate attributes, as well as the mapping of human nature onto behavioral patterns.

**Keywords:** *metamorphosis, proverbial discourse, human nature, zoonym, conceptual metaphor, being, seeming.*

**ՄԱՐՈ ՂՈՒԿԱՍՅԱՆ\***

*Մեսրոպ Մաշտոցի անվան հին ձեռագրերի գիտահետազոտական  
ինստիտուտի ասպիրանտ  
Հանրապետության նախագահի աշխատակազմի ավագ մասնագետ  
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ՇՈՒՐՋ**

***Ամփոփում***

Տարբեր ժամանակներում գրողները նախընտրել են ստեղծագործել ծածկանունով կամ անստորագիր: Ինչո՞ւ է առհասարակ գրողը ներկայանում ծածկանունով կամ կեղծանունով: Պատճառները շատ են ու յուրաքանչյուր գրողի համար ունեցել և կարող են ունենալ իրենց ուրույն հիմքերը՝ երկար անունը կարճով փոխարինելը, նման կամ նույն անունը կրող մեկ այլ գրողից տարբերվելը, ազգային ծագումը թաքցնելը, ավելի խոսուն անունով հայտնի դառնալը, գաղտնիությունը, հեղինակի հասարակական դիրքը, գրաքննությունը և այլն:

Մեծանուն երգիծաբան Հակոբ Պարոնյանը ևս իր ստեղծագործությունների, հոդվածների մեծ մասը ստորագրել է ծածկանունով կամ հրապարակել դրանք անստորագիր: Հոդվածում մասնավորապես անդրադարձ է կատարվում «Մեղու» և «Թատրոն» երգիծաթերթերում գրողի այն երկերի դերանուն-ծածկանունների և մի քանի այլ ծածկանունների, որոնք տարիներ շարունակ չեն վերագրվել Պարոնյանին: Քննության են առնվում Հ. Պարոնյանի կողմից այդ ծածկանունների գործածության շարժառիթները, ներկայացվում է ծածկանունների կիրառության քանակական վիճակագրություն, և ընդգծ-

\* Հոդվածը ներկայացվել է 08.03.2026, գրախոսվել է 27.03.2026, ընդունվել է տպագրության 30.04.2026:

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## **Հակոբ Պարոնյանի մի քանի ծածկանունների շուրջ**

վում են դրանց գործածման անհամապատասխանություններն ու հնարավոր պատճառները:

**Բանալի բառեր՝** *Հակոբ Պարոնյան, ծածկանուն, կեղծանուն, «Մեղու» երգիծաթերթ, «Թափրոն» երգիծաթերթ, դերանուն-ծածկանուն, անստորագիր:*

### **Ներածություն**

Բանասիրության կարևորագույն խնդիրներից մեկը եղել և մնում է անանուն, ծածկանունով կամ կեղծանունով գրված տեքստերի հեղինակի և ստեղծման ժամանակի բացահայտումը (ատրիբուցիա): Այսպիսի տեքստերն ի հայտ են եկել գրավոր խոսքի ձևավորմանը զուգահեռ. տարբեր նպատակներից, դրդապատճառներից ելնելով՝ տեքստի հեղինակը նախընտրել է հրապարակել գրվածը անստորագիր, ծածկանունով կամ կեղծանունով: Գրականագետ, գրող, թարգմանիչ Վալենտին Դմիտրիևը գրում է. «Գրական միստիֆիկացիայի ճանապարհին առաջին քայլը կեղծանունն է, այն է՝ մտացածին անունը. հեղինակը մոլորեցնում է ընթերցողներին՝ իրեն կոչելով ոչ թե իր, այլ ուրիշի անունով:

Թեպետ երբեմն նրան դա էլ բավական չէ. նա իր ստեղծագործությունը վերագրում է մեկ ուրիշին՝ շատ հաճախ հորինված, ընդ որում, փորձում է օժտել նրան հատկանիշներով՝ ընթերցողներին համոզելով նրա իսկության մեջ»:<sup>1</sup> Գրականագետը կարևորում է կեղծանունների ուսումնասիրությունը՝ որպես բոլոր ժամանակների և ժողովուրդների գրական կյանքի կարևորագույն գործոն: Ըստ Դմիտրիևի՝ այն հավասարապես հարում է մատենագիտությանը, լեզվաբանությանը և գրականագիտությանը:<sup>2</sup>

Սույն հոդվածում կիրառելու ենք «ծածկանուն» եզրույթը, և, քանի որ այս հասկացությանը զուգահեռ տարբեր գրքերում և գիտական ուսումնասիրություններում գործածվում են նաև կեղծանուն, մականուն, գրչանուն, գրական անուն եզրերը, հարկ ենք համարում ընդգծել, որ ծածկանունն իմաստով և գործածության շրջանակով մոտ է կեղծանվանը: Փ. Մեյթիխանյանը փաստում է, որ կեղծանունն ու ծածկանունը, չնայած դրանց բաղադրիչ արմատների (կեղծ և ծածուկ) տարբերությանը, ունեն շփման եզրեր և կարող են փոխարի-

<sup>1</sup> **Дмитриев** 1973, 6.

<sup>2</sup> **Дмитриев** 1977, 4.

## Ղուկասյան Մ.

նել մեկը մյուսին:<sup>3</sup> Ծածկանունը կամ կեղծանունն անհատի կողմից (գրող, նկարիչ, քանդակագործ և այլն) ընտրված անուններ են, որոնցով նա ներկայանում է հանրությանը՝ որոշ դեպքերում թաքցնելով իր անձն այդ անվան ներքո, որոշ դեպքերում էլ պարզապես նախընտրելով հանդես գալ այդ անվամբ՝ առանց գաղտնիության նպատակադրման:

Այս հոդվածում կանդրադառնանք Հակոբ Պարոնյանի այն գործերի ծածկանուններին, որոնք չեն ընդգրկվել հեղինակի երկերի ժողովածուներում և տարիներ շարունակ չեն վերագրվել երգիծաբանին: Ինչպես հայտնի է, Պարոնյանը մամուլում հանդես է եկել մի քանի տասնյակ տարբեր գրական ծածկանուններով: Միայն Բախտիար Հովակիմյանի «Հայոց ծածկանունների բառարանում» թվարկվում է նրա շուրջ 54 ծածկանուն՝ *Ա., Անանուն, Անաքարսիս, Անիկա, Ապրակ, Գող, Գրանենգ, Դեպ, Դուն, Ես, Թապրոն, Թմբուկ, Լուսարար, Կայծակ, Կարկուտ, Ով է նե, Սպինքս, Փայլակ, Փշող, Քամ* և այլն:<sup>4</sup> Ի դեպ, նշված բառարանում ընդգրկված չեն *Մենք, Ոմն, Վառարանը, Թաղեցի ոմն* ծածկանունները: Այս բոլոր ծածկանուններով ստորագրված տեքստերի հետևում, անկասկած, հանճարեղ երգիծաբանն է, ով ունի իր ինքնատիպ ձեռագիրը: Հրանտ Ասատուրը գրում է. «Իր ոճը թէև միօրինակ չէ քերականական տեսակետով, սակայն ունի լեզուական որոշ դրոշմ մը որով կարելի է առանց վարանման բացայայտ կերպով ցոյց տալ /Թատրոն/ի յօդուածներէն անոնք զորս ծածկանունով ստորագրած կամ անստորագիր գրած է Պարոնեան, և անոնք զորս գրած են իր աշխատակիցները»:<sup>5</sup>

Հակոբ Պարոնյանի այս երկերի հեղինակային պատկանելության հարցին տարբեր ժամանակներում գրականագետների կողմից տարակարծիք անդրադարձներ են եղել: Պարոնյանագետ Գառնիկ Ստեփանյանն այս գործերում տեսնում էր Պարոնյանի խմբագրական միջամտությունը, բայց ոչ հեղինակային ձեռագիրը: Չնայած գրողի երկերի լիակատար ժողովածուի խմբագրի այդ կարծիքին՝ ժողովածուն կազմող Ալիս Մանուկյանը դերանուն-ծածկանունները վերագրում է Պարոնյանի գրչին:<sup>6</sup> Գրականագետ Գևորգ Մադոյանն ընդունում է, որ Պարոնյանի հեղինակությամբ հայատառ թուրքերեն շատ գործեր կան, որոնց զգալի մասը մնացել է մամուլի էջերում և դեռ բացահայտված չէ. «Դրանց մեծագույն մասն առայժմ չի հայտնաբերված, և

<sup>3</sup> Տե՛ս **Մեյթիխանյան** 2020, 216:

<sup>4</sup> **Հովակիմյան** 2005, 702:

<sup>5</sup> **Հրանտ Ասատուր** 1921, 186:

<sup>6</sup> Տե՛ս **Մանուկյան** 1953, № 6:

### **Հակոբ Պարոնյանի մի քանի ծածկանունների շուրջ**

միայն մի մասը՝ շուրջ 50 կտոր, պահպանվել է Հ. Պարոնյանի հրատարակած պարբերականների՝ մեզ հասած կոմպլեկտներում, այդ թվում միայն «Մեղուի» 1872-1874 թթ. համարներում՝ 40 կտոր»:<sup>7</sup> Այս տեսանկյունից ընդարձակ աշխատանք է կատարել Մարգարիտ Ըրղաթբաշյանը՝ մասնավորապես տողատակի թարգմանություններով հրատարակելով «Հին աշխարհին Խաչիկը, նոր աշխարհին Գաբիկը» երգիծավեպը:<sup>8</sup> Վիճելի հարցին համոզիչ հիմնավորում է տվել ժամանակակից գրականագետ պրոֆեսոր Ալբերտ Մակարյանը՝ գիտական փաստերով վերջ դնելով առկա բոլոր անհամաձայնություններին:<sup>9</sup>

Ինչն է դրդել երգիծաբանին գրել այլ անվան ներքո, չէ՞ որ արդարամիտ Պարոնյանն իրականում ոչ մեկից չէր վախենում, միայն իրեն բնորոշ լեզվով ձաղկում և մերկացնում էր ժամանակի արատավոր երևույթներն ու երևելի անձանց: Հրանտ Ասատուրը հիշում է. «Ուղղասիրություն և բարեհամբույր բնավորություն: «Ավելի կը սիրեմ խոտ ուտել և ուղիղ մարդ մնալ քան պնակ լիզել և բարիք վայելել», կ'ըսեր»:<sup>10</sup> Պարոնյանին բնորոշ չէին շողոքորթությունը, շահույթի դիմաց որևէ մեկին գովաբանելը, որքան էլ ֆինանսական միջոցները սուղ լինեին:

Ինչպես հայտնի է, «Մեղու» և «Թատրոն» երգիծաթերթերի խմբագրի պաշտոնը Պարոնյանը ստանձնեց բավականին ծանր ժամանակահատվածում, նյութական զրկանքներ կրելով հրատարակեց հանդեսները, որոնք չունեին բավարար թվով աշխատակիցներ: Այս պայմաններում խմբագիրը միաժամանակ ստանձնում է նաև երգիծաթերթերի թղթակիցների դերը: Ամենայն հավանականությամբ, Պարոնյանը չի ցանկացել երգիծաթերթերի բոլոր էջերն իր անունով ստորագրել, այդ իսկ պատճառով որոշել է պարբերաբար հանդես գալ ծածկանուններով:

Այս տեսանկյունից, փաստորեն, ծածկանունները տեխնիկական խնդիր են լուծել՝ միաժամանակ հետաքրքրություն առաջացնելով ինչպես հեղինակի ժամանակակիցների, այնպես էլ հետագա ուսումնասիրողների շրջանում:

Երգիծաբանի համար միշտ առաջնային է եղել թերթի էջերում հրապարակվող նյութի բովանդակությունը, ասելիքը, այլ ոչ թե հեղինակի անունը կամ նրա հանրահռչակումը: «Մեղու» երգիծաթերթի 1873 թվականի 164-րդ

<sup>7</sup> Մադոյան 1954, 49:

<sup>8</sup> Տե՛ս Ըրղաթբաշյան 2017:

<sup>9</sup> Տե՛ս Մակարյան 2018, 219–240:

<sup>10</sup> Հակոբ Պարոնյանը ժամանակակիցների հուշերում և վկայություններում 2004, 71:

## Ղուկասյան Մ.

համարում «Ո՛վ է նե՛» ծածկանունով հրատարակված «Սուրհանդակ Մեղուի» շարքում կարդում ենք.

«– Մեղու՛, սա «ՈՎ է Նե»ն ո՛վ է նե՛՝ ինձի չ՛ըսե՛ս:

– Ինչո՞ւդ պէտք»: <sup>11</sup>

Այսպիսով, հարցի պատասխանն ավելի քան խոսույն է. Պարոնյանը կարևորում է տեքստի բովանդակությունը, գրվածի իմաստն ընթերցողին հասցնելը և անհրաժեշտություն չի տեսնում պարզաբանելու, թե ով է դրա հեղինակը:

Ուշարժան է, որ ռուս իրականության մեջ Հակոբ Պարոնյանի ժամանակակից պոետ-երգիծաբան, թարգմանիչ, քննադատ Դմիտրի Մինանը ևս շատ ծածկանուններ է ունեցել: Նրա մասին գրականագետ Դմիտրիևը գրում է. «Հաճախ Մինանը ծածկանուններ ստեղծելու համար օգտվում էր գրական ոեմինիսցենցիաներից: Նրա շատ հումորեսկներ ստորագրված են եղել՝ «*Քեզ ի՞նչ իմ անունը*»: Նա վերցրել է Պուշկինի այդ տողը՝ ցանկանալով ասել՝ արդյո՞ք միևնույն չէ, թե ով է գրողը: Գլխավորը բովանդակությունն է, այլ ոչ թե ստորագրությունը, կարևոր է, թե ինչ և ինչպես են գրված, այլ ոչ թե ում կողմից»: <sup>12</sup>

Կյանքի վերջին տարիներին անգամ՝ 1890 թվականին, Պարոնյանը հավատարիմ մնաց ծածկանունով գրելու իր ընտրությանը. «Տարագ» թերթի խմբագիր Տիգրան Նազարյանին գրած նամակում խոսելով իր թղթակցության պայմանների մասին՝ նա շեշտում է. «Չմոռնամ հայտնել թե հողվածներու ներքև՝ զորս ապագային, եթե ուզեմ, մասնավոր տեսրակով հրատարակելու իրավունքն ինձ կը վերապահեմ, անունս չդնելով, սուտանուն պիտի գործածեմ»: <sup>13</sup>

Ավելի մանրամասն անդրադառնանք Հակոբ Պարոնյանի մի քանի ծածկանունների:

### **«Մեղու» երգիծաթերթի մի քանի ծածկանունների վերաբերյալ**

Կ. Պոլսի «Մեղու» երգիծաթերթում հրատարակված, սակայն երգիծաբանի ժողովածուներում չընդգրկված երկերը ստորագրված են հետևյալ ծածկա-

<sup>11</sup> «Մեղու», 1873, № 164, 18.08.1873 (հրատարակվել է «Ո՛վ է նե՛» ծածկանունով):

<sup>12</sup> **Дмитриев** 1986, 165.

<sup>13</sup> Հակոբ Պարոնյանը ժամանակակիցների հուշերում և վկայություններում 2004, 209:

\* Փակագծերում նշված է ծածկանունների գործածության քանակը:

### Հակոբ Պարոնյանի մի քանի ծածկանունների շուրջ

նուններով՝ Ես (6),\* Դուն (19), Մենք (1), Ոմն (1), Անիկա (3), Ո՞վ է նէ (10): Հետաքրքրական է, որ «Մեղու» երգիծաթերթի 1873 թվականի երկու՝ 149-րդ և 150-րդ համարներում լույս տեսած «Կրօնական ժողով և Ղազար վարդապետին խալբախը» հրապարակախոսական ակնարկի միայն երկրորդ մասն է ստորագրված «Դուն» ծածկանունով, իսկ 1873 թվականի 149-րդ համարում տպագրված առաջին մասն անստորագիր է: Բնականաբար, ենթադրվում է, որ այն ևս կարող էր ունենալ նույն ծածկանունը: Սա կա՛մ տպագրական վրիպակ է (քիչ հավանական է, քանի որ իրար անմիջապես հաջորդող համարներում են տպագրվել նյութերը, Պարոնյանը հազիվ թե մոռանար և միայն շարունակությունը ծածկանունով հրատարակել), կա՛մ էլ ևս մեկ փաստ, որ Պարոնյանն ուղղակի հետևողականորեն չի ցանկացել գործածել ծածկանունը՝ առաջնային համարելով տպագրվող նյութի բովանդակությունը:

«Մեղու» երգիծաթերթի 1873 թվականի մայիսի 19-ի 139-րդ համարում «Ծեփողականութիւն կամ շողոքորթութիւն» ակնարկում կարդում ենք ոմն տիկնոջ և նրա սիրտն իր շողոքորթությամբ նվաճող տղամարդու հետևյալ երկխոսությունը.

«— Հա՛հ, հա՛հ հա՛հ հա՛հ, այնչափ աղւո՞ր եմ:

— Տարակոյս չը կայ ազնիւ, շատ աղւոր էք:

— Հա՛հ, հա՛հ, հա՛հ հաաաա՛հ...

ԴՈՒՆ

— Հա՛, հա՛, հա, հա՛, հա՛:

ԵՍ

— Հա՛, հա՛, հա՛, հա՛, հա՛:

ԱՆԻԿԱՅ

— Հի՛, հի՛, հի՛, հի՛, հի՛, հի՛:

ՄԵՂՈՒ»<sup>14</sup>:

Ինչպես տեսնում ենք, այս երկխոսության մեջ ի մի են բերված նշված երգիծաթերթում Պարոնյանի գործածած դերանուն-ծածկանունները, ինչպես նաև իր արդեն հայտնի «Մեղու» ծածկանունը: Կ. Պոլսի «Մամուլ» հանդեսի խմբագիր Գևորգ Այվազյանը հեզնանքով մեջբերում է այս տողերը՝ սկսելով այսպես. «Հետևեալ տողերն ալ մեր տէլի ճօրճիէն կը քաղենք.»<sup>15</sup> Նա, լինելով անզիջում պայքարի մեջ Պարոնյանի հետ, «տէլի ճօրճիէ» (տէլի - գիժ) բնորոշումն է տալիս երգիծաբանին: Այսկերպ Պարոնյանի ժամանակակցի կողմից

<sup>14</sup> «Մեղու», № 139, 19.05. 1873:

<sup>15</sup> «Մամուլ», № 285, 23.05.1873 (Ստորագրված է ենուլք Տէմիրճեան անունով):

## Ղուկասյան Մ.

հաստատվում է նաև այս դերանուն-ծածկանունների՝ նրա գրչին պատկանելը: Վերը մեջբերված երկխոսությունը ևս մեկ փաստ է, որ բոլոր այդ ծածկանունները մեկ մարդու կողմից են կիրառված:

Գ. Այվազյանը «Մամուլի» 1873 թվականի 340-րդ համարի «Առ շոշորդաբան» մանրապատումում թունոտ սլաքներն ուղղելով Պարոնյանի դեմ՝ գրում է. «Հապա ո՞ւր թողունք ասկէ երկու շաբաթ առաջ նոյն իսկ քու թերթիդ մէջ շարած Ես, Դուն, Ան, Գովինըս, Դիմացինըդ եւ այլն միմոսական ստորագրութիւններդ, որոնցմով կատարեալ յիմարանոցի մը փոխուած էր Մեղու հանդէսը»:<sup>16</sup> Չի բացառվում նաև, որ, ի հեճուկս այս բնորոշման, երգիծաբանը որոշել է ծածկանունները խառը և ոչ համակարգված կիրառել:

Համաշխարհային պարբերական մամուլում բավականին տարածված են եղել «N.» և «NN.» ստորագրությունները, որոնք լատիներեն «Nemo» (ոչ ոք) և «Nomen nescio» (անունը չգիտեմ, այլ կերպ ասած՝ ինչ-որ մեկը) բառերի կրճատ տարբերակներն են: Պարոնյանի կողմից «Ոմն» ծածկանվան գործածությունն էլ այս շարքից կարելի է համարել: Տիրապետելով մի շարք լեզուների՝ երգիծաբանը կարող էր հաղորդակից լինել միջազգային մամուլում կիրառվող և տարածում գտած հնարքներին՝ անհրաժեշտության դեպքում գործածելով դրանք:

Բնավ պատահական չէ նաև Պարոնյանի կողմից դերանուններն իբրև ծածկանուն գործածելը. անվան դեր կատարող այս խոսքի մասերով գրողը հասնում է ասելիքի ընդհանրացման, դրանցով ավելի ընդգծում իմ, քո, նրա, մենք-ի անունից արտահայտվող բովանդակության կարևորությունը: Նշանագետ Յու. Լոտմանը «Հատուկ անունների աշխարհը» («Мир собственных имен») վերտառությամբ ակնարկում գրում է. «Ամբողջ ընդարձակ, միևնույն ժամանակ ակունքներով հնագույն շերտերի հասնող մշակույթի ոլորտներ են կապված առաջին դեմքի հետ և ներկայացնում են «ich-Erzählung»՝ պատում առաջին դեմքով: Սակայն այդ «ես»-ը միևնույն ժամանակ «բոլորը «ես» կարգավիճակով» իմաստի կրողն է»:<sup>17</sup>

Պարոնյանի «Ես»-ը, «Դուն»-ը, «Մենք»-ը, «Ոմն»-ը, «Անիկա»-ն, «Ո՞վ է նէ»-ն կարող էր լինել իր ժամանակակիցներից յուրաքանչյուրը, ով կբարձրաձայներ այդ օրերի իրականությանն առնչվող, իսկ որոշ գրվածքներով նաև՝ համամարդկային ցավոտ հարցերն ու խնդիրները:

<sup>16</sup> «Մամուլ», № 340, 01.12.1873:

<sup>17</sup> Лотман 2000, 40.

**«Թատրոն» երգիծաթերթի մի քանի ծածկանունների վերաբերյալ**

Կ. Պոլսի «Թատրոն» երգիծաթերթում լույս տեսած, սակայն Պարոնյանի ժողովածուներում չընդգրկված երկերի ծածկանուններն են՝ *Ես* (35), *Դուն* (5), *Թաղեցի ոմն* (1), *Հէռադէտ ոմն* (1), *Վառարանը* (1), *Կարկուտ* (2), *Ո՛վ է նէ* (2): Փաստորեն, այստեղ «Մեղու» երգիծաթերթի ծածկանուններին ավելացել են «Թաղեցի ոմն», «Հէռադէտ ոմն», «Վառարանը», «Կարկուտ» ծածկանունները, որոնք կարելի է պայգոնիմներ կոչել: Գրականագետ Վ. Դմիտրիևը գրում է. «Երգիծաբանները միշտ ձգտել են այնպես ստորագրել, որ հասնեն երգիծական արդյունքի: Դա էր նրանց ծածկանունների հիմնական նպատակը. անունը թաքցնելու ցանկությունն այստեղ երկրորդ պլան էր մղվում: Այդ իսկ պատճառով նման ծածկանունները կարելի է ընդգծել հատուկ խմբի մեջ և կոչել պայգոնիմներ (հուն.՝ *paizen* - կատակել)»:<sup>18</sup>

«Թատրոն» երգիծաթերթի վերը նշված ծածկանունների գործածությունն ուսումնասիրելիս մի շարք ուշագրավ փաստերի ենք բախվում. «Հին աշխարհին Խաչիկը, նոր աշխարհին Գաբիկը» վիպակը Պարոնյանը ստորագրել է «Ես» ծածկանունով, սակայն թերթի 1874 թվականի 53-րդ, 54-րդ, 55-րդ, 56-րդ, 58-րդ, 75-րդ, 77-րդ, 79-րդ, 1875 թվականի 81-րդ, 82-րդ, 84-րդ, 88-րդ, 89-րդ, 92-րդ, 94-րդ, 97-րդ, 101-րդ համարներում վիպակի մասերը հրապարակվել են անստորագիր: «Դուն» ծածկանունը գործածված է հինգ անգամ: «Լանկա Պօսթանին. պախըճի պատուելի մը» մանրապատումը հատվածաբար լույս է տեսել 1874 թվականի 73-րդ, 74-րդ, 75-րդ, 77-րդ, 79-րդ համարներում անստորագիր, սակայն 1875 թվականի 84-րդ համարում՝ զարմանալիորեն «Դուն» ծածկանունով: Զարմանք ենք ապրում նաև, երբ 1875 թվականի 105-րդ համարում հրապարակված «Հին աշխարհին Խաչիկը, նոր աշխարհին Գաբիկը» վիպակի վերջում կարդում ենք «Դուն» ստորագրությունը. չէ՞ որ Պարոնյանն այս վիպակը ստորագրում էր «Ես» ծածկանունով կամ էլ ուղղակի անստորագիր էր թողնում:

«Նկարագրութիւն դիմաց եւ բնաւորութեանց մայրաքաղաքիս զանազան թաղերու ազգայնոց» ակնարկաշարը լույս է տեսել «Ես» ծածկանունով և անստորագիր, բացառություն են կազմում միայն 1875 թվականի 122-րդ և 131-րդ համարներում, համապատասխանաբար, հրապարակված «Բումէլի հիսար» և «Պօյաճի քէօյ» ակնարկները, որոնցից առաջինն ունի «Վառարանը», իսկ երկրորդը՝ «Կարկուտ» ծածկանունը:

<sup>18</sup> **Дмитриев** 1977, 228.

## Ղուկասյան Մ.

Ինչո՞վ բացատրել այս անհամապատասխանությունները. վերագրենք սա Պարոնյանի անուշադրությամբ, թե՛ նպատակադրված խառը գործածությանը: Երկու տարբերակներն էլ հավանական են: Հրանտ Ասատուրը հիշում է. «Իր հրատարակած թերթերուն գալով, վերջին պահուն, երբ նեղն կը դնեն եղեր, այն ատեն կը նստի կը գրե: Բայց արագ կ'աշխատի եղեր և իր գրածները նորեն սրբագրելու սովորությունը չունի եղեր: Մեկ գրչով գրած է իր գործերեն մեծ մասը: Քովս գտնվող ձեռագիրները ապացույց են այս մասին. շատ քիչ *rature* (ուղղում) կա անոնց մեջ: Բայց Պարոնյան *méthodique* (մեթոդի) մարդ եղած չ'է. օրն օրին գրած է միշտ, ինչպես օրն օրին ապրած է»:<sup>19</sup> Հրանտ Ասատուրի այս խոսքերը նկատի ունենալով հանդերձ՝ պետք է փաստել, որ, ստեղծագործական անհրաժեշտությունից ելնելով, երգիծաբանը որոշ դեպքերում «մեկ գրչով» չի բավարարվել, հղկել է տեքստը, մաքրել ավելորդություններից, բյուրեղացրել այն: Բավական է հիշել, թե «Պտույտ մը Պոլսո թաղերու մեջ» ակնարկաշարը որքան տարբերակներ է ունեցել՝ «Քաղաքական աշխարհագրություն»-ից մինչև «Նկարագրություն դիմաց և բնավորությանց մայրաքաղաքիս զանազան թաղերու ազգայնոց»: Պարոնյանի համար բովանդակությունն էր առաջնային, իսկ ծածկանվան խառը գործածությունը, թերևս, տեխնիկական խնդիր է եղել, որին նա կարևորություն չի տվել:

### **Եզրակացություններ**

Ընդհանրացնելով Պարոնյանի մի քանի ծածկանունների վերաբերյալ ասվածը՝ հանգում ենք հետևյալ եզրակացությունների.

1. Ինքնակի կողմից ինչպես շուրջ 54 ծածկանվան, այնպես էլ հողվածում քննարկված ծածկանունների գործածության պատճառներից մեկը, թերևս, այն է, որ լինելով խիստ համեստ անձնավորություն, Պարոնյանն անհարմար է զգացել իր անուն-ազգանունով հանդես գալ իր իսկ խմբագրած թերթերի էջերում,

2. Ծածկանունների կիրառությունը երգիծաբանի դեպքում իր անձը որևէ մեկից, գրաքննությունից կամ այլ գործոններից թաքցնելու նպատակ երբեք չի հետապնդել, այլապես դրանք այդքան ինքնաբացահայտող չէին լինի: Բացի այդ, Պարոնյանը որևէ մեկից չի վախեցել և միշտ համարձակորեն քննադատել է բոլոր նրանց, ովքեր արժանի են եղել այդ քննադատությանը: Նրա

<sup>19</sup> Հակոբ Պարոնյանը ժամանակակիցների հուշերում և վկայություններում 2004, 68:

## **Հակոբ Պարոնյանի մի քանի ծածկանունների շուրջ**

կենսագրության որևէ դրվագ մեզ չի հուշում ծածուկ հանդես գալու մասին ինչ-ինչ հանգամանքներ,

3. որոշ ծածկանուններ երգիծական արդյունքի հասնելու նպատակ են հետապնդել՝ միևնույն ժամանակ ենթատեքստ պարունակելով,

4. դերանուն-ծածկանունների կիրառությունն ընդհանրացնող նշանակություն ունի, ընդգծում է յուրաքանչյուրի կողմից բարձրաձայնման ենթակա նյութի կարևորությունը,

5. Հակոբ Պարոնյանի համար թեպետ ծածկանունների կիրառությունն ինքնանպատակ չի եղել, այդուհանդերձ այն երգիծաբանի ստեղծագործական կյանքում չի ունեցել նաև խիստ մեծ առաջնահերթություն: Այդ մասին է վկայում հաճախ ծածկանունների խառը, անկանոն գործածությունը:

Պարոնյանը միշտ առաջնակարգությունը տալիս էր հրապարակվող նյութի իմաստին, բովանդակությանը. կարևորը ասելիքը ճիշտ նպատակակետին հասցնելն էր, իսկ մնացածը անէական, տեխնիկական և, այո, «մեկ գրչով» լուծվող հարցեր են եղել նրա համար:

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*kut'wn yew tpragrut'wn K. K'eshishean ordi, 280 e'j). Hrant Asatur 1921, Dimastuerner, Constantinople, Publishing and printing son K. Qeshishean, 280 pages (in Armenian).*

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## **CONCERNING SEVERAL PSEUDONYMS OF HAKOB PARONYAN**

### **Summary**

Throughout various historical periods, authors have often opted to use pseudonyms or remain anonymous when creating their works. This prompts the question of why an author would generally choose to present themselves under a pseudonym or a nickname. The reasons behind the adoption of a pseudonym are multifaceted and vary according to the individual writer's circumstances: simplification of a lengthy name, the need to differentiate oneself from a writer with a similar or identical name, the concealment of ethnic identity, the desire for becoming famous with a more evocative name, concerns regarding privacy, the author's public status, the constraints of censorship, etc.

The renowned satirist Hakob Paronyan also signed the majority of his works and articles under pseudonyms or published them unsigned. This article specifically examines pronoun-pseudonyms and several other pseudonyms of newly found works in the satirical newspapers "Meghu" ("Bee") and "Tatron" ("Theatre") that remained unattributed to Paronyan for years. The study analyzes the motivations behind Paronyan's use of these newly identified pseudonyms, provides quantitative statistics on their application, and highlights inconsistencies and potential reasons for their usage.


**Keywords:** *Hakob Paronyan, pseudonym, nickname, satirical newspaper "Meghu" ("Bee"), satirical newspaper "Tatron" ("Theatre"), pronoun-pseudonym, unsigned.*

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## THE FIGURE OF PARUYR SEVAK IN THE WORKS OF SARGIS MURADYAN

### ***Abstract***

Paruyr Sevak's figure as a symbol of the Armenian intellectual – perpetually engaged in the quest for truth–has been repeatedly reflected in the works of Sargis Muradyan (1927–2007), People's Artist of the Republic of Armenia. An examination of the series of portraits that Muradyan dedicated to Sevak over the years, along with the thematic compositions and frescoes, reveals their artistic role and significance within the broader development of Armenian national fine arts in the 1960s and 80s. During that period, a novel vision, characterized by psychological depth and a symbolic, multilayered nature, was being formed, according to which Sevak's portraits were consistent with contemporary artists' interpretations of the intellectual's figure. We've drawn parallels among the portraits by Hovhannes Zardaryan, Eduard Isabekyan, Ara Bekaryan, which –

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## **The Figure of Paruyr Sevak in the Works of Sargis Muradyan**

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similar to Muradyan's work - reflect inner tension, spiritual quest, and national consciousness.

**Keywords:** *Sargis Muradyan, Paruyr Sevak, Armenian fine arts, portrait, fresco, drawing, sketch.*

### ***Introduction***

Paruyr Sevak (1924–1971) is one of the most prominent representatives of Armenian contemporary literature. His works encompass the ideology of sublime national self-consciousness and historical memory that align with modern reality. His poetic legacy is not only literary but also a socio-cultural phenomenon. It has had a significant impact on the actualization of self-consciousness across different generations. Sevak's figure in the Armenian reality is that of an intellectual with integrity, an insightful poet, and a symbol of national voice, which has been reflected in the fine arts, particularly in Sargis Muradyan's works. In Muradyan's art, Sevak is represented as a contemplative, introspective, at times suffering but always unflinching and resolute character. The research aims to analyze the interpretations of Paruyr Sevak's figure in Sargis Muradyan's works, revealing their artistic specifics.

### ***Methodology***

The research was conducted using both theoretical and practical methods. The painter's works dedicated to Paruyr Sevak—including oil paintings, frescoes, and sketches preserved at the Paruyr Sevak House Museum, at the Jermuk branch of the Armenian National Gallery, at the funds of the Moscow Fine Arts Academy, as well as in family and private collections—were examined in the course of this study. The analysis of literature in art history, literary criticism, and culturology has enriched the research. Descriptive, analytical, and comparative methods were employed to shed light on the reflection of Sevak's figure in Muradyan's works, revealing their ideological and aesthetic foundations.

### ***Discussion/Analysis***

Beginning in the 1950s, Sargis Muradyan devoted himself to painting portraits of his contemporaries. The artist was always drawn to creative people, i.e., writers, composers, actors, and artists, with many of whom he cooperated, forging honest friendships and creative rapport. One such exceptional friend was

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Paruyr Sevak.<sup>1</sup> In Sevak, Muradyan perceived the conscience of the era and the echo of the people's suffering; for his part, Sevak recognized in Muradyan's works the artistic counterpart to his own poetic vision. "Sevak's poetry resonates with Muradyan's artistic vision in many respects. The poet and the artist were united by shared ideas and a common worldview, and their intellectual affinity developed into a strong friendship."<sup>2</sup> Muradyan, with touching sincerity, depicted this bond in the article "In Memory of My Friend," expressing the depth of this exceptional closeness that had developed over the years. "It has been a year since Paruyr passed away. It is both unbelievable and heartbreaking that a year has passed since we last saw him. It's terrible for those who were close to the poet. Many were fortunate to be close to him, yet only a few shared a particularly special bond. With them, he shared his daily bread, his thoughts, and the essence of his being. I was both fortunate and unfortunate to belong to that small circle. I was fortunate to be with him for more than 20 years, sharing joy and sorrow, and listening to his wisdom. I was unfortunate because his close confidants feel they have been orphaned".<sup>3</sup>

In Muradyan's heartfelt speech, one perceives his deep affection for his friend, the pride he took in having stood beside Paruyr, and the shared experience of profound human and creative moments.

At various stages of his creative development, Muradyan produced his renowned series of portraits of Sevak. In these works, the artist succeeded in uniting spiritual tension, the sublimity of the poetic word, and the collective radiance of national memory, thereby shaping a monumental image of Sevak that remains, to this day, one of the most sensitive and sincere expressions of Armenian fine arts.

The genesis of Sevak's poetic word, with its mysterious unfolding, was of special interest to the painter. It was through this almost invisible process that Muradyan portrayed Paruyr Sevak in his 1964 and 1996 portraits. In the first portrait (1964, oil on canvas, 100×80 cm, Armenian National Gallery, Jermuk Branch; see Fig. 1), where Muradyan rejects external pathos, the poet is depicted seated on the floor of his home, his legs crossed, with open books and notebooks before him. This simple, unassuming posture symbolizes the poet's spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Hetq.am

<sup>2</sup> **Urazova** 1970.

<sup>3</sup> **Muradyan** 1972.

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concentration and the unfolding of his creative thought. The poet's bluish sport jacket, combining greyish and greenish tones, creates a cool, restrained atmosphere marked with mental tension. Sevak is portrayed in deep silence, his head tilted, and his gaze focused. The serious expression on his face and the sharp line of his brows attest to a contemplative mind and the tension of inner thought and spirit. The burning cigarette held between his fingers appears to symbolize creative urgency and the nervous drive that often accompanied his work. "When he was working, he became so self-absorbed that this cordial and open person turned impenetrable. He would neither eat nor drink for days on end, his only inseparable companion being his cigarettes."<sup>4</sup> The composition of the painting is defined by balance and harmony. Light falls from above, softly lighting the poet's face and hands and bringing out the severity yet serenity of his features. The clay vessels and pomegranate in the background symbolize soil, memory, life, blood, and fertility. In this way, Muradyan brings together the individual and national ideologies, encapsulating the force of collective memory within the poet's silence. The choice of colors and the harmonious interaction of blue, grey, and soft green create an atmosphere of intellectual silence and inner concentration. Muradyan's later portrait of Paruyr Sevak (1996, oil on canvas 100×80 cm, Armenian National Gallery, Jermuk Branch; see Fig. 2) itself attests to the painter's mature thinking. Here, Muradyan does not strive for external representation; instead, he concentrates on the genesis of thought and the inner state of creative inspiration. If in the 1964 portrait the poet is depicted as a perceptive intellectual in an atmosphere of silence and concentration, then in this later portrait Sevak becomes a figure of spiritual struggle, a symbol emanating from inner creative energy. The poet is depicted seated in the corner, his legs crossed, his thoughts recorded by tense gestures. We witness a state of inner self-absorption and spiritual concentration, conveyed not through a dark, heavy atmosphere but through a warm luminosity marked by inner silence. The bright orange in the background plays a significant role in the composition's structure; through it, an emotional tension is generated, highlighting the poet's inner energy and creative drive. This color stands in stark contrast to the cold blue of the poet's clothing, creating a psychological opposition: coldness as an expression of lucidity of thought, and warmth as a source of inspiration.

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<sup>4</sup> Muradyan 1972.

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Muradyan focuses on the poet's creative essence, highlighting the genesis of the poem, which arises from the depths of silence and sensation. His posture, with legs hanging loosely and movements seemingly spontaneous and free, underscores an inner balance and harmony between body and mind. Also noteworthy is the close compositional format and the framing angle that encloses the image. It appears to define the poet's inner world as a self-contained domain in which silence becomes a dimension of thought. Moreover, the saturation of the principal hue contributes to the image's plastic integrity. Sevak's face is dimly illuminated, his features conveying the intensity of thought. The depiction of creative concentration as a spiritual process is the painting's conceptual core. In this psychologically charged portrait, Sevak's figure transcends the boundaries of reality, entering a symbolic and ideological domain. By skillfully employing color, light, and form, Muradyan succeeds in expressing the inner tension from which speech emerges; he renders the silences that give birth to thought. Here, Muradyan achieves artistic laconism, presenting the creation of thought as a spiritual mode of action.

In *"Paruyr Sevak in Chanakhchi"* (1965, oil on canvas, 65×80 cm, family collection; see Fig. 3), Sevak is depicted in an open field under the sun, imbued with the breath of nature. His bowed head, downcast gaze, and tense facial expression attest to inner reflection and spiritual concentration. Sevak's figure blends into the sunburnt hills of Vayots Dzor, becoming an integral part of the landscape.

In Armenian fine arts, portraits of writers and intellectuals have often been depicted against a landscape background. In the works of Martiros Saryan, Eduard Isabekyan, and Ara Bekaryan depicting Armenian intellectuals, nature functions as a spiritual and cultural setting. This approach shaped an artistic tradition in which the portrayed figure transcended the limits of the image, becoming a symbol of collective memory.

Sargis Muradyan continued this tradition; however, his style is distinguished by a more psychological and symbolic interpretation: "Whereas for other artists the human figure and nature form a harmonious unity, for Muradyan this relationship develops into an ideological symbolism. The human being embodies the memory of the earth, while nature becomes his spiritual voice. Artistic generalization is the core of Muradyan's art. In this and other works, the landscape participates actively in the construction of the thematic image,

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transforming the portrait into a monumental painting characterized by complex compositional solutions.”<sup>5</sup>

The color tonality of the painting is grounded in a warm, sunlit palette, defined by a harmonious combination of yellowish, golden, and earthy hues. The landscape abounds in subtle gradations of shade, producing a sense of tonal harmony. The warm landscape contrasts with the figure’s bluish attire, creating not only a tonal but also a psychological opposition. The external world is radiant and open, whereas the figure’s inner world remains restrained, taciturn, and deeply contemplative.

In the background of the portrait, within the depth of the landscape, we can also see the figures of Sevak’s parents. The painter renders their presence as a powerful symbol of the poet’s inseparable bond with the roots of his ancestral soil.<sup>6</sup> This work still retains the simplicity of its drawing and the openness of its composition, where the figure and the surrounding environment engage in a dialogue. Through his inner silence, Sevak becomes the voice of nature, while nature, in turn, resonates as the reverberation of the poet’s deepest thoughts.

In the poet’s 1974 portrait (oil on canvas, 65×82 cm, Armenian National Gallery, Jermuk Branch, fig. 4), Muradyan employs a similar compositional solution while significantly transforming the figure’s inner nuances. Here, the poet is portrayed not merely as an individual preoccupied but as an intellectual who embodies the convergence of personal and universal drama. The portrait’s setting is an interior space before a window, where the illumination acquires a spiritual resonance. The poet is depicted at the threshold of light and shadow, embodying contemplation and spiritual stillness. Muradyan deliberately rejects external action, directing his attention instead toward the expression of inner tension and introspective self-contemplation. Sevak leans his hands against the window edge, as if seeking support, while his averted gaze conveys a sense of intellectual isolation and solitude. According to art critic Ararat Aghasyan, this portrait acts as an autonomous canvas within Muradyan’s oeuvre, distinguished by its expressive hues.<sup>7</sup> Here, the shades of the face are more pronounced, and the chromatic tonality more intensified: deep blues intertwine with the warm pinks of the skin, generating an intensified emotional contrast.

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<sup>5</sup> Ghazaryan 1981.

<sup>6</sup> Urazova 1970.

<sup>7</sup> Aghasyan 2009.

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The canvas resonates with the chromatic – and at times imagistic – systems characteristic of the works of Hovhannes Zardaryan and Minas Avetisyan, while preserving the simplicity of the object in the drawing.<sup>8</sup>

In this work, Sevak's figure embodies both the historical experience of the people and their inner emotional world. The light entering through the window no longer serves merely as an external source of illumination; rather, it is a symbolic, spiritual essence that signifies memory, justice, and the eternity of the soul. Despite their external similarities, these two portraits ideologically represent two distinct stages in the evolution of Sevak's figure. In the first one, the human being in nature, in the second one, the human in the world of light and contemplation. In the 1965 painting, Sevak merges with the living breath of his native land; in the 1974 work, he transcends everyday reality, ascending into a symbol of eternity. The artistic and psychological trajectory between the two works attests to the fact that, for Muradyan, Sevak embodies contemplation, intellectual depth, and the national spirit – an image that evolves over time yet stays true to its essence. Sargis Muradyan, in portraying Sevak's creative image, frequently adopts a compositional format characterized by a seated, closely framed, and contemplative posture. The poet is depicted seated cross-legged amid books and notebooks, wholly immersed in the flow of his thoughts. This posture is far from incidental; it reflects the poet's inner tension, spiritual concentration, and his almost mystical attitude towards work. These works, created with the painter's admiration and heartfelt sympathy, recall Muradyan's own lines dedicated to Sevak: "He was sitting on the ancient ottoman with his legs crossed or leaning against the cushion, his small body seeming to shrink even further. Only his prominent head stood out, crowned with its fine mane of hair; his shoulders appeared to bend beneath an invisible burden. Each time I saw him working in this manner, I was reminded of his lines – one would carry the world upon his shoulders."<sup>9</sup> Art critic Lilit Sargsyan, discussing Sargis Muradyan's work *Restless Night*, emphasizes that "the looming anxiety<sup>10</sup> of the 1980s is powerfully conveyed in P. Sevak's posthumous

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<sup>8</sup> Aghasyan 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Muradyan 1972.

<sup>10</sup> The "anxiety" referred to a series of major historical and social processes: the nascent Karabakh movement, which had begun to emerge in the internal political arena prior to 1988 and filled public consciousness with both uncertainty and heightened expectation; as well as the ongoing political and economic crises of the USSR, framed within the context of pere-

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portrait, whose title – *Restless Night* – speaks for itself.” In the darkness of the night, the poet ascends like a ghostly figure, rising from the curved line of the horizon as though emerging from the earth itself. Distressed and shrunken, his head turned away, the poet gazes downward as if looking upon the earth. Was it the anxiety of the 1980s that summoned this memory of Paruyr to the painter’s mind?”<sup>11</sup> Here, Sevak’s image surpasses the boundaries of the individual intellectual, evolving into a universal symbol of spiritual suffering and the enlightenment of thought. While earlier portraits depict the poet as a contemplative figure immersed in his inner world, here Muradyan captures him in the silent solitude of the night – a space where creative thought becomes a liminal struggle between life and death. The poet sits absorbed in intense contemplation, burdened by a spiritual heftiness. His posture is closed: head resting on his hands, body turned inward. The plasticity of that movement expresses spiritual oppression and a drama of inner struggle. The entire work is structured around the dramatic tension between light and darkness. The dark blue of the night sky, with its coldness and infinite expanse, underscores the loneliness of man within the universe. The moon, as a symbol of supreme light, is distant and inaccessible; yet, it remains the sole ray of hope linking humanity to eternity. The viscous light cast upon the figure suggests a faint lunar radiance; this motif of spiritual illumination strikes the poet’s head as if its trajectory were directed toward the intellect rather than the physical form. In this manner, Muradyan transmutes material light into an ideological construct, reconfiguring it as a unified symbol that represents both inspiration and suffering.

The small house appearing in the distance, identified by its red window, is perceived as a symbol of memory, vitality, and human warmth, standing in stark contrast to the void of the night. That minute light seems to preserve Sevak’s

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stroika, which exposed long-standing systemic problems, the erosion of the ideological order, and growing public insecurity. These developments were accompanied by acute social challenges and geopolitical blockades, generating a dangerous loss of faith in the future. All of these developments shaped a complex psychological climate which, by the end of the 1980s, emerged as one of the central internal tensions in art, including in Muradyan’s works. At that time, *Restless Night* functioned not simply as a reflection of the individual’s inner world, but as an expression of the broader psychological atmosphere of the period. It reflects the common feeling of a society experiencing anticipation, anxiety, and deep transformation as it confronts an uncertain future.

<sup>11</sup> Muradyan 2008, 152.

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memory, serving as a symbolic reminder of human presence. The work is distinguished by a carefully constructed artistic composition and marked by the laconic simplicity of its palette, yet it is imbued with a profound and compelling expressiveness. The chromatic scheme, defined by the contrast between black, deep blue, and muted gold, conveys sensual tension and inner dynamism. The golden sand, symbolizing the earth, simultaneously evokes a return to origins—to land and memory—while alluding to the transience of life and the world's physical fragility. Here, the poet's figure transforms into a symbolic image of solitude, which may be interpreted as a spiritual testament to life, love, and loss. His closed posture in the light embodies the creative suffering as an integral part of human existence. Although the formation of Muradyan's artistic style is more distinctly manifested in his thematic paintings, the portrait likewise testifies to his artistic evolution. "A comparison between the portraits of the 1950s and those of the early 1960s reveals that the painter gradually moved away from the literal imitation of nature, freeing his work from excessive detail. He redirects his attention to the character's psychological essence. Across both thematic compositions and portraiture, Muradyan pursues a synthetic approach to depiction."<sup>12</sup> *Restless Night* may be interpreted as a poetic requiem in which the night becomes a liminal symbol, mediating between the poet's life and death. Within this symbolic space, light and darkness, the individual and ideology, converge into a unified image that embodies the enduring essence of Armenian thought and the universal human spirit.

Sargis Muradyan's *Mother's Hands* (oil on canvas, 110×90 cm, Chelyabinsk Gallery, fig. 6) is a psychologically profound work in which the poetic word, maternal love, and the expressive force of artistic symbolism converge. The painting depicts Paruyr Sevak and his mother in a luminous moment when life and memory—past and present—intersect. The mother stands at the center, absorbed in her silent and serene routine, while next to her, the son appears contemplative, immersed in his thoughts. It is this silent dialogue that appears as the thematic core of the work. Paruyr Sevak's poem *Mother's Hands* and Muradyan's painting of the same title represent two artistic manifestations of the same psychological dimension. Both works are devoted to the sublimation of maternity into the profound roots of human existence, where love, suffering, and

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<sup>12</sup> Urazova 1970, 17.

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time amalgamate into a single, powerful symbol—the depiction of the mother’s hands.

The structure of the painting is simple yet strongly profound. The mother occupies the center, absorbed in her daily labor, while next to her the son stands in silence, his gaze contemplative. A tree positioned between them functions as a symbolic focal point within the composition. The red doors in the depth of the painting evoke the thresholds of memory—borders that remain open, even in the mother’s absence. The light falling on the mother’s hands is divine, seen as a blessing. This light seems to emanate from the gentle movement of the mother’s hands—a radiance that resonates with the poet’s lines: “Come, let us today kiss with a son’s devotion.

those who birthed and nourished us,  
those who gained and sustained us in this world...”

*“Mother, I am Leaving”* (oil on canvas, 125×150 cm, fig. 7 Collection of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport of the Republic of Armenia) may be interpreted as a spiritual extension of the themes examined in *Mother’s Hands*. If in the previous canvas the mother’s presence embodied the home’s guardian light, in this painting that light recedes into a vague, distant memory, subtly conveying the pang of separation. In the painting, Paruyr Sevak is portrayed positioned at the threshold of an open door. The door symbolizes departure and separation, yet it also embodies the enduring expectation of return. Sevak’s mother, *Azi*, is not fully portrayed; nevertheless, her presence remains perceptible in the composition. She stands in the background, in the courtyard of the house, holding white garments reminiscent of nightgowns, which seem to diffuse a delicate illumination. The painting is constructed upon a system of contrasts: the cool bluish hue of the open door stands in opposition to the warm brown tones of the background. Blue functions as the chromatic sign of departure, symbolizing journey and uncertainty, while simultaneously evoking a feeling of inner peace. In the depiction of the soil and the maternal dwelling, the earth becomes a symbol for the eternal, representing the profound roots. This chromatic opposition intensifies the central drama of the composition—the son’s departure from the family home. Sevak stands in silence, his hand resting on the door, his gaze directed inward. Silent but laden with tension, his expression reflects the spirit of Sevak’s verse, where pride and nuance coalesce. In this work, Muradyan once again affirms his artistic approach, according to which form and

color are never ends in themselves<sup>13</sup>. *Mother, I am Leaving* is one of the most subtle and lyrical works in Muradyan's thematic cycle dedicated to the life and legacy of Paruyr Sevak. Here, the painter's brush becomes an instrument of memory, reenacting the son's final gaze directed toward his mother. The chromatic restraint of the painting and its compositional simplicity possess a profound poetic quality; together, they appear to constitute the culminating expression of Muradyan's interpretation of motherhood, memory, and separation.

***The graphic portraits of Paruyr Sevak (1965)***

The two drawings from 1965 are clear testaments to the creative friendship between Sargis Muradyan and Paruyr Sevak. These works possess great artistic value, imbued with psychological depth and a precise rendering of the image. The drawings (1965, pencil on paper, 22x15 cm, family collection, fig. 9) are executed with spontaneous, fluid lines, yet grounded by deliberate, well-defined strokes. The painter's steady hand and inner restraint are visible on the paper; Muradyan simultaneously observes and analyzes the sitter—prioritizing the revelation of their inner nature over purely physical resemblance. Sevak's sharp features, thick brows, and pursed lips immediately evoke a sense of intellectual tension and inner bitterness.

In the first drawing, the profile view is transformed into an expressive structure, bringing out the commanding power of the forehead and the intensity of thought.

In the second drawing, the three-quarter figure is more relaxed, as the poet appears immersed in his thoughts. Through these two distinct postures, Muradyan creates a psychological opposition between the poet's fiery thought and his inner silence. The linearity of the work suggests the stark accuracy of a metal engraving. Through profound modulation and a dynamic interplay of light and shade, Muradyan achieves volume and tactility entirely through the graphic medium, eschewing the need for color. The painter's interest in the deep layers of the human essence is more pronounced than his focus on external details. In these drawings, the features that will later become the core of the monumental interpretation of Sevak's figure are already perceptible, i.e., emotional tension, plastic simplicity, inner dignity, and poetic spirit.

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<sup>13</sup> **Khalatyan** 1976.

## **The Figure of Paruyr Sevak in the Works of Sargis Muradyan**

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### ***Paruyr Sevak: Key Milestones of His Life***

Sargis Muradyan possessed extensive experience in monumental painting, as evidenced by the magnificent fresco created for the Paruyr Sevak House-Museum between 1981 and 1986 (tempera, 200–300x2200 cm, Fig. 8). Erected across the full breadth of the wall, this composition offers a visual chronicle of the poet's life and creative path. The collection of images illustrates Sevak's childhood and education, his evolving worldview, and his entrance into Armenian literature. It further captures his encounters with prominent writers of the era, as well as the depth of his love and devotion to the motherland. The emotive undertones of the fresco are rooted in memories of the past; here, suffering and melancholy converge, forming an essential dimension of the poet's spiritual journey. The creation of the fresco is structured on the principle of portrait-narrative. Paruyr Sevak's figure is represented through a multi-layered fusion of his biography, memory, and national culture. At the heart of the composition is the poet, encircled by his family, his peers, and the eminent figures of Armenian culture: Mesrop Mashtots, Grigor Narekatsi, Komitas, Avetik Isahakyan, Aram Khachatryan, and Martiros Saryan. Arranged horizontally, the composition moves visibly from left to right. Here, the flow of time ascends from the depths of pain and memory into a luminous presence: the realm of the poetic word.

In the upper part, the poet's parents are depicted against the remote background of the horizon. His sons, holding seedlings, symbolize the continuation of life and legacy, while the figure of his wife, Nelly Menagharishvili, underscores family warmth and dedication. Muradyan portrays Sevak alongside his friends—including Silva Kaputikyan, Hovhannes Shiraz, Hrant Matevosyan, Razmik Davoyan, Jim Torosyan, Hamo Sahyan, and Sero Khanzandyan. This group represents an entire generation, united by a commitment to creative freedom and independent thought.

The chromatic structure is defined by gentle, clear tonal transitions. Bluish and gray tones are juxtaposed with a yellowish, golden light, creating a sense of spiritual luminosity at the work's center. The figures' plasticity is clear and harmonious; their movements are quiet, their gestures persuasive, and their facial expressions deeply contemplative. The poet's open palms, directed toward the viewer, convey a sense of communication and involvement; it is as if Sevak himself is telling his nation's story. This fresco can be seen as a symphony of time and memory. It unites the individual and the collective, history and the present, pain

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and hope—transforming them into a single, holistic dimension where Sevak serves as a spiritual guide. The ideological and artistic commonalities between the works of Sargis Muradyan and those of his contemporary painters are evident, particularly in the oeuvres of Hovhannes Zardaryan (portraits of Viktor Hambardzumyan, William Saroyan, Ghukas Chubaryan, Ruben Drambyan), Eduard Isabekyan (portraits of Khachatur Abovyan, Axel Bakunts, Derenik Demirchyan), and Ara Bekaryan (portraits of Yeghishe Charents, Vahan Teryan, Hakob Kojoyan). These parallels are especially pronounced in their respective series of portraits dedicated to intellectuals.

Each of these artists addresses the era's most decisive topics through the figures of their heroes. The intellectual is represented as a spiritual embodiment of the era—a figure in whom social changes, creative pursuits, and new definitions of national identity resonate. It is this holistic perception that unites Sargis Muradyan with the portraiture legacy of his contemporaries, establishing it as an essential layer of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Armenian art. Here, the human figure transforms into a precise ideological and spiritual representation of the era, confirming Muradyan's significant contribution to this cultural evolution.

### ***Conclusion***

Within the creative legacy of Sargis Muradyan, the figure of Paruyr Sevak functions as an artistic and philosophical pivot, where the painter's thematic, chromatic, and compositional endeavors intertwine. Muradyan's portrayal of Sevak evolves through various stages, ranging from the depiction of a man merged with nature to that of a thinker filled with inner luminosity. This progression represents an artistic and ideological evolution, indicating the poet's transformation from a physical presence transitioning into a symbolic eternity. Thus, in Muradyan's works, Paruyr Sevak embodies the collective spirit of the Armenian intellectual—a figure of deeply national yet universal resonance. Within this portrayal, the profound bond between man and land, memory and silence, and suffering and spiritual tenacity is revealed. Muradyan's artistic cycle dedicated to Sevak stands as a testament to human intellect and the eternal nature of the spirit.

## The Figure of Paruyr Sevak in the Works of Sargis Muradyan

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### ՋԵՆՆԻ ԿԱՐԱՊԵՏՅԱՆ

արվեստագետ

Հայաստանի գեղարվեստի պետական

ակադեմիայի ասպիրանտ

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0009-0006-0051-1259 

## ՊԱՐՈՒՅՐ ՍԵՎԱԿԻ ԿԵՐՊԱՐԸ ՍԱՐԳԻՍ ՄՈՒՐԱԴՅԱՆԻ ՍՏԵՂԾԱԳՈՐԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐՈՒՄ

### Ամփոփում

Պարույր Սևակի կերպարը՝ որպես հայ մտավորականության, ճշմարտության որոնման և հոգևոր դիմագծի խորհրդանիշ, բազմիցս արտացոլվել է ՀՀ ժողովրդական նկարիչ Սարգիս Մուրադյանի (1927–2007) ստեղծագործություններում: Ուսումնասիրելով Սարգիս Մուրադյանի՝ Պարույր Սևակին նվիրված տարբեր տարիների դիմանկարների շարքը, թեմատիկ կոմպոզիցիոն աշխատանքներն ու որմնանկարները, դիտարկման առարկա է դառ-

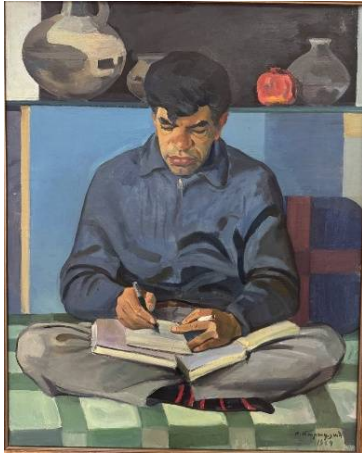
## Karapetyan J.

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նում նաև դրանց տեղը և դերը՝ 1960–1980-ականների հայ ազգային կերպարվեստի ընդհանուր զարգացումների համատեքստում: Այդ շրջանում ձևավորվում էր նոր՝ հոգեբանական խորությամբ և խորհրդանշական բազմաշերտությամբ բնութագրվող գեղանկարչական մտածողություն, որի շրջանակում Մուրադյանի սևակյան պատկերները համահունչ էին ժամանակակից նկարիչների՝ մտավորականի կերպարի մեկնաբանություններին: Զուգահեռներ ենք անցկացրել Հովհաննես Զարդարյանի, Էդուարդ Իսաբեկյանի, Արա Բեքարյանի դիմանկարների հետ, որոնք, ինչպես Ս. Մուրադյանի գործերում, արտացոլում են ներքին լարվածության, հոգևոր որոնման և ազգային ինքնագիտակցության թեմաները: Ս. Մուրադյանի ստեղծագործություններում Պարույր Սևակը ներկայանում է որպես հայ մտավորականի հավաքական կերպար՝ խորապես ազգային, բայց միաժամանակ համամարդկային հնչողությամբ, որտեղ բացահայտվում է մարդու և հողի, հիշողության և լռության, տառապանքի և ոգեղեն տոկունության ներքին կապը: Ս. Մուրադյանի սևակյան շարքը վերաձվել է մարդու մտքի և հոգու հավերժության մասին գեղարվեստական վկայության:

**Բանալի բառեր՝** *Սարգիս Մուրադյան, Պարույր Սևակ, հայ կերպարվեստ, դիմանկար, որմնանկար, գծանկար, էսքիզ:*

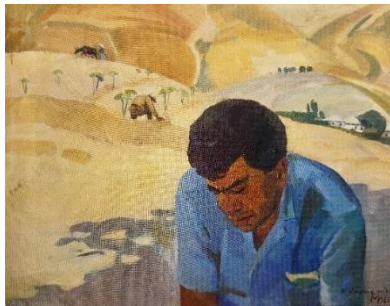
## The Figure of Paruyr Sevak in the Works of Sargis Muradyan



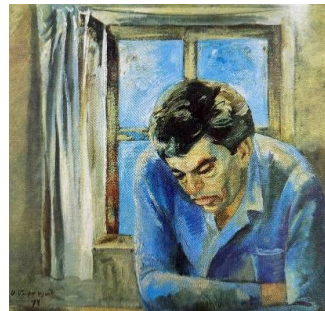
1964, oil on canvas, 100×80 cm, Armenian National Gallery, Jermuk Branch; see Fig. 1  
Photographed by the author of the article



1996, oil on canvas 100×80 cm, Armenian National Gallery, Jermuk Branch; see Fig. 2  
Photographed by the author of the article



1965, oil on canvas, 65×80 cm, family collection;  
see Fig. 3



Paruyr Sevak, 1974 oil on canvas, 65×82 cm,  
Armenian National Gallery, Jermuk Branch, fig. 4.  
Photographed by the author of the article



*Restless Night*, 1988, oil on canvas, 120×130 cm,  
The Fine Arts Academy Fund, family collection



*Mother's Hands* (oil on canvas, 110×90 cm,  
Chelyabinsk Gallery, fig. 6, provided by the family  
of the painter)

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"Mother, I am Leaving" (oil on canvas, 125x150 cm, Collection of the Ministry of Education, Science, fig. 7 Culture, and Sport of the Republic of Armenia, provided by the family of the painter)



1965, pencil on paper, 22x15 cm, family collection, fig. 9




Paruyr Sevak: Key Milestones of His Life  
(tempera, 200-300x2200 cm, Fig. 8 Paruyr Sevak House-Museum 1981-1986/ 1982-1985)

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## **MONUMENTAL PAINTING BY HOVHANNES MINASSIAN IN PUBLIC SPACES**

### ***Abstract***

Mural painting is one of the most significant forms of monumental art, characterized by its organic and conceptual relationship with the architectural environment and its capacity to shape the artistic integrity of space. Executed through techniques such as fresco, tempera, glue-based paint, encaustic painting, and oil, mural painting is inherently intended for long-term existence and functions as a bearer of historical and cultural memory. The origins of this art form date back to prehistoric rock paintings and later developed extensively within ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman civilizations, where it acquired religious, ideological, and symbolic meanings.

This article is devoted to the study of murals created in public spaces by Hovhannes Minassian. Although the majority of these works have not survived over time, they occupy an important place in the history of Armenian monumental painting, reflecting the artistic thinking and spatial-decorative explorations of the 1960s. The research is based on preserved photographs, archival materials, and contemporary testimonies, aiming to reconstruct the artistic and historical-cultural significance of the lost murals. This approach makes it possible to reassess Minassian's contribution and to emphasize the crucial role of monumental art created in public environments in shaping the cultural life of the period.

**Keywords:** *Hovhannes Minassian, mural painting, fresco, fine arts, monumentalism, heritage, painting.*

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## **Monumental Painting by Hovhannes Minassian in Public Spaces**

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### ***Introduction***

Mural painting, as an independent and multifaceted field of monumental art, is distinguished not only by the diversity of its techniques but also by its profound integration with the architectural environment. It functions as a medium for shaping space and conveying ideas, uniting painting and architecture into a coherent artistic system. Murals executed in public settings have played a particularly significant role in expressing the aesthetic ideals, social perceptions, and cultural priorities of their respective periods.

Within the context of Armenian art of the second half of the twentieth century, the development of monumental painting is closely linked to the artistic articulation of public spaces. From this perspective, the murals created for public venues by Hovhannes Minassian, primarily during the 1960s, are of special scholarly interest. Although the majority of these works have not survived, they constitute important evidence of the artistic thinking, ideological orientations, and the formation of a monumental visual language characteristic of the period.

The aim of this article is to examine and critically interpret Minassian's murals created in public spaces by identifying their artistic features, technical solutions, and historical-cultural significance. The study is based on preserved photographs, archival materials, and contemporary testimonies, seeking to reconstruct the place of these lost works within the broader framework of the development of Armenian monumental art.

Mural painting is one of the most significant forms of monumental art, representing a branch of painting executed on walls, plastered surfaces, ceilings, and various architectural planes, and occasionally on canvas, paper, or other materials. It is defined not only by its technical characteristics but also by its organic and conceptual relationship with architecture, often shaping the artistic integrity of space and embodying a synthesis of architecture and fine art. Predominantly realized through fresco, glue-based techniques, encaustic painting, tempera, and oil, mural painting is inherently intended for long-term existence. These techniques ensure both artistic expressiveness and durability, allowing mural painting to function as an enduring carrier of historical and cultural memory. Its origins trace back to the earliest stages of human civilization, with early manifestations found in Paleolithic rock art, later developing extensively in ancient Egyptian, Assyro-Babylonian, and Greco-

Roman cultures, where mural painting acquired religious, ideological, and symbolic significance, reflecting prevailing beliefs, social structures, and aesthetic ideals.

***Historical Foundations and Contemporary Relevance of Mural Painting***

Mural painting achieved particularly wide dissemination in Byzantine art, where it became one of the principal expressive means of Christian iconography. Byzantine murals, distinguished by their symbolic visual language, stylistic rigor, and profound theological content, exerted a significant influence on the formation of medieval Armenian art. Within Armenian ecclesiastical architecture and painting, Byzantine traditions were reinterpreted and transformed, giving rise to a distinctive national style manifested in the murals of medieval monasteries and churches. In this sense, mural painting may be regarded as one of the most important expressions of Armenian culture, reflecting not only artistic thinking but also the spiritual and ideological worldview of a given era.

To this day, monumental mural painting has not lost its relevance. In contemporary art, it continues to evolve, assuming new forms and ideological emphases. Worldwide, pictorial interventions on the walls of buildings in urban environments have become widespread, often aiming to reinterpret public space and endow it with new aesthetic and cultural meanings. In recent decades, numerous examples of newly created murals can also be found on the streets and building façades of several Armenian cities, attesting to a contemporary revival of monumental painting. This phenomenon is frequently associated with the Street Art movement, whose practitioners seek to express their ideas within public space through various mural techniques. However, so-called “Street artists” often do not fully recognize that the expressive medium they employ possesses a centuries-old history, rich traditions, and a well-developed technical system.

Nevertheless, regardless of creative approaches, mural painting continues to preserve its significant artistic and cultural value. It not only shapes the aesthetic image of the urban or architectural environment but also contributes to the organization of public space, endowing it with a distinctive identity and cultural memory. Thus, mural painting may be understood as an art form that

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simultaneously fulfills aesthetic, social, and cultural functions, serving as an important means of creative dialogue between space and the individual.

In the twentieth century, a renewed interest in monumental painting emerged, particularly in Mexico, where muralists such as Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco created large-scale works with non-ecclesiastical themes.<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Union likewise accorded special importance to monumental art, viewing it as an effective means of demonstrating the power and grandeur of the newly established state. The walls of new public and residential buildings were adorned with colorful murals and mosaics intended to glorify the ideal of the Soviet “New Man”.

From the mid-1940s onward, monumental-decorative art in the Soviet Union entered a period of active development, despite less than ideal conditions. This growth was largely driven by the necessity of reconstructing buildings destroyed during the war and by the opportunity to articulate new artistic statements. Buildings of public significance occupied a central place in this process. Artists began working with diverse media murals, mosaics, stained glass whose development varied across Soviet republics, including Ukraine, the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and the Caucasus.<sup>2</sup> In these regions, the evolution of monumental-decorative art was shaped not only by Soviet ideological demands but also by local artistic traditions. Each republic sought to combine state commissioned themes with its own national cultural heritage, producing distinctive artistic solutions.

### ***Monumental Art in the Soviet Postwar Context and its Development in Armenia***

Naturally, one of the dominant themes of monumental painting during this period was victory in the Great Patriotic War, a focus dictated by historical necessity. This accounts for the triumphant character, form, and visual rhetoric of many works, which aimed to emphasize the resilience and courage of a people who had defeated Nazism. Monumental artists were entrusted with influential public spaces metro stations, concert halls, theaters, markets, hospitals, cultural centers where mural imagery contributed to the broader democratization of art. At the same time, monumental art was expected to

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.vltramarine.ru/mag/art/public/862>

<sup>2</sup> Weimarn 1981, 88–93.

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solemnly underscore the strength of the victorious nation, the power of communist ideology, and the unity and friendship of the Soviet peoples. National motifs were frequently incorporated into compositions, color schemes, and decorative forms. While in Ukraine and the Baltic republics monumental art often aligned with minimalist modern architecture, producing restrained yet expressive compositions, in the Caucasus richer color palettes, traditional ornamental motifs, and historical-cultural themes were more prevalent.

In Armenia, monumental-decorative art likewise experienced a significant phase of development, particularly in the second half of the twentieth century. Newly constructed public buildings-cultural centers, theaters, educational institutions, and administrative complexes-provided artists with opportunities to employ murals, mosaics, fresco and stained glass. These works frequently combined socialist ideological themes with imagery drawn from Armenian history, culture, and nature. By the mid-1950s, monumentalism also penetrated cafés and clubs, integrating historical themes and expanding its technical repertoire to include metalwork, ceramics and glass.

Conceptually, monumental art is generally understood as a form of large-scale, spatial art that defines the visual and architectonic composition of a specific architectural environment and whose coloristic and formal structure corresponds to that purpose. Thus, during the Soviet period, monumental-decorative art became not only a crucial component of architectural design but also a powerful means of ideological and artistic communication, synthesizing various art forms into a unified artistic space in which architecture and fine art functioned as an integrated whole.

#### ***Minassian as a Monumentalist***

The works created during Hovhannes Minassian's student years were modest in scale and ambition. However, his earliest paintings produced in Armenia already stood out for their vivid color palette and carefully structured planar compositions, reflecting at least in part-a sense of continuity with earlier masters who had depicted Armenia before him. This initial phase was followed by an unexpected and decisive shift marked by sharp contrasts and an inclination toward abstraction. A tension emerged between two artistic principles in which the artist had not yet fully found himself. Yet it was precisely through

### **Monumental Painting by Hovhannes Minassian in Public Spaces**

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this confrontation that a new artistic world was formed the world of Minassian's the monumental artist.<sup>3</sup>

Within the Armenian artistic context, Hovhannes Minassian was among those masters who boldly sought to integrate their individual artistic identity into the demands and imperatives of a new era. Of particular significance is the fact that he was the first in Armenia to revive several classical techniques that had been forgotten for centuries. This achievement was crucial not only for Minassian's own artistic development but also for the broader evolution of Armenian monumental painting. By reactivating ancient technological methods, he reopened a path toward artistic principles long established in medieval Armenian art, especially in the traditions of ecclesiastical fresco painting, such as the frescos of the St. Mesrop Mashtots Church of Oshakan.

The application of classical techniques required meticulous study of materials and technological processes.<sup>4</sup> Minassian employed natural pigments, specially prepared layers of plaster, and phased working methods characteristic of medieval mural painting. This approach enabled the creation of works that were not only artistically expressive but also technically durable and resistant to the passage of time. At the same time, these revived techniques were not limited to the mechanical reproduction of historical methods; they were reinterpreted within the framework of contemporary artistic thinking, combining traditional technologies with new compositional and ideological solutions. As a result, a distinctive creative approach emerged in which the experience of the past served as a foundation for modern artistic expression.

This process also served as an important stimulus for younger artists, who began to show increased interest in the technical and conceptual possibilities of monumental painting. Consequently, a professional milieu was formed in which the study of classical traditions and their creative application became one of the key factors in the development of Armenian monumental art.

Minassian's murals may be divided into two main groups: works created for public spaces and ecclesiastical murals. This article focuses on the murals executed in public environments, which, unfortunately, have not survived. Despite their physical loss, these works occupy an important place in the history of Armenian monumental painting as testimonies to the artistic thinking,

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<sup>3</sup> **Tatikyan** 1975, 88–91.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Hovhannes Minassian's son.

## Karamyan O.

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ideological orientation, and spatial-decorative solutions of their time. The study seeks to reconstruct the artistic and historical-cultural significance of these murals on the basis of preserved photographs, archival materials, documentary evidence, and contemporary accounts. Such an approach allows not only for a reassessment of their place within the overall development of Armenian monumental art but also for highlighting the important role played by artistic interventions in public spaces in shaping the cultural life of the period.

Minassian's preferred technical media were oil paint and tempera. Beginning in 1960, he increasingly devoted himself to monumental works intended for practical application within architectural settings. One of his earliest and most notable realizations was the mural *"Round Dance"* (fig. 1), executed in the lobby of the Palace of Culture of the Kirov Chemical Combine in Yerevan. This work represented a distinctive synthesis of painting and architecture and posed a new artistic proposition that attracted considerable public attention.

In *"Round Dance"*, the simplification and generalization of the dancers' bodily volumes create a smooth, rhythmic composition; expressive linear elements convey a sense of movement, while the luminous color palette evokes joy and vitality. The Palace of Culture itself was a typical public institution of the Soviet period, designed to organize the cultural and social life of workers. Its spacious lobby functioned not merely as a transitional area but as a site of cultural communication. Minassian's monumental mural was conceived to enrich this interior environment artistically and to underscore the building's social significance.<sup>5</sup>

The composition of *"Round Dance"* conveys a spring-like mood concentrated at the center and expanding into the surrounding space. The dance unfolding within the image seems to generate an audible rhythm, as if music itself emanates from the movement. Against a light green and blue background, vivid colors: red, yellow, and violet accentuate the emotional outbursts of young dancers. Through linear rhythms and a sequence of blue, yellow, and white tones, the artist achieved a harmonious and life affirming scene. This work corresponds closely to the cultural atmosphere of the Khrushchev era "Thaw" characterized by a retreat from ideological rigidity

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<sup>5</sup> Voronova 4, 1976, 23.

### **Monumental Painting by Hovhannes Minassian in Public Spaces**

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toward everyday life, nature, and emotional sincerity. Youth and innocence here are liberated from disciplinary control and the heroic idealization typical of Stalinist cultural propaganda.

In terms of simplified forms and flat color treatment, *“Round Dance”* may be cautiously compared to Henri Matisse’s *“La Dance”* (fig. 2), which likewise employs a circular composition of dancing figures united by rhythmic movement. In both works, dance functions as a symbol of life and energy; however, while Matisse’s forms are more abstract, Minassian preserves a distinctly national and ethnographic character.<sup>6</sup>

In this context, *“Round Dance”* can be viewed not only as a decorative monumental mural but also as an expression of the artistic mentality of its time. Minassian consciously abandons heroic and idealized representations in favor of natural human movement, immediate emotion, and the simple joys of life qualities that became especially prominent in the cultural climate of the 1960s. Unfortunately, the mural has not survived and is known today only through archival documentation and recollections.<sup>7</sup>

Another significant example of Minassian’s monumental work was realized at the Grinding Machine Factory in Leninakan (Gyumri), one of the important industrial enterprises of the Soviet period. The factory complex included infrastructure serving the social needs of workers, among which the workers’ canteen occupied a special place as a space for rest and communication. The artistic design of this interior was regarded as a means of cultural enrichment, and it was within this context that the fresco *“Flute”* (fig. 3) was created in 1963–1964 by H. Minassian. The aforementioned structure formed an integrated complex, the overall composition of which was developed in collaboration by A. Melkonyan and R. Petrosyan.<sup>8</sup>

Minassian’s *“Flute”* in certain respects recalls *“La Musique”* (Fig. 4). In both works, the musical theme is presented through simplified and decorative forms. The figures are harmoniously integrated with nature, while chromatic and formal solutions serve to establish an overall sense of rhythm and harmony. In *Henri Matisse*, the color planes are considerably more intense, whereas in

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<sup>6</sup> **Aleksei Bobrikov**, <http://xz.gif.ru/numbers/51-52/surovo>

<sup>7</sup> See the same source.

<sup>8</sup> *Catalogue*, 1974. Compiled by Gohar Khostikyan and Martin Minassian.

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### Karamyan O.

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Minassian's work the forms are associated with monumental decorative thinking and an architectural conception of space.

The industrial frieze "*Builders, Miners, Welders*" (Fig. 5), created by Minassian in 1968 and formerly located in the workers' workwear store in Yerevan, has unfortunately not been preserved. Judging from photographic documentation, these works clearly embody the characteristics of the "Severe Style" of the 1960s.

This refers to a realist tendency within Soviet art that was characteristic of the 1950s–1960s. In defining their creative orientation, the masters of this movement turned to the pre-Stalinist period of Soviet visual art, encompassing the entirety of the 1920s and the early 1930s. The term "Severe Style" was introduced into art discourse by the art historian Aleksandr Kamensky. This style is marked by artists' depictions of the lives of their contemporaries, emphasizing their willpower and capacity for labor. Its underlying premise was that the everyday diligence of the Soviet individual constituted heroism in itself—heroism rooted in simplicity yet marked by hardship. The art of the Severe Style is generalized and laconic, characterized by the use of flat color planes and a canonized approach to figuration. Ultimately, the Severe Style represented an intellectual shift in Soviet visual art, brought about by a new generation of artists.<sup>9</sup>

For a comprehensive scholarly understanding of the full essence of the "Severe Style" it is essential to examine the movement that preceded it, namely the Soviet "Thaw." These two successive currents stand in clear opposition to one another. The "Thaw" marked the end of the Stalinist era in the sphere of culture. It continued to reproduce the subjects and objects, evaluative criteria, and thematic priorities established during the Stalinist period, yet did so in a markedly freer manner—as if breathing and living more fully—allowing for repose and a renewed focus on ordinary, everyday situations.

The principal confrontation between the "Thaw" and the "Severe Style" occurred primarily within the domain of painting. For the painters of the "Thaw" such as Zardaryan, Levitan, Yablonsky, Gavrilov, Bogaevsky, and Zagonek the revival of themes related to nature, rather than everyday life, was of primary importance.

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<sup>9</sup> **Aleksei Bobrikov**, <https://ithaca-66.livejournal.com/35704.html>

### **Monumental Painting by Hovhannes Minassian in Public Spaces**

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By contrast, the "Severe Style" is devoid of all forms of illusion and, without leaving room for compromise, relentlessly offers what it presents as a "truthful" interpretation of the human being, history, and nature. Stripped of ideals, it is austere, bleak, and desolate in character.

It excludes miracles and recognizes only the primacy of labor. The concept of heroism within this framework is devoid of explicit exaltation and instead presupposes inward concentration, restraint, and physical as well as moral exhaustion. Life, as articulated here, is stripped of vivid coloration and emphatic expressions of joy. The central figure of the "Severe Style" is the individual who rejects philistine formalism—an ordinary human being, detached from social classification, outwardly indistinguishable, for whom neither age nor gender is of significance. This figure may be understood as the naked human standing upon bare ground, whose weariness derives from the realization that the world must be constructed anew, from the very beginning, and exclusively through one's own labor.<sup>10</sup>

Workers, welders, and miners appear, as if through an evolutionary process, to have gradually transformed from primitive laborers into cultivated agents of civilization. This bearer of immense willpower is characterized by a muscular and formidable physique, the emphasized scale of the hands, and abrupt transitions of volume and color. These heroes more precisely, builder-workers are recast as fearless titans confronting a formidable nature. They emerge as figures soaring within the domains of civilization. Their labor is grounded not in physical convulsion but in inner tension, one that arises from moral disposition rather than corporeal strain. The emphasis thus shifts from brute strength to will.

Synthesizing the essence of these three works by Hovhannes Minassian, it may be asserted that they do not constitute a single stylistic formula, but rather articulate a unified field of artistic problems: a shared philosophy of nature and a common anthropology, which, through an evolutionary and professionally grounded process, brings to culmination all the ideas concentrated within it.

Hovhannes Minassian demonstrably possessed a multifaceted mastery of his craft, underpinned by refined artistic sensibility, whether working in painting, self-portraiture, sculpture, mosaic, fresco or historical mural composition.

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<sup>10</sup> See the same source.

## **Karamyan O.**

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It should be noted that a portion of Minassian's monumental legacy has unfortunately not been preserved. One such example is the fresco *"Fish"* (1962), which was installed on the façade of the bathhouse building of the Yerevan Polytechnic Institute and created in collaboration with A. Aleksanyan. This work, like many other examples of public art, has not survived the passage of time.

It is also noteworthy that the artist developed a number of sketches intended for a monumental decorative program for the Cinema House of Yerevan. However, due to various circumstances, these projects were never realized and did not reach their final execution (Fig. 6, Fig. 7)

### ***Conclusion***

In conclusion, it may be stated that the murals created by Hovhannes Minassian in various public spaces during the 1960s represent not only the artist's individual creative explorations but also a comprehensive reflection of the aesthetic and ideological transformations of the period. In the murals *Round Dance*, *Fish* and *Flute* (1961–1964), the simplification and generalization of volumes, a luminous, almost idyllic color palette, and a clearly articulated rhythmic structure give rise to harmonious and fluid compositions. Here, the relationship between human beings and nature is presented as an integrated whole: bodies in motion, rendered through softly expressive contours, convey a sense of joyful dynamism and freedom. This approach may be interpreted as an artistic manifestation characteristic of the Khrushchev "Thaw" marked by a turn toward nature, primordial purity, and a metaphorical return to a "Lost paradise" where humanity does not yet stand in opposition to its environment but rather coexists with it.

At the same time, the industrial frieze *Builders, Miners, Welders* (1968) signifies a new phase in Minassian's artistic thinking. Here, the visual language aligns with the principles of the "Severe Style," characterized by rigid geometric forms, heavy monumental rhythms, and an emphasized material weight of the physical world. The forces of nature and the man-made environment quarries, metal pipes, reinforced concrete volumes are transformed into a unified vortex, within which the human figure appears not as a passive observer but as an active agent. Minassian's heroes the builder-workers merge with the industrial environment, becoming both an integral part of it and the force that overcomes it.

## **Monumental Painting by Hovhannes Minassian in Public Spaces**

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The juxtaposition of these two phases demonstrates that Minassian's monumental art evolves between harmonious idyll and tense industrial heroism, responding sensitively to the social, ideological, and artistic challenges of its time. Consequently, his murals emerge as significant testimonies of Armenian visual art of the 1960s, while simultaneously preserving a lasting relevance and a profound humanistic dimension.

It is important to note that a comprehensive study of the ecclesiastical-themed murals of Hovhannes Minassian is currently ongoing and will be presented in a separate article.

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Fig. 1 "Round Dance", (*"Shurjpar"*) 1961–1962, tempera, mural painting, 270 × 940 cm, foyer of the Palace of Culture of the S. Kirov Chemical Combine, Yerevan



Fig. 2 Henri Matisse's "La Dance", 1910, The Hermitage, St. Petersburg

Fig 3. "Flute" (*"Srting"*), 1964, 520 × 940 cm, workers' canteen of the Grinding Machine Tools Factory, Leninakan (not preserved).

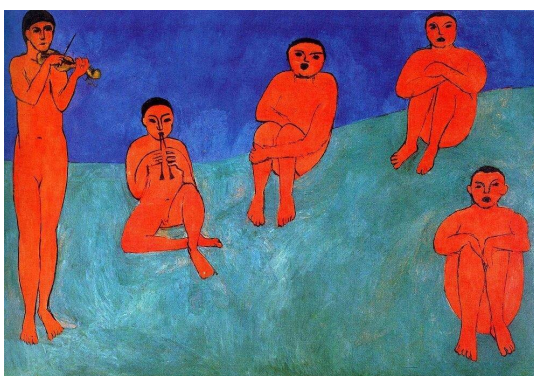


Fig. 4. Henri Matisse's "La Musique", 1910, The Hermitage, St. Petersburg

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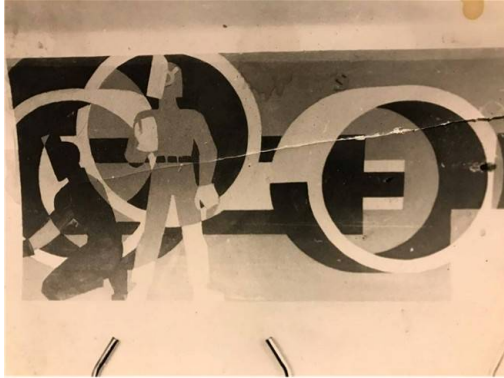


Fig. 5. Industrial frieze “*Builders, Miners, Welders*”, 1968, mural painting, workers’ workwear store, Yerevan, oil on canvas (the work has not been preserved; only photographic documentation survives).



Fig. 6



Fig. 7 1971-1972

Fig. 6. 7. Sketches intended for a monumental decorative program for the Cinema House of Yerevan, 1972

**ՀՈՎՀԱՆՆԵՍ ՄԻՆԱՍՅԱՆԻ ՄՈՆՈԻՄԵՆՏԱԼ  
ԳԵՂԱՆԿԱՐՉՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ՀԱՍԱՐԱԿԱԿԱՆ ՎԱՅՐԵՐՈՒՄ**

**Ամփոփում**

Տարբեր հասարակական վայրերում ստեղծված Հովհաննես Մինասյանի 1960-ականների որմնանկարները ոչ միայն անհատական ստեղծագործական որոնումների, այլև ժամանակաշրջանի գեղագիտական և գաղափարական վերափոխումների ամբողջական պատկերն են: 1961–1964 թվականներին արված «Շուրջպար», «Ձկնիկներ», «Սրինգ» որմնանկարներում ծավալների պարզեցումը և ընդհանրացումը, լուսավոր, գրեթե իդիլիական կոլորիտը և հստակ ռիթմիկ կառուցվածքը ձևավորում են ներդաշնակ, սահուն հորինվածքներ: Այստեղ մարդու և բնության հարաբերությունը ներկայացվում է իբրև ներդաշնակ ամբողջություն. շարժման մեջ գտնվող մարմինները մեղմ արտահայտչական գծերի շնորհիվ հաղորդում են կենսախիռոճ դինամիկա և ազատության զգացում: Այս մոտեցումը կարելի է մեկնաբանել որպես «Ձնհալի» դարաշրջանին բնորոշ՝ դեպի բնություն, նախնական մաքրություն և «կորուսյալ դրախտ» վերադարձի գեղարվեստական արտահայտություն, որտեղ մարդը դեռևս չի հակադրվում միջավայրին, այլ գոյակցում է նրա հետ:

Միննույն ժամանակ, 1968 թվականին ստեղծված «Շինարարներ, լեռնագործներ, զոդողներ» ինդուստրիալ ֆրիզը նշանավորում է Մինասյանի արվեստում նոր մտածողության փուլ: Այստեղ գերիշխող է «խստաշունչ ոճին» համահունչ լեզուն՝ խիստ երկրաչափական ձևեր, ծանր, մոնումենտալ ռիթմեր և նյութական աշխարհի ընդգծված կշիռ: Բնության և տեխնաժին միջավայրի տարերքները՝ քարհանքը, երկաթյա խողովակները, երկաթբետոնե ծավալները վերածվում են համընդհանուր հորձանուտի, որի մեջ մարդը հանդես է գալիս ոչ թե որպես դիտորդ, այլ գործող ուժ: Մինասյանական հերոսները՝ շինարար-բանվորները, ծուլվում են արդյունաբերական միջավայրին՝ դառնալով նրա անբաժան մասը և միաժամանակ՝ հաղթահարողը:

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Այս երկու փուլերի համադրումը ցույց է տալիս, որ Մինասյանի մոնումենտալ արվեստը զարգանում է ներդաշնակ իդիլիայի և լարված ինդուստրիալ հերոսապատման միջև՝ արձագանքելով ժամանակի հասարակական, գաղափարական և գեղարվեստական մարտահրավերներին: Նրա որմնանկարները դառնում են 1960-ականների հայ կերպարվեստի կարևոր վկայություններ՝ միաժամանակ պահպանելով արդիական հնչեղություն և խորքային մարդասիրական իմաստ:

**Բանալի բառեր՝** Հովհաննես Մինասյան, որմնանկար, որմնանկարչական ձևավորում, կերպարվեստ, մոնումենտալիզմ, ժառանգություն, նկարչություն:

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## **THE SECOND PERIOD OF SARKIS KATCHADOURIAN'S CREATIVE ACTIVITY (THE PERSIAN MURALS)**

### ***Abstract***

This article examines the second period of the creative activity of the prominent representative of the Armenian Diaspora, artist Sarkis Katchadourian (1886–1947). The study presents an analysis of his extensive work on the copying and reconstruction of the murals of the Safavid palatial complexes in Isfahan, including Ali Qapu Palace and Chehel Sotoun Palace, undertaken during his residence in Persia between 1929 and 1933. The research analyzes Katchadourian's exceptional contribution to the preservation of Iranian cultural heritage and the popularization of Oriental art in Europe and America. Based on archival and documentary evidence, the author proposes a new thesis regarding the identification of an anonymous work held in the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, identifying it as Katchadourian's reconstruction of the fresco "Khoja Petros's Feast in the Presence of Shah Abbas."

**Keywords:** *Sarkis Katchadourian, Oriental art, Ali Qapu Palace, Chehel Sotoun Palace, New Julfa, reconstructions, Shah Abbas period.*

### ***Introduction***

In this article, we address the second period of the creative activity of Sarkis Katchadourian, a prominent representative of the Armenian Diaspora and a

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### **The Second Period of Sarkis Katchadourian's Creative Activity**

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distinguished artist. The study presents an analysis of his extensive work on the copying and reconstruction of the murals of the Safavid palatial complexes in Isfahan, including Ali Qapu Palace and Chehel Sotoun Palace, undertaken during his residence in Persia between 1929 and 1933.

Our focus is on the artist's exceptional contribution to the preservation of Iranian cultural heritage and the popularization of Oriental art in Europe and America. The article examines the circumstances of Sarkis Katchadourian's journey to Persia, his activities in establishing a museum and an art school in New Julfa, as well as his efforts to identify the "Armenian trace" in seventeenth-century murals within the broader context of Oriental art, including works associated with Ali Qapu Palace and Chehel Sotoun Palace, particularly in relation to reconstructions of artworks from the Shah Abbas I period. Based on the archival and documentary research we have conducted, a thesis is proposed regarding the attribution of an anonymous work from the collection of the museum on Quai Branly to Katchadourian's brush. We identify this work as Katchadourian's reconstruction of the fresco "Khoja Petros's Feast in the Presence of Shah Abbas."

At different historical periods, a large number of Armenians lived in Persia (now the Islamic Republic of Iran). Perhaps the connection between the Armenian and Persian peoples has been very deep, and the Armenians settled here have created one of the oldest Armenian settlements. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a new Armenian colony was formed in New Julfa. This was during the reign of Shah Abbas I, the latter forcibly populated the area with Armenians, expecting that they would develop both culture and trade there. As a result of all this, a number of Armenian artists lived and worked in Persia.

In the early twentieth century, the prominent diasporan Armenian painter Sarkis Katchadourian was active in Persia. Although he resided and worked there only for a relatively brief period (1929–1933), he nonetheless carried out significant work in the preservation of Persian murals. The artist's contribution was substantial not only to the development of twentieth-century diasporan Armenian fine arts, but also within the broader context of world art, particularly in advancing the recognition and preservation of the artistic heritage of Persia, one of the world's most ancient civilizations.

***The Master of Persian Murals: Reconstruction and Style***

The second period of Sarkis Katchadourian's creative activity was also prolific, encompassing the restoration and copying of the wall paintings of the royal palaces of the Safavid dynasty in Persia.

Katchadourian was an incomparable master of Persian murals. The artist, who even before that had gained great fame in Europe with his compositions of the "Armenian Cycle" series, this time appeared with a new series of paintings that rediscovered Katchadourian as an artist. The remarkable reproductions of the murals of the palaces of Shah Abbas are unique masterpieces of art that were highly appreciated by art theorists. It may be asserted with confidence that the artist succeeded in penetrating the essence of seventeenth-century Iranian culture, internalizing the Persian spirit, and mastering the artistic traditions and distinctive style of that ancient country. These works reflect not only the traditions of Persian painting but also elements of European art.

Katchadourian himself, being from the East, was interested in the art of Persia and desired to bring these copies of murals out of oblivion and present them to the people of the West. He was also close to the philosophical thought of Persian poets Saadi, Ferdowsi, and Omar Khayyam. According to the testimony of his contemporaries, he loved Khayyam and even recited his contemplative quatrains. He even illustrated a book of Omar Khayyam's quatrains with an English translation.<sup>1</sup>

The circumstances of Katchadourian's departure for Persia are also interesting; some sources mention that he received an invitation from the Persian authorities of the time and Arthur Pope, who lived in Persia at that time, and arrived in 1929.<sup>2</sup> The artist's wife, Vava, notes that the idea was given to him by the famous diplomat Hovhannes Khan Masehyan,<sup>3</sup> who was the Persian ambassador in London at the time: "At the end of 1930, I remember, at the suggestion of Hovhannes Khan Masehyan, my husband left for Julfa, Persia and

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<sup>1</sup> **Zakaryan** 1981, 39.

<sup>2</sup> **Pope** 1939. Arthur Upham Pope (1881–1969) was an American scholar, historian of art and architecture, and archaeologist. He was an expert on historical Persian art and the editor of *A Survey of Persian Art* (1939).

<sup>3</sup> **Khan-Masehyan** 1864–1931. Iranian-Armenian translator, state and public figure, diplomat, journalist, educator, and editor.

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thanks to his intellect, he was able to penetrate the spirit of old Persian paintings."<sup>4</sup>

We are more inclined to assume that Katchadourian received an invitation, which coincided with the advice of Hovhannes Khan Masehyan. The artist himself, in an interview given in Tehran in 1931, noted: "At the suggestion of Hovhannes Khan Masehyan, I came to Persia; the dull scenes of Tehran and Mashhad did not inspire my soul and I could not produce any painting, for which my coming to Persia seemed very difficult. I moved to Isfahan, about which I had heard and read much. For the first time, I went to Chehel Sotoun."<sup>5</sup>

It is also important to note that different sources provide conflicting dates for the first arrival in Persia. Some mention the end of 1929, while others state the end of 1930.<sup>6</sup>

During the study, a page dedicated to the artist's student, Smbat Ter-Kyureghyan, was examined. According to his biography, Ter-Kyureghyan's significant meeting with his teacher, Katchadourian, took place in Isfahan in the autumn of 1929.<sup>7</sup> Along with all that, it is necessary to take into account the circumstance that the Persian calendar is different; there the year begins from Nowruz, March 21, until March of the next year. In a number of Persian sources, it is mentioned that Katchadourian arrived in Isfahan in 1928–1934.<sup>8</sup> Taking the above information into account, it can be assumed that Katchadourian's first visit to Persia took place in the autumn of 1929.

In fact, in 1929, the artist traveled to Persia for the first time, to the city of Shiraz, where he visited the graves of his favorite poets Hafez and Saadi. In Nishapur, he visited the tomb of Omar Khayyam, then to the Armenian-centered Julfa, then to New Julfa. Here, in November 1930, Sarkis Katchadourian founded an art school, where more than two dozen students of both sexes studied. Among them were later famous Iranian-Armenian painters Smbat Ter-Kyureghyan and Yervand Nahapetyan.

Katchadourian also undertook the cleaning of the paintings on the walls of the Holy Savior Monastery, St. Bethlehem, and St. Mary churches in New Julfa,

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<sup>4</sup> Museum of Literature and Art, Fund Khachatryan 313.

<sup>5</sup> **V. A.** 1931, 4.

<sup>6</sup> **Toranyan** 1983, 10; see also **Stepanyan** 1982, 261.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.sumbat.com/index2.html>, accessed: 27.04.2025.

<sup>8</sup> **Akbarzadeh** 2013, 145–155.

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which had faded over many years from incense and candle smoke. By collecting various ethnographic items, such as old manuscripts, paintings, and items of decorative applied art, he founded the Museum of the Holy Savior Monastery of New Julfa. He also donated 17 of his works to the museum, including “The Feast of Shah Abbas the Great,” “St. Mary,” “Shahanshah Reza Pahlavi,” and others.<sup>9</sup> Katchadourian also prepared mannequins of historical costumes of New Julfa residents for the museum.<sup>10</sup> The artist donated the etching “Father Abraham” by the world-famous painter Rembrandt van Rijn to the museum, and for the Joseph of Arimathea church of the Holy Savior Monastery, he painted the portrait of Khoja Avetik,<sup>11</sup> who was the patron of the church decorations, and the portrait of Khoja Petros, the latter being the builder of the Bethlehem church.<sup>12</sup>

### *Katchadourian’s Journey to Persia and Influences*

Parallel to these extensive works for the Armenian community of New Julfa, Katchadourian constantly visited the palaces. The murals here were mostly decomposed, but the artist nevertheless copied them; some parts that were completely erased, he filled in himself, based on his knowledge of Persian art. It is significant to note that the provenance of several of Katchadourian’s reproductions remains undocumented, with no definitive records specifying their original palatial sources. Comparative analysis is limited to the data found in theoretical sources and catalog reproductions alongside the original murals. It should be noted that the murals in these palaces have undergone restoration over the last 50–60 years.

During the study, an interesting fact was identified. As previously mentioned, Katchadourian was engaged in copying murals in Persia. Notably, he produced copies of the “Young Woman with a Cup” and “Young Woman with a Hat” murals from the Ali Qapu Palace.

They carry some small changes from the originals preserved today. For example, in the “Young Woman with a Cup” mural (fig. 1)<sup>13</sup> of the Ali Qapu Palace, a figure of a Persian woman is seen, who appears to be dancing with her

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<sup>9</sup> **Achemyan** 1933, (July 8).

<sup>10</sup> **Stepanyan** 1982, 267.

<sup>11</sup> **Martirosyan-Stepanosyan, Khoja Avetik.**

<sup>12</sup> **Velijanyan, Petros** (1580–1649). New Julfa merchant and benefactor; built St. Bethlehem Church in 1627.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mytripsmypics/24644837196>, accessed: 27.04.2025.

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gentle movement, a scene that was accepted in Persian fresco art. In the image, the woman is depicted in the lap of nature. There, in the foreground, is a wine jug next to a small table, then delicate leaves of plants and flowers are seen, in the back part are the spiral mountains, which with their fairy-tale shapes remind of clouds.

In the copy made by Katchadourian (fig. 2),<sup>14</sup> we meet partial changes. If in the original, the gaze of the Persian woman in red clothes is dreamy and looks towards the bottom part, then in Katchadourian's version, the beautiful Persian woman is in light pink clothes and looks at the viewer. There are changes in the patterns on the clothes, botanical elements, structures of mountains and trees, shapes of the table and wine jug. The wine cup depicted in the woman's hand in the original differs from the shape of the cup appearing in Katchadourian's copy.

Overall, the theme of the image evokes the famous lines from the poem *The Capture of Fort Temuk*:

"Who in the world a hero could crush  
If not for women  
And wine?"<sup>15</sup>

In Ferdowsi's epic "*Shahnameh*", wine and women appear together; in Persian poetry, the woman symbolizes ideal beauty and the poet's source of inspiration, while wine represents joy, worldly pleasure, and the heroic spirit.

Given the aforementioned variations, it can be inferred that Katchadourian produced inspired interpretations rather than direct copies of the originals. However, an image found on the Iranian website *arzhangihoma.ir* (Fig. 3)<sup>16</sup> reveals another reproduction of the same scene by an anonymous author. In terms of draftsmanship and color palette, this version is significantly closer to Katchadourian's work.

Deeply studying the existing problem, we conclude that in the 1964–1970s, then in the 2000–2010s, the renovation of the murals of the Ali Qapu palace was carried out not so successfully, bearing obvious deviations. Evidence of all this is also an article found in the Iranian Journal of Persian Archaeological Studies, in which the authors mention that the murals of the Ali Qapu palace have been

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.mutualart.com/Artwork/Jeune-femme-a-la-coupe---Palais-dAli-Kap/B3183C32B4E4349B>, accessed: 20.03.2020.

<sup>15</sup> **Tumanyan** 1991, 50.

<sup>16</sup> <https://arzhangihoma.ir/miniatures/108>, accessed: 03.03.2026.

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unsuccessfully restored.<sup>17</sup> At the end of the material, the authors of the article also present three reproductions from the murals of the Chehel Sotoun palace, drawing parallels with the reproductions of Sarkis Katchadourian's copies, proving the differences between the current murals of the palace after renovations and Katchadourian's works.<sup>18</sup>

Minor discrepancies are observed between the current state of the mural *Young Woman with a Hat* (Fig. 5)<sup>19</sup> and Sarkis Katchadourian's reproduction (Fig. 6).<sup>20</sup> Specific variations in color and line suggest that alterations occurred during the various restorations of the palace murals (Fig. 4).<sup>21</sup>

In fact, the copies made by Sarkis Katchadourian are more faithful to the initial originals and represent not only artistic but also documentary value.

It is also noteworthy that Katchadourian conducted extensive work in the Chehel Sotoun (Palace of Forty Columns) Palace. In executing the decorations, he was assisted by his student, Smbat Der-Kiureghian.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, he produced reproductions of the murals found on the walls of Talar Ashraf (Ashraf Hall), the Qeysarieh Bazaar (Imperial Bazaar), and the Allahverdi Khan Bridge (also known as Siosepol or the Julfa Bridge).<sup>23</sup>

The primary documentary sources for this study consist of Katchadourian's correspondence, in which the artist details the specific projects and decorative programs he was commissioned to execute within the palaces. In one of them, the artist writes: "...The murals found this time are so difficult and incomprehensible that they force me to think for long days and search to find lines faithful to the real and contemporary spirit. The merciless hammer has been struck left and right, without ever paying attention to the composition of divine colors and lines."

In another letter, Katchadourian says: "...I have undertaken all the difficulties simply to save the whole art of the Safavid era, so that international art is not

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<sup>17</sup> **Zamani, Ahmadi** 2022, 237–263.

<sup>18</sup> **Katchadourian** 1932.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-fresco-at-ali-qapu-palace-depicting-persian-woman-isfahan-province-94202564.html>, accessed: 04.03.2020.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.artnet.com/artists/sarkis-katchadourian/jeune-femme-à-la-coupe-palais-dali-kapu-W4HBmpa3gLUfv44mLvpBWA2>, accessed: 04.03.2020.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpdnc2Crrlc>, accessed: 04.03.2026.

<sup>22</sup> **Ter-Kureghyan, Sumbat** (1913–1999). Iranian-Armenian master of watercolor painting.

<sup>23</sup> **Si-o-se-pol**. (From Persian *si-o-se* meaning "thirty-three" and *pol* meaning "bridge").

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deprived of that glory. Numerous European artists have come and gone without ever paying attention to these murals, which keep the scent of eternity. Perhaps they did not feel or they did not speak with their soul and the luck reserved for me the honor of reading that face of art." "In two small rooms of the Allahverdi bridge, I have found more than thirty murals of pleasure and love; these differ from other palaces and must shed new light on Persian murals."<sup>24</sup>

For his extensive work, Reza Shah Pahlavi grants him the title of Khan, honors him with gifts.<sup>25</sup> André Godard,<sup>26</sup> who was in Iran during that same period, said: "At the heights of Ali Qapu, I saw a wizard who worked diligently and with his own imagination completed what time had long corrupted. And it seemed that he was one of the Safavid artists who continued to skillfully realize their unfinished work."<sup>27</sup> "Sarkis Katchadourian with his miracle brush was able to give to the canvas what was not on the walls."<sup>28</sup>

Art critic Camille Mauclair,<sup>29</sup> addressing the 17<sup>th</sup>-century murals of the royal palaces, notes that most of these murals were decayed, on the verge of disappearing, and an Armenian artist was found who "...was disturbed by that destruction. Already in 1932, in the Guimet Museum, he had exhibited several of his paintings where he had tried to re-establish those testimonies of Safavid art with a watercolor mixed with gouache."<sup>30</sup> Mauclair considers these works excellently executed and adds that Katchadourian's works represent not only archaeological and ethnographic value, but also artistic value, then continues: "...the first impression we get is thinking that we have a 'very contemporary' exhibition before us."<sup>31</sup>

The murals of the palaces built by Shah Abbas differ significantly from Islamic art, because the depiction of people was not characteristic of Islam. In these Safavid murals, the opposite tendency is observed, as greater importance is

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<sup>24</sup> **Achemyan** 1933 (July 7).

<sup>25</sup> **Pahlavi, Reza Shah** (1878–1944). Shah of Iran (1925–1941), founder of the Pahlavi dynasty.

<sup>26</sup> **Godard, André** (1881–1965). French architect, archaeologist, and art historian; Director of the Archaeological Service of Iran (IAS).

<sup>27</sup> **Zakaryan** 1981, 40; see also **Godard** 1934.

<sup>28</sup> **National Gallery of Armenia**, Fund 70, Inv. 14246.

<sup>29</sup> **Mauclair, Camille** (1872–1945). French author, novelist, and art critic.

<sup>30</sup> **Mauclair, Bonnat** 1935, 65.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

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given to human figures. Individuals dressed in rich garments are depicted at rest, enjoying wine, or engaged in quiet conversation, presented in calm and static states. The murals also include figures in European clothing; an example is the “While the Rose Blows Along the River Bank” mural of the Ali Qapu Palace, which was copied by the artist.<sup>32</sup>

On February 25, 1932, in the Guimet Museum in France, the copies made during Katchadourian’s first trip were exhibited, which numbered 132. The exhibition had great success. Thousands of people had gathered to see this exhibition, which had given them the opportunity to get acquainted with the rich civilization of Isfahan of the Safavid period and remember the elegant poems of poets Hafez, Ferdowsi, and Omar Khayyam.

After the grey atmosphere of a Parisian winter, viewers were enchanted by the elegant, linear patterns of these watercolor works and the delicate harmonies of pink, red, golden yellow, dull gold, and powdery blue.<sup>33</sup> Even more encouraged by this success, the artist decided to complete the works he had started. Arriving in Isfahan, from the autumn of 1932 until the spring of 1933, Katchadourian again gets to work in the most magnificent palaces built by Shah Abbas. After some time, he sees that there is almost nothing left to do; besides, he felt great physical and mental fatigue. Katchadourian writes about this once again to Haig Adjemyan: “I am completely tired both in mind and body; the studies I carried out completely broke me and my mind does not work. Today I decided to finish, especially since no new thing remained. I have almost the entire period of Safavid art. A few insignificant pieces remained unfinished, whose being or not being have no meaning and especially cannot diminish the value of my collection or lessen it.”

In the early summer of 1933, Katchadourian returns to Paris, bringing with him a new series of paintings that are exhibited in different countries.

Katchadourian’s copies were not just a reflection on Persian culture. A large number of Armenians lived in Persia. Shah Abbas grants privileges to the local Armenian Khojas so that they, in their turn, develop the country’s economy, because the Khojas created large trading companies, the silk trade in Persia was in their hands.

It should be noted that Sarkis Katchadourian was responsible for copying the murals found in the mansions of Armenian merchants Khoja Avetik and Khoja

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<sup>32</sup> **Met Museum** 2024; see also **Katchadourian** 1932, 8, 19.

<sup>33</sup> **Katchadourian** 1932, 14.

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Petros. According to the artist's wife, Vava Katchadourian, in an interview conducted in 1967 on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her husband's death,<sup>34</sup> one of these copies is the composition entitled "*Khoja Petros's Feast in the Presence of Shah Abbas*."<sup>35</sup>

Research has identified a specific work (Fig. 8) currently held in the Musée du quai Branly in Paris.<sup>36</sup> Although scholarly literature has not previously documented this connection, a detailed archival examination supports the thesis that the anonymous work in the Musée du quai Branly collection (preliminary inventory number: X376834) is a reproduction of the mural *The Feast of Khoja Petros in the Presence of Shah Abbas* executed by Sarkis Katchadourian (Fig. 8). Furthermore, according to the museum's official records, the donor is identified as "Mrs. S. Katchadourian." Based on this evidence, it is hypothesized that the work currently held at the Musée du quai Branly is the same piece mentioned by the artist's widow during her 1967 interview in New York.

Addressing the Armenian fine arts of the Shah Abbas period, let us specifically mention the works of the painter Minas.[36] None of these are signed by Minas and we cannot say for sure which of the works Katchadourian copied here are the works of the famous painter Minas of that period. Katchadourian himself considered it logical that the rich Khojas would have invited the most famous master of the time. In a letter addressed to Arshag Chobanian, Katchadourian notes with regret that in the Armenian murals "I found no trace of the Armenian masters of the same time, I read all the inscriptions, no mention of master Minas."<sup>37</sup>

In another letter, addressed to the ethnographer-philologist Haig Adjemyan, who lived in Tabriz at the time, Katchadourian assumes that in all probability they are the works of the painter Minas: "I am happy to report that the Armenian name will remain forever linked to Safavid art, because the murals of Khoja Petros's house, as well as the murals of Khoja Avetik's or Khoja Nazar's house, are largely linked with the art of that era with their skillful arrangement of colors

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<sup>34</sup> **Archival recording**, Interview with artist Vava Katchadourian, 1967, (July 12). See also: **National Gallery of Armenia**, Fund 70, Inv. 19620.

<sup>35</sup> **Musée du Quai Branly** 2006. Note: Since 1937, the Trocadéro Museum has been known as the Musée de l'Homme. In 2006, the ethnographic collection was moved to the Musée du Quai Branly, where "Khodja Petros' Feast" (Fig. 8) is currently held.

<sup>36</sup> <https://collections.quaibrantly.fr/>, accessed: 08.08.2025.

<sup>37</sup> **Minas** (17<sup>th</sup> Century). Armenian artist born in New Julfa.

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and lines and especially composition. Is our Master Minas's finger there or not, it is very difficult to say, but as a European artist, there is definitely a link between European paintings and Master Minas. Our patriotic Khojas would not have allowed a foreign painter to work in their house, since they had a master like Minas."<sup>38</sup>

Katchadourian, undoubtedly, had a great contribution to the preservation of Persian culture. With his brush, he was able to revitalize the old Persian art. As a result of the study of Persian art, he was also able to be a participant in the events of an important part of the life of the local Armenian community. The Persian copies painted by Katchadourian have been repeatedly covered by the diaspora Armenian, domestic, and foreign press. Of course, a valuable part of Oriental culture would have disappeared if the artist had not undertaken the copying and restoration works of the Persian palace murals.

### ***Conclusion***

Summarizing the results of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The research demonstrates that Sarkis Katchadourian can be considered a "new type of artist-restorer." His works are not mere mechanical copies, but rather creative reinterpretations of the Safavid artistic style. This approach helped preserve the aesthetic value of the murals, which in many cases have become difficult to read due to damage.

2. The study also shows that Katchadourian's stay in Iran was highly significant for the Armenian community. The establishment of a museum in the Holy Savior Monastery and the discovery of works by 17<sup>th</sup>-century Armenian masters, especially Minas, contributed to strengthening the historical and cultural presence of Armenians in Iran.

3. This research supports the identification of the painting "Khoja Petros's Feast in the Presence of Shah Abbas" preserved in Paris. Based on documentary evidence, including testimonies from the artist's widow and museum records, it is highly probable that this work forms part of Katchadourian's Persian series.

4. Finally, the international success of Katchadourian's exhibitions in the 1930s, particularly at the Guimet Museum and other institutions, increased West-

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<sup>38</sup> **Stepanyan** 1982, 265; see also **Achemyan** 1933, (July 7).

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ern scholarly interest in the art of the Shah Abbas period and helped bring wider recognition to these cultural monuments.

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**Fig. 3.** Unknown Author.



**Fig. 4.** Frescoes of the Ali Qapu Palace.

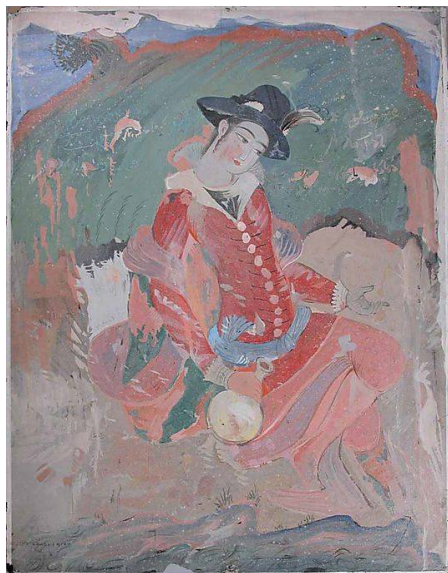
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**Fig. 6.** Sarkis Katchadourian, "Young Woman with a Hat" (Reconstruction).



**Fig. 7.** Sarkis Katchadourian, "While the Rose Blows Along the River Bank".




**Fig. 8.** "Khoja Petros's Feast in the Presence of Shah Abbas".

**ԱՐՓԻՆԵ ԹՈՐԻԿՅԱՆ**

*ՀՊՄՀ Գեղարվեստական կրթության ֆակուլտետ, հայցորդ  
Արվեստի պատմության, տեսության և մշակութաբանության ամբիոն*

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**ՍԱՐԳԻՍ ԽԱԶԱՏՈՒՐՅԱՆԻ ՍՏԵՂԾԱԳՈՐԾԱԿԱՆ  
ԳՈՐԾՈՒՆԵՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՐԿՐՈՐԴ ՇՐՋԱՆԸ  
(ՊԱՐՍԿԱԿԱՆ ՈՐՄՆԱՆԿԱՐՆԵՐ)**

**Ամփոփում**

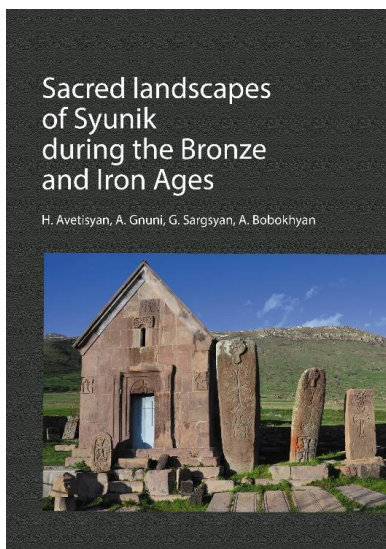
Սույն հոդվածում մենք անդրադառնում ենք հայկական սփյուռքի նշանավոր ներկայացուցիչ, արվեստագետ Սարգիս Խաչատուրյանի ստեղծագործական գործունեության երկրորդ շրջանին: Ներկայացնում ենք 1929–1933 թվականներին Պարսկաստանում գտնվելու ընթացքում Սպահանի Սեֆյան պալատների Ալի Ղափուի, Չեհել Սոթունի և այլ պալատական կառույցների որմնանկարների կրկնօրինակման և վերակառուցման նրա լայնածավալ աշխատանքների վերլուծությունը: Ուշագրավ է նկարչի բացառիկ ներդրումը իրանական մշակութային ժառանգության պահպանման և Եվրոպայում ու Ամերիկայում Արևելյան արվեստի հանրահռչակման գործում: Մեր կողմից իրականացված արխիվային և փաստագրական հետազոտության հիման վրա առաջ է քաշվում Բրանլի փողոցի վրա գտնվող թանգարանի հավաքածուից անանուն ստեղծագործության՝ Խաչատուրյանի վրձնին վերագրելու թեզը: Այդ գործը մենք նույնացնում ենք Խաչատուրյանի «Խոջա Պետրոսի Քէֆը Շահ Աբբասի ներկայությամբ» որմնանկարի հետ:

**Բանալի բառեր՝** *Սարգիս Խաչատուրյան, արևելյան արվեստ, Ալի Ղափու պալատ, Չեհել Սոթուն պալատ, Նոր Ջուղա, ընդօրինակումներ, Շահ-Աբբասի ժամանակաշրջան:*

## ԳՐԱԽՈՍԱԿԱՆՆԵՐ BOOK REVIEWS

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### A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANCIENT HISTORY AND CULTURE OF SYUNIK



The monograph *Sacred Landscapes of Syunik during the Bronze and Iron Ages: Archaeological Survey* (H. Avetisyan, A. Gnuni, G. Sargsyan, A. Bobokhyan, Yerevan, IAE Publishing, 2025, 221 p.) represents a substantial contribution to the archaeology of the Armenian Highland and, more broadly, to the interdisciplinary study of sacred landscapes. Produced under the auspices of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography and Yerevan State University, and funded by the All Armenian Foundation Financing Armenological Studies, the volume synthesizes more than a decade of intensive archaeological fieldwork

and museum research. Its declared aim is to reconstruct and interpret the sacred landscape of historical Syunik during the Bronze and Iron Ages (ca. 3500–500 BC), situating the region within local, regional, and supraregional cultural processes.

Historical Syunik is a pivotal area of the Armenian Highland, distinguished by its exceptional density of archaeological sites. Systematic investigations of these sites have been conducted since the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Lalayan Y., Lisitsyan S., Yesayan S., Barseghyan L., Xnkikyan O., Avetisyan P., Gasparyan B., Hovhannisyanyan V., Piliposyan A., Zardaryan M., et al.), demonstrating the

### **A Valuable Contribution to the Ancient History and Culture of Syunik**

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considerable potential of the region for advancing our understanding of early historical developments in the Armenian Highland.

Since 2013, systematic research on the archaeological sites of Syunik has been significantly reinforced through expeditions conducted by the Department of Archaeology and Ethnography of Yerevan State University. These investigations were realized within the framework of the project entitled *“Historical Syunik in the Bronze and Iron Ages (according to the latest archaeological data),”* supported by the Higher Education and Science Committee of the Republic of Armenia.

The research under consideration integrates data obtained from systematic excavations, field surveys, and analyses of museum collections, encompassing sites located in the Syunik, Vayots Dzor, and Gegharkunik provinces of the Republic of Armenia, as well as in the Kashatagh region and the Karvachar district of the Shahumyan region within the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic.

The study is framed by contemporary debates on sacred space, landscape archaeology, and cultic geography. By explicitly adopting the concept of the “sacred landscape” as an analytical category, the authors move beyond traditional site-based or typological approaches, instead emphasizing spatial relationships, environmental settings, and long-term continuity in ritual practices. In this respect, the book aligns with international scholarship on landscape archaeology while remaining firmly grounded in the empirical traditions of Armenian archaeology.

The monograph consists of an Introduction, three substantive chapters, Conclusions, and extensive supplementary materials, including References, Abbreviations, Tables, and Appendices. This structure allows the main argument to be supported by detailed case studies without overburdening the central narrative.

Chapter I addresses research issues, including the natural environment, historical context, historiography of research, and theoretical foundations. Chapter II proposes a classification of sacred places, while Chapter III (not fully reproduced in the excerpt) focuses on topography and spatial organization. The internal logic of the book progresses from contextualization to conceptualization and finally to analytical synthesis, reflecting a coherent research design.

A major strength of the work lies in its detailed reconstruction of Syunik’s natural and historical environment. The authors convincingly demonstrate that

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**Petrosyan A.**

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Syunik's mountainous terrain, climatic diversity, water resources, and mineral wealth were decisive factors in shaping patterns of settlement, economy, and ritual behavior. The region's role as a corridor connecting the Armenian Highland with the Caucasus and Iran is emphasized through the reconstruction of ancient road networks and transit routes.

By integrating environmental data with historical geography, the authors show that Syunik was not a marginal periphery but a structurally significant zone within the central-northeastern cultural subregion of the Armenian Highland. This positioning underpins their later argument that Syunik functioned as a "gateway" mediating cultural influences between the Highland and the Caucasian world.

The historiographical survey presented in Chapter I is comprehensive and critically informed. The authors divide the history of research into three stages: pre-Soviet (1870–1920), Soviet (1920–1990), and post-Soviet (since 1990). This periodization allows them to contextualize changing research agendas, methodologies, and institutional frameworks.

Particularly valuable is the discussion of early discoveries and the descriptive nature of nineteenth-century investigations, followed by the systematic excavations and syntheses of the Soviet period. The authors do not shy away from addressing the intellectual and political ruptures caused by Stalinist repressions, which led to the loss of data and scholarly continuity. The post-Soviet stage is characterized by renewed international collaboration, intensive surveys, and the reexamination of legacy collections.

One of the theoretical pillars of the book is the nuanced definition of the sacred landscape. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature, the authors distinguish three analytical levels: sacred area (landscape), sacred place, and sacred object. This tripartite model provides a flexible yet structured framework for interpreting archaeological evidence.

The use of concepts such as hierotopy and hierophany demonstrates engagement with broader theoretical discourse, particularly the works of Mircea Eliade. Importantly, the authors adapt these concepts to the specific realities of the Armenian Highland, avoiding uncritical transplantation of theoretical models. The sacred landscape is thus understood as a dynamic system shaped by natural features, human agency, and long-term cultural memory.

The book identifies a series of factors contributing to the formation and persistence of sacred landscapes: topographic prominence, spatial separation

### **A Valuable Contribution to the Ancient History and Culture of Syunik**

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from profane areas, accessibility via road networks, proximity to settlements, and associations with subsistence strategies such as pastoralism and agriculture. The inclusion of natural resources and craft activities as cult-forming factors broadens the analytical scope and highlights the economic dimensions of ritual behavior.

This multifactorial approach allows the authors to explain why certain locations retained their sacred significance across millennia, even as specific ritual forms and material expressions changed.

Chapter II offers a detailed classification of sacred places, focusing primarily on platforms and monumental stelae. Platforms are further subdivided into structural platforms and those situated on natural rock outcrops. The authors provide an impressive array of archaeological examples from settlements, cemeteries, and isolated contexts, demonstrating the versatility of platforms as ritual installations.

The discussion of platforms associated with burials is particularly insightful, revealing complex ritual sequences involving construction, deposition, and reuse. Comparative references to sites in Armenia, the Caucasus, and the Near East situate Syunik within a broader cultural horizon.

The treatment of vishap (dragon stone) stelae constitutes one of the significant contributions of the volume. Syunik is presented as a core area in the distribution of vishaps, and the authors provide a thorough historiography of their study, from early documentation to recent systematic investigations.

By embedding vishaps within their archaeological and landscape contexts, the authors move beyond earlier typological or mythological interpretations. The discussion highlights issues of reuse, relocation, and reinterpretation, particularly during the medieval period, underscoring the *longue durée* of sacred meanings attached to these monuments.

A notable methodological strength of the book is the integration of data from surveys, excavations, and museum collections. Newly discovered sites, such as Yelpin and Aghavnadzor, are discussed alongside reexamined legacy collections from regional museums. This holistic approach allows for a more nuanced chronological and functional interpretation of material culture.

The detailed presentation of pottery, among others also ritual vessels, and animal-shaped objects enriches the discussion of cult practices and symbolic expression, particularly for the Middle and Late Bronze Age.

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### Petrosyan A.

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The authors consistently situate Syunik within wider cultural networks. By identifying three major cultural subregions of the Armenian Highland, they convincingly argue that Syunik belonged to the central-northeastern sphere, with particularly strong ties to Utik and Paytakaran. At the same time, the region's openness to Caucasian and Iranian influences is emphasized.

This balanced perspective avoids both isolationist and diffusionist extremes, presenting Syunik as an active participant in regional cultural dynamics.

While the monograph is rich in empirical data and theoretical reflection, certain limitations can be noted. The density of archaeological detail may at times challenge non-specialist readers, and clearer syntheses at the end of some sections would enhance accessibility. Additionally, while the theoretical framework is sound, further engagement with recent international landscape archaeology case studies could strengthen comparative perspectives. Nevertheless, these points do not detract significantly from the overall scholarly value of the work.

Along with the main investigation also four reports are incorporated into the text. One of the most substantial contributions is the detailed presentation of the Joj Dar cemetery near Yeghegnadzor (V. Hovhannisyan). Based on excavations conducted in the 1980s, the study offers a careful reconstruction of Late Bronze and Early Iron Age burial practices. The tombs, surface-built stone structures arranged in small groups across hills and watersheds, demonstrate a funerary tradition characterized by collective burial, animal sacrifice, and rich assemblages of weapons, tools, ornaments, and pottery. Particularly valuable is the author's nuanced discussion of disturbance and looting, which avoids simplistic ritual explanations and instead convincingly attributes the fragmented condition of the assemblages to ancient robbery and later reuse. The comparative analysis situates Joj Dar within wider cultural networks linking the Ararat Valley, Syunik, Nakhchivan, and northwestern Iran, reinforcing the site's importance for understanding Early Iron Age interaction spheres.

The chapter on anthropomorphic stone stelae of the Artsakh steppe provides a theoretically informed examination of symbolic monuments within a broader Eurasian context (N. Yeranyan). The author convincingly demonstrates that these stelae, rectangular slabs depicting stylized human figures with folded arms and raised hands, belong to a tradition closely related to Scythian anthropomorphic tomb markers known from the North Caucasus and Black Sea regions. The discussion of iconography, particularly the presence of swords or daggers and the

### **A Valuable Contribution to the Ancient History and Culture of Syunik**

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ritualized hand gestures, is enriched by references to earlier Bronze Age traditions and Near Eastern ideological influences. By engaging with classic interpretations of Scythian stelae as representations of heroized ancestors or warrior elites, the chapter situates the Artsakh material within debates on ancestor cults, social hierarchy, and cosmological symbolism. The documentation of later reuse of these monuments in medieval and Christian contexts adds an important diachronic dimension, illustrating how ancient sacred objects retained ritual potency even as their meanings shifted.

Equally significant is the treatment of the Sotk region of historical Syunik, presented as a coherent sacred landscape shaped by metallurgy, mobility, and long-term occupation (M. Amiryan, et al.). The excavations at the fortified settlement of Sotk 2 reveal a complex, multi-layered site spanning from the Chalcolithic to the Early Iron Age. The authors' identification of three architectural traditions, clay structures, stone buildings, and rock-cut features, allows for a nuanced understanding of changing economic and ritual practices. Of particular interest is the interpretation of rock-cut pits, some of which appear to have served not only as storage or workshops but also as loci of cultic activity. The presentation of nearby sanctuaries and cemeteries further reinforces the regional perspective. The Sotk 15 sanctuary, marked by cromlechs and cup-marked stones, and the Sotk 10 cemetery, with evidence for decarnation and possible sacrificial practices, are interpreted within broader Middle Bronze Age ritual traditions. The Norabak 1 cemetery, with its long sequence of use from the Late Bronze to the Middle Iron Age, provides an especially compelling case study. The discussion of group burials, excarnation, and the early appearance of iron contributes meaningfully to debates on social structure and ritual practice in the Sevan Basin.

The final section, devoted to sacred sites of Syunik preserved in state repositories, adds an important documentary and historiographic dimension to the volume (L. Mkrtychyan). By systematizing archival records of rock platforms, menhirs, vishaps, dolmens, cromlech cemeteries, and monumental stelae, the author highlights the exceptional density and diversity of cultic monuments in the region. Although many of these sites remain insufficiently studied, the catalog underscores their potential for future research, particularly in addressing questions of dating, function, and landscape organization. The emphasis on the sacralization of natural stone formations, often continuing into the Christian

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**Petrosyan A.**

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period and even the present, offers a compelling illustration of cultural continuity in ritual attitudes toward the landscape.

Overall, the volume makes a significant contribution to the archaeology of the Armenian Highland by foregrounding the concept of sacred landscape as an analytical framework. Its principal merit lies in demonstrating that cemeteries, settlements, sanctuaries, and monuments formed interconnected systems of meaning, deeply embedded in social memory and regional identity. While some chapters remain primarily descriptive and would benefit from more explicit theoretical engagement, the richness of the empirical data and the breadth of regional comparison more than compensate for this limitation. The book will be of particular value to scholars of Bronze and Iron Age archaeology, landscape archaeology, and ritual studies in the South Caucasus and adjacent regions.

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## ՀՈՒԲԵԼՅԱՆՆԵՐ JUBILEE

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### **A 65-YEAR-OLD SCIENTIST AT THE CROSSROADS OF HISTORY**

A prominent representative of modern Armenian historiography, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, and academician of NAS RA, Ashot Melkonyan, is celebrating a jubilee year, marking the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth.

The scholar was born on February 16, 1961, in the city of Akhalkalaki, Georgia, into the family of Aghasi Melkonyan, a well-known intellectual, journalist, and publicist within Armenian circles. He completed secondary school in 1977 and entered the Faculty of History at Yerevan State University, graduating in 1982. He began his academic career in 1982–1985 by completing postgraduate studies (aspirantura) at the same institution. In 1989, under the supervision of academician Suren Yeremyan, he defended his Candidate dissertation entitled “The Armenian Population of the Erzurum Province of Western Armenia in the First Third of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” for which he was awarded the degree of Candidate of Historical Sciences. In subsequent years, his research expanded significantly, encompassing broader aspects of this field and leading to fundamental contributions to Armenian historiography. His doctoral dissertation, titled “Javakhk in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the First Quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century,” was defended in April 2002. His achievements in the field of academic and pedagogical activity earned him the title of Professor in 2005, followed by wide recognition in scholarly and intellectual circles. In December 2006, he was elected a Corresponding

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Member of NAS RA, and in December 2014, he was elected a full Academician.

A. Melkonyan began his professional career at the Institute of History of NAS RA, starting as a laboratory assistant and, by 2002, rising to the position of Director of the same institute, a post he held until February of this year. He currently continues his academic and organizational work as Head of a Department at the Institute.

A. Melkonyan has followed a distinguished professional path, to which he has devoted, and continues to devote, his full energy, enriching Armenian studies with the fruitful results of his work. It should also be noted that today the scholar transmits his decades of experience and knowledge to university students with remarkable enthusiasm and dedication.

A. Melkonyan's works are characterized by a broad and multifaceted historical scope, addressing the demography of Western Armenia, historical-political and cultural issues, national liberation movements and their leaders, the socio-economic condition of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, as well as aspects of national life in the homeland and the diaspora, among others. As a rule, the historian relies on analyses grounded in contemporary theoretical approaches, facts, and realities – thereby valuing Armenian history both as a distinct field of scholarly inquiry, with its own characteristics, identity markers, and specific realities, and as an integral part of world history. He approaches these two fields of research as mutually interconnected domains, grounded in shared patterns and interrelations, through which his studies acquire a distinct degree of objectivity. From this perspective, his substantial scholarly contribution is often manifested in the formation and definition of new directions. Particularly noteworthy is A. Melkonyan's significant contribution to the establishment of the field of historical demography within Armenian scholarship.

Prior to his conceptualization of this new direction, it had appeared in the academic environment primarily within economic studies, framed in terms of purely economic issues and the identification of patterns, and therefore presented with an insufficiently developed historical dimension.

In A. Melkonyan's works, this boundary is overcome, and the methodological treatment of the issue is brought into the domain of historical scholarship, placing it on solid foundations. Its contemporary significance becomes even more pronounced in the context of Turkish-Azerbaijani

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distortions of the issue, where nationalistic and pan-Turkic interpretations of demographic questions tend to dominate.

By exposing these distortions, A. Melkonyan has entered Armenian historiography through the main gate, leaving his distinctive mark on the study and reinterpretation of the modern and contemporary periods of Armenian history.

Such is his first, yet, in both conception and execution, undeniably impressive, work: the revised and expanded version of his Candidate dissertation, titled "The Armenian Population of the Erzurum Province in the First Third of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (A Historical-Demographic Study)" (Yerevan, 1994, "Gitutyun" Publishing House, 179 pp.).

The study is devoted to the distribution of the Armenian population of the province, ethnic movements, and other related issues. The author pays particular attention to clarifying his concluding arguments, noting that new political conditions emerged for the Armenians, who constituted the majority of the province's population-conditions that had negative consequences for their numbers and the dynamics of their movements.

In the province, the influx of Turkic-speaking and Iranian-speaking populations gradually intensified, emerging as a general phenomenon and constituting an important characteristic of the demographic transformations in Western Armenia.

The result of the historian's many years of research was his published lecture manual "History of the Armenians" (Yerevan, "Hayagitak" Publishing House, 1998, 277 pp.), which, alongside the relevance of the issues it addressed, testified not only to the internal coherence of his research but also to the importance of transmitting new perspectives to a new generation of historians – driven by the practical necessity of his own approaches and solutions. In terms of its chronological scope, the manual covers an outline of Armenian history from ancient times to the present day. It also incorporates the achievements of Armenian historiography, particularly with regard to a number of controversial issues.

Special attention is given to the assessment of new realities that have become historical facts, such as the new phase of the Artsakh movement and the proclamation of the independent statehood of Armenia, including an

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analysis of the legal and political foundations of the Declaration of Independence.

A. Melkonyan's studies are closely intertwined with his personal inclinations and biographical background, often serving as fertile ground for his scholarly vigor. Being genealogically connected to his ancestors and to the historical homeland of the Karin (Erzurum) region, he, as it were, responds to the call of blood by giving due attention to the demographic history of the Armenian population of the Erzurum province.

The relevance of this issue required further elaboration, prompting the need for new scholarly contributions. Such an intermediate link became the work prepared by him: the biography "Archbishop Karapet" by Senior Priest E. Geghamyants, presented with his introduction and annotations (this work had originally been published in the 1870s in the journal "Pordz"). The subject concerns Archbishop Karapet, the spiritual leader of Karin, whose name is associated with the organization of the migration of Armenians from Karin to Javakhk in Transcaucasia.

Finally, two subsequent works by A. Melkonyan are devoted to the same issue. The first of these, "Outlines of the History of Javakhk" (Yerevan, 1999, "Gitutyun" Publishing House, 104 pp.), is dedicated to the history of the Javakhk district of the Gugark province of Greater Armenia, as well as to the histories of the Akhalkalaki district and the adjacent regions of Akhaltsikhe and Tsalka, up to the Soviet period.

Particular attention is devoted to the history of the period spanning 1918–1921. This work is enriched with newly discovered documents and archival materials, which substantiate a renewed interpretation of the issue from a demographic perspective.

Finally, the issue reached a distinctive level of development with the publication of A. Melkonyan's work "Javakhk in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the First Quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" (Yerevan, 2003, Institute of History of NAS RA, 542 pp.). Here, the research material is employed within an expanded chronological framework, including the ancient and medieval periods of Javakhk's history, as well as new findings at various historical stages, particularly in those thematic areas that address the Turkish invasion of Akhalkalaki in 1918, the tragic condition of the local Armenian population, the far from benevolent policy pursued toward them by the Georgian authorities,

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and Armenian–Georgian interstate relations, among others. The work addresses a number of issues that have been scarcely or almost never examined in historiographical literature, such as the Armenian–Georgian war that began in early 1918 over Akhalkalaki and Lori, as well as the internal and external factors associated with it, which ultimately concluded with British intervention and its ensuing political consequences. Through convincing analyses, the author demonstrates the isolated position and underlying logic of Soviet Armenia in this matter, where nationalism appeared under the guise of internationalism. The historian calls things by their proper names in showing that the Georgian-Azerbaijani Bolshevik majority, acting in a coordinated and unified manner, achieved in July 1921 the annexation of Akhalkalaki and other Armenian territories to Georgia and Azerbaijan.

On November 6 of the same year, the author concludes, an Armenian–Georgian treaty was signed, which, with certain modifications, remains in effect to this day. Also noteworthy are the analyses of its repercussions, such as the demands raised in 1925 by the Armenians of Akhalkalaki for the incorporation of Akhalkalaki into Armenia, demands that were rejected by the Soviet authorities. Closely related to this is the documentary collection published by A. Melkonyan and Professor V. Ghazakhyantsyan, “Armenia in State Secret Documents, 1922–1929” (in Russian; Yerevan, 2008, “Gitutyun” Publishing House, 352 pp.), which addresses the activities of secret services that remained largely concealed in the background of Soviet history. The materials of this collection provide invaluable factual information about the attitude and policies of the Soviet authorities toward Armenia during that period.

Further deepening his research in the field of historical demography, A. Melkonyan published his next work, “Issues of Armenian History and Demography” (Yerevan, 2011, “Mitk” Analytical Center, 455 pp.). In this volume, familiar topics are revisited within a broader conceptual framework and with new methodological approaches, including the history of Javakhk, the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian Cause, and the methodological foundations of Turkish-Azerbaijani falsifications, among others.

Although his discussions of various issues are formally presented as distinct, they enable him to draw significant generalizations regarding the themes addressed in his work. Such is his conclusion concerning the

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movements of the Armenian population of the Erzurum province, which, in a broader sense, may be attributed to the oppressive and difficult historical environment faced by the Armenians. As he notes, Armenians addressed the problem of survival in two ways, through armed struggle and emigration, resulting in a sharp decline in the Armenian population and the depopulation of Armenian-inhabited areas.

The formulation “preferred topics” in relation to A. Melkonyan, used above, carries a rather conditional meaning, particularly in the context of his broad research scope, within which his factual interests are often synthesized. He traverses the vast space from history to reality, from the historical to the contemporary, with remarkable ease and natural continuity: under his pen, history is reinterpreted in terms of modern relevance, and the present is illuminated through instructive historical truths.

Indeed, Melkonyan’s numerous articles and speeches reflect not only pressing issues concerning present-day Armenia, its statehood, and the Armenian people, but also offer necessary proposals aimed at addressing them. From this perspective, particular attention should be given to his collection of articles, speeches, and interviews, “Lessons and Messages of Armenian History” (Yerevan, 2013, NAS RA “Gitutyun” Publishing House, 631 pp.).

Within this diversity of genres, he advances the necessity of a new strategic phase in the development of the issue of the Armenian Genocide, aimed at moving it beyond its current stagnation. As he observes, the phase of recognition of the Genocide “has long since passed, and we must emphasize reparation and, by no means, be satisfied with parliamentary-level recognition of the issue in any given country; rather, we must also reach the idea of reparation in our formulations” (p. 25).

A. Melkonyan thus raises the issue of material or tangible compensation for the loss of Western Armenia. In this regard, it should be recalled that, with well-grounded arguments, he adopted a negative stance toward the so-called Armenian–Turkish Reconciliation Commission, as well as toward proposals from the Turkish side to shift the issue from the political sphere to an academic one through debates among historians. Such an approach, in his view, would have meant consigning the matter to the realm of fruitless and endless debates between fundamentally opposing sides.

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He notes that Turkish society is not prepared to take even a single step toward the recognition of the Genocide, while, on the other hand, Armenian society maintains a rejecting stance toward such ineffective debates. From this principled position, A. Melkonyan substantiated his objections to the Zurich Armenian–Turkish protocols, viewing in them formulations that contradict the vital interests of the Armenian people.

In particular, he points out that these agreements contain a provision which effectively nullifies the Treaty of Sèvres by implying the *de facto* recognition of the border between Armenia and Turkey.

A. Melkonyan is deeply concerned with the fundamental issue of preserving and strengthening Armenia’s statehood, a theme that is evident throughout his works and in the coherence of his conceptual approaches. In this collection as well, he regards May 28, 1918, as a turning point in the history of the Armenian people, as it ensured “the continuity of Armenian statehood.”

A. Melkonyan approaches the topic of the Genocide from a legal and political perspective, as reflected in his collection “Genocide and Dispossession” (works, publications, and interviews given to the press; “Zangak” Publishing House, 438 pp.). In this volume, the issue of the inadmissibility of the Armenian–Turkish protocols is examined from new angles (a position he had also defended in the National Assembly on October 1, 2009).

He advances the need to substantiate a new phase following the recognition of the Genocide, formulating a number of key issues such as: “Demanding reparation is also a preventive measure,” “What occurred was not only genocide but also dispossession,” and “The necessity of legally defining the concept of dispossession,” among others.

In modern Armenian historiography, theoretical and substantive issues assume primary importance in A. Melkonyan’s work “Essays on Armenian History” (Yerevan, 2012, Institute of History of NAS RA, 411 pp.), which covers the entirety of Armenian history from ancient times to the end of the twentieth century.

The author places particular emphasis on the creation of unified pan-Armenian textbooks (in history, language and literature, and culture), with the aim of fostering an Armenia-centered mindset and a sense of statehood. Of

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notable historiographical value is A. Melkonyan's proposed periodization of Armenian history, ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern periods, which fully corresponds to internationally recognized chronological frameworks. It should also be noted that the chronological structure of this work (as reflected in its division into chapters) is likewise based on the same principles.

A. Melkonyan has compiled his articles and reports from the first decades of the 2000s in the volume "Historiographical Studies" (Yerevan, 2021, Institute of History of NAS RA, 488 pp.). In this work as well, the author addresses numerous issues related to Armenian history, politics, and related fields, unified by the internal logical interconnections of the problems and their contemporary relevance.

Among the products of his long-term research included in this volume, particular attention may be drawn to several works, such as "The Historical Stages of Armenian Statehood," "Problems of the New Periodization of Armenian History," "Artsakh in the Trajectory of Armenian Statehood," as well as articles and reports published in English and Russian.

At the end of the book is included the preface written by A. Melkonyan, as editor, to the work of the late talented historian Hamlet Harutyunyan, "The Demographic Profile, Crafts, and Trade of the Yerevan Province" (Yerevan, 2020, Institute of History of NAS RA), in which the scientific significance of reconstructing the demographic picture of the two parts of Armenia is highlighted.

In the aforementioned discussions on Armenian statehood, A. Melkonyan presents fundamental distinctions regarding historical periods. He thoroughly revises the unfounded view that the Armenian people experienced complete statelessness, proposing a new conceptual framework according to which, following the successive collapse of unified Armenian kingdoms, there emerged regional kingdoms, principalities, melikdoms, and other formations that "in almost all historical periods preserved the continuous chain of Armenian statehood" (p. 170).

During the entire period of A. Melkonyan's leadership of the Institute of History of NAS RA, historians of the Academy published numerous works in foreign languages both in Armenia and abroad, presenting contemporary historiographical thought. The scholarly results of these works would do credit

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to any country, as evidenced by the impartial assessments of many foreign scholars.

However, in our context, there exists a certain degree of dismissive attitude toward historical scholarship, which, in my view, stems from the tendency to mechanically attribute to contemporary historians the shortcomings of Soviet historiography (namely, the subordination of scholarship, especially the social sciences, to politics).


It must be acknowledged that the public remains highly insufficiently informed about the achievements of modern historiography. Is our society adequately aware that during A. Melkonyan's tenure as director the multi-volume *History of the Armenians*, a testament to the vitality of contemporary Armenian historiographical thought, was published? I would venture to doubt it.

I ask the jubilarian's indulgence for this brief digression from the main theme, sincerely believing that Academician Ashot Melkonyan will continue to place his impeccable abilities and experience at the service of Armenian historiography. To the distinguished sixty-five-year-old scholar, we extend our heartfelt wishes for good health, long life, and continued strength in his fruitful work.

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**Գիտական խորհուրդ**

Աղասյան Արարատ  
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