

ՀՆԱԳԻՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ

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NOTES ON URARTIAN PERIOD POTTERY TRADITIONS IN ARMENIA

Key Words – Van Kingdom, Etiuni, Lchashen-Metsamor culture, Iron Age, IX-VIII centuries BC, pottery

Introduction. In the IX century BC, with the formation of Urartian state, the cultures of the Armenian Highland entered a qualitatively new stage of their development. As a result of cultural progress of the former Bronze and Early Iron Age cultures, the natives of the Armenian Highland were involved in a sphere of such historical developments which are defined by specialists as ‘civilization’. This concept is characterized according to some attributes, among which the most important are the appearance of towns with organized planning, using of script, presence of monumental architecture which, accordingly, presupposes the existence of complex social structures.

The preconditions of all mentioned criteria were present already within the Bronze and Early Iron Age societies of the region; however, they were not ripe enough to be expressed in united and systematized manner. And only at the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 1st millennium BC, as a result of unification of Nairi tribes of the southern regions of the Armenian Highland, the state Bianili-Urartu was formed, which, during the next three centuries, had to play a decisive role in historical and cultural developments of the Near-East. The creators of this state were the Urartians – an ethnic group who lived primarily in the mountainous regions, south of Lake Van and who spoke a language which was ranked among the languages of the so called Hurrian-Urartian language family. Urartu was by its structure a typical ancient Near-Eastern state formation. Accepting the value systems of Syrian-Mesopotamian cultural world, the Urartian élite tried to conform them with the values of the local population.

During the VIII and the VII centuries BC the Urartians and their language spread through the whole territory of the Armenian Highland and reached also contemporary Armenia, which coincides with the lands of Etiuni and Uduri-Etiuni of the Urartian inscriptions. After the Urartian invasion at the beginning of the 8th century BC this region turned into one of the most important parts of the common Urartian cultural area. As a result of this invasion an élite culture par excellence was formed which coexisted with the local Late Bronze and Early Iron Age cultural groups called ‘Lchashen-Metsamor’ in Armenian archaeological nomenclature.

During the last hundred years in the territory of the Armenian Highland a huge archaeological material has been accumulated. The investigations of Armenian (H. Martirosyan, G. Tiratsyan, S. Esayan), Russian (H. Orbeli, N. Marr, B. Piotrovskiy, S. Khodzhash), Euro-American (Ch. Burney, W. Kleis, P. Zimansky) and Turkish (A.

Çilingiroğlu, V. Sevin, O. Belli) archaeologists greatly promoted the explanation of different problems concerning the nature of the Urartian culture¹. However, there appeared also questions which still remain to be unanswered. Here, we want to underline three of such questions.

1. First of them deals with the problem of origin of Urartian culture. Today we hardly have any archaeological complex which could be identified with Urartian culture before the 9th century BC. If the Urartian culture was something identic it should have its prehistory. However, the archaeological data from the Early Iron Age sites between the lakes Sevan, Van and Urmia demonstrate a united picture of cultural developments in which it is not possible to differentiate between a single group which could be compared with later Urartian culture. The most interesting aspect is that this whole region (including the heartland of the Urartians around Van Lake, it means the territory of chiefdoms of Nairi) during the pre-Urartian period was dominated by a type of black burnished pottery which, according to the last investigations, should be closely connected with Armenian materials².

2. The second question deals with disappearance of Urartian culture. Particularly, the archaeological data do not allow us to see the end of Urartu in terms of big cultural changes. The change into the Ervandid (according to Armenian archaeological terminology) or Achaemenide period took place evidently in the context of the keeping of old traditions³.

3. And the third question concerns the explanation of local variants of all-Urartian culture, as well as correlation of 'élite' and 'mass' cultures. In Armenian archaeology some works have been undertaken towards the differentiation of the local and the Urartian in material culture of Iron Age Armenia⁴.

¹ For the history of investigation of Urartian state and culture as well as for corresponding literature cf. **Zimansky P.**, *Ancient Ararat: A Handbook of Urartian Studies*, Delmar, New York, 1998.

² Sevin V., *The Early Iron Age in Elazig Region and the Problem of the Mushkians // "Anatolian Studies" XLI, 1991, p. 87-97*, Sevin V., Kavakli E., *Van/Karagündüz: An Early Iron Age Cemetery, Istanbul, 1996*.

³ For the links between Urartian and early Armenian ceramics cf. e.g. **Мартиросян А. А.**, *Аргиштихинили // «Археологические памятники Армении», вып. 8, Ереван 1974, с. 58-66, 147*. For other links in material culture cf. also **Տիրացյան Գ., Արեշյան Գ., Ուրարտու-Հայաստանի պրոբլեմը // «ՊԲՀ», 1990, թիվ 3, էջ 70-75**, **Есаян С. А., Биягов Л. Н., Амаякян С. Г., Канемян А. Г.**, *Бийнская гробница в Ереване // «Археологические памятники Армении», вып. 15, Ереван 1991*, **Հմայակյան Ս., Ուրարտական պետության և մշակութի ձևավորման խնդրի շուրջ // «Հայաստանի հնագիտական հուշարձանները», սր. 16/III, Երևան, 1995, էջ 105-106**, **Biscione R., Hmayakyan S., Parmegiani N.**, *The North-Eastern Frontier: Urartians and Non-Urartians in the Sevan Lake Basin, I. The Southern Shores // "Documenta Asiana", VII, Roma, 2002*, **Tiratsyan G. A.**, *From Urartu to Armenia // « Civilisations du Proche-Orient I, Archeologie et Environment » 4, Neuchâtel, 2003*.

⁴ For earlier considerations towards the problem of relations of Urartian and local cultures cf. **Мартиросян А. А.**, *Город Тейшебаини, Ереван, 1961*; **Мартиросян А. А.** *Армения в эпоху бронзы и раннего железа, Ереван, 1964*; **Առաքելյան Բ., Ջահուկյան Գ., Սարգսյան Գ.**, *Ուրարտու-Հայաստան, Երևան, 1988*, **Տիրացյան Գ., Արեշյան Գ.**, նշվ. աշխ., **Есаян С. А., Биягов Л. Н., Амаякян С. Г., Канемян А. Г.**, *указ. соч.*, **Հմայակյան Ս.**, նշվ. աշխ., **Zimansky P. E.**, *Archaeological Inquiries into Ethno-Linguistic Diversity in Urartu, Greater Anatolia and the Indo-Hittite Language Family*, **Drews R.** 2001 (ed.) // *"Journal of Indo-European Studies"*, *Monograph Series 38*, Washington, 2001, 15-27, **Biscione R., Hmayakyan S., Parmegiani N.**, *op. cit.*, **Tiratsyan G. A.**, *op. cit.*, **Ավետիսյան Հ., Ավետիսյան Պ.**

The main problem is that earlier the western archaeologists scarcely considered the Urartian culture in terms of differentiating between various cultural groups, whereas Armenian and Russian archaeologists were inclined to see in Urartian culture, at least in Armenia, some sub-groups. However, due to recent collaborations of western and Armenian archaeologists, reflected in such works as excavations and surveys in Kotayk region (Armenian-Austrian expedition), Sevan-Lake basin (Armenian-Italian expedition) and Tsaghkahovit plain (Armenian-American expedition) the terminological differences will be overcome¹.

The aim of this article is to go into some circumstances of the mentioned three questions with the main stress to the third one, i.e. the correlation of local and Urartian cultural components in Iron Age Armenia. Moreover, we shall approach the question from the Armenian view point and our initial material is pottery. However, to test the results gained from pottery analyses we shall try to go beyond pottery and briefly analyze also other evidences concerning material culture. In this connection, the problem is if pottery alone is able to answer historical questions and if the pots are equal to peoples². The following paradigm demonstrates the conventionality of our interpretations. So, the presence of Skythians in Armenia since the mid 8th century BC is evident according to the written sources, metal finds (weapons, horse-bits) and artistic data (images, statues)³. However, there is no any pottery group to be identified with Skythians, which means to some researches that there are no grounds to define the presence of the Skythians in Armenia as a cultural group. Hence, not always can pottery be identified with groups of peoples.

The main problem with the source basis in Armenian archaeology is that in modern Armenia we deal mainly with burial excavations and less with excavations of fortress-settlements⁴. Stratigraphical data towards the problems put by us in this article

Արարատյան դաշտի մշակույթը մ.թ.ա. IX-VI դդ., Երևան, 2006.

¹ Cf. Biscione R., Hmayakyan S., Parmegiani N, *op. cit.*, Avetisyan H., Allinger-Csollich W., **The Fortress of Aramus: Preliminary Report of Excavations in 2004 and 2005** // “**Aramazd, Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies**” (then – “**Aramazd**”), 2006, I, p. 105-134, Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P., 2009, **The Archaeology and Geography of Ancient Transcaucasian Societies, v. 1: The Foundations of Research and Regional Survey in the Tsaghkahovit Plain, Armenia** // «**Oriental Institute Publications**» 134, Chicago, 2009.

² For theory cf. Kramer C. 1977, **Pots and Peoples** // «**Bibliotheca Mesopotamica**», 7, Malibu, 1977, p. 91-112.

³ **Мартиросян А. А.** Раскопки в Головино // «Археологические раскопки в Армении», т. 4, Ереван, 1954, с. 91, **Есаян С. А., Погребова М. Н.**, Скифские памятники Закавказья, М., 1985.

⁴ Among the sites discussed in this article are Karmir Blur (Пиотровский Б. Б. Кармир Блур I // «Археологические памятники Армении» N 1, Ереван, 1950, Его же Кармир Блур II // «Археологические памятники Армении», № 2, Ереван, 1951, *его же*: Кармир Блур III // «Археологические памятники Армении», № 5, Ереван, 1955, **Сорокин В. С.**, Следы древнейшего поселения у Кармир Блура // «Советская археология», 1958, № 2, с. 150-162, **Мартиросян А. А.**, Город Тейшебаани), Dvin (**Кушнарера К.**, Древнейшие памятники Двина, Ереван, 1977), Metsamor (**Խանգաշյան Է., Միրզայան Վ., Պարապյան Է.**, Մեծամոր, Երևան, 1973), Oshakan (**Есаян С., Калантарян А.**, Ошакан I // «Археологические раскопки в Армении», № 18, Ереван 1988), Shirakavan (**Թորոսյան Ռ., Խնկիկյան Օ., Պետրոսյան Լ.**, Հին Շիրակավան, Երևան 2002); Karmir Verd (**Есаян С. А.**, Ереван (археологический очерк), Ереван, 1969), Horom (**Badaljan R. S., Kohl Ph. L., Stronach D., Tonikian A.**, Preliminary Report on the 1993 Excavations at Horom, Armenia // “Iran” 32, London, 1994, p. 1-29), Golovino (**Мартиросян А. А.**, Раскопки в Головино), Astghi Blur (**Есаян С. А.**, Древняя культура племен Северо-восточной Армении, Ереван, 1976), Karchaghbyur (**Engibaryan N.**, in: **Biscione R.**,

derive only from some settlements. Among them especially noteworthy are those central sites of Ararat valley (Dvin, Metsamor, Aygevan, Shamiram, Artashat, Karmir Blur) which during the first quarter of the 8th century BC underwent the military attack of the Urartians accompanied by burning or abandoning of these sites¹. In any case, the existing data enable us to gain a common picture on developments of the period.

The methodology used by us can be defined as interdisciplinary. Particularly, we shall try to use both archaeological and historical reconstructions, with the help of scientific analyses realized towards pottery.

And at the end of this introduction we would like to speak about chronological frameworks of this investigation. On the whole we deal with Iron Age Armenia, to be divided into Late-Bronze-Early Iron transitional, Early Iron and Middle Iron Ages in terms of periodization, to be united in Lchashen-Metsamor horizon. In absolute terms we deal with the period of ca. 1200-600 BC².

Cultural Developments in Armenia during pre-Urartian and Urartian Times.

On the border of the XVI-XV centuries BC (transition phase between Middle and Late Bronze Ages = Late Bronze I) occurred the formation and expansion of Lchashen-Metsamor culture, which was accompanied by a ‘demographic explosion’. Unlike the previous period, a sedentary mode of life prevailed in the whole region. In the Late Bronze II (second half of the XV to the mid of the XIII centuries BC) the southern Caucasian region was entirely dominated by Lchashen-Metsamor culture. At the transition period between the Late Bronze and the Early Iron (mid of the 12th century

Hmayakyan S., Parmegiani N., op.cit., 417 ff.); Artashavan (**Ավետիսյան Պ., Ենգիբարյան Ն., Սարգսյան Գ.**, Հայաստանի նորայայտ հնագիտական հուշարձանները (Արտաշատի դամբարանադաշտ) // «Հանդես ամսօրեայ», 1998, թիվ 1/12, էջ 193-248), Kuchak (**Պետրոսյան Լ.**, Նախնադարյան հուշարձաններ Քուչակում // Հնագիտական աշխատանքներ Հայաստանի նորակառույցներում I, Երևան, 1992), Talin (**Ավետիսյան Հ., Ավետիսյան Պ.**, նշվ. աշխ.), Getap (**Melkonyan H., Karapetyan I., Yengibaryan N.**, The Excavations of the Newly Found Urartian Fortress in Getap // “Aramazd” V/2, 2010, p. 90-98). For location of these sites cf. maps in **Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P. S.**, Bronze and Early Iron Age Archaeological Sites in Armenia: I. Mt. Aragats and its Surrounding Region // “British Archaeological Report (then - BAR), International Series” 1697, Oxford, 2007; **Bobokhyan A.**, Kommunikation und Austausch im Hochland zwischen Kaukasus und Taurus, ca. 2500-1500 v. Chr. // “BAR, International Series” 1853, Oxford, 2008, **Smith A.T., Badalyan R.S., Avetisyan P.**, op. cit., Odzaberd (**Բաղայան Մ., Միքայելյան Ա., Կյուրեղյան Հ., Իսկրա Մ., Հովսեփյան Ռ., Նահապետյան Ս., Եղիազարյան Ա.**, Օձաբերդի 2014-2016 թթ. պեղումների նախնական արդյունքները // «Մեծամորյան ընթերցումներ» I, Երևան, 2017, էջ 205-246).

¹ **Տիրացյան Գ., Արեշյան Գ.**, նշվ. աշխ., էջ 71-72. The Urartians destroyed also the Late Bronze-Early Iron Age settlement in the place of later Argishtikhinili (**Мартirosян А. А.**, Город Аргиштихинили, с. 69). Another interpretation of the destruction of the LB-EI settlement of Dvin in: **Փիլիպոսյան Ա.**, Դվինի ուշբրոնզեդարյան-վաղերկաթեդարյան բնակավայրի կործանման ժամանակի և պատճառների մասին // «Խոսքով Կոտակից՝ մինչև Կարո Ղաֆաղարյան», հանրապետական գիտական նստաշրջան, զեկուցումների հիմնադրույթներ, Երևան 2017, էջ 32-33.

² Towards chronology cf. **Ավետիսյան Պ., Բաղայան Ռ., Հմայակյան Ս., Փիլիպոսյան Ա.**, Հայաստանի բրոնզ-երկաթի դարերի պարբերացման և ժամանակագրման հարցերի շուրջ (Հ. Մարտիրոսյանի սանդղակն արդի հնագիտական խնդիրների համատեքստում // «ՀՀ-ում 1993-1995 թթ. հնագիտական հետազոտությունների արդյունքներին նվիրված X գիտական նստաշրջան» (զեկուցումների թեզիսներ), Երևան 1996, էջ 8-12, **Ավետիսյան Հ., Բոբոխյան Ա.**, Ուրարտուի հնագիտություն, Երևան, 2010, **Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P.**, op. cit.

BC) one can discern decrease of population. However, from the XI century BC the increase in population developments was again evident. This demographic growth was accompanied everywhere by the appearance of urban settlements such as Metsamor, Dvin, Shamiram. One can put forth the hypothesis that the decrease in population mentioned above in certain regions is primarily the result of migration (rural exodus) and concentration in the urban centres. The process of militarization was manifested in the development of metallurgy and the increasing number of ‘warrior burials’. The Lchashen-Metsamor culture in its every sub-region was characterized by central settlements – generally cyclopean fortresses with a citadel, outer city and their satellites. The borders of these territories were defended by fortified advance posts. Great cemeteries surrounded these fortresses stretching over several kilometers¹. The materials from the tombs (barrows or flat graves with cromlechs and underground /pit and cist/ or surface constructions covered with plates) contained materials stressing on existence of different estates (nobleman, priests, artisans, common population)². The culture was characterized by black-grey-brown burnished pottery, very advanced bronze and iron metallurgy and connections in eastern Mediterranean (Late Bronze Age) and northwestern Iranian (Early Iron Age) directions. From the beginning of the 8th century BC the invasion by the Urartian kings of the lands north to the Araxes river modified the process of development of Lchashen-Metsamor society entering a qualitatively new stage of its history. The Lchashen-Metsamor culture was involved in a sphere of complex society. Since this period bipolar developments have been discernable in Armenia reflected in coexistence of local and Urartian cultural phenomena³.

Going back to the history of investigation of Urartian materials in Armenia it should be noted that after excavations of administrative and economic centres of the Urartian kingdom within the territory of up to date Armenia (Teishebaini, Erebuni, Argistikhinili), the archaeological materials were gathered under the common name ‘Urartian culture’. In the same time, with accumulation of new data, it became evident that among the excavated materials from the VII and the VI centuries BC there were such contexts and artifacts, which were totally different from that of known from the classic Urartian centers. To bring clearness to this question, the Armenian archaeologist H. Martirosyan in the 50-60^s of the last century was the first to introduce new conventional terms, such as ‘local culture of Armenia’ or ‘the culture of broad spreading of iron’, to define those local, non-Urartian cultural elements⁴. This approach first seemed to be acceptable, reflecting the cultural situation formed during the Urartian expansion in northern direction. However, in the last three decades, a great deal of new complexes manifesting the process of interbreeding or adaptation of

¹ Սարգսյան Գ., Գևորգի Ա., Հակոբյան Ա., Մյունխի արևելյան սահմանների պաշտպանական համակարգի ձևավորումը մ.թ.ա. II-I հազ., // «Վեմ», 2014, թիվ 1, էջ 152-170:

² Ավետիսյան Պ., Հայկական լեռնաշխարհը մ.թ.ա. XXIV-IX դդ. (սոցիալ-մշակութային ձևափոխումների դինամիկան ըստ հնագիտական տվյալների), պ. գ. դ. ... աստ. հայցման գիտական գեկուցում, Երևան, 2014, էջ 65-66:

³ Мартirosян А. А., Армения в эпоху бронзы и раннего железа, Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P. S., op. cit., Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P., op. cit.

⁴ Мартirosян А. А., Раскопки в Головино, *ibid.*: Раскопки в Кировакане и некоторые памятники раннеармянского периода // «Известия общественных наук», 1956 № 2, с. 61-84.

Urartian and local cultures have been unearthed¹. It means that the archaeologists came across with materials which were impossible to attribute to one of the mentioned cultural groups. Now it is clear that in the early stages of the military and political expansion of the state Urartu (it means during the 9th and the 8th centuries BC) these two cultural entities existed parallelly in comparatively unmixed conditions. However, since the first half of the VII century BC, i.e. with the reign of the Urartian king Rusa II, one can see a new situation which was characterized by parallel appearance of new cultural traits to be formed through the interbreeding of local and imported elements. With regard to this all, today, Armenian archaeologists differentiate between three cultural groups in Armenia during the existence of the Urartian state: 1. ‘Lchashen-Metsamor’ (or ‘Etiuni’) culture – representing the local, i.e. the native element; 2. Urartian (‘Bianili’ or ‘Van-Tosp’) culture – representing the introduced élite element from the original regions of the Urartians around Van Lake; and 3. ‘Local Urartian’ culture – to be formed as a result of symbiosis of the mentioned two elements. In this connection, we should not forget also the active participation of Cimerian and Scythian groups in creating of cultural mosaic of the later period of the history of Urartu². This model could be useful also for interpretation of cultural developments in other regions which underwent Urartian expansion. The main goal of this work is to present the process of coexistence of these groups.

Pottery Sequence of the 2nd – Mid 1st Millennium BC Armenia. The cultural developments described above are reflected first of all in pottery traditions. To understand them we need to go into some circumstances of the Armenian 2nd-1st millennium BC pottery sequence. Particularly, in Armenia, since the beginning of the Middle Bronze Age and up to the end of the Middle Iron Age, i.e. from the end of the 3rd millennium BC until the Urartian invasion, it was possible to distinguish between six archaeological groups, which were, as a rule, defined in the special literature as ‘cultures’. They were as follows: 1. Early Kurgan; 2. Trialeti - Vanadsor; 3. Sevan - Artsakh; 4. Karmirberd; 5. Karmirvank (the same as Van - Urmia) and 6. Lchashen - Metsamor (or Lchashen-Tsiteligorebi in Georgian literature). The first five of them were defined as Middle Bronze Age groups and the last one – as Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age group. The mentioned groups had systems of features which were different from each other, which is clearly discernable on pottery, though on the ground of their names lies the metallurgical aspect³.

Investigations of morphological, technological and ornamental features of these pottery groups allow us to differentiate on the whole between 15 sequential typological pottery subgroups.

¹ Cf. **Тирацян Г. А.**, Урарту и Армения // II Международный симпозиум по армянскому искусству, Ереван 1978, с. 181-191, *ibid.*: Культура Древней Армении, Ереван, 1988, **Տիրացյան Գ., Արեշյան Գ.**, նշվ. աշխ., **Tiratsyan G. A.**, From Urartu to Armenia, **Եսայն Ս. Ա., Բиягов Л. Н., Амаякян С. Г., Канецян А. Г.**, указ. соч., **Аветисян Г. Г.**, Биайнская керамика из памятников Араратской долины, Ереван 1992, **Ավետիսյան Հ., Ավետիսյան Պ.**, նշվ. աշխ.:

² For different aspects of the question and further literature cf. Avetisyan P., Bobokhyan A., **The Pottery Traditions in Armenia from the Eighth to the Seventh Centuries BC // Bianili-Urartu, Konferenz in München 2007, Roaf M. (Hrsg.), München, 2010, p. 10-22.**

³ In details cf. **Ավետիսյան Պ.**, Հայաստանի միջին բրոնզի ժամանակագրումը և փուլաբաժանումը, պ. գ. թ. ատենախոսություն, Երևան, 2003, **Ավետիսյան Հ., Բոբոկյան Ա.**, Ուրարտուի հնագիտություն, **Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P.**, op. cit. p. 33-93.

The typological contents of the complexes related to Lchashen-Metsamor culture is possible to subdivide into six sub-periods, on the ground of inventory selection, constructional features and stratigraphical comparisons of multi-layer sites in Armenia: a. Lchashen-Metsamor I is represented by the complexes of the Late Bronze Age with the pottery repeating Karmirberd, Karmirvank, Trialeti-Vanadsor III, Sevan-Artsakh II typological groups. Furthermore, there are samples of pottery, which are absent in the newly mentioned Middle Bronze Age complexes, as well as in the tombs, which are attributed to the early stages of the Late Bronze Age; b. Lchashen-Metsamor II coincides with developed stage of the Late Bronze Age (such complexes as Lchashen and Artik catacombs of the ceramic groups 1 and 2); c. Lchashen-Metsamor III is characterized by materials from complexes related to the end of the Late Bronze Age.

The materials of the Early Iron Age of Lchashen-Metsamor group can be divided into three main typological subgroups: d. Lchashen-Metsamor IV - is defined by the materials from complexes related to the transitional period of Late Bronze Age – Early Iron Age; e. Lchashen-Metsamor V is characterized by typological contents of pre-Urartian complexes with ‘burnt layers’ and complexes corresponding to them (Early Iron Age); f. Lchashen-Metsamor VI is represented by typological contents with ‘local features’ observed in monuments of Urartian period (Middle Iron Age or ‘period of wide spread of iron’, according to Armenian terminology).

The analysis shows that the complexes of the mentioned different periods and sub-periods are represented either by one of these 15 typological groups (that is ‘non-mixed complexes’) or by coexistence of samples of different typological groups (i.e. ‘mixed complexes’). Moreover, in the frames of one ‘mixed complex’ (tomb or layer) one may distinguish some cases of coexistence of different typological groups. So in the same complex simultaneously can appear: 1. Pottery samples, which are characteristic to two and more typological groups (coexistence of artifacts) or 2. Examples, which have a feature of two or more typological groups (parallelism of ‘foreign’ features).

The coexistence of two and more typological groups proves either their synchronism or the immediate sequence. It is obvious that in the context of synchronism and diachronism of the ‘mixed complexes’ of the ‘transitional period’ and its peculiarities we can speak only after understanding all this. Very important in this context is the category of transitional period. Independent on that what kind of ideas lay under the conception ‘transitional period’ – argumentations of gradual, hereditary or evolutionary developments, etc. – it is obvious that it embodies an intermediate situation between the groups of archaeological complexes of the same region, that from the one side replace each other, and from the other one are completely different from each other. Under ‘transitional period’ we perceive archaeological realities that reflect the degradation of the system of peculiarities typical for old groups (namely break of the elements of the former system, cultural eclecticism) and the coming out of new elements and parameters, the great part of which find their place in the system of the forthcoming groups¹.

¹ For theoretical aspects cf. **Ավետիսյան Պ.**, Հայաստանի միջին բրոնզի ժամանակագրումը և փուլաբաժանումը.

decorated with pressed furrows; spouted vessels with flat bases; churns with flat bases, decorated with incised horizontal lines; glazed pottery (plates and flasks); boot shaped vessels; kernoi; goblets and cups¹.

Lchashen-Metsamor VI (early VIII-end of the VII centuries BC): During the 8th century BC with Urartian invasion into up to date Armenia we can trace two main pottery groups – Lchashen-Metsamor V and Urartian, which coexist isolated from each other. It means that in the layers or graves, the examples of traditional Urartian and traditional local pottery are coming out together. In the complexes of later dating (i.e. since Rusa II, in Karmir Blur and contemporary sites) we meet Urartian and local pottery examples, as well as new types of pottery which are the result of crossing of the mentioned two traditions. Two settlements are especially important for defining the Lchashen-Metsamor VI horizon – Metsamor and Karmir Blur. Both the post-destruction (upper ‘kiln’) layer at Metsamor and the lower town at Karmir Blur contained a wide range of pre-Urartian ceramics. Yet the assemblages from the two sites are distinct. The construction of Karmir Blur by Rusa II allows us to associate the Lchashen-Metsamor VI complexes of the lower town with the Urartian reconstruction period of the 7th century BC (it means from Rusa II till the end of Urartu). The local wares at Metsamor appear to be earlier than those of Karmir Blur, strongly suggesting that its Lchashen-Metsamor materials should be assigned to the Urartian imperial era of the VIII century BC.

Typical forms of Lchashen-Metsamor VI pottery assemblage are one-handed jars of flat or convex bases, with knob handles or elbow-shaped projections, decorated with relief or polished ornaments; jugs with a single ‘elbow’-shaped handle and pear shaped profile; jars with flat bases, elbow and loop handles; single-handed cups with flat bases, handles decorated with pressed furrows; pots with wide, flat bases, decorated with oblique lines; zoomorphic vessels decorated with polished ornaments; deep bowls with lug-handles; phiales; tea-pots; double vessels².

The symbiosis of Urartian and local traditions especially during the VII-VI centuries BC is well demonstrated in some settlements and burial complexes, situated between the Ararat valley, the slopes of Aragats mountain and lake Sevan. The most important among them is Karmir Blur - both the citadel and especially the lower town. From the citadel of Karmir Blur itself we have a big quantity of black burnished local pottery (pots, jugs, open vessels) with ornamentations (such as triangles, fir-tree, burnished, grooved wavy lines) typical of Lchashen-Metsamor pottery. Among them jugs with ‘elbow’-shaped handles and churns are especially noteworthy³.

Examples of pottery which bear both local and Urartian traits are fixed in many burial complexes, among which in the Tomb 25 of Oshakan. This complex is represented merely by the examples of Urartian red pottery. Two oinachoi from this tomb are different from the classic prototypes with their rounded in the section handles and ornamentation. Jugs are ornamented with horizontal lines and fir-tree ornament

¹ Ավետիսյան Հ., Բորոխյան Ա., Ուրարտուի հնագիտություն, Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P., op. cit., p. 87-91.

² Cf. Ավետիսյան Հ., Բորոխյան Ա., Ուրարտուի հնագիտություն, Smith A. T., Badalyan R.S., Avetisyan P., op. cit., p. 91-92. For these pottery groups cf. also Есаян С. А., Бяггов Л. Н., Амаякян С. Г., Канеян А. Г., указ. соч., Аветисян Г. Г. Бийнская керамика...

³ Мартиросян А. А., Раскопки в Головино, с. 63-65, 45, 87-89.

typical for the local pottery. One example repeating the shapes of these vessels is known from the Tomb 23 of Karchaghbyur. Urartian in their shape, one-handed but black and gray-brown jugs, have been found in Oshakan Tomb 69 and Karchaghbyur Tomb 27. In the Tomb 59 of Oshakan, with red jugs without handles, as well as black burnished examples are present, which with their technological peculiarities do not differ from the examples of Early Iron Age pottery of Armenia. Here, together with red pottery, a black open vessel, with a sign of the tradesman was found. This vessel was made clearly in an Urartian workshop, however with its composition and colour it repeats the Early Iron Age examples of the region. The materials from Artashavan necropolis are also represented by interbreeding materials. In particular, the pottery of the Tombs 3 and 6 has a repertoire typical to pre-Urartian sites of Armenia. So the vessels with trumpet like rim, ornamented with ear and linear ornaments, in some cases with false handle on the shoulder, the amphora-like two handled vessels, as well as vessels ornamented with burnished and grooved wavy lines have a lot of parallels in the burnt layers of Dvin and Metsamor, in many Early Iron Age tombs, dating back to the borderline of the 9th to the 8th centuries BC and later.

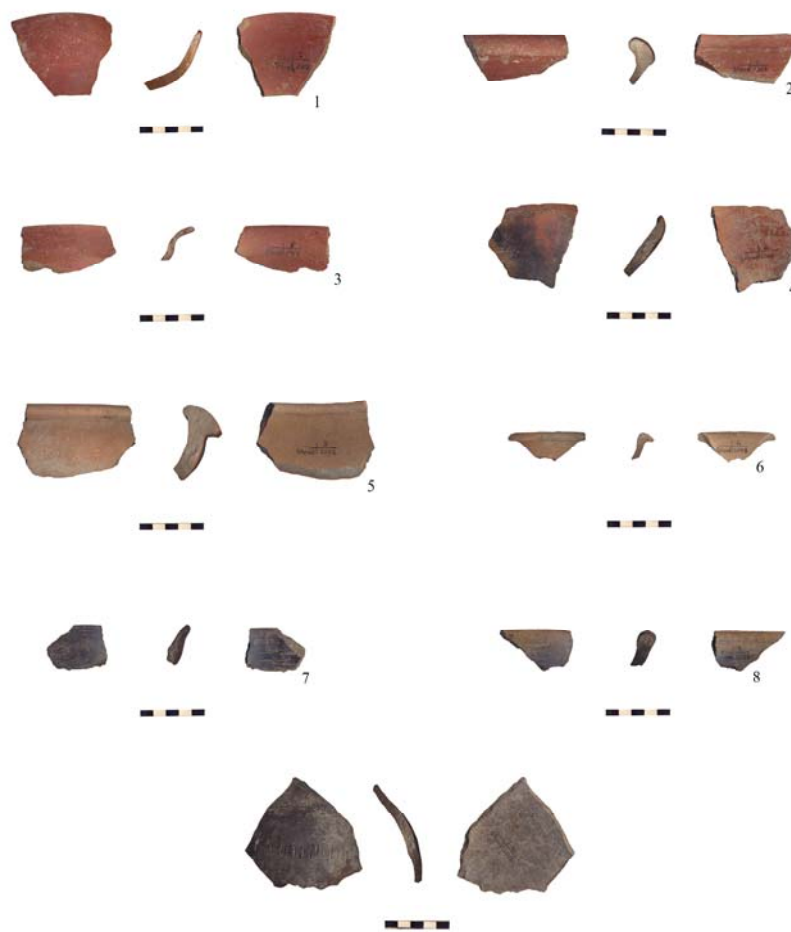


Fig. 1. Lchashen Metsamor VI pottery from Getap (after H. Avetisyan, courtesy of H. Melkonyan)

One of the peculiarities of the tombs of Artashavan and other mentioned sites is that in these complexes we have examples repeating the shapes of Urartian vessels. This is especially to be seen on a one handled black beaker with matt surface from the Artashavan Tomb 3. With its technical and technological peculiarities (we mean the clay composition, outer surface treatment, colour, as well as baking grade) this vessel is the bearer of Iron Age traditions, however morphologically (we mean the stretched rim and the handle beginning under the rim) it repeats the shapes of the Urartian one-handed red beakers. The gray-black surfaced, thick walled and handmade vessel from the Tomb 6 also repeats the shapes of classic Urartian pottery.

Synthesis of Urartian and local traditions are fixed in the complex of ceramics from Keren and Kapan cemeteries. Among such parallels are pithoi with wide relief cinctures (tomb 106 of Keren), pots and jugs with relief transition from the neck to the body (tombs 31, 34, 64 of Keren, 6/6 of Kapan), vessels with ox-shaped (tomb 106 of Keren), arc-shaped (tomb 31, 64 of Keren), fan-shape (tomb 97 of Keren) handles. At the same time, the bottom of the vessels from Kapan and Keren is wide and flat, which is inherent for the pottery of the beginning of the I millennium BC¹. In a number of burials (tomb 8/4 of Kapan), miniature black jugs with polished ornament, characteristic to the end of the II and the beginning of the I millennia BC, coexist with red pottery inherent to the VII century BC.

It is also worth mentioning, that in many complexes we meet such examples of pottery, which in their technical and technological parameters and outer colour treatment are connected to the pottery known from pre-Urartian sites of the region, but with their ornamentation and the handle shapes differ from the above mentioned ones, and their prototypes are not known also in Urartian pottery-making tradition. We mean above all the one-handed jugs, which have rounded handles in their section and the handles are ornamented with stepped deep grooves. This variant of one-handed vessels was very popular at the beginning of the 8th century BC. It is worth mentioning, that similar vessels are known also from the late Urartian layers and tombs, among them from Karmir Blur. At the same time, open protuberant vessels with false handle and circular bottom become very popular and are known from such sites as Golovino, Astghi Blur, Artashavan, etc.

As to the dating of the complexes with interbreeding pottery traditions, it should be remembered, that in the absolute majority of these tombs, as a rule, also Skythian arrow-heads are present². Moreover, the Urartian and local artifacts typical to the mentioned complexes come out together in the Urartian layers of Karmir Blur. This all enables us to date back such complexes not earlier than to the VII century BC, which speaks in its turn about the formation of a new cultural situation in the region.

So, due to comparison of the main peculiarities of the pottery, it is possible to trace the process of synthesis of the local Iron Age and imported/imitated from the Van region cultural elements. In the early stages of the military and political expansion (it means the 9-8th centuries BC) of the state of Urartu these two cultural

¹ **Գևորգի Ա.**, Կերենը քաղաքակրթությունների խաչմերուկում // «ՀՀ», 2014, թիվ 2, էջ 152-161:

² For the Scythian cultural context in Armenia cf. in circumstances **Есаян С. А., Погребова М. Н.**, указ. соч., **Курочкин Г. Н.**, Хронология переднеазиатских походов скифов по письменным и археологическим данным // «Российская археология» 1994, № 1, с. 117-122.

entities existed parallel in comparatively ‘sterile’, i.e. unmixed conditions. On the pottery examples typical to both local and imported cultural groups, coming out together in the same context in settlement layers and tombs, it is not possible to discern serious morphological or technological changes. However, since the first half of the 7th century BC, i. e. with the reign of the Urartian king Rusa II, one can see a new situation. In addition to the picture mentioned above, the fact of parallel appearance of new examples of pottery to be formed through the interbreeding of local and imported elements is evident.

With regard to these all, the pottery of Armenia from the 9/8th to the 6/5th centuries BC is possible to divide into three main groups, expressed in the following conventional terms: 1. Typological group of local black-burnished Iron Age pottery (= ‘Lchashen-Metsamor’ or ‘Etiuni’ pottery); 2. Typological group of imported from the south (region of Van) elite red-polished Urartian pottery (= ‘Van/Tosp’ or ‘Biainili’ pottery); 3. Typological group of symbiosed pottery, i. e. examples on which are to discern peculiarities typical to the both above mentioned pottery groups (= ‘local Urartian’ pottery).

Technological Aspects of Pottery-Making. For understanding the pottery development and adaptation processes in Iron Age Armenia, the consideration of technological peculiarities of pottery traditions is also of importance, which can add our knowledge on interpretation of social processes.

In this respect, our purpose is to trace **technological peculiarities** of Urartian and Lchashen-Metsamor pottery-making traditions. Our investigations are based on materials from Aramus, Erebuni and Getap (**Fig. 1**) with the stress on technological process of production in some

1	Clay + sand
2	Clay + sand + fire-clay
3	Clay + sand + other rocks
4	Clay + sand + other rocks + fire-clay
5	Clay + sand + other rocks + fire-clay + limestone
6	Clay + sand + other rocks + straw

Fig. 2. Technical recipes of clay mass preparation process of Lchashen-Metsamor V-VI and Urartian pottery (after K. Navasardyan)

levels, among which are - the choice of initial raw material, preparing of clay mass, permeability to water, provision with hardness, i.e. baking. We have investigated 40 Urartian bright red, rose and brick coloured sherds and 32 Lchashen-Metsamor black, grey-brown, polished and matt sherds of vessels of various functional significance. The investigations have been made by means of microscopic (MBS-9), chemical and spectral analyses.

The initial raw material of the pottery-making is the natural clay with various percentage of sand and iron. These are those important factors by which is conditioned the grade of plasticity and fusibility of clays and which were surely considered by potters during the pottery making process.

To define the percentage of sand inclusions (i.e. the plasticity) through microscope, according to the method elaborated by E. Volkova¹, in the fresh section of

¹ **Волкова Е. В.**, Гончарство фатьяновских племен, М., 1996, с. 33.

the sherd compositions of the rude natural inclusions, their quantitative contents, the grade of polishing, the colour, as well as the presence of limestone and obsidian were identified. It turned out that the natural clays, with different quantitative contents and correlations were used with mixtures of sand, obsidian and sand as well as of limestone. As the results of investigations demonstrate, for preparation of Urartian vessels from the mentioned sites mainly very sandy clays (28 sherds: it means that in the fresh section of the sherd a great quantity of very small, 0.1mm in size, corns of natural sand is present) and middle sandy clays (12 sherds: in which small and big corns are present, the quantity of which fluctuates between 15-20%) were used.

For preparation of local Lchashen-Metsamor pottery middle sandy (24 sherds) and also very sandy (8 sherds) clays are mainly typical. The iron percentage of clays is defined by means of chemical analyses. According to the results of our analyses, for preparation of both Urartian and Lchashen-Metsamor pottery, fusible clays with high percentage of iron (6-9%) and seldom clays with comparatively less percentage of iron (4-6%) were in use.

Also important is to understand the process of **preparation of clay masses**. The clay mass is a plastic material which includes natural clay and special additional mixtures. The differences in preparation of clay masses has been determined through the microscope¹, which enabled us to define some technical sketches (recipes) of clay mass preparation process, which are demonstrated on **Fig. 2**.

It is noteworthy that clay masses of Urartian vessels are represented mainly by variants 1, 2, seldom 4 and only one sherd (from Getap) by variant 6. The clay masses of Lchashen-Metsamor pottery are represented by all of the above mentioned variants, except for variant 1. The clay masses differ from each other also by quantitative contents of specially added mixtures. For example, in one case the whole quantity of the mixtures makes up 25-30%, in another case it does not surpass 15-20%. Also in correlation of mixtures differences are present. So, in the recipe sand + other rocks this relation is in one case 2:1 in another case 3:1, which means that in the first case with two parts of sand one part of other rocks was mixed, while in the second case - to three parts of sand one part of other rocks was mixed. In the recipes with fire-clay the quantity of fire-clay fluctuates in the frames of 2-5%. Similar differences are discernable also in other recipes. So, one can see definite differences in sizes of corns of mixtures (0.5-1mm) and (1-1.5mm), which is connected as a rule with forms and sizes of vessels.

From comparisons of preliminary results it is clear, that the clay masses used for preparation of Urartian vessels are characterized by more homogenous, static (standard) sketches. They are represented mainly by sand and sand + fire-clay mixtures, seldom by sand + other rocks + fire-clay and only one example (from Getap) is characterised by the presence of straw. According to compositions of artificial mixtures, the Lchashen-Metsamor vessels are more various and are represented by almost all mentioned variants: however, one can see also some reservation towards the recipes 4 and 5 (**Fig. 3**).

The pottery colour, hardness, permeability to water is conditioned by the whole process (atmosphere, temperature and duration in high temperature) of **baking**. For bright red, cherry, rose and yellowish Urartian vessels both long and comparably short

¹ For the theory cf. **Бобринский А. А.**, Гончарство Восточной Европы, М., 1978.

baking processes in oxidizing atmosphere are reconstructed. For Lchashen-Metsamor black and grey-brown vessels a process of long duration baking in reducing and half-reducing atmosphere is reconstructed¹. The temperature of actual baking of vessels is determined by water absorption method². The essence of this method is that the sherd undergoing the thermal influence for the second time keeps its exponent of water absorption till the temperature of the initial baking, after which, as a rule, the exponent of water absorption falls down and the temperature, above which the changes of water absorption begin, is considered as the real baking temperature of the sherd.

Site	Characterizing traits of the sherd	Variants of clay masses						
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	On the whole
Erebuni	Uartian	6		9		3		18
	Lchashen-Metsamor		4	2	5	3	2	16
Aramus	Uartian	5		11		1		17
	Lchashen-Metsamor		2	1	3	4	1	11
Getap	Uartian	1		2		1	1	5
	Lchashen-Metsamor		2	1	1		1	5

Fig. 3. Comparative data of clay masses of Lchashen-Metsamor V-VI and Uartian pottery (after K. Navasardyan)

For our investigations such sherds have been chosen which are free from secondary thermal influence (hearth, conflagration), hence they can not result definitive deviations. The exponents of water absorption are different for Uartian and Lchashen-Metsamor vessels of various functions and on the whole they fluctuate in the frames between 6-12%. Especially low (6-9%) water absorption have the slipped vessels. It is noteworthy that for getting bright red or cherry slips of Uartian vessels the potters used special clays with iron inclusions, in which, according to the results of spectral analyses, the contents of iron fluctuate between 12-15%. Such clays are known in the vicinity of Meghradsor and Geghadir villages in Kotayk region.

The analysis of curves of water absorption enables to determine the temperatures of the investigated sherds, which fluctuate in the frames between 800-900⁰C with some deviations to reduction till 700⁰C. It is noteworthy that high baking temperatures are connected with Uartian vessels.

So, on the ground of technological analyses of Uartian and Lchashen-Metsamor pottery we can conclude that 1. The Lchashen-Metsamor V-VI pottery has traditional technological features deriving from the mid 2nd millennium BC; 2. The Uartian pottery is distinguished mainly by innovative features; and 3. Since the VII century BC, during the Lchashen-Metsamor VI stage, a new pottery standard appeared bearing the peculiarities of both mentioned features.

¹ 'In reducing atmosphere' means in conditions of restricted infiltration of oxygen.

² Сайко Е. В., История технологии керамического производства Средней Азии VII-XII вв., Душанбе, 1966.

Discussion. The question which arises after presentation of the common context of ceramic traditions of Armenia is how the reconstructed picture fits into the common context of cultural developments. To test this idea we shall try to trace the situation through brief analysis of developments of material culture, habitation principles and burial rites of the investigated period.

If we try to define the Urartian **material culture** beyond the pottery in its pure archaeological sense, we shall meet serious problems. Since the beginning of Urtological studies, in the works of such pioneers as C. Lehmann-Haupt, E. Akurgal, or B. Piotrovskiy, under the term Urartian culture actually the Urartian art and written heritage was perceived. The material culture of the common population was shifted back and still remains to be almost unpublished (the best example seems to be Karmir Blur). However, this is not only because of the subjectivity of excavators. We think there are also objective grounds for such an approach. And from this view point, if we try to present the Urartian common culture, we shall find a lot of parallels with local assemblages such as Lchashen-Metsamor. Such an approach confirms once more that the Urartian culture is essentially an élite culture. In any case we can see that there are a lot of parallels between the local and the Urartian or the mass and the élite material cultures during the VII-VI centuries BC. So, between the materials of Karmir Blur citadel and lower town and sites of local culture it is possible to find essential parallels. New forms of weapons, tools and ornaments appear with Lchashen-Metsamor VI horizon among them iron objects such as spear heads, sickles, knives, bronze objects such as bracelets, belts, horse bits, helmets, bell-shaped pendants, snake head bracelets, necklaces of glass, paste, semi-precious stones, which are typical also for Urartian material culture¹.

In the territory of the Armenian Highland of the investigated period we have several types of **fortress-settlements**. Among them there are pure Urartian fortress-settlements, Lchashen-Metsamor settlements which did not undergo direct Urartian influence, Lchashen-Metsamor central settlements which were destroyed in the time of military campaigns of the Urartian kings and abandoned afterwards (to be presented by exclusively pre-Urartian layers) as well as Lchashen-Metsamor settlements which were destroyed and rebuilt by the Urartian kings (to be presented by both pre-Urartian and Urartian layers).

Many Urartian sites have been excavated and surveyed in Armenia, Iran, and Turkey. During these works mainly citadels and less settlements have been excavated (Tushpa, Anzaf, Toprakkale, Çavuştepe, Ayanis, Erebuni, Teishebaini, Argishtikhinili), as a result of which the Urartian élite culture is known better than the mass culture. The archaeological materials got from the excavations of the mentioned sites enable us to systematize our knowledge about the peculiarities of Urartian architecture (town-planning, monumental, rock-cut and irrigation constructions, building techniques) for which the principles of both mountainous and lowland architectures were typical².

¹ Мартиросян А. А., Раскопки в Головино, с. 85-87, 91, Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P., op. cit., p. 91.

² Cf. Forbes T. B., Urartian Architecture// "BAR, International Series" 170, Oxford, 1983, Հովհաննիսյան Վ., Ուրարտական ճարտարապետություն // «Հայկական ճարտարապետության պատմություն» հ. 1, Երևան 1996, էջ 87-199.

As to Lchashen-Metsamor culture, every geographical sub-region is characterized through evident hierarchy of central and satellite settlements and advance posts. They are situated in expedient defensive systems to each other and are connected with common system of usage of local raw materials and exchange making up one or some social-political entities. As an example of such entities we can remember the sites of Tsaghkahovit plain, northern slopes of mountain Aragats (investigated by Armenian-American expedition), which demonstrate that in this region since the Late Bronze Age the habitation of the main settlements Hnaberd, Tsaghkahovit, Gegharot has taken place around which a system of satellite settlements and cemeteries have appeared. Some of them (Tsaghkahovit, Hnaberd) are of big scales (ca. 5000 graves with 162 groups on the territory of 32km²). The mentioned settlements had little fortresses (so Hnaberd is 1.56 ha), however together with the settlement they take big areas (so Hnaberd is 33.2 ha). Among them were also handicraft and cultic centres such as Gegharot¹.

The symbiosis of local and Urartian settlements is especially well demonstrated by investigations of Armenian-Italian expedition on the southern shores of Lake Sevan region, where the archaeological data are supplemented through written sources. According to these investigations, the building of 28 fortified settlements of that region began in pre-Urartian period and was finished in the time of Urartian expeditions during the 8th century BC. These settlements were concentrated around four units (Arquqiuni, Lueruni, Kamaniu, Tulihu), the central sites of which were Nagharakhan, Mtnadsor, Tsovak and Sangar fortresses. Especially the group Kamaniu with its central site Nagharakhan (15.5 ha) stands close to the idea of a city-state, which was surrounded by five small (0.15 ha) fortresses. The Urartian sources of the 8th century BC mention three types of political units in this region-city-states (^{URU}Tulihu), chiefdoms (¹Arquqiuni, Lueru, Kamaniu), federations (^{KUR}Uduri-Etiuni), which included settlements of the mentioned chiefdoms. Accordingly, two types of settlements are mentioned: 1. URU - settlement and 2. E.GAL - palace, fortress, administrative centre².

As a result of the works of Armenian-Italian expedition it was managed to reconstruct a very probable picture of relationships between the Urartians and the local population. The Urartians controlled Lake Sevan region through central fortresses such as Lchashen or Tsovinar, where they left also inscriptions, graves and features of Urartian material culture. Local population outside of the zones of immediate interest continued in its Lchashen-Metsamor or Etiuni culture with only some Urartian influences. On the whole, it is possible to say, that the pre-Urartian settlement patterns continued also in the Urartian period and could form also the basis of later Transcaucasian civilizations, and in the writer's opinion, of the Urartian kingdom. Actually the Urartian system can be considered the continuation and perfecting of the Caucasian model of social development (i.e. non-urban complex societies characterised by an active function of military leadership with presence of large settlements which does not form tepes and settlement hierarchy³). The most significant fact for this point is the lack of real Urartian cities. The large fortresses in Urartu had evident administrative functions with their storerooms,

¹ Smith A. T., Badalyan R. S., Avetisyan P., op. cit.

² Biscione R., Hmayakyan S., Parmegiani N., op. cit.

³ Массон В. М., Кавказский путь к цивилизации: вопросы социо-культурной интерпретации // «Древние общества Южного Кавказа в эпоху палеометалла (ранние комплексные общества и вопросы трансформации)», СПб., 1997, с. 124-133.

palaces and temples. These fortresses, like those of the pre-Urartian period, had all functions of a city but did not have the presence of a large, concentrated population, like the cities of the Near East. Many Urartian large fortresses were surrounded by lower undefended cities. These agglomerations of populations are more similar to pre-Urartian Caucasian large settlements than to the Near Eastern ones. The most evident fact is that in both cases the settlements are never identified by tepes. In the mountainous area between lakes Sevan, Urmia and Van the most evident signs of the Caucasian model of development are the presence of pre-Urartian fortifications and of burial barrows as well as the absence of tepes, which is a different model of settlement organization. The same situation is around Van, which means that the heartland of the Urartian kingdom was part of the diffusion of the Caucasian model. The Urartian fortresses, therefore, can be considered as the development and the evolution of the pre-Urartian ones. Urartu was clearly secondary state generated by Assyrian military pressure, created out of earlier confederation of chiefdoms. A series of concomitant factors allowed the grafting of the state organization onto the Caucasian model. The result was a peculiar state structure, evidently so well-suited to the area, the people and the traditions that it was also the model for later state organizations¹.

Similar developments can be discerned also in **burial rites**. The burial rites of Lchashen-Metsamor culture are investigated very well. A great quantity of graves have been excavated in enormous cemeteries (Lchashen, Metsamor, Lori Berd, etc.) demonstrating diverse burial practices typical to Late Bronze-Early Iron Age population of Armenia. These are barrows or flat graves, as a rule surrounded by cromlechs, with underground (pit or cist graves) or surface constructions, covered with plates, having dromoi and belonging to different estates of society².

As to the Urartian burials known from such sites as Van, Altıntepe, Alişar, Yerevan, Agarak, Geghovit, etc., with some exceptions, only Urartian élite graves are known. The extramural cemeteries of common population, where the Urartian mass culture would appear, like in Lchashen-Metsamor complexes, are unknown. However, there is also a third type of burials, where graves of local population are accompanied by Urartian materials (e.g. in Oshakan), which belong mainly to the local élite staying under Urartian political and cultural influence. This fact speaks per se for the élite nature of the Urartian culture³. Both the burial constructions (rock-cut tombs, pit graves, cist graves, ossuaries, stone coffins) and burial rites (inhumation, cremation, decarnation) were diverse in Urartu. This variety attests from the one hand that different ethnic groups living in Urartu kept their religious identity, in spite of existence of the Haldi oriented state religion, and from the other hand it demonstrates the conservatism in keeping of burial traditions originating in Lchashen-Metsamor culture.

So the symbiosis of Van-Tosp and Lchashen-Metsamor traditions, as well as the character of the Urartian statehood predetermined the viability of culture in conditions

¹ **Biscione R., Hmayakyan S., Parmegiani N.**, op. cit., p. 364-365.

² For burial rites of Lchashen-Metsamor culture cf. **Թումանյան Գ.**, Հայաստանի ուշ բրոնզեդարյան դամբարանների կառուցվածքը // «ՊԲՀ», 2003, թիվ 3, էջ 166-185.

³ For Urartian burial rites cf. **Öğün B.**, Urartian Burial Customs // « Actes du XXIX^e Congrès International des orientalistes », Paris, 1975, p. 30-34, **Հմայակյան Մ.**, Վանի թագավորության պետական կրոնը, Երևան 1990, **Burney Ch. A.**, Urartian Funerary Customs // “The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East”, Campbell S., Green A. (ed.), Oxbow Monographs 51, Oxford, 1995, p. 205-208.

when the Biaynili kingdom ceased to exist as a single unit. This is especially visible in the sites of peripheral areas of the state: cf. e.g. Aramus, Solak (Kotayk region), Odzaberd (Gegharkunik region), Keren (historical Syunik region)¹. In the same times large urban centers (such as Tushpa, Argishtikhinili, Erebuni) continued to exist in the post-Urartian period².

Summarizing, we should stress that investigations of last years reveal multiple layers within Urartian state and society, which are very well discernable in all spheres of culture (materials, art, cult, architecture, burial rites, etc.). It is clear that the Urartian state consisted of different cultural and ethnic elements, however, the bearers of which especially since the VII century BC shared similar value systems³. Its main peculiarity was the mountainous nature which was totally different from the value systems of the lowland population of Syria and Mesopotamia. In this sense, the Urartian culture was not a distinct phenomenon among the cultural groups of the Armenian Highland but a kind of reflection or perhaps imitation of lowland way of life on the background of one of the local cultures stretching south of Van Lake, i.e. not far from the Syrian-Mesopotamian border. It means also that the Urartian culture was a state culture or the culture of the élite the representatives of which belonged to one of the ethnic groups of the Armenian Highland – the Urartians. However, in the atmosphere of more than two hundred years long (the VIII and the VII centuries BC) coexistence of Urartian and local cultures in different sub-regions of the Armenian Highland, preconditions for their real symbiosis were created.

To understand the Urartian culture would mean to uncover its different sub-elements as well as its horizontal and vertical relations with surrounding cultures. In this respect, it is especially important to consider the role of tradition and innovation in developments of the Armenian Highland of the Urartian period. Some traits unearthed through archaeological investigations demonstrate clearly the border between the new and the old. So, the juxtaposition of dwelling houses of Bronze and Early Iron Ages and that of the Urartian times reveal some links between them. The Urartians constructed towns in new places, however, they used also the previous cyclopean fortresses. As a rule, the Urartian culture of ancient Near-Eastern nature is represented in the fortresses, while in the settlements appears the mass culture to be characterized by more simple traits, a fact which confirms *sensu stricto* the élite nature of the Urartian culture, and the élite culture of this level was in itself an innovation in the Armenian Highland. The usage of smooth-masonry was an important innovation in

¹ Պետրոսյան Ա., Դան Ռ., Վիտտոլո Պ., Մելիքյան Վ., Նահապետյան Ս., Մուրադի Ղ., Կոտայքի հետախուզական ծրագրի 2016 թ. Հիմնական արդյունքները // «Մեծամորյան ընթերցումներ» I, էջ 154, Avetisyan H., Aramus: Archaeological investigations, Aleppo, 2012, Բաղդայան Մ., Միքայելյան Ա., Կյուրեղյան Հ., Իսկրա Մ., Հովսեփյան Ռ., Նահապետյան Ս., Եղիազարյան Ա., նշվ. աշխ., էջ 210-213, Գևորգի Ա., նշվ. աշխ., էջ 151:

² Оганесян К. Л., Крепость Эребуни, Ереван, 1980, с. 89-114, Маргиросян А. А., Аргиштихинили, с. 173-174.

³ The archaeological data on cultural diversity in Urartu since the period of Rusa II find their parallels in common historical developments of that period (Zimansky P. E., *Archaeological Inquiries into Ethno-Linguistic Diversity in Urartu, Greater Anatolia and the Indo-Hittite Language Family*, Seidl U., *Bronzekunst Urartus, Mainz am Rhein, 2004*, p. 193, 207, Grekyan Y., *The Will of Menua and the Gods of Urartu* // “Aramazd”, 2006, I, p. 176; Hmayakyan S., Grekyan E., *Review to: U. Seidl, Bronzekunst Urartus, Mainz am Rhein 2004* // “Aramazd”, 2006, I, p. 255).

the Highland of the Urartian period, which, unlike cyclopean masonry, introduced new perceptions of symmetry. An evident innovation was the usage of temples and palaces in their ancient Near-Eastern perception. The fact of harmony of the rock and the site to be so characteristic for the Urartian culture was typical also in pre-Urartian period, however, the Urartians brought this concept to perfection. In this respect, the Urartian culture shows essential similarities also with the Hittite-Hurrian and the Phrygian cultures. The appearance of rock-cut tombs is also worth mentioning, a phenomenon which was, however, an innovation and was not known in the Highland during the Bronze and Early Iron Ages. As to other peculiarities of burial constructions and rites, many of them were known since the Bronze and Early Iron Ages and continued to be used in the Highland also in the Urartian period, however new ones appeared as well (e.g. pithos burials). As demonstrated above, all these developments are very clearly demonstrable also on pottery materials.

**Հայկ Ավետիսյան, Արսեն Բոբոխյան, Պավել Ավետիսյան, Քնարիկ Նավասարդյան,
Արտակ Գևունի – *Դիտարկումներ Հայաստանի ուրարտական շրջանի
խեցեգործական ավանդույթների շուրջ***

Հոդվածում ներկայացվում են Հայաստանի ուրարտական շրջանի խեցեգործական ավանդույթների զարգացման հիմնական ուղղությունները մ.թ.ա. II-I հազ. հայկական լեռնաշխարհի մշակութային զարգացումների ընդհանուր համատեքստում: Խեցեղենի հիմնական տիպերը դիտարկվում են նախորդ դարաշրջանների ավանդույթների լույսի ներքո: Հոդվածում հիմնավորվում է մ.թ.ա. VIII-VII դդ. խեցեղենի երեք տիպերի առկայության տեսակետը՝ Լճաշեն-մեծամորյան (Էթիունյան), Վանտոսայան (Բիայնական) և այսպես կոչված՝ ուրարտական, որը առաջին երկուսի համադրության արդյունքն է: Այս ավանդույթները գոյություն ունեին ոչ թե մեկուսացած, այլ մշտական փոխազդեցության մեջ, ինչը կանխորոշեց նաև ուրարտական խեցեգործական ավանդույթների հարատևումը Վանի թագավորության կործանումից հետո:

**Гайк Аветисян, Павел Аветисян, Арсен Бобохян, Кнарик Навасардян, Артак Гнуни
– *Наблюдения за традициями керамического производства в Армении урартского периода***

В статье представлены основные вехи развития традиций керамического производства урартского периода в контексте культурного развития Армянского нагорья II-I тыс. до н.э. Основные типы керамики рассматриваются в свете традиций керамического производства предыдущих периодов. В статье обосновывается существование в VIII-VII вв. до н.э. трех основных типов керамики: Лчашен – мецаморской (этиунской), Ван – тоспской (биайнской) и так называемой местной урартской керамики, являющейся продуктом синтеза первых двух типов. При этом отмечается, что данные традиции существовали не обособленно, а в постоянном взаимодействии, что предопределило сохранение урартских традиций керамического производства после падения Ванского царства.

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