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**CAUCASIAN ALBANIA
AND
ALBANIANS**

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The work explores the key issues in the history of political, social, and cultural life of historical Azerbaijan, specifically Albania (3rd–8th centuries BC – 8th century AD), and further aspects of the late Albanian history in the 9th–19th centuries, reconstructing the ethnic and political boundaries of the state, feudal institutions, state power structure, continuity and succession of its rule. It further describes the history of emergence and establishment of Christianity as a state religion, as well as the rise of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, the establishment of canon law, the development of the Albanian historical and literary tradition in the 5th–19th centuries, the formation of the Albanian ethnic community and its role in the ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijani people. The book also explains the ways and methods used for the transformation and de-ethnicization the Albanians, reveals their role in the history of Cilicia in the 11th–14th centuries, and explores the Albanian origins of the Karabakh problem.

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In loving memory of my dearest parents, Jafar-aga and Sara Mammadovs.

PREFACE

The people of Azerbaijan are comprised of three primary ethnocultural layers: Caucasian-speaking (Albanians), Persian-speaking (Medes, Kurds, Talysh, Tats), and Turkic-speaking. The Azerbaijanis and peoples of Dagestan are descendants of the Albanians, heirs of a vast ethnocultural layer and rich Albanian culture manifested in material, spiritual culture stretching back to antiquity, the early and late Middle Ages, and modern times. I am not just referring to the cultural heritage of the 1000-year-old Albanian state but also that of the Albanians of later history, the five Albanian melikdoms and the remainder of Albanians.

Although the Albanian culture and the ethnos were transformed with the adoption of Islam, we are the bearers of the rich culture created as a result of the succession of the religious systems of mankind. In other words, our culture originates in the Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim environment. It is the invaluable wealth and uniqueness of Albanian culture that determines the relevance of such study.

It should be noted that the formation of Albanian studies in Azerbaijan began in 1828 with Abbasgulu Bakikhanov and his work “Gülüstani-İrəm”. In the 1960s and 1970s, in the former Soviet Union, Azerbaijani Albanian studies were reborn with researchers on ancient, early medieval history, archeology, who had been educated in Moscow, St.Petersburg, Tbilisi and knew classical languages, Old Syriac, Old Armenian, Old Middle Persian, Old Georgian, Arabic, and Persian^I. We remember this very well and should not forget. But paradoxically, it was by this time that Caucasian studies had almost disappeared from Soviet historical science, ensuring the unrivaled dominance of Armenian studies, which attempted to depict Albanian studies as its appendage.^{II} At the same time, it should be emphasized that the very Soviet historical science about the Caucasus was held captive by the Armenian historical science,^{III} on which the fates of Azerbaijani Albanologists were literally dependent. We see this in every instance where the thesis papers (works) of Azerbaijani Albanologists were sent for review by the Higher Attestation Commission to Armenian scientists or Armenophiles – specialists on Japan or Eskimos (S.Harutyunyan), or a specialist on the history of Ancient Rus (A.N.Sakharov), who published his review in Armenian in an Armenian newspaper, where works on Christian Albanian studies were accused of pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism.^{IV} It was a true mockery of Albanian studies. How appropriate was it to ask for permission to study our historical past, humiliatingly begging Soviet science for its official recognition? The people of

Azerbaijan have learnt a lesson from the past and the present, and independently achieves its self-affirmation in historical science in general and Albanian studies in particular.

The emergence of sovereign Republic of Azerbaijan, along with the growing potential of Albanian studies, made it possible and necessary to bring the Azerbaijani people back to its origins, to one of its roots, the Albanian past. The works of Azerbaijani Albanologists proved that Albanian studies, in their person, had the chance to return to their rightful heirs and owners. This was vividly demonstrated by Azerbaijani academics when they compiled the historical geography of the peoples of the Caucasus from ancient times to the nineteenth century at the Moscow and Tbilisi conferences in 1983. This was demonstrated in their publications, at international forums^V when literally, inch by inch, every aspect of this richest ethnohistorical and cultural heritage had to be reclaimed: be it the Autocephalous Patriarchal Albanian Church, Albanian statehood, or Albanian historical literature, among other things.

The path of the development of Azerbaijani Albanian studies was very long and challenging, “from thorns to truth”, “from thorns to stars”, in the fight against Armenian scientific aggression, in the struggle against hidden Armenophiles and Persophiles. Albanology, which used to be a stepchild of historical science finally acquired the status of legal citizenship in its homeland, Azerbaijan.

The fact that the first Albanian conference was held in its homeland in 2001 was a significant accomplishment (though it happened too late). This would be impossible without the Azerbaijani people gaining their sovereignty, the creation of an independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

We should honor the Azerbaijani Albanologists who laid the foundation of Albanian studies: Abbasgulu Bakikhanov, Zelik Yampolsky, Jabbar Khalilov, Saleh Mustafaevic Kaziyev, Voroshil Ghukasyan and others. With a deep sense of gratitude, we should note the invaluable contribution to Albanian studies made by Ziya Bunyatov, the titan of Azerbaijani historical science, who, for the first time in the world, drew the attention of the scientific community to the wrongfulness, groundlessness, and falsity of the Armenian scientific historical tradition and concept, as well as its scientific aggressiveness, and he was the first to break this tradition, showing its bias and, therefore, unsteadiness.

I consider it a pleasant duty to pay tribute to those patriots, the chosen sons of the Azerbaijani nation, whose titanic efforts, fiery hearts, selfless love, and dedication to their people, rekindled Azerbaijani Albanian studies. Each of them is an outstanding citizen of their country, and their names must be inscribed on the historical boards. My heartfelt gratitude goes out to each and every one of them!

Farida Mammadova

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^{III} **Новосельцев А.П.** К вопросу о политической границе Армении и Кавказской Албании в античный период / Кавказ и Византия. Ереван, 1979, т.I, с.10-18.
^{IV} S.Narutyunyan, an ethnographer, was an ardent opponent of F.Mammadova’s doctoral dissertation “Political history and historical geography of Caucasian Albania” (Baku, 1986), which was also reviewed by the historian A.N.Sakharov.
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INTRODUCTION

As is known, science has long been dominated by the concept according to which the history of Albania was viewed from the perspective of the history of Armenia, and Albania was considered the eastern province of so-called “Greater Armenia”: the Albanians were ethnically, confessionally, culturally, and politically considered Armenians. So, history has completely denied the independence of the Albanian ethnos, its history, culture, place, and role in the cultural history of humanity.

This work focuses on the key moments in the history of Albania from the third century BC to the eighth century AD inclusive, covering historical geography, political and social system, political history, ideology (religion – Christianity), culture (literature), the formation of the Albanian ethnic community.

And further in the monograph we tried to cover all aspects (to the possible extent) of the history of the Albanian ethnos from the ninth century to the nineteenth century inclusive, highlighting its transformation, de-ethnicization.

A critical issue was to determine the political boundaries of the Albanian state during antiquity and the early Middle Ages, the territory on which the Albanian ethnic community, one of the ancestors of the Azerbaijani people and the peoples of Dagestan, was formed, as well as its political life, ideology – religion (Chapter 2).

Chapter 1, *Sources and Historiography*, deals with the problem of the emergence of the Albanian historical and literary tradition, the source analysis of the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi; it provides the handwritten basis of the “History of the Aghuans” and the textual analysis thereof, explores the chronological system of the source. It considers and supplements the Albanian sources with the works of Albanian authors of the 12th–13th centuries: Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Smbat Sparapet, Hayton of Corycus, Vardan Arelveltsi-Aghuanetsi, Stepanos Orbelian, Esayi Hasan Jalalyan, Makar Barkhudaryants.

Chapter 3 explores the political life of the country, reveals the political reasons for preserving the independence of Albania, the formation of a centralized Albanian state during the reign of the Albanian kings and the great princes who replaced them; shows their foreign and domestic policies; reveals the specifics of the Albanian statehood in comparison with the Armenian and Iberian ones; explores the revived Albanian kingdoms in the 9th–14th centuries, the formation of the Albanian ethnic community, as well as the problem of Albania and Cilicia in the 11th–14th centuries.

A special section is dedicated to the study of the socio-political structure of Albania (Chapter 4). The socio-economic relations in Albania in the late antiquity and early Middle Ages have long remained one of the least studied sections in the history of the Caucasian peoples. Meanwhile, historiography had a considerable number of special works covering this problem in respect of neighboring countries.

Albania was depicted as an economically lagging country compared to Georgia and Armenia. And due to the above, the social structure of Albania was perceived as primitive and was not portrayed at all.

The difficulties inevitable in research were aggravated by the lack of written records in the Albanian language, the absence of Albanian historiography, and the extreme paucity of information in Albanian and Armenian sources. The main source of our information and ideas about the socio-economic history of Albania, “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, has come down to us in translation into the Old Armenian language. The social terms recorded in the source, which are of paramount importance for the subject under study, are of Iranian origin, as in neighboring countries, and are mentioned a few times. The difficulties are also aggravated by the ignorance in the realities of that time and the poor study of the socio-economic history of Albania, which does not allow us to rely on the existing and established scientific ideas on certain issues of the social system of Albania.

Therefore, the study involved investigating each term in “History of the Aghuans” in different contexts, as well as comparing the terms in the texts of all Armenian sources, the modern “History of the Aghuans” and later and earlier sources. Using the necessary comparative material from Armenian sources was also somewhat difficult as the Armenian historians themselves often differ from each other in using different terms. Therefore, it became necessary to trace the use of this or that term by each of the Armenian authors in order to identify its actual meaning.

The chapter on the social structure of Albania was the first experience in the comparative historical study of the formation of feudal relations in Caucasian Albania.

Particular attention is paid to the formation of the Autocephalous Albanian Church, the Albanian Catholicosate in the history of early Christianity, the complex process of its establishment and transformation into the official religion of Albania, the identification of its origins. In addition, an attempt was made to show its relationship and similarity with the general process of development of Christianity and determine Albanian features (Chapter 5). The work traces the history of the Albanian Church up to 1836, before its abolition.

Chapter 5 provides a legal analysis of the Aguen Canons of the fifth century, the oldest record of the Albanian law. The work considers the manuscripts and editions of the Aguen Canons, as well as the literature dedicated to this source: it clarifies the time of creation of the canons and the prerequisites for adopting them and provides a comprehensive analysis of each canon.

Chapter 6, *From Albania to Karabakh*, explores the political and confessional position of the Albanian population of Karabakh-Aran in the 14th–19th centuries as part of the states of historical Azerbaijan; it presents the history of the five melikdoms, describing the ways of their survival as part of the states of Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu, the Safavid Empire, shows the vain attempts and hopes for their liberation with the help of the Russian Empire and the ways (methods) of de-ethnicization of the Albanians.

The work highlights how painful and difficult was the de-ethnicization of the Albanians and the transformation of their historical and cultural heritage.

This chapter explores the role of the Albanians in the ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijani people.

For the first time in science, this chapter considers the location of the Armenian dioceses and Armenian feudal patronymies, and revises the location of the Armenian Highlands, Ararat and the Ayrarat region, which is associated with the attempts of the territorial justification and claims of Armenians to the Azerbaijani lands.

This chapter ends with a study of the Albanian origins of the Karabakh problem.

The study is based on a wide and consistent use of antique, early medieval, and medieval written sources – Albanian, Armenian, Georgian, Middle Persian/Pahlavi, of a remarkably diverse nature: historical, hagiographic, geographical writings, legal documents, acts of oecumenic councils. To some extent, the work also relies on Syriac literature inextricably linked with the early history of Christianity.

As for the literature available on the problems addressed in this monograph (Chapter 1, *Historiography*), we considered it feasible to describe just the key and most important works. Research from other authors is reflected in each chapter according to the question posed.

The monograph is the result of the transition from source analysis to a comprehensive historical study, to filling gaps and recreating the history of early medieval Albania, historical Azerbaijan, as well as the history of the Albanians up to 1836.

The materials of the Albanian realities are presented in a comparative perspective, which allows making comparative conclusions.

The monograph presented to the readers is the result of revision and improvement of two previously published monographs¹, as well as the inclusion of our new research done since 1986.

In summary, the work recreates the history of Albania and the Albanians from the 3rd century BC to the 19th century AD.

CHAPTER 1. SOURCES AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

§ 1. Albanian Sources

Due to the peculiarities of historical destinies, the Albanian written monuments of local origin have been preserved in the Old Armenian language.*

All Albanian sources were originally written in Albanian. These include Albanian church and theological literature: the Bible, hagiography, epistolaries, canonical literature, act materials, chronicles, stories. After the abolition of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church by the Russian tsarist government in 1836 and its subordination to Etchmiadzin Cathedral, the Armenian clergy started publishing Albanian literature in Armenian, having translated it into Armenian and edited with a deeply thought-out Armenian concept. And the Albanian originals were seized and possibly destroyed (this did not happen in 705 by the decree of the caliph, as opposed to what was believed in the literature, but much later). In this way, traces of the centuries-old, rich authentic Albanian literature were hidden (see more about this at the end of this chapter).

The findings made in the 20th century by I.V.Abuladze, the research of A.G.Shanidze and the sensational findings of Z.N.Aleksidze – the discovery of Georgian-Albanian palimpsests – is vivid evidence of the existence of Albanian literature.

Christian written monuments played a key role in the emergence and formation of the Albanian literary tradition. That is, the Albanian literature, like the ancient Caucasian literature, was Christian.

* Also, A.G.Shanidze wrote: “It is believed that the “History of the Aghuans” attributed to Movses Kaghankatvatsi was translated from Albanian into Armenian, much as the historical chronicles “Kartlis Tskhovreba” were translated from Georgian into Armenian under the title “History of Georgia”... There is also evidence that one article has been translated from the Albanian language into Armenian. Specifically, it is the “Story of the holy divine oil”, found by holy fathers in the East in Albanian letters and translated by them into Armenian”. This story is known from the manuscripts of 1669 and 1726. But, as I.V.Abuladze correctly points out, there is no doubt that it dates back to ancient era (Абуладзе И.В. Новые сведения о существовании письменности у кавказских албанцев // Сообщения грузинского филиала Академии наук СССР, т.1. 1940, №4, с.317-319; Шанидзе А.Г. Язык и письмо кавказских албанцев / Вестник отделения общественных наук. Тбилиси, №1, 1960, с.169; Ямпольский З.И. К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании // Изв. АН Аз.ССР. Сер. обществ. наук, 1957, №9, с.149-156; Алиев К. К вопросу об источниках и литературе по истории древней Кавказской Албании / ВИКА. Баку, 1962, с.17; Буниятов З.М. Азербайджан в VII–IX вв. Баку, 1965, с.97; Ворошил Гукасян. Удинские слова в “Истории албан”// Изв. АН Аз.ССР. Сер. лит., языка и искусства, 1968, №1).

From its beginning in the 1st–2nd centuries, Christian literature only became the leading ideological force in the fourth century, when the Roman Empire and the neighboring countries were christianized.²

Before Christianity was adopted and became the state religion in Albania, the country probably had some kind of writing system of its own³; and the language of intertribal communication, Albanian, was widespread throughout the country. The official correspondence with the Sassanids was in Persian. Aramaic (Syriac), the trade language, was in use. But Persian and Aramaic (Syriac) were estate or class languages.⁴

The creation of a local writing system and literature in the Albanian language is associated with the country's Christianization, as well as the emergence of Armenian and Georgian writing systems and literature.

Christianity started to penetrate Albania from Syria* and Palestine. That is why from the very beginning of the spread of Christianity, the languages of worship and church languages in Albania, as in other countries of the Caucasus, were Syriac and Greek. The first theological sources were translated into Albanian from Syriac. The information from Movses Kaghankatvatsi allows us to speak about the ancient ties of Albania with the Syrian regions and with Palestine.**

Although the official adoption of Christianity (in 314) in Albania is associated with the Greek influence (the activities of Gregory the Illuminator in Armenia, Nino, a bishop from Rome who arrived in Albania, in Georgia), nevertheless, the influence of the Grecophile school took place much later.⁵ The Sassanian Persia, reconciling with the Christian Church in the countries of the Caucasus, patronized the Syrian clergy, since they were politically devoted to the Sassanids. However, Greek as a language of worship was prohibited by the Sassanids.⁶ The period of the early spread of Christianity in Albania is associated with the existence of ancient Jewish settlements in Albania, with the Syrophile school (1st–5th centuries). The Syrians, as is known, were great connoisseurs and bearers of Greek science and literature, which they regarded as one of the branches of theology. The Syrians, the Syrophiles, probably translated the ancient Greek writings into the Albanian language not from the original, but from Syriac, as did the Armenian representatives of the Syrophile school.⁷

Later, in the 5th–6th centuries, with the development of the Greco-Hellenic trend in literature, it stemmed, according to researchers,⁸ not from the Greeks, but from the monophysite Syrians. “Of great importance is the fact that the Syriac writing was in

* The fact is that the fundamental documents of Christianity were originally written in the Greek language. In Osroene, a small Hellenistic state with the center of Edessa, in Mesopotamia, where Christianity penetrated in the first centuries and where it first became the official state religion, it was preached in the Syriac language. A large number of Greek Christian monuments have been translated into this language – the Old and New Testaments, as well as liturgical and hagiographic books. Edessa, a proponent of Hellenistic culture, became a nursery of the new Christian ideology in the Syriac language (Пигулевская Н.В. Культура сирийцев в средние века. М., 1979, с.12, 24–25).

** This is evidenced, in the legend of the apostolate of Thaddeus, by the names of the church leaders of Albania of Semitic origin, as well as the presence of inscriptions in the Syriac and Greek languages in the country (Каганкатвацци М. История агван / Пер. с древнеармян.яз. К.Патканова. СПб.: типография Импер. Академии наук, 1861, с.241, 247; Новосельцев А.П. Генезис феодализма в странах Закавказья. М.: Наука, 1980, с.11).

an easy-to-learn alphabet, which was subsequently improved”.⁹ Along with this, there have long been prerequisites for the influence of the culture of Mesopotamia on the countries of the Caucasus. “History of the Aghuans” has preserved traces of the ancient ties of Albania with the Aramaic regions.

The religious and political influence, the assimilation policy of the Sassanids – the desire to propagate Zoroastrianism, as well as the activities of the Syriac-language church, had to be opposed in the country by the Christian church in the local Albanian language, which could defend the cultural and ethnic identity of the Albanians.

The question of writing and literature in the native Albanian language has become an objective historical necessity. Albania was prepared for the creation of its literature by all its living conditions, socio-economic and political. In line with the Armenian tradition, in the early fifth century, the Albanian alphabet was restored and improved*, which the Armenian tradition associates with the name of Mesrop Mashtots. A.G.Perikhanian noted: “The creation of a new writing system that serves this or that language cannot be reduced to just creating letters. This is a large and complex process, including, first of all, distinguishing the phonemes of a given language, and presupposing a subtle knowledge of both the phonetics and the structure of a language. Mashtots knew neither Georgian nor Albanian and Koriun's statement that he, Mashtots, there, on the spot, had collected information about the phonetic composition of these languages, should not be given much importance...”¹⁰

Now it becomes quite obvious that one really should not take seriously the words of Armenian author Koriun of the fifth century about Mesrop Mashtots' inventing Albanian and Georgian, as well as Armenian writing systems, as the discoveries of the famous Africanist, a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences D.A.Olderogge showed that the prototype, the tracing-paper copy of photographic accuracy of the Armenian alphabet was the Ethiopian (Amharic) alphabet that had existed even before the “invention” of Mashtots.

The Ethiopian writing system has survived to this day and is now the writing system of the state language of modern Ethiopia (the Amharic language).¹¹

The latest sensational discovery, the identification of Georgian- Albanian palimpsests by the famous Caucasian scholar Z.N.Aleksidze, showed that in the fourth century, the Albanians had their own local Christian literature: a complete translation of the Bible, a lectionary written in the Albanian writing system in the Albanian language.¹²

With the assistance of Albanian king Aswagan and Albanian patriarch Jerimiah, many young men trained to be teachers were sent to different regions of the country (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 3). Along with translated theological literature, local original literature was created: hagiographic (the lives of Albanian saints) and secular.

The heyday of Albanian writing is considered to be the 5th–7th centuries, when, according to A.G.Shanidze, “the Albanians took an active part in all areas of the political and cultural life of the Caucasus along with the Georgians and Armenians”.¹³

* Armenian author Koriun mentions that Mesrop Mashtots, having come “to the land of the Albanians, renewed their alphabet, contributed to the revival of the scientific knowledge...” (Кориун. Жизнеописание Месропа / Collection des historiens anciens et modernes l'Arménie par. V. Langlois. Paris, 1869, t.II, p.10).

In its initial form, Albanian literature took shape under favorable historical and cultural circumstances. This was the time of an independent Albanian state (4th century – early 8th century) with the royal dynasty of the Albanian Arsacids and the great princes of the country, the Albanian Mihranids, who replaced them, with the Autocephalous Albanian Church. In Armenia, located on the territory of Asia Minor, statehood was abolished during that period, the country was split into two provinces: the Roman/Byzantine (Western – Lesser Armenia) and the Persian province (Eastern – Larger Armenia). In Georgia, which suffered a double vassal dependence on Byzantium and Iran, state power was also abolished in 527.

The development of literature expanded the range of interests, which was reflected in literary genres: hagiographic works, historical chronicles, stories; legal documents included church canons and secular laws. In the 5th–7th centuries, the Hellenophile trend was outlined in literature, which is explained by political reasons. This was a period of strengthening the rule of the Sassanids who tried to break with the policy of religious tolerance and force Zoroastrianism, which, accordingly, led to an increase in Byzantine sentiments and an increase in interest in Hellenic culture. It seems that the Grecophile school was not developed in Albania as deeply and widely as in Georgia and Armenia, the western part of which was under the auspices of Byzantium, and the eastern part, Persian Armenia, was in close proximity to the Byzantine Empire.

The geographical remoteness of Albania, its strategic position, and relative independence were the reasons for the relatively poor development of the Grecophile school here. And still, Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi preserved the data allowing to find traces of the Hellenophile school.*

Hellenists, Hellenophiles expanded the boundaries of literature, introducing new knowledge in philosophy, poetics, grammar, mathematics, and rhetoric.¹⁴ In Albanian literature, as well as in the literature of Georgia and Armenia, we can outline “three branches representing the three successive eras: the missionary era with the complete domination of Syrian education, the philosophical and scholastic era with a predominance of Greek influence, and, finally, the national one due to the emergence of local schools and traditions”¹⁵.

As has been noted, the local Albanian tradition includes the historical narrative sources that have reached us: “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi (*hereinafter* – HA), “The Albanian Chronicle” and “The Life and Martyrdom of Khosrow of Gandzak” by Mkhitar Gosh, “The History” by Kirakos Gandzaketsi, “The History of Syunik” by Stepanos Orbelian, “The History of the Mongols” by Gregory Patmich (Magakiya), “The General History” by Vardan Areveltsi (Eastern) /Aghuanetsi (Albanian),

* This is evident from the Greekisms (“alphabet”, “Aphrodite desires”, “priests of Aphrodite”), as well as from the Albanian author's knowledge of the certain Greek realities – “Olympic Games – Olympiads”, “Olympic people of the Greeks” (*Каганкатвацци*, II, 1, 15, 40, 41), Javanshir's knowledge of the Greek language (*Каганкатвацци*, II, 28), author's knowledge of the history of Rome, Roman emperors (*Каганкатвацци*, II, 15, 28), discovery of Christian relics with a Greek inscription in Albania (*Каганкатвацци*, II, 33), author's knowledge of the Iliad (III, 18), the inclusion of Davtak's acrostic (alphabetical versification) by Kaghankatvatsi in his work. Not only Greeks, but also the Syrians had acrostics as well (Март Н.Я. Классическая эпоха V–VI вв.: Архив АН СССР, ф.800, оп.1, ед.хр. 171, лл.1-17).

“Flower of the Histories of the East” by Hethum the Historian, “A Brief History of the Albanian Land (1702–1722)” by Esayi Hasan Jalalyan, and, finally, “History of the Country of Aghuank”, “The Country of Albania and Its Neighbors”, and “Artsakh” by Makar Barkhudaryants, as well as Albanian legal sources, i.e., church canons (the canons of the Aguen Council of the fifth century and the canons of the Partaw Council of 705, also referred to as the canons of Albanian Catholicos Simeon, as well as the canons of David Alawik), and secular laws – the “Book of law” by Mkhitar Gosh, the “Legal code” by Smbat Sparapet.

The importance of the above-mentioned work of Movses Kaghankatvatsi for the study of the history of the Albanians and Albania in the 1st–10th centuries, as well as for the history of other peoples, cannot be overestimated. “History of the Aghuans” is of extraordinary interest in many aspects: for the socio-economic, political, church-ideological history of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, cultural history, historical geography, ethnogenesis of Azerbaijan, as well as for studying the history of Albanian, Turkic, and many other ethnic groups living in the Caucasus and beyond.

*a) Movses Kaghankatvatsi “History of the Aghuans”.
Copies of manuscripts, editions. Genealogy of copies
and revisions*

Movses Kaghankatvatsi, an outstanding representative of the local Albanian historical and literary tradition, provides the basic information and ideas about the history of Caucasian Albania in the first to tenth centuries in his “History of the Aghuans” (HA), written initially in Albanian and later translated into Old Armenian. The source came to us in the Old Armenian language.¹⁶ It is possible that Albanian literature had been purposefully translated into Armenian since the foundation of the Armenian Church in Etchmiadzin, i.e., since the 15th century, and its foundation was probably laid during the reign of the Cilician Hethumid kings.

The first attempt to publish the HA was made back in the 18th century, when the Albanian Catholicos Nerses sent one copy of the manuscript for publication to the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople (but not to the Etchmiadzin Patriarch – ?). The publication failed, and the manuscript was returned to Etchmiadzin in 1766 at the request of Armenian Etchmiadzin Catholicos Simeon.¹⁷

In 1841, Archbishop J.Shakhatunyants reported that there were two copies of HA in the Etchmiadzin library.¹⁸ He dates one of them to 1279–1311, the second manuscript is undated. In it, the list of Albanian patriarchs continued until 1675, which is considered terminus post quem (the manuscript of the 17th century).

In 1829, J.Shakhatunyants made a copy (Matenadaran, No.2866) of the most ancient Etchmiadzin manuscript [kept at the Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts – Matenadaran (Yerevan), Arm. man. collection No.1531, sheets 231a-377b; further: 1289], which, in turn, was the original source for the St.Petersburg manuscript¹⁹ (now ИВ B 56),²⁰ made by Ivan Nazarov in 1841 in Saint Petersburg.²¹

With a copy of one of the two Etchmiadzin manuscripts, French Armenologist E.Boré translated some parts of the HA and was the first to publish them in 1847/1848.²² In 1851,

M.Brosset, based on the Petersburg manuscript, published extracts from the HA in French.²³

In 1860, two Armenian editions appeared – by N.Emin²⁴ and K.Shahnazarian.²⁵ As stated in the preface, N.Emin made his publication on the basis of two undated manuscripts. A few months later, K.Shahnazarian published in Paris an Old Armenian text based on four manuscripts – two Etchmiadzin, apparently mentioned by J.Shakhatunyants, one Tabriz, and one Constantinople. K.Shahnazarian's edition is prefaced with an introductory article and has notes. In 1861, K.Patkanov, using the Petersburg manuscript, published a Russian translation of the HA.²⁶ K.Patkanov provided his edition with a preface and notes. The foreword is a study in which K.Patkanov tries to identify the sources of the HA and substantiates his opinion about the time of the creation of the source.

Y.A.Manandian's doctorate thesis on Movses Kaghankatvatsi, published in Leipzig in 1897, is based on the early Etchmiadzin manuscript of 1289.²⁷

In 1939, T.Ter-Grigoryan reviewed eight copies kept in Matenadaran. The HA copies reviewed by him include the following: No.1531, which, according to T.Ter-Grigoryan, was updated in 1289; No.2866 in 1829; No.2561 in 1664; No.1725 in the 17th century; No.2646 in 1761; No.3043 in 1839; No.668 in 1848; No.667 in 1855²⁸

In 1961, C.Dowsett published his English translation of the HA, made on the basis of manuscripts stored in various collections, and on the basis of Armenian editions.²⁹ Dowsett's text is provided with an introduction and notes, some of which are somewhat controversial. The introduction, prefacing Dowsett's translation, lists all the manuscripts reviewed by him: five manuscripts of the National Library of Paris (P₁ No.217, P₂ No.218, P₃ No.219, P₄ No.220, P₅ No.221);³⁰ the manuscript of the British Museum (BM Or. 5261);³¹ two manuscripts of the Venice Mechitarist collection (V₁ No.1485 and V₂ No.1146); four copies of K.Dadayan (Д 1-4) kept in the Venetian Mechitarist collection; manuscript No.131 of the Holy Savior Cathedral in New Julfa.³² Dowsett reviewed the new copies of the “History of the Aghuans” against R.Acharyan's Root Dictionary³³ and established their identity with K.Dadayan's manuscripts³⁴ 1-4.

Dowsett did not consider the following manuscripts: No.667-1855 and No.668-1848, i.e., the manuscripts reviewed by T.Ter-Grigoryan, as well as the Vani manuscript³⁵ from I.A.Orbeli's collection (ИБ C №59), copied in Isfahan in 1678 by priest Martiros.³⁶

Dowsett's list can also be supplemented with Matenadaran manuscripts marked in the catalog: No.2966 (17th century, copied in Constantinople, contains an excerpt from the HA), No.3062 (1765–1767, an excerpt from the HA), No.4197 (1822), No.4284 (1631–1634, an excerpt from the HA), No.4442 (1870–1891).³⁷

In 1968, one of the last editions of the HA was published, translated into Modern Armenian by V.Arakelyan.³⁸ The text is provided with a foreword and notes. No discrepancies are shown. In the preface, V.Arakelyan notes that he completed the translation in 1958 and that he widely used the Russian translation of K.Patkanov.³⁹

According to the preface, Arakelyan considered all the HA manuscripts available in Matenadaran and all known HA publications, except for the English translation by Dowsett, as the English edition and that of Arakelyan are based on different textual bases. But the translator considered the preface and notes of Dowsett. As noted in the preface, Arakelyan allegedly compiled a text based on a comparative and critical analysis,

eliminating defects and filling in gaps using the most important Armenian primary sources. And it was this text that he translated.

In his publication, Arakelyan used only one version of the manuscripts and did not involve the other, on which the English edition of Dowsett was based, which nullifies all his efforts. But the worst drawback in Arakelyan's work is that he arbitrarily “eliminated defects” and “filled in gaps” (!) using these Armenian sources. And this is hardly permissible when publishing written monuments. In such a way, Arakelyan made the HA similar to the Armenian sources in terms of the content. Before we turn to the genealogy of the manuscripts, we need to clear up the confusion in literature resulting from dating the oldest known copy, namely the manuscript of 1289 (Matenadaran No.1531). As has already been mentioned, in 1829 J.Shakhatunyants made a copy of this manuscript, which, in turn, served as the original for the Petersburg manuscript in 1841.

Shakhatunyants dates the manuscript to 1279–1311, based on one of its colophons (sheet 2306) which mentions the commissioner of the manuscript, Hamazasp Mamikonian, abbot of the Hovhannavank monastery (sheets 1236, 149a, 2306, 265a, 273a). It is known that Hamazasp became the head of this monastery in 1279.⁴⁰ Based on the fact that the next mentioned abbot of this monastery was Father Basil (1311), J.Shakhatunyants determined the duration of Hamazasp's stay at Hovhannavank as 32 years, i.e., 1279–1311. The manuscript was dated based on the above.⁴¹ This dating was accepted by M.Brosset,⁴² K.Patkanov,⁴³ K.V.Trever,⁴⁴ Z.M.Bunyatov⁴⁵ and others. Meanwhile, the manuscript itself preserves another colophon (all the records were made by the scribe) which was first noticed and published by K.Dadayan⁴⁶ and in which there is an exact date (738) according to Armenian chronology, i.e., 1289 (sheet 3066). This dating of manuscript No.1531 is now accepted by everyone who is familiar with K.Dadayan's article.

The interdependence of the known HA manuscripts is as follows. According to Shakhatunyants' description, by 1841, there were two manuscripts in Etchmiadzin: the oldest one, of 1289, and another, probably of the 17th century.

As has been mentioned, in 1838, E.Boré made a copy of one of these Etchmiadzin manuscripts, but it is not known which one it is exactly. And of these very manuscripts' copies were also made for K.Shahnazarian – (III₁) and (III₂).

In 1839, two Tabriz manuscripts (Matenadaran, No.3043 and No.1087) were written from E.Boré's copy,⁴⁷ of one of which, in turn, a copy was made for K.Shahnazarian (III₃) and a copy of the Parisian manuscript P₁ No.217.⁴⁸ Variant D₄ dates back to one of the Tabriz manuscripts, and that is why not only P₁ and D₄ are identical, as established by Dowsett, but, apparently, III₁, III₃ and the Tabriz manuscripts are as well.

It is especially important to note that K.Shahnazarian, having copies of the two Etchmiadzin manuscripts (of 1289 and the 17th century), acquired another copy of the Tabriz manuscript that dates back, as we see, to one of the listed Etchmiadzin manuscripts, but at the same time failed to notice their similarity.

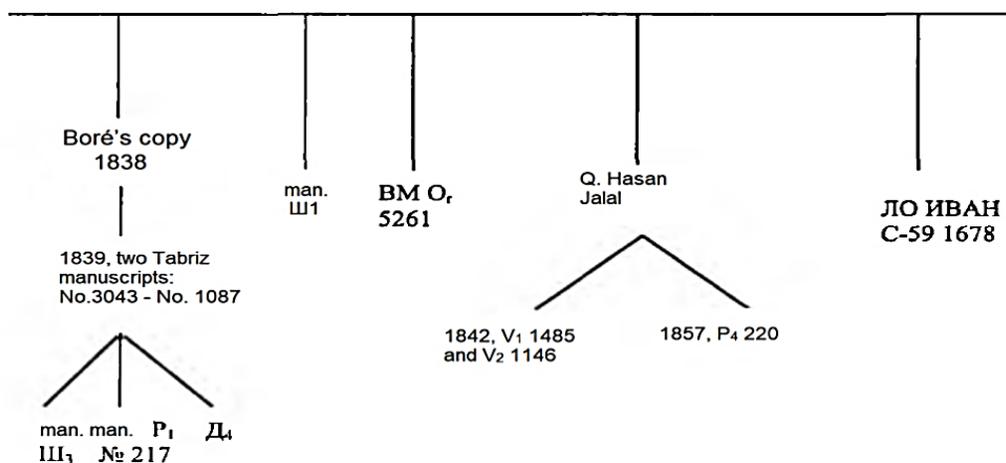
It seems that it was the Etchmiadzin manuscript of the 17th century and not the early manuscript of 1289, that was taken as the original of E.Boré's manuscript and other manuscripts dating back to the latter. This is supported by K.Shahnazarian's report: the full text of Davtak's Elegy on the Death of Javanshir is missing in the second and the fourth manuscripts (used by him), i.e., in III₂ and III₄.⁴⁹ III₄ is a copy of the Constantinople

manuscript, and III₂ is a copy of one of the two Etchmiadzin manuscripts – either of 1289 or of the 17th century. The full text of the elegy is available, according to K.Shahnazarian, in manuscripts III₁, i.e., in another Etchmiadzin manuscript, and in III₃ which is a copy of the Tabriz manuscript.⁵⁰ And they all, III₁, III₃ and the Tabriz manuscript, go back to one of the two Etchmiadzin manuscripts. And in fact, the III₁ and III₃ manuscripts go back to the same Etchmiadzin manuscript – one directly, the other indirectly. In the Russian text of K.Patkanov and in the Old Armenian text of N.Emin, which go back to the Etchmiadzin manuscript of 1289, the full text of Davtak's elegy is missing. Consequently, the prototype of III₁ and III₃ could be another Etchmiadzin manuscript – the one of the 17th century.⁵¹

Therefore, the following manuscripts date back to the Etchmiadzin manuscript of the 17th century: the manuscripts of E.Boré, K.Shahnazarian (III₁) and (III₃), the Tabriz manuscripts No.3043 and No.1087, the Parisian P₁ No.217, and variant Д₄. Only manuscript No.1725 in the list of Matenadaran manuscripts is dated to the 17th century. It seems that this manuscript was copied to create E.Boré's manuscript and those that go back to it.

The genealogical branch of this manuscript looks as follows:

Chart 1.
Manuscript No.1725= No.1721 – 17th century
(the coverage of lists of Albanian Catholicoi up to 1675)



Further, we found that, just like the model for the manuscripts of E.Boré, III₁, III₃, Д₄ and P₁ and the Tabriz manuscripts was the manuscript No.1725 of the 17th century, the other Etchmiadzin manuscript No.1531 of 1289 was used as the original for other manuscripts.

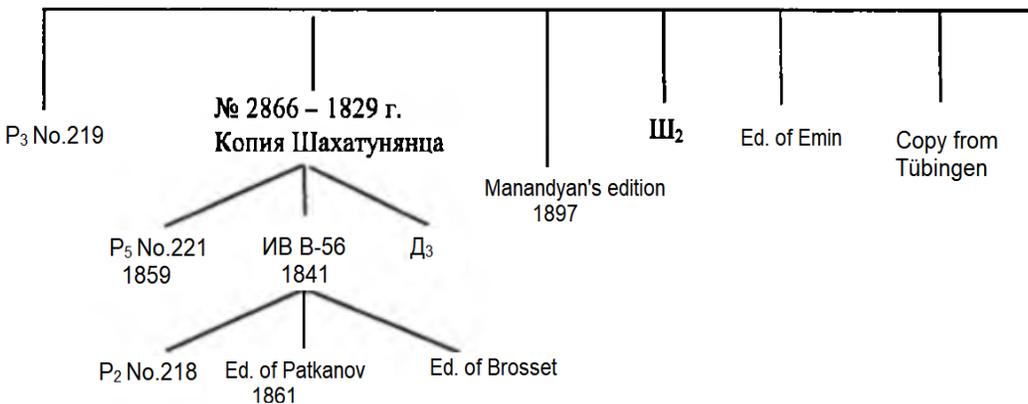
The oldest Etchmiadzin manuscript, from 1289, was updated and straightened out in 1676 by deacon Zacharias. He did not notice that one of the quires of the manuscript did not consist of twelve sheets, like all others, but of ten sheets, i.e., two sheets were missing in it.⁵² The manuscript copied by Zacharias later served as the original for many scribes who

did not notice this omission. This is how the omission in the text appeared in all the manuscripts dating back to the earliest manuscript, and the corresponding editions.

In 1761, at the request of Armenian Catholicos Hakob Shamakhetsi, the manuscript of 1289 was copied by Lunkianos (Matenadaran, No.2646). Lunkianos introduced some fundamental changes to the text⁵³ as is described below. As noted, in 1829, J.Shakhatunyants made a copy of the 1289 manuscript (Matenadaran No.2866).⁵⁴ The direct original for J.Shakhatunyants was not the manuscript No.1531 of 1289, but a copy from it, made by Lunkianos in 1761. From Lunkianos' copy, N.Emin copied the Parisian manuscript P₃ No.219⁵⁵ for Dulaurier; to this very document relates one of the two manuscripts used by N.Emin in his publication⁵⁶, the manuscript from Tübingen (Hauptkatalog)⁵⁷ and K.Shahnazarian's manuscript III₂. The manuscript of Shakhatunyants, in turn, was the original for two copies: those of St.Petersburg and Parisian P₅ No.221 of 1859.⁵⁸ Variant Д₃ also relates to it.⁵⁹ The Petersburg manuscript, which was the basis for the Russian edition of K.Patkanov, was the model for the Parisian manuscript P₂ No.218.⁶⁰

Therefore, the Etchmiadzin manuscript of 1289 was the original for copies of Lunkianos, J.Shakhatunyants, N.Emin, K.Shahnazarian (III₂),⁶¹ Parisian copy P₃, Tübingen, Petersburg, Parisian P₅, Parisian P₂ copies, variant III₃, the edition of K.Patkanov. The genealogical branch looks as follows (see Chart 2).

Chart 2.
Manuscript No.1531 of 1289.
No.1531 of 1676 – updated by Zacharias
No.2646 of 1761 – Lunkianos' copy



These two charts allow us to identify the manuscripts that formed the basis of the known publications: those of Shahnazarian and Patkanov. As for Emin's publication, one of the manuscripts was, as is clear from Chart 2, the manuscript of Lunkianos of 1761 (traced back to manuscript of 1289) and the other was manuscript No.47 of the Lazarev Institute, copied by Emin in 1849.⁶²

Of the four manuscripts used by Shahnazarian, two manuscripts III₁, III₃ are traced to manuscript No.1725 of the 17th century, one manuscript III₂ is traced to manuscript

No.2646 of 1761 (and the latter, in turn, to the manuscript of 1289), and the original source of the fourth manuscript (of Constantinople) could not be established.

Patkanov's edition is based on the IB B-56 manuscript, which is indirectly traced to the manuscript of 1289.

Dowsett reports that manuscript P₄ No.220 was copied in Shusha in 1857 from an unknown manuscript and that its readings coincide with the manuscript of the British Museum (BM Or 5261), with the manuscripts of the Venetian collection V₁ No.1485 and V₂ No.1146 and with the manuscript Q from Nagorno-Karabakh, which belonged to Hasan Jalalyan.⁶³

Dadayan gives a classification of five Etchmiadzin manuscripts which are divided into two groups.⁶⁴ According to Dadayan, in Etchmiadzin there was one manuscript of 1289 and four copies: of 1664, 1761, 1829 and one undated No.1721 (Matenadaran, No.1725 of the 17th century). Two copies were made from the manuscript of 1289. These include the copy of 1761 made by Lunkianos and the copy of 1829 made by J.Shakhatunyants. According to Dadayan's gradation, group 1 consisted of the manuscript of 1289 and the copies of 1761 and 1829 copied from it (our Chart 2), and group 2 – the copy of 1664 and the undated copy No.1721 (No.1725 of the 17th century) (our Chart 1). Dowsett believes that, like copies No.1725 of the 17th century and No.2561 of 1664, copies P₄, BM, V₁, V₂, Q also make up group 3⁶⁵ (our Chart 1).

It seems to us that since manuscript No.1725 of the 17th century belongs to group 1, then, naturally, all copies that are traced to it, which have the same readings with it, must make up group 2. Consequently, group 2, in addition to the copies indicated by Dadayan and Dowsett, comprises all the copies included in our Chart 1, as well as the Van manuscript (C-59).

The first group of manuscripts is comprised of the earliest manuscript No.1531 of 1289 and all copies based on it, i.e., all copies of our Chart 2. We rely on the current state of the manuscript of 1289 to which changes were made, according to Dadayan, by another person (Lunkianos). According to Dadayan, all three editions – those of Emin, Shahnazarian, and Patkanov – are based on the first group of manuscripts.⁶⁶

Contrary to the statement of Dadayan that all the four manuscripts of Shahnazarian were of the first group,⁶⁷ two of them, as was said, III₁ and III₃ are traced to manuscript No.1725 of the 17th century, i.e., group 2 manuscript (Chart 1), and one III₃ – to the manuscript of 1289 (Chart 2), i.e., to group 1 manuscript. The original of the fourth manuscript III₄ (of Constantinople) has not been identified. Shahnazarian, however, in his edition, gave preference to the first group of manuscripts, and therefore his text is closer to this group than to the second. Regardless of some variants, group 2 differs from group 1, which was established by Dadayan and confirmed by Dowsett: 1) the content of individual passages in book 3 Ch. 20⁶⁸ and in book 2 Ch. 51 that are missing in group 1; 2) different versions of materials concerning the Albanian Church (Book 1, Ch. 9, Book 3, Ch. 8, 23).⁶⁹ Even the analysis made by Dadayan (found by N.Y.Marr as insufficient and even superficial⁷⁰), shows how significantly the two groups of manuscripts differ.

Let's review a few passages.

Group 1 (Chart 1)

No.1725=No.1721 of the 17th century, No.2561 (D No.633) of 1644

Book 1, Ch. 9.

'...Urnayr, our king, asked St.Gregory to consecrate him (Grigoris, grandson of Gregory) as the bishop of his country – *not out of necessity and not because the Armenians were considered older than the Albanians, and not because of the miraculous and mighty deeds that happened among the Armenians – they (the Albanians) decided to obey, of their own free will, the worthy heir to the family of St.Gregory and were satisfied*'.⁷¹

Group 1 (Chart 2)

No.1531 of 1289, ed. E., Sh., P., edition of Arakelyan,

Book 1, Ch. 9 (last paragraph).

'...Urnayr, our king, asked St. Gregory to consecrate him (Grigoris, grandson of Gregory) as the bishop of his country. *And according to this rule, the countries of Armenia and Albania remain to this day in unanimous and indivisible agreement*'.⁷²

Group 2

No.1725=No.1721 of the 17th century, No.2561 of 1664,

Book 3, Ch. 8

'Regarding the consecration of our [Albanian] Catholicos. *The first [Albanian Catholicos] received [consecration] from Jerusalem – before St.Grigoris. And then to this day they receive [consecration] from our bishops*'.

'But now, since our country has fallen into heresy, we have agreed before God and your fatherhood that the consecration of the Patriarchate of Albania will be from the throne of St.Gregory through the unanimity of our country. *And the consecration of the Armenian throne will be from the Albanians, for they are older than the Armenians*'.⁷³

Group 1

No.1531 of 1289, ed. E., Sh., P., edition of Arakelyan,

Book 3, Ch. 8

'*In the same way, we have established rules regarding the consecration of the Catholicos of Albania. Because for a short time, our Catholicos received holy orders from bishops*'.⁷⁴ But now, since our country has fallen into heresy out of inexperience, we have agreed before God and your fatherhood that the consecration of the Patriarchs of Albania will be from the throne of St.Gregory through the unanimity of our country, *as has been from the time of St.Gregory. From there, we have been illuminated and truly know that whoever you wish will please both God and us*'.⁷⁵

The comparison of the manuscripts of the two groups shows that the differences between them are fundamental. It is quite obvious that the manuscripts of one of these groups have undergone serious and fundamental changes and have been updated. Moreover, corrections were made in the sheets relating to the Albanian Church, Catholicosate, and the independence of the Albanian Church.

The first group of manuscripts, dating back to the earliest Etchmiadzin manuscript of 1289, contains limited data on the subordination of the Albanian Church to the Armenian

one. Group 2 traced to manuscript No.1721 of the 17th century, on the contrary, throughout the entire source testifies to the initial autocephaly of the Albanian Church, to the adoption of Christianity by the Albanians earlier than by the Armenians.

Dadayan, upon studying five Etchmiadzin manuscripts, believes that the earliest is the group 1 manuscript of 1289, which, in his opinion, was subject to changes, corrections, and erasures. “The original notes have been erased and corrected. Traces of the original text are clearly visible”.⁷⁶ K.Dadayan believes that these erasures and additions were made by Lunkianos when, in 1761, at the request of Armenian Catholicos Hakob Shamakhetsi (1759–1763), he made a new copy of the oldest Etchmiadzin manuscript of 1289. As K.Dadayan states, Lunkianos had been noted for similar affairs before.⁷⁷ According to Dowsett, the readings of group 2 manuscripts are original, and therefore, in his English edition he gives preference to this group of manuscripts.⁷⁸

It is interesting to find out why in 1761 Armenian Catholicos Hakob Shamakhetsi needed a new copy of the HA of the early manuscript of 1289 and what caused the corrections made by Lunkianos.

Since the 1630s, the Etchmiadzin Patriarchate was growing stronger. As is known, after the Seljuk and Mongol conquests, the Armenian Church was not united, but divided into competing patriarchates. Since the 1440s, there were several patriarchates: Etchmiadzin, Cilician, and Akhtamar.

Etchmiadzin patriarchs strove to subjugate other Catholicoi; they sought recognition of their primacy, demanding that other patriarchs be consecrated only by Etchmiadzin Catholicoi. This policy was continued by the subsequent Catholicoi, in particular, Hakob Shamakhetsi (1759–1763) and his successor Simeon Yerevantsi (1763–1780). As for the Autocephalous Apostolic Albanian Church, the Gandzasar (Albanian) Patriarchate, with the help of its Albanian clergy, chose and appointed the Albanian patriarch, the Catholicos. In this regard, Armenian patriarchs repeatedly sent messages to the Albanian clergy, where they claim that since ancient times, starting from St.Gregory, the order was allegedly established according to which the Albanian Catholicoi were consecrated by the Etchmiadzin Catholicoi following the example of Grigoris, the grandson of the Illuminator.⁷⁹ Obviously, under these conditions, wishing to further suppress the independence of the Albanian patriarchate, Armenian Catholicos Hakob Shamakhetsi demanded the early HA manuscript of 1289 (as in his day, in hierarchical disputes with the Albanian clergy, Armenian Catholicos Ananias (tenth century) demanded the HA manuscript) and through Lunkianos subjected it to confessional editing in order to deprive the Albanian clergy of the opportunity to refer to the HA in hierarchical litigation. And still, despite the editorial work done under Hakob Shamakhetsi (with the help of Lunkianos), the manuscript of 1289 and the ascending manuscripts (group 1) did not lose traces of political orientation against the Armenian church hierarchy,⁸⁰ i.e., preserved the traces of the Albanian version.

Thus, Book 2, Chapter 47 states that Armenian Catholicos Abraham wrote an accusatory letter to the Albanians about Kiwrion: ‘The see of Albania was established before that of Armenia and agrees with us’.⁸¹ ‘In the year 43, according to Greek reckoning, the Armenians were illuminated, 270 years after the illumination of the Albanians’.⁸² In Book 2, Chapter 48 is titled as follows: ‘...the efforts of the Armenians to make

the Albanians subordinate to them as an archbishopric, to which the Albanians do not agree'.⁸³ And the chapter itself says: 'As for that which concerns the nine grades, the prelates of the Church, presumptuously and in accordance with *the rude ways of the Armenians*, ranked Abraham as patriarch, the head of the Albanian Church as archbishop, and the head of the Iberian Church as metropolitan... *Encouraged by the Greek generals, the Armenians wanted precedence over the Albanians, to which the Albanians did not agree, for they pointed to another early apostle who arrived in the land of Albania, named Elisha, from among the disciples of the Lord, consecrated by Jacob, the brother of the Lord. He preached there and built a church, the first mother of church of the East, earlier than in Armenia, laying the foundation of that church in Gish. Putting their trust in him, the Albanians turned from the Armenians in order to be subject to no one's authority*'.⁸⁴

These passages in their meaning contradict the corrections of Lunkianos, described above (group 1 manuscripts), but are in full agreement with the unedited passages (group 2 manuscripts). The successor of Armenian Catholicos Hakob Shamakhetsi, Simeon Yerevantsi, analyzed the HA manuscripts (which later formed group 2) and, in accordance with Lunkianos' corrections (in group 2), he made additions and erasures, trying to bring them into agreement with the manuscripts of group 1.

Thus, in manuscript No.1725 (group 2) there is the postscript of Simeon Yerevantsi himself: 'all that we scraped off with a fingernail is a lie and had been added by vain people afterwards in their favor, *since it is not found in other copies of the history. It seems that this was done after the Catholicos Anania by Albanian monks*'.⁸⁵

In his work "Jambr", in the section devoted to the history of the Albanian Catholicoi, Simeon Yerevantsi writes: 'But in "History of the Aghuans" by Movses Kaghankatvatsi in some places, for example, in chapter 10 of volume 1, in chapter 8 of volume 3, we see that this author recognizes Albanians to be older than Armenians; he says that an Armenian Catholicos must be consecrated by an Albanian Catholicos; that before Grigoris they had had seven Catholicoi, etc. *All this is a lie, these are later insertions of Albanian monks*'.⁸⁶

Further, Simeon Yerevantsi, in the section on Albanian Catholicoi, cites an excerpt from Movses Kaghankatvatsi about Bishop Samuel, who after being consecrated by Albanian bishops, in 877, became the Catholicos when the Albanian princes, together with the Armenian king Ashot, fought with the military leader Mahmud. Then Albanian ishkhans (who were in the camp) wrote to the great Catholicos of Armenians, George, who was in Dvin, and the Catholicos wrote to them and to (Armenian) King Ashot, to make them settle the matter amicably in this or that way and end the turmoil. 'King Ashot, at the proposal of the Catholicos, started to admonish the Albanian ishkhans to come to terms with the fait accompli, but the Albanian ishkhans refused saying that they had a long-established obligation taken under pain of curse that they may not appoint Catholicoi consecrated by their bishops without the consent of the governors of the Illuminator, and they cannot recognize such Catholicoi. King Ashot demanded a treaty and, having made sure of this, sent for Samuel and after a severe reprimand, sent him to Dvin to the Catholicos of Armenians, George, who reconsecrated him, taking his signature so that he would no longer rebel against the throne of the Illuminator and letting him go to Albania. At this point, Movses Kaghankatvatsi continues and ends his story'.⁸⁷

Both in group 1 manuscripts and the corresponding editions, and in group 2 manuscripts and the corresponding edition of Dowsett, this passage is recorded in a different way: ‘Albanian ishkhans informed Armenian Catholicos Ter-Georg, catholicos of Armenia, who wrote to the prince of Armenia, defining the canonical laws and beseeching him to establish peace. *He, however, cunningly won over the chiefs and princes of Albania and made peace between them, whereby the Albanians incurred the anathema of the Armenians. But Ashot, ishkan of Armenia, demanded that they observe the rule of St.Gregory that they accept consecration from the Armenians, who had in the meantime become reconciled with the irregularities of Samuel.* The great Armenian ishkan wrote to Patriarch Georg and persuades Samuel, with the consent of all Albanians, (and he) goes against his will to Dvin, where he is reconsecrated’.⁸⁸

This passage particularly clearly demonstrates the interest of the Armenian clergy in the editorial changes of the HA manuscripts. Therefore, it is hardly justified to see the reason for the changes in Group 1 in the accidental intent of Lunkianos alone. It is more likely that here we are dealing with the biased approach of the Armenian Church, which had long nurtured the idea of subordination of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and did not manage to achieve this before 1828 (for more details, see the end of this chapter).

Apparently, the struggle between the church hierarchies can explain why the HA manuscript was not published, which, as noted, in the 18th century, had been sent by Albanian Catholicos Nerses⁸⁹ to the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople to publish.⁹⁰ It stands to reason that this manuscript was not edited by Lunkianos and was closer to the original. Therefore, in 1766, Armenian Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi requested this manuscript from the Patriarch of Constantinople to Etchmiadzin where it was received and therefore not published. Now the reason is clear why Nerses sent the manuscript not to Etchmiadzin, but to Constantinople.

Obviously, due to the natural interest in the earlier manuscript of 1289, it was deemed necessary to subject it to the Armenian editing.

It seems that Charles Dowsett was right in believing that, of the two groups of manuscripts, group 2 is closer to the original text (our Chart 1).

Anyway, the HA text needs critical editing, involving the review of the manuscripts of not only group 1 (our Chart 2), which is the sin of all Armenian publications (K.Patkanov, N.Emin, K.Shahnazarian, V.Arakelyan, etc.),⁹¹ but of both groups, with more attention to group 2 (our Chart 1).

When covering any issue of political history, it is necessary to refer to the manuscripts of both groups, but the critical text of the HA should be based on the publication of Dowsett.

***About the authors of the source. Dating of the source. Chronological system.
The text. Archaeographic description. Additional branch of the manuscripts'
genealogy****

The author of the written monument remains uncertain. The authorship of “History of the Aghuans” is attributed to two Movseses – Kaghankatvatsi and Daskhurantsi, although the source itself has retained neither the name Movses nor the nicknames “Kaghankatvatsi” or “Daskhurantsi”. The author's name is only known from the evidence of Armenian and Albanian sources.

The “History of the Aghuans” has been known in ancient Armenian historiography since the eighth century. This work was familiar to the abbot of the Makenatsvots monastery, Solomon (seventh century), and in the ninth century, to the Armenian Catholicos Mashtots.⁹² In the first quarter of the 10th century, the Armenian historian Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi already used “History of the Aghuans”. It should be noted that Solomon, Mashtots, and Hovhannes Draskhanakerttsi, while being aware of the source, do not mention it. The “History of the Aghuans” was first mentioned by Armenian Catholicos Ananias Mokatsi (943–967) in his letters.⁹³ At the end of the 10th century, the “History of the Aghuans” is used by Ukhtanes⁹⁴ who has a real textual agreement – borrowing. But neither Ananias Mokatsi nor Ukhtanes names the author of the “History of the Aghuans”. In the 12th century, the Armenian historian Mkhitar Anetsi, chronologizing the Albanian sources, puts the unnamed “History of the Aghuans” after Sebeos (seventh century) and before Ghevond (eighth century). In the 13th century, the Albanian author Stepanos Orbelian widely used and already mentioned the “History of the Aghuans”, but again without the author's name.⁹⁵

The first source mentioning the name of the “History of the Aghuans” author was the Albanian writer Mkhitar Gosh (12th–13th centuries). In his unfinished “Albanian Chronicle” he wrote: ‘...A story written by Movses Daskhurantsi who made a full account of the Albanian dynasty’.⁹⁶ The disciple of Mkhitar Gosh, vardapet Vanakan, who was the teacher of Kirakos Gandzaketsi, also names the author of the “History of the Aghuans”: ‘Who is the Albanian historian?’ – and he answers himself: ‘Movses from the village of Daskhoren’.⁹⁷ In the 13th century, Kirakos Gandzaketsi and Mkhitar Ayrivantsi were the first to state the author of “History of the Aghuans” to be Movses Kaghankatvatsi.⁹⁸ As for the manuscripts, the earliest manuscript that preserved the name of Movses Kaghankatvatsi, according to Dowsett, seems to be the manuscript of Lunkianos, copied in

* When compiling the genealogy of the HA manuscripts, I deliberately did not take into account the publication of А.А.Накобыан (Албания – Алуанк в греко-латинских и древнеармянских источниках / Изд-во АН АССР, Ереван, 1987, с.304) due to its academic inconsistency. In his book, А.А.Накобыан draws a complete genealogical tree of copies of HA manuscripts (on one page – 278) without a proper study that should be based on studying the genealogy of HA copies, which forces the reader to take them on faith, since he has no chance to check the genealogy provided by the author due to the fact that it was based on a mythical database hidden in the library of Etchmiadzin, in Matenadaran, to which only Armenian researchers have access. It is interesting to note that in the “Etchmiadzin” and “Ararat” journals, information from the “database” of Matenadaran, hidden for other scientists, appears but occasionally

1761.⁹⁹ It appears that the nickname of Kaghankatvatsi is based on the context of “History of the Aghuans” itself, where it is said: ‘When the enemy became aware of what had happened, they pursued them and overtook a group of them at the foot of the mountain opposite the large village of Kaghankatuik, which is in the same province of Uti where I too am from’.¹⁰⁰ K.Patkanov, based on this passage, considered the author of “History of the Aghuans” to be Movses Kaghankatvatsi, who, in his opinion, came from the village of Kaghankatuik in the province of Utik.¹⁰¹

Y.A.Manandian believed that the nickname of Kaghankatvatsi resulted from an incorrect interpretation of this passage by the chroniclers. He believes that, as appears from the passage, the author was from the Utik region, where the village of Kaghankatuik was also located. Based on this, Y.A.Manandian refers to the author as Movses of Uti or Movses of Utik.¹⁰² The point of view of Y.A.Manandian is shared by N.Y.Marr¹⁰³ and V.Gukasyan,¹⁰⁴ while R.Acharyan believes that the known passage does not testify to the fact that the author of the HA was from Utik and, trusting Kirakos Gandzaketsi and Mkhitar Ayrivantsi, calls him Kaghankatvatsi.¹⁰⁵

N.Akinian, based apparently on the information found in Mkhitar Gosh and Vanakan’s works, calls the author of “History of the Aghuans” Movses Daskhurantsi. He believes that “Kaghankatvatsi” came from Kirakos Gandzaketsi’s misinterpretation of the above passage, which, in his opinion, in turn, misled Lunkianos and the subsequent scribes and writers.¹⁰⁶

N.Akinian had doubts that the name of the “compiler” was Movses. He believes that in the 12th–13th centuries, readers, trying to find out the name of the compiler of “History of the Aghuans”, could simply assume that it was one of the Catholicoi of Albania. In this case, according to Akinian, it should have been Catholicos Movses, the last on the list of Albanian patriarchs.¹⁰⁷

C.Dowsett, based on the opinion of V.B.Hanning, believes that the nickname of Kaghankatvatsi refers to the name of the monastery in Kaghankatuik, of which Movses was a member, and the nickname of Daskhurantsi refers to the village of Daskhoren where he was from. ‘This enables us to consider Kaghankatvatsi and Daskhurantsi as one and the same person’.¹⁰⁸ And Dowsett prefers the nickname of Daskhurantsi.¹⁰⁹

So, K.Patkanov, Y.A.Manandian, N.Akinian and C.Dowsett believe that the entire work (in 3 parts) was created by one author. But, according to N.Adonts,¹¹⁰ T.Ter-Grigoryan,¹¹¹ K.V.Trever,¹¹² Z.M.Bunyatov,¹¹³ V.Arakelyan,¹¹⁴ L.M.Melikset-Bekov,¹¹⁵ K.G.Aliyev¹¹⁶ and others, Movses Kaghankatvatsi wrote Books 1 and 2, and Movses Daskhurantsi wrote Book 3.¹¹⁷

Z.I.Yampolsky is also of the opinion that there were two authors, but, unlike the above researchers, he believes that the most reliable name of one of the authors of the Chronicle should be Adrian.¹¹⁸ It seems to us that Z.M.Bunyatov and Voroshil Gukasyan were right, that the record about Adrian is an obvious addition of the scribe. Read more on this below.

Now it can be seen that we have the following information about the author of the HA:

1. According to tradition, his name was Movses. But we do not know if this name referred to the author who lived at the turn of the 7th–8th centuries (see below), his successor in the 10th century or even to both.

2. Apparently, the same can be said about his nicknames, “Kaghankatvatsi” and “Daskhurantsi”. Perhaps the latter is preferable; the first could be concluded directly from the context, which, however, could also suggest the nickname “Utetsi”.

The date of the creation of the source

The question of dating the HA remains unsolved to this day. There are two points of view regarding the time when the source was created. One group of researchers including S.Somal,¹¹⁹ K.Neuman,¹²⁰ E.Boré,¹²¹ N.Emin,¹²² K.Shahnazarian,¹²³ G.Zarbanalyan,¹²⁴ N.Adonts,¹²⁵ T.Ter-Grigoryan,¹²⁶ S.T.Yeremian,¹²⁷ Z.I.Yampolsky,¹²⁸ K.V.Trever,¹²⁹ Z.M.Bunyatov,¹³⁰ V.Arakelyan,¹³¹ L.S.Davlinidze¹³² date the creation of Books 1 and 2 of “History of the Aghuans” to the seventh century and Book 3 to the 10th century.

It should be noted that S.Somal and K.Neuman dated the source to the seventh century on the basis of references to it, i.e., not being directly familiar with it.¹³³ The dating of the first two books of the “History of the Aghuans” to the seventh century was based on the author's description of many events of the seventh century as an eyewitness, “with details and enthusiasm, characteristic of a contemporary”,¹³⁴ as well as on the linguistic difference between the first two books and the third book.

Among the scientists who adhere to this point of view, let's consider the main ideas of T.Ter-Grigoryan, who was the first in national science to turn to this problem.

One of the compelling reasons that allowed T.Ter-Grigoryan to attribute Books 1 and 2 to the seventh century were the words of non-Armenian origin in the two books, “apparently of local origin”, as T.Ter-Grigoryan believes, “which are not found in the third book”.¹³⁵ Another reason for T.Ter-Grigoryan was the fact that the author of “History of the Aghuans” knew Armenian historians of the 4th–6th centuries, but not the Armenian historians of the subsequent centuries (8th–10th centuries) – Hovhan Mamikonian, Shapukh Bagratuni, Hovhannes the Catholicos, Tovma Artsruni, and others.¹³⁶

T.Ter-Grigoryan also calls attention to the fact that “History of the Aghuans” lacks data on such important events of the ninth century as the struggle of the Albanians against the Arabs led by Abu-Muse, as well as data on the Babak's uprising.¹³⁷ Yampolsky explains the last circumstance by the fact that “the Arab invasion and the policy of the Armenian Catholicoi in the ninth century interrupted the chronicle tradition of Albania, and it was restored in the 10th century by Movses Daskhurantsi”.¹³⁸ K.V.Trever shares the arguments of Ter-Grigoryan.¹³⁹

This argument of T.I.Ter-Grigoryan, Z.I.Yampolsky and K.V.Trever is not convincing, because it has been established that these events are partially reflected in the HA.¹⁴⁰ According to another point of view shared by M.Brosset, K.Patkanov,¹⁴¹ Y.Manandyan,¹⁴² G.Alishan,¹⁴³ N.Y.Marr,¹⁴⁴ R.Acharyan,¹⁴⁵ M.Artamonov,¹⁴⁶ A.Christensen,¹⁴⁷ M.Abegyan,¹⁴⁸ N.Akinian¹⁴⁹ and others, the “History of the Aghuans” was written in the 10th century.

Researchers attribute the source to the 10th century based on the fact that the last historical event mentioned in Book 3 of the HA, i.e., the capture of Partaw-Barda by the Rus, dates back to the 10th century. In addition, the list of Albanian Catholicoi also ends by the late 10th century.

K.Patkanov relies on the fact that the Armenian authors of the 12th–13th centuries knew all three books.¹⁵⁰

Y.A.Manandian, giving a detailed presentation of the problem, raises two questions: 1) the lifetime of the author and 2) the position of the Albanian church. Let's consider the main reasons for the first question.

According to Y.A.Manandian, “History of the Aghuans” is a compilation consisting of three books with no planned sequence or division.¹⁵¹ Without denying some degree of compilation in the source, the assertion of Y.A.Manandian about the complete absence of a planned sequence of narrative seems to us controversial, although it should be noted that some chapters in the source are missequenced.¹⁵² In general, there is a clear idea that the source has been given a good deal of editing, not beginning in the 13th century, but beginning in 15th–16th centuries, when the Armenian Church moved from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin. Nevertheless, in the presentation of the material of the three books, there is a chronological and thematic sequence, which is described in detail in the “Chronological system of the author” section (see below), which indicates that the author (or authors) had a certain sequential plan. It seems appropriate to note not the lack of a plan in general, as stated by Y.A.Manandian, but rather the lack of linkages, mainly between chapters in Books 1 and 3.

In our opinion, Y.A.Manandian's statement that the author borrowed all the information of the first book from Armenian sources should be considered incorrect.¹⁵³ Chapters 5, 6, 7, 9, 14 (the smaller part), 15-23, 29-30 seem to be borrowed from Albanian sources, because the material of these chapters has no analogy in Armenian sources and by its nature refers to Albanian hagiographic literature. Y.A.Manandian's main argument proving that Movses Kaghankatvatsi-Movses of Utik could not be a contemporary of the events of the seventh century and could not have written in the seventh century, but was a compiler of the 10th century, relies on Chapter 17 of Book 3, which tells about the origin of the Albanian House of Mihran. The chapter reads: ‘We learned from reliable and true historians that Bndo and Vetam, relatives of the Persian king, rebelled against King Hormizd, the father of Khosrow, and killed him...’ And further, it is reported that the founder of the Albanian Mihranids, and a relative of Persian king Khosrow II (590–628) Mihr, having fled, reached Albania, and settled in Gardman. This could have happened, according to this chapter, not earlier than 590–600. In this regard, Y.A.Manandian writes: “It is highly noteworthy that our author, the so-called imaginary companion of Viroy (628) and a contemporary of Javanshir, knows about these events that are close in time from “true reliable historical descriptions”. This is very remarkable. In terms of history, it is improbable that during the decade from the reign of Khosrow (590–628), his contemporary Mihr, to Javanshir (637), six generations of Mihr would have arisen.¹⁵⁴ That's out of question that the person who described Viroy's embassy to the Khazars could have given such inconceivable legendary information about the Albanian reigning house. Perhaps this is more likely to be the work of a 10th century compiler.¹⁵⁵

We share the opinion of Y.A.Manandian: Chapter 17, which tells the history of the Albanian Mihranid house, could not have been written in the seventh century, but a little later. But unlike Y.A.Manandian, we only question the creation in the seventh century of chapter 17 of Book 2 but not of the entire Book 2, as one chapter, apparently,

should not cast doubt on all other data allowing us to believe that the events of the seventh century, reflected in Book 2, were written by a contemporary author. These data include the chronological system of “History of the Aghuans” (see the Chronological System section), the language and manner of presentation, the author’s attitude to the events described.

The chronological system is consistent, especially in Book 2, from the 9th to 35th chapter that covers the events of the seventh century. The chronological data is firmly consistent and, most importantly, historically reliable, except for chapter 17 under consideration. It seems to us that Chapter 17 is a late interpolation, aiming at proving the ancient origin of the Mihranid clan, at exalting it.¹⁵⁶ This chapter was probably later inserted between Chapters 16 and 18, for, among other things, the direct chronological continuation of Chapter 16 is Chapter 18. Chapter 16 covers the events of 630, and Chapter 18 – the events of 632–640.

In addition, according to Georgian sources, it is known that in the fourth century, Iberia was ruled by King Mihr (according to Georgian sources, Mirian).¹⁵⁷

In Albania, apparently, the Mihranids had been much earlier than the sixth century, and took, apparently, the position of appanage princes and only in the sixth century, when the royal power was abolished, they became the great princes of Albania. Of the Mihranids, the author must have known Varaz-Grigor, Javanshir and Varaz-Trdat, as he was a contemporary of the latter two. But, in our opinion, Chapter 17, which tells us about the predecessors of the Mihranids, was written by the same author who, at the end of Book 3, provided the genealogical list of Albanian kings and great Albanian Mihranid princes.

Another evidence supporting the authorship of the 10th century, according to Y.A.Manandian, is Chapters 29 and 33 of Book 2, which report on the uncovering of holy relics by the priest Israel. Y.A.Manandian believes that if the author of the HA wrote in the seventh century, he was a contemporary of the priest Israel and, writing about him, should not have turned to sources. ‘Isn’t Movses Kaghankatvatsi’s note paradoxical in that he had but brief information on this matter, and that he was not able to provide accurate information about the hermitic life of Saint Israel?’¹⁵⁸

Meanwhile, Chapter 29 says the following about this:

‘I found the fair information about Israel’s hermitry to be insufficient. *The beginning was unknown*, but we included only what was relevant’.¹⁵⁹ The author turns to his source only in order to illuminate the past anchoret’s activity of priest Israel. Probably a contemporary author could not necessarily be well aware of Israel’s past ascetic life. Of the many anchorets, Israel became known to have found the “holy cross” and “the relics of the Jerusalem martyrs”. As for “what was relevant” – the uncovering of holy relics, as noted in the above passage, the author was not only well aware of this without the help of sources, but was also an eyewitness to the uncovering.

Chapters 29 and 33 of Book 2 discuss two different findings. Chapter 29 discusses uncovering of Jerusalem shrines in the Artsakh region, the Chlakh plain, which were evidenced by the locals. No author’s attitude appears here; in Chapter 33, however, which tells us about the search for and uncovering of the holy cross by the same priest Israel in Gish in the region of Utik (where the author himself comes from), there is an author’s attitude. According to the description, the “sign” that was on the occasion of the uncovering of the cross struck many, including the author, who is the narrator and eyewitness.

Considering that the author was himself from Utik, it becomes evident that these chapters were written by him. And finally, according to Y.A.Manandian, the mention of Armenian Catholicos Elias of Archesh (703–711) in the second book in chapter 48 contradicts the fact that Kaghankatvatsi lived in the seventh century. Y.A.Manandian believes that if Movses Kaghankatvatsi, as a witness, reports on the Khazar attack on Albania in the 630s while also describing the trip of Armenian Catholicos Elias to Albania as a contemporary, it should be assumed that he was over one hundred years old.¹⁶⁰

In our opinion, the author described the events of the 630s not by personal observations but used eyewitness data (as described below). As for the events of the 2nd half of the seventh century and early eighth century, the author described them as an eyewitness.

Y.A.Manandian believes that all three books were written by one author in the 10th century. And the events of the seventh century, described by an eyewitness, according to Y.A.Manandian, were borrowed by the author in the 10th century from a companion of Viroy, from a participant in Javanshir's meeting, and were included in his compilation just like the information from Armenian historians – Movses Khorenatsi and Petros Syunetsi was included in his work.¹⁶¹ Y.A.Manandian believes that this is confirmed by the title of the second book: “History according to my notes”. According to Y.A.Manandian, this title should be understood as “History from the records available to us”. He states that the beginning of the first chapter of Book 2 proves this: ‘*There are legends about eastern countries,**’ which are not in the books of ancient historians, but which we consider necessary to include in our work’.¹⁶²

Y.A.Manandian believes that these words of the author indicate that Book 2 consists of a number of revised sources.¹⁶³ What, then, does the first book consist of, if not of “revised sources”? Does it make sense for the author to note that he intends to write Book 2 based on revised sources when Book 1 has been written the same way?

The title “History according to my notes” may refer both to Chapter 1 of the second book and to the entire second book. We believe that this title should refer to a chapter rather than to a book, for each chapter has its own title, and if this is the title of the entire second book, Chapter 1 remains untitled. Even if we agree with Y.A.Manandian in that this is the title of the entire second book, even then we will get a different meaning, not the one that he put into it. The statement of the source author that he intended to write the second book on the basis of his own notes, implies apparently that the first book was based not on the author's “notes”, but, in all likelihood, on sources, which once again confirms the point of view that the second book was written by a contemporary author. As for the first lines of Chapter 1 of Book 2, which says that the author had legends about eastern countries, which are not included in other sources, this only refers to the content of Chapter 1 of Book 2, but not to the entire Book 2, because later the author tells a legend about Andovka, the Syunik ishkan and his son Babik, which is not given in any Armenian source.

The relation of all the three books of “History of the Aghuans” to one author is confirmed, according to Y.A.Manandian, by the fact that in Book 3 the author is aware of the events witnessed in Book 1.

* Eastern countries refer to the whole of Albania or its individual provinces. Read more on this below.

Thus, Chapter 22 of Book 3 reports as follows: ‘The names of the kings, *as we have described above*, from Vachagan the Brave to Vachagan the Pious...’ (изд. ЭМИНА, р.387). These kings, as is known, are mentioned in Book 1. Y.A.Manandian believes that, saying this, the author of Book 3 indicates himself as the author of the previous books. One cannot agree with this, since Book 3, along with the knowledge of the author, includes facts that contradict what is recorded in Book 2. Thus, in the same chapter it is reported that ‘...Mihr, Armael, Vard, Vardan the Brave believed in Christ. He is not the one who erected the fortress in Gardman’, although Book 2, Chapter 17 says: ‘the brave Vardan, son of Vard, had been building the Gardman fortress for three years’. Obviously, one author would not have given such contradictive information. In our opinion, neither the contradictions, nor the awareness of the author constitute a solid argument in favor of or against the creation of the source by one author. This could have been the work of the last editor or the author who wrote the last chapters of the third book.

Attributing the writing of the three books of “History of the Aghuans” to one author who lived in the 10th century, Y.A.Manandian at the same time admits that Book 3 is inferior to Book 2 both in its historical value and in the form of writing. He sees the reason for this in the scantiness of sources available to the author for describing the events after the seventh century.¹⁶⁴

It should be noted that the chapters of Book 3 that reflect the events of the 10th century, of which the author of the three books, according to Y.A.Manandian, was a contemporary, exhibit a particular laconicism, a straightforward statement of unconnected facts. It seems that it should be the other way around. As is known, historians of the early Middle Ages describe the events of the ancient period laconically, in a concise form. As the author approaches contemporary events, the narrative becomes independent and detailed. This fully surfaces in “History of the Aghuans”. The events of the seventh century and early eighth century are described independently, in detail, and with enthusiasm. The author who described these events could not be the same person who described the events of the 10th century. So, we have considered the main arguments of Y.A.Manandian. “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi is studied in the articles by N.Akinian, published since 1953 in “Andes Amsoreai” journal.¹⁶⁵ “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, according to N.Akinian, is a collection of works written by various authors from the sixth century to the 10th century inclusive.

In the second half of the 10th century, as N.Akinian believed, Movses Daskhurantsi organized these works, arranged them chronologically. He even tried to give his work the character of a complete historical description with new appendices, dividing it into parts – ancient, middle, and modern history – with indices and announcements of what he intended to write about.¹⁶⁶ Although N.Akinian does not view the author of the HA as a historian but only as an editor, a compiler who had streamlined the works, arranged and polished the “History of the Aghuans”, he admits that the editor wrote the following chapters: in Book 1 – Chapters 1-4, 6, 8, 9, 12-15; in Book 2 – Chapters 2-3, 8, 47; in Book 3 – Chapters 15, 17, 23-24.¹⁶⁷

Further, N.Akinian notes that the chapters telling about the Albanian king Vachagan III (the Pious) (Book 1, Ch. 5-6, 16-23), belong to one author who, in his opinion, lived in the second half of the 10th century. N.Akinian suggests that he could have been one of

the main readers of Sahak Sevada's school.¹⁶⁸ The chapters dedicated to the Mihranids and, in particular, Javanshir, Varaz-Trdat and Bishop Israel, according to N.Akinian, were written by one author, which in due time was noted by N.Adonts. 'They are written with the same spirit and breath and issued from the same pen'.¹⁶⁹ These are the following chapters: in Book 1 – Chapters 27-30; in Book 2 – Chapters 17-31, 33-35.

The “narrator”, as N.Akinian believes, probably originated from the ecclesiastical class, he was an Albanian patriot from Gardman who lived in the second half of the 10th century¹⁷⁰ and as indicated above, he could have been a reader of the Sahak Sevada school.¹⁷¹

N.Akinian's narrative is very chaotic, nevertheless, it is obvious that when speaking about the editor, Daskhurantsi, the author of the history of Vachagan III, and about the “narrator” of the Mihranids' history, N.Akinian had one person in mind, because he spoke about each of them as of a person who lived in the 2nd half of the 10th century and was the chief reader of the Sahak Sevada school.

If so, is N.Akinian right, taking the author of “History of the Aghuans” not for a history writer, but only for an editor, a compiler, who had written, in his own words, almost all of Book 1 (24 chapters out of 30), half of Book 2 and four of the 23 chapters of Book 3?

As for the reliability of the events described in “History of the Aghuans”, the opinion of N.Akinian comes down to the following.

In those cases when the information provided by Movses Daskhurantsi is confirmed by the data of Armenian sources, N.Akinian considers the information of Daskhurantsi borrowed from Armenian sources and therefore reliable. However, the information about Daskhurantsi comes from an unidentified source and is viewed by N.Akinian as historically unreliable. Thus, he considers the list of Albanian Arsacid kings to be a fiction of the “editor”. In his opinion, of the ten Albanian Arsacid kings, only two are known (i.e., mentioned in Armenian sources) – Urnayr (fourth century) and Aswagen (Arsvaghen) (fifth century);¹⁷² as for Vache II and Vachagan III, they are mentioned only in “History of the Aghuans” and therefore are figments of Daskhurantsi's imagination.¹⁷³ Speaking about the rest of the Albanian Arsacids, N.Akinian states that these names were taken in the 8th–10th centuries from the nominal list of Albanian nobles, i.e., are also fictional.¹⁷⁴ According to N.Akinian, the author's fantasy gave rise to the story of the founder of the Mihranid clan. It is one of the versions of the epic about Bahram Chobin. N.Akinian questions the historicity of Javanshir.¹⁷⁵

We see that the far-reaching conclusions of N.Akinian are absolutely groundless.

The chronological system

“History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi lacks a chronological table common in other sources. Nevertheless, the events in “History of the Aghuans” are dated. Here, like in “The History of Armenia” by Movses Khorenatsi, ‘chronological indications are woven into the narrative’.¹⁷⁶

The consistency and continuity of the chronological data,¹⁷⁷ and a certain level accuracy, convince us that in “History of the Aghuans”, the author or authors have developed a certain chronological system.

The author indicates the reign periods of only four of the 10 Albanian Arsacid kings – Urnayr, Aswagen, Vache II, and Vachagan the Pious. This is because the Arsacid period of Albania is very poorly documented, which the author complains about in chapters 6 and 8 of Book 1 and probably for this reason he does not determine the duration of the reign of these kings. The author makes extensive use of the chronological data of his sources. The first attempt at dating is outlined in Chapter 9 of Book 1, which reports that in Albania under King Urnayr, a relative of Persian king Shapur II (309–379), Christianity became the state religion. Besides, the author notes that this happened at the same time when the Greek emperor Constantine the Great (324–337) and the Armenian king Trdat (298–330) also adopted Christianity.¹⁷⁸ It seems that the chronological indication of the simultaneous adoption of Christianity belongs to the Albanian author. Consequently, Christianity was adopted in Albania in the early fourth century and Urnayr ruled at the same time. According to the HA, another Albanian king Aswagen was a contemporary of Emperor Theodosius the Younger (408–450), Armenian King Vramshapur (391–414), Persian king Yazdegerd, apparently, Yazdegerd I (399–420), and of the creator of the Armenian writing system Mesrop Mashtots (361–440).¹⁷⁹ Therefore, Aswagen lived no later than the 1st half of the fifth century. About the time of the reign of another Albanian king, Vache II, the author reports: ‘In the year 19 of the reign of Azkert, death befell him. His two sons fought for power as rivals’.¹⁸⁰ It was at this time that the Albanian king, Vache, revolted, i.e., in 459.

Based on the time of the reign of Persian king Valarsh (484–488), the author dates the enthronement of Albanian king Vachagan the Pious. ‘After the wicked Peroz was driven out of the world by a fierce death, his father's brother Valarshak became the king, the Albanians, with his help, enthroned Vachagan, the son of Azkert, the brother of Vache’.¹⁸¹

As for the rest of the events inside Albania, the author also resorts to this method of dating: ‘At that time, the city of Tsri, indignant against the Albanian king, surrendered to the Persian king’.¹⁸² ‘At that time, the king of the Rosmosoks with his troops and hordes of Fovel ...crossed the Kur River, scattered across the Uti region...’.¹⁸³ The events are also dated by mentioning the name of an Albanian king. Thus, Book 1 Chapter 26 reports that the Aguen Council was convened by Albanian king Vachagan on the 13th of the month of Mareri.

Let's consider the chronological data of Book 2 of the HA. While the chronology of Book 1 is not firm, the Albanian kings are only dated by mentioning them as contemporaries of the Persian kings or Byzantine emperors and Armenian kings and this chronology is somewhat sporadic, the chronology of Book 2 is consistent, concrete, and determined. For Book 2, starting with Chapter 9 and up to and including Chapter 34, there is an uninterrupted sequence of dated events with a systematic chronology.

Four chapters of Book 2 (1, 2, 3, 5), both chronologically and thematically, should have been included in Book 1. Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 describe the reign of Albanian patriarch Abas. The chronological data about this is as follows: ‘Then in the second year of Khosrow, the king of kings, at the beginning of the Armenian chronology, the patriarchal throne was moved from Choga to the capital Partaw ...The patriarch was Abas, who ruled for 44 years’.¹⁸⁴ In this chapter, the author uses two parallel chronological dates, which

have some discrepancy. The second year of Khosrow I Anushirvan (= 532/33) is not in line with the beginning of the Armenian era (= 551/552).

In Chapters 9 to 19, events are dated based on the reign of the Persian kings, starting with the 35th year of Khosrow II's reign. In chapter 9, the author says: '...I will begin my story from the first year of the 18th leap year, after the appearance of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the month of Mehekan, in the 35th year of the king of kings Khosrow Hormizd'.¹⁸⁵ K.Patkanov assigns the first year of the 18th leap year to 626–627,¹⁸⁶ and the 35th year of Khosrow II falls on 625–626. The dates coincide.

Further events are dated to the 36th year of Khosrow II – 626/627 (Ch. 12); 37th year of Khosrow II – 627–628 (Ch. 12); the 38th year of his reign – 628 (Ch. 11); the reign of king Kavad, which apparently means Kavad II (Ch. 14); the second year of the reign of Ardashir, the son of Kavad, apparently, Ardashir III, 629/630 (Ch. 16); the first and eighth years of Yazdegerd III – 632 and 640 (Ch. 18).

To clarify the author's chronological method, we should briefly summarize the content of these chapters.

Chapters 9-16 describe the Persian-Byzantine wars (624–630): Heraclius' campaigns against Albania, Iberia, and Armenia; Heraclius' alliance with the Khazars; the invasion of the Khazars into Albania, Iberia; and the embassy of the Albanian Catholicos Viroy to the Khazars. Chapter 18 reflects the exploits of Albanian prince Javanshir in the Persian-Arab wars. So, these chapters set out foreign policy events during the Sassanid reign, and the author dates them according to the years of the reign of the Persian kings.

Chapter 19 says: 'In the 20th year of the reign of Azkert (Yazdegerd III), the Persian kingdom ceased to exist; it was the 31st year of the world victories of the Hagarians and the 15th year of the reign of Javanshir'.¹⁸⁷ According to the reliable chronology, the 20th year of Yazdegerd III is 652, and the 31st year of the "world victories of the Hagarians" is also 652/653; the 15th year of the reign of Javanshir = 637+15 = 652. The dates given by the author of the HA are historically accurate. The author uses three parallel chronological lines here: 1) the reign of the Persian kings; 2) the "domination of the Hagarians" (Hijrah); 3) the reign of Javanshir. It is noteworthy that for the first time, the author uses the Hijrah for dating. Interestingly, the author uses this dating method when the Sassanid kingdom ceased to exist. Obviously, due to the fact that the author could not date the subsequent events by the reign of the Persian kings anymore, he used a different chronology in the subsequent chapters.

Chronological data analysis of the "History of the Aghuans" convinces us that based on what country Albania had more contact with at this or that time (or rather, based on what country Albania was dependent on), the author adheres to the chronology of that country when describing foreign policy events. Thus, describing the events of the Sassanid period and, in particular, the time of the Persian-Byzantine wars, the author adheres to the chronology of the Persian kings. But after the fall of the Sassanid dynasty, Albania became a tributary of Byzantium and the Arabs. And hence the subsequent foreign policy events – personal meetings and negotiations of Javanshir, the great prince of Albania, with the Byzantine emperor Constantine, the grandson of Heraclius, the transfer of troops to the west by the Byzantine emperor as a result of the increasing Arab domination, reflected in chapters 22, 27, 28, are dated by the author based on the years of the Byzantine emperor's

reign and the Arab rule. Thus, the events in Chapter 22 are dated to the 19th year of the reign of Constantine,¹⁸⁸ i.e., to 660, and in Chapter 27 – to “the sixth year of the transfer of the Ismailite kingdom to Assyria (Syria)”,¹⁸⁹ i.e., 661+6=667; in Chapters 28-30 – to the year of the reign of Constantine, i.e., 671.

It is therefore possible to note that the author relied on the years of the reign of kings to chronologize the foreign policy events of 625–671: first on those of the Persian kings (625–652), then the Byzantine emperors, as well as the years of the Arab rule (652–671).

The remaining chapters of Book 2, including Chapters 23, 24, 25, 26, 32, 34, 46, mainly reflect the events of the internal life of Albania. The dating method for these events is different from the above. In these chapters, events are dated using synchronisms, i.e., approximate dating of a fact by indicating its relationship in time to another, a better-known fact.

Thus, taking the exact date recorded in chapter 22, the 19th year of the reign of Constantine (660) as the starting point, the author in Chapter 23 reports: ‘After that, 2 years later, the Khazars came to Albania for loot and plunder’.¹⁹⁰

So, this event dates to 662. In Chapter 24 we read: ‘After the victory of Javanshir, two years after the expulsion of the Khazar troops, the construction of a temple in the name of God was completed’.¹⁹¹ Therefore, it happened in 664 (662+2). Chapter 25: ‘Javanshir spent an entire year in peace’¹⁹² (i.e., 664+1=665).

It should be noted that, along with dating according to the reign of kings and synchronisms, a third way of dating can be distinguished based on the years of military leadership and reign of the great Albanian prince, Javanshir. Javanshir's chronological line is synchronized with the line of the reign of the kings (Persian and Byzantine). The chronological data of the rule of Javanshir is recorded in Chapters 18, 19, 26, 27, 28 of Book 2.

Chapter 18: ‘Four years after the death of the great Khosrow, the king of Persia, his son Azkert (Yazdegerd III) was ascended to the throne. Having crossed Assyria, the Hagarians opposed the king of Persia... In the eighth year of the reign of Azkert, another time enemies came out and had been besieging the king in Tizbon (Ctesiphon) for six months... After that, one battle followed another... For seven years, the brave Javanshir was fighting in these burdensome wars’.¹⁹³

Yazdegerd III, as is known, mounted the throne in 632, indeed, 4 years after the death of Khosrow II, as reported by the HA. The Arabs first invaded Iran, as is known, in 636; and in 637, they laid siege to Ctesiphon. According to the HA, this happened in the eighth year of the reign of Yazdegerd, i.e., 632+8=640. This data has a two to three years' difference *with* the actual chronology. In 642, in the battle near Nahavand, the Persian troops were defeated, and after that, Iran was conquered by the Arabs.¹⁹⁴ Javanshir's seven-year participation in the Persian-Arab wars is also consistent with the actual chronology: 636+7=642/643.

Further, Chapter 19 reports: ‘In the 20th year of the reign of Azkert, the Persian kingdom ceased to exist; it was the 31st year of the world victories of the Hagarians and the 15th year of the reign of Javanshir’.

The 20th year of Yazdegerd III, the 31st year of the Arabs' victories and the 15th year of the reign of Javanshir, as has been mentioned, corresponded to 652.

The last chronological indication of Javanshir's rule is recorded in Chapter 28. 'In the 30th year of Constantine's reign, eunuchs rebelled and wanted to kill him'.¹⁹⁵ And the chapter ends as follows: 'For these 33 years, the Lord made the pious Albanian prince victorious'.¹⁹⁶ The thirtieth year of Constantine's reign falls in the year 670/671. And the 33-year victorious stay of the Albanian prince is $636/637+33=670/671$. So, we have considered the contents of Chapters 19-28. Chapters 19-34 cover the time of Javanshir's reign. Chapters 19-34 document firm, systematically conclusive chronological data covering the period from 625 to 671: 625 (Ch. 9), 626 (Ch. 12), 627 (Ch. 12), 628 (Ch. 11), 630 (Ch. 16), 632 r. (Ch. 18), 640 (Ch. 18), 642 (Ch.18),652 (Ch. 19), 660 (Ch. 22), 662 (Ch. 23), 664 (Ch. 24), 665 (Ch. 25), 666 (Ch. 26), 667 (Ch. 27), 671 (Ch. 28).

While the events reflected in Chapters 9-34 are full of consistent chronological data, the period of reign of Javanshir's successor, Varaz-Trdat, reflected in Chapters 36-45 of Book 2¹⁹⁷ and in Chapter 12 of Book 3, is not provided with sufficient chronological data. There is only one firm date in Chapter 39: 'Then, in the sixth year of the southern kingdom of the obstinate Muhammad (i.e., in year 62 of Hijrah: $622+62=683/84$), Albanian prince Varaz-Trdat conferred with his fellow tribesmen princes and Catholicos Eghiazar'¹⁹⁸ about the heavy burden of taxes imposed on the Albanian people by the Arabs and Huns.

An important event in the history of Albania is the stay of the great prince of Albania, Varaz-Trdat, as a hostage by the Byzantine emperor. The author does not provide this description with specific chronological data. From Chapter 12 of Book 3 we only know that it was 'after the complete termination of the Persian kingdom and at the time of the strengthening of the Southern Tajiks', i.e., Arabs. It is also known that Varaz-Trdat had been held hostage for five years, then returned to Albania. His sons, after 12 years of imprisonment, were released by the Byzantine emperor, Philippicus Bardanes. There is no more information about Varaz-Trdat.

This can also be explained by the fact that during the period of Varaz-Trdat's rule in Albania, apparently, there were no major events, according to the views of that time, that would be considered worthy for narrative and, accordingly, for dating.

As for the remaining chapters of Book 2 of the HA, Chapters 46-49 reflect the dogmatic and hierarchical disputes between the churches at the dawn of Christianity and up to the eighth century. The latest chronological indication in Book 2 refers to 703–711. This is a reference to Armenian Catholicos Elias of Archesh at the end of Chapter 48. Chapter 50, in all likelihood, is an independent work. It is entitled "On the Life of Hermit Joseph in Artsakh..." This source dates from the reign of Byzantine emperor Heraclius, Albanian great prince Varaz-Gregory, i.e., the early seventh century. As can be seen, this chapter, like many others, is not in its place in terms of chronology.

Chapters 51 and 52, which conclude Book 2 of the HA, are devoted to the buildings and monasteries of Jerusalem. There is no chronological data in the text, but the researchers date these chapters to the seventh century.

Finally, let's consider the chronological system of Book 3. There is no single dating method here. In Chapters 3, 7, 11, 13 that reflect the internal life of Albania, one can see dating according to the reign of the Albanian patriarchs, which, apparently, is explained by the absence of the great prince's power in the country.

‘After the death of Eghiazar, the Albanian Catholicos, a certain Bakur, from among the followers of the Chalcedonian teaching ...agreed with Sprama, the wife of Varaz-Trdat...’,¹⁹⁹ ‘Simeon was followed on the patriarchal see by the Blessed Michael who had been patriarch for 35 years’.²⁰⁰ These chapters reflect the span of time from approximately AD 695 to 710. As for the remaining chapters, Chapters 1, 2, 8, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21 and 23 of Book 3 are dated according to the Armenian chronology, including both foreign and domestic events.

Thus, in Chapter 16 we find: ‘In the 145th year of the Armenian era, Mahmet II arrived in Armenia and hastily entered Choga across the land of the Albanians’,²⁰¹ i.e., 551+145=696/697. ‘...After that, in the 153rd year of the Armenian era, Shero, the prince of Albania, was taken captive to Taron and from there to Syria, along with other azats’,²⁰² i.e., in 704. The same Chapter 16 reports: ‘The ruler of the Khazars spoke out with 80,000 men and took Albania in 158’,²⁰³ i.e., in 709/710.

Chapter 19 is titled ‘What Happened in Albania in the 200th Year of the Armenian era’²⁰⁴ (751). This chapter says: ‘By the end of 270 of the Armenian era, selected men from the Tajiks (Arabs) secretly left Partaw and plundered the Amaras region...’²⁰⁵ This falls on 821/822. It should be noted that in Book 3 only Chapter 8 reflecting the deed of the Albanian Council on the unity of faith with the Armenians, records the event with two parallel dates – Hijrah and the Armenian chronology. ‘This deed was written... in the 85th year of the Tajiks (Arabs) and the 148th year of the Armenians’.²⁰⁶ The 85th year of the Arabs corresponds to 622+85=706/707 and the 148th year of the Armenian era, 552+148=700.

In all other chapters of Book 3 (1, 2, 8, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23), the events are only dated according to the Armenian chronology. It is noteworthy that even when describing the history of the Arab prophet Muhammad, the author relies on the Armenian era (Chapter 1). ‘At the end of 65 of the Armenian era, Mahmet appeared in Medain’,²⁰⁷ i.e., 552 + 65 = 616/617. The chapters noted are also rich in chronological indications. They cover the events that took place in Albania, starting from the 145th year of the Armenian chronology, i.e., from 696 to 400 of the Armenian era, i.e., 952. These chapters mainly describe the campaigns of individual Arab troops against Albania, Armenia, and Iberia. They represent a bare chronological recording of facts, as well as chronological weather data: ‘In 174 of Armenian era, in summer was a cattle plague, in winter – another census, which plunged people and livestock and the entire country into the yoke of slavery’,²⁰⁸ i.e., 552+174=725. ‘In 175 of the Armenian era, there was a severe hunger’,²⁰⁹ and so on.

The sequence of individual chronological indications of these chapters is as follows: 696 (Ch. 16), 704 (Ch. 16), 710 (Ch. 16), 731 (Ch. 16), 752 (Ch. 19), 822 (Ch. 19), 828 (Ch. 19), 832 (Ch. 20), 852 (Ch. 20), 869 (Ch. 20), 877-915 (Ch. 21).

As from 654, Albania became a tributary of the Arabs, politically subordinated to them. At this time, Albania also alternately paid taxes to the Khazars and Byzantium. Its history was closely related to the history of the Caliphate and Byzantium. Based on the author's chronological system reflected in Books 1 and 2, it was natural to expect that when describing the events of the 8th–9th centuries, the author would adhere to dating both by the years of the reign of the Byzantine emperors and by the years of the Arab rule (Hijrah), as he did in the previous chapters of Book 2, when the chronology of Arab rule

was documented in parallel with other dates and synchronized with them. However, the author of the mentioned chapters of Book 3 only uses the Armenian chronology.

So, having considered the chronological data of all the three books of the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, we can come to some conclusions about the chronological system of the author. The method of chronological recording of events is:

1) Dating according to the years of the reign of Persian and Byzantine kings. The line of Persian kings includes Shapur II, Yazdegerd II, Peroz Valarsh, Khosrow II, Kavad, Ardashir III, Yazdegerd III. The references to the Persian kings in the “History of the Aghuans” are firmly dated. Among the Byzantine emperors, Constantine the Great, Theodosius the Younger, Marcian, Zeno, Anastasius, Heraclius I, Constantine II, Philippicus Bardanes are mentioned.

The reign of some of the Byzantine emperors is dated, other emperors are mentioned as contemporaries of well-known Persian and Armenian kings. This method is mainly used to date foreign policy events.

2) Synchronized dating, prevalent in the first two books. The author uses this method mainly when dating the events of the internal life of Albania.

3) Dating based on the years of the reign of Javanshir, the great prince of Albania. Chronological data about Javanshir is recorded in parallel with the line of Persian and Byzantine kings, with the years of Arab domination and is synchronized with them. This method of dating is used in Book 2.

4) Dating based on the years of the reign of the Albanian Patriarchs-Catholicoi, typical only for several chapters of Book 3.

5) Dating according to Armenian chronology only, which is typical for several chapters of Book 3.

There is a certain system in using these dating methods. Dating by the reign of the Persian kings is used for early times. This is followed by dating based on the reign of the Byzantine emperors and by the years of the Arab rule. This also includes dating line of Javanshir. Next in time is the line of the Albanian Catholicoi. And, finally, the latest in time is the Armenian chronology.

Of the three books of the “History of the Aghuans”, the chronology of the second book is the most consistent, especially Chapters 9 to 34, where, as has been shown, there is a continuous sequence of dated events, systematic chronological indications.

Based on the chronological system of the “History of the Aghuans”, it seems to us indisputable that Chapters 9-34, 36-52 of Book 2 were written by one author, probably a contemporary of these events. He wrote or compiled all the chapters of Book 1 and the first chapters of Book 2. There is almost no doubt that the same person wrote several chapters of Book 3 (Chapters 3-7, 9-13). And it is absolutely clear that Chapters 1-2, 15-21, 23 of Book 3 were written by another person.

The text of the source

Unlike those researchers who date the first two books to the seventh century, it seems to us that both Books 1 and 2 (starting from Chapter 9), as well as several chapters of Book 3 (Chapters 3-12), were written by the same author in the late 7th and early 8th centuries,²¹⁰

and the remaining chapters of Book 3 were written by another author in the 10th–11th centuries.

The assumption is based on the author's chronological system, Chapter 9 of Book 2, where the author states that the information presented, as well as the author's language, style, and literary techniques are of his own.

We share the opinion of Z.I. Yampolsky,²¹¹ that the author's own narrative of the HA begins in Chapter 9 of Book 2. We should pay attention to the title of this chapter: “The history of the rising of the barbarians and the various events in the universal disaster which overtook many nations”.²¹²

From the text of Chapter 9 itself, it becomes clear that both the title and the text of the chapter refer to all the subsequent chapters of the second book. We think that this chapter is an introduction, the author's preface to the subsequent chapters and the history that is contemporary to the author. It should be noted that in all the three books of the HA, except for this chapter, there is no author's preface, which, as is known, is in any historical work.

Thus, after describing the sources of the events of the sixth century (in Chapters 4-8 of Book 2),²¹³ the author proceeds to an independent and detailed presentation of contemporary history.

Chapter 9 says: ‘Oh, what amazing stories I have prepared to tell in order to attract the attention of the world – far and near! They cannot be compared to the reports of the early centuries regarding all kinds of battles and periods of unrest that broke out in various places and among different peoples ...And so, my *thoughts plunged, and my intentions scattered in world defeats, and I forgot the order of the story, which I intended to use to lay the foundation and tell about the times and events that happened in Albania, as the prophet said: ‘I forgot to eat my bread from the voice of my lamentation’.*

The author made an extensive use of seventh-century documents. We do not agree with the assertion that the author described the events of the early seventh century mainly based on Sebeos.²¹⁴ Movses Kaghankatvatsi had in common with Sebeos only the theme of the “Persian-Byzantine wars”. However, the presentation is completely different, has nothing in parallel.²¹⁵ The author writes about the events of 624–628, from which his presentation begins, not directly, not in hot pursuit, but with a certain time interval, as evidenced by the above passage: ‘Since the past is little by little becoming increasingly demanding, I will begin my story from the first 18th leap year...’ This is evidenced by the end of Chapter 13 of Book 2, which reads: ‘The kingdom was taken from the house of Sassan and given into the hands of the sons of Ismail’. Describing the events of 628, the author was aware of what would take place in 652. Therefore, the events of 624 and 628 at the time of presentation are in the past for the author. The author could write about the past both on the basis of his own observations and of other eyewitnesses' data. It seems to us that the author was not a member of Viroy's embassy to the Khazars (628). He borrowed this information from eyewitnesses.

Let's consider an excerpt about the embassy of Catholicos Viroy to the Khazars. According to the HA, Viroy offered noble people to go *with him* to the Khazar camp. The author does not give any information about himself: ‘...many agreed, but many were cowardly’. Further, Viroy and his companions are referred to in the third person – “they”, “them” and only twice “we”, “ours”.

‘When they (Viroy and his companions) reached the court of the (Khazar) prince, the nobles stood in front of him. There we (Viroy and his companions) saw them (the Khazars) sitting with their legs crossed...’

‘Then they ordered them (Viroy and his companions) to sit down and eat with them and, placing in front of them plates with unclean meat, they ordered them (Viroy and his companions) to tuck their legs in accordance with their customs... But they (Viroy and his companions) did not want to taste, because at that moment was a forty-day fast. He (the prince of the Khazars) allowed them (Viroy and his companions) this at the wish of the servants of God... Praising God, they (Viroy and his companions), having blessed the bread, ate it and pleased them (the Khazars)’.²¹⁶

It seems that the author wrote this based on eyewitness accounts and, in places, kept the narrative on their behalf. This is the only thing that can explain such a discrepancy. Otherwise, the author would hardly have hidden the fact of his presence.

It seems obvious to us that not only the above passage from Chapter 14 of Book 2, but the entire next Chapter 15 of Book 2 come directly from Albanian Catholicos Viroy and are a complete source. Chapter 15, which reports on the famine, and epidemics in Albania and where the narration is in the first person, by a contemporary of the events described, ends as follows: ‘I, Viroy, Catholicos of Albania, Lpinia and Chola, refraining from mentioning all other ugly things – blackness of bodies, baldness of heads...’.²¹⁷

It is quite obvious that the author was a contemporary of Javanshir and Varaz-Trdat, and he sets out the events of this period as an eyewitness, based on personal impressions, which is especially evident in Chapter 28 of Book 2.

‘...From there (from the caliph) he (Javanshir) went to Ostan, his winter residence. Then a general council gathered there. *We saw* everything there in an excessive amount, and saw a royal bird adorned with royal splendor. It looked magnificent...’ Further is a detailed description of a parrot. Then: ‘Just as before, it brought glory to the chambers of emperor Nero, now it is glorifying our laborious ruler. *Although much wondered by everyone*, still not as much *as I am prepared to speak*. *We saw* the pleasure of royal amusements’. Further, the author gives a detailed description of the elephant, and further: ‘*I truly say* that one movement of the hippopotamus’ head brought shudder to human nature. *We saw*, horses were brought there, proud, magnificent, for ride... What am I now to tell or talk about here? By God’s providence, Javanshir from birth was destined for glory and greatness, and until today the Lord allowed him to be glorious in everything. Therefore, *we saw* him in no way inferior to kings... Only because he did not have a crown on his head – the highest stage of royal greatness, and great honors – *for us*, humble slaves, he was great, not as emperor Augustus or Tiberius, but by his great good deeds he resembled Constantine who became famous to receive a crown from God. The magnificent prince of the East, *we, having put all this in you*, have exalted you’.²¹⁸

The author conveys his personal observations, impressions and assures the reader of their authenticity: ‘...I truly speak’. The author repeatedly notes the truthfulness of his story about Javanshir in other chapters. Thus, the author reports that Javanshir learned that Persian troops invaded Peroz and took his father and brothers captive: ‘*I truly say*, he was furious like a bear deprived of his cub and he quickly crossed the lands of his ancestral domain to the other bank of the Kur, to the province of Kapichan (Cambisena)’.²¹⁹

It should be noted that the author speaks about the authenticity of his narrative only in the chapters devoted to Javanshir. The fact that the author lived during the time of Javanshir is evident from the following words: ‘...until today, the Lord has allowed him to be glorious in everything’; ‘The king of the South ordered to reward the prince of the East with even greater honors, as a crowned king ...Since the dawn of time to present, no one has heard that such honors being bestowed on anyone’.²²⁰ And the author's appeal to Javanshir, i.e., ‘The magnificent prince of the East, we, having put *all this* in you, have exalted you’ evidently testifies that the author devoted his story to his patron, the great prince of Albania, Javanshir, by whose order he, apparently, wrote his book. This is supported by the author's questioning: ‘But what kind of feat *did my brave master accomplish* the next day?’²²¹

The fact that the author lived in the late seventh – early eighth centuries is also supported by the fact that all the events of this time are described by the author in great detail, with enthusiasm. There are no parallels in other sources for these data. And most importantly, biographical information, that is, the well-known author's phrase ‘Kaghankatuik, which is in the same province of Uti where I too am from’ is recorded in Chapter 2 (Book 2), one of those chapters, written, obviously, by the author himself.

Throughout Book 2, starting from Chapter 9, one can feel the consistency and continuity of the author's story and an attempt to develop rapidly the actions. In order not to damage the integrity of the narrative, the author avoids vagueness and deviations. In the course of the presentation, the author outlines a narrative plan.²²²

In the second book and the first chapters of the third book, unlike other parts, there is a connection between the chapters.

Throughout Book 2 and several chapters of Book 3, we managed to observe one stylistic feature of the author, a literary technique, consisting of contraposition,²²³ and common figurative expressions,²²⁴ which once again confirms our point of view that Book 2 (from chapter 9) and several chapters of Book 3 were written by the author himself.

Finally, the language and form of presentation, which differ from the language of not the entire Book 3, as T.Ter-Grigoryan noted,²²⁵ but only of the last few chapters of Book 3, confirm the assumption that not only Book 2 and the first few chapters of Book 3, but the entire Book 1 as well, were written by one author. It should be noted that although in the above parts in each individual case it is possible to isolate the author's sources from his own work, because they are not intertwined skillfully enough, nevertheless, the narrative and descriptive form of the author's presentation is common and the same for all the said chapters. Books 1, 2 and the first chapters of Book 3 are rich in story telling. These parts are imbued with the author's sincere patriotism. The author with love and in color describes the natural resources of his country: ‘Located among the high mountains of the Caucasus, the land of Albania is beautiful and charming with its numerous natural resources. The great Kur River quietly flows through it, bringing big and small fish, and discharges its waters into the Caspian Sea’ (HA, Book 1, Ch. 5).

Historical figures of Albania – King Vachagan III, great princes Javanshir, Varaz-Trdat, and Albanian Catholicos Viroy – are described by the author with admiration, in an imaginative manner, with numerous epithets and figurative expressions. They are distinguished by piety, wisdom, valor, concern for the improvement of the country.

Thus, Vachagan III is represented as a man of “great valor, wise, reasonable, tall and dignified”, “pious, crowned by God” (HA, Book 1, Ch. 17, 18). Catholicos Viroy – ‘an intelligent and wise man, strict in words and with a speech like a quick-writing quill, when he was giving advice and reasonable suggestions to kings and nobles’, ‘...his lips invented and composed parables like pearls in pure gold’ (HA, Book 2, Ch. 14). Javanshir – ‘proud, majestic, handsome...; skillful with weapons, dexterous as an eagle; ...successful in everything’, ‘was never shy, because by nature he was more daring against the many than against the few’ (HA, Book 2, Ch. 19). Varaz-Trdat, ‘...courageous, in his lofty mind, he showed love and friendship to everyone, ...he conquered them (his enemies) with his rational and affectionate love and attracted their hearts to him’ (HA, Book 2, Ch. 36).

There are no such figurative descriptive characteristics of historical figures in other chapters of Book 3. The first two books, as well as the first few chapters of Book 3, are characterized by the use of the epistolary genre: the author provides letters/messages, deeds, and orders in their original form.

Specifically, Book 1 includes a letter from Bishop Kyut to Vache (Ch. 11), Vachagan's question to priest Matthew (Ch. 24), a letter from Abraham to Vachagan (Ch. 25); Book 2 – John's letter to Ter Abas (Ch. 7), Javanshir's letter to Greek emperor Constantine (Ch. 20), Constantine's reply (Ch. 21), a letter from the Huns' ruler to Armenia (Ch. 44), the answer to this letter (Ch. 45); Book 3 – the message of the Albanian Council to Elias, Armenian Catholicos (Ch. 4), the letter of Elijah to Abd-al-Malik the Emir of the believers (Ch. 5), the reply of the Emir of the believers Abd-al-Malik to Elijah's letter (Ch. 6), the deed of the Albanian Council (Ch. 8), the deed of Elijah (Ch. 9). It is noteworthy that in other chapters of Book 3 there are no letters, messages, or deeds.

The first two books and the first chapters of Book 3, contain no dialogues, but there are oral messages, orders, answers to them, given in direct speech. All this gives the “History of the Aghuans” a variety of styles.

As for the remaining chapters of Book 3, the language is barren, laconic, the presentation form is schematic, has the character of chronographic and weather records, and is a bare fixation of faits accomplis and events.

So, the textual analysis of the “History of the Aghuans” and the study of the chronological system allows us to speak about its complex composition. The historical work, written in the late seventh – early eighth centuries, corresponds to Books 1, 2 and the initial chapters of Book 3 of the HA. Its author is a person who relied on a number of sources, preserving their characteristic narrative in the first person. He can be identified with one of the named authors, about whom is the famous phrase ‘Kaghankatuik, which is in the same province of Uti where I too am from’.

From Chapter 9 of Book 2 to the end of Book 2 and the initial chapters of Book 3, as we were able to identify, the author describes events as a contemporary and in most cases as an eyewitness.

After 710 (i.e., in the rest of the chapters of Book 3), this work was continued and is now known in a continued and edited form. The last chapter of the “History of the Aghuans” is a list of Albanian Catholicos up to 999, which could have been written either by the continuer of the HA or added by a person not related to the writing of the “History of the Aghuans”.

As is known, every written monument is a reflection of its own political era. Therefore, one of the main objectives of the researcher is to identify both the time and the purpose of the source.

Movses Kaghankatvatsi was a contemporary of the great Albanian Mihranid prince, Javanshir, whose reign was rightfully considered a period of political and cultural flourishing of Albania.

While two empires – the Sassanian Iran and Byzantium, as well as nomad Huns (Khazars), and later Arabs, tried to conquer Albania and make it their province, Javanshir, thanks to his military talent and wise, flexible policy, managed to restore and unite Albania within its original borders, i.e., from the Aras in the south and up to Derbent-Chola in the north, became its sovereign ruler, pursuing an independent domestic and foreign policy in the presence of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church. It is quite obvious that Javanshir, wishing to have a record of his reign in a special written monument, commissioned this book. This is one of the reasons for the creation of the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi. In the conditions of triple political pressure in order to mobilize the Albanian people to fight for the independence of the Albanian state, for the preservation of cultural and ideological identity, work was needed both to cover the events contemporary to the author – the glorious reign of Javanshir – and to reflect the entire previous history of the Albanian kingdom, starting from the biblical time, then from the first century and up to the early eighth century.

In summary, the objective of the author of the “History of the Aghuans” is to create a history of the rise and development of the Albanian kingdom, its ethnos, territory, political and spiritual life, the reign of its kings – the Albanian Arsacids and the great Mihranid princes – to show the continuity of the royal power, and the history of the rise of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church with its patriarchal beginning.

So, this written monument glorifies the independent statehood and the Apostolic Autocephalous Albanian Church.

The content of the “History of the Aghuans”

Chronologically, the source begins in biblical times and continues until the year 999. Structurally, it consists of three parts. In the first part, the narrative starts with biblical history. The Albanians descended from the tribe of Japheth, and not from the same tribe as the Armenians. The Albanians are one of the fifteen nations with a writing system. The historical geography of the country is presented with a geographical description, the characteristics of natural resources, and clarity of the country's borders. The fourth chapter begins the presentation of the real history of Albania. The local ruler, Aran, was named as the first ruler of the country, followed by a list of the Albanian kings of the Arsacids. The reign of kings Urnayr, Aswagan, Vache II, and Vachagan III the Pious is described with reality.

A prominent place in Book 1 belongs to the history of the spread of Christianity: the first, i.e., the apostolic period, and the second period, i.e., the rise of Christianity as the state religion. The church canons of the Albanian Church of the fifth century are of paramount importance in terms of meaning – “Aguen canons” of King Vachagan III

the Pious. Finally, the first part of the book ends with a description of the Huns' invasion in the fifth century.

The second book begins in 552 and ends in 703–711. It describes the Persian-Byzantine and Persian-Arab wars in which the Albanian troops took part under the leadership of the great Albanian prince Javanshir. This book tells the history of the house of Mihranid, whose rule was established over Albania after the fall of the royal power of the Albanian Arsacids. As for the Mihranids, the book describes the rule of Javanshir and Varaz-Trdat. It describes the activity of Albanian Catholicos Viroy during the invasion and conquest of the country by the Khazars.

The third book is devoted to the emergence of the Arabs in the historical arena. It briefly outlines the story of Prophet Muhammad, reports on the invasion of the Arabs in Albania, Armenia, Iberia, starting from 698 to 877. The third book reflects events of the internal life of Albania such as the last years of Varaz-Trdat's reign, relations with the Huns, the events of the church life in 705, the Chalcedonian activities of Albanian Catholicos Nerses-Bakur, the Albanian Council of 705 (canons of Albanian Catholicos Simeon). It reports the invasion of the Rus into the country in 944. The book ends with a list of Albanian rulers and Patriarchs Catholicoi.

The sources of the “History of the Aghuans” were: 1) folk tales and legends; 2) epistolary sources – official messages and correspondence of clergy and secular persons, which were kept in palace and monastery archives; and 3) information about those events, of which the author himself was an eyewitness or contemporary.²²⁶

The sources mentioned by K.V.Trever can be complemented with: 4) Albanian hagiographic literature (lives and martyrdoms of the Albanian saints); 5) Albanian chronicles (chronicle of Albanian Catholicos Viroy); 6) canons of the Albanian Church (the fifth century Aguen canons, canons of Albanian Catholicos Simeon of 705); 7) the acrostic of Albanian poet Davtak – Elegy On the Death of Javanshir; 8) foreign, non-Albanian sources – the chronicle of Hippolytus the Roman (third century), the works of other authors of the 5th–7th centuries.

Despite the traces of later editing of the “History of the Aghuans”, the entire nature of the presentation of the monument, the relative completeness of the information reported and the breadth of the author's range of interests, the developed chronological system, according to which all events of the internal and external life of the country are clearly dated, the presence, as one might say, of historical vision characteristic of the era, certain objectivity in the data reported by the author suggest the existence in Albania of certain traditions and experience of historical presentation.

The very content of the “History of the Aghuans” (which provides the Albanian history from ancient times to the early eighth century, the history of the Albanian ethnos, the rulers of the country, the Albanian Church, where the territorial boundaries of the country are outlined three times, which in different periods were stably located on the two banks of the Kur River, etc.), the manner of presentation, the author's attitude to the events described, the attitude to historical figures (Catholicos Viroy, Vachagan III, Javanshir, poet Davtak), the author's well-knit chronological system – dating events based on the rule of Albanian rulers, as well as on the rule of Persian and Byzantine kings, etc. –

all this gives the basis for the only conclusion that “History of the Aghuans” was written by an Albanian for the Albanian population.

The manuscript basis of the written monument

1. All manuscripts of the “History of the Aghuans” trace back to two sources (and form two groups) – to the 13th century manuscript No.1531 [Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Matenadaran], (group 1, Armenian edition) or to the 17th century manuscript No.1725 = No.1721 [Matenadaran] (group 2, Albanian edition). All editions (except for the English edition of C.Dowsett, who, considering both groups, made his English translation according to the edition of K.Shahnazarian²²⁷) are based on group 1 manuscripts. According to K.Dadayan,²²⁸ group 2 (Albanian edition, our Chart 1) consisted of two manuscripts – No.1725 = No.1721 of the 17th century and No.2561 of 1664 [Matenadaran]. C.Dowsett added the following manuscripts to this group: P₄ 220 [National Library of France, Makler Catalog], BM Or 5261 [British Museum, Conybeare Catalog], V₁ No.1485 and V₂ No.1146 [The Venetian Mechitarist Collection] and Q [From Nagorno-Karabakh].

In our opinion, the list of group 1 of the Albanian edition can also be supplemented with the Petersburg manuscript ЛО ИБАН С-59.

2. We have included four manuscripts for the work under study, of which two are of the Albanian edition (ЛО ИБАН С-59 and P₄ 220) and two of the Armenian edition [ЛО ИБАН В-56 and P₁ 217 (Makler catalog)], as well as all editions of this source: two ancient Armenian editions of N.Emin and K.Shahnazarian (1860), Russian edition (1861) of K.Patkanov, English edition (1961) of C.Dowsett and an edition in Modern Armenian (1969) of V.Arakelyan. Giving preference to group 2 (our Chart 1), we took for the basis of our study the Petersburg manuscript ЛО ИБАН С-59 and the Parisian P₄ 220 which until now have not attracted the attention of researchers for various reasons and, probably, not least because of their late dating (origin) to the 17th–18th centuries, as well as due to the difficulty of understanding the text (P₄ 220) written in *skoropis* (semi-cursive) handwriting.

Archaeographic description

The title of the ИБАН В-56 copy is “The History of Aghuank” made by Movses Kaghankatvatsi (correction in pencil) from the same people (azga – Old Arm.) and the same country (ashkharkhe – Old Arm.); (he) begins with the birth of Japheth and continues till the end of the ninth century, outlining the history of his native country (zpatmutyun khayreni ashkharkhin – Old Arm.), government, Christian illumination, the continuity of spiritual government, etc. that relates to his people, and the circumstances relating to his country (sheet 2a). Sheet 1a bears the Russian title – “The history of the origin of the Aghuans (residents of the Russian Muslim provinces) by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, copied from an ancient manuscript kept in the Etchmiadzin library by Armenian archimandrite Hovhannes Shakhaturun”.

This copy was made by Ivan Nazarov in 1841 in St.Petersburg (postscript on sheet 1a in French by M.Brosset) from the copy of Hovhannes Shakhaturyants in 1829 (sent to

the Asian Museum). Shakhhatunyants, in turn, took the gigantic manuscript of 1289 (now Matenadaran No.1531) as the original. The IBAH B-56 manuscript contains three books of “The History of Aghuank” (sheets 4a – 270a), common contents (sheets 290b – 298a) and an index of personal names with a reference to a book, chapter, or sheet. This manuscript was used in the French translation by M.Brosset, the Russian translation by K.Patkanov of 1861, and a copy of the manuscript of the National Library of France – P₂ No.218. The pagination is new, the margins indicate the corresponding pages of the original of this copy; there are twenty lines per page, and the titles of individual chapters and books are in modern script, they were not in the original version. The backbone bears the inscription: “Histoire des Aghovans par Moise Kagkantwazi en arménien”. E.Kunik. Sur la première expédition Caspienne des Russes normands en 914, d'après la chronique inédite de l'Arménien Moise Caghancatovatsi. – Bulletin, t. IV, N 12, 13.

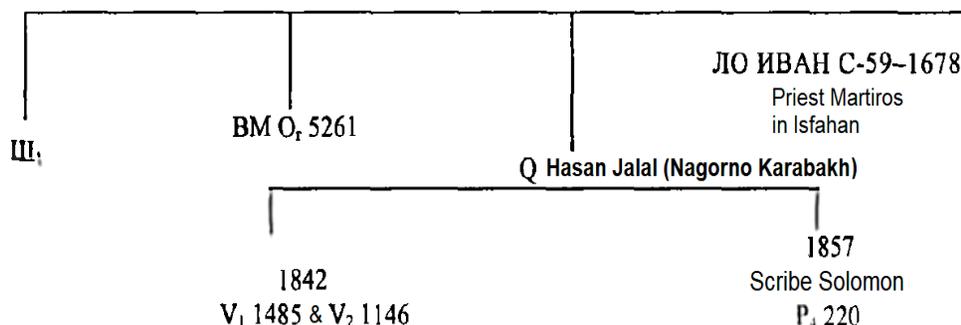
The IBAH C-59 list is untitled. The list contains “The Church History” by Eusebius of Caesarea, the “Jewish War” by Flavius Josephus, the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the “History of the Nation of the Archers” by Grigor Akantsi, etc. The copy of the “History of the Aghuans” was made in Isfahan in 1678 by Priest Martiros. This copy is referred to as “Van” from I.A.Orbeli's collection (See: R.R.Orbeli Collection of Armenian manuscripts of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR / Records of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1954, vol. VI, p. III). The manuscript is on pages 287a – 375b. The text on each page is arranged in two columns, thirty-seven lines each. In this copy, sheet 287a-b contains the “Table of Contents of Book 1 of the “History of the Aghuans”, on sheets 308b – 309a – “Second (book) is the history of the inhabitants of the East – the Albanian land”, on sheet 350b – “Table of contents of the (third) book of the Albanian history”. Unlike manuscript No.1531 of 1289, in this manuscript the table of contents is written in the same handwriting as the entire manuscript.

As for *manuscript P₄ 220*, it was copied in Shusha in 1857 by scribe Solomon (Makler catalog). The untitled manuscript contains 560 pages-sheets, eighteen lines each, in *skoropis* (semi-cursive) handwriting. It consists of three parts, each of which is preceded with a table of contents.

3. C.Dowsett reports that P₄ 220 was copied from an unknown manuscript and that its content is the same as in the manuscripts of the British Museum (BM Or 5261), the Venice collection – (V₁ 1485 and V₂ 1146) and the manuscript from Nagorno-Karabakh (Q).²²⁹ It seems to us that the prototype of these manuscripts, i.e., P₄ 220, V₁ 1485 and V₂ 1146 could only be the Q manuscript from Nagorno-Karabakh, belonging to Hasan Jalal, who in 1842 sent it to a Venetian monastery. And it was returned to him at once.²³⁰ Undoubtedly, this Q manuscript served as the original for two manuscripts of the Venetian Mechitarist collection (V₁ and V₂). And it is quite obvious that scribe Solomon made the P₄ 220 copy from the Q manuscript in 1857 in Shusha, after it had been returned to Hasan Jalal. C.Dowsett, apparently, was not aware of the identity of Shusha with Nagorno-Karabakh and therefore, like other researchers, did not understand what was the original for the P₄, V₁ and V₂ manuscripts. Therefore, it is not surprising that their

contents are identical, as noted by C.Dowsett. So, the study allowed us to complement the genealogical table, the basis of the 17th century manuscript No.1725 with a new branch*:

Manuscript No.1725 of 17th century



It is of crucial importance that the third part of the P₄ 220 manuscript contains four additional chapters, which are not found in other manuscripts (Makler catalog). These are chapters 25, 26, 27, 28, p.454 (table of contents) and p.551-560, which reflect the events of the 13th century, the period of the reign of Albanian prince Hasan Jalal. Here are the titles of these chapters: Chapter 25 – “About the battle – bloodshed – defeat that took place in the Khachen land, and about the pious ishkhan – Prince Jalal”; Chapter 26 – “About the church which was built in Gandzasar by ishkhan – prince Jalal – Dovla Hasan”; Chapter 27 – “On the death of the pious ishkhan Jalal Dovla Hasan”; Chapter 28 – “On the death of ishkhan Shahinshah and his son Zacharias” [Shahinshah is Hasan Jalal's cousin. – *F.M.*].

These chapters are interpolations made later. We believe that these four additional chapters must be included in the V₁ and V₂ and Q manuscripts because, as we noted, they have one common prototype Q. As for other manuscripts of the same Albanian edition [group 2, chart 1], these additional chapters, from our point of view, must not be in them, since they must only be present in manuscripts dating back to the source [or sources] from Nagorno-Karabakh.

Although, given the current state of knowledge of these manuscripts, strictness is hardly appropriate, nevertheless, we will try to substantiate our statement and find out the reason for this late interpolation.

As is known, the Albanian state ceased to exist in the eighth century. The 12th–15th centuries represent the time when one of the largest feudal formations, the principalities of the former Albanian state – the Khachen principality (Artsakh) began to rise, which roughly occupied the territory of the contemporary Nagorno-Karabakh.

In the 13th century, this principality was headed by a prominent political and cultural figure of the era, Hasan Jalal, whose reign was characterized by an economic, political, and cultural upsurge of the country. Hasan Jalal was the suzerain prince of Khachen and Aran

* Compared to the first edition of our monograph in 1977 (Мамедова Ф. “История албан” Моисея Каланкатуйского как источник по общественному строю раннесредневековой Албании, с.20)

[in part], and he was outside vassalage of the Georgian kingdom and the Zakaryan principality. In Armenian, Georgian, and Persian synchronous sources, as well as in epigraphs, he is endowed with high titles like “Prince of Princes, Kingly Brilliant”, “The Prince of the Khachen lands”, “The Great Prince of Khachen and Artsakh”, “The King”, “The Crown Wearer”, “The King of Albania”, “The Great Border-Keeper of Albania”.²³¹ Spiritual centers were created at the time of his reign. One of the best creations of Christian architecture in the medieval Caucasus, the Gandzasar temple, was built.

The Albanian Renaissance could not but affect the written tradition. Perhaps Hasan Jalal himself or the representatives of the Khachen princely house [obviously, spiritual ones], trying to prove the continuity of the Albanian kingdom and the ruling dynasty, found that “History of the Aghuans” should be in line with the new policy and reflect it. To this end, they supplemented it with the events of the 13th century, i.e., the reign of Hasan Jalal.

Back on our premise that not all group 2 manuscripts [Albanian edition, Chart 1] were interpolated, as well as in the light of the above-said about the Khachen principality, we believe that only the manuscripts of “History of the Aghuans” from Nagorno-Karabakh (formerly Khachen), as well as those that go back to them, were interpolated, overlapped with the events of the 13th century, i.e., overgrown with four additional chapters.

4. The tables of contents of the manuscripts of the two groups are indicative. Group 2 [ЛЮ ИБАН С-59 and P₄ 220] says: “Headings of the first part of *the history of the Albanian people* (“Aluanits azgn”). And in group 1 [ЛЮ ИБАН В-56]: “The heading of each chapter of the three parts of *Albanian history* (“patmutyun aluanits”)”. In editions, we read: N.Emin – “Table of contents of the history of the Albanian land”; K.Patkanyan – “Table of Contents”, C.Dowsett – no table of contents at all; Arakelyan – “Table of Contents”. In group 2 manuscripts (Chart 1), in contrast to group 1 manuscript (Chart 2), the concept of the “Albanian people” occurs more often; it is often identified with the concept of the “Albanian country” or “Albanian” in group 1 manuscript. The concept of the “Albanian people” is also encountered in group 1 manuscripts (see Chapter 2 where Kaghankatvatsi, trying to find out the origin of the Albanian people, traces it to other children of Japheth, in contrast to the Armenians and Georgians; see also Chapter 3 where Kaghankatvatsi mentions the Albanians among the peoples (azgk) who have a writing system). The concepts of the “Albanian people”, and “Albanian country” are synonymously alternated. In light of what has been revealed, we believe that the attempt of some Armenists to assert that Movses Kaghankatvatsi did not reflect the history of the Albanian people but reflected the history of the Albanian country [K.Patkanov], and that there was no Albanian ethnos at all (B.A.Ulubabyan,²³² S.Smbatyan²³³, et al.) is absolutely unjustified.

5. Group 2 manuscripts (Chart 1) differ from those of Group 1 by different versions of materials concerning the Albanian Church. It was K.Dadayan who revealed it in Book 1 Chapter 9 and Book 3 Chapter 8, 23. In this respect, the contexts of Chapter 14, Book 1 are very revealing. Specifically, in ЛЮ ИБАН С-59 and P₄ 220 (group 2): ‘*The consecration of Saint Grigoris and his arrival in Albania. His illumination and martyrdom and the uncovering of his relics*’. But in ЛЮ ИБАН В-56, P₁ 217 (Chart 1): ‘*Brief word about Saint Gregory, the Illuminator of Armenia, and about his blessed sons; about Saint Grigoris' consecration by him; his arrival in Albania and the illumination of it, his*

martyrdom and the uncovering of his relics'. The italicized line is an addition. It is significant that in the editions of N.Emin, K.Patkanov, based on group 1 manuscripts (Chart 2), this text is even more overlapped, has a lot of additions: '*A short account of St.Gregory, the Illuminator of Armenia, and his blessed sons; and of the consecration of St.Grigoris, son of Vartanes, grandson of the great St.Gregory, as the Catholicos of Albania and Iberia...*'. The ending is the same. The highlighted part is again new. The study showed that group 1 manuscripts underwent the last confessional revision both in the 18th and in the 19th centuries. The editions of "History of the Aghuans", based on group 1 manuscripts, were, in turn, also edited by publishers. Therefore, the text of "History of the Aghuans", subjected to erasing of individual fragments, overlaying additions, clarifications from Armenian sources, became similar to the text of the Armenian sources. And so, some researchers had a wrong idea about the sources of "History of the Aghuans". In this written monument, they found whole text borrowings from Armenian sources (see, for example, S.Smbatyan²³⁴).

This can be clearly seen in many chapters. Let's consider again Chapter 14 of Book 1. There are discrepancies both in the title of Chapter 14 [above] and in the text itself. That is, the text of Chapter 14 of group 2 [C-59 and P4 220] begins with the words: '*That which relates to the sacred – the elder [erits], the blessed Gregory, the Illuminator of Armenia, can be learned from the history of Agathangelus. But what happened in Albania with the help of the youth Grigoris is in this writing*'. *This passage is only found in manuscripts C-59 and P4 220.* And further [in C-59 and P4 220] after this excerpt, the manuscript presents the story of the preaching activities of Gregory the Illuminator and the youth Grigoris in Albania. But in all other manuscripts [group 1] and in all editions, this presentation is preceded by three or four pages, which tells us about the genealogy, the origin of Gregory the Illuminator, his preaching activities in Armenia, about the saints of the Armenian Church – Hripsime and Gayane, about the Armenian king, Trdat. And only after that, the history of Albania is given. So, this chapter clearly shows the traces of the Albanian and Armenian editing. The Albanian editing [group 2] included everything that is directly related to the history of Albania. And what this chapter begins with in group 1 manuscripts and editions represents the Armenian editing, which presents the history of the Armenian Church. The Armenian editing brings the text of "History of the Aghuans" closer to the text of Armenian sources [*Agathangelus*].

6. The difference between group 2 and group 1 manuscripts is that group 2 manuscripts include information that is not in group 1. That is, in Chapter 4 of Book 1 of group 2: 'From his children, they say, descended the peoples of the Utik, Gardman, *Tsovdia and Gargarean* principalities', '*Tsovdia and Gargarean* principalities' are added. In Chapter 8 of Book 1 of group 2, we read: 'The *Alanian* prince [brother Satinyak] falls into the hands of Artaxias.' And in group 1 the narrative is about the Albanian prince.

7. Colophon of the copies of "History of the Aghuans". A characteristic feature of medieval manuscripts is a colophon – a postscript, which states the name of the scribe, the time and circumstances of scribing, the name of the commissioner, etc. There are certain rules for writing colophons. Colophon (Old Armenian "hishatakarán") is a documentary source for the exact dating of a section, part, manuscript (in which it is recorded), for the study of many questions of history.

The study of two copies of the “History of the Aghuans” convinces of the need to identify and publish colophons, not only because of their importance for studying the history of Albania, but also due to the fact that some researchers misunderstand and misinterpret them. Thus, the name of scribe Adrian in one of the colophons prompted Z.I.Yampolsky to think that the author of the entire manuscript of “History of the Aghuans” is this Adrian.²³⁵ This opinion should be rejected because its dissemination makes it difficult to identify the name of the true author.

The fact that Adrian is a scribe, and that the text associated with him is a colophon that meets all the requirements of a canonical colophon, is quite obvious: ‘I, Adrian, who wrote this, ask you, the readers, to mention me, the unworthy, and not to forget Patriarch Abbas, in whose days the light appeared in our country, and Vechik together with them, their forerunner, let the Lord remember him by His great mercy. And you remember us, may Christ reward you together with the blessed martyrs, now and ever. Amen’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 6).²³⁶

8. Given the current state of study of the manuscripts of the two groups, as well as the realities of that time, it can be assumed that of the two groups of manuscripts, group 2 manuscripts (Chart 1) are closer to the original, have not undergone changes, did not attract due attention of Armenian researchers and therefore retained traces of the Albanian edition.

‘Among the Transcaucasian sources, it is hardly possible to find a monument equal in its historical significance to “History of the Aluan Land”, says assessment of the monument given by Caucasian expert A.P.Novoseltsev. This is ‘primarily a source on the history of the ancestors of Azerbaijanis and the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh. The monument also contains the most valuable information about the Khazars, interesting data on the history of Georgia... materials on Iran’.²³⁷

*b) Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, David Alawik,
Smbat Sparapet, Hethum the Historian, Stepanos Orbelian, Gregory
Patmich-Magakiya, Vardan Areveltsi (Albanian),
Esayi Hasan Jalalyan, Makar Barkhudaryants*

The Albanian literature of the 5th–8th centuries also includes Albanian hagiographic literature, the chronicle of the Albanian Catholicos Viroy, and the Albanian poet Davtak’s “Elegy on the Death of the Great Albanian Prince Javanshir”.

As is known, after the fall of the Albanian kingdom due to the Arab conquest in 705, Albania ceased to exist within its original boundaries, from the Aras in the south to Derbent in the north. The Albanians of the plain, being converted to Islam, were assimilated by the Turks. But in the mountainous parts of historical Azerbaijan, in the southwestern and northwestern parts, a part of the Albanians is ethnically preserved with all the characteristics of the ethnos.

There was a new round of political, economic, and cultural development for the Albanians in the 9th–13th centuries, i.e., the Albanian Renaissance. This is the period of the formation of the Albanian kingdoms in Shaki, Syunik, Utik, and in Artsakh, Albanian-Artsakh-Khachen principality-kingdom headed by the descendants of the Albanian Mihranids, Hasan Jalal and his successors.

It was in this period that the role of Ganja rose, which became the center of spiritual Albanian culture, as well as the center of the Muslim renaissance. This city gave the medieval Christian culture such famous representatives of local Albanian historiography as David Alawik, Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Vardan the Great – Areveltsi (Eastern) – Albanian, Gregory Patmich, Smbat Sparapet, and Hethum the Historian (Hayton of Corycus), who in their priceless works reflected certain aspects of Albanian society and its political and spiritual life. Their works also covered the political events that took place in the Caucasus in the 11th–13th centuries – the periods of Seljuk and Mongol domination both in the Caucasus and in Asia Minor, preserved valuable information about the history of Georgia, Armenia, Byzantium, the history of Christianity in general and Albanian Christianity, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, in particular.

The written monuments of local Albanian historiography include the works of Mkhitar Gosh. A prominent figure in Albanian culture, Mkhitar Gosh, was the author of a large number of parables, fables, the famous “Book of Law”, “The Albanian Chronicle” and one hagiographic work, “Martyrdom of Khosrow of Gandzak” (of Ganja). A well-known lawyer, Mkhitar, nicknamed Gosh, a native of the city of Gandzak – Ganja, which he calls the “mother of cities”, the “metropolis”,²³⁸ was educated by vardapet Hovhannes of Tavush and then in Cilicia.²³⁹

Mkhitar Gosh was well regarded, and in matters of dogmatic theology, church ritual, as well as in matters related to church regulations and monastic charters, his opinion was considered decisive.²⁴⁰ Gosh was the founder of the monastery and monastery school of Nor Getik [in the area of the present-day Gazakh], which has become a famous center of illumination both in Albania and neighboring countries. People came here not only to study, but also to improve their knowledge. Nor Getik was also called Goshavank (the monastery of Gosh).

The famous students of Mkhitar Gosh were Vardan Areveltsi (Eastern) and Vanakan Vardapet. It was Vanakan's disciple Kirakos Gandzaketsi who provided most of the information that we have about his “spiritual grandfather” Mkhitar Gosh.²⁴¹

Mkhitar Gosh moved from Ganja to Khachen and settled in the Getik monastery, where he stayed until the earthquake of 1139, which destroyed the monastery. With the help of Khachen prince Vakhtang and his entourage, Mkhitar Gosh founded the above-mentioned Nor Getik (New Getik) monastery, where he died in 1213.²⁴² Mkhitar's “Albanian Chronicle”^{*} which, according to the author's intention, was a continuation of the story written by Daskhurantsi-Kaghankatvatsi, describes the events that took place in Albania in 1130–1162, during the Seljuk domination.²⁴³ ‘But the work started by Gosh remained unfinished’.²⁴⁴

In manuscript No.1237 of “The Albanian Chronicle”, there is an ending: ‘...the creation of this chronicle was postponed due to domestic, not foreign persecution, which fell on our shoulders as a burden – we also considered it necessary to include in it a list of the Albanian Catholicoi, and, having properly combined, we [also] would now have them all in the following order’.²⁴⁵ This list of the Albanian Catholicoi is of undoubted

^{*} The Armenian text was published by G.Alishan in 1901, the English text by C.J.Dowsett in 1958, and the Russian text by Z.M.Bunyatov in 1960.

value for us, for it contains the names of the patriarchs from the founding of the Albanian Church up to the 12th century inclusive. The very title of the list is interesting: ‘The list of Albanian patriarchs consecrated after Lord Elisha (Eliseus) who came from Jerusalem’.

The title emphasizes the apostolic nature of the Albanian Church, as well as the fact that its origins go back to the city of Jerusalem.

A monument of great importance to Albanian legal studies is Mkhitar Gosh's “Book of Law”, which crystallized the legal norms of a past life, reflected the social and legal relations of various classes and strata of Albanian society.

Z.M.Bunyatov, for the first time, rightfully drew attention to the fact that the title of Gosh's legal work is known in the manuscript as “Datastanagirk – Book of Law” and that the publishers of this work, adding the word “Hayots” (Armenian) to the title, created a new, not Gosh's, title “Datastanagirk hayots”, i.e., “Armenian Book of Law”. Based on this, as well as on the fact that Gosh created his “Book of Law” at the urgent request of the “noble head of the churches of the Albanian house”, Catholicos of Albania Stepanos III, and that the sources of the “Book of Law” were both the laws of the Eastern Roman Empire, the laws of Moses, and the Albanian church canons, Z.M.Bunyatov came to a fair conclusion that the “Book of Law” by Gosh should be considered a monument of Albanian literature* written in Grabar.²⁴⁶

A.S.Mnatsakanyan, considering Z.M.Bunyatov's conclusion erroneous and “trying” to deny it, nevertheless, had to admit and confirm that Gosh's manuscript was really known under the title “Book of Law of Mkhitar Gosh” and the word “Armenian” was “incorrectly selected for the published text”^{247**} by V.Bastamyants (Gosh's publisher). We will try to identify the historical prerequisites for creating the “Book of Law”.^{***}

The creation of a historical and legal document, the “Book of Law”, was not an accidental will or desire of Mkhitar Gosh only, but it was a historical necessity.

The fact is that before the fall of the Albanian state (eighth century), during the reign of the Albanian kings and the great princes who followed them, the social and legal relations of the country's social strata, legal norms were regulated by canonical decrees (canons) of Albanian councils, as well as secular laws issued by the rulers of the country – kings, great princes.

However, in the period from the 8th to the 13th century, in the absence of Albanian statehood, in the absence of a single power within the entire country, most of the Albanian population was Islamized, de-ethnicized and used Islamic law – Sharia. In the period of Seljuk domination, the Sharia-based Muslim law was in use. Almost all cases were dealt with in the Sharia court, except for those related to state crimes. According to the principles of the Sharia court, the rights of non-Muslims in legal proceedings were to some extent

* Copy of “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh No.488, dated 744 of the Armenian calendar (1295), bore the title “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh without the word “hayots”. The same copy was similar to the copy belonging to the Albanian Bishop, Sargis Jalalyan [coming from the Hasan Jalalyan family] (“Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Пер. А.А.Паповяна. Ереван, 1954, с. XXXVI-XXXVII).

** As for A.S.Mnatsakanyan's rejection of Z.M.Bunyatov's position, Mnatsakanyan's assumptions are extremely rudimentary, as detailed below.

*** This is the only edition of the original text of the Book of Law: Мхитар Гош. Армянский судебник. Вагаршапан, 1880 (in Old Arm.).

limited and therefore the Sharia court did not suit both Christians and Sharia itself. Muslim judges did not hear the cases of Christians but sent them (Christians) to litigate according to their own laws.²⁴⁸ The rest of the Albanians, the Christian population surrounded by non-Christians, survived only thanks to the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, which acted as the central general ethnic organization. It was in this context that the political and cultural revival of the Albanian principality – kingdom (of Khachen) was marked and matured, the rise of Albanian self-awareness was observed, the need arose to create a legal document for Albanian Christians that would regulate all aspects of their life. The Book of Law could help the Christian Albanians to resist not only alien religious and political influences, but also ideological unity with foreign Christian churches.²⁴⁹

By that time, the Albanians had accumulated a large number of both translated (from Syriac, Greek, Armenian) and local original canonical texts.

Mkhitar Gosh's "Book of Law" was created only for the Albanians – and there should be no doubt about that. As is known, the Armenians had legal monuments of their own – the "Armenian Book of Canons" ("Kanonagirk") created in the eighth century by Odznetsi.²⁵⁰ As is known, scholars of Armenian historiography, without exception, consider Gosh's "Book of Law" to be Armenian.²⁵¹ Then the question arises, why, given the presence of Odznetsi's "Kanonagirk" which was used by the Armenians and which perfectly satisfied the needs of Armenians up to the 20th century,²⁵² create in the 12th–13th centuries the new "Book of Law" by Gosh (the numerous sources of which include the "Kanonagirk"]? And if Gosh's "Book of Law" was nevertheless created for Armenians in the 12th–13th centuries, another question arises: why should Smbat Sparapet have created a new "Legal code" for the Cilician population, with the main source being the same "Book of Law" by Gosh?²⁵³ In our opinion, this can be explained on the basis of both the Albanian and Armenian realities simply and logically by the fact that Armenian "Kanonagirk" of Odznetsi was not in line with the social structure, legal norms, judicial system and legal proceedings of the Albanian Christian population, in the same way the Albanian "Book of Law" by Gosh was not quite acceptable for the judicial system of Cilicia with its mixed population, including the Albanians, and the Armenians, and other ethnic groups.

Gosh created his "Book of Law" for the Albanians, which is confirmed by a great deal of evidence. In this respect, the Introduction is very eloquent. That is, Mkhitar Gosh, in an extensive preface, outlining the objectives of the work being created, dates the beginning of his work with three synchronous dates: according to the Armenian chronology, according to the so-called Minor Armenian era, and according to the "Byzantine chronology". 'We started this work in 633 according to the Armenian chronology: subtracting a cycle (532 years) gives us 101 according to the calendar, which is called (among us) the Minor Calendar, and according to the Greek calendar – in 405 (i.e., 1184.)...'²⁵⁴

So, "among us" – the Albanians even had a chronological system of their own, in contrast to the Armenian era – the Minor Calendar, about which I.A.Orbeli had to note that it 'was not widespread but *adopted in Artsakh (the Armenized Albania)*'.²⁵⁵

Further, Mkhitar Gosh gives a brief description of the era, the political situation of the country, the circumstances under which he created his work: '...in the years of the long-established anarchy *in our kingdom*: at the time when only a few princes remained in the countries of Khachen, *in the days* he who took vows [the prince], named *Hasan* and his

son Vaktang who [resides] in the fortress called Hayterk [Haterk. – *F.M.*], and is the head of other princes, and in the lands of Cilicia – the great prince Ruben; in the year when George, the victorious king of Georgia, died, at the time when the Patriarch over Greater Armenia was Lord Gregory and the High Priest in our Albanian land was Lord Stefan'.²⁵⁶ As I.A.Orbeli correctly noted, in this fragment Gosh emphasizes the equality of the Great Prince of Cilicia, in the near future the king, and the eldest of the princes of Albania (Khachen-Artsakh), which is the motherland for Mkhitar Gosh – 'in our kingdom', 'in our Albanian land'.²⁵⁷ I.A.Orbeli made another remarkable observation that 'Mkhitar, listing the princes of Khachen, mentions neither Zakhariya nor Ivane Dolgorukov,²⁵⁸ representatives of the strongest of the Armenian families of that time...'.²⁵⁹ And all the more incomprehensible is why I.A.Orbeli, having made such interesting observations, absolutely groundlessly continues to consider Mkhitar Gosh an Armenian author: 'This once again emphasizes that, despite his *belonging to the Armenian Church*, despite his total dedication to the Armenian people and under the influence of the Armenian culture in which he grew up, Mkhitar did not lose the consciousness of his connection with Aran [Albania. – *F.M.*] and its largest and most significant city after the destruction of Partaw (Barda), his hometown Gandzak, i.e., Ganja'.²⁶⁰

On the contrary, the introduction to the "Book of Law", as well as Kirakos Gandzaketsi's reports about Mkhitar Gosh evidence that Gosh was an Albanian Christian, a vardapet (teacher) of the Albanian Church, and the so-called "dedication to the Armenian people", i.e., Gosh's ministry to the "Armenian people" looks in fact as follows:

1. Gosh's preaching and educational activities took place within the boundaries of historical Albania; 'There were many people who learned from him (Mkhitar) the art of preaching, for the rumor of his wisdom spread everywhere. *People came to him from all over*'. Further: 'Many people in the rank of vardapet, due to his fame, hid their rank, came to him and, together with his disciples, learned from him and were consecrated again. Many of his disciples were honored to become vardapets' (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, Ch.15)

Mkhitar's famous disciples were the Albanian Vanakan, the future teacher of Kirakos Gandzaketsi himself, and Toros from the Armenian Melitene, whose father was Armenian by birth and mother was Syrian (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, Ch. 15). So, what does it have to do with the "total dedication to the Armenian people"?

2. Gosh's literary activity: writing the "Albanian Chronicle" in which he reflected the history of the Albanians, "the land of Albania", "the Albanian country", and gave a list of Albanian patriarchs from the 4th to the 12th centuries inclusive; writing the "Book of Law" at the urgent request and demand of the Albanian Catholicos Stepanos III, which was supposed to serve the Albanian population; and writing a hagiographic work – "The Life of Khosrow of Gandzak", again – the life of an Albanian Christian. How can one see "dedication to the Armenian people" in Gosh's work?

As for A.S.Mnatsakanyan's "attempts" to include Mkhitar Gosh and his "Book of Law" in the history of the Armenian people, he has no scientific evidence. The information given by him, and his logic, on the contrary, point to the opposite.

Specifically, A.S.Mnatsakanyan reports that Gosh, having learned about Georgian bishop Kiwrion, wrote that he (Kiwrion) was 'seized with envy as the see of Syunik and Aghuan was in a greater honor than his (see), therefore he separated from us'.²⁶¹ This

fragment has no hint in favor of A.S.Mnatsakanyan's concept. If he tries to discern this in “us”, we should remember that Kiwrion ideologically and confessionally separated from the monophysite faith, whose adherents were the Armenians (Armenian Church), the Albanians (Albanian Church), the Coptic Church, and the Jacobite Church. “Us” should be understood as the Albanians. A.S.Mnatsakanyan, calling Gosh “a brilliant representative of Armenian and world legal thought”, notes his active work, first of all, in the “Eastern part of Armenia”.²⁶² And the “Eastern part of Armenia” is understood by A.S.Mnatsakanyan and all Armenian researchers as the right-bank Albania, i.e., the territory between the Kur and the Aras rivers, i.e., actually Albania. Consequently, one way or another, Gosh was a figure of Albania.

It is known that Albanian Catholicos Stepanos, the patron saint of Mkhitar Gosh, with whom Mkhitar's relations were complicated, strongly insisted and urged Gosh to create the “Book of Law”, of which Gosh vaguely complained.^{263,264,265} A.S.Mnatsakanyan quite unfoundedly asserts that the relations between Gosh and Stepanos were ruined due to the fact that the Catholicos was hostile towards the Armenian clergy and that the work of Gosh (the “Book of Law”) ‘had to be subjected to fierce attacks and, above all, on the part of the Catholicos of Aghuank, since the author of this work [Gosh. – *F.M.*] *persistently strove to establish the traditional authority of the Armenian Church and the faith that the Armenian people adhered to*’.²⁶⁶ The fact is that Gosh was far from such “striving”, which is evident especially from Article 113 of the “Book of Law” “On the nine grades” – “on the church hierarchy”, which Armenian scholars consider someone's falsification.²⁶⁷ In this article, Gosh, following the Albanian historical and legal tradition and using “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, tells about the need for the nine grades in the church hierarchy, according to which the Albanian Church was patriarchal, that is, autocephalous. The article says: “...these defeated the Armenians in their dispute about issues of faith with the Byzantians and Franks, as evidenced by “History of the Aghuans” (“Book of Law”, Article 113). And, moreover, proceeding from the premises of A.S.Mnatsakanyan about “the hostile position” of Albanian Catholicos Stepanos to the Armenian clergy, a completely different conclusion follows, i.e.: there were disagreements between the Armenian and Albanian churches²⁶⁸ and the Albanian Catholicos strove to create his own “Book of Law” for his Albanian Christian population, which Gosh did.

On all pages of his book “On the Literature of Caucasian Albania”, the author proves that the Aghuans are Eastern Armenians, i.e., part of the whole. And speaking about the masterpieces of Albanian literature, in particular, about Mkhitar Gosh, he claims: “Will the denied Mkhitar Gosh [meaning the “denial” by Z.M. Bunyatov – *F.M.*] together with his work, become the property of the Aghuans? Certainly not!”²⁶⁹ The question arises, why does Gosh's Albanian affiliation (his Albanian origin, work for the Albanians) frightens A.S.Mnatsakanyan so much? According to his logic, the Albanians-Aghuans are the Armenians, part of them. However, A.S.Mnatsakanyan's stubborn desire to prove the contrary brings him to an involuntary opposition of Armenians to Albanians and vice versa, which undermines the foundations of his concept.

His only evidence is the language of Gosh's works, which was Old Armenian. But this is due to historical conditions, which will be discussed below.

Coming back to the “Book of Law”, let's mention the sources of this monument. Gosh himself writes: ‘It would be appropriate to write the “Book of Law” upon consideration by the Council or with the participation of many. I asked for this, but for many reasons it did not happen. But because this did not occur, we compensate with the writings, taking as witnesses their power and commands, especially the decisions contained in them on cases that actually took place, as well as reliable [from what we have personally seen or heard. – *I.O.*] laws of every people. Therefore, having collected the laws from these writings and from the people, we will write them and be free from reproaches’.^{270,271,272} As can be seen, Gosh himself refers to his sources as the writings and laws of each people.

At the end of the Introduction, Mkhitar indicates his sources: 1) customary law, 2) the lore of Christian peoples that has legal significance, 3) Muslim laws, 4) Old and New Testaments, and 5) the canons of the Armenian Church councils. As noted, A.A.Papovyan omitted the Albanian canons.²⁷³

By the time Gosh created the “Book of Law”, there was, of course, a large number of both translated and original canonical texts:

1. The Bible, the canons of the first three oecumenic councils, the apostolic canons, the canons of the “Holy Fathers” (Basil the Great, Athanasius of Alexandria, etc.). The above canons are external norms, adopted, common with other churches of the Christian East and obligatory for all Christians. They were dogmatic and organizational.

2. Local Albanian canons developed by the Albanian Church. As for “Kanonagirk” (the Armenian “Book of Canons”), it only had external norms in common with Gosh's “Book of Law”. But the canons of Armenian councils, regulating the internal life of the Armenians, were not used by Gosh, which V.A.Hakobyan himself has to admit.²⁷⁴ Gosh's “Book of Law” served the needs of the Albanians, regulated the norms of their social life. This is also confirmed by the fact that the “Book of Law” was created both at the insistence of the Albanian Catholicos and at the insistence of the Albanian (Khachen) “prince of princes” Vakhtang, who undoubtedly pursued their own practical goals. In one of the “Book of Law” manuscripts, there is a very important postscript (stored in the Venetian Mechitarist Collection) which says: ‘May God grant the God-loving and pious prince of princes Vakhtang, the son of Hasan, the will to unmistakably fulfil the commandments of this “Book of Law”’.²⁷⁵

The “Book of Law” retained its relevance for Albanian Christians in subsequent centuries, probably until 1836. It was used by other peoples as well. Gosh's persistent desire for his “Book of Law” to be corrected, supplemented, and enriched in the future, “in accordance with the situation and requirements of life” and time, came true.²⁷⁶ At the beginning of the 17th century, most of Mkhitar's “Book of Law” was included in the Code of Georgian king Vakhtang and was in use ‘not only before the annexation of Georgia to Russia, but also in Russian judicial regulations for the Transcaucasian regions during the first decades of the 19th century and accordingly became part of the Code of Laws of the Russian Empire’.²⁷⁷

In addition to the “Book of Law”, Mkhitar Gosh wrote a hagiographic work, a eulogy dedicated to Khosrow of Gandzak, which in the manuscript is referred to as the “Panegyric of Vardapet Mkhitar named Gosh, to the new martyr Khosrow” (in Old Arm.).

Structurally, the work is divided into two parts: the introduction and the history of the asceticism and martyrdom of Khosrow. The introduction itself, which reflects the economic and political situation of the country after the Seljuk campaigns, ‘when lawlessness, violence and death reigned, is of particular interest to us’.²⁷⁸ The introduction discusses the constant wars between the Seljuk emirates of Khlatab and Gandzak (Ganja), on the one hand, and the war of these emirates with Georgia, on the other. Undoubtedly, this devastated the Albanian population.

‘The king of Iberia, neighboring Albania, also wanted to devastate the country, deprive it of people and cattle; especially severe destruction was made to the fertile and rich land of Utik’.²⁷⁹ Mkhitar Gosh notes a terrible decline in morals, an increase in bribery: ‘Patriarchs, as well as priests consecrated in exchange for silver’. He continues: ‘Everyone has become so insolent that not only lay people who have not been consecrated as priests, but also their wives became senior priests. And everyone boldly commits crimes, not being afraid of anyone and not condemned by anyone’.²⁸⁰

The value of this work is that it reflects the world outlook, the political views of Mkhitar Gosh, who believes that only *the unity of the princes in the face of the enemy can save the country from enslavement*. This is also evident from his view on the fate of the Armenian princes, and he writes reproachfully, noting the specific feature of the Armenian princes: ‘...they (ishkhans – princes) preferred to be in the service of any nation than to obey each other and be free’.²⁸¹

Among other things, this hagiography gives a clear idea of the political situation in the country immediately before (or during) the creation of the “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh and once again testifies to the fact that this work was a historical necessity. Mkhitar dates his work in his traditional manner, i.e., dating with synchronization.* That is, he reports that Khosrow of Gandzak ‘The Holy Martyr of Christ reposed in Aran, in the capital Gandzak (Ganja) in 616 (1167), on the third day of month Arats... *during the reign of Greek emperor Kir-Manuil, during the rule of Armenian prince Toros honored by Greek emperor and Georgian king George with a princely title, at the principality of Hasan, the son of Vakhintang from Khachen, and during the patriarchate of the [religious] Lords of Greater Armenia, brothers Grigoris and Nerses, at the time of religious Lord of Aghuank Stepanos and Lord John, Bishop of Gandzak – [Ganja], under the ruler of the eastern [countries] Eldiguz, during the reign of Aslan-shah, the sovereign of the Elamites and Persians, and for us during the reign of Jesus Christ...*’²⁸²

Among the Albanian legal monuments is a small collection of canons written by David, son of Alawik (*hereafter* David Alawik) from the city of Ganja-Gandzak (11th–12th centuries). Mkhitar Gosh and Smbat Sparapet used the canons of David Alawik when writing their Book of Laws.

Considering this fact and the importance of this rare Albanian monument undoubtedly created for the Albanians, the Albanian population of Artsakh, Utik-Ganja, Shaki of the 11th–12th centuries, considering the insufficient study thereof, we consider it useful to provide almost the full text of the study-introduction (to the canons) made by C.Dowsett.²⁸³

* In fact, this dating method is characteristic of Albanian literature. See the Chronological system of Kaghankatvatsi (Мамедова Ф. “История албан” Моисея Каланкатуйского, с.49-60).

David of Ganjak. “Canonical Advice” Introduction

Until recent years, the “Xratk kanonakank”^{*} (Canonical advice) of Dawit son of Alawik written in or near Ganjak at the beginning of the twelfth century, remained in virtual obscurity. The few opinions that were expressed on the work in the 18th and 19th centuries were largely unfavorable. M.Chamchean considered it “chaotic and unintelligible”²⁸⁴, and C.F.Neumann held it to be C.F.Neumann believed that this work is not of significant importance as it was written without a definite order, and also with such a raw and intricate style, that it is difficult to grasp any meaning.²⁸⁵ J.Dashian dismissed it as consisting of ‘largely foolish matters’²⁸⁶ and nineteenth century Armenian literary histories treat it with little respect.²⁸⁷ It should be noted that this criticism was unjustified. However, in 1906/7, an article by K.Kostanean²⁸⁸ drew attention to the unique nature of Dawit of Ganjak's work and to its historical importance in providing a trustworthy picture of the life and beliefs of the author's own time.²⁸⁹ In 1910, G.Alisan cited a few passages from the Xratk in his work on ancient Armenian religious beliefs. Its significance for the history of Armenian law was discussed by X.Samuelean in 1939²⁹⁰, and subsequent literary histories have treated the work with greater favour.²⁹¹ In 1947, the fullest attention was paid to the work of the Albanian vardapet by J.Mecerian, who devoted to it a section of his *Bulletin armenologique*, comprising a critical bibliography, a description of the six manuscripts of the work known to him, a summary of the various topics treated by the vardapet, and an appraisal of his position among Armenian legislators. In this article Mecerian stressed the need for an edition of the Abrahamean Armenian text and a thorough study of the work, a need satisfied to some extent in 1952 by the publication by A.Abrahamean of the text of the Xratk kanonakank²⁹² in *Ejmiacin*, the monthly magazine of the Supreme Catholicosate of the Armenian Apostolic Church, a text on which the present edition is largely based. Relatively recently, in 1960, its importance was stressed by A.Ter-Pogosean.

Of the life of Dawit, son of Alawik, we know very little. Kirakos of Ganjak states that he was from the region of Ganjak and he dates his death at 589 Arm (1140–1141), that is, between 15 February 1140 and 13 February 1141.²⁹³

Vardan Arewelci, an Albanian writer, follows Kirakos.²⁹⁴ Samuel of Ani gives 580 Arm (1131–1132) as the death of the “illuminating and holy vardapet Dawit”. Kirakos further names Dawit as one of those who in 588 Arm (1139–1140) appealed to Grigoris, the Catholicos of Armenia, to arrange the election of a successor to the Albanian see which had remained vacant for eight years, so that there is, no doubt, that he considered Dawit to have died about 589 Arm. Another fellow countryman of Dawit, Mxitar Gos, who provides more details of this occasion,²⁹⁵ does not however record that Dawit himself wrote to Grigoris, but says that ‘in the year 588 of the Armenian (1139–1140) era a holy bishop Sahak from the house of the holy patriarch Lord Grigoris, catholicos of Armenia, came from Armenia at his [Grigoris'] command following the request and enterprise of the vardapet Grigor of our country [Kirakos: Grigor, son of Tokaker, of Ganjak] who was the pupil of the glorious and famous vardapet Dawit’. Mxitar names another pupil of

^{*} Hereinafter to be referred to as “Xratk”

Dawit, the vardapet Sargis, as a participant in the ensuing convocation held on 11 June 1139, but not Dawit himself. One may perhaps assume from Mxitar's account that Dawit was too old to take an active part in these affairs; it is not at any rate suggested that he was dead. 1140 is the date accepted as that of his death by Kostanean, Samuelean, J.Mecerian, and others, and assuming that he would have been born around 1070.²⁹⁶

As the many passages in the Xratk dealing with the relations between Christians and infidels (refers to Kurds)²⁹⁷ show, Dawit lived his life in a time of troubles for his church and nation. The Christians were subject not only to the contamination of their food, vessels and holy places by Muslims, and the misfortune of seeing women become their wives, mistresses or nurses: the church might clearly at any time be threatened by what Dawit calls “hopeless tyrants” (ch. 37), and attacks on Christians were not unknown (ch. 59). At the beginning of the 12th the only region of Caucasian Albania to preserve some independence was Xacen, part of the ancient province of Arcax, and the Xratk portray a medieval Christian community politically isolated from the rest of Christendom. From 970 to 1075, that is, for about a century prior to the date of Dawit's birth, Ganjak had been ruled by the Kurdish Shaddadids; after 1075 it was in the hands of the Seljuks, and the death of Dawit closely coincided with that of Qara Sonqur (Sanjar), amir of Adharbaidjan and Arran at Ganjak, and the succession of Djawali in 1140–1141. For a period of some eight years preceding his death, the see of Albania had been without a leader. In the absence of Albanian Catholicos, disorders would have multiplied, and although there is some doubt whether it formed part of Dawit's original composition²⁹⁸, ch. 97 seems particularly interesting in this respect. If the priests there criticized for various misdeeds²⁹⁹ fell outside the jurisdiction of the Albanian church, it would have been the duty of the Albanian catholicos to discipline them, and any unsolicited comments on the part of a vardapet from Ganjak might not have been well received. It seems possible, therefore, that there was no Albanian catholicos at the time, and that the chapter was written between 1131 and (11.6.) 1139. Dawit was born at troubled times, and his work is of **considerable historical importance in affording one a glimpse of the life and mentality of the Caucasian Albanians around the turn of the eleventh to twelfth centuries**, providing as it does much information on their everyday problems, their crimes and misdemeanors, their ceremonies and superstitions.³⁰⁰

The vardapet's own purpose was to compose a penitential book interpreting and elaborating Holy Writ for the guidance of priests in their duty of imposing penance or temporary excommunication on the erring, or, more precisely, to assemble a series of answers to a series of questions put to him concerning confession. A newly consecrated priest would be faced daily with confessions of misdeeds for which the existing canons gave no explicit guidance. Many of the chapters of the Xratk must have dealt with specific cases: how many cases of mothers falling asleep and stifling their children (ch. 40) or of children drowned whilst their father was getting drunk (ch. 39), for example, would a priest encounter in his lifetime? Abrahamyan calls the work a kanonagirk or “book of canons”, but only one MS³⁰¹ (manuscript) is entitled thus, although some others in fact refer to it as the kanonk of Dawit son of Alawik.³⁰² Dawit of course, had no authority to promulgate canons, and those manuscripts are more accurately entitled which refer to the work as “Questions concerning various confessional matters and events which have arisen”,

“Admonitory recommendations concerning various questions on confession”, Xratk kanonakan (“Canonical advice”) or merely Xratk (“Advice”). One may note in this respect that ch. 70 is simply entitled Xratk kanonakank.³⁰³

Xratk, or treatises, containing practical advice to priests and laymen, form a small genre of their own.³⁰⁴

Most of Dawit's work consists in the elaboration of degrees of penance, that is, exclusion from holy communion, varying with the gravity of the sin and the age, estate (lay or clerical) and the intentions of the sinner, the severest penalty being deprivation of extreme unction, that is, total excommunication, as in the case of wives who poison their husbands (ch. 74). **It is as difficult to determine the sources of the Albanian vardapet's rulings as it is to determine those of the penitential books of the Western Church.** One naturally looks first to the canons common to the early church (e.g., those of the Apostles, the councils of Nicaea) and canons laid down by various native Armenian councils and patriarchs (e.g., those of St.Sahak the Great, Nerses of Astarak, the council of Dvin).³⁰⁵

Dawit also differs much from his Armenian predecessors: e.g., the Council of Sahapiwan prescribed fines for anyone consulting witches, while ch. 95 renders him liable to life-long penance. On some questions Dawit's outlook is strikingly individual.³⁰⁶

The canons accepted by the Armenian Church had already in the eighth century been gathered together by the Catholicos Yovhannes Ojneci, and an example of the sort of collection which may have been at the Albanian vardapet's disposal. It is not however possible to point to any specific work as the model upon which Dawit' based his penitential. He usually takes an independent stand on the matters which interest him and very rarely refers to other sources apart from the Bible, one of the few exceptions being found in ch. 23, where he mentions previous vardapets. It is most unlikely that he knew anything of the penitential books of Irish and Anglo-Saxon churchmen like Sts.Cummian, Finnian, Columbanus, Adamnan, Theodore and Egbert (6th–8th centuries) current in the Western Church.³⁰⁷ He is more likely to have known of the Greek penitential attributed to John the Faster, patriarch (as John IV) of Constantinople 582–595, whose works were translated into Coptic, Syriac, Georgian and Slavonic,³⁰⁸ but we have no evidence that he knew of it; the styles of the two works are very different, but Dawit's general considerations in fixing penance, e.g. whether or not the sinner was over the age of 30, are largely in accord with those of the Greek author. It is most probable that the Albanian treatise was an individual and independent production designed to satisfy a local need, and the fact that there is no other work in Armenian of any magnitude which could be termed a penitential book adds to its importance. One of the striking features of the Xratk kanonakank, if they are fully representative of contemporary practice, is the conservatism of the Albanian Church in matters of penance.³⁰⁹

A penance might be accompanied by genuflections, two kinds of fasts and sometimes hard labor (ch. 81) and was to be performed publicly first outside the church and then inside. **This was a simplified form of the ancient Eastern system of public penance** in which penitents were classified into four “stations” – those who had to remain outside the church door during the whole liturgy, those, who could attend part or the whole of the service but could commune only on completion of their penance.³¹⁰ By Dawit's time the system of public penance had long been abandoned by the Byzantine Church and the Western system of

mitigated public penance was soon completely to be replaced by the system of private penance finally established by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). Dawit was clearly conservative in these matters, but it is possible that the “evil primates and priests” criticized in ch. 97 were applying a more evolved system consisting in the commutation of penance and possibly tithes, perhaps even in the sale of indulgences common in the Western Church in the 12th century. Although the *Xratk* deals mainly with sins against the spirit, they do in places touch upon crimes and misdemeanors against society, and there the penalty most probably reflects the customary law of the time.³¹¹

Thus, kidnappers responsible, directly or indirectly, for the death of their victims are considered “guilty of murder and shall be put to death” (ch. 58), *and, like the Paulicians, poisoners “are to have a fox branded on their foreheads and the sinews of their feet severed and are to be delivered into a leperhouse”* (ch. 58). Not many chapters, however, are devoted to civil matters, although homicide is discussed in chapters 39, 40, 48, 58, 59, infanticide and abortion in 40, 48, 57, poisoning in 53, 74, theft in 79, usury in 83, prostitution in 75, and questions of responsibility in 39, 42, 43. It is clear that Dawit is interested exclusively in the criminal’s soul, not in his physical punishment.

In the case of arsoners, for example, even those who cause the death of others (ch. 60), and in the case of thieves (ch. 79), only spiritual sanctions are prescribed. In some instances, where the Christian conscience may be troubled by the discrepancy between the laws of God and Caesar (the emperor, the supreme world power), Dawit even encourages the faithful to break the law, as in ch. 41, where the Christians are encouraged to resort to lies and bribes in order to cover the retreat of an escaped slave. This advice reminds us that the civil authority in these Eastern regions was largely non-Christian [Muslim – *F.M.*]. The *Xratk* are not a code of canon law. However, Dawit has been granted a place, among Armenian legislators, and the cautious appreciation of his position by Samuelean is worth reproducing here: “This collection of Dawit son of Alawik cannot truly be called a *datastanagirk*³¹² [lawbook – *F.M.*] still less an *orensgirk*...” [legal code – *F.M.*].³¹³ It was apparently formed on the basis of Armenian canonical “norms” and largely consists of explanations and instructions of canonical “norms” and rules.³¹⁴

However, considering on the one hand that this is the first attempt to form a collection of “canonical laws” with its special contents, among which norms concerning the laws of marriage and punishment are to be found, and, on the other hand, that it enjoyed definite currency in Armenia in that Mxitar Gos introduced some of its articles into his *Datastanagirk*, borrowing them word for word. We range this compilation by Dawit son of Alawik in the ranks of national lawbooks, as an attempt at codification, though executed on personal initiative and for restricted circles. We call the *Xratk* “the first, though unsuccessful, attempt to compose an Armenian legal code (*orensgirk*)”, the second attempt being the *Datastanagirk* of Mxitar Gosh. Among his fellow-countrymen Dawit undoubtedly enjoyed great renown as an authority on canon law, and Mxitar Gosh, although he did not name him as one of his sources, testified to this renown by drawing upon his work when compiling his own *Datastanagirk*. Kostanean, followed by Mecerian, has pointed to passages borrowed by him from Dawit: e.g., *Datastanagirk* I – 111, 112, 114; II – 109, 110 correspond to *Xratk* chapters 96, 35, 61, 41, 42 respectively. Kirakos, very generously, dubbed Dawit’s work “a beautifully arranged and useful work on canon law”,

and Vardan Arewelci, perhaps in accordance with the Preface of the Xratk, where, they are termed diwralur “easily heard or understood”, describes his “canons” as diwrahas “easily intelligible”.³¹⁵

In many places the text seems to be composed of rough notes and jottings rather than of continuous prose, and if one seeks to defend Dawit by attributing the faults to later scribes, as Mecerian suggests, one must assume that the corruption began extremely early, for the earliest manuscript available, those of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Erevan No.5607, Venice No.511, and Jerusalem No.2481) reveal like confusion.

It is true, however, that the work, considered of some practical importance, later underwent considerable editorial alteration.³¹⁶ Camcean says that “those who have copied it have added good and bad, omitting most of the useful material”.³¹⁷ The work was often abridged³¹⁸ and examples of editorial additions are found in chapters 69 and 86.³¹⁹ Although Dawit has taken no pains to classify the various matters of which he treats under distinct headings, some of the sequences of chapters – as they occur in Abr at least – fall naturally into three groups.³²⁰

In conclusion, it should be noted that the creation of the “Canons” by David Alawik, as well as the “Book of Law” by Gosh, was a historical necessity, **the need for the Albanians to have their own Christian court**, even if only an ecclesiastic one, in that part of historical Albania that was under the rule of Muslim emirs, who allowed Christian Albanians to administer judgment of their own.

Another representative of Albanian literature is Kirakos Gandzaketsi (of Ganja) – also a native of Gandzak (Ganja), born about 1201, died in 1272.³²¹ Sources refer to him as Areveltsi, i.e., a native of the East, Eastern, and also Getitsi, after the name of the Nor Getik monastery where he was a pupil of Vanakan, a pupil of Mkhitar Gosh and where he spent most of his life. Kirakos knew Albanian, Armenian, Persian, Turkish, Arabic. His “History” is a valuable monument of the history of the Albanians, Armenians and Georgians during the invasion and beginning of Mongol rule. Kirakos Gandzaketsi was an eyewitness to many events of that time, a contemporary of the Mongol invasion, was a great patriot of his hometown Ganja, which he calls “the great and wonderful city of Gandzak”; enumerating a number of outstanding figures, he does not forget to add that they were from Ganja, ‘where I am from’.³²² In the 1220s, when the troops of the Khorezm sultan Jalal ad-Din invaded, Kirakos and his companions moved to Taus [in Gardman gavar in the province of Utik], to the “great teacher Vanakan”, who founded the Khoranashat monastery in the Taus fortress. Vanakan and his pupils hid first in Khoranashat, and then in a cave in the mountains, south of the Taus fortress, where Vanakan founded a school and a book depository.³²³ From this cave, Vanakan with the brethren and disciples, including Kirakos, as well as with the peasants who had taken refuge there, was taken prisoner by the Mongolian commander Molar-nuin in the summer of 1235. In Mongolian captivity, Kirakos became a scribe and interpreter. The Mongol troops included Tatars and other Turkic tribes. Kirakos interacted with them. In the fall of 1235, the population of the fortresses [of the present Kazakh district. – *F.M.*] redeemed Vanakan, but as Mongols needed Kirakos, they kept him. But Kirakos managed to escape from Mongol captivity.³²⁴ He settled in the Nor-Getik monastery and began writing his work, which chronologically covered the period up to 1265. This is evidenced by his school friend, the famous Albanian historian Vardan the Great, Areveltsi-Albanian, in his

“Historical Compilation”: ‘Now, starting from 685 of the Armenian era [1236], to 714 [1265] during our lifetime, what the tribe of archers did with the countries... with Persia and Albania, with Armenia and Iberia ...all this was described in detail ...by vardapet Vanakan and ...our father vardapet Kirakos...’*

The work consists of 63 chapters (T.Ter-Grigoryan's edition – 63 chapters), of which 15 chapters are devoted to Armenia, 29 to Albania (of which 5 chapters are devoted to Cilicia – the Albanian rulers – Hethumids), 8 to Georgia, and the rest of the chapters reflect some religious issues common to the three peoples (Albanians, Georgians and Armenians), as well as issues of the political history of the Ilkhanate, its tax policy, its conquest of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia.

In his work, Kirakos notes that his work consisted of two parts:

1. “A brief history and list of the names of Saint Gregory and his heirs to the see” (48 pages in total, Chapter 2);

2. “A brief history of the regions of Albania, the underwritten” (6 pages, Chapter 9).

The remaining chapters describe the events that took place in Cilicia, Iberia, Armenia, and Albania, as well as the process of the Mongol conquest of the Caucasus and the attempts to conquer Asia Minor. Moreover, as noted above, most of the chapters are devoted to Albania.

First of all, surprising is the title of the first part of Kirakos's work. Such a title is not usual for Armenian historians and chroniclers, whose titles of works necessarily reflect the history of the Armenian state, or the history of a certain Armenian feudal clan, or the history of the Armenian people. Kirakos Gandzaketsi begins the first part with a description of the time of Gregory the Illuminator, the reign of Armenian king Trdat, and then sequentially lists the successors of the Armenian Catholicoi and Armenian kings, outlining the historical events that took place during the reign of each Armenian Catholicos. In fact, this section describes the political events in the life of the Armenian people and the history of the Armenian Church. This part, in contrast to the second one (“A brief history of the regions of Albania”), contains many historical inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and sometimes fantastic items, the same cannot be said about the events that took place in Albania and outlined by him both in the first and in the second parts.

Here are some examples. Kirakos writes: ‘...our Father, Saint Gregory, after the illumination of *our Armenian country*... consecrated more than 430 bishops’ (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.17). It is certain that this cannot correspond to historical realities. The same applies to Kirakos's report about the trip of Gregory the Illuminator and King Trdat to Rome to conclude a “holy alliance” (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.17), which is not confirmed by other sources. This legend could have risen in the Crusades era, when there was an aspiration of the popes to extend their influence towards the Eastern Christian churches, which echoed among the Cilician clergy in the period of which Kirakos himself was a contemporary. It [the legend] was apparently created to confirm a document called “Treatise” – “Dashantz tukht”, which was a clear falsification. Under the Cilician king Levon (1185–1219), the tendencies towards the unification of the Western and Eastern churches were especially strong, which was supported by part of the Cilician clergy headed

* “Всеобщая история” Вардана вардапета Великого. Венеция, 1862, с.146-147 (in Old Arm.).

by Bishop Nerses of Lambron (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.17, 202, note 28). To no greater extent is the report of Kirakos about the delivery of the “relics” of St.Gregory, Hripsime and Gayane to Constantinople true to the fact and is not confirmed by other sources (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.18). The statement that ‘Gregory [the Illuminator] hung a lamp over the Holy Sepulcher and prayed to God that it would kindle on the feast of Holy Easter, without fire brought, which sign continues to this day’ is also legendary (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.17) (i.e., until the 13th century – the lifetime of Kirakos).

Not corresponding to reality is the event described by Kirakos, that Armenian king Tiran killed Saint Husik allegedly for the following reason: emperor Julian (the Apostate) sent a plaque to the Armenian Church with an image of a devil similar to Julian with instructions to install it in the church, to which St.Husik opposed (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.20). In reality, however, this event could not have taken place, since Tiran and Catholicos Husik died before Julian became the emperor. According to other sources (Faustus of Byzantium, Movses Khorenatsi), the death of Husik was due to the hostile relations of the Armenian king Tiran to Husik (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.20, 204, note 50).

It is noteworthy that the first part, which describes the history of the Armenian people and in which there are many historical inconsistencies in the history of Armenia that we have noted, also contains some information about Albania, which, when checked, turns out to be historically reliable. Consequently, Kirakos was better informed and prepared for the presentation of the history of Albania than for the presentation of his so-called “Home Armenia”. Good knowledge of Albanian realities is observed both in the first part (of “The History of Armenia”)* and in the second part, called “A brief history of the regions of Albania”. Let’s note these Albanian realities in the first part: the information about Sanatruk, the Muskut ruler, St.Grigroris, the Bishop of Syunik Stepanos, Albanian Catholicos Viroy, the Syunik Church, Albanian Catholicos Hovhannes, Albanian Catholicos Ter-Hovsep III, the consecration of Armenian Catholicos Ter-Barsegh in 1080, etc. Of great interest is the author’s attitude to the events described, which clearly outlines the deliberate emphasis on the author’s Armenian origin. From the author’s preface [all highlighting made by us. – *F.M.*]: “To study the history of both **our** own country and foreign”; “...illumination of **our** Armenian country...”; “...especially with **our** Armenian people”, “...about the devastation of **our** Armenian country”.

Let’s trace once again the author’s attitude in the first part of Kirakos’s “History”: ‘...Our Father St.Gregory, after the illumination of **our Armenian** country’, ‘...they found **our** country and improved it’, ‘...Greek and Persian kings divided **our** country into two parts’, ‘...under Sahak the great light of science shone in the **Armenian country**’; ‘Moses, at the request of Sahak Bagratuni, who wrote the **history of Armenia**’, ‘...and the Persian king appointed Vardan as marzban of **Armenia** and entrusted him with **our country**’, ‘...especially to **our** Armenian people’.

As for the second part of the work, dedicated to Albania, Kirakos writes: ‘And in the second part we will tell about the illuminators of Albania, as **a people related to us and of the same faith with us, especially since most of their princes knew the Armenian**

* We named it indicatively, but in reality, it is called: “A brief history and list of the names of St.Gregory and his heirs to the See”.

language and spoke Armenian, their kings were subordinated to the Armenian kings, were under their rule, and the bishops were consecrated by St. Gregory and his heirs to the see, but their people remained together with us in the Orthodox faith,* and therefore it befits us that both nations be mentioned together’.

The very fact of emphasizing that most of the Albanian princes spoke Armenian proves that the Albanians, contrary to the author's assurances, were a different ethnic group.

We will dwell in detail on the inconsistency of these passages with historical realities. In the second part of Kirakos's work dedicated to Albania, one feels that the author knows well the Albanian realities, the history of Albania, and the Albanians, but for some reason he is hiding some rather important points. Specifically, he briefly but accurately reports on the missionary activity of the pupil of Apostle Thaddeus, Elisha, referring to him as “the first illuminator of the East”, the founder of the church in Gish, which is quite consistent with the data of Albanian sources. But, when writing about Albanian king, Vache II, he cites scanty but not so important data, and moreover, it is logically and factually incorrect. ‘Then Vache, who **was forcibly** converted to Mazdeism by king Azkert who killed Saint Vardan and his companions [Vardan Mamikonian in 451 – *F.M.*]. **Later, he (Vache), having left Mazdeism together with his throne, took** vows and lived an austere ascetic life, having reconciled with God, before whom he had been guilty’ (*Kirakos*, p.100). And the main reason for Vache's “abdication”, his deposition from the throne, was that he raised the Albanian people to fight against the Persian domination and led this fight. This anti-Persian, anti-Sassanian war lasted from 459 to 462. Kirakos could not but know this. But here, in this passage, Kirakos did not fail to mention Vardan Mamikonian and his companions, who fell victim to the anti-Sassanian movement (451–?!). In addition, Vache only pretended to adopt Mazdeism, as did the representatives of the Armenian and Georgian nobility, as Kirakos himself noted “forcibly”, under duress, i.e., he “had not been guilty”.

Now let's consider individual messages from this section. ‘The kings from the clan of h'Aik's tribe, Aran, who was appointed the ruler of those regions by Valarsace the Parthian, are as follows: Vachagan I...’ But, according to the data of another Albanian author, Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the Albanians descended from another tribe of Japheth, unlike the Armenians, and he does not trace Aran to h'Aik (HA, I, 2, 4). Kirakos knew well Kaghankatvatsi's work he refers to: ‘...for he who wrote the history of Albania’ (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.100). Thus, in connection with the Khalkidonite activities of Nerses-Bakur in 704–705, Kirakos reports that the Armenian Catholicos Elias consecrated Simeon as the Catholicos of Albania, and meanwhile, Simeon was elected by the Partaw Council. According to Kaghankatvatsi (III, 7): ‘After that, the council elected Simeon, a meek man, and consecrated him as the Catholicos of Aghuank’.

According to Kirakos, Armenian Catholicos consecrated Albanian Catholicos after Nerses Bakur. Starting with the Albanian Catholicos Hovsep II (848–873) and listing the subsequent ter Samuel (877–897), ter Sahak (927–945), Gagik I (947–961), he notes that David (VI) (961–968) was consecrated by Armenian Catholicos Ananias.

* i.e., in the monophysite faith.

Then Kirakos states that for twenty-five years, there was no spiritual leader in Albania. And then (after 25 years), according to Kirakos, Gagik, consecrated by Armenian Catholicos Grigor III Pahlavuni (1113–1166), becomes the Albanian Catholicos. Moreover, Armenian Catholicos Gregory (who was at that time in Western lands) ‘having consecrated the messenger, ordered the bishop of Karin [Theodosiopolis, now Erzurum. – *F.M.*] to go to the Albanian country and consecrate Gagik as the Catholicos of Albania. The bishop Karin Sahak and another bishop, having arrived in Albania, consecrated **twelve more bishops**, according to the requirement of the Scripture, and then consecrated Gagik as the Catholicos’ (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.102-103).

This passage about the consecration of 12 more bishops is a sufficient argument confirming that the subsequent Albanian Catholicos could be elected by their twelve bishops, without the consecration of Armenian Catholicos. One should not attach great importance to the information of Kirakos about the consecration of the Albanian patriarchs in the 9th–10th centuries by Armenian Catholicos and make far-reaching conclusions on this basis. In addition, Kirakos himself, in section “Brief history and list of names of St. Gregory and his heirs to the see”, reports that the **Albanian Catholicos Hovsep III**, by the decision of Kiurike, son of David, of the Bagratunis clan, **consecrated the Ani Catholicos Ter-Barsegh in Lori in 1080/1081**.³²⁵

As for the Albanian Church and its autocephaly throughout the 8th–12th centuries, another Albanian author of the 13th century, Vardan Areveltsi (Eastern), the Albanian notes that to the question of the Arab Caliph Omar, ‘How many independent Christian churches are there?’ Greek emperor Leo III (717–741) replied ‘twelve’ and listed them, mentioning among them the Albanian Church: “Ethiopian, Egyptian, Roman, Indian, Armenian, Persian... and Albanian” (*Vardan Areveltsi* (38))* . According to the Chronicle of Smbat Sparapet, the Albanian Catholicos Ter-Stepanos (1040) together with Albanian bishops participated in the re-enthronement of Ter-Petros to the Armenian see (*Smbat Sparapet*. The Chronicle, p.19).

All these excerpts lead to one conclusion: the Albanian Church was autocephalous, and the patriarchs of both the Armenian and Albanian Churches were equal co-throneers. In certain difficult situations, when in the country (Albania) or when in Armenia, due to certain circumstances, the Church was doomed, deprived (for some time) of the patriarch's spiritual power, then the patriarch of another Church helped to restore the patriarchal power. But, since the Albanian and Armenian churches were Monophysite, therefore they participated (were involved) in these processes.

In view of the above, the attitude of Kirakos to one of the events set forth in the second part of the “Brief History of the Regions of Albania” seems to be particularly important. He writes: ‘...(Albanian Catholicos Viroy) freed the Armenians, Iberians and Albanians, who were captured by the son of Jebu Hagan, Shat, the Khazar **who took over our country**’ [highlighted by us. – *F.M.*]. As is known, Jebu Hagan and his son Shat conquered only Albania and not Armenia, because at that time there was no such a state. There is no doubt that the author's words “our country” refer to Albania.

* Edition of R.W.Thomson. See 332.

The analysis of the author's attitude to the described events, set out in two parts (“A Brief History of the Armenians...” and “A Brief History of the Albanians”), as well as the study of the above-mentioned excerpts, of which information about Armenian Catholicoi seems exaggerated and inconsistent with realities, and in contrast to them, information about Albania and the Albanians is presented as derogatory, which neither corresponds to realities, such as: the kinship of the Albanian people with the Armenians for the author of the 13th century, information about the dominant role of the Armenian language for the 13th century in Albania; about the subordination of the Albanian kings to the Armenian kings, the constant presence of the Albanian kings under the rule of the Armenians; about the subordination of the Albanian Church to the Armenian Church – show that all this is completely devoid of historical ground and testifies that such data cannot be cited by a historian from Ganja living in the 13th century among the Albanians, constantly preserving the Albanian identity, their Albanian political formation – in Artsakh, Utik, Ganja, Shaki (9th–13th centuries).

Kirakos' surprisingly good knowledge of the Albanian realities in the “Brief History of ...the Armenians” in the first part of his work is bewildering, and the Armenian history replete with inaccuracies, fantastic information devoid of historical ground (in the same section) is alarming. Along with this, Kirakos' “Brief History of the Regions of Albania” (Part II) contains information that constantly disparages the Albanian state, the Albanian Church, there is a desire to show, emphasize their constant dependence on Armenia. Both this observation and the “author's attitude” to the events, revealed by us, suggest that Kirakos's work was subjected to thorough “editing”, which was evident even from the title of the book, when “The History” was replaced by “The History of Armenia”*, and further when Kirakos [due to the “editing” – *F.M.*] by his author's attitude to the events described is presented as an Armenian, and the Albanian ethnos becomes akin to the Armenian one (?!). After all, as is known, these ethnic groups are different in origin and language. Thanks to the editorial revision, the Albanian land, and the Albanian Church, respectively, became subordinate to the Armenian state and the Armenian Church.

In sections on Albania, Kirakos provides a compiled overview of the history of the Albanians from the mythical period until the coming of the Mongols. Of particular interest are the chapters that give an independent presentation of the period of the Mongol conquest of the Albanians, the period of the reign of the Khachen prince, Hasan Jalal, and the construction of the Gandzasar Cathedral by him. The author's sympathies are evident here. Kirakos provides valuable unique information about the Hethumid dynasty, who ruled in Cilicia in the 13th–14th centuries, and about the connections between the Albanian Khachen princes and the Hethumids.

Kirakos also summarizes the history of the Armenians from the adoption of Christianity and brings it back to the appearance of the Tatars.

The main goal of his work is to describe the conquest of the Caucasus, Asia Minor and Mesopotamia by the Mongols. Based on the content and composition of Kirakos's “History”, it is quite obvious how wrong it is to call Kirakos's work “The History of Armenia”. We consider the most correct title of Kirakos's work, resumed by

* This was first noticed by T.N.Ter-Grigoryan.

T.I.Ter-Grigoryan, to be “The History” by Kirakos Gandzaketsi.³²⁶ ‘As an Albanian, in the sense of this name, which was in the 13th century, and an eyewitness of the historical events in Albania in the first half and at the beginning of the second half of the 13th century, Kirakos wrote a work that is valuable both for Azerbaijan and the Transcaucasus’.³²⁷ So, studying the work of Kirakos gives the impression that his work has undergone significant distortion as a result of purposeful “editing”.

The sources for his “History” were religious and theological documents, hagiographies, Holy Scripture and church canonical charters, works of historians Eusebius of Caesarea, Socrates Scholasticus, as well as Albanian authors: Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Mkhitar Gosh, Vanakan, Vardan Areveltsi, Hovhannes Sarkavag, and others.³²⁸

Summarizing the history of the development of Albanian literature, we should note that the rise of the historical and literary tradition also falls in the 12th–13th centuries, which is associated with political reasons, while in Armenian literature stagnation is observed.

In the 11th–12th centuries, the position of the Armenians was aggravated both by the Seljuk conquest and by the stable political dependence of their political formations (principalities-kingdoms) on the Byzantine Empire, of which Armenia has always been a province. On the verge of the Seljuk campaigns, Byzantium had destroyed the political independence of the small, newly formed kingdoms- principalities of Vaspurakan (1022), Ani (1045), and Kars (1065). The Armenian policy of resettlement to the west – to Cappadocia, Cilicia – was caused not only by the forced resettlement policy of Byzantium and the Seljuk invasions, but also by the desire of the Armenian feudal nobility itself to live better, get titles, positions, and land from the Byzantine emperor. For example, the Pahlavuni clan³²⁹ and the patriarch of the Armenian Church Petros,³³⁰ the honors and rewards they received from the Byzantine emperor for their treacherous misdeeds. The Armenian feudal nobility constantly pursued their own interests, to which the interests of the country were sacrificed. This is the reason why the Armenians lost their statehood.

And of course, in such conditions, there could be no upsurge in Armenian literature in the 12th–13th centuries. An entirely different situation was in historical Albania.

The conditions for the revival of Albanian statehood were brewing in the form of the rising Khachen principality, which was the result of the country's overall cultural and political upsurge. In general, the period of the 12th–13th centuries, is considered the period of the Azerbaijani renaissance.³³¹

After the collapse of the Albanian kingdom (in the early eighth century), the Albanians, having permanently the Autocephalous Apostolic Church, stably living on their territory, surrounded by a tolerant population: Muslim-Turkic-speaking and Persian-speaking and other ethnic groups, having political formations (principalities-kingdoms) in Syunik, Artsakh, Utik, Shaki-Cambisena, being part of the states of historical Azerbaijan, consistently found ways and methods of survival, be it the period of the Seljukids or the Mongol conquest period.

As noted, the Albanian sources include Vardan Areveltsi (the Albanian),³³² Gregory Patmich, aka Magakiya³³³ – a native of Albania, raised in Utik, aka Grigor Aknertsis, i.e.,

from the Akner monastery, in Cilicia. Gregory Patmich is the author of “The History of the Nation of the Archers”. Ukhtanes also mentions the “Albanian historians” in Chapter 65. The Albanian authors are Stepanos Orbelian, Smbat Sparapet and Hethum the Historian (Hayton of Corycus), Esayi Hasan Jalalyan, Makar Barkhudaryants. All the above authors are natives of Albania, its regions – Ganja, Utik, Syunik, and Artsakh.

Smbat Sparapet lived and worked in Cilicia, descended from a noble family of the Hethumids of the Albanian reigning dynasty of Cilicia in the 13–14th centuries, founded by Afshin-Oshin, an Albanian prince from Ganja, who left Ganja in 1073/1088 and settled in Cilicia, Lambron. Smbat Sparapet, son of commander Constantine of Baberon, was born in 1208. Being the commander-in-chief (sparapet or gundstable of the state) of Cilicia from 1226 to 1276 under the king of Cilicia, Smbat became famous for a number of victories defending Cilicia from the Egyptian Mamluks. As a politician and diplomat, he sought friendly relations with the strongest Mongols.³³⁴ In addition to his military and diplomatic activities, Smbat Sparapet left a valuable literary heritage – “The Chronicle” and “Legal code”, as well as philosophical and historical poems. Before creating his “Legal code”, Smbat Sparapet had got acquainted with the canons of David Alawik of Ganja, “The Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh, trying to use them for Cilicia, but as is known, they turned out to be unsuitable. He (in 1253) translated the “Assizes of Antioch” from Old French, a legal document of the 13th century, created by Antiochian feudal lords in the era of the Crusaders, which was important for the study of medieval law.³³⁵ However, the “Assizes of Antioch” were not in line with the lives and customs of the population of Cilicia. This prompted Smbat Sparapet to write a new “Legal code” using the canons of David Alawik and the “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh and others as sources.

Smbat's “Legal code” consists of seven sections and contains 202 extensive articles headed as “On the laws of kings”. Other sections include “General church and secular laws and canons”. Smbat designed his “Legal code” trying to strengthen the king's power in the country, create a strong centralized state, limit the rights of feudal lords so that they do not immiserate peasants and townspeople.³³⁶ Smbat Sparapet is the author of “The Chronicle” and a short “Memorable note” – a diary in verse. He spoke Old French, Greek, and knew Latin. The Chronicle covers a 320-year history (951–1272), setting out individual historical events that took place in Eastern Armenia, Albania, Byzantium, Georgia, Cilicia, etc.

The Chronicle begins with one of the messages about how ‘the patriarch of Armenia and all the Armenian princes had a desire to send messengers to Albanian Catholicos Ter-Hovhannes and to Aghuank king Philippe to invite them to the coronation of King Gagik’. Albanian Catholicos Ter-Hovhannes, Albanian king Philippe arrived with 40 bishops and many Albanian princes and unanimously crowned Armenian king Gagik from the Bagratid clan in 961.³³⁷

The source reports that Abas (Bagratid) “became the ruler of the royal domain of Kars and Gevorg – of the country of Aghuania simultaneously”.³³⁸ According to the Chronicle, another representative of the Albanian clergy, Ter-Stepanos, arrived (in 1040) with his bishops to help the Armenian king and Armenian princes to re-enthroned Ter-Petros at the Armenian see. The large-scale council in Ani was presided over by elderly holy Albanian Catholicos, Hovsep. The participants elevated Ter-Petros to the rank of the Catholicos of

Armenia.³³⁹ This context, like the previous ones, testifies to the equal status and equal relations of the Albanian and Armenian Churches, to the absence of any hierarchy that allegedly existed between these churches, stubbornly and completely groundlessly propagated by the Armenian concept, invented and nurtured for centuries. There are many historical examples. We have to recall that Greek Emperor Leo III (717–741) mentioned the Albanian Church among the 12 independent Christian Churches.³⁴⁰ To come back to the above-mentioned excerpt of the “Chronicle”, it should be added and clarified that the aforementioned council in Ani in 1038/1040, was actually attended by two representatives of the Albanian spiritual hierarchy, i.e., Stepanos and Catholicos Hovsep. Further, the “Chronicle” of Smbat provides information about joint actions of Albanians and Georgians against the Persian Emir Apusuar (11th century); information is given about the conquest of Ganja by sultan Melik-shah (Atabek).³⁴¹ The “Chronicle” provides valuable information about other Albanian Catholicoi, about Georgian king David the Landless, his joint actions with the Albanians against the Persian emir. Of particular interest are the “Chronicle” data on the Hethumids [an Albanian dynasty] – the rulers of Cilicia.

Another Albanian source is the work of historian Hethum the Historian³⁴² (late 13th – early 14th centuries) – “Flower of the Histories of the East” – “La flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient” written in 1307 in Old French. It was a valuable source for Europe at the time on the historical geography and political life of Asia, the Caucasus, and South Russia, as well as the history of the Mongols in the 13th century. It should be noted that Hethum also came from a royal family [Albanian – *F.M.*] of Hethumids, who ruled Cilicia from 1226 to 1342.³⁴³ Hethum, as the commander-in-chief of Cilicia (constable, gundstable, and owner of the Lambron domain of the Hethumids), took an active part in the events of the late 13th century in the Middle East. At this time, there was a rivalry for political hegemony in Western Asia between the Egyptian sultanate and the Mongols. As is known, by 1258, the Mongols had formed a vast power in Iran and the Caucasus.³⁴⁴ Hethum, as an influential politician, was a supporter of the offensive alliance of the Hulaguid Mongols, Iran, the papacy and European states against Egypt for the alienation of Syria and Palestine. Hethum believed that with such an alignment of forces, Cilicia would have achieved a certain degree of independence.³⁴⁵ But this plan failed, and Hethum had to seek refuge in Cyprus, where he took vows.³⁴⁶ He knew Old French, Latin, as well as Arabic and Persian. Hethum, who represented the interests of a certain feudal elite of Cilicia, advocating an alliance of European states with the Hulaguid Mongols, was invited in 1306 to Pope Clement V. By order of the pope, in 1307, he dictated his work on the Mongols to monk Falcón, apparently in Old French, who translated it into Latin. Hethum soon died being a prior in a monastery at Poitiers in France.³⁴⁷ The book of Hethum is of extraordinary interest. The French original is considered to be lost, and monk Longue, in 1351, again translated the Latin text into French. During the 15th–19th centuries, both texts and translations of them into Italian, English, Spanish, Dutch, German were published in the cultural centers of Western Europe.³⁴⁸ The fact that Hethum's book was translated into Armenian only in 1842 under the title of “Hethum as a Historian of Tatars” deserves special attention.³⁴⁹ The translator was Mechitarist M.Avgeryan. The Latin version of Hethum's text differed significantly from the original text. M.Avgeryan, translating Hethum's work into Armenian, in addition to the mistakes he made, omitted whole parts of the text. Due to M.Avgeryan's omissions

and misinformation, the historians who used his translation began to doubt the reliability of this source. In addition, monk Longue, to please Pope Clement V, “corrected Hethum”, attributing to him such religious zeal that he did not have.³⁵⁰ Hethum, in his work, gives a historical and geographical overview of fourteen countries of Asia and the Caucasus, in particular Armenia, Georgia [Albania?! – *F.M.*] with a description of their ethnic composition; he sets out the history of the Mongols and their policy of conquest from Genghis Khan to Kublai Khan (1259), the history of the Mongol conquest of Iran and the struggle of the Ilkhans with Egypt (1259–1305); political history of the Cilician kingdom in the second half of the 13th century. Hethum got information from the records of conversations with his uncle king Hethum I about his trip to Möngke Khan in 1253–1255; from the reports of his other uncle – Smbat Sparapet – about his embassy to Güyük Khan in 1242. Hethum himself took part in the campaigns of the Cilician-Mongolian army against Egypt, performing embassy functions for Cilician king Hethum II.³⁵¹

Dulaurier observed that Hethum's portrayal of Mongol history is frequently superior to that of other Armenian chroniclers.³⁵² Regarding Hayton/Hethum, V.G.Tiesenhausen stated that his book, along with Arab and Persian works, is among the most important published works on the Tatar history.³⁵³ V.S.Ikonnikov wrote that Europe for a long time drew information about Russia, its territory and the peoples inhabiting it from the work of Hethum, published in 1473, and from the collections of Vincent of Beauvais.³⁵⁴ Tiepolo, back in 1560, in his book “Discourse on Muscovia”, set out the genealogy of the great khans, the battle of the Kalka, and Batu's invasion in Russia, according to Hethum.³⁵⁵ When describing China, Hethum emphasizes the high spiritual and material culture of China. China is followed by a description of the Uyghurstan; Hethum characterizes it as one of the cultural countries of the East, where the Mongols first got acquainted with writing.³⁵⁶ Hethum describes Turkestan, Khwarazm, and Cumania – states with a Turkic population. He dwells in detail on Cumania, which was the main supplier of the Mamluks to the Egyptian Sultan's guard, consisting of slaves, the Cumans. It was Hayton/Hethum who reported on the **Albanian writing** which back in the 14th century was used by the remaining Albanians. He further writes: ‘...south and west of this river (Itil-Volga) there are **several warlike peoples** who do not consider themselves to belong to the kingdom of Cumania and they live near the Cocaz mountain range, very large and high... These Cocaz Mountains lie between two seas. These are the Great Sea (Black) in the west and the Caspis Sea in the east’. Hethum describes the peoples of the Caucasus – Armenians, Abkhazians [Albanians?! – *F.M.*]. In all likelihood, by the warlike peoples living near the Caucasus Mountains between the Black and Caspian Seas, Hethum also certainly meant [and noted] the Albanians. It is very noteworthy that neither S.M.Mirny nor M.Avgeryan who in his translation of Hayton/Hethum's work omitted “entire fragments of the text”, practically no one noted that Hayton/Hethum gives the rarest information that **the Albanians in the 14 century used their own writing**.³⁵⁷ Hethum emphasizes the strategic importance of the Caucasus in the mutual struggle of the Tatar uluses (nomad camps).³⁵⁸ It is quite obvious that the work of Hethum the Historian has also undergone certain “editing”.

Hethum the Historian sets out the political program of Hethum I. Indeed, the “Seven Request Letters” addressed by Hethum I to the Mongols contain basically all elements of the policy that Hethum subsequently pursued in Western Asia: an alliance between the

Turco-Mongols and Christians against Egypt; the transition of the Eastern Mediterranean to Eastern Christians; orientation on the conversion of representatives of the Turco-Mongol nobility to Christianity by the Nestorian and Armenian missionaries for political purposes. The Mongols destroyed the caliphate in 1258 and conquered Iran. But 'the Tatars were driven out by force of arms by the Sultan of Egypt', who also raised the Khan of the Golden Horde, Berke, against Hulagu.³⁵⁹ The struggle against Berke temporarily weakened the Ilkhan Hulagu, and his death in 1265, writes Hethum, prevented a new campaign against Egypt. The forced policy of Hethum I, of which Hethum the Historian was an ardent supporter, at the end of the 13th century collapsed due to the changed social conditions in Europe, as there were no economic and political prerequisites for the resumption of the crusades, and the Hulaguid empire, shaken by internal unrest, was breaking into parts and was engaged in the struggle against the Jochid and Chagataid uluses. The orientation of Cilicia towards the Pope and the Catholic West, which led to an exacerbation of relations with Egypt, without the hope of European help, turned out to be disastrous for Cilicia. Hethum did not understand this new political situation in Western Asia. Due to the growing influence of Egypt, Hethum was forced to leave his homeland, but in a foreign land he continued to defend his theory, which had already lost its significance.³⁶⁰

Hethum's book for that time was an unsurpassed geographical description of the countries of the East. Hethum was much more educated than the Catholic monks, and in understanding the relationship of the Mongols with the outside world, he was free from the bias of the papal prelates.³⁶¹

The next Albanian authors are Esayi Hasan Jalalyan (18th century) and Makar Barkhudaryants (19th century).

Esayi, the Catholicos of Albania, descended from the famous princely family of Hasan Jalals, which descended from the ruler of the Lower Khachen in Karabakh, Hasan Jalal (13th century) – the son of Vakhtang and Tamta, sister of Zakharia and Ivane Mqargrdzeli Argutinsky-Dolgorukovs, the famous commander and atabek of Georgian Queen Tamara. In turn, the Hasan Jalal family ascends to the Albanian great prince family of the Mihranids (7th–16th centuries).

Representatives of this sovereign family were elected as the Albanian Catholicoi, and this became a custom.

The ancestral tomb of the rulers of the Lower Khachen was the Gandzasar monastery, located on a high, steep mountain, on the left bank of the Khachenchay. This monastery was a burial vault for the ancestors of Hasan Jalal.

Hasan Jalal himself, killed by the Mongols, was buried in this monastery in 1261, and so were his descendants. In 1511, the Gandzasar monastery became the residence of the Albanian Catholicoi, who after that were also referred to as the Gandzasar Catholicoi. Catholicos Hasan Jalalyan was elected as the Albanian Patriarch in 1702 and held the see until his death in 1728.

The period when Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalalyan headed the Albanian Church coincided with the emergence of a movement among the upper stratum of Karabakh's population aimed at liberation from Safavid Iran's oppression.

Guided by this liberating idea, the Karabakh and Zangazur meliks, as well as merchants, cast their eyes on Russia, where tsar Peter I was thinking about moving east.³⁶²

Etchmiadzin Catholicos, fearing to incur the suspicion and anger of Safavid Iran and Ottoman Turkey, bluntly rejected any idea of any movement among Armenians against the Iranian and Turkish yoke. The Gandzasar Catholicos, however, took an active part in it. The Gandzasar monastery became the center where Karabakh meliks held their secret meetings and wrote letters addressed to Peter I and his heirs. The incipient liberation movement was supported and encouraged by the tsarist government.³⁶³ Peter I intended to cover the way to Shamakhi on land and there unite with the Georgian and Karabakh troops. Catholicos Esayi rushed to Karabakh where an army of ten thousand was quickly gathered, which hastily moved to Ganja to join the Georgian army. From here, the united Georgian-Karabakh army was to move to Shamakhi to join the Russian troops. But this plan was never destined to come to fruition. Peter left his garrison in Derbent and hastily returned. At this point, Catholicos Esayi ends his story. The Karabakh meliks and Catholicos Esayi waited in vain for Peter I's arrival, who promised to resume his campaign in a year.³⁶⁴

Although “The History” of Catholicos Esayi covers a short period (1702–1722), it is of great interest as a rather detailed description of events made by a contemporary and in many cases by a participant who tells about the political fate of Albanian Christians, the activities of the Autocephalous Albanian Church, organizing and consolidating the power of late Albanians, thanks to which the Albanian ethnos retains its historical memory and ethnic Albanian identity in the 18th century. Catholicos Esayi's work was first published in Shusha by Karabakh Metropolitan Baghdasar Hasan-Jalalyan in 1839. In its second edition, it was published in Jerusalem in 1868. In addition, “The History” of Catholicos Esayi was translated into French by the Member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences M.Brosset and published in St.Petersburg in 1876, in the II volume of the “Collection of Armenian stories”.³⁶⁵

Albanian author of the 19th century Makar Barkhudaryants, the last representative of the Albanian clergy, wrote the following works: “The History of the country of Aghuank”, “The Country of Aghuania and Its Neighbors”, “Artsakh”.³⁶⁶

Makar Barkhudaryants was the first researcher of the history of “Artsakh” (Karabakh) – the most important area of the 1000-year-old Albanian state (fourth century BC – eighth century AD), an important area of historical Azerbaijan, and an integral part of all subsequent Azerbaijani states. Being the last representative of the (ethnically) Albanian clergy and later becoming the bishop of the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church in the 1890s, M.Barkhudaryants in his writings tries to recreate, to describe the history of his motherland, Albania: its historical geography, ethnography, political history, and the history of the Albanian Church – its dioceses. He collects and compiles a list of Albanian Catholicos, tries to elucidate their activities. For the first time in history, he partially recreates the genealogy of the dynastic princely family of the 10th–12th centuries ruling in Artsakh-Khachen and the subsequent melikdoms.

M.Barkhudaryants, like the Albanian people, is a victim to the Armenian policy pursued by the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church aimed at transformation of the Albanian historical and ethnocultural heritage and de-ethnicization of the Albanians. Being well-versed in political events, understanding and seeing all the disastrousness, doom, hopelessness of the fate of the Albanian ethnos, in conditions of complete revelry,

annihilation, destruction of Albanian cult monuments, its manuscripts, he took the liberty and undertook unbearable work: he attempted to collect the epigraphy of Artsakh, give a description of all Christian churches and monasteries, translate and provide all the inscriptions on them, collect, describe the remaining gospels, provide all the memorable records on the gospels – colophons. And practically, to date, M.Barkhudaryants' work is the only surviving historical source that gives reliable and valuable information about the not-preserved Albanian epigraphy, gospels, colophons, allowing historians to reconstruct the activities of the Albanian Church, the Albanian patriarchs-Catholicoi, the reign of secular feudal lords, and, most importantly, the dynastic Artsakh-Khachen princely house, the rule of individual representatives of the clan during a large chronological period (10th–19th centuries).

Neither the Albanian manuscripts nor the Albanian epigraphy were spared by fate. For unknown reasons, all those who were dedicated to Albanian studies and engaged in the collection of Albanian epigraphy, could not publish it. The first collector of the Artsakh – Khachen inscriptions was the Catholicos of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, the representative of the Hasan Jalal clan, Esayi Hasan Jalalyan (collected epigraphy in 1718). The original of his handwritten collection is lost (!) and continues to be considered missing to this day. And, of course, a copy of the collection has been preserved in two later copies, as well as in Bishop I.Shakhatuni's well-known Collection of Armenian Epigraphy, published in 1842 (!)³⁶⁷. In general, the years 1841–1842 are fateful in the history of the Albanian ethno-cultural heritage: it was during this period that I.Shakhatuni gave the first information about the ancient Albanian manuscript “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, which dates back to the 13th century, in Etchmiadzin; during this period, he (Shakhatuni) managed to publish the Collection of Albanian epigraphy, not from the original, but from later copies; and in 1842, the work of the Albanian (by origin) historian Hethum/Hayton “Wind city of the histories of the lands of the East” was translated from Old French into Armenian.

Bishop Makar Barkhudaryants is a direct eyewitness to the complete de-ethnicization of the Albanians and the ultimate destruction of their historical and literary heritage.

Apart from the narrative sources that we have dwelt upon, judicial codes, canons of David Alawik, the monuments of the Albanian historical and literary tradition also include the canonical decrees of the Albanian Church, Albanian church councils (the Aguen Council of the fifth century and the Partaw Council of 705) written in Albanian, but which have come down to us in Old Armenian.

When covering the socio-economic history of Albania, we studied the Aguen Canons, gave a detailed commentary, identified their sources, the meaning of the Canons.³⁶⁸

For the subject considered (the political history of Albania), the era, the date of the creation of the Aguen Canons, is of great importance, as the adoption of them is directly related to the reign of Albanian king Vachagan III the Pious, whose reign reflects the country's political history in the fifth century.

The date for the adoption of the Aguen Council Canons is traditionally believed to be the last quarter of the fifth century (487–488). This date is recognized by all researchers.³⁶⁹ The points of view of N.A.Akinian and S.H.Hovannisian differ. That is, N.A.Akinian casts doubt on the very existence of Albanian king Vachagan III the Pious, considering him an

invention of the author of the “History of the Aghuans”, and dates the Aguen Council to the first half of the fifth century, in the interval between 451 and 459.³⁷⁰ N.A.Akinian's conclusions are unsubstantiated. S.H.Hovannisian dates the Aguen Canons to the fourth century, believing that the Canons were adopted not under Vachagan III in 488, but under Vachagan II in 372–387.³⁷¹ However, the arguments of S.H.Hovannisian appear convincing only on a surface level. A very unsuccessful attempt to refute the position of S.H.Hovannisian was made by B.A.Ulubabyan,³⁷² whose article seems to us insufficiently substantiated. His point of view is mainly based on three points:

- 1) the participants in the Aguen Council are historical figures who lived in the late fifth and early sixth centuries;
- 2) Artsakh and Utik, until the fifth century, had been part of Armenia and therefore could not have accepted their own “Canonical Constitution” in the fourth century;
- 3) among the participants of the Council were the Archbishop of Partaw and the Partaw priest, although Partaw was built after 459.

Of the three points, we consider only the first one to be scientifically proven. The second point is completely groundless, not supported by sources (see our detailed exposition in Chapter 2, § 2 – “Political boundaries”). The third point is unpersuasive. Since the traditional date of the adoption of the Aguen Canons has been justified in detail in literature, we will try to show that it is correct. One of S.H.Hovannisian's reasons justifying his dating is the list of Albanian Catholicoi, on which he relied in the conclusion that Shupkhalishoy, a member of the Aguen Council, was a Catholicos in the fourth century. The contemporary of Shupkhalishoy was not Vachagan III, the Albanian king, but Vachagan II and the council was convened under him. S.H.Hovannisian revealed contradictions in the history of the Albanians with the name of Shupkhalishoy. Trusting the list of Albanian Catholicoi and at the same time denying the authenticity of the contexts, S.H.Hovannisian argues that Shupkhalishoy was a Catholicos in the fourth century.³⁷³

The fact is that S.H.Hovannisian did not notice the contradictions in the very lists of Albanian Catholicoi attached to the “History of the Aghuans”, which he fully trusts. In some copies of the manuscripts of “History of the Aghuans” and the corresponding editions³⁷⁴, Shupkhalishoy immediately follows Grigoris, and in other copies and the corresponding editions³⁷⁵, Shupkhalishoy, together with five subsequent Catholicoi, precedes Grigoris.

We believe that one should trust Kaghankatvatsi's texts and not the Catholicoi list, since the contexts talking about Shupkhalishoy as a contemporary of Vachagan III, the contexts about Vachagan III about the convocation of the Aguen Council are included in the first book, which was written in the late seventh and early eighth century. And the list of Albanian Catholicoi, which rounds off the third book of Kaghankatvatsi, was undoubtedly compiled not before the 10th century.

So, in this list, which is a late addition, errors are possible, especially in the part devoted to the first Albanian Catholicos. This is confirmed by the following. At the beginning of the Albanian Catholicoi list, there is a subscript: “The names of the patriarchs should have been set out precisely. But since the deeds, time, and names of the previous patriarchs, their covenants were *burned by evildoers, their places of residence are unknown to us and did not reach us, we, as best we could, tried to compile this list for those who will*

deal with this issue’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). And in the note to the list of Albanian Catholicoi, given by J.Shakhatunyants, this is attested as follows: ‘...but since the deeds and times of the past Catholicoi and information about their names *were burned by evil people and not all of them have reached us and the place of their stay is unknown to us, we present it (the information) incompletely* for those who are interested in this issue’.³⁷⁶ With such a state of these lists, displacements, omissions are possible in them and, therefore, they are not chronologically consistent. Such incompleteness is also evidenced by the fact that the Catholicoi list given by J.Shakhatunyants differs from the lists of known publications of *Kaghankatvatsi*. Here, Shupkhalishoy is preceded by three Catholicoi: 1) St.Elisha; 2) a certain blessed man who accompanied Gregory from Caesarea, who was appointed head of the Albanian Church; 3) Grigoris. The newly added one is the “blessed man”. Sure enough, the lists of Albanian Catholicoi underwent profound changes in later editions in connection with the autocephaly of the Albanian Church. The Albanian edition, proving the independence of the Albanian Church, its patriarchal origin, placed Shupkhalishoy together with five Catholicoi in front of Grigoris, the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, and the Armenian edition, trying to prove that the Albanian Catholicoi were consecrated by the Armenians and that the first Albanian Catholicoi was the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, placed Shupkhalishoy after Grigoris.

It seems that according to the given contexts, Shupkhalishoy should rightfully be moved upwards in the list of the Catholicoi. He was the successor of Albanian Catholicos Jeremiah, who was a contemporary of Albanian king Aswagen (fourth century), and with several subsequent Catholicoi, he preceded the Albanian Catholicos Ter Abas (sixth century). After all, as is known, late historians – Kirakos Gandzaketsi, and Mkhitar of Ayrivank,³⁷⁷ drew attention to the contradiction regarding the name of Shupkhalishoy, expressed doubts about placing it at the beginning of the list of the Catholicoi, and dated it to the fifth century. It is also known that, in addition to the Aguen Council, Shupkhalishoy, as part of the Albanian clergy, took part in the joint Armenian-Albanian-Iberian council convened in Dvin in 506 by Armenian Catholicos Babgen I (490–515).³⁷⁸

Another reason, in the opinion of S.H.Hovannisian, is the fact that if the Aguen Council had been convened in the fifth century, during the reign of Vachagan III, it would certainly have accepted the canons against the Nestorians, which, according to S.H.Hovannisian, in the fifth century also disturbed the Albanian Church. The fact is that Nestorianism, according to *Kaghankatvatsi*, did not penetrate Albania before the second half of the sixth century. In the fifth century, Albania, like Armenia and Iberia, kept aloof from the dogmatic disputes that shook the Greco-Roman world. And in the Roman Empire itself, by that time, Nestorianism, as is known, did not actually gain the upper hand. The decrees of the Council of Chalcedon of 451, which encouraged the teachings of Nestor, were not accepted by everyone.³⁷⁹ Thus, the decrees of Roman emperors Zeno (474–491) and Anastasius (491–518), the ardent opponents of Chalcedonism, were an official renunciation of the confession of the Council of Chalcedon, which led to the temporary success of monophysitism. Among other things, the Council of Chalcedon was convened a few months after the Battle of Avarayr in 451. Consequently, the political situation in the Caucasian countries was such that dogmatic disputes could hardly arouse the interest of these countries. The Albanians expressed their attitude to the teachings of Nestor and

the Council of Chalcedon at a common council together with the Armenians and Iberians.

According to Kaghankatvatsi, Nestorianism actually penetrated Albania in the sixth century. ‘At this time (552), the troubles of the Council of Chalcedon spread to the four winds... Then Ter Abas, the Albanian Catholicos, made a strict investigation with the bishops and expelled from Albania the nasty teachers: Thomas, Elijah, Bnot, Ibas, and others’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 8).

According to S.H.Hovannisian, the Armenian Canons of Ashtishat served as the canonical basis of the Aguen Canons. The matter is that for both canons, analogous were those that established the rules of the Christian faith, which is quite natural, as they should be the same for all Christians. These rules were approved by the oecumenic councils. As for the rest of the Aguen Canons, they are independent and have nothing to do with the canons of the Ashtishat Council, dedicated to establishing god-houses, leper colonies, convents, hospices, etc. All these are absent in the Aguen Canons. Further, S.H.Hovannisian tries to make a comparison of the internal political situation of Armenia and Albania in the fourth century, believing that the “likeness” of the Aguen and Ashtishat canons is due to the proximity of the era. However, the political situation in Armenia in the fourth century is by no means identical to that in Albania, reflected in the Aguen Canons.

According to Faustus of Byzantium, the struggle between the royal power and the secular nobility, as well as between the royal power and the clergy, was characteristic of Armenia (IV, 5). With the precariousness and weakness of the Armenian throne, ‘in the conditions of the fragmentation of the country and the disobedient aspirations of the naxarars, the hierocracy was centralized, had great economic, moral and political power, through which it influenced the domestic and foreign policy of the country’.³⁸⁰ The Ashtishat Council was convened by the Armenian Catholicos Nerses, who invited bishops, developed the Ashtishat Canons, and approved them, and the Council, where the participation of the secular nobility and the king is not attested (*Faustus of Byzantium*, IV, 4), only unanimously approved them.

In contrast to Armenia, there are “confrontations and turmoil” between the clergy and the secular nobility in Albania during the period of centralized royal power in the 4th–5th centuries. The Albanian clergy was not strong enough to confront the king. The Albanian Catholicos and the clergy did not play a leading role in resolving not only internal and external issues of the country, but also in resolving issues of the church. The main functions of the Catholicos were performed by the king, who appointed bishops, convened councils, and drafted decisions with the participation of the secular nobility and the clergy.

The above obviously enables us to disagree with the new dating of S.H.Hovannisian and to consider the traditional date of convocation of the Aguen Council, i.e., 487–488, to be correct.

The Aguen Canons are a monument of great importance, the only surviving historical and legal document of early medieval Albania, which reflects the social, legal and ecclesiastical relations of Albania, regardless of the degree of influence on these norms of their actual and probable sources.

Summing up the results of the study of Albanian historical, literary, and legal monuments, we can say that they are typical creations of the feudal era. ‘Each social system

has its own specific range of historical sources, the content of which is determined by the originality inherent in the basis and superstructure of a given social system, and the external form depends on the corresponding level of development of material culture and writing techniques'.³⁸¹

In terms of class and confessional positions, the authors of Albanian sources were the spokesmen for the interests of Albanian rulers (kings, great princes), clergy, church and pro-Christian feudal lords-azats (naxarars).

In Albanian literature, as in any Christian literature, in the initial period (and not only), the main role passed to ecclesiastic Christian writers, the so-called "Church Fathers", by virtue of which it can be called patrology. The works of Albanian authors, written in the Albanian language, were of a dual nature, had signs of a historical work and a hagiographic one. They can be classified as chronicles because they have a particular chronological principle of presentation: dating with synchronization ("History of the Aghuans").

As previously noted, Albanian literature was created in the Albanian language, although it has come down to us in the Old Armenian language.

And from this perspective, it seems to us that the opinions and doubts of those who do not recognize the fact that the Albanian sources of the 5th–13th centuries existed and were written in Albanian, are wrongful and groundless.³⁸²

If we consider the parallel historical realities of Armenia and Albania in the period of late antiquity and the 5th–13th centuries, we will be convinced that the Albanian monuments could by no means be written in the Old Armenian language.

From the fall of Tigranes II's empire (first century BC) and until 428, the Armenian statehood actually did not exist anymore and legally it was cancelled in 428. In all this period, till the sixth century inclusive, the territory of Armenia was repeatedly divided between two empires – Rome-Byzantium and Iran (the numerous treaties are described in detail in Chapter 2 of "Historical Geography"). So, the actually non-existent Armenian kingdom was legally abolished. Now there were two Armenias, two provinces – western Byzantine Armenia, and eastern Persian Armenia, ruled by governors (marzbans). What was Albania like in that period?

Due to Albania's remoteness from Byzantium both geographically and strategically, which allowed it to control the strategically important Derbent and other small passages along the mountain ranges of the Greater Caucasus, it managed, unlike Armenia and Georgia, to preserve political independence, because the Sassanids were interested in the presence of a spatial buffer that reliably protected the immediate imperial lands from the invasions of the nomadic steppe peoples, whose political activity in the North Caucasus at the time under consideration increased greatly. In a certain sense, this also suited Albania, which, through controlling these passages, gained a domain in domestic and foreign policy activities.

Both the kings and great princes of Albania maintained mutually vital allied relations with the ruling dynasties of Iran – the Arsacids and Sassanids, reinforcing these relations through dynastic marriages. In such conditions, there was no need to use the Armenian language in Albania, and no more to create Albanian historical and legal literature in this language, i.e., Armenian could not be the *lingua franca*.

If we talk about the ethnos of the country, then according to the sources, there was no infiltration of Armenians into Albania. Armenian settlements on the territory of Azerbaijan appeared much later, in the late 18th – early 19th centuries. The population of Albania was autochthonous, Albanian, with constant infiltration and settlement of Turkic- and Persian-speaking tribes.

The Albanian alphabet, as is known, consists of 52 phonemes, and the Armenian – of 36. It is quite obvious that there is no connection between these ethnic groups and their languages. As is known, the Armenian language belongs to the Indo-European language family and the Albanian language belongs to the northeastern Caucasian-Nakh-Dagestan family. The “father of Armenian history” Movses Khorenatsi knows very well the Albanian ethnos, in contrast to the Armenian. ‘The ever-deceitful Albanians’, says Khorenatsi (III, 3). Faustus of Byzantium considers the Albanians to be an independent ethnos, not mixing them with Armenians. Thus, Chapter 13 of Book V is clearly titled: “About the Albanians”, and in the text we read: ‘[Mushegh] also turned his arms against the *land of the Albanians* and *brutally defeated them*’.

As for the fact that the Albanians had a writing of their own back in the fifth century, I.Abduladze, then A.G.Shanidze, followed by K.V.Trever rightfully believed that the most reliable source in this regard is the “Book of Letters”, the official edition of which was made in the eighth century. In the “Book of Letters”, the second letter of the Armenians to Orthodox fellow believers in Persia after the Council of Dvin in 506, says: ‘We have written to you before, in agreement with the Georgians and Albanians, *in letters of each country* – *yurakanchur ashkharkhrov*’.³⁸³

A.S.Mnatsakanyan believes that the words “in letters of each country” should be attributed not to the authors of the message, Armenians, Georgians, and Albanians, but to those to whom it was addressed, i.e., the Christian peoples living in the territory of Persia. A.S.Mnatsakanyan believes that this answer was translated into the languages of the Christians living in the regions of Persia – Syria, Nisibis, Khuzestan, Nineveh. He believes that these Christians were Syrians, Persians, Armenians.³⁸⁴

The matter is that the written language of the Christian population of Persia was Syriac (Aramaic)³⁸⁵ and, therefore, A.S.Mnatsakanyan's explanations are devoid of any grounds. The excerpt from the “Book of Letters” can be interpreted only in one sense, in which A.G.Shanidze, K.V.Trever and Z.N.Aleksidze interpreted it.³⁸⁶

Let's also recall the preserved Albanian epigraphy from Mingachevir.

From Albanian, Armenian, and other sources, we know the following about Albanian writing and literature: Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, 3) provides data from the Roman author Hippolytus, according to which the Albanians are mentioned in the list of peoples with a language and writing;³⁸⁷ Ghevond, an eighth-century Armenian historian, lists Albanian as the 12th language in which the Bible is translated. Hethum the Historian of the 14th century, in his book, (I, Ch. IX) talks about the alphabets that were used in the 14th century: ‘...there were different alphabets – one Armenian, the other Albanian’ (see below about this). There is information about the Albanian language in the 17th–18th centuries as well, when “Holy Fathers found in the East a manuscript titled “On the History of the Holy and Divine Oil” in the Albanian language, and they also translated it into

Old Armenian?”. This old-Armenian (!) manuscript was found by A.D.Anasyan in Matenadaran.³⁸⁸

Besides, French scientist Bernard Outtier at the end of the 20th century discovered a manuscript in Jerusalem, the title of which says that it had been written in Albanian (!), but then translated into Armenian.³⁸⁹

And now everyone knows the sensational discoveries made by Z.N.Aleksidze on Sinai, in the monastery of St.Catherine, which led Z.N.Aleksidze to the conviction that the Albanians had a well-developed literature back in the 4th–8th centuries, written in the Albanian language in the Albanian writing system, at a high level, like was the case with the Georgians and Armenians.³⁹⁰

According to Z.N.Aleksidze, the Caucasian Albanians, having adopted Christianity, soon completely translated the Bible. ‘Only a nation who has the entire text of the Bible in their own language can create a lectionary. And most importantly, this lectionary was not translated from any language, but was compiled from the books of the Bible in Albanian and presented on the basis of the now lost Greek lectionary’.³⁹¹ The Albanian lectionary was created in the second half of the fourth century, which means that the books of the Bible must have been written in the Albanian language before the creation of the Albanian lectionary.³⁹² Z.N.Aleksidze believes that the Georgian and Armenian lectionaries were translated in the fifth century from Greek and the Albanian lectionary *was* created in the vicinity of Jerusalem and belongs to the early type of Jerusalem lectionaries, which bespeaks the connections of Albania with Jerusalem.³⁹³ It seems to us that the attribution of the Albanian lectionary to the early type of Jerusalem lectionaries is also connected with (or can also be explained by) the presence of ancient Nazarenes in Albania.* According to Z.N.Aleksidze, the time of development of Albanian Christian literature is the 5th–8th centuries, more exactly the 6th–7th centuries. But as Z.N.Aleksidze believes, in the 720s, the Albanian Church fell under the strong influence of the Armenian Church. And according to sources, the Armenian Church burned diophysite literature (or diophysite-spirited literature) and the monophysite Albania, having switched to the Armenian language and the Armenian alphabet (writing system), thereby putting an end to its wealth – existence.³⁹⁴

What happened to the Albanian writing system and literature, and is it true that in the eighth century, the Albanians transited to those of Armenia? And did the Armenian Monophysite Church really destroy Albanian literature (burned it) in the eighth century?

The fact is that Albanian literature was really destroyed by the Armenian Monophysite Church. This issue is undoubted by scientists, there is total consensus here. The question is when this happened.

Medieval Arab writers and geographers (al-Istakhri, Ibn Hawqal, Al-Maqdisi and others) reported that the inhabitants of Aran spoke their Aran (obviously Albanian) language.

There are three opinions in historiography regarding the fate of Albanian literature.

The view of Georgian scientists has been considered (Z.N.Aleksidze) and will be described in more detail in historiography. According to the latest model of Armenian

* See Chapter 5 of this monography.

scientists, Albanian literature in the 5th–8th centuries was written in the Old Armenian language only (S.T.Yeremian, A.S.Mnatsakanyan, B.A.Ulubabyan, etc.).³⁹⁵

According to Z.M.Bunyatov, ‘later [after the Council of Partaw in 705], the Armenian Church ousted the Albanian clergy from their positions and began an intensified Gregorianization of the Albanians living in the mountainous areas of the country inaccessible to the Arabs. The Armenian clergy gradually nullified the influence of the Church of Aran among this population and, by the hands of the Arab authorities, destroyed all the literary monuments of the Albanians – all that could to the smallest extent remind of Albanian culture. This was done, we repeat, first with the help of the Caliphate, and later with the help and knowledge of other conquerors’. Here Z.M.Bunyatov makes a reference to M.Ormanyan.³⁹⁶

According to our opinion published in 1986, Albanian literature in the Albanian language had been created until the 12th century, after which it was written in Old Armenian.³⁹⁷ However, our recent studies of both the history of the Armenian people and the history of the Armenian Church, as well as studies of the history of the Albanian Church and the Albanian population, made us reconsider our view and come to the conviction that during the entire period of the existence of the Albanian Church (fourth century – 1836), the Albanian Church remained un-Gregorianized, Autocephalous, Apostolic, and Monophysite, just like the Coptic and Jacobite Churches. Monophysitism is by no means Gregorianism nor Armenization. Studies also convince us that, given that the Albanian ethnos never lost their territory, that they constantly had the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church serving its Albanian ethnos, which lived stably surrounded by the Muslim-Turkic and Iranian-speaking ethnos, that the Albanian ethnos constantly had political formation, including kingdoms and principalities, and that these Albanian political formations were constantly part of the Azerbaijani states, there was no need for the Albanians to transit to the Armenian language and write their works using it. The international language, the lingua franca in the 12th–14th centuries in the Azerbaijani states and further in the subsequent centuries, was Turkic. Previously, we have stated that in the 5th–8th centuries, Albanian literature could not have been created in the Armenian language and was created in the Albanian language only. Now let’s consider whether the Armenian language could have been a lingua franca for the Albanians in the 12th–14th centuries. As noted, the 12th–13th centuries are the period of decline of Armenian literature due to political reasons, this is the period of the loss of the Armenian principalities-kingdoms on the territory of Eastern Anatolia, the period of the powerful emigration of Armenians to the West, to the western borders of Byzantium, and to Cilicia, this is the period of emigration, the wandering of the Armenian Church with its patriarchal center. It is quite natural that during this period, the Armenian language could not be the lingua franca language in the Caucasus (where there were no Armenian dioceses and the Armenian ethnos at all, see Ch. 6) and in Albania, in particular. And therefore, the Albanian literature of the 12th–14th centuries, considered above (David Alawik, Vardan Areveltsi, Stepanos Orbelian, Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, etc.), could not create their works in the Old Armenian language. The ideological rapprochement of the two churches – the Armenian and the Albanian – in reality, could not have happened before the 15th century, in connection with the establishment of the Armenian Church in

Etchmiadzin. But this rapprochement cannot be an assertion and substantiation of the fact that the language of the Albanian Church and the Albanian population had become Armenian. Because, for this, the conditions of Armenia's domination, both political and ideological, i.e., confessional, must be identified, which is also out of the question. As is known, this is the period of domination of the states of Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu in the Caucasus, and since the 16th century of the Safavid state, and finally, the period of the Azerbaijani khanates.

And yet, again, if we cast a scientific look at the history of the Armenian Church, we will see the constant “wanderings” of the Armenian people in search of new lands, Armenian capitals and “wanderings” of the Armenian Church with its central see – the Catholicos see: Ashtishat, Etchmiadzin – Vagharshapat from the 5th to the 9th centuries; in Dvin, the Catholicos anti-see in Avan, as opposed to that of Dvin; in the 9th–13th centuries an anti-see was established in Ani, Akhtamar; then in Sebastia, in Constantinople, in Tavblur (Eastern Turkey), in Tsamndav (near Amasi), in Hromkla (near Cilicia), in Sis – the capital of Cilicia. Given the wanderings of the Armenian Church patriarchs, when each time at church councils, geographically different dioceses located beyond the Caucasus were noted, i.e., there was no stability of the *dioceses subordinate to the Armenian Church* (about the Armenian dioceses see chapter 6), it is unlikely that the Armenian language was the lingua franca in the Caucasus, in Albania in particular.

So, having reviewed the historical realities of the history of the Armenian people and the Armenian Church, we consider it practically impossible for the language of such an ethnic group and such a church to be dominant in the Albanian Church and among the Albanian population. This could only happen via geopolitics, which was the case in the 19th century. But more on that below.

The Armenian people, unlike many ethnic groups, having lost their historical homeland early, doomed themselves to search for new lands in the west (9th–15th centuries), lost their states-principalities, with an emigrating Church, managed to preserve the Armenian language, the Armenian alphabet [no matter that it was not originally invented by themselves, but borrowed from the Ethiopians]. The “creators” of Armenian history, with the help of printing (printing press), published the printed word “greater” – “The History of the Armenian People” – and disseminated it throughout the ecumene.

A very important, fundamental milestone in the history of the Armenians in the very literal sense of the solution to the problem of how “to be or not to be” was the period of 1805–1828, the period of the conquest of the Caucasus, Azerbaijan in particular, by Tsarist Russia, which cleared the path for the creation in the territory of the Caucasus of the Armenian state that had not existed there before. And here the church prelates faced a dilemma: how to establish themselves *historically* in the new land, how and from what sources to present or create “their historical memory”, linking them with the newly acquired land – the territory of Caucasian Albania? Armenian “minds” with the help of church prelates decided to fully attach, or rather annex, the Albanian cultural heritage created over the centuries. But the Autocephalous Apostolic Albanian Church and the living Albanian ethnos, which managed to heroically survive for centuries, despite the vicissitudes of fate, stood in the way of this plan. The decision was unequivocal – with the help of the Tsarist Government to de-ethnicize the Albanians, to which end a well-thought-out and, perhaps, centuries-old

plan of the Armenian Church was created. The first and decisive step on the path of de-ethnicization was the relocation of Armenians from Iran and Turkey and settlement of them on the lands of the Azerbaijani khanates. The next step was the Regulations of the Tsar's Government of 1836, approved by Emperor Nicholas I, according to which the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church was abolished and subordinated as a diocese to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin. After this tsarist rescript, the Albanians had to attend the Armenian Church and be considered Armenians. The report of M.Ormalyan himself also speaks in favor of the late Armenization of the Albanians: 'The throne of Caspian Albania was eliminated at the beginning of the 19th century as a result of the merger of the Caspian-Albanian or Aghuan nationality with the Armenian one'.³⁹⁸

What could make the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church oppose the rich Albanian historical and literary tradition that existed in the 5th–8th centuries and revived in the 11th–14th centuries (both narrative and legal/documentary), existing further in the 18th–19th centuries? Studying the works of Movses Khorenatsi, "the father of Armenian history of the eighth century", reveals that the last incriminating chapter of "The History of Armenia" reveals the essence of the character of the Armenian elite – the feudal lords-naxarars, who, betraying their homeland and country, received lands and positions from two empires, Byzantium and Iran. And this was the reason for the loss of the first Armenian state in the 4th–5th centuries. To get a foothold on the territory of historical Albania, the Armenian church prelates of subsequent centuries could not present the stories of individual Armenian feudal houses-clans located far beyond the Caucasus, around Lake Van, or on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris, etc. There was only one thing to do – by annexing the Albanian ethno-cultural heritage, to establish themselves in the Eastern Caucasus with the support of the Tsarist Government, both politically, culturally, and historically, passing off the entire Albanian heritage as Armenian. To do this, they needed to carefully "edit" the rich, centuries-old Albanian historical and literary tradition in the spirit of Armenian history – translate it into the Old Armenian language, destroy the original, and change the titles of the works of Albanian authors (instead of Gosh's "Book of Law", add "The Armenian Book of Law", instead of "The History" of Kirakos, present "The History of Armenia" by Kirakos), so that they were consistent with the "edited" text.

I came to this conclusion not only as a result of a profound study and juxtaposition of the realities of the Armenian states, the Armenian Church with the Albanian state and the Albanian Church, but also textual, source study of Albanian sources, the manuscript basis of them, the dates of publication. It was revealed that the information about the manuscripts of Albanian sources dates back to 1829 onwards, but not earlier.

It is quite noteworthy that the works of Albanian historians, translated into Armenian, were declared Armenian by the Armenian science and church and were not published before 1836, despite the presence of an Armenian printing house and Etchmiadzin paper mill back in the 17th century.

Even the work of Hethum, originally written in Old French and published in Europe in different languages in the 14th and 15th centuries and later, was translated into Old Armenian and published only in 1842 (i.e., after 1836).

It should be noted that the oldest manuscript of the "History of the Aghuans" by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, which was subjected to "editorial" revision by Lunkianos and

which dates back to the 13th century, is kept in the Matenadaran, the Armenian manuscript fund, and is carefully hidden from the Azerbaijani Albanists: I was denied access to it nor saw it during my repeated visits to the Matenadaran, which each time was explained by the fact that “the manuscript is being restored”, that “the manuscript is sick”, which means the same thing. In 1968–1974, on repeated requests (made by Z.M.Bunyatov) of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian Republic, to its manuscript fund on making a photocopy of that manuscript of the 13th century. The answer was unequivocal: “the manuscript is under restoration”. What scared the Armenian colleagues so much? The lack of a substantiated answer brings one to certain suggestions which are not very flattering for Armenian scientists.

It seems that the “editing” of the Albanian manuscripts according to the well-thought-out plan of the Armenian Church and the translation of these manuscripts into Old Armenian started several centuries before the Regulations on the Albanian Church in 1836, this process had already been completed by 1829, and therefore information about the manuscript basis of Albanian sources and their publication began after 1829, 1836.

All of the above leads to the conviction that until 1828/1836, before the conquest of the Caucasus by Tsarist Russia, a rich Albanian literature had existed in the Albanian language. Albanian literature was translated into Old Armenian, “edited” and published. It is not yet known how many Albanian sources were either destroyed or simply hidden by the Armenian Church.

Vivid evidence of transformation of the Albanian historical and cultural heritage into Armenian, as well as of its partial destruction and unification, is the fundamental work of Makar Barkhudaryants “Artsakh”.³⁹⁹

According to Makar Barkhudaryants' description: *‘In 1828, according to eyewitnesses, these monasteries were inhabited and flourishing [in a Muslim environment, Albanian Christian monuments had been preserved in excellent condition for many centuries. – F.M.]. After the Aghuank Catholicosate was cancelled, i.e., after 1828, the monasteries gradually began to decay, lose monastic groups, and being left unattended, for the most part began to collapse’* (M.Barkhudaryants, I, p.5); he also mentions the magnificent Gandzasar monastery complex, and how, after 1828, *‘Precious manuscripts have been plundered in large numbers, the remaining manuscripts have become, as we have seen, victims of dampness and negligence, and services are not held in the monastery for months, for there are no literate people, schools, monks, or even simple readers’* (M.Barkhudaryants, I, 160). *‘The monastic library room was completely empty’; ‘There was a handwritten gospel, later relocated to Shaki, in the village of Geog-Bulak’* (M.Barkhudaryants, note 403). In this famous Albanian monastery of the 13th century, according to M.Barkhudaryants, from the entire rich library only the handwritten “Lives of the Saints” has survived. This was the fate of all Albanian monasteries and churches.⁴⁰⁰

Clearly, “Artsakh”, the work of the Albanian author of the 19th century Makar Barkhudaryants testifies to the transformation of the Albanian ethnocultural heritage into the Armenian one, which began in 1828.

§ 2. Other sources

Ancient sources

The work widely involves ancient sources: Strabo (1st century BC – 1st century AD), Pliny the Elder (1st century AD), Pomponius Mela (1st century AD), Plutarch (1st– 2nd centuries AD), Cornelius Tacitus (1st–2nd centuries AD), Claudius Appian (2nd centuries AD), Cassius Dio (2nd–3rd centuries), Ptolemy (2nd century), Eutropius (4th century), Solinus, Festus, Pompeius Trogus (1st century BC – 1st century AD),⁴⁰¹ Eusebius (4th century).

Ancient sources provide information about the historical geography of Albania, Georgia, Armenia, about cities, settlements, hydronyms, tribes and ethnic history of Caucasian Albania; the weapons and the number of the Albanian horse troops and infantry, the religious beliefs of the Albanians, the campaign of Pompey, Lucullus to the Caucasus, including Albania; the occupations of the Albanians, natural resources, the military assistance of the Albanians to Armenian king Tigranes II, the relations between the Albanians and the Romans, the names of the Albanian rulers, the correspondence of the Albanian kings with Alexander the Great; about the connection of the Argonauts with the Albanians; the connection of Latin Alba Longa with Caspian Albanians, etc.

A unique source for the ancient Caucasus is the “Geography” by Strabo; one of the most difficult and controversial issues is one of the sources of Strabo's information about the Caucasus, which is associated with the solution to another problem – the emergence of states in Iberia, Albania, as well as the problem of the historical geography of Albania, Iberia, and Armenia. Strabo's information about Albania mainly goes back to descriptors, participants in Pompey's campaign.

The work of Pompeius Trogus (first century BC) was preserved in a short form compiled in the second century by Justinus.⁴⁰²

According to Justinus, Pompeius Trogus had a wealth of material on Iran and the Caucasus.

The work of Pliny the Elder also provides information on historical geography, history, and ethnography. As a compiler, he strove to convey his sources as accurately as possible, and he always mentions these sources. Pliny relied on the reports of the expedition of Corbulo (first century), the map of Agrippa and so on.

Pliny tells about the arrival of the king of Albania to Alexander the Great at the time of the departure of the Macedonians to India. The Albanian king, according to Pliny, gave Alexander a huge dog of a famous Albanian breed. The same is repeated by Julius Solinus (third century).

Cornelius Tacitus, a contemporary of the described events in the Caucasus, relied on eyewitness accounts and official documents. What is important for us is his information on historical geography, political events and the social system of Albania, Armenia, and Iberia.

For the history of the Caucasus, “Parallel Lives” (of Lucullus, Pompey, Crassus, Mark Antony, who visited the Caucasus) from Plutarch’s work, which also provides valuable information on historical geography and political history, are of particular interest.

A significant place in ancient geographical literature is occupied by the “Geography” of Ptolemy (second century), who collected cartographic materials about the world in a volume that was huge for that time; the geographical nomenclature of the Caucasus is given, including toponyms, hydronyms.

Works of Appian (second century): – the History of the war of Rome with Mithridates VI and History of the Syrian wars – provide information about the political history, social relations in the Caucasus and Parthia.⁴⁰³

Of the enormous work of Cassius Dio (“Roman history in 80 books”), books reflecting the campaigns of Lucullus and Pompey to the East have survived intact. Cassius Dio provides interesting information about the overthrow of the Arsacid dynasty in Iran, the establishment of the Sassanid dynasty, and in this connection, notes the role of the Caucasian countries. The data of Cassius on the historical geography of the Caucasus is of great importance.

Eutropius (fourth century) gives information about Armenia, Iberia, Albania for the Trajan period and the second half of the third century.

Eusebius (3rd–4th centuries), the bishop of Caesarea Palestinae, the author of “Church History” and “Chronicle”, provides valuable information about early Christianity. Both works were written in Greek, early-translated into Latin and Syriac, as well as into Old Armenian.

The works of Eusebius were the main source till the fourth century inclusive for the Syrian historian Michael the Syrian (12th century).⁴⁰⁴

Syrian sources

Another group of sources are Syrian sources: Zacharias Rhetor, Joshua the Stylite, Ishobokht’s Syriac Book of Law, Michael the Syrian, Bar Hebraeus.⁴⁰⁵

The “Chronicle” of Zacharias Rhetor of Mytilene, an author of the sixth century, is an important source on the history of two empires – Byzantium and Sassanid Iran, as well as the peoples of the Caucasus – Albanians, Iberians, and other ethnic groups. It was Zacharias Rhetor who added, into the Syriac translation of a fragment from Ptolemy in the list held by Ptolemy, Armenia, Gurzan and Arran, i.e., Albania, which at the time of Zacharias Rhetor depended on the Persian king of kings and had its own king, after the “Sarmatians, Scythians and Seriks”. He also mentions that the people of Arran had their own language.⁴⁰⁶ This source contains valuable information about the preaching activity of the Albanian clergy among the Huns of the steppe, about the preaching of the Christian doctrine among the Turkic-speaking tribes living beyond Derbent.

The “Chronicle” of Joshua the Stylite (sixth century) provides information on the situation of the peoples of the Caucasus during the Persian-Byzantine wars in the sixth century.⁴⁰⁷

Ishobokht’s Book of Law was originally written in the Middle Persian language (eighth century), i.e., after the Arab conquest, and was translated at about the same time into the Syriac language.⁴⁰⁸

The Syriac Book of Law of Ishobokht sets out the legal rules of the Christian communities in the Sassanid Iran, of the Babylonian Talmud, which reflects the law of the Jewish communities of the Sassanid state. They deal with articles on marriage and inheritance law in particular detail and defend the interests of the clergy.* Ishobokht's Book of Law is of interest to Albania since it was in Albania that ancient Jews-Nazarenes lived, who needed such a Book of Law.

A special place among the written monuments is held by the so-called Syro-Roman Book of Law, which was well known and widespread in the East, from Asia Minor to Egypt. The Book of Law has been preserved in the Syriac language (translated from Greek). Later, the monument was translated into Armenian, Arabic and Georgian.⁴⁰⁹

According to experts, the Syriac translation dates back to the eighth century. It retains the features of the customary law of the eastern provinces of Byzantium. Unlike the Book of Law of Ishobokht, the legal terminology of this Book of Law is Roman-Greek. Experts believe that the Syro-Roman Book of Law was translated into Armenian not earlier than in the 12th century in Cilicia.⁴¹⁰

It is quite obvious that this is a translation made (on instruction) by Nerses of Lambron, the great-grandson of the first Afshin-Oshin, an Albanian prince from Ganja, who emigrated with other Albanian princes and settled in Cilicia. Nerses of Lambron translated the Syro-Roman Book of Law⁴¹¹ received from the Syrian priest Theodosius, for the Cilician population. Probably, preference was given to this Book of Law because of the monophysite orientation. But this Book of Law turned out to be unacceptable.⁴¹²

There is no reason to believe that this Book of Law was circulated in pre-Arab Armenia. The Book of Law was written in the interests of the Church; it boldly defends the interests of the clergy.

Borrowings from the Syro-Roman Book of Law are found in the Syriac and Arabic writings of the 13th–15th centuries. When, under Justinian, his legislation became officially binding on the entire Byzantine Empire, it turned out to be too cumbersome and incomprehensible for the eastern provinces. In practice, the Syriac Book of Law replaced the Book of Law there.⁴¹³

The 12th century historian Michael the Syrian, originally from Melitene, entered the famous Jakobite Bar-Sauma monastery early. In 1163, he was the archimandrite of this monastery, and in 1166, he was elected as the monophysite (Jacobite) Patriarch of the East. In the 12th century, the Jacobite Patriarch had a large flock in Syrian, Cilician, Mesopotamian, and other cities. Michael the Syrian was a well-educated and knowledgeable Syrian writer. He knew Arabic and Armenian. Of the works of Michael the Syrian, the Chronicle is of the greatest value for the study of the Middle East countries of the 6th–7th, 11th–12th centuries.

Until the end of the 19th century, i.e., before the discovery of the Syriac text and the Arabic translation, the Chronicle was known from the Armenian translation made in 1248 of the author's Syriac autograph.⁴¹⁴

* It also helps to understand many terms and realities in the monuments of ancient Armenian historical and canonical literature (Периханян А.Г. Сасанидский судебник. Ереван, 1973, с. XXIV–XXV).

The work of Michael the Syrian can be chronologically divided into 2 parts, the first of which consists of books 1-13 and the second includes books 15-21. For us, the most interesting is the information about the spread of Christianity in the East, the policy of the Sassanian kings to persecute Christians, as well as the history of the eastern states of the 11th–12th centuries: Byzantium, Cilicia, Turkic domains, etc. The conquests of the Middle Eastern regions by the Seljuks are described quite fully. The value of Michael the Syrian's work lies in the fact that he created his Chronicle based on the works of Syrian authors of the 6th–7th centuries.⁴¹⁵ He provides interesting information about the Jacobite Patriarchate of Antioch and about its relations with the Eastern churches. That is, he writes that since the establishment of the services of the four apostolic wherenesses, which were: “to him who is in Rome and to him who is in Constantinople [high priests. – *F.M.*] – one of the three parts of the world, i.e., Europe; Egypt, Ethiopia, and Libya ...belong to the jurisdiction of Alexandria. Greater Asia, which begins at the eastern reaches of the Adriatic Sea and extends to the eastern reaches of the inhabited land, perhaps as vast as the first two other parts [combined], depended on [the patriarch's] residence in Antioch. That is why the Patriarch of Antioch, according to the source, consecrated the Catholicos of the Armenians, as well as those of Gurzan, Aran, until the time when Babai was killed by Persian Bar-Sauma. Then this established order was violated until the time of Persian king Ardashir [III]”.⁴¹⁶ See the chapter “The Albanian Church” of this monograph for more on the attitude toward this passage and how well it corresponds to historical realities. Michael the Syrian gives a lot of information about the Turks, “where their people come from and where they live”, their customs and manners, the structure of the political system of the Turks, the Caucasian gates – the Alan and the Derbent passages, and Babek's uprising.

Another Syrian author is Bar Hebraeus, whose work “Chronicon” consists of two parts: “Chronicon Syriacum” and “Chronicon Ecclesiasticum”. “Chronicon Syriacum” begins from the bible times and continues until 1285, then it was supplemented by Bar Hebraeus' brother, Bar-Sauma, from 1286 to 1297.⁴¹⁷

Bar Hebraeus, in his work, provided the reports of his predecessors about the Arabs and Seljuks and consistently outlined the events of the conquerors of his day, the Mongols, whose history in his work is the most valuable, as being a contemporary of the events, he was equally revered by both Christian and Muslim writers.⁴¹⁸ “Chronicon Ecclesiasticum” consists of two parts. The first part details the history of the Christian church, starting from the Antiochian patriarchs, from the fifth century. This is mainly the history of the patriarchs of the monophysite branch, brought to 1285, and subsequent additions were made until the middle of the 19th century. For us, of interest is the history of the eastern (later – Nestorian) branch of the Syrian Church up to 1286. Thanks to Bar Hebraeus, science has information about the history of two important branches of the Eastern Church – the Jacobite and the Nestorian.⁴¹⁹

“Chronicon Syriacum” of Bar Hebraeus (the “Chronicon”) informs about the reign of the Persian kings Yazdegerd II – Peroz, their policy towards the Christian population of Persia and [the Caucasus], the reason for their persecution, the relationship of the Huns with the Persian kings – Peroz, Kavad, and Khosrow II, the Arab-Persian wars and the fall of the Sasanian empire, and the policy of the Arabs in the Caucasus.

Of particular interest for the topic under study is Bar Hebraeus' report on the submission of Egypt by Persian king Artaxerxes III (fourth century BC). ‘The Egyptians were

once again subject to the Persians... Okoz [Artaxerxes] *also conquered the Jews and made them tributaries... He settled them on the shore of the Caspian Sea in the city of Hyrcania*.⁴²⁰ This event dates back to the fourth century BC. This excerpt provides valuable information about the settlement of Jews – ancient Jews on the Caspian coast. These were the ancestors of modern Tats living in North and South Azerbaijan. In connection with this information, a passage from Michael the Syrian's chronicle acquires a certain interpretation, which says: 'In the 60th year of captivity [of the Jews], the queen of the Massagetae killed Cyrus, the king of the Persians. Cambyses, his son, reigned for 8 years. Jews say he was nicknamed Nebuchadnezzar'.⁴²¹ The beginning of the Persian captivity of the Jews, according to this data, was started by Cyrus in the sixth century BC and, apparently, continued by Cambyses, and this is why he was nicknamed Nebuchadnezzar by the Jews, for, as is known, the Jews were taken captive in Mesopotamia under Nebuchadnezzar.

Pahlavi sources

In the empire of the Arsacids, and the Sassanids who followed them, many social and legal institutions were shared by all areas of the state, and they were also shared by the Caucasian countries that were its vassal states. Therefore, for the problems under study, it is of significant importance to engage Middle Persian sources: "Letter of Tansar" (sixth century), "Cities of Iran" (eighth century), "The Book of a Thousand Judgments" (seventh century). The "Book of the Deeds of Ardashir" gives information about the institutions of the Sassanian society and about its class division. It is important for studying the Middle Persian terminology, which can be studied in a fairly thorough manner from the originals of Middle Persian sources only.

"The Letter of Tansar" was translated into Arabic only in the eighth century, but neither the Arabic version nor the Middle Persian original have reached us. "The Letter of Tansar" (the Arabic version) became known in the 13th century, thanks to the translation into Persian by Ibn Isfandiyar, who included it in the "History of Tabaristan".

"The Letter" describes the internal structure of the Persian state and the relationship of the shahinshah with the social groups of the population of the state.⁴²²

"The Cities of Iran" is a historical geography and urban planning source. Of great interest is the "Land of Adurbadagan" (one of the sections of the source) – one of the four groups of 110 cities listed in the monument, divided by the cardinal points.⁴²³

To us, of interest are the cities of North and South Azerbaijan.

Among the Middle Persian legal monuments, only one work has survived – "The Book of a Thousand Judgments".⁴²⁴

An important source of Sassanian law, preserved among the Middle Persian monuments, is the Sassanian Law-Book – "The Book of a Thousand Judgments". Since the social, political, and administrative terminology in the Caucasus (Albania and Georgia), as well as in the eastern part of Asia Minor (in Armenia), was Persian in origin, the Sassanian Law-Book helps to understand many terms and realities in the monuments of ancient Georgian, ancient Albanian, ancient Armenian historical and canonical literature. Let's also note that Persian terminology in its original meaning was well preserved in the Old Armenian language, which helped A.G.Perikhanian to translate this complex Book of Law.

The Sassanian Law-Book reflects the high, for that era, level of Iranian law and the elaboration of judicial procedure.⁴²⁵

The Law-Book is based on the centuries-old experience and practice of Iranian legal proceedings, which can be seen from the numerous references to the authorities and works of lawyers of the past. The work has been preserved in a manuscript copied in Iran in the 17th century, then taken to India, where it survived in the Indian Parsi community.

Georgian sources

The next group of sources are Georgian sources, among which Georgian hagiographic monuments are preferable, since for the early Middle Ages these are the only surviving data in the Old Georgian language. This group of sources is important for studying social terminology, as well as for the reconstruction of political realities, the cultural history of Georgia and Albania in the early medieval period.

The earliest hagiographic source is “The Martyrdom of Saint Shushanik” (fifth century).⁴²⁶ Another monument is “The Martyrdom and Suffering of Eustatius of Mtskheta” (sixth century). The rest of the hagiographies were written later. “Kartlis Tskhovreba” is a wonderful collection of chronicles, translated as “Lives of Georgia” or “The History of Georgia”. This source talks about the heroic past of the Georgian people from the time of hoary antiquity to the 14th century inclusive, and there is a lot of interesting information about the close “neighbors of Georgia” – Albanians, Ereti, Rani, and others – of antiquity and the early Middle Ages. The initial parts of “Kartlis Tskhovreba” were written by Archbishop Leonti Mroveli at the end of the 11th century. They were published separately under the title “Life of the Kartlian Kings”.⁴²⁷

In the 17th century, in the capital of the Safavid state, Isfahan, Georgian historian Parsadan Gorgijanidze wrote “The History of Georgia” and neighboring countries from the time of the spread of Christianity in Kartli to the late 17th century.*

The historical geography of Georgia is reflected in the “geography” of Vakhushti (18th century). According to M.Brosset, Vakhushti's “Geography” has the same significance for Georgia as Homer's topographical notes for Greece.

Arabic sources

Arabic sources: al-Tabari (9th–10th centuries), Al-Baladhuri (10th century), Ibn al-Athir (12–13th centuries), al-Mas'udi (10th century), Ibn Khordadbeh (10th century), Ibn Hawqal (10th century) provide information about the natural resources of Transcaucasia, historical geography, settlements, cities, distances between them, about political history, about the trade of Azerbaijan (South) and Aran (North).⁴²⁸

* Кикнадзе Р.К. Очерки по источниковедению истории Грузии. Парсадан Горгиджанидзе и “Картлис цховреба”. Тбилиси, 1980.

Armenian sources

Armenian sources are of significant importance for the study of the history of Azerbaijan in the early medieval period. It should be noted that science owes these monuments a considerable part of the facts of the social, political, and spiritual history of Albania in the 4th–9th centuries. The biased nature of the Armenian sources draws attention, which, incidentally, is typical for any work of antiquity and the early Middle Ages. This bias was especially noticeable when they portrayed the history of adjacent nations and neighboring peoples, Iberia and Albania.

To determine the historical reliability of the information reported by Armenian authors, it is necessary to consider who the authors were, their class, political, and ideological tendencies, as well as their social status. It is necessary to consider the era, goals, and objectives that were set before the authors, to compare the data from Armenian sources with information from other (foreign) synchronous sources, as well as to conduct a comparative study of the realities of the two countries, Armenia and Albania, of the same time. History uses a variety of methods to conduct a critical evaluation of monuments.

It is known that the authors of these works, as a rule, were the ministers of the Christian Church of Armenia, whose position was unstable due to the location of the country at the junction of two empires: the Sassanian Iran and the Rome-Byzantium. The ideological positions of the church depended on the interests of the empires.

The interests of the clergy were mainly associated with the Armenian people, for whom the Armenian Church was an organizing and consolidating force.

That is why Armenian literature, gradually freeing itself from the influence of Greek and Syrian literature, began to reflect the church and political struggle.⁴²⁹

The authors of all Armenian works and those who wrote their works commissioned by their patrons were, in a certain sense, patriots of their country and created the history of both individual princely families and the history of Armenia. ‘Armenian literature was actually created in the era when there was no Armenian statehood’.⁴³⁰ And this represents its originality and uniqueness.

Against the background of the loss of Armenian statehood, as well as the fragmentation of Armenia (the presence of western Byzantine Armenia and eastern Persian Armenia), naturally, striving for the past independence, for revival was brewing, ‘there was a great need for an integral and finished history of Armenia’.⁴³¹ Under such circumstances, the authors of “The History of Armenia” set the goal of exalting the history of the independent Armenian kingdom, preached, cultivated the idea of the commonality of the Armenian regions, the idea of a once existing united powerful Armenia, capable of resisting foreign invaders, and fostered a spirit of resistance among the people. ‘This idea required development in order to support the people’.⁴³² Such works were rife with inevitable hyperbolae and distortion.

In addition, over time, the sources underwent changes, were edited, brought in line with the new political course. N.Adonts noted: “...the monuments were elucidated from a new point of view, were often reworked in accordance with the new situation and the dictates of the time. Regarding many monuments of antiquity, especially of their historical

content, it is possible to doubt how their present appearance corresponds to the original. It is clear that they are of ancient origin, but there is no doubt that they have been touched by an outside hand”⁴³³.

So, an individual approach is required for each source, which, ultimately, will help to identify the objective and subjective causes of the distortions. In some cases, this is a deliberate deception, pursuing propaganda or other practical purposes; in others, it is an unconscious expression of class and ideological bias with the subjective conscientiousness of a historian; in others, it is a consequence of the author's lack of critical approach to the information received, which is due to primitive methods of research.

The first place in Armenian historiography in time belongs to Koriun's “Life of Mashtots” (written in the 440s), which is a biography of Mashtots. Koriun's work is a description of a certain event, one short period,⁴³⁴ most likely, it is a panegyric clearly showing the exaltation, the praise of his spiritual father, teacher, and not a historical work in the narrow sense of this concept.⁴³⁵ Koriun describes the educational and preaching activities of Mashtots in Albania, in the regions of Syunik, Goghtn, tells how he reformed, improved the alphabet for the Albanians with the help of Syunik translator Beniamin and under the patronage of Albanian king Aswagen and the Albanian patriarch.⁴³⁶

Another representative of the Armenian historical and literary tradition is Elishe (Yeghishe) who wrote “The History of Vardan and the Armenian War” in the second half of the fifth century. It is dedicated to the people's liberation movement with the participation of Armenians, Albanians, and Iberians against the Sassanids in 450–451. This movement was led by Armenian commander Vardan Mamikonian. In this work, the author also reflected the events of 457 related to the anti-Sassanid uprising in Albania, which was led by Albanian king Vache II himself. According to Elishe, as a result of this uprising, the royal power in Albania was temporarily abolished. Elishe, a contemporary and participant in the stern events that took place in the Caucasus, correctly covers the reasons that prompted these peoples to engage in anti-Iranian uprisings: economic and political oppression, and the policy of cultural and ideological assimilation (planting Zoroastrianism, persecution of Christians) carried out by the Sassanids.

The importance of this monument also lies in the fact that it contains valuable information about the Huns, about the Zoroastrian religion.⁴³⁷

In the late fifth century, Faustus of Byzantium wrote “The History of Armenia”, of which books 3–6 have survived to the present day, entirely related to “The Latest History”. The work covers events over 55 years (332–387).⁴³⁸ The book by Faustus of Byzantium is the first experience in rendering the complete history of Armenia. It was designed to elucidate two sides of history: secular-political and ecclesiastical.⁴³⁹

Faustus of Byzantium seeks to portray the Mamikonians as the only force capable of liberating Armenia from Persian oppression.⁴⁴⁰

Faustus of Byzantium's information on Albania and Albanians is very biased. Specifically, he reports that after a 34-year war between Armenia and Persian king Shapur II (309–379), ‘...both parties were tired, worn-out, defeated, discouraged’, i.e., it was a “draw”. Then, according to Faustus, a number of regions broke away from the Armenian king and went over to the side of the Persian king. Among these he mentioned the ruler of Gardmanadzor, the fortified Artsakh, the country of the Caspians (*Faustus of Byzantium*, IV,

50). Further, he reports that Mushegh, the Armenian commander, ‘started to fight with those who rebelled against the Armenian king and regained many lands by a series of fierce battles’ (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 8). Artsakh, Uti, Shakashen, Gardmanadzor, that is, the Albanian regions, are mentioned among the “regained” lands. ‘Mushegh made the Kur River the border between his country and Albania, as it had been before’ (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 12, 13). The study of ancient, Albanian sources, as well as the realities of Armenia and Albania in the ancient period and the early Middle Ages, convinces us of the complete groundlessness of this information (see Chapter 2 “Historical Geography”).

The political bias of Faustus is obviously explained by the time, the conditions of the country where his work was created, and therefore requires a critical approach to his data. The imperfection and primitiveness of Faustus of Byzantium's work was noted by M. Abegyan: ‘This story was typical of a commoner, without chronology, with excessive exaggerations’.⁴⁴¹ But at the same time, we must not forget that Faustus provides valuable information about the political, social, and church history of Albania. Thus, his reports talk about the preaching activities of Grigoris, the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, in Albania, in the country of the Maskuts, as well as about the participation of Albanian king Urnayr on the side of Persian king Shapur II during the Persian-Armenian war of 371 (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 4). The author's information about social terminology is also important.

The younger contemporary of Elishe, Ghazar Parpetsi, who wrote in the late 5th – early 6th centuries, devoted his work to the struggle of the Caucasus peoples for their independence. His work is traditionally titled “The History of Armenia”. Parpetsi describes events starting from the partition of Armenia in 387 and brings them to the end of the fifth century. Being based on the documents and testimonies of contemporaries, the author supplemented the information available to Elishe about the anti-Iranian movement of 450–451 and described the anti-Sassanid uprising of the Caucasus peoples in 481–484. The value of Parpetsi's work lies in the fact that, unlike all Armenian authors, he often emphasizes the unanimity, coordination, and allied relations that existed at that time between the three peoples – Armenians, Albanians, and Iberians.⁴⁴²

The works of Faustus of Byzantium and Ghazar Parpetsi, with the traditional name “The History of Armenia”, were nevertheless “stories of a short period of time”, meeting the requirements of their time, the 5th century, i.e. the first century of Armenian Christian writing.

But later, in the 7th–9th centuries, the need for a holistic, comprehensive, well-thought-out history of Armenia was increasing. This is how “The History of Armenia” by Movses Khorenatsi, ‘the father of Armenian historiography’, appeared, which ‘stands out from the entire early medieval historiography both in structure and content’.⁴⁴³ Structurally, “The History” consists of three parts. As is clear from the preface to “The History of Armenia”, Khorenatsi began his essay at the request of Prince Sahak Bagratuni, who wanted to know about the origin of the Armenian people, the Armenian state, various Naxarar clans and, above all, about the origin of the Bagratuni clan. And Khorenatsi creates the history of the Armenian people, starting from the biblical ancestors and bringing it to 428, to the abolition of the king's power in eastern Persian Armenia (*Khorenatsi*, III, 1) The author develops the history of the Armenian ethnos in parallel with

the histories of well-known ancient peoples – those of Babylonia, Assyria, Media, Persia, Parthia, Rome, and the Sassanids.⁴⁴⁴

The political objective of Khorenatsi is to show the past greatness of Armenia, the Armenian people, to prove that in the past there was a strong independent Armenian kingdom⁴⁴⁵ which was in no way inferior to the largest powers of Western Asia.

Khorenatsi is an author of the eighth century. We fully proceed from the premises stated by G.A.Khalatyan,⁴⁴⁶ N.Y.Marr,⁴⁴⁷ N.Adonts,⁴⁴⁸ Y.A.Manandian⁴⁴⁹ regarding Khorenatsi's dating.

Khorenatsi's life can be accurately dated, firstly, based on the periods of development of literary trends. As is known, N.Y.Marr noted three branches in Armenian literature, representing the three periods: missionary period with the complete domination of Syriac education, philosophical-scholastic with a predominance of Greek influence and, finally, national, local.⁴⁵⁰ The History of Khorenatsi, 'a bright Armenian nationalist with a Greek education, a lover of Greek norms and forms', as N.Y.Marr asserts,⁴⁵¹ 'can in no way be attributed either to the Syrian missionary school or to the moment of the first enthusiasm for Greek scholastic science'.⁴⁵² If, as N.Y.Marr believes, the Grecophile period falls into the 6th–7th centuries, "The History of Armenia" by Khorenatsi, that has come down to us, could not have appeared in its final form before the seventh century, but possibly later than the seventh century.⁴⁵³ In his other work, N.Y.Marr again positively asserts that Khorenatsi should be dated not to the fifth century, 'but to a much later period, when the exclusively Syrian direction was the tradition of antiquity, and the cultural Hellenophilism that replaced it managed to evoke a national trend in literature'.⁴⁵⁴ According to N.Y.Marr, the external characteristics of the monument, *including the language in which it was written*, are quite consistent with this dating.⁴⁵⁵ [highlighted by us – F.M.]. N.Y.Marr's expertise in Armenology and Armenian philology leaves little room for doubt. Following N.Y.Marr, N.Adonts calls Khorenatsi 'outstanding among the Hellenists, whose work is an experience of applying Hellenic scholarship to the field of historiography'.⁴⁵⁶ According to N.Adonts, Khorenatsi lived not earlier than the late seventh century. "With Chorenensis, Armenian historiography and literature in general closes its first period... The eighth century is a time of transition to the second period of Armenian literature", which continues, according to N.Adonts, until the 11th century inclusive, *coinciding with the Bagratid era*⁴⁵⁷ [highlighted by us – F.M.].

Secondly, another strong evidence in favor of dating Khorenatsi to the eighth century is his attitude to two well-known influential Naxarar clans – the Mamikonians and the Bagratunis; G.Khalatyan was the first to rightfully draw attention to this fact in his studies.⁴⁵⁸ In literature, the supporters of the traditional date of Khorenatsi's life – the fifth century – trying to dismiss the evidence of the representatives of the "critical school", for some reason did not focus on this important evidence, but simply kept silent about it. Let's consider the real socio-political position of these two clans in Armenian life in the 5th–8th centuries.

Note that in the 5th–7th centuries, the Mamikonians held the position of sparapets (the commanders-in-chief of the Armenian troops) and at times the position of marzban (governor), i.e., practically the full power in the country (Persian governorship of Persian-Armenia) was in the hands of the Mamikonians. As for the Bagratunis, in earlier

times, in the royal period of Armenia, up to 428, they were aspets (encrowners), i.e., had the prerogative of the coronation of the Armenian kings. With the abolition of the king's power, they remained practically out of work, they continued to be considered encrowners in a crownless country only by virtue of tradition. The Mamikonians led the country's anti-Iranian forces, including the anti-Sassanid people's liberation movements of 450–451 (Vardan Mamikonian), 481–484 (Vahan Mamikonian). In 485, Vahan Mamikonian became the marzban of the country (Eastern Armenia, Persian Armenia). In 571, the anti-Iranian movement was led by Vardan Mamikonian, nicknamed the Red Vardan, who was actually the ruler of eastern Armenia almost until 591. The events of the fifth century show that the Bagratunis do not appear in the list of the naxarars, members of the anti-Sassanid group, convened for a council in 450 to write an answer to Persian king Yazdegerd II, i.e., they did not appear at the council, as they did not sympathize with the movement.⁴⁵⁹ The Bagratid (Bagratuni) family practically began to rise only at the beginning of the eighth century. They led the anti-Arab movement in 703. In 747–750, when the anti-Arab liberation movement started again, the Caliphate sowed discord and enmity between the most influential clans – the Bagratunis and the Mamikonians, granting the Bagratunis great privileges. Ashot Bagratuni betrayed the movement.⁴⁶⁰ After the defeat of the movement, the Caliphate deprived the Mamikonians of the ishkhan position as the prince and sparapet of Armenia and endowed the Bagratuni clan with these titles.⁴⁶¹ Sahak Bagratuni became the ishkhan of the country, and Smbat Bagratuni became the sparapet. The Mamikonians were exterminated and their hereditary possessions passed to the Bagratunis.

Now, returning to the question of the time of Khorenatsi, we recall that all sources of the fifth century, i.e., Elishe, Ghazar Parpetsi, Faustus of Byzantium, and the author of the seventh century Sebeos honor the Mamikonian clan above all naxarars. As is known, Elishe called his work “The History of Vardan [Mamikonian – *F.M.*] and the Armenian War”. Faustus of Byzantium describes the Mamikonians as the only force in the country capable of organizing and implementing the liberation of the country from foreign domination. And only Movses Khorenatsi, who created his work commissioned by Bagratuni, stands apart. He, unlike the authors of the 5th–7th centuries, exalts the Bagratuni clan and completely ignores the Mamikonians. He tries to alter the notable events associated with representatives of this family, give a different interpretation, link to other people, other circumstances,⁴⁶² to avoid mentioning the name of the Mamikonians to please the Bagratunis. In Ch. 7 Book 2, where he describes the origin of the naxarar clans, he mentions first the Bagratunis, falsely shifting back the time of their appearance in Armenia. Having outlined the origin of all other naxarar clans in Book 2 Chapters 7, 57, 58, 78, Khorenatsi finally speaks about the origin of the Mamikonians in separate Chapter 81 of Book 2.

In the light of the above, we can come to the only conclusion that if Khorenatsi were an author of the fifth century, he would not dare to treat the influential and highly esteemed family of the Mamikonians in this way. This could only be in the eighth century, when the Mamikonians were in disgrace, quitted the stage and the Bagratunis became the rulers of the country. The eighth century is fully consistent with both realities and the period of the literary trend – the local, national – of which Khorenatsi was a representative. And it

becomes clear why Khorenatsi took 428, i.e., the time of liquidation of the Armenian kingdom, as the starting point of his work. As it seems to us, he thus pursued two goals: on the one hand, to illuminate the rule of the reigning dynasty in Armenia, the Armenian Arsacids (66–428) ‘as the end and the crown of independent Armenia’ (*Khorenatsi*, II, 8), and on the other hand, to show that during this period the Bagratunis were on the highest pinnacle of their glory and after 428 their real significance declined.

What was the time of the creation of “History of Armenia”? In the situation when the anti-Arab movement of the eighth century was defeated, the disobedient aspirations of the naxarars were dominant, and there was no political entity, it was necessary to write a work that would ideologically contribute to the mobilization of the country's forces to fight for its independence. The exaltation of the rule of the Arsacids of Armenia in the past meant that the country could only be saved through the uniting of all forces around the Bagratuni clan with the aim of creating and gaining a state. This is evidenced by the last chapter that concludes “The History of Armenia” – “Lament about the termination of the Armenian kingdom by the Arshakuni clan and the patriarchate by the house of St.Gregory”.

Khorenatsi's “History of Armenia” is an important source on the history of Albania, providing information about its historical geography, especially about the southern border, which in the first century ran along the Aras River. This source tells us about the political history – the first ruler of Albania – Aran from the Sisak clan, the invasion of Armenia by the ruler of Albanian region Paytakaran Sanatruk, the participation of Albanian Arsacid king Urnayr in the battle of Dzirav in 371; about Christianity, preaching in Albania, especially in its northeastern part, of bishop – Catholicos of Albanian Grigoris, grandson of Gregory the Illuminator; also of interest is information about the Turkic-speaking nomads – Bulgars, Basils (Barsils), Khazars, Huns⁴⁶³ and other information.

Another important source of Armenian literature of the seventh century is a historical work attributed to Bishop Sebeos. Currently, conventional authorship is being questioned.⁴⁶⁴ In terms of structure, the source consists of three sections, of which only the third section belongs to Sebeos proper, according to K.Patkanov. It is interesting to consider the main arguments of K.Patkanov, who believes that: 1) Sebeos wrote a work titled “A History of Heraclius”. The first two parts, as is well known, are about ancient history and have nothing to do with the Emperor Heraclius' era; 2) the third part is preceded by a preface in which the author informs us about the era that will be discussed. The author explains that he does not intend to talk about the times long gone by, because all this is described and told by others.⁴⁶⁵

G.Abgaryan's monograph scientifically proves that “The Initial History of Armenia” – “The History of the Anonym” – was not written by the author who wrote the rest of the work and that the author of “A History of Heraclius” attributed to Sebeos is actually the Armenian writer Khosrow who lived in the seventh century.⁴⁶⁶

This is a unique source on the history of the Caucasus countries of the 6th–7th centuries, where both peaceful relations and destructive wars between the two great powers – Persia and Byzantium for the division of the Caucasus countries – are presented in a concise form. Armenia, Albania and Iberia were drawn into these devastating wars. “A History of Heraclius” contains valuable information about the participation of the Turkic-Khazars in the war of Heraclius with the Persians. This work is very important

for understanding the actual situation that has come about in the Caucasus during the first appearance of the Khazars in the historical arena.⁴⁶⁷ The source talks about Christianity, about the religious policy of Heraclius, about his introduction of Chalcedonianism in the Caucasian countries. The author dates the events according to the reign of either the Persian kings or the Byzantine emperors and brings the description of the events to 661.

An interesting representative among the Armenian authors of the seventh century was Ananias Shirakatsi, whose most important work, “The Geography” – “Ashkharhatsuyts” – provides a description of all the countries of the then known world.⁴⁶⁸ “The Geography” has come down to us in two editions – a brief one and a lengthy one. When relying on this significant work, it should be borne in mind that over the centuries, scribes have made significant changes to the original text – they made abbreviations, interpolations, added new paragraphs, replaced ancient geographical names with new ones, allowed distortions, etc.⁴⁶⁹

The sources for “The Geography” of Shirakatsi were “The Geography” of Claudius Ptolemy (1st–2nd centuries), the information of the Pope of Alexandria and other ancient authors.⁴⁷⁰ However, when describing Armenia and neighboring countries, the author's presentation is independent.

Shirakatsi based the description of each country on the natural geographic landscape and ethnic boundaries, and not on political and administrative division. In terms of structure, “The Geography” consists mainly of two parts: the first contains a general description of the land and the second a description of individual countries. The original part of “The Geography” is a description of Near Asia, which sets out the administrative and political division of the Middle East of the 6th–7th centuries, which was not the case under Ptolemy.⁴⁷¹

Asia in “The Geography” is divided into 44 countries, where number 26 is Albania and number 27 is Greater Armenia, which was divided into 15 provinces (nahangs) and each of them was divided into regions (gavars – cantons).⁴⁷² Researchers believe that Ananias Shirakatsi's description of Armenia is based on the administrative division not of the seventh century, when Armenia was divided into the western – Byzantine and the eastern – Persian Armenia, but of the period of the Arsacid kingdom of Armenia; however, at the same time, he considered it necessary to note the changes that occurred after the split of Armenia: namely, the Albanian nahangs of Artsakh, Uti, and Paytakaran were separated from Armenia and included in Albania.⁴⁷³

However, S.T. Yeremian points out that Armenia was divided into 15 nahangs under the Byzantine emperor Mauricius, i.e., in 591–610.⁴⁷⁴ Consequently, this division was geographic and administrative, considering that the Armenian statehood had long ceased to exist by that time, and according to the treaty of 591, as is known, the territory of Armenia was divided once again between Byzantium and Sassanian Iran. Iran gained Vaspurakan, Syunik and Dvin and all other lands were allocated to Byzantium. As for the nahangs of Artsakh, Utik and Paytakaran, which were allegedly separated from Armenia, nothing is said about them in the 591 treaty.

It should be noted that Shirakatsi's reports regarding the three Albanian regions – Artsakh, Utik, and Paytakaran – as part of Armenia are not true to the historical realities of antique and early medieval Albania and Armenia (see Ch. II “The Historical Geography of

Albania”). Nevertheless, Shirakatsi's information is very valuable for the historical geography of Albania in the part where he describes all the political and administrative units of Albania, their borders and natural resources.

A valuable source of the 7th–8th centuries is “The History of the Caliphs” of Ghevond, which covers the events that took place in the Caucasus for 127 years (from 661 to 788). The work talks about the first invasions of the Arabs into Albania and Armenia, about the subjugation of the Albanians, the wars of the Arabs with the Armenians, Greeks, and Khazars. The author provides unique information about the Khazars, the Khazar Khaganate, covers the policy pursued by the Arabs in relation to the Caucasian peoples, etc.⁴⁷⁵

The history of Christianity is perfectly reflected in the epistolary collection “Girk tltots” (“Book of Letters” or “Book of Epistles”), compiled in the eighth century.⁴⁷⁶ This monument contains the correspondence of Armenian church and state leaders with the heads of neighboring countries and churches (Albania, Iberia, the Sassanian Iran) during the 5th–8th centuries. The first part of the collection dates back to the 5th–7th centuries and consists of three groups of correspondence: 1) with the Greeks, 2) with the Syrians, 3) with the heads of Georgian and Albanian churches.⁴⁷⁷ The “Book of Letters” is an important source not only for the history of Christianity and dogmatic disputes of the Albanian Church, but also proves that the Albanians had their own writing system.⁴⁷⁸

Summarizing the review of Armenian sources, we can say that, according to class and ideological views, all authors of the Armenian historical and literary tradition were, to one degree or another, spokesmen for the interests of the church, Armenian Christian circles, and the pro-church party of feuds – naxarars.

Class bias is especially clearly manifested in narrative sources, both Albanian and Armenian, which mainly reflect political events that are important primarily for feudal lords, the church, and the feudal state.

§ 3. Historiography

In this section, we will look at historiography that reflects the problems we are studying: historical geography, the Albanian ethnos, social and political system (feudal institutions, administrative apparatus), the history of the formation of Albanian rulers, Albanian historical and literary school, and the history of the formation, development, and liquidation of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church. The monograph covers the history of the Albanians, the Albanian kingdom from the fourth century BC to the early eighth century AD, as well as the history of the Albanians of later periods, the history of the revived Albanian principalities-kingdoms in the 9th–12th centuries, the history of the Albanian melikdoms from the 15th to the 19th centuries, the de-ethnicization of the Albanians, the transformation of the Albanian ethnocultural heritage into Armenian, and the role of the Albanians in the ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijani people.

In connection with the tragic fate of the Albanian ethnos, whose ethnocultural heritage was transformed and suffered aggression from the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin, we had to make a retrospective journey into the history of the Armenian people and investigate certain issues that have not been studied in science: history and location of Armenian dioceses, Armenian feudal patronyms, localization of the Armenian Highlands, the Armenian region of Ayrarat and Armenian capitals, etc.

We will not limit ourselves only to covering the existing opinions, but in a number of cases, we will propose new solutions to these issues based on a different methodological basis, namely on consideration and comparison of the realities of Albania and Armenia at the same time, to which historians have not paid attention at all, on the treaties made between the two empires, Rome-Byzantium and Persian, which were not used to study the history of Albania, as well as the use of these sources in connection with the goals of creation of the written monuments, based on the analysis thereof.

As is known, Albanian studies began in the 19th century with the research of outstanding French researchers like E.Boré and academician M.F.Brosset, who were among the first historians-source experts to have translated some fragments of “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi into French and commented on them.⁴⁷⁹

Certain questions of Albanian studies were touched upon in the works of N.Y.Marr, who contributed greatly to the development of Caucasiology.⁴⁸⁰

One should mention the research of N.Y.Marr's student, I.A.Orbeli, who at the beginning of the 20th century took up the epigraphy of “Artsakh” – Khachen at the dawn of his work, later becoming a brilliant orientalist, Caucasian scholar, Kurdologist. Furthermore, I.A.Orbeli “described” the Christian monuments of the ancient Khachen principality, collected and checked the known relevant epigraphic material. I.A.Orbeli copied three hundred inscriptions, some of which had been generally unknown by that time: all the monuments dated back to the 12th–14th centuries. It should be noted that I.A.Orbeli's commitment to Albanian epigraphy, the history of the house of Hasan Jalal (the research in this field is rightfully considered to be the best work of I.A.Orbeli), was accounted for not only by purely professional interest, but also had its own prehistory. I.A.Orbeli descended from two prominent families in the Caucasus – in Georgia and Albania: the Orbeli family (to whom Stepanos Orbelian, author of “The History of Syunik” in the 13th century, belonged) and the Argutinsky-Dolgorukov family. And the Albanian house of Hasan Jalal, which he studied, descended from the Albanian Mihranids, and was often related to the family of Ivane Atabek and Zakharia Spasalar Argutinsky-Dolgorukovs, as well as the family of the Syunik Orbelians. In 1909, having collected the epigraphy of Khachen-Artsakh, having worked on it, making it readable, and having done a titanic work, I.A.Orbeli published Corpus 1 of the “Inscriptions of Gandzasar” (42 pages) in 1919 in Petrograd, promising in the preface to provide Russian translation of these inscriptions in Corpus 2. Of the three hundred inscriptions in Old Armenian, 84 were copied in Gandzasar, and meanwhile, only 40 of them were published by I.Shakhatuni, collected by Sarkis Jalalyants and Makar Barkhudaryants (in “Artsakh”). Other inscriptions were first printed by I.A.Orbeli in this corpus. All the more surprising and inexplicable are the actions of I.A.Orbeli, when he, of his own free will (known from a letter kept at the I.A.Orbeli Foundation),⁴⁸¹ turns to the printing house (Petrograd, 1919),

buys up the entire circulation and refuses to publish the “Inscriptions of Gandzasar”. Alas, this titanic work of I.A.Orbeli remains hidden and inaccessible to science. It is impossible to understand what could have prompted him to such an act. I worked at the I.A.Orbeli Foundation and, having personally rewritten the entire epigraphic corpus of the Gandzasar epigraphy, translated most of it. It seems that Orbeli was forced to do this due to the content of the Gandzasar letters, which was not in line with the existing Armenian concept. As has become known, according to this concept, the Artsakh-Khachen kingdom is considered Armenian and henceforth should be Armenian ethnically, politically, and culturally. Meanwhile, the inscription says: ‘I, Hasan Jalal ...the king of Albania, built the Gandzasar Cathedral at the insistence of Albanian Catholicos Patriarch Nerses for *my Albanian people*’.⁴⁸² It's likely that Orbeli couldn't compromise his scientific integrity and thus refused to publish the Gandzasar inscriptions.

In the 1960s, S.G.Badkhudaryan headed the work of an epigraphist team at the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the Academy of Sciences of the Armenian SSR in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region and later prepared for publication a collection of Artsakh inscriptions, which was not published either (!?).

Such is the sad fate of Albanian epigraphy, as well as everything associated with Albania. All of the foregoing demonstrates that the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin strictly censored or prohibited any scientific study, research, or recreation of the history of any aspect of Albania, Albanian ethnos, or Albanian churches.

This was done with the help of the Tsarist Government and was consistent with the policy of Tsarist Russia, which, in an attempt to conquer the Caucasus, pinned great hopes on the Armenians of Turkey, and with the suggestion of Etchmiadzin, the plan to create an Armenian state in the Caucasus was implemented. And for this, it was necessary to “sanctify” the Armenian historical past. Later, this tradition was supported by the Soviet government.

One should make specific mention of I.A.Orbeli's works dedicated to Albania – Artsakh and the Hasan Jalal house, which have retained their relevance to this day.⁴⁸³

In Georgian historiography, Albanian studies begin with I.V.Abuladze and A.G.Shanidze. In 1936, having discovered in Matenadaran one of the 15th century Armenian manuscripts, which is a collection of alphabets, including among others the Albanian alphabet, which was a great sensation in Caucasian studies, I.V.Abuladze wrote an article titled “New information on the existence of Caucasian Albanian writing”.⁴⁸⁴ A.G.Shanidze devoted special research to the language and writing system of the Caucasian Albanians,⁴⁸⁵ defining primarily the chronological period of the Albanians: 4th–13th centuries AD – and reliably outlining their territorial boundaries – the banks of the Kur River. Knowing the Armenian and Georgian sources very well, A.G.Shanidze substantiated the existence of the Albanian proper writing system by referring to “Letter from Armenians to Persian Orthodox Christians” (505) from the Armenian “Book of Letters”, which says: “We have the same faith, we have written to you before, in agreement with the Georgians and Albanians, in letters of each country”. This passage indisputably testified that the Albanians had a writing system of their own. Further, A.G.Shanidze substantiated the thesis of the existence of a strong Albanian Church, which must have had liturgical books in the Albanian language.

A.G.Shanidze predicted: ‘The writing of an entire people which played a key role in the cultural and political life of the Caucasus in the Middle Ages, could not have disappeared without a trace. Excavation will provide us with convincing epigraphic material... confirming information from Armenian sources about the existence of Albanian writing’.⁴⁸⁶ A.G.Shanidze believed that the Albanian language in its phonetic composition was close to the modern Udi language, which is spoken by the inhabitants of Vartashen and Nidzh.

A.G.Shanidze refers to a manuscript titled “The grammar fundamentals of the Aghuan language, written in Armenian letters” and sent by the Academy of Sciences F.Korganov in 1842 (the manuscript of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, p.7 according to the old numbering system: Arm. 77), which contains brief information on the grammar of the Udi language. This means that the “Aluan” (Albanian) language is identified with the Udi language. ‘The Udi language is one of the New Albanian dialects, or which is the same, Albanian is the literary language of the ancient Udins, that is, Old Udi’,⁴⁸⁷ this conclusion is made by A.G.Shanidze.

A.G.Shanidze's prophetic words came true when in 1996, in the monastery of St.Catherine on Mount Sinai, Z.N.Aleksidze found Georgian-Albanian palimpsests. According to Z.N.Aleksidze's research, the Albanian manuscript of the palimpsest is a lectionary – a liturgical collection of church readings on holidays throughout the year, which evidences that the Albanians had a complete translation of the Bible into Albanian. According to the researcher, the Albanian lectionary dates back to the second half of the fourth century.

Z.N.Aleksidze believes that after the adoption of Christianity, Albanian writing and literature not only existed, but also was rather advanced. The researcher claims that in terms of both vocabulary and morphology, the Albanian language is remarkably close to the Udi language: ‘...the Albanian literary language was fully formed at the time when the Lectionary was written and existed for a long time after that. We may have to revise over time the upper boundary of the date of its disappearance [eighth century]’.⁴⁸⁸

Based on the fact that the Jerusalem lectionary can be considered the prototype of all the ancient lectionaries that have come down to us, as well as on the fact that in the Albanian lectionary the name “Iohan” is found in the Hebrew-Syriac form “Iohannan” only, Z.N.Aleksidze rightly justifies this by the close contact between the Albanian Church and Jerusalem. On this basis, the researcher believes that the Albanian manuscript from Sinai was created in the Jerusalem environment and belongs to the earliest type of Jerusalem lectionaries. We believe that the Albanian lectionary with the Hebrew-Syriac form of the name of Apostle “Iohannan” was not necessarily created in the Jerusalem environment, but could have been created in Albania itself, inhabited in the first century AD by Nazarenes, i.e., Christian Jews.⁴⁸⁹ As is known, early Christianity relied on Jewish literature translated into Aramaic for the needs of Jewish communities.⁴⁹⁰ The perception of Christianity through the Aramaic language was facilitated by the fact that the Jews themselves at that time spoke Aramaic.

For the development of Caucasian studies in general and Albanian studies in particular, Z.N.Aleksidze's “Problems of ideology and culture of early medieval Caucasus and Georgia” is of great importance.⁴⁹¹ In this work, the researcher studied and assessed

the religious situation in the Caucasus in the 5th–7th centuries not from the perspective of an individual country, but by examining the entire Caucasus against the background of the relationship between the great empires of the West and the East of the era of schism and subsequent times. Of importance is the identification by the researchers of the interdependence of all sources associated with this problem. Z.N.Aleksidze showed the *interest of the new generations of medieval historians and writers in the issues of the church split in the Caucasus* and their participation in the editing of the corresponding texts. The researcher, through source analysis, reproduced the true history of dogmatic disputes in the Caucasus.

The issues of social history (feudal institutions) of Georgia and Armenia, as well as the issue of the church split between Georgia and Armenia, were investigated in the works of I.A.Javakhishvili,⁴⁹² which made it possible to understand and highlight the same issues in relation to Albania.

It is also worth mentioning the studies of Georgian colleagues who covered certain issues of the historical geography of Albania: N.A.Berdzenashvili,⁴⁹³ G.N.Chubinashvili,⁴⁹⁴ T.G.Papuashvili,⁴⁹⁵ D.L.Muskhelishvili⁴⁹⁶ (for the author's detailed attitude to the research, see Chapter 2 of this monograph).

We should mention two articles by A.Krymsky, devoted to the study of Albanian political formations of the 9th–10th centuries, Albanian prince Sahl ibn Sunbat, the Albanian ethnic groups belonging to the Ibero-Caucasian family. According to the researcher, in Albania, historical Azerbaijan, the early process of Turkification started.⁴⁹⁷

Now let's consider the concept of S.T.Yeremian,^{*} who has dealt with the history of Caucasian Albania, with almost all the issues that we have now made the subject of our research. These include issues of historical geography, statehood formation, the establishment of the Albanian Massagetae branch of the Arsacids, the formation of the church hierarchy, Catholicosate, ethnos, Albanian literature, and de-ethnicization of the Albanians.

All works by S.T.Yeremian, dedicated to the history of Albania, are imbued with a single concept aimed at the exaltation of Armenia, the Armenian state, at the expense of infringing on the history of Albania, the Albanian state. Let's consider the author's sections written for the “Essays on the History of the USSR” published in 1958 (“The Political History of Albania in the 3rd–7th centuries”, “The Ideology and Culture of Albania in the 3rd–7th centuries”), as well as sections for the “History of the USSR” published in 1966. In the “Essays on the History of the USSR”, S.T.Yeremian initially considers Albania as an integral part of Greater Armenia, which seems completely unjustified. All questions of the history of the Albanian land are viewed by the author through the perspective of the history of Greater Armenia and in the light of the interests of the Armenian people. Even if we assume that S.T.Yeremian's concept is correct, there is a logical discrepancy with the titles – “The political history of Albania in the 3rd–7th centuries” and “The ideology and culture

* Certain issues of the history of Albania, explored from the beginning of the 20th century in the works of Armenologists such as N.Adonts, Y.A.Manandian, M.Abegyan, T.Avdalbegian, G.Aganyan, N.Akinyan, were explored by us in each corresponding chapter of this monograph.

of Albania in the 3rd–7th centuries”, because the titles and content of the texts are mutually exclusive.

The concept of “Greater Armenia”, according to sources, is used in two senses: geographic and political. As a geographical concept, it became known in 220 BC, when ‘Antiochus III Seleucid seized the Ayarat kingdom and united it with the main region of Armenia (basin of Lake Van), which from that time had been called Greater Armenia’.⁴⁹⁸ Except for Lesser Armenia, all Armenian regions were subordinated to the Seleucids. Antiochus appointed the local dynasty of Artaxias (Artashes in Armenian) as the ruler (strategos) of Greater Armenia.⁴⁹⁹ Consequently, in contrast to Lesser Armenia, there was Major/Greater Armenia (from Armenian “Mets” – big, great). As a political concept, “Greater Armenia” is characteristic of the 2nd–1st centuries BC, the reign of Artaxias I and Tigranes II, when Major Armenia reached its highest prosperity and power. So, it appears that in the 2nd–1st centuries BC, geographic and political concepts of “Greater Armenia” coincided. But after the collapse of Tigranes II’s empire, i.e., after 65 BC, Greater Armenia as a political concept outlived its usefulness, for Armenia remained territorially within the limits of the Armenian Highlands only. “Major Armenia” was preserved as a geographical concept, which was also used in the early Middle Ages.

The territory inhabited by Armenians to the east of the Euphrates was called Greater Armenia, i.e. Major Armenia, and west of the Euphrates, Lesser Armenia.⁵⁰⁰

N.Adonts, commenting on Ibn Khordadbeh, notes that ‘the royal power really existed in *Buzurk Armenia*, i.e., *Major Armenia* and in Aran – Albania...’⁵⁰¹

The study of Albanian and Armenian realities convinces us that “Greater Armenia”, both in political and geographical senses, is in no way related to the fate of Albania.⁵⁰² The following statement of S.T.Yeremian raises an objection: ‘The right-bank Albania was part of the centralized slave-based state of Greater Armenia for about six centuries and Albanian statehood was restored only in the fourth century’.⁵⁰³ In this statement, the information on not only Albania, but also Armenia is incorrect. For six centuries (2nd century BC – 4th century AD), there was no centralized, unified state of “Greater Armenia”. As is known, the empire created by the occasional conquests of Tigranes II was a fragile union of regions with different levels of social structure, and a multilingual population. This power was devoid of any organic unity. All this resulted in the aggravation of internal contradictions and the strengthening of the separatist aspirations of the nobility.⁵⁰⁴ After the defeat of Tigranes II by Pompei, in 65 BC, Armenia, occupying the territory of the Armenian Highlands at the time, was repeatedly divided between the two empires, which subsequently led to the formation of two Armenias: the Eastern – Persian Armenia and the Western – Byzantine Armenia, which were in fact, completely dependent on Rome/Byzantium and Iran.

In complete contradiction with the afore-mentioned statement of S.T.Yeremian is his premise: ‘In this struggle [between Rome and Iran, – *F.M.*] *involuntarily*, Greater Armenia was drawn again [this is in reference to the fourth century – *F.M.*]. Again, of significant importance was acquiring the position of the *buffer Armenia in this struggle*, which was considered ‘a friend and ally of Caesar and the Roman people’ and *was obliged* to fight on the side of the Roman Empire...’⁵⁰⁵ The highlighted lines do not fit in any way with the political status of *Greater Armenia*. For this period, the “Greater” sounds paradoxical. As

for the words ‘a friend and ally of Caesar and the Roman people’, this is figurative, and in fact, it meant complete dependence on Rome, simply meaning a Roman province.

Albania's political situation was radically different. The statehood thereof was created, according to ancient written sources, as early as in the fourth century BC, and according to archaeological research of the last decade, also in the 4th–3rd centuries BC on a local ethnic basis and, apparently, initially on the basis of a local dynasty.

The wars between Rome and Iran (Parthian and Sassanian) in the 2nd–4th centuries, which had such a heavy impact on Armenia, hardly ever touched Albania. As for the so-called “restoration of Albanian statehood” in the fourth century, according to S.T.Yeremian, it should be recalled that the statehood of Albania, according to the information of the Albanian authors themselves, was not interrupted until 463. As is known, Albania remained without royal power only from 463 to 487.

Further, S.T.Yeremian links the Albanian Arsacid kings who had actually reigned in Albania since the first century AD and ascended directly to the Persian Arsacids, with the Massagetae branch of the Arsacids, who, in his opinion, were relatives of the Armenian Arsacids, and therefore places them in Albania in the fourth century.⁵⁰⁶ One conclusion logically follows from S.T.Yeremian's concept: the Albanian Arsacids must have obeyed the Armenian Arsacids.

Having linked the Albanian Arsacids with the Massagetae branch of the Arsacids, reaching the events of 462 when Albanian Arsacid king Vache II abdicated the throne and retired in his own domain, S.T.Yeremian quite arbitrarily sends Vache II to Chola (Chora), to the “land of his ancestors”,⁵⁰⁷ although there are no grounds for such information in any source. Again, this is done in a concept thought out by him, in order to connect the Albanian kings with the Massagetae branch of the Arsacids who were in Chola and were allegedly related to the Armenian Arsacids.

S.T.Yeremian unreasonably exalts the political role of Armenia in the fourth century and explains the establishment of the Sassanids in the Caucasus with it only. ‘As long as there was the Roman-supported buffer of Greater Armenia, the Sassanid Iran could not establish itself in the Transcaucasus’.⁵⁰⁸ This statement unforgivably diminishes the political roles of both Albania and Iberia and the Sassanian Empire.

By virtue of its geographical and political position, being subordinate to two empires at the same time, the buffer Armenia could not be an obstacle to the policy of the Sassanids who wanted to strengthen their power in the Caucasus, especially since in territorial terms, the “buffer Armenia” was outside the Caucasus. The statement of S.T.Yeremian is contradicted by his own words that “in the general policy of defense of the northern borders from the invasions of nomads, Albania turned out to be an important strategic link”.⁵⁰⁹ The Albanian kings, being vassals of the Sassanids, exercised control over the mountain passes, in particular over the Chola-Derbent pass, with the exception of a short period (during the uprisings of the fifth century). The security of Albania, as an ally of the Sassanids, was in the interests of the latter. Albania's political position was fundamentally different from Armenia's due to its strategic location and geographical isolation. And that is why S.T.Yeremian is wrong in believing that the Sassanids pursued the same policy in Albania as in Armenia and Iberia.⁵¹⁰ Obviously, it is difficult to agree with his opinion, expressed, however, not so categorically, but with some degree of

probability that ‘...back in 387, although there were kings, Albania was actually ruled by the governors of the Persian king of kings – the marzbans’.⁵¹¹ However, it is known that the rule of the country by marzbans was completely ruled out given the presence of king power. And most importantly, the sources do not report anything about this, but, on the contrary, testify to the continuity and succession of the Albanian kings – the Albanian Arsacids who maintained allied, although at times unequal, relations with the Sassanids.

As has already been mentioned, in 387, Armenia was once again divided between the two empires, as a result of which most of it was allocated to Iran, and less to Byzantium. In connection with these events, S.T.Yeremian believes that Albania must have been somewhat infringed upon, and he decided to introduce the Marzban regime here, even in the presence of king's power. But in reality, the marzban regime *was introduced* in Albania from 463 to 487, which was due to an unprecedented case – the anti-Iranian uprising in 457–462/463 led by Albanian king, Vache II.

As for the historical geography of Albania, S.T.Yeremian shares the opinion of M.Chamchyan that the territory of right-bank Albania, that is, the territory between the Kur and the Aras rivers – the Artsakh, Uti, and Paytakaran regions – for six centuries (from the second century BC to the fourth century AD), was a part of Armenia (Our opinion on this matter is provided in detail in Ch. 2 “Historical Geography of Albania”). The statement of the author that ‘Albania, to a greater extent than Armenia and Iberia, turned out to be subordinate to Iran politically and culturally’, is also completely wrong.⁵¹² When comparing the realities of the three countries – Armenia, Iberia and Albania – it becomes quite obvious that the position of Albania before 462/463 was more privileged and independent than that of Armenia, which in fact became a province and, at best, the governorship of the two empires; and also incomparably better than Iberia, which, being under the protectorate of Rome-Byzantium on the one hand, was a vassal of the Sassanids on the other hand. To control Iberia, Iran, established the position of Kartli Bidaxsh along with the royal power.⁵¹³

The royal power in Albania was abolished from 463 to 487/488. However, after the anti-Iranian uprising (481–484) and the conclusion of the Treaty of Nvarsak of 485, due to a protracted unsuccessful war with the Hephthalite Huns in Central Asia, Persian king Walagash had to satisfy the demands of the three rebellious countries. Among the concessions to them was the restoration of royal power in Albania.

In setting out the political history of Albania in the 6th–8th centuries, S.T.Yeremian succeeded more. Anyway, he presented the history of an independent country not related to the interests of Armenia. The author correctly assessed the importance of the Caucasian passages both for the history of Albania and for the two empires, he described four lines of defensive fortifications, which, according to the author, were started during the reign of the Sassanian king Yazdegerd II and completed under Khosrow I Anushirvan in the sixth century. The fate of Albania under the Mihranids is described in more detail.

In the section “Ideology and Culture of Albania of the 3rd–7th centuries”, S.T.Yeremian regards Albania again as a link in one chain, as a part of Armenia. The section about “Ideology...of Albania” begins with the following words: ‘One of the measures to preserve the integrity of the *disintegrating territory of Greater Armenia* was the spread of a new religion, Christianity, and the establishment of the *church hierarchy and administration on the outskirts*’.⁵¹⁴ And after that he talks about the preachers of

Christianity sent from Armenia to Albania. Meanwhile, the territory of Armenia was disintegrating under the will and persistent policy pursued by the two empires, and not by the will of the Armenians. And here, preaching Christianity could not be of much help. In addition, Byzantium, being a Christian country, actively pursued a policy of conquering Christian Armenia.

Completely ignoring the data of Movses Kaghankatvatsi about the first period of preaching Christianity and its early penetration into Albania, S.T.Yeremian claims that Christian preachers from Armenia moved to Albania. Moreover, he believes that in the region of the right bank of Albania, preachers of Christianity penetrated from Armenia as subordinates of Armenia, and in the northwestern regions of the left bank of Albania, i.e., in the interfluvium of Iori and Alazani, preachers from Iberia.⁵¹⁵

S.T.Yeremian, speaking about the Albanian Church, argues that establishment of its independence in 552 was due to the general policy of the Sassanids and that hierarchically, the Albanian Catholicosate had been subordinate to the Armenian Church since 552, for which the author has no grounds.⁵¹⁶

Regarding the Albanian ethnos, S.T.Yeremian believes that the “Albanians” is a collective term referring to the union of a number of tribes, of which the biggest were the Uti or Udins.⁵¹⁷ For the answer to this, see “Albanian ethnic community” (Ch. 3).

As for the Albanian literary language, S.T.Yeremian thinks that it was formed on the basis of the Gargarean dialect, was not communicative and being of a supra-dialectal nature, differed from the dialects of the rest of Albania. And in the seventh century, according to S.T.Yeremian, the Old Armenian language ‘completely and irrevocably’ became the language of worship. As a result, the Albanian writing system had gradually been getting out of use since the seventh century, and the mention of it disappeared without a trace.⁵¹⁸ S.T.Yeremian contradicts himself by saying that there is information that some of the Armenians-Albanians used the Albanian writing system back in the 13th century. As for the transition to the Old Armenian language, this is not a momentary act, but a complex process that took centuries, primarily associated with political events in which empires with certain interests had to be involved. In this case, such an empire was Tsarist Russia in the late 18th–early 19th centuries, under the patronage of and with the assistance of which the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church de-ethnicized the Albanians (for more information, see Chapter 6).

S.T.Yeremian is hasty with the processes of Armenization and Georgianization, assimilating the population of Utik and Artsakh with the Armenians at the beginning of the eighth century and the Albanian population of Kakheti and Kizikia with the Georgians. In our opinion, these processes could not have begun before 1836, before the abolition of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and its subordination to the Armenian Church. In addition, initially there was cultural and ideological assimilation (confessional), not ethnic.

The first synthesizing monographic work covering almost all questions of the history of Albania, from the fourth century BC to the seventh century AD, is the book by K.V.Trever, “Essays on the History and Culture of Caucasian Albania”. With the exception of socio-economic history (social system), K.V.Trever, at a level of knowledge existing at the time, brilliantly covered the issues of the economy of the Albanian tribes, political

history, religion, cities, fortifications, culture of Albania. The work was based on a study of data from antique, ancient Armenian, Georgian, Syriac, Arab sources, with the wide use of material monuments.

The author revealed almost all the data, reflecting the numerous elements of the economic life of the Albanians, and with sufficient completeness, covered the country's economy in three periods: 4th–2nd centuries BC, 1st–3rd centuries AD, and the 4th–7th centuries AD.

As for the historical geography of Albania, K.V.Trever adheres to the so-called Armenian tradition regarding the southern border, which ran along the Kur River until the fourth century. According to her, the regions of Artsakh, Uti, Paytakaran, and Shakashen-Sakasena, i.e., all the right bank of the Kur, were conquered in the second century BC by the Armenian king Artaxias I and remained a part of Armenia until 387,⁵¹⁹ when they were reunited with Albania. Consequently, these areas were originally Albanian.

Noteworthy is the author's observation that the Chor (Chola) and Lpnik regions 'enjoyed some kind of internal independence, which perhaps gave reason to list them after mentioning Albania'.⁵²⁰

K.V.Trever tries to reconstruct the political history of Albania against the general background of the events that took place in the Caucasian region. This research method is undoubtedly correct, but in each case, it requires an individual approach and not only a general knowledge of the realities of the three countries, but a profound knowledge of the Albanian realities. If the historical destinies of ancient Armenia and Iberia (to one degree or another for each country) are associated with history, with the foreign policy of Rome and Iran, then the history of Albania is more related to the history of the Sassanian Iran. The participation of both Albania, Armenia and Iberia in international relations is inadequate. In contrast to them, Albania, at times, was not at all involved in those foreign policy events that had a heavy impact on the destinies of Armenia and Iberia.

Trying to reconstruct the international situation in the Caucasus in each individual case, K.V.Trever pays unjustifiably much attention to the history of Armenia, through which she tries to illuminate the history of Albania as a perspective.⁵²¹

K.V.Trever begins the political history of Albania in the early medieval period from the 330s, and tries to characterize it not by its problems, but describing over the centuries all the events related to the political life of the country.

Based on the information of Faustus of Byzantium, Khorenatsi and Kaghankatvatsi about the invasion of northern peoples against Armenia, led by Sanesan (Sanatruk), K.V.Trever came to the correct conclusion that 'neither Iberia, nor Albania were affected by the invasion of Sanatruk'.⁵²² Among the Albanian kings, K.V.Trever describes the reign of Urnayr and his participation on the side of Persian king Shapur II in the battle of Dzirav of 371.⁵²³ With sufficient detail, she covers the anti-Iranian national liberation movement of the Caucasian peoples in the fifth century, in particular the uprising of 457–463, which was led by Albanian king Vache II himself.⁵²⁴ We object to the interpretation given by K.V.Trever to the 1000 "smokes" wheedled out by Vache II from Persian king Peroz as his paternal inheritance, where he retired after his abdication from power. K.V.Trever interprets them as one thousand families, and in our opinion, here we are talking about

the hereditary domain consisting of 1000 fumages, i.e., lands for which hearth-money was to be paid.⁵²⁵

In our opinion, the author's search for heretical movements in Albania, including Manichaeism, Nestorianism is successful and attempts to find echoes of Mazdakism.⁵²⁶ K.V.Trever finishes the fifth-century events with a description of the reign of Albanian king Vachagan III.⁵²⁷ As for foreign policy events, she describes in detail the invasion of the Khazars into Albania in 552 and in 628–630, the Persian-Byzantine wars of that time. The author correctly noted that in 628–630, there was 'political subordination of the country to the Khazars'.⁵²⁸ K.V.Trever's monograph provides a detailed description of the establishment and reign of the great Mihranid princes (Varaz-Grigor, Javanshir and Varaz-Trdat) in Albania. A serious objection is raised by the opinion of the author, who, speaking about the resettlement of Mihran to Albania, writes: 'Are we not dealing here with the seizure of power by the local Gardman ruler (perhaps supported by the Persians), who destroyed representatives of the *Armenian princely families owning lands in this region...* we are dealing with the echoes of the struggle between the Armenized Albanian and Armenian feudal clans for the seizure of suzerain rights over the feudal Albania'.⁵²⁹ Undoubtedly, V.V.Bartold is right when he believes that in the face of Mihranids in Albania, "the Albanian national dynasty is restored, but of Persian origin".⁵³⁰

In the 730s, according to K.V.Trever, the final subordination of Albania to the Arabs took place. She dedicates a special section in her monograph, titled "Christianity and other cults", where she claims that from the fourth to the seventh centuries, the country was diverse in terms of religions, a number of religious systems and cults coexisted, which, in her opinion, affected the worldview of the Albanians.⁵³¹ In our opinion, the author exaggerates the role of polytheism, arguing that 'Christianity, forcibly implanted since the fourth century and perceived primarily by the court and the nobility, Zoroastrianism, introduced by the Sassanids in the middle of the fifth century and also perceived ostensibly ...by representatives of the top of society, various Christian and Zoroastrian sects, ...and coming from the seventh century, militant Islam, all these religions and cults in one way or another, took root in the Albanian land'.⁵³²

At first glance, the author's thesis seems correct, but it groundlessly levels the role of Zoroastrianism, religious systems – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. For the period of the 4th–7th centuries, K.V.Trever completely underestimated the presence of such factors as the centralized royal power of Albania, the continuity and succession of the Albanian rulers represented by the Albanian Arsacids and the great Mihranid princes who replaced them and who (both the kings and the great princes) consistently and firmly pursued the policy of the religious formation of Christianity as the dominant religion of the country, strengthened the material and ideological positions of the Albanian Church.

The establishment of Christianity in the early fourth century as the state religion was preceded back in the 1st–2nd centuries by the preaching of Christianity by the first missionaries, which again missed the author's attention. As for the Albanian Church, K.V.Trever is generally silent about it. Meanwhile, the Church of Albania was Autocephalous, Apostolic, had dioceses in almost all regions of the country. Consequently, among the religious systems, the position of Christianity until the seventh century inclusive was dominant, but not universal, polytheism was not obsolete. The anti-Sassanid uprisings

of the fifth century, ideologically spearheaded against Zoroastrianism, for the preservation of the country's cultural and ideological identity, testify to the dominant positions of the Christian doctrine. Despite some shortcomings, the work of K.V.Trever remains an important reference book for everyone who is interested and engaged in the history of Albania.

Charles Dowsett, a famous English scientist and Armenian scholar, made a significant contribution to Albanian studies, including the study of Albanian sources such as Movses Kaghankatvatsi's "History of the Aghuans", Mkhitar Gosh's "Albanian Chronicle", David son of Alawik's "Canons", the identification of their manuscripts, reading, and translation into English.⁵³³ This researcher was one of the first to identify and publish the unpublished (missing) pages of "History of the Aghuans" by Movses Kaghankatvatsi and, making comments, illuminated the period of the reign of Albanian prince Sahl ibn Sunbat (ninth century).

On the centenary of the translation of Movses Kaghankatvatsi's "History of the Aghuans" into Russian by K.Patkanov (1861), Charles Dowsett, in 1961, published his English translation of K.Shahnazarian's Armenian edition of the Albanian source, but taking into account all the manuscripts of the two groups (1 and 2). As has been noted, C.Dowsett added new manuscripts to this group: P₄ 220 [National Library of France, Makler Catalog], BM Or 5261 [British Museum, Conybeare Catalog], V₁ No.1485 and V₂ No.1146 [The Venetian Mechitarist Collection] and Q [From Nagorno-Karabakh].

C.Dowsett undertook large-scale, serious research with an Albanian source – "Canons" by David Alawik, namely, he provided an English translation of the entire text, studied the period when the source appeared, revealed the purpose of the writing of the monument, gave separate comments, and wrote a serious "Introduction" to it.

A great contribution to science in general and to Albanian studies in particular was Z.M.Bunyatov's monograph titled "Azerbaijan in 7th–9th centuries", in which, based on the study of Albanian, Armenian, Georgian, Byzantine, Arab, Syrian sources, the author for the first time in science correctly illuminated the history of Albanian ideology: Christianity, the Albanian Church, its structure, Albanian literature. The author showed the role that the Armenian Gregorian Church tried to play in the infringement of the rights and liquidation of independence of the Albanian Church. In his monograph, Z.M.Bunyatov for the first time, makes an attempt to solve the problem of Gregorianization and Islamization of the Albanian Christian population. He shows both objective and subjective reasons that would have led to the disappearance of Albanian literature, culture (epigraphy), the Albanian ethnos. But this did not happen during the period described by the researcher.

Recent research convinces me that in the 8th–9th centuries, with the help of the Arab Caliphate, the Armenian Church did not succeed in subjugating the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, de-ethnicizing the Albanians, and transforming their cultural heritage. The Islamization policy pursued by the Arabs resulted in Islamization of part of the Albanians and their further assimilation with the Muslim Turks. But Gregorianization and further Armenization of the Albanians did not take place during this period. The Albanian Autocephalous Church, with a strong Albanian flock, many Albanian dioceses, continued to function actively.

Returning to Z.M.Bunyatov's studies, we note that he correctly studied the political history of the country during the reign of Albanian great Mihranid princes.

In light of the problems we are considering, the following sections of Z.M.Bunyatov's monograph are of undoubted interest: "Political situation in the late 6th–early 7th centuries", "The conquest of Azerbaijan by the Arabs", "Islamization and Gregorianization of the population of Azerbaijan", "Arab-Khazar wars and Azerbaijan", "Social movements in Aran".

We can say that Z.M.Bunyatov was one of the first to correctly assess the political importance of the strategic position of Aran (Albania) in the Northern Kustak (governorship), with which its powerful neighbors, Byzantium and Iran, had to reckon.⁵³⁴

Characterizing the foreign policy situation of the 6th–7th centuries, the author exhaustively described the invasion and conquest of the country by the Khazars, from the sixth to the eighth centuries, the Persian-Byzantine wars, in which Albania had been drawn since 625.⁵³⁵ For the first time in history, Z.M.Bunyatov duly appreciated and described the activities of the Albanian patriarch Viroy (seventh century), who played an important role in the social and political life of the country during the Persian and Khazar domination.⁵³⁶

The author's opinion in his polemic with M.I.Artamonov about the duration of the Khazar rule in Albania raises some objections.

In our opinion, M.I.Artamonov is right in arguing that the Khazars ruled in Albania for three years from 627 to 630 and that "a century of domination" is "out of question".⁵³⁷ It seems that Z.M.Bunyatov somewhat exaggerated the "duration of stay" of the Khazars in Albania, arguing that "...most likely the Khazars, having suffered defeat during the next invasion to the south, did not leave Albania, as stated by M.I.Artamonov, but simply returned to their original borders, to the place of settlements on the territory of Albania, to the Kabala region. Here they waited for events favorable for their predatory campaigns, *undoubtedly controlling a large territory, which probably reached the borders of Georgia in the west, and in the south to the Kur*".⁵³⁸

In our opinion, we are talking about different spheres of influence of the Khazars. M.I.Artamonov speaks about the political domination of the Khazars in all of Albania, and Z.M.Bunyatov – about the settlement, stay and control of a part of Albania – the left-bank Albania. According to Kaghankatvatsi, Albanian Great Prince Javanshir owned all of Albania – both the right bank and the left bank, from the Aras to Chola (Chora) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 23). In addition, Z.M.Bunyatov himself, summarizing, comes to an absolutely correct conclusion: "...and the north of Azerbaijan (Aran – Albania) was subjected to frequent raids by the Khazars who settled in the foothills of the Caucasus".⁵³⁹

Considering the political history of Albania in the 6th–9th centuries, Z.M.Bunyatov noted that in the sixth century, the country was ruled by marzbans and in the 7th–8th centuries by the Mihranids, who, in his opinion, 'although *nominally*, continued to rule the entire country *or part of it* until the early eighth century'.⁵⁴⁰ It seems that one should not generalize the rule of all Mihranids. The author's thesis is legitimate only regarding the reign of Varaz-Grigor and the last representative of the Mihranids, Sheroy, the great prince of Albania. As for the reign of Javanshir, to which the author devoted many pages⁵⁴¹ and who, according to Kaghankatvatsi, was an outstanding figure of the seventh century, as well as the reign of his successor Varaz-Trdat, these can hardly be regarded as "nominal" .

These two figures actively pursued independent domestic and foreign policies, entering into equal and unequal alliances, and vassal dependence on this or that state.

Speaking about the territorial boundaries of Aran (Albania), it should be noted that Z.M.Bunyatov correctly outlined the southern political borders of the country in the 7th–9th centuries, for the first time in science rightfully including Syunik in Albania, considering the border to be the Aras.⁵⁴² By indicating the correct location of the historical region of Gardman, the author convincingly proved that Hnarakert was located at the mouth of the Ktsia (Khrami) (at its confluence with the Kur) and was, in his opinion, the border point between Albania and Iberia. Z.M.Bunyatov quite rightly emphasized the erroneous opinion of P.Ingorokva, who located Hnarakert at the confluence of the Aghstafa and the Kur Rivers and thereby, as Z.M.Bunyatov noted, ‘moved the Georgian lands to the territory of Albania’.⁵⁴³

Z.M.Bunyatov correctly identified and located the existence of the two Shakis, which brought the utmost clarity in the reconstruction of the late Albanian political formations and in solving other issues.

Summing up our opinion regarding the studies of Z.M.Bunyatov (“Azerbaijan in the 7th–9th centuries”), it should be noted that he was the first in science to show, and in some cases to prove the vulnerability and groundlessness of the Armenian concept dominating in science regarding Albanian literature and church, and thus made a breach in the Armenian concept, which was artificially created and existed for centuries.

For our work, of interest is the article by Igrar Aliyev “On the interpretation of paragraphs 1, 3, 4 and 5 of the fourth chapter of book 11 of Strabo's “Geography””.⁵⁴⁴ As is known, Strabo has extremely contradictory information about the socio-economic, political life, about the way of life and culture of Albania. This gave many scholars reason to believe that the Albanian tribes are more backward compared to their western and southwestern neighbors.

In this respect, science can offer several points of view trying to highlight the degree of reliability of this information (K.J.Neumann, V.Fabritius, K.V.Trever, K.Aliyev, I.Babayev, S.Kaziyev, etc.).⁵⁴⁵ Aliyev tries to establish the accuracy of the information about Albania reported by the Amasyan geographer in several ways: by identifying Strabo's sources, reconstructing the Albanian realities of that time on the basis of written sources and material culture, as well as by juxtaposing Strabo's reports with the reconstructed Albanian realities. The author comes to the conclusion, which differs from all existing opinions, that Strabo's information about the primitiveness of the economic and political life of the Albanians cannot apply to the whole of Albania and its population but refers to a small area in the north-west of the country. Research by I.G.Aliyev proves that Albania in the 1st century BC – 1st century AD in social, political and economic terms, not only kept up with its neighbors, but also reached a high level of social development; Albanian society has long been subjected to social stratification; agriculture, cattle breeding, handicrafts, and trade have reached high development.⁵⁴⁶

In his last book “On some issues of the ethnic history of the Azerbaijani people”, Igrar Aliyev practically failed to cope with the task set. Trying to criticize the linguists and

historians of Azerbaijan who adhere to the concept of Turkogenesis,* he bombards them with didactic ungrounded instructions, defames them, and every time assaults their dignity, claiming that “this is not the way to write”. A reader determined to read his justification, his conclusions, is deeply amazed that the so-called conclusions and evidence provided by Igrar Aliyev are always not his own but borrowed from prominent scientists of Russia: E.A.Grantovsky, I.M.Dyakonov, A.Y.Krymsky and others, as well as famous scientists of Georgia G.A.Melikishvili, T.G.Papuashvili and others. And Igrar Aliyev himself remains on the sidelines, who sententiously criticizes, who practically does not have his own view, his own concept on the subject of the dispute.

In this book, in section “Albanological Notes”, he criticizes linguists and historians who are of the opinion that “Albanians are Turks” and that “Albanian is a Turkic language”, and objects to them as follows: “...that in centuries BC and in *very early centuries AD in Azerbaijan, as well as in the Caucasus and throughout Asia Minor, there were no Turks and that they did not appear here before the beginning of the Middle Ages*”.⁵⁴⁷ Needless to say, the statements of both the scholars who advocate Turkogenesis and the opinion of Igrar Aliyev who criticizes them and is under an opposite delusion, do not stand up to scrutiny. As is known, science has long recognized the reliability of the reports of the second century sources – Dionysius Periegetes and Claudius Ptolemy, reporting on the Huns living in the Caucasus in the second century AD. If the sources report about the Turkic-speaking tribes in the Caucasus in the second century AD, we can make the appearance of these tribes one more century earlier, i.e., in the first century AD. Indeed, science has recognized that the first century AD was the first stage of the penetration of the Turkic-speaking tribes, the Bulgars, into the North Caucasus. And in the second century AD, Turkic-speaking Huns penetrated into the region (I.Marquardt, F.Altheim, K.F.Smirnov, O.Maenchen-Helfen, N.Y.Merpert, A.V.Gadlo, Y.R.Jafarov).

Consequently, Igrar Aliyev is fundamentally wrong when he categorically asserts that the Turks appeared in the Caucasus at the beginning of the Middle Ages. Igrar Aliyev speaks repeatedly about the late appearance of the Turks in the Ciscaucasia and the Caucasus. Thus: ‘starting from the 3rd–4th centuries, a new ethnic element began to penetrate into the Ciscaucasia – individual groups of nomadic Turkic-speaking tribes’.⁵⁴⁸ Here he refers to Y.Jafarov's work,⁵⁴⁹ although Y.Jafarov dates it to the 1st–2nd centuries.⁵⁵⁰ Similarly, Igrar Aliyev tries to deny the presence of the Turks in Northern and Southern Azerbaijan of the same time (1st–4th centuries) and even in the 7th–8th centuries in South Azerbaijan.⁵⁵¹ Meanwhile, it has been proven that a significant part of South Azerbaijan's population in the middle of the seventh century were the Turks.⁵⁵² Trying to underestimate, reduce, simplify the role of the Turkic-speaking tribes in the formation of the Azerbaijani people, Igrar Aliyev highlights the ethnic processes that took place in antiquity, specifically giving priority to the “Median-Atropatene people”. At the same time, in the formation of this nation, there is a lot of vulnerable, unconvincing elements, in particular regarding its self-awareness. According to Igrar Aliyev, “in the Hellenistic period, a new ethnic community with its Iranian, Median language, self-designation

* By Turkogenesis, I refer to the ethnic process, when only the Turkic origin is traced in the genesis of the ethnoses.

(ethnonym) – the “Medes”, *almost certainly – ethnic identity*, and other integral components of the ethnos appeared on the territory of South Azerbaijan”.⁵⁵³ This is rather a declarative statement, completely groundless and unreasoned. Such a vital component of an ethnos as self-awareness (if any) would necessarily have shown itself, which science would have known. One cannot speak about self-awareness a priori. Meanwhile, as far as the Turks are concerned, as all the sources testify: ancient, early medieval (Albanian, ancient Armenian, ancient Georgian, Arab) – starting from the first centuries, each subsequent century various Turkic-speaking tribes, replacing one another, constantly replenished, and renewed, penetrated and settled compactly in the Caucasus, North and South Azerbaijan.

Igrar Aliyev recognizes a priori that Turkification of Northern Azerbaijan could have ended in the 7th–8th centuries, but he thinks it was prevented by the Arab invaders. According to him, this process did not affect South Azerbaijan. Meanwhile, the data of sources and the historical realities of North and South Azerbaijan allow talking about their Turkification during this period, which was the main reason for the rapprochement of North and South Azerbaijan in the presence of various political formations in them.

Incorrectly referring to the works of Z.M.Bunyatov and Farida Mammadova, Igrar Aliyev also makes a statement: “The Armenian Catholicosate did everything (eighth century) to subjugate the Albanian Church, which was helpless to stop the *powerful process of de-ethnicization, denationalization, that had begun*”.⁵⁵⁴

Along with the report of Z.M.Bunyatov about the submission in the early eighth century of Albanian Catholicos to Armenian Catholicos, there is another statement: ‘the throne of Caspian Albania was destroyed in the early 19th century as a result of the merger of the Caspian-Albanian or Aghuan nationality with the Armenian nationality’.⁵⁵⁵ Farida Mammadova says: “The Albanian Church was unable to resist the policy of the Arab Caliphate and the Armenian Church actively helping it ...All this *subsequently* led to Islamization, as well as *cultural and ideological assimilation – Gregorianization (Armenization) and Georgianization of the Albanian Christian population*”.⁵⁵⁶ As we can see, the word “subsequently” does not indicate specifically the chronology of the process, but, undoubtedly, this was not after the eighth century, but later. Igrar Aliyev, in his irresponsible statement regarding the allegedly “powerful process of de-ethnicization and denationalization, the *breakup* of the Albanian people that began in the eighth century”, again refers to another work of Farida Mammadova, which says: “In the 18–19th centuries, a double ethnic self-awareness was formed in Artsakh and then its complete explosive change, when the Albanian self-awareness disappeared and the Armenian one emerged”.⁵⁵⁷

Igrar Aliyev unscrupulously refers to Azerbaijani authors, trying to falsely make them solidary with him, clearly demonstrating this in the works of Y.Jafarov, Z.M.Bunyatov, and Farida Mammadova. Nor does his assertion stand up to criticism, that on the eve of the Seljuk conquest, *‘the population of the country, tired of endless wars, exhausted by numerous taxes, various duties, extortions and arbitrariness, gradually de-ethnicized, apparently became indifferent even in relation to its eternal values: language, culture, customs, traditions, etc.’* [?!]⁵⁵⁸ How will Igrar Aliyev manage to align and correlate this groundless thesis about the “indifference” of the population, which had forgotten, lost all its values – language, etc. – with the ‘revival of the Albanian statehood and Albanian

Catholicosate’, the presence of a ‘living Albanian spirit, Albanian ethnic identity’ in the 12th century?!⁵⁵⁹ Perhaps with another one of his most absurd assertions, namely ‘the reaction that had arisen against the Armenian dominance in Artsakh’, he is trying to substantiate with this his last thesis, which contradicts the first one. Is it possible that the so-called “Armenian dominance” (which will be discussed below) can be such a great catalyst capable of reviving another state, another ethnic identity, another ethnic spirit, and so on and so forth?!

We should object to Igrar Aliyev, who in all ethnic processes underestimates the presence of such a factor as religion, which permeates all spheres of society and determines culture, customs, and traditions.

By the arrival of the Seljuks, two confessions had been dominating the country: Islam and Christianity, whose positions were decisive. It was thanks to the spread of these religions that a renaissance in the country was possible: Albanian (11th–13th centuries) and Muslim (11th–12th centuries). Igrar Aliyev explains the success of Turkification only with the Seljuks – this brings him to the conviction that ‘soon Turkic languages began to spread everywhere. The Azerbaijani nationality was forming’, which consisted ‘essentially of the descendants of an autochthonous population, de-ethnicized and mixed with the newcomers, having lost their languages’.⁵⁶⁰ Igrar Aliyev forms the Azerbaijani nation in a very simplified way, mindlessly, without identifying and defining the role of the confession in this process and completely without examining the self-awareness of the “Azerbaijani nation”: who did the representatives of this nation consider themselves?! As a result of his ethnogenetic studies, he comes to a very primitive conclusion that all the tribes and ethnoses that lived on the territory of historical Azerbaijan played a role in ethnic processes. ‘Sometime around the middle – second half of the first millennium BC., two nationalities were formed on this territory – the Iranian-speaking, the Median-Atropatenian in the south, and the Caucasian-speaking Albanian in the north of the country. Both ethnic groups with some modifications or other survived until the middle of the Middle Ages, when after the 11th century they *united with* the Oghuzes who came, forming the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijani people’.⁵⁶¹ The point is that ethnic groups cannot unite. Ethnic groups, similar in origin and language, are converging, merging – this process is referred to as consolidation. If this process is meant, then in Igrar Aliyev’s this passage, consolidation cannot take place, because ethnic groups of different origins and languages engage in the process: Albanians – Caucasian-speaking, Medes-Atropatenians (?) and Oghuzes – Turkic-speaking. In this case, we can talk not about “unification” – consolidation, but solely and exclusively about assimilation. Ethnoses of different origins and languages integrated, and the strongest of them, in this case, the Oghuzes, assimilated (absorbed) both the Albanians (the part living in the lowland part of the country) and part of the Iranian-speaking ethnos, but at the same time, religion must have played a key role, which should be common for the three ethnic groups, in this case, Islam.

In the end, one can object to Igrar Aliyev with his own words addressed to Azerbaijani historians and linguists: ‘without being an expert and having but superficial knowledge of the subject, he could not write a serious scientific work’.

The so-called independent judgments, arguments, and conclusions of Igrar Aliyev, if cited without references, certainly refer to the issues of Albanian studies, in which he thinks

of himself as an infallible master. But on closer inspection, it will definitely turn out that all this is taken from my publications. It is here that Igrar Aliyev does not bother himself with references to my monographs and articles. Apparently, he liked the text so much that it was simply impossible to let it go. After my return from Leningrad, according to the deep conviction of Igrar Aliyev, he became the true master of my scientific work. It is noteworthy that the Albanian studies of Igrar Aliyev appear after the publications of Farida Mammadova*, but several years later, to “digest” the information! In recent years, having become an academic, Igrar Aliyev tried to be independent, ingenious in Albanian studies, to make his own conclusions. It is here that he finds a mare's nest. Knowing little about the historical geography of Caucasian Albania, Igrar Aliyev utterly incorrectly outlines the boundaries of the Albanian region of Utik, the southern border of which, in his opinion, stretched to the Aras.⁵⁶² In reality, south of the Utik region was the Artsakh region, followed by the Syunik region with the southern border, on the Aras.⁵⁶³ Trying to join in the Armenian and Georgian historiography on Albanian studies, obviously prompted by the interest in becoming a colleague of the Georgian and Armenian historians who would refer to him, Igrar Aliyev makes completely groundless, irresponsible statements about the conquest of the Albanian regions in the northwest (the contemporary Balakan and Gakh, Zagatala, Shaki districts), as well as the south-west of Albania (now Aghstafa and Gazakh districts) by Georgian kings. Perhaps he was prompted by other, unknown reasons.

Let's consider these questions. According to Igrar Aliyev, the Gardman region (now the territory from the Dzagam River to the Khrami River, that is, the territory of modern Aghstafa and Gazakh districts) ‘only in the early Middle Ages was captured by the Kingdom of Kartli, and the Gardmanians, obviously, disappeared among the Georgian tribes’.⁵⁶⁴ Without verifying the reliability of this information from a Georgian source (Leonti Mroveli), controversial even for the early Middle Ages, Igrar Aliyev unreasonably shifts the Georgian conquest to an earlier time (referring to the studies of G.A.Melikishvili and T.G.Papuashvili), arguing that Gardman was captured by the Iberian kingdom during its strengthening. ‘Let's recall that the Iberians in the last centuries BC and at the very beginning of the Common Era tried to seize the Albanian region of Hereti’.⁵⁶⁵ Not having his own opinion, Igrar Aliyev this time shares the opinion prevailing in the Georgian tradition that the territory of Albania in the northwest (Balakan – Gakh, Zagatala, Shaki) and in the southwest (Aghstafa, Gazakh regions) was conquered by Georgian kings at the very beginning of the third century BC and during the early Middle Ages, i.e., in the 3rd–8th centuries. In this way, Igrar Aliyev unreasonably, with one stroke, gives the Albanian lands to the Georgian kingdom for 8–10 centuries. The Georgian authorities and some Georgian historians had claims on these lands (the Aghstafa district, where the cave temples and David Gareja are located). Meanwhile, in my monograph (“Political history and historical geography of Caucasian Albania”), in a dispute with Georgian scientists, the absolute inconsistency of this opinion was proved, which the director of the Institute of

* Compare: Мамедова Ф. Политическая история и историческая география... (1986), Глава II, § 2 and Алиев И. Нагорный Карабах. Баку, 1989; Mamedova F. Ursachen und Folgen des Karabach-Problems. Eine historische Untersuchung / Krisenherd Kaukasus. Baden-Baden. Band 2, 1995, p.110-128 and Алиев И. Лжеистория: попытка оправдать агрессию. Баку, 1998.

Georgian History Academician D.L.Muskhelishvili had to admit in 1983 in Moscow in discussions on historical geography.

Touching upon the issue of early Christianity, the activities of Elisha and the church he founded in Kish (Gish), Igrar Aliyev again completely follows the Georgian tradition and the Georgian concept, completely ignoring the data of Albanian sources and the research of Azerbaijani scientists who defended the historical truth in difficult discussions.

So, blindly following T.G.Papuashvili, Igrar Aliyev writes: ‘however, the entire Eyrichay zone, which in Georgian sources was referred to as the Gishes-tskali (i.e., the Gish River), together with Gish was part of Hereti. The jurisdiction of the Gish bishopric proper included a significant part of Hereti – Eliseni, Tsuketi, Shakihi (Shaki)’.⁵⁶⁶ Meanwhile, according to Albanian author Kaghankatvatsi, Shaki was a region and bishopric of the Albanian Church in the 5th–8th centuries and in this bishopric was the Gish (Kish) church. And further, trying by all means to differ from the opinion of Azerbaijani scientists, Igrar Aliyev makes a conclusion – again not his own, for he does not give reasons in any way, but merely repeats the conclusion of Georgian scientists: ‘Hereti, which was an integral part of Caucasian Albania and included the eastern regions of Kakheti, early, at least not later than the third century BC became the object of the expansionist aspirations of the ancient Georgian Iberian kingdom. As early as sometime around the 1st–2nd century, part of the territory of Hereti was captured by the Iberian kingdom. At this time, the Iberians were striving to capture those remaining areas of Hereti, which were still within the borders of Albania. The Iberians also capture the Albanian region of Gardman and some other lands’.⁵⁶⁷ Meanwhile, Farida Mammadova's monograph “Political History...” shows that some strengthening of Iberia in the 1st–2nd centuries was achieved with the help of Rome, who fought against Parthia for domination in Armenia and the domination of Iberia over Armenia. Iberia followed the political course of Rome. Subordination of Armenia to Iberia is not an independent will and real capability of Iberia, but the implementation of the Roman course with its support and under its direct pressure. And Albania, as is known, remained beyond the sphere of influence of Rome and was focused on Parthia. Therefore, it is unlikely that the northwestern territory of Albania – Ereti would have gone to Iberia, D.G.Muskhelishvili had to agree with this.⁵⁶⁸

Igrar Aliyev, trying to criticize the Armenian tradition regarding the historical geography of Albania and, in particular, regarding the historical fate of Artsakh-Karabakh, verbatim and literatim borrows § 2 of Chapter 2 of Farida Mammadova's monograph “The Political History...”. For comparison: I.Aliyev. “On certain questions...”, p.357-363 and Farida Mammadova “The Political History...”, p.111-126. But at the same time, he tries to give “his own analysis”, which makes his conclusions similar to the Armenian concept. Objecting to Armenian scientists that the territory between the Kur and the Aras rivers did not belong to Albania, Igrar Aliyev gives the antithesis that Karabakh and the right bank of Albania did not belong to the Armenians, but to the Medes and Persians in the Median-Atropatene era. The data cited by Igrar Aliyev in favor of this thesis had to be carefully studied, for the participation of the Albanians and the Sakesins in the Battle of Gaugamela can be explained not only by their subordination to the Persian king, but also by the fact that they could participate as mercenaries. Igrar Aliyev's report that Albania was subordinate to the king of Atropatene is highly doubtful. Following R.Hewsen, Igrar

Aliyev writes that ‘apparently, the condition for the Armenian expansion was prepared by the fall of the Persian state’.⁵⁶⁹ And here again, without reason, Igrar Aliyev claims that in the second century AD, Armenians seized control of the Central Armenian plateau, and their residence moved to the Ararat valley.⁵⁷⁰ All this requires proof. Further, he continues that ‘on the territory of Transcaucasia ...the Armenians seized the lands of their neighbors, apparently partially assimilating the population of the latter (2nd–1st centuries BC)’.⁵⁷¹ It remains completely unclear why and what historical data Igrar Aliyev relies on when speaking about the amazing ability of the Armenians to assimilate the population of Transcaucasia in the 2nd–1st centuries BC?! Following R.Hewsen's concept which should have been studied and not taken on faith, Igrar Aliyev states that the Armenians could have also seized the Syuni (Syunik) region.⁵⁷² He even tries to explain and substantiate the Armenian version that the southern border of Albania allegedly ran along the Kur (Armenian tradition), and not along the Aras, as is in reality.⁵⁷³ This begs the question: how can one explain the pro-Armenian sentiment that appears through the pseudo-scientific conclusions of an Azerbaijani scientist? Igrar Aliyev did not understand at all the essence of the two different processes – Armenization, de-ethnicization, on the one hand, and the preservation of self-awareness, ethnic spirit, and the revival of the Albanian kingdom, on the other hand. These two processes cannot actually happen at the same time.* If in the 9th, 10th, 12th and 13th centuries, the Albanian kingdoms were revived on the two banks of the Kur, then how can Igrar Aliyev share the opinion of I.A.Orbeli that ‘I.A.Orbeli wrote about Artsakh directly that it was an Armenized part of Albania’.⁵⁷⁴ Beneath the criticism is Igrar Aliyev's assertion that ‘only the fact that the Albanian spirit, Albanian ethnic identity were still alive, and also, apparently, the reaction against the Armenian domination in Artsakh, explain the revival of the Albanian statehood and the Albanian Catholicosate in part of the territory of Albania, namely in Karabakh’.⁵⁷⁵ The so-called Armenization of Artsakh (Karabakh) in the 12th century is groundlessly explained by Igrar Aliyev, as we see, by ‘the Armenian dominance in Artsakh’. He further clarifies: ‘Khachen... an Albanian region, where, after the fall of the Albanian state (early eighth century), groups of homeless Armenian population began to penetrate like locusts, who gradually began to colonize this land, where Albanian identity began to revive, the process which was stopped by the Armenians’.⁵⁷⁶ Here Igrar Aliyev misunderstood or purposefully misrepresented everything: first, there is no data in sources, even in those of Armenian aggressive historians, about the settlement of the Albanian region by the Armenians after 705 (after the fall of the Albanian kingdom); there is no data in sources before the 19th century. Why should Igrar Aliyev show such affectionate concern for this and ‘settle the Armenians in the early Middle Ages’ in Albania and at the same time disparagingly call the Armenians “homeless”? The opinion of Igrar Aliyev that the “homeless Armenian population”, which “gradually began to colonize the region”, *was able to suppress the revival of Albanian self-awareness*, is puzzling. How could the “homeless Armenians” who had arrived in

* In my monograph “Political History and Historical Geography of Caucasian Albania” (“Политическая история и историческая география Кавказской Албании”), in reference to Gregorianization, Armenization, I noted each time “subsequently”, even after the 12th century, but not in the eighth century, and new data convince me that there was no Gregorianization of the Albanian Church at all and Armenization took place in the 19th century

a foreign country (Albania) stop the process of Albanian Renaissance, which was manifested in the revival of the Albanian state in Karabakh, in the revival of the Albanian identity, Albanian culture in the conditions of the preservation of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church in the 12th–13th centuries?! Even the nomad invasions of the 11th–13th centuries (Seljuks, Mongols), the mobile peoples, which many empires could not resist, could not stop the Albanian Renaissance. Armenization could only be facilitated by geopolitics: in the first case, it was an attempt by the Arab Caliphate to subordinate the Albanian Church to the Armenian Church, which was unsuccessful; in the second case, it was another interference in geopolitics: the conquest by Russia, the abolition of the Albanian Church, and the violent policy of Russia to de-ethnicize the Albanians. As a result, I.Aliyev's model of *Azerbaijani people ethnogenesis looks as follows*: the north-western (Gakh–Zagatala area) and south-western parts (Aghstafa and Gazakh regions) of Caucasian Albania back in the third century BC and during the Middle Ages (3rd–8th centuries), i.e., for 1000 years, were conquered and subordinated to the Georgian kings, and the population of these parts was Georgianized. In the 5th–4th centuries BC, two nationalities were formed: in South Azerbaijan, the Mede-Atropatene people who referred to themselves as “Medes” and had “almost undoubted ethnic identity” [but what identity? – *F.M.*] and in Northern Azerbaijan, the Albanian nation was formed (in the 5th–4th centuries BC?!).

From the 3rd–4th centuries, according to Aliyev's concept, a new ethnic element began to penetrate into the Ciscaucasia – individual groups of Turkic-speaking tribes, which only penetrated into Northern Azerbaijan, but by no means into South Azerbaijan. A priori, the process of Turkification of Northern Azerbaijan could have finished in the 7th–8th centuries, but this was prevented, as Aliyev believes, by the emergence of Arab invaders. This so-called Turkification, according to Aliyev, did not affect South Azerbaijan. Regarding the concept of the Albanian ethnos, it was here in the eighth century that a powerful process of de-ethnicization and denationalization began, which Aliyev describes as “the collapse of the Albanian nation”, which the Albanian Church was powerless to stop because, in the eighth century, Albania was overrun by “groups of locust-like homeless Armenians who began to colonize the region (Karabakh) and Armenize it”. It was these Armenians who were able to suppress the revival of the Albanian identity, the Albanian spirit in the 12th century (!).

Further, according to Aliyev, on the eve of the Seljuk conquest (11th century), the population of the country (North and South), ‘tired of endless wars, exhausted by numerous taxes, various duties, extortions, gradually de-ethnicized, apparently became indifferent even in relation to ... the language, culture, customs, traditions’.

Both ethnos – Mede-Atropatene and Albanian – persisted until the middle of the Middle Ages, when after the 11th century, they united with the newcomers, the Oguzes, forming the Turkic-speaking Azerbaijani people.

Will I.Aliyev find an analogue of such a model of ethnic formation in the history of the world ethnos?!

Even the biased authors of the Armenian and Georgian concepts of the Albanian ethnos did not come up with such an absurdity, but this model was created by the academician of the historical science of Azerbaijan. He virtually tried to nullify the

work of Azerbaijani historians, created since the 1950–1960s, who for the first time correctly reconstructed the history of Azerbaijan – the works of academicians A.A.Alizade, Z.M.Bunyatov, A.Sumbatzade, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences Aliovsat Guliyev and other historians-doctors of history.

We should mention the works of Caucasian expert A.P.Novoseltsev, which reflected the issues of the social system (genesis of feudalism), historical geography, ethnos, and culture of Albania.⁵⁷⁷

A good knowledge of Armenian, Georgian and Albanian realities brings the author to the conclusion that the 4th–7th centuries were the heyday of the Albanian state and the Albanian people with its authentic culture and writing.⁵⁷⁸ The author notes that the most ancient and main population of Albania were local Caucasian tribes.⁵⁷⁹ Sharing the opinion of Z.M.Bunyatov, A.P.Novoseltsev believes that the reasons for the disappearance of the Albanian ethnos should be seen in Islamization, which began after the Arab conquest, and the Gregorianization of the Albanian Church. ‘As a result of the vigorous activity of the Arab rulers and for other reasons, Islamization of the population in the lowland areas of Albania and in the cities brought the Armenian and Albanian Churches even closer, which, unlike the Georgian one, did not break spiritual unity. The rapprochement contributed to the fact that part of the Albanians... who preserved Christianity, on the contrary, gradually adopted the Armenian language and became Armenians’.⁵⁸⁰

As for the issues of the historical geography of Albania, A.P.Novoseltsev argues that during the early Middle Ages, Albania included mainly the territory of the modern Azerbaijan SSR, as well as the lands of Armenia, Dagestan ASSR and Eastern Georgia.⁵⁸¹ We have serious disagreements with the author on matters of the de-ethnicization of the Albanians (their early Armenization), the historical geography of Albania in the ancient period⁵⁸² (see our detailed justification in Chapters 2, 3 and 6).

Interesting data about the political history of Albania, the Albanian source – Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Christianity, the unpublished pages of “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi are given in the unpublished works of T.I.Ter-Grigoryan.⁵⁸³ Among the works of the last decades, which have illuminated certain aspects of the lives of the Albanians and Albania proper, one should mention monographs and articles by the archaeologists R.M.Vahidov,⁵⁸⁴ I.Babayev and G.M.Ahmedov.⁵⁸⁵ For the issues we are investigating, Babayev’s work “Cities of Caucasian Albania in the 4th century BC – 3th century AD” is of certain interest. The author sees the reason for the emergence of cities ‘a result of centuries-old spontaneous socio-economic development of society’, as well as ‘the impact on this process of cultural, economic and political contacts with the Middle East countries’. Important, in our opinion, is the correct dating by the author of the emergence of the Albanian state – 4th–3rd centuries BC. Babayev came to this conclusion when he revealed a coin hoard in the territory of Kabala, where he found that during the above-mentioned period, the Albanians minted their own silver coins, imitation of the drachmas and tetradrachms of Alexander the Great. The author believes that in the middle of the first century BC, the markets of Albania were quantitatively dominated by local imitations of the coins of Alexander the Great. The discovery of this coin hoard by Babayev and his interpretation allowed, in conjunction with the information from written sources, the final revision of the view on the date of the foundation of the Albanian state

and shift it from the first century BC, as stated in historiography, to the 4th–3rd centuries BC. Worthy of mention are the works of R.Mammadov,⁵⁸⁶ A.A.Kudryavtsev,⁵⁸⁷ representing the life of the early medieval cities of Albania; Voroshil Ghukasyan's research⁵⁸⁸ of some important aspects of history and literature, the preservation in “History of the Aghuans” of Movses Kaghankatvatsi of Albanisms-Udinisms, Turkisms; his correct coverage of specific matters of political history and Christianity in Albania.

The monograph by Jabbar Khalilov is a serious archaeology-based study on the history and culture of the Caucasian Albania of the ancient period. For the first time, summarizing the archaeological material and comparing it with written sources, the author characterized the high authentic culture of the Caucasian Albanians, the era, showed internal and external events, the unity of material culture throughout the territory of Albania, the emergence of cities, urban life of the given period. Generalizing the archaeological materials and written evidence, Khalilov was able to chronologically deepen and rethink the issues of the development of social differentiation and the creation of the centralized state of Albania. The author comes to the conviction that the Albanian centralized state took shape at the end of the third century BC. The work presents the spiritual culture of the Caucasian Albanians, their art and religion.⁵⁸⁹ The problem of Christianity in Caucasian Albania is dealt with in R.Goyushov's monograph.⁵⁹⁰

Let's note the studies of G.O.Goshgarly⁵⁹¹ who brilliantly characterized the ancient and early medieval toretics, which is important both for the study of material culture and for illuminating the economic life of the country, and the relations of Albania with the Sassanian Iran (about his subsequent studies, see the end of the chapter).

We consider it necessary to note the serious Albanology research of Dagestan scientist M.S.Hajiyev, in particular his monograph “Ancient City of Dagestan”.⁵⁹²

In connection with the history of culture, architecture of Caucasian Albania, one should certainly mention the works of D.A.Akhundov and G.Mammadova, who studied the architecture, cult buildings of Caucasian Albania.⁵⁹³ Besides, D.A.Akhundov scrupulously researched the cult symbolism of the monasteries of Caucasian Albania. According to D.A.Akhundov, the Albanian churches of the heyday of Albanian architecture of the 11th–13th centuries root back to the early 5th–9th century basilicas of Mingachevir, Kum, Tsitsernavank, Amaras and in the central domed temples and chapels of the early Middle Ages.

The development of cross-domed structures in Azerbaijan, as the author believes, can be traced to examples of both Christian and Muslim religious and memorial architectural works. According to D.A.Akhundov, the most ideal example of cross-domed structures with a semicircular apsis is the Gandzasar Cathedral, which in terms of size, thoughtfulness of sculptural decoration, quantity and high quality of carving should be ranked among the best works of Albanian and not only Albanian architecture.⁵⁹⁴

According to G.G.Mammadova, the Christian cult architecture of Albania, having formed on the typological, compositional, and technical basis of the previous stage of architecture and having absorbed the functional, ideological, semantic, and aesthetic requirements common to the entire Eastern Christian world, acquired its distinct identity in the early period. As the author asserts, all the main types of cult architecture of that period

are found in Albanian building practice – vaulted halls and basilicas, cross-domed, “free cross”, as well as a domed basilica and a domed hall.

Round temples are a unique theme of cult architecture inherent only in Caucasian Albania. The author's research covers a huge chronological period of the 4th–14th centuries.

According to G.G.Mammadova, the 8th–10th centuries were a transitional period for the Christian architecture of Caucasian Albania, when further development of Christian architecture continued in the semi-independent Albanian principalities, which prepared a qualitative leap in the 12th–13th centuries, the era of the second heyday of Albanian Christian architecture.⁵⁹⁵

I am very pleased to see the achievements of young historians Zurab Kananchev⁵⁹⁶ and Ulviyya Hajiyeva in Albanian studies. Hajiyeva, through a scrupulous analysis of the work of the 19th-century Albanian author Makara Barkhudaryants' “Artsakh”, as well as deployment of other sources and research, highlighted the paths and methods of de-ethnicization of the late Albanians in the 19th century, thus breaking a new ground in science.⁵⁹⁷

As for the Armenian historiography of the last decades, we must do justice to it, for Albania has attracted and is consistently attracting the close attention of Armenian researchers. The study of the history of Albania has especially revived in Armenia since the 1960s and 1970s, i.e., at a time when Albanian studies enjoyed scientific development in our republic. A monograph by A.S.Mnatsakanyan, “On the Literature of Caucasian Albania”,⁵⁹⁸ articles, and a monograph by B.Ulubabyan⁵⁹⁹ “Essays on the History of the Eastern Territory of Armenia” (5th–7th centuries) were published. In 1975, G.H.Svazyan defended his thesis on “Aghuank in the 7th–8th centuries”.⁶⁰⁰ A.Ayvazyan devoted three monographs⁶⁰¹ to the architecture and history of Nakhchivan from antiquity to the 17th century and, finally, S.V.Smbatyan took up the issues of the history of Albania by translating Movses Kaghankatvatsi into Russian and providing a preface and comments to it.⁶⁰²

It should be noted that the works of the listed authors are different only in name, and their goal is the same: to confirm (we intentionally do not say “to prove”, as there is no proof) that historical Albania is Armenia in terms of territory, politics, culture, ethnos, and confession. All of them believe that there were two Albanias: 1) Aghuank proper (Aluank), the Albania* of ancient sources, located above the Kur River, on its left bank, the so-called left-bank Albania until 387 (as all the authors mentioned believe), and 2) the Aghuank located below the Kur River, on its right bank, the right-bank Aghuank, lying on the territory between the Kur and the Aras, the Aghuank after 387. The right-bank Aghuank is nothing else than the “northeastern part of Armenia”, which includes the Armenian nahangs (provinces) Artsakh, Uti and Paytakaran (as stated by to G.H.Svazyan⁶⁰³ and B.Ulubabyan⁶⁰⁴).

Moreover, in B.Ulubabyan's works, there is no certainty of opinion and there is confusion. Now he means by Aghuank the name of the country,⁶⁰⁵ now he calls it “the Persian-subject marzbandom” after 387.⁶⁰⁶ During the Arab domination, B.Ulubabyan

* Albania – Greek, Aluank//Aghuank – Old Armenian, Aran//Ardan – Middle Persian.

notes, Aghuank became a toponym, which ‘stuck to the right bank of the Kur as a bitter leftover of marzbandom’.⁶⁰⁷ B.Ulubabyan is misled by ignorance in history, historical realities of Albania and Armenia and the entire Caucasus, as well as a lack of historicism. The lack of consistency is observed in B.Ulubabyan's explanation of the actual territory of Aghuank. In one case, in his opinion, Aghuank is only the right bank of the Kur, in another, Aghuank is only two regions of the right bank of the Kur – Artsakh and Uti, and in the third case, Aghuank is one region of the right bank of the Kur, Artsakh.⁶⁰⁸

A.S.Mnatsakanyan and S.V.Smbatyan, in contrast to B.Ulubabyan and G.H.Svazyan, argue that the territory of the second Aghuank included Aghuank proper (the left bank) and the Armenian nahangs Artsakh, Uti and Paytakaran,⁶⁰⁹ i.e., the right bank. S.V.Smbatyan believes that both Movses Kaghankatvatsi and other Armenian authors regard Aluank as the territory of the Aluank marzbandom, an administrative unit formed after the partition of Armenia in the fourth century and including both the nahangs of Greater Armenia – Uti, Artsakh and part of the Paytakaran, and Aluank proper, i.e., Albania (of ancient authors) together with adjacent territories to the Caucasus ridge and the Caspian Sea.⁶¹⁰

According to this concept, even in “the original Albania” – Aghuank proper (of ancient authors), located north of the Kur until 387, left-bank Albania, Armenia possessed the north-western part of it, the Albanian region of Cambisena.⁶¹¹ Thus, it turns out that three quarters of the territory of Albania was Armenian, i.e., belonged to Armenia.

Summarizing the arguments of the Armenian researchers, they can be reduced to the following: in the early Middle Ages, Albania was understood as either only the right bank of the Kur – “the eastern part of Armenia” (the regions of Artsakh, Uti, and Paytakaran), or Albania in the 4th–8th centuries is conceived only as an *administrative entity (marzbandom)*, which practically stretched from the Aras to the Greater Caucasus Range. So, Armenian researchers completely deny the existence of Albania as an independent state, a country with its ethnos, territory, culture, and history.

Let's consider the “attempts” to substantiate the above concept.

G.H.Svazyan notes that the point of view about the existence of two Albanias belongs to S.V.Yushkov, V.F.Minorsky and N.Adonts, and he, as he puts it, is trying to ‘*again* prove the opinion existing in historiography (S.V.Yushkov, V.F.Minorsky, N.Adonts and others) that although Kaghankatvatsi's work is called “History of the Aghuan Land”, *it is rather the history of the northeastern part of Armenia than Albania proper*, which (according to the Greek-Roman and Armenian historians and geographers) was located north of the Kur River’. The Aghuank country described by Kaghankatvatsi, in his opinion, is located between the Kur and Aras rivers and it is this territory that he calls “Aghuank” meaning the ancient Armenian provinces Artsakh and Utik.⁶¹²

The mentioned researchers (S.V.Yushkov, V.F.Minorsky and N.Adonts), whom G.H.Svazyan groups and whose opinions he refers to, say nothing not only about the two Albanias, about the Armenian Aghuank, but even do not have a clear, and most importantly, common opinion about the southern border of Albania. Thus, V.F.Minorsky believed that ‘in Greek and Latin sources, the alluvial valley of the Lower Kur and the Aras, lying between Iberia and the Caspian Sea, was called Albania... Caspia (probably the area near Beylagan and Mugan) also belonged to Albania’.⁶¹³ V.F.Minorsky considered Albania's southern border other than the Kur, as evidenced by this text. He further writes:

‘The Armenians have significantly cut Albanian territories south of the Kur River. Only after the partition of Armenia between Byzantium and Persia in 387, the areas of Uti and Artsakh (south of the Kur) *again fell into the hands of the Albanian ruler*’.⁶¹⁴ So, according to V.F.Minorsky, the right bank of the Kur, as well as the left bank, were originally part of Albania, which is fully consistent with the aforementioned opinion of K.V.Trever.

S.V.Yushkov, being critical of the contradictory data of ancient authors, doubts that the southern border of Albania ran along the Kur River in ancient times. ‘The fact that the Albanians must have inhabited a much larger territory than the valley of the Kur River (or rather, only the valley on the left stream of the Kur, since the valley on the right stream belonged to Armenia) is confirmed by Strabo’s report that... the Albanian and Iberian peoples, who exactly constitute the main population of the isthmus (the territory between the Black and Caspian Seas), live in a rich country that may have a very dense population. One cannot think that Albania under Strabo occupied only the valley on the left side of the Kur River’.⁶¹⁵ Again, as we see, S.V.Yushkov says far from what G.H.Svazyan ascribes to him. According to N.Adonts, during the time of the Arsacids [probably the Armenian Arsacids. – *F.M.*], the Kur formed the southern border of Albania. And it was not before the second half of the fourth century, according to N.Adonts, that the right bank of the Kur (Uti, Artsakh and Paytakaran) was taken from Armenia and annexed to Albania.⁶¹⁶

To sum up, of the three authors, placed in one group by G.H.Svazyan, only N.Adonts believed that the right bank of the Kur was originally part of Armenia up to 387. This situation is explained by the inconsistency of the authors’ data and the scarcity of sources, both antique and Armenian, which, moreover, were not studied critically enough and with due regard to the realities of Albania and Armenia of the same time, without attempting to identify the reliability of these sources. And no wonder that in science, there are three points of view on this issue (on the southern border of Albania of the ancient period, that is, on the right-bank Albania, as far as it is related to the history of Armenia).^{*} As for the idea of the existence of two Albanias – “proper Albania” (the left bank) and Aghuank, the northeastern part of Armenia (the right bank), it should be noted that it was invented and put forward back in 1784 by Mechitarist M.Chamchyan.

‘The Aghuan country is mentioned in our books in a double meaning. In the first one, the country that lies between the Kur River and the Caspian Sea up to Derbent, is called Shirvan Aghuank or Shirvan... And in the second, the part of Armenia which includes three regions, namely Uti, Artsakh and Paytakaran, and the part that is on the other side of the Kur River, are called specifically Armenian Aghuank...’⁶¹⁷ M.Chamchyan was followed by K.Patkanov⁶¹⁸ and others. It should be noted right away that science knows nothing about the Shirvan Aghuank during the early Middle Ages. S.Kanayan wrote in 1914: “So, there is, therefore, “the Aghuank proper” – from the Caucasus Mountains to the Kur River, and, so to speak, “Aghuan Armenia” – between the Kur and the Aras rivers. It’s fair to say that by “Aghuank”, all our authors, mean exactly the latter (especially since the fifth century), all *except* “Ashkharatsuyts” by Khorenatsi and Kaghankatvatsi...”⁶¹⁹

^{*} Some associate them with the conquests of Armenian king Artaxias I (second century BC), others – with the conquests of Armenian king Tigranes II (first century BC), another group considers them to be primordial Armenian (see Ch. II “Historical Geography”).

First, we can trace this by no means in all Armenian authors. It is very important that “Armenian Geography” (“Ashkharatsuyts”) and Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi, i.e., all synchronous sources of the 7th–8th centuries, are an exception to the list of S.Kanayan and by Aghuank they do not mean the right-bank Albania, the so-called “Armenian Albania”, but quite obviously the whole of Albania, which lies on the territory from the Aras to Derbent.

It seems to us that it is no wonder that Armenian authors, when describing the history of Armenia, simultaneously touching upon the historical events of neighbors, precisely described those regions of Albania that were their immediate neighbors. These were the regions on the right bank of the Kur – Uti, Artsakh and Paytakaran. As for the rest of the regions of Albania (the left bank), they were very far from Armenia. In addition, when interpreting Armenian sources, it is necessary to consider the time of their creation, historical background, and the purpose of creation of these works. Especially unfair and unfounded is the statement that starting from the fifth century, “Aghuank” meant the right-bank “Armenian” Albania, for it was in the fifth century that Albania reached its highest power under Albanian Arsacid kings Vache II and Vachagan III, who restored and united the entire Albania in its ancestral domain, some of which were taken away by the Sassanian king Peroz, but not the Armenian king (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17).

M.Chamchyan's opinion, expressed in the 18th century, is still cultivated today by all Armenian researchers trying to support this concept with more and more “proofs”.

Another “reason” put forward in favor of this opinion is that Kaghankatvatsi himself, in his “History of the Aghuans”, allegedly reflects the history of not Albania, but of Aghuank – the northeastern regions of Armenia, located on the right bank of the Kur, i.e., at the interfluvium of the Kur and Aras rivers; as if it reflects the history of not the Albanian people, but of the Armenian one.⁶²⁰

The study of Movses Kaghankatvatsi's accounts convinces, as one would expect from a source entitled “History of the Aghuans”, that it reflects the history of not only the two Albanian regions of Uti and Artsakh, i.e., not only the right bank of the Kur, but also the history of the regions of the left bank of the Kur. The main regions of Albania, according to “History of the Aghuans”, on the left bank were Chola, Lpinia, Shaki, Kabalaka (Kabala), Ejeri, Cambisena.

The center of the Kabala region (gavar) (the left bank of Albania) was also the capital of the entire Albanian state from the ancient period to the fifth century inclusive. With the adoption of Christianity, Kabala (along with Chola) also became the seat of the Albanian Catholicos. Three regions of the left bank – Kabala, Shaki, and Cambisena were, according to “History of the Aghuans”, ecclesiastical and administrative units – dioceses (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 26; II, 7; III, 8, 23), whose representatives (bishops) participated in Albanian councils of the fifth century and of the 7th–8th centuries. Not all participants are listed in Albanian council registers, just like in the protocol lists of Armenian councils.⁶²¹ And nevertheless, in the list of the Albanian Partaw Council of 705, according to Kaghankatvatsi, there are representatives of the secular nobility of both the right-bank and left-bank Albania, Bab Hrahatean from Kabalaka and Kolt, Theodor Anastoean from Cambisena.⁶²² All the Kabalaka, Kolt, and Cambisena are areas of the left bank of the Kur.

As for the participants in the Aguen Council of the fifth century, the clergy were represented from the right bank and left bank of the Kur, and the presence of the secular nobility is again not reflected in full, and their names are mainly recorded without specifying patronymic possessions.

As can be seen, the historical events that took place in the country were naturally reflected in these areas as well. The accounts of the Albanian historian attest to the territorial integrity of Albania (i.e., united Albania – the left and right banks) from the first to the early eighth centuries. And it is not surprising that even S.Kanayan noted that Movses Kaghankatvatsi and “Armenian geography of the seventh century” were an exception among the Armenian sources, i.e., Albania was understood as not only the right bank, but also the left bank, i.e., united Albania.

The next argument of the said authors is the groundless assertion that the regions of the right bank of the Kur – Artsakh, Uti and Paytakaran – were designated in the works of ancient Armenian historians by the following names: “Eastern edge of Armenia”, “North-Eastern edge”, “Eastern edge”, “North-Eastern edge of Armenia”, “Aghuan territory”, “Remote Armenia”.⁶²³

The following statement of B.Ulubabyan does not stand up to criticism: “In Armenian sources, the country of Aranshaiks, starting from the time of marzbandom (principality) was called differently: “East”, “Eastern edge”, “Eastern edge of Armenia”, because it was the eastern part of Ancient Armenia: ‘the Aghuank region, this new administrative entity, was really in the territory of the former Aghuank (Albania), it was directly its neighbor”, etc.⁶²⁴ Firstly, Albania had been called the “East”, “Eastern region”, “Eastern regions”, “inhabitants of the East” not since the time of marzbandom, the fifth century, but from the first century AD. In addition, these concepts, phrases were mainly preserved by Movses Kaghankatvatsi in “History of the Aghuans”, where there is never a mention of “the Eastern edge of Armenia” or “Eastern Armenia”. I have investigated and established that the term “inhabitants of the East”, “**the East**”, “**Eastern regions**”, “**Eastern edge**” are interpreted in “History of the Aghuans” as Albania in the ideological Christian sense, i.e., it implies that Albania is the eastern border, the eastern outskirts of Christendom in relation to Jerusalem.⁶²⁵ And the concept of “Eastern Armenia” is a completely different concept, which includes other territorial boundaries of Armenia.

Eastern Armenia, as is known, is understood and referred to as Persian Armenia, which was finally formed after the treaty of 387, as opposed to Western – Roman Armenia.

Further, Armenian researchers argue that the population of the right-bank “Armenian” Albania was originally Armenian.⁶²⁶ B.Ulubabyan tries to separate the name of the country, Aghuank, from the name of the ethnos, i.e., he believes that the name Aghuank does not reflect the name of the dominant ethnic group, Albanians. He asserts dogmatically that the population of Aghuank, which lived on the right bank of the Kur only, was Armenian and spoke Armenian.⁶²⁷ And therefore, according to B.Ulubabyan's theory, the work of Movses Kaghankatvatsi, which B.Ulubabyan emphatically translates, in contrast to all Armenists, Albanists, not as “History of the Aghuans”, but as “History of the country of Aghuank”, did not and could not reflect the history of the ethnos, the Albanians. ‘In the Aran region, which covered the interfluvium of the Kur and the Aras rivers and later was called the Eastern region of Armenia, back in the second century BC,

the spoken language was Armenian. In other words, the Armenian people here was so completely formed that there were no more traces of the Pre-Armenian tribes'(!).⁶²⁸

This opinion is shared by S.V.Smbatyan, who categorically and completely irresponsibly asserts that the term Albania was '*not an ethnonym*, but only an administrative and geographical name...'⁶²⁹

As for the Albanian ethnos, the Albanian language, we will add the following to what has already been said. The fact is that Movses Kaghankatvatsi provides no information about the Armenians living in Albania (in Artsakh and Uti), who spoke Armenian. But, if we are talking about the Albanian people, which, according to Ulubabyan and Smbatyan, were not considered in the source, they should know that the manuscript of Movses Kaghankatvatsi, copied from the earliest manuscript of the 13th century (ՋՈ ԻԲԱԿ – B-56), is titled "*History of the Aghuans*" written by Movses Kaghankatvatsi of *the same people (azge) and the same country (ashkharhe)*". The manuscript of the 17th century (ՋՈ ԻԲԱԿ C-59) reads: "The table of contents of the first part of the *history of the Albanian people* – "*aluanits azgn*", and in the ՋՈ ԻԲԱԿ manuscript – B-56 dating back to the manuscript of the 13th century – "Table of contents... of *History of the Aghuans* – "*patmutyun aluanits*". In the manuscript of the 13th century and 17th century, Chapter 1 of Book One is titled "The Preface to *History of the Aghuans*". As can be seen from the manuscripts, the attempt of B.Ulubabyan and S.V.Smbatyan to separate the name of the people from the name of the country and give a "new" title to the source – "History of the Country of Aghuank" is futile. And it is no coincidence that the well-known grabar expert K.Patkanov, who published the Russian translation of the source, titled it "History of the Albanians", the Caucasian expert A.P.Novoseltsev titled the source "History of the Aluan Country".⁶³⁰

As for the content of the source itself about the Albanian ethnos, we will give several examples. Specifically, in the very first chapters of Book 1, Movses Kaghankatvatsi tries to find out the origin of the Albanian people (HA, I, 2), which, according to him, along with the Cyturians, descends from the Japheth, separating them from the Armenians. He quotes a letter from the Armenian Catholicos Eliah to Arab Caliph in 705: 'From the Almighty God, our subordinate country [Armenia. – *F.M.*] has to obey you and, together with the *Albanians* confess the same faith of the divinity of Christ. The current *Albanian Catholicos*... is forcing our countries to unite with him [the Greek emperor. – *F.M.*] in faith'. (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 5).

As can be seen from the above passage, it is unnecessary to prove or deny the presence of the Albanian ethnos and the country of Albania (Aghuank), which reflects this ethnos (See: "Albanian ethnic community" in Ch. III).

Another argument of B.Ulubabyan in favor of the absence of the Albanian ethnos is the assertion that "History of the Country of Aghuank" does not provide any specific data about the Aghuans but sets out the history of Armenian Aranshahik princes and Gardman Mihranid princes.⁶³¹ As is known, the data of Movses Kaghankatvatsi about the Aranshahiks is very scarce, fragmentary, and contradictory.

B.Ulubabyan, without any reason, identifies the Albanian Aranshahiks with the Albanian Arsacids, who, being of Parthian origin, were Albanized in the environment of Albania, just like the Armenian Arsacids were Armenized. The ruling Persian clan of

the Mihranids in Albania, also pursuing a pro-Albanian policy, having adopted Christianity and Albanian culture, got gradually Albanized. Besides, how can the leaders of the ruling clans – the Aranshahiks, Arsacids, and Mihranids – represent the entire ethnos of the country of Albania?! In Armenia, according to Movses Khorenatsi, many of the naxarars – feudal patronyms – were founded not by Armenians, but by foreigners. That is, for example, the most famous Mamikonid clan was founded by a Chinese, and the Bagratid clan was founded by a Jew. However, this does not give grounds to believe that the population of the Mamikonid and Bagratid domains was not Armenian. One can draw a lot of analogies with the ruling families of many countries of the West and East. So, Albanian rulers, like Armenian ones, were not indigenous, but the population of the country did not cease to be Albanian because of this.

Upon considering the data of the Albanian author about the Albanian ethnos, let's turn to other sources and see what they say about this ethnos. Let it be known that the father of Armenian history, the author of the 7th–8th centuries Movses Khorenatsi, as mentioned above, calls the inhabitants of Albania, namely the right-bank Albania, “the ever-deceitful Albanians” (III, 3, 6). Consequently, this is not the Armenian ethnos, not related to it, but on the contrary, even animus to it.

Another Armenian author of the fifth century, Ghazar Parpetsi, when describing the anti-Sassanid uprisings of the fifth century (450–451 and 481–484), mentions three countries and three ethnic groups, and the triad is constantly mentioned: “Armenia, Iberia, Albania”; “All the three countries – Armenia, Iberia, Albania”; “Three countries”; and “Armenians, Iberians, Albanians” (*Ghazar Parpetsi*, Ch. 25, 26). Parpetsi writes that marzban Mihran reported to the Persian king on the state of affairs in the Caucasus: ‘...if the Armenians were on our side, then neither the Iberians *nor the Albanians* would have dared to raise a revolt’ (*Ghazar Parpetsi*, Ch. 75) So, it is obvious that the Armenian authors of both the fifth and the eighth centuries had no doubt about the existence of the *country of Albania*, the *Albanian ethnos* and, accordingly, *ethnonym Albanians*. B.Ulubabyan and S.Smbatyan should have known well the Armenian authors, the realities of Armenia and the neighboring Albania, because, as you know, provability is not in opinionatedness. There again, Parpetsi reports that Persian hazarapet Mihrnarse ‘arrived in the city of Paytakaran, equipped regiments *with Albanians*, and sends them to Armenia’.⁶³² Therefore, the inhabitants of the right bank, the Paytakaran region, were Albanians, not Armenians.

The existence of an independent Albanian ethnos is also reported by the Syrian author of the sixth century, Zacharias Rhetor: ‘...in this northern region, there are five believing peoples with their twenty-four bishops... *Aran [i.e., Albania] is also a land... with [its] language, with a people believing and baptized*. They have a king subordinate to the Persian king...’⁶³³

In his last monograph (“Essays on the History of the Eastern Territory of Armenia...”), B.Ulubabyan tries to reaffirm his previous ideas. Having established the chronological framework of his research as the 5th–7th centuries, he essentially, oddly enough, focuses on the data of ancient authors and the opinions of researchers with whom he is in solidarity. Meanwhile, the data from synchronous local sources of the 5th–7th centuries remained almost unexplored by him.

The matter is that for the period of the 5th–7th centuries covered by Ulubabyan's research (at least, according to the title of the book), the historical borders of Albania are well-known in science and no longer cause any controversy. According to the uniform data of all sources, the southern border of Albania ran along the Aras River, i.e., Albania stretched from the Aras to Derbent. Even K.V.Trever noted that ‘...in the fifth century, the borders of the *Albanian kingdom* expanded: it also included the right bank of the Kur from Hnarakert to the confluence of the Aras with the Kur, including the ancient regions of Shakashen, Utik, Artsakh and the Paytakaran region’.⁶³⁴ Let's remember once again that an Albanist like K.V.Trever did not doubt the existence of the Albanian kingdom.

Disputes about the southern border of Albania could have arisen in the ancient period, the reason for which was the contradictory data of some ancient authors, as well as the information of the Armenian author of the fifth century Faustus of Byzantium, reporting on the events of 371 (we give a detailed commentary on this controversial information in Chapter 2). It was this information that is dealt with in the works of Ulubabyan whose monograph's objectives should have been different, and A.S.Mnatsakanyan, whose goal should also have been different – the literature of Caucasian Albania. The same can be said about the thesis of G.H.Svazyan.

Once again, attention should be paid to the period studied by Svazyan – Aghuank in the 7th–8th centuries, i.e., the period of domination of the Mihranids in Albania. It is this period that none of the researchers raised doubts about the territorial integrity of Albania or about its territorial boundaries.

Even if we agree with the scientists who believe that the right bank of Albania had supposedly been a part of Armenia before 387, it still raises the question of what this has to do with the history of Albania in the 7th–8th centuries when these areas had already, for three or four centuries, belonged to Albania. Surprising is the interest of Svazyan in pseudogenetic succession and the persistent idea that these two regions (Utik and Artsakh) constituted a political, ethnic, cultural unity with Armenia during the 7th–8th centuries.

Thus, regarding the territorial possessions of Albania in the 7th–8th centuries, Kaghankatvatsi reports: ‘Thuswise, he [Javanshir – *F.M.*] reigned with autocracy and splendor from the borders of Iberia to the *Gates of the Huns and to the Aras River*’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 21). That Albania possessed the left-bank Albania is also evident from the following: ‘On that day, Javanshir won a great victory (over the Khazars) and said to that barbaric people: Go through the Chola gate and do not come out of there anymore’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 23). The same borders of Albania, from the Chola gate to the Aras, were preserved under Javanshir's successor, Albanian ruler Varaz-Trdat. ‘He [Varaz-Trdat. – *F.M.*] open-heartedly and gently subdued the country [Albania] within its usual borders...’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 35, 37).

In light of the above, the entire inconsistency of Svazyan's assertion that ‘the Aghuank country described by Kaghankatvatsi is located between the Kur and the Aras rivers and it is this territory that he calls “Aghuank”, meaning by this geographical name the ancient Armenian provinces of Artsakh and Uti’, is clearly presented’.⁶³⁵ Boggled down in the concepts of Aghuank and Albania and seeing that Kaghankatvatsi speaks of a single country (the right-bank and the left-bank together), Svazyan notes that the country during the reign of the Mihranids (Varaz-Grigor, Javanshir and Varaz-Trdat) was the “Aghuan

marzbandom” and had the “common name Aran”,⁶³⁶ although Kaghankatvatsi calls the country in this period, as in the previous ones, only Albania. And this is natural, and besides, it was not a marzbandom.

B.A.Ulubabyan, S.V.Smbatyan and G.H.Svazyan do not want to gain insight into the concept of “marzbandom” and the presence of the king's power in the country. “Marzbandom” is not a principality, as Ulubabyan believes, but a governorship, which is established in the country only when the king's power in the country is abolished and the country becomes a province. Such a fate among the three countries first befell Armenia, then Iberia and almost did not affect Albania. Ulubabyan and Smbatyan transfer the Marzban regime to Albania.⁶³⁷ As is known, in 387, when Armenia again (for the umpteenth time!) was divided between two empires – Byzantium and Iran – the Albanian regions of Artsakh, Uti and Paytakaran, according to the Armenian concept, were once again legally assigned to Albania, and the region of Gugark (Gogarena) to Iberia. And in 428, the king's power in Armenia was legally abolished de jure (before this period it was abolished de facto), and Armenia became a province ruled by the marzban. Albania did not lose its independence, the royal power of the Albanian Arsacids existed until 510, and then it was replaced by the power of the great princes of Albania – the Mihranids, which lasted until the beginning of the eighth century inclusive. And while Ulubabyan agrees with the date of 387 in his previous articles, he goes even further in this monograph in his fabrications, claiming that the regions of Artsakh and Uti (as well as Gugark) remained part of Armenia until 428. And after that, they were not conquered by Aghuank, and not even Persia handed them over to Aghuank (Albania), but a single dependent region was simply formed from Uti, Artsakh, and Aghuank (Albania).⁶³⁸

Svazyan's statement that ‘the Mihranids remained Persians only for two generations, after which they adopted Christianity and became akin to the representatives of the local Armenian naxarars, finally became Armenized, adopted the customs and lifestyle characteristic of the Armenian nobility’, is absolutely incorrect. In reality, the Mihranids, being Persians by origin, became the rulers of the Albanian country. To this end, they adopted the religion that the Albanians adhered to (it should be emphasized that not only Armenians followed Christianity), joined the local Albanian culture, and pursued a pro-Albanian policy. It is known that the territory of Albania, the right bank, according to the data of ancient sources,⁶³⁹ Armenian and Albanian historians, was inhabited by Albanians, Udins, Caspians and other ethnic groups. According to the data of Syrian and Arab sources of the 6th–10th centuries, not only in the Partaw (now Barda) area, but also in the Sisakan-Syunik (modern Sisian) area, the people did not speak Armenian.⁶⁴⁰ In this case, it is fair to speak about the Albanization of the Mihranids, but not about their Armenization.

As for the rest of the questions that are “investigated” or are “new” in Svazyan's thesis, it should be noted that many of them are copied from publications, in particular from mine and from Z.M.Bunyatov's monograph. Probably, it could not have been otherwise, since the work of Svazyan is called “Aghuank of the 7th–8th centuries”, and Z.M.Bunyatov's is called “Azerbaijan in the 7th–9th centuries”, both chronologically and thematically, apparently, difficult to disperse.

Svazyan's work consists of three chapters, of which the first one is devoted to the socio-economic relations of Albania in the 7th–8th centuries, and the other two are devoted to the political history of Albania – “The Kin of Mihranids and Aghuank” (Ch. 2); “The Political history of Aghuank of the 7th–8th centuries” (Ch. 3). The first chapter copies my thesis and my conclusions about the social system of Albania in the 5th–8th centuries.⁶⁴¹

When comparing the articles, as well as chapters 2, 3, 4 of our thesis with the first chapter of Svazyan's work, it is easy to notice the same issues, the same arguments, conclusions. This refers to interpretation of terms “hostak”, “avag”, “krtser”, “sparapet”, “ramik”, “shinakan”, “alakhin”. The only difference is that Svazyan came to these conclusions six years after my publications.

Svazyan's academic advisor was Academician S.T.Yeremian, who, in turn, was an opponent to my dissertation on the social structure of Caucasian Albania and delayed my thesis for a year and a half.

The novelty of Svazyan's work consists only in his correct revision of the traditional date of the reign of Javanshir (Mihranid). Svazyan dismisses the opinion existing in historiography, according to which Javanshir ruled in 636–669 (or 680). He offers, in our opinion, a more accurate dating: 642–683.⁶⁴²

The last publication of Kaghankatvatsi's work, undertaken by S.Smbatyan, also indulges in borrowing, especially comments.⁶⁴³ And the main thing in this edition is that the Albanians are simply Armenians.

Summarizing what has been said about the concept of studies considering Albania as Eastern Armenia, it should be noted that it is based on conflicting, controversial data of sources (for details, see Chapter 2). Without juxtaposing these data with synchronous local sources, abstracting from the true history of Armenia, they developed a theory with far-reaching conclusions. It is obvious that the supporters of this concept understand the vulnerability, precariousness, and fragility of their positions. Therefore, repeated attempts are made to confirm, but not to scientifically prove this opinion in science.

A recently published book by Robert Hewsen, an American historian, titled “Armenia: A Historical Atlas” (Chicago-London, 389 p.), contains 276 maps, covers the period from the 4th millennium BC, at times from the 6th millennium BC to the 21st century inclusive). This pompous publication amazes with its large scale, material resources expended and the number of involved Armenian research centers (at all American universities). It is not surprising that in order to place all the emotions, aspirations and cherished hopes of the entire Armenian people, the Armenian scientific thought, a voluminous container is needed.

The premised lengthy introduction is really unique: it scrupulously describes the entire process of creating this opus, the countless curtsies and acknowledgements addressed to numerous long-lived foundations, and involved structures, scientists, photographers, cartographers, IT specialists. A detailed and thorough description is devoted to the long-term search for an advanced computer-aided map creation method and the very process of improving cartography by years and techniques.

A deeply thought-out psychological effect is exerted by the excessive brilliance and grotesquely enlarged format of the edition, designed to suppress the true perception of

the professional reader, who, “impressed” by the cutting-edge technology of design, will not notice the distortion and falsification of maps and will unconditionally accept the Atlas. In the case of disagreement, rejection of maps, this method of issuing involves the creation of alternative maps with a similar method of presentation. And the reality is that only Armenians can afford this. But alas! The most important thing remains in the shadows: the inconsistency of these maps with truly historical reality. This is where a truly scientific discussion awaits, the evaluation of this groundless, unsteady, and vulnerable work.

Our confidence and optimism comes from the two-year evaluation of maps of the historical geography of the Caucasus from ancient times to the twentieth century, undertaken by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR during 1981–1983, with the participation of scientists from Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. But more on that follows.

The foreword to the book “Armenia: A Historical Atlas” is written by Cyril Toumanoff (Rome, 1995), a well-known Caucasian scholar who worked under the guidance of Adonts and Tsereteli, according to whom it was ‘when Caucasian studies were at the stage of childhood’. He further notes ‘the great achievements in Caucasian studies over the past 30 years’ and claims that for the study of such an Armenian historical Atlas which also presents the historical geography of the Caucasus, he was lucky enough to choose such a scholar as Robert Hewsen. This is followed by the praise of Hewsen, his “pseudo-objectivity”, “sufficiently discerning to reject the slightest close-mindedness or not to be misled by nationalism in his approach to the problem” (But, as we will see below, all the hopes and optimism of Cyril Toumanoff did not come true). And in conclusion of his foreword, Cyril Toumanoff assures that this is ‘the Historical Atlas of the entire Caucasus’ and “the Historical Atlas of Armenia” in the foreseeable future, will be the starting point for any such undertaking that could have place in the future (!).

Such a self-confident assertion, previously unheard in science, is surprising. How can one arrogantly declare that this Atlas – is an Atlas for ages? From the “Geography of Anania Shirakatsi in the seventh century to the geography of Robert Hewsen in 2002”, no less! After the Atlas was published, R.Hewsen’s work did not go through an edition’s evaluation period, and the comments of scientists, true Caucasian scholars, scientists from Georgia, Azerbaijan, Dagestan, Russia, and Turkey are yet to be heard.

The author of “Armenia: A Historical Atlas”, Robert Hewsen, was a specialist in Russian studies and the Middle East until 1967, and only in 1967 he began specializing in Caucasian studies (we would say Armenology, and this is far from being one and the same thing) and is one of the founders and the first president of the Caucasian Studies Society (University of Chicago, 1985–1997).^{*} And it is all the more surprising that, in attempting to lead Caucasus studies, R.Hewsen dared to ignore and bypass the opinions and works of modern Georgian and Azerbaijani researchers on the history and historical geography of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia from ancient times to the twentieth century in

^{*}Special attention should be paid to the date of the formation of the Caucasian Studies Society – on the eve of the emergence of the Karabakh problem and further – during the annexation of the Azerbaijani lands. The politicization of this Society is evident; its objective was to create a “scientific” platform (substantiation) of the Armenian aggression. How could such a fact have escaped the “all-seeing” eye of the American democratic public and, in particular, from American political scientists?

“Armenia: A Historical Atlas”! After all, the concepts of Azerbaijani, Georgian and Armenian researchers were presented in texts and on maps and approved from 1981 to 1983 in Tbilisi and Moscow at conferences held by the Department of Historical Geography of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Armenian historical geography was headed and represented by academician S.T.Yeremian and professor B.Harutyunyan, the very scientists whose concepts greatly aided Hewsen and to whom he deeply thanks.

So, it was they, more specifically, Harutyunyan, who, on behalf of Armenian science, in the presence of academician Yeremian (after the criticism of the Armenian concept of historical geography by Azerbaijani researchers) had to admit that this Armenian concept was outdated and they were abandoning it (May 4-8, 1983) and would begin to create a new one.

Unlike Armenian scholars who referred exclusively to Armenian sources, without attempting to critically analyze them without revealing historical realities, Azerbaijani historians, perfectly mastering all synchronous multilingual sources, critically using their data, and most importantly, in a reliable manner, revealed the historical realities of both Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. This was the advantage of Azerbaijani researchers. But the main advantage is the prevailing historical realities themselves. As a result of the evaluation of the maps, the so-called “Greater Armenia” was removed from all maps of the territory of the Eastern and Southeastern Caucasus, Azerbaijan, and its brief existence (only 30 years, under Tigranes II, and only on the territory of the Eastern Anatolia) as a political entity was proved. Essentially, all the maps of Azerbaijani researchers were accepted. The objectivity of Azerbaijani historians was recognized by Russian researchers.

Hewsen's statement that the work on the Atlas began in 1982 suggests that this is the embodiment of that very “new” concept promised by B.Harutyunyan in Moscow. Even with a cursory glance at the maps, one is surprised at the infantilism and excessive ambition of the author of the Atlas. How could the Armenian people, constantly migrating and wandering, who have more than once created a state in different parts of Asia Minor with large chronological gaps, but, according to the intentions of the “creators” of Armenian history (and not according to sources and historical realities), the same people managed to have a stable “Pseudo-Armenian state” in the Eastern, Southeastern, Western, and Southwestern Caucasus – in the territories of historical Azerbaijan and Georgia? The political engagement of non-existent ancient and medieval realities is too obvious for the historical justification of the newly-Armenian lands acquired with the help of geopolitics in the Caucasus.

Of course, the Atlas of Armenia was created by a huge team of scientists, mainly Armenians from America and Armenia, whom Hewsen credits many times. It is noteworthy that Hewsen himself notes that the Atlas refers not only to Armenian studies, but also to disciplines close to it: preclassical, classical sciences, Caucasian studies, Iranian studies, Byzantine studies, Turkic studies, [history] of the Ottoman Empire, the Middle East, Sovietology. Why, not *‘misled by nationalism in his approach to the problem’* (C.Tumanoff), Hewsen did not engage non-Armenian scientists to participate in part of these disciplines?

A unique method of influencing the reader is also a pedantic enumeration of Armenian centers for history and literature, which are present in almost all universities: at Harvard, California, Columbia, Michigan, Taft, Waynes, Detroit, Cleveland State University, Chicago, Pennsylvania, etc.

In fact, this Atlas turns out to be not a concept of Robert Hewsen alone, not an Armenian concept, but American, i.e., the view of American science. Does the American academic community (not of Armenian origin) know about this, and does it agree with it? Hewsen himself calls the Atlas an exhaustive, authoritative (for whom?) historical atlas, which, in its concept, is suitable for the entire academic community (which one?). No comment.

Hewsen honestly and cynically admits his dislike and attitude towards Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Dagestan: ‘...we have realized [at least! – *F.M.*], that we failed to properly assess Georgia and Azerbaijan, as well as Dagestan and Circassia, which were very poorly represented. But, alas, our means and time were not limitless, and we illuminated aspects [that interested them. – *F.M.*] such as political processes. The publication demanded a compromise between the ideal and the actual’ [alas, neither one nor the other! – *F.M.*]. Of course, the end justifies the means. And what means! What is the use of scientific truth and conscience when politicized goals are used to historically substantiate scientific and territorial aggression, and the myth of the eternally existing “Greater Armenia” between the three seas (Mediterranean, Black, and Caspian) is set once again. Hewsen's words that he had to ‘compromise between the ideal and the actual’ mean in fact a compromise between the historical truth and aggressive falsification [ideal?!], in which the latter turned out to be preferable for him. And the entire Caucasus – Georgia, Azerbaijan, Dagestan are presented as provinces of Armenia from the fourth millennium BC to the 20th century inclusive on all 276 maps (almost without dynamics). And it is not surprising that they (Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Dagestan) are represented in the Atlas “very poorly”, which Hewsen himself has to admit.

The assurance, the optimism of the pseudo-research, the anti-scientific methods of Hewsen proceed mainly from the fact that, continuing the groundless Armenian biased tradition, he received constant moral and material support from the Armenian diaspora in general and from its branch in the United States, in particular. After settling in this superpower roughly two centuries ago, the Armenians, having perfectly learned their rights (while forgetting their duties), feel and behave excessively freely. Having created their Armenian pseudoscientific centers in almost all American universities, they are filling and long ago have filled the vacuum of American Caucasian studies with the contrived history of the Armenian people, thereby transforming American Caucasian studies into Armenian studies. And using such methods, having expanded the circle of well-wishers, sympathizers, empathizers, but not professionals, Hewsen tries to pass off the old mossy Armenian model of territorial claims for the American model, for the American scientific concept.

So (for the umpteenth time!), the mythically created Armenian state has no precedent in world history. Hewsen is attempting to find historical precedents for the Armenian people in the model of the Jewish and Irish peoples, even though he recognizes this implausible feature of the Armenian tradition, which has been cultivated for centuries and

is vulnerable. Hewsen's attempts to draw analogies between the fates of Armenians and Jews do not stand up to criticism. We must agree once and for all that the Armenians have no analogues in world practice. In addition to their natural mentality, the formation of which initially took place in a different geographic environment, in different territories, nurtured in different ethnocultural environments, further development of the Armenian mental make-up and ethnic character was influenced by the powers, the empires that had been pursuing their goals with their policies. This was the case in antiquity and in the Middle Ages; it became so in the 17th–19th centuries, when the empires began to send their missionaries to the Armenians, who completed the work. Some Armenians adopted Catholicism, some Lutheranism, and some remained faithful to Gregorianism, but they were all led by a single Christian church – the Armenian Church. The Catholic Armenians, the Lutheran Armenians, educated in Europe, in America, formed the origins of the Armenian diaspora. With the help of Catholic, Protestant congregations and with the help of a printing press (which the Jews did not have), the Armenians informed the world about their fate, their history, and attracted the attention of the European community to their own “eternally long-suffering” fate.

Nothing of the kind is observed in the history of the Jews, who formed as an ethnos with their own single caste-based religion, Judaism, in their promised land, Judea. The Jews, unlike the Armenians, were never led and did not use the services of missionaries. The Jews created an ancient writing system of their own, which served as the basis for many writing systems of other ethnic groups. And the Armenians borrowed someone else's writing – Ethiopian. Mesrop Mashtots used this alphabet in the fifth century to adapt it to Armenian sounds-phonemes. This very alphabet is still used today.

The Hebrew language is an independent language, moreover, it influenced the Semitic languages, being their source, while Armenian has a great deal of Iranian borrowings: Persian roots, derivational suffixes, endings, onomastics. All is Persian, particularly Middle Persian, Pahlavi.

Jews in the first century, having lost their state, scattered in other countries, forgot their language, with the exception of the Mountain Jews. The Armenians, on the other hand, preserved their language and acquired writing even after losing their states on the territory of Asia Minor and becoming dispersed across the countries. The Jews, having joined other ethno-cultural environments, enriched the history and culture of other ethnic groups with their creations, either without being able to develop their own, or for other reasons. The Jews never propagandized their history and culture. One creation is enough for this – the books of the Old Testament. The Armenians, on the contrary, in the zone of alien ethno-cultural residence, appropriated other people's history and culture (music, myths, legends, cuisine, etc., language, as was the case with Persian and partly with Turkic). In addition, the Armenians, having lost their states, began to create the history of the Armenian people by artificially and exaggeratedly expanding their territory, exalting their rulers, and trying to present Armenia as a third power after Rome-Byzantium and Persia. The Armenians have flooded all countries with their artificially created histories. In addition, the so-called histories of the Armenian people that were written and promoted are essentially stories of individual feudal clans, often ethnically non-Armenian, but not the history of one country, one ethnic group.

By riveting attention to their fate, not without the help of the great powers, the Armenians consistently present themselves as a calamitous people who have allegedly suffered genocide; the number of Armenians killed in 1915 is increased every year.

However, the Jews, to whom a good half of humanity is deeply in debt, never speak or cultivate the theme of genocide. How can the Armenians be compared to the Jewish people or to their unique destiny? And finally, in the 20th century, the Jews created their state in their historical homeland, Palestine, and the Armenians, with the help of powers, created a state in the 20th century in foreign lands, the lands of historical Azerbaijan.

We consider it unnecessary to draw parallels between the fate of the Armenians and the Irish, whose land was taken away by a power (Great Britain), and who live on this land and courageously preserve their independence.

Summing up, Hewsen's promising work, "Armenia: Historical Atlas", which is an attempt to illuminate the historical geography of the Caucasus, turned out to be completely inconsistent with historical realities and the sources' data. The proposed Atlas causes deep indignation in the scientific community of Azerbaijan.

I am sincerely sorry for the gullible, benevolent American people, who are once again misled about the history of the "long-suffering" Armenian people, skillfully woven by Hewsen.

Recently, V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian released a monograph,⁶⁴⁴ which offers information from a source about the Albanian and Syuni churches, Albania (its Gardman region), Chalcedonianism in Albania, and comments on Albanian realities, Albanian source Movses Kaghankatvatsi, raising serious objections.

It seems to us that the author of the monograph "The Narration about the Armenian Affairs", to a certain extent, detaches from reality, idealizes the history of the formation of the Armenian Chalcedonite community of the 6th–7th centuries: 'a complex phenomenon, the genesis and development of which was constitutively influenced by such multi-temporal and heterogeneous components as the Greek sermon of Christianization times and the **subsequent alliances with the Greek Church**, Greek culture and language, educational, translation, and creative activities of the Grecophiles, and finally, the inclusion of most of Armenia into Byzantium at the end of the 6th–7th centuries'⁶⁴⁵ If the Armenian-Byzantine contact zone were so real, relatively formed, as Arutyunova-Fidanian believes (in the seventh century, Chalcedonianism won in Armenia and became the dominant religion; the seventh century "became the Armenian century" in the history of Byzantium and equally, in Armenia, the seventh century was the "Byzantine century"), then it becomes inexplicable how, for what reasons, the very Armenian Church, which considered itself part of the Byzantine Church, so easily went to serve the Arabs, merged with its policy, and moreover, offered the Arabs its services for the subordination of the Christian Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church?!

In fact, the contact zone presupposes and predetermines the natural integration of two worlds, two cultures, two churches, two ethnic groups, and two ethnopolitical formations. And in this case, we see that Armenian provinces were part of the Byzantine Empire, their relations being built upon the principle of the rule of Byzantium, the Byzantine Church, and the subordination of the Armenian elite, the Armenians, and the Armenian Church. Arutyunova-Fidanian cites a passage from Sebeos that the heir to the great Heraclius,

Constans II, the legitimate overlord of the Armenian lands, appointed Theodore Rshtuni, ‘a faithful man from the Armenian princes of the Greek part’, as the commander of the troops of Byzantine Armenia. But when the Armenians soon **betrayed Constans II, ‘submitted to the king of the Ishmaelites’** (*Sebeos*, p.164), ‘the emperor set out on a punitive expedition to Armenia’, so **‘and then Armenian Catholicos and Mushegh with all the Armenian princes prostrated themselves before the king and with the great sobbing, shedding tears, began to beg him for mercy so that he would not destroy them, their country for their crimes.** The king hearkened to their supplication, immediately dismissed most of the army, and he himself ...went to Dvin and stayed at the Catholicos’ (*Sebeos*, p.118). At such cost, i.e., by coercion, the Armenian naxarars and clergy submitted to the empire. Is it right to call such a relationship a “contact zone”?! Here is another excerpt from Sebeos who writes that when in the church of St.Gregory, the Council of Chalcedon was proclaimed, ‘a Byzantine priest served the mass in Greek and the king, the Catholicos and all the bishops joined in, **some voluntarily, others involuntarily**’.⁶⁴⁶ And therefore, we believe that the definitions given to “this phenomenon” – the Armenian-Chalcedonian community – by R.M.Bartikyan and American researcher N.G.Garsoyan are correct. **Bartikyan writes: ‘The machinations of the Chalcedonian Armenians have a long history, their instigators were the Byzantine state and the church’. Bartikyan considers the Armenian--Chalcedonian dioceses and monasteries as agent centers of the Byzantines.**⁶⁴⁷ In the opinion of Garsoyan, however, the empire could not ‘absorb the Armenians, with a small number of aristocratic families, even the absence of religious antagonism did not lead to the ‘expected merger’, the Armenians were ‘incorporated, but not assimilated, and finally, Armenians never perceived a genuine, orthodox Byzantine identity’.⁶⁴⁸

Now let's look into the information on Albania contained in the seventh-century source, “Narration”, and Arutyunova-Fidanian's position on it. Arutyunova-Fidanian claims that Armenian Grecophiles, who studied at excellent Hellenistic schools, were fluent in the Armenian and Greek languages, successfully participated in theological and philosophical debates. As a proof, she refers to Movses Kaghankatvatsi's mentioning one of such discussions: ‘And although Greek theologians gathered at the behest of the emperor were confident that thanks to the flexibility and richness of the Greek language they would have the upper hand, **they received a worthy reply. For the faith of the Armenian Church was right and [many] spoke Greek well**’.⁶⁴⁹ In this passage, Arutyunova-Fidanian refers to the so-called critical edition of Movses Kaghankatvatsi, undertaken by V.D.Arakelyan.⁶⁵⁰ Meanwhile, in the text of Kaghankatvatsi, in this passage, there is no mention of the Armenian Church, and in general, this passage reads a little differently: ‘And although Greek experts gathered at the behest of the emperor, confident that thanks to the eloquence, the sharpness of the Hellenic language, **they would have the upper hand, but they had to listen to answers.** Although in Armenia, **ecclesiastical sciences were just emerging and reviving, there were many experts in the Greek language.** The Armenians accused Hovnan Mayravanetsi that being on the side of the Greeks, he contradicted [the Armenians]. The reason for his accusation was the hermit Solomon, who later became the Armenian Catholicos. He [Hovnan Mayravanetsi] asked Vardapet Solomon, the abbot of the [monastery] of Makenats, and the latter confirmed in writing,

‘the Armenians were not defeated in faith... but they were defeated in what the Greeks said’ about the nine church grades that were absent in the church hierarchy (structure) of the Armenian Church (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 48).⁶⁵¹

Arutyunova-Fidanian attempts to present everything in an illusory light, smoothing things over, and for the sake of the originally set goal of her research (the “contact zone”), she predetermined in advance that among the Armenian nobility, the Armenian principalities that were part of the Byzantine Empire, there allegedly were stable attempts to sincerely accept Chalcedonianism in order to create a theological unity in Christianity, the idea of unity with the Greek Church. For the sake of the well-thought-out goal, the researcher sacrifices remarkably interesting extracts from sources that reveal and illuminate completely various aspects of theological disputes.

A passage from Albanian author of the 7th–8th centuries Movses Kaghankatvatsi does not service the goal set by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, and moreover, it contradicts her logic of vision, the statement that ‘Armenian theologians strove to give their understanding of Christological and Trinitarian problems using the same ancient logic philosophical tools as their ideological opponents in Byzantium’.⁶⁵² **‘They [Armenian theologians] successfully participated in theological and philosophical debates.** Movses Kaghankatvatsi tells about one of such discussions’. However, Kaghankatvatsi talks about another subject of the dispute, which is reflected both in the text cited by us and to which V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian refers, and in the title of the chapter: **‘Concerning the remonstrances made by the Greeks to the Armenians for not having the nine grades in the hierarchy of the Church;** efforts of the Armenians to make the Albanians subordinate to them [Armenians] as an archbishopric, to which the Albanians do not agree; Siwnik’ turns from the Armenians to the Albanians for consecration and chrism’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 48). As we see, the theological dispute was the background, hiding the true reasons – hierarchical ones, when the Byzantine Church and its clergy tried to subjugate the Armenian Church. And the Armenian Church, defending its creed, its church doctrine, tried to preserve its independence. Back in the day, N.Adonts rightly noted that the struggle between the dyophysites and the monophysites was based not on dogmatic, but on hierarchical reasons.

The work of V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian is surprising for its conceptual presentation, a new way of prioritizing – the alleged desire and understanding among the Armenian princes and the Armenian clergy of the need to integrate with the Greco-Roman world. The passages *identified* by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian are commented on in a very simple manner. In reality, the Armenian elite, the Armenian clergy, very flexibly “served” two empires (Byzantium and the Sassanid Iran), pursuing personal interests, benefits, which more than once caused the Armenians to lose their statehood, their political entity – in the fifth century, in the 9th–10th centuries, which was dealt with back in the eighth century by the father of Armenian history, Movses Khorenatsi, in the last chapter of his “History”, “Lamentation for the Armenian people”. As is known, this chapter reveals the true colors of the Armenian naxarars-princes, alternately betraying the ruler of the Armenian kingdom in favor of Rome (later Byzantium), and the Sassanid Persia. In this aspect, the actions of Theodore Rshtuni were far from an exception, but rather a pattern. In addition, this trait of the Armenian elite, the Armenians, was the reason for the letter of the Byzantine emperor

Mauricius (582–602), addressed to Persian king Khosrow, which says about the restless, hard-to-control Armenian ethnos. Sebeos quotes the “accusatory” letter of Mauricius: ‘The obstinate and rebellious people live among us and stir up trouble. Let’s do this: I will summon my people and send them to Thrace and you gather yours and order them to be sent to the East. If they die, our enemies will die, if they kill, they will kill our enemies, and we will live in peace’.⁶⁵³ And, of course, from the modern point of view, the assessment of Theodore Rshtuni’s act given by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian looks extremely infantile: ‘...Rshtunik had no right to conclude [an agreement with the Arabs] neither de facto, since he was not supported by most of the naxarars, nor de jure, since he was in the service of the empire’. Considering the deeds of the Armenian princes, who constantly oscillated between the two empires, V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian should have passed her verdict to the entire Armenian elite, with rare exceptions, and to individual representatives of the Armenian Church. Referring to A.Hakobyan alone,⁶⁵⁴ as the “last classic” in the issues of Albanian studies, without bothering to read the opinions of other Caucasian scholars,* V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian calls the work of the Albanian author ‘a compilation made by Movses Kaghankatvatsi or Daskhurantsi, a high rank Armenian vardapet, perhaps the Catholicos of Aluank (and before that the abbot of the monastery in Parisos), in the 10th century based on sources from the 6th–10th centuries, sometimes transferred into the text without any changes’.⁶⁵⁵ This statement raises serious objections. As noted, the source itself, i.e., “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the very content of the monument (which gives the history of the country of Albania located on the two banks of the Kur River, the history of the Albanians living on the two banks of the Kur River, the history of the Albanian rulers-kings and the great Mihranid princes, the history of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church), the manner of presentation, the author’s attitude to the events described (especially the attitude to Javanshir), and most importantly, the author’s strict chronological system of dating events based on by synchronization, i.e., according to the reign of Albanian kings, the great princes of Albania, according to the years of Albanian Catholicoi, according to the reign of Persian, Greek, Byzantine kings – all this gives rise to a single conclusion – “History of the Aghuans” was written by an Albanian, “and not by an Armenian vardapet” (Moses Kaghankatvatsi – Daskhurantsi), for the Albanian people.⁶⁵⁶

Further, again referring to A.Hakobyan, the researcher speaks about the so-called “ready” sources included in the history of Aluank: “The History of 684” and “The History of Catholicos Viroy”. In the so-called “History of 684”, the information that has parallels in Armenian sources is taken by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian on faith, and the information that is not confirmed by other Armenian sources causes her “skepticism”. This applies to the history of the relationship between great prince Javanshir and the Byzantine Empire. V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian doubts the possibility of these relationships: Javanshir

* In the archive of I.A.Orbeli there is a study where we read: ‘~~Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi~~² [crossed out by I.Orbeli], ‘~~Armenian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi~~² [crossed out again by I.A.Orbeli], ‘Armenian-speaking author Movses Kaghankatvatsi’. As we can see, it was not easy for such a well-known Caucasian scholar as I.A.Orbeli to bypass the “taboo” already established by the Armenian Church on Albanian studies, and mainly on the Albanian source – Movses Kaghankatvatsi. I.A.Orbeli was lost in conjectures – how should he call this source?

acknowledged in writing the suzerainty of the empire, and Emperor Constans II, in response to this, bestowed high ranks on Javanshir. The emperor, after two personal meetings, renders Javanshir great honors and recognizes his right of hereditary possession of all the territories ‘which had ever belonged to the first kings of Aluank’, ‘entrusting him with the royal rule of the eastern land’.⁶⁵⁷ It is worth noting the attention and honors shown to Javanshir by Byzantine Emperor Constans II: ‘The nobles of Armenia and military leader Hamazasp [Hamazasp Mamikonian appointed by the Arabs as the ruler of Armenia in 654–659], seeing that Javanshir received such heavenly gifts [a piece from the Cross] badly envied him’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 22). Could an “Armenian” author ever say, think and write anything of the kind?!

The skepticism of V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian comes from the realities of Albania, which are completely unknown to her, and the realities of Armenia of the same period. The attitude of Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, his grandson Constans II, to Albania is dictated by the strategic position that Albania had in the Caucasus unlike the “country of the Armenians”, due to which Albania retained its statehood longer than Georgia/Iberia (to say nothing about the “country of the Armenians”, for it was a province of two empires for centuries). First of all, the Albanian rulers were entrusted with protecting the Caucasian passages (Derbent, Besh-Barmag, Gilinchay), through which the Turkic-speaking tribes constantly invaded, posing a threat to the two empires, Rome/Byzantium and Persia. And only thanks to this, the Albanian state existed for over 1,000 years (from the fourth century BC to the beginning of the eighth century). Albania has always been a part of the geopolitical interests of empires since the time of Alexander the Great. As is known, during antiquity, except for Albania, the entire Central Caucasus was subordinate to Rome. And therefore, only in the seventh century, during the Persian-Byzantine wars, during the Caucasian campaign of Heraclius, under his successor Constans II, at last, a real opportunity appeared for Byzantium to gain a foothold in the Caucasus, to include the entire Caucasus in its sphere of influence. In order to achieve confessional unity, Heraclius, according to Georgian sources, pursued the policy of persecution of both Zoroastrians and Monophysites in Mtskheta, Ujarma. In 628, Heraclius arrived in Albania, in the Gardman region – ‘Gardabani, the lands of Varaz-Grigor’, then by the order of Heraclius, Varaz-Grigor and his people, as well as the “ruler of Metsekevank” were baptized in the town of Lal. Obviously, they adopted Monothelitism and Varaz-Grigor, while still a Gardman prince, declared himself a vassal to Heraclius.⁶⁵⁸ It is for these purposes, to the surprise and misunderstanding of V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, ‘Byzantium appears as a generous and merciful patroness of the Eastern region’ and actually in order ‘to legalize [now] the claims of Javanshir [the great prince of Albania] to the royal dignity’. Gaining a foothold in the Central Caucasus was impossible without owning Albania. And Javanshir, a wise and flexible politician, diplomat, and prominent statesman, fluent in Greek,⁶⁵⁹ clearly versed in the prevailing political realities, in turn, promptly recognized the suzerainty of Byzantium, just unlike Theodore Rshtuni, who made a wrong choice, could not understand the current situation, and rushed to an agreement with the Arabs. And that is why ‘Javanshir [succeeded to] reign with autocracy and splendor, from the borders of Iberia to the Gates of the Huns and to the Aras River’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 21).

In addition, unlike the Armenian *naxarars*, who constantly took up one or the other side (now Rome/Byzantium, now the Sassanian Iran, later now Byzantium, now the Arabs), the Albanian elite, together with their rulers, was stably (until the seventh century) focused on Iran, recognizing vassal dependence on it, managed to preserve its territory, its statehood.

The information contained in the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi about Javanshir, his relationship with Byzantium, and with the Arabs, which has no analogues in other sources, once again confirms (among other things) the Albanian origin of the author of the “History of the Aghuans”. It raises an objection, and not the only one, to represent the country of Albania/Aluank and Syunik as regions of Armenia. ‘Chalcedonianism as a complex and broad religious movement, had other ways of winning souls besides war, as evidenced by its spread **in Aluank and Syunik, Armenia's most distant from Byzantium regions** not suffering its military presence’.⁶⁶⁰ This statement is completely groundless. This is about the events of the seventh century, when there was an Albanian state (ruled by the Albanian Mihranids), which, under the severe conditions of the Byzantine-Persian wars and Arab-Byzantine relations, managed to survive and which, in the previous centuries, was not “regions” of Armenia. After all, Armenia was subject to repeated divisions between the empires of Rome and Parthia in 37 and 298, between Rome/Byzantium and the Sassanian Persia in 387 and 591; as a result, there were two Armenian provinces: Byzantine Armenia and Persian Armenia. It makes me even more uncomfortable to have to remind Armenian historians of this once again. After all, researchers are well aware that in 428 (and actually in 387), when the Armenian state was legally abolished, this act was in no way connected with the formation of the “Albanian marzbandom”, which is cultivated in the so-called Armenian historiography. In Armenian historiography, the formation of the Albanian marzbandom dates back to 428 (associated with the liquidation of the Armenian state) or 451. And according to historical political realities, the marzbandom was created in Albania in 510 and existed until 629. The division of Armenia under the treaty of 591 did not affect Albania at all, and therefore the unfounded statement of the researcher (V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian) looks paradoxical that after the division of 591 the Persians retained... Syunik, Paytakaran, Utik, Artsakh,⁶⁶¹ i.e., the regions of Albania on the right bank of the Kur. In fact, in 591, both the right and left banks of the Kur constituted a single Albanian marzbandom ruled by a Persian marzban. Despite the data contained in the Albanian and Armenian sources, as well as the historical realities, the researcher continues to unfoundedly assert that ‘Syunik has always been a part of Armenia and always, to a certain extent, autonomous’.⁶⁶² The only thing we can agree with is the autonomy of Syunik. As for Syunik, N.Adonts and S.Malkhasyants had to note that Syunik enjoyed ‘a position that is separate and more independent from the Central Armenia both in secular and church life’. And this, in their opinion, was explained by the ethnic specificity of the country. ‘There is no doubt that the **Albanian outskirts of Armenia**, Syunia, differed somewhat from the central parts of Armenia in terms of population. Its ethnic exclusivity was maintained and renewed by migratory currents from the adjacent mountainous lands’.⁶⁶³ Apparently, the ethnic exclusivity of Syunik was made up of Kurds, called Mars. H.Hubschman and I.Markwart, as is known,

considered Syunik an Albanian region.⁶⁶⁴ According to the 13th-century Syunik author Stepanos Orbelian, bishop of Syunik, in the fifth century, the Albanian king Aswagen bestowed the rank of metropolitan, ‘also red royal banner with a gold fringe, with a gold ball at the top and a magnificent cross above it, and ordered it to always be carried in front of the Syuni bishop’ (*Stepanos Orbelian*, Ch. XV, XXV). And only in the seventh century, for the second time, the rank of Metropolitan was given to the Bishop of Syunik by Armenian Catholicos Abraham during a dispute with the Greeks regarding the absence of nine ranks in the church hierarchy of the Armenian Church (*Stepanos Orbelian*, Ch. XXV). According to the data of Movses Kaghankatvatsi (II, 48), Stepanos Orbelian (XXV), the Syunians were consecrated and received the holy oil (myrrh) from the Albanians in the 6th–7th centuries.

“A narration about the Armenian Affairs” (hereinafter – Anonym), an Armenian source of the seventh century, provides information on the Albanian Church, which has no parallels in other sources. The author of the “Narration” is an orthodox cleric, who believes that Chalcedonianism is the only “right faith” and that the Armenian Church is a part of the Universal Church. Anonym – this is the history of the unity and schisms of the Greek and Armenian Churches, it offers unique information on the Armenian-Chalcedonian community of the 6th–7th centuries.⁶⁶⁵ The author of the “Narration” is inclined to believe that the spread of Chalcedonianism in Albania and Syunik in the sixth century was linked to the activities and influence of Vardan Mamikonian and his entourage, when, after returning from the V Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, they began to carry out the idea of unity with the Greek Church in Armenia (§§ 84, 85-87).⁶⁶⁶ According to Anonym, such prominent church figures as the Albanian Catholicos Abas (§ 85), Peter, Gregory, Matusala (Methuselah) and Vrtanes, bishops of Syunik, were also Chalcedonites (§§ 86-87).⁶⁶⁷ First of all, it should be noted that much in this passage does not correspond to historical and confessional realities. This excerpt of the “Narration” reflects the complex period of the ideological situation that developed in Byzantine Armenia and the Caucasus in the 6th–7th centuries, which led to a church schism. As is known, in the second half of the sixth century, when the Armenian Church defined its dogma at the Council of Dvin (adopting Monophysitism), the Albanian and Syunik churches began to adhere to the moderate Chalcedonian position, together with the Georgian Church.⁶⁶⁸ It seems that it is completely inappropriate to link the spread of Chalcedonianism in Albania with the activities of Vardan Mamikonian and his entourage here. The choice of faith by Albania, like other countries of the Caucasus, depended on the political rivalry of the two empires, Byzantium and Iran. And this very moment (period) is reflected in the next passage. In a section of the “Narration” (dedicated to the Monophysite propaganda of the Monophysite clergy; this is a unique passage, unparalleled in other sources), it is indicated that the churches of Syunik, Aluank and Iberia rejected the aspirations of the Monophysites (§§ 85-87). ‘The Iberians, having bluntly objected, did not want to listen [to anything] and expelled them in disgrace as heretical disciples’ (§ 88). ‘And others did not obey their will, except for those who spoke only the Armenian language: Tashir, Dzorapor, and Gardman, i.e., the countries located on the side of Artsakh’ (§ 89). V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian tries to further analyze this passage. This place in the “Narration” is considered by researchers to be mysterious. Indeed,

V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian notes that it is difficult to imagine that “the Armenian language” was spoken in Tashir, Dzorapor and Gardman *and was not spoken in Syunik*. The answer, apparently, should be sought in the general context of this passage.⁶⁶⁹ It is difficult for the researcher to imagine how Armenian was not spoken in Syunik in the seventh century. Meanwhile, it is known that eighth-century author Stepanos of Syunik noted that in his time in Syunik people spoke their own Syuni language, but not Armenian. This view was shared by R.A.Acharyan, who believed that the people of Syunik are a nation that has its own original language. N.Adonts also shared this point of view.⁶⁷⁰ Regarding the information in the “Narration”– ‘except for those who spoke only the Armenian language: Tashir, Dzorapor and Gardman’, R.M.Bartikyan rightly believes that there simply could not be such a phrase in an Armenian text, for there are many Armenian toponyms, but nowhere it was specifically mentioned that they were called so ‘in the Armenian language’.⁶⁷¹ V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, trying to comment on this fragment, believes that the Chalcedonite Armenians, apparently, at the request of the Greeks, could administer divine services in Greek. In the Byzantine Empire for a long time there were doubts about the legality of the use of local languages in the liturgy.⁶⁷² But the geographical and cultural remoteness of the Tashir, Dzorapor and Gardman districts from the Byzantine world determined, according to V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, the confessional and linguistic situation of the region, emphasized by the author of the “Narration”: the Monophysite Armenians of these regions spoke ‘the Armenian language only’,⁶⁷³ in which, in fact, they administered the divine services. This comment does not seem convincing. Moreover, it does not fit logically into the general concept set out by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian: the seventh century – the period of the unity of the Armenian Church with the Constantinople Church, i.e., Chalcedonism triumphed throughout Armenia, the priests served in Greek, and for some reason, only in the three districts mentioned, Tashir, Dzorapor, and Gardman, service is administered in the Armenian language, i.e., these three districts in the entire so-called Armenia remained true to monophysitism. The matter is that Gardman is an Albanian region which became known as such (gavar) as part of the large Albanian province of Uti and then continued to be in this position until the fall of the Albanian kingdom (early eighth century) and later, during the late Middle Ages, when the small Albanian principalities-kingdoms were revived. In addition, the Gardman region, in the 6th–8th centuries, was the hereditary domain of the Albanian rulers, the great Mihranid princes, who, having fled from Persia, settled in Gardman. By virtue of all of the above, it is utterly out of the question that the language of Gardman was Armenian. As for the confessional realities of Gardman of the seventh century, it is known that two Albanian Catholicoi of the seventh century, Zacharias and Nerses-Bakur, were Chalcedonites, moreover, Nerses-Bakur was at first the bishop of Gardman, then became a Catholicos. It is unlikely that during this period, Gardman remained Monophysite and, moreover, the confessional language could not be Armenian. Only one question remains: is the information about the Armenian language in the three districts, Gardman, in particular, the fruit of the editorial work of the author of the “Narration” or the fruit of the editorial work of the scribe of the “Narration” manuscript of the ancient 12th–13th century? This is explained by the degree of interest of the new generations of the Middle Ages (12th–13th century) in the issues of the schism in the Caucasus and hence their participation in

the editing of the relevant texts. And according to V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, the author of “Narration” is an erudite, well-informed theologian who used the archival materials of the Catholicosate,⁶⁷⁴ which also, over time, were edited and reflected the course of their time. And besides everything else, we are confident that the archives of the Armenian Catholicosate will never be short of the “necessary material” for the needs of Armenian history. It should be noted that almost all ancient manuscripts of Armenian sources date back to the 12th–13th centuries (!).

One of the eternal themes of Armenian studies is the resettlement of Armenians from their home land, both voluntary and forcible,⁶⁷⁵ the loss of their political formations-states, as well as drawing of maps delineating (by all historians without exception) the territorial limits of the lost Armenian states and lands, i.e., the creation of historical geography of the so-called Greater Armenia, beginning from ancient times, the second century BC, and now (in the last publication of Robert Hewsen) from the 6th–4th millennium BC to the 21st century inclusive⁶⁷⁶ on the lands of Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus.

Any research conducted by any Armenian scientists on any aspect of the history and culture of the Armenian people ought to be accompanied with a map. And, of course, the work of V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian could not be an exception in this respect. The long-term research into the history of the Armenian people has convinced me that such a craving for maps, inherent in Armenians, is, apparently, typical for migratory ethnic groups who lost their state early. However, comparable characteristics in other ethnic groups, which are equally doomed to the loss of land, were not identified during immigration, i.e., these ethnic groups are completely devoid of a craving for maps. In terms of the number of maps produced, the Armenians clearly hold the record. It is worth noting that regardless of the period – whether it was the period of the existence of Greater Armenia (2nd–1st centuries BC) or the period of the loss of state by the Armenians, or the period of the existence of two Armenian provinces, Byzantine and Sassanid Persia, Greater Armenia is reflected stably on the maps of all periods, without any dynamics. Besides, its borders were enlarged in all centuries at the expense of its neighbors – in the north at the expense of Georgia, in the east at the expense of the lands of the historical Azerbaijan – Albania and later Azerbaijani states.

From the point of view of the historical realities of the political history of Armenia and the Caucasus, the map of S.T.Yeremian presented by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian⁶⁷⁷ raises serious objections. Only with the help of the legend to the map which is given without a title/the author's name and reflects the period of one of the divisions of Armenia (591) between Byzantium and the Sassanid Persia, its content becomes more or less clear.

The legend craftily depicts five lines-symbols, all of which are designations of the same color, reddish-pink. The entire territory of Armenia (!) is represented in pink, while the territorial boundaries of so-called Armenia are edged, outlined with a bold red line. It is not explained in the legend, because doing so would necessitate to somehow name this line, which would contradict historical facts. On the map, the territory of Armenia (in fact, Byzantine and Persian provinces) stretches from the Halys River in the west and from Amaseia in the north-west to the eastern borders, where it encompasses the Albanian regions of Syunik-Sisakan and part of Artsakh, i.e., in fact, the territory of the modern Republic of Armenia, established in the twentieth century. In the north, the so-called

Armenia includes parts of historical Georgian lands. And the territorial boundaries of all this territory referred to as Armenia (in the text of the map, but not in the title) are delineated by the researcher (S.T.Yeremian) in illusory pink, exaggerating its territory at the expense of the truncated lands of Georgia and Albania, without considering its actual political fate, that is, another division thereof in 591 between the two empires. As for the territory of Albania – the Albanian marzbandom (during this period), which is shown by the researcher in a pale yellowish-light green, here, V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, by introducing designations of her own (in reddish), generously distributes the Albanian regions both on the left and right banks of the Kur River between the two empires, Byzantium and the Sassanid Persia, which seems completely wrongful and groundless. The unnamed map created in this way by V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian, which, according to political realities, was supposed to reflect another one of the redistributions (this time of 591), the Persian-Byzantine redistribution of the Armenian regions, in fact, visibly embodied the golden dream of Armenologists—the allegedly steadily existing Armenia.

In recent years, particularly after 2000, as a result of the establishment of the Caucasian Albanian Research Center, which has held two international conferences and one international symposium with the participation of a large number of foreign researchers, the interest in Albanian studies has grown considerably. These events* included interesting and remarkable speeches throwing light on specific aspects, including historical geography, history, culture, ideology and religion (of the Albanian Church, its Kish church, the time of the adoption of Christianity in Albania and Armenia, the ecclesiastical dioceses of Albania and Armenia, the apostolic period of Christianity in Caucasian Albania), Albanian writing and literature in light of the findings on Mount Sinai, the archeology of Albania, Albanian ethnos (in the past and present), and Albanian melik clans.⁶⁷⁸

* The papers were published in “The History of the Caucasus. The scientific-public almanac” (Baku, 2001, No.1; 2002, No.2), and the papers presented at the III International Conference in 2003, unfortunately, have not been published in the general collection.

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The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movses Dasxuranci / translated by C.J.F.Dowsett. London: Oxford University press, New York, Toronto, 1961, p.XIII (*Hereinafter*: Dowsett).
20. **Орбели Р.Р.** Собрание армянских рукописей Института востоковедения Академии наук СССР // Уч. зап. ИВ АН СССР, т.VI, 1954, с.110.
21. Brosset’s postscript on the Petersburg manuscript (л. 1a).

22. **Boré E.** Nouvelles annales de voyages, t.II. Histoire des Aghovans par Moise Calkantouni extraite et traduite du manuscrit armenien. Paris, 1848, pp.53-93.
23. **Brosset M.** Extraits de l'histoire des Aghovans, pp.468-494.
24. **Каганкатвацци М.** История страны албан / Изд. Н.Эмина. Тифлис, 1912 (in Old Arm.) (*Hereinafter*: “История страны албан” / изд. Н.Эмина).
25. История страны агван Мовсеса Каганкатвацци / Изд. К.Шахназаряна. Париж, 1860 (in Old Arm.).
26. “История агван” / Пер. К.Патканова.
27. **Manandian J.** Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte. Untersuchungen über Moses den Utier (Kalan'katuaci). Leipzig, 1897, “Базмавэп”, pp.575-578 (in Arm.).
28. **Тер-Григорьян Т.** К вопросу об “Истории Албанской страны”, с.3-4.
29. The History of the Caucasian Albanians, C.J.F.Dowsett. Introduction;
Toumanoff C. C.J.F. Dowsett. The History of the Caucasian Albanians by Movses Dasxuranci. London, 1961 / BSOAS, XXV. 12, 1964;
Bartikyan R. The History of the Caucasian albanians... / ВВ, т. XXVII, 1967.
30. **Macler F.** Catalogue des manuscrits arméniens et géorgiens. Paris, 1898, pp.118-120.
31. **Conybeare F.C.** A Catalogue of the armenian Manuscripts in the British Museum... London, 1913, №117, pp.292-293.
32. **Акопян В.А.** “Армянская книга канонов” и ее редакции: Автореф. докт. дисс. Ереван, 1967, с.32.
33. Этимологический коренной словарь армянского языка, т.V. / Сост. Р.Ачарян. Ереван, 1931 (in Arm.).
34. **Dowsett**, p.XIII.
35. **Марр Н.Я.** По поводу русского слова “сало” в древнеармянском описании хазарской трапезы VII в. / **Марр Н.Я.** Избранные работы. М.-Л., 1935, т.V, с.72-90.
36. **Орбели Р.Р.** Собрание армянских рукописей..., с.111.
37. Каталог рукописей Матенадарана имени Маштоца, т.I / Сост. О.Еганян и др. Ереван, 1965 (in Arm.).
38. История албанской страны Мовсэса Каганкатвацци / Пер., предисл. и примеч. В.Аракеляна. Ереван, 1969 (*Hereinafter*: “История албанской страны”/ пер. В.Аракеляна).
39. “История албанской страны”/ Пер. В.Аракеляна, с.XVI.
40. **Захарий, дьякон.** История. Вагаршапат, III, 1870, с.30 (in Old Arm.).
41. M.Brosset dated the oldest manuscript of the Armenian version of Kartlis Tskhovreba to the same 1279–1311 (now Matenadaran №1902): **Brosset M.** Rapports sur un voyage archéologique dans la Géorgie et dans l'Arménie en 1847–1848, III, St.-Petersbourg, 1851. This dating is recognized in literature. In Matenadaran manuscripts catalog, this number is dated as the 13th century.
42. **Brosset M.** Rapports..., III, p.71.
43. “История агван” / Пер. К.Патканова, с.IV.
44. **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.12-13.
45. **Мхитар Гош.** Албанская хроника / Предисл., пер. и коммент. акад.З.М.Буниятова. Баку: Изд-во АН Аз.ССР, 1960, с.20.
46. **Дадян Х.** Рукописи “Истории Агванка” Мовсэса Каганкатвацци, находящиеся в библиотеке при кафедральном соборе (в Эчмиадзине)/ Арарат, 1895, с.238 (in Arm.).
47. **Dowsett**, p.XIII.
48. *Ibid.*
49. История страны агван Мовсеса Каганкатвацци / Изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.86.
50. In 1938, T.Ter-Grigoryan discovered the missing part of Davtak's poem in Matenadaran manuscript No. 3043 (the Tabriz manuscript).
51. **Тер-Григорьян Т.** Неизданные страницы истории Моисея Каганкатвацци: Архив Института истории АН Аз.ССР, №1356, с.6-14;
K.V.Trever did not know the reason for the omission in Davtak's Elegy – it was its absence in the 1289 manuscript (**Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.13).
52. These two pages are part of Book III, Chapter XX (P.) and Chapter XXI (Emin's edition) and chronologically cover the events of 8 years (835/6–842/3). They were found by H.Dadyan in Matenadaran in two manuscripts, and published by him in “Ararat” (“Арапар” 1897, с.161-163). In 1940, T.Ter-Grigoryan translated these passages into Russian (**Тер-Григорьян Т.** Неизданные страницы истории Моисея Каганкатвацци / **Альтман М.М.** Исторический очерк города Гянджи. Баку, ч.1, 1949, с.15, примеч.1).

In 1957, C.Dowsett translated the text of the missing pages into English:

Dowsett C.J.F. A Neglected passage in the History of the Caucasians Albanians / (BSOAS) XIX/3, 1957, pp.456-468;

Бунятов З.М. Ещё раз о неизданных страницах “Истории агван” Моисея Каганкатваци // Изв. АН Аз.ССР, серия общ. наук, 1961, №4, с.3-4.

53. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68-70.

54. **Dowsett**, p.XIII.

55. *Ibid.*

56. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1895, с.345-346.

57. **Dowsett**, p.XII (note 2).

58. **Dowsett**, p.XIII; пер. К.Патканова, p.IV.

59. **Dowsett**, p.XIII.

60. *Ibid.*

61. The copy Ш₂ was made, as is seen from K.Shahnazaryan's preface, from another Echmiadzin manuscript, i.e. the one dated to 1289. This copy was most likely made from Lunkianos' copy, which belongs to the same reading group as K.Patkanov's and Emin's editions dating back to this copy.

62. **Dowsett**, p.XIII.

63. *Ibid.*

64. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1895, с.235.

65. **Dowsett**, p.XIV.

66. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1895, с.347.

67. *Ibid.*

68. It concerns the text of two pages missing from the early 1289 manuscript copied by Zacharias, which chronologically cover the events of 835/6–842/3.

69. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68-70; **Dowsett**, p.XIV.

70. **Март Н.Я.** По поводу русского слова “сало”..., с.71.

71. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68; **Dowsett**, p.VIII.

72. *Ibid.*

73. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68-69; **Dowsett**, p.195, note 2, 3.

74. “История агван” / Пер. К.Патканова: “...because shortly, our catholicoi defrocked our bishops”, с.244.

75. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68-69; **Dowsett**, p.195, note 2, 3.

76. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68-70.

77. *Ibid.*

78. **Dowsett**, p.XIV.

79. **Ереванци Симеон.** Джамбр / Пер. с арм.яз. С.Малхасянца. М., 1958, с.152-160.

80. Z.I.Yampolsky once noted that the Chronicle, “having lived for centuries in manuscripts made by Armenian monks, nevertheless retains traces of political orientation against the Armenian church hierarchy” (**Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с.153).

81. “История агван”, кн.II, 47 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.307; пер. К.Патканова, с.216. These editions, as has been noted, are based on group I manuscripts that have preserved traces of the Armenian edition.

82. “История агван”, кн.II, 47 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.306; пер. К.Патканова, с.216; Patkanov indicates 270 years, not 280.

83. “История агван”, кн.II, 48 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.308; пер. К.Патканова, с.217.

84. “История агван”, кн.II, 48 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.311-312; пер. К.Патканова, с.220, in another way: “First of all, the Greek generals incited him to seek dominance over the Albanians.”

85. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1897, с.68-69; Архив армянской истории, т.II, с.339;

Тер-Григорьян Т. К вопросу об “Истории Албанской страны”, с.5.

86. **Ереванци Симеон.** Джамбр, с.145. Footnote 90 on page 389 of this book, reads: “The author (Yerevantsi) is right. The published texts of the “History” of Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, Chapter 10, III, Chapter 8) lack anything of the kind in these places. These are undoubtedly the subsequent postscripts of some Albanian patriot”. It is quite natural that the editions lack this information as they are based on, as noted, on the first group of manuscripts and have undergone corrections by Lunkianos, while the text cited by Simeon Yerevantsi is based on the second group of manuscripts.

87. **Ереванци Симеон.** Джамбр, с.142-143.

88. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 21 / изд. Н.Эмина, с. 382; пер. К. Патканова, с. 273 – manuscripts of I group; Dowsett – manuscript of II group.

89. Albanian Catholicos Nerses had many clashes with Armenian Catholicos. As reported by Armenian Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi, ‘Nerses caused a lot of trouble’ to the Armenian Church. He became Catholicos in 1705 without the consent of the Etchmiadzin Catholicos. In 1707, the Armenian Catholicos anathematized him. From 1726 to 1763, he was an Albanian Catholicos once again, having been ordained by Albanian bishops / **Ереванци Симеон**. Джамбр, с. 151-156.

90. Архив армянской истории, кн. III, с. 376.

91. История албанской страны / Пер. В. Аракеяна, с. III.

92. История албанской страны / Пер. В. Аракеяна, с. III.

93. **Дадян Х.**, Арарат, 1896, с. 22-25; **Акинян Н.** Мовсэс Дасхуранци (прозванный Каланкатуйский) и его “История албан” / Пер. А. А. Баграмяна, Андэс амсореай, 1953, с. 13-15 (in Arm.).

94. **Ухтанес**. История Армении, главы 63, 64, 65, с. 119-123.

95. “История албанской страны” / Пер. В. Аракеян, с. III;

Орбелян Степаннос. История области Сисакан. Тифлис, 1910, гл. 25, 26.

96. **Мхитар Гош**. Албанская хроника / Изд. З. М. Буниятова, с. 8.

97. **Алишан Г.** Хайапатум (Свод армянских историй). Венеция, 1901, с. 175 (in Arm.);

Тер-Григорьян Т. К вопросу об “Истории албанской страны”, с. 90.

98. **Гандзакеци Киракос**. История / Пер. с древнеарм. яз. Т. Тер-Григорьяна. Баку: Изд-во АН Аз. ССР, 1946, с. 15;

“История албанской страны” / Пер. В. Аракеяна, с. IV;

Хронографическая история, составленная отцом Мехитаром, вардапетом Айриванским / Пер. К. Патканова. ТВОРАО, т. XIV, СПб., 1869, с. 405.

99. **Dowsett**, p. XVIII.

100. “История албан”, кн. II, гл. 11 / изд. Н.Эмина, с. 155; пер. К. Патканова, с. 106;

Dowsett, p. 84.

101. “История албан” / Пер. К. Патканова, с. III.

102. **Manandian J.** Beitrage zur albanischen Geschichte..., p. 22.

103. **Марр Н.Я.** По поводу русского слова “сало”..., с. 70.

104. **Гукасян Ворошил.** Удинские слова в “Истории албан”..., с. 54.

105. **Ачарян Р.** Словарь армянских личных имен, III. Ереван, 1946, с. 437-440 (in Arm.).

106. **Акинян Н.** Моисей Дасхуранци, 1953, с. 28-29; **Dowsett**, p. XVIII.

107. **Акинян Н.** Моисей Дасхуранци, 1953, с. 30.

108. **Dowsett C.J.F.** The Albanians Chronicle of Mkitar Gos / BSOAS, XXI/3, 1958, p. 476;

Dowsett, p. XIX.

109. **Dowsett**, p. XIX.

110. **Адонц Н.** Армянская литература, с. 650.

111. **Тер-Григорьян Т.** К вопросу об “Истории албанской страны”, с. 91.

112. **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с. 13.

113. **Мхитар Гош**. Албанская хроника / Изд. З. М. Буниятова, с. 20;

Буниятов З.М., 1965, с. 8-11.

114. “История албанской страны” / Пер. В. Аракеян, с. III.

115. **Меликсет-Беков Л.М.** К истории удин / Utica-armenica. Труды Тбилисск. государств. университет., XXIII, 1942, с. 25, 50.

116. **Алиев К.Г.** К вопросу об источниках и литературе..., с. 17.

117. The first two books, according to K. Shakhnazaryan, were written by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, while the third one was created by an unknown author (see his preface to the publication of the text of “History of the Country of Aghuans”); S. T. Yeremyan, without focusing on the “History of the Aghuans” books, mentions only the name of Movses Kaghankatvatsi, calling him a historian of the seventh century / **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв. / Очерки истории СССР (III–IX вв.). М., 1958, гл. 2 (11), с. 305.

118. **Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с. 149-159.

119. **Somal [ean] S.** Quardo della storia litteraria di Armenia. Venezia, 1829, p. 44.

120. **Neumann C.F.** Beiträge zur armenischen Literatur. Munchen, 1849, pp. 1-16;

Manandian J. Beitrage zur albanischen Geschichte..., pp. 6-7.

121. **Boré E.** Histoire des Aghovans par Moises Calkantouni, p. 61.

122. Хрестоматия. М., с.60 / Preface to the translation of “History of the Aghuans” by K.Patkanov, p.VII, note 4.
123. Preface to the Armenian edition of “History of the Aghuans” by K.Shakhnazaryan.
124. **Зарбаналян Г.** История древнеармянской литературы. Венеция, 1889, с.422-433 (in Arm.)
125. **Адонц Н.** Армянская литература, с.650.
126. **Тер-Григорьян Т.** К вопросу об “Истории Албанской страны”, с.69-91.
127. S.T.Yeremyan regards “History of the Aghuans” as a compilation of two historical works – of the 7th and the 10th centuries (**Еремян С.Т.** Моисей Каланкатуйский о посольстве албанского князя Вараз-Трдата к хазарскому хакану Алп-Илитверу // Зап. ИВАН СССР. М.-Л., 1939, т.VII, с.129-155). In the “Essays on the History of the USSR (3rd–9th centuries)”, S.T.Yeremyan dates Movses Kaghankatvatsi to the seventh century (p.305), referring apparently to the first two books.
128. **Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с.151-152.
129. **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.13.
130. **Бунятов З.М.**, 1965, с.10-11.
131. “История албанской страны” / Пер. В.Аракеяна, с.V.
132. **Давлианидзе Л.С.** “История Албании” и “Албанская хроника” как источники по истории народов Закавказья: Автореф. канд. дисс. Тбилиси, 1970, с.3.
133. **Manandian J.** Beitrage zur albanischen Geschichte..., pp.6-7.
134. “История агван” / Пер. К.Патканова, с.VIII.
135. **Тер-Григорьян Т.** К вопросу об “Истории Албанской страны”, с.28.
136. *Ibid.*, p.32-33.
137. *Ibid.*, p.30-31.
138. **Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с.157.
139. **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.16.
140. **Бунятов З.М.**, 1965, с.227-228, 251-252.
141. **Brosset M.** Extraits de l'histoire des Aghovans, pp.468-486; K.Patkanov. Introduction to the Russian translation of Movses Kaghankatvatsi.
142. **Manandian J.** Beitrage zur albanischen Geschichte..., 1897.
143. **Алишан Г.** Автор “Истории албан”. Базмавэп, 1897, с.575-578 (in Arm.).
144. **Март Н.Я.** Сборники притч Вардана, ч.1, СПб., 1899, гл.X, с.511-512.
145. **Ачарян Р.** Моисей Каланкатуйский. Исследование о времени написания. Базмавэп, 1897, с.370-374 (in Arm.).
146. **Артамонов М.И.** Очерки древнейшей истории хазар. Л., 1936, с.50.
147. **Christensen A.** L'Iran sous les Sassanides. Copenhagen, 1944, p.79.
148. **Абегян М.** История древнеармянской литературы. Ереван, 1948, т.I, с.391.
149. **Акинян Н.** Мовсэс Дасхуранци, 1953 (in Arm.). Due to the inavailability of all issues of “Andes Amsoreai”, I will further rely on A.A.Baghramyan's translation from the archives of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR, No. 3995, p.1-3, 62-81.
150. “История агван” / Пер. К.Патканова, с.VIII-IX.
151. **Manandian J.** Beitrage zur albanischen Geschichten..., p.7.
152. Specifically, chapters 13, 14 of Book I, covering events under King Urnair, should be placed after chapter 9, which is also devoted to Urnair. Chapters 27, 28, 29 and 30 of Book I should precede chapter 10 narrating about Albanian king Vache, since they look into the reign of Albanian king Aswagen, the predecessor of Vache. The sequence of some chapters is incorrect in both the second and third books. The inconsistency of the material arrangement was once specified by K.Patkanov (p.XIII); Z.M.Bunyatov dedicated a specific article to this issue (**Бунятов З.М.** О хронологическом несоответствии глав “Истории агван” Моисея Каранкатваца // ДАН Аз.ССР, т.XXI, 1965, №4, с.65-67). The structural changes made by Z.M.Bunyatov in Book II seem to be controversial;
- Hewsen Robert H.** Notes and communications on the chronology of Movses Dasxuranci / BSOAS, vol.XXVII, part I, London, 1964.
153. **Manandian J.** Beitrage zur albanischen Geschichte..., p.7.
154. This chronological discrepancy was noticed by M.Brosset (**Brosset M.** Extraits de l'histoire des Aghovan..., p.475). However, the temporal gap during which six generations of Mihr arose, is equal to 60 years in M. Brosset's work and 40 years in K. Patkanov's work. (пер. К.Патканова, с.341).
155. **Manandian J.** Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte..., p.12.

156. K.V.Trever once noted that the narratives about the first Mihranids should be considered legendary genealogical information created later and included in the historian's narrative by scribes / **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.235-236.

157. **Давлианидзе Л.С.** “История Албании” и “Албанская хроника”, с.6.

158. **Manandian J.** Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte..., p.13.

159. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.231; пер. К.Патканова, с.163.

160. **Manandian J.** Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte..., p.15.

161. Ibid., p.17.

162. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.1 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.119; пер. К.Патканова с.79.

163. **Manandian J.** Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte., p.17-18.

164. Ibid., p.15.

165. **Акинян Н.** Мовсэс Дасхуранци, 1953; “Андэс амсореай”, 1953, с.1-31, 161-175, 321-349, 552-556; 1955, с.309-329; 1957, с.38-40, 525-536; 1958, с.149-151.

166. **Акинян Н.** Мовсэс Дасхуранци, с.1.

167. Ibid., p.3.

168. In the “History of the Aghuans”, it is said that ‘Sahak, who was called Sewaday, a brave and capable man, subjected the cantons of Gardman, Kutsi and Parna to his rule; he was a lover of letters and created a school in his household’ (“Истории агван” кн.III, гл.22 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.389; пер. К.Патканова, с.278-279;

Акинян Н. Мовсэс Дасхуранци, с.62, 75, 81.

169. **Акинян Н.** Мовсэс Дасхуранци, с.14.

170. Ibid., p.16.

171. Ibid.

172. Ibid., p.7-8.

173. Ibid., p.39, 63-64, 75.

174. Ibid., p.11-12.

175. Ibid.

176. **Саркисян Г.Х.** О хронологической канве “Истории Армении” Мовсэса Хоренаци / Доклады делегации СССР. М., 1960, с.1.

177. Manuk Abeghian also noted that the material in “History of the Aghuans” is arranged in chronological order / **Абегян М.** История древнеармянской литературы, с.391.

178. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.9 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.21-22; пер. К.Патканова, с.10.

179. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.131; пер. К.Патканова, с.89.

This chapter should be part of the first book from the point of view of chronology /

Бунятов З.М. О хронологическом несоответствии глав “Истории агван”, с.66.

180. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.22; пер. К.Патканова, с.10-11.

181. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.55; пер. К.Патканова, с.34-35.

182. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.14 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.49; пер. К.Патканова, с.30.

183. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.29 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.108; пер. К.Патканова, с.73.

184. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.4 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.133; пер. К.Патканова, с.90. Chapters 4 and 1 of Book II seem to be an interpolation of later period, since they record the Armenian chronology and, according to I.A.Orbeli, the Armenian era came into use much later (**Орбели И.А.** Шесть армянских надписей VII–X вв. / Христианский Восток, т.III, вып.1. Петроград. 1914, с.83; **Орбели И.А.** Две строительные надписи князей Камсаракан / Христианский Восток, Христианский Восток, т.III, вып.3. Петроград, 1915, с.303, примеч. 4). In addition, dating according to the Armenian chronology is not typical for the entire Books I and II. Chapters 1 and 4 are exceptions.

185. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.9 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.145; пер. К.Патканова, с.99.

186. The author takes the beginning of the Armenian era in 552 as the starting point. By adding 18 leap years or 74 calendar years to this number, we get 626–627. “Heraclius went forth on the Persian campaign” (Translation by Patkanov, notes to Chapter IX, p.326).

187. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.206; пер. К.Патканова, с.144.

188. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.210; пер. К.Патканова, с.147.

189. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.221; пер. К.Патканова с.156.

190. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.213; пер. К.Патканова, с.149.

191. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.214; пер. К.Патканова, с.150.

192. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.217; пер. К.Патканова, с.153.

193. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.197; 201-202; пер. К.Патканова, с.137, 140.
194. Дьяконов М.М. Очерк истории древнего Ирана. М., 1961, с.320-321.
195. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.226; пер. К.Патканова, с.159.
196. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.230; пер. К.Патканова, с.162.
197. Of them, chapters 36-39 are directly dedicated to Varaz-Trdat, while chapters 40-45 describe the stay of Albanian Bishop Israyel in the country of Huns' during Varaz-Trdat's reign.
198. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.269; пер. К.Патканова, с.190.
199. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.335; пер. К.Патканова, с.237.
200. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.13 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.359; П., с.255.
201. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.366; пер. К.Патканова, с.259. “In 146...”.
202. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.367; пер. К.Патканова, с.260.
203. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.368; пер. К.Патканова, с.260.
204. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.372; пер. К.Патканова, с.265.
205. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.374; пер. К.Патканова, с.266.
206. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с.346; пер. К.Патканова, с.245.
207. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.1 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.331; пер. К.Патканова, с.233.
208. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.368; пер. К.Патканова, с.261.
209. Ibid.
210. V.Gukasyan calls Movses Kaghankatvatsi an Albanian historian of 7th–8th centuries, but does not substantiate this: **Гукасян Ворошил**. Из истории изучения письменности Кавказской Албании / Oktyabr İncilabı və Azərbaycan dilçiliyi məsələləri. Bakı, 1969, с.92.
211. **Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с.151.
212. Patkanov's text “in our country” seems right, p.97;
Dowsett, p.75: “Overtook many nations”.
213. We noted in the section “Chronological System” that chapter IV should be viewed as the beginning of Book II.
214. **Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с.152.
215. Compare chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, and 17 of Book II of “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi with chapters 23, 31, 32, 36, 37 of Sebeos (**История епископа Себеоса** / Пер. с древнеарм.яз. с четвертого исправленного армян. издания Ст.Малхасяна. Ереван: Армфан, 1939). Movses Kaghankatvatsi could not have made use of Sebeos’ “History” as they are next to contemporaries.
216. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.14 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.181-185; пер.К.Патканова, с.125-127.
217. K.Patkanov noted in the preface to “History of the Aghuans” that chapter 15 owes its origin to Catholicos Virov (p.XII).
218. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.28 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.229-231; пер.К.Патканова, с.161-163.
219. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.19 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.203; пер. К.Патканова, с.141-142.
220. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.28 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.226-227; пер.К.Патканова, с.160.
221. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.219; пер. К.Патканова, с.154.
222. Specifically, in the preface to chapter 9, the author writes: “Now, with my mind and thoughts so overwhelmed and occupied with universal disasters, I have forgotten the course of my narrative... However, I will temporarily suppress the fear and dread which still possess me and will now return to our narration...” (изд. Н.Эмина, с.144; пер. К.Патканова, с.98). And speaking of the capture of Jerusalem by the Persians, the author writes: “But I will not go into details, because everything he did goes beyond my vision” (кн.II, гл.10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.146; пер. К.Патканова, с.100).
- “My thoughts are unable to deal with the detailed description of many examples. But now let us return to the thread of our narrative again...” (кн.II, гл.16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.194; пер. К.Патканова, с.134).
- “Listen now a while and I will tell to you briefly about this man's (Kavad's mentor) cunning how and in what fashion this hunter managed to pen up in the cage of death the lion of the East (Xosrov the king of Persia...)” (кн.II, гл.13 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.166; пер. К.Патканова, с.114).
- Getting at the narration about how Javanshir became a tributary of the Arabs, while retaining some independence, the author writes: “And now I shall undertake to describe how that grace-giving Cross caused light to shine on him (Javanshir) from darkness and let him pluck flowers from fire” (кн.II, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.220; пер. К.Патканова, с.154).
223. “He did not approach them and did not incline them to battle, but left them in their land, made his own way by sea to Egeria, and arrived in Armenia” (кн.I, гл.10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.148; пер. К.Патканова, с.101).

“He achieved all this *without calling on* any other king or prince *for assistance* or arranging for distant peoples and languages to help his ward. All he did was to *send a secret message* to Emperor Heraclius to find out where he was” (кн. II, гл. 13 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 166; пер. К. Патканова, с. 114).

“He did not withhold the income of patriarchs that was due to him, nor did he deprive him of the title of catholicos. *Instead, he kept him* like some precious vessel, tending him...” (кн. II, гл. 14 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 171; пер. К. Патканова, с. 118).

“*Do not choose a battlefield for them, do not fight with them, and do not draw your sword* from its scabbard... *Rather, trample them beneath the hooves and chests of your horses*” (кн. II, гл. 16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 192; пер. К. Патканова, с. 133).

“There, time was *not wasted with improper speech, in drunkenness, or in comedies, rather discreet entertainments*” (кн. II, гл. 21 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 209; пер. К. Патканова, с. 146).

“Give me *your opinion, not false but true*, and do not oppose for such is not the custom of the Church of Christ... We are *no less* than you but fully equal to you in the faith, for the apostles and teachers preached the gospel equally and uniformly” (кн. II, гл. 49 /пер. К. Патканова, с. 222; изд. Н.Эмина, с. 315);

“...Christ granting us this great and divine honour *not because of any good works or worthiness on our part, but because, in accordance with his great mercy*, he himself wished to grant us gifts in his grace” (кн. III, гл. 11 /пер. К. Патканова, с. 248; изд. Н.Эмина, с. 350).

224. Describing the language of Albanian Catholicos Viroy and that of poet Davtak, the author puts it in the same way: “his language is like a quick-writing quill”. Compare Book II, chapter 14 and Book II, chapter 34.

225. **Тер-Григорьян Т.** К вопросу об “Истории албанской страны”, с. 83.

226. **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с. 15-16.

227. **Dowsett**, pp. XI-XX.

228. **Дадян Х.**, Арагат, 1895 (in Arm.), с. 238-239, 333-348, 388-390, 421-426.

229. **Dowsett**, pp. XIII-XIV.

230. *Ibid.*, p. XIII.

231. **Орбели И.А.** Хасан Джалал, князь Хаченский / Избранные труды. Ереван, 1963, с. 157-158.

232. **Улубабян Б.** Еще одна произвольная интерпретация армянской “Истории страны Агванк”. Рец. на книгу Мамедовой Ф. “История албан” Моисея Каланкатуйского как источник по общественному строю раннесредневековой Албании. Баку, 1977 // ВАА, 1979, №2 (54), с. 222-223.

233. **Каланкатуаци М.** История страны Алуанк / Пер. с древнеарм. яз., предисл. и коммент. Ш.В.Смбатяна. Ереван, 1984, с. 18.

234. *Ibid.*, p. 7, 20.

235. **Ямпольский З.И.** К изучению Летописи Кавказской Албании, с. 149-159.

236. Z.M. Bunyatov and V. Gukasyan noted that the mention of Adrian is an obvious postscript of the scribe / **Буниятов З.М.**, 1965, с. 11;

Гукасян Ворошил. Удинские слова в “Истории албан”..., с. 54.

237. **Новосельцев А.П.** Рец. на древнеарм. изд. В.Д. Аракеяна: Мовсес Каганкатуаци. История страны алван. Ереван, 1983 / История СССР, 1985, №1, с. 186.

238. **Орбели И.А.** Мхитар Гош и его судебник / Избранные труды. Т. I. М., 1968, с. 214.

239. **Мхитар Гош.** Албанская хроника / Изд. З.М. Буниятова, с. 6-7.

240. **Орбели И.А.** *Ibid.*, p. 212.

241. **Мхитар Гош.** Албанская хроника / Изд. З.М. Буниятова, с. 7.

242. *Ibid.*

243. *Ibid.*, p. 5-7.

244. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

245. **Мхитар Гош.** Албанская хроника / Изд. З.М. Буниятова, с. 6.

246. **Буниятов З.М.**, 1965, с. 98-99.

247. **Мнацаканян А.Ш.** О литературе Кавказской Албании, с. 179.

248. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Пер. с древнеарм. яз. А.А. Паповяна. Ереван: Изд-во АН Арм. ССР, 1954, с. 10.

249. Directly before and during the creation of the “Lawcode”, there were some deviations from the Christian faith among the Albanians, “vices”, a terrible decline in morals, as evidenced by the “The Life and Martyrdom of Khosrow of Gandzak” by Mkhitar Gosh, as well as according to David the son of Alawik of Gandzak (Alawkavordi): “...with other major vices that afflicted Albania... it erupted and spread among

the people of the mountains and plains...” (See: Etchmiadzin, 1953, p.44, Armenian). David Alawkavordi created canons that were supposed to eradicate this evil. Thus, it can be seen that even before Mkhitar, the Albanian clergy were interested in and made attempts in creation of canons for the Albanian population. Read more about it below.

250. It is known that Odznetsi did not include Albanian canons in his “Armenian Book of Canons” (**Меликсет-Беков Л. М.** Об источниках древнеармянского права / ИКИАИ, 1927, т. II, с.147, 153; **Мамедова Ф.** “История албан” Моисея Каланкатуйского..., с.155).

251. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.А.Паповяна; When translating Gosh’s “Lawcode” into Russian, А.А.Паповян omitted a major part of the text that outlines the Albanian canons: Буниатов З.М., 1965, с.98-99;

Мнацаканян А.Ш. О литературе Кавказской Албании, с.178-184 и др.;

Орбели И.А. Мхитар Гош и его судебник, с.212-216.

252. **Акопян В.А.** “Армянская книга канонов” и ее редакции: Автореф. дисс. докт. ист. наук. Ереван, 1967, с.37-40.

253. Судебник Смбага Спарапета (Гундстабля). 1265 / Пер. со среднеарм.яз., предисл. и примеч. А.Г.Сукиасяна. Ереван: Изд-во Ереван. ун-та, 1971, 208с.

254. **Мхитар Гош.** Армянский судебник. Вагаршапат, 1880 (in Old Arm.). Введение; “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.А.Паповяна. Введение.

255. **Орбели И.А.** Мхитар Гош и его судебник, с.213.

256. Ibid.

257. **Орбели И.А.** Мхитар Гош и его судебник, с.214.

258. The question of Dolgorukov-Argutinsky clan’s Armenian origin is controversial. There are grounds to suggest that this family is of Kurdish origin, but underwent Gregorianization.

259. **Орбели И.А.** Мхитар Гош и его судебник, с.214.

260. Ibid.

261. **Мнацаканян А.Ш.** О литературе Кавказской Албании, с.180.

262. Ibid.

263. **Мхитар Гош.** Армянский судебник (in Old Arm.). Введение.

264. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.А.Паповяна. Введение.

265. “But the reason for us writing of the “Lawcode” was the repeated coercion by the Albanian Catholics, Lord Stepannos, to whom I cited my bodily weakness and ignorance as the reasons [why the proposed work was beyond us]. But as he insisted even more, I forgot about my ailment and accepted, realizing that we must obey the spiritual instruction’. Further: “...I implore you, the high-souled head of the churches of the Albanian house, to not regard the spiritual tribute you have imposed on me as an idle and simple thing...”.

Introduction (“Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.А.Паповяна (and in Old Arm.).

266. **Мнацаканян А.Ш.** О литературе Кавказской Албании, с.184.

267. Ibid., p.183, note 37.

268. A.S.Mnatsakanyan asserts: “True, these churches were mostly in agreement, but ...there were some differences as well”, Ibid., p.184.

269. **Мнацаканян А.Ш.** О литературе Кавказской Албании, с.179.

270. **Мхитар Гош.** Армянский судебник (in Old Arm.). Введение.

271. **Орбели И.А.** Мхитар Гош и его судебник, с.215.

272. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.А.Паповяна, с.XVIII-XXII.

273. **Буниатов З.М.**, 1965, с.99; “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.А.Паповяна. Введение.

274. **Акопян В.А.** “Армянская книга канонов” и ее редакции, 1967, с.28.

275. **Шахназарян А.М., Пигулевская Н.В.** Обзор армянских источников по истории Азербайджана: НАИИ АН Аз.ССР, инв. №915, с.110.

276. **Орбели И.А.** Мхитар Гош и его судебник, с.216.

277. Ibid.

278. Eulogy and martyrdom were usually written by the same person / Памятники армянской агиографии / Пер. с древнеарм.яз. и примеч. К.С.Тер-Давтяна. Ереван, 1973, вып. I, с.241.

279. Ibid., p.244.

280. Памятники армянской агиографии, 1973, с.244.

281. Ibid., p.243.

282. *Ibid.*, p.249-250.
283. The penitential of David of Ganjak / Translated by C.J.F.Dowsett. Louvain. 1961, pp.I-XVII.
284. *Patmuteiwn Hayoc*. Venice, 1786, t.3, pp.41-42.
285. Versuch einer Geschichte der armenischen Literatur. Leipzig, 1836, p.162-163.
286. **Dashian J.** Catalog der armenischen Handschriften in der Mechitaristen-Bibliothek zu Wien. Vienna. 1896, p.656.
287. **Somal [ean] S.** Quadro della storia litteraria di Armenia. Venice, 1829, p.90.
- Zarbanalean G.** Haykakan hin dprut'ean patmut'iwn. Venice, 1886, p.639 (1st.ed. 1865).
288. Dawite vardapet Alawkay ordi, Azgagrakan Handes. Tiflis, 1906 (no. XIV), pp.105-132, 1907 (no.XV), pp.62-67, quoted by Mecerian, loc.cit.infra.
289. Hin hawatke kam hete anosakan kronke Hayoc. Venice, 1910, pp.395, 404, 414, 434 (refs, from abrahamean), op.cit. infra, 1952, IX-X, p.49, n.1.
290. Hin hay iravunke I patmutyun. Erevan, 1939, vol.I, pp.74-75, 153; The penitential of David of Ganjak / Translated by C.J.F. Dowsett, p.I.
291. **Abelean M.** Hayoc hin grakanuteyan patmute yun, t.2. Erevan, 1946, pp.62-64.
292. Davite Alavka ordu kanonagirke . Ejmiacin ("Etchmiadzin"), 1952, ix-x, pp.48-57, xi-xii, pp.56-67, 1953, i, pp.56-62, ii, pp.53-60, iii, pp.51-63.
293. Hamarawt patmuteiwn, Venice, 1865, p.66; The penitential of David of Ganjak / Translated by C.J.F.Dowsett, p.II.
294. Hawakeumn patmuteean. Venice, 1862, p.121.
295. See my article: The Albanian chronicle of Mxitear Gos / BSOAS, XXI / 3, 1958, pp.480-481.
296. The penitential of David of Ganjak..., p.III.
297. The term "infidels" could refer to all Muslims. – *F.M.*
298. See Introduction to the Text, p.vi.
299. See below, pp.70-73.
300. The penitential of David of Ganjak..., p.IV.
301. Erevan, MS no. 3562.
302. Erevan, MSS nos. 715, 487, 2576.
303. The penitential of David of Ganjak... p.V.
304. *Ibid.*, p.VI.
305. *Ibid.*, p.VII.
306. *Ibid.*, p.VIII.
307. See **Hanna E.J.**, art. Penance. The Catholic Encyclopaedia, vol.XI, New York, 1911, pp.632-633.
308. **Migne, PG**, t.88, Almazov A.I., Kanonarii monakha Ioanna, Zap. Imp. Novorosiiskago Univ., 1.109, ch. II, E.A.W.T. BUDGE, Coptic homilies in the dialect of Upper Egypt.
309. The penitential of David of Ganjak... p.IX.
310. **Hanna**, loc. cit. p.630, A.Boudinhon, art. Penitential canons, *ibid.*, p.636.
311. The penitential of David of Ganjak... p.X.
312. Usually "lawbook", here probably "case-book".
313. Book of laws, i.e. "legal code".
314. The penitential of David of Ganjak... p.XI.
315. *Ibid.*, p.XII.
316. See the Introduction to the Text, p.i-vi.
317. Loc.cit., p.42.
318. E.g. in Erevan, MSS nos. 487, 652; see Introduction to the Text, p.iii.
319. Pp.50 and 61.
320. The penitential of David of Ganjak... p.XIII.
321. **Шахназарян А.М., Пигулевская Н.В.** Обзор армянских источников, с.119.
322. **Гандзакеци Киракос.** История / Пер. Т.Тер-Григорьяна, с.6 (*Further on*, I rely on this edition – *F.M.*)
323. *Ibid.*
324. *Ibid.*, p.7.
325. **Матгеос Урхаеци.** История. Вагаршапат, 1898, с.221; **Гандзакеци Киракос.** История, 1946, с.55, 269, note 659; 241, note 409.

326. There are the following publications of Kirakos: “История Армении”, написанная Киракосом вартапетом Гандзакским / Изд. Воскан Тер-Кеворкян-Иоаннисян Эрнвалский. М., 1858 (in Old Arm.); Краткая история с периода св. Григория до своего времени, написанная Киракосом вартапетом Гандзакским. Венеция, 1865 (in Old Arm.); “История Армении”, написанная Киракосом вартапетом Гандзакским. Тифлис, 1909 (in Old Arm.); and the last publications of Т. Тер-Григорьяна (Баку, 1946) и Л. А. Ханларяна (М., 1976) (in Russian).
327. **Шахназарян А. М., Пигулевская Н. В.** Обзор армянских источников, с. 120.
328. **Гандзакеци Киракос.** История Армении / Пер. с древнеарм., предисл. и коммент. А. А. Ханларян. М., 1976, с. 17. According to her, Kirakos relied on Armenian authors of the 5th to 7th centuries.
329. Повествование вардапета Аристакееса Ластивертци / Пер. с древнеарм. яз., вступит. статья, коммент. К. Н. Юзбашьяна. М., 1968, гл. X, с. 84.
330. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
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666. *Ibid.*, p.41.

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CHAPTER 2.

HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF ALBANIA

FROM THE 3RD CENTURY BC

TO THE EIGHTH CENTURY AD

The study of the historical geography of Azerbaijan from ancient times to the late Middle Ages is an extremely important topic for the history of Azerbaijan, as well as for solving the problem of the historical geography of the ethnic groups of the Caucasus in general.

Identifying the location of ethnic groups, locating ethnopolitical unions, defining the area on which tribes united and nations and states were created, and determining the political boundaries of the states are all part of the purview of historical geography.

Thus, the issues covered by historical geography are closely related to ethnogenetic issues, the external and internal political situation of the country, the political status of the country, its territorial boundaries, the domination and spread of one or another ideology, the religion.

The historical geography of Azerbaijan (from antiquity to Middle Ages) had remained a completely unexplored area of the history of Azerbaijan and the ethnic groups of the Caucasus, while Soviet historiography had a significant amount of special papers covering this problem in regard to the neighboring countries (the works of academician S.T.Yeremian for Armenia, the works of academicians N.A.Berdzenashvili, G.A.Melikishvili, D.L.Muskhelishvili, and Doctor of Historical Sciences T.G.Papuashvili for Georgia).¹

The current state of knowledge about the historical geography of Armenia and Georgia is owed to the availability of a broad base of source study and a historical and geographical tradition, rich documentary and epigraphic material, Georgian historiography, and an overly rich, artificially created Armenian historiography.

The prerequisites for the development of geographical views about the ethnic groups of the Caucasus were created back in antiquity, in the works of Strabo (1st century BC – 1st century AD), as well as of the last major representative of ancient science, Claudius Ptolemy (1st–2nd centuries AD).

In Armenian reality, geographical and cartographic methods were most fully reflected in “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century” by Anania Shirakatsi, which describes the political division of the Middle East in the 6th–7th centuries. Therein, Asia is divided into 44 countries and Iberia appears on the list under number 25, Albania – number 26, and number 27 is Armenia. However, according to Shirakatsi’s concept (created by him or attributed to him), the interfluvium of the Kur and the Aras, i.e. the regions of Artsakh, Paytakaran and Uti, were originally Armenian, and only after the division of Armenia in

387 between Persia and Byzantium these regions were annexed to Albania, and the Gugark region to Georgia.

The tradition of geographical and cartographic views continued in the 13th century in the geographical work of Vardan the Great, where the author provides interesting information about the Albanian ethnic groups and the Albanian territory.

The historical geography of Georgia is reflected in “The Geography” of Vakhushti (18th century). According to M.Brosset, Vakhushti's “Geography” has the same significance for Georgia as Homer's topographical notes for Greece.

The historical geography of early medieval South Azerbaijan is covered in a source of the 7th century (“The Cities of Iran” – Iranshahr). A significant addition to the listed geographical works is the accounts of the Arab and Persian geographers and historians, historical and geographical treatises, and historical narrative sources.

As for the history of (Northern) Azerbaijan, with the exception of Vardan the Great, we do not have any local geographical sources. The only local source covering the history of Azerbaijan in the 1st–8th centuries is the work of the Albanian author of the 8th century, Movses Kaghankatvatsi, “History of the Aghuans”, in which he tries to outline the borders of the territory of the Albanian people in each period – in the 1st, 5th, and 8th centuries.

The information about the historical geography of Azerbaijan in the early-medieval and medieval periods, as has been noted, has been preserved in the works of Arab and Persian authors.

The questions of the historical geography of Albania (Azerbaijan) of the ancient period and the early Middle Ages were raised in the works of the tsarist Russia's scholars, foreign, and Soviet scholars, including A.Yanovsky,² B.Dorn,³ V.Tomashek,⁴ A.E.Krymsky,⁵ S.V.Yushkov,⁶ S.T.Yeremian,⁷ K.V.Trever,⁸ K.Aliyev⁹ and others.¹⁰ But all of them were based mainly on the one-sided use of ancient sources, Armenian authors, without trying to evaluate their reliability, and on the established Armenian tradition. In Soviet historiography, the question of the southwestern and southern borders of Albania in the 7th–9th centuries was first correctly posed and solved by academician Z.M.Bunyatov. A successful finding of Z.M.Bunyatov is the identification of the first Shaki located by him on the right bank of the Kur, which sheds a light upon the reconstruction of certain events in the historical geography of Albania.¹¹ Z.M.Bunyatov's research revealed that historically there were two Shakis: the first on the right bank of the Kur, south of Nakhchivan, the second – on the left bank of the Kur, the present-day Shaki. Z.M.Bunyatov accurately outlined the southern borders of Azerbaijan in the 7th–9th centuries.¹²

A.P.Novoseltsev, being aware of Caucasian realities, believes that Albania, during the early Middle Ages, mainly included the territory of the modern Azerbaijan SSR, as well as the lands of Armenia, the Dagestan ASSR, Eastern Georgia.¹³

So, as can be seen from the above, Azerbaijani researchers are in an entirely different position than their Armenian and Georgian colleagues. Azerbaijani researchers, in fact, were the first to create the historical geography of Azerbaijan. The lack of a historical and geographical tradition, well-known and established scientific ideas on this problem, which makes recourse to them impossible to some extent, creating enormous difficulties. In addition, we have to repeatedly express our attitude to the established two traditions, Armenian and Georgian, which we will specifically dwell upon below.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to study this problem. The fact is that researchers failed to use the sources available to us, fully determine the degree of their reliability, the nature of the monuments, and did not extract from them all the data necessary and important for the history of Azerbaijan. Based on the available sources, one can come to very interesting new conclusions.

Perhaps my experience will prove the validity of the thought, albeit in part.

In the course of work, we have developed our own research method:

1) when using information from one or another source, one should first examine the time of creation of the source, the goal set for its author, determine its nature, and then identify the degree of reliability of certain information;

2) explore the realities of the time described by the source – Albanian, Armenian, and Georgian realities of one and the same period;

3) give precedence to local sources – Albanian, Georgian sources from among multilingual and multi-temporal sources, both ancient and late Arab, Persian, engaging and juxtaposing them with Armenian sources;

4) consider treaties that were not employed in the problem under study.

The concept of the historical geography of Albania, which the Armenian and Georgian scholars adhere to, is as follows.

According to the Armenian historical tradition, the territory of Azerbaijan in antiquity and early Middle Ages was located north of the Kur river, only on the left bank of the Kur; i.e., according to this tradition, the territory of the present interfluvium of the Kur and the Aras was Armenian, and that only after 387, this territory allegedly was ceded to Albania, but ethnically, politically, and culturally continued to be considered the eastern regions of the so-called Greater Armenia.

According to Georgian (old) tradition, the western part of the left-bank territory of Albania was also allegedly Georgian. And according to the new Georgian tradition (the author of which is D.L.Muskhelishvili), both the left-bank territory of Albania, “generously allocated” by Armenian researchers, and the western part of the right bank, and in some periods, the entire right bank of Azerbaijan, belonged to Georgia.

§ 1. Political and administrative units

According to written sources, i.e. Armenian authors of the 5th–8th centuries and Albanian author of the 7th–8th centuries Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the territory of Albania stretched from the Caucasus Mountains in the north to the Aras river in the south, from Iberia in the west to the Caspian Sea in the east in the 1st–7th centuries. The entire territory of Albania was divided by natural boundaries into numerous regions. Administratively, it was divided into regions (gavars) and provinces (nahangs).*

Albania, located on the left bank of the Kur (the left bank Albania), was administratively divided into gavars only. The administrative division is less developed

* Several gavars made up a province, district-nahang.

here than in the right-bank Albania. According to “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century” by Anania Shirakatsi, the left bank of Albania consisted of eleven regions. The Albanian source mentions four of them – Gabala, Shaki, Cambisena, and Ejeri, which were the largest and most important in political terms. Three regions (Gabala, Shaki and Cambisena) were ecclesiastical-administrative units, bishoprics, with representatives (bishops) at all Albanian councils. Apart from the aforementioned gavars, two countries belonged to the left-bank Albania – *Lpinia* and *Chola* – which had not always been part of the Albanian state. Back in the second half of the 5th century, they remained peripheral areas with partial internal autonomy. However, after 488, during the reign of Albanian king Vachagan III, *Lpinia* and *Chola* finally became part of the Albanian state.

It is believed that the name Chola (Chor, Chol) is of Iranian origin. The Chola region stretched on the Caspian strip, from the Chola (Derbent) pass to the south, approximately, to the Besh-Barmag Mountain. The major cities of the region were Chola (the capital of the Massagetae Arsacids), Derbent.

The Chola region was rich in grapes, fruits, and grains. Its strategic importance was also great. Here was the so-called Albanian Gate – a passage between the Greater Caucasus Mountains and the Caspian Sea. This gate was used by various nomadic tribes to invade the country from the north, posing a threat not only to Albania, but to Iran and Rome-Byzantium as well. Therefore, not only were the Albanians interested in protecting this passage, but also the major powers of that time, Persia and Rome-Byzantium.

The study of written sources and archaeological research conducted in Derbent since 1971 by A.A.Kudryavtsev, showed that the Chola region, ‘the fortress and the city guarded throughout the Albanian period an important road in the western Caspian region and its inhabitants, the guards of the famous “gate” were local Dagestan tribes that were part of the Albanian kingdom during that period...’¹⁴ In the 4th–5th centuries, as a result of the rise of the nomadic world, new hordes of nomads poured from the north through the Chola pass, who began to settle south of Derbent. Traces of this invasion were found in the cultural layers of Derbent in the 4th–5th centuries. The gray-clay ceramics found here, in their shapes and ornaments, remind us of the ceramic products of the nomads of the North Caucasus and Ciscaucasia, as well as weapons and domestic items typical of the steppe people.¹⁵

The Derbent pass – the “Chola frontier fortress”, “Chola gates”, “Huns' gates”, the border of the “lands of the Albanians and the Khons” – becomes the border between Albania and the “kingdoms” of nomads, i.e. the border of two worlds – agricultural and pastoral.¹⁶

In the 5th century, when the Eastern Caucasus was overwhelmed with the Sassanian expansion, the Chola region played an important military and political role. By closing the pass, the Sassanids, on the one hand, ‘isolated the peoples of Transcaucasia from possible alliances with the nomads in their struggle against the Persians and on the other hand, they acted as defenders of the conquered territories from the devastating raids of the steppe people’.¹⁷

In the first half of the 5th century, during the reign of Persian king Yazdegerd II, powerful defensive structures, the well-known Fortifications of Derbent, were erected in Chola (HA, II, 2, 11).¹⁸

Chola was both a military and political stronghold of the Sassanids in the Caucasus (the seat of a large Persian garrison, the residence of the Persian marzbans) and a strategic stronghold, a political and administrative unit of the Albanian state, the seat of the Albanian Catholicos (until the 6th century). Given the Albanian realities, it seems that Chola was not always the residence of the Persian marzbans, but only during the periods of intensification of the Sassanian expansion in the Eastern Caucasus. This took place in the middle of the 5th century, when the Sassanids tried to turn Albania into a Persian province, as well as from 510 to 630, when there was no centralized royal power in the country, i.e. in the period preceding the reign of the Mihranids. The presence of marzbans in Chola was recorded in sources exactly at the above time (*Elishe, Parpetsi, Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 2). In addition to the strategic position, the Albanian author reports on the ideological importance of the Chola region as one of the earliest centers of Christianity in the entire Eastern Caucasus. Saint Elisha ‘...goes to the Maskuts, avoiding Armenia, and begins preaching in Chola’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6), which happened in 1st–2nd centuries. Albanian tradition associates this event with the transformation of Chola into a patriarchal center until the 6th century and the location of the Catholicos of the East’s palace there – the edge of the East until the 9th century inclusive (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 4; III, 16). Some degree of autonomy of the Chola region, its separatist tendencies were reflected in the traditional triad recorded by the Albanian author – “Albania, Lpinia and Chola”. Back in the 1st–2nd centuries, during the apostolic activity of Elisha, the latter was called ‘the illuminator of the three countries – Chola, Lpinia, Albania’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23)

Here the sequence of the three countries draws attention, which truly reflects the realities of the time – Elisha, having started his activity in Chola, then illuminated Lpinia and, finally, the rest of Albania. According to the Albanian author, the use of the triad “Albania, Lpinia, and Chola” after the 2nd century came into use in 551, under the patriarchate of Ter-Abas (551–595) and his successor, Catholicos Viroy (595–630) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 15; III, 23). Of interest is also the fact that there is no list of the three countries in the official name of the subsequent (after Viroy) Catholicoi. We also come across this triad in the political events of 626–630, when Chola, like all of Albania, was conquered by the Khazars. Qaghan's son Shat said that his father received three countries – ‘Albania, Chola and Lpinia for ever’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 14).

Based on this excerpt, K.V.Trever came to the correct assumption that in the 7th century, ‘the territories of Chor [Chola. – *F.M.*] and Lpnik, which were still part of Albania, apparently, enjoyed some kind of internal independence, which gave, perhaps, a reason to list them after mentioning Albania’.¹⁹ The study of realities convinces us that this triad has not only a religious symbolic meaning, but also an actual significance. Lpinia and Chola, being peripheral strategic regions, became independent during the period of the absence of centralized political power in the country (from 551 to 630). As is known, the Arsacids were ousted from power, but the Mihranids had not yet taken possession of the entire country. During the reign of Javanshir and Varaz-Trdat, Chola, like Lpinia, again became an integral strategic Albanian region.

In 698, Chola suffers the first Arab invasion (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 16). Its final submission took place in the 730s, when Marwan ibn-Muhammad subdued the entire Albania. The population of Chola consisted of the Tabasarans (Tavasparans), Albanians,

Chilbs (Silvs), Legs, Hechmataks, Maskuts, Khazars, Huns.²⁰ Due to the resettlement policy of the Sassanids, the Iranian-speaking element had become stronger here.

Northwest of Chola, between Chola and Shaki, there was the *Lpinia* region, whose territory was almost entirely covered by forests rich in large and small nuts. Apparently, back at that time, locals grew chestnuts, mulberries and produced silk. The population consisted of Albanians, Lpins, Legs, and other ethnic groups (*Agathangelos, Elishe, Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 39).

Lupenii is the Greek form, Lpins – Armenian. The Albanian historian places the Lpins next to the Silvs – Chilbs in the mountainous parts of Dagestan (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). Some locate the Lpins in the upper and central part of the Samur river²¹, others in the valley of the Alazani river.²² Apparently, the Lpins settled in the central part of the Samur river along the Alazani river valley, from the east to the west.

Lpinia, like Chola, being a peripheral region of the country, enjoyed partial independence in certain periods (450-451, from 551 to 630), which, among other indirect data, was reflected in the mentioned triad – “Albania, Lpinia, and Chola” (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 2, 14, 15; III, 23). It was also one of the earliest centers of Christianity, which is associated with the activities of the apostle Elisha (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23).

In the 6th–7th centuries, as a result of the campaigns of the Turkic-speaking nomads, Lpinia was invaded. Thus, after the death of Javanshir, when the great commander of the Huns Alp-Iluetuer with a large army attacked Albania, he ‘settled in the fields of Lpinia’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 36).

Cambisena, in antique authors, Kambechan in Armenian sources, was located in the north-west of Albania, on the border with Iberia. It occupied the territory from the middle reaches of the Alazani and Iori rivers in the northwest to the Kur river in the south and up to the confluence of the Alazani, the Iori, and the Kur rivers in the east. Half of the stony Shirak plateau belonged to it. There is an opinion that the choronym Cambisena reflects the name of the East Iranian tribe of Kamboja. Early medieval Georgian sources refer to the area of Cambisena as Here, Hiroae and to the people living here as Hers.

In the 1st–3rd centuries, the region of Cambisena, like the right-bank region of Sakasena, started to turn into a new metropolis of Iranian-speaking tribes.²³ During the period under study, the population of Cambisena consisted of the Albanians, Lpins, descendants of the Scythian and Sak tribes, and, from the 6th century, also of Turkic-speaking nomads, the Sabirs.²⁴ Some researchers believe that the valley of the Alazani river was inhabited by the Chilbs (Silvs).²⁵ Politically and ideologically, Cambisena was a political administration and ecclesiastical administrative unit (bishopric).

Archaeological activities in Mingachevir (located in Cambisena) revealed the remains of agricultural tools testifying to the agricultural economy of the Cambisena population in the Alazani-Iori valley.²⁶ People cultivated grain crops, including wheat, millet, and barley,²⁷ as well as walnuts and pomegranates, which had been grown here since ancient times. Flax was also cultivated here. Viticulture and winemaking played an important role in the region's agriculture. Sheep farming, fishing, metallurgy, metalworking (there was a special technique for metal mining and treatment), pottery, and weaving, as evidenced by the finds of wool, linen, and other fabrics from the Mingachevir burials, were developed here.

In the settlements of Cambisena of the Albanian period, many pottery kilns of various shapes and designs have been discovered.²⁸

Little is known about the political life of Cambisena. As a result of the religious and ideological activities of the Albanian king Vachagan III in the 5th century, the position of Christianity was renewed and strengthened in Cambisena – bishops, deacons, and priests were appointed in the region, i.e. bishoprics were established (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17) in 488–506. During the reign of the Mihranids, the following is known about Cambisena. After the fall of the Sassanid state, Javanshir, upon his return to Albania, cleared Cambisena and the entire Albania from Persian troops (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19). Consequently, the fate of Cambisena under the Mihranids was the same as that of the whole country.

Ejeri – Hejeri was located south of the Gabala region, between the Karasu and the Girdymanchay rivers; in the south it reached the Kur. The population here was engaged in agriculture.

In “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”, Ejeri is also referred to as Dasht-i-Bazkan. The Albanian author reports about this area only in connection with the illegal incestuous marriages that took place in the regions of Arshakashen and Ejeri (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 32). We do not have any other information about Ejeri.

Kabala, the Greek form of Kabalaka (the present-day Gabala district), lay south of Lpinia, north of the historical region of Ejeri, and stretched between the regions of Shaki and Chola. In this area was the capital of the Albanian state, the city of Kabala, which was first mentioned in the 1st century by Pliny. Kabala was the capital of Albania during antiquity and the early Middle Ages until the 5th century. It was the residence of the Albanian Arsacid kings and the seat of the Albanian archbishop. After the dynasty of the Albanian Arsacids ceased in 510, Kabala became the seat of the marzbans appointed by the Sassanids. In this connection, the Kabala region was also called “Vostan-i-marzban”.²⁹ The Kabala region was a political administration and ecclesiastical administration unit (bishopric). The registers of the Aguen Council of the 5th century and the Partaw Council of the 8th century list the bishops of Kabala – Manase (the 5th century) and John (the 8th century).

Among many others, the bishop of Kabala, John, separated from Albanian Catholicos Nerses-Bakur the Chalcedonite. The importance of the Kabala region in religious and ideological terms is evidenced by the fact that in the participants' signatures lists of the Aguen (488) and Partaw (705) Councils, the signature of the Bishop of Kabala follows immediately the archbishop's signature. In the 8th–9th centuries, the Kabala bishops became the patriarchs of the Albanian Church (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23).

In the 7th century, when the Khazars subjugated the population of both banks of the Kur, the Kabala region temporarily became part of the Khazar domain and, possibly, was the administrative center.³⁰ Al-Baladhuri says: ‘Kabala, that is, Khazar’.³¹ During the Arab conquest of Albania, Kabala was captured by the Arabs and since then has completely lost its significance.

Kabala was inhabited by Tavaspars, Hechmataks, Izhimakhs, Glouars, Gats, and since the 6th century, by North Caucasian Turkic-speaking nomads – Sabirs, Khazars,

Bulgars, and Barsils (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 4).³² K.V.Trever believes that the Tavaspar, Hechmataks, Gugars, Glouars, and Gats were Caucasian ethnos.³³

Trade routes connected the Kabala region with the southeast and south through the Albanian and Savalan passes, with the west through Georgia, and through Atropatene with Iran and through the Greater Caucasus with the north.³⁴ In the early Middle Ages, Kabala was the main center of weaving³⁵ with highly developed pottery and glass making.

Shaki. The historical region of Shaki, Shako, Shake (as referred to by Armenian authors) with the city of the same name, Shake, Nukhpato (from Georgian sources) (the present-day Zagatala-Shaki zone), occupied the territory in the north-west of Albania, in the foothills of the Caucasus, north-west of the Kabala region, bordered in the west and southwest with the historical region of Cambisena, in the northeast with Lpinia, and in the southeast with Kabala. In the 3th–8th centuries, the Shaki region was one of the centers of weaving. Mulberries were grown here, which provided raw materials for high-quality silk fabrics production.

A.Y.Krymsky believed that in antiquity, the temple area dedicated to the deity of the Moon (Selene) was in the Shaki area.³⁶ Based on Strabo's message that the sanctuary of Selene was located near Iberia, K.V.Trever rightly disputes the opinion of A.Y.Krymsky, arguing that Shaki in the 1st century BC was very far from the borders of Iberia.³⁷ In Shaki, along with the Albanians and Utis, lived the descendants of the Scythian or Sak tribes,³⁸ which is reflected in the toponym, as well as the Zekens (Tsekan), Khenuks (Gheniokh).³⁹ The main city of the region was Shaki.

Being a political and administrative unit in the 6th–8th centuries, the Shaki region also became an ecclesiastical administrative unit – a bishopric. Its increased role in religious and ideological respect is evidenced by the cases of the appointment of the Shaki clergy as the country's patriarchs. That is, in 682–688, the Catholicos of Albania was Bishop of Shaki Ter-Elizar (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). In 706–743, a deacon from Shaki Ter-Mikhail becomes the Catholicos of Albania (a rare case of the appointment of a deacon to the patriarch). Regarding the political life of Shaki, al-Baladhuri, al-Tabari, al-Athir state that in the 6th–8th centuries, the region of Shaki suffered the invasion of the Khazars. Persian king Kavad I (446–531), taking vigorous measures against the Khazars, fortified the Shaki region.⁴⁰ In the 8th century, Shaki, among other regions of Albania, was conquered by the Arabs.⁴¹

The regions of Shaki, Gabala, Cambisena, Lpinia, Ejeri, Chola that we have considered are the regions located in the left-bank Albania. As for the political and administrative ethnic units of the right bank of Albania, it was divided into four large nahangs (provinces): Artsakh, Uti, Paytakaran, and Syunik, each of which, in turn, was divided into gavars (regions), and those were ecclesiastical units.

Paytakaran. The region of Kaspk, Kazbk (from Armenian sources), Caspiane (from Greco-Roman sources), Paytakaran-Balasakan (Movses Kaghankatvatsi and Armenian authors), and Balasakan (Persian and Arab sources) was located in the southeastern part of Azerbaijan, occupying a part of the Mil and Mugan steppes, extending below the Kur river (on the right bank of the Kur), adjoining the Caspian Sea in the east. In the south, the Paytakaran area probably covered the northeastern lands of Atropatene at times.⁴²

There is a point of view that the Paytakaran region also included the southeastern part of Shirvan along the Caspian Sea coast, including the Absheron Peninsula.^{43*} It was famous for its fertility. Here was a high level of agriculture: traces of enormous irrigation structures were found in the Mil and Mugan steppes, and the Gavurarkh canal. Horticulture, vegetable gardening, viticulture, cotton growing were developed, grain crops (native barley) and fig trees were also grown, ruminants, bulls, horses, and camels were bred. Along with cattle farming, the inhabitants were engaged in fishing. Caspiane (Paytakaran) in the 2nd century BC, was conquered by the Armenian king Artaxias I and remained part of Armenia until 55 BC. After 55 BC, Caspiane politically belonged to Albania or Atropatene at different times, which it was alternately part of.

From the second half of the 4th century, Caspiane became an Albanian region. The center of the region was the eponymous Paytakaran (Beylagan). The Paytakaran (Beylagan, Balasakan) region at times enjoyed internal autonomy. K.V.Trever noted that ‘back in the 4th century, ...the land of the Lpins and Balasakan did not merge with indigenous Albania into a monolithic whole’.⁴⁴ In the Parthian version of Shapur I’s inscription (3rd century),^{45**} the Paytakaran region is mentioned in the list of countries along with Armenia, Albania, and Iberia. In “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century” Balasakan is mentioned in the list of 13 countries (shahrs) included in the North Caucasian Kust in the following order: Atrpatakan, Armenia, Iberia, Albania, Balasakan, Sisakan, etc.

From the events of the political life of the region, it is known that in 336–338, the ruler of Paytakaran was Maskut king (Arsacid by origin) Sanatruk, who was involved in the death of Albanian Catholicos Grigoris. Encouraged by Persian king Shapur II, in order to subjugate Armenia, Sanatruk gathered a myriad of motley North Caucasian nomadic tribes and in 336–337 attacked Armenia. He managed to retain Armenia for a whole year, but in 338 he was defeated. The Armenians drove the remnants of his army to the country of the Balasiches, i.e. to Balasakan (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 12; *Khorenatsi*, III, 3, 4, 5, 6; *Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7). During the anti-Iranian movement of the Caucasian peoples in the 5th century (450–451, 457), the Balasakans and the king of Balasakan sided with the Persian troops (*Elishe*, *Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 2). The Armenian marzban Vasak of Syunik, who also betrayed the rebel movement, made an alliance with the Aran – Albanian Huns headed by the king of Balasakan.⁴⁶ The area of Paytakaran turned into a military and strategic stronghold of the Sassanids, who could help control both the rebellious countries of the Caucasus and the Caucasian passes in the region of the Caspian coast. Persian troops were gathered here (*Elishe*, *Ghazar Parpetsi*). After the anti-Sassanid uprisings and restoration of the power of the Albanian kings in Albania in the person of Vachagan III (488–510), Paytakaran, having completely lost its independence, became an Albanian province.

Sebeos reports on the further political life of Paytakaran: ‘...the ruler of the Syuni land rose up and separated from the Armenians and asked Persian king Khosrow to transfer the archives of the Syuni land *from Dvin to Paytakaran and bring their city to the borders*

* According to B.Harutyunyan, however, the Paytakaran region is located south of the Aras river. His line of reasoning seems unconvincing. See: Арутюнян Б. Город Пайтакаран и его локализация // ВОН АН Арм.ССР, 1981, №12, с.61-76.

** Compare “Bazgun” in Zacharias Rhetor. Пигулевская Н.В. Сирийские источники по истории народов СССР, М.-Л., 1941, p.82; Тревер К.В. Очерки по истории культуры Кавказской Албании, с75, примеч. 7.

of *Atrpatakan*... The order was fulfilled' (*Sebeos*, VI). This event is dated to 571. Sebeos was wrong saying that Paytakaran was 'within the borders of Atrpatakan' K.V.Trever's view on this point is correct. Paytakaran at that time was part of Albania. This error is explained by the fact, according to K.V.Trever, that after establishing a single military administrative unit – the Caucasian Kust – the border between Albania and Atrpatakan at first was not clarified, all the countries of the Kust were headed by one Persian marzban.⁴⁷

In religious and ideological terms, Christianity did not become a universal confession in the region. The positions of Zoroastrianism,^{48*} Tangrianism, and paganism were still strong. According to Khorenatsi (III, 60), the "false teachers" were in Balasakan.

It is no coincidence that in such a large province as Balasakan, which, as is known, consisted of 12 regions, there was only one bishopric in the 6th–8th centuries – Balasakan.

Balasakan, in the 5th–7th centuries, was inhabited by the Albanians (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 12), the Caspians (Parsis-Parsees) (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 14; *Khorenatsi*, II, 86), the Balasiches (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7), The Balases (*Bags*) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19), Ainians, Huns, Khazars, Akatsirs (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7; *Elishe, Ghazar Parpetsi; Khorenatsi*, III, 60).⁴⁹ The Caspian region (Paytakaran) was inhabited mainly by Iranian-speaking tribes and Turks'.^{50**}

During the Arab conquest of Albania, according to the 9th century Arab author Baladhuri, the Arabs under Caliph Osman (644–656) occupied Beylagan under a peace treaty which guaranteed the inhabitants' lives while obliging them to pay land and capitation taxes.⁵¹ In 730, the army of three hundred thousands of the Khazars under the command of Barjik opposed the Arabs and penetrated the territory of Aran (Albania). According to Lewond (8th century), the Khazars captured Paytakaran (Beylagan), where there was a battle between the Khazars and the Arabs. As a result, the Khazars were defeated.⁵²

In the second half of the 9th century, a number of principalities dependent on the Arabs were formed on the territory of Aran. Among them was Beylagan, ruled by Esayi Abu-Muse,⁵³ who 'managed to take over most of Aran' (Artsruni)⁵⁴ and preserve a certain separatism associated with the conditions in which the Caliphate was in the late 9th – early 10th centuries.

In the 7th–9th centuries, the region of Paytakaran (Balasakan) became the birthplace of the Paulician social movement, one of the most powerful in the East, intended against local and Arab feudal lords and the Church.⁵⁵

According to *Kaghankatvatsi* (III, 19) and Stepanos Orbelian, the Paytakaran region did not join Babek's movement, but in 851–852, when the entire Central Caucasus was overtaken by a powerful new anti-caliphate movement, Esayi Abu-Muse led the uprising of the inhabitants of Beylagan. The hostilities between the insurgents and the Arab troops

* The Persian version of Istakhri's work says that there were many villages in Mugan, whose inhabitants were Zoroastrians. See: Marquart J. *Eransahr nach der Geographi des Ps. Moses Xorenaci*, p.108-109.

** The Huns that settled in Mugan in the 5th century, were referred to as the Turks by the historians of that time. See: Феофилакт Симокатта. *История*. М., 1957, с.36, 77, 102, 160. 'He (Kubad I) went to the tribe of the Huns, whom our history has repeatedly called the Turks'. See: Буниятов З.М. *Азербайджан в VII–IX вв.*, с.180.

lasted for about a year. Among the disobedient princes taken captive by the Arabs was Esayi Abu-Muse. The uprising was suppressed.⁵⁶

The historical province of Uti, Utik (Armenian form), Otene (Greek form) is located, like Paytakaran, on the right bank of the Kur, between the regions of Paytakaran in the east and Artsakh in the south, the Kur river in the north, and stretched west to the border of Albania with Iberia. In this area were the ancient cities of Ayniana, Hani, Anariaka,⁵⁷ as well as the cities of Khalkhal, Sogarn and the capital of Albania, Barda (Partaw in Armenian sources), built, according to *Kaghankatvatsi*, in the 5th century. In 551, Barda became the seat of the Albanian Catholicos, and in 630, it became the residence of the Albanian great Mihranid princes—Varaz-Grigor, Javanshir, etc. The province (nahang) of Uti, in turn, was divided into political and administrative units (gavars), among which the most important were Sakasena (Greek authors) – Shakashen (Armenian authors) and Gardman, which in the 4th century became the territorial-hereditary possession (domain) of the Mihranid dynasty, whose representatives were “the first great princes of Albania”. The inhabitants of Uti were engaged in cattle breeding and all branches of agriculture; they grew grain, fruit, vegetables, and cultivated industrial crops such as flax, cotton, citrus, and oil trees. Gardman was famous for his iron and copper ores, essential for making weapons and household items.

Uti was inhabited by the Utis, Gargareans, Tsavdeans, who, according to tradition, were the descendants of the mythical Albanian ancestor, the eponym of the ruler of Aran (*Kaghankatvatsi* I, 4; *Khorenatsi*, II, 8; *Asoghik*). This gives reason to believe that the Uti, Gargareans and Tsavdeans were among the most ancient indigenous tribes in the Albanian union. Along with the autochthonous population, the Iranian ethnos also infiltrated here – the Saks, who settled in Sakasena, the Mihranids – in Gardman, which is reflected in the toponymy. The name of the Gargareans was reflected in the name of the plain – the Gargarean plain (the present-day Mil Steppe),⁵⁸ and also in the hydronym – Gargarchay. In the 4th century, in Uti, sources report about the Huns (*Khorenatsi*, II, 85) and in the remote west of Uti, on the border with Georgia (in Gugark, a Georgian province), the Kangars are mentioned in the 5th century.⁵⁹ In the 6th century, a large compact mass of the Huns (Sabirs) were resettled to one of the regions of the Utik province, Sakasena.⁶⁰

In the 1st–6th centuries, Utik was subject to the Albanian Arsacid kings and in the 6th–8th centuries to the Mihranids. In the early 4th century, in Utik, as in the rest of the country, Christianity became the state religion. Here were two major and important bishoprics – the Partaw (Barda) and the Gardman bishoprics. In the 5th century, Utik was attacked by the Huns (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 29, 30). In 624–628, like other provinces, it was involved in the Persian-Byzantine Wars, and in 629–630, it was invaded by the Khazars (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 10, 11, 14). In 642, after the Persian-Arab battles, Javanshir inflicted a number of defeats on the Persian troops who were camping in Utik and cleared the province of them (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19). Utik was once again occupied by the Khazars. In 705, Utik was finally conquered by the Arabs and included in the Arab-dominated political administrative unit of Aran. In the second half of the 9th century, the ruler of Utik was among the principalities on the territory of Aran, dependent on the Arabs. Thus, Albanian author Vardan, reporting on the campaign of Arab commander Bugha, writes: ‘Bugha seized the princes of Syunik, Vasak with his brother Ashot and the Great Prince Atrnerseh

in the Khachen district, Gardman prince Ketritch, and *in Uti* – Stepan Klia, whose family was named Sevko-Ordik after its ancestor...’⁶¹ In the works of Arab historians and geographers, the language of the population of Uti in the 9th century was Aran, i.e. Albanian.

Gardman is a region, a political and administrative entity located on the right bank of the Kur, part of the Utik province. In sources, this area is known as Gardman (Ancient Armenian), Girdman (Ancient Persian), Gardabani (Ancient Georgian). There are three points of view regarding the location of this area. Some believe it was in the Agsu and the Girdyman river basins (I.Aliyev, F.Osmanov),⁶² others believe it was in the territory of the present-day Gazakh district (S.T.Yeremian),⁶³ and a third group believes it was in the present-day basin of the Shamkirchay river and the Gadabay district (Z.M.Bunyatov).⁶⁴ We believe that the Gardman region was located in the north-west of Albania, on the territory of the right bank of the Kur, near the borders of the Georgian lands to the tributary of the Kur river, the Khrami. This is confirmed by the following accounts of Kaghankatvatsi: ‘...Javanshir ...crossed the boundaries of his motherland to the other side of the Kur river, to the Kapichan region’ (II, 19); ‘...when the Khazars attacked Albania, Javanshir... took his squad and crossed the great Kur river and had a battle with them...’ (II, 23); ‘...he set out on a day's journey above the city of Perozkavat-Partaw. He set out from there with a large crowd, entering the Gardman region...’ (II, 24). And then, as their lands expanded and their power increased in Albania, the Mihranids extended their domain to the left bank of the Kur (the territory of the modern Ismayilli district), in the basin of the Goychay – Girdymanchay – Agsu rivers. The information on the Gardman principality was preserved by the Albanian historian of the 7th–8th centuries, Movses Kaghankatvatsi, and early medieval Armenian authors of the 5th–8th centuries, including Faustus of Byzantium, Elishe, and Movses Khorenatsi.

Gardman occupied an important strategic position in the west of the Albanian state. Before the Mihranids, it was ruled by local Albanian rulers (naxarars). According to Faustus of Byzantium, Gardman, along with Artsakh and Utik, had been part of Armenia until 387. However, a study of the realities of the history of Armenia and Albania of this period showed that Gardman had never been part of Armenia (see below). Among Armenian regions or along with Armenian regions, it is recorded in the list of the nobility (table of ranks), Gahnamak, and among the northern regions, along with Artsakh, Caspiane, Gugark (in Georgia), Gardman is recorded in the Military Charter – Zoranamak.⁶⁵

According to a legend set forth in “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the population of Gardman came from the descendants of Aran (I, 4). This means that initially the population of the region was Caucasian-speaking, autochthonous, Albanian, and from the 5th century and further, the Persian language element became stronger here, and from the 1st century, the Turkic language element. In the 4th century, Gardman, along with other regions of Albania, converted to Christianity and received Albanian letters under prince Khurs. And at the Aguen Council in 488, among those who sealed the minutes was Vardan the Brave, the ruler of Gardman. This region became very important in the political life of Albania in the 5th–8th centuries, after the establishment

and reign of the Mihranid dynasty. The economic and political upsurge of this area, when it became the hereditary domain of the Mihranids, dates back to the same period.

In Gardman, the Mihranids built the Gardman fortress, the Mihravan city and a temple. During the early Middle Ages, the Gardman city was not only the center of the region, a fortress city, but also the center of handicraft and trade.⁶⁶ Religiously, the Gardman region was one of the first ecclesiastical administrative units (bishoprics). Gardman bishops took part in Albanian councils and some of them were the Catholicoi of the Albanian church (Nerses-Bakur). In the 7th–9th centuries, the Gardman region, like Beylagan, was the birthplace of Paulicianism, one of the largest people's movements in the East against local and Arab feudal lords and the church.⁶⁷ In the 7th century, among other regions of Albania, it was involved in the military events of the Persian-Byzantine Wars (624–629); from 653, the conquest by the Arabs began, in 660–664, 684, the region was invaded by the Khazars. In 705, when Albania fell into complete dependence on the Arabs and the Mihranids still nominally remained in power for another century, the territory of Albania was divided into three regions: Aran, Mugan, and Shirvan. The Principality of Gardman, among other regions of Utik, became part of Aran.⁶⁸

The historical Artsakh province (in Armenian authors) is one of the important provinces of the right-bank Albania (the present-day part of Nagorno-Karabakh and part of the Mil steppe). It was characterized by developed agriculture with the use of artificial irrigation. The population was engaged in livestock production, poultry farming and beekeeping, sheep farming, goat farming, and cattle farming; the horses of the Artsakh-Karabakh breed were especially famous.⁶⁹ According to “The Armenian Geography”, Artsakh was divided into 12 small administrative units. Its population consisted of the Gargareans, the Utis, the Huns, the Khazars, the Basils.

Politically, in the 1st–6th centuries, Artsakh was subject to the Albanian Arsacids and in the 6th–8th centuries to the great princes of Albania, the Mihranids. Before Christianization, the people of Artsakh adhered to their old pagan beliefs. With the adoption of Christianity as the state religion of Albania, it was planted in Artsakh as well.

The establishment of Christianity in Artsakh and eradication of the remnants of paganism is, to a great extent, a merit of Albanian king Vachagan III (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17). Artsakh had a great political and religious influence in Albania. Several bishoprics were formed in Artsakh. The clergy of Artsakh, together with the secular nobility, participated in Ecumenical Albanian Councils (the Aguen Council in 488, the Partaw Council in 705) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 26; III, 11). Albanian kings sent representatives from the Artsakh clergy to the Huns and Khazars as preachers of Christianity (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 39–45). Many Catholicoi of Albania were elected from among the representatives of the Artsakh clergy. In sources, Artsakh is called “a fortified region”, “a strong country”. In the 8th century, the Arabs abolished the power of the Mihranids in Albania and Artsakh as part of Albania was included in the Umayyad Caliphate. In the 9th century, Grigor Hamam restored the destroyed Albanian kingdom which included Artsakh (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 21).⁷⁰ After his death, Artsakh, along with another Albanian province of Uti, passed to the son of Grigor Hamam – Sahak (Sevada), whose reign lasted until the 11th century (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22). In the 12th–13th centuries, the Khachen principality rose in Artsakh, the ruler of which Hasan Jalal was called “the king of Albania”. In the 13th

century, under the Mongols, Hasan Jalal entered into an alliance with them and faithfully served them.⁷¹ After the Arab conquest, part of the population of Artsakh converted to Islam, part of the Albanians became Islamized, and the other part remained faithful to Christianity until 1836. These were the late Albanians.

Syunik (Sisakan) is located in the remote south of Albania, south of Artsakh. The “Syunik” form is older than the “Sisakan” form. It is mentioned by Eusebius, by Procopius of Caesarea.⁷²

The Persian form “Sisakan” is first found in a Syrian author of the 6th century, Zacharias Rhetor. He speaks about Sisakan as a country which is not part of Armenia, like Aran and Gurzan. In Armenian literature, Sisakan also appears later than Syunik. Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi mentioned both the Sisakan, Syunik and Syunestan forms. There is a point of view that the name Syunik is of ethnic origin.⁷³

Syunik, according to “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”, consisted of 12 regions. Ethnically, culturally and politically, it was more connected with Albania and Atropatene than with Armenia. Apparently, it was not part of the first union of Albanian tribes.⁷⁴ At certain periods, Syunik politically depended on Albania and Atropatene at different times, and at others it was independent.⁷⁵

H.Hübschmann and I.Markwart considered Syunik to be an Albanian region.⁷⁶

Syunik author of the 8th century Stepanos of Syunik noted that the Syunik and Artsakh languages were spoken in Syunik at the time.⁷⁷ R.A.Acharyan believed that the formation of the Armenian people and the Armenian language, in addition to the Urartu people, was contributed to by 18 local ethnic groups with their native languages. Based on the information of Stepanos of Syunik and other Armenian authors, R.A.Acharyan believed that by the 8th century, seven of them survived, including Syuni.⁷⁸

Syunik occupied an ‘isolated and more independent from central Armenia position, both in civil and church life’, according to N.Adonts and S.Malkhasyants, and this circumstance was explained by the country's ethnic specifics. ‘There is only one thing that is certain, that the Albanian outskirts of Armenia, Syunia, differed somewhat from the central parts of Armenia in terms of population. Its tribal uniqueness was maintained and renewed by migratory movements from the adjacent mountainous countries’.⁷⁹

S.Malkhasyants believes that ‘here longer than anywhere else in Armenia, the feudal system existed in the person of the Karabakh meliks’.⁸⁰

In sources and epigraphy in lists of Caucasian countries, Syunik appears officially independent. That is, it is recorded in the inscription of Persian king Shapur I of the 3rd century in the Ka'ba-ye Zartosht [“Atropatene, Armenia, Iberia, Syunik, Albania...”]. Syunik was economically and politically strong. With its powerful cavalry (about 20 thousand), Syunik took first place in the Military Charter (*Zoranamak*).

Both the Persian Arsacids and the Sassanids had to reckon with Syunik. From time to time, they entrusted Syunik with the protection of the Derbent passes.⁸¹ Sources (*Movses Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 4; *Movses Khorenatsi*, II, 8; Syunik author *Stepanos Orbelian*) associate the first king in Albania in the 1st century *with* the Syuni house. They report that Parthian king Valarshak made Aran from the Sisakan clan the head of Albania. The same Valarshak in the 1st century granted the Sisakan clan the right of supreme command over the king's troops so that they could guard the Caucasian gates, originally called “Sisan”.⁸²

Retaining their independence, until 387, the Syunik princes were bdeskhks, the leaders of the troops of Armenia, and during the period of the marzban Armenia, the Syunik princes were appointed from Persian Sassanid kings as the marzbans of Armenia (5th century), they also exercised control over Iberia (5th century).⁸³ The sources of the 6th century note the political and confessional isolation of Syunik, who at that time adhered to Nestorianism, from Armenia. In the struggle between Persia and Byzantium, Syunik chose Persian king Khosrow Anushirvan as its suzerain. In 591, ‘the ruler of the Syuni land rose up and separated from the Armenians and asked Persian king Khosrow to transfer the archives of the Syuni land from Dvin to Paytakaran and bring their city to the borders of Atrpatakan, so that the name of the Armenians would be removed from them. The order was fulfilled’.⁸⁴ Here, as noted, Atrpatakan should be understood as Albania, for Paytakaran at that time was already part of Albania. In church hierarchy terms, the Syunik Church was subordinate to the Albanian Church. The Albanian Catholicos was entitled to consecrate the Syunik bishops. The Armenian Catholicoi challenged this right (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 48).⁸⁵

In 591, after the new division of Armenia between Persia and Byzantium, Khosrow II retained Vaspurakan, Syunik and the Dvin region, giving up most of Armenia to Maurice.⁸⁶ Being a direct vassal of the Sassanids, Syunik was politically subordinate, apparently, to the Albanian Mihranids as well (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19, 28). By the time of the Arab invasion, Aran (Albania), Syunik and part of Georgia belonged to the Khazars.⁸⁷ During the Arab invasion, the Syunians, together with the Albanians and Armenians, participated in the gathering of the Persian army against the Arabs.

In 654, Syunik, along with Albania, Iberia and Armenia, was invaded by the Arabs. At the beginning of the 7th century, during ecclesiastical and dogmatic disputes, Syunik achieved the rank of metropolitan for its church (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 48). During the 8th century, it continued to be an independent peripheral region of Albania. The great prince Albanian Javanshir became related to the Syunik house by marrying the daughter of the Syunik prince (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19). The Caliph subordinated Syunik to Javanshir (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 28). In the second half of the 9th century, the Syunik principality was among other principalities on the territory of Aran, dependent on the Arabs. In the 9th century, when Arab Sevada invaded Syunik, the Syunik prince Vasak turned to Babek for help, who defeated Sevada and married the daughter of the Syunik prince (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19). In the 12th century, Syunik was conquered by the Seljuks.

One of the regions of Syunik (the eleventh gavar), according to the Syunik author of the 13th century, Stepanos Orbelian, was considered to be Yernjak and Goghtn, and the center of Syunik was Nakhchivan (*Stepanos Orbelian*, Ch. II).^{*} Goghtn is the present-day Ordubad District of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Nakhchivan is one of the ancient regions and cities of Azerbaijan. It is situated on the left bank of the Aras river, about which information has been preserved by Armenian authors of the 5th–7th centuries, 13th–17th centuries, Albanian authors of the 8th–13th centuries, 17th–19th centuries, Persian and Arab historians and geographers of the 9th–13th centuries.

* In “Ashkharhatsuyts” published by S.T.Yeremian, Yernjak is listed as the first gavar of Syunik, and Goghtn is wrongly assigned to the province of Vaspurakan.

According to “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”, Nakhchivan together with Goghtn were allegedly two areas of a major province of Greater Armenia, Vaspurakan, located on the right bank of the Aras river. Nakhchivan was considered the 34th region and Goghtn was the 33rd. However, “Armenian Geography” says nothing about the duration of their status as part of this state. Regarding Vaspurakan, it is said that this was the eighth province of Greater Armenia. The fact is that this information from “The Armenian Geography” does not correspond at all to the real history of Armenia. In the 1st century BC, Greater Armenia ceased to exist. In 387, Armenia was divided between Rome and Persia. In 428, the king’s power was abolished in Persian Armenia, i.e. it became a Persian governorate (vicerealty), a province. The territory of the Vaspurakan region was called Vaspurakan not earlier than the 6th–7th centuries, and before that (1st–6th centuries), its north-western part was called Mardpetakan.⁸⁸ And therefore there is no Vaspurakan region on the maps of S.T.Yeremian (2nd century BC – 6th century AD). *S.T.Yeremian, in his study “Armenia according to the Ashkharhatsuyts”, believes that the division of Armenia into fifteen provinces took place in 591, during the reign of emperor Mauritius.*⁸⁹ According to the treaty of 591 concluded between Byzantium and Persia, Armenia was divided once again. Khosrow ceded a significant part of Persian Armenia to Byzantium and of the central regions of the former Eastern Armenia, Persia only gained a part of Ayrarat and Vaspurakan,⁹⁰ i.e., Persia preserved Vaspurakan, Syunik, and Dvin (nahangs nos. 8, 9); nahangs nos. 10, 11, and 12 – Artsakh, Paytakaran, and Uti, according to S.T.Yeremian, were part of Albania; nahangs No.13, Gugark, were part of Iberia. Consequently, out of 15 nahangs, 9, i.e. most of Armenia, were assigned to Byzantium.

Regarding “Ashkharhatsuyts”, the work of Anania Shirakatsi (“The Armenian geography of the 7th century”), it should be taken into account that the scribes, as researchers noted, have been making significant changes over the centuries to the original text, abbreviating, adding new paragraphs, replacing ancient geographical names with new ones, allowing distortions, etc.⁹¹

Therefore, the division of Armenia into 15 nahangs does not reflect the true picture of the political life of Armenia in the 2nd century BC – 5th century AD, i.e. the period of the existence of the Armenian statehood, but rather characterizes the period of the 6th century, when Armenia was divided between two empires and these cantons (regions) were purely geographical entities, not political ones.

The publication of Anania Shirakatsi by A.G.Abrahamean and G.B.Petrosyan says that this division is based not on political and administrative principles, but on the natural geographical landscape.⁹² It is not surprising that the Albanian regions of Nakhchivan and Goghtn [Ordubad. – *F.M.*] were included in Vaspurakan when Armenia was divided between Persia and Byzantium, although the ethnic, linguistic, political, and cultural destinies of these areas differed greatly from those of the entire Vaspurakan.

So, it appears that in the 6th–7th centuries (after 591), the regions of Vaspurakan, Syunik and Dvin were politically directly under the rule of Persia. The historian of Vaspurakan Thomas Artsruni (9th century), well aware of its topography, reports that the lands of Vaspurakan were divided between two brothers – Gagik and Gurgen. He lists the Vaspurakan regions, dividing them into two parts – north-western and southeastern. It is noteworthy that in these two parts, two gavars are missing – *Goghtn and Nakhchivan*. Thomas Artsruni explains

this by the fact that Nakhchivan fell away from Vaspurakan 210 years and Goghtn 186 years before that⁹³ (i.e. the 9th century minus 210 years and 186 years = 7th century). It appears that the regions of Nakhchivan and Goghtn had been part of Vaspurakan since 591, i.e. when Armenia was divided into 15 provinces, to the 7th century. We borrow information about Nakhchivan and Goghtn of the 1st century BC – 2nd century AD from Movses Khorenatsi: Tigran settled the MARRS ‘to the borders of Goghtn, ...opposite the fortress of Nakhchivan’;⁹⁴ “Vagharshak approves the founder Khair-mardpet on the lands from Atropatene to Nakhchivan” (II, 7, p.58); “The Goghtns are the natives, descended from Sisak” (II, 8, p.60); the ruler of Nakhchivan was Argam (1st century), the householder of the Muratsan tribe, from the descendants of Azhdahak, who had “a large infantry of spearmen”. During the war between the two pretenders to the Armenian throne – Eruand and Artaxias (1st century), this Argam supported now one now the other (II, 44, p.93; II, 46, p.94); Argam in “the legend is called Argavan” (II, 51, p.100); Artaxias (1st century), the Armenian king “bestows upon Argam ...the promised second place, also a crown studded with gems, a pair of earrings, red shoes for one foot...” (II, 47, p.96); but the successor of Artaxias, Artavasdes (2nd century) “deprived them (the Dragonids – descendants of Azhdahak) of the second place, he also took away from them Nakhchivan and all the villages lying to the north of Araxes... The sons of Argam... rebelled against him by war; but the prince, having gained the upper hand, destroyed all the children of Argam” (II, 51, p.100) According to Khorenatsi, there were rhapsods in Goghtn, whose songs render information about Argavan (Argam), Artaxias, Azhdahak (I, 30).

Relying on Khorenatsi, the above excerpts make it clear that Nakhchivan (in the 1st–2nd centuries) was not inhabited by the Armenians, but by the MARRS [Kurds – *F.M.**], and the ruler of the region was the founder of the Muratsans, Argam. Further, from the data of Khorenatsi, later confirmed by Stepanos Orbelian (Chapter 5, p.13-15), it follows that there was a genetic relationship between the inhabitants of Goghtn and the rest of Albania (Utians, Gardmanians, Tsodians). They had a common eponym – Sisak. As for the words of Khorenatsi that Artavasdes (early 2nd century) took Nakhchivan and the villages north of the Aras, this is not confirmed either by the Armenian realities of the 2nd century (as described in the “Historical Geography”) or the Albanian ones. The status of Nakhchivan and Goghtn as parts of Armenia at this time is not consistent with the accounts of Khorenatsi himself (II, 8), as well as that of Kaghankatvatsi (I, 4), who report that in the 1st–2nd centuries the territory of Albania in the south stretched from the Aras river, in the west to the Hnarakert fortress (on the border with Georgia), in the north – to Derbent – Chola. Consequently, Nakhchivan, Goghtn and Syunik, located on the left bank of the Aras river, were parts of Albania.

Stepanos Orbelian also reports on Goghtn of the 1st–2nd centuries, that Apostle Bartholomew began preaching Christianity in Sisakan, in one of its regions – Goghtn, built a church here, and consecrated one of his disciples named Kumsi as the bishop of Goghtn. And only after that did Bartholomew go to the capital of Armenia, Dvin (*S.Orbelian*, Ch. III).

Goghtn and Nakhchivan in the 4th century are covered in the works of Faustus of Byzantium and Koriun. Faustus of Byzantium, describing the events that took place in

* Armenian sources of the 13th–19th centuries refer to Kurdistan when speaking about the country of the MARRS.

Armenia in the 4th century, when the Persians seized a number of Armenian cities (Vagharshapat, Yervandashat, Zarekhavan, Zarishat, Van), captured several thousand Armenian and Hebrew families, says the following: ‘At this time the Persians destroyed these cities, captured their inhabitants, together with them the whole Armenian country and regions. From all these regions, territories, gorges and countries, they took all the prisoners to the city of Nakhchivan, which was the center of their [Persian] troops. They also *seized* and destroyed this city, took two thousand Armenian families and sixteen thousand Hebrew families away together with other captives’ (*Faustus of Byzantium*, IV, V).

The sequence of the cities captured by the Persians and their route leave no doubt that it is about Nakhchivan on the Aras, i.e. the Albanian Nakhchivan.⁹⁵ As can be seen from the text, the Armenian population in Nakhchivan was insignificant, and besides, there is no hint that the city of Nakhchivan was Armenian at that time. This is the only note of Nakhchivan by Faustus of Byzantium. Koriun also preserved information about Goghtn of the 5th century.

Koriun reports of two stages of Mashtots' missionary preaching activity in Goghtn: 1) oral preaching of the Gospel by Mashtots before he invented the Armenian writing system (*Koriun*, V); 2) preaching Christianity after the invention of the Armenian writing system by Mashtots (*Koriun*, XIII). In the first period of his missionary activity, Mashtots visited Goghtn: ‘The blessed Mashtots took with him people who entrusted themselves to him, set off and arrived at the *uncared-for, disorderly, and hopeless places of Goghtn...* the blessed one immediately set about preaching the Gospel and *covered the entire area and rescued all inhabitants from the influence of the pagan traditions of their ancestors and the devilish worship of Satan*, brought them into obedience to Christ’.⁹⁶ Mashtots also visited Goghtn in the second period of his missionary activity. ‘After his habit [Mashtots], taking up his teaching... filled this gavar with the Glad Tidings of Christ's Gospel. And he established the rank of holy monks in all the villages of the gavar’.⁹⁷ But this fragmentary data about the preaching of Mashtots in Goghtn does not allow us to make any conclusion that Goghtn was an Armenian region, because according to the Armenian tradition not supported by science (see the revelations of Zaza Aleksidze), Mashtots preached Christianity both in Armenia, Georgia, and Albania. In addition, Koriun reports about Goghtn with such disdain – ‘the uncared-for, disorderly, and hopeless places of Goghtn’, i.e. as if they were alien lands.

Khorenatsi also reports on the preaching activity of Mashtots in Goghtn (III, 47). ‘Here [in the Goghtn region], with the help of the ruler of this region, Shabit by name, Mesrop eradicated the pagan cleavage...’

So, from the 1st to the 6th century, Nakhchivan and Goghtn, as Stepanos Orbelian correctly noted, were part of Syunik and were Albanian regions. And according to the treaty of 591, they, as part of Vaspurakan, together with Syunik, were politically subordinate directly to Persia, which was connected with the general policy of the Sassanids – the formation of the Northern Kust, which, along with Armenia, Iberia, Albania, and Atropatene, included Vaspurakan and Syunik. This is also connected with the abolition of statehood in Albania, the elimination of the power of the Albanian Arsacids. In connection with these events, Artsruni's data on the separation of the Goghtn and Nakhchivan regions from Vaspurakan in the 7th century takes correct meaning. During

the reign of the Mihranids, i.e. restoration of the statehood of Albania, Goghtn and Nakhchivan were allocated to Albania, and the border again was along the Aras river.

Let's consider what the sources of the 9th–13th centuries report about Nakhchivan.

According to Persian sources, Nakhchivan is located in Azerbaijan. Arab geographers also view it as a city of Azerbaijan or Aran. That is, Yaqut al-Hamawi (9th century) wrote: 'Nashava [Nakhchivan] is in Azerbaijan, some believe that in Aran, not far from Armenia'.⁹⁸

Arab sources associate the emergence of the city of Nakhchivan with Persian king Khosrow I. In the 6th–7th centuries, in Nakhchivan, there was a mint where coins were minted on behalf of Khosrow I, which is explained by the fact that Nakhchivan was part of the North Caucasian Kust.

In the 7th century, during the Persian-Byzantine Wars, Nakhchivan was attacked by the Sassanian army or the Byzantine army from time to time. According to Albanian authors Movses Kaghankatvatsi (III, 16), Vardan the Great, and Armenian authors Ghevond (Chapter VI), Asoghik, and Artsruni,⁹⁹ the commander of the Caliph Muhammad ibn Marwan trapped all the Armenian leaders who refused to surrender (800 people) and ordered the ruler of Nakhchivan Hisham to lock them up in the church and burn them.

In the late 9th century to the 930s, Nakhchivan was part of the Sajids' lands and then passed to the Sallarids.¹⁰⁰ From the 980s, Nakhchivan was the capital of a separate feudal independent domain known as the "Nakhchivan kingdom",¹⁰¹ headed by the Abu Dulafid dynasty (of Arab origin). According to Asoghik, in 982, the ruler of the Goghtn region, Abu Dulaf, after the capture of the last ruler of the Sallarid state, Abu'l-Hayja ibn Ibrahim, seized the lands of Basfurajan, Dvin, and Nakhchivan, and laid the foundations of a feudal domain called the "Nakhchivan kingdom",¹⁰² which lasted until 1064. After that, Nakhchivan fell under the rule of the Seljuks, in the 12th century, Ildegizids, and in the 13th–15th centuries, the Mongols.¹⁰³

In his monograph "Historical and Architectural Monuments of Nakhchivan",¹⁰⁴ Argam Ayvazyan asserts that Nakhchivan is a native Armenian region. He substantiates his thesis by putting forward the following arguments:

1. Nakhchivan, from ancient times to the 9th century, was part of Vaspurakan, the region of historical Armenia. At the beginning of the 10th century, having freed Nakhchivan from the Arab emirs, king Bagratuni I gave it to the Syuni princes.

It was noted above that Vaspurakan as a geographic region was formed in the 6th century and Nakhchivan from the first centuries AD to the 8th century was a territory of Albania. And even if we believe that "Bagratuni handed Nakhchivan" to the Syuni princes, then again, it turns out that this is not Armenia. Syunik is a peripheral Albanian region. Anyway, territorially, Nakhchivan was almost always part of Syunik. It is not surprising that Stepanos Orbelian, as noted, calls Nakhchivan the center of the Syunik region, the southern border of which was adjacent to the northern border of Vaspurakan.

2. 'The numerous monastic complexes and churches of the 12th–17th centuries were built with great architectural skill. It should be noted that the most common type of these cult monuments are three-aisled basilicas with a dome supported by four pillars,

which in their architectural solutions are similar to the structures of Syunik, Vaspurakan¹⁰⁵.

In this thesis of Ayvazyan, there is no linkage and there is no logic with his historical reference regarding Nakhchivan. Relying on Ayvazyan that Nakhchivan was a region of historical Armenia since ancient times to the 9th century AD, then why, in this case, do the Christian monuments with Armenian epigraphy, found in Nakhchivan, date back to the 12th–17th centuries and not earlier? This has a simple explanation: in Nakhchivan, Armenian script was not used, and Christian architectural monuments of the 12th–17th centuries are the monuments of not the Armenian population living in Nakhchivan, but of the Albanian population, which was subordinate to its Albanian Catholicos and the independent Albanian Church which existed until 1836. And there is nothing surprising in the fact that the architectural solution of the Nakhchivan churches has analogies with the Syunik and Vaspurakan churches of the 12th–17th centuries.

3. ‘It should be noted that the huge number of maples or Oriental planes in one of the most ancient centers, Goghtn (Ordubad), is not accidental. It is known that this is the favorite tree species of the Armenian people and one of those that were revered by the Armenians as sacred during the period of paganism’.

Such a “method” can be used to prove anything.

§ 2. Albanian territory and political borders (3rd century BC – 8th century AD)

There is every reason to believe that the territory of Albania, both in the ancient period and in the early Middle Ages, was within the same borders. In the north, the territory of Albania extended to Derbent, in the south to the Aras, from Iberia in the west to the Caspian Sea in the east. According to synchronous sources of the 7th–8th centuries, i.e. Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, 4) and Armenian historian Movses Khorenatsi (II, 8), as we have noted, the southern border of Albania in the 1st century ran along the Aras river. The Albanian historian notes that the borders of Albania remained unchanged until the 7th–8th centuries (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 21).

However, from the 4th–5th centuries, due to foreign policy events, and the penetration of nomads (Barsils, Huns) from the north, the political and cultural center of Albania moved from the left to the right bank of the Kur. The capital and patriarchal center was transferred from Gabala to Partaw. And for this reason, the importance of the right-bank Albania in the 4th–8th centuries increased in comparison with its left bank.

There is an opinion in scientific circles that until 387, the southern border of Albania passed along the Kur river, i.e. Artsakh, Uti, and Paytakaran (the right bank of the Kur) belonged to Armenia, and only after 387 they became part of Albania. This idea belongs to the Mechitarist M.Chamchyan, who put it forward back in 1784.¹⁰⁶ There were several attempts later to substantiate this concept.

According to one point of view, of the three Albanian regions of Uti, Artsakh and Paytakaran, only Paytakaran was conquered in the 2nd century BC by the Armenian king

Artaxias I and was part of Armenia actually until 338, and then became Albanian. And two other regions of the right bank of the Kur – Artsakh and Uti – were originally Armenian, and only after 387 were they annexed to Albania.¹⁰⁷

This idea was put forward in 1963, and the author of this point of view, S.T.Yeremian included areas of both the left bank and the right bank of the Kur in Albania of the 2nd century BC in the atlas attached to “The History of the Armenian people” (part I) in 1951–1952. According to this atlas, on the right bank, the Albanian regions were Sakasena, Otena (Uti), Caspiane (Paytakaran) and Orchistene (Artsakh). Relying on this atlas, in the 1st century BC, Tigranes II won the entire right bank of the Kur from Albania, i.e. Sakasena, Otena, Orchistene and Caspiane, which were parts of Armenia under the treaty of 66 BC concluded between Tigranes II and Pompey, according to the author of the atlas.

According to another opinion, the regions of Artsakh and Uti were conquered and annexed to Armenia in the 1st century BC by Tigranes II and according to the treaty of 387, they were divided between the Persians and the Romans and annexed to their lands. Not a word about Paytakaran.¹⁰⁸ According to a third opinion (K.V.Trever), the regions of Artsakh, Uti, Paytakaran and Sakasena, i.e. the entire right bank, were seized in the 2nd century BC by Armenian king Artaxias I and remained part of Armenia until 387, and then were reunited with Albania. Consequently, these areas were originally Albanian.¹⁰⁹

But, according to S.Mnatsakanyan and B.Ulubabyan, Artsakh, Uti, Paytakaran were originally the regions of the Armenian kingdom. Only under the treaty of 387, they were annexed to Albania, which, until 387, occupied only the left bank of the Kur, i.e. the southern border of Albania ran along the Kur river.¹¹⁰ The lack of a unanimous opinion on the issue under consideration indicates the complexity and necessity of its further investigation.

The authors of the first three concepts relied mainly on the data of “The Geography” by Strabo, Armenian author of the 5th century Faustus of Byzantium, and “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”. Analysis of the accounts of Strabo showed that of the Albanian lands, only Paytakaran (Caspiane) was conquered by the Armenian king Artaxias I. ‘They say,’ Strabo reports, ‘that originally Armenia was small, but that it was enlarged by the wars of Artaxias (Artashes) and Zariadres... They expanded their possessions, cutting off pieces of land from the neighbors of the surrounding nations, namely: they took Caspiane, Favnitida, Basoropeda from the Medes; from the Iberians, they seized the slopes of the Paryadres Mount, Horzena, Gogarena, lying on the other side of the Kur...’¹¹¹

Based on this passage from Strabo, K.V.Trever makes a far-reaching conclusion: ‘In the 2nd century BC, Armenian king Artaxias I (189–170) annexed a number of neighboring regions to Armenia, including the right bank of the Kur, inhabited by the Shaks, Utians and Gargareans – the Albanians... Since then, ancient authors have described the Kur as a river that forms a border between Albania and Armenia’.¹¹² Meanwhile, from Strabo's words, one can conclude that only Caspiane was conquered by Artaxias I. Regarding this area, Strabo has no consistency. He first associates Caspiane with Media, considering it as an alienated region of Media, then with Albania, reporting that ‘in the country of the Albanians, there is Caspiane, named, like people, after the Caspian people, which no longer exist’.¹¹³

As already noted, some associate the regions of Uti and Artsakh with the conquests of Tigranes II. Greek and Roman sources convince us that the conquests of Tigranes II did not touch the Albanian lands. Tigranes II, uniting western and eastern Armenia, won 70 valleys from the Parthians, ceded by Armenia. These valleys, according to J.Marqwart, were the areas conquered by Artaxias II in northwestern Atropatene.¹¹⁴

In the 70s BC, in addition to the proper Armenian lands, Armenia of Tigranes II included Atropatene, Northern Mesopotamia, Corduene, Syria, Adiabene, Phoenicia, Eastern Cilicia.¹¹⁵ After Tigranes II was defeated by Lucullus and Pompey, his state fell. According to the terms of the peace treaty of 66 BC, Tigranes II abandoned all his conquests. Pompey kept for him 'all the kingdom inherited by him, and took away the lands he had conquered...'. Of the lands he had conquered, only Northern Mesopotamia and Corduene were left under Armenian rule. So, the Armenian state was preserved within the Armenian Highlands. Even if we assume that Artsakh and Uti were conquered by Tigranes II, then after the fall of his state, these regions, along with other conquered territories, should have been separated from Armenia. The inconsistency of the opinion that Artsakh and Uti were conquered by Tigranes II is clear.

The territory of Armenia, officially approved by the treaty of 66 BC, remained unchanged until 37 AD, when according to the convention concluded between Rome and Parthia, Northern Mesopotamia and Corduene departed from Armenia to Parthia. The borders of Armenia in 37 were officially recognized under the treaty of 298 and remained unchanged until 387.¹¹⁶ These treaties do not say anything about the Albanian regions. As for the Albanian region of Caspiene, based on the report of Strabo (XI, 7, 1) that Armenians lived on the shores of the Caspian Sea after the Albanians, S.T.Yeremian comes to the categorical conclusion that 'part of the Caspian coast was included (at least politically) within the boundaries of Greater Armenia'.¹¹⁷ This conclusion carries little credibility as, according to S.T.Yeremian's logic, the area of resettlement of other ethnic groups (Saks, Parns) in Albania should be politically attributed to Seistan and Parthia.

The last point of view about the southern border of Albania, passing along the Kur, is based mainly on the data of the Greco-Roman (*Strabo*, XI, 8, 4; *Plutarch*, *Pompey*, XXXIV; *Cassius Dio*, XXXVI, 56; *Appian*, 103) and Armenian authors of the 5th-8th centuries, on an uncritical trust both in the sources, without trying to check their reliability, and in the established Armenian tradition, completely ignoring the data of the Albanian historian of the 8th century Movses Kaghankatvatsi.

It should be noted that Strabo's data (XI, 8, 4) about Sakasena as an Armenian region is contradicted by other data of his, in particular, that the Kur flew through Albania (XI, 4, 2). But this logically implies the location of its two banks (the left bank and the right bank) on the territory of Albania. Strabo's works have a lot of contradictions. This is explained by the fact that he used various contradictory sources, 'he used uncritically the reports of people who had been in Albania for a very short time and therefore were poorly informed'¹¹⁸ [Strabo's sources were Theophanes of Mytilene, Dellius, etc.]. Strabo himself had to confess about the reliability of Posidonius (one of his sources), one of the participants in the Roman campaign: 'I cannot imagine how Posidonius can be trusted with respect to the unknown (about which he cannot say anything believable) if he speaks

about the known so unreasonably, especially since he was a friend of Pompey, who made a campaign against the Iberians and Albanians' (*Strabo*, XI, 1, 6).

Using excerpts from Patroclus, which Eratosthenes had, Strabo came, as E.Honigmann correctly noted, to 'unfair and credulous generalizations'.¹¹⁹

Regarding the individual data of Pliny (VI, 11; VI, 16; XII, 28), Appian (103), Dion Cassius (XXXVI, 54), Plutarch (*Pompey*, XXXIV), which state that the southern border of Albania was the Kur, it should be borne in mind that the information of these ancient authors, as is known, was also taken from Patroclus, Eratosthenes, who knew very little of Transcaucasia,¹²⁰ as well as from participants in the Roman campaigns in Transcaucasia, whose goal was to persecute the Pontic king Mithridates and not to explore Albania. In addition, this data refers to the 1st century BC – 2nd century AD and the chronological framework of the issue under study – to the 2nd century BC – 4th century AD. It seems to us that we should not overestimate the data of ancient authors in our question of interest because their information was random, contradictory and could well be inaccurate. Let's recall, for example, the message of Pliny (IV, 10, 39) and Solinus about the "conquest" by Alexander the Great of Iberia, Albania and "crossing" the Taurus and the Caucasus...

V.V.Bartold, assessing the ancient literary sources, wrote: 'The problem is that the Greek originals we have are in a very late form, after they have been edited; they are often just a compilation without any criticism of the compared data, so they all need to be treated with great caution'.¹²¹

There is also no doubt that Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi, who wrote "History of the Aghuans", knew and studied the history and geography of his country undoubtedly better than the Romans during their short campaign against the Pontic king. As for the southern border of Albania in the 1st century, the Albanian author reports: '...certain man of the Sisakan family, descended from Japheth (Aran), who received the plains and mountains of Albania from the river Araxes (Aras) to the fortress of Hnarakert' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 4). Armenian author Movses Khorenatsi (II, 8), a contemporary of the Albanian historian, also reports on the 1st century: '...the tribe of Sisak, which inherited the plain of Albania and the mountainous region from the river Araxes as far as the fortress called Hnarakert...' So, the southern border of Albania in the 1st century ran along the Aras, not Kur.

It seems that only the study of local contemporary sources, the study of the realities of Albania, Armenia at that time, the juxtaposition of sources, a greater preference for the data of the Albanian author will help reconstruct the historical geography of Albania of the time under study.

Let's consider what the real situation in Armenia and Albania was, and how the subsequent course of events from 66 BC until 387 AD affected the fates of Armenia and Albania and whether during this period the borders of Armenia remained unshakable.

As is known, Armenia after 66 BC and under Artavasdes II, the successor of Tigranes II, was forced to declare itself "a friend and ally of the Roman people", which in fact meant recognition of complete dependence on Rome.¹²²

As for Albania, its dependence on Rome should have been nominal, 'taking into account the territorial remoteness of Albania, and the freedom-loving disposition of its

population, and the entire course of the subsequent events',¹²³ and, most importantly, its strategic position (the Albanian Gate).

Pliny (VII, 27, 3), Plutarch (*Pompey*, XXXV), Appian (Chapter 117) provide interesting information on the real situation in Albania in the 1st century BC (66–65 BC), after Pompey's campaigns on Albania. Plutarch lists the participants among the royal captives in the triumphal procession organized in honor of Pompey: 'the son of Armenian king Tigranes with his wife and daughter, the wife of king Tigranes II himself Zosima, as well as the king of the Jews Aristobulus, the sister of King Mithridates, his five children and Scythian wives; there were also hostages of the Albanians and Iberians...'

But Appian, when describing the triumph of Pompey, refers to these hostages (Albanians and Iberians) as "hegemons", i.e. leaders, chieftains, overlords: '...leaders (hegemons) from the Iberians—three, and from the Albanians, two... They also carried a plaque with the inscription... Tigranes of Armenia, Artoces of Iberia, Oroeses of Albania, Darius the Mede are defeated...'

Based on Plutarch and Appian's narratives,¹²⁴ we can confidently state that, unlike Tigranes II and his family, neither the Albanian king, Oroeses, nor the Iberian king, Artoces, took part in Pompey's triumph, i.e., could afford it. This indicated that the Romans had failed to incorporate Albania and Iberia into the Roman Empire as a province.

Valuable information about the political fate of Armenia in the 30–20s is provided by numismatic monuments, for the first time testifying to the occupation of Armenia, the fall of the kingdom, glorifying the Roman victories over Armenia. On the coins dedicated to the conquest of Armenia by the Roman troops under Augustus, Armenia is allegorically depicted as a tamed bull or a young king, a captured Armenian warrior, bound hand and foot, begging for mercy.¹²⁵

In the early 1st century, Armenia was surrendered by the Roman emperor Augustus to the rulers of Atropatene. The "Acts" of Augustus (27, 2) say: 'Greater Armenia, after the assassination of its king Artaxias (20 BC – *author*), although I could make it a province, I preferred, following the example of our ancestors, to give this kingdom to Tigranes (Tigranes III: 20–6 BC – *author*)... And I transferred the same people, after that fallen away and indignant, harnessed by my son Gaius, under the control of king Ariobarzanes, the son of the king of Medes Artabazos, and after his death to his son Artavasdes'.¹²⁶

According to the data of Dion Cassius and Tacitus, in the 35–50s AD, Armenia was ruled by Iberian princes.¹²⁷ During the entire period of the 1st century BC–2nd century AD, Armenia was constantly occupied by Roman forces whose chiefs were the actual owners of the country.¹²⁸ With their help, from 59 AD, the kings of Armenia were either Roman or Parthian henchmen. According to the treaty of 63, concluded between Rome and Parthia, a double dependence of Armenia was established. It became the inheritance of the younger lineage of the Parthian royal house and, in fact, a state dependent on Parthia. De jure, the king of Armenia was considered a vassal of the Romans, and was to receive the royal crown from them.¹²⁹ That is, in 65 AD, Trdat I, the Armenian king, despite his origin from the Parthian house, received power from the Roman emperor.¹³⁰

As for Albania, in the period from the 1st century BC to 63–64 AD, the local kings continued to reign both in Iberia and in Atropatene. And after 63, the younger branches of the Arsacid dynasty established themselves in Albania and Iberia.

Dominated by the Parthians till 114 AD, Armenia was alienated from them and declared a Roman province in 115.¹³¹ Interesting information is provided by historians of the 4th century, Eutropius and Festus. Roman emperor Trajan, as Festus reports, ‘took Armenia back from the Parthians, destroyed the crown, and deprived the king of Greater Armenia of power. He gave a king to the Albanians, and took the Iberians, Bosphorians, and Colchians into Roman citizenship’.¹³² Consequently, with the exception of Albania, the entire Caucasus was brought under the subordination of Rome.¹³³ ‘Among the Transcaucasian peoples, the Albanians have retained their independence more than others and have not finally joined the number of Roman allies’.¹³⁴

In light of the above, Roman coins minted in 115–117, dating back to the campaigns of Trajan and the Roman occupation of Armenia, are of great interest. On these coins, the Armenian state is depicted allegorically in the image of a woman sitting under the feet of the Roman emperor, which undoubtedly reflects the political enslavement of the Armenian kingdom.¹³⁵ On the coins of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus of the 160s, Armenia is also depicted as either a woman or a captured warrior.¹³⁶

Trajan's successor Adrian re-enthroned the Arsacid dynasty in Armenia.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, up to 185 AD, Roman troops stayed in Armenia and magister militum Trajan and other imperial officers were at the court of the Armenian kings even during the time of Armenian king Pap (369–374). Armenia continued to pay taxes to the Roman Empire until 358.¹³⁸

Until the 3rd century, the Arsacid kings in Armenia did not have a hereditary right of succession to the throne, which is one of the main attributes of statehood. They were representatives of the Parthian kingdom, who were on the Armenian throne with the consent of Rome. Not having political independence, the Armenian kingdom of the Arsacids, naturally, did not have a coin of its own.¹³⁹

The position of Albania at that time was incomparably better than that of Armenia. Even if it sometimes had to align itself with Rome or Parthia, it never lost its independence. Albania, as a sovereign state in the 3rd–1st centuries BC, minted its own silver coins imitating the tetradrachms and drachmas of Alexander the Great. Monetary circulation of the country in ancient times reached a high level.¹⁴⁰ All this time, from the 1st century BC to the 4th century AD, the foreign and domestic political situation did not favor Armenia. In such a situation, when Armenia was in a dependent position, it is unlikely that its borders remained unchanged. Even if we assume that the Albanian regions of Uti, Artsakh and Paytakaran were really conquered by Armenia, then during this period, i.e. during the period of its political weakening, these areas would have fallen away from Armenia, or the Albanian kings would have regained them.

So, consideration of Strabo's and other ancient authors' data, as well as the juxtaposition of the realities of Albania and Armenia from the 1st century BC to the 4th century AD, have brought us to the conviction of the inconsistency of the points of view of researchers, according to which the border of Albania in the south allegedly ran along the Kur, i.e. the Albanian regions of Artsakh, Uti, and Paytakaran were part of Armenia until 387.

Now let's consider the information of Armenian authors Faustus of Byzantium (5th century) and “The Armenian Geography” by Anania Shirakatsi (7th century) on

the adjacent political border of Albania and Armenia in the 4th century, which are also referred to by researchers who claim that it ran along the Kur river. Faustus of Byzantium writes that when the war between the Armenians and the Persians ended (in 371), Armenian commander, Mushegh, began to smash those who rebelled against the Armenian king. 'I also turned my arms against the country of the Albanians and brutally defeated them. I took away many gavars (i.e. regions) from them that they had captured – *Uti, Shakashen, Gardmanadzor, Kolt, and adjacent gavars. I made the Kur river the border between my country and Albania, as it had been before*'. 'Then Mushegh went to the Iberian king ...defeated him, conquered the entire Iberian country...' ¹⁴¹ Among the countries allegedly 'regained by Mushegh', Faustus of Byzantium names Iberia and the Albanian regions – Artsakh, Uti, Sakasena, Gardman, and Paytakaran. The fact that Mushegh 'made the Kur river the border between his country and Albania, as it had been before', Faustus of Byzantium is clearly exaggerating. According to the treaties of 66 BC, 37 AD, 298 AD, Armenia lost all the conquered countries, retaining only the Armenian highlands. According to Armenian researchers, Atropatene, Iberia and the Albanian regions, allegedly 'defeated by Mushegh', were not at all included in the conquests of Armenia, but on the contrary, at times the Armenian throne was held by Atropatene and Iberian princes. In addition, the actual position of Armenia in the 1st–4th centuries, as noted above, contradicts the data of Faustus of Byzantium. When studying the information of Faustus of Byzantium, one should take into account the time of his life, the objective and historical prerequisites for his work. The picture presented by Faustus of Byzantium, like that by Movses Khorenatsi, reflects, as N.G.Garsoyan correctly noted, their own ideals – a single, united Armenia, opposing the threat of Zoroastrian Persia. ¹⁴²

Like other Armenian sources, Faustus of Byzantium continued to biasedly represent Armenia as a confessional and political unity, a polytonym with unchanging content. Essentially, the complex political picture that developed in Armenia in the 4th century was presented by Armenian historians in a very simplified way. 'It is sufficient to recall the 'history' of the autonomous Armenian Euphrates satrapies, which in the works of Armenian authors are presented as lands dependent and even subordinate to the Armenian Arsacids. In fact, these satrapies enjoyed greater political independence than the Armenian Arsacid state'. ¹⁴³

Faustus of Byzantium's data is also reflected in "The Armenian geography of the 7th century" by Anania Shirakatsi, which says: 'The original country of Albania is the one between the Kur and the Caucasus Mountain'. S.T.Yeremian believes that this refers to the territory of the Albanian state before 387. ¹⁴⁴ Among other things, the information of Faustus of Byzantium and that of "The Armenian Geography of the 7th century" also contradicts the reports of the authors of synchronous sources – Albanian historian Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, 4) and Armenian author Movses Khorenatsi (II, 8), according to which, as already mentioned, the southern border of Albania in the 1st century ran along the Aras river. '...certain man of the Sisakan family, descended from Japheth (Aran), who received the plains and mountains of Albania from the river Araxes (Aras) to the fortress of Hnarakert... From his (Aran's) children, they say, descended the inhabitants of the principalities of Uti, Gardman, Tsovey (Artsakh), Gargar' (*Kaghankatvatsi* I, 4) Khorenatsi speaks about this in almost identical expressions (II, 8). As it is clear from

the text of these authors, Uti, Artsakh, Gardman – all the right bank of the Kur – could not be a part of Armenia.

In fact, only the data of Faustus of Byzantium and “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century” substantiates the opinion of researchers that the regions of the right bank of the Kur – Uti, Artsakh, and Paytakaran – became Albanian only in 387, and before that were part of Armenia. According to the prevailing opinion, in 387, after centuries of rivalry, Rome and Persia came to an agreement on the division of Armenia. From the point of view of S.T.Yeremian, all the outlying regions of Armenia, Uti, Artsakh, Paytakaran, Gugark, and others, were taken away by agreement, and the remaining inner part – the middle country – was divided between the two powers. Three quarters of it were annexed to Iran and one fourth to Rome.¹⁴⁵ ‘According to the new administrative division of the Sassanian authorities, the Armenian regions of Artsakh, Paytakaran, and Uti were annexed to Albania, and the Armenian region of Gugark – to Georgia’.¹⁴⁶ It seems illogic to assert that when Armenia was divided between the two empires, its marginal regions were given to the neighboring countries – Iberia and Albania, which, while maintaining their independence, were at the same time influenced by these two empires, at times guided to some extent by them and under the Sassanids, they were de jure their vassals. If these areas were Armenian, then what was the need for these two powers to take care of Albania and Iberia? This could only be possible if these areas were Albanian and Iberian rather than Armenian. And therefore, the territory of Armenia proper was subjected to the division between the two empires. And the lands which it claimed were legally assigned once again to the countries to which they originally belonged.

Based on the above, we believe that the very formulation of the question of a stable, unchanging remaining of the regions of Uti, Artsakh, Paytakaran as part of Armenia until 387 is completely untenable.* It seems that the borders of Armenia and Albania, as well as Armenia and Iberia, could actually change and, apparently, did change depending on the external and internal political situation of these countries. These points, of course, must be identified and correctly reflected. So, studying the sources and realities of Albania of the 1st–4th centuries convinces us that the southern border of Albania of that period ran along the Aras river.

Now let's consider the point of view of Georgian researchers regarding the western borders of Albania. According to old Georgian researchers, the western part of the territory of Albania (the left bank of the Kur) was Georgian territory.¹⁴⁷ And lately, some Georgian scholars argue that Georgia owned both the northwestern left-bank territory of Albania and the southwestern part of the right bank of the Kur. These problems are covered in the monograph by D.L.Muskhelishvili, titled “On the Historical Geography of Eastern Georgia” (Shaki and Gogarena).

The abstract of the book says: ‘The monograph considers the issues of *political and ethnic geography of the southern and eastern provinces of ancient Georgia* [highlighted

* I could not identify the source reflecting the treaty of 387 regarding the Albanian lands. At a meeting on the problem of the historical geography of the Caucasian peoples (May 4-8, 1983, Moscow), it became clear that there is no such treaty, it lacks a source study basis. B.A.Harutyunyan officially declared that this agreement does not exist. The treaty owes its existence only to Armenian historiography. He also stated that Armenian science is rejecting this outdated concept and is creating a new one.

by us. – F.M] from the rise of the East Georgian kingdom of Iberia to the end of the 14th century’.

A comparison of the title of the book and the abstract shows that *Shaki was the eastern province of Iberia, and Gogarena was the southern one*. There is an inconsistency: in the title of the book, it is Eastern Georgia and the abstract and the text speak of ‘the eastern and southern borders of Iberia’.

As is known, in science, Eastern Georgia means Kartli. In fact, D.L.Muskhelishvili, in his book, makes an attempt through ingenious interweaving to substantiate the opinion that the Albanian – Azerbaijani lands located in the north-west of the left bank of Albania (the Cambisena and Shaki regions) and in the south-west of the right-bank of Albania (Gardman, Sakasena), were primordially Georgian lands from ancient times to the 14th century inclusive, i.e., they were the regions of Eastern Georgia.

Let's consider the author's research method and his argumentation. The starting point for D.L.Muskhelishvili was the words of an Albanian author of the 13th century, Vardan the Great, that “Shaki is a land of the Gugars”. And, based on this passage, D.L.Muskhelishvili, trying to identify Gugars with Gugarens, the inhabitants of the Georgian-Armenian region of Gogarena (Gugark), with no reason, expands the territory of Gugark (Gogarena) to the northeast (to the left bank of the Kur), including the Albanian lands of two regions, Cambisena and Shaki. D.L.Muskhelishvili forgets about the time and place of Vardan the Great's information. In addition, Vardan Areveltsi could have in mind Shaki as the area of residence of the Gugars. In addition, one should not forget about another Shaki, in the south-west of Albania, where the Gugars actually could also live. It is necessary to verify the reliability of Vardan's passage – to what extent it is confirmed by other synchronous sources and how well it corresponds to the realities of Albania, Armenia, and Iberia of that time. And is it reasonable, relying only on Vardan the Great's information, to project this into antiquity and the early Middle Ages, trying to “prove” that the disputed Georgian-Armenian region of Gugark (Gogarena) included the north-western territory of Azerbaijan on the left bank of the Kur (Cambisena and Shaki) and the southwestern lands of Azerbaijan on the right “bank of the Kur (Gardman, Sakasena)”. The structure of Muskhelishvili's book is as follows: a step-by-step inclusion in Iberia of 1) Gogarena, expanding it at the expense of Albania; 2) Hereti, expanding it again at the expense of Albania; 3) Cambisena proper; 4) Shaki proper.

First of all, let's consider the conclusions of D.L.Muskhelishvili regarding Gogarena, in which he included the southwestern regions of Azerbaijan. Due to the incorrect location of the Hunan (Hnarakert) city, as well as the Berduji river, D.L.Muskhelishvili gives the wrong location of the Gogarena region. He places Hunani in the center of Gogarena, while Hunan is a border point in Gogarena, located in the extreme northeast of Gogarena, at the junction of Georgia, Armenia and Albania, in the center of the Gardabani canton.¹⁴⁸ Further, Muskhelishvili's concept regarding the southeastern border of Iberia is based on the wrong location of the Berduji river. The author deliberately misplaces Gogarena in the territory of Albania, and the reason for this will be revealed in the course of our research. Muskhelishvili writes: ‘...the southern border of Iberia (Kartli) ran along the dividing ridge of the Kur and Aras,¹⁴⁹ starting from the sources of the Berduji river (now the Dzegamchay river)¹⁵⁰ to

the Tao province”* [highlighted by us. – *FM*]. As we can see, the Berduji river is identified by the author with the Dzegamchay. It should be noted that the author is not sure of his location, and therefore is not consistent, because in the last book (“On the Historical Geography of Eastern Georgia”), he locates the Berduji in the area of Tovuzchay, since he places the city of Hunani on the map at the Berduji river on the Dzegamchay, and in the book, at the mouth of the Tovuzchay river.¹⁵¹ The author refers to “Kartlis Tskhovreba” (I, 4, 8, 24). Let's take a look at this data. ‘...He endowed Kartlos and established the boundaries for him: in the east – Hereti and the Berduji river’¹⁵²; ‘Gardabos was given Hunani with the boundaries: *in the east – the Berduji river*’.¹⁵³ ‘...The third (Pharnavaz) was sent as eristavi to Hunani and was given the lands from the Berduji river to Tbilisi and Gachaani, which is Gardabani’¹⁵⁴ [highlighted by us. – *F.M.*].

“The Geography” by Vakhushti identifies the Berduji river with the Debed river, a tributary of the Khrami river. G.V.Tsulaya (the publisher of Leonti Mroveli's “Life of the Kartlian Kings”) believes that the identification of the Berduji with the Debed, a tributary of the Khrami, is beyond doubt.¹⁵⁵

Depending on the location of the Berduji river, there is the exact location of Hunani, which is placed by D.L.Muskhelishvili on the Dzegamchay or on the Tovuzchay from time to time.

Vakhushti's “Geography” (18th century) locates Hunani at the confluence of the Ktsia river (now Khrami) with the Kur, i.e. where there is the Debed river. This location is specified and substantiated by S.T.Yeremian, Z.M.Bunyatov, G.A.Melikishvili and others.¹⁵⁶ It is fully in line with the realities of that time, which is clear from the data of synchronous sources of the 7th–8th centuries, Armenian author Movses Khorenatsi, Albanian historian Movses Kaghankatvatsi and “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”, because, as is narrated in the latter, the Albanian region of Sakasena (Shakashen in Armenian) stretched from the Dzegamchay river to the Kurekchay river,¹⁵⁷ and Albanian gavar Gardman, which was the sixth gavar of the Uti province and occupied the territory of the present-day Gazakh region, stretched to the Dzegamchay.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, Hnarakert – Hunani could not be in the Tovuzchay or Dzegamchay area in any way.

Hnarakert's connection with the Debed, a tributary of the Khrami, is also confirmed by “Ashkharhatsuyts”, according to which Hnarakert is also called Hantsikhe derived from the name of the Han river, mentioned by Strabo, which in the future became the Ktsia (Khrami).¹⁵⁹ The fact is that the exact location of the eastern border of the Gogarena region depends on the location of the Hunani. If we assume the correctness of the opinion of D.L.Muskhelishvili regarding the location of Hunani on the Dzegamchay or Tovuzchay, it appears that Gogarena occupied the territory of not only *Iberia, Armenia, but also Albania*, i.e. it also occupied the southwestern part of the Albanian region (Gardman and partly Sakasena). And in this case, Gogarena shifted from its real territory to the east at the expense of the historical territory of Albania. And in case Hunani is located on the Debed, Gogarena had nothing to do with Albania, but was only an adjacent border area, which is

* Muskhelishvili D.L. Annotation to map number 3 “Caucasus in the 6th–3rd centuries BC”. Materials of the historical geography of the Caucasus, presented for the publication of the “Atlas of the Peoples of the USSR” (1983).

consistent with all the sources and realities of that time. Movses Kaghankatvatsi never mentions the toponym of Gogarena. Anyway, as is known, the territory of Gogarena was a bone of contention between Armenia and Iberia and Albania has never been involved in the dispute over this territory. In this connection, let's consider the data of Strabo (XI, 14, 5): ‘...Armenia, once a small country, was enlarged by the wars of Artaxias and Zariadres... Together, they jointly expanded their possessions, annexing part of the regions of the surrounding peoples, namely: they took Caspiane, Favnitida and Basoropeda from the Medes; the foothills of the Paryadres, Horzena and Gogarena located on the other side of the Cyrus river, from the Iberians...’

As can be seen from the excerpt, we are talking about the conquest of the Georgian Gogarena by Armenia—and nothing more. Apart from Strabo's information that Gogarena ‘was on the other side of the Cyrus river’, there is no other data on its location. Defending his opinion and referring to this passage of Strabo, D.L.Muskhelishvili writes: “That this was really so is proved by Strabo's report (XI, 14, 5) ...Strabo's Gogarena embraces the southern half of the Kur basin, starting from modern Javakheti up to the Hnarakert fortress (*Movses Khorenatsi*, II, 8), i.e. the same Hunani from the Georgian sources, *which was located on the right bank of the Kur river, near the Berduji river*,¹⁶⁰ i.e. *the Dzegamchay* (see D.L.Muskhelishvili. Annotation to map number 3 at the end of this section). So, identifying the Berduji with Dzegamchay (and in the book with the Tovuzchay), D.L.Muskhelishvili misplaces the Georgian historical region of Gogarena to the southeast, to the territory of Albania. Due to this, the historical territory of Albania is cut down from the Debed river to the Dzegamchay or Tovuzchay. According to D.L.Muskhelishvili's map, it appears that Armenian king Artaxias, having seized Gogarena from Iberia, actually seized part of Albania (from the Debed river to the Dzegamchay or Tovuzchay). And when Iberia regained Gogarena, it added a part of the territory of Albania (from the Debed to the Dzegamchay or Tovuzchay to the west) to its domain. According to the concept of D.L.Muskhelishvili, the territory of historical Georgia, i.e. Iberia, did not change and the struggle for the disputed region of Gogarena was between Georgia and Armenia at the expense of the territory of Albania. Strabo (XI, 3, 2), among other things, reports: ‘The Cyrus originates in Armenia and, immediately entering the aforementioned plain, receives the Arag, flowing from the Caucasus, and other tributaries, and *further flows through a narrow valley to Albania*’. Hence, the territory of Albania begins far from the Dzegamchay. So, the research revealed why D.L.Muskhelishvili builds his concept on the elaborated location of the *Berduji, Hunani, Gogarena*. This method can be used to “prove” anything, because in this case, sources are useless.

D.L.Muskhelishvili is trying to achieve the goal in relation to Gogarena in another way: by placing the cantons of Gugark on the territory of Albania. Referring to the list of cantons of Gugark in *Khorenatsi*, where they are listed sequentially from the west to the east, D.L.Muskhelishvili arranges and lists them backwards from the east to the west, due to which part of the cantons of Gogarena falls within the lands of Albania. Thus, *Khorenatsi* says: ‘Gushar... inherited the Dark Mountain, that is, Kangark, and half of [the land of] the Javakhs, Kokhb, Ttso, Dzor up to the Hnarakert fortress’.¹⁶¹ It is clearly said: ‘up to the Hnarakert fortress’. D.L.Muskhelishvili writes: “Let's start from east to west”, “Dzor up to the Hnarakert fortress”. He locates Dzor (Dzorapor) at the Agstafa river

and Kokhb at the Injachay river.¹⁶² Meanwhile, all the cantons of Gugark in “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century” are located on the territory of Georgia proper and partly of Armenia bordering Georgia,¹⁶³ which is in line with historical realities.

The cantons of Gugark were first part of Iberia, then of Armenia; after 387,* they finally became part of Iberia, except for Ashots. According to “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”, Kokhbopor is located near the modern Noyemberyan (Arm. SSR), Dzorapor – near the Debed river, and Ashots corresponds to the Ghukasyan region.¹⁶⁴ As we can see, all these cantons have nothing to do with the territory of historical Albania.

Summarizing his conclusions about Gogarena, D.L.Muskhelishvili places the original ancient territory of Gogarena in the basin of the Debed, and its cantons, in his opinion (Hnarakert, Dzor, Kokhb, Tashir, Ashots, etc.), are territorial expansions that took place after the conquest of Gogarena by Armenia in the 2nd century BC. Later, according to D.L.Muskhelishvili, with the political expansion of Armenia to the north, the conquered territories were included in Gogarena.¹⁶⁵

So, at the time when Gogarena was conquered by Armenia, Iberia lost an insignificant small area (the Debed river basin) and after the conquest of Gogarena by Armenia, the territory of Gogarena expanded to the northeast at the expense of the Albanian lands (see D.L.Muskhelishvili's location of the Hnarakert, Dzor, Kokhb cantons). In the 4th century, according to D.L.Muskhelishvili's theory, when Gogarena, territorially increased at the expense of the Albanian lands, was regained by Iberia, the latter, in fact, received not only its former region, Gogarena, but also additional territorial increases at the expense of Albania.

The thesis that the territory of Gogarena after its conquest by Armenia in the 2nd century BC was expanded to the north and east, i.e. at the expense of the Albanian lands, seems to be inappropriate. As we stated in the first part of the chapter (regarding the Armenian concept), in the period after the 2nd century BC and up to the 4th century AD (when Gogarena was regained by Iberia), the foreign and domestic political situation of Armenia was such that it did not have the opportunity to expand its borders, especially at the expense of Albania. Therefore, D.L.Muskhelishvili's statement is devoid of any ground. Gogarena, both ancient (which D.L.Muskhelishvili recognizes) and early medieval, was located only in the basin of the Debed river.

D.L.Muskhelishvili finishes his concept of Gogarena (as the southwestern Albanian lands) set out in the first chapter of the book, with the following conclusion: ‘...in the minds of the Armenians, Gugark [Gogarena] embraced Eastern Georgia proper’. But in fact, Gogarena is the southern province of Georgia. In Chapter II, D.L.Muskhelishvili promises to reveal what in Georgian sources is meant by “Eastern Georgia”, although before him, science had known that Eastern Georgia is Kartli. In this chapter, D.L.Muskhelishvili gives a historical and geographical outline of the northwestern Albanian regions – Hereti and Cambisena – and tries to prove that they were already part of Iberia in antiquity and underwent centuries of Iberization. It appears that the “Eastern Georgia” should also be understood as the northwestern Albanian lands. Let's follow the arguments of D.L.Muskhelishvili. The author sets out three meanings of the concept of Hereti (in its

* The data for the year 387, as noted in the first part of our chapter, is based on historiography.

own, narrow and broad sense). However, in all three senses proposed by D.L.Muskhelishvili, Hereti is not the northwestern lands of Albania or the entire Albania.¹⁶⁶ First of all, it is necessary, in our opinion, to clarify the concept of Hereti. It seems to us that Hereti is not only a political concept, but also a purely geographical one. Anyway, according to Georgian sources, the idea suggests itself. And, as Georgian textual scholars (E.S.Takaishvili, K.S.Kekelidze, G.V.Tsulaya) have correctly noted, the scarcity of material does not allow establishing the exact boundaries of Hereti. Hereti is a part of Kakheti or a region along the basins of the Alazani and the Iori rivers. It stretched east to the Caucasus Mountains, west to the Kur, north to the Tke-Tba or Gulgula lake, which is higher than Teleb, south to the Alazani and Iori. *Written sources do not record the northern and northeastern borders of Hereti.*¹⁶⁷

So, Hereti was located in the Alazan-Iori-Kur zone and included the eastern regions of historical Kakheti, as well as the Cambisena region.¹⁶⁸ Chrononym Hereti, derived from the name of the Albanian tribe, is known only from Georgian sources. And therefore, every time one comes across the concept of Hereti in Georgian sources, it is difficult to identify what is politically meant by this toponym and what territory it covers.

D.L.Muskhelishvili's attempts to prove the 'process of the political expansion of Iberia towards Albania' by expanding the scope of the historical and geographic understanding of 'Kakheti' (Iberia) by reducing the corresponding understanding of 'Hereti' are absolutely groundless'.¹⁶⁹

D.L.Muskhelishvili claims that in the first half of the 4th century, the part of Hereti – 'Sujeti proper' – that was directly annexed to the Iberian kingdom, to the very province of Kakheti (and Kukheti) and this territory, at least since the 9th century, according to Georgian sources, was called Kakheti.¹⁷⁰

A logical discrepancy and some uncertainty appear in the very statement of the author. In the 4th century, Sujeti is adjoined to either Kakheti or Kukheti (and they are not one and the same thing), and as it turns out from his own note 78 (p.74), only from the 9th century was Sujeti called Kukheti, and not Kakheti. What is the evidence that the entire period from the 4th to the 9th century inclusive, Sujeti was part of Kukheti?

D.L.Muskhelishvili refers to his own work 'The City of Ujarma', in which, however, there is no information from the sources promised by him that confirms directly or indirectly the author's conclusion about the annexation of Sujeti to the Iberian kingdom in the 4th century. Referring to the information of Leonti Mroveli, that in the 4th century king Mirian bequeathed his son Rev Kakheti and Kukheti and 'installed' him in Ujarma, D.L.Muskhelishvili comes, although to a groundless, but rather categorical conclusion, that 'this lot included a part of *Hereti proper*. *The rest of Hereti*, presumably, remained in vassal dependence on the Kingdom of Kartli'.¹⁷¹ As we can see, sources do not mention any Hereti. In general, it is impossible to find out from Georgian sources which Hereti is meant in "Hereti proper", "the part of Hereti which is Sujeti", "the rest of Hereti". All this is the result of the author's free imagination. Sources provide only one concept of Hereti.

The next 'argument' of D.L.Muskhelishvili is as follows: 'Further, the north-western part beyond the Alazani territory, which once belonged to Hereti (Albania), starting from the turn of the 6th–7th centuries (and in reality much earlier) is again referred to as 'Kakheti' in sources'.¹⁷² The author treats chronology very freely, easily and carelessly

stirring up centuries. Speaking about the 6th–7th centuries, he immediately notes ‘much earlier’, but when exactly?! Again, there is no link to sources. The author refers to his own work “The City of Ujarma”, where there is also a mere allegation.

It remains unclear how the author managed to find out what part of Hereti is meant in “pseudo-sources”. Despite the fact that Hereti is an ambiguous choronym, attributing exactly three meanings to it, D.L.Muskhelishvili, to justify his concept, tries to show the gradual joining of each part of Hereti to the Iberian kingdom. And thus, “creating” the “dynamics” of the political expansion of Iberia towards Albania, he brought Iberia closer to the Albanian region of Shaki.

D.L.Muskhelishvili believes that the thousand-year process of active penetration of East Georgian tribes into Hereti resulted in the assimilation of the local population by Georgians, and by the 8th century, the Hers were ‘a completely Georgianized people’.¹⁷³ With regard to such an early Georgianization, it is important to note that Georgian sources do not mix the Hers and the Georgians, but, on the contrary, draw a distinction between the “Kartveli” (Karts) and the “Hers”.¹⁷⁴ This distinction is made in Georgian sources later too, not only by author of the 11th century, Leonti Mroveli, when the Hers that became “part of Georgia” took an active part in the unification of the Georgian kingdom¹⁷⁵ and the formation of a feudal society in Eastern Georgia, but also by Georgian authors of the 17th–18th centuries,* when the independent Hereti, whose name was abolished in the 15th century, no longer existed. The Hers made themselves felt throughout the early Middle Ages, which was the time of the emergence and flourishing of the independent Heretian principality and later the kingdom.

It is very interesting to note that the population of historical Hereti belonged to the same anthropological group.¹⁷⁶ Of great importance is the fact that the latest research in the distribution of blood groups in the Transcaucasus has shown a high degree of homogeneity in terms of gene frequencies of the Kakhetian and Azerbaijani populations of the Alazan-Ayrichay valley and the Shamakhi zone.¹⁷⁷ This stability of genotype frequencies in their average regional values was preserved in the Alazan-Ayrichay zone, despite the ethnic and genetic barrier that arose here many centuries ago.¹⁷⁸ According to influential researchers, this is due to the fact that Hereti was once the territory of the union of Albanian tribes, which played a significant role in the commonality of their gene pool.¹⁷⁹ So, the Azerbaijani and Georgian populations of the territory of historical Hereti have common ancestors.

Before embarking on the “Iberization” (Georgianization) of the Albanian region of Shaki, D.L.Muskhelishvili tries to “prove” that the lands up to Shaki, namely the Albanian region of Cambisena (lying between the Alazani and the Kur rivers), was also subjected to “Iberization” since the 2nd–1st centuries BC. The author comes to the conclusion that *‘the history of the ancient and Albanian province clearly confirms our idea that the Ibero-Albanian political relations, developing over centuries, should be viewed as a process of alternating “ebbs and flows” and that the active role in this process belonged to the Iberians’*.¹⁸⁰

* In particular, in prince Vakhushti. See: Вахушти Багратиони. История царства Грузинского / Пер. Н.Т.Накашидзе Тбилиси, 1976, с.125.

Determination of the Ibero-Albanian relations by D.L.Muskhelishvili pursues one goal – to seize the territory of Cambisena, Hereti. In his opinion, ‘the political expansion of Iberia towards Albania came with ethnic diffusion’, which is confirmed, as he believes, ‘both with documents and toponymy, ethnographic material and church architecture’.¹⁸¹

Let's consider whether back in the 2nd–1st centuries BC, Iberia, in political terms, really expanded its domain to the North-East at the expense of the Albanian lands, at the expense of Cambisena. A study of Strabo (XI, 4, 5), Pliny (VI, 39), Solinus (XIX, 4) convinces us that before the 2nd century BC, the territory of the Albanian region of Cambisena had been vast as never before. It lied in the interfluvium of the Alazani and the Kur: in the east of the mouths of the Alazani, Iori and Kur, in the west from the headwaters of the Alazani, Iori inclusive, *to the interfluvium of the Kur and the Khrami* (its middle course) in the south. In the south-west, Cambisena also included the right bank of the Kur.

Thus, Pliny (VI, 39) reports: ‘This tribe (the Albanians), settled in the Caucasus Mountains, reaches, as it is said, *up to the Cyrus river, which forms the border of Armenia and Iberia*’. This implies the settlement of the Albanians on the western borders of Albania and not the southern ones, *for the Kur was the border between Armenia and Iberia*. The Albanians were settled on the west, from the middle course of the rivers Alazani and Iori, to the Kur flowing in the area of Tbilisi, Rustavi, and Hunani (south-west of Cambisena). Solinus (XIX, 4) reports about the Kur, which became the border between Iberia and Armenia: ‘The great [Pompey] managed... to pass ...then to the Caspian Sea, and from there, through the Caspian, penetrate *to the Cyrus river which flows along the border of Armenia and Iberia*’. From the data of Pliny and Solinus, it is clear that the Kur, in a certain period, became the border between Armenia and Iberia in a certain period. The information of ancient authors and the realities of that time allow us to believe that the Kur was the border between Iberia and Armenia on the territory of Iberia proper, in the area where there were lands to the south of the Kur, seized in the 2nd century BC by Armenian king Artaxias I. This is Gogarena and the territory between the Kur and the Khrami rivers, adjacent to it in the North-East. There is reason to believe that the lands between the Kur and the middle reach of the Khrami were the southwestern tip of the Albanian region of Cambisena. Strabo (XI, 14, 4) says: ‘The province of Armenia is Favenna, as well as *Komisena and Orkhistena*, which supplies the largest number of horsemen. Khorzena and Cambisena are the most northern and covered with snow more than others’. With regard to Komisena, the Armenian edition of ‘Ashkharhatsuyts’ reports that the part of Cambisena, which was called Komisena, was included in Greater Armenia, and that *this Armenian part of Cambisena – Komisena was separated by the Kur from the rest of the Cambisena region, which is part of Iberia and Albania*.¹⁸² Along the entire course of the Kur and throughout the region of Cambisena, there is no other segment separated by the Kur from the rest of Cambisena, except for the territory of the interfluvium of the Kur and the middle reaches of the Khrami. So, it appears that the part of Cambisena seized in the 2nd century BC by the Armenians, *called Komisena*, was in the interfluvium of the Kur and the Khrami.* All this

* It seems to us that the name Somkhiti also covered the Armenian part of Cambisena (Komisena), adjacent to Gogarena, just as Somkhiti was used, as D.L.Muskhelishvili believes, also in the meaning of the ancient Gugark (See: Мусхелишвили Д.Л. Из исторической географии Восточной Грузии, с.27).

gives reason to believe that before the 2nd century BC, the territory of the Albanian region of Cambisena had been vast as never before, occupied the interfluvium of the Alazani and the Kur: in the west from the *upper reaches of the Alazani, Iori* to the interfluvium of the Kur and the Khrami (its middle course). So, in the south-west, Cambisena also included the right bank of the Kur. Ptolemy's report (V, II, 2) about the Albanian city of Teleba speaks in favor of the maximum territory, the length of the Albanian Cambisena to the west, northwest.

And now, Strabo's information (XI, 4,1) makes sense: 'Armenia is partly a plain, partly a mountainous country, like Cambisena, where the Armenians simultaneously border with the Iberians and Albanians'. As we can see, in the Armenian Cambisena – Komisena, the Armenians neighbor both with the Albanians of the rest of Cambisena and with the Iberians on the western outskirts of Cambisena.

Referring to this place in Strabo, D.L.Muskhelishvili makes a completely groundless conclusion that this passage 'makes us imagine the settlement of the East Georgian tribes as a more or less compact mass in the northwestern part of Kambechan back in the 1st century BC, and thus postpone the beginning of this process at least for several centuries'.¹⁸³

With such a reconstruction of the western and southwestern borders of the Albanian region of Cambisena, the statements of Pliny and Solinus about the Kur being the border of Iberia and Armenia from the 2nd century BC take on standing. The Kur bordered the northern limits of Gogarena (which had become Armenian) and the north-eastern part of the Armenian Komisena.

In the light of the above and on the basis of other data, as well as the Albanian and Georgian realities of that time, the groundlessness of the concept of D.L.Muskhelishvili, according to which, in the 2nd–1st centuries BC, parts of the Albanian regions of Cambisena and Hereti became part of Iberia, i.e. its territory expanded to the north-east, becomes quite obvious. In his argumentation, he relies upon four fragments from Strabo (XI, 3, 2; XI, 4, 5; XI, 4, 1; XI, 2, 15),¹⁸⁴ which, in our opinion, cannot prove his theory. And most importantly, the history of this period is such that Iberia failed to retain its southern lands (Gogarena in the 2nd century BC) and was not able to gain the north-eastern lands at the expense of Albania.

Specifically, Strabo (XI, 2, 18) reports: '...when the power of Mithridates Eupator increased significantly, *the country [Iberia] submitted to his rule. The king always sent there one of his 'friends' as a 'governor' or 'ruler'* ...From this country, the king received most of the help for equipping his fleet. After the collapse of Mithridates' power, his entire state disintegrated and was divided among many rulers... *The country of the Meskhetians ...is divided into 3 parts: one part is under the rule of the Colchians, another – under the Iberians, and the third is ruled by the Armenians...*'

D.L.Muskhelishvili, claiming that Iberia, at that time, included not only the north-western part of Cambisena, but also the southern-western part of Hereti, puts forward the last argument citing the data on the construction of the city of Nekresi by Iberian kings, 'the ruins of which are located on the left bank of the Alazani river, i.e. in the province of Hereti'. The matter is that Nekresi is located on the border of Albania and has nothing to do with its territory.

According to Leonti Mroveli, King Pharnajom (the fourth king from the Pharnavazid dynasty, who ruled in the first half of the 2nd century BC – Tsulaya), built Nekresi in Kakheti.¹⁸⁵ ‘The Georgian tradition attributes vigorous activity both in Mtskheta itself and in the territory adjacent to Albania to Pharnajom’, writes G.V.Tsulaya. He also notes that Nekresi was the center of the Kartlians in the north-eastern part of Kakheti. The city was supposed to be an outpost of the Kingdom of Kartli on the outskirts of Albania as it was located on the border with Albania.¹⁸⁶ As we can see, Nekresi has nothing to do with the territory of Hereti understood by D.L.Muskhelishvili as Albania.

As for the period of the 1st–2nd centuries, D.L.Muskhelishvili reports about the north-western boundaries, i.e. about *Cambisena*: ‘*In the 1st century, during the period of the power of Iberia*, it can be assumed that politically this area was included within the boundaries of this kingdom. In addition, the diffusion of the East Georgian element to the east stretches up to the lower reaches of the Alazani river’.¹⁸⁷ D.L.Muskhelishvili’s assertion seems to be exaggerated. If Iberia at this time was only rewarded, for its services to Rome, with its regions conquered in its time by Armenia (*Tacitus*. The Annals, VI, 32; XI, 9), this wouldn’t mean that Iberia was able to expand its domain in the northeast at the expense of the Albanian lands – *Cambisena*. In such circumstances, when Iberia was an obedient ally of Rome, if not more, and Albania was the only state of the Caucasus that remained independent of Rome, but was only under the influence of Parthia, it is unlikely that the territory of Albania in the north-west could be annexed to Iberia. Among the Transcaucasian peoples, the Albanians retained their independence more than others and did not finally join the number of Roman allies.¹⁸⁸ According to the data of Eutropius (VIII, 3) and Festus (XX), “Trajan deprived Armenia of the royal power, *gave the king to the Albanians, and the Iberians, the Bosporians, the Colchians accepted as Roman citizens*”. As mentioned above, with the exception of Albania, the entire Caucasus was brought under the subordination of Rome.

Although sources are silent about the 3rd–4th centuries and *Cambisena* again belonged to Albania in the 4th century, D.L.Muskhelishvili nevertheless absolutely groundlessly and extremely categorically asserts that ‘...the Ibero-Albanian relations developed on a large scale in the early Middle Ages’.¹⁸⁹ Revealing these relationships, he is aiming at one thing – to alienate the territory of *Cambisena* and Hereti. The author believes that since the 4th century, an exceptional role in this aspect was played by Christianity, the preaching of the “illuminator” of Iberia, St.Nino, in Hereti. Besides, he refers to his work “The City of Ujarma” in which he says that given that the spread of Christianity means the penetration of a powerful stream of Georgian culture into Hereti, and, as a result, political domination, ‘in the ‘mission of illumination’ of St.Nino, we can see a proof of even greater consolidation of the cultural and political domination of Kartli in Hereti’. He believes that Christianity was preached in the Georgian language and therefore the language of preaching and the official language in Hereti must have been Georgian.¹⁹⁰ He confirms this idea once again in his latest book ‘On the Historical Geography of Eastern Georgia’: ‘These were the Georgian language and the Georgian writing system, which, together with Georgian Christianity, were deeply embedded in the local environment’.¹⁹¹

First, D.L.Muskhelishvili actually did not give *any evidence of the penetration of Eastern Georgian tribes into Hereti, Cambisena*, before the preaching of St.Nino, i.e. until

the 4th century, although on p.21 he notes: ‘On the other hand, a thousand-year process of intensive penetration of Eastern Georgian tribes into Hereti [from where? how? – *F.M.*], and from the 4th century of East Georgian Christianity...’

Secondly, with regard to Eastern Georgian Christianity, it should be noted that St.Nino was a prisoner from Byzantium,¹⁹² did not have “Georgian citizenship”, was not a Georgian. In addition, in the history of preaching Christianity, not a single country of the East, including the countries of the Caucasus, had its own local (indigenous) preacher. All the preachers (missionaries), beginning with the apostles and their disciples, were foreigners – Thaddeus, Elisha (from Jerusalem), Bartholomew, Andrew, the Armenian “Gregory the Illuminator” (Parthian from Rome), Syrian preachers, etc. And did this give any reason to talk about the political, cultural and ideological domination of their countries over the countries of the Caucasus?

And can it be argued that the language of the missionaries and their writing became the official language and writing system of the countries where they preached? From the history of early Christianity, it is known that the language of preaching was first Syriac, then Greek, and then local languages. D.L.Muskhelishvili writes that ‘anyway, in this area [the left bank of the Alazani. – *F.M.*] in the 9–10th centuries, the presence of the Georgian population is beyond doubt’.¹⁹³ This is true and beyond doubt. In the borderlands, the presence of a mixed ethnic group – Albanian-Iberian – is quite natural. In addition, in the 9th–10th centuries, when the Albanian state collapsed, the process of Islamization of the Christian population began. In this case, it is not unexpected that in the areas bordering Iberia, the Albanian Christian population was being accustomed to Orthodoxy, and then de-ethnicized, Iberized, but the process was just beginning!

It is not surprising that the Georgian epigraphy found on the territory of Hereti, Cambisena, which D.L.Muskhelishvili is trying to refer to as one of the main arguments, dates back to the 10th century. And this is just one epitaph, again speaking nothing in favor of D.L.Muskhelishvili’s concept, as well as an inscription of the 7th century in Cambisena, on its western outskirts,¹⁹⁴ which is at the same time the eastern outskirts of Iberia. And it is difficult to say on whose territory this inscription is. Although it is quite natural that in adjacent territories it could well be mixed – both in Georgian and in Albanian.

As for the data of the Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi regarding the area of Cambisena, it seems quite clear that Cambisena up to the 10th century inclusive had been an Albanian region, an Albanian political and ecclesiastical administrative unit, i.e. a bishopric (*Movses Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17; II, 19; III, 10). “The Armenian geography of the 7th century” includes Cambisena in Albania since ancient times to the 7th century inclusive. As for the church architecture in Cambisena, Hereti, under the influence of the Diophysite branch of the Christian doctrine, it could have had much in common with the Christian architecture of Georgia, the religion of which became officially Diophysite in the 6th–7th centuries. And the church architecture of Georgia was strongly influenced by the Byzantine architecture of the Orthodox Byzantine Church. In addition, in the 6th–7th centuries, the Albanian Church still adhered to Diophysitism in alliance with the Georgian Church.

D.L.Muskhelishvili’s opinion that ‘...in the 7th century, the population of Kambechan, perhaps, was still mixed Ibero-Albanian with small inclusions of Armenian element’ seems

to be wrong.¹⁹⁵ A mixed population could be found in subsequent centuries, i.e. after the 8th–9th centuries, and before that, Cambisena had been an Albanian region with a dominant Albanian population.

D.L.Muskhelishvili used the same method to “investigate” the historical geography of the primordial Albanian region of Shaki, which he tries to include, referring to Albanian author of the 13th century Vardan the Great, into the geographically enlarged, artificially expanded by him Gugark (Gogarena), i.e. to alienate from Albania and attach to Iberia.

Summing up the study of the political borders of Albania for a long period of 1000 years (the 3rd century BC to the 8th century inclusive), we can say that the territorial boundaries of the Albanian state remained almost unchanged. With a few exceptions, there was no particular dynamics in terms of expansion or reduction of its territory, which was due to political reasons.

The geographical remoteness of the country from the two empires – Rome-Byzantium and the Parthian, Sassanid Iran, the strategic position (the presence of the Caucasian passes, Derbent, which allowed the penetration of the warlike nomads and provided trade and military channels), created favorable conditions for the preservation of state sovereignty, the political independence of the country. The Albanian kings did not pursue an expansionist policy. But the existing foreign and domestic political situations in Armenia, located at the junction of the two empires, Iberia and Albania, contributed to the stable security of the Albanian borders.

See Map 1. Albania in the 3rd century BC^{*}

Since the earliest data on the borders of the Caucasian peoples refer to sources not earlier than the 1st century BC – 1st century AD, it is possible to reconstruct the map retrospectively, which is no older than the 3rd century BC.

In the 3rd century BC, the northern borders of Albania reached the Greater Caucasus, the northern foothills of the Samur ridge, from the upper reaches of the Iori and Alazani in the northwest and to the present Derbent in the northeast (*Strabo*, XI, 4, 1; *Ptolemy*, V, 8, 7; V, 11, 1).¹⁹⁶ But, at times, the northern border could reach the Sulak river and further.¹⁹⁷ The data of *Strabo* (XI, 14, 5) and other ancient authors, information from local synchronous sources of the 7th–8th centuries, Albanian historian Movses Kaghankatvatsi and Armenian author Movses Khorenatsi, as well as the realities of that time, convince us that the southern border of Albania in the said period ran along the Aras river and in the southeast, included Caspiane.

According to *Strabo* (XI, 14, 4) ‘...the plain of the Aras, along which the Aras flows to the borders of Albania, flowing into the Caspian Sea’. Further, he (XI, 14, 5) says that the Armenians ‘...took Caspiane away from the Medes’. *Pliny* (VI, 26) writes: ‘The entire plain, starting from the Cyrus river, is inhabited by the tribe of Albanians, and then Iberians’.

Consequently, the Albanians inhabit the plain of the two banks of the Kur—the left bank and the right bank. *Strabo* (XI, I, 5) writes: ‘The Aras flows through Armenia and

^{*} See the Maps at the end of the book.

Cyrus flows through Iberia and Albania'. It is quite obvious that this information of Strabo implies that the left and right banks of the Kur were part of the territory of Albania, otherwise the Kur would be the border between Albania and Armenia and would flow both through Iberia and Albania, and through Armenia. Strabo further says: 'They (the Albanian and Iberian tribes) own fertile land and can develop a good economy'. Had the right bank of the Kur also belonged to the Armenians, Strabo's words would equally apply to the Armenians, for the right bank of the Kur is as fertile as the left one.

And, finally, Kaghankatvatsi (I, 4) and Khorenatsi (II, 8) report on the borders of Albania in the 1st century, which may retrospectively refer to the 3rd century BC: 'Aran (eponym)... who received the plains and mountains of Albania from the Araxes (Aras) river to the fortress of Hnarakert'. In the northwest, the border of Albania ran from the headwaters of the Alazani, Iori rivers, in the west, southwest to the interfluvium of the Khrami and Kur inclusive, and further along the Debed river to the headwaters of the Agstafa river and further to the south (*Strabo*, XI, 4, 5; *Pliny*, VI, 36; *Ptolemy*, V, 11, 2).¹⁹⁸

See Map 2. Albania in the 2nd–1st centuries BC

In the north, the border of Albania remained the same during this period. In the west, the border did not change, with the exception of the south-western part of Albania, where changes took place – the Kur and Khrami interfluvium (the south-western part of Cambisena) was annexed to Armenia, i.e., Komisena. The southern border of Albania ran along the Aras river, i.e. its border, in comparison with the previous period, had changed in the south-east only. Albania lost Caspiane (*Strabo*, XI, 14, 5) which was part of Armenia from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD, then it again became Albanian, and later (in the 2nd century AD) became part of Atropatene.

As for the data of Strabo (XI, 8, 4) about the regions of Arasena (XI, 14, 4), Sakasena (XI, 8, 4) as Armenian, it should be noted that other data of Strabo contradicts this data, in particular his statement that the Kur flows through Albania (XI, 4, 2), which logically implies the location of its two banks (the left bank and the right bank) on the territory of Albania. It seems to us that we should not overestimate the information of ancient authors (*Pliny*, VI, 11; VI, 16; XII, 28; *Appian*, 103; *Cassius Dio*, XXXVI, 54; *Plutarch*, *Pompey*, XXXIV), according to which the southern border of Albania was the Kur river. Their information was random, contradictory and could be inaccurate.

Out of the Albanian lands, Artaxias I only conquered Caspiane. Tigranes II's conquests did not touch the Albanian lands. In all the treaties concluded between Rome and Armenia, between Rome and Parthia regarding Armenia, according to which the territory of Armenia was divided, not a word is said about the Albanian regions. As is known, after 66 BC, under the successors of Tigranes II, Armenia was made a Roman province.

According to Plutarch (*Pompey*, 2, 45) and Appian (Chapter 117), the Romans failed to include Albania and Iberia in the Roman Empire as its provinces. All of the above gives reason to believe that the right-bank regions of the Kur continued to be part of Albania, and the border in the south ran along the Aras.

See Map 3. Albania in the 1st–2nd centuries AD

It seems to us that D.L.Muskhelishvili's assessment of the territory of Iberia in the 1st–2nd centuries is somewhat exaggerated, which he describes as ‘the period of great power of the Iberian kingdom’,¹⁹⁹ when Cambisena, in his opinion, became part of Iberia.

In fact, Iberia strengthened to some extent with the help of Rome, which finally dragged it into its political intrigues ‘aimed at fighting Parthia for de facto domination in Armenia’.²⁰⁰

The war between Iberia and Armenia in the 1st century, the rule of Armenia by Iberian princes is not an independent will and real capability of Iberia, but the implementation of the Roman political course with its support and under its direct pressure (*Tacitus, The Annals*, VI, 32; XI, 9; *Dion Cassius*, III, 26). As is known, Pharasmanes' victory over Armenia and ruling Armenia from 35 to the 50s, was achieved both with the support of Rome and with the help of the allied troops of the Albanians and the Sarmatians (*Tacitus, The Annals*, VI, 33-35, 36). All this cannot speak to the political power of Iberia, ‘which was a weapon in the struggle of Rome with Parthia and the Roman foothold for the attacks inflicted on Armenia from the north’.²⁰¹

In such a situation when Iberia was an obedient ally of Rome, if not more, and Albania, as noted above, was the only state of the Central Caucasus that remained independent from Rome, but was only under the influence of Parthia, it is unlikely that the territory of Albania in the north-west could be annexed to Iberia.

In the light of the above, we do not agree with D.L.Muskhelishvili's statement: ‘the eastern border (with Albania) had moved eastward and runs *along the lower course of the Alazani river*’ (*Pliny*, VI, 29; VDI, 1949, No.2, p.297). Pliny writes: ‘The entire plain, starting from the Cyrus river, is inhabited by the Albanians, and then by the Iberians who are separated from the former by the Okazana river flowing from the Caucasus Mountains to the Cyrus’. There is no indication in which part of the Okazana [Alazani] the Iberians are separated from the Albanians. It seems that one should not see the dynamics of borders in the inconsistent data of almost synchronous ancient authors (Strabo and Pliny), since they had nearly the same sources. It is necessary to reveal the reason for their difference. Claiming that the region of Cambisena was part of Iberia, D.L.Muskhelishvili incorrectly quotes Pliny (VI, 39). Pliny (VI, 39, VDI, 1949, No.2) writes: ‘These people (the Albanians), settled in the Caucasus mountains, reach the Cyrus river, forming the border between *Armenia and Iberia*’. In this passage, Pliny (VI, 39) means the settlement of the Albanians on the western borders of Albania, and not on the *southern* ones, for the Kur was the border between Armenia and Iberia in the area where the Armenian lands were south of the Kur. And this was Gogarena seized by Armenia, as well as the territory between the Kur and the Khrami rivers, adjacent to Gogarena in the northeast, i.e., south-western outskirts of Cambisena.

So, the northern and north-western borders of Albania, like the southern ones, remained unchanged in the 1st–2nd centuries.

Regarding the southern borders, we just recall that the Albanian and Armenian realities of the 1st–2nd centuries were such that the foreign and domestic political situation

of Albania was incomparably better than that of Armenia. Albania did not lose its independence, even if sometimes it had to align itself with Rome or Parthia.

However, Armenia, as is known, was ruled by either Atropatene or Iberian princes, Roman or Parthian henchmen. From 52 to 185, the Roman troops were in Armenia. In 63, a double dependence was established in Armenia – on Parthia and Rome. In 114–116, Armenia became a Roman province. Trajan abolished the king's power. In 117, Rome restored the Arsacid dynasty in Armenia, but Armenia continued to be dependent on Rome and paid tribute. In such a situation, it is unlikely that Armenia could expand its territory in the north-east at the expense of the Albanian lands.

See Map 4. Albania in the 3rd–4th centuries

There are virtually no sources on historical geography for the 3rd century. The 4th century was covered in the works of Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Faustus of Byzantium, and “The Armenian Geography of the 7th century”.

The western borders, as well as the northern ones, remained unchanged. As for the southern borders, according to Faustus of Byzantium, in 371, Armenian commander Mushegh started to fight with those who rebelled against the Armenian king. Among the countries “conquered by Mushegh”, Faustus of Byzantium refers to Iberia and the Albanian regions of Artsakh, Uti, Sakasena, Gardman, and Paytakaran (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 8, 13).

As has been noted, Faustus of Byzantium is obviously exaggerating the facts. According to the treaties of 66 BC, 37 AD, and 298 AD, Armenia lost all the conquered countries, retaining only the Armenian Highlands. Iberia and the Albanian regions allegedly defeated by Mushegh, were not at all included in the conquests of Armenia. In addition, the real situation in Armenia in the 1st–4th centuries contradicts the data of Faustus of Byzantium. According to the realities of Armenia and Albania, it can be considered that the border in the south of Albania continued to run along the Aras.

See Map 5. Albania in the 5th century

According to D.L.Muskhelishvili, in the 5th century, the eastern border of Iberia (i.e. the western border of Albania) changed: ‘...the province of Hereti (i.e. Yekhni and Bekh according to “Ashkharhatsuyts”) is the military administrative border of Iberia ruled by the governor of the Iberian king (eristavi).²⁰²

‘The fact that Hereti’, continues D.L.Muskhelishvili, ‘was part of Iberia is confirmed by the ‘Martyrdom of St.Shushanik’.*

It seems to us that there is no reason to so categorically locate Hereti, in the 5th century, in the present Balakan-Zagatala-Gakh area, i.e. Yekhni and Bekh (“Ashkharhatsuyts”). According to Vakhushhti, Hereti occupied the territory between the Iori and the Alazani rivers.²⁰³

* D.L.Muskhelishvili's comments on the maps for the “Atlas of the USSR”.

We object to D.L.Muskhelishvili's assertion that 'in the 480s, according to Movses Kaghankatvatsi... *Cambisena belonged to the king of Albania, but in the 490s it was regained by Iberia* as the inheritance of the prince with the center in the city of Khornabuji, where Vakhtang Gorgasali founded the episcopal see'.²⁰⁴

According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, 7), Vachagan III, the king of Albania, 'admonished and baptized many and made them learn the way to knowledge of God. In many places he established bishops and priests and supervisors. He *issued the same strict commands in Kambican*'. Consequently, Cambisena was part of Albania between 488 and 506. How did D.L.Muskhelishvili manage to establish that it was precisely in the 490s that it once again was annexed to Iberia? He refers to "Kartlis Tskhovreba" which says that Vakhtang Gorgasali '...appointed one bishop in Kornabuji'.²⁰⁵ And Vakhtang Gorgasali was almost a contemporary with Vachagan III. What had happened over those ten years?

In addition, the reign of Vachagan III was the period of the highest power, the cultural and political upsurge of the country. 'Vachagan ruled all the lands of his kingdom' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17). Besides, "The Armenian Geography of the 7th century", a source synchronous with *Kaghankatvatsi*, also attributes Cambisena at that time to Albania.

The only thing that can be assumed, taking into account the data of "Kartlis Tskhovreba" (I, 195, 199), is that in the fifth century, part of Cambisena, Hereti, (location according to Vakhushiti, p.103), i.e. part of the interfluvium of the Iori and the Alazani, or rather, the interfluvium of the middle reaches of the Iori and the Alazani rivers, was probably part of Iberia.

So, the northern border of Albania remains unchanged, and the southern one, according to Movses Kaghankatvatsi and "The Armenian Geography of the 7th century", continues to run along the Aras. Paytakaran in the first half of the 5th century enjoyed a kind of internal autonomy (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 2), but by the end of the 5th century, during the reign of Albanian king Vachagan III, it became an Albanian province (at the beginning of the 6th century, the Balasakan bishopric was mentioned among the Albanian bishoprics) (*Kaghankatvatsi* II, 7). The western border remained the same, with the exception of the Cambisena territory, part of which might have been part of Georgia.²⁰⁶

See Map 6. Albania in the 6th–7th centuries

D.L.Muskhelishvili believes that in the 6th century, the geographical situation of the late 5th century persists, i.e. the political and ethnic expansion of Iberia to the east and the penetration of East Georgian culture continue, which, in our opinion, is a groundless statement. D.L.Muskhelishvili believes that there is data testifying to this: in the 6th century, in the period of the asceticism of the so-called "Assyrian fathers" in Eastern Georgia, some of them developed their activities *in the territory of Cambisena* (p.11). And in his book, he clarifies: "*in the territory of Hereti*". One of these (fathers) was, in his opinion, Stephane Khirseli.²⁰⁷ As for the reference to "Kartlis Tskhovreba", it turned out that there that passage was an addition to the later copies of the 18th century; as for the reference in his book, in note 105 on p.75, D.L.Muskhelishvili notes that 'in the text [of the life], the area of asceticism of these monks was not Hereti, but Kakheti. This is due to the fact that when the text of the "Lives" was written... (the 10th–12th centuries) ...this

territory was already called Kakheti’, explains D.L.Muskhelishvili. As we can see, the “selfless” activity of the “Assyrian fathers” indicated by D.L.Muskhelishvili on the territory of ‘Hereti, Cambisena’ is thus far-fetched.

Even if the activity of the “Assyrian fathers” took place in Cambisena, in Hereti, this only speaks of the Syrophile period of Christianity, common to all Caucasian peoples.

Noteworthy are the words²⁰⁸ that two brothers ‘seized Cambisena... and settled in Khornabuji’. However, it is unknown how long these two brothers had Cambisena in their possession. D.L.Muskhelishvili claims that such a situation was in the 630–640s and refers to Kaghankatvatsi, whose text does not at all confirm his opinion (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19).

So, based on the data from synchronous sources of the 7th–8th century, i.e. Movses Kaghankatvatsi and “The Armenian geography of the 7th century”, as well as Arab authors, we can assume that the borders of Albania in the 6th–7th centuries remained unchanged. Thus, Kaghankatvatsi reports: ‘Thus, from the borders of Iberia to the gates of the Huns and the Araxes river, he (Javanshir – 642–681) ruled as a monarch and with splendor’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 21).

§ 3. Economy

This section is brief, as many elements thereof are sufficiently covered in the works of Azerbaijani historians and archaeologists, as well as the most recent edition of the seven-volume “History of Azerbaijan”. Furthermore, they are briefly mentioned in §1 “Political administrative units” of this chapter.

Agriculture and livestock farming. Albania was generously endowed by nature with a favorable climate, rich forests, fertile and well-irrigated steppe and foothill stretches, vast winter and summer pastures, and minerals. Albania had several soil and climatic zones, each contributing to the development of a particular sector of the economy.²⁰⁹ The well-irrigated fertile lands, as well as piedmont regions that did not need artificial irrigation because of sufficient precipitation, were the zone of the main form of economic activity of the country's population: agriculture, with its leading industries of field cropping, viticulture, and winemaking. Agriculture was widely developed in the Kur-Aras and Caspian lowlands. The Albanian soil was strikingly rich and fertile, according to both ancient and medieval Armenian and Arab authors.²¹⁰ Strabo noted that the Albanian ‘plain is irrigated better than the Babylonian and Egyptian plains with rivers and other waters’ (*Strabo*, XI, 4, 3, p. 502).

Unlike the foothill areas, agriculture could not exist without artificial irrigation in the Kur-Aras and the Caspian lowlands. Albania had a complex and widely branched irrigation system (irrigation ditches, kahrizes, canal networks), the remains of which have been revealed in excavations and prospection in different parts of the country – in the Mil Steppe (Gavurarkh), in Mugan, in the Caspian region.²¹¹

The fertile fields were also irrigated by many rivers, which was noted by Armenian authors of the 7th century, Shirakatsi, Sebeos, and the Albanian author Kaghankatvatsi. The main waterways of the country were the Kur with its tributaries, and the Aras. The fertile plains and river valleys yielded grain and industrial crops, as well as vegetable

and melon crops, and allowed the development of viticulture. According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi and Anania Shirakatsi, the population of Albania was engaged in agriculture on both banks of the Kur, Mil and Mugan steppes, and in Nakhchivan (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 5). In written sources, there is no information about the cultivation of land in early medieval Albania. Archaeological and ethnographic research has provided valuable relevant data.

According to archeological data, the Albanians had arable farming. The land was cultivated with the help of an iron ploughshare, the remains of which were found in an early-medieval settlement in Mingachevir.²¹² Archaeologists have found a large number of harvesting tools, including iron sickles, a scythe blade,²¹³ and bone claws to make sheaves.²¹⁴ According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, on both banks of the Kur barley, wheat (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 5, 26), native barley grew.²¹⁵ The Albanians cultivated millet.

Archaeological activities in the Mingachevir area, in the village of Sudagylan and ancient settlement of Khinisli, revealed the remains of barley, millet and wheat.²¹⁶ According to written sources, as well as archaeological excavations, grain crops were stored in large deep ground pits – cellars, as well as in large jugs (*Khorenatsi*, III, 32).²¹⁷ Grain was threshed with the help of threshing boards, wooden sticks, as well as by tramping out wheat using animal hooves.²¹⁸ Grains were ground with millstones, mealing stones. The discovery of numerous agricultural implements, as well as pits for storing grain, testifies to the high level of agriculture. Albania was famous for the extraordinary fertility of the vines. Viticulture was especially noted by Strabo in Albania.²¹⁹ Horticulture was highly developed in the country, including cultivation of fig trees, pomegranates, cherries, citruses, peaches, dogwood, chestnuts, walnuts, olive trees.²²⁰ Arab historians and geographers also mention saffron, mulberry trees, flax. People also made gardens; they grew watermelons, and pumpkins. The share of winemaking in agriculture was the largest. In this regard, of particular interest are free vessels, which undoubtedly were used for storing wine. They are found mainly in the Alazani Valley, in the Mil steppe and in the jar burials of Mingachevir. Madder, one of the most important dyes, was produced in Albania. 'Madder grows all over Aran from the borders of Bab al-Abwab (Derbent) to Tbilisi.²²¹ Cotton was also grown in the country, which was favored by climatic and soil conditions. According to Kaghankatvatsi, cotton was abundant along the banks of the Kur (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 5).

Cotton seeds and skeins of cotton thread were found in the catacomb burials of Mingachevir.²²²

The main agricultural population of the country was thus concentrated in the fertile valleys of the Kur and the Aras, in the foothills of the Lesser and Greater Caucasus.

These regions were the most developed in economic terms, and their social system was leading in the country. Livestock farming played an important role in the lives of the Albanian population.

Mountain areas with Alpine meadows, covered in rich grass, the steppe of the Kur-Aras lowland and the Caspian regions, with almost no snow in winter, facilitated the wide development of distant-pasture livestock farming. Albania was so famous for its pastures that the Armenians in search of food came with their herds to pass the winter on

the land of the Albanians (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 7, 21). According to ancient and early medieval authors, goats, sheep, cattle, horses, pigs, camels were raised here.

The role of hunting in the early Middle Ages steadily declined and the production of cattle and ruminants increased. We learn more about this part of the economy of Albania from Movses Kaghankatvatsi, who notes the breeding of cattle and small ruminants, as well as horse raising (including for riding) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 5, 26).²²³ He also mentions a special breed of white horses.

Arab geographers Maqdisi, Istakhri, Ibn al-Faqih, Ibn Hawqal, also note the presence in Albania of cattle and small ruminants, mules, horses, and donkeys. Dogs apparently played an important role in the livestock farming economy in the early Middle Ages, since archaeological excavations revealed the remains of their bones.²²⁴

The study of archaeological and ethnographic material shows that in the early medieval Albania, people also raised camels for the transport of goods and riding. Dairy production in early medieval Albania was at a high level. In livestock farming, clay, wooden and leather butter churns were used. Archaeological and ethnographic research testifies to the widespread production and use of wool and leather by the population of the country.

Excavations near Mingachevir, dating back to the 3rd–8th centuries, revealed sheep shears; iron shears were also found in catacomb burials. It is interesting to note that they are still used in livestock farming in Azerbaijan. Thus, the above materials show that, due to the development of livestock farming in early medieval Albania, wool production was at a high level. Albania's semi-nomadic and sedentary populations both engaged in livestock farming. Livestock farming prevailed in the upland regions where more backward forms of farming prevailed. The owners of huge herds ran their economy with rather backward methods on vast and high-mountain pastures.

Fishing also played an important role in the economic life of the country. Antique and Arab authors, as well as Movses Kaghankatvatsi emphasize the abundance of various fish for which Albania was famous. Albanians salted, dried fish and took it to Persia on camels. Its fat was used to extract some kind of healing ointment and, most importantly, by boiling the insides, they made valuable sturgeon glue from them. This testifies to the high level of economic culture of the Albanians.

Crafts. Growth of productive forces, development and strengthening of feudal relations, and the increased role of cities in the economy of Albania resulted in changes in the social structure of cities; free artisans appeared, who finally broke off ties with agriculture. The expansion of the crafts sector was aided by a rich raw material base and other necessary material resources.

Albania was famous for its weaving industry. The main raw materials for weaving were wool, flax, silk, cotton (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 16).²²⁵ The abundance of mulberries on the banks of the Kur ensured the manufacture of multi-colored silk fabrics (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 5).²²⁶ The silkworm grain was imported from China. The main dyes included madder, cochineal, as well as leaves, bark, roots, and fruit of plants.²²⁷ The large number of ruminants provided raw materials for the production of wool, wool fabrics, carpets, and thread. Archaeologists have found clay spinning wheels, kirgids, weaving looms, carpet weaving looms (in Mingachevir, Beylagan and in other places).²²⁸ Apart

from the Albanian author, Arab geographers Istakhri, Ibn Hawqal, Yaqut al-Hamawi mention linen, silk, and flax production in Albania. That is, Istakhri reports that ‘a lot of silk is exported from Barda. Silk worms are fed on mulberry trees that do not belong to anyone. A lot of silk is sent from there to Persia and Khuzestan’.²²⁹

Written sources and archaeological research indicate that the country has long been one of the centers of metallurgy and the production of metal products and utensils. In the early Middle Ages, this industry was at a high level. There were several centers for the production of metal products: the present-day Gadabay, Shirvan, Karabakh, Shaki-Zagatala, Guba, and other regions. Iron, copper, gold, silver were actively mined (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 16). A special technique for metal production and treatment has been developed: cold and hot forging, soldering, casting and embossing.²³⁰ Archaeologists have identified various casting beds and production tools. Iron items were produced for military and household purposes – iron daggers, swords, knives, sickles, plows, axes, etc.

There were highly skilled jewelers who made gold, silver, and bronze jewelry: earrings, bracelets, tiaras, rings, necklaces, belts.²³¹ An important role in Albania was played by the production of utensils from precious metals and bronze: bowls, plates, jugs, vases, dishes, and sugar bowls. Items of toreutics (artistic metalwork) found in archaeological complexes, are represented by foreign and local samples created under the influence of imported Sassanid items. Precious utensils, items of toreutics, were relatively widespread in the everyday lives of the local population.²³²

In Albania, the crafts sector included pottery. Archaeological research revealed a lot of ceramic products of various types and purposes. They were found mainly in Mingachevir, Gabala, Shamakhi, Torpaggala (Gakh district), Shergakh (Shamakhi district), Khujbala (Guba district) and in Ismayilli district. Of interest are the two-tiered quadrangular pottery forges and pottery kilns. According to Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Albanian potters made ‘various precious royal goblets’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 23).²³³ Jewelers decorated these cups with gold, silver, and precious stones. This is also confirmed by Arab geographers.²³⁴ It should be noted that since the 3rd century, there had been a sharp decline in pottery technique, which researchers explain in different ways. Some attribute this to wars and nomad invasions, which drove potters to other countries²³⁵, while others attribute it to a shift in economic formation, specifically the development of the feudal mode of production.²³⁶ Numerous glass, metal, and wooden items (jars and others), precious utensils found in the archaeological complexes of Albania of this period, suggest that the pottery in Albanian households was replaced by the said items. Pottery was used in the economy and everyday life of the lower class. Woodworking, leathercraft, and stone-cutting were highly developed in the country. The latter was used in architecture, in manufacture of gems, beads, mealing stones,²³⁷ and glass production was also developed (glass objects for household and alchemical purposes: decanters, jugs, bowls, goblets, sugar bowls, bottles, beads, etc.). Archaeologists have identified glass-melting furnaces in Amaras (Agdam district), in Torpaggala (Gakh district).²³⁸ Albanians were also known as skilled craftsmen in wood and bone carving.

So, written and archaeological data allow us to speak about a high level of craft and various industries in the 3rd–7th centuries.

§ 4. Cities

The question of the cities of the early Middle Ages, the emergence and formation of their social structures, is relevant both in domestic and foreign historical science. In the last quarter of the 20th century, the medieval cities of the Near East and Central Asia were the object of attention of historians of the former Soviet Union.²³⁹ The question of the cities of Albania (Gabala, Beylagan, Nakhchivan, Shamakhi, Derbent) was studied in dedicated works of G.M.Ahmedov, R.Mammadov, I.A.Babayev, G.A.Dzhiddi, A.A.Kudryavtsev, M.S.Hajiyev, M.H.Heydarov, and also partially reflected in the studies of K.V.Trever, Z.M.Bunyatov, S.Ashurbeyli.²⁴⁰

The period of the early Middle Ages of Albania is characterized by the growth of cities, where, along with the development (rebuilding) of old cities (Gabala, Nakhchivan, Derbent), new cities appeared (Barda, Beylagan, etc.), and the urban life was increasingly active. In the same period, Armenia suffered a decline in urban life, which is explained by the disintegration of the central state, the constant patron of cities, the gradual weakening of political power, and by the complete abolition of royal power and statehood in 428. This, in its turn, was the beginning of the strengthening of the disobedient aspirations of the Armenian feudal lords and the struggle between the naxarars and cities, the weakening of the latter, the weakening of trade ties between countries.

In Albania, however, feudal relations developed under the conditions of strong political central power (the royal power before the 6th century and after that, the power of the great Mihranid princes), which felt a substantial need for the cities, supported them as it could, used them in the struggle against the feudal lords. The newly feudalized nobility also was interested in developing newly granted lands. All of this had resulted in the prosperity of urban life, support for old cities, and the emergence of new ones. As for the trade and crafts elite in the cities of Albania, it was also interested in a powerful state with a strong central government, ensuring uninterrupted trade. Therefore, Albanian Arsacids and later Albanian Mihranids continued to be supported by the cities of Albania during the early Middle Ages.

The cities that arose on the main routes of international transit trade were characteristic of Albania. These cities included Barda, Derbent, Gabala, Chola, Beylagan. They were large administrative, trade, and craft centers. They were called in the sources “the great” and “the glorious” (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 4, 10).²⁴¹ Another type of cities was centers of crafts and trade, located in areas that were closed and remote from trade routes. Such cities included Shaki, Shamkir, Gardman, Nakhchivan, etc. These cities were at the same time fortresses where military detachments were located.²⁴² And the third type were agricultural cities. They were the administrative centers of the feudal regions, but were not cities in the socio-economic sense.²⁴³ These include the settlements of Govurqala (Aghdam district)²⁴⁴, Torpagala (Gakh district),²⁴⁵ Mingachevir and others. Rural districts whose population was engaged in agriculture were adjacent to the cities of the first two types.²⁴⁶ During this period, there were such cities as Derbent, Chola, Shabran, Shamakhi, Shaki, Gabala, Shamkir, Barda, Beylagan, Khalkhal, Amaras, Nakhchivan.

Having become the capital or residence of dynasties, a city was ahead of other cities in its economic development. The main military forces of the rulers were concentrated in the capital. On the other hand, the cities that had become political and administrative centers, often enjoyed economic privileges.²⁴⁷

As for the political structure of Albanian cities, according to Movses Kaghankatvatsi (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 19, 23), they were ruled by their local rulers (gord-zakal). Apparently, there was a so-called city meeting with the participation of all residents of the city, which made decisions in urgent political situations (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11).

The capital of Albania as from the 5th century was Barda (Partaw). Located at the crossroads of important caravan routes from Iran, Central Asia, South Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Arab countries, Byzantium,²⁴⁸ North Caucasus, it became one of the largest trade centers in the Near and Middle East. Barda (Partaw) was also the main city of the large Uti region. In the early Middle Ages, it became the political, religious and cultural center of Caucasian Albania. Barda was the seat of the last Albanian Arsacids, the great Mihranid princes, and from the 5th to the 9th centuries, of Albanian Catholicos. According to Kaghankatvatsi and Arab authors, Barda was built in the 5th century by Albanian king Vache (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 15).²⁴⁹ It was the trade and crafts center. People came here to buy silkworms, cocoons, a lot of silk, figs, madder, etc. During the Persian-Byzantine Wars in 628, Barda was destroyed by the Khazars, who were allies of Byzantium. The city was rebuilt only under the first Umayyad caliph Mu'awiyah (661–680) by the ruler of Aran (Albania) Abd al-Aziz ibn Hatim.²⁵⁰

Under the Abbasids (in 752), Barda, torn away “from the Albanian princes”, became the capital of the Aran wilayah and since that time came under the complete control of the Arabs. During the reign of Caliph Mansur, Barda had its own mint, where coins with the stamp “Barda” were minted.²⁵¹ Arab geographers of the 9th–10th centuries left many bright pages about Barda, the largest city in the Caucasus, which reached its highest prosperity under the Abbasids. Arab authors call Barda the main city of Aran, describing its beautiful buildings of baked brick and plaster, magnificent markets, crafts, and particularly about silk weaving.²⁵² In the 10th century, as a result of invasion, as well as the shift of the main transit routes from north to south and other economic reasons, the city began to fall into decay.²⁵³

Gabala was one of the important cities of Albania. It was founded in the late 4th – early 3rd century BC and lasted until the 18th century. Till the 5th century, Gabala was the capital of Albania, the seat of Albanian kings, and the Albanian archbishop. But even after the transfer of the capital to Barda, Gabala continued to remain one of the major political, church administration (bishopric), trade, crafts, and cultural centers of the country.

Following many years of archaeological work, which began in 1958, it became clear that the most ancient part of the city (4th century BC – 1st century AD) was located at the interfluvium of the Karachay and Gochalanchay. From the late 1st century till the mid-18th century, the city was located on a high hill between the Karachay and the Jovurluchay rivers. The citadel of the city covers an area of more than 25 hectares, is fortified with robust defense works and an artificial moat. It was divided into the northern part, called Selbir, and the southern part, Kala (fortress). Till the 9th century, Selbir was more populated, and in the 9th century, more people lived on the territory of the Kala.²⁵⁴

Excavations revealed the remains of numerous residential and public buildings, handicraft items, coins, bullas. The buildings were built of stone, mud and baked bricks and decorated with embossed geometric ornaments made of clay, sometimes covered with glaze.²⁵⁵ The buildings were covered with high quality tiles, which testifies to the advanced engineering level.²⁵⁶

One of the important cities of early medieval Albania was Derbent (Chola), which is known not only as the main stronghold of the Albanians, the Sassanid stronghold in the Caucasus, but also as a significant medieval city, one of the largest trade, crafts, and political centers. Derbent's strategic location on one of the most important trade routes in the ancient world, as well as its special military-strategic importance under Albanian rulers and the Sassanids, all contributed to its rapid development. In the 6th century, Derbent became known as a city with a clearly defined internal structure and topography.²⁵⁷ Sources called Derbent a "great city" (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 4, 11), a "fortress" (*Sebeos*, III, 35), "the city of the Chora pass, a great stronghold built in the middle of the sea".²⁵⁸

Derbent became a city by transforming a military and political stronghold, a strategic point of the Albanian rulers and the Sassanid kings into a significant administrative center (the seat of a large garrison) with its further development into a medieval trade and economic center.²⁵⁹ The construction activity of the Sassanian kings played a great role in this transformation, as the Albanian author eloquently reports: 'But he saw what happened to the defenders of the great city of Chola (Derbent) and to the troops who were on the marvelous walls, for the construction of which the Persian kings exhausted our country, gathering architects and seeking various materials for the construction of the great building, which was erected between the Caucasus Mountain and the great eastern sea' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11).

The scale of fortification construction required a long accumulation of many workers with various skills. Archaeological research has shown that all the defensive structures of this long wall 'have outer facings made of carefully treated stone blocks quarried and brought here from Derbent quarries, while the filling is made of local stone'.²⁶⁰ The main crafts of the city were weaving, metalworking, metallurgy, glassmaking, and pottery, which is similar not only to the dishes of the Middle East and the Caucasus, but also to the ceramics of Central Asia.²⁶¹

Derbent had a clearly defined internal structure. In terms of the urban area (about 150 hectares), it significantly surpassed many of the largest early-medieval cities of the Near East, the Central Caucasus, and Central Asia. The total area of the inhabited territory of the city (excluding the seaside region) reaches, according to archaeological data, 26-27 hectares, which is about 1/6 of the space enclosed by the city walls.²⁶² In Derbent, two component parts of the city are clearly distinguished: the citadel and the city itself. The citadel, now called Naryn-Kala, had a special place. It was the residence of the ruler of the city, the seat of his court and garrison, and the administrative, military, political, and cultural center.²⁶³ The strong walls, up to 2.5-3.5m thick, in some sections reaching 20-25m in height, made it an impregnable fortress.²⁶⁴ The early-medieval Derbent did not have another part, an urban structure – a suburb (rabad). The huge fenced-in area thus allowed the city to grow and develop over a significant area.

A special role in the structure of urban society was played by warriors, who constituted a stratum between the ruling class of the urban aristocracy and the lower strata of small traders and artisans. To protect the border, the Sassanids settled military colonists in Derbent, giving them land.²⁶⁵ Derbent is also known as a cultural center, one of the main Christian centers in the Eastern Caucasus. According to Kaghankatvatsi (HA, II, 4), the Catholicos of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church was seated here until the 6th century.

Derbent, for a long period, was the scene of fierce Arab-Khazar wars. Due to its strategic position, Derbent survived and was turned by the Arabs into the largest stronghold of the Caliphate in the Caucasus, into the most important political and ideological center.

Famous cities included Nakhchivan, Beylagan, Shamakhi, to which, as it has been noted, special studies were devoted, as well as the cities of Shaki, Shamkir, Shabran, Khalkhal, Amaras.

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CHAPTER 3.

POLITICAL HISTORY OF ALBANIA

FROM THE 4TH TO THE 8TH AND 9TH TO THE 14TH CENTURIES

§ 1. Albania under the rule of the Albanian Arsacids

The study of the Albanian Arsacids and the Albanian state of this period (1st–6th centuries) is of exceptional importance not only for the history of Azerbaijan, but also for addressing the important issue of Arsacids in general.

As is known, the policy of the Persian (Parthian) Arsacids towards the subordinate countries of the Caucasus was neither smooth nor stable. The extent of dependence of the subordinate kingdoms on the central government of Arsacid Persia varied among different kingdoms and throughout time.¹ In the 2nd–1st centuries BC, in the age of military power, and in the absence of an established administrative machinery to oversee the subordinate countries, the only feasible solution for the Persian Arsacids was to preserve the local statehood, local dynasties.² Over time, when the separatism of the vassal kingdoms began to grow, the central government of Arsacid Persia resorted to a new policy – the policy of abolishing local dynasties and transferring vassal kingdoms to representatives of the Arsacid house. This is how the lateral branches of the Arsacid house – the younger Arsacids in Persis, Elymais, Atropatene, Hyrcania, India, Armenia,³ Georgia, and Makhelonia arose.⁴ With the exception of India, the Arsacid branches reigned in these countries at the same time – in the first century. Around the same time, one of the Arsacid branches established themselves in Albania. The main sources of our information about the Albanian Arsacids are Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Faustus of Byzantium, Elishe, Khorenatsi, Agathangelos, “Lives of the Saints” (hagiographic work), “Jaryntir”,* Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Mkhitar of Ayrivank. Concerning the Albanian Arsacids, there is an opinion that the Albanian branch was established in the fourth century, and that its founder was not Vachagan I the Brave, as Kaghankatvatsi reports, but Sanatruk.⁵ M. Brosset argues that Sanatruk should be identified with the Albanian king Arsacid and placed on the list of the Albanians before Vachagan I the Brave.⁶ According to S.T. Yeremian, Albania was ruled by the Massagetae dynasty of

* *Jaryntirs* are collections of speeches of clergy, martyrological and other works, different in volume and content. Jaryntirs are to ensure the dogmatic upbringing of community members (Акопян В.А. “Армянская книга канонов” и ее редакции, 1967, с.34).

the Arsacids, which he thinks was founded on the Albanian throne in 338.⁷ Thus, S.T.Yeremian denies the existence of the Albanian Arsacid branch.

A.E.Krymsky believes that the Albanian Arsacid kings bore the title of “eran-shah” or “eran-shahin”, that the word “eran-shah” could be derived from “aran-shah”, that is, “king of Arans”, “king of the Albanians”, i.e., in his opinion, the Aranshahiks are identical to the Arsacids.⁸

N.Akinyan and B.A.Ulubabyan hold a radically different viewpoint. Specifically, N.Akinyan, in particular, believes that the list of Albanian Arsacid kings is a fabrication of the “editor” (Movses Daskhurantsi – Kaghankatvatsi). He points out that history knows (and this means, as he thinks, the information in Armenian sources) only two Albanian Arsacid kings: Urnayr (the fourth century) and Aswagen (the fifth century).⁹ As for Vache II and Vachagan III, they are mentioned only in “History of the Aghuans” [by Kaghankatvatsi] and, therefore, from the point of view of N.Akinyan, they are the figments of imagination of Daskhurantsi.¹⁰ Speaking about the rest of the Albanian Arsacids, N.Akinyan claims that these names were taken in the 8th–10th centuries from the list of Albanian nobles, i.e. again are a fiction.¹¹ So, N.A.Akinyan believes that if the data of Movses Daskhurantsi is consistent with the data of Armenian sources, then it is borrowed by Daskhurantsi from Armenian authors and, therefore, is reliable. Conversely, the information of Daskhurantsi, coming from an unidentified source, is viewed by N.Akinyan as historically unreliable.

N.Akinyan's conclusions are completely unfounded. N.Akinyan does not give any justification for his skepticism about “History of the Aghuans”, the origin of the ruling clan of Albania, and a number of other issues, thus his categorical assertion appears to be a nihilistic denial.

In his article on the royal dynasty of Albania, B.A.Ulubabyan is essentially trying to “resolve” two big questions – “about the existence” of the two Albanias of the early Middle Ages – the “Albania proper” (the left bank Albania beyond the Kur) and the Albania ‘that became part of Greater Armenia’ (the right-bank), as well as the question of Albanian kings. B.Ulubabyan's ideas are entirely unfounded.¹² Movses Kaghankatvatsi, in his opinion, is wrong, as is Mkhitar of Ayrvank, who, he says, misplaced representatives of numerous clans and administrative units and portrayed them as the rulers of a unified Albania (the left bank and the right bank). A.E.Krymsky and all others who rely on Kaghankatvatsi's misunderstanding of the rulers' list are wrong, according to B.Ulubabyan. He fully agrees with the unfounded opinion of N.Akinyan.¹³ Unlike N.Akinyan, he seeks to “clarify” who of the “few kings of Albania” owned the left-bank Albania, and who owned the right-bank Albania. Ignoring completely the data of Albanian author Kaghankatvatsi, creating an artificial model of the existence of two Albanias, based only on the data of Tacitus and Agathangelos, that the fourth representative of the Arsacid house received the dominion over the kingdom of the Maskuts, identifying this Maskut kingdom (without any reason) with the “kingdom” of the left-bank Albania, B.Ulubabyan reports that in this part of Albania in the first century, the Massagetae Arsacids established themselves. According to B.Ulubabyan's theory, these Arsacids lasted only until 428, because according to the author's logic, they “must have been” abolished at the same time as the Armenian Arsacids.¹⁴ Representatives of the Massagetae Arsacids, reigning in the left-bank Albania, according to

B.Ulubabayan, were Vachagan the Brave, Urnayr, Aswagen. As for the right-bank Albania, B.Ulubabayan, in accordance with the model invented by him, enthrones the Aranshahiks here, whose representatives were Aran and Vachagan the Pious. B.Ulubabayan altered the course of events in time and space. We discussed our thoughts on the two Albanias in Chapters 1 and 2 in detail. In this chapter, we will try to explore the question of the founder of the Albanian branch of the Arsacids and consider the reigns of some of its representatives.

K.V.Trever,¹⁵ followed by C.Toumanoff,¹⁶ believes that the Albanian Arsacids established themselves in the first century and held out with the help of the Iranian Arsacids until the sixth century, ‘when Albanian monarchy was overthrown by Iran and the country was entrusted to Iranian governors’.¹⁷

Now let's look at the data from the relevant sources. Kaghankatvatsi reports that Parthian Valarshak appointed a prince and rulers over the inhabitants of Albania, ‘the head of all of them at the behest of Valarshak was someone from the Sisakan clan from the descendants of Japheth (Aran), who inherited the fields and mountains of Albania from the Araxes river to the Hnarakert fortress... From among the brave and famous descendants of the same Aran, they say, *Parthian* Valarshak appointed a governor over the country... From his children, they say, descended the peoples of the Utik, Gardman, Tsovdia and Gargarean principalities’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 4). Khorenatsi reports that Armenian king Valarshak appointed Aran the governor of the northeastern country, great, glorious and densely populated, near a large river that cuts its way through the great plain and is called the Kur. ‘But know that I forgot to mention this great and eminent family in the 1st book, that is about the Sisak clan, who inherited the Albanian plain with its mountainous part, from the Araxes river to the fortress called Hnarakert...’ (*Khorenatsi*, II, 8). It is obvious from these texts that Aran (the eponym of the Albanians) was not of the Arsacid clan, but rather of the Sisak (Sisakan – Syunik).

As for the Albanian kings of the Arsacid dynasty, Kaghankatvatsi kept a separate list of them, consisting of ten kings: ‘The number of days from Aran to the brave Vachagan, *who descended from the great Arsacid family, is unknown*. Here are the names of the kings who ruled Albania in due order: Vachagan the Brave (I), Vache (I), Urnayr, Vachagan (II), Merkhavan, Sato, Asai, Aswagen, Vache (II), after him Vachagan the Pious (III) the king of Albania’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 15). This list also shows that Aran is not an Arsacid. Obviously, the local dynasty is being replaced by the Arsacid branch. The fact that the ten kings recorded in the list were Arsacids is supported by other data of the Albanian author: ‘*From Vachagan I the Brave to Vachagan III the Pious, there were ten kings*. After his death, this clan (azgn) began to decay and the princes from the Mihran clan, from the Sassanids, arriving from Persia, established themselves in Albania’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). This can be traced in another fragment: ‘The patricians from the Karoyan people, who settled in the Azbed region at the behest of Vachagan the Pious, their ancestors were Vachagan the Brave, Vache and those who follow in order in this book’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 10). The above texts also show how wrong it was to divide the list of Albanian kings at one's own discretion and to assign some of them to the Aranshahiks and others to the Arsacids, as B.Ulubabayan did.

As we have seen, the cited fragments also omitted the name Sanatruk, whom researchers believe to be the founder of the Albanian Arsacids.

Sanatruk is a historical figure associated with the invasion of northern peoples into Armenia, which, in addition to the Albanian historian who calls him Sanesan – Sanatruk, is also mentioned by Armenian historians – Faustus of Byzantium (Sanesan), Movses Khorenatsi (Sanatruk), Kirakos Gandzaketsi, and other historians of later periods. It should be noted that the issue of the invasion of northern peoples led by Sanatruk (Sanesan) in Armenia is covered in detail in the work of K.V.Trever.¹⁸ She analyzed, compared the texts of sources, revealed their inconsistencies, determined the historical reliability of individual reports and came to the conclusion that in the 330s, military operations of the northern peoples against Armenia took place under the leadership of a relative of the Armenian Arsacids, named Sanesan or Sanatruk. In the history of Armenia's struggle against Sanatruk, K.V.Trever sees two successive stages described by Movses Khorenatsi and Movses Kaghankatvatsi, and in her opinion, Faustus of Byzantium, describes the events of the second stage only.¹⁹ K.V.Trever comes to the conviction that the invasion of the northern peoples, the Maskuts, did not affect Albania.²⁰

In our work, we will try to clarify (specifically) the date of Sanatruk's (Sanesan) invasion and take the liberty to challenge the opinion established in the official literature that the founder of the Albanian Arsacid branch is Sanatruk (Sanesan), a representative of the Massagetae branch of the Arsacids.²¹

The name of Sanatruk is first mentioned in connection with the name of Grigoris, the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, with his missionary activities in Albania, Iberia and the country of the Maskuts. In this regard, we will consider the texts where the name of Grigoris is mentioned with Sanatruk, since not all the passages we are considering were cited by K.V.Trever.

Let's briefly outline the events associated with Sanatruk and Gregory, according to Faustus of Byzantium and Movses Kaghankatvatsi, for their data is the closest.

According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Grigoris, the son of Vrtanes, the grandson of Gregory the Illuminator, 'consecrated as bishop of Albania and Iberia at the age of fifteen, illuminated both countries... built churches in cities and villages, consecrated priests' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). Faustus of Byzantium reports: '...at the age of fifteen, he reached the rank of bishop over the Iberian and Albanian countries, that is, *to the borders of the Maskuts*. Arriving there, he restored churches, establishing an illuminating order...' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 5).

Further, Movses Kaghankatvatsi has a passage that Faustus does not. That is, he reports that Grigoris took with him 'a particle of the blood of the great high priest and martyr Zacharias, father of John, and the relics of St.Pantaleon who was crowned in the city of Nicomedia. He took away the holy relics of the martyrs to the great Albanian city Tsri, built a small church and put a particle of Zacharias's blood and the relics of St.Pantaleon in it' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). Further, Faustus of Byzantium and Movses Kaghankatvatsi are unanimous. Both sources report the departure of Grigoris from Albania to the Maskuts. Faustus writes: 'Having put in order and restored all the churches located in those parts of the country [in Albania and Iberia. – *F.M.*], he arrived at the camp of the Arsacid king of the Maskuts, whose name was Sanesan, for both their kings and the Armenian kings were of the same origin and clan' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 6). This is what Movses Kaghankatvatsi says: 'Taking with him the other half of the relics of St.Zacharias and

Pantaleon, he went to the country of the Maskuts and appeared before Sanatruk, the king of the Maskuts, a fellow countryman of the Arsacids' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14).

It should be noted that the Albanian historian considers Sanatruk to be simply a fellow countryman of the Arsacids, without clarifying which ones, the senior or junior, while Faustus reports that the Maskut kings and the Armenian kings were of the same origin.

Furthermore, according to both historians, Grigoris first succeeded in preaching Christianity among the Maskuts. 'At first, they (the Maskuts) obeyed, accepted, and yielded' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 6). Movses Kaghankatvatsi puts it in a somewhat different way: '...they gladly accepted and believed the gospel word not for the first time' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14).

According to the same sources, when the Maskuts discovered that the Christian doctrine persecutes (prohibits) 'robbery, predation, murder, greed, passion for other people's property, they became enraged' and found that these were the machinations of the Armenian king who decided to suppress the predatory raids of the Maskuts on Armenia with the help of Christian teachings (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 6; *Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). They decided to kill Grigoris. 'Let's get him out of the way and make a raid on Armenia. And the king changed his mind and heeded the words of his army' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 6). 'They enticed the king into their evil craftiness' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14).

The above passages make it quite obvious that the Maskuts had evil intentions only against Armenia. Both historians confirm that they tied Grigoris to the tail of a wild horse and let it go across the Vatnyan field and killed him (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 6; *Kaghankatvatsi* I, 14).

Thus, comparison of the texts of the two sources reveals similarities in meaning, but not in style. *Kaghankatvatsi* reports data that *Faustus of Byzantium* does not have. Thus, for example, the Albanian historian says that Grigoris had the relics of St.Zacharias and St.Pantaleon. This information is very significant since it aims at exalting the Albanian Church by the presence in it of the relics of such deeply revered pillars of Christianity as Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, and Pantaleon, the great martyr of Christ, who was killed in Nicomedia under Maximilian (285–305). Apparently, the Albanian historian contrasts these names with the names of St.John and St.Athanagine, whose relics were brought to Armenia by St.Gregory. N.Akinyan says in this regard: 'Perhaps the preference of the saint comes from the Aghuank monastery of Panta, which was established in Jerusalem. The word "Panta" is etymologically explained as an abbreviated form of "Pantaleon".'²²

An important addition is also *Kaghankatvatsi's* words that Grigoris '...received the double honor enjoyed by the celestial prominence of his grandfather, the great Gregory, namely the honor and throne of the most sublime martyr's crown' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14).^{*} The addition of the Albanian historian is noteworthy: '[The Maskuts] ...believed the gospel word not for the first time' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). The author, apparently, implies the preaching activity of St.Elisha and other predecessors of Grigoris.

^{*} M.Brosset suggests that "double honor" should be understood as "the right of birth and valor" (Brosset M. *Extraits de histoire des Aghovans*, 1861, p.481). It seems that by "double dignity" one can interpret that Grigoris was a Catholicos of two countries – Albania and Iberia, i.e. sat on two thrones.

Of the two historians, Faustus of Byzantium (the fifth century), as is known, is closer in time to the described events.** Based on the above, the following assumptions can be made – either Movses Kaghankatvatsi used the work of Faustus and, being an Albanian historian, interpreted the facts in his own way, or both historians borrowed information from other shared sources.

The messages of Movses Khorenatsi stand apart from the texts of the two sources. Khorenatsi provides no information about the events associated with the appearance of Grigoris among the Maskuts, about the Maskut king, the Maskuts. According to Khorenatsi, Armenian king Trdat III was asked by *the rulers of the northeastern regions, the rulers of the remote town of Paytakaran* to send them a bishop of St.Gregory's clan. Trdat agreed, according to Khorenatsi, and sent young Grigoris, the son of Vrtanos, with Trdat's relative Sanatruk the Arsacid (*Khorenatsi*, III, 3). Khorenatsi continues: ‘Grigoris, having arrived at place, showed a good example, following the virtue of his fathers, he even surpassed them in chastity... When the news of Trdat's death came, through the wiles of Sanatruk himself and some other ever deceitful people – the Albanians – the barbarians killed the blessed man putting him under horse hooves on the Vatnyan field’ (*Khorenatsi*, III, 3).

According to Kaghankatvatsi and Faustus of Byzantium, as we have seen, Grigoris, having illuminated the Albanians, came to Maskut king Sanesan. Faustus of Byzantium mentions Sanesan, Kaghankatvatsi – both Sanesan and Sanatruk. Khorenatsi speaks about Sanatruk – not as about the king of the Maskuts, but as a relative of Trdat, sent by him (Trdat) to the vicinity of Paytakaran together with Grigoris. According to Faustus of Byzantium and Kaghankatvatsi, Grigoris was a high priest, the Catholicos of Albania and Iberia; according to Khorenatsi, Grigoris was the bishop of the region of Paytakaran, i.e. Caspiane, subject to the Armenian king. As Faustus and Kaghankatvatsi report, Grigoris was killed by the Maskuts (the Huns) with the consent of their king Sanesan, and Khorenatsi believes that Grigoris was killed ‘through the wiles of Sanatruk himself and some other ever deceitful people – the Albanians – by the barbarians’.

Y.S.Gagloyev's attempts to see in the Albanians mentioned by Movses Khorenatsi the Alans recorded by Faustus of Byzantium in connection with the invasion of Armenia by Sanesan (Sanatruk),²³ appear unconvincing, as the scene, the territory where the Albanians and Alans lived, differs between the two authors. Faustus of Byzantium's Alans were part of the Maskut army of Sanesan, living on the western Caspian coast to the Kur river. Khorenatsi's Albanians were the inhabitants of the Paytakaran region located below the Kur.

Thus, returning to Khorenatsi's concept, it is quite obvious how much it differs from the facts of Faustus of Byzantium and Kaghankatvatsi. Faustus of Byzantium makes a hint that Paytakaran was covered by the missionary activities of Grigoris. That is, he reports that Grigoris ‘was a Catholicos of Iberia and Albania; being consecrated, he... built and restored

** But in the light of N.G.Garsoyan's study, Faustus of Byzantium's data should be treated very critically. Гарсоян Н.Г. Армения в IV в. (К вопросу уточнения терминов “Армения” и “верность”) // ВОН АН Арм.ССР 1971, №3, с.55-62; Garsoian N.G. The Epic Histories: Attributed to P'awstos Buzand (Buzandaran Patmut'iwnk), 1989.

all the churches of those countries, up to the gavars bordering on Atrpatakan' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 6). The gavar that directly bordered Atrpatakan was Paytakaran.

Based either on this information of Faustus of Byzantium or on another, unknown to us, and, most likely, owing to specific factors, Movses Khorenatsi narrows (limits) the territorial geographical scope of Grigoris' activities. The events that took place in Iberia, Albania and in the country of the Maskuts are relocated by Movses Khorenatsi to the so-called north-eastern region of Armenia – the Paytakaran region. It is quite obvious that Khorenatsi could not identify the territory of Paytakaran with the territory of the Maskuts country, since his sources – Agathangelos and Faustus of Byzantium – clearly distinguish between them (*Agathangelos*, ch. 842). Khorenatsi could understand Paytakaran in a later sense, as an Albanian area.* But even in this case, he should not have kept silent about the country of the Maskuts, because Albania and the country of the Maskuts, according to sources, are independent countries. In his account of Grigoris, Faustus of Byzantium makes a clear distinction between them: 'He (Grigoris) ...attained the rank of bishop over the Iberian and Albanian countries, that is, to the boundaries of the Maskuts' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 5).

Movses Kaghankatvatsi also makes a clear distinction between Albania and the country of the Maskuts. '...Taking with him the other half of the relics of St.Zacharias and Pantaleon (and one half Grigoris left in Albania), he went to the country of the Maskuts' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 4).

Since it is not known what Khorenatsi relied upon to show the events in a different way, it is difficult to follow his reasoning which led him to different conclusions. Khorenatsi's information gets some clarity from the subsequent course of events related to Sanesan (Sanatruk)'s invasion of Armenia and Khorenatsi's subsequent accounts about Sanatruk coincide with those of Kaghankatvatsi. In this case, the data of Faustus stands apart.

So, according to Khorenatsi, after the death of Trdat and the killing of Grigoris, Sanatruk 'set the crown on his head, seized control of the city of Paytakaran, with the help of foreign peoples he conceived to take possession of the entire Armenia' (*Khorenatsi*, III, 3). Further, according to Khorenatsi, Armenian and Greek troops led by Greek commander Antiochus attacked Sanatruk. The latter, accompanied by Albanian naxarars, hurried to the Persian king Shapur II (*Khorenatsi*, III, 6). Antiochus 'ordered to destroy the power of the rebellious by force and, having collected tribute, went to the emperor' (*Khorenatsi*, III, 6). Movses Kaghankatvatsi very briefly touches upon the same event of Khorenatsi. 'After the death of Trdat, a certain Sanatruk established himself over the Albanians in the city of Paytakaran and became the enemy of the Armenians. Khosrow, the son of Trdat, bringing with him Antiochus with the Greek army, Bagarat with the troops of the west, Mihran, the ruler of Iberia, together with all of them, he waged war against Albania. Sanatruk with the Albanian army (Khorenatsi: with the Albanian naxarars)

* Although, judging by Khorenatsi' text, Khorenatsi implies an Armenian gavar (region) by Paytakaran: 'Trdat was extremely keen on faith and good morality, especially of those living in the remotest lands of his state. This is why the rulers of the northeastern countries – regions, the rulers of the city of Paytakaran came to him...' (*Хоренацци*, III, 3).

hurriedly went to Shapur, the king of the Persians, leaving a strong army in the city of Paytakaran. Antiochus collected royal taxes and returned to the emperor' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 12). The difference between the texts of Kaghankatvatsi and Khorenatsi is only in the editorial amendment of the Albanian historian.

It should be noted that Kaghankatvatsi's accounts of Sanatruk partially coincide both with the data of Khorenatsi and that of Faustus of Byzantium. As an Albanian historian, he values any fragmentary information about the Albanian country, Albanians, regions of Albania, he uses data from sources selectively and interprets them in his own way. Kaghankatvatsi does not provide Khorenatsi's version of the mission of Grigoris with Sanatruk to Paytakaran, he does not know it, he has the same version that Faustus of Byzantium has.

Movses Kaghankatvatsi, who discovered information that Faustus did not have about Paytakaran, Sanatruk's accession there, the backing of the Albanian (Paytakaran) naxarars of Sanatruk, considering Paytakaran an Albanian region, describes these events as occurring not only in Paytakaran (as Khorenatsi does), but throughout Albania in general. Kirakos Gandzaketsi (the 13th century) also considered Sanatruk to be the ruler of the entire Albania: 'Sanatruk was made *the ruler of Albania* by Trdat. After the death of the latter, he went to Persian king Shapur II, received royal power from him and took Albania away from Khosrow (the Armenian king)',²⁴ although historically, as is known, Albania was subject to neither Trdat nor Khosrow Kotak.

Kirakos Gandzaketsi most likely drew inspiration from the works of Movses Khorenatsi and Kaghankatvatsi. And most likely, Kirakos was subject to Armenian editing later.

As already noted, Faustus lacks the information of Khorenatsi and Kaghankatvatsi about the accession of Sanatruk in Paytakaran, about the arrival of Greek commander Antiochus. Apparently, chronologically, these events might have preceded the invasion of Armenia by Sanatruk, as reported by all the three sources – Faustus, Kaghankatvatsi and Khorenatsi.

According to Khorenatsi, 'the inhabitants of the northern land of the Caucasus ...incited by the requests of Sanatruk, by the secret order of Shapur, the Persian king, united and attacked with 20 thousand troops the middle of our [Armenian] homeland' (*Khorenatsi*, III, 9). Khorenatsi further reports: '...the enemies defeated our northern regiments, put them to flight, appeared under the walls of Vagharshapat and besieged it'. (*Khorenatsi*, III, 9). Then 'the enemy troops were driven out by the *Armenians to the Oshakan rock* where they were defeated and put to flight'.

The Albanian historian reflected the invasion of Armenia by the North Caucasian tribes led by Sanatruk in the first book, in two separate chapters – XII and XIV, and in completely different ways. In chapter XII, he offers the version of Khorenatsi, keeping the name Sanatruk, and in chapter XIV, he sets out the version of Faustus of Byzantium, keeping the name Sanesan. Such a discrepancy, inconsistency is encountered in Kaghankatvatsi in connection with Sanesan – Sanatruk. It could be a result of editing made in later periods.

Let's take a look at chapter XII of Movses Kaghankatvatsi. 'Sanatruk, by the order of King Shapur, gathers 30 thousand Albanian troops and invades the middle of Armenia'. As

previously stated, Kaghankatvatsi describes the events surrounding Sanatruk as taking place in Albania. And in this passage, he refers to the Albanian army by the North Caucasian peoples, i.e. Sanatruk's driving force against Armenia was the Albanian army.

Of particular interest is the fact that Kaghankatvatsi did not clarify how the battle of Oshakan between the Armenian troops and, as follows from the words of the Albanian historian, the Albanian forces, ended. According to Movses Khorenatsi, the Armenian troops won a victory, defeated and put to flight the northern peoples, which is confirmed by other sources and which is probably historically true. In Kaghankatvatsi's theory, the forces opposing the Armenians were Albanian troops and, naturally, the Albanians had to be defeated. Perhaps, not daring to depict the Albanian troops as winners, since this would contradict the source data, and equally hesitant to show them defeated, the Albanian historian did not say anything at all about the outcome of the battle (if only this is not a later edition).

The invasion of Armenia by Sanesan, the leader of the North Caucasian nomadic tribes, is described in detail and somewhat differently by Faustus of Byzantium. According to Faustus, Maskut king Sanesan 'became imbued with enmity towards his kinsman, Armenian king Khosrow' and, having gathered the nomads of the Caspian coast, including, along with the peoples of the northern Caspian coast, the "Balasiches" [the residents of Paytakaran-Balasakan. – *F.M.*], crossed his border, 'the big Kur river and flooded the Armenian country' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7). Further, he says, the Maskuts took possession of the entire Armenia. 'They rushed, flooded and crowded the entire Armenian country ...stretched out to the city of Satala, to Gandzak...' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7).

Sanesan violently seized the entire country and held it for almost a year (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7). And Armenian king Khosrow, according to Faustus, together with Armenian Patriarch Vrtanes, took refuge in the Daruynk fortress in the land of Kovgh (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7). Later, according to Faustus, the commander of Great Armenia Vache from the Mamikonian clan gathered a strong army and defeated Sanesan's troops in the battle of Oshakan (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7). 'They (the Armenians) drove the scanty remnants in front of them to the Balasiches' country [i.e., Paytakaran. – *F.M.*]. And the head of the great king Sanesan was brought to the Armenian king' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7). And Faustus' description ends with the words: 'Thus they avenged St. Grigoris on King Sanesan and his army, for none of them survived' (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 7).

As previously noted, this information of Faustus is reflected by Kaghankatvatsi in chapter XIV as follows: '...Sanesan with countless Hunnic troops invaded Armenia. But the God's blessing gave strength to the nobles of Armenia to demand revenge for the death of the young St. Grigoris. All the countless troops were defeated by their swords, and there was not even a messenger left to bring the sad news to the country of the Maskuts' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). Kaghankatvatsi, apparently, did not understand that this was the same event and did not understand the identity of Sanatruk and Sanesan. That is, in chapter XII, Sanatruk led the Albanian army against Armenia, and in chapter XIV Sanesan, the leader of the numerous Huns, led them to Armenia.

Now let's briefly touch upon the theories of Faustus of Byzantium and Movses Khorenatsi, leaving aside Movses Kaghankatvatsi whose information about Sanatruk is in

line now with Khorenatsi, now with Faustus. According to Faustus of Byzantium, Sanesan is a Maskut king, the ruler of the numerous Huns, whose power covered the northern Caspian coast, the southern border of which was the Kur, with the knowledge of whom Grigoris was killed by the Maskuts. Sanesan invaded with a large army which included the *inhabitants of Paytakaran – the Balasiches*. He controlled the entire Armenia for a whole year. His army was defeated by Armenian commander Vache Mamikonian together with the Greek and Iberian troops, and he himself was killed.

According to Movses Khorenatsi, Sanatruk, a relative of Armenian king Trdat, was sent to Paytakaran (Caspiane) together with Grigoris. With the consent of Sanatruk and the Albanians, Grigoris was killed. Sanatruk became the king of Paytakaran. At his instigation and the order of Persian king Shapur II, the peoples of the northern Caucasus countries attacked Armenia. And further Movses Khorenatsi does not report anything about Sanatruk. According to him, the northern peoples besieged Vagharshapat, but were driven out to Oshakan, and then put to flight.

As is known, Movses Khorenatsi, having made extensive use of Faustus of Byzantium's work, having cardinally revised it, created his "History of Armenia" imbued with patriotism, as opposed to some indifference of Faustus of Byzantium.²⁵ If we take into account that 'Movses Khorenatsi lived in the seventh century, during the period of a kind of cultural revival of the Armenian nation', which somewhat recovered from the brutal blows inflicted on it from the West by Byzantium and from the East by the Iranians',²⁶ then the reason for the distortion of the course of historical events of the 3rd–4th centuries by Movses Khorenatsi will become clear.

In Khorenatsi, we can see two tendencies:

1) he presents the illumination of Albania, Iberia, the country of the Maskuts (data from Faustus of Byzantium) by Gregory as illumination of the remote region of Armenia – Paytakaran (Caspiane);

2) the conquest of Armenia by Sanatruk is limited by Khorenatsi to the conquest of Paytakaran by Sanatruk. And for the sake of the set goal, he limits the sphere of power and narrows the territorial conquests of Sanatruk, turning him from a Maskut king, "the ruler of the numerous Huns", into a subordinate relative of Armenian king Trdat, sent by Trdat 'to one of the remote regions of Armenia – Paytakaran'. Khorenatsi omits Faustus of Byzantium's accounts that Sanatruk possessed the entire Armenia for a whole year, when Armenia had its own Arsacid king – Khosrow Kotak who was not able to defeat Sanatruk. G.Khalatyants also noted that Khorenatsi altered and presented in a separate chapter (III, 12) the report of Faustus of Byzantium (III, 7) about the possession of Armenia by the Maskuts during a year, not linking this event with Sanatruk, but showing it as occupation of the Albanian borders by the barbarians during four years.²⁷ Again, we can clearly see Khorenatsi's tendency to protect Armenia from the events and circumstances compromising it, creating, from the point of view of Khorenatsi, an unpleasant impression of the Armenians, and to transfer them to the neighboring Albania and to present the latter as a vassal country, dependent on Armenia, because its ruler is a relative of the Armenian king, subordinate to him, and not the younger Arsacid ascending directly to the Persian Arsacids.

Returning to the problem of the Albanian Arsacids, as we have noted, the researchers of the last century and modern ones, based on Khorenatsi's accounts about the accession of Sanatruk in Paytakaran, argue that it was this Sanatruk who was the founder of the Albanian Arsacid branch in the 330s.

If the researchers take into account the accounts of Khorenatsi about the establishment of Sanatruk in Paytakaran, then equally, if not more, they should reckon with the Faustus of Byzantium who asserts that Sanatruk (Sanesan) possessed the entire Armenia for a whole year, especially since he pursued this goal. And on this basis, we can conclude that Sanatruk was the founder of the subsequent Armenian Arsacids. However, researchers do not come to this conclusion, apparently, due to the fact that Armenia had its own Arsacid branch long before Sanatruk and it reigned after him. Further, sources other than Kaghankatvatsi do not report anything about the descendants of Sanatruk.* In this case, the Albanian branch of the Arsacids also had reigned in Albania before Sanatruk (Sanesan). Its founder, according to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, was Vachagan I the Brave, whose successors were Vache I and Urnayr. At the moment of Sanatruk' invasion, Albania was ruled by Urnayr. According to Kaghankatvatsi and the message of Armenian Bishop St. Kyut to Vache II, the Albanian king, Urnayr was a contemporary of Armenian king Trdat (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 9, 11). The earliest chronological mention of Urnayr dates back to after 313 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 9) [The dating is ours. – F.M.]. The last chronological line of mentioning Urnayr is the battle of Dzirav in 371 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 13). As we can see, Urnayr was the king before the invasion of Sanatruk and after him. The silence about him in connection with Sanatruk is apparently explained by the fact that, as K.V. Trever correctly noted, the invasion of Sanatruk did not mainly affect Albania.

As is known, the Sassanids at that time were trying to weaken the rear of Armenia, dependent on Rome. The invasion of Armenia by the North Caucasian peoples – the Maskuts – was enticed by Persian king Shapur II, who, trying to weaken the Armenian Arsacids, supported various claimants to the Armenian throne in their fight against the Armenians, even the Massagetae Arsacids. As for Albania, Albanian king Urnayr was an ally of the Persian king. In addition, he was related to Shapur II by family ties. Even if we assume that the Albanian Arsacid branch was not reigning in Albania at that time, then, in all likelihood, Persian king Shapur II would not have allowed the establishment of new Arsacids hated by them (the Sassanids) in Albania in the fourth century, but would have put there his kinsman from the Sassanid dynasty. The Sassanids, at the beginning of the third century, having destroyed the elder Persian Arsacids, tried to weaken the Armenian Arsacids and for this purpose organized the invasion of Armenia by Sanatruk. Therefore, it is unlikely that in the fourth century it led to the accession of new Arsacids in Albania, even if they were Maskuts. As is known, the Persian Arsacids and the Sassanids pursued the same policy towards the peoples of the Central Caucasus, i.e. in order to strengthen their power in the kingdoms dependent on them, they enthroned their relatives in these

* It is known that the three sons of Sanesan (Sanatruk) – Movses, Daniel and Elijah – and all 3870 men believed and were baptized by Grigoris. After the martyrdom of Grigoris, they went to Artsakh where they led a hermitic life. They were killed by Sanesan, the king of the Maskuts. Каганкатвацци, II, 5; Бархударянц М. Албания и ее соседи, 1893, с.62 (in Arm.).

kingdoms. This is what the Sassanids did to Albania in the sixth and seventh centuries, when they established their kindred Mihranids there.

It is no coincidence that the list of the Albanian Arsacids, given by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, does not include the name of Sanatruk, which is historically justified (right). So, the researchers' opinion about the establishment of the Massagetae branch of the Arsacids in Albania does not seem to be confirmed in sources.

Now let's try to specify the date of Sanatruk's invasion, given that the missionary activities of Grigoris, his assassination and Sanatruk's invasion are chronologically interconnected and follow each other. It is enough to date one of the links of this chain. M.Brosset, referring to M.Chamchyan, believes that Grigoris was assassinated in 343,^{*} therefore, Sanatruk's campaign took place after 343. The same date is accepted by M.Barkhudaryants,²⁸ J.Markwart^{**} and after him Y.A.Manandian,²⁹ who date the invasion of Sanatruk to 335; S.T.Yeremian³⁰ and S.H.Hovannisian³¹ dated this to 338; G.H.Svazyan – to 330/331.³²

As for the date of the invasion of Sanatruk (Sanesan), the data of Movses Khorenatsi, Faustus of Byzantium, Movses Kaghankatvatsi and later authors is the same. According to them, this took place during the reign of Armenian king Khosrow Kotak. According to the official traditional opinion, Khosrow Kotak reigned from 332 to 338.^{***} According to Faustus of Byzantium, in the year of the Maskuts' invasion, the Armenian Patriarch was Vrtanes, the son of Gregory the Illuminator (*Faustus of Byzantium*, I, 7). This data, apparently, should be taken as correct, as the invasion of the Maskuts, as is known, was preceded by the consecration of Grigoris, the son of Vrtanes, who, as we believe, was consecrated by his father. Consequently, if Vrtanes had been free and had not been the Patriarch, then, naturally, he would have been appointed as the Catholicos of Albania and Iberia, and the choice would not have fallen on the young fifteen-year-old Grigoris,

* M.Brosset believes that Grigoris was consecrated by his brother Husik, the Catholicos of Armenia. And referring to the opinion of M.Chamchyan, he believes that Grigoris was killed by the Maskuts in 343 (Brosset M. *Extraits de histoire des Aghovans*, 1861, p.473). It seems that M.Brosset is mistaken, because Faustus of Byzantium reports that Husik led a secular life, was married, and therefore he became a Catholicos much later, during the reign of Tiran, i.e., in 338–345. According to reliable official chronology, Husik was a Patriarch in 341–347. As sources report, the consecration of Grigoris took place no later than the reign of Khosrow Kotak, and the event following the consecration of Grigoris – the invasion of the Maskuts – also took place during the reign of Khosrow Kotak. Consequently, Grigoris could not have been consecrated under Tiran, the successor of Khosrow Kotak. M.Chamchyan believes that the consecration of Grigoris as Catholicos took place under Vrtanes. But M.Chamchyan does not provide the time of this event. He believes that Grigoris was not 15 years old at that time, but 25 (Чамчян М. *История Армении*. Венеция, 1784–1786, ТТ. I–III (in Arm.), с.600). We think that M.Chamchyan was mistaken believing that Grigoris was 25 years old and that he was consecrated not under Trdat, but under Khosrow.

** J.Markwart believes that Vache Mamikonian, sparapet of Armenia, was sent to the Greek land to ask for help to fight Sanatruk. Based on a Roman source stating that in 335, Constantine's half-brother's son Hannibalianus was given the title of “the king of kings” and sent to rule the Pontic peoples, J.Marqwart and after him Y.M.Manandian believe that Hannibalianus was the supreme ruler of Georgia and Armenia and that, in 335, he was ordered to liberate Armenia from the northern peoples of the Caucasus, i.e. from Sanesan (Marquart J. *Die Entstehung der armenischen Bistumer / Orientalia Christiana*, XXVII, 2, Roma, 1932, p.77-78).

*** The historical dates of Armenia in the 3rd–5th centuries are disputable. As reported by G.H.Sargsyan, ‘there are three points of reference: the dates of the accession of Trdat and Pap, the date of the fall of the Armenian Arsacids’: Саркисян Г.Х. *Хронологическая система “Истории Армении” Мовсеса Хоренаци*. Ереван, 1965, с.181 (in Arm.).

which was obviously considered to be inconsistent with the canons. This assumption is supported by Movses Khorenatsi's words that the rulers of Paytakaran asked for a bishop from Gregory the Illuminator's clan, without specifying who exactly they want. According to the traditional reliable chronology, Vrtanes was patriarch from 336 to 341.

Consequently, the Maskuts invaded Armenia not earlier than 336 and not later than 338 (the last year of Khosrow Kotak's reign), since they were defeated during the reign of Khosrow Kotak. During this time, Grigoris carried out his mission in Albania, in the country of the Maskuts, was murdered, and the Maskuts invaded Armenia. According to sources, the Maskuts ruled Armenia for a whole year, therefore, they participated in the campaign in 336–337 and were defeated at Oshakan in 338.

Now that we have found out that the founder of the Albanian Arsacid branch was not Sanesan (Sanatruk) and specified the date of his appearance, let's return to the question of the Albanian Arsacid branch. We consider it necessary to trust the data of "History of the Aghuans" by Kaghankatvatsi, from which it is clear that the first Arsacid king in Albania was Vachagan I the Brave. The time of the appearance of the first Albanian Arsacid – Vachagan the Brave – is the same as the appearance of the first younger Arsacids in Atropatene, Armenia, the country of the Maskuts and in other countries.³³ The younger Arsacids were enthroned by Persian (Parthian) Valarsh (Vologases) I (51–57), son of Vonones.³⁴ Movses Khorenatsi, using the list of the Armenian Arsacids, borrowed from Anonymous, made creative changes to it.³⁵ Turning Trdat I, the founder of the Armenian Arsacid branch, into a Valarsh (Valarshak), of the same name to the Persian Valarsh, he thus made confusion. According to Khorenatsi's concept, the first ruler of Albania, Aran, was appointed by the Armenian Valarsh, instead of the really existing Persian Valarsh. As for the Albanian author, in connection with the appointment of the ruler of Aran, he mentions Valarsh now as an Armenian now as a Parthian king, which, in our opinion, is explained by the Armenian editing made later.

We consider Khorenatsi's data to be incorrect in this case for the simple reason that Albania, both in the first century and in the previous and subsequent periods, was not subject to Armenia, and the Armenian king could not appoint his ruler for Albania (see: Chapter 2 hereof).

So, as it becomes known, in the first century, the first representative of the Albanian Arsacids, Vachagan I the Brave managed to unite all the regions (kingdoms) of Albania and create a single centralized kingdom (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6). Since we do not have any other information about him and his successor Vache I, we will consider the data of sources about the successor of Vache I, Urnayr, who was married to the sister of the Sassanian Persian king, Shapur II. The years of Urnayr's reign remained unknown. According to *Kaghankatvatsi* (I, 8, 9, 10, 13), Urnayr was a contemporary of Persian king Shapur II (309–379), Byzantine emperor Constantine the Great (337–361) and Armenian kings Trdat III (287–330), Tiran (338–345), Arshak (345–367), and Pap (370–374). As noted, Urnayr is first mentioned in 313, when he together with the Albanian nobility adopted Christianity (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 9) and the latest record dates back to 371 in connection with the battle of Dzirav (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 4; *Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 13). Therefore, it

can be assumed that Urnayr reigned from 313 to 371.* The Albanian author calls him ‘a valiant man who inherited a glorious name in great wars, hoisting the banner of victory inside Armenia’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 9). But what wars exactly the Albanian author has in mind remains unknown.

The internal policy of Urnayr is characterized by the struggle against paganism, declaring Christianity an official religion (313–314), the allotment of lands to the Church, appointments, giving the first fruit to the Church, the Church tithe (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 9, 11). However, under Urnayr, Christianity did not become a widespread single confession. Christianity, accepted by the king, court, nobility and part of the population of Albania, becomes the ideological basis of the emerging feudal culture. Part of the Albanians remained faithful to their old pagan beliefs, others – to Mazdeism.

The capital of the Albanian state and the seat of the king and the Albanian Catholicos under Urnayr and later until the fifth century was Gabala. As for Urnayr's foreign policy, it is known that Albania as a vassal and ally of Shapur II, the king of Persia, was drawn into the Persian-Roman wars. Thus, in the battle of Amida in 359 between the Romans and Persians, Albanian king Urnayr stood with Persian king Shapur II (*Ammianus Marcellinus*, book XVIII, ch. 6), he also helped Shapur II in the battle in the Dzirav field in 371 when Shapur II turned his arms against the Roman and Armenian troops (*Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 4). In this battle, Urnayr was wounded by Mushegh Mamikonian (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 13; *Faustus of Byzantium*, V, 4). This is all that is known about him.

From among the Albanian Arsacids who reigned after Urnayr, sources preserved data about Aswagen; during his reign, new Albanian writing was created by improving the old one. Information about this was preserved by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, as well as by Armenian authors of the 5th–8th centuries – Koriun, Movses Khorenatsi, and others.

Of particular interest is the way Aswagen organized the education of Albanian children. He “ordered to teach writing to many children from the regions and districts of the country, to send them in groups to schools, to appropriate and convenient places and to assign them “food allowance”.”³⁶

Under Aswagen, religious books were translated into Albanian for the first time: the Bible, the teachings of the apostles, etc.

In 444, Vache II from the dynasty of the younger Arsacids,³⁷ the son of Aswagen and the sister of Persian king Yazdegerd II,³⁸ became the Albanian king. By king Peroz's order, as reported by Kaghankatvatsi (I, 5), Vache II built the city of Perozabat (Partaw) which became the capital of Albania. Transferring the capital from Gabala to Partaw was due to the foreign policy changes. Due to the frequent invasions of the Turkic-speaking nomads, the cultural and political center of the country moves from the left to the right bank of the Kur. The reign of Vache II was marked with people's anti-Persian liberation movement – the uprising of the Armenians, Albanians, Iberians in 450–451, led by Armenian commander Vardan Mamikonian, as well as the uprising in Albania in 457–463, raised and

* R.Acharyan (Ачарян Р. Словарь армянских личных имен. 1962, т.V) and some others were puzzled by such a long reign of the Albanian king (almost 60 years). And they therefore believed that there must have been two Urnayrs (Urnayr I and his successor Urnayr II). But, as is known, in the list of Albanian kings (provided by Kaghankatvatsi) there are two Vaches, three Vachagans. It seems that if there were two Urnayrs, this would certainly be reflected in the list. In addition, we are not surprised by such a long reign of Persian king Shapur II.

led by king Vache II himself. The reasons that spurred the peoples of Albania, the Armenians and the Iberians to anti-Persian protests was the economic, political, cultural, and ideological oppression.

As is known, the policy of the Sassanids in relation to the subordinate Christian countries – Albania, Iberia, Armenia – was not stable but was constantly changing. When Christians were persecuted in the Roman Empire, the kings of Iran patronized them, willingly offered them shelter on their territory, hoping to gain allies in the person of Christians in the rear of the Romans. After the victory of Christianity, when it became the official religion of the Eastern Roman Empire, the official religion of Albania, Armenia and Iberia (Georgia), the attitude towards Christians in the Sassanian Iran changed. The Sassanian kings began to persecute orthodox Christians and to support various sects that fought with the official Church both in their state and in the territory of Albania, Armenia and Iberia.³⁹ Having borders with countries politically and religiously hostile to Iran and having the same faith with the Roman Empire meant running a constant danger from the north and west, where Iran did not have natural fortified borders.

In 428, the Sassanids abolished the royal power in Armenia, turning it into a governorship. By that time, Albania was a vassal country that preserved certain political independence. It retained the exclusive privileges of secular feudal lords and clergy; the king's power was preserved in the person of the Albanian Arsacids who pursued an independent domestic and sometimes foreign policy. The separatism of the Albanian kings worried the central government of Persia. In the middle of the fifth century, due to the increasing attacks of the North Caucasian nomads and also taking advantage of the fact that Byzantium was busy with the war with Attila and ecclesiastical strife, the Sassanids openly resorted to decisive measures, trying to put a permanent end to the independence of Albania and Iberia and turn them, like Armenia, to their provinces. First, Yazdegerd II (438–457) summoned the military forces of the three countries – Albania, Georgia and Armenia – and sent them to the north-eastern borders of his state to fight the Huns, thereby weakening the resistance of these countries (*Elishe*, I).⁴⁰

Yazdegerd II also changed the tax policy. He held a general census of the population and made a register of all taxable items, which resulted in a significant increase in taxes. Heavy taxes were imposed not only on peasants, but also on urban population, as well as the clergy, which had earlier been equated with the azats and only paid land tax (*Elishe*, II). All land plots suitable for cultivation were inventoried and land tax was collected from each of them regardless of whether they were empty or cultivated. All work on the construction of five lines of defense works on the western coast of the Caspian Sea was carried out by the inhabitants of Albania. Kaghankatvatsi writes: 'The Persian kings exhausted our country, gathering architects and seeking various materials for the construction of the great building, which was erected between the Caucasus Mountain and the great Eastern sea' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11).

In addition to these measures, the Sassanids sought to achieve the cultural and ideological assimilation of the Albanians, Armenians and Georgians by forcibly converting them to Mazdeism. The question of confession was not of purely religious nature. It was of great political importance. The religious assimilation was aimed at strengthening the central political power, bringing rebellious peoples into a state of full submission and

obedience, distancing them from Byzantium, which they could resort to in the struggle for their independence. The Albanian, Iberian, Armenian peoples had since become religious allies.

All these activities of Yazdegerd II (economic, political oppression and, religious and cultural assimilation) had led to the anti-Persian movement of 450–451, the occasion for which was an attempt to eradicate Christianity and plant Mazdeism through Persian magicians (700 persons) who arrived in the Central Caucasus, of which 300 were intended to convert the Albanians (*Elishe*, II).⁴¹

The uprising in Albania proceeded in more difficult conditions than in Armenia and Iberia. Here, in the city of Paytakaran, the Persian armed forces were concentrated. In the Chola region, there was a 10-thousand Persian cavalry, who returned here after the Hunnic campaign. The Sassanids relied on it to paralyze the insurgency in Georgia and Albania and suppress the movement in Armenia. Albanian king Vache II could not support the insurgents, because he was at the Persian court where he was summoned by Yazdegerd II and forced to accept Mazdeism (*Elishe*). The uprising in Albania was led by the country's Catholicos and Hazarapet, who maintained close ties with Vardan Mamikonian, the leader of the people's liberation movement in the Central Caucasus, who headed the development of the general strategic plan of military operations (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 2; *Elishe*, III).⁴² In 450, near the city of Khalkhal [in the vicinity of the present-day Qazax], the winter residence of the Albanian kings, a battle took place between the rebels and the Persian army (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 2; *Parpetsi*, II, 35; *Elishe*, III). The Persian army was completely defeated at Khalkhal. After this defeat, the allied forces of the Albanians, Armenians and Iberians attacked the castles and cities occupied by the Persians in Albania, and made a joint campaign to the “Hun pass”. They destroyed the fortress built by Yazdegerd II, killed the Persian garrison and appointed a prince from the Albanian royal patronymy as the commandant of the gate (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 2; *Elishe* III; *Parpetsi*, II, 35). He was also ordered to go to the country of the Huns and to other North Caucasian lands and conclude an alliance with them against the Persians. The Huns promised help. At that time, Yazdegerd II, who had lost the war with the Hephthalites, returned to Ctesiphon from Central Asia. Having learnt that the Greeks refused to interfere in the affairs of the rebels, Yazdegerd II decided to suppress the uprising by force and sent Mihr-Nerses there with a large army and numerous elephants. Many rebels in Albania, Armenia and Georgia were persuaded to renunciation with rich gifts and promises. Many naxarars returned to their lands. The Persians managed to ‘break the union treaty so skillfully concluded by Vardan Mamikonian with Albania and Georgia’. On June 2, 451, in the region of Artaz [between the present-day Maku and Khoy cities], the famous Battle of Avarayr took place between the Persians and the rebels. The rebels suffered severe damage in the battle.

After the suppression of the anti-Sassanid uprising in 451, the entire Albanian people, led by the Albanian Arsacid king Vache II himself, took up arms against the Sassanids. This uprising lasted from 457 to 463. After the uprising of 450–451, Sassanian king Yazdegerd II did not make concessions, did not fulfil the most important demands of the Albanians.

After his death in 457 and the beginning of an internecine struggle for power in Iran, Albanian king Vache II raised a revolt against the Persians (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 10;

Elishe, X). The outward manifestation of the uprising was Vache's renunciation of Zoroastrianism, which he adopted, as noted, under duress. In 459, Peroz (459–484) came to power in Iran. The plight of the peoples under his control, already hard enough, was aggravated by a long-term drought, crop failure and wars that he waged with external enemies. Peroz continued the war started by Yazdegerd II against the Hephthalites.

All this resulted in the discontent and the unceasing unrest in Albania in 459. *Elishe* says that the temporary peace in the Persian state was disturbed by the 'persistent refusal of the Albanian king to obey' in 459 (*Elishe*, VII). Albanian rebels seized the Chola passages, and letting in the Maskut troops, made an alliance with the eleven "kings" of the Greater Caucasus and with their help waged successful military operations for two years against the Sassanid troops invading Albania. The repeated attempts by the Persians to start negotiations with Vache II were in vain. Then Peroz, for a plenty of money, summoned the Onogur Huns, who invaded Albania through the Alan Gate (Daryal)⁴³ and started a long fight with the Albanians in 462 (*Elishe*, VII).

The Onogurs fought the Albanian king for a whole year. Although the army of Vache II was diminished and dispersed, they could not defeat it (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 10; *Elishe*, VII). This war was also disastrous for the army of the Persian king, the mercenary Onogurs. Some of them died in battles, others from disease.

The uprising in Albania, which began in 457, was not suppressed before 463. Apparently, the Sassanids had once again settled in Albania so firmly that Vache II, having abdicated the throne, sought from Peroz a permission to retain his father's inheritance, 1,000 land parcels. Movses Kaghankatvatsi quotes a letter from Bishop Kyut to king Vache II after his abdication.

This letter is a kind of hymn in honor of Vache II. He writes: 'The fathers' faith has been preserved in your country, the churches have remained in good state, the chapels are in peace, the priests are in the priesthood, the sacrifices are on the altars' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 11).⁴⁴

In 463, the king's power was abolished in Albania, the country was ruled by Persian governor, the marzban. The Marzban regime remained in Albania for 30 years.

Peroz's unsuccessful wars with the Hephthalites, the punitive expeditions against the Albanians, the increased tax oppression, the infringement of the hereditary privileges of the naxarars, religious persecution – all this paved the way for a new uprising (481–484). The uprisings in Albania, Iberia and Armenia lasted until about 484. Continuously fighting with the rebellious Armenians, Iberians and Albanians, the Persians at the same time were defeated by the Hephthalites. Peroz was killed and in 484, the Hephthalites broke into Persia. This forced the already exhausted Persian army out of Albania, Armenia, Georgia. In 484, Balash the Sassanid acceded to the throne (484–488). The challenging political and economic situation that prevailed in Persia and Balash's attempt to restore the agricultural sector destroyed by the wars made him put an end to the policy of religious persecution in the Central Caucasus, pursued by his predecessors and to make peace with the peoples of the Caucasus.

The treaty of Nvarsak was concluded on the terms put forth by the rebels. The Persian government, in accordance with the terms of the Nvarsak peace, made significant concessions to Albania, Armenia and Iberia. The royal power, the power of the Arsacids,

was restored in Albania. The right of independent internal governance of the country was recognized as belonging to the Albanian king. The conditions also included the freedom of religion, the restoration of the Albanian nobility privileges, preservation of the principle of the Naxarar clans hierarchy. Only the Albanian king himself could be the supreme judge of the country and the overlord of the naxarars. The Sassanids pledged not to impose Mazdeism, and Christians were not to convert fire worshipers to their faith. The amount of tribute to be paid by Albania to Persia was reduced. The Albanians were exempted from the obligation to supply horsemen to the Persian cavalry.⁴⁵

In 487, Vache II's nephew Vachagan III the Pious, the last representative of the Albanian Arsacid branch, became the Albanian king. Kaghankatvatsi reports (I, 16): 'For 30 years, from Vache to Vachagan the Pious, Albania remained without a king...'. According to the Albanian historian, 'the inhabitants of Albania, once again uniting into one kingdom, took from the children of the king the brave, the wise, the sensible, and the tall Vachagan, the son of Yazdegerd, the brother of Vache, the king of Albania, enthroned him with the help of Balash, the king of Persia' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17)

The reign of Vachagan the Pious was a political, cultural, and religious revival of Albania. He first of all sought to achieve religious unity in the country, to make Christianity a universal state religion. To this end, he strenuously persecuted fire worshipers, all pagan sects, and eliminated them. Vachagan opened schools, restored the destroyed ones and built new churches and monasteries, restored church ranks.⁴⁶ In his efforts to consolidate the independence of Albania and given the important political role of the independent Albanian Church, which would oppose alien religious and political influences and the assimilationist foreign policy, Vachagan III considered it necessary to strengthen the shaken foundations of this church, to strengthen it economically. With all that in mind, he convened the Aguen Council. On the one hand, this council was supposed to promote the independence of the Albanian Church, on the other, Vachagan, with the help of the Aguen Canons, tried to strengthen the state power, curb the self-willed feudal lords (the azats), equalize the clergy with the secular nobility, settle the relations of the taxable estate with the secular nobility and the clergy, achieve religious unity of all estates, which is also necessary to preserve the political independence of the country and to fight against foreign forces. Vachagan III was the last Arsacid of Albania. Albanian kings, taking into account the strategic position of Albania, in their foreign policy kept in contact with the nomadic Turkic-speaking steppe inhabitants from beyond the Caucasian passes, the Albanian Gates (beyond Derbent). In order to win the favor of the nomadic world and stop their systematic invasions, the Albanian kings sent Christian preachers to them, trying to convert them to Christianity, to make them co-religionists.

This policy was pursued by the rulers of Albania and the Albanian Church since the fourth century, since the time of the formation of the state religion until the fall of the Albanian kingdom.

The Albanian Arsacids pursued an independent Albanian policy, faithfully served the Albanian state, people, religion, lost their Persian attributes, adopted the local culture very quickly, i.e. got Albanized. The political structure of Albania in the 2nd–6th centuries can be viewed as a feudal centralized state. The king was the lawmaker, the supreme judge of the country, headed the legislative and advisory body of secular and religious power,

was the commander-in-chief of all the military forces of the country.⁴⁷ The king's functions also included the creation of cities. In Albania, as well as in Persia, 'the king's power was considered as the common property of the Arsacid clan, and only the representatives of this clan could claim it'.⁴⁸

Considering the great strategic significance of Albania (protection of the Caucasian passes from nomads), its natural resources, trade routes, the kings of Persia preserved the statehood of Albania from the first to the sixth century by preserving the power of the Albanian kings here, the younger Arsacids.

So, during the reign of the Albanian Arsacids, the Albanian state continued the traditions of ancient Albania, was a sovereign nation that pursued its own domestic and, at times, foreign policy, independent of its neighbors.

In the sixth century, when the situation in the Sassanid Iran was stabilized, the Sassanids abolished the local dynasties in Albania, and in Iberia-Kartli (Georgia). According to the administrative reform carried out by Khosrow I, the Sassanid empire was divided into four governorships – "parts"(Kusts). Albania, like all the countries of the Central Caucasus, and Atropatene became part of the northern governorship, the Caucasian Kust, and henceforth was ruled by the marzbans (governors) of the "king of kings of the Iranians and non-Iranians".

§ 2. The Albanian state under the rule of the Mihranids (630–705)

In 510, the rule of the Albanian Arsacids ceased and the Persian marzbans ruled in the country for a short time (510–629). In the late sixth – early seventh centuries, the feudal family of the Mihranids, the rulers of the Gardman region, rose in Albania. According to the genealogical information from *Kaghankatvatsi*, at the end of the sixth century, the Persian Mihranid family headed by Mihr, being involved in the palace coup and trying to escape from the retaliation of Persian king Khosrow II Parviz (591–628), with 30 thousand families fled from Iran in order to defect to the enemies of Khosrow, the Khazars. Concerned about this, Khosrow hastened to get ahead of him and sent a letter giving the right to freely choose his place of residence.

Mihr received the king's letter in Gardman gavar, Utik province, where he decided to settle. He and his descendants, having established themselves in Gardman, which became their family domain, through physical destruction of local feudals and family ties, ousted the local Aranshahik princes and took possession of the entire Albania. They 'also subjugated the wild peoples of the Caucasus'. The local princes did not understand at once this cunning policy of the Persian court. It is quite possible that this circumstance was one of the reasons for the uprising against the Persians in 603.⁴⁹ The Mihranids retained the right to bear the title of the first great prince of Albania for two centuries (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 17).⁵⁰

According to *Movses Kaghankatvatsi*, Mihr 'went to the north of the Gardman region and insidiously summoned 12 of its rulers, put them to the sword and took possession of the country' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 17) Mihr's grandson Vardan the Brave murdered 60 last

representatives of the previous rulers of Albania, and thus Albania fell into the hands of a new dynasty.

Moses Kaghankatvatsi provides the genealogy of the Albanian Mihranid clan: Mihr, Armayel, Vard, Vardan the Brave, Vard, Varazman, Varaz-Grigor, Varaz-Peroz, Javanshir, Jesuit Khosrow, and Varazman (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 17).

The Mihranids' arrival in Albania was due to the political situation. Albania was of exceptional strategic importance in protecting the northern borders of the state of Sassanian Iran. Because of this, the Sassanids sought to establish themselves in Albania. Under the new conditions, the Persian element was to be strengthened, especially in Gardman, where the Mihranids established themselves. Gardman was chosen due to its location at the borders of the Armenian and Georgian lands subordinated to Byzantium under the treaty of 591.⁵¹ The Sassanids could not rely on the local princes in protecting the western borders from the potential invasions of Byzantium and began to rely on the new rulers of Gardman – the Mihranids, who were religiously and politically close to Iran.

The hopes of the Sassanids regarding the Albanian Mihranids did not come true. The Mihranids remained Persians for no more than two generations, then they adopted Christianity, became akin to the local Albanian nobility, connected with the Albanian culture and language, i.e. got Albanized.

V. Bartold believed, as noted, that in Albania, through the Mihranids, 'the Albanian national dynasty is being restored, but of Persian origin'.⁵² To the greatest disappointment of the Sassanids, the Albanian Mihranids, like the previous Arsacids, persistently pursued the pro-Albanian policy, the policy of Albania's independence.

Although the Mihranids had established themselves in Albania by 603, they did not become the sovereign rulers of the whole country, the "first great princes" of Albania, as we were able to clarify, until 630.

Let's consider the internal and external political situation of the country from 510 to 630, i.e. the period when Albania was ruled by Persian marzbans. Thus, in the middle of the sixth century, as a result of the military-administrative reform of Khosrow I Anushirvan (531–579), Albania, among the Central Caucasian countries, was included in the Northern Adurbadagan Kust ruled by one Persian marzban.

The policy of Iran and Byzantium in relation to the North Caucasian peoples was ambivalent.

Allocating funds, as well as taking measures to strengthen the Caucasian gates (passes), Iran and Byzantium (separately) at the same time tried to use the nomads for their own purposes, seeking their support. The Albanian kings did the same. Allying with the northern peoples, they let them through the Caspian Gates and defeated the conquerors together. Ultimately, the northern peoples, prompted by their own interests or being allies of Iran, Byzantium, Albania, often traveled to Albania, or rather, through the territory of Albania to the countries of the Central Caucasus and further to the south and southwest of the Caucasus.

During the reign of Khosrow I Anushirvan, the war of Byzantium with Iran distracted Iran's attention from its northern border so much that in 552–553 Albania was invaded by its northern neighbors, the Khazars. According to M.I. Artamonov,⁵³ this raid was not made by the Khazars, but by the Sabirs.

According to *Kaghankatvatsi*, the Khazars, having seized Albania, burnt churches and scriptures, devastated cities and villages, and took away the people. ‘...When the Armenian chronology was established (in 552), the Albanian Patriarchal see was transferred from Chola to the capital Partaw, due to the predatory raids of the enemies of the Cross of Christ’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 4).

In 562, Khosrow Anushirvan, upon his return from a campaign against Byzantium, opposed the Khazars and defeated them. During the 20-year Persian-Byzantine War (571–591), the Byzantine army, having entered Albania, met the Sabirs here and took some of them hostages to ensure obedience. As soon as the Byzantine army left Albania, the Sabirs took the side of Iran. Then the Byzantine army invaded Albania again and forced the Sabirs to move beyond the Kur, to the territory controlled by the Byzantine Empire.⁵⁴

In 591, the 20-year war between Persia and Byzantium ended. Under the treaty of 591, Armenia suffered another political and territorial division, but this treaty did not concern Albania. The country remained under the rule of Persian marzbans. In 603–629, when hostilities resumed between the two empires, Albania got involved in these wars.

In 602, Phocas (602–610) killed Byzantine emperor Mauricius (582–602) and usurped the throne of the empire. Taking advantage of this, Persian king Khosrow I, under the pretext of revenge for Mauricius, declared war on Byzantium, which lasted until the overthrow and assassination of Khosrow I. At first, the success was with the Sassanids, who seized almost all of Byzantium's Asia Minor possessions. In 605, Persian troops invaded Armenia. Iberia submitted to the Sassanids without a fight. The Persians also conquered Mesopotamia. Byzantium's situation did not improve in the first years of the reign of Heraclius (610–641) who acceded to the throne after the assassination of Phocas. In 611, the Persians conquered Syria, in 614 – Palestine, Jerusalem, where they captured the main relic of Christians – the cross on which Jesus was crucified. Only in 622, Heraclius started a decisive campaign against the Persians.⁵⁵ Taking advantage of the Iranian-Byzantine Wars, in 603–604, the population of Albania revolted against the Sassanian rule. The uprising was suppressed with savagery by Khosrow II. Many of the representatives of the Albanian nobility died, only Albanian Catholicos Viroy survived thanks to the intercession of Shirin, the wife of Khosrow II, who was a Christian. Queen Shirin, ‘after many efforts received his [Viroy's] life as a gift from the king’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 14). He was retained for 25 years at the Persian court. However, Khosrow II set the condition that Viroy ‘would not return to his country, but remain in custody at the court till the end of his life. He [Khosrow II] did not take away his patriarch's income nor did he deprive him of the dignity of Catholicos’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 14) While in custody, Albanian Catholicos Viroy obtained an order from Khosrow II to grant the Albanian princes from the Mihranid dynasty the title of “the Lord of Gardman and the Prince of Albania” (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 23). This right was obtained under Varaz-Grigor, when he became the first prince of the entire Albania.

Khosrow II's benevolence towards Viroy is explained by the fact that Khosrow II generally surrounded himself with Christians. One of his wives was Byzantine princess Maria, the other was a Christian Shirin, believed to be from Khuzestan, probably a Syrian [but more likely an Albanian. – *F.M.*]. Shirin is a famous heroine of many works (*Sebeos*, XI),⁵⁶ in Nizami's romance “Khosrow and Shirin”. Despite, however, his Christian

environment, Khosrow II continued to consistently conduct the Sassanid policy, the policy of alienation of the Central Caucasian countries from Byzantium. To this end, in 612–614, he convened the well-known Persian Church Council of Christians subject to him, where monophysitism was declared officially recognized Christian denomination as opposed to Byzantine dyophysitism.⁵⁷

Iran's success in the international political arena (during the Persian-Byzantine Wars) began to decline. In 623–624, as a result of a decisive campaign, Heraclius won a number of victories in Asia Minor and the Central Caucasus. He moved to Iran in a roundabout way, through Colchis and Iberia. In 624–628, Albania, as well as Iberia, becomes one of the main arenas of the Persian-Byzantine Wars. These events are firmly and consistently dated by Kaghankatvatsi in the book II, chapters 9, 10, 11, 12.

‘...I will begin my story from the first year of the 18th leap year, after the appearance of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the month of Mehekan, in the 35th year of the king of kings Khosrow Hormizd’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 9). It is $590 + 35 = 624$.

The struggle of Byzantium and Persia for Albania pursued both political and economic goals. In 624, the Byzantine army seized Dvin, invaded Atropatene, occupied Nakhchivan, and forced the Aras (*Sebeos*, XXXVI). Then they captured the capital of Atropatene, Gandzak (Gayshavan). Heraclius turned to the princes and rulers of Albania, Iberia, Armenia with the demand that ‘they come out to meet him of their own free will, serve him with their army during the winter, otherwise he will treat them like pagans and his troops will capture fortresses and devastate their countries’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 10). At the behest of Persian king Khosrow II, the rulers and princes of Albania left capital Barda and established themselves in the fortresses. The Greek army entered Albania, settled in the Utik region, ‘trampled on and devastated the beautiful gardens and fields through which it passed’ and settled near the Dyutakan village. But this campaign was not a success for Heraclius. The Persians attacked the Greeks here and drove Heraclius across the Syuni country ‘and took away the cities he had captured’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 9; *Sebeos*, XXXVI). In 625, Heraclius called the Khazars for help. ‘After that, in the 36th year of Khosrow's reign’ [$590+36=625$ – *F.M.*], Heraclius decided to ‘open the gates of Chola, summon various barbarian peoples and together with them exile the proud Khosrow’. He sends an envoy Andrew by name to the Khazars for help, promising them ‘to quench the thirst of the gold-loving people of the scythemen’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 12). The Persians, in turn, managed to conclude an alliance with the Avars who ruled the Balkan Peninsula and draw their attention to Constantinople.⁵⁸ In 626, the Khazars invaded Albania.

‘At the end of the 37th year of Khosrow's reign [$590+37=626$ – *F.M.*], the king of the north sent the promised militant army led by Shat. He raided all the borders of Albania and parts of Atrpatakan, put many Christians and even pagans to the sword. But who can know and count the number of the captives?’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 12). The Albanian author also reports on the campaign of 626 in Chapter 11: ‘The Khazars with countless hordes raided our country at the behest of Heraclius’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11). This was the first major Khazar invasion. In 628, the Khazars again attacked Albania: ‘So, in the 38th year of Khosrow, in ...the year of Khosrow's assassination’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11). They struck the first blow at Derbent (Chola), then at Barda (Partaw). The feudal lords and the representatives of the Sassanian authorities were confused and thinking about their

salvation. Kaghankatvatsi reports: ‘When this terrible news reached Albania, a certain Gayshah, sent by Khosrow to rule the country, wanted to strengthen our country and the great capital Partaw. Therefore, he settled in it the inhabitants of the surrounding regions and, supported by the consent of the nobles of our country and the inhabitants of the cities, he wanted to defend the country from the Khazars. But he saw what had happened to the defenders of the great city of Chola and to the troops who were on the marvelous walls... At the approach of the world's scourge which threatened us all, before the waves of the uneasy sea hit it [i.e. the Chola fortress] and leveled it to the ground’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11). The nobility of Partaw, having learned about the destruction of Chola, hastily hid in the hard-to-reach mountains of the Artsakh region. The Sassanian marzban fled to Iran. The people sought shelter in the inaccessible mountains of Artsakh. This was the second major invasion of the Khazars. They occupied the territory of Albania and moved to Tiflis, where, together with the army of Emperor Heraclius, they laid siege to the city.

In the summer of 628, on the advice of Heraclius I, the siege of Tiflis was lifted and postponed to winter. Heraclius told the leader of the Khazars: ‘When the next year comes, after the hot months, immediately come here... Meanwhile, I will not stop fighting the Persian king and endangering his countries and subjects’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 11). During the second siege of Tiflis, apparently at the end of 628, the city was captured. After that, Byzantium subjugated the countries of the Central Caucasus.

The data from Georgian sources helped to literally understand the words of Heraclius I: ‘I will not stop... endangering his country and his subjects’, reported by Kaghankatvatsi. According to Georgian chronicles, in Mtskheta, Ujarma and other places, Heraclius pursued a policy of persecution not only of Zoroastrians, but also of monophysite Christians. Then Heraclius departed for Albania (628), the Gardman region – ‘Gardabani, the lands of Varaz-Grigor’, where by his order, Varaz-Grigor and his people, as well as the “ruler of Metsekevank” adopted monotheletism in the town of Lal⁵⁹. This happened, apparently, in the period between the first and second siege of Tiflis.

Heraclius' actions must be viewed against the background of the relationship between the two empires (Persia and Byzantium), their political and ideological rivalry. The successful Persian campaigns of Heraclius in 623–628, often compared to the brilliant campaigns of Alexander the Great,⁶⁰ led to the victory over Persia, returned Byzantium its heretical eastern provinces. Heraclius wanted to restore the ecclesiastical unity in the Byzantine Empire, as well as in the Caucasian countries subordinate to them, by introducing monotheletism. Khosrow II, as noted, in 614 made monophysitism the official religion of all Christians subject to him – Iran, the Central Caucasus and the Byzantine eastern provinces conquered by him.

As for Albania, which was still ruled by the Persian marzbans, Gardmanian prince Varaz-Grigor the Mihranid declared himself a vassal to Heraclius. By recognizing the new overlord and adopting his religion – monotheletism, he became the sovereign ruler of the entire Albania.⁶¹ However, we believe that Varaz-Grigor was unable to execute the rights and powers that Heraclius gave him due to the changes that took place in the international arena. At that time, Persian king Khosrow II was killed and Kavad II was enthroned, who in 628/629 made peace with Heraclius and returned the lands captured by Khosrow II

(*Sebeos*, 37; *Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 13). And Albania again remained dependent on Persia.* At the same time, the Khazars became the actual lords of Albania. In 629, upon invasion of the country, the leader of the Khazars, Shat [the third Khazar campaign], sent messengers to the Persian marzban seated in Albania and to the Catholicos of the country Viroy, freed in 628 from Persian political imprisonment, with the demand to subjugate the country to him (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 14). In this case, it was about the political subjugation of the country to the Khazars. Albania was unable to resist, and the marzban rejected the demands of Shat and fled to Persia. Albanian nobility led by Catholicos Viroy recognized the supreme power of the Khazars (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 14, 16).

Albania became the “eternal possession” of the Khazar qaghan (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 14).⁶² So, Albania was conquered by the Khazars ‘in the second year of Ardashir, the son of Kavad, the king of Persia’ (*Kaghankatvatsi* II, 169), i.e. in 629–630. The continuous attacks and domination of the Khazars ravaged Albania. It suffered famine and an epidemic, the victims of which were a large number of local people, including the Catholicos of Albania Viroy (630)**.

Being the actual lords of the country, the Khazars demanded from the Albanian feudals state taxes and duties previously paid into the Sassanid treasury. The Khazars, who had firmly established themselves in the ancient capital of Albania, Gabala, which since then was also called Khazar-e-Gabala, had the left-bank part of Albania.⁶³ The international situation – troubles due to the succession to the throne in Persia, the struggle of the Chalcedonites and Monophysites in Byzantium – diverted attention from the northern borders, from the events in the remote Albania.⁶⁴ The internal strife in Khazaria in the early 630s (the killing of Yabghu Qaghan) put an end to the rule of the Khazars in Albania and saved the country from disastrous destruction. By the will of history, the country gained independence. The gained sovereignty was also facilitated by the fact that the belligerent countries – Byzantium and Persia – came out of the Persian-Byzantine Wars tired and exhausted in 628–629.

At that time, the Arabs were preparing to capture the countries of Western and Central Asia. The princely throne of Albania was acceded to by a representative of the Mihranids Varaz-Grigor (630–642) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 17).

The generally accepted date of Varaz-Grigor's reign, i.e. 628–636, seems incorrect to us. As we have noted, he could not have been the ruler of the country in 628. It is no coincidence that the name of Varaz-Grigor is not mentioned in the events of 624–629, the period of the Persian- Byzantine Wars, described in detail and dated by *Kaghankatvatsi*. As is known, in 629, the Khazars sent messengers to the Persian marzban and Catholicos Viroy. The Albanian author provides genealogical information about the Mihranids and the subsequent data about them in the chapters following the description of the Persian-Byzantine Wars. According to *Kaghankatvatsi*, Varaz-Grigor was the first prince

* see page 340-341

** In our opinion, C.Toumanoff is mistaken, believing that, in 628, Albania already “had a reorganized government. Instead of the Iranian governor who ruled together with local dynasties, at that moment there was a presiding elected prince from the Mihranid dynasty”. (Toumanoff C. *The Albanian Royal succession* / Le Museon. *Revue d'etudes Orientales*, Louvain, 1984, t.97, fasc.1-2, p.87). This could not have happened, as we believe, before 630.

of Albania to be baptized by Albanian Catholicos Viroy (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 17). Viroy's lifetime falls within the period of 536–630 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). *Kaghankatvatsi*, a convinced Monophysite, is silent about baptizing of Varaz-Grigor by Heraclius, his transition to monotheletism, as about a very unpleasant fact. It is quite possible that only after Viroy returned to Albania, in the last year of his life, when his country gained independence (in 630), Catholicos Viroy could baptize Varaz-Grigor, i.e. he was converted from monotheletism to monophysitism. Varaz-Grigor was thus baptized by Heraclius into monotheletism in 628, and in 630 he was baptized into monophysitism by Catholicos Viroy.*

It should be noted here that without fully understanding the realities of the period, the foreign policy situation, clarifying the role and place of the Central Caucasus and Albania in particular in the relationship between the two empires of the West and the East, their political and ideological rivalry, taking into account the inevitable flexibility of the dogmatic struggle which was always based on political reasons, some scholars came to the illogical conclusion that ‘the Mihranids, who adopted Christianity from the Byzantine emperor, naturally must have been fighting anti-Chalcedonianism’,⁶⁵ i.e. monophysitism.

First, in our opinion, it is inappropriate to generalize all the Mihranids in religious dogmatics, which, as noted, was very flexible depending on many political reasons. A vivid example of this is the baptizing of Varaz-Grigor. In addition, it is quite obvious that *Kaghankatvatsi* would have never glorified the deeds of Javanshir the Mihranid if the latter had been a dyophysite (Chalcedonite). In this regard, another conclusion of the researchers that ‘*the Mihranids remained faithful to Byzantium in all respects*, because it was with the help of Heraclius that they conquered all of Albania and adopted the religion of their overlord’ is also erroneous.⁶⁶ First, the Mihranids took possession of Albania, as noted, without the help of Heraclius but due to the current circumstances – when peace was made between Byzantium and Persia in 628/629. Secondly, by 630, the Khazars themselves left Albania and it remained under the influence of the Sassanian Persia. It was because of these circumstances that the Mihranids could not have been faithful to Byzantium in any way from 630 to 642.

By this time, the Arabs were gaining strength in the Middle East. In 632, they moved to Persia. *Kaghankatvatsi* clearly dates this campaign: ‘4 years after the death of the great Khosrow, the Persian king [i.e. 628+4=632 – *F.M.*], Azkert [Yazdegerd III (632–651)] ...acceded to the throne. The Hagar clan, strengthened by joining of 12 tribes, is moving swiftly like a whirlwind in the desert, in a terrible and formidable onslaught. Having passed Assyria, they hastily opposed the king of Persia’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18).

Yazdegerd III demanded from the rulers of the countries and regions under his control an additional army to fight the Arabs. Having received such an order, the Great Prince of Albania Varaz-Grigor decided to send one of his four sons, Javanshir. *Kaghankatvatsi* describes Javanshir poetically, with love: ‘Varaz-Grigor ...turned thoughts to his second son, Javanshir, proud, majestic and handsome. No sooner did his beard cover his face, his

* According to G.H.Svazyan, the baptizing of Varaz-Grigor by Catholicos Viroy should be understood as his being baptized by Catholicos Viroy as “the first prince of Aghuank” according to the monophysite rite (СвАЗЯН Г.Х. АГВАНК В VII–VIII ВВ., 1975, с.19).

father's favorite, skillful in weapons, dexterous as an eagle, the support of his father, successful in everything, Javanshir in his mind was preparing to help his father in the worldly life, grade up to the great, and attend the kings...' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18).

Javanshir led the army of the entire Albanian state. In 636–642, Javanshir, being a sparapet, the commander-in-chief of the Albanian forces, together with the Albanian army, was part of the Persian army. In the battles of the Dead Waters, at al-Qadisiyyah (637), he distinguished himself for his courage (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18).⁶⁷

His bravery was appreciated by Yazdegerd III, 'who gave him a banner and loud trumpets, two golden lances and two gilded shields which were always carried in front of him. He [Yazdegerd III] honored him above all. He girded him with a golden belt studded with pearls and a sword with a golden grip, gave him bracelets on his arms and put a beautiful crown on his head. He also gave him headbands studded with pearls and hung many strings of pearls around his neck' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18).⁶⁸ In 640 ['in the 8th year of the reign of Yazdegerd' (632+8=640)] the Arabs laid siege to the Persian king in his capital Ctesiphon. For six months, Javanshir, at the head of the 3000 Albanian army, together with the Persians, participated in the defense of Ctesiphon (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18). Some time later, in 642, there was the famous Battle of Nahavand where the Albanian army led by Javanshir also participated. The Persian army was completely defeated. Yazdegerd III fled and hid in a fortress on the banks of the Tigris. After the victory of the Arabs and the final defeat of Iran, the sparapet of Albania Javanshir 'bade them [the Persians. – *F.M.*] farewell and came to the province of Atrpatakan and from there he returned to his country' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18).

So, 'for seven years, the brave Javanshir was fighting in these burdensome wars [636+7=642/643 – *F.M.*]. Being severely wounded 11 times, he bade them farewell...' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 18). After returning to his homeland, in 642/643, Javanshir became the first Great Prince of Albania, even during the life of his father Varaz-Grigor. 'The valiant Javanshir returned from the Persian Wars with a glorious name and, by the order of the king, exalted the entire Albania through himself' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19). The first year of Javanshir's reign should be considered not 636, as was officially accepted in literature, but 642/643.⁶⁹ Having ascended the princely throne, Javanshir raised an uprising against the Persian rulers. He wanted to take possession of both the right bank and the left bank of Albania. To this end, he, together with his father, taking bodyguards with them, set out north of Partaw (Barda), to the left bank of the Kur river. At that time, the Persian troops invaded Albania. The fact is that when the Sassanid state defeated by the Arabs ceased to exist, the remnants of the defeated Persian troops began to retreat to the north, to Albania, where, according to *Kaghankatvatsi*, they tried to get stronger (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19).⁷⁰ Javanshir had to fight with the Persians for a long time. Thus, he cleared the Gardman and Cambisena regions from the Persians. Here, in Cambisena, he made an "unbreakable alliance" with the ruler of Iberia Atrnerseh. Having secured his support, with the additional Georgian army, Javanshir went to the Utik region, drove the Persians off from there, cleared the capital Partaw from them, and freed his relatives – mother and brothers – captured by the Persians. The Persians, in turn, began to equip and send hordes from Atropatene. The Persian troops were defeated by Javanshir in two battles in the Sakasena region. However, the defeated Persians, through the prince of Syunik, managed to persuade

Javanshir to an armistice, after which he, ‘remembering about the fall of the great Persian Empire and the independence of the first eastern (Albanian) kings and comparing them with himself in the royal splendor, decided to never again subjugate his principality to anyone’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 19).

Soon the Persians betrayed the alliance with Javanshir. The Persian commander-in-chief equipped the regiments and sent them to Albania again, even appointing rulers in its area. With the help of Georgian troops, Javanshir succeeded in defeating and clearing the country of the Persians. Javanshir's war against the Persians for the independence of Albania ends with the invasion by the Arabs. In 642–645, the Arabs attacked the Central Caucasus from of Atropatene and entered Albania, but failed to settle there (*Sebeos*, XLIX).⁷¹

At first, in the fight against the Arabs, the Great Prince of Albania Javanshir made an alliance with the commander and ishkhan of Armenia Theodore Rshtuni who submitted to the Arabs. Unlike him, Javanshir considered it necessary to become a vassal to Byzantium. In political terms, Armenia was practically a province of the Byzantine Empire. The Armenians pinned great hopes on the arrival of the Arabs to achieve relative independence and unification of the Armenian provinces. In his letter to Byzantine emperor Constans II (641–668), Prince Javanshir wrote: ‘The all-powerful lord, the mighty and merciful sovereign of Greece Constans ...Javanshir, sparapet and *the prince of the Albanians* with the humble country of the East worships you, saluting with humility. May it please your Christ-loving seniority to agree to accept a remote people into new allegiance...’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 20). The Byzantine emperor, in his response letter, readily agreed and called Javanshir “The ruler of Gardman, prince of Albania, sparapet and proto-patrician” (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 21).

In addition to gifts, he sent to Javanshir pativs (honor, position) to bestow 1200 men of the titles of patricians, hypatoses, apohypatoses, and other Byzantine titles (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 20).*

In 660 (‘In the 19th year of the reign of Constans’, i.e. 641+19=660, *Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 22) Javanshir met with emperor Constans II twice: for the first time in Persia, when Constans summoned princes, rulers with a Byzantine orientation and for the second time in Vagharshapat. Both times, *as the Albanian author reports*, Javanshir was received with great honors: ‘Javanshir entered the imperial court *as a king*’, ‘the emperor *honored him above all nobles*’, ‘the emperor girded him with the belt of his brave grandfather Hercules and ancestor Nicetas’, ‘the emperor gave him a piece of the Holy Cross, royal clothes’, ‘two banners’, ‘the emperor made his sons patricians’. *Kaghankatvatsi* further reports: ‘The noblemen of Armenia and the military leader Hamazasp, seeing that he received such heavenly gifts, greatly envied him... The emperor sent him, accompanied by the azats of Ararat, not as his slave, but as a co-throne brother...’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 22).

* Sebeos' version regarding the alliance of Javanshir with Constans II is somewhat different. According to Sebeos, Constans II, who was in Western Armenia, sent an army to Iberia, Albania and Syunik in order to dissolve the alliance concluded between the rulers of these countries with the ruler of Eastern Armenia Theodore Rshtuni, who submitted to the Arabs. In this case, only the threat of an attack by Byzantium on Albania forced Javanshir to side with Byzantium (История епископа Себеоса / Пер. Ст.Малхасяна, 1938; Буниязтов З.М., 1965, с.75-76).

The Albanian author ends the chapter with the words: 'He [Constans] gave him [Javanshir] for hereditary possession all the villages and *borders of the Albanian kings* and entrusted him with reigning in the East *as a king*'. Without hiding his enthusiastic attitude towards Javanshir, Kaghankatvatsi emphasizes the inequality of the political position of Albania, its ruler, with the position of Armenia and Georgia at that period. All the excerpts that we have considered and the words underlined by us, in our opinion, can be understood only in one sense – Javanshir managed to preserve the statehood of Albania on the condition of vassal dependence on Byzantium. Kaghankatvatsi indicates precisely the territorial boundaries of the country which Javanshir ruled at that time: 'With autocracy and splendor reigned he from the borders of Iberia to the Gates of the Huns and to the Aras river' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 20).⁷²

As for the policy of Byzantium in relation to Albania, it is determined by the strong interest of Byzantium, that takes into account the strategic position, natural resources, important trade routes passing through the territory of Albania. In addition, in the face of the formidable threat from the south (the Arab invasion), it was necessary to strengthen the eastern borders of the empire.⁷³

In 662, Albania was invaded by the Khazars again. This time Javanshir managed to defeat them and drive them out of the country (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 23).

In 664–665, the Khazars attacked Albania again. They crossed the Kur, reached the Aras, captured the Albanians, the Armenians, and took away the cattle. Javanshir made an alliance with the Khazars and married the daughter of the Khazar qaghan (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 26). The Khazar raids, weakening of Byzantium by that time due to the conquest of a number of areas of Asia Minor by the Arabs, the aggressive policy of the Arabs towards the Central Caucasus countries – all this prompted Javanshir to submit to review his alliance with Byzantium.⁷⁴ He made up his mind to submit to the caliph, 'to the yoke of the ruler of the south', refusing the help of the Khazars – 'the countless troops of the Turkestanis' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 27).⁷⁵ Wanting to get closer to the Arabs, Javanshir visited Caliph Mu'awiya in Damascus twice. The first time was in 667, with the purpose to recognize the vassal dependence on the Caliphate in order to save the country from the threatening Arab plunder. Javanshir achieved his goal (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 27).⁷⁶ Thanks to the alliance with the Caliphate, the population of Albania was spared from foreign invasions for three years.⁷⁷ In 670, Javanshir visited Caliph Mu'awiya again, this time at the invitation of the Caliph himself. Javanshir's authority grew so much in the eyes of the Caliph that he was authorized to mediate in diplomatic negotiations between the Caliphate and Byzantium. Javanshir negotiated with such skill that both sides were satisfied. Bestowing gifts on him, the Caliph gave him the principality of Syunik and requested to rule Atropatene. But Javanshir rejected this proposal and asked the Caliph instead 'to ease the tax burden imposed [by the Caliphate] on his country and the king of the south gladly agreed to this and ordered to reduce the tax burden by one third' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 28). The Albanian author repeatedly noted that the caliph received Javanshir 'with such honors and splendor that he had not shown to any of the governors of the country'. 'He ordered to honor the eastern prince *like a crowned king*' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 27, 28).

The fact that both Byzantine emperor Constans II and Caliph Mu'awiya bestowed *royal status and honor* on Javanshir is noteworthy. There is no doubt that the respect, esteem, and favor that Javanshir won for himself are explained not only by the importance of Albania, its strategic location on the Caliphate's northern frontiers, its resources, but also by the personal traits of Javanshir himself. He was a great commander, intelligent politician, deft diplomat, and a statesman of the middle of the seventh century,⁷⁸ who preserved the country's independence during one of the most difficult periods in the history of the Central Caucasus peoples – the period of the Persian, Arab, Byzantine, and Khazar conquests. Only taxes were paid by his country. It's no surprise that the Albanian author dedicates a panegyric to him: 'By God's providence, Javanshir from birth was destined for glory and greatness, and until today the Lord allowed him to be glorious in everything... He was respected and revered by the four conquering states and was no lower than these rulers' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 28).

Javanshir was assassinated in a political conspiracy. As K.V. Trever properly pointed out, it's unclear whether he was the victim of a palace coup or a class war.⁷⁹ Some researchers believe that Javanshir died in 669,⁸⁰ while others think that he died in 680,⁸¹ and, finally, the last version is 683.⁸² The date of 680–681 seems to us more accurate, as in book 39, chapter II, the Albanian author says that '...in the 62nd year of the southern reign of the obstinate Mohammed...', i.e. in 681, Javanshir's successor Varaz-Trdat, who was already the Great Prince of Albania, sent bishop Israel to the Huns on a diplomatic mission. Consequently, Javanshir was assassinated no later than in 681. The representatives of the secular nobility elected the nephew of Javanshir, the son of his brother Varaz-Peroz, named Varaz-Trdat, who received the patrician title from the Byzantine emperor and was exalted with the honor of exconsul [apohypatos], "to the rank of the Great Prince of the paternal throne" in the presence of Albanian Catholicos Eghiazar (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 36). Caliph Yazid I (680–683) recognized Varaz-Trdat I (680–699) as "the governor of the eastern regions and the ruler of the kingdom of Albania and the province of Uti" (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 37). The country continued to pay tribute to the Arabs. After pacifying the opposing separatist forces within Albania, Varaz-Trdat seized control of the entire country, restoring the Great Prince's sovereignty within the country's former territorial boundaries (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 36).

At that time, a great army of the Khazars led by the Great Prince of the Huns Alp-Iluetuer moved to Albania 'as though avenging the death of Javanshir'. Alp-Iluetuer settled in the fields of Lpinia after plundering the areas of Gabala and Uti, capturing people and stealing cattle (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 36). Continuing Javanshir's tactics, Varaz-Trdat decided to use diplomacy to influence the Khazars. To this end, he sent the country's Catholicos Eghiazar to the Khazars, 'showing unwavering obedience and affection via him'. However, the peace and friendship concluded with the qaghan were short-lived. To put an end to the constant raids of the Khazars, Varaz-Trdat sent Bishop Israel to Varachan, to the headquarters of Alp-Iluetuer. Israel was tasked with persuading the Khazars to the Albanian faith, i.e. with spreading Christianity among them. The mission of Israel was successful.⁸³ A large number of the Khazars commanded by Alp-Iluetuer converted to Christianity. Only if Bishop Israel continues with the Khazars as a pastor, said Alp-Iluetuer in his letter to Varaz-Trdat, Albanian Catholicos Eghiazar, as well as in a letter to the Armenians, 'unbreakable love will be between us [the Khazars] and you'

(*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 43), ‘...due to the common faith, our wild peoples’ incursions on your country will cease’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 44).⁸⁴ Varaz-Trdat and Albanian Catholicos Eghiazar also believed that if Israel continued acting as a “mediator” between the two countries (peoples), a long-term peace with the Khazars could be achieved. But this did not save the country from another invasion of the Khazars. The Khazars took possession of Albania, Armenia, and Iberia in 685, taking advantage of the weakening of the Arab power over the northern countries as a result of civil strife in the Caliphate under Caliph Mu’awiyah, and also forgetting about the common faith with the Albanians and Armenians.⁸⁵ The Khazars devastated them, seized booty and prisoners, and returned to their lands.

In 685, Caliph Abd al-Malik (685–705) took power in the caliphate, and in the same year, he signed a truce with Byzantine emperor Justinian II (685–695, 705–711), under which they shared power over Albania, Iberia, and Armenia, and the taxes levied on these three countries were divided equally between the Caliphate and Byzantium.⁸⁶

In 689–690, Justinian II led a military campaign in Armenia, Georgia, and Albania and captured them all. Justinian II took some princes from these countries with him, while from others he demanded their sons as hostages. He made Varaz-Trdat, the Great Prince of Albania, the Patriarchal Exarch, i.e. “the second Ishkhan of Albania after the king”.⁸⁷ At that time, Albania paid taxes to three peoples – the Khazars, the Arabs, and the Greeks [Byzantium] (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 12). In 699, under emperor Tiberius III, Varaz-Trdat, due to rapprochement with the Arabs, was sent along with his sons to Constantinople as hostages, where they remained for five years (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 12). In Albania, during the absence of Varaz-Trdat, events took place that led to the direct intervention of the Caliphate in the internal affairs of the country. After the death of Albanian Catholicos Eghiazar, the Gardman Bishop Bakur-Nerses, a follower of the Chalcedonian teachings, became the Catholicos. Nerses decided to use Varaz-Trdat's wife, princess Sparama, to convert the country to Chalcedonianism and submit to Byzantium. Sparama clearly relied on the confessional unity with Byzantium to save her husband and sons from hostage as quickly as possible. Prince Shero led the opposition faction of Varaz-Trdat's relatives (the Mihranids) who adhered to monophysitism and were pro-Arab. He crushed the resistance of Nerses-Bakur and Princess Sparama and became the Great Prince of Albania in 699–704 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 3, 4).

Armenian Catholicos Elias informed Caliph Abd al-Malik in a letter about the activities of Catholicos Nerses and Sparama: ‘...Albanian Catholicos ...having agreed with the Greek emperor, mentions him in prayers and forces our countries to unite with him in faith’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 5). It should be mentioned that the Arabs followed the Sassanids' policy of alienating the Caucasian peoples from Byzantium when it came to the territories of the Central Caucasus. To this end, they supported the Monophysite Christianity among the Christian population of these countries, as opposed to Byzantium, where the Dyophysite Christianity was professed, i.e. Chalcedonianism.

By the order of Caliph Abd al-Malik, the Arab army and Armenian Catholicos Elias arrived in Albania and tried Nerses-Bakur and Sparama. They were anathematized and put to death (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 6-19). Caliph also ordered that the names of the Albanian nobility be added to a special list: if any of them professes Dyophysitism, he will be put to

the sword and captivity. ‘Peace was thus established in all of Albania's churches’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 10). After that, the Albanian Church was subordinated to the Armenian church.* Shero did not last long as the Great Prince of Albania. In 704, the Arabs took him to Syria (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 16). In 705, when Justinian II acceded to the throne for the second time, Varaz-Trdat was liberated. After his return from Constantinople to Albania, Varaz-Trdat fully accepted the Arab citizenship: ‘...since then, he subjected our country to the Tajiks [Arabs], paid tribute to them only’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 12). From that time on, Albania, in fact and in law, completely falls under the yoke of the Arabs. After Varaz-Trdat, Albania was ruled by the Arab emirs.

§ 3. Social movements from the fifth to the seventh centuries

The rise of feudal relations, feudal exploitation of the population by their state, as well as the Sassanian Iran, and secular and religious feudal lords, resulted in an increase in tax tyranny, which sparked people's rebellion.

Movses Kaghankatvatsi, as a representative of the church-feudal nobility, is silent about the class struggle, the social movements that, undoubtedly, must have taken place in Albania. K.V.Trever correctly identified their echoes in certain limited fragmented accounts of the Albanian author.⁸⁸ Thus, clarifying the causes that led to the convocation of the Aguen Council in 488, Kaghankatvatsi writes: ‘there were discrepancies between the laity and the clergy, between the azats and the commoners (ramiks); then the king wished to gather a council – a numerous trial’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 26). It is quite obvious that he is talking about class and intraclass differences. The text of the canons reflected intraclass strife only, i.e. the differences between the secular nobility and the clergy. Both Byzantine (*Theophanes, Malalas, Agathias, Procopius*), Syrian (*Joshua the Stylite*), and Armenian historians (*Elishe, Ghazar Parpetsi, Sebeos, Khorenatsi, Faustus of Byzantium*), who described the events of the 5th–7th centuries, report nothing about the social movements in the public life of the countries of Albania, Armenia and Georgia. The study of Movses Kaghankatvatsi's texts reveals what “strife between the azats and commoners (ramiks)” meant in the text of the Aguen Council, what social movement could have taken place in Albania at the time, and allows reconstructing this event.

As is known, any social movement in antiquity and the Middle Ages was hidden behind religious differences between the official religion and heretical beliefs that contradicted it. There is reason to believe that in Albania, in the 5th–6th centuries, Nestorianism and Manichaeism were preached. These were heretical religious teachings opposing Christianity and Zoroastrianism. The preachers of these teachings were

* However, this was a one-time act, and the Albanian Church did not adhere to it, remained to be considered autocephalous – the Catholicos was elected by the Albanian clergy – since the Albanian people was able to revive the Albanian kingdom in the ninth century. This was also facilitated by the political weakness of the Armenian people and the Armenian Church. For more information on this, see Chapter 5.

the followers of Ibas from Syria (died in 457), an adherent of Nestor, and the followers of Syrian-manichean Bundos (the fifth century).⁸⁹

Thus, Movses Kaghankatvatsi reports that in 551, Albanian Catholicos Ter-Abas 'made a strict investigation and exiled from Albania the nasty teachers: the hypocrite Thomas, the psalm-singing Elijah, Bnot, Ibas, and the like. They banished them to distant lands and restored peace' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 8). K.V.Trever correctly identified the Syrian Ibas or his followers in Ibas, and the Manichean Bundos or his followers in Bnot.⁹⁰ K.V.Trever believes that the echoes of the revolutionary movement of Mazdak were reflected in Albania in these heretical sermons, which took place in the second half of the sixth century. Unlike K.V.Trever, in the "strife between the Azats and commoners" of the Aguen Council in 488, we see a social movement that adopted the ideology of Manichaeism and Nestorianism in the fifth century directly from the followers of Nestor himself (the Syrian Ibas) and Mani himself (the Manichean Bundos). Alternatively, we prefer to associate Albania's class struggle with Mazdak's revolutionary movement which began in the second half of the fifth century and also ascended to the teachings of Manichaeism, i.e. the social movements of Mazdak and the movement in Albania were almost simultaneous. This class struggle in Albania was one of the main reasons for the convocation of the Aguen Council. As for the data of Movses Kaghankatvatsi related to the exile of heretics by Ter-Abas in the sixth century, we tend to see a continuation of the struggle, both with the remnants of this social movement and a dogmatic struggle. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Mazdakite movement raised not only the peasants and tradesmen of Iran, but the entire people of Albania. The main requirements of the Mazdakites included property equality, equality before the law, equality in family life, simplification of church rituals, the fight against exploitation and feudal land tenure.⁹¹ Indirect evidence of class differences appear now and then whenever the Albanian author reports on the clashes of Christianity with ancient pagan cults which were still practiced by large segments of people. Of particular interest is Kaghankatvatsi's statement that after the death of Javanshir 'a lot of troubles took place in our country: the armed rabble gathered in crowds' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 34).

It remains unknown why 'the armed rabble gathered in crowds'. Apparently, there was some kind of rebellion. A major social movement in the seventh century was Paulicianism. In the late seventh-early eighth century, the Arabs established their power in Albania and imposed a large tribute on it.

Previously, the main tax unit had been the hearth. To avoid unnecessary taxes, peasant families did not split so as not to multiply the number of hearths (smokes). Now, hearth tax was replaced by poll tax. The new tax collection system took the form of organized pillage.⁹² The local feudal lords also increased extortions from the population. All this resulted in a social anti-feudal movement known as Paulicianism.⁹³ It was one of the longest in time and the most massive heretical movement in the Middle Ages in the East, which lasted for about two centuries, alternately growing stronger and weaker. The Paulicians opposed the large-scale land tenure, religious rites, and church hierarchy. Believing that the world is based on the two principles – the good and the evil, they believed that the good principle, prosperity, is on the earth and not in the heavenly kingdom. They recognized the property and legal equality of all people. Unlike

the Mazdakites, the Paulicians believed in the triumph of the good. They established independent communities and obeyed neither the feudal lords or nor the church.

The Paulicians are first mentioned in the decree of the Albanian church council held in Partaw (Barda) in 706–707, where the Paulicians were condemned as heretics by the Albanian secular and ecclesiastic nobility.⁹⁴

The Paulician heresy was only suppressed among the ruling elite of Albania. It took on the form of a substantial anti-feudal movement within the broader population, particularly in the Gardman and Balasakan – Paytakaran regions.⁹⁵ The Paulicians, apparently, should be seen in the heretics mentioned in the decrees of another council of Partaw, convened in 768. The vigorous activity of the Paulicians of Albania also includes the disobedience to the Arabs by the people of the Beylagan province in the 7th–9th centuries.⁹⁶ The inhabitants of Beylagan – the Balasakan Paulicians – were a significant force until the mid-ninth century, that had to be reckoned with both by the local princes, allies of Babek, and the caliphate. Later, under the threat of extermination or Islamization, all or part of the Paulicians could migrate from Beylagan to Byzantium and a smaller part converted to Islam and assimilated.⁹⁷ Therefore, the cradle of the Paulician movement should be considered Albania – the Gardman and the Beylagan (Paytakaran – Balasakan) regions.⁹⁸

§ 4. Albanian ethnos

The study of ancient and early medieval (synchronous Albanian, Armenian) sources illuminates the history of the Albanian ethnos which existed for a long period, from the first century BC to the eighth century AD within the entire country of Albania (from the Aras River in the south to Derbent in the north) and further from the 8th to the 19th century in Artsakh, Utik and Shaki-Cambisena, Syunik. The source data allows tracing historical and ethnic processes over so many centuries and reconstructing the ethnic picture.

First of all, let's briefly repeat once again what Albania was like in geographical and political terms.

The geographical remoteness of Albania from the two empires – Rome-Byzantium and the Parthian, Sassanid Iran, the strategic position (the presence of the Caucasian passes, Derbent, which allowed the penetration of the warlike nomads), as well as trade and other channels created favorable conditions for the preservation of state sovereignty, the political independence of the country in the 1st–8th centuries. The Albanian kings, due to the existing conditions, did not pursue an expansionist policy. But the foreign and domestic political situations in Armenia (located at the junction of two empires), Iberia and Albania contributed to the stable security of the Albanian borders, which stretched from Derbent in the north to the Aras in the south, from Iberia in the west to the Caspian in the east.⁹⁹ When we talk about the Albanian settlements' boundaries, we're referring to the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural qualities that set it apart from the nearby ethnic groups of Armenians and Georgians.

In the 4th–8th centuries, Albania's political system was a feudal centralized kingdom ruled on a vassal basis by Albanian Arsacid kings and the great Mihranid princes who

superseded them. In contrast to Armenia and Georgia-Iberia, the Marzban government (governorship) established in the country after the collapse of the king's power was short-lived and episodic: from 463 to 488 and from 510 to 629. Albanian Church – Apostolic, Autocephalous – was one of the oldest in the Caucasus. Its origins, like those of the Georgian Church, are directly related to the Jerusalem Church, the Jerusalem Patriarchate, while the origins of the Armenian Church go back to the churches of Hellenic Osroene and Hellenic Cappadocia.¹⁰⁰

Written sources and material culture testify to the presence (from the first century AD) of the dominant ethnos in Albania, the Albanians, with ethnic diversity. They are not incompatible.

“Ethnos is a historical, stable, multigenerational group of people who have not only similarities but also relatively stable features of culture (including language) and psyche, as well as a sense of its unity and differences from all other similar groups (self-awareness) that are fixed in self-designation (ethnonym).”¹⁰¹

Based on the source analysis, we came to the conclusion that the Albanian ethnos was formed as a result of the consolidation (merger) of several tribes, close to each other in language and culture and genetically related. By the beginning of the first century, the number of the 26 tribes mentioned by Strabo, who lived long before the Strabonian period, had drastically fallen. These were Albanians, Gelae, Legae, Udis, Gargareans, Chilbs- Silvs, Lpins, Tsodis – the autochthons of Caucasian origin,¹⁰² who lived on the two banks of the Kur river.

The formation of the Albanian ethnos was due to the following factors:

1) territorial and state unity which can be traced in Albania throughout the country from the 4th–3rd centuries BC to the 8th century AD (the period of the reign of the local kings, the Albanian Arsacids and the great Mihranid princes who superseded them); from the 9th to 14th centuries – in Artsakh, Syunik, Shaki-Cambisena, Utik – in the political administration units – the revived Albanian kingdoms (the reign of Sahl ibn Sunbat, Esayi Abu-Muse, Atrnerseh I, Hamam, Ishkhanik, Sahak Sevada, Senekerim, Philippe, Hasan Jalal); and from the 15th century this can be seen in the Karabakh melikdoms;

2) Albanian self-awareness reflected in the self-designation-ethnonym Aluank – Albanians – can be traced approximately from the first century BC to the eighth century AD throughout the country, and after the fall of the Albanian kingdom, both the ethnonym and the Albanian self-awareness can be traced as a fragmentary phenomenon in the 9th–19th centuries in some parts of the country – in Artsakh, Syunik, Utik, Shaki-Cambisena-Hereti. The “we” – “they” antithesis existed until the 19th century.

Albanian author Kaghankatvatsi (7th–8th centuries) distinguishes Albanians from Armenians and other ethnic groups, genetically deduces them from another tribe of Japheth, from the Cyturians (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 2). Separating the Albanians from the Armenians, Khorenatsi (7th–8th century) called them “the ever deceitful Albanians” (*Khorenatsi*, III, 3, 6; *Faustus of Byzantium*). ‘The noblemen of Armenia and the military leader Hamazasp... greatly envied Javanshir...’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 22). It is critical to notice that the ethnic identities of both Kaghankatvatsi and Khorenatsi incorporate notions about the characteristics of both their own ethnos and, to some extent, the foreign ethnos. And this is characteristic of the self-awareness of an ethnos.¹⁰³

Albanian self-awareness is seen, first of all, in an attempt to create “History of the Aghuans”, when the name of the ethnos is recorded in the title “The History”. Further, Albanian self-awareness is seen in an attempt to restore the **Albanian kingdom** in Syunik, Artsakh in the 9th–13th centuries, in the epigraphy of the 13th century Gandzasar cathedral, which says that the cathedral was built by **Albanian king Hasan Jalal** at the insistence of an **Albanian patriarch for the Albanians**; in the creation in the 12th–13th centuries of “The Albanian Chronicle” and “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh, “Canons” by David Alawik, which is an evidence of the Albanian renaissance and the rise of self-awareness. In the 13th century, a need arose to create a legal document for Albanian Christians. Albanian self-awareness existed as far back as in the 18th century. Thus, a letter in the Udi language from Karabakh to Peter I says: ‘We are Aghuans and Utis by nation’.¹⁰⁴ There are ‘the basics of grammar in the Aghuan language, written in Armenian letters’ in the 18th century (see manuscript *ИО ИБАХ СССР*, C-7, according to the old numbering 77, 19 pages).¹⁰⁵ Albanian self-awareness shows itself as late as in the 18th–19th centuries, when Karabakh meliks in a letter to Potemkin call themselves ‘the heirs of the Arsacid and **the Albanian kings**’. The 17th century author Arakel of Tabriz calls Karabakh ‘the country of the Albanians-Aghuans’.¹⁰⁶ Albanian Catholicos of the 18th century Esayi Hasan Jalalyan wrote a history of the Christian population of Karabakh and titled it “A Brief History of the Albanians”, in which he refers to himself as to an Albanian.¹⁰⁷

At the insistence of the Karabakh meliks, the projects of Suvorov (whose grandmother descended from the Albanian Karabakh meliks) and Potemkin provided for creating the Albanian kingdom. ‘...Prince -Tauricheski's project was found in order to take advantage of the Persian turmoil and occupy Baku and Derbent and annex Gilan, call the occupied territory Albania of the future legacy of the Great Prince Konstantin Pavlovich’.¹⁰⁸

Potemkin writes in his letter: ‘...to arrange the Armenian land and the part that is to make up Albania, as well as the kingdom of Heraclius’ (Central National Historical Archive, fund 52, series 2/203, file 37, pages 63-64).

3) One of the components of an ethnos is **the unity of culture**, including religion and language. Albania was united in terms of confession from the 4th till the 19th century, with the Albanian Autocephalous Church and the Albanian Patriarchate as the general organizing and consolidating force. In 1836, the Albanian Church was deprived of its independence.

The archaeological Yaloylutepe culture and the culture of jar burials testify to the cultural unity throughout country.

Linguistic unity is by all means inherent in an ethnos in the process of its formation, when it uses one language. The Albanian language belonging to the North-East Caucasian (Nakh-Dagestan) language group, was widespread throughout Albania at the stage of intertribal communication.¹⁰⁹ The existence of the Albanian language, Albanian writing is evidenced by Strabo, Hippolytus of Rome, Eutropius, Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Korium, Sebeos, Ghevond, Khorenatsi, “Book of Letters”, Zacharias Rhetor, Arab authors, Hayton.

The ethnic role of a language grows as the language acquires a writing system.¹¹⁰ Albanian writing system was developed on the basis of the Gargarean dialect rich in

guttural – throaty sounds (*Khorenatsi*, III, 54; *Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 3; *Koriun*), consisted of 52 phonemes, especially rich in guttural, whistling, and hissing sounds.

The creation of the Albanian writing system and literature in the Albanian language is associated with the country's Christianization, as well as the emergence of the Armenian and Georgian writing and literature. The question of writing and literature in the native Albanian language has become an objective historical necessity. As noted in Chapter I, Albania was prepared for the creation of its literature by all its living conditions – socio-economic and political.¹¹¹ Nowadays, the unique findings of the famous Caucasian scholar Z.N.Aleksidze at Sinai, in the monastery of St.Catherine – the discovery of Albanian-Georgian palimpsests with letters in the Albanian language and in the Albanian alphabet – testify to the existence of Albanian church literature back in the 4th–5th centuries.¹¹²

The assimilation policy of the Sassanids – the desire to propagate Zoroastrianism, as well as the activities of the Syriac-language church, had to be opposed in the country by the Christian church in the local Albanian language, with the Albanian literature, which could defend the cultural and ethnic identity of the Albanians. The Bible and other theological writings (*Ghevond*) were translated into Albanian. The local Albanian historical and literary heritage, whose formation we trace to the 6th–12th centuries¹¹³ and which survived until the beginning of the 19th century, was being established.

Due to the specifics of historical destinies, the written works of local Albanian origin have been preserved in the Old Armenian language. If we dwell upon the synchronous historical realities of Armenia and Albania (the period of late antiquity and the 4th–8th centuries and later – from the ninth century to the early 19th century), we will be convinced that the Albanian literature works could by no means be written in the ancient Armenian language. As noted in Chapter I, from the fall of Tigranes II's empire (the first century BC) and until 387, the Armenian statehood actually did not exist any more and legally it was cancelled in 428. Geographically, there were two Armenias, two provinces – the western Byzantine Armenia located west of the Euphrates and the eastern Persian Armenia located east of the Euphrates, ruled by governors – marzbans. Meanwhile, Albania retained its territorial and political, i.e. state unity for 1000 years (the third century BC – the early eighth century AD).

Under such conditions, there was no need to use the Armenian language in Albania, and no more to create Albanian historical and legal literature in it, i.e. Armenian could not be the lingua franca. The possibility that the Armenian language could have been the lingua franca in Albania in the following centuries (9th–19th centuries) is discussed in detail in Chapter I of this book.

The local Albanian historical and literary tradition had been taking shape since the 6th–7th centuries: “The History of Catholicos Virov”, “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi (8th–10th centuries), Elegy of Albanian poet Davtak (7th century), and in the 12th–14th centuries, i.e. in the renaissance of the Albanian literature – “Albanian Chronicle”, “Book of Law” and “The Life of Khosrow of Ganja” by Mkhitar Gosh (12th–13th centuries), “The History” by Kirakos Gandzaketsi (13th century), Canons of David Alawik (12th century), the works of Areveltsi/Aghuanetsi (Albanian) (13th century), “The History of the Sisakan Clan” by Stepanos Orbelian (13th century),

the works of Smbat Sparapet, Hethum the Historian (13th century), “A Brief History of the Albanian Land” by Esayi Hasan Jalalyan (18th century) and finally, the works of Makar Barkhudaryants “Artsakh”, “The History of the Country of Aghuank”, “The Country of Albania and Its Neighbors” (19th century).

Parts of what was discussed in Chapter 1 concerning “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi must be repeated. Movses Kaghankatvatsi was a contemporary of the great Albanian Mihranid prince Javanshir (the seventh century) whose reign is rightfully considered a period of political and cultural flourishing of Albania. This work was commissioned by Javanshir. This is one of the reasons for the creation of “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi. Under the conditions of triple political pressure, in order to mobilize the Albanian people to fight for the independence of the Albanian state, for the preservation of cultural and ideological identity, a work was needed both to cover the time contemporary to the author – the glorious reign of Javanshir – and to reflect the entire previous history of the Albanian kingdom, starting from the biblical period, then from the first century to the early eighth century.

Despite the subsequent traces of editing of the “History of the Aghuans”, the entire nature of the narrative of the monument, the relative completeness of the information reported and the breadth of the author's range of interests, the developed chronological system, according to which all events of the internal and external life of the country are clearly dated, the presence, as one might say, of a certain historical vision characteristic of the era, certain objectivity in the data reported by the author suggest the existence in Albania of certain traditions and experience of historical presentation.

When it comes to disputing the fact that Movses Kaghankatvatsi's work was initially written in Albanian, Armenian scholars have practically only one argument – the inclusion of an acrostic, the Elegy, by poet Davtak on the death of Javanshir, Great Prince of Albania, written in the seventh century and preserved as part of “History of the Aghuans” (HA, II, 35) in the Old Armenian language. Poet Davtak did not leave any other works, except for the acrostic in honor of the Albanian ruler, not related to him by blood, according to the logic of Armenian scholars. In some of the manuscripts, representing, in our opinion, the Albanian edition (C-59 ЛО ИВАН СССР and P4220), the elegy includes nineteen verses-quatrain, corresponding to the first nineteen letters of the Armenian alphabet. And only in other manuscripts, which, in our opinion, represent the Armenian edition (B-56 ЛО ИВАН СССР and P1217 (Makler catalog)), the number of verses reaches thirty-six, thus covering all the letters of the Armenian alphabet. If, however, we observe complete harmony of the rhythm and the clarity of the meter (one quatrain per each letter of the alphabet) from the first to the nineteenth verse, after the nineteenth letter, both the meter (a couplet, tiercet appear instead of quatrains, etc.) and the poetic forms are distorted in comparison with the first part. Undoubtedly, there is a wishful thinking, a correction. As is known, an acrostic does not always need to cover all letters of the alphabet. To some extent, it is symbolic. Similarly, Davtak's acrostic could well cover only 19 out of 52 letters of the Albanian alphabet. It seems to us that any decent rhymer is able to translate an acrostic into another language, in this case from Albanian into Armenian, to this end, undoubtedly following the alphabet of the target language. Moreover, it was an opportunity to demonstrate the skill of versification. Let's take into account that currently there is

an Azerbaijani version of Davtak's elegy on the death of Javanshir, which is read out or sung in the southwestern regions of modern Azerbaijan at memorial services dedicated to Muslim saints. In terms of content, manner of presentation, Davtak's elegy could not have been created by a poet who came from Armenia to Albania upon being commissioned. Elegy is hopelessness, deep sadness over the loss of a person dear to the poet, the hopelessness of his Albanian country:

‘We mourn **our** grievous loss’;

‘Our world has turned bitter, hordes are engulfing **us**’;

‘The feast of the Lord's Cross was turned into mourning for **us**’;

‘The king of Greece and the princes of the south were eager to see **our** ruler’;

‘Misfortunes befell **us** at once’;

‘**Our** country was put to death by God’.

The poet repeatedly emphasizes the greatness of Javanshir's personality (“His fame spread throughout the earth, his name reached the end of the world”), realizes the severity of this loss for Albania, his (the poet's) country.

So, Albania had all the components that characterize an ethnos. The historicity of the Albanian ethnos, which can be traced from early class system to present times, is also worth noting. Changing the reality, ethnic communities develop history and transform themselves throughout time.

In light of the foregoing, the Armenian scholars' viewpoint appears susceptible and incorrect, including B.Ulubabayan, A.S.Mnatsakanyan, B.Harutyunyan, S.Arutyunov, A.Hakobyan, K.N.Yuzbashyan, P.M.Muradyan, as well as the opinion of R.Hewsen¹¹⁴ and others, according to which there was no Albanian ethnos and that it did not develop. According to our Armenian colleagues, before the fifth century, Albania was not a unified ethnopolitical entity. The population of Albania is divided by Armenian scholars into the population of the right-bank Kur, which they believe was inhabited by Armenian ethnos who in the fifth century was holding the dominant position in the newly created governorship – marzbandom – Albania, and who began to Armenize the Albanians – those who lived on the left bank of the Kur. As for the Armenian population of the right bank of the Kur (which, according to their concept, was originally Armenian), they believe that for some reason it became known as the Albanians and developed an Albanian identity and worldview.¹¹⁵

It is quite obvious that self-awareness and self-designation (ethnonym) are the prerequisites of an ethnos and they could not be acquired immediately in the fifth century with the creation of a new administrative unit – the Albanian marzbandom, as childishly presented by the Armenian colleagues. Armenian sources – Koriun, Elishe, Ghazar Parpetsi, Khorenatsi, Sebeos, Ghevond, Faustus of Byzantium – and Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi do not mention the Armenians in the territory of the right bank and left bank of the Kur, but only report about the Albanians.

The authors of the aforementioned theory, using to some extent modern concepts and terms that characterize aspects of ethnic problems, set forth a theoretical proposition about the likelihood of separation of a part from an ethnos and integrating into another ethnic environment, followed by the formation of a common ethnic identity, different from that of the initial ethnos. According to our opponents, this

situation continued in Albania from 428/450 to the tenth century and this process was supposedly reflected in Armenian sources of the fifth century and the subsequent centuries and in “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi. First of all, it should be noted that such theoretical rationale needs confirmation by facts, which the reviewers do not have and therefore, apparently, do not cite them. Without providing any grounds, they assert that in 428, the Sassanids created three marzbandoms in the Central Caucasus – Armenia, Albania and Iberia.¹¹⁶ In reality, the abolition of statehood in Armenia did not imply the establishment of a similar political status in Albania, as evidenced by the presence of the king's power in Albania up to and including 510 (Koriun, Elishe, Parpetsi, Kaghankatvatsi, Kanonagirk), while only Armenia became a marzbandom. According to the reviewers' concept, the Albanian marzbandom allegedly included the regions with the Armenian population (Utik, Artsakh – the regions of the right bank of the Kur).

Therefore, according to their concept, “Albania” means a certain political and confessional unity.

Even if the Albanian political union was far more independent than the Armenian and included in the fifth century two ethnically different components – the Albanian and the Armenian, the former might have been the leading one in relation to the latter, and then the Armenian community would not have mechanically adopted the Albanian identity, but the Armenian population of the right bank of the Kur would rather be de-ethnicized due to the dominant role of the political component, as unwittingly pointed out by the Armenian colleagues. If the concept proposed by Armenian scientists is correct, then this process must have been preceded by a long interaction between the two ethnic groups – the Albanians and the Armenians within the ethnic borders, and they would first develop a double ethnic identity (Albanian and Armenian), in which later one would assimilate the other. In this case, Armenian scholars would have to agree with the long-term existence of both the Albanian and the Armenian ethnoses, not only on the left bank, but, undoubtedly, on the right bank as well. In addition, if the position of our Armenian colleagues were right, the Sassanids, after creating the Albanian marzbandom, would try to plant Persian identity here, but not Albanian or Armenian. Did the Armenians, Georgians, or Albanians who made up the Caucasian Kustak known as Adurbadagan gain a political self-awareness as “Adurbadaganis” along with the local identity of their own – Armenian, Georgian, and Albanian? R.Hewsen does not agree with the Armenian scholars who consider the population of the interfluvium of the Kur and the Aras (i.e., the right bank of the Kur) to be Armenian. He argues that this population was autochthonous, of Caucasian origin. However, R.Hewsen contends that there was no Albanian nation as such but rather a federation of Caucasian tribes with the Albanians as the core.

According to Armenian authors, Kaghankatvatsi's “History of the Aghuans” was written during a period when the Armenian nobility was dominated by separatist tendencies, and it was intended to support a group of Armenian feudal lords who opposed the formation of a centralized Armenian state under the Bagratids.¹¹⁷ This begs the question: does it make sense for the author of “History of the Aghuans” to defend the independence of his homeland from Armenia just to subjugate the former to another state with a different people, a different geography, and a different dynasty? As is known,

the birthplace of Kaghankatvatsi is Albania, which stretched from the Aras river to Derbent and was ruled by the Mihranids; the author aims at exaltation of the country. But the state of the Bagratids was created in the 8th–10th centuries in another land, in the region of Kars and Erzurum, southwest of Albania. Furthermore, assuming the possibility of such circumstances for writing “History of the Aghuans”, one would anticipate an outspoken anti-Bagratid attitude in it. It is all the more surprising that the Bagratids are mentioned only twice in the source. The Bagratids – Ashot – were first mentioned by Kaghankatvatsi (III, 21 and 22). ‘Then Hamam the Pious, having become the Albanian king, revived the destroyed kingdom of Albania, like Ashot Bagratuni revived the Armenian kingdom. It was at one and the same time’ (HA, III, 21) and another fragment about Bagratuni (HA, III, Chapter 22): ‘He (Sahak Sevada, the ruler of Albania) was fought by ...the king of Armenia and Smbat, but they could not subdue him to their power’.

What happened to the Albanian ethnos? During the Arab invasion, the majority of the Albanians residing in the lower reaches of the Kur and Aras converted to Islam and integrated with Turkic-speaking peoples who also converted to Islam and settled here in large groups. And the rest of the Albanian population, who inhabited the mountainous parts (the Arabs did not go to the mountains), in the north-west of Albania, as well as in the south-west, adhered to monophysitism, which in the distant future would “make it related” to the Armenian Church, or to dyophysitism, which makes it related to the Georgian Church. Had there been a third branch in Christianity, as noted by Z.N.Aleksidze, the Albanians would obviously, in order to preserve their identity, adhere to this branch and would probably have survived to the present day.¹¹⁸ The fact is that despite the tragedy of their fate, some of the Albanians have survived to this day. These are Udis. The traditional components of the local Albanian culture will be preserved among the Albanian Christian population for a long time: secular subjects on Albanian khachkars – cross-stones (9th–14th centuries), the architectural canons of the Khoshavank-Khutavank cathedral (12th century), Gandzasar cathedral (13th century), which have no analogues in Armenian architecture,¹¹⁹ the Small calendar of chronology (Artsakh), etc. In the 19th century,¹²⁰ a double ethnic self-awareness is formed and then it changed steeply, when the Albanian identity disappeared superseded by the Armenian one (after 1836). However, in the 18th century, when Albanian Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalalyan wrote his “A Brief History of the Albanians”, the Albanians' self-awareness was still strong. The policy of the Tsarist government to de-ethnicize the Albanians, pursued to appease the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin, which had long ago thought out and prepared its own concept in relation to Albanian ethno-cultural heritage, put an end to the Albanian self-awareness. In 1836, the Tsarist Government abolished the Albanian Autocephalous Church and subordinated it to the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church, and from then onward, all the Albanians were to be considered Armenians, although some of them remembered their Albanian roots. This process was very lengthy and painful. In protest, most of the Albanians began to Islamize.

As a result of the forcible interethnic integration of Armenians and Albanians, Georgians and Albanians, part of the Albanians were culturally and ideologically assimilated (Armenized) and others were Georgianized after adopting Orthodoxy, i.e. Dyophysitism.

We should not forget that, alongside Albanians, Turkic-speaking and Iranian-speaking tribes, who also played a role in the assimilation of a part of the Islamized Albanians, have resided in compact settlements in Artsakh/Karabakh since ancient times (from the first century). Artsakh was part of all Azerbaijani political formations.

§ 5. The renaissance of Albanian kingdoms in the 9th to 12th centuries

Following the Arab conquest and before the conquest of the historical Azerbaijan by the Turks, individual political formations emerged in the territory of the former Albanian kingdom. These were Albanian principalities-kingdoms: in Shaki and Arran, ruled by Sahl ibn Sunbat (822–835?), Ktish and Beylagan – Stepannos Ablasad and his nephew Isai (Esayi) Abu-Muse; Syunik – Vasak; Khachen – Atrnerseh; Gardman – Ketritch; Utik – Stepan Klia or Kon (before 853). All these principalities were initially dependent on the Arabs and were in one way or another related to Babek, now supporting him in the struggle against the Caliphate, now betraying him.¹²¹

As for the Albanian Mihranid rulers, according to the Albanian author, one of their last representatives, Varaz-Trdat III, was killed in Artsakh in 822 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19). It was from this period that Sahl ibn Sunbat appeared on the historical arena. He descended from the local Albanian kings' clan of Zarmihr from the Aranshahiks who ruled Albania before the Mihranids (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19).¹²² He was the ruler of Shaki, as well as of Arran, which he subordinated in 835. Z.M.Bunyatov quite rightfully dismisses the opinion about the Armenian origin of Sahl ibn Sunbat, as well as about the fact that he was from the Armenian Bagratids family.¹²³ As B.Ulubabyan is compelled to admit, there is no documentation in the sources on Sahl ibn Sunbat's descending from the Bagratids.¹²⁴ As for the general Armenian Haykid origin of Sahl ibn Sunbat, Armenian historians build on the fact that Sahl ascends to the Sisak clan, which, in turn, they relate to as the Haykids. But *Kaghankatvatsi* provides no information on the Haykid origin of either Sisak or Sahl.¹²⁵ Some information only appears in the penultimate chapter of *Kaghankatvatsi*'s "History of the Aghuans": 'We truly know that the Haykans-Armenians became related with the Mihranid clan which dominated the Eastern country – Albania' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22).¹²⁶ The fact is that the author (or authors) of "History of the Aghuans" is absolutely strange to such an arrogant assertion that appears for the first time. This excerpt is an interpolation of later period in content and an editorial amendment of later period as this amendment completely contradicts all the stated factual material and the logic of the events in "History of the Aghuans".

Sahl ibn Sunbat opposed the Caliphate back in 820, according to Z.M.Bunyatov, who refers to the data on Derbent history.¹²⁷ In 822, together with his brothers and an army, Sahl ibn Sunbat once again attacked the Arabs who came from Barda and plundered the Amaras region, 'knocked them down, scattered them throughout the land and rescued the captives as if from a lion's mouth' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19). Sahl owned the strategically important area of Shaki, which Z.M.Bunyatov correctly identified as being in the Bazarchay-Hakarichay riverbed¹²⁸ and not to be confused with Shaki on the Kur's left

bank. In 835, Sahl subdued the entire Arran. According to al-Dinawari, ‘at that time the lord of the lands along the Aras was Sahl ibn Sunbat’ (al-Tabari, al-Ya’qubi, al-Baladhuri),¹²⁹ i.e. he owned the territory of the right bank of the Kur river, which is the left bank of the Aras river. According to the Albanian author, for his labors (the extradition of Babek), caliph awarded Sahl with “the supreme power over Armenia, Iberia and Aghuania-Albania and ruled them all imperiously as a king”.¹³⁰ Although the Arabs regarded Sahl ibn Sunbat as having some sort of independent sovereignty over Arran, he remained merely “the ruler of Shaki”,¹³¹ according to Armenian author Tovma Artsruni.

In 853–854, despite the services rendered to the Caliphate, Sahl was captured by Bugha al-Kabir, and together with other Albanian princes of Arran – Esayi Abu-Muse, as well as with the ruler of Khachen, Prince Atrnerseh, was taken to the capital of the caliph.¹³² As previously mentioned, there were other anti-Caliph, separatist-minded Albanian princes during Sahl ibn Sunbat's reign, including Stepannos Ablasad (before 830) his successor, his nephew, Esayi Abu-Muse, rulers of Beylagan-Paytakaran and Ktish.¹³³ According to “History of the Aghuans” (III, 19), the Paulicians attacked the provinces of Artsakh about 830/831, but were defeated by Prince Stepannos Ablasad with the support of Babek. In the same year, Prince Ablasad was assassinated by the leaders of the Paulicians Davon and Shapukh. The rebellious Paulicians fortified themselves in the fortress of Goroz, and according to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, they owned many regions of Arran for 12 years (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19).¹³⁴ Ablasad's friends put his murderers to death. Then the nephew [the sister's son] of Ablasad, Esayi Abu-Muse, captured the regions of Arran, which had been in possession of the Paulicians, and ruled over all the lands. In 840/841, Esayi Abu-Muse once again defeated the rebellious Paulicians who devastated the regions of Sisan, Jor and Amaras.¹³⁵ In 851/852, after the suppression of the Babek uprising, during the reign of Caliph Mutawakkil, Transcaucasia was engulfed in a powerful new anti-caliphate uprising. The punitive army led by Bugha al-Kabir, sent by the caliph to suppress the uprising, started the hostilities against the Sanars, against the great Ishkhan Atrnerseh, who was in the Khachen fortress and was captured by Bughi al-Kabir.¹³⁶ According to the Armenian historian of the tenth century Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi, Bugha went from Khachen to the Gardman region, took possession of it and captured the ruler of Gardman Ketritch. ‘Bugha next went to the Uti region, to the village of Tus [Tavuz], where he captured Stepannos named Kon [Klia], whose clan was known as Sevordik after his forefather Sevuk. Then the deceived ishkhans of Aghuank Esayi [Abu-Muse], together with his relatives, as well as other ishkhans of Aghuank, were subdued and captured, tied up. Bugha brought them all in chains to the king's court, where they were severely tortured. Stepannos Kon alone was martyred for confessing Christ’.¹³⁷ It happened in 852/853. It is worth noting that it took Bugha's army a while to break the resistance of Esayi Abu-Muse who took up defensive positions in the Ktish citadel. According to the detailed description of Armenian author Artsruni, the hostilities between Bugha and Esayi Abu-Muse lasted more than a year, during which Bugha attacked the Ktish fortress 28 times and was driven back each time. It was only through an artful design that the caliph and Bugha were able to deceive Esayi Abu-Muse and lure him along with other princes to the caliph.¹³⁸ Among the Albanian princes who were captured, chained, and sent to the caliph, was, as noted, ishkhans of Khachen – Atrnerseh, called

Adar-Nerse ibn Iskhak al-Khashini (al-Khashini means “from Khachen”) by Tabari.¹³⁹ Despite the punitive actions against the independent Albanian princes-Ishkhans, the Caliphate failed to consolidate its power over Arran – the historical Albania. According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, in 886, ‘Hamam the Pious, having become the Albanian king, revived the destroyed kingdom of Albania, like Ashot Bagratuni revived the Armenian kingdom. It took place at the same time’ (*Movses Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 21). According to Kaghankatvatsi, ‘Hamam took upon himself the blood of his brother; Hamam himself did great and generous benefits to the churches, the needy and the poor’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 21). Al-Mas’udi (*Muruj*, II, p.86) says that Humam (Hamam) was the “Great Prince of the East” and “the king of Albania” who united the Albanian kingdom, which was defeated and beheaded by the Arabs.¹⁴⁰ According to the Albanian authors – Kaghankatvatsi and Kirakos, Hamam freed the great Patriarch of Armenia Gevorg from captivity for a lot of money and sent him with honor and in good health to Armenia. In 893, Hamam paid ransom Muhammad Afshin ibn Abi'l-Saj, the governor of Azerbaijan, for Armenian Catholicos George II,¹⁴¹ “adding his own money to increase it (the ransom)”.¹⁴² Researchers rightly identify Grigor with Hamam the Pious. Hamam (‘Grigor’ literally translated in Arabic – “vigilant, caring”)¹⁴³ – the great ishkan of the East.* Asoghik calls Hamam “the king of Aghuank”. Grigor-Hamam the Pious’ domain stretched from the eastern coast of the Sevan lake in the west to the approaches to the city of Partaw (Barda) in the east. According to Kaghankatvatsi, ‘Grigor... extended his power beyond’, i.e. to the left bank of the Kur, ‘including Kambechan-Shaki in his domain’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22),¹⁴⁴ which were part of the Albanian kingdom under the Albanian Arsacids and Mihranids. Grigor-Hamam was one of the sons of Khachen ruler Atrnerseh, the one who was captured in 853/854 by Bugha and the only one who able to return from the Arab captivity. Atrnerseh himself was the son of Sahl – ‘the head of the Syunians’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22).

And Sahl, ‘the head of the Syunians’, according to some researchers, was Sahl ibn Sunbat, the ruler of Shaki and Arran. In the province of Dzor, in the village of Mets-Mazra – The Big Mazra – an inscription (autograph) has been preserved in the Old Armenian language: ‘In 330 (881) in the Armenian chronology, I, Grigor Atrnerseh, the prince (of Minor Syunik and Aghuank), erected this cross’.¹⁴⁵ Grigor-Hamam was considered the grandfather of Ishkhanik, the king of Hereti-Cambisena (Kambechan) and the father of Atrnerseh II. The descendants of Varaz-Trdat Mihranid had owned the provinces of Artsakh and Syunik since the 9th–10th centuries (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22). According to Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi (III, 22), Varaz-Trdat’s wife and her daughter Sparama found refuge in Khachen-Artsakh, ‘wishing to restore her house’. She gives her daughter Sparama in marriage to Atrnerseh, the son of Sahl, the head of the Syunik province. The son of Sparama and Atrnerseh, Grigor-Hamam, partially restored the Albanian kingdom, which included Artsakh-Khachen.

According to Stepanos Orbelian, the Syunik kingdom repeatedly appealed to Khachen-Artsakh for help and asked or invited the heir to the Syunik throne from it in the tenth, eleventh, twelfth centuries. Moreover, Stepanos Orbelian speaks of the invited heirs as of

* The East implies Albania. See Chapter 5, § 1.

representatives of the great principality, of princes.¹⁴⁶ Grigor-Hamam had four sons, and each of them inherited his own domain. In 910, one of Grigor-Hamam's sons named Atrnerseh II declared himself the king in Kambechan-Hereti. During his reign, according to The Georgian Chronicles (*"Kartlis Tskhovreba"*, I, 264), the Kingdom of Shaki was invaded in 915 by Abkhazian king Constantine III (893–922) and Kakhetian chorebishop Kvirike I (892–918), which resulted in the loss of some border towns. But Atrnerseh II regained these cities after a major invasion of the Sajids into Central Transcaucasia between 925–929. So, the Shaki kingdom retained its territorial boundaries throughout the entire tenth century.* Arab author Al-Mas'udi writes in his work *"Muruj"* (943): "The kingdom of the Sanars is followed by Shaki, whose inhabitants are Christians, although there are also Mohammedans among them... Their king in the days when this book was written was Atrnerseh, the son of Amam..."¹⁴⁷ In the mid-tenth century, according to Ananias Mokatsi, an Armenian Catholicos who visited Albania, the country was already ruled by Hamam's grandson, Atrnerseh II's son, Ishkhanik: '...At that time, Ishkhanik, the son of king Atrnerseh and the grandson of the blessed Hamam, the pious sovereign of Aghuan, was on the throne'.¹⁴⁸ Ananias Mokatsi also reports that Ishkhanik '...adopted the heresy of Chalcedon and forgot his father's faith'.¹⁴⁹ Georgian sources also attest to the growth of Chalcedonianism and its triumph in Hereti-Kambechan, claiming that all of Hereti's inhabitants were heretics [monophysites] before Ishkhanik's rule. However, as Ishkhanik's mother, Atrnerseh II's wife queen Dinar was the sister of Georgian prince of princes (eristavt-eristavi) Gurgen who ruled in the second part of the tenth century, it was she who converted the population of Hereti-Kambechan to Orthodoxy-Chalcedonianism.¹⁵⁰ But later Ishkhanik returned to the Monophysite Albanian Church, although, according to N.Y.Marr, after Ishkhanik 'in a hundred years... Hereti became part of Georgia forever'.¹⁵¹ And, naturally, following the confessional transition, the Albanians of Kambechan-Hereti were being de-ethnicized for a long time, and a long process of partial Georgianization began.

Artsakh and partly the province of Utik (adjacent to Artsakh) came to the possession of another son of Grigor-Hamam, Sahak known as Sevada, whose reign lasted till the eleventh century (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 21, 22). Sahak Sevada, according to the Albanian author, subdued the Gardman region in the Utik province, Kust-i-Parnes in the Artsakh province, and Tsoroget (Shirak) in the Ararat province. Armenian king Smbat Bagratuni fought with him, but failed to subdue him to his power (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22). Sahak Sevada had kinship relations with the Bagratuni house and the ishkan of Syunik: one of the daughters later married Ashot II Yerkat Bagratuni, while another daughter of his married Smbat, the ishkan of Syunik.¹⁵² According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, 'Sahak Sevada loved literature and established his own school in his house' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22). According to Hovhannes Draskhanakertsi (LX), Sahak Sevada 'drowned his great wisdom and began to weave a plot against the king' Ashot Bagratuni, the Armenian king, his son-in-law, incited by the deceitful speeches of slanderers, rebelled against Armenian king Ashot. Sahak Sevada and his son Grigor were taken prisoners by the Armenian king and blinded. The kings of the revived Albania in the tenth century came from the descendants of Sahak Sevada. These were his great-grandsons – John Senekerim and

* See Chapter 1, endnote 658: Насибов Ю. Азербайджан в V– первой половине XII вв. (по древнегрузинским источникам): Автореф. дисс. канд. истор. наук. Баку, 1985, с.19.

Philippe (sons of Sevada – ishkhans, grandchildren of Sahak Sevada) (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22). John, yclept Senekerim, ‘was chosen by the Most High as the king of the long-ceased kingdom, revived by God through him. The Persian king rewarded him with great honors, gave him the crown of his father and his horse. In the same year, Greek master David sent the king's crown and a magnificent purple mantle in honor and in respect of the God-chosen man, who was anointed king by the right hand of the patriarch for the glory of Christ’ – this is what *Kaghankatvatsi* reports on Senekerim's enthronement in Albania (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 22). The Albanian author here emphasizes three times the legality of the royal dignity: ‘the Persian king... gave the crown’, ‘the Greek master David sent him the king's crown’, and finally, ‘was anointed king by the right hand of the patriarch’. The period of his long reign (until the end of the tenth century), when Sanariya [Kakheti] was annexed to Shaki, is considered the heyday of the Shaki kingdom. Only after his death did the Shaki kingdom weaken.¹⁵³

The “Persian king” who gave the crown to Senekerim should apparently be understood as the Sallarids, who ruled Azerbaijan (North and South) at that time, on whom, among other rulers, the rulers of the Artsakh-Syunik kingdom were in vassal dependence. Moreover, when in the 9th–13th centuries the Shirvanshahs, Sajids, Sallarids, Shaddadids, and later Atabeks formed Azerbaijani states in the territory of the former Albania, the small revived Albanian kingdoms-principalities were part of these Azerbaijani states.

So, by the eleventh century, Shaki-Kambechan-Hereti, the Albanian kingdoms in the north of the country, were absorbed by Kakheti. However, Kakheti and the Shaki kingdom were still referred to in texts as constituent entities of the same state. This “kingdom of the Tsanars and the Shakis” lasted until the early twelfth century, when it was added to David IV's lands.* As for the rest of the Albanian kingdoms-principalities located in the interfluvium of the Kur and Aras, the Shaddadids, having vanquished the Sallarids, extended their influence to these Albanian kingdoms too and put an end to their existence as independent political units.¹⁵⁴

Noteworthy is the fact of mentioning the Albanian principality- kingdom of Khachen in the tenth century in the Book of Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (912–959) “On the ceremonies of the Byzantine court”, which includes Albanian Khachen principality in the list of the rulers of the most important principalities-kingdoms which had a written diplomatic relationship with the Byzantine court. Letters were addressed as follows: “to the prince-owner (archon) of Khachen, Armenia” (“On the ceremonies of the Byzantine court”, II, 48).¹⁵⁵

And another work of the same emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, his political and diplomatic collection “On the Administration of the Empire” (“De Administrando Imperio”), preserved the “Transcaucasian dossier” which provides unique information about the Transcaucasia, which makes it possible to judge about the status of political formations in Armenia, Georgia,¹⁵⁶ Albania, about their rulers and their relations with the Arabs and the Byzantine Empire. “On the Administration of the Empire”, among other things, describes the geography of the foreign peoples who surrounded Byzantium in the north, west and east, with whom Byzantium had diplomatic relations.¹⁵⁷

* Насибов Ю. Азербайджан в V – первой половине XII вв. (по древнегрузинским источникам), с.21

Constantin Zuckerman devoted a serious study to a chapter (II, 48) of the “Book of Ceremonies”, that is of certain interest. The article states that diplomatic relations between Byzantium and the countries of the Eastern Caucasus were not regular as evidenced by the gaps in the list of the “Book of Ceremonies” (II, 48).

C.Zuckerman tries to reveal the relationship between Transcaucasian political entities (formations) and church distributions. Regarding Georgia, the Georgian group, the “Book of Ceremonies” states that it consisted of the curopalates of Iberian and the “archons” of the four regions, which were under the rule of the Catholicos of Iberia. However, the Armenian group, according to the “Book of Ceremonies”, was more complex, as C.Zuckerman believes, for there were two “archons of archons”: “the archon of archons of Great Armenia” referred to as protos, and the archon of Vaspurakan, who ‘recently had also been granted the title of archon of archons’.¹⁵⁸

C.Zuckerman then provides the sequence of the archons of the regions-principalities – Kogavit, Taron, Mokka, Andzevachik, Vayots Dzor and Khachen, and each time the title includes the title of Armenia [archon of Khachen, Armenia. – *F.M.*]. They are followed by the archons of Sevordik without “Armenia”.¹⁵⁹ And the “archon of archons” of Greater Armenia and Vaspurakan receive letters from the Byzantine emperor with a golden bull and letters addressed to other archons are sealed with a simple bull.

C.Zuckerman correctly observes that the listed archons lack hierarchy based on the acknowledgement of primacy, i.e. Great Armenia's king power over other archons. C.Zuckerman also substantiates this by the fact that the Byzantine emperor writes epistle “directly to the heads of the nine countries-principalities”, which testifies to the lack of their internal dependence on Armenia. He also notes that the wide practice of diplomatic contacts between Byzantium and Taron rules out any mention of the supreme power of Great Armenia's Bagratids over Taron. In addition, as C.Zuckerman points out, the Bagratids were severely weakened in the second quarter of the tenth century.¹⁶⁰ And it is all the more surprising why, giving such weighty arguments and observations, C.Zuckerman does not comment on the very concept of “Greater Armenia” for the events of the tenth century. Is this a political or geographic concept? After all, it looks like an anachronism for the tenth century, for it was Armenia Major.

Further, C.Zuckerman tries to find out who the Sevordiks were, what territory they inhabited, what their political status was (?!), in order to reveal the reason for not mentioning, the absence of the word “Armenia” in the letter in relation to them.

According to Armenian folk etymology, Sevordia-Sevordik means “Black sons” or “sons of a black-haired”. According to Arab geographer al-Mas'udi: “...The Kur River flows ... reaches the border region of Tiflis, which it crosses in the middle. It flows further through the lands of Siyavurdiya, **which are a branch of the Armenians**’.¹⁶¹ **They settled in the Albanian region of Uti**, are first encountered in Shamkir, ‘but this is by no means a seizure’, asserts C.Zuckerman.¹⁶² Regarding their origin, some scholars associate them with the Sabirs (Huns-Sabeirs), and according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, part of the Hungarians, which moved under the pressure of the Pechenegs, ‘settled in one of the places of Persia’ [of historical Azerbaijan. – *F.M.*], adopted Christianity and Gregorianized, Armenized. ‘So it is them who the Armenians call Sevordik and the Arabs – Sabordiyya or Siyavurdiya. The center of their country was Tavuz’¹⁶³ [again, in Uti].

In both cases, Sevordik, Siyavurdiya is a Turkic-speaking tribe that converted to monophysite Christianity. ‘The inhabitants of Uti – the Sevordiks – are mentioned among the external enemies of the Armenians’.¹⁶⁴ The Sevordiks, according to C.Zuckerman, are alien to Armenians and therefore the “Book of Ceremonies” refrains from calling the lands of the Sevordiks Armenia.¹⁶⁵

In his research, C.Zuckerman comes to the conclusion that “this is a rare case, the only one in the tenth century, when a foreign tribe, alien to the Armenian people, converts to their national faith’.^{166*} With the exception of the Sevordiks, everything in the “Book of Ceremonies” that pertains to the other rulers of the countries-regions that, according to C.Zuckerman, make up the Armenian group, i.e. those having the word “Armenia” in their title – the archon of Khachen, Armenia – this is defined as **‘the Armenian group (or union) of tribes united by the Armenian faith: it includes political formations subordinate to Armenia in the ecclesiastical sense. The Sevordiks is the only case of discrepancy between religion and ethnicity’**. Much is objectionable here. First of all, the Sevordiks are far from the only case mentioned. Khachen, with its Albanian population, likewise represents the “discrepancy between religion and ethnicity”. Confessionally, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and the Albanian population, with rare exceptions (6th–7th, 9th–10th centuries), adhered more to Monophysitism, which was practiced by the Armenian Church, Coptic and Jacobite. But the Armenian Church, unlike all others, was still Gregorian. The “discrepancy” stated by C.Zuckerman between the Albanian and Armenian distinct ethnic groups remained until the 19th century, both in terms of language, culture, identity, and, most crucially, the Albanians’ preservation of their ethnic identity and self-designation (ethnonym). After all, the Albanian ethnos (apart from individual emigration, forced relocations of part of it), unlike the Armenians, never lost its territory: until the eighth century, the Albanians lived throughout the country, and from the ninth to the nineteenth centuries – in certain areas of historical Albania: Artsakh, Syunik, Utik, Shaki-Cambisena, where they managed to create and revive political formations, which C.Zuckerman is well aware of and which he studies. Besides, the existence of the Albanian Autocephalous Church for over 1500 years is a clear proof of the presence of an ethnos distinct from the Armenians – the Albanian ethnos; otherwise, who would the Albanian Church serve?! Based on his study, C.Zuckerman comes to the conclusion that “now it becomes clear why the editor of the “Book of Ceremonies” refrained from calling the lands belonging to the Sevordiks Armenia: neither ethnically nor politically their country was part of Armenia”. Similarly, C.Zuckerman should be reminded that, throughout history, the Albanian principalities-kingdoms in general and Khachen in particular, were neither ethnically nor politically part of Armenia until the 19th century. First and foremost, it is vital to comprehend what “Armenia” had meant before the 10th century. We believe it referred to a geographical concept rather than church and confessional unity: the Byzantine Empire’s political and administrative division, when as early as under Justinian, numerous political and administrative units known as Armenia were introduced – Major (but by no means Greater) Armenia, Minor Armenia (purely geographic concepts), Armenia I, Armenia II, Armenia III, Armenia IV, the Middle

* Confession of monophysitism is not only Armenian faith.

Armenia (Armenia Interior). And probably for the Byzantine historians, chroniclers, the Byzantine chancellery and in subsequent centuries, all lands, political formations – principalities, kingdoms, regions with the monophysite religion, located to the east of the listed *n*th Armenias were simply perceived as Armenia in geographic, political, and administrative sense. This did not apply to Iberia with the Orthodox-Chalcedonian religion, with which Byzantium had direct contacts, and there was good awareness. In addition, in the 8th–10th centuries, in relation to the territory of the conquered Armenias, Arran, Azerbaijan, part of the modern Eastern Georgia and Dagestan, Arab sources record the political administrative concept of “Arminiya” which is further divided into Arminiya I, Arminiya II, Arminiya III, Arminiya IV (*Ibn Khordadbeh, al-Baladhuri, al-Ya'qubi, Ibn al-Faqih, Yaqut*). The multiple division of Armenias¹⁶⁷ was traditionally borrowed, inherited from Byzantium by the Arabs, but with a different content. In contrast to the Byzantine division, which covered Armenian lands, the Arab division of Arminiya (i.e. Transcaucasia) was not reflected in synchronous Armenian sources, presumably because these territories artificially created by the Arabs did not reflect their ethnic and geographic/territorial unity and were united in such divisions in the course of conquests.¹⁶⁸ The name “Arminiya” was also promoted, among other things, by the initial presence of the Arab governor in Dvin (Dabil), as well as the rapprochement of the Armenian clergy with the caliphs, who at that time were already waging an ideological and political struggle against Byzantium, hostile to the Arabs.¹⁶⁹ The inapplicability of the concept of “Armenia” to Sevordia (Sevordiks) is explained, in our opinion, by the fact that, unlike the listed principalities-regions, Sevordia was not a political, administrative entity, but rather a purely ethnic entity [moreover, hostile to the Armenians], therefore, accordingly, the political administrative geographic name ‘Armenia’ did not apply to them. Our interpretation of the concept of “Armenia”, used from the sixth century on purely in the geographical and by no means in political sense, can be supported by the data of the sixth century Syrian writer Zacharias of Mytilene: ‘In this northern land [Transcaucasia], there are five believer nations with their 24 bishops. Gurzan is also a land in Armenia, with a language similar to Greek, they have a Christian king subject to the king of Persia. Arran [Albania] is also a land in the same land of Armenia, with [its] language, with the people, believing and baptized, they have a king subordinate to the Persian king’.¹⁷⁰ This passage states it quite clearly that Gurzan and Arran had languages of their own, peoples, and kings subject to Persia, and due to this they could by no means be ethnically, politically, or confessionally a part of Armenia. Consequently, Armenia in this case (by *Constantine Porphyrogenitus*, II, 48) is interpreted in a purely geographical sense. V.A.Arutyunova- Fidanian tries to underline, with references to researchers, that Constantine Porphyrogenitus’ “Transcaucasian dossier” was compiled by immediate participants in the events, including Constantine’s informants – Armenian Chalcedonites, who were in the service of the empire, spoke the Greek language, which had long been accepted among the nobility and clergy of the Chalcedonian community of Armenia. They (the Chalcedonian Armenians) were the ones well-versed in the Armenian world, which was inaccessible to their Greek colleagues: it was they, as V.A.Arutyunova-Fidanian asserts, played a leading role in military and diplomatic actions in the Byzantine Empire in the East.¹⁷¹ In this case, the information “about the archon of Siyavordik” and “the archon

of Khachen, Armenia” goes back to the informants – the Armenians Chalcedonites. And this could suggest that the Armenian informants of the “Transcaucasian dossier” were the editors of the material they provided to the Byzantine Empire, among other things.

The argument made by C.Zuckerman that the Sevordiks' country is not a part of Armenia either ethnically or officially, is absolutely true. The country, or rather, the territory of residence or settlement of the Sevordiks, as is known, was the Uti province (nahang). Uti was one of Albania's most important and stable provinces, with dioceses of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, as evidenced by both political sources and confessional realities. If so, isn't C.Zuckerman embarrassed by the fact that his assertion contradicts the Armenian concept, artificially created, groundless, according to which Uti, along with Artsakh, seemed to be always considered the eastern regions of “Greater Armenia” ?!

The final part of C.Zuckerman's research also does not stand up to criticism, saying that “the political Albania and the religious Albania once again will be divided”, and that the Albanian Catholicos (arbitrarily brought by C.Zuckerman to the rank of archbishop) ‘would never have been raised to the same height as the Catholicos of Armenia and Iberia, if it had not won independence, both organizationally (in 902/903) and doctrinally (in 942/943)’. The Albanian Church, like Armenian and Georgian naturally suffered confessional struggle in the sixth, seventh, and tenth centuries.

The political and confessional division within Albania can in no way be compared with the political and religious split of Armenia, when, unlike Albania, it was for centuries (1st–6th centuries) subject to political divisions between empires, confessional division between the monophysite Persian Armenia and Chalcedonian Byzantine Armenia in the 6th–7th centuries, and when it took shape in terms of ideology and confession only in the sixth century.

The Albanian Church, as the Apostolic Autocephalous Church, managed to endure on the ancient Albanian territory from the fourth to the nineteenth centuries, despite the vicissitudes of fate, with a huge flock and multiple dioceses.

If K.Zuckerman has in mind individual cases of Albanian Hierarchs' consecration by Armenian Catholicoi, this was from time to time equally characteristic of the Armenian Church, when Albanian Catholicoi consecrated Armenian patriarchs (see Chapter V, § 2 of this monograph), especially during the periods when there was not a unified Armenian patriarchate, during the periods of Armenian anti-sees, during the periods of wandering of the sees of the Armenian Church.

Such a politicized conclusion that would be more appropriate for an Armenian scientist, but not for such a respectable author, is astonishing and invidious: ‘We are talking about very close ties between the Albanian Khachen and Armenia. Thanks to these ties, the **Armenian Khachen will remain the only memory of ancient Albania and its Church** – the only bearer of this name. These ties have not lost their relevance, just the other way round: Khachen is Karabakh today’ [for our opinion on this, see the chapter VI of this monograph. – *F.M.*].

§ 6. Albanian Khachen kingdom from the 12th to the 14th centuries

Famous historians debated over the ethnic roots of the reigning clan of the Artsakh-Khachen dynasty, with some attributing them to the Mihranid line, some to the Maskut Arsacids, and all portraying them as Albanians, not Armenians.¹⁷²

Armenian historiography is dominated by a unanimous opinion about the purely Armenian origin of the Artsakh-Khachen reigning clan, which links it to the Haykids.^{173*} Concerning the genetic origin and genealogy of the Albanian rulers in the ninth-eleventh centuries – Syunik, Artsakh-Khachen, Shaki-Kambechan – their relationship with each other, we adhere to the opinion of A.Y. Krymsky, which is based on synchronous data of Arab sources and Albanian author Kaghankatvatsi, the more so as the latter provides all this genealogy in a concise way.

The introduction to Cyril Toumanoff's monograph *“Dynasties of the Christian Caucasus from antiquity to the 19th century. Genealogical and Chronological Tables”* makes it clear that this edition is a revised version of a textbook on the genealogy and chronology of the Christian Caucasus (Armenia-Georgia-Albania), published in Rome in 1976. This book is an attempt to describe the historical families of the Christian Caucasus, i.e. houses [patronymies – *F.M.*] that built the nation's history. The book includes the genealogical charts of the ‘melikdoms (dynastic states) that survived in Armenia's north-east under the imperial rule. They were declining during the nineteenth century due to the absorption by the Roman Empire (in one case) and the Ottoman Empire, which resulted in the loss of dynastic status and feudal duties by the houses we're considering’. As stated in the introduction, the genealogy and chronology of melikdoms once included in the textbook ‘will be considered in a separate edition written by a scientist with great authority in this field – professor R.Hewsen’. This work loses its value, significance, first and foremost, because it is not based on sources and contains no references to them.

The book appears to have been written in such a way that it assumes or requires everyone to believe every word of it. The historical fates of the Armenian, Albanian, and Georgian princely patronymies all took quite distinct paths. Firstly, the Armenian princely houses, in contrast to the Georgian and Albanian ones, originally and up to the 18th–19th centuries *were* not in the territory of the Caucasus, but in Asia Minor, in Eastern Anatolia. They were subject to imperial authority of the Roman, the Byzantine, the Persian, and eventually, from the fifteenth century, of the Ottoman Empire; moreover, they were subject to immigration processes. The fate of the Albanian and Georgian elite patronymies, which endured despite the vicissitudes of fate in their historical homeland until the nineteenth

* As is known, according to Movses Khorenatsi (II, 8), as well as Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, 4), the ethnarch ancestor of the Albanians (as well as Utians, Gardmanians, Gargareans, Tsaudians) was Aran from the Sisakan clan. The association of Aran from the Sisakan clan with Hayk, the progenitor of the Armenians, by Movses of Khorenatsi (I, 12), as well as Leonti Mroveli's consideration of Gaos (Hayk) as the main and senior among the brothers-eponyms-descendants of Japheth and Noah is nothing more than mythical biblical ancestry, not ethnicity. In addition, Kaghankatvatsi does not associate Aran with Haik.

century, and the Georgian princely houses – and even beyond, developed in a completely different way.

The preface to C.Toumanoff's work,¹⁷⁴ written by R.Hewsen, says that the critical publication of literary sources on Caucasian history, as well as the specialized studies [?!] explaining them, made us reconsider their content and gain experience, 'which allows us to analyze the information in them'. R.Hewsen also notes that the "**improved approach**" was supplemented with archeological, epigraphic, numismatic, linguistic, ethnographic resources and, finally, the genealogy of the Caucasian dynasties was added to the research, because "the Caucasus, like Ancient Iran, Medieval Japan, the Medieval West, was a nobiliary and dynastic society. The princely houses were the leaders and remained such until the beginning of the nineteenth century". R.Hewsen notes that Cyril Toumanoff 'created a fundamental work dedicated to the princely houses of the Caucasus – Armenian, Georgian, Albanian, who valiantly led their peoples through the Middle East's turbulent past to the dawn of the modern world for so many years. Eventually, they either failed to assure the survival of their people, as was the case with Albania, or barely succeeded in it, as in Armenia. Finally, the Georgian houses were able to keep their core, but the Caucasian aristocracy as a whole requires historical acknowledgment and extensive study'.¹⁷⁵ The truth is that no "fundamental monuments" like C.Toumanoff's work and no laudatory introduction to it like R.Hewsen's preface will help to correctly reconstruct the history in general and the genealogical tree of Caucasian princely houses in particular – "Armenian", Georgian and, of course, Albanian houses sacrificed to the Armenians, if they, the scholars, initially, deliberately proceed from incorrect premises, which will accordingly lead to incorrect conclusions. Robert Hewsen, like C.Toumanoff, should be well aware that the Albanian princely families, unlike the Armenian ones, did not lose their historical homeland from ancient times to the nineteenth century, and it was the Albanian princely patronymies that were able to preserve and create their political entities – the 1000-year-old Albanian kingdom within the entire country (from the Aras in the south to Derbent in the north), Albanian kingdoms-principalities and melikdoms. Albanian princely families preserved their original culture, religion, language, historical and literary tradition (5th–18th centuries), Albanian self-awareness and Albanian self-designation until the 19th century. Only due to geopolitical factors – the policy of the Tsar's Government, the Russian Empire, as well as the insidious concept of the Armenian Church, which was thought over for centuries, the Albanian princely families, like the Albanian people, were subject to violent transformation when according to the decree of the Tsar's Government in 1836, the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church was abolished and subordinated to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin, which was followed by long, painful process of de-ethnicization of the Albanians some of whom were Gregorianized- Armenized, most of them Islamized, and some Georgianized. R.Hewsen's reliance on the help of related sciences such as numismatics and archeology is unlikely to be able to help the Armenian people in reconstructing their history, their princely houses, as, without their states, the Armenians did not have coins of their own with the exception of the coins of Tigranes II in the first century BC (save for the coins of the Cilician Hethumid kings of Albanian origin). The wanderings of the Armenians in other countries, when they had to share the fate of these countries – such a fate could hardly be reflected in archaeological research.

In his genealogical table, Cyril Toumanoff, following the Armenian concept, completely unduly, without any grounds, attributes part of the Albanian princely clans – Aranshahiks, Arsacids, Mihranids, and even Hethumids – to Haykids (Aykids). Even the Argutyian clan (of Kurdish origin) is linked by Toumanoff to the Haykids. This makes Toumanoff's work “monumental” indeed in physical dimensions and, finally, in terms of the expectations and hopes pinned on it by the Armenians, of the problems raised, but not the solutions.

The principality-kingdom of Artsakh or Khachen, a part of ancient Albania, arose around the end of the twelfth century. The center of this principality was the basin of the Khachen-Chai and the Tartar rivers. The principality-kingdom of Khachen was located in the territory of Artsakh and Uti. As noted in “Ajaib ad-Dunya”, Khachen was a district within Arran, its territory covered inaccessible, mountainous terrain and woodlands.¹⁷⁶ The revival of this principality-kingdom is associated with Hasan Jalal. In addition to realities, there are detailed genealogies that trace Hasan Jalal and his family back to the Albanian Mihranids (along the line of the aforementioned Senekerim). So, we can see the genetic relation of the rulers of Artsakh-Khachen principality-kingdom with the ruling Albanian Mihranids. Similarly, the succession and continuity of the political power of Artsakh-Khachen-Karabakh monarchs can be traced throughout a large chronological period from the eighth to the fifteenth century.

Since 1142, the Khachen house was headed by h'Asan, the son of Sakar Vakhtang, who left several inscriptions. h'Asan married Mama-Khatun, the daughter of King Kiurike. In 1182, h'Asan, after 40 years of reign, took the monastic vows together with his wife. He had six sons.¹⁷⁷ It should be noted that h'Asan calls himself the owner of the fortresses of h'Aterk, h'Andaberd, Khachenaberd and Khavkakhagats. All this is recorded in the Dadi monastery in 1182 and on the cross in the Hatra monastery in 1201.¹⁷⁸ One of the sons of h'Asan, Vakhtang, nicknamed Tankik or Tonkik, the ruler of the Lower Khachen, married Horishah,¹⁷⁹ the sister of the brothers Zakharia Spasalar and Ivane Atabek Dolgorukov-Argutinskys, who are renowned in the history of Caucasus. Vakhtang had three sons and three daughters by Horishah. One of the three sons was Hasan Jalal whose clan had family ties with powerful houses of that time, both with the Argutinsky-Dolgorukovs and the clan of Orbeli – the rulers of Syunik. In 1240, Hasan Jalal made an inscription in Gandzasar: ‘My father on his deathbed bequeathed to me and my mother Horishah that we build a church in Gandzasar, the burial vault of our ancestors; we started it in 1216...’ The construction of the temple was completed in 1238. Before the construction was completed, h'Asan's (Hasan's) mother Horishah made her third pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where she died. The Gandzasar church was built in the Gandzasar monastery, which had existed long before Hasan Jalal on a high mountain on the left bank of the Khachenchay opposite Khokhanaberd as an ancestral tomb. The Gandzasar temple was consecrated in 1240. Hasan Jalal generously endowed the monastery with arable lands, gardens, and silver church utensils listed in detail in the inscription. Hasan Jalal granted complete freedom to the entire monastery.¹⁸⁰ The consecration of the temple was attended

by Catholicos of Albania Nerses, bishops, priests, whose number reached 700. There was also the famous Vanakan, the teacher of historians Kirakos Gandzaketsi and Vardan Areveltsi (Eastern) – Aghuanetsi (Albanian). After the consecration, Hasan Jalal gave a reception ministering himself to the guests and gave generous presents to everyone, seeing them off.¹⁸¹ Hasan Jalal's wife Mamkan descended from the lateral branch of the Syuni house or from Senekerim, the last ruler of this country.¹⁸² The scope of Hasan Jalal's construction extended far beyond Khachen.

The time when Hasan Jalal lived and worked is rich in historical events reflected in the works of Albanian authors Kirakos, Vardan Aghuanetsi, Mkhitar Gosh.

In 1220, Khachen was attacked by the numerous Mongol army who passed through the Derbent Gate to Albania and Georgia. In the thirteenth century, the Khachen principality was also invaded by Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah. In 1227 (or later), during Jalal ad-Din's campaigns, his vizier Sharaf al-Mulk approached the Khachen fortress. Hasan Jalal managed to buy off by paying 10,000 dinars.¹⁸³ Later, Khachen was invaded by the Mongols. Even the impregnable fortresses could not withstand the onslaught and fell.¹⁸⁴ Hasan Jalal took shelter with the inhabitants of his region in the Khokhanaberd fortress. 'The wise Jalal, seeing the attack of the infidels, hid his people in a fortress called Khokhanaberd in Persia. And when the Tatars (Mongols) came and, having besieged this fortress, were convinced that it was unconquerable, they offered Hasan friendship and peace'.¹⁸⁵ Hasan Jalal wisely agreed with them, went to the Mongols with numerous gifts and was honored. They 'gave him his country with some additional territories'.¹⁸⁶ He was charged with the duty of taking part in all their campaigns. This occurred between 1238 and 1240. Probably, this time should be connected with the marriage of Bora-nuin, the son of Chormagan, to Hasan Jalal's daughter Ruzukan.¹⁸⁷ And in 1243, Hasan Jalal with a detachment took part in the campaign of Bayju who took the place of Chormagan, against the Ruman Sultan Ghiyath ad-Din Kaykhusraw III. By this time, Hasan Jalal had a certain influence under the Mongol commander-in-chief. It was thanks to Hasan Jalal's help that the messengers of Cilician king Hethum managed to introduce themselves to Bayju and Chormagan's wife Altani-Khatun. But Hasan Jalal's high position did not help him to avoid the heavy oppression by Arghun and Bugha in 1246/1247, associated with new tax rates.¹⁸⁸ In 1251, Hasan Jalal turned to Sartak, the son of Batu Khan of the Golden Horde, seeking his patronage with a declaration of obedience. Sartak introduced Hasan Jalal to his father Batu (in the latter's camp on the shores of the Caspian Sea) who returned him his hereditary possessions – Charaberd, Akan and Karkar – and declared him the ruler of a number of new lands. Hasan Jalal managed to secure privileges for Albanian Catholicos Nerses, providing his property with tax immunity. In 1255–1260, Hasan Jalal, due to the persecutions from Arghun had to go again to the Great Khan Batu, this time to Mongolia, Karakorum. The Great Khan again returned him all his hereditary titles and 'gave him a written assurance of power'.¹⁸⁹

Hasan Jalal gained the independence of the Khachen principality for 10 years (1251–1261). Soon upon return from the Mongolian camp, Hasan Jalal was suspected by Arghun of participating in the anti-Mongol uprising.¹⁹⁰ 'Put in irons, under a wooden yoke' Hasan Jalal was sent to Qazvin for hard labor. But he was killed on the way in 1261. His son Atabek was appointed the prince of Khachen, who ruled until 1287.¹⁹¹

In challenging political conditions, thanks to a wise, flexible policy, Hasan Jalal could preserve the independence of his country, i.e. the revived Albanian kingdom – Khachen-Artsakh, part of the ancient Albania. In order to preserve the integrity of the Albanian ethnos, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, the Albanian lands of Artsakh- Karabakh, unlike all Armenian princes, who pursued only their own interests, Hasan Jalal could and did sacrifice many things. To pay the burdensome taxes to the Mongols, he almost lost his property, repeatedly traveled to the Mongolian camp, participated in their wars, remained for years in the Mongolian camp and, finally, became their victim.

As it was noted, in Persian, Armenian, Georgian synchronous sources, as well as in epigraphs, Hasan Jalal is endowed with high titles like “The Prince of Princes”, “Kingly Brilliant”, “The Prince of the Khachen lands”, “The Great Prince of Khachen and Artsakh”, “The King”, “The Crown Wearer”, “The King of Albania”, “The Great Border-Keeper of Albania”. Hasan Jalal himself was titled as the king, the autocrat. The most high-sounding title appears in the inscription of 1240 in the Gandzasar cathedral: ‘I, a humble servant of God, Jalal-Hasan, the son of Vakhtang, the grandson of the great Hasan, the autocratic king by birth of the high and great country of Artsakh, which has vast lands’.

Hasan Jalal's rule can be considered an Albanian renaissance – the economic, political, and cultural revival of Albania. This renaissance was reflected in literature, historical and literary tradition, residential and religious architecture. As noted in Chapter I, at this time Kirakos Gandzaketsi writes his “History”, a prominent figure of Albanian culture Mkhitar Gosh (12th–13th centuries) creates “The Albanian Chronicle”, the famous “The Book of Law”, the hagiographic composition “Martyrdom of Khosrow of Gandzak” and a large number of parables, fables. “The Albanian Chronicle”, which, according to the author's intention, is a continuation of Kaghankatvatsi's narrative, describes the events that took place in Albania during 1130–1162, during the period of Seljuk domination in Azerbaijan. The very title of the list is interesting: “The list of Albanian patriarchs consecrated after Lord Elisha who came from Jerusalem”. Again, even in the twelfth century, the apostolic principle of the Albanian Church (after Lord Eliseus) is emphasized, as well as the fact that its origins go back to Jerusalem.

A very important evidence of Albanian legal science is Mkhitar Gosh's “The Book of Law”, which he wrote at the insistence of Albanian patriarch Stepannos III for the remaining Albanian population of Khachen (surrounded by Muslims), who retained part of their territory, partially revived their statehood and retained their identity. At the insistence of Hasan Jalal, who sought to show the inheritance of his power from the Albanian Mihranids, as we have already noted, “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi was continued and supplemented with four new chapters, which reflect the reign of Hasan Jalal, the construction of the Gandzasar complex – one of the best samples of Christian architecture in the medieval Caucasus, a masterpiece of Albanian architecture, unmatched, by the way, among the monuments of Armenian architecture. The Gandzasar Cathedral becomes the headquarters of the Albanian Church and the Albanian Catholicosate-patriarchate, and henceforward the Albanian Catholicosate, which became the religious center of the remaining Albanians until 1836, was known as

the Gandzasar Catholicosate. It is very important that Hasan Jalal himself called the Gandzasar Cathedral “the Albanian patronal cathedral”.

Summing up what has been said, the historical Albanian Artsakh-Khachen region, throughout history in general and in the tenth-thirteenth centuries in particular, was an important political and cultural center of the Albanian Christian population, which, despite the vicissitudes of fate, was able to preserve its territorial, political, confessional unity and, most importantly, its Albanian identity and self-designation.

§ 7. The Albanians and the Cilician kingdom from the 11th to 14th centuries

The first resettlement of Albanians to Asia Minor, the Balkans, and Cilicia is associated with the Paulician movement of the 7th–10th centuries, when the Albanians, as adherents of the Paulician sect persecuted in the Caucasus (in Albania) fled to Asia Minor and the Balkan Peninsula, where they contributed to the development of Bogomilism, the center of which was in Bulgaria. As is known, the religious Paulician movement* arose in Caucasian Albania – in its regions of Gardman, Beylagan (Balasakan – Paytakaran) in the early eighth century and lasted in Albania until the ninth century inclusive. The Paulician movement was officially anathemized in Albania at two Albanian church councils held in Albanian capital Barda (Partaw) in 706–707 and in 768 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 7; III, 8, 19).¹⁹²

The second wave of emigration of Albanians to Asia Minor, to Cilicia in particular, was associated with the movement of the Seljukids.

The settlement of Albanians in Cilicia is reported by Samuel of Ani,¹⁹³ Smbat Sparapet,¹⁹⁴ Hethum the Historian,¹⁹⁵ Gregory Patmich (Magakiya)¹⁹⁶ – a native of Albania, raised in Utik, who created his work in the Akner monastery in Cilicia; Kirakos Gandzaketsi (of Ganja),¹⁹⁷ Stepanos of Syunik,¹⁹⁸ Nerses of Lambron¹⁹⁹ and, finally, Bishop Makar Barkhudaryants,²⁰⁰ etc. Practically all of them, with the exception of Samuel of Ani, were of Albanian origin.

The emigration process that swept Albanians and Armenians in the 11th–12th centuries was caused by the invasions and the aggressive policy of the Seljukids, and, first of all, the policy of the Byzantine Empire in relation to the Armenians.

* The Paulician heresy appeared in the second half of the seventh century. Its founder was Constantine from Syria, brought up in the Gnostic-Manichean views, the remnants of which found adherents in the Near East in the early seventh century [there is evidence that it was in Albania]. On a falsely apostolic basis, Constantine founded his religious community as opposed to a church with its numerous rituals and ceremonies. The Orthodox Christians, however, referred to all the followers of Constantine as Paulicians since they associated the teaching and organization of their community with the Apostle Paul. The Paulician teaching is a mixture of Gnostic-Manichean views with the misinterpreted teaching of Apostle Paul. In the early eighth century, Paulician communities spread in the East – in Asia Minor and further in the East. In the 11th–12th centuries, many sectarians appeared in different parts of the west. They were referred to as Manichaeans, Bulgars, Publicans (Paulicians), and so on. The Paulician sect is believed to have been brought to the west from Bulgaria, where the cradle of Bogomilism was. The teachings of the Paulicians and the Bogomils are based on Manichean dualism. (Тальберг Н. История христианской церкви. М., Нью-Йорк, 1991, с.185-187, 346).

As for the historical Azerbaijan, it is known that first the Oghuzes and then the Seljuks raided the South Caucasus at the beginning of the eleventh century, and in 1038, they created the Oghuz-Seljuk state. In 1075, The Seljukids liquidated the critically important Arran-Nakhchivan emirate ruled by the Kurdish dynasty of the Shaddadids, which included the Christian Albanian population with their political formations in Syunik and Artsakh – the principalities-kingdoms ruled by the descendants of the Albanian Mihranid clan.

Melik Shah's son, Muhammad Tapar, who subsequently became the renowned Seljuk sultan (1105–1117), rose to power in Ganja as the ruler of Azerbaijan (South) and Arran (North). And in 1136, the Iraqi sultan Masud assigned Arran as iqta to Shamseddin Eldeniz, the guardian-atabek of his minor nephew Arslan Shah. Soon Shamseddin Eldeniz subjugated the entire Azerbaijan.²⁰¹

Under these circumstances, in 1073, pressed by the Seljukids, a part of the Albanian princes left the borders of Albania and went to Cilicia for settlement. It was the ruler, the Ganja prince Afshin-Oshin, who 'left his ancestral possession Mayreatzshur in the Gandzak region and, together with his squad, the azats, moved to Cilicia', according to Samuel of Ani.²⁰² He was accompanied with a group of Khachen feudal lords who left Albania with their squad, as well as Syuni feudal lord Kogh Vasil and others.²⁰³

There is also additional information about Afshin-Oshin: he left Albania exactly after Emir Bugak or Buzan invaded Ganja by the order of Melik-shah. When Ganja was besieged (1088), Oshin took his brother h'Alkam, mother and wife, azats, all his belongings with him, and went to Cilicia. There he took possession of the Lambron fortress. There are two versions regarding Lambron. Afshin-Oshin married Abelharib Artsruni's daughter and his father-in-law gave him the Lambron fortress and the eponymous district, which became the hereditary possession of the Oshinids. According to another version, however, Oshin received the Lambron mountainous region from Byzantium.²⁰⁴ The Lambron princes ruled for long in Lambron and its surroundings, independently of the Cilician kings-princes. The rest of the Christian Albanian population continued to live in their historical homeland – in Artsakh, Utik, Syunik – in Arran, as well as on the left bank of the Kur, in Shaki, trying to adapt in local conditions to the new rulers. the Seljukids-Atabeks. The rulers of the Khachen kingdom-principality were in search of ways to stay alive.

As for the Armenian population, its position was aggravated by both the Seljuk conquest and the stable historical dependence of their political formations on the Byzantine Empire, of which Armenia has always been a province. On the verge of the Seljuk campaigns, Byzantium had destroyed the political independence of the small, newly formed kingdoms-principalities – the Vaspurakan principality (1022), the Ani (1045), and Kars (1065) kingdoms. The Byzantine emperor Basil II the Bulgar Slayer (976–1025) began to implement an Armenian relocation scheme in Asia Minor's western region. As reported by Michael the Syrian, 'Emperor Basil took the country of king Senekerim [Vaspurakan. – *F.M.*] from the Armenians and gave him Sebastia, Cappadocia... From here, the Armenians migrated across Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Syria'.²⁰⁵ Thomas Artsruni has also written on the subject.²⁰⁶

The strategy of resettlement of the Armenians to the west – to Cappadocia, Cilicia – was caused not only by the forced resettlement policy of Byzantium and the Seljuk

invasions, but also by the desire of the Armenian feudal nobility itself to live better, get titles, positions, and land from the Byzantine emperor. I have to repeat, because this was partly stated in Chapter I, when highlighting the political situation explaining the stagnation in Armenian literature of the 12th–14th centuries. This aspiration of the Armenian feudal lords can be clearly traced in Armenian sources. According to Aristakes Lastivertsi, even Grigor, a political and military leader from the Pahlavuni line (i.e., from the descendants of Gregory the Illuminator), hastened to move to the safe zone of the Byzantine Empire before the fall of the Ani kingdom in 1044, when he handed over the keys of the fortress of Bjni and his ancestral estate to Byzantine king Constantine Monomachos in exchange for the province of Mesopotamia and the title of master and duke of Mesopotamia, Vaspurakan, Taron, Manazkert forever, from family to family, along with a charter and a gold ring.²⁰⁷ Armenian Catholicos Petros (1019–1058) had long hoped that Byzantium would provide him with shelter from the Seljuks. In order to accomplish this, he journeyed to Constantinople twice, in 1022 and 1033. Armenian king Hovhannes-Smbat and some Armenian nobles opposed to the transfer of the Ani kingdom to Byzantium. Petros was convicted and even imprisoned. In 1033, the Armenians convened a council in Ani under the representation of Albanian Catholicos Hovsep, at which Petros was acquitted and released. Nevertheless, the patriarch of the Armenian Church Petros hastened to give the capital of Ani and other fortresses of the Armenian country to Byzantine emperor Constantine Monomachos for a large reward, jewelry, and dignity.

According to Vardan Areveltsi, ‘the king of Kars, the son of Abas, fearing the Turks, handed over his ancestral estate to the Greeks and received Tsamndav, Larisa, Amasya, Comana and a hundred villages’.²⁰⁸

The information under discussion reveals the Armenian feudal nobility's persistent concern for their own interests, which have always been prioritized over the country's interests and the preservation of the country's unity. This has been a constant reason for the loss of statehood and for emigration since ancient times. This feature of the Armenian nobility was first seen and sorrowfully noted by the “father” of Armenian history Movses Khorenatsi in the eighth century, who ends his “History” with the chapter “Lament for the Armenian people”, where he reproaches the Armenian *naxarars* for this trait, claiming that it is the primary reason for the country's demise.

This feature of the Armenians was even noted in historiography. The Procurator of the Etchmiadzin Synod A.Frenkel wrote about this at the beginning of the twentieth century: ‘The historical destinies of the Armenian people demonstrated their full inability to build an autonomous state, a state organism, with unmistakable truth’.²⁰⁹ Kevork Aslan also noted in his books that the Armenians did not have a sense of national – ethnic unity and were not politically connected with each other.²¹⁰

As reported by Aristakes Lastivertsi, in 1048, the Seljuks invaded the central regions of Armenia, Basen, Karin, all four directions through Vaspurakan, reaching the fortress of Sper and Tayk in the west, Taron in the southwest, Hashtenk district and the forests of Khordzen.²¹¹ In 1065, the Seljuks seized Ani.

By the time of the emigration of the Armenians and Albanians, Cilicia was populated by Franks, Syrians, Turks (the Muslim population in general), Jews, Italians, Kurds, and Greeks.

Afshin-Oshin, who arrived in Cilicia in 1073 or 1088, founded the Hethumid (or Ethumids – Gethumids) family who reigned in Cilicia from 1226 until 1342. Both Afshin-Oshin and his successors were loyal vassals to Byzantium, pursued the Byzantine policy in the hopes of establishing a government of their own in Cilicia with its help. Lambron was the center of the same-named territory and the castle of the Afshinids-Oshinids (later Hethumids) princely family.

Some time later, prince Afshin-Oshin's son, prince Hethum (1110–1143), after the death of his father, declared the principality of Lambron an independent principality of the Hethumids. Back during his father's lifetime, prince Hethum was in the service of Byzantium and earned the title of Sebast from Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118) for military merits. Hethum gradually increased his influence and took control of a number of cities in Cilicia, including Tarsus, Paperon, and others. As a result, if the Rubenids gained the mountain Cilicia, the Hethumids, who were once Byzantium's vassals, seized the plain Cilicia.²¹²

Relying on the inaccessibility of Lambron, as well as on an alliance with Byzantium, the Hethumids fought against the Armenian dynasty of the Rubenids, who were at the head of the Cilician state, for more than a century. Paperon was the ancestral castle of the princely family related to the Oshinids and Guglag was a formidable fortress guarding the entrance to the same name mountain pass.²¹³ The maritime city Corycus was well fortified with walls and towers.²¹⁴ In the thirteenth century, Corycus belonged to one of the relatives of the Hethumid dynasty – Hethum the Historian who fortified it and built a sea fortress on the same-name island located near the port.²¹⁵

The struggle between the Rubenids and Afshinids-Oshinids continued throughout the twelfth century. The mediator between the two sides was the brother of Grigor Pahlavuni, Nerses the Gracious, who soon became a Catholicos and reconciled Afshin-Oshin and Thoros Rubenid. Afshin-Oshin's son, Hethum, married Thoros Rubenid's daughter. The two hostile clans thus became related. However, the struggle between the Rubenids and the Lambron Afshinid princes continued for a long time in Cilicia. In 1226, Lambron Oshinid prince Constantine of Baberon, who was the regent of the Cilician realm, during the childhood of the daughter of Cilician king Leon II (Rubenid) Isabella, staged a coup d'etat and forcibly married her to his son Hethum, establishing the Hethumids' authority (1226–1342).²¹⁶ Kirakos Gandzaketsi reports: 'The great prince ishkhan Constantine seized the king's power, transferred it to his son Hethum, and took all the state cares upon himself. He established wise orders, subduing some with good and destroying those who did not obey, driving out some and killing others. **He made an alliance and friendship ...with the surrounding peoples and ensured peace in the country.** He appointed his eldest son Smbat as sparapet and the other as the ishkhan of the state; and he provided all the monasteries of the country, satisfying their needs so that they could focus solely on prayers and ministering'.²¹⁷ It was during this troubled time that church services were forgotten.

Representatives of the Hethumid clan, both during the reign of this dynasty and before it, during the Rubenids period, actively participated in ruling the Cilician state. Thus, under the Rubenids, Constantine of Baberon himself served as the commander-in-chief of the country, Nerses of Lambron, the great-grandson of the first Afshin-Oshin, the son of

Afshin-Oshin II and Shahandukht from Grigor Pahlavuni's clan was the largest public and ecclesiastic figure in Cilicia. He became the Archbishop of Lambron and Tarsus in Cilicia at the age of 22. Nerses of Lambron was a man of wide reading, knew languages and headed the foreign policy of the Rubenids, actively fighting for rapprochement, unification of the Armenian and Albanian Churches with the Byzantine-Greek Church. He gave a wonderful speech at a church council on this occasion in h'Romkala in 1179.

Catholicos Ter Stepannos III, the head of the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church, was also present at the council convened under Armenian Catholicos Gregory IV to discuss the question of merging the eastern and western churches. The death of emperor Manuel I Komnenos prevented the council's edict on the unification of the said churches from being carried out. Nerses of Lambron was accused of treason against the interests of the church by the Eastern Armenian and Albanian clergy.²¹⁸

Further, Nerses of Lambron was sticking to the policy of rapprochement with the papacy and spreading Catholicism in Cilicia, which also caused discontent in the Eastern Armenian Church.²¹⁹ Nerses of Lambron did not make a distinction between confessions – Christian movements and denominations, i.e. between monophysitism, Orthodoxy, Catholicism. He strove for the unity of all Christians. Nerses of Lambron, in his church-confessional policy, adhered to the high church ideal of unity for all Christians, regardless of ethnicity. These ideas were embodied in the Grecophile edition of the “Life of St. Gregory”, as well as in the Chalcedonian version of Agathangelos.

The Grecophile edition of the “Life of St. Gregory” embodies the idea of uniting the Eastern Christian peoples by their common birth in Christ through the labors of one Illuminator and under the patronage of one great Christian power – the Roman Byzantine Empire. St. Gregory, according to the “Life”, was brought up, educated, and consecrated by the Greek Caesarean Church.

The Chalcedonian edition of Agathangelos also sees a high religious ideal – belief in the brotherhood of Christian peoples and their spiritual prosperity outside national characteristics – inherited from the previous Grecophile edition.²²⁰ Nerses of Lambron left a great literary and ecclesiastical heritage, but only part of it was published.

The son of Constantine of Baberon, Smbat Sparapet, as noted (in Chapter I), actively participated in the foreign policy of Cilicia, was an outstanding military leader, diplomat, and a lawyer. Smbat laid the foundation for the friendship between the Cilician state and the powerful at that time Mongol empire. Smbat Sparapet and his father Constantine negotiated with the Mongols in 1243 with Bayju Noyan in Caesarea, in 1247 in Karakorum with Güyük Khan. As a result, they agreed that the Cilician state pledged to supply the Mongolian army with food and troops, and the Mongolian side promised to preserve the sovereignty of Cilicia and provide armed assistance if the Cilician state was attacked.²²¹ Smbat is the author of the historical “Chronicle”, “Legal code” and a brief “Memorable Record”. This list of famous Hethumid figures could be augmented. Afshin-Oshin, Smbat's brother, became the owner of the seaside fortress and the port of Corycus, his younger brother – Leon – later became a marshal, another brother, Barseg, was the archbishop of Sis. Other relatives of the Hethumids became abbots of monasteries, bishops.²²²

The period of the Hethumids' reign is known for the rapid prosperity of Cilicia. They cleaned the government machine, strengthened it, strengthened the country's defensive

capacity, established relations with neighboring states, made peace with the Seljuk and Halab sultans, with the Hospitaller Order created by the crusaders in Asia Minor and Cilicia, and, finally, with the Mongols.

The revival or renaissance of the Cilician kingdom may be seen in the country's socio-political, economic, and cultural life in the 12th–13th centuries, following the decline and crisis caused by the Seljuk conquests.

The Albanian Renaissance can be traced both in distant Cilicia and in the Albanians' historical homeland – the Khachen Albanian kingdom, which will be discussed more below.

As for Cilicia, the Albanian Renaissance is manifested in an attempt to create a secular Law code for the population of Cilicia. The attempts to create a legal document of the Law code were not easy. First, Nerses of Lambron was tasked to translate the Syro-Byzantine Code of Laws received from the Syrian priest Theodosius, for the Cilicians.²²³ Probably, preference was given to this instrument because of its Monophysite orientation. This Code was found to be unacceptable. Nerses of Lambron himself translated the collections of laws from Greek: “The laws of the Christian kings – the victorious Constantine, Theodosius and Leo”, “A new brief collection of laws”, “The laws and scriptures of Moses from the Exodus”, “Laws, copied from the Book of Leviticus”. However, these laws failed to meet the needs of the Cilician Christians and therefore did not gain popularity in the Cilician state.²²⁴ Later (as mentioned in Chapter I), Smbat Sparapet was specially tasked to translate “The Assizes of Antioch” (the Law code of Antioch) from Old French, which also proved to be unacceptable.²²⁵

It is worth noting that the Hethumids, trying to use the law-books of neighboring states – Antioch, Byzantium – in Cilicia, realized their unacceptability and finally had to turn their gaze to the remote Albania, the Albanian “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh, which had been used in Cilicia before the compilation of a more complete Legal code by Smbat Sparapet.²²⁶ Smbat Sparapet used two Albanian legal codes: the “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh, created in Albania in 1184, and a small collection of Canons by David son of Alawik from Ganja. He produced his own code of laws, called “The Legal code of Smbat Sparapet (Gundstable)” in 1265,²²⁷ by revising these canons and using other sources and laws, taking into account the situation in Cilicia.

‘He (Smbat Sparapet) created the first in Cilicia... Legal code which was used not only during the life of the author, but also in the subsequent centuries’.²²⁸

It's worth noting that despite the existence of Kanonagirk, the Armenian set of canons compiled by Odznetsi in the eighth century for the Armenians who (as stated in Chapter I) actively used it until the twentieth century, for some reason, this Kanonagirk stayed out of sight of the Hethumids in general, and Smbat Sparapet in particular. The law books which became sources for the lawman of the Cilician kingdom, were all created by Albanians from Ganja: David son of Alawik,²²⁹ Mkhitar Gosh and, finally, Smbat Sparapet himself, who was originally from the Ganja Albanians. In our opinion, this testifies to the indisputable fact of the residence in the territory of the Cilician kingdom of a large number of Albanians which were dominant in the specified period, if not in quantitative, then in the political sense. Thus, the Legal code of Smbat Sparapet, based on Albanian laws

and canons, was to serve the needs of the Albanian Christian population, to which the rest of the Christian population had to adapt.

Now it becomes clear when and why the Albanian canons of the fifth century's Aguen Council were included in the "Armenian Book of Canons", Odznetsi's *Kanonagirk*. In the eighth century, Odznetsi didn't include the Albanian canons of the fifth and seventh centuries into his *Kanonagirk* because he didn't consider them Armenian by right. And the oldest surviving Armenian manuscript of *Kanonagirk*, was copied in Cilicia in 1098. And it is this Armenian *Kanonagirk* manuscript that contains the Albanian canons of the fifth century's Aguen Council, translated from the Albanian into Armenian.²³⁰ Cilicia was the epicenter of the Albanian-Armenian integration process.

There is a good chance that it began with the advent of the Albanian Oshinids-Hethumids in Cilicia in the 13th–14th centuries, when they dominated the country, that the Hethumids themselves and the Armenian Church provided the groundwork for the translation of Albanian authors' works into Armenian, and in the following centuries, the Armenian Church turned this into a policy of complete annexation of the Albanian historical and literary tradition.

The Hethumids' cosmopolitan strategy – the triumph of the "world Christianity" rejecting an independent political existence, the identity of ethnoses – played into the Armenian Church's hands in relation to other ethnic groups, and, in particular, the Albanians. The Armenian Church nurtured this policy for the future, especially after it was moved to Etchmiadzin in 1441. More importantly: what were the political and confessional realities of the Albanians and the Albanian Church? Were they ready for that?!

As set out in our research, the destiny of Albanians in their historical homeland from the 14th to the 19th century totally dismisses the long-nurtured Armenian Church's concept of transforming the Albanian cultural heritage into Armenian heritage. Otherwise, the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin would not have counted on and would not have resorted to the power of Tsarist Russia.

Now, let's consider the prerequisites for the creation of the "Legal code" by Smbat Sparapet and the prerequisites for the creation of the "Book of Law" by Mkhitar Gosh. The latter are partially dwelt upon in Chapter I. To what extent are these prerequisites, which have developed in geographically very remote countries – one in the west of Asia Minor (in Cilicia), and the other in the Caucasus (in Albania) – similar to each other?

First, let's take a historical look at the Christian Albanian population of Arran (Ganja, Utik, Khachen, Syunik). The de-ethnicized part of the Albanian population who converted to Islam, relied on the Islamic law – Sharia, and the remaining Albanian Christian population was deprived of its legal document that would govern all aspects of their life. As appears from a passage from David son of Alawik from Gandzak (Alawkvordi): '...with other major vices that afflicted Albania... it erupted and spread among the people of the mountains and plains...'²³¹ The "Life and Martyrdom of Khosrow of Gandzak" by Mkhitar Gosh also attests to the severe decrease in morals among the Albanian Christians, as well as the defection from the Christian faith. There was an urgent need for canons, for a legal act controlling all aspects of the Albanian society, which would restore the church's shaky power and defend Christian clergy from Muslims who chastised Christians for lack of laws of their own. This was the reason for the creation of David Alawkvordi's canons,

which were found to be insufficiently acceptable and this fact eventually led to the creation of Mkhitar Gosh's "Book of Law" which was a historical necessity for the Albanian community.

As for the prerequisites for Smbat Sparapet's "Legal code", they are clearly highlighted in a passage of Nerses of Lambron who wrote in 1193: '...in 642 according to the Armenian chronology (1193), the patriarchate received a request from the Christians of cities and districts to give them civil laws, since the Ishmaelitan-Mohammedan princes and judges did not handle court cases of Christians who sought justice from them, they sent them to their own court, according to the order to leave non-Muslims to litigate according to their own laws'.²³² Therefore, the lack of Christian laws, which was the source of Muslim clergy reproaches, was a general precondition for both the Christian population of Cilicia and the Albanian population of Arran.

Returning to the renaissance in the Cilician state, one should note the development of sciences, writing of chronicles that recreate the histories of both the Cilician state of the 11th–14th centuries, the Albanian kingdom of the 9th–14th centuries, and Eastern Armenia of the 9th–11th centuries.

Smbat Sparapet in his "Chronicle" describes individual historical events that took place in the territory of Eastern Armenia, Byzantium, Albania, Georgia, Cilicia, etc. The opening page of the "Chronicle" is particularly interesting, as it reports the beginning of the rule in Armenia of Gagik from the Bagratid clan, the son of Ashot, as previously stated (in Chapter I). Smbat reports that in 961, the Armenian patriarch and all the princes of Gagik 'had a desire to send messengers to Albanian Catholicos Ter-Hovhannes and to Albanian king Philippe to invite them to the coronation of King Gagik. They arrived with 40 bishops and many princes and unanimously crowned the Armenian king Gagik as the Armenian king. For, although endowed with power, he did not have a king's crown on his head'.

Matteos Urhaetsi wrote about the same in 410 according to the Armenian chronology, i.e. in 961: 'The Catholicos of Albania, Lord Hovhannes, and his forty bishops... the king of Albania Filippose, a God-loving and saintly man, the son of Gogakzak and grandson of Vachagan, who were kings in the Albanian land, were invited for the anointing Gagik son of Ashot to reign'. Matteos Urhaetsi continues: 'King Philippos, Catholicos Hovhannes... were escorted to the Albanian country, where the throne of the apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew – "Taddeos Bardugimeos" – was located...'²³³ This passage emphasizes that Gagik's legitimacy as an Armenian king could only be recognized in the presence of a king, who in this case was the Albanian king. After all, as is known, the Armenian kingdom was abolished *de facto* in the fourth century and formally in the early fifth century, implying that there was no political state for four centuries. And, as is known, the Albanian state existed from the fourth century BC till the beginning of the eighth century, and then it was revived again from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries.

The chronicle, history, historical tradition were reconstructed at that time by both Smbat Sparapet and Hethum the Historian, known as Hethum Patmich (the historian), nephew of Smbat Sparapet, cousin of King Leon IV Hethumid, which was described in Chapter I. During the period of fierce rivalry for political predominance in Western Asia between the Egyptian sultan and the Mongols, Hethum the Historian played an active role

in the events of the late 13th century in the Middle East. Hethum the Historian, a politician of the Cilician state, adhered to the alliance of the Hulaguid Mongols of Iran, the papacy and the European states against Egypt for the reconquering Syria and Palestine. Such a policy, according to the Hethum, would guarantee the Cilician state a certain independence.

“Flower of the Histories of the East” written by Hethum in Old French and translated into Latin in 1307, into Italian, English, Spanish, Dutch, German (in the 15th–19th centuries), was only translated into Armenian in 1842 [?!] under the title “Hethum as a Historian of Tatars”.

Structurally, Hethum's work consists of four parts. Part I covers the geography and ethnology of 14 regions and kingdoms – kingdoms of the Central, East Asia and the Caucasus, from Armenia, Georgia, and Syria to China and India.²³⁴ For us, this first part is of particular interest as there must have been information about the Albanians, especially because Hethum Patmich notes in Book I, Chapter IX, that in the fourteenth century people used the Albanian writing.²³⁵ But, unfortunately, next to no one who has studied Hethum's Chronicle reports anything about the Albanians, with the exception of Bernard Outtier.²³⁶

As for the Albanian Renaissance of the said period (12th–13th centuries), later the Albanians as integral members of successor Azerbaijani states, as in previous centuries, after the fall of the Albanian kingdom, established – revived Albanian kingdoms in Syunik, Shaki, and Artsakh in the 9th–13th centuries, whose kings were heirs of the lineage of the famous Albanian Mihranid princes. Therefore, there is a genetic relation and continuity of the Albanian rulers. It was the Hasan Jalal clan which reigned until the fifteenth century inclusive. As previously said, this was the age of the Albanian Renaissance, which manifested itself in the resurrection of Albanian historical and cultural traditions, as well as in the creation of new Albanian sources – “The Albanian Chronicle” by Mkhitar Gosh, which is an attempt to continue chronologically “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi; and also “The History” by Kirakos (Gandzaketsi), “Historical Compilation” by Vardan Albanian-Areveltsi, and others (see Chapter I).²³⁷

Both during the creation of the Cilician kingdom and during the Renaissance, the Hethumids of Cilicia maintained a close, live relationship with the Khachen Albanian kingdom, with Hasan Jalal, and later with the Albanians of Arran and Syunik. This is evidenced by the dynastic marriages between the Hethumids and Hasan Jalal's clan: in 1287, Afshin-Oshin, the son of Afshin, brother of Cilician king Hethum, uncle of King Leon, mentions his mother, who was the daughter of ‘the great, valiant, wise God-bearing Jalal’. I.A.Orbeli believes that this passage refers to Jalal al-Dawla and that the marriage could have been effected in 1243.²³⁸ The ties between the Hethumids and the Albanians are evidenced by the close communication – visiting Cilicia by Mkhitar Gosh, Stepanos Orbelian, who was consecrated as Metropolitan of Syunik and honored in Cilicia by King Leon III Hethumid himself.²³⁹ These ties are also supported by the exclusive knowledge of Hethum Patmich, a Cilician historian from the Hethumid clan, who, contrary to all Armenian sources, says that in the fourteenth century, some Albanians continued to use the Albanian writin.²⁴⁰ Obviously, this refers to the Albanians living in historical Albania, and the other part, apparently, should mean the Cilician Albanians. Three thirteenth-century gospels written under the Hethumids attest to the Hethumids' ties to their

historical homeland – Arran, Syunik, and Khachen, which follows from the narratives of these gospels. ‘This holy gospel was written in the region of Hethum II the Pious’ Cilician state in a woeful time, in which we lost the patriarchal throne with all the saints and the patriarch with the people. This holy gospel was written in a glorious holy monastery named Drazark in the shelter of the Most Holy Theotokos’. Another gospel: ‘Today this scripture is written by the hand of priest Stepannos in 732 (1283) in the patriarchate of Lord Hakob and under the reign of Leon, son of Hethum, in the glorious holy monastery of Skevra under the patronage of St.Savior and mother St.Theotokos, in the impregnable castle of Dam on the banks of the Tarsus, at the foot of the Taurus Mountain, in the year when the glorious and pious son of our sovereign Hethum took the title of horseman and now owns this castle and other surrounding areas’. The first of the gospels was written during the reign of Hethum II in the Drazark monastery in Cilicia, from where in the 18th century it was brought to Syunik and then, together with its settlers – to Jraberd (Artsakh). In the nineteenth century, according to bishop M.Barkhudaryants, this gospel was used by the Albanians in the church of St.Theotokos in Khanatsakh of Khachen district.²⁴¹ The Drazark monastery, where the Gospel of Hethum II was written, was one of the largest in Cilicia and the center of the episcopacy and the burial tomb of the Cilician kings.²⁴² The second gospel was written during the reign of King Leon, the son of Hethum II, in 1283, “in the holy monastery of Skevr” near the hereditary fortress of the Hethumids, Lambron, and it was completed in the patriarchate of Albanian Lord Petros in 1663. According to the same bishop M.Barkhudaryants, this gospel was used till the end of the nineteenth century in the Albanian Cathedral Church of St.John the Baptist in Ganja, built under Albanian Catholicos Hovhannes in 1633.²⁴³ It is quite obvious that the Hethumids' gospels got to Albania – to Syunik, Khachen, Ganja – not by mere coincidence. At the end of the 19th century, another gospel was found in the same Cathedral Church of St.John the Baptist, with the colophon reading: ‘And this illuminous gospel was written in the beginning of the holy time to the present day in the Drazark monastery, it was completed in 744 (1295), trusting, we beg mother the St.Theotokos about mercy for us, for the whole world, for Christian kings and the pious king Hethum who bore the burden of all valiant deeds like holy kings...’

The Albanian toponyms of Arran found in Cilicia, including Kafan-Kapan, Khatchin-Khachen also testify to the Hethumids' historical ties with Albania.

Thus, under the Hethumids, the culture of Cilicia evolved in close contact with the cultural and social life of Aran, i.e. Albania. It's easy to see why Albanian historian Kirakos Gandzaketsi was keenly interested in and described the history of the Hethumids and the current political events of Cilicia. Kirakos Gandzaketsi, trying to date events using synchronization, refers to the events of Cilicia and Albania in a similar way: ‘what is described here was under the pious ...king of the Cilician land h'Etum, under his brave brother sparapet Smbat, under his great father Ishkhan Constantine, under the Catholicos of the Holy See of Gregory, Constantine, who sat in Rumkale... and under the humble and humane Albanian Catholicos Ter-Nerses, who at that time had his seat in the Khamshy monastery’.²⁴⁴ The Hethumids maintained ties with their historical homeland.

The close political relationship between the Hethumids, Khachen Albanian king Hasan Jalal, and the ruler of Syunik Stepanos Orbelian can be clearly seen during

the Mongol invasion, when the ruler of Khachen and, on his advice, the rulers of Cilicia Hethumids as well as the ruler of Syunik, in order to preserve the unity of the country and the Albanian Christian population from plunder and destruction, reached common ground with the rulers of the Mongols, visiting repeatedly the Mongol ruler's camp with generous gifts, admitting vassal dependence, concluding peace treaties with them, alliances, and remaining loyal to them. Not a single Armenian prince considered this option, when abandoning his principality, the Armenian population, and his Armenian churches and moving to the west to pursue his own interests.

Let's take a look at the sources for this thesis. When the Mongol conquerors approached the borders of Cilicia, the rulers of Cilicia sent their messengers to the commander-in-chief of the Mongolian troops, Bayju Noyan, to make peace with him. Hethum decided to recognize the rule of the Mongols and maintain peace and friendship with them, and to this end, in 1243/1244, he sent a messenger to the Mongolian commander Bayju. Kirakos Gandzaketsi writes: 'Hethum, king of Cilicia and the neighboring countries, seeing that the Seljuk sultan was defeated by the Mongol Tatars, sent messengers to them with expensive presents and proposed to conclude a friendship alliance with them, at the same time announcing his submission to them. The messengers arrived at their main headquarters and, through the help of prince Jalal, were introduced to Bayju Noyan, Chormagan's wife Altani-Khatun, and the rest of the nobles'.²⁴⁵ The Mongols made friendship with the king and gave, according to their yassa, a charter known as "el-tamga".²⁴⁶ The success of the negotiations of King Hethum's messengers was facilitated by Albanian prince Hasan Jalal, who acted himself in a similar way and, in this case, participated in the Mongol campaign against the Turks of Asia Minor and gained significant power under the Mongol commander.²⁴⁷ Hasan Jalal's diplomatic mission was determined by his far-sighted policy, his tireless concern for preserving the integrity of his country. As previously stated, at the first attack of the Mongols, he took shelter with the people of his region in the Khokhanaberd fortress (in Artsakh) besieged by the Mongols. The Tatars failed to seize the fortress and offered Hasan friendship and peace. Hasan Jalal went down to the Mongols with lavish presents and was honored. They gave him his country with some additional territories, and entrusted him with participating in all of their campaigns.²⁴⁸ Hasan Jalal proved to be a very wise and clever politician. Foreseeing endless extortions, he made all sorts of arrangements to receive frequent Mongol delegations, and supplying them in abundance with everything, he relieved his subjects from the burdens. This occurred between 1238 and 1240. In 1243, previously stated, Hasan Jalal appears with his detachment in the campaign of Bayju against the Sultan of Rum, Ghiyath ad-Din Kaykhusraw III. By that time, Hasan Jalal had earned some trust and power under the Mongol commander-in-chief.²⁴⁹ Therefore, it was thanks to Hasan Jalal's help and personal assistance that Hethum's messengers managed to introduce themselves to Bayju, and Chormagan's wife, Altani-Khatun, and other powerful Tatars.²⁵⁰ Noteworthy is what Kirakos Gandzaketsi writes about the relationship of Hasan Jalal with the Mongols: '...but they (the Mongols) did not treat other countries in the same way and, wherever they arrived, they brought tyranny and oppression'.²⁵¹ The ruler of Syunik, Stepanos Orbelian, following in the footsteps of Hasan Jalal and the Hethumids, went to the camp of the Mongols in 1258, became their vassal, and managed to gain their favor and

trust.²⁵² Hasan Jalal, Stepanos Orbelian, and the Hethumids, in their dealings with the Mongols, remained loyal to the policies of the Albanian rulers (the Arsacid kings and the Mihranids), who, under difficult circumstances, tried to preserve the country's integrity and the Albanian people's unity, pursued a flexible policy, focusing on a strong enemy, and hurried to become their vassals. This policy has always been justified. The Hethumids were forced to visit the Mongol camp two more times. As noted earlier, according to historian Hethum (Patmich), King Hethum first sent Smbat Sparapet with gifts and offerings to Güyük, the great khan, in 1247/1248. Khan gave Smbat a yarluk and a paiza, a golden plaque that certified the power of Hethum over Cilicia before the Mongols.²⁵³ And for the third time, it was Hethum I himself who traveled to the Mongol camp in Karakorum in 1254. 'He went through the Albanian country and through the gates of Derbent, i.e. Pakhaka Jora, to Batu and his son Sartak' (*Kirakos Gandzaketsi*, p.185). This resulted in a treaty (consisting of 7 points) between Hethum and the Mongols, Mengü Khan. The main provision of the treaty released Christian churches, priests, and the Christian population in all the countries conquered by the Tatars, from tax burden. The Armenian translations of Hethum's "History" incorrectly rendered the third clause of the treaty, according to which the Mongols allegedly relieved only Armenians from all taxes and duties, while the treaty in Old French provides for the exemption from taxes and duties of all Christian churches and monasteries in general.²⁵⁴ This is also reported by Kirakos Gandzaketsi: 'Mengü Khan also issued a charter guaranteeing the freedom of all churches from taxation'.²⁵⁵

Hethum Patmich articulated the political program of Hethum I ('in his seven requests to Mengü Khan'), who chose to become a vassal of the Great Khan in order to preserve Cilicia from the Mongol invasion and ensure specific territorial and material rewards for it. The alliance with the Mongols and European countries was successful at first: the Mongols destroyed the Caliphate in 1258 and conquered Iran. But this necessary strategy of Hethum I faltered around the end of the thirteenth century, due to changed socioeconomic conditions in Europe, since the preconditions for the restart of the crusades existed no more, and because Ilkhanate was disintegrating. Cilicia's orientation toward the Pope and the Catholic West, without the prospect of European support, proved to be disastrous.

The foregoing demonstrates that the Albanians, as the bearers of a powerful ethnocultural Albanian heritage, created this culture not only in their historical homeland, Caucasian Albania, but also well beyond its borders, and that the search for and identification thereof should continue. As is known, the Cilician kingdom is treated in historiography to this day as Armenian, created only by the Armenians and the Armenian rulers, the Armenian dynasty. Our research testifies to the wrongfulness of such a concept and such a solution. The Albanian factor was completely ignored.

Self-contradictory are the statements of A.S.Mnatsakanyan, who asserts: '...We should note that the attempts to alienate this part of Armenian literature [David Alawik, Mkhitar Gosh, Vardan Areveltsi, Hovhannes Vanakan, Kirakos Gandzaketsi – *F.M.*], which is an eloquent testimony to the spiritual heritage of *Eastern Armenia*, are unacceptable, especially since in terms of its magnificent prosperity it was like a tween of the rapidly developing literature of the Cilician Armenians. For historical reasons, these two major cultural hubs were meant to drive the Armenian people's spiritual growth [?!] in the 12th–13th centuries'.²⁵⁶ No comment.

Our research makes absolutely clear the reason and the consequence of the move of the Armenian Catholicosate from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin, i.e. to the Caucasus, in 1441, where the Albanian kingdom split into five feudal domains – melikdoms – and the Albanians continued to exist.

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CHAPTER 4.

ALBANIA'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

§ 1. Social institutions

The question of the socio-economic structure of early medieval Albania was raised neither in the works of Western European scientists nor in the pre-revolutionary works of Russian scholars. This topic was first brought up in Soviet historical science. However, the social structure of Albania was limited in Soviet historiography to two unpublished articles by Z.I.Yampolsky,¹ a section in the “Essays on the history of the USSR” by S.T.Yeremian,² a number of provisions (summaries and hypotheses) of K.V.Trever,³ a section in the monograph by Z.M.Bunyatov,⁴ and a short report by T.Mammadov.⁵

V.N.Leviatov⁶ characterizes the socioeconomic relations in Albania during the 4th–6th century as “early feudal” without referencing any historical sources. ‘Feudal relations were forming unevenly and the traditional tribal relations survived for a long time in some regions of Albania’, V.N.Leviatov states.⁷ He argues that alongside the king, there were large and small land owners, both secular and religious, in this “semi-feudal and semi-patriarchal” realm. According to V.N.Leviatov, material goods were produced by peasants who were divided into the wealthy and the poor. V.N. Leviatov believes that in the mid-sixth century, the feudal mode of production became the dominant, the leading one, although the slaveholding structure remained in the country's economy.⁸

Z.I.Yampolsky describes the social structure of Albania in the 3rd–7th centuries as feudal and argues that the early slave communal land tenure and majorat law in Albania was replaced by feudal property and the *Sepukh law*. The *Sepukh law* establishes the foundations for feudal hereditary patrimonial property ownership (“allod”). Feudal land tenure (“benefices”) also arose, with some of it becoming life-long (“feud”). Slave labor was also employed in production.⁹

According to S.T.Yeremian, a multi-structured social system arose in Albania between the 4th and 6th centuries. The primitive communal system and slaveholding structure continued to dominate during the feudalization process. Cattle herders and hunters lived in mountain gorges and woodland areas, structured into tribal groups.

S.T.Yeremian believes that “the bulk of the population were farmers, free producers of material wealth”, united in rural communities.¹⁰ Free producers, according to S.T.Yeremian, were split into three categories: the rich, the needy, and those who did not have arable land and vineyards. ‘The feudalized slave-owning elite acquired large farms. A large number of them were the azats – horsemen who received “hostak”, i.e. land plots, from the king as a natural allotment’.¹¹ According to S.T.Yeremian, private farms still

existed in Albania in the fifth century, with slaves as the primary producers. Farmer-slaves who lived in separate houses, had their own peculium, individual farm, made up a special residence. Such slaves were called *yerdumards*.¹²

In the multivolume “History of the USSR” published in 1966, S.T.Yeremian insists that in the fifth century, in Albania, there were large estates whose main producers were farmer-slaves. But this edition already lacks the premise of domination of a primitive communal system in Albania in the fifth century.¹³

K.V.Trever suggests that the social system of Albania in the 4th–7th centuries was characterized by established feudal relations similar to those in Armenia and Eastern Georgia (Kartli), but had somewhat slower pace of development and specific features caused by the entire course of the historical process in Albania, the country's ethnic and economic fragmentation.¹⁴

All the aspects of Albania's aspects were regarded primarily in terms of its unity and relationship with Armenian history, which received far too much attention and through which perspective they attempted to reveal Albania's social structure.

Albania was cast in the role of an economically backward country in comparison with Georgia and Armenia. And due to the above, the social structure of Albania was understood as primitive and was not represented at all. Meanwhile, the importance of revealing Albania's social processes and realities cannot be overestimated. The Albanian canons of the Aguen Council, the records of the Albanian nobility (preserved in the “History of the Aghuans”), the entire “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Armenian sources (including historians' works, codes of laws, church canons), the Sassanian Law Book give direct and indirect, sometimes scanty and scattered, but very valuable information about the socio-economic history of Albania.

According to Z.M.Bunyatov, the social structure of Albania in the 6th–7th centuries had the characteristic features of feudalism. There were feudal forms of land tenure: the nobility owned ancestral estates, the nascent class of feudal lords received land plots in exchange for service, the church and the clergy nobility inherited ownership of the church and monastery lands. The tax-paying estate was divided into three groups: “the rich with a high income”, “the needy” and “the peasants without property”.

But at the same time, slavery in Albania had not yet been completely eliminated. In general, the economic system in Albania, according to Z.M.Bunyatov, was similar to those in Georgia and Armenia.¹⁵

The concept of Albania's social structure (3rd–5th centuries), which Azerbaijani historians supported, was presented in Azerbaijani historians' collective work titled “The History of Azerbaijan” (Volume 1).¹⁶

According to this concept, the process of establishing feudal relations was uneven. Feudal relations and the slave-owning framework persisted in several areas of Azerbaijan. The feudal nobility relied on the labor of both dependent peasants and slaves. Nonetheless, feudal relations dominated in the country's economic system, and were steadily increasing and strengthening.¹⁷ I addressed the subject of Caucasian Albania's social structure in the 3rd–8th centuries in the most recent edition of the seven-volume “History of Azerbaijan”.¹⁸

It should be noted that the research of the socio-economic system of Albania, carried out by Z.I.Yampolsky, S.T.Yeremian, K.V.Trever, Z.M.Bunyatov, V.N.Leviatov, is mainly based on one source – the Aguen Canons. Meanwhile, the conclusions, as we have seen, were different: according to one point of view, the primitive communal system and slaveholding structure remained dominant, but feudalization was gathering pace; according to another point of view, feudal relations prevailed, but the slave-owning system persisted.

The matter is that the Canons were studied either on the basis of the Russian translation of K.Patkanov and therefore the terms remained unsearched, or, using the Old Armenian text, the focus was on the Iranian origin of the terms and they were interpreted by analogy with Iran in their traditional meaning.

Furthermore, the researchers limited their studies to a few canons chosen from among all the canons. Meanwhile, only a thorough examination of all canons, including all data from Movses Kaghankatvatsi's "History of the Aghuans", as well as data from Armenian primary sources, and the juxtaposition of the social realities of Georgia, Armenia, and Iran, allows one to comprehend each canon and the terms used in it.

The difficulties inevitable in research were aggravated by the lack of written records in the Albanian language, the absence of Albanian historiography, and the extreme paucity of information in Albanian and Armenian sources. The main source of our information and ideas about the socio-economic history of Albania – "History of the Aghuans" by Movses Kaghankatvatsi – has come down to us in translation into the Old Armenian language. The social terms recorded in the source, which are of paramount importance for the subject under study, are Iranian in origin, as in neighboring countries, and are mentioned but a few times. The difficulties are also aggravated by the ignorance in the realities of that time and the poor knowledge of the socio-economic history of Albania, which does not allow us to rely on the existing and established scientific ideas on certain issues of the social system of Albania.

Documentary material, i.e. Albanian church and legal acts, is represented by the only historical and legal monument – the Canons of the Aguen Council, which, however, consists of only 21 canons. Movses Kaghankatvatsi himself rarely ventures beyond the realms of political and military history, as well as church and religious interests. The information on social history in this text is fragmentary, incidental, mentioned in passing. This is why the study involved investigating each term in "History of the Aghuans" in different contexts, as well as comparing the terms in the texts of all Armenian sources, contemporary to "History of the Aghuans", and later and earlier sources. Using the necessary comparative material from Armenian sources was also somewhat difficult, for the Armenian historians themselves often differ from each other by using different terms. Therefore, it became necessary to trace the use of this or that term by each of the Armenian authors in order to identify its actual meaning.

The Georgian sources could not be used due to a lack of knowledge of the Georgian language, but we were aided by Georgian scientists' study.

When studying the issues of the socio-economic history of Albania, one cannot ignore the works of the Armenists, Iranists and Kartvelists, who study the issues of the social system of Armenia, Georgia and Iran, study the same social terms that are used in the HA and are of primary interest for the topic under study.

The work widely relies upon the works of I.Javakhov, N.Adonts, Y.A.Manandian, S.T.Yeremian, A.G.Perikhanian, G.H.Sarkisian, V.A.Livshits, N.V.Pigulevskaya, as well as foreign authors. Ethnographers' writings were also used to document the remnants of the patriarchal-clan structure that have survived to this day. The information provided by ethnographers is important for comparison and analogy through historical retrospection.

Based on primary sources and available literature, this work examines the social legal institutions and the social structure of Albania in the 4th–8th centuries.¹⁹

References to the Armenian-language literature are given (for technical reasons) in Russian translations with notes “(Old Armenian)” and “(Armenian)”.

The author considers it a pleasant duty to express deep gratitude to everyone who at that time assisted with helpful advice and comments in the process of working on the “The social structure of Caucasian Albania”, in particular to Vladimir A.Livshits and Muhammad A.Dandamayev, as well as Alla Kaplan, Lyudmila I. Kireyeva.

*a) Direct producers:
shinakans, ramiks and anashkharhiks.
Some information on the community*

According to the “History of the Aghuans” (HA), the main exploited mass of the Albanian society is referred to as either “shinakan” or “ramik”.

H.Hübschman believes that *shinakan* is derived from *shen*, which in turn ascends to the Avestan “*Rayana*” meaning *abode, village, settlement, cultivated place, built place*. Therefore, *Rinakan* is interpreted as *villager, peasant*.²⁰ G.Widengren adheres to the same etymology.²¹

The term *ramik*, according to H.Hübschman, is of Iranian origin. *Ramik* is derived from *rama* by adding suffix *-ik*, which corresponds to the New Persian *rama* meaning *crowd, herd, group*.²² G.Widengren adds the meaning of *army* to the above meanings of *ramah-a < ramak*.²³ As for the actual meaning of the terms, in Armenia, during the early Middle Ages, *shinakan* meant a member of a commune²⁴ as opposed to *azat* and means the lowest social stratum of the Armenian society.²⁵

According to the point of view of Y.A.Manandian,²⁶ shared by M.A.Gevorgyan,²⁷ A.G.Sukiasyan²⁸ and other scholars including us, *ramik* is a broader concept forming a social class, which included poor urban people, artisans and villagers, i.e. the shinakans.

According to N.Adonts, however, shinakans were state peasants, plebeians, and ramiks were peasants of private estates, princely latifundia.²⁹ G.Widengren believes that Armenian sources do not allow establishing which of these terms is broader in meaning. According to G.Widengren, ramik and shinakan mean two different categories of the same lower class that have little in common. *Shinakan*, according to G.Widengren, conveys a solely social connotation, meaning *peasant*, and *ramik* is a military-social concept meaning a horseman, part of a feudal vassal's squad.³⁰ It should be noted that Widengren's conclusion about the actual meaning of *ramik* in Armenia is only based on the analogy with the *ramik* of Parthian-Sassanian Iran and is not supported with Armenian factual material. According to S.T.Yeremian, ramiks were the city plebs (crowd, rabble).³¹

Researchers note that Faustus of Byzantium and Elishe use *shinakan* to refer to the unprivileged class, and Ghazar Parpetsi uses the term *ramik*.³²

Let's take a look at the meanings of the terms *shinakan* and *ramik* in relation to the Albanian conditions in the time under study.

Explaining the reasons for convocation of the Aguen Council, the author of "History of the Aghuans" says that 'dispute arose among the laymen and the bishops and priests, nobles (*azats*) and the ramiks'.³³

Unfortunately, these disagreements were not reflected in the source. Ramiks together with *naxarars* are found in the following context: '...at his [bishop Israel's. – *F.M.*] command, a divine deed was performed; the entire *azat* estate of *naxarars* – all the nobility and *ramiks* of the Huns came to worship the religion of the Holy Church'.³⁴ Further, '...he [Khazar ambassador] is not of the *ramiks*, but is a *naxarar*'.³⁵ As is evident from these passages, the secular nobility (*azats* and *naxarars*) is contrasted with the entire unprivileged class with the single term – *ramik*.

The *ramiks of the Huns* which should probably be understood as the Hunnic plebs in a broad sense, are of immense interest in the aforementioned text. The *Hunnish shinakans* are not mentioned in the HA.

The term *shinakan* was first mentioned in "History of the Aghuans" in connection with the anti-Sassanid uprising of 451. 'Many of the nobles (*naxarars*) and *shinakans* of Aghuank, who in the name of God scattered and hid in the inaccessible mountains of the Caucasus...'³⁶ The term *shinakan* is also mentioned in the 4th and 5th canons of Aguen Council.

'*Azat* or *shinakan*, or whoever of the laity may not miss the day-hours' (Canon 5).³⁷

In these passages, the secular nobility (*azats*, *naxarars*) is contrasted with *shinakans*.

In the Aguen Canons, apparently, as well as in the Armenian canonical literature, believers are divided into two categories: the nobles, i.e. *azats* and *shinakans*, and *shinakans* mean all taxable persons.³⁸ The 4th Canon of Aguen Council prescribes: 'The fruits* [to be given] to the priest by people – *zhogovrdene* as follows: the wealthy – *tuani*³⁹ – must pay four *griws*⁴⁰ of wheat, six *griws* of barley and 16 jugs⁴¹ of wine; the poor – *tarapeal* – must give half a loaf of bread (which means 2 *griws* of wheat and 3 *griws* of barley) and as much wine as he can; let nothing be taken from his who has no field or vineyard. He who has sheep shall give one sheep and three fleeces and one cheese; he who has horses shall give one foal, and he who has cattle, one calf. "Zhoghovurd" (which literally means people) in Armenian sources is used as a synonym of *ramik* and *shinakan*.⁴²

The fourth canon makes it clear that the main taxable estate of Albania were peasants-*shinakans*. The canon illustrates the deep property stratification of the village.⁴³ There were three categories of peasants in Albania: the rich – *tuani*s, the needy – *tarapeals*, and landless – those who had no field or vineyard.⁴⁴

Landless *shinakans* apparently became sharecroppers or were hired by feudal lords.

The bulk of the population of Albania were farmers, free producers of material wealth.⁴⁵ This thesis can be supported by the fact that the main taxable estate of Albania

* Fruit – Armenian "ptug".

were peasants-*shinakans*, that “History of the Aghuans” and the canons mention the “needy”, “azats and shinakans”, “azats and ramiks”, “naxarars and ramiks,” i.e. the secular nobility is opposed either by peasant *shinakans* or by commoner *ramiks*.

Peasants-*shinakans* were exploited as a class. The main classes of Albanian society were *shinakans* and the feudal nobility – the *azats*.

S.T.Yeremian believes that the landless peasants mentioned in the fourth Aguen Canon turned into *anashkharhiks*, corresponding to Iranian *anshakhrik*.⁴⁶ The primary producers of private farms (*dastakerts*), according to S.T.Yeremian, were slaves referred to as *anšahrik* – *anshahrik*, which in Armenian sources is rendered as *anašxarhik* – *anashkharhik*.⁴⁷ However, S.T.Yeremian refers to the canon of the Aguen Council as an Armenian source.

The term *anashkharhik* is mentioned throughout the HA but twice. The 19th Canon of the Aguen Council states: ‘On Sundays, both master (*ter*) and servant (*tsarra*) are to go to the Vsam (cathedral) church⁴⁸ to pray and offer memorial services in the church, but the *anashkharhik* must pay soul-scot to the church (*hoghetsatur*)’. The rest of the laity apparently held the dominical memorial service in the azat parish churches. The meaning of *anashkharhik* should be clarified in this canon. In Grabar (Classical Armenian), *anashkharhik* means “taken away from his land”, “stranger”, “captive”, “slave”. This term goes back to Iranian *anshakhrik* found in the sixth century Pahlavi source Matigan-i Hazar Datistan.

Anshakhrik (literally “stranger”) means a slave. According to A.G.Perikhanian, originally this term meant prisoners of war who were made slaves. Actually, this category included slaves of various origins. *Anshahrik* slaves were allotted to the land of the slave owner.⁴⁹

To reveal the true meaning of “*anashkharhik*” in Albania, Canon 19 should be taken together with Canon 5,⁵⁰ both of which instruct on the payment of tax when holding the divine service for the soul. The only difference is that Canon 5 stipulates for tax payment by all laity annually, while Canon 19 requires that this payment be paid on Sundays by *anashkharhiks* only. If we agree with the opinion that *anashkharhik* was a slave obliged to pay tax, then, firstly, the means and possibilities of the slave should have been stipulated for, as was the case in the fourth canon in relation to the taxed estate;⁵¹ secondly, if he really was a slave, then, as a layman, he would obey the laws of the fifth canon, which prescribed this tax to be paid by the entire population; thirdly, he would have paid the tax to the same church as all the laity, and not to the cathedral one. Based on what has been discussed, we can confidently assert that the term “*anashkharhik*” is used in its literal meaning, i.e. “stranger”.⁵²

And in order to honor the memory of the deceased, a stranger, due to the fact that he is not affiliated with any church, must attend the main church and bring in a donation for his soul when the Sunday memorial service is performed by local residents – the master and servant. As for the tax for the soul of locals, as noted (canon 5), it was paid by locals to the church during the year.

Anashkharhik is also mentioned in the HA in the following text. Albania was strictly ordered to abandon the faith (Christianity) and adopt the religion of fire-worshipping magi: ‘Should anyone rebel, he shall be put to death, and his wife and children will become

anashkharhiks'.⁵³ In this passage, *anashkharhiks* can be understood as exiles, literally "outcast from their land". The HA provides no other information to help us understand the true meaning of the term we are interested in. We do not have additional comparative material from Armenian sources on this term, and therefore there is no way to trace the meaning of the term *anashkharhik* in a broader context. The mention of the term *anashkharhik* in Canon 19 and the interpretation we have proposed, apparently, exclude the rightfulness of the statement about the presence of slaves-anashkharhiks in Albania in the fifth century. The sources provide no data indicating the presence of such a category of slaves in Albania.

Although production in Albania was based on shinakan labor, slave labor was nevertheless used in the country as well.

Thus, according to Faustus of Byzantium (the fifth century), Albanian king Urnayr (the fourth century), said to his army: 'I am telling you something now to remember later on. When you have arrested the Greek troops, allow many of them to live. For we will bind them and take them to Albania and put them to work making bricks, as stone-cutters, and masons creating what is useful for our cities, mansions, and whatever else...'⁵⁴ It is possible that the captive Greeks were made slaves.⁵⁵

"History of the Aghuans" mentions slaves in Albania in the fifth century and later. Thus, "History of the Aghuans" reports that Albanian king Vachagan III Pious enslaved "magi and sorcerers". 'And subsequently, many magi, sorcerers and pagan priests were punished – some of them were hanged, some exiled, and others were enslaved (*i strkutyun arkanelov*)'.⁵⁶

Albanian Great Prince Javanshir says in his prayer: '...you (the Lord) ...gave me gold and silver in abundance, slave-servants (*tsarra*) and slave-maids (*agakhneays*)'.⁵⁷

The origin of the word *tsarra* is unknown.⁵⁸ This term has many meanings: "subordinate person", "inferior", "servant", and finally, "slave".⁵⁹ *Agakhin* literally means belonging to "agkh", i.e. clan, family, tribe.⁶⁰

S.T.Yeremian subdivides slaves into two categories by their origin: "home-raised slaves", "slaves born in the master's house", and later – any slave born in the master's property, and "foreign" slaves – acquired in war or purchased. S.T.Yeremian places *agakhins* in the first category, i.e. the valety.⁶¹

Therefore, *tsarra* and *agakhin* in this context can mean both slaves and servants, domestic valety.

The above passages allow for the conclusion that the source of slave power in Albania in the 4th–5th centuries were wars⁶² and grave crimes (anti-religious acts).

Our ideas about slavery in Albania are based on the data of the HA only. It suggests that in the era of early feudalism in Albania, slavery was preserved, but only in a primitive form, as a pattern of life, and did not dominate in the country's economy. Slave labor was used in civil construction work and in household.

So, the main producers of material wealth in Albania in the given period were peasants-*shinakans* who lived in communities and villages. The economic unit of the Albanian society was a small family and the community was made up of such families. 'It was a territorial-communal structure in which kinship relations gave way to neighbor and economic ties'.⁶³

The rural community was the bottom fiscal unit. A community was taxed collectively and the tax was levied on the community as a whole. "History of the Aghuans" provides evidence of communal management in Albania.

Canon 14 says: 'Those who eat meat on Wednesday or Friday must fast for one week. Should someone go to the priest and say that such a person is not complying, let the elder of the village – *avag shinin* – expropriate an ox from this person and give it to the priest'.⁶⁴ The village elder – (*avag shen-a*) was the head of the community. In Armenian sources, village elderly are also known as *avag ghekhja* (Sahapiwan canons), *ghekhjavag*, *dassapet*.

The village elder was in charge before the church for the administration of religious rites by the community members. He was probably also in charge of the *shinakans* carrying out state duties⁶⁵ and his direct responsibilities included taxing and collecting taxes from community members, regulating land use concerns, and irrigation water distribution.

We have no other information characterizing the community, its relationship with feudal lords, with the state, its internal status. "History of the Aghuans" does not provide any direct data on the character of exploitation or the degree of peasants' economic and political dependency on feudal lords. The decrees of the Aguen Council give us but very scanty data on the *shinakans*' being subject to exploitation by the church, but these data suggest that at the early stages of feudal relations, the principal form of exploitation was the tribute in kind.

Church taxes

The Aguen Council determines the amount and types of church taxes levied on the population (Canons 3, 4, 5, 17, 18, 19).

The issue of taxes in Albania paid to secular feudal lords and the church was not specially studied.⁶⁶ Therefore, the Aguen Canons are extremely valuable in this regard, as they contain records of church taxes which had a varied character and, accordingly, different names. The canons describe the following church taxes: "*has*", "*tasanord*", "*ptug*", "*hoghetsatur*".

"Has" means share, part, income, tax,⁶⁷ church tax, king tax,⁶⁸ feudal tax.⁶⁹

According to the Armenian canons of Sahak the Parthian (5th century), the Albanian canons of Vachagan III (5th century), Albanian Catholicos Simeon (8th century), the Book of Law by Mkhitar Gosh (13th century), *has* was a church tax, but researchers are not unanimous about the nature of this church tax. According to Y.A.Manandian, *has*, basically, meant a secular land tax. However, based on the fact that in Sahak the Parthian's canons *has* refers to a church hearth tax, Y.A.Manandian believes that *has* could also refer to a secular capitation tax.⁷⁰

T.Avdalbegian, disputing Y.A.Manandian's opinion, believes that neither Armenian religious literature nor Armenian law codes provide data that allow for considering *Has* as a "land tax".⁷¹ T.Avdalbegian reports that in the Armenian translation of the Old Testament *Has* refers to a capitation tax – *ghhakhark* collected by the temple from adult Jews for purification, deliverance, for redemption – *prkank*, *srbuti*.⁷²

The believers' duty to pay the capitation tax to the church (*has*) is reported in Sahak the Parthian's "Charter of Tradition", which conclude his canons. It says:

‘And let you priests put to God's altar one drachma as the *has* from *each of your homes* and sacrifices ... Just like parishioners are required to pay you (priests) the *capitation tax*, you (priests) are required to tribute the *capitation tax* to bishops’.⁷³

According to the 17th–19th centuries authors Zacharias of Agulis⁷⁴ and Arutyun Araratyan,⁷⁵ one of the heavy church taxes of their time was the capitation tax, which the church collected from each Armenian in the amount of 20 dinars a year.

Considering the mention of the temple capitation tax in the Bible,⁷⁶ T.Avdalbegian's statement about *has* as a capitation tax in favor of church, Sahak the Parthian's accounts on the *has* church capitation tax, and the accounts of later authors about the capitation tax among other church taxes in Armenia, it can be assumed that the *has* church tax mentioned in the 5th–7th centuries sources was a capitation tax paid to the church.

According to the Aguen Canons and the canons of Albanian Catholicos Simeon, *has* was also a church tax in Albania. Canon 17 of the Aguen Council states: ‘Bishops and priests complained to the king of the *azats* building two or three churches and monasteries in villages, and the *azats* laid down their conditions to the king; the king, the bishops, and the *azats* agreed that the arranged churches be preserved and the “*ptug*” and “*has*” paid to these churches be paid to the Vsam Church’.⁷⁷

In this canon, both “*has*” and “*ptug*” are only mentioned and their nature and amount remain unclear. While Canon 4 particularly deals with *ptug*, we believe that the *has* tax is addressed in Canon 3 of the Aguen Council: ‘An *azat* and a member of the royal family shall in the course of his life give with his own hand for his soul⁷⁸ a horse, saddled and harnessed, and whatever else he can afford. If he should not give this in his lifetime, his family shall give it after his death’.⁷⁹ As can be seen from the canon, only the nobles had to pay *has*.

The Bible requires this capitation tax be paid by all children of Israel. The cited Armenian canon of Sahak the Parthian makes it clear that *has* was paid by both the laity and the clergy. T.Avdalbegian shares this opinion.⁸⁰ Consequently, this tax was compulsory for everyone regardless of social and class category. Probably, Albania was no exception in this regard.

But it seems to us that *has*, though compulsory, was not flat and uniform in the nature of the offerings, i.e. was not a strictly regulated tax. It seems that Aguen Canon 3 specifically stipulates the nobility, apparently for the reason that it establishes a regulated increased tax for this social stratum only. It stands to reason that not every layman could afford giving one saddled horse “for his soul”. For the common people, the unprivileged class, apparently, *has* remained a voluntary tax.

The parishioners brought both *has* and *ptug* to the church where it was distributed among the clergy.⁸¹

Aguen canons mention another church tax in Albania, *tasanord*. *Tasanord* was a tithe to be paid in kind by one and all to the church. Tithe was the most common type of not only the church tax, but also the temple tax. As a temple tax, tithe existed in the countries of the ancient East and the Classical Antiquity.⁸²

According to the Bible, the Israelites were required to contribute a tenth of all agricultural products to the temples annually.⁸³

Tasanord in Armenia is mentioned by Faustus of Byzantium who says that Armenian king Pap ‘canceled the duty of paying ptug and tasanord to the church according to the long established custom’.⁸⁴

The church tithe is mentioned in Canon 18 of the Aguen Council: ‘The *azats* who pay *tasanord* – tithes are to give half to the principal church (bun ekeghetsin) and half to their own church’ (*azat*).⁸⁵

Apparently, the tithe paid by the *azats* was considerable in size, and therefore the canon prescribes sharing it between two churches (the main and the *azat* ones), probably in order to avoid the enrichment of the *azat* church. Probably, Canon 18 is aimed at limiting the property of the *azat* churches.

It remains unclear whether a tithe was collected from the underprivileged class. In all likelihood, *tasanord* in Albania, as well as in Armenia, was a universal tax collected from all Christians. As for the amount of Albanian *tasanord*, it was equal to a tenth of all the income of the laity. This is evident from the letter of Armenian Catholicos Kyut (5th century) to Albanian king Vache II. The letter says that under Albanian king Urnayr (the fourth century) Albania was illuminated once again, adopted Christianity: ‘...the first fruit was to be given to the church, *tithes were allocated from the fruit of the barn, wine press, fields, flocks and all domestic animals*’.⁸⁶

Among other taxes was also *ptug* (literally “fruit”). *Ptug* was a church and feudal tax.

According to N.Adonts, *ptug* was the Armenian equivalent of the European champart, Arab *mukasama* and Persian *bahraka*, i.e. a certain part of the harvest paid as a tribute to the feudal lord.⁸⁷ Following N.Adonts, S.Malkhasyants also considers *ptug* to be an in-kind tax in favor of the feudal lord.⁸⁸ T.Avdalbegian shares N.Adonts' opinion adding that *ptug* was also a tax of the clergy, collected from laity households.⁸⁹ Y.A.Manandian disagrees with N.Adonts, considering *ptug* to be only a church tax⁹⁰ and notes that this term is not mentioned as a secular tax in written sources.⁹¹

Ptug ‘was originally a Christians’ voluntary offering to the church, that consisted from the first fruit of the earth, mainly from cereals. Over time, *ptug* became a compulsory tax in favor of the church’.⁹²

Ptug is dealt with in Aguen Canons 4 and 17. Canon 4 says: ‘*Ptug* – the fruit, to be (given) to the priest by people as follows:...’ (see the detailed content of Canon 4). As evidenced by this canon, *ptug* was an obligatory church tax in Albania in the fifth century, which was levied not only from agricultural crops, but also from all products of the household. Apparently, this canon devoted to *ptug* is based on the biblical law “on the first fruit of domestic animals”, “on the first fruit (or beginnings) of cereals, fruit trees”.

‘Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors’.⁹³ ‘The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God’.⁹⁴ ‘This shall be the priests' due from the people, from those offering a sacrifice, whether an ox or a sheep: they shall give to the priest the shoulder, the two jowls, and the stomach. The first fruits of your grain, your wine, and your oil, as well as the first of the fleece of your sheep, you shall give him’.⁹⁵

The Aguen Canon establishes certain rules for the wealthy and the needy. A landless person is exempt from paying taxes. But in Albania, the biblical law was adapted to local

conditions, customized, it specified the amount of each type of offering, i.e. became a mandatory regular tax.

According to the Aguen Canon, ptug was paid to the priest. However, as attested by the Armenian canons of Sahak the Parthian (Canon 17), Canon 13 of the 547 Dvin Assembly, ptug was not the priest's personal income, but rather church money as opposed to the remuneration to the priests for discharging church obligations. Parishioners brought ptug to the church to the archpriest or priest who distributed it among the church ministers.⁹⁶

Apart from the above-mentioned three taxes, Aguen Canons 5 and 19 describe the tax "for the soul" in Albania, brought to the church by the relatives of the deceased. Canon 19 provides the technical name of this tax, while its true meaning is revealed in Canon 5.

Canon 5 reads: 'Azat or *shinakan*, or other layman should not avoid an annual giving (*patarag*) in memory of the dead.⁹⁷ They should give as much as they are able, not to deprive the dead of a share of their gain. If the deceased had horses, then the Church should be given a horse; if he had oxen, then an ox'.⁹⁸ As is clear from this canon, the tax for "for the soul" was regulated. Obviously, who had neither a horse nor an ox, was not charged for the soul of the deceased.

The "for the soul" tax in Armenian sources is referred to as "hoghebazhin", literally "share of the soul", and "hoghetsatur". The new Armenian dictionary etymologizes "hoghetsatur" as "hoghi" – "soul" and "turk" – "tax"; this means the "for the soul" tax. It would be more appropriate to say that this complex word was derived from "hoghi" – "soul" and "tur" – present-tense imperative singular from "tam", and the terminal "k" in "tur" is an indicator of plural. Literally, "give for the soul". Only "hoghetsatur", to which Canon 19 is specifically dedicated, is mentioned in Albania. 'On Sundays, both master (*ter*) and the servant (*tsarraï*) are to go to the Vsam church (diocesan, cathedral) to pray and offer memorial services in the church, but a stranger (in this case) must pay *hoghetsatur* to the church'.⁹⁹

The rest of the laity, as noted, performed the Sunday memorial service in the parish (*azat*) churches. The laity paid the "for the soul" tax to the same church. The fragment of Aguen Canon 5 about the receipt of the "for the soul" tax mentions an ordinary church, but when it comes to the senior cathedral church, the canons always mention the "bun church" or the "Vsam church".

The "for of the soul" tax paid by the laity to the parish churches, and not to the senior ones, is evidenced by Canon 18 of the 763/771 Partaw Council, later referred to by Mkhitar Gosh in his "Book of Law".¹⁰⁰ This canon, in accordance with Christian laws and the instructions of the holy fathers, prescribes the relatives of a deceased to observe forty days' prayers and agapi¹⁰¹ "for the soul" or to bring a tribute for the fulfillment of the will of the deceased. The main requirement is that the relatives of the deceased may not bring the tribute to another church or to another churchman, except for the elder of that parish church which the deceased attended.¹⁰² This canon, as well as Aguen Canon 5, convince us that the Sunday memorial service mentioned in Aguen Canon 19 did not involve sacrifice.

The only difference between the 5th and 19th Aguen canons is that the 5th canon required that the "for the soul" tax be paid by the entire population during the year to the parish church, while canon 19 obligated only strangers to pay this tax on Sunday to

the senior cathedral church. This was obviously a new revenue stream for the diocesan cathedral church. The concern for the material interests of the senior (cathedral) church is also reflected later (in the 13th century) in the Legal code of Smbat the Gundstable. Article 25 of this Legal code required that people attend the main churches on major holidays so that the small churches do not take away the income of the senior churches.¹⁰³

Canon 19 provides no data on the amount and nature of the hoghetsatur tax. The way the content of hoghetsatur is not disclosed in Canon 19 suggests that this tax was well-known. It might have been collected in cash from strangers, making it easier than the in-kind tax provided for in Aguen Canon 5. The analysis of the donation acts preserved by the 13th century historian, Stepanos Orbelian,¹⁰⁴ convinces that later, compared to the Aguen canon, in the ninth century, “hoghetsatur” was simply a voluntary offering of the laity to the church.

An analysis of the Aguen Canons showed that canon law, by establishing the amount of donations in favor of the church and clergy, thereby turned voluntary donations into regular flat church tributes. The analysis of these taxes allows revealing the forms of exploitation of peasants and other estates of the working population. The information of the Aguen Canons about the numerous church taxes (*ptug*, *has*, *tasanord*, *hoghetsatur*) are of great importance not only for the church history, but also for the secular tenor of life. Studying these taxes is vital as they reflect the technical names of various secular taxes. Though ascending to the biblical taxes, the terminology and sometimes the nature of church taxes partially coincide with the taxes accepted in the local secular environment. Thus, in Armenia, *ptug*, *has*, *tasanord* are known not only as church-related, but also as secular taxes charged in favor of secular feudal lords.¹⁰⁵

b) *Secular nobility*

The HA is rich with terms denoting secular nobility: “*azat*”, “*azatani*”, “*ter*”, “*tanuter*”, “*azgapet*”, “*nahapet*”, “*ishkhan*”, “*naxarar*”, etc.

All the terms under consideration are extremely important for understanding the social structure of early medieval Albanian history. They are almost unexplored, yet the analysis of these terms leads to important conclusions on the social history of Albania.

“*Azats*”

The term “*azat*” is the most frequently used term and has the broadest definition. This term is of Iranian origin. “*Azat*” means “noble”, literally, “born” (in clan), a derivative from “*zan*” – “be born”, an equivalent of Latin “*agnatus*”.¹⁰⁶

During the period under study, *azats* were known in Iran, Sogdia, Armenia. It has been established that, in Armenia, during the early Middle Ages, “*azat*” was used in two meanings: 1) in the broad sense, *azat* meant the nobility; 2) in the narrow sense, it referred to a certain category of the nobility, i.e. a minor and medium feudal dependent on the king or a large landowner and receiving land ownership conditioned by military service.¹⁰⁷

A.G.Perikhanian gives a new interesting interpretation to the term¹⁰⁸, asserting that “*azat*” in Armenian sources has only one meaning: “*agnat*”.¹⁰⁹ According to

A.G.Perikhanian, belonging to an agnatic group implied being a member of the noble class. In this context, the word *azat* was generalized and used to refer to any member of the noble class, “un nobles”.¹¹⁰ But where social contradiction was not felt, the term “azat” meant members of an agnatic group of the noble class – *de la noblesse* as opposed to the leaders of these groups of *nahapetk: azgapetk: tohmapetk: mecameck*.¹¹¹

S.T.Yeremian studied this term in relation to the conditions of Albania in the 3rd–7th centuries. He considered the *Azats* to be horsemen who were granted land plots (“hostaks”) from the king as rations in kind. According to S.T.Yeremian, *azats*, the owners of the *hostaks*, were the main military force of the country.¹¹² However, Z.M.Bunyatov believes that in the 6th–8th centuries in Albania, there were such social strata as “the nobility” (*azat mard*), “the military people” and “the horsemen”.¹¹³ “The nobility” and “the military people”, according to Z.M.Bunyatov, were minor nobles bound by the great prince with the obligation of military service and receiving land in compensation for this service.¹¹⁴

Our purpose is to find out what HA considers to be the true meaning of the term “azat”.

As noted in Chapter 2, in the context of HA, the term “azat” is opposed by the terms “shinakan” and “ramik”, i.e. *azats* were opposed by direct producers.

In the HA, the term “azat” was first recorded in the fifth century in the Aguen Canons. The preamble to the Aguen canons says that one of the reasons for convening the assembly was the disputes among the *azats* and the *ramiks*'.

Further, “azat” is mentioned in two lists: in the list of participants in the assembly and in the list of those who approved the canons.

In the text of the Aguen canons (3, 5, 17, 18, 20, 21), we come across “azat” both in the form of “azat” and as a compound term “azat mardik” (“noble people”), “azat mard” (“noble man”) and “azat ark” (“noble men”).

Thus, Canon 17 reads: ‘Bishops and priests complained to the king about the *azat arks*, who built two or three churches or monasteries in one village, and the *azat mardiks* made an agreement before the king. It was considered fitting by the king, the bishops, and the *azats* that the churches which had been built should remain, and that the (taxes) *ptug* and *has* of these should be given to the Vsam church’.¹¹⁵

The term “azat” is used in the Aguen Canons in a broad meaning as the secular nobility in relation to the clergy (Canons 17, 20, 21), and, as previously stated, in relation to the taxable class,¹¹⁶ is referred to as *azats* only.

This is also supported by the fact that the *azats* were equated in status with the members of the royal family (*tagavorazn*), since another canon (3) establishes church taxes¹¹⁷ particularly for them – for the *azats* and the royalty. Apparently, “azats” here refer to the entire privileged estate, the entire ruling class. The end of the canons speaks in favor of this assumption: ‘the decrees were made by bishops and priests and *azats* in the presence of the king’,¹¹⁸ although the beginning of the canons similarly states that these canons were established by the king, the clergy, ‘and the *azats* and *nahapets* of Artsakh and Bakur *nahapet* of Kalankatuk, and many others...’¹¹⁹

And the final list of those who sealed the canons reads: ‘...This charter was sealed by the rings of the *hramanatar*, *hazarapet*, *azgapets* – Marut, Tirazd, Asprakos, Shma, Bakur,

Aratan, Vardan the Brave, ter of Gardman, Xurs, Germanosan, Khosgen, *nahapet* Pirod and all the *azats* of Albania'.¹²⁰

As we can see, in one case the secular nobility is denoted by the generalizing term “*azat*” and in others by specific terms. Consequently, the semantic field of “*azat*” is broad, covering the entire secular nobility, including the *nahapets*, *azgapets*, and *ters* who attended the assembly.

Terminologically, “*azat*” can refer not only to *nahapet*, *azgapet*, *ter*, but also to *ishkhan* and *naxarar*. This is evident from the following HA passages.

‘At the end of 300 (851) of the Armenian era, the punishment for our sins was accomplished. The *believing ishkhan*s of Armenia and Albania were taken prisoner, cast into irons by the Tajiks, exiled from their homes and sent to Baghdad against their will. There the impious ones tortured them, forcing them to abandon the faith... But venerable Sapuh Artsruni and another excellent man from among the Armenian *azats* preferred a martyr’s death to a worthless life’.¹²¹ Judging by this passage, *ishkhans* were *azats*.

The term “*naxarar*” is used in the HA in a meaning similar to “*azat*”.

Thus, the HA provides two lists of participants in the Albanian assembly of 705 – one list requested by Armenian Catholicos Elias, the other – by Caliph Abd al-Malik for storage at the divan. In the first one, the list of the clergy is followed by the secular nobility: ‘Sheroy, *ishkhan* of Albaniya, Juankoy, *sparapet* of Albania, the patrician Vardan and his brother Gagik, Bab of the Hrahatean, Vakhtang of Varazmanean, a patrician from the Karoean royal clan, Vagan of the Varaz-Ioann clan, Theodoros Anastoean, Rostom Varaz-koyean, Zarmihr of the royal clan of Varaz-Kurdakean, Makhmat of the Sheroean (clan) and all other *azats* of this country’.¹²² *Azat* is undoubtedly used here in a broad meaning. According to this list, all secular nobility represented generally and by name – *ishkhan*, members of the royal family and representatives of other noble families – are referred to as *azats*.

The second list which is a slightly expanded version of the first, i.e. the preceding one, refers to all this nobility as “*naxarars*” as the entire list is titled “List of names of Albanian *naxarars*...”.¹²³ A significant addition to the second list is the mention of Atrpatakan *ishkhans* and the sons of Daylam *ters*.

The comparison of the two lists shows that *azats*, as well as *naxarars*, included the Great *Ishkhan* of Albania Sheroy, ordinary *ishkhans* (of Atrpatakan), representatives of the royal family, the sons of *ters*, and other representatives of the clans. While the meanings of *azat* and *naxarar* are similar, *azat* is a broader, a more comprehensive term that is and has a slightly different connotation than *naxarar*. ‘...At his (bishop Israel’s) command, a divine deed was performed; all the *azats* (*naxarars*) (*amenain azatakoit naxararatz*) and *ramiks* of the land of the Huns came to worship the religion of the Holy Church’.¹²⁴ This fragment presents two somewhat equivalent terms meaning secular nobility – *azatakoit* and *naxarars*. But *azatakoit* implies a broader meaning, since *naxarars*, as the context shows, come from the *azat* estate. This is also confirmed by the following passage: ‘Sapuh, the Persian king, gave a tremendous feast for all the nobles (*metzametatz*) of the nine *azat* clans (*azatatohm*) of the Persian *naxarars*’.¹²⁵

As is clear from this passage, the terms “*metzametzk*” and “*naxarars*” mean secular nobility, originating from the *azats*.

Further, this passage narrated how Persian king Sapuh decided to check the “rank hierarchy” of the Armenian nobility – *azatatohm*.

In this passage, the Armenian nobility is referred to as either *azatatohm*, or *naxarars*, or *ishkhans*.¹²⁶

The terms “*azatatohm*” and “*azatazarm*” (azat clans) documented in HA,¹²⁷ are of particular interest since they imply that the term “azat” refers to the entire clan, i.e. to any member of the clan.

The foregoing information on the term “azat” allows us to make inferences regarding its true meaning in the contexts of early medieval Albania.

1. *Azat* as a term of social hierarchy opposes “shinakan” (peasant) and “ramik” (commoner).

2. *Azat* in a broad sense refers to the entire ruling class of feudal lords, indicating their social position. The term “*azatk*” and its compounds “*azat mardik*” and “*azat ark*” generally mean all secular nobility.¹²⁸

3. The concept of “azat” includes *nahapet*, *azgapet*, *metzametzk*, *ter*, *ter's* sons, *ishkhan*, the *great ishkhan*, and *naxarar*. Judging by *azatatohm* and *azatazarm*, “azat” meant the entire feudal clan as a whole and any member of the clan, both the head of the clan (*ter*, *nahapet*, *azgapet*) and the sons of the clan.

This is about all the data that the HA provides regarding the term “azat”. Perhaps, Albania was no exception, and the term “azat” was used in Albania, like in Armenia and Iran, in another meaning: minor military nobility – horsemen. But the HA is silent about it. Aguen Canons mention the *azats* as dastakert owners.¹²⁹

Patronymy (agnatic group)

The terms “*zarm*” (azata-zarm), “*tohm*” (azata-tohm) and “*azg*” denoting family relationship in general, meant different kindred groups, both large and small. “*Azg*” and “*tohm*” are of Iranian origin. “*Azg*” in Middle Iranian (or Parthian) meant “branch”, “offspring”.

In terms of kinship relations, “*azg*” could mean one stage of kinship (one “navel”, one kindred), a large family, clan, tribe, tribal groups.¹³⁰

Middle Iranian *toxm* (Iranian *tauxman*) is preserved in Armenian *tohm*¹³¹ – “seed”, “genus”. The New Dictionary of the Armenian Language and S.Malkhasyants' explanatory dictionary hardly clarify the difference in the definitions of “*azg*” and “*tohm*”. Both *azg* and *tohm* are defined as a group of people descending from one ancestor.¹³²

“*Zarm*” as a synonym of “*tohm*” and “*azg*”¹³³ is defined similarly. The term “*tun*” which originally meant “house”, “family” was also used in the meaning of a kindred group, but in the Middle Ages its meaning was enriched. Apart from a family structure, it included various concepts.¹³⁴

Armenists and Iranists proved that the terms “*azg*”, “*tohm*”, “*zarm*”, and “*tun*” in Armenian written sources could be used as synonyms in respect to the early medieval Armenia, i.e. mean the same kindred group.

I.Javakhov was one of the first to pay attention to the identical use of two terms in Armenian sources – “*azg*” and “*tohm*” meaning “genus”.¹³⁵ N.Adonts does not see a semantic difference between the terms “*azg*”, “*zarm*”, “*tohm*”, “*tun*”. He interprets them as

genuses and believes that during that period they acquired a shade of nobility, that is, they meant princely families.¹³⁶

S.Hakobyan noted that Ghazar Parpetsi used the terms “azg”, “tohm” and “tun” as synonyms.¹³⁷ According to A.G.Perikhanian, the terms “tohm” and “azg” were used interchangeably.¹³⁸ The synonymy of the above terms and their use to denote solely noble kin groups are supported by both Ghazar Parpetsi's and Faustus of Byzantium's data.¹³⁹

According to the HA, a similar picture can be seen in Albania. Here, the terms “azg”, “zarm”, “tun”, and “tohm” can be used without semantic distinction, as synonyms.

A telling example are the two above-mentioned identical lists of Albanian *naxarars*, of which one list mentions a patrician from the royal family (*azg*) of Karoan¹⁴⁰ and the other refers to the same person as being from the clan (*zarm*) of Karoan.¹⁴¹

The synonymy of “azg” and “zarm” is beyond doubt. It is clear from the following passage: ‘In the scorching hot days, the remarkable (Javanshir) took his retinue of the *azatazarm tohm* and *Namesakan* brigade into the valleys between the high mountains...’¹⁴² “*Zarm*” and “*tohm*” are used here together in the same meaning. ‘The use of two synonyms to denote the same concept is a common occurrence in Armenian syntax’.¹⁴³ Unfortunately, the HA does not offer analogous examples, where one and the same kindred group would be denoted by the terms “tun”, “tohm”, “azg”, “zarm”. But the context analysis shows that each of these terms is applied to one kin group.

Let us consider a “tohm” example: ‘When the grief (over Javanshir's death) had gone... the *ters of tohms*, the heads of regions – kusakals, metzametzs, naxarars, and all the ishkhans of these countries gathered together to go to the great archbishop’.¹⁴⁴

In this passage describing the events of the late seventh century, tohm is used in the meaning of not a tribe or a patriarchal clan, but of a kind of kin group.

The synonymy of “tun” and “tohm” is evident from the passage narrating about the hierarchy of the Armenian nobility. Here the same kindred groups are referred to as now azatatohm now naxarar tuns.¹⁴⁵

It seems to us that one should distinguish between the terms “azg”, “zarm”, “tohm”, and “tun” of the pre-feudal and the feudal period. We believe that these terms in the early medieval Albania and Armenia did not mean a tribe or family in their usual meaning [patriarchal clan], but the consanguineous group to which M.O.Kosven and his ethnographer followers refer as “patronymy”,¹⁴⁶ and A.G.Perikhanian – as an agnatic group.¹⁴⁷ It stands to reason that in the 5th–7th centuries, when the economic unit of the Albanian and Armenian society was a small family, under the conditions of the deepening disintegration of clan associations, the development of feudal relations, patriarchal clan communities with subdivisions characteristic of the clan did not survive in Albania. Kindred groups were patronymies. The criteria that are used by M.O.Kosven to characterize patronymy¹⁴⁸ and by A.G.Perikhanian to characterize the agnatic group,¹⁴⁹ in our opinion, fully fit those consanguineous groups that are mentioned in Armenian sources and in the HA by the terms “azg”, “zarm”, “tohm”, “tun” in the early Middle Ages.

From among the terms we are considering (“azg”, “zarm”, “tohm”, “tun”), only the term “azg” was explored by Armenian ethnographers as patronymy on the basis of ethnographic material. V.A.Bdoyan believes that “azg” meant “patronymy” in Armenia of the 19th–20th centuries.¹⁵⁰

E.Karapetian also interprets “azg” as a consanguineous patronymic group in Armenia of the 19th–20th centuries, but believes that back in medieval Armenian literature, “azg” and “tohm”, among other things, meant patronymy.¹⁵¹

Based on the above, it seems to us that K.Patkanov's and C.Dowsett's translations of “azg” and “tohm” in the HA are wrong. In these terms, they saw different kindred groups. C.Dowsett translated “tohm” as “family” and “azg” as “race”.¹⁵² K.Patkanov translated “azg” as “tribe” and “tohm” as “genus”.¹⁵³ We also disagree with the scientific interpretation of the term “azg” as “tribe” for early medieval Albania.¹⁵⁴

N.Adonts put together the geographic names and the naxarar patronymics in Armenian sources and established a close relation between them: either the princely houses are named after the regions, or, on the contrary, they give their family names to the regions.¹⁵⁵

This phenomenon is characteristic not only of the patronymic of Armenia, but, as M.O.Kosven found out, such patronymic names are characteristic of many languages.

The term “patronymy” is used in two meanings: to designate this form of the name of a place and to designate the name of a kin group living in such a place.¹⁵⁶ According to the “History of the Aghuans”, a similar situation was in Albania.

1. Representatives of naxarar patronymies are known under a geographic name, i.e. under the name of the locality inhabited by this kin group.

Examples: “Varaz-Grigor, *ter* of Gardman”,¹⁵⁷ “Xosrov, *naxarar* of Gardman” or “Gardman *naxarar*”,¹⁵⁸ “Bakur, *nahapet* of Kalankatuk”,¹⁵⁹ etc.

2. *Azat* patronymies are mentioned with their *azg*- names, which are reflected mainly in the 705 Partaw Council: “Bab Hrahatean (Bab i Hrahatean), Vakhtang Varazmanyanyan (Vakhtang i Varazmanean), Teodoros Anastoean (Teodoros i Anastoyean)¹⁶⁰ and others. Here we can single out the patronymic preposition “I” and suffix “ean” (eanyan), which show belonging to the patronymy, which were the basis of the surname.

3. Some personal names have no geographic origin and an *azg*- name.

a) Such names usually go with titles “azat”, “naxarar”, “ishkhan”, or with indication of *naxarar* or *azat* patronymy (*azata-zarm*, *azata-tohm*, *tohm* of *azats*).

“Two brothers Manuk and Merdazat from *tohm* of *azats*”,¹⁶¹

“A certain woman named Tagukhi of the *native azats*”¹⁶²

b) Personal names with titles “nahapet”, “azgapet”, “ter”. The participants in the 488 Aguen Council are generally mentioned in this way – *azgapets* Marut, Tirazd Asprakos, Shmavon, as well as Pirod *nahapet*.¹⁶³

4. Old generic name and patronymy name go together.

Ter Sakhli Smbatyan Yeranshahik,¹⁶⁴ where Smbatyan is a patronymic name, Yeranshahik is a generic name; ‘But he took a wife from Aruedzan *tohm*, the daughter of the prince of the Sisakan country, to the eternal joy of the Syunians’.¹⁶⁵ Here, apparently, Aruedzan is a patronymic name, and the generic name is Sisakan (of Syunik); Varaz-Trdat Stepanosean who was from the Mihr *tohm* (Mihrakan *tohme*).¹⁶⁶ Here Stepanosean is a patronymic name and Mihrakan is a generic name. As for Armenia, it is known that only *azats* had the right to be called by their surname, i.e. the *azg* name, while others were called by their first name and patronymic, or by their own name indicating the place where this person came from. Such, for example, as Ghazar Parpetsi, Yeznik Kohbatsi.¹⁶⁷ In all

likelihood, it was the same in Albania, for example, ‘...a certain woman Mariam Shamkhoretsi’,¹⁶⁸ i.e. common people were considered “without kith or kin”.

“Ters”, “tanuters”, “nahapets”, “azgapets”

The head of an *azat* patronymy (*tun*, *azg*, *tohm*, *zarm*) was called *ter*, *tanuter*, *nahapet*, *azgapet*. “Tanuter” and “ter” are Armenian formations.

Ter is the lord, master, senior in a *naxarar* family, head of the family, head of the country.¹⁶⁹

Tanuter is etymologized as the *ter* (lord) of the *tun* (clan), literally the head of the family, paterfamilias. And the terms “nahapet” and “azgapet” are Iranian borrowings. *Nahapet* is borrowed from Parthian *nafa-pati*, literally the head of the family.¹⁷⁰ *Azgapet* is also borrowed from Middle Persian (or Parthian) – literally, the paterfamilias, the hereditary head of the family, who gave his name to the genus.¹⁷¹

Let's take a look at their actual significance for Albania during the early Middle Ages. Just as the terms “tun”, “azg”, “tohm”, “zarm” meant the *azat* patronymies in the early Middle Ages, the terms “ter”, “tanuter”, “nahapet”, “azgapet”, “tohmapet” meant the heads of the noble *azat* patronymies, the heads of the *azatazarms*, the *azatatohms*.

N.Adonts believes that ‘in the historical monuments that have come down to us, the terms “ter”, “tanuter”, “naxarar” and “nahapet” are used as really synonymous concepts, but some authors use mostly one term while others give preference to other terms’.¹⁷² It seems to us that the terms “ter”, “tanuter”, “azgapet”, “nahapet” should not be considered identical to the term “naxarar”. The terms “ter”, “tanuter”, “nahapet”, “azgapet” carry signs of both the family (i.e. determine the position of a person in the patronymy) and the social hierarchy (mean the heads of *azat* patronymies, i.e. feudal patronymies). Meanwhile, the term “naxarar” indicates only the social estate of a person in the society, i.e. his belonging to the feudal nobility.¹⁷³ In fact, the term “naxarar” and the rest of the listed terms render various aspects of the role of one and the same person in the society. And the use of one of the terms “ter”, “tanuter”, “azgapet”, “nahapet” depends on the author's preference. Thus, Faustus of Byzantium uses mostly “nahapet”, while “tanuter” is mentioned only seven times; Elishe prefers “ishkhan”, while Ghazar Parpetsi uses “ter”, “tanuter”. Movses Kaghankatvatsi refers to the heads of *azat* patronymies mainly as “ter” and twice as “nahapet” and “azgapet”. According to the HA, *tanuters* in the eighth century referred to abbots of monasteries.¹⁷⁴ The technical term for the heads of the *azat* patronymies in Albania was obviously the term “ter”.

The terms “nahapet” and “azgapet” are mentioned in the list of participants in the Aguen Council. Let's refer again to the list of the participants in the Council and the final list of those who approved the canons.

The Christian clergy, “and the *azats*, and the *nahapets* of Artsakh, and *Kalankatuk nahapet Bakur*,¹⁷⁵ and many others...” appeared at the council before Albanian king Vachagan ‘and decided as follows’.¹⁷⁶ The text of the canons (there are 21 of them) is followed by the list of people who affixed the seal on the canons: ‘...This charter was sealed by the rings of the *hramanatar*, *hazarapet*, *azgapets*:¹⁷⁷ Marut, Tirazd, Asprakos, Shmavon,

Bakur, Aratan, Vardan the Brave, *ter of Gardman*,¹⁷⁸ Khurs, Germanosan, Khosgen, *nahapet Pirod*¹⁷⁹ and all the azats of Albania'. The data of the two lists and the text of the canons leave no doubts that nahapets, azgapets, ters, like azats, belonged to the ruling strata, i.e. the nobility. They are present at the council and develop and approve an official document – the canons – together with the king. Based on the terms “nahapet” and “azgapet”, mentioned at the Aguen Council of the fifth century, S.T.Yeremian believes that ‘even at the end of the fifth century, mountain gorges and wooded regions of the country were inhabited by pastoralist and hunter tribes organized into tribal associations – “azgs” – headed by tribal leaders – “azgapets”. Each tribe consisted of consanguineous communities headed by patriarchal heads, paterfamilias – “nahapets”’.¹⁸⁰

It seems that the term “azg” can hardly be applied to the early medieval Albania in its original sense, i.e. as a tribal association.

According to the HA, as it has been shown, the terms “azg”, “tohm”, “zarm”, “tun” all referred to the same existing kindred group – a patronymy. And most importantly, these terms are used in the HA to denote azat patronymies. Obviously, there is no semantic difference between the terms denoting the heads of such patronymies. The terms “nahapet” and “azgapet” both etymologically and in the texts under consideration are synonymous. Some manuscripts mention the nahapet of Artsakh and Kalankatuk, others – azgapets. Even in one and the same text, Bakur is now referred to as nahapet, now azgapet,¹⁸¹ Vardan, the *ter of Gardman*, is mentioned in the list of azgapets.

Based on the foregoing, we believe that one should not view the azgapets from the Aguen Canons as “tribal chieftains” and the nahapets as “patriarchal heads of consanguineous communities”¹⁸² and on this basis conclude that in the fifth century the primitive communal system continued to dominate in Albania.¹⁸³ But what kind of nobility exactly was referred to as “nahapet”, “azgapet”, “ter”?

As noted in the section on azats, the main classes of Albanian society in the fifth century, according to the canons, were shinakans – peasants and the feudal nobility – *azats*.

The concept of “azat” includes, as noted, all the secular nobility, including the *nahapets-azgapets* and *ters* present at the council.

It should be emphasized that *azgapets* and *nahapets* are mentioned in the two lists only as being present at the council and approving the canons. Not a single article of the canons is directly devoted to them, the secular nobility is referred to, as has been said, as the “azats”. It becomes quite obvious that if the ruling class is the feudal nobility – the *azats* – and the canons reflect their interests, these canons do not need legal approval of the “tribal chieftains – azgapets” and “patriarchal heads – nahapets”. Consequently, the terms “nahapet” and “azgapet” in the canons mean feudal nobility and therefore fall within the concept of “azat” in a broader sense. *Nahapets* and *azgapets* represented at the council the heads of the azat feudal patronymies.

The power of nahapets, azgapets, and ters extended to the entire azat patronymy, to all its members, the territory, the area populated by the patronymy. This is evident from the following HA passages.

‘The *ters* of *tohms* – patronymies and *ishkhans*, all obeyed him (Javanshir) in fear and love’.¹⁸⁴

In this passage, *ters* are described as the lords of patronymies. The list of the participants in the Aguen Council includes “*nahapets-azgapets* of Artsakh... *nahapet* of Bakur...”, “*Vardan, ter* of Gardman”. There are more examples from the HA. “*Varaz-Grigor, ter* of Gardman”,¹⁸⁵ “*ter* of Shirak”,¹⁸⁶ “*Vasak, ter* of Syunik”.¹⁸⁷

These examples show that *azgapets-nahapets, ters* are the heads of regions, settlements, territories populated by their patronymies. Consequently, *ters, azgapets-nahapets* are at one and the same time the rulers of the patronymy and the region, i.e. an *azgapet-nahapet* was both a lord, a ruler, a seigneur, and the elder of a patronymy.

According to Armenian sources, in the early feudal and feudal Armenia, a similar phenomenon can be traced in relation to the power of the *ters, tanuters, nahapets* and *azgapets*.

The true meaning of these terms for feudal Armenia is historically and philologically covered in the works of H.Indzhidzhian,¹⁸⁸ K.Kostanyants,¹⁸⁹ I.Javakhov,¹⁹⁰ Y.A.Manandian,¹⁹¹ and others.

Ishkhan. The title “*ishkhan*” meaning “ruler”, “lord”, as shown in Armenian studies, proves that all of the power of *naxarars*¹⁹² was concentrated in the hands of *ters, tanuters, nahapets* and *azgapets*, who bore this title. The term “*ishkhan*” was used as a synonym of “*ter*”, “*azgapet*”, “*nahapet*”, but it was more likely to be used in the political aspect. The term “*ishkhan*” is used mainly when it comes to political power, governing a *naxarardom*, a region, the country. This is especially evident from the fact that the Albanian rulers, the great princes, are referred to in the “History of the Aghuans” as the “*ishkhans* of Albania”, the “great *ishkhans* of Albania”. The source mentions the Mihranids beginning with *Varaz-Grigor* and on.¹⁹³

The term “*ishkhan*” was first mentioned in the “History of the Aghuans” along with the terms “*ter*”, “*nahapet*”, “*azgapet*” in the fifth century.¹⁹⁴ But since the sixth century “*ishkhan*” becomes dominant among the above terms. This happens, obviously, for the reason that as the power of the *ters, azgapets-nahapets* becomes increasingly political and administrative in nature, the terms dating back to the clan system are supplanted by the term “*ishkhan*”, which more clearly expresses the position of the feudal ruler. Apparently, this is why *ishkhans* are also referred to as *gavaraters* (rulers of regions), *kogmnakals* (rulers of the area).

Many Armenian sources provide evidence that the senior member of a patronymy, who inherited the *naxarardom* under the unwritten law, by custom, became a *tanuter, ter, nahapet, azgapet*.

Despite the fact that the *tanuterdom* was inherited in Armenia according to the principle of seniority, the king's government interfered in the issues of the *tanuter* power inheritance. This interference manifested itself in the recognition and approval of the legal heirs' rights by the king. However, such approval was but nominal because seniority in a patronymy in Armenia, was founded on the idea of majorat.

In the case of Albania, the HA has no direct information on the principle of *tanuter* power inheritance and the king's approval. However, the existence of the institution of *terdom* in Albania and the indirect facts on majorat law lead us to infer that Albania

followed the same legal principle of *tanuter* power inheritance as Armenia. But the “History of the Aghuans” provides a case in which the principle of seniority was violated in the patronymy of the Albanian rulers – the great *ishkhans*.

That is, the *ishkhan* of Albania and the *ter* of Gardman was not the eldest son of Varaz-Grigor, Varaz-Peroz, but his second son Javanshir.¹⁹⁵ Probably, in Albania, *ters* were first approved by the Albanian kings and later by the Persian kings. ‘The *tanuters* fulfilled important functions, and the supreme approval of a *tanuter's* power was intended to ensure his duty in relation to the state, i.e. the vassal service’.¹⁹⁶

“Naxarars”

According to our research of the HA data, “naxarar” appears to be the second common term after “azat” to denote all secular nobility.

Iranian and Armenian studies provide several versions of the etymology of this term.¹⁹⁷ The final etymology was recently established by W. Henning who believes *naxarar* to be a Parthian borrowing. The Old Armenian “naxarar” is a full equivalent of Parthian *naxwadar*, “the one who holds the beginning, the first place, the superior”.¹⁹⁸

We will try to analyze the actual meaning of this word in Albania's public life in the early Middle Ages.

The “Direct Producers” section dwells upon texts that show that *naxarars* contrast with common people – *shinakans* (peasants) and *ramiks* (common people). *Naxarars* can also contrast with the crowd – “khurn”. ‘At that time, great troubles befell our country, for the crowds (the *khurn*), united together, and the assembled *metzametz naxarars* and the entire country ... mourned the prince...’¹⁹⁹ As follows from the text, “naxarar” refers to the secular nobility as a whole. This passage does not mention just *naxarars* but *metzametz naxarars*, i.e. the great *naxarars*. The texts do not detail what is meant by the “great” *naxarars* – their degree of nobility, eminence, power? And aren't the *metzametz naxarars* the same as the *awag naxarars* (senior *naxarars*)? *Naxarars* as a general term referring to secular nobility in contrast to the spiritual nobility, were recorded as the companions of Albanian king Vachagan III at the moment of uncovering the relics. ‘The bishops, priests, *naxarars*, and their wives, each in their clothes, shoveled the earth out of the pit’.²⁰⁰

The secular nobility known as “naxarars” can be referred to as “azats” and “metzametz”,²⁰¹ i.e. the nobles (not to be confused with adjective “metzametz”). Thus, Chapter 3 (Book III of the HA) tells that the bishop of Gardman Ter-Nerses Bakur, being of the Chalcedonian confession, assisted by Sparama, Varaz-Trdat's wife who was a follower of the same teaching, became an Albanian Catholicos. ‘After listening to him, the evil woman sought advice from the bishops and the *metzametz* (the nobles or heads of patronymy)’.²⁰² Next, it is said: ‘And with her help, as well as those *naxarars* who adopted his chaff, he successfully destroyed many church altars...’²⁰³ Here it is obvious that the terms “naxarar” and “metzametz” are equivalent.

For all the univocality, the terms “metzametz” and “naxarar” can both replace each other and be used together. That is, the HA reports the following about the terms “metzametz” and “naxarar” applied to the Hunnic nobility. Chapter 42 of Book Two is titled “The consultation of the great *ishkhan* of the Huns Alp Ilituer with his *naxarars*”.²⁰⁴

And the first lines read: ‘...The great ishkhane of the Huns holds a good consultation with all the *metzametzk*s and *naxarars* of his domains’.²⁰⁵ Apparently, this should be read as “*metzametzk*s and other *naxarars*”.

A similar example: ‘...the great king (Urnayr) himself with the *metzametzk*s, with the *naxarars*, and a strong army went to Armenia’.²⁰⁶

The use of the term “*naxarar*” in a meaning similar to “*azat*” follows from the two lists of participants in the Partaw Council of 705, which were considered in connection with the term “*azat*”. The comparison of the two lists showed that *naxarars*, as well as *azats*, included the Great Ishkhan of Albania Sheroy, ordinary ishkhans of Atrpatakan, representatives of the royal patronymy, and, most importantly, the sons of *ters*, and other representatives of patronymies. Consequently, the term “*naxarar*” is identical to “*azat*” and is broader in the meaning than “*ishkhan*”, “*ter*”, etc. This is also evidenced by another passage. Chapter 32 of Book Two is titled “Albanian *naxarars* become related to pagans, for which they are cursed”.²⁰⁷ And the chapter itself reads: ‘*Ghavors* (chieftains, foremen)²⁰⁸ of the Albanians sullied themselves by marrying foreign women. Firstly, the house (*tun*) of Koght, *ter* of royal origin,²⁰⁹ then three houses (*tunk*) in the Arshakashen gavar: Dastaker, Chnshmi and Mamshegun,²¹⁰ and the house of Hejeri (*tun*) on the other side of Kur river, the house of Varaz-Peroz²¹¹ in the Uti gavar, in Gish, who held the title of Laknar, and the service clan – house of patronymy (Spasatun), who sat in Arzhakan,²¹² and the house of Tuerak’.

The comparison of the title and the text itself testify to the equivalence of the terms “*naxarar*” and “*ghavor*”. Apparently, the term “*naxarar*” referred not only to the heads – *ghavors*, but also to the members of patronymies, as can be seen from the text, where *tun* refers to a patronymy that has sullied itself. It is worth noting that the royal patronymy with its *ter* was also referred to as *naxarars*.

Let us consider another example confirming that *naxarar* could also mean *ishkhan*. ‘Varaz-Trdat ...sent to him (Israel) the senior of the *ishkhans* from the *naxarars* (*ars avags ishkhans i naxararatz*)’.²¹³

The term *avag* meaning “senior ishkhane” is of great interest, we will dwell upon it. This passage shows that the category of *naxarars* also covered *ishkhans*, including senior ishkhans. The terms “*naxarar*” and “*ishkhan*” can be used interchangeably, but nevertheless, *naxarar* is broader than *ishkhan*. That is, the HA reports that Varaz-Trdat, the great Albanian prince, consulted with the clergy and *naxarars* about sending an Albanian bishop to the Huns. ‘Thinking about this, the *ishkhans* and *naxarars* immediately elected and sent a wise and humble bishop from the Metz-kogmantz gavar’.²¹⁴ So, the secular nobility is collectively referred to as the “*naxarars*” and then is apparently narrowed down to *ishkhans* and *naxarars*. In this case, the word “*ishkhan*” somewhat emphasizes the broad meaning of the term “*naxarar*”.

In the last passage, *naxarars*, apparently, mean secular nobility other than ishkhans, unless there is a tautology here. Apparently, *ishkhans* are always *naxarars*, but not every *naxarar* is an *ishkhan*.

The context analysis shows that the use of the terms “*naxarar*”, “*ter*”, “*ishkhan*”, “*metzametzk*” with regard to the Hunnic nobility depends on the term used to designate the head of the Huns, the great prince. The HA refers to the head of the Huns as either

“ishkhan” or “ter” and never as “naxarar”. And this apparently leads to a conclusion that with all the synonymity of the terms “ishkhan”, “ter”, and “naxarar”, there is a slight difference between them. The terms “ishkhan” and “ter” are more specific compared with “naxarar”. “Naxarar” refers to a social position.

To prove our conclusion about the term “naxarar” for early medieval Albania, we should compare it to the meaning of this term for Armenia according to Armenian sources. The actual meaning of the term “naxarar” in Armenian sources (Elishe, Faustus of Byzantium, and Ghazar Parpetsi) was first studied by I. Javakhov. In his opinion, “*naxarar* can mean *sepukh*, as well as *ishkhan and tanuter*; this is essentially the name of one general concept covering all the three and opposed only to *ramiks* and *shinakans*”.²¹⁵

N.Adonts, believing that “naxarar” is a synonym for “nahapet”, understands it only as the head of a feudal clan.²¹⁶

We considered the meaning of this term for Armenia in the works of Agathangelos, Elishe, Faustus of Byzantium, Ghazar Parpetsi, Movses Khorenatsi, Sebeos.

Ghazar Parpetsi reports that after the letter of Persian king Yazdegerd, the clergy and the secular nobility gathered at the order of the *tanuters* of Armenia. The clergy included ‘the bishops of the gavars, who are called *ters*, priests, and senior monks’. The historian reports: ‘And those *naxarars* who came – *ter* Vasak, *ter* Artsruni – Ner-shapukh, Vriv Malkhaz, *ter* Mamikonean and *sparapet* of Armenia Vardan, *ter* Vahevuni – Gyut, *ter* Mokka – Artak, *ter* Andzevatzi – Shmavon, *ter* Apakhuni – Maneeg, *ter* Vananda – Aravan, *ter* Arsharuni – Arshavir, *ter* Amatuni – Wakhan, *ter* Gnuni – Atom, *ter* Paluni – Varazshapuh, *ter* of Ashotz – Khrahat, *ter* Dimaxean-Khmayeak, *ter* Abelean – Gazrik, *ter* Aravelean – Papag, Vren Dzyunakan. All these *avag tanuters*, together with *avag sepukhs*, pious bishops, *avag* priests, and monks wrote a reply to king Yazkert and all the nobility (*avagani*) of the Persian court’.²¹⁷

This passage can be interpreted in two ways: 1) the *ters* listed by names (or *avag tanuters*) are referred to as *naxarars*; 2) “naxarars” refers to both *ters*, *avag tanuters* and *avag sepukhs*, although the names of the latter are not recorded. In the latter case, the meaning of “naxarar” is broader than that of each of the above terms.

The fact that a *sepukh* could also be referred to as *naxarar*, which was first noticed by I.Javakhov, deserves special attention. Thus, Ghazar Parpetsi reports: ‘...a certain *naxarar* Andzevatzi, a *sepukh* named Hovhannes’.²¹⁸

According to Armenian sources, in Armenia “naxarar” could also mean “ishkhan”. Thus, Agathangelos reports: ‘Then the king ...hastily summoned the chief *naxarars* (*zghavors naxarartz*) and the governors of the countries – first, the *ishkhan* of the Angekh house; secondly, the *ishkhan* of Agdznik, ...thirdly, the *ishkhan* of the Mardpet principality’.²¹⁹

This passage clearly shows that *ishkhan* is not any *naxarar*, but the “glkhavor naxarar”, i.e. the chief *naxarar*.

I. Javakhov's conclusion on the term “naxarar” should be supplemented with the idea that it might refer to *nahapets*, as well as the highest nobility (*metzamez avagani*), *azatani*, and *tanuters* together with the *sepukhs*.

Thus, Ghazar Parpetsi refers to the secular nobility of Armenia, Iberia and Albania, summoned by Persian king Yazdegerd II, as “metzametz avagani”,²²⁰ “tanuters and avag sepukhs”,²²¹ “azatani”, “azatorear”,²²² and “naxarars”.²²³

Faustus of Byzantium reports: ‘...a certain Andovka, one of the naxarars, the *nahapet* of Syunik, had a daughter named Parandzem’.²²⁴

So, according to Armenian sources, the actual meaning of the term “naxarar” is pretty congruent with the information revealed by the HA analysis.

We can draw some inferences concerning the term “naxarar”, based on a comparison of the facts on the history of early medieval Albania and Armenia.

Among the variety of terms denoting secular nobility, “naxarar” appears to be the second most common term after “azat”.

1. “Naxarar” can refer to the secular feudal nobility in general (“avagani”, “azatani”, “azatatohm”, “patuakan ark”, “tanuters and sepukhs”).

2. “Naxarar” is used in a meaning similar to the terms “ter”, “tanuter”, “avag tanuter”, “nahapet”, “metzametz”, “ishkhan”, “metz ishkhan”, i.e. it can mean the head of a feudal and royal patronymy, the ruler of a principality, region.

3. Apart from the heads of patronymies, “naxarar” means “sepukh”, “the son of ter”, and “azat”, i.e. any member of a feudal or royal patronymy.

4. Naxarar as the ruling feudal nobility contrasts with common people – *shinakans*, *ramiks*, “the crowd” (“khurn”, “kharnijahanj”).

As can be seen from the above, naxarar is a general technical term to denote all members of a feudal patronymy (both senior and subordinate), as well as the nobility as a whole.

Our conclusions about the broad meaning of the term “naxarar” does not contradict the definition proposed by N.Adonts,²²⁵ since his interpretation does not cover the entire breadth of the concept revealed in the primary sources. If the meaning of “naxarar” were as narrow as N.Adonts believed, Ghazar Parpetsi and Movses Kaghankatvatsi's reports about *naxarars* – *sepukhs* and *naxarars* – “sons of ters” would be nonsensical. Because of such a broad and universal use of the term, we can deduce that “naxarar” had a social rather than a political²²⁶ meaning during the historical period under consideration. This is supported by the fact that *naxarar's* genuine meaning corresponds to two distinct concepts: *ter-tanuter* (a patronymy's head) and *sepukh* (a patronymy's ordinary member), who had different positions in a patronymy.

This is further confirmed by the fact that when the meaning of “naxarar” coincides with “ter” and “ishkhan” as the rulers of regions, political and administrative entities and states, they are referred to in sources as “ishkhan” or “ter” and have never been mentioned as “naxarars”. Thus, the rulers of the Huns and the great princes of Albania – the Mihranids – the rulers of principalities are called either “ters” or “metz iskhkans”. Nevertheless, these same rulers – *ishkhans* and *ters* – are *naxarars* among the feudal nobility. Consequently, they are *naxarars* according to their social class. Therefore, the term “naxarar” shows the social estate position of a person and the terms “ishkhan” and “ter” reflect the position of this person in the region, country, state, patronymy.

The social meaning of the term “naxarar” explains why this term is not recorded at the Aguen Council of the fifth century and at the Partaw Council of the eighth century (705).

According to the lists of participants, the Council was attended by one representative of each feudal patronymy. These were the heads of patronymies, mentioned in the HA by really and etymologically synonymous terms “nahapet”, “azgapet”, and “ter”.

These paterfamilias are naxarars by virtue of their social affiliation, therefore there is no need to mention the term. But the lists provide another term of social meaning, which is semantically broader than the term “naxarar”. This is “azats”, thus “naxarar” becomes unnecessary in this case.

§ 2. Governance structure of Albania

a) Order of precedence. Hierarchy

What did the naxarars possess? This issue is fully covered in the legend of Andok and Babik, cited in the HA.

We should clarify that the passage we are considering does not seem to have a direct relationship to Albania at first glance. Nevertheless, the very fact that it is included in the HA without the author's comments, the transformation of the disputes between Andok and Sapuh to the level of parochial disputes²²⁷ (whether by the author of the HA or his source, which remains unknown) and taking into account that Syunik belonged to Albania and was more associated with it – all this suggests that the structure set forth in the legend was not unknown to our author, and this phenomenon was typical for Albania as well. This is supported by other information contained in the HA and Armenian sources, which will be described below.

Let's first consider the text about Andok and try to analyze it. “History of the Aghuans” reports that Persian king Sapuh wanted to know ‘which peoples and languages have *bardz* (“cushion” meaning a “place near the throne”)²²⁸ and *pativ* (“honor”)²²⁹. He gave a tremendous feast for all the nobles of the nine *azat* clans (patronymies) of the Persian naxarars and honored each of them according to the *gah* (rank) in the nobility hierarchy (*yst gahu nahapativ*)²³⁰ by goblet and vine-slip.²³¹ The Mobad of Mobads [“mobedan-mobed”] was greatly honored at the royal table. After consulting with his nobles, the king said: “I know well the correct order of precedence (*znakhadrutyun*)²³² of Persians and native Pahlavis – the Parthians and *azats*. But as to the *azat* patronimies (*azatatohmn*) of Armenia and their order of precedence (*nahapatutyun*)²³³, I have been unable to learn anything either from my royal ancestors or from books. Now you lords of Armenia have two options to choose from. Either you show me an ancient book that indicates the degree and rank (*zastijan ev zpativ*)²³⁴ of each patronymy (*tantz*) – in which case you shall receive from us great honor. Or, if you cannot bring (such a document) to the attention of our Aryan people, we shall give your highly placed cushions (*znahanist bardzs*), *pativ* and *tun*, land, water, and all your possessions to Aryan *azats*.²³⁵ The *ishkhans* of Armenia brought at once the coveted History of Agathangelos to the king. Finding

the figure of seventeen cushions in this book, the king began to rearrange the seats of everyone at the royal table accordingly. Now it came about that Andok, the Syunik *ter*, received the fourteenth cushion (“bardz”). Because of this he haughtily declined to eat.²³⁶

The text makes it clear that “bardz” and “gah” refer to a rank, a category.

The above passage shows that each *azat* patronymy had its own *gah*, *bardz*, *pativ*, possession (*tun*), land, water, and property. The legal title of all of the above was secured, as can be seen from the cited passage, by the “rank and honor” (*gah-bardz* and *pativ*) of each *azat* patronymy, which depended on the hierarchal place of the patronymy in the Chart of Ranks – “gahnamak”. The “rank and honor” of an *azat* patronymy was reflected in the place occupied by the head of this patronymy at the king's table. Ukhtanes reports that the Armenian king endowed each *naxarardom* with ‘*bardz* and *pativ*, and a cushion, and power, in accordance with their dignity’.²³⁷

N.Adonts, after studying the Chart of Ranks *gahnamak* and the Military Charter *zoranamak*²³⁸ of the Armenian nobility, pointed out that ‘*gahnamak* is based on the military power: *naxarardoms* are ranked downward, in accordance with the amount of the cavalry, which each of them had’.²³⁹

S.T.Yeremian shares this opinion.²⁴⁰ And the military power of each *naxarardom* was determined, obviously, by the number of subjects and the area of the *naxarar's* land. Consequently, the “rank and honor” of each *azat* patronymy was determined by the *naxarardom's* economic might, political situation, and the amount of troops it supplied. It is quite natural that there could not be perfect *de facto* and *de jure* equality between *azat* patronymies; they must have been ranked within the hierarchy. Thus, the most powerful among the *naxarardoms* was Syunik. Syunik was a natural fortress on a vast territory with a large population. The Syunik cavalry was the largest, it reached 19,400 people. That is why the *ter* of Syunik was ranked first among other *naxarars*.²⁴¹ And it becomes clear from the above passage why Syunik *ter* Andok was disappointed when he was given the 14th *gah* in the *naxarar* hierarchy.

Therefore, the Chart of Ranks established the order of precedence in the *naxarar* hierarchy, determined the place and position of each *azat* patronymy in the socio-political life of the country.

The passage we are analyzing testifies to the existence of the institution of ranks in Iran and the lands subject to it, in particular in Albania.

The issue of ranking, one of the important issues of the socio-economic system of ancient Albania, has not been studied in the scientific literature.²⁴²

The above passage clarifies some sketchy data about Albania, contained in the HA and in Armenian sources, and reveal a similar picture in Albania: the Albanian nobility, like the Armenian elite, had possessions, land, water, and, most importantly, a rank – *gah*, *bardz*, and *pativ*. It seems that the situation reflected in the legend of Andok applied not only to Syunik, but equally to Iberia and the rest of Albania.

Indeed, the passage proves that the rank system (order of precedence) that existed at the court of the Sassanian kings was obligatory not only for the Persian nobility, but also for the nobility of other peoples subject to Persia. For the passage narrates that Persian king Sapuh wanted to know *which peoples and languages* had *bardz* and *pativ*. Obviously, the ‘peoples and languages’ dominated by Persia included not only Armenians, but also

Iberians and Albanians, who also might have had lists of ranks of their own. Our assumption that the Albanian nobility had an order of precedence is confirmed, in addition to the data on Syunik, by other data on Albania from Ghazar Parpetsi and Movses Kaghanatvatsi.

Ghazar Parpetsi reports that the nobility (*azatorear*) of three countries – Armenia, Iberia and Albania – arrived at the Persian court, listened to the words of honor, promises, and mortal threats from the king, and then Vardan Mamikonian made a speech in response. ‘There are many members of the nobility (*azatorear*) of these three lands (Armenia, Iberia and Albania) who are my seniors in *gah* and in age; and there are many who are lower than I’²⁴³ i.e. many of the *azats* who were present were older or younger than Vardan Mamikonian in rank and age. The passage makes it clear that the Albanian *azats* also had a rank, therefore, there was an order of precedence in Albania. This is also confirmed by fragments from the HA about the senior (*avag*) *naxarars* in Albania: ‘He (Varaz-Trdat) sent the senior *ishkhans* of the *naxarars* for him as quickly as possible’.²⁴⁴ Let's consider the significance of the *avags* for the rank system. Data provided by Ghazar Parpetsi and Movses Kaghanatvatsi allow us to conclude that Albanian, as well as Armenian *naxarars* were divided into two categories – senior (“*avag*”) and junior (“*krtser*”). It should be noted that the HA does not expressly mention “*krtser*”, but the existence of “*avags*”, i.e. seniors, naturally implies the existence of juniors – “*krtser*”.

Armenian sources, such as Faustus of Byzantium, Ghazar Parpetsi, Movses Khorenatsi, and Elishe, classify *naxarars* into senior and junior. However, researchers have no consensus on what is the criterion for elevating a *naxarar* to the rank of *avag* or *krtser*.

For the first time this issue was investigated by H.Indzhidzhian, according to whom ‘the senior *naxarars* were those who were superior in their position and in the governed area’.²⁴⁵

B.Kostanyants and N.Emin tried to give a different interpretation. In their opinion, “*avag naxarar*” descended from ancient royal and noble families or from the ancient *paterfamilias*, while “*krtser naxarars*” were those whose ancestors were common people and received the *naxarar* title from kings for outstanding service or for loyalty.²⁴⁶

I.Javakhov, based on the interpretation of Vardan Mamikonian's speech (cited above from Ghazar Parpetsi), believes that *naxarars*' seniority was determined by their *gah* and age and, in addition, he interprets *gah* as region.²⁴⁷ Y.A.Manandian agrees with the opinion of I.Javakhov subject to the caveat that he understands *gah* as rank.²⁴⁸ N.Adonts, however, believed that *naxarars* were divided into the junior and the senior according to their power.²⁴⁹ S.Hakobyan considers the opinion of all the listed researchers to be correct.²⁵⁰

As follows from the speech of Vardan Mamikonian, cited by Ghazar Parpetsi, and from Movses Khorenatsi, the legal criterion of seniority is *gah*, i.e. rank. That is, Movses Khorenatsi reports that after the death of *aspet Sahak Bagratuni*, *Catholicos Sahak*, wishing that his son-in-law *Amazasp* be appointed in his place, went to the Persian king and also asked him for mercy to the disgraced princes *Kamsarakantz* and *Amatuni*.

The king ‘spared life of those who remained (*Kamsarakantz* and *Amatuni*) and ordered to return the possessions of both princes, confiscated to the treasury, but *not to approve on the gah of the fathers* and to put them below many *naxarars*, to rank them as

juniors; the family (patronymy) of Amazasp, i.e. the Mamikonids' clan, however, to be raised to the *fifth gah* among the Armenian *naxarars* and enlist in my divan'.²⁵¹

This passage makes it clear that, firstly, the transfer to the category of seniors or juniors did not apply to an individual *naxarar*, but to an entire *naxarar* patronymy ('...the family of Amazasp, however... to be raised to the fifth *gah*...'). And, secondly, it is absolutely indisputable that "gah" is interpreted as a hierarchical place, a rank, which indicates the level of seniority.

And the *gah*, i.e. the position of a *naxarar* patronymy in the *naxarar* hierarchy, as noted, was determined by the economic, political state, the military power of that *naxarar* patronymy. Consequently, the division of *naxarars* into the senior (*avag*) and junior (*krtser*) was not based on the gentrice,²⁵² on age,²⁵³ but, as N.Adonts correctly noted, the economic and political situation and the hierarchical place corresponding to this situation.²⁵⁴ This conclusion refers to the early Middle Ages. Perhaps, in the period preceding the one under study, the division into *avag* and *krtser* was based on gentrice, personal merits.

The personal merits of the *naxarars* were obviously taken into account in the presence of a centralized king power. As we can see from the passage from Movses Khorenatsi, the entire patronymy was transferred to the category of seniors (*avag*) or juniors (*krtser*), so the titles *avag* and *krtser* appear to be associated with the patronymy and thus refer to any member of the patronymy, whether *tanuter* (*nahapet*) or *sepukh*,²⁵⁵ indicating whether they are from a senior or junior *azat* patronymy.

I.Javakhov and Y.A.Manandian believe that the title "avag *sepukh*" was given either for the prominence of the *naxarar* family or for the age.²⁵⁶ N.Adonts believed that *avag sopukh* was the eldest *sepukh* in a *naxarar* house, who, after the death of the *tanuter*, inherited his *ishkhandom*.²⁵⁷ There is no direct data to shed light on this issue. Our assumption is based on the fact that the transfer to the category of junior or senior applied to the entire patronymy.

So, *avag naxarars* were those whose patronymies, in accordance with the supplied army, were ranked first. S.T.Yeremian believes that senior *naxarars* were divided into *bevravors* who had more than 10 thousand horsemen and *azaravors* with more than a thousand horsemen.²⁵⁸

I.Javakhov's claim that there was no hierarchical difference between the senior and junior *naxarars* appears to be incorrect.²⁵⁹

In the light of the above, it becomes quite obvious that the *gah* of the Syunik *ter* and the *gahs* of the Albanian nobility, mentioned by Ghazar Parpetsi, and Movses Kaghankatvatsi's "avag *ishkhans* of the *naxarars*" testify to the existence in Albania, during the period under study, of a precedence system, a *naxarar* hierarchy, in which each patronymy had a *gah* corresponding to its economic position and socio-political role in the country. In Albania, as well as in Armenia, the *naxarar* estate had its own hierarchy and fell into two categories. The *naxarars* of the first category were called elders (*avags*) and were vassals of the king. And the second rank *naxarars*, the junior ones – *krtser*s, were apparently the vassals of the *avag naxarars*.

b) Vassalry

Ters and *nahapets*, as legal persons of a patronymy, were responsible for the service of their patronymy. The relationship between the king and the *naxarars* was maintained through the service of the latter. The vassal service carried out by the *naxarars* to the king (the local one and later to the Sassanids) was known as *tzarayutyun* or *gordz akalutyun* in Armenia and Albania, and the *naxarars* themselves, the king's vassals, were referred to as the *tzarais* and “arkuni gordzakal”. “Tzarai” – a servant and “tzaray-utyun” – service, as certain terms of the *naxarar* structure, can be compared to Russian “sluga” (“servant”) and vassus, servus, servitium of feudal Europe and, which is more, fully corresponded to these words in their meaning.²⁶⁰ And *gordz*, *gordz akalutyun* referred to a high or low position of a *naxarar*.²⁶¹ The *naxarars* in office were called “arkuni gordzakal” – “king's servants”. According to N.Adonts, “gordz” and “gordzakal” corresponded to Western European terms “office” and “officier”.²⁶² According to Ghazar Parpetsi, the Armenian, Albanian and Iberian *naxarars* were considered servants (“tzaraik”) of Persian king Yazdegerd II.²⁶³

The HA provides interesting data on vassal service. Specifically, it says that when the Arabs marched against the king of the Persians, ‘then all those who were subject to the Persian kingdom – generals, *ishkhans*, *ters* and indigenous *azats* (*bnashkharkhik azatk*) of various regions – massed together to march against the foreign enemy’.²⁶⁴ Further, the author of the HA reports that the great *ishkhan* of Albania Varaz-Grigor sends the Albanian army under the leadership of his younger (second) son Javanshir.²⁶⁵ Further, it is narrated that the Persian king appointed Javanshir a *sparapet* – the commander-in-chief of the Albanian army, and for the valor shown in the Persian-Arab war, the Persian king bestowed on Javanshir the insignia of a general: a banner, a spear, a diadem, a shield, bracelets, and ‘ordered him to be given villages as his vassals and rivers full of fish’.²⁶⁶

It should be noted that Javanshir was at that time one of the Gardman *naxarars*.

This passage testifies twice to vassal service: 1) the *azats* of Albania, like the *azats* of Armenia,²⁶⁷ as vassals of the Persian king, were obliged to supply troops during the wars waged by the Sassanid kings. Javanshir headed the troops of the Albanian *naxarars*; 2) this passage reflects the vassal service of Javanshir himself. In fact, he received these listed awards for loyal service to the king.

Although the HA does not directly clarify whether the Albanian *naxarars*' vassal service was based on the feud or on the estate, some indirect data in the HA suggests that the king's (state) service was apparently conducted by the owners of the estates – the seniors, since they also needed the king's patronage in order to protect their domain from foreign encroachment, to keep the peasants in leash and to maintain their *gahs* (ranks) in the hierarchical system. Thus, the HA reports that Vachagan III, the king of Albania, ‘...was peace-loving and master of all the lands in his kingdom which the wicked Peroz had wrested out of his authority and whose native princes (*zbnik ishkhanutyun*), to each of whom he (Vachagan) now restored his authority, he had suppressed’.²⁶⁸ As can be seen from the text, the owners of ancestral estates (native princes) needed the king's protection. The HA narrates that the Albanian king granted lands to the Daylam *ters*' sons.²⁶⁹

Probably, legally, the king retained the supreme ownership of the land, both to inherited and granted. In this case, the right of alienation and granting, illustrated in these passages, characterizes the relation of the suzerain king with his *azat* vassals. The *naxarars'* land ownership privilege apparently obligated them to serve the king by supplying the army, performing palace service according to their social rank, or performing different state administrative responsibilities. Indirect data suggests a vassal relationship in Albania between the king and the *naxarars*, as well as between the *naxarars* themselves. As previously stated, Albania had a system of order of precedence, which was indicative of the feudal hierarchy. In all likelihood, the hierarchy was based on the vassal system: *krtser*, i.e. the junior *naxarars*, were the vassals to *avag*, i.e. the senior *naxarars*. However, it is not possible to verify this with hard evidence.

c) *Administrative apparatus*

The *naxarars* headed the most important departments in the central administration. The primary departmental positions in Albania were *hazarapet*, *hramanatar* and *sparapet*.

The texts of the HA do not dwell upon the real powers of these positions or their scope of subordination. And therefore, in order to characterize Albanian *hazarapet* and *hramanatar*, it is important to understand the real meaning of these terms in Iran and Armenia at that time.

Hazarapet (Middle Persian *hazvrpat*) literally means “leader of thousand”. The *hazarapet* position had existed in Iran since ancient times. This military term was transferred to the civilian realm under the Achaemenids.²⁷⁰ This position was borrowed from the Achaemenids by the Parthian Arsacids and later by the Sassanids. Based on the narrative of Xenophon about the new financial system of Cyrus, N.Adonts describes the *hazarapet* post in Iran as the highest level in the state revenue department, and argues that the tax department once fell under his purview as well. Later, according to N.Adonts, taxation and collection of taxes were separated to a specialized department in charge of the *vaštriošansalar*, i.e. the head of tillers.²⁷¹

N.Adonts makes such an assumption on the basis that at the time of the almighty Sassanian noble Mihr-Nerseh, called by Armenian historians the great *hazarapet* – *mets hazarapet*, and by al-Tabari – *buzurg-framadard*, which means, according to his translation, the “great vizier”, there was a certain Mahgushnasp who was in charge of the taxes and was called *vaštriošansalar*.²⁷² “Perhaps”, concludes N.Adonts, “the former *hazarapet* system split into two sections: one was approximately *buzurg framadard* and the other *vaštriošansalar*, meanwhile in Armenia it remained unchanged”.²⁷³ Thus, according to N.Adonts' analysis, in the fifth century in Persia, the great *hazarapet* – *buzurg framadard* – controlled all the departments with the exception of the tax department.

According to A.Christensen, the great vizier was at first called the *hazarapet* and back under the Achaemenids, the *hazarapet* becomes the first official of the empire, who supported the king in ruling the state. This term was also preserved in the Parthian period up to the Sassanian era. Under the Sassanids, however, the official title of the great vizier was *vuzurg framadard*.²⁷⁴ A.Christensen also notes the existence of the positions of *vvstryf* = *shansalar* and *Ervn-amârkâr*, which were in charge of taxation and finances. But

A.Christensen, unlike N.Adonts, does not associate them with the initial functions of the *hazarapet*.²⁷⁵

According to A.G.Perikhanian, the position of *hazarapet* was preserved in the Sassanid Iran, although it had a different nature and merged with the position of the great vizier (*vazurg framatar*).²⁷⁶ ‘*Hazarapet's* fiscal functions were assigned to the *vastroyošan sardar’y* (head of tillers) and *Erânšahr amârkâr*. In Armenia, however, the position of *hazarapet* remained unchanged right up to the fifth century’.²⁷⁷ A.G.Perikhanian is followed by G.A.Melikishvili who believes that the position of the great vizier (*vazurg framatar*) merged with that of the king's steward, while in Armenia, “*hazarapet*” preserved its original meaning until the fifth century.²⁷⁸

E.Benveniste also believes that “*hazarapet*” (and its Greek calque) was originally a military term. Relying upon an Armenian source (Elishe), he admits the equivalence of “*hazarapet*” and “*hramatar*”²⁷⁹. The identity of the two terms – “*hazarapet*” and “*vuzurg framatar*” – among the Sassanids is supported by the accounts of the fifth-century Armenian historian Elishe.²⁸⁰ However, the Armenian “*hazarapet*” referred to the king's steward, the head of the financial department. He was in charge of the distribution and collection of taxes and state construction. *Hazarapet* was superior to town governors, village elders, through whom he collected state taxes and workforce for serving state duties.²⁸¹ Faustus of Byzantium calls *hazarapet* “the first *gordzakal*”, and the *hazarapet* department (“*hazarapetutyun*”) “general care”, “care for the country” (“*ashkharhates hnamakalutyun*”), whose power extended to the agricultural population.²⁸²

As we can see, a *hazarapet* in Iran held an undoubtedly higher position and had broader powers than a *hazarapet* in Armenia.²⁸³ Probably, Armenian historians realized this difference and therefore the aforementioned Mihr-Nerseh is called not just a *hazarapet*, but the great *hazarapet*, in contrast to the Armenian *hazarapet*.²⁸⁴ In ancient Kartli, the position similar to the Armenian *hazarapet* was the “*ezoysk modzgvári*”, which literally means “the steward of the court”.²⁸⁵

The HA mentions the term “*hazarapet*” twice. The author of the HA reports about the anti-Sassanid uprising in 451: ‘The Albanian *hazarapet* and the holy arch-bishop of the country, however, opposed the command (Yazdegerd II's), and allying themselves to the Armenians, they sent their army in great haste to inform them of the evils which had come to pass...’²⁸⁶

For the second time, the term “*hazarapet*” is mentioned at the Aguen Council in 488. ‘These ordinances were sealed by Mucik, the king's *hramanatar*, Mirharik, *hazarapet*, *azgapets*...’²⁸⁷

The texts show that *hazarapet* is one of the highest government positions. Together with the head of the Albanian church, *hazarapet* represents Albania and among the Albanian nobility, together with the king and the *hramanatar*, seals the Aguen decrees. The texts do not clarify whether *hazarapet's* position was military or civil. The texts only testify to the fact that during the reign of Albanian king Vachagan III, there were only two positions in Albania – *hazarapet* and *hramanatar*.

Regarding the etymology of Armenian “*hramanatar*”, H.Hübschman considers this term to be the same as the Persian *hramanatar* – according to folk etymology, it is derived from “*hraman*” (order) and “*tar*” (leading, the one who gives). However, H.Hübschman

believes, that *hramanatar* is not “giving the order”, but rather “obeying the order”, “executing the order”.²⁸⁸ H.Hübschman provides the following meanings of *hramanatar*: ruler, caretaker, steward – and asserts that *buzurg-hramatar* means “the great vizier”.²⁸⁹

The HA mentions *hramanatar* in the following contexts.

‘...He was peace-loving and master – *hramanatar* – of all the lands in his kingdom which the wicked Peroz had wrested out of his authority and whose native princes, to each of whom Vachagan now restored his authority, he had suppressed’.²⁹⁰ The next fragment: ‘Grigoris ...laid the foundations of a church in the town of Amaras and appointed workmen – *gordzunyais* – and foremen – *hramanatars* – to build a church’.²⁹¹

The term “*hramanatar*” in the last passage is unlikely to have any other meaning. As mentioned above, *hramanatar* is the first to be mentioned among the persons who sealed the Aguen Canons. As we can see, the definition of “*hramanatar*” as “overlord”, “caretaker”, proposed by H.Hübschman, is quite consistent with the data of “History of the Aghuans”. In this regard, we can assume that in Albania in the period under consideration, the term “*hramanatar*” meant both the supreme departmental position and at the same time had other technical meanings.

Albania’s departmental posts – *hramanatar* and *hazarapet* – appear to be more akin to those of Iran than of Armenia and Iberia. We view the following as indirect support of this. According to scholars, in the Sassanian Iran, the great vizier was referred to as “*buzurg framatar*” and “*hazarapet*”. He was in charge of all state affairs. But there was also a dedicated fiscal department managed by *vâstryošan sardâr’y Erânšahr amârkâr*.

In that period, the Armenian state revenue department was administered by the *hazarapet*, however, as is known, there was no highest position of *hramanatar*.²⁹² This is probably due to the absence of the king’s power in Armenia in the fifth century. In Albania, however, there were both the position of *hramanatar* and the position of *hazarapet*. In the existence of these two positions, we are inclined to see an analogy with Iran rather than with Armenia. By analogy with Iran, the *hramanatar* of Albania might have also been a vizier, in charge of all state affairs.

And the existence of an independent department of state revenue in Iran, Armenia, and Iberia implies the existence of a similar department in Albania. Apparently, the *hazarapet* headed this fiscal department, but unlike Iran, in Albania, he was not called *vâstryošan sardâr’y* and *Erânšahr amârkâr*, but retained the name “*hazarapet*”, like in Armenia.²⁹³ However, there may be a different interpretation of “*hazarapet*”. Perhaps, this was the head of a smaller military department (as in ancient times), as opposed to the *hramanatar* who headed a wider civil administration.

The HA mentions the position of *hazarapet* only in the fifth century. The *hazarapet*’s position as that of the king’s steward could possibly be associated with the existence of the king’s power, king’s land ownership, when direct producers who lived on the king’s land paid taxes to the king’s treasury. But it is also possible that as the feudal land tenure system developed and the king’s lands reduced, the economic and fiscal functions of the *hazarapet* gradually passed to the *naxarars*. At the beginning of the sixth century, due to the abolition of the king’s power and, in all likelihood, the disappearance of the king’s land, the position of the *hazarapet* might have been abolished and the fiscal functions were transferred from the *naxarars* directly to the marzbans.

The third key departmental position in Albania was the *sparapet*, the commander-in-chief of all the military forces of Albania.

Sparapet is the Armenian version of ancient Persian spadpat and Pahlavian spahpat, i.e. commander, military leader.²⁹⁴

According to Faustus of Byzantium, in Armenia, the sparapet service contrasts with the hazarapet service. The sparapet institution was defined as service over all principalities (*i verai ishkhanyann bovandak*), over all the army (*amenain zorats zoravarutyann*).²⁹⁵ This is due to the fact that the military forces of Armenia consisted of the king's army proper and the troops supplied by *azat* patronymies, led by their nahapets. The *sparapet* was in charge of the overall command of this army. In this regard, the *sparapet* was at the head of all the princes/ishkhans and their warriors.²⁹⁶

In Albania, the position of *sparapet* was only recorded since the seventh century, when there was no king's power in the country. The HA mentions Javanshir, the great prince of Albania, as a sparapet of Albania of that time.

According to the HA, the Albanian army opposed the Arabs on the side of Persia under the leadership of the young Javanshir, the son of the great Ishkhan of Albania, Varaz-Grigor. Persian king Yazdegerd III appointed him the sparapet of Albania.²⁹⁷ Consequently, Javanshir was at one and the same time the great ishkhans of Albania and the commander-in-chief of all the troops of the country.

Under the successors of Javanshir, Varaz-Trdat and Sheroy, the position of sparapet was held by people other than the great ishkhans of Albania. Thus, the list of participants in the Partaw Council of 705 attests: 'Sheroy, ishkhans of Albania, Juankoy, sparapet of Albania'.²⁹⁸ According to the HA, the role of commander-in-chief in Albania was known by two terms: sparapet and zoravar (commander).

Thus, a letter addressed to the clergy reads: '...Uxtanes, unworthy patriarch, and Juanser, zoravar/general and prince/ishkhans of Albania'.²⁹⁹ Under the great ishkhans of Albania, Varaz-Trdat, the term "zoravar" was recorded to denote the commander-in-chief.³⁰⁰ In regard to Armenia, scholars reveal various nuances in the two words – "sparapet" and "zoravar". Sparapet, in their opinion, was the person endowed with this position by inheritance. Zoravar, however, was a person who directly, in reality commanded the army, be it a sparapet or any other person.³⁰¹ The term "zoravar" appears to have been a full equivalent of the term "sparapet" in Albania in the period under study. This is supported by the fact that in Albania, unlike in Armenia, there is no data indicating the existence of hereditary positions in the country. Noteworthy is the fact that only two positions are recorded in the list of participants in the Aguen Council – hramanatar and hazarapet – but there is no sparapet. It is unlikely that there was no military department at that time. Probably, under the Albanian Arsacids, this role was played by the kings themselves,³⁰² and this position is, therefore, not mentioned in the Aguen Canons, as the presence of the king is recorded. Or else, the military department was headed by the *hazarapet* as opposed to the *hramanatar*, as noted.

If the first assumption turns out to be correct, we can suggest that the position of *sparapet* was not introduced in Albania before the fall of the Albanian king's power, during the time when the Albanian great Mihranid princes were establishing their authority. This position could be held by both the great princes and other people.

We see the difference between the Albanian and the Armenian state machinery in the absence of departmental posts inheritance in Albania, the existence of the *hramanatar* position, and in the fact that the king of Albania was also its supreme judge³⁰³ and lawmaker.³⁰⁴

The Albanian army consisted of the detachments supplied by the *azat* patronymies.³⁰⁵ Each *azat* patronymy, in addition to the army, had its own banner and a signet ring to seal the most important documents of national significance, as well as the *naxarardom* documents.³⁰⁶

d) Clergy

The decisions of the Aguen Council constitute the primary and crucial source on the church structure, its income and land, the Christian clergy, the relationship of the clergy with the secular nobility and the common people.

The analysis of the Aguen canons allows us to draw the following conclusions regarding the Albanian clergy:

1. The ecclesiastical hierarchy³⁰⁷ was structured similarly to the secular feudal hierarchy, with the Albanian archbishop, i.e. the Catholicos,³⁰⁸ at the head, followed by bishops, chorebishops, priests, and deacons. This is evident from the list of the participants³⁰⁹ in the Council and from Canons 1, 2, 20.

2. There were two types of churches in Albania: 1) the main one, in all likelihood, the diocesan, the cathedral church, referred to as the “Vsam church” and the “Bun church”, and 2) the *azat* church. Consequently, each *azat* domain had its own church (canons 17, 18, 20, 21).

3. The Church possessed lands. A land was allotted to the clergy for temporary use in exchange for their services (Canon 6).

4. The clergy collect numerous taxes in kind from the laity (Canons 3, 4, 5, 17, 18, 19).

The analysis of the HA and the Aguen canons shows that in the early centuries of the spread and establishment of Christianity, the Albanian clergy was economically and politically weak. The power of the Albanian Catholicosate was but nominal. The Albanian clergy did not take the initiative in resolving church problems.³¹⁰ The Aguen canons indicate the increasing independence and power of the church and clergy. The clergy was still asserting their rights before the secular nobility, trying to limit their arbitrariness and equalize with them in rights (Canons 17, 20, 21).

The Catholicos did not yet head the legislative branch, as it will be the case later in Albania and which is particularly obvious from the comparison of these canons with the canons of Albanian Catholicos Simeon (the eighth century) and with the activities of Catholicos Viroy. It is no coincidence that Albanian Catholicos Shupkhalishoy is mentioned among the participants in the council and the Aguen Canons are called the canons of Albanian king Vachagan.³¹¹ Such a position of the Albanian clergy is explained, apparently, by the country's consolidated king power.

In Armenia, in the absence of the king's single state power (since 428), the Armenian Church was a central and nation-wide institution that held the legislative and judicial powers, and therefore the initiative to convene Armenian councils belonged to the church

through its Catholicos who headed the church and the legislative council. In Albania, however, in the fifth century, the legislator and the supreme judge was the Albanian king who was at the head of the deliberative and legislative body of secular and religious power – the council-trial (“Zhogov atean”).

The conditions of the canonical rules were developed in the presence of Albanian king Vachagan by the secular nobility, i.e. the azats, and the clergy. But they did not become binding before the approval by the secular nobility and the king.

So, the data of the Aguen Canons testify to the feudalization of the Albanian clergy.

§ 3. Forms of land tenure and land use: “dastakerts” and “hostaks”

The forms of land tenure and land use, like many other issues of the Albanian social system, dealt with in this work, have not received special attention. Due to the paucity of data regarding the forms of land tenure and land use, many judgments were hypothetical. The terms “dastakert”, “hostak”, and “yerd” are, in our opinion, quite relevant to this topic.

The term “dastakert”, which frequently appears in Armenian sources and is a borrowing from Iranian languages (Parthian or Middle Persian), has been the focus of interest for many scholars.³¹² In Middle Persian texts, “dastkart” was usually translated as “domain”, “land”, “estate”. This meaning, in particular, is confirmed by the inscription of Shapur I on the Cube of Zoroaster. The same meaning suits the contexts of many Armenian sources. A.G.Perikhanian, based on the analysis of the “Sassanid Law-Book”, proposed a new interpretation of the term. She translated “dastkart” as “possession/person made or declared competent”.³¹³

The information provided by “History of the Aghuans” about the dastakerts of Albania is as follows: ‘The king [Vachagan III] had a daughter called Xnch'ik, a child whom he loved very much and in whose name he had built a country villa (dastakert)’.³¹⁴ Canon 20 of the Aguen Council reads: ‘Azats, in so far as concerns their *dastakerts*, are not to presume to dismiss or appoint a priest without the bishop's consent...’³¹⁵

As is clear from the above fragments, the owners of the dastakerts were the king and the feudal nobility – the *azats*.

It seems that in the first passage, *dastakert* is used in the meaning of “created, founded” and in the second – “a private household, land ownership, estate”.

According to Canon 20 of the Aguen Council, dastakert was apparently the hereditary tenancy of an azat. S.T.Yeremian translates the fragment under consideration as follows: ‘Azats, **as long as** dastakerts were in their possession...’ – and on this basis concludes that ‘the *azats*, i.e. horsemen, receive dastakerts for temporary possession’, that the dastakerts could be withdrawn by the king.³¹⁶ S.T.Yeremian refers to B.Patkanov, although the latter does not have the wording ‘**as long as** dastakerts were in their possession’, but says: ‘free people (*azats*) in their estates...’ And the Old Armenian text reads: ‘Ark azatk vorchap yureants dastakertk yen’, where “vorchap” does not have a time meaning “as long as” but means “**in so far as**”. And had the term “dastakert” meant temporary possession in this canon, the canon, in our opinion, would have lost its meaning. Secondly, in this canon,

S.T.Yeremian understands “azat” in the narrow sense. Meanwhile, the term “azat” appears to be used in the canons in a broad sense, referring to the entire ruling feudal class, as we noted before.

The azat class included *nahapets*, *ters*, *tanuters*, every representative of an *azat* patronymy. Our hypothesis that dastakert is hereditary land is supported by the data from “*Matikan*” showing that in Iran, dastakert could refer to the king's domain,³¹⁷ dastakert belonged to the whole clan, not to an individual, and it could be given as a gift or bequeathed.³¹⁸

According to “History of the Aghuans” and, in particular, the Aguen Canons, there were two types of land tenure in Albania in the fifth century: inherited and the one provided for service, which were denoted by the terms “dastakert” and “hostak”.³¹⁹

While hostak as a fief is dealt with in detail in the works of Y.A.Manandian,³²⁰ and considered by S.T.Yeremian,³²¹ dastakert as a hereditary land tenure has not been studied.

“Dastakert” and “hostak” did not have a fundamental semantic difference in Hellenistic Iran and their meanings overlapped. According to *Matikan*, dastakert as property – *hostak* – could be sold, given, bequeathed, or pledged.³²²

However, in the fifth century, during feudalization of Armenia and Albania, the terms “dastakert” and “hostak” appear to be differentiated, with each having its own distinct meaning. It can be safely assumed that, much as “hostak” denoted a land/fief granted for service to minor military nobles and clergy,³²³ “dastakert” meant the hereditary possession of the king's family, feudalizing clan nobility, wealthy feudal nobility, as well as donated lands, both bequeathed and purchased.

The Aguen Canon says the following about hostak: ‘Should an abbot or any monk misbehave in the monastery and be discovered, he shall be reviled and expelled and his property confiscated by the church’ (Canon 6).³²⁴

The canon refers to the land granted to the clergy for service. This can be easily seen if we juxtapose Canon 6 of the Aguen Council with Canon 8 of the Dvin Council of 641 and with Article 105 of Mkhitar Gosh, who commented on this canon.³²⁵ According to these sources, clergymen had full ownership of both personal property and church real estate, i.e. land and water. Church officers were given such property in the form of a feud for hereditary tenancy in remuneration for service. The full ownership of the land belonged to the church. Clergymen could lose their lands both for ignorance, illiteracy (as evidenced by Canon 5 of Nerses and Nershapukh decrees)³²⁶ and, apparently, for misdeeds (Canon 6 of the Aguen Council).

Hostak as a legalized technical term defining ecclesiastical land tenure is mentioned for the first time in the fifth century, in the Albanian canons of the Aguen Council.³²⁷ As for Armenia, Y.A.Manandian³²⁸ proved that church feudal land tenure existed de facto in the 4th–5th centuries, and azats who were vassals of large feudal lords (*ters*) are recorded de jure as hostak holders in donation deeds of the 9th–10th centuries.³²⁹

According to researchers, the direct producers of dastakerts of Iran³³⁰ and Armenia³³¹ were slaves. As for the dastakerts of Albania, here again, according to S.T.Yeremian, ‘...the main producers were various categories of the enslaved population. They were slaves, mainly from prisoners of war and pauperized community members.’³³² However, we do not know who the direct producers of dastakerts were in Albania.

Dastakerts with slaves tied to the land existed in Iran and Armenia during the period of disintegration of slavery system and the maturation of feudal relations, when slave exploitation was approaching feudal exploitation in its nature. A slave is assigned a parcel, a significant part of slaves are given partial or complete freedom. According to sources, such a phenomenon did not exist in Albania of the 4th and 5th centuries.

In our opinion, slaves did not play a leading role in Albanian dastakerts. This conclusion can be made due to the paucity of data on slaves in relation to the land, but the availability of data on shinakans – peasants, as the country's primary producers, and data on the country's dominating feudal nobility – the *azats*.

Some researchers believe that the term equivalent to dastakert was “*agarak*”.³³³ Let us first consider the meaning of “*agarak*” for Armenia. The concept of “*agarak*” has evolved from “field” to “settlement” or “estate”. In the fourth century, in Armenia, the term “*agarak*” also meant, along with “estate” with slaves – “*mshaks*” – as its main producers, a rural settlement of freed slaves who were given land plots.³³⁴

This assertion is based on the report of Agathangelos that king Trdat III granted the rural clergy ‘four chimney land plots in villages (“*agarak*”) and seven plots in towns (“*avans*”) for church ministry’, and Y.A.Manandian's statements with reference to Mkhitar Gosh.³³⁵ Gosh says that townspeople should be given more honor than villagers and the latter in their turn should enjoy more honor than the inhabitants of *agaraks*; the same applies to the inhabitants of a fortress in relation to the inhabitants of a settlement (*avan*), as this is the order established by our previous kings.³³⁶

S.T.Yeremian, sharing the opinion of H. Samuelian, writes that ‘if the exploited villages (*gyukh*) were shinakans or serfs, then those exploited in *agaraks* could only be slaves’.³³⁷

Mkhitar Gosh's report does not provide an idea of the social status of *either the inhabitants, or the exploited agaraks, villages (gyukhs, shens), or towns*. Indeed, townspeople included various social strata – nobles, artisans, merchants, peasants, slaves; in the same way, among the inhabitants of villages and *agaraks* could be the nobility, peasants, and slaves. Consequently, slaves could exist in all three types of settlements. This piece of information certainly indicates a difference that is common between a town and a village, between a village and a hamlet, and this difference is probably based on economic factors, but not on social ones.

As for the reference to Agathangelos, we agree with Y.A.Manandian,³³⁸ who asserted that Trdat III granted the clergy of *agaraks* less land than those of *avans*, for the reason that there were fewer clergymen in the *agaraks* than in the *avans*. The fact is that in Agathangelos' Greek text, “*avan*” is translated as “town” and “*agarak*” as “hamlet”,³³⁹ without social interpretation.

Probably, the true meaning of the term “*mshak*” with which S.T.Yeremian refers to the primary producer of *agaraks* in Armenia, requires further research. This is evidenced by different interpretations of the term “*mshak*” by scholars who worked on this topic.³⁴⁰

Therefore, we believe that there is no reason to claim that Armenia's *agaraks* of the fourth century were slave communities or private households with slaves as principal producers. If the opinion of S.T.Yeremian about Armenian slave settlements-*agaraks* is based on the source (albeit interpreted in a particular way), then he substantiates

the assertion about the Albanian agaraks served by slaves' labor by analogy with the Armenian agaraks only.

Based on the canons, S.T.Yeremian claims that in the 5th–6th centuries, in Albania, there were slave settlements which, in contrast to the settlements of free tillers (*shen*), were known as agaraks. Agaraks in Albania were sets of land plots (parcels) with yerdumards living on them and cultivating this land for their lord.³⁴¹

Study of the HA shows that the term “agarak” is used in Albania to refer to a village, hamlet, or field. We do not have any data about the inhabitants and producers of agaraks. Canon 9 reads: ‘A priest who ministers to a large village (“shen”) shall not minister to another (“shen”). Should two small hamlets (“agaraks”) be close to one another, one priest may minister to them. A priest may be a shepherd for as many as he is able to lead’.³⁴² Here, “agarak” refers to either a hamlet, or a village, or a settlement.

Another example: ‘The winged voices’ of the deep were silenced by the fury of the winds, and the thorns of the agarak field ...dwelt upon the waves of the wide ocean’.³⁴³ As we can see, here, again, “agarak” refers to a field.

Yerdumards³⁴⁴ who, according to S.T.Yeremian, were the producers in Albanian agaraks, are not mentioned in the HA. S.T.Yeremian identifies “yerdumards” with “yerd” mentioned in the HA not in relation to agaraks but to the hereditary allotment of Albanian king Vache.

“Yerds”

The significance of the terms “yerd” and “yerdumard” in comprehending Albanian and Armenian socioeconomic history in the fifth century makes it necessary to dwell on their interpretation.

The question of yerds, and yerdumards, who are related to them, was studied by many historians – N.Adonts, T.Avdalbegian, Y.A.Manandian, S.T.Yeremian, S.S.Markosian, S.Y.Hakobyan³⁴⁵ and others – in terms of the existence of communal land tenure, serfdom, slavery, and enslavement of the shinakan peasants in Armenia and Albania.

Researchers sometimes confuse the two different meanings of the term “yerd” and, accordingly, its derivatives “yerdumard”, “yerd and mard”. The term “yerd” has two meanings: 1) a window, an opening in the roof and 2) a house, “hearth”, a family,³⁴⁶ a household, a family member.³⁴⁷

In our opinion, *yerd* can also refer to an economic entity consisting of a land plot of a certain area, necessary for one family, one house.

Agathangelos reports that in order to provide the church and the clergy with lands, king Trdat ‘ordered (to grant) four hog yerdoi in agaraks but to provide each avan with seven hog yerdoi’.³⁴⁸ Here, “hog” means land and “yerdoi” is the genitive case of “yerd”; therefore, the whole expression literally means “the land of yerd”, “the land of the house”, i.e. “chimney (hearth) land”, “land allotted to the house”.

In this context, “four hog yerdoi” means “four chimney land plots”, “seven hog yerdoi” – “seven chimney land plots”.

As noted by Y.A.Manandian, S.T.Yeremian and other authors, “hog yerdoi” was a land plot of a certain area, i.e. land unit.³⁴⁹ The land was allotted according to the number of families (hearths or chimneys).

The number of “hog yerdoi” given to the churches was determined by the number of clergymen. Faustus of Byzantium writes about these lands granted to churches by Trdat: ‘...king Pap reduced the church's land that... (once) was granted by king Trdat, ...for out of seven parcels he took away five in favor of the treasury and left only two parcels. And according to the number of parcels, he left two servers in the village – one priest and one deacon’.³⁵⁰ Although the text refers to the same land plots, in one source they are referred to as “seven hog yerdoi” and in the other – as “seven hog”. The expressions “seven hog” (“seven lands”), “two hog” (“two lands”) do not yet speak about the amount of allotted land, but the comparing of the two texts makes it quite obvious that “hog” means “hog yerdoi”, i.e. “chimney land”. It is safe to believe that a land unit was denoted both by the word combination “hog yerdoi” and by separate words “hog” and “yerd”. The original form was “hog yerdoi”.

The passage from Faustus of Byzantium shows the use of “hog” in the meaning of “hog yerdoi”. “Yerd” is used in the same meaning in the ninth canon of the Dvin Council of 641 and in a passage about Albanian king Vache. ‘But he (Vache) agreed to take only the *sepukh* (personal) allotment (*bazhin*), which he inherited from his father – 1,000 yerds (and) took (this allotment), settled *on it* (*nstav and nma*) with hermits’.³⁵¹

Y.A.Manandian, C. Dowsett, S.T.Yeremian, K.V.Trever, Z.M.Bunyatov³⁵² interpret “yerds” in this passage as “families”. S.T.Yeremian considers yerds to be slaves, Y.A.Manandian, K.V.Trever and Z.M. Bunyatov view them as serfs.

In our opinion, Vache's yerds do not mean “families”, but chimney lands, for Vache ‘inherited 1,000 yerds and *settled on it*.’ It would obviously be difficult to settle on the yerds, were they families.

Canon 9 of the Dvin Council reads: ‘When azats divide their yerds and mards (people), many are too greedy, trying to enslave and impose taxes (*i dzarayutyun arkanel*)³⁵³ on the clergy, which is not appropriate in Christianity, for the Blessed Gregory and Saint Trdat equated the youths of the holy church to the azat estate and recognized the land and water of the holy church to be free. It was (also) declared under the Persians that the possessions of the clergy, (who) are enlisted in the divan, not to be mixed with those of the peasantry,³⁵⁴ but they must only pay has to the royal treasury.³⁵⁵ So, if anyone is greedy enough to impose tax (*i vijak dzarayutyun arkzen*)³⁵⁶ on free church youths, may they be deprived of the blessing of the holy Illuminator and our council’.³⁵⁷

Obviously, in this case, “yerds” cannot refer to “families” as that would be a tautology. Not only the first lines, but the entire content of the canon reveals that the yerds were land allotments. The phrase from the canon ‘...tax is imposed on church clergy’ means that the lands of the clergy were subject to tax. This follows from the warning to the azats not to impose tax on the church clergy, since the clergy is equated to the azats, *their lands are exempt from taxation and they only pay “has” to the state treasury, which is, apparently, the capitation tax*.

So, when “dividing” yerds and mards, azats tax the land (hog yerdoi) of the clergy. Consequently, a similar phenomenon might have occurred in the process of dividing yerds

and mards, i.e. there must have existed a land tax. So, one of the terms “yerds” and “mards” must refer to land. “Mards” refers to people, apparently, producers, therefore “yerds” – lands – meant chimney allotments. And now the canon takes on the following meaning: when azats divide their chimney lands and people, they levy a tax on the mards' land allotments (yerds), while attempting to levy a tax on the clergy's lands.

According to researchers, this canon describes yerds and mards as inheritable.³⁵⁸ N.Adonts believes that the canon narrates about the division of yerds and mards between sepuh heirs.³⁵⁹

S.Markosian's assumption that the division of yerds and mards may represent the division of the land rent appears to be valid.³⁶⁰ It is supported by the analysis of the canon, which showed that the azats impose land taxes on the mards. This appears to happen when escheated property is divided or when the owner changes. But the reasons and circumstances associated with the division of yerds and mards still remain unclear. Mards (people) were apparently provided with land plots, i.e. yerds.

Yerd appears in Armenian historical sources both as an independent term and in combinations such as “yerd i mard”, “yerdumard”. The comprehensive Mechitarists' dictionary defines “yerdumard” as “house and its inhabitant”, “house and family” (although “mard” means a person, a man), S.T.Yeremian etymologizes it as “smoke (hearth) people”,³⁶¹ and R.Acharyan³⁶² as “dweller, household member”. “U” in “yerd-u-mard” is not a conjunction (conjunction ‘u’ is not typical for Grabar), but the phoneme resulting from the loss of stress by diphthong ‘oy’ in the compound word “yerdoymard” – “yerdumard”. If “yerd” is interpreted as a certain chimney land plot, “yerdumard” can mean “the man of the land”, “the man related to the land”. “Yerd” and “yerdumard” can also be interpreted similarly to “tun” and “tanuter” as “tun” is identical to “yerd” and means “home”, “family”. Much as “tun” is a technical term for a certain land concept, a territorial unit of the feudal nobility,³⁶³ “yerd” is a specific land unit of mard, i.e. the producer. Similarly to the way the term “tanuter” (meaning “lord of a tun”, “lord of a feudal territorial unit”) is etymologized (“tan” and “ter”, where “tan” is the genitive and dative cases of “tun” and “ter” means “lord”), “yerdumard” can be interpreted as “yerdoi” and “mard”, where “yerdoi” is the genitive and dative cases of “yerd” and “mard” is a person, a man. Consequently, the general meaning of this term is “the man of yerd”, i.e. “the man of the land”, “the person of yerd”. It seems to us that initially “yerd” and “mard” were independent terms that later merged into a compound word to denote a certain social stratum dependent in one way or another on the azats. But the degree of yerdumards enslavement and the way the azats exploited them are not known and therefore their social nature still has to be revealed. According to S.T.Yeremian, they were slaves who kept households of their own and were tied to the land.³⁶⁴

The proposed interpretation allows for the conclusion that the concepts “yerd” and “yerdumard” are not identical. “Yerd” as an abbreviation of “hog yerdoi” can also mean a certain land allotment, a land unit. Yerdumard both etymologically and semantically means a person related to the land, tied to the land. According to documented sources, Albania had no category of producers known as yerdumards. The HA only mentions yerds to denote a chimney land plot. It seems to us that “yerd”, like “hog yerdoi”, was a land parcel allotted to a member of a peasant commune.

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- Адонц Н.** Исторические исследования, с.182.
33. "История агван", кн. I, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.97; пер. К.Патканова, с.65; Dowsett, p.50 – "...and the bishops and priests, chorepiscops, nobles and commoners".
34. "История агван", кн. II, гл.40 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.274; пер. К.Патканова, с.194; Dowsett, p.156.
35. "История агван", кн. II, гл.14 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.180; пер. К.Патканова, с.124; Dowsett, p.98 – "...and he is not the common people, but is a noble...".
36. "История агван", кн. II, гл.2 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.130; пер. К.Патканова, с.88; Dowsett, p.68 – "...nobles and peasants".
37. "История агван", кн. I, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.99; пер. К.Патканова, с.66 – "Each noble or villager"; Dowsett, p.51.
38. "Армянский судебник" Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.Паповяна, с.233, примеч.39.
39. Tuvanik is Pahlavi. "Tuvanik" means powerful, wealthy, rich: К.Патканов (p.66) translates *tuvanik* as "annually" instead of "wealthy".
40. The Armenian word "griv" is a Parthian borrowing that first meant a dry capacity measure, then a measure of weight and a measure of sowing of a field plot and, finally, a measure of area (according to V.A.Livshits).
41. "История агван" /изд. Н.Эмина, с.99: "16 tases of wine"; изд. К.Шахназаряна, "16 tases, i.e. "cups". К. Dashian referenced by N. Adonts (Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.486) uses the term "parch" – "jug" and "liquid measure"; К.Патканов, с.66: "16 jugs"; Dowsett, p.51.
42. **Сукиасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.120-121.
- N. Adonts (Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.479-480) noted that "shinakan" is used alternately with the church term "*zhoghovurd*". This is also evident from the letter of Armenian Catholicos Abraham to Mkhitar, the Albanian bishop of Amaras. The letter reads: "To ter Mkhitar, the Bishop of Amaras, and to the bishops ... and azats and other commoners of Aghuania (ail and zhoghovrdakanats)...":
- "История агван", кн. II, гл.49 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.314; пер. К.Патканова, с.222; Dowsett, p.178 – "And to the nobles and others of the Albanian people".
43. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.309.
44. The division of the taxable estate into three groups is mentioned in the works of S.T.Yeremian. (Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.309);
- Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.185; **Бунятов З.М.**, 1965, с.63.
45. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.307.
46. *Ibid.*, p.310.
47. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении // ВДИ, 1950, №1, с.18, примеч.1.
48. "История агван", кн. I, гл.26. See below. About the Vsam and "bun" churches.
49. **Периханян А.Г.** К вопросу о рабовладении и землевладении в Иране парфянского времени // ВДИ, 1952, №4, с.16-17. This opinion is shared by N.V.Pigulevskaia (Зарождение феодализма в Иране. М., 1956, с.12-14).
50. See below the contents of Canon 5.
51. As previously stated, landless peasants were free from paying taxes under Canon 4, while according to Canon 5, an *anashkharhik* was obliged to pay a tax.
52. К.Патканов (p.69) and Dowsett (p.53) translate "anashkharhik" as a "foreigner":
- Периханян А.Г.** К вопросу о рабовладении и землевладении в Иране парфянского времени // ВДИ, 1952, №4, с.16, примеч.1.

53. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 2 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 127; пер. К.Патканова, с. 85; Dowsett, p. 66 – “...and his wife and children shall be exiled”.
54. История Армении Фавстоса Бузанда, с. 148.
55. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 309.
56. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 60; пер. К.Патканова, с. 37; Dowsett, p. 29.
57. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 25 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 216; пер. К.Патканова, с. 152; Dowsett, p. 122.
58. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с. 25.
59. Ibid., p. 18.
60. Ibid., p. 21.
61. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с. 21.
- Еремян С.Т.** Основные черты общественного строя Армении в эллинистическую эпоху // ИАН Арм.ССР, 1948, №11, с. 35–36, 54.
62. According to S.T.Yeremian, the collapsing rural community was also a source of slavery: Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 309.
63. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 307.
64. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 101; пер. К.Патканова, с. 68; Dowsett, с. 52 – “...the elder of the village...”.
65. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 307.
66. This issue is partly addressed in the following works: **Ямпольский З.И.** О зарождении феодализма в Азербайджане; **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 307–308; **Тревер К.В.** Очерки по истории и культуре Кавказской Албании, с. 185, 296; **Бунятова З.М.** Азербайджан в VII–IX вв., с. 63–64; **Мамедова Т.** О социально-политическом составе и отношениях собственности в Азербайджане, с. 105.
67. Новый словарь армянского языка, 1837 (*Hereinafter*: НСАЯ).
68. Словарь Мхитаристов. Венеция, 1749.
69. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с. 481–484.
70. **Манандян Я.А.** Государственные налоги Армении в период марзбанства. Ереван, 1926, с. 29–31 (in Armenian). According to S.Malkhasyants, “has” in ancient Armenia meant a direct capitation tax, but it could also mean a land tax: **Толковый словарь армянского языка** / Сост. Ст.Малхасянц. Ереван, 1944, ч. II (in Arm.).
71. **Авдалбегян Т.** О налогах “Гас, сак, баж” // Известия Института наук и искусства Арм.ССР, 1926, с. 49–50 (in Arm.).
72. Ibid. p. 49–50.
73. Канонагирк, с. 55.
74. **Акулисский Захарий.** Дневник. Ереван, 1939, с. 74; **Ереванци Симеон.** Джембр, с. 11.
75. **Богданов А.** Жизнь Артемия Араратского, уроженца селения Вагаршапата близ горы Арарата, СПб., 1813, ч. I, с. 174–175.
76. The Bible. Exodus, XXX, 12–15.
77. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 102; пер. К.Патканова, с. 68; Dowsett, p. 53. N.Adonts believes the “Vsam” and the “bun” to be one and the same church (Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с. 402); K. Patkanov translates the “Vsam church” as the “high church” and the “bun church” as the “principal church” (Патканов, кн. I, гл. 26, с. 69, 310); Z.I.Yampolsky translates the “Vsam church” as the “official temple” (Азербайджан в период зарождения феодализма, с. 53); Z.M.Bunyatov as the “main parish” (Азербайджан в VII–IX вв., с. 67). The “Vsam church” appears to be a diocese pro-cathedral.
78. “История агван” /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 98; Dowsett, p. 51 – “...for his soul” and in the note thereto – “whatever is part of or for his, soul”, i.e. “soul-scot”.
79. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 98; Dowsett, p. 51; пер. К.Патканова, с. 66.
80. **Авдалбегян Т.** О налогах “Гас, сак, баж”, с. 49.
81. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.Паповяна, с. 233, примеч. 40.
82. **Дандамаев М.А.** Храмовая десятина в поздней Вавилонии // ВДИ, 1965, №2, с. 14.
83. The Bible. Leviticus, XXVII, 30, 32; The Book of Deuteronomy XXVI 12; The Book of Numbers XVIII, 21.

84. **Фавстос Бузандаци**, кн.V, гл.31; see the canons of Sahak the Parthian about tasanord (Канонагирк, с.53-54).
85. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.102; пер. К.Патканова, с.69: “And the nobles who pay tithes are to give half to the principal church and half to their own church”, Dowsett, p.53.
86. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.11 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.28; пер. К.Патканова, с.15; Dowsett, p.12.
87. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.482-483.
88. Толковый словарь армянского языка / Сост. Ст.Малхасянц, ч.II.
89. **Авдалбегян Т.** О налогах “Гас, сак, баж”, с.89.
90. **Манандян Я.А.** Материалы по истории экономической жизни древней Армении // ЕГУ Арм.ССР, Ереван, 1928, №4, с.53 (in Arm.).
91. Ibid.
92. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша, с.246, примеч. 152. According to certain scholars, *ptug* was offered to the monastery in Armenia: История Армении Фавстоса Бузанда, с.221, коммент.87). In Albania, according to the fourth Aguen Canon, *ptug* was given to the church.
93. The Bible. Exodus, XXII, 29.
94. The Bible. Exodus, XXIII, 19.
95. The Bible. The Book of Deuteronomy, XVIII, 3-5.
96. Канонагирк, с.23; “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша / Изд. А.Паповяна, ч.1, с.100, ст.99; с.234, примеч.40.
97. “Patarag” means an offering, sacrifice, Mass, liturgy. K. Patkanov (p.66) translates it as “Mass”; Dowsett, p.51 – “sacrifice”; Z.M.Bunyatov as “offering” (Азербайджан в VII–IX вв., с.64). We assume “patarag” means the Mass in this context, as it alludes to celebration of a divine service ordered by family in memory of the deceased.
98. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.99; пер. К.Патканова, с.66-67; Dowsett, p.51.
99. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.102; пер. К.Патканова, с.69 – *hoghetsatur is translated as* “for the repose of the soul”; Dowsett, p.3. – “soul scot”.
100. **Мхитар Гош**, ч.1, ст.101.
101. Agape (Greek) means funeral repast.
102. Канонагирк; **Мхитар Гош**, ч.1, ст.101.
103. Судебник Смбата Спарапета (Гундстабля), с.30.
104. **Орбелян Степаннос.** История области Сисакан, 1911, с.201, 219.
105. **Адонц И.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.481-485;
- Манандян Я.А.** Государственные налоги Армении в период марзбанства, с.12, 29,31.
106. **Perikhanian A.** Notes sur le lexique iranien et armenien, REA, 1965, v.V, p.9-30. On etymology of “*azat*” see: Bailey H.W., BSOS VI, 1953; XXIII, 48. Quotation according to V.A.Livshits (Юридические документы и письма, вып.II, М., 1962, с.30);
- Смирнова О.И.** Азаты как социальная категория Согда / Сб. “Ближний и Средний Восток”. М., 1968, с.134.
107. “Армянский судебник” Мхитара Гоша, с.233; примеч.38.
- About the social meaning of the term “*azat*”: **Christensen A.** L’Iran sous les Sassanides, pp.111-113;
- Пигулевская Н.В.** К вопросу о феодальной собственности на землю в Иране // ВЛЮ, М.-Л., 1956, №8, с.82;
- Пигулевская Н.В.** Города Ирана в раннем средневековье. М.-Л., 1956, с. 217;
- Пигулевская Н.В.** Зарождение феодализма в Иране, с.20;
- Лившиц В.А.** Юридические документы и письма;
- Смирнова О.И.** Азаты как социальная категория Согда, с.134-149;
- Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.132-133;
- Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.444, 451-452;
- Манандян Я.А.** Заметки о феоде и феодальном войске Парфии и Аршакидской Армении. Тифлис, 1932, с.7-12;
- Манандян Я.** Феодализм древней Армении, с.90-93;
- Манандян Я.** Краткий обзор истории древней Армении. М.-Л., 1943, с.19 (in Arm.);
- Еремян С.Т.** Армения в период кризиса, 1958.
108. **Perikhanian A.** Notes sure le lexique iranien et armenien, p.13.

109. Ibid., p.14.

110. Ibid., p.4.

111. Ibid., p.13.

112. Еремян С.Т. Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.308.

113. **Бунятов З.М.**, 1965, с.69.

114. Ibid.

115. К. Patkanov (p.68) translates “azat ark” and “azat mardik” as “free people” and “azats” as the “nobles”; Dowsett (p.53) translates *azats*, *azat mardik*, and *azat ark* as “nobles”; Z.М. Bunyatov (Азербайджан в VII–IX вв., с.67) translates “azat ark” and “azat mardik” as “free people”. Azats are also mentioned in the subsequent chapters of “History of the Aghuans” in the terms “azat mardik” and “azat ark”, for example, in Book II, Chapter 49 (изд. Н.Эмина, с.314; кн. II, гл. I).

116. See §1 of this chapter.

117. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.98; пер. К. Патканова, с.66: Canons 2 and 3 are cited together and “tagavorazn” is rendered as “of royalty”; Dowsett, p.51 – “a member of the royal family...”.

118. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.103; пер. К. Патканова, с.69 – “...bishops... and nobles”; Dowsett, p.54 – “...by the bishops and priests and nobles...”.

119. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.98; пер. К. Патканова, с.66 – “...the nobility and clan-heads (nahapetk) of Artsakh...”; Dowsett, p.51 – “...and the nobles and heads of clans azgapetk of Arsax...”.

120. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.103; пер. К. Патканова, с.69 – “azgapetk Marut... Vardan the Brave, lord of Gardman... Pirog, patriarch (nahapet) all the nobles of Aghuania”. Dowsett, p.54 – “...the heads of clans (azgapetk... Vardan the Brave, Lord of Gardman, ...P’iwrog, patriarch (nahapet) and the nobles of Armenia”.

121. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 20 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.379; пер. К. Патканова, с.271 – “...the Christian princes of Armenia and Aghuania... Shapuh Artsruni and another excellent man from among the Armenian nobles...”; Dowsett, p.219 – “Sapuh Arcruni and another excellent man from among the Armenian nobles preferred a martyr’s death to a worthless life...”.

122. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 8 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.343-344; изд. К. Шахназаряна, с.21; пер. К. Патканова, с.243; Dowsett, p.194 – “and all the freemen (azatk) of this country...”.

123. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.348-349; изд. К. Шахназаряна, с.26-27; пер. К. Патканова, с.247; Dowsett, p.197 – translates “naхарars” mainly as “nobles”, but sometimes, as in this case, he preserves the term “naхарars”.

124. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 40 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.274; изд. К. Шахназаряна, с.373; пер. К. Патканова, с.194; Dowsett, p.156 – “... and all the nobles (naхарars) and commoners of the Huns...”.

125. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. I /изд. Н.Эмина, с.119; изд. К. Шахназаряна, с.204; пер. К. Патканова, с.79 – “for all the grandee and ancient families of the lords of Persia”; Dowsett, p.61 – “for all the great and ancient families of the naхарars of Persia...”.

N. Adonts believes that this refers to the seven high-born Sassanian families (Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.273).

126. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. I /изд. Н.Эмина, с.119-120; изд. К. Шахназаряна, с.204-205; пер. К. Патканова, с.80; Dowsett, p.61-62 – “the nobles family of Armenia naхарars of Armenia”; “the princes of greater Armenia”.

127. On *azatazarm*, see “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 35 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.254.

128. This is evidenced by both the analysis of the Aguen Canons and by the following texts: “Sheroy, a great prince of the Aghuans together with his nobles. [These folk], together with a multitude of the clergy convened an assembly and anathematized Nerse’s and all the heretics” (“История агван”, кн. III, гл. 3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.337; пер. К. Патканова, с.238) – “...they took Sheroy, prince of the Aghuans, and the nobles to ...Syria” (“История агван”, кн. III, гл. 16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.367; пер. К. Патканова, с.260). *Azats* apparently refers in this context to all secular nobility.

129. See § 3 of this chapter.

130. **Бдоян В. А.** Кровнородственный “азг” и родственные отношения у армян // Советская этнография, 1952, №1, с.189.

131. **Периханян А.Г.** Агнатические группы в древнем Иране // ВДИ, 1968, №3, с.35.

132. НСАЯ, I–II; Толковый словарь армянского языка / Сост. Ст. Малхасянц, I, IV.

133. Толковый словарь армянского языка / Сост. Ст.Малхасянц, П.

134. I.Javakhov was one of the first to study the meaning of *tun* based on Armenian sources and outlined its following meanings: a group of people related by blood ties; dwelling, house, estate, land, region and, finally, country (Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.84-89). We have analyzed “The History of the Aghvansians” and came to the conclusion that the term “*tun*” in Albania had an equally broad meaning as in Armenia (“История агван”, кн.П, гл.12/ изд. Н.Эмина, с.162; пер. К.Патканова, с.111-112; кн.П, гл.1 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.120-121; пер. К.Патканова, с.81; Dowsett, p.62; кн.П, гл.17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.195; пер. К.Патканова, с.135; Dowsett, p.107; кн.П, гл.3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.131; пер. К.Патканова, с.89; Dowsett, p.68. The Armenian “*tun*” was equivalent to the Georgian “*sakhl*” (Джавахов И. Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.31-32, 50-51).

135. Джавахов И. Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.96.

136. Адонц Н. Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.435.

137. Акопян С. История армянского крестьянства (период раннего феодализма). Ереван, 1957, с.108 (in Armenian).

138. Периханян А.Г. Агнатические группы в древнем Иране, с.35.

139. Faustus of Byzantium mentions in one case the Amatuni *tohm* (III, 14, с.33), in the other – Amatuni *tun* (IV, 4, с.61); the Mamikonean clan is referred to as both *azg* and *tohm* (V, 37, с.201), although in all the cases he speaks about the same kindred group, which is more, a *naхарar* group. Ghazar Parpetsi now refers to the Artsruni *naхарar* clan as Artsruni *tohm*, now Artsruni *azg* (I, 4, с.13; II, 25, с.98; II, 27, с.108; II, 47, с.85; III, 69, с.278), although in other Armenian sources the same kindred group is mentioned as “*tun*”.

140. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.8 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.344; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.21; К.Патканов (с.243) translates “*azg*” as a “tribe”; Dowsett, p.193-194 – “the race”.

141. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.348-349; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.26-27: he uses “*partsis*” instead of “*zarmits*”; К.Патканов (p.127), again, translates it as “the tribe”; while Dowsett (p.197) translates it as “the race”.

142. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.34 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.254; пер. К.Патканова, с.179.

143. Марр Н.Я. Аркаун, монгольское название христиан, с.45.

144. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.36 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.261; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.360; пер. К.Патканова, 184 – “the lords of the clans”; Dowsett, p.149 – “the lords of the [chief] families...”.

145. “История агван”; кн.П, гл.1 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.119-120; Dowsett, p.61-62 – “nobles family”; “house”.

146. Косвен М.О. Семейная община и патронимия. М., 1963;

Карапетян Э. Родственная группа “азг” у армян (вторая половина XIX – начало XX вв.). Ереван, 1966.

147. Периханян А.Г. Агнатические группы в древнем Иране, с.29-53;

Perikhanian A. Notes sur le lexique iranien et armenien, 1965.

148. Косвен М.О. Семейная община и патронимия, с.92, 97, 104, 111, 112, 115, 117.

149. Периханян А.Г. Агнатические группы в древнем Иране, с.29.

150. Бдоян В. А. Кровнородственный “азг” и родственные отношения у армян, с.189-192.

151. Карапетян Э. Родственная группа “азг” у армян, с.20-21.

152. Dowsett, p.146-149; Dowsett translates “*tear’k’ tohmits*” as “the tribal chiefs” (p.115).

153. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.243, 183.

154. Еремян С.Т. Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.307.

155. Адонц Н. Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.299.

156. Косвен М.О. Семейная община и патронимия, с.92, 111.

157. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.50 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.318; пер. К.Патканова, с.225; Dowsett, p.181.

158. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.132-133; пер. К.Патканова, с.90; Dowsett, p.69.

159. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.98-100; пер. К.Патканова, с.66; Dowsett, p.51.

160. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.8 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.343-344; Dowsett, p.194.

161. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.369; пер. К.Патканова, с.260; Dowsett, p.208.

162. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.29 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.109; пер. К.Патканова, с.74; Dowsett, p.57 – “*Taguhi* one of the local noblewomen...”.

163. “История агван”, кн.П, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.103; пер. К.Патканова, с.69; Dowsett, p.54.

164. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.19 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.374; пер. К.Патканова, с.266-267; Dowsett, p.214. “History of the Aghuans” (кн.II, гл.17) narrates about the ancient lineage of Er'anshahiks – изд. Н.Эмина, с.196; Dowsett, p.109.
165. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.19 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.204-205; пер. К.Патканова, с.142-143; “from the Aruichan clan”; Dowsett, p.114.
166. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.19 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.375; пер. К.Патканова, с.267; Dowsett, p.214.
167. Ст.Малхасянц (примеч. 116): Истории Армении Мовсэса Хоренаци, с.281;
- Сукнасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.187.
168. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.52 /пер. К.Патканова, с.230; изд. Н.Эмина, с.324.
169. НСАЯ, II; Толковый словарь армянского языка / Сост. Ст.Малхасянц, IV.
170. **Meillet A.** De quelques motes Parthes en Armenien. REA, II, fas. I, Paris, 1922, p.1-3;
- Адонц Н.** Исторические исследования, с.159.
171. НСАЯ, II.
172. **Адонц И.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.463.
173. See below about the term “nahagar”.
174. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.8 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.343; пер. К.Патканова, с.243; Dowsett, p.194 – “abbot of the monastery...”.
175. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина и К.Шахназаряна; пер. К.Патканова, с.66 – “clan-heads (nahapetk') of Artsakh, Bakur, clan-head of Kaghankatuk”; Dowsett, p.51– “(azgapetk) of Arcah, Bakur, head of clan of Kalankatuk”.
176. Ibid.
177. Ibid. /изд. Н.Эмина и К.Шахназаряна; пер. К.Патканова, с.69 – singular of “azgapet”; Dowsett, p.54 – “the heads of clans (azgapetk)”.
178. изд. Н.Эмина и К.Шахназаряна; пер. К.Патканова, “lord of Gardman”; Dowsett – “lord of Gardman”.
179. изд. Н.Эмина и К.Шахназаряна; пер. К.Патканова – “*Пюрок*, старшина”; Dowsett – “P'iwrog, patriarch (nahapet)”.
180. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.307.
181. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.98 и 103.
182. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.307.
183. Ibid.
184. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.35 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.259; пер. К.Патканова, с.183; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.355; Dowsett, p.146 – “the lords of nobles families and all the princes...”. Interestingly, Dowsett appropriately translates the *ters of tohms* as lords of noble clans - families, i.e. he comprehends the term according to the time.
185. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.50 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.318; пер. К.Патканова, с.225 – “lord of Gardman”; Dowsett, p.181 – “lord of Gardman”.
186. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.367; пер. К.Патканова, с.260 – “the lord of Shirak”; Dowsett, p.208 – “the lord of Sirak”.
187. “История агван”, кн.III, гл.1 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.375; пер. К.Патканова, с.267 – “the head of the Syunians”; Dowsett, p.214 – “lord of Swinik”.
188. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с.46-47.
189. Ibid.
190. **Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.106-109.
191. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с. 45-47.
192. Naharardom // tanuterdom, according to N.Adonts, was a territorial and political entity, similar to lordship: **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.458, 463.
193. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.197; кн.II, гл.20 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.207 и гл.21, изд. Н.Эмина, с.208; кн.III, гл.7 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.340; гл.16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.367.
194. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.132.
195. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.18 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.198; пер. К.Патканова, с.137 – “Varaz-Grigor... observed that his second son Juanshir...”; Byzantine emperor Constantine writes a letter to Javanshir: “To you, Lord Juanshir, lord of Gardman and prince of Aghuania...”, although Javanshir's elder brother Varaz-Peroz was

in good health: “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 21 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 208; пер. К.Патканова, с. 145; кн. II, гл. 19, изд. Н.Эмина, с. 205; пер. К.Патканова, с. 143.

196. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с. 465.

197. **Hübschmann H.** Armenische Grammatik, I, p. 200;

Март Н.Я. Этимология двух терминов армянского феодального строя // ЗВОРАО, т. XI, 1898, с. 170-173; **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с. 514;

Meillet A. De quelques mots Parthes en Armenien;

Толковый словарь армянского языка / Сост. Ст. Малхасянц, т. III et al.

198. **Henning W.B.** A New Parthian Inscription. JPAS, 1955, issue 3-4, p. 132-136.

199. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 34 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 257; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с. 353; пер. К.Патканова, с. 182 – “вооруженная чернь собиралась толпами и именитые вельможи”; Dowsett (p. 145), however, puts a full stop after “the mob banded together and armed itself” and starts the next sentence with “naхарars”.

200. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 23 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 87; пер. К.Патканова, с. 58 – “The bishops, priests, lords...”; Dowsett, p. 45 – “the bishops and priests and the nobles and their wives...”.

201. A.G.Perikhanyan views metzametzk as an equivalent to *nahapet*: *azgapet*, i.e. the head of an agnatic group: **Perikhanyan A.G.** Notes sur le lexique iranien et armenien, p. 6.

202. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 3 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 335; пер. К.Патканова, с. 237 – “...with grandees”; Dowsett (p. 90) in both cases translates it as “nobles”.

203. Ibid. /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 336; пер. К.Патканова, с. 238 – “...other nobles”; Dowsett, p. 190.

204. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 42 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 293; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с. 393; пер. К.Патканова, с. 207 – “...with his lords”; Dowsett, p. 166 – “The consultation of the prince with his nobles...”.

205. Ibid., Dowsett – “with all the nobles and naхарars”; К.Патканов – “all the grandees and lords”.

206. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 11 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 26; пер. К.Патканова, с. 13-14; Dowsett, p. 11 – “by his grandes and nobles...”.

207. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 32 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 244; пер. К.Патканова, с. 172 – “lords”; Dowsett, p. 137 – “Albanian nobles”.

208. Ibid., пер. К.Патканова, с. 172 – “the chiefs of Aghuania”; Dowsett, p. 137 – “principal men”.

209. изд. Н.Эмина, с. 244, изд. К.Шахназаряна, с. 339; Dowsett, p. 137 – “the house of the lord of Kolt who was of royal blood...”.

210. Dowsett, p. 137 – “three houses in the province of Arsavasen of Dastaker. Cnsmi, and Mamset...”.

211. К.Патканов, с. 172 – “...in Gis” is omitted; Dowsett, p. 137 – “in Gis in the province of Uti...”.

212. The word *spasatun*, translated literally, defies explanation: К.Патканов translated it as “a court functionary Varazhan who sat at Arazhakan”; Dowsett – “the sacristan Varazan (?) who sat in Arzakan...”.

213. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 37 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 266; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с. 364; пер. К.Патканова, с. 187; “senior lords”; Dowsett, p. 151 – “the senior naхарars”.

214. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 39 /изд. Н.Эмина, с. 269-270; пер. К.Патканова, с. 190 – in the first case – “with his lords”, in the second case – “the princes and the lords”; Dowsett, p. 153-154, in the first case – “naхарars”, in the second one – “the princes and the naхарars”.

215. **Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с. 131.

216. **Адонц Н.** Исторические исследования, с. 159.

As for the socio-political meaning of the term, A.G.Perikhanyan believes that initially “naхарars” referred to the rulers of the regions, appointed by the Armenian king, and later, in the fourth-fifth centuries, as the feudal system was growing stronger, naхарars became large feudal lords, hereditary owners of the same regions (**Периханян А.Г.** Древнеармянские востаники // ВДИ, 1956, №2, с. 49). S.T.Yeremian defines naхарars as the top of the ruling class of the feudalizing Armenia (Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с. 179).

217. **Лазар Парпеци**, II, 23, с. 91-92.

218. Ibid., II, 70, p. 280.

219. **Агафангел**, гл. 112, с. 414.

220. **Лазар Парпеци**, II, 25, с. 98.

221. Ibid., p. 96.

222. Ibid., II, 26, p. 101.

223. Ibid., II, 27, p. 103.

224. **Фавстос Бузандаци**, IV, 15, с.98-99.

225. According to N.Adonts, *naxarar* meant the head of a feudal patronymy, while other members of the clan were referred to as *sepuks*.

226. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.452.

227. The conflict between Syunian *ter Andok* and Persian king *Shapukh*, according to *Faustus of Byzantium*, arose because the Persian monarch sought to marry his daughter to Armenian king *Arshak*, who was already married to *Andok's* daughter. *Andok* shattered his son-in-law *Arshak's* bond with *Shapukh*, and a conflict ensued: **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.276-277.

228. *Bardz* – a cushion, on which the representative of the patronymy sits in the reception hall during the king's feast. According to I.A.Orbeli, such pillows are depicted on the Sassanian dishes of the Hermitage:

Орбели И.А., Тревер К.В. Сасанидский металл. Художественные изделия из золота, серебра и бронзы. М.-Л.: Academia, 1935, табл.13, 16.

229. *Pativ* – honour, solemnity, respect; a headband bestowed by the king upon *naxarars*. (История Армении **Фавстоса Бузандаци**, с.214). About the meaning of *pativ*:

Джавахов И. Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.117-118;

Манандян Я. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.83-84.

230. *Gah* is a Persian word, in the Middle Persian meaning: 1) “see”; 2) “rank”. In Armenian, *gah* is used in abroad meaning (**Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.120;

Адонц Н. Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.463;

Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.56; История Армении **Фавстоса Бузанда**, с.214). In this passage, *gah* refers to the position held by a representative of a patronymy among others in the presence of the king: *K.Patkanov* (p.79) translates as follows: “...various degrees of precedence”.

231. изд. Н.Эмина, с.119; изд. К.Шахназарян, с.79 – “...by goblet and vine-slip he designated the various degrees of precedence which they enjoyed before him”; *Dowsett*, p.61 – “and by goblet and vine slip he designated the various degrees of precedence which they enjoyed before him”. We adhere to N.Adonts' translation (Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.273).

232. изд. Н.Эмина, с.119; К.Шахназарян, с.205 – “*znaharutyun*” is used instead of “*znahadrutyun*”; *K.Патканов*, с.79-80 – “I know well the correct order of precedence of Persian nobles...”; *Dowsett*, p.61 – “I am well acquainted with the true *Pahlavi* among the Persians and Parthians and the order of precedence of these nobles”.

Адонц Н., *Ibid.*, p.273 – “... I am also well aware of the free men's ranks”.

233. изд. Н.Эмина, с.119-120; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.205; пер. К.Патканова, с.80 – “...about their origin”; *Dowsett*, p.61 – “their order of precedence”.

Адонц Н., *Ibid.*, p.274 – “... their ranks”.

234. изд. Н.Эмина, с.120; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.205; пер. К.Патканова, с.80 – “about title and rank”; *Dowsett*, p.61 – “the degree and rank of each house”.

Адонц Н., с.274 – «about title and rank”.

235. пер. К.Патканова, с.80 – “if you cannot explicitly show your place, honors, houses, earth, water, and all your possessions to our Aryan people, we'll present you to Aryan noblemen.” **Адонц Н.** (с.273-274) – “... if you fail to show to our Aryan people the visual evidence of the ranks of your cushions, we will give your honours and possessions, land, water, and all your property to Persian nobles”.

Dowsett (p.61-62) – “or, if you cannot bring this to the eyes of our Aryan assembly, we shall bestow your highly placed cushion, honours, house earth and water and your possessions upon Aryan noblemen”.

236. изд. Н.Эмина, с.120; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.205-206; **Адонц Н.**, с.274; **Dowsett**, p.62.

237. **Ухтанес**, I, 27, с.40; **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.253;

Орбелиан Степаннос, гл.7, с.25.

238. *Gakhnamak* – the List of the nobility (the table of ranks) – reflects the *naxarars'* standing at the Armenian court in the fifth century. The text was found by *Y.Akhverdov* and published by *N.Emin* as an appendix to Russian translation of “The History” by *Movses Khorenatsi* (M., 1958). *N.Adonts* studied this document in detail (**Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.236-297). *Zoranamak*, i.e. the Military Charter, was written much later: **Периханян А.Г.** Агнатические группы в древнем Иране, с.42.

239. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.264.

240. **Еремян С.Т.** Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с.179.

241. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.249-252.
242. Материал об этом в отношении истории Армении: **Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.110-113; 117-121;
Адонц Н. Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.240-297;
Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.38-45;
Акопян С. История армянского крестьянства, с.136-139.
243. **Лазар Парпеци**, II, 26, с.100-101.
244. “История агван”, кн.II, гл.37 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.266; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.364; пер. К.Патканова, с.187 – “senior lords”; Dowsett, p.151 – “The prince sent the senior *naxarars* to him as swiftly as possible...”.
245. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с.41.
246. Ibid.
247. **Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.110.
248. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с.42-43.
249. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.453.
250. **Акопян С.** История армянского крестьянства, с.137.
251. **Мовсэс Хоренаци**, с.335.
252. As assumed by К.Костанянц и Н.Эмин:
Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.41.
253. As believed by I. Javakhov (Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.110) and Y.A.Manandyan (**Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с.42-43).
254. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.453.
255. *Sepukh* refers to the other (after *tanuter*) male members of a *naxarar* house: История Армении Фавстоса Бузандаци, с.222.
256. **Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.127;
Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.51.
257. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.472-473.
258. **Еремян С.Т.** Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с.180.
259. **Джавахов И.** Государственный строй древней Грузии и Армении, с.110.
260. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с.45.
261. In “History of the Aghuans”, as well as in Armenian sources, the term “*gordzakal*” is given a broad interpretation. *Xochkorik*, a *naxarar* of royal descent, illegitimate son of Albanian king *Aswagan*, who lived in the 5th century under King *Vachagan III*, is mentioned in the position of the *gordzakal* *Xochkorik* was the *gordzakal* of *Tsri* and the *kogmnapah* (the head of the region) (“История агван”, кн.І, гл.19 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.66; пер. К.Патканова, с.42; кн.І, гл.23 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.85; пер. К.Патканова, с.56). *Gordzakals* are mentioned in “History of the Aghuans” in the meaning of a constable. “He (the prince of the North) sent his officials to various craftsmen...” (“История агван”, кн.ІІ, гл.16 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.190; пер. К.Патканова, с.131); *Viroy* asked *Shat*: “...send trustworthy officials everywhere, to the hamlets, fields, fortresses and villages, so that all the inhabitants of this country may return and work without...” (“История агван”, кн.ІІ, гл.14 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.185; пер. К.Патканова, с.128); в “История агван” засвидетельствованы и “*мецамецк гордзакалы*” (“великие сановники”). “История агван”, кн.ІІ; гл.29 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.235; пер. К.Патканова, с.166.
262. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.467;
Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.61.
263. **Лазар Парпеци**, II, 24, с.93; II., с.95-96.
264. “История агван”, кн.ІІ, гл.18 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.198; пер. К.Патканова, с.139 – “...generals and princes, lords and indigenous nobles of the various regions”; Dowsett, p.109 – “those generals and princes, lords and indigenous nobles”.
265. “История агван”, Ibid.
266. “История агван”, Ibid. /изд. Н.Эмина, с.200; пер. К.Патканова, с.139; Dowsett, p.112 – “They ordered him to be given villages as his vassals and riversfull of fish”.
267. Джеваншир с албанским войском “достиг общего сборного места раньше *ицхана* Сюнийского и *спаранета* Армении”: “История агван”, кн.ІІ, гл.18 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.198; пер. К.Патканова, с.138.

268. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.57; пер. К.Патканова, с.36 – “...those native princes whom the wicked Peroz had removed from his kingdom, he returned to each his own lordship”; Dowsett, p.27 – “...he was peace = lowing and master of all the lands in his kingdom which the wicked Peroz had wrested out of his authority and whose native, princes to each of whom Vacagan how restored his authority, he had suppressed”.
269. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.349; пер. К.Патканова, с.247; Dowsett, p.198.
270. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.445-446.
271. *Ibid.*, p.446.
272. *Ibid.*
273. *Ibid.*, p. 446-447.
274. **Christensen A.** L’Iran sous les Sassanides, p.113.
275. *Ibid.*, p.122-123.
276. **Периханян А.Г.** Древнеармянские востаники, с.54.
277. *Ibid.*
278. **Меликишвили Г.А.** К истории древней Грузии, с.457.
279. **Benveniste E.** Titres et noms propres en iranien ancien. Paris, 1966, IV, p.68-70.
280. Elishe calls the “great vizier” of Yazdegerd II, Mihr-Nerseh, “Vzurk hramatar Eran ev Aneran” and “Mets hazarapet Aream ev anareats”: **Егише**, с.24, 28, 88, 90, 94-97, 128, 194.
281. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.445;
Еремян С.Т. Рабовладельческое общество древней Армении, с.18-19;
Еремян С.Т. Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с.183.
282. **Фавстос Бузанд**, IV, с.56.
283. According to A.Christensen, the great vizier of the Sassanids controlled both domestic and foreign affairs of the state and could also head the military command.
L’Iran sous les Sassanides, p.114-115.
284. **Егише**, с.28. Более высокое положение персидского хазарапета Михрнерсеха видно из отрывка Егише (III, с.88).
285. **Меликишвили Г.А.** К истории древней Грузии, с.456-458.
286. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 2 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.125; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.212;
пер. К.Патканова, с.85 – translates *hazarapet* as “military leader”; Dowsett, p.65 – “the albanian chiliarch (*hazarapet*)...”.
287. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.103; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.189; пер. К.Патканова, с.69 – “the king's chancellor Mirhorik, *hazarapet*...”. So, K.Patkanov translates *hazarapet* in one case as a military leader, and in the other retains “*hazarapet*”, but in the footnote he mentions *chiliarch*; Dowsett, p.54 – “...Mucik, the kings chancellor (*hramanatar*), Mirharik, steward (*hazarapet*)...”.
288. **Hübschmann H.** Armenische Grammatik, p.182.
289. *Ibid.*
290. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.57; пер. К.Патканова, с.36, “*hramanatar*” translates as “rules”; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.138; Dowsett, p.27.
291. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 14 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.45; изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.123; пер. К.Патканова, с.26-27; Dowsett, p.21.
292. S.Malkhasyants, based on the data of historian Sebeos, believes that in Armenia the position of *aspēt* was similar to that of Sassanian *Vzurk hramanatar*
(Себеос. История / Изд. Ст.Малхасянца. Ереван, 1939, с.10). But this question remains unaddressed.
293. C.Dowsett translates *hazarapet* as “chiliarch” (p.65). Chiliarchies were institutions in charge of tax affairs in the Seleucid state, that were inherited from the Achaemenids: **Периханян А.Г.** Древнеармянские востаники, с.52.
294. История Армении Фавстоса Бузанда, с.213, коммент.18. Eran’s powers – spah – badh – were very wide: he was the military minister, commander-in-chief and peace negotiator – “negociateur de la paix”. On his functions, see: **Christensen A.** L’Iran sous les Sassanides, p.130-131.
295. **Фавстос Бузанд**, IV, 2, с.56-57; **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.445-446.
296. **Адонц Н.** *Ibid.*

297. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 18 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.199; пер. К.Патканова, с.138, примеч.3, “Asparapet” or “Aspahapet” is the leader of the cavalry; “Sparapet” is the leader of the entire army, the commander-in-chief”; Dowsett, p.110 – “and named him field marshal (“sparapet of Albania”). *Asparapet* and *sparapet* are obviously one and the same thing, as Javanshir is now referred to as *asparapet*, now as *sparapet*.”

“История агван”, кн. II, гл. 18 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.199; пер. К.Патканова, с.139; Dowsett, p.110; кн. II, гл. 19 (name of chapter). K.V.Trever translates *asparapet* as “strategist”, “commander-in-chief” (Очерки по истории и культуре Кавказской Албании, с.290).

298. “История агван”, кн. III, гл. 8, 10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.343, 348; пер. К.Патканова, с.243, 246; Dowsett, p.194, 197.

299. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 31 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.242; пер. К.Патканова, с.170-171 – “военачальника, князя Албании”; Dowsett, p.136 – “...Juanser general and prince of Albania”.

300. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 37 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.265; пер. К.Патканова, с.187 – “полководец”; Dowsett, p.151 – “general”.

301. История Армении Фавстоса Бузанда, с.213, коммент. 18.

302. As A.Christensen points out, during the wars, some Sassanian kings acted as commanders-in-chief.: L'Iran sous les Sassanides, pp.130-131.

303. The king's judicial powers are dealt with in Aguen Canon 2.

304. Albanian king Vachagan III convenes the Aguen Council and takes the lead in it.

305. Heraclius, the Byzantine emperor, wrote to the *ishkhans* and *arrajnords ashkharhats* requiring them voluntarily come out to meet him and serve him with their armies during the winter (“История агван”, кн. II, гл. 10 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.149; пер. К.Патканова, с.102; Dowsett, p.79-80).

306. The representatives of the azat patronymies attending the Aguen Council attached their signet rings to the ordinances of the Council (“История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.103; пер. К.Патканова, с.69; Dowsett, p.54; **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.296).

“History of the Aghuans” narrates that when Israel was ordained bishop, a written deed was sealed for him by the *zoravar* (commander) with *naxarars* from each region (“История агван”, кн. II, гл. 37 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.266; пер. К.Патканова, с.88; Dowsett, p.151-152). О наличии знамен “История агван” сообщает, что *нахарары* после избрания великого *ишхана* Албании Вараз-Трдата, “подняв зверовидные знамена, посадили его на золотообразный щит...” (“История агван”, кн. II, гл. 35 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.262; пер. К.Патканова, с.185; Dowsett, p.149).

307. **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с.295

308. In Albania, the terms denoting the highest ecclesiastical ranks, i.e. patriarch, catholicos, and archbishop, were used as equivalents. Thus, according to “History of the Aghuans”, there were nine degrees (ranks) in the Greek church hierarchy: “The patriarch who was the hairapet; the archbishop, who is called the *yepiskopsapet* and catholicos; metropolitan, bishop, priest, deacon, subdeacon, reader and psalmist” (“История агван”, кн. II, гл. 48 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.309). Hairapet is an Armenian word traced from the Greek “patriarch” and *yepiskopsapet* – from the Greek “archbishop”. It is quite obvious that “archbishop” and “catholicos” are identical terms. The head of the Albanian Church was called the patriarch (hairapet) and the catholicos – the archbishop. For example, Albanian catholicos Ukhtanes (670–682) is called *hairapet*, catholicos, and archbishop (“История агван”, кн. II, гл. 29 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.232-234; гл. 31, с.243).

309. The clergy are listed at the Council as follows: *Shuphaghishoy*, *archbishop of Partaw*, *Manase*, *bishop of Kapaghay*, *Yunan*, *bishop of Hashu*, *Anania and Sahak*, *chorepiscops of Uti*, *Yovsep*, *priest of Kaghankatuk*, *Mate*, *priest of Partaw*, *T'omay*, *priest of the royal court*, *Po'ghos*, *priest of Gayeguch*, *Shmawon*, *chorepiscopus of Tsri*, *Mat'e*, *priest of Darahoch*, *Abikaz*, *priest of Bed*, *Urbatayr*, *priest of Manushay*, *Yove'l and Parmide' and Yakob*, *priests*. The ecclesiastical ranks are listed here in the following sequence: archbishop, bishops, chorebishops, priests, chorebishop, priests (“История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26).

310. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 17 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.60; пер. К.Патканова, с.38; гл. 21 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.75; пер. К.Патканова, с.48.

311. **Мамедова Ф.Дж.** Из истории раннефеодальных отношений в Кавказской Албании, с.95.

312. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.14-15;

Периханян А.Г. К вопросу о рабовладении и землевладении в Иране парфянского времени, с.18; **Периханян А.Г.** Сасанидский судебник, с.458-460;

Пигулевская Н.В. Города Ирана в раннем средневековье, с.202-206;

Пигулевская Н.В. Зарождение феодализма в Иране, с.13;

- Луконин В.Г.** Иран в эпоху первых Сасанидов. Л., 1961, с.17;
- Саркисян Г.Х.** Дастакерты и агаракы в армянских источниках V в. // ИФЖ Арм.ССР, 1962, №3, с.85 (in Arm.);
- Саркисян Г.Х.** О двух значениях термина дастакерт в ранних армянских источниках / Эллинистический Ближний Восток, Византия и Иран, М., 1967, с.101.
313. **Перихаян А.Г.** Сасанидский судебник, с.458.
314. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.23 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.93; пер. К.Патканова, с.62 – “...He had built an estate (dastakert) in her name”; Dowsett, p.48 – “...in whose name he had built a country willa (dastakert)...”
315. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 /изд. Н.Эмина, с.102; пер. К.Патканова, с.69 – “Nobles, regarding their estates...”; Dowsett, p.53 – “Nobles, in so far as concerns their estates...”.
316. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.16.
317. **Луконин В.Г.** Иран в эпоху первых Сасанидов, с.17.
318. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.18.
319. *Hostak* – Persian *Xvasta* – means any property. **Hübschmann Н.** Armenische Grammatik, p.161; **Манандян Я.А.** Материалы по истории экономической жизни древней Армении, с.44, 73. In Armenian and Georgian sources, the term *Hostak* (in Arm.) // *Xwastagi* (Georgian) means “property” in its narrow sense - “land or livestock”.
- Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.17.
320. **Манандян Я.А.** Материалы по истории экономической жизни древней Армении;
- Манандян Я.А.** Заметки о феоде и феодальном войске Парфии и Аршакидской Армении.
321. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.308.
322. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.18;
- Пигулевская Н.В.** Переходные формы рабовладения в Иране по сирийскому сборнику пехлевийского права. М., 1954, с.11-17.
323. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.308;
- Манандян Я.А.** Заметки о феоде и феодальном войске Парфии и Аршакидской Армении, с.9-11.
324. “История агван”, кн.I, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.99; пер. К.Патканова, с.67 – “...and take the sone to the church»; Dowsett, p.52 – “...and his property confiscated by the church”.
325. Канонагирк, с.124-126; **Мхитар Гош**, ч.I, с.211-214; с. 105-106, 234, коммент. 44-47 (Russian translation by Раповуян).
326. Канонагирк, с.107-112.
327. **Манандян Я.А.** Заметки о феоде и феодальном войске Парфии и Аршакидской Армении, с.9-11.
328. **Манандян Я.А.**, Ibid.; **Манандян Я.А.** Материалы по истории экономической жизни древней Армении, с.43-52.
329. **Орбелян Степаннос**, с.201, 207, 233; **Манандян Я.А.** Материалы по истории экономической жизни древней Армении, с.44, 48.
330. **Перихаян А.Г.** К вопросу о рабовладении и землевладении в Иране парфянского времени, с.18.
331. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.14-19.
332. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.308.
333. **Еремян С.Т.** Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с.170-171;
- Саркисян Г.Х.** О двух значениях термина дастакерт в ранних армянских источниках, с.97-101.
334. **Еремян С.Т.** Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с.170-171;
- Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.14, 21.
335. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с.14;
- Манандян Я.А.** Проблема общественного строя доаршакидской Армении // Исторические записки, Т.15, 1945, с.4.

336. **Мхитар Гош**, ч. II, ст. 1, с. 319; русск. пер. А. Паповяна, с. 148. This statement dates back to the data of Movses Khorenatsi (кн. II, гл. 8), moreover, Khorenatsi refers to the population of towns and villages only – *gyukhs* and *shens* – and says nothing about *agaraks*.

337. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с. 14.

338. **Манандян Я.А.** Проблема общественного строя доаршакидской Армении, с. 4.

339. *Ibid.*

340. **Еремян С.Т.** О рабстве и рабовладении в древней Армении, с. 16-25;

Еремян С.Т. Проблема падения рабовладельческого общества и зарождения феодальных отношений в древней Армении / Доклады Советской делегации на XXIII Международном конгрессе востоковедов. М., 1954, с. 111.

341. **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 308.

342. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 26 / изд. Н. Эмина, с. 100; Dowsett, p. 52 – “A priest who ministers to a large village shall not minister to another. Should two hamlets be close to one another, one priest may minister to them. A priest may be a shepherd for as many as he is able to lead”.

343. “История агван”, кн. II, гл. 27 / изд. Н. Эмина, с. 221; пер. К. Патканова, с. 155 – “...the thorns of the field”; Dowsett, p. 124.

344. *Yerdumards* were agricultural slaves who lived in separate houses and had their own peculium.

Еремян С.Т. Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 308-309.

345. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с. 474-475;

Адонц Н. Исторические исследования, с. 174-188;

Авдалбегян Т. О налогах “Гас, сак, баж”, с. 55-56;

Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с. 161-163;

Манандян Я.А. Проблема общественного строя доаршакидской Армении, с. 21;

Еремян С.Т. Рабовладельческое общество древней Армении;

Еремян С.Т. Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с. 168-169;

Еремян С.Т. Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 308-309;

Маркосян С.С. О социальном положении сословия “шинаканов” древней Армении // ИФЖ АН Арм. ССР, 1965, №3, с. 151-168 (in Arm.);

Акопян С.Е. К вопросу о прикреплении крестьян к земле в древней и средневековой Армении // ИФЖ АН Арм. ССР, 1963, №1, с. 173-183;

Акопян С.Е. История армянского крестьянства (период раннего феодализма). Ереван, 1957, с. 164-171 (in Arm.).

346. НСАЯ, т. I.

347. Этимологический коренной словарь армянского языка, т. I / Сост. Р. Ачарян.

348. **Агафангел**, гл. 119, с. 436.

349. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с. 134-135;

Манандян Я.А. Проблема общественного строя доаршакидской Армении, с. 21;

Еремян С.Т. Рабовладельческое общество древней Армении.

350. **Фавстос Бузанд**, V, 31, с. 194.

351. “История агван”, кн. I, гл. 10 / изд. Н. Эмина, с. 24; **Егише**, с. 199.

352. **Манандян Я.А.** Феодализм в древней Армении, с. 163-164. “История агван”, кн. I, 10 / Dowsett, p. 10; **Еремян С.Т.** Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с. 309; **Тревер К.В.**, 1959, с. 185; **Бунятов З.М.**, 1965, с. 66.

353. “i dzarayutyun arkanel”, identical to “i vijak dzarayutyun arkanel = and harki dzarayutiun” all mean taxation. **Авдалбегян Т.** О налогах “Гас, сак, баж”, с. 55;

Маркосян С. О социальном положении сословия “шинаканов”, с. 152-153.

354. Or “the clergy”.

355. T. Avdalbegyan proved that “has” was not the land tax – *hoghahark*, but the capitation tax to the church. However, he believes that in this canon “has” is some other tax (**Авдалбегян Т.** О налогах “Гас, сак и баж”, с. 45-58). It seems that “has” also referred to the capitation tax paid to the state treasury. It is known that the principal state taxes were the capitation and the land taxes. The canon clearly states that the clergy were exempted from land tax and paid “has,” i.e. the capitation tax only.

356. “i vijak dzarayutyun arksen” see reference 353.

357. Канонагирк, с.126. This canon, with some changes, is given by Mkhitar Gosh:
Мхитар Гош, ст.106, с. 207; русск. перевод А.Паповяна, с.107, 235.
358. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.474-475;
Манандян Я.А. Феодализм в древней Армении, с.162;
Маркосян С. О социальном положении сословия “шинаканов”, с.151.
359. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.474.
360. **Маркосян С.** О социальном положении сословия “шинаканов”, с.151.
361. **Еремян С.Т.** Рабовладельческое общество древней Армении.
362. Этимологический коренной словарь армянского языка, т.1.
363. **Адонц Н.** Армения в эпоху Юстиниана, с.451-452.
364. **Еремян С.Т.** Рабовладельческое общество древней Армении;
Еремян С.Т. Экономика и социальный строй Албании III–VII вв., с.308;
Еремян С.Т. Армения в период кризиса рабовладельческого общества и формирования феодальных отношений, с.169.

CHAPTER 5.

ALBANIAN CHURCH

§ 1. The rise of Christianity as the official religion

The rich antique and early medieval culture of ancient Caucasian Albania, the state of historical Azerbaijan, has been preserved in the ancient Caucasus, the cradle of ancient civilizations created by autochthonous peoples.

Azerbaijan has nourished all religious systems, including Zoroastrianism (fire worship), Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The most ancient Albanian Apostolic independent Church in the Caucasus, one of the earliest in the entire Christian world, was here.

Albania was one of those countries where the first Christian communities appeared long before the fourth century, before Christianity became the state religion. According to the Albanian tradition, the first Christian missionaries, apostles, and disciples of apostles arrived in Albania from Jerusalem and Syria in the early centuries AD, founding the first Christian communities.¹ This was largely owing to the Hebrew settlements existing in Albania long before the first century AD, as well as the presence of the Nazarenes, Christian Jews in the first century. The early Christians were known by this name; the term “Christians” was used considerably later at Antioch, Syria.

The Nazarenes were Jews who venerated Christ as a fair man, i.e. did not view him as the Son of God. All the scriptures record the earliest concept of the Jewish Christians (Nazarenes) about Jesus Christ as a righteous man who acquired the divine Power – the Holy Spirit – following baptizing. In the future, this ancient concept was reconsidered and the divine destiny of Jesus was no longer determined by baptism, but by his birth proper. It is believed that Nazareneism had existed until the fourth century.²

Back in 1987, I suggested that the Tats of Azerbaijan be regarded as the descendants of the long-lost Jewish tribe. This was supported, among other reasons, by the records about the resettlement of Jews/Hebrews, famed for their workmanship, to Iran and further to the Caucasus, to Albania, in particular, along the western Caspian coast, by the Persian kings (the Achaemenids, the Parthians, and the Sassanids). This was also confirmed by the anthropological type of the Mountain Jews. Their ethnic purity was maintained through the practice of intra-ethnic marriages, which set them apart from European Jews and allowed them to retain their biblical appearance to this day. Some of the Mountain Jews' commitment to Judaism also convinced me of this. This was an important fact, given the isolation and the caste nature of Judaism which could only be practiced by Jews. Academician Z.M.Bunyatov and Hebraist, Corresponding Member of the French Academy

of Sciences professor Mark Filonenko shared my arguments. Later, I found that there were the Nazarenes on the Absheron, along with the Tats, i.e. the Mountain Jews. The Jewish names in the epigraphy in Buzovna, coming along with the word “Nazarene”, and the existence of the “quarter of the Nazarenes” in Buzovna,³ as well as the permanent residence of Mountain Jews in Absheron, convince that there were early Jewish Christian communities of Nazarenes. Subsequently, many of them, having converted to Islam, transformed.

Back to the Nazarenes in Absheron, their descendants now live in three villages – Buzovna, Shagan, Yeni-Surakhani, where there are epigraphic monuments mentioning the Nazarenes. In Buzovna, a two-line Persian inscription in Arabic letters, carved above the entrance to the mausoleum, says: 1. “This is the tomb of Shmavon (Samavarz) Bahram, a Nazarene – نرسیا ; 2. in Muharram, 706 = 12.08.1306. This inscription was first read by S.Karim-zade as the name Shmavon proper, and the word “narsa” (نرسیا) is translated as “Christian”. The well-known epigraphist, a corresponding member of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences M.S.Nematova read that this was the grave of Samavarz Bahram, a Nestorian, i.e. the word “narsa” means “Nestorian”. It seems to us absolutely indisputable that the inscription refers to a Nazarene.

Another epigraphy in Shagan settlement, also preserved above the entrance to the mausoleum, read by M.S.Nematova, says: “This is the structure of Bulgag-a Bulgarar-a”. M.S.Nematova, commenting on this name, writes that in all likelihood, Bulgag-a and Bulgargarar were Jewish names from which the Arabic names Abul-l-Hakk and Abul-l-Karar were derived.

A quarter known as “*nəzaranlı məhəlləsi*” (“the Nazarene quarter”) has been preserved in Buzovna to this day. The Jewish names in the above-mentioned epigraphy, along with the word “narsa”, as well as the existence of the Nazarene quarter and the permanent settlement of the Mountain Jews in Absheron testify to the fact that there were early Jewish Christian communities of the Nazarenes here.

And, finally, the Albanian author provides data on the settlement of “Christians, Jews, pagans” in the seventh century in Barda, the capital of Albania (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 10). The numerous recent studies devoted to the Mountain Jews of Azerbaijan note that the modern Tats-Jews are the descendants of the ancient Jews who resettled in the Caucasus under the Achaemenids.⁴ The 13th century Syrian writer Bar Hebraeus makes an interesting note: ‘After Artaxerxes – the ruler – Artaxerxes Ochus (Artaxerxes Ochus – 359-338), 27 years. This one was strong and reigned over Egypt. The Egyptians were subdued by the Persians once again... Ochus *also conquered the Jews* and made them tributaries. He settled *them on the shores of the Caspian Sea in the city of Hyrcania*’.*

The Albanian studies distinguishes two successive periods of the spread of Christianity. The first so-called apostolic period is associated with apostles Thaddeus, Bartholomew and Thaddeus' pupil (or pupils) Mar → Elishe (Dadi). Let us call this period the Syrophile period, which dates back to the time before the fourth century when

* Гусейнов Р. Сирийские источники об Азербайджане. Баку, 1960, с.65, 142 (примеч 22).

Christianity was preached in the Syriac-Aramaic language, both by the apostles, their pupils, and by the Syrian missionaries and the Nazarenes.

The second (Grecophile) period of preaching Christianity is associated with the name of Gregory the Illuminator (the Parthian) and Albanian king Urnayr (the fourth century), when Christianity became the state religion.⁵ The Grecophile period was short and upon its completion the Albanian Church took the path of ethnic Albanian development, which promoted the rise of Albanian literature. The distinction between the two periods – the Syrophile and the Grecophile – is evidenced, among other things, by the eighth-century Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi's accounts on the spread of inscriptions in the Syriac and Greek languages in Albania.* The Albanian Church, unlike the Armenian one, in its origin was directly related to Jerusalem, the Jerusalem Church, and the Jerusalem Patriarchate. In this respect, the Albanian Church is similar to the Georgian Church which also ascends to the Jerusalem Church.⁶ The origins, the entire path of Christianity formation in the Albanian Church was symbiotically related to the history of the Eastern Christianity, fully fitted into the general pattern of its development while demonstrating its own unique way. Both preaching Christianity and the structure of the Christian church, the church hierarchy were developing in two periods: the apostolic period and the period after Christianity was declared the official religion in the fourth century.

Before embarking on the Albanian Christian realities, we will consider the origins of the Christian doctrine in general, the formation of the doctrine (the ideological outlook), the formation of the church structure, the geography and the time of Christianity spread, which will undoubtedly help us shed light on what the Albanian Church was like.

Christianity, as is known, arose in the depths of Judaism and was nurtured on its basis in the 1st–2nd centuries.⁷ ‘Christianity is the essenianism that succeeded’.⁸ At the Palestinian stage, Christianity potentially included the Essenes’ mystical, ascetic, and organizational skills which came into systematic use much later. The emerging early Christian communities were in many ways similar to the Qumran community: ethnic identity, territorial proximity, similarity in social principles, organizational structure, and a number of theological doctrines.⁹ The early Christian community was called, like the Qumran community, the “New Testament”¹⁰ and later the term “New Testament” referred to the collection of canonical texts viewed as new commandments replacing the “Old” Mosaic Law (Torah).^{11**}

In the second half of the first century, early Christian communities in Jerusalem, like those in Qumran, were headed by “teachers” and “prophets” (compare prophet Elisha, the disciple of Thaddeus the Apostle, who led the early Albanian Christian community),

* The fact is that the fundamental documents of Christianity were originally written in the Greek language. In Osroene, a big Hellenistic state with the center of Edessa, in Mesopotamia, where Christianity penetrated in the first centuries and where it first became the official state religion, it was preached in the Syriac language. A large number of Greek Christian monuments have been translated into this language – the Old and New Testaments, liturgical and hagiographic books. Edessa, a proponent of Hellenistic culture, became a nursery of the new Christian ideology in the Syriac language (Пигулевская Н.В. Культура сирийцев в средние века. 1979, с.12, 24-25).

** I gratefully acknowledge the use of these materials supplied by the staff of the Ancient East department of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

later by “bishops” (Greek “overseer”) and “deacons” around whom, by the middle of the second century, the universal church's disciplinary and hierarchical structure crystallizes in the fight against decentralizing initiatives.¹²

Along with the similarities between the Qumran and the early Christian community, between the Qumran literature and the New Testament, there are also significant differences that allow Christianity to be considered a new phenomenon in Mediterranean social and spiritual history and later in the world history.¹³ The main and decisive difference is that the Qumran community ‘made do with the belief in the coming arrival of the Messiah, while the very emergence of Christianity is associated with the belief in the already accomplished coming of the Messiah, i.e. Jesus Christ’.¹⁴ One of the ‘clearly visible cardinal differences is that the Qumran community had been and remained a closed, even a secret organization, fenced off from the outside world, completely condemned by it, and concealing its teachings from it’.¹⁵ Christianity, on the other hand, split from Judaism and sought to spread its message throughout the Mediterranean in order to become a universal religion that transcended national and state boundaries¹⁶ [underlined by us – F.M.]. And by virtue of its universalism, Christianity has become the religion of the peoples of the Caucasus, in particular of Albania. Christianity absorbed the worldview recorded in the biblical canon, and then in the gospels. This worldview, recorded both in the Old Testament and especially in the New Testament, was particularly focused on the comprehension of history which was viewed not as a succession of cycles, but as a path out to the absolute future.¹⁷

The early centuries' Christian literature that came down to us is mainly represented by a canonical collection known as the New Testament, the materials for which were mainly selected in the second century, but this process was only finished by the end of the fourth century. The New Testament consists of 27 writings: four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles related to them, 21 Epistles (teachings in epistolary form), of which 14 were written by or are attributed by tradition to Paul the Apostle, and the rest to Peter the Apostle (two), John the Evangelist (three), James and Judas (one each), and finally, the Revelation to John or the Apocalypse – a phantasmagoric picture of the coming end of the world.¹⁸ All these works have been preserved in Greek – the international language of the Eastern Mediterranean – and Syriac (in Syria, Edessa, Mesopotamia). The widespread preaching of Christianity among the Romans and other peoples began when it was initiated by the learned Jew Saul (Saul) from Tarsus, a city of Asia Minor.

According to the *Acts of the Apostles*, Saul was originally a staunch skeptic of Christ and an ardent persecutor of him in the sake of Jewish orthodoxy. According to legend, a special vision caused him to have a spiritual awakening and lead him to Christianity. Henceforth, calling himself the Roman name Paul (his name as a hereditary Roman citizen), he began to preach Christianity in Antioch (the capital of Syria), in various cities of Asia Minor and Greece. Paul was summoned to Jerusalem by the leaders of the original congregation, and convinced them of the legitimacy of his mission. The Judeo-Christian Church in Jerusalem decided that Paul would be the “apostle to the Gentiles”.¹⁹ It was Paul the Apostle (along with the author of the fourth gospel) who played a key role in the preparation of the later development and systematization of Christian dogmas, religious

and ethical principles. Paul preached the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum. His preaching career brought him to Rome, where he was martyred under emperor Nero.²⁰

The same Judeo-Christian Church of Jerusalem resolved that Peter the Apostle, together with other apostles, would remain the “pillars” of the Judeo-Christian Church of Jerusalem.²¹ Later, Peter the Apostle preached in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Assia to the Jews and at the end of his life he came to Rome, where he was given charge over the local Christian community. Here in Rome, he was crucified head down.²²

After Paul, in the 1st–2nd centuries, apostles Thomas, Andrew, Bartholomew, the brother of apostle Thomas – Mar Addai-Addeus- Thaddai-Thaddeus and the disciples of Thaddeus – Mar (Elisha?) spread preaching Christianity to the northeast and east of Jerusalem.

These apostles and their disciples preached in Syria (with the center in Antioch), in a small Hellenistic state of Osroene (with the center in Edessa), in Nusaybin, Mesopotamia, Lesser Armenia and further in the east and northeast, in Persia (Seleucia – Ctesiphon), in the countries of the Central Caucasus – Georgia, Albania.

The eastern outskirts of the Eastern Roman Empire, in the immediate vicinity of the border with Iran and further beyond this border, cities and villages (of Syria, Osroene, Mesopotamia, Persia) were populated by the Syrians who spoke one of the Aramaic dialects.²³ The early spread of Christianity in all these countries inhabited by the Aramaeans is largely associated with the Jewish diaspora, i.e. with the resettlement of Jews expelled from their hearth and home.²⁴ ‘When the first Christians, driven out of Jerusalem, found a new home in Antioch on the Orontes (the Acts, 9, 19) and resumed their preaching wanderings from there, the Aramaic East, apparently, was no less mature for the adoption of a new religion than the Greek and the Roman world’.²⁵ The Aramaeans thus were the conductors of Christianity in the East. The fact that the Syrians (Aramaeans) brought the evangelic teaching into the countries of the East is mainly accounted for by the role that the Syrians played in trade relations. The long-established water and land trade links between the Mediterranean and the countries of the Middle and Far East were largely in the hands of the Syrians.²⁶

The trade routes took the Syrians far from Mesopotamia, from Iran, to the Central Caucasus – Georgia and Albania. They have been tradesmen for a long time and, while making trade operations, they were becoming the conductors of new trends, contributing to the spread of Christian teaching. The perception of Christianity through the Aramaic language was facilitated by the fact that the Jews themselves spoke the Aramaic dialect at that time. Early Aramaic Christianity relied on Jewish literature translated into Aramaic for the needs of Jewish communities.²⁷

In this respect, Syria, Osroene, Mesopotamia, certain regions of Iran were breeding grounds for both perception and consistent propagation (to the east) of the Christian doctrine in the Aramaic language. The apostles' missionary activities in the first and second centuries clearly shows the global dissemination of Christianity. Eusebius of Caesarea, based on Origen, reports that, as legend has it, Thomas the Apostle preached in Parthia and Andrew the Apostle in Scythia.²⁸ Thomas' gospel message was largely addressed to Jews and proselytes. In this respect, the western half of the Parthian kingdom was more receptive to the gospel than the eastern.²⁹ Thomas was in fact the apostle of Mesopotamia. According

to Syrian sources, Thomas the Apostle, one of the twelve apostles, missioned Addeus (Thaddeus), who was one of the 70, to preach in Edessa.

Thaddeus founded the Church of Edessa and before his death 'he sent one of his disciples named Mar on a mission to preach the gospel in the countries east of Mesopotamia. Mara went from Edessa to Nusaybin and laid the foundation for Christianity here'.³⁰ The Syro-Persian tradition calls the Seleucia-Ctesiphonian see the "apostolic see of St.Mar-Mara the Apostle"³¹ and views him as the founder of the see.

The spread of Christianity in Armenia is also associated with apostle Thaddeus, one of the seventy apostles. The Armenian tradition regarding the spread of Christianity in Armenia distinguishes between three movements associated with apostles Thaddeus, Bartholomew, and Gregory. Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew came from the south to preach.³² The earlier of the two was the apostleship of Thaddeus, regarded differently by traditions. In accordance with the Armenian tradition about the conversion of Armenians to Christianity under Abgar, Syrian sources provide interesting data on Haggai (Addai-Thaddeus), one of 70 disciples: 'Haggai converted Zophene (Sophene), Arzane (Arzanene) and Outer Armenia and Sirinos, son of Avgar, broke his legs, and he died'.³³ It is recognised that the famous ruler of Edessa, who adopted Christianity, was Abgar IX, a historical figure who lived in the 2nd–3rd centuries and that the legend pushed the historical event back to the early years AD and transferred it to another person, Abgar V, a contemporary of Christ.³⁴ So, Thaddeus, also known as Haggai, converted Edessa, Lesser Armenia (Sophene), Arzanene to Christianity, implying that Edessa and Outer Armenia were ideologically and genetically related. Unlike the Armenian tradition, the Syrian tradition does not narrate on the wandering of Haggai – Addeus – Thaddeus from Edessa to Artaz (Maku, Atropatene) where, according to the Armenian tradition, he was martyred and where there is his tomb.³⁵ So, according to the Armenian tradition and the Albanian author (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6), the Christian Church of Atropatene rather than the Armenian Church had an apostolic origin, as Armenia was not yet ready to adopt the new creeds at the time of the initial spread of Christianity. As for the Orthodox and Catholics, it remains silent in general.³⁶

The entire process of the Christian structure formation in the early apostolic period can be traced in Caucasian Albania, where Christianity was preached by Elisha, the disciple of apostle Thaddeus, and by apostle Bartholomew.

Movses Kaghankatvatsi reports: 'The holy apostle Thaddeus was appointed for us Easterners. He came first to Armenia and there suffered martyrdom at the hands of Sanatruk, the king of Armenia' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6). The Albanian historian continues that the disciple of Thaddeus, St.Elisha returned to Jerusalem and was consecrated by St.James, the cousin of the Lord, who was the first patriarch of Jerusalem. Elisha was given charge over the East (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6). In this context, as in many other cases, the East refers to Albania. The study of the Albanian historian's concepts of "East", "eastern country", "northeast" prove that they refer to Albania, the Albanian land in the meaning of the easternmost tip, the eastern border of the Christian world in relation to Jerusalem.³⁷

According to the Albanian tradition, apostle Thaddeus' disciple Elisha left Jerusalem, headed for Persia bypassing Armenia [located in Asia Minor. – *F.M.*] and came as the illuminator of three countries – Chola, Lpinia, and Albania (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23).

‘The holy patriarch Elisha arrived in Gish [Shaki], founded a church there, and offered up bloodless sacrifices. This place was the original source of all the churches and cities and the conversion of us Easterners’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6) The author conveys the same idea in another chapter (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 43): ‘St.Elisha preached in Albania and built a church before there was one in Armenia, namely, the church of Gish, the first mother church of the east’. The approximate time of Elisha's preaching activity in Albania might have been the period from 51 to 62.³⁸

The fact that Elisha preached both on the right bank and on the left bank of Albania is supported by another fragment: ‘The first cause of our illumination was Saint Elisha; he came as the illuminator of three countries: *Chola, Lpinia, and Aghuania*, where he was martyred’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). Elisha is renowned not only as Thaddeus' disciple in Christian literature and Christian tradition, but also as a prophet.³⁹

The idea of the apostolic origin of the Albanian Church, its genetic relationship with the Jerusalem Church, and the constant unremitting connection with it runs through the entire “History” by *Kaghankatvatsi*. *Kaghankatvatsi* repeatedly emphasizes that Elisha, a pupil of apostle Thaddeus, was consecrated in Jerusalem as the patriarch of Albania and founded a church here, which was the first church in the Central Caucasus. In addition, he was consecrated in the first century by the first patriarch of Jerusalem, James, cousin of the Lord (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6, 28; II, 30, 42, 48; III, 8, 23).

Regarding the missionary activity of apostle Bartholomew, whose name is associated, according to Armenian tradition, with one of the stages (the second one) in the spread of Christianity in Armenia, another Albanian author, Stepanos Orbelian (the 13th century), reports that this apostle's mission was very closely associated with Syunik, which is again Albania, but not with Armenia. ‘First of all, it is necessary and very useful to show that *before the population of Armenia, these people (the Syunians) were the first believers and, through the Saint Apostle Bartholomew, adopted the teaching of the Holy Gospel, which is appropriate here to tell*. When Bartholomew returned from Persia, he crossed Atrpatakan with his disciples, crossed the Aras river, arrived in Sisakan [Syunik. – *F.M.*] and was preaching in the hamlet of Ordubad, in the Arevik region, in the house (estate) of Bagk and in Goght'n, who adopted the evangelical preaching, were baptized in a font by Saint Apostle Bartholomew. And the holy apostle built a church in Gokht'n... From there, the Holy Apostle went to the capital of Armenia, Dvin (*Stepanos Orbelian*, Chapter 5). The Syunik church (Albania) also appears to have the apostolic origin.

The Holy Apostle Bartholomew was one of the 12 disciples of Christ. After his mission in India, Bartholomew went to Caucasian Albania where he converted the king, his family, and the residents of many cities to Christianity. But the king's brother, instigated by pagan priests, ordered to seize the holy apostle in the city of Alban (or Albanopol, the present day Baku) and crucify him head down. Such was the death of apostle Bartholomew in 71.⁴⁰ So, in the apostolic period, a bishopric and a metropolis had already been established in Albania. Both apostle Bartholomew himself and the successor of apostle Thaddeus, Elisha, the first bishop, the archbishop of Albania (traditionally), who founded the first episcopal see in Gish, preached Christianity. This church has survived to this day.

Scientists from Azerbaijan and Norway worked together on archaeological research and the reconstruction of this unique first-century apostolic church, the church of Gish. This church could only survive due to the tolerance of the Azerbaijani people, which is accounted for by the multi-ethnicity, polytheism and hence the cultural awareness and respect for any cult and confession. It should be borne in mind that the Albanians were one of the ancestors of the Azerbaijanis, as well as of many other Caucasian peoples such as the Lezgins, Tsakhurs, Ingiloy, Khinalugs, Kryts, Budughs, Alpans, Rutuls, Aghuls, Tabasarans, and, finally, they were the direct forefathers of the Udis.

Andrew the Apostle laid the foundations of Christianity in Georgia.

The apostolic origin of a church is significant due to the fact that it testifies both to the ancient, primordial origin of the church and that the church was created by the original source (the apostle), without the mediation of another church.⁴¹

In the early period known as apostolic, Christianity was adopted in Albania more readily than in Armenia and Iberia. This is confirmed by both the written accounts (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6, 7, 9; II, 48) and the realities of that time.⁴²

Christianity was spread in Albania earlier than in Armenia, which is evidenced by the Albanian historian who cites the letter of Armenian Catholicos Abraham to the Albanians: 'The see of Albania was established before that of Armenia and agrees with us' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 47). Another passage: 'In the year 43 according to Greek reckoning, the Armenians were illuminated, 270 years after the illumination of the Albanians...' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 47) This is further supported by the following fragment from Movses Kaghankatvatsi's work: 'After the blessed St. Elisha had commenced his apostolic mission from the far corners of the earth, he converted some among the eastern peoples of the north, but not all. He fought a good fight and strove hard for the good of his people. In the days when God visited mankind and caused the west to prosper under the great emperor Constantine and converted Greater Armenia through the blessed Trdat, he also led to the Faith the lands of the Orient (Albania) which had been taught a little of the rising of the true Sun of Salvation, and they were again converted through the most excellent Urnayr (an Albanian king). These divine wonders came to pass at the same time' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 9). The author emphasizes the synchronicity of the Christianization time: 'came to pass at the same time', i.e. in 313/314.

The text further narrates of the two periods of the spread of Christianity: the first period of preaching Christianity by Elisha who 'converted some among the eastern peoples of the north...' and the second period when Albania 'was again converted' under Albanian king Urnayr (in 313/314).

As we have noted, the first period of preaching Christianity was the Syrophile period, when gospel was spread in the Syriac (Aramaic) language, like in all countries of the Near and Middle East. This period is associated with the activities of the apostles and their disciples, as well as with the activities of the Syrian missionaries. Kaghankatvatsi has preserved data that can give us the idea of the Syrophile period, including the activities of Syrian monks in Albania in the 4th–5th centuries (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14) and *the Syriac inscriptions on Christian relics*.

The ethnic diversity,* the dominance of polytheism** paved the way for the adoption of a new ideology, a monotheistic religion, i.e. Christianity. It is no coincidence that Elisha began his ministry in the Chola region in the north of Albania, where there was the highest ethnic diversity, and most importantly, there were Jewish settlements with early Christians – Jewish Nazarenes. Our position on the early penetration of Christianity is also supported by the presence in Albania of early churches named after Thaddeus (Dadi) the Apostle and his disciple Elisha.

‘At first, Christianity flourished fast and made significant achievements in the East under the Parthian dominance, but as the Sassanian dynasty in Persia was growing stronger, due to their hostile policies, the results of two centuries came to nothing’.⁴³ As a result, the triumph of Christianity in Albania in the first-third centuries (during the early period) was out of the question. The Christian denomination had not become fully official before the fourth century, which was associated with the general triumph of Christianity in the Near and Middle East, with its victory in the Roman Empire. This is also related to the policy of the Albanian Arsacid kings.

Christianity had already taken root in Asia Minor by the third century,⁴⁴ and the surrounding areas had been prepared for it. In the late second – early third centuries, Christianity became the state religion in Osroene.⁴⁵ As for the Roman Empire, the first decree of the empire in favor of Christianity was issued in 311, when the Christians were granted pardon for their persistence in rejecting paganism and the legal status.⁴⁶ And in 313, Constantine issued the famous Edict of Milan which established freedom of worship. This was a pivotal point in the history of early Christianity. Constantine's edict did not only provide legal status to Christianity (as it was according to the decree of 311), but also took it under the state protection.⁴⁷ Privileges were granted to the Christian clergy (clerici) who were exempt from state taxes and duties, from any civil office (the immunity). Everyone had the right to make a will in favor of the church, which was thereby recognized as a passive inheritance right. The diocesan courts were granted significant privileges.⁴⁸

The second (Grecophile) period, characterized by establishing Christianity as the state religion, is common for the three countries. It is associated with the name of Gregory the Illuminator (for Armenia, Georgia, and Albania), as well as with the name of Albanian king Urnayr (for Albania).

The accounts of Agathangelos, Movses Khorenatsi (II, 74), Movses Kaghankatvatsi (I, 14) about Gregory the Illuminator are as follows. He was the son of Anak, a Parthian noble and a member of the Suren Pahlav clan, one of the seven great Persian houses. During their escape from Persia to Armenia, Gregory's parents stopped at Atropatene, in the region of Artaz (Maku), in the place where Thaddeus the Apostle was buried. ‘Here the mother of the great Gregory the Illuminator conceived’ (*Khorenatsi*, II, 74). This legend

* According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi (II, 21), during the search for and uncovering of the saints' relics, undertaken by Albanian king Vachagan III in the fifth century, the population of Albania sang psalms in many languages: ‘The earth echoed loudly to the many sounds of worship in many different tongues (yayl lezus)’.

** Kaghankatvatsi (I, 16) ‘...and in many places fire temples were established, thereby strengthening fire-worship of the foul gods. Diverse sects of the malicious Satan proliferated the unfortunate people of the land of the Aghuans’; ‘(Vachagan) converted much of the land from their wicked and diabolical worship to the path of blessed and correct service to God’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 17).

serves as a symbol of apostolic continuity, as apostle Thaddeus' mission will be carried on by Gregory.⁴⁹ After the death of his father Anak (Anak the Parthian), Gregory was taken to the country of the Greeks, where he was 'kept for the salvation of the land of the Armenians and all the eastern areas', i.e. Albania (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). Gregory was raised and educated in the city of Caesarea, the center of the Hellenic state of Cappadocia. He learned the Syriac and the Greek languages and literature.*

When Albanian king Urnayr, who, like Gregory, was also of Parthian origin, 'heard about the great miracles and signs of God performed by St. Gregory in Armenia, he turned from many erroneous paths to the true God' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14). Then, according to the Albanian author (HA, I, 14), Urnayr with the nobles and the Albanian army went to Armenia, where they all imposed upon themselves a forty-day fast and confessed the Holy Trinity. '...The king [Urnayr] descended into the most holy water and all his soldiers with him. And then the chief priest [Gregory] had performed over them the rite of rebirth in the Heavenly Trinity'.

After he was given the second birth from St. Gregory, as reported by *Kaghankatvatsi* (I, 9), Urnayr illuminated the Albanians once again. So, in 314,⁵⁰ Urnayr declared Christianity as the state religion. Relying on the monotheistic religion, i.e. Christianity, Urnayr hoped to unite the multi-tribal state and oppose the Zoroastrian Persia. His successors were fully aware of this approach and continued it.

Gregory the Illuminator, consecrated *chief priest* (*kahanayapet*) in Caesarea, apart from Armenia, 'illuminated Iberia and Albania. Having arrived in Gaband (Albania), he taught the people to keep the commandments of the Son of God and laid the foundation of the church in Amaras, appointed workers and caretakers to complete the construction' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 14).

Although the Grecophile (the second) period of Christianity was common in the countries of Transcaucasia, it was not equal in terms of its duration and character, which is, of course, accounted for by political reasons. The relationship of the Albanian, Armenian and Iberian churches with the imperial church 'were to be illuminated in connection with the political situation, in other words, the dependence of the church was to manifest itself to the extent that the country was politically dependent on the empire'⁵¹ – Eastern Rome. As is known, Armenia was the most dependent, Iberia was less dependent, and Albania was completely independent. And therefore, after Gregory the Illuminator and his grandson Grigoris (both Hellenophiles), the Albanian Church continued to maintain relations with the Jerusalem Church.

In light of the foregoing, the prevailing opinion that the first Christian preachers were sent to Albania from Armenia and that the regions of the right bank of Albania were pastored by Christian preachers from Armenia and the northwestern regions of the left bank of Albania, i.e. the interfluvial area of the Iori and the Alazani, by Christian preachers from Iberia, seems to us untenable.⁵²

The Sassanids' policy towards the subordinate Christian peoples of the Central Caucasian countries was, as is known, uneven and constantly changing. The victory of Christianity in the Eastern Roman Empire (in the early fourth century) changed

* Айвазян К.В. "История Тарона" и армянская литература IV–VII вв. Ереван, 1976, с.3.

the Sassanid Iran's attitude towards Christians of the three countries – Georgia, Albania, and Armenia.

The Sassanian kings began to support various Christian sects that fought with the official church in their state. Christianity declared at the beginning of the fourth century as the official religion, was adopted by the king, the court, and the feudal aristocracy, was implanted among the population, but did not become the universal, nationwide religion, did not have a global reach. The ancient local beliefs continued to exist, which were based on the worship of the elemental forces, Tengrianism, the dogmas of Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism with its various sects implanted by the Sassanids.

According to Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the Albanian Arsacid kings – Urnayr, Vache II, Vachagan III – fought a fierce struggle with various pagan beliefs, trying to eradicate them. The persecution of the remnants of pre-Christian beliefs is covered in two canons (11, 12) of the fifth-century Aguen Council.

The Albanian writing, the Albanian alphabet played a crucial part in the spread and establishment of Christianity by allowing the Bible and other theological material to be translated into Albanian from Syriac and Greek. The unique discovery by the famous Caucasian scholar Zaza Aleksidze of Albanian letters (Georgian-Albanian rescripts) and the study of these artifacts showed that Albanian letters, Albanian theological literature existed back in the fourth century.⁵³

This discovery testifies to the inconsistency of the prevailing Armenian scientific tradition according to which the Albanian alphabet was allegedly invented in the fifth century by Mesrop Mashtots. In fact, he did not even invent the Armenian alphabet, but simply borrowed it from the Ethiopians.⁵⁴

The feudal monarch and the feudal nobility of Albania founded the material base of the Albanian Church, its clergy, who gained most of the lands and treasures of pagan temples, as well as land donations from the king and nobles. The church tithe was levied on the common people in favor of the church in the amount of 1/10 of all agricultural income of the Albanians, as well as numerous other regulated taxes in kind and freewill offerings. The clergy were remunerated with land allotments (“hostaks”)⁵⁵ for their ministry and were exempt from taxes, like the secular nobility.

The Albanian kings cared deeply about the Albanian Church, the Albanian Christian clergy, and granted them special privileges. They tried to equate them with the secular nobility (the azats) and created, along with the palace court, the ecclesiastic court structured into the court of the priest and the court of the bishop.⁵⁶

In the early period of Christianity (4th–5th centuries), the Albanian clergy were economically and politically weak. Even when it came to resolving church concerns, the Albanian clergy did not take the lead. The canons of the Albanian church councils were developed in the presence of the king by the secular nobility and the clergy. However, they did not gain legal standing before being signed and sealed by the secular aristocracy and the king.⁵⁷ The power of the Albanian Catholicos was but nominal. Albanian kings appointed bishops (Vachagan III the Pious), convened councils, made arrangements for searches for Christian relics, i.e. undertook the duties that should have been the responsibilities of the clergy and the church. Such a position of the Albanian clergy is explained both by the ideological weakness of the church among the public and by

the centralized power in the country. This is one of the characteristics that distinguishes the Albanian Church from the Armenian. Due to the constant political dependence of Armenia on two empires – Rome and Persia, consistently weak state power which was completely abolished de jure and de facto in 387–428, due to the ethnic homogeneity, the position of the Armenian Church in the 4th–5th centuries and the following centuries was strong and Christianity became a universal religion.

As for the Albanian Church, its position was not stable. The economic and political positions of the Albanian Church strengthened under the great Albanian Mihranid princes in the sixth and seventh centuries, as evidenced by a comparison of the canons of the 488 and the 705 Albanian Councils. If, according to the canons of the Aguen Council of 488, the Albanian clergy defended their rights before the secular nobility, i.e. azats, tried to equalize their rights, then according to the canons of 705, the clergy took up arms against the azats, restricted their arbitrariness, and categorically forbade them to meddle in ecclesiastical affairs (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 26, III, 11). In the seventh century, it was the Albanian Catholicos heading the church and the legislative council, who took the initiative to summon the Albanian Council.

It is noteworthy that the title of the Albanian Mihranid rulers, “The Great Prince of Albania”, was requested by Albanian Catholicos Viroy from Persian Shahenshah Khosrow.

§ 2. Albanian Catholicosate

In the 4th–5th centuries, Albania starts its way as a Christian state. This ideology (Christianity) was supported by both the Albanian Arsacid kings and later by their followers, the Great Mihranid princes who tried to unite and consolidate the ethnic diversity and eradicate polytheism through establishing a single confession.

The Albanian kings and the Great Princes, despite their Persian origin and kinship with the kings of Iran, when they took control over Albania, assessed its strategic position (the Caucasian Derbent passages) and chose to become independent rulers. This necessitated a single ideology, a religion throughout the country that would oppose the Zoroastrianism-Mazdeism of Iran, the paganism and Tengrianism of Albania. This was the only way to preserve the state and the Albanian identity.

In the initial period of Christianity (the fourth century), while there was still ideological unity in the Christian world (there were no dogmatic disputes), when the Albanian clergy had not yet been fully formed and the church hierarchy did not finally take shape, the Albanian Church, as well as the Armenian and Georgian ones, hierarchically depended directly on the imperial Greek Church, but unlike the Armenian Church whose head was consecrated in Caesarea in Cappadocia, the head of the Albanian Church was consecrated in Jerusalem (with the exception of the bishop from Rome). The dependence of the Albanian Church was nominal.

According to Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi, Gregory the Illuminator was consecrated bishop in the early fourth century. He came from Rome together with a “blessed man”, also consecrated a bishop, who went to Albania with Albanian king

Urnayr to head the Albanian Church. It is noteworthy that the first bishops of Armenia and Albania – Gregory the Illuminator and this “blessed man” – are referred to by the Albanian author as kahanayapets (Old Arm.), literally “heads of priests”, which is a synonym for bishop (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 11). There could be no other ecclesiastical ranks at that time.

By the end of the fourth century, the necessary church hierarchy had already formed in Albania, with a certain subordination inherent in it. This allowed the Albanian clergy to consecrate the head of the Albanian Church independently. Thus, Movses Kaghankatvatsi wrote: ‘Concerning the consecration of our [Albanian] catholicos; originally they [the Albanian catholicos] received it [consecration] from Jerusalem down to St. Gregory. And from then until now they have received it [consecration] from our own bishops’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 8, manuscript C-59).

Consequently, by 340, the Albanian Church appears to be autocephalous. The political status of the Albanian state must have predetermined the early de facto autocephaly of the Albanian Church, the first hierarchs of which were consecrated by the Jerusalem Patriarchate.

According to another point of view, however, autocephalous churches were considered those of apostolic origin, i.e. the foundation of such a church was directly related to the deed of an apostle.⁵⁸ Proceeding from two points of view, that clarify the autocephaly of the church, we can confidently speak about the early independence of the Albanian Church. The opinion of Y.A. Manandian and S.T. Yeremian, who claim that in the 4th–6th centuries the Albanian Church was hierarchically subordinate to the Armenian Church, that the head of the Albanian Church was consecrated by the Armenian Catholicos, seems to be groundless.⁵⁹

The question of the right to consecrate was resolved depending on how many bishops there were in the country's church.

By the decree of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325, consecration required the consent of all the bishops of a diocese; if getting everyone together was impossible, the presence of at least three bishops and the written consent of those absent were mandatory. The result was submitted to the metropolitan for approval.

The council also declared the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Antioch patriarchs. The title of “Pope” was bestowed on the first two of them. The bishop of Jerusalem joined them, retaining the right of honor.⁶⁰

The Armenian Catholicos from Gregory to the time of Armenian king Pap were consecrated in Caesarea. The unstable political situation of Major Armenia, its constant dependence on the Byzantine Empire (to a greater or lesser extent from time to time) and on Iran created a similar position for its church. ‘In the first century of the Armenian Church from Gregory to the division of Armenia at the end of the fourth century, Armenia was under the protectorate of the empire and therefore, church relations were closer’,⁶¹ i.e. the Armenian Church depended on the imperial one. Meanwhile, the independent position of Albania ensured the autocephaly of the Albanian Church.

The actual position of the Albanian Church was legally established after the fourth Ecumenical Council convened in 451 in Chalcedon, when the Christian world was torn apart by the Western and Eastern Churches in the dogmatic struggle [monophysites with dyophysites] which was based on a hierarchical struggle.

In the fourth century, i.e. by the time Christianity became the state religion both in the Byzantine Empire and in some other countries, the church structure had already taken shape, with the exception of the patriarchal rank.⁶²

Only in the fifth century, since the Council of Chalcedon, the leading metropolitans of the five ecclesiastical districts have been honored with the title of patriarch (the head of the fathers), i.e. the decrees of the Council of Nicaea were confirmed. However, due to the respect and holiness of Jerusalem as the first Christian Church for the Christians, the Metropolitan of Jerusalem was also given the title of patriarch. In fact, he was the only one to be considered the Patriarch from the first centuries of Christianity. The Jerusalem Council attended by some of the apostles and representatives of other churches, was the highest manifestation of ecclesiastical authority.

The decree of the Trullan Council of seventh century established the following order of seniority of the patriarchal sees: Roman, Constantinople, Alexandrian, Antioch, and Jerusalem.⁶³

Canon 28 of the Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon in 451 caused great discontent in the Christian world. The Council, in fact, caused a schism in the Greco-Roman world and split off many Eastern churches from the imperial one. According to this canon, the Patriarch of Constantinople was entitled to consecrate bishops of Pontus, Asia, Thrace, inhabited by foreigners, outlanders.⁶⁴

After the Council of Chalcedon, the most notable leading bishops of other ecclesiastical districts were referred to as metropolitans. Long before the Council of Chalcedon, the Syro-Persian Church was fully independent in terms of hierarchy and maintained confessional ties with other metropolitans. Its first hierarchs being from the Church of Edessa, it became autocephalous, and during its historical existence it never depended on the Patriarchate of Antioch. The leaders of the Syro-Persian Church were chosen and consecrated by the Syro-Persian bishops under their authority.⁶⁵ That is why the heads of the Syro-Persian Church referred to themselves as “bishop, catholicos, archbishop of the East”, which is evident from the decrees of the Syro-Persian Councils.⁶⁶

In our opinion, this is also due to political reasons. The location of the Syro-Persian Church in the independent Persian state ensured the independence of the Syro-Persian Church.

The consecration of the Albanian patriarchs is reported by the 12th century Syrian historian Michael the Syrian, who was elected the Monophysite (Jacobite) Patriarch of the East in 1166. His chronicle states⁶⁷ that there was an ancient custom that had been observed in churches since the services of the four apostolic locations were established – Europe is cared for by Rome and Constantinople, while Egypt, Ethiopia and Libya are under the jurisdiction of Alexandria. Greater Asia ...depended on [the patriarch] residing in Antioch. *That is why the Patriarch of Antioch consecrated the Catholicos of the Armenians, as well as those of Gurzan and Aran,*⁶⁸ *until the time when Babai was killed by Persian Bar-Sauma. Then this established order was violated until the time of Persian king Ardashir.*⁶⁹ “Ancient custom” is a relative notion, for, as is known from the history of Christianity, the Monophysite patriarchy in Antioch was created by Jacob Baradaeus (541–578). After this Jacob Baradaeus, the monophysites of Syria and Mesopotamia were named the Jacobites.⁷⁰ And judging by the above passage, the Antiochian Monophysite

patriarch had “consecrated” prior to Persian king Ardashir III, i.e. before 630, i.e., according to the passage, since the second half of the sixth century to 630. But the truth is that it was in this period that the Albanian and Georgian churches adhered to Chalcedonianism, and this is why the heads of these churches could not be consecrated by the patriarch of the Monophysite Church of Antioch. The Antioch Jacobite Patriarchate apparently used its positions in Syria and Mesopotamia to lay claim to the autocephalous churches of the Caucasus.

By the late fourth – early fifth century, the church hierarchy was completely matured in the churches of the Caucasus as well. In the twenties of the fourth century, Christianity was preached in Georgia (among the Iberians) by Cappadocian Christian St.Nino. She converted the king of Georgia to Christianity. He built a temple and on St.Nino's advice sent an embassy to Constantine the Great with a request to send a bishop and clergy to Georgia (Iberia). In 457, the Patriarch of Constantinople Anatolius appointed Greek Peter as archbishop of Georgia and gave him the title of the Catholicos of all Iberia.

The Albanian Church, together with other churches of the Central Caucasus, could not show its attitude to the dogmatic, Christological disputes of Chalcedon, for it was busy fighting Zoroastrianism.⁷¹

The Albanian Church, like other churches of the Caucasus, adopted the decrees of the first three ecumenical councils. The First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325 condemned the heresy of Arius and after some amendments and additions adopted the Nicene Creed, in which, contrary to the teachings of Arius, *Christ was recognized as the Son of God, uncreated, consubstantial with the Father.*⁷² According to Kaghankatvatsi, this symbol was adopted by the Albanian Church. The Second Ecumenical Council was convened in Constantinople in 381 and was attended only by the representatives of the Eastern Church.

The council condemned the heresy of Macedonius who was further developing Arianism, proving the creation of the Holy Spirit. The Council re-established the doctrine of the consubstantiation of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. According to the Second Ecumenical Council, the Patriarch of Constantinople was ranked second among the patriarchs after the Roman bishop (the Patriarch), which the more ancient Eastern patriarchs could not agree with.⁷³ The Third Ecumenical Council was held in Ephesus in 431. The Council condemned the teachings of Nestorius (Nestorianism).^{*} Regarding the nature of Christ, Nestorius recognized the two natures, the human and the divine, distinctly existing in one body. The Nestorius' followers took refuge in the Sassanian Empire whose Christian church officially accepted Nestorianism in 484 at the Synod of Beth Lapat.^{**}

At this time, a new trend opposed to Nestorianism appeared in the Byzantine church itself, particularly in Alexandria. This was the monophysite trend of Christianity⁷⁴ which was later adhered to by the Albanian Church. The Fourth Ecumenical Council, convened in 451 in Chalcedon, recognized that Jesus Christ has two principles – one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten, to be acknowledged in *two natures*, unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably⁷⁵ (diophysitism).

^{*} Деяния вселенских соборов, т. I

^{**} Synodicon Orientale ou recueil de Synods Nestoriens, public traduit et annot. par J.B.Chabot, p.308; Касумова С. Христианство в Азербайджане в раннем средневековье. Баку, 2005, с.39.

According to the Albanian author, the local council of 491 attended by representatives of the Albanian, Georgian, and Armenian Churches, condemned the Council of Chalcedon.⁷⁶

The ideological situation in the Caucasus that developed in the 5th–7th centuries led to a split in the church, which was being prepared throughout the entire sixth century and lasted essentially until the early seventh century. The constant balancing between the two empires – Byzantium and Persia, their political rivalry during the period of schism and later, complicated the choice of faith by the countries of the Caucasus.

According to Z.N.Aleksidze, the hierarchs of the Armenian, Georgian and Albanian churches first revealed their attitude to the 451 Council of Chalcedon at the Dvin Council in 506, in which they supported the unional policy of the Byzantine rulers, aimed at establishing the agreement between the dyophysites and the monophysites.⁷⁷ Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi reports as follows: ‘One hundred and eighty years after the conversion of Armenia, in the days of Babgen, catholicos of Armenia, a council was convened concerning the Council of Chalcedon. Greeks, all Italy, Armenians, Albanians, and Iberians unanimously cursed the infamous Council of Chalcedon...’ (HA, II, 47). Meanwhile, Byzantium and Iran changed their ideological policies. Byzantium returned to Chalcedonianism from Zeno’s unional policy which first grew into a promonophysite, then into a monophysite policy. Iran, however, took to monophysitism.⁷⁸ In the second half of the sixth century, the Armenian Church finally defined its principles at the Council of Dvin in 551, when the Julianism-oriented monophysitism was declared the official ideology.⁷⁹ As for Georgia, the Georgian Church, it was in search for its way between Byzantium and Iran and remained, as Z.N.Aleksidze rightly believes, in its former moderately Chalcedonian position. During this period, the Albanian and Syunik churches adjoined the Georgian Church in confessional terms. But at the beginning of the seventh century (in 607) the Council of the Georgian Church declared its Chalcedonian confession. A little later, the Albanian and Syunik churches returned to the fold of the monophysites.⁸⁰ Monophysitism triumphed in Armenia and Albania with the active assistance of the Sassanids. Indeed, in 614, Persian shah Khosrow II made monophysitism the official religion of all Christians subject to him – in Iran, the Central Caucasus and the Byzantine eastern provinces conquered by him.

The Albanian author writes regarding the separation of the Georgian Church – Kiwrion (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 47): ‘...in the days of Abraham, catholicos of Armenia, the Georgians separated from the Armenians through the accursed Kiwrion. Greece and Italy were also with them. The Aghuans, however, did not abandon orthodoxy or communion with Armenia. Concerning Kiwrion’s disobedience, Abraham cut him off with the sword of the spirit. He first informed Albania and wrote a letter: ‘The see of Albania was established before that of Armenia and agrees with us. We and the Aghuans, with their support, have cursed and rejected Kiwrion in accordance with the command of our fathers. We have laid down the following ordinances concerning Iberians: do not commune with them in any way whatsoever...; but only trade with them, as with the Jews’.

In Albania, the highest church ranks – patriarch, catholicos, and archbishop – were used interchangeably.⁸¹ Meanwhile, according to the Greek church hierarchy, patriarch and archbishop were independent ranks and archbishop could also be referred to as

a *Catholicos*. According to the Greek church hierarchy, there were nine ranks: patriarch, archbishop who was called *Catholicos*, metropolitan, bishop, priest, deacon, subdeacon, sacristan and psalmist. In the Albanian Church, however, there were seven ranks (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 48), for the first three were synonymous. And the metropolitan was the bishop of Syunik. The Armenian Church lacked the rank of Metropolitan, for which it was repeatedly criticized by the Greco-Roman Church.

In the second half of the sixth century, Albanian patriarchs bore the title of the “*Catholicos of Albania, Lpinia and Chola*” or the “*Great Catholicos of Albania and Balasakan*”. This last title is recorded on a seal in the Pahlavi script.⁸² In the first case, the mention of the triad of Albania, Lpinia and Chola is accounted for by the peripheral location and certain autonomy of Lpinia and Chola in the absence of centralized political power in Albania (from 551 to 630).

In our opinion, this is also due to the apostolic preaching of Elisha, who illuminated Chola, Lpinia, and Albania, and thus a tribute is paid to the apostolic tradition. And in the second case (“*The Catholicos of Albania and Balasakan*”), the Christian ideological positions of the Albanian Church do not appear to be always strong in Balasakan-Paytakaran, and this fact is thus highlighted in this particular case. Indeed, such a huge province (*nahang*) as Balasakan-Paytakaran had only one bishopric, or was one significant bishopric.

In the 5th–8th centuries, there were 12 bishoprics in Albania, with three bishoprics in Artsakh (Karabakh) alone and three in Utik. Here is a list of bishoprics in the 5th–8th centuries: Gabala, Gashua, Yeuta, Tsri, Amaras, Balasakan, Shaki, Gardman, Metz-Kogmank, Metz-Irank, Gaband, Partaw (*Kaghankatvatsi*).

Not every Albanian region had a bishopric. That is, there were 11 regions in Artsakh and only three bishoprics – Gaband, Metz-Kogmank, Metz-Irank. And sometimes, as noted above, an entire province (*nahang*) had one bishopric, like Balasakan (Paytakaran). This probably depended on the extent to which Christianity was prevalent. The most valuable data for studying the question of bishoprics is the remnants of synodic documents. Put it bluntly, these documents do not fully reveal the number of bishops. This especially applies to the lists of councils convened from the end of the sixth century. It was a period of confessional differences of opinion, the country split into dogmatic parties and therefore many representatives of the church were not present at the council for one reason or another. Church disagreements continued until the eighth century.

Nevertheless, the analysis of council lists from the fifth century onwards reveals the expansion of ecclesiastical areas, which resulted in the creation of new bishoprics as well as in the fragmentation of existing ones. Thus, from the fifth to the eighth century, the bishopric of the Gaband region was located in the city of Gaband (Amaras), and in the eighth century Amaras becomes a region and at the same time the independent Amaras bishopric and Gaband itself remains a bishopric.⁸³

According to *Kaghankatvatsi*, in the seventh century, the Albanian secular nobility actively participated in church affairs, even in the process of consecrating priests as bishops, with each noble writing a commendation diploma and affixing the seal of the ruler of each region. The Patriarch consecrated priests as bishops in the presence of the nobles and the great prince of Albania. This is what Movses *Kaghankatvatsi* reports on the church

structure and consecration: *‘The Albanian nobles escorted them (the priests) from there with the necessary letters, went to the patriarch and to the prince of the Aghuans and they presented Israel to them, dressed in his monk's habit. All of them took the letter of praise and affixed their seals to a deed on behalf of all districts. The patriarch consecrated him bishop of the district of Metz-Kogmank, and sent him back to his own district accompanied by a large crowd and the necessary documents... Israel was greatly honored by his co-adjutors...’* (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 37).

Let's consider another passage: *‘All the bishops and their dioceses and many ministers, row upon row and group after group, came to meet them (king Vachagan who carried the holy relics of Gregory and the greatly renowned Hripsime and Gayane). Each group carried revered relics of the saints together with the gospel; Many crosses and divers emblems gleamed’* (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 21). This last excerpt is illustrative of the bishopric structure.

The Albanian Church, like all Eastern churches, maintained doctrinal and confessional, but not hierarchical relations with the Byzantine Imperial Church. The Albanian Church kept contacts with the Georgian, Armenian, and Syro-Persian Churches,* and probably with the Coptic Church.

Albanian Church, the only one of all Caucasian countries, had foreign links, which proceeded from the foreign policy of the Albanian rulers, from the strategic position of Albania. This was the relation with the nomadic steppe Turkic-speaking inhabitants who lived behind the Caucasian passages, behind the Albanian gates (Derbent). In order to win the nomads' favor, stop their systematic invasions, the Albanian Church stably maintained confessional ties with them, sent Christian preachers to them, trying to convert them to Christianity, to make them co-religionists. This policy had been pursued by the Albanian Church since the fourth century – since establishing Christianity as the state religion until the fall of the Albanian kingdom. This is evidenced by both local Albanian writers, e.g. Movses Kaghankatvatsi, and Syrian sources – Zacharias Rhetor (sixth century). *‘The Bishop of Albania Israel converts the Huns by his preaching and they listen to him (his teaching) with docility by virtue of the miracles he performs’* (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 40); *‘The Huns believe in Christ through Bishop Israel; the altars are destroyed and the cross of Christ set up’* (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 41).

Albanian Catholicos Eghiazar and prince Varaz-Trdat responded to the Hun ruler's letter requesting that Albanian bishop Israel be sent to them once again as their bishop: *‘But we command him to come and go to confirm you in the faith of Christ and to safeguard*

* The analysis of the registers of the Syro-Persian Nestorian Councils testifies to the contacts of the Albanian Church with the Syro-Persian Church in the 5th–7th centuries. Thus, the register of the II Nestorian Council of 420 convened by Mar-Yahbalah, the first “bishop, catholicos, archbishop of the East”, and held in Beth Lapat, mentions the attendance of the heads of the churches of Georgia, Armenia and Aran – Albania. And the register of the VII Nestorian Council of 554 records the bishop of Paytakaran, a region of Albania. *Synodicon Orientale ou recueil de Synods Nestoriens, public traduit et annot. par J.B.Chabot, Paris, t. XXVII, p.276.* The links of the Albanian Church with the Georgian and Armenian Churches are evidenced by the “Book of Armenian canons” (“Kanonagirk”) and the “Book of letters” (“Girq tqtots”). The heads of the Albanian clergy also participated in local councils together with the Armenian and Georgian Catholicoi, including the Council of Dvin in 551 and the Councils of Karin in 505 and 633.

the inviolable friendship we have for each other. Now we are allies, for by his intercession between you and ourselves he shall rid us of the enmity between us and friendship and peace shall flourish' (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 45).

According to Zacharias Rhetor (the sixth century), Albanian bishop Kardost came to the Huns with three virtuous priests, baptized many people, taught them, stayed there for seven years, and issued there a scripture in the Hunnic language.* In 498, when Kavad, the Sassanian king, fled from usurper Jamasp to Turkestan, he was accompanied by an Albanian bishop (from Aran), four elders and two laymen on the mission of spreading Christianity among the Hephthalite Huns.**

It's worth noting that Artsakh's clergy rulers frequently sent preachers to nomads.

According to the brief accounts of Albanian sources, Albania and the Albanian Church were engaged in hierarchical and doctrinal disagreements that tore apart the Christian world. Such disagreements included the views on the teachings of Paul of Samosata, Marcion, Nestorius, Theodoret, Thomas the Hypocritical, Bnot, and others, as well as on the Chalcedon Council, and later to Paulicians. The Albanian author provides interesting facts about one of the theological disputes. That is, Chapter XIV (III, 14) of *Movses Kaghankatvatsi* is titled 'An inquiry by the same Mikayel, catholicos of Aghuania, into the Nativity and Epiphany of the Saviour'. Albanian Catholicos Mikayel was the successor of Albanian Catholicos Simeon, led the Catholicos see for 35–37 years, and headed the Albanian Church from 706 to 747. He is known for persecuting intermarriages, revealing such marriages between the grandchildren of the Albanian prince, naxarar Varazman. On this occasion, Mikayel gathered the clergy in the monastery of the Shamkir fortress, where they unanimously cursed the house of Varazo. They also anathematized the Bishop of Iberia Talile who blessed this marriage. As for Catholicos Michael's inquiry of the nativity and epiphany of Jesus Christ the Savior, it is known that before the fourth century, all Christians had had a triple holiday – Epiphany, Christmas, and Baptism, which was celebrated on January 6 by all Christians. And in the fourth century this holiday split: Christmas was celebrated on December 25 and Epiphany and Baptism on January 6. Due to the lack of data in the Four Gospels, it was impossible to accurately determine the day of the Nativity of Christ. The Eastern Church originally celebrated this holiday on January 6, on the same day with the Epiphany under the general name "Epiphany" ("The appearance of God in the world"). In the Western Church, however, Christmas has long been celebrated on December 25 (January 7 Old Style). In the late fourth century, the Eastern Church started to celebrate this day on December 25. But different Christian nations celebrated it in different ways. Nowadays, as is known, Orthodox Christians celebrate the Nativity of Christ on January 7, Armenian monophysites – on January 6, Catholics – on December 25. So, it is this date of Christmas and Epiphany that Albanian Catholicos Mikayel is trying to explain and justify its acceptability for the Albanians, which in the eighth century was hardly known to anyone, i.e. by no means all Christians were aware of the reason for such a difference in the dates. Albanian Catholicos Mikayel comes to

* Пигулевская Н. В. Сирийские источники по истории народов СССР, с.166-167.

** Vine A.R. *The Nestorian Churches*. London, 1937, p.62;

Касумова С. Христианство в Азербайджане в раннем средневековье, с.77.

the conclusion that Christians ethnoses who used to be pagans celebrate the birth of Christ on December 25, and he explains why exactly on December 25. According to his clarification, on December 25, the pagans celebrated the birth of the Sun. And therefore, the apostles, according to Michael, agreed to date the Nativity of Christ on December 25 for these ethnic groups. But those who, as Michael believes, ‘converted to Christianity from circumcision, celebrate Christmas on January 6, *as it was behested to our ancestors. This is what we follow now, for it is said: ‘The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem’*. It is quite obvious that the date of January 6 was appointed by the Nazarenes (Christian Jews), the Syrians and Aramaeans. And the Albanians took it over directly from the Nazarenes. Moreover, it is emphasized once again that the direct primary source of Christianity is Zion, Jerusalem, with which the Albanian Church had deep genetic ties. This was probably why the monophysites chose January 6 as their feast day.*

As has been noted, dogmatically the Albanian Church, like the Georgian one, did not consistently adhere to monophysitism. The decline of the political influence of the Sassanids in the Central Caucasus coincided the collapse of the monophysite church hegemony.

Heraclius' triumphal Persian campaigns of 623–628 resulted in the victory over Persia and returned Byzantium its heretical eastern provinces. Heraclius aspired to restore ecclesiastical unity both in the empire and in the subordinate countries of the Caucasus on the basis of the monothelite teaching.⁸⁴ Back to the Persian campaign, Heraclius met the head of the monophysite Severians Paul the One-Eyed in Theodosiopolis (Karin) and tried to persuade him to the Monothelite Union [Formula of Union is “the single action (or energy) of Christ”]. After negotiations, Heraclius issued a decree prohibiting the doctrine of two energies in Christ, and in 638, he issued the “Ecthesis” that established monotheletism as the official doctrine of the Byzantine Church.⁸⁵

The Caucasian countries were the first to support this doctrine. Chalcedonianism, albeit with some Monophysite modifications, regained its positions in Georgia and Albania (the baptism of Varaz-Grigor and his people) painlessly. However, the Armenian Patriarch and his disgruntled flock were forced to submit to the victorious Caesar at the Council of Karin in 633.⁸⁶

Despite the best efforts of the Byzantine Empire and the Church, Monothelitism proved to be as hopeless as previous union attempts. The death of Patriarch Sergius and Emperor Heraclius, the Arab invasion put an end to the monothelite discussions. The Sixth Ecumenical Council in Constantinople (680–681) declared monotheletism a heresy.

After the Arabs conquered Transcaucasia in the early eighth century, the Albanian Church broke with dyophysitism under the pressure of the Arabs and with the active support of the Armenian Church. In order to coordinate the activity of the Christian population under their control, the Arab Caliphate fostered monophysitism among them as opposed to the Byzantine Empire's dyophysitism. In response to the Armenian Catholics'

* The disputes about the time of Easter celebration are detailed in the Church History by Eusebius. They arose between some churches in the late second century. The churches of Asia Minor celebrated Easter with the Jews on the fourteenth day of the first month after the vernal equinox, while the western churches observed it on the first Sunday after the full moon of that month (Тальберг Н. История христианской церкви, р.91-92; Деяния вселенских соборов, т.1, с.17).

denunciations against the Albanian Church that adhered to diophysite Orthodoxy, the Arab Caliphate converted the Albanian Church to monophysitism and hierarchically subordinated it to the monophysite Armenian Church in 705.

Thus, in 705, Armenian Catholicos Elias informed Caliph Abd al-Malik (685–705) that the Albanians were allying with Byzantium against the Caliphate and adhered to their religion – dyophysitism. ‘He who is now catholicos of Albania and has his throne in Partaw has come to an agreement with the emperor of Greece, mentions him in his prayers and forces the land to adopt his faith and unite with him’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 5). Then Abd al-Malik, relying on the military and political power of the Arabs, subordinated the Catholicos of Albania to Armenian Catholicos Elias. This subordination consisted in the procedure for consecration: of the two equal co-adjutors, the Armenian Catholicos was to consecrate the Albanian one, which was viewed as a violation of the hierarchical principle.

But this was only once and thereafter the Albanian patriarchs were again consecrated by the Albanian bishops without the participation of the Armenian Catholicos. The Albanian author reports on the events of the 7th–8th centuries as follows: ‘...Albanian Catholicos Eghiazar, who from the time of St.Elise till now has alone been granted the apostolic see of the north-east by the city of Jerusalem and who was consecrated by St.James, the brother of the Lord’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 42). Another passage, which is the response of Armenian Catholicos Sahak (the seventh century) and Armenian prince Grigor to the letter of the Huns: ‘Concerning your request for (Albanian) bishop Israel. But we have the reasons. Our wish and inclination is that he should always be with you, *but an instruction to this effect is the prerogative of our patriarchal colleague Eghiazar, patriarch of Albania*, and it is for him to decide’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 45).

‘These are, however, surprising and terrible things to assert; They say that St.Gregory received the tradition from Caesarea by the authority of the Roman patriarchs and that he himself could not bless the oil, but that the Armenians received the oil from Caesarea down to the Council of Chalcedon; then, when the heresies had grown stronger, they (the Armenians) separated and in their opposition contrived to establish the right to bless the oil themselves. (They say) that this is a mere custom taken from Chronicles, and that it is not orthodox, but nonsensical and heretical’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 19).

The events of this chapter are dated to 828, i.e. the ninth century. Consequently, the subordination, consecration of the Albanian Catholicoi by the Armenian ones is out of the question.

By the way, our latest study of the registers of Armenian church councils (Book of Armenian canons – Kanonagirk) revealed that the Armenian dioceses proper were located in the area of Lake Van, as well as on the two banks of the Tigris, i.e. in the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates⁸⁷ (See chapter VI, § 3).

The Albanian Apostolic Church was autocephalous from the fourth century up to 1836. The centers of the Albanian patriarchate were Chola, in the 6th–8th centuries Barda, in the 8th–9th centuries Berdakur, then Charek-Khamshi (not far from Gadabay) and for a short time it was the Dadivank church named after the disciple of apostle Thaddeus-Dadi (Mar→Elisha) in Khachen, and finally, from 1240 to 1836, Gandzasar (the Gandzasar Cathedral). In the 17th–19th centuries, the Khachen temple, Yerits Mankants, housed an anti-see.

The Albanian Church was united with the Armenian and Syro-Persian churches by dogmatic unity – monophysitism, which was unstable in Albania. It should be borne in mind that there are only two approaches in Christianity – monophysitism and dyophysitism. Monophysitism was professed by the churches of Western Asia: Coptic, Jacobite, Albanian, and Armenian. Monophysitism is not Gregorianism.

In 705, the Albanian state collapsed and was taken over by Arab emirs. The Albanians, who constituted the political majority in the period of the Albanian kingdom, were partially de-ethnicized, assimilated in terms of culture, ideology, and language. Part of the Albanians who converted to Islam were assimilated by the Turkic-speaking tribes (who also converted to Islam) and the Christians, as noted, in the 9th–19th centuries managed to revive in some parts of the country, in the foothills of the Lesser Caucasus, Albanian political formations in the form of the Syunik kingdom in the 9th–12th centuries, in the form of the Khachen-Artsakh kingdom in the 12th–15th centuries, in the form of feudal principalities-melikdoms in the 15th–19th centuries, and in the foothills of the Greater Caucasus – the Shaki principality-kingdom (9th–10th centuries). Therefore, the scattered Christian Albanian population has preserved over the centuries its territorial, political, cultural unity, religion, language, and most importantly, its self-awareness – Albanian, and its self-designation – ethnonym. They had a calendar of their own and their cross-stones with secular subjects were unparalleled. Some of the Albanians survived in Lezghins, Udis, Khinalugs, Tsakhurs, Ingloiyos, Rutuls, Aghuls, Kryts, Alpans, Budughs. Except for the Udis, all other Albanian ethnic groups assimilated due to Islamization. The Udis, being the direct descendants of Caucasian Albanians, have survived with their ethnic identity and Christian faith. The languages of almost all of the above ethnic groups, including Albanian, are Nakh-Dagestian languages.

After the conquest of the Caucasus under the Treaty of Turkmenchay of 1828, the Tsarist government made a number of concessions to the Armenian Catholicosate who demanded, among other things, the abolition of the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church and its subordination to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin.

Tsarist Russia, to a certain extent, relied on Turkish Armenians in its foreign policy in the East. Their support could be gained through their subordination in terms of the church hierarchy to the pro-Russian Armenian Catholicos. The tsarist government Decree on the Armenian Gregorian Church of 1836 abolished the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and the Albanian Patriarchate – Catholicosate and subordinated them to the Church of Etchmiadzin.⁸⁸ From that time on, two episcopal and one successive dioceses subordinate to the Etchmiadzin Catholicosate were established in the provinces and districts previously controlled by the Albanian Catholicosate. The first episcopal diocese (of Shusha or Artsakh) included Varanda, Khachen, Dizak, Berdadzor, Jraberd, Gulistan, Lankaran, Shaki, Kabala, Ganja, Khen, Kambechan, Arash districts. The second episcopal diocese (with the center in Shamakhi) included the churches of Derbent, Guba, Baku, Salyan and other neighboring districts. The center of the successive diocese was Gandzak. It ruled over the Gardman, Parisos, and Zav districts. The successive diocese was directly subordinate to the Tiflis consistory.

According to the Decree of 1836, the Etchmiadzin Armenian Gregorian Synod was headed by the Etchmiadzin Supreme Patriarch – the Catholicos.⁸⁹

In 1857, according to the Charter of Foreign Confessions Affairs, there were six Armenian Gregorian dioceses in Russia: Astrakhan, Georgian, Karabakh, Nakhchivan-Bessarabian, Shirvan, Erivan dioceses.⁹⁰ The Albanian Church, the Albanian diocese were abolished altogether.

In 1909–1910, the Russian Synod allowed the Etchmiadzin Armenian Gregorian Synod and the Erivan Armenian Gregorian Consistory to destroy the old archival files of the subordinate dioceses.⁹¹ It is obvious that the archives of the Albanian Church were destroyed together with the old Armenian archives.

The Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin thus annexed and transformed the Albanian ethnocultural heritage with the help of the tsarist policy.

After 1836, the Albanians, an autochthonous two-thousand-year-old ethnic group of the Caucasus in general and of the historical Azerbaijan in particular, went through a lengthy and arduous process of de-ethnicization: part of the Albanians were forcibly Gregorianized, Armenized. Another part adopted dyophysitism and were Georgianized. And most of the Albanians voluntarily converted to Islam and were later Turkified. The tsarist government began to populate Karabakh and Syunik with Albanian settlers from Persia and Armenians from Turkey.⁹² Nevertheless, not all Albanians were de-ethnicized. Part of the Albanians of Karabakh and Syunik moved to the left bank of the Kur river, in Shaki, where the Albanians have long lived, in particular the Caucasian-speaking Tsakhurs, Gelae, Khinalugs, Kryts, Budughs, Udis. With the exception of the Udis, all groups converted to Islam. Part of them, the Udis, have survived to this day and live in the Oghuz and Gabala districts of the Republic of Azerbaijan and in the village of Oktemberi of Georgia.

The latest model of the Armenian concept of the Albanian Church status as a diocese of the Armenian Church is set out in the article “The Armenian Apostolic Church” (Arm. AC).⁹³ According to this model, the Albanian Church was *originally* a diocese of the Armenian Church. The article reads: ‘In the early seventh century (608), *hierarchical disagreements took place from time to time between the Armenian and the Caucasian Albanian churches*’.⁹⁴ It is further reported that Armenian Catholicos Elias achieved the removal of Albanian Catholicos Nerses who adhered to the Byzantine policy and Chalcedonianism. Since then (706), the Armenian and Albanian Churches adhered to a single position regarding the rejection of the Council of Chalcedon.⁹⁵ The article continues with the events of the late 14th–first half of the 15th centuries: ‘*A movement for the revival of the Armenian Church arose from the Syunik theological school. This included the idea of relocating the seat of the Armenian Church from Cilicia to its ancient historical place, Etchmiadzin, which was implemented in 1441*’.⁹⁶ This passage, as well as the previous one, is completely groundless, does not stand up to criticism, which will be detailed below.

We pay special attention to the fragments from the Armenian concept of the Albanian Church. We will consider another three excerpts and comment on all of them. ‘The Etchmiadzin see of the Catholicos of all Armenians ended up on the territory of *Persia and there was also the see of the Catholicos of Albania (Artsakh), subordinated to the Armenian Church*’.⁹⁷ In the late 18th century, the dioceses located on Persian territory, most notably the Albanian Catholicosate based in Gandzasar (Artsakh), put in place

important steps to annex *Armenia to Russia*. *The Armenian clergy of Yerevan, Nakhchivan, and Artsakh Khanates sought to get rid of the power of Persia*.⁹⁸

And next: 'According to the Treaty of Turkmenchay of 1828, *Eastern Armenia became part of the Russian Empire. The Armenian Church functioned in accordance with a special statute (The Code of Laws of the Armenian Church) approved by Emperor Nicholas I in 1836. This document, in particular, abolished the Albanian Catholicosate which had lost its independence. Its dioceses became part of the Etchmiadzin Catholicosate*'.

Let's first look into the primary sources on the Armenian and Albanian realities to juxtapose the status of the Armenian and the Albanian Churches and find out whether the above passages could correspond to the facts. In the case of the Armenian Church, we must first clarify where its first church was located, as well as its dioceses. Next, we must determine where the Primate of the Armenian Church sat and whether it was a permanent location, and what relationship was between the Armenian see and its dioceses. Such an approach will help reveal the geography of the Armenian Church's influence, the sphere of its prerogatives, and then we will analyze in a similar way the same aspects of the Albanian Church.

According to the "Armenian Book of Canons", the first church in Armenia was built in Ashtishat, in the Armenian region of Taron, on the banks of the Aratsani, a tributary of the Euphrates, in the eastern part of Asia Minor, but not in the western part of the Central Caucasus. The "Armenian Book of Canons" ("Kanonagirk") reads: 'Nerses summoned the council [in 365] in the village of Ashtishat, where the first church of the Armenian land, the mother of Armenian churches was built and therefore the first synod was convened in this place'.⁹⁹ Ashtishat was one of the centers of paganism in ancient Armenia, with the temples of god Vahagn and goddesses Anahit and Astghik were located. In pagan times, Ashtishat belonged to the family of high priest Vakhuni and *in the Christian era it became the hereditary tenancy of the house of Gregory the Illuminator*.¹⁰⁰ Surprisingly enough, the above-mentioned article "The Armenian Apostolic Church" says nothing about Ashtishat – the first church, the mother of the Armenian churches. Apparently, this fact is undisclosable as it is inconsistent with the role of Etchmiadzin as the first see of the Illuminator, located in another place, quite remote both from Ashtishat and the actual habitat of the Armenians in the region of the eastern bank of the Euphrates, and the banks of the Tigris and the Lake Van. Indeed, according to Armenian historiography, the see of the Illuminator of the Armenian Apostolic Church was established in the fourth century in the capital of Greater Armenia – Vagharshapat, where Gregory the Illuminator built a cathedral and named it Etchmiadzin (Armenian "the place where the Only Begotten descended") in memory of his miraculous vision.¹⁰¹ As for the location of the capital Vagharshapat and Etchmiadzin, they are believed to be located in the vicinity of the present-day Yerevan. Meanwhile, studies of Armenian sources give every reason to believe that Vagharshapat was not on the left bank of the Aras, but on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, on its right coast. For, according to the fifth-century Armenian author Agathangelos, 'Gregory the Illuminator and Armenian king Trdat with his numerous retinue left the capital of Vagharshapat, went to Baguan, then to the bank of the Euphrates, and there Gregory baptized them in the waters of the Euphrates'.¹⁰² Therefore,

Vagharshapat could not possibly be distant from the Euphrates, be located on the right bank of the Aras (For a detailed discussion of this, see Chapter VI, § 4).

Back to the location of the *Armenian Catholicos' see*, the article notes that *from the fifth to the ninth centuries it was in Vagharshapat* (Etchmiadzin) and then moved to *Dvin* located in Persia. And according to the same article, in the sixth century an anti-see was established *in Avan* with the support of Byzantium, as opposed to the Dvin see.

In the 9th–13th centuries, the Catholicosate of the Armenian Church continued its wanderings around different cities of Byzantium and Persia: in Ani (and again, the anti-see was created in Akhtamar); then in Sebastia; in Constantinople, Tavblur (Eastern Turkey); Tsamndavi near Amasia, in h'Romkala (Rumkale, near Cilicia (1149–1293); in Sis – the capital of Cilicia (1293–1441).

Each time church councils recorded geographically different dioceses located in different parts, i.e. there was no stability of the subordinate dioceses.¹⁰³ And after such wanderings of the Armenian patriarchs, the above article (“The Armenian Apostolic Church”) noted with a naive conviction that the “wanderings” of the Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church (and since the 12th century they are titled the Catholicoi of all Armenians) *did not lead to a significant weakening of their power*.¹⁰⁴ And the authors themselves have to admit once again that the crisis inside the Armenian Apostolic Church, which had its chief see *shifted to Etchmiadzin* in 1441, was deepening again in the late fourteenth – the first half of the fifteenth century.

This politicized transfer can be to some extent explained by two specific goals: 1) to bring the patriarchal seat closer to the Albanian lands (i.e. the territory of the historical Azerbaijan); 2) to somehow account for, in any meaningful way, the 1000-year gap when there was no patriarchal seat in the so-called Etchmiadzin located near the present-day Yerevan. And therefore the authors continue that *‘the theological school of Syunik gave rise to a movement for the revival of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Here it was decided to transfer the main see of the Church to its oldest historical center, Etchmiadzin, which was implemented in 1441’*.¹⁰⁵ And according to Armenian Catholicos Simeon Yerevantsi,* the reason to move the patriarchal center from Cilicia was as follows: the patriarch of the Cilician Armenian Church sent emissaries to Florence in 1439, declaring the Armenian Church's wish to adopt Catholicism, which caused discontent among the Armenians living in the so-called Central Armenia [?!].

Until recently, the Armenian science has viewed this as one of the main reasons for the transfer of the patriarchal seat of the Armenian Church to Etchmiadzin.

This is not the only circumstance in which one may disagree. The fact is that, according to historical realities and sources, the theological school of Syunik had nothing to do with the Armenian Apostolic Church. This school was founded by representatives of the Albanian clergy Albanian Church. Another declarative, but absolutely politicized assertion that *‘here, in Syunik, it was decided to transfer the main see of the Armenian Church to its oldest historical center, Etchmiadzin, which was implemented in 1441’*, seems to be completely inappropriate, unfounded. Syunik has nothing to do with it at all. This idea arose far beyond the borders of Syunik, in the western part of Asia Minor, when

* Ереванци Симеон. Джамбр, с.54.

the Armenian clergy, the Armenian Church, who had repeatedly tried their fate in the west of Asia Minor and once again ended in a fiasco, lost hope of returning to their ancestral lands and settling again in Eastern Anatolia due to the formation of the powerful Ottoman Empire. Only in this connection they directed their eyes to the Caucasus in order to settle in the territory of historical Azerbaijan, took a course to purge it of the Caucasian Turks. For several reasons, the Armenians found this new project simple to implement and most crucially, the existence of a Christian Albanian community who adhered to monophysitism, i.e. the presence of fellow believers, was highly appealing. The Armenians have already been nurturing the far-reaching political plans to establish themselves in the historical Azerbaijan with the help of the Albanians, their fellow believers, and then to join their cultural heritage. Back to “The Armenian Apostolic Church”, we find again an irresponsible assertion that ‘the Etchmiadzin see of the Catholicos of all Armenians ended up on the territory of *Persia and there was also the see of the Catholicos of Albania (Artsakh), subordinate to the Armenian Apostolic Church*’. First of all, it should be noted that during this period this was not Persia’s land; instead, the states of Qara Qoyunlu and afterwards Aq Qoyunlu existed here, on the historical Azerbaijani territory. As for the Albanian Church, it by no means did and, moreover, could obey the Armenian Church (Etchmiadzin) due to the actual position of the latter, as there was no unity among its clergy, contradictions, oppositions (anti-sees) prevailed in it, and its (the Armenian Church’s) sees were constantly in emigration or wandering. The authors of the article had to admit that ‘*the tough situation in the country forced the Armenians to seek salvation in a foreign land*’ in the 15th–16th centuries owing to the ‘confrontation between the Turkic tribal unions Aq Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu’. But the truth is that the real history of the Armenian people vividly demonstrates that, unlike all other peoples, Armenians are continually ‘seeking salvation in a foreign land’, i.e. this is their way of life.

In addition, the statement that ‘the Armenians were forced to seek salvation in a foreign land in the 15th–16th centuries because of the confrontation of the Turkic tribes’ lacks logic. But then, how do the Armenians and their Church try to “return” and “establish themselves” precisely in Etchmiadzin, located on the territory controlled by same Turkic tribes – the state of Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu?!

The authors themselves have to admit that the *Etchmiadzin Catholicosate*, being controlled by Persia in the 17th–19th centuries, was unable to actively participate in the life of the Armenian Church riven with hierarchical confrontations. And at the same time, the authors once again declare a *provision* that does not exist in the history neither of the Armenian nor of the Albanian Church, according to which ‘*the dioceses located on Persian territory, most notably the Albanian Catholicosate based in Gandzasar (Artsakh), put in place important steps to annex Armenia to Russia. The Armenian clergy of Yerevan, Nakhchivan, and Artsakh Khanates sought to get rid of the power of Persia*’. Everything in this passage is false and politicized, with just one goal in mind: to justify by all “hooks” and “crooks” the policy of the Armenian Church, which, supported by the policy of tsarist Russia, will soon be focused at seizing the Albanian cultural legacy, then attempting to destroy it and erase even the remains of it. It should be noted that since the transfer of the Armenian Catholicosate to Etchmiadzin (the fifteenth century), closer to the Albanian-Azerbaijani lands, the Armenian Apostolic Church did not have any Armenian

dioceses on this new territory and was unable to create them. And therefore, it appropriated in advance the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church with its dioceses, with the Albanian ethnos, misrepresented the Albanian clergy as Armenian clergy and geographically distributed this clergy between the khanates – Yerevan, Nakhchivan, and Artsakh. [Speaking of which, the Artsakh Khanate never existed, it was part of the Karabakh Khanate with a vast territory that encompassed Artsakh among other regions. – *F.M.*]

There is neither any data on the activities of the Albanian Church aimed at joining Armenia to Russia. Such an activity would have been impossible for the simple reason that it was not in line with the interests of the Albanian Church, moreover, in reality there was no so-called Armenia which should have been “annexed” to Russia. The issue of Armenia’s “creation”, or rather, “statehood”, was raised during the Berlin Congress of 1878 and was not resolved before the early twentieth century by superpowers – Russia, England, and the USA [*F.M.*, see Chapter 6 of this monograph]. In order to achieve this goal, the Armenian Church was purposefully relocated to Etchmiadzin in the fifteenth century, closer to the Albanian regions, the lands of historical Azerbaijan.

And therefore, the following inappropriate statement does not stand up to criticism: ‘according to the Treaty of Turkmenchay of 1828, Eastern Armenia became part of the Russian Empire’. Where did the Eastern Armenia come from, I wonder, and how it became part of the Russian Empire?! And the theses cited are fully contradictory to the following premise: ‘The Armenian Church functioned in accordance with a special Statute (The Code of Laws of the Armenian Church) approved by Emperor Nicholas I in 1836. *This document, in particular, abolished the Albanian Catholicosate which had lost its independence. Its dioceses became part of the Etchmiadzin Catholicosate*’. It was its dioceses, i.e. the dioceses of the Albanian Church, that were in the Karabakh, Yerevan, and Nakhchivan khanates. And the Statute of 1836 testifies to the existence of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church.

Now let us briefly summarize the history of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church.

The Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church gave guidance to and cared for the Albanian ethnos from the fourth century until 1836 without fail. Initially, from the fourth to the eighth century, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church was the single church of the entire Albanian kingdom, and after the collapse of the Albanian state, the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church served the Albanian ethnos in the revived Albanian kingdoms: Artsakh, Utik, Shaki, and Aran. The Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, unlike the Armenian Church, had never left its domain, its Albanian kingdoms, principalities, its Albanian ethnos, just as the Albanian ethnos, with some exceptions (emigration), remained on its historical homeland. Only the tsarist policy could suppress its activity and liquidate it. The primary sources testify to the aspiration of the Armenian clergy and the Armenian secular nobility to establish relations with the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church. Example: when Armenian prince Ashot Bagratuni declared himself king in the tenth century, the Armenians asked the Albanian clergy, Albanian Catholicos, and Albanian king Philippe to attend this event, as Smbat Sparapet reports,¹⁰⁶ apparently to recognize the legitimacy of Ashot Bagratuni’s power. This is reported by another Albanian author Kirakos Gandzaketsi.¹⁰⁷ Vardan Areveltsi- Aghuanetsi, as mentioned, provides

information that back in the 10th–12th centuries, there were twelve independent churches, including the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church. ‘Vardan gives these church-families: Greek, Roman, Babylonian, Egypt, Ethiopians, Indians, Syriac, Armenian, Sarakeer / Arabic, Persian, Albanian and Georgian’.¹⁰⁸

So, the juxtaposition of the realities shows that the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church had not been subordinate to the Armenian Church until 1836.

§ 3. Aguen Canons as the oldest monument of Albanian law

a) Manuscripts, editions and translations of the Aguen Canons. Literature review

The oldest written evidence of the Albanian law, that has come down to us, is the canonical decrees of the Aguen Council convened in the fifth century by Albanian king Vachagan III in Aguen.¹⁰⁹ The Aguen canons are a monument of great importance, the only surviving historical and legal document of early medieval Albania, which reveals the social and legal relations of various social strata. These canons exist in the Old Armenian language, which is quite obviously a translation of the Albanian original that remains unknown.

There is no independent edition of the Aguen Canons. They were published as part of “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi and of the “Armenian Book of Canons” (“Kanonagirk”).¹¹⁰

The decrees of the Aguen Council were published in 1838 in Latin together with Armenian canons by A. Ancharakyan. In the twentieth century, the Aguen Canons were repeatedly published as part of Kanonagirk. In 1912–1903, M.Ormanyan published the Aguen Canons again as part of the Armenian canons.¹¹¹ In 1914, A. Klytchyan published Kanonagirk in Old Armenian in Tiflis.

Since the Aguen Canons were not included in the original edition of Kanonagirk (of the eighth century), V.Hakobyan did not include them in Volume I of the newest edition of the Armenian Book of Canons.

As part of Kanonagirk, the Aguen Canons have been preserved in a large number of manuscripts. The oldest Armenian manuscript of Kanonagirk that has come down to us and includes the Aguen Canons was copied in 1098 in Cilicia.¹¹² Today, this manuscript, numbered 131, is kept in the Surb Amenaprkich Vank (Holy Saviour) monastery on the outskirts of Isfahan, in New Julfa.¹¹³ And the oldest HA manuscript which includes the Aguen Canons dates back, as is known, to 1289. Thus, the oldest handwritten text of the Aguen Canons has not come down to us in the HA, but in the Kanonagirk manuscript. The Aguen canons were apparently translated into Armenian and included in Kanonagirk in 1098.

As is known, Kanonagirk was first compiled by Hovhannes Odznetzi in 719–725 based on translated and original canonical texts. Kanonagirk did not survive in its original version in manuscripts, for over time it was enriched by the additions of other texts.

Besides, the sequence of parts was changing. According to M.Ormanyanyan,¹¹⁴ N.Akinyan¹¹⁵ and V.A.Hakobyan,¹¹⁶ the Aguen Canons were not initially included in Odznetsi's Law code, therefore, they were added to this work later. According to Mechitarist N.Akinyan, Odznetsi was not even familiar with the canons of the Aguen Council because no one knew about them.¹¹⁷ We believe that Odznetsi did not include the Aguen Canons in Kanonagirk because he correctly regarded them as non-Armenian, created in a non-Armenian ethnic and religious setting. He did not include other Albanian canons in his Law code, in particular, the canons of Albanian Catholicos Simeon (703–705) who lived in the same period. Odznetsi did not view the Albanian canons as belonging to the Armenian legal science. Let's note, by the way, that Arsen Klytchyan in his edition of Kanonagirk divides the sources of Armenian canon law into the following four groups: 1) canons of National Councils and the Holy Fathers; 2) *Albanian canons*; 3) apostolic canons, and 4) canons of the three ecumenical councils.

A.L.Melikset-Bekov, speaking about the national sources of the Armenian canon law, describes the Aguen canons as follows: 'The national sources of Armenian canon law should include all rules and regulations resulting from the legislative activity of the Armenian Church, represented by its local councils and Catholicoi-patriarchs. This category of sources, *in our opinion, also includes the canons of the autonomous church of the Armenized part of Albania, as well as the ancient Armenian lawcodes*'.¹¹⁸

Probably, the Albanian canons were included into Kanonagirk only after the Albanian Church finally lost its autocephaly and was in fact subordinated to the Armenian Church. And this happened in 1836. Many scholars adverted to the canons of the Aguen Council in connection with the aspects of the social system and the spread and establishment of Christianity in Albania.

Z.I.Yampolsky carried out an analysis of the Aguen Canons in K.Patkanov's translation in 1953.¹¹⁹ In his opinion, the Aguen Council recorded new legal relations, establishes a number of regulations in the state and family law. The author comes to the reasonable conclusion that 'the Aguen Council structured the feudal foundations of the new religion and thus contributed to the further development of feudal relations in Albania'.¹²⁰

N.Akinyan, in his study of the Aguen Canons, offers his own dating. He casts doubt on the very existence of Albanian king Vachagan III the Pious, considering him an invention of the author, or rather the compiler, of the HA, and dates the Aguen Council to the first half of the fifth century, between 415 and 459.¹²¹ Based upon the study of the Aguen Canons' language, N.Akinyan believes that the latter were written in Classical Armenian.¹²²

Some attention has been given to the Aguen Canons in the works of S.T.Yeremian,¹²³ K.V.Trever,¹²⁴ Z.M. Bunyatov,¹²⁵ and T.Mammadov.¹²⁶ Each of these researchers did not go beyond the analysis of a couple of canons.

A.G.Sukiasyan considered the Canons from the legal point of view. His work was essentially about classifying the canons according to their characteristic features. He defined the norms of criminal and judicial law.¹²⁷

The Aguen Canons are also in the focus of a lengthy piece by S.H.Hovannisian.¹²⁸ The author sets two goals: determining the time of creating the Canons and their main source. The author proves that the Aguen Canons were not adopted under Vachagan III the Pious in

488 (as is traditionally believed), but under Vachagan II in 372–387. Further, the author finds that the Aguen Canons were based on the Ashtishat canons (356) after comparing them with the Armenian canons of the Sahapiwan and Ashtishat Councils (For a detailed criticism of his work, see Chapter I).

In 1969, B.A.Ulubabyan published a paper dedicated to the time of the creation of the Aguen Canons.¹²⁹ The article is an attempt to refute S.Hovannisian's concept and prove the correctness of the traditional date.

I find S.H.Hovannisian and B.A.Ulubabyan's arguments unpersuasive and dwell upon them in detail separately¹³⁰ (See Chapter 1).

The Aguen Canons are the only surviving written source that contains information on the social structure of Albania, on Christianity, church organization, relations between estates, and legal science. Due to the insufficient knowledge of these issues, a thorough examination of the Aguen Canons is required, as well as the use of other sources.

Our duty is to determine the time of the creation of the written monument, the historical prerequisites that led to the creation of the canons, and, if possible, provide a detailed commentary on them. The translation and analysis of the Aguen Canons is based on all existing editions of the HA and Kanonagirk published by A.Klytchyan.

By the time when the Aguen Canons were adopted, both translated and original canonical texts that expressed the needs and interests of the church already existed in Albania, Armenia and Georgia: the translation of the Bible with its legal regulations, the canonical rules of the ecumenical councils, which were binding upon all Christians (the Council of Nicaea of 325, Constantinople of 381, Ephesus of 431), decrees of local councils (the Synod of Ancyra of 314, of Neo-Caesarea of 315, of Gangra of the fourth century, Antioch of 341, and Laodicea of 365).

Armenia adopted the regulations of the Ashtishat Council (354–356), the canons of Sahak the Parthian (387–439), of the Sahapiwan Council (444).

The need for the creation of the Albanian canons arose under some influence of the legal codes of the ecumenical councils and as a result of the internal social development in Albania. There must have existed other canons in Albania by the time of the Aguen Canons. Anyway, the text of the Aguen Canons (Canons 15, 16)¹³¹ which mention the punishment of the priest and deacon according to the canons, attests to the application of some canons before the Aguen Council. At the same time, the actual content of the canon, the nature of the punishment is not covered. Apparently, these were well-known canons by that time. Perhaps, of course, the text implies some common or other rules, but equally these could be canons of the local origin. What were the historical prerequisites for the convocation of the Aguen Council?

Being dominated by the Sassanids, Albania suffered severe economic, political, cultural, and religious oppression. As is known, the Sassanids strove for the complete enslavement of the Caucasian peoples and their cultural assimilation. This is why, starting from the early fourth century, the Sassanids attempted to stifle the growth of Christianity both within the country and among neighboring peoples, and to promote Mazdeism by whatever means at their disposal. Taking advantage of the political weakness of the peoples – Albanians, Armenians, and Iberians – as well as of the Byzantium's wars with Attila and church strife, Persian king Yazdegerd II (438–457) breaks with the policy of relative

tolerance¹³²: he aspires to establish Zoroastrianism as a national religion with stakes and incentives. Yazdegerd II imposes new taxes on the Christians subject to him – the Albanians, Armenians, and Iberians. Yazdegerd II took a number of steps to reduce the church and clergy's influence by removing the church's privileged position, weakening its economic strength and therefore, weakening it politically. The church and clergy, traditionally exempt from state taxes, were levied with tribute. Along with the introduction of Mazdeism, Persian judicial laws came into force.

An attempt at the economic and religious enslavement of Albania, Armenia, and Iberia resulted in the anti-Sassanid uprisings of 451, 457,¹³³ and 481–484.

Persia was exhausted by both these uprisings and the wars with the Hephthalites; so upon the accession of Valarsh it was forced to recognize the Christian peoples' right to practice their religion. Albania, in addition, had restored its political independence. The Albanian Arsacids regained their power in the person of Vachagan III the Pious. The reign of Vachagan the Pious was a political, cultural, and religious revival of Albania. He first of all sought to achieve religious unity in the country, to make Christianity a universal state religion. Given the political role of the independent Albanian Church in opposing foreign religious and political influences and the assimilationist policy of foreign forces, Vachagan III considered it necessary to strengthen the shaky foundations of this church, to strengthen it economically. And this could be done by adopting the Albanian church legal norms.

With all that in mind, Vachagan the Pious convened the Aguen Council. On the one hand, the Aguen Council was supposed to help strengthen the independence of the Albanian Church. Therefore, the Aguen Canons aimed at strengthening religious rites, creating a material base for the clergy, legalizing the material and religious obligations of the flock to the church, asserting the rights and duties of the clergy, and eradicating the remnants of non-Christian beliefs.

On the other hand, as noted in Chapter 3, § 1, Vachagan III resorted to the Aguen Canons to strengthen the state power, curb the self-willed azats, equalize the clergy with the secular nobility, settle the relations of the taxable estate with the secular nobility and the clergy, achieve religious unity of all estates to preserve the political independence of the country, and fight against foreign influence.

So, in light of the above, it becomes clear that the adoption of the Aguen Canons was a historical necessity.

b) The content of the Aguen Canons. Comments and sources

The canonical charter developed and adopted at the Aguen Council consists of an introduction and 21 articles. The introduction sets out the reasons for convocation of the Council.

‘In the reign of Vachagan, king of Albania, a great dispute arose among the laymen and the bishops and priests, chorepiscopi, azats and ramiks (commoners). And the king decided to convoke a large council at Aguen on the thirteenth day of the month of Mareri’.¹³⁴

The council was thus convened to take urgent measures against the troubles that arose between the laity and the clergy, between the secular nobility – the azats – and the ramiks – the commoners. The Canons must have not come down to us in full edition as the above “disputes between the azats and the ramiks” are not mentioned in the Canons. The council was attended by Vachagan, the king of Albania, azgapets-nahapets, all the azats, hramanatar, hazarapet, and the clergy.

The fact that the decisions of the Aguen Council had the legal force is evidenced by the following passage: ‘I, Vacagan, king of Albania, (list of the church and secular nobility), consecrated thus – ‘kargetsak aispes’.¹³⁵ The canons end in the same way: ‘As confirmation of this writ, a seal was affixed (zais hraman matanetsin)’¹³⁶ – again followed by the list of the nobility headed by the Albanian king.

Moving on to the analysis of the canons, one can distinguish four groups: 1) clergy-related canons (relations between clergy, their rights and duties); 2) canons governing the relations between the clergy and the secular nobility; 3) canons regulating relations between the clergy and the laity; 4) purely legal canons.

Let's consider the first group of canons (canons 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16). Canon 1 reads: ‘Village priests¹³⁷ are to pay homage to their bishop twice a year and are to learn the spiritual rules from him according to the Scripture;¹³⁸ and in accordance with the rule, they shall bring him a yearly gift’.¹³⁹

Apparently, this canon was not new for Albania, it was not introduced for the first time, because it says: ‘in accordance with the rule, they shall bring him a yearly gift’. For this reason, the canon does not specify the amount and nature of the offering. However, the canon does not only prescribe priests to bring offerings to the bishop, but also justifies this gift by stating that the priests must ‘learn the spiritual rules from the bishop according to the Scripture’.

This canon establishes the duties of the church ministers of the lower dignity to the churchmen of the higher dignity, i.e. strengthens the church hierarchy. The second Aguen Canon is about the observance of the hierarchical principle for consecration: ‘When they are consecrated, a priest (priest rank) must give four drachmae and a deacon (deacon rank) two’.¹⁴⁰

As noted, the first group also includes canon 6 which reads: ‘Should an abbot or any monk misbehave in the monastery and be discovered, he shall be reviled and expelled and his property (the hostak) confiscated by the church’.¹⁴¹

This canon correlates with the second canon of the Armenian Sahapiwan Council convened in 444.

‘Should a *monastic priest* (kronavor yeretz)¹⁴² be convicted of filth and fornication or other malicious deeds and this be proven by witnesses, he shall be deprived of his priestly dignity (kahanayutyun)¹⁴³ and of the *church share* and fined 300 drachmas in favor of the poor. This canon applies to the priest and the deacon. And they were to do their military service and pay taxes and not mix with the clergy’.¹⁴⁴

According to the Sahapiwan canon, a priest is deprived of his “church share” in much the same way that he is deprived of a hostak which is restored to the church under the Aguen Canon, i.e. the “church share” mentioned in the Sahapiwan canon appears to be the same hostak land allotment of the Aguen canon.

Unlike the Aguen canon, the Sahapiwan canon sets out the punishment of the guilty clergyman in more detail, since the priest not only loses his place (dignity) and land allotment, but also pays a fine, becomes a taxpayer, liable for military service.

The condemnation of a guilty churchman is also addressed in Canons 15 and 16. Canon 16 reads: 'Should a priest be accused of a crime by his fellows and pupils¹⁴⁵ and they themselves be trustworthy, the priest is to stand before the altar and his accusers before the congregation, and he shall be taken from the sanctuary and driven from the village. But should his fellows¹⁴⁶ and pupils bear a grudge against him¹⁴⁷ and it be known to the congregation that they have quarreled, the priest is to celebrate a Mass¹⁴⁸ and the congregation is to drive the others out and curse them.¹⁴⁹ If they confess and say 'We have spoken falsely', they are to be made to repent and are not to be driven from the monastery. Should they hereafter cause any mischief, however, they are to be *punished in accordance with the canons (kanonyuk datestin)*.¹⁵⁰

According to Canon 15, lay people could complain about a priest or deacon to the bishop. The bishop sent the priest or deacon who confessed his guilt to repent in solitude and the one who did not confess his guilt *was judged according to the canons* and exiled from the village.

As evidenced by the above facts, some canons were in effect in Albania prior to the adoption of the Aguen Canons, to which the Aguen Council's decisions allude in cases when the clergy judges offenders when they repeatedly commit a misdemeanor again and refuse to confess their guilt. These could have been the canons of the previous Albanian councils or the so-called apostolic canons, since the few legal norms of the apostolic canons establish, as is known, the liability for false testimony and vilification of priests.

From the legal standpoint, canons 15 and 16 contain both the criminal law (concerning libel) and the judicial law (judicial evidence) norms.¹⁵¹

Canons 6, 15, and 16 are concerned with establishing the jurisdiction of the clergy – bishops and priests – over lower-ranking clergy. A guilty priest or deacon was tried by the bishop or priest. The punishment could include disroffing, withdrawal of land allotment, repentance in solitude, expulsion from the village, punishment according to the canons.

Aguen canons 7 and 9 establish a certain ratio of priests and flock, i.e. determine that the number of the flock should be proportionate to the number of priests. Canon 7 reads: 'If the fathers in one monastery be many and their congregation small, and the congregation of another monastery be large and the fathers few in number, some of [the offerings of] the large congregation are to be taken and given to the monastery in which the fathers are many'.¹⁵² This canon obviously protected the clergy's interests. Such distribution of the flock was most likely done to ensure that the clergy received the equal income from the parishioners.

Canon 9 reads: 'A priest who ministers to a large village (shen) shall not minister to another. Should two small hamlets (agaraks) be close to one another, one priest may minister to them. A priest may be a shepherd for as many as he is able to lead'.¹⁵³

We have considered the first group of canons (1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 15, 16) directly devoted to the clergy, its relationships, internal structure, and flock management.

Let's now dwell upon the canons of the second category, that regulate the relations between the clergy and the secular nobility (17, 18, 20, 21, 3).

Article 21 of the Aguen Council reads: ‘If an azat constructs an altar in his church or places relics therein or makes an offering, he shall do it as far as possible with the permission of the bishop. He who obeys this shall be blessed, and whoever does not shall be expelled from the Church and shall pay a fine to the bishop proportionate to his resources. And after this man has paid the amount of the fines as prescribed by the canons, he shall be blessed’.¹⁵⁴

This canon is similar to Canon 17 of the Sahapiwan Council of 444.

Canon 17 of the Sahapiwan Council reads: ‘If someone wants to place the relics of the martyrs, he may not place them without the permission of the bishop of the land. No one may commemorate martyrs and convene councils without the bishop's permission. And if someone brings the relics of martyrs from holy places, he must provide the bishop with a testimony and letters from the bishops of those (places) where he has brought them from and place them where appropriate with the permission of his bishop. If someone wishes to erect an altar of the Lord, then he may not erect an altar without the permission of the bishop’.¹⁵⁵

While the Aguen Canon refers to the azats, the Armenian one mentions “whoever”. But, apparently, the Sahapiwan canon refers to “whoever” from the azat estate, since the azats, due to their economic and political position, had more opportunities than the shinakans to “erect altars”, “place relics”, “celebrate Mass”, and “convene councils”. Unlike the Sahapiwan Canon, the Aguen Canon establishes punishment. Anyone who disobeyed this canon was excommunicated and fined according to the canon. This excerpt, again, refers to some canons that had been in force before the Aguen Council.

These regulations were aimed at strengthening bishops' authority and influence while also retaining their portion of the “revenue” they allegedly gained when celebrating mass, displaying martyrs' relics, or erecting an altar.¹⁵⁶

Strengthening the power of the clergy, in particular bishops, is dealt with in article 20 of the Aguen Council: ‘Azats, in so far as concerns their dastakerts, are not to presume to dismiss a priest without the bishop's consent; and the bishop may not dismiss and appoint priests without consulting them.¹⁵⁷ Should a priest be threatened by the azat or the congregation, he is not to leave without the bishop's consent’.¹⁵⁸ The canon apparently limits the azats' arbitrariness and equates the rights of the clergy with those of the azats.

A similar canon was adopted in Armenia later, in the seventh century at the fourth Council of Dvin. Article 10 of the Council disapproves of the azats who appointed priests and monks, defrocked monks and expelled them from monasteries without the consent of the clergy.¹⁵⁹

It is noteworthy that the Aguen canon depicts the fifth-century struggle between the secular and the religious feudal lords, while Armenia of the 5th century is characterized by the struggle between the clergy and the king. This, apparently, is one of the features of Albania. The conflict between the secular and spiritual nobility in Armenia was in the seventh century, as evidenced by the Dvin Council's rule.

Aguen Canon 17 reads: ‘Bishops and priests complained to the king about azats who built two or three churches or monasteries in one village,¹⁶⁰ and the azats made an agreement before the king; it was considered fitting by the king, the bishops, and the

azats that the churches which had been built should remain¹⁶¹, and that the ‘*ptug*’ and ‘*hac*’ of these should be given to the Vsam (the main) church’.¹⁶²

The canon can be interpreted in two ways. It either refers to the construction of two or three churches or monasteries in one village, which, apparently, was considered a violation, for it was probably allowed to have only one church or one monastery in one village. With such interpretation, it can be assumed that the azats, by establishing additional churches, tried to get their income – *ptug* and *has*. And therefore the canon provides for the payment of the built churches' expenses to the diocesan church.

This provision is reinforced by Article 114 of Mkhitar Gosh (the 13th century), entitled “On the construction of one church to the detriment of another”. This article reads: ‘This canonical rule is to prohibit the construction of one church to the derogation of another one out of greed, to ensure construction with the consent of the bishop and others, so that no one can turn churches into an inheritance and prevent, in appropriate cases, the construction of new ones’.¹⁶³

Finally, the creation of new churches dissipated the church income, infringed upon the material interests of the clergy. Apparently, the share of *ptug* and *has* of one church was more than if there were two or three churches in the village with their staff of churchmen. Therefore, the clergy complained to the king about the azats.

But if we assume that Aguen Canon 17 is about the transformation of two or three churches into monasteries, then such an interpretation would again be explained by the laws of Mkhitar Gosh and Smbat Constable (the 13th century), which contain important articles on the construction of the church and monastery.

‘Only the bishop has the authority to lay the foundation of the church according to the rules of Orthodoxy, either by the order of his chorebishop or peretut (the caretaker). Whoever dares to lay the foundation of a church without the permission of a bishop or chorebishop, we command to demolish it and lay it down again and thereby strictly observe the church order’, says an article of Mkhitar Gosh's Lawcode.¹⁶⁴

Mkhitar Gosh cites this rule, as he himself points out, from the canons of the subsequent fathers (Rule 18). Such regulation on the construction of a church is set out in the “Legal code” of Smbat Gundstable.¹⁶⁵

Monastery construction is dealt with in article 2 of Mkhitar Gosh's “Book of Law”: ‘Kings and princes, and also all believers, should build monasteries not for the sake of any corporeal hope but rather for a spiritual one... For he who formerly was abboth of brethren, if he builds on his own [site] a place for brethren or on [the site] of others, and he administers it well, it is illegal to transfer him. But if he does anything contrary [to the rule] with two or three witnesses it is necessary to remove him’.¹⁶⁶

So, the azats, not having the right to build churches, as follows from Mkhitar Gosh's canons, turned the existing churches into monasteries and thereby seized the monastic income.

In both readings, the canon represents the inter-class azats and the clergy's struggle on economic and political grounds. The azats sought to economically weaken the clergy by limiting the sources of their income, to increase their own income at the expense of the church.

Canons 3-5, 17-19 which govern the relationship between the clergy and the parishioners, make up the third group. Their main focus is on the material support of the clergy. The clergy levy numerous taxes from the laity – *ptug*, *tasanord*, *has* and *hoghetsatur*. The “Church taxes” section of the fourth chapter dwells in detail upon the content of these canons and their analysis.

Canons 3-5, 17-19, as noted in this section, ascend to the Bible, according to which the ancient Jews paid per capita tax, tithes, and the “first fruits” from all agricultural products to the clergy.

In addition to the canons that describe the structure and the hierarchy of the church (group I), govern the relations between the clergy and the secular nobility (group II), determine the relations between the clergy and the flock (group III), the fourth group of canons can be distinguished, which are of a purely legal nature as they set out the rules of marriage and family (canons 10, 11) and some rules of criminal law (canons 8, 11, 12, 13, 14).

Canon 8 reads: ‘Any Christian who quarrels and sheds blood is to be brought before the bishop and punished in accordance with the laws (*yst orinatsn*)’.¹⁶⁷

This canon traces back to the Bible, which states that those who shed human blood should be punished with death.¹⁶⁸ The Aguen Canon does not detail the nature of the punishment. First and foremost, it should be noted that this is the only canon of the Aguen Council, in which the punishment is determined by the law (*oren*) rather than by the canon (*kanon*). Laws, as is known, are established by state authorities, while canons are made by church councils with involvement of religious and secular nobility. Canon 8 shows that the clergy represented by the diocese head exercises their legal functions (judicial power) in particular areas of civil and criminal law and judge according to secular laws rather than canons.

Canons 10 and 11 govern marital relations.

Canon 10 reads: ‘A man may not marry a woman related to him in the third degree; he may not marry his brother's wife’.¹⁶⁹ The canon allows marriage from the fourth degree of kindred.

This canon is fully consistent with the Bible which prohibits marriages between relatives up to the third degree of kindred inclusive.¹⁷⁰

Christianity, like the Mosaic Law, viewed such marriages as an incest, a crime, and condemned them harshly. These rules are included in Article 34 of the so-called “apostolic canons”.¹⁷¹ This biblical law is set out in Articles 54 and 55 of the fifth-century Syro-Roman Law Book.¹⁷²

The Armenian Church also prosecuted such marriages and increasingly widened the circle of those who were not allowed to marry.¹⁷³ Canon 3 of the Ashtishat Council (the fourth century) condemned marriages between close relatives, especially with daughters- and sisters-in-law, i.e. with the brother's wife, with the son's wife.¹⁷⁴ However, the Ashtishat Council does not specify to what degree of relation the prohibition applies. Canons 12 and 13 of the Sahapiwan Council of the fifth century prohibit marriages up to the fourth degree of kinship,¹⁷⁵ i.e. including the third degree, like in Albania. This is natural, as all Christians must have followed the same rules in this regard. Article 16 of the Albanian Council of Partaw (eighth century) extended the interdiction to the fourth degree, allowing marriages to be contracted between the relatives of the fifth degree of kinship.¹⁷⁶

According to the following canons, pre-Christian traditions and levirate were still practiced in Albania in the 5th century, as they were in other Christian countries. The Aguen Canon, like other national canons, was aimed at abolishing archaic marriage customs in favor of Christian church marriage.

Unlike the Sahapiwan Canon which established the most severe punishment for such marriages – excommunication, the Aguen Canon was limited itself only to a strict prohibition. Obviously, all Christians faced the same penalties for such a transgression.

According to the HA, marriages between close relatives took place in Albania later as well, in the eighth century,¹⁷⁷ but these were evidently rare events, as the HA makes no other mention of them.

Thus, the HA reports that Albanian ishkan Varazoy, the grandson of Varazman, married Vardanuhi, the granddaughter of the same Varazman, i.e. his first cousin. The Albanian clergy headed by Albanian Catholicos Michael cursed the house of Varazo and anathematized Iberian Catholicos Talile who blessed this “lawless marriage”. It is noteworthy that, in reprimanding Talile, the Albanian clergy did not refer to the Aguen Canon, but to the canonical decisions of Athanasius of Alexandria and Basil the Great.¹⁷⁸ The Albanian clergy viewed this marriage as a violation of the general Christian canon, a violation of Christian church marriage, rather than of the local ethnic canon. Finally, this passage reveals the source for Albanian ecclesiastical law.

The Albanian clergy were guided directly by the canonical decrees of the ecumenical councils of the universal church in solving general issues of the Christian religion.

The marriage and family law is also dealt with in the first half of Aguen Canon 2: ‘He who abandons his wife without cause, or lives with a woman outside wedlock, or is lawless or a murderer,¹⁷⁹ or one who consults wizards, is to be bound, brought to the royal court, and put to a cruel death’.¹⁸⁰ As can be seen from the canon, divorce without a reason and illegal marriage, turning to the wizards are equated with murder and punished accordingly. This is the only article that establishes the death penalty. The royal power was in charge of investigating and punishing the gravest crimes. This article thus incorporates both criminal and judicial law rules (execution of the sentence). This canon is in some aspects comparable to Canon 4 of the Armenian Sahapiwan Council, except that the Sahapiwan canon is more comprehensive, laying out all of the conditions and cases of such a divorce.

The Sahapiwan canon reads: ‘If a husband abandons his wife with children not because of her adultery or some physical flaw but because of his fornication and passion for another (woman), the judgment will be as follows: divide the children, the house, the property, the land, the water, and everything evenly, with half going to his wife. She will also be given the right to bring another husband to her home if she so desires... And the husband who abandoned his wife will be subject to a seven-year penance and a fine in favor of the church as follows: if he is an azat, the fine will amount to 300 drachmae, if he is a shinakan, he will be whipped and will pay a fine in favor of the church in the amount of 100 drachmae for neglecting the blessed marriage’.¹⁸¹

Unlike the Sahapiwan Canon, the Aguen Canon provides for a harsh punishment – the death penalty – without regard for social status.

The second half of Aguen Canon 11 condemns murder. The article concerning murder apparently ascends to the Bible: ‘Anyone who takes the life of a human being is to be put to

death'.¹⁸² Canon 11 also forbade consulting sorcerers, which was considered apostasy and punished in the same way as for murder, i.e. with death penalty. This canon must also be based on biblical law: 'A man or a woman who is a medium or a necromancer shall surely be put to death; they shall be stoned with stones; their blood shall be upon them'.¹⁸³

The Armenian Church also persecuted the use of the sorcerers, according to Canon 9 of the Sahapiwan Council. But unlike the biblical law and the Aguen canon, the Armenian canon established a monetary fine: 200 drachmae for the azats in favor of the poor, for shinakan 100 drachmae and 15 baton strikes and a three-years' penance for both.¹⁸⁴

Canon 12 of Aguen Council is also dedicated to persecution of the pre-Christian vestiges: 'Of those who mourn for the dead head of the house – let them be bound, brought to the royal court, and punished; and let not their families dare to lament afterwards'.¹⁸⁵

Canon 12 criminalizes the pre-Christian mourning rite. Canon 11 of the Sahapiwan Council forbade entering the church for such practice for a year and established a fine of 100 drachmae for the azats and 50 drachmae for the shinakans in favor of the church.¹⁸⁶

According to Aguen canons 11 and 12, pre-Christian practice is tried by the royal court, according to the Armenian canons, however – by the church [for lack of the royal power and the royal court. – *F.M.*]. Another feature of the Aguen Canons is that they did not provide for a guilty verdict.

Canons 13 and 14 of the Aguen Council deal with church rituals. Canon 13 reads: 'The priest and the congregation are to punish him who eats carrion or eats meat during Lent or works on Sundays and does not go to church'.¹⁸⁷

The prohibition to eat carrion is mentioned back in the Mosaic Law. 'Whoever eats from the carcass must wash his clothes and will be unclean until evening'.¹⁸⁸ 'Whoever eats a beast that died by itself, or that was torn asunder by beasts, whether he be a native or an alien, shall wash his clothes and bathe in water and he shall be unclean until the evening. Then he shall be clean'.¹⁸⁹ Canon 4 of the Armenian Ashtishat Council also forbade eating the dead body of an animal and drinking its blood.¹⁹⁰

Aguen Canon 13 is aimed at eradicating the remnants of paganism and establishing Christian rituals. The same purpose is pursued by Canon 14 of the Aguen Council: 'He who eats meat on the Wednesday and Friday is to fast for one week before Lent'¹⁹¹ and should someone go to the priest and declare that the man is not complying with this, the elder of the village is to seize an ox belonging to the man and give it to the priest'.¹⁹² According to Canons 13 and 14, the violator of these religious requirements is to be punished by the priest together with the parishioners or the foreman of the village is to take a bull from him in favor of the church. Both Canon 13 and Canon 14 set out the rules of criminal law.

The Aguen Canons say very little about the civil law provisions. This can apparently be accounted for by the fact that civil relations were governed mainly by customary law.

The sources of the Albanian Church's canon law, as well as those of the Armenian and Georgian ones, were: 1) external, adopted rules, common with those of other churches of the Christian East; 2) rules developed and established by the Albanian Church. The first category includes, first of all, the biblical laws, particularly the Mosaic laws. The biblical rules as "the God's law" were declared "unshakable", "eternal", were regarded as the basis for church legislation¹⁹³ and therefore were introduced into the regulations of ecclesiastical canon law.

The external sources also include the ante-Nicene, the so-called apostolic canons; canons adopted by the first three ecumenical councils (of Nicaea in 325, Constantinople in 381, Ephesus in 431); the canons of the “holy fathers” – Basil the Great, Athanasius of Alexandria, etc.¹⁹⁴ Prior to the Council of Chalcedon, the decrees of the ecumenical councils, the rules of the apostles and the holy church fathers were regarded binding and common to all Christian communities.

These rules were primarily dogmatic and organizational in nature, establishing the clergy's competency and the Christians' obligations. External sources also include the rules of local councils – from the Synod of Ancyra to the Council of Serdica.¹⁹⁵

The Albanian church hierarchy not only borrowed but also adopted these external principles insofar as they did not contradict the Albanian social relations or customary law.

Regardless of the degree of effect on these rules of their actual and probable sources, the Aguen canons represented Albania's social, ecclesiastical, and legal relations.

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135. “История агван”. Ibid.
136. “История агван” / изд. Н.Эмина, с.103; пер. К.Патканова, с.69; Dowsett, с.54; Канонагирк, с.197.
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139. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26.
140. “История агван” / изд. Н.Эмина, с.98; пер. К.Патканова, с.66 – “...the priest must pay four drams and a deacon, two”; Dowsett, p.51 – “when they are ordained, a priest must give 2 drams and a deacon two”.
141. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.99; пер. К.Патканова, с.67 – translates “hostak” as “son”; Dowsett, p.52 – translates “hostak” as “property”.
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143. Here, apparently, no difference is made between hiereus and priest.
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147. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова – “...but if the students were drunk”.
148. Dowsett, “celebrate a Mass”.
149. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.68 – “...celebrate a mass and the congregation is to drive the others out and curse them”; Dowsett, p.53 – “the priest is to celebrate a Mass and the congregation is to drive the others out and curse them”.
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153. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.100; пер. К.Патканова, с.67; Dowsett, p.52 – “A priest who ministers to a large village shall not minister to another. Should two small hamlets be close to one another, one priest may minister to them”.
154. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.102-103; пер. К.Патканова, с.69, Dowsett, p.54.
155. Канонагирк, с.77-79.
156. **Сукниасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.413.
157. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.69 и изд. К.Шахназаряна, с.188 – a whole line is missing: “and the bishop must not dare to remove or appoint without their approval”; Dowsett, p.53 – negation (“mi”ми) is missing “... the bischop, however, may dismiss and appoint priests without consulting them”.
158. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.102; пер. К.Патканова, с.69; Dowsett, p.63.
159. Канонагирк, с.127;
- Сукниасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.425.
160. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.68 – “They turn two or three churches to monasteries in a village”; Dowsett, p.53 – “built two or three churches or monasteries in one village...”. It seems to us that if this canon were about turning churches to monasteries, then further, too, it would refer to monasteries (“vank”) and their income and not churches (“ekegetsi”) and the church income.
161. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.68. “It was considered fitting by the king, the bishops, and the nobles that the churches which had been built should remain...”.
162. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.102.
163. Армянский судебник Мхитара Гоша / Пер. А.Паповяна, с.129-130.
164. Ibid., p.69-70.
165. **Смбат Спарпет.** Судебник, с.51.
166. Армянский Судебник Мхитара Гоша / Пер. А.Паповяна, с.36-37.
167. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.100; пер. К.Патканова, с.67; Dowsett, p.52.
168. The Bible. Leviticus, IX, 6.
169. “История агван”, кн. І, гл.26, Э., с.100; П., с.67; “No one may marry a relative; he may not marry his brother's wife”; Dowsett, p.52. “A man may not marry a woman related to him in the third degree he may not marry his brother’s wife”.
170. The Bible. Leviticus, XVIII, 6-8; XX, 17;
Армянский судебник Мхитара Гоша / Пер. А.Паповяна, с.109.
171. Канонагирк, с.232-233;
- Сукниасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.148.
172. Syrisch – gomisches; Rechtsbuch, p.95-141.
173. **Сукниасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.468.
174. Канонагирк, с.14.
175. Ibid., p.73-76.
176. Ibid., p.170; **Сукниасян А.Г.** Ibid., p.468.
177. “История агван”, кн.ІІІ, гл.13 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.359; пер. К.Патканова, с.255; Dowsett, p.204-205.
178. Ibid.
179. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.67 – “A man who abandons his wife without cause, or lives with a woman out of wedlock is a lawless manslayer”; Dowsett, p.52 – “He who abandons his wife without cause, or lives with a woman outside wedlock, or is lawless a murderer...”.
180. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.100; пер. К.Патканова, с.67; Dowsett, p.52.
181. Канонагирк, с.64; **Аревшатян С.** Шаапиванские каноны, с.341.
182. The Bible. Leviticus, XXIV, 17; Exodus, XX, 13; Book of Numbers XXXV, 16, 17, 31.
183. The Bible. Leviticus, XX, 27.
184. Канонагирк, с.67-68; **Аревшатян С.** Шаапиванские каноны, с.342.
185. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.100; пер. К.Патканова, с.67; Dowsett, p.52, in another way – “Of those who mourn for the dead, let the head of the household and the gusans be bound brought to the royal court”...
186. Канонагирк, с.69-70; **Аревшатян С.** Шаапиванские каноны, с.343.

187. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.100; пер. К.Патканова, с.67-68; Dowsett, p.52.
188. The Bible. Leviticus, XI, 40.
189. The Bible. Leviticus, XVII, 15.
190. Канонагирк , с.14.
191. “История агван” / пер. К.Патканова, с.68; Dowsett, p.52 – “Those who eat meat on the Wednesday and Friday before Lent must fast for one week”.
192. “История агван”, кн.І, гл.26 / изд. Н.Эмина, с.101; пер. К.Патканова, с.68; Dowsett, p.52.
193. **Сукиасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.437.
194. **Меликсет-Бесов Л.М.** Об источниках древнеармянского права, с.147,
Сукиасян А. Г. Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.389-390.
195. **Сукиасян А.Г.** Общественно-политический строй и право Армении, с.389-390;
Меликсет-Беков Л.М. Об источниках, с.147.

CHAPTER 6. FROM ALBANIA TO KARABAKH

§ 1. Albanian population of Karabakh-Aran in the 14th–19th centuries and its de-ethnicization

The territory of Artsakh was home to Albanians, as well as Turks and Kurds in the 14th through 19th centuries. Turkic tribes such as the Barsils, Sabirs, Huns, Khazars, and others settled in Artsakh as early as the third century.¹ Before the Mongol conquest of Azerbaijan, its inhabitants, especially the population of Aran (Karabakh), had established itself as a Turkic-speaking ethnic group, as Z.M.Bunyatov pointed out.² According to the author of the 13th century work “Ajaib ad-Dunya,” the Turks were Aran’s most populous ethnic group, with an estimated 100,000 Turkic horsemen.³ “There are so many Turkmens on Aran,” Shihab al-Din Muhammad al Nasawi (13th century) writes, “that if they get together, they will be like swarms of ants or a cloud of locusts”.⁴ Aran was “ruled by the Saracens (Muslims)”,⁵ according to the traveler Johannes de Galonifontibus.

According to sources, Albanians resided in the Caucasus with other peoples and were ethnically separate from them. The fact that Kirakos Gandzaketsi mentioned Albanians as an independent ethnic group alongside other peoples,⁶ as well as Albania alongside Georgia, in his book, is irrefutable evidence of independence of the Albanian ethnic group and later Albania.⁷

Makar Barkhudaryants, a 19th-century Albanian author, provides unique information about the events of the 14th century and 14th-century Albanian prince Gregory, the son of the great Hasan, the ruler of Albania [of Artsakh – *F.M.*] from the colophon of the Albanian Gospel, which he discovered in the Monastery of Saint Translators in Gardman. Gregory himself was the ruler of Lesser Syunik in the 14th century. “Today, as in all epochs and our lean times, there was a Christ-loving and blessed woman, Aspa, the daughter of Tarsaich, the ruler of Syunik. She was the wife of the great and glorious Prince of Princes Gregory ...during the century of global domination and reign of the people of archers, who dominated from the Pontic Sea to the Caspian Sea and from the Euphrates River to a portion of the Caucasus Mountains, which was ruled by khan-autocrat nicknamed the Conqueror of Harpand in 761 (1312). Meanwhile, a great and noble person with a princely descent and dignity emerged from a great clan and a legion of the illustrious. He was Grand Prince Gregory, the ruler and baron of Lesser Syunik, Handaberd and Akan and the High Lake of Gegham, from Zod to Shahdag /Mrav and the Gegham Great Mountain Range, who married Aspa, the daughter of Prince Tarsaich. He had sons and daughters with her, one of whom was Sarkis, whom he had consecrated to Christ since he was a youngster. The latter followed his soul’s calling and rose through the ranks of clergy with dignity,

eventually becoming Bishop of Khachen; in addition to the secular authority inherited from his forefathers, he also assumed spiritual authority. Thus, this year, *id est* in 760 (1311), Aspa passed from this world to Christ and was buried in a tomb in the sacred community of the Khatar Monastery [Hatra or Hatravank. – *U.H.*]. Hence, Grand Baron Gregory lavished her tomb with numerous presents, villages, and fields ...and also beautifully embellished this sacred Gospel with a gold frame and bestowed it on her grave and in memory of his forefathers (*M.Barkhudaryants*, “*Artsakh*”, II, p.304-306). *M.Barkhudaryants* reports that Aspa was the daughter of Tarsaich, the Grand Prince of Syunik from the famous Orbeli family, and Mina-khatun, the daughter of Prince of Albania (Khachen) Jalal. As for Prince Gregory Dopyan, the husband of Aspa, he was “the son of the Grand Prince Hasan, the ruler of Aghuan” (*M.Barkhudaryants*, “*Artsakh*”, II, p.205-207, 211).⁸ The colophon reveals the family ties of Khachen and Syunik rulers, which increased the power of the princes – the rulers of these two Albanian regions.

Furthermore, Thomas of Metsoph, an Armenian historian from the 14th to 15th century who witnessed Tamerlane’s conquest of the Caucasus, has preserved knowledge about the Albanians. According to him, Tamerlane camped in Karabakh in 1386, and he resettled 10,000 Albanians in Khorasan and Afghanistan in 1399. According to Esayi Hasan Jalalyan (an Albanian author from the 18th century), in the Khorasan and Kandahar districts, there was an Afghan tribe coming from Caucasians – the Aghuan clan – who were resettled by Timur Lenk in 25 households. These Aghuans were originally Christians, but were converted to the Mohammedan faith after a period of time. Following his conquest of Kandahar, Shah Abbas the Great subjected these Aghuans to his rule.⁹

In the 15th century, Karabakh-Artsakh and Syunik became part of the state of Qara Qoyunlu established on the territory of historical Azerbaijan by Jahan Shah (1436–1476). After Jahan Shah’s death in a battle with Uzun Hasan, the leader of the Aq Qoyunlu tribal union, Karabakh-Artsakh and Syunik, like the rest of the Qara Qoyunlu domains, became part of the new state. Jahan Shah had already bestowed the title “melik” on the House of Hasan Jalal in the 15th century, which also applied to the Hasan Jalal clan’s offshoots. The clan was further divided into five sub-clans (fiefdoms or melikdoms). This is how the following five (Khamsa) Albanian melikdoms were formed: Gulistan, Jraber, Khachen, Varanda, Dizak.*

From the 15th century till 1836, Hasan Jalal clan members were virtually invariably hereditary spiritual rulers of the Albanian people – the Catholicoi of the Albanian

* The title “melik” was appended to the surnames of the owners of the principalities. For example, the Melik-Aslanovs and Melik-Yeganovs. It is worth noting that meliks were originally characteristic only of Artsakh-Karabakh, but later they also appeared in Sheki, Lori, Shamshaddil, Tiflis, Kakheti and Kartli. After the abolition of the Albanian Church in 1836, the following family names were formed from one Albanian Melik clan (patronymic unit) according to their religion: Muslim-Turkic, Orthodox-Georgian and Armenian-Gregorian. For example, Azerbaijani Melik-Aslanovs, Armenian Melik-Yeganovs, etc. In a letter to the Russian emperor, the Meliks of Karabakh refer to themselves as “heirs of the Albanian Arsacids”. In Azerbaijan, descendants of the Hasan Jalal clan (both Muslims and Gregorianized Armenians) recognize their Albanian ancestry and keep the legacy of the past alive.

Autocephalous Church (in Gandzasar). Between the 16th and 18th centuries, the Hasan Jalal clan continued to play a significant part in Artsakh's political and spiritual life.

In his account of the Safavid Sheikh Heydar's 1488 campaign to Shirvan and Dagestan, historian Fazlallah Khunji Isfahani mentions Karabakh-Artsakh. According to him, when Sheikh Heydar arrived in Barda region's Jalbert district (Charbert>Jraber), he "plundered it and took the property of the dhimmi community". These dhimmis – Albanian Christians – "lived in peace and were exempt from hardship and misery by paying jizya and ushr (tithe)".¹⁰ Ibn Ruzbihan notes that this district was the fiefdom (property) of the Chief Justice of the state (qadi al-qudat). The chronicler of Sultan Ya'qub's reign writes that the sovereign spent the winter time either in Tabriz or in the Garaaghaj area of Karabakh, where he fell ill and died at the end of 1490.¹¹

Karabakh-Artsakh became part of the Azerbaijani Safavid state in the 16th century as an administrative unit of the Karabakh (Ganja) beylerbeylik with Ganja as its capital. During the Ottoman-Safavid wars (1578–1590), the Albanians of Khachen-Artsakh appealed to Shah Abbas I for help and liberation from Turkish rule. Hovhannes Tzaretsi, a contemporary of the events and native of the Tsar region in the Lesser Syunik with lineage to the family of Albanian meliks, reports that the people of Khachen/Artsakh sent their Khachen prince Jalal as an envoy to Shah Abbas I with this mission. By making promises and offering high-profile titles, Shah Abbas I won over the Albanian meliks to his side. However, some of the Albanians and Albanian meliks were forcibly relocated during the Shah's retreat from Transcaucasia to the provinces and regions of Iran (1605). "The despair of the country" is described in the 1606 colophon of Hasan Jalalyan's family Gospel by Prince Jalal, son of Mehrab-bek.¹²

After another occupation of Karabakh by the troops of Shah Abbas I (1606), the Qajars returned to their original settlements and the Shah again granted the governance of Karabakh to the family of Ziyadoglu. Beylerbey Muhammad Khan died during the uprising of the Ganja population in 1614. The insurrection of the Ganja raiyah (subjects) was brutally subdued by Shah, who executed forty "rebellion leaders and relocated the rest to Mazandaran".¹³ Kelbali Khan was entrusted with authority over Kakheti when he was appointed as the beylerbey of Karabakh beylerbeylik, which included the Albanian melikdoms. In general, the administration of Karabakh (Ganja) beylerbeylik was combined with the governance of Kakheti in the second half of the 17th century. According to K.M.Rohborn, the Ganja beylerbey was also the governor (hakim) of Kakheti, ruling from his residence in Garaaghaj.¹⁴

The Albanian population of Artsakh-Khachen-Karabakh and Syunik launched a liberation movement against Persian and Ottoman-Turkish dominance in the late 17th and early 18th century. This movement was led by Israel Ori, David Beg and the Albanian Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalalyan – descendants of the old princely royal line of Khachen and representatives of the Albanian Melik clans of Karabakh and Zangazur (Syunik). They pinned their hopes on Russia in search of liberation. Israel Ori traveled to Germany, Italy, France, and Russia in an attempt to persuade European governments, as well as Peter I, who vowed to help, to support his plan. As previously stated, the Albanian meliks were supposed to join Peter I's army in Shamakhi, together with Georgian troops led by

Georgian monarch Vakhtang VI. However, as is well known, Peter I's campaign to Shamakhi did not materialize.¹⁵

In 1723, ordinary Albanians also turned to Peter I: "...The last and lowest servant of Isaiah of the province of Parantu and the village of Gulustan with all Afghan > Aghuan [Albanian] peoples ...inform Your Majesty with a broken heart and tears that before this we have suffered many misfortunes, harms and ravages from *faithless Christians...*"¹⁶

In the 17th century, an Albanian peasant revolt led by Mikhli (Mehlu) Baba broke out in Karabakh-Artsakh against the spiritual and secular feudal lords. Zakaria Sarkavag reported the details of this movement (History, II). Mikhli Baba preached a full rejection of riches, calling for the clergy to be expelled and no tributes to be paid to them. The movement spread from Karabakh to Iravan. Peasants from Muslim communities also joined the campaign. "This movement brought together Armenian [read as "Albanian" – *F.M.*] and Azerbaijani peasants in their fight against landowners."¹⁷ According to Zakaria Sarkavag (History, II), the Albanian patriarch, the Etchmiadzin patriarch, and the Erivan khan all opposed Mikhli Baba's preaching. Mikhli Baba sought refuge from persecution with the ruler of Ganja, Davud Khan. However, the Erivan Khan expelled Mikhli Baba from Erivan and exiled him to Asia Minor.

Nader Shah (1736) dealt harshly with the Karabakh people after his coronation. He subordinated the Gazakh and Borchali provinces, which were originally affiliated to Karabakh beylerbeylik, along with their feudal governors, to the king of Kartli Teimuraz II. The Javanshir, Otuziki, and Kebirli tribes were ordered to relocate to the Saraskh area of Khorasan province, near the Afghan border. Meanwhile, the Albanian meliks (Khamsa) were granted "freedom" so that they submitted directly to the Shah rather than the Ganja-Karabakh beylerbeys.¹⁸ In the mountainous region of the Karabakh Khanate, five vassal melikdoms of Christian Albanian feudal lords continued to exist. The local Christian meliks and rulers of Shaki and Shirvan were concerned about Panah Ali Khan's construction of the Bayat Castle and the Karabakh Khanate's growing authority. They agreed to oppose Panah Ali Khan together. "Panah Khan is building a stronghold and erecting fortifications," Meliks warned the Shaki Khan Haji Chalabi (a Muslim), whose roots go back to one of the Albanian Melik clans. "If his project is not halted in time, it will be hard to resist him later."¹⁹ After the Karabakh meliks' letter, the Shaki khan and his allies from Shamakhi besieged Bayat and stormed it many times over the course of a month, but to no avail. Except for melik Shahnazar of Varanda, who was a relative of Panah Ali Khan, the khan used force to subordinate the other meliks. The latter showed only outward submission.²⁰

Ibrahim Khalil Khan, the khan of Karabakh, considered it important, first of all, to win acceptance of his authority from the five Christian Albanian meliks, who had previously shown obedience to Panah Ali Khan, but after his death behaved almost independently. Among the Karabakh meliks, melik Esayi of Dizak, melik Mejlum of Jraberd and melik Abov of Gulustan were particularly active. Defending their position as major feudal lords, they sought complete political freedom and independence from Ibrahim Khalil Khan. It was for this reason that the khan had to wage war against the meliks.²¹ Only two of the five Karabakh meliks – Shahnazar of Varanda and Mirza Khan of Khachen –

chose to submit to Ibrahim Khan without a battle. A lengthy and arduous battle with the other three meliks ensued, with Ibrahim Khalil Khan eventually triumphing.²²

During the reign of Russian Empress Catherine II, the question of liberating the Karabakh melikdoms came to the fore once more. On this matter, Potemkin's project reads: "...taking advantage of the Persian turmoil to occupy Baku, Derbent and other lands, annex Gilan and call the occupied territory Albania, as it was before – the future legacy of the Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich".²³

It is worth noting that the Russian administration intended to restore the Albanian kingdom rather than the Armenian one, paying tribute to historical truths and devising specific plans. "We can gain great benefits from this and peacefully establish an Armenian province [apparently, the city of Erivan with its surroundings, which was the hereditary possession of the Azerbaijani khan, but probably had an insignificant Armenian minority. – *F.M.*] and the part that should constitute Albania, also the kingdom of Irakli", Potemkin wrote to Bezborodko in a letter.²⁴ Thus, Russian interests in the Caucasus in the 18th century included the formation of three Christian states. Russian commander A.V.Suvorov had blood ties to the Karabakh meliks. This explains his interests and his support for the Karabakh meliks. His plans also included the liberation of lands belonging to the Karabakh meliks and lands of the Erivan Khanate.

The Karabakh Khanate's situation deteriorated after 1797 as a result of the last two Iranian invasions and civil strife. The khanate's economic life was shattered, many peasant farms were destroyed, and some subjects fled. In terms of politics, the Karabakh Albanian meliks' Russian orientation became increasingly apparent; at their request, "it was proposed to expel the Shusha Khan Ibrahim from Karabakh and Karadag, and establish an Albanian province independent of anyone other than Russia...", and entrust administration to one of the most respected meliks.²⁵

Colophons of the Albanian Gospels from the Albanian churches, which trace the succession and continuity in office of the Albanian Catholicoi in the 16th–18th centuries, are an important source for the reconstruction of the history of the Albanian Church of the 16th–18th centuries, its monasteries and churches; each of them reads "to the patriarchate of the house of Aghuan" and then gives the name of the Catholicos. The colophons in question are valuable because they can be used to recreate and supplement the lists of Albanian patriarchs-Catholicoi. The article "Albanian Church", written by Armenian authors under the initials E.N.G. and published in the Orthodox Encyclopedia,²⁶ provides a list of Albanian patriarchs, except for Albanian Catholicos Gregory (1645–1650). This creates a chronological gap in the list. His name is, however, mentioned in the colophons of the Gospels, and the colophons are a reliable source.²⁷

The evangelical colophons of the Albanian churches are significant because they allow tracing the presence of two independent churches – Albanian and Armenian – operating in completely different territories and having different dioceses headed by equal fellow diocesans up to and including the 18th century. M.Barkhudaryants's work reveals that the Albanian Catholicosate was autonomous even in 1828 (*M.Barkhudaryants, "Artsakh", I, p.5*).²⁸ This refutes the claim in the article "Albanian Church" (in the Orthodox Encyclopedia) that the Albanian Catholicosate was abolished by the tsar's decree in 1815 and was already replaced by two dioceses. The motive of the authors (or the author) of this article, who rush

to liquidate/abolish the Albanian Autocephalous Church (with its ethno-cultural heritage) and misdate this shameful and unprecedented act in the history of Christianity to 1815 rather than 1836, raises certain questions.

Let us have a look at a couple more colophons. The colophons of several gospels preserved in the St. Illuminator church in the village of Metz-Banants in Gardman province read: “In 1101 (1652), ...this was written in the country of Dzegam in the village of Melikzat, under a warrant from Holy Theotokos and St. Thomas and another holy martyr...”; “During Great Lent in 1245 (1796), Georgian king Heraclius of Tiflis attacked Ganja together with the Shamshaddin army, Ibrahim Khan of Shusha, and Lezgins. Javad Khan, the local ruler, had barely escaped Kala. They fought numerous battles but were unable to defeat him. The Shamshaddin Sultan issued an order and arrived with his troops in the mountain villages. He betrayed us with a false pledge. They captured us and put us to death. Those of us who escaped dispersed in different directions but were unable to find shelter”. “In 1252 (1803), the Russians came to Ganja, remained for one month, seized it in an hour, and slaughtered 300 people within an hour and a half” (*M.Barkhudaryants, “Artsakh”, II, p.296-298*).

As we can see, the colophon of this last Gospel contains a very detailed description of historical events in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, including the battle between Javad khan of Ganja and Georgian king Heraclius II, Ibrahim khan of Shusha and Lezgins, the capture of Ganja by the Russian troops, as well as the disasters associated with these wars and epidemics. The following line of the colophon's author is particularly noteworthy: “at this time, we renewed this holy Gospel, in memory of ours and our parents”.

Memorable records in the Albanian Gospels of the Albanian churches were a kind of continuation of the Albanian historical and literary tradition and unique chronicles. The study of the colophons of these Gospels demonstrates that the Albanian Gospels were written both during the heyday of the Albanian principality and Albanian culture, as well as during the years of invasions by various conquerors and periods of epidemics and famine. They recorded all the historical events that occurred to the Albanians of various districts, particularly Artsakh. It is important to note that the events were synchronized with the events of neighboring countries, continuing the Albanian tradition of synchronizing events in order to convey the ethnic group's history to its descendants. Only the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church managed to preserve manuscripts and Gospels, as well as coordinate and unite the Christian Albanian population de-facto until 1828 and de-jure until 1836, in the face of constant invasions, wars, and the absence of its own Albanian state.²⁹ Thus, the Gospels and colophons were bearers of the ethnic group's historical memory. It is fair to say that, in his detailed research and account, M.Barkhudaryants did not name a single Gospel from after 1836, when the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church was abolished and subjected to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin. This fact rightly implies that, beginning in 1828, the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin began to consistently and meticulously transform them, along with the entire Albanian heritage, into Armenian ones.³⁰

M.Barkhudaryants's statement that “in 1828, according to eyewitnesses, these [Albanian] monasteries were still inhabited and flourishing” deserves special attention (*M.Barkhudaryants, “Artsakh”, I, p.5*). From this information, it appears that Albanian

Christian religious centers were preserved and remained completely intact in the Muslim-Turkic environment until and including 1828. The Albanian monasteries of Artsakh ceased to be the center of the spiritual and religious unity of the region's Albanian Christian population after the abolition of the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church and the liquidation of the Albanian Catholicosate in 1836. After being subordinated to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin in 1836, these monasteries had no archives or libraries by the end of the 19th century; everything had mysteriously disappeared. This was because the monasteries themselves were physically destroyed, church services essentially ceased to be performed in them, and all church literature was eliminated. According to M.Barkhudaryants, even the famed Gandzasar monastery complex, the seat of the Albanian patriarch, fell into complete desolation after 1836, or rather, by the end of the 19th century (1895, the year when M.Barkhudaryants wrote his work). “...This marvelous monastery is becoming obsolete and worn-out; stones are gradually falling out and getting crushed, the roofing is damaged, the fence has collapsed in parts and has no decent doors, precious manuscripts have been plundered in large numbers, and the remaining manuscripts have become, as we have seen, victims of dampness and neglect, and because there are no literate people, no school, no monks, or even simple gospels, there has been no service at the monastery for months” [emphasis added by us – F.M.] (*M.Barkhudaryants, “Artsakh”, I, p.160*).³¹

In view of the foregoing, the attempts of Armenian scientists and the Armenian public to portray the Gandzasar Cathedral (complex) as an Armenian cathedral established in the Armenian ethnic milieu appear entirely groundless and ludicrous. If this were the case, why was it necessary for the tsarist administration to issue a separate rescript to attach the already “attached” Gandzasar to the Armenian Patriarchate? It is self-evident that there cannot be two autonomous patriarchates and two distinct churches with different ethnic designations – Albanian and Armenian – in a homogeneous ethnic environment (allegedly Armenian). In this scenario, one of them must be the Church and the patriarchate, while the other must be a bishopric of the former, administered by a bishop. This is precisely what the Armenian Church accomplished in 1836.

During the early stages of its conquest of the Central Caucasus (late 18th century), the Russian imperial government sought to strengthen its holdings, particularly in the conquered Muslim Caucasus, in order to expand further southward (into the Muslim powers – Persia and the Ottoman Empire). This was expected to be accomplished by both increasing the Christian population and establishing the following three Christian ethnopolitical formations in the region as part of the Russian Empire:

- Georgian – by uniting the lands of the current Georgian state entities.
- Albanian – by restoring one of the earliest Christian states on the basis of the autochthonous Albanian ethnic group, which had survived on the ancestral lands and preserved the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church.
- Armenian – by resettling Armenians from Iran and the Ottoman Empire.

By the early 19th century, the Russian Empire had entirely occupied Eastern and Western Georgia, abolished the autocephalous status of the Georgian Apostolic Orthodox Church (1811) and appointed a prosecutor of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church to supervise it.

In 1805, Russia conquered the Karabakh Khanate, where the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church (Monophysite) had been operating for more than 1300 years with a large flock. The Karabakh (Albanian) meliks attempted to revive the Russian (Peter I's) idea of restoring the Albanian kingdom, which Catherine II tried to implement.³² However, they did not succeed, because the geopolitical situation in the Caucasus and its environs was constantly changing, and the imperial power was searching for a model of the administrative-territorial structure of the region. With the peace treaties of Turkmenchay (with Persia) and Adrianople (with the Ottoman Empire) signed respectively in 1828 and 1829, Russia got the opportunity to resettle a large number of Persian "Armenians" [these were Albanians resettled from Karabakh to Iran in the early 17th century] and Ottoman Armenians to the occupied Azerbaijani lands, and created a new Christian ethnopolitical formation – an Armenian province – from the territory of the Nakhchivan and Erivan khanates in order to protect the imperial frontiers from Muslim adversaries in the region.

In turn, with no chance of establishing its own statehood within Persia or the Ottoman Empire, and mindful of the Christian Russian Empire's geopolitical interest in creating and using an Armenian factor, the Armenian Church sought to effectively use Russia to achieve its cherished goal. To this end, Etchmiadzin tried everything it could to establish a "Greater Armenia" on the newly gained Azerbaijani and Georgian lands that had not yet been annexed by Russia.³³

The Armenian Church became more vocal in its calls for the tsarist government to abolish the Albanian Autocephalous Church, transfer its material and cultural assets to the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church, and recognize Albanians as ethnic Armenians. The Russian government passed joint Regulations on the Armenian Gregorian Church in 1836, which included a particular article regarding the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church, stripping in the Albanian Church of its autonomy and subjecting it to Etchmiadzin. The title of Albanian Catholicos, as well as his office and archives, were all abolished.³⁴

The Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin seized Albanian ethnocultural heritage and initiated its comprehensive transformation, which was also expressed in the physical destruction of Albanian Gospels and manuscripts in all Artsakh monasteries and churches.

Similar destructive actions were carried out by the Etchmiadzin Church and Armenian scholars in Georgia against the Georgian religious and cultural heritage, as great Georgian poet I.G. Chavchavadze recounted with horror in his work "Armenian Scholars and the Crying Stones".

"A visiting publicist offers to figure out what the Russian government will ultimately construct in the Caucasus: Russia or Armenia?"³⁵ writes N.Shavrov in his paper "Russian Colonization in the Caucasus". "Among the uninvited protectors of the Armenian people, the idea of forming an *autonomous "kingdom"* and *within Russian borders* at that is *not dying away, but blazing strongly*. They didn't have territory in Turkey, so it is being created artificially in the Transcaucasia ...these politicians strived to get rid of ...the Muslim population of the region *and ruin the reputation of Muslims in order to use their lands in the future*",³⁶ said V.L.Velichko, a Russian scholar on the Caucasus, at the start of the 20th century. In order to consolidate the Armenians' position in the Caucasus, tsarism had to provide historical justifications for their presence. This might be accomplished by eradicating the ethnocultural heritage of the original Caucasian populations, particularly

Albanians and Georgians, or changing their heritage into an Armenian one. Beginning from the 1830s, the official Russian press on the Caucasus purposefully published a range of articles, historical reviews and essays about the past of the Caucasus, Georgia, historical Azerbaijan and its component part Karabakh Khanate (Artsakh), which presented the Albanian history as an integral part of the history of “Great Armenia” and noble Albanian Melik families as Armenians. Tsarist Russia used this information aggression to legitimize the autochthonous nature of Armenians in the Caucasus, thereby strengthening their position in the region and allowing Russia to fulfill its geopolitical goals in the future.³⁷ I.G.Chavchavadze was outraged by such coverage of the history of the Caucasus indigenous peoples in the Russian press: “The entire sixty-year period begins with a Russian writer and ends with a Russian writer. There are a number of Armenian scholars/writers between these two... They swear to the entire world through words and pens that there has been so-called Armenia (allegedly Somkheti, i.e. the country of Somekhs-Haykans) from time immemorial on this side of the Caucasian ridge, reaching the sources of the Tigris and the Euphrates and stretching almost from the Black Sea to the Caspian Sea”.³⁸ According to the notes of P.Kovalensky, “The Karabakh Armenian meliks, who established themselves in Georgia, namely, Melik Shahnazar's son Melik Jumshud, Melik Joseph's son Melik Abov, and Melik Beglar's son Melik Fridon are the descendants of the Meliks or lords of the Karabakh, who, as a quintet, retained the independence of their possessions after the fall of the Armenian kingdom of antiquity until the most recent times”.³⁹

G.A.Ezov claims in his book “Relations of Peter the Great with the Armenian People” that Heraclius asked Russia to take Georgia under the supreme power of the Russian state, affirm his and his descendants' right to the throne and preserve the title of Catholicos in Georgia. Although, Ezov believes that Heraclius offered to the Russian court something that did not belong to him, but rather to Persia; he asked the title of king, which he had never had under Persian rule. However, if Georgia “were not a kingdom”, as I.G.Chavchavadze puts it, “the entire title of the All-Russian Emperor would not include, inter alia, the title of “King of Georgia.” All of this is done to argue that Georgia is actually ancient Armenia”.⁴⁰

Armenian academicians and politicians misrepresented the Caucasus' historical past, present and future not just in the Russian press, but also in the international press, in order to generate the opinion suiting their needs and garner support outside the Russian Empire later on. A publication by Cutuli, a correspondent for the French Journal *Le Temps*, from 1877 is one example. According to I.G.Chavchavadze, Cutuli traveled to Tiflis and stayed there for two months to gather information about the Caucasian peoples. In Tiflis, he kept regular contact with an Armenian named Artsruni, the editor of the newspaper *Mshak* and leader of the liberal party and the Armenian “noble society”, after which he published articles about the Caucasus in the newspaper *Le Temps* for two months. “According to Cutuli, four nationalities live in Transcaucasia: Armenians, Georgians, Tatars and Russians [*there are no Albanians anymore! – F.M.*]. He writes with enthusiasm about how glorious and great the Armenians are, states that there is nothing in Georgian history that its people can be proud of, and makes no mention of Tatars or Russians, as if they did not exist. He goes on to say that by the end of the century, Armenians will

outnumber Georgians, and that the Armenians will build a monarchy with 30 million subjects in the future. “The future of the Caucasus belongs to the Armenians”, Cutuli concludes, “while the neighbors, Georgians and Tatars, have no choice but to become Armenian”.⁴¹ According to I.G.Chavchavadze, all of this information warfare intended “to prove to the world that there is only one – Armenian – nation in Transcaucasia, which has existed since ancient times and to which the future [of the region] belongs, because it has historically proven its moral and physical strength and firmness and greatness of mind. The Armenians, they say, have been summoned by God and history to revive not only the Middle East, but also the far, wild and ignorant Asia, with the banner of culture in their hands”.⁴²

The destruction of the Albanian ethnocultural heritage is a vivid example of how the Armenians “revived it with the banner of culture in their hands”. As previously said, with the help of Russia, the Armenians attempted to establish themselves in the territory of Azerbaijan and participate in the Albanian ethnocultural heritage, by assimilating the Albanians. In view of the foregoing, Russian policy envisaged the speedy Armenization of the Albanians. The main step in putting this plan into action was the abolition of the Albanian Patriarchal Autocephalous Church in 1836 and its subordination to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin, after which the Albanians became Gregorians by religion and began to be regarded as Armenians. A significant number of Albanians evaded Gregorianization/Armenization by adopting Islam, which Islamized and subsequently Turkified/Azerbaijanized them; another group of Albanians became Georgian by adopting Orthodoxy and moved to Kakheti. The de-ethnicization of the Albanians was a very complex, painful and objectionable process. An interesting document from the Russian Synod describes an Albanian seeking permission to change his religion: * he wanted to accept Lutheranism because he was considered an Armenian for adhering to Gregorianism.⁴³ There were Albanians who managed to avoid becoming Armenized. The Karabakh region was quickly populated by Armenians from Persia and Turkey. Part of the Albanians-Udi relocated to the present-day districts of Oghuz and Gabala, where they successfully resisted Gregorianization and Armenization. This is explained, among other things, by the fact that the Gabala and Oghuz districts were far from the Armenian populated area and were not included in Russia's Armenization plans. Nonetheless, the Etchmiadzin Church attempted to assimilate these Udi people by forbidding the Udi from visiting Albanian churches after 1836 (including the church/monastery named after the Apostle St.Elisæus/Elishe, the first Albanian apostle/illuminator of the 1st century, which the Udi also called “Kala Gergetz” or “Big Place of Worship”). Etchmiadzin erected a special Armenian church for the Udi in 1853, but the Udi elected to stop visiting

* The reason for the Albanian's appeal to the Synod was that in 1830, according to a Russian Empire statute, missionary work of the Catholic and Lutheran churches was prohibited among the indigenous Caucasus people, which was regulated by local authorities. These denominations could only be followed by ethnic groups from other countries. As a result, Armenian Catholic and Lutheran congregations emerged in Karabakh and Ganja. However, this ban was abolished by a manifesto on religious freedom published in 1905, hence the Albanian sought permission (I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to T.Gumbatova for providing the document (reference) – *F.M.*).

the Albanian church of Apostle Elishe, not enter the Armenian church or the 18th century Albanian church subordinated to Etchmiadzin, and begin practicing Christianity at home.

Another document from the Synod is particularly interesting; it describes the Udi Albanians' lack of knowledge of the Armenian language in 1867, 31 years after the abolition of the Albanian Church and the futile attempt to submit the Udi to the Armenian Church. "I entered the village church", writes vicar Aristakes of the former Nukha [Shaki] district on his visit to the Karabakh diocese in 1867, "It was a simple dugout with ashes in a pit in the middle. The villagers, it turns out, have a tradition of holding council around the fire before Mass or after Vespers. Another church – a dark and dilapidated structure with no decorations and furnishings except for a greasy phelonion and a gravure depicting the bombardment of Sevastopol hanging on the right side of the altar... during the divine service, you can hear the laity complaining about the priests everywhere: some of them could read some Armenian but not speak it at all, while others could neither speak nor read. This people recently converted to Mohammedanism, and only the residents of Nidzh village and three or four villages have not converted. And this small group of individuals who have kept their religion alive scoff at their priests' mental and moral incompetence". In the same year, the author of the aforementioned message wrote to the Synod: "The lack of decent priests is especially obvious in the villages of Nidzh, Mirzabeyli, and Jorlu; they mainly speak Turkish, and the priests cannot even read. Their behavior is boorish and disorderly, and it acts as a breeding ground for agitation and hopelessness. In the village of Nidzh, two priests started a fight with sticks during a wedding; Father Sahak, the priest of the Jorlu village, arbitrarily married 18 couples on the forbidden days of the Lord's feasts, taking a lot of money for this; Priest Martiros does not know how to write at all and is not well-versed in the celebration of the sacraments of the Eucharist and baptism..."⁴⁴

To avoid becoming Gregorian and preserve their identity, the Udi enriched Christianity with paganism adepts and established a syncretic religion that combined primitive religious pagan beliefs with Christianity. The holiday ritual was a mix of Udi paganism and Christian cult, which can also be traced back to ancient Albanian times. For example, on the day of the "black holiday", the Udi take the deceased's share of holiday treats to the cemetery; this tradition dates back to the Albanian Christian ritual of allocating a share – "tribute for the repose of the soul" – for the deceased, which used to be brought to the church since the 4th century, but in the absence of church visits, present-day Udi carry it to graveyards and distribute it to passers-by. Both old Albanian legends and Azerbaijani tales have been preserved in Udi tales and folklore, which are known for their brevity and richness of content.

The Udi have preserved a legend about the ancient Albanian Christian shrine of brave great martyr Tagukhi, whose cult was highly revered in Albania, like the cults of Gayane and Hripsime in Georgia and Armenia, and who existed in Christian hagiographic literature from the 5th–6th centuries.

The Armenian Gregorian Church, with the permission of the Russian Synod, destroyed the archive of the Albanian Church, among other old archives, in 1909–1910, meticulously concealing the vestiges of Albanian literature (ЦГИА, ф.821, оп.10, д.89).

Armenian schools were opened in 1854 to Armenize the Udi people in their places of residence (Oghuz and Gabala districts) and remained in operation until 1937. In 1875,

an Orthodox Udi Russian school for the Udi was operating in the Elizavetpol governorate. It was decided in 1931–1933 to introduce schooling in both Russian and Udi. However, due to the fact that their language was not utilized outside of their places of residence, the Udi have stopped studying in their native language since 1937. From 1938 until 1951, the Udi studied in Azerbaijani, then beginning in 1952, in Azerbaijani and Russian. In the case of the Udi living in Georgia (Oktemberi), education was performed entirely in Georgian.*

Thus, the Udi have been able to stay in their ancestral territory for generations, keeping their culture, including language, religion, distinctiveness, identity, and ethnonym (self-designation). The role and significance of the Udi in Azerbaijani history is comparable to the role of the Celts in the life and formation of the Anglo-Saxon and French nations. The Udi are direct descendants of the Albanians, who, along with others, are forebears of the Azerbaijani people and Dagestani peoples.

The Udi, unlike Armenians, are indigenous people and their language belongs to the northeastern Caucasian linguistic group. This language is rich in guttural whistling and hissing sounds, and its alphabet, like that of the Albanians, is made up of 52 phonemes (the Armenian language belongs to Indo-European language family and its alphabet consists of 36 letters).

Thus, a portion of the Udi that had been deprived of a monastery since 1836 did not join any of the churches: neither the Armenian Gregorian Church of Etchmiadzin (which would have Armenized them) nor the Georgian Orthodox Church (so as not to become Georgian). In either case, the remainder of Udi would be de-ethnicized. Their plight has no parallel in Christian history.

Let us examine the history of a family/surname of one Albanian clan during the late 19th and early 20th (first quarter) centuries using the family of Pavel Florensky as an example. “Pavel Florensky himself is the most prominent thinker of the Russian Silver Age, who managed to introduce new motives (semantic and stylistic) into the classical theological philosophy of Orthodoxy, and is a person in whose works the history of the Church is presented – or appears to be? – renewed and detached from the artificial conventions of external conservatism”.⁴⁵

The family of Pavel Florensky: his father Alexander Ivanovich Florensky attended the Vladikavkaz Classical Gymnasium, before transferring to the First Classical Gymnasium of Tiflis, and graduating from the Institute of Civil Engineers in St.Petersburg in 1880. The same year he married Olga (Salomia or Salome) Pavlovna Saparova (mother of Pavel Florensky). Olga Pavlovna Saparova (the Saparovs are descended from one of the Albanian Melik clans) was born in 1859 in the city of Signaghi (Georgia). Her father's name was Pavel Gerasimovich Saporov. Elizaveta Pavlovna, one of Olga Pavlovna's sisters, was married to Sergei Teimurazovich Melik-Beglarov (the Melik-Beglarovs also go back to the Albanian meliks). Pavel Florensky went to great lengths throughout his life to learn more about his mother's past and familial roots, despite the fact that it was a forbidden subject. He has written about it several times. “Our family (parents and living aunts and children – we) was a *small closed world*. Her father and mother, *particularly*

* Арзуманян А. Удины. Вопросы этнической истории и культуры (Историко-этнографическое исследование). Автореф. дисс. канд. ист. наук. Ереван, 1987.

mother, led it to seclusion from everything external” (1916. IX. 7).⁴⁶ It further reads: “...especially my mother, takes some obscure, but certainly aristocratic pride in her lineage, despite frequently saying that “we are just ordinary people”. Let us take a look at the following passages: “...due to detachment from life and a kind of *extra-church and non-religious asceticism* – all of this combined led to the fact that *our life was “a life on a secluded island”, ...on an uninhabited island*, because we did not particularly enjoy people and tried to stay away”.⁴⁷ “*The family's mission was to isolate themselves from the general public. We lived a solitary existence, ...cut off from both the social environment and the past. Both spatially and temporally we were a “new clan”, “a new generation – in our own right...”*”, we children *practically “did not know the past of our family, did not speak about our clan”, “the past was theoretically denied; in actuality, it was not known or almost not known”*. “*...Father and mother fell out of their clans, ...the thread of living tradition slipped from their grasp and was, to some extent, just let go. We, the children, knew almost nothing about it”; “when we don’t have a living connection with grandfathers and great-grandfathers, we don't have a foothold in history”*”.⁴⁸ Pavel Florensky was able to learn something about the Saporovs' maternal line after much effort. He writes: “The Saporovs were one of the *several Armenian clans* that belonged to the *heterogeneous and ethnically badly mixed group* of inhabitants of Armenia, a branch which the Armenians themselves call “*Albanian.*” It is an offshoot of the most ancient inhabitants of the Mediterranean basin, the so-called Mediterranean race. This race existed as an ethnic substratum in pre-Homeric Greece. The purer forms of its remnants are the ancient tribes of the Medes and the Phrygians. They ventured to the northeast, where part of them mixed with the local Ararat population and the other part settled as ethnic conglomerates. One of these conglomerates survived until the early Middle Ages near the shores of Lake Gokcha [Sevan], and around that time, under pressure from an invasion, expanded even further north, to the current Elizavetpol province [Ganja]. There, five independent regions or *melikdoms* were formed, which later came under the vassalage of Persia, then Turkey. Several clans descending from the ruling houses of these regions, who came from here and partly settled in Georgia, remembered and still remember something special about their past, albeit *they are not always skilled at articulating their ancestral memories in eloquent words. The reasons for ancestral pride have long since been forgotten, but the sense of superiority has not*. These clans are known for their outstanding beauty, and the Saporov clan is well-known for it... These clans are cultured and better-off than those surrounding them, and the Saporovs were particularly cultured and wealthy”.⁴⁹

This lengthy excerpt, which provides important information about the Albanian meliks and ancient Albanians, contains both inaccuracies and valuable information. Indeed, there is evidence that the Albanians-Utis, Kutis migrated to the southeastern Caucasus from the Mediterranean, from the west, in deep antiquity,⁵⁰ and some argue that there are two types of Albanians anthropologically: Mediterranean and Caucasian. Pompeius Trogus also linked Albanians and Medes to Greco-Italian ancestors, effectively lumping all of Western Asia into a single family of peoples having a Hellenic origin. Albanians' physical characteristics, such as their beauty, towering stature, blonde hair, and gray eyes, were noted by ancient writers. These characteristics are thought to be inherent in the Caucasian type. The Albanian ethnic masses are known to have survived after

the collapse of the Albanian kingdom from the 9th to the 19th centuries (within the borders of the entire country from the Aras River to Derbent, and from to the Caspian Sea) in the northwestern (Gakh – Shaki – Zagatala) and southwestern (Aghstafa – Gazakh – the region of Lake Gokcha/Sevan and Ganja – Karabakh – Syunik) regions of historical Azerbaijan. Pavel Florensky, it appears, used information from other outside sources provided by Armenians, and as a result, he incorrectly identified the Albanian melikdoms as Armenian. It is crucial to consider the time period in which Florensky composed his work. This occurred in the first quarter of the 20th century through 1923, when the Albanians had already been de-ethnicized after 1828–1836, when part of them was Islamized-Turkified-Azerbaijanized, and the rest was Georgianized by adopting Orthodoxy, while some were forced to adopt Gregorianism and submit to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin, and thus began to be considered Armenians and were Armenized. Some of the Saporovs were Armenized, adhering to the Armenian Gregorian Church, while others were Islamized and were ethnically classified as Azerbaijanis/Tatars (under the surname of Safarovs). However, this process was very painful and difficult not only for the Saporovs, as evidenced by the example of the first generation (after submission to the Armenian Church); Olga Pavlovna, the mother of Pavel Florensky, born in 1859, who, reverently and proudly remembering her Albanian origins and certainly aware of the tragic fate of her Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church, was forced to consign to oblivion her historical memory – the glorious past of her unique Albanian family, the Albanian melikdoms – with pain and bitterness due to the realities of her time. The only option that remained for Olga (Salomia) Saporova's rebelling soul was to reject the Armenian Gregorian Church both for herself and for her children and descendants. Thus, she would no longer be an Armenian ethnically. At such a cost, she deprived her entire family of a monastery, which is essential for a person. In fact, she followed in the footsteps of the rest of the Albanians/Udi, who managed to survive at the same cost – by rejecting the Armenian Gregorian Church. Olga Saporova's destiny, as well as the fates of her descendants and other Albanian-Udi people, is the tragic fate of an entire lost generation and ethnic group.

Let us have a look at Pavel Florensky's own explanations for this overcomplicated fact. According to Pavel Florensky, his family was not religious, did not have a religious history, and never talked about God: “*Religion and everything associated with it were treated as inappropriate... We never talked about religion, neither for nor against, nor even as a social phenomenon in narrative form*”.⁵¹ “*However, father was alien to both weak and aggressive atheism*”.⁵² “*...Nonetheless, father had a predisposition towards the Church ingrained in him unconsciously... in his fear of religious certainty, father (was guided) by more private motives: family circumstances were the root cause. These circumstances arose from the fact that my parents were born into two different religions... For fear of reminding mother of his Orthodoxy even with the tiniest breath of a chilly breeze, he did not exhibit his affiliation to the Orthodox Church; and mother sought to repay him with the same delicacy and did the same in respect to the Armenian-Gregorian Church*”.⁵³ Pavel Florensky attempted to explore and explain his parents' peculiar attitude toward the Church, but he found it incredibly difficult to comprehend because he lacked historical information.

“...If it weren’t for hypersensitive delicacy (and a greater awareness of the objective good of religion), then why not try to enhance religious consciousness in mother, and why not support her ties with the Armenian Church, explaining that belonging to two different denominations still brings you together in the most important and deepest things...”⁵⁴ he wrote. Pavel Florensky believed the reason why his mother would not visit the Armenian Church was in her family history: her father, Pavel Gerasimovich Saparov, refused to approve to the marriage of his daughter Olga (Salomia) to Alexander Florensky, who was Russian and Orthodox. But, in reality, she married after her father passed away. And it appeared as if this explanation would have to be dropped. Of course, the crucial point was something else that Pavel Florensky didn’t really understand. “Throughout her life, she [Olga] treated herself as if she did not belong to her own clan and absurdly concealed even the most insignificant aspects of the past... she even banned her sisters from telling the children anything and forbade the youngsters from asking any questions”,⁵⁵ he wrote. The whole sense of the inadequate behavior of Pavel Florensky's mother is revealed in his own words, which he could not comprehend: “Even if her entire clan actually rejected her [mother], this would not imply a split with her *people*, and even more so with her Church. *Perhaps mother didn't feel a strong connection to either [!!!];* but in any case, I always sensed something more than a simple remoteness and lack of interest in her reluctance to say at least *a word in Armenian, to speak or read about Armenia or Armenians*, or to go – at least out of curiosity – or take us to the *Armenian Church. Mother had phobia towards everything associated with Armenia*, and this phobia spread first to the subject of Caucasus in general, then to the issue of nation and state, and finally to the question of religion and, in particular, ancestry”.⁵⁶ It goes on as follows: “...our unique family situation, which forced our parents to impose a taboo on religion. *This situation was the source of my mother's wound and my father's caution with this wound*”.⁵⁷

Pavel Florensky, who considered his mother to be ethnically Armenian, attempted to analyze the Armenian ethnic group, its history, and distinguishing characteristics in order to understand why his mother was completely estranged from this ethnic group and culture. “Not a single nation in its life has spent so much effort on culture as the Armenian, and it appears that none of them has as little effectiveness as theirs”, P.Florensky wrote. “Eventually, the exceptional vitality of this people was depleted, and, they abandoned their oldest priorities of state and culture building and instinctively focused on the most modest task – how to preserve at least the existence of their small remnant in the world; in fact, everything points to the impending extinction of this people... it is impossible to preserve something that no longer has the strength and will to open up and build itself spiritually... I am certain that this people are doomed not only historically, but also culturally, to blend with other nations, donating the enzyme of their ancient blood, which is no longer vigorously productive in its pure form, to them...”⁵⁸

Pavel Florensky is completely incorrect in his assumption that the Saparovs are Armenians. According to Armenian history, it is extremely uncommon for Armenians to conceal their ancestry (much less a prominent and aristocratic ancestry) and ethnicity. The institution of melikdoms is known to have existed on the area of historical Azerbaijan from the 15th to the 19th century, and is solely applicable to the Christian Albanian people and, in part, to meliks who converted to Orthodoxy and were Georgianized. However, this

institution of melikdoms is not typical for Armenia, or rather, the territory inhabited by Armenians, because it dates back to the rulers of Qara Qoyunlu, a state created on the territory of historical Azerbaijan. Armenians whose feudal clans were formed in Eastern Anatolia continued to roam and wander from the 12th century onwards, as they had done previously (see: location of Armenian patronymies, § 3 of this Chapter). Pavel Florensky's attempts to see and understand the reasons for his mother's detachment from Armenia, Armenians, and the Armenian Church in the differences between the parents' denominations (the father's Orthodoxy and the mother's Gregorianism) or the maternal grandfather's disagreement with the daughter's marriage, among other things, are insufficient reasons and motives for the mother's profound rejection and antipathy for everything Armenian. The reason for all of this is that Olga Saparova is an Albanian by birth, and she knew and remembered her deep Albanian roots and the rich original Albanian culture, which had been forcibly de-ethnicized and Armenized by the Tsarist government and the Orthodox Church of Russia due to the hostile Armenian Gregorian Church (hence her dislike for Orthodoxy). One thing is certain: the Saparovs were Albanians, and Pavel Florensky's mother's attitude toward Armenia, the Armenian ethnic group, the Armenian Church, and even her past and ancestors is clear evidence of a blatant protest for the broken and ruined fate of the Albanian ethnic group.

The above facts of the Etchmiadzin Church's mockery of the Albanian ethnic group once again proves the point about the targeted aggression of the Armenians aimed at the destruction and appropriation of the ethnocultural heritage of the indigenous peoples of the Caucasus – Albanians (Aghuans) and Georgians – in order to create and reinforce their own historical heritage which did not exist in the Caucasus and was only feasible because of tsarism's colonial religious policy in the Caucasus. It is an unprecedented event in human history.

§ 2. Albanians and ethnogenesis of the Azerbaijani people

The Azerbaijani people were formed from three powerful fundamental ethnocultural layers: the Caucasian-speaking (Albanian), Persian-speaking (Medes, Kurds, Talysh, Tats) and the Turkic-speaking.

1. Azerbaijan (North) is the historical heir to all state formations on its territory, the earliest of which is Caucasian Albania (4th century BC – 8th century AD). The new ethnic community of Albanians was formed through an intensive process of consolidation of Caucasian tribes that were closely related in origin and language (Albanians, Gelae, Legae, Udis, Gargareans, Chilbs-Silvs, Lpins, Tsodis – autochthonous people of Caucasian origin).⁵⁹

The Albanian people with Albanian identity were formed in a 1,000-year-old Albanian state, a stable political entity with a fixed territory (from the Aras River in the south to Derbent in the north), under successive and continuous reigns of Albanian rulers, in the presence of the Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church, Albanian language (Nakh-Dagestan group), Albanian writing and a developed ecclesial and

historical-literary tradition of the 4th–8th centuries; [theological literature: the Caucasian Albanian translation of the Bible, lectionary (Z.N.Aleksidze); the “History” by the Albanian Catholicos Viroy (7th century), the elegy to the death of Javanshir by the Albanian poet Davtak, and, finally, the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi (8th century); canonical literature: the “The Aguen Canons” of the 5th century].

The writings of the 14th-century Albanian historian Hethum, as well as “manuscripts recovered in the East in the 17th–18th centuries by the Holy Fathers, originally written in Albanian and then translated into Armenian”, demonstrate later and long-term usage of Albanian writing.⁶⁰ Finally, in the twentieth century, a document written in Albanian and subsequently translated into Armenian was rediscovered in Jerusalem by French researcher Bernard Outtier.⁶¹

Albanian self-identity, as enshrined in its self-designation (ethnonym) as “Albanians”, can be clearly observed throughout the country (1st–8th centuries) and in its constituent parts (until the 19th century).⁶²

2. Albanians were a politically dominant ethnic group, but not a unified one, from the first to the eighth centuries. Since ancient times, Albania had been home to Iranian-speaking tribes who were constantly settled by the Persian Achaemenid, Arsacid, and Sassanid kings, particularly on the territory of the Caspian Sea's western coast (Tats, Talysh and Kurds). There was ethnic diversity in this place (the Maskut kingdom). Many regions of Albania had compact settlements of Turkic-speaking tribes from the first centuries, whose ranks were constantly replenished and renewed, especially in the 3rd–5th centuries and on, when there were massive migrations of steppe nomads affecting both the Caucasus, Iran, and other countries.⁶³ The ethnocultural integration of the two parts of historical Azerbaijan can be traced thanks to the entry and mass compact settlement of Bulgar-Sabir Turks (Huns) in North and South Azerbaijan.

3. The Arabs – followers of a new, unique faith – had a significant impact on the fate of the Albanian and Atropatene populations. Islam displaced paganism, Christianity with its heresies, Tengrism, and fire-worshipping as the only religion of Albanians, Turks, and Iranians. Thus, it served as a solid platform for the integration of multilingual ethnic groups. In the future, Islam would be considered an ethnic factor. The Turkic ethnic segment, which was constantly replenished by new arrivals of Turkic groups, transformed the country's ethnic demographics, by accepting Islam and actively assimilating the Albanians and other ethnic groups that had also converted to Islam. In the flatlands of the country, Albanians were de-ethnicized and part of them emigrated. This was the first wave of westward emigration of Albanians/Paulicians to the Byzantine Empire and the Balkans.⁶⁴ However, many Albanians managed to survive in the Turkic-Muslim and Iranian-Muslim environments in the mountainous regions of their historical homeland – Artsakh, Syunik, Shaki, Parisos – with their unique identity and self-awareness. In the 9th and 10th centuries, these Albanians, led by direct descendants of Albanian Mihranid rulers (Grigor Hamam and his son Sahak Sevada, as well as John Senekerim), were able to revive the Albanian kingdom in Artsakh, Syunik, and Shaki-Cambisena, as well as expand their holdings through the Albanian province of Uti and the Shirak region of Ararat province (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 21, 22).

The peoples brought into the orbit of the Caliphate created a Muslim culture that for many centuries determined the worldview, traditions, ethical norms and even a sense of ethnopsychological belonging to Muslims. However, this would occur later, no earlier than the 12th century. In Atropatene, the Turkic-speaking peoples also became the dominant ethnic group. In the 9th and 10th centuries, states such as Sajids, Sallarids and Shirvanshahs (millennial) were formed in historical Azerbaijan, which included the revived Albanian kingdoms. You'd think that a population that has been a part of various political formations ruled by various dynasties (in terms of ethnic origin and rapid change of power) would be unable to form close economic and political ties, which are so important in the formation of a single language and ethnic identity.

According to Arab authors of the 10th century, the “common language” in Shirvan and Aran was Persian and Arabic (for merchants and feudal lords), while that the inhabitants of Barda spoke “Aranic”⁶⁵ (apparently Albanian).

4. The formation of the powerful Oghuz empire of the Seljuks, which included Azerbaijan, in the 11th and 12th centuries altered the political and ethnic map of Iran, the Caucasus, and historical Azerbaijan. During this time, Azerbaijan experienced a massive influx of Oghuz and Kipchaks, who established a dominance in the country. During the Seljuk period, two contradictory processes occurred in the history of Azerbaijan.

On the one hand, common ethnic integration was underway in South and North Azerbaijan, which would eventually lead to the completion of the Turkification process. The growing influx of Oghuzes and Kipchaks would help to consolidate the local Turkic population of the two regions of historical Azerbaijan with the Turks, Oghuzes and Kipchaks, as well as their assimilation of local ethnic groups who mastered the Turkic language. This entire process would result in the Turkic-Oghuz language group gaining supremacy and the Turkic ethnic group (Turkic people) completing its formation. The epic “The Book of Dede Korkut” was created during this time period.

On the other hand, a process of enhancing pro-Persian culture was underway. This is because the Seljuk political class, which was primarily composed of Turkic ethnics, was heavily affected by Persian culture and Iranian public administration ideas. Nizam al-Mulk, Sultan Malik Shah I's vizier, was the Seljuk empire's ideologist and proponent of this doctrine. The Seljuk administration technique was based on his treatise “Siyasatnama”, which reflected old Iranian statehood traditions.⁶⁶

Iranian-Sassanian values influenced culture and literature as well. Ferdowsi's “Shahnameh” left an indelible mark on the Seljuk era. Therefore, the Seljuk period also saw the development of a Persian-language literary school in Azerbaijan, the luminaries of which were poets: Nizami Ganjavi (whose “Khamasa” (“Quintet”) is the peak of the Eastern Renaissance), Khaqani Shirvani, Falaki Shirvani, Abulula Ganjavi, Mahsati Ganjavi, and Qatran Tabrizi. Prominent exponents of the social, political and legal thought of the 11th century were Baba Kuhi Bakuvi, Abu al-Hasan Bahmanyar and Khatib Tabrizi who for the first time spoke about the Azerbaijani language.* For the first time, a local Arabic-language Muslim historical tradition emerged: an anonymous work titled “Derbend-Nameh”, which covers the events from the 10th to 12th centuries; and, Masud

* Piriye V. “Azərbaycan dili” istilahi və vaxdan bəllidir? / “Ədəbiyyət qəzeti”, №29 (2828), 17 iyul, 1992, s.1.

ibn Namdar, an official of the Shirvan and Aran feudal administrations (11th–12th centuries)⁶⁷ who covered the long struggle of Beylagan's crafting and trading population against representatives of the feudal administration.

During this period, the architectural schools of Shirvan, Nakhchivan, Tabriz, and Aran were established, guiding the development of architecture in Azerbaijan.

All of this demonstrates the development trajectory of public consciousness in Azerbaijan. During this time period, Islam or tribal affiliation may have been a factor of ethnicity.

As for the Christian Albanian population, part of them emigrated west to Cilicia due to Seljuk conquests. This was the second wave of Albanian westward emigration to Cilicia. The rest of the Albanian population, living in Artsakh, Utik-Aran, Syunik and Cambisena-Shaki, remained, looking for a way to survive.⁶⁸ The Albanian kingdom in Syunik was disintegrating by this time, whereas the Albanian Khachen principality (kingdom) in Artsakh, which was once “part of ancient Albania”, was reviving.⁶⁹

5. In the 13th–14th centuries, during the period of Mongol dominance in Azerbaijan, the adherence to the system of Sassanian values was weakening, which was associated with the peculiarities of the development of the Seljuk culture. Nomadic statehood traditions and Genghis Khan's Yassa were gaining traction. The migration of Turks to Azerbaijani territory continued, and ties with the cultural centers of the Eastern Turks-Uyghurs were strengthened, bolstering Turkic cultural influence. It was during the Mongol era that the first examples of Turkic-language literature⁷⁰ (the “Dastani-Ahmed Harami”, ghazals by Hasanoglu, and the diwan of Kadi Burhan al-Din) appeared in Azerbaijan, alongside historical works in Persian (by al-Ahari, Ahmad Tabrizi, Hamdullah Qazvini), Muhammad Nakhchivani created an explanatory dictionary of the Persian language in which the concept of “Azerbaijani language”^{*} was mentioned three times, and Hindushah Nakhchivani developed the Arabic-Turkic dictionary.

As for the remaining Albanian population, they were able to gain the favor and trust of the Mongols, thanks to the wise and flexible policy of Khachen king Hasan Jalal (1215–1261), who remained loyal to the policy of the Albanian rulers Arsacids and Mihranids in his foreign policy with the Mongols. As previously stated, the close political relationship between Hasan Jalal, the Cilician kings – the Albanian Hethumids – and Syunik ruler Stepanos Orbelian during the Mongol invasion can be clearly observed. Together, they found a common language with the Mongol rulers, repeatedly visiting the Mongol ruler's camp with great gifts, recognizing vassal dependence, concluding treaties and alliances with them, and remaining their loyal allies.⁷¹

As described above in the monograph, Hasan Jalal's reign can be considered an Albanian renaissance, an economic, political and cultural revival of Albania. This renaissance was mirrored in literature, architecture, and the construction of places of worship, especially the masterpiece of Albanian architecture, Gandzasar Cathedral. The Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church relocated to the Gandzasar Cathedral. Gandzasar became the religious center of the Albanians until 1836. Hasan Jalal himself

* Piriye V. “Azərbaycan dili” istilahi və vaxdan bəllidir?

Piriye V. Naxçıvan tarixindən səhifələr. Bakı, 2004, s.89.

referred to the Gandzasar Cathedral as “patronal cathedral of Albania”.⁷² According to the epigraph, Hasan Jalal erected the Gandzasar Cathedral for the “Albanian people”.⁷³

This is the period when Albanian literature flourished: Movses Kaghankatvatsi's “History of the Aghuans” was continued and supplemented with four new chapters; Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Mkhitar Gosh, David Alawik, Vardan Aghuanetsi, Stepanos of Syunik and others produced their works during this time.

6. The Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu periods. By deposing the Jalayirid state at the end of the 14th century, Timur ended the Mongol and post-Mongol eras in the history of Azerbaijan. The 15th century can be rightfully called the Oghuz-Turkman period in the history of Azerbaijan: the traditions of Oghuz-Turkic state administration were formed and revived; the Turks became dominant not only in the ethnic, but also in the political sphere; and, the Oghuz values gained prominence in public life. Most notably, during this period, for the first time, the Turkic identity – Turkman – was established in ethnic self-awareness,⁷⁴ while the local Muslim Iranian-language historical tradition was continued by Abu Bakr Tihrani and Fazlallah Khunji Isfahani. A diwan of poems in the Turkic-Azerbaijani language, written by Qara Qoyunlu ruler Jahan Shah under the pseudonym Haqiqi, has come down to us. Seyid Yahya Bakuvi (author of works on history, philosophy and astronomy) was a well-known scientist. Abdul al-Qadir Maraghi was a musical theorist, composer, and creator of mughams, which were popular in the Near and Middle East. Architectural masterpieces included the Palace of the Shirvanshahs in Baku, the Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah in Ardabil, the Blue Mosque built in Tabriz by Jahan Shah's order, and the palace structure of Hasht Behesht (the Eight Heavens) in Tabriz.

As for the Albanian population, during Timur's reign, a portion of the Albanians (25 households, 10 thousand people) were evicted and settled in Khorasan and Afghanistan⁷⁵ (Aghuans).

As for the Albanians who remained in their historical homeland, as noted earlier, their ruling clan of Hasan Jalal split into five sub-clans (fiefdoms/principalities). Qara Qoyunlu monarch Jahan Shah bestowed the title of “melik” on these Albanian princes. These melikdoms, like the previous Albanian state formations, were integral parts of the states on the territory of historical Azerbaijan. In this case, the melikdoms were part of the Qara Qoyunlu, then the Aq Qoyunlu state, and finally the Azerbaijani Safavid state. The Albanian ethnic group maintained its Albanian identity.

According to historian Fazlullah ibn Ruzbihan, Uzun Hasan's son Sultan Ya'qub assigned the management of Ganja and Barda (which included the Albanian melikdoms) to his son Baysunghur. Albanians-Christians “lived in peace and were freed from suffering and misery by paying jizya and ushr (tithe)”.⁷⁶

7. In the 16th to 17th centuries, in contrast to the monarchs of Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu, the Safavid rulers rejected Turkic ancestry and ascribed their origins to Imam Ali rather than Oghuz Khan. They did, however, provide the groundwork for the Azerbaijani political entity; at first, they established the Azerbaijani Safavid state (Shah Ismail I). The Safavids formed four Azerbaijani political and administrative entities: Tabriz or Azerbaijan beylerbeylik, Shirvan beylerbeylik, Karabakh or Ganja beylerbeylik, Chukhur-Saad or Erivan beylerbeylik. The creation of a state on theocratic foundations by the Safavids, as well as the transformation of Shiism into an

official religion resulted in a weakening of the Turkic identity in the public consciousness compared to the 15th century. The importance of the religious factor increased, which was facilitated by the Sunni-Shiite (Ottoman-Safavid) confrontation with the Ottomans. Simultaneously, the role of the Kizilbash Turks in the state bureaucracy was dwindling, while the Persian ethnic element was strengthening, eventually leading to the Iranization of the Safavid state.⁷⁷ It was observed that two cultures – Turkic folk culture and Persian court culture – were forming. During this period, the diwan of Shah Ismail, the Turkic oral folk epic “Koroghlu”, and ashik poetry (epics “Ashiq Qarib” and “Asli and Kerem”) were composed in Azerbaijani-Turkic. The local Iranian-language Muslim historical tradition was further developed: Hasan beg Rumlu, Iskandar Beg Munshi, Sharafkhan Bidlisi, and Don Juan of Persia (Spanish pseudonym of Oruch Beg, an Azerbaijani from the Bayat tribe), a historian who documented the history of the Safavid state. The pinnacle of Azerbaijani poetry was Muhammad Fuzuli (his work “Leyli and Majnun”). One of the representatives of Azerbaijani culture was miniaturist Sadiq Beg Afshar from Tabriz.

In the 16th century, Karabakh, with its Albanian population and five Albanian melikdoms, joined the Safavid Empire as an administrative subdivision of the Karabakh (Ganja) beylerbeylik, with Ganja as its seat. Karabakh remained the hereditary beylerbeylik of the Ziyadoglu Qajar family for about 300 years, with only a few interruptions, until the formation of the Karabakh Khanate.⁷⁸ As previously stated, during the reigns of Shah Abbas and Nader Shah, some of the Albanian meliks with the Albanian population were resettled to Isfahan, Iran.

The book of taxation of Karabakh and Ganja, compiled in 1593 by officials of the Ottoman administration during the conquest of Azerbaijan by Ottoman Turkey, attests to the significant size of the Turkic population in Karabakh and Ganja, which included the tribes of Qajar, Karamanli, Sorluk, Shamsaddinli, Hajili, Otuziki (Eng. *Thirty-Two*), Iyirmidord (Eng. *Twenty-Four*); Kurdish tribes resided here alongside Turkic-speaking tribes.⁷⁹

8. On the territory of historical Azerbaijan, independent khanates were formed as a result of the people's liberation movement against Persian dominance in the 18th and 19th centuries. These khanates were state formations with their own state administration,⁸⁰ judicial system, and judicature in cities, with the religious head, Shaykh al-Islam, having a special role and authority in the management of the city and the entire state.

The most important primary source on the socio-economic, political and legal situation of the 18th century is the “Chronicle of the Jar Wars in the 18th Century”, to which the “Jar-Tala Legal Code” (adopted in Aghdam in 1751) is attached.⁸¹

The defters (tax registers) of the Iravan province, the Nakhchivan sanjak (district), and the Ganja-Karabakh province are valuable sources of information on Azerbaijan's statehood.⁸² These defters – Ottoman Empire documents – show the presence of close ties between various regions of historical Azerbaijan and the movement of the population in them, illustrates the role of waqfs (pious foundations) in trade, the influence of waqfs in the formation of trade policy in the region, the role of the Azerbaijani merchants engaged in trade outside the region (provinces), and interregional integration in trade. These defters depict the ethnic makeup of the region's population. These sources reveal the inconsistency

and tendentiousness of the former Soviet historical science's assumption that the khanates were fully isolated due to the dominance of natural economy and feudal fragmentation.

A number of significant changes in socio-political, economic and spiritual-cultural life are associated with the khanates. Schools and madrasahs were opened in a number of cities. Historical literature in the Azerbaijani language developed; the history of the Safavid dynasty from its origins was covered in the treatise “Khanadan-e Safavi” (*The Safavid Dynasty*). The spiritual life of this period left a deep mark on the lives of people and works of prominent progressive thinkers such as Molla Vali Vidadi (a poet at the court of Erekle II, and then a teacher in Shamkir), Molla Panah Vagif (vizier of the Karabakh khanate), Haji Zeynalabdin Shirvani and many legal scholars who advocated for humanism, patriotism and social justice, resisted Iranian domination and Islamic fanaticism, hailed goodness and free thought, and criticized internecine warfare between the khans.⁸³

H.Z. Shirvani reflected upon the creation of an ideal society and sought to theoretically recreate a utopian state, for which he designed a special social program consisting of 50 sections.⁸⁴ The 18th century, during which a powerful galaxy of Azerbaijani thinkers worked, is one of the most difficult and controversial periods of Azerbaijani history, and according to Academician V.V. Bartold, was the most critical century for the entire Muslim world.⁸⁵

A detailed examination of the 18th century reveals a distinct continuous process of self-enlightenment which was both a prerequisite and a precursor of national development and orientation. It is discovered that the Muslim elite of historical Azerbaijan possessed a distinct spiritual and cultural potential prior to Russian conquest, which assimilated and inherited the evolution of social and spiritual values from earlier ages. Attempts were undertaken in the 19th century to fix historical memory, and document the history of the khanates in the Azerbaijani-Turkic language. There was both a local Muslim and a local Christian-Albanian historical and literary culture. During this time, the history of the Shaki, Guba, Karabakh, Talysh, and Ganja khanates was chronicled for the first time,⁸⁶ representing a continuation of the existing local tradition. This clearly demonstrates shifts in popular consciousness and the awakening of ethnic identity. In these historical records, the ideas of “el” (community),⁸⁷ “ellar” (communities), and “khalg” (people) emerged.

As for the Albanian population and melikdoms, the Albanian aristocracy of Karabakh led a liberation campaign against Safavid Iran in the 18th century, during the patriarchate of the Albanian Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalalyan, as previously reported. Meliks and the Georgian ruler placed their hopes in Russia, where Peter I was organizing an expedition to the Caucasus. This movement was actively supported by the Albanian Catholicos.⁸⁸

A 10,000-strong Albanian army marched to Ganja to join the Georgian army, and the two armies were to march together to Shamakhi to join Russian troops. However, this proposal did not come to fruition.⁸⁹ The Albanians maintained written contact with the tsarist authority.⁹⁰ During the creation of the khanates, the Albanian meliks of Karabakh and Zangazur were absorbed into the Karabakh khanate. When Nader Qoli Beg became the Shah of Iran (Nader Shah), he granted freedom to all the meliks (Khamsa), so that they no longer submitted to the Ganja-Karabakh beylerbeys, but to the Shah personally.⁹¹ Panah Ali khan (Karabakh khan) managed to subjugate the Albanian meliks, with the exception of

the Varanda melik.⁹² However, upon the death of Panah Ali Khan, Albanian meliks acted independently once again. Ibrahim Khalil Khan, Panah Ali Khan's son, waged a series of wars against several meliks and was able to subdue some of them,⁹³ while the rest found refuge in Georgia. Albanian meliks remained oriented towards Russia. It bears repeating that the question of liberating the Karabakh melikdoms came back on the agenda during the reign of Russian Empress Catherine the Great. On this matter, Potemkin's project reads: "...call the occupied territory Albania".⁹⁴ During this period, the Albanians maintained their identity.

9. The national identity of Azerbaijanis was developed and separated from the wider Muslim world in the 19th and 20th centuries as a result of Russia's conquest of Azerbaijan and the division of Azerbaijan, with North Azerbaijan included into Russia and South Azerbaijan incorporated into Iran.⁹⁵

The transition from the stage of populace and people to the final stage – nation – is associated with the general development of capitalism, the growth of economic and cultural centers, the spread of literacy and education, a change in the socio-ethnic structure of society, the formation of a national economic market, a change in the class structure of society, and the formation of a national bourgeoisie, scientific and technical intelligentsia and enlighteners (Abbasgulu Agha Bakikhanov, a prominent thinker, historian, philosopher, politician and the founder of the Azerbaijani enlightenment; Mirza Jafar Topchubashov, an orientalist scholar; Muhammad Ali Kazim-bey, an orientalist scholar; Mirza Fatali Akhundov, the founder of the Azerbaijani dramaturgy, who first introduced the concept of "millat" (nation); Mirza Shafi Vazeh, a poet; Gasim bey Zakir, a poet and satirist; Khurshidbanu Natavan, a poet; prominent educators and enlighteners Habib bey Mahmudbeyov, Sultan Majid Ganiyev and Firidun bey Kocharli; poet Seyid Azim Shirvani; Jalil Mammadguluzadeh, the publisher of the famous satirical magazine "Molla Nasraddin"; Mirza Alakbar Sabir, a great national satirist; Nariman Narimanov, a playwright and politician; and many others; and the formation of the press such as publications "Akinchi," "Ziya" and "Keshkul"). This process took place over many decades of the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century. The path of formation of the Azerbaijani identity was through the awareness of all-Muslim (pan-Islamism) and all-Turkic (pan-Turkism) unity to Turkism (preservation of common cultural values) and, finally, to nationalism (Azerbaijanism).

As for the Albanian population, following the conquest of the Caucasus, a portion of the Albanian people was subjected to forceful de-ethnicization. The Albanian Autocephalous Apostolic Church was abolished in 1836 by a tsarist government edict, and subordinated to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin as a diocese. The Albanians were deprived of their monastery, resulting in formal de-ethnicization. Albanians were to be regarded as Armenians. "As a result of the merger of the Caspian-Albanian or Aghuan nationality with the Armenian, the see of Albania was abolished at the beginning of the 19th century (1836)".⁹⁶ Most Albanians refused to submit to the Armenian Church and accepted Islam, intermarrying with Turks and becoming Turkified; some Albanians submitted to the Armenian Church and were Gregorianized-Armenized; others adopted Orthodoxy and became Georgian; while Albanians living in the former Nukha uyezd (present-day Oghuz and Gabala districts) have preserved their identity to this day. These

are the Udi people, who have managed to survive for two centuries on their ancestral land, while keeping their culture: language, religion, uniqueness, traditions, identity (Albanian) and ethnonym (Albanians-Udis). This was aided by the ethnic environment around the Udi people, which is marked by tolerance and respect for various faiths. We're talking about the Muslim population of Azerbaijan. The Udi are a unique ethnic group that has no analogues in history. Lezgins, Leghs, Tsakhur-Lpins, Khinalugs, Kryts, Alpans, Rutuls, and Budukhs are all members of the Albanian ethnic group. During the Middle Ages, however, they converted to Islam.

The politonym "Azerbaijan" has a long history. According to Pahlavi (Middle Persian) and Syrian sources (5th–6th centuries), it first appeared in historical records in the 4th century BC and covered the territories of modern-day South Azerbaijan. From the 6th century, the term covers the territories of both South and North Azerbaijan, because when the Sassanian Empire was divided into four "quarters" under Khosrow I's political and administrative reform, the lands of South and North (modern) Azerbaijan were included in the fourth "quarter" called Atropatene (Azerbaijan). This is supported by a Pahlavi epigraph on the Derbent wall from the 6th century, as well as Arab sources from the 9th to 12th centuries.

The name "Azerbaijan" came to be used in historical and geographical treatises as a political, politico-administrative, or geographical term. Thus, "Shahrestaniha-i Eranshahr" ("Cities of Iran"), a Pahlavi source from the 7th to 8th centuries, contains a separate chapter titled "Cities of Azerbaijan", which discusses the cities of North and South Azerbaijan. The historian Abu al-Hayja ar-Rawwadid composed the "History of Azerbaijan" in the 13th century, during the Ilkhanid period. "Do you want the sultanate of Azerbaijan (seat of the throne) or the Gulustan fortress?" Ismail Safavid asked the sultans, according to an unnamed 16th-century historian. "Azerbaijan," they replied. (Siz Azərbaycan səltənətinimi (max-kah), yoxsa Gülüstan qalasınımi istəyirsiniz? Onlar cavab verdilər: "Azərbaycan")

One of the four beylerbeyliks created by the Safavids was called Azerbaijan.

§ 3. About location of Armenian dioceses and Armenian patronymies

Firstly, I would like to define the term "Christianity of the Caucasus" and what it entails. Until now, the Christian Caucasus was thought to include the Christian churches of three countries: Albania, Georgia, and Armenia.

Realities and conciliar acts, as well as toponyms of the localities where these councils were held, and conciliar registers of all three churches (Albanian, Georgian, and Armenian) are all of significant relevance in casting light on the issue raised. It should be noted that, for various reasons, not all cathedrals keep the original full registers. However, the largest dioceses and important parish churches are usually indicated in the registers. Representatives of the secular nobility are also recorded in the registers under their patronymic names, as well as the names of their geographical possessions and

political-administrative divisions (for example, Vardan, the naxarar (feudal noble) of Gardman).

The geographical area of action of one or more of the listed churches is usually revealed through this approach and analysis of conciliar acts. For example, let us start by examining the conciliar acts of the Armenian Church.⁹⁷ The picture that emerges is quite intriguing. Nerses I the Great convened the first Armenian council in the town of Ashtishat, in the Taron region, on the banks of the Aratsani River, a tributary of the Euphrates River, in the year 365. Ashtishat was a pagan center in ancient Armenia, with temples dedicated to the god Vahagn and the goddesses Anahit and Astghik. Ashtishat belonged to the family of the high priest Vakhuni in the pagan era, and passed into the hereditary possession of the family of Gregory the Illuminator in the Christian era.⁹⁸ Kanonagirk, the book of Armenian canons, reads: “Nerses assembled a council in the village of Ashtishat, where the first church of the Armenian country was built, which was the mother of Armenian churches, and therefore the first synod/council was assembled on this place”. There is no preserved register of this council, but the location of Ashtishat and its role in Armenian Church history is of interest. As previously stated, Ashtishat was located in the Taron region, on the bank of the river Aratsani, a tributary of the Euphrates, in the eastern section of Asia Minor, but not in the Caucasus.

Next, we will look at the Sahapiwan council, which took place in 447. Sahapiwan turned out to be in the southwestern area of the Bagratuni possession, to the north of Lake Van. This council, too, does not have a register. Again, its location is in Asia Minor region. In 505 and 633, the next Armenian council met in Karin. Karin (Theodosiopolis) was located in the south of the Tayk region, at the headwaters of the Euphrates River. The clergy from Armenia, Albania, and Georgia were present in the Karin Council, but their identities have not been recorded.

The register of the 649 council is the only one that has survived from the three Dvin councils (506, 555, and 649). Dvin was a city located west of Lake Sevan and southwest of Yerevan.

Its register is extremely interesting:

Archbishop of Armenia: Nerses;

Bishop of Phasiane (a region located in the upper reaches of the Aras River, in the south of the Tayk region);

Bishop of Mardaghi (a region located at the junction of the regions of Turuberan and Taron);

Bishop of Bznunik (a region on the western shore of Lake Van);

Bishop of Arsharunik (a region located between the Vanand region and the Bagratuni possession, west of the Aras River);

Bishop of Bagratunik (a region west of the Aras River and northeast of Lake Van);

Bishop of Khorkhorunik (northwest of Lake Van);

Bishop of Rshtunik (in the south of Lake Van);

Bishop of Vanand (region east of Tayk region);

Bishop of Amatunik (southwest of the Aras River);

Bishop of Gnunik (northwest of Lake Van);

Bishop of Palunik (eastern shore of Lake Van);

Bishop of Mehnunik (region near Palunik region).

The register clearly shows that the subordinate dioceses and parish churches under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Church were located around Lake Van, far to the west of the Aras River, as well as on the eastern bank of the Tigris River, and in some cases, at the Tigris-Euphrates interfluvium.

The next Manzikert council (726) met in the Apakhunik region (a region north of Lake Van, on the bank of the Aratsani River). Take a look at this council's register: Bishops from the Ostan (west of Dvin), Tayk, and Phasiane regions, as well as the Bznuni possession, were present. The modern proposed location of Dvin – at the northeastern end of the Armenian Highlands – appears perplexing. How could the patriarchal see and the capital be so far removed from the Armenian dioceses and lands proper? After all, as previously demonstrated, the Armenian dioceses were located far to the west of them.

The Shirakavan Council of 862 was convened in Shirakavan, a region located east of the Vanand region, in the southwestern part of the Caucasus, on the territory of the kingdom of Kartli.

An examination of the proposed material revealed that almost all of the bishoprics of the Armenian Church, cities, and areas where Armenian councils were held were located on the eastern bank of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, around Lake Van, i.e. outside the Eastern Caucasus, and in rare cases, on the territory of the Southwestern Caucasus.

As is well known, the Catholicosate of the Armenian Church was transferred from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin in the 15th century. Different sources and studies speak of the temporary stay of the Armenian Catholicosate in Dvin and Avan, h'Romkla, and Sis (Cilicia) prior to this period. It is necessary to determine the geographical area of the churches under the jurisdiction of Etchmiadzin. As for the two Caucasian – Albanian and Georgian – churches, both the realities and the conciliar acts attest to the presence of all the dioceses under their jurisdiction in the Eastern and Western Caucasus. Albanian dioceses were located on both the left and right banks of the Kur River.

Local (Albanian, Georgian) as well as Armenian sources and realities show that there were essentially two Christian churches in the Caucasus from the first centuries of our era and during the early and late Middle Ages: Albanian and Georgian. The Armenian Church's sphere of influence was mostly in the eastern part of Asia Minor and in the Southwestern Caucasus.

The register of Armenian dioceses examined and cited from the Kanonagirk can be supplemented with the data of the Albanian historian Kaghankatvatsi (II, 7): a letter addressed by the Armenian Catholicos John II to the Albanian Catholicos Abas about affirmation of the faith (6th century): “from John, the Armenian Catholicos; Gregory, Bishop of Taron; Stepanos, Bishop of Mardpet; Mashtots, Bishop of Tayk, Gyut, Bishop of Khorkhoruni; Abdishu, Bishop of Vanand; Baba, Bishop of Syria; Christopher, Bishop of Amatuni; Sikand, Bishop of Rshtuni; and, Bishop of Mokk and from all Armenian bishops...” Here, additions to the register of Armenian bishops are the bishops of Taron, Tayk, Mardpet, and Mokk.

Another list of Movses Kaghankatvatsi has retained more information regarding the 8th century Armenian bishoprics (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 8): “with Simeon, Bishop of

Khorkhoruni; Sarkis, Bishop of Amatuni; Sarkis, Bishop of Rotakk, and many others”. The addition is the bishopric of Rotakk.

Thus, a list of the total number of Armenian dioceses can be compiled based on the registers of Armenian church councils, as well as the letter of the Armenian Catholicos addressed to the Albanian Catholicos, in which individual bishops of Armenian dioceses are mentioned by name: Phasiane, Mardaghi, Bznunik, Vanand, Arsharunik, Bagratunik, Khorkhorunik, Rshtunik, Amatunik, Gnunik, Polunik, Mehnunik, Taron, Mardpet, Tayk, Mokka and Rotakk (17 bishops in total). Based on the foregoing, it is clear that the Armenian dioceses were located in Eastern Anatolia, west of the Central Caucasus (See: Map No.12).

Let's now look at Agathangelos's list of Armenian feudal patronymies and the registers of Armenian church councils.

According to Agathangelos:

1) ishkhan/ruler of the district (gavar) of Angeghtun (third) with a namesake capital city (also known as Metz Tsopk or Great Tsopk [Sophene]), located on the eastern bank of the Euphrates River; in the south, Sophene was separated from Mesopotamia by one of the spurs of the Taurus;

2) ishkhan/ruler of Aghdznik, a region located on the banks of the Tigris River (northeastern part), in the southwestern part of Lake Van. In ancient sources it is known as Arzanenae, present-day Khorzan → Arzan or Zoh. The gavar/region of Aghdznik was one of the four bidakhshdoms;*

3) ishkhan/ruler of the Mardpetakan gavar, which, according to S.T.Yeremian's research, came to be known as Vaspurakan in the 6th century, and before that (1st–6th centuries) its northwestern part was known as Mardpetakan,⁹⁹ located east of Lake Van, between Lake Van and Lake Urmia, and south of the Aras River.

4) ishkhan(dom) of Aspetutyun – [coronation, which traditionally belonged to the house of Bagratuni; they had the right to coronate Armenian kings. By tradition and in later centuries, the Bagratids continued to be considered crowners in a kingdomless country after the collapse of royal power in Armenia in the 4th century]. The Bagratids, like Bishop of Bagratunik, were in charge of the same district. The Bagratids expanded their territory under the Arabs, taking Taron on the western shore of Lake Van and parts of the Tayk region (formerly Mamikonid lands) under their possession until the 8th century, when Ashot Bagratuni betrayed the Mamikonid anti-Arab struggle. The Arabs annihilated the Mamikonids.

5) ishkhan(dom) of Sparapetutyun [ruler/prince, commander-in-chief of the Armenian troops] belonged to the Mamikonians/Mamikonids, rulers of the provinces of Taron and Tayk. Taron is to the west of Lake Van, while Tayk is located in the interfluvium of rivers Chorokha and Akhuryan, a tributary of the Aras River, i.e. to the west of the Armenian Highlands;

* There were four border regions (bidakhshdoms) in Armenia, each administered by a governor (bidakhsh). These four bidakhshdoms were all located in Eastern Anatolia. In Iberia, the same system existed.

6) ishkhane of Korduk [Corduene]: Korduk is a region located south-west of Lake Van, in the interfluvium of the rivers Jerm and Khabur, opposite the Tigris River (present-day Iraqi Kurdistan);

7) ishkhane of Rshtunik: their domain is to the south of Lake Van;

8) ishkhane of Mekk, a region to the south of Lake Van, north of Korduk and east of the Aghdznik;

9) ishkhane of Zaravand and gavar of Gher (present-day Khoi in South Azerbaijan, Iran)

*Armenian patronymies according to the registers
of Armenian councils:*

10) ishkhane/naxarar Bznuni (see: Armenian dioceses);

11) naxarar of Arsharunik, rulers of the region located between the Vanand region and the Bagratuni possessions, west of the Aras River;

12) ishkhane/naxarar Khorkhoruni (see: in the same place as the Armenian bishopric of Khorkhoruni)

13) naxarar Amatuni, rulers of the region lying south-west of the Aras River;

14) naxarar/ishkhane of Gnunik: north-west of Lake Van;

15) naxarar/ishkhane of Polunik: on the north-eastern shore of Lake Van;

16) naxarar of Mehnunik: adjacent to the Polunik possessions;

17) naxarar of Apakhunik, one of the 16 gavars of the Turuberan nahang (province).

Agathangelos lists the heads of four border regions (bidakhshdoms) of Armenia, territories of strategic importance, whose heads were called bidakhshs and accompanied Gregory the Illuminator: ishkhans (rulers/princes) of Aghdznik, Korduk, Nushirakan (west of Lake Urmia), and Gugark. It is very noteworthy that all four bidakhshdoms, which are normally positioned at the four ends/corners of the state, are located in Eastern Anatolia; with the exception of Gugark, which is located in the north-western part of the Caucasus,* the other three bidakhshdoms in general had nothing to do with the Caucasus. Movses Khorenatsi names bidakhshdoms slightly differently: Tsopk, Angelton, Aldznik, and Gugark.¹⁰⁰ Angelton is an ancient Armenian region located on the left bank of the headwaters of the Tigris River.¹⁰¹ Again, these bidakhshdoms had nothing to do with the Caucasus.

* Gugark was conquered by Tigranes II, and Pompey returned it to Iberia in 66 BC.

§ 4. About the location of the Armenian Highlands, the Ayrarat region and capital cities of Armenia

The correct location of the Armenian Highlands, the Ararat, the Ararat Plain, and the Ayrarat gavar is critical for the correct reconstruction of the historical geography of the Central Caucasus, South Caucasus, and Western Asia, because, as is known, many important milestones and historical realities of both the Central and South Caucasus and Western Asia, as well as the history of the Armenian people, are associated with these territories. Meanwhile, their currently alleged location is completely unconvincing, as it contradicts historical, geographical, and source evidence.

First, let us look at the Armenian Highlands. The territory of the Armenian Highlands and Ararat is defined as follows in one of the most recent editions of the “History of the Armenian People”: “The Armenian Highlands are located between the Asia Minor and Iranian plateaus, in the north-western part of Western Asia... the middle part of the highland was known in ancient times as the Middle Country (Midjnashkharh). Starting from the summits of Ararat and stretching west to the Euphrates River, the Armenian ridge and its continuation (mountains) divide the Middle Country into northern and southern portions. Mount Ararat (Masis), a massive volcanic mountain with two peaks, Greater Ararat (5165 m) and Little Ararat (3925 m), is almost in the center of the Armenian Highlands. The Armenian Highlands are bordered on the north by the Eastern Pontic Mountains. Their continuation is the mountain system of Lesser Caucasus, which spans from the Black Sea coasts to the Meghri gorge of the Aras River and is made up of a number of mountain ranges”¹⁰² (See Map No.1, 2).

If we agree that Ararat is or should be located in the center of the Armenian Highlands, then the mountains of the Armenian Highlands should be removed from the center of Ararat by a radius of equal length to the north and south, as well as to the east and west. Meanwhile, Ararat is located near the north-eastern extremity of the Armenian Highlands (not in the center), immediately after which the Lesser Caucasus range stretches, as evidenced by all maps published by Armenian authors.

Regarding the Armenian Highlands, we recommend looking at two maps (see maps):

- 1) “Ancient Near East”¹⁰³ (see: Map No.1).
- 2) “Armenian Highlands”, S.T.Yeremian’s map (see: Map No.2).

On I.M.Dyakonov's “Ancient Near East” map, the Armenian Highlands are clearly located on the left bank of the Aratsani River (a tributary of the Euphrates River, currently known as the Murat River), extending from the Euphrates River (in the west) to the northern and north-eastern shores of Lake Van. The “Armenian Highlands” are depicted on S.T.Yeremian's map as stretching from west to east with the same length, from the Euphrates River to the eastern shore of Lake Van, but with an intentional change – a significant shift to the north of the Armenian Highland from Lake Van.

I.M.Dyakonov describes the boundaries of the Armenian Highlands as follows: “In the eastern part of the Asia Minor or Anatolian peninsula, the mountain ranges approach each other, and the Armenian Highland begins, dotted by high and patchily snow-capped

mountains stretching in the general latitudinal direction and separated by longitudinal river valleys: in the south by the Tigris River valley (from west to east), in the center by the valleys of the Euphrates tributary Aratsani (Murat River) and the Euphrates itself in the upper reaches (both from east to west) and the valley of the Aras (again from west to east)... A big bitter-salty lake, Van, is located in a depression in the center of the highlands".¹⁰⁴ We also read from the same author: "The snow cap of Ararat rises majestically over the rich lowlands of the Aras valley in the north of the Armenian Highlands. Transcaucasia, the northernmost region of the Near East, begins behind the Aras... In the meanders of the Aras, a hilly country in the heart of Transcaucasia connects the Greater Caucasus in the north with the Lesser Caucasus in the south".¹⁰⁵ As for Mount Ararat, as we have seen, it is located in the center of the Armenian Highlands according to the "History of the Armenian People", and it rises in the north of the Armenian Highlands according to the History of the Ancient East, with Lake Van nestling just barely in the center of the Armenian Highlands.

The phrase "the peninsula of Asia Minor, the entire Armenian Highlands, all the way to Ararat..." clearly indicates that Ararat is the limit, the tip of the Armenian Highlands.¹⁰⁶ According to the map prefaced to the edition of "Ancient Near East" in question and the text cited above (from the History of the Ancient East), the Armenian Highlands were divided into four valleys by four rivers (the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Aratsani (Murat River), and the upper reaches of the Aras). The so-called Ararat Valley is nowhere to be found in the Armenian Highlands. As for the location of Ararat itself, S.T.Yeremian's reconstruction of 7th-century Armenian geography based on the reports of Anania Shirakatsi revealed that there were two Ararats.

The first Ararat – Urartian Ararty, Assyro-Babylonian Arartu → Nibur is located in the region/gavar of Corduene → Corduene in Latin or "Kurti" in Assyro-Babylonian, or "the country of Korduk" as per Xenophon. Corduene is the first region/gavar of the province (nahang) of Korchayk. Corduene occupies the interfluvium of Jerm and Little Khabur rivers¹⁰⁷ and is located in the south of Lake Van, south of the Mokk region. According to local accounts, the biblical Noah's ark rested on the top of this Ararat (in Corduene),¹⁰⁸ which is now Mount Judi (the town of Thamanin), i.e. Iranian Kurdistan.

Second Ararat → Ararad is the contemporary Great Masis or Ararat – the Armenian highland country, located, according to Armenian historians, in the interfluvium of the Aras and Takhmut rivers, on the left bank of the Takhmut River.¹⁰⁹ As we can see, none of the considered Ararats can be located in the middle of the Armenian Highlands, hence the "History of the Armenian People" incorrectly places Mount Ararat (Masis) "almost in the heart of the Armenian Highlands".¹¹⁰ Faustus of Byzantium gave the following location for Ararat, which he spelled as Sararad: "in the Armenian mountains, on Mount Sararad located within the Ayrarat country in the gavar (region) of Korduk... He arrived with a passionate desire... to see Noah's ark of salvation, which after the flood rested on this mountain... ascending Mount Sararad" (*Faustus of Byzantium*, III, 10). As we can see, Faustus clearly defines the location of the Ayrarat country in the Korduk region, which was located in the extreme south of Lake Van. Further we will notice the displacement of the Ayrarat country to the territory of South Transcaucasia.

Along with the two Ararats, there is also the similarly mythical Ararat plain in Armenian geography, which is located as follows: “On both sides of the Aras River, between Mount Ararat (Masis) and Mount Aragats, and the mouths of the Akhuryan and Arpa rivers, there is a vast and fertile Ararat plain – the heart of the Armenian highlands”.¹¹¹ As previously mentioned, there is no Ararat valley on the actual Armenian Highlands territory, and it certainly cannot be “in the heart of the Armenian Highlands”. As cited from the History of the Ancient East, the Armenian Highlands had four plains: the valleys of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Aratsani rivers, as well as the upper reaches of the Aras, where there was no Ararat valley. According to the given location of the Ararat plain, its territory appears to be located in the north-eastern extreme of the Armenian Highlands, on its eastern border, and mostly on the territory of the Lesser Caucasus. What does it have to do with the Armenian Highlands then? The same “History of the Armenian People” further reads that the Ararat plain became the heart of the Armenian Highlands from the 4th century BC. “The ancient Armenia's capitals Armavir, Yervandashat, Artashat, Vagharshapat and Dvin, and the current capital Yerevan were all located here”.¹¹² It is puzzling how the Armenians managed to create all their capital cities in the same area, at the north-eastern end of the Armenian Highlands, or rather, on the territory of the present-day Lesser Caucasus, more precisely, on the territory of the South-Western Transcaucasia [?!],¹¹³ on the so-called Ararat plain, under such circumstances, when the Armenian people were scattered throughout a large area, living on either side of the Euphrates and Tiger rivers, as well as around Lake Van, and were doomed to roam for centuries to the west, and only to the west, until and including the 15th century. Even more surprising is the fact that, according to historical realities, the Armenian Church with its patriarchal sees went through constant wanderings, but all the while “capital cities were consistently created in the same area” far off from political formations and from the wandering territory of the Armenian people, i.e. on the “stable Ararat valley”, now located in the south-western Transcaucasia. Armenians themselves wrote that, “in the historical past, the Armenian people lived on the territory known to geographical science as the Armenian Highlands. Soviet Armenia occupies the north-eastern part of this territory”.¹¹⁴ There you have it: they talked and spilled the beans! Why was it so important to put all of the ancient capitals in a specific area – the northeastern part of the Armenian Highlands, the so-called Ararat plain – and attempt to stretch the geographical concept of the “Armenian Highlands” eastward, inflate the historical significance of the north-eastern part of the Armenian Highlands (in reality, the north-western regions of the Lesser Caucasus and Transcaucasia) and make it appear ancient by placing the Ararat plain here and linking it to the history of the Armenian people? As is well known, capital cities change and new ones emerge in response to shifting political, religious, and geopolitical realities. Capital cities were almost always located in different areas; otherwise, there would be no point in creating (constructing) a new capital city close to an existing one. Reading the written “History of the Armenian People” convinces one that the Armenian kings were an exception in this sense. However, when researching Armenian historical political realities and sources, you get convinced that there were no exceptions and that the Armenian people, like other peoples, established their capitals in different spots. Their

historians crafted an incredibly creative story-legend for them, driven by present political circumstances.

The Armenian concept is intended to historically link and legitimize the territory of contemporary Armenia, which was founded in 1920 as a result of geopolitics in general and Soviet Russia's efforts in particular, with the territory of historical Azerbaijan (Albania – Zangazur lands). The city of Tigranakert, built on the bank of the Tigris, is the only exception to all of the listed capital cities that are purposefully located in one area. However, even here, there was a historical need for the appearance of three more Tigranakerts, which Armenian historians once again located on the left bank of the Aras River, i.e. territory of the modern Armenian Republic. You are astounded by Armenian pseudo-historians' logic: how did the Armenian people, establishing a state for themselves at different times (up to the 5th century, the 9th–11th centuries) in different territories of the Armenian Highlands in Asia Minor, manage to create the capitals of these “wandering states” on a fixed territory far from the states themselves, on the left bank of the Aras River? Let us reiterate that due to the established model of “historical necessity” to link the lands on the left bank of the Aras River (in reality, the lands of historical Azerbaijan/Albania) to modern Armenia, Armenian pseudo-historians, for the sake of historical association with the territory of modern Armenia (historical Azerbaijani lands), largely abandoned claims to the western lands (lands around Lake Van and along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, as well as historical memory of these lands), where the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey were established as of the 15th century.

The Armenian concept alters the entire actual history of the Armenian people with an elaborate agenda. However, it is impossible to alter historical realities, according to which all Armenian dioceses and feudal patronymies/principalities were actually located far to the west of the Aras River, on land spanning the Armenian Highlands, around Lake Van, on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, and further west. Let us have a look at the information on Armenian capitals. According to the *History of Armenian People*, the capital of Greater Armenia, the city of Artashat (Armenian authors) or Artaxata (ancient authors), was founded during the reign of Armenian king Artashes in the 2nd century BC. Strabo describes Artashat as a well-populated city and royal residence that was washed on three sides by the Aras River and fortified on the fourth side by a moat and rampart. “The cities of Armenia are Artaxata... and Arxata ...Arxata is near the border of Atropatene, while Artaxata, located not far from the Araxena plain, is a comfortable city and the capital of the country. It is situated on a ledge resembling a peninsula and its walls are encircled by a river, except for the space on the isthmus, which is fenced off by a moat and a palisade” (*Strabo*, XI, XIV).¹¹⁵ The currently alleged location of Artashat, south of Yerevan, on the left bank of the Aras River in its western part, does not, in our judgment, conform to Strabo's description. The only spot where the Aras River may bathe the city from three sides is on a meander, and the Aras River has two such meanders (bends): One meander is located in the center of the Aras River's middle course, i.e. in the northern portion of the Armenian Highlands [south of Karin], and the other is closer to the Aras River's upper reaches, i.e. in the very center of the Armenian Highlands towards the west. We're talking about the meander of the Aras River, which is marked by the Akhtodzor Pass (see: map No.2).¹¹⁶ As for the rest of the capital cities, according to the “History of

the Armenian People”, Armavir is considered the first capital (“built on the site of the Urartian city Argishtikhinili”¹¹⁷), which is also located in the so-called Ararat valley. “In the center of the Ararat valley, Argishti founded the city of Argishtikhinili, which became the administrative center of the northern provinces of the Urartu state”.¹¹⁸ A study revealed that there were more than one Argishtikhinili: one on the shore of Lake Urmia (or on the shore of Lake Van), and the other “in the midst of the Ararat valley”,¹¹⁹ again in the south-western Transcaucasia.

On I.M.Dyakonov's “Schematic map of Western Asia at the beginning of the 1st millennium BC (9th–7th centuries BC)”¹²⁰ (map No.3), Argishtikhinili is positioned in the center of the middle reaches of the Aras River, much to the west of the site proposed by Armenian historians (map attached). In this case, the location given by I.M.Dyakonov is correct. Armavir should probably be shifted to the west as well. According to Armenian historians, in the 2nd century AD, Armenian king Valarsh I Arsacid built the city of Vagharshapat or “New City” (now Etchmiadzin), the future capital of Armenia,¹²¹ which the Armenian historians locate in the same Ayrarat gavar, the Ararat plain, in the same area. The message of Armenian historians is particularly notable, according to which the Ayrarat region/gavar, where practically all of the Armenian capitals were located, including the city of Vagharshapat, was a patrimonial estate – a seat of the Armenian Arsacid kings.¹²² The ancestral burial site of the same Armenian kings of the Arsacid dynasty was located in another city called Ani, which was located on the right, or eastern, bank of the Euphrates River, in the Daranaghi region.¹²³ Armenian researchers describe the location of the Daranaghi region as follows: “Daranaghi is the first gavar (region) of the Upper Armenia. Its main city and fortress, Ani, was located on the right bank of the Euphrates River, and was adjacent to the city of Kamakh located on the left bank of the Euphrates. The tombs of the Arsacid dynasty kings are found here. In the pre-Christian era, Ani was the religious center of Armenia, with a temple dedicated to the supreme pagan god Aramazd”.¹²⁴ Thus, the purported location of the “patrimonial estate” in the so-called Ayrarat gavar and the ancestral burial site of the Armenian kings in the Daranaghi region on the right bank of the Euphrates generates a logical contradiction and a total paradox. Despite the fact that the Armenian kings were based in the Ayrarat gavar, which was actually located in the west of the Lesser Caucasus (Transcaucasia), they managed to “be buried far away”, on the right bank of the Euphrates River, according to Armenian historians! They were apparently driven by a desire “to be buried in their historical homeland”. Almost every time the remains of Armenian kings had to be brought across the Armenian Highlands to the bank of the Euphrates River: what type of “holy journey” were they on?! One thing is certain: the capital could not possibly be so far away from the royal tombs. Based on the realities, Vagharshapat should be located closer to the Euphrates River.

After all these alleged locations of Ararat, Armenian Highlands and Armenian capitals, the location of the Ayrarat region itself generates great interest. We must first determine whether it is “Ayrarat gavar/region” or “Ayrarat nahang/district/province”. A nahang is definitely larger than a gavar, and consists of several gavars. In this case, it is a crucial question. S.T.Yeremian gives the following definition and location in “Ashkharatsuyts”. First of all, the researcher arbitrarily elevates the Ayrarat region/gavar

into a province/district/nahang, increasing its territory several times, and then adds that, in the narrow sense, the Ayrarat nahang included the territory of the present-day Ararat valley (which we never found), spanning, according to S.T.Yeremian, from the Akhuryan River to the Arpa River.¹²⁵ S.T.Yeremian's location of the Ayrarat district/province (nahang) appears to be highly implausible. According to the “Ashkharatsuyts”, “the Ayrarat nahang is the central nahang of Greater Armenia and functioned as the ancestral estate/residence at the time of the Arsacids. The Ararat valley and its surrounding gavars (regions) served as the economic and urban production center of Greater Armenia”.¹²⁶ The preeminent, fabricated role of the Ayrarat Province/nahang is not traceable in Armenian sources and historical realities since, according to sources, there was no Ayrarat as a nahang and there was no central nahang of Greater Armenia. Ayrarat is referred to solely as a gavar/region throughout all available Armenian sources. This is an essential point. According to Faustus of Byzantium (IV, 14), the Armenian Catholicos Nerses I (353–373) [from the clan of Gregory the Illuminator] “traveled around his own possessions. Because he owned fifteen gavar/regions, which belonged to his family from time immemorial and were considered their property. The main ones of these gavar/s were: Ayrarat, Daranaghi, Yekeghyats, Taron, Bznunik, Tsopk and those which were in between and around them”. This list describes gavar/s from west (from the right bank of the Euphrates River) to east, and only Ayrarat, which is listed first, deviates from the sequence. Because Ayrarat, according to Armenian scientists, is supposedly located in the north-east of the Armenian Highlands, i.e. in the south-west of Transcaucasia.

The Ayrarat gavar, as can be seen from this passage, was not the residence/ancestral estate of the Armenian Arsacids, but rather the hereditary property of the family of Armenian Catholicos Nerses, i.e. the family of Gregory the Illuminator, and “belonged to his family from time immemorial”. There are conflicting reports in sources as to whether the Ayrarat gavar belonged to any particular family. According to Movses Khorenatsi, Ayrarat was the royal gavar. “Artavasdes, the son of Tigranes ...only obliges them [their sisters and brothers] not to settle in Ayrarat – the residence of the king” (*Khorenatsi*, II, 22).

Returning to the question of whether Ayrarat was a gavar/region or a nahang (?), based on this passage, it can be assumed that if Ayrarat were a province/nahang made up of several gavar/s/regions, it would not have been possible to prohibit the relatives of Artavasdes from settling there.

Another expert from Khorenatsi (III, 23): “Why did you settle in Ayrarat and violated the order established by your ancestors? Because, according to tradition, only the king himself and one of his sons, designated as his successor, lived in Ayrarat”.

According to logic and S.T.Yeremian's own presentation sequence, his statement about Ayrarat being the “central nahang of Greater Armenia” made up of 15 nahangs does not hold. Yeremian claims that the division of Greater Armenia into 15 nahangs, one of which allegedly was the Ayrarat nahang, took place under the Byzantine emperor Maurice in 591–610.¹²⁷ As it was purely a political and administrative division instituted by the Byzantine Empire, it could not reflect the historical realities of previous centuries, i.e. there was no such nahang in the preceding period. S.T.Yeremian, not without forethought, transformed the Ayrarat region/gavar into the Ayrarat province/nahang, which he claimed was located in the center of the Armenian Highlands. The Ayrarat gavar/region really was

in the middle of the Armenian Highlands. As far as this is concerned, S.T.Yeremian is correct. However, by exaggerating the area of Ayrarat and making it out to be a nahang, he was able to extend its boundaries (which could not have been done with a gavar/region) to the north-eastern limits of the Armenian Highlands, i.e. to the south-west of Transcaucasia, which was the core of his strategy. Hence, the claim that Ayrarat nahang was the ancestral estate/residence of the Armenian Arsacids is no less paradoxical. Regarding Ayrarat: is it a province or a region, and where exactly is it located? Let us refer to the sources again. The excerpts of 5th-century Armenian historian Agathangelos on the baptism of Armenians by Gregory in the Euphrates River are particularly interesting in this context. “When the great king Trdat learned of Gregory's arrival, he gathered his army, his wife Ashkhen and his sister Khosrovidukht and set out from his camp, from the gavar (region) of Ayrarat, from the city of Vagharshapat, with Gregory at the head of a numerous procession went to the locality of Bagavan [lit. “Sanctuary” – *F.M.*], which is called a temple in the Parthian language; there they remained to serve it [the temple – *F.M.*] for a month... Gregory preached everywhere, spreading the life-giving word with all the Gospel ministers who were with him; ...the blessed bishop [Gregory] came and reached Mount Npat by the grace of God. Ahead of him, the king walked with all his army to the bank of the Euphrates River, and there everyone was filled with benevolence by the grace of the Gospel of Christ, and they returned to the same locality of Bagavan with great delight”.¹²⁸ If we accept the location of current Ayrarat, we can trace the route of Gregory and King Trdat's procession with all their entourage on a map of Armenian researchers (see: map No.2). From the Ayrarat gavar/region, from the capital Vagharshapat (if we agree with its currently proposed location), it was undoubtedly necessary to cross the Aras River [in which course – middle?], then walk quite a long distance on land, then cross the Aratsani River, and only then could one arrive at the locality of **Bagavan, at the foot of Mount Npat**. And if the final destination of the procession was certainly the Euphrates River and its banks, then, travelling far to the west from Vagharshapat [located by the Armenians in the west of the Lesser Caucasus], it would be necessary to cross the Aratsani River once more [as Bagavan is washed by the Aratsani River on three sides; map No.2], then, make a long journey by land, cross the Aras River once again (this time in its upper reaches) and make yet another long journey by land, and only then would they finally reach their destination, the Euphrates River, where they would be baptized. Further Agathangelos reports: “Blessed Gregory the Illuminator gathered all the army of the surroundings and the king himself, his wife Ashkhen, great damsel Khosrovidukht, all the nobles and the whole camp on the banks of the Euphrates River and baptized them there in the name of God, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And when the whole people and the king went down into the waters of the Euphrates River for baptism, a miraculous sign appeared from God, as the waters of the river receded from the spot. And a bright light, like a luminous pillar, appeared and stood like God's Cross over the waters of the river and over them [those gathered – *F.M.*], shining until sunset. And when Gregory baptized the people, [the luminous pillar] meandered in the river, encircled and surrounded the people, then went out and passed”.¹²⁹ Thus, the only conclusion we can draw from the foregoing is that if all you needed for baptism was a river, then Gregory and the flock he led had plenty of opportunities to perform the baptism: in the Aras River [if Vagharshapat was really on its bank]. If a prayer service in the Bagavan

locality was required before being baptized in the river, there were again plenty of options: cross the Aras River, pray in Bagavan, and then be baptized in the Aratsani or the Aras. However, the source mentions baptism in the Euphrates River specifically. The entire route we considered from Vagharshapat to the Euphrates appears absurd for one reason: the city of Vagharshapat, the gavar of Ayrarat, and the locality of Bagavan are all wrongly located. They should be positioned not far from the Euphrates River. These toponyms indeed turn out to be in the center of the Armenian Highlands, but not far north-east of the Armenian Highlands [as described by the Armenian scientists in support of their elaborate concept], which practically puts them in the west of the Lesser Caucasus, on the left bank of the Aras River. As our research demonstrates, this has nothing to do with the historical and geographical realities under consideration, but rather with Armenian historians' insistence on and defense of the claim of geographical proximity to the territories of modern Armenian Republic, Albania, and historical Azerbaijan.

Now let us briefly look at the real historical geography of Armenia from the 5th century BC based on historical realities, sources and compiled maps:

1. Armenia, as a geographical concept, was located on two banks of the Euphrates River (at the headwaters), around Lake Van in the 5th century BC, during the period of the Achaemenid state (see: map No.4). There were two Achaemenid satrapies in this territory: XIII and XVIII.

2. During the conquests of Alexander the Great (4th century BC), Armenia, as a geographical concept, was located east of the Euphrates River (on its eastern bank), around Lake Van, and south of the Aras River in the north (see: map No.5);

3. During the conquests of Artashes I and Tigranes II in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC, Armenia as a political concept extended its territorial coverage: from the Euphrates River in the west to the Caspian Sea in the east (see: map No.7). As is well known, Artashes captured only Caspiane from the Albanian regions, which was part of Armenia from the 2nd century BC until the 1st century AD. However, S.T.Yeremian later published other maps, apparently under duress, indicating that Greater Armenia at the time spanned all the way to the Kur River.

Tigranes II's conquests did not extend to Albanian territory. Tigranes II surrendered all of his gains after his defeat, with the exception of Northern Mesopotamia and Corduene, according to the stipulations of the 66 BC peace treaty. The Armenian state was preserved within the Armenian Highlands. Northern Mesopotamia and Corduene were ceded by Armenia to Parthia under the terms of a treaty signed between Rome and Parthia in the year 37 AD. These borders were held until the de facto and de jure dissolution of the Armenian state in 387 and 428, respectively.

4. It is commonly known that Armenians were deprived of statehood until the 9th century. In the 9th century, the Bagratid state was formed in the Kars region, but on the map of Armenian historians, this state is freely positioned on both banks of the Aras River: starting from the southern coast of Lake Sevan, the Arpachay River, and extending north and south along the left and right banks of the Aras.

5. After the fall of the Bagratid state, located on the territory of Eastern Anatolia, there were no Armenian states until the 20th century (see maps at the end of the book).

§ 5. Albanian roots of the Karabakh problem

Armenian territorial claims against Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people are the root of the so-called “Karabakh problem”. Armenians had their eyes on the lands of historical Azerbaijan in general, and Karabakh in particular, because of their historical fate, which has been influenced by a variety of objective and subjective factors. A quick historical review demonstrates this. Let us first examine (summarize) the history of Artsakh-Karabakh before providing some historical background about Armenia.¹³⁰

As previously indicated, the ancient province of Karabakh-Artsakh, one of the most important provinces in Caucasian Albania (the earliest state of North Azerbaijan), occupied a portion of present-day Nagorno-Karabakh and the Mil Plain. It was referred to as “Orchistene” by 1st century BC authors, and “Artsakh,” subsequently “Khachen”, and “Karabakh” in the early medieval and medieval periods by Albanian, ancient Armenian, Byzantine, Arab, ancient Georgian, and Persian sources.

Attempts to etymologize this name using the Armenian language are extremely unconvincing. It should be noted that the toponyms Artsakh and Uti also exist in Spain's Pyrenees. The name “Artsakh” was first mentioned in Avesta in the meaning of “a country/region of winds,” and was known as “Artsakh” or “Khachen” in Albanian, Armenian, and Byzantine sources from the 5th–18th centuries, and as “Karabakh” in Persian and Arabic sources from the 8th–14th centuries, and appeared in Georgian sources since the 12th century. “Karabakh” is a Turkic word that means “large gardens” or “black gardens”. Karabakh-Artsakh has been an integral part/region of all those state formations that have existed on the territory of historical North Azerbaijan from ancient times to the present.

As previously stated, Artsakh was a region of Caucasian Albania, the most ancient state of North Azerbaijan, from the 4th century BC to the 8th century AD. Following the fall of Caucasian Albania, Artsakh-Karabakh, as part of the geographical and political concept “Azerbaijan”, was integrated into the Azerbaijani state of the Sajids, then into the state of the Sallarids in the 10th century. Karabakh was part of the Shaddadid state in the 11th–12th centuries,¹³¹ and subsequently of the Azerbaijan state of Atabegs/Ildenizids in the 12th–13th centuries.¹³² Between the second half of the 13th and early 15th centuries, during the reign of the Mongol Ilkhanate, Karabakh was part of the Jalayirid state,¹³³ and it was merged into the Qara Qoyunlu and then Aq Qoyunlu states in the 15th century. In the 16th–17th centuries, Karabakh was a beylerbeylik of the Azerbaijani Safavid state (in the political sense), which consisted of four beylerbeyliks: Shirvan, Karabakh (or Ganja), Chukhur-Saad (or Iravan) and Azerbaijan (or Tabriz).¹³⁴ From the 16th through the 19th century, Karabakh was administered by the Ziyadoglu clan of the Turkic Qajar tribe as part of the Karabakh beylerbeylik.¹³⁵ Karabakh was included into the Karabakh khanate in the second half of the 18th century, as part of which it was annexed to Russia in 1805 and 1813, and definitively in 1828 after the Turkmenchay treaty.¹³⁶

As can be seen, Artsakh-Karabakh was never a part of Armenian political formations or even political and administrative formations, which were formed on the territory of Asia Minor, far away from the Caucasus.

From antiquity to the early and late Middle Ages to modern times, Karabakh was populated primarily by Albanians who spoke a Caucasian language, and, beginning in the first centuries, also by Turkic-speaking tribes and Kurds, whose numbers grew steadily throughout history.

Now, let us have a look at some of the major turning points in the real history of the Armenian people and Armenian colonies spread throughout a broad geographical area. It is not the history of a stable country, which is why all scientific publications on the subject are titled “History of the Armenian People”, despite the writers’ illegitimate attempts to present it as the history of a stable country, Armenia, in these works. Armenia, as a political concept, quickly outlived its usefulness, as it ceased to be a country, a concept meaning a political unity. K.Patkanov, another well-known Armenist, who made translations from ancient Armenian into Russian and published Armenian sources, wrote: “Armenia has never played a special role in the history of humanity. This is not a political term, but rather the name of a geographical area dotted with Armenian communities. Armenians have always been poor masters of the lands on which they lived, but they always expertly served the powerful, betraying their close ones”.¹³⁷

As is well known, Armenians are not indigenous to either Asia Minor (ancient Turkey) or the Caucasus. According to Armenists,¹³⁸ Armenians from the Phrygian tribes resided in the Balkans before being ousted by the Cimmerian migration and eventually settling in Asia Minor in the 13th century BC. Later, they travelled eastwards, to the Euphrates. According to the most recent revision of the “History of the Armenian People”, groups of Indo-European Armenian tribes penetrated the Hurrian, Hittite, and Luwian territories in the 12th century BC (in the upper reaches of the Euphrates). They were known as “Mushki” and “Urumu” in Assyrian cuneiforms, as “Armi” in Greek, and as “Armenians” further.¹³⁹ Manuk Abegyan, an eminent Armenist and philologist, says: “What is the origin of the Armenian people? How and when did they get established in Armenia? Where did they come to their homeland from, and how? What tribes did they communicate with prior to and after their arrival in Armenia? Who influenced their language and ethnic composition, and how? We do not have precise and detailed information about all this”.¹⁴⁰ Historically, Armenians lived outside of the Caucasus, in Asia Minor, the Armenian Highlands, around Lake Van, and on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

The first Armenian state emerged on the territory of Asia Minor in the 6th century BC and lasted until 428. From the 6th century BC to the 3rd century BC, Armenia consisted of two satrapies/provinces (Eastern Armenia and Western Armenia), which were initially subordinate to the Persian Achaemenid Empire, then to Alexander the Great, and finally to the Seleucids. As stated in this monograph, the borders of the Armenian state were expanded in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC (under the reigns of Artashes I and Tigranes II). Tigranes II lost all of his acquired lands after being defeated by the Roman commander Pompey. Pompey kept for Tigranes II his “inherited kingdom”, which is further defined as “the original territory of Armenia, i.e. the Armenian Highlands”.¹⁴¹ Our research into

the Armenian Highlands and the Ayrarat region found that the Armenian Highlands have nothing to do with Caucasian lands. As previously stated, in terms of its political status, Armenia was a nominal state, in fact a province of Persia and Rome/Byzantium, from the 1st century BC until 428. Armenia was ruled by Persian or Roman appointees who could be Atropatenian or Iberian/Georgian princes. This means that the Armenian kings lacked the right to inherit, i.e. they were nominal but not *de facto* rulers. Armenia was divided between the Roman and Persian empires several times throughout this period, including in 66 BC, 37 AD, 298 AD, 387 AD, and 591 AD. According to these divides, a portion of Armenia was transferred to Byzantium and became known as Western Byzantine Armenia (west of the Euphrates River). It is known as Lesser Armenia. Persia took the other portion, which became known as Eastern Persian Armenia (east of the Euphrates River). Greater Armenia is the name of this one. Armenians began to share the history of the nationalities whose states they resided in.¹⁴²

Between the 9th and 11th centuries, the Armenian state of Bagratids existed in the south, on the northern bank of Lake Van, south of the upper and middle reaches of the Aras River. Furthermore, Armenian historians assert that the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia existed from the 12th to the 14th centuries on the north-eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. However, as my research has proven, it is incorrect to consider Cilicia to be an Armenian state. In their writings, the authors of Armenian history created a concept-legend about the allegedly existing two Albanias (one Albania beyond the Kur and the other in the interfluvium of the Kur and Aras rivers) and attempted for decades and centuries to present the Albania between the Kur and Aras as an Eastern province of the “eternally existing” “Greater Armenia”. Furthermore, they sought and succeeded in their goal of geographically positioning the territories of the 5th-century Armenian state and the Bagratid state in the north-western part of the South Caucasus. To do this, it was necessary to “merely” shift the Armenian states from the central part of the Armenian Highlands eastward, as well as “move” the Armenian Highlands themselves eastward, placing the Ayrarat province (rather than the Ayrarat gavar) at its northeastern end. Thus, by stretching the territory of the Ayrarat region to the “endless territory” of the (artificially created) Ayrarat district/province, Armenian historians accomplished their goal: they attached the territories of ancient and medieval Armenian states to the territory of the modern Armenian Republic, the territory of the Eastern Caucasus, or, more precisely, the territory of historical Azerbaijan (see: § 3 on the location of Ayrarat...). The Armenians were deprived of statehood from the 9th through the 19th centuries. Armenians have closely linked their history to their Church since the 15th century, when the Catholicos’ seat was relocated from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin, near Yerevan, in 1441. And it is worth noting that this period in Armenian history has come to be known as the “Etchmiadzin Period”. In any case, authors of pre-revolutionary publications, that is, publications prior to 1918, were aware of this, whereas Soviet historians consigned it to oblivion.

It is common knowledge that an ethnic group can survive if it has a territory, a state or a church. Armenians were deprived of the first and second one. The Church began to perform the functions of the state. As previously stated, the diocese/episcopate of the Armenian Church, which was based in Etchmiadzin, was located on territory around Lake Van and on the banks of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. The domains of Armenian

feudal patrimonial groups were also located in the same territory. It would seem, what does this Etchmiadzin Church do in the Caucasus? (This is discussed further below). Since the 15th century, Etchmiadzin has been the leader of political, and indeed any, sphere of life among Armenians as a consolidating and organizing force of the Armenian people scattered throughout the world. It should also be noted that the Armenian Church was not united: there were anti-sees in Constantinople and Akhtamar.

In the 16th century, the Armenian clergy wanted to rid the Caucasus of the Caucasian Turks. Christian missionaries from Europe and America began gaining access to Asia Minor in the 16th and 18th centuries, where the formidable Ottoman Empire had already been established. Armenians easily embraced Catholicism and Lutheranism and studied in missionary schools without destroying links with their Armenian Church (or rather, at its own request). The missionaries developed the first generation of Armenian intellectuals in Europe and America, laying the foundation for the future Armenian lobby and diaspora. These Armenians acquired European rights fast and effectively, entirely ignoring their responsibilities. These Armenians, along with the Etchmiadzin Church, became the ideologists for the establishment of Armenians on the Eastern Caucasus, or rather, on the territory of historical Azerbaijan.

With the rise of the Ottoman Empire, Armenians lost hope of establishing their own state in Asia Minor, their historical homeland. As a result, they shifted their focus to historical Azerbaijan, nurturing the idea of cleansing Azerbaijani Turks from the Caucasus.* The authors of the “History of the Armenian People” popularized the concept of “Eastern Armenia”, which from the 16th to the 20th centuries covered exclusively Azerbaijani territories: Karabakh, Iravan, Ganja, and Syunik-Zangazur. Thus, the concept of “Eastern Armenia” shifts in time and space from east of the Euphrates to the Caucasus. Why to the Caucasus? The Armenians who lived in the Eastern/Persian Armenia were actually in Eastern Anatolia. Here Armenians lived alongside Kurds and the confederation of Turkic-speaking Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu tribes in the 14th–15th centuries. The Armenians saw these peoples establish their states in the south-eastern Caucasus: in the 10th–11th centuries, Kurds established the Nakhchivan-Aran Emirate, i.e. the Shaddadid state, and, in the 15th century, the confederation of Turkic tribes established the Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu states south of the Kur. The creation of these states was made feasible by the ethnic environment in this territory, which was already conducive for the formation of these states. By the 9th–11th centuries, the Kurds had established themselves in the interfluvium of the Kur and Aras rivers. The Turkic-speaking tribes have dominated this region from the 6th–7th centuries. It is also worth noting that the presence of local entities, rather than empires, in the Caucasus allowed the prospect of new state formations.

This gave Armenian historians an excuse for definitively latching into the Azerbaijani regions Artsakh and Syunik, which had remnants of Albanian population and where a portion of the population were Christians (Albanians who had not lost their territorial and political unity) who maintained confessional unity with Armenians (Monophysitism),

* I provided a partial explanation for this in Chapter 3, § 2

Copts, and Jacobites. However, the Armenians could only achieve their goal with the help of geopolitics – European powers, particularly Russia.

Under the “History of the Armenian People” of the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Armenian historians present the history of the Azerbaijani regions – Karabakh, Ganja, Iravan and Nakhchivan beylerbeyliks – and later the khanates.

From the 18th century onwards, Armenians wormed their way into Russia via Poland (?!), attempting to win over the Russian court and Russian emperor Peter I with various promises and tricks in order to pique their interest in the importance of liberating so-called “Eastern Armenia” from the Turkish and Persian yoke, but in reality, they held negotiations on the liberation of Karabakh, Iravan, Zangazur, and Nakhchivan, where the remnants of the Christian Albanian population coexisted with Turks and Kurds.

The Albanian Karabakh meliks of the 15th–18th centuries are completely unjustifiably referred to as Armenians in Armenian publications, and all events associated with them are transferred to the history of the Armenian people.

Special sections on the history of the Armenian people in the 17th–18th centuries include chapters titled “Armenian-Russian relations: Israel Ori” and “Independence movement in 1720”. These chapters, in essence, deal with the Albanian Christian population that lived in the Karabakh melikdoms and their liberation movement, rather than with Armenian history in the 18th century.

Similarly, Armenian scholars misrepresented the liberation movement of the Karabakh and Zangazur meliks led by David Bek in 1722–1728. There is nothing else in the arsenal of the Armenian people's history besides the history of these meliks.

It is remarkable that throughout the “histories” of the Armenian people nothing is said about Potemkin's project for the restoration of the Albanian kingdom. Instead, it is said that “in order to win over the Christian people of Transcaucasia, the tsarist government circulated the rumor that the Russian campaign's purpose was “the restoration of Armenia”.¹⁴³ The most recent edition of the “History of the Armenian People” (1980) reports on negotiations between the Armenian diocese in Russia and representatives of the Russian state, according to which the commander A.V.Suvorov was allegedly supposed to liberate Armenia and restore the Armenian state with its capital in Iravan. “It was suggested to form a special Armenian regiment that, along with the troops of the Armenian meliks of Karabakh, would free the Ararat province, followed by the remainder of the Armenian regions” [?!].¹⁴⁴

Regarding the 18th century, the “History of the Armenian People” (1980) says the following: “Western Armenia was subdivided... into Pashaliks of Erzurum, Kars... Diyarbekir. Khanates such as Iravan, Nakhchivan, Karabakh, Shirvan, and others were established in Eastern Armenia and Azerbaijan”. We can see that all of the khanates named were Azerbaijani. The “histories” of the Armenian people speak nothing about the Azerbaijani beylerbeyliks which preceded the khanates. Iravan and Nakhchivan were places of residence (ulka) of the Qizilbash tribe Ustajlu. Chukhur-Saad remained their hereditary ulka. As we can see, there was no Eastern Armenia on these lands. It should be particularly noted that the Karabakh beylerbeylik covered a vast area between the Kur and Aras rivers, which also included Gazakh, Shamshaddil, Lori and Pambak.¹⁴⁵ The Karabakh

beylerbeylik became the Karabakh khanate when the Azerbaijani khanates were established.

As for the Armenian ethnic group, the same “History of the Armenian People” (1980 edition, page 187) contains a reluctant confession: “At the beginning of the 20th century, a significant part of the Armenian people lived outside their homeland, in neighboring and distant countries... Many Armenian colonies did not break ties with their homeland” [?! – *F.M.*]. A logical question arises: what is meant by the concept of “homeland” and what are these lands?! What territory did the Armenian colonies keep in constant contact with?! After tracing the history of the Armenian people through the centuries and reading the works of the Armenian historians, we could not identify the homeland of the Armenians – a politically unified, permanent stable territory. After all, the primary criterion of an ethnos-nation is a common territory where it emerges and is formed. The Armenians must define this common territory and then write a real history, rather than latching on to new areas every time, such as Azerbaijani regions (Karabakh, Syunik-Zangazur, and other lands) or southern Georgia (Gogarena), as they did in the early 20th century, as I.Chavchavadze and V.L.Velichko documented. The latter pointed out that the area of “Greater Armenia” on Armenian maps extends almost as far as Voronezh, with Tiflis as its capital. He also wrote: “They (Armenians) quite shamelessly steal Georgian history and archeology; they scratch Georgian inscriptions off monuments, ...they make up historical nonsense and refer to locations where every stone tells a story about the past of the Georgian kingdom as Armenian possessions”.¹⁴⁶ A.Frenkel, the public prosecutor of the Etchmiadzin Synod, wrote about this at the beginning of the century: “The historical fate of the Armenian nation has irrefutably proven the complete inability of this people to create their own independent state, a state organism”.¹⁴⁷ The Armenians would never have achieved statehood without the assistance of Russia and other countries.

By the 1850s, Russia had conquered the Caucasus and strengthened its positions there: it liquidated the ethnopolitical formations of the autochthonous population – the Georgian kingdom and Azerbaijani khanates (in particular Karabakh) – and for the first time established an Armenian region – a political entity that had never existed in the Caucasus – on the lands of the Azerbaijani khanates of Iravan and Nakhchivan. But before that Russia increased the number of Armenians in these areas (and in Karabakh) by resettling Armenians from the Ottoman Empire and Albanians from Persia. Of the two ancient autocephalous apostolic churches in the Caucasus – the Georgian and Albanian churches – which had functioned from the 4th to the 19th centuries, the Tsarist Russia weakened the Georgian Church, depriving it of its autocephalous status, and abolished the Albanian Church, turning it into a diocese of the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church and de-ethnicizing the autochthonous Albanian population.

After bolstering the Etchmiadzin Church's political, ideological, and economic position in the Caucasus, Russia began to fear separatist aspirations of the overly strengthened Armenian Etchmiadzin Church, as well as pressure from the Armenian diaspora, who were methodically seeking statehood in the Caucasus, in the context of the changing geopolitical situation. As a result, Tsarist Russia abolished the Armenian region in 1850 and replaced it by the Erivan Governorate. Probably, Russia's subsequent policy did not envision the establishment of an Armenian state in the Caucasus (which

allowed Russia to maintain constant and complete control over the Armenians), but rather sought to use the Armenians as a “satellite-factor” in its Near East policy.

In the 1860s, Tsarist Russia began to nurture the idea of establishing an Armenian region – Western Armenia – on Turkish lands in the Asia Minor. Tsarist Russia disguised its intentions to occupy the Black Sea, Bosphorus and Dardanelles under the slogan of “the struggle to free Christians and Armenians from the yoke of Muslim Turkey”.

During the negotiations in San Stefano and Berlin in 1878, the issue of Western Armenia and the situation of the Armenian population in Turkey became known as the “Armenian question”. Turkey, according to this, undertook to implement the necessary reforms in Armenian vilayets. Russia was practically the only country that supported resolving the “Armenian question”. The political parties Hunchakian (1887) and Dashnaksutyun (1890) were formed for this purpose. Based in Russian Transcaucasia, they sent propagandists to Turkey and organized rebel groups, the goal of which was to draw the attention of the world powers to the fate of the Armenian people. To accomplish its goal, the Dashnaksutyun party frequently changed its orientation from Russia to European powers, then to the Young Turks (a pan-Turkist revolutionary movement), and back to Russia. As Milyukov put it, “settled at the crossroads between Russia and Turkey”, the Armenians gained great political significance on the eve of World War I.¹⁴⁸ During the Balkan War (1912–1914), Russia proposed that the vilayets of Erzurum, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Harput and Sivas be combined to form the so-called Western Armenia, an autonomous Armenian region in Turkey. The ruler of Western Armenia would have to be a Christian governor-general appointed by Turkey with the consent of European states. However, the European countries did not support this program.¹⁴⁹ The “genocide” of Armenians in Turkey in 1915 proved to be very timely for the Armenians*, hastening the resolution of the issue of establishing an Armenian state, albeit on a different territory.

Armenians cunningly exploited any revolution to attain their objectives. The February and October revolutions of 1917 expedited the resolution of the Armenian question. The Armenian National Congress met in Tiflis in October 1917, and on behalf of the entire Armenian people, demanded that Russia keep the areas of Turkish Armenia occupied by Russian troops during World War I. Lenin also supported the idea of establishing Western Armenia, and on October 28, 1917, he signed a decree in which Soviet Russia declared the right of so-called Western Armenia to complete self-determination.¹⁵⁰

When the Transcaucasian Seim collapsed in May 1918, the Armenian independent republic was declared, with no land or capital city. The declaration was made in Tiflis. On May 29, 1918, the ADR (Azerbaijan Democratic Republic) ceded Iravan to the Republic of Armenia.¹⁵¹ The territory of the Republic of Armenia was almost entirely made up of the districts of Iravan and Etchmiadzin, which had a combined population of 400,000 people.

At the end of World War I, the world powers saw Armenia as a buffer against Turkey (in Cilicia) and against Soviet Russia (in the Transcaucasia). The Entente gave the region of Kars and uyezds of the Erivan governorate to the Republic of Armenia.

* “Мемуары русского офицера” – подполковника Твердохлебова, Командира 2-го Эрзурумского крепостного артиллерийского полка // Изв. АН Аз.ССР, Сер.ист., фил., право, 1989, №1.

In 1918, this republic had a population of 1.5 million people, 700,000 of whom were Armenians. Not content with this, the Dashnaks laid claims to Georgia's Akhalkalaki and Borchali areas, as well as Karabakh, Nakhchivan uyezd and Zangazur lands of Azerbaijan. These claims triggered a conflict with Georgia, as well as a lengthy and bloody war with Azerbaijan. The Republic of Armenia began illegally annexing Azerbaijani territories through force.¹⁵² On August 12, 1918, Lenin signed a decree handing over Nakhchivan and Zangazur to the Dashnaks. In the summer of 1918, General Andranik invaded Zangazur with an Armenian army and issued an ultimatum to the people to submit to their authority or leave the settlements. According to Mikhailov's investigation commission, in the summer of 1918 alone, 115 Azerbaijani villages were destroyed in Zangazur, 7,000 people were killed and 50,000 Azerbaijanis fled Zangazur.¹⁵³

The struggle was especially fierce in Karabakh. In 1919–1920, the European powers were no longer interested in the Armenian question, i.e. the creation of Armenia. The question of the establishment of Armenia was referred to North America. The General Council of the League of Nations acknowledged that Armenia could not exist “without support”.¹⁵⁴

President Wilson of the United States accepted the assignment by the League of Nations to define Armenia's borders. However, the “mandate for Armenia” was rejected by a majority vote in the Senate because American politicians believed the Armenian question was a European matter.¹⁵⁵

In 1919, the French authorities did the same to the Armenians of occupied Cilicia. France concluded a peace treaty with Turkey in 1921, according to which it relinquished Cilicia. The Armenians were defeated, and some of them were killed. The pathetic remnants of the Armenian population fled to Syria, Cyprus and Egypt.¹⁵⁶

Thus, one of the two “Armenian bases” was liquidated. The Armenian question was centered in the Transcaucasia, where the Dashnaks pursued a policy of militant nationalism. In March–July 1920, clashes occurred with the Dashnaks in Karabakh, Shusha, Nakhchivan, Ordubad, Terter, Askeran and Zangazur, Jabrayil and Ganja uyezds. Dozens of Azerbaijani villages were destroyed.

Soviet Russia decided not to let the Republic of Armenia become an anti-Soviet bridgehead, and instead served as a mediator in resolving territorial disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Receiving arms from the United Kingdom and Italy, the Dashnaks carried out a mass pogrom against the Muslim-Turkic population in Karabakh, Nakhchivan, and Zangazur, as well as the governorates of Iravan and Kars. Karabekir and Halil Pasha's Eastern Turkish Army captured Kars and Alexandropol in October 1920, forcing the Armenians to accept yet another humiliating peace treaty. The Dashnaks requested assistance from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Italy on two occasions, but were turned down.¹⁵⁷ The Dashnak regime was deposed in November 1920, and Soviet power was established. The Dashnaks remained in Zangazur and created “the Government of Syunik” (the Republic of Mountainous Armenia) in December 1920. Zangazur was only freed from the Dashnaks in June–July 1921.¹⁵⁸

The Treaty of Alexandropol was nullified by the Russian-Turkish Treaty of 1921, which established the present borders between Turkey and Armenia. The history of Armenian statehood in the Caucasus has begun since then. Following the fall of

the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, Soviet Russia reconsidered its position: realizing the mythical nature of the idea of establishing Western Armenia in Turkey, it decided to create so-called Eastern Armenia from Azerbaijani lands, i.e. the former Erivan khanate and Zangazur territories, where compact Armenian settlements had already been established at the time. Following the establishment of Soviet rule in Azerbaijan (April 1920), N.Narimanov repeatedly demanded the incorporation of Nagorno-Karabakh, Zangazur, and Nakhchivan into Azerbaijan. “No one in the world can stop us from persuading the people of these regions to insist on uniting with Azerbaijan”,¹⁵⁹ he said. “Ceding these regions to Armenia now discredits Soviet authority not only in Azerbaijan, but also in Persia and Turkey”.¹⁶⁰

The Soviet authorities attempted to resolve the Armenian question by establishing Eastern Armenia at the expense of Azerbaijani territories. The territories of Azerbaijan were practically used as a pledge, a kind of bait, to implement the idea of establishing the Soviet Republic of Armenia.

The agreement signed on March 16, 1921, between Kemalist Turkey and Soviet Russia established the legal foundations for the establishment of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan. According to Article 3 of the agreement, “the Nakhchivan region, within the boundaries specified in Appendix 1(c) of the current agreement, forms an autonomous territory under Azerbaijan's protectorate on the condition that Azerbaijan will never cede the said protectorate to a third state”.¹⁶¹ Soon after, N.Narimanov expressed the will of the Azerbaijani people and demanded categorically that Karabakh remain within Azerbaijan. Otherwise, he said, “the Council of People's Commissars will bear responsibility”, because in that case, “we will re-establish ...anti-Soviet groups in Azerbaijan”.¹⁶² On the basis of this statement, the Caucasus Bureau decided on July 5, 1921, to keep Nagorno-Karabakh within the borders of the Azerbaijan SSR, granting it broad autonomy and forming an autonomous region within Azerbaijan.¹⁶³

Thus, the Republic of Armenia was established in 1920 on the Azerbaijani lands, namely, the Erivan governorate (the former Azerbaijani Erivan khanate). In 1921, Zangazur uyezd was also taken from Azerbaijan and given to the newly formed Armenian SSR. During the formation of the USSR in 1922, the Azerbaijani territories of Dilijan and Gokcha (Sharur-Daralayaz district) were transferred to the Armenian SSR. In 1923, the NKAO (Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region) was created on the territory of the Azerbaijani SSR. In 1929, several villages were taken from Nakhchivan and incorporated into the Armenian SSR. In 1969, the Republic of Armenia gained territory at the expense of Azerbaijani villages in Gazakh and Sadarak regions.

I.P.Petrushevsky, a well-known orientalist, quite rightly stated that “Karabakh has never been a center of Armenian culture”.¹⁶⁴

It is important to remember that the Karabakh problem has no precedent in history.

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CONCLUSION

The current monograph is the result of extensive research and reconstruction of nearly every element of the history of Caucasian Albania and Albanians: the rise of the school of Albanian history and literature, historical geography, political history, the socio-political order, the formation of the Albanian ethnic community, the history of Christianity and the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church from the 3rd century BC to the 8th century AD (throughout a millennium of existence of the Albanian state), as well as observations from the 9th to the 19th century covering the local Albanian melikdoms of later period, the history of the Albanian Church and Albanian ethnicity within Azerbaijani states and khanates; the role of the Albanians in the ethnogenesis of Azerbaijani people, as well as the path to their transformation and de-ethnicization have been identified.

Studies of ancient and early medieval sources, the realities of Albania, Armenia, and Iberia, their comparison, and agreements concluded between the two empires, Byzantium and Persia, concerning the Caucasus, have led to the conviction that the territory of Albania remained within the same boundaries (with small exceptions) throughout 1,000 years, from the 3rd century BC to the 8th century AD, for political reasons. Its territory did not expand or shrink in a dynamic way. Albanian kings did not pursue a policy of expansion. The geographical positions of Albania, Armenia and Georgia, as well as the external and internal situations in each of these countries, all contributed to the stability of the Albanian border. Consequently, the formation of the Albanian ethnicity, which was one of the ancestors of the Azerbaijani people, occurred in the same territory.

Changes used to occur exclusively in Albania's remote northwest, in the region of Cambisena, and in the southeast, where they were connected to the Caspiane region. Albania's boundaries were at their most expansive in the third century BC. The territory of Cambisena in the northwest was as vast as it had never been, while in the south, where the political borders stretched along the river Aras, Caspiane was included in the territory of Albania. Caspiane was seized by Armenia in the 2nd–1st centuries BC, but was absorbed into Atropatene in the 1st–2nd centuries AD. It was ultimately included into Albanian territory in the third century AD. The territory of Cambisena shrank in favor of Iberia in the fifth century.

My research proved the lack of any grounds for the so-called Armenian concept, according to which Albania's boundaries stretched along the Kur river from the 3rd century BC to the 4th century AD, and the territories between the rivers Kur and Aras – Artsakh, Uti, and Caspiane (Paytakaran) regions – were deemed Armenian. The studies also demonstrated the inadequacy of Georgian researchers' assertions that the Albanian lands up to and including Shaki were part of Iberia.

The monograph looked into the subject of Albanian literature and depicted the creation of the school of Albanian history and literature, as well as its many forms such as hagiographical, ecclesiastical, and secular literature. The sources examined show that

the development of Albanian literature in the Albanian language stemmed from an objective historical necessity. All of Albania's existing socio-economic, confessional, and political factors paved the way for the creation of its literature. These occurred during the period of an independent Albanian state with a ruling royal dynasty and magnificent princes who eventually replaced them, and the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church. The monograph revealed three consecutive trends in Albanian literature: apostolic, Graecophilic, and local – Albanian.

All of the Albanian sources were originally written in Albanian. Thanks to the discoveries of Z.N.Aleksidze, it is beyond any doubt now that the Albanians had their own Albanian Christian literature (complete translation of the Bible, Lectionary) in the fourth century, written with Albanian letters in the Albanian language.

The school of Albanian history and literature started to take shape in the sixth century. Its origin and growth took place between the 6th and 13th centuries, which were the times of Arab rule, the fall of the Albanian state, the Islamization of a part of the Albanian population, the revival of local Albanian kingdoms (in Syunik, Artsakh, and Shaki-Cambisena), and the Seljuk and Mongol rule. Albanian author Movses Kaghankatvatsi, the outstanding representative of the tradition of history and literature, provided the key information and views on the history of Albania from the first to the tenth century in his “History of the Aghuans”, an Albanian-language book that has survived to the present day in the Old Armenian translation.

After studying the manuscripts of the “History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghankatvatsi and their genealogy, we managed to compile, first of all, a genealogical tree of manuscripts of the sources in the “History of the Aghuans”, which can be divided in two groups. I refer to the first group (Chart 2) as “Armenian” since it was purposefully altered by the Armenian Church, and the second group (Chart 1) “Albanian” which was not edited in any manner.

With this being said, our research was based on a thorough examination of all the available copies of the “History of the Aghuans”, including three Old Armenian editions, a modern Armenian edition, English and Russian editions, as well as four more manuscripts from Petersburg and the National Library of Paris. We found out that two of these manuscripts were written in Albanian (JIO ИBAH C-59 and P₄220), while the other two in Armenian [(JIO ИBAH B-56 and P₁217– (Makler catalog)].

Research revealed that, in order to claim the heritage of Albanian history, literature, and culture, the Armenian Church significantly edited one of the manuscripts of Kaghankatvatsi's “History of the Aghuans” in its translation into Old Armenian in the interests of the Armenian Church's history. It released this edited manuscript and its copies, which served as the foundation for all the existing versions of Kaghankatvatsi's “History of the Aghuans”, as well as all the studies by Orientalists, researchers studying the Caucasus, and anyone else interested in this Albanian monument. The editing was done in the claimed context of the Albanian Church's subordination to the Armenian Church since its foundation, as well as the Armenian origin of Albanian rulers.

The discovery of editing Albanian poet Davtak's elegy, which was devoted to the death of magnificent Albanian Prince Javanshir and written in the style of an acrostic covering 19 letters of the Albanian alphabet, is, in my opinion, not less important.

Specifically, the poem was purposefully expanded into all the 36 letters of the Armenian alphabet during the translation. Nevertheless, despite the vigilance and precautions, the Armenian Church has overlooked several manuscripts of Albanian writing that were translated into Armenian, but not subjected to Armenian editing in translation and were likely preserved thanks to the Albanians in subsequent periods. The textual analysis of these two groups of manuscripts testifies to the fundamental differences between them.

We came to the following conclusions on the basis of textual analyses, research into the monument's writing style and the chronological system of dating events in the "History of the Aghuans". The very contents of the "History of the Aghuans" (which describes the history of Albania from ancient times to the eighth century, the history of the Albanian ethnicity, the rulers of the country, the Albanian Church, and contains three descriptions of Albanian borders on either banks of the river Kur at different times), the manner of writing, the attitude of the author to the events being portrayed, the attitude towards separate historical figures (Catholicos Virov, Vachagan III, Javanshir, poet Davtak), the author's strictly developed chronological system that dates events in accordance with the rule of Albanian kings, as well as the rule of Persian and Byzantine kings (dating with synchronization), etc. convince us that the "History of the Aghuans" was written by an Albanian for the people of Albania. The first and second books were written in the early eighth century, while the third book was written in the tenth century. Armenian historians, on the other hand, believe that the "History of the Aghuans" is an Armenian source, written and compiled by an Armenian author or authors, who portray the history of the Armenian people and the eastern province of Greater Armenia. It was not easy even for the renowned Caucasian expert, I.A.Orbeli, to avoid the "taboo" imposed by the Armenian Church on the Albanian source, Movses Kaghankatvatsi. Orbeli was as perplexed by the question of how to name this source: Armenian-language (?), Armenian (?) or Albanian (?).

Our research has illustrated that, in the history of Albanian literature and culture, the 11th–13th centuries constitute a period of renaissance. During this time, Ganja's role as the center of Albanian Christian and Muslim Renaissance grew, and this town produced such notable representatives of Albanian history as David Alawik, Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, the Great Albanian Vardan (Eastern), Gregory Patmich, Smbat Sparapet, and Hethum Patmich. In their invaluable works, these individuals reflected all facets of Albanian society, politics, and spiritual life. Their works also illuminated the political developments in the Caucasus from the 11th to the 13th centuries, including the Seljuk and Mongol reigns in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and contained valuable information on the history of Georgia, Armenia, Byzantium, and Cilicia, as well as the history of Christianity in general, including Christianity in Albania – the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church.

My research into the works of Mkhitar Gosh and Kirakos Gandzaketsi convinced me that their works were also purposefully "edited" when being translated from Albanian into Armenian. Mkhitar Gosh's "Book of Law" was edited into the "Armenian Book of Law", while Gandzaketsi's "History" became the "Armenian History". Later on, they attempted to make Kirakos' text conform to the new title. In our opinion, the work of Hethum Patmich, an of the 13th–14th century descended from the royal lineage of Albanian Hethumids, who

ruled Cilicia from 1226 to 1342, was also edited in some way. M. Avgeryan skipped “entire sections of the text” at his choice, when translating Patmich’s poems into Old Armenian.

Our research revealed that during the development of Albanian literature in the 11th–13th centuries, which was linked to the general political, economic, and cultural revival of local Albanian kingdoms (in Syunik, Artsakh, and Shaki-Cambisena), Armenia’s political and cultural life, as well as its literature, slipped into decline. This can be explained not just by Byzantium’s forcible policy of resettlement of the Armenians or Seljuk attacks, but also by the whims of the Armenian feudal nobility, who only pursued their own interests (receiving titles, positions, and lands from rulers) at the expense of the Armenian people. The loss of Armenian statehood can be traced back to this point.

The tradition of history and literature of the late Albanians continued in the ensuing centuries. In the 18th century, Albanian Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalal wrote the “A Brief History of the Albanian Land”, while in the 19th century, Makar Barkhudaryants wrote three theses dedicated to the late Albanians: “Artsakh”, “Albanian Country and Its Neighbors”, and “History of the Albanian Land”. It is also worth noting that all of the mentioned Albanian authors from the 6th to the 19th century had Albanian self-awareness in their works’ content and titles.

Aside from narrative sources, we fully analyzed the legal acts of the Albanian “Aguen canons” of the 5th century, as well as the “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh, which served as the basis for the “Book of Law” by Smbat Sparapet. Our studies disproved the Armenian claims that Albanian sources from the 5th to the 13th century, and subsequent centuries, are Armenian, as if they were written in Armenian and for the people of Armenia. Our research into the historical realities of political and confessional Armenia and Albania during the same periods (5th–13th centuries) revealed that the Armenian language could never be a lingua franca either in Albania or in the Central Caucasus at the time. According to the sources, Armenians were not infiltrated into Albania. Armenian settlements emerged in these territories in the late 18th and the early 19th centuries. The population of Albania was autochthonous, consisting of Albanians, with constant infiltration and settlement of Turkic and Persian tribes beginning in the 1st century. There is a lot of data in different sources as to the existence of the independent Albanian ethnic group with the Albanian language and letters.

As for the fate of Albanian literature, there are three different perspectives on its existence and duration. We have already mentioned the Armenian viewpoint. According to Georgian scholars and Z.N. Aleksidze, the Arabs assisted the Albanian Church in falling under the powerful sway of the Armenian Church in the 720s, which destroyed Albania’s diophysite literature and put an end to monophysite Albania, which switched to the Armenian language and alphabet.

According to Z.M. Bunyatov, with the support of the Arab Caliphate and other conquerors, the Armenian Church began turning the Albanians into Gregorian and gradually nullified the influence of the Aran (Albanian) Church among the Albanian population. The Armenian Church destroyed all the artifacts of Albanian literature and anything that could serve as a remembrance of Albanian culture, also with the help of the Arab rulers. However, according to my own theory, which was published in 1986,

Albanian literature was written in Albanian before the 12th century, but after that it began to be written in the Old Armenian language.

The research into the history of the Armenians and the Armenian Church, as well as comparisons with Albanian realities, led me to reconsider my opinion and believe that throughout its existence (from the fourth century to 1836), the Albanian Church was never made Gregorian and remained an independent Albanian apostolic monophysite church, like the Copt and Jacob churches. Our studies prove that the Albanians had their own stable territory, political formations (before the 8th century within the whole country, from the Aras river in the south to Derbent in the north), local kingdoms in Syunik, Artsakh, and Shaki-Cambisena from the 9th to the 13th centuries, as well as five small Albanian kingdoms from the 15th century. The Albanian Church was surrounded by Muslim Turkic and Persian ethnicities, while local Albanian kingdoms (from the 9th to the 15th centuries) were always part of the Azerbaijani states. There was no need for the Albanians to switch to the Armenian language and write their works in Armenian under those conditions. In the 12th century, Turkic became a lingua franca and a language for inter-ethnic communication. Armenia should have had political, ideological, and confessional domination (from the 5th to the 15th centuries and on) for Armenian to be the language of the Albanian Church and the Albanians. However, as I already stated, I discovered back in 1986 that the Armenians were deprived of their statehood as early as in the 4th–5th centuries. As is known, the Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu states reigned in the Caucasus from the 15th century, the Safavid dynasty from the 16th century, and Azerbaijani khanates later on.

A look back at the history of the Albanian Church and the Armenians from the 11th century may reveal the Armenians' constant "wandering" and "roaming" in search of new lands in the west, as well as the Armenian Church's search for a center. Dioceses outside the Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia were not stable in their subordination to the Armenian Church, as a result of this "roaming". According to my research, only the occupation by Tsarist Russia in the Caucasus paved the way for the establishment of an Armenian state, which had never existed there before. The first decisive step to construct Armenian statehood in the Caucasus (in the territory of historical Azerbaijan) was the settlement of "Armenian"-Albanians from Iran and Armenians from Turkey in the lands of Azerbaijani khanates. The next step was to de-ethnicize the Albanians with the help of Tsarist Russia. The Tsarist resolution was issued in 1836 to abolish the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and subordinate it to the Armenian Church "as a result of the assimilation of the Caspian Albanian nationality with the Armenians" (M.Ormanyan). The Armenians needed to appropriate Albania's ethnic and cultural heritage, carefully remake the rich and centuries-long tradition of Albanian history and literature in the spirit of Armenian history, translate and edit Albanian literature into Old Armenian and destroy the original to establish historical grounds for their existence in Albania. I was also convinced of this idea by studying the text and origin of Albanian sources, as well as their manuscripts and dates of issuance. All of the data on the manuscripts of Albanian sources was discovered to be from 1829 and later. It was also discovered that the Albanian sources, translated into Armenian, began to be published after 1836, despite the fact that in the 17th century, Etchmiadzin had an Armenian publishing house and a pulp and paper factory (?!).

Makar Barkhudaryants' statement that "in 1828, according to eyewitnesses, these Albanian monasteries were still inhabited and flourishing" [in Muslim surrounding] is a vivid example of the transformation of Albania's historical and cultural heritage into Armenian. After the abolishment of the Albanian Church, Albanian monasteries and churches began to be destroyed in negligence.

The research revealed that Albania kept its statehood and political sovereignty in the 1st–8th centuries, longer than Armenia and Georgia. The political structure of Albanian society in the 4th–8th centuries can be described as a centralized feudal state ruled by Albanian kings and princes. The research allows us to discuss the uninterrupted succession of the Albanian kings of the Arsacid dynasty (1st–6th centuries) and the great princes of the Mihranid dynasty (7th–8th centuries). The Albanian Arsacid dynasty, descended straight from the Persian Arsacid dynasty, was established in Albania in the first century AD. The founder of the Albanian branch of the Arsacid dynasty was Vachagan I the Brave.

Our research disproves some historians' opinion that the Albanian Arsacids originated in the 4th century and that the founder of the Albanian branch of this dynasty is Sanatruk, the Massagetae king of the Arsacids. The period of political and cultural flourishing in Albania coincides with the rule of Vachagan III (the 5th century) from the Albanian Arsacid dynasty. Despite being descendants of Persian lineage and originally being protégés of Persian kings (Parthian and Sassanid), the Albanian kings of the Arsacid dynasty and their successors, the great princes of the Mihranid dynasty, served Albania, pursued a pro-Albanian policy, became close to the local aristocracy, got accustomed to the Albanian religion and culture, and thus became Albanian.

One can say with certainty that the Arsacids' internal policy aimed to establish Christianity as the ideological basis of Albanian society and feudal culture. The Arsacids and Mihranids in Albania attempted to strengthen the ideological and economic positions of the church, recognizing the importance of an independent Albanian church in preserving the country's political sovereignty and its ability to fight outer religious and political influences, as well as the policy of assimilation of two empires, Byzantium and Persia.

Unlike Armenia and Iberia, the Marzban system (appointment of governors to rule regions) in Albania, established after the abolition of royal power, was short-lived and episodic, lasting from 463 to 487/488, as well as from 510 to 629. I viewed the political fate of Albania and the ideological positions of the Albanian Church before and during the rule of the Mihranid dynasty's great princes in the context of relations between two great empires, Byzantium and Persia, as well as their political and ideological struggle.

Against the background of foreign policy events – the invasions of the Khazars, the Persian-Byzantine and Arab-Byzantine wars, when Albania became the arena of these hostilities, the Mihranid rulers, thanks to a wise and flexible foreign policy, managed to preserve the political independence of Albania on a vassal basis. The rule of Great Prince Javanshir, a prominent commander, a wise politician, a delicate diplomat and a major statesman of the mid-seventh century, should be especially noted in this regard.

Tracing historical and ethnic processes, I managed to recreate, for the first time in scientific research, the ethnic picture of the country and show the establishment of the Albanian ethnic community, which had ethnic, linguistic, and cultural characteristics

that distinguished it totally from neighboring Georgian and Armenian ethnicities. The formation of the Albanian ethnos was due to the following factors:

1. Stable territorial and state unity, which can be traced in Albania throughout the country from the 3rd century BC to the 8th century AD (the period of the reign of the local kings, the Albanian Arsacids, and the great Mihranid princes who replaced them), in the revived Albanian kingdoms – in Syunik, Artsakh, and Shaki-Cambisena from the 9th to the 14th centuries; and from the 15th to the 19th centuries, this can be seen in the formation of small Albanian kingdoms;

2. Albanian self-awareness reflected in the self-designation-ethnonym *Aluank-Albanians*, which can be traced approximately from the first to the eighth centuries throughout the country, and in local kingdoms in Syunik, Shaki-Cambisena, Utik, and Artsakh from the 9th to the 19th centuries. The “we” – “they” antithesis existed until the 19th century. As previously stated, Albanian self-awareness was reflected in all Albanian sources and, particularly, in their titles (“History of the Aghuans” by Movses Kaghanatvatsi, “Brief Albanian Chronicle” by Mkhitar Gosh, “Brief History of the Albanian Land” by Esayi Hasan Jalal, and “History of the Albanian Land” by Makar Barkhudaryants);

3. The unity of culture, which includes religion and language, is another ethnic component. From the 4th to the 19th century, Albania was united in terms of confession, with the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church as the organizing and consolidating force. Albanian was included in the northeastern Caucasian group of languages (Nakh-Dagestani).

The ethnic role of a language grows as the language acquires a writing system. Albanian writing system consisted of 52 phonemes, especially rich in guttural, whistling, and hissing sounds.

As previously mentioned, religious literature in the 4th century and rich Albanian literature from the 6th to the 19th centuries were created in Albanian language and writing. However, due to the efforts of the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church and the geopolitics of the Russian Empire, this literature was obliterated (it was translated into Armenian, while the Albanian traces were covered up).

During the Arab rule, the majority of the Albanians in the lowlands of the rivers Kura and Aras were Islamized and got assimilated with Turkic peoples who had also adopted Islam. The remaining part of the Albanians in the mountainous northwest and southwest (in former Albanian kingdoms) were forcibly de-ethnicized after Russia's occupation of historical Azerbaijan. They were forcibly integrated with Armenians and Georgians in 1836, as a result of the policies of Tsarist Russia and the Etchmiadzin Church. Part of the Albanians was culturally and ideologically assimilated with the Armenians, while the other half was made Georgian. The majority of the Albanians accepted Islam once again. Despite the tragic fate of the Albanians, part of them has survived to the present day. These are *Udins*, whose fate is reminiscent of that of the Celts.

The monograph goes on to study the restored Albanian kingdoms of the 9th–12th centuries in Syunik, Arran, Khachen, and Shaki-Cambisena. The rulers of these kingdoms were either directly or indirectly descended from the Albanian Mihranids, the great princes of Albania, or from the local Albanian kings known as *Aranshahiks*. In other words,

Albanian rulers have had a continuous line of succession: the ruler of Shaki and Aran – Sahl ibn Sunbat (second Shaki near the river Bazarchay-Hakarachay); Vasak, the ruler of Syunik; Stepannos Ablasad and his nephew Esayi Abu- Muse, the rulers of Beylagan and Ktish; Atrnerseh, the ruler of Khachen; his son Righteous Hamam, who restored the ravaged kingdom of Albania on either sides of the Kur river, as it was in the times of the Albanian state; Hamam's son Sahak Sevada, who was the ruler of Artsakh and partly Uti; Ishkhanik, the grandson of Grigor Hamam and the ruler of Shaki-Cambisena; and, finally, Senekerim and Philippe, who were the descendants of Sahak Sevada.

The monograph was the first to uncover the actual meaning of the term “Armenia” in the 10th century in relation to the Albanian kingdom of Khachen. As is known, the list of kingdoms and principalities, with which Byzantium had diplomatic correspondence, also includes the “ruler of Khachen, Armenia” (On Byzantine ceremonies, II, 48). Studying the actual meaning of numerous political and administrative concepts that had existed since the rule of the Byzantine Emperor Justinian, such as Armenia I, Armenia II, Armenia III, Armenia IV, Middle Armenia, Interior Armenia, and many other Armenias, which had only a geographical meaning, as well as the political and administrative units that the Arabs inherited from Byzantium, with slightly different geographical content, such as Arminiya I, Arminiya II, Arminiya III, and Arminiya IV, and taking into account the fact that Syrian author Zacharias Rhetor used the term “Armenia” in a wider geographical meaning, I came to believe that Armenia was used in relation to Khachen in a purely geographic meaning, despite C.Zuckermann's conclusion that Armenia is interpreted as a political, spiritual, and confessional unity. Under his conclusion, the kingdom of Khachen would be subordinated to Armenia and the Armenian Church. This is totally ungrounded and, above all, contradictory to the Armenian and Albanian realities.

Cyril Toumanoff's monograph, “The Dynasties in the Christian Caucasus from Ancient Times to the Nineteenth Century”, which links all the Albanian rulers, including the Aranshahiks, Arsacids, Mihranids, and even the rulers of Cilicia and Albanian Hethumids to the Armenians, also draws criticism. The monograph details the restoration of the Albanian-Khachen kingdom in the 12th and 13th centuries, as well as Hasan Jalal's rule and his domestic and foreign policy, which continued the traditions of the preceding Albanian rulers.

Thus, in the 12th–14th centuries, the historical Albanian region of Artsakh-Khachen was an important political and cultural center for the Albanians, who managed to preserve their territorial, confessional, and political unity, as well as, most importantly, Albanian self-awareness.

A new word in science is our recreation of the Albanian kingdom of Cilicia and the description of its links with the Albanians residing in the historical territories. According to the research into Albanian and Armenian sources, the second wave of emigration of the Albanians into Cilicia in Asia Minor was linked to the Seljuk movement in the 11th–12th centuries. The Albanian emigration was led by the prince of Ganja, Afshin-Oshin. He left his inherited estates of Mayreatzshur and, together with his troops and a group of Khachen and Syunik feudalists, set out towards Cilicia, where he conquered the Lambron fortress, which became the inherited property of the Afshinid-Oshinid dynasty. Afshin-Oshin laid the foundation of the Albanian dynasty of Hethumids, which

ruled Cilicia from 1226 to 1346. Being a faithful vassal of Byzantium, the Hethumids pursued a pro-Byzantine policy and fought the Armenian dynasty of Rubenids, which ruled Cilicia, for more than a century. Hethumid rulers were actively involved in the administration of the Cilician state. Constantine Pyle was the chief commander of the Rubenid dynasty. Nerses of Lambron was a prominent public and spiritual figure, who fought for the unification of the East Armenian and Albanian churches with the Byzantine Church, as well as for closeness with Catholicism. Nerses of Lambron and his successors from the Hethumid dynasty were devoted to the lofty spiritual ideal of unification of all the Christians, regardless of ethnicity.

Our studies show that the Hethumids' cosmopolitan strategy – the triumph of the “world Christianity” rejecting an independent political existence, the identity of ethnoses – played into the Armenian Church's hands in relation to other ethnic groups, and, in particular, the Albanians. We believe that the works by Albanian authors started to be translated into Armenian by both the Hethumid dynasty and the Armenians after the Albanian Hethumids came to Cilicia. In the next century (in the 15th century, when the Armenian Church moved to Etchmiadzin) it became a policy of gradual appropriation of the Albanian tradition of history and literature. The argument in favor of this thesis is that the ancient Armenian manuscript of *Kanonagirk* by Odznetsi, which dates back to the 8th century and has survived to the present day, was copied out in Cilicia in 1098 and included, for the first time, the *Aguen* canons of the 5th century, which were translated from Albanian into Armenian. Meanwhile, Odznetsi did not include the Albanian canons of the 5th century in his *Kanonagirk*, since he did not think they were Armenian. We think that the process of Albanian-Armenian integration began in Cilicia. However, the most important thing is that the Albanians themselves, with their political formations and the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church in its historical land, were far from this political integration. Our studies testify that the fate of the Albanians in their historical lands from the 14th to the 19th centuries totally denies the concept of the Armenian Church concerning the integration and further transformation of Albanian cultural heritage into Armenian. With the help of the Tsarist Russian strategy of forcibly de-ethnicizing Albanians and transforming their ethnic and cultural heritage, the Armenian Church was able to achieve its purpose. Our research revealed political and cultural relations between Cilicia and the Albanian kingdom of Khachen-Artsakh. These relationships existed between the Albanian Hethumids and the Hasan Jalal dynasty, as well as between individuals who established Albanian history and culture in Cilicia and the Artsakh-Khachen kingdom. Albanian renaissance, both in Cilicia and Artsakh-Khachen, took place in the 11th–13th centuries, while Armenian literature and political life were in full decay. This development was reflected in political and economic life, as well as in literature and in the creation of religious monuments. The creators of the literary traditions of the Albanians of that period in their historical land were Mkhitar Gosh, Kirakos Gandzaketsi, Stepanos Orbelian, Gregory Patmich (Magakiya), Vardan the Great (Albanian), while the creators of these traditions in Cilicia were Smbat Sparapet, historian Hethum Patmich, Nerses of Lambron, all of whom were of Albanian origin. It is also worth noting that the canons of David of Ganja and the “Book of Law” by Mkhitar Gosh were used as a source for the “Book of Law” by Smbat Sparapet. The fact that Hethum Patmich

was well aware of the Albanians using their own Albanian letters back in the 14th century is further suggestive of the Hethumid dynasty's ancient ties with its historical motherland. Testifying to this are also the copies of the Gospel written in the 13th century during the reign of the Hethumid dynasty, as well as Albanian place names in Cilicia, such as Kafan (Kapan) and Khatchin (Khachen). The close political relations between the Hethumid rulers, Khachen-Albanian King Hasan Jalal, and Stepanos Orbelian, the ruler of Syunik, can be clearly seen during the Mongol attacks, when the ruler of Khachen and, on his advice, the rulers of Cilicia, who were the Hethumids, as well as the rulers of Syunik, found common language with the Mongol leaders in order to preserve the country's unity and Christian population, and traveled to Mongol-ruled areas with huge tributes to accept being a vassal and a faithful ally of the Mongol empire. None of the Armenian princes ever considered of acting in that way.

Hasan Jalal, a foresighted politician, led his troops to join the march of Mongolian commander Bayju Noyan, gained his trust and some influence. It was thanks to Hasan Jalal's assistance and personal contribution that the envoys of Hethum managed to have a successful negotiation with Bayju Noyan. According to our research, it becomes clear why the Armenian Church moved from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin in 1441, which is in the Caucasus, where the Albanian kingdoms were divided into five domains and the later Albanians had been in existence.

Albania was one of the first Caucasian countries to develop feudal relations. Written sources can be used to track the development and specification of early feudal relations in the economically developed regions of the country.

The studies make it possible to say that the most persistent and dominant tendency was feudalism. Slavery certainly existed in Albania, but never became a formation. The main classes of feudal society, the azats and shinakans, were formed in general terms. The main producers of material wealth in Albania were peasants-shinakans who lived in communities and villages.

For many centuries, the communities progressively came under the control of the state (taxes and duties to the state, as well as a variety of other obligations) and, through it, the nobility. The policy of Albanian and Persian kings, who distributed villages and regions to their vassals – azats and naxarars – aided this. This process continued throughout the 4th–7th centuries. Movses Kaghankatvatsi reports on the ruling elite's allocation of villages and regions. During the early stages of feudalism, taxes and duties in favor of the state were the most common type of exploitation of the peasantry. When feudal relations were strongly established, this exploitation was reflected in numerous in-kind duties in favor of secular and spiritual feudalists, as well as metayage. The establishment of the class of feudalists – azats is closely connected to the formation of the class of feudally dependent peasants. The sources of the class of feudalists also reside in the preceding society. First of all, a new class of the nobility emerged from free community members and merged with the old class into a common class of feudalists.

Secondly, the king-appointed rulers of regions, naxarars, gradually made their position hereditary and gained the right to pass it to their sons. As a result, they turned from administrative rulers into genuine feudal princes with the right to feudal land possession.

The state's land stock gradually decreased in the 4th–5th centuries. Most of it was owned by feudal houses – patrimonies. In the heyday of feudalism, the ruling class, Albanian feudalists – azats, were divided into several groups, with the rulers of regions and districts being the highest. In the 4th–7th centuries, the further polarization of the social strata in Albanian society led to the emergence of a full range of feudal political and administrative units – naxarariats (seigniors).

With the strengthening of feudal ties, all naxarariat power was concentrated in the hands of feudal patrimonial leaders. From the 6th century onwards, the title “ishkhan” became the most common term for the head of a naxarariat. As the power of naxarariats (azgapets-nahapets) developed more political and administrative characteristics, the term “ishkhan”, which fully reflects the position of a feudal ruler, substituted the terms included in the patrimonial structure (azgapets-nahapets). The title “ishkhan” meant “ruler”, “owner”, and “master”. The prevalence of the state form of ownership at an early stage of feudalism resulted in a centralized state and expanded privileges for kings in both secular and spiritual life.

The Albanian king was the legislator and the supreme judge in the country, led the legislative and consultative body of secular and spiritual power, convened church councils and acted as the supreme commander of all the armed forces in the country. There was a strong tendency to create a hierarchy, as well as suzerain and vassal relationships. As it was in neighboring Iran, Armenia and Georgia, there was a feudal hierarchy in Albania, which was described in the Class Charter – Gahnamak. Every feudal-azat patrimonial group signed that special charter in the order of their power and importance. The first ten patrimonial groups were classified as senior, while the rest were classified as juniors.

The head of every patrimonial group was required to sit at the king's table by the same order. The “rank and honor” of a patrimonial group was determined by its economic power, political position, and troops. The Class Charter identified the order of the hierarchy of azats, as well as the place and position of each patrimonial group of azats in the country's socio-political life. Azats in Albania were the vassals of Albanian and Persian kings, were obliged to provide troops, perform royal service in accordance with their social rank, and carry out various public administrative functions during wartime. They, together with the clergy, were exempt from poll-tax. In exchange for their military service for Albanian and Persian kings, the azats were given land.

Feudal relations dominated Albania's social life in the 4th–8th centuries. Feudal land tenure developed in the confrontation between state and private forms of land ownership. The state's ownership was confined to state domains (where the rent and tax were the same) and land, privately owned by feudalists in exchange for their services. During the early stages of feudalism (about the 3rd–6th centuries), state ownership of land (in the person of the king) predominated, while the private feudal form of ownership was made up of two forms:

1. Hereditary ownership of absolute feudal land (which was technically called “dastakert” in Persian). This form of land ownership (allod) emerged after the decomposition of community land ownership, as well as land allocations by the state to the representatives of the ruling class as patrimonial estates.

2. Conditional land ownership (known in Persian as “hostak”), which emerged as a result of the state distributing land to representatives of the ruling class for temporary possession in exchange for vassal service. Conditional lands (hostak) tended to become completely owned property, dastakert, over time.

The owners of dastakerts were the royal house (patrimony), the feudal nobility (azats, nahapets, azgapets), the reestablished feudal nobility (patrimonial estate holders – naxarars, ishkhans), and part of the rural elite, which emerged under kings and princes. The clergy and the minor military-service aristocracy (azats in a narrow sense – Persian term) were the owners of hostaks.

Feudalism is also characterized by the political structure of a feudal society, which was its socio-economic structure and was rooted in out-of-economic restrictions.

An extremely divided right to property, the division of public power, and the exploitation of state rights in one's personal interests are all key characteristics of the political structure of feudalism. All of these characteristics of feudalism may be recognized in Albania.

The conditions of canon law were developed by the secular aristocracy and the clergy in the presence of King Vachagan. However, this law became effective after being approved by the secular nobility and the king. The position of the Albanian clergy appears to be explained by the country's centralized power. The main positions in Albania in the fifth century were hazarapets and hramanatars. Drawing parallels with Iran, it is possible that hramanatars in Albania were likewise viziers who administered all state affairs.

In contrast to hramanatars, who had broader civil administration duties, hazarapets usually headed a department to manage state revenues, such as in Iran, Armenia, and Iberia, or led a military department, such as in ancient times. The positions of hazarapets and hramanatars are regarded to be linked to the presence of royal authority in the country.

According to Aguen canons, there were spiritual and royal courts in Albania. The instances of church jurisdiction were the courts of the clergy and the court of the bishop. The spiritual court investigated the acts of clergymen and the violation of spiritual duties by lay people. The clergy, represented by the bishop, used to carry out judicial functions not only in the field of ecclesiastical law, but also in several areas of civil and criminal law (quarrels, clashes, bloodshed, etc.). With this being the case, the bishop used to try cases under secular laws rather than canon law.

The royal court dealt with marriage and family matters, antireligious acts, homicides, and the most serious crimes of the time that were punishable by the death penalty. The royal court also considered litigations between the nobility and the clergy. The royal court, which was presided over by the king himself, was country's supreme court. This is one of the differences between Albania and Armenia, where the judicial authorities of the clergy were incomparably large. This is explained by the fact that, in the absence of a centralized state, the Armenian Church served as a centralized and nationwide authority with legislative and judicial powers.

The absence of hereditary administrative positions, the presence of hramanatars, the king acting as the country's supreme judge, and the king convening church councils were all characteristics of the Albanian administration system.

With the collapse of the royal authority in Albania, the administration system apparently changed a little. The positions of hazarapets and hramanatars were perhaps related to the royal authority. As is known, the rule of great princes – ishkhans from the Mihranid dynasty, was established in Albania in the seventh century. Only the position of sparapet, the supreme commander of all the armed forces of Albania, was known in the 7th century. This position was occupied by both the great princes of Albania and by other individuals. By that time, the church and clergy had grown in strength, and Albanian Catholicoses started to head church councils.

As a result of the foregoing, we came to the conclusion that Albania lacked multi-structured socio-economic life, tribal unions, a primitive communal system, and slavery, all of which are alleged to have existed in the country. The terms *dastakert*, *anashkharhik*, *azgapet*, and *nahapet*, which were interpreted in their etymological and socio-traditional meanings without regard to the time and the local conditions of the Albanians, are the basis for scientific allegations that these structures existed in Albania. The available data testify to the presence of feudal relations in Albania in the 5th–7th centuries.

The subject of the Albanian Church, early Christianity, and its penetration and admission as the state religion, which is directly linked to the fate of the Albanian ethnicity, is given significant consideration in this monograph. Studies of the aforementioned annals, as well as Albanian and Christian realities in general, show that Christianity in Albania passed through two stages: 1) apostolic and 2) Graecophilic.

At first, Christianity was preached in Syrian-Aramaic. This period, dating back to the 1st–3rd centuries, is characteristic of the activities of both apostles and their students, as well as Syrian missionaries. The monograph reveals the reasons for the early penetration of Christianity into Albania. This was encouraged, first of all, by ancient Jewish settlements in Albania far before the first century, as well as by Nazarenes and Christian Jews in the first century. Back in 1987, I suggested that the Tats of Azerbaijan be regarded as the descendants of the long-lost Jewish tribe. This was supported, among other reasons, by the records about the resettlement of Jews/Hebrews, to the Caucasus, to Albania, in particular, along the western Caspian coast, by the Persian kings (the Achaemenids, the Parthians, and the Sassanids). This was also confirmed by the anthropological type of the Mountain Jews. Their ethnic purity was maintained through the practice of intra-ethnic marriage. Some of the Mountain Jews' commitment to Judaism also convinced me of this. This was an important fact, given the isolation and the caste nature of Judaism which could only be practiced by Jews. The Jewish names in the epigraphy in Buzovna, along with the word “*narsa*”, as well as the existence of the Nazarene quarter and the permanent settlement of the Mountain Jews in Absheron testify to the fact that there were early Jewish Christian communities of the Nazarenes here. Finally, there is data about Jews in Barda (Kaghankatvatsi, II, 10) and the settlement of Jews along the Caspian coasts by Achaemenid King Artaxerxes in the 4th century BC (Bar Hebraeus).

The second (Graecophilic) period of preaching Christianity is associated with Gregory the Illuminator (Parthian) and Albanian King .Urnayr (4th century), when Christianity became the state religion. The Graecophilic period was brief and after that, the Albanian Church took the path of Albanian ethnic development.

The source and the entire way of establishment of the Albanian Christian Church were closely linked to the history of Christianity in the East and blended with its general development trends. However, it had certain peculiarities. The monograph analyzes the sources of Christianity as religious teaching, the formation of its doctrine (ideological views), the structure of the church, as well as the geography and time of the spread of Christianity, all of which will undoubtedly shed light on the recreation of the Albanian Church. The vast propaganda of Christianity in the northeast and east of Jerusalem in the 1st–2nd centuries is credited to apostles Thomas, Andrew, Bartholomew, the brother of apostle Thomas – Mar Addai-Addeus-Thaddai-Thaddeus and the disciples of Thaddeus – Mar, Elisha, who preached in Syria (its center Antioch) and Osroene (its center Edessa), in Nisibis, Mesopotamia, Lesser Armenia and further in the northeast and the east, in Persia (Seleucia – Ctesiphon), and in the central Caucasus in Albania and Georgia.

According to the Albanian tradition, apostle Thaddeus' disciple Elisha (from Jerusalem) preached in three countries such as Chola, Lpinia and Albania (*Kaghankatvatsi*, III, 23). ‘The holy patriarch Elisha arrived in Gish [Shaki], founded a church there, and offered up bloodless sacrifices. This place was the original source of all the churches and cities and the conversion of us Easterners’ (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 6).

The idea of the apostolic beginning of the Albanian Church, as well as its genetic kinship and enduring relations with the Jerusalem Church, can be easily spotted throughout the “History” by *Kaghankatvatsi*. According to Stepanos Orbelian (13th century), Saint Bartholomew, one of Christ’s 12 apostles, preached in the village of Ordubad in Syunik and built a church in Gokhtn.

Thus, in the apostolic period, the episcopacy had already been established in Albania, and both Apostle Bartholomew and Apostle Thaddeus' successor Elisha, who was the first bishop and archbishop of Albania, preached Christianity (traditionally).

Some historical texts testify that Christianity spread in Albania before Armenia. Among them is Armenian Catholicos Abraham’s letter to the Albanians: “The see of Albania was established before that of Armenia and agrees with us” (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 47). Another passage reads: “In the year 43, according to Greek reckoning, the Armenians were illuminated, 270 years after the illumination of the Albanians...” (*Kaghankatvatsi*, II, 47).

Ethnic diversity and the rule of polytheism paved the way for the emergence of a new ideology: monotheistic Christianity. It is not accidental that Elisha started preaching in the Chola region in the north of Albania, where there was ethnic diversity and, most importantly, there were ancient Jewish settlements, where early Christian Judaists lived.

The second (Graecophilic) period, during which Christianity became the state religion, is common for the three countries in the Caucasus. Gregory the Illuminator (for the three countries – Armenia, Georgia, and Albania), as well as Albanian King Urnayr (for Albania), are linked to this.

In light of the foregoing, we believe the widely held scientific belief that the first Christian preachers arrived in Albania from Armenia, that preachers for the right-bank part of Albania came from Armenia, and that preachers for the northwestern regions of the left-bank Albania, the area between the rivers Iori and Alazan, came from Iberia, is unfounded. The Albanian written language and Albanian letters, which were used to

translate the Bible and other Gospels from Syrian and Greek into Albanian, played a crucial role in the spread and establishment of Christianity. The discovery of Georgian-Albanian palimpsests by Z.N.Aleksidze disproves the Armenian tradition, which holds sway in science, that Mesrop Mashtots invented the Albanian alphabet in the 5th century.

The feudal monarch and feudal nobility in Albania created the material basis of the Albanian Church and its clergy, who had most of the lands and wealth of pagan temples, land donations from the king and nobility, as well as other numerous in-kind duties. For their service, the clergy were provided with lands – *hostaks*, and exempted from tax, just like the nobility.

In the early period of Christianity (4th–5th centuries), the Albanian clergy were economically and politically weak. Even when it came to resolving church concerns, the Albanian clergy did not take the lead. Such a position of the Albanian clergy is explained both by the ideological weakness of the church among the public and by the centralized power in the country. The economic and political positions of the Albanian Church strengthened under the great Albanian Mihranid princes in the sixth and seventh centuries. The clergy took up arms against the *azats*, restricted their arbitrariness, and categorically forbade them to meddle in ecclesiastical affairs in 705 (*Kaghankatvatsi*, I, 26; III, 11).

The monograph also examined the issue of the Albanian Catholic establishment (patriarchate), which, unlike the Armenian Church, was initially autocephalous. The researched materials unveiled the political reasons for the original independence of the Albanian Church. Albania's political sovereignty and stable statehood ensured independence for its church.

The ideological situation in the Caucasus between the 5th and 7th centuries led to church division, which began in the 6th century and ended in the early 7th century.

According to the research, Albania had 12 bishoprics in the 5th–8th centuries, and the Albanian Church had foreign links, especially with Turkic-speaking nomads who lived in the steppes behind the Caucasus passages and the Albanian gates (beyond Derbent). These links originated from the foreign policy of the Albanian rulers – Albanian Arsacids, and the great princes of the Mihranid dynasty.

The Albanian Apostolic Church was autocephalous from the fourth century up to 1836. The centers of the Albanian patriarchate were Chola, in the 6th–8th centuries Barda, in the 8th–9th centuries Berdakur, then Charek-Khamshi (not far from Gadabay), and for a short time it was the Dativank church named after the disciple of apostle Thaddeus-Dadi (>Mar>Elisha) in Khachen, and finally, from 1240 to 1836, Gandzasar (the Gandzasar Cathedral). In the 17th–19th centuries, the Khachen temple, Yerits Mankants, hosted an anti-see.

The Albanian state fell in 705, and Arab emirs took control of the country. In the 9th–19th centuries, some Albanians who converted to Islam assimilated with Turkic tribes (who also converted to Islam), while others who practiced Christianity managed to restore Albanian political formations in some parts of the country and in the mountainous regions of the Lesser Caucasus, such as Syunik, Artsakh, and Shaki-Cambisena.

Following the occupation of the Caucasus under the Turkmenchay Treaty in 1828, Tsarist Russia made several concessions and allowances to the Armenian Catholics, one

of the demands of which was the abolishment of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and its subordination to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin.

In 1909–1910, the Russian Synod allowed the Armenian Gregorian Synod of Etchmiadzin and the Armenian Gregorian Consistory of Yerevan to destroy the old archives of subordinated dioceses. It is obvious that the archives of the Albanian Church were also destroyed together with old Armenian archives.

Thus, the Armenian Church in Etchmiadzin appropriated and transformed the ethnic and cultural heritage of the Albanians with the help of the policy of the Tsarist Russia.

The monograph then goes on to investigate, for the first time, the Aguen canons of the 5th century, which constitute an ancient monument of Albanian law. The manuscripts and translations of the canons were studied, and the canons were analyzed as part of the research. These studies were used to reconstruct certain aspects of the Albanian clergy and the Albanian Church. This is, by the way, a groundbreaking scientific endeavor.

The latest model of the Armenian concept of the Albanian Church status as a diocese of the Armenian Church, as set out in the article “The Armenian Apostolic Church”, is completely groundless and irrational. Admitting temporary “contradictions” between the Armenian and Albanian churches on hierarchical grounds, the article alleges that the Albanian Church was initially a diocese of the Armenian Church. The article continues with the events of the late 14th – first half of the 15th centuries: “A movement for the revival of the Armenian Church arose from the Syunik theological school. This included the idea of relocating the seat of the Armenian Church from Cilicia to its ancient historical place, Etchmiadzin, which was implemented in 1441”. This entire passage is a lie. The matter is that, until recently, Armenian science claimed that the main reason for the patriarchal center’s relocation from Cilicia to Etchmiadzin was the effort of the Cilician patriarch of the Armenian Church to adopt Catholicism, which enraged the Armenians in “Central Armenia” (?!). Syunik has nothing to do with it at all. This idea arose far beyond the borders of Syunik, in the western part of Asia Minor, when the Armenian clergy, the Armenian Church, who had repeatedly tried their fate in the west of Asia Minor and once again ended in a fiasco, lost hope of returning to their ancestral lands and settling again in Eastern Anatolia due to the formation of the powerful Ottoman Empire. The existence of monophysite Christian Albanian communities in the western part of historical Albania, Etchmiadzin, seemed appealing. The Armenian Church was fostering political plans to prepare historical foundations for existence on the territory of Azerbaijan with the help of the Albanians, and then to adapt to their cultural heritage. The article also claims that Vagharshapat (Etchmiadzin) was the center of the Armenian Catholicos from the 5th to the 9th centuries. This allegation is also groundless, since, according to the Armenian Book of Canons, first Armenian church was built in the village of Ashtishat in the Armenian region of Taron, on the bank of the river Aratsani (Muradchay), which is a tributary of the river Euphrates, in the eastern part of Asia Minor, rather than the western part of the Central Caucasus. The church in Ashtishat was the “mother of Armenian churches”, and then became the hereditary possession of Gregory the Illuminator’s dynasty. It is very surprising that the article “Armenian Apostolic Church” does not mention this church. This fact is unlikely to be uttered since there could be a discrepancy in “covering” Etchmiadzin's role as the Illuminator's initial center, which is located far from

the Armenians' actual residence. According to historiography, the Illuminator's see was established in Vagharshapat, while the research into Armenian sources (Agathangelos) allows us to locate Vagharshapat and Etchmiadzin on the right bank of the river Euphrates, rather than the left bank of the river Aras. According to Agathangelos, in order to baptize Armenian King Trdat, Gregory the Illuminator and his numerous clergy left the capital Vagharshapat for Bagavan, and then for the bank of the river Euphrates (see Chapter 6, Paragraph 4). The authors of the article have to admit that the Armenian Church's migration to Etchmiadzin is explained by the fact that in the 15th–16th centuries, “the difficult situation in the country compelled the Armenians to seek lifesaving in foreign land” because of “the struggles between Turkic Aq Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu tribes”. As we can see, the creators of the Armenian people have to accept that Etchmiadzin, the last refuge for the Armenian Church, was a “foreign land” for the Armenians. How can the aforementioned allegation be compared to the fact that the Armenian Church, fleeing “the struggles between Turkic Aq Qoyunlu and Qara Qoyunlu tribes”, established itself in Etchmiadzin, a land dominated by these Turkic tribes (?!). The article goes on to make a declarative allegation that never existed in the history of the Armenian and Albanian churches that “dioceses in Persia, first and foremost, the Albanian Catholicos centered in Gandzasar (Artsakh), carried out active efforts aimed at Armenia's annexation to Russia. The Armenian clergy of the kingdoms of Yerevan, Nakhchivan, and Artsakh aspired to get rid of Persian rule”. This entire passage is a politicized lie designed to support the Armenian Church's political efforts, which, with the help of Tsarist Russia's policy, would be focused first at appropriating Albanian cultural heritage, then at destroying it and covering up its traces. The Armenian Church, which did not have a single diocese in the Caucasus (such dioceses were in Eastern Anatolia, Chapter 6, Paragraph 3), in good time regarded the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church with its eparchies and the Albanian population as its own by touting the Albanian clergy as Armenian and geographically dividing this church into the khanates of Yerevan, Nakhchivan, and Artsakh, which never existed, since Artsakh was part of the Karabakh khanate. History does not record any activity by the Albanian Church aimed at Armenia's annexation to Russia. Such an action could never take place because it would be contradictory to the interests of the Albanian Church. Furthermore, in reality, there was no so-called Armenia which needed to be “annexed” to Russia. Another allegation that bears no criticism is that “Eastern Armenia” was included in Russia under the Turkmenchay Treaty of 1828. History has no idea what “Eastern Armenia” is, where it originated from and how it was included. The article's last allegation is that “the Albanian Catholicosate, which lost its independence, was abolished and its eparchies were included in the Catholicosate of Etchmiadzin”, under the document of 1836.

This passage reveals something different, the only possible conclusion that the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church and all of its eparchies existed until 1836.

In the monograph (Chapter 6), we attempted to trace the fate of the Albanian population in Karabakh-Arran from the 14th to the 19th century, as well as show the means and methods of its de-ethnicization. In the mentioned periods, Artsakh-Arran was also populated by Turks and Kurds, with Turks having ethnic dominance. During his conquest of the Caucasus, Tamerlane sent 10,000 Albanians to Khorasan and Afghanistan.

In the 15th–16th centuries, Karabakh-Artsakh and Syunik were part of the Qara Qoyunlu state, which was established in the territory of historical Azerbaijan under the leadership of Jahan Shah, and later the Aq Qoyunlu state. In the 15th century, the dynasty of Hasan Jalal received the title of melik (ruler) from Jahan Shah, which was also granted to the successors of Hasan Jalal's dynasty on his daughters' line, “khamsa”. Hasan Jalal's dynasty continued to play an important role in the political and spiritual life of Artsakh from the 15th century through 1836, and its representatives became hereditary patriarchs of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church (in Gandzasar). In the 16th century, Karabakh-Artsakh was included in the Azerbaijani state of Safavids as part of the Karabakh (Ganja) administrative unit. In the late 17th and early 18th centuries, Albanians launched a national liberation movement in Karabakh and Syunik against the Persian and Ottoman domination (the movement was headed by rulers Israel Ori, David Beg, and Albanian Catholicos Esayi Hasan Jalal). The Albanian rulers relied on the march of Peter the Great to Shamakhi.

In the 17th century, Christian Albanians, led by Mikhli Baba, launched a social movement against spiritual and secular feudalists in Karabakh. The Albanian meliks (rulers) of Shaki, Shirvan, and Karabakh were alarmed by the rise of the Karabakh khanate under Panah Ali Khan's leadership. They incited Shaki Khan Haji Chalabi, who was Muslim and of Albanian descent, to rise up against Panah Ali Khan; nevertheless, Chalabi's attempts to besiege the Castle of Bayat were fruitless. Under Ibrahim Khalil Khan's leadership, the struggle with Karabakh rulers continued, and he eventually triumphed.

In the 18th century, Russia's geopolitical interests in the Caucasus included the formation of three Christian states: restoration of the Albanian kingdom and Georgian kingdom of Irakli, and creation of the Armenian province.

The important source for recreating the history of the Albanian Church in the 16th–18th centuries, its monasteries, and its churches are the colophons of the Albanian Gospels, which note the existence of two autonomous churches, Albanian and Armenian. The colophons bore the historic memory of the Albanians. M. Barkhudaryants's statement that ‘in 1828, according to eyewitnesses, these Albanian monasteries were still inhabited and flourishing’ deserves special attention. Barkhudaryants' another statement is interesting that these monasteries (which became subordinated to the Armenian Church of Etchmiadzin from 1836) had no archives or libraries by the end of the 19th century. Everything had mysteriously disappeared. Precious manuscripts have been plundered in large numbers. For months, monasteries had no religious services because there were no literate people, schools, monks, or even simple gospelers (*M. Barkhudaryants*, Artsakh, I, page 5, 160).

By settling Armenians from Iran and Turkey in Karabakh, Yerevan and Nakhchivan khanates, Russia changed the ethnic demography in the Caucasus and created Armenia in historical Azerbaijani territories out of the lands of Nakhchivan and Yerevan khanates. In 1836, Tsarist Russia approved joint regulations on the Armenian Gregorian Church, which contained a particular provision for the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church, under which the Albanian Church would lose its independence and be subordinated to the Etchmiadzin Church as its diocese. The Armenian Church appropriated Albania's ethnic and cultural heritage and completely changed it, which resulted in its physical

destruction. The de-ethnicization of the Albanians was very painful. Part of the Albanians adopted Islam, another part became Gregorian Armenians, while others accepted Orthodoxy and became Georgian. However, the Albanians had not known Armenian for a long time, as evidenced by papers from the synod examined in the monograph.

Part of the Albanians-Udins managed to avoid de-ethnicization and have survived to the present day. These are Udins from Oghuz and Gabala districts of Azerbaijan. The Udins are direct descendants of the Albanians. The monograph also analyzes the terrible process of forcible de-ethnicization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, using the example of the family of Pavel Florensky, who was from the dynasty of an Albanian melik (ruler).

A ground breaking experience in science was our research into the problem of “The Albanians and Ethnic Origin of the Azerbaijani People” (paragraph 2, Chapter 6). The three powerful ethnic and cultural layers that made up the people of Azerbaijan (the Azerbaijanis) were Caucasian (Albanian), Persian (Medes, Kurds, Tats, and Talysh), and Turkic. We reviewed the intensive process of ethnic formations in the territory of historical Azerbaijan from very ancient times to the twentieth century, from Albanian, Turkic and Persian ethnicities to the formation of the Azerbaijani people and nation, using sources, literature, as well as political, confessional, and cultural realities in different periods. For each period, we identified the role of Albanians in ethnic processes in the territory of historical Azerbaijan in the 1st–19th centuries.

Studies into the dioceses of the Armenian Church, Armenian patrimonies and their locations are also new in science. Our research, which is based mostly on Armenian sources, as well as synodal registers and Armenian political and confessional realities, is convincing that Armenian dioceses and patrimonies existed outside the Caucasus in Eastern Anatolia (see the map “Armenian dioceses”).

The evaluation and pre-examination of the current locations of Ararat and Ararat Plain, Nahanga Province of Ararat, as well as my suggestion for new locations, is also groundbreaking. Their exact location can aid in the exact reconstruction of the historical geography of Middle Eastern regions and states, the Armenian people, and states in the Central and South Caucasus. The research was based on the maps “Ancient Middle East” (by I.M.Dyakonov) (map No. 1) and the “Armenian Highlands” (by Academician S.T.Yeremian) (map No.2). The Armenian Highlands, according to I.M.Dyakonov, stretched from the west (right bank of the Euphrates) to the east (north of Lake Van). The Armenian Highlands are crossed by the river Aratsani-Muradchay, which is a tributary of the river Euphrates. According to S.T.Yeremian, the Armenian Highlands are located in the same area from west to east, but with a significant displacement towards the north, where the upper reaches of the Aras river start in the center of the Armenian Highlands. According to the “History of the Armenian People”, Armenian people lived in the territory known in science as the Armenian Highlands. Soviet Armenia occupied the northeastern part of this territory. In order to substantiate the territory of Soviet Armenia, Armenian pseudo-historians solved the problem by stretching the territory of the Armenian Highlands to the northeast and connecting it to the western part of the Eastern Caucasus, which is the territory of historical Azerbaijan.

Armenian historians went on to fabricate the Ararat Plain and Ararat, which never existed in the center of the Armenian Highlands. According to the “History of

the Armenian People”, Ararat Plain became the heart of the Armenian Highlands in the 4th century BC. The ancient Armenian capitals – Armavir, Yervandashat, Vagharshapat, Dvin, as well as the current capital, Yerevan, were all located there. Again, did Armenian historians “need” to place all the Armenian capitals in the same area in order to substantiate the city of Yerevan and its pseudo-Armenian origin?!

It is puzzling how the Armenians, who lived on both banks of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, as well as around Lake Van, and were doomed with its church to roam westward, managed to establish their capitals in the territories far from their political formations, in the “stable Ararat Plain”, which Armenian historians place in the southeastern part of the Eastern Caucasus. The location of Armenian feudal patrimonies and Armenian dioceses in Asia Minor, namely in Eastern Anatolia, contradicts this “elaborate conceptual model”. The Armenian model is also refuted by actual data in Armenian sources, which claim that the patrimonial burial-vaults of the Armenian Arsacid dynasty were located in the Daranaghi region of the town-castle of Ani, on the right bank of the Euphrates, and that the so-called capital of these Arsacids, Vagharshapat, was allegedly near Etchmiadzin in the southeastern part of the Eastern Caucasus. The fact that the remains of Armenian kings would be carried across the Armenian Highlands from east to west, from the Eastern Caucasus (its western part) and Lesser Caucasus to Asia Minor and the eastern bank of the river Euphrates, creates a total paradox. Our research revealed, that in order to achieve the goal of appropriating the western part of the Lesser Caucasus, the Eastern Caucasus, and Azerbaijani lands, Armenian scholars turned the region of Ayrarat into the province-region of Ayrarat and artificially increased the territory of Ayrarat by placing it in the center of the Armenian Highlands and stretching it towards the western parts of the Eastern Caucasus, that is, towards Azerbaijani lands. However, this is again refuted by Agathangelos, whose data, included in the monograph, testify to the absurdity of the Armenian concept. According to Agathangelos, during the mass march, Armenian King Trdat and Gregory [the Illuminator] left Vagharshapat for Bagavan, and then for the river Euphrates, to baptize. If we accept the location of current Ayrarat, we can trace the route of Gregory and King Trdat's procession with all their entourage on a map of Armenian researchers. It was necessary to cross the river Aras [in which course – middle?] from the capital Vagharshapat in the region of Ayrarat, cover a long distance overland and then cross the river Aratsani to reach Bagavan at the foothills of Mount Npat. And if the final destination of the procession was certainly the Euphrates River and its banks, then, travelling far to the west from Vagharshapat [located by the Armenians in the west of the Lesser Caucasus], it would be necessary to cross the Aratsani River once more [as Bagavan is washed by the Aratsani River on three sides], then, make a long journey by land, cross the Aras River once again (this time in its upper reaches) and make yet another long journey by land, and only then would they finally reach their destination, the Euphrates River, where they would be baptized. The entire route we considered from Vagharshapat to the Euphrates appears absurd for one reason: the city of Vagharshapat, the gavar of Ayrarat, and the locality of Bagavan are all wrongly positioned. They should be positioned not far from the Euphrates River. These toponyms indeed turn out to be in the center of the Armenian Highlands, but not far north-east of the Armenian Highlands [as described by the Armenian scientists in support of their elaborate concept], which

practically puts them in the western part of the Lesser Caucasus, on the left bank of the Aras River. As our research demonstrates, this has nothing to do with the historical and geographical realities under consideration, but rather with Armenian historians' insistence on and defense of the claim of geographical proximity to the territories of the modern Armenian Republic, Albania, and historical Azerbaijan.

The monograph ends with a paragraph "Albanian Roots of the Karabakh Problem". For a long time, the creators of Armenian history have staked out an aggressive concept on Karabakh-Artsakh that is devoid of any scientific foundation. According to this concept, Karabakh and its Albanian population were deemed Armenians in terms of politics, territory, ethnicity, culture, and confession. The Armenians got accustomed to Karabakh-Artsakh with the help of the Albanian ethnic and cultural heritage.

Our research revealed that Karabakh, territorially and politically, was always part of all the states in historical Azerbaijan from the 3rd century BC to the 19th century, including Caucasian Albania, the Sajid state, the Sallarid state, the Shaddadid state, the state of Atabegs-Ildenizids, the Qara Qoyunlu and Aq Qoyunlu states, the Safavid empire, and, finally, the Karabakh khanate, which was annexed to Russia in 1805, 1813, and finally in 1828. As can be seen, Artsakh-Karabakh was never a part of Armenian political formations or even political and administrative formations, which were formed on the territory of Asia Minor, far away from the Caucasus. Albanians, Turks, and Kurds made up the population of Karabakh.

As for the history of the Armenian people, two Armenian political formations are known. The first one emerged on the territory of the Armenian Highlands in the 6th century BC and lasted until the 5th century. This was a nominal state since its rulers lacked the right to inherit political power. Its kings were either Persian and Roman appointees, or could be princes of Iberia and Atropatene. After the abolishment of the Armenian state in the 5th century, its territory was subjected to constant pressure by Persia and Rome/Byzantium. As a result of this, two provinces emerged: Eastern Persian Armenia and Western Byzantine Armenia. The second Armenian state of Bagratids was established 400 years later, in the 9th–11th centuries, on the northern bank of Lake Van, south of the upper and middle reaches of the Aras River. The third Armenian state is considered to be Cilician, however, as our studies illustrate, this state was ruled by the Albanian dynasty of the Hethumids in the 13th–14th centuries, and had a mixed population. Therefore, it is incorrect to consider this state to be an Armenian political formation.

Furthermore, this paragraph states that the Armenian Church was based not in its historical land, but in Etchmiadzin, in the western part of the Eastern Caucasus, and, until the nineteenth century, had no dioceses and patrimonies, which continued to be in Eastern Anatolia.

In the 16th–18th centuries, European and American missionaries fostered a galaxy of Armenian intellectuals in Europe and America, who embraced Catholicism and Lutheranism, laying the foundation for the future Armenian lobby and diaspora. These Armenians, along with the Etchmiadzin Church, became the ideologists for the establishment of Armenians in the Eastern Caucasus, or rather, in the territory of historical Azerbaijan. In the 16th century, Armenians wanted to rid the Caucasus of

the Turks, however, they could only achieve their goal with the help of geopolitics – European powers, particularly Russia.

Under the “History of the Armenian People” of the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Armenian historians present the history of the Azerbaijani regions – Karabakh, Ganja, Iravan, and Nakhchivan beylerbeyliks, and later the khanates, since there is nothing else in the store of the “history” of the Armenian people.

At the early stage of the occupation of the Central Caucasus, Russian Empire planned to strengthen the Christian factor by establishing three Christian political formations within the empire: the Georgian kingdom, the restored Albanian kingdom, and the established Armenian region, which had never existed in the Caucasus. After conquering the Caucasus by the 1830s, Russia reviewed the geopolitical situation on the ground: it abolished the Georgian kingdom and Azerbaijani khanates, established a political formation that had never existed in the Caucasus – the Armenian region in the lands of Azerbaijani khanates (Iravan and Nakhchivan), and increased the number of the Armenian population by settling here ethnic Armenians from the Ottoman empire, as well as Albanians from Iran. Thus, the issue of restoration of the Albanian kingdom got out of the agenda. It became necessary for the Russian Empire to set up and strengthen an Armenian factor that would always be pro-Russian and help stay in the Caucasus, as well as pursue the policy of getting access to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. That is why, of the two ancient autocephalous apostolic churches in the Caucasus – the Georgian and Albanian churches – which had functioned from the 4th to the 19th centuries, Tsarist Russia weakened the Georgian Church, depriving it of its autocephalous status, and abolished the Albanian Church, turning it into a diocese of the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church. This was the beginning of the final de-ethnicization of the Caucasian autochthonous population – the Albanians.

After bolstering the Etchmiadzin Church's political, ideological, and economic position in the Caucasus, Russia began to fear separatist aspirations of the overly strengthened Armenian Etchmiadzin Church, as well as pressure from the Armenian diaspora, who were methodically seeking statehood in the Caucasus, in the context of the changing geopolitical situation. As a result, Tsarist Russia abolished the Armenian region in 1850 and replaced it by the Iravan Governorate.

It is evident that Russia's subsequent policy did not envision the establishment of an Armenian state in the Caucasus (which allowed Russia to maintain constant and complete control over the Armenians), but rather sought to use the Armenians as a “satellite-factor” in its Near East policy. In the 1860s, Tsarist Russia began to nurture the idea of establishing an Armenian region – Western Armenia – on Turkish lands in Asia Minor. That was how the “Armenian question”, supported only by Russia, emerged in 1878. To accomplish its goal, the Dashnaksutyun party frequently changed its orientation from Russia to European powers, then to the Young Turks (a pan-Turkist revolutionary movement), and back to Russia. The “genocide” of Armenians in Turkey in 1915 proved to be very timely for the Armenians, hastening the resolution of the issue of establishing an Armenian state, albeit on a different territory. The February and October revolutions of 1917, as well as the Entente and the Bolsheviks, sped up the establishment of the republic of Armenia. However, this was preceded by a long-lasting war that the Dashnaks imposed on Georgia and Azerbaijan in 1919–1920, when they annexed Akhalkalaki, Borchali, Karabakh, and

Zangazur. Finally, the Soviet authorities resolved the Armenian question at the expense of Azerbaijani lands (the lands of the former Iravan khanate and Zangazur) by establishing Eastern Armenia, which is the Republic of Armenia, in 1921 and the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous District in 1923 (out of historical Karabakh).

Thus, the Armenians acquired their statehood with the help of the Russian Empire, and then the Soviet administration. With the help of Tsarist Russia, the Armenian Etchmiadzin Church set out to convert Albanians' rich ethnic and cultural heritage into Armenian, pursuing the forcible "Armenization" of Albanian heritage, and promoting ethnic Albanian political and cultural sources as Armenian.

However, the assertion that Albanian society and culture vanished as a result of the policies of the Russian Empire and Armenian Etchmiadzin Church, and that the Albanians left no traces in other ethnicities, is undoubtedly false. This rich two-millennium-old culture blended with the cultures of the peoples of the Caucasus: the Azerbaijanis, the Georgians, and the peoples of Dagestan. The Albanians were a major contributor to the ancient, early medieval, as well as medieval culture of Azerbaijan. The Albanians are one of the ancestors of the peoples of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Dagestan. This defines the role of the Albanians in the history of Azerbaijan, the history of the Caucasus, and the history of humanity. This is what makes it necessary to study all the questions raised.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JAH	– Journal of Ancient History. Moscow
BM	– Bulletin of Matenadaran
HSS NAS RA	– Herald of the Social Sciences, National Academy of Sciences of RA
BA	– Byzantine Annals
QH	– Вопросы истории (Questions of History)
PAS Az.SSR	– Доклады Академии наук Азербайджанской ССР (Proceedings of the Azerbaijan SSR Academy of Sciences)
JMNE	– Журнал Министерства народного просвещения (Journal of the Ministry of National Education)
RODRAS	– Записки Восточного Отделения Русского археологического общества (Records of the Oriental Department of Russian Archaeological Society)
RIO	– Записки Института востоковедения АН СССР (Records of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences)
PAS	– Известия Академии наук (Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences)
IOS of the USSR	– Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR AS
HR	– Исторические записки (The Historical Records)
HJ	– Исторический журнал (The Historical Journal)
HPJ	– Историко-филологический журнал (Historical-Philological Journal), Yerevan
КСИИМК	– Краткие сообщения Института истории материальной культуры АН СССР (Brief Reports of the Institute of Archaeology, USSR Academy of Sciences)
LB IOS	– Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR AS
MCA	– Материальная культура Азербайджана (The Material Culture of Azerbaijan)
PC	– Палестинский сборник (The Palestine Collection)
CDCRP	– Сборник материалов для описания местностей и племен Кавказа. Тифлис (Collection of Descriptions of Caucasian Regions and Peoples, Tiflis)
SA	– Soviet Archaeology
SE	– Советская этнография (Soviet Ethnography)
SN	– Ученые записки (The Scientific Notes)
CE	– Христианский Восток (The Christian East)
BSO[A]S	– Bulletin of School of Oriental (and African) Studies. London
REA	– Revue des études arméniennes. Paris
REG	– Revue des études géorgiennes et caucasiennes. Paris

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