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ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OF ARMENIAN HISTORY
(Discussing the problem)*

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Introduction

For the history of the Armenian Highland and particularly the emergence and development of Armenian nation, the geographical conditions had an important role. Its unbiased analysis can fundamentally change current dominant concepts. It is time for the in-depth study of our history in close relationship with the geographical and climatic peculiarities of the Armenian Highland, which definitely could contribute much for the solution of many problems which until now remain inexplicable.

The impact of environment on society is divided into two spheres: 1) Constant influence of geographical environment, 2) global climatic fluctuations which sometimes cover many centuries, 3) natural disasters (volcanoes, earthquakes etc.). Below we shall briefly present first two factors.

Environment and Society

The scientific perception of the history of peoples and eventually civilization to a large extent depends on the environment where they begin their formation or at least took place main phases to become distinguished nations.

Human being and, correspondingly, the society as integral part of the ecosystem could not stay away of the direct or indirect impact of that system, which clearly determines many aspects and tendencies of the development of that society.¹ The role of environment in the modern postindustrial society is not fully understood which could be explained by the existence of mighty technological capabilities and extensive system of international mutual assistance, but in reality its impact is substantial. At the early periods of

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¹ In archaeology this sphere is entitled as “Environmental archaeology” (Jones. 2007, 59). Actually, this aspect of archaeology is close to the “Ecological archaeology”.

history that impact was infinitely more extensive,² if one takes into account the isolated lifestyle of human communities, existing psychological barriers between the native and alien and the resulting factor of constant confrontation.

The ignorance or underestimation of close interconnection of the environment with the society definitely is explained through the limited character of historical memory. Man regards as true only those events which happened during his own lifetime and those of his immediate ancestors (father and grandfather, that is to say three generations). More remote events he treats through historical documents, mostly written. It is worth to mention that written sources, especially ancient and medieval, very rarely contain information regarding the impact of the significant environmental changes. Such information comes into existence mostly from the Late Medieval period, especially connected with Great geographical discoveries. Only very limited sources mention some concrete natural disasters and climatic fluctuations.³

Let us imagine a scenario regarding the impact of environment on the lifestyle of the society.

On the territory possessing with poor resources of water fluctuation of climate towards drier conditions at some period leads to periodical outpour of population due to which agricultural activity is marginalized and limited with small household works. On the contrary, pastoralism which implies mobile lifestyle grows into main business. Mobility begins with the employment of natural resources located in the neighborhood of the settlement or the territories next to them (hunting, looting of other communities, etc.), a business which later culminated into partial or total emigration.⁴

The impact of environment on human society was discussed and evaluated since long, and today exist several concepts whose authors had tried to establish the frames and sizes of that influence. Still some ancient and medieval authors had discussed this problem.⁵

² Such development characterizes the sedentary population of Eastern Mediterranean region (Levant) towards the end of the VII mill. BC (the so-called “Aceramic Neolithic” phase, see Goring-Morris. 1994).

³ See, for example, the Annals of Ulster (Mac Carthy. 1893) where the annalist mentions several years of crop failure, diseases spread among the people and cattle which happened in the XIV century Ireland. Also Борисенков и Пасецкий. 1988 (for Russia, Europe and Near East from 736 until 1914).

⁴ By the way, the continuous migrations of population groups of the so-called “nomadic belt” (for this term see Chernykh. 2008) is thought to have been the result of climatic fluctuations. See also Гумилев. 1970, 27–33, 69–73 (in regard to the mobility of Mongols, Turkic-speaking tribes, etc.).

⁵ Still in the Preface of his study the Greek historian Thucydides (V–IV centuries BC) had made an attempt to find the reasons of the rise of the Athenian polis was trying to connect them with the environment of Attica (Thucydides. 1956, 5–6). The same idea was expressed in the study of Ibn Khaldûn, the XIV century Arab scholar (Ibn Khaldûn. 1958).

Taking into account the multileveled character of the problem and also wide chronological and geographical frames, below we shall present only the most popular concepts in regard to the influence of environment on human society.

Among authors who had discussed the problem of the significant impact of the environment on civilization is worth to mention Ch. Montesquieu,⁶ H. Th. Buckle,⁷ Fr. Ratzel,⁸ S. M. Soloviev,⁹ V. O. Klyuchevskiy,¹⁰ E. Huntington,¹¹ C. Brooks¹², K. Wittfogel,¹³ F. Braudel,¹⁴ R. Stothers,¹⁵ and also Armenian historians A. M. Garagashyan,¹⁶ S. Palasanyan,¹⁷ Leo¹⁸ etc. But until the mid-XIX century adherents of the idea of significant environmental impact on the society comprise minority among scholars dealing with the problems of the rise and development of civilizations. Among them were Marxism theorists whose vision of the driving forces of civilization leads them to claim such concepts as “geographical determinism”.¹⁹ Due to Marxist ideas and that of

⁶ Montesquieu. 1766, 326. The author states that the climate greatly influences the human mentality, activity, and character. By the word climate he means temperature and in this regard Montesquieu’s vision of interaction of the environment and society is close to the idea of Ibn Khaldûn.

⁷ Buckle. 1872, 154.

⁸ Ratzel. 1882–1891. Despite the ethnographic character of Fr. Ratzel’s study it contains some important remarks on the influence of environment on the society; also Semple. 1911 (she was the adherent of Ratzel’s ideas).

⁹ Соловьев. 1988, 56.

¹⁰ Ключевский. 1987, 63. The author presents his attitude as follows: “*When one initiates the study of the history of any people, he encounters a force which holds in his hands the cradle of every people – the nature of that country*” (Loc. cit., 63).

¹¹ Huntington. 1907; 1911; 1915; 1919; 1922; 1922. He was one of the first who was trying to reveal the fundamental impact of the environment on the human society. In some of his studies E. Huntington discusses also the environmental problems of the Armenian Highland (see, in particular, Huntington. 1907, which discusses the problem of fluctuations of the level of Lake Golcuk (Arm. Tsovk’, now Hazar) located in the Armenian province of Tsopk during the last 2000 years.

¹² Brooks. 1926.

¹³ Wittfogel. 1967. The elaborated variant of K. Wittfogel’s concept later was put forward by K. Butzer whose study deals with ancient Egypt (Butzer. 1976).

¹⁴ Braudel. 2000, 11.

¹⁵ Stothers. 1979; 1999; 2002.

¹⁶ Գրադաշանյան. 1895:

¹⁷ Պալասյան. 1890:

¹⁸ Լեո. 1966, 145–146:

¹⁹ At the same time it is worth to mention the idea of Fr. Engels expressed in regard to the heavy reliance on the nature: “... at every turn we willy-nilly notice that we did not rule over the nature like the conqueror over the conquered people ...

other anti-determinists in the first part of the XX century the factor of the environment on the activity of civilization has been increasingly marginalized.²⁰ Even today the attitude of most historians towards any significant role of the environment is negative.²¹

Obviously, the reason for the negative reaction of the opponents of geographical determinism rests on the overestimation of the impact of environment on human society which sometimes took the form of fatalism. Even so, the opponents regularly mention some components of deterministic concepts.

Along with the overestimation also were essential expansionist-colonial ideas expressed by the adherents of this concept which stood next to racism.²² It is worth to mention the idea of A. De Gobinaeu, one of the initiators and leaders of scientific racism regarding the innate abilities of three main human races.²³

Today the interrelationship between environment and society is widely discussed by numerous scholars which represented social and natural sciences.²⁴ Besides studies dealing with this or that separate problems scholars are trying to bring together the causes and the degree of short-term and long-term impact upon the society.²⁵

Leaving aside exaggerated evaluation of the impact of environment on human society which sometimes is present in some studies, anyway it is difficult to bypass numerous evident examples which testify in favor of that influence. Environment is not an isolated habitat which secures the so-called “Greenhouse” conditions for the society, and separates it from other “Greenhouses”. Such “Greenhouse” or “oasis-like” societies could exist only

moreover, by our body, blood, and brain we belong to it and reside in it ...” (ЭНГЕЛЬС. 1934, 57).

²⁰ In Armenian historiography “geographical determinism” and in particular Leo’s ideas were criticized by A. Voskanyan (*Ուղիւնքներ*. 1956, Восканян. 1956).

²¹ For the positive discussion of this problem see Crown. 1971; 1972.

²² These ideas reflex the mentality of the white race and the subordinate status of other peoples which were popular in different racist concepts in Europe and USA in the XVII–XIX centuries.

²³ “If the three great types (races – A. K.) had remained strictly separate, the supremacy would no doubt have always been in the hands of the finest of the white races, and the yellow and black varieties would have crawled for ever at the feet of the lowest of the whites” (De Gobinaeu. 1914, 208).

²⁴ For brief overview of such studies see Косян. 1998; *Քննարկներ*. 2014, *Գրեկյան*. 2013, 64–82; Grekyan. 2014.

²⁵ See, for example, Lamb. 1995; Fagan. 1999; Fagan. 2001; Fagan. 2004; Diamond. 2005. In regard to the Medieval Armenian history are of considerable interest studies dealing with climatic fluctuations which are registered during the so-called “Little Ice age” in Europe and the Ottoman Empire (Trevor-Roper. 1999; İnalçık. 2005; De Vries. 2009; Özel. 2012 etc.

in the regions where the population groups were separated from the outer world by water (sea or ocean) or other naturally impassable barriers. In the remote past such primitive societies existed and the isolated lifestyle significantly and negatively affected their development (for example, Australia, New Zealand, islands of the Pacific ocean before the British colonization, primitive tribes of the River Amazon who dwell in the tropics of South America, etc.).

Contacts between the habitats which have different geographic and climatic characteristics are beneficial for both sides. Environment could not determine all aspects of lifestyle, collective mentality of the society, but it is able to guide this or that population group, more to say, sometimes also economic, political, and spiritual-cultural priorities of the whole region and to form “genetic code” in that population group.

Returning to the Armenian Highland we shall mention that under the political and other circumstances from the 1920's onwards the scientific heritage of prominent Armenologists, their realistic vision of our historical past was forgotten. This mentality continues until today. In Armenological studies the history of Armenia is no more viewed under the light of its unbreakable unity with the environment which significantly overshadows the vision of historical events and political, economic, and spiritual-cultural developments. Today in the historical studies one can face only with the simple description of geographical and climatic characteristics of the Armenian Highland, but their interrelationship with historical processes is in no way considered. It is simply mentioned that the Highland is rich with mineral and water resources, fauna and vegetation and in addition a convenient strategic position in the immediate neighborhood of the Near Eastern civilizing centers (Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, and Iranian plateau). Actually, in none of studies has been made attempts to view our history in close connection with the environment, since the activities of the population of any given area should correspond to the challenges of ecosystem.

Specific geographical and climatic conditions of the Armenian Highland had greatly influenced the rise of ancient societies beginning from remote past, significantly determining its lifestyle, tendencies in economic and political developments and relations with neighboring civilizations. The main peculiarity of Armenian historical-cultural space should be determined not through the idea of being a “crossroad” between neighboring civilizations as it is generally accepted²⁶, but on the wide panorama of peculiarities with which the population regardless of their ethnic-linguistic, political and spiritual-cultural characteristics had deal with, like during the IV millennium BC was

²⁶ Let us cite the prominent historian Leo: “*Armenia was cut by communications on different directions and represented a space where international movements always took place. By its roads proceed conquering armies, migrating tribes and big trading caravans as well. ... So Armenia was the land being trumped from the very first movements of peoples*” (L. n. 1966, 144).

done by the civilizations of Eastern Mediterranean basin (Egypt and Syria-Palestine) and Mesopotamia.

Here it is worth to mention the well-known historian St. Palasanyan whose statement regarding the influence of the geographic peculiarities of the Armenian Highland on the political history of ancient Armenian kingdoms since Urartu. Taking into account its importance, below we shall refer to the corresponding passage from his study:

*“When we carefully study the structure of Armenian country, then we shall see what a powerful influence it used to have on the historical fate of the nation. The whole country is cut by big and small mountains which are followed by ravines and valleys, and streams of numerous rivers and rivulets which separated people like natural barrier and complicated communication. This circumstance contributed to the development of tribal life among Armenians, and from the beginning in different parts of the country came into existence numerous big and small principalities which generally seek to become independent from the kingdom. The Araratian kings (the kingdom of Van/Urartu – A. K.), no matter how hard they tried could not succeed to completely conquer these principalities”.*²⁷

Before St. Palasanyan the same approach was demonstrated by the prominent German ethnographer H. Kiepert.²⁸ According to him, due to the features of the environment, the Armenian Highland consists of numerous small and big political entities where each one corresponds to main valleys (the term belongs to Kiepert, he means big valleys – A. K.). Here big settlements are few and are mostly located near the churches (the author uses the term “temples” – A. K.). Initially cities were founded around royal residencies, particularly in the Ararat plain during the reign of the Arsacid kings.

The well-known American geologist and geographer E. Huntington also had described the central and south-western regions of the Armenian Highland.²⁹ According to him, in the mountainous region stretching from Alashkert to Malatya are located several intermountain plains. And the borders between these plains and mountains are so marked that when seen

²⁷ Պալասանյան Ստեփան. 1890, Loc. cit., 12. This idea was criticized by H. Manandyan (*Մանանյան Հրաչյա. 1981, 9*). H. Manandyan especially could not accept the idea that the weakness of Armenian kingdoms resulted from internal unrest, still from the period of Urartian state. But we shall mention that these strifes and the separatism of *nakharars* were the result of the truncated terrain of the Highland and the absence of integrity between population living in the regions which have different geographical characteristics. In fact, both authors were right, but H. Manandyan’s approach to the problem did not view the political history in connection with morphological peculiarities of the Armenian Highland (landscape, geology plus climate).

²⁸ Kiepert. 1881, 50.

²⁹ Huntington. 1902, 302.

from an elevation it suggests a shore-line, with bays and promontories. These plains are extremely fertile due to the erosion of the surrounding mountains brought by streams which could be deduced by their uniformly fine character of the deposit in the center. Most of the population lives in these plains. As to communication in this rugged mountainous terrain, the author had noticed: “is ... very slow and rare, and the effect of this is seen in the provincialism of the people and the great number of local dialects and customs”.

Useful remarks based on the peculiarities of the environment of the Armenian Highland and its impact on the lifestyle of the population appears in the memories of many other travelers who had visited both historical and modern Armenia.³⁰

Global climatic changes

Along with geographical and climatic peculiarities an important role are played by global fluctuations of climate which has been well revealed for the period after the last Great Ice age (Holocene). Beginning from the X millennium BC several climatic phases are identified which strongly influenced and fundamentally changed actually all aspects of life of the human society. Below we present these periods (we did not discuss in detail all concepts in regard to possible causes of such changes), but only briefly mention their influence.

1. Holocene climatic optimum (around 9000–5000). Warm and comparatively mild climate³¹ during which considerable fluctuations are fixed towards cooling and warming. Particularly, around 6200 BC an abrupt cooling (8.2 ka. climatic event) took place which lasted about 2-4 centuries.

2. 4.2 k. climatic event (XXIII–XXII centuries BC). was one of the most severe climatic events of the Holocene. Severe drought in the context of which the Old Egyptian kingdom was disintegrated and the Akkadian empire in Mesopotamia collapsed.³²

3. 3.2 k. climatic event (Late Bronze Age collapse) (XII–XI centuries BC). Major droughts in the Northern hemisphere which resulted in the collapse of the Near Eastern and Mycenaean Late Bronze age civilizations.³³

4. Roman climatic optimum (250–400 BC).³⁴ During this period also severe drought is registered beginning from the second half of the II century

³⁰ Kinneir. 1818; Brant. 1836; Brant and Glascott. 1840; Creagh. 1880; Lynch. 1901 etc.

³¹ Haynes, Eyles, Pavlish, Ritchie, and Rybak. 1989.

³² Wossink. 2009.

³³ For this period see *Քոսյան*. 1999 (with references). See also most recent studies where this period is thoroughly discussed in regard to different regions of Eastern Mediterranean (Kaniewski, van Campo, Guiot, le Burel, Otto, Baeteman. 2013; Langgut, Finkelstein, Th. Litt. 2013; Knapp and Manning. 2016 etc.).

Lake Van basin (the period of the IV–II millenniums BC).⁴³

8) 3800–1000 – low level comparing with the previous period.⁴⁴ Around 3000 BC the level was approximately the same as now.⁴⁵ Three sub-periods of yearly precipitations are fixed.⁴⁶

a) 3200–2900 – decrease in precipitations and level.

p) 2350–2000 – further decrease of precipitations and level.

q) 2000–0 – fluctuations of level (particularly around 1300 BC), establishment of dry climate. Towards the end of this period in the Lake Van basin climatic conditions similar to modern period were established.

9) 650–1200 – significant rise in level.

The period between 3300–900 BC is characterized by the low level of Lake Van which necessarily might have negative consequences on Mesopotamian civilizations whose agriculture was completely built on the water resources of these rivers, and also south-central regions of the Armenian Highland. It has been suggested that the decrease in yearly precipitations and the low level of Lake Van were the reason which forced the population of Southern Mesopotamia to turn to the practice of new system of agriculture based upon artificial irrigation.⁴⁷

Significant fluctuations of Lake Van are fixed in the not too remote past by European travelers.⁴⁸ Thus, in 1806 continuous rise in level had threatened the outskirts of the cities of Van and Archesh. In 1839 the lake showed a rise in level by 21 meters and 4 meters in 1841, which forced the population of Archesh to leave the city since it was surrounded by water. The rise of Lake Van continued until 1898, due to which many settlements located near the lake appeared under the water.

Euphrates and Tigris.

1) Abrupt rise of the level approximately around 1450 BC.

2) Peak of the level approximately around 1350–1250 BC.

⁴² Kay, Johnson. 1981; Neumann and Parpola. 1987, etc.

⁴³ Fluctuations of the level of Lake Van are studied in Landmann, Reimer, Kempe. 1996; Özdemir, Konyar, Ayma, Avci. 2013, etc.

⁴⁴ Butzer. Loc. cit., 136.

⁴⁵ The period of 4200–2000 BC is determined as “Climatic optimum” which is expressed by the low degree of salt and high level of the lake (Wick, Lemcke and Sturm. Loc. cit., 674).

⁴⁶ Butzer. Loc. cit., 136. It is worth to mention that these three periods of the decrease of precipitations and the decrease of the level correspond to the three significant periods of the decrease of the Nile level – 3000, 2200 and 1300.

⁴⁷ Butzer. Loc. cit., 136.

⁴⁸ For such information see Yakar. 2000, 386 (the author refers to A. Jaubert, J. Brant, V. Loftus, H. Layard, H. Lynch), also the data presented by H. Lynch (Lynch. Loc. cit., vol. II, 49).

- 3) Abrupt decrease in level, minimal level around 1150 BC.
 4) Comparative rise in level around 950 BC.

Fluctuations of the levels of these two greatest Near Eastern rivers testify about possible negative influence on the lifestyle of population whose agricultural activities should significantly be endangered. Contemporary Mesopotamian cuneiform texts tell about severe famines and cannibalism in Assyria.⁴⁹

Summary

The problem discussed in the article enables us to state the next.

The influence of environment on different aspects of life of the society is extremely important for studies dealing with this or that historical period. The impact of environment could not be limited with natural disasters but comprises a constant factor. The ignorance of this factor could lead to the mistreatment of historical events. Environment had decisive role in the formation and further development of Armenian civilization; let us mention the inner instability of Armenian kingdoms, low level of interactions between center and periphery, multiethnic and multicultural structure of the society, mobility of population (numerous large-scaled migrations since the Early Bronze Age), the existence of dozens of Armenian dialects, etc.

As to climatic fluctuations, their impact on the political, economic and cultural aspects of Armenian history is no less important. All periods of Armenian history should benefit if studied in close connection with environmental issues.

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⁴⁹ Neumann and Parpola. Loc. cit., 178.

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ՇՐՋԱԿԱ ՄԻՋԱՎԱՅՐԻ ԴԵՐԸ ՀԱՅՈՑ ՊԱՏՄՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄԵՋ

(Խնդրի դրվածքը)

ԱՐԱՄ ՔՈՍՅԱՆ

Ա մ փ ո փ ու մ

Բանալի բառեր՝ շրջակա միջավայր, հասարակություն, աշխարհագրական դետերմինիզմ, կլիմայական փոփոխություններ, Հայկական լեռնաշխարհ:

Ժողովրդի պատմության և նրա քաղաքական, տնտեսական ու հոգևոր-մշակութային զարգացման արդյունքը հանդիսացող պետության և, խոշոր հաշվով, քաղաքակրթության գիտական ընկալումը մեծապես պայմանավորված է այն աշխարհագրական միջավայրով, որտեղ ձևավորվում է կամ, առնվազն, անցնում իր հետագա զարգացման հիմնական փուլերը: Հասարակությունը, որպես կոնկրետ էկոհամակարգի բաղկացուցիչ մաս, չի կարող իր վրա չկրել այդ համակարգի ուղղակի ազդեցությունը, որն էլ որոշակիորեն պայմանավորում է նրա կենսագործունեության բոլոր ոլորտների գոյությունն ու զարգացման միտումները:

Սկսած հին ժամանակներից՝ հասարակության զարգացման վրա միջավայրի ունեցած կարևոր դերը լուսաբանվել է բազմաթիվ պատմիչների, փիլիսոփաների և այլ ոլորտներ ներառյալ գործիչների աշխատություններում (Թուկիդիդես, Իբն Խալդուն, Շ. Մոնտեսքյո, Հ. Թ. Բաքլ, Ֆ. Ռաստել, Ս. Մ. Սոլովյով, Վ. Օ. Կլյուչևսկի, Է. Հանթինգթոն, Բ. Բրուքս, Կ. Վիտֆոգելը, Ֆ. Բրոգել, Ռ. Սթոյթերս, Հայ պատմաբաններից՝ Ա. Գարագաշյան, Ս. Պալասանյան, Լեո):

Հարկ է նշել, որ հայ պատմագրության մեջ ինչպես նախորդ դարում, այնպես էլ ներկայումս, որոշ բացառություններով, Հայաստանի պատմությունը չի դիտարկվում շրջակա միջավայրի հետ անխզելի միասնության ետնախորքի վրա, ինչն էականորեն ստվերում է պատմական իրադարձությունների և քաղաքական, տնտեսական ու հոգևոր-մշակութային զարգացումների մասին ընկալումները ոչ միայն հնագույն շրջանի, այլև հետագա դարաշրջանների կտրվածքով:

Վերահիշյալից դատ, բերվում են նախորդ դարի վերջին տասնամյակներում և այժմյա Արևմտյան Հայաստանի տարածքում իրականացված հնակլիմայաբանական ուսումնասիրությունների արդյունքները, որոնք թույլ են տալիս վերականգնել երկրագնդի վերջին սառցակալումից մինչև XIX դարն ընկած խոշոր ժամանակահատվածի ընթացքում Հայկական լեռնաշխարհում տիրող կլիմայական պայմանները: Այդ տվյալների շնորհիվ զգալիորեն հստակեցվում են Հայկական լեռնաշխարհում տեղի ունեցած քաղաքական իրադարձությունների և գլոբալ զարգացումների իրական պատճառները:

Արամ Քոսյան – պ. գ. դ., պրոֆ., ՀՀ ԳԱԱ արևելագիտության ինստիտուտի չին Արևելքի բաժնի վարիչ, գլխավոր գիտաշխատող: Գիտական հետաքրքրությունները՝ խեթագիտություն, հնագույն Առաջավոր Ասիայի

և Հայկական լեռնաշխարհի հնագույն պատմություն: Հեղինակ է բազմաթիվ մենագրությունների և հոդվածների: aramkosyan@yahoo.com

РОЛЬ ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЫ В АРМЯНСКОЙ ИСТОРИИ
(Постановка проблемы)

АРАМ КОСЯН

Резюме

Ключевые слова: окружающая среда, общество, географический детерминизм, климатические изменения, Армянское нагорье.

Научное восприятие истории народа и государства как результата его политического, экономического и духовно-культурного развития и в целом цивилизации в значительной степени обусловлено той географической средой, где они зарождаются или по меньшей мере проходят основные этапы своего развития. Общество как составная часть конкретной экосистемы не может не ощущать ее непосредственное влияние, которое в определенной степени обуславливает существование и тенденции развития всех направлений его жизнедеятельности.

Начиная с древних времен важная роль окружающей среды в развитии общества являлась предметом исследований многих историков, философов и деятелей других областей (Фукидид, Ибн Халдун, Ш. Монтескьо, Х. Т. Бакл, Ф. Ратцель, С. Соловьев, В. Ключевский, Э. Хантингтон, К. Брукс, К. Витфогель, Ф. Бродель, Р. Стотерс; из армянских историков – А. Гарагашян, С. Паласанян, Лео).

Следует отметить, что как в армянской историографии прошлого века, так и сегодня, за малыми исключениями, история Армении не рассматривается в тесной взаимосвязи с окружающей средой, что в значительной степени затеняет наши представления об исторических событиях и политических, экономических и духовно-культурных сдвигах, произошедших в древности и в последующие периоды.

Результаты палеоклиматологических исследований, проведенных в течение последних десятилетий на территории исторической Армении, позволяют реконструировать климатические условия Армянского нагорья от конца последнего ледникового периода до XIX века. Благодаря этим данным в значительной степени проясняются действительные причины политических событий и сдвигов в истории Армении.

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