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THE DYNAMICS OF ALEXANDRAPOL (LENINAKAN, GYUMRI) INTRA-TERRITORIAL CHANGES (HISTORICAL-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE)

Key words: Alexandrapol, Leninakan, Gyumri, urban planning, intra-territorial changes, district.

Introduction

Gyumri is a city with a unique feature of Armenia, the creation, establishment and development of which is presented in a great variety of sources, scientific and popular literature. Originally built as a city of strategic importance and with a clear urban plan, its area has grown steadily due to the influence of various demographic as well as economic, cultural and political factors.

Russian architect A. Ivanov singles out four stages of the city's vernacular¹ development: traditional (the 1830s–70s, when the city received a regular plan with a rectangular network of districts and the construction of stone buildings began); multicultural (the 1880s–1910s, when Alexandrapol flourished after the annexation of neighboring Kars region to Russia, the construction of the railway to Kars began, and the city, without changing its type, actively absorbed the modern architectural tendencies); compensation (the 1920s–1950s, when the construction

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¹ Folk Architecture or "Architecture without Architects".

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of private residential buildings continued at the expense of the townspeople, contrary to the official policy of the Soviet state); neo-vernacular (since the 1990s up until the present time, when the construction of private traditional residential buildings made of tuff was revived after the triumph of modernism and the mass construction of apartment buildings).

But even in the 1960s and 1980s the city employed individual craftsmen, and the vernacular tradition was not completely ceased².

In terms of the peculiarities of urban culture, Gyumri is clearly distinguished by three stages of its historical development which is reflected in the three names given to the city. According to that, a number of characteristic features of spatial-structural organization of the city stand out for each period, showing both the state policy approaches to this issue, and the degree of participation of its urban population in resolving it. Thus, the present article attempts to present both the state and the popular approaches to the territorial and administrative division of the city of Alexandrapol-Leninakan-Gyumri in the three stages of its formation and development.

In the early 19th century Gyumri was a small village in a place called Cherkez Dzor (Charkizi Dzor). According to sources, in 1804, when the first Russian Cossack groups entered Gyumri, the area around the village was deserted. Here a residential area known as “Kazachiy Post” was built on the southern side of the settlement for the soldiers of the Cossack frontier garrison. Shortly afterwards, a well-fortified border post was established here, where a fairly large Russian garrison was housed.

During the Russian-Turkish war of 1828–1829, Gyumri became the main outpost of the Russian troops, from where the Russian army attacked Akhltskha (Akhaltsikhe)-Akhalkalaki and Kars. The results of this war fundamentally changed the fate of Gyumri and became the beginning of the establishment of a new settlement – Alexandrapol.

In the first quarter of the 19th century Gyumri had no prospects as a settlement. The eastern part of Armenia continued to be under the Persian rule, and here the economic opportunities for construction activities were limited. The situation changed significantly after Eastern Armenia came under the Russian rule, and several new cities were established, including Alexandrapol, which

² Ivanov 2020, 121.

received the status of a city in 1837 as a result of urban development measures carried out by the tsarist civil and military authorities.

According to contemporaries, the village of Gyumri had an old church in the early 19th century and about 30 houses of Persians and 20 houses of Armenians living under the Persian rule in different districts. After the construction of the castle, the villagers gradually climbed the hill from the canyon, which later became the “Geghtsots” or “Ranchparneri Mayla” (district) of the newly formed city. Later, one of the main districts of the city, the “Dzori Boghaz” was established, where after the war and deprivation Western Armenians scattered here and there, moved to settle under the auspices of Russia³.

As a result of the great migration of Western Armenians in 1829–1831, 600 families of Kars people, as well as 150 Greek families⁴ crossed the Russian-Turkish border and settled in Gyumri. At the same time, approximately 300 other Armenian families migrating from Bayazet (Western Armenia) also joined them, making up half of the number of the people of Kars⁵.

According by the decision of the Russian authorities, the people of Erzurum were to settle in Akhalkalaki and Akhaltsikhe, but at the end of the migration, 200 families from Erzurum who arrived through Kars settled in Gyumri. In addition, the amount of the inhabitants of Gyumri was enlarged due to 30–40 families of Armenian gypsies (boshas), as well as about 100–120 families from the cities of Basen and Mush.

Until 1837, Gyumri was a settlement with narrow, crooked streets, with dull and “blind” street dwellings, those low houses had tuff walls with no windows. Since the urban development events in Gyumri were mainly of military significance until the end of the 1930s the gloomy picture of the settlement remained unchanged for the next three or four years. It was only in late 1837, after the visit of Tsar Nicholas I to Transcaucasia that Gyumri gained the status of a city and shortly after that was renamed Alexandropol. This newly created city remained in the memories of the contemporaries as a typical Asian city the construction of which later developed on the principle of regular planning. As can be seen from the plan of 1837, it was considered that the new city was to be built on a free, almost flat area to the east of old Gyumri. The city area was divided into

³ **Bazeyan, Aghanyan** 2015, 10.

⁴ **Krpe** 1893, 79.

⁵ **Hayrapetyan** 2005, 81.

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large (100x150m) and small (50x75m) districts by a rectangular network of streets stretching from north to south and from east to west, the streets were numbered⁶. Streets having odd numbers stretched from north to south and those with even numbers – from east to west.

Some numbered streets have been renamed (Alexandrovskaya, Loris-Melikovskaya, Beybutovskaya, etc.) since the 1870s.

Such planned construction of the city changed its “Asian” appearance, straight and paved streets with sidewalks – a novelty in the urban development of Eastern Armenia, as well as structures of public and religious significance appeared. As a result, poor Alexandrapol, reminiscent of a rural town in the 30s–40s of the 19th century, in a few decades became a well-built and a beautiful city with its unique features⁷.

It is interesting to note that the townspeople soon “shortened” the name Alexandrapol and on a conversational level tended to apply the names of Alek-Pol and Alekpolts. It is also noteworthy that the old residents and the villagers continued to feel like Gyumri residents, rather than the Alekpol ones⁸.

The Immigration Committee put forward a demand that the newcomers should build comfortable houses with fixed facades, in a straight line, and leave streets “three sazhen (approximately 6,5 meters) in width”⁹. Taking advantage of the above-mentioned privileges and opportunities provided by the Russian government, the migrants of Western Armenia started to build houses in Gyumri. In consequence, gradually, districts emerged that formed the basis of the city. However, it should be mentioned that in the beginning these were formed spontaneously and with no positive urban development program, and the population was automatically placed according to the principle of ethnic, inter-ethnic, religious attributes or even occupation¹⁰.

This is how Karapet Kostanyan describes the construction of the city: “Newly migrating people settled in the low part of those canyons in this way: the people of Kars dwelt on the right and left sides of the middle stream of Gyumrichay, spreading on the hills and ridges, the richer and more influential families resided

⁶ Harutyunyan 1977, 83–84.

⁷ Bazeyan, Aghanyan 2015, 14.

⁸ Seghbosyan 1974, 166.

⁹ Yeritseants 1894, 440–441.

¹⁰ Avetisyan 1978, 3.

closer to the water, and the rest farther away, and on that place, almost in the center of the gorge, a very spacious church – St Astvatsatsin (St. Mother of God) – was built on the left bank of Gyumrichay, which was the only one for all immigrants.

The people of Erzurum settled mainly on the eastern plateau of the hill and the valley of Murtar Chai. Their district, called Hogheplan, was far from the church. Rich and influential families, however, lived in the districts with the people from Kars, and Hogheplan was left to the middle and poor class families. The people of Bayazet dwelt on the right bank of the upper stream of Gyumrichay, establishing a dense settlement between the people from Kars and old Gyumri. They were not so many, but they occupied a relatively larger space and built so that each house had its own garden, something that other migrants were deprived of. This district is called Bayaztsots Mahla. There were Horom (Urum) migrants from Kars and Arzrum (100 families), they settled in Hogheplan, near the people of Arzums, and next to them very few Turkish families settled at the kaleyards. Armenian Catholics (Franks) settled at the foot of the western hill and lower of these people (south). The Horoms and the Franks had their chapels, there was a small bath in the Horoms district (Urmnots). The Franks were partly from Arzrum, numbering about 200 families¹¹.

At the beginning of the century, the Russian military who settled here had their district, which was located in the southern part of the city and was called "Ruskaya Sloboda" (locals call it "Slabodka"). About 40–50 houses of Muslims set up the "Turkish Mahla" in the south-east of Gyumri (from the current bus station to the old cemetery). Khayat Zahriyan left an interesting memory about them, "There were some Turkish houses upon the mound near Astvatsatsna church... Seeing that the number of local Armenians was gradually increasing, the Turks abandoned their old places and built new houses outside the city, which is still called Turkish Mayla"¹².

Above that, to the north, 150 Greek houses founded the "Urmnots" or "Greek Mahla". 30–40 Armenian Boshas founded the "Boshi Mahla" (from the current Sayat-Nova street to the former department store). "Frangner Mahlen" with its church (from the girl's progymnasium to the military commissariat) was

¹¹ **Kostanyan 5.**

¹² **Khayat Zahriyan 8128–8129.**

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established by the efforts of about 50 houses of Armenian Catholics. Poor migrants had built their shabby houses from "Greek Mahla" to the north, the district of which was called "Hogheplan", and the old people of Gyumri, due to the construction of the fortress, mainly settled in "Dzori Mahla"¹³.

Urban development in Alexandropol expanded in the second half of the 19th century. The construction was based on the master plan restored in 1868 and approved by the Caucasus viceroy on September 9, 1872 maintaining the principle of the previous plans (1837, 1841, 1845), expanded the land for construction, added the network of parallel and vertical streets.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Alexandropol had expanded also at the expense of Polygons and two army barrack areas: Kazachi Post (from the south) and Severski (from the north). Later on, identical two-storied houses, (mainly barracks) made of tuff were constructed on that territory. Gradually, the population of the city is growing. After receiving the status of a city, the population tripled, and according to the Russian Imperial Census of 1897, it was 30 316 people¹⁴, of which 95% were Armenians.

World War I and the Turkish invasions of 1918–1920 had a catastrophic effect on the demographic picture of the city of Alexandropol, the population changed, the city lost its young, mighty power, emigration to Tbilisi and the immigration of the rural population became widespread. And though the city was no longer the most populous in the territory of Eastern Armenia, it kept its homogeneity and the Armenian character¹⁵.

The features of any city are best shaped and expressed by the population of that city. Changes in the population automatically lead to a change in the appearance of the city, and the other two problems: the industrial and social-professional staff outline the urban social environment in which the urban population forms and confirms its patterns.

The establishment of the Soviet Union had a positive impact on the stabilization of the demographic situation in Alexandropol-Leninakan¹⁶ and the further growth of the population.

¹³ **Nikoghosyan** 1935.

¹⁴ **Bazeyan, Aghanyan** 2015, 13.

¹⁵ **Hayrapetyan** 2005, 27–33.

¹⁶ In connection with Lenin's death in 1924, Alexandropol was renamed Leninakan.

This growth became possible, first of all, due to the immigration and repatriation of the rural population. After the Soviet Union, the occupations of the city's population changed. Craft enterprises and workshops were replaced by industrial manufacturing. During 1926–1939, Leninakan's economy, employment and steady growth of the population was registered, which is partly explained by socio-economic policies of the authorities.

During the Great Patriotic War, the growth rate decreased significantly, but in the post-war years, particularly in 1959–1970, the population growth rate increased sharply due to the intensive development of the city's industries. In the 1960s, there was an influx of labor from the rural areas around Leninakan due to the construction of new industrial enterprises in the city. In 1970–1988, the population of the city increased by 50,2 thousand people due to birth rate¹⁷.

The immigration of the Armenian diaspora had a significant impact on the growth of Leninakan population. According to the data from Armenian diaspora who settled in Leninakan in 1946–1948, most of them had come from Lebanon and Syria. 1278 families or 5935 people settled in Leninakan only at this stage, which is about 20% of the total number of people who returned to their country¹⁸.

This proves that the opportunities for employment in Leninakan were wider than in other regions of the republic. There were mostly craftsmen among the people returning to their country, and especially those who immigrated from France and Constantinople were intellectuals and qualified craftsmen.

Most of them settled in the city center, and the rural population migrated from Syria, Iraq and Iran dwelt in the suburbs, who needed land for agriculture¹⁹. It should be noted that as a result of intra-ethnic processes initiated by the repatriation in 1926–1927, three groups were formed in the city, immigrants from Western Armenia after the genocide of 1915, called "migrants", the immigrants of Armenian Diaspora or the "People of Constantinople" and the indigenous Armenians – "locals"²⁰. All this, of course, had a profound effect on the new image of the city, the behavioral system and the ethno-cultural environment.

The formation of Leninakan as a new, industrial city was done by three stages: 1920–1941, 1945–1960s and 1970–1980s those terms have to be regarded

¹⁷ **Boyajyan** 2008, 14.

¹⁸ **Boyajyan** 2007, 167–169.

¹⁹ **Stepanyan, Sargsyan** 2002, 68.

²⁰ **Stepanyan, Sargsyan** 2002, 67.

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individually. So let's look at them separately. After the establishment of the Soviet Union, the city had just begun the work of improvement and modernization, when the earthquake of October 22, 1926 destroyed the great part of the city²¹. It showed the need to use new, anti-seismic construction methods²².

On February 22, 1927, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR convened a special session to discuss the restoration of Leninakan, as well as the assistance to be provided to the residents of Leninakan province. Special steps and plans for the reconstruction of the city were adopted during the session. A project for the reconstruction and expansion of the city was drawn up²³.

A committee (chaired by H. Minasyan, members S. Stepanyan, D. Chisliev, S. Almazyan and A. Hambardzumyan) was set up to study thoroughly all the issues related to the planned reorganization works and the restoration and the further development of local industrial enterprises, which was to work until April 15²⁴.

The process of restoration took place until 1930s in the aftermath of the earthquake in 1926, when the city's industrial potential stock restored by virtue of the efforts of the local, republican and union authorities. Moreover, during that time not only demolished factories were restored, but also new ones were built, particularly, the textile factory was put into operation by 1930, the Meat-Canning Factory in 1934, and the building of a bakery was completed in 1936. Along with all this, the railway and the station were restored, the new drinking water supply line of the city was put into operation. New districts were established: the Textile combine, the Railway and the Meat Factory, in which wooden or stone temporary buildings were newly built (these were popularly known among the people as "barracks"), where the graduates of the Philological faculty and Professional technical school were settled /FZU/ (the Russian name was common among the people of Leninakan). The majority of the population of Banavan (industrial community) were the students of Leninakan orphanages and the labor force transferred from different villages of the province to the city. Each banavan had its own social life, ambulance, club, bath, etc. Leninakan gradually transformed from a traditional craft-commercial city into a large industrial center with regard to the USSR standards.

²¹ **Kozmoyan** 1957, 50.

²² Gyumri, the city and the people 2012, 177.

²³ **Kozmoyan** 1957, 55.

²⁴ "Banvor" 1926.

According to the new plan of the chief architect of Leninakan D. Chisliev, the May Uprising (now Vardanants) and the squares near the station, the Ring of Peace with their adjacent streets and earthquake-resistant two-storied buildings were built in 1926–1930. In 1927²⁵, thanks to Sargis Lukashin (Srapionyan), Deputy Chairman of the Council People's Commissars of the Transcaucasian SFSR (Soviet Federative Socialist Republic), Chisliev was instructed to design and build an experimental-demonstration of one-story house of Artik tuff, which was carried out in the same year in Leninakan. It was the first house in Armenia which was built of Artik tuff in the 20th century²⁶.

In the 1930s, N3 State Architectural Studio, led by architect M. Mazmanyanyan, drew up the new plan of Leninakan and the construction of the city was carried out in accordance with that project until the 1940s. Thus, during 1926–1940, huge sums of money were invested by the state for the restoration of the city, due to which the city was not only restored, but also completely renovated, expanded and transformed²⁷. In the post-war years, the construction of houses in the city gained momentum especially in the 1960s. The growing rates of the population, the emergence of people with new professions and occupations, gave the city a unique feature, which brought new demands and problems. One of the problems was the establishment of an industrial city center, which assumed a new type of city with its developed infrastructure, industrial suburbs, entertainment centers, recreation areas.

Noravan district was built for the people returning to their country in 1946–48, large residential districts of Antaravan, Yerkatughayinneri, Shirakatsi Avenue, Poghpatavan, Yerevanyan highway (Strommash) were established in 1945–60s. Private so-called “fund” houses were built in the city with the support of the state, forming several new districts, receiving popular names: Kozhtrest and Avznots in the south, Hnotsavan (Katelni) and Sovkhoz in the northeast.

The Lenin squares of (now Independence), Astgh (now Aznavour), “50 Anniversary” bridge over the Gyumri River were built during those years, connecting Shirakatsi Avenue to Lenin square, and the Children's Railway in the green upper part of Cherkezi Dzor²⁸.

²⁵ **Gabrielyan** 1984, 51.

²⁶ **Melik-Adamyanyan, Khachatryan** 2019, 55.

²⁷ **Aghanyan** 2018, 33–34.

²⁸ **Gabrielyan** 1984, 58.

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By the decision of the USSR government in 1985, Leninakan was divided into two administrative districts: Moscow and Shirak, which was abolished as an inefficient system during the years of independence²⁹.

The construction of the city continued to the north in the 1970–1980s. Here, mainly high-rise buildings, Boulevard, Triangle and Tghmut (popularly known as Malaya Zemlja) districts were formed, which, unfortunately, were completely destroyed by the earthquake taken place in 1988.

A new city plan was drawn in 1987, but it remained unfinished as the earthquake of Spitak city in 1988 demolished and damaged 80% of the city's housing stock³⁰.

According to the Soviet government's restoration plan, the construction of Leninakan continued in the direction of north-west.

"Yerevanproject" Institute, with the participation of specialists from Moscow and Leningrad, drew up the main and priority construction plans. The plan was to build a 660-hectare area of land to accommodate 120,000 people. It was supposed to establish a new public center of urban significance in the area to be targeted as the city center³¹.

All this implied that the application of new architectural directions and solutions in the urban construction system, and if we take the system into account the districts were built in post-earthquake Gyumri³² following the example of different models and countries, then we can say that Gyumri became a unique synthesis of urban development. The independence of Armenian, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the economic crisis and the war prevented the full implementation of Gyumri's reconstruction programs. Ani district being of the planned structures by the program, and occupying an area of only 58 hectares, was completed, and called District 58 by the dwellers of the city. The structures resistant to earthquake made of small molds and other methods, which were built in the district, created a rather low-value environment due to the lack of local conditions. The district for the families of the military garrison, known as "town 8" was built with similar buildings. Moreover, the temporary dwellings created by

²⁹ Gyumri city and the People 2012, 108.

³⁰ The earthquake of Spitak city 2008, 5–6.

³¹ Gyumri, the town and the people 2012, 189.

³² Leninakan is renamed Kumayri in 1990, and in 1991 as a result of the referendum "Gyumri".

the people of the city made forget the architectural art. After the collapse of the USSR, financing the construction was stopped, new builders went away leaving unfinished buildings.

The responsibility to carry out the restoration work of the disaster area falls on the shoulders of a newly independent country in economic crisis and war. After overcoming the crisis, new projects and architectural solutions were put forward. In order to correct and regulate the urban development situation in Gyumri, it became necessary to adopt a new concept of reconstruction and development of the city and draw up a new master plan, implemented by the "Armproject" design institute (architects S. Kalashyan, A. Aloyan, H. Gasparyan). Housing and school building programs were especially important. One of the first housing projects was a residential district implemented by the government of the Republic of Austria. One-story houses with whitewashed walls and reddish tile roofs are lined up along the streets. A public center consisting of a school, a chapel and an administrative building is in the center of the district.

There is something special about another residential area "Hope" ("Huys") built in the south-east of Gyumri that local raw materials, construction materials and labor force are used here as much as possible. The project was implemented on the building plot. Thanks to the centralized and consistent management of the district, it still impresses with its neat and tidy environment.

The construction of 3–4-story residential buildings implemented by the Lincy Foundation played a great role in the restoration of the city's housing stock. These are buildings covered with Artik tuff, a combination of reinforced concrete and stone.

One of the major housing projects was the construction of a Norwegian district implemented by the government of Norway. Located along Yerevan Highway in the area adjacent to the buildings built by Lincy project, the two-room private houses greatly contributed to the creation of the complete and well-maintained environment in that part of the city³³.

In 2008, the new construction of the district Mush 2 started by the State Budget of the RA. The city was mostly freed from cottages in 2010–2020s and the reconstruction of the historical center was carried out.

³³ Gyumri, the city and the people 2012, 192–195.

Conclusions

Thus, Alexandropol-Leninakan-Gyumri is the city where the local architecture of the historical cities of Western Armenia was subsequently reproduced and developed. Masonry masters of Kars, Karin, Bayazet moved to Alexandropol, bringing with them the skills of urban architecture. Their descendants and students, using the local traditions of house-building and innovating within the common unwritten rules, continue to build here to this day.

It should be noted at the same time that on the basis of the city of Alexandropol, despite the state approved plan, the district divisions were made according to ethnic, interethnic groups and confessional characteristics, which were predominant in the formation of the newly formed city.

The economic factor was used to transform Leninakan as a developing city with a new “working” culture. According to that, the newly built districts received the names of the respective factories or plants, and the later ones got the territorial names.

In the process of eliminating the consequences of the earthquake taken place in Gyumri, the reconstruction works in their entirety have created for the city a new image in the last 30 years.

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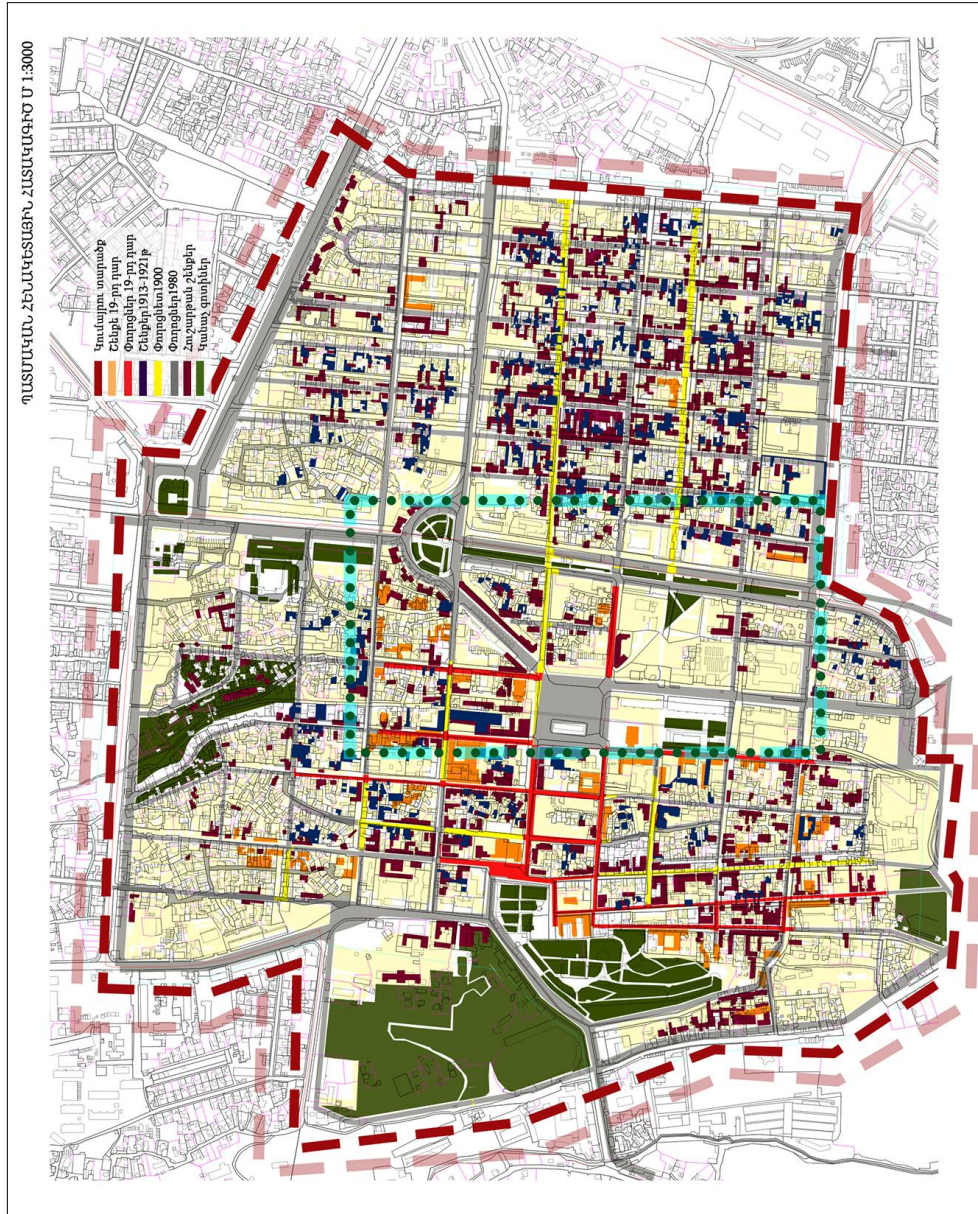
Նիկողոսյան Ն. Գյումրի-Լենինականի անցյալը (1935 թ.), ՀՀ ԳԱԱ ՊԻ արխիվ, գործ 103, տետր 1:

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**ԱԼԵՔՍԱՆԴՐԱՊՈԼ-ԼԵՆԻՆԱԿԱՆ-ԳՅՈՒՄՐԻԻ
ՆԵՐՏԱՐԱԾՔԱՅԻՆ ՓՈՓՈԽՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ
ԴԻՆԱՄԻԿԱՆ (ՊԱՏՄԱՄՇԱԿՈՒԹԱՅԻՆ ԴԻՏԱՆԿՅՈՒՆ)**

ԲԱԶԵՅԱՆ Կ., ԱՂԱՆՅԱՆ Թ.

Ամփոփում

Բանալի բառեր՝ Ալեքսանդրապոլ, Լենինական, Գյումրի, քաղաքաշինություն, ներտարածքային բաժանում, թաղամաս, բանավան:

Ի սկզբանե կառուցվելով որպես ստրատեգիական նշանակություն ունեցող ու քաղաքաշինական հստակ հատակագծով քաղաք, Գյումրու տարածքն անընդհատ մեծացել է ինչպես ժողովրդագրական, այնպես էլ տնտեսամշակութային ու քաղաքական տարբեր գործոնների ազդեցությամբ: Քաղաքային մշակույթի յուրահատկությունների առումով այն հստակ տարբերակվում է իր պատմական զարգացման երեք փուլով, ինչն արտահայտված է քաղաքին տրված երեք անունների մեջ: Ըստ այդմ, որոշակիորեն առանձնանում են քաղաքի տվյալ ժամանակաշրջանին բնութագրական տարածքային/կառուցվածքային կազմակերպման մի շարք հատկանիշներ, որոնք արտահայտում են ինչպես պետական քաղաքականության մոտեցումներն այս հարցում, այնպես էլ քաղաքային բնակչության մասնակցությունը: Մասնավորապես.

ա) Ալեքսանդրապոլի թաղային բաժանումներն ըստ էթնիկական, ներէթնիկ խմբերի ու դավանական հատկանիշների, որոնք գերակայող էին նոր ձևավորվող քաղաքի կայացման մեջ:

բ) Տնտեսական գործոնի դերը Լենինականի՝ որպես զարգացող արդյունաբերական ու նոր «բանվորական» մշակույթ կրող քաղաքի վերածվելու ու դրան համապատասխան նոր թաղամասերի առաջացման գործում:

գ) Հետերկրաշարժյան Գյումրու վերակառուցման ու քաղաքի նոր կերպարի ձևավորման գործընթացի յուրահատկությունները, որտեղ դրսևորված են աղետի վերացման ուղղությամբ վերջին 30 տարիների գործընթացները:

ДИНАМИКА ВНУТРИТЕРРИТОРИАЛЬНЫХ ИЗМЕНЕНИЙ В АЛЕКСАНДРОПОЛЕ-ЛЕНИНАКАНЕ-ГЮМРИ (ИСТОРИКО-КУЛЬТУРНЫЙ ОБЗОР)

БАЗЕЯН К., АГАНЯН Т.

Резюме

Ключевые слова: Александрополь, Ленинакан, Гюмри, градостроительство, внутритерриториальное разделение, квартал, рабочий поселок.

Город изначально был построен по четкому генплану и имел военно-стратегическое значение. В силу демографических, хозяйственно-культурных и политических факторов он непрерывно расширялся. Изучение характерных черт городской культуры дает возможность отметить три фазы развития, нашедших отражение в трех названиях города. В соответствии с этим выделяются несколько характерных особенностей территориально-структурной организации города в названный период, что отражает как государственную политику, так и участие в этом городского населения.

В частности:

- а) Разделение кварталов Александрополя по этническим, внутриэтническим группам и конфессиональному признаку, что являлось доминирующим принципом на раннем этапе развития города.
- б) Роль хозяйственного фактора в преобразовании Ленинакана в город «рабочей» культуры с развивающейся промышленностью и, соответственно, новыми кварталами.
- г) Особенности процессов восстановления после землетрясения и формирования нового облика Гюмри, в которых отражены мероприятия, направленные на ликвидацию последствий стихийного бедствия на протяжении последних 30-ти лет.