

NORTH-EASTERN ARMENIA IN THE VII-VI CENTURIES BC (according to archaeological sources)

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Until now the studies aimed on the elucidation of the relationship between the Urartian and Ervandid periods of the history of the Armenian Highland, due to scanty sources have brought to contradictory views. One of the main obstacles for the study of this relationship should be regarded the insufficient understanding of the periphery of both kingdoms, despite their importance. Taking into account the importance of the task¹, the present article is an attempt to bring together the results of archaeological investigations conducted in north-eastern Armenia and their supplementation with scanty written data.

The geographical area under consideration, as is well known, first was mentioned by Argishti I, king of Urartu, who describes his two campaigns. During the first campaign he had conquered Etiuni and reached Uduri-Etiukhi (according to H.Haruthiounyan Etiukhi of the Uduri tribe), while in the second campaign he defeated the country of Qiehuni located on the shores of a lake, reached Ishtikuniu and the city of Alishtu.² It was suggested that Alishtu might have been located in the general area of modern Dilijan-Idjevan. According to another view, this locality should be identified with the settlement Sari-tepe in the Kazakh region (Azerbaijan).³ There has not been reached a consensus also regarding the location of "19 countries" listed by Rusa I (735-713), said to have been on the other side of the lake; all scholars (I.Meshchaninov, G.Melikishvili, B.Piotrovski, N.Haruthiounyan, S.Esayan) locate them tentatively in the mountainous areas of Krasnoselsk, Shamshadin, Dashkesan and Lesser Caucasus.⁴

Scanty written sources and the results of excavations does not reject the possibility that Argishti I had proceeded towards Lake Sevan through Vanadzor; this could be proved by the discovery of joint appearance of Urartian and local artifacts in

¹ Tiratsyan 1980.

² Melikishvili 1960: 212, 216, 237, 248, 249, 261.

Haruthiounian 2001. According to the author Ishtikuniu should be looked to the west of Lake Sevan, probably in Hrazdan region (p.156-162).

³ The small settlement of Tevraqar, Idjevan district, where the IX-VIII c. BC burials were excavated (Dovlatbekyan, Hmayakyan, Simonyan 2009: 74-75). The fortress of Khrtanots was not studied (see Martirosyan 1954: 45). According to M.Nikolskiy, the toponym «Geghaquni» could be compared with Qiehuni (Nikolskij 1910: 106-110). According to Gr.Kapancyan and others Gegharquni originates from the toponym *Uelikuni* (*Ulikuhi*) which is identified with the Gavar region (Kapancyan 1940: 22; Jahukyan 1981: 48-63). S.Eremyan thought that the name of the modern river Aghstev comes from the Urartian toponym Alishtu (Eremyan 1969: 19). On Sari-tepe see Khanzadyan, Mkrtchyan, Parsamyan 1973: 58.

⁴ Melikishvili 1960: 329. Haruthiounyan 1985: 67.

the burials of Mayisyan, Vanadzor, Makarashen and Khrtanots.⁵ Among the latters are – vessels which has arched ornament and elongated slot reaching the central part of the handle on the upper part of the spheric body (pic. 1), which are characteristic mainly for the Ashotsq-Tavush region. In the sites located between Sevan and Gyumri, as well as to the south of Pambak range such materials are rare (burials of Kuchak; but those unearthed in the residential parts of Teishebaini and the citadel, probably could have brought with them the settlers from the north, during the construction of the city).⁶ Probably these details of the vessels could be treated as peculiarities of the local center of northern Etiuni. Extra buttons on the handles are also common. Fragments of vessels with similar decoration, along with various types (piala-type jars), were unearthed in Kosi-coter and Tagavoranist, near Vanadzor.⁷ Unfortunately, insufficient excavations of fortresses and settlements does not allow to reconstruct complete archaeological picture of the Pambak region, which could enrich our knowledge of the fortified settlements of Tavush. Mostly due to excavations conducted by S.Esayan and S.Chilingaryan we achieve certain idea regarding the «fortifications» and «cities» (as they are entitled by these archaeologists) of this area⁸; the latters comprise separate groups.⁹ S.Esayan had established that among 19 fortresses (total 56) 6 were active in the Iron age, 13 – between VII/VI-V centuries BC. The chronology of the remaining 37 fortresses is based on surface materials; 6 are dated with the Iron age (early I mill. BC), 10 were built at the beginning of the I c. BC and were active until the VI-V centuries BC. The chronology of 21 buildings is uncertain (among them are temporary stables and fortified watching posts).

The geographical distribution of sites conventionally could be grouped as:

I - «Ayrum-Noyemberyan» (in the Debed valley),

II - «Shavarshavan» (in the Djoghaz valley),

III - «Yenokavan» (in Aghstev),

IV- «Tsaghkavan» (in the Hakhum valley),

V - «Berd-Norashen» (in the Tavush valley),

VI - «Ghrghi-Aygedzor»¹⁰ (see the map):

Although the groups are represented by different number of sites (in groups II and

⁵ Martirosyan 1964: 202-223, p. 79-80, 84, 85, Tables XXI-XXII. Martirosyan 1954, cf. Table IV, XIII. We are grateful to L.Petrosyan for supplying us with unpublished materials from Mayisyan.

⁶ Martirosyan 1961: 101-102, p. 41. Petrosyan 2016.

⁷ Khanzadyan 1962: 75-78; Palanjyan 2008: 175-178: Along the road from Makarashen – Vanadzor the remains of two fortresses were found. See Martirosyan 1964: 202.

⁸ On the periodization and functions of “cities” and settlements see Bobokhyan 2014.

⁹ See Esayan 1976: 32-98; also Chilingaryan 1968: 221-231; Chilingaryan 1971a; Chilingaryan 1971b: 69-72:

¹⁰ Our knowledge of the historical province of Utik (between Artsakh and Kura river) could have been complete (Shirakatsi 1979: 296; Svazyan 2015: 219-220) in case if the sites of this region have been studied. According to earlier studies this region is represented by both fortified (cyclopean) and unfortified settlements. Among the latters are settlements located in the region of Aghstev-Tavush-Kura. See Earliest states of the Caucasus and Middle Asia 1985: 43-44.

V they are few), they form two large groups. 29 are located in the valleys of Debed-Aghstev (I-III), 24 in Hakhum-Asrik (IV-VI); the 3 fortresses to the east of Lake Sevan are omitted from the total 56.

At first sight it seems that both in the western and eastern parts these buildings are distributed proportionately (the difference is 5 buildings), but the chronological distribution proves it to be wrong. 7 or 8 fortresses of the early period (mostly the first quarter of the I mill. BC) (Poploz-gash, Bardzraberd, Astghi-blur, [Khrtanots?], Arcis, Berdatakh, Patashar, Arami-blur) are located in the Debed-Aghstev region, three in the Hakhum-Asrik (Tandzut, Masmalar, Seprik), which comprises 25% and $\approx 9\%$: These calculations show that the eastern part was populated sparsely. The same situation is traced also in the second quarter of the I mill. BC; in the western part this period is represented by 7 fortresses (Sb. Nahatak, Astghi-blur, Berdatex, [Idjevan?], Tkhkut dzor, Kotakar, Armunk-aghbyur), and in Hakhum-Asrik only by 2 (Tandzut, Azatavan), the total ratio is 14/15:5 or $\approx 44\%$ and 15,6%. The picture abruptly changes from the VI-Vc. BC in the Debed-Aghstev region. To this period belong Poploz-gash, Tmbadir, Shahlaman II-IV (15,6%), and in eastern section - 15 fortresses (Norashen, Pilur-pat, Kalqar, mound of Sev-sev stones, *taht* of Sev-sev stones, Bakhri cross, Berdaqar, Salqar, Tavri-pash, Srtner, Dashti, Ker-qar, Berd, Karmir Areguni, Dzoraberd $\approx 47\%$). The data show that in the early period in the eastern section were comparatively densely populated the regions of Navur and Ghirghi, and in VI-V c. the increase in the number of fortresses ($\approx 47\%$) could not be explained but by the influx of population. It could be difficult to explain such demographic blow only by means of the natural growth of population, which one might expect also in the western section (in the latter in the VI-Vc. $\approx 15,6\%$), where it could not be traced. Indeed these calculations are preliminary, but anyway they are enough to propose that in the eastern and western sections the number of population was not equal.

In this regard it should be mentioned the density of cemeteries in the neighborhood of Dilijan in the first quarter of the I c. BC (Redkin lager, Djarkhech, Golovino, Papanino, Khrtanots). One could agree with S. Esayan that the abundance of archaeological monuments in this comparatively small region speaks in favor of the existence of a local cultural variant but also on its affiliation to the tribes of the Aghstev valley.¹¹ Another peculiarity of this region is the decrease in number of cemeteries in the VIII-VII c. BC, probably as a result of Urartian campaigns in this area if we propose that they follow the route between the ranges of Bazum-Pambak (Mayisyan, Vanadzor, Makarashen, Khrtanots, through the eastern part of the Dilijan reserve – Aghstev sector. The existence of summer pastures in nearby Dilijan reserve where we find burials of the local population (western section) are in accordance with the inscriptions of Urartian kings where are listed the numbers of captured cattle and people, also the resettlement of the latter. The resettlement of captured people could lead to the decrease of population.

¹¹ Esayan 1976: 131.

The solution of this problem might have been clarified by the study of materials excavated in about 900 burials by J.de Morgan in the neighborhood of Ayrum (Sheytandag), Alaverdi and Akhtala¹², in case if they were published accurately. They might have been supplemented also with materials unearthed by A.Eritsyanyan (23 burials), N.Marr, E.Takaishvili in Akner (40 burials) and others (the Debed valley and Lalvar). Anyway, the extant data is enough to propose that in the western section the life of local population had not suffered much. In the first half of the I mill. BC, unlike in Aghstev-Dilijan, it shows permanent development. The same is true for the cemetery of Astghiblar, near the village of Enokavan (north-west of Idjevan), and the materials of the Djarkhech cemetery belong to the VIII-VII c. BC.¹³

Judging by the distribution of cemeteries the pastures of the Idjevan region were used widely in the first quarter of the I mill. BC. Cemeteries dated with this period were unearthed also in Idjevan and in the village of Lusadzor (the monument of Paker). Unfortunately, scanty materials obtained during the excavations of cemeteries does not allow one to judge about the region of Aghstev-Masrik. Burials of the same period are known near the fortress of Qari glukh (Navur) and Choratan. The picture is changed in the neighborhood of Ghrghi, where in the first quarter of the I mill. BC some increase in cemeteries is visible (Bughaqar, Eghenkaladzor, Qari dzor, Ayghrani talan, between Qolagir-Ghrghi, big cemetery of "Pagan yal" in Azatavan in about 15 km from Ghrghi). Of some interest is the small number of burials of the VIII-VII c. BC in these cemeteries which might be a result of their abandonment (Seprik near Ghrghi-Masmalar in the VIII-VII c. BC, Azatavan - VI-V c. BC). It should not be excluded that the population had deserted their settlements in the face of the Urartian advancement. In this regard should be recalled the results of excavations at Sari-tepe ("yellow mound") in Kazakh (tentatively identified with Alishtu of Urartian texts). Among the excavated materials is a detail of the bronze bracelet with a serpent-like edge (pic. 2a), which undoubtedly is Urartian.¹⁴ The latter has parallels from Menuakhinili (Malaklu), Erebuni and other VIII c. BC sites.¹⁵ The excavator of this site refers to the Urartian influence and also the appearance of the 4-spiked wheel in the first half of the I mill. BC in Transcaucasia (although he mentions that Urartian wheels have 6-9 spikes which is pictured on one clay vessel, pic.2b). Let us mention that the 4-spiked wheel was already known in Syria still in the II mill. BC.¹⁶

Excavations show that the pre-Urartian settlement was burned down and the population had fled,¹⁷ which is evident through the burnt layer all along the floors of two buildings. The preliminary date of materials found from the buildings is the beginning of

¹² De Morgan 1889; *ibid* 1927, pic. 301-303, cf. 278-285, 305-306. For bibliography see Martirosyan 1954: 10-19.

¹³ Khnkikyan 1987: 79-87.

¹⁴ Narimanov 1957: 138-142, p. 55.

¹⁵ Kuftin 1944: 28. For parallels see Martirosyan 1964, Tab. 24; Esayan, Hmayakyan, Kanetsyan, Biyagov 1991: 14, Devedjyan 1981: 29, 69 etc.

¹⁶ Gorelik 1985: 183-202, Table 2-3.

¹⁷ Khalilov 1960: 68-75.

the I mill. BC. They are represented by vessels with cords on their shoulder, a ritual pot, etc. For the sake of dating are important vessels with double and triple formed handles typical for the IX-VIII c. BC, but particularly the triangular and domino-type beads which are dated with the VIII-VII c. BC (pic. 2a): Over the burnt and then smoothed lower layer was unearthed the second one which resembles post-Urartian palatial complex which the author compares with similar buildings (apadana) from Shosh (Susa), Persepolis and Hamadan (Ekbatana), dating it with the V-IVc. BC¹⁸. The complex consists of two intertwined rectangular buildings – bigger and lesser ones, divided into rooms along their perimeter. The rooms of the inner building comprise an open space (300 sq.m), where at the distance of 2,5 m two «bell-like» pedestals were opened; their lower part is decorated with vertical grooves. The walls of excavated 12 rooms are built of bricks (36x36x12 cm.), and on two pedestals were set columns. The entrance of the outer building having 9 rectangular towers standing far from the inner wall forms a corridor or yard, where total 23 rooms were unearthed. The details of this building are close to the Urartian-Assyrian style; the forms of ceramics are connected with the VI c. BC culture (see below). Worth to mention that ceramic finds are rare and all rooms of the complex are full of burnt wooden logs which testify in favor of a conflagration.

Excavated artifacts of Sari-tepe repeat those excavated at Yasti-tepe, near Aghstafa, which the archaeologists working there dated with the transition from Bronze age to Iron age.¹⁹ The peculiarities of materials (triangular openings on the handles, extra buttons, angled cuttings on the base of the handle, which is extant also at Sari-tepe), forces one to accept the proposal of E.Khazdadyan about the destruction of Sari-tepe in the VIII c. BC by Urartians. This dating could be proved not only by the materials of Sari-tepe (particularly the snake-form bracelet) but also by their parallels in the neighboring Tavush region and elsewhere where they are common. It is important also the synchronism of the conflagration of the lower layer at Sari-tepe and the end of Yasti-tepe with the decrease of the sites of Tavush (eastern section); this makes possible the proposal about the brief Urartian presence here.

The above mentioned proposal do not contradict to idea of the Urartian advance through Aghstev-Sari-tepe/Alishtu, which might have been proved if the stone block found in the village of Khachak (modern Ghushchin) was copied (according to S.Ter-Avetisyan, on this block was inscribed cuneiform text).²⁰ This could have been proved by the study of materials from the burials; among the latters there are no Urartian ones. Ya.Hummel and others who had excavated in the neighborhood of the village and in the area towards Dzvasar (also in other places) unearthed materials dated with the Iron age.²¹ Also should be mentioned the ornaments drawn on handmade, rude yellowish-

¹⁸ Narimanov 1960: 162-164; see Earliest states of the Caucasus and Middle Asia 1985: 44.

¹⁹ Muradova, Narimanov 1973: 46-55.

²⁰ S. Ter-Avetisyan who was sent to the site in order to check the «cuneiform text» mentions that this stone covers a stone chamber full of bronze artifacts (Ter-Avetisyan 1934; Ter-Avetisyan 2010: 178, 182). See also Esayan 1976: 215.

²¹ Gummel 1940; Passek and Latinin 1926: 121-150, Gummel 1949: 55-58, pic. 13₂.

reddish and greyish surfaces (maeanders, geometric figures of people and animals) covered with white material (according to Ya.Hummel – “whitish pottery culture”), which parallelly appears along with the local black surfaced ceramics in the region slightly to the north-east (Getabek, Khanlar etc.). In the burials containing such ceramics bodies frequently are laying on their back with stretched extremities which is not characteristic for the Transcaucasian burials (here bodies lay on their sides with clutched extremities); it is characteristic for the Scythians and some other northern tribes. Judging by the archaeological materials their early groups had appeared at Sakasene towards the end of the II mill. BC, later to be mixed with the local population and Scythians. This data prove the suggestion made by M.Pogrebova, according to whom the excavated burials (excavations by A.Ivanovskij) represent two chronological groups. The earlier one which is called «Getabek» (late IX c. BC - VIII c. BC) (the latter group bears the name «Kalakend»)²² shows that between the eastern areas of the region lying on the right bank of the Kura river and western part of the North Caucasus exist certain relations; they resulted from the migrations of the «pre-Scythian» period of the North Caucasian tribes.²³ It is not accidental that regarding the emergence of the toponym of “Sakasene” which some scholars connect with Scythians of Strabo, until now a consensus has not been reached.²⁴ Avoiding the discussion of this problem let us mention only that in regard to the early migrations of these tribes are of importance the results of the excavations conducted at the sites of Eastern Georgia. According to excavations prior to 1979 objects covered with white material (geometric ornaments, figures of people and animals), and fragments applied with extra buttons are known from Kverno Kedi, sanctuary of Meligele I, Zemo-Bodbe and others, dated with later periods. Such objects like “Scythian” arrows were unearthed from Mochrili gora B, Melaani, Ikalto, Arushenda; they were found in burials where the deceased were put on their back (earliest samples are known from 3 burials of Samtavro and Kaspi). In the valley of Iori the life was continued until VII-VI c. BC (in Tskhinvali it was terminated at some earlier date), due to conflagrations and destructions (Mochrili-gora B, Meligele II sanctuary, Arushenda etc.), skeletons struck by «Scythian» arrows (Ikalto, Khashuri).²⁵ Archaeological data shows that Tavush region had not suffered due to migrations from outside; here only one vessel ornamented like those mentioned above was unearthed (Astghi blur, burial № 14), which was produced by local craftsman (pic. 3a). These materials allow us to state that at the end of the II mill. BC - early I mill. the tribes who entered the Utik steppe and settled down there (Saka?), had adopted the local burial tradition (on the back, with stretched hands and legs), at initial phases also the usage of primitive pottery and

²² We shall mention that this refers only to the burials with horses and among those containing «whitish pottery» are some belonging to earlier periods (№№ 14, 23, 26, 49 etc. have materials of the II/I mill. BC). According to A.Ivanovskij, in the excavated burials sitting bodies were also common where bones are piled on a limited space.

²³ Pogrebova 2011: 208-210.

²⁴ Strabon 2011: 40; Khnikyan 2016: 162, 172-176.

²⁵ Pitskhelauri 1972: 21-25, 38, 44-48, 54-55, 70-75; the same study in Georgian (Tbilisi, 1973), Tables V, XVIII, XXVIII, XXIX, XXXVI.

mobile lifestyle, later were assimilated with the locals through mixed marriages. This proposal could be proved by the joint appearance of pots belonging to different cultures, and also by the practice of different burial rites in one and the same burial (for example, according to Ya.Hummel, in the burial Khanlar № 18 the skeleton of a woman lays on her side, while the nearby skeleton - on its back with stretched hands and legs).

Archaeological data concerning the problem mentioned above might let one to propose that the Urartians did not proceed further into the steppe; probably they were beware of the possibility of sudden attacks by pastoralists. Worth to mention that in most burials containing ceramics with white cover A.Ivanovskij had unearthed «Sevan»-type daggers. Possibly the rare campaigns of Urartians into the mountains and forested terrain of Tavush was conditioned by the dense population and geographic features of this region. They prefer the comparatively sparsely populated regions. After the defeat suffered at the hands of Rusa I which was followed by the capture of the population of the confederation of 19 countries, hardly the eastern section could have been of certain importance for Urartians. In favor of the sparse population speaks the decrease of the VIII-VII c. BC fortresses (groups IV-VI). The demographic change in the VI-V c. BC and the increase of the number of fortresses (groups IV-VI) testifies in favor of the influx of population.

Here we encounter the problem of the identity of the newcomers, their relations with the local population. Whether they were Scythians, as it is suggested by most scholars, who think that exactly these ethnic element had participated in the destruction of Urartu, allied with the Medians. At present one can note only that in the fortresses where “Scythian” arrowheads were found (Astghi-blur, Norashen, Tmbadir and Berdaqar) traces of destruction or conflagration are absent, and the sherds of the pottery of local culture prevail. Worth to mention a fragment of a sherd with *oinochoe* rim, reminding the Urartian samples, (Berdaqar, pic. 6a), which is well-known from main Urartian archaeological sites (Argishtikhinili, Teishebaini, Oshakan, Aragats, Artashavan, Shamiram etc.)²⁶, iron arrowheads with rounded part on the bottom from Norashen (pic. 4) and daggers having hooked blade (plausibly Urartian) which were found in Norashen and Berd (pic. 8), could speak in favor of the ethnic element who was in close contacts with Urartians, if not Urartians themselves. Probably, the idea of conflagration was achieved due to the excavations at the fortress of Tmbadir, near the village of Achajur²⁷, which was erected on the artificial mound, the latter comprising a soil brought from other place. A Scythian arrowhead found in the pit opened in the room N. 1, taken in one context with the burnt bricks of the room № 4 could have bring to such an idea, if one neglects clear traces of metallurgical activities observed in the room N. 5 (part of a mould - pic.5, the nearby fireplace).

²⁶ Martirosyan 1974; Avetisyan, Avetisyan 2006, Tab. 73, 76, 79, 82.

²⁷ On artificial mounds were built also the fortresses of Choratan, Nerqishen (Tavri pash), Moses (Qreghants blur), Pilor pat of Norashen. For the erection of the latter about 270,000 cubic meters, and for Tmbadir – 72,000 cubic meters of soil was brought. These numbers testify in favor of numerous and well-organized working activities.

The materials of the archaeological complexes discussed above show that the Scythian military impact is overestimated. This proposal could not be doubted also in the case of the one-bladed axe found from Berdaqar which was compared with similar axes from the Northern Caucasus and Central Georgia dated with the VII-VI c. BC (pic. 6).²⁸ Anyway, even if we agree with those who argue for the active Scythian involvement, then the existence of Scythian artifacts in only 4 fortresses would cause problems. The problem is that other fortresses lack traces of destructions whereas we find them in the monuments without Scythian artifacts. For example, the fortress of Kal-qar (6 km to the east of Tsaghkavan) where are fixed traces of fire, burnt soil and wood. This and the surrounding fortified sites - Mound of Sev-sev stones, Sev-sev takht, Bakhri-khach (evidently guarding Kal-qar) are represented exclusively by local artifacts. The same picture is observed among the materials found in the fortress of Berdategh, 8 km far from Yenokavan (rooms n. 2 and 3); here were opened burnt soil, pieces of charred logs and stones falled from the walls. Worth to mention that the temple in front of which is located a square (600 m²), is not damaged although its walls are weak. Possibly this speaks against the alien attack. Another parallel to Kal-qar and Berdategh could be traced in the big fortress of Shahlama IV (the settlement of «Hakhtanak», 4.5 ha). The data obtained from excavations proves that the targets of enemy attacks were big and well fortified central fortresses of the western section which probably resisted the newcomers. But in these fortresses the Scythian arrowheads were never found which makes doubtful the Scythian version. The existence of Scythian arrowheads in some sites found by J. de Morgan in Musieri (late VII c. BC – VI c. BC), N. Marr in Akner (V-IV c. BC) and H.Mnacakanyan in Ghachaghan might speak about the existence of small groups of Scythians among the newcomers.

The idea put forward regarding the decisive role of Median participation in the «destruction» of Urartu is also doubtful. The difficulties in accepting it could be seen also in its archaeological argumentation. Even if we leave aside the Urartian impact which is evident²⁹ and regard the excavated cups of piala-type as brought here by Medians, then a question should arise - why the Iranian «classical triangular painted» pottery is lacking in this region. On the contrary, here we encounter sherds of the prototypes of piala-type pots which are the result of distinct influences. In this regard one should refer to the sherds excavated at the settlement of Tagavoranist, in Vanadzor³⁰, also at Tandzut (VII-VI c. BC) (pic. 7). They have concaved sides in their upper part proceeding to the lower part which ended with rims looking slightly outside. On one sample the rim has a form of a sharp angle and is similar with the sherd from the same monument which has figured sides. As to the piala-type sherds, they have either concaved figured sides, or are slightly rounded forms at the bottom; both types

²⁸ Martirosyan 1961: 284, 290; Pogrebova 1969: 179 and others; Esayan 1976: 93.

²⁹ For details see Tiratsyan 1968: 18-19; *ibid.* 1957: 79; *ibid.* 1988.

³⁰ Palanjyan 2008: 175-178. We are grateful to R.Badalyan who supplied us with the C₁₄ data obtained from Tagavoranist (I half of the VII c. BC - mid-VI c. BC).

are finished with a rim stretched out. The bottoms of these cups excavated at Norashen (pic. 4), Pilor-pat, Djudjevan and Berd (pic. 8) in some cases are flat, in other cases – concaved. On some samples are horizontal, slightly bended up handles, which according to S. Esayan might have been a feature of the local hearth. These cups as it is mentioned in the literature³¹, resemble the “triangular painted” jars from Hasanlu III B, Ziviyeh, Sialk B which are dated with the late VII - early VI c. BC. For the dating of these materials with the VI c. BC points the piala-type jars excavated in the Hasanlu III A layer; they are more improved and have new forms which shows their late date. The lower date of Hasanlu III A as a «pre-Achaemenid» layer is 508 BC.³² The early date for the materials could be supported also by the daggers with hooked blade and arrows with round base; they show that the complexes under discussion belong to the post-Urartian period. The study of the materials may help to suggest that the king Yervand after besieging Teishebaini with the rest of his army proceeded further to the north and that part of his troops were descendants of Scythians of the north and people from the Urmiya region brought by him for the construction of Teishebaini. Archaeological data which consists of different cultural layers may testify in favor of that army where the local element prevails.³³ Correspondingly, we may suggest that the existence of large fortresses and artificial mounds of the eastern section is a result of the activities of such diverse ethnic troops. This haste probably was caused by the plans of Yervand to fortify the north-eastern regions of his new state and the establishment of control over separatistic tribal chieftains. Along with the evident cultural inheritance (see, for example, pic. 3a and 3b), the name of Vardges, the prince of the *gavar* Tuh of the province of Utik should be added. Here we shall recall the suggestion of Gr. Kapancyan who was inclined to consider the root *eti(u)* as an ethnic one³⁴, also the rapid advance of Yervand and the unification of territories, an undertaking which was not an easy job for the Urartian kings who lack local footing.

In this respect two questions should be asked. Does this situation contradict to Strabo’s information regarding the people of Armenia who became monolingual during the reign of Artashes I and why *hay* or *armen*, two ethnonyms of Armenians does not appear in the list of the peoples of the XVIII Achaemenid satrapy. In the case of Strabo probably we deal with the existence of multiethnic enclaves due to the continuous resettlement of population (for example, the passage which tells about the resettlement of a great number of Medians). In this regard is worth to mention the similarity of the VI-V c. BC materials excavated at the village of Bars (Tigranakert), Shamkhor region with that from Meghri-Kapan;³⁵ probably, these could be true in regard to the sites of

³¹ Martirosyan 1974: 53.

³² Dyson 1999: 101.

³³ Local people could use also Urartian arrows. In this regard it is worth to mention the absence of workshops of smiths, but also large amount of raw materials which could have been given to the craftsmen residing in the city for final working (see Martirosyan 1961: 99).

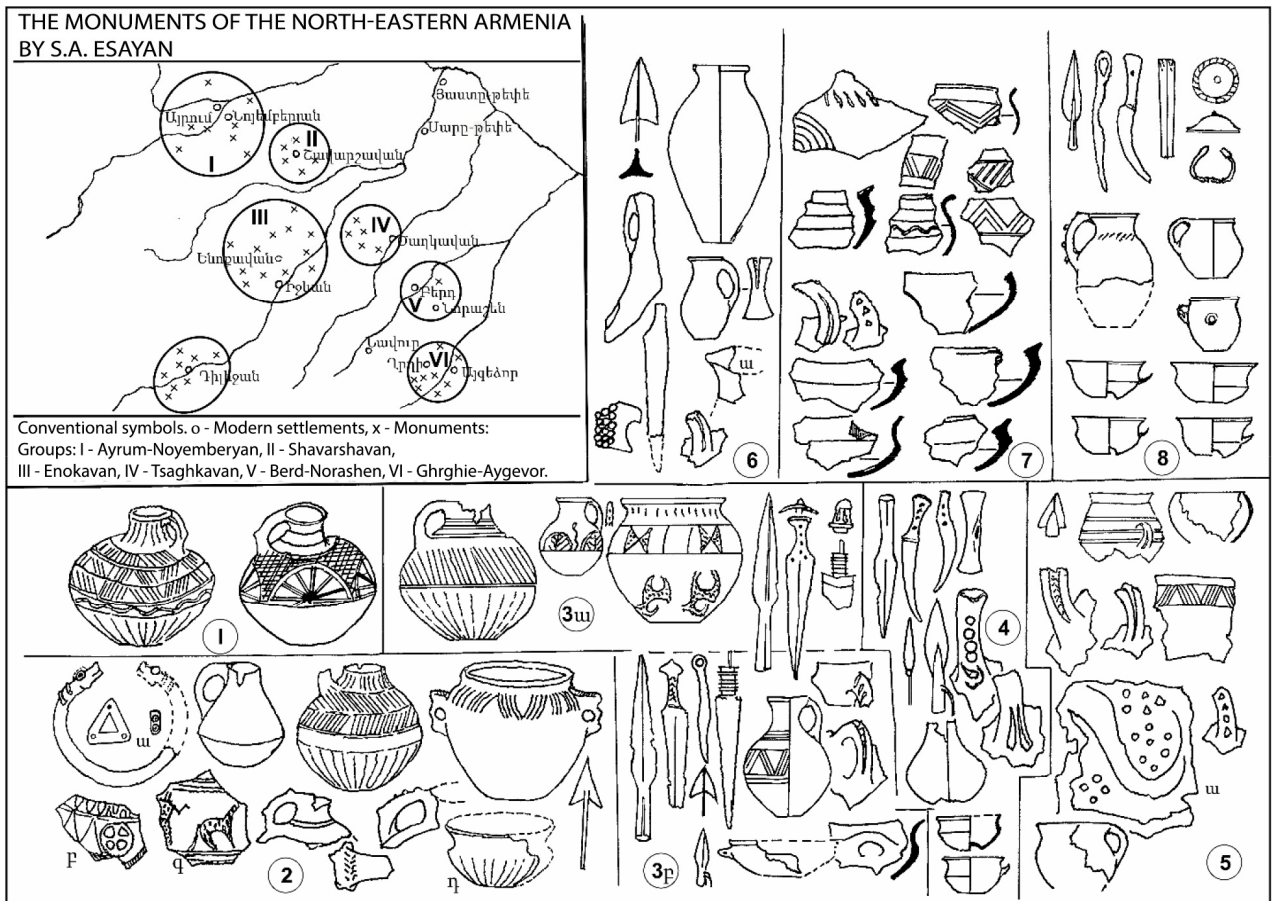
³⁴ Kapancyan 1940: 9-20. Cf. Diakonoff 1968: 17sq.

³⁵ For these materials see Khnikyan 2016: 171, n. 27.

Nakhijevan. The problem of the XVIII satrapy could not be an obstacle, since it was thoroughly studied.³⁶ It goes without saying that although the territory of the XIII and XVIII satrapies were incorporated into the Median empire already during the reign of Astiages but anyway Armenia was a vassal kingdom which was obliged to pay tribute to Medians and supply them with military contingents.

It seems that the I mill. BC burnt palatial complex of Sari-tepe which might have been the residence of Astiages's viceroy, was captured and looted by Tigranes mentioned in Cyropaedia.³⁷ To this conclusion one may come not only through written sources but also poorly incompletely published sherds of pottery (until now only one sample was published, pic. 2d). The latter repeats those from Berd and Navur by shape and the VI-V c. BC jewelry from Sheytan-dagh, Khrtanots and Karmir-blur. The early dating of Sari-tepe is evident, since several details resemble those from the Karajamirli palace and the palace of Xerxes from Persepolis (measurement of bricks - 32x32 cm., columned hall (apadana), «bell-like» decorated bases, etc.).³⁸

Further excavations shall through light on the problems touched upon in this article.



³⁶ Diakonoff 1956: 341-350.

³⁷ Hardly the «father Cyrus» had participated in the destruction of the Sari-tepe complex in order to keep a firm hand over the multiethnic population of his extending empire.

³⁸ Gagoshidze 2018: 225-230.

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Abbreviations

KSIMK - Brief reports of the Institute of the history of material culture (Moscow-Leningrad).

LHG - Lraber hasarakakan gitutynneri (Yerevan).

PBH – Patmabanasirakan handes (Yerevan).

SA – Sovetskaya Archeologiya (Moscow).

THG – Texekagir hasarakakan gitutynneri (Yerevan).

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