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THE CHOICE OF NAMES FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF TIME AND TRADITION

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Introduction

Any individual's birth is ratified by the law. At civil acts registration office the citizen's birth is registered where he is given a name, surname and patronymic. Once the birth is registered this gets an essential significance in terms of the individual's human rights and his civil responsibilities.

Being part of any society, human beings bear a name as there cannot exist a nameless person. Presently, 7 billion people living in the world have names many of which are common.

The names of all nations are mainly influenced by two factors that of tradition and of the given period. Just an example will suffice to understand the influence of these factors. One of the oldest names in the repository of names is Davit (**Դավիթ**). After the translation of the Bible the name Davit entered not only our but also world repository of names. The uses of the given name (we would even dare to say innumerable) are multitudinous, thus, the name was soon jointly represented by the following pattern - name + epithet – Davit Anhaght (**Դավիթ Անհաղթ**), Davit Sasuntci (**Դավիթ Սասունցի**), Davit Anhoghin (**Դավիթ Անհողին**), Davit II Kakaghetci (**Դավիթ Բ Կակաղեցի**), Davit Haykazn (**Դավիթ Հայկազն**), Davit Arkakaghnetci (**Դավիթ Գ Արքակաղնեցի**), Davit Mashkotn (**Դավիթ Մաշկոտն**), Davit Shinarar (**Դավիթ Շինարար**), etc. Davit is found in the denomination of many dynasties, thus becoming the component of the pattern – name + dynasty – Davit Saharuni

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(Դավիթ Սահառունի), Davit Mamikonian (Դավիթ Մամիկոնյան), Davit Bagratuni (Դավիթ Բագրատունի), Davit Kamsarakan (Դավիթ Կամսարական), Davit Gnuni (Դավիթ Գնունի), Davit Syunetci (Դավիթ Սյունեցի), etc.

Nowadays if someone chooses the name Davit for his son or grandson, then he is driven by tradition, referring to one of the well-known individuals such as Davit (biblical), or Davit Sasuntci (Դավիթ Սասունցի), Davit Anahaght (Դավիթ Անհաղթ) or somebody else. The same tradition prevails when a child is more often named Davit in honor of his grandfather, uncle or a deceased relative. Nonetheless, if the name Դևիդ>Դեվիդ>Դեվ>Դև, is given to a child, then here the time factor is dominant.

We shall dwell upon these factors more comprehensively.

Religion as a reflection of tradition. The Bible and Church have had their influence on the name repository of Christian nations in general and that of the Armenians in particular, while in the Muslim world the Koran and Islamic literature played a crucial role.

In the culture of choosing a forename religion is seen as an essential source, reflecting the existing traditions. After the adoption of Christianity the forename given at the christening was prioritized; the name of a saint penetrates into other Christian nations' tradition and becomes popular like in Hovhannes (Հովհաննես) – Ivan, Johan, Juan, Jean, John, Giovanni, Petros – Pyotr, Pierre, Mariam – Maria, Mari, Miriam, etc. With the spread of Islam many nations of Africa and Asia took Muslim forenames, while the Buddhist nations nearly exclude borrowings and their names are short syllables or words without any meaning.

The Church has carried out the responsibility of registering the newborns (up to the establishment of the Soviet rule), giving them biblical names. The abundance of biblical names in the Armenian name repository and that of other Christian nations is conditioned by the aforementioned factor.

Names like Abel (Աբել), Anania (Անանիա), Andreas (Անդրեաս), Anna (Աննա), Aharon (Ահարոն), Benjamin (Բենիամին), Gayane (Գայանե), Gabriel (Գաբրիել), Daniel (Դանիել), Davit (Դավիթ), Yeghia (Եղիա), Yeghishe (Եղիշե), Yeva (Եվա), Israel (Իսրայել), Tovma/s (Թովմա/ս), Karapet (Կարապետ), Hovhannes (Հովհաննես), Hakob (Հակոբ), Hovsep

(Հովսեփ), Hripsime (Հռիփսիմեն), Ghukas (Դուկաս), Matevos (Մաթևոս), Mariam (Մարիամ), Mane (Մանեն), Manvel (Մանվել) Marcos (Մարկոս), Melkon (Մելքոն), Mkrtich (Մկրտիչ) Mikael (Միքայել), Movses (Մովսես), Nshan (Նշան) Shoghakat (Շողակաթ) Shushan (Շուշան), Rachel (Ռաքել), Rebecca (Ռեբեկա), Sahak (Սահակ), Sara (Սարա), Samson (Սամսոն), Srбуhi (Սրբուհի) are handed down from the Bible and biblical literature, lasting through centuries. We shall highlight a very interesting example: In our literature the more common names given to Armenians were Anania -Անանիա (38), Anton - Անտոն (28) Azaria - Ազարիա (24), Andreas - Անդրեաս (43) rather than names of our national heroes (from legends and saga) i.e. names of eminent historical figures like Ara -Արա (4), Artashes - Արտաշես (12), Aram - Արամ(4) and no toponyms at all – Ararat (0). Interestingly, the name Artavazd (Արտավազդ) was an exception as there were 35 cases of this name.

The new religion replenished our name repository with such names of Armenian origin as **Arakel (Առաքել)**, **Astvatsatur (Աստվածատուր)**, Avedis or Avetis (Ավետիս), Galust (Գալուստ), Yeranuhi (Երանուհի), **Makruhi (Մաքրուհի)**, **Srбуhi (Սրբուհի)**, Taguhi (Թագուհի), Tiruhi (Տիրուհի), **Khachatur (Խաչատուր)**, **Karapet (Կարապետ)**, Hambardzum (Համբարձում), Mkhitar (Մխիթար), **Margar (Մարգար)**, Mkrtich (Մկրտիչ). The popularity of Christian names is reflected in the frequent use of such Armenian names as Astvatsatur/Աստվածատուր (192), Avetik/Ավետիք (116) Arakel/Առաքել (110).

Interestingly, such names as Adam (Ադամ) and Noah (Նոյ) were not common in the previous centuries; however, presently they have become more popular.

In his dictionary of Personal Names Hr. Atcharyan mentions four uses of the name Noah, one was recorded in the 8th and the other three in the 17th centuries¹.

Having a Church calendar, the Russian Orthodox Church has suggested that the parents name the newborn after the saint born on the same day².

In Russian culture the ever-lasting popularity of names like Ivan (*Иван, Иоанн*) and Maria (*Мария, Марина*) can be accounted for by abovementioned factor.

The Spanish name repository is closely interconnected with the Bible. According to the Spanish National Institute of Statistics, of 226000 boys born in

¹ Աճառյան 1946, 82:

² Петровский 1980.

2003 7543 were named Alejandro (3/3%), 1762 were called Alex, while the popular name for girls was Lucia (4/4%). The origin of the name traces back to the times of the Roman Emperor Gaius Aurelius Valerius Diocletianus when saint martyr Lucia was subjected to persecutions (it is common knowledge that Columbus called a location after Lucia – Santa Lucia in America), Maria occupied the second place in the ranking. The latter had topped the list up until then. The blending of Spanish names Maria and Lucia led to the emergence of a new name – Marisa, which is perceivable for everybody.

It is noteworthy that according to the same statistic data all along the previous century Maria topped the list of the most frequently used female names followed by Laura, Ana, Pilar, Cristina, Daniela, Josefa, while the most common male names were Jose, Javier, Jesus, Carlos, Angel, Francisco, Manuel, Daniel, David, Miguel.

Names in honor of heroes, historical figures and lost homeland. Driven by tradition our generations have adopted such names which reflect our glorious history. These names have been handed down from grandfather to grandson, from grandson to great grandson. To this class belong such names as: Ara (**Արա**), Arshak (**Արշակ**), Artavazd (**Արտավազդ**), Ashot (**Աշոտ**), Gnel (**Գնել**), Gevorg (**Գևորգ**), Gohar (**Գոհար**), Torgom (**Թորգոմ**), Toros (**Թորոս**), Levon (**Լևոն**), Khosrov (**Խոսրով**), Tsovinar (**Ծովինար**), Khandut (**Խանդութ**), Hayk (**Հայկ**), Hamazasp (**Համազասպ**), Mher (**Մհեր**), Menua (**Մենուա**), Argishti³ (**Արգիշտի**), Mesrop (**Մեսրոպ**), Mkhitar (**Մխիթար**), Mushegh (**Մուշեղ**), Samvel (**Սամվել**), Vazgen (**Վազգեն**), Vagharshak (**Վաղարշակ**), Vahan (**Վահան**), Vasak (**Վասակ**), Vardan (**Վարդան**), Tigran (**Տիգրան**), Hripsime (**Հրիսիմեն**), Gayane (**Գայանեն**) and many others playing a unique educational role in the society.

The names of historical locations of our lost homeland where mountains and valleys are situated carry out a similar function. The toponyms transformed into forenames are Ararat (**Արարատ**), Masis (**Մասիս**), Nairi (**Նաիրի**), Aragats (**Արագած**), Taron (**Տարոն**), Van (**Վան**), Ani (**Անի**), Getik (**Գետիկ**), Marut (**Մարութ**), Mrav (**Մռավ**), Hayastan (**Հայաստան**), Araks (**Արաքս**), Azat (**Ազատ**), Akner (**Ակներ**), Tade (**Թադե**), Ashnak (**Աշնակ**), Narek (**Նարեկ**).

We shall dwell upon the uses of the toponym Nairi (**Նաիրի**) as a forename.

³ It should be noted that in the 60s of the 20th century names like Argishti and Menua became widespread among the Armenian population.

In the ancient Assyrian inscriptions that go back to the XI century BC a large part of the Armenian Highlands was referred to as land of Nairi/ **Նաիրի**. In various historical sources the toponym Nairi was denominated differently – Nakharina/**Նախարինա**, Nakhrayana/**Նախրայանա**, Nakhria/**Նախրիա**, Naharain/**Նահարաին**, Naharin/**Նահարին**, Naharina/**Նահարինա**, Naharini/**Նահարինի**, Nahri/**Նահրի**, Nahria/**Նահրիա**, Nahriani/**Նահրիանի**, Nahrina/**Նահրինա**, Nari/**Նարի**, Nikhria/**Նիխրիա**, Ninirja/**Նինիրյա**, Niri/**Նիրի**, Nirt/**Նիրտ**.⁴

The aforementioned name was given to all countries lying south of Assyria, however it is out of question that the given denomination had its specific significance as a toponym, referring to all the mountainous countries which stretched all along Lake Van; Nairi has the following names – rivers or a country of rivers or a country of fire⁵.

Moreover, the Assyrians mainly invaded the locations, lying between the eastern Euphrates (Aratsani) and the eastern Tigris (Bohtansu). These two rivers (in the Assyrian inscriptions Aratsani is called Arzani) can be considered northern and southern borderlines of Nairi, while in the west and east the Euphrates and Lake Urmia can be regarded as borderlines respectively. The Assyrians called Lake Urmia the Lower Sea Nairi, while Lake Van was referred to as the Upper Sea Nairi⁶.

In the IX century BC Nairi was included in the Armenian kingdom, and its first kings started to bear the title of the King of Land of Nairi.

The toponym Nairi has never been used as a forename at any point in the Armenian history, while currently it has become quite common as a forename. **The use of the toponym as a forename may be accounted for by Vahan Terian's** anthology of poems Land of Nairi. The eminent Armenian writer Hayastan Yeghiazarian made the forename Nairi more ubiquitous by creating a new, more euphonic literary pseudonym Nairi Zarian⁷.

⁴ Հայաստանի և հարակից շրջանների տեղանունների բառարան, 1991, 1947:

⁵ Ibid. It is noteworthy that according to Hr. Acharyan's etymological dictionary, the root նայ (nai) is of purely Armenian origin, having the following meanings humid, wet, as well as flowing water, river-head, water nymph. **Աճառյան** 1977, 426:

⁶ For more information about Nairi see **Լեո** 1966, 182–187:

⁷ That is why the name Nairi cannot be seen as an equivalent for such Armenian toponyms as Van, Taron, Sis, Masis, Aragats, etc., which were used as forenames in a later period.

It is worth mentioning that among the aforementioned names we can surely single out the following uses - Nahri (**Նահրի**), Nirt (**Նիրտ**) and – Nakhria (**Նախրիա**), Naharina (**Նահարինա**), Nahria (**Նահրիա**), Nahrina (**Նահրինա**), Nari (**Նարի**), Nikhria (**Նիխրիա**), Niri (**Նիրի**) which are respectively male and female versions of forenames.

The names themselves, included in these semantic groups, do not have to play an essential role in denominating a person. It is the generic characteristics of the tradition itself that lead the parents to name their sons and daughter after grandfathers and grandmothers or after other relatives. In other words Armenians mainly follow the tradition; thus the names of grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, eminent historical figures and those of national or biblical heroes are reproduced. The past three centuries witnessed the revival.

Tradition Seen as a Typical Feature for Both Armenians and Foreigners.

In ancient Armenia daughters were named after their fathers e.g., Shahandukht (**Շահանդուխտ**), Khosrovidukht (**Խոսրովիդուխտ**), Tigranuhi (**Տիգրանուհի**), Haykuhi (**Հայկուհի**). With a slight variation the same tradition could be found in medieval Korea. The girl did not have a name before marriage, thus, she was called by either father's or brother's name i.e. somebody's daughter, somebody's sister, while after marrying she was referred to as somebody's wife or somebody's mother.

In German repository of names Hitler and Musolini⁸ were excluded after the war. However, during the wartime a German politician named his children after Hitler and Musolini which are now forbidden. At present the forenames and surnames with the initial “h” (like Henri, Henkel) are utterly rejected in the German repository of names.

Fortunately, we Armenians have a rich history of names and make the choice of our children's forenames consciously. In the course of centuries thanks to the prevalence of common sense our name repository has been cleansed, and such names as Bazuk (**Բազուկ**), Bardzr (**Բարձր**), Kanach (**Կանաչ**), Kaputik (**Կապուտիկ**), Darman (**Դարման**), Karasunk (**Քառասունք**), Brindzk (**Բրինձք**), Himar (**Հիմար**), Poghots (**Փողոց**), Magaghat (**Մագաղաթ**), Apres (**Ապրես**) common in the Middle Ages are absolutely out of use now.

⁸ These were originally surnames used in honor of German and Italian politicians Adolf Hitler and Benito Amilcher Andrea Musolini.

None of the following purely Armenian forenames with the initial “a” Azgatikin (**Ազգատիկին**), Azgaser (**Ազգասեր**), Azger (**Ազգեր**), Amenatar (**Ամենատար**), Amenavag (**Ամենավագ**), Amen (**Ամեն**), Amanor (**Ամանոր**), Ayruk (**Այրուկ**), Andzrev (**Անձրև**), Andzrevavard (**Անձրևավարդ**), Arak (**Առակ**), Arevhar (**Արևհար**), Arevshah (**Արևշահ**), Arevtikin (**Արևտիկին**), Artasovor (**Արտասովոր**), Artuyt (**Արտույտ**), Arkayutyun (**Արքայություն**), Avetaber (**Ավետաբեր**), found in Atcharyan’s dictionary are used nowadays. The aforementioned names can be somehow justified (nowadays we may also come across odd names), but names like Apush (**Ապուշ**), Himar (**Հիմար**), Apirat (**Ապիրատ** - dishonest) are in all respects illogical. If the first two have been used twice in our literature, then the multiple uses of the forename Apirat seem totally incomprehensible. In fact, the bearers of the name are eminent personalities like Gagik B’s favorite nobleman Apirat whom the king on his visit to Constantinople appointed the overseer of Ani. Another figure, bearing the given name was Apirat Magistrosean of Pahlavuni dynasty who was Grigor Magistros’ grandson and Grigor Vkasaser’s, Catholicos Grigor B’s and Nerses Graceful’s nephew. Other eleven individuals of the same name by which Atcharyan himself was bemused: “is the Armenian word apirat the same as dishonest, if so how was it possible for such a nasty epithet to become a forename?⁹” We think that this is not the same Armenian word but just a borrowing and its substantiation was put forward by Atcharyan himself, stating that the same name is common among Georgians, signifying ishkhan (nobleman) – Apirat¹⁰.

The abovementioned examples are centuries-old but what about nowadays? The employee at civil acts registration office of Arabkir district handed me an entire repository of extraordinary names registered in the documents: Pataskhan (**Պատասխան**), Gutan (**Գութան**), Evrasia (**Եվրասիա**), Drnapet (**Դռնապետ**), Salat (**Սալաթ**), Indzprkoghserozh (**Ինձփրկողսերոժ**), Oasis (**Օազիս**), Inchevinch (**Ինչևինչ**), Bronja (**Բրոնյա**), Majka (**Մայկա**), Gvardia (**Գվարդիա**), Naslednik (**Նասլեդնիկ**), Dekabrist (**Դեկաբրիստ**), Payluk (**Փայլուկ**), Claratsetkin (**Կլարացետկին**), Fransik (**Ֆրանսիկ**), Urakhik (**Ուրախիկ**), Hamleta (**Համլետա**), Ptichka (**Պտիչկա**), Cognac (**Կոնյակ**), Sniper (**Սնայպեր**), Arageghecik (**Արագեղեցիկ**), Potorik (**Փոթորիկ**), Tndanot (**Թնդանոթ**). One cannot but be puzzled over the choice of names

⁹ Աճառյան 1942, 193:

¹⁰ Աճառյան 1942, 193:

made during the Soviet era. In this case the only comforting thing is that the **choice of the baby's forename was made by the grandparents, i.e. by the elderly** and we do hope that names as such will have no place in future.

One of the important factors reflected in tradition are the regional boundaries. The tradition as such has a great influence on the choice of forenames in provinces.

If we come across such names as Arshaluys (**Արշալույս**), Sirakan (**Սիրական**), Nazareth (**Նազարեթ**), Hayastan (**Հայաստան**), Hamest (**Համեստ**), Voski (**Ոսկի**), Knkush (**Քնքուշ**), then they by all means are handed down by ancestors, either by grandparents or uncles.

The preservation of national values, the appreciation of historical figures have had a great impact on the choice of such names as Drastamat (**Դրաստամատ**), Vardan (**Վարդան**), Mkhitar (**Մխիթար**), Narek (**Նարեկ**), Parandzem (**Փառանձեմ**), Hripsime (**Հռիփսիմե**), Gayane (**Գայանե**), Hayk (**Հայկ**), Levon (**Լևոն**), Tigran (**Տիգրան**), Davit (**Դավիթ**), Ghevond (**Դևոնդ**), Vazgen (**Վազգեն**), etc.

When choosing a name for the firstborn child the tradition is more prevalent, while it is less influential in the choice of the name for the second one. Whereas, time is seen as an important factor in the choice of a name for the third child, i.e. **the mother's desire and father's consensus are taken into account**.

Throughout the past 50 years time has left its trace on our repository of names. The establishment of the Soviet rule brought about the emergence of the following names – Vilsen (**Վիլսեն**), Vesmir (**Վեսմիր**), Mels (**Մելս**), Novlet (**Նովլետ**), Vladilen (**Վլադիլեն**), Vilen (**Վիլեն**) as well as names taken from literature – Tristan (**Տրիստան**), Isolda (**Իզոլդա**).

Nowadays, there are countries where people being illiterate choose names without understanding their meaning and role; letters written on a product label may become a person's forename. In the Dominican Republic illiteracy and backwardness are reflected in the choice of names – a child is called Usamade (made in USA) Usmail (US mail), in this case no logical norm functions. In this respect we do not make an exception either; a man who does not hide his love for an alcoholic beverage names his fourth daughter Cognac (**Կոնյակ**). Members of a family, wanting to preserve the initials of the forenames create a new version Shantaline (**Շանթալինե**) of the existing names Shahen (**Շահեն**), Shahane (**Շահանե**).

Throughout the past decades, after Armenia's Independence, time has had a visible impact on the choice of names in the capital and its neighboring regions.

Such male forenames as Pajlak (Փայլակ), Kajtsak (Կայծակ), Vorot (Որոտ), are found in the Armenian repository of names, while names like Astgh (Աստղ), Lusin (Լուսին) do not exist. The female forename Astghik has derived from the word astgh, and Lusine emerging from lusin. Nonetheless, it is quite possible that driven by the imposition of modern times Armenian mothers may want to name their daughters Astgha (after a character of the Indian series).

During the Soviet era the bride took her husband's surname after marriage, sometimes an in-between option worked when she had two surnames *Khachatryan* – *Adilkhanyan*. At present each couple to be married preserves his /her surname. The newborn used to take and still does take the father's surname.

Exceptions of norms certainly exist. In such families where husbands and wives have harmonious relationships and the wife has a right to voice her opinion, she chooses the child's name. Nevertheless, the mother's choice greatly leads to disregard for our traditions and national values. Due to mothers' wish such names as Anahit (Անահիտ), Gayane (Գայանե), Shushan (Շուշան), Hripsime (Հրիսիմե), Satenik (Սաթենիկ), Varditer (Վարդիթեր), Varsenik (Վարսենիկ) are replaced by names like Vivian, Jessica, Jennifer, Milena, Nathalie, Mila, Arina, Ariana, Eva, Evoca.

Driven by another trendy factor, parents often name their second or third child, taking into account their firstborn's forename choice. This may be a wrong and frivolous step on parents' part as a three-year-old or a five-year-old cannot be trusted with such a task.

Female names like Haykuhi (Հայկուհի), Yeranuhi (Երանուհի), Srbuhi (Սրբուհի), Azatuhi (Ազատուհի) are not popular any more. Zaruhi (Զարուհի), Karine (Կարինե), Marine (Մարինե), Narine (Նարինե), Irina (Իրինա), Sofya (Սոֆյա) have changed into Zara (Զառա), Kara (Կառա), Mara (Մառա), Nara (Նառա), Ir (Իռ), Ira (Իռա), Safia (Սաֆիա), while Grigor (Գրիգոր) is Grig (Գրիգ), Margar (Մարգար) – Mark (Մարկ), Sirvard (Սիրվարդ) – Silva is Sylvi (Սիլվի), Susanna (Սուսաննա) is Susie (Սյուզի).

Here the statistic data are of great interest. We shall illustrate the popular forenames in the regions of Amasia and Chambarak¹¹.

According to statistics the most common male names in Amasia are Artur (**Արթուր**) and Armen (**Արմեն**), Karine (**Կարինե**) and Gohar (**Գոհար**), being the most popular female counterparts. Due to the influence of tradition such male forenames as Jonsik (**Ջոնսիկ**), Raja (**Ռաջա**), Bezhan (**Բեժան**), Arzinov (**Արզինով**), Chkalov (**Չկալով**), Khanan (**Խանան**), Velikhan (**Վելիխան**), Ozios (**Օզիոս**), Farid (**Ֆարիդ**), Lucash (**Լուկաշ**), Pandukht (**Պանդուխտ**), Bakhtiyar (**Բախտիյար**), Pashik (**Փաշիկ**), Zarzand (**Ջարզանդ**) are still used and the following female counterparts stand next to them – Hayastan (**Հայաստան**), Menik (**Մենիկ**), Ciala (**Ցիալա**), Nisja (**Նիսյա**), Zareta (**Ջարետա**), Petrushka (**Պետրուշկա**), Voski (**Ոսկի**), Grunia (**Գրունիա**), Zhuzhuna (**ժուժունա**), Tukhik (**Թուխիկ**), Ginevard (**Գինեվարդ**), Dolares (**Դոլարես**) and so on. Some of these names are inherited by ancestors, others are borrowed from Turks, and the existence of the rest is conditioned by some extraordinary circumstances.

Here we find many traditional Armenian forenames like Mayranush (**Մայրանուշ**), Vehanush (**Վեհանուշ**), Lusanush (**Լուսանուշ**), Armanush (**Արմանուշ**), Marganush (**Մարգանուշ**), Sahakanush (**Սահականուշ**), Hamestuhi (**Համեստուհի**), Armenuhi (**Արմենուհի**), Drakhtuhi (**Դրախտուհի**), Garegin (**Գարեգին**), Habet (**Հաբեթ**), Baghdasar (**Բաղդասար**), Harutjun (**Հարություն**), Hambardzum (**Համբարձում**), Mher (**Մհեր**), Tachat (**Տաճատ**), Sedrak (**Սեդրակ**), Margar (**Մարգար**) that unfortunately seem to have become less common over time. The latter are replaced by personal names like Alen (**Ալեն**), Eric (**Էրիկ**), Emil (**Էմիլ**), and Sofi (**Սոֆի**).

We witness the same tendency in Chamabark. People born in 1970-1975 bear such traditional female Armenian forenames as Azatuhi (**Ազատուհի**), Almast (**Ալմաստ**), Shoghakat (**Շողակաթ**), Voski (**Ոսկի**), Paytsar (**Պայծառ**), Sosi (**Սոսի**), Varsenik (**Վարսենիկ**), Tiruhi (**Տիրուհի**), Knkush (**Թնքուշ**), while their male counterparts are Apaven (**Ապավեն**), Zarzand (**Ջարզանդ**), Loris (**Լորիս**), Kamsar (**Կամսար**), Hovakim (**Հովակիմ**), Vanatur (**Վանատուր**), Varos (**Վարոս**). Analyzing the statistics of names registered between 1990 and

¹¹ The statistic data are based on research carried out by Satine Jarahian and Vehanush Tonoyan (Master's students of the Armenian Philology department at Yerevan State University).

1995, we can state that tradition is still a factor, however, the inherent characteristics of these names seem to be different – the popular female forenames of the period in question were Ani (**Անի**), Anna (**Աննա**), Lilit (**Լիլիթ**), Sona (**Սոնա**), Meline (**Մելինե**), Milena (**Միլենա**), Christine (**Քրիստինե**), Tatev (**Տաթև**) while, Arman (**Արման**), Arsen (**Արսեն**), Arkadi (**Արկադի**), Davit (**Դավիթ**), Gor (**Գոր**), Gevorg (**Գևորգ**), Hayk (**Հայկ**), Narek (**Նարեկ**), Vardan (**Վարդան**), Tigran (**Տիգրան**) were the most preferable choice for males. The forenames of those born from 2010 to 2015 reflect an utterly different state of affairs. The most common personal names registered in the given period are Elen (**Էլեն**), Nare (**Նարե**), Mane (**Մանե**), Lia (**Լիա**), Monica (**Մոնիկա**), Nathalie (**Նատալի**), Yeva (**Եվա**), Erica (**Էրիկա**), Camela (**Կամելա**), Mila (**Միլա**), Milya (**Միլյա**), Alex (**Ալեքս**), Alen (**Ալեն**), Areg (**Արեգ**), Eric (**Էրիկ**), Artyom (**Արտյոմ**), etc. The mere enumeration of these forenames highlights that tradition gives way to allmighty time. In this respect noteworthy is Alex (**Ալեքս**), which is one of the versions of the forename Alexander (**Ալեքսանդր**) (other versions are Alec/**Ալեք** and Aleksan/**Ալեքսան**). According to Atcharyan's Dictionary of Personal Names, Alex, which is currently very popular, was used in Armenia back in the XIII century. Moreover, several eminent figures had this name¹². It would not be accurate to state that the shorter version of the name is more fashionable and preferable. The most frequently used Spanish name is Alejandro (the Spanish version of the forename Alexander). We Armenians also prefer long names like Adelaida (**Ադելաիդա**), Angelina (**Անգելինա**), Daniela (**Դանիելա**), Gabriela (**Գաբրիելա**). Such a situation is seen only in the faraway provinces, but also in Yerevan and its neighboring regions where the influence of time is undoubtedly prevalent. People choose names as they wish, very often ignoring the national values. The only thing that matters is that the more extraordinary and peculiar the name the better. The forename should also be uncommon and bewildering, so that hearing it, people would ask to repeat. The forenames of our historical figures, grandparents are cast away, being replaced by artificial, invented, meaningless ill-transliterated foreign names from TV shows.

In order not to hurt the feelings of the elderly, in-between versions are created. Thus, Satenik (**Սաթենիկ**) changes to Saten (**Սաթեն**) or Satine, (**Սաթինե**), Shoghakat (**Շողակաթ**) to Shoghane (**Շողանե**), Susanna

¹² Աճառյան 1942, 73–74:

(Սուսաննա) to Suzie (Սյուզի), Zaruhi (Զարուհի) to Zarine (Զարինե) or Zara (Զառա), Mariam (Մարիամ) to Marine (Մարինե) or Mara (Մառա).

The euphonic forename Asmira (Ասմիրա) turns out to be the blending of grandmother's (Asthik/Աստղիկ) and grandfather's (Miran/Միրհրան) names. The female forenames Ashotuhi (Աշոտուհի), Arsine (Արսինե), Artemis (Արտեմիս) are tokens of great love for fathers.

The Diaspora Armenians make great efforts to preserve traditions. Thus, in many Armenian-populated locations the child's name acquires new attributes, consisting of two names of which one is European or American and the other is Armenian: Arman (Արման) Nadarik (Նադարիկ) and Nathalie (Նատալի), Lala (Լալա) Manukians, Nazar (Նազար) Alex (Ալեքս) Nazarian. After reaching adulthood, the child may give up one of the names or keep both.

One should not be under the impression that we intend to popularize names which were enumerated above as no lady would like to be named Zmrkht (Զմրուխտ), Sokhak (Սոխակ), Bavakan (Բավական) Sarngyul (Սարնգյուլ) and other traditional names.

The seemingly Armenian forenames are not of Armenian origin at all as they were borrowed from other peoples in different periods. As we mentioned above we Armenians, following Russians' and Persians' example, like to borrow names. Thus, any name can be preferable if it is fashionable, common and extraordinary. The traditional forename Mikael/Միքայել (*Miguel, Michel, Mikhail*) is replaced, giving way to Miguel or Michael. Instead of Yeghisabet/Եղիսաբեթ (*Yeghsik/Եղիսիկ, Sabet/Սաբեթ, Elisabeth Էլիզաբեթ, Eliza/Էլիզա, Ela/Էլա, Liza/Լիզա, Bella/Բելլա*) Ela (Էլա) and Eliza (Էլիզա) are chosen, Grigor (Գրիգոր) changes into (Grisha/Գրիշա, Gikor/Գիքոր, Gokor/Գոքոր, Grig/Գրիգ) Grig, Hovhannes (Հովհաննես) into (Hovik/Հովիկ, Hovo/Հովո, Onik/Օնիկ, Juan/Խուան, Jean/ժան) Jean (ժան), Heghine (Հեղինե) is replaced by Yelena (Ելենա,) Elen (Էլեն), Levon (Լևոն) (*Lyova/Լյովա, Leon/Լեոն, Leo/Լեո*) by Leo (Լեո), Davit (Դավիթ) by David (Դևիդ), Anton (Անտոն) by Anthony (Էնտոնի). The enumeration of these names reflects a common intention, i.e. shorter names are preferable. It becomes evident that Armenians in choosing names give way to globalization trends. What kind of situation will we face in a decade or fifty years? Almost not a single name from the traditional Armenian name repository, (names which have been used throughout centuries) will be left.

Another important point is that the English, Germans and French will by no means choose Armenian names.

Once given a forename an individual is personalized in the society. Thus, a forename should be chosen with great care and not randomly. It would be greatly recommendable that Armenian parents and grandparents not go to extremes but think it over more than once before choosing a forename. The point is that choosing a forename, parents and grandparents should never ignore the fact that their child and grandchild is also an individual, who reaching adulthood will be distinguished in society owing to his/her forename.

The oddest forename of the Armenian history is perhaps Ananun (nameless) which was given to quite a popular person who, due to his activities, is immortalized by this particular name. The son of the Armenian king Abgar bore the forename Ananun (nameless). From 34–37 Ananun reigned in Edessa, while his nephew ruled in Armenia. Ananun having given up Christianity, reopened the temples of pagan Gods and assassinated the Archbishop Adde. He was crushed to death during the renovation of his palace, being buried in its ruins¹³. His name, in fact was *Sirinos* but he was so hated by Armenian chroniclers that Mkhitar Ayrivantsi made no reference of him and after king Abgar, king Sanatruk was mentioned.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can state that globalization has had its impact on the general characteristics of global name repository. Various nations' name repositories cannot withstand the changes that are indicative of time. This is not conditioned by the size of the nation. Many nations think the borrowing of names to be threatening as it would lead to amalgamation. Thus, they keep their traditional names. The formulaic patterns found in the names of such nations as Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Georgians, Armenians can be accounted for by this factor. Nonetheless, even the most traditional nations surrender to the influence of almighty time.

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¹³ **Մովսես Խորենացի** 1981, 182–183:

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ՄԵՅԹԻԽԱՆՅԱՆ Փ.

Ամփոփում

Քանալի բառեր¹ ավանդույթ, անուն, անձնանուն, ազգանուն, հայրանուն, անվանարան, անվանակոչում:

Բոլոր ժողովուրդների անձնանունները կրում են հիմնականում երկու գործոնի ազդեցություն՝ **ավանդույթի և տվյալ ժամանակի**:

Ավանդույթը բնորոշ է թե՛ մեզ, թե՛ օտարներին:

Հայ ժողովուրդը հետևում է մեծ մասամբ ավանդույթին. պապի, տատի, հորեղբոր, պատմական նշանավոր անձերի, ազգային ու սուրբգրքային հերոսների մեզ համար թանկ մեր կորուսյալ հայրենիքի բազում տարածքների անուններն ու անվանումները վերարտադրվում են: Եվ այդ վերազարթոնքը հատկապես բնորոշ է վերջին երեք հարյուրամյակներին:

Ավանդույթը գերակայում է հատկապես առաջին երեխային անվանակոչելիս, ավելի պակաս՝ երկրորդի դեպքում, իսկ երրորդ երեխան հիմնականում անվանակոչվում է ժամանակի թելադրանքով, այն է՝ մոր ցանկությամբ կամ մոր և հոր համաձայնությամբ, ևս մի քանի գործոններով պայմանավորված, որոնց մասին խոսվում է հոդվածում:

Ժամանակը իր ազդեցությունն է թողնում անվանադրման վրա հատկապես այս վերջին տասնամյակներում, կարելի է ասել անկախացումից հետո և հիմնականում մայրաքաղաքում ու նրա մերձակա բնակավայրերում:

ТРАДИЦИЯ И ВРЕМЯ КАК ФАКТОР ВЫБОРА ЛИЧНЫХ ИМЕН

МЕЙТИХАНЫАН П.

Резюме

Ключевые слова: традиция, имя, антропоним, фамилия, отчество, ономастикон, именование.

У всех народов на выбор личных имен влияют главным образом два фактора-фактор традиции и фактор исторического отрезка. Данная традиция характерна как для армян, так и для других народов.

Армянский народ издревле придерживался устоявшихся традиций, что имеет место и в наши дни: возрождаются имена бабушек и дедушек, ближайших родственников, исторических деятелей, национальных и библейских героев и т.д. Рассматриваемая тенденция особенно характерна для последних трех столетий.

Традиция доминирует в особенности при выборе имени первенца и в гораздо меньшей степени отражается на имени второго ребенка. Что же касается третьего ребенка, то выбор его имени в основном зависит от желания родителей и ряда семейных обстоятельств.