

## SUMMARY<sup>1</sup>

The present instalment from the series «Archaeological specimens of Armenia» contains rich material on the culture and history of the late Bronze and early Iron Ages. Some of the archaeological findings are published in different monographs and various papers, which means that they have not so far been assembled in a single volume. A considerable part of the recently uncovered landmarks sees print for the first time.

The instalment is divided into five small parts in accordance with the types of the archaeological finds, the products unearthed during the excavations and the nature of the requirements of the given analysis. The first part deals with an outline of the various habitations and fortresses; the second gives a brief description of graves and necropolises; the third speaks of the material culture, the fourth handles the dating and the fifth is a concise survey of the late Bronze Age. The instalment is furnished with a reference list of nearly one hundred works (in Armenian, Russian and other languages), numerous plates, schemes and other relevant matter that throw added light on the archaeological data.

The section on the late Bronze Age habitations includes a number of the left and right banks of the river Arax (Tashpooroo, Metsamor, Karinir-blour, etc.), one of the habitations in Shirak and the most typical forts in the vicinity of lake Sevan (p. fig. 1). In treating of the tombs and the necropolises we have taken into account «stone-made», «slab-made» and

earthen box-typed vestiges (fig. 2), the large mounds near Sevan and the district of Syunik-Artsakh, the cromlech circles widespread in Armenia (fig. 3) as well as specimens of menhir, dolmen-like, rupestral and cave-dug graves (fig. 4) which are of infrequent occurrence.

Here is the sequence in which hundreds of specimens representing the various arts and crafts of prehistoric times are submitted to archaeological classification and chronology in the extensive and important section on material culture:

1. *Tools of labour* that comprise smelting and metal-processing instruments and devices (plate I—III), implements for tilling, harvesting and working agricultural products (fig. 6) contrivances for pottery and the like. As to the makes of woodcarvers, varieties of ox-carts, carts and chariots (plate IV—VIII) along with horse bridles and various artifacts of harness (plate IX—X) are also presented.

2. Special consideration is given to the various types of weapons, that include specimens of local, imported or commonly oriental poleaxes (plate XII—XIII), the chief six varieties of daggers, again both local and oriental, (plate XV—XXII) and the main types of swords. The charging weapons are presented in the form of spears and maces (plate XXIII—XXVI), many types of the bow and the arrow and lances. Defence armour is composed of variously designed shields, coat of mails and helmets (plate XXVIII).

3. The present instalment also treats of objects of adornment, art and cult. They are made of bronze, tin, antimony, gold and semi-

<sup>1</sup> Translated into English by P. Mesropian.

precious stones. The collection also comprises various bead-strings made of china clay (plate XXIX—XXXIV), metal-wrought necklaces, tastefully patterned pegs and so on. A particularly interesting group is the single and group figurines made of metal (plate XXXV—, various animals (plate XXXVI), disc-shaped ornamented pegs dedicated to the cult of the sun and luminaries, as well as richly embossed bronze belts (so typical of Armenia's antique culture) with linear patterns on themes of religion and worship. (plate XXXVIII, XL, XLT). Beautiful cult pottery that still arrests the onlooker's attention for its diversity and richness, is characteristic of the archaeological finds of this section and makes up the fourth group. Aside from cult earthen ware, the basic trends in pottery making are also submitted to ascertained archaeological classification.

Relying on a cross-test of pottery products and metal making, on comparative analysis and a detailed examination of the specific features of the monuments pointing to the respective levels as well as drawing parallels with definitely dated ancient oriental objects, a general classification into periods of the material culture of the late Bronze Age is devised that is in keeping with the common scheme of the evolution of the ancient Orient.

Along with the classification into periods of the late Bronze Age culture of Armenia and closely affiliated with it are the issues on cultural and economic relations and impacts between the Armenian highlands and the neighbouring countries viz. the peoples living in Asia Minor, Assyria, Palestine, northern Mesopotamia and the Caucasus.

A joint examination of all the foregoing archaeological finds: habitations and necropolises, thousands of items of material culture, the applied arts and objects of cult, enables us to approach the social and economic relations of the late Bronze Age, the racial and tribal systems, the spiritual life and other issues and outline the contours of the above-mentioned period. Such historiographic results feature in brief in the last section of this instalment which is captioned: «Armenia in the late Bronze Age»

and the contents of which are set out below.

Having conducted an investigation of the late Bronze Age monuments in Armenia, the economic life of the local ethnic groupings are now clearly defined. Owing to the unparalleled growth of various branches of the economy, an original and peculiar culture emerges in Armenia during the XIII—X centuries B. C., common to the whole of the Transcaucasus, extending, south of the Caucasian mountain range, encompassing the valleys of the rivers Rion, Kura and Arax and the entire Armenian highlands. This middle eastern remote yet powerful centre of culture develops comprehensive cultural and economic relations with the civilised parts of the East and the eastern Mediterranean and, on the other hand, with the racial groupings of the northern Caucasus. Those extensive cultural and economic relations were due to the growth of the country's productive forces.

Ore-mining and metal-processing that originated as early as the first millennium B. C. attain a high level of development in the mountainous regions of Sassoun, Julamerk, Reshtuny, Angueghtun Tayots, Gugark, Guegharkuny, Syunik and Artsak that turn into key areas of metal-processing. Mastering the skill of copper smelting, deriving high-quality bronze from other metals, gold plating, inscribing and minting, the qualified artisans of the late Bronze Age manufacture in profusion weapons, tools of labour and ornamented objects. The weapons turned out in Armenia were marketed at home and in the Caucasus, in Persian Talish and elsewhere. Many varieties of armaments and defence ammunition were made after the pattern of imported oriental objects.

It is interesting to note that the tiny pole-axes, the various daggers, tridents and a host of other items found out in Lechashen, Artik and Tazakend, correspond to artifacts unearthed in Khattushagh, Tei-Ahmar and Ugarig. In the XIII century B. C. the application of metal products starts which proceeds along the same lines as in Iran, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and the Aegian world. Apart from weapons and tools of labour, the smiths make also objects of adornment and produce brilliant specimens of



art, statuettes of animals, birds and men, down to bronze belts that are bedecked with ingeniously wrought incised pictures of worship and religion.

Goldsmithery was a well developed branch of metalworking. This trade drew largely on Mesopotamian traditions and along with Shumerian, Accadian and Indian adornments the Armenian goldsmiths produced exquisite pieces of art that were purely Armenian. The manufacture of earthen ware also attained a high standard. Pottery was made exclusively with the help of the potter's wheel and by baking in kilns; the products are of diverse form and pattern—black, smooth, even, polished surface often with geometrical, plant or animal designs in relief or human figures. Particularly richly embossed and elegantly shaped are the cult vessels, small or large, and shoe-shaped cups. Pottery in the.... century B. C. is divided into three broad chronological periods (Lechashen.... The end of the XIV—XIII centuries, Ornakian XII century, Redkin and the base for a general chronology of the late Bronze Age culture.

The growth of metalworking and pottery was due to the promotion of husbandry and stock-farming—the two principal branches of economy. We positively gather from a scrupulous study of bone-made artifacts dug out from habitations and necropolises that by the second half of the II millennium B. C. the semi-nomadic way of agricultural life had got a firm footing in Armenia. A reasonable use of mountain meadows opened extensive possibilities for the growth of cattle. Sheep and goat-raising was the main occupation of the stock farmers in the mountainous areas, whereas the low-lying parts were predominantly engaged in rearing horned cattle that was of paramount importance in husbandry. Studying the fossils and remains of domestic animals such as cows, oxen, sheep, goats and donkeys we deduce that pure-strain stock-breeding prevailed in the regions of Sevan, Moughan-Gharahagh, Gzoraguet-Tregghk and the vicinity of lake Urmia. Especially notable for their large size and excellent physical qualities were the horses and bulls raised in those areas.

To meet the needs of stock-raising and husbandry small reservoirs were made in the elevated regions, and streams were dug in plains; however, the construction of canals in the late Bronze Age failed to reach in Armenia the level of Mesopotamia.

Nevertheless, compared to previous historic periods stock-raising that was of comparatively high standard in Armenia, formed the basis of the economy of prehistoric community. The outsize jars and pits, found out in the pre-Urartean habitation of Karmir blour (the Red Mound), together with the remnants of wheat, barley, millet, the considerable supplies of wheat, barley, millet, sesame, pea, lentil, pomegranate, grape, apple, peach and vegetables in the Urartean fort of Teyshabaim, where those items were levied from the local population as tax, testify to a highly developed viticulture, field-crop cultivation at the close of the II millennium B. C. and the start of the first millennium. Such an upsurge of agriculture is to be accounted for not only in terms of favourable climatic and physical-geographical conditions and the ever-increasing number of the cattle but it is also due to the production of agricultural implements, i. e. the existence of complex means of production, the main types of which underwent no change during the slave-owning or feudal systems for many centuries. The plough, the bronze scythe and the knife, wood chippers threshers, spades, shovels, forks and tridents, various querns and mortars comprised the list of the tiller's implements.

The means of transport were of great significance in the economy of the late Bronze Age in Armenia, when husbandry and stock-raising were on the upward grade. The barrows of Lechashen contain many ox-carts, either open or with vaulted-covers, two or four-wheeled, passenger or express coaches, children's small carts, metal models of chariots the prototypes or parallels of which are to be met with in the arts objects of the ancient Orient and the Transcaucasus and also in sepulchral findings (Ourkich, Tepe-Gavra, Shurappak, Mari, Til-Barsip, Ougarit, Dmanisi, etc.).



The rapid advance of the foregoing branches in economy, the natural division of labour in the Armenian highlands into agricultural, stock-raising and metalworking areas fostered international barter greatly, without which the evolution of society would be inconceivable. Being situated on the cross-roads of the East and the West, Armenia was a linking ring between the Middle East, the northern Caucasus and the south-Russian steppes. Some areas of the Armenian highlands (Diarbekir, Malatia, Van, the upper courses of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris) formed part, nearly for one millennium, of the ancient oriental state of Mitani, that served as a temporary link of many an eastern country. At the end of the II millennium the cities of Mitani preserved their role of mediators in trade. They also connected with Armenia the important centres of Phoenician trade—Tir, Sido, Mejiddon, Askalon and particularly Ugarit. The major trading centre of Mari was on the middle course of the Tigris, and the famous Karkenish city was situated on the bank of the Euphrates.

It is not, therefore, accidental that the above-named archaeological findings are parallel to similar artifacts unearthed in Armenia. Part of the late Bronze Age weapons, ornaments, harnesses and seals discovered in Armenia are, no doubt, introduced from those countries. It is commonly known that Hurrite and Hittite seals have been brought to light in Lechashen, Artik, mountainous Gharabagh and far-off Osetia, while a bead bearing the name of King Adadmar of Saura was dug out from a rich tomb in Gharabagh.

On the other hand, most of the products manufactured in Armenia are encountered in Talish, Lutistan, the northern Caucasus and the banks of the river Dnieper. It is noteworthy that most of those objects, including the makes of the Urartean period, are to be met with on the slopes of the Kazbek, next to the big Caucasian pass and, beyond the range, in the valleys of the rivers Chekem Baska and Terek. The metalware that came over to Armenia from various regions of the Transcaucasus, spread from there to the central parts of Asia Minor

and the southern regions of Kaputan. The foregoing great economic changes resulted in the social and political upheavals that led eventually to the downfall of the tribal community. The development of private ownership and inheritance rights, the disintegration of patriarchal family, the isolation of tribal notables, and the social and economic contradictions paved the way for the emergence of class societies. In the south-eastern parts of Armenia Urartean tribes and Uduri-Etuni and other tribal units in the east rise, in the XIII—XII centuries B. C., to the level of state formation, while in the land of Hayassa the primitive system of administration persists. «Maritime races» invade Asia Minor in the XII century B. C.; the formation of the first proto-Armenian small princedoms can be discerned. Armenia steps into the last stage of military democracy.

The continuous tribal strifes for arable and pasture lands as well as for political supremacy lead to the supreme economic and political power of the notables. The lion's share of the best arable lands, plunder and the prisoners taken during the hostilities would go to the privileged section of the society. The heads of the tribes had at their disposal military units composed of spearmen, shield-bearers and chariot warriors.

The tribal representatives sharply differed from ordinary clans by their mode of life, relaxation grounds and ornaments. Even their graves were huge mounds, with broad halls for burial where the remains of the privileged were interred together with their hearses, ornaments, their best attire and military equipment and all sorts of rich materials that might seem «usable» in the other world. Their graveyards, the burial ceremonies and rites were akin to those of Scythian and Armenian kings of later periods.

Contrastingly humble and unassuming was the burial of simple tribesmen who were interred in small stone-made or earthen graves with a few essential personal effects, that frequently amounted to a couple of earthenware. Their clay-or stone-made jars were equally unpretentious in appearance.

At the time when productive forces stood

on a low level, the organization of the production of material objects en masse was possible only through the joint efforts of large human groups. That is why the large patriarchal formations that emerged as early as the onset of the III millennium B. C. continued to exist. They were composed of several consecutive generations of consanguineous relatives (3—7), and milk animals and means of production including plots designed for temporary use and public pasture lands. The patriarchal way of life of the family continued to function as the economic nucleus of the community. However, social contradictions gradually wormed their way into large communities of families. Its manifestations were apparent in the private appropriation of the common income of production and the split up into small families.

Thus, by the end of the XIII millennium B. C. tribal community in the Armenian highlands stood on the verge of disintegration creating thereby all the preconditions necessary for the formation of the state.

The life of the natives in the Armenian Highlands during the late Bronze Age, however, was not confined to the development of merely social and economic relationship and the productive forces. They led a complicated and contradictory spiritual life fed by naturalistic concepts, religious beliefs and cults that had been established by the natives themselves. Elements of those notions are traceable in the inner folds of Armenian public thinking: folklore, fables, riddles and legends. Female stone-carved idols figure with the most significant cult objects to symbolize the notion of fertility of the woman or the mother-goddess and especially to picture the floral and animal life by local stock-raisers. These are compositions on the human race. The concept of the god was widespread in the whole of contemporary East, in Crete-Micene and elsewhere. It was the goddess Anahit that embodied all those notions in historical Armenia.

The ideas of the natives on the earth, the heaven and the Universe are pictured on pottery embossments and especially on adorned

bronze belts to be found among cult objects of the late Bronze Age. The earth, the heaven and the water are presented on those objects in the shape of three heavenly horizons and are depicted as real or imaginary overland and aquatic animals or geometrical figures. Such traces are discernible in the brilliant Armenian epos—the dare-devils of Sassoun. In profusion are the objects dedicated to the cult of the sun. They comprise linear belts presenting the god of the sun in the shape of human figures or chariots, sometimes by fiery horses, lions or bulls that are marvered with disc- or ray-shaped bodies. Porous, bronze discs embodying the sun cast together with small birds are also met with, in addition to statuettes of birds. The above-named bronze belts are also engraved with birds, horses and wavy lines pointing to the cult of water. We also see huge giant statues of dragon-fish near ancient canals and reservoirs; those sculptures would, in the eyes of the ancients, preserve the waters. In some parts of Armenia the belief was held until recently that there existed sources securing eternity; they were guarded by dragons and seven-headed demons. Our ancients were deeply convinced that the waters were of magic significance to the welfare of man, and many springs and rivers, including the Euphrates, the Arax and the Tigris, were looked upon as holy waters.

Of no lesser importance in agricultural life was the cult of animals and especially that of the horse and the bull, the bronze statuettes of which are frequently met with in archaeological findings. At times the remains of such animals, were placed in holy tombs. The cult of those animals, deeply rooted and widespread, was in force with the Armenians as late as heathen times; they sacrificed horses to the goddess of the sun, whereas inviolable herds of bulls lingered about in private temples. The bull worship was common to all the stock-raising peoples of the East. It is still prevalent among some peoples today.

Hunting scenes, with many interesting particulars, are traceable on belts and earthenware objects of the late Bronze Age. They present hunters, armed with bows and quivers,



dressed and wearing bird-masks, surrounded by hunting animals, heavenly bodies and fish. Most of the earthenware is inscribed with mountains and starry skies, symbols of the sun, various hunting animals, hunters on horseback armed with bows and arrows and the image of the forest spirit or the god of hunt. The Armenian folk tales abound in brave hunters that struggle

against dragon-snakes, demons, lions and other beasts of prey. The heroes of Sassoun were themselves herdsmen-hunters.

It stands to reason that the fountain head of the Armenian arts, the spiritual and material life, is to be sought in the womb of Urartean and late Bronze culture.